

Good Friday

There's one thing that's told to every demon assigned to Earth duty, at the earliest possible opportunity. In fact, for the first few weeks, every *other* demon that the trainee meets will make it a point to mention said thing, in blithe disregard for Word or Band-hostility. They have to, as most demons don't want to hear this piece of advice, even when it's in their best interest to do so, and constant repetition (and negative reinforcement) is the best way to make sure that it sinks in. The advice is simple:

Do NOTHING to attract attention on Good Friday. Stay home, watch TV, order in your meals, and cause NO disturbance. If it's a choice between racking up dissonance and doing anything to call attention to yourself, no matter how small -- eat the dissonance.

This reticent attitude has nothing to do with piety, and has everything to do with fear. You see, experienced demons know what's going on in Heaven on that day: every Christian angel is (after a short but heartfelt formal religious service) spending the day inflicting guilt upon themselves.

You see, they failed. God came back, and nobody saw Him in time. He had to come back, too, because the Host did not do their duty by humanity. He had to clean up their mess, and He didn't even give anyone a word of richly-deserved reproof. Then, because the angels screwed up so badly, (to quote a certain Saint) God had to be nailed to a tree and **die** in order to properly fix things. And He *still* didn't say anything, which doesn't mean anything, because He's... well, just that merciful and benevolent. The Host could have messed things up even more (although precisely *how* is hard to imagine), and God would have forgiven them. This really makes all of them feel even worse.

All the Christian angels feel this way, and it just gets worse as the day goes on. Laurence, Archangel of the Sword himself is the epitome of the above attitude -- after all, he was around and able to protect his Creator, but did he? He didn't even **recognize** God when He took human form; and whose fault is that, really? Obviously, it's Laurence's. The fact that he was less than a century old (and wasn't even a Word-bound) at that point is absolutely immaterial to him. Laurence could have done **something**.

So, imagine that you're an angel (or Archangel) wrestling with this incredible amount of frustration and shame.

Misery loves company, so you've all gathered together to give each other what comfort that you may. Now imagine that you get told of demonic activity -- *any* demonic activity.

Guess what happens then?

It's a **disaster**, from Hell's point of view. Long experience has shown that the Christian contingent of the Host will react to *any* infraction that they perceive on Good Friday with a combat response normally associated with the Order of the Eternal Sword -- and *serious* infractions go off the scale. The base chance for invoking Laurence is a 6 on this day, and reaction modifiers are meaningless (if you've got a demon to Smite, Laurence will be happy to answer your call, no matter who you are).

The level of response has a hideous flavor of overkill to it. We're talking about sending a squad of twenty to punish some unlucky demon that's snatched a purse. Some demons have tried to use this gut reaction to set up an ambush: it never works. If twenty angels don't rectify the situation, then the next batch of celestials that show up (within about a minute) will number two hundred. If that doesn't work, then the next bunch will be two full legions with Laurence himself leading the charge. And they'll **all**

be the mood for washing out guilt with noise (Disturbance? Who cares?) and blood.

Demons aren't stupid creatures. Heaven can't maintain this level of intensity full time (if they could, the War would have ended a while back), but when they do... well, only a fool goes looking for trouble.

Unfortunately, Demon Princes refuse to let this matter lie (no matter how sensible it would be to just wait a bloody day or two before setting a plan in motion). They traditionally use Good Friday to cull their Servitors. If a demon gets a specific assignment to do on that day, said demon can be assured that his or her Prince is not happy with their performance (or that some Servitor higher up in the organization is giving said demon the shaft). Failure is not 'officially' an option -- but "success" is equivalent to "survival", in this special case only.

The implications for this for adventure hooks should be obvious.

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