

Facing Your Daemons

by Phil Kelly
Using the Diabolic in Inquisitor

The ultimate scourge upon humanity is Chaos, and the ultimate embodiment of Chaos is the Daemon. Thousands of Inquisitors have devoted their entire lives to hunting down and destroying the daemon, in fact one of the major organs of the Inquisition, the Ordo Malleus, exists primarily to do just that. This article provides you with everything you need to use the daemonic in your games of Inquisitor.



WHY USE A DAEMON IN A GAME OF INQUISITOR?

Well, this is a simple one. Daemons make for extremely cool bad guys, because they are the archetypal enemy of Mankind in the 41st Millennium. Perhaps the most potent and iconic of all the evils that could assail your warrior band, daemons are capable of causing catastrophic damage to any who oppose them, and as such it's important that they are used extremely sparingly.

Those of you who are avid 40K or Warhammer players will already be familiar with the main elements of the daemonic pantheon, and will no doubt be wondering where the daemons we are talking about in this article fit in. The smallest of daemons, the humble Nurglings, tend to be a little too comical for the grandiose life-or-death battle we are hoping to enact (although there is a certain appeal to the idea of using Plaguebearer models by the dozen and assailing a warrior band with a tide of giggling putrescent filth). Conversely, the vast Greater Daemons of Chaos are so truly awesome that even their inclusion in a game of Warhammer 40,000 rocks the entire battlefield to its core. Such beasts are not suitable for skirmish-scale games like Inquisitor; a single Bloodthirster is powerful enough to rampage through an entire Imperial Guard armoured company, and the translation of such an entity into Inquisitor would make for a very short and unfulfilling game. Besides, a to-scale model would have to be about a foot tall!

Nevertheless, your games of Inquisitor can make use of any and all of the minor daemons of Chaos, and at the far end of the scale, Daemon Princes. These entities, although undeniably powerful, are in the same league as your player's warrior band and it is quite possible that such a beast could be destroyed by their heroic efforts. Lesser Daemons should be reckoned around the same level of power as Space Marines; we'll cover them in more detail later.

Daemon Princes, in theory, range in power from the merely hardcore to the totally staggering (after all, the traitor Primarchs such as Magnus the Red, Mortarion and Fulgrim are all Daemon Princes), and unsurprisingly it is

the lesser of the breed with which you should aim to incorporate into your games. They are great focal points for Machiavellian plots and vile rituals to awaken or free said Daemon Prince, and of course it is the players' duty to make sure this cannot happen. It's no big surprise when they arrive just a fraction too late...

Just because you can't use a Greater Daemon doesn't mean you can't use that Lord of Change model you've had knocking about for ages; our range of Greater Daemons make for great Daemon Princes or even Lesser Daemons with a little conversion work (a Bloodthirster without wings would make an excellent Bloodletter, and a Great Unclean One could be a perfectly acceptable, if overly corpulent, Plaguebearer). With a bit of imagination and a rummage around your old models you're bound to uncover something suitable; you could even use one of the more gruesome action figures available these days as your Daemon Prince!

WHEN SHOULD THEY BE USED?

Daemons should not be used as player characters. The fact that they tend to destroy or enslave everyone they encounter would make every game involving a daemonic PC very similar. The sheer levels of power involved would quickly remove any subtleties to a game, sucking any subplots or roleplaying opportunities into the black hole created by the daemon's presence. As in the 40K universe, extreme caution and plenty of preparation is advisable in all dealings with the diabolic.

When your player characters encounter a daemon it should be at the climax of a suitably portentous and dark campaign or story arc. It would be a cardinal sin to allow your players to become blasé about daemons, and the circumstances in which one might become manifest are very rare. A player is not likely to bump into one on his way to Old Threefinger's Speakeasy in the local shanty town. In a blood-soaked ritual down in the bowels of a defiled Imperial cathedral, well, that's another matter!

