



NEW CANAAN

A SUPPLEMENT FOR

DOGS IN THE VINEYARD

by

Aaron M. Sturgill

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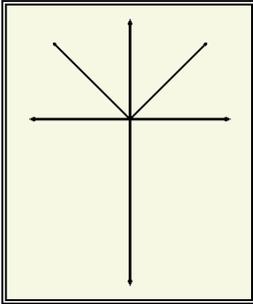
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HORTON'S HOPE

+ PRIDE

They arrive the day before Brother Leonard's wedding – the first in his village to be granted polygamy. Of course, he's just doing it for the sex – his first wife, Sister Bethany, cut him off years ago, which quickly led to his philandering (making this a two-sided issue).

+ INJUSTICE

Restricted from what he feels is his marital privilege, Leonard has slept with several young women in the village. Clearly he is less than worthy of the privilege of polygamy – but Brother Gregory, the Steward, empathizes with his situation. Naturally, there is great turmoil between the wife (Sister Bethany) and the fiancée (Sister Amelia).



Brothers Leonard and Gregory

+ SIN

Polygamy for all the wrong reasons – which leads to jealousy and partiality. (On the other hand: could this be preferable to Leonard sleeping around?)

+ DEMONIC ATTACKS

The women of the town have become outrageously fecund, to the point of their offspring being a strain on the community.

+ FALSE DOCTRINE

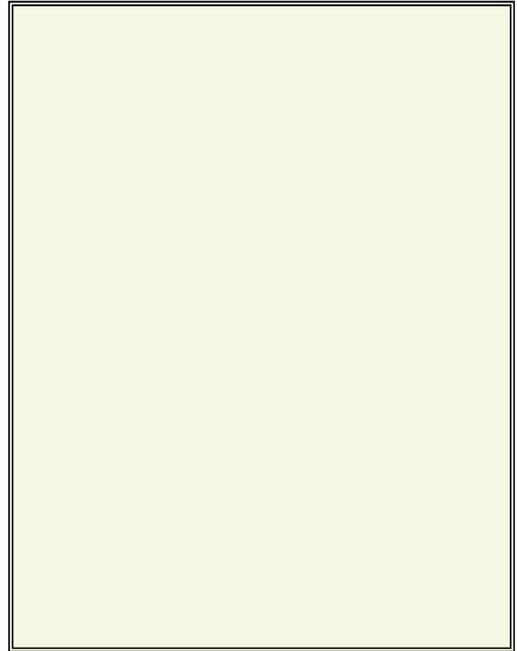
Brothers Leonard and Gregory have convinced themselves that a man may take another wife if he is not being physically fulfilled. Of course, Sister Bethany (and others) feel justified in cutting their husbands off, for no better reason than boredom or distaste.

* * * * *

Done. No **Corrupt Worship, False Priesthood, Sorcery, or Hate & Murder.**

+ TOWNSPEOPLE

- **Brother Leonard Bishop:** Brother Josiah's uncle; polygamist-to-be.
- **Sister Bethany Bishop:** Brother Leonard's first wife.
- **Brother Gregory Stewart:** Steward of Horton's Hope; Leonard's collaborator.
- **Sister Lucille Stewart:** Steward Gregory's wife.
- **Sister Amelia Clark:** Brother Leonard's bride-to-be. Daughter of Brother Alden and Sister Martha Clark.
- **Brother Alden** and **Sister Martha Clark:** preparing to give away their daughter, Amelia, in marriage to Leonard Bishop.
- **Sisters Camilla and Livia:** friends and cohorts of Sister Bethany.
- **Sister Emma Obetz:** the last girl Brother Leonard slept with before exploring the polygamy option.
- **Brother Cameron Obetz:** single father of Sister Emma (whose wife died a year ago of an undiagnosed illness).
- **Brother Matthew Pearse:** Sister Amelia's hopeful suitor.



+ WHAT DO THE TOWNSPEOPLE WANT FROM THE DOGS?

- **Brother Leonard** wants them to bless his marriage, perhaps also to condemn his first wife, Sister Bethany, for her selfishness (or at least take her down a peg or two).
- **Steward Gregory** wants them to approve of his award of polygamy for Brother Leonard.
- **Sister Bethany** wants to expose Leonard's depraved urges – but without admitting her own selfishness.
- **Sister Amelia** wishes their blessing. Things get complicated when she becomes infatuated with one of the Dogs.
- **Brother Alden** and **Sister Martha** (Sister Amelia's parents) are very worried about their daughter, and about the character of Brother Leonard. They wouldn't mind for one of the Dogs to try to talk some sense into her – they might even welcome the prospect of a Dog suitor....
- **Sisters Camilla** and **Livia** are behind Sister Bethany, and adamant that the Dogs take steps to chastise basically all the men in the town for their sinful urges.
- **Sister Emma** just wants to forget her tryst with Brother Leonard, and pretend it never happened.
- **Brother Cameron:** Being the only parent in town who's convinced of Brother Leonard's infidelities, Sister Emma's father wants revenge. He'll approach the Dogs about this, seeking support for his condemnation of Brother Leonard.
- **Brother Matthew** is fairly irrational in his hatred of Brother Leonard – but only because he has no proof of his sexual habits. Naturally, he wants to see Leonard condemned, and to assert himself as a worthy suitor for Sister Amelia.

