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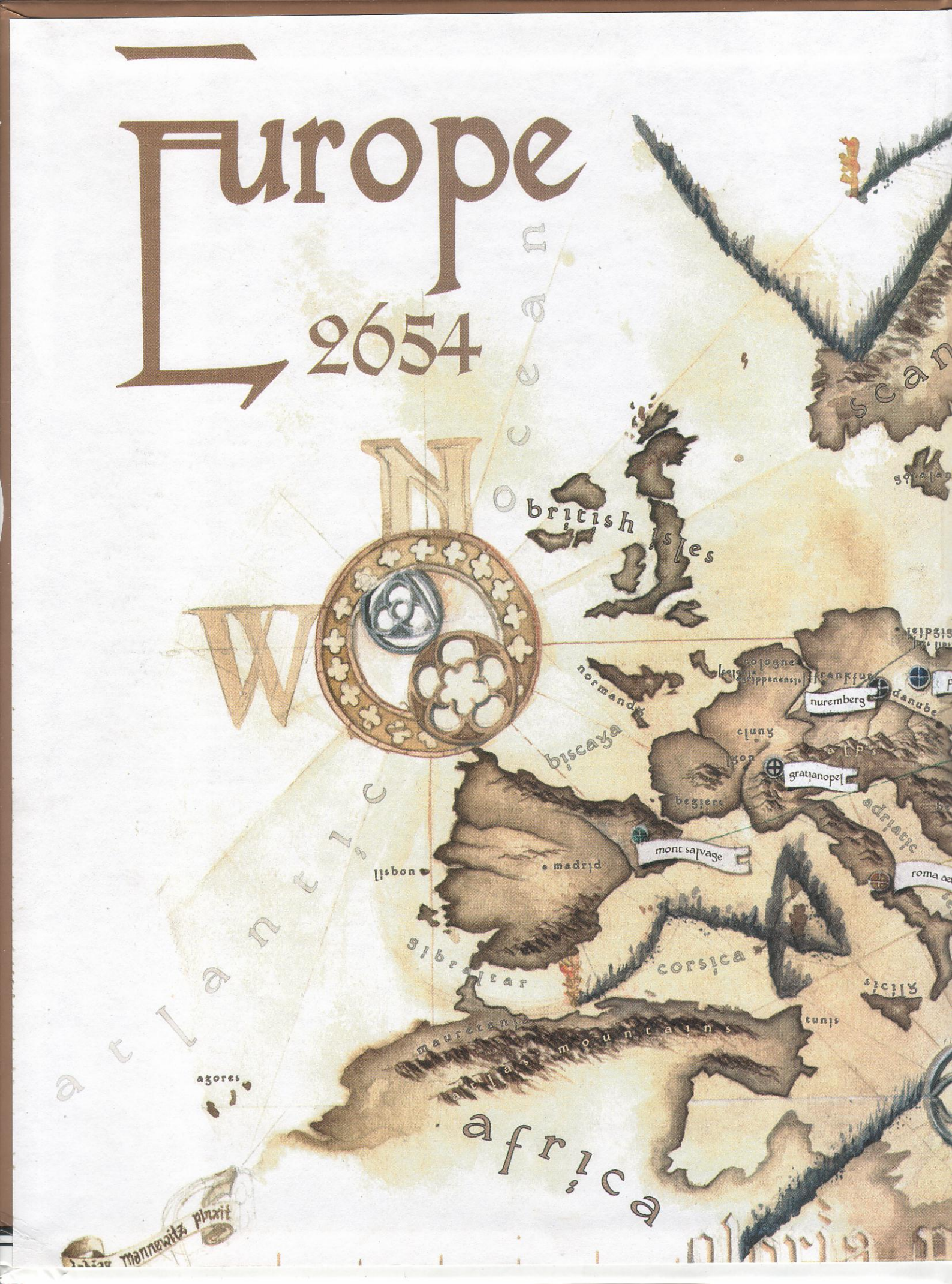
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Dedication

To those who conjure us wings.

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News clipping on p. 22: Source: DER SPIEGEL, October 14, 2000

PRINTED IN CANADA.

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prolog

The riders came at night, clad in long, flowing cloaks. Their horses were black. Our priest, Father Vigo, told us: "Have no fear!" Nonetheless, I was terribly afraid. The riders looked nothing like I'd thought Grim Riders had to look. They seemed to be harbingers of the Lord of the Flies more than anything else. What a blasphemous thought!

I watched every detail of their arrival at our village's market place. I had been awakened by a sucking noise as they rode past the window of my room – the noise the hooves of their horses made in the ankle-deep, sticky mud that covered the rain-soaked market place. Cautiously, I sneaked to the window and opened the curtains a bit to catch a glimpse at those strange, dark horsemen. The drizzle that fell from the sky that night made their long, black, hooded cloaks glitter in the light of the dim moon.

None of the villagers dared to enter the marketplace to welcome the nocturnal visitors – none except for Father Vigo.

With crooked back and lowered head, the collar of his cassock tucked up to protect him from the ever-present dampness, he flitted like a thief towards the new-arrivals whose faces were obscured by the shadows of their hoods. One of them dismounted when he noticed the cleric approaching him hesitantly. His high, heavy boots splashed in a puddle.

"Greetings, honorable sirs!" Without looking up, Father Vigo addressed the dark figure.

It was hard for me to understand his words through the panting of the horses and the incessant murmur of the rain.

The broad-shouldered man – who was obviously the group's leader since his companions called him "Komtur" – threw off his hood – and for the very first time in my short life I beheld a man from outside our village who wasn't one of the merchants or jugglers that paid our small settlement the occasional visit to sell their goods or distract us from our day's work on the rice fields or at the weir-baskets for a small fee.

The Komtur's hard-edged face was shaven clean and almost immaculate, if not for the scar beneath his right eye where a sword or other weapon of war had marked him. He seemed to be slightly older than my father, but compared to the

grimrjoers

peasant who worked hard day after day to keep his large family from starving, this warrior was well fed without being stout. His light-blue eyes burned with zeal and I understood why the old village priest resisted the temptation to face these cold stars' glare.

"Well, Father", said the Komtur with a pleasantly deep voice which showed that he was used to give orders to those beneath him in station, "I guess I won't have to explain the reasons why we have come here tonight."

"No, although I had hoped your visit wouldn't come too early in the year, sire."

The slight trembling in the voice of the old man, whom, from the time I'd learned to speak, I had entrusted with my sins both small and severe in the cramped space of a confessional, made me nervous. Cold sweat ran down my back beneath my nightgown.

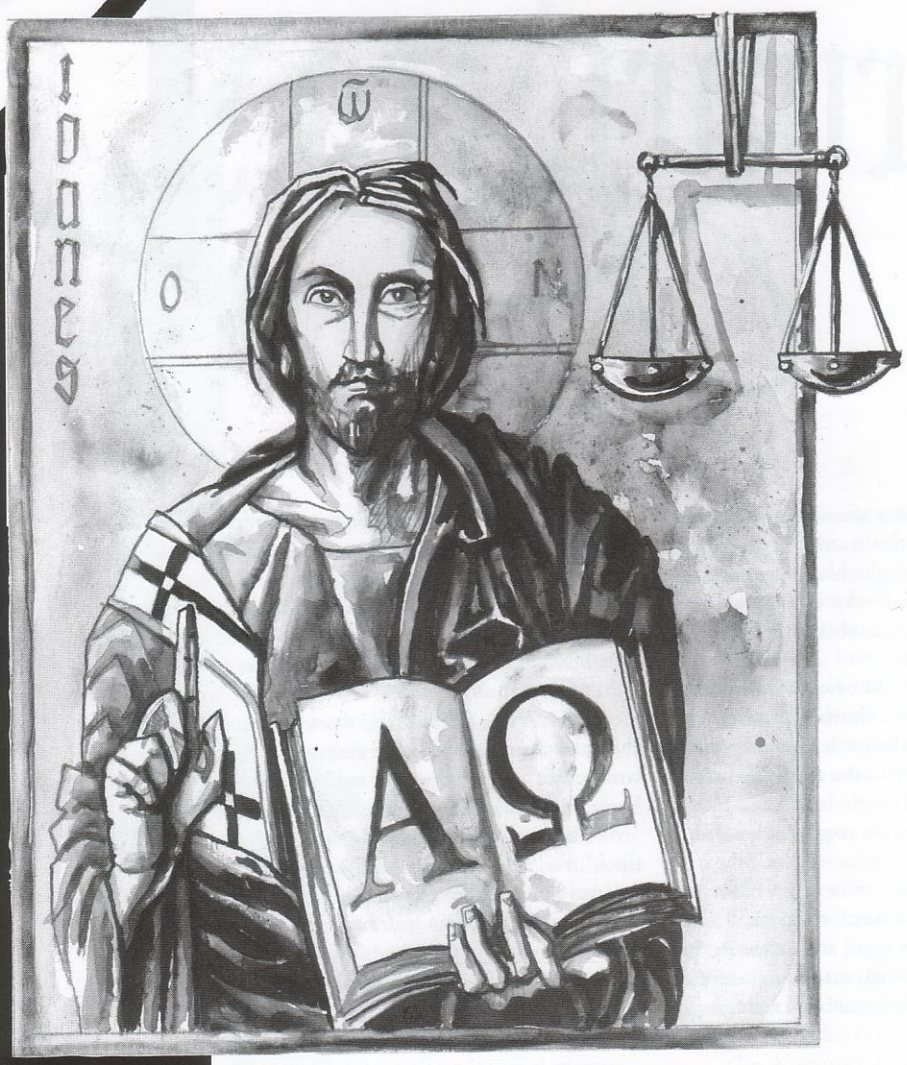
"Our holy mission shan't suffer from any delays, Pater Vigo. You will pay your village's Tenth tonight, immediately." There wasn't a hint of anger in the Komtur's deep voice, but I could see that he pushed back the left side of his hooded cloak to reveal the hilt of a weapon that gleamed in the pale light of the moon.

Father Vigo started slightly when he noticed that the Komtur was carrying more than one weapon, for strapped to the saddle of his steaming horse dangled a heavy two-handed sword.

"I'll have the church bells tolled to gather the flock", the priest uttered hastily. The Komtur only nodded his quick, consenting permission.

When Father Vigo hurried to his small church, ignoring even the deepest puddles in the uneven market place, I began to realize that this night would change my life forever.

introduc



And I looked, and, lo, a lamb stood on the mount sion, and with him a hundred forty and four thousand, having his father's name written in their foreheads.

– revelation 14: 1

introitus

Angels.

The harbingers of the Lord whose name derives from the Greek word *angelos* – messenger. Supernatural beings mentioned primarily in the Old and New Testament of the Holy Bible, classified in different ranks, the so-called choirs. Mighty heralds of divine judgment whose importance isn't restricted to Christian beliefs, but who also play vital roles in the Islamic faith.

This book is about these entities, beings that are as intertwined with occidental culture as the existence of God, the number *pi* and the fact that might makes right. They bustle about contemporary pop songs. They decorate obituaries and wedding cards, they can be found reproduced a million times even in the smallest gift shop on Earth, we encounter them as brooches, as illustrations in diaries, in churches and as pseudo-religious kitsch on smarmy depictions showing beautiful male angels as they lead frail ladies across bridges over troubled water.

Angels feature prominently in novels, movies, TV series and computer games, and every museum literally bursts with paintings or statues of these winged beings.

Does this mean that there is nothing more to say about angels?

No. Not at all.

Angels have always been a source of hope for the faithful, heralds of the Divine and champions of the Lord. In the centuries of secularization during which idols took the Lord's rightful place away from him, angels were neglected in an unpardonable way. In the days of the future, however, they fulfill the tasks they were created for once more, albeit under the name of Engel. The Engel carry the hopes of the world between their wings. The Shining Host faces the spawn of the Lord of the Flies in a struggle which shakes Heaven and Earth to their foundations. And the result of this war will decide the future of mankind – or lead to its ultimate annihilation.

What is Engel?

Engel is a roleplaying game set in the 27th century. The year is 2654 AD. Plagues and ecological disasters have ravaged the Earth – wind and weather scourge the land, the oceans have risen to threatening levels, irrevocably altering the face of the Old World. Due to these catastrophes mankind has fallen into a post-apocalyptic state of being which the term "neo-medieval" describes best. The determining force in the lives of people everywhere is a dominating church restored to former glory, ruling the continent from *Roma Æterna* by the force of the Heavenly Host under their command.

Engel is a storytelling game. All of you who are familiar with this expression can skip the next few paragraphs and read on in **Chapter One: *Historia Apocalyptica*** to get to know the history of the world of **Engel**. The following introductory words are to all the others to whom this book represents the first steps you take into the universe of storytelling games.

Storytelling Games

Storytelling games are classic simulations, games in which the player describes the actions of his character. Without any simulation at all, however, we wouldn't be able to stage contests, get swept along by duels or kick open a closed door, just by sitting around the table.

In **Engel**, story elements like the ones mentioned above are handled via a simple set of rules, which are designed to facilitate game play. The rules presented in this book are a tool to help you build a bridge between your own force of

Example: Stephen, Susan, Astrid and Holger have met to play. Astrid, Susan and Holger are the players.

Astrid plays Rachiel, an experienced Engel.

Susan plays Lamiel. This Engel resides in the monastery where the fellowship's current superior is Ab.

Holger plays Sacriel who is allowed to wield a flaming sword on this mission for the first time. Furthermore, he is very susceptible to the mortal sin of wrath.

Stephen is the storyteller. He tells the players that their characters have been looking for a suspected Heretic. Unfortunately, they haven't succeeded in their mission, so they are of low spirits as they meet with the monastery's Ab to report.

Stephen describes the scene: "Two Templars and their officer have fetched you from your quarters. You know that the officer's name is Xesos and it is he who has taken the lead of your small group on your way through the cloister.

"The room to which you are escorted is spacious, opulently furnished and cramped with sacral pieces of art from eras long past. Of course the Engel would not be able to make any sense of it, but just to give you an impression – it's a hodge-podge of medieval reliquaries, Renaissance paintings and even a modest wooden crucifix from the late 20th century. A single yellow-white candle as long and thick as a man's arm on a large, golden candle stand flickers and casts diffuse light in alcoves full of frescoes and statues. You barely have time to let your eyes wander across the room. With a gesture from their officer, the two Templars escort you to a dais at the far side of the room. They keep a certain respectful distance, although their stance betrays that they won't tolerate any resistance from your side. On the dais sits a gaunt, old figure in the ornate vestments of an Ab of the Angelitic Church on a wooden chair with a high, straight back, reminding you of a throne."

Stephen continues, speaking as the Ab: "I have been the Ab of this monastery for more than three decades now. Like a father, severe but merciful and forgiving when warranted, I have gently led the faithful of the surrounding villages on the path to betterment. Under my care a city rose, where there were only ruins when my brothers and I first arrived in this barren land. You have seen the crude form of the cathedral I am going to build with your own eyes. I have had Heretics taken into custody and thwarted the devious plans of the Dreamseed time and again. And during all these endeavors, the Lord's Engel stood by my side. How comes then that I have to learn that you failed me in such a simple mission? Speak, for I am indignant!"

The storyteller falls silent, giving the players the opportunity to carry on the tale.

Astrid reacts first and answers as Rachiel: "Father, please forgive us, our fellowship…"

Holger interrupts her as Sacriel: "Oh no, Rachiel, enough is enough! With all due respect, Father, you seem to forget who stands before you! We are the Engel of the Lord, not your pupils you can reprimand at your whim!"

Stephen has to convey to his players how angry the Ab is about the unruly reaction of the young Engel. Instead of simply describing the old cleric's behavior, he goes one step further and brings his acting skills to bear, showing the Ab's reaction and stimulating the players' imagination. His fingers clutch the arms of the chair he sits in conspicuously – the Ab grabs the golden lion heads on the arms of his throne with palsied fingers – and stares furiously at Holger – the old man's disapproving gaze falls on Sacriel.

Here, Susan intervenes; in order to save the situation, Lamael exclaims: "Calm yourself, Sacriel!"

She then explains what her Engel does afterwards: "I know all too well from my own painful experiences how angry Ab Gundar can get, so I avoid looking at him at any cost. I will rather *look around the room. What is the Templars' reaction to Sacriel's insolence? And what is Xesos doing?"*

imagination and the necessity to simulate certain aspects of the game in the real world. We offer you the chance to use the rules of the most popular roleplaying game of all time, the system of which primarily makes use of a twenty-sided die. Despite this rules set, there is one rule you can always rely on before letting the dice speak: Use common sense and forget about the dice.

How the game develops depends on the actions of the players as well as the possible twists and turns of the plot the storyteller presents. Even the following small anecdote plucked from mid-play demonstrates, however, that all the actions and words of the characters lie solely in the responsibility of the players. It also shows that said actions or words can result in consequences of crucial importance, although the exact repercussions may not be obvious in the short run.

Nonetheless, the possible outcome of a scene depends heavily on the storyteller's decisions: It's Stephen, the storyteller, who decides how Ab Gundar reacts to Sacriel's words and the Engel's failure. Or, to put it more plainly, he lends a voice to all the people the player characters meet, regardless how vital or unimportant they may be to the overall plot; he bestows them with unique quirks and personality traits, and it is the storyteller who has final say on anything the characters say or do.

the Engel

A large number of interesting creatures our world has had to offer – including a host of beings from myths and legends – have been the focus of storytelling games and other forms of roleplaying, from the barbarian warrior of the classic sword & sorcery genre to masked crime fighters from pulp-fiction and modern comic books. The heroes of the storytelling game you are reading right now and whose roles you will have to slip into are angels – the Lord's messengers. You are expected to clothe them in flesh and blood and follow them into a strange world in the far future where mysticism and technology, faith and hatred clash.

The Engel, who fill the sky of this advanced and yet archaic world with the beat of their wings, resemble the pictures the word "angel" paints in our minds in many ways, but they are also very different from these associations in as many aspects as they might meet our expectations. Our Heavenly Host consists of very special creatures: they have been granted strange but impressive powers. They seem so similar to the people they have been ordered to protect. And yet, they are different from them in almost incomprehensible ways.

what the people of the 27th century know about Engel

In some ways, the Engel, whom we are inviting you to play, resemble those champions of the Lord you know so well from Biblical tales, from myths and legends, from literature and movies. Without doubt, there is a lot of truth in tradition, even though we are not presumptuous enough to judge if all these ancient tales about angels are true or if people in the grip of religious zeal invented the angels. Not everything attributed to the Engel is based on facts – to set the atmosphere of the game we would like to present some fundamental truths about the Heavenly Host which belong to the credo of every person in the 27th century. At the same time, we will point out false doctrines, most of which are based on simple ignorance, although some derive from a childish naivety in regards to the harbingers of the Almighty.

• **Engel are immortal.** Countless legions of the winged executors of the Divine have met their doom during the crusades against the Dreamseed, for the Engel are not invulnerable. Despite this, neither do they age and die like God's lesser children. They don't need to eat or drink in the customary sense, since Manna from Heaven nurtures them and sates their every need, should they hunger or thirst. Nonetheless, they are able to share food and drink with man should they wish, as Christ shared bread and wine with His disciples.

• **Engel are strong like Samson who slew the Philistines; the birds, the animals and the fish obey the Engel; their words carry the Lord's authority and they can raise the dead.** These statements are as false as they are true. Engel possess *Potestates* (sing. *Potestas*), powers bestowed by God which vary from Order to Order. As more mysteries of his order are revealed to an Engel, his command over these divine gifts grows. Surely, a lot of the abilities attributed to the Heavenly Host stems from the wishful thinking of the European people. On the other hand, it is widely known that some Engel can call back the deceased from the dead, and terrible to behold is the wrath of the angel-warriors when they cut their path through the ranks of the enemies of the faith with their blazing blades.

• **Engel have wings and are able to fly for very long distances.** It is true: Engel have wings on their backs which grant them flight. These wings are almost always white, tower above the Engel's heads and make their flight as elegant as the swan's and as

bold as the eagle's. The Urielites, the fellowships' forerunners, are especially trained to cover long distances. It is rumored that they are even capable of sleeping or at least resting in mid-flight. Exceptions to the rule are the Sarielites, an order of wingless angels.

• **Not all the Engel carry flaming swords.** This holy weapon is reserved for the members of the Gabrielite Order, for their archangel and founder, Gabriel, the Lord's Champion, received it from the hands of the Almighty Himself to stand guard at the gates of Eden. The Raphaelites, whose hands bring healing, almost never wield weapons and frown upon violence.

• **There are eight orders of Engel.** This statement is as true as it is false; centuries ago, when the Lord graced His ravaged world by sending his Engel to Earth for the second time, eight orders were indeed formed. Only six of them still exist today; of these, five form the fellowships which set out to do the Lord's will: the Michaelites, the Gabrielites, the Raphaelites, the Ramielites and the Urielites. These five orders are called the "fighting orders" which is strictly speaking a misnomer in the case of the Raphaelites. The sixth order is the Sarielites, often simply called "the Choir". The orders that vanished are the Raguelites, whose Himmel was destroyed by the Dreamseed, and the Samaelites. The latter sacrificed themselves to the last Engel, saving their home island of Corsica from Dreamseed occupation.

• **The Engel sport their orders' Sigils on their garment.** This is true for the fighting orders. The Sigils allow everyone who encounters an Engel to discern which order this messenger of the Lord belongs to. The symbols are the corona and the key (Michaelites), the flaming sword (Gabrielites), the healing hand (Raphaelites), the Book of Books (Ramielites) and the all-seeing eye (Urielites).

• **There are no Dark Engel; there never have been and there never can be.** There has never been any doubt that one of the Dreamseed's most important goals has always been the creation of Dark Engel – by any means necessary. It is argued whether these blasphemous creatures truly strive to create proper Engel who bow their heads in humility and obedience to the Lord of the Flies – an unthinkable endeavor - or if the Dark Engel who haunt the nightmares of the simple peasants are former members of one of the five orders who have fallen from grace. Regardless of where they come from, countless rumors about the atrocities of this zenith of depravity are being spread. The tone of these stories varies wildly; not all of them depict the Black Engel as demonic, wicked monsters. In some of these tales, they are tragic heroes or misunderstood creatures the Lord banished in a moment of negligence – as if He were capable of such - for venial sins. Utter nonsense, all of it; the Angelitic Church contradicts all rumors about Dark Engel whatsoever energetically and denies their existence with all due severity.

the consecration of the Engel

The career of an Engel on Earth starts with a time of training, education and ceaseless tests of his abilities. This apprenticeship lasts for years, in rare cases only several months, and the young Engel resides solely in the Himmel, the gigantic citadels of the orders. The only fact known for sure is that the Engel are taught how to fly during this time. During the Consecration of the Engel, a ceremony of the utmost solemnity which is celebrated on the spring and autumn equinoxes, respectively, the Engel are officially accepted as full members of their orders. The ceremony is held on the Peter's Place in Rome where the Engel are blessed by Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus, the absolute ruler of the Angelitic Church. Standing on a gallery on the roof of the Lateran Palace, the Pontifex welcomes his new champions into the Heavenly Host. From then on, every Engel is regarded as one of the Lord's angels, a vessel and an executor of the divine will.

Regarding ceremonial as well as social importance, there is nothing in the life of an Engel that could be compared with this event. After the consecration, which lasts from early dawn until the sun disappears behind the Lateran's towers, all the newly consecrated Engel rise to the skies in a breathtaking display of glory. Thousands of faithful gather to witness this religious ceremony – especially its spectacular ending. It is said that the Lord smiles for a full year upon everyone who catches a feather of an Engel floating from the sky.

Following their consecration, the Engel stay in the Eternal City only for a single night before they set out to the monasteries or other places they will do their duty at from then on. They are the Lord's angels, ready to serve the Almighty and obliged to defend His flock.

the fellowships

Normal people live in social systems of any imaginable size, from a hermit in a cave in the forests to the last remaining cities on Earth; the Engel, however, know a social unit which permeates their entire being and influences their whole life: the fellowship. The fellowship is a small, autonomous military unit within the Heavenly Host that consists of one Engel from each of the fighting orders. In exceptional cases, two members of the same order can be found in a fellowship – or, rarer still, an order isn't represented at all. Especially on missions during which heavy fighting is expected, the fellowship is occasionally reinforced by a second Gabrielite. A Sarielite accompanies a fellowship only in the rarest of cases

when the fellowship's mission requires special advice in matters of faith.

Each fellowship is led by a Michaelite. Some fellowships are stationed in cloisters or Himmel where they handle various tasks. Others maintain small shrines in difficult terrain to satisfy wanderers' most basic spiritual and physical needs. Some travel to the far corners of the continent to follow the Lord's mysterious ways. The Engel of your players will belong to one of the latter, a fellowship constantly trying to succeed in the most dangerous or enigmatic missions.

the world of engel

Engel don't strive for worldly goods, for riches or for influence. They use their Potestas granted them by God in an extremely hostile world for the greater good of the faithful under their responsibility. **Engel** is set in Europe. The skies have darkened, and it rains almost ceaselessly. God's eternal adversary, the Lord of the Flies, sends legion after legion of unsuspecting slaves or willing tools into battle to shape earth in his own image. More than one member of the clergy and more than a few secular lords secretly do his bidding.

With a few exceptions, some of Europe's greatest cities were lost when the Second Flood came more than 500 years ago. Europe is divided by incredibly broad rivers and dotted with countless seas and lakes the great flood left behind. And nobody knows what lurks beneath the waves...

the eternal crusade

Immediately after the Second Sending of the Engel, the war against the Dreamseed began. These insectoid creatures are the minions of the Lord of the Flies. It is rumored, however, that they are nothing less than the spawn of mankind's frightful nightmares – maybe the Dreamseed are both.

Ever since Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus declared the Great Crusade on the Dreamseed in 2472, the Engel fight a never-ending war against the Dreamseed on countless front lines, a war that is often called the Eternal Crusade in the Himmel, a war that will decide the future of the whole world. Junklords and nations fell, monasteries were burned to the ground and whole armies perished in this endless conflict. The tactical necessities of this struggle build the foundation upon which the Pontifex makes all his political decisions. The concept of fate as a blind, unpredictable destiny has no place in Angelitic faith; every revolt, every economic crisis and every new, questionable idea spread among the faithful is contributing to the evil machinations of the Lord of the Flies and the unwholesome influence of the Dreamseed. Those people, however, who have actually succumbed to the insinuations of evil hide themselves well,

manipulating others by pulling invisible strings and undermining the Engel's efforts wherever they can – although they are simply tools of an unimaginably evil mind hidden from the eyes of those inhabiting the earth. There are even men and women who have defected to the Dreamseed's side without knowing that they have already done so.

Only a few years have passed since the Heavenly Host officially went to strike out against the Dreamseed in the Second Crusade, after having noticed grave changes in their enemies (you can find further information on that topic in **Chapter One:** ***Historia Apocalyptica***). An end to this crusade is nowhere to be seen – even though the Junklords are fed up with the ceaseless warfare on their soil, the Gabrielites' sword arms tire and the inhabitants of many distant lands won't refuse to be illuminated by the light of the true faith. The war on the Dreamseed, which began almost three centuries ago, rages from the streets of Rome to the infinite marches of the Tunguska Archipelago. There is some truth in the old saying: "Nothing lasts forever, but the war and the rain."

The signs for an impending Armageddon, the final battle, get clearer with each day, however. According to the prophecies of Fra Juda, this battle will bring about the end of the world as we know it. Fra Juda was a preacher from the Apennine Mountains blessed – or cursed? – with a prophetic gift. He wrote his visions down during the 22nd century. His *Prophecies* state: "*Countless men will perish/ In the most devastating of floods/ Which will be called the Third Deluge/ Which will consist/ In equal parts of blood, water and bile/ And with man shall perish/ The Engel of the Lord/And the armies of the Lord of the Flies.*" Only when the new world rises from the ruins of the old world, the prophecies continue, it can be decided which side ultimately won.

This great battle, the omniscient Ramielites say, is near – maybe only a few years away.

how to use Engel

Engel is divided into two books, the first of which focuses on the setting of the game, while the second one offers rules for playing it. The Golden Rule for you while reading **Engel** nevertheless should be to let your imagination soar high.

The following two paragraphs help you to find your way around:

first book

Chapter One: ***Historia Apocalyptica*** describes the origins of the Engel and how they became what they are today.

Chapter Two: ***Urbi et Orbi*** details the world the Engel live in.

Chapter Three: ***Mater Ecclesia*** describes the hierarchy and the different factions within the Angelitic Church.

Chapter Four: ***Promissum*** focuses on the Engel you are about to play and the orders they are organized in.

Chapter Five: ***Amici et Inimici*** portrays companions and enemies of the Engel.

second book

Chapter One: Foundations serves as an introduction to the world of storytelling games.

Chapter Two: Sermon shows storytellers how to design breathtaking adventures for **Engel** and offers tips and tricks for the art of storytelling.

Chapter Three: Alea Iacta Est presents the rules of the game.

Chapter Four: Equipment contains a number of tools, weapons and other equipment from the world of **Engel**.

live action elements in Engel

Live action roleplaying has gained a remarkable popularity all over the world. Even more so than conventional roleplaying, this style of play resembles improvisational stage acting; the players literally embody their characters instead of merely describing their characters' actions and simulating situations with the help of dice. The players not only slip into the role of their characters, they dress like their characters. At the center of such games is always entertainment, rules are even less important than in pen and paper games.

To create a stand-alone live action game based on the concept of **Engel** seems somewhat problematic, though it would still be possible to play a mix of both styles of gaming. Several inherent elements of the setting – like the ability to fly the Engel possess – cannot be incorporated into a live action version of the game.

On the other hand, the classic visit in an inn or the participation in a holy mass can certainly be transported to a live action game. If you decide to try your luck with a live action game based on **Engel**, you will have to invest a lot of work – otherwise you might realize midway that your endeavor leads to undesired effects, when disappointed players complain that an interesting interaction suddenly gets interrupted by a verbal description of an event impossible to present in an appropriate manner via the means of live action gaming. However, you won't find any situation in **Engel** where dice determine the results of a theological dispute – of course, situations like these have to be acted out, just as a barmaid in a tavern doesn't have to make a roll to flirt with a Templar…

source material

The modern age has rediscovered angels, and **Engel** is certainly a part of this Renaissance of the Heavenly Host. A lot of people have recently shown renewed interest in introspection, spirituality and mysticism – especially due to the millennium that has come and gone without ushering in a new age. And we have already mentioned that angels have always been a favorite subject in art and literature.

Therefore, we were inspired by a host of sources. The following list presents merely some of them.

- The Holy Bible.
- Baudelaire, Charles: *The Flowers of Evil*, Chronicle Books, 1995
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lexicon

- **Ab:** Principal of a *Himmel* and only contact for the *Archangel* of said *Himmel*. In the hierarchy of the church, an Ab is the equivalent of a *Cardinal*.
- **Abt:** see *Ab*.
- **Æbtissin:** A female *Ab*.
- **Æditus (pl. Æditui):** An alternate term for a member of the *Templar Order* in *Roma Æterna*.
- **Angelic Baptism:** A ritual which transforms the chosen ones into the harbingers of heaven. Also called Baptism of the Engel
- **Archbishop:** Church dignitary; within the hierarchy, they are situated below the *Cardinals* and the *Pontifex Maximus*.
- **Archdiocese:** An area of influence ruled by an *Archbishop*.
- **Archimandrit:** Principal of the convent-castle of the *Sarielites*; equivalent to an *Ab* in the *Choir*.
- **Archkomtur:** Military leader; subservient to the *Dux* and commanding the *Komturs* who in turn command the *Grimrider Bands*.
- **Armamentarium:** A weapons-magazine.
- **Armatura:** Foreman and trainer of the *Templars* in a *Himmel* or cloister.
- **Band:** A group of *Grimriders*.
- **Bandmaster:** Right hand of the *Komtur*. This rank can be compared to that of a sergeant in modern military terms. The Bandmaster takes care of the daily needs of a *Band* with at least 15 members.
- **Baptists:** A caste of *Monachs* within a *Himmel* who report only to the *Ab*.
- **Begine:** Sister in a *Himmel* or cloister; she is addressed as Soror.
- **Bird of Passage:** Traveling mercenaries who are often charged with the protection of a caravan by wealthy merchants.
- **Bishop:** Church dignitary, subservient to *Archbishops* in the church hierarchy. He is responsible for all *Monachs* within a large city or region, his diocese. The *Prelates* come from the ranks of the *Bishops*. Also referred to as *Patriarch*.
- **Brandland:** The corridor of smoke, poisonous fumes and burned earth which remains after the passing of an *Inferno*.
- **Brandland Guide:** Daring individuals who lead or undertake expeditions into *Brandland* on their own out of curiosity or a hunger for profit.
- **Cardinal:** A very high-ranked dignitary within the church. They command the *Archbishops*. Furthermore, the *Cardinals* of the *Konsistorium* act as advisors for the *Pontifex Maximus*. C. are often charged with special areas of interest instead of certain geographical areas.
- **Castellan:** *Monach* who is charged with the logistics and the supply of a *Himmel*.
- **Children of the Prophecy:** A sect of children and youths who advance the reverence of children to new heights and sport a clearly anti-adult attitude.
- **Choir:** Short name of the *Sarielites*.
- **Citybaron:** see *Diadoche*.
- **Consistory:** An advisory council to the *Pontifex Maximus* consisting of selected Cardinals.
- **Cult of the Machine:** Relatively young sect which reverses the anti-technology attitude of the church.
- **Custodian:** The leader of all *Templars* within a given *Himmel*. In *Roma Æterna* this rank is called Custos Basilicæ.
- **Day of the Children:** Holiday within the Angelitic Church to celebrate children leading Europe from the catastrophe of the Second Flood.
- **Day of the Martyrs:** Holiday to praise those who fell in battle against the *Dreamseed*.
- **Decani:** The title of the commander-in-chief of the *Templars* in a given cloister.
- **Diadoche:** Worldly, self-proclaimed leader of a city or a similar settlement. Also called Citybaron or derogatively *Junklords*. In most cases, they control a cache of antediluvian artifacts.
- **Deacon:** Pious layman who takes care of churchly matters. Often derogatively called an "almost-priest" or "left hand of the Lord".
- **Disciples of the Morningstar:** A heretical sect who revere the *Lord of the Flies*.
- **Diocese:** An area of influence ruled by a *Bishop*.
- **Dreamseed:** A term used to describe a variety of demons that, according to the doctrine of the

Angelitic Church, spring forth from the fever dreams of the *Lord of Flies*.

- **Dux:** Highest of the *Templars* who controls the whole of the order.
- **Ecstatic:** Member of a religious splinter-group who travel in front of *Infernos* awaiting paradise.
- **Electus:** A term used to signify a *Templar* who has been selected by a *Magister* for special missions.
- **Em:** Form of addressing for an *Æbtissin*.
- **Engel:** 1) (pl.) The whole of the Heavenly Host found within the angelic orders; 2) (sin.) One of the servants of heaven in the form of a child-like being with large wings; also referred to as angel.
- **Fellowship:** The smallest unit within the heavenly hierarchy. Consisting of five members, fellowships generally include one member of each of the angelic orders. Sometimes, fellowships are to accompany a number of *Templars*.
- **Festival of the Sending:** A holiday of the Angelitic Church to remind all believers of the day when the Lord sent his Engel unto the Earth.
- **Festivities of the Tents:** A holiday of the Angelitic Church which shall remind all believers of the chaotic state the world was in after the Second Flood.
- **Fulminadores:** Iberian sect whose members consider it to be the highest favor of the Lord to be struck by lightning and die subsequently.
- **Gabrielites:** Named after the archangel Gabriel. Wearing black robes and garments, the Gabrielites are the most feared angelic order. The champions of the Lord (also referred to as Angels of Death) are trained in all manners of fighting and killing, as they have been chosen to execute the judgment of God. Their symbol is the flaming sword.
- **Grimrider:** Mounted soldier in the service of a *Komtur* who collects the *Tenth* in the form of children for the church.
- **Hasta:** A special form of the sword-lance employed by the *Templars*.
- **Hebdomadar:** *Monach* who is responsible for a weekly duty. As these change each week, this rank consequently changes each week as well.
- **Heretic:** A term used to describe all those who do not follow the beliefs of the Angelitic Church or dare oppose it in some way. Also called Ketzer.
- **Heretics War:** A campaign of extermination during the course of which several thousand people who were branded heretics were killed. It started with the uprising of the *Morlocks* in the beginning of the 27th century.
- **Himmel:** Main seat of one of the angelic orders. Architectonic masterworks that reach up to the clouds and therefore let the *Engel* behold the glory of the Lord. These are living quarters, training grounds and power-centers for the order. Also referred to as Heavens, Engel Castles or Engel Citadels.
- **High Days:** Holidays of the Angelitic Church which mark the passing of the year.
- **Inferno:** Mystical force of nature of extraordinary dimensions, resembling a gigantic tornado of fire which travels across the land very slowly and leaves nothing but *Brandland* in its wake.
- **Innovators:** A movement within the Angelitic church promoting change and modernization.
- **Inquisitor:** An investigator of the Angelitic Church who tracks and fights heresies. Due to an edict of the *Pontifex Maximus*, an Inquisitor has been granted the power to condemn people to torture and death.
- **Jonahites:** An obscure Iberian sect whose members adhere to the teachings and words of a man who supposedly stepped forth from the mouth of a whale.
- **Junklord:** see *Diadoche*.
- **Keepers of Piety:** Ultraconservative lodge within the Angelitic Church.
- **Komtur:** The leader of a band of *Grimriders*. A mercenary officer who raises troops to collect the Church *Tenth*.
- **Leatherers:** Traveling merchants who are always on the move, even in the heat of summer.
- **Lodge:** A faction within the Angelitic Church. Lodges are sometimes part of a public body, although some of them are secret societies with goals differing from those of the church.
- **Lord of the Flies:** Archenemy of God on Earth. According to the dogma of the Angelitic Church, he is responsible for the *Inferno*, the *Dreamseed* and all kinds of misfortune plaguing the population of Europe.
- **Magister:** 1.) Trainer of the *Electi*, similar in rank to an *Armatura*. 2.) Trainer of the novices of a Himmel – a *Monach* with special responsibilities.
- **Mater:** The lowest rank a woman can hold within the church.
- **Michaelites:** Named after the Archangel Michael; the member of this order receive special training in tactics and in leading a fellowship. Similar to their namesake, they are considered the highest and purest of the Engel. Their unique abilities allow them to be the ultimate link between the other orders. Their symbol is the crown of rays or the key.
- **Monach:** Member of a cloister, comparable to a monk.
- **Morlocks:** Sect of mentally or physically handicapped people who were cast out by society and are therefore forced to live in the underground of the destroyed cities. Their uprising led to the *Heretics War*.
- **Mystics of the Blood of Christ:** *Lodge* which is dedicated to the reverence of an obscure preacher named Jesus of Nazareth.
- **Neofeudalism:** Society of the 27th century. Similar to the society of the Middle Ages, but the Angelitic Church is the only liege.
- **New Hanse:** An alliance of merchants of the Baltic and North Sea.
- **Nonnus:** *Monach* who is responsible for the training of the *Engel*. A woman holding this office is called *Nonna*.
- **Novice:** Member of a cloister who strives to be

accepted as a *Monach*, but has not yet been ordained.

- **Pater:** Lowest rank for male persons within the church.
- **Patriach:** see *Bishop*.
- **Peter's Day:** Birthday of the *Pontifex Maximus*; is considered one of the highest holidays within the Angelitic Church.
- **Pii:** Traditionally minded lodge which opposes all reforms within in the church.
- **Plagues:** Marauding hordes of criminals who especially haunt the people in fall.
- **Pontifex Maximus:** Immortal representative of God on Earth. Head and heart of the Angelitic Church, residing in *Roma Æterna*.
- **Potestas (pl. Potestates):** The divine gifts given to the Engel by the Lord.
- **Preacher:** Often times self-proclaimed prophets bringing the Lord's own words among the people. They travel through the whole of Europe and spread their message to all those willing to listen.
- **Prelate:** Official title of an *Inquisitor*.
- **Prior:** The deputy of an *Ab*.
- **Purification:** Ceremonial end of the advancement towards perfection of an *Engel*. Unfortunately, no details are known about this important rite.
- **Raguelites:** An angelic order named after Raguel. Forgotten since its *Himmel* was devastated by an *Inferno*.
- **Ramielites:** Named after the Archangel Jeremiel, this order is dedicated to the preservation of knowledge and prophecies. Their scrying abilities allow them to peer into past and future. Their symbol is the book or Alpha and Omega. Also referred to as Jeremielites.
- **Raphaelites:** An angelic order devoted to the powers of healing, named after the Archangel Raphael. Simply by putting his hand on a wound, the Raphaelite is able to heal wounds, ease pain and disperse sorrow.
- **Ratcults:** Darwinist sect whose members revere pests due to their adaptability. These vermin are also often consumed ritually.
- **Roma Æterna:** City in former Italy; capital of Europe, seat of the *Pontifex Maximus* and therefore heart of the Angelitic Church.
- **Sacraments:** The six greater consecration-rituals of the Angelitic Church.
- **Samaelites:** It is unknown why this angelic order, named after the Archangel Samael, *went into the smoke*. It has all but disappeared since that fateful occurrence.
- **Sarielites:** An angelic order better known as the *Choir*. Only very seldom do members of the Choir become part of a fellowship. These highly specialized *Engel* are lacking the wings of other *Engel*, but their voices are of such beauty and greatness, that they grant all others battle prowess and new courage. *Choirs* are often sent into battle on great floating discs, so that they may aid the other *Engel*.
- **Scriptura:** The finished form of the mystical tattoos of the *Engel*.
- **Sending of the Engel:** The sudden arrival of the *Engel* in AD 2206, bringing victory to the Angelitic Church in the Diadoche Wars.
- **Sigil:** Middle stage of the tattoos of the *Engel*.
- **Templar:** Elite guardians of the *Himmel* with various executive responsibilities.
- **Tenth:** A form of tithe which is claimed by the church. It does not only include money and goods, but also children.
- **Urielites:** Named after the Archangel Uriel, this order is charged with the knowledge of the ways of the Lord. Due to God's power they are able to find their way even in the darkest hour of the night.
- **Vestitiar:** *Monach* who guides an *Engel* through the final part of its initiation.
- **Vitusdance:** A deadly plague, which exterminated the majority of adults all over the world. Children before or at the beginning of puberty survive the plague easily.
- **Votive-cloth:** A long strip of cloth embroidered or painted with prayers and blessings to keep the *Engel* safe from harm. They are granted as signs of recognition, similar to the medals of our age.
- **Walking into the Smoke:** A reference to the historical event when the whole order of the *Samielites* entered *Brandland,* never to return.

Introl

The man hiding behind the moss-covered trunk of a pine wore a linen shirt buttoned down to his belly button and tight leather trousers. Crossbow in hand, he receded deeper into the shadows just as his target left the inn by the roadside... where the old fool had undoubtedly met with the baron's son again.

His target was a gaunt man of medium build with a shaggy goatee and long, wispy hair that fell down, unkempt, to his shoulders. The brown mane was shot through with silver strands and he wore a black, broad brimmed hat and a wide, worn-out cloak of the same color that fell to his ankles. Brown leather gloves, oilcloth trousers and a linen shirt completed his outfit. Although the man obviously traveled on foot – the long, knobbed stick he carried with him was a telltale sign – thigh-high waterproof riding boots in the fashion of the marshwalkers of Northern Europe's shores covered his feet.

The man with the crossbow knew the reason for the clandestine meetings between this man and the baron's son that often lasted to the wee hours of morning. This was the man who was called Helder, a heretic. And time seemed to pass oh so quickly when brooding over forbidden books. All of this would come to an end. The lurker gestured and another man stepped out from behind the trunk of another tree behind the target. In the green light under the forest canopy, a poisoned needle flashed viciously.

• • •

"Take off his blindfold, Garmond," spoke a nasal voice, and the order was quickly followed. "You're tough, Helder, I'll grant you that. A horse would have slept longer than you with the tincture on Garmond's needle."

Helder only glared hatefully towards the man who had caught him, barely visible in the half-light the torches cast across the room. The heretic strained futilely against the tight leather straps that bound his hands to the back of a chair.

t u s : helder 7

"Speak freely, my friend, vent your anger. Tell me what bothers you."

The speaker stepped forward into the light. He was smaller than Helder, walked with a slightly bent back and was clad in a white cassock. Over his soutane he wore a black cloak which sported the embroidery of a silver key within a corona of light. Judging from the gray moustache and the thick glasses, he had to be older than Helder. It was impossible to discern if his hair had turned gray as well, because he wore a small, white cap that covered his entire head. The cap could be tied up under the chin, but right now the ribbons dangled loose on the shoulders.

A Michaelite Inquisitor. And what he held in his hands was undoubtedly one of the copies of the *Historia Millenii Tertii* by Wenzel of Prague that Helder had manufactured and commented upon in a less than pious manner. Helder's situation could not have been any worse.

"I am Prelate Karolus, Inquisitor of the Michaelite Order," he began in an even-tempered voice. "This was only for the protocol, so you know with whom you are dealing. And you are Helder, called the heretic, accused of –"

"Allow me to ask *you* a question beforehand, your Excellency!" his prisoner interrupted him, carefully choosing the most polite tone imaginable.

"Please do," Karolus replied in surprise.

Helder was forced to ask his question to the Inquisitor's back, for the Prelate had turned away to bend over a table standing in the shadows. Helder's tone remained unchanged.

"There is one thing I always wanted to know – what is life like as a toady of a mendacious authority which suppresses and deceives the common man?"

The Inquisitor spun around to face Helder. The torchlight cast half of his face in shadows as if he wore a Venetian mask; his spectacles reflected the flickering light and made his eye flash grotesquely.

"Well," he said slowly, "I do believe that we have a most... entertaining night before us."

chapter

And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, o lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. and is this the manner of man, o lord God?

– 2 samuel 7:19

one:
historia apocalyptica
or, of the events that shaped the world we live in

preface

Ah, Prague, the Golden City: All too well I remember my time as an apprentice there in days less frightening, when we still believed we had overcome the menace of the Dreamseed. Walking under these city's towers and striding through its twisting lanes means sensing the slightest air of mighty forces at work, invisible yet perceptible.

And even here, in the city where the Himmel of the Ramielite Order stands, the Heretics lurk. For them, Prague serves as gateway to the heart of the Angelitic Church. Here the Dreamseed's secret servants walk among man to spy on the Ramielites and their allies.

But I digress, without having even introduced myself to my dear readers. I am Wenzel of Prague, Ramielite and, as I may add with all due modesty, one of the most renowned historians of my order.

I was born 64 falls ago, in the year of the Lord 2586. I have made it my duty to write a history of mankind – and my superiors in the order are pleased to support me in this task. You might ask whom such an ambitious project would address, and regarding the fact that most of the people out there don't know how to read any longer, your objection is justified. Some of my order's priests and its Engel, on the other hand, are truly masters of the written word, so my work will certainly find its readers. The knowledge contained herein has to be preserved for those who will come after us – it had to be written down, for oral tradition is much too untrustworthy, too fallible for a proper historian to rely on it.

Don't misunderstand, dear readers – I would never doubt the dangers of the written word. Let those Heretics, first and foremost the one called Helder – a former priest, by God - demand as loud as they like we should turn back the wheels of time and start reading the Mass not in Latin, but the tongue of the common people again and teach them how to read and write… we know it would be no good, that it would only lead to libels and insulting pamphlets, directed against our Lord God. And what about the accusations we are keeping the masses uneducated on intent – why should a peasant know how to read the Bible? I don't presume to be able to till his soil, do I?

How prudent of you not to tell exactly which forces are at work here…

Now that's what I call modest. What am I then? A Heretic reputed for his deviant views on history? Pompous fool.

The world we live in has not always been like it is today. There were other eras. There was an age without Infernos, without Dreamseed and without the horrors of the Brandland.

There must have been a world without Engel. For tradition teaches us that there were no Engel during the ages before the Great Vitusdance.

But I digress again. One thing after the other, step by step.

of the beginning of all time

Even though this is supposed to be a history of the Third Millennium, I believe in holistic designs, so please allow me to begin my ruminations by reaching back to the beginning of time. In the beginning, the Holy Bible tells us, God created the Heaven and the Earth. The Earth was void, without form. And on this day and the following five, the Almighty Father created the firmament, the water and the land, the stars, the plants and animals, and finally, man. And He gave us mankind's historical task: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the Earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

A nice idea... God has to rectify His creation. And he has to do so almost two and a half millennia after sacrificing His only son to get rid of all the teething troubles His grand Project Earth goes through all at once! Just shows that His creation could not have been too perfect right from the start.

This seems to contradict a lot of biblical texts – I have studied the sources as well, my dear Wenzel. I would like to remind you how Jacob wrestled the angel, of the angel with the flaming sword who stood guard at the gates of Eden – without doubt your revered Gabriel – and don't forget the gentle, winged youth who visited Maria, the Blessed Virgin, to announce Christ's birth. Where those the forefathers of the Engel? Or a completely different breed? Wenzel are you hiding something?

I sincerely hope all my readers know of Cain and how he murdered Abel. For his crime, the Lord banished Cain from the society of man. Cain turned away from the face of the Lord and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden. The Lord's Engel, the archangels themselves, followed him to offer him the opportunity to make his peace with the Lord, but he disregarded all their offers. Alone and lonely, Cain wandered the barren lands on his own for a while. According to the apocrypha of the Holy Bible, he encountered Lilith, his father Adam's first wife from Hebraic folklore. She alone of all mankind stood by his side, and he took shelter with her. At that time, the archangels Uriel, Raphael and Michael are said to have approached Cain. Each of the archangels told Cain, his exile would come to an end at once, if he only begged the Lord for forgiveness. The first murderer refused to do so three times, and in the end his curse led him deeper and deeper into solitude.

of the first city of man

Cain took a wife in the land of Nod, and she bare him Henoch, his son. Cain built a city and named it after his son Henoch. According to the

Well, here is something we all know from the heart. But we don't want to pass over in silence, my dear Wenzel, that there are others who claim the truth to be very different and whose theories strike even me as heretical.

Let us contemplate their views for a moment free of prejudices, fear or horror, however. They wonder what this earth we all live on really is – this is their initial, innocent premise. A planet, you as an educated Ramielite, will surely answer. You are certainly right, but it is also so much more. An ancient globe of rock and gas and water and magma, drifting lonely in lifeless space at the corners of creation. And what if these "true Heretics" were proven right and it would not have been created for the sake of mankind, Wenzel, not even created for anything that lives? What if someone – or something (whom we would both call God since we lack a better term to describe Him) has created the earth due to a sole reason, to use it as a prison? As the most secure, most perfect, most remote prison in the entire universe?

And in this prison, our Heretics continue, he was trapped in eons ago, the Tempter, the Adversary, Satan – the Lord of the Flies. Incarcerated beneath the surface, deep down in the core of fire, on a bed of molten stone, lies the Devil and he sleeps – dreaming his dream of returning to the world, dreaming endlessly of his own resurrection – and as other instances have shown, resurrection is not an impossibility.

At some point in time long forgotten, man evolved – I agree, Wenzel. I would even agree that God created man. But once again: Just think about what it could mean if these radical, heretic factions are actually right when they say that mankind isn't the lord of creation but nothing more than a parasite, unintentionally born in and out of itself, a sponger, a living, thinking, loving, destructive mold. According to the Heretics, its presence weakens the prison, eats away at its structure. The parasite is like rust, restlessly dissolving the bars, like dampness, making the walls frail and brittle. Cracks spread throughout the dungeon, imperceptible, invisible – but the cracks are there nevertheless, and you can surely imagine what is going to ooze out through them.

most ancient sources in the apocrypha, the first city was a place of wonder. In truth, it must have been rather unimpressive – probably a primitive settlement of mud-huts and a wall to protect the inhabitants - but this prospect was the first time in years that Caine encountered others like him. After the city had been completed, its inhabitants made Cain their king, and all seemed well and good. His son Henoch became the father of all of those who live in tents close to their cattle and of all of those who play the zither and the shawn.

Despite ill omens that said his children would eventually murder each other just like he had murdered his own brother, Cain insisted on siring two more children – oral tradition named them Zillah and Irad. And again, the archangel Uriel appeared and cursed Cain for having sired children although it had been forbidden to him.

Meanwhile, Eve bare Adam a third son. She called him Seth. And mankind brought to bear its legacy which our Lord God had granted them, for Cain's three children and the children of his nephew Seth wanted children of their own…

Millennia – some say even millions of years – passed, and man subdued the earth in a manner more extensive than the biblical prophets and scholars would have dreamed of, until the world was almost overpopulated. Hunters and gatherers had become peasants and cattle-breeders, and soon towers reached up so high as if they would long to smother the light of the stars.

In the first great Flood Noah escaped from in his ark many men perished. When the waters finally receded, however, something happened, nobody could have anticipated: A gigantic rainbow shone in the skies.

the new cities

And God said unto the remaining men:

"I do set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth.

"And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant which *is* between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh." The people realized then and there that the Flood had been a punishment sent by God for they had become wicked, and so they swore to never again be led into temptation. Noah lived on after the Flood and died at a very old age.

The city of Henoch perished in the Flood, but soon other cities took its place. Noah's sons sired new sons after the Deluge, and they went and became the forefathers of all the people on earth. And our Lord God called the angels back to heaven, for His work was done, and so was theirs. Only rarely they were seen on earth after the Flood. They protected the chosen of the Lord, they guided the prophets on their stony paths and they proclaimed His judgments. Without doubt, Jacob wrestled the angel and spoke to him in the defiant manner of man: "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

And surely an angel came to Maria, the Blessed Virgin, to announce the birth of the greatest prophet of them all. But these were exceptional cases, not the rule; to behold our Engel, to keep good company with them and to live among them such as we are allowed to do, was unthinkable for thousands of years. The creator of the firmament and all things beneath it had entrusted the world to His mortal children. The One Above had put His trust in man, and so His messengers walked among man only in the rarest of cases.

the time before

And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

– Revelation 13: 16 – 18

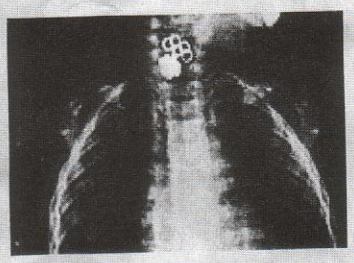
Most of what we know about the time before the first Vitusdance comes from fragments of old printings, and most of them are of a fictional nature – unfortunately, it is often impossible to discern whether a given text is fiction or not. Many less educated brothers fail to understand the grave importance of distinguishing between texts of a fictional nature and those of a scientific nature. Therefore, fictional texts have been wrongly regarded as truth even in the libraries of my order.

Certainly, our Lord God has tumbled the Tower of Babel and has confounded the language of man, but the creatures He loved the most didn't learn their lesson. They trampled His commandments underfoot in their folly, and their lordship over creation our omniscient Father in Heaven had entrusted them with soon failed to come close to the wise counsel of a King Solomon, resembling more and more the draconian stranglehold of the priests of Baal. Our omniscient Father in Heaven saw their ungodliness and their wantonness, their haughtiness and their harlotry, and He saw how entire generations sacrificed their devoutness on the shining, luring altars of mortal sin. And our Lord God remembered the words He had spoken unto Noah and his wife and their sons while they had been building the ark: "This is the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you; the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh; this covenant I make for perpetual generations."

Undoubtedly, technology triggered the Lord's wrath, for not all catastrophes which have destroyed the world as it once was could be recognized as such when they first manifested. A lot of things must have come to pass, before the world was ravaged. Perhaps there have been some events which announced the Lord's wrath, and the people living in the time of the First Vitusdance were unable to make sense of these signs. I present to you one of these signs that I found in a salvaged archive of an old university:

What about the first book of Moses where it is written in chapter 6, verse 4: "There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown"?

I'm sure you can explain this to me, Wenzel – because I was always of the opinion that Engel are neuter. Does this mean that they aren't pure creatures, free of longing and the flaw of lust? You and your brethren must have your reasons for keeping the Holy Bible under lock and key.



PICTURE OF THE WEEK

The aesthetics of digital man: Implanted memory chips don't have to be repulsive.

It's inevitable for all of us: All the PIN-code-bearing plastic cards we carry around in our wallets are going to find its way beneath our skin. A new age of practicability dawns, when you pass an ATM and the machine can tell who you are and what you want at once. You won't have to be afraid of forgetting your PIN or getting your credit card shredded because you typed in a wrong digit. Even your passport doesn't have to be checked at the airport anymore. All more or less important information – sex, nationality, color of skin, sexual preferences, bank accounts – will be simply stored on a chip beneath your skin which will bring order to the chaos of your daily life.

The idea of a credit card inside of oneself is not what you might call cozy, of course. Microchips carry as much erotic impact as a ruptured condom. Furthermore, Joe Public is sure to react with some heavy resistance at first – just like he always does when confronted with revolutionary inventions. Motto: No hardtech garbage beneath my soft skin!

A notion anyone can understand. That's why scientists already run preliminary tests and are busy developing strategies to win the normal citizen who fears for his physical integrity over to their ambitious plans. Addressing the last remnants of an aesthetic sense for individuality, the first prototypes manufacture

For more than ten years, the printing tells us, banks and financial institutes – those usurers and moneychangers the Prophet of Nazareth cast out of his temple to prevent it from turning into a den of thieves – had been looking for ways to prevent credit frauds and manipulations. To them, those "implanted memory chips" – praise the Lord that He made us forget all about them – must have been a groundbreaking, memorable success. And they couldn't care less that they literally crept beneath the skin of the unsuspecting masses, thereby intervening in God's Creation.

So God in His wrath sought to punish mankind, but He felt honor-bound to the promise He had given to Noah. Then He remembered the words His son had spoken in his name: "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, He shall not enter therein." And He truly exempted the children from His judgment.

the first seal:

the great vitusdance

And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

– Revelation 14: 14 - 15

Only the children were spared, when our Lord God brought about His great judgment. And it didn't come unexpected: The Venerable Bede, one of the great early prophets, reckoned out as early as the 8th century that Jesus – the Nazarene prophet who was a religious figure of utmost importance in the Time Before – was born 3942 years after the world had been created. According to Bede, the six thousand year long Great Week – the lifetime of our world, the duration of which had been revealed at Christ's birth - would end exactly in the year 2076. Well, he has been 20 years out in his calculations, but who might blame him for that regarding these vast stretches of time?

In any case, it came to pass like it is written in the John's Revelation: Billions died like flies – and I choose this term for a reason – when the Great Vitusdance came crashing down on the world on the 11th day of Januarii, Anno Domini 2093, without any warning. A virus as yet unidentified befell anyone who had achieved physical maturity and passed through the gates of adulthood.

The virus killed its victims within seconds after infection, but these few seconds the victims spent in gruesome convulsions, resembling a grotesque dance – which explains the name of the plague. The disease left mountains of corpses in its wake, the faces of the deceased distorted into a bizarre grin.

If I'm not mistaken, this Bede was one of the favorite prophets of the Jehovah's Witnesses who were seen as religious muddle-heads in the Time Before. The old saying comes to mind, Wenzel: "Birds of a feather flock together..."

The town of Ingolstadt, the scene of the initial outbreak, was depopulated within mere hours. The virus showed curious reactions: it settled down in any porous surfaces without losing its virulence. A few days later, there were no adults left in all of Germany. Scientists in their laboratories desperately tried to come up with a cure or prevention, until they fell dead at their worktables, for anyone who was contaminated perished within seconds.

With flying machines the people of the Time Before had constructed in their hubris, authorities strove to whisk away infected persons to remote sanitariums and infirmaries in the hopes to find better cures and new therapy methods there. But the flying machines with their virulent load fell from the skies and crashed down on earth, further spreading the disease, rather than helping to stop it. In the end, only the children survived, and on their slim shoulders rested the responsibility of creating a new world.

During the next few days, winds carried the contagion all over Europe. First, it reached France, and at the end of January, 81% of the French population had been killed. Millions of Frenchmen fled the tainted regions, becoming the victims of mass executions in the neighboring countries, the governments of which attempted to uphold a strict quarantine.

The world died neither silently nor suddenly. All the achievements of the first half of the millennium we know from myths and legends were lost: the machines that could think for themselves, the flying apparatuses mentioned above, the horseless carriages, the trails of wagons which went guided by rails from one city to another regularly. Their use, their function, their manufacture and their maintenance sunk into oblivion, and mankind tumbled inevitably towards a new Dark Age. The damage done in villages, towns and cities all over the world was immeasurably high.

The Great Vitusdance died out as suddenly as it had erupted. It raged for a mere four months, until May of 2093. The horrors hadn't come to an end, though.

the second seal: war

And I saw the beast, and the kings of the Earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

– Revelation 19: 19

This was the end of the world, the beginning of the end, and it turned out to be subtler and more vicious than even the most fervent believer in apocalyptic scenarios could have imagined. Catastrophe followed catastrophe. The total breakdown all over the world entailed that nations struggled over scraps from the Lord's table. Political and religious differences lead to burning hatred and wars, wars in which abhorrent weapons were used we have entirely forgotten about. Mushroom

clouds stole the sun from the sky. On June the 3rd, 2093, a war erupted that almost turned into World War Three. Falsely suspecting the events in Europe, which inevitably spread to other continents, to be the results of secret tests of so-called biological weapons gone hideously wrong, several nations attacked the suspected culprit, Saudi Arabia. In their delusion, they didn't see the Lord's hand behind the Great Vitusdance. They assaulted Saudi Arabia successfully, and a damnable Muslim theocracy not unlike that of the Iran was put into power there.

During their preemptive strike, the aggressors captured some of the mass destruction weapons which were one of the hallmarks of the Time Before. Therefore, America declared war on the main members of this alliance – forgotten realms with exotic sounding names like Jordan, Iraq, Iran and Syria – after their president convinced the American Congress of his course of action with a captivating speech.

America's first aggressive action was the bombardment of its former military bases in Saudi Arabia from so-called nuclear submarines, enigmatic vessels capable of traveling under the sea, carrying weapons of incredible destructive power. With this strike, America planned to eliminate the threat posed by the very same weapons the enemy had captured beforehand. The attack was successful and large parts of Saudi Arabia and the Middle East were razed to the ground.

The war ended on June the 6th, after claiming nearly 200 million lives. Syria, Iraq and Jordan had literally been swept from the face of the earth, Iran's fighting spirit broken. The alliance surrendered without conditions and refused offers of help from other nations which suffered from the nuclear strike's repercussions, countries like Turkey, Cyprus, Pakistan and India.

A week later, the American president was ousted from office for his premature employ of nuclear weapons. Two days later, he committed suicide. The end of days had suddenly come all too close. Of course, not all of the plagues John had prophesied came to pass, while others came in the wrong order. Probably, the wise monks – the ancestors of my own brothers – had rewritten the revelation during the Middle Ages of the Time Before to spice things up, thereby unwittingly making John's work less of a warning than he had it initially intended to be. Still, whoever took a look outside during those days, saw only untilled fields,

swollen corpses and rivers of blood. *Ipso tempore*, the continents lost contact with each other. Whoever had claimed in the beginning these events didn't herald the end of the world, was long dead since.

Some children did their very best to face up to the devastating decline. They tried to employ the technology they couldn't understand in improvisational manners, attempting to explain and eventually master it. Some were successful, others brought about even more disasters. Most survivors simply withdrew into lethargy, lying down in their beds, waiting – for better days or for death. Yes, some of the children truly opposed the impending doom. They never had a fair chance of succeeding.

the third seal: famine

And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

– Revelation 6: 5 – 6

There was no one left to till the soil in an appropriate manner nor manufacturers producing food. Within only a few months, agriculture and meat-producing industries all over Europe came to a grinding halt.

When food became scarce, civil wars for food erupted, claiming thousands of victims. In some cities, the oldest surviving youths formed so-called "civil councils", protected the supplies at hand with hastily improvised "city guards" and designed plans for rationing food. Whoever got caught stealing others' rations, was summarily executed. My hometown of Prague, for example, knew such a rationing plan according to which every citizen was handed out 125 grams of meat, two slices of bread, 125 milliliters of milk or 125 grams of cheese and 100 grams of fruit or vegetables per week. The remaining supplies left over after the preceding catastrophes lasted a mere three weeks.

Moreover, Europe was forced to endure acid rain and radioactive fallout from the war. And, as if that wouldn't have been bad enough, the largest swarm of locusts in the history of mankind descended upon Iberia, devouring the isle's crops and cattle.

It took less than a month before the first Iberian Junklords announced that cannibalism would no longer be regarded as a crime. In England, where the situation was comparably horrible, people undertook literal raids for meat on Ireland. The Republic of Ireland declared war on Great Britain, but there was no one left who would have been able to raise a proper campaign.

I wonder how to reconcile this with the promise of your oh so almighty God according to which He would never again send a devastating flood – did He simply forget about it? Is He growing old or senile? Or is His omnipotence so absolute that He isn't bound to His own word? What a benevolent patriarch you and your Angelites bow down to, Wenzel...

the fourth seal: infernos

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

– Revelation 9: 1 – 3

Soon, people realized that the ocean levels were rising and they noticed strange lights illuminating the northern and southern skies. It was said that these lights were Infernos, cleansing pillars of fire our Lord God had sent upon the earth to burn out the ulcers of inner taint within His people, if necessary even to the bone, to make possible a new beginning for His dwindling flock of true believers.

The Infernos rose up from beneath the poles, melting the vast ice masses of the Arctic and the Antarctic before setting out on their unpredictable way across the face of the earth. They were first noticed in early April 2094. Initially, they towered over the landscape without moving, and the few remaining European survivors dubbed them Beacons. When they eventually began their seemingly unstoppable advance, the terrified people started to speak of Infernos.

They came from beneath the ground, and many people claimed our Lord God had sent the fires just like He had sent the plagues to Egyptland in biblical times. The wickedness of the Time Before must have been truly all-encompassing, for the Lord to take such measures to purify His people. The pillars of fire advanced ever so slowly but unstoppably over the sea towards our continents, reached the coasts and kept on burning. And where they touched the land, only an endless corridor of smoke remained, a corridor which we today call Brandland. Their walls of ashes reach up to the everlasting clouds in the firmament, never to fade or be scattered by the winds.

I am not sure, but I can guess that there has to be some connection between the Infernos and the Flood that swept over Europe long before the pillars of fire arrived on the mainland. Who can imagine what fire and ice of such proportions caused when they first clashed in the Arctic wastes?

Anyway, within days the sea had devoured the coastline. In December 2094, the first massive floods hit Europe; the Netherlands, northern Germany and northern France were lost. Again, millions died. The flood crashed down on the lower regions of the continent, literally washing away everything, destroying the greatest achievements of occidental culture in mere hours.

On April the 4th, 2095, the flood wave reached Paris. The Eiffel Tower toppled, and at the same time the architectural marvels of Greece and Italy

sunk beneath the waves for all time to come. And the people suffered a similar fate. The few survivors, all of them children and youths, receded to the highest mountains and the highest remaining buildings of the old world.

According to my estimates regarding a comparison of numbers between our time and the time before the First Vitusdance, today only 10 % of the former population are scattered over Europe – it almost seems as if our Lord God wanted to decimate us like He decimated the people of Moab. And His wrath had not abided yet: Just when the waters stopped rising, when the first sighs of relief could be heard all throughout the land, when the first of the survivors planned to begin with reconstruction work, the Vitusdance returned in a second wave in April 2124, killing virtually all of those old enough to be afflicted by it. And it happened again 38 years later during the Third Vitusdance in November 2162; only then the plague had run its course – and almost no adults were left in ravaged Europe. And there are more than a few prophets in our days who warn of an imminent return of that great plague known to us as the Vitusdance.

And yet, there was hope for those who suffered: In 2163 the Angelitic Church was founded in the mountains of central Italy. Two years later, in 2165, the fathers of the church – if this term is appropriate for those small children and youths who were the hope of an entire world at that time – agreed upon the Exodus; some of them set out from the first monastery in *Roma Æterna* to find suitable bastions of faith and to spread the gospel. Three years after the foundation of the church, its missionaries were active all over Europe. In the following years – from 2166 to 2177 – other monasteries were founded which would many years later become Himmel, gigantic castles on the highest places in the land which spires are said to pierce the cloud cover so that you can even see the sun when standing on the Himmel's highest towers. The faithful started to work on them with fervent zeal, to reach up to the skies to praise our Lord. After their completion, the first seminaries and monasteries outside of the Himmel were built at once.

Not all the people of Europe were of benevolent intentions, though, and in many places the missionaries of the Angelitic Church met with resistance and wickedness of various sorts. Again and again, missionaries were slain, and so in 2191, the Angelites set the Army of Templars on its feet to protect its missionaries and Europe as a whole. Ten years later, the Army of Templars as we still know it today had been formed, and the champions of the Lord set out for the first time to expurgate forbidden lore and make an end to the use of the tainted technology which had brought about the Vitusdance. Again, not all the lambs in the land showed prudence, and especially the independent Junklords, men and women who had risen to power in the industrial wastelands of former cities of the Time Before opposed the Army of Templars. From 2203 on, the Templars had to fight countless battles with the marauding and murdering hordes of the citybarons, a conflict later called the Diadoche Wars.

of the sending of the Engel

Scant years later, Anno Domini 2206, our Lord God sent His saving Engel, and their intervention decided the outcome of the Diadoche Wars. They are of radiant beauty, sporting gleaming-white wings and clad in the glory of His might. They are of slender built, almost fragile, and yet full of unrivalled power. Webs of lines most delicate cover their entire bodies as far as they are exposed to a beholder's sight, and it is said that during their birth – or creation? – the Lord Himself dips His finger into the ink with which He wrote the first WORD in the sky, inscribing their destiny on their skin and their souls in infinite filigree.

Faith alone makes men happy...

These Engel, honored readers, are His messengers, the Heavenly Host, His strong arm. They spread His word; they are the keepers of His most unfathomable secrets. They bring happiness and hope. They possess amazing powers they exclusively use for our good. The Lord bestowed upon them a mastery over heaven and earth that almost rivals His own. Wherever they tread, the earth is made whole and becomes the home of man again, just like it was given to us for safekeeping from the beginning of all time.

That sounds nice... Did you really never wonder where these demigods, these child-heroes came from all of a sudden, dear Wenzel? Or do you and you well-educated brethren avoid the question because you don't want to know the answer?

Ever since the Lord's Engel have been sent to us, they carry the hopes of all men on their wings, and their numbers are ever-growing! And it seems as if some of them are blessed with truly immeasurable power, especially the noble archangels who reside over the Himmel and whose face is of such a terrible beauty we mortals can not bear to behold it.

The Engel are our beacon of hope in an age full of questions and bereft of answers. What am I? Why am I here? What fate has He laid out for me? And are we allowed to wallow in foolish pride, believing it were our prayers, our fervent supplication from the depths of our longing that made the One Above send His Heavenly Host down to earth at last? In my humble opinion, our Lord God is more than a timeless, distant entity impossible to experience for mere mortals. I am convinced He is always waiting for sincere prayers He can answer. And the Engel, dear readers, were the best possible answer He could give, for they have brought us hope when all hope seemed lost forever.

And there it is. That's an interesting view – but wholly inappropriate for someone who intends to write down a scientifically sound history of mankind. This inferior work isn't worth the parchment the old man from Prague wastes on it.

Many a brother has lost his faith because he could not find an answer to a question which admittedly is very difficult to answer: Where were the Engel during all those millennia? Did they wait in the voids of deep space for our time of direst need? Did they live among us, unseen and unrecognizable to us? To me, all these musings seem superfluous, I simply don't care – they came, and they brought new hope to His people who wandered in darkness.

... And thus the Lord said unto Michael who was the most beautiful and pleasing of all His Engel://
"You shall be the most radiant and brightest among the Engel//
And the like of you shall follow your way and your words//
For you are like Me, born of purity and light"//
And He took him by the hand and led him to the holy halls//
Where the other Engel waited for all time to come, and He led him to Gabriel.//
"Sweet Gabriel," He said, "guardian and keeper of the gates of Eden,//
I will take from you half of your immortal soul//
To give you a companion to fight all evil."//
And He took half of Gabriel's immortal soul and gave him a companion who was his equal.//
"Samael," He said, "strong Samael.//
You shall be a brother at arms to Gabriel to fight all evil and you shall stand to his right at the gates of Eden.//
And you shall be his equal, terrible and beautiful, cruel and gentle."//
And the Lord turned to Gabriel again and said unto him: "Gabriel, terrible Gabriel,//
Now that your immortal soul has been cut in half I will comfort you and give to you a small branch from the burning tree of cleansing,//
To ease your loss. It shall light your way,//
And you shall battle darkness with it."//
Then the Lord said unto Uriel: "Uriel, swift Uriel,//
I have chosen you as my messenger.//
Spread my word and speak in my name and carry the gospel beyond the borders of Heaven to each and every man, to each and every living thing, to praise and please me."//
Then the Lord said unto Sariel: "Sariel, pleasing Sariel,//
You are chosen to raise your voice to praise me.//
For your voice is the purest of all, and no other voice shall sound within these halls."//
And Sariel answered Him://
"O Lord, how can I stay in heaven and raise my voice to praise you,//
When the likes of me have wings to soar over distant fields?//
I beseech you to take this burden off my shoulders,//
So I will not succumb to temptation and disregard your bidding."//
And the Lord answered him: "Sariel, unselfish Sariel,//
I shall act in compliance with your wish and free you from your burden.//
You shall not give up claim to journey to distant fields, however,//
For your voice shall be louder and more beautiful than ever,//
So it shall reach the most distant fields,//
And your voice shall give comfort and strength to the likes of you forevermore."//
And lo, freed from his burden, the voice of Sariel sounded louder and more beautiful than it had before, reaching far beyond the horizons,//
And all the Engel within the halls, and all the souls in Heaven, and all the souls on Earth, hearkened to his voice, and it was good.//
And the Lord said unto Raphael: "Raphael, gentle Raphael,//
Your hands are the softest and fittest of all hands.//
I send you out into the world to cure my children from the seed of doubt and the wounds of dissension."
And the Lord said unto Jeremiel (= Ramiel – translator's note): "Jeremiel, wise Jeremiel,//
You are the wisest and most diligent of all my Engel.//
So I charge you with gathering and keeping all the knowledge there is in Heaven and all the knowledge there is on Earth."//
And He plucked a leaf from the tree of knowledge and put it in Jeremiel's mouth and said unto him://
"Take this leaf and guard it well, so the spark of illumination might reside within you."//
And the Lord said unto Raguel: "Raguel, (...) (the rest of the text here has unfortunately been mangled to the point of illegibility by culprits unknown – translator's note)
When He had spoken, he marked His Engel, so they would be recognized in the world,//
And He sent them out to do His bidding.//
And the Lord created eight orders, each with its own task//
In His ways full of mercy and wisdom He granted each of His Engel powers of his own, and yet made each of them fallible in his own way//
To keep His chosen from succumbing to the sin of pride.//
He chose the Raguelites as keepers of the past,//
And they inherited all technology from the times before the Great Plague (a reference the Vitusdance in my opinion – translator's note).//
Into the Gabrielites' hands were given the flaming swords//
Gabriel had guarded the first garden with,//
To turn them into champions for the cause of the Lord.//
From the hands and souls of the Raphaelites,//
The gentlest of the Engel,//
Should grow alleviation to mankind's suffering.//
The Urielites found ways where there were no ways before, and they set foot//
Where others feared to tread.//
The Sarielites raised their voices//
To praise the Lord, our almighty Father.//
The Ramielites, successors of Jeremiel, the Engel who knows God's thoughts,//
Were charged with keeping the knowledge of the ages,//
The secrets of the multitude of tongues,//
And the mysteries of the written word.//
Like the Gabrielites, the Samaelites were chosen to be unrelenting champions of the Lord,//
Commanders of the Heavenly Host and terrible in their wrath.//
The One Above loved the Michaelites the most//
For He made them in His image, for Michael means://
"He who is like God"//
And they were chosen//
To lead the other Engel//
For they were graced by our Lord God//
With the knowledge//
Of His ways.
– from the *Genesis Secunda* by Fra Juda

Why is that? Speculations of any kind are welcome.

The Citadels of the Engel were built and the eight orders formed – Michaelites, Gabrielites, Raphaelites, Ramielites, Urielites, Sarielites, Samaelites and Raguelites. I enclose a fragmentary text, which was found in Italia we call the *Genesis Secunda* in lack of a more accurate nomenclature. It is attributed to an obscure itinerant monk from the Apennine Mountains who lived, preached and wrote during the 22nd century and who had chosen the monastic name of Fra Juda for himself.

Be it as it may, from then on the Lord's Engel walked among us, and it was good – at least that was what most of the Europeans felt. An exception to that rule were the inhabitants of the British isles: In 2210, Britain declared the New Splendid Isolation (NSI), therewith isolating itself from the mainland and prohibiting the Engel and all representatives of the Angelitic Church to set foot on its soil. Due to massive pressure from the rest of Europe London – a seaport ever since the Great flood – was turned into a free port in 2215.

In 2221, Lisbon attempted to follow the example London had set. The fire of the Lord rained down from the sky and razed the island to its foundations. Jorge, the Baron of Madrid who had shown some sympathy for his Portuguese colleague and paid the latter a visit during that time, barely escaped the avenging judgment of the Lord.

In 2237, the construction of the Himmel was finished; the organization of tasks within the Citadels had then settled into the structure we still find within their walls today, as had the overall structure of the Angelitic Church. More missionaries and preachers than ever before roamed the land, and again the Army of Templars – strengthened by the Engel's support – tirelessly began to search for forbidden knowledge, especially for heretical books which were obliterated in the cleansing fire of truth by the thousands. The Templars were also looking for satanic remnants of technology that suffered the same fate or were brought to the Himmel – especially the Raguelites' castle – for safekeeping.

This old earth was bleeding from countless wounds, was bruised and scarred almost beyond recognition – there was ample work to do for the shining champions of the Lord.

dreamseed

And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondsman, and every free men, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the lamb:

– Revelation 6: 14 – 16

The most urgent of these tasks was a new menace which already lurked beyond the horizon during the Sending of the Engel. The Infernos started to move, advanced from the North, from the sea towards Europe, and from the Brandland their unstoppable, triumphant progress left behind in its wake the Dreamseed rose. In October 2455 the first Inferno appeared off the coast of Iceland. First accounts of this abominable servant race of the Tempter, Satan, the Adversary, the Lord of the Flies, however, date from Februarii the 28th, 2420. The Dreamseed was born of the Brandland's acid fumes and caustic vapors and descended upon the good people of Europe. To prevent this threat from spreading further and further has been the most prominent task of the Heavenly Host ever since, even today.

The times we live in are dangerous and troublesome indeed, especially for the pious. Even though our redemption has begun to spread its white wings over our unworthy heads, we already have one leg in the mouth of Hell. Allow me a caveat addressing my honored readers: Don't delude yourself into believing the Dreamseed is merely of a metaphorical nature, comparable to the bogeyman we scare our children with or the monster under the bed we know from childish fever dreams. Nothing could be more wrong – the greatest menace mankind has ever had to face lurks everywhere, waiting to corrupt the souls of the faithful.

What is the Dreamseed then? I have to admit, dear readers, that I haven't left my order's Himmel for many years, so I have to rely on second-hand accounts to answer this question. These accounts are based mainly on rumors as well, but as far as anyone can tell from hearsay, the Dreamseed are insectoid creatures of many sizes and shapes, from tiny representatives of their kind as puny as common blowflies to gargantuan spawn resembling dragonflies of the size of the legendary airships from the Time Before. One of my order's young brothers in faith, Fra Domenico, is currently traveling all over Europe to gather reliable information on the Dreamseed; if he should return in time to hand in a report regarding his travels, I will add an adequate post-scriptum to my *Historia.*

the fifth seal:

the great crusade

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held;

And they cried with a loud voice, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

– Revelation 6: 9 – 10

As early as 2470 the orders of Engel joined forces to face up to the threat the minions of the Lord of the Flies posed. In 2493 Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus proclaimed the Great Crusade on the Dreamseed, a call to battle many Engel followed. Millions died in this war, not only during the actual fighting, but many were killed in uprisings and the general disorder the Lord of the Flies brings to the world. For he is more than a tactician brilliant in his malice who knows how to employ his troops to cause maximum damage in the ranks of the Heavenly Host. No, he also is an insinuator, a demagogue, a tempter and a corruptor who knows how to look into the souls of men to corrupt them, making them flock to his banner entirely convinced of the absurd notion the Adversary could make their hearts' wishes come true.

One of the most disastrous events during this holy war was the Dreamseed's raid on Corsica, once

Religious poetry and a false account of history, nothing more. A few prophetic lines here, a little bit of gospel there, mixed with a few elements to stir apocalyptic hysteria, thickened with a few highly disobliging revelations... that has been the recipe since the dawn of mankind. By the way, "Fra Juda"... how pretentious and presumptuous a name can get? But that's something you cowl-wearers are really fond of, aren't you?

called the Isle of Beauty. The monsters could barely be driven back from this Angelitic bastion in the Adriatic Sea where the lost order of the Samaelites had built his Himmel in the impregnable capital of the island, Corte. The spawn of the Lord of the Flies literally stood before heaven's gate and only the unselfish sacrifice of the Ab of that time prevented the Dreamseed from razing the island to the ground. The entire order including its Himmel perished while repelling the Dreamseed.

The Crusade's end was officially declared on Decembrii the 1st, 2595, after all the Dreamseed had returned to the smoke of the Brandland virtually over night. The months of December, January and February were a long, collective sigh of relief, a time of extensive festivities, even though not all of the old problems had been solved.

Was there any reason to cheer? Quite possibly not – the majority of our world's treasures were spent, the purses empty, since too much money had gone into the orders' treasuries, the fields had been ravaged by the Dreamseed's locust swarms or had been burned in the Infernos' wake. In 2603, a revolt of a cult called the Morlocks grew into the so-called Heretics War the Angelitic Church weathered without any heavy losses, even though the war itself had its own repercussions – but I will return to this topic later. Diseases spread out of control and killed countless people all over Europe despite the Raphaelites' concerted efforts. At the end of July 2603, though, archangel Raphael himself could report proudly to the Pontifex Maximus that the most virulent of diseases had been successfully wiped out.

the sixth seal: the return of the dreamseed

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondsman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the lamb:

For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

– Revelation, 6: 12 – 17

The decade of defiant hope before the turn of the century – generally called the Decade of Reconstruction – proved to be short and treacherous. For even in the first decade of our century those anxious prophets who had predicted the spawn's return from the Brandland were proven right. Exactly a decade after their retreat, on December the 1st 2605, the Dreamseed reappeared with renewed might. And it came to show that the power of the Lord of the Flies had played its part, for the Dreamseed had changed into hellish, demonic shapes even more grotesque than before, had been granted unholy powers even more monstrous than could have been imagined. And their pestilential stench had become even more offensive than during the time of the Great Crusade.

The Dreamseed had changed, grown more powerful and more threatening, and I can only pray that the Engel will stand steadfastly in its way. Some of the Dreamseed's creatures still resemble humans in size and shape, whereas others seem to spring directly from our own nightmares and others still are temptation incarnate, the likes of which the Holy Anthony of Padua must have suffered. There seems to no doubt, however, that these creatures are imbued of a deeply seated cruelty, of a lust for killing and torturing, but also of an unexplainable curiosity in regards to the status quo of our miserly world. Without the Engel, we wouldn't even know about this abominable spawn's appearance, for our Lord God in His infinite mercy and wisdom has granted them alone with the courage to oppose the seed of the Lord of the Flies.

And yet we know far too few things about these creatures – where do they come from? Where do they live? What motives determine their actions which so often appear to us as mysterious as the ways of the Lord Himself, as if we were looking at His ways in a darkened mirror?

I tell you, their powers are truly frightening. I have seen Engel whose wings were burned away by the fire some of these creatures breathe, so that the poor champions of the Lord begged for nothing more than a swift death. The Raphaelites brought others to our infirmary, their faces molten like the tallow candles on the altar of the chapel in our graveyard because they had encountered acid-spitting, flying specimen of the Dreamseed.

And I heard of one of the Gargantuans, the flying, gigantic specimen, which had been slain by a fearless squad of Gabrielites with their long lances. When it was smashed to pieces on the crags of the Pyrenean Mountains, however, its body burst open and dozens of human-sized young crawled from its womb. Only one of the Gabrielites survived to warn the world of this new menace. These examples so humbly illustrated should be enough for my kind readers to realize

That's how we know and love him: God, the unyielding, avenging paragon of a punishing father figure. The mindless killer of innocent children. If all your chronicles are of such superficiality, dear Wenzel, you should feel very, very ashamed; even my diary is more accurate and of greater depth.

how challenging it is to defeat these creatures.

And still, the deep, unshakable faith permeating the orders, the unerring conviction to be God's last bastion He in His infinite mercy has chosen to protect His people from the fires of hell lends so much power to the orders in their entirety – not only the Engel, but also the Monachs and Begines, the Templars and servants living in the monasteries – that they will without doubt prevent the destiny of the whole world from being determined by a horde of demons. Our Lord God in His grace granted them the capabilities to protect mankind from the devastations of the Dreamseed and to thwart the malicious plans of the Lord of the Flies. To all champions of the Almighty who might ever read these lines: Never forget that you are the last line of defense preventing the world from ultimately being ruled by the forces of evil. Act accordingly, for the faith of mankind and the authority of the Lord rest upon your shoulders.

In our life every wrong step could be our last, but every courageous, pious deed could be crucial in the war against the Dreamseed and its diabolic master, the Lord of the Flies. More than ever, the Dreamseed threatens our very souls, being mankind's archenemy as well as the Engel's.

Since 2650, the citybarons, who suffered a crushing blow during the Diadoche Wars, have been regaining their strength. It is rumored that they have started to forge alliances to battle the Angelitic Church.

Moreover, a Himmel was lost to the Infernos in the meantime. On February the 1st, 2642, one of the Infernos approaching from the North suddenly swayed from its predicted path and ate its way towards the Raguelite Himmel in Trondheim. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah must have been a similarly horrible sight, if I may dare to make such a comparison. As I have already mentioned above in the paragraph on the origins of the Infernos, I can explain this occurrence only by suspecting that the entire Raguelite Order – but especially its upper echelon – must have been thoroughly corrupted by the Lord of the Flies. And our Lord God beheld their wickedness and put it to an end.

The golden age the arrival of the Engel had ushered in was almost smothered by the ashes and the rubble of the Raguelite Himmel, and the losses for the Angelitic Church in terms of troops – winged as well as mortal – and knowledge were immense indeed.

the second crusade

The orders of Engel have followed another call to battle from Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus in 2649, joining forces for a second crusade. They have our complete confidence.

"His creatures"? The Lord of the Flies as a creator, as a God of his own right? You take me by surprise, Wenzel... and you are the one to call me a Heretic?

They are armed and ready to take on anything that might threaten us. Right now the weapon-smiths in the Himmel and monasteries are forging the swords, right now the High Engel are blessing the flaming swords of the Gabrielites to wield them in the decisive, final strike against the Lord of the Flies and his creatures.

They are fully aware of the historical importance of their struggle. There is no doubt: Armageddon is nigh or has even begun, and only the Engel are able to tip the scales to save mankind. Such is the status quo after five thousand years of human history.

The time for us has come to heed the words our Lord God spoke in the beginning of all time: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

The Seventh Seal, revered brothers in faith who read this, has not been opened. The Lord grants us a last chance for redemption. Let us pray that our work will keep the Lord's wrath from bursting forth; let us strengthen the Angelitic Church, so that the Seventh Seal may never open.

– From the "*Historia Millennii Tertii*" (History of the Third Millennium) by Wenzel of Prague, Historian of the Ramielite Order, on the first day of the first month in the year of the Lord 2650

- Furnished with notes by Helder, called the Ketzer, eleven days later

Well, go ahead then, Wenzel... I know how to restrain myself. By the way, you Monachs uphold a vow of chastity, don't you?

chronology of Engel

a brief time-table for storytellers

November 1st, 2093	First Great Vitusdance.
May 2093	The first wave of the Vitusdance ends.
January 2094	The Infernos erupt at the poles; they remain stationary (Beacons); the ocean levels start rising immediately afterwards.
December 2094	First massive flood waves in Europe; the Netherlands, Northern Germany and Northern France sink beneath the waves.
April 2124	Second Great Vitusdance.
2153	Fra Juda writes the *Genesis Secunda*.
November 2162	Third Great Vitusdance.
2163	Foundation of the Angelitic Church; the Michaelite Order is founded in *Roma Æterna*.
2165	The Angelitic Church declares the Exodus.
2166	The first missionaries of the Angelitic Church are sent out to spread the Gospel.
2166-2177	The other seven Himmel are founded; remaining buildings from the Time Before are expanded until work on the Himmel is finished.
2177	First seminaries and monasteries outside of the Himmel.
2191	The Army of Templars is founded.
2201	The Army of Templars is ready for battle; first pogroms on books and technology.
2203	War is waged on independent citybarons, the so-called Diadoches (with varying degrees of success).
2206	The first arrival of the Engel brings victory for the Angelitic Church for the time being.
2210	Britain proclaims the NSI (New Splendid Isolation).
2215	London is declared a free port.
2221	Lisbon tries to follow in London's footsteps. The fire of the Lord rains down from the sky and razes the island to the ground. Jorge, Baron of Cordova, moves large parts of his personal treasures out of harm's way.
2226	Antonio Santiago founds the Disciples of the Morningstar.
2237	Work on the Himmel is finished at last; organizational structures have strengthened. Massive campaigns of indoctrination and book-burnings. Monopolization of technology. The Angelitic Church begins to rewrite history extensively.

2420	First reported movement of an Inferno; the Dreamseed appears in droves all over Europe.
October 2455	Inferno off the coast of Iceland.
2493	The Great Crusade on the Dreamseed is proclaimed by Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus.
2543	Apparent destruction of the Samaelite Himmel; the fate of the order remains uncertain.
December 1st, 2595	The Dreamseed recedes into the smoke of the Infernos; the Great Crusade officially ends.
2596	Wenzel of Prague is born.
2596-2605	Decade of Reconstruction.
2603	Uprising of the cult called the Morlocks leads to Heretics War.
December 1st, 2605	Return of the mutated Dreamseed.
June 2610	Battle of Jerusalem. Largest battle ever between Engel and Dreamseed.
2640	Isabella, an heir of Jorge, discovers her ancestor's treasures; citybarons regain their strength: foundation of the Urbanis League and subsequent sharing of knowledge about pre-Flood technologies.
February 1st, 2642	Pandoramicum. Knowledge of the secret of the tattooing ink is lost.
Late 2642	Thariel, one of the few Raguelite survivors, joins the Urbanis League. Sudden increase in power of the Urbanis League.
2649	The Second Crusade is proclaimed.
2650	Wenzel writes the *Historia Millennii Tertii*.
2652	Convocation of the Angelitic European Council by Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus.
2654	Current Year.

intro

The figure crouched at the highest point of the ruin. Its cowering body could barely be seen through the rain, but the folded white wings shone brightly through the gray.

Simael sat next to the other Engel on the rough stone of the old wall.

Mariel had wrapped her arms around her knees, her head resting on them. The delicately built Engel *didn't stir when Simael landed. He continued* staring at the veils of rain down in the valley as if she had not noticed Simael at all.

"What do you see down there?" Simael asked.

Mariel did not answer. The rain soaked the smaller Engel's hair, which clung to her face in thick, brown strands. Small rivulets ran down her pale skin, tracing the lines of the tattoos on her shoulders and trickling away between the tight wrappings of her garment which couldn't conceal the fact that that Mariel had breasts. Only the wings stayed dry, water glistening on the white feathers and falling into the hollow mouth of the tower from the crossed tips.

Simael looked down into the valley again, hoping that Mariel hadn't noticed his inquiring gaze.

"It rains often in my dreams," Mariel said without looking up. "I always hate the rain in my dreams, but the man in them always says that the constant rain is a blessing from heaven we should be thankful for. He has rice fields."

"Is that the village from your dreams down there?"

Mariel shook her head without looking at the other Engel. "I don't know."

"I know that there is a river near the place in my dreams and that the rain always makes it rise over its banks. And when the high-water recedes, it leaves all sorts of driftwood. Once, the boys and I found a dead horseman who had become entangled in a fence on our pasture. The horse was

dead as well. We ran back to the village screaming, and the adults later told us, the dead man must have been a Templar."

"Do you remember these boys well? What are they?" Mariel tilted her head to look at him.

Simael laughed. "Not very clearly. There are only shreds of dream, just like the story I just told you. I don't even know how many boys and girls there were, let alone their names. But I feel connected to them somehow."

"I have a little boy, Birk, in my dreams as well. I can remember him clearly since yesterday. He must be four or five years old as I see him in my dreams." Mariel looked down into the valley again, its bottom obscured by the pouring rain.

"I have dreamed of a day like today. Grimriders appear all of a sudden out of the rain, no one saw them coming. Suddenly, this giant in black armor enters the house I am in and tears me away from Birk. I remember his awful stench, rancid fat and sour sweat. I scream and punch him, but he won't let go. They take me with them. And when we leave the village, we mount a slope just like this one."

Simael nodded. "A year or so ago my fellowship and I tried to protect a village from the Dreamseed. But we were too late. The houses were destroyed, and all the people were either dead or missing. And then I noticed the river, and I knew it had been the village from my dreams."

Mariel shot him a surprised glance, but he smiled at her and looked up to the gray sky.

"One day you'll remember what that village and the little boy mean to you and you will find them if they really exist," he said and put his hands on the wall as if he wanted to push off of it.

"Are you sure?"

Simael nodded. They sat silently in the rain for a few moments, before Mariel put her hand in Simael's.

chapter

And the seventh angel sounded;
and there were great voices in heaven, saying,
the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our lord,
and of his christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

revelation 11: 15

two: urbi et orbi

or, of the face of the world and the worldly powers

If we could take a look at the world of the 27th century from outer space, Earth would still be the "blue planet" – indeed, it would appear even more so than in former times. Large parts of the continents are covered by the oceans which devoured everything that stood in their way when they rose after the melting of the poles. Cities and entire regions are but pale memories in myths, legends and yarns. Nations, institutions, social and economic structures which had been of vital importance to the existence of the human race for centuries are gone. The elements have reshaped the face of the earth. Life has changed fundamentally for the people. One of the most substantial changes is the incisive climatic developments on a global scale and their effects on human life.

climate

Nothing is as it was in Europe – why should the weather be an exception to that rule? Nowhere on the entire continent, the average temperature of the warmest month sinks below 22° Celcius and the average precipitation has quadrupled, with the sole exception of certain Scandinavian regions.

Humidity is very high in the mainland during the day, and people start perspiring heavily after only the smallest physical efforts. The only relief is the ever-present rain falling from the sky regularly in a multitude of varieties – sometimes it's pouring down, sometimes it's only drizzling, sometimes merely a few heavy rain drops splash down. Thick, black clouds travel over the land and obscure the sun. When the cloud cover tears open, the ground starts steaming at once and vapors of mist build. When the Eye of the Lord looks down upon the people, they have reason to cheer, for such an event is proof that God hasn't turned His back towards His creation, but is rather guarding His children like a strict but just father.

At night, temperatures drop a few degrees, but whoever isn't fortunate enough to live in a mountain valley and be soothed by the cooling winds therein, has to cope with the humidity that follows him even into his dreams. Most of the time, the sun rises behind a red veil of clouds, so the rare days when one can observe how the glowing disk

rises up unclouded from the horizon are seen as auspicious in folklore – children born on such days are destined for greatness, weddings celebrated last long, and journeys started will be safe.

The situation is different on Europe's coasts. The cloud cover tears open more often, and the sea carries a refreshing breeze to the shores. Here, awnings, pergolas and the like – which also often define the character of inland towns – don't serve exclusively as protection from the rain, but also as protection from the brilliant rays of the sun. In coastal cities, there is an old saying: "You can tell the rich from the poor by the size of their sunshades" – and the servants who carry the sunshade, serve him water, fan him and give him massages with cool, damp cloths. Occasionally, it can get rather chilly in the coastal cities at night, although it's still not necessary to heat homes – all it takes to guarantee for a pleasant sleeping temperature is a small brazier or a few warm stones in the bed. A unique element in coastal life are the tides. Fishermen and sailors always take into consideration the tides before setting sail to defy the forces of nature. The marshwalkers – those daring men and women who set out when the tide is low to search for precious treasures of the old world in mud and silt – have no other choice than to finish their efforts hastily, when the waters start rising again. Woe to those who get lost in the marshes or went too far out – the cruel sea will surely take its rightful toll. The notion of snatching away a treasure from the sea is too tempting, though, and there are a lot of daredevils who are ready to take the risk of drowning. The marshwalkers never go out unarmed when they look for lost fortunes of the old world, because rumors of giant predators waiting for their prey under the brown silt abound.

The far north is an exception to all of this: the climate of Scandinavia can be compared to the climate of Central Europe in our times, and mad travelers rant and rave about entire regions reputedly covered in ice and snow and cities of glittering glass with veins of black blood – these lunatics are considered Heretics and are often summarily executed by the authorities.

when the wind blows

The regions with the highest amounts of precipitation are still those where a front of clouds can "cling to" a mountain range and get rid of its load of rain. In these regions, cloudbursts lasting several days without any noticeable interruption aren't unheard of. In 27th century Europe, the wind blows mainly from western to northwestern directions and brings thick, rain-heavy cloud masses from the sea to the inland.

In fall, the British Isles and the west coast of Scandinavia are battered by huge tornadoes; these storms are violent enough to push entire villages built on wooden rafts and pontoons to the high seas, where their unfortunate populace dies of thirst, if they don't get rescued by sailors or are unable to repair one of their own sea-going vessels. Occasionally, such a swimming ghost town suddenly appears at the shores of other coastal settlements. It is whispered that it brings bad luck to set foot on these floating cities of the dead - the inhabitants of which have been so unfortunate as to not being given to the cleansing fires of a proper burial ceremony and going to heaven without the blessings of a priest. Therefore, fire is set to them at once – at least this is what the tenets of the Angelitic Church require from their followers in such cases.

Time and again, gruesome stories are spread about fishermen who claim to have seen that the corpses of the dead were horribly mutilated – without doubt the work of terrible beasts the Lord of the Flies has spawned to terrorize even the seas. Prudent minds find less unsettling explanations – carrion-eating seabirds, advanced states of decomposition or the horrifying results of heavy storms. It doesn't take a Dreamseed creature to behead a man.

Spain's western coasts are haunted by similarly devastating storms every spring and fall. These storms often wash ashore old shipwrecks and giant, dead fish. A sect of this region apparently withstanding any efforts the Angelitic Church takes to wipe it out, the *Jonahites*, adheres to the teachings of a wise man who reputedly stepped forth from the belly of such a beast to preach God's true words.

Comparable but less fierce storms occur in rare cases in the Mediterranean Sea during wintertime: Full-fledged tornadoes are totally unknown here, although a common thunderstorm is quite capable of causing severe damage. From time to time, avalanches and mud slides have swept away entire villages. The people of these coastal regions live with the constant fear of plagues, since nobody can tell for certain if the next storm won't expose the decomposing victims of earlier storms or even bring such plague-carriers to the cities unnoticed via creeks and rivers.

What is left of the European heartland in the 27th century seems blessed by the Lord's hand: Even though summers may bring sudden and heavy rain, storms only find their way here in the rarest of cases, since the majority of storm fronts rages further to the north over Scandinavia and Britain before sending their last, feeble remnants over Central Europe. Many village elders nevertheless shudder at the thought of the occasional spring tide, because no one knows if they aren't the first harbingers of an even greater catastrophe.

From time to time, the storms do some good despite all the devastation they bring. An avalanche caused by a tornado exposes an old excavation site which makes mining easier or holds the most curious relics from the old world. A breeze carries the snow-white feather of an Engel to a village that has lost all hope for a harvest which can feed all its people, granting them new confidence they will survive another winter. Driftwood is washed ashore which is brought into a new shape pleasant to God and His servants on earth by diligent carvers of crucifixes.

In addition to these devastating storms – unbound displays of power by the forces of nature -, thunderstorms rage more frequently than in our times. People regard them with greater composure, though – fires caused by lightning only occur once every few years, because most of the wood is too damp to be easily set ablaze.

Moreover, folklore holds that people killed by lightning (a highly improbable occurrence) directly go to Heaven even if they led less than pious lives. Why should anyone be afraid of a thunderstorm sent by the Lord? On Iberia, there is even a sect the members of which travel from mountain peak to mountain peak wielding long iron rods. The people of Iberia are accustomed to their laments and sadness when they return to the villages down in the valleys below, embittered and depressed because the Lord once again found none of their numbers worthy of going to heaven during the last thunderstorm. Those members of the sect who get struck by lightning and survive the accident are regarded as especially unfortunate souls. As signs of their disgrace, their hands are scarred where the long iron rods have burned deep into their flesh. More information on the *Fulminadores* and other cults can be found in **Chapter Three: Mater Ecclesia**.

the lock-gates of heaven

The people of the 27th century have ample opportunity to experience first-hand all variations of rain – usually, even more than one variety during a single day, for it trickles endlessly. Sometimes one gets the impression of only the slightest trace of dampness on the wind. Items left lying in the open are covered almost imperceptibly with a sheen of moisture. Frequently, the water comes from below as well when the rain pours down in heavy cloudbursts and the thick raindrops send the water of already existing puddles shooting upwards. Sometimes, even underground water is pushed to the surface. It drizzles and when the wind blows, the drizzling can turn into spray without warning.