Perhaps the best analogy to use here would be the 'boss' characters in computer games. After a long and usually gore-soaked quest, the protagonist(s) inevitably come up against some enemy that is bigger, harder and just plain scarier than all that have gone before: the end-

of-level bad guy. This individual really tests the mettle of the players, usually has some kind of Evil Dialogue™ before the action kicks in, and may even kill one or more players before they achieve their goal (normally to escape or hammer seven shades of ichor out of the offending beastie). These rules apply equally to Inquisitor; most daemons far exceed any other characters in terms of potency, and are quite capable of eating even the superhuman Space Marines for breakfast. It will take a monumental effort to destroy or banish a daemon back to the hell from whence it came, and such a last-ditch effort makes for a spectacular end to any Inquisitor campaign.

DAEMONS AND DAEMONHOSTS

All Inquisitor players are familiar with one type of Daemonic entity, the Daemonhost. Cherubael and his vile kin are an integral part of Inquisitor, epitomising the far end of the Puritan/Radical spectrum: only a desperate or insane individual would consider making use of such an abomination.

Daemonhosts are, by their very nature, far weaker than a fully manifested Daemon. When trapped inside a host by complex patterns of hexagrammic and holy wards, a daemon becomes a pale shadow of its former grandeur, controllable and stable enough to perform simple tasks at its master's behest (as revealed in Dan Abnett's Eisenhorn trilogy, Cherubael is near-godlike in power when loose, but far more limited when confined to a host body). Should these wards somehow be destroyed, the fury of the entity humiliated and forced to serve the Imperium against its will should know no bounds. It is very likely the first act such an unbound daemon would attempt is to kill his former master and drag his soul screaming into the Warp.



PLOT HOOKS

Here are some examples of scenarios for those of you considering incorporating a daemon into your games of Inquisitor.

THE DOOMSDAY RITUAL

Possibly the oldest one in the grimoire, this story device has done sterling service for GMs across the world since roleplaying games were invented. There exists an evil daemon-worshipping cult that has been labouring in secret to bring its foul god to the material dimension, thereby bringing about the end of the world (or at least the end of the week). Although the good guys have found out about it they are racing against time because the final ritual allowing the daemon to manifest is nearing completion. Generally involving some sort of pentacle and plenty of robed, chanting figures, this scenario is great for a real rollercoaster action spectacular at the end of a campaign as the players desperately try to fend off frenzied cultists and, at the ritual's conclusion, one extremely unhappy daemon. It's often worth ensuring that despite how well the players do they are always just that fraction of a second too late, after all it'd be a bit of an anti-climax if the GM finished the story arc with, "Well done lads, you were just in the nick of time to stop the daemon from appearing, so you can all slope off home for tea and medals whilst I pack this Bloodthirster model back in its case".

THE BROKEN CHAIN

A Radical Inquisitor has been studying or using a powerful daemon weapon or artefact for some time. However, a botched attempt at using a psychic power has cost him a portion of his willpower, and the daemon takes control of him through the weapon whilst he is still weak. Before the Inquisitor can regain control over his own body, the daemon has forced him to undo whatever bindings keep the daemon enslaved to the item. Finally free of its bondage, the daemon manifests and

"There are many ways that malevolent beings can bridge the gap from their disincorporate realm to ours. It is your task to know the signs to watch for when seeking out the foul spoor of this most unholy of intrusions. You must learn to use rumour and hearsay as your eyes and ears, to sieve the grain of truth from myth and legend, to see the fire causing the smoke."

*From the suppressed lectures
of the Adept Sullian*

begins slaughtering everything in its path. The Radical Inquisitor, mentally shattered, must nevertheless hunt down the daemon and either banish it or, if he is not the kind to learn from his mistakes, bind it once more. This is a good scenario to keep in reserve for when a Radical Inquisitor botches his Willpower roll, maybe due to a particularly successful nullification by his target.