+ WHAT DO THE DEMONS WANT?

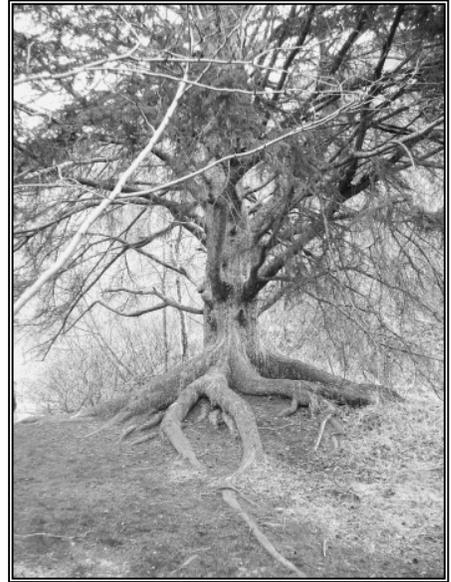
To exacerbate the jealousy and strife by making sex a curse (manifests in the women's outrageous fecundity).

+ WHAT DO THE DEMONS WANT THE DOGS TO DO?

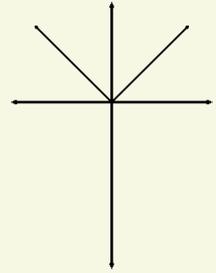
To bless the marriage and the heresy of wrongful polygamy. To chastise Sister Bethany and the other older Sisters, thereby aggravating the growing tension between many of the couples. Really, the demons will be happy if the Dogs pick any side to the exclusion of the other, since this will only worsen any injustice.

+ WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE DOGS DIDN'T COME?

Older wives would band together against their husbands. Men would take more and more wives for less and less reason (younger and younger, too) – or just ignore the sanctity of union entirely, in favor of their baser urges. Children would cripple Horton's economy, and eventually, Brothers Leonard and Gregory would find enough men to form a FALSE PRIESTHOOD. Shortly after that, a deadly STD would spawn, seemingly *ex nihilo*, and decimate the community (and possibly spread to others).



NEW GILEAD



+ PRIDE

Sister Sarai Newcastle has supplanted Steward Thomas Pearse as minister and counselor of New Gilead, following certain recent failures and perceived shortcomings on the part of the male leadership. (Brother Thomas remains the official Steward, if only for appearances.) Many of the townspeople supported this change, and nearly all have by now accepted it.

BACKGROUND

These are the events which led to the current dispute. About five years ago, a family by the name of Mayland (Franklin and Mercy) adopted an abandoned boy. Apparently aged about ten, he seemed to resemble the Mountain People of the area, and the Maylands (as well as the rest of the town) considered him a blessing from the King of Life.

Everything seemed fine until Benjamin (the orphan) reached puberty. From the townspeople's point of view, one day he was a fairly well-adjusted Faithful child, and the next, numerous farm animals were found mutilated and sexually assaulted. In addition, more than a few young girls reported that he aggressively tried to get them alone (unsuccessfully). Over the next several months, awareness of the situation grew, and various people (mostly men at first, then women) tried to confront Benjamin about his transgressions – since no amount of familial punishment seemed to have any lasting effect.

About six months after Benjamin's behavior was first discovered, the Maylands began to withdraw from the stabilizing influence of their community. They even stopped attending weekly services. In response to this, Sister Sarai openly rebuked Steward Thomas (and the rest of the men in New Gilead) for not doing 'enough' to remedy the situation. Within weeks, Thomas had all but relinquished his authority and responsibilities as Steward, deferring to the all-too-eager Sister Sarai. Notably, Benjamin disappeared around the same time.

+ INJUSTICE

Although men still do the breadwinning, the women are taking on more and more responsibility for running both their households and the community. Men have begun to see their children raised contrary to their beliefs, but they feel obligated to trust their wives because of the perceived failures of a few men. There's no small amount of hurt and resentment over this.

+ SIN

Women have authority over men.

+ DEMONIC ATTACKS

A number of men are injured or ill – far more than would normally be expected. Oddly, the women seem more prosperous than ever. **Whooping cough... XX**

+ FALSE DOCTRINE

All but a few of the town's women have agreed that, at least in this situation, they can do certain things better than the men. In addition, they believe that women can teach men and interpret the Word.

+ CORRUPT WORSHIP

Women are leading services both for their individual families, and the community at large. This is a complete inversion of Faith doctrine and tradition. Notably, it affects the entire town.