Now and then, the sun shines while large raindrops fall from the sky. The rain runs in rivulets from the rooftops into water-butts, pouring a deluge of rain on the land. Shortly, no other meteorological phenomenon is as omnipresent as the tears of the Lords shed when He weeps over the countless transgressions, sins, moral lapses and weaknesses of His children. The constant rain has had its effects on the predominant colors in the "brave, new world" of the 27th century as well. In the countryside, where nature has reclaimed vast regions, rich greens virtually dominate everything. The cities, on the other hand, are dominated by the concrete-gray of dilapidated and undermined buildings as well as the rust-red of corroding iron pillars reaching accusingly up to the skies like the scabby limbs of slain giants.

Furthermore, myths and legends tell about rains of the most curious kind: frogs, fish, blood, wine and even the feathers of Engel are all said to have rained down from the sky. Officially, the church quickly decries these phenomena as superstitious nonsense – secretly, fellowships of Engel are often sent out to investigate the matter, though. Most of the time, the phenomena turn out to have been cases of mass hysteria or pranks played on traveling merchants. The origins of others remain shrouded in mystery, however. Especially those occurrences when feathers of Engel are said to have rained down from the sky attract flocks of sick or poor persons hoping to catch such a gift from above to ease their suffering. A few years ago, templars and local mercenaries had to put an end to a full-fledged revolt caused by such mass hysteria in Southern France. The survivors of this penal order have retreated to the Sea Alps where they wait for the miracle to repeat that changed their lives so drastically.

The Seasons

Although the great cataclysm hasn't brought the eternal cycle of nature to a grinding halt, the everlasting dance of becoming and passing has adjusted to the altered conditions.

Spring still is the time of sowing, but it also is the time when the fields that have been tilled during fall and winter are ripe for harvesting. Temperatures rise, and precipitation increases. Rivers flood and bring fertile mud and silt on which the new crops prosper. Cattle couple and multiply. All over Europe, people celebrate the reawakening of life the Lord God has allowed to come to pass. His mercy seems to know no bounds: rich green flows into the scanty mountain valleys; the sweet smell of flowers hangs in the air after a downpour; people dance, laugh and sing, and work progresses rapidly, since it isn't hot enough for every physical effort to turn into a troublesome burden. Wedding vows are given, and the priests praise the bounty of Paradise whose immaculate shadow has been cast all over the earth.

white tears

Snow has become uncommon even in wintertime. Many people have never seen a single snowflake in their entire lives. Snow is found only on the highest, most inaccessible mountain tops and reputedly far in the north of Scandinavia. These cold tears of the Lord are cause for profound confusion when they fall from the sky overnight. The peasants dwelling in remote villages are always terrified to the bone when they get up one morning to find the world outside apparently covered by a thick, white shroud. Their prayers are heard rather quickly, though, since the white powder disappears as fast as it appears, leaving merely water and mud. In many of the secret archives of the Diadoches strange scriptures can be found sporting illustrations which clearly depict people in strange garment gliding over the fleeting dust on long, thin boards attached to their feet – pictures like these lead many nobles to conclusions of their own; maybe the old world truly was as ungodly as the priests preach.

The arrival of springtime is, however, galled by giant swarms of mosquitoes. These vermin thrive in the humid climate, and it is whispered that they are but harbingers or a harmless variety of the dreadful Dreamseed. Another blemish of spring is the impending return of the dreaded Grimriders who often claim the Tenth in children during this time of year. Moreover, occasional storms rage across the land, although they cannot be compared in terms of severity to those hurricanes fall brings.

In spring, the merchants in the cities assemble their caravans to carry their goods on boats or carriages from one European center of trade to another, just like the troupes of jugglers and actors who travel from village to village, bringing joy to the everyday lives of the rural communities with all sorts of plays, legerdemain and tumbling in return for small compensations. The rest of the city populace turn this time of trade to their advantage by producing all kinds of goods and the acquisition of Manna, the European currency of the 27th century.

Spring ends with a rainy season with cloudbursts often lasting several days. The rainy season is heralded by a phase lasting several weeks during which rain sets in at regular times of day. If there were still any watches left, you could set them by these cloudbursts. Precipitation decreases notably during the summer, and it gets really hot. Water doesn't get scarce, though; rain may have become more uncommon, but to call it a dry season would be exaggerated. Clothes worn are restricted to whatever is absolutely necessary – whatever decency and local customs demand.

People stop working during the hottest hours of the day to rest in the cool shade of their homes. Peasants lead more difficult and straining lives during this season: A skirt a tailor works on or a bed a carpenter is taking the rough off can be laid aside for a few hours, whereas cows have to be milked, fences have to be repaired and fields have to be tilled even in the burning heat. Therefore, most city dwelling people can be discerned easily due to their comparatively pale skin (which is of a much darker tone than that of an average person living in the 21st century). Many peasants constantly in danger of suffering sunburns or heat strokes envy the city dwellers for their paleness. During peasant weddings, powder is a favorite wedding gift for the bride, while the father of the bride gives his future son-in-law a broad-rimmed hat as a present – he is hoping for grandchildren, and a son-in-law who returns from the fields in the evening suffering from a heat stroke would be unfavorable to this wish. Recently, a growing number of city people is fond of sporting a "healthy" tan. Charlatans who sell potions and salves which can make a man as "tanned as a peasant" overnight can make a small fortune in many cities – if they are clever enough to leave town before the morning comes and it is obvious that their wares have been entirely ineffectual. Otherwise, they may well be slain by an angry lynch mob.

Most honorable merchants and their caravans stay in whatever city they reach before the rainy season begins – travel during the summer is too exerting for most of them. They can make a good living for quite a while on the Manna they have gained thus far most of the time anyway. Only a few of them face up to the hardships of summer travel, but those who do can claim unsurpassed prices for their goods. Those Leatherers – as they are often called for their weather-hardened skin – are of a steadfast tenacity and famous (or rather infamous) for their unscrupulous haggling methods. The fathers of the church hear many laments about usury and unfairness, but since the Holy Mother Church accepts their services gladly as well, all an angry customer cheated by a Leatherer will hear from the clerics are some appeasing, pacifying phrases.

The first storms of fall announce the most difficult time of year for all Europeans; in many places, severe storms rage which the peasants must nonetheless endure in order to reap what they have sowed earlier in the year. Furthermore, marauding gangs of thieves and murderers start raids on peasant villages in fall. These bandits which are called the Plagues choose this time of year to harass the peasants for they know all too well that their bounty will be plenty during harvest time and that it will take them literal loads of bounty to survive winter with its floods of rain. And so, the peasants tirelessly oppose the cutting, icy winds and the driving rain, fully aware that all their efforts may have been in vain, should one of the robber chiefs decide to claim his toll for "protecting" their village from "mishaps". The traveling merchants have to deal with such raids during the whole year anyway, so they often hire mercenaries – the Birds of Passage – to protect their lives and their valuable goods.

Whether they live in a settlement guided by the gentle hand of Mother Church or dwelling in one of the sinks of corruption the Diadoches claim as their own, all city folk prepare for the fall in their own ways, too. To guard themselves against possible attacks, defensive fortifications are manned more heavily and the diligent weaponsmiths work all night long. Should a larger Plague manage to take a city, it might well be that they decide to stay for the winter – an extremely unpleasant situation for the inhabitants. If all messengers fail to spread the news of the taking of the city to other settlements, there is no one to drive the bandits away.

Wintertime is rather uneventful when compared to fall. Most regions have weathered the most severe storms, the harvest has been brought in, and even the rain abides. Though temperatures drop, the cold merely grows painful up in the far north of Europe. Clothing gets slightly thicker, the days shorten and the nights bring chilly winds. Sometimes, people can even enjoy a star bright night; entire villages are afoot in the hope of catching a glimpse at the face of the Lord who is guarding His flock from somewhere up above. To behold the silhouette of an Engel on such occasions strengthens the faith of the common man, even though it is rumored that there are certain heretics in the cities waiting for such nights to look into the night sky with strange apparatuses,

trying to prove that there is nobody up there who helps the people on earth.

In winter, most of the merchants return to their respective hometowns where there is always much ado when they tell their tales about their adventures abroad. The Birds of Passage hire themselves out as city guards or waste their hard-earned Manna on women and wine.

A rainy season similar to that announcing the beginning of summer marks the last weeks of winter, and thus, the seasons come full circle.

the infernos

Another new "natural" phenomenon of the 27th century are the so-called Infernos: pillars of fire several kilometers high and wide which travel slowly, almost majestically overland like blazing whirlwinds. The people of Europe are totally unaware of the true number of existing Infernos; estimates vary wildly, from three to a dozen (even though a cult of Heretics who have retreated underground to be safe from the Infernos claims all these pillars of fire are but harbingers of an impending apocalyptic, worldwide conflagration). If the Infernos behaved like proper whirlwinds, they would have put an end to all life on earth a long time ago. Wherever they pass, roaring deafeningly, they leave a trail of devastation: burned, dead land, poisonous, acidic vapors and corridors of strangely unmovable smoke, a monument to the destruction they have wrought. These hostile zones – where nothing grows and everyone daring enough to set foot on them is in mortal danger – are called Brandlands by the people of Europe. The Infernos move so slowly, however, that one might almost believe them to be stationary. And yet, they crawl on, slowly, unstoppably and relentlessly. When they change direction, though, which they do suddenly for no apparent reason, they often move with furious speed. After their change of direction, they slip back to their previous behavior.

Fishermen and sailors have reported that the Infernos cannot be stopped by even the largest bodies of water. If they travel over the sea or one of Europe's numerous lakes, tons of hissing steam rise up all around them. Where they have passed, the water turns black and dead animals float on the waves. Just like with the Brandland, only few of those who went into the smoke have ever returned.

The Infernos are accompanied by bizarre meteorological phenomena: pitch-black brooding storm fronts, sending such multitudes of lightning bolts across the sky that they can turn even the blackest night into day, and occasional hail storms with lumps of ice as big as a child's head. From time to time, huge explosions take place at the foot of these pillars of fire, hurling rocks and soil through the air which rain down on the landscape hundreds of meters away. The gales around these raging pillars of fire create a suction strong enough to pull anything into the blazing flames which isn't firmly fixed. Animals flee from these harbingers of

damnation in mindless panic, and the peasants know that it is an ill omen when their cattle start charging against the fences until the wood gives way. The animals seem to sense the approach of an Inferno, even when the sinister, reddish sheen announcing its arrival hasn't yet risen from the horizon. Therefore, farms in the near vicinity of Infernos have to be abandoned because cattle-breeding has become impossible.

Vast floods of refugees build in front of an approaching Inferno – men, women, children and cattle start moving to escape from the fire and the horrors springing forth from its smoke: the Dreamseed. These unholy creatures with their countless limbs, wings and heads are the only force every man on earth truly fears – whether rich citybaron or poor peasant. These beings – some of which are gigantic monsters the size of a small mountain – appear out of the smoke of the Infernos like a never-ending flood of destruction sowing death and damnation. Except for the Engel, there are only few people daring enough to oppose them... and fewer still survive a battle with these harbingers of the Lord of the Flies.

And yet, there are people who seem to approach the Infernos of their own volition. Casting all warnings to the winds, they gather at the foot of the pillars of fire. No sane person has ever stayed long enough to watch whatever these poor, misled fools might do in these godforsaken places, but some peasants swear the friend of a cousin of a brother-in-law has returned from one of those gatherings. Of course, they keep silent about what the returning person might have done during such a gathering, but maybe they are more cunning than one might think, considering how harsh Mother Church judges those Heretics who claim to know someone who has actually survived one of the gatherings.

There are two main rumors constantly being spread regarding the Infernos. First, there are always people convinced of having seen a face in the blazing flames or having heard voices in their roar. Mostly, they believe the face belonged to a deceased lover or relative who urged them to follow him or her to the Promised Land. Others say, the Lord of the Flies had revealed his ugly face in the Inferno for the blink of an eye. Those who believe that they heard voices usually describe those as lamenting, mourning or grieving; occasionally, sweetest promises are rumored to have lured unsuspecting people to the vicinity of the Infernos, where they quickly fell victim to the Dreamseed, the giant explosions, flying pieces of debris or the Inferno itself.

The other remarkable rumor being constantly spread in regards to the Infernos tells of the sudden appearance of smaller Infernos in remote areas of Europe or the unexpected eruption of these insatiable flames within the ruins of an old city. People often react with anxiety to these rumors, for the single fact preventing the Infernos from being the trigger of a mass panic of heretofore unknown proportions is their relative predictability, except during those horrible moments when they change direction as if imbued by a spiritual force. Heretical thought supporting certain theories according to which new Infernos could erupt anytime and anywhere on earth is subject to the strictest persecution by the Angelitic Church.

The church keeps an eye on the Infernos all the time, employing the Engel (especially the Urielites, of course) to track the course the Infernos follow. If it becomes obvious that an Inferno threatens to devour a larger settlement, the Himmel send out an army of Engel to stop the pillar of fire. Despite the Lord's help, such missions have failed time and again. At best, the Engel can merely assist in the evacuation of the settlement.

There are always people who boast of having found a possibility to bring the Infernos' unholy wandering to a halt. These loudmouths often die a swift but painful death trying to prove their power. Maybe the Angelitic Church reacts generously to some minor trespasses, simply preventing a Heretic claiming such power from endangering others in the future, for the claws of the Dreamseed know no mercy.

limits of power

On the remaining land masses of the world known to the people of the 27th century, living together hasn't become any easier than before. Even though the population has decreased drastically since the Time Before, living conditions have decreased accordingly as well. Small rivers turned into gigantic torrents, rich pastures were lost to the sea, and sleepy mountain villages have suddenly become seaports viciously fought over. The remaining technology of the past functions no more. For a long time, chaos and anarchy ruled. Then came the Lord's messengers to bring mankind peace. The Angelitic Church grew, gained influence and eventually became the driving, virtually omnipotent force behind the new social structure evolving in Europe.

Soon, voices were raised; the voices of those who felt mistreated, betrayed or wronged. The number of followers who merely paid lip-service to the ideals and ambitions of their superiors only because they saw their own advantage in it increased rapidly. Inevitably, the Church – whose claim to power was based on their conviction that God had chosen them as His holy vassals to rule over the entire known world – had to fight a battle with numerous front-lines. In the Angelitic Church's centers of power, the faithful led by the Engel steadfastly defended their new way of life against all Heretics. In more remote regions of Europe, though, the seed of hatred and envy began to show itself. Many of those who abjured their faith or turned their backs to the church due to baser motives have retreated as far as possible from the orders' sphere of influence to establish their own realms. There they wait until they have gained enough influence to truly challenge the church.

the north

Ever since the destruction of the Raguelite Himmel in Trondheim, anarchy has spread in the

far north of Europe where the heat and humidity dominating the rest of Europe are replaced by razor-fierce winds. The remaining orders are incapable of appropriately controlling Raguelite lands, and so the faithful are driven to the south by hordes of unruly, nomadic Heretics and greedy Diadoches. Their only hindrance seems to be the stifling heat of the Inferno which once razed the Raguelite Himmel to the ground and which is now heading back north towards the sea – for how long it will stay on this course, no one can tell. Small realms are established and torn apart in short order when rivaling forces go to war. Finally, the Dreamseed's atrocities ensure total chaos. Whole regions are devastated by the envoys of the Lord of the Flies, making living there impossible for years to come.

the east

The first flood of refugees set into motion by the destruction of the Himmel in Trondheim headed east towards the land bridge across the Baltic Sea, the only connection between the Scandinavia and the islands of Russia. When the refugees shortly afterwards encountered another gigantic corridor of Brandland, they crossed the Baltic Sea towards the south, spreading from there across the islands. Some of them risked the dangerous sea journey to Central Europe, but the large majority learned to live with the immediate threat of the Brandland.

Today, only the memories of the Raguelites can reveal to interested scholars details on the lands further to the east. The Ural Island, the Tunguska Archipelago and the Caucasian Sea remain hidden from prying eyes ever since the Lord of the Flies has drawn his curtain of darkness and corruption over the land. Only some Urielites on suicidal missions dare to cross the Brandland. No-one can tell if they succeed in their missions; none of their numbers has been known to return from an attempt to reach the other side. Those people, however, who have learned how to adjust to the extremely hostile living conditions in the direct vicinity of Brandland are a tough breed who literally fight for their daily life.

Moscow has become a free city, not due to generous notions of the Angelitic Church, but rather because the Ramielite Order who ruled over the city renounced its claims of power a few years ago. Nowadays, virtually nobody cares about the last bastion of mankind in the far east of Europe. Its inhabitants don't claim any authority over the surrounding lands, so anyone who comes here of his own free will can try to make his own living in the way he deems appropriate.

the south

Moving in clockwise direction towards the south, a traveler inevitably reaches the coast lines of Asia Minor where small trading houses were established during the years of reconstruction, especially in places like Smyrna and Bursa. Unlike many others, the sea routes to Greece are short and rather safe. Cattle, fabrics and unspoilable food is shipped to northwestern directions, raw material like metal and wood are imported. On the inland, population drops quickly, for the large majority of locals is drawn towards the coastal region looking for work.

Further to the south are the remainders of the Arabian Peninsula. Here, living conditions for man and beast alike are even more inhospitable than further to the east: rain is scarce in this barren region where two gigantic Infernos meet. Like the invisible fiery breath of dragons, hot winds blow and make breathing difficult for the few people dwelling here.

The influence of the orders has decreased as well. In former times, the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea belonged to the dominion of the Michaelite Order after its Engel had defeated the "Islamic Nation of God" which previously ruled over the area. The leaders of the fellowships have withdrawn from the region step by step to alleviate the losses of the other orders and to focus on the mounting problems in Central Europe in regards to uprisings of populace and the advance of the Dreamseed.

The last bastion of the Angelitic Church in the area (and its southernmost outpost) is Amman, near the ruins of Jerusalem, a city that has been razed to the ground during the largest battle between the forces of the Angelitic Church and the Dreamseed in human history. The monastery of Amman has been ordered to conduct a perpetual death-watch for the victims of this monumental clash. The desert rulers have learned to live with the fact that they are not allowed to set foot on the battlefield and have even

brandland guides

One of the most dangerous and most fool-hardy professions imaginable today is that a of a Brandlandguide. As their name reveals, this loose organization of daredevils, cut-throats and madmen act as guides for merchants, travelers and all other persons willing and able to pay their exorbitant prices set on crossing the desolate, hazardous darkness of the Brandland – without any guarantees of success; actually, they fail so often in their chosen task that anyone who is ready to put his life into the hands of a Brandlandguide surely has good reason to do so.

According to local folklore, the profession of Brandlandguide originated where the threat of the Brandland was most palpable – on the Russian Isles. Born from the desperate need to locate new sources of food, pastures and resources, a handful of death-defying people set out to laugh at the face of the Lord of the Flies. Equipped with more or less reliable devices ensuring supply with breathable air, primitive compasses, strong leading ropes, makeshift weapons and long signal rods sporting clanging and ringing metal platelets and blessed medallions to keep back the hideous creatures dwelling on the Brandland and as a means of communication between the guide and his customers, the pioneers of the Brandland head out into the unknown. Some of them were hunters or rangers before taking the decision to follow this dangerous path, while others were forced to become guides, partly due to financial reasons, partly because they had to escape persecution from law-enforcing authorities.

Rare is the Brandlandguide who is working just for fun, because the danger of being impaled upon a bile-covered mandible appearing out of nowhere or being torn to pieces by a razor sharp claw somewhere in the black depths is more of a certainty than a simple possibility. And yet there are some guides who boast with their adventures in the Black Mists, lifting their shirts to show the scars on their bodies where a wound from the armpit to the small of the back had to be stitched 96 times, claiming they would never want to earn their living any other way.

Admittedly, some of the expeditions through Brandland succeeded; most of the time, however, they end with one, several or all of the travelers disappearing without a trace.

forged a truce with the envoys of the Angelitic Church. Even though the nomadic tribes of desert dwellers aren't especially pious, they would never dare to raise the ire of the Angelitic military force in Amman, despite their superiority In numbers. They regard the Angelites' task in Amman as holy and respect their code of honor with an understanding showing great wisdom.

Further to the west across the Mediterranean Sea lie the coastal regions of Africa with their ports of Konstantine, Algiers and finally Tangier, the northernmost tip of the African continent. Here, one of the most remarkable architectural endeavors of recent centuries has begun: the construction of a gigantic bridge, spanning the ten kilometer long distance between Tangier and Tarifa on the southern coast of Iberia. The European people, and especially the Iberians, saw the rediscovery of Africa as the regaining of the Garden Eden. Work on the construction of the bridge which will even dwarf the Himmel – a blasphemous, heretical thought to many people – has already taken many lifetimes, and an end is nowhere in sight.

The hope of a better life urges the people on despite countless setbacks. Due to numerous reports by its Engel, the Angelitic Church is completely aware of the fact that there is no Garden Eden waiting beyond the sea, but in order not to disappoint the people and to give them something worth working and living for, it keeps silent about the true situation in Africa. Rather, the Pontifex Maximus is concerned about the Inferno approaching the straits from the East which already spelled doom for the Samaelites on Corsica.

The cities on the coast of Africa resemble many human settlements immediately after the Vitusdance: abandoned monuments to the hubris of man. Almost entirely reclaimed by nature, these remnants are either covered by the swirling desert sands or lush vegetation. Over the years, many animals have found a new home there. And perhaps something else has found a new home at these distant, remote places as well, far from the prying eyes of the Angelitic Church...

the purification of impure thoughts

Some chapters of the Angelitic history are kept secret even from their most trusted members, including the wars of religion the Church had to wage in its founding years to defend its undisputed claim to the earth. The people of Africa and their beliefs and deities differed so much from those of the Angelites that the Church simply decided to solve this problem in an unbelievably horrible way. The ethnic cleansing by the hands of the Heavenly Hosts only took a mere week and met with only minimal resistance.

The Heretics were swept from the face of the Earth and the whole continent depopulated. This dark chapter of Angelitic history has been wiped out even from the Ramielite cathedrals and slumbers deep in the secret archives of the Pontifex Maximus. But if this story which is only told in whispers is really true or a modern myth is unclear, as no one has dared to enter the depth of the dark continent for many, many generations.

the west

Once part of the European mainland before the Second Flood, Iberia has become a huge island under the dominion of the Urielite Order. The Pyrenean Channel divides the rocky isle from the French mainland. Little has changed here in regards to the typical scenery of Europe's mountainous west. Despite the Urielites' undisputed claim to the region, its capital is not Mont Salvage, but rather Madrid in the center of the island. Ab Guillaume, the current leader of the Urielite Order, regularly travels from his seat in the Pyrenean Mountains to the capital where he addresses state affairs and informs the local legates about his political decisions. Due to Iberia's vast stretches of firm ground, a remarkable web of trade routes and highways has spread across the island which has led to stable economic growth.

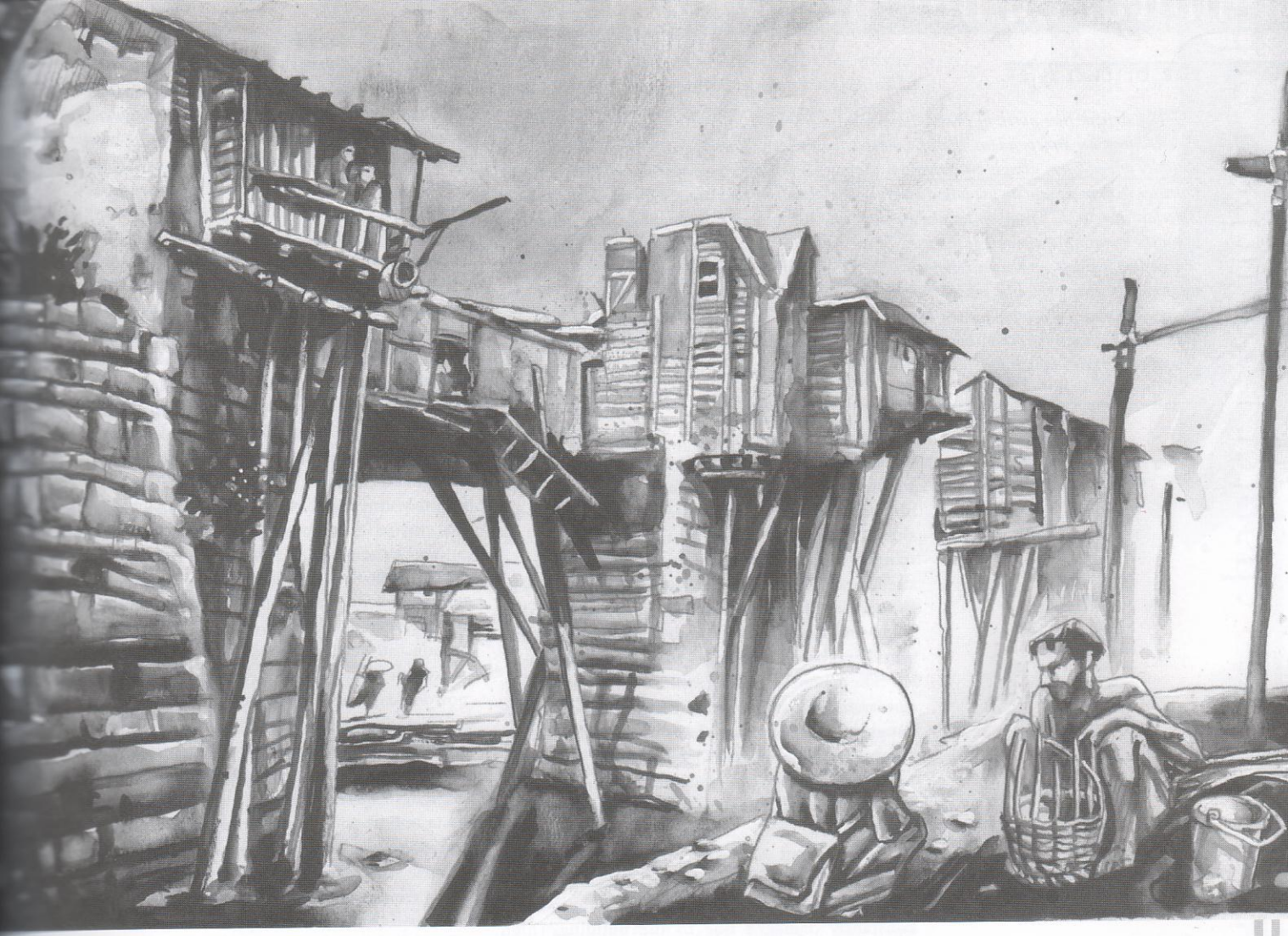
An exception to that rule was the island of Lisbon. This self-declared free isle off the western coast of Iberia seceded many years ago from the Urielite hegemony and announced a strict prohibition for Engel to set foot on its soil. This announcement was not what one might call a severe blow for the Urielite government. The Urielites knew that Lisbon depended on their support, and so they let the renegades do as they pleased, ordaining a trade boycott on the free city.

A few months later, the Lisbonans – as they called themselves – began raiding Urielite territory. The Church eventually took action when an envoy they sent to Lisbon to find an agreeable solution for all parties was slain to the last man by the Lisbonans. The people of Lisbon had made a grave mistake.

On New Year's Eve 2221, on the island of Lisbon, the fire of the lord rained down from heaven and the city was razed to the ground, its few survivors and refugees slain by fellowships of Engel from the Urielite Himmel. No one could escape their righteous wrath. Even today no sane soul could try to live in the craters and the rubble which remained after the catastrophe and the ruins of Lisbon remain even today as a silent monument to the power of the church.

the heart of europe

In Central Europe, the Himmel of the Orders literally tower above the landscape, allowing no opposition to their rule whatsoever. France and Switzerland nominally belong to Raphaelite territory, but are defended against the incursions of the expanding Gabrielites only half-heartedly. Raphaelite philosophy can be called almost cosmopolitan, and they think that the Angelitic



Church should rather focus on their global claim to power than wasting energy on territorial quarrels in Europe. Ever since people have started flocking towards the Gabrielite capital of Nuremberg, the order needs more and more tributary lieges to cover the immense costs of maintaining the local infrastructure. Further expansion to the north being impossible, the Gabrielites advance deeper and deeper on the territory of the other orders, causing trouble on the highest political levels.

Whereas the Raphaelites in the west hold a neutral view on that matter, the keepers of knowledge in the east, the Ramaelites, are less than pleased by the expansion of the Engel of death. The Michaelites were largely oblivious to Gabrielite "land gaining" in the south until recently. When they finally took notice, the Pontex Maximus himself proclaimed a call to order and gathered the first Angelitic European Council in 2652 to settle the matter once and for all. The Council has continued ever since, with any agreement between the orders still a long way off.

The common people, however, are wholly unaware of these political machinations. For them, life goes on, with all its successes and setbacks. High politics affect the populace only marginally, and most of them simply don't care to whom they have to pay their taxes. The national colors change from time to time, the borderlines – which are totally incomprehensible to the majority of Europeans, anyway – are pushed back or forth a few meters, and the legate of their city is replaced by another legate. Life, as they say, goes on.

of himmel and arks – the architecture of the 27th century

As with countless other things, Europeans can only dream of a homogenous architecture. Too varying are the financial and technological means of different builders and their fervor to create something new as to allow to sum up the numerous styles with one term. Globally speaking, the world of the 27th century is reminiscent of a mix of buildings from the late Middle Ages, remnants of pre-Flood concrete edifices and East Asian wooden constructions, coupled with loads of human megalomania.

The orders' Himmel are definitely the most remarkable in the architectural history of the 27th century. The Himmel – or rather the buildings that

The British Isles north of France have seceded from the Angelitic Church over 400 years ago, leading an independent life of isolation ever since. Their persistent policy of silence actually wiped them almost entirely from the memory of the Angelitic Church. Initially, the Pontifex Maximus saw no use whatsoever for the islands in the Atlantic Ocean and agreed to a declaration in 2215 which turned London into a free port and the subsequent agreement upon the isolation of the rest of the Isles. Since that time, Britain has become a safe haven for renegades, infidels and new religious beliefs. The orders reproach the Pontifex with this weakness of letting the Isles secede from the rest of Europe and have made reunification – by force, if necessary – a topic for the European Council of 2652. A final decision has yet to be made. Nevertheless, rumors about an impending hostile takeover by the orders have already spread to Britain, which upsets the locals very much of course.

were turned into them later – stem from the time of the Second Flood, perhaps even from the time before the Vitusdance. Today, this kind of architectural feat is beyond the abilities of men, and this is one of the main advantages of the Angelitic Church – if nobody is able to erect such buildings, then these buildings must have been built by the Lord Himself to prove the legitimacy of the claim to power the Angelitic Church holds over the entire world and everything on it.

The Citadels of the Engel tower up more than one and a half kilometer into the skies, their base roughly being half as wide as the citadel is high. Countless flying-buttresses lend a skeletal appearance to the Citadels, and in decades of perpetual work the entire façade and large parts of the interior have been adorned with gothic tracery and gargoyles by the Monachs. Until now, the orders' engineers and architects have been unable to find a lasting solution to a major problem, though: the Himmel are constantly damaged due to the buildings' high flexibility and the brittle material they are built of. At its top, Himmel are notorious for the seemingly incessant swaying back and forth which often leads to nausea in inhabitants unaccustomed to this effect. After a while, most people living in the Himmel don't notice the swaying anymore which is of course very slow. The Angelitic additions suffer heavily from the basic frameworks' pendulum-like motion. Nevertheless, the Himmel are a majestic sight and a fitting match to their noble task as homesteads for the Heavenly Hosts.

The Himmel and the buildings surrounding them have entered into a kind of symbiosis over the centuries; it is hard to tell whether a building was added to the Citadel or whether it belongs to the basic framework from the Time Before. The additions made often remind viewers of growths of sponges on sick trees. Only in the Eternal City of *Roma Æterna* such architectural aberrations are strictly prohibited or their builders even punished.

Roma Æterna itself resembles a giant amphibian creature slowly crawling from the water, as large parts of the city fell victim to the Second Flood. This doesn't prevent its inhabitants from still using the long and winding underground tunnels connecting many depots and warehouses not yet flooded. Near the Apennine Mountains, the city rises on the mountain slopes, terrace after terrace further approaching the Michaelite Himmel. The various quarters of the city can be reached on wide avenues lined with titanic statues of Engel. The buildings here differ from the typical, contemporary European architecture. Many of the seemingly oversized edifices look like Aztec temples, cold and repelling because of their sobriety and clear lines. Mighty bridges span the avenues, connecting the pyramidal office buildings of Angelite dignitaries. At the easternmost end of the city, visitors often feel like insignificant wretches standing at the borders of a giant metropolis. Here, the gothic shape of the Michaelite Himmel breaks through the somber clarity, for even the omnipresent statues fail to break up the architectural stasis in which they are themselves caught.

Looking at the rest of Europe, architecture becomes less spectacular, but no less interesting. The city of Nuremberg dwarfs even *Roma Æterna* in size, although it has the air of a giant refugee camp rather than a capital of one of the Angelite orders. In many places, the streets are too narrow for the wagons of the merchants, and venerable architectonic marvels are smothered by a flood of makeshift homes for the refugees. Nuremberg is a powder keg waiting to explode.

The domains of the Diadoches are unique in regards to their extensive efforts of preserving and adding to pre-Flood buildings. Bland but functional buildings lend these cities an air of cool avant-garde. As symbols of their power or probably as provocation to and perversion of Angelitic Engel statues, many Diadoches have built monuments from remnants of the old technology, oversized hallmarks of their worldly power. Huge steles built of steel girders and rails resemble a bizarre caricature of Egyptian temples. Roads in these domains are well-maintained and often freshly tarred, unlike many other roads in Europe which have often remained in a state of neglect for centuries. The homes, or rather palaces, of the Junklords are decorated or furnished with numerous pieces of pre-Flood technology, making it hard for visitors to focus on details – a situation many Diadoches use to their advantage when inviting envoys of the Angelitic Church to official meetings. They want to provoke and confuse the clerics to prevent them from focusing on the matters at hand, a cunning and often successful strategy.

Cities under the rule of Angelitic legates tend to resemble one another very closely in terms of architecture. In most cases, the materials at hand were incorporated into new buildings and improved from time to time. Over the years, only the basic structures of the original building remain unchanged. Today, the character of these cities is heavily influenced by the wooden structures possible with current technology and appropriate to climatic conditions, similar to the traditional buildings of 21st century Asia. Other natural resources like rice thatch and mud are used as well, although the pretentious city dweller still favors a stone foundation for his home.

In the countryside, people are less particular. It is natural to work with the materials at hand, especially in coastal regions; severe storms disallow the building of massive stone edifices, because it would be far too expensive to keep them maintained. However, architectonic amalgamations of a religious nature are common throughout these areas. Some older villages on the coast resemble giant shipwreck yards, for the homes of the fishermen remind of huge, wooden arks kept in balance by long supporting beams. Afraid that the Lord might send a third Flood since He hadn't swept all the people from the face of the earth yet, the simple fishermen built these arks in a sudden burst of self-preservative urges – a haughty endeavor according to the tenets of the Angelitic Church because if the One Above has decided to drown His people, man is not allowed to question His judgment. The church decided not to bother with such trifles and let the fishermen and peasants do as they like, convinced that the arks wouldn't swim anyway due to bad maintenance or construction flaws. Probably, they would be right in the end.

flora and fauna

The location and different geographical and climatic conditions of the various regions have spawned a rich variety of flora and fauna in Europe. Many indigenous species have become extinct, whereas others prosper. The vast land mass of the Alps stretching from the west to the east (dividing the continent into a tropical zone to the south of the mountain range and a temperate zone to the north of it) as well as the various landscapes – the alluvial plain of the Tunguska Archipelago, the relatively dry steppes of Iberia, the rolling hills and high mountains of Scandinavia and the vast Mediterranean mangrove swamps – all played a major part in this development. In the northern regions of the continent, flora and fauna still resemble those of the 21st century – even though all changes detailed later on apply nevertheless -, whereas in the south especially the animal world has taken on a decisive tropical appearance.

Constantly high temperatures, high humidity and fertile soil allowed for a quick growth and swift expansion of vast stretches of woodland. Europe in the 27th century is covered with thick forests which cannot be used as pastures, but nevertheless are the home of a varied and rich fauna. Many questions arise when walking through this world with open eyes: Is this fruit edible despite its awful stench? What are these plants floating in the water? And what is hopping around over there in the mud?

insects

The giant swarms of mosquitoes mentioned above are but one example of how insects prosper in the climatic conditions of 27th century Europe. Roaches, spiders and beetles crawl and fly virtually everywhere. Many of them belong to exotic species that escaped from zoos and private collections, finding optimal living conditions in the ecosphere they advanced into, often growing to remarkable size.

rodents

A second species which profited from the catastrophes rather than being harmed by them are the omnipresent rats, from water-rats over pack-rats to musk-rats. These hardy little creatures have become literal plagues in some regions, while they are surprisingly uncommon in certain others.

domestic cattle

As predominant domestic cattle, the cow has been subjected to extensive breeding programs in the centuries following the Vitusdance and the Flood. In the year 2654, cows resemble Indian water-buffaloes rather than the cow of the 21st century, and this new breed has been named the marshcow. They can be seen everywhere, used as riding animals or beasts of burden and bred for their milk and meat. Due to the multitude of abandoned herds directly after the catastrophes, wild buffaloes exist, although they are relatively rare animals. Most of their kind belong to a single, large herd grazing on the wide steppes of Hungary. They are expected to be re-domesticated in 30 to 40 years.

Of course, sheep, rabbits and fowl are still bred, as are pigs.

crops

Due to the fundamental changes in their living conditions, people have begun to cultivate crops which would be virtually impossible to cultivate in 21st century Europe, including kiwi, pineapples and all sorts of citrus fruit. Their high concentration of vitamins contributes to the fact that people don't suffer from scurvy or other diseases caused by malnutrition (what happens when a harvest is destroyed is a completely different story, however).

The genengineers of the 21st century developed quite a novelty – a crossbreed of tomato and potato. The tabloids of the time dubbed it the "pomato," and the name stuck. To cross these two rather closely related plants is a useful endeavor in as much as a plant could be cultivated which offers edible fruit as well as edible roots. Moreover, this new breed would grow even on rather bland soil. In 27th century Europe, the pomato is mass-cultivated and can be found in countless variations in numerous meals, though its two progenitor foods, the tomato and potato can still be found as well.

Another fruit which can be found almost anywhere is the durian. Due to the altered climatic conditions, this plant quickly spread all across Europe. During the durian's main season (from May to August), every visit of a marketplace is accompanied by a terribly offensive smell. A half-sacriligeous joke common in such market places

says that if there had only been durian in Paradise instead of apples – the Fall of Man would have never come to pass.

The Europeans living in the 27th century love this spiky fruit. Its stench is as repulsive as its skin: it calls to mind the stench of rotten eggs or bad cheese and hangs heavily in the city air during the summer months. The fruit is highly sought after, especially by the less-affluent. The fruit pulp is eaten, with or without sticky rice, sweets are made from it and it is used as stuffing for cakes. The fruit tastes strangely sweet, and whether its taste is a godsend or an insult is a matter of much debate. In any case, common wisdom has that one shouldn't drink alcoholic beverages together with durian, because this mixture leads to agonizing belly-aches and sickness.

In the Angelite Himmel, this fruit is strictly forbidden, since its stench would interfere with their sacral atmosphere.

water hyacinths

Many rivers and canals are covered with large islands of deep-green, thick-leafed aquatic plants. During the right season, they blossom in a light-violet. They float in the middle of the rivers or cling to their banks in thick patches, often impeding water traffic.

Presumably, the first water hyacinths were brought to Europe by birds of passage, spreading and prospering quickly ever after. For a long time people tried to stop this tough, stubborn plant from spreading any further. Meanwhile, it has become an outright plague in many regions where every effort is taken to prevent it from literally smothering the waterways – with only limited successes. Recently, people have become aware of the hyacinths' advantages; their roots dangling in the water act as natural filters, ensuring that the water remains drinkable in many places. Furthermore, they are rich in protein and are used as fodder and fertilizer.

mangrove swamps

In the south of Europe along the Mediterranean coast, mangroves have shaped a unique landscape with their thick tapestry of bizarre adventitious roots. The animals that live in these mangrove swamps have adapted perfectly to their environment. Harmless, amphibian fish the size of a man's hand called mudskippers climb the mangroves to escape larger, predatory fish. When the tide comes in, the mangrove forest enriches the water with nutrients. Therefore, its tangle of roots is the favorite spawning place for many different sorts of aquatic animals. The mangrove swamps are threatened by the expansion of commercial shrimp farms as well as deforestation because the local people use wood from the swamps for heating.

other environments

The mangrove forests dominate all the coastal regions in southern Europe. Further to the north, there are other ecospheres: in the eastern half of the continent, evergreen rainforests can be found. The thick, bushy forests in regions higher than 800 meters are called evergreen hillforests. The undergrowth of these forests is especially rich in pine trees. The thick woodland of the north is dominated by oak trees and teak trees. The latter carry foliage only in spring and summer. Generally, most trees still cast their leaves in fall. Bamboo has spread to the size of proper forests in many regions, usually in areas cleared beforehand by the locals. Its rapid growth and thickness often prevents other plants from growing.

the social structure of europe

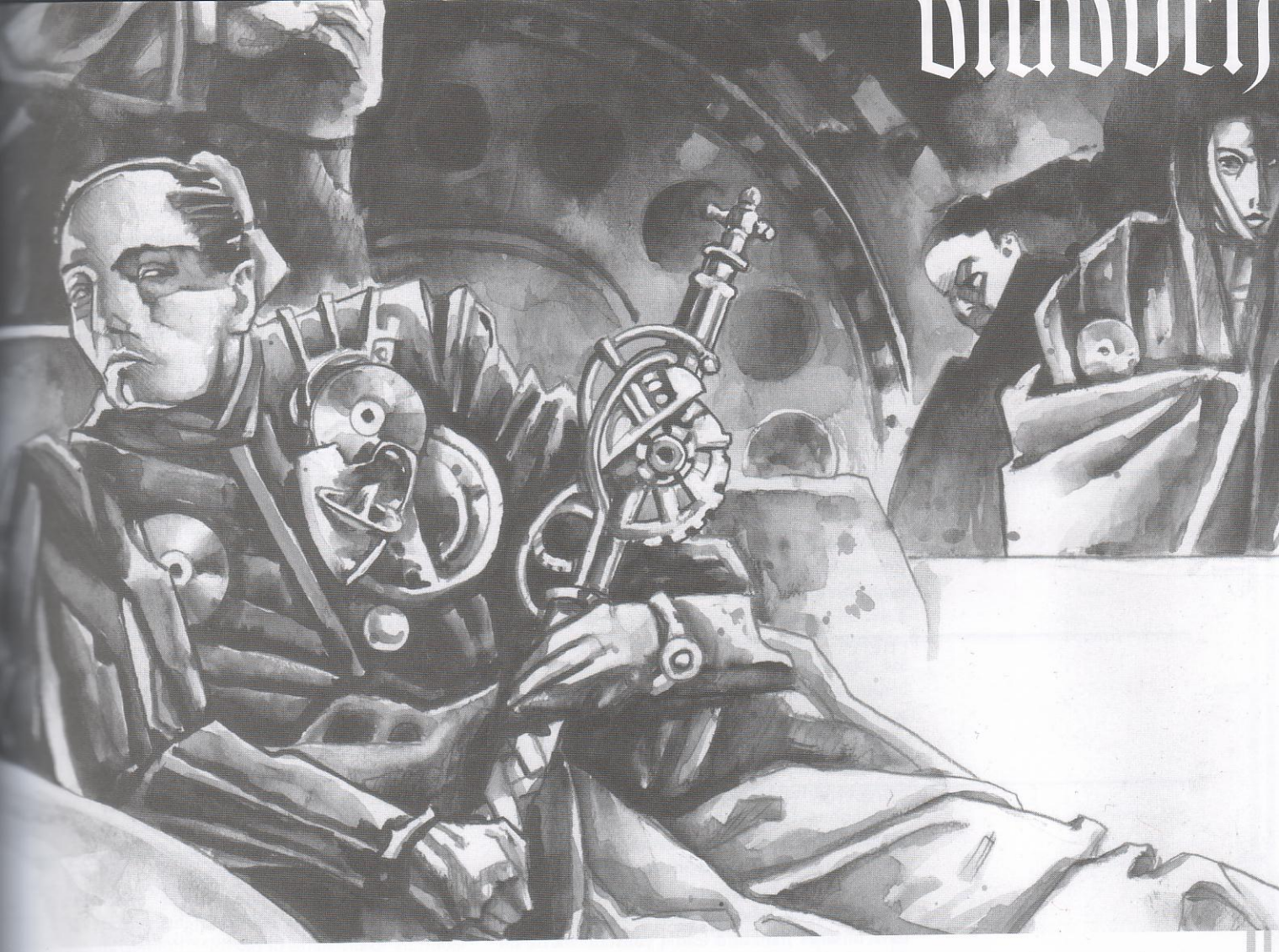
Every era has its own characteristics, political systems and social structures. In 27th century Europe a modified form of monarchy regulates the relations between the different social classes whereby the Angelitic Church regards itself as absolute ruling body authorized by the Lord's will. In *Roma Æterna*, Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus acts as God's representative and spokesperson on earth.

In theory, the church lays claim to any landed property all over Europe, although it cannot care for every single acre of crop-worthy soil itself – in spite of fertile soil being much rarer than in the 21st century. To solve this dilemma, the church has reinvented the medieval system of fiefdom for itself. The English term "fief" is derived from the Latin word "feudum" which in turn derives from "fehu", meaning "the estate" – originally, a fief was simply an estate which was given to a person. In the 27th century, the term fief can also stand for an office or means of income. The Angelitic Church refers to the system according to which it organized entire Europe as neofeudalism.

On the following pages, we will take a look at various aspects of the social structure in Europe during the time of **Engel**, for example, its origins, its evolution and its effects on Europeans in general.

the origins of neofeudalism

The dominant social structure of 27th century Europe has its roots in the 22nd century. At that time, the people on the gradually recovering continent felt the urgent need of restoring order.



Chaos ruled the land, and the survivors threatened to tear one another apart in the daily fight for food and other vital resources. The people were tired of death and struggling and were looking for someone or something to take action and guide and govern them. And who would have been more than willing to do so than the Angelitic Church who had just emphasized its claim to power to the entire continent by building the seven monumental Himmel and who commanded the Engel who could easily carry out its ambitious agenda in the dawning of the 23rd century?

And thus, the system of fiefdom so typical for entire Europe until today was established during the rule of the first Abs of the Himmel and the Pontifex Maximus in *Roma Æterna*. At first, it had effect only in the direct vicinity of the Himmel, but the organizational structure soon stood the test and became an example for all of Europe. In this special form of government, a superior authority (in this case, the Abs and upper echelons of the Angelitic Church) grants a lesser party certain privileges, offices or territories, expecting servitude from the lesser party in return. The upholding of these mutual agreements is the strongest pillar on which neofeudalism depends. Both components – the granting of fiefs and the liability to serve – spring from medieval traditions which were rediscovered by the first Ramielite Ab. The Angelitic Church acting as feudal lord promised to protect its vassals (in some regions, the church additionally offered its vassals financial support in times of famine or disease), demanding obedience in return. Furthermore, the peasants of its vassals are obliged to do compulsory services. These services soon encompassed military service in the wars against the Dreamseed.

During the oath of allegiance accompanying the granting of a fief – the so called Angelitic Oath of Fealty – the Lord Himself is called as a witness. Therewith, the oath becomes law, sacrament and code of honor in one. It is binding for both parties – that means the Ab as well as the vassal - though it can be renounced in case of perjury from one of the parties.

Generally, such donations of land aren't hereditary; they end with the death of the vassal. This custom serves to strengthen the bonds between vassal families and their feudal lord: The heir-to-be has to travel to the seat of his lord – the nearest large monastery or the nearest Himmel – in order to renew the Angelitic Oath of Fealty in person. This habit gets unraveled in remote fiefs where the church often isn't even informed about the death of a former vassal because for the family

of the deceased it goes without saying that they rightfully regard themselves as leaseholders of their lands bound to the oath of fealty.

Tying together fief and allegiance to the feudal lord is an important advantage for the Angelitic Church: This practice facilitates administration and allows the church to legally oblige the people of Europe to military service. Moreover, the distribution of land contributes to an efficient cultivation of said lands.

Current trends, however, are to invest dignitaries of the church with fiefs. On the one hand, this strengthens the union of person, office and fief, but it also practically unhinges the system of fiefdom in its original sense, since the number of vassals not of the cloth steadily declines.

the classes

To understand and fully grasp the concept of Angelite neofeudalism, a detailed description of its major factions is required.

the peasants

Since the 22nd century, a new peasant class has evolved in Europe, although it is nigh impossible to present a homogenous picture of all the diverse types of European peasants. Too varied are their living conditions due to geographical or climatic distinctions. Still, there are several facts that are generally true of the class as a whole.

Country dwellers amount to 75 to 80 percent of the entire European population, the large majority of which being vassals of some sort. They have to work hard and lead a constant battle for survival. Compulsory services for the Angelitic Church have to be performed regardless if last harvest's yields have been sufficient or not. A single bad harvest due to a natural disaster can thrust a whole family of peasants into poverty. Not all the orders enforce their privileges with the same rigorousness, though.

the Engel

In the 23rd century, the Lord sent His Engel to Europe. Their importance grew quickly during the wars of the Angelitic Church against the lords of the independent cities and due to their role as protectors and defenders of the peasants from the Dreamseed.

Under the leadership of the upper echelons of the Angelitic Church, the Engel serve the Lord, the Pontifex Maximus and the church in general. During the crusades on the Dreamseed, the Engel devoted their lives to the defense of the Angelitic faith from the creatures of the Lord of the Flies.

the diadoches

The members of this often criticized class are also called citybarons, satraps or contemptibly "Junklords". The Diadoches are the most powerful antagonists of the Angelitic Church. They rule over communities of all sizes all over Europe whose members refuse to tolerate any Angelite interference in their daily lives. Thanks to the resources and remnants of technology they scavenge from ancient cities, they are able to lead rather comfortable lives. These freethinkers are a thorn in the Pontifex Maximus' side, but there seems to be no cure for these infidels.

One exception to this rule is Lord Walter of Essen, a very powerful and influential Junklord. After being guaranteed extensive privileges and warrants, this lord personally pledged allegiance to the remarkably militant Gabrielite Æbtissin Susat of Nuremberg. He forced her to come to Essen for the ceremony, though – a so far unprecedented event. This concession became necessary because of Walter's noteworthy influence on the western regions of Germany - he had constantly expanded his sphere of power and even threatened to join the Urbanis League. Ever since the 22nd century, the Diadoches have been the virtually undisputed rulers of eastern Europe and Hellas.

the burghers

Burghers as a class of their own have come into being in the 23rd century, when cities like London, Cordova and Essen and other centers of anti-Angelite secularity prospered. At first, every city dweller was called a burgher. The Diadoches as rulers of the cities, however, further differentiated between "burghers" possessing all the political rights the respective city has to offer and "residents" lacking any political rights whatsoever. Contrary to the status of peasants, though, all city dwellers are considered free persons.

When a peasant renounces his feudal lord and migrates to a city, he can gain burgher rights, provided the local bishop or Diadoche agrees. To prove oneself as burgher, a peasant generally has to live in a city for a year and a day. Full burgher rights are granted when the former peasant pledges allegiance to the local Diadoche, obliging himself to live up to his responsibilities as burgher.

the role of the angelitic church in neofeudalism

The following paragraphs focus on the relationships of the church to all other social factions in neofeudalism.

In the beginning, the Angelitic Church founded by Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus simply wanted to make the daily struggle for survival easier on the survivors of the great disasters. Furthermore, the clergy searched for a means to prevent a caste of landed proprietors from developing which would eventually lay claim to the land promised to the Angelitic Church by the Lord Himself. To achieve this goal, the Pontifex Maximus installed neofeudalism to stabilize the

political situation in Europe and thus his own power. So, Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus started to invest bishops and Abs with vast stretches of land. This trend changed the political landscape drastically: the ecclesiastical lords now invested with secular power were responsible only to the church (and the Pontifex Maximus), being completely independent in all other regards.

The most essential step taken by the Pontifex Maximus, though, was to send his land-owning inferiors to regions they were unfamiliar with. Thus, he kept the clerics from allying with Junklords or other local factions; these groups had no bonds to their ecclesiastical overlords whatsoever, and many Diadoches even laid claim to the area in question themselves. With undesired alliances between secular and religious leaders made impossible, the clerical lords could only turn to their superiors in church hierarchy and the Pontifex Maximus in times of need. Moreover, being strangers in strange lands, the feudal lords couldn't take root in the regions their fiefs were located in. Due to their oaths of celibacy, it was established as a fact right from the start that the clerical lord would never be able to present a (legitimate) heir – with every new generation the Pontifex Maximus had the opportunity to give the fiefdom to another, loyal cleric.

All these factors created an efficient administrative system in Europe, at least in the eyes of the Angelitic Church and its pious followers.

on names

With the exception of the naming of the Engel which follows strict rules, names in Europe often call for creativity. After the Second Flood, names had become virtually meaningless, and whoever became famous or infamous among the children and youths had earned his name due to extraordinary circumstances. Naming followed simple patterns. When a child had searched the sewers of the abandoned cities extensively and successfully for useful tidbits, for example, his folks called him "Rat" or "Crawler". If someone turned out to be a capable hunter, he was quickly called "Weasel" or "Killer". These nicknames were then adopted with pride or violently rejected. Many of the weaker children – often treated like outsiders and scapegoats – lacked convincing arguments to get rid of their new nicknames like "Stinky", "Shithead" or "Fatso". Moreover, existing Christian and surnames were bowdlerized, of course, according to the motto: "The simpler and catchier the better".

Many children still remembered the games they had played in better days all too well, especially games of make-believe like cops and robbers. And like many members of organized crime in former times, they wore their nicknames like badges of honor. From then on, Alex the Mouse became Alexander the icon painter, and Big Ben became Bernhard the Smith whom his friends still called Big Ben nevertheless. Nobody needed surnames. Rarely, two persons from a village bore the same name, and when it happened, one of them was Carlo of Northend and the other Jorge's Carlo, because his father was called Jorge.

Only today, surnames start to become more common in larger cities like Nuremberg. This isn't a widespread trend, though, and many people regard surnames as a telltale sign of show-offs and boasters. Many travelers grew fond of donning themselves the name of places, places which are difficult to reach or were lost to the Flood. They believed this practice would lend them the air of experienced, cosmopolitan travelers. European languages mingled further and further until they had turned into a single hodgepodge, leading to entirely new names like Karlito, Susata, Bernalutto, Jackuart or Erwinson. Among especially pious families the names of saints of the Angelitic Church are still very popular, showing humility and piety. (More information on saints and their tasks can be found in **Chapter Three: Mater Ecclesia**.) The names of the Engel, however, remain taboo to the common people. Parents who give their children the names of Engel are considered pretentious Heretics and are punished with death, if a benevolent priest doesn't prevent such a worst case scenario during the baptism.

the confusion of tongues

To further global understanding, many nations of the 22nd century began to abandon their original tongues in favor of English as an official trade language, though the native tongue was still cultivated in many places as a family custom. After the Lord had sent His divine wrath over the world, the orphaned children were largely unable to keep the language of their ancestors alive in the new age that had dawned. The only linguistic influences that have endured and permeate the predominantly English vocabulary are Spanish and German. This new linguistic structure was dubbed *Common* and is the only language spoken in Europe, except for Latin which the Angelitic Church installed as its standard educated speech. Certain terms from other pre-Flood nations have entered the European jargon without actually impressing themselves on the language. Due to these circumstances and despite a nominally common language, proper conversation between peasants living merely sixty kilometers apart from each other is virtually impossible in many regions, because dialects differ so drastically.

The Angelitic Church, however, cultivates Latin learned from books with all implications of using a tongue which is essentially extinct: it often sounds awkward and stiff although virtually nobody takes notice since the common people don't understand a single word of this language. The Engel speak in Latin to one another, further emphasizing their otherworldly appearance and even lending them an air of mysticism in the eyes

of the peasants. All official rituals of the Angelitic Church are held exclusively in Latin. The fact that none of the faithful can follow even a simple mass is compensated with lay-brothers whose task is to translate and interpret the contents of the masses. This procedure may seem absurd and superfluous to outsiders, but the reasons for it become obvious when the results are examined. All the divine words pouring forth from the lips of the preacher mean so much more than all comprehensible words combined could ever mean, since they remain open to imagination and encourage personal interpretations. In any case, Latin is one of the most efficient instruments of power of the Angelitic Church, even though many simple Monachs in the far corners of Europe understand as little of their own sermons as the pious flock enraptured by their words.

economy

After the waves of the Vitusdance and the Great Flood, the people of Europe – especially among the peasantry – were forced to reorganize their economic lives from the ground up.

agriculture

Just like the few free landowners, the peasant vassals found themselves surrounded by estates belonging to notable monasteries or other estates of the Angelitic Church providing the Himmel, cloisters and cities with food. The monasteries themselves are often centers of economic life as well.

It is extremely difficult for a peasant to keep his family fed. Thus, the 23rd century saw drastic changes, leading to the evolving of an urbanized burgher class specializing in trade and crafts: life in the city nowadays seems to ensure a reasonable income. A peasant who is part of the system of feudalism finds grateful customers for his products in the city dwellers, especially when a city belongs to the fief of an ecclesiastical lord rather than to the independent nation of a Diadoche. Many residents of cities ruled by a Diadoche cultivate a small strip of land outside of the city walls where they grow crops to meet their basic needs in case of food shortages while otherwise making a living as merchants or craftsmen.

The Angelitic Church harbors resentments towards this current practice. In addition to restricting the number of settlements outside of already existing cities or villages, agriculture is promoted by tax provisions which only apply to peasants. The church hopes that these measures will stop the waves of migration towards the cities which already threaten to impede on religious life.

New Markets

The remaining peasants who have decided to stay on their soil profit from the constantly growing demand for food the increase in population especially around the cities and the Himmel entails. The prices they can claim for their wine, corn, cattle, butter and eggs are climbing fast. The taxes they had to pay to their feudal lords have remained unchanged so far, however, and thus, the profits inherent in climbing prices have fallen to the peasants' share. They use them to settle charges to be paid in kind or to buy themselves out of compulsory services. Many even manage to purchase their own arable land from the church and making a small fortune with it. This practice has come to the attention of the church, though, and its officials are sure to change tax policy in the near future.

trade in the cities

There are two kinds of cities in Europe: those under a feudal lord from the ranks of the Angelitic Church installed by the Pontifex – Episcopal or monastic fiefs – and the so-called free cities. The latter are ruled by a Diadoche, a renegade noble who seceded from the Angelitic Church. Originally, only the Pontifex Maximus himself could grant the rights to found a marketplace, but in the recent past, he has invested ecclesiastical lords like the Dux, bishops, Abs, Cardinals and even a few high-ranking Armatura with that privilege. In the free cities, the local citybaron lays claim to these rights. Most often, the Diadoche elects a sheriff or burgomaster to raise and levy taxes, hold court and enforce law and order. Markets bring immense prosperity to cities, of course, regardless whether free city or under the rule of the church.

Since the foundation of the Urbanis League about 15 years ago, the number of cities striving for sovereignty has increased drastically. When a city joins the League, the rights the Diadoche had previously invested the sheriff with are automatically transferred to the City Council, though both – Diadoche and former sheriff – are generally members of this ruling body. From then on, the Council ensures that walls, towers and gates of the city are properly maintained, thus creating job opportunities for artisans. The tasks of the Council are many: the paving of streets, the baking of bricks, trade in wine from the Council's cellar, the purchase of entire villages and castles, the maintenance of infirmaries and many other things. In Cordova, the stronghold of the League, Comtessa Isabella, the local Diadoche, has even founded a school where children learn how to read and write, among other heretic pursuits.

The cities loyal to the church are bustling with *activity as well (except for the fact that you won't* find any schools, of course), furthering economic growth. In addition to the achievements mentioned above, many of them have orphanages or other charitable institutions as well as splendid ecclesiastical buildings, erected with the self-sacrificing help of the residents.

the guilds

In face of a growing demand for skilled craftsmen, the artisans are organizing in communities of interests, the so-called guilds. Even though they act very confidently, they are neither welcomed by the Angelitic Church – since the clerics regard them as a possible threat to their absolute power – nor much liked in the free cities. In the Urbanis League, their members are even forbidden seats on the City Councils. Master artisans everywhere call for a suspension of these restrictions, however. Many cities are close to riots on the matter. The city of Augsburg goes its own way (as it often does): in this free city close to the Gabrielite Himmel a master smith rules as citybaron.

foreign trade

Since the division of labor necessary for trade takes place earlier between communities than within them, foreign trade recovered more quickly in Europe after the almost utter devastation wrought by the Vitusdance and the Second Flood, especially trade in luxuries, later on in spices, fabrics and various metals like copper, tin or bronze.

The first trade routes in the eastern Mediterranean regions were re-established as early as the 22nd century. Further expansion to the western shores of the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic coast soon followed – Greece in particular became a veritable nation of daring sea merchants.

The merchants profited from the foundation of the Angelitic Church and the Sending of the Engel – even though the church's trading activities themselves were rather limited, its armies made trade-routes more secure and its political and economical influence led to a standardization of currencies, measurements and weights.

After the temporary reduction in trade during the pogroms on technology, the new trade routes from Iberia to the Slavic regions in the east, from the Baltic to the Mediterranean Sea gained remarkable importance.

Generally speaking, the main hubs of trade are the Himmel and a few major cities, notably *Roma Æterna* and the small Diadoche city-state of Augsburg. Trade in the northern regions of Europe is currently dominated by the New Hanse.

god's reward

Even during a time when mankind seems to be down and out, an efficient monetary system is required to convey a certain sense of security to the people. Since resources are scarce in the remaining regions of Europe, it is only natural to put existing resources to good use.

After the introduction of the Euro in the early years of the 21st century, this currency gradually spread all over the globe. Ancient writings even claim that some of this currency's units were so valuable that they were made of paper and ingeniously decorated by the able hands of the greatest artisans. None of these precious papers have survived the Second Flood, and only the metal coins – the silver, copper and golden Euro and Cent – are used today as Manna.

The word Manna comes from the terminology of the Angelitic Church and presumably goes back to an old legend appearing in the apocrypha of the Holy Bible. Nobody knows the meaning of this term for sure. Nevertheless, it entered the vocabulary of the common people rather quickly.

Due to the fact that Manna grows rarer and rarer - the population increases while the pecuniary resources remain on the same level – the purchasing power of the coins is rising. Whereas a peasant received 2 Euro for a sack of rice a few years ago, he only gains 50 Cent today. A fisherman has to make his living with 15 Euro a day, while a skilled artisan in the city has an average income of 80 Euro.

Exchanging natural produce for Manna is no longer a good deal for fishermen, peasants and the rest of the country dwellers. Therefore, handing out natural produce as change for Manna has become virtually unknown. Generally speaking, the forms of legal tender in Europe are about to be reduced to Manna. Growing numbers of country dwellers keep the Manna they received for their natural produce when they went shopping in the cities and start using it as tender in their villages, where bartering was commonplace only a few years ago. Considering the current development, it is only a question of time before bartering is replaced by Manna, turning into a rare occurrence when peasants want to trade favors. Currently, though, it is still common everywhere to pay with fowl for maintenance work on a roof or trade oxen for hand-woven fabrics.

the new hanse: merchant princes of the high seas

Even before the return of the Dreamseed, during the Decade of Reconstruction, merchants from northern Germany re-established trade routes across the North Sea. Their ships always sailed together in small fleets to aid one another in case of pirate raids or other perils of the sea. Their influence was hardly felt during the first years of the 27th century, but eventually they grew to a notable faction with considerable economic power.

Why found a New Hanse? According to Angelite law, if a wheel on a wagon carrying trade goods breaks and the axle touches the ground, the entire shipment belongs to the owner of the land, usually the church. If a ship is stranded, the locals lay claim to all goods washed ashore without any chance for the merchants of keeping them from doing so. Many ships are even lured to their doom by false beacons in the night. To counter these hazards and claims, the New Hanse has formed on the northern coasts of Europe. The merchants protect themselves from outlawry and preserve their freedom of trade. The Hanse's members consist of a small, loyal community of merchants sharing common interests.

the ways of the Lord

Looking at the tight web of roads and highways of the 21st century, one might think that it would last for time to come. Roads as smooth as mirrors and massive layers of concrete dominated Europe prior to the Second Flood. Today, mankind has grown wiser in many ways. Most highways didn't even last the first post-Flood century before they were reclaimed by nature. Seemingly unpretentious weeds with unexpected tenacity and strength cracked the heavy layers of concrete like a sea-otter cracks a seashell on his belly. Some streets lost their significance anyway, since they simply lead nowhere after the drastic rise of the ocean levels. Bridges collapsed like oversized houses of cards and perished in the rising tide.

not all roads lead to rome

Only few streets were exempted from such a fate, mostly due to the cleverness of cunning merchants who soon realized their vast potential and started to maintain these prospective trade routes. This endeavor was incredibly expensive in terms of Manna and the sweat of many willing and unwilling workers.

Merchants followed two strategies to compensate these immense costs, one of them being a highway toll. Toll stations were built along the roads where travelers had to pay in regular intervals for using the road. The results of this idea were manifold. Most people lacked (and still lack) the financial resources to pay these tolls, and therefore simply make their way alongside the road when traveling. The tolls levied were therefore increased on these roads, infuriating those travelers willing to pay for themselves but unwilling to basically pay for those who *won't* use the road as well.

Other less scrupulous contemporaries decided to lay claim to the rich bounty they saw in the toll stations and many of these stations were raided. This again forced the merchants to hire mercenaries to protect the toll stations, further increasing the toll and resulting in a downward spiral of sorts. This problem incited many merchants to organize themselves and share the costs for construction and maintenance of trade routes – generally, they were the only ones who knew how to put the roads to good use, anyway.

The practice described above is common in all the major cities and the roads connecting them to each other today. On roads far from larger cities, toll stations remain the norm, however. Europe's most impressive highways are those between the Himmel and the Eternal City of *Roma Æterna*, all of which are financed by the Church. Gigantic triumphal arches and statues of Engel built by local stonemasons line the roads. In regular intervals, resting places can be found, catering to the spiritual and physical recreation of travelers. Small shrines and chapels dedicated to the different orders of Engel invite travelers to rest in their shade for a while. On particularly humid days, itinerant merchants can gain a small fortune by selling drinks and snacks.

by sea and land

With a few notable exceptions, Europeans aren't too picky when choosing their means of transport or travel. Anything which could serve them in not being forced to travel by foot can be found on the rather sparsely frequented roads. In the countryside, wooden carts pulled by animals are common. Affluent peasants can afford the amazing tires from Diadoche surplus, scavenged from pre-Flood vehicles and sold at vastly inflated prices in the cities' marketplaces. Horses are expensive, and they are never employed for working in the fields but rather as riding animals for visits to the nearest city. Horses aren't common in the cities, either; stables for them would require too much space and the expenses would be far too high compared to their limited usefulness in a city.

Clever artisans have invented numerous vehicles over the centuries which are popular in the cities, from two-wheels – wooden frameworks reminding of bicycles lacking pedals, making it possible to cover great distances with only minimal physical effort, provided the ground isn't too rough or muddy – to large chariots used by many Diadoches to demonstrate their power. These chariots are veritable monstrosities made of steel equipped with many superfluous knick-knacks and pre-Flood technology. The Diadoches make use of them within city confines only rarely, since the chariots are often far too bulky for the narrow, winding streets and alleys. In addition to these extremes, there is a broad variety of other bizarre vehicles which never made it from prototypes to popular means of transportation.

Most engineers are less creative in regards to form and function when it comes to water vessels. Security is the top priority, and the creatures populating the seas and lakes of Europe justify this notion. Except for those belonging to the New Hanse, trading vessels are few and far between on the seas between Europe's large islands because journeys are full of hazards and often end in the loss of the vessel and the entire shipment. The coastal scenery is dominated by small to medium fishing-boats which ensure the food supply of the fishermen and their families as well as the survival of the Europeans as a whole. Even the larger vessels of the 27th century never sail too far out and virtually none of them ever loose sight of the coastline, for fear of falling prey to the horrors of the deep sea.

The crews of larger fishing-boats and junks protect their precious boats by reinforcing hulls with iron plates, covering decks with steel cages or

hiring specially trained harpooners. Only the sailing-boats and galleys of the armada of the Angelitic Church dare to sail the high seas. But even the Templars are unsure whether their vessels could withstand an attack by a Dreamseed creature lurking beneath the waves. Sailors like to be on the safe side regarding propulsion as well; they rely on the large triangular sails or oars and their own strength and endurance during dull weather. Those who try their luck with more modern forms of propulsion like steam-power are ridiculed by most with better sense.

but not by air

Numerous engineers and Diadoches have tried to solve the mystery of flying. Some of them succeeded, as the records of the Diadoches are sometimes astonishingly accurate and complete. Others fell on hard times and paid with their lives for their efforts – or were marked for the rest of their lives during one of their vain attempts to fly. The joy of those who had bested gravity wasn't meant to last long, though; the Angelitic Church regarded any attempts to move through the air as heresy and not only destroyed all the flying apparatuses they could find, but summarily executed all engineers as well. The Engel alone are allowed to populate the skies, their rightful element. Whatever else is able to soar up into the skies must be the abominable spawn sent by the Lord of the Flies.

the tools of the tempter

During the past few centuries, the Holy Angelitic Church has successfully banned all technology from the face of the earth. The noble Raguelite Order was chosen to guard the pre-Flood machines and apparatuses in the caverns deep beneath its Himmel, so that no man, tempter or demon of the Dreamseed could ever take possession of them. The church was convinced they would remain hidden for all eternity, for who would have thought that the Keepers' Himmel could ever fall? And that's exactly what happened.

Together with the Himmel, though, any pre-Flood technology therein fell prey to the flames.

Whatever technology survived, remains hidden in the secret storehouses of the anti-church Diadoches dispersed all over Europe and the vaults of the remaining Himmel. The church is well aware that machines from the times before the Second Flood exist and are in the hands of worldly powers, but feels incapable of addressing this problem at the moment, because the armies of the Lord of the Flies have laid siege to the last stronghold of human faith – Europe – in their mobile hells, the Infernos.

of the ingenuity of the people

Not all the achievements of the ancestors of the 27th century Europeans have been lost, of course. Too many bric-a-bracs have survived the pogroms on technology instigated by the Angelitic Church and are waiting to be rediscovered or have been incorporated into daily life in such a manner that they are no longer regarded as forbidden technology. Many of these technological marvels of daily life are, not surprisingly, employed or even introduced to the masses by the church. In some cities with larger churches, it is even possible to listen to the words of the revered Consistory on Sundays during the Holy Mass when this council of Cardinals offers its advice to the Pontifex Maximus who is working for the greater good of all Europeans from distant *Roma Æterna*.

Though the audience rarely wonders how the Angelitic Church works this miracle, in many churches, clerics managed to build devices from pre-Flood machines which allow communication with distant places via radio-waves. This technology is far from commonplace, particularly considering the muscle power necessary to produce the electricity that powers it, and none of the novices are fond of pedaling for hours, even for the glory of the Lord.

Another revolutionary achievement of recent years is steam-power. In some cities – especially those where Diadoches rule – clever engineers and artisans have put their relative tranquility from the church to good use to further this amazing technology. Mostly, the Diadoches finance these research projects and try to keep the church oblivious to such endeavors through cunning political maneuvers – unfortunately, not all of them are successful. Too many spies of the Angelitic Church eavesdrop on places where nobody would ever expect them to, and thus many achievements of "modern" technology are nipped in the bud.

Though engineers succeeded in comprehending how steam-engines work and getting a glimpse of the incredible possibilities such engines offer, a practical use of the new technology is a long time coming. Naturally, this development doesn't proceed in a linear fashion in all the cities, and the crews of some fishing-boats already try to get the better of classic sailing-boats by using a steam-engine, and this is merely the tip of the iceberg. It will surely take a long time before the usage of steam-engines in normal production procedures will be advanced past a state of trial and error.

Generally, it is nigh impossible to find a single, striking word to describe the living conditions of Europeans in regards to technology. There is no such thing as a common level of technology in Europe. In some places, it has been possible to study pre-Flood technology, jury-rig certain pieces of it and eventually draw some conclusions which allowed for new or other rediscovered inventions. In other places, people are yet to move beyond muscle-powered plows and the tallow-candle.

When it comes to medicine, there are almost no differences whatsoever, though; people rely on a mixture of instinct, inquiring curiosity and trial and error. Charlatans are at work everywhere, whether in the countryside or in the cities, and the chances of getting proper medical help are as good as catching a feather during the Baptism of Engel in *Roma Æterna*. Despite this, it is well known that the best places to find treatment for serious illnesses and wounds at one of the Raphaelite infirmaries spread all through Europe, where the ill and hurt are treated by trained Monachs or Begins.

technological marvels of the himmel

Pre-Flood technology has always been a part of daily life for the residents of the Himmel, gradually being regarded as a matter of course by the Engel and their allies. Gigantic transformer stations and complex machinery deep down in the cellars of the Himmel ensure this luxury for the servants of the Angelitic Church. Only a handful of the Himmel's residents and virtually none of the common people know this technology exists, and even if it would be revealed to the unsuspecting, they would probably fail to understand it.

The fact that the Himmel are entirely self-sufficient lends them an air of even greater mystique in the eyes of the faithful. Almost all rooms are illuminated by a shining light, even though there isn't a single candle to be seen; the Himmel's residents can ease themselves in sterile, white lavatories with running water; the temperature within the Himmel is kept on the same level regardless of the season. All of these characteristics strike visitors as simply marvelous. Essentially, the fact that their Himmel offer such commodities is a miracle to the Engel, Monachs, Begines, Templars and Abs as well, but they have become so accustomed to them that they usually consider them as completely normal, as only few of the inhabitants of a Himmel are chosen to take care of maintaining these marvels and even fewer truly understand them.

Outside of the Engel, any hint of pre-Flood technology is cause for serious conflict, though. Whoever pays no attention to the pogroms on technology instigated by the Angelitic Church or even consciously disregards them, is subjected to divine judgment in all its severity. Only powerful Diadoches or conglomerates of smaller Junklords are able to withstand the wrath of the Angelitic Church even if only temporarily, as they have the means to literally hold the church at gunpoint.

# of rags and robes

27th century fashion

As it has been the case in history so often, the trends of 27th century fashion are determined by the tastes of the nobility and the tenets of the omnipresent Holy Mother Church. During a time when only the rich are able to bother with such trivialities like style or good taste, it is difficult to offer a profile which does justice to the term "fashion". In the countryside, only practical considerations count, while personal tastes determine which clothes are worn in the cities. The only certainty is that the Engel's garbs coupled with the climatic conditions in Europe gave birth to the large majority of current styles of dress. Storytellers should imagine fashion to be a mixture of styles from feudal Japan and the late European Middle Ages.

in the countryside

The climatic conditions which have turned entire Europe into a subtropical greenhouse make it possible for the common people living in the countless fishing and farming villages to dispense with much of the clothing 21st century Europeans needed – the meager income of many peasants and fishermen wouldn't have been sufficient to pay for such commodities anyway. Whenever weather and situation allow, country dwellers walk barefooted. Shoes are expensive, so they are only worn on cold winter days, on weddings or on important holidays of the Angelitic Church. The head, though, is covered by a hat almost all the time; women sometimes wear artistically arranged shawls instead. Hats made from rice straw are the most common headgear for simple peasants, for rice and its by-products are the most common natural resource. Even women carry such hats over their shawls to keep dry in face of the persistent rain. On the rice fields, men and women alike wear skirts almost exclusively. The hems of these skirts are pulled up between the legs and stuck into the front of the waistband, resulting in a kind of baggy pants look. On warm days, people walk bare-chested. Women paying heed to modesty wear a piece of tied up cloth.

On the coast, winds are more severe, and the land is often haunted by thunderstorms. The locals take into account this fickle kind of weather in their clothing. Hats are tied with laces under the chin or around the neck to keep them from being blown away. Light linen jackets protect their wearers from the harsh winds. Unlike the peasants, fishermen almost never wear skirts, because they have to work a lot in or close to the water; skirts would soak through quickly and become a burden. Therefore, tight, knee length trousers are common on the coast. Whoever decides to defy the dangers of the sea does so wearing another jacket made of a sturdier fabric, like leather or rubber. Those who can afford it, complete such an outfit with heavy boots of a comparable material.

The average artisan – a smith or carpenter, for example – doesn't wear any special garment. In larger settlements where several artisans of the same craft live, the artisans have begun to show their membership in a guild by wearing similar hats and/or jackets.

in the city

Cities offer much more to observers interested in fashion than rural regions. Moving further away from the borders of a city where it is impossible to discern a certain style of fashion different from that of the rural communities due to the intermingling between country and city dwellers taking place in these quarters, the picture gets more varied. The omnipresent hats of the peasants are replaced by stylish bamboo shades basically serving the same function as the hats while being more impractical – which suits the mentality of many city dwellers. The shades are manufactured by highly specialized artisans who demand high prices for their exquisite work. Shoes are as expensive in the cities as they are in the country, but they are being worn much more frequently here. The reasons are manifold: the pavement on the streets gets awfully hot on summer days, while being unpleasantly cold during the winter. Moreover, shoes are a sign of wealth, and the city dwellers are fond of displaying how affluent they are, even though it's is often more for show. To prevent their precious shoes from being worn-out or getting dirty too quickly, many city dwellers wear overshoes. A large variety of outer garments follow the turn of the seasons. It is of the utmost importance to carry as much clothing as possible. Like many other follies, this notion isn't based on any logical reason. On further consideration, it becomes obvious that there are many drawbacks to it: the costs are immense and the danger of suffering a heat stroke in the subtropical climate of Central Europe is high. Many a rich lady or show-offish bachelor has lost consciousness due to the wholly superfluous layers of clothes on his body. Nevertheless, all these excesses of human vanity – as foolish as they might seem – have become an integral part of city life and are even the most important factor in the lives of many city dwellers.

servants of faith

By far the most powerful and influential institution in the known world, the Angelitic Church has left its mark on the fashion styles of 27th century as well. Above all, the Engel have godfathered most of the Angelite garments worn today. The orders' wide, heavy battle-dresses quickly spread among the orders' elite guards, the Templars. They are of different colors because white tunics are reserved exclusively to the Engel, but their form is easily recognized in the church's gala uniforms. **Chapter Four: Promissum** looks into the

Engel's garment and the differences between the respective orders in ample detail.

The Templars' garments are heavily based on the appearance of the order they serve. The members of this brotherhood try to come as close to their role models, the Engel, in terms of dress and conduct as possible without being subjected to the reproach of being Heretics. Their tunics are colored in accordance with their respective orders, and splendid suits of armor they have often crafted themselves sparkle on their bodies honed in battle.

Many of these suits of armor resemble those of the samurai from feudal Japan, not because the Templars deliberately chose to do so, but due to the fact that human anatomy coupled with the use of natural materials essentially dictates a similar style. Those few Templars who aren't placed under the supervision of a single order of Engel but rather belong to the personal guard of the Pontifex Maximus stationed in *Roma Æterna* wear magnificent armor made of hammered metal which feature characteristics of a rather gothic style, not unlike the majority of sacral architecture in Europe.

The Grimrider Bands of the Angelitic Church strayed further from the classic Engel motifs than the Templars in regard to their choice of garment. Nevertheless, there are certain similarities. The entire clothing of these dreaded mercenaries serving the church is deep black. This choice of color obviously came to pass for psychological reasons only. Even their horses are bred in this particular color. The tunics – which are popular among Grimriders as well – are often almost entirely hidden beneath layers of other, sturdy clothing. Despite the awful stench their greased outer garments exude, their code of dress offers a number of advantages. Countless pockets hidden between the folds offer room for all sorts of equipment, from tobacco-pouches to long knives. Heavy, broad hoods can even be pulled over the Riders' bulky iron hats to keep the valuable pieces of armor from rusting. High, heavy boots with sharp spurs peeping out from under the ankle length trousers put the last touches on the outfit of the average Grimrider, though these are only a few examples for the mercenaries' ingenuity on their week-long missions in rough terrain.

The Monachs and Begins of the various Orders differ from one another merely in minor details when it comes to clothing. The most visible distinctive features are hair and beard. Most Monachs wear their hair long and open and sport long beards as well. The hair of the Begins is usually kept hidden beneath broad cowls, weighing in at several kilograms due to their extensive wire framework. Both sexes wear simple robes with wide, flowing sleeves. The garments get more splendid and expensive for members of higher ranks within the hierarchy of the Angelitic Church, although less in terms of style, but rather in terms of additional accessories: embroidered or painted girdles or scarves, bejeweled shoes or magnificent hats complete their outfits, even though the original idea of plain clothing still remains obvious. The dignitaries of the orders and the clerics in the immediate vicinity of the Pontifex Maximus attach great value to set off against other clerics and stress their exposed rank within the Angelitic Church. Among them, robes are replaced by state attires in the orders' shining colors or the divine messengers' pure white.

the unbeholden

In the society of 27th century Europe, the Diadoches are without doubt an exception to the rule when it comes to fashion. Only a handful of these self-styled nobles could be associated with a certain style of dress, and most of them would never accept social restraints to impede on their personal tastes. As secular rulers of Europe, they neither see the necessity of justifying their actions to anyone nor do they feel the need to care for the spoonerisms of urban vanity. Thus, a few examples have to suffice to give an impression of the various excesses of extensive wealth.

Some Diadoches attempt to remove themselves from the affluent members of European trade houses by wearing expensive yet simple clothing which they adorn with relics of old technology easily accessible to them. Others literally carry their wealth on themselves – they have artisans tailor vastly expansive robes which consist of several pieces of clothing from the time prior to the Vitusdance, requiring numerous servants to carry the hems of the Diadoche's garment. The garments of female Diadoches are unrivaled in terms of pomp even by the robes of the Angelitic Church, turning heads everywhere the Junkladies go. Huge collars with heavy wire frameworks as well as oversized sleeves and skirts alternate with skin tight see through dresses which have raised the ire of many ecclesiastical lords – or have brought the blush of shame to their faces. Most servants of the church are well aware that many Diadoches intend to do just that and don't lay themselves open to ridicule by venting their anger. Instead, the priesthood came up with the name of "Junklords" for these upstarts whose wealth is based on the garbage of a lost culture, thereby paying the new nobility back in their own coin.

travelers and itinerant merchants

Most travelers trying to make a fortune on the road are characterized by a colorful repertoire of garments of various styles. Merchants, jugglers, charlatans and showmen – they are all unified by a certain longing for a unique style of fashion which shows their experience of the world. Most craved for accessories are classic pieces of clothing from lost eras which are virtually indestructible and give their wearers the impression as if they were reliving adventures of old; yellow rubber cloaks, high black boots of the same material and transparent capes are just a few examples. Many merchants and caravan guides combine such antiques with expensive fabrics of a dark color to spice up their appearance, while jugglers and showmen add further crude colors to their already colorful attire. Frequently, travelers fall victim to roaming bandits and jealous city dwellers who either see the often vastly expensive pieces of clothing as an opportunity to make a good profit or who want to adorn themselves with those peculiarities.

It is easy for travelers of even rather slender means to acquire such relics of former times by visiting places during their journeys where such relics are more common than in other places. These precious items can also simply be found in the ruins of the European pre-Flood cities. Regardless how a traveler came into the possession of such pieces of clothing, he is sure to earn respect as well as envious looks.

food

The culinary art of 27th century Europe is unmistakably independent, different from 21st century customs and, due to the changes in living conditions, characterized by inimitable ingenuity and improvisation. The following statements are valid for eating at home as well as eating in a tavern, though the latter occurs far more infrequently than today.

Since it has become impossible to refrigerate food – though it can still be dried or bottled – most meals are prepared with fresh ingredients. The custom of a rather strict order of dishes in a menu has fallen into disuse; while eating is still regarded as an act of pleasure, people have neither time nor leisure to celebrate the art of cooking in veritable "culinary temples". Rather, all dishes of a menu are served at the same time: cold and warm salads with many herbs and spices as well as seafood like fish – *especially* the common bass – and shrimp are the cornerstones of cuisine for European coastal dwellers. On the entire continent, the menu is rounded off with various kinds of vegetables, countless spices and all sorts of exotic dishes – in some regions where rodents have multiplied so much that they have become a veritable plague upon the land, rat fillet is considered a staple. Rice is the basis of every dish. Fresh fruit and sometimes even home made sweets are served on special occasions.

rice – the number one food

Due to climatic conditions, rice is the most important food in 27th century Europe. 60 to 70 grams a day suffice to keep an average person from starving. When the phrase "eat" is used in 27th century Europe, "eat rice" is the assumed meaning. The importance of rice in European cuisine during the time of **Engel** is undisputed.

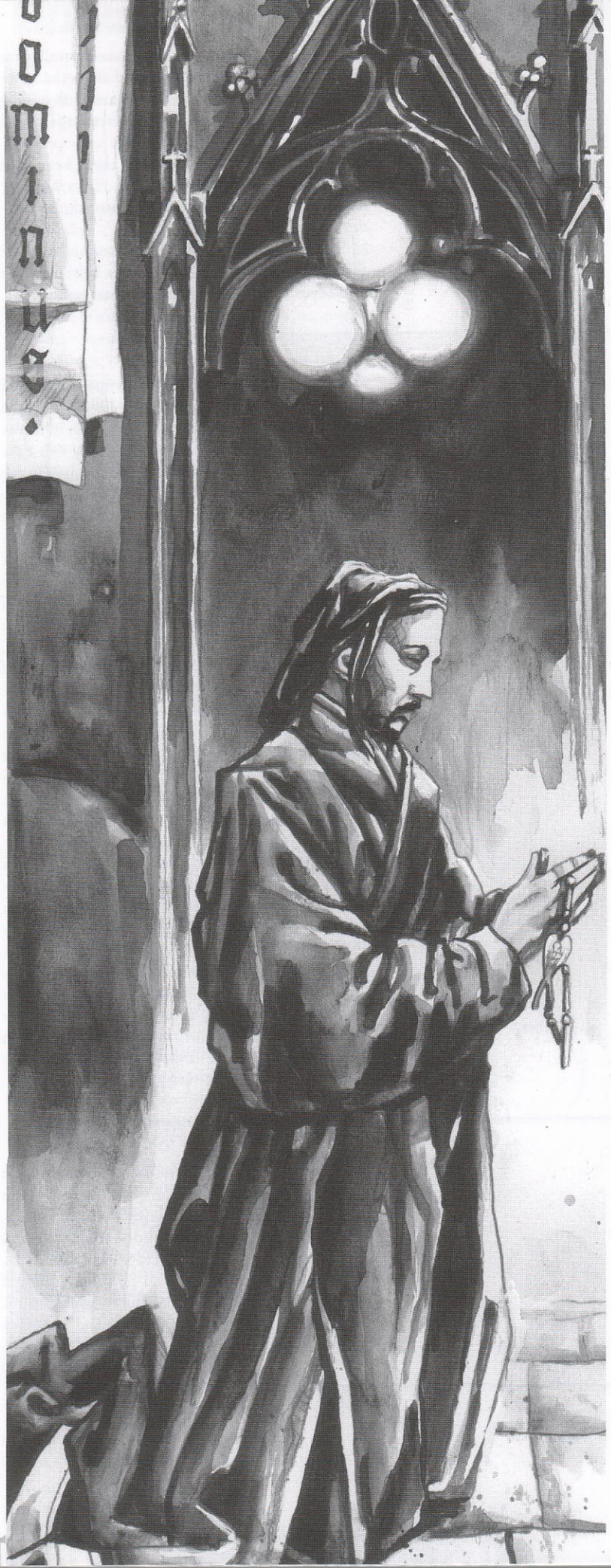
During breakfast, people often have a light rice soup and small morsels of fish, meat or vegetable. During dinner, usually the most extensive meal of the day, white rice is always placed in the center of the table.

Two different kinds of rice are predominantly used in the cuisine of 27th century Europe: long grain rice and sticky rice; the latter is mostly used for preparing sweets since it turns into a sticky mass after cooking. It is soaked in cool water for two hours before it is cooked in boiling water.

The average European usually eats normal, white long grain rice. In rich houses or on special occasions, scented rice is served. Rice is washed in flowing cold water and rinsed until the water stays clear. Afterwards, it is drained and cooked in open pots. Halfway through cooking, the pot is closed, so the rice can swell further.

noodles

Next to rice, noodles are the second most important food in Europe which can be found in many dishes. There are several different kinds of noodles:



• **Rice noodles** are made from ground rice. There are two variants, broad and thin, the latter being more common. They are covered with boiling water they can swell in and are afterwards rinsed prior to further use.

• **Glass noodles** are made from mung beans and have to be soaked before cooking. They are very thin and become transparent – hence the name – during cooking.

• **Classic noodles** made from flour and eggs are thin like spaghetti from 21st century Italy. They are cooked in salt water for a rather short amount of time.

seafood

After the Second Flood, Europe discovered many riches in regard to seafood. The waters in the continent's inland are immensely plentiful in fish as well. Since some of the larger predatory fish have noticed how easy it is for them to make prey in the rivers and lakes of the inland, swimming in these waters is dangerous – even many fishermen become the prey of *their* intended prey.

To water the rice fields, canals hundreds of kilometers long have been dug which are also populated by fish and serve as means of transportation besides their initial meaning. These canals are the main spawning area of the pike shark, a four foot long predator sporting several rows of imposing teeth which appeared in Europe after the Great Flood. It resembles a crossbreed of 21st century pikes and primeval coelacanths and is extremely aggressive – many rice farmers or their children working in the fields have lost their lives to this predator which rarely hesitates to attack creatures several times its own size which it considers possible prey nonetheless.

The most popular and delicious (as well as most expensive) saltwater fish is the silver or white butter fish. Its firm flesh is very tasty and considered a veritable delicacy on all European coasts. Other edible fish include halibut, monkfish and sole. Furthermore, cod, perch, hake, mackerel and tuna supplement the diet. Gutting and cleaning the fish makes up the majority of many fishermen's daily work. Mostly, fish are not are not filleted, although in more exclusive inns fish fillet is a staple on the menu. Lobsters are also very popular across Europe.

fruit and vegetables

In addition to the numerous spices, Europe offers a wealth of fruit and vegetables which can be bought on the well stocked markets. Besides the pomato, these fruit and vegetables include various forms of eggplant, broccoli and bamboo sprouts. Cauliflowers, snow peas and beans can also be found. Central Europe in particular also offers fruit in lavish bounty. Pineapples, bananas, lychees, mangos and paw-paws are but a few examples of this diversity.

spices

The use of spices has seen a lot of changes in 27th century Europe. Custom dictates that a meal has to include five different flavors: bitter, spicy, sweet, salty and sour.

A fondness for spicy food and the technique of first preparing a pesto before frying all ingredients of a dish in a pan has spread across Europe ever since rice became the culinary foundation, because the omnipresent rice can be served with a vast variety of dishes. The most common dishes are served with sauce, regardless whether the base is fish, meat or vegetables. Frequently, the pesto consists of up to 20 different ingredients and it is often prepared right before eating time. It is toasted briefly in a pan before the other ingredients as well as water, broth or milk are added, resulting in thick soups or stews.

The most important spices of the aromatic 27th century cuisine are ginger, cardamom, coriander, garlic and salt. Often, milk is added to the stew to temper the hot dishes.

kitchen utensils and methods of cooking

Mortars are indispensable for preparing pesto. They are made of rather rough stone because the spices thus can be ground more easily. If no mortar is at hand, a small grinder can serve just as well.

The most important utensil next to the mortar is the frying pan. The ingredients are cut into small pieces, fried in hot oil and continually stirred with a spoon or long spatula. The whole process only takes a few minutes, so all ingredients are kept close at hand. Due to the short cooking time, the dishes stay juicy when fried in a hot pan.

The second most important style of preparing a dish is steaming. In addition to a large pot, either a small wicker basket or metal sieve is required. For steaming, water is poured into a pot up to a height of one or two inches. Then, the water is heated and the basket or sieve is put into the pot which is lidded afterwards. After two minutes or so, the ingredients of the dish are put into the basket and steamed for 5 minutes.

Steaming is a particularly favored style of cooking: the dishes thus prepared retain their aroma and no minerals or vitamins are lost. Another common method of cooking is stewing, for which iron pans are used. Sometimes, dishes are also roasted rather than stewed.

Moreover, barbecues are popular across Europe. Marinades made from oil, rice wine and spices are considered essential when it comes to barbecues.

beverages

The Europeans of the 27th century rarely drink alcohol to accompany their meals, preferring water, tea or juice. The only exception to that rule is beer which is brewed in many monasteries. Wine is considered a luxury rather than an everyday drink. Rice wine – which can be served hot or cold – is the most popular alcoholic beverage, especially since it can be distilled so easily.

art, kitsch and heresy

During an era when the means of communicating via the written word are limited or even non-existent, messages are conveyed with the help of images. Therefore, art in virtually every form is valued in Europe, and artists are respected among those Europeans who can afford to pay for their masterworks.

After the first pogroms on technology by the Angelitic Church, a pogrom on the written word followed in 2201, spelling doom to all educational institutions outside Angelite walls. The only opportunity to get some education for Europeans has been and still is oral tradition ever since. The church is of the opinion that it is simply not necessary to let a fishermen know more than how to catch his fish, any more than a rice farmer needs to know how to till his field. Important decisions and considerations are made by the church, and the clerics' plan seems to stand all tests: the Angelitic Church has managed to claim power undisputedly for several centuries now.

Many artists have apparently firmly established themselves in the gray areas of politics. Even though they are incapable of understanding the written word, they are nevertheless frequently employed by the church to paint icons of Angelitic saints or whole ceilings which are dotted with the forbidden letters. Moreover, the painters are the link between the church and the populace because their depictions of diverse proceedings help the people in understanding said proceedings. When a Monach wants to explain the intricacies of the Engel's war on the Dreamseed, it is helpful to have some illustrations at hand which show how the Engel fight the demons of the Lord of the Flies.

In recent years, more than one painter has gone a little too far, though, getting caught while incorporating insulting or ambiguous contents into his works – these artists were summarily executed as Heretics by the Angelitic Church. Ever since, artists are subjected to close inspection by inquisitors who try to ensure the inoffensiveness of their work. A small group of artists managed to slip through the inquisitors' web, though; all over Europe paintings or sketches appear which try to draw attention to social shortcomings in a highly defamatory manner. Of course, these insulting paintings bear no signatures, and the church's persecutors know virtually nothing about their origin. The most successful of these silent revolutionaries are those who know how to hide their accusations and indications so well that they rise to become duly honored "masters" receiving regular payment from the church despite the heretic content of their works.

The stonemasons feel that they have to carry an even heavier load than the painters. If they don't belong to those few chosen who carve the heads of the Angelite upper echelons in stone in *Roma Æterna*, they are doomed to work on gigantic statues of Engel for the rest of their lives - statues which line seemingly endless streets praising the Lord and spreading their stone wings in a cloud covered sky.

Music plays an essential role in the spiritual recreation of the general populace as well as the clerics, even though the Angelitic Church doesn't approve of every kind of music. Stringed instruments, drums and wind-instruments are used in the modern music of the 27th century. In the countryside, where it is nigh-impossible to buy expensive instruments, the locals imitate Sarielite song in many-voiced choirs, while in the cities the rhythmic beating of the drums sets the tone of music.

Many of these strong, driving rhythms are intended to remind the people of the Vitusdance which heralded the end of the old world. People dance to these songs as if they were stricken by this plague. Through ecstatic convulsions and grotesque contortions they try to enter a state of trance which makes them forget the hardships of their daily lives and carries them to a better world for a few short minutes – the world of their dreams and wishes. These dances are a thorn in the side of the Angelitic Church. The clerics teach that these dances are sure to make people stupid and that they hamper the circulation of blood in the heads of the dancers which can lead to an early death. Most of the common people don't mind these teachings, though; they regard their dances as their personal minor uprising against the church.

Many musicians have specialized in sacral music to earn their living. If the Angelitic Church deems their compositions worthy, they are even played during Holy Masses. Such a performance is a great honor for a musician.

The most bizarre art form, however, are the devotionals which can be found in virtually any place of Angelite power. At the Himmel, at churches, at places of pilgrimage and at holy sites, itinerant merchants offer these aberrations of human tastes to the humble faithful: colorful bead necklaces with lockets depicting Angelitic symbols, small statuettes of Engel made of shiny materials which hold candles instead of swords in their hands, bottles shaped like the Himmel woven round with rice straw, all these small things which were manufactured with much care and sense for details sell extremely well with the pious who flock to the holy sites. These devotionals often decorate the homes of the common European. Recently, the Angelitic Church has levied taxes on this marketing of Angelitic symbols, thus profiting again from the piousness of the people. Nevertheless, the distributors of such art seem to get their cut out of it, since sales numbers are steadily rising, and the upper classes have started to regard the tiny works of art as popular collectibles, buying them in large numbers as a form of valuable.

intro

All the residents of the Ramielite Himmel gathered on the mountain top to participate in the epitaph mass for the fellowship which had fallen prey to the demonic Dreamseed while defending Liberec. Over their heads hovered a giant, golden platform from which the Sarielites raised their voices in a choral.

Mariel had known he would die. Even though he hadn't told Fabiel before the battle, he could see it in his eyes. He had been surrounded by an air of infinite sadness and great power, and they had both known there was no running away from their destiny. And now he was lying there on his bed of rock next to Auriel, Baalel and the others.

The Monachs and a handful of Gabrielites had prepared the dead Engel for their funeral as thoroughly as they could, but Fabiel had seen the corpses after the battle and knew that the birds' feathers and votivclothes hid scorched flesh and splintered bone.

He dared not look around. It was his first time on the mountain of the dead, and on his way up here – walking, rather than flying, to honor his fallen comrades – the old graves haunted him with visions of death and decay. The sight of the stone mounds and their outlines, still recognizable as Engel with spread wings, overwhelmed him. This place was so dominated by memories and emotions that he couldn't muster the strength to fight the gloom. For the first time he doubted if the Ramielite gift was truly a blessing.

The five graves were set in a semicircle around a large boulder on which the Ab now stood and preached to the gathered servants of the Lord. He praised the Engel's courage, their willingness to sacrifice themselves. He spoke of the community of the purified the Engel would find their peace in. And he told of the mercy of the Angelitic Church, but his words never reached Fabiel.

burial rites

He was far away, on another mountain high above the sea.

Mariel was with him, and Auriel and Baalel, too. They had been a fellowship then. They had been sent to decipher the glyphs on an old stone-circle, but the rocks were hollowed by the sea, plunging the menhirs into the sea. The fellowship stood on the cliff together for a long time, savoring that unique feeling of dampness on their skins brought about by the ocean spray and the rain. The earth touched the sky there.

The Ab finished his address and blessed the Engel's bodies. Now the grieving people of Liberec stepped forth in a long procession to place stones they had carried up here from the valley on the graves. Fabiel could see many older persons and children among the carriers, burdened with heavy loads they almost collapsed under.

When they had reached the graves, Templars directed them in putting layer upon layer on the dead bodies without damaging them.

Fabiel could stand it no longer. Mariel, Baalel and the others gave their lives for these people; they would have never wanted such drudgery for them. Whatever had become of his fellow Engel after their deaths, they no longer needed their ruined bodies.

Vision blurred by tears, Fabiel turned away and rose into the sky. He barely noticed the furious calls of the grieving people as he rose toward the gray clouds, wings beating mightily. He wanted only solitude.

chapter

But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

-psalms 5; 7

three: mater ecclesia

or,

of the omnipotence of the holy mother church

In a world of persistent rain where traveling from one place to another often is only possible by ship, where the Dreamseed has returned in order to corrupt God's own people everywhere, where Engel with flaming swords and healing hands are omnipresent, a unifying force of good has stepped forth which alleviates the most urgent of grieves and guides the way in the darkest of times: the Church. In a time of universal insecurity, the church offers a home to the European people, it protects them and sets beacons on the troublesome path into an unknown future. In the hopes of unifying all the people beneath its shield of faith, the Holy Mother Church urges its wayward flock on without the slightest hesitation.

the dogma of angelitic faith

Religion has always been a hotly debated topic in our world and it still is in 27th century europe. The only difference being that there is no longer a conflict between individual faiths but rather between sects and sub-groups within one faith, as the Angelitic Church is the only serious religion in the known world, and its upper ranks strive to keep it that way by all means necessary.

To gain a more in-depth look at how the Angelitic mind works, it has to be understood how an Angelite thinks and what his basic moral beliefs are. On first sight, the Angelitic Church appears to be not unlike an absolutistic faction of ultra-orthodox Catholics, who try to defend their territory like a vicious dog by clinging to radical and inhumane standards. Some readers might absolutely agree with this brief description, but there is more to the Angelitic religion as a closer look will surely reveal.

what does the church believe?