THE GENIE IN THE BOTTLE

At the core of the Inquisitor battle reports featured in White Dwarf whereby Inquisitor Lichtenstein, in his single-minded pursuit of the Librarium Hereticus, sets loose the Daemon Prince Phara'gueottla, this is another storyline as old as the hills. In his constant search for knowledge/precious archaeotech/Pringles one of the characters in your campaign has gone that little bit too far and opened the cursed library/smashed the ancient seal/popped the lid of the tube. Perhaps predictably this inauspicious behaviour sets loose the grandfather of all gribbliness and it's up to the PCs to hunt it down. There's always one...

ESCAPE

Following on from the Genie in the Bottle plot hook above, this scenario hinges around the fact that the PCs are ill-prepared to deal with a rampaging Daemon, and must flee for their lives to better prepare for a later banishment

THE DIABOLIC FOE

Of all things most foul and unmentionable, it is the minions of the Ancient Dark Gods with which this treatise is concerned. These unpardonable stains upon existence live to weaken our grip on the stars, make us question our sanity and attempt to drive us from the path of righteousness and fervent faith which we should all tread. They are a dread foe, taking many guises and employing many hideous talents. Although these malignant beings can be encountered on the battlefield, their malfesance can also be detected in many unforeseen places.



of said beastie. Unlike the other scenarios mentioned here, this is ideal for a point in the middle of a story arc, where the PCs have unwittingly released a Daemon that they must stalk and kill in a later climactic finale. You might want to break these two scenarios with a game revolving around the acquisition of specialist daemon-hunting wargear or personnel.

WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

A Puritan Inquisitor of the Ordo Malleus, strong in faith and conviction, has been notified of the slaughter of a far-flung settlement where now only ragged skeletons and the unquiet ghosts of the town's populace reside. After a period of prayer and fasting, the Puritan vows that he will see the daemon destroyed by his own hand, and gathers his warrior band about him for a spot of good old-fashioned daemonhunting in an abandoned ghost town. You might want to use the purestrain genestealer 'blips' and the system accompanying them in Issue 5 of *Exterminatus* magazine, as they are great for building suspense: the Inquisitor's psyker companion/customised Auspex can detect psychic presences all over the town, but whether they are just ghosts or a ravaging daemon is up to the players to find out.

THE RIFT

Somehow, maybe because of the psychic death-scream resultant from mass genocide,

an astral conjunction, the machinations of a Tzeentchian cult or the spontaneous activation of an ancient warp gate, the veil keeping the material world and the warp separate is slowly but surely becoming irrevocably sundered. All manner of nastiness stands really to spill from this wound into reality, and although the Inquisitor and his warband have requested the back-up of the Grey Knights, they must hold the line until the elite Chamber Militant of the Ordo Malleus are able to teleport in and seal the rift once and for all. The rift is currently no larger than man-sized, but as time passes, more and more warp energy pours into the material world carrying with it all manner of impossible and disturbing entities.

ESCORT DUTY

Against the daemon, chainswords and bolters are practically useless, whereas unshakeable faith in the Emperor is far more lethal than any blade or bullet. The player characters must escort a wizened and frail holy man whose near-crippled form belies a strength of faith that dwarfs that of his warrior band bodyguards. Only by ensuring the holy man is kept safe and undisturbed to perform his exorcism can the PCs possibly hope to triumph. You might want to impose a turn length on how long the exorcism takes: if they manage to protect their charge from harm long enough for him to complete his

banishment, they have succeeded, but of course the daemon will have minions of its own ready and waiting to complicate matters...

THE POSSESSED

The good news is that the player characters have finally uncovered their daemonic quarry's hiding place. The bad news is that it is within the body of the planet's king, religious head or tyrant, and he has a legion of followers at his beck and call. This is a particularly tough scenario for the characters to attempt, as they will not only have to fight their way through the minions inhabiting the palace, but also, once the possessed ruler has been despatched, deal with the uninvited daemonic guest, and possibly even have to fight their way out again! This would make an excellent scenario for a Grey Knight Space Marine (see Issue 5 of *Exterminatus* magazine for more details on these elite daemonhunters).