+ FALSE PRIESTHOOD

Sister Sarai heads up the hierarchy of women who have actively rejected mainline doctrine. Sarai's heresy is, of course, the most developed: she sees herself as nothing less than the town's savior. In her mind, the women can do no wrong – and the men are, to a one: weak, depraved, ineffectual, hypocritical, and in dire need of the women's guidance.

The cult itself only claims about a dozen converts. The rest of the women in New Gilead fall somewhere on a continuum – there are even a few that have internally rejected Sister Sarai's heresy, and will continue to cleave to their husbands' authority (although most feel it far too dangerous at this point to confront her publicly). However, even these men feel pressured by the others to put themselves under their wives' authority (a further manifestation of INJUSTICE).

+ SORcery

Several demonic spirits have been doing Sister Sarai's bidding for several weeks, so she is quite accustomed to having no small amount of spiritual power and authority. (Note that the demons were attacking the town long before the FALSE PRIESTHOOD was established – their goals just coincidentally matched.) A few of the other women also have demonic authority, in varying degrees (in fact, three of the women have demonic relationships: Sisters Sarai, Margaret, and Adelaide).

* * *

Done. No **Hate & Murder** (yet).

+ TOWNSPEOPLE

THE CULT

- **Sister Sarai Newcastle:** Leader of the cult that seeks to utterly usurp the authority laid down by the King of Life. Wife of Brother David Newcastle.
- **Sister Margaret Baker:** Sarai's right hand. Wife of Brother Malachi Baker.
- **Sister Adelaide Pearse:** Third in the cult's hierarchy. Wife of Steward Thomas Pearse.

THE MEN

- **Steward Thomas Pearse:** Bore the brunt of Sister Sarai's wrath following the mishandling of the Mayland dilemma.
- **Brother David Newcastle:** 'Castrated' husband of Sister Sarai. He represents and embodies the shame of the men of New Gilead (he truly believes that letting the women 'have their turn' is the right thing to do).
- **Brother Malachi Baker:** One of several men who attempted to remedy the Mayland situation several months previous. Husband of Sister Margaret.

OTHERS

- **Brother Abram** and **Sister Elizabeth Yoder:** Representative of only a few adult townspeople who have rejected Sister Sarai's heresy (although neither of them are vocal about their disagreement).
- **Brother Jonas, Brother Alphonse, Sister Sarah, and Sister Tabitha.** These four make up a loose cadre of young adults who are convicted of the heresy of Sarai's actions, and hope to soon reclaim New Gilead from her clutches.
- **The Doctor... XX**

+ WHAT DO THE TOWNSPEOPLE WANT FROM THE DOGS?

- Deep down, the **women** live in fear of judgment. They know they cannot hope for absolution or understanding from the Dogs, so they seek only to hide their heresy for as long as they remain in town. However, in her self-righteous boldness, Sister Sarai will approach any female Dog (after a short time), and try to broach the subject gently. She alone (vainly?) hopes for the eventual official blessing of the Dogs.
- The **men**, being utterly convinced of their failure as husbands and fathers, wish to be punished, or at least exhorted. However, knowing the heresy of their wives' actions, they will not come right out and ask for this – it's merely written all over their faces.
- The **Yoders (Brother Abram and Sister Elizabeth)** will only communicate their concerns to the Dogs if asked – naturally, they don't wish to tear down their community or appear as heretics themselves. Arguably, they may be experiencing the most internal strife of anyone.
- The **rebels:** The four young people (**Brother Jonas, Brother Alphonse, Sister Sarah, and Sister Tabitha**) will approach the Dogs as soon as possible. All of them look up to the image of Life's Watchdogs, and they believe them to be the King's instrument of salvation for their town.

+ WHAT DO THE DEMONS WANT?

To continue to elevate the women and denigrate the men, in order to destabilize the town and speed its destruction.

+ WHAT DO THE DEMONS WANT THE DOGS TO DO?

The demons will be happy if the Dogs come down on either side of the conflict – if they side with the men *or* the women. They would prefer that the women be justified and blessed, but dogmatically re-elevating the men is liable to cause just as much hurt and injustice (since the women’s pride is already firmly established, they would have a very difficult time reintegrating into their proper societal roles).

What the spirits don’t want is Scriptural gender balance. This is not to say that men and women are created equal in the sight of the King – but the Dogs will understand that if each person keeps to his own sphere of authority (according to Scriptural doctrine), then each person will find ultimate satisfaction in his or her daily life.

+ WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE DOGS DIDN’T COME?

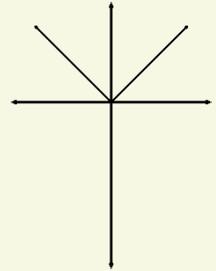
It wouldn’t be long before Sarai and her minions started killing off the men – maybe even the boys (using Benjamin’s behavior as evidence that all men are created *evil*).

+ WHAT OF BENJAMIN MAYLAND?

...

[See the town of Defiance.]

SELAH



+ PRIDE

A two-sided issue, as usual: in instructing the children in music and other arts, Sister Margaret believes that she knows what is best for the community (while Steward Martin and the town elders have become irrationally stubborn in rejecting *any* artistic endeavor whatsoever, believing themselves to be above such pursuits).

