

Aballem

Shedite Prince of Madness

The world is whatever you want it to be.

They say that Aballem is an urban myth, a Lie, a fable told to demonlings in order to make them behave. **They** say that claiming to believe in Aballem is just an excuse for one's own shortcomings and failures of Will. **They** say that the supposed existence of Aballem is just a convenient justification for your superiors to oppress, and your inferiors to disappoint, you. **They**, in fact, say everything except Aballem is real, functional, and holds its own sort of power.

They say all these things rather loudly, and with a certain amount of bravado.

Dissonance

Like Eli, Aballem considers nothing to be outside of the scope of its Word; and thus like Eli, no action is Word-dissonant for Aballem's Servants (not Servitors). However, all Servitors of Madness are constrained by a special form of Discord (see below).

Organization

The Prince of Madness does not have an organization; it has secret acolytes and even more secret supplicants. Servants of Madness all serve two masters; their own Prince and Aballem. Naturally, they all hide their allegiance to Madness, as even Demon Princes friendly to Aballem react badly to the thought of their *own* Servitors having divided loyalties. Servants of Madness can detect each other on sight, for a price. With Aballem, there is always a price.

Band Attunements

Note that Servants of Madness do not start with these attunements: they start instead with Bargain (see below). Also note that each Band attunement comes with the ability to recognize other Servants of Madness on sight.

Balseraph

Liars of Madness add their Ethereal Forces to all Lying rolls.

Djinn (restricted)

Djinn serving Aballem automatically attune (roll anyway for the CD) to anyone possessing either an Ethereal Discord or Disadvantage. This *does* include other Servants of Madness.

Calabite (restricted)

Aballem permits its Calabim to use their resonance to inflict Mind hits.

Habbalite

Habbalim of Madness can add their Ethereal Forces to all reaction rolls made by anyone within eyesight that possesses an Ethereal Discord or Disadvantage. This bonus will *not* work on other Servants of Madness.

Lilim (Restricted)

Lilim of Madness can choose which Bargain Discords they acquire. They survive in Aballem's service for precisely as long as they can avoid turning their Bargain Discords into Geases. Once one starts, she finds those Geases sold to someone else; usually her other Superior.

Shedite

Shedim serving Madness can subtract their Ethereal Forces from all reaction rolls made by anyone within eyesight possessing an Ethereal Discord or Disadvantage.

This penalty will *not* work on other Servants of Madness.

Impudite

Impudites of Madness add their Ethereal Forces to all Emote rolls.

Servant Attunement

Bargain

This is the basic Servant attunement of Madness. Aballem is a very old Demon Prince, and what it has not discovered, it has learned; and what it has not learned, it has stolen. You could learn *anything* from it, for a price. Essentially, a PC with this attunement can pay character points to learn any skill, Song, or attunement permitted by both the rules and the GM. This will not allow, say, a Shedite of Dark Humor to purchase the Balseraph of Death attunement, but it will allow him to purchase the Shedite of Death attunement, or the Balseraph of Dark Humor attunement, or either Saminga's or Kobal's extra Rites, or even their secret Songs (that last especially at the option of the GM).

The problem is that accepting gifts from Aballem means embracing its Word more fully, which means becoming

steadily less sane.

Bargain	Points
Direct gift of Essence	1pt/9 Essence
Skills	1pt/level
Songs, common	1pt/level
Rites	1pt
Aballem's Attunements	1pt
Songs, Secret	2pt
Other Prince's Band Attunements	2pt
Other Prince's Servitor Attunements	3pt
Distinction, Aballem	3pt
Distinction, Other Prince	9pt

Servants of Aballem must keep a running total of their Bargain points. For every three full points that they gather they must also acquire one level of an Ethereal Discord, chosen by the GM. This will not actually show up as Discord, even in celestial form -- but it can never be removed. These Bargain Discords also stack with "natural" Discord, which can lead to effective Discord levels above 6. Merely *using* abilities purchased with Bargain (even Aballem's) does not trigger the generation of more Discord: the Prince of Madness is more subtle than that.

Formally renouncing Aballem's service can be done at any

time, and will result in the immediate loss of all abilities gained via this attunement. Multiply the total amount of Bargain points by 20: the result is the total number of Mind Hits immediately suffered by the demon. If this is enough to knock him out, do not discard the remainder; instead apply the rest as soon as he has regenerated half of his Mind hits back. Repeat as needed (GMs unwilling to do the paperwork can instead simply rule that the demon is now officially Discordant with whatever he was suffering from in the first place, but at half level).