THE WITCH TRIAL

During a good old-fashioned witch trial, a psyker is being brutally tortured and beaten for the unforgivable sin of heresy exhibited by his otherworldly powers. Although the psyker has, up to this point, had no dealings with Chaos whatsoever, in his agony he calls upon the aid of dark powers to save him from the baying crowd and cold, methodical torment from the puritan Inquisitor presiding over the trial. As the axe is about to fall, something in the cold abyss of the warp heeds his cry, and (in exchange for the psyker's immortal soul) bursts forth and slaughters his would-be executioner. The puritan Inquisitor is going to have to act fast if he wants to avoid a massacre...

CONJURATION

The Minor, Lesser, or Greater Servants and Beasts of the Unspoken Lords can be enticed into this realm with a variety of offensive rites and practices. An unclean combination comprising the sacrifice of humans, promises of service, and arcane and superstitious ritual are employed by the diabolic heretic in his misguided attempts to gain the power of the otherworldly creatures we must fight against. Ancient, unintelligible languages are employed in barbaric ceremonies of desecration and treachery to bring forth the foul offerings of the 'Unnamed Gods, culminating in heathen praise and physical subjugation. In most cases, such efforts will go unanswered by the Nether Entities of the Empyrean, and those misguided individuals who indulge in such nefarious and traitorous practices will not receive the nihilistic 'aid' of the creatures they are trying to entreat to their purpose. Only the true student of the malevolent practices, the dark arts we call Daemonancy, will really understand the conjunctions of circumstance that can allow such creatures access to our noble realm. Only an equal exchange of dark sorcery can allow a Corrupt Servant to cross over the Empyrean void, and the power of such sorcery will limit or justify the indulgence of the beast in its dealings with the mortal world. Therefore, a small dedication of power will bring small service, and correspondingly larger donations will bring correspondingly larger responses.