BACKGROUND

Six months before the Dogs arrive, Sister Margaret Barber arrived in Selah. A convert to the Faith from Back East, she is thirty years old, unmarried, and possesses impressive musical ability. After being warmly accepted into the community, she offered her services as an assistant schoolteacher, and she was greatly appreciated.

At first, Sister Margaret's assistance was limited to the school's general classes. But it didn't take long for her inborn talents to emerge, and Sister Charity, the school Headmistress, did nothing but encourage her to promote artistic growth among the children. Two months ago, Sister Margaret gained enough support from the community to build a house dedicated to artistic performance – the Hall of Praise and Worship, as it has come to be called.

THE OPPOSITION

Of course, not everyone in Selah is entirely comfortable with these developments. Certain parents have expressed concern over their children's attitudes towards music – specifically that with the realization of inborn talent comes pride. In the past few weeks, Steward Martin has begun placing severe restrictions on Sister Margaret's influence – namely by instructing the townspeople to disallow their children from attending her classes and performances. Naturally, a few families have chosen to reject their Steward's instruction, and are continuing to support Sister Margaret's initiatives.



+ INJUSTICE

Steward Martin, in his self-righteousness, has decided to utterly reject any form of artistic expression as heresy – even to the extent of forbidding musical worship in the town’s church services. On the other hand, Sister Margaret feels justified in her brazen rejection of the Steward’s teachings – which has severely disrupted the faith of certain Brethren, not to mention the unity of the town as a whole.

+ SIN

Steward Martin’s wholesale rejection of music and art, for which there is no basis in Scripture. (Quite the contrary: in the right context, music should be seen as edifying expression and an integral form of worship.) However, those who have chosen to reject the Steward’s instruction are in rebellion against their divinely-appointed authority. (Who is right if both are wrong?)



+ DEMONIC ATTACKS

Starting on the day that Steward Martin began teaching against Sister Margaret’s music, the demons have manifested in two subtle ways:

1. By hardening the hearts of Martin’s followers, causing increasing tension between the two camps. This is made apparent to outside observers (the Dogs) by their dogmatic and irrational hatred of Sister Margaret and anyone with an artistic inclination – to the point of physical persecution (although no one’s been killed... yet).
2. By coloring the nature of the music played by Sister Margaret and her students. Where under normal circumstances she would focus on compositions intended to glorify the King of Life, she is now open to pieces that celebrate the human condition, and even darker things. This is audibly apparent to anyone with a balanced perspective (such as the Dogs): the students’ music is dissonant and jarring, in both pitch and rhythm, and serves only to gravel and depress the listener.

+ FALSE DOCTRINE

Really, a restatement of SIN: Steward Martin and his followers have dogmatically rejected all forms of artistic expression, resulting in a dull and lifeless method of worship. At the same time, Sister Margaret and those aligned with her have rejected the ordained authority of their Steward.

+ CORRUPT WORSHIP

Without music, the town’s services have taken on a lifeless quality, and weakened the vibrancy of the people’s faith. Sister Margaret has recently begun holding her own worship services – however, as stated above, the music itself represents an affront to the very King she ostensibly wishes to honor, and instead glorifies the spirits responsible for it. (See DEMONIC ATTACKS.)

+ FALSE PRIESTHOOD

Selah is literally split in two, with both camps clinging to dogmatic heresy and corrupt practices. Both represent a fatal deviance from Faithful doctrine, and both command demonic spirits.

+ SORCERY

- **1. Sister Margaret**, in rejecting her divinely-appointed Steward (and choosing music that is discordant and gravelling), is channeling a manifestation of evil that is an affront to the King of Life's purpose for music. On a few occasions, Sister Margaret has even used this music as an attack on her adversaries in the town.
- **2. Steward Martin** and his followers, in turn, have begun praying *against* Sister Margaret in the name of their own pride. These prayers cannot reach the ears of the King of Life, and instead fall to the demons, summoning them and calling them to attack Sister Margaret's artistic faction.

Interestingly, what we have are two factions, each pursuing its own selfish ends, and each controlling a number of demonic spirits – which are in turn fighting each other.

DEMONS FIGHTING EACH OTHER?

Absolutely. If the spirits are at the beck and call of any sufficiently-progressed heretic, then in this situation, they have no choice but to meet each other on the spiritual battlefield.

+ HATE and MURDER

When the Dogs arrive, tensions are at their peak. Martin and his followers are firmly entrenched, and Margaret's acolytes have felt pressured to respond in kind. However, although this conflict has resulted in harsh exchanges of words, no one has been physically assaulted.

But on the night that the Dogs arrive, the Hall of Praise and Worship is set ablaze. Clearly an act of premeditated arson, the Dogs will immediately formulate a plan to discover the guilty individuals. (A small cadre of young men, believing themselves to be following the teachings of Steward Martin.) Martin will, of course, honestly and vehemently deny any involvement – although he displays no remorse over the act itself. Fortunately, no one is killed or seriously hurt in the fire.