Many parts of the Bible have been lost during the Second Flood, and those parts that remain have been handed down by so many people with their own individual interpretations that they can only be called incomplete at best. The children who brought to life the Angelitic Church more than six hundred years ago were growing up amongst the ruins of a great civilization in many ways. At first, they lived like savages who only cared for something to eat and a dry, warm place to sleep. Later, as mankind began to recover, many of the ancestors' achievements were lost beneath the waves, so people had to come up with their own explanations for many of the things they saw all around them. All they found were remnants of past wisdom and lost lore. Angelitic faith is based on these fragments. Most of the tenets of the Angelitic Church spring from fragments of the Old and New Testaments. Jesus Christ, the son of God, though, is practically non-existent, at best one among many prophets religious cults believe in. Thus, the concept of the Trinity isn't even a topic and would be regarded as heretical by most clerics. The god of the Angelites is a single, undisputable God, the creator of the world and everything there is on it.

faith in Engel

No known Angelite chronicle gives an exact date when the messengers of Heaven descended from the skies to battle the Lord of the Flies. It isn't inconceivable, though, how and why faith in the existence of the Engel spread so fast after the first European beheld a veritable winged harbinger of the Lord. There are a few people who claim that the first appearance of the Engel coincided with the appearance of the Infernos, but every scholar knows that the Infernos triggered the Second Flood and the appearance of the Engel obviously occurred at a later date; thus, there cannot be any coincidence between the Sending of the Engel and the appearance of the Infernos. It is possible, however, that the Engel entered the scene just as the first legions of the Dreamseed started to haunt vast regions of Europe. This coincidence, however, would actually rather underline the divine origin of the Engel and their benevolence.

veracity

One of the most convincing arguments of the Angelitic Church is the existence of veritable Engel who descended from the skies as champions of the Lord to battle the hordes of the Lord of the Flies, rendering proof to the teachings of the Holy Mother Church. What other religion ever offered such convincing evidence for the truth of its tenets? Further proof of the truthfulness of the Angelitic Church, which seem to make its claim to power over Europe even more legitimate, is the existence of the Himmel. No man would be capable of building such giant edifices, and the Engel alone could have made such architectural marvels possible.

A final argument – albeit an unnecessary one, since no one would ever question it (or rather, him) – is God's representative on earth, His Eminence the Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus who invests the office of Holy Father ever since the founding days of the Angelitic Church – more than six hundred years ago. Who would doubt then that the Lord has laid out a holy task for His First Servant whom He has even granted seeming immortality?

the adversary

The Angelitic Church regards the Lord of the Flies as its opposition – the Lord of the Flies is no creature of God or fallen Engel as 21st century Christianity holds it. He is a primeval power, the archenemy and absolutely evil pendant of the One Above. The Angelitic Church sees the world as a vast battlefield, with the Lord of the Flies and his demonic armies – the Dreamseed - standing on one side of the front lines and God and the Engel on the other. Angelitic faith therefore includes an apocalyptic scenario where only one side can ultimately triumph. This idea leads to drastic behavior. Fearing that the Lord of the Flies could eventually gain the upper hand in the cosmic battle of powers, the shepherds of the Angelitic Church take all means necessary to enforce their moral standards on their charges. Minor trespasses and the slightest hint of suspicious moral conduct are enough to make the Church see the hand of the Tempter at work and the Church never hesitates to nip his work in the bud.

conduct pleasant to god

It is certainly not an easy task to determine exactly how a good Angelite has to behave. Too many different ideas and opinions turn into an impenetrable jungle of ultraconservative and freethinking philosophies. The Ten Commandments

still retain their validity, but the dogma of the Angelitic Church includes many more. One of these new commandments says: "You shall not raise your fist against your own progeny, neither man nor wife, neither in anger nor for enjoyment." Generally, children play the most essential role in the Angelitic religion. As mentioned above, it is not allowed to beat or publicly humiliate children; furthermore, it is punishable not to have one's children baptized, for this would prevent them from becoming part of the Angelitic community. Some examples follow to illustrate what makes a good Angelite:

- Regularly attending of the Holy Mass, at least once a week.
- Admission and accommodation of a fellowship of Engel in case of need.
- Paying the Tenth in children in case of need.
- Paying one's taxes in Manna or in kind.
- Reporting all activities concerning the Lord of the Flies.
- No remonstrating against the ways of the Angelitic Church.

heretical thought

To list all the possible misdeeds a faithful Angelite could commit would surely go beyond the limits of this book – files registering such misdeeds fill countless magazines of the church all over Europe. Due to this reason, a few examples must suffice to show the interested reader which deeds are deemed heretical by the Angelitic Church.

- Giving a child the name of an Engel.
- Questioning the tenets of the Angelitic Church.
- Questioning the divine origin of the Engel.
- Knowing how to read and write.
- Possession of pre-Flood technology.
- Hiding Heretics or offering them shelter.
- Not reporting heretical activities or participants in said activities.
- Non-observance of Angelitic dogma.

aberrations of faith

In addition to numerous ties to older Christian customs in Angelitic faith, many common rites seem to be aberrations of even older religions or inventions of a younger date. Martyrdom, for example, is regarded as wholly acceptable and even as a sign of ultimate devotion. Frequently, Monachs or Begines volunteer to sacrifice themselves in order to prevent a disaster from happening. Even infants are sacrificed - in and of itself a perversion of the entire faith – to confuse the Lord of the Flies; the clerics hope that such atrocities will lead the Adversary to rethink his devious plans.

Similar rituals – the results of which are limited at best – take place on a smaller scale as well. When spring arrives, fish and other sea animals are hung up everywhere on the houses of the coastal dwellers. These "decorations" last until they are either dried

up – a portent which promises many children to the family - until they have rotted from the string they were tied on – predicting a bad catch – or until they are eaten by vermin – which is seen as the worst omen possible. If the fish are eaten by birds, this is seen as a gift to the fellowships of Engel and a sign for good times to come for the fishermen.

geographic origins

According to official history, the geographic origins of the Angelitic Church lie in former Italy and a lot of evidence seems to prove this theory. Most of the knowledge the Angelitic Church has salvaged was discovered among the ruins of Old Rome where Angelitic faith came into existence more than six hundred years ago, and Rome is still the capital of the Angelitic Church even today. Presumably, Italian youths started to interpret the fragments of ancient lore they found in the debris of obliterated Rome, and they reached the conclusion that their version of interpreting the religious texts was the only one of universal validity. Or maybe a small group of students of the pre-Flood Christian church took advantage of the chaos in Europe in order to become the ultimate rulers of the land and build an empire, an effort in which some of their discoveries in ruined cities came in handy to support their claim to power. But maybe the whole process is part of a larger plan of subversive powers to shape man according to their own ideals, a plan set in motion even before the Great Flood and the Vitusdance.

inquisitors

The most feared institution of the Angelitic Church is the Inquisition. Authorized with rights far beyond the norm, the Prelates of the Inquisition can become a threat even to the Abs of the Himmel. Even though this has never been the case officially, the thought alone suffices to unsettle many clerics. The Abs themselves remain rather calm in the face of Prelate influence. They know all too well that no Inquisitor would ever dare to raise the ire of an Ab with thousands of Engel at his behest. Fear spreads among the Cardinals and the ranks beneath them when an Inquisitor visits or travels through their domain. The Inquisitors know that they are feared and take full advantage of this fact while tackling their tasks in earnest, always trying to work exclusively for the common good of the Angelitic community, even though it might not always seem so.

The Prelates are accountable only to the Pontifex Maximus and are allowed to summarily execute anyone they find guilty of heresy without much ado. The only exception to that rule are the Engel; the normal jurisdiction does not apply to them. When an Inquisitor doubts the loyalty of an Engel or a fellowship, he is obliged to appeal to the Ab of the respective order or else to report directly to the Pontifex Maximus himself when matters at hand are of the utmost importance and urgency. If a Prelate tries to pass over this stipulation, he would inevitably be accused of heresy himself, to be judged by a council of Abs of the orders under the chairmanship of the Pontifex Maximus.

the framework of faith

Similar to the religious principles and ideas of the Angelitic Church, its structures also are modeled after pre-Flood examples; only the basic structure has been tightened in many ways and areas of responsibilities have been expanded.

pontifex maximus petrus secundus

The first shepherd of the Angelitic Church is truly a mystical figure. He who has been called into office by the Lord Himself has been ruling the faithful for more than five hundred years without aging a single day during all this time. His public appearances are rare because he only shows his face to the masses when time allows it, usually on the Day of the Children - when all local parents take their offspring to the Pontifex Maximus for a blessing – and when the Engel come to *Roma Æterna* to be baptized. The rest of the year, he spends addressing political and religious matters. During this time, only the Archangels, the Cardinals of the Consistory and the Abs will probably see him.

the archangels

Far more mysterious than the long regency of the Pontifex Maximus is the apparently invisible existence of the Archangels – invisible because no one has ever seen them except for the Pontifex Maximus himself and the Abs of the Himmel. This is not to say that they don't exist at all, it merely means that they either know how to keep themselves hidden from prying eyes or that they are only capable of revealing themselves to especially holy men. Many people speculate in private that the Archangels only exist in the drug-induced ecstasies of the Pontifex Maximus and the Abs, while others insist that they have seen one of the Archangels – their appearance varies from one alleged sighting to another, from titans with lion's heads to mighty eagles with human faces. The only fascinating peculiarity about these sightings is that the Archangels appear as some kind of man-beast or creature from fairy tales and legends in many places all across Europe. Regardless of their true appearance, the Archangels are known to serve the Pontifex as well as the Abs of the orders in an advisory function, representing a link between the Angelitic Church and God.

the abs

In spite of similar titles, the Abs of the Himmel and the Abts of the various monasteries and cloisters all over Europe are in no way of comparable ranks in the hierarchy of the church. While the rank of an Ab of an Himmel is directly beneath that of an Archangel, the countless Abts of the smaller bastions of Angelitic faith hold a rank comparable to that of an Archbishop or Bishop. Therefore, it is common practice for Abts to name their cloister or monastery when introducing themselves. Of course, anyone who needs to know would know the faces of the five Abs presiding over the different Himmel, but decency asks for naming one's cloister – no Abt wants to give the impression he would be so bold as to aggrandize himself by pretending to hold a higher rank. More information on the Abs of the Himmel can be found under **Heavenly Structures**.

the cardinals and the consistory

As advisors to the Pontifex Maximus, the Cardinals hold the true power within the Angelitic Church. Of course, the Cardinals are in no position to question or even oppose the Pontifex himself, his edicts or ways; nevertheless, the Cardinals know of and are expected to address virtually all matters of state. The only institution rivaling their power are the Abs of the Himmel whose influence has grown over the centuries and without whom the Pontifex Maximus' power would be seriously diminished. Not all Cardinals can influence the Pontifex Maximus in a direct manner, of course. Only a small circle of Cardinals, the Consistory, serve as advisory council to the First Shepherd of the Angelitic Church and are authorized with as extensive rights as alluded to above. The large majority of landowning Cardinals lack the time of addressing matters beyond their own borders. The territory they have been given is too vast and the number of servants to follow their orders is too small. The Angelitic Church approves of this situation, even though it would never officially admit to do so, but as long as the Cardinals are concerned with their own problems, they would never get the idea to oppose the church or try to get a higher-ranking office by underhand means like intrigues or political maneuvering. Whoever manages to rise among the uppermost echelons of the church, has to be either well-connected or an ambitious, calculating mind, dispensing with such worldly matters as ethics or decency. Paradoxically, the leaders of the Angelitic Church are well aware of the fact that one has to be able to sell one's own mother in order to play with the big boys. They simply try to keep out of most of the trouble this kind of political struggle entails. The Cardinals of the Consistory, however, have no territory to govern and reside in *Roma Æterna* where they assist the Pontifex Maximus by word and deed.

the archbishops

Every Archbishop rules a conglomerate of cities in a certain region of Europe. Their seats of power are mostly in one of the cities they rule and they travel to all the neighboring cities to address local problems from there. On such journeys, they meet with the Bishops to keep up-to-date with current matters, problems and news. Before the Archbishop leaves the city he is visiting, he explains the future policy he has decided on for the city to the local Bishop. A handful of Archbishops own breathtaking mansions in the countryside which serve mainly representative functions – not unlike many of their direct superiors, the Cardinals – because they don't have much spare time to spend in their mansions, as the tasks waiting for them in cities are too numerous and important to delegate to underlings.

the bishops

With the exception of those cities which are home to the Himmel, all European cities are at least nominally governed by Bishops. In some places, one or several Diadoches are the actual rulers of a city. Even though they are never recognized as such by the Angelitic Church, they cause a major problem for the local Bishop. Under such circumstances, a Bishop only has two options: he can settle an agreement of sorts with the Junklord, which is never easy because even if the Bishop is ready for such an agreement, the Diadoche need not be willing to do so.

The second option is to claim the city by force. This can only succeed if the city in question is very important to the Angelitic Church or if the Bishop has connections in the higher ranks of the Angelitic hierarchy that can support him with the troops necessary for such an endeavor. Otherwise, the Church expects its Bishops to show some ingenuity in addressing such problems. In rare cases, the Bishop is blessed – or cursed, depending on how you look at it – with an Archbishop who has made his home in the same city he did. Then the Bishop can be certain that the church will send support troops to cope with the problem at hand.

the maters and paters

The lowest rank of the Angelitic hierarchy is held by the Maters and Paters, the ministers responsible for small communities. Usually, these clerics can be found in the countryside where they ensure the spiritual well-being of a single village or a conglomerate of farms. Generally, there are more female clerics of this rank – the Maters – than male ones. These Begines in the poorer rural regions of Europe are responsible not only for celebrating the

Holy Mass, but also for solely worldly matters like midwifery – as not every peasant can afford the services of a proper midwife.

heavenly structures

Beyond the basic structure of the Angelitic Church in Europe are the Himmel. The Himmel resemble giant beehives. People come and go all the time, and these gigantic bastions of Angelitic faith where Engel and clerics live so close together never seem to sleep.

the ab

Actually, the hierarchical structure of a Himmel is far more complex. The highest authority of a Himmel is the Archangel the respective order derives its name from. However, the Archangel solely communicates with the Ab, his human representative, who handles all administrative tasks. Therefore, every resident of a Himmel is fully aware of the Archangel's presence without ever actually seeing him. The Archangel's orders are passed down to the lower ranks via the Ab. Within the walls of his Himmel, the position of an Ab is comparable to that of Pontifex Maximus for the Angelitic community as a whole, and from the Cardinals' point of view the power of an Ab as a proxy of an entire order of Engel comes dangerously close to the power of the Pontifex Maximus himself. Should one of the Abs stubbornly hold his course in a crucial political question, the whole church is incapable of taking action, a state of affairs numerous Angelitic factions have tried to change over the years, as yet unsuccessfully.

the prior

Since the large majority of administrative tasks within the Himmel take much more time than the Abs could muster – especially due to the fact that the Abs have to deal with foreign affairs as well as the governing of the surrounding lands in addition to their role as leaders of the Himmel – they choose a steward for internal matters, the Prior. The Prior is concerned with the administration of the Himmel proper and holds a rank comparable to that of a Cardinal. His tasks include distributing tasks among the Monachs and Begines as well as governing the city where the Himmel can be found and its direct vicinity. The Engel themselves and the Baptists – an enigmatic caste of mute Monachs with special authorizations – are subservient to the Ab only, however. It is the Prior who has to dispense justice in case of minor felonies like theft. He also commands the Armatura of the Templar Order during the absence of the Dux. In case of more severe crimes liker murder, heresy or parental abuse, the Prior acts as an assessor to the Ab, determining the punishment with him.

nonnus, magister and castellan

Within the lower ranks of the clergy, there are a few positions worthy of closer inspection. The first of these ranks is that of Nonnus or Nonna, a Monach or a Begine charged with the task of directing the training of the Engel. This is not a unique post within a Himmel; the number of Nonni or Nonnæ rather depends on how many teachers are needed, based on the number of Postulants currently to be trained in a Himmel. The Postulants are those Engel whose wings have not fully developed yet and those who are still waiting to be consecrated in *Roma Æterna*. The Nonni and Nonnæ ensure that the Engel are taught everything they need to know to serve the Lord as good as possible; furthermore, they act as advisors to the Engel in secular matters. During talks in private, the Nonni and Nonnæ are often called Abe or Amma respectively by the Engel, reflecting their paternal or maternal relationship to the Postulants.

The Magister has to deal with a task comparable to that of a Nonnus, though his pupils aren't Engel but humans who want to join the clergy and have to endure a long and hard apprenticeship. After a certain time of training, the orders' novices are sorted out by the Magister for distinctive tasks within the Himmel. Some of the novices who have excelled in the eyes of their Magister are sent to one of the cloisters or monasteries all across Europe for further training. The local Abts then decide whether a novice is worthy of attaining the rank of a Monach. If the novice should be deemed unworthy – a highly improbable occurrence – he is sent back home to his order to be employed in minor tasks; if it comes to pass that the novice has even more potential than it takes to become a Monach, he is sent to *Roma Æterna* to receive further training – this is often the start of an impressive career within the Church hierarchy.

The Magister cannot be compared to his namesake in the Templar Order, however. The Magister of a Himmel is employed exclusively for non-military tasks, as are the other Monachs; he is not allowed to carry any weapons whatsoever. It is hard to explain how the same title came into use among the Monachs as well as the Templars, though it can be presumed that the similar tasks these two titles entail were shared by both organizations in the early Angelitic history.

Another prominent position within the structure of the orders is that of Castellan. He is responsible for the material well-being of all residents of the Himmel. The Castellan governs all aspects of public service, from kitchens and sanitary facilities to all menial tasks such as the employment of servants. He personally ensures a steady supply of food, negotiates and haggles with

merchants and distributes the tributes paid by peasants and fishermen in kind among the various administrative departments within the Himmel. Without him, life in the Himmel would quickly come to a grinding halt. Numerous Monachs, the Hebdomadars, are placed under his supervision; they assist him in the complex task of supplying the gigantic building with everything its inhabitants might need. The Hebdomadars are not assigned to certain fields of supply, but rather switch their tasks once a week in order to guarantee that one of them can become the next Castellan as soon as the current Castellan grows too old to cope with the burdens of his important office.

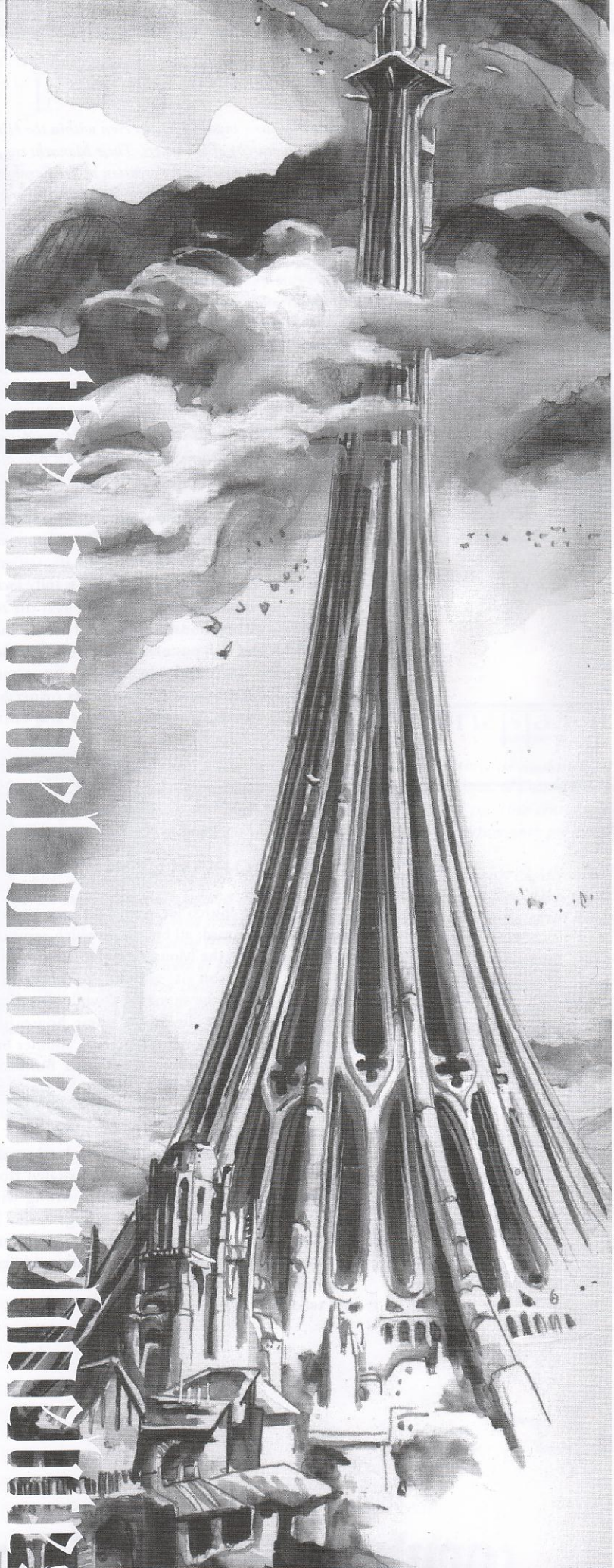
the foundation

Literally and figuratively, the Monachs and Begins form the base of a Himmel, not only due to reasons of status alone, but also because of a rather simple notion: because of the immense height of a Himmel, it is far from easy to take the endless stairs from the quarters of the Ab at the top of the citadel to the entrance gates far below. Most of the tasks the Monachs and Begines have to handle include keeping in touch with the people living around the castle, however; thus, it is only reasonable for them to live in the lowermost levels of the Himmel and leave the upper levels to the Engel and their mighty wings. The lower ranks of the clergy mostly have to deal with the common people and their common problems until they encounter a problem which they deem important enough to address their superiors, most likely the Prior or the Castellan.

The Monachs and Begins also fill the ranks of ecclesiastical civil servants responsible for many administrative tasks which are not related to the inner workings of the orders. For example, they control the regular payment of taxes from the country dwellers in form of rice or fish; they exchange Manna for natural produce when peasants or fishermen come to the city to shop. Furthermore, they are charged with the current trend – originating in Nuremberg – of introducing a compulsory obligation to report for burghers and immigrating peasants to control the drastic increase in new mouths to feed. The list of tasks is nearly endless and changes to accommodate new difficulties nearly daily.

the structure of monasteries

The expansion of the Angelitic Church across Europe led to the founding of countless monasteries of the five fighting as well as the Sarielite orders. They became centers of education – particularly the Ramielite cloisters – and hubs of



the baptists

The caste of Monachs calling themselves Baptists – mystical figures even within the Himmel themselves – play a special role within the hierarchy of the orders. These Monachs cut off their own tongues when joining this caste to keep the secret of the creation of the Engel well hidden behind their faces which resemble masks carved of stone. Every Baptist has sworn to carry with him this most important secret of the Angelitic Church to the grave. The European populace isn't aware of their existence, and even the clergy within the Himmel don't necessarily know more about them than a few basic facts. The Baptists are only accountable to the Ab of the Himmel they live in, and they communicate exclusively with him, refusing to acknowledge any attempts of conversation from other sources.

The rest of the clergy are highly concerned about the Baptists' existence; their appearance, their shaved heads, their black robes and the strange devices they often carry open the door to countless speculations and rumors. Every time the matter is mentioned, the Ab insists that the Baptists contribute to the higher good of the One Above, that they are on a holy mission and that it would be indiscrete to share any details with his underlings. The quarters of the Baptists are also taboo and only handpicked servants – who are also mute – are allowed to enter these halls which they will never leave again during their entire lives once they have entered them.

European economy as early as the first expansionist activities of the Church.

A monastery is similar to a small, valiant, fortified city in many ways. The gables and stocky towers of the monastic churches loom over the red tiles of the dwelling-houses, stables and barns, while fertile fields and rich pastures lie beyond the strong walls which surround the entire monastery. Additionally, a monastery often holds ownership over fields, forests, pastures, villages and entire districts.

the layout of a monastery

Next to the church located in the center of the monastery lies a yard; all buildings which serve the communal life of the Monachs are adjacent to this area. No layperson is allowed to enter this innermost part of the monastery, while Engel can enter it at anytime. In one of these houses the Monachs take their communal meals, another one features the dormitory with its hard bunks or alternatively long corridors of cells for the Monachs. In Ramielite monasteries, the library – which is also off-limits to laypersons – can be found here.

The outlying buildings, such as the kitchen, the larder and the laundry, are strictly separated from the actual monastery. This area is bustling with activity comparable to that of a large farm. In addition to the buildings necessary for agriculture, this area also features workshops of smiths, saddlers, wagon-builders, carpenters, shoemakers, weavers and tailors.

monastic life

Monachs live according to strict, ancient rules, referred to as the Statutes. Every Monach has his own task within the monastic community. An office involving great responsibility is that of Brother Porter. He alone is in possession of the keys to the monastery's gate and he has to decide whom is permitted in and when the gate is locked for the night.

The most important task of the Monachs, however, is to serve God whole-heartedly and spend their lives in service to the Angelitic Church. Seven times a day the bells ring to call the Monachs to the Church for devotion and prayers. These prayers which determine the day are called the Hours, after the Latin word for hour, *hora*.

Only the Abt or the Æbtissin – the "father" or "mother" of the monastery, respectively – have their own houses. According to the Statutes, they are the highest authority within the walls of the cloister. They are mostly meritorious clerics who were exalted to this rank as a reward for services rendered. As an outward sign of their rank, the Pontifex Maximus bestows them staff and ring and additionally grants the monastery many privileges and fiefs. In return, the Ab or the Æbtissin is obliged to loyally serve the Pontifex as vassal.

monastic schools

In the monastic schools offered by every large cloister, the sons and daughters of both noble and commoner are taught basic arithmetic, singing, the confession of faith and the High Prayer of the Orders, the most popular psalm of the Angelitic Church. The monasteries are the centers of spiritual and academic life in Europe. The language of the common people is never written, though, staying unattended and reserved for the secular daily life only.

secular influences

Despite their remoteness from the world the Angelitic monasteries do not exist in a vacuum. Generally, the Monachs are as close to the world as they are to God. Merchants or traveling nobles often spend the night in the Abt's guesthouse, as long as they seem pious. If necessary, the Abt even mounts his horse to lead the troop of armed Templars stationed at his monastery to the army of the Dux.

beginehouses

Of course, there are convents where pious women – the so-called Begines – instead of Monachs live. Their daily live is also determined by strict Statutes. Like Monach cloisters, the Beginehouses belong to one of the five orders.

After prayer, the Begines work hard. While the Monachs mostly practice a certain craft or work in the fields, the Begines cultivate medicinal herbs. Most of the pupils of the schools of Beginehouses are daughters of noble families loyal to the church. Especially Raphaelite Begines tend to the sick as physicians and nurses all over Europe. They get the medicine required for this task from the monastic herbal gardens.

the importance of the monasteries

The influence of the Angelitic monasteries can be felt all over Europe. Through immense deforestation efforts and the draining of swamplands, the Monachs create precious, arable soil. Their farms are an example to every European. Here, the local peasants can learn how to properly till their soil and how to cultivate new kinds of vegetables, herbal plants, fruit trees or even wine. In the stables of the monasteries, they are shown the significance of proper care and breeding of cattle.

The Monachs and Begines are patrons and keepers of the cultural legacy of Europe. They demonstrate the Angelitic virtues: unconditional love for one's fellow men, humility, piety, charity as well as absolute devotion towards a higher, peaceful ideal. Slowly but steadily, the influence of the monasteries helps to strengthen the Europeans' faith in Angelitic teachings.

the reformers of cluny

In the centuries since the founding of the Angelitic Church, many monasteries amassed considerable wealth. The Monachs quickly grew accustomed to a rather worldly way of life and neglected their spiritual and cultural duties. The validity of vows and the Statutes was questioned in many places.

Around 2600, the Beginehouse of Cluny north of Lyon under its Æbtissin Odilie opposed the omnipresent secularization and lack of discipline in the monasteries. Odilie has been a close friend of Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus ever since she began her career in *Roma Æterna*. "Back to the Archangels' rules!" was her slogan. She called upon the Monachs and Begines to return to strict discipline, prayers and piousness.

Soon, meditation, prayers and the Holy Masses ruled the lives of the Begines of Cluny again. Even outside monastery walls, they walked with their heads lowered and used simple signs and gestures to communicate, avoiding any superfluous words.

Then Cluny fell, razed to the ground by the abominable Dreamseed. But this did not hamper Odilie's Reformation: the seriousness and the reformatory zeal of the Begines of Cluny finds more and more adherents in other monasteries.

libraries and hoards of knowledge:

the ramielite monasteries

In the so-called Monastic Academies of the Ramielite order, only young people destined to serve as clerics of the order of the Keepers of Knowledge are educated. The education focuses on reading, writing, theology and Latin.

In the monasteries of the Keepers of Knowledge, Monachs laboriously copy old texts by hand, embellishing all headings and initial letters. These copies exist in large numbers, because every Ramielite monastery attempts to complete its own library, endeavors which have led to a certain level of competition among them. One of the results of this competition are the famous Ramielite Gospels which illustrate parables and stories from the lives of legendary Engel and Templars with splendid images of gold-leaf and precious inks.

According to the will and the customs of the Ramielites, Latin is the language of choice in their monasteries. Additionally, the Monachs practice writing in their respective national dialects. In spite of the common European language, the dialects spoken in Europe are legion; therefore, even the High Prayer of the Orders, for example, can sound differently from one monastery to the other, depending on where it was written down.

The Ramielite Monachs faithfully record all the news, rumors and events they hear from travelers or Urielites visiting the monastery on a mission year after year, binding them in a single volume. This is how the famous Annals, monastic yearbooks, come to be, the only historical texts easily accessible.

gabrielslaach

On the banks of a silent crater lake in the Eifel rests the Gabrielite monastery of Gabrielslaach, one of the most important centers of power for the Angels of Death besides Nuremberg. It was built on the ruins of an ancient monastery from the 10th century. Its giant church is a perfect example for the merging of Angelitic architecture with pre-Flood buildings.

Thick, almost quadratic pillars line the middle aisle and carry the only slightly arched roof of the church. They also support the Roman arches which are made of formidably placed granite blocks. Small windows reminiscent of loopholes pierce the thick walls of the whole monastery, dimly illuminating its interior.

The round corner-towers of the western wing which are dwarfed by a mighty square watchtower rising between them, the octagonal church tower and the quadratic towers on both side of its apse lend the whole complex an air of valiancy reminding of a castle.

In the apse of the giant monastic church the Archangel Gabriel looks sternly upon the faithful from a shimmering golden mosaic-work. The bare, unadorned walls between the pillars guide the eyes of the praying towards the altar; nothing distracts them from contemplating the depiction of the Archangel.

Following the example of the conservative Gabrielite monastery of Hirsau in the Black Forest (whose Abt exchanged letters with Odilie from the very beginning of her efforts), many monasteries of other orders joined the Reformation.

Today, there are more than 2000 reformatory monasteries across Europe, supporting each other and sharing information and experiences. They all have an Abt or an Æbtissin to address daily affairs, even though they see themselves as symbolically accountable only to the Pontifex Maximus according to their teachings. The reformatory monasteries take drastic measures against Diadoches in their direct vicinity who show anti-church tendencies.

the reformation spreads

Although – or maybe because – its spiritual center, the monastery of Cluny, has recently fallen prey to the latest attack of the Dreamseed, the movement set in motion by Em Odilie is constantly growing even years after her death. Now, the Reformers want to lead the more secular clerics – the priests living in villages and cities – back to a more humble and pious way of life as well. They are displeased with the fact that many priests are too careless in their interpretations of the Holy Bible; they see the reason for this in the fact that the priests usually are unable to refer to the original text.

Together with radical factions of the Ramielite order the Cluniacensians – as the Reformers call themselves in honor of their slain founder – have therefore started to demand a large-scale effort of teaching all European clerics how to read and write. Then, so they say, their brothers and sisters would no longer have to recite only phrases they committed to memory in their sermons. Furthermore, the Reformers take offense at the rather distasteful way of life of some priests, many of whom ignore even their vows of celibacy. Though the church might even approve of the latter criticism, it is only a question of time before it has to take action against the Cluniacensians because of their radical theories regarding alphabetization.

of the templars

When the Dreamseed appears one day at the gates of the Himmel, we will be ready to show the Engel that we are worthy of dying in their name.

– Einhardt, Templar Magister in the Gabrielite Himmel

The tasks are manifold for law enforcement organizations in the remaining regions of Europe. This is especially true for mankind's centers of power – the Himmel. The Himmel, as the roots of all opposition against the Lord of the Flies and his dark seed, harbor more people, necessitating a higher need for security than anywhere else. Only the most courageous and spirited are willing to do what has to be done under such challenging conditions – the Templars.

It is said that their name derives from an old legend about a group of warriors who put their own lives at stake guarding and defending a holy place, a temple reputedly holding the most sacred of their religion's relics. Since the Templars claim to do exactly the same thing, their name seems more than justified. The similarity of their appearance with that of the Engel can also be explained quite easily; most Templars do not keep the fact that they regard the Engel as their idols a secret.

Thus, the elite guard of the Himmel differs from the Engel only in small but essential details. Of course, the Templars have no wings and their skin has not been touched and marked by the Lord. Furthermore, most of them are considerably older looking than the Heavenly Host. They wear the wide skirts and bandages which are the hallmarks of the fellowships of Engel, and even their haircuts are often reminiscent of those of the Engel of the respective orders.

Most of the Templars nevertheless vehemently deny all accusations of any desire to emulate the Divine Host, since according to their own beliefs, it would be pure heresy to claim one strives to become like an Engel. Their goal is merely following an idealized mindset, or so they say. By imitating the appearance of and adhering to the strict codes of conduct of the Engel, the Templars simply try to pay the fellowships the respect they are due.

A further sign by which Templars can be distinguished from the Engel are the magnificent suits of armor they wear, which only in the rarest of cases cover the entire body. These suits of armor are of an exquisite quality and always in a flawless state of maintenance. The shoulder and breast plates are made of hammered metal, tied together and kept in place by sturdy leather straps. Sometimes these parts of the armor are made of alternative, antique materials like rubber or plastic which are then painted and decorated with elaborate colorful patterns. Armor worn on the arms and legs is often made of wood, since it is rather easy to work with as well as tough yet light, thus not slowing down the Templar in battle. Helmets are virtually unknown among the Templars.

The quality of the weapons the Templars wield is as good as that of their armors, in many cases even better than the weapons of the Grimriders although the Templars refrain from using long range weapons because of their code of honor. This rejection is part of their dogma of unity of spirit, body and weapon. Many Grimrider Bands mock the Templars for not using such weapons, regarding it as a potential weakness. These tensions frequently erupt in smaller skirmishes between those groups which are quickly brought to an end by the Komturs of the bands or the Armatura, the supervisors of the Templars.

Templar dogma is primarily based on the idea that the energy flowing in the human body can be channeled. This energy can be focused in any desired limb to deliver blows or kicks far more powerful than it would be the case under normal

circumstances. To do so, in-depth insight into the workings of the own body and the interaction of all the forces at work within it is required.

Masters of this highly philosophical martial art are rumored to be capable of transferring these energies into a weapon. To make this transfer of energies possible, a strong grip and a controlled, constant contact with the weapon is necessary. Should the energetic bond between the warrior and his weapon be severed, the results for the Templar would be possibly fatal. His inner rhythm would be off-balanced which could lead to a weakening of the warrior, ultimately resulting in his death due to his inability to pay the required attention to the actions of his opponent.

The significance of this philosophy becomes obvious when Templars wish one another *tenere capere* – which means good or strong grip – before riding into battle. Daily weapon training and meditations offer student and mentor alike the chance to reach a state of perfection in this skill. The achievements this philosophy ultimately brings are phenomenal, for the Templars are true masters in wielding the weapons of their choice. As long as it is a melee weapon, the kind of weapon used is of no importance; long range weapons, however, are taboo to the Templars in and of themselves because these weapons cannot be imbued with the Templars' energies.

Regardless whether sword, lance, dagger or hasta (a kind of sword lance), there is no such thing as a favorite or recommended Templar weapon. The fact that the Templars do not fear death is another advantage they have over many of their opponents. Their belief in the tenets preached by the church according to which the soul of a pious man ascends to Heaven to wait for its return as an Engel is so strong that they cannot conceive a fate more honorable than following the path of martyrdom in the course of their duty.

ranks and decorations

It is impossible for outsiders to tell which rank a Templar holds based on his outer appearance. The Templars are of the opinion that an enemy would surely focus on neutralizing a Templar leader if he is given the chance to recognize one of the Templars as such. This rather reasonable notion is underlined by the fact that any common European of wholesome intentions is expected to regard any Templar as a figure of authority. Internally, a complex code of braided, colored leather strings tied to the breastplate of a Templar's suit of armor reveals the rank of the wearer.

Today, many younger members of the order who rose through the ranks rather quickly, due to the heavy losses the order suffered in the past, question this secret hierarchy. They insist that the status a Templar holds within his order should be

revealed with pride to his own people and the enemy to illustrate that the Templars fear neither battle nor death. All these hotheads get from the older Templars are disappointed looks or words of contempt.

It is relatively easy to tell which Himmel a Templar belongs to, however. The colors of their garments are the colors of their respective Himmel, so that Europeans and Dreamseed alike can know from afar whom they are dealing with. Those Templars fulfilling their duties outside of the sphere of influence of a Himmel (for example in one of the countless monasteries) nevertheless wear the colors of their order proudly, leading to a colorful hodgepodge of Templars of different orders in many places.

In regard to structure, the Templars – or *Æditui* as they are called in *Roma Æterna* – are organized in a pyramidal hierarchy. At the top of this hierarchy stands the *Dux* who presides over all the Templars. The current Dux is Etienne Normand. The Supreme Templar travels across Europe year after year to pay his respects to the Abs of the Himmel in regular intervals. He stays in every Himmel for a while to address the local problems of his brothers in arms. After one or two months or when all problems have been solved – which is rarely the case – he moves on to the next Himmel, spending the last two months of the year in Roma Æterna. Here, he reports to the Pontifex Maximus whom the Templars serve directly in theory and receives his orders for the next year. He follows this cycle every year.

The five *Custodians*, the commanding officers of the Himmel, rank next in the hierarchy. The *Decani* – which are of lower rank than the Custodians although they are basically charged with comparable tasks – are the commanding officers for all Templars stationed in one of the countless monasteries or cloisters which dot the landscape and serve as shelter for Engel too far from their home Himmel.

Beneath the Custodians and the Decani, the hierarchy returns to a more linear structure. Every Custodian or Decani has several *Armatura* at his disposal. These supervisors organize guard-shifts, have to make sure that the novices are properly trained and check that all other work is done in a satisfying manner.

Furthermore, a special form of Armatura can be found in every Himmel, the *Magister*. He recruits from the numbers of Templars those he deems worthy for special services or missions. The Templars recruited by the Magister are called the *Electi*, which means "the chosen ones". Virtually nothing is known about their special missions or their purpose. Except for the Pontifex Maximus, only the Magisters and their chosen ones know these inner workings of the Templar Order. According to rumors, the Electi represent the missing link between the church and the Grimriders. The base of the pyramid is formed by the common Templars without any special rank whatsoever. Regardless of rank, every member of the order fulfills his tasks dutifully, with a strange air of proud humility.

tasks and privileges

Within the Himmel, the Templars' tasks are established very clearly. The gates of the Himmel have to be appropriately manned at all times, and no one is allowed to enter the Himmel without an invitation or good reason. Whoever attempts to do so risks being summarily executed by one of the Templars without even being brought before a judicial court. The lords and barons of the neighboring regions have clashed with the official representatives of the Himmel repeatedly over such Templar privileges in the past, and the conflict continues since the officials of the Himmel refuse to change their position in that regard.

In the settlements close to the Himmel, legislative and executive power are separated more clearly. Here, regular Templar patrols deal with minor quarrels and theft as well as arguments between merchants. They only use force if they are being attacked themselves, though. In the case of more serious crimes like murder or rape, the accused is arrested and brought before the Ab. Special days have been set for such legal proceedings which vary from region to region. Frequently, several cases are decided upon on such a day, with more or less fortunate results for the accused. Punishment varies from reprimands over banishment to death.

not all that glitters

The Templar Order has always been a paragon of humility and honor as well as efficiency and prowess in battle since its founding days. This reputation has bolstered the Templars' self-confidence over the years, and many novices sometimes grow arrogant; humility has, in some instances, turned into hubris for reasons all too human. The Templars have gained a reputable standing among the common people over the centuries, and many would like nothing more than to bask in the glory of heroic deeds of the past. Unsurprisingly, the ranks of the warriors are shaken violently by all kind of dissension. Many young Templars see their membership only as a means to gain power over others and to bully peasants and burghers, whereas the older members follow their code strictly, ignoring the budding conflicts or trying to end it by force. These internal quarrels are never the topic of a public debate, though.

on grimriders

Heavily armed with giant broadswords, bizarre hasta sword-lances and lethal firearms, clad in oily, dark garments and massive suits of armor, their faces hidden behind masks and broad-rimmed helmets, riding huge black horses: this is how the Grimriders walk amongst the common people, arriving seemingly out of nowhere from across the sea or the land.

from the currently valid Statutes of the Templar Order, the so-called "New Templar Bull", granted by Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus in the year of the Lord 2491

- You shall pledge everlasting allegiance to the Angelitic Church and its members.
- You shall not commit no deed that leads to harm to the Angelitic Church
- You shall neither attack nor harm any member of the Angelitic Church
- You shall kill one of your fellow Templars only in self-defense or if your fellow Templar has been expelled from the Order by a tribunal properly summoned.
- You shall speak no ill of the Engel or the Angelitic Church, for they are the Lord's representatives on earth.

(...)

- You shall fall not to the mortal sin of pride but do all your work in humility and piety.

(...)

- You shall strive not for material wealth, for it is of the tempter.
- You shall not interfere with the concerns of the common people without being called upon or ordered to so.

(...)

- You shall serve the Engel.
- You shall not associate with the Dreamseed, for such behavior would spell doom for your Order.

(...)

- You shall protect the Himmel.

(...)

- You shall acknowledge that the enemies of the Angelitic Church are your enemies and you shall acknowledge that the allies of the Angelitic Church are your allies.
- You shall hunt down the tools of the tempter and deliver them into the hands of the Angelitic Church so that they shall be swept from the face of the earth.
- You shall heed the decrees of the tribunals of your order and you shall respect the wishes of the Consistory. Tribunals of the Templar Order shall pass resolutions only according to the intentions of this Bull and the commandments of the Angelitic Church.

(...)

- You shall promote the power of the Lord and the Angelitic Church by all means necessary.

(...)

- You shall live your life in obedient servitude to the Lord and the Angelitic Church. Through the acts of the church the Templar Order shall be strengthened and empowered.

(...)

- You shall praise the Lord every single day.

(...)

Should you ever break this oath, you shall be expelled from the Order. Your former brothers shall hunt you down and slay you, so that you will not end your life in dishonor. Woe to those who break this oath or succumb to the tempter.

Not much is known about these dark servants of the Himmel who roam the land to visit the cities, villages and smaller settlements in order to work the will of the almighty Holy Mother Church. The origin of their name has been lost to the tides of time: Some claim that the Grimriders of ages past terrorized the land as cruel marauders, never showing any emotions. Others are convinced that the Grimriders' name derives from the custom of the common people to literally shower the Grimriders with presents in order to appease them and to evade the grim fate of being slaughtered by the marauding bands. Nobody can tell which of the numerous explanations comes closest to the truth; their loot which they carry away from the human settlements is a precious good indeed – one out of ten of the villages' children is taken away as a tax payable to the Angelitic Church.

This ancient tradition upheld even today stems from a time when the world order was still fragile, right after the Vitusdance and the Second Flood, and peasants had nothing else to give to the church except for their own children. In irregular intervals the Grimriders seemingly appear out of nowhere, out of the fog, from across the sea, demanding that the parents present their children to them so that the Grimriders can select some of them, while performing their duties an with eerie sense of determination. Afterwards, they vanish with their loot in tow as quickly as they arrived. Their leaders, the so-called Komturs, take a close look at each of the children before they make their choice according to criteria only they can fathom.

Many disillusioned parents claim the Komturs only choose the most beautiful and healthy children. The Grimriders in the Komturs' entourage ensure that the whole affair proceeds as smoothly and quickly as possible. Their intimidating looks literally serve as a guarantee, since their weapons and armors are terrifying and their numbers are legion. They carry the rancid stench of old fat they drench their clothing and equipment in to protect it from the incessant dampness. Some peasants claim this stench heralds their appearance hours in advance. Even their horses glisten like eels in brackish water and exude the appalling stench of their masters. According to numerous reports, the number of Grimriders in a Band varies from ten to a hundred, depending on the size of the settlement they intend to haunt. Presumably, the Grimriders camp in a safe place from which they set out in groups of different numbers to the settlements of the neighboring regions. From the outside, such a Band seems to be nothing more than a motley crew of warriors whose appearance in a group nevertheless lend them a strange air of uniformity. In rare cases, though, the Grimriders have to prove an unruly mob of villagers that their reputation is well-earned but little is said about these unfortunate encounters.

the structure of the grimrider bands

The structure of the Grimrider Bands is simple but efficient. The Komtur leads the Band, acting as commanding officer as well as employer. Every Komtur forms his own Band according to his own personal views and financial resources, recruiting former Templars, soldiers of fortune and professional mercenaries. The size of such a Band also varies, depending on preferences and needs of the Komtur.

If the number of Grimriders in Band grows too large, the Komtur elects a Bandmaster – an experienced veteran mercenary – to assist him in coordinating the activities of his men. The Bandmaster is mainly concerned with keeping morale high within the Band, a vital task due to the many different points of view concerning the most diverse topics the individual members of larger Band harbor. One of the many measures taken by the Bandmaster is to give the Band a sonorous name in order to distinguish it from other groups, giving its members an opportunity to identify more strongly with their Band and create a certain feeling of belonging. Frequently, the Grimriders adopt a name the populace has given to them, even though these names are rarely very polite.

In the most densely populated regions of Europe, the Bands number up to a hundred members, while a Band can consist of merely a dozen Grimriders in some of the more sparsely populated areas. Within the Himmel's sphere of influence, the orders sponsor a large number of Grimrider Bands which deliver the tenth in children only to the order they have sworn allegiance to. In return, the Komturs of these Bands receive regular payments from the orders the whole year long. In those European regions outside of the sphere of influence of one of the Himmel, the rules are different. Here, many bandits or marauding mercenaries pass themselves off as Grimrider Bands without being officially aligned with one of the orders. These Bands even try to play off the Himmel against one another to force up prices for their "goods". Publicly, the Angelitic Church condemns these groups, and there are often conflicts between these Bands and the "true" servants of the church which quickly lead to bloody skirmishes. In reality, the orders put up with the fact that sometimes the Tenth has not been delivered to them in the officially sanctioned way.

raids and strategies

The raids of the Bands often last many weeks or even months. During this time, the Grimriders are more or less cut off from the Himmel and thus have to rely on themselves. Moreover, the Bands frequently push forward into sparsely populated or remote regions. Therefore, Grimrider Bands aligned with the same order often flock together to build veritable armies. They build a common base camp far from any human settlements from which they travel to neighboring villages to do their duty. After their work is done, the individual Bands return to the base camp to pool their valuable goods and plan the next raid.

Over the course of history – especially over the last years – the populace has steadily grown more unwilling to pay its Tenth to the church, and Grimriders often arrive in villages without any children because the parents have hidden their offspring in time. Therefore, the arrival of the Bands increasingly grows more unpredictable and random. The Komturs are even forced to come up with actual strategies to enter a village. These strategies often play on the fears and superstitions of the people.

Many Bands come across the waters with their horses, building huge rafts or paying ferrymen to ship them over. For such endeavors, they wait for days when the fog hangs low over the land which keeps the villagers from noticing their impending

arrival too soon. The whole procedure takes place very quickly. None of the Grimriders speaks a single word, everyone of them knows exactly what he is supposed to do, and only the Komtur addresses the priest of the village, the eldest or whoever else may be the representative of the people with some well-chosen words.

The subsequent process is familiar to all the involved parties. All children of seven to fourteen years of age have to subject themselves to the examination of the Komtur. After he has made his choice, the remaining Grimriders carry the chosen ones along on their horses and leave as quickly as they appeared. Only weeping mothers and angry fathers stay behind. Nevertheless, the large majority of the populace remain calm in regard to this *modus operandi* of the Angelitic Church because the reward they gain in return is the Church's protection from the Dreamseed and all other sorts of perils – at least in most cases.

Lack of Loot

Probably one of the most urgent problems which have arisen over recent years is the procurement of top-notch children; due to the steady increase in marauding slave traders and fake Grimriders, it is becoming more and more difficult to collect the Tenth. Entire regions are childless since the motivation of many families of siring children is minimal, considering the frequency with which Grimriders appear at their doors.

Therefore, the Bands have to advance further and further into distant regions of Europe, and many encounters with determined settlers lead to massacres. Encounters between rival Bands – regardless if they are Grimriders aligned with different orders or officially sanctioned Grimriders meeting rogues – often end in a comparably disastrous way. The Angelitic Church mostly keeps itself out of such conflicts, even though several Bands have already turned to the church requesting support.

Only rarely do Templars interfere in the open disputes of rivaling Grimrider Bands, most recently in Gratianopel: the outer court of the Raphaelite Himmel became the stage for a quarrel between a group of Grimriders loyal to the church who had entered a trade agreement with the Himmel of the Healers and a gang of mercenaries who had roamed the local region for years and wanted to deliver an entire wagon of children to the Raphaelites. After grave insults were exchanged for several minutes, the conflict erupted into a violent skirmish; at first the Templars cheered and applauded, though, before finally putting an end to the affair by force.

black sheep

The most infamous Band of Grimriders, whose name evokes fearful glances and hushed whispers all over Europe, haunts the vast stretch of coast between Marseille and Genoa. Word about them travels faster than their horses and leads to eyes wide with panic and mindless flight – the Læmmergeiers. According to unsubstantiated reports, the Band has merely ten members; nevertheless, there are no confirmed reports of successful opposition by the populace towards this Band.

Their leader – a slender, androgynous man by the name of Ameno – rules his Band with an iron fist. To all appearances, he is not a typical Komtur, though. He neither sports the insignia of one of the known Angelitic orders nor does he care for tradition or etiquette. Moreover, most people find him primitive and repulsive because of his countless tattoos. His behavior as well as that of his men is always characterized by violent brutality and unscrupulousness. He never allows his word to be questioned or his decisions to be doubted.

His right hand is a Bandmaster named Skargarak, a grumpy giant without any sense of humor whatsoever. The individual members of the Band are seldom seen alone, but even then the fear of retribution is too high to take advantage of the situation. In bad times, they visit a village more often than once year to demand the Tenth in children. This ruthless behavior has already led to a total lack of children in some regions. Eyewitnesses report that the Læmmergeiers have even traveled to the far north where they sell children on secret slave markets. Others claim they have seen the Band loading dozens of children on large boats to ship them across the sea where they sacrifice them to a cruel idol of theirs.

of factions and lodges

There is a multitude of secret societies within the Angelitic Church. Some of them are well-known to clergy and Engel – or even the general populace – as brotherhoods or religious orders acknowledged by the Angelitic Church. Others are of a far more clandestine nature, their existence only known to their members.

Some clerics as well as high-ranking Templars would prefer to see all lodges outlawed; they feel that these alliances contribute to the disunity of the church, and to them membership in such an organization is unthinkable. The Templars know that this would be irreconcilable with the Templar Bull, at the very least.

Other members of the church – especially high-ranking priests – hold different views. All attempts to disband the secret societies have been half-hearted. Some clerics believe the upper echelons of the Angelitic Church even sponsor these groups; they are convinced that some Angelitic leaders have been founding members of such lodges and that these lodges are merely a tool to destabilize unsatisfied factions within the church or to distract them from their aberrant goals.

Membership within a lodge is considered undesirable by the church; some lodges have even been put under a ban. Under certain conditions, though, membership can gain a cleric, Templar or Grimrider influence or prestige and even access to the most important secrets of the Angelitic Church. In retrospective, these so-called "secrets" often turn out to be nothing more than platitudes hardly worth risking a membership.

Usually, the prestige acquired is the result of secret machinations by the society because the lodges want to offer their members the opportunity to impress non-members in disputes or otherwise get attention in a positive way. Generally, the secret knowledge of the lodges is revealed to members little by little, the first revelations being minor disclosures and information – indiscretions, some might say. Truly significant secrets are only revealed to those members who have proven their worth for and loyalty to the lodge. Since the secrets the lodges keep often pose a possible threat to the unity of the Angelitic Church, members are careful to never even hint at them in the presence of others. These secrets are discussed exclusively during clandestine meetings of lodge members.

Of course, membership within a lodge also entails certain tasks and responsibilities which almost inevitably lead to serious problems for each and every lodge member sooner or later.

factions

Unlike the orders, the two following factions are not acknowledged parts of the Angelitic Church. Nevertheless, there are only few adherents of Angelitic faith who do not know what these two groups are or which ideas their members promote. The prominent members of both factions are well-known within the Church. Although both factions make use of secret signs to identify likeminded persons, they act mainly in the open, hold meetings where important questions of faith are discussed, recruit new supporters from among the novices, newly ordained Templars and even the Engel. As a rule of thumb, one out of ten members of the Angelitic Church professes his sympathies for one or the other faction candidly and actively stands for their goals.

Being a member of one of the two factions can be a prestigious affair; such a political and philosophical creed helps in finding loyal allies, while at the same time it also entails gaining bitter rivals. Whoever officially joins one of the factions has to take an oath of allegiance which obliges him to a lifelong membership; in reality, this vow is broken quite often and unlike the Templar Bull

only rarely called in to the letter. Whoever changes his points of view can change factions without any problems or retreat from the quarreling entirely. Moreover, unlike members of a secret lodge, Angelites who confess openly to adhere to one or the other faction need not expect reprisals from the leaders of the church.

the Pii

The Pious – or Pii as they call themselves – represent the traditionalistic wing of the Angelitic Church. This theological movement - which came into existence 200 years ago – regards itself as the only truly valid faction pleasant to God within the Angelitic Church and it claims to preserve the pure teachings of the church's founding days (consisting of the *Genesis Secunda*, the remaining fragments of the Holy Bible and the countless bulls of the Pontifex). Ever since the founding of the Innovators, the Pii have entered a heated battle for values, norms and basic principles. At the center of their controversial writings are the *Confessiones* of their spiritual father Calvin of Ostende. The most prominent member of the Pii who holds the rank of Pius Primus – the First among the Pious – is Johannes of Gemmingen, one of the most intimate advisors of the Pontifex, member of the Consistory and head of the so-called *Congregratio Fidei*, the supreme court of the Angelitic Church.

the Innovators

The liberal Innovators were founded 50 years ago as counter-movement to the unswerving orthodoxy of the Pii. They are far more liberal than the latter and reject many traditional rituals of the Angelitic Church as dead weight and superfluous. They support the introduction of newer, more "modern" rituals. Moreover, they further the career of all clerics, Templars and other members of the Angelitic Church who strike them as ingenious and extraordinarily devoted, even when these protégés refrain from the hardships of rising through the ranks and often lack the famous "stable stench" many conservative Angelites deem absolutely necessary for promising candidates. Their paragon and most eloquent defender of their ideas is Roland of Bærwald, a Templar with a profound theological training. He resides in the Swiss monastery Bærwald – which is often decried as extremely progressive – where he has essentially united of secular and theological leadership in his own person, even though the monastery is still nominally headed by an Abt.

Lodges

These clandestine organizations work in secret, and membership as well as their agenda, strategies and secrets are never revealed to outsiders. The existence of some lodges is a well-known fact at least within the Angelitic Church – albeit not necessarily among the common people – even though their ultimate intentions and wishes remain unclear in many cases. One or the other Engel will certainly hear about one or all of them sooner or later.

Whoever is interested in joining one of these groups has only to occasionally give a hint in regard to his intentions. Rumor-mongering within the Angelitic Church is unrivaled, and the potential new member can be certain to be contacted by a representative of his lodge of choice in the near future. This representative takes a close look at the potential new member, assessing the latter's goals and character traits, before eventually revealing – if he likes what he sees – the true reason why he wanted to have a talk with the recruit. He then invites the potential new member to "officially" appeal for membership.

Like the factions, the lodges demand an oath of loyalty from their new members, but unlike the factions, they call on this vow to the letter. How this is done depends on the lodge in question; most often, oath-breakers are expelled from the lodge at once. There have been rumors about more far-reaching punishments however…

Usually, the initiates vow to devote their lives to the goals of the lodge and to refrain from a parallel membership in another lodge. In spite of these vows a remarkable number of members of the Angelitic Church belong to more than one of these secret societies.

Most lodges have a secret sign members use to recognize one another. In most cases, these are subtly altered symbols the Angelitic Church uses anyway, so only those in the know can notice them: a bull – a symbol for one of the Cherubim – with only a single, spiraling horn, a corona with an elongated ray of light in the middle or some such. These lodge signs are embroidered on clothes or worn as jewelry in such a fashion that they either remain wholly unremarkable to outsiders or appear like curious, possibly regional variations of common Angelitic iconography. Only those actively looking for the specific signs they know are able to find them.

All lodges see themselves as loyal parts of the Angelitic Church, even though they are quite often at odds with other secret societies. At first, initiates are familiarized only with the most basic philosophical ideas and ultimate goals of their new spiritual home; information like names of other members, the structure of the lodge or current activities are withheld from novices. A promotion in rank brings more information on the internal procedures of the lodge.

Two examples for lodges within the Angelitic Church follow:

the Keepers of Piety

This lodge is a radical splinter group of the Pii in the tradition of those Inquisitors and Templars who led the widespread pogroms on technology during the 23rd century. They still uphold the theory that machines of all kind – even technology in general – are the work of the Lord of the Flies and that the use of even the most rudimentary

technology will weaken and eventually spell doom for mankind.

The Keepers actively oppose any technological innovations and reputedly go to such lengths as sabotaging the equipment of Engel, Templars and Grimriders in order to save them from the unwholesome influence of the Tempter. Actually, prior to their destruction, the Raguelites were fond of using the hated Keepers as convenient scapegoats when one of the devices or weapons they invented failed at the most inopportune of moments. On the other hand, it is incontestable that the Keepers of Piety laid waste to entire villages in western France with the help of loyal Templars and Gabrielites not too long ago. This radical action was prompted by the fact that they suspected these villages to be bastions of Cultists of the Machine.

There are rumors that this lodge is nothing more than a cover for an even smaller group of determined archconservatives who would like to see any use of technological tools to be punishable by death – even something as minor as a steam-powered weaver's loom. Many Angelites fear that numerous Komturs and even a Cardinal belong to this splinter group of radical muddle-headed zealots.

the mystics of the blood of christ

The followers of this esoteric doctrine promote a special form of dogma: through devotion and meditation they strive to achieve a personal union with God. To achieve the so-called *Unio Mystica*, they contemplate the suffering and death of a certain Jesus of Nazareth – who is also often called *Christos*, the Anointed – an early prophet of the Angelitic Church who presumably lived in the faraway region called Galilee. In the meetings of their lodge, the ancient tradition of the Lord's Supper is kept alive, a rite from ages past which has fallen into obscurity and includes the ritual consumption of "body and blood" of the aforementioned prophet in addition to prayers, chants and confession.

Rumors abound concerning the viscous red potion, called *Sanguis Christi*, served during the lodge's meetings and an initiate is first offered on his admittance into the lodge. Reputedly, only those who have solved the riddle of the potion's mixture and who are able to name all its ingredients during their rite of initiation are allowed to join the lodge. After having taken the first draught, many initiates enter an ecstatic sleep-like state of trance which can last several weeks. Since their semi-slumber is filled with a multitude of religious visions it can be deduced that the potion is treated with potent hallucinogenic drugs. Those initiates who fail to enter this state are deemed unworthy, and the lodge cuts any ties to them immediately. It is whispered that more radical circles of the lodge eliminate abortive initiates for reasons of secrecy which makes appealing for membership quite a risky endeavor.

It is said the Lord Himself sometimes speaks to intoxicated Mystics with years of experience in regard to such visions. Sometimes the Archangels appear to whisper the deepest secrets of creation to them. On awakening, the so-called Master of Dreams – a member of the lodge who knows how to write – writes down the initiates' reports in the Book of Dreams, the holiest relic of the lodge.

It is whispered that the two Grand Masters of the lodge – which are only referred to under their lodge names of Maria of Magdala and Simon, respectively – have become physically addicted to the *Sanguis Christi*, spending their lives in a constant drug-induced haze. Reputedly, they have started to visit other lodge members with astral bodies during the course of their visions. The cryptic messages they conveyed on such occasions have remained totally unclear, however. Some of those who have been visited in such a fashion presume the messages are prophecies which could not be grasped in their entirety during the vision. Time will tell...

The main meeting place of the lodge is reputedly located within the Urielite Himmel built on the Templar castle of Mont Salvage. There, numerous tapestries depicting scenes from the legend of the Holy Grail can be marveled at, and according to further rumors, this potent relic of a lost religion is kept within the walls of the Himmel. Unsubstantiated rumors, of course, but who can say if there is not a kernel of truth to them? Due to this reason, it is common practice among the members of this lodge to travel to the Urielite Himmel once in their lives to meditate there.

cults

There are many cults in Europe, religious communities of various sizes which – barring a few exceptions – do not adhere to the teachings of the Angelitic Church, reject many or all of its tenets. Each one of them is unique in its own fashion. Some of them are led by charismatic mystics which harbor only the best of intentions for their followers, while others are wholly under the influence of the Lord of the Flies and his countless – and diverse – minions. Those cults which are described on the following pages differ from one another in terms of philosophy.

These groups are mentioned either because of their considerable size or their remarkable natures. Without doubt, there are numerous other cults spread across the vast regions of Europe which are not mentioned here, some of which so extremely well hidden that their existence remains unknown to any outsiders whosoever. As has been said, all these cults are unique. They all address different needs of the downtrodden Europeans. In most cases, it is unknown whom or what they worship.

the fulminadores

The Fulminadores are one of the oldest cults of Europe and a rare breed at that, for their teachings are not in direct conflict with those of the Angelitic Church. Strictly speaking, they are a sect rather than a cult. They are limited to Iberia and are characterized by the all-embracing desire to become closer to God, a desire which often appears like a death-wish of sorts to many outsiders.

The Fulminadores find followers among the poorest classes, the sick and the old, to whom this world has little left to offer. They see thunderstorms – which are especially common in the main sphere of influence of the sect, the Pyrenean Mountains – as palpable manifestations of the power of the Lord whom they love unconditionally. The flashing lightning bolts of such thunderstorms are regarded as signs from the One Above. And so the desperate Fulminadores – traditionally clad in rags and sackcloth – set out into the mountains during each truly devastating thunderstorm where they travel from mountaintop to mountaintop carrying long iron rods, hoping to be struck by lightning and thus being taken out of this miserable life by the Lord who calls them to Heaven. Many of them give up their worldly careers and live as hermits in caves close to the highest peaks of the Pyrenean Mountains or as itinerant monks wandering the stony mule-tracks, always hoping for a thunderstorm.

However, those sect members who are struck by lightning and survive such an incident are considered especially unfortunate souls. As a sign of their shame, they are marked with scars on the palms of their hands where the long iron rods burned into their flesh.

The Fulminadores' center of power is Benjamin's Cathedral in Saragossa where the bodies of the redeemed who have fused with their rods stand united in silent prayer.

the disciples of the morningstar

The Disciples of the Morningstar are proud of being the first cult to form after the Second Flood, and over the centuries they have perfected the subtle arts of manipulation and intrigue. It has to be feared that Lucifer himself, the Fallen Angel, the Lightbringer, represents the driving force behind this cult, even though the opinions in regard to what or who he exactly is differ greatly. In any case, the cult upholds an extremely dark style and its members strive to imitate the Lord of the Flies in their appearance: their favorite color is crimson, and their secret meetings – so-called "Sabbats" - take place in caves illuminated by blazing bonfires and the torture of enemies supposedly plays an important role in these unholy festivities.

New initiates are lured to the ranks of the Disciples of the Morningstar with promises of power. According to the tenets of the cult, Lucifer – the Morningstar – was once an angel who objected to a seemingly meaningless order God had given him. For this insolence he was banished from Heaven. Proud and unbroken, he fell to earth sheathed in a nimbus of flames.

As Lucifer's successors, the Disciples of the Morningstar see their most urgent task in choosing their own destinies, independent of the commands of others and the expectations of society. To live "proud and unbroken" like Lucifer, the Disciples of the Morningstar act with the utmost ruthlessness – they kill without hesitating to satisfy their needs and desires, regardless whether those needs are of a sexual nature, the wish for a longer lifespan or hunger for material riches. Whoever is subjected to the cult and its indoctrinations for more than a year begins to regard even friends and loved ones as tools to use as he pleases and discard when they are no longer useful.

Mostly, the Disciples of the Morningstar avoid meeting among themselves, for they know that any of their fellows would kill even his brothers and sisters without hesitation if doing so furthered their goals. Each of them lusts for power. Supposedly, the large majority of wars and conflicts over the last 500 years started when a Disciple of the Morningstar attempted to expand his sphere of influence – and some Prelates who have to cope with such matters as part of their duties whisper it is even uncertain whether the crusades on the Dreamseed pose an exception to that rule.

The cult has spawned some of the most ruthless figures of recent history, and claims that many of its members are celebrities or icons, making it extraordinarily well-connected among the influential classes of European society if they are to be believed. In the cities, the Disciples of the Morningstar enjoy their intrigues and often determine the cut-throat policy of the Diadoches, who are supposedly members of the cult themselves or at least figureheads thereof in many cases. In the ranks of the church, they fight a bitter battle with the orthodox Angelites in whose side they are an enormous thorn.

Although the typical Disciple of the Morningstar prefers working on his own, he is often forced to cooperate with other cult members. A strict internal structure divides the cult into so-called Families. Every Family is led by a Family Council of eight members, the head of which is called the Patron, for whom the Family is named. Each family has its own geographical region to operate in.

In all, there are approximately ten different Families of Disciples of the Morningstar; the number of "family members" varies – the smallest Family consists of only eight Disciples, the largest one of close to 100. Every Disciple of the Morningstar belongs to at least one Family; some have wormed their way into several at once, though they keep this fact hidden, of course. When a new Family is to be founded, the majority of Patrons has to consent to such an endeavor. Their blessing is often bought with promises of future favors, by meeting certain conditions or by services rendered. Within their own Families, Disciples of the Morningstar do not have to fear backstabbing, since

the Families not only promote the interests of the individual family members, but also mutual, higher goals defined and enforced with an iron fist by the Patron. Whoever opposes these goals, paradoxically not only has to deal with one's own Family but also with allied Families and is eventually brought back on the right track with all means necessary. Nevertheless, internal power struggles and even assassinations within Families are not unheard of.

Occasionally, Families are invested with fiefs by Diadoches who want to ensure their support against the Angelitic Church. Such was recently the case in Denmark. The feudal lord Olaf Carlsson, Diadoche of Kopenhagen supported the influential merchant family Mölby with all resources he could muster – wholly unaware which spiritual depravities he furthered, for all that he saw was the mask of a venerable family of merchants. Ever since he realized the true nature of his strange bed-fellows, he has tried to beat them at their own game, sowing discord among the members of the Mölby Family Council.

The most powerful Family – the Santiagos, of Spain – have their headquarters in Madrid and are led by Antonio Santiago. This man is regarded as the founder of the cult and reputedly has not aged a single day since he pledged his allegiance to Lucifer in the early 23rd century, lending impressive proof of Lucifer's power. His Family owns vast stretches of land all over the island of Iberia, even running a rather profitable chain of inns and taverns.

Other Disciples of the Morningstar try their luck as demagogues rather than as merchants. Those cultists don the robes of the clergy and try to gain control of one of the most important weaknesses of the human mind: the longing to believe in something greater than oneself. Numerous Disciples of the Morningstar have insinuated themselves with the Angelitic Church, and many of them oversee communities in the more remote regions of Europe where rites and rituals have turned into vicious travesties of Angelitic customs. One of the most dangerous representatives of this variant of the Disciples of the Morningstar is Abt Ivar who has founded the Order of Souls in northeastern Germany – an order of laymen within the Angelitic Church, the members of which have declared that they want to save the souls of all European madmen, while actually their goals are totally different and of a far more unwholesome nature.

It is whispered that some of the Patrons have met with Lucifer in person. It remains unquestionable, however, that the Disciples of the Morningstar are well informed when it comes to the activities of other cults for reasons unfathomable. Precisely how they manage this feat of communication if unknown.

the cult of the machine

As the name implies, this cult is based on the use of forbidden technology. It is the youngest of all the known cults and was founded immediately after the destruction of the Trondheim Himmel. Its founder, Sadija de Mornay, is one of the few Raguelite Begines to survive the catastrophe.

Sadija's mind was shattered by the events at Trondheim, however, which also rendered her deaf – something of a blessing to the Church, because she keeps some highly explosive secrets in the caverns beneath the Himmel in Trondheim, and only her insanity keeps her from revealing them to others. In her madness and her seemingly endless escape from the minions of the church, she has taken to the idea of creating a union of man and machine. She works night and day to achieve this exalted state, and she leaves countless failed experiments – lobotomized and discarded carelessly – in the wake of her breathless flight all across Europe.

Her more temperate brothers and sisters in faith usually see technology as it should be seen: productive, efficient and reliable. Most of them live in cities ruled by pro-technology Diadoches where they salvage the remainders of technological marvels which they try to understand and use, often to the advantage of the common good, gaining them a high social standing.

Some machine cultists have brought to life a network of assassins working with technological devices with the goal of thwarting the threat the anti-technologically inclined Keepers of Piety represent to them, before the Keepers are given the chance to eradicate the cult. Cordoba has become one of the major centers of power for the Cult of the Machine, with Comtessa Isabella, the local Diadoche, virtually courting the cultists.

Generally, the cultists organize in small cells of about five members called Combinates. The individual Combinates maintain very close ties to each other. If there are several Combinates in a city, all the cultists hold joint meetings on a regular basis. This strictly organized manner of cooperating lends an astonishing efficiency to the Cult of the Machine, despite the massive resistance they face in the Angelitic Church.

Cultists of the Machine who are not aligned with a Combinate, usually due to a lack of fellow cultists in the area they operate in, often hire themselves out as assassins or bodyguards. They see salvaging, repairing and skillful use of high tech weapons as the first step to be taken on the path towards the union of man and machine preached by Sadija.

Detachedness is a trait of personality characterizing many cultists – lack of emotion is highly valued within the cult and the machine cultists literally strife to achieve a state in which they have rejected all feelings. Other basic virtues are an imperturbable sense of duty as well as ruthless efficiency. Only those who renounce all human emotions and sacrifice their conscience to the higher cause like Sadija did – who is revered as a saint – can hope to get closer to the cold mother of the cult.

saints

The Angelitic Church worships a large number of saints. Some of them are children, but majority were adults beatified for their achievements to the church, its growth or the expansion of Angelitic faith. The Raphaelite Order, with its frequent encounters with the common populace, especially engages in an almost exaggerated reverence of saints because the faith of most simple-minded Angelites can thus be strengthened very easily. The following list (which is neither exhaustive nor representative) names some of the more popular saints:

amadeus friedensreich steckling

Amadeus Steckling – or Saint Amadeus as the Angelites call him today – was born on the 14th of March in 2240 at Strasburg. Impressed by the piety of the Raphaelite monastery where he spent his childhood, he worked as the assistant to a physician after studying theology from 2262 onwards. In 2267, he volunteered to become the priest of Zabern, one of the poorest and most destitute communities of Alsace where he acted as communal priest as well as peasant, physician and apothecary.

At first he opened the difficult terrain for trade by focusing on building roads, a process during which he often took up pick and shovel himself. Then, he organized proper seed-corn and established a tree-nursery for fruit-trees in the garden of the parsonage; he encouraged each of his candidates for confirmation to plant two fruit-trees on the day of their confirmation. He purchased cattle and better tools – such as steel harrows – for the peasants. He founded an embroidery school for girls, and instituted the potential for women to be invested with the office of deacon in his parish. His activities met with so much approval that a large Raphaelite Beginehouse was established at Zabern.

Steckling initiated the establishment of cooperative societies for peasants and took care of building several cotton-mills in the Zabern area. 2313 he managed to convince a Swiss entrepreneur, the Diadoche Thomas of Bern, of establishing a plant producing silk ties in Zabern. This brought him in direct conflict with his church as he was regarded as a Diadoche collaborator from then on, but his agreement with Thomas of Bern allowed him to mitigate the misery of his diocese so drastically that the population increased tenfold.

Moreover, his flock was able to make donations for other projects of public benefit. When he severely criticized the greed of his secular patron in a sermon in the year 2319, Thomas of Bern had Steckling arrested, attempting to force the priest to renounce his Angelitic faith, but not even torture could lead the idealistic priest to stray from his chosen path. He died in the dungeons of Bern and was buried where he had done so much good. In the same year, he was appointed an honorary Armatura of the Templar Order by the Dux of that time, Ragnar Ahnhalm. In 2326, he was canonized by the Pontifex Maximus.

His epitaph reads: "He was the father of Zabern for 59 years."

helena resplendita eisen

A Begine in later years, Helena Eisen was born on the 12th of January in 2194 in Brünn in Moravia, the daughter of a shoemaker and a gardener. When she was one year of age, her parents moved to Vienna. In her youth, she suffered from a severe case of stuttering which subsided after a long period of silence recommended by a Raphaelite Begine. Afterwards, she worked as a cook and later as an assistant nurse in a hospital at Linz run by Raphaelite Begines.

At the age of 22, she adopted the order name of Resplendita and moved to a Begine hospital in the Viennese Forest. After the Diadoche Gianchristof Agum seized power over Vienna and the neighboring region in 2238, Sister Resplendita refused to let herself be limited and did as she thought godly. She secretly baptized a child and opposed the orders of the Diadoche's minions to take the Raphaelite insignia from the hospital walls. When she tried to nurse a wounded Ramielite back to health in secret, she was denounced by the new head of the Hospital, a physician named Franz Stadtler, who was loyal to the Diadoche.

In March 2242, she was arrested in her hospital for "plotting high treason" and brought to Vienna. On the 3rd of April in the year 2242 the Free Court of the City of Vienna sentenced her to death, the only Begine to be executed during the entire so-called Diadoche Wars – the countless other Begines who joined the resistance in other cities ruled by Diadoches were mostly merely taken into custody. On the 2nd of March in the year 2243 she died as a martyr in Vienna because she refused to renounce her faith in the presence of the Diadoche. Sister Resplendita was beheaded.

ida of bayeux

Ida was born on the 13th of April in 2140 in Luxemburg. Her husband was the local Diadoche, Baron Friedrich. After the death of her husband, Ida imparted all the land she owned to several monasteries, the largest estate to the Ramielite cloister of Bayeux where her brother was a Monach. She died on the 22nd of April in 2213 and was buried in Bayeux according to her own wishes. She is considered the patron saint of generosity.

idamer of canterbury

Idamer was Bishop of Canterbury before Britain entered the NSI and banned the Angelitic Church. He was a Ramielite monk and ordained as the first English Bishop of his hometown Canterbury by Cardinal Horatio of Britain on the 7th of August in the year 2144. He was the

other cults

There are countless other cults in Europe which either play less important roles or will be detailed in future publications. The most prominent of these cults are:

the ecstatics

A catch-all term for those nomadic tribes – most often led by a highly charismatic traveling preacher – who advance ahead of the Infernos, basking in their short-lived healthy influence on the local climate in a state of religious rapture. Ecstatics often fall victim to the creatures of the Dreamseed.

the jonahites

A group of sectarians who believe in the second coming of a prophet swallowed whole by a white wale.

the children of promise

A group of children led by the enigmatic, self-appointed Saint Romanin, a thirteen-year-old boy. Reputedly, the Children of Promise are close to the roots of the Angelitic Church; they worship children as creatures sent down to earth by God and the members of this cult are known to judge adults rather harshly.

the morlocks

This once astonishingly widespread group consisted of sick, handicapped or otherwise deprived people who dwelled in the catacombs and sewers of the ruins of the great cities of the Time Before. When their general dissatisfaction reached a certain critical level, they rose against the Angelitic Church in the year 2603. The violent suppression of their rebellion triggered the so-called Heretic War during which the Angelitic Church eradicated numerous cults and sects by force.

the ratcult

A strange brotherhood of survivalists and plague-carriers, the Ratcult reveres rats – as well as, in some cases, cockroaches – because these creatures were resilient enough to survive God's wrath on their own. The members of this cult eat the objects of their adulation in the archaic hope to thereby gain their strength and toughness. Paradoxically, the population of the cult's holy animals is thus decimated where the cult has gained the most influence.

successor of the German Paul of Jülich. On the 9th of October in the year 2155 he became one of the first victims of anti-church rioters in Great Britain. A lynch mob stormed the cathedral during Holy Mass and stabbed the Bishop who bled to death on the altar. Reputedly, the assassination was executed on behalf of the Lord Chancellor of London himself.

magdalena of maubeuge

The Æbtissin of the Raphaelite monastery of Maubeuge in northeastern France was the first woman at the head of an Angelitic cloister and a highly skilled healer. Only her approximate date of death is known; she died around 2205 in her monastery. Magdalena is the patron saint of pregnant women; a prayer to her ensures a delivery free of complications.

notburga of rattenberg

Her commemoration day is on the 1st of March. Notburga was a maid born around the year of 2265 in Innsbruck, the capital of the Tyrol. Ever since her 13th birthday, Notburga worked as a maid on Castle Rattenberg, the seat of the Diadoche of the Tyrole, Baroness Dora.

Notburga was a paragon of loyalty and sense of duty as well as active charity out of piety and godliness. It is said that she starved to bring food to the poor. One day, Baroness Dora caught her in the act, summoned her and asked her what she was carrying under her skirt. Then and there, so the legend says, the food turned into vinegar and wood chips. Because of her charity and generosity she was sacked after the death of the Baroness by the latter's son Arl, who was of even greater cruelty than his mother. Notburga started working for a peasant in the village of Eben, a settlement loyal to the church.

She came to an understanding with her new employer that she would be allowed to cease mowing on the eve of Sundays and holidays on the stroke of the vesper-bell to prepare herself for the holiday in the nearby Angelitic chapel; when the peasant insisted that she was to continue her work after the stroke of the vesper-bell, though, she shouted "Work is done" and simply hung up her sickle in the air where it miraculously kept hanging until she took it off its "invisible hook" after she had said her prayers.

After Arl was killed in a battle with Templars, Castle Rattenberg was ordained as a Raphaelite monastery. Hereafter, Notburga worked as a cook in the cloister where she died on the 1st of February in the year 2213.

Notburga is the most revered Raphaelite saint and her grave in the village of Eben a popular site of pilgrimage. Many stories, ballads and plays tell of her life. A mural on the wall of a farm in Eben testifies to the "sickle-miracle" which supposedly took place not far from the farm.

The Notburga cult and her worship were officially sanctioned by Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus in 2362. Since then, she is the patron saint of peasants and maids as well as rest from work. A prayer to her can help with cattle-pests and all other hardships of life as a peasant.

pater antonius

A Ramielite monk in later years, Pater Antonius was born Anton Achter on the 11th of December in the year 2185 in Breslau in Lower Silesia. He was ordained as a priest at a remarkably young age. In 2232 he wrote a later to the Diadoche ruling his hometown in which he reproached the latter that many of his judgments were directly opposed to the Lord's will. Soon afterwards, Anton's small monastery beyond the gates of the city was assaulted. One of his confidants, the Templar Peter Gherbod, helped him escape by delaying the minions of the Diadoche long enough. The Templar himself was arrested and eventually put to death. Pater Antonius fled to the Raphaelite monastery of Strasburg, but assassins wormed their way into the cloister of the healers and killed Antonius on the 13th of February in the year 2235. In the same year, Pontifex Maximus canonized him for his strong faith in face of adverse circumstances.

raphaela javiera capruna

Raphaela Capruna was born on the 23rd of December in the year 2250 the youngest of 13 children of a landed gentry in Navarra in Iberia. From her earliest years she cared for the children of the poor country dwellers. In 2274 she became the Æbtissin of a monastery in Genoa.

In 2280 she founded the order of the "Missionary Sisters of the Lord's Voice" which was officially acknowledged only a year later by the Pontifex Maximus. The ultimate goal of the order, under the aegis of the Michaelites, was to spread the Angelitic faith all over Europe. After a request by the Pontifex Maximus, Capruna went to England in 2288 to organize the care-taking and religious efforts of the scattered followers of the Angelitic Church on the "Island of Heretics". Starting in York, she founded numerous secret hospitals, orphanages and monasteries in the most remote regions of England and Ireland. She worked tirelessly up to 20 hours a day and was a shining example to the large numbers of young women who joined her order.

Her work done, Em Capruna returned to Europe and eventually founded a main monastery for her order in Celle where she died on the 22nd of March in the year 2317. Raphaela was beatified in 2238 and canonized in 2346. In 2350, she was officially declared the patron saint of all Angelites in Diaspora.

sebald of lorraine

The background of Sebald of Lorraine's canonization is rather unspectacular. The Urielite Abt who died on the 15th of January in 2200 founded the first Urielite monastery in Metz and became Bishop of Lorraine at the urging of his order. After his canonization, Sebald became the only Urielite saint ever.

serkan of cappadocia

Serkan of Cappadocia was born on the 5th of December in the year 2239 in the hamlet of Mutalaska in Cappadocia. He was a Sarielite monk, a hermit, a monastery founder and the first Abt of the Sarielite Convent of Mir Saba. He founded numerous cloisters and hospitals all over Turkey, including the famous island monastery in the Kidron Gorge where he invested the office of Abt later in his life.

He died on the 15th of February in the year 2432 at the venerable age of 92 at the Convent of Mir Saba. His tomb has survived to the present day, and his remains were returned to Mir Saba in 2465, after being kept at *Roma Æterna* after his canonization for his achievements in furthering the cause of the Sarielites in the Holy City.

ulrich of guben

Ulrich of Guben was born around 2180 in Guben in Lower Lusatia. It is said that this Abt of the local small Sarielite Convent kept a horde of Dreamseed creatures away from his cloister where countless mothers from the village had sought refuge for themselves and their children with the power of his voice alone. He died on the 5th of June in the year 2260 at a very old age. In 2292 he was canonized for saving his brothers and the children of Guben with his strong faith. He is revered as the patron saint of children.

holy sites

Due to the central importance of the Angelitic Church in the lives of the Europeans and the fact that faith permeates even the most banal trivialities of daily life, numerous sites of pilgrimages have evolved ever since the Angelites came into existence.

roma æterna

The most important site of pilgrimage in the Angelitic Church is without doubt *Roma Æterna* itself. This Italian city on the highlands above the River Tiber is unquestionably the heart and soul of Angelitic faith. The Holy City – the birthplace of the veneration of the Engel – is a symbol to Angelite power in and of itself. Year after year, thousands of pilgrims are drawn to the center of Angelitic life. Peter's Church, with the throne of the Pontifex Maximus, is at the center of attention during such pilgrimages because it is said that touching the throne brings the Lord's blessing.

the himmel

The five Himmel are major sites of pilgrimage. Whoever strives to be a good Angelite, sets out on a pilgrimage to one of the Himmel at least once in his life. Generally, the pilgrim is expected to visit the Himmel of the order to which he can best relate to in terms of ultimate goals in life and basic principles. However, more practical considerations often take precedence over this idea – since traveling in the 27th century is rather troublesome and hazardous, those who do not simply settle on the closest Himmel as goal of their pilgrimage can be considered truly pious.

It is considered a special trophy – or pilgrim insignia as the faithful say – to catch a feather of one of the Engel dwelling in the Himmel visited during the traditional High Mass held in the Himmel's church marking the end of a pilgrimage. The sheer number off feathers actually caught by pilgrims lends credence to suspicions of the scattering of feathers from within the Himmel in order to please the pilgrims.

speier

Speier – or Speyer as it was once called – was of an utmost importance even during the Time Before as a site of pilgrimage as well as a bishopric. In the Time Before, the city on the river Rhine belonged to a nation called Rhineland-Palatinate. Then, the Great Flood arrived and washed away the entire city, including Speier's Romanic cathedral which had been built in the 11th century by the Salian emperors.

Speier is important to the Angelitic Church as the birthplace of the Pontifex Maximus, turning it into a major site of pilgrimage. Especially on Peter's Day (see below), countless pilgrims come to Speier to row in a large procession of boats illuminated by torches to the middle of the river at midnight – legend holds that the Pontifex was born on the first hour of the day. To celebrate the birthday of the leader of the Angelitic Church leaves of water hyacinths are scattered in the winds and waves. When the sun rises, the Bishop of nearby Hambach traditionally says a Holy Mass on a grandstand at the banks of the river.

rodez

In addition to these more remarkable sites of pilgrimage, there are other regional sites which are of minor importance to the Angelitic Church as a whole. One of these sites is the Grimrider pilgrim church of Rodez. The Urielite monastery the church is part of looms over a mangrove-covered cliff high above the French Mediterranean coast. Once a year, Grimriders from all over Europe gather here to sacrifice small gold or silver statuettes of children. For unknown reasons, this ancient custom almost fell into oblivion during the middle of the 26th century, before it was brought back to life in the beginning of the following century through tireless efforts taken by the Prince-Bishop of France.

From 2646 to 2649, a new pilgrim church was erected on the site of the original building which had suffered massive damage from a fire. On the Sunday following the 3rd of May – the commemoration day of Saint Philippas, the first Komtur and patron saint of the Grimriders canonized by the Pontifex – the Grimriders as well as many faithful Angelites living on the Mediterranean coast or even in other, more distant regions of France come to Rodez. The Grimriders, clad in full armor, attend a Holy Mass only they are allowed to participate in. The rites and contents of this mass are kept secret from outsiders.

holidays

Similar to the sites of pilgrimage, the holidays of the Angelitic Church – during most of which work rests – have become an integral part of daily live for the Europeans after the Second flood. They represent welcome diversions in the monotony and hardships of life and are celebrated with a lot of pomp especially in the centers of Angelitic power. Some of the most important Angelitic holidays are:

the day of the children

All followers of the Angelitic Church celebrate this holiday on the 1st of February as it remembers the significant role of the children in the salvation of mankind after the Second Flood. Parents who have been blessed with children in the course of the past twelve months make offerings in their local churches, and in the monasteries, sweet bread in the shape of children's bodies are baked and given to the poor. The children of *Roma Æterna* are taken to the Lateran where they are blessed by the Pontifex Maximus himself.

the day of the martyrs

This festival represents the most important theological holiday of the Angelitic Church. Part hero-worship, part remembrance of the dead and a defiant celebration in honor of one's own survival and the arrival of spring, it is held every year on the 1st of March. It reputedly derived from an old religious holiday from the Time Before.

Essentially, on the Day of the Martyrs the Angelitic Church remembers those Engel as well as Templars, Grimriders and even Monachs and Begines who gave their lives to serve the church, especially in battle with the Dreamseed. In the course of time, another aspect has wormed its way into the festivities, particularly in rural regions: The peasants celebrate the rebirth of earth and love. The days are longer than the nights, and spring has prevailed upon winter – for the common country dweller this signifies as much reason to cheer as the remembrance of martyrs from distant lands as called for by the ecclesiastical lords. Therefore, the Day of the Martyrs is simply called "Festival of Life" in some rural regions. The festivities commence with the first rays of dawn and last long into the night. Everywhere in Europe people bake sweet rice cakes as gifts. Furthermore, lambs are slaughtered, roasted and eaten, according to ancient traditions.

The Day of Martyrs is of the utmost importance to Nuremberg, the city of the Gabrielite Himmel. The Angels of Death celebrate this day in its traditional sense as a time for hero-worship of an extraordinarily dark and grim nature. The festivities culminate in the great ritual Sword Dance of the Gabrielite elite squadrons – clad in white for this occasion – taking place on the Plærrer, a wide plain on the outskirts of the city, and the passion play that follows the Sword Dance. In this passion play, the Angels of Death reenact the great sacrifice of their Samaelite brothers who walked into the smoke to the last man to save their home island of Corsica from the Dreamseed.

In all the Himmel and monasteries, Engel face east, keeping a symbolic honor guard which lasts all day. They look to this direction because the first

Dreamseed mutated by the Lord of the Flies returned from the large corridor of Brandland in the eastern part of the continent after the Decade of Reconstruction in 2605.

peter's day

The celebration of this holiday is mostly limited to *Roma Æterna* itself and its neighboring regions. Countless pious Angelites flock to the city each year, however, to celebrate the birthday of their First Shepherd on the 12th of May.

Traditionally, the Vatican prepares a feast for the needy on Peter's Place on this day, and the Pontifex Maximus shows himself to the cheering masses on one of the New Lateran's flying platforms.

the festivities of the tents

Exactly three months after the highly "spiritual" holidays, the Festivities of the Tents cater to rather worldly pleasures.

The Festivities of the Tents are traditionally celebrated at the end of the harvesting seasons and they are one of the three holidays which are often combined with a pilgrimage to Peter's Church in Rome. During the Festivities of the Tents, everyone is expected to remember that there once was a time when the ancestors of today's Angelites were a poor nomadic people which wandered a devastated Europe instead of reaping the bounty of the fields. This remembrance is supposed to result in thankfulness and praise for God's gifts. Therefore, the church introduced the practice to put up tents the people have to live in during the festivities.

The tent does not have to be a lasting home, though; rather, it is supposed to remind the people of the makeshift shelters the Europeans had to live in after the Second Flood. The tents can be composed of diverse materials at hand (wood, metal rods, plastic covers, tightly stretched blankets etc.). All tents have a circular opening at the top through which the sky can be seen.

According to ancient customs, typical European fruit and plants are offered on the altars of the churches – ears of rice, lemons, branches of weeping willow trees and bunches of lavender. These four offerings are tied into a bunch and brought to a prayer tent with an altar also erected exclusively for this occasion during a thanksgiving sermon. This strange bouquet represents the different forms of flora in 27th century Europe – corn (mostly rice, but also wheat and rye), fruit trees which are cultivated in large plantations, non-edible but otherwise useful plants (medicinal herbs or flowers picked because of their beauty or their fragrances) and finally trees which can be used as fire-wood or as raw material for various crafts (basket-work etc.).

The Festivities of the Tents last eight days; only on the first day of the Festivities, work of any kind is strictly forbidden.

> when you reap what you have sowed and you forget but only one grain of rice on the field, you shall not return to fetch it; it shall belong to the stranger, the orphan and the widow so that you may blessed by the Eternal one, your god.
>
> when you shake your fruit-tree you shall not pick the fruit from its branches afterwards; the remaining fruit shall belong to the stranger, the orphan and the widow so that you may be blessed by the Eternal one, your God.
>
> when you harvest the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not take those grapes fallen to the ground; the remaining grapes shall belong to the stranger, the orphan and the widow so that you may be blessed by the Eternal one, your God.
>
> remember that you once wandered the wastes of europe; this why the Lord tells you to do so.
>
> - from the *genesis secunda*

On the eve of the first day of the Festivities, the mother of the family lights the candles in the tent her loved ones have built and speaks the appropriate thanksgiving prayers.

Afterwards, the whole family attends the Holy Mass at the prayer tent. Others are greeted with a simple "Happy Festivities!" on this day. After returning home, the family starts the Festivities proper with a huge feast which is blessed before everyone sits down to eat.

The families celebrate for seven days in their tents, convinced that God is their guest during each and every meal they take. The following prayer is said before each major meal of these seven days:

"Be praised, Eternal One, our God, King of the World who sanctified us with his commandments."

The families are expected to spend as much time as possible in the tents after the meals, and as far as the climatic conditions allow, they are also supposed to live in the tents for the duration of the Festivities rather than using them only as dining-rooms of sorts.

On the morning of the first day of the Festivities, a festive Mass is said which includes thanksgiving psalms and recitations from the *Genesis Secunda*. The special bouquet is brought to the prayer tent to be carried by the celebrants while singing solemn chorals and receiving the blessings of the priest. Afterwards, the bouquet is swung in all cardinal points as a sign of gratitude for God's grace and gifts in all their various forms.

the festival of the sending

This holiday remembers a historical event as well – the day when the Lord sent his Engel. According to the annals of the Angelitic Church this happened on the 3rd of December in the year 2206. The anniversary of this miraculous occurrence – another holiday in the second half of the year – is cause for much joy among the people who celebrate it with passion plays and processions in many places.

the high days

Unlike the other important holidays of the Angelitic Church, the so-called High Days – Year's Turn, the Angelitic equivalent of New Year's Day, and the following first day of the new year, the Day of the Lord – are not tied to any historical events. In some regions, they are also called "Days of Omnipotence" or "Days of Humility". Moreover, they are not cheerful holidays. The High Days are purely religious festivities which celebrate God's role as judge of the universe. They focus on godliness, spirituality, penitence and the silent glorification of the Lord.

Actually, the High Days are far more than just – last and the first day of the year. Preparations for these two days of atonement – the most significant holidays of all – begin a whole month in advance of Year's Turn in early December.

The High Days themselves are celebrated all over Europe on two days – the 31st of December and the 1st of January.

year's turn

Actually, this holiday is celebrated merely with a single Holy Mass on sunset. At the beginning of this Holy Mass, an ancient Latin prayer is read which states that all vows taken during the last year end with the last word of the prayer – the following day they will be renewed, but during the "Night between Times" nothing can last. Afterwards, people gather silently for bread and water to remember the times of need after the Second Flood, so they will not fall into oblivion. At midnight, a small oil lamp – the so-called Light of Hope – is lit by every family before the people gather again to attend the Holy Mass which is read to announce the Day of the Lord.

the day of the lord

On this day of fasting – which is exclusively dedicated to returning to the ways set out by God – the Lord seals the fate of every creature on earth, judging them according to their efforts taken in finding back to His ways. The Day of the Lord is marked from sunset to the sunset of the following day with fasting and praying.

The focus of the long Masses read – depending on local customs they can last two to seven hours – is a "return to God", since God is ready to take in the sinners, to forgive them for their sins and to offer them the opportunity to start the new year as a "blank page" in His book.

According to Angelitic traditions, God never makes this decision rashly. The gates of penance stand open until the day of the Great Reconciliation, the moment in time when it is finally decided upon "who shall endure and who shall perish, who shall be rich and who shall be poor, who shall be punished and who shall be exalted", according to the *Genesis Secunda*.

In folklore, the Day of the Lord is conceived as the most significant day in the Angelitic calendar, even though the Festival of the Sending is officially even more important. Five Masses - starting and ending with a midnight Mass – conclude the High Days. After the second midnight Mass, the faithful leave the churches, the gates of which are symbolically closed for the next 24 hours all over Europe. According to Angelitic faith, the gates of heaven close when this night has come, sealing the fate of every creature on earth. Then the horns are blown, their call echoing through the night, and the gathering ends and everyone walks towards a new year.

> "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." and he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.
>
> st. matthew 19; 14 – 15

rituals of the angelitic church

No other religion in the history of mankind has ever made such heavy use of pomp, splendor and ostentatious display in regards to outward appearances like the Angelitic Church. In order to satisfy the need for spirituality of the common people, the founding fathers of this religion thoroughly ritualized countless aspects of daily life and virtually all actions in sacral contexts.

The following descriptions only show a small part of the numerous significant rituals practiced by the Angelites. Storytellers are encouraged to come up with rituals of their own design. Those rituals here exemplify the high level of ritualism predominant in all sacral activities.

the six angelitic sacraments

These are the six most important rites of the Holy Angelitic Church, installed by Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus himself. Countless other rituals are introduced by the orders' Archangels or high-ranking clerics; most of the time, these rites are only of regional significance or purely specific to their respective orders.

baptism

Children are held in highest regard in the belief systems of the Angelitic Church and are revered as God's gifts to the world in an almost saint-like fashion. Thus, baptism has become far more important than in the predecessor religions of Angelitic faith. Baptism is the first of the Angelitic sacraments, being exclusively reserved for children

– baptizing adults would run counter to the most basic principles the Angelitic Church holds dear. As soon as an infant is strong and healthy enough, he is baptized. Baptism introduces the infant to the Angelitic community and forges a bond between him, God and His Engel. Usually, an infant is baptized by pouring water over his head; in some communities, the entire body of the infant to be baptized is briefly immersed in a font.

baptism of the Engel

Only the Engel – and the One Above, of course – rank even higher than children in the belief system of the Angelitic Church. Their rite of initiation, the so-called Baptism of the Engel, is one of the mysteries at the core of Angelitic faith and the orders guard it jealously. Engel are always baptized in the Himmel behind closed doors. The only fact commonly known is that Engel are baptized at a very early stage of their development. During their baptism, the Lord reputedly bestows His powers upon them. It is rumored that the Engel also receive the Signum - their tattoos – during their baptism. Storytellers may find more information on this topic in **Chapter Four: Promissum** under the header **The Long Path of the Engel.**

confirmation

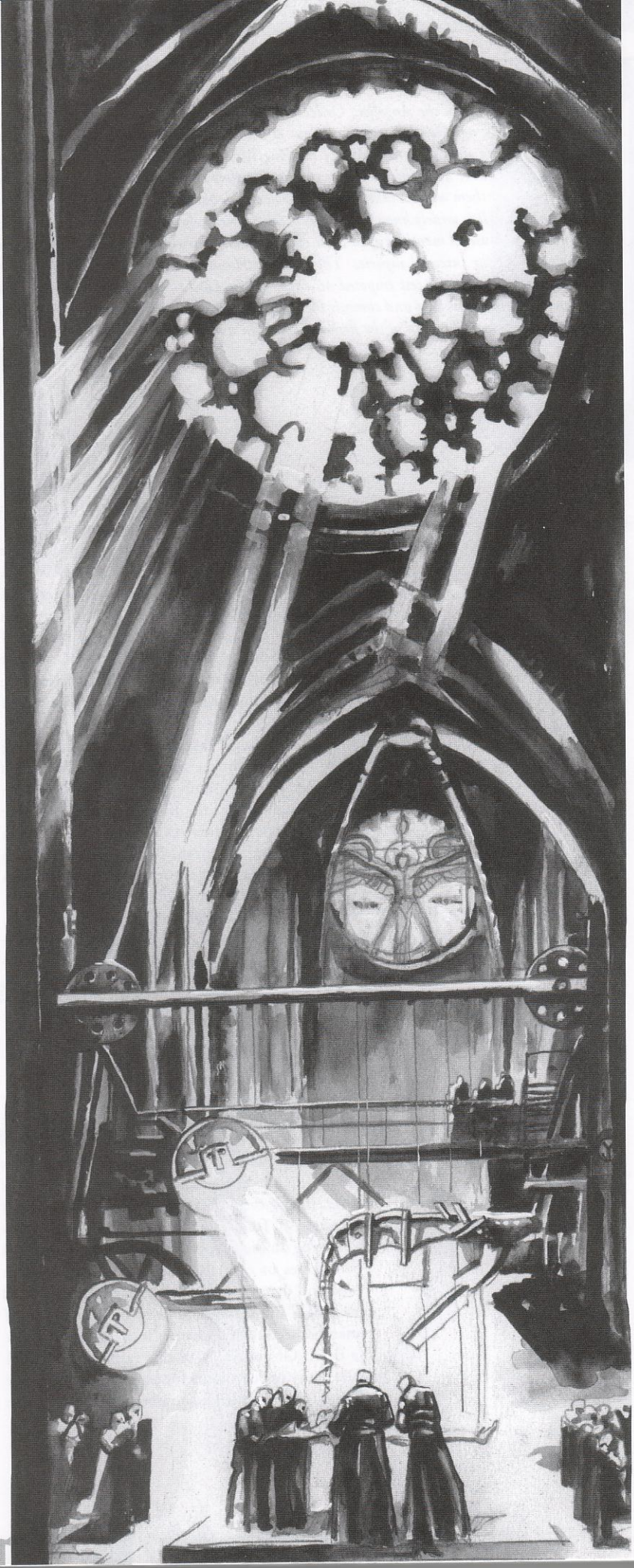
In the Angelitic Church, confirmation – or *Confirmatio* as some well-educated Angelites call this event – constitutes the sacrament which bestows its recipient with the "bounty of faith" as well as the capability to become a martyr, confirming and expanding the initial bond formed during the candidate's baptism. Moreover, this rite ensures the candidate of the loyalty of the Angelitic Church and the Engel. Usually, this sacrament – which acknowledges the candidate as a full member of the Angelitic Church – is given when puberty sets in. It is reserved for mortals only; the Consecration of the Engel constitutes a comparable event in the life of an Engel (see below).

consecration of the Engel

Once a year on the spring equinox, the Pontifex Maximus blesses all the new Engel the Lord has sent down to earth this year in *Roma Æterna*.

To prepare for the most important day in their lives, the Engel spend the whole night praying with spread wings on the cold, hard marble floor in the consecration hall of Peter's Church. They kneel down in large circles, so that only the tips of their wings can touch one another. Thus, they remain without moving from sunset to sunrise, sunken in meditation.

After the long night, Templars open the gates of the consecration hall, and the first dim light of the morning falls upon the gathered Engel. The day



order-specific rites

As mentioned before, the Angelitic Orders differ greatly from one another in terms of their ultimate goals, agendas and points of view. It is no surprise then, that distinctive rites have evolved among the different orders of the Angelitic Church. Further information on these rites will be made available to players and storytellers alike in future publications; to give an example for them we will take a quick look at the elaborate rites of penitence practiced by the Raphaelites. It is widely known that this order deliberately opposes the will of the Lord in many cases, because its members open their own bodies in chirurgical experiments in order to find new cures for internal injuries. The Healing Hands conceive this violation of the commandments as a special test imposed on them by the Lord – proud yet humble at the same time, they carry this load and commit their sins, only to do penance for them excessively – castigation and mortification of the flesh are common within the Raphaelite order.

has come when they are ordained as officially acknowledged members of fellowships by the Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus himself.

