

Matthew

Mercurian Master of Finances

Angel of Entertainment

Corporeal Forces: 4 Strength: 6 Agility: 10
Ethereal Forces: 6 Intelligence: 12 Precision: 12
Celestial Forces: 6 Will: 12 Perception: 12
Word-Forces: 16

Vessel: middle-aged man/3, Charisma +1

Skills: Artistry (Cinema/3, Game Design/3, Writing/3), Computer Operation/1, Detect Lies/6, Dodge/3, Emote/6, Fighting/3, Knowledge (Law/2, Entertainment Industry/6), Languages (French/1, Hindustani/1, Japanese/1), Musical Instrument (guitar/1, harp/1, piano/1), Ranged Weapon/1 (pistol), Savoir-Faire/6, Singing/3, Tactics/1

Songs: Harmony (Ethereal/1), Healing (All/2), Light (Corporeal/1, Celestial/2), Motion (Celestial/6), Retribution (All/3), Shields (All/6), Tongues (Corporeal/3, Ethereal/3)

Role: "M. R. Billings" (mover and shaker/6, Status 6)

Attunements: Mercurian of Trade, Seraphim of Trade, Malakite of Trade, Divine Contract, Head of a PIN, Master of Finances, Angel of Entertainment

Angel of Entertainment: Matthew always knows whether a work of commercial entertainment has the potential of being a surefire hit. He can also tell whether any particular form of entertainment is being directly supported by Hell by making a Perception roll. Both of these abilities can be given out as Servitor Attunements.

Matthew also automatically succeeds at any resonance roll (CD of 6) involving a particular human's tastes in entertainment.

Rites (also available to others):

- Watch a well made, entertaining film/TV show
- Loan someone a well-written book
- Put on some kind of performance for five or more people and get an unforced emotional response out of them (+2 Essence)

In one sense, having your own personal Triad assigned to you is a compliment: it shows that Dominic, Archangel of Judgement, considers it very important that you not Fall. That's the rationalization, at least. Matthew recognizes that he's on a knife-edge, but what can he do? He was the Angel of Entertainment a century before anyone ever even **heard** of Nybbas, Demon Prince of the Media, and he's

not about to give up the Word just because it's no longer safe to hold. Trade's people aren't quitters.

Besides, the work he does is starkly necessary. This is the modern era: wars (and the War) are fought in a thousand different types of arenas these days, and Matthew knows how important his particular one is. *Someone* has to make sure that humanity gets forms of entertainment that won't corrupt them, or insult their collective intelligence, and it seems that Matthew is that 'someone'. So, it's a good thing that he works for Marc: he's at least got the cash to do the job right.

These days, Matthew's influence is very wide, if not all that deep. The angel has a stake in every worthwhile record label, movie studio, software company, traditional and/or digital publisher, and roleplaying game company out there. If it exists and consistently avoids producing crap, his mini-organization is involved somehow. Most of the time, said involvement is limited to watching for Media involvement, but Matthew keeps a very firm finger on the pulse of the various entertainment industries.

Another, lesser task is trying to reclaim those cast aside by Nybbas' relentless empire. Matthew has been responsible for drying out more than one has-been actor or musician, and fixing them up to the point where they can at least pay their bills. It's the good and decent thing to do - besides,

having once-famous people quietly telling horror stories about the evils of Hollywood can do wonders on the local level of society.

One thing that Matthew does *not* do is set himself up as a rival to the Media. He can't. He'd like to, but he can't. This is a bitter pill to swallow, but the Mercurian consoles himself with the fact that he's not actually being forced back. While Nybbas may be expanding faster than Matthew could ever hope to match, the angel is involved in his own empire building, and it's a blessed sight better defended than its malignant Infernal mirror image.

This is one place where Heaven's ability to work together is paying dividends: the rest of the Host knows full well that defending their beachhead in Nybbas' domain is vitally important, so they *all* pitch in, when needed - even the ones that normally don't care much for Trade. The aforementioned Triad is there almost as much to ensure that Matthew keeps getting the backup that he needs as it is to keep an eye on him. Dominic remains paranoid, of course, but that's par for the course.

The ironic bit is that Nybbas has no real plans to crush this interloper. It's largely because of his relative inexperience (the Prince **is** very young for his position), but Nybbas also apparently thinks of Matthew as more of an independent subcontractor than as an active danger. Market share is

market share: the stuff that the Angel of Entertainment puts out may be goody-goody, boring, and outdated drivel, but there are people who **like** it. If Nybbas were to destroy Matthew, then those people might... *start making their own entertainment instead*. The very idea makes the Prince of the Media's flesh crawl.

In order to prevent *that* obscenity, Nybbas might have to get involved in producing more quality material himself. He *could* do it (or so he tells himself), but why work when you can get someone to do it for you? As long as Matthew doesn't get ideas above his station, the Prince of the Media is willing to let Heaven have their foothold. Hell, it's even serving his Word.

This may be a drastic miscalculation (the Prince has never quite gotten his head around how angels will instinctively work together in ways that no demons could hope to emulate), but then Nybbas *is* very young. If there's ever a confrontation, it could very well be ... interesting.

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