

# The Spark (Jean's Desk)

*Daniel now had to locate a chair; all the blood in his legs seemed to be rushing into his brain.*

*"If that is true," he said, "then everything you proved **before** about point objects - for example that they move along conic section trajectories - "*

*"Applies without alteration to spherical bodies."*

*"To **real things**." Daniel had a queer vision just then of a shattered Temple reconstituting itself: fallen columns rising up from the rubble, and the rubble re-aggregating itself into cherubim and seraphim, a fire sparking on the central altar. "You've done it, then... created the System of the World."*

*- Neal Stephenson, **Quicksilver**, page 686*

This is not how it happened, per se, but there is Truth there. There was a point and a place where the first human besides Isaac Newton comprehended the scope of the latter's discoveries - not a point and a place where things did make sense, but a point and a place where one could hope to ensure that things **would** make sense - and that created a Tether.

It is a small Tether - one Force capacity, and not amenable to stretching (fully Inelastic, in game terms) - but that is to be expected: it is the personalized expression of one human's delighted understanding, and the second most wondrous thing about it is that a human could so

transcend belief as to create the Tether in the first place. There is no Seneschal, and the Earthly locus (an extensively remodeled yet unremarkable London room) is effectively unguarded: Jean chooses to take personal responsibility for maintaining and protecting the Spark (something which is well within his powers), which takes care of both problems. Conceivably, a Demon Prince might be able to work some mischief that would affect Jean, should they find the earthly locus of the Tether, but the only one who could have any realistic hope of succeeding would be Vapula, and he interferes not.

Being the personal property of a Superior means that the Spark is not precisely subject to normal rules. Usually, the Archangel of Lightning keeps the heavenly locus of this Tether close to hand; if it has a usual resting place, it's on Jean's approximation of a desk. As usual, Jean has several reasons for this. First, it is a handy (in many senses of the term) reminder for Servitors of Lightning that there was a reason why humanity is favored by God. They may be not as intelligent as angels, and they certainly are not as disciplined... but mortals have their own powers and abilities, and underestimating them is perhaps not the wisest of strategies. There is also a scientific interest, as well as an aesthetic one (the two are often connected in the minds of Jean's Servitors). For that

matter, its size allows it to be used as an educational tool, and Jean is very much a teacher.

But the fundamental reason - which is one that only a select few angels know - is that Jean's personal possession of the Spark makes it impossible for anyone else to get an effective reading off of it. This is important because the Tether is not to Lightning. When Jean discovered the earthly locus, it was already stabilized... and the Heavenly locus was found, after much personal searching, in the dusty halls of an abandoned Cathedral.

If Jean Knows anything, he Knows this: once a Word has been Orphaned, further stabilized Tethers to it simply do not form. Yet the Spark exists, and is stabilized. Therefore, the Word it is linked to has not been Orphaned.

She lives.

She. Lives.

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