However, after the young men responsible are brought to justice, several adults under the sway of Sister Margaret choose to retaliate by brutally murdering one or more of the perpetrators. (How this plays out is largely in the hands of the GM, in response to the actions of the PCs.)

ULTIMATELY...

Steward Martin, although grossly misled and in dire need of spiritual direction, isn't involved in the arson, and can therefore be seen as a moral zealot who got a little off-track. **Sister Margaret**, on the other hand, may well be too far gone to safely save. Although she began with the best of intentions, her self-righteous retaliations (subtle though they may have been) against the ordained authority of Steward Martin have caused her to travel down a road of sorcery and damnation, from which it is unlikely she can return.

* * *

Done.

+ TOWNSPEOPLE

- **Sister Margaret Barber:** musician and assistant schoolteacher.
- **Sister Charity Griffin:** headmistress of Selah's schoolhouse. Supporter of Sister Margaret's artistic initiatives.
- **Steward Amos Martin:** the most vocal adversary of Sister Margaret's teaching.
- **Sister Heather Martin:** wife of Steward Amos Martin. Wishes to usurp Sister Charity as headmistress of the school, and condemn the actions of Sister Margaret.
- **Brothers Thomas, Sam, and Robert:** The arsonists. Fervent, youthful (albeit pitifully misled) followers of Steward Martin.
- **Brother Andrew** and **Sister Hester:** The murderers following Sister Margaret.

+ WHAT DO THE TOWNSPEOPLE WANT FROM THE DOGS?

On a basic level, the artists (Sister Margaret, her students, and followers) want them to bless their musical endeavors, and even to encourage them to explore more obscure (and self-gratifying) forms of expression.

Of course, the other side (Steward Martin and his cohorts) wants the Dogs to condemn all art, and condone their rejection of musical worship.

FOR THE DOGS OF NEW CANAAN:

Given the Dogs' natural musical inclination, Steward Martin will immediately distrust them, and may even reject their ordained authority. Certain reactions of the townspeople will be obvious:

- Sister Margaret will try as hard as she can to ingratiate herself with the Dogs, asking them to assist her in the Hall of Praise and Worship – even requesting that they give a performance.
- On the other side, if things don't go smoothly with Steward Martin, someone from his faction may take aggressive action sooner rather than later. (E.g., attacking the Dogs in the dead of night – or simply ostracizing them from the majority of the townspeople. How would the Dogs deal with being shut out of the broader community?)

+ WHAT DO THE DEMONS WANT?

The demons' behavior in this situation resembles that of animals, in that they are following their biological (?) function, with no regard for being at odds with each other. When the Dogs arrive, they are merely acting based on the motives of the townspeople – their only purpose is to continue spreading hate and malice until the two factions break out into open hostility.

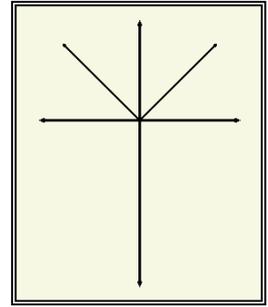
+ WHAT DO THE DEMONS WANT THE DOGS TO DO?

If the Dogs side with either faction, then Selah will be torn apart. Really, each side needs serious chastisement, but desires ultimate sanctioning by the Dogs' divine authority.

+ WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE DOGS DIDN'T COME?

X

HERMON



Hermon is likely to be the largest town that the Dogs have ever seen. As such, it will have several unique attributes:

- Several businesses and social meeting places will be duplicated (and competing), perhaps more than once (two blacksmiths, three schoolhouses, etc.).
- Its extensive plots of land and high population density have made it a formidable center of production and trade. Many Brethren from several smaller, outlying towns make frequent trips to Hermon, both for luxuries and basic necessities.
- The Steward (**xx**, below) has found it necessary to delegate many of the day-to-day religious and social responsibilities to a small council of Deacons (see **xx**, below). However, this necessity has begotten its own folly (see **xx**, below).
- The Territorial Authority has established a permanent presence in Hermon, in the form of Fort James. Around thirty soldiers are stationed here at any given time – and it's not hard to see why the Feds would have a genuine interest in preserving (and influencing) such a key economic center on the frontier.



+ PRIDE

Ideally, the Faithful are a shining example of living in subjugation to the Will of the King of Life. However, the people of Hermon have traded meek obedience for decadent glorification of their own flesh.

This self-veneration has manifested as a series of progressive and liberal attitudes towards their day-to-day lives. Specifically (and roughly chronologically)...

PRODUCTION and LABOR

As the citizens of Hermon were blessed with prosperity, they began to find ways to utilize their surplus of goods. At first, they were content to relieve the burdens of smaller local communities – but as time passed, they began to imagine more tangible benefits of their labors. (Greed.)

