

Nothing

Ethereal 'God' of Atheism

Corporeal Forces: 1

Strength: 2

Agility: 2

Ethereal Forces: 3

Intelligence: 8

Precision: 4

Celestial Forces: 3

Will: 7

Perception: 5

Elements: Emotions (Dispassion) (primary); Information (Perspective) (secondary)

Affinities: Emotions (Dispassion) (strong); Books (Moderate); Deception (Moderate)

Skills: Dream-Shaping/3, Dodge/3, Emote/3, Fighting/3, Knowledge/3 (logic)

Songs: Charm (Ethereal/4), Motion (Celestial/3)

Dread: Revealing its existence to any mortal/3 (3pt/level)

Image: Ever have a dream where you knew that something was there, but when you looked at it, it wasn't? But you knew that it was still hanging around, somehow? Well: there you go. It all makes perfect sense on the

ethereal plane and absolutely none on the corporeal, which is just as it should be.

About the only thing that Nothing has going for it as an ethereal 'god' is that it's effectively immune to Assumption combat challenges, despite the steady Essence flow. There are very few ethereals out there that want to *volunteer* to be under constant attack from both the Host **and** the Tsayadim, Outcast Servitors of Purity. The latter in particular loathe Nothing, which is why any particular one tends to have a lifespan measurable in months.

Of course, one might wonder why there's been even a **single** Nothing in the first place, as a god of atheism seems counterintuitive. Well, it goes like this: in the *In Nomine* universe, a certain portion of humanity considers themselves to be atheists. Of that group, there is a further division between those who do not believe in God (or gods) and those who believe that there *is* no God (or gods): the entire 'absence of evidence' versus 'evidence of absence' thing, in other words. It's the latter subgroup that is important, in this context. They're the ones who are sustaining Nothing, as they are actually passing on Essence to it through their positive belief in the nonexistence of any deity.

Unfortunately, to semi-quote Terry Pratchett, Nothing lives in a universe where deities go around and throw rocks through atheists' windows.

Nothing has no allies, or even real neutrals. The Tsayadim find the idea of a god of atheists to be a calculated insult; so does the Host, really, except that they're slightly more polite about it. Many other ethereals consider the very existence of Nothing to be a threat to their own continued survival. Admittedly, this is not really true, as the ethereals are suffering more from a general lack of belief than from active *disbelief*, but since when has logic gotten in the way of a good general loathing? Besides, most ethereals live in quiet terror of fading -- and Nothing's regular mode of existence looks far too much like that condition to be anything but disquieting.

As for Hell? Well, the Habbalah at least are predisposed to loathe the ethereal on sight and the rest of the Horde have their own reasons for encouraging regular ethereals in their quite irrational hatred of the spirit. Then there's the wrinkle of Nothing's Dread: it literally cannot hope to openly encourage worshippers (to use the technical term), as said act of encouragement runs directly counter to its Image. The best that it can hope for is to enter individual dreamscapes and obliquely encourage existing tendencies

towards an active disbelief in any deity. This only rarely works, and is fairly risky.

This should hopefully explain why there have been so many Nothings. They tend to be destroyed with a regularity that would do credit to a metronome; and when the current one is gone, a new one crops up fairly soon. Informed speculation suggests that new Nothings form from faded spirits with severe Image problems: indeed, some healing-oriented ethereals have classified Nothing as a particularly disturbing, nigh-incurable disease. Whether or not this is true is up to individual GMs, but bear in mind that trying to find a cure for an ethereal infected with Nothing can make for an interesting adventure.

As for Nothing's personality? well, considering that it's fueled by people who don't believe in it (not to mention that Nothing rarely has much time for personal development), it'd be lucky to have one. As Nothing can not considered to be particularly lucky by any reasonable measuring system, it generally displays a basic sentience and not much else. The 'not much else' part tends to support the hypothesis that new Nothings come from faded ethereals: sometimes a flicker of what might have been the original personality matrix appears for a moment,

apparently at the cost of great pain to Nothing. Most ethereals agree that seeing this happen causes them to feel two specific and distinct reactions. The first is a curious mixture of disquietude and pity.

The second is a sudden and fierce need to find a nice, heavy rock to throw.

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