All Servants of Madness must take this attunement at character creation, as well as Aballem's two basic Rites -- which means that they also start with one Ethereal Discord/1.

Distinctions

Earning a Distinction from Aballem on your own is actually simple: acquire enough Bargain points and the Prince of Madness will give one to you. Every 20 points is worth one step on the ladder.

Knight of Madmen

Knights serving Aballem may suppress their Bargain Discords by spending 1 Essence and making a Will roll. Success will lower all levels of his Bargain Discords by the

CD; the effects last one hour. However, once the effect is completed the effective level of *all* his Discords (including any "regular" ones that he might have) is doubled for the next hour.

Many Servants of Madness get revealed at this stage.

Captain of Lunatics

Captains of Lunatics add their Celestial Forces to their Will rolls. It does not cure their madness, but it does return to them some degree of functionality.

Baron of Bedlamites

These demons are rare, and the ones that function are rarer. It is reported that they can actually remove the abilities gifted by Aballem to others without harming the demon. It is also reported that getting one's attention can be difficult, and getting their cooperation is harder.

Relations

As long as Aballem does not actively recruit Servitors of the Game -- which it apparently does not -- Asmodeus will not actively have his servants hunt those of Madness. Plus, the Game has found that the resources that Aballem

can offer are often valuable, usually convenient, and invariably suitably deniable. Kobal has similar opinions about the convenience, as does Kronos. Most of the rest of Hell's Princes loathe having Madness infiltrate their organizations, but only Baal and Saminga allow this loathing to outweigh their appreciation of the advantages. And Lilith and Aballem actively fight each other as only direct business competitors with fanatical servants and no functioning ethical senses can.

Allied: Asmodeus, Kobal

Associated: Kronos

Hostile: Baal, Saminga

Enemy: Lilith

Basic Rites

: Use a supernatural ability given to you by Aballem

: Recruit another demon to accept Aballem's gifts

Aballem will also be happy to arrange special Rites for you. As many as you wish (if the player has the points for them), and however you like.

Chance of Invocation: Special

A Servant of Madness can *always* speak to his Prince; it's just that the Prince will never offer material aid, ever. It will

be happy to give worthy supplicants whatever abilities they need to succeed on their own, of course. For the right price.

History and Personality

Aballem is a bit of an enigma. It certainly is a historical character: the Prince was originally a Kyriotate serving Knowledge who participated with great zeal in the Rebellion, and the oldest records show that it was one of the first Demon Princes of Hell. Aballem's activities continued and were chronicled even after the First Incursion, although none of its old Servitors (who, unlike his modern Servants, operated openly) survive to the current day. It even had a Cathedral, located high in the mountains that were later converted into the Circle-City of Hades.

But somewhere along the line the Prince simply disappeared. The process was slow, and probably could not be duplicated in today's modern, cynical, deeply paranoid Hell. There was no dramatic gesture or event, simply the gradual loss of contact and interaction between Madness, and its fellows. When Asmodeus' construction

crews finally came to Aballem's abode, it had been clearly abandoned for some time. While the other Princes knew that Aballem still lived, of course -- most of them had "acquired" Servitors who could check, when prodded -- it was deemed wisest to let Hell believe that the Prince of Madness had passed on, somehow.

Eventually the Prince of Madness made contact with its peers again, at least -- and from there Aballem began making all sorts of arrangements. It of course frustrates most of the other Demon Princes that one of their number is poaching their Servitors; but the resource that a Servant of Madness represents is in itself not inconsiderable, and an advantage is an advantage. Aballem does not protect its Servants, either. They are expected to fend for themselves. If they have to, deals can be made.

The only question that remains is: what are Aballem's long term goals? Many Princes suspect that the Prince of Madness has none, or at least none that would make sense to someone sane. Many others take the related view that Aballem is perfectly happy to be a Superior-level parasite. Three Superiors -- Baal, Lilith, and Saminga (to their mutual dismay) are convinced that Aballem has some sort of nefarious goal in mind. They have yet to convince anyone else of this, or more accurately: they have to

convince anyone else that this is an actual problem, as Hell is already quite full of nefarious and dubious goals. Interestingly, they say that Aballem will be happy to answer that question, if you ask it, and pay the price. They also say that once you hear it, you'll never be able to explain it to anyone else.

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