Any Faithful settlement must deal with the sporadic influx of travelers from Back East. But the people of Hermon have begun to welcome any that could offer them a leg up on production of goods and services. This has included (but is not limited to)...

- Technicians and various scientists, who have improved many aspects of farming and the production of food and other goods.
- Doctors and advanced tradesmen have brought new techniques, and new ideas – many of which are far from compatible with Faithful doctrine.

EDUCATION and ENTERTAINMENT

The aforementioned specialists and tradesmen – those that have substantially improved Hermon’s quality of life – have become highly revered within the community. As education and worldly knowledge have become so highly esteemed, the people of Hermon have grown to desire the same for their children. This has led to the acceptance of even more educated individuals from Back East – mostly teachers, for Hermon’s newer, larger, and more numerous schoolhouses. Rather than providing for a single teacher to drill the town’s children, the schools have begun offering numerous separate classes, each taught by a different educational specialist.

The issue of entertainment may seem like a mere side note, but may in fact be causing the most pronounced damage to the community at large. For several years, Hermon has supported a music house independently of its regular fellowship hall. This house has provided musical and theatrical entertainment, but always based on (or at least in the context of) the teachings of the Book of Life. But recently, resulting from increasingly liberal teachings and interpretations of the Word, it has employed actors and musicians from outside of the Faith.

WHYS AND WHEREFORES

How is this possible? How could [Steward ~~xx~~] and his Deacons allow this to happen? To answer this, it’s important to remember several crucial factors, both subtle and overt:

- Hermon lies on what could be considered the Eastern border of Faithful territory. Of course, the Faith does not occupy a defined territory, as such – but it is easily the first substantial town that any Westward traveler would reach (which certainly contributes to the number of non-Faithful citizens it has recently welcomed).
- Liberalism and progressive attitudes are a slippery slope – which is why Faithful doctrine and tradition are (generally) so hard-lined: an aggressive attempt to prevent any decline in the moral uprightness of the Brethren. But once these fundamental beliefs are challenged, it is a simple matter – and, often, an understandable necessity – to do away with them, altogether.

+ INJUSTICE

As the townspeople at large take an increasingly liberal attitude toward teaching and interpreting the Word, those that wish to adhere to the old ways are quickly becoming marginalized. These ‘conservatives’, who wish to maintain the traditions of old, are being pressured into accepting the ‘ways of the future’ – even when these ways run contrary to traditional doctrine.

In addition, many of the tradesmen, teachers, and entertainers that have recently come to Hermon have been given equal stature beside lifelong adherents to the Faith. This alone has caused great dissent among the people, and is currently the primary concern of the Deacons. Their current stance is to give the newer converts a wide berth (allowing them to benefit the community with their talents), while allaying the fears of the older, more conservative segment of the population.

+ SIN

Because of Hermon's size and the depth of the people's pride, SIN is running rampant, in several different forms:

WORLDLINESS

Pretty much everyone is displaying comfort in the presence of SIN. Tobacco and liquor have made their way into town. Even the older, conservative Faithful see these problems as unavoidable evils in the growth of the town.

DECEIT AND DISUNITY

These have become nearly unavoidable as business and cultural growth have gained paramount importance. These problems in particular are also exacerbated by the presence of the Territorial Authority. (MORE XX)



+ DEMONIC ATTACKS

The majority, progressive element believes that their material blessings are from the King of Life. Nothing could be further from the truth. (See Scripture reference at right.)

+ FALSE DOCTRINE

This has simply developed into a necessary dilution of Faithful doctrine:

- The King (and, by extension, the Book) of Life can change with changing times.
- Any Brother can, under the right circumstances, interpret the Word for these changing times.
- The King will materially bless those who chase after what they want (God helps those who help themselves).

These heresies are a practical necessity for a Branch that is hell-bent on pursuing its own ends. Obviously, they won't hold up under any serious scrutiny, especially one that is based upon the teachings of the Book of Life.

PSALM 73:3

³For I was envious of the arrogant, as I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

⁴For there are no pains in their death, and their body is fat.

⁵They are not in trouble as other men, nor are they plagued like mankind.

⁶Therefore pride is their necklace; the garment of violence covers them.

⁷Their eye bulges from fatness; the imaginations of their heart run riot.

⁸They mock and wickedly speak of oppression; they speak from on high.

⁹They have set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue parades through the earth.

¹⁰Therefore his people return to this place, and waters of abundance are drunk by them.

¹¹They say, "How does God know? and is there knowledge with the Most High?"

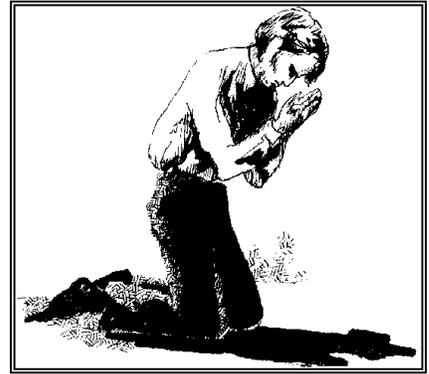
¹²Behold, these are the wicked; and always at ease, they have increased in wealth.