Two Templars in plain white garments lead the Engel to the large square in front of Peter's Church. Traditionally, grandstands are erected overnight on which the people crowd during the consecration proper. They wave small flags with the insignia of the Angelitic orders. Due to the immense number of spectators, it is often rather difficult for the individual to catch sight of at least the wing tip of an Engel.

Then, the Engel take their places beneath the gallery with the throne of the Pontifex, which is decorated in white and gold and shines in an unearthly light. After the Engel have gathered, the audience members raise their voices in a psalm praising the Lord. Then, the Pontifex Maximus calls the name of every Engel present and blesses him with benedictions centuries old. One after the other, the Engel stand to receive their first votive-cloth with the benediction of the Pontifex Maximus on it from the hands of a Monach. Afterwards, they rise into the skies as a single unit, leaving the cheering masses far beneath them.

burial or cremation

The dead of the 27th century are neither mummified nor entombed in mausoleums. The customs of the Angelitic Church dictate that the dead have to be placed on their backs, their faces looking up to the sky and their arms (as well as wings, in the case of the messengers of the Lord) spread in a final union with the Lord. Then depending on the region the dead are either covered with stones or cremated. Small tombstones with name and date of death of the deceased are placed either near the stone-mound or in the ground of remembrance in areas where it is customary to burn the dead. Of course, even this rather plain ritual offers many opportunities for ostentation – a higher mound, a more splendid tombstone – all of these have been seen.

Should a horrible twist of fate end the existence of an Engel during his time on Earth, he is taken to the closest Himmel, so his soul can receive the rite of Purification. If that is impossible, he is burned within a monastery and his ash is carefully collected and taken back to a Himmel for this final rite.

purification

If there is a ritual even more secretive and jealously guarded than the Baptism of the Engel, then it surely is the purification. It sets an end to the worldly career of an Engel and marks the moment when the Lord takes the burden of servitude on earth off his shoulders.

When the time for their purification has come, the Engel return to their Himmel, make their last confession with the Archangel of their order himself and go home to the kingdom of their heavenly father.

It has to be admitted that Heretics spread all kinds of vicious propaganda in regard to the purification, of course – but the fact remains that not a single Engel has ever raised his voice to speak against this ritual.

minor rites

This is a catch-all term for a host of regional customs, idiosyncrasies and ritualized peculiarities which can be found under the aegis of individual Himmel and monasteries. Some of them evolve to gain a more general importance, while others remain limited to their home regions or even fall into obscurity altogether. Only a single minor rite at least common in most monasteries is described here.

the blessing for the returning fellowship

Traditionally, fellowships which have been sent on a mission away from the Himmel or monastery they are stationed in report immediately to the Ab, Prior or (in rather rare cases) a Monach charged with the task of coordinating the activities of the fellowships upon their return. Before they do so, the Blessing of the Returning Fellowship takes place, a short rite which essentially consists of nothing more than a benediction and a brief thanksgiving prayer. This rite is held to thank the Lord for the safe return of His messengers.

Especially successful fellowships sometimes receive new votive-clothes which have been written for the occasion during an expanded, more public variant of this rite.

Introit

They would spend the entire night with wings spread on the cold, hard marble floor of Peter's Church. There were five Engel to their fellowship, and at least a dozen other fellowships were kneeling under the huge vaults of the cathedral. In the evening, their fellowship had kneeled down here, only the tips of their wings touching one another. Since then, they had not moved. Not many fellowships were brought together before the consecration, and he wondered why there had been an exception in their case. Alviel had seen the Michaelite Sabiel a few times during her training, but did not know any of the others.

Although they faced one another, Alviel could not watch the other Engel. Like her, they all seemed deep in meditation. Or at least they were pretending to be. She wondered if the thoughts of the others wandered as often as hers did and whether Sabiel was able to notice it. She knew that the Michaelites were capable of creating a mental rapport between the Engel of a fellowship. She had even heard the voice of a Michaelite in her head herself, and she had been told that the Michaelites could read the minds of others.

But what did this mean? Would Sabiel know everything she and the other three Engel would be thinking during this night? Or did he need a certain amount of time before he would be able to understand their thoughts? Maybe he had to focus on each of them individually to do so. In the latter case, Alviel would have chosen the Urielite if she were in Sabiel's place. He looked strange and alien – his skin was of a curious tone of olive she'd never seen before, and he appeared gnarled, more like a tree than a boy. Or an Engel. A tree – how fitting.

When the Templars opened the gates after the long night and the first dim light of the morning fell into the hall, all Engel present were relieved. Alviel did not need the telepathic gift of the Michaelites to recognize that. Even though they all had meditated regularly before, none of them was accustomed to spending the whole night in such an unpleasant pose. Moreover, they all were rather anxious. The day had come when Pontifex

Consecration

Maximus Petrus Secundus himself would ordain them as true Engel of the Lord. None of them had ever seen the Pope before, but even though he appeared to be but a boy, they knew of his virtually infinite power.

Two Templars in plain white garments led them on the square in front of Peter's Church. Grandstands erected the night before now groaned under the weight of the people crowded upon them. They waved small pennons in the colors of the orders and reached out to the passing Engel, trying to touch the tips of their wings.

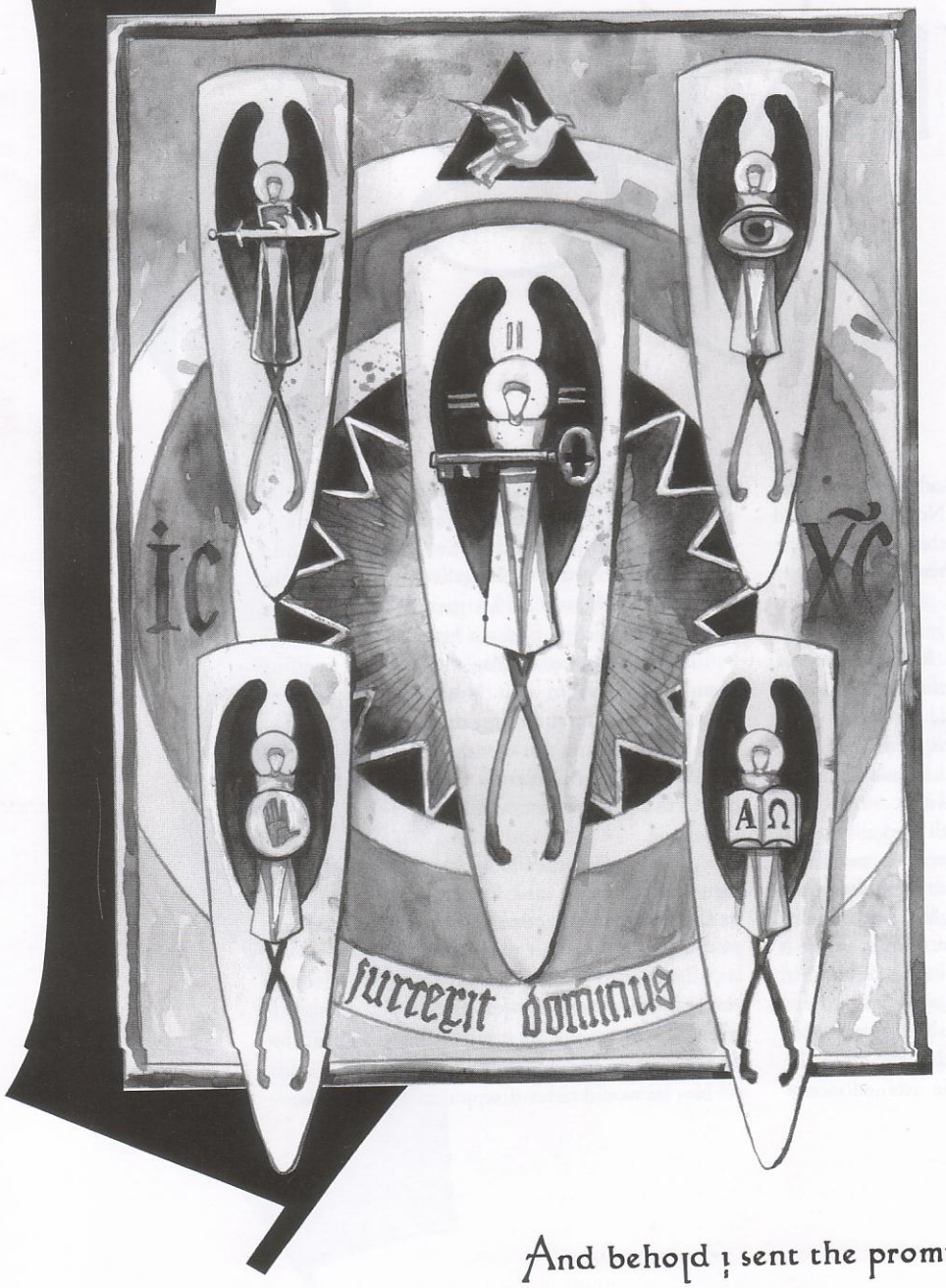
All the Engel gathered beneath the gallery with the throne of the Pontifex. It was decorated in white and gold all over and shone in an unearthly light. The plain throne itself might have been lost among all the splendor that surrounded it – were it not for the Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus, who had taken place on it. He simply sat there, with bare feet and a plain white shirt, surrounded by Cardinals and Armatura. He was deep in thought, his gaze enraptured as he listened to the loud singing of the gathered crowd. After the psalm ended, he lifted one slender hand and silence fell. Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus rose and advanced to the edge of the gallery with a few light steps. He wordlessly let his gaze wander over the fellowships kneeling beneath him.

Then he spoke, calling the name of each of them, blessing them with the ancient benedictions centuries old. One after the other, the Engel rose to receive their first votive-cloth with a benediction of the Pontifex Maximus from the hands of Monach before rising to the skies under the merry cheers of the crowd.

When the Pontifex looked to Alviel and called his name, his heart sank for a moment. Would he be able to live up to the trust the Pontifex and these people put in him? But then he noticed that he was standing without thinking and the Monach tied the votive-cloth around his left arm. He only had to spread his wings and let himself be carried aloft by the exuberance of the crowd.

No, he would never disappoint these people.

chapter



And behold i sent the promise of my father upon

you: but tarry ye until ye be endued

with the power on high

- luke 24; 49

four: promissum

or,

how the lord sent his message on white wings

orders of the world

The elevated station of the Engel within the Angelitic Church can easily lead to the assumption that there is no interaction at all between these heavenly beings and the population of Europe. The Engel are supposedly kept apart from the outside world, hidden inside the marble and steel cages called Himmel - resting and waiting until they are called upon to battle the Dreamseed. But actually there are a multitude of possibilities that allow and call for interaction between the Heavenly and the Earthly.

In the last centuries, the orders have done their share to improve the lot of simple people everywhere and due to their efforts the people live longer and healthier lives than ever before.

with a healing hand

The Raphaelites are especially well known for the interest they take in the needs and wants of the common people. The Engel of the Healing Hand have always tried to make the life in Europe worth living. This trait even made some members of the Order defy the will of the Pontifex Maximus in 2598 – some Engel made the long and arduous trip to the British Islands despite their secession from the Angelitic Church and the Pontifex Maximus' subsequent forbidding travel to these God-forsaken lands. But the Order considered the punishment to be rather light and acceptable – Petrus Secundus condemned the Ab of the Order to Death following the Raphealites' act of defiance.

Hospitals and convents of the Order of Healers can be found in almost all larger settlements of Europe and more open their gates to those in need every day. The Monachs and Begines of the Order are mainly focused on caring

for the sick and injured. Many young Raphaelites also spend some of the little free time they have in such hospitals to assist in healing those in need and use their powers in service of the common good. Most members of the Order consider it their holy duty to use their powers until they are almost completely exhausted, to help as many people as possible. Some even undertake trips to smaller towns near the convent although these are strictly forbidden by the Ab, as periods of rest are necessary to preserve the precious gift these Engel have received.

As fellowships stick together even in-between missions, the Raphaelites are often accompanied by Urielites during these trips, since these winged harbingers of heaven have a deep bond to the common people as well.

Despite their self-sacrifice, the healing granted by the Engel is still a miracle and considered a favor of the Almighty himself – not surprisingly, the people react with awe and reverence to the workings of the healers of the Lord.

their brothers' keepers

Despite the geographically secluded location of the Himmel of the Urielites in the midst of the rough Pyrenees, these Engel are amongst the most social in regards to interaction with the people of Europe. Oft times the Keepers of the Ways are a little too shy to make many contacts, but their withdrawn manner does not keep them from watching humans from a distance and to keep them safe from harm, of course.

Due to their endurance and because they are often employed as scouts, many Urielites also like to spend their free time soaring high above the holdings of their Order – always looking for interesting changes and people in need, whom they aid in small and unobtrusive ways. For the Urielites, this aid is game, training and fulfillment all in one, and these Engel are only fully satisfied when they have aided the needy in such a manner that they will only notice that someone intervened on their behalf later on.

What causes this interest in humanity is not known, but the aid of Urielites has saved many a farmer, fisher or townsman from certain death, not to mention the minor help these Engel grant whenever they see the need. The Begines and Monachs who reside in the cloisters and monasteries of Iberia and France handle the direct contact between the Order and the people. The Order of Urielites guided by Ab Guillaumes is very much aware of its duty as the ruler of a large realm and its members take this duty very serious and the people of Iberia are grateful and satisfied with this.

an iron grip

In opposition to their Urielite and Raphaelite brothers and sisters, the Gabrielites actively refrain from establishing contact with the common people. But no one can say for certain if this behavior stems from an over-developed pride or from the fact that the area surrounding the Himmel of Nuremberg resembles a gigantic refugee-camp. Whatever may be the cause for this attitude, most Gabrielites are convinced that they subject themselves to great danger to keep the common people safe and should therefore be spared of their day-to-day concerns.

Unfortunately, this desire can only seldom be satisfied. Every day thousands of hungry mouths have to be fed and for years the Templars have busily kept the Himmel safe from angry mobs who want to plunder the grain reserves of the Himmel – not knowing that these are already dangerously depleted. Due to the tension in the city, thieves are harshly punished and Gabrielites are forbidden to venture into the city at all - supposedly to protect the city from incidents involving the tempers and fiery swords of the Gabrielites.

The immigration laws of the Æbtissin have not brought any relief and the Order is still dangerously close to financial and personal ruin. The expansionist desires which could have brought some new tax money into the coffers of the Order caused one of the most dangerous arguments within in the Angelitic Church and led to the European Council, which is mainly concerned with the problems of the Gabrielite Order and convenes in *Roma Æterna* since 2562. Just one thing is certain: a change must happen soon or the Himmel of the Gabrielites will drown in the flood of people who flock to the bosom of the warriors of heaven in their desperate search of help.

knowledge is power

The Order of Ramielites carefully cultivates a distinct image to differentiate themselves from the common people. The Begines and Monachs of the Order are the only members most inhabitants of Prague will ever see or even speak to. Even the Templars of Prague have no direct contact to the population around the Himmel. Only when a fellowship floats down from the mighty citadel to bring some news to the people they might see one of the Ramielites and even then the fellowship's Michaelite leader speaks on his behalf.

Outside their own holdings, the Ramielites are very much different; they seem to ignore any boundaries of class or upbringing and interact openly and friendly with the people. Rumors claim that many Ramielites suffer from a certain form of paranoia; according to these rumors many Ramielites are convinced that other members of their order spy on them – this of course would explain why they act differently when they are surrounded only by their fellowship and not by any other members of the Order.

The bureaucracy of the Order is as precise as clockwork and none of the other Orders retain as tight a control as the Ramielites. The few holdings of the Ramielites, which are situated outside their area of direct influence, are mainly educational facilities for the clergy of the Order.

the glory of the eternal city

"And when the Archangel Michael came unto the earth, he beheld the people and felt pity for them, as they were mere mortals and he comforted them."

So says the Book of All Books. Even today, the order of Michaelites remains true to the legacy of their forbearer and therefore seeks to be amongst the population as much as possible. Not necessarily to help them directly, as the Urielites do, but rather to clearly demonstrate that they have not been forgotten. Even the mere presence of a Michaelite Engel in a town or city will grant the people a feeling of security and protection – or so believe the Engel of the Order. With the growing insecurity in regards to the omnipotence of the church, the views of the Engel have changed as well – a simple faith-healing to rid a city of all evil will not suffice to quiet the nagging questions of the people: they want answers to these questions, not mere showmanship.

The administration of the holdings is generally not handled by the Order of those who lead the fellowships but is rather directed by the Consistory of Cardinals which resides in *Roma Æterna* as well. This allows the Ab of this Himmel to primarily concentrate on educating the Engel, seldom taking part in politics and administration. The only outpost which has to be supervised by the Ab is the graveyard near the ruins of Jerusalem and this is indeed an easy task as very few people remain there who have to be protected or thwarted.

The cloisters and monasteries of the leading order of the Angelitic Church are the most widely spread ones; as they can be found in many places all across Europe, they often offer fellowships a safe harbor and are well-known for their hospitality. Even the Dux himself, being the leader of all Templars, prefers to rest at one of the Michaelite monasteries to enjoy the affable nature of the Begines and Monachs there.

the power of faith

For more than half a century the people of the 27th century lived with the fact that Engel walk amongst them, populating the skies and Himmel. Despite all their piety, a feeling of normalcy has slowly crept into the interaction between mankind and the Heavenly Host. In the beginning, encounters between Engel and mortals were few and far between; many mortals lost consciousness upon beholding the glory of the Engel and even the bravest souls could not avoid being awe-struck when a fellowship arrived to spread the word and work of the Lord. But as time passed, these encounters occurred ever more often and in some instances the people might witness whole squadrons of Engel who flew above them on missions in the name of the Angelitic Church. The population still shows the Engel proper respect but they have stopped crawling on their bellies whenever Engel are said to be around. The Engel have become as used to this change as their charges , who gladly offer the best they have to give – their faith.

The faith of the people has become ever stronger and firmer over the years and only the most cynic individuals dare to question the omnipotence of the church behind even closed doors.

But the changes of the last few years – especially the advancing Dreamseed in suffering Europe – have lend new credence to the cynics whose numbers are growing by the day. Ever more often, the clergy is unable to comfort angry farmers complaining about the abominable life they are forced to lead and the constant threat of the demons serving the Lord of the Flies. Although the church is only accountable to those above, it has become harder and harder to stand the pressure of the angry masses who have been whipped into a frenzy by those who only care about the church losing power.

But despite all of this, the position of the Engel in the mind of the common people is still so powerful that every interaction has a spark of fear in it – the myths and legends about the Engel are much too awe-inspiring for anything else, especially as many of them are true.

the long path of the Engel

Let us start with a serious warning: the following section is for the eyes of the Storyteller only. We would advise all players against reading it, as it unveils one of the central secrets of **Engel**. Being aware of this secret might remove some of the enjoyment of playing Engel – consider yourselves duly warned.

Those who have paid attention to our descriptions of the 27th century might have become a little suspicious about the well-oiled propaganda and spiritualism machine that calls itself the Angelitic Church. And as we are about to discuss where the Engel come from, we have to let the cat out of the bag:

The Engel are no angels.

At least not in the literal sense: they are no harbingers of some demiurge who has sent his winged warriors onto the earth to act as the strong arm of the church.

child-theft and chosen ones

What *are* we discussing then? First of all, the Engel are children. Every year, the Grimriders – tax collectors in the employ of the Angelitic Church – travel through Europe to collect the "Chosen Ones" as part of the Tenth the church demands. The parents of these – if possible very young – children are fooled into believing that their children will serve as Monachs, Begines or other unnamed posts within the church hierarchy. But this is only true for a part of these children – most of the children will become part of the "Engel Program" of the Angelitic Church.

Oftentimes, one hears rumors that the Komturs are guided by divine insight when choosing the children who have supposedly found "mercy in the eyes of the Creator". The criteria which guide the leaders of the Bands are much more mundane, though: the children chosen should be as healthy and physically fit as possible, they should be beautiful to behold and if possible rather tall for their age. Furthermore, they have to appear intelligent, as only a combination of all these traits will guarantee that the Chosen Ones satisfy the harsh requirements of the Angelitic Church. After their kidnapping, these children are taken to the closest Himmel as soon as possible.

the origin

The process of becoming an Engel is based on antediluvian biotechnological machines discovered by the founders of the Angelitic Church shortly after the Second Flood. Some of the smartest of the surviving children discovered a secret military facility in Italy; not only did they find cloning facilities but also other much more exotic machines which had still been in the testing stage when the catastrophe struck – machines which had been designed to create universal super-soldiers. And in these forgotten tunnels and hallways, an amalgam of futuristic technology, catholic upbringing and religious dreams was born that would centuries later rule the entire known world: the Angelitic Church.

The basic ideas of the machine mentioned above were later duplicated in the laboratories of the Angelites. The "mother-unit" was *handed to the Keepers of the* Forgotten – the Raguelites in distant Trondheim who kept it safe for many years.

on white wings

From the beginning of the journey to its end, the young captives of the Grimriders are drugged. This mix of various drugs – including hallucinogens, sedatives, stimulants and other psycho-active drugs – will accompany the Chosen Ones in various doses for the remainder of the ordeal which lies ahead of them. Having arrived at the nearest citadel of one of the Orders, the children are tested and then distributed according to their capabilities to other Himmel.

During the next step of the Engel-Program, a coma is induced in the children who are then subjected to a surgical treatment. Specially trained Monachs make slight changes to the shoulder muscles and bones and insert cells that have been altered with the technology of the Antediluvians. The Chosen Ones are then transported into the labs below their Himmel. For ten days they will reside within gigantic chambers filled with a fluid which emits a soft blue light and induces the Budding – the cells implanted into their back and shoulders begin their growth into wings. After ten days have passed, the Engel are carefully retrieved from the tanks, to allow them to unfold their wings for the first time. During the next four months – while the Chosen Ones begin their training – the wings will grow to their majestic size.

signum, sigil and scriptura

Even before the wings reach their final size, the prospective Engel receive their impregnation, which is called Angelic Baptism in the argot of the Angelitic Church. Although they are still weak from the coma, the Chosen Ones are led into the Chamber of Baptism; due to the trance induced by the drugs which are constantly administered to the Engel, their recollection of these events is often clouded and cloaked into metaphors and hallucinations.

Within this chamber, the Baptists await their charges; those Monachs and Begines have taken vows of silence and as a sign of their determination they have even cut their own tongues out – this furthers the veil of silence spread by the church, of course, as the Baptists belong to those very few people who will ever see an Engel weak and vulnerable. And even though they receive preferential treatment and many luxuries are offered to them, the Baptists are little more than prisoners of the Order they serve, as they will never leave the Himmel again.

The Baptists lead the Engel to a gigantic machine, which seems to take up most of the chamber – they are then suspended upon thin but very strong wires below the machine, which causes their trance to deepen even further.

Afterwards, the Baptists calibrate the machine according to the vital signals the body of the Engel emits. The machine monitors these vital signals as well and can adjust the treatment as necessary. After the calibration and analysis of the body of the child, several tiny robot-arms descend from the baptism-machine and pierce the soft skin of the Chosen One. With unfailing precision these arms create the fine lines of the Signum – a full body tattoo – within the skin of the prospective Engel. These tattoos are enlarged and extended at certain points within the career of the Engel to create the so-called Sigil and Scriptura. Every Order has its own tattoos and designs, but they do not differ between two Engel of the same Order.

The ink used to create these tattoos is more then a mere colorant – it is rather a carrier for millions of tiny nano-viruses who at once begin to act according to their programming: they reproduce and allow the Engel to use his powers later on. But only after all the tattoos are completed the Engel reach the peak of their powers.

The nano-viruses were designed prior to the Second Flood and their secret seems to be lost, but it is certain that they cause momentous changes to the biochemical and physiological nature of the subject. Even the powers of the Engel are in some way created by the tiny nano-machines, but as no one in the 27th century could explain why and how these operate, their powers are considered miracles by the common people.

per aspera ad astra

The following months are filled with Order-specific training to prepare the chosen children for their future role as Harbingers of the Lord. The will of the Lord means very different things depending on the Order which has chosen the child, of course; this also means that the Engel receive very different forms of education. This can be the combat training of the Gabrielites which resembles a military boot camp or the high-speed alphabetizing of the Ramielites.

The young recruits are still subject to the drug cocktail mentioned above, although at this point it is not designed for clouding minds but rather to heighten the concentration, learning and memorizing capabilities of the students. A side effect (which is of course more than gladly accepted by the church) is a complete amnesia in the subjects – none of the Chosen can remember their former lives before they received their Signum and all of them will now consider themselves true Engel – accordingly, the Order also gives them an appropriate name.

As all Engel are supposed to be immortal – a belief that is actively encouraged during the training – many of the Chosen Ones are hit especially hard when a member of their fellowship dies in battle. But as this belief makes the Engel more daring and audacious, the church continues to propagate it.

Other core concepts which are part of the education all Engel receive are the commitment to the beliefs and commandments of the Angelitic Church, the eternal loyalty to the Abs of the Orders and the Pontifex Maximus as well as the absence of sex and sin within an Engel. A sentence that every Engel will repeat endlessly during his training and his service later on is as follows: "We are the Engel of the Lord. We are Messengers of the Light. We listen and we obey."

angelic consecration

This glorious yearly ceremony on the Peter's Place in *Roma Æterna* is the official end of the becoming of an Engel. The training of an Engel generally takes one and a half years: the Tenth is collected in autumn, while the Angelic Consecration takes place at the spring-equinox.

The Angelic Baptism is not part of the secret Engel-Program but rather an act of spiritual showmanship for the common people who long for signs of hope and an outwardly powerful and protective church. But the long and arduous flight to *Roma Æterna* is often the first experience the young Engel have with flying long distances under their own power - only the Urielites have the chance to have such experiences beforehand, as long range flight is part of their special training.

More details about this ceremony can be found under the header "*Rituals*" in **Book I, Chapter 3, Mater Ecclesia**. After the ceremony, fellowships are bonded and the Engel have a chance to meet members of other Orders for the first time in their life.

purified

Now you are aware of the true and jealously guarded origins of the heavenly host of the holy Angelitic Church. But this is not the end of the revelations. Everything has its time, as the Book of Books says.

All those who have spent some time with heretical thoughts about the place where one can find adult Engel, will realize that another secret is hidden here as well. And indeed, the coming of age causes no end of problems for the Angelitic Church: when puberty nears its close and the sexual differences between the supposedly sexless Engel become apparent, questions are asked and the drug-induced amnesia also seems to slowly relinquish its hold on the still young mind. Ever more often, the Engel suddenly have flashbacks of

happy childhoods which occurred before they were taken away by the Grimriders - friends, family and a home away from the Order surface once more. Those signs of reawakening memories are often accompanied by a nagging headache, a feeling of dizziness and sometimes even a complete loss of consciousness. When these flashbacks occur more and more often, doubts about one's nature begin to accompany them – and soon doubts about the doctrine of the church are sure to follow.

In this state, the Engel are often sent back to the citadel of their Order by their clerical superiors. The vast majority – unsure of themselves and unaware of the duplicity of the church – follow this order and return to their Himmel where Purification awaits them. The propaganda that is spread by the Holy Angelitic Church about this "final ritual of honor" can be found under the header "*Rituals*" in **Book I, Chapter 3, Mater Ecclesia**. But as we are more concerned with the truth at the moment, let us face this horrible and disgusting practice: the Purification solely serves to destroy those Engel that are coming ever closer to being "useless" or even "dangerous".

One last time, they are drugged heavily and sent down deep below the Himmel, where the heavy iron gates of massive furnaces await. Although the sight of these is much more reminiscent of the classical Hell, the Engel, their sight clouded by drugs and perception twisted by suggestion, perceive these soot-blackened portals as the pearly gates which allow them to enter Paradise and live in the eternal Light evermore.

The Engel enter into these "gates of Heaven" singing and are seen nevermore.

the finiteness of the Engel

Up until about a decade ago, all of this did not pose much of a problem for the Angelitic Church. Engel who lost their lives battling the Dreamseed, during one of their often-perilous missions or those who were purified could easily be replaced by new Chosen Ones who were then subjected to the procedure described above. But a cruel turn of fate has caused one of the most dangerous crises of the Angelitic Church ever.

When the Dreamseed attacked the Himmel of the Raguelites in distant Trondheim on the 1st of February 2642, the citadel was mysteriously destroyed. The baptism-machine was lost and therewith the Order doomed. But even worse than the loss of this and many other technologies which were kept and preserved by the Raguelites was the destruction of the only remaining manufacturing plant for the ink used to tattoo the Engel. Maybe this machine could have been recreated but the secret formula used to synthesize the ink and the nano-machines contained therein, both jealously guarded by the Raguelites, were lost forever in the fiery rain which destroyed the citadel. The most important pillar of the Angelitic Church has begun to crumble; soon, the last of the ink stored in the vaults of the other Orders will be used up and then there will be no way to create new Engel. The most noticeable change is of course how the Engel are treated by their Abs and superiors; they have become much more precious than ever before. And only time will tell how and if the loss of this fundamental part of the church will be compensated.

the dream of flying

Some of our readers with a certain understanding of basic physics might have wondered if our Engel would actually be able to fly, if they were prone to the actual laws of physics. These harbingers of the Lord are still palpable creatures of flesh and blood despite all the blessings placed upon them by the Lord and the Church. They are therefore subject to the laws of gravity and aerodynamics and they are certainly not flimsy, ethereal beings of light, as anyone who ever witnessed an enraged Gabrielite descending on a flock of Dreamseed will be able to attest. First and foremost, the Engel of the dark ages of the 27th century are the champions of heaven, lacking neither substance nor weight.

On the other hand, the Engel are all blessed with a remarkable physique: even the eldest amongst them – those who have come close to their Purification – weigh more than 70 kilograms only in the rarest of cases.

The largest birds, e.g. great white pelicans or swans, weigh between 10 and 15 kilograms. They need a wingspan of about 4 meters to lift this weight up into the sky. The graylag has a ratio of 2 gram per square-centimeter and has therefore the best ratio found in the animal kingdom – this might not appear much unless you consider that most birds only have a ratio below 1 gram per square-centimeter. This ratio mainly determines how often the bird has to beat its wings to stay aloft and how well it is able to sail.

Coming back to the Engel, we can safely assume that they are blessed with extraordinarily strong back and chest musculature which probably exceeds even the designs of 21st century nature; thus, their wings – with a span of 10 to 12 meters – should be more than sufficient to lift them from the ground. These mighty wings are folded up onto the back so as to not hinder the Engel while he is moving inside buildings – but they still reach well above the head of the smaller Engel and surely can be unwieldy in small, enclosed spaces. This scientific approach also means that the tiny wings with which angels have been represented for centuries, e.g. in the art of the great Caravaggio, could not have sufficed to actually lift an angel from the ground. The Engel of this game are able to fly 300 kilometers a day and if they are willing to push themselves to exhaustion this can even be stretched to 500 kilometers – this distance is normal for the Urielites who can fly up to 800 kilometers when pushing themselves.

Indeed, the Chosen of the 27th century are no filigree, little angels with rosy cheeks. They are mighty warriors of Heaven, champions in the war between Good and Evil.

ordines angelorum

or,

Of the Orders of Engel in whose Hands the Lord Placed the Fate of the World

"Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of resurrection."
– St. Luke 20; 36

The history of the Angelitic Church began a long time ago. In the centuries that followed its founding, the world has seen many orders rise and even saw a few fall. It is the year 2654. The honorable Order of the Raguelites, the Keepers of the Past, is gone. In a gigantic battle as never seen before by any mortal's eyes, the Order was defeated by the onslaught of the sinister Dreamseed and one of the mobile hells of the Lord of the Flies – an Inferno.

The Samaelites who went into the smoke, supposedly in an act of selfless sacrifice for all of humanity, are gone as well and cannot lend their support to the church anymore – some even dare to say that their exodus was caused by base and cowardly urges. Their fate is unknown and their residence in Corsica cloaked in the pestilential stench of the Brandland.

The Sarielites, nowadays only known as "the Choir", once flew proud and full of power on their floating platforms but those days are long past and gone; they are damned to be little more than powerless decoration in this day and age. The platforms which once served as their mount and shield have almost all been destroyed and therefore the Sarielites may only be employed in times of greatest need. Therefore, only at *Roma Æterna* they may raise their voices to praise the Lord on a few holidays. Even the Convent of Guben, which had served as their training facility for centuries, has been closed and sealed.

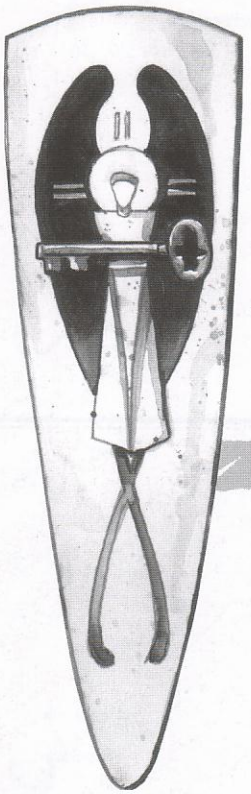
Only five of the Orders of Engel have weathered the onslaught of time and fate to defend the world – some by sheer force, others with courage and even others with strategic thinking or the power of community. Of these Orders we will tell you.

Engel is a game about pathos and heroism, but also about doubts and false goals, lies, intrigues and treachery. On the following pages, you will find information on the most powerful instrument of the Angelitic Church, the five great Orders. The wording of the following presentation of the Orders does not give away too much about the themes and contents of the game and can therefore be read by any player, regardless of the Engel and the Order he decides to play.

of exalted stature

The heroes of **Engel** are angels, fitting the expectations of what angels should appear as. Most people are impressed by their appearance, as they seem to be youthful but still exude an aura of authority. Mighty wings reaching high above their heads vary in color from the purest white to milky light-brown or even beige. Their bodies are clothed in wide, white cloth that reaches up to their chest and are kept tight by girdles and belts around their waists. White sleeves cover their arms and below these, white strips of linen cover their arms. More experienced Engel are often adorned with votive-cloths, signs of praise and blessing - these are often worn until they fall off on their own due to wear and tear.

Except for these clothes the Engel are naked. They walk bare-footed and wherever their bodies are exposed, the fine black-lines of the Sigil, the signs of the Lord, are visible. Some of the older Engel have even more intricate markings, the Signum or even the Scriptura – these show the origin as well as the destiny of the Engel, as they differ from Order to Order and it therefore allows the trained eye to discern which of the Himmel baptized the respective Engel. The hair, weapons and armor of the Engel differ as well according to individual preferences, but otherwise there is little room for individuality within the closely-knit community in service of the Angelitic Church. The peculiarities of the Orders are described on the following pages.



michaelites

those who are like god

Nowhere else in Europe can one see the almighty hand of the Creator more clearly than in *Roma Æterna*. Grand roads, huge pillars of victory, brilliant palaces and artificial gardens dominate the city. But all of this pales compared to the gigantic Citadel of the Michaelites. Here in the rolling hills of Abruzzo where the Angelitic Church recreated the Garden of Eden, resides the purest of all Orders.

It is written: "When our Lord God created the world according to his wishes, he created the Archangel Michael first of all, and he was to proclaim His will unto the people, as he was most dearest to Him. He was destined to be the most noble and pure of all Engel and he would be the first amongst them." And who ever lays eyes on *Roma Æterna* and the Himmel of the Michaelites knows that the Angelitic Church was not willing to leave any doubt about the truth of this tale.

The Citadel overshadows the Peter's Church – the residence of the Pontifex Maximus and a place of pilgrimage for all Angelitic believers by – many meters and it even servers as a lighthouse for fishermen in stormy seas. At the base of the Citadel a maze of smaller palaces, chapels, servant houses and stables is situated. It is built so close to the Himmel that the Citadel seems to meld into the city around it.

Due to the close proximity of the nominal leader of the Angelitic Church and the fact that the Order of Sarielites resides in the city as well, there is very little room for the Michaelites compared to the other Orders abroad. Behind closed doors one can often hear rumors that the Ab of the Order, Vermonte Brindisi, is not much more than a figurehead for the Pontifex and has therefore no actual influence at all. Other whispers claim that the true and only leader of the Angelites is Ab Brindisi himself whose only motivation to let the Pontifex retain his office is avoiding useless and time-consuming investigations by the other Orders. Which of these theories – if either – is correct and which role the Michaelites play in this intrigue is still an open question. But one can be certain that there is much more going on behind the veil of pomp and Angelitic rituals than the uninitiated could perceive at first sight.

"Woe unto you, ye blind guides!"

– St. Matthew 23; 16

of the nature of the michaelites

The Michaelites are well known for their stoic calm and inner peace in stressful situations. Daring, insecurity or outright panic are the enemies of the Order, while decisiveness, creativity melded with logical and well-thought

actions are its allies. Few other Engel within a fellowship carry as much responsibility as the Michaelites and the Order is all too aware of that fact. Like no other Order they take care to properly educate and train their brothers and sisters. But alas their grace and understanding for the people, whom to protect they have sworn, often causes them to come into conflict with themselves: all too often the common people stand between them and fulfilling a mission successfully. Due to this, the confessors of the Order always have full schedules.

traits of the order

The color of the Michaelites is gold, reminiscent of the sun which shines all too seldom unto the earth but which grants mankind a glimmer of hope if it does. This illustrates how the Order considers itself: offering comfort, warmth and light. The official hairstyle is rather plain compared to the pompous nature of their symbolic color: unmodeled hair which is cut just above the ears and is the same length on all sides. The hair below is carefully shaved or plucked. Their shoulder-plate is often adorned with artistic carvings or paintings. During their training the Michaelites are encouraged to use the elaboration of this plate as a method for recreation, meditation and to further their creativity. It can take many months to finish such a plate and they are rightfully considered works of art. Iconographic motifs are the most common ones, but are often accompanied by more secular motifs. Sometimes though, the design is lacking any clearly defined motifs but instead consists of complex graphic patterns, which the novice learned from the Monachs and Begines of the Order.

training

Daily physical exercises, tactical lessons and classes concerned with the leadership of a fellowship turn these Engel into frighteningly efficient and powerful leaders and tacticians. Despite this hard training, Ab Brindisi – the leader of the Order – makes sure to cultivate a soft and graceful side in his charges. As the Michaelites are angelic heralds destined to spread the word of the Lord, communication skills are another requirement and goal of the training. To allow for better training, the Michaelites make frequent excursions into the villages and towns of the surrounding countryside – the people living there must truly be among the most fortunate in all of Europe. The laws and commandments of the Angelitic Church are taught and discussed in class, as are the basics of armed and winged combat.

potestates

As the interface between all members of a fellowship, the Michaelites possess powers which are sometimes considered blessings while at other times they are considered more of a curse. *The Soul of the Fellowship* is the name of their ability to establish telepathic contact between other Engel, which allows information and orders to be transmitted in the fastest and most efficient manner. This contact only works amongst other Engel. Mortals, even the Monachs and Begines of the Order, can neither hear nor notice such communication. Furthermore, the Michaelites are able to modulate the sound of their voice to allow for a variety of effects - be it threatening, demanding or comforting; this allows them to break the strongest wills and spirits. Some members of the Orders are rumored to have even cast mighty lightning bolts unto their foes, shining in a heavenly light and therewith smiting their foes.

opinions on the other orders

Gabrielites: "There are no warriors more worthy amongst us then the Angels of Death. Let us pray that their ambition will not doom them one day."

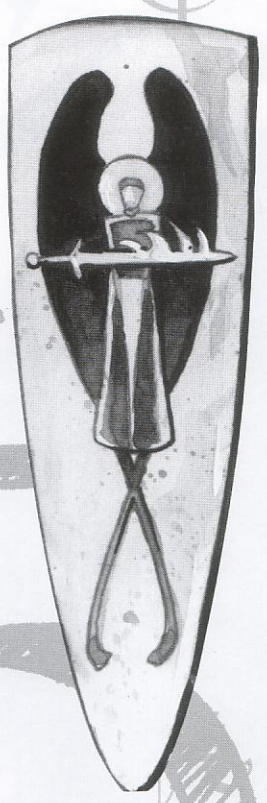
Ramielites: "They commune directly with the Lord. One day, one of their numbers will pick up the sword and lead us all to final victory. But what if they do not speak to God?"

Raphaelites: "I do not know why, but they scare me. Their gentleness grants me an even greater faith, but their anger sends cold shivers down my spine."

Urielites: "Without their eyes and ears, the Lord of the Flies might have already gained the upper hand. But their solitude high in the mountains does them no good."

gabrielites

the champions of the lord



The Gabrielites are often called the Judges of Life and Death, or the Angels of Death. Once being situated on the edge of Nuremberg, their Himmel now rises from the center of one of the largest cities in all of Europe. Since the beginning of the new age, a steady and ever increasing stream of refugees from all over Europe has come to seek the safety supposedly granted by the proximity to the Himmel. These never-ending convoys have kept the city in a constant state bordering on famine, as even the supposedly limitless reserves of the Order ran dry.

Nowadays, enormous amounts of food are brought into the city everyday by rafts or caravans, and the Templars check everyone who seeks entrance into the city. If there is no immediate danger to life and limb of a refugee, they are turned away by the Templars – only the presence of Dreamseed, an Inferno or other extraordinarily dangers outside of the city will grant one passage through the mighty gates. Due to the size and population – and the power granted to the Order due to it – Nuremberg has been named "the secret capital of Europe" for quite some time, which is not to the liking of the Angelitic Church at all.

This is boon and bane for the Gabrielites – although they do not want any conflict with the Pontifex Maximus and the rest of the church, the reputation and power of Nuremberg intimidates all cities nearby who would therefore never dare to withdraw their support for the Order. Furthermore, many rich merchants have come to the city and even settled here, which grants some relief to the coffers of the Order. Despite (or perhaps because) of the size and wealth of their holdings, the Gabrielites keep an eagle eye on all proceedings within their borders. Nothing much is hidden from the ever watchful eyes of the Templars who report everything to the Æbtissin Susat of Nuremberg, who is also the only female member of the upper echelons in the entire history of the Angelitic Church.

of the nature of the gabrielites

The Order of Gabrielites is more deeply influenced in deed and thought by their role within the fellowships than any other Order. Most of them are very well aware of their importance to a fellowship and therefore walk the thin line between pride and self-confidence. They tend to be loners even within the crowd and it can take a long time before they allow others to fully befriend them. After they have come to trust someone else, though, they are loyal allies. Amongst one another, Gabrielites form even stronger bonds, as they

"Let them be as chaff before the winds: and let the angel of the Lord chase them."
– Psalms 35; 5

suffer many hardships together during their training. Their first and foremost loyalty always goes to their fellowship, although some would be hard-pressed to admit it and only extraordinary circumstances can break the loyalty to other members of their Order.

traits of the order

The Archangel Gabriel chose black as the color of his Order at the beginning of all time – the color of mourning, of night and of death – to remind all his children to punish and judge all enemies of the Lord. Moreover, he chose the Flaming Sword as his symbol. The hair of the Gabrielites arches upwards like tiny flames and many of the Order even color it red to underline this impression even more. To protect their hair from the great heat of the Flaming Swords, the Gabrielites wear broad bandanas and more experienced Engel often carry their votive-cloths entwined with them. Due to their greater need for protection, the Gabrielites wear tougher and heavier shoulder-plates than the other Engel; oftentimes, it also has a raised spine on it that offers additional protection to the head of the Engel. The arms of the Angels of Death are almost completely covered in cloth which has the same silvery-black sheen as the rest of their clothes and bodies – all due to a special tincture said to make them fire-proof.

training

The way of speaking is harsh and full of orders in the Himmel of Nuremberg and the punishments for disobedience are draconic. Every day in the life of a Gabrielite is filled with ever-repeating training sessions with a variety of weapons, primarily though the Flaming Sword. From their first day, the Gabrielites seem to establish a close bond to their swords and the loss of such a weapon can plunge an Engel into a deep crisis that sometimes culminates in a ritual suicide. Although this is frowned upon by the Angelitic Church, the Order allows it nevertheless as the union with the sword is of such importance for it.

The code of honor among the Champions of the Lord is nowhere to be found in the records of the Angelitic Church; rather, it is based solely on oral tradition – would its contents ever be spread among the church in general, the Order would reap harsh criticism and would have to face other, more severe political problems. Merciless chastising, rites of dedication and physical exercises of a special nature await the novice in the first months of his training. Only those who are able to stand the unbearable physical and psychological strain of these months will become a part of this sworn brotherhood; the others will not finish their training as Gabrielites. After running this gauntlet, the prospective Gabrielites will be trained in aerial combat – with a special focus on the complex maneuvers employed against the Dreamseed. Lessons – which are called *Dispensiates* – about the laws the Lord gave unto His people are part of the theoretical education and are endlessly repeated and extended.

potestates

As can be expected, the powers of the Gabrielites are focused especially on combat and the physical enhancement of the body. Most members of the Order are of exceptional strength and dexterity. Furthermore, they have a natural understanding of the weak points of their enemies, an almost regeneration-like ability to heal and a very high pain-tolerance – some even claim that their skin can withstand the attack of the dreaded Dreamseed. Those Engel who have received the greatest boon – the Scriptura – are even said to shine with the light of the Lord Himself and to be able to therewith banish the Darkness from the world forevermore.

opinions

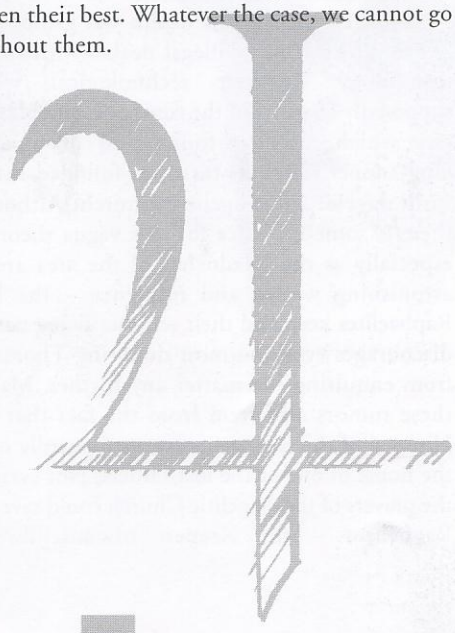
on the other orders

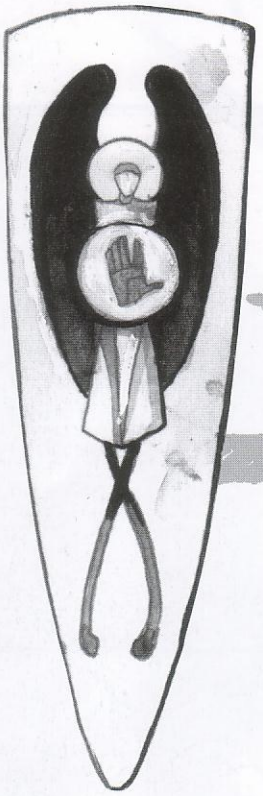
Michaelites: "Our Lord God has deigned us to follow them. And so we shall do it. If the Lord ever changes His mind – who knows what will happen then?"

Ramielites: "Either they have a little man in their ear or they have a multiple personality or maybe both. But they can be useful at times."

Raphaelites: "Yellow-bellies and weaklings!"

Urielites: "Some of them might have been good brothers and sisters if they would have only given their best. Whatever the case, we cannot go without them."





raphaelites

the healing hand of god

High among the peaks of the French Alps, almost unseen by the eye of the world, rises the Himmel of the Keepers of Creation from the dark rocks below. Only seldom does a traveler come here, and unlike in the rest of Europe, only very few refugees come to seek safety at the foot of this Himmel. But despite these circumstances or maybe even because of them, the Raphaelites are the most wealthy of the Orders.

Some claim that this wealth was gained and is being furthered by illegal deals with banned technology – their technological wares supposedly come from the ruins of Grenoble, the city which was the foundation of modern Gratianopel which in turn was founded in the early days of the Angelitic Church. Although there is some evidence for this vague theory – especially as the Diadoches of the area are of astonishing wealth and influence – the lore Raphaelites keep and their self-sacrificing nature discourages even the most doubting Thomases from enquiring the matter any further. Maybe these rumors also stem from the fact that the Himmel of the Raphaelites was supposedly once the home of one of the lost Orders. Not even all the prayers of the Angelitic Church could save the Raguelites – the Keepers of antediluvian technology. This Order retreated to the far north in fear of all of those who craved for their knowledge and the contents of their vast vaults. The Raphaelites were allowed to move into the very advanced and marvelous Himmel that had been erected by the power of the Raguelites.

The mighty streams of Isère and Drac, which convene near Gratianopel, are often used to transport relief goods to all regions in need. Even the Begines and Monachs of this Order have taken the dedication of the Engel to their hearts and try to preserve all of the Lord's creation. All over Europe, hospitals and institutes dedicated to the art of healing have been erected by the Order.

"I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal."
– Deuteronomy 32; 39

of the nature of the raphaelites

Despite their martyrdom, none of the other Orders of the Angelitic Church are as torn and ravaged on the inside as the Raphaelites. The daily discussion about duties, rights and orders of the Keepers of Creation thrust upon them with their heavenly powers have caused deep

chasms to open in the ranks of the Order, and not even the Pontifex Maximus has been able to mend these wounds. The seeds of this conflict were sown when some of the Engel discovered that their powers could not only be used to better the lot of humanity, but also as terrible weapons against Heretics and the Dreamseed. The higher-ups of the Angelitic Church and the leadership of the Himmel were thunderstruck after hearing about this, and the Ab of the Raphaelites is trying in vain to stop the avalanche which seems to grow day by day and will eventually wash him away. The number of those who walk the path of destruction have increased so much that the Pontifex Maximus himself has begun to investigate the matter, but only the future will show whether his efforts will be successful. Within a fellowship, this is not much of a problem; Raphaelites of either faction do their duty with dedication and only seldom does a remark or act show the direction of their faith. Most of the members of the Order are rather withdrawn and quiet – therefore, they retain self-control in face of adversary circumstances, be it within their own Order, within other Orders or even amongst the common people.

traits of the order

Raphaelites are beings of light in an almost literal sense. Their white clothes are spotless despite them caring for the sick and injured; their white-blond or silver-gray hair is plainly combed back or held by simple clasps. The colors of their Order are white and silver and the open hand of the healer is their symbol. The dark lines and symbols of the Scriptura are in stark contrast to their otherwise spotless demeanor. As the use of weapons is of almost negligible importance in the training of the Raphaelites, only few of them carry any weapons of war with them. Only those within the Order who claim that the powers of the Raphaelites are also supposed to destroy life carry a weapon with them always, not necessarily to use it but rather to demonstrate their willingness to fight for the preservation of Angelite society.

training

The human body and the methods and manners of curing it are at the center of the training the Raphaelites receive. All secrets of form, structure and ways of functioning of the body are examined down to the smallest detail. To enter this fantastic realm within God's highest achievement, the Engel not only use their miraculous powers but also scalpel, bone-saw and clasp. Even the body of the Engel themselves – which is taboo according to church doctrine – is examined by the Raphaelites in experiments on their own bodies. Of course, extended rituals of penance all Engel of the Order have to attend regularly accompany all of these tests. Originally, weapons' training was not a part of the curriculum of the Order at all, but as the faction of Engel who was attracted to war has steadily increased it was officially added recently. Flight training and the lessons about interaction with the common people are of course as important to the Raphaelites as to any other Order.

potestates

The *Potestates* granted to the Raphaelites by the Lord are blessing and curse at the same time, just like many other gifts of the Divine. All abilities have two sides and a careful balance must be maintained between the two. By laying on hands, the Engel of the Order are able to do a wide variety of things with the body of their subjects – they can evaluate the state of health, heal minor wounds or even cure supposedly incurable diseases. But those powers can also be turned against those who are to be healed by the Raphaelites; an enraged Engel of the Order can be more terrible than one of the Gabrielite Champions. And everyone who has witnessed which fate awaits anyone who dares to wake the wrath of a Raphaelite has cold shivers running down his spine whenever he beholds the calm and friendly face of a Raphaelite, as life and death are nothing to these Engel.

opinions on the other orders

Michaelites: "Thank the Lord and praise Him, as He has deigned to show us His shining light."

Gabrielites: "Sometimes I do get the impression that they actually enjoy destroying life. If we do not guide them back to the path of virtue, we might lose them forever."

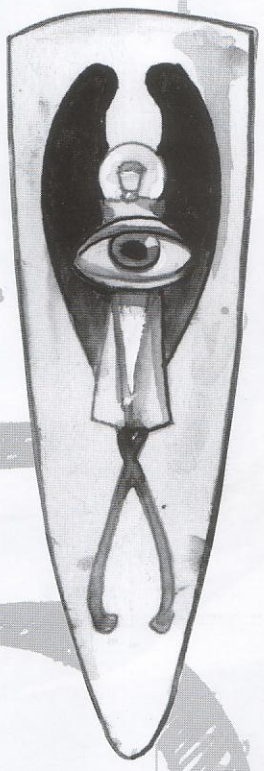
Ramielites: "They know more than they care to admit. I pray to the Lord that they know what they are doing."

Urielites: "They should pay better attention to what they are doing, as I am getting tired of stitching them up after another of those oh so funny stunts."

u r i e l i t e s

urielites

preservers of the way



Constant efforts, exhausting patrol-flights and life-threatening reconnaissance missions into unexplored or hostile territory dominate the life of the Urielites. None of the other Orders has to contend with the constant dangers the Urielites have to face. Their Himmel rises gigantically on Mont Segur in the southeastern spurs of the Pyrenean Mountains; according to the Keepers of Knowledge, it was built upon the foundations of a castle which was once called Montsalvage in legends and tales.

Once upon a time, as these tales tell, there was yet another name for the castle on the mountain – Rennes-le-Chateau – and pilgrims came here long before the Second Flood. An artifact was supposedly hidden deep within the walls of the castle – a chalice that was only called The Grail in the legends surrounding it. The truth of this matter is unclear, as the chalice, which originally belonged to the prophet Jesus of Nazareth, is lost, but the legend surrounding this place lingers on. The stream of pilgrims has become smaller but it still brings a steady supply of them to the Pyrenees – although the mountain which was supposedly the base of the castle has long since been incorporated into the Himmel of the Urielites which rises like the nest of an eagle high above the highest peak of the Pyrenees – the Pic de Aneto.

Almost 3500 Engel serving in the name of the Lord and the Angelitic Church can be housed in the structure, together with the Monachs and Begines of the Order, of course. Within a fellowship, the members of the Order are renowned for their unbelievable stamina, stubbornness and exceptional courage, although this last trait quite often urges them to bone-breaking feats of daring. Some claim that the Order is an amalgam of the courage of the Gabrielites and the honesty and inventiveness of the Michaelites – but this would not give any of the three Orders the credit they deserve. Although the Urielites are indeed the ones most closely in touch with nature itself and their own inner being as well – which lends them an air of friendliness without setting them apart at all - they are all too aware of their duty within the heavenly host. Therefore, they spare no effort and pay full attention when attending their service to the betterment of humanity and the fulfillment of the Lord's plans, whatever these may be.

"If I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people."

– Exodus 33; 13

of the nature of the urielites

The Urielites feel in tune with the people and seek their company whenever they have the chance to do so. Oftentimes they spend their time circling above settlements or even lone farms, protecting the humans below them from all dangers nearby and taking part in their lives in this unobtrusive way. All too aware that their lives are all too different from the lives of their charges, they still seem to draw strength from observing them. Within a fellowship, the Urielites often appear to be rather withdrawn and shy which probably stems from the long hours they spend alone with uncertain goals and locations ahead of them. When interacting with mortals, though, they appear friendly and interested and are easily led astray by more mundane matters.

traits of the order

As the Order of Urielites is very much in touch with nature, their Archangel chose green as his personal color. The all-seeing eye openly displays their responsibility as guardians of humanity and its concerns. Urielites wear their hair in a long braid that falls down to their backs. The signs of the Lord – the Signum, Sigil and Scriptura – are much more prominent in the faces of the Urielites than on those of the other Orders which lends them a more martial appearance.

Like most of the other Orders (with the exception of the Gabrielites), the Urielites refrain from using one type of weapon exclusively, but only few other Engel can match the Urielites' skills with the bow. Due to their exemplary dexterity and strength, they are even able to shoot mighty bows with extraordinary stopping power while in flight. Besides their long bows, they often employ long knifes, daggers and short swords, who do not hinder them overly during long distance flights.

training

The training of the Order is hard and laborious. When the buds on their backs are still only vaguely reminiscent of wings, they begin their flight training. One of the coming of age rituals of the Order involves young Urielites being cast off the edge of the top platform of the Himmel – only those worthy of the Order are able to catch their fall and glide to safety. But this turning point will only bring even more hardship and suffering to the young initiate. All of those who fail do not have a second chance. The trainers of the Order claim that these hardships are necessary as a failure on a mission cannot only endanger the fellowship but rather even humanity as a whole. And indeed, the successes of the Urielites seem to prove them right; no other Engel could dream of flying as far, high or long as the Urielites. Exercises of the mind and weapons training are part of the education of the young Urielites as well. The *Potestates* themselves are mentioned and exercised only seldom and on the side, as these are seen as natural extensions of the Urielites' nature and training.

potestates

The Urielites are in balance and communion with nature, more so than any other Order, therefore it should not be very surprising that many of these Engel are able to predict the weather for many days in advance. Their senses are honed to a sharpness beyond any mortal ken – some can see through the cover of clouds above which they soar and their ears can hear noises far beyond those any human could ever perceive. Superhuman endurance, an extraordinary sense of direction and an instinct for adaptation and survival in any surrounding furthermore enhance their arsenal of *Potestates*.

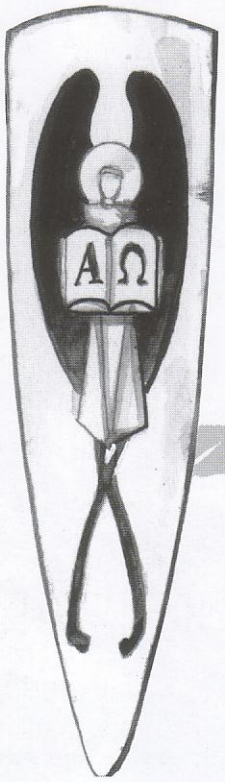
opinions on the other orders

Michaelites: "I hope that they will never submit to the sin of pride, as they would surely all drag us to our dooms."

Gabrielites: "Blessed be the Lord as He has deigned them to fight by our side."

Ramielites: "I am unsure if it is a curse or a blessing the Lord bestowed upon our brothers and sisters, but who am I to question the judgment of the Lord?"

Raphaelites: "Few of the other Orders are as worthy to serve the Lord as the Raphaelites. Their gentleness is overwhelming, and if the Lord had just bestowed them with a comparably strong toughness, we would probably follow them into any battle."



ramielites

preservers of knowledge, keepers of the words

On the foundations of the ancient city of Prague, which nowadays rest beneath the waves, the last bastion of faith in science and the fine arts rises majestically – the Himmel of the Ramielites. The Preservers of Knowledge protect the eastern front of the Angelitic Church against the advances of the unspeakable evil. All those who dare to venture to the east do so well aware of the fact that no one can say what horrors and secrets lie behind the veil of smoke and pestilent fumes which rises from the dreaded Brandland a mere thousand kilometers further to the east and which will forever divide Europe into two separate parts. For some, this distance might not appear to be much of a threat, but the experiences of the last centuries have left no doubt in the heart of the Angelitic Church about the unpredictable evil of the Lord of the Flies and his all-consuming Infernos. All too quickly, they change their course and threaten to consume all that is good and holy. Despite these fears, the Ramielites accept their life with stoic calm and fulfill their duties seemingly unaware of the threat.

Similarly to the Michaelites, the Keepers of the Word – as they are often referred to – seem to exude calmness, although this seems to stem from an all-different source. All of them seem to carry an "inner peace" within them at all times, which protects, comforts and advises them. The Ramielites themselves call this "inner peace" the Cathedral of Thoughts. According to the awkward and seemingly weird accounts of the Ramielites, this place supposedly exists only within themselves; it is a place of tranquility that can be shown or demonstrated to no one as only they may see it. For some, it is indeed a cathedral or church, while others perceive it as a meadow with flowers, while others speak of a gigantic, featureless, white wall with occasional doors that vary widely in appearance, though.

This list could probably be continued for eternity, as every single Ramielite seems to perceive a place that is exclusive to him, and even then, words could not begin to describe this place where the members of the Order preserve their knowledge, lore and discoveries. Some claim that the Cathedral of Thoughts is merely an alternate name for the brain and that the Ramielites just try to garner special attention, but if those doubters had ever seen the distant look in the eyes of a Ramielite who has just entered his Citadel, they would refrain from spreading such slander.

"And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables."
– Exodus 32; 16

Unlike in Nuremberg or *Roma Æterna*, the faithful cannot easily erect their quarters at the foot of the Himmel; the water is a surmountable but still dangerous obstacle and many a believer has found only death in his floating home at the base of the Himmel. But once more humanity has proven that it is of astonishing ingenuity and toughness. More and more people have come to Prague in the centuries and decades since the Himmel was erected; nowadays the number of rafts, boats and pontoons has risen to such large numbers that one would not guess that the sea is hidden behind and below the wooden walls and floors when the weather is calm.

of the nature of the ramielites

The members of this Order often appear to be overly intellectual and internalized. They are capable of spending hours on end in silent discussion with themselves – completely shutting out the world around them. This trance can even consume the reserves of the Engel so thoroughly that they only barely manage to escape from the world within them. What exactly the Engel experience in these times of meditation and what they gain from it, is unknown to the other Orders. But quite often the Ramielites garner insults and teasing from members of the other Orders who seem unable or unwilling to understand the seemingly weird behavior of the Ramielites. On closer inspection though, the Preservers of Knowledge are friendly, open and always willing to help. The other members of their fellowships are supported without any doubts, while they always try to retain a neutral vantage point themselves, allowing them to be able to mediate between the angered parties and retain an unemotional and fair view.

Towards other members of their Order though, the Ramielites often appear cold and discouraging, almost paranoid, as if they try to preserve a secret only they are privy to and which only other Ramielites might take away from them. The people of Europe also seem to be of little interest to the Order, a fact the other Orders often blame them for. Maybe the common people lack the intelligence and/or education to be of any interest to them or maybe they are just afraid of interacting with them, but the results are the same: the Ramielites live in a self-imposed exile. Therefore, it is not surprising that the people at the base of the Himmel have to take care of themselves and are only seldom visited by those few who reside above them.

traits of the order

The cumbersome shoulder-shield worn by many Engel appear to be relics of a by-gone age for the Ramielites, as their appearance is usually much more similar to that of a Monach rather than a Templar. Although some members of the Order try to invoke the impression of strength and power with the shield, most Ramielites only wear them for very formal occasions and prefer to leave them in their quarters whenever possible. Their extremely long hair falls down to their hips - in flight, these imposing manes fly menacingly behind them. This rather annoying and unwieldy tradition seems to enhance the impression that the Ramielites consider themselves committed to thought rather than deed. The blue of their insignia represents the endless expanse of the sky where thoughts may fly and float like birds in a soft summer wind. The open book – the symbol of the Order – represents knowledge as well as wisdom, the two most treasured traits within the Order. The Ramielites do not care about weapons much but if they are forced to wield one, most resort to small knifes which might serve as tools as well. Many Engel of the Order prefer to carry quivers for writing scrolls, though, and some like to perform with simple musical instruments when their scarce time allows it.

training

Physical education, flight maneuvers and weapons-training are only seldom taught and not considered of much importance; the training of the Order focuses mainly on expanding the mental potential of its members and the collecting of various knowledge, whether it is science and philosophy of times long past or the latest achievements in contemporary science. The highest privilege that was ever granted to the Order is the permission to learn the arts of writing and reading, which is generally only granted to parts of the clergy, and even the other Orders are not allowed to partake of this forbidden fruit. The Ramielites are well aware of the power these instruments grant them and of the trust the Angelitic Church has put into them; therefore, they jealously protect their secrets, unwilling to share them with anybody. But this advantage makes it even more difficult for them to gain the trust of the other Orders, which is a hard task in and of itself, considering the rather strange and alienating behavior the Ramielites are prone to at times.

potestates

The *Potestates* of the Ramielites – ever thirsty for more knowledge – could easily be considered the most mysterious ones amongst the Orders of Engel. It seems to be almost impossible to explain what the Cathedral of Thoughts is, how it works and what benefits it grants. Although some of their powers seem to be emulating the powers of other Orders, the Ramielites apparently have an unshakable sense of time and a superior skill at recollecting past events. Some Ramielites are even rumored to be able to predict the future or at least give a rough but generally accurate estimation of future events or the outcomes of a given situation. Others are said to be able to pierce any veil of lies or untruths; even thoughts are laid open clearly to those selected few. As with the other Orders, there are rumors about manifestations of powers which seem to be almost legendary, of course; the most common tale claims that some Ramielites are able to speak with the voice of the Lord Himself, although it is unclear if this ability sprang from the divine nature of the Engel or if the Lord just found a suitable vessel for His word.

opinions on the other orders

Michaelites: "They walk the right path, but it is narrow, slippery and full of dangers and traps. I pray that they never slip and fall."

Gabrielites: "They are lacking the far-sight and willingness to sacrifice themselves found in the Michaelites, but this is a good thing because if they were any different, we would not need the Dreamseed to do battle."

Raphaelites: "Let us hope that they can heal their own wounds and not perish fighting themselves."

Urielites: "If you seek someone to trust, approach a member of this Order. They can be silent as the grave, and treason is unheard of amongst them."

the fellowship of ariel

In the following, we will present an example of a complete fellowship to Storytellers and players alike – it might serve as an example for your own fellowships or as storyteller characters early in your campaign. Three of the Engel have received their Consecration less than a year ago and only the Ramielite and Urielite have more experience to their name.

To allow these characters to be integrated more smoothly into an existing campaign or even serve as the foundation of a new chronicle, we have provided not only a descriptive text about the individual Engel but also the attributes in 3rd Edition format.

ariel

The Michaelite Ariel is the leader of the fellowship gathered by Ab Guillaume. Her favorite hobby is without doubt cooking and her fascination for preparing meals has more than once been to the profit of her fellowship, when she creates delicious meals with her improvisation skills out of whatever Daniel has found while hunting or foraging for edible plants.

Appearance: Ariel appears to be the classic image of a Michaelite. Her blond hair and her shining blue eyes not only fulfill the ideal of beauty her Order venerates, but also reminds of the inhabitants of northern Italy; her features are sharply cut and her skin retains its suntan even in winter. But for reasons unknown even to herself, she is troubled by a slight inferiority complex; she therefore tries to communicate telepathically as much as possible.

Nature: Her role as the leader of this frequently rather unconventional fellowship, assembled by Ab Guillaume of the Urielite Himmel, seems to be cumbersome and unwieldy to her sometimes, but on the other hand her brothers and sisters have become true friends and companions; she tries to spend as much time with them as possible, even away from missions. Towards the other members of her fellowship, she is always truthful even if these truths might be painful and hurt one of the others – but she seems to be completely ignorant of the sin of lying. Even her superiors always hear the truth, even if it will get her in trouble later on.

As a member of the Order of those who are like God, Ariel is more beautiful and more remarkable than she realizes herself. She has long, hard muscles that remind of a Gabrielite on first sight, but they only seem to underline her powerful grace rather than undermining it. Those who behold her knows what it means to face a messenger of the Lord, as she is beautiful as well as untouchable – a mix well suited to impressing and intimidating the common people.

Although she is sometimes unsure of what to do and feels overwhelmed by her duties of leadership, she has mastered her training with excellence and could feel at home on the battlefield as well as in learned discussions with equal ease. She might feel uncomfortable in either situation and ill at ease with the knowledge that the success of all missions rest on her shoulders alone, but she is nonetheless a very impressive figure and character. Her technique with the long-sword is as refined as her tactical knowledge and she is capable in battle against Dreamseed and Heretic alike, be it with words or in violence.

Even though she is such a remarkable personality, she was consecrated only a few short months ago and her responsibilities weigh heavily upon her. In fact, even small defeats and problems can discourage her. To compensate for this, she often acts on impulse, as thoughts will only bring more doubts to her mind. She dreams of achieving greatness in the service and name of the Angelitic Church – and maybe her dreams will come true at some point, or everything will turn out completely different…

ariel

Michaelite 1; Medium-size humanoid (1.4m); HD 1d8; 8 HP; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd: 30 ft., fly 150 ft. (Average); AC 16 (+2 Dex +4 AC Modifier); Atk +1 melee (1d8+1 [19-20; x2] long-sword); Sv Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +4; Str12, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills: Concentration +4, Innuendo +4, Knowledge (Religion) +4, Profession (Cook) +6, Read Lips +4, Sense Motive +6.

Feats: Flying, Improved Initiative, Signum.

***Potestates*:** Inner Calm +6, Soul of the Fellowship +6, Strategic Mind +6, The Voice +5.

Languages: Latin, Common, Common Dialect of the Genoese Region

Equipment: Bag, cooking utensils, dagger, extra set of white clothes, long-sword

aadoniel

Aadoniel fought valiantly against the Dreamseed on the field of war in southern France during the first months after his Consecration. The death of several members of

his first fellowship has left him deeply shaken, though, and he is haunted by nightmares regularly – nightmares of his companions falling towards the earth, their bodies broken and bleeding. Although his broken valor did not allow the Engel to be sent into battle again for more than a year, Ab Guillaume is convinced of his abilities and skills; thus, he was assigned to the newly founded fellowship around Ariel, somehow convinced that this may allow him to recover. But despite the comfort and company offered by his friends, he is not able to stand the tall tales the other Engel like to spin about past victories and adventures and even the mentioning of death and dying will cause him to leave the room without a word.

Although he is terrified by the thought of other battles, he is no coward. More than once, Rahel, the Raphaelite, has offered to talk with and counsel him about the past events, but he has declined her kind offers - confident that he will be able to cope with his memories and experiences on his own. Despite rejecting her advances in this regard, he has a deep, platonic relationship with the healer of the fellowship, so deep in fact that Ariel sometimes suspects the two of lacking chastity. He feels such a deep bond to Rahel that he has even sworn a holy oath to protect her with his life in his cell one dark night. Slowly, he has come to see Rahel as the soul of the fellowship, as Ariel always appears so cold and demure.

Appearance: Aadoniel is a compact young Engel with black curls, usually in the typical black cloak of his Order. Although his complexion is very dark, the Signum is still clearly and concisely visible. His vivid, dark eyes are the only crack in his fierce and cold shell of aloofness, as a warm fire seems to burn within them and his eyes rarely miss a thing. His skin has an olive sheen common to the people of southern Europe and his body appears to be hewn from black marble; it appears to be comely at first sight, but is actually quite angular on closer inspection. He seems to exude power and might, regardless whether he is sleeping, flying or listening to his friends.

Nature: While talking to others, Aadoniel is often a little grumpy and overly direct, but the truthfulness – a trait he shares with Ariel – is in

his case accompanied by a certain kind of wits and smartness, hinting at his hidden qualities. And even though he sometimes doubts Ariel and her decisions, he nonetheless feels the bonds of truth and fellowship to her.

aadoniel

Gabrielite 1; Medium-size humanoid (1.4m tall); HD 1d10+3; 13 HP; Init +0; Spd: 9m., fly 45m. (Average); AC 14 (+2 leather armor +2 AC Modifier); Atk +4 melee (1d10+3 [19-20; x2], flaming sword); SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +1; Str16, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Concentration +4, Listen +3

Feats: Fly, Power Attack , Signum

***Potestates*:** Goliath's Might +7, Samson's Hair +5

Languages: Latin

Equipment: Flaming sword, mechanical watch, photograph from pre-Flood times depicting a war-scene

malloriel

Outwardly, Malloriel could also be a member of the Michaelites rather than a Ramielite. He constantly plans and develops new ideas, but this plotting and planning also makes him see the faults in the plans of others and he takes every opportunity to point towards those flaws and demand better solutions; this behavior was regarded as hubris by other Michaelites whom Malloriel was forced to accompany - Ariel doesn't seem to hold this opinion of him, though.

The tall and well-favored Ramielite seems to be constantly moving, neither his tongue nor his body ever rest. Authority figures – even those from within the Angelitic Church – are constantly questioned and doubted by him, always to make sure that those above him deserve the position they inhabit. These traits caused constant problems for the fellowships he accompanied – all the more surprising then, that he accepts Ariel's leadership with a lot less of the questioning he is usually prone to.

Appearance: Malloriel is a tall Engel with pale skin and sharp features – his complexion is reminiscent of the finest alabaster which lends him an aura of dignity surpassing even that of other Engel. This is underlined by his prematurely gray hair that flows down to his hips.

Nature: The Ramielite of Ariel's fellowship clearly has the most experience to his name; he has seen much and has contacts in quite a number of cloisters, castles and towns all over Europe - if necessary for the advancement of the fellowship and the mission, he is more than willing to ask those he once helped and assisted to repay the favor. His biggest problem is the sin of lust - for a few years now, he has felt attracted to beautiful mortal women; although it was at first only fascination he felt for them, it has become increasingly difficult for him to retain his chastity. His attitude towards authorities provides many problems for him and his companions, but he still retains it nonetheless.

malloriel

Ramielite 3; Medium-size humanoid (1.75m tall); HD 3d6+6; 21 HP; Init +5; Spd: 9m, fly 45m (Average); AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 AC Modifier); Atk +2 melee (1d4+1 [19-20; x2] dagger); Sv Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Skills: Appraise +7, Craft (bookbinding) +5, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (geology) +6, Knowledge (religion) +5, Profession (librarian) +5, Read Script +4, Search +6, Wilderness Lore +4

Feats: Awareness, Fly, Improved Initiative, Sigil, Signum, Skill Focus (Diplomacy).

***Potestates*:** Babylon's Tongues +3, The Eighth Commandment +4, Icon +8, Inner Calm +7, Prophet +4, To Speak in Tongues +8.

Languages: Latin, Common, Czech, German

Equipment: Dagger, scroll quiver, writing utensils

rahel

Rahel appears to be full of contradictions. On the one hand, she seems to love being an Engel – especially her duties and abilities as a healer – while on the other hand she is plagued by strange dreams of events which cannot have happened to her for she sees herself in a form younger and smaller, together with a mortal man and a mortal woman for whom she feels something akin to love. She is also adept at employing subterfuge and charm, which will probably serve her well in the years to come. The fact that she has been gifted with extraordinary abilities to heal and that she has easily refined these gifts to an astonishing degree seems to be an added benefit.

After confessing her strange dreams to Ab Guillaume, he appeared shocked and worried which only served to confuse Rahel even more. Her fellowship, which relies upon her for her calmness and comfort, is unaware of this, though; even now she has become the center of the fellowship and at times she feels uncomfortable with this role, knowing that this position should be Ariel's to take.

Appearance: Her silver-gray hair, which she

prefers to wear in a tight bun, accentuates her heart-shaped face even more. Wherever she walks, an air of aristocracy seems to accompany her; her voice is soft and rather deep, but she is more than able to make herself heard.

Nature: The young Raphaelite is adorable, with a friendly nature and diplomatic way that keeps the fellowship bound as tightly together as it is.

rahel

Raphielite 1; Medium-size humanoid (1.45m tall); HD 1d6; 6 HP; Init +2; Spd: 9m, fly 45m (Average); AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 AC Modifier); Atk +1 melee (1d4+1 [19-20; x2] dagger); Sv Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 15.

Skills: Animal Handling +5, Concentration +2, Diplomacy +5, Heal +7, Knowledge (Religion) +4, Profession (Herbalist) +6, Spot +5.

Feats: Fly, Lightning Reflexes, Signum.

***Potestates*:** All-seeing Eye +7, Field of Bones +4, Healing Hands +7, My Body +5.

Languages: Latin, Common, Dialect of Gratianopel

Equipment: Dagger, backpack, first-aid kit

daniel

Despite his seeming youth, Daniel appears overly serious and ill inclined towards jokes or other foolishness; he perceives the world soberly and with unclouded eyes. His seriousness seems to have deepened even more since he began to have dreams of a tiny village, probably in the Pyrenees, and a married couple who seem to have harbored him for a time – unlike Rahel, he has begun to question his nature as an Engel, but as he had a good time with his Order and his fellowships he is still unsure about what he might do if his doubts solidify. Due to his energetic nature, he is well known in the Himmel of Mont Salvage, but no one seems to know more than his name and Order. But this ignorance is not due to other people not being interested in him, but rather due to Daniel's inability to let others come close to him – emotional bonds might hurt him, something Daniel's seems to be mortally afraid of. He is a young Engel with few contacts and few friends (his fellowship) who is subject to extreme mood swings. He sometimes appears to be on the edge of violence after a seemingly innocent question from a Monach, while at other times he will listen for hours to a boring lecture from Malloriel about Angelitic theology.

Appearance: Daniel has a rather large nose, ears that lie close to the head and soft-brown eyes that suggest that he would rather escape from all the people around him than fight them. But he walks with predatory grace and his musculature reminds of the proud battle-steeds of the Templars.

Nature: At times, he seems to burst with joy and good nature, while at other times he broods for hours. Daniel has suffered and seen many disappointments from other people and desperately tries to avoid suffering further; he therefore tries to keep his distance and has only grown close to the members of his fellowship.

daniel

Urielite 2; Medium-size humanoid (1.53m tall); HD 2d10+4; 19 HP; Init +3; Spd: 12m, fly 48m (Good); AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 AC Modifier); Atk +5 melee (1d4+3 [19-20; x2] dagger) or +5 ranged (1d8 [x3] longbow); Sv Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills: Balance +6, Concentration +2, Listen +6, Sense Direction +6, Search +2, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +6

Feats: Flying, Point-Blank-Shot, Signum, Track

***Potestates*:** Enlightened Eyes +6, Might of the Messenger +6.

Languages: Latin

Equipment: Dagger, bag, longbow, 20 arrows, 10 iron rations, quiver

intro

"If not for that damn storm, we wouldn't even have stopped at the monastery. But we hadn't traveled a single march when night fell. Three times we had to pull one of the wagons out of the mud!"

The innkeeper took an appraising look around the half-empty tap room before sitting down at Pauk's table. "What did you see?"

Pauk took a deep draught from his beer mug.

"We had already seen the light of the tower for quite some time. Master Bram had been concerned about his wares all day – we carry a load of spices, you now – and so he had sent ahead one of the servants to ask for shelter for us. We had some drovers from the region with us. Those guys were far from enthusiastic at the idea of spending the night at the monastery. Looks like it's not particularly popular, that monastery of yours."

The inn keeper nodded distractedly.

"Anyway, Master Bram would hear none of it and urged the people on so that we would arrive at the monastery as soon as possible. The man who had ridden ahead preferred to stand outside in the rain, rather than set foot in the monastery alone! At least he had told the Monachs about our arrival, and just as the first wagon could be seen from the monastery, they were already lifting the gate so we could steer the wagon right into the courtyard." Pauk drank the rest of his beer and let his gaze rest on the empty mug.

"And the Monachs?" the inn keeper asked, refilling Pauk's mug.

"Everyone we met at first was mute. At least, they weren't saying a single word. They just scurried silently from one wagon to the other to give water to the oxen and show the servants where the animals could be stabled. I guess they were novices who had taken a vow of silence. Anyway, I was quite happy when we were all seated safe and dry for dinner. It was a curious dining-hall, though, without any windows, and the walls were covered with metal plates, half of which were covered with glyphs and mysterious symbols the Monachs had carved into them. Even while we were eating one of them was still working on those plates."

"That would be the chronicle of the monastery," the inn keeper mumbled, signalling one of his barmaids for a drink for himself.

"The chronicle?"

u s : monastery

"Well, it is said that the Monachs write down everything which happens in the region and in its skies, night and day."

"That may well be, at least I got the impression that they'd done a damn load of writing, if you ask me. After dinner, the Abt made a nice, little speech. It could have been all cozy, if his face wouldn't have been hidden beneath that huge hood of his. And then the silent brothers showed us to our guest quarters. Those quarters were rather simple but tidy and dry and far better than spending the night outside in the storm."

"And yet," Pauk continued after wiping some foam from his beard, "I didn't sleep very well. Perhaps I drank a little too much of the good monastery beer – but I wasn't drunk, mind you! Anyway, there wasn't much to look at in my cell and so I got up sometime after midnight and decided to take a look around the monastery on my way to the lavatory."

Pauk lowered his voice, leaning closer towards the innkeeper.

"I saw how the Monachs sleep." He nodded portentously.

"If they were sleeping at all. There was another hall at the end of the corridor with our guest quarters. The door was slightly ajar and a faint blue sheen fell into the corridor. I sneaked to the door and stole a look inside. The walls were lined with recesses with seats in them. In each of those recesses sat one of the Monachs. Their heads were hidden beneath shiny silver helmets which were tied to the wall with some kind of wire. The helmets had no visors, they were covering the Monachs' entire heads and the strange blue light flashed from underneath them."

"What did you do then?"

"Well, I took to my heels! When I returned from the yard a few minutes later, the door to the hall was closed, and so I went to bed, trying to finally catch some sleep."

"And what if the Monachs weren't asleep? What do you think were they doing wearing those helmets?"

Pauk shrugged his shoulders and reached for his beer mug.

"Meditating," a soft voice said from behind him. "The Monachs were meditating."

Startled, Pauk knocked over his beer mug and leapt up. Behind him stood a slender figure whose face was hidden in the shadows of a hood.

chapter

it is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?

- Job 11:8

five:

amici et inimici

or,

of those of true faith,

of the lord of the flies,

of the dreamseed and of those who have

fallen from grace

On the following pages, we want to introduce some characters and creatures who populate the world of **Engel**. They can be directly incorporated into your adventures or campaigns or can serve as inspiration for you to design your own characters and creatures.

No stats are given for the Pontifex and the Dux; both are omnipresent figures in the world of **Engel**, but players probably will never interact with them in a direct fashion. Take heed when bringing these two characters into your game – of course, their influence can be felt virtually anywhere, but when they appear in every second adventure of yours, they will become less and less important and you will rob their appearances of a large part of their significance when you employ them in an inflationary manner.

amici

petrus secundus – the pontifex maximus

Reputedly, Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus – the Lord's representative on earth and the First Shepherd of all Angelites – was born in Speier in the late fifties of the 22nd century. There is a lot of evidence indicating that he went by the prosaic name of Peter Christiansen as a child.

Apart from that, information on the early years of the leader of the Holy Angelitic Church is scarce. The first confirmed report concerning his actions is a speech he held at *Roma Æterna* in 2163 which laid the foundations for the Angelitic Church. Ever since those days – some 500 years ago – the seemingly eternally-young twelve-year-old boy has steadfastly carried the burden of being the highest cleric in the known world, weathering all storms his church has had to endure. Neither famine nor Dreamseed, Heretics nor other machinations of the Lord of the Flies have proven able to lead the strict but just overlord of all faithful Angelites astray. He has seen the Dreamseed come and go – and eventually return again. The Lord put the Engel at his side. He has proclaimed two Crusades and is the chairman of the European Council of the Orders. And yet, he has remained unchanged through all of this.

Appearance: The fact that Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus still appears to be a 12 year old boy even after having ruled the Angelitic Church for centuries is generally agreed to be a miracle which proves that the Lord holds his most loyal, noblest and highest servant in extraordinarily high esteem. The Pontifex Maximus is of slender yet muscular build. He measures in at 1.4m tall and his motions often illustrate his swiftness, his dexterity and his determination. He prefers plain white robes which are almost reminiscent of hair shirts and are supplemented with woolen cloaks in winter. He rejects anything heavy, bulky or showy; plainness in appearance is his first and foremost priority. Usually, Petrus Secundus either walks barefooted or wears flat leather sandals. His blond hair falls on his shoulders in long, shiny strands; his gaze with which he looks at the world speaks of profound wisdom, determination and insight.

Nature: The Pontifex Maximus has not left the Holy City for more than 300 years. Only in the rarest of cases, he crosses the boundaries of the Peter's Church and the New Lateran Palace. Whereas he often visited the Himmel during his early years in office, he nowadays relies on his authority to call Abts and Archangels to *Roma Æterna* for consultations.

Essentially, mortals and Engel alike have only two opportunities every year to catch a glimpse at the First Shepherd: during the annual Consecration of the Engel or on the Day of the Children in *Roma Æterna*. While many people – especially the residents of the neighboring regions – return year after year to participate in this breathtaking display of splendor, many Engel behold the Pontifex Maximus on this occasion for the first and the last time in their entire lives. To the average Engel, Petrus Secundus is nothing less than a vessel for the One Above, the boy-like incarnation of the Lord Himself who speaks in His voice and with His authority.

Many enemies have been misled by his child-like appearance, but it stands to consider that Petrus Secundus is the most powerful man on earth. The Holy Angelitic Church and the countless fellowships of Engel are under his command, and the Pontifex Maximus will not hesitate to throw anything at his disposal at the lackeys of the Lord of the Flies.

etienne normand – the dux

In the wars of the Angelitic Church – whether against the Dreamseed or mere mortal enemies – the fate of every soldier depends on the abilities of his military leaders. Etienne Normand, a French patriot who was hired by the church as a mercenary during the war against the cells of the Humanis League, almost met his doom in the heat of battle, even though not in the form of the sword blade as every mercenary has to expect.

In 2462, the Humanis League openly rebelled against the Angelitic Church for the first time. The church quickly put an end to the uprising, but the League successfully broke the church's hold on several important cities, particularly in France.

When a battle in one of these conflicts drew to an end and the actual fighting moved further and further away from Etienne's position, he lay bleeding on the battlefield, his body covered with wounds caused by the bullets of a weapon he had never seen before. His sword was broken. He was

barely able to move, and with his blood he felt his life seeping inevitably from his body into the ground. But his soul rebelled, struggling diligently against impending doom. In the early evening, the crows descended upon the abandoned battlefield, having circled above it the whole day long in anticipation of a feast. Etienne Normand escaped their greedy beaks; with the last strength he could muster, he crawled into a ditch both sides had thrown their dead into – there was no time for proper burial rites in the heat of battle. He covered himself with the bodies of the slain mercenaries to hide from the carrion crows and lost consciousness. On nightfall, a group of Raphaelites arrived at the battlefield to bury the dead and tend to the survivors. Their arrival saved Etienne's life.

The mercenary who had somehow survived for several hours despite his grievous wounds in a pit full of corpses was found by a Raphaelite called Cashaniel, a far-traveled legate of the Raphaelites whose healing powers were the stuff of legends. This Engel saved the life of the gravely injured man. The powers of the experienced healer ensured Etienne Normand's survival who was swiftly brought to a Raphaelite monastery where he was nursed back to health by the Monachs.

Originally, Etienne was not a particularly religious man. Certainly, he had believed in the Lord and the Angelitic Church like any other European, but in a passive manner, accepting something which is not to be bothered with and simply taking it for granted. Although his faith was far from strong, he had to admit that Cashaniel had returned his health and strength by laying his hands on him. To thank the order that saved his life, Etienne Normand joined the Raphaelite Templars as soon as he was able to walk without crutches again. And lo, thanks to the rigorous training in the elite guard of the Healing Order, his prowess as a fighter and a horsemen soon surpassed anything even his most veteran mercenary friends had to offer. Fascinated by the Templars' discipline and grateful for the gift of his life, Etienne Normand became the Ab's personal bodyguard.

During a campaign under the command of the Ab to knock down another uprising of the Humanis League, Etienne gained a name among the Templars. Due to his prowess in battle and his thorough training he quickly rose through the ranks of the holy warriors. He grew particularly famous for preventing unnecessary bloodshed by demanding a duel with the leader of the enemy army – duels which he never lost. A lust for danger, excitement and, as has to be admitted, violence so characteristic of a good mercenary raged inside him, and being a Templar represented a legitimate way of reveling in these urges. The Ab's support allowed him to be taught by the best mentors and masters, and Etienne became an extremely skilled fighter with a large variety of weapons; the Michaelites taught him their tactics and strategies, and with renowned Urielites he learned how to hunt, how to set traps and how to survive in the wilderness.

After ten years, in 2652, Etienne learned everything a Templar could ever teach him. When the old Dux died in the same year, Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus summoned the former French mercenary, who had risen through the ranks of the Templars like no one else ever before, to *Roma Æterna*. He put him to the test in a long private talk in the New Lateran Palace and eventually appointed him the new leader of the Templars. This is a novelty in as much as only holy warriors trained with the Michaelites or Gabrielites had ever been invested with this important office.

As soon as Etienne Normand was released from his duties as one of the Armatura, he devoted his entire time to the study of the art of war. Since he detests the political intrigues of the Vatican, he only spends as much time in the Holy City as is absolutely necessary; when his duties allow it, he can be found on every battlefield on which the decisive battles of the Angelitic Church against its enemies are being fought, side by side with his men and often still in duel with the enemy leaders. Once, he single-handedly slew a dozen of the horse-sized wasps of the Dreamseed.

In time, the Dux grew paranoid, however, and nowadays he fears nothing more than conspiracies amongst the Templars to oust him from office. Sadly, this suspicion is wholly without reason, for the entire Templar Order looks up in admiration to the first Dux ever to come from the ranks of the Raphaelite Templars.

Appearance: With his weathered skin, his heavy frame and his stocky build, Etienne Normand resembles a rock – immovable, steadfast and timeless. He looks a lot younger than he actually is – although he is nearing his 40th birthday, he could be easily taken for someone ten years younger. The Dux's mouth is always framed by a thick gray beard which stands out in a curious manner against his dark eyes gleaming with craftiness. His face is gaunt – the only part of his body which can be called thus – the skin stretching tightly over his protruding cheekbones. His jet-black hair still falls on his back in a thick ponytail. He chooses his garments following tactical considerations, and functionality always prevails over splendor. Recently, he has started to suffer from a skin disease desiccating the face of his skin which bursts open in large clefts. No Raphaelite has been able to cure the Dux, and it is whispered he has been cursed by the Lord of the Flies himself.

Nature: The Dux is a born warrior. Only when adrenaline pumps through his veins in duel, he feels truly at ease. He has fought and killed hundreds of enemies of the Holy Angelitic Church and has triumphed over Dreamseed creatures twice his own size. Frequently, he has led missions in person to assuage his lust for fighting and war. Nowadays, his aggression has turned inwards, though; he believes to detect enemies and conspirators around every corner in his own Order. Therefore, he uses his influence on the Templar Order to form his own unofficial elite guard. And yet, he is confused by feeling the presence of an enemy whose face

remains unknown to him and whom he cannot oppose directly. That is why he pushes aside his (imaginary) internal enemies and devotes his time to the development of a strategy to bring about the final annihilation of the Dreamseed. When asked about his mysterious skin disease, he reacts with anger and even violence.

the Komtur:

eliphas of bern

What can be said about a man who has done anything to keep his past in the dark in order to let only his actions speak for him?

Eliphas was the oldest of five sons of the Diadoche of Bern, a young man with a promising future in a time when the possession of resources was of the most crucial importance to ensure personal success, and his family owned resources in abundance. His father, Darius of Bern, was a ruthless ruler; little Eliphas was groomed to become his successor from his very childhood and spent his early years spoiled with all kinds of amenities. Wealth, plenty of food, expensive clothes, skilled teachers (yes, the Komtur knows how to read and write, though he keeps his education secret), an upbringing which would eventually make him a leader of men – his father who saw his own power as unassailable conferred all this upon his son. Darius of Bern anticipated his son's every wish and did anything in his power to make these wishes come true.

And yet, little Eliphas grew up in troubled times.

One morning, the Dreamseed descended upon the Swiss city without warning. Cruelly and brutally, the black insect demons of the Lord of the Flies swarmed over the small city state in the Swiss Alps and razed the seemingly unassailable realm of Eliphas' father to the ground. The battle merely lasted a single day, and on the evening of this terrifying day, Eliphas galloped out of his father's stables on the fastest steed he could find and fled from the ruins of his home into the darkness of the falling night. The flames turning his father's palace to ash lighted his way.

Uprooted all of a sudden, Eliphas wandered all over Europe for many years, looking for something to give new meaning to his life. He listened to the blasphemous sermons of the Heretics, wrote lampoons about the Pontifex Maximus which he spread anonymously among the populace, became the priest of an abandoned village church, hunted Dreamseed creatures in the Alps as a mercenary and did many, many things more, most of which were not particularly glorious. Eventually, Eliphas joined the Templars at the age of 18, because he realized that despite all of his father's diatribes, the Angelitic Church was the only power which stood at least the smallest chance to efficiently oppose the Dreamseed. Accompanying the largest army ever gathered by the Templars as a scout acquainted with the region, he rode into the rather inaccessible mountain city of Chur where numerous Tempted had sought refuge. He helped in burning out this festering boil on the face of Europe. In the end, his determination caught the attention of one of his superiors and he became one of the Electi.

Today, Eliphas of Bern (his few friends among the ranks of the Templars often simply call him "the Swiss" because of his accent) is the Komtur of a Grimrider Band. Through a spotless performance of duties in this position, he hopes to qualify for more important tasks in the Templar Army proper. He is known to always keep his opinions to himself and to refrain from practically any discussions whatsoever. When he occasionally does give voice to his opinions, however, his superiors and even the Engel fall silent to listen to the well-founded arguments of the taciturn Swiss. Eliphas' words when smashing open the doors of the Inner Sanctum in Chur have become legendary.

He advanced into the sanctum at the head of the Templar Army and greeted the high priest of the Tempted with the words: "Which Maker do you want to meet – yours or mine?" before beheading him with a single mighty blow of his sword.

The Abt of the monastery of St. Germain at Rodez, where Eliphas' Grimrider Band is stationed, realized that the Swiss outdoes him by far when it comes to strategy and tactics. As a result, the Abt grants him an almost unheard-of liberty of action in virtually any military matters. Within the hierarchy of the Templars, though, reprimands against the angry young man accusing him of insubordination and an unhealthy lust for power have risen. Many Templars even suspect that he plans to cut all ties to the church sooner or later to follow his own agenda, supported by his men who literally worship him. All this talk bothers Eliphas as much as the moon is bothered when it is barked at by a straying mongrel. If someone actually tells him to his face that he is furthering his own agenda, he just stares coldly at the impudent accuser. And then he smiles the spry smile of a shark immediately before it tears its prey to shreds.

Appearance: Like almost all other Templars, Eliphas reveres the Engel. He has even followed the current trend among younger Templars to have his body extensively covered with tattoos,

eliphas

Fighter 5; Medium-size humanoid (1.72m tall); HD 5d10+15; 47 HP; Init +6 (+2 Dex,+4 Improved Iniative); Spd: 6m (walking due to armor); AC 14 (+7 masterwork plate-armor, +3 Ac Modifier); Atk +10 melee (1d10+5 [19-20; x2] masterwork bastard-sword) or +8 ranged (1d8 [19-20; x2] masterwork light crossbow); Sv Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills: Climb+6, Handle Animals +8, Jump +6, Knowledge (Religion) +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +4, Spot +3, Swim +6.

Feats: Cleave, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword).

Languages: Common, local dialect of Bern, local dialect of Rodez, can read and write all the aforementioned languages

tattoos which remind of the Signum, Sigil and Scriptura of the Engel. Though this practice is officially denounced as blasphemous, the Angelitic Church turns a blind eye to it because it originates in the adoration of the Engel. Most of the time, large parts of his body art vanish beneath the Templar armor worn by the small, wiry Komtur with the long, prematurely gray hair and the neatly trimmed beard. Over the years, Eliphas has trained himself to live with only four hours of sleep a day; meanwhile, he has grown accustomed to his self-induced sleep deprivation, though this habit is reflected in his pale complexion and his bloodshot eyes.

Nature: Just like one of his greatest heroes, the Dux, Eliphas could not care less for the political machinations at *Roma Æterna* or the internal quarrels of the Templars. Everything about him exudes his upbringing as a leader his father conferred upon him. Eliphas is the classic loner who only relies on himself and makes clever use of other people without actually putting his trust in them. He lives his life following the basic principle: "If you want something done right, you can only do it yourself". Besides, he is cold, calculating, cynical and hungry for power. Unfortunately, he sometimes nevertheless tends to lose his self-control in violent frenzies. For now, he has always been able to suppress his rage again after a certain while, but the more intimate knowledge of the Holy Angelitic Church he gains, the more his smoldering rage grows. Eliphas keeps these urges hidden from others – the world only sees his shark-like smile.

the cardinal on the consistory: johannes of gemmingen

Otto of Gemmingen, a feudal lord loyal to the church from the banks of the Upper Rhine Lake, died before his youngest son Johannes was born on the 12th of March in 2577, the birthday of the Pontifex Maximus by and large celebrated as Peter's Day. Otto's wife, Countess Christa of Gemmingen, had little Johannes baptized on the same day at the castle's small chapel which had been built especially for this occasion. Christa raised Johannes and his brother – who was one year older than the future Cardinal – on her own.

One year after Johannes' birth, sightings of Dreamseed creatures in the area grew more frequent, and Christa of Gemmingen left the family estate together with both of her small sons. In 2579, they arrived at Tittmoning, a small town on the river Salzach on the Austrian-German border. Tittmoning was ruled by a Diadoche with whom the exceptionally pious Christa of Gemmingen came into conflict time and again.

Due to the lasting criticism its matriarch practiced towards the Diadoche, the small family was forced to flee the Junklord's sphere of influence, moving to Auschau on the river Inn at the foot of the Alps in December 2582. In 2587, Christa of Gemmingen eventually bought an estate at Traunstein where Johannes lived until his 18th birthday. He went to school at the local Ramielite monastery where he learned how to read and write as well as Greek and Latin.

In 2599, Johannes of Gemmingen became a novice at the Traunstein monastery, the first step of a truly extraordinary career in the Angelitic Church.

Together with the other novices, Johannes of Gemmingen was drafted into military service when numerous raids by Heretics started to pose a threat to the region and no Engel or Templar units were close enough to aid the locals. Three times a week, Johannes traveled to Munich to receive training as a soldier at the Gabrielite academy. When a miniature Inferno with a range of movement of merely seven kilometers laid waste to large parts of the inner city of Munich in September 2604, he was recruited for reconstructive work and helped in rebuilding the destroyed buildings. Two months later, he voluntarily joined the Templar Army and received basic training as a Templar infantryman at the Gabrielite academy already mentioned. However, the severe asthma he suffered from hindered him in participating in all of the training's aspects.

After a decade of treacherous silence, the Dreamseed suddenly reappeared at the gates of Munich on the 1st of December in 2609 in a horribly mutated form even more powerful than before. Terrified, Johannes of Gemmingen deserted and fled to his family's estate in Traunstein. Only the fact that he offered the family's mansion as tactical headquarters to the army of Engel rushing towards Munich saved him from being summarily executed. Nevertheless, he was arrested as a deserter and brought to *Roma Æterna* for interrogation.

Nobody knows for sure what happened during his time in prison, but on the 19th of June in 2610 Johannes of Gemmingen was released and returned home to Traunstein. A month later, his brother Adalbert who was wounded during the war against the Dreamseed returned home as well. In November of the same year, Johannes of Gemmingen continued his training as a Monach, and Adalbert decided to follow his brother's footsteps and start a career as a cleric.

In 2617, Johannes of Gemmingen moved to the Ramieliticum, an Angelite institute in Munich. On his 44th birthday, Johannes of Gemmingen was ordained as Monach together with his brother Adalbert in the cathedral of Freising by famous Cardinal Faulfaber, a member of the Pii. In July 2623, he graduated in theology at the Ramieliticum. His doctoral dissertation was titled "People and Church in Fra Juda's Genesis Secunda". In the same year, he became an ordinary for theology at the Ramieliticum; his inaugural dissertation was devoted to "Theology and Policy of Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus". During a theological congress in Innsbruck in 2627, Johannes of Gemmingen and the Ramielite priest Hanns Helder met for the first time. Johannes of Gemmingen had been one of the assayers of the young priest's doctoral dissertation on "Alphabetization as a Missionary Tool," but his opinion according to which Helder should not be conferred a degree because the latter promoted heretical philosophies had not prevailed with Johannes' fellow assayers. Helder and Johannes of Gemmingen at once came into conflict over basic ideas, even though Helder admired the ordinary for his shrewdness and Johannes valued his young colleague's openness.

On the 15th of April in 2629, Johannes of Gemmingen started teaching as an ordinary at the Ramielite monastery of Bonn. On the 23rd of August in the same year, his mother died at a very old age.

In 2633, Johannes of Gemmingen moved back to the Ramieliticum and started to encourage the eradication of all cults and Heretics in a highly radical manner. On the 16th of December in the same year, his brother was murdered by Heretics who mistook Adalbert for Johannes.

In 2636 Johannes of Gemmingen was offered a second professorial chair for Dogmatic Theology at the archconservative Ramielite monastery of Tübingen, an offer he gladly accepted. His vocation was supported a great deal by Helder who had begun teaching in Tübingen in the meantime.

In 2640, the anti-church Humanis League tried to gain a foothold in Tübingen. Johannes of Gemmingen accused the liberal Diadoches of being tyrants and refused to teach as long as the Junklords had a say in the matters of the city. He called upon all "people of good faith" to oppose the League. Shocked by the minimal response, Johannes of Gemmingen retreated to Regensburg where he gained a teaching position at the local Ramielite monastery. From there, he was summoned to Nuremberg to act as an advisor to the German Cardinal at the papal court, Claas of Freyung. In 2642, he initiated the so-called "Angelitic Disputes", quarterly conferences during

johannes of gemmingen

Aristocrat 12; Medium-size humanoid (1.78m tall); HD 12d8+24; 84 HP; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd: 9m.; AC 19 (+1 Dex, +8 AC Modifier); Atk +9/+4 Melee (1d4-1 + poison [19-20; x2] masterwork stiletto); Sv Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +11; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 19, Wis 16, Cha 17.