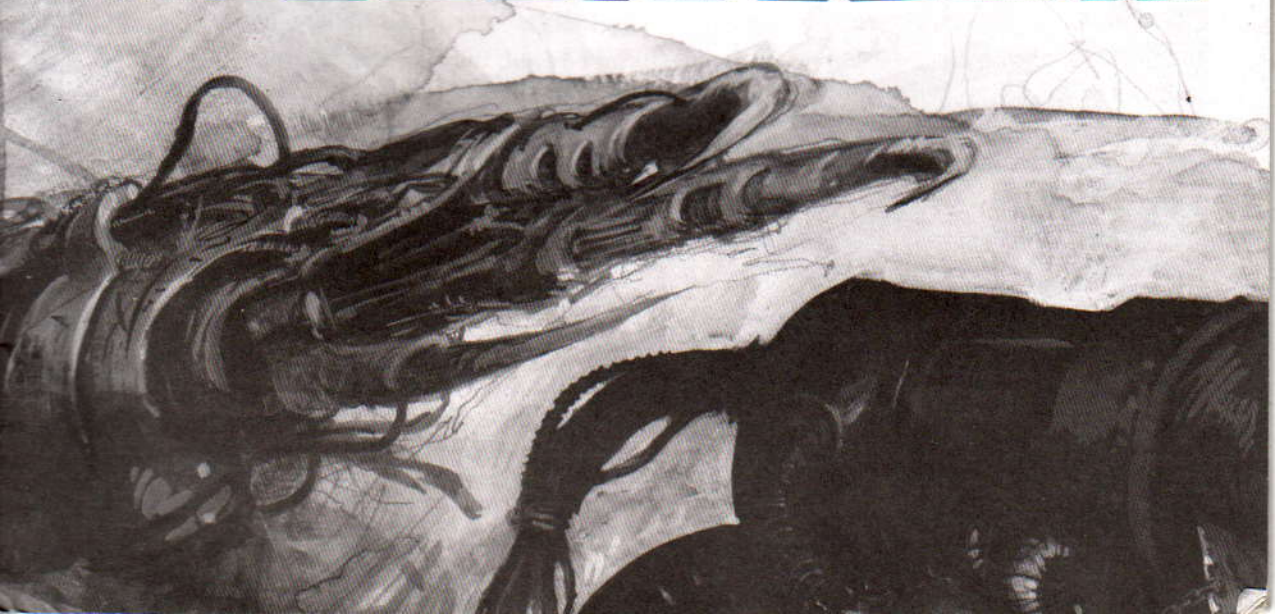
DAEMONANCY

Those Dark Arts named Daemonancy excel in the summoning, conjuration, exhortation and control of diabolic entities from the Immaterialium. The Daemonancer knows the intonations, offerings and promises that will gather the attention of these infernal phantasms. Through researched study of the cabalistic formulae and liturgy, the impure celebrant can increase his influence over the Great Powers. With such increased power, the entreatment of diabolic forces becomes more secure, the response to pleas for treacherous reward greater. The Black Sorceries of Daemonancy rely upon certain elements, some physical, others spiritual. The offering of these components in correct quantities and order is paramount in Daemonancy. Blood, sweat, hair, bone, fear, loathing and hatred are the *Ingredientia Majoris*, common to all conjurations and summonings. Dependant upon the Nefarious Power to be entreated, certain *Ingredientia Minoris* will also be required.

THE DISMAL TEXTS

Many of the dire persuasion have felt beholden to record their diabolic investigations. These tomes are often hidden from us for centuries, waiting until their vile secrets are uncovered by some other poor desperate fool. Usually insane, the authors of the Dismal Texts scrawl their research into manuscripts of unnatural parchments, bound in human skin, and indeed in some rituals the presence of such a tome or grimoire, with diagrams and sigils in certain compound inks (see the *Ingredientia Majoris* above) is required. It is our eternal task to seek out these Dismal Texts and destroy them, their depraved scribblings are of no value and pose innumerable threats to the fabric of our society. Such diabolism must be checked at every stage, from the naïve initiate to the treacherous, malignant Demagogues and Daemonancers.

Various cabalistic shapes and icons help conjoin the powers needed to open a gateway to the Empyrean and aid the summoning process. In some cases, when cajoling particularly potent entities, such pentangles, hexes, formulae, charms, fetishes and profane and obscene runes also form protection for the Daemonancer from the hostile and predatory intents of the Dark Servant to be invoked and brought forth from the Hell-regions of their birth.



CREATING A DAEMON

Although no two daemons are identical, there are certain aspects of their unnatural physiology that are common throughout the scions of Chaos. A great place to start is page 62 of the Inquisitor rulebook; feel free to give your daemon some (or even all if it is a particularly powerful entity) of the daemonic abilities listed there. There are no hard and fast rules for creating daemons, and their characteristics vary wildly. Nonetheless, here are some guidelines as to how to create a daemon for your campaign: remember you can play free and loose with these rules as there really is no set template that has to be adhered to. **Remember these profiles are for GENERIC Chaos daemons, you will need to adjust statistics depending on alignment yourself.**

DAEMON CHARACTERS

- Being manifestations of pure Chaos, daemons always have the Exotic Ability 'Terrifying'.
- Daemons are never intimidated or impressed by anything other than other, more powerful daemons or direct manifestations of faith. They count as having the Force of Will and Nerves of Steel Special Abilities against all attacks or individuals that are not blessed in the eyes of the Emperor (GM's discretion).
- As daemons are creatures composed from the fabric of the warp itself, all psychic powers they have count as being Wyrd abilities.

DAEMONIC CHARACTERS

	WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
Lesser Daemon	75	30	90	80	85	90	60	90	15
Random	45+6D10	6D10	60+6D10	50+6D10	55+6D10	60+6D10	30+6D10	60+6D10	3D10
Daemon Prince	120	60	140	120	110	110	95	95	110

Equipment: Daemons generally carry no equipment. However, Khornate Daemons are almost always clad in brass armour and wield massive hellblades, and Plaguebearers have often been encountered wielding the much-feared Plague Swords. See the Daemonic Armoury for rules.