+ CORRUPT WORSHIP

This merely involves the who, rather than the what or the how. With so many hasty converts to the Faith (both Mountain People and folks from Back East), there are certain to be many worshippers who have not internalized their faith (and are only going with the flow for the sake of appearances).

This lack of sincere devotion has three significant effects (aside from the sheer hypocrisy):

- It cuts them off from the King of Life (even more severely than if they had never made any pretense at all).
- It opens a door to the demons, through which they can attack the town at large.
- It corrupts the purity of the entire Branch by its very presence (and the fact that it's allowed to exist).



+ FALSE PRIESTHOOD

Steward Obadiah has effectively abdicated his position (see **xx**). Replacing him are the Deacons, who effectively represent a cult dedicated to the worship of social progress and material gain. (Technically, most of Hermon's population falls within this cult – but the core leadership is of greatest concern.) (See **xx**.)

+ SORCERY

Three years ago, it became apparent to the Deacons that a certain evil had infected the town. As time passed, they sensed that it would soon explode onto the streets, in blood and death, if they did not give it a place to rest. The obvious answer lay in Brother Cyrus, who was already known to be half-mad.

Under the direction of demons, Brothers Samuel and Hamilton performed a ritual of possession, offering up Cyrus' soul as a repository for the evil that infests the town. In the wake of this, Cyrus' madness was loosed upon the town, as the demon caused (allowed?) him to rape, murder, and cannibalize.

Since his possession, Cyrus has taken one victim every two to three months – almost ten by the time the Dogs arrive. The other Deacons have gone to great lengths to cover this up – disposing of the bodies, paying off the Territorial Authority, etc. Of course, the demons have helped with this, as well, owing to their connection with the Deacons.

As a side note, Steward Obadiah has done a decent job of convincing himself that he knows nothing of the Deacons' activities.

+ HATE and MURDER

The rape, murder and partial consumption of several locals, both men and women (see above). Very few know of these killings, and those that do are all too eager to cover them up – including the Territorial Authority, which sees such heinous crime as an unavoidable byproduct of civilization.

+ TOWNSPEOPLE

Note: Anyone of any stature in Hermon has been nominally accepted into the Faith, and is consequently called Brother or Sister, even if they have little or no interest in the precepts of the Faith itself.

THE STEWARD

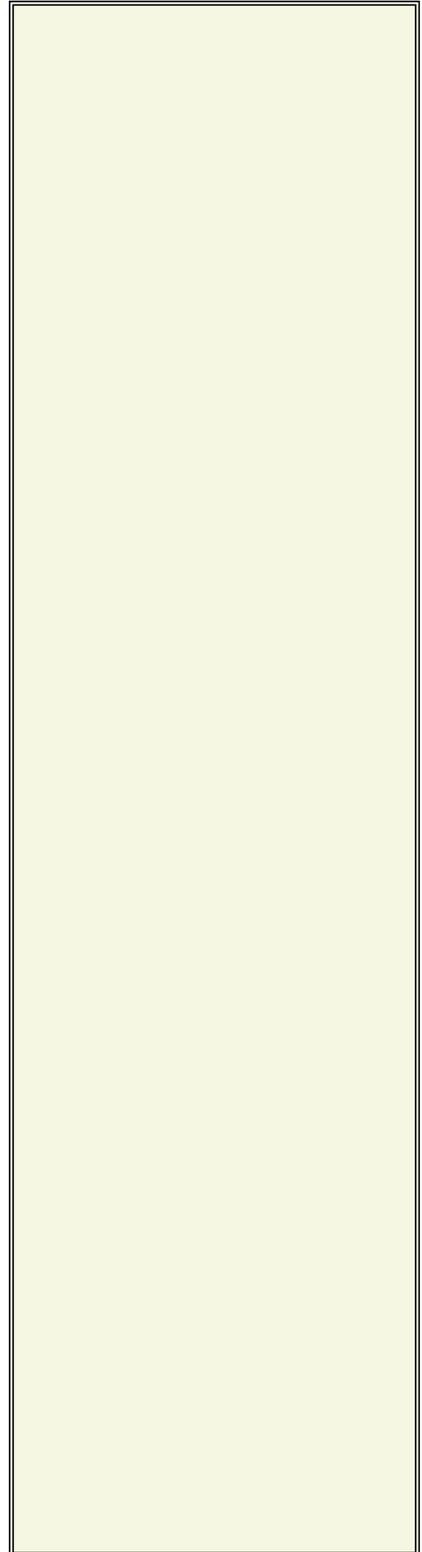
- **Steward Obadiah Watson:** At 57 years of age, Steward Obadiah has presided over Hermon for almost twenty years. The last decade has brought much upheaval to his town and his flock, but he feels confident that, with the blessing of the King of Life, he has performed his duties to the best of his abilities.