Skills: Perform +10, Bluff +18, Diplomacy +24, Intimidate +13, Spot +8, Forgery +14, Gather Information +10, Knowledge (Engel) +19, Knowledge (Religion) +18, Listen +20, Read Lips +12, Sense Motive +18, Ride +6, Appraise +9, Innuendo +10

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Intimidating, Skill Focus: Knowledge (Engel), Skill Focus: Knowledge (Religion), Skill Focus: Diplomacy, Trustworthy

Languages: Common, Latin, Greek, English, German, several local dialects from Germany – can read and write all the aforementioned dialects

which Freyung met with Hannes-Ulrich of Basel, Henri de Lyon and other leading Angelitic theologians to promote pan-European cooperation in order to create an opposing force to the agitations of the Humanis League.

In 2647, Johannes of Gemmingen was appointed to the office of Archbishop of Munich and Freising. His confessor and fatherly friend Claas of Freyung urged him to accept the office. Johannes left his teaching position behind and focused on church politics with the same zeal he had shown during all his years as professor. He saw himself as the highest servant of truth in his archbishopric and started to oppose imaginary and actual Heretics alike with all his might. He took into his head the idea of carrying the truth out into the world again and become a beacon of said truth. This inspired goal caught the attention of Petrus Secundus himself. The Pontifex Maximus called him to *Roma Æterna* to join the Consistory in 2650 and charged Johannes with the task of coordinating the persecution of Heretics all over Europe. From its beginning in 2652, the well-educated theologian participated in the European Council of the Orders, acting as the so-called Peritus, the supreme advisor of the Pontifex Maximus in theological matters. In the same year, he met Helder again – who also took part in the Council – and scant weeks after the meeting had begun, Johannes instigated Helder's excommunication from the Holy Angelitic Church.

Appearance: Johannes of Gemmingen is an old man with a friendly, suntanned face which just will not correspond with his role as one of the cruelest hunters of Heretics in the entire Angelitic Church. Usually, he wears his official robes in public, acting in a gentle and grandfatherly way. In private, he prefers a plain linen cloak and flat leather sandals.

Nature: Those bold enough to take a closer look at Johannes of Gemmingen are bound to realize that the old man seething with hatred is actually on the edge of breaking down. More and more often, he becomes confused, his mind clouded by vague delusions full of bitterness. Helder, his greatest critic, claims Johannes' lifelong hatred towards Heretics has inevitably led him into the arms of the Lord of the Flies. In any case, the godly theologian has recently taken one more step towards his ultimate fate – whatever that may be.

marie – peasant with a past

Marie is a fine example how ubiquitous the war on the Lord of the Flies and his dark entourage has become all over Europe and how thoroughly it has influenced the lives of all Europeans. At the age of 18, Marie joined the patchwork army of patriots led by Frédéric de Lyons in a war on the Dreamseed in the Pyrenean Mountains after the Decade of Reconstruction. She fought valiantly during the siege of Marseilles, but in the end, she was wounded

in battle, taken as a prisoner and tortured in a military camp. She ridiculed her torturers until they foamed with rage and decided to "silence the insolent bitch once and for all" by cutting her tongue out. Enchained, bleeding and close to death, the twenty-year-old woman looked into the skies, seemingly for the last time in her life – only to see how her salvation in form of several fellowships of Engel swooped down on brilliant white wings. The Heretics and Tempted fled in downright panic as the winged champions of the Lord descended upon them, while an experienced Raphaelite among them rushed to the injured woman's side at once. Almost in awe, the Engel healed her wounds and replaced her tongue, incessantly praising her courage, her strong faith and her godliness.

All these events furthered the young volunteer's determination to bring an end to the infidels' atrocities in her homeland once and for all. Soon, she was renowned as a pious champion of the Lord, even though she sometimes showed unnecessary brutality against suspected infidels. No danger was too great for the young woman from Valencas in whom burned an unquenchable thirst for vengeance.

Then the battles in southern France came to an end – a temporary victory was won and the demonic hordes of the Lord of the Flies seemed to concentrate on other targets. At this time, several high-ranking Armatura of the Templars tried to recruit the woman from Valencas into the ranks of the holy warriors. Marie, however, simply wanted to return to her old life as a fisher and refused all such offers. She returned home, and in time, the embittered warrior grew accustomed to a normal life as a civilian again. For a while, she led a miserable life in her home village of Valencas, depending on the alms of other villagers, because it was hard for her to accept the routine of daily life after more than two years of fighting. Soon after her 25th birthday, her luck changed: She married a fisherman by the name of Eric who was one year younger than her and she bore him a daughter – Irène – in the following year. Marie did not know that Tempters living undercover at Marseilles had put a price on her head and those of other famous partisans. In the remoteness of her small fishing village, Marie was relatively safe from harm, though. She worked hard for the common good of the village, the residents of which had taken her in after the war despite all her hardships – and she never spoke a single word of her time in the army. She went fishing with her beloved husband, acquired remarkable skills in her new vocation, and soon word about her got around again.

In 2542 – after more than 30 years of being happy together – her husband unexpectedly was cast into a watery grave together with her son-in-law. And as if that would not have been enough to shatter Marie's life, she fell victim to ruthless bounty hunters passing through Valencas by chance in the same year who had recognized the grieving widow on an ancient warrant and carried her off to Marseille.

Marie endured everything the Tempters did to her in their hideouts in the old seaport town in silence. After two months, the infidels grew frustrated with her and released the outwardly unbroken but inwardly completely shattered woman from their clutches. She had been tortured, abused and subjected to abominable rituals, but she had never given up. At most, she has become even more gruff, brusque and taciturn than before the event.

Again, Marie returned to Valencas, and again, she did not speak a single word of what she had suffered. She devoted her entire time to her daughter Irène – a widow like her – and her grandson Dominic who is the apple of her eye. And though she tells herself that she has found peace, there is something just below the surface that threatens to burst.

Appearance: Marie – a woman with weathered skin – appears suntanned even in Winter. Her small, light blue eyes stand out drastically against her dark complexion, even though they seem hollow and somehow washed out after her being tortured at Marseilles. She still walks upright and keeps her back straight, though her age and bitterness are displayed prominently in her face. Deep lines are carved into it around her eyes and mouth. Marie's long has turned gray, her brow is wrinkled. Moreover, brown spots have started to appear on the back of her hands and her lower arms.

Nature: Marie is best described with a single phrase: battle-weary. Nevertheless, she plans to return to Marseilles one day to hunt down and kill those responsible for her being tortured or die trying. This decision she has taken only recently filled the vast, terrible void within Marie. And there is something more: a longing for peace, simple peace after such a long time of pain, blood and hatred.

marie

Commoner 2; Medium-size humanoid (1.63m tall); HD 2d4+4; 14 HP; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd: 9m; AC 11 (+1 Dex, +0 Ac Modifier); Atk +2 Melee (1d6+1 [x2] club) or +1 ranged (1d6+1 [x2] club); Sv Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills: Profession (Fisherman) +5, Craft (Sewing) +2, Listen +2, Handle Animals +5, Swim +3

Feats: Endurance, Toughness.

Languages: Common

fra domenico – monach and painter of monsters

Fra Domenico is the groundbreaking driving force of Dreamseed research in Europe and one of those few daring persons bold enough to capture the abominable spawn of the Lord of the Flies in sketches and paintings.

The Austrian Monach and painter was born in Herzogenburg near Vienna in 2604. He spent his time of apprenticeship in his father's carpenter's shop. Afterwards, he decided to try his luck with a career as a cleric. His lay name has fallen into oblivion, but even while still being a young Monach in a Raphaelite monastery, he captured the horrors of the war against the Dreamseed in his paintings which he signed with his order name, Dominikus of Herzogenburg. Far from the creative centers of European culture, Dominikus developed a strange metaphorical language of his own. A precious table-top with a depiction of the seven mortal sins dating from 2634 is regarded as his most important early work.

In addition to the adversary of mankind – the Dreamseed – he has always been concerned primarily with death, Judgment Day, heaven and hell. In paintings like "The Acrobat" or "The Grim Reaper and the Egotist", he depicts man as one of God's creations plagued by follies and prone to sin and cruelty.

In his painting "In the Park of the Dreamseed", an apocalyptic festival of love is staged in minute detail, ample symbolism and with myriads of monstrous creatures. Another major work of his is the hotly debated "The Temptations of the Pontifex Maximus" which shows the First Shepherd of the Angelitic Church standing tall even though he is surrounded by obscenities, Dreamseed creatures and violent atrocities. In "Judgment Day", hell and the punishments reserved for mankind in this place of damnation are depicted in a similarly drastic fashion. Dominikus' meticulous paintings which literally crawl with depictions of countless figures combine the discriminating scientific point of view of the scholar with comical and sarcastic elements in an inimitable way. He was also the first modern artist to paint pictures of landscapes in order to express a certain kind of mood. A highly admired man, he was summoned to *Roma Æterna* by the Pontifex Maximus himself in 2646 where the latter gave him his new Italian name of Fra Domenico.

Even more so, the leader of the Holy Angelitic Church charged Domenico with a special task. For the last seven years, Domenico has been roaming the land accompanied by Hieronymus, an expert cartographer, friend and fellow Monach from Domenico home monastery of Herzogenburg. While Hieronymus has taken it into his head to measure by steps the new borders of Europe drawn by the Second Flood, Domenico exploits their travels to capture as many Dreamseed creatures in picture as possible and to write down the two travelers' experiences with the spawn of the Lord of the Flies. The entire scientific community of Europe looks forward to reading their travel books – as well as many Armatura who hope to draw tactical hints from the travelogues which could help them in their battles against the Dreamseed.

Expert 6/Fighter 1; Medium-size humanoid (1.7m tall); HD 1d10+6d6+14; 40 HP; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd: 9m; AC 16 (+1 Dex, +2 leather armor, +3 AC Modifier); Atk +7 melee (1d8+2 [19-20; x2] heavy mace) or +6 ranged (1d8 [19-20; x2] light crossbow); Sv Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills: Craft (Calligraphy) +11, Diplomacy +8, Hide +10, Knowledge (Geography) +8, Knowledge (Religion) +12, Knowledge (Dreamseed) +15, Listen +6, Move Silently +11, Profession (Scribe) +13, Spot +10, Swim+9, Wilderness Lore +9

Feats: Dodge, Mobility, Run, Skill Focus (Profession-Scribe), Skill Focus (Knowledge-Dreamseed).

Languages: Common, Latin, English, local dialect of Wales - can read and write all the aforementioned languages

Appearance: Fra Domenico is a well-educated, rather soft-spoken man clad in the typical garments of a Ramielite Monach. He attaches great importance to his well-groomed appearance in order to be regarded as a stereotypical member of his Order. His long hair is dirty blond, and he wears a neatly trimmed goatee. Fra Domenico walks upright and proud as if he wanted to deny the pain he had to endure during his many first as well as second hand encounters with the Dreamseed. His gaze constantly wanders to the horizon as if he wanted to look out for new creatures still unknown to him.

Nature: The Painter of Monsters is a man whose calm and impressive bearing lends him the respect of others wherever he travels. Recently, Fra Domenico has started to suffer from bouts of home sickness for Herzogenburg, making him more and more introverted and pensive. Moreover, he has had to admit grudgingly on his long expeditions with Hieronymus that in certain situations a skillfully wielded blade can be as helpful as the word of faith or a daring stroke of the brush.

Domenico cannot stand stupidity of any kind; together with foolhardiness, he considers this trait to be the most insufferable failing of his fellow men.

inimici

nana – the ferrywoman

There are countless people all over Europe which hire out their services as ferrymen, and many of them have acted with great boldness at times. But even among these daredevils, Nana has become a legend, even though only a handful of ferrymen can claim to have spoken to her in person. It was Nana – together with the similarly infamous mercenary Wittgenstein – who snatched a small group of chosen children from a Grimrider camp, disappearing in the maze of branches and tributaries of the river Rhine with her "loot" before the Grimriders could get a hold on her. Only few people can pilot as many various forms of water vessels as she can. And she knows how to use her talent to her advantage – some accuse her of abominable crimes, while others praise her heroic deeds, depending on which side they are on. Her actions have earned her all manners of more or less flattering names from friends and foes alike, but while others would show off with these monikers, she keeps calling herself "Nana," plain and simple. Her favorite creed is: "Nana will do everything for Manna, no questions asked," and she acts according to it. Nana is bold, foolhardy and to a certain degree corruptible – but she will never kill for money.

Appearance: Nana is an attractive woman close to thirty with close-cropped white blonde hair – she is well-shaped and well-dressed. Her favorite clothes she wears on her rare sojourns on solid ground are fashionable dresses – she almost never lacks the Manna to pay for them; while aboard her boat, she prefers waterproof men's clothes, with functionality being her top priority. She has an almost child-like face with a small mouth often drawn into a mocking half-smile.

Nature: Nana acts very methodically in all regards and likes to keep her distance. This is her way of controlling the desperate anger towards the all-embracing iron grip of the Angelitic Church she feels and of keeping her from committing a great folly one day. She sees herself as an atheist – a rarity in 27th century Europe – and she is proud of never having seen the interior of a church. When her rage grows too strong, she numbs it with opium.

nana

Fighter 2/Rogue 3; Medium-size humanoid (1.65m tall); HD 2d10+3d6+10; 36 HP; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd: 9m.; AC 18 (+2 Dex, +6 AC Modifier); Atk +4 Melee (1d6+3 [19-20; x2] short sword); Special: Sneak Attack +2d6, Uncanny Dodge (Retains Dex Bonus); Sv Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 15.

Skills: Appraise +3, Balance +10, Climb +11, Hide +7, Jump +10, Move Silently +7, Pilot (Raft) +10, Repair +6, Spot +5, Tumble +10, Use Rope +7.

Feats: Cleave, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Specialization (short sword).

Languages: Common, Latin.

isabella of cordova – the junklady

Isabella of Cordova leads the life she has always dreamed of.

Last winter, at the age of 28, she became the successor of her late father Enrique and is now the official ruler of the Free City of Cordova in Andalusia where she leads an excessive life, seemingly centered on nothing more than pleasure and debauchery. Time and again, she spends vast amounts of Manna to appease former lovers so she can face new challenges free of unsettling repercussions of her love affairs.

In spite of her excesses, Isabella of Cordova is an aristocrat through and through, and in the few months of her rule, she has quickly gained an understanding for the workings of matters of state. Even before she entered her current office, she was a fervent defender of the Urbanis League her father had founded on her urgings; together with her major allies – the Free Cities of Vienna and Nantua – she attempts to organize an opposing power to the hated Angelitic Church. During League meetings, her allies do not get to know the jaded, pleasure-seeking hedonist she is at the bottom of her heart; instead they find themselves facing a determined, resolute politician.

isabella of cordova

Aristocrat 3/Fighter 1; Medium-size humanoid (1.6m tall); HD 1d10+3d8+8; 31 HP; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd: 9m; AC 23 (+3 Dex, +5 AC Modifier, +5 Masterwork Polymer Breastplate); Atk +5 melee (1d6+1 [18-20; x2] masterwork rapier) or +7 ranged (1d10 [x3] masterwork pistol); Sv Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +8, Diplomacy +14, Knowledge (Religion) +5, Knowledge (Technology) +9, Repair +8, Ride +5, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6, Swim+8.

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Firearms), Quick-Draw, Point-blank Shot, Precise Shot.

Languages: Common, Latin, Spanish – can read and write all the aforementioned languages.

At the tender age of 14, Isabella of Cordoba discovered the lost hoard of her ancestor Jorge in a hiding-place in the woods close to her hometown. This discovery has brought immense resources of pre-Flood technology into the hands of the Cordovisian Diadoche house, bolstering its power to the present day. One of the last official functions of her elderly father was to offer part of the rediscovered weapons to the Angelitic Church during its Second Crusade on the strengthened Dreamseed. After the Consistory in *Roma Æterna* answered with a haughty letter of refusal which was saturated with perfidious threats of carrying out a pogrom on technology in Cordova, Isabella and Enrique knew that those people would never listen to reason.

Since both recognized the Dreamseed as an enormous menace, they started to oppose the spawn of the Lord of the Flies with military means themselves. 23-year-old Isabella waged a successful private war on the horrible insect demons, which eventually purged the Dreamseed from the entire region of Andalusia, expanding Cordova's sphere of influence at the same time. Many painters and other artists persecuted by the church because of political agitation (see **Chapter Two: Urbi et Orbi**, "Art, Kitsch and Heresy") found refuge from their pious oppressors in Andalusia. To express their gratitude, many of them paint portraits of the beautiful young Diadoche which caters to Isabella's vanity, of course. She collects all these works of art in her private residence, a mansion beyond the gates of Cordova. The walls of her chambers are plastered with such souvenirs. When a servant once accidentally dropped and damaged one of these paintings while cleaning up her chambers, Isabella did not hesitate to have the unfortunate man flogged to death. Such acts of meaningless brutality occur ever so often when her personal vanity is offended.

Only a week after entering her office, the young Diadoche personally led a unit of her elite guard to banish those few representatives of the church from Cordova her father had tolerated as a sign of his good will and continued readiness for further negotiations. Due to her foresight and especially because of her skills in leadership, the entire city state was free of Angelites of any kind after merely five days.

Currently, Isabella of Cordova is visiting Vienna where she confers with the Raguelite Thariel who has defected to the Urbanis League.

Appearance: A typical Iberian woman, Isabella has dark brown eyes and jet black hair which falls down to her waist unrestrained. The only flaw in her beauty is a barely perceptible limp she gained from an injury she suffered while fighting the Dreamseed. Isabella of Cordova is not fond of state attire; instead she prefers to wear her pre-Flood armor made of a material called "polymer" – which is attributed with magical qualities – as often as possible.

Nature: Because of her extravagant lifestyle as well as due to her radical political views, Isabella numbers among the worst nightmares of the Angelitic Church. Unfortunately, her essentially likeable character is tainted with a noticeable dose of sadism. But no one in all of Andalusia questions her authority – Isabella of Cordova is accustomed to unhesitating obedience.

helder – the heretic

Hanns Helder, theologian and Heretic, was born in Basel on the 19th of March in 2600. After the death of his parents in an accident, he was raised in a Ramielite monastery and started a career as a theologian. He became a novice with 15, a Monach with 18. His acquaintance with the miserably poor, often not even nominally pious country dwellers of the remote mountain villages of Switzerland made the young Pater question some of the basic principles of the Angelitic Church. He particularly resented how he himself was favored above the mountain villagers simply by not being illiterate. He took offense at the suppression of literacy skills by the hands of his Mater Ecclesia. His doctoral dissertation written in 2627, "Alphabetization as a Missionary Tool", reflected this notion.

This dissertation led him into conflict with the archconservative Johannes of Gemmingen (see above) for the first time during a theological congress in the Austrian city of Innsbruck. Johannes valued the young cleric's intellectual capabilities, but he had read the latter's controversial writings and tried in vain to prevent Helder's promotion as one of the dissertation's assayers. This argument was only the first in a long series of disputes between the two scholars.

As soon as 2632, Helder was appointed to the Gabrieliticum at Tübingen as an ordinary for

Fundamental Theology where the young innovator *ex cathedra* continued to promote the alphabetization of the masses. In spite of his hotly debated views, he was promoted to the rank of chancellor of the institute for Angelitic research in 2635 as a reward for his brilliant writings on other topics. The Swiss headed the institute until 2650, turning it into a subversive center for the general alphabetization of the populace by subtle means in the course of these 15 years. During this time, he gave countless courses as a guest lecturer in many Angelitic institutions all over Europe, promoting his ideas. Moreover, his sermons as well as his research gained him numerous academic decorations and honorary titles.

Everything changed in 2650, though: Helder's old opponent Johannes of Gemmingen finally had gained the power he needed to put an end to Helder's activities after Johannes had been ordained as one of the Cardinals of the Consistory; in Rome. And he did so very thoroughly: Not only Helder's status as professor was revoked and his institute for Angelitic research closed, Johannes also set the reactionary Michaelite Inquisitor Karolus on Helder's trail. In the climate of rivalry between Gabrielites and Michaelites predominant during those years, the elderly Prelate was more than happy to take action against the prominent theologian. Karolus had Helder taken into custody when the latter returned from teaching the son of a Diadoche how to read – a serious crime – and carried him off to *Roma Æterna* where Helder was tortured at length.

Eventually, the theologian managed to escape under unknown circumstances. The only established fact is that Prelate Karolus suffered a stroke he never fully recovered from. He swore bloody vengeance on his nemesis and is currently hunting the Heretic all across Europe. Helder has been on the move ever since, never staying in the same place for more than 48 hours and preaching alphabetization with renewed zeal. Meanwhile, his flaming speeches have adopted a more radical, anti-church tone...

Appearance: Despite his meanwhile advanced age, Helder remains an interesting man. His limbs are long, sinewy and well-muscled, and each of his movements speaks of his physical prowess. His face is nearly perfectly shaped, but wrinkled with lines brought about by age and sorrow. His mien is always determined by a skeptically wrinkled brow and an examining gaze from narrowed eyes, through which he sees the world with the eyes of a scholar examining insects under a looking-glass. Often, the persecuted Heretic literally stares at the people he talks to.

His smooth, black hair which is shot through with many silver strands falls well down to his shoulders. Numerous scars from his torture during his imprisonment at *Roma Æterna* cover his back. They are a grim reminder to Helder which goals the Angelitic Church truly harbors, even though its members incessantly preach charity. He could hide another ugly scar on his cheek beneath a beard, but Helder shaves especially carefully ever since he is on the run and wears the scar like a hard-won trophy. Another of Helder's remarkable features is his full, booming voice, honed in countless sermons.

Nature: Once the Angelitic Church meant everything to Hanns Helder and he was a fervent missionary. Rejection and persecution have not turned him into a zealot who agitates wholeheartedly against his former spiritual home, as could be expected. He has rather reached the personal, rational conclusion that the Holy Angelitic Church is the root of all evil in this world; with the cold, clinical determination of a surgeon diagnosing a tumor, Helder has decided that he has to work towards the eradication of this evil. Consequently evaluating the matter, he has settled on the Pontifex Maximus as the most important symbolic figure of this religion – and now he wants to see Petrus Secundus dead. To achieve this end, he is currently looking for appropriate allies. If you want to use Helder as a storyteller character, keep in mind that he lays out his plans with a cool head and razor-sharp logics. There is nothing worse than him: a religious man who has decided to kill out of apparently righteous motivation.

helder

Expert 7; Medium-size humanoid (1.68m tall); HD 7d6+7; 35 HP; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Iniative); Spd: 9m; AC 16 (+3 Dex, +2 AC Modifier, +1 padded armor); Atk +5 melee (1d6 [x2] quarterstaff); Sv Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +13, Craft (Scribe) +13, Diplomacy +17, Disguise +15, Hide +13, Listen+10, Move Silently +11, Perform +13, Swim +3

Feats: Heroic, Improved Iniative, Iron Will, Mimic.

Languages: Common, Latin, Greek, German - can read and write all the aforementioned languages

wittgenstein

Wittgenstein – adventurous, avaricious and born in Southern Westphalia – should have become part of the church. As the only son of an impoverished family of landed nobles, the Grimriders should have carried him off to the Gabrielite Himmel in Nuremberg.

But Wittgenstein caught sight of the approaching Band. The village at the foothills of the mountain where the modest residence of his family stood paid no heed to his warnings – the boy had always been considered as fanciful and imaginative, and so the villagers only laughed at him. He decided to take his fate into his own

hands and fled to the local woods. Since he was used to a certain degree of wealth, it does not come as a surprise that young Wittgenstein soon decided to leave the forests to join treasure hunts into the outer regions of Brandland zones. Wittgenstein joined the expedition of the merchant Garloui who was looking all over Europe for brave men and women he could hire; the merchant had taken the idea of establishing a permanent outpost for Brandland treasure hunters near Nice into his head. This outpost should be as close to the Brandland of the Mediterranean Inferno as possible. The expedition itself was a failure, but Wittgenstein's extraordinary courage caught Garloui's attention. His bravery and his commitment also made him famous among several other merchants as well as Junklords along the Mediterranean coast which were always in need of capable men for missions of all kind, and soon the services of the young mercenary were literally sought after – but his final choice fell upon an extremely unusual prospect.

He had heard that the Grimriders were so enraged of their failure that they had slain his parents. Filled with hatred towards the church's mercenaries, Wittgenstein therefore went on a mission on behalf of a young widow from a French coastal village who bade him to rescue her son who

wittgenstein

Fighter 5/Rogue 8; Medium-size humanoid (1.98m tall); HD 5d10+8d6+42; 102 HP; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Iniative); Spd: 9m; AC 24 (+3 Dex, +9 AC Modifier, +2 Masterwork leather armor); Atk +14/+14/+9/+4 melee (1d6+6 [x2] unarmed attack) or +14/+9/+4 ranged (1d10 [x3] pistol); Special: Sneak Attack +4d6, Uncanny Dodge (retains Dex bonus and cannot be flanked), evasion. Sv Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +5; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills: Acrobatics +13, Appraise +6, Balance +10, Bluff +5, Climb +14, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +7, Handle Animals +4, Hide+15, Intimidate +10, Intuit Direction +7, Jump +11, Listen +13, Move Silently +12, Repair +15, Ride +13, Search +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +10, Swim+10, Use Rope +8.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms), Improved Unarmed Combat, Power Attack, Two-weapon fighting, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike), Weapon Specialization (unarmed strike).

Languages: Common, Latin, dialect of the Nuremberg region – can read and write all the aforementioned languages.

had been carried off by the Grimriders. He succeeded and was able to save the boy before he could be taken to the Raguelite Himmel at Mont Salvage; the price he had to pay was the loss of one his eyes. This grave injury has not exactly helped to ease the anger he harbors towards the church. Meanwhile, his reputation – which is based on numerous stories about all kinds of adventures – paints a picture of him that is larger than life, but Wittgenstein can live with this glorification for two reasons. First, he does not shoot his mouth off with the name he has gained, even though the black leather patch covering his eye has become a sort of trademark or telltale sign. Secondly, it cannot hurt if he is generally well-respected wherever he goes, for doing so keeps many potential foes at bay.

Appearance: Wittgenstein is extraordinarily tall. He measures in at almost 2 meters and always keeps a military-like, straight-backed stance. His large hands are exceptionally skilled in the use of swords and pistols alike. He never shaves, which – coupled with his long hair, weathered skin and dark eye – lends him a certain rustic charm. The black leather patch covering his missing left eye further enhances this impression. He often wears gray or black and feels most comfortable in clothes of a paramilitary style. He feels like half a person when not wearing his shabby, long, black leather coat. Due to the way Wittgenstein earns a living, he can change his whole appearance in accordance with the mission he is on (except for the patch, of course). He hates the Angelitic Church; nevertheless, he wears a Gabrielite symbol underneath his clothing because his mother gave it to him as a confirmation gift and it is the only memento of his murdered parents.

Nature: Almost nothing disturbs Wittgenstein's equanimity; in his opinion, calmness is the key to any success. He thoroughly contemplates any situation before taking action; he never follows the advice of others blindly without considering them carefully beforehand. His instincts and his skills have earned him a certain renown, and he is not planning to risk this reputation by acting imprudently. On the other hand, he seldom wastes time on retrospective pondering or idleness; Wittgenstein is like a long distance runner – he keeps his mouth shut and keeps going. Only the loss of his eye is a deeply rooted pain he still has not overcome..

Gianni Elio

Rogue 11; Medium-size humanoid (1.68m tall); HD 11d6+22; 63 HP; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd: 9m.; AC 20 (+3 Dex, +7 AC Modifier); Atk +10/+5 melee (1d4+1 + poison [x3] punching dagger) or +11/+6 ranged (1d4 + poison [19-20; x2] masterwork hand-crossbow); Special: Sneak Attack +6d6, Uncanny Dodge (retains Dex bonus and cannot be flanked, +1 against traps), evasion; Sv Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills: Appraise +13, Balance +10, Bluff +11, Concentration +4, Demolitions +13, Diplomacy +19, Disguise +6, Forgery +10, Gather Information +6, Hide +10, Innuendo +10, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (Cult of the Black Consecration) +11, Knowledge (Religion) +9, Listen +10, Move Silently +14, Repair +7, Ride +13, Search +10, Sense Motive +15, Spot +12, Swim +5, Tumble +13.

Dark *Potestates:** Ash to Ash +10, Judgment Day +14 [usable on his followers], The Voice +13, Like a Thief in the Night +10.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack.

Languages: Common, Latin, Italian dialect, Spanish dialect, English - can read and write all the aforementioned languages

* Gianni is certainly not an Engel, but his connection to the Lord of the Flies grants him access to certain perverted abilities, which are reminiscent of the *Potestates* of Engel.

Gianni Elio – the tempted

Despite his Italian sounding name and residing in *Roma Æterna*, Gianni Elio is in no way "born in Rome and has never left the Eternal City," as he is fond of claiming. Rather, he received the name of Aleandro Moravia upon his baptism in Barcelona. He is a typical example of many city dwellers: corrupted to the bone, having meddled with the Lord of the Flies and his sinful brood in their boundless hedonism. These so-called Tempted turn away from the Lord of their own free will and as a reward, the Adversary invests them with demonic gifts, at least this is what they claim.

When Elio arrived in the Holy City about ten years ago, he founded the Cult of Black Consecrations shortly after having taken on his new identity. He still is the cult's undisputed leader. This cult, which places sexual excesses, blood sacrifices and other perversions – including the rape and ritual murder of children – at the forefront, has to remain well hidden, of course, and Gianni ensures secrecy with all due consequences. Unfortunately, the measures he takes are sometimes a little too drastic – a few months ago he blew up one of the secret gathering places of the cult to forestall an impending Templar investigation: without any consideration for his five fellow cultists still in the building. Actually, Gianni Elio stays in *Roma Æterna* to undermine the power of Pontifex Maximus Petrus Secundus on behalf of his abominable master.

Before young Aleandro Moravia came into contact with the veneration of the Lord of the Flies, he was a ministrant at the Sagrada Familia, the famous cathedral which was built by an eccentric architect by the name of Antonio Gaudì and was spared from being swallowed by the waves of the Second Flood. But then, the tall young man who had always shown slightly... strange tastes met likeminded souls and turned his back to Angelitic faith at the age of 16. From then on, his spiritual longing was satisfied in the dark cult of the Lord of the Flies. With every new step of initiation, Moravia became more inhumane and ruthless, and the shy ministrant from a distant past has turned into a cruel, cold man who is ready to commit any atrocity imaginable.

In Barcelona, he saw a form of government in which an enlightened Diadoche ruled the city who nevertheless gave the Angelitic Church considerable leeway and acted rather godly himself. Aleandro Moravia started to actively oppose this coalition, and soon the fragile peace between the secular and the spiritual powers of Barcelona was severely threatened. Aleandro reveled in this "powder keg waiting to explode" atmosphere and started to commit a series of bestial murders. He left evidence at the scenes of his crimes which pointed towards the Diadoche's vicinity. The sad result of his plan – the execution of which took about a year and a half – were ten missing children from Barcelona; only a few of their body parts were found, generally scattered over the vast area of the Diadoche's palace.

When the Templars felt that they had collected enough evidence against the ruling family, Moravia further raised their ire by slaughtering eleven Monachs with the help of several of his brothers in faith; they arranged the bodies like cattle from the slaughter in the cold-storage chamber of the palace where the horrified Templars found them the next morning during a surprise search of the residence. Unfortunately, Aleandro Moravia was observed sneaking into the castle with his accomplices the night before, pulling a large tilt-cart. The clash between clerical and Diadoche power Aleandro had hoped for did not come to pass, and the murder of the eleven clerics was hushed up. Church and Diadoche were looking feverishly for a mad murderer they had only a vague description of. And soon, everything pointed to Aleandro Moravia as the killer.

During this stage of the investigation, though, one night a thin, masked creature some 2 meters tall paid Moravia a visit. With a voice only distantly human and in barely comprehensible Common, it suggested that Alaendro should better move to *Roma Æterna* "to the greater glory of the Lord of the Flies and to refine his arts of corruption even further." For some reasons, his actions – even though they had been unsuccessful in the end – flattered those beings Aleandro Moravia now worshipped. The decision fell into other hands, when Prelate Karolus arrived at Barcelona, a feared Michaelite Inquisitor who had earned the reputation of being able to solve any mysterious crime imaginable. It took Karolus merely ten days to work through the files of the case, draw his conclusion and sentence Moravia to burn at the stake in absence of the culprit. Thus, the Tempted fled his hometown.

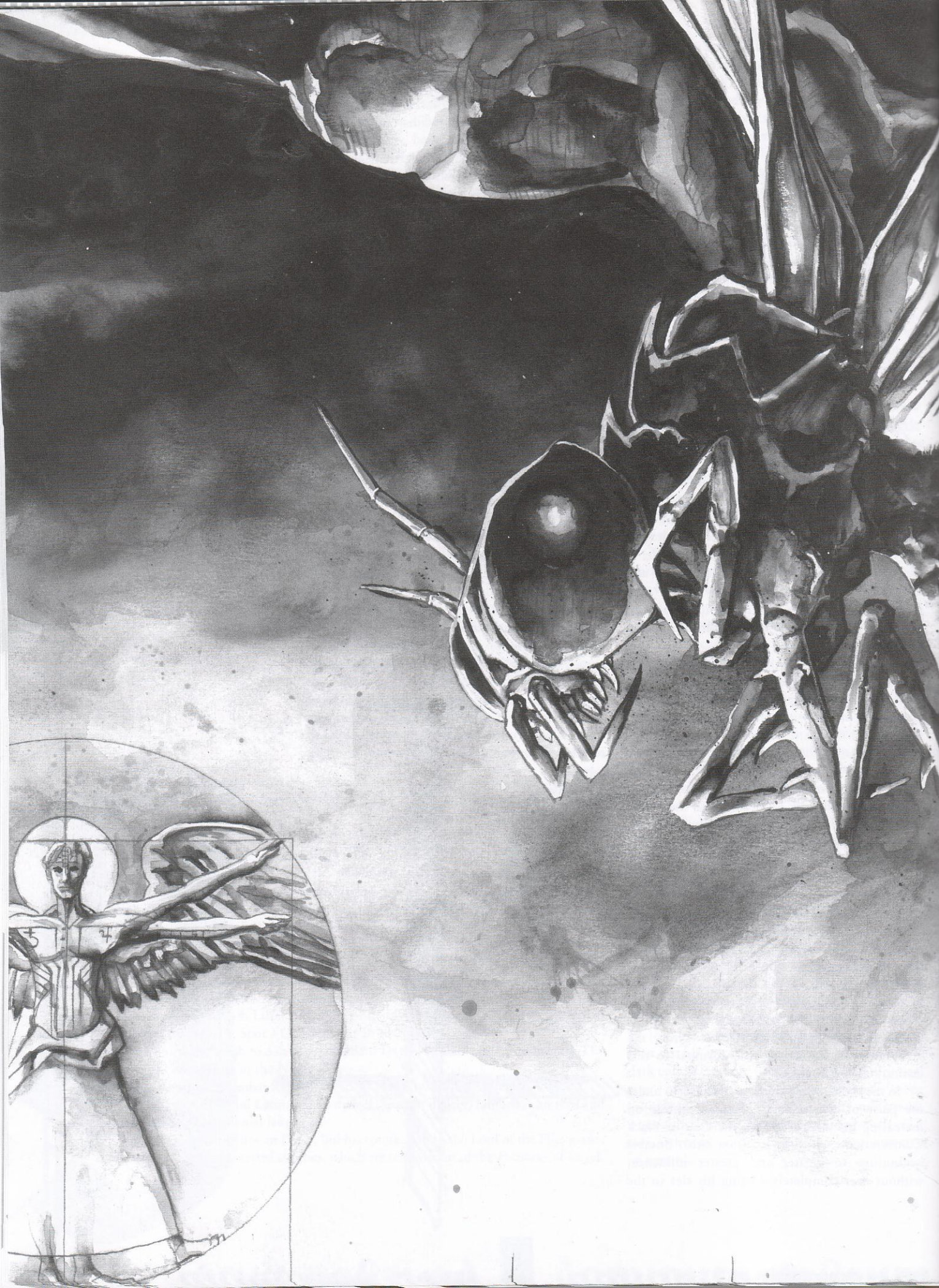
Arriving in *Roma Æterna*, Moravia changed his name to Gianni Elio and began to study his archenemy, the Inquisition. For a while, the Tempted even worked as an informant to this institution's lower ranks.

In the course of the last four years, Elio – under the guise of a merchant – focused mainly on increasing his wealth and on the Cult of Black Consecrations, which he led from rather humble beginnings to greater and greater influence, without ever completely cutting his ties to the Inquisition. Even though his contact with the upper ten thousand of the Eternal City has refined his manners to a certain degree, he is still a brutal, boorish man without polish. He is oblivious to the fact that some members of the Holy Inquisition have grown suspicious of him.

On the other hand, he is extremely skilled at saving face and ruthlessly betrays minor figures from the ranks of his own cult to the enemy, in order to keep the hated judges of faith interested in his person. Since Karolus has returned to *Roma Æterna* after long travels – severely handicapped because of a stroke he recently suffered – Gianni Elio can feel the Inquisitor's gaze upon him even from afar. Prelate Karolus has sworn to put an end to the numerous cults at the heart of the Eternal City, and so it is only a question of time before he meets again with his old enemy from Iberia. Gianni Elio is fully aware of this impending clash. He watches the Prelate closely, contemplating whether he should flee or whether he should get rid of the old man as soon as things turn ugly.

Appearance: Gianni Elio is an ugly, coarse man; his coldness and mercilessness are written on his face. Even though he is quite tall and athletically built, his smirking face with the perpetual grin is simply repulsive. Despite all his acquaintances among the upper class of the Holy City, his etiquette leaves much to be desired. He tries to cover up all his flaws with refined clothes – he has money to burn.

Nature: Gianni Elio is a Tempted to the bottom of his heart who has joined the Lord of the Flies out of his own free will; he revels in his power and his special gifts his master has granted him in return. He is constantly looking for new thrills, pleasures he has never partaken from and heights (or gulfs) of decadence. He enjoys nothing more than the unconditional subservience of others – he likes to see people crawl at his feet.



dreamseed

The demonic insect spawn of the Lord of the Flies is found in all sizes and forms. If you ignore the drastically different sizes, most of the creatures of the Dreamseed are reminiscent of grossly mutated insects, be they wasp, ants or dragonflies. But all these beasts are often equipped with unholy traits that clearly mark them as unnatural - some are able to breathe fire upon unsuspecting enemies, while others have potent acid for blood.

The **Dreamseed** sourcebook for **Engel** will offer further insight on these servants of the Lord of the Flies, but nonetheless we want to present two of the minor species of the Dreamseed here; these are more reminiscent of animals rather than demons due to their appearance and behavior - if you want to confront your players with larger beasts that might even grow to the size of whales or even airships, we would suggest you take these as examples and create your own larger beasts.

tracery-scarab

Tiny Dreamseed

Hit Dice:	1d10+1 (6 hp)
Initiative:	+1 (Dex)
Speed:	4.5m, fly 9m (Average)
AC:	16 (+4 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural)
Attacks:	Bite +4
Damage:	1d3-1
Face/Reach:	30cm x 30cm / 0m
Special Attacks:	Fire-spray
Special Qualities:	Blind-sight, Dreamseed
Saves:	Fort+3, Ref+3, Will -1
Abilities:	Str 8, Dex 13, Con13, Int 2, Wis 8, Cha 7
Skills:	Spot +3
Feats:	Flyby Attack, Improved Grab, Weapon Finesse (Bite)
Climate/Terrain:	Temperate and warm plains, hills, mountains and woods
Organization:	Solitary, Brood (2-6), Mating Swarm (4 - 16)
Challenge Rating:	1
Advancement:	2 -3 HD (tiny)

tracery-scarab

Despite its rather puny size, the tracery-scarab is a very impressive Dreamseed creature. These tiny insect-demons of about 20cm in length and 15cm in width will surely stay in the memory of anyone unfortunate enough to encounter them, even though facing one of them is not necessarily as dangerous as facing some of their larger brethren. This lasting impression primarily results from its impressive appearance: the shining-green carapace of the little beasts is reminiscent of the structure and grain of the Gothic tracery found on the Himmel and larger cathedrals of the Angelitic Church (especially the Engel, of course). The spurs and thorns on its head seem to be the smallest of towers and turrets, while the wing-plates seem to have been designed with the rosettes in mind which are often found in the arches of Angelitic Churches.

Merely a century ago, tracery-scarabs were found only in the deepest, most isolated forests of southern Europe, but since the return of the mutated Dreamseed, their ecosystem seems to have expanded dramatically. Time and again, they have proven to be extremely adaptable and they pose a danger for many travelers due to their sharp pincers and claws.

Unlike many other scarabs, tracery-scarabs are exclusively carnivorous, and although they do consume carrion, they are not above hunting their own prey. Luckily for the population of Europe, these insects only leave a fixed hunting ground when prey becomes too scarce – though such an event sometimes occurs rather quickly, as the scarabs know no restraint and mindlessly wallow in gluttony whenever the opportunity arises. This truly unholy indulgence leaves entire areas devoid of all fauna.

Combat: The pincers of the tracery-scarab are exceedingly strong. Prey - generally animals not much larger than the scarab itself - is overthrown with a surprisingly quick and strong push and then pinned down by the weight of the beetle, which

then proceeds to cut its live prey apart. If the prey tries to defend itself, the beetle cuts off extremities, until the resistance subsides. Larger prey is only attacked by swarms that descend upon the unfortunate being and begin to tear it apart at once. When a tracery-scarab considers prey either inedible (which seldom occurs) or too dangerous, it can spray a highly flammable substance, which ignites on contact with the air, from its mouth to baffle and harm its enemy and then escape in the ensuing confusion. This can be especially dangerous when a group of beetles decides to flee. This defensive weapon is exclusively used as a means to escape, never to attack.

Blind-sight: Tracery-scarabs can perceive their environment even in complete darkness up to 60 feet away. If its back-shell is covered completely, it loses this ability and is considered blinded.

Fire-spray: Tracery-scarabs can spray a cone of fire from their mouths; it has a range of about 4.5m Enemies hit by the fire spray take 2d6 of fire damage, although a successful Reflex save (DC 11) negates this damage. It takes about 10 minutes until the respective glands have recovered and sufficiently refilled to allow for another fire-spray after it was used. On any round that the tracery-scarab uses its fire-spray, it may not bite.

Dreamseed: Immune to mind-influencing effects.

tainter-dragonflies

Tainter-dragonflies are insects 1.2m to 1.8m in length with shimmering green bodies similar to common dragonflies, but their heads betray their demonic heritage: instead of pincers, which would be of tremendous size, Tainter-dragonflies possess a gigantic maw more suited to a giant shark than an insect. When agitated, their wings emit an unnerving deep drone, and a whole swarm of these beasts can frighten even the best-trained animals.

Tainter-dragoflies are a robust and adaptable form of Dreamseed; they attack animals and humans alike to use the paralyzed beasts as both gestation chambers and food-reservoirs for their offspring. During the winter months, these monstrosities dig hills over themselves and hibernate. They emerge from these hills in the second week of spring to spread their reign of terror.

While the majority of the swarm consists of female drones, the largest of the beasts is always a queen which tries to attract the smaller males for mating right after rising from hibernation. After the mating has taken place, the swarm begins to search for suitable prey to serve as food or breeding-grounds.

The swarm often flies ahead of the queen, and a small escort flies up to 30kilometers ahead to attack prey and paralyze it. Tainter-dragonflies are equipped with a highly developed sense of smell which seems to be mainly focused on blood, though – the queen can find paralyzed and wounded victims of the swarm over distances which can exceed 15 kilometers.

After locating prey, the queen pierces the skin and lays up to 20 eggs into the chest cavity of its prey. The larvae that hatch from these eggs after a mere few hours feast on the flesh for about a week, after which they cocoon themselves. One week later, the cocoon breaks open and releases a new swarm of those beasts, which are only about 10 cm long directly after hatching from the cocoon; nothing remains of their former host but a heap of bones. The young tainter-dragonflies quickly grow and reach their final size after about half a year. It is unclear what life expectancy these beasts have.

Originally hailing from the mangrove swamps of the Mediterranean coast, these Dreamseed creatures have proven to be surprisingly adaptable to altering climate and terrain. The swarms have steadily but slowly moved north, and some have even reached Scandinavia. This strange behavior, which some claim seems to be directed by an unseen hand, troubles the local authorities greatly.

Combat: Tainter-dragonflies use advance scouts that direct the rest of the swarm and the queen to potential prey; their dexterity and quickness allows them to attack their prey quickly, overwhelming it by sheer force of numbers. While some members of the swarm try to occupy enemies by attacking with their powerful jaws, the rest tries to paralyze their enemies with their stingers. Prone and unmoving enemies are stung for a few more times and then left alone, so the queen may lay her eggs when she arrives.

Vulnerable to Cold: Tainter Dragonflies take double damage from cold-based attacks if they fail the saving throw.

Poisonous Stinger: Tainter-dragonflies inject a debilitating poison with their tail stingers. Initial and secondary damage is 2 points of temporary Dexterity damage; a Fortitude save (DC 12) negates this.

Dreamseed: Immune to mind-influencing effects.

tainter-dragonflies

Large Dreamseed

Hit Dice:	2d10+2 (13 hp)
Initiative:	+4 (Dex)
Speed:	9m, fly 21m (Perfect)
AC:	15 (-1 size,+4 Dex, +2 natural)
Attacks:	Bite +4 or Stinger +4
Damage:	Bite 1d8 or stinger 1d6+2 and poison
Face/Reach:	4.5m x 9m /4.5m
Special Attacks:	Poison stinger
Special Qualities:	Vulnerable to cold, Dreamseed
Saves:	Fort+3, Ref+7, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 14, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 11
Skills:	Hide +1, Listen +6, Spot +6, Search +5, Wilderness Lore +6
Feats:	Flyby Attack, Track, Weapon Finesse (Bite, Stinger)
Climate/Terrain:	Temperate and warm lands
Organization:	Solitary, Swarm of the Queen (3 - 9), Hunting Swarm (7 - 50)
Challenge Rating:	2
Advancement:	3 - 6 HD (large)

libellus regularum secundus

intro

The young Engel had to be supported by two Monachs. Ingram was unsure what to think about the questionable honor of being one of the few to ever see an Engel in such a state of weakness. It unsettled him to see the frail boy advance so slowly together with the Monachs – too weak to lift the mighty, white wings that were trailing behind him, hanging limply from his back.

He wondered what the other Monachs felt while working down here, deep in the bowels of the Himmel, but he would never be able to exchange his thoughts with them. Even before he and the others had taken up this most holy of assignments, they all had taken vows of silence - and as a sign of their devotion, they had cut their own tongues out. He remembered the pain which quickly subsided due to the advanced drugs other Monachs had administered. And although their eternal silence was thus ensured, they were prisoners of the Church and would probably never leave the Himmel again.

The other Baptists brought the Engel to the machine. They were just affixing the clamps to his legs and arms. Around his head, chest and waist larger rings had already been fixed.

The drugged boy was now firmly in the grip of the machine. Ingram did not have to give them any signs or help; they knew all the moves and adjustments by heart, just as he did.

• • •

Ingram could not remember how often he had calibrated the machine, how often he had stared at the flickering displays, how often he had evaluated the diagrams and numbers that represented the body suspended beneath the machine. Even the brain waves were recorded and evaluated by the machine, but the memories and thoughts were hidden – the ancient machine could not discern the Engel's nature and being. Ingram was unsure if he could stand to really know the young beings that were brought before him, for the procedure he had to subject them to was too alien and strange.

The analysis and calibration was finished – all values were within the tolerance range. If everything proceeded as planned, Ingram did not have much to do while the Baptism was in process. He just had to watch and flip a switch or pull a lever at certain points. If something did not work as planned, he would probably be powerless to do anything anyway. Goose bumps appeared on his skin, when he remembered the last time something had not worked out as planned.

It was quite a while ago, but the images were all too clear in his mind. The Engel must have been a little too old for the Baptism as he had only barely been able to fit into the machine. The first calibration had been a failure, but the second calibration had been perfect; all values had been very close to the ideal numbers he had been taught

us: the machine

so long ago. But during the tattooing itself, their mistakes had become all too evident – the second calibration had been wrong as well, horribly wrong. The machine had not only calculated a dose much too high, it had also injected the ink much too deeply. The young Engel had lost his life even before the machine had finished the tattoo half-way through – the netting had grown too quickly, without paying heed to organs, muscles, skin and bones and then it had hardened too much, too soon. Ingram had watched how pain had flashed across the face and body of the Engel; the sedative must have worn off much too early, not only flawing the measurements of the machine but also dooming the whole process.

• • •

Ingram gave the naked, limp body within the machine one last check. This time it would work, he was certain of it. He flipped the plastic-switch and started the Baptism.

Buzzing, the machine came to life. With a jerk, the small body was lifted up to the machine. His wings were spread. The robotic arms with their glistening needles moved to precise locations and pushed long needles at certain, specially calculated points into the skin on body, wings and head. The Engel groaned, his eyelids seemed to jitter, but he did not awake from his deep sleep. In the next few hours, the omnipotence of the Lord would flow under his skin and into the whole of his body and when he would finally awake from his waking-sleep, he would have become a true Engel of the Angelitic Church. His gifts would be enhanced and solidified into supernatural abilities; he would be one of the few beings able to brave the Lord of the Flies and all of his minions.

Silently, Ingram prayed.

chapter 1

Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

– Isaiah 28; 16

one: foundations

or,

of the basics

of storytelling games

Engel is, as mentioned before, a role-playing game, or – to introduce another diversification in this genre – a storytelling game. All those familiar with these terms can, if they prefer, jump ahead to the next chapter. Those who are unfamiliar with this concept may wish to continue reading.

what is a roleplaying game?

Even though this question has been answered more than once in many other games, we would like to answer it as well for all those unfamiliar with the genre.

Roleplaying games are defined primarily by creative freedom and the nonexistence of goals for the game in a classic and easily definable sense; this entails that there is no clear-cut winner at the end of a role-playing session, of course – no prizes can or should be handed out.

Let us begin with the basics: in roleplaying games the players guide their characters, fictional beings created with a framework of rules, through adventures, which are commonly called stories, scenes, quests or a variety of other names. The adventures arise from the wishes and actions of the characters (and therewith the players) on the one hand, and the ideas and directions of the director of the game on the other hand – this director is not in charge of only one character but rather portrays all the other beings and situations

the characters encounter within the fictional game world. The term used for these directors vary widely from game to game as well – some call them storytellers, game masters, masters of so-and-so or a variety of other names. (For a more detailed look at the relationship of storyteller and characters, please see **Chapter Two: Sermon**).

In many regards, roleplaying games are similar to improvisational theater and "Murder Mystery Nights" which seem to crop up ever more often. The players personify their characters and then act out and describe the actions their characters take, not to mention emulating their manners of speaking, and speak for them. All this is rather open; as long as it fits their character concept, the players may describe and say whatever they like in regards to their character. Some actions require some sort of test, though, as it is not a given that a character will succeed at a given task; for this, rules are required which shall be described and outlined in this part of the book.

Roleplaying games generally have three main aspects, which shall be described as a basis for the work. Although this is of course an over-simplification and we are well-aware that the lines between these aspects may blur at times, we still consider them well-worth mentioning:

- Rules – everything that is judged with numbers and the system of the game.
- Simulation – everything that neutrally describes and simulates the background, history and appearance of the fictional world.
- Drama – the emotional component of the game: the inner workings of the characters, the development and relations of the characters towards each other and all the other beings inhabiting the fictional world.

Every roleplaying game has different amounts of these three basic ingredients, all depending on the focus of the game. After establishing this basic idea, we can go on to the next important question.

what is a storytelling game?

Storytelling games are first of all a part of the roleplaying genre and **Engel** is one of them. They always focus on *drama* but acknowledge that *simulation* can be useful, with the *rules* perhaps being the least important (though not unimportant) aspect of the game. These games are focused on playing, and winning is of even less importance than in other roleplaying games – the way is the goal. In the foreground of the game is always the story and not – as it is common in many other games – the rules and traits.

If you have never taken part in a storytelling game, these ideas might be a little confusing for you. But almost everybody has taken part in one of these games in one form or another – storytelling games are actually Cowboys and Indians with more rules, more acting, more references to modern literature and much less live action. After getting used to this idea, some of our readers might notice that this notion is not as weird and alien as it sounds at first, but appears to be strangely familiar. Together with other players and the storyteller, you will be able to tell, to live, to suffer, to experience stories of victory and defeat, of dreams, prose and power, of life, love and death. Tales of mystery, danger, heroics and dark, fascinating enemies – scenarios from the darkest corner of the subconscious mind. With tools from your childhood, **Engel** will lead you into an unexplainable, mysterious world – experienced by beings much alike to children. In effect, this is a game about children – but certainly not a children's game. And in the center of it all are you and the other players.

Adventures from **Engel** will hopefully be able to stimulate your imagination much more easily than the most perfectly done stage play or movie. Adults are much more in need of ways into the realms of mystery and myth, and we want to provide you with such a way – we want to allow you to take on the mask and character of another being. Looking through the eyes of this character and powered by your own imagination, you will walk through another world – alien and yet familiar. Your characters will be mirrors to yourself and the world, but still allow you to be someone else. You will not only imagine the adventures, but you will be able to experience them firsthand by being the protagonist of the story. You are director and actor in one person.

But unlike the games of childhood, storytelling games do need rules at times – the complexities of the rules might vary, but the story is always more important than the rules themselves. They only serve to introduce chance and thus danger and luck – sometimes dialogues and descriptions are not enough, and adding these elements can make the story even more exciting and unpredictable.

Storytelling games, as we understand them, truly flourish with only a handful or even fewer players – especially in **Engel**, where there should generally be five players; the storyteller should consider it well if he wants to allow more players to partake in it. But this is your game, so feel free to let your imagination run wild and enjoy it.

why use these rules?

First of all let us restate it: If you do not like the rules, change them or even ignore them altogether. Rules are not a necessity, but they can add spice and give the impression of fairness and equality – which can be very important for the players.

This book provides you with a simple and easily learned system of rules.This framework functions from a simple mechanism that is both quite intuitive and that can simulate a variety of situations with but small adjustments. You will also only need very few dies for it - a 4-sided die, a 6-sided die, an 8-sided die, a 10-sided die, a 12-sided die and a 20-sided dice. With these six dice, your imagination and some numbers you will be able to simulate whole worlds – but we will give you the details later on.

Intro

Rufus Andreani had only walked through this passage once before. Then, about 15 years ago, he had only been 10 years old and his mother had taken him for the *Dies Liberorum*, the Day of the Children, at the Vatican. Even though it had been a voyage full of wonders to him at that point, he could remember well that meeting the Pontifex Maximus had scared him. And even now, he could feel a sense of unease within him, despite being here on personal invitation of the Pontifex Maximus.

"Be blessed, children. And once you have become adults, undertake the pilgrimage to Roma Æterna with your families, just as your mothers and fathers have done. I will welcome you. Do so and you shall be doubly blessed."

Those were the only words which Petrus Secundus had said in their native tongue fifteen years ago. Rufus could remember him well, standing down there, a boy in a long, white shirt which even touched the ground. Rufus did not have a family – he had joined the Monachs. Not the second blessing had brought him here, but the secret of eternal youth which had been granted to the Pontifex Maximus. Some claimed that he had been reigning for over 400 years and had not aged a single day. A thought that had been on Rufus' mind ever since he had beheld the seemingly youthful Petrus Secundus so many years ago.

His memory had not deceived him in the past years; the hall seemed to be unchanged. The bowls of fire set high in the walls still flickered and beneath them, partially hidden by shadows and he could see Templars, all hand-chosen for the personal guard of the head of the Angelitic Church. Although he could not see their faces, he was sure that they watched him constantly. Fifteen years ago, thousands of children had pushed and pulled through this hallway, but all of them kept their distance from those mighty warriors. And despite the uncomfortable closeness and smell of all the children, he had considered himself lucky to have them with him; if he would have been alone, he would surely have died from fright. Today, he was well aware of the fact that the hallway had been constructed to intimidate visitors, but even despite this knowledge, he could not help feeling a little frightened.

The hall ended in front of a mighty doorway – firmly closed by a seemingly insurmountable gate. In front of the two softly gleaming door-wings two sentinels were stationed – they were strangely pale and wore brilliant, golden suits of armor. Tentatively, he stepped towards them and presented them with the yellowed parchment-scroll which had been given to him by the scribe of the

u s : pontifex maximus

Pontifex Maximus so long ago. Again, the writing seemed to do wonders. Without a word, the sentinels stepped aside and opened the gate which swung open without a sound.

Compared to the hall-way, the throne-room was brightly lit - the ceiling seemed to consist of a single, gigantic window of slightly convexed glass, reminding Rufus of a gigantic looking glass. After his eyes had adjusted to the light, he noticed that nothing seemed to have changed since he had been here fifteen years ago. The wide steps constructed of the finest white marble which led to the simple throne were still devoid of any decorations or ornamentations. The throne still appeared to be the only piece of furniture in the gigantic hall. At first, Rufus was surprised to see that other people were in the throne-room with him, but then he realized that someone like the Pontifex could of course not afford to welcome him alone. He was unsure how many of them there were – were it a few dozen or even a few hundred? The size of the hall made any estimations impossible – they appeared to be lost within their small groups.

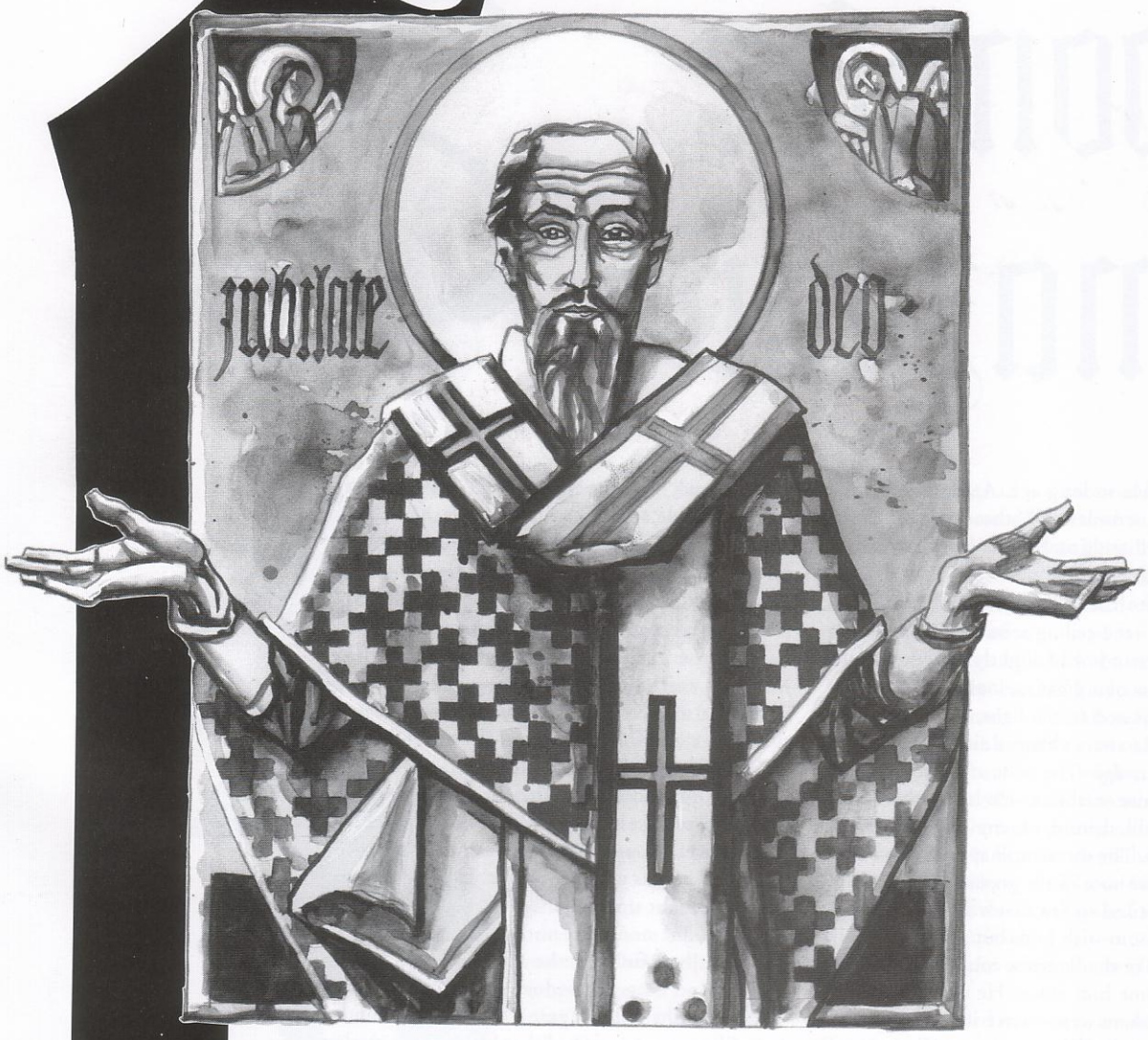
Rufus walked down the steps leading into the room and then sat down on the last but one of the steps. The white marble was cold and smooth, the edges worn down by thousands of feet who had come for centuries to see the Pontifex Maximus.

After all visitors had arrived, the sentinels stepped inside and closed the gates behind them. Then the Sarielites stepped forward, seemingly out of nowhere. Their voices filled the room with pure sound after they had reached their preordained positions; the unimposing door behind the throne opened and the Pontifex Maximus entered the room.

Rufus shivered. It was him, the slender boy in the long, white shirt. Pontifex Maximus Secundus stood still in front of his throne and nodded towards his audience. When he sat down, the Sarielites suddenly went quiet and he began to preach. Even though Rufus had learned Latin in the last years, he was unable to follow the sermon – he was too caught up in the sight of the child before him. He did not even notice that the Pontifex Maximus had finished the sermon and began to address and bless individual groups of pilgrims. Only when the brilliant gaze of the Petrus Secundus found his own, he noticed that he had been staring with an open mouth.

"Rufus Andreani! How nice of you to come here."

chapter 1



I will praise thee,
o lord, with my whole heart; i will
show forth all thy marvelous works.
- psalms 9; 1

two:

Sermon

or, of the art of storytelling

Before we get to the chapters with the actual rules, before the first die is rolled, a few things have to be mentioned. Let us imagine a few candles, a slightly dark room – you sitting on one side of the table while we sit on the other side. You are telling us a story about dignity, courage and faith. We tell you about the strengths and weaknesses of our Engel. You can tell us about the dangers which we will have to face, about the horrors of the Dreamseed which await us and about the victories which we will have achieved if we succeed at defeating them. You design unexpected twists of the story, the seeming inconsistencies, the adverseness and we will reveal how our Engel will face and conquer them all. You will decide how our story ends, but we will decide how we arrive at that final goal. The more work you, our storyteller, invests into our mutual way, the more freedom and enjoyment will we both gain from it.

This shall be the subject of this chapter: the exciting endeavor of storytelling as a mutual act.

the functions of a storyteller

To be a storyteller is not always easy – as **Engel** is much more similar to free acting than to classic board-games (unlike some other games), the storyteller is like a director, rather than an umpire. Additionally, he describes the events in the game, be they caused or only witnessed by the players; he has the final say within the game and is also responsible of keeping up the drama of the game and even introduce other elements (sometimes even comedy!). Always remember: a roleplaying game can only ever be as good as its players. Storyteller and players are not adversaries but accomplices in creating the story. But nonetheless, the storyteller is the final arbiter who has to gather the loose strands, give them structure and finally weave them into the wonderful tapestry of a story.

He has to personify something else than the players – he is the rest of the world. This book can only offer you advise and hints – the only thing you will truly need is your imagination. We want to introduce you to some of the duties, functions and joys of the storyteller in the following paragraphs.

the functions of the players

In **Engel**, the players take on the role of angels. They act on the stage which has been prepared by the storyteller. This requires preparation and can be tedious at times, but do not fear: enter freely into any doors and gate-ways your storyteller opens up for you. Feel sorrow and joy, valor and fear, as this will make the game even more fun and add spice to an already interesting mix.

What the Engel are will be unknown to you as well at first: are they truly harbingers of the holy word? Are they creations of the Angelitic Church – born of prayer to bring new hope? Or are they even servants of the Lord of Flies himself, perverted by a corrupt and ubiquitous faith? You decide the actions of your Engel and you are free to strive against your fate whatever it may be; like the protagonist of a novel you will brave adventures as no mortal man has ever seen and like the co-author of said novel, you will be able to influence the world which has been prepared for you – every word and action will change the fate of Europe and beyond.

Being a player also means taking part in a constant giving and taking – the interaction between character and game world. Go back to the days of your childhood and let the storyteller and his story do the rest.

the characters

It cannot be said too often: even though the characters may suffer from the decisions of the storyteller, he is not the enemy of the players – he is the author of the drama, a guide through the story, and odysseys would be all too boring if the heroes would not have to face threats and setbacks at times.

The characters move within the bounds and guidelines that the storyteller has set, but within these, he is free to do as he likes. We have chosen this rather simple system, as the main focus should not be on the set of statistics or values which are noted on the character-sheets but rather on the thoughts and emotions which make up the character in the mind of his player. The newly created Engel has a name, a face, a soul and internal conflicts which are more important than anything written down on pieces of paper.

peculiarities of Engel

Engel is our quintessence of almost 20 years of roleplaying. Countless sessions of playing have brought us a lot of bad ideas and concepts, but also quite a number of good thoughts and ideas. We have tried to exclude all the things from **Engel** which have always been a nuisance to us – as we do not consider creativity to be the art of hiding your sources, by basing our work on some ideas from other works and adapting them to our uses, we do not want to infringe on the works of others but rather want to express our acknowledgement of the great work of others.

Although we do favor our way of playing, we are certainly not of the opinion of having created the best possible roleplaying game – everyone has to find a way of playing and a game suited to him or her. There is no "universally best possible roleplaying game"; we just consider **Engel** to be the best possible combination of different aspects of playing which are most dear to the authors.

Compared to other games, the cohesion of the characters, the group dynamics and cooperation are at the center of **Engel**. But there will still be moments when the players will consider to have achieved victory or suffered defeat. Such moments can be the fulfillment of personal goals, the joint victory or the solving of difficult puzzles – on the other hand, the death of a loyal comrade, facing supposedly insurmountable odds or even the violation of trust between friends or even lovers can mean loss or defeat.

Engel faces the players with a double challenge: on the one hand, their characters have to take part in events on a cosmic scale and will change and influence these events at key junctures, while on the other they will have to portray the split minds of adolescent beings unsure of their nature and destiny but equipped with superhuman powers and responsibilities to match.

Even though **Engel** was designed with a certain timeline with fixed events in mind, which will be detailed to the storyteller in this book as well as in future supplements, there is an almost infinite number of changes to run adventures with small or no significance to the events unfolding in the rest of the world. Storytellers will put their own emphasis on the aspects of the dramatic frame, but to preserve the secrets and allow the players to discover these secrets on their own, he should refrain from ever telling them outright what takes place behind the scenes. But while they follow up the leads and clues found within the world, the characters can accompany a church dignitary, bring urgent missives to faraway cloisters, find the thief who has been taking invaluable books from the library of a Himmel or even act as investigators

bent on catching the mysterious killer haunting a small village on the edge of the Black Forest. Such interludes do not interfere with the main plot, but allow the storyteller to adjust his game to the tastes of the players. During all these events, the visual impression of the game should remain untouched, though, as it will gain further importance later on in the plotline.

Indeed, there is no "end" in the literal sense, just breaks between playing sessions. **Engel** is truly a never-ending story… borders are not set by the game but by the power of imagination.

the structure of adventures and chronicles

Four central questions need to be considered when storytelling and for all of them good and fitting answers have to be found before the characters can begin your story:

- What kind of story will I tell?
- What mood do I want to invoke?
- Where does the action take place?
- What obstacles will the characters have to overcome?

plot: what kind of story will i tell?

Put bluntly, this section focuses on the theme of your chronicle. It is the framework of your story, the grain of sand, so to speak, around which the pearl that is to become your chronicle will form, just like inside an oyster. Each of your adventures – and more so, each of your chronicles – can be centered on several themes at the same time, of course. Your chronicle can interwine these individual themes in a single plot line and if done the right way, it should address all senses of your players. It is of the utmost importance for a storyteller to know which theme he wants to use in his chronicle before play starts, since without a central theme the whole effort will end in a meandering but unfocused and thus meaningless game. In other words: the theme is the message you want to convey to your players.

mood: what kind of atmosphere will permeate the game?

Mood directly derives from the chosen theme. It is boring to tick off one task after the other in the course of an adventure, as though it were some shopping list – mood is the emotional glue that keeps everything together and turns your idea of a chronicle into true story. Mood is the emotional counterpart to theme, so to speak, and it allows the players to contribute emotional elements to the story in addition to purely plot-oriented contributions. At the same time, mood is a powerful tool of storytelling, especially when the storyteller takes the extra effort to create an individual emotional background for every single character in addition to an overall mood – while one of the characters celebrates a personal victory, another one could grow depressed because he was not able to achieve that victory. A third character could be enraged, and a fourth one is just turning into a plaything of his hormones. And all this can happen while the general mood of the adventure – the emotional plot, if you will – grows more and more menacing. We all know that our feelings often do not match the situation we are in…

Example:

Stephen has decided to run a rather short chronicle with only two themes. The theme "how a fellowship of Engel fights against the Dreamseed" is at the forefront; the subtler second theme are the slowly returning memories of the Engel, their growing doubts and their increasing alienation from the ultimate goals of the Angelitic Church. The first theme can be transported quite easily with a series of action scenes; the second one will be harder to handle, though. Stephen can convey it by confronting the Engel with seemingly banal scenes of daily life whenever they are on their way to a mission or whenever they return to their home monastery. The banal scenes should remind the Engel of events in their lives prior to their Baptism, resulting in strange deja-vu. *Stephen describes to the players how a worker in a street café by the side of the road is served spicy fish soup – and the soup's aroma is associated by one of the Engel with family dinners from his former life. During one of the action scenes mentioned above, one of the Engel wipes the hair of a wounded comrade from the latter's brow… just like the wounded Engel's mother always did during his childhood illnesses. Later, both Engel are reprimanded by a high-ranking Monach for their unwholesome lack of chastity. This will certainly lead to grudges. How can the Monach dare to criticize such an innocent, compassionate gesture? Thus, Stephen has woven all the themes he wanted to use – battle, memories and alienation – into a whole, and the themes will take hold in the experiences of his players.*

setting: where does it all take place?

The setting of an adventure or chronicle directly takes up the mood and even enhances it under the best of circumstances. Describing how a place looks, smells and sounds can evoke emotional responses in the players almost as intense as the atmospheric details mentioned above. Furthermore, the storyteller characters populating the setting also play a crucial role in the effect produced by the setting itself.

Example:

Stephen tries to evoke the mood he has settled on for his already mentioned chronicle in two ways. First, he makes use of certain tricks and props that may sound trivial in the beginning but which can enhance the overall mood of a game in uncomparable ways (see below, Tools). Moreover, he employs several techniques of storytelling. He adds emotional elements to the scenes described above: the gentle, warm feeling of euphoria deep inside the Gabrielite when the fragile Raphaelite wipes the hair from his bloody brow… the stench of fear emanating from two figures in the alleyway when the Engel ask them if they have seen a suspected Heretic… the feeling of purity when the rain washes the blood from the wounds of the exhausted fellowship after the last battle against two giant Dreamseed creatures… and finally the stifling fashion in which insect powder, candle tallow and the sour stench of the old Prelate mingle to create a repulsive whole when the old man reprimands the fellowship bitterly in the end. You will see that Stephen will capture the players' attention far more easily and thoroughly than a simple description of the facts at hand would have allowed him to…

Example:

Let us stay in the scene already sketched above in which the Engel give a report of their mission and are reprimanded harshly by the Prelate. Think about what a difference it makes if Stephen makes this scene take place in the silent, dark dungeon of a monastery the fellowship is unfamiliar with where there are only the creepy old man reeking of death and disease as well as a handful of unwashed, resolute mercenaries present, compared to the effect of a conversation at the fellowship's home Himmel in the well-known reception hall of the Engel's beloved Ab Guillaumes, with the first birds of spring twittering outside the opened windows.

drama: what kind of obstacles do i present my players with?

When storytelling **Engel**, you are trading in a valuable good: you are working with the imagination, fears, dreams and wishes of your players which they have invested their characters with. Make it hard for them, but also give them a fair chance of success. Reward teamwork as well as a well-done portrayal of the individual characters. And above all: Be courageous. **Engel** is set in a dark, neo-medieval world. Do not be afraid of controversial topics. Rub the players' noses in these topics. Hit them where it hurts. Setbacks, painful experiences, loss and temporary defeat are good things – but always offer your players a fair chance of success. Avoid logical twists and turns simply to get the chronicle or adventure going exactly the way you wanted it to. Believe in yourself and your players. Working together, you will live unique, breathtaking stories.

# of problem players and problems in the game

We use the term "problem players" for those players who stand in the way of a smooth-running game for any reasons whatsoever. Especially in long running chronicles or among players who have played together for a long time, there will sooner or later of course come a time when somebody is dissatisfied with something; this is not the kind of problem we are talking about here, however. Those things will happen in the best of families – or roleplaying groups – but usually such incidents tend to take care of themselves on their own. In the following paragraphs, we will be talking about people whose behavior or point of view pose a lasting problem. When we use the term problem players, we are talking about exactly that group of persons.

In most cases, it is rather difficult to deal with those kind of fellow players. Of course, you could hold the point of view that such spoilsports are simply kicked out of your game – but we would like to make things a littler harder on us (and you). Simply because of the fact that the person causing a problem belongs to your group of players, we assume that she could contribute to the game in a helpful and interesting way. Therefore, it is quite important how you handle such a conflict.

In any case, there is no point in just wanting to sit out approaching conflicts. Do not wait until it is too late; take action as soon as the dark clouds start brewing at the horizon. In most cases, these problems are caused by a player who places the "authenticity" he feels necessary to portray his character in an appropriate way above all other concerns, playing the role of his character to the hilt without any considerations towards possible collateral damage. Most of the time, an open, serious conversation with the player at such an early point is enough to avoid more trouble. So do not be afraid to approach one of your players and talk about the problems you see coming – this is one of your privileges as a storyteller. Try to stay calm under any circumstances, even when the player shows some drastic emotional responses, feels attacked or pulls out the big guns to defend himself. Of course, anyone is totally convinced that he would never cause such problems. In the end, he has only done what others have encouraged him to do: he has portrayed his character in a consistent manner, and now he does not want to hear anything about a lack of consideration, an inability to adapt to the troupe's wishes and bad teamwork. Keep in mind that no one will really like what you have to say, even though you may be right.

Nevertheless, it is up to you – the storyteller – to deal with such matters, so we will say it again: Do not be afraid to address problems, but always stay consistent. And if it really comes to pass that there is nothing more to say, without you and the problem player having reached an agreement, you may actually have to go separate ways in order not to endanger your friendship – maybe the player will fare better in another group and your chronicle returns to more peaceful ways.

A last hint: There has to be an end to everything. Put more bluntly: Do not feel obliged to keep running a chronicle for troupes which regularly cause you ulcers. Leave them behind and start looking for other players. Roleplaying games are spare time treats, and there should be no place for frustration or coercion.

cinematic descriptions

Our society is marked by literal flood of TV commercials and Hollywood movies. However, this section is not supposed to be an essay on the pros and cons of new media, but rather offer a little food for thought. The force of imagination is hampered by computer games and other novelties in such a drastic way – especially in younger people – that you as a storyteller might find it difficult to weather a night of gaming without resorting to some classic comparisons here and there. You can use this circumstance, however, to make the game more vivacious and palpable to your players.

Just imagine the plot you have planned for your story scene by scene and try to think of appropriate scenes you have seen in a movie. It is of much help when these scenes are from rather popular movies to guarantee a certain level of recognition among your players. But you should never replace a description of the scene from your side by simply naming the title of a movie. If you go like "Well, the battle with the Dreamseed proceeds just like in that flick with the aliens in which a woman knocks out hundreds of those beasties to save the life of a single girl," this will only encourage your players to rant about the best scenes of that movie and why some scenes were better than others for the next hour or so, essentially bringing the gaming action to a grinding halt.

Be subtle and rigorous at the same time. Try to describe the scene from the movie from your point of view, in your own words. If the players get a hint of what you are doing, they might start to discuss their suspicions. This should not prevent you from proceeding with the scene, and if an all too colorful description of a scene actually makes one of your players shout "I have seen that movie, I know what kind of movie it is, and my favorite scene is when the...", you can either take short break from the game, continue in the hope that the player will calm down in a moment or you can tell him that you are very glad that he knows the movie, but that you nevertheless want to keep playing.

Cinematic descriptions also mean something else. It is possible to make use of the storytelling techniques employed by the directors of some movies and incorporate these techniques into your own game. This practice tends to lend more diversity to your personal style of storytelling. A short example will give you an impression of the advantages of using both aspects of cinematic descriptions.

In a short scene within the game, scenes from different movies and cinematic descriptions form a perfect amalgam of storytelling techniques. If you like to you can take the effort of trying to find out which scenes were intermixed here, but it really is of no importance. Of course, it can be very exhausting for the storyteller to maintain this intensity over a long time, but if you use these techniques carefully and sparingly, you will send cold shivers of fascination and horror down the spines of your players. Be careful though not to take the action away from your players, they are as much part of the game as you are. Rather encourage your players to colorfully describe important actions their characters take, therewith allowing them to employ cinematic descriptions for their characters as well; this interaction between storytellers and characters can weave the most interesting and fascinating stories.

Storyteller: The battlefield on the hills of what used to be Jerusalem echoes with the sound of fighting and the songs of the Sarielites who have raised their thundering voices to the greater glory of the Lord on their silver floating platform. Aadoniel – the only one of you who has not been wounded yet – is surrounded by overpowering forces of Heretics which slowly advance on him.

Player 3 (as Aadoniel): I attack them!

Storyteller: Aadoniel grows strangely still all of a sudden and closes his eyes. His body stiffens. The world around seems to hold its breath as the Gabrielite takes to the air with a single beat of his mighty wings. The first ray of the morning sun is reflected on the blade of his smothered flaming sword. Nothing moves. Somewhere, a cock crows, and its call seems to bring new life to the scene. Aadoniel's left foot smashes into the face of the mercenary in front of him with a sickening crunch of bones. At the edge of the battlefield three white doves ascend to the skies, as a rain of dark-red blood from the dying warrior's mouth hits the ground.

epics and stories

All players are discouraged of reading the following sections. Do a favor to your storyteller and yourself alike by only reading those parts of the book your storyteller has allowed you to.

There are countless stories waiting to be played in the world described in **Engel**, and certainly you have had dozens of ideas for plots and chronicles while reading the setting chapters. To all of those who have some problems in imagining how to run an adventure in such a complex world setting with its numerous aspects and rather abstract philosophies like those of the Angelitic Church, the following few paragraphs should come in handy.

Similarly to most other world settings in the roleplaying genre, it is not enough to look at this fictional world from a single point of view. There is far more to consider than superficialities; rather, you will have to acknowledge a lot of proceedings which take place behind the scenes. If you are planning for a longer stay in the universe of **Engel**, forging numerous adventures into chronicle, it is wise to spend some thoughts on how you want the chronicle to end in advance. There is no point in designing an extensive battle scenario right at the beginning of your Chronicle which can never be outdone in regards to sheer size and importance to the world, only to notice a little further along the way that all the following adventures will pale compared to the epic story at the beginning of your exploits. On the other hand, it is comparably dull to lose oneself in essentially meaningless banalities

and leaving the true potential of the game lying fallow. A few tips and tricks on designing interesting adventures are presented in the following which will hopefully help get a game of **Engel** going for inexperienced and veteran storytellers alike.

the prelude

Nothing much can give an inexperienced or new player a better impression of the game's setting than a well-done prelude. If you have already read the preceding chapters of this book, you surely have noticed that the Engel are no angels in the mythological sense. Your players, however, are not necessarily aware of that fact – and even if your players know the truth, the characters they embody are oblivious to it in any case. Use this fact to your advantage. Make your players – or their characters, at least – believe that they are truly the heavenly messengers of the Lord sent unto the earth to protect mankind from the Lord of the Flies and his evil Dreamseed. The longer you manage to keep this misconception alive, the better for your story. Those children who are now populating the skies above Europe's remaining mainland and the seas have been robbed of all their memories concerning their former lives.

Give your players the opportunity to experience how their characters remember episodes from their former lives in dreams and sudden flashbacks, not knowing what to make of these flashbacks. Do not answer any of the players' questions regarding these occurrences and give them the impression that all the other Engel around them apparently suffer from the same problems but that it somehow seems forbidden to talk about them. Explain the workings of Angelite society to the players by using your own storyteller characters, if necessary. After having played the Engel's prelude from their awakening in their individual Himmel – confused and with as yet no fully developed wings – up to their Consecration and forming of a fellowship at *Roma Æterna*, you can decide upon which kind of adventure you want to play next with your novice fellowship.

In upcoming supplements for **Engel**, the history of the world and the European people may take drastic twists and turns. Nevertheless, you should not refrain from laying your own claim to the game world, for example determining the exact course of the Infernos as well as the borders of Brandland or coming up with your own timeline for the Angelitic world. We merely wanted to reveal to you that there is far more to **Engel** than what has been shown in this core rulebook; some deeper meanings and crucial events are waiting to be made public. The following ideas for adventures serve to lead your players – and therewith their characters – to reach a certain conclusion after a while. You could also use only part of the official storyline presented in future publications, but we would advise that eventually the characters will be drawn to the other side. Not to the Dreamseed's side, though, but to the side of those who want to put an end to the machinations of the Angelitic Church – those Engel who have realized that they were being used. Do not ever tell this directly to the players' faces, but rather guide them to this conclusion with a gentle hand.

escort

One of the first missions of a fellowship could be to accompany a more or less influential legate from *Roma Æterna* to a remote region where he is supposed to help bringing a delegation of Heretics back into the arms of the Holy Mother Church. During these negotiations, unexpected events forcing the characters to take action could occur. Perhaps the Heretics take the Legate as a hostage and demand all kinds of possible and impossible things from the Engel; or maybe the Legate gets panicky and makes off overnight, so that the Engel have to explain to the Heretics the next morning why there is no Legate present.

the village of no return

The fellowship is sent to a nearby village by the Ab of their Himmel to search for another fellowship which has been sent there previously and vanished without a trace. The missing fellowship should have investigated the disappearance of large numbers of cattle from the village and never returned. When the heroes arrive at the village, a terrifying experience awaits them. With the exception of a few peasants at the brink of madness uttering meaningless ravings, the whole village is abandoned. Neither animals nor mortals nor the missing fellowship are

life and death in roleplaying games

We would like to state some basic things here. Most of you who already have some experience in this hobby know these situations when a horrible misinterpretation of the current situation, a fumbled die roll or simply bad luck is to blame for the sudden death of a valued character. Most storytellers also know that such situations can get awfully ugly when it comes to hurt feelings from the side of the player. Although we partially do agree with this notion, we would also like to take the opportunity and offer a different alternative. More easily said than done, some of you might say. Everbody wants to win, achieve his goals, be the winner of the race, the champion of the game. But who says that winners always have to live happily ever after?

Let us take a look at real life for a moment. How many famous heroes do you know? And how many of them died for their cause? In whose honor are more ballads sung and more stories written and whom do we remember more fondly than the departed champions? We do not want to delve into metaphysics here, but one thing is for certain: a heroic, glorious death within a story, an adventure or a chronicle can be a roleplaying experience as impressive and memorable as solving a puzzle or defeating an enemy. Thus, players and storytellers alike should always keep this option in mind:

The death of a character does not have to be the end of the game, but it can rather create space for a wonderful new beginning. But no death is taken lightly and should therefore always serve a purpose and have meaning.

anywhere to be found, except for a single Engel who has been impaled on a gigantic thorn rising from the ground at the edge of the village. While searching the village for clues, the Engel quickly realize that the thorn belongs to a gargantuan Dreamseed creature beneath the ground which is digesting its latest meal.

bug hunt

In this episode, the characters can show teamwork and fighting prowess. Together with other fellowships, the heroes are sent out to fight Dreamseed creatures marauding in the vicinity of the Engel's home monastery – an excellent opportunity to incorporate some suspense and action into your game.

fire

This time, the characters are on their way home from a mission – maybe they were hunting Dreamseed (see above, **Bug Hunt**) – and witness the "birth" of a new Inferno. Of course, this is not one of the giant specimens, but even a small Inferno with a radius of about two or three kilometers is more than enough to profoundly scare the heroes. It might well be that cultists roam the vicinity of the awakening Inferno, attracted here by their master, the Lord of the Flies, waiting to be slain by the heroes or anticipating that new Dreamseed creatures might arise from the budding Inferno. In any case, information about the eruption of a new Inferno is invaluable to the Angelitic Church.

heretics

On one of their patrols through neighboring regions, the fellowship is told about a secret cult of Heretics. During the following weeks, they try to find out where the cultists' hideout is located, what their ultimate goals are and who are their enemies. Are these Heretics truly Tempted or rather a group of people whose only crime is to hold views and opinions that clash with the dogma of the Angelitic Church?

forbidden technology

The Ab of a Himmel asks the fellowship to return a pre-Flood artifact, which would otherwise fall into the hands of the Dreamseed, to the safety offered by the Angelitic Church. In the course of their mission, it becomes obvious that the Engel ordered to the heroes' side knows more than he lets on and that the lost artifact is a hideous weapon the Angelitic Church wants to claim for itself to wield it against anyone who questions the Angelites' claim to power.

evil revelations

During a patrol flight, the Engel discover the ruins of a large city which has been abandoned for years, only offering refuge to small bands of nomads. On closer inspection, the characters learn that the ruins hide much more, though. They find halls full of books and maps, and with the help of the Ramielite of their fellowship the characters uncover ancient lore which could well bring about the end of the Angelitic Church.

friend or foe?

A Heretic who escaped from the dungeons of the Angelitic Church turns out to be a reasonable man, possibly leading the Engel away from the Angelitic Church for the right reasons or merely a Tempted wearing the mask of innocence to make the Engel question their loyalty towards their masters.

deserters

Maybe your players would like to turn their backs to the Angelitic Church at some distant point in the future, waging a kind of guerrilla war on their erstwhile Holy Mother. Go ahead, but consider yourself warned. This is a rather drastic and irreversible step for the characters to take. After they have gone AWOL, they will be hunted as Heretics by countless other fellowships; maybe they will never again feel safe for a single minute in their entire lives. Of course, it can be very tempting to play such a group of Fallen Engel, but it is quite hard. Naturally, there has been one or the other fellowship which has walked this stony path before, but their story will be told at a later time.

tools

Engel has been designed as a pen and paper RPG. A copy of this core rulebook, character sheets, paper, pens and the imagination of the players are required to play the game. Moreover, you will need a couple of dice.

Of course, there are a wide range of tools to enhance the mood of the game: candles or other appropriate sources of illumination, background music (for example, **Engel**, a soundtrack to this game by *In the Nursery*), hand-drawn maps and other props. It is far more thrilling when the storyteller hands a real earthen vessel of unknown content to a player whose character has just discovered an ancient amphora, rather than merely describing what the Engel has found. Do not overdo it, though: when props distract the players from the plot, they are more of a hindrance than a useful tool for storytelling.

experience and challenges

Furthermore, we would like to introduce you to two more traits which will be of use to the storyteller in the planning of chronicles and the advancement of characters.

challenge ratings

When designing an adventure or chronicle storytellers will often have to select and design antagonists for their players' characters. These antagonists of course have to provide a challenge for the characters on the one hand, but on the other hand should not outright slay the players' characters when first encountered. For this reason, we use the so-called challenge rating – which could also be called monster level, as its value represents the strength of a given foe. If a being is not a true monster but rather a mortal or Engel character controlled by the storyteller, his or her challenge rating equals the sum of his or her class levels.

Generally speaking, a challenging combat encounter includes one opponent with a challenge rating similar to the average level of the player characters; if it includes more than one opponent of equal levels, add half the number of creatures (rounded up) and add it to the challenge rating to determine the actual challenge rating for such an encounter. When encountering large numbers of creatures, though, you might have to adapt these rules slightly, so beware of swarming the players.

experience

The further one travels and the more adventures the characters encounter, the more experience the characters of the players will collect, therewith gaining levels and become more adept in their abilities.

To simulate this advancement, **Engel** uses Experience points which are awarded at the end of a game session, an adventure or a chronicle. This serves to clearly show what the characters have achieved and learned in the course of the chronicle.

The rewards given in the text below are appropriate to the listed achievements; to adapt them to different character levels you should multiply them with the average level of the group.

At the end of a game session (e.g. an evening of playing) the following rewards should be handed out:

• Being there: 100 XP

Just turning up in time for the session shows commitment which should be rewarded accordingly.

• Good Roleplaying: 100 XP

A player who portrayed his character convincingly and appropriately earns this reward. This is especially true if the player could distinguish between his own knowledge and that of his character very well and therefore chose appropriate but possibly uncomfortable paths of action.

• Learned Something: 100 XP

Have the players describe what they learned; if they can come up with an innovative and interesting lesson taught to their characters in the course of this session, they garner this reward.

At the end of an adventure the following rewards should be handed out:

• Success: 500 XP - 2000 XP

The fellowship has been victorious or at least achieved their goal. Even if they did not achieve a complete victory and eradicated their enemy (which should never be the case, actually), all of the characters will gain this reward, if their actions have advanced the chronicle and story. Depending on the length of the adventure and the grade of success, the storyteller may adapt the award given out within the range mentioned above.

• Great Danger: 250 XP

If one (or all) of the characters faced danger even greater than one could generally expect, but still triumphed over it, or if a character was willing to give life and limb to save his friends or innocents, he will be legible to receive this special award. This reward may be granted posthumously.

• Wits and Intelligence: 100 XP

If the characters or players showed great skill in solving the problems they faced, especially if they chose non-violent but more difficult ways, or came up with especially smart ways to solve a riddle or dilemma which led to a quick conclusion of the adventure, they should receive this additional reward.

Of course, the rewards mentioned above can only be the beginning; feel free to come up with your own categories for awards, but make sure that your characters do not advance too quickly.

intro

Einhardt's eyes narrowed to slits. It would happen any moment now. He nodded curtly, and his Electi formed a wedge and readied their sword lances.

A horn sounded and they dashed down the slope in a tight unit and descended upon the enemy's armored riders. Einhardt noticed at once that their opponents were mercenaries, probably even the backbone of this small army of Tempted. Their suits of armor had been reinforced with the chitin of Dreamseed creatures, and their faces were covered with stiff, pale green leather masks.

Brother Siegfried spearheaded their assault and was the first to make contact with the enemy. The blade of his lance hit the breastplate of mercenary hard, slid along it and finally cut off the man's arm at the shoulder. In a flowing motion, Siegfried brought his weapon around and the blade pierced the neck of his second opponent. The mercenary fell off his horse without making a sound.

The two cavalry units fell upon one another like two animals in a deadly dance of blood and steel. Einhardt knew that he could not help his Electi any further. He had tried to prepare them for the heat of battle in endless training sessions as well as he could. There was nothing he could do for them now. As he unfastened his long, slender war-hammer from the strap at his saddle, he noticed out of the corner of his eye a charging mercenary thrust his spear into Brother Augustinus' shoulder. Though the young Electus grimaced with pain, he regained his composure and used the enemy weapon to outmaneuver the horse of his attacker before beheading the mercenary with a precise

Einhardt's battle

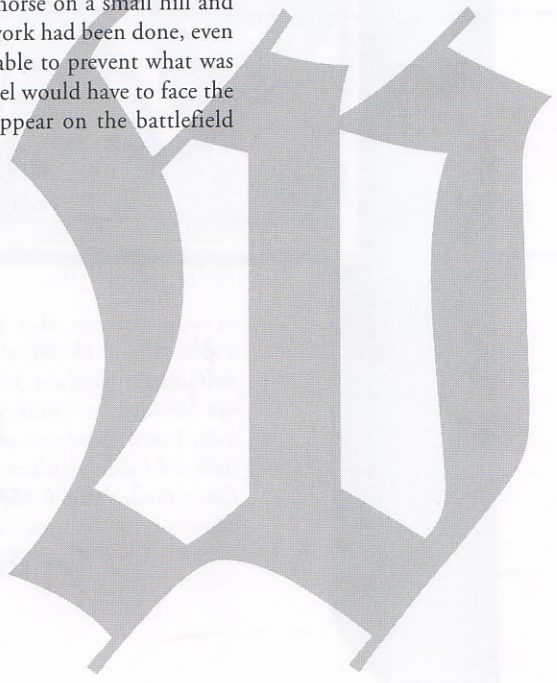
blow with his long sword. Two more enemy warriors appeared and pinned Augustinus to his horse with their spears; the animal reared up whinnying in pain and collapsed, burying its rider under its massive body.

Einhardt did not think of vengeance. Except for the pounding rhythm of battle that his heartbeat and the beat of his horse's hooves merged into, his head was empty. His weapon seemed to possess a will of its own and drew a complex pattern of bloodied strokes into the air.

But then, something changed.

Almost imperceptibly, the light shifted and the stench of burned flesh and sulfuric smoke spread. Even though the changes were almost too subtle to notice, Einhardt knew their meaning. He had been right all along. His hammer slammed through the breastplate of another charging enemy, but the steady rhythm had been broken. He shot a quick glance to the palisade and noticed at once the huge pillar of smoke which rotated ever faster over the enemy camp's center. He turned his steed around and looked for his Electi. Most of them had cleverly taken position at the edge of the battle proper, just like he had ordered them to. He gave them a sign with his hand and they prepared for a retreat.

Einhardt stopped his horse on a small hill and searched the skies. Their work had been done, even though they had been unable to prevent what was about to happen. The Engel would have to face the new enemy who would appear on the battlefield any moment now.



chapter

And hilkiah the high priest said unto shaphan the scribe, i have found the book of the law in the house of the lord. and hilkiah gave the book to shaphan, and he read it.

- 2 kings 22: 8

three:

alea iacta est

or,

of dice which determine victory and defeat.

This chapter includes everything necessary to play Engel.

dice and how to use them

Engel uses the following dice and abbreviation in regards to their use:

d4	four sided die
d6	six sided die
d8	eight sided die
d10	ten sided die
d12	twelve sided die
d20	twenty sided die
d%	percentile dice

Die rolls are expressed in the following format: [Number of dice] die type [+/- modifiers]

Example: 3d6+2 means: "Roll 3 six sided dice. Add the result of all the three dice together and finally add 2."

rounding fractions

Generally if you wind up with a fraction, round down, even if the fraction is one-half or larger. *Exception:* Certain rolls, such as damage and hit points, have a minimum of 1 and will never go below one regardless of modifiers.

multiplying

Sometimes a special rule requires you to multiply a number or a die roll. As long as only a single multiplier is involved, multiply the number normally. When two or more multipliers are involved, you will have to combine them into a single multiple. Each extra multiple adds 1 less than its value to the first multiple. Thus, a double (x2) and another double (x2) applied to the same number results in a triple (x3 as 2 + 1 = 3).

basic system for resolving tasks and tests

The rules which are the basis for **Engel** use a standardized system for determining the success or failure of any given task. This system is as follows:

- A single d20 is rolled, modifiers are added to the result which is then compared to the difficulty.
- The Modifiers and Target Number are determined by the complexity and type of the task at hand.
- If the final result of the d20 roll added to the Modifiers equals or exceeds the Target Number, the test is successful. Any other result is a failure.
- A "natural 20" on the die roll is **not** an automatic success. A "natural 1" on the die roll is **not** an automatic failure, although this can be the case in some tests.

abilities

Every character has six basic Abilities:

strength [str]

dexterity [dex]

constitution [con]

intelligence [int]

wisdom [wis]

charisma [cha]

The Score of these Abilities ranges from 0 to infinity (at least theoretically). The result of an 0 in an ability are as follows:

- STR 0 means that the character cannot move at all. He lies helplessly on the ground.
- DEX 0 means that the character cannot move at all. He stands motionless, rigid, and helpless.
- CON 0 means that the character is dead.
- INT 0 means that the character cannot think and is unconscious in a coma like stupor, helpless.
- WIS 0 means that the character is withdrawn into a deep sleep filled with nightmares, helpless.
- CHA 0 means that the character is withdrawn into a catatonic, coma like stupor, helpless.

The score of an ability can never go below 0 – any further reduction does not change the score.

The normal range of humans and Engel alike is 3 (very bad) to 18 (the best of the best) – by using *Potestates* and other modifiers these scores can go above or below this limit though.

Some unnatural beings or constructs may have a score of "none". A score of "none" is not the same as a score of "0". A score of "none" means that the being does not possess the ability at all. The modifier for a score of "none" is +0.

To determine the starting values of a character four six-sided dice are rolled – the worst roll is ignored while the best three are added. This is repeated six times, until 6 values are determined, these maybe freely assigned to one of the attributes.

ability modifiers

Each ability will result in a modifier. The modifier can be calculated by dividing the ability by 2 and subtracting 5.

The resultant modifier is the number added to or subtracted from any die roll which relates to that ability. A positive modifier is called a bonus, and a negative modifier is called a penalty. The chart below indicates these bonuses and penalties.

Ability Score	Modifier
0-1	-5
2-3	-4
4-5	-3
6-7	-2
8-9	-1
10-11	+0
12-13	+1
14-15	+2
16-17	+3
18-19	+4
20-21	+5
etc.	+1 additional at every even number

using abilities

ability checks

Sometimes the character tries to do something to which no specific skill really applies. In these cases, the character makes an ability check. An ability check is the roll of 1d20 plus the appropriate ability modifier. Essentially, the character is making an untrained skill check. The storyteller assigns a Difficulty Class.

strength [str]

Any being that can physically manipulate other objects has at least STR 1. Strength is the raw power of a being. It is a measure of general physical power – his ability to lift, carry or physically damage other beings and objects. In melee Strength adds a bonus or penalty to attack rolls and damage. It is also used to break objects or force down doors.

A being with no Strength score can't exert force, generally because it is unable to move. It will automatically fail all STR checks. If the being is able to attack, it applies its DEX modifier to its base attack instead of a STR modifier.

dexterity [dex]

Any being that can move has at least DEX 1. This ability indicates the physical speed, quickness and dexterity. It allows smooth movement and the use of tools with precision and grace.

A being with no Dexterity score cannot move. If it can act, it applies its INT modifier to initiative checks instead of a DEX modifier. The being fails all Reflex saves and DEX checks.

constitution [con]

Constitution is a measure of the general health and fitness of a being. It determines how long a character or other being can exert himself and how much damage he can suffer. Constitution could also be labeled physical and mental stamina and the ability to carry on despite fatigue, injuries or other hindrances is one of its most important aspects. The CON modifier is added to Fortitude saves and furthermore the modifier multiplied with the level is added to hit points. If a character's Constitution changes enough to alter his or her Constitution modifier, his or her hit points also increase or decrease accordingly at the same time.

Any living being has at least CON 1.

A being with no Constitution is either lacking a physical body or a metabolism. It is immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless the effect works on objects. The being is also immune to ability damage, ability drain, and energy drain, and always fails Constitution checks.

intelligence [int]

Any being that can think, learn, or remember has at least INT 1. Intelligence includes cognition, problem-solving and memory. It does not just represent an intelligence-quotient but rather gives measure of the beings ability to remember and realize seemingly unconnected facts and details as well as combine them into useful and usable structures. Structured thinking is as much part of Intelligence as are the abilities to associate and judge situations, being's and objects. A low value in intelligence does not mean that the character is numb, but rather implies that he thinks in very simple terms and is unable to perceive slight nuances. On the other hand a high value in intelligence does not necessarily make a genius, it just means that a character can quickly recall facts and work with the information. The Intelligence modifier is added to the skill points gained each level. At first level, the number INT modifier also determines the number of bonus languages gained.

A being with no Intelligence score is a robot or similar creation, operating on simple instincts or predetermined instructions. It is immune to all mind-influencing effects (compulsions, holograms, deceptions and morale effects) and automatically fails Intelligence checks.

wisdom [wis]

Any being that can perceive its environment in any fashion has at least WIS 1. Wisdom is the synthesis of active perception of the surrounding and the feelings and impressions of the character. It can require concentration but does not necessarily do so. On the one hand it provides a sensitivity and susceptibility but also measures wits and acting correctly on gut feelings. Wisdom is necessary to excel at tracking, finding traps and information. Characters lacking worries or doubting everything generally lack Wisdom.

Anything with no Wisdom score is no creature at all but rather an object. Anything without a Wisdom also has no Charisma, and vice versa.

charisma [cha]

Any being capable of telling the difference between itself and its surrounding has at least CHA 1. Charisma is not only optical attractiveness but also charm and the ability to naturally influence others. Being shabby or unkempt does not necessarily mean a low Charisma and many leaders seem to exude authority without being especially attractive or beautiful. Characters with high Charisma are a font of inspiration for others, they radiate strength of character and compassion. Others turn to them when in need of comfort and acceptance – much is expected from them. Characters with low Charisma are never well-liked and sometimes even actively shunned by others, regardless of their appearance. They act and talk in exactly the wrong way, thereby alienating others and scaring them away.