Special Abilities: Daemons often have abilities and psychic powers determined by their alignment. You may want to limit the number of abilities according to the power of the daemon in question. Particularly appropriate examples are listed below.

Note: All powers written in italics are included in The Twisting Path, the Chaos Psychic Powers article from Issue 3 of Exterminatus magazine, which compliments the information given here. Furthermore, as a rough guideline, lesser daemons can use any psychic power listed up to and including those of difficulty level 15, whereas those with a difficulty level of 20 or more should be reserved for use by Daemon Princes.

Undivided: Invulnerable, Shadow, Impervious, Cloak of Darkness, Void-Chill.

Tzeentch: Gaze of Death, Blinding Flash, Firestorm, Fireball, Burning Fist, Storm of Lightning, Instability, Vortex of Chaos, Puppet Master, Mind Scan, Enforce Will, Regeneration, *Kiss of Change, Golem Sign, Babel Curse, Cerebral Splinter, Flicker, Childmind.*

Slaanesh: Acrobatic, Ambidextrous, Catfall, Dodge, Feint, Mesmerism, Distraction, Embolden, Psychic Shriek, Enfeeble, Puppet Master, *Gift of Agony, The Torturer's Touch, Ophidian Maw, Phantasm, Primal Horror, Mastery of the Soul.*

Nurgle: Demoralise, Impervious, Invulnerable, *Effluent Form, Putrid Torrent, Rain of Foulness, Putrefying Embrace, Curse of the Leper, Pestilent Earth, Sanguinary Explosion.*

Note that Plaguebearers count as if they have cast *Choir of Poxes* successfully once each round as their droning tally of the multitudinous diseases of nurgle takes its toll. Daemons of Nurgle will always carry Nurgle's Rot.

Khorne: Frenzy, First Strike, Feint, Furious Assault, Lightning Reflexes, Impervious, Invulnerable. Note that although they may not use any sort of psychic powers they may attempt to nullify any powers used against them in the same way as a psyker.

THE TOOLS OF A DAEMON

HELLBLADES

Massive iron blades taller than a man, the Hellblades wielded by Daemons of Khorne are searing hot and their ragged edges can rip through armour as if it were as soft as the flesh beneath. They count as having the daemonic properties: Bound, Gnawing and Deathlust.

BRONZE ARMOUR

Khorne Daemons wear bronze armour that has been forged in the fires of hell and quenched in the blood of innocents. It affords 6 points of Armour to any location covered. This Armour value is ignored if the weapon being used has been consecrated.

PLAGUE SWORD

These are rusted, jagged blades that constantly drip with venomous pus. They count as having the daemonic properties Enfeeble and Mind Stealer. In addition, those struck by such weapons stand a chance of contracting Nurgle's Rot (see below).

NURGLE'S ROT

Any model that comes within 10 yards of any other model with Nurgle's Rot has a chance of catching the infection. Make a Toughness test at the beginning of any round in which a character is in such close proximity, taking into account any respiratory equipment the model might have (rebreathers, bionic lungs, etc). If this test is failed by more than 20%, that character has contracted Nurgle's Rot. His Speed is decreased by D3 (roll separately each turn) and he must add that same amount to his Injury total each turn. The only reliable way to be cured of Nurgle's Rot is by the thorough blessing of a member of the Ecclesiarchy who is particularly strong in faith, accompanied by the correct ritual and the burning out of infected areas with consecrated unguents and holy water. A character that is not cured of Nurgle's Rot will eventually degenerate into a Plaguebearer and serve Nurgle for eternity.

ACHILLES HEELS

As you can see, Daemons are very tricky customers, and as mentioned in the beginning of this article they can be nearly impossible to take down without the correct preparation. However, certain substances, phrases and individuals are inimical to daemonkind, and it is with these that the servants of the Emperor

"I shall not counsel you against fear of the daemon: the Emperor knows you have none. But even psycannon and daemonhammer cannot carry the day against such a foe: for what use is the bolter shell against disease, terror and madness?"