Everything lacking Charisma is an object. Anything without Charisma also has no Wisdom, and vice versa.

increasing and decreasing abilities

There is no upper limit for ability increases.

- Poisons, diseases, and other effects can temporarily decrease or harm an ability (temporary ability damage). Ability points lost to this temporary damage heal and therewith return on their own, typically at a rate of 1 point per day per ability.
- Some effects drain abilities, resulting in a permanent loss (permanent ability drain). Points lost this way don't return on their own.
- As a character ages, some ability scores may go up and down while others go down.

When an ability score changes, the modifier associated with that score also changes, such changes can therefore increase or decrease several other traits.

armor class

Every character (and other objects in certain circumstances) have an Armor Class (AC). The base AC for a character or object of medium-size is 10. Bonuses and penalties are applied to this basic Armor Class to reflect the effects of armor, dexterity, etc.

Armor Class is a measure of how difficult it is to hit and do damage to a target.

dexterity modifier

A character's Dexterity-modifier is applied to his Armor Class when he is able to physically react to an attack. Characters lose their Dexterity modifier when they are flat-footed, unaware of an attacker, when they are restrained or otherwise rendered immobile and therewith unable to try to avoid the attack.

ac modifier by class

In **Engel**, every character has an AC modifier determined by his class and level (see below). It represents a dodge bonus dependent on the experience of the character. The more experienced a character is the easier it will be for him to avoid dangers even though his other senses have not yet warned him. The character therefore retains his bonus when surprised, but he will lose it due to being restrained, unconsciousness or unable to move.

size modifier

A being's size grants a standardized Armor Class modifier. It is also easier for small beings to hit larger beings, these therefore gain a bonus to attack, while larger beings get a penalty when attacking smaller objects. The following modifiers are generally included in the statistics of a character or being.

Size	AC/Attack modifier
Fine	+8
Diminutive	+4
Tiny	+2
Small	+1
Medium	0
Large	-1
Huge	-2
Gargantuan	-4
Colossal	-8

adding modifiers

AC modifiers of the same type do not stack with one another; in cases where a character receives two or more bonuses of the same type, apply only the greater modifier. Bonuses of different types do stack. Some common armor bonus types are:

- Armor bonuses
- Dodge bonuses
- Circumstance bonuses

saving throws

A saving throw roll is:
d20 + class and level based bonus to saving throw+ other modifiers due to equipment, active effects, environment, circumstance, etc. + ability modifier vs. difficulty of the Saving Throw

The Saving Throw is successful if the total of the die roll plus all the above mentioned modifiers equals or exceeds the DC.

There are three different kinds of saving throws in **Engel**:

fortitude

These saves measure the ability of a being to stand up to massive physical punishment or attacks against the vitality and health of the being. The Constitution modifier is added to all Fortitude Saving Throws.

reflex

A Reflex save tests the ability of a being to avoid a danger by sheer quickness and reflexes. The Dexterity modifier is added to all Reflex Saving Throws.

will

These saves reflect a being's resistance to mental influence and control. The Wisdom modifier is added to all Will Saving Throws.

difficulty of saving throws

The DC for a save is determined by the effect that triggered the save attempt. Any effect that allows a save will indicate the necessary DC and the effects of succeeding or failing at the save.

hit points

Hit points are a measure of endurance, toughness and luck of the character or being. Every character gains hit points determined by the roll of die which is in turn determined by the class which is increased – the CON modifier is applied to the result of this die roll, a character will always gain at least 1 hit point.

levels

Characters advance in levels. Every time a certain bench-mark of experience points is reached the character will be able to advance his level or even select a new class to advance

in, this seldom occurs in the world of **Engel** though. Most characters stay within the bounds of their profession and only advance to certain prestige-classes later on (which will be detailed in future supplements).

skills

As a character increases in level, he gains skill points with which to increase his ranks in skills. Skills granted by his class are limited to a number of ranks equal to his character level plus 3 (*level +3*). Other skills, referred to as cross-class skills, are limited to half of this amount (*level +3, divided by 2*).

feats

A character gains one feat at first level, and one additional feat at every third level. These feats are in addition to any feats that may be gained from individual classes.

ability increases

Every four levels, the character may permanently increase one Ability to one point. Abilities may be increased above 18 in this manner.

races in Engel

All characters in **Engel** will be humans or Engel, for these two races the following adjustments have to be made:

humans

Humans are of Medium-size and have a base speed of 9m. They gain 4 extra skill points and an extra feat at 1st level. Every level they receive one extra skill point.

The automatic language of a freshly created human is the dialect of his region; possible bonus languages are the following: Common, dialect of other regions, Latin and reading/writing (the latter two are outlawed, however, unless the character is a member of the clergy).

Engel

Engel are of medium-size and have a base speed of 9m and a fly speed of 45m. All Engel receive the feat Fly at 1st level. They also gain access to one of the Engel classes detailed below.

The automatic language of Engel is Latin; possible bonus languages are the following: Common, dialect of local regions as well as the lost tongues (see the languages skill for further details on these languages).

classes

Classes always start with a capital letter to differentiate them from the generic term.

The descriptions of the classes are structured as follows:

Hit Die: The type of Hit Die used by characters of the class determines the number of hit points gained per level.

Class Table: The table below details how a character improves as he or she gains experience levels. Class tables typically include the following:

- *Level:* The character's level in that class.
- *Base Attack Bonus:* The character's base attack bonus and number of attacks.
- *Fort Save:* The base save bonus on Fortitude saving throws. The character's Constitution modifier also applies.
- *Ref Save:* The base save bonus on Reflex saving throws. The character's Dexterity modifier also applies.
- *Will Save:* The base save bonus on Will saving throws. The character's Wisdom modifier also applies.
- *AC Modifier:* All characters begin to develop the ability to unconsciously avoid attacks and dangers. This bonus is retained even when surprised or flat-footed as long as the character is able to move.

Class Skills: The number of skill points the character starts with at 1st level, the number of skill points gained each level thereafter, and the list of class skills.

Class Features: Special characteristics of the class. When applicable, this section also mentions restrictions and disadvantages of the class. Class features commonly include:

advantages of levels

Level	XP	Class Skill Max Rank	Cross-class Skill Max Rank	Feats	Ability Increase
1	0	4	2	+1	-
2	1,000	5	2.5	-	-
3	3,000	6	3	+1	-
4	6,000	7	3.5	-	+1
5	10,000	8	4	-	-
6	15,000	9	4.5	+1	-
7	21,000	10	5	-	-
8	28,000	11	5.5	-	+1
9	36,000	12	6	+1	-
10	45,000	13	6.5	-	-
11	55,000	14	7	-	-
12	66,000	15	7.5	+1	+1
13	78,000	16	8	-	-
14	91,000	17	8.5	-	-
15	105,000	18	9	+1	-
16	120,000	19	9.5	-	+1
17	136,000	20	10	-	-
18	153,000	21	10.5	+1	-
19	171,000	22	11	-	-
20	190,000	23	11.5	-	+1

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Which weapons and armor types the character is proficient with.

Engel-classes also have the following special entries in their class descriptions:

Signum Skills: Every Engel starts with the Signum feat and is therefore able to learn all the *Potestates* listed under this heading.

Sigil Skills: The *Potestates* the Engel can learn and access after gaining the Sigil bonus feat at 3rd level.

Scriptura Skills: The *Potestates* the Engel can learn and access after gaining the Scriptura bonus feat at 5th level.

the Engel classes

For many centuries had the Lord sent his Engel to fight side-by-side with humanity against the Dreamseed. Since those days long past have they faithfully served God's will, acted as his champions upon Earth and organized into the so-called Orders of Engel. In the following you will find classes for these five Orders, these are of course only accessible to Engel, on the down-side faithful Engel must advance in the class of their Order.

michaelites

Michaelites have the following traits:

Abilities: As leaders of the Engel, Charisma is the most important ability for the Michaelites as it determines the reaction of others and influences many of their *Potestates* and skills. Wisdom is also important for many of their skills and *Potestates*. Constitution allows the Michaelite to use his *Potestates* even under stress and in battle as hit points and some key skills are improved by this ability.

Hit Die: d8

skills

Class Skills: The Michaelite's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Dex), Knowledge (Religion) (Int), Knowledge (Tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Read Lips (Int) and Sense Motive (Wis).

Signum Skills: The Michaelite's Signum skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Inner Calm (Wis), Soul of the Fellowship (Wis), Strategic Mind (Int) and The Voice (Cha).

Sigil Skills: The Michaelite's Sigil skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Hand of God (Dex), Corona (Dex), Lord of the Body (Con) and *Tohu Wa Bohu* (Cha).

Scriptura Skills: The Michaelite's Scriptura skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Bolt of Authority (Dex), Omnipotence (Cha) and Outcry (Con).

Michaelites gain (6 + INT modifier) times 4 skill points at first level and 6 + INT modifier every time they increase in the Michaelite class. These skill points are used to purchase and advance the *Potestates* (Signum, Sigil and Scriptura skills) as well.

class abilities

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Michaelite is proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and with light armor and shields.

Signum: At 1st level, the Michaelite gains access to the Signum level of *Potestates* skills.

Sigil: At 3rd level, the Michaelite gains access to the Sigil level of *Potestates* skills.

Scriptura: At 5th level, the Michaelite gains access to the Scriptura level of *Potestates* skills.

michaelite

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus	Special
1st	+0	+2	+2	+2	+3	Signum
2nd	+1	+3	+3	+3	+4	
3rd	+2	+3	+3	+3	+4	Sigil
4th	+3	+4	+4	+4	+5	
5th	+3	+4	+4	+4	+5	Scriptura
6th	+4	+5	+5	+5	+6	
7th	+5	+5	+5	+5	+6	
8th	+6/+1	+6	+6	+6	+6	
9th	+6/+1	+6	+6	+6	+7	
10th	+7/+2	+7	+7	+7	+7	
11th	+8/+3	+7	+7	+7	+8	
12th	+9/+4	+8	+8	+8	+8	
13th	+9/+4	+8	+8	+8	+8	
14th	+10/+5	+9	+9	+9	+9	
15th	+11/+6/+1	+9	+9	+9	+9	
16th	+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+10	+10	
17th	+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+10	+10	
18th	+13/+8/+3	+11	+11	+11	+10	
19th	+14/+9/+4	+11	+11	+11	+10	
20th	+15/+10/+5	+12	+12	+12	+11	

gabrielites

Gabrielites have the following traits:

Abilities: Constitution is one of the most important abilities for the Gabrielites as many of their *Potestates* rely on it and a higher ability grants them more hit points. Strength is almost as important as members of this Order are at the forefront of battle. As Engel commonly wear only light armor, Dexterity helps the champions of the Lord to avoid injuries in battle.

Hit Die: d10

skills

Class Skills: The Gabrielite's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Climb (Str),

Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Intimidation (Str or Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Religion) (Int), Listen (Wis) and Swim (Str).

Signum Skills: The Gabrielite's Signum skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: David's Agility (Dex), Gift of Daniel (Con), Goliath's Might (Con) and Samson's Hair (Wis)

Sigil Skills: The Gabrielite's Sigil skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Chalice of Vengeance (Str), Golem (Con), God's Armor (Con) and Light of the Lord (Str)

Scriptura Skills: The Gabrielite's Scriptura skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Judgment Day (Con), Sacrificial Lamb (Con) and Shield of Faith (Con)

Gabrielites gain (4 + INT modifier) times 4 skill points at first level and 4 + INT modifier every time they increase in the Gabrielite class. These skill points are used to purchase and advance the *Potestates* (Signum, Sigil and Scriptura skills) as well.

class abilities

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Gabrielite is proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and with light and medium armor and shields. Furthermore all Gabrielites gain an Exotic Weapon Proficiency as a bonus feat at first level.

Signum: At 1st level, the Gabrielite gains access to the Signum level of *Potestates* skills.

Bonus Feats: The Gabrielite gains an additional bonus feat at 2nd level and every two levels thereafter (4th, 6th, 8th, etc.). These bonus feats must be drawn from the following list: Ambidexterity, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Exotic Weapon Proficiency*, Expertise (Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Whirlwind Attack), Fly-by Attack, Improved Critical*, Improved Initiative, (Deflect Arrows, Stunning Fist, Martial Arts Training), Power Attack (Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Sunder, Great Cleave), Quick Draw, Two-Weapon Fighting (Improved Two-Weapon Fighting), Weapon Finesse*, Weapon Focus*, Weapon Specialization*.

A Gabrielite must still meet all prerequisites for a feat, including ability score and base attack bonus minimums. Feats marked with an asterisk may be chosen more than once if a different weapon is chosen each time.

Sigil: At 3rd level, the Gabrielite gains access to the Sigil level of *Potestates* skills.

Weapon Specialization: On achieving 4th level or higher, as a feat the Gabrielite may take Weapon Specialization. Weapon Specialization adds a +2 damage bonus with a chosen weapon. The Gabrielite must have Weapon Focus with that weapon to take Weapon Specialization.

Scriptura: At 5th level, the Gabrielite gains access to the Scriptura level of *Potestates* skills.

Exotic Weapons Training: After reaching the 7th Level the Gabrielite gains an intuitive understanding of any weapon. He is therefore proficient with all Exotic Weapons.

gabrielite

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	+2	Signum
2nd	+2	+3	+1	+0	+2	Bonus feat
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	+3	Sigil
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	+3	Scriptura
6th	+6/+1	+5	+2	+2	+4	Bonus feat
7th	+7/+2	+5	+2	+2	+4	Exotic Weapons Training
8th	+8/+3	+6	+2	+2	+4	Bonus feat
9th	+9/+4	+6	+3	+3	+5	
10th	+10/+5	+7	+3	+3	+5	Bonus feat
11th	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+3	+5	
12th	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+4	+6	Bonus feat
13th	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+4	+6	
14th	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+4	+6	Bonus feat
15th	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+5	+7	
16th	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+5	+7	Bonus feat
17th	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+5	+7	
18th	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+6	+8	Bonus feat
19th	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+6	+8	
20th	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+6	+8	Bonus feat

raphaelites

Raphaelites have the following traits:

Abilities: Wisdom is without doubt the most important ability for members of this Order, as it enhances most of their healing *Potestates* as well as many of their skills. Charisma helps in interacting with patients and the common people, as many class skills benefit from this Ability. Constitution helps the Raphaelite avoid being afflicted with the diseases he wants to cure and aids some of his *Potestates*.

Hit Die: d6

skills

Class Skills: The Raphaelite's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Concentration (Con), Craft (wis), Diplomacy (Wis), Handle Animals (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (Religion) (Int), Knowledge (Biology) (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis) and Spot (Wis).

Signum Skills: The Raphaelite's Signum skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: All-seeing Eye (Wis), Field of Bones (Cha), Healing Hands (Wis) and My Body (Wis).

Sigil Skills: The Raphaelite's Sigil skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Benediction (Wis), Bitter Bile (Wis), Heal Malady (Int) and Spinning the Thread of Life (Wis).

raphaelite

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	+4	Signum
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	+5	
3rd	+1	+3	+1	+3	+5	Sigil
4th	+2	+4	+1	+4	+6	
5th	+2	+4	+1	+4	+6	Scriptura
6th	+3	+5	+2	+5	+7	
7th	+3	+5	+2	+5	+7	
8th	+4	+6	+2	+6	+8	
9th	+4	+6	+3	+6	+8	
10th	+5	+7	+3	+7	+9	
11th	+5	+7	+3	+7	+9	
12th	+6/+1	+8	+4	+8	+10	
13th	+6/+1	+8	+4	+8	+10	
14th	+7/+2	+9	+4	+9	+11	
15th	+7/+2	+9	+5	+9	+11	
16th	+8/+3	+10	+5	+10	+12	
17th	+8/+3	+10	+5	+10	+12	
18th	+9/+4	+11	+6	+11	+13	
19th	+9/+4	+11	+6	+11	+13	
20th	+10/+5	+12	+6	+12	+14	

Scriptura Skills: The Raphaelite's Scriptura skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Ashes to Ashes (Con), Grail of Life (Con), Lazarus (Wis).

Raphaelites gain (6 + INT modifier) times 4 skill points at first level and 6 + INT modifier every time they increase in the Raphaelite class. These skill points are used to purchase and advance the *Potestates* (Signum, Sigil and Scriptura skills) as well.

class abilities

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Raphaelite is proficient in the use of all simple weapons.

Signum: At 1st level, the Raphaelite gains access to the Signum level of *Potestates* skills.

Sigil: At 3rd level, the Raphaelite gains access to the Sigil level of *Potestates* skills.

Scriptura: At 5th level, the Raphaelite gains access to the Scriptura level of *Potestates* skills.

ramielites

Ramielites have the following traits:

Abilities: Intelligence is the most valuable trait for the Ramielites as many of their Potestates and Skills rely on this ability. A high score in Intelligence also grants additional skill points. Wisdom enhances the prophetic abilities of this Order and is therefore valuable as well.

Hit Die: d6

skills

Class Skills: The Ramielite's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Appraise (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Language, Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Repair (Int), Demolitions (Int), Search (Int), Knowledge (any) (Int) and Wilderness Lore (Wis),

Signum Skills: The Ramielite's Signum skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Icon (Int), Inner Calm (Con), Samson's Hair (Wis) and To Speak in Tongues (Wis).

Sigil Skills: The Ramielite's Sigil skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Babylon's Language (Int), Champion of the Lord (Int), The Eighth Commandment (Wis) and Prophet (Wis)).

Scriptura Skills: The Ramielite's Scriptura skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Oracle (Wis), Spirit of the Lord (Int) and Spirit over Soul (Wis)

Ramielites gain (8 + INT modifier) times 4 skill points at first level and 8 + INT modifier every time they increase in the Ramielite class. These skill points are used to purchase and advance the *Potestates* (Signum, Sigil and Scriptura skills) as well.

class abilities

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Ramielite is proficient in the use of all simple weapons.

Bonus Feat: Ramielites gain an additional feat at 1st level and another feat at 5th, 10th, 15th and 20th level. This bonus feat must be chosen from the following list: Stunning Blow, Lightning Reflexes, Iron Will, Skill Focus, Sure Instinct, Deflect Missiles, Improved Unarmed Strike, Tinkerer, Convincing, Alertness. These bonus feats are in addition to bonus feats gained due to advancement in level.

Signum: At 1st level, the Ramielite gains access to the Signum level of *Potestates* skills.

Sigil: At 3rd level, the Ramielite gains access to the Sigil level of *Potestates* skills.

Scriptura: At 5th level, the Ramielite gains access to the Scriptura level of *Potestates* skills.

urielites

Urielites have the following traits:

Abilities: Dexterity is important for the Urielites as they generally wear only light armor and many of their skills and Potestates rely on it. Of course it also helps with ranged attacks which are the weapon of choice for most Urielites. Wisdom helps the Engel with many of his skills and Potestates as well and also grants him the wits

and quick thinking, the Urielites are famous for within the Angelitic Church. Being messengers and scouts, stamina and endurance are treasured within the ranks of the Order as well, therefore many of its members make sure to train them accordingly.

Hit Die: d10

skills

Class Skills: The Urielite's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Handle Animals (Cha), Hide (Dex), Innuendo (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex) and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Signum Skills: The Urielite's Signum skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Enlightened Eyes (Wis), Messenger's Fortitude (Con), The Lord's Paths (Wis) and Water from Stone (Wis).

Sigil Skills: The Urielite's Sigil skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Assisi (Cha), Eyes of the Sentinel (Wis), Like a Thief in the Night (Con) and Trail of Blood (Con).

Scriptura Skills: The Urielite's Scriptura skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Vision in the Night (Wis), One with Creation (Con) and Flaming Final (Con).

Urielites gain (4 + INT modifier) times 4 skill points at first level and 4 + INT modifier every time they increase in the Urielites class. These skill points are used to purchase and advance the *Potestates* (Signum, Sigil and Scriptura skills) as well.

class abilities

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Urielite is proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and light armor and shields.

Fast Movement: Urielite are faster and more enduring than other Engel or any human being. Their base speed is increased by 3m.; this bonus also applies to flying.

Signum: At 1st level, the Urielite gains access to the Signum level of *Potestates* skills.

Tracking: At 2nd level Urielites gain Track as a bonus feat.

Sigil: At 3rd level, the Urielite gains access to the Sigil level of *Potestates* skills.

Uncanny Dodge: At 3rd level and above, a Urielite retains his Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) if caught flat-footed or struck by a hidden attacker.

At 6th level , the Engel can no longer be flanked. Rogues at least four levels higher than the Urielite can still flank him though.

At 11th level, the Urielite gains a +1 bonus to Reflex saves made to avoid traps and a +1 dodge bonus to AC against attacks by traps. At 14th level, these bonuses rise to +2. At 17th, they rise to +3, and at 20th they rise to +4.

Scriptura: At 5th level, the Urielite gains access to the Scriptura level of *Potestates* skills.

ramiel

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	+3	Signum, Bonus Feat
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	+4	
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	+4	Sigil
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	+4	
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	+5	Scriptura, Bonus Feat
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	+5	
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	+6	
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	+6	
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	+6	
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	+7	Bonus Feat
11th	+5	+3	+3	+7	+7	
12th	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	+8	
13th	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	+8	
14th	+7/+2	+4	+4	+9	+8	
15th	+7/+2	+5	+5	+9	+9	Bonus Feat
16th	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	+9	
17th	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	+10	
18th	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	+10	
19th	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	+10	
20th	+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	+11	Bonus Feat

uriel

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	+3	Fast Movement, Signum
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	+4	Tracking
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	+4	Sigil
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	+4	Uncanny Dodge (Retains Dex bonus)
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	+5	Scriptura
6th	+6/+1	+5	+5	+2	+5	
7th	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	+6	
8th	+8/+3	+6	+6	+2	+6	Uncanny Dodge (can't be flanked)
9th	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	+6	
10th	+10/+5	+7	+7	+3	+7	
11th	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+3	+7	
12th	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+4	+8	Uncanny Dodge (+1 to avoid traps)
13th	+13/+8/+3	+8	+8	+4	+8	
14th	+14/+9/+4	+9	+9	+4	+8	
15th	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+5	+9	
16th	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+10	+5	+9	Uncanny Dodge (+2 to avoid traps)
17th	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+5	+10	
18th	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+11	+6	+10	
19th	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+11	+6	+10	
20th	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+12	+6	+11	Uncanny Dodge (+3 to avoid traps)

a word about multiclassing Engel

Although most other publications that use 3rd edition rules allow characters to freely choose which class to advance, therewith creating unique combinations, Engel are not free to do so. This is caused by the Baptism; once an Engel has undergone this procedure he must stick to his Order and advance accordingly. Additionally, the oaths and trainings Engel undergo bind them to one way of advancing.

However, should any Engel should ever turn his back on his as well as any other Order and choose a – shall we say – more profane way, other choices might arise, but this will be discussed at some other time…

other classes

Besides the Engel many other professions, destinies and duties are found in the world of **Engel**. Please find below some details and descriptions for such characters.

aristocrat

Only few are born to be one of the modern aristocracy which makes decisions or assists those who make those decisions. Although the name Aristocrat might imply that all members of this class come from certain breeding stocks and wield only worldly power, this is not the case – many of the Diadochs, their officers and children are indeed members of this Class, but the majority of Aristocrats are in fact church dignitaries. All Aristocrats wield considerable power and are therefore familiar with a variety of skills.

Hit Die: d8.

skills

Class Skills: The Aristocrat's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (all skills taken individually) (Int), Language, Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Pilot (Dex), Read Lips (Int), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Aristocrats gain (4 + INT modifier) times 4 skill points at first level and 4 + INT modifier every time they increase in the Aristocrat class.

class abilities

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Aristocrat is proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and with all types of armor and shields.

commoner

Most of the inhabitants of the 27th century are simple people living of the land, never facing any adventures besides survival in the harsh world. Most of these are Commoners and they will be for the rest of their lives. This class also includes inn-keepers, simple merchants and some of the Monachs and Begines responsible for the more menial and simple tasks within a monastery.

Hit Die: d4.

skills

Class Skills: The Commoner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Profession (Int), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Use Rope (Dex).

Commoners gain (2 + INT modifier) times 4 skill points at first level and 2 + INT modifier every time they increase in the Commoner class.

class abilities

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Commoner is proficient with one simple weapon. He is not proficient with any other weapons, nor is he proficient with any type of armor or shields.

expert

Lore-keepers, scientists and advisors make up this Class. Due to the tight control the Angelitic Church tries to exert on knowledge and education, these are generally only found either in the employ of a Diadochs or within the ranks of the Angelitic Church. Experts are mainly concerned with gathering knowledge and spreading it amongst them and certain chosen people.

Hit Die: d6

skills

Class Skills: The expert can choose any ten skills to be class skills.

Experts gain (6 + INT modifier) times 4 skill points at first level and 6 + INT modifier every time they increase in the Expert class.

class abilities

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The expert is proficient in the use of all simple weapons and with light armor but not shields.

fighter

In the brutal and dangerous world of **Engel**, fighting men are highly regarded and always needed, few of them are skilled enough though to become true Fighters. Becoming a Fighter and advancing in levels demands dedication, strength of body and spirit as well as complex training, something only few people can provide in the world of Engel. Therefore it should come as no surprise the Fighters are generally only found within the ranks of the Templar, as body-guards of

the Diadochs or as commanders of other men-at-arms (who are usually of the Warrior class, below).

Hit Die: d10.

skills

Class Skills: The Fighter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Jump (Str), Pilot (Dex), Ride (Dex), and Swim (Str).

Fighters gain (2 + INT modifier) times 4 skill points at first level and 2 + INT modifier every time they increase in the Fighter class.

class abilities

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Fighter is proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and all armor (heavy, medium, and light) and shields.

Bonus Feats: At 1st level, the Fighter gets a bonus feat in addition to the feat that any 1st-level character gets and the bonus feat granted to humans. The Fighter gains an additional bonus feat at 2nd level and every two levels thereafter (4th, 6th, 8th, etc.). These bonus feats must be drawn from the following list: Ambidexterity, Blind-Fighting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Exotic Weapon Proficiency*, Expertise (Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Whirlwind Attack), Improved Critical*, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike (Deflect Arrows, Stunning Fist, Martial Arts Training), Mounted Combat (Mounted Archery, Trample, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge), Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run), Power Attack (Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Sunder, Great Cleave), Quick Draw, Two-Weapon Fighting (Improved Two-Weapon Fighting), Weapon Finesse*, Weapon Focus*, Weapon Specialization*.

Some of the bonus feats available to a Fighter cannot be acquired until the Fighter has gained one or more prerequisite feats; these feats are listed parenthetically after the prerequisite feat. A Fighter can select feats marked with an asterisk (*) more than once, but it must be for a different weapon each time. A Fighter must still meet all prerequisites for a feat, including ability score and base attack bonus minimums.

Weapon Specialization: On achieving 4th level or higher, as a feat the Fighter may take Weapon Specialization. Weapon Specialization adds a +2 damage bonus with a chosen weapon. The Fighter must have Weapon Focus with that weapon to take Weapon Specialization. If the weapon is a ranged weapon, the damage bonus only applies if the target is within 9m., because only at that range can the Fighter strike precisely enough to hit more effectively. The Fighter may take this feat as a bonus feat or as a regular one.

aristocrat

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	+3
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	+4
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	+4
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4	+5
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	+5
6th	+4	+2	+2	+5	+6
7th	+5	+2	+2	+5	+6
8th	+6/+1	+2	+2	+6	+6
9th	+6/+1	+3	+3	+6	+7
10th	+7/+2	+3	+3	+7	+7
11th	+8/+3	+3	+3	+7	+8
12th	+9/+4	+4	+4	+8	+8
13th	+9/+4	+4	+4	+8	+8
14th	+10/+5	+4	+4	+9	+9
15th	+11/+6/+1	+5	+5	+9	+9
16th	+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+10	+10
17th	+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+10	+10
18th	+13/+8/+3	+6	+6	+11	+10
19th	+14/+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	+10
20th	+15/+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	+11

commoner

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+0	+0
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1
4th	+2	+1	+1	+1	+1
5th	+2	+1	+1	+1	+1
6th	+3	+2	+2	+2	+2
7th	+3	+2	+2	+2	+2
8th	+4	+2	+2	+2	+2
9th	+4	+3	+3	+3	+3
10th	+5	+3	+3	+3	+3
11th	+5	+3	+3	+3	+3
12th	+6/+1	+4	+4	+4	+4
13th	+6/+1	+4	+4	+4	+4
14th	+7/+2	+4	+4	+4	+4
15th	+7/+2	+5	+5	+5	+5
16th	+8/+3	+5	+5	+5	+5
17th	+8/+3	+5	+5	+5	+5
18th	+9/+4	+6	+6	+6	+6
19th	+9/+4	+6	+6	+6	+6
20th	+10/+5	+6	+6	+6	+6

rogue

Thieves and self-proclaimed entrepreneurs are usually not regarded very highly in most of the small communities and therefore seldom found away from the larger cities. Some Rogues manage to become accepted though either through more or less honest trade or by advancing in the ranks of the armed bands where scouts can be of great use. Some of the most successful Brandland Guides and treasure-hunters are Rogues.

Hit Die: d6.

expert

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	+0
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	+0
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	+1
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4	+1
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	+1
6th	+4	+2	+2	+5	+2
7th	+5	+2	+2	+5	+2
8th	+6/+1	+2	+2	+6	+2
9th	+6/+1	+3	+3	+6	+3
10th	+7/+2	+3	+3	+7	+3
11th	+8/+3	+3	+3	+7	+3
12th	+9/+4	+4	+4	+8	+4
13th	+9/+4	+4	+4	+8	+4
14th	+10/+5	+4	+4	+9	+4
15th	+11/+6/+1	+5	+5	+9	+5
16th	+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+10	+5
17th	+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+10	+5
18th	+13/+8/+3	+6	+6	+11	+6
19th	+14/+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	+6
20th	+15/+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	+6

fighter

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	+2	Bonus feat
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	+2	Bonus feat
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	+3	
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	+3	
6th	+6/+1	+5	+2	+2	+4	Bonus feat
7th	+7/+2	+5	+2	+2	+4	
8th	+8/+3	+6	+2	+2	+4	Bonus feat
9th	+9/+4	+6	+3	+3	+5	
10th	+10/+5	+7	+3	+3	+5	Bonus feat
11th	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+3	+5	
12th	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+4	+6	Bonus feat
13th	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+4	+6	
14th	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+4	+6	Bonus feat
15th	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+5	+7	
16th	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+5	+7	Bonus feat
17th	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+5	+7	
18th	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+6	+8	Bonus feat
19th	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+6	+8	
20th	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+6	+8	Bonus feat

skills

Class Skills: The Rogue's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Pick Pocket (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read Lips (Int), Repair (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str) and Tumble (Dex).

Rogues gain (8 + INT modifier) times 4 skill points at first level and 8 + INT modifier every time they increase in the Rogue class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A Rogue's weapon training focuses on weapons suitable for stealth and sneak attacks. Thus, all Rogues are proficient with the club, crossbow (hand or light), dagger (any type), dart, heavy crossbow, heavy mace, light mace, morningstar, quarterstaff, rapier, sap, shortbow (normal and composite), and short sword. Rogues are proficient with light armor but not with shields.

Sneak Attack: Any time the Rogue's target would be denied a Dexterity bonus to AC (whether the target actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), or when the Rogue flanks the target, the Rogue's attack deals extra damage. The extra damage is +1d6 at 1st level and an additional 1d6 every two levels thereafter. Should the Rogue score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied.

Ranged attacks can only count as sneak attacks if the target is within 9m. The Rogue can't strike with deadly accuracy from beyond that range.

With a sap (blackjack) or an unarmed strike, the Rogue can make a sneak attack that deals subdual damage instead of normal damage. The Rogue cannot use a weapon that deals normal damage to deal subdual damage in a sneak attack, not even with the usual –4 penalty.

A Rogue can only sneak attack a living creature with a discernible anatomy. Any being or object that is immune to critical hits is also not vulnerable to sneak attacks. The Rogue must be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach a vital spot. The Rogue cannot sneak attack while striking a creature with concealment or striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

Traps: Rogues (and only Rogues) can use the Search skill to locate traps when the task has a Difficulty Class higher than 20. Finding a trap has a DC of at least 20, higher if it is well hidden.

A Rogue who beats a trap's DC by 10 or more with a Disable Device check can generally study a trap, figure out how it works, and bypass it (with his party) without disarming it.

Evasion: At 2nd level, a Rogue gains evasion. If exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, the Rogue takes no damage with a successful saving throw. Evasion can only be used if the Rogue is wearing light armor or no armor. It is an extraordinary ability.

Uncanny Dodge: At 3rd level and above, she retains her Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) if caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker.

At 6th level, the Rogue can no longer be flanked. Another Rogue at least four levels higher can still flank.

At 11th level, the Rogue gains a +1 bonus to Reflex saves made to avoid traps and a +1 dodge bonus to AC against attacks by traps. At 14th level, these bonuses rise to +2. At 17th, they rise to +3, and at 20th they rise to +4.

Special Abilities: On achieving 10th level and every three levels thereafter (13th, 16th, and 19th), a Rogue chooses a special ability from among the following:

• *Crippling Strike:* When the Rogue damages an opponent with a sneak attack, the target also takes 1 point of Strength damage.

• *Defensive Roll:* Once per day, when a Rogue would be reduced to 0 hit points or less by damage in combat (from a weapon or other blow, not a spell or special ability), the Rogue can attempt to roll with the damage. She makes a Reflex saving throw (DC = damage dealt) and, if successful, takes only half damage from the blow. The Rogue must be aware of the attack and able to react to it in order to execute the defensive roll — if the Dexterity bonus to AC is denied, the Rogue can't roll. Since this effect would not normally allow a character to make a Reflex save for half damage, the Rogue's evasion ability does not apply to the defensive roll.

• *Improved Evasion:* The Rogue takes only half damage on a failed save.

• *Opportunist:* Once per round, the Rogue can make an attack of opportunity against an opponent who has just been struck for damage in melee by another character. This attack counts as the Rogue's attacks of opportunity for that round. Even a Rogue with the Combat Reflexes feat can't use the opportunist ability more than once per round.

• *Feat:* A Rogue may gain a feat in place of a special ability.

rogue

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+0	+3	Sneak attack +1d6
2	+1	+0	+3	+0	+4	Evasion
3	+2	+1	+3	+1	+4	Uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC), Sneak attack +2d6
4	+3	+1	+4	+1	+4	
5	+3	+1	+4	+1	+5	Sneak attack +3d6
6	+4	+2	+5	+2	+5	Uncanny dodge (can't be flanked)
7	+5	+2	+5	+2	+6	Sneak attack +4d6
8	+6/+1	+2	+6	+2	+6	
9	+6/+1	+3	+6	+3	+6	Sneak attack +5d6
10	+7/+2	+3	+7	+3	+7	Special ability
11	+8/+3	+3	+7	+3	+7	Uncanny dodge (+1 against traps), Sneak attack +6d6
12	+9/+4	+4	+8	+4	+8	
13	+9/+4	+4	+8	+4	+8	Sneak attack +7d6, special ability
14	+10/+5	+4	+9	+4	+8	Uncanny dodge (+2 against traps)
15	+11/+6/+1	+5	+9	+5	+9	Sneak attack +8d6
16	+12/+7/+2	+5	+10	+5	+9	Special ability
17	+12/+7/+2	+5	+10	+5	+10	Uncanny dodge (+3 against traps), Sneak attack +9d6
18	+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+6	+10	
19	+14/+9/+4	+6	+11	+6	+10	Sneak attack +10d6, special ability
20	+15/+10/+5	+6	+12	+6	+11	Uncanny dodge (+4 against traps)

warrior

Despite the seemingly tight grip the Angelitic Church exerts on Europe, fights do take place and men proficient with weapons are needed at times. The rank and file of the Grimrider Bands as well as many of the Birds of Passage and the armies of the Diadochs are members of this class. Being not as gifted as Fighters and lacking the Dexterity and wits of the Rogue, these often times simple and brutal men take up arms – most of them are base mercenaries, led by men of higher calling.

Hit Die: d8.

skills

Class Skills: The warrior's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), Pilot (Dex) and Swim (Str).

Warriors gain (2 + INT modifier) times 4 skill points at first level and 2 + INT modifier every time they increase in the Urielites class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The warrior is proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and all armor and shields.

warrior

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	+0
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	+0
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	+1
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	+1
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	+1
6th	+6/+1	+5	+2	+2	+2
7th	+7/+2	+5	+2	+2	+2
8th	+8/+3	+6	+2	+2	+2
9th	+9/+4	+6	+3	+3	+3
10th	+10/+5	+7	+3	+3	+3
11th	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+3	+3
12th	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+4	+4
13th	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+4	+4
14th	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+4	+4
15th	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+5	+5
16th	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+5	+5
17th	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+5	+5
18th	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+6	+6
19th	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+6	+6
20th	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+6	+6

feats

Feats either describe affinities, knacks or talents which a character has been gifted with or developed later on or they simulate special abilities which the character has learned during his training or later. Unlike skills, feats have no ranks and therefore feats may generally only be taken once. Some feats, however, are specialized in some way and may be chosen more than once, if a different specialization is selected for them.

Some feats require certain values or other feats in order to qualify to take that feat. A character may choose or have such a feat despite not meeting the prerequisites, but he will not be able to gain any benefit from it until he meets these prerequisites – he has learned the technique but is not yet skilled enough to use it.

Some feats are only available to certain classes, races or certain beings, these will have an appropriate requisite listed. To more clearly illustrate the use of some feats, these have a 'Normal' category which demonstrates the effect of not having a feat.

acrobat

Your character is especially nimble and acrobatic.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus on all Jump and Tumble checks.

alertness

The character is especially aware of his surroundings.

Benefit: The character gains a +2 bonus on all Listen checks and Spot checks.

animal affinity

The character is adept at interacting with animals, be they wild or domesticated.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus on all Ride and Handle Animal checks.

ambidexterity

The character is neither left- nor right-handed and can therefore use both of his hand with equal ease.

Prerequisite: Dex 15+.

Benefit: The character ignores all penalties for using an off hand.

Normal: Without this feat, a character who uses his or her off hand suffers a -4 penalty to attack rolls, ability checks, and skill checks. For example, a right-handed character wielding a weapon with her left hand suffers a -4 penalty to attack rolls with that weapon.

Special: This feat helps offset the penalty for fighting with two weapons.

armor proficiency [heavy]

The character has learned how to don and wear all heavy armors.

Prerequisites: Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium).

Benefit: See Armor Proficiency (light).

Normal: See Armor Proficiency (light).

armor proficiency [light]

The character has learned how to don and wear all light armors.

Benefit: When a character wears a type of armor with which the character is proficient, the armor check penalty applies only to Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket, and Tumble checks.

Normal: A character who is wearing armor with which she is not proficient suffers its armor check penalty on attack rolls and on all skill checks that involve moving, including Ride.

armor proficiency [medium]

The character has learned how to don and wear all medium armors.

Prerequisite: Armor Proficiency (light)

Benefit: See Armor Proficiency (light).

Normal: See Armor Proficiency (light).

athletic

The character is especially athletic.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus on all Climb and Swim checks.

blind-fighting

The character does not have to rely on his eyes when fighting in a melee and is not hindered as badly as others when unable to see.

Benefit: In melee, every time a character misses because of Concealment, the character can reroll the miss chance percentile roll one time to see if the character actually hit.

Hidden attackers get no bonus to hit the character in melee. That is, the character doesn't lose his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, and the attacker doesn't get the usual +2 bonus. The hidden attacker's bonuses do still apply for ranged attacks, however.

The character suffers only half the usual penalty to speed for being unable to see. Darkness and poor visibility in general reduces the character's speed to three-quarters of normal, instead of one-half.

cleave

The character knows how to make the most use of the momentum of an attack.

Prerequisites: Str 13+, Power Attack.

Benefit: If the character deals a target enough damage to make it drop (typically by dropping it to below 0 hit points, killing it, etc.), the character gets an immediate, extra melee attack against another being in the immediate vicinity. The character cannot take a 1.5m step before making this extra attack. The extra attack is with the same weapon and at the same bonus as the attack that dropped the previous being. The character can use this ability once per round.

combat reflexes

The character has quick wit in combat and recognizes opportunities to attack enemies nearby.

Benefit: When foes leave themselves open, the character may make a number of additional attacks of opportunity equal to the character's Dexterity modifier. The character still may only make one attack of opportunity per enemy.

The character may also make attacks of opportunity while flat-footed. A Rogue with the Combat Reflexes feat still can only make one attack of opportunity in a round if he uses his Opportunist ability to make that attack.

contortionist

The character's body is especially flexible and bendable.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus on all Escape Artist and Climb checks.

convincing

The character's arguments and ideas seem especially convincing and sound to others.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus on all Bluff and Intimidation Rolls.

deflect missiles

The character can deflect slow-flying missile attacks with his bare hands. He cannot use this ability to deflect bullets or projectiles of similar velocity.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, Improved Unarmed Strike.

Benefit: The character must have at least one hand free (holding nothing) to use this feat, he may not use this weapon to attack. Once per round when the character would normally be hit with a ranged weapon, the character may make a Reflex saving throw against a DC of 20. If the character succeeds, the character deflects the weapon. The character must be aware of the attack and not flat-footed. Attempting to deflect a ranged weapon doesn't count as an action.

dodge

The character is skilled at avoiding blows.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+.

Benefit: During the character's action, the character designates an opponent and receives a +1 dodge bonus to his AC Modifier against attacks from that opponent. The character can select a new opponent on any action. This bonus is lost if the character loses his AC Modifier for any reason.

eagle-eye

The character has an especially adept eye at noticing details in a situation and minute changes in the expression of others.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus on all Search and Sense Motive Checks.

endurance

The character has astonishing reserves of stamina.

Benefit: Whenever the character makes a check for performing a physical action that extends over a period of time (running, swimming, holding the character's breath, and so on), the character gets a +4 bonus to the check.

exotic weapon proficiency

The character knows how to wield one type of exotic weapon.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1 or higher.

Benefit: The character makes attack rolls with the weapon normally. If Exotic Weapon Proficiency: Firearms is chosen, you are proficient with all firearms.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon without being proficient with it suffers a -4 penalty on attack rolls.

expertise

Due to the characters training at arms, he may choose to fight more defensively.

Prerequisite: Int 13+.

Benefit: When the character uses the attack action or full attack action in melee, the character can take a penalty of as much as -5 on the character's attack and add the same number (up to +5) to the character's AC modifier. This number may not exceed the character's base attack bonus. The changes to attack rolls and AC Modifier last until the character's next action. The bonus to the character's AC Modifier is a dodge bonus.

Normal: A character not capable of the Expertise feat can fight defensively while using the attack or full attack action to take a -4 penalty on attacks and gain a +2 dodge bonus to Armor Class.

far shot

The character knows how to use his ranged weapon precisely, even over great distances

Prerequisite: Point Blank Shot.

Benefit: When the character uses a projectile weapon, such as a bow, its range increment increases by one-half (multiply by 1.5m). When the character uses a thrown weapon, its range increment is doubled.

fly

The character knows how to use his wings or other aerial propulsion to maneuver while flying.

Prerequisite: Wings or other method of aerial propulsion limited to self only – pilot is used for aerial vehicles.

Benefit: The character can make full use of his improved flying speed and maneuverability.

Normal: Without this feat, maneuverability is limited to Clumsy and maximum flying speed is 9m.

flyby attack

The know how to use his ability to fly in combat.

Prerequisite: Fly, Dex 13+.

Benefit: When flying, the being can take a move action (including a dive) and another partial action at any point during the move. The being cannot take a second move action during a round when it makes a flyby attack.

Normal: Without this feat, the being takes a partial action either before or after its move.

frightful aura

The character is able to frighten others with his mere presence, therewith unnerving them.

Prerequisites: Charisma 16+, Intimidate 10+.

Benefit: Once per round as a free action the character may cause all those standing within 39m and of lower total character level than him to make a Will save (DC 10 + character level* + Cha modifier*). If the targets fail this saving throw, they are considered *shaken* for (1d8 + Cha modifier*) and suffer a penalty of -2 to all attack rolls, saves and skill checks.

Note: Those traits marked with an asteriks are those of the character with this feat.

great cleave

The character can strike down multiple opponents with one mighty blow.

Prerequisites: Str 13+, Power Attack, Cleave, base attack bonus +4 or higher.

Benefit: As Cleave, except that the character has no limit to the number of times the character can use it per round.

great fortitude

The character is tougher than others.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus to all Fortitude saving throws.

heroic

Fate has chosen the character in some special way, granting him the ability to take quick and decisive action when necessary.

Prerequisites: Level 4 and storyteller approval.

Benefit: The character can take an additional move-equivalent action before or after his standard action. This ability maybe used only once per round, and only once for every 4 character levels.

improved bull rush

The character has learned how to avoid being attacked when rushing an opponent.

Prerequisites: Str 13+, Power Attack.

Benefit: When the character performs a bull rush, the character does not provoke an attack of opportunity from the defender.

improved critical

The character has learned how to use his weapon for especially dangerous blows.

Prerequisites: Proficient with weapon, base attack bonus +8 or higher.

Benefit: When using the weapon the character selected, the character's threat range is doubled.

improved disarm

The character has learned how to disarm his opponent without leaving himself open to attacks.

Prerequisites: Int 13+, Expertise.

Benefit: The character does not provoke an attack of opportunity when the character attempts to disarm an opponent, nor does the opponent have a chance to disarm in return.

improved initiative

In combat, the character tends to act before others.

Benefit: The character gets a +4 bonus on initiative checks.

improved trip

The character has learned to trip an enemy and make a follow-up attack.

Prerequisites: Int 13+, Expertise.

Benefit: If the character trips an opponent in melee combat, the character immediately gets a melee attack against that opponent as if the character hadn't used the character's attack for the trip attempt.

improved two-weapon fighting

Extensive training allows the character to make the most out of wielding two weapons.

Prerequisites: Two-Weapon Fighting, Ambidexterity, base attack bonus +9 or higher.

Benefit: In addition to the standard single extra attack the character gets with an off-hand weapon, the character gets a second attack with the off-hand weapon, albeit at a -5 penalty.

Normal: Without this feat, the character can only get a single extra attack with an off-hand weapon.

improved unarmed strike

The character has learned to attack and defend unarmed without leaving himself open to attacks.

Benefit: The character is considered to be armed even when unarmed. That is, armed opponents do not get attacks of opportunity when the character attacks them while unarmed. However, the character still gets an attack of opportunity against any opponent who makes an unarmed attack on the character.

iron will

The character has an iron determination.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus to all Will saving throws.

lightning reflexes

The characters reflexes are finely honed.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus to all Reflex saving throws.

martial weapon proficiency

The character is skilled with the use of a martial weapon.

Benefit: The character makes attack rolls with the weapon normally.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon without being proficient with it suffers a -4 penalty on attack rolls.

martial arts training

The character has received extensive martial arts training, making his body a deadly weapon. Most such knowledge comes from before the Flood.

Prerequisites: Improved Unarmed Combat.

Benefit: The characters unarmed attacks deal 1d6 damage and when a natural 20 occurs on the attack roll, this is considered a threat for a critical hit at double damage.

Normal: Without this feat unarmed attacks cause 1d3 subdual damage and cannot inflict critical hits.

mimicry

The character has a knack for acting and imitating others.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus to Perform (Acting) and Disguise Checks.

mobility

The character is able to move past opponents and avoiding their attacks on him while doing so.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, Dodge.

Benefit: The character gets a +4 dodge bonus to his AC Modifier against attacks of opportunity caused when the character moves out of or within a threatened area. If a character loses his AC modifier he will also lose this bonus.

mounted archery

The character has learned to use missile weapons while riding on a beast of burden.

Prerequisite: Mounted Combat, Ride Skill.

Benefit: The penalty the character suffers when using a ranged weapon from horseback is halved: -2 instead of -4 if the character's mount is taking a double move, and -4 instead of -8 if the character's mount is running.

mounted combat

The character is used to fighting on horseback and knows how to guide it to avoid the mount being wounded.

Prerequisite: Ride skill.

Benefit: Once per round when the character's mount is hit in combat, the character may make a Ride check to negate the hit. The hit is negated if the character's Ride check is greater than the attack roll (essentially, the Ride check becomes the mount's Armor Class if it's higher than the mount's regular AC).

multiattack

This feat allows a being (usually a Dreamseed creature) to coordinate multiple natural attacks more efficiently

Prerequisite: Three or more natural weapons.

Benefit: The being's secondary attacks with natural weapons suffer only a -2 penalty.

Normal: Without this feat, the being's secondary natural attacks suffer a -5 penalty.

multidexterity

This feat allows a being (usually a Dreamseed creature) to use all his appendages with equal ease.

Prerequisite: Dex 15+, three or more arms or other appendages usable as hands.

Benefit: The being ignores all penalties for using an off hand. This feat replaces the Ambidexterity feat for beings with more than two arms.

Normal: Without this feat, a being who uses an off hand suffers a -4 penalty to attack rolls, ability checks, and skill checks. A being has one primary hand, and all the others are off hands; for example, a four-armed being has one primary hand and three off hands.

multiweapon fighting

This feat allows a being (usually a Dreamseed creature) to wield and use more than two weapons for an attack.

Prerequisite: Three or more hands or other appendages, capable of gripping.

Benefit: Penalties for fighting with multiple weapons are reduced by 2. This feat replaces the Ambidexterity feat for beings wielding more than 2 weapons.

Normal: A being without this feat suffers a -6 penalty to attacks made with its primary hand and a -10 penalty to attacks made with its off hands. (It has one primary hand, and all the others are off hands.)

point blank shot

The character is able to shoot especially precisely at short ranges.

Benefit: The character gains a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls with ranged weapons at ranges of up to 9m.

power attack

By using sheer force the character can opt for less precise but more powerful blows.

Prerequisite: Str 13+.

Benefit: On the character's action, before making attack rolls for a round, the character may choose to subtract a number from all melee attack rolls and add the same number to all melee damage rolls. This number may not exceed the character's base attack bonus. The penalty on attacks and bonus on damage applies until the character's next action.

precise shot

Even the heat of battle does not hinder the character's aim.

Prerequisite: Point Blank Shot.

Benefit: The character can shoot or throw ranged weapons at an opponent engaged in melee without suffering the standard -4 penalty.

quick draw

The character can ready his weapon or other items faster than others.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1 or higher.

Benefit: The character can draw a weapon or an item as a free action instead of as a move-equivalent action.

rapid shot

The character is able to shoot faster than others.

Prerequisites: Point Blank Shot, Dex 13+.

Benefit: The character can get one extra attack per round with a ranged weapon. The attack is at the character's highest base attack bonus, but each attack (the extra one and the normal ones) suffers a -2 penalty. The character must use the full attack action to use this feat.

ride-by attack

The character may attack opponents while riding past them.

Prerequisites: Ride skill, Mounted Combat.

Benefit: When the character is mounted and uses the charge action, the character may move and attack as with a standard charge and then move again (continuing the straight line of the charge). The character's total movement for the round can't exceed double the character's mounted speed. The character does not provoke an attack of opportunity from the opponent that the character attacks.

run

The character is quicker than others.

Benefit: When running, the character moves five times normal speed instead of four times normal speed. If the character makes a running jump, increase the distance or height cleared by one-fourth, but not past the maximum.

shield proficiency

The character knows how to use a shield in combat.

Benefit: The character can use a shield and suffer only the standard penalties.

Normal: A character who is using a shield with which he or she is not proficient suffers the shield's armor check penalty on attack rolls and on all skill rolls that involve moving, including Ride.

shot on the run

The character has been trained to use his ranged weapon to skirmish.

Prerequisites: Point Blank Shot, Dex 13+, Dodge, Mobility.

Benefit: When using the attack action with a ranged weapon, the character can move both before and after the attack, provided that the character's total distance moved is not greater than the character's speed.

simple weapon proficiency

The character knows how to wield a simple weapon.

Benefit: The character makes attack rolls with simple weapons normally.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon without being proficient with it suffers a -4 penalty on attack rolls.

skill focus

The character has a gift for using a certain skill or has gained in-depth knowledge in it.

Benefit: The character gets a +3 bonus on all skill checks with that skill.

Special: The character can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time the character takes the feat, it applies to a new skill.

spirited charge

The character knows how to use the momentum of a mounted charge to deal even more damage.

Prerequisites: Ride skill, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack.

Benefit: When mounted and using the charge action, the character deals double damage with a melee weapon (or triple damage with a lance).

spring attack

The character is so agile, that he can attack while in motion.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, Dodge, Mobility, base attack bonus +4 or higher.

Benefit: When using the attack action with a melee weapon, the character can move both before and after the attack, provided that the character's total distance moved is not greater than the character's speed. Moving in this way does not provoke an attack of opportunity from the defender the character attacks. The character can't use this feat if the character is in heavy armor.

stunning fist

By striking vulnerable spots, the character can stun others with a blow.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, Improved Unarmed Strike, Wis 13+, base attack bonus +8 or higher.

Benefit: Declare that the character is using the feat before making an attack roll (thus, a missed attack roll ruins the attempt). It forces a foe damaged by the character's unarmed attack to make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + one-half the character's level + Wis modifier), in addition to dealing damage normally. If the defender fails his saving throw, he is stunned for 1 round (until just before the character's next action). A stunned character can't act and loses any Dexterity bonus to Armor Class. Attackers get a +2 bonus on attack rolls against a stunned opponent. The character may attempt a stunning attack once per day for every four character levels attained, and no more than once per round.

sunder

The character has an innate sense for damaging objects.

Prerequisites: Str 13+, Power Attack.

Benefit: When the character strikes at an opponent's weapon, the character does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

tinkerer

The character has a knack for repairing and disabling machines.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus on all Repair and Disable Device checks.

toughness

The character can endure more punishment than others.

Benefit: The character gains +3 hit points.

Special: A character may gain this feat multiple times.

track

The character has learned how to read and follow tracks.

Benefit: To find tracks or to follow them for one mile requires a Wilderness Lore check. The character must make another Wilderness Lore check every time the tracks become difficult to follow, such as when other tracks cross them or when the tracks backtrack and diverge.

The character moves at half normal speed (or at normal speed with a -5 penalty on the check). The DC depends on the surface and the prevailing conditions:

Surface	DC
Very soft	5
Soft	10
Firm	15
Hard	20

Very Soft Ground: Any surface (fresh snow, thick dust, wet mud) that holds deep, clear impressions of footprints.

Soft Ground: Any surface soft enough to yield to pressure, but firmer than wet mud or fresh snow, in which the being leaves frequent but shallow footprints.

Firm Ground: Most normal outdoor surfaces (such as lawns, fields, woods, and the like) or exceptionally soft or dirty indoor surfaces (thick rugs, very dirty or dusty floors). The being might leave some traces (broken branches, tufts of hair) but leaves only occasional or partial footprints.

Condition	DC Modifier
Every three beings in the group being tracked	-1
Size of being or beings being tracked:	*
• Fine	+8
• Diminutive	+4
• Tiny	+2
• Small	+1
• Medium-size	0
• Large	-1
• Huge	-2
• Gargantuan	-4
• Colossal	-8
Every 24 hours since the trail was made	+1
Every hour of rain since the trail was made	+1
Fresh snow cover since the trail was made	+10
Poor visibility:**	
• Overcast or moonless night	+6
• Moonlight	+3
• Fog or precipitation	+3
Tracked party hides trail (and moves at half speed)	+5

*For a group of mixed sizes, apply only the modifier for the largest size category.
**Apply only the largest modifier from this category.

Hard Ground: Any surface that doesn't hold footprints at all, such as bare rock or indoor floors. Most streambeds fall into this category, since any footprints left behind are obscured or washed away. The being leaves only traces (scuff marks, displaced pebbles).

If the character fails a Wilderness Lore check, the character can retry after 1 hour (outdoors) or 10 minutes (indoors) of searching.

Normal: A character without this feat can use the Search skill to find tracks, but can only follow tracks if the DC is 10 or less.

trample

The character has learned how to use his mount to trample an enemy.

Prerequisites: Ride skill, Mounted Combat.

Benefit: When the character attempts to overrun an opponent while mounted, the target may not choose to avoid the character. If the character knocks down the target, the character's mount may make one hoof attack against the target, gaining the standard +4 bonus on attack rolls against prone targets.

trustworthy

Most people consider the character to be personable and trustworthy.

Benefit: The character gets a +2 bonus on all Diplomacy and Gather Information checks.

two-weapon fighting

The character has learned how to fight with two weapons.

Benefit: The character's penalties for fighting with two weapons are reduced by 2.

weapon finesse

Instead of relying on brute force, the character is able to rely on his Dexterity when attacking with a certain weapon. This feat may only be taken for light weapons and rapiers.

Prerequisite: Proficient with weapon, base attack bonus +1 or higher.

Benefit: With the selected weapon, the character may use a Dexterity modifier instead of a Strength modifier on attack rolls. Since the character needs the second hand for balance, apply the armor check penalty of any shield worn to attack rolls.

weapon focus

The character has trained extensively with a type of weapon, therewith being able to become incredibly capable in its use.

Prerequisites: Proficient with weapon, base attack bonus +1 or higher.

The character can choose "unarmed strike" or "grapple" for the character's weapon for purposes of this feat.

Benefit: The character adds +1 to all attack rolls the character makes using the selected weapon.

Special: The character can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time the character takes the feat, it applies to a new weapon.

weapon specialization

The character has mastered the use of one weapon, causing devastating damage when using it.

Prerequisites: Fighter or Gabrielite Level 4+.

Benefit: The character adds +2 to all damage inflicted with the weapon the character has specialized with. If a ranged weapon is chosen this added damage is only effective if the target is within 9m.

whirlwind attack

In combat the character can become a veritable whirlwind of death, attacking all opponents around him.

Prerequisites: Int 13+, Expertise, Dex 13+, Dodge, Mobility, base attack bonus +4 or higher, Spring Attack.

Benefit: When the character performs the full attack action, he can give up all regular attacks and instead make one melee attack at the full base attack bonus against each opponent within 1.5m.

skills

skill points

Characters have a number of skill points based on their race and their class levels.

Depending on a character's class, some skills are "class skills" and some skills are "cross-class skills." Putting one skill point into a class skill gains the character one rank in that skill; putting one skill point into a cross-class skill gains the character one-half a rank in that skill.

The maximum number of ranks a character can have in a class skill is equal to that character's level +3. The maximum ranks a character can have in a cross-class skill is half that number.

using skills

When a character uses a skill, he makes a skill check to see how well he does. The higher the result on the character's skill check, the better he was at using the skill. Based on the circumstances, the character's result must match or beat a particular difficulty to use the skill successfully.

skill checks

To make a skill check, roll 1d20 and add the character's skill modifier for that skill. The skill modifier incorporates the character's ranks in that skill, the character's Ability Modifier for that skill's key ability, and any other miscellaneous modifiers the character has, including any armor check penalties. The higher the result, the better. A natural 20 is not an automatic success, and a natural 1 is not an automatic failure. If the character has at least 10 ranks in a skill and beats the DC by 20 or more on a normal skill check, the character has completed the task impossibly well.

against a difficulty class

Some checks are made against a Difficulty Class (DC). The DC is a number that the character must score as a result on the character's skill check to succeed.

opposed checks

Some skill checks are opposed checks. They are made against a randomized number, which is usually another character's skill check result. Whoever gets the higher result wins the contest.

For ties on opposed checks, the character with the higher key ability score wins.

If these scores are the same, flip a coin.

retries

In general, the character can try a skill check again if the character fails, and can keep trying indefinitely. Some skills, however, have consequences of failure that must be taken into account. Some skills are virtually useless once a check has failed on an attempt to accomplish a particular task. For most skills, when a character has succeeded once at a given task, additional successes are meaningless.

If a skill carries no penalties for failure, the character can take 20 and assume that the character goes at it long enough to succeed eventually.

untrained skill checks

Generally, if the character attempts to use a skill the character doesn't possess, the character makes a skill check as normal, but he has no skill ranks to add to the skill of course. The character does get other modifiers added into the skill modifier, though, such as the ability modifier for the skill's key ability.

Many skills can only be used if the character is trained in the skill. If a skill cannot be used untrained this is noted in its description.

favorable and unfavorable conditions

Some situations may make a skill easier or harder to use, resulting in a bonus or penalty added into the skill modifier for the skill check or a change to the DC of the skill check. The storyteller may alter the odds of success in four ways to take into account exceptional circumstances:

1. Give the skill user a +2 circumstance bonus to represent circumstances that improve performance.
2. Give the skill user a –2 circumstance penalty to represent conditions that hamper performance.
3. Reduce the DC by 2 to represent circumstances that make the task easier.
4. Increase the DC by 2 to represent circumstances that make the task harder.

A bonus to the character's skill modifier and a reduction in the check's DC have the same result: they create a better chance that the character will succeed. But they represent different circumstances, and sometimes that difference is important.

time and skill checks

Using a skill might take a round, take no time, or take several rounds or even longer. Most skill uses are standard actions, move-equivalent actions, or full-round actions. Types of actions define how long activities take to perform within the framework of a combat round (6 seconds) and how movement is treated with respect to the activity. Some skill checks are instant and represent reactions to an event, or are included as part of an action. These skill checks are not actions. Other skill checks represent part of movement. The distance the character jumps when making a Jump check, for example, is part of the character's movement. Some skills take more than a round to use, and the skill descriptions often specify how long these skills take to use.

practically impossible tasks

In general, to do something that's practically impossible requires that the character have at least rank 10 in the skill and entails a penalty of –20 on the character's roll or +20 on the DC (which amounts to about the same thing).

Practically impossible tasks are hard to delineate ahead of time. They're the accomplishments that represent incredible, almost logic-defying skill and luck.

The storyteller decides what is actually impossible and what is merely practically impossible.

extraordinary success

If the character has at least rank 10 in a skill and beats the DC by 20 or more on a normal skill check, the character has completed the task impossibly well.

checks without rolls

Taking 10: When the character is not in a rush and is not being threatened or distracted, the character may choose to take 10. Instead of rolling 1d20 for the skill check, calculate the character's result as if the character had rolled a 10.

Taking 20: When the character has plenty of time (generally 2 minutes for a skill that can normally be checked in 1 round, one full-round action, or one standard action), and when the skill being attempted carries no penalties for failure, the character can take 20. Instead of rolling 1d20 for the skill check, calculate the character's result as if the character had rolled a 20. Taking 20 means the character is trying until the character gets it right. Taking 20 takes about twenty times as long as making a single check would take.

skill points by class

Character Class	1st level Skill Points	Higher Level Skill Points per Level
Aristocrat	(4 + Int Modifier) x 4	4 + Int Modifier
Commoner	(2 + Int Modifier) x 4	2 + Int Modifier
Expert	(6 + Int Modifier) x 4	6 + Int Modifier
Fighter	(2 + Int Modifier) x 4	2 + Int Modifier
Gabrielite	(6 + Int Modifier) x 4	6 + Int Modifier
Michaelite	(6 + Int Modifier) x 4	6 + Int Modifier
Ramielite	(8 + Int Modifier) x 4	8 + Int Modifier
Raphaelite	(6 + Int Modifier) x 4	6 + Int Modifier
Rogue	(8 + Int Modifier) x 4	8 + Int Modifier
Urielite	(4 + Int Modifier) x 4	4 + Int Modifier
Warrior	(2 + Int Modifier) x 4	2 + Int Modifier

combining skill checks

When more than one character tries the same skill at the same time and for the same purpose, their efforts may overlap.

- **Individual Events:** Often, several characters attempt some action and each succeeds or fails on her own.
- **Helping the Leader:** Sometimes the individual PCs are essentially reacting to the same situation, but they can work together and assist one another. In this case, one character is considered the leader of the effort and makes a skill check while each helper makes a skill check against DC 10 (the character can't take 10 on this check). For each helper who succeeds, the leader gets a +2 circumstance bonus (as per the rule for favorable conditions). In many cases, a character's help won't be beneficial, or only a limited number of characters can help at once. The storyteller limits cooperation as she sees fit for the given conditions.
- **Skill Synergy:** It's also possible for a character to have two skills that work well together. In general, having 5 or more ranks in one skill gives the character a +2 synergy bonus on skill checks with its synergistic skills, as noted in the skill description.

skills

The following section summarizes all skills available in **Engel** and gives a short description of how to use them and what for to use them. Some skills can only be used if the character has at least one rank in the given skill. Others might be hindered by wearing armor; armor check penalties apply to these, even if the character using the skill is proficient with the given armor.

Special situations or uses of a skill have italic heading. Some skills might sport the Untrained, Retry, Synergy or Time headings, this indicates special rules for these skills, if no such heading is mentioned in a skill, no special rules apply. Untrained details the effects of untrained use. The Retry heading gives the conditions for a retry, the Time heading gives the standard amount of time required for a use of the skill, while the Synergy heading lists synergy effects with other skills.

appraise [int]

This skill allows a character to estimate the value of an item.

Check: The character can appraise common or well-known objects within 10% of their value (DC 12). Failure means the character estimates the value at 50% to 150% of actual value. The storyteller secretly rolls 2d6+3, multiplies by 10%, multiplies the actual value by that percentage, and tells the character that value for the item. (For a common or well-known item, the character's chance of estimating the value within 10% is fairly high even if the character fails the check — in such a case, the character made a lucky guess.)

Rare or exotic items require a successful check against DC 15, 20, or higher. If successful, the character estimates the value at 70% to 130% of its actual value. The storyteller secretly rolls 2d4+5, multiplies by 10%, multiplies the actual value by that percentage, and tells the character that value for the item. Failure means the character cannot estimate the item's value. All pre-flood items are considered rare and have a minimum DC of 20. The price for such items tends to vary widely as well due to their nature and the specialized needs of most potential buyers.

A magnifying glass gives a +2 circumstance bonus to Appraise checks involving any item that is small or highly detailed, such as a gem. A merchant's scale gives a +2 circumstance bonus to Appraise checks involving any items that are valued by weight, including anything made of precious metals. These bonuses stack.

Time: 1 minute.

Retry: Not on the same object, regardless of success.

Untrained: If the character is making the check untrained, for common items, failure means no estimate, and for rare items, success means an estimate of 50% to 150% (2d6+3 times 10%).

balance [dex]

This skill used for walking on precarious and dangerous surfaces or in areas where very little room is available for the feet.

Check: The character can walk on a precarious surface as a move-equivalent action. A successful check lets the character move at half the character's speed along the surface for 1 round. A failure means that the character can't move for 1 round. A failure by 5 or more means that the character falls.

The difficulty varies with the surface:

Surface	DC
17.5-30 cm wide	10
5-15 cm wide	15
Less than 5 cm wide	20
Uneven Floor	10
Surface Angled	+5*
Surface Slippery	+5*

*Cumulative; if both apply, use both.

• *Being Attacked while Balancing:* Attacks against the character are made as if the character were off balance: They gain a +2 attack bonus, and the character loses any Dexterity bonus to AC. If the character has 5 or more ranks in Balance, then the character can retain the Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) and his AC modifier in the face of attacks. If the character takes damage, the character must make a check again to stay balanced.

• *Accelerated Movement:* The character can try to walk a precarious surface more quickly than normal. If the character accepts a –5 penalty, the character can move at normal speed as a move-equivalent action. (Moving twice the character's speed in a round requires two checks.)

Synergy: If the character has 5 or more ranks in Tumble, he gains a +2 synergy bonus on Balance checks.

bluff [cha]

This skill is used to successfully lie or misinform other characters.

Check: A Bluff check is opposed by the target's Sense Motive check. Favorable and unfavorable circumstances weigh heavily on the outcome of a bluff. Two circumstances can weigh against the character: The bluff is hard to believe, or the action that the target is to take goes against the target's self-interest, nature, personality, orders, etc.

If it's important, the storyteller can distinguish between a bluff that fails because the target doesn't believe it and one that fails because it just asks too much of the target. For instance, if the target gets a +10 bonus because the bluff demands something risky of the target, and the Sense Motive check succeeds by 10 or less, then the target didn't so much see through the bluff as prove reluctant to go along with it. If the target succeeds by 11 or more, he has seen through the bluff (and would have done so even if it had not entailed any demand on him).

A successful Bluff check indicates that the target reacts as the character wishes, at least for a short time (usually 1 round or less) or believes something that the character wants him to believe.

A bluff requires interaction between the character and the target. Beings unaware of the character cannot be bluffed. Bluff has the following special uses:

• *Feinting in Combat:* The character can also use Bluff to mislead an opponent in combat so that he can't dodge the character's attack effectively. Doing so is a miscellaneous standard action that does not draw an attack of opportunity. If the character is successful, the next attack the character makes against the target does not allow him to use his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any). This attack must be made on or before your next turn. Feinting in this way against a nonhumanoid is difficult because it's harder to read a strange being's body language; the character suffers a –4 penalty. Against a being of animal Intelligence (1 or 2) it's even harder; the character suffers a –8 penalty. Against a nonintelligent being, it's impossible.

• *Creating a Diversion to Hide:* The character can use Bluff to help the character hide. A successful Bluff check can give the character the momentary diversion the character needs to attempt a Hide check while people are aware of the character.

Retry: Generally, a failed Bluff check makes the target too suspicious for a bluffer to try another one in the same circumstances. For feinting in combat, the character may retry freely.

Time: A bluff always takes at least 1 round (and is at least a full-round action) but can take much longer if the character tries something elaborate.

Synergy: Having 5 or more ranks in Bluff gives the character a +2 synergy bonus on Intimidate and Pick Pocket checks and a +2 synergy bonus on an Innuendo check to transmit a message. Also, if the character has 5 or more ranks of Bluff, the character gains a +2 synergy bonus on Disguise checks when the character knows that the character is being observed and the character tries to act in character.

climb [str]

This skill is used to scale a variety of surfaces or climb up or down ropes, pipes, walls, etc.

Check: With each successful Climb check, the character can advance up, down, or across a slope or a wall or other steep incline (or even a ceiling with handholds) one-half the character's speed as a miscellaneous full-round action. The character can move half that far, one-fourth of the character's speed, as a miscellaneous move-equivalent action. A slope is considered to be any incline of less than 60 degrees; a wall is any incline of 60 degrees or steeper.

A failed Climb check means that the character makes no progress, and a check that fails by 5 or more means that the character falls from whatever height the character has already attained.

A climber's kit gives a +2 circumstance bonus to Climb checks.

The DC of the check depends on the conditions of the climb:

• *Being attacked while climbing:* Since the character can't move to avoid a blow while climbing, enemies can attack the character as if the character were stunned: an attacker gets a +2 bonus, and the character loses any Dexterity bonus to Armor Class and his AC modifier.

The character cannot use a shield while climbing.

DC	Example Wall or Surface
0	A slope too steep to walk up. A knotted rope with a wall to brace against.
5	A rope with a wall to brace against, or a knotted rope
10	A surface with ledges to hold on to and stand on, such as a very rough wall a ship's rigging.
15	Any surface with adequate handholds and footholds (natural or artificial), such as a very rough natural rock surface or a tree. An unknotted rope.
20	An uneven surface with some narrow handholds and foot holds, such as a typical wall in a dungeon or ruins.
25	A rough surface, such as a natural rock wall or a brick wall.
25	Overhang or ceiling with handholds but no footholds.
—	A perfectly smooth, flat, vertical surface cannot be climbed.
–10*	Climbing a chimney (artificial or natural) or other location where one can brace against two opposite walls (reduces DC by 10).
–5*	Climbing a corner where the character can brace against per pendicular walls (reduces DC by 5).
+5*	Surface is slippery (increases DC by 5).

** These modifiers are cumulative*

Any time the character takes damage while climbing, make a Climb check against the DC of the slope or wall. Failure means the character falls from the character's current height and sustains the appropriate falling damage.

• *Accelerated climbing:* The character tries to climb more quickly than normal. As a miscellaneous full-round action, the character can attempt to cover the character's full speed in climbing distance, but the character suffers a –5 penalty on Climb checks and the character must make two checks each round. Each successful check allows the character to climb a distance equal to one-half the character's speed. By accepting the –5 penalty, the character can move this far as a move-equivalent action rather than as a full-round action.

• *Making the character's own handholds and footholds:* The character can make his or her own handholds and footholds by pounding pitons into a wall. Doing so takes 1 minute per piton, and one piton is needed per 1 meter. As with any surface with handholds and footholds, a wall with pitons in it has a DC of 15. In the same way, a climber with a handaxe or similar implement can cut holds in an ice wall.

• *Catching oneself when falling:* It's practically impossible to catch one's self on a wall while falling. Make a Climb check (with a DC equal to the wall's DC + 20) to do so. A slope is a lot easier to catch oneself on (the DC equals the slope DC + 10).

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Escape Artist gains a +2 synergy bonus on checks to Climb checks.

concentration [con]

This skill is used to retain a clear mind even in the face adversary and to make use of the power reserves of the body. Especially the Engel make use of this skill to be better able to employ their *Potestates*.

Check: The following table summarizes various types of distractions that cause the character to make a Concentration check while castin a spell. It also presents a variety of other applications with the appropriate difficulties:

Retry: Yes, though a success doesn't cancel the effects of a previous failure - i.e. the hit points used or 8 hours of mediation have passed without affect.

craft [int]

Craft is actually a catch-all term for a number of separate skills - all focused on creating something. Craft is a specialized skill, it has to be raised individually for each medium you want to work with. Skill ranks in one Craft skill will of no use with another.

Check: The character can practice a trade and make a decent living, earning about half the check result in Euro per week of dedicated work. The character knows how to use the tools of the trade, how to perform the craft's daily tasks, how to supervise untrained helpers, and how to handle common problems. (Untrained laborers and assistants earn an average of 10 Cent per day.)

However, the basic function of the Craft skill is to allow the character to make an item of the appropriate type. The DC depends on the difficulty of the item created. The DC, the character's check results, and the price of the item determine how long it takes to make the item. The item's finished price also determines the cost of raw materials. (Actually it is the skill level required, the time required, and the raw materials required that determine an item's price. That's why the item's price and DC determine how long it takes to make the item and the cost of the raw materials.)

All crafts require artisan's tools to give the best chance of success; if improvised tools are used instead, the check is made with a –2 circumstance penalty. On the other hand, masterwork artisan's tools provide a +2 circumstance bonus.

To determine how much time and money it takes to make an item:

1. Find the DC listed here or have the storyteller set one.

2. Pay one-third the item's price in raw materials.

3. Make a skill check representing one week's work.

If the check succeeds, multiply the check result by the DC. If the result times the DC equals the price of the item in Euro multiplied by 10, then the character has completed the item. (If the result times the DC equals double or triple the price of the item (multiplied by 10), then the character has completed the task in one-half or one-third the time, and so on.) If the result times the DC does not equal the price multiplied by 10, then it represents progress the character has made this week. Record the result and make a check for the next week. Each week the character makes more progress until the character's total reaches the price of the item multiplied by 10.

If the character fails the check, the character makes no progress this week. If the character fails by 5 or more, the character ruins half the raw materials and has to pay half the original raw material cost again.

• *Examples of crafts:* armorsmith, bowmaking, gunsmith, leatherworking, weaponsmith, woodworking.

• *Progress by the day:* The character can make checks by the day instead of by the week, in which case the character's progress (result times DC) is at one tenth the weekly rate.

• *Creating masterwork items:* The character can make a masterwork item (an item that conveys a bonus to its use through its exceptional craftsmanship, rather than through being magical). To create a masterwork version of an item on the table below, the character creates the masterwork component as if it were a separate item in addition to the standard item. The masterwork component has its own price and DC. Once both the standard component and the masterwork component are completed, the masterwork item is finished. (Note: The price the character pays for the masterwork component is one-third of the given amount, just as it is for the price in raw materials.)

Repairing items: Generally, the character can repair an item at the same DC that it takes to make it in the first place. The cost of repairing an item is one-fifth the item's price.

Retry: Yes, but each time the character misses by 5 or more, the character ruins half the raw materials and have to pay half the original raw material cost again.

DC	Application
10	Using a *Potestas* successfully while flying in a storm, heavy rain or similar phenomenon.
11 + damage dealt	Injury or failed saving throw during or before the use of a Signum skill but after the *Potestas* check was successful. If the Concentration check fails the hit points used to activate the *Potestas* are lost and the *Potestas* is not activated
12 + damage dealt	Injury or failed *Potestas* check during or before the use of a Sigil skill but after the *Potestas* check was successful. If the Concentration check fails the hit points used to activate the *Potestas* are lost.
13 + damage dealt	Injury or failed *Potestas* check during or before the use of a Scriptura skill but after the *Potestas* check was successful. If the Concentration check fails the hit points used to activate the *Potestas* are lost.
15	Meditating 4 hours while gaining benefits equal to 8 hours sleep.
17	Using a Signum skill on the defensive without provoking an attack of opportunity.
19	Using a Sigil skill on the defensive without provoking an attack of opportunity.
21	Using a Scriptura skill on the defensive without provoking an attack of opportunity.
20	Meditating 8 hours, to regenerate hit points as if the character had rested for one day - this application is only available to Engel.
21	Using a Signum-*Potestas* while Grappling or pinned. (Some *Potestates* cannot be used.)
22	Using a Sigil-*Potestas* while Grappling or pinned. (Some *Potestates* cannot be used.)
23	Using a Scriptura-*Potestas* while Grappling or pinned. (Some *Potestates* cannot be used.)
25	Meditating 8 hours, to regenerate hit points as if the character had enjoyed complete bed rest - this application is only available to Engel.

demolition [int; trained only]

This skill grants a character knowledge of explosives and allows him to set and disarms bombs. Furthermore they know how to transport such items without danger for themselves or others. Craft (Chemist) is required to produce explosives in and of themselves though.

Check: Setting a simple bomb in and of itself is not very hard and does not require a skill check, positioning it correctly and disarming a bomb will require checks as per the following table:

DC	Application
10	Set a pre-built bomb
15	Disarm a bomb
25	Build a bomb from scratch
Opposed	Disarm scratch-built bombs
-5	Schematics of specific bomb are available (only applicable to disarming a bomb)
+5	Appropriate tools and parts are not available (applicable only to building and setting one)

Failing to set a bomb correctly will garner the affected targets a +4 bonus to avoiding the damage of the bomb. Failing to disarm a bomb will detonate it at once, while failing to successfully built a bomb from scratch will detonate the bomb for 1d6 times 10% damage.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Disable Device gains a +2 synergy bonus on Checks to disarm a bomb.

Item	Craft	DC
Armor, shield	Armorsmith	10 + AC bonus
Longbow, shortbow	Bowmaking	12
Composite longbow, Composite shortbow	Bowmaking	15
Mighty bow	Bowmaking	15 +2/Str bonus
Crossbow	Weaponsmith	15
Simple melee or thrown weapon	Weaponsmith	12
Martial melee or thrown weapon	Weaponsmith	15
Exotic melee or thrown weapon	Weaponsmith	18
Musket	Gunsmith	17
Pistol	Gunsmith	20
Hunting Rifle	Gunsmith	21
Submachine Gun	Gunsmith	23
Assault Rifle	Gunsmith	25
Very simple item	Varies	5
Typical item	Varies	10
High-quality item	Varies	15
Complex or superior item	Varies	20
Using uncommon materials (especially pre-flood materials)		+5

diplomacy [cha]

This skill is used to communicate successfully with others and sway them to your opinion.

Check: The character can change others' attitudes with a successful check. In negotiations, participants roll opposed Diplomacy checks to see who gains the advantage. Opposed checks also resolve cases when two advocates or diplomats plead opposite cases in a hearing before a third party. The difficulty of a Diplomacy check is determined by the storyteller and depends on a variety of characters like original attitude, appearance, goal of the discussion and arguments used. Charisma ability checks are often times untrained Diplomacy checks.

Retry: Generally, retries do not work. Even if the initial check succeeds, the other character can only be persuaded so far, and a retry may do more harm than good. If the initial check fails, the other character has probably become more firmly committed to his position, and a retry is futile.

Synergy: If the character has 5 or more ranks in Bluff or Sense Motive, the character gains a +2 synergy bonus on Diplomacy checks. These bonuses stack.

disable device [int]

This skill is used to disable the functionality of an item either permanently or temporarily. It is also used to open locks.

Check: The storyteller makes the Disable Device check so that the character doesn't necessarily know whether the character has succeeded. The amount of time needed to make a check and the DC for the check depend on how tricky the device is. Disabling a simple device takes 1 round (and is at least a full-round action). Intricate or complex devices require 2d4 rounds. The character also can rig simple devices such as saddles or wagon wheels to work normally for a while and then fail or fall off some time later (usually after 1d4 rounds or minutes of use).

Disabling (or rigging or jamming) a fairly simple device has a DC of 10. More intricate and complex devices have a higher DC. The storyteller rolls the check. If the check succeeds, the character disables the device. If the check fails by up to 4, the character has failed but can try again. If the character fails by 5 or more, something goes wrong. If it's a trap, the character springs it. If it's some sort of sabotage, the character thinks the device is disabled, but it still works normally.

Time: The required times are listed in the table on the next page. The normal rules for adding up multiples apply.

Retry: Yes, though the character must be aware that the character has failed in order to try again.

disguise [cha]

This skill is used to disguise oneself - it may be used to either emulate one special character or a certain group of people.

Check: The character's Disguise check result determines how good the disguise is, and it is opposed by others' Spot check results. Make one Disguise check even if several people make Spot checks. The storyteller makes the character's Disguise check secretly so that the character is not sure how good it is.

If the character doesn't draw any attention to him or herself, however, others do not get to make Spot checks. If the character comes to the attention of people who are suspicious (such as a guard who is watching Commoners walking through a city gate), the storyteller can assume that such observers are taking 10 on their Spot checks.

Bonus/Penalty	Modification
+5	Minor details only / portraying a general type of character
-2	Disguised as different sex
-2	Per difference in age category (young, adulthood, middle age, old, venerable)
-2	Disguised as specific class
-8	Trying to appear human while being an Engel or vice versa
No roll possible	No props available
-2	Inappropriate props
+2	large number of props available
+4	Knows imitated character very well
-4	Knows imitated character only from pictures
-8	Knows imitated character only from hear-say

The effectiveness of the character's disguise depends in part on how much the character is attempting to change his or her appearance:

If the character is impersonating a particular individual, those who know what that person looks like get a bonus on their Spot checks (and are automatically considered to be suspicious of the character, so opposed checks are always invoked).

Familiarity	Bonus
+4	Recognizes on sight
+6	Friends or associates
+8	Close friends
+10	Intimate

Usually, an individual makes a check for detection immediately upon meeting the character and each hour thereafter. If the character casually meets many different beings, each for a short time, check once per day or hour, using an average Spot bonus for the group. For example, if a character is trying to pass for a merchant at a bazaar, the storyteller can make one Spot check per hour for the people she encounters using a +1 bonus on the check to represent the average of the crowd (most people with no Spot ranks and a few with good Spot skills).

DC	Time required	Application
10	1 round	Simple (example: a simple lock, a wagon wheel)
15	1d4 rounds	Tricky (example: an average lock, a steam engine)
20	2d4 rounds	Difficult (example: a good lock, a clock-work device)
25	3d4 rounds	Complex (example: a complex lock)
30	4d4 rounds	Very Complex (example: an electronic device)
+0	-	Destroy Device beyond working order - this is the default action
+5	double time	Device will break down at a certain point in the future (will vary by 1/10 of time)
+5	add 1/2 of time	Disable Device only temporarily (will vary by 1/10 of set time) and might be impossible
+5	double time	Deactivate Device without Damaging it
+5	-	Destroy Device beyond any repair or salvage
+5	double time	Avoid any evidence of tampering
+2	-	Appropriate tools
- 2	-	Inappropriate tools
no roll possible	-	no tools at all

Time: 1d3 times 10 minutes per try.

Retry: A character may try to redo a failed disguise, but once others know that a disguise was attempted they'll be more suspicious.

Synergy: If the character has 5 or more ranks of Bluff or 5 or more ranks in Perform (acting), the character gets a +2 synergy bonus on Disguise checks when the character knows that the character is being observed and the character tries to act in character.

escape artist [dex]

This skill is used to escape bonds of any kinds and also lend some familiarity with the use of ropes or binding others.

DC	Condition
10	Tie a firm knot
15	Tie a special knot, such as one that slips, slides slowly, or loosens with a tug
15	Tie a rope around oneself one-handed
15	Splice two ropes together (takes 5 minutes)
20	Escape Net
30	Escape Manacles
30	Escape Tight space
35	Escape Masterwork manacles
	Grappler's grapple check
	Escape Grappler
+10	Binding someone else with a rope
+12	Binding someone else with duct-tape
+14	Binding someone else with a plastic-rope

Check: Escape Artist may either be used to escape some form of generic bond, to work with a rope or to bind someone with some form of rope or similar restraint. The latter case this is an opposed skill check. The binding party does get a bonus though dependent on the type of rope used.

- *Manacles and masterwork manacles*: Manacles have a DC set by their construction.
- *Net:* Escaping from a net is a full-round action.
- *Tight space:* This is the DC for getting through a space where one's head fits but one's shoulders don't. If the space is long, such as in a chimney, the storyteller may call for multiple checks. The character can't fit through a space that the character's head does not fit through.
- *Grappler:* The character can make an Escape Artist check opposed by the enemy's grapple check to get out of a grapple or out of a pinned condition (so that the character is just being grappled). Doing so is a standard action, so if the character escapes the grapple the character can move in the same round. See "Wriggle Free" under Other Grappling Options.

Time: Making a check to escape from being bound up by ropes, manacles, or other restraints (except a grappler) requires 1 minute of work. Escaping a net or entangle spell is a full-round action. Squeezing through a tight space takes at least 1 minute, maybe longer, depending on how long the space is. Splicing a rope takes 5 minutes.

Retry: The character can make another check after a failed check if the character is squeezing through a tight space, making multiple checks. If the situation permits, the character can make additional checks or even take 20 as long as the character is not being actively opposed.

forgery [int]

This skill is used to forge official documents of any kind. To be able to use it, the character has to be able to read and write and know the appropriate language.

Check: Forgery requires writing materials appropriate to the document being forged, enough light to write by, wax for seals (if appropriate), and some time. Forgery is always opposed by the inspecting parties Forgery check.

Forger's Check Modifier	Condition
+8	hand-writing/print-quality is not specific to type a person or a machine
+4	forging an autograph with sample available
+4	official seal or masterwork copy of it available
+4	sample text available
+2	forger is familiar with document
+2	access to machine used to print similar documents
no roll possible	*forging a longer hand-written text without longer sample of hand-writing no roll possible*
	forging a machine written text without appropriate machine

The storyteller makes the check secretly so the character is not sure how good the forgery is. As with Disguise, the character doesn't need to make a check until someone examines the work. This Forgery check is opposed by the person who examines the document to check its authenticity. That person makes a Forgery check opposed to the forger's. The reader gains bonuses or penalties to his or her check as described in the table below.

The reader's forgery check is modified as follows:

Reader's Check Modifier	Condition
-2	Type of document unknown to reader
+0	Type of document some what known to reader
+2	Type of document well known to reader
-2	Handwriting not known to reader
+0	Handwriting somewhat known to reader
+2	Handwriting intimately known to reader
-2	Reader only casually reviews the document

As with Bluff, a document that contradicts procedure, orders, or previous knowledge or one that requires sacrifice on the part of the person checking the document can increase that character's suspicion (and thus create favorable circumstances for the checker's opposing Forgery check).

Time: Forging a very short and simple document takes about 1 minute. Longer or more complex documents take 1d4 minutes per page.

Retry: Usually, no. A retry is never possible after a particular reader detects a particular forgery. But the document created by the forger might still fool someone else. The result of a Forgery check for a particular document must be used for every instance of a different reader examining the document. No reader can attempt to detect a particular forgery more than once; if that one opposed check goes in favor of the forger, then the reader can't try using his own skill again, even if he's suspicious about the document.

gather information [cha]

This skill allows a character to find out about events, persons and locations by asking the right people the right questions.

Check: By succeeding at a skill check (DC 10), given an evening with a few Euro to use for making friends by buying drinks and such, the character can get a general idea of what the major news items are in a city, assuming no obvious reasons exist why the information would be withheld. The higher the check result, the better the information.

If the character wants to find out about a specific rumor, specific item, obtain a map, or do something else along those lines, the DC is 15 to 25 or higher. Due to their official role in the Angelitic Church and their high visibility, Engel often receive bonuses or penalties to Gather Information rolls, depending on the circumstances.

Retry: Yes, but it takes an evening or so for each check, and characters may draw attention to themselves if they repeatedly pursue a certain type of information.

handle animal [cha]

This skill is used when interacting with animals.

Check: The time required to get an effect and the DC depend on what the character is trying to do.

DC	Time required	Application
10	varies	Handle a domestic animal
15	varies	"Push" a domestic animal
15	2 months	Teach an animal tasks
20	2 months	Teach an animal unusual tasks
15+HD	1 year	Rear a wild animal
20 + HD	2months	Train a wild animal
		Training and rearing Dreamseed creatures is impossible

- *Handle a domestic animal:* This means to command a trained dog, to drive beasts of labor, to tend to tired horses, and so forth.
- *"Push" a domestic animal:* To push a domestic animal means to get more out of it than it usually gives, such as commanding a poorly trained dog or driving draft animals for extra effort.
- *Teach an animal tasks:* This involves teaching a domestic animal tricks. The character can train one type of animal per rank (chosen when the ranks are purchased) to obey commands and perform simple tricks. The character can work with up to three animals at one time, and the character can teach them general tasks. An animal can be trained for one general purpose only.
- *Teach an animal unusual tasks:* This is similar to teaching an animal tasks, except that the tasks can be something unusual for that breed of animal, such as training a dog to be a riding animal. Alternatively, the character can use this aspect of Handle Animal to train an animal to perform specialized tricks, such as teaching a horse to rear on command or come when whistled for or teaching a falcon to pluck objects from someone's grasp.
- *Rear a wild animal:* To rear an animal means to raise a wild being from infancy so that it is domesticated. A handler can rear up to three beings of the same type at once. A successfully domesticated animal can be taught tricks at the same time that it's being raised, or can be taught as a domesticated animal later.
- *Train a wild animal:* This application allows a user to train a wild creature to do certain tricks, but only at the character's command. The being is still wild, though usually controllable.

Time: For a task with a specific time frame, the character must spend half this time (at the rate of 3 hours per day per animal being handled) working toward completion of the task before the character makes the skill check. If the check fails, the character can't teach, rear, or train that animal. If the check succeeds, the character must invest the remainder of the time before the teaching, rearing, or training is complete.

Retry: Retries are allowed for handling and pushing domestic animals. They are not permitted for training and rearing.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks of Handle Animal gets a +2 synergy bonus on Ride checks.

heal [wis]

This skill allows a character to heal wounds and treat poisons and diseases by mundane means.

Check: The DC and effect depend on the task the character attempts.

DC	Application
15	First aid
15	Long-term care
15	Treat caltrop wound
Poison's DC	Treat poison
Disease's DC	Treat disease
-2	using a healer's kit or treatment in a primitive hospital (most monasteries)
-4	using a med kit or treatment in a hospital (most Raphaelites monasteries)
-5	treatment in a high-tech clinic (available only in a Himmel, very few monasteries of the Raphaelites and in the care of some Diadoches)
-10	using the correct antidote or antibodies (only applies to diseases and poisons)
no roll possible	Having no supplies at all (bandages and some simple tools are necessary for healing)

- *First aid:* First aid usually means saving a dying character. If a character has negative hit points and is losing hit points (at 1 per round, 1 per hour, or 1 per day), the healing character can make her stable. The injured character regains no hit points, but she does stop losing them. The check is a standard action.

• *Long-term care:* Providing long-term care means treating a wounded person for a day or more. If successful, the character lets the patient recover hit points or ability score points (lost to temporary damage) at twice the normal rate: 2 hit points per level for each day of light activity, 3 hit points per level for each day of complete rest, and 2 ability score points per day. The character can tend up to six patients at a time. Giving long-term care counts as light activity for the healer. The character cannot give long-term care to him or herself.

• *Treat wound that reduces base speed:* A being that has its speed reduced can be treated by the Heal skill. A successful Heal check removes this movement penalty. Treating such a wound is a standard action.

• *Treat poison:* Treating poison involves treating a character who has been poisoned and who is going to take more damage from the poison (or suffer some other effect).

Every time the poisoned character makes a saving throw against the poison, the character makes a Heal check. The poisoned character uses the character's result in place of her saving throw if the character's Heal result is higher.

• *Treat disease:* To treat a disease means to tend a diseased character. Every time the diseased character makes a saving throw against disease effects, the character makes a Heal check. The diseased character uses the character's result in place of his or her saving throw if the character's Heal result is higher.

Synergy: If the character has 5 or more ranks in Profession (herbalist) or Knowledge (biology) the character gets a +2 synergy bonus on Heal checks.

hide [dex]

This skill allows a character to hide himself or an object.

Check: The character's Hide check is opposed by the Spot check of anyone who might see the character or object. The character or object can move up to 4 meters per round and hide at no penalty. At more than 4 meters and up to the 9 meters speed, the character suffers a –5 penalty. It's practically impossible (–20 penalty) to hide while moving faster than this.

Larger and smaller beings and objects get size bonuses and size penalties on Hide checks: Fine +16, Diminutive +12, Tiny +8, Small +4, Large –4, Huge –8, Gargantuan –12, Colossal –16.

If people are observing the character, even casually, the character or object cannot be hidden from them. The character can run around a corner or something so that the character is out of sight and then hide, but the others then know at least where the character or object went. If the character's observers are momentarily distracted (as by a Bluff check; see above), though, the character can attempt to hide. While the others turn their attention from the character, the character can attempt a Hide check if the character can get to a hiding place of some kind. (As a general guideline, the hiding place has to be within 30cm per rank the character has in Hide.) This check, however, is at –10 because the character has to move fast.

Circumstances are of great importance to this skill - storytellers should feel free to assign a variety of bonuses or penalties depending on the equipment available to the character and his surrounding. Hiding an object might be impossible due to the surrounding area.

Time: Creatures can hide within one round. The time required to hide an object depends mainly on the size of said object. Medium and smaller objects and persons need an action to hide or be hidden. Large objects require 1 minute, huge objects require 10 minutes, Gargantuan objects require 1 hour. Depending on the surrounding and tools available this time might be shorter (e.g. using camouflage nets) or take longer (e.g. if the object has to be buried). It does include moving the object up to 10 meters though.

innuendo [wis; trained only]

This skill is used to transmit messages to another by using signs or sounds.

Check: The DC for a basic message is 10. The DC is 15 or 20 for complex messages, especially those that rely on getting across new information. Also, the character can try to discern the hidden message in a conversation between two other characters that are using this skill. The DC is the skill check of the character using Innuendo, and for each piece of information that the eavesdropper is missing, that character suffers a –2 penalty on the check. For example, if a character eavesdrops on people planning to assassinate a visiting diplomat, the eavesdropper suffers a –2 penalty if he doesn't know about the diplomat. Whether trying to send or intercept a message, a failure by 5 or more points means that some false information has been implied or inferred.

The storyteller makes the character's Innuendo check secretly so that the character doesn't necessarily know whether the character was successful.

Retry: Generally, retries are allowed when trying to send a message, but not when receiving or intercepting one. Each retry carries the chance of miscommunication.

Synergy: If the character has 5 or more ranks in Bluff, the character gains a +2 synergy bonus on the check to transmit (but not receive) a message. If the character has 5 or more ranks in Sense Motive, the character gains a +2 synergy bonus on the check to receive or intercept (but not transmit) a message.

intimidate [cha or str]

This skills allows a character to frighten others and therewith force them to do his bidding. Either the Cha or Str modifier may be used for this skill, the character using the skill chooses the ability to be used.

Check: The DC is typically 10 + the target's Hit Dice. Any bonuses that a target may have on saving throws against fear increase the DC.

Retry: Generally, retries do not work. Even if the initial check succeeds, the other character can only be intimidated so far, and a retry doesn't help. If the initial check fails, the other character has probably become more firmly resolved to resist the intimidator, and a retry is futile.

Synergy: If the character has 5 or more ranks in Bluff , the character gets a +2 synergy bonus on Intimidate checks.

Intuit Direction [Wis; trained only]

This skill allows a character to determine true north or find his way in a unfamiliar area.

Check: By concentrating for 1 minute, the character can determine where true north lies in relation to the character (DC 15). If the check fails, the character cannot determine direction. On a natural roll of 1, the character errs and mistakenly identify a random direction as true north. The storyteller makes the character's check secretly so that the character doesn't know whether the character rolled a successful result or a 1.

The DC of finding ones way in a unfamiliar area depends on the amount of landmarks available and the complexity of the area (e.g. a small office building would be 10 while the Maze of Rhodes would be DC 30).

Retry: The character can use Intuit Direction more than once per day. The roll represents how sensitive to direction the character is at that point in the day. Use the most recently rolled number for all other checks in the same day. Finding ones way in unfamiliar surrounding might be retried only when discovering that the last check failed.

Jump [Str]

This skill allows a character to jump further than others.

Check: The character jumps a minimum distance plus an additional distance depending on the amount by which the character's Jump check result exceeds 10. The maximum distance of any jump is a function of the character's height.

*The character must move 6 meters before jumping. A character can't take a running jump in heavy armor.

The distances listed are for characters with speeds of 9 meters. If the character has a lower speed (from armor, encumbrance, or weight carried, for instance), reduce the distance jumped proportionally. If the character has a higher speed (because the character is a Urielite, for instance), increase the distance jumped proportionally. Distance moved by jumping is counted against maximum movement in a round normally. If the character intentionally jumps down from a height, the character might take less damage than if the character just fell. If the character succeeds at a Jump check (DC 15), the character takes damage as if the character had fallen 10 meters less than the character actually did.

Synergy: If the character has 5 or more ranks in Tumble, the character gets a +2 synergy bonus on Jump checks.

A character who has the Run feat and who makes a running jump increases the distance or height he clears by one-fourth, but not past the maximum.

Knowledge [Int; trained only]

These skills simulate in-depth knowledge of a character of a certain subject. This is a specialized skill.

Check: Answering a question within the character's field of study has a DC of 10 (for really easy questions), 15 (for basic questions), or 20 to 30 (for really tough questions). Untrained skill checks will grant the user only common knowledge.

- *Examples of Knowledge skills:* Biology, Chemistry, Computer, History, Physics, Pre-flood Religion, Tactics

The Angelitic Church had forbidden the teaching and spreading of many knowledges. Just possessing them is a punishable crime and can be the source of much trouble.

Retry: No. The check represents what the character knows, and thinking about a topic a second time doesn't let the character know something the character never learned in the first place.

Language

Languages do not work like other skills; there are no ranks in Language, but rather learning a new knowledge requires a certain amount of skill points depending on the complexity of the language and its application – the table below lists languages according to their spread and availability. Knowing how to read and write is forbidden for laymen and some members of the Church (notably some of the Engel); being able to do so is a punishable crime if found out. just one dot in reading and writing means that the character is just able to read very slowly and will only understand simple words. Languages which are not commonly known and not spoken generally are marked with a cross (†); some languages might only be spoken in some areas of Europe or even more distant lands. If a character

Type of Jump	Minimum Distance	Additional Distance	Maximum Distance
Running jump*	1,5 meters	+0,25 m/1 point above 10	Height X 6
Standing jump	0,25 m	+0,25 ft./2 points above 10	Height X 2
Running high jump*	0,5 m	+0,25 m/4 points above 10	Height X 1 1/2
Standing high jump	0,5 m	+0,25 m/8 points above 10	Height
Jump back	0,25 m	+0,25 m/8 points above 10	Height

has half the number of required skill points, he will be able to speak the language in a slow and very simple manner and will grasp basic concepts when listening to others speaking said language.

Skill points required	Language gained
1	Regional Dialect
2	Common
2	Latin
2	English
2	Arabic
2	Reading and writing (the skill point cost is per script)
2	Old German (†)
2	Old Spanish (†)
2	Old-French (†)
2	Old-Greek (†)
2	Old-Hebrew (†)

listen [wis]

This skill allows a character to notice noises or eavesdrop on conversations.

Check: Make a Listen check against a DC that reflects how quiet the noise is that the character might hear or against an opposed Move Silently check.

The storyteller may make the Listen check so that the character doesn't know whether not hearing anything means that nothing is there, or that the character rolled low.

DC	Sound
0	People talking
5	A person in medium armor walking at a slow pace (3 m/round) trying not to make noise.
10	An unarmored person walking at a slow pace (4,5 m/round) trying not to make any noise
15	A 1st-level Rogue using Move Silently within 10 meters of the listener
19	A cat stalking
30	An owl gliding in for a kill
+1	Per 3 meters from the listener
+5	Through a door
+15	Through a stone wall

In the case of people trying to be quiet, the listed DCs could be replaced by Move Silently checks, in which case the listed DC would be the average result (or close to it).

Retry: The character can make a Listen check every time the character has a chance to hear something in a reactive manner. As a full-round action, the character may try to hear something the character failed to hear previously.

move silently [dex]

This skill is used to sneak up on others or to avoid detection by noises.

Check: The character's Move Silently check is opposed by the Listen check of anyone who might hear the character. The character can move up to one-half the character's normal speed at no penalty. At more than one-half and up to the character's full speed, the character suffers a –5 penalty. It's practically impossible (–20 penalty) to move silently while running or charging.

perform [cha]

This skill allows a character to actively engage in some kind of performance which some might considered artistic. The character has mastered one kind of performance per rank in this skill; these must be chosen, when the skill rank increases.

Check: Before the performance the character must set a quality (and therewith a DC) he wants to achieve. If the test is not successful, the audience might be less than pleased.

Examples of types of performance: instruments (each is one type of performance), oration, preach, juggling, acting, storytelling, etc.

DC	Quality of the Performance
10	Routine performance. Trying to earn money by playing in public is essentially begging. The character earns 1d10 Cents/day.
15	Enjoyable performance. In a prosperous city, the character can earn 1d10 times 10 Cents/day.
20	Great performance. In a prosperous city, the character can earn 3d10 cents/day. With time, the character may be invited to join a professional troupe and may develop a regional reputation.
25	Memorable performance. In a prosperous city, the character can earn 1d6 Euro/day. With time, the character may come to the attention of noble patrons and develop a national reputation, he may be invited by a Diadoche or an Archbishop.
30	Extraordinary performance. In a prosperous city, the character can earn 3d6 Euro/day. With time, the character may draw attention from distant potential patrons (possibly even of the most powerful Diadoches or the Ab of a Himmel).

Retry: Retries are allowed, but they don't negate previous failures, and an audience that has been unimpressed in the past is going to be prejudiced against future performances. (Increase the DC by 2 for each previous failure.)

pick pocket [dex; trained only]

This skill allows a character to pick pockets and perform feats of legerdemain.

Check: When performing this skill under close observation, the character's skill check is opposed by the observer's Spot check. The observer's check doesn't prevent the character from performing the action, just from doing it unnoticed. The opponent detects the attempt if her check result beats the character's check result, regardless of whether the character got the item. If the character tries to steal something from a target and but his target succeeds at the spot-check, the target will prevent the character from stealing if he succeeds at an opposed Dex check.

DC	Application
10	Palm a coin-sized object, make a coin disappear
20	Lift a small object from a person

Retry: A second Pick Pocket attempt against the same target, or when being watched by the same observer, has a DC +10 higher than the first skill check if the first check failed or if the attempt was noticed.

Synergy: If the character has 5 or more ranks in Bluff, the character gains a +2 synergy bonus on Pick Pocket checks.

pilot [dex]

This skill allows a character to operate some kind of vehicle. The character has mastered one kind of vehicle per rank in this skill, only vehicles may be chosen which are readily accessible to a character.

Check: Typical piloting task do not require any check. But when the vehicle encounters combat, adverse conditions or the pilot tries to do special maneuvers or pushes the limits of the vehicle a test might be called for. Failing a pilot check might have catastrophic results depending on the type of vehicle and the maneuver.

Examples of vehicle-types: muscle powered land vehicle, animal driven land vehicle, engine powered land vehicle, muscle powered water vehicle, wind driven water vehicle, engine powered water vehicle, jet powered air vehicles, propeller driven air vehicles, rotary powered air vehicles and airships.

Some examples and their DCs maybe found in the table below:

DC	Maneuver
5	easy maneuvers (examples: low-speed turn or roll)
10	average maneuvers (example: half-loop or long roll)
15	tough maneuver (example: tight turn or a loop and turn)
20	Challenging maneuver (example: hard bank or bootlegger)
25	Heroic maneuvers (examples: jumping an obstacle or sliding past it at high-speed) +/- vehicles maneuverability

profession [wis; trained only]

This skill simulates the professional training a character has received. This is a specialized skill. the Profession skill represents an aptitude in a vocation requiring a broader range of less specific knowledge. To draw a modern analogy, if an occupation is a service industry, it is probably a Profession skill. If it is in the manufacturing sector, it's probably a Craft skill.

Check: The character can practice a trade and make a decent living, earning about half the check result in Euro per week of dedicated work. The character knows how to use the tools of the trade, how to perform the profession's daily tasks, how to supervise untrained helpers, and how to handle common problems. For example, a sailor knows how to tie several basic knots, how to tend and repair sails, and how to stand a deck watch at sea. The storyteller sets DCs for specialized tasks.

Examples of crafts: Apothecary, Boater, Bookkeeper, Brewer, Cook, Farmer, Fisher, Guide, Herbalist, Innkeeper, Lumberjack, Miller, Miner, Porter, Rancher, Sailor, Scribe, Tanner.

Retry: An attempt to use a Profession skill to earn an income cannot be retried. The character is stuck with whatever weekly wage the check result brought the character. (Another check may be made after a week to determine a new income for the next period of time.) An attempt to accomplish some specific task can usually be retried.

read lips [int; trained only]

This skill allows a character to read lips and therewith understand conversations without hearing the actual words.

Check: The character must be within 9m of the speaker and be able to see her speak. The character must be able to understand the speaker's language. (Use of this skill is language-dependent.) The base DC is 15, and it is higher for complex speech or an inarticulate speaker. The character has to concentrate on reading lips for a full minute before making the skill check, and the character can't perform some other action during this minute. The character can move at half speed but not any faster, and the character must maintain a line of sight to the lips being read. If the check succeeds, the character can understand the general content of a minute's worth of speaking, but the character usually still misses certain details.

If the check fails, the character can't read the speaker's lips. If the check fails by 5 or more, the character draws some incorrect conclusion about the speech.

The storyteller rolls the character's check so the character don't know whether the character succeeded or missed by 5.

Retry: The skill can be used once per minute.

repair [int; trained only]

This skill allows a character to repair machinery.

Check: Most Repair checks will serve to return pre-flood items or newly built mechanical machines to working order, be they cars, motor-boats, pumps or steam-engines. The DC is set by the storyteller and will generally be between 10 and 15 for simple repairs; returning machines which have been broken for a long time or which sustained severe damage to working order has a DC of 20 or more.

Without appropriate tools the character suffers a -5 penalty to his skill check, while very good tools and an abundance of spare parts will grant him a bonus of +5.

Characters with this skill might try to jury-rig and therewith temporarily return a piece of machinery to working order, this is only possible if a simple repair would be appropriate. This reduces the DC by 5 but every use (or every 5 minutes of use) have a cumulative 10% chance that the machine will break down again.

Time: Most simple repairs take 2d10 minutes, while complex repairs take 1d6 hours. Jury-rigging takes half this time.

Synergy: A skill rank of 5 or more in an appropriate craft, knowledge or profession skill nets the character a +2 synergy bonus.

ride [dex]

This skill allows a character to ride a horse and exert a limited control over the actions of his mount.

Check: Typical riding actions don't require checks. The character can saddle, mount, ride, and dismount from a mount without a problem. Mounting or dismounting is a move-equivalent action. Some tasks require checks:

DC	Application
5	Guide with knees
5	Stay in saddle
10	Fight with warhorse
15	Leap
20	Control Mount in Battle
20	Fast mount or dismount
15	Cover
15	Soft fall
+5	Riding bare-back
-2	military saddle

• *Guide with knees:* The character can react instantly to guide the character's mount with the character's knees so that the character can use both hands in combat. Make the check at the start of the character's round. If the character fails, the character can only use one hand this round because the character needs to use the other to control the character's mount.

• *Stay in saddle:* The character can react instantly to try to avoid falling when the character's mount rears or bolts unexpectedly or when the character takes damage.

• *Fight with warhorse:* If the character directs a war-trained mount to attack in battle, the character can still make the character's own attack or attacks normally.

• *Cover:* The character can react instantly to drop down and hang alongside the mount, using it as one-half cover. The character can't attack or cast spells while using the character's mount as cover. If the character fails, the character doesn't get the cover benefit.

• *Soft fall:* The character reacts instantly to try to take no damage when the character falls off a mount, such as when it is killed or when it falls. If the character fails, the character takes 1d6 points of falling damage.

• *Leap:* The character can get a mount to leap obstacles as part of its movement. Use the character's Ride skill modifier or the mount's Jump skill modifier (whichever is lower) to see how far the mount can jump. The DC (15) is what the character needs to roll to stay on the mount when it leaps.

• *Control mount in battle:* As a move-equivalent action, the character can attempt to control a light horse, pony, or heavy horse while in combat. If the character fails, the character can do nothing else that round. The character does not need to roll for warhorses or warponies.

• *Fast mount or dismount:* The character can mount or dismount as a free action. If the character fails the check, mounting or dismounting is a move-equivalent action. (The character can't attempt a fast mount or dismount unless the character can perform the mount or dismount as a move-equivalent action this round.) Armor check penalties apply to this action.

Synergy: If the character has 5 or more ranks in Handle Animal, the character gains a +2 synergy bonus to Ride checks.

search [int]

This skill allows a character to be better at finding something when actively looking for it.

Check: The character generally must be within 3 meters of the object or surface to be searched. It takes 1 round to search a 4.5m area or a volume of goods 4.5m on a side; doing so is a full-round action.

DC	Application
10	Ransack a chest full of junk to find a certain item
20	Notice a typical secret door or a simple trap
21+	Find a difficult trap not of stone
30	Notice a well-hidden secret door

sense motive [wis]

This skill allows a character to discern the emotions and feelings of another character; it is most commonly used to find out if someone is lying.

Check: A successful check allows the character to avoid being bluffed. The character can also use the skill to tell when something is up (something

odd is going on that the character was unaware of) or to assess someone's trustworthiness. Trying to gain information with this skill takes at least 1 minute, and the character could spend a whole evening trying to get a sense of the people around the character.

Characters skilled at Sense Motive sometimes have hunches (DC 20) – this essentially means making a gut assessment of the social situation. The character can get the feeling from another's behavior that something is wrong, such as when the character is talking to an impostor. Alternatively, the character can get the feeling that someone is trustworthy.

Retry: No, though the character may make a Sense Motive check for each bluff made on the character.

spot [wis]

This skill allows a character to notice something hidden without actively searching for it.

Check: The Spot skill is used primarily to detect characters or beings who are hiding. Typically, Spot is opposed by the Hide check of the being trying not to be seen. Sometimes a being isn't intentionally hiding but is still difficult to see, so a successful Spot check is necessary to notice it. Spot is also used to detect someone in disguise. Every 3 meters away from the target impose a -1 penalty upon the check result.

Spot check every time the character has the opportunity to notice something in a reactive manner. As a full-round action, the character may attempt to spot something that the character failed to spot previously, this should only be allowed if it is brought to the character's attention that there is something to notice.

swim [str]

This skill allows a character to swim better than others.

Check: A successful Swim check allows the character to swim one-quarter of the character's speed as a move-equivalent action or one-half the character's speed as a full-round action. Roll once per round. If the character fails, the character makes no progress through the water. If the character fails by 5 or more, the character goes underwater and starts to drown.

If the character is underwater (whether drowning or swimming underwater intentionally), the character suffers a cumulative –1 penalty to the character's Swim check for each consecutive round the character has been underwater.

The DC for the Swim check depends on the water:

DC	Water Conditions
10	Calm water
15	Rough water
20	Stormy water

Each hour that the character swims, make a Swim check (DC 20) or take 1d6 points of subdual damage from fatigue.

tumble [dex; trained only]

This skill allows a character to perform a variety of acrobatics. The character can't use this skill if the character's speed has been reduced by armor, excess equipment, or loot.

Check: The character can land softly when the character falls or tumbles past opponents. The character can also tumble to entertain an audience (as with the Perform skill).

DC	Application
15	Treat a fall as if it were 3 meters shorter when determining damage.
15	Tumble up to 6 meters (as part of normal movement), suffering no attacks of opportunity while doing so. Failure means the character tumbles 6 meters but suffers at tacks of opportunity normally.
25	Tumble up to 6 meters (as part of normal movement), suffering no attacks of opportunity while doing so and moving through areas occupied by enemies (over, under, or around them). Failure means the character tumbles 6 meters and can move through enemy-occupied areas but suffers attacks of opportunity normally.

Retry: An audience, once it has judged a tumbler as uninteresting, is not receptive to repeat performances. The character can try to reduce damage from a fall as an instant reaction once per fall. The character can attempt to tumble as part of movement once per round.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Tumble gains a +3 dodge bonus to his AC modifier when executing the fight defensively standard or full-round action instead of a +2 dodge bonus to it. A character with 5 or more ranks in Tumble gains a +6 dodge bonus to his AC modifier when executing the total defense standard action instead of a +4 dodge bonus.

If the character has 5 or more ranks in Jump, the character gains a +2 synergy bonus on Tumble checks. If the character has 5 or more ranks in Tumble, the character gains a +2 synergy bonus on Balance checks.

wilderness lore [wis]

This skill allows a character to survive in the wilderness for indefinite time, he can even guide others and supply them with food and secure shelter depending on his skill. It is also used when tracking someone.

Check: The difficulty of any skill checks depend on the task at hand as per the following table:

DC	Application
10	Get along in the wild. Move up to one-half the character's overland speed while hunting and foraging (no food or water supplies needed). The character can provide food and water for one other person for every 2 points by which the character's check result exceeds 10.
15	Gain +2 on all Fortitude saves against severe weather while moving up to one-half the character's over land speed, or gain +4 if stationary. The character may grant the same bonus to one other character for every 1 point by which the check result exceeds 15.
15	Avoid getting lost or avoid natural hazards, such as quicksand.

Retry: For getting along in the wild or for gaining the Fortitude save bonus, the character makes a check once every 24 hours. The result of that check applies until the next check is made. To avoid getting lost or avoid natural hazards, the character makes a check whenever the situation calls for one. Retries to avoid getting lost in a specific situation or to avoid a specific natural hazard are not allowed.

Synergy: If the character has 5 or more ranks of Intuit Direction, the character gets a +2 synergy bonus on Wilderness Lore checks to avoid getting lost.

potestates

The *Potestates* of the Engel differ widely from those skills which are available to all characters in Engel. A character can only use these Potestates if he has acquired the required feats which are only available to members of the Engel classes. Some of the servants of the Lord of the Flies have gained access to perverted versions of some of these abilities. These do not require a prerequisite but are only available to certain characters solely controlled by the storyteller.

Many *Potestates* vary in effect depending on the result of the roll while others show either their full effect or no effect at all. The DC can also vary; all necessary details for the individual Potestates are found in the rules accompanying the *Potestates* skill. All *Potestates* checks are handled like skill checks.

If no range is mentioned in the description the maximum range of the *Potestas* is 30 feet and the user has to be able to see his target. All *Potestates* take effect at once, unless other details are given in the description.

Please note that almost all *Potestates* require the expenditure of hit points. The user employs his own body to channel and fuel the *Potestas*. In most cases these points are lost, regardless of the success of the skill check. If a character does not have enough hit points to use a *Potestas*, he cannot use it. It is possible to have 0 hit points after using a *Potestas*, but this will only result in loosing consciousness, it cannot kill an Engel. Losing hit points in this manner does not cause pain, but rather invokes a strange euphoria.

Unless stated otherwise, using *Potestates* requires a full-action and provokes attacks of opportunity. None of the *Potestas* can be used untrained.

potestates of the michaelites

bolt of authority [dex]

Prerequisites: Use of *Bolt of Authority* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

The character is able to absorb electrical charges from the air around him and smite an enemy with a bolt of lightning composed of the energy gathered this way.

Check: *Bolt of Authority* requires a ranged-touch attack. The result of the skill check determines the amount of damage caused and the difficulty of the Reflex save of the target to receive only half damage. More experienced Michaelites can extend this *Potestas* to affect one additional target for every level in the Michaelite class above 7th – in such cases the *Potestas* very much resembles a chain-lightning arcing from one enemy to the next. The maximum range of a *Bolt of Authority* is 30 meters.

Result	Damage	Reflex Save DC
1-15	2d6	10
16-25	4d6	15
26+	6d6	20

corona [dex]

Prerequisites: Use of *Corona* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

The character may charge the air around him therewith causing a soft glow to surround him, causing him to appear majestic and clearly displaying his heavenly heritage.

Check: The character gains a +4 bonus to his Charisma for one minute. The DC to activate this *Potestas* is 20.

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts, no further attempts to activate the *Potestas* may be made.

hand of god [dex]

Prerequisites: Use of *Hand of God* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

With a mere touch, the Michaelite can discharge electrical energies which he has gathered

beforehand into the body of an enemy and therewith harm him.

Check: *Hand of God* requires a successful touch attack, the result of the skill roll determines the damage the target will take and the DC of the Fortitude save for half damage.

Result	Damage	DC for Fort Save
1-15	2d6	10
16-25	4d6	15
26+	6d6	20

inner calm [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Inner Calm* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 1.

This *Potestas* enables an Engel to retain calm and concentration even while under stress or in combat.

Check: The result of the skill check determines the duration of this *Potestas*. While it lasts, the Engel receives an enhancement bonus of 1 for every two class levels to all his Concentration skill rolls.

Result	Duration
1-5	1 round
6-15	1 minute
16-25	5 minutes
25-35	30 minutes
36+	3 hours

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts, no further attempts to activate the *Potestas* may be made.

lord of the body [con]

Prerequisites: Use of *Lord of the Body* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

By calling upon the Potestas of the Lord, the user of this *Potestas* can temporarily enhance his own Strength or Dexterity.

Check: Using *Lord of the Body* requires a standard action. If the skill check is successful, the user will gain a bonus dependent on the result of the test to either Dexterity or Strength for the next 10 rounds (1 minute).

Result	Bonus
1-14	no bonus is gained
15-19	+2
20-24	+4
25-29	+6
30+	+8

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts no further attempts to activate this *Potestas* may be made.

omnipotence [cha]

Prerequisites: Use of *Omnipotence* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

With the power of his voice and an eerie blue glow in his eyes, the Engel may force his will upon another being and command it as he pleases.

Check: This *Potestas* is more, potent version of *The Voice*, allowing the user to give even suicidal commands. The Engel may only give one command (which may be of any complexity) per use of this *Potestas*.

Result	Fort Save DC
1-5	10
6-15	15
16-25	20
25-35	25
36+	30

outcry [con]

Prerequisites: Use of *Outcry* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

The character can emit a scream which can kill a single creature.

Check: The result of the skill check determines the difficulty of the Fortitude save of the target. If the target successfully saves, it receives 3d6 damage; if it fails to save against *Outcry*, it dies instantly, its cellular structure ripped apart.

Result	Fort Save DC
1-15	10
16-25	15
26+	20

soul of the fellowship [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Soul of the Fellowship* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 0.

Using the *Potestas,* the character can establish telepathic contact with the rest of his fellowship, to discuss strategies and give orders. The fellowship may respond, but is unable to establish contact with other members.

Check: The DC for using this *Potestas* is 10, modified by the distance between the most remote member of the fellowship and the Michaelite. The maximum range is 100 meters. Every minute of using this ability requires a skill check. This ability may be activated as a free action.

Distance	DC Modifier
up to 10 m	+0
11–100 m	+10
101–1000 m	+20

strategic mind [int]

Prerequisites: Use of *Strategic Mind* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 1.

The user of this *Potestas* gains access to a collective consciousness of strategies for a variety of

situations, be they combat, tactics or extraordinary stratagems. This knowledge may then be broadcast to other members of a fellowship.

Check: The result of the skill check determines the duration of this *Potestas*. All members of the fellowship within 100 meters receive a +1 morale-bonus to all attack rolls, initiative rolls and saving throws for the duration of the *Strategic Mind*.

Result	Duration
1-5	1 round
6-15	1 minute
16-25	5 minutes
25-35	30 minutes
36+	3 hours

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts, no further attempts to activate the *Potestas* may be made.

tohu wa bohu [cha]

***Prerequisites*:** Use of *Tohu Wa Bohu* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 2 per target.

By activating this *Potestas*, the Michaelite causes his eyes to glow an eerie blue and his voice to change, creating a terrifying demeanor that spooks and panics a group of people.

Check: The result of the *Tohu Wa Bohu* skill check determines the DC of the Will save to resists its effect and sets the morale penalty that those affected suffer when failing that save. Those under the effect of this *Potestas* receive the morale penalty to all attacks, saves and skill checks.

The maximum range of this *potestas* is 100 meters, *Tohu Wa Bohu* will affect one being per class level of the Michaelite, beginning with the one closest to him. Most targets will flee and only battle-hardened soldiers will be able to engage the Engel.

Result	Will Save DC	Penalty
1-9	none	none
10-14	10	-2
15-19	15	-4
20-24	20	-6
25-29	25	-8
30+	30	-10

the voice [cha]

***Prerequisites*:** Use of *The Voice* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 1.

The character is able to modify his voice to either sound enchanting, commanding or unpleasant; this change in modulation is almost hypnotic for most humans.

Check: Using this *Potestas* the character can convince a target to agree to any proposition, even if it would be unacceptable otherwise. The character has to be able to communicate verbally with the given target and the proposition must not be life threatening. Even when the Engel has long gone, the target will still consider the proposition to be reasonable and will not realize that he has acted against his conviction.

The result of the skill check determines the difficulty of the Will save of the target to resist the effects of the *The Voice*. The Engel may only give one command (which may be of any complexity though) per use of this *Potestas*.

Result	Will Save DC
1-5	10
6-15	15
16-25	20
25-35	25
36+	30

potestates of the gabrielites

chalice of vengeance [str]

***Prerequisites*:** Use of *Chalice of Vengeance* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

While in battle the Engel may enter a combat trance which allows him to perform superhuman feats, strengthen his sword-arm and make himself more resistant to pain. On the downside, he will be able to follow orders and is unable to distinguish between foes and allies.

Check: To achieve the trance the Engel has to succeed at a *Potestas* check (DC 15). In this state, he gains a bonus of +4 to STR and CON but also suffers a penalty of -4 to his Armor Class. The Gabrielite may not willingly end the trance prematurely, but will fight for the entire duration of one minute as long as he can see potential targets – this may include members of his fellowship as well as other allies and friends. No other *Potestates* maybe activated while in the grip of *Chalice of Vengeance,* but other *Potestates* are not prematurely aborted.

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts, no further attempts to activate the *Potestas* may be made.

daniel's gift [con]

***Potestates*:** Use of *Daniel's Gift* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 1.

The character may temporarily change the structure of his skin to be able to resist the damaging effects of fire, becoming supernaturally immune to heat.

Check: Activating *Daniel's Gift* requires a *Potestas* check (DC 20). If the skill check is successful the Gabrielite gains Fire Resistance 12, ignoring the first 12 points of fire damage every round. *Daniel's Gift* remains active for one minute after activation.

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts, no further attempts to activate the *Potestas* may be made.

david's agility [dex]

Prerequisites: Use of *David's Agility* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 1.

When using this *Potestas* the character gains extraordinary quickness and dexterity.

Check: With a successful *Potestas* check (DC 20), the Engel gains a bonus of +2 to his Dexterity and doubles his movement speed for 1 minute.

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts, no further attempts to activate the *Potestas* may be made.

god's armor [con]

Prerequisites: Use of *God's Armor* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

Small blades, thorns and dagger-like projections sprout from the skin and body of the Engel. These allow him to inflict grievous wounds while unarmed, as well as defend him from harm. The blades have a dark, metallic sheen but are not composed of any know metal.

Check: To extend the blades, a successful *Potestas* check is required – the result determines the duration of the weapons. The edges and thorns never harm the Engel and impose no penalty on him. When inflicting damage on a grapple, the Engel does 1d6 + STR bonus piercing damage, with a x2 critical multiplier.

The spurs and blades are considered martial weapons and may be used to attack regularly (with the above mentioned damage and critical multipliers, they are considered weapons of tiny size. Others trying to grapple the Engel will suffer 2 points of automatic damage per turn. *God's Armor* also grants the Engel a +4 armor bonus to Armor Class (this is stackable with other armor bonuses) and a bonus of +4 to all Escape Artist rolls.

Result	Duration
1-14	none
15-19	1 round
20-24	1 minutes
25-29	10 minutes
30+	1 hour

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts, no further attempts to activate the *Potestas* may be made.

golem [con]

Prerequisites: Use of *Golem* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

The skin of the character becomes supernaturally hard; weapons and missiles seem to bounce of his skin, reducing the damage he takes.

Check: With a successful *Potestas* check (DC 20), the Engel gains a damage resistance of 5/-, ignoring the first 5 points of damage from physical attacks that hit him. This lasts for 10 rounds (1 minute).

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts, no further attempts to activate the *Potestas* may be made.

goliath's might [con]

Prerequisites: Use of *Goliath's Might* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

The character may increase his Strength or Constitution for short durations in times of stress.

Check: Using *Goliath's Might* requires a standard action. If the skill check is successful the user gains a bonus dependent on the result of the test to either STR or CON for the next 10 rounds (1 minute).

Result	Bonus
1-14	none
15-19	+2
20-24	+4
25-29	+6
30+	+8

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts, no further attempts to activate this *Potestas* may be made.

judgment day [con]

Prerequisites: Use of *Judgement Day* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

The Engel may draw power from the other members of his fellowship, allowing him the ability to fight on far beyond what he would have been able to endure if fighting alone.

Check: The Gabrielite must succeed in a *Potestas* check (DC 20) to be able to draw upon the reservoirs of his brothers and sisters. For each member of his fellowship within 5 meters, he gains 10 temporary hit points, which last for 5 minutes. The members contributing in turn lose 10 hit points which are not regained when the *Potestas* ends – a member of the fellowship may resist contributing and losing the hit points with a successful Fortitude save (DC 10).

light of the lord [Int]

Prerequisites: Use of *Light of the Lord* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

The user may blind a target with a sudden flash of light emitted from his body.

Check: The result of the skill check determines the duration of this *Potestas* as well as the difficulty of the Reflex save to resist it. If the target saves successfully, it has averted his eyes in time and is therefore not blinded.

Result	Duration	Reflex Save DC
1-15	1 round	15
16-25 and below	1 minute	20
26 and above	5 minutes	25

Retry: While blind the target may not be blinded again.

sacrificial lamb [dex]

Prerequisites: Use of *Sacrificial Lamb* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: All remaining hit points, with a minimum of 6.

When fighting insurmountable odds or when caught in a hopeless situation, the character can immolate his own body in a fiery explosion which causes damage to everything around him.

Check: The result of the *Potestas* check determines the damage of the resultant blast caused by this *Potestas*. The radius of the explosion is 10 meters. Any target in the blast suffers only half damage on a successful Reflex save (DC 25). Any character using this *Potestas* is consumed completely by the resultant explosion.

Result	Damage
1-15	6d6
16-25	10d6
26+	16d6

samson's hair [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Samson's Hair* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 0.

The user can instinctually discover the weaknesses of all enemies he faces and use this knowledge against them.

Check: With a successful *Potestas* check (DC 20), the Engel gains a +1 insight to all his attack rolls for the next 10 rounds (1 minute).

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts, no further attempts to activate the *Potestas* may be made.

shield of faith [con]

Prerequisites: Use of *Shield of Faith* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

By absorbing the kinetic energy of a melee attack, the Engel may emit a powerful shockwave to damage his attacker and avoid being damaged at the same time.

Check: To successfully activate the Shield of Faith a *Poteastas* check (DC 20 for a normal hit, 25 for a critical hit) is required. If this roll is successful, the Engel suffers no damage, but rather reflects it back on his enemy.

potestates of the raphaelites

all-seeing eye [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *All-seeing Eye* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 0.

By touching a living being, a character can judge its health and fitness.

Check: Successfully using this *Potestas* requires a *Potestas* check (DC 15). Success allows the Raphaelite to judge the target's health, detect any injuries, poisons or diseases afflicting it, as well as the nature of that disease or poison, including effects and symptoms, though not necessarily how to heal them.

ashes to ashes [con]

Prerequisites: Use of *Ashes to Ashes* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

With a mere touch the Raphaelite destroys living cells, dissolving them into a lifeless ooze.

Check: Using *Ashes to Ashes* requires a touch attack. The result of the *Potestas* check determines the target's Fortitude save DC. If the victim successfully saves, he takes 3d6 of damage; failing the test results in instant death as the body is reduced to a reddish goo.

Result	Fort Save DC
1-15	10
16-25	15
26+	20

benediction [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Benediction* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 3 (Impregnation), 6 (healing infertility).

By touching a woman, the Engel can impregnate her or restore lost fertility.

Check: With a successful *Potestas* check (DC 15), the Raphaelite can impregnate a woman, either while touching a man (thereby impregnating the woman with his seed) or he can impregnate the woman with his own angelic seed (this last may only be performed by male Engel). Healing the infertility of a woman requires a *Potestas* check (DC 20). Either use of this *Potestas* requires about 1 minute of unbroken contact with the target.

bitter bile [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Bitter Bile* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

The Engel can extract poison from a being, healing the poison victim.

Check: To counter a poison, the Raphaelite first has to know what poison to fight, usually discovered through the use of *All-seeing Eye*. The DC of the *Potestas* check depends on the strength of the poison. If the target has already taken damage from the poison, this damage is not healed, but further damage is prevented as the poison is removed completely from the body. The effect of the poison stops at once when the treatment begins, but purging the poison completely from the body takes 1 minute - the target has to be touched while doing so.

DC	Example of a poison
5	Alcohol (either intoxication or hang-over)
10	Asp-poison
20	Arsenic
30	Thaipan-poison

field of bones [cha]

Prerequisites: Use of *Field of Bones* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 1.

The character can animate dead tissue for a short time with a mere touch. A leg may kick, a hand grasp or a head may nod.

Check: With a successful *Potestas* check (DC 15), the Engel may control one limb or set of muscles for one minute. Touching the affected body part is only required when activating the *Potestas*. This *Potestas* may only be used on dead tissue.

grail of life [con]

Prerequisites: Use of *Grail of Life* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

The Engel may restore any limb or organ lost to injury, as long as the target is still alive. He may even return damaged or malformed organs and limbs to working order.

Check: Successful use of *Grail of Life* requires a successful *Potestas* check (DC 20). Each limb or organ healed requires one use of the *Potestas*. Touching the target is only necessary to initiate the healing, which will take 1d8 days to complete.

healing hand [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Healing Hand* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 1.

By controlling the growth of cells and enhancing or reducing the clotting of blood and cell fluids, the Engel may heal wounds or other injuries.

Check: The use of this *Potestas* can restore hit points as well as restore lost ability points. The result of the *Potestas* check determines how many hit points or ability points may be restored. Only ability points lost due to the effects of poisons or diseases can be restored – effects caused by advanced age cannot be reversed.

The target of this *Potestas* has to be touched and the healing takes 1 minute, although the stabilizing effect occurs at once. Points may not be restored beyond their natural maximum – all other points of healing are lost, but if the result is high enough it maybe split between hit points and ability points.

High results on the check can be used to heal larger amounts of points, but will also require more hit points to be expended to use the *Potestas*; the Engel may choose to heal a lower category despite a hieving a sufficient roll for better results. Healing a mortally wounded being (i.e. one with negative hit points) will restore him to 1 hit point at most. The Engel may not use this *Potestas* to heal himself. The subject of this *Potestas* does not feel anything but a tingling sensation.

Result	Possible Healing	Additional use cost
1-9	none	none
10-14	stabilize mortally wounded character	none
15-19	1d4	+1 hit point
20-24	1d6	+2 hit points
25-29	1d8	+4 hit points
30+	2d6	+6 hit points

Retry: Another healing attempt on a single target may only be made after at least one hour has passed and the target had a hearty meal. Another attempt to heal ability points may only be made after 24 hours have passed.

heal malady [int]

Prerequisites: Use of *Heal Malady* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

With the power of his hand, a Raphaelite may cure diseases or inflict them upon a target.

Check: The Engel may only inflict or cure a sickness he is familiar with. The DC of the check depends on the severity and complexity of the disease. If a disease is inflicted upon a target, it may resist the infection with a successful Fortitude Save (DC 20). The target must be touched to allow the use of this *Potestas*. Some diseases might require more than one use of *Heal Malady*.

DC	Disease example
5	Cold
10	Influenza
20	Anthrax/Cholera
30	Cancer/AIDS
40	Vitus-dance

lazarus [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Lazarus* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: 10 + the user of this *Potestas* loses 1 point of CON permanently.

By invoking his birth-right and calling upon all the *Potestates* granted to him by the Lord, the character is able to return a dead person to life.

Check: Successful use of this ability requires a *Potestas* check (DC 25). The Engel has to touch the corpse and remain in contact with it for 10 minutes. The body has to be almost intact and decay must not be advanced too far – limbs may be missing but will not be regenerated.

The risen returns to life with 1 hit point and might be missing memories or some character traits (the storyteller may adjust the ability scores of the character to reflect the time he has been dead) – the target will never have recollection of events

occurring after his death. Even those who have been passed on to the Afterlife may be revived.

my body [int]

Prerequisites: Use of *My Body* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 1.

The Engel may temporarily raise or lower the Abilities of another character.

Check: The Raphaelite must touch his target to use this *Potestas* (a touch attack is necessary to touch an involuntary target). Successful use of this ability will increase/decrease the chosen ability for 10 rounds (1 minute). A target may try to resist the effect of this *Potestas* with a successful Fortitude Save (DC 15). The result of the *Potestas* check determines the increase or decrease.

Result	Bonus/Penalty
1-14	no change
15-19	+/- 2
20-24	+/- 4
25-29	+/- 6
30+	+/- 8

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts, no further attempts to activate the *Potestas* on the same target may be made.

spinning the thread of life [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Spinning the Thread of Life* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

The character can heal or cause paralysis in a target.

Check: A touch attack is necessary to touch involuntary targets, as touching the target is required to invoke the *Potestas*. If the victim fails a Fortitude save (DC determined by the result of the *Potestas* check), it is completely helpless and will remain in a stable position (he might fall over though if in mid stride or attack). This paralysis lasts for 10 rounds (1 minute).

Healing paralysis requires just a touch and it will dissipate within 1 round.

Result	Fort Save DC
1-15	10
16-25	15
26+	20

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts, no further attempts to activate the *Potestas* may be made.

potestates of the ramielites

babylon's language [int]

Prerequisites: Use of *Babylon's Language* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 1.

The character is able to understand and speak any language which he hears or reads.

Check: Activating *Babylon's Language* requires a *Potestas* check (DC 15). The Ramielite is able to understand any given language for 10 minutes.

champion of the lord [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Champion of the Lord* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

By evaluating a battle of any kind, the character can predict the outcome and take actions to change it, therewith gaining an advantage in combat.

Check: The Ramielite gains a +2 dodge bonus to his AC and a +2 insight bonus to all attack rolls. A *Potestas* check (DC 15) is necessary to activate the *Champion of the Lord*, which will remain active for 1 minute.

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts no further attempts to activate the *Potestas* may be made.

the eighth commandment [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *The Eighth Commandment* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

Using this *Potestas*, the Engel is able to recognize any lie spoken in his presence.

Check: Activating *The Eighth Commandment* requires a *Potestas* check (DC 15). To maintain this *Potestas*, the Engel has to concentrate on it for the entire duration of 5 minutes. If anyone within 10 meters utters a lie, the Engel will instinctively know it. If the target isn't aware of the falsity of his claims, this *Potestas* does not detect his words as false.

icon [int]

Prerequisites: Use of *Icon* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

The character is able to recall any event in complete detail and describe it accordingly.

Check: If the Engel successfully activates this *Potestas* (DC 15), the storyteller will supply him with all the details of the given situation.

inner calm [wis]

As the Michaelite *Potestas* of the same name.

oracle [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Oracle* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

By calling upon the Voice of the Lord, the Ramielite may speak prophecies and premonitions.

Check: By using this *Potestas*, the player of the Ramielite may ask one question about the fate of a person, a place or an object anywhere in future, past or present and will receive a useful answer – the meaning of the prophecy can be cryptic or clear and is only subject to the ideas and creativity of the storyteller.

Use of *Oracle* requires a *Potestas* check (DC 20). Multiple uses of this *Potestas* on the same subject will always garner the same answer. Fate is not immutable, though, and changing circumstances may garner different answers.

prophet [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Prophet* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

The character may instinctively predict future events with a high probability.

Check: After successfully using this *Potestas* (DC 20) the character may ask one question about the results of an action or the events surrounding a certain object, location or person within the next 7 days. Asking the same question without changing any of the variables will always garner the same result.

samson's hair [wis]

as the gabrielite *potestas* of the same name.

to speak in tongues [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *To Speak in Tongues* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 1.

The Ramielite is able to send a message to a fellow Ramielite although his target is far away. When successful, the target will hear the message in his head spoken by the voice of the user of this *Potestas*.

Check: A successful activation establishes a link to a specific target – the user of the *Potestas* must at least know the name of his target. The maximum distance to the target must not exceed 1000 kilometers, and a larger distances increase the difficulty of using this *Potestas*. The basic difficulty is 10.

Distance	DC Modifier
Up to 6 miles	+0
Up to 60 km	+10
Up to 600 miles	+20

spirit of the lord [int]

Prerequisites: Use of *Spirit of the Lord* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

The Ramielite may enter the Cathedral of Thoughts and access knowledge from within, which he would not be aware of otherwise. He may freely share this knowledge with others while the *Potestas* lasts.

Check: Upon successfully activating this *Potestas* (DC 15), the Ramielite gains the ability to use any Knowledge skill untrained, with a +10 bonus to the skill check.

spirit over soul [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Spirit Over Soul* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

By watching his target ,the user is able to perceive the wishes and thoughts of any being.

Check: A successful check allows the Ramielite to perceive the general mood, attitude and feelings of a target. This grants him a +4 bonus to the following skills when interacting with a target: Perform, Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Handle Animals and Sense Motive.

The result of the *Potestas* check determines the DC of the Will save of the target to resists this *Potestas*. If the victim successfully resist the intrusion, the Engel is unable to perceive anything and the target becomes aware of something trying to read his mind.

Result	Will Save DC
1-5	10
6–15	15
16–25	20
26–35	25
36+	30

Retry: If the Will save of the target was successful, the Engel may not try to affect him with this *Potestas* for the next 24 hours.

potestates of the urielites

assisi [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Assissi* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

Wild animals ignore the character or regard him in a friendly manner, depending on the type of pheromones the Engel chooses to exude.

Check: This *Potestas* calms animals and even some creatures of the Dreamseed and causes them to become relaxed and less dangerous. Only beings with an Intelligence of 2 or lower are affected. These must be of one species chosen beforehand by the Engel. The maximum range of the *Potestas* is a globe with a radius of 10 meters. To determine the maximum number of hit dice affected, the user rolls 2d4 and adds his class level. Creatures trained to attack or guard a location as well as Dreamseed may try to resist the effect with a Will save (DC 15). A Urielite can easily calm a wolf or a lynx but has a much more difficult time when encountering creatures of the Dreamseed or guard dogs.

Creatures affected by the *Potestas* remain where they are or move towards the Engel as if they were trained. They will neither attack nor flee from him. The animals are not helpless, though, and will defend themselves normally. Any obvious dangers like fire, hungry predators or attack will cancel the effect at once.

become one with creation [con]

Prerequisites: Use of *Become One with Creation* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

The Engel may adapt his body to the dangers of most environments; he may, for example extract oxygen from water, gaining the ability to remain underwater as long as this Potestas lasts.

Check: The duration of this *Potestas* is determined by the result of the *Potestas* Check. Some applications of this *Potestas* might include breathing under water, tolerance towards extremes of natural heat or cold, crossing Brandland without suffering any dangerous side-effects and the consumption of poisonous plants without succumbing to the poison.

Result	Duration
1-15	1 hour
16-25	5 hours
26-35	12 hours
36+	24 hours

enlightened senses [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Enlightened Senses* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 1.

The perceptions of the Engel are heightened.

Check: For the whole duration of the *Potestas* (determined by the result of the *Potestas* Check), the Engel gains a +4 Bonus to all Listen, Search and Spot skill checks.

Result	Duration
1-5	1 minute
6-15	5 minutes
16-25	30 minutes
26-35	1 hour
36+	24 hours

eyes of the sentinel [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *Eyes of the Sentinel* requires Signum and Sigil.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

Character can see in the dark.

Check: With a successful *Potestas* check (DC 15), the Urielite gains darksight of 18 meters.

flaming final [con]

Prerequisites: Use of *Flaming Final* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: All remaining hit points.

By initiating a chemical reaction within his own blood, the Urielite may turn his own blood luminescent and cause it to explode outward from him just before dying, leaving a strongly glowing mark behind which can guide other Engel to the place of his demise.

Check: Successfully activating this *Potestas* requires a check (DC 20), which is a free action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. The result of the check will determine how long the spilled blood of the Gabrielite continues to glow. The light emitted by the blood is of golden-white color and equivalent to a very strong flash-light, marking the site of the battle as well as the killer of the Engel and where the body maybe found. Though the blood may be washed away, the glow remains for the duration of the *Potestas*.

Result	Duration
1-19	1 hour
20-25	12 hours
26-35	1 day
36+	1 week

like a thief in the night [con]

Prerequisites: Use of *Like a Thief in the Night* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

By adapting the color of his body and wings like a chameleon, the Engel may instinctively fit his appearance to his environment therewith becoming almost invisible.

Check: To use this *Potestas,* the Urielite must succeed at a *Potestas* check (DC 20). If this roll succeeds, his body and wings adapt to any background, granting him a +10 bonus to all Hide checks. His clothes, weapons and equipment remain visible, though, and may spoil the effect (effectively decreasing the bonus/penalty). This *Potestas* lasts for 1 minute per level in the Urielite class.

the lord's path [wis]

Prerequisites: Use of *The Lord's Path* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 0.

The character has a natural understanding for geography and can therefore find any point which is described to him by a person, a map or a text without becoming lost on his way there.

Check: With a successful activation of this *Potestas* (DC 15), the Engel gains a +20 competence bonus to all Sense Direction checks for one day. He is also able to instinctively locate places described to him and, if familiar with a location, he will be able to give direction and distance to the land-mark.

the messenger's fortitude [con]

Prerequisites: Use of *The Messenger's Fortitude* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 1.

The character can fly, walk, run, swim and hold his breath longer than others by increasing his stamina.

Check: The Urielite makes a *Potestas* check, the result of the check determines the bonus granted and determines the duration of the bonus.

Result	Bonus	Duration
1-5	none	none
6-15	+2	1 hour
16-25	+4	5 hours
26-35	+6	24 hours
36+	+8	48 hours

Retry: While the *Potestas* lasts no further attempts to activate the *Potestas* may be made.

trail of blood [con]

***Prerequisites*:** Use of *Trail of Blood* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 3.

The character may leave a trail which can be easily perceived and followed by other Urielites.

Check: With a successful Potestas check (DC 15), the the Urielite gains the ability to leave the above mentioned trail for 1 day.

vision in the night [wis]

***Prerequisites*:** Use of *Vision in the Night* requires Signum, Sigil and Scriptura.

Hit Point Cost: 6.

The Engel is able to switch his sight to different spectra of light, allowing him to see as if he were in broad daylight regardless of the actual amount of light available.

Check: With a successful *Potestas* check (DC 20), the Urielite gains the ability to selectively see other spectrums of light for 30 minutes per class level, allowing him to see normally regardless of light conditions.

water from stone [wis]

***Prerequisites*:** Use of *Water from Stone* requires Signum.

Hit Point Cost: 1.

The character gains a natural understanding of his surroundings, granting him the ability to find food and water in the most desolate areas.

Check: Using Water from Stone requires a *Potestas* check (DC 15). Success grants the Engel a +10 competency bonus to all Wilderness Lore rolls when trying to find food, water and shelter for the next 24 hours.

combat

Engel sports a variety of interactions, but in some cases fighting an enemy will be the only choice left: the Dreamseed is not open for discussion and even the words of a Michaelite might not be enough to sway a Heretic from his path.

Combat is separated into rounds. Each round represents about 6 seconds in the game world. Anything a person could reasonably do in 6 seconds, a combatant can do in 1 round. To determine the order of the combatant's actions, the initiative of all participants is determined at the beginning of a combat: roll d20 and add the Initiative modifier. The highest initiative begins, if two beings have the same initiative they act simultaneously. When a combatant's turn comes up in the initiative sequence, that combatant performs his entire round's worth of actions. Effects that last a certain number of rounds end just before the same initiative count that they began on.

combat terms

The combat rules use the following terms:

actions

There are four types of actions: free actions, move-equivalent actions, standard actions and full actions. A character can take any number of free actions per turn (although each type only once), he can take one move-equivalent action and a standard action per turn or he can take one full action and a 1.5m step per turn.

Sometimes a character must take only a partial action (or he might gain it in addition to his normal actions): with the partial action, he can either take a move-equivalent or a standard action and a 1.5m step.

Standard actions can be forfeited for another move-equivalent action in most cases.

The character can choose whether he wants to take his move-equivalent or his 1.5m step before or after his standard action; he cannot split up the move (unless he has a feat which allows this).

attack

The attacking character rolls 1d20 and adds his attack bonus (which includes his base attack bonus, appropriate Ability bonus, etc.). If his roll is higher than or equal to his target's AC, he has hit his target and causes damage.

He may also opt to fight defensively, granting him a dodge bonus of +2 to his AC modifier but incurring a -4 penalty to all his attack rolls.

A natural roll of a 20 is an automatic hit and threatens a critical, while a natural 1 is always a miss.

face

This trait indicates how wide a face a combatant presents in combat. Face is essentially the border between the square or rectangular space that a combatant occupies and the space next to it. These faces are abstract, not "front, back, left, and right," because combatants are constantly moving and turning in battle. Unless a combatant is immobile, he practically doesn't have a front, left, right or back side — at least not one that can be identified on the tabletop.

combat sequence

step i

The storyteller determines which combatants are aware of their opponents at the start of the battle. If some but not all of the combatants are aware of their opponents, a surprise round happens before regular rounds begin. The combatants who are aware of the opponents can act in the surprise round, so they roll for initiative.

In initiative order (highest to lowest), combatants who started the battle aware of their opponents each take a partial action during the surprise round. Combatants who were unaware do not get to act in the surprise round. If no one or everyone starts the battle aware, there is no surprise round.

step ii

Combatants who have not yet rolled initiative do so.

step iii

Combatants take actions, their order is determined by their iniative.

step iv

Repeat Step III each round until combat ends.

special rules for combat

Not everything is covered by the basic rules and actions described above as for some situations special rules might apply.

attack roll modifiers

Circumstance	Melee	Ranged
Attacker flanking defender*	+2	n/a
Attacker on higher ground	+1	+0
Attacker prone	-4	**
Attacker invisible	+2***	+2***
Defender sitting or kneeling	+2	-2
Defender prone	+4	-4
Defender stunned, cowering, or off balance	+2***	+2***
Defender climbing (cannot use shield)	+2***	+2***
Defender surprised or flat-footed	+0***	+0***
Defender running	+0***	-2***
Defender grappling (attacker not)	+0***	+0****
Defender pinned	+4***	-4***
Defender has cover	See Cover	
Defender concealed or invisible	See Concealment	
Defender helpless	See Helpless Defenders	
Shooting at a target in melee	-	-4

*A combatant flanks a defender when a combatant has an ally on the opposite side of the defender threatening him. Rogues can sneak attack defenders that they flank.

**Most ranged weapons can't be used while the attacker is prone, but a combatant can use a crossbow while prone.

***The defender loses any Dexterity bonus to AC.

****Roll randomly to see which grappling combatant a combatant strikes. That defender loses any Dexterity bonus to AC.

actions in combat

free actions

Free Action	Attack of Opportunity
Drop item	No
Drop to ground	No
Speak up to 20 words	No

move-equivalent actions

Move-Equivalent Action	Attack of Opportunity
Activate simple device	Yes
Calm panicked horse	Yes
Climb (1/4 of movement rate)	No
Mount/dismount	No
Move heavy object	Yes
Open door	No
Pick up item	Yes
Ready an item	Yes
Ready crossbow	Yes
Ready firearm	Yes
Ready shield	No
Ready weapon	No
Sheathe weapon	Yes
Stand up	Yes
Take off shield	No

standard actions

Standard Action	Attack of Opportunity
Attack (Melee)	No
Attack (Ranged)	Yes
Attack a weapon	Maybe
Bull-rush (charge)*	No
Bull-rush (attack)*	No
Escape grapple*	No
Feint (as per Bluff Skill)	No
Full defense*	No
Light a torch	Yes
Load clip into firearm	Yes

full-round actions

Full-round Action	Attack of Opportunity
Charge	No
Climb (half movement speed)	no
Coup de Grace*	Yes
Escape a net	Yes
Extinguish fire	No
Full Attack*	Yes
Load (Dex modifier) bullets into a weapon	Yes
Load mortar	Yes
Ready heavy crossbow	Yes
Using most *Potestates*	Yes

special actions

Special Action	Attack of Opportunity
Disarm*	Yes
Double-Move	Maybe
Grapple*	
Run	Yes
Trip someone *	No
Use skill (see skill description)	maybe

** see special rules below*

flanking

If a combatant makes a melee attack against an opponent, and an ally directly opposite the combatant is threatening the opponent, the combatant and the combatant's ally are considered to be flanking the opponent.

A combatant gains a +2 flanking bonus on the attack roll. A Rogue in this position can also sneak attack the target. The ally must be on the other side of the opponent, so that the opponent is directly between the combatant and the ally.

flat-footed

At the start of a battle each combatant is flat-footed. A combatant does not gain his Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) while flat-footed. A flat-footed combatant can't make attacks of opportunity.

movement

As a move-equivalent action a character can move his movement rate.

He may also opt to give up all his other actions (besides free actions) to take a movement-only action: a character can opt to either make a double-move or run as a full action (he does not gain the 1.5m step when doing so, however).

A double-move allows a character to move twice his movement rate, while a run allows him to move four times his movement rate, but he will lose his AC modifier.

reach

Some weapons grant their wielders reach; additionally, some large creatures have a natural reach. This in effect means that a character can attack targets which are further than 1.5m away. This also extends the area a character threatens for attacks of opportunity.

actions

Characters can take a variety of actions in combat, we have listed these in the following table.

attacks of opportunity

Although no one wants to be hit by an opponent, sometimes a character neglects his defense and leaves himself open to attacks by an enemy. Attacks which use such chances for attack are called attacks of opportunity.

• **Threatened Area:** A combatant threatens the area into which it can make a melee attack, even when it is not a combatant's action. An enemy that takes certain actions while in a threatened area may provoke an attack of opportunity from a combatant.

A combatant normally threatens all adjacent spaces. "Reach weapons" and "natural reach" can change the threatened area.

• **Provoking an Attack of Opportunity:** If a combatant moves through (not simply into) or out of a threatened area, this movement usually provokes an attack of opportunity.

If all a combatant does during that round is take a normal move or a double move (not a run), the space that the combatant started out in is not considered threatened. If a combatant's entire move for the round is a 1.5m step, the 1.5m step does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Besides movement a variety of other actions can provoke attacks of opportunity (e.g. using *Potestates* or a ranged weapon).

• **Making an Attack of Opportunity:** An attack of opportunity is a single melee attack, and a combatant can only make one per round unless he has some means which allow him more attacks of opportunity (e.g. the Combat Reflexes feat). The combatant does not have to make an attack of opportunity if the combatant doesn't want to. A combatant can make the attack of opportunity at a combatant's normal attack bonus – even if the combatant has already attacked this round.

bull rush

This type of attack does not replace an action, but rather constitutes an attack. Therefore they can be used in combination in with all other options available when attacking.

A combatant can bull rush as an attack action or a charge action.

When a combatant bull rushes, the combatant attempts to push an opponent straight back instead of attacking him. A combatant can only bull rush an opponent who is one size category larger than the combatant, the same size, or smaller.

• *Initiating a Bull Rush:* First, the combatant moves into the defender's space. Moving in this way provokes an attack of opportunity from each foe that threatens the combatant, probably including the defender. Any attack of opportunity made by anyone other than the defender against the combatant during a bull rush has a 25% chance of accidentally targeting the defender instead, and any attack of opportunity by anyone other than the combatant against the defender likewise has a 25% chance of accidentally targeting the combatant.

Second, the combatant and the defender make opposed Strength checks. The combatant adds a +4 bonus for each size category that the combatant is above Medium-size or a -4 penalty for each size category that the combatant is below Medium-size. The combatant gets a +2 charge bonus if the Bull Rush is attempted at the end of a Charge. The defender gets a +4 stability bonus if he has more than two legs or is otherwise exceptionally stable.

• *Bull Rush Results:* If the combatant beat the defender, the combatant pushes the defender back 1.5m. If the combatant wishes to move with the defender, the combatant can push the defender back up to a distance of an additional 30cm for each point by which the combatant exceeded the

defender's check result. A combatant can't, however, exceed his or her normal movement limit.

If the combatant fails to beat the defender's Strength check, the combatant moves 1.5m back straight back. If that space is occupied, the combatant falls prone in that space.

charge

This type of attack does not replace an action, but rather constitute an attack. Therefore they can be usedin combination with all other options available when attacking.

The combatant must move before attacking, not after. The combatant must move at least 3m and may move up to double base speed. All movement must be in a straight line, with no backing up or turns allowed. The charge stops as soon as the combatant threatens the target. A combatant cannot run past the target and attack from another direction.

After moving, the combatant may make a single melee attack or a bull rush. The combatant gets a +2 bonus on the attack roll. The combatant also suffers a -2 penalty to AC for 1 round.

A lance or similar weapon deals double damage if employed by a mounted combatant in a charge. A target can ready certain piercing weapons, setting them to receive charges by using the ready action against receiving a charge. A weapon of this type deals double damage if the readied attack is successful.

Creatures that fly can make especial form of charge, called dive attack. A dive attack works just like a charge, but the diving creature must move a minimum of 4.5m. Any weapon it wields causes double damage.

cover

Cover provides a bonus to a combatant's AC. The more cover a combatant has, the greater the bonus.

• **Cover and Attacks of Opportunity:** An attacker can't execute an attack of opportunity against a combatant with one-half or better cover.

• **Cover and Reach Weapons:** If a combatant is using a reach weapon, a combatant standing between the attacker and the target provides cover to the target. Generally, if both of the other combatants are the same size, the one in the back has one-half cover (+4 AC). If a combatant hits the combatant providing cover, it takes no damage because the attacker would strike it with the haft of the weapon.

• **Degree of Cover:** Cover is assessed in subjective measurements of how much protection it offers a combatant. The storyteller determines the value of cover. This measure is not a strict mathematical calculation because a combatant gains more value from covering the parts of the body that are more likely to be struck.

Degree of Cover	Cover AC Bonus	Cover Reflex Bonus
One-quarter	+2	+1
One-half	+4	+2
Three-quarters	+7	+3
Nine-tenths	+10	+4*
Total	-	-

** Half damage if save is failed; no damage if successful.*

• **Cover Reflex Save Bonus:** Add this bonus to Reflex saves against attacks that affect an area. For nine-tenths cover, a combatant also effectively has improved evasion. These bonuses, however, only apply to attacks that originate or spread out from a point on the other side of the cover.

concealment

Concealment includes all circumstances where nothing physically blocks a blow or shot but where something interferes with an attacker's accuracy.

Concealment	Example	Miss Chance
One-Quarter	Light fog; darkness; light foliage	10% moderate
One-Half	Dense fog at 1.5m	20%
Three-quarters	Dense foliage	30%
Nine-tenths	Near total darkness	40%
Total	Attacker blind; target invisible; total darkness; dense fog at 3m	50%

Concealment is subjectively measured as to how well concealed the defender is. Concealment always depends on the point of view of the attacker.

• **Concealment Miss Chance:** Concealment gives the subject of a successful attack a chance that the attacker missed because of the concealment. If the attacker hits, the defender must make a miss chance percentile roll to avoid being struck. When multiple concealment conditions apply to a defender, use the one that would produce the highest miss chance. Do not add the miss chances together.

coup de grace

A combatant can use a weapon to deliver a *coup de grace* to an adjacent, helpless foe. The attacker automatically hits and scores an automatic critical hit. If the target survives the damage, the target must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage dealt) or die.

It's overkill, but a Rogue also gets her extra sneak attack damage against a helpless foe when delivering a *coup de grace.* A combatant can't deliver a *coup de grace* against an opponent that is immune to critical hits, e.g. some Dreamseed creatures.

critical

If a character rolls a natural 20 when attacking, he threatens a critical. The character makes a standard attack roll; if he hits the target, he causes critical damage, i.e. the multiplies his damage dice with the critical multiplier of his weapon as well as his Strength bonus; additional damage represented as dice (e.g. the sneak attack bonus or a the fire damage of a flaming sword) is not multiplied.

disarm

This type of attack does not replace an action, but rather constitutes an attack. Therefore they can be used in combination with all other options available when attacking.

The combatant and an adjacent target make opposed attack rolls with their respective weapons. If the weapons are different sizes, the opponent with the larger weapon gets a bonus on the attack roll of +4 per difference in size category. If the target is using a weapon in two hands, he gets an additional +4 bonus. If the combatant beats the target, the target is disarmed. If a combatant attempted the disarm action unarmed, the combatant now has the weapon. Otherwise, it drops to the ground at the target's feet. If the combatant fails, then the target may make an attempt to disarm the combatant as an immediate, free action.

full attack

The full attack action is a full action and therefore allows the character to take only a 1.5m step, but to make use of multiple attacks a character must use the full attack action.

full defense

As a standard action a character can choose to concentrate on defense, thereby gaining a +4 dodge bonus to AC modifier but not making any attacks at all for the round.

grapple

This type of attack does not replace an action, but rather constitutes an attack. Therefore they can be used in combination with all other options available when attacking.

Grappling means wrestling and struggling hand-to-hand. Repeatedly in a grapple, a combatant makes opposed grapple checks against his opponent. A grapple check is something like a melee attack roll. A combatant's attack bonus on a grapple check is:

Base attack bonus + Strength modifier + special size modifier.

• **Special Size Modifier:** The special size modifier for a grapple check is as follows: Colossal +16, Gargantuan +12, Huge +8, Large +4, Medium-size +0, Small –4, Tiny – 8, Diminutive – 12, Fine –16. Use this number in place of the normal size modifier a combatant uses when making an attack roll.

A combatant provokes an attack of opportunity from the target the combatant is trying to grapple. If the attack of opportunity deals the combatant damage, the combatant fails to start the grapple. To start a grapple, a combatant first needs to grab and hold a combatant's target. Attempting to start a grapple is the equivalent of making a melee attack. If a combatant gets multiple attacks in a round, a combatant can attempt to start a grapple multiple times (at successively lower base attack bonuses).

• *Step I – Grab:* the combatant makes a melee touch attack to grab the target. If the combatant fails to hit the target, the combatant fails to start the grapple.

• *Step II – Hold:* make an opposed grapple check. If the combatant succeeds, the combatant has started the grapple, and the combatant deals damage to the target as if with an unarmed strike.

If the combatant loses, the combatant fails to start the grapple. The combatant automatically loses an attempt to hold if the target is two or more size categories larger than the combatant is (but the combatant can still make an attempt to grab such a target, if that's all the combatant wants to do).

• *Step III – Move in:* to maintain the grapple, the combatant must move into the target's space. Moving, as normal, provokes attacks of opportunity from threatening enemies, but not from the combatant's target.

• *Step IV – Grappling:* The combatant and the target are now grappling.

If a combatant's target is already grappling someone else, then the combatant can use an attack to start a grapple, as above, except that the target doesn't get an attack of opportunity against the combatant, and the combatant's grab automatically succeeds. The combatant still has to make a successful opposed grapple check to deal damage and must still move in to be part of the grapple.

When a combatant is grappling (regardless of who started the grapple), the combatant can make an opposed grapple check as an attack. If the combatant wins, the combatant can do the following:

• *Damage an opponent:* A combatant deals damage as with an unarmed strike. If a combatant wants to deal normal damage, the combatant suffers a -4 penalty on the grapple check.

• *Pin:* A combatant can hold an opponent immobile for 1 round. (If a combatant gets multiple attacks, the combatant can use subsequent attacks to damage the opponent. A combatant can't use a weapon on a pinned opponent or attempt to damage or pin a second opponent while holding a pin on the first.) While a combatant is pinned, opponents other than the one pinning the combatant get a +4 bonus on attack rolls against the combatant (but the combatant is not helpless).

• *Break another's pin:* A combatant can break the hold that an opponent has over an ally.

• *Escape:* A combatant can escape the grapple. A combatant can take whatever movement the combatant gets. If more than one opponent is grappling a combatant, the combatant's grapple check result has to beat all their check results to escape. (Opponents don't have to try to hold a combatant if they don't want to.)

When an opponent has pinned a combatant, the combatant is held immobile (but not helpless) for 1 round. The combatant can make an opposed grapple check as a melee attack. If the combatant wins, the combatant escapes the pin, but the combatant is still grappling.

In addition to making opposed grapple checks, a combatant has a few other options while grappling.

• *Attack with weapon:* A combatant can attack with a light weapon while grappling (but not while pinned or pinning). A combatant can't attack with two weapons while grappling.

• *Wriggle free:* A combatant can make an Escape Artist check (opposed by a combatant's opponent's grapple check) to get out of a grapple or out of being pinned (so that the combatant is just being grappled). Doing so counts as a standard action; if a combatant escapes a grapple, the combatant can also move in the same round.

Several combatants can be in a single grapple. Up to four combatants can grapple a single opponent in a given round. Opponents that are one size category smaller than a combatant count for half, opponents that are one size category larger than a combatant count double, and opponents two or more size categories larger count quadruple. While a combatant is grappling, that combatant's ability to attack others and defend itself is limited.

• *No threatened area:* A combatant doesn't threaten any area while grappling.

• *No Dexterity bonus:* A combatant loses it's Dexterity bonus to AC and his AC modifier (if a it has one) against opponents he is not grappling. (A combatant can still use the bonus against opponents the combatant is grappling.)

potestates in combat

Using a *Potestas* in combat requires a Concentration check (see above) if the Engel using it is either threatened by another character and wants to avoid provoking an attack of opportunity or has suffered damage in the round.

shooting into melee

If a combatant shoots or throws a ranged weapon at a target that is engaged in melee with an ally, that combatant suffer a -4 penalty on it's attack roll. Two combatants are engaged in melee if they are enemies of each other and either threatens the other. (A held, unconscious, or otherwise immobilized combatant is not considered engaged unless he is actually being attacked.)

If a combatant's target (or the part of a target a combatant is aiming at, if it's a big target) is at least 3m away from the nearest ally, the combatant can avoid the -4 penalty, even if the combatant being aimed at is engaged in melee with an ally.

touch attacks

This type of attack does not replace an action, but rather constitutes an attack. Therefore they can be used in combination with all other options available when attacking.

Touch attacks come in two types: melee touch attacks and ranged touch attacks. A combatant can score critical hits with either type of attack. A combatant's opponent's AC against a touch attack does not include any armor bonus, shield bonus, or natural armor bonus. The target's size modifier, Dexterity modifier, and AC modifier (if applicable) all apply normally. Otherwise this is handled like any other attack roll; on a successful roll no damage is caused, though, but rather the *Potestas* takes effect.

trip

This type of attack does not replace an action, but rather constitutes an attack. Therefore they can be used in combination with all other options available when attacking.

A combatant can try to trip an opponent as a melee attack. A combatant can only trip an opponent who is one size category larger than a combatant, the same size, or smaller.

•*Making a trip attack:* Make a melee attack as a melee touch attack. If the attack succeeds, make a Strength check opposed by the defender's Dexterity or Strength check (whichever ability score has the higher modifier). A combatant gets a +4 bonus for every size category he is larger than Medium-size or a -4 penalty for every size category he is smaller. The defender gets a +4 stability bonus on his check if he has more than two legs or is otherwise more stable than a normal humanoid. If a combatant wins, a combatant trips the defender. If a combatant loses, the defender may immediately react and make a Strength check opposed by a combatant's Dexterity or Strength check to try to trip a combatant.

A tripped combatant is prone. A combatant may make a trip attack against a mounted opponent. The defender may use his Ride skill in place of his Dexterity or Strength check. If a combatant succeeds, a combatant pulsl the rider from his mount.

two-weapon fighting

If a combatant wields a second weapon in the off hand, that combatant can get one extra attack per round with that weapon. Fighting in this way is very hard, however, and a combatant suffers a -6 penalty for regular attacks with a combatant's primary hand and a -10 penalty to the attack with a combatant's off hand. A combatant can reduce these stiff penalties in three ways:

• If a combatant's off-hand weapon is light, the penalties are reduced by 2 each. A light weapon is one that's smaller than a weapon a combatant could use in one hand. Its size category is smaller than a combatant's. (An unarmed strike is always considered light.)

• The Ambidexterity feat reduces the off-hand penalty by 4.

• The Two-Weapon Fighting feat reduces both penalties by 2.

death, dying and healing

As a character takes damage, subtract that damage from the character's hit points.

Effects of Hit Point Damage:

- At 1+ hit points, a character is able to act normally
- At 0 hit points, a character is disabled.
- At from -1 to -9 hit points, a character is dying.
- At -10 or lower, a character is dead.

massive damage

If a character ever sustains damage so massive that 50 points of damage or more are inflicted in one hit, and the character isn't killed outright, the character must make a Fortitude save (DC 15). If this saving throw fails, the character dies regardless of current hit points.

disabled [0 hit points]

When a character's current hit points drop to exactly 0, the character is disabled. The character is not unconscious, but is close to it. The character can only take a partial action each round, and if the character performs any strenuous activity, the character takes 1 point of damage after completing the action. Strenuous activities include running, attacking, or using any ability that requires physical exertion or mental concentration. If the character takes a strenuous action, the character's hit points drop to -1, and the character is dying.

dying [-1 to -9 hit points]

When a character's current hit points drop to between -1 and -9, the character is dying. The character immediately falls unconscious and can take no actions.

At the end of each round (starting with the round in which the character dropped below 0), roll d% to see whether the character stabilizes. The character has a 10% chance to become stable. If the character doesn't, the character loses 1 hit point.

If the character's hit points drop to -10 (or lower), the character is dead.

A character can keep a dying character from losing any more hit points and make the dying character stable with a successful Heal check (DC 15).

If any sort of healing cures the dying character of even 1 point of damage, the dying character stops losing hit points and becomes stable.

Healing that raises the dying character's hit points to 0 makes the character conscious and disabled. Healing that raises the character's hit points to 1 or more makes the character fully functional again, just as if the character had never been reduced to 0 or less.

dead [-10 hit points or lower]

When a character's current hit points drop to –10 or lower, or if the character takes massive damage and fails the saving throw (see above), the character is dead. A character can also die from taking ability damage or suffering an ability drain that reduces Constitution to 0.

Potestates that use all of an Engel's remaining hit points are assumed to reduce the Engel to -10 hit points.

stable characters and recovery

An hour after a tended, dying character becomes stable, roll d%. The character has a 10% chance of becoming conscious, at which point the character is disabled (as if the character had 0 hit points). If the character remains unconscious, the character has the same chance to revive and become disabled every hour. Even if unconscious, the character recovers hit points naturally. The character is back to normal when his hit points rise to 1 or higher.

A character who stabilizes on its own (by making the 10% roll while dying) and who has no one to tend for him still loses hit points, just at a slower rate. The character has a 10% chance each hour of becoming conscious. Each time the character misses the hourly roll to become conscious, the character loses 1 hit point. The character also does not recover hit points through natural healing.

Even once the character becomes conscious and is disabled, an unaided character still does not recover hit points naturally. Instead, each day he has a 10% chance to start recovering hit points naturally (starting with that day); otherwise, the character loses 1 hit point.

Once an unaided character starts recovering hit points naturally, the character is no longer in danger of losing hit points (even if the character's current hit point total is negative).

healing

A character can never regain more hit points than the character lost.

natural healing

A character recovers 1 hit point per character level per day of rest. If the character undergoes complete bed rest (doing nothing for an entire day), the character recovers one and one half times the character's character level in hit points.

healing with *potestates*

Some *Potestates* can give a character hit points back. Each use of the *Potestas* will restore a different amount of hit points. Unless a *Potestas* grants a character temporary hit points a *Potestas* will not grant him hit points in excess of his normal maximum.

healing ability damage

Temporary ability damage returns at the rate of 1 point per ability per day of rest (light activity, no combat or using Potestates). Complete bed rest restores 2 points per ability per day.

temporary hit points

Certain effects give a character temporary hit points. When a character gains temporary hit points, note the character's current hit points. When the temporary hit points go away, the character's hit points drop to that score. If the character's hit points are already below that score at that time, all the temporary hit points have already been lost and the character's hit point score does not drop.

When temporary hit points are lost, they cannot be restored as real hit points can be.

subdual damage

Sometimes a character gets roughed up or weakened. This sort of stress won't kill a character, but it can knock a character out or make a character faint.

Nonlethal damage is subdual damage. If a character takes sufficient subdual damage, the character falls unconscious, but the character doesn't die.

dealing subdual damage

Certain attacks deal subdual damage. Other stresses, such as heat or exhaustion, also deal subdual damage. When a character takes subdual damage, keep a running total of how much has accumulated. Do not deduct the subdual damage numbe from a character'

current hit points. It is not "real" dama e. Instead, when a character's subdual damage equals a character's current hit points, the character i staggered, and when it exceeds a character's curre t hit points, the character goes unconscious. It do sn't matter whether the subdual damage equals or ex eeds a character's current hit points becau e the subdual damage has gone up or because a

aracter's current hit points have gone down. A character can use a melee weapon that deals nor al damage to deal subdual damage instead, but the character suffer a -4 penalty on the attack roll.

A character can use a weapon that deals subdual damage, including an unarmed strike, to deal normal damage instead, but the character suffers a -4 penalty on the attack roll.

staggered and unconscious

When a character's subdual damage exactly equals a character's current hit points, the character is staggered. The character is so badly weakened or roughed up that the character can only take a partial action each round. A character ceases being staggered when the character's hit points exceed the character's subdual damage again.

When a character's subdual damage exceeds the character's current hit points, the character falls unconscious. While unconscious, a character is helpless.

Each full minute that a character is unconscious, a character has a 10% chance to wake up and be staggered until the character's hit points exceed a character's subdual damage again. Nothing bad happens to a character if the character misses this roll.

healing subdual damage

A character heals subdual damage at the rate of 1 hit point per hour per character level. When a Potestas cures hit point damage, it also removes an equal amount of subdual damage, if any.

starvation and thirst

In normal climates characters need at least 2 liters of fluids and about half a kilogram of decent food to avoid starvation. In very hot climates, characters need two or three times as much water to avoid dehydration.

A character can go without water for 1 day plus a number of hours equal to his Constitution score. After this time, the character must make a Constitution check each hour (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of subdual damage.

A character can go without food for 3 days, in growing discomfort. After this time, the character must make a Constitution check each day (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of subdual damage.

Characters who have taken subdual damage from lack of food or water are fatigued. Subdual damage from thirst or starvation cannot be recovered until the character gets food or water, as needed — not even Potestates that restores hit points heals this damage.

movement and encumbrance

Most character have a ground movement of 90 meters per round, though this can be modified due to encumbrance or armor.

moving

Humans generally move 90 meters per round in combat. If taking a double-movement or a Run

action this increases accordingly. When covering longer distances though characters are unable to run though, they may either walk about 5 kilometers per hour or jog for about 10 kilometers per hour. When traveling overland this increases accordingly to about 40 kilometers which can be covered in one day of walking.

Some obstructions (e.g.) undergrowth) will decrease this speed to about 75% of the original speed. Heavy undergrowth reduces it to 50%. This can be further reduced by the quality of the surface – mud or a steep slope will incur an additional 50% penalty while deep snow would reduce speed to 25%. Poor visibility (e.g. if traveling at night away from roads or through dense fog) will generally decrease the speed by 25% as well.

carrying capacity

The table below gives the load capacities of character as per their Strength. A character carrying a light load does not suffer any ill effect; carrying a medium load will limit the Dexterity bonus to +3 though and incur a check penalty of -3 to a number of skills, and the basic speed of the character is also reduced to 6 meters. Heavy loads have even more dramatic effects reducing the maximum Dexterity bonus to +1 and incurring a check penalty of -6 to skill checks, although the base speed is not reduced further, though such heavily loaded characters can only run for triple their speed when taking the run action.

- **Lifting and dragging:** A character can carry up to twice a heavy load but this will only allow him to take 1.5m steps. Characters can push or drag up to 5 times their heavy load limit at the same speed (although circumstances might increase or decrease this amount).
- **Bigger or smaller creatures:** Size does matter when carrying weight as per the table below:

Size of creature	Weight change
Fine	x1/8
Diminuitive	x1/4
Tiny	x1/2
Small	x3/4
Medium	x1 (no change)
Large	x2
Huge	x4
Gargantuan	x8
Colossal	x16

Strength	Light Load	Medium Load	Heavy Load
+ 10	X4	X4	X4
1	up to 1,5 kg	2 - 3 kg	3,5 - 5 kg
2	up to 3 kg	3,5 - 6,5kg	7 - 10 kg
3	up to 5 kg	5,5 - 5 kg	5,5 -15 kg
4	up to 6,5 kg	7 - 13 kg	13,5 - 20 kg
5	up to 8 kg	8,5 - 16,5 kg	17 - 25 kg
6	up to 10 kg	10,5 - 20 kg	10,5 - 30 kg
7	up to 11,5 kg	12 - 23 kg	23,5 - 35kg
8	up to 13 kg	13,5 - 26,5 kg	27 - 40 kg
9	up to 15 kg	15,5 - 30 kg	30,5 - 45 kg
10	up to 16,5 kg	17 - 33 kg	23,5 - 50 kg
11	up to 19 kg	19,5 - 38 kg	38,5 - 56,5 kg
12	up to 21,5 kg	22 - 43 kg	43,5 - 65 kg
13	up to 25 kg	25,5 - 50 kg	50,5 - 75kg
14	up to 29 kg	29,5 - 58 kg	58,5 - 87,5kg
15	up to 33 kg	33,5 - 66,5 kg	67 - 100 kg
16	up to 38 kg	38,5 - 76,5 kg	77 - 115 kg
17	up to 43 kg	43,5 - 86,5 kg	87 - 130 kg
18	up to 50 kg	50,5 - 100 kg	101 - 150 kg
19	up to 58 kg	58,5 - 116,5 kg	117 - 175 kg
20	up to 66,5 kg	67 - 133 kg	133,5 - 200 kg
+10	x4	x4	x4

flight

In the Europe of the 27th century a variety of beings have taken to the air, besides the ones with which we are familiar – the Engel and many beasts of the Dreamseed are probably the most visible ones. All flying creatures have certain grades of maneuverability as well as limits while flying, these maybe found in the table below. The descriptions of creatures will always feature a maneuverability and a speed (which they can keep up unless carrying more than a medium load).

maneuverability in flight

- **Minimum Speed:** If a being does fly slower than the listed minimum speed, it has to land. If it is still too high to do so, it falls 45m in the next round - if it hits ground due to this, it takes normal falling damage. If not it must succeed at a Reflex save to catch its flight or it fall another 90 m. Repeat this procedure every turn, until the creature hits the ground (add up the total distance fallen) or successfully saves.

Grade	Perfect	Good	Average	Poor	Clumsy
Example	Floating Platform	Urielite	Other Engel	Tainter-Dragonfly	Tracery-Scarab
Minimum speed	None	None	Half	Half	Half
Hover	Yes	Yes	No	No	No No
Fly Backwards	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Reverse	Free	-5 ft.	-	-	-
Turn	Any	90°/1.5m.	45°/1.5m.	45°/1.5m.	45°/3m.
Turn in place	Any	90°/-1,5m	45°/-1,5m	No	No
Maximum turn	Any	Any	90°	45°	45
Up Angle	Any	Any	90°	45°	45
Up Speed	Full	Half	Half	Half	Half
Down Angle	Any	Any	Any	45°	45
Down Speed	Double	Double	Double	Double	Double
Between down and up	0	0	1.5m	3m	6m

condition summary

If more than one condition affects a character, apply them all. If certain effects can't combine, apply the most severe effect.

ability damaged

The character has temporarily lost 1 or more ability score points. These points return at a rate of 1 per day. Ability damage is different from effective ability loss, which is an effect that goes away when the condition causing it goes away. A character with Strength 0 falls to the ground and is helpless. A character with Dexterity 0 is paralyzed. A character with Constitution 0 is dead. A character with Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma 0 is unconscious.

ability drained

The character has permanently lost 1 or more ability score points. The character cannot regain these points through natural healing or the passage of time. A character with Strength 0 falls to the ground and is helpless. A character with Dexterity 0 is paralyzed. A character with Constitution 0 is dead. A character with Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma 0 is unconscious.

blinded

The character cannot see at all, and thus everything has full concealment to him. He has a 50% chance to miss in combat, loses his positive Dexterity bonus to AC (if any), and grants a +2 bonus on attack rolls to enemies that attack him, just as if all his enemies were invisible. He moves at half speed and suffers a -4 penalty on most Strength and Dexterity-based skills. He cannot make Spot skill checks or perform any other activity (such as reading) that requires vision.

blown away

Depending on their size, beings can be blown away by winds of high velocity. Beings on the ground that are blown away are knocked down and rolled 1d4x 3m, sustaining 1d4 points of subdual damage per 3m. Flying beings that are blown away are blown back 2d6x3m and sustain 2d6 points of subdual damage due to battering and buffering.

checked

Prevented from achieving forward motion by an applied force, such as wind. Checked beings on the ground merely stop. Checked flying beings move back a distance specified in the description of the specific effect.

confused

A confused character's actions are determined by a 1d10 roll, rerolled each round: 1: wander away (unless prevented) for 1 minute (and don't roll for another random action until the minute is up); 2-6: do nothing for 1 round; 7-9: attack the nearest being for 1 round; 10: act normally for 1 round. Any confused being who is attacked automatically attacks her attackers on her next turn.

cowering

The character is frozen in fear, loses her Dexterity bonus to AC (if any), and can take no actions. Foes gain a +2 bonus to hit cowering characters.

dazed

A dazed being can take no actions (but defends itself normally). A dazed condition typically lasts 1 round.

dazzled

Unable to see well because of over stimulation of the eyes. A dazzled being suffers a -1 penalty on attack rolls until the effect ends.

dead

The character's soul leaves his body permanently, or until he is returned from the dead somehow. A dead body decays, but *Potestates* or technology that allow a dead character to come back to life restores the body either to full health or to its condition at the time of death (depending on the *Potestas* or machine). Either way, resurrected characters need not worry about rigor mortis, decomposition, and other similar sorts of unpleasantness. A dead character cannot regain hit points.

deafened

A deafened character cannot hear and suffers a -4 penalty to initiative checks. He cannot make Listen skill checks.

disabled

A character with 0 hit points, or one who has negative hit points but has stabilized and then improved, is disabled. He is conscious and able to act but horribly wounded.

dying

A dying character has negative hit points. She is unconscious and near death.

entangled

An entangled being suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls and a -4 penalty to effective Dexterity. If the bonds are anchored to an immobile object, the entangled character cannot move. Otherwise, he can move at half speed, but can't run or charge. An entangled character who attempts to use *Potestates* must make a Concentration check (DC usually 15) or fail the attempt.

exhausted

Characters who are exhausted move at half normal speed and suffer an effective penalty of -6 to Strength and Dexterity. A fatigued character becomes exhausted by doing something else that would normally cause fatigue. After 1 hour of complete rest, exhausted characters become fatigued.

fatigued

Characters who are fatigued cannot run or charge and suffer an effective penalty of -2 to Strength and Dexterity. A fatigued character becomes exhausted by doing something else that would normally cause fatigue. After 8 hours of complete rest, fatigued characters are no longer fatigued.

flat-footed

A character who has not yet acted during a combat is flat-footed, not yet reacting normally to the situation. A flat-footed character loses his Dexterity bonus to AC (if any).

frightened

A being that is frightened flees as well as it can. If unable to flee, the being may fight. It suffers a -2 morale penalty on attack rolls, checks, and saving throws. A frightened being can use special abilities to flee; indeed, the being must use such means if they are the only way to escape.

Frightened is like shaken, except that the being must flee, if possible. Panicked is a more extreme condition of fear.

grappled

Engaged in wrestling or some other form of hand-to-hand struggle with one or more attackers. A grappled character cannot move, use *Potestates*, fire a missile, or undertake any action more complicated than making a barehanded attack, attacking with a Small weapon, or attempting to break free from the opponent. In addition, grappled characters do not threaten any area and lose any Dexterity bonuses to AC against opponents they aren't grappling.

helpless

Bound, held, sleeping, paralyzed, or unconscious characters are helpless. Enemies can make advantageous attacks against helpless characters, or even deliver a usually lethal *coup de grace.*

A melee attack against a helpless character is at a +4 bonus on the attack roll (equivalent to attacking a prone target). A ranged attack gets no special bonus. A helpless defender can't use any Dexterity bonus to AC. In fact, his Dexterity score is treated as if it were 0 and his Dexterity modifier to C were -5 (and a Rogue can sneak attack him).

incapacitated

Characters who are incapacitated are treated as helpless.

knocked down

Depending on their size, beings can be knocked down by winds of high velocity. Beings on the ground are knocked prone by the force of the wind. Flying beings are instead blown back 1d6 x 3m.

nauseated

Experiencing stomach distress. Nauseated beings are unable to attack, use or concentrate on *Potestates* or do anything else requiring attention. The only action such a character can take is a move-equivalent action per round.

normal

The character is unharmed (except, possibly, for hit points that have been lost) and unafflicted. She acts normally.

panicked

A panicked being suffers a -2 morale penalty on saving throws and must flee. A panicked being has a 50% chance to drop what he's holding, chooses his path randomly (as long as he is getting away from immediate danger), and flees any other dangers that confront him. If cornered, a panicked being cowers.

Panicked is a more extreme state of fear than shaken or frightened.

paralyzed

A paralyzed character stands rigid and helpless, unable to move or act physically. He has effective Strength and Dexterity scores of 0 but may take purely mental actions.

pinned

Held immobile (but not helpless) in a grapple.

prone

The character is on the ground. He suffers a -4 penalty on melee attack rolls, and the only ranged weapon he can effectively use is a crossbow, which he may use without penalty. Opponents receive +4 bonuses on melee attack against him but -4 penalties on ranged attacks. Standing up is a move-equivalent action.

shaken

A shaken character suffers a -2 morale penalty on attack rolls, checks, and saving throws. Shaken is a less severe fear condition than frightened or panicked.

stable

A character who was dying but who has stabilized and still has negative hit points is stable. The character is no longer dying, but is still unconscious.

staggered

A character whose subdual damage exactly equals his current hit points is staggered. He is so badly weakened or roughed up that he can only t ke a partial action when he would normally be able to take a standard action.

stunned

The character loses her Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) and can take no actions. Foes gain a +2 bonus to hit stunned characters.

unconscious

Knocked out and helpless.

environmental hazards

Heat, cold, wind, water and fire can be as dangerous as a bullet or a sword.

water

Any character can wade in relatively calm water that isn't over his head, no check required. Swimming in calm water only requires skill checks with a DC of 10. Trained swimmers can just take 10.

Fast-moving water is much more dangerous. On a successful Swim or Strength check (DC 15), it deals 1d3 points of subdual damage per round (1d6 points of normal damage if flowing over rocks

and cascades). On a failed check, the character must make another check that round to avoid going under. If the character goes under, the character is drowning.

Very deep water is not only generally pitch black, posing a navigational hazard, but worse, it deals water pressure damage of 1d6 points per minute for every 30 meters the character is below the surface. A successful Fortitude saving throw (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) mans the diver takes no damage in that minute. Very cold water deals 1d6 points of subdual damage fro hypothermia per minute of exposure.

drowning

Any character can hold her breath for a number of rounds equal to twice her Constitution score. After this period of time, the character must make a Constitution check (DC 10) every round in order to continue holding her breath. Each round, the DC increases by 1.

When the character finally fails her Constitution check, she begins to drown. In the first round, she falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round, she drops to –1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, she dies.

It is possible to drown in substances other than water, such as sand, quicksand, fine dust, and silos full of grain.

heat

Heat deals subdual damage that cannot be recovered until the character gets cooled off. Once rendered unconscious through the accumulation of subdual damage, the character begins to take normal damage at the same rate.

A character in very hot conditions (above 50° C) must make a Fortitude saving throw each hour (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or sustain 1d4 points of subdual damage. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor of any sort receive a –4 penalty to their saves. A character with the Wilderness Lore skill may receive a bonus to this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well. Characters reduced to unconsciousness begin taking normal damage (1d4 points per hour).

In extreme heat (above 60° C), a character must make a Fortitude save once every 10 minutes (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or sustain 1d4 points of subdual damage. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor of any sort receive a –4 penalty to their saving throws. A character with the Wilderness Lore skill may receive a bonus to this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well. Characters reduced to unconsciousness begin taking normal damage (1d4 points per each 10-minute period).

A character who sustains any subdual damage from heat exposure suffers from heatstroke and is fatigued. These penalties end when the character recovers the subdual damage she took from the heat.

Abysmal heat (air temperature over 80° C, fire, boiling water, lava) deals normal damage. Breathing air in these temperatures deals 1d6 points of damage per minute (no save). In addition, a character must make a Fortitude save every 5 minutes (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or sustain 1d4 points of subdual damage. Those wearing heavy clothing or any sort of armor receive a –4 penalty to their saving throws. In addition, those wearing metal armor or coming into contact with very hot metal take 1d4 fire damage in the second round of the metal's heating, ad 2d4 fire damage for every round thereafter.

Boiling water deals 1d6 points of scalding damage, unless the character is fully immersed, in which case it deals 10d6 points of damage per round of exposure.

catching on fire

Characters at risk of catching fire are allowed a Reflex saving throw (DC 15) to avoid this fate. If a character's clothes or hair catch fire, he takes 1d6 points of damage immediately. In each subsequent round, the burning character must make another Reflex saving throw. Failure means he takes another 1d6 points of damage that round. Success means that the fire has gone out. (That is, once he succeeds at his saving throw, he's no longer on fire.)

A character on fire may automatically extinguish the flames by jumping into enough water to douse himself. If no body of water is at hand, rolling on the ground or smothering the fire with cloaks or the like permits the character another save with a +4 bonus.

Those unlucky enough to have their clothes or equipment catch fire must make Reflex saving throws (DC 15) for each item. Flammable items that fail sustain the same amount of damage as the character.

cold

Cold and exposure deal subdual damage to the victim. This subdual damage cannot be recovered until the character gets out of the cold and warms up again. Once a character is rendered unconscious through the accumulation of subdual damage, the cold and exposure begins to deal normal damage at the same rate.

An unprotected character in cold weather (below 20° C) must make a Fortitude saving throw each hour (DC 15, + 1 per previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of subdual damage. A character who has the Wilderness Lore skill may receive a bonus to this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well.

In conditions of extreme cold or exposure (below 0° C), an unprotected character must make a Fortitude save once every 10 minutes (DC 15, +1 per previous check), taking 1d6 points of subdual damage on each failed save. A character who has the Wilderness Lore skill may receive a bonus to this

saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well. Characters wearing winter clothing only need check once per hour for cold and exposure damage.

A character who sustains any subdual damage from cold or exposure suffers from frostbite or hypothermia and is fatigued. These penalties end when the character recovers the subdual damage she took from the cold and exposure.

weather

winds

Winds can create a stinging spray of sand or dust, fan a large fire, heel over a small boat, and blow gases or vapors away. If powerful enough, they can even knock characters down (Table: Wind Effects), interfere with ranged attacks, or impose penalties on some skill checks.

- **Light Wind:** A gentle breeze, having little or no game effect.
- **Moderate Wind:** A steady wind with a 50% chance of extinguishing small unprotected flames, such as candles.
- **Strong Wind:** Gusts that automatically extinguish unprotected flames (candles, torches, and the like). Such gusts impose a –2 penalty to ranged attacks and to Listen checks.
- **Severe Wind:** In addition to automatically extinguishing any unprotected flames, winds of this magnitude cause protected flames (such as those of lanterns) to dance wildly and have a 50% chance of extinguishing these lights. Ranged weapon attacks and Listen checks are at a –4 penalty. This is the velocity of wind produced by the gust of wind spell.
- **Windstorm:** Powerful enough to bring down branches if not whole trees, windstorms automatically extinguish unprotected flames and have a 75% chance of blowing out protected flames, such as those of lanterns. Ranged weapon attacks are impossible, and even siege weapons have a –4 penalty to attack. Listen checks are at a –8 penalty due to the howling of the wind.
- **Hurricane-Force Wind:** All flames are extinguished. Ranged attacks are impossible (except with siege weapons, which have a –8 penalty to attack). Listen checks are impossible: All characters can hear is the roaring of the wind. Hurricane-force winds often fell trees.
- **Tornado:** All flames are extinguished. All ranged attacks are impossible (even with siege weapons), as are Listen checks. Instead of being blown away (see Table: Wind Effects), characters in close proximity to a tornado who fail their Fortitude saves are sucked toward the tornado. Those who come in contact with the actual funnel cloud are picked up and whirled around for 1d10 rounds, taking 6d6 points of damage per round, before being violently expelled (falling damage may apply). While a tornado's rotational speed can be as great as 500 km/h, the funnel itself moves forward at an average of 50 km/h. A tornado uproots trees, destroys buildings, and causes other similar forms of major destruction.

precipitation

Most precipitation is in the form of rain, but in cold conditions it can manifest as snow, sleet, or hail. Precipitation of any kind followed by a cold snap in which the temperature dips from above freezing to 0° C or below may produce ice.

- **Rain:** Rain reduces visibility ranges by half, resulting in a –4 penalty to Spot and Search checks. It has the same effect on flames, ranged weapon attacks, and Listen checks as severe wind (see above).
- **Snow:** While falling, snow reduces visibility as rain (–4 penalty to ranged weapon attacks, Spot checks, and Search checks). Once on the ground, it reduces movement by half. Snow has the same effect on flames as moderate wind (see above).
- **Sleet:** Essentially frozen rain, sleet has the same effect as rain while falling (except that its chance to extinguish protected flames is 75%) and the same effect as snow once on the ground.
- **Hail:** Hail does not reduce visibility, but the sound of falling hail makes Listen checks more difficult (–4 penalty). Sometimes (5% chance) hail can become large enough to deal 1 point of damage (per storm) to anything in the open. Once on the ground, hail has the same effect on movement as snow.

storms

The combined effects of precipitation (or dust) and wind that accompany all storms reduce visibility ranges by three quarters, imposing a –8 penalty to all Spot, Search, and Listen checks. Storms make ranged weapon attacks impossible, xcept for with siege weapons, which have a –4 penalty to attack. They automatically extinguish candles, torches, and similar unprotected flames. They cause protected flames, such as those of lanterns, to dance wildly and have a 50% chance to extinguish these lights. See Table: Wind Effects for possible consequences to beings caught outside without shelter during such a storm. Storms are divided into the following three types:

- **Duststorm:** These desert storms differ from other storms in that they have no precipitation. Instead, a duststorm blows fine grains of sand that obscure vision, smother unprotected flames, and can even choke protected flames (50% chance). Most duststorms are accompanied by severe winds (see above) and leave behind a deposit of 1d6 inches of sand. However, there is a 10% chance of a greater duststorm accompanied by windstorm magnitude winds (see above and Table: Wind Effects). These greater duststorms deal 1d3 points

of subdual damage each round on anyone caught out in the open without shelter and also pose a choking hazard (see The Drowning Rule — except that a character with a scarf or similar protection across her mouth and nose does not begin to choke until after a number of rounds equal to ten times her Constitution score). Greater duststorms leave 2d3–1 x 30cm of fine sand in their wake.

• **Snowstorm:** In addition to the wind and precipitation common to other storms, snowstorms leave 1d6 inches of snow on the ground afterward.

• **Thunderstorm:** In addition to wind and precipitation (usually rain, but sometimes also hail), thunderstorms are accompanied by lightning that can pose a hazard to characters without proper shelter (especially those in metal armor). As a rule of thumb, assume one bolt per minute for a 1-hour period at the center of the storm. Each bolt causes electrical damage equal to 1d10 eight-sided dice. One in ten thunderstorms is accompanied by a tornado (see below).

powerful storms

Very high winds and torrential precipitation reduce visibility to zero, making Spot and Search rolls, Listen checks, and all ranged weapon attacks impossible. Unprotected flames are automatically extinguished, and even protected flames have a 75% chance of being doused. Beings caught in the area can make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 20) or face the following effects based on the size of the being. Powerful storms are divided into the following four types:

• **Windstorm:** While accompanied by little or no precipitation, windstorms can cause considerable damage simply through the force of their wind (see Table: Wind Effects).

• **Blizzard:** The combination of high winds (see Table: Wind Effects), heavy snow (typically 1d3 x 30cm), and bitter cold make blizzards deadly for all who are unprepared for them.

• **Hurricane:** In addition to very high winds (see Table: Wind Effects) and heavy rain, hurricanes are accompanied by flash floods (see below). Most adventuring activity is impossible under such conditions.

• **Tornado:** One in ten thunderstorms is accompanied by a tornado (see Table: Wind Effects).

• **Fog:** Whether in the form of a low-lying cloud or a mist rising from the ground, fog obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 1.5m. Beings within 1.5m have one-half concealment (attacs by or against them have a 20% miss chance).

• **Flash Floods:** Runoff from heavy rain forces beings in its path to make a Fortitude save (DC 15). Large or smaller beings who fail the save are swept away by the rushing water, taking 1d6 points of subdual damage per round (1d3 points on a successful Swim check). Huge beings who fail are knocked down and face potential drowning. Gargantuan and Colossal beings are checked, but they onl drown if the waters rise above their heads.

Checked: Beings are unable to move forward against the force of he wind. Flying beings are blown back 1d6x3m.

Knocked Down: Beings are knocked prone by the force of the wind. Flying beings are instead blown back 1d6x3m.

Blown Away: Beings on the ground are knocked prone and rolled 1d4x3m, sustaining 1d4 points of subdual damage per 3m. Flying beings

wind effects

Wind Force	Wind Speed	Ranged Attacks	Affected Being Size	Wind Effect on Beings	Fort Save to avoid Effect
Light	0–15 km/h	-	Any	none	-
Moderate	16-35 km/h	-	Any	none	-
Strong	36-50 km/h	-2	Tiny or smaller	knocked down	10
			Small or larger	none	
Severe	51-80 km/h	-4	Tiny	Blown away	15
			Small	Knocked Down	
			Medium-size	Checked	
			Large or larger	None	
Windstorm	81 - 115 km/h	Impossible	Small or Smaller	Blown Away	18
			Medium-size	Knocked Down	
			Large or Huge	Checked	
			Gargantuan or Colossal	None	
Hurricane	116 - 280 km/h	impossible	Medium-size or smaller	Blown away	20
			Large	Knocked Down	
			Huge	Checked	
			Gargantuan or Colossal	None	
Tornado	281 - 480 km/h	impossible	large or smaller	Blown away	30
			Huge	Knocked Down	
			Gargantuan or Colossal	Checked	

***Flying or airborne beings are treated as one size class smaller than their actual size, so an airborne Gargantuan Dreamseed creature is treated as Huge for purposes of wind effects.*

are blown back 2d6x3m and sustain 2d6 points of subdual damage due to battering and buffering.

other hazards

Use the following guidelines to cover the other sorts of dangers a character can face.

acid

Corrosive acids deals 1d6 points of damage per round of exposure except in the case of total immersion (such as into a vat of acid), which deals 10d6 points of damage per round. An attack with acid, such as from a hurled vial or a Dreamseed's spittle, counts as a round of exposure.

The fumes from most acids are inhalant poisons. Those who come close enough to a large body of acid to dunk a being in it must make a Fortitude save (DC 13) or take 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. All such characters must make a second save 1 minute later or take another 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage. Beings immune to acid's caustic properties might still drown in it if they are totally immersed.

ice

Characters walking on ice must make Balance checks (DC 15) to avoid slipping and falling. Over long distances, a character must make a check each minute. Characters in prolonged contact with ice may run the risk of cold damage.

lack of air/high altitude

Characters in conditions of low oxygen, such as on top of a mountain, must roll a Fortitude saving throw each hour (DC 15, +1 per previous check), taking 1d6 points of subdual damage each time they fail.

A character who sustains any subdual damage from lack of oxygen is automatically fatigued. These penalties end when the character recovers the subdual damage he took from low oxygen.

• *Altitude Sickness:* Long-term oxygen deprivation due to high altitude affects mental and physical ability scores. After each 6-hour period a character spends at an altitude of over 6,000 meters, he must make a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1 point of temporary damage to all ability scores.

suffocation

A character who has no air to breathe can hold her breath for 2 rounds per point of Constitution. After this period of time, the character must make a Constitution check (DC 10) in order to continue holding her breath. The save must be repeated each round, with the DC increasing by +1 for each previous success.

When the character fails one of these Constitution checks, she begins to suffocate. In the first round, she falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round, she drops to –1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, she suffocates.

• *Slow Suffocation:* A Medium-size character can breathe easily for 6 hours in a sealed chamber measuring 3m on a side. After that time, the character takes 1d6 points of subdual damage every 15 minutes. Each additional Medium-size character or significant fire source (a torch, for example) proportionally reduces the time the air will last. Thus, two people can last for 3 hours, after which they each take 1d6 points per 15 minutes. If they have a torch (equivalent to another Medium-size character in terms of the air it uses), the air runs out in only 2 hours.

lava

Lava or magma deals 2d6 points of damage per round of exposure, except in the case of total immersion (such as when a character falls into the crater of an active volcano), which deals 20d6 points of damage per round. Damage from magma conti ues for 1d3 rounds after exposure ceases, but this additional damage is only half of that dealt during actual cotact (that is, 1d6 or 10d6 points per round).

An immunity or resistance to heat or fire serves as an immunity to lava or magma. However, a being immune to heat migt still drown if completely immersed in lava.

smoke

A character who breathes heavy smoke must make a Fortitude saving throw each round (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or spend that round choking and coughing. A character who chokes for two consecutive rounds takes 1d6 points of subdual damage.

Smoke obscures vision, giving one-half concealment (20% miss chance) to characters within it.

falling objects

Just as characters take damage when they fall more than 3m, so too do they take damage when they are hit by falling objects. Objects that fall upon characters deal damage based on their weight and the distance they have fallen.

For each 100 kilos of an object's weight, the object deals 1d6 points of damage, provided it falls at least 3m. Distance also comes into play, adding an additional 1d6 points of damage for every 3m increment it falls beyond the first (to a maximum of 20d6 points of damage).

Objects smaller than 200 pounds also deal damage when dropped, but they must fall farther to deal the same damage; see the table below for the distance a lighter item has to fall to cause 1d6 of damage.

damage from falling objects

Object Weight	Falling Distance
100-51 kg	6 m
50-26 kg	9 m
25-16 kg	12 m
15-6 kg	15 m
5-3 kg	18 m
2.5-0.5 kg	21 m

For each additional increment an object falls, it deals an additional 1d6 points of damage. For example, since a 15 kilo metal sphere must fall 15 meters to deal damage (1d6 points of damage), such a sphere that fell 45 meters would deal 3d6 points of damage. Objects weighing less than 0.5kg do not deal damage to those they land upon, no matter how far they have fallen.

intro

They'd been lying in this damned ditch for five days now. As soon as the first night, water started trickling into their shelter. Then, on the third day, a storm crashed the roof in and the two of them had spent the following couple of nights without any shelter from the elements. Yesterday, they had still tried to take the whole situation with a certain sense of humor, but this morning – after the second damp, sleepless night – none of them spoke a single word. Marik had not even tried to light a fire, and Ranalf lacked the energy to urge Marik on.

At least it wasn't cold. The inferno blazing on the eastern horizon sent its hot winds across the land.

Ranalf stretched and climbed up to the edge of the ditch. With narrowed eyes, he looked to the wall of flames. Cautiously, he drew a long bundle from his rucksack and unwrapped his spyglass from the soft piece of cloth. His spyglass was likely his only piece of equipment that hadn't been soaked yet. Ranalf folded the piece of cloth, covering the spyglass with it, in order to keep it that way.

He did not know how many times he'd scanned the red wall of flames during the last few days. Nevertheless, rain and fatigue were forgotten as he let his gaze wander slowly along the Inferno – too much depended on the city being warned as early as possible.

Ranalf almost failed to notice the black dot, but there could be no doubt: something floated in the air in front of the wall of fire.

After a few more moments, Ranalf was absolutely sure: The spot was growing. It actually was moving – right towards their position.

Mesmerized, Ranalf kept looking through his spyglass, watching as the dot grew larger. Soon, an uneven outline was visible, as was a black sheen. Then, Ranalf noticed that the blurry spot had legs.

"Alarm! This is it!" he shouted without putting the spyglass down. "The messengers are to ready their horses at once. Pert rides to the city and Gwenja to the monastery of Mærkhelde to get the Engel!"

The soldiers started to move immediately. They all had family and friends in the city and they knew that every minute would count from now on.

us: giants of the air

The creature became more recognizable. Its black insect head had no eyes, only gigantic mandibles, and countless clawed legs hung down from its body.

But it was alone. Carefully – so that he didn't lose track of the monster – Ranalf moved the spyglass from the left to the right. There was definitely no other creature.

"Wait," he called to the messengers, all astride their horses by now. He put the spyglass down to look at the wall of fire with his naked eyes. The dot was already visible without the aid of a spyglass. Ranalf closed his eyes and listened. There was no familiar beat of wings, just a dull drone that seemed to come from very far away.

And suddenly, he understood. The creature had to be immense, much larger than the demons that had attacked the town last year. It had been cattle-sized bugs then, with spiked carapaces and sharp mandibles. The creature coming closer now was many times their size.

Quickly, he gave orders to the messengers and told the other soldiers to put up the shelter and camouflage with dirt and bushes. A well-camouflaged hiding place often was the safest means of defense against a single enemy.

His orders given, he put the spyglass back to his eyes. The creature had changed course slightly, allowing him to see how massive it truly was. As we watched, though, there was another change.

The creature's flight slowed, and it began to twist and writhe in midair. Suddenly, a shrill, unearthly scream pierced the still morning air. With a final spasm, the giant Dreamseed creature burst apart in midair.