No, it is faith! Faith is our impenetrable shield and when faced with such belief the daemon becomes weak. Faith is our fiery sword and with it we will burn out the diabolic cancer of Chaos wherever it is found."

*Attributed to Inquisitor
Lord Hephaestos Grudd*

can hunt and banish all forms of warp-spawned devilry. The exact nature of such holy artefacts and powers is better left for another day, but suffice to say this represents a truly excellent opportunity for any GM to link a series of games that culminate in a devastating finale. Your players may have uncovered the lair of the daemon, but they know it'll feast on their guts if they go in there without the Sacred Rosary of St. Josmane. Naturally, a series of games where they hunt down and acquire said holy artefact, perhaps from a reticent member of the Ecclesiarchy who refuses to be convinced with mere words, forms a fantastic precursor to the final struggle against the Daemon. There really is no shortage of groovy themes and exciting story devices to bring your group into conflict with a Daemon, so draw a pentacle around your modelling table, put something scary together and unleash it on your players. They'll thank you for it, assuming they escape with their souls!



THE UNHOLY RANKS

In a blasphemous mirror of our own noble empire, it is believed that the minions of the Most Dire Gods have a hierarchy of power. From the insane whims of the Ancient Darknesses spring forth the Greater Servants of Misrule. They are hideous creatures, powerful in strength and mind, and possessed of dire abilities. Their visages are terrifying in the extreme, the incarnation of all things most unholy.

Ranking beneath these most fell of Dark Minions are the Lesser and Minor Diabolics. Amongst their incoherent ranks are some of superior or inferior potency, but still of a degree much less than the Greater Presences. This order of Servant provides the Fell Deities of the Pit with a multitudinous army of disparate and malevolent beings, sent to corrupt and disrupt, hurt and injure, those of a noble and pious disposition. Then there are the true Beasts of the Abyssal Gulf, mindless monstrosities intent on wanton chaos, random in their instincts, possessed of no motivation but that of their Unliving God.

At every level there are those poor corrupted mortals who have fallen pray to the avaricious, heathen ideals of the Ancient Enemy and have forsaken Humanity to become Dwellers in the Pit, some viewed highly as princes by their grotesque lords, others nothing but mere playthings for the whims of the Mad Gods.

THE VILE PRESENCE

The malformed existence which a Dark Fiend will create within the material universe is based on a number of factors, not least being the perceptions of the individual or group entreating its presence. The intents and purpose of their Dark Master is reflected in their Daemonic visage and appearance.

Those horrific beings, conjoined to the ancient and terrible Lord of Skulls, are dire warrior-things, dark of eye, blood-hued and bedecked with armour and weapons of brazen heritage. They are bloodthirsty, possessed of a supernatural bestiality, fury and rage, and excel in the arts of war and death. Their presence stirs men to bloodshed, their look turns the spine to ice with fear, and their bellows and war cries deafen those that oppose them.

The vile servants of the Prince of Misdeed are incarnate of the lascivious dreams and depraved imaginings of desperate malcontents. Their disgusting and foul nature is obscured by an aura of ecstasy and beauty, truly obscene in its falsity. Their grotesque conjurers are confronted by visions of unnatural serenity, charm and lustful suggestion, driving reason from their thoughts and causing unholy admiration and covetousness.

Those supplicants to the Architect of Fate who attract his supernal gaze will be gifted with bizarre, anarchic entities comprised of the raw magic of their master. They are a blaze of chaotic colour, shape-shifting and incorporeal. They are enveloped in an inconstant corona of energy, buzzing and shrieking with unearthly power, sparks of incandescence cascading from their bodies, piercing eyes seeing into souls.

Of all the nefarious devils that serve the Dark Masters, the corrupt minions of the Pestilent Beast are the most physically grotesque. Embodiments of decay and plague, their festering presence and unnatural stench is pervaded by a miasma of flies and nauseating putridity. Their swollen sores, exposed innards, wart-strewn and pus-slicked skin is sickening in the extreme.