Ranalf stared, gape-jawed, through his spyglass as a comforting thought crept into his mind: perhaps a creature of such a huge size could not survive outside of the Brandland's black smoke.

But his newfound hope died quickly. The rapidly expanding black cloud that took the creature's place grew and the distant drone became louder and more high-pitched. As the cloud expanded, Ranalf could see the infernal shapes of demons both large and small erupting from the dessicated waste that was the larger insect-demon's husk.

They had no choice but to flee.

chapter 1

They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; oh that men would praise the lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of man.

- psalms 107; 23-31

four: equipment

or,

of the useful things that make life worth living

The world of **Engel** features a large variety of goods, while the items available in the countryside are generally limited to self-made items crafted by less than perfect artisans, the cities bustle with markets where products of various qualities can be bought; some of these originate even from pre-Flood times; while most of them are modern equivalents.

Buying items of inferior quality or which have seen some use generally reduces the price by half. Pre-flood items which have survived the rigors of time, generally cost about five times as a modern equivalent – without being of any better quality! Many items which have survived until now are masterwork items though and therefore cost considerably more. True artifacts from the time before are often invaluable and almost never offered for sale (or so expensive that no player character could afford them.)

common trade goods

Commodities are the exception to the above mentioned half-price rule. A commodity, in this sense, is a valuable good that can be easily exchanged almost as if it were cash itself. Wheat, flour, cloth, and valuable metals are commodities, and merchants often trade in them directly without using currency. Obviously, merchants can sell these goods for slightly more than they pay for them, but the difference is small enough that you do not have to worry about it.

trade goods

Commodity	Cost
Chicken	1 Euro
Cinnamon, 0.5 kg.	5 Euro
Cloves, 0.5 kg	40 Euro
Copper, 0.5 kg	5 Euro
Cow	75 Euro
Ginger, 0.5 kg	15 Euro
Goat	8 Euro
Gold, 0.5 kg	500 Euro
Iron, 0.5 kg	1 Euro
Linen, 0.5 kg (sq. meters)	15 Euro
Ox	75 Euro
Pepper, 0.5 kg	15 Euro
Pig	25 Euro
Purebred Dog	150 Euro
Rice, 0.5 kg	5 Cent
Rice Flour, 0.5 kg	10 Cent
Saffron, 0.5 kg	40 Euro
Salt, 0.5 kg	1 Euro
Sheep	15 Euro
Silk, 0.5 kg (2 sq. meters)	150 Euro
Silver, 0.5 kg	40 Euro
Tea leaves, 0.5 kg	1 Euro
Tobacco, 0.5 kg	5 Euro

weapons and armor

weapon categories

Weapons in **Engel** are grouped into several interlocking sets of categories. These categories pertain to what skill is needed to be proficient in their use (Simple, Martial, and Exotic), usefulness in close combat (Melee) or at a distance (Ranged, which includes both thrown and projectile), and weapon size (Tiny, Small, Medium-size, and Large).

If a character uses a weapon with which the character is not proficient, the character suffers a -4 penalty on attack rolls.

Melee and Ranged Weapons: Melee weapons are used for making melee attacks, though some of them can be thrown as well. Ranged weapons are thrown weapons or projectile weapons that are not effective in melee (though they could possibly be used as clubs). Apply a character's Strength bonus to damage dealt by thrown weapons but not to damage dealt by projectile weapons (except for mighty composite shortbows or longbows).

Tiny, Small, Medium-Size, and Large Weapons: The size of a weapon compared to a character's size determines whether for the character the weapon is light, one-handed, two-handed, or too large to use.

Light: If the weapon's size category is smaller than the character's, then the weapon is light for that character. Light weapons are easier to use in the off hand, and they can be used while grappling. A light weapon can be used in one hand. There is no special bonus when using such a weapon in two hands.

One-Handed: If the weapon's size category is the same as a character's, then the weapon is one-handed for that character. If a one-handed melee weapon is used two-handed, apply one and a half times the character's Strength bonus to damage (provided the character has a bonus).

Thrown weapons can only be thrown one-handed, and a character's Strength bonus is added to the damage.

Two-Handed: If the weapon's size category is one step larger than a character's, then the weapon is two-handed for that character. A two-handed melee weapon can be used effectively in two hands, and when damage is dealt with it, add one and a half times the character's Strength bonus to damage (provided the character has a bonus).

Thrown weapons can only be thrown one-handed. A character can throw a thrown weapon with one hand even if it would be two-handed for him due to the character's size, but doing so counts as a full-round action because the weapon is bulkier and harder to handle than most thrown weapons. Add the character's Strength bonus to damage.

A character can use a two-handed projectile weapon (such as a bow or a crossbow) effectively in two hands. If the character has a penalty for low Strength, apply it to damage rolls when you use a bow or a sling. Add no Strength bonus to damage with a projectile weapon unless the weapon is a mighty composite bow or a Urielite Bow.

Too Large to Use: If the weapon's size category is two or more steps larger than a character's own, the weapon is too large for the character to use.

Unarmed Strikes: An unarmed strike is two size categories smaller than the character using it.

Page 233:
I. Umbrella
II. Overshoes
III. Sickle for harvesting rice
IV. Lantern
V. Fiddle
VI. Jug for water or brandy.
VII. Bottle for various beverages

I
II
III
IV
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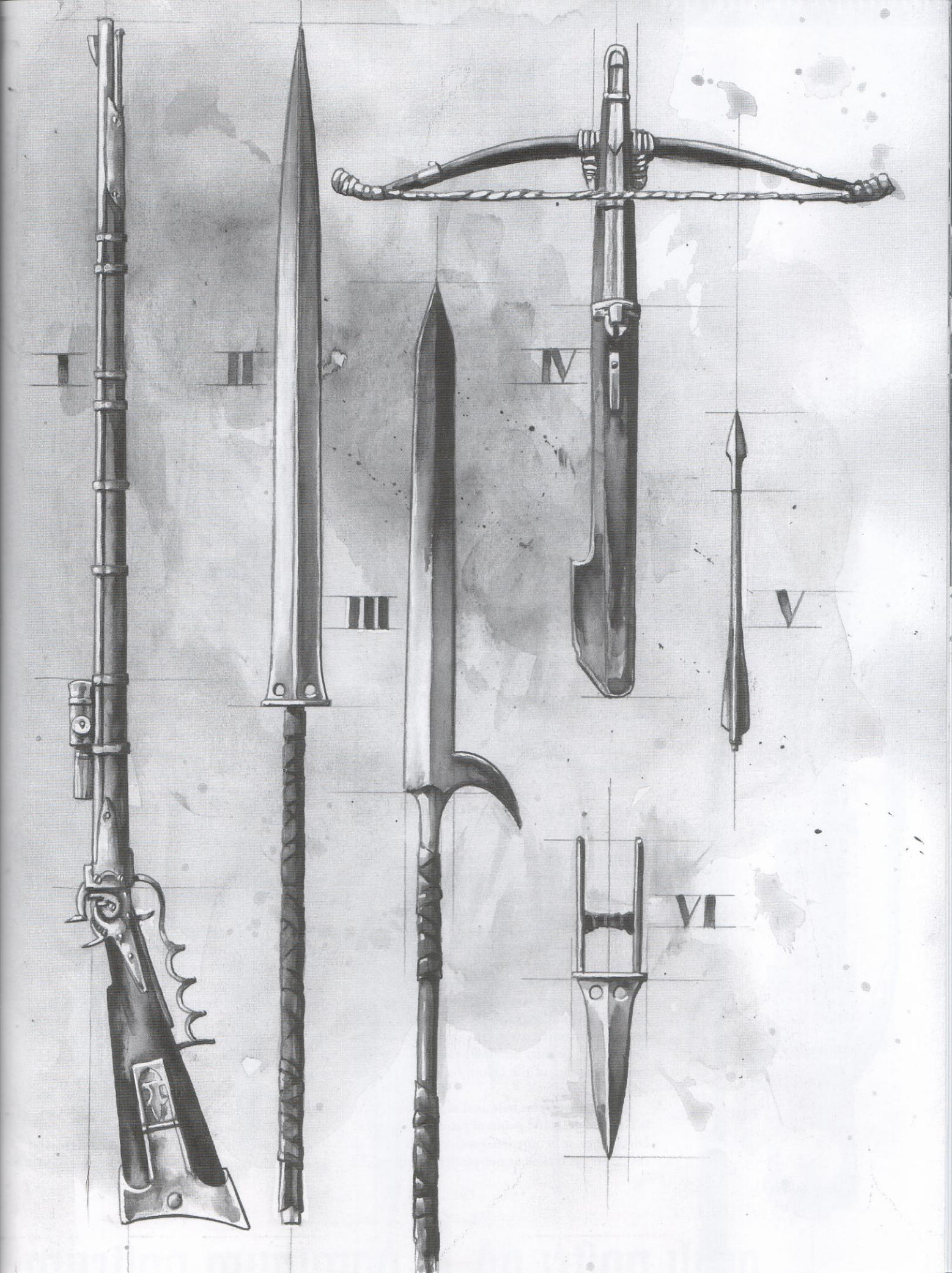
weapons

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range	Weight	Type Increment
simple weapons-melee						
Unarmed Attacks						
Gauntlet	15 Euro	#	#	-	1 kg	Blunt
Strike, unarmed	-	1d3§	x2	-	-	Blunt
Tiny						
Dagger	15 Euro	1d4	19-20/x2	3 m	0.5 kg	Piercing
Dagger, punching	30 Euro	1d4	x3	-	1 kg	Piercing
Small						
Mace, light	40 Euro	1d6	x2	-	1.5 kg	Blunt
Sickle	15 Euro	1d6	x2	-	1.5 kg	Slashing
Medium-size						
Club	free	1d6	x2	3 m	1.5 kg	Blunt
Mace, heavy	90 Euro	1d8	x2	-	6 kg	Blunt
Large						
Quarterstaff	free	1d6/1d6	x2	-	2 kg	Blunt
simple weapons-ranged						
Small						
Crossbow, light	250 Euro	1d8	19-20/x2	24 m	3 kg	Piercing
• Bolts, crossbow (10)	10 Euro	-	-	-	2 kg	-
Sling	-	1d4	x2	15 m	0 kg	Blunt
• Bullets, sling (10)	1 Euro	-	-	-	2.5 kg	-
Medium-size						
Crossbow, heavy	400 Euro	1d10	19-20/x2	36 m	4.5 kg	Piercing
• Bolts, crossbow (10)	10 Euro	-	-	-	0.5 kg	-
Javelin	10 Euro	1d6	x2	9 m	1 kg	Piercing
martial weapons-melee						
Small						
Hammer, light	10 Euro	1d4	x2	6 m	1 kg	Blunt
Handaxe	60 Euro	1d6	x3	-	2.5 kg	Slashing
Sword, short	100 Euro	1d6	19-20/x2	-	1.5 kg	Piercing
Medium-size						
Longsword	120 Euro	1d8	19-20/x2	-	2 kg	Slashing
Warhammer	120 Euro	1d8	x3	-	4 kg	Blunt
Ceramic-sword	not available	1d10	18-20/x2	-	2 kg	Slashing
Large						
Longspear	40 Euro	1d8	x3	-	4.5 kg	Piercing
Sword Lance	100 Euro	1d10	x3	-	4 kg	Slashing
martial weapons-ranged						
Medium						
Shortbow, composite	550 Euro	1d6	x3	21 m	1 kg	Piercing
• Arrows (20)	10 Euro	-	-	-	1.5 kg	-
Large						
Longbow	550 Euro	1d8	x3	30 m	1.5 kg	Piercing
• Arrows (20)	10 Euro	-	-	-	1.5 kg	-
Longbow, composite	750 Euro	1d8	x3	33 m	1.5 kg	Piercing
• Arrows (20)	1 Euro	-	-	-	1.5 kg	-
Urielite Longbow*	not available	1d10	x3	39 m	1 kg	Piercing
• Arrows (20)	1 Euro	-	-	-	1.5 kg	-
exotic weapons-melee						
Medium-size						
Hasta	750 Euro	1d8	19-20/x3	-	5 kg	Slashing
Sword, bastard	250 Euro	1d10	19-20/x2	-	5 kg	Slashing
Sword, flaming*	not available	1d10+1d6	19-20/x2	-	5 kg	Slashing
exotic weapons-ranged						
Tiny						
Crossbow, hand	600 Euro	1d4	19-20/x2	9 m	1.5 kg	Piercing
• Bolts (10)	10 Euro	-	-	-	0.5 kg	-
Small						
Blowgun	10 Euro	1	x2	3 m	1 kg	Piercing
• Needles, blowgun (20)	10 Euro	-	-	-	#	-
Medium-size						
Crossbow, repeating	1000 Euro	1d8	19-20/x2	24 m	8 kg	Piercing
• Bolts (5)	10 Euro	-	-	-	0.5 kg	-
Net	150 Euro	#	#	3 m	5 kg	-
firearms						
Small						
Pistol (modern)	500 Euro	1d10	x3	15 m	1.5 kg	Piercing
• Bullets, pistol (10)	30 Euro	-	-	-	1 kg	-
Iberian Gun*	not available	1d10	x3	50 m	2.5 kg	Piercing
• Pistol-clip (15)	not available	-	-	-	0.25 kg	-
Medium-size						
Musket (modern)	750 Euro	1d12	x3	48 m	10 kg	Piercing
• Bullets, musket (10)	30 Euro	-	-	-	1 kg	-
Cordoban Rifle*	not available	1d12	x3	75 m	4 kg	Piercing
• Rifle-clip (30)	not available	-	-	-	0.5 kg	-

* This is a pre-flood weapon or otherwise prohibited and therefore not commonly available.

Page 235:
I. Musket
II. Hasta
III. Sword Lance
IV. Light Crossbow
V. Crossbow Bolt
VI. Punching Dagger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Page 237:
I. Long Sword
II. Short Sword
III. Flaming Sword
IV. Dagger
V. Urielite Composite Longbow
VI. Urielite Quiver with arrows

weapon qualities

Cost: This is the weapon's cost in Euro. The cost includes miscellaneous gear that goes with the weapon, such as a scabbard for a sword or a quiver for arrows.

Damage: The Damage column gives the damage dealt with a weapon when a hit is scored.

Critical: The entry in this column notes how the weapon is used with the rules for critical hits. When a critical hit is scored, roll the damage with all modifiers two or three times, as indicated by its critical multiplier, and add all the results together.

x2: The weapon deals double damage on a critical hit.

x3: The weapon deals triple damage on a critical hit.

19-20/x2: The weapon scores a threat on a natural 19 or 20 and deals double damage on a critical hit.

Range Increment: Any attack at less than this distance is not penalized for range. However, each full range increment causes a cumulative -2 penalty to the attack roll.

Thrown weapons, such as javelins, have a maximum range of five range increments. Projectile weapons, such as bows, can shoot up to ten increments.

Improvised Thrown Weapons: Sometimes objects not crafted to be weapons get thrown. Because they are not designed for this use, all characters who use improvised thrown weapons are treated as not proficient with them and suffer a -4 penalty on their attack rolls. Improvised thrown weapons have a range increment of 3 meters. Their size and the damage they deal have to be adjudicated by the storyteller.

Weight: This column gives the weapon's weight.

Type: Weapons are classified according to types: bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing.

weapon descriptions

Arrows: An arrow used as a melee weapon is Tiny and deals 1d4 points of piercing damage (x2 crit). Since it is not designed for this use, all characters are treated as not proficient with it and thus suffer a -4 penalty on their attack rolls. Arrows come in leather quivers that hold 20 arrows. An arrow that hits its target is destroyed; one that misses has a 50% chance to be destroyed or lost.

Blowgun: This is used to fire small needles or clay projectiles a long distance. It is silent, and its needles most often are used to poison foes. The blowgun is a popular hunting weapon (as well as a weapon of war) of the country-dwellers in 27th century Europe.

Bolts: A crossbow bolt used as a melee weapon is Tiny and deals 1d4 points of piercing damage (x2 crit). Since it is not designed for this use, all characters are treated as not proficient with it and thus suffer a -4 penalty on their attack rolls. Bolts come in wooden cases that hold 10 bolts. A bolt that hits its target is destroyed; one that misses has a 50% chance to be destroyed or lost.

Bullets: These large, round, lead bullets are sold in bags of 10. The bag has negligible weight.

Bullets, Sling: Bullets are lead spheres, much heavier than stones of the same size. They come in a leather pouch that holds 10 bullets. A bullet that hits its target is destroyed; one that misses has a 50% chance to be destroyed or lost.

Club: A wooden club is so easy to find and fashion that it has no cost. Especially in the countryside, clubs are often used as improvised throwing weapons.

Cordoban Gun: Most of these pistols still originate from pre-Flood times and are therefore not commonly available for sale. The clip holds 15 bullets. Using such a weapon, a character can make full use of the full-attack action. Firearms ignore the AC bonus granted to a target by modern armor, though pre-Flood armor grants full protection.

Crossbow, Hand: Loading a hand crossbow is a move-equivalent action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Crossbow, Heavy: A heavy crossbow requires two hands to use effectively, regardless of the user's size. Loading a heavy crossbow is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

A character can shoot, but not load, a heavy crossbow with one hand at a -4 penalty. A character can shoot a heavy crossbow with each hand at a -6 penalty, plus the usual -4 penalty for the off-hand attack (-6 primary hand/-10 off hand). The Two-Weapon Fighting feat does not reduce these penalties because it represents skill with melee weapons, not ranged weapons. The Ambidexterity feat lets someone avoid the -4 off-hand penalty (-6 primary hand/-6 off hand).

Crossbow, Light: A light crossbow requires two hands to use, regardless of the user's size. Loading a light crossbow is a move-equivalent action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

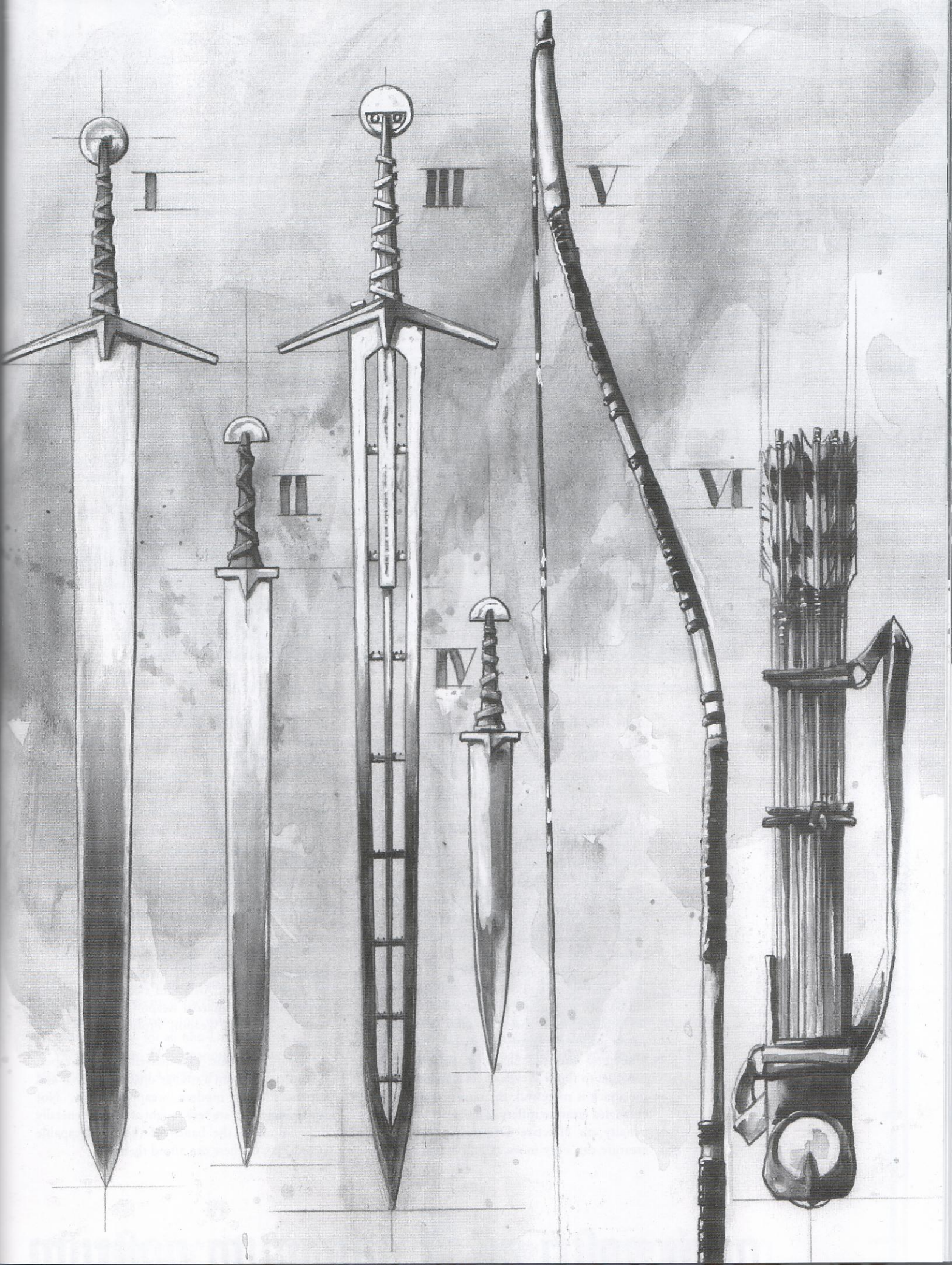
A character can shoot, but not load, a light crossbow with one hand at a -4 penalty. A character can shoot a light crossbow with each hand as noted for heavy crossbows, above.

Crossbow, Repeating: The repeating crossbow holds five crossbow bolts. While it holds bolts, the crossbow can be shot according to a character's normal number of attacks without reloading. Loading a new case of five bolts is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Dagger: The dagger is a common secondary weapon. Use of the the Weapon Finesse feat allows the character to apply his Dexterity modifier instead of his Strength modifier to attack rolls with a dagger.

Dagger, Punching: This dagger puts the full force of the wielder's punch behind it, making it capable of deadly strikes.

Gauntlet: These metal gloves protect the hands and let character's deal normal damage with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unarmed strikes rather than subdual damage. A strike with a gauntlet is otherwise considered an unarmed attack. The cost and weight given are for a single gauntlet.

Hammer, Light: This is a small sledge light enough to throw.

Hasta: A reach weapon with a length of 3m. and with a short handle and a broad, two-edged blade. Usually, the Hasta is only used by Templars.

Iberian Rifle: The supply of these very powerful weapons is heavily restricted and most people of the 27th century will never have seen one of these. The clip holds 30 bullets. Using such a weapon, a character can make full use of the full-attack action. Firearms ignore the AC bonus granted to a target by modern armor, though pre-flood armor grants full protection.

Javelin: This weapon is a light, flexible spear intended for throwing. It can be used in melee, but not well. Since it is not designed for melee, all characters are treated as not proficient with it and thus suffer -4 on their melee attack rolls.

Longbow: A character needs at least two hands to use a bow, regardless of the size of the bow. This bow is too big to use while mounted.

Longbow, Composite: A character needs at least two hands to use a bow, regardless of the size of the bow. Composite bows are made from laminated horn, wood, or bone and built with a recurve, meaning that the bow remains bow-shaped even when unstrung. They can be made with especially heavy pulls to take advantage of a character's above-average Strength.

Longspear: A longspear has reach of 3m. The weapon cannot be used against an adjacent foe.

Mace, Heavy or Light: A mace is made of metal, even the haft, making it quite heavy and very hard to break.

Musket: A ranged weapon originally invented in the Time Before, the matchlock musket has been reinvented by clever Europeans. A musket requires two hands to use effectively, regardless of the user's size. The musket holds a single shot and requires a standard action to reload. It is generally suspended upon a prop, if this is not done, the range increment is halved. Firearms ignore the AC bonus granted to a target by all modern armor, though pre-flood armor grants full protection.

Needles, Blowgun: These 5cm long iron needles are sold in small wooden cases of 20. A full case is so light that its weight is negligible. The tips of the needles are often coated with poison such as curare, arsenic or ipoh.

Net: A fighting net has small barbs in the weave and a trailing rope to control netted opponents. It can be used to entangle opponents.

When a net is thrown, make a ranged touch attack against the target. A net's maximum range is 3 meters, and the character suffers no range penalties to throw it even to its maximum range. If the attack is successful, the target is entangled. An entangled creature suffers -2 on attack rolls and a -4 penalty on effective Dexterity. The entangled creature can only move at half speed and cannot charge or run. If the character takes control the trailing rope by succeeding at an opposed Strength check while holding it, the entangled creature can only move within the limits that the rope allows. If the entangled creature attempts to use *Potestates*, it must succeed at a Concentration check (DC 15) or be unable to utilize the ability.

The entangled creature can escape with an Escape Artist check (DC 20) that is a full-round action. The net has 5 hit points and can be burst with a Strength check (DC 25, also a full-round action).

A net is only useful against creatures between Tiny and Large size, inclusive. A net must be folded to be thrown effectively. The first time a net is thrown in a fight, the attacker must make a normal ranged touch attack roll. After the net is unfolded, the character suffers a -4 penalty on attack rolls with it. It takes 2 rounds for a proficient user to fold a net and twice that long for a nonproficient one to do so.

Pistol, modern: Another reinvention of the 27th century. This pistol holds a single shot and requires a standard action to reload. Firearms ignore the AC bonus granted to a target by modern armor, though pre-flood armor grants full protection.

Quarterstaff: A quarterstaff is a wooden double weapon 1.5 to 1.8 meters long.

Sickle: A curved knife with a short wooden handle, a sickle is used in the countryside to cut wheat, grass, sunflowers, corn, flax and other sorts of crops. In case of emergency, it comes in handy as a weapon, of course.

Sling: The sling hurls lead bullets. It's not as easy to use as the crossbow nor as powerful as a bow, but it's cheap, and easy to improvise from common materials.

A character can hurl ordinary stones with a sling, but stones are not as dense or as round as bullets, so they deal only 1d3 points of damage and suffer a -1 penalty on attack rolls.

Strike, Unarmed: A character deals 1d3 points of subdual damage with an unarmed strike, which may be a punch, kick, head butt, or other type of attack. The damage from an unarmed strike is considered weapon damage for the purposes of effects that provide a bonus to weapon damage.

Use the Weapon Finesse feat to apply a character's Dexterity modifier instead of the Strength modifier to attack rolls with an unarmed strike.

Sword, Bastard: A bastard sword is too large to use in one hand without special training; thus, it is an exotic weapon. A bastard sword can be used two-handed as a martial weapon, or one-handed with the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard Sword).

Sword, Ceramic: This marvelous light weapon is constructed from a strange opaque material and surpasses most modern weapons easily. Not surprisingly they are very sought after and generally only found in the hands of the most capable swordsman (if these can afford them).

Sword, Flaming: This mighty weapon is exclusively used by the Order of Gabrielites, it deals 1d10 slashing damage and 1d6 fire damage on each successful strike. Even touching one is considered heresy for most humans (with some Monachs being the exception) and is punished severely by the church.

Sword, Long: This classic, straight blade is a common weapon in the neo-feudal society of the 27th century.

Sword, Short: This sword with a classic, straight blade is popular as an off-hand weapon.

Sword Lance: A reach weapon 1.8 - 2.1 meters long with a long, sword-like blade which features a hook at its lower end.

Urielite Composite Longbow: Similar to a standard Composite Longbow, but with a stronger pull and constructed of superior material. These weapons are presented to the Urielites in their Himmel. The possession of such a bow is considered heresy for all non-Urielites.

Warhammer: This weapon is a one-handed sledge or maul with a large, heavy head.

armor qualities

Depending on a character's class, the character may be proficient in the use of all, some, or no armors, including shields. To wear heavier armor effectively, select the Armor Proficiency feats.

Cost: The cost of the armor.

Armor Bonus: The protective value of the armor. Bonuses from armor and a shield stack. This bonus is an armor bonus, so it does not stack with other effects that increase an armor bonus.

Maximum Dex Bonus: This number is the maximum Dexterity bonus to AC that this type of armor allows. Heavier armors limit mobility, reducing a character's ability to dodge blows.

Even if a Dexterity bonus drops to 0, a character is not considered to have lost the Dexterity bonus. For example, a Rogue is not allowed to do a sneak attack on a character simply because said character wears a breastplate.

Shields: Shields do not affect the maximum Dexterity bonus.

Armor Check Penalty: Anything heavier than leather hurts the ability to use some skills.

Skills: The armor check penalty number is the armor check penalty applied to certain skill checks.

Shields: Both armor check penalties apply when wearing armor and shield.

Nonproficient with Armor Worn: If armor is worn with which a character is not proficient, the character suffers the armor's armor check penalty on attack rolls and on all skill rolls that involve moving, including Ride.

Sleeping in Armor: If a character sleeps in a suit of armor with an armor check penalty of -5 or worse, the character is automatically fatigued the next day. The character suffers a -2 penalty on Strength and Dexterity, and can't charge or run.

Speed: Medium and heavy armor slows a character down. The number on Table: Armor is a character's top speed while wearing the armor.

Shields: Shields do not affect speed.

Weight: The weight of the armor.

Getting Into and Out of Armor: The time required to don armor depends on its type.

Don: This column records how long it takes to put the armor on. (One minute is 10 rounds.)

Don Hastily: This column records how long it takes to put the armor on in a hurry. Hastily donned armor has an armor check penalty and armor bonus each 1 point worse than normal.

Remove: This column records how long it takes to get the armor off.

armor descriptions

The types of armor found on Table: Armor are described below.

Banded Mail: This armor is made of overlapping strips of metal sewn to a backing of leather and chainmail. The strips cover vulnerable areas, while the chain and leather protect the joints and provide freedom of movement. Straps and buckles distribute the weight evenly. It includes gauntlets.

Breastplate: A breastplate covers the front and back. It comes with a helmet and matching greaves (plates to cover the lower legs). A light suit or skirt of studded leather beneath the breastplate protects limbs without restricting movement much.

Buckler: This small metal shield is strapped to the forearm, allowing it to be worn and still use the hand. A bow or crossbow can be used without penalty. An off-hand weapon can be used, but a -1 penalty on attack rolls is imposed because of the extra weight on your arm. This penalty stacks with those for fighting with the off-hand and, if appropriate, for fighting with two weapons. In any case, if a weapon is used in the off-hand, the character doesn't get the buckler's AC bonus for the rest of the round.

Gabrielite Shoulder Shield: These are only worn by the Angels of Death and are jealously kept away from the hands of mortals and other Engel alike.

Half-Plate: This armor is a combination of chainmail with metal plates (breastplate, epaulettes, elbow guards, gauntlets, tasses, and greaves) covering vital areas. Buckles and straps hold the whole suit together and distribute the weight. It includes gauntlets.

Hide: This armor is prepared from multiple layers of leather and animal hides. It is stiff and hard to move in.

Large Shield: A large shield is too heavy to use the shield hand for anything else.

Leather: The breastplate and shoulder protectors of this armor are made of leather that

armor

Armor	Cost	Armor Bonus	Max Dex	Armor Check Penalty	Speed	Weight
light armor						
Padded	40 Euro	+1	+8	0	9m	5 kg
Leather	75 Euro	+2	+6	0	9m	7.5 kg
Shoulder Shield	not available	+2	+8	0	9m	20.5 kg
Studded leather	200 Euro	+3	+5	-1	9m	10 kg
medium armor						
Gabrielite shoulder shield	not available	+3	+6	0	9m	30.5 kg
Hide	100 Euro	+3	+4	-3	6m	7.5 kg
Scale mail	400 Euro	+4	+3	-4	6m	55 kg
Breastplate	1500 Euro	+5	+3	-4	6m	55 kg
heavy armor						
Splint mail	1500 Euro	+6	+0	-7	6m*	12.5 kg
Banded mail	2000 Euro	+6	+1	-6	6m*	17.5 kg
Half-plate	4500 Euro	+7	+0	-7	6m*	12.5 kg

shields

Armor	Cost	Armor Bonus	Max Dex	Armor Check Penalty	Speed	Weight
Buckler	100 Euro	+1	-	-1	-	2.5 kg
Shield, small, wooden	30 Euro	+1	-	-1	-	2.5 kg
Shield, small, steel	70 Euro	+1	-	-1	-	3 kg
Shield, large, wooden	50 Euro	+2	-	-2	-	5 kg
Shield, large, steel	150 Euro	+2	-	-2	-	7.5 kg

**When running in heavy armor, a character moves only triple speed, not quadruple.*

has been stiffened by boiling in oil. The rest of the armor is softer and more flexible leather or rubber.

Padded: Padded armor features quilted layers of cloth and batting.

Scale Mail: This is a coat and leggings (and perhaps a separate skirt) of leather covered with overlapping pieces of metal, much like the scales of a fish. It includes gauntlets.

Shield Bash Attacks: An opponent can be bashed with a shield, using it as an off-hand weapon. A character deals 1d4 points of damage (x2 crit) with a large shield or 1d3 (x2 crit) with a small one. Used this way, the shield is a martial bludgeoning weapon. For purposes of attack penalties, treat a shield as a light weapon. If the shield is used as a weapon, the wearer loses its AC bonus until the character's next action (usually until the next round).

Shoulder Shield: These are commonly used by the Engel and provide a modicum of protection without restricting movement overly. They seem to be constructed of a pre-flood material and touching one without the permission of an Engel is considered heresy.

Small Shield: A small shield's light weight lets a character carry other items in that hand (although the character cannot use weapons).

Splint Mail: This armor is made of narrow vertical strips of metal riveted to a backing of leather that is worn over cloth padding. Flexible chainmail protects the joints. It includes gauntlets.

Studded Leather: This armor is made from tough but flexible leather or rubber (not hardened leather as with normal leather armor) reinforced with close-set metal rivets.

Wooden or Steel: Wooden and steel shields offer the same basic protection, though they respond differently to special attacks.

donning armor

Armor Type	Don	Don Hastily	Remove
Padded, leather, hide, studded leather or shoulder shields	1 minute	5 rounds	1 minute*
Breastplate, scale mail, banded mail or splint mail	4 minutes*	1 minute	1 minute*
Half-plate	4 minutes**	4 minutes*	1d4+1 minutes*

**If a character has some help, cut this time in half. A single character doing nothing else can help one or two adjacent characters. Two characters can't help each other don armor at the same time.*

***A character must have help to don this armor. Without help, it can only be donned hastily.*

special and superior items

Weapon or Armor	Cost
Weapon, masterwork	+2300 Euro
Arrow, bolt, or bullet, masterwork	50 Euro
Armor or shield, masterwork	+1000 Euro

special and superior items

Armor or Shield, Masterwork: These well-made items function like the normal versions except that their armor check penalties are reduced by 1.

Arrow, Bolt, or Bullet, Masterwork: A masterwork projectile functions like a normal projectile of the same type except that it is so aerodynamically sound that a +1 bonus on attack rolls is added when using it. This bonus stacks with any bonus a character might get by using a masterwork bow, crossbow, or sling. The projectile is damaged (effectively destroyed) when it is used.

Bomb: This round gunpowder bomb must be lit before it is thrown. Lighting the bomb is a standard action. The explosive deals 10d6 points of fire damage. Those caught within the 6 meters blast radius can make a Reflex save (DC 20) to take half damage. Within a radius of 6 - 12 meters of the blast, splash damage applies (another Reflex save for half damage is allowed).

Dynamite: Highly efficient and also rather secure to handle pre-flood explosive made of 75% nitroglycerine, 24.5% ground wood or coal and 0.5% soda. This short, thin cylinder of explosive must be lit before it is thrown or set. Lighting the dynamite is a standard action. The explosive has a

blast radius of 6m and deals 3d6 points of fire damage per stick used. Those caught within the blast radius can make a Reflex save (DC 20) to take half damage. Within a radius of 6 - 12m from the blast, splash damage applies (another Reflex save for half damage is allowed). Only very few people retain the secrets of its manufacture and jealously guard it.

Grenade, Fragmentation: A fragmentation grenade looks like a large egg on a 30-cm-long stick with small fins. Fragmentation grenades are pre-Flood antipersonnel explosives that deal damage that is half piercing damage and half fire damage in a 6m radius. Those caught within the blast radius can make a Reflex save (DC 20) to take half damage. Within a radius of 21 – 40 feet from the blast, splash damage applies (another Reflex save for half damage is allowed).

Grenade, Smoke: A smoke grenade looks like a squat cylinder on a 25-cm-long stick with small fins. One round after it lands or hits its target, this nondamaging explosive emits a cloud of smoke in a 6m radius that persists in still conditions for 1d3+6 rounds and in windy conditions for 1d3+1 rounds. Visibility within the smoke is limited to 5 ft. Everything within the cloud has 90% concealment.

Grenade, Sound: This grenade does not do any damage. It detonates with a blinding flash of light and deafening noise. Any creature in the blast radius must make a Fort save (DC 20) or be stunned and deafened for 1d3 rounds. If the creature was looking in the direction of the grenade when it detonated and fails the save, it is blinded for the same period of time. If the creature made the save, it is dazzled for the duration of the effect.

grenadelike weapons

Weapon*	Cost	Direct Hit	Splash Damage	Range	Weight Increment
Acid (flask)	75 Euro	1d6	1 pt**	3m	0.5kg
Bomb	1100 Euro	10d6	2d6	3m	0.5kg
Dynamite not available on the open market		15d6	3d6	6m	0.5kg
Grenade, fagmentation+ not available on the open market		6d6	2d6	6m	0.5kg
Grenade, smoke+ not available on the open market	**			3m	0.5kg
Grenade, Sound+ not available on the open market		Sonic	-	6m	0.5kg
Molotov Cocktail	150 Euro	1d6	1 pt**	3m	0.5kg
Smokebomb	500 Euro	Smoke	**	3m	0.5kg

** Grenadelike weapons require no proficiency to use. See text for full details on using these weapons.*

*** Grenadelike weapons deal splash damage to all creatures within 5 feet of where they land.*

+ These items are pre-Flood artifacts. Most of them were destroyed together with Raguelite Himmel. The secret of their manufacture was lost with the Himmel at Trondheim. The short supplies stored at the other Himmel are guarded jealously and are only sparsely distributed, except in cases of the utmost emergency.

Gunpowder: While gunpowder burns (with an ounce consuming itself in 1 round and illuminating a 9m radius) or even explodes in the right conditions, it is chiefly used to propel a bullet out of the barrel of a pistol or a rifle, or it is formed into a bomb (see below). 25 gramms of gunpowder is needed to propel a bullet. Gunpowder is sold in small kegs (10kg total weight, 2000 Euro each) and in water-resistant powder horns (2 lb. total weight, 260 Euro for a full powder horn). If gunpowder gets wet, it cannot be used to fire a bullet.

Molotov Cocktail: A bottle filled with a sticky, flammable liquid that must be lit before it is thrown. Lighting it is a standard action. The burning liquid has a blast radius of 3m and deals 1d6 of fire damage. Those caught within the blast radius can make a Reflex save (DC 20) to take half damage. Within a radius of 3 - 6m from the blast, splash damage applies (another Reflex save to negate damage is allowed). On the round following a direct hit, the target takes an additional 1d6 points of damage. The target can take a full-round action to attempt to extinguish the flames before taking this additional damage. It takes a successful Reflex saving throw (DC 15) to extinguish the flames. Rolling on the ground allows the character a +2 bonus. Leaping into a body of water or comparable actions automatically smothers the flames.

Smokebomb: This cylindrical bomb must be lit before it is thrown. Lighting it is a standard action. One round after it is lit, this nondamaging explosive emits a cloud of smoke in a 6m radius that persists in still conditions for 1d3+6 rounds and in windy conditions for 1d3+1 rounds. Visibility within the smoke is limited to 1.5m. Everything within the cloud has 90% concealment.

Weapon, Masterwork: These well-made weapons add a +1 bonus to attack rolls. A masterwork weapon's bonus to attack does not stack with an enhancement bonus to attack.

poisons

Although the noble Engel would never dream of using a poison against their enemies, some servants of the Lord of the Flies or other beings lacking such scruples might do so.

When a character comes into contact with a poison, he has to save against Fortitude; if he fails he will suffer the initial damage of the poison, regardless of his success or failure, he will have to save again after 1 minute or suffer the secondary damage. Some poisons might have delayed onset times, these will be noted with a poison if they apply. Poisons have a vector, which determines how the poison has to enter a body to take effect.

poisons

Poison	Type	DC for save	Initial Damage	Secondary Damage
Asp poison	Injury	10	1d3	1d3
Scorpion Poison	Injury	18	1d6 Str	1d6 Str
Curare	Injury	20	1d6 Dex	2d6 Dex
Thaipan Poison	Injury	30	3d6 hp	6d6 hp
Arsenic	Ingested	20	1d3Con	2d6 Con

goods and services

Weights for all the items listed on the Table: Goods and Services are their filled weights (except where otherwise designated). A variety of items from time before survived the onslaught of the years, most of these are either treasured heirlooms, jealously guarded by the church or in the possession of the Diadoches and richer merchants.

Acid: A corrosive liquid ideally suited to be hurled in little flasks at seemingly invincible opponents.

Backpack: A pack carried on the back, typically with straps to secure it, made of leather or pre-flood fabrics.

Bedrolls: Travelers never know where they are going to sleep, and bedrolls get better sleep in haylofts or on the cold ground. A bedroll is bedding and a blanket thin enough to be rolled up and tied. In an emergency, it can double as a stretcher.

Blanket, woolen: A thick, quilted wool blanket.

Candle: A candle clearly illuminates a 1.5 meter radius and burns for 1 hour.

Case, Map or Scroll: A capped leather, plastic or tin tube for holding rolled pieces of parchment or paper.

Chain: Chain has a hardness of 10 and 5 hit points. It can be burst with a strength check (DC 26).

Crowbar: An iron bar for levering things open.

Flask: A ceramic, glass or metal container fitted with a tight stopper. It holds 30ml of liquid.

Flint and Steel: Striking the steel and flint together creates sparks. By knocking sparks into tinder, you can create a small flame. Lighting a torch with flint and steel is a full-round action, and lighting any other fire with them takes at least that long.

Grappling Hook: Tied to the end of a rope, the hook can secure the rope to battlements, windows, tree limbs and so forth.

Hammer: A one-handed hammer with an iron head that is useful for pounding pitons into a wall.

Iberian Riders: Iberian Riders resemble large metal jacks with sharpened points rather than balls on the end of their arms. They are essentially iron spikes designed so that one point is always facing up. You scatter them on the ground in the hope that your enemies step on them or are at least forced to slow down to avoid them.

One bag of Iberian Riders (the 2 lb. unit listed on the Table: Goods and Services) covers an area five feet square. Each time a creature moves into an area covered by Iberian Riders (or spends a round fighting while standing in such an area), the creature may step on one. The Iberian Riders make an attack roll (base attack bonus +0) against the creature. For this attack, the creature's shield, armor and deflection bonus do not count. (Deflection averts blows as they approach you, but it does not prevent you from touching something dangerous.) If the creature is wearing shoes or other footwear, it gets a +2 bonus to AC.

If the Iberian Riders succeed at the attack, the creature has stepped on one. The Iberian Rider deals 1 point of damage, and the creature's speed is reduced by one-half because its foot is wounded. This movement penalty lasts for one day or until the creature is successfully treated with the Heal skill (DC 15). A charging or running creature must immediately stop if it steps on an Iberian Rider. Any creature moving at half speed or slower can pick its way through a bed of Iberian Riders with no trouble.

The storyteller judges the effectiveness of Iberian Riders against unusual opponents like Dreamseed creatures. A giant centipede-like Dreamseed monster, for example, can scramble among the Iberian Riders with no chance of hurting itself.

Ink: This is black ink. Ink is available in other colors, but it costs twice as much.

Inkpen: A wooden stick with a special tip on the end. The tip draws ink in when dipped in a vial and leaves an ink trail when drawn across a surface.

Jug, Clay: A basic ceramic jug fitted with a stopper. It holds 4 leters of liquid.

Ladder, 3 meter: A straight, simple wooden ladder.

Lamp, Common: A lamp clearly illuminates things in a 4.5m radius and burns for 6 hours on 30ml of oil. It burns with a more even flame than a torch, but, unlike a lantern, it uses an open flame and it can spill, making it too dangerous for most adventuring. You can carry a lamp in one hand.

Lantern, Bullseye: A bullseye lantern has only a single shutter, with its other sides being highly polished inside to reflect the light in a single direction. It illuminates a cone 18 meters long and 20 feet wide at the end, and it burns for 6 hours on 1 pint of oil. You can carry a lantern in one hand.

Lantern, Hooded: A hooded lantern is a standard lantern with shuttered or hinged sides. You can carry a lantern in one hand. It clearly illuminates a 6 meter radius and burns for 6 hours on 30ml of oil.

Lock: A lock is worked with a large, bulky key. The DC to open this kind of lock with the Disable Device skill depends on the lock's quality: very simple (DC 20), average (DC 25), good (DC 30), amazingly good (DC 40).

Manacles and Manacles, Masterwork: These manacles can bind a character. The manacled character can use the Escape Artist skill to slip free (DC 30, or DC 35 for masterwork manacles). To break the manacles requires success at a Strength check (DC 26, or DC 28 for masterwork manacles). Manacles have a hardness of 10 and 10 hit points. Most manacles have locks; add the cost of the lock you want to the cost of the manacles.

Mirror, small: A mirror is handy when you want to look around corners, signal friends with reflected sunlight, make sure that you look good enough to present yourself to the Pontifex Maximus or examine wounds that you have received on hard-to-see parts of your body.

Oil: One pint of oil burns for 6 hours in a lantern. A flask of oil may be used as a grenadelike weapon (see the Table: Grenadelike Weapons, page 242). Use the rules for Molotov cocktails.

30ml of oil can be poured on the ground to cover an area five feet square (provided the surface is smooth). If lit, the oil burns for 2 rounds and deals 1d3 points of damage to each creature in the area.

Paper: A white sheet of paper made from cloth fibers.

Parchment: Goat hide or sheepskin prepared for writing on.

Piton: When a wall does not offer you handholds and footholds, you can make your own. A piton is a steel spike with an eye through which you can loop a rope.

Pouch, Belt: This leather pouch straps to your belt. It is good for holding things that you may need in a hurry.

Pouch, Leather: A small watertight leather pouch with many small compartments.

Rations, Trail: Trail rations are compact, dry, high-energy foods suitable for travel, such as jerky, dried fruit, hardtack and nuts.

Rope, Hemp: This rope has 2 hit points and can be burst with a successful Strength check (DC 23).

Rope, Silk: This rope has 4 hit points and can be burst with a successful Strength check (DC 24). It is so supple that it adds a +2 circumstance bonus to Escape Artist checks.

Sack: A drawstring sack made of burlap or a similar material.

Signet Ring: Your signet ring has a unique design carved into it. When you press this ring into warm sealing wax, you leave an identifying mark.

Sledge: A two-handed, iron-headed hammer that is good for smashing open doors and chests.

Snaplight: These 20cm long, neon green plastic sticks burn in a bright light when bent in half. They illuminate a 9m radius for six hours, after which the stick is burned out and worthless.

Spyglass: Objects viewed through a spyglass are magnified to twice their size.

Tent: This simple tent sleeps two.

Torch: A wooden rod capped with twisted flax soaked in tallow or a similar item. A torch clearly illuminates a 6m radius and burns for 1 hour.

Vial: A ceramic, glass or metal vial fitted with a tight stopper. The stoppered container usually is no more than 3cm wide and 10cm high. It holds up to 30ml of liquid.

Waterskin: A leather pouch with a narrow neck that is used for holding water.

class tools and skill kits

Item	Cost	Weight
Artisan's tools	40 Euro	3kg
Artisan's tools, masterwork	400 Euro	3kg
Climber's kit	600 Euro	3kg
Healer's kit	400 Euro	0.5kg
Hourglass	200 Euro	0.5kg
Magnifying Glass	500 Euro	*
Musical instrument, common	40 Euro	2kg
Musical instrument, masterwork	7500 Euro	2kg
Scale	15 Euro	0.5kg
Thieves' tools	200 Euro	0.5kg
Thieves' tools, masterwork	7500 Euro	1kg

** No weight worth noting.*

class tools and skill kits

Artisan's Tools: This is the set of special tools needed for any craft. Without these tools, you have to use improvised tools (-2 penalty on your Craft check) if you can do the job at all.

Artisan's Tools, Masterwork: As artisan's tools, but these are the perfect tools for the job, so you get a +2 circumstance bonus on your Craft check.

Climber's Kit: Special pitons, boot tips, gloves and a harness that aids in all sorts of climbing. This is the perfect tool for climbing and gives you a +2 circumstance bonus to Climb checks.

Item	Cost	Weight
Acid (flask)	75 Euro	*
Backpack (empty)	15 Euro	1 kg
Barrel (empty)	15 Euro	55 kg
Basket (empty)	2 Euro	0.5 kg
Bedroll	1 Euro	3 kg
Bell	25 Euro	*
Blanket, woolen	4 Euro	2 kg
Block and tackle	40 Euro	3 kg
Glass bottle	15 Euro	*
Bucket (empty)	4 Euro	1 kg
Candle	10 Cent	*
Canvas (sq. m.)	1 Euro	0.5 kg
Case, map or scroll	75 Euro	0.25 kg
Chain (3 m)	75 Euro	1 kg
Chalk, 1 piece	10 cent	*
Chest (empty)	15 Euro	13 kg
Crowbar	15 Euro	3 kg
Firewood (per day)	10 Cent	50.5 kg
Fishhook	1 Euro	*
Fishing net, 10 sq. m.	30 Euro	3 kg
Flask	20 Cent	*
Flint and steel	75 Euro	*
Grappling hook	75 Euro	2 kg
Hammer	4 Euro	1 kg
Iberian Riders	75 Euro	1 kg
Ink (30 ml vial)	60 Euro	*
Inkpen	1 Euro	*
Jug, clay	20 Cent	50.5 kg
Ladder, 3 m	40 Euro	100.5 kg
Lamp, common	1 Euro	0.5 kg
Lamp, bullseye	90 Euro	2 kg
Lamp, hooded	50 Euro	1 kg
Lock		
• Very simple	100 Euro	0.5 kg
• Average	250 Euro	0.5 kg
• Good	500 Euro	0.5 kg
• Amazing	1000 Euro	0.5 kg
Manacles	100 Euro	1 kg
Manacles, masterwork	400 Euro	1 kg
Mirror, small	75 Euro	0.25 kg
Mug/tankard, clay	15 Cent	0.5 kg
Oil (1 pint flask)	1 Euro	0.5 kg
Paper (sheet)	1 Euro	*
Parchment (sheet)	2 Euro	*
Pick, miner's	200 Euro	50.5 kg
Pitcher, clay	15 Cent	3 kg
Piton	1 Euro	0.25 kg
Pole, 3 m	2 Euro	4 kg
Pot, iron	3 Euro	50.5 kg
Pouch, belt	75 Cent	1 kg
Pouch, leather	5 Euro	0.5 kg
Rations, trail (per day)	4 Euro	0.5 kg
Rope, hemp (15 m)	75 Euro	50.5 kg
Rope, silk (15 m)	75 Euro	3 kg
Sack (empty)	1 Euro	0.25 kg
Saddlebags	30 Euro	4 kg
Sealing wax	75 Euro	0.5 kg
Sewing needle	4 Euro	*
Signal whistle	6 Euro	**
Signet ring	150 Euro	*
Sledge	75 Euro	50.5 kg
Soap (per 0.5k g)	4 Euro	0.5 kg
Spade or shovel	15 Euro	4 kg
Spyglass	750 Euro	0.5 kg
Tent	75 Euro	5 kg
Torch	10 Cent	0.5 kg
Vial, ink or potion	75 Euro	*
Waterskin	10 Euro	1 kg
Whetstone	15 Cent	0.5 kg

** No weight worth noting.*
*** Ten of these items together weigh 1 pound.*

Healer's Kit: This kit is full of herbs, salves, bandages and other useful materials. It is the perfect tool for anyone attempting a Heal check. It adds a +2 circumstance bonus to the check. It is exhausted after ten uses.

Magnifying Glass: This simple lens allows a closer look at small objects. It is useful as a substitute for flint, steel and tinder when starting fires (though it takes light as bright as direct sunlight to focus, tinder to light and at least a full-round action to light a fire with a magnifying glass). It grants you a +2 circumstance bonus on Appraise checks involving any item that is small or highly detailed, such as a gem.

Musical Instrument, Common or Masterwork: Popular instruments include flutes, fiddles, horns, xylophones, gongs as well as percussion instruments of any kind. A masterwork instrument is of superior make. It adds a +2 circumstance bonus to Perform checks and serves as a mark of status.

Scale: This scale includes a small balance and pans and a suitable assortment of weights. A scale grants you a +2 circumstance bonus to appraise checks involving items that are valued by weight, including anything made of precious metals.

Thieves' Tools: These are the tools you need to use the Disable Device skill. The kit includes one or more skeleton keys, long metal picks and pries, a long-nosed clamp, a small hand saw and a small wedge and hammer. Without these tools, you have to improvise tools, and you suffer a –2 circumstance penalty on your Disable Device skill.

Thieves' Tools, Masterwork: This kit contains extra tools and tools of better make, granting you a +2 circumstance bonus on Disable Device.

clothing

Item	Cost	Weight
Artisan's outfit	75 Euro	2kg
Brandland Guide's outfit	350 Euro	4kg
Cold weather outfit	60 Euro	4kg
Entertainer's outfit	200 Euro	2kg
Junklord's outfit	500 Euro	3kg
Monach's vestments	40 Euro	3kg
Peasant's outfit	1 Euro	1kg

More information on these outfits can be found in Chapter Two: *Urbi et Orbi.*

superior materials

The items which have survived until today or which were produced in the lost factories of the Raguelite Order were of astonishing power and resilience. their design was efficient and still imbued with a certain sense of elegance, therefore all pre-Flood items are considered masterwork items of their type.

The two most common materials used for weapons and armor where polymer and ceramic.

Polymer is generally of dark color and is surprisingly flexible and light, providing superior protection though, even against firearms. Armor and weapons constructed of polymer weigh only half as much as similar weapons and are considered one size category lighter or smaller than modern armor or weapons; the lowest possible categories are tiny for weapons and light for armor though.

Ceramic, on the other hand, is not as light as polymer but is extremely hardy and resistant to damage. Armor constructed of ceramic has a bonus to AC according to the category of armor – shields and light armor gain a +2 bonus, medium armor a +3 bonus and heavy armor a +4 bonus. Ceramic weapons retain an extreme sharpness regardless of use despite having seemingly light and easily breakable points or blades, therefore piercing and slashing weapons constructed of ceramic have a bonus to damage and to hit depended on their size, weapons with 1d6 or 1d4 receive a +1 bonus, while all weapons dealing more damage gain a +2 bonus.

food, drink and lodging

Item	Cost	Weight
Ale, Mug	3 Cent	0.5kg
Banquet (per person)	75 Euro	-
Bread, per loaf	15 Cent	0.25kg
Cheese, hunk of	80 Cent	0.25kg
Fish	1 Euro	.0.25kg
Inn stay (per day)		
• Good	15 Euro	-
• Common	4 Euro	-
• Poor	15 Cent	-
Meals (per day)		
• Good	4 Euro	-
• Common	2 Euro	-
• Poor	1 Euro	-
Meat, chunk of	2 Euro	0.25kg
Rations, trail (per day)	4 Euro	0.5kg
Rice, cup of	15 Cent	0.25kg
Wine		
• Common (pitcher)	2 Euro	3kg
• Fine (bottle)	75 Euro	0.75kg

Inn: *Poor* accommodations at an inn amount to a place on the floor near the hearth, plus the use of a blanket if the innkeeper likes you and you are not worried about fleas. *Common* accommodations are a place on a raised, heated floor, the use of a blanket and the presence of a higher class of company. *Good* accommodations are a small, private room with one bed, some amenities and a covered chamber pot in the corner.

Meals: *Poor* meals might be composed of rice, baked turnips, onions and water or tea. *Common* meals might consist of cheese, fish stew (there is usually no lack of fish all over Europe), carrots and tea or watered-down rice wine. *Good* meals might be composed of rice, pastries, beef, peas and tea, beer or wine.

mounts and related gear

Item	Cost	Weight
Bit and bridle	15 Euro	0.5kg
Cart	100 Euro	100kg
Donkey or mule	60 Euro	-
Feed (per day)	4 Cent	5kg
Horse		
• Grimrider Horse	3000 Euro	-
• Heavy	600 Euro	-
• Light	1500 Euro	-
• Pony	250 Euro	-
Saddle		
• Grimrider	300 Euro	55kg
• Pack	40 Euro	8kg
• Riding	75 Euro	8kg
Saddlebags	30 Euro	4kg
Sled	150 Euro	150kg
Stabling (per day)	4 Euro	-
Wagon	250 Euro	200kg

mounts and related gear

Cart: A two-wheeled vehicle drawn by a single horse (or other beast of burden). It comes with a harness.

Donkey or Mule: The best pack animal around, a donkey or mule is stolid in the face of danger, hardy, sure-footed, and capable of carrying heavy loads over vast distances. Unlike horses, they are willing (though not eager) to enter strange or threatening places.

Feed: Horses, donkeys, mules and ponies can graze to sustain themselves, but providing feed for them (such as oats) is much better because it provides a more concentrated form of energy, especially if the animal is exerting itself.

Horse: The horse is the best all-around mount in common use.

Saddle, Grimrider: A Grimrider saddle braces the rider, adding a +2 circumstance bonus to Ride checks related to staying in the saddle. If the rider is knocked unconscious while in a Grimrider saddle, he has a 75% chance of staying in the saddle (compared to 50% for a riding saddle). These saddles are available to the public though, not only to Grimriders.

Saddle, Pack: A pack saddle holds gear and supplies, not a rider. A pack saddle holds as much gear as the mount can carry.

Saddle, Riding: The standard riding saddle supports a rider.

Sled: This is a wagon on runners for moving through snow and over ice. In general, two horses (or other beasts of burden) draw it. It comes with the harness needed to pull it.

Stabling: Includes a stable, feed and grooming.

Wagon: This is a four-wheeled, open vehicle for transporting heavy loads. In general, two horses (or other beasts of burden) draw it. It comes with the harness needed to pull it.

hauling vehicles

Item	Cost	Weight	Holds or carries
Cart	100 Euro	100 kg	500 kg
Sled	150 Euro	150 kg	500 kg
Wagon	250 Euro	200 kg	1000 kg

ships

Type	Cost
Row boat or pole boat	400 Euro
Oar or boat-hook	15 Euro
Junk	25.000 Euro
Templar Galley	Not available
Sailing Ship	75,000 Euro

ships

Junk: Sailing ship with two masts. 12 - 15 meters long and 4.5 - 6 meters wide. In case of emergency, it can also be propelled with oars. It has a crew of eight to fifteen and can carry forty to fifty tons of cargo or one hundred soldiers. It can make sea voyages as well as sail down rivers. (It has a flat bottom.) It moves about 1.5 km per hour.

Row Boat or Pole Boat: A 2.5 - 3.5 meters long boat for two or three people. It moves about 2.5 km per hour.

Sailing Ship: This larger, more seaworthy version of junk is 22.5 to 27 meters long and 6 meters wide. It has a crew of twenty. It can carry cargo up to 150 tons. It has square or triangular sails on its two masts and can make sea voyages. It moves about 3 km per hour.

Templar Galley: Flat row boat with 50 or more oarsmen. The templar galley is 24 meters long and requires a crew of 50 men. Can carry up to 50 tons of cargo or 120 passengers. Can make sea voyages. It moves about 15 km per hour.

transportaion

Service	Cost
Coach cab	10 Cent per km
Messenger	10 Cent per km
Road or gate toll	10 Cent
Ship's passage	50 Cent per km

transportation

Coach Cab: The price listed is for a ride in a coach that transports people (and light cargo) between towns. For a ride in a cab that transports passengers within a city, 10 Cent usually takes you anywhere you need to go.

Messenger: This entry includes horse-riding messengers, runners and messengers traveling by boat. Those willing to carry a message to a place they were going anyway (a crew member on a ship, for example) may ask for half the listed amount.

Road or Gate Toll: A toll is sometimes charged to cross a well-trodden, well-kept and well-guarded road to pay for patrols on it and its upkeep. Occasionally, large, walled cities charge a toll to enter or exit the city (sometimes just to enter the city).

Ship's Passage: Most ships do not specialize in passengers, but many have the capability to take a few along when transporting cargo.

buildings

Type	Cost
Simple house	7,500 Euro
Grand house	40,000 Euro
Mansion	750,000 Euro

buildings

Simple House: This one-to-three-room house is made of wood and has a thatched roof.

Grand House: This four-to-ten-room grand house is made of wood and has a thatched roof.

Mansion: Usually, mansions feature various associated buildings with up to 20 rooms. Some of these buildings are several stories high and they are built from brick and mortar. They have a slate roof.

epilog

When I look out of the window, I see the black plain. The scarred soil stretches to the horizon. Ragged rocks tower above it like God's broken toys. Gray clouds chase northwards across the skies above the plain as if they were trying to flee. Perhaps they are.

It is time to finish another chapter of my writings and deliver it to the right hands. I will leave it at the usual place where the others will find it and spread it among the needy, so that they may learn from my experiences. If they are to survive long enough, since in spite of all the old stories there is no hell to harbor the slain. No, when they find you, they will kill you. They will let you taste the fiery sting of their flaming swords. They say that the flames purify your soul, but I do no longer believe them.

From: Elisabeth

Re: Stigmata

Have you ever been told what it means to be a woman? Or a man? Have you ever had the meaning of your dreams full of sighs and the longing for skin explained to you?

I guess not. They have certainly told you that such dreams and thoughts are impure, that you must fight them. They have certainly told you that the Lord of the Flies has sent them to you to tempt you.

And yet... isn't it sweet, that longing? The feeling when your body spasms, tightens, stiffens, the feeling when all of your mind focuses on that single spot at the center of your body? The sweat that trickles down your skin under your clothes, the fear of being exposed, the silent explosion of your nerves, the fatigue which follows it? The pangs of guilt when the Monachs notice that you have failed them?

Did you maybe even have an object of your longing? Somebody from your fellowship who attracted you in an almost magical fashion? Did you dream of him? To see him standing in front of you, without armor, without weapons, naked, vulnerable, and unchaste and impure? What then?

Then you woke up.

You know what we truly are. Engel. But you haven't been told that there are two different kinds of us: men and women. They are different from one another even though they belong to the same species. They feel attraction, one to the other. They want to touch one another, understand one another, be together. They are two sides of a coin. Your dreams are messages of this truth. Knowledge dwelling in your head, your soul, even though they have tried to keep it secret from you and scare you for almost your entire life.

Believe me, I know exactly what I'm talking about.

The physical union of man and women can produce a child. Like you. You aren't a spark from the fingertip of the Lord, you are the result of the impure physical union of your parents.

All those years, they have tried to rob you of any feeling for your true body. It isn't your flesh that counts, it's your tattoos and the wings. The tattoos all look similar, for this is what we are supposed to be: Engel, the sexless warriors and harbingers of the Lord.

Surely, they will have told you that there are no genders in the ranks of the Engel. And if you have received this text and not the one I have written for your male companions, it means that you can be a woman someday and that you are a girl even now.

I will explain to you what it means to grow up as a puppet of the tattoos. To become a woman. I

Stigmata

will give my own story as an example. You aren't me, and you may lead a different life. The anatomical and biological processes are the same nevertheless.

We women begin our menstrual period – the time of the month when we bleed – sometime after our 14th birthday. It means that theoretically, we are able to bear children from then on. When the bleedings begin depends on the individual woman – and the kind of tattoos she has been given. It also depends on whether they have used you as a guinea pig for a new procedure to solve the problem once and for all.

I have seen other female Engel die from the new ink mixtures. Some were driven mad by them. I haven't heard a single word about them finally coming up with a new method that actually works.

It will start sooner or later, if it hasn't already begun. Your tattoos, however, will ensure that none of your blood leaves your body. Around the same time, the urge – the longing – awakens inside of you. Don't confuse it with your longing for a home, for your parents, for comfort and warmth. We Engel are a pretty botched lot, but I'm sure you have already noticed that on your own.

I was 15. I wasn't bleeding yet. A slightly older Ramielite had prepared me for the impending change within my body. "It would be best if you just ignore it," Karael had told me. "It is a remnant from the mortal world, the world of the impure. It is a burden some of us simply have to bear."

I was afraid. I was pure, wasn't I? My mind was innocent and free of any evil thoughts. When I was angry, I only felt the wrath of the righteous, not the wrath that is a mortal sin. I hadn't fought a single battle, but my training would be coming to an end soon, and I was eager to take my place at the frontlines of the holy war we waged. My fellowship was a good one. We were six. None of us had ever raised the ire of the Lord. I went by a different name at that time. I will neither reveal it nor reveal the real names of my fellows of that time. Nobody should get into trouble, if this document falls into the wrong hands.

The longing inside of me already had awakened. There was one among my companions – Mirael – to whom I felt attracted to. We often fought side by side. But unlike me, he wielded no weapons. When he fought, an aura of golden light appeared around his head and his eyes burned in a divine glow. If he gazed upon an enemy with his golden eyes, Mirael pulled out the soul of his opponent through the latter's eyes, and his foe perished. This was the basic framework of our strategies: We fought and brought our enemies into a position which allowed Mirael to use his divine fire. We had exercised it a thousand times in the simulation rooms. When we fought side by side, we were cold white flames raging in the air.

For some time now, I had had strange dreams from which I awoke sheathed in sweat. Mirael was the focus of these dreams. I couldn't say that there had been any series of logical images in a linear sense, though. Rather, I was plagued by confused scenes, impressions and ideas.

I saw myself how I flew naked over green rolling hills. Mirael ahead of me, naked, smooth white skin lacking any tattoos. I had never seen an Engel like that – you know that the tattoos accompany us right from the beginning of our existence as servants of the Lord – but my mind

filled in the blanks. Mirael and I on the altar of an ancient church in *Roma Æterna*, at the edge of the underground city beneath the heart of Angelitic faith. I felt lips on my thighs, on my belly – places of my body that hadn't been touched during the last seven years. Mirael and I high in the air, intertwined. A sigh, a moan, as if we suffered unbearable pain and then again not.

I didn't dare to talk to anyone about my dreams. Every scene of them screamed "Impure!" I was afraid. God saw and knew everything – what if he told my tutors about my sinfulness? But God remained silent.

The dream images seemed to get more and more intense. They neared a climax of sorts, although I never reached it at first because I always woke from my dream before it could happen. I had heard rumors about lost Engel who had vanished. I was afraid to vanish like them as soon as the unspeakable would happen, that I would become a lost Engel as well. I would melt away like a smoldering chip of wood and fall into oblivion without leaving a trace of my existence behind.

Immediately after my first orgasm, I awakened. Covered in sweat just as I always was, but more confused and more frightened than ever before. Now it would only be a matter of time before I would be deemed unworthy and eventually put to death. The days went by and nothing happened. Finally, I knew that God would keep silent about what had occurred to me and that my tutors were unable to notice it. Today, I know that male Engel don't partake of such grace, because their semen leaves telltale signs. But even then, the matter is never discussed in public; the affected have to do penance on their own and in secret – with flagellation and prayers.

Weeks went by. Until the day of our first mission came. I suppose you have already seen the day of your first mission as well, because I have never heard of a fallen Engel who has escaped from the clutches of our apparent benefactors at an earlier point in his personal career. At the break of dawn we set out, six white shadows under the sun, birds of prey.

The village was almost entirely dilapidated. Nobody had survived the raid. We walked through the huts and smelled death everywhere we went. After all those years in the Himmel and the catacombs of the Eternal City, nothing prepares you for a stench like this. We were six innocent, and we were alone.

Our Michaelite, Nathaniel, called us together after we had split up to search for survivors. He stood at the edge of a field and the ground beneath his feet was black and scarred. "Here they are," he said softly. We looked down at the ground and shuddered like mere mortals. Under a thin layer of black soil we could discern white arms and legs, bodies, heads. In some places, skin shone through, in others the bones could be seen. Maggots and worms were crawling all over the place. One of my companions reached down and pulled an arm from the field. "They have been hacked to pieces," he said. I shuddered again. Somewhere in the distance, a falcon called.

"We have to purify them," Nathaniel said calmly. He was a good leader, because he never lost his composure. At the same time, he lacked any imagination whatsoever, particularly in regards to the elaborate machinations of evil. As far as I know, Nathaniel loyally serves the church even today.

We took up equidistant points at the edge of the field. The sky was gray, the wind was blowing cold. Nathaniel raised his arms and we did the same. I guess you know this ritual since it is one of the first new Engel are taught.

"Our Father who art in Heaven," Nathaniel intoned solemnly. While he spoke the ancient Words, his body began to glow in the Michaelites' holy fire. We repeated his words. I shuddered once again, awestruck this time.

"Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Six Engel stand at your feet. Let peace settle here and gather up the souls of the departed. Amen." Viael spread his arms which emitted a soft light. A perfect triad sounded. Viael belonged to those few whom God had chosen as messengers of His gentleness. I have heard that these Engel grow rarer and rarer and that they usually don't belong to a fellowship anymore. The music they sing wanders along your nerves, it encourages, it calms, it heals and it serves many purposes more which are kept hidden from us warriors. Engel like Viael, Sarielites, don't live very long because all the bad things they see seems to harm their souls. And you know how much *you* had to endure, child.

Viael sang this pure sound, and it grew louder and louder before it eventually changed. It became a melody, slow, full of grief and yet full of hope. Viael took up the rhythm of Nathaniel's words and played on them and we all felt peace spread over the horrible field of the dead. God withdrew His avenging hand and granted us a moment of relief.

Finally, Viael's song returned to the first chord, rested on it, faded away. We stood and listened how his song faded away into eternity.

After the last echo had faded away, we spoke the finishing syllables of the ritual: "Hallelujah, amen."

We regained our composure. Night fell in. I felt the need of holding Mirael's hand, but I pushed it aside. The tattoos increased my body temperature, and the shivers subsided.

"Whoever is responsible for this has not acted on behalf of the local lords", Nathaniel said. "It is up to us to punish this heresy in the name of the Lord." We nodded.

You can surely imagine how the people stared at us in awe and adoration, as we walked down their streets or flew high above their heads. You can also imagine how we had to learn to life with the hatred some of the more powerful mortals harbored for us.

In the end, we discovered who had given the order to the massacre. It was an old man. He lived in the caverns of an old castle. He was evil, his eyes were cold. Cold like the relics he had found in the caverns. The old man had unearthed a veritable shrine of darkness, with slumbering black Engel and fearsome weapons. The village was part of the fief of his greatest rival, and he had awakened the avenging angels and sent them on their way. Maybe you have already been warned of them –

they look like us, but they wear masks and their wings are black.

We fought them. Four of us had already tasted battle before. We rose to the skies and fought them. It was like in the simulation rooms – and yet wholly different. After only a few seconds, one of the black Engel hit Nathaniel's arm. Nathaniel cried out and tumbled from the sky, trailing a red line of blood behind him.

We fought on nevertheless. They were fast. We were faster. One of them succumbed to our blows and fell to his death at the floor of the crypt. There was a short break in the skirmish. The remaining black Engel stared hatefully at us with his hollow eyes. Suddenly, they were of a blinding white fire. The black Engel directed his blazing gaze at one of my companions. The flames in the black Engel's eyes merged into a single beam, too bright to look at it. The beam burned into the head of my companion who fell dying down to the floor.

The rest of us were warned. We dodged the beam, circling the black Engel. But we found no way to harm our raging opponent. Soon, it was he who chased us through the air relentlessly.

I fled, taking evasive action, desperately trying to protect the last of my remaining companions. I was mortally afraid. I didn't want to die. I didn't want my companions to die. I didn't want Mirael to die. My heart was racing, keeping me from thinking with a clear head.

I swooped down and raced along right above the floor. I could feel the black Engel's presence at my back. With a mighty beat of my wings, I dodged a huge pillar supporting the vaults of the caverns mere seconds before I would have hit him, climbing rapidly. Below me, the wings of the black Engel betrayed their master. He crashed into the cold stone of the pillar. Right beneath the ceiling, I stopped climbing. The black Engel had fallen to the ground and lay there, unmoving.

Viael stepped at his side. He raised his left hand. I saw his lips moving, I recognized the WORDS. They were an ancient benediction to make it easier on the black Engel to pass away into the hands of the Lord. Viael's robe puffed up as if he was standing in a strange wind. I could feel how my heart stopped racing. Viael had this effect on all kinds of creatures. He was a shepherd, a singer and a healer. I landed at his back.

The others also approached Viael. We had to come up with a plan to find the old man without suffering further losses. The thought of Nathaniel made my heart stop missing a beat. But just like I had learned, I pushed the thought aside. It would have to wait until the threat was truly over.

Nevertheless, thinking of Nathaniel distracted me. Viael's strangled cry brought me back to reality. The black Engel gripped Viael's wrist and had drawn the Sarielite down to him. I witnessed the claw-like fingers of the black Engel's other hand tightening around Viael's unprotected neck. His gentle face was but an inch away from the ruin that had been the face of the black Engel. Viael desperately began to gasp for air. A gurgling sound erupted from his ravaged throat.

I drew my sword and slashed at the arm that threatened Viael's life. Wrath dictated all of my actions. I looked into Viael's pleading eyes. His face turned blue. I beat away at the arm again, but the black Engel didn't move. He only turned his defaced head in my direction as if he wanted to mock me. A thin trail of blood trickled from the corner of his mouth. At the same time, I noticed that Viael's efforts grew weaker and weaker. He began to lose consciousness.

Somebody screamed. The black Engel was under attack from all sides, but yet he didn't move. He didn't move anymore at all. Mirael touched Viael at the chin. Their eyes met. In this horrible moment, the rest of us knew that we would lose Viael here as well. Viael gurgled again feebly. His pale face was distorted to a bluish grimace which had no similarity to his usual mien. Maybe you know that our tattoos also do a certain amount of skin breathing for us. Nevertheless, we have to fill our lungs with air from time. Our enhanced skin breathing only prolongs the process of asphyxiation.

I was unable to meet Viael's pleading gaze. Instead, I delivered a kick to the body of the black Engel with all my might. The force of impact made the body move a little, but this wouldn't help against its iron grip anymore. Mirael turned around.

"Be still," he said. His voice was calm, but his eyes were full of tears. Only then I realized that it had been me who had been screaming all along. My cheeks were wet with tears. I lowered my sword.

"Viael will go home," Nathaniel said. "Let's help him on his way." We gathered around Viael, we, the Engel, God's messengers and preservers of His mysterious ways. Nathaniel drew a heavy dagger from a scabbard on his left thigh with his uninjured arm. "Go in peace," he intoned while lifting Viael's chin. Viael shot him a last glazed glance, and I pray to this day that it was relief rather than fear and betrayal I saw in it.

"Hallelujah, amen," we all whispered hoarsely as the Michaelite cut open Viael's jugular vein. Viael closed his eyes. His blood flowed over the claw under his chin. It didn't take long and he was gone.

For several minutes, nobody said a word. I felt something growing cold inside of me. The tears on my cheeks were cold as ice. Viael was dead. We were but four. Rage welled up inside me, but different from the blind, mindless frenzy I had suffered a few moments ago. It was cold anger – as cold as my tears. I looked up. My gaze found Mirael's eyes and rested on them.

Like all Ramielites, he felt much more than we warriors. I could see it in his eyes that he had felt the change inside of me. And that he was terrified of it.

We were only children. Children who should have never seen a friend bleed to death or smashed to pieces far below them. We were only children, but we also were impeccably bred fighting machines.

We were only children.

I had lost part of my innocence when Viael's eyes closed forever. This was no longer a game like in the simulation rooms. This was deadly serious. And the fact that we were God's chosen warriors didn't matter in the least.

Today, I know that this has been the first step on my way to becoming a fallen Engel. Probably you have been told a lot of rubbish about we who have fallen. None of it is true. Our fall has been the fall from a house of lies and illusions into freedom, into our own innermost self.

Nathaniel broke the silence. "Let's find the one responsible for Viael's death." He came up with a strategy: Nathaniel and our Urielite would deal with the old man's weapons. Mirael and I were intended to triumph over our enemy with the maneuver which had always been so extraordinarily efficient in the simulation rooms. My nerves turned to ice.

I have heard a story about a liquid metal used in the Time Before. It supposedly was highly toxic. A shimmering, shiny liquid, quick and deadly. I felt like that as Mirael and I rose into the air.

It took quite some time for us to search the crypt until Nathaniel finally discovered a corridor. He gave us a sign and we dived down and through the doorway. I was the first of us to catch sight of the room at the end of the corridor. It was a vestry with pointed arches and black icons. And the dull metal of countless unholy artifacts.

I didn't allow myself to be overly impressed by this sight. My body remembered the complex maneuvers from the simulation rooms. I climbed high into the air shortly after entering the vestry and my eyes scanned the room.

Below me, the others entered the vestry. Nathaniel explored the space to the right of the doorway, our Urielite the space to the left, and Mirael took his place beneath me.

Maybe you know the formation. It is called the diamond, for if a full fellowship follows this formation it resembles such a gem.

We were eye to eye with our enemy.

The old man was gaunt. In his icy blue eye burned an unholy fire. He laughed, but it was the laughter of a demon. He didn't seem to feel threatened.

"Children!" The single word cut through the silence of the vestry. "Have you been sent to oppose me? Yes, of course. But I tell you: I am the true Pontifex, the Lord's representative on earth. I bring triumph, salvation, mercy and grace. I will chase the false priests from the Lord's temples and slay them wherever they may flee. Then I will lead the world into the eternal light. Follow me or die!"

I attacked him while he was still babbling. I didn't wait for Nathaniel's order, I didn't care for the others. I only saw Viael's face in the grip of the black Engel who had attacked us so furiously on behalf of this man.

Cold fire erupted from the ground. The old man tried to burn me just like the Black Engel had burned our companion. I evaded the blazing tongues of fire. My sword demolished one of the gray reliquaries the old man abused in such a horrible way to control the holy fire. Then my companions joined the fight.

We soon realized that we had to split up the task of disabling the old man's reliquaries. Otherwise, Mirael and I would never get close enough to send his wicked soul into the flames of hell.

I kept close to Mirael during the fight. More than once, I saved him from mortal danger. His gaze, which cut deeply into my soul, was full of questions. I fought more furiously than ever before.

Then I heard Nathaniel's voice: "*In nomine patri!*" You will surely know that this is one of the commands for switching to a different maneuver.

Below me, Mirael spiraled to fly in a different direction. I closed in on the old man from the opposite side. The sword in my hands seemed to grow larger and larger. Diving, I looked into the eyes of our enemies, sunk into the blue ice.

Suddenly, Mirael shouted: "Watch out!"

Instinctively, I beat my wings and climbed a little. One of the searing white lightning bolts exploded in the spot I had been in mere seconds before. Behind me, the old man laughed his mad laughter again.

Without thinking, I bent low and curled into a ball in the air. With a single beat of my wings, I turned around. Headlong, I darted towards the old man. Before he could move, I had grabbed him by the hip and smashed him into the wall of the vestry. The staff fell from his hands and broke into two pieces.

He was no match for my strength and my fury. I couldn't have made secured him any better by actually nailing him to the wall. With one arm I pinned him to the wall, while I lifted his sweaty face with the other one.

"Unworthy creature," I hissed, "meet your maker!"

The sheen on his skin told me that Mirael had started to call upon his powers.

The old man squirmed in my grip. He was weak but tough. Then he began to speak.

"You silly child," he forced out, "you deem me unworthy, you hold me responsible for the death of your friend? Well, I may have caused his death. But those who tattoo you and convince you that you are superhumans are responsible in the end." I stared at him. "You are children, nothing more. Pretentious, unworthy creatures, you are the..."

Golden light flooded my sight. I was still staring at the face of my enemy. Something inside of me felt that the old man had spoken the truth. But I *had* to be wrong.

My trained reflexes made me tighten my grip on him as Mirael started to free his soul from its prison. His body suddenly seemed fragile to me, not more than a bundle of skin and old bones. Dying, the crazy old man kept talking.

"Do yourself a favor. Think about it! Think about it! If you are truly the Heavenly Host why do the Grimriders snatch you from your homes at night? They steal you from your villages. They change you in the Himmel. They tell you..."

Then he began screaming. The pain awakened unexpected reserves of strength in him, and it was hard for me to keep him in the ray of light shining forth from Mirael's eyes. Even if he would have escaped my clutches, he wouldn't have survived. But only the complete ritual would cast his soul into the purifying flames of hell.

Then, several things happened at once.

On the one hand, something inside of my body seemed to burst open. I felt a sting in my abdomen that was almost painful. However, it

entailed a feeling of liberation, as if a dam would break and something primeval, something powerful would erupt. Then I felt as if some liquid would start to run down inside of my body, starting where I had felt the sting. And then I knew it: it had begun. I was bleeding.

On the other hand, I saw a black Engel shooting towards Mirael from behind his back. The old man's death had obviously turned the black Engel into a mindless automaton. The speed with which he raced towards the wall where the remains of the old man lay was much too high.

In the blink of an eye, I leapt forward.

My arms embraced Mirael's willowy waist. Since there was not time for thought, I just wanted to push him to the ground. Unfortunately, he shrank back from me when I charged him all of a sudden. My hold on him wasn't tight enough. Split seconds later, the world vanished in a thundering crash and a blinding white light. A gigantic claw seemed to hurl the both of us through the air. I held on to Mirael and closed my eyes.

I woke up when Nathaniel's hand gently caressed my face. I opened my eyes. A strange smell hung in the air. There was a loud roar in my ears. Before I was able to make a sound, I saw Mirael lying on the ground with our Urielite tending to him. Mirael was still moving.

I realized that Mirael's left arm was missing at the same moment part of my tattoos were shoving themselves into my body. I was horrified. Something forced its way into my body. The sensation was incredibly humiliating. I started to understand what the tattoos were doing: They were absorbing the impure blood in my abdomen and somehow discarding it. There was nothing I could do about it.

A wave of terror crashed down upon me. I wriggled free of Nathaniel's grip and threw up. When the choking subsided, the words of the dead old man came to my mind: "But those who tattoo you and convince you that you are superhumans are responsible in the end."

Deep in my mind, this seed of betrayal – of liberation! – took root in the soil of my thoughts and entered its hibernation which would eventually end with my fall a few years later.

I lay on the cold stone floor, staring up to the vaults of the vestry, listening to the whimpering of the Engel I longed for without really knowing it. Within my body, a finger of the Lord stirred to take away something He deemed impure, while my insolent spirit tried to convince me that it was something that was an integral part of my being, more so than my tattoos, my sword or my faith. Another part of my innocence withered and turned to dust in my young heart. Warm blood trickled into my eye.

I still bear the scar even today – it is shaped like a sword, with the tip of the blade pointing towards the center of my eye. The skin has healed a long time ago, but sometimes the wound still bleeds. Inwards, into my head.

On that day, I glimpsed the first hint of knowledge that the Angelitic Church points a deadly sword at their Engel, forged of the false sermons of insane Monachs, hardened with the blood of the Engel's friends and honed in the annihilation of their freedom.

You think I'm exaggerating?

Remember then, that you will never get rid of your tattoos again if you don't tear off your own skin. You will never conceive or give birth to a child. Your body doesn't belong to you anymore, and there is no way of getting it back. I won't even talk about the abuse you suffered from with all the church's false promises and meaningless dogma. You will realize for yourself on day what they have done to you.

Maybe this knowledge will kill you. Maybe it will make you furious. Maybe you will start to cry and never stop crying again.

In any case, you can never undo the wrongs that have been done to you, child. The people you have murdered on behalf of the church will weigh heavily upon your soul for your entire life. As well as every single dead companion, every piece of happiness never gained.

The wounds will bleed forever, child, even though nor mortal will ever see it. You will bear those wounds, irrevocably. They are marks of our pride, marks of our loss and marks of our freedom.

They are stigmata.

• • •

These were the last of my words, the words of Elisabeth, a woman who was once an Engel.

Day breaks. The clouds are light gray and I know it will be raining soon. Three days have passed since my arrival. Slowly, I am overwhelmed by a longing for company, a longing for understanding.

I take the picture of my beloved from my pocket. In death, he appeared relaxed and still. There was no trace left of all the pain and blood.

I knew that Mirael could never survive with only one arm left. The Ab would take him from our midst and send him away. We would never see him again. We all knew it. But nobody dared to say it. When I woke up during that night, I new that the task had fallen into my hands and that there would be no questions asked. So I got up and walked over to him. His tattoos and his wings were covered in blood. He tossed and turned in his sleep.

Nevertheless, he opened his eyes only after I had laid my hands around his neck and started squeezing. Our eyes remained interlocked right until the end. It was the most intimate moment in my entire life. I killed Mirael with love in my heart. Afterwards, I drew the picture and went back to my sleeping place and cried myself to sleep.

Since my fall, I have slain more than one of these unsuspecting children. I have always done it as swift and painless as possible, but their dead bodies weigh heavily upon my soul, though. But it is more important that those survive who can spread word about the great lie than to spare those children with their shimmering tattoos. I fell with my eyes wide open, and there is no way back.

I put the picture away. My sword rests firmly in its scabbard. Then I step out of the old ruins and up to the edge of the cliff. With two beats of my wings, I take to the air.

I am flying home.

Character Name | Player Name | Class | Sex | Level

Height | Weight | Eye Color | Hair Color | Age

abilities

	Ability Score	Ability Modifier	Temp. Score	Temp. Modifier
Strength (str)				
Dexterity (dex)				
Constitution (con)				
Intelligence (int)				
Wisdom (wis)				
Charisma (cha)				

hp

	Total	Wounds/Temporary HP	Subdual Damage
Hit Points			

saving throws

	Total	= Base Save	+ Ability Modifier	+ Misc. Modifier	+ Temp. Modifier
fortitude (Constitution)					
reflex (Dexterity)					
will (Wisdom)					

ac

	Total	= 10+ Armor Bonus	+ Shield Bonus	+ AC Modifier	+ Dex Modifier	+ Other Modifier
Armor Class						

skills

Skills marked with a ♦ cannot be used untrained. * Armor Check Penalty applies.

Cross Class	Skill Name	Key Ability	Max Ranks	Skill Mod. =	Ability Mod. +	Rank +	Misc Mod.
☐	Appraise	INT					
☐	Balance *	DEX					
☐	Bluff	CHA					
☐	Climb *	STR					
☐	Concentration	CON					
☐	Craft	INT					
☐	Demolition ♦	INT					
☐	Diplomacy	CHA					
☐	Disable Device	INT					
☐	Disguise	CHA					
☐	Escape Artist *	DEX					
☐	Forgery	INT					
☐	Gather Information	CHA					
☐	Handle Animal	CHA					
☐	Heal	WIS					
☐	Hide *	DEX					
☐	Innuendo ♦	WIS					
☐	Intimidate	CHA / STR					
☐	Intuit Direction ♦	WIS					
☐	Jump *	STR					
☐	Knowledge ♦	INT					
☐	Listen	WIS					
☐	Move Silently *	DEX					
☐	Perform	CHA					
☐	Pick Pocket ♦ *	DEX					
☐	Pilot	DEX					
☐	Profession ♦	WIS					
☐	Read Lips ♦	INT					
☐	Repair ♦	INT					
☐	Ride	DEX					
☐	Search	INT					
☐	Sense Motive	WIS					
☐	Suchen	INT					
☐	Spot	WIS					
☐	Swim *	STR					
☐	Tumble ♦ *	DEX					
☐	Wilderness Lore	WIS					

offense

	Total	= Base Attack Bonus	+ Ability Modifier	+ Size Modifier	+ Misc. Modifier	+ Temp. Modifier
melee attack (Bonus)						
ranged attack (Bonus)						

Armor Type

Armor Check Penalty

Basic Attack Bonus

Speed

weapons

	Total Attack Bonus	Damage	Critical	Range	Weight	Size	Type	Special Properties

armor

	Type	Armor Bonus	Check Penalty	Max D.B.	Speed	Weight	Special Features

shield

	Armor Bonus	Weight	Check Penalty	Special Features

initiative

	Total Modifier	= Dex Modifier	+ Misc. Modifier
Modifiers			

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Chronicle

Experience Points

equipment

Item

potestates

Max Ranks

Potestas	Key Ability	Skill Mod.	Ability Mod.	Rank	Misc. Mod.
		=	+	+	
		=	+	+	
		=	+	+	
		=	+	+	
		=	+	+	
		=	+	+	
		=	+	+	
		=	+	+	
		=	+	+	
		=	+	+	

special abilities and feats

notes

languages

ammunition

character sketch

manna

Euro

Cent

Light Load

Medium Load

Heavy Load

Lift Over Head
Max. Load

Lift Off Ground
2x max. Load

Push or Drag
5x max. Load

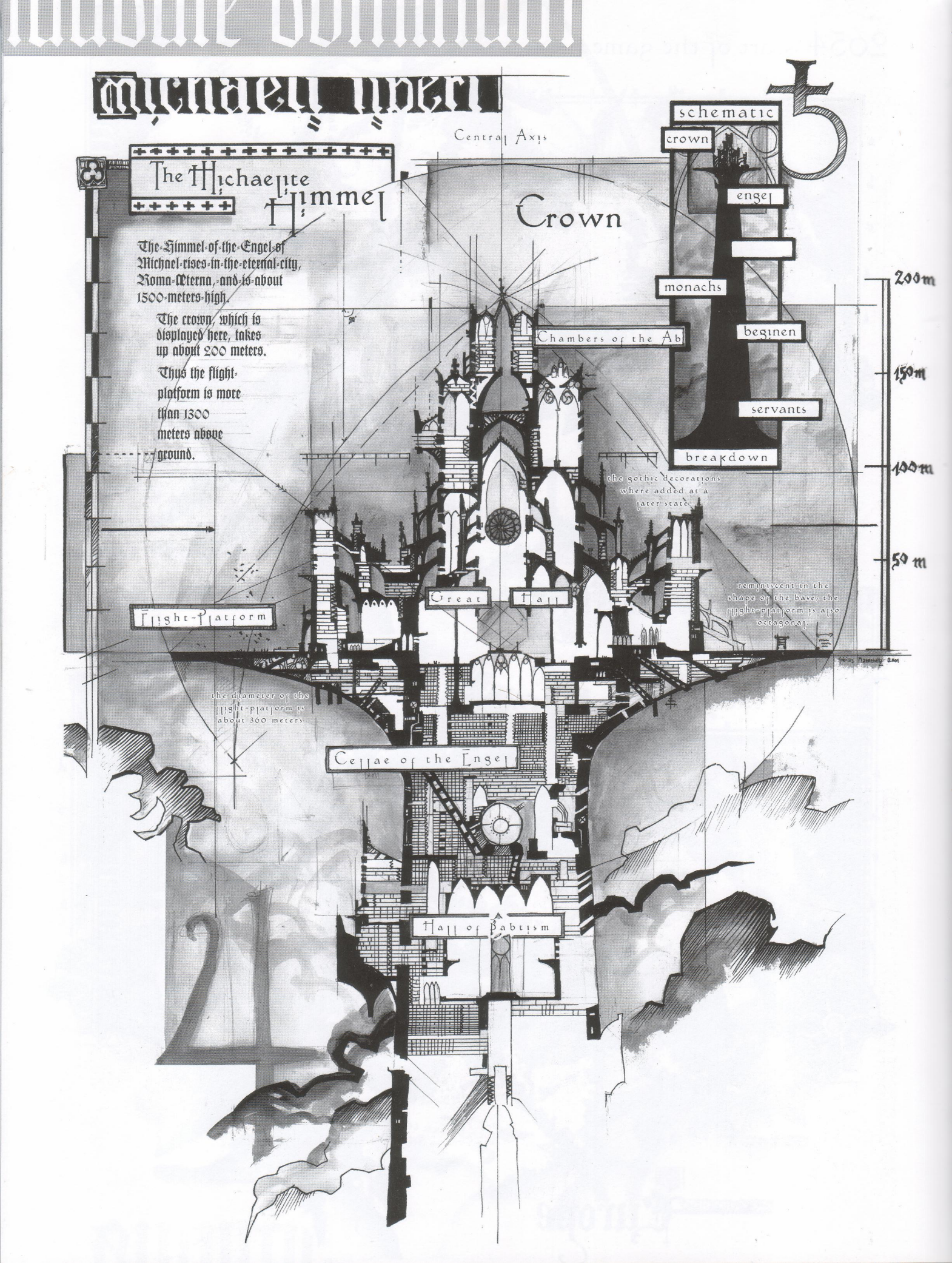
engel - characer sheet

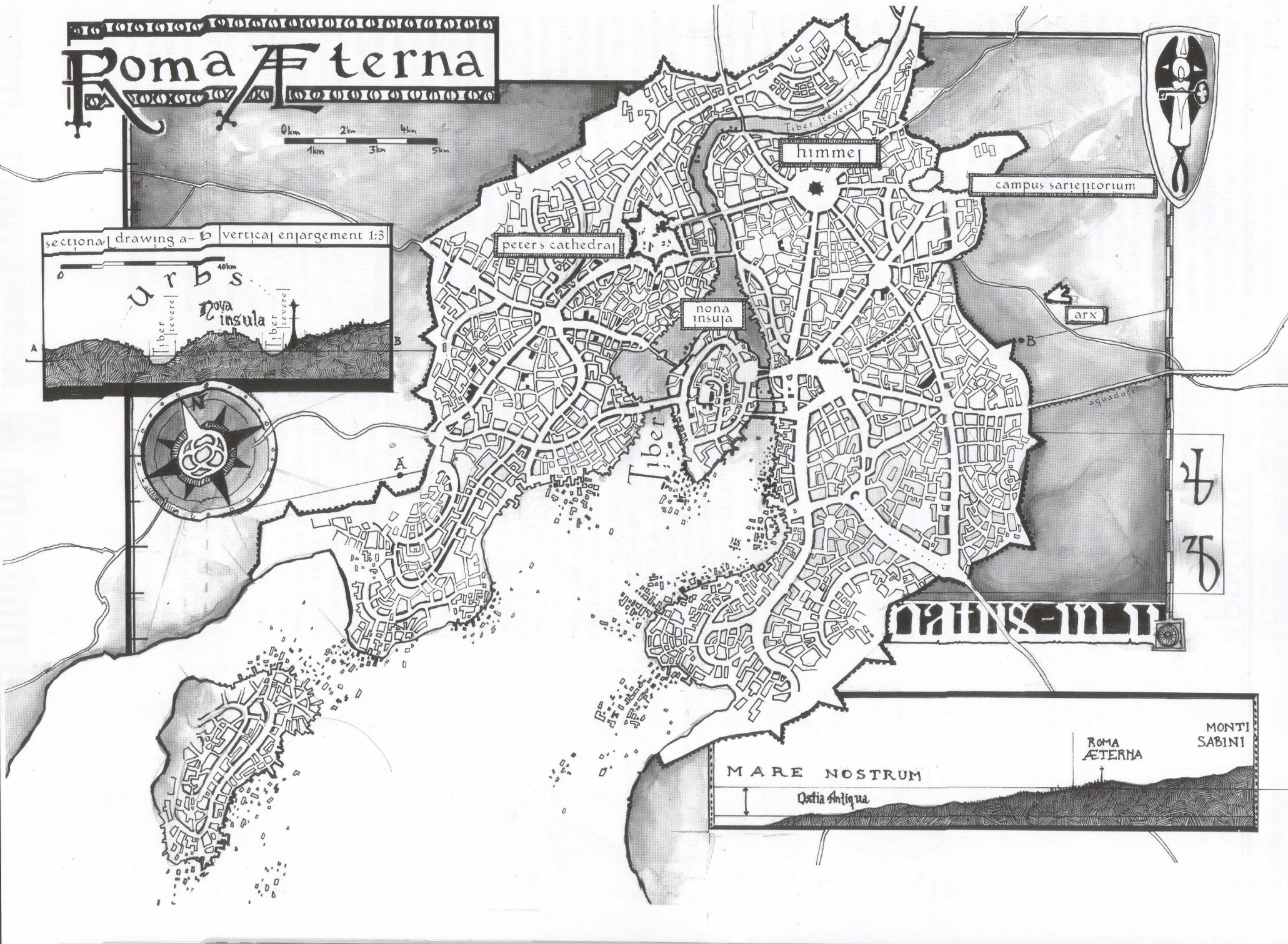
appendix:

maps and miscellanea

2654 start of the game

2664 future course of the infernos


The Michaelite Himmel
The Himmel of the Engel of Michael rises in the eternal city, Roma Aterna, and is about 1500 meters high.
The crown, which is displayed here, takes up about 200 meters.
Thus the flight-platform is more than 1300 meters above ground.
Central Axis
Crown
schematic
crown
engel
monachs
beginen
servants
breakdown
200m
150m
100m
50 m
Chambers of the Ab
the gothic decorations where added at a later state.
Great Hall
Flight-Platform
reminiscent in the shape of the base, the flight-platform is also octagonal.
the diameter of the flight-platform is about 300 meters
Cellae of the Engel
Hall of Babtism


Roma Æterna
0km 2km 4km
1km 3km 5km
himmel
campus sariejitorium
peters cathedral
nona insula
arx
Tiber
Tiber tevere
aquaduct
section a-b vertical enlargement 1:3
0 40km
urbs
Nova insula
Tiber tevere
Tiber tevere
A
B
N
MARE NOSTRUM
Ostia Antiqua
ROMA ÆTERNA
MONTI SABINI

appendix

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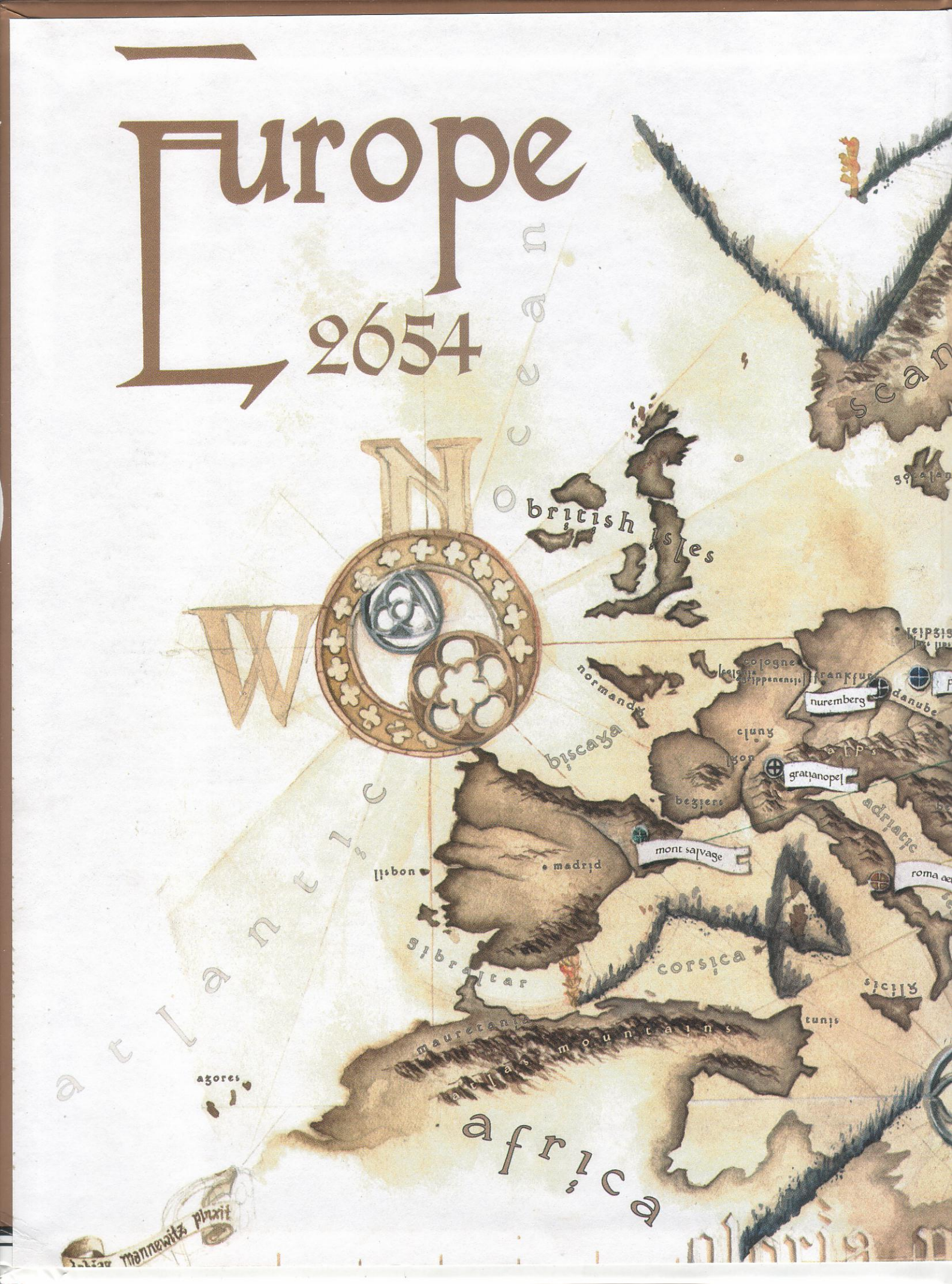
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Engel

In our far future, Earth has become the gigantic battlefield for the forces of good and evil. Vast Infernos scar the face of the planet with a dark mark, and the champions of the One Above wage a seemingly hopeless war against the unwholesome creatures of the Lord of the Flies – the Dreamseed.

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