THE DEACONS

- **Brother Samuel Erin:** The pastor. Currently presides over worship services. Carries himself with affected religiosity, and truly believes that the King of Life speaks truth directly through him.
- **Brother Hamilton Sikes:** The treasurer, bookkeeper, and tax collector. Oversees the commercial life of the town. Keeps tabs on the various business, and handles most aspects of civic finance. Comes across as friendly, but subtly conniving.
- **Brother Cyrus Owen:** The gifted and the damned. The other two Deacons performed a ritual of demonic possession on Brother Cyrus, making him into a kind of 'heat sink' for all of the evil lying under the surface of the town. (See **Sorcery**, pg. 17.) His visage is now somewhat less (or more) than human, although not everyone would notice.

ORIGINAL TOWNSPEOPLE

- **Brother Amos Blackwell:** The oldest farmer in town. Still owns the largest mill and the most land. He has no issue with the progress of the town, and sees friendly competition as healthy. (Brother Amos represents the friendly face of a competitive economy.)
- **Brother James Grant:** The original blacksmith. Resents the necessity of a second smithy, and has resorted to cutthroat business tactics in response. (Brother James represents the darker side of a competitive economy.)
- **Sister Rebecca Keller:** The unofficial 'town mother'. Head of an informal ladies' aid society; very active in spiritual and social circles. Has been known to take it upon herself to smooth over relations between various townspeople, especially competing businessmen. (Sister Rebecca is the token active, visible female in a town dominated by driven men.)



TRADESMEN

- **Brother Jason Smith:** A young and successful agricultural expert, trained and educated in a big city Back East. He and his family have thrown themselves wholeheartedly into the Faith. He's also responsible for many recent agricultural advancements. (
- **Brother Silas Archer:** Owns the Archer Hotel and Archer's General Store. A proper businessman: sensible, down-to-earth, and involved in the community (but always looking for the angle, the edge, and any way to make a quick buck).
- **Brother Robert Bell** insists on being addressed with his professional title, Doctor. His is by far the most worldly, progressive attitude. He finds the Faith to be an amusing conceit, and doesn't mind saying so. His only competition is an old man of the Faith, who maintains a limited practice, treating only slight injuries and mild illnesses.

TEACHERS

- **Sister Laura Horn:** Soon after arriving in Hermon, Sister Horn began working at what was then the only schoolhouse in town. Being from Back East, and accustomed to a certain degree of academic excellence, she was dismayed by the fact that several classes of students had to be crammed into each day. Because of this overcrowding, none of the children were receiving any individual attention, and the small handful of teachers were severely overworked. After appealing to the Deacons, Sister Laura was granted permission to establish a second (and, eventually, a third) schoolhouse, and to bring on as many teachers as she felt were necessary. This required her to both train women from the local community, and to hire acquaintances from Back East (all of whom were, of course, warmly accepted into the Faith almost without question).
- **xx**
- **xx**

ENTERTAINERS

- **Brother Peter Shepherd** isn't quite what you'd expect of a stage actor: a fairly recent, but exceedingly devout convert to the Faith (from Back East, where he received his theatrical training), who sincerely uses his art for the glory of the King of Life. He is twenty-five, and unmarried.
- **Brother Thomas...** (musician)
- **Sister Liza...** (writer/poet)

The Territorial Authority

- **Colonel Frank Smyth** is a by-the-book, dyed-in-the-wool military man. He also somewhat resents the 'religious kooks' he's been tasked with babysitting (which is how he's overlooked his men being paid off – he just doesn't care).

+ WHAT DO THE TOWNSPEOPLE WANT FROM THE DOGS?

- **Steward Obadiah:** Although he makes an appearance to welcome the Dogs, he wishes only to be left alone. Aware of how far he and his flock have fallen, he's convinced himself that he no longer cares what happens to any of them. (He may, in fact, turn out to be the town's ultimate salvation.)
- **The Deacons:** Brothers Samuel and Hamilton wish to show off their achievements, and be first in line for divine blessing. At the same time, they will do *anything* in their power to prevent the Dogs from meeting Brother Cyrus. (If Cyrus does meet them: **(a)** they will know immediately what he is, and **(b)** he will respond exactly like the Geresene Demoniac (xx scripture reference xx).)
- **The Original Townspeople** are a little more conflicted. They display great pride, at least at first – but with chastisement and exhortation, they may come around and turn from their wickedness.
- **The Tradesmen, Teachers, and Entertainers** (the new blood in the town) barely understand the Dogs' function, and will therefore (at best) pay them lip service, or (at worst) dismiss and reject them outright.

I KNOW I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO DO THIS, BUT...

If the Dogs can find (or sway) enough converts, it could lead to a scene in which the wayward sheep are driven out of town by force. Or... Steward Obadiah could be spiritually and emotionally revived, and lead the Faithful remnant out of Hermon and back to Bridal Falls for judgment, as the Dogs cut Hermon off as a Branch of the Faith.

+ WHAT DO THE DEMONS WANT?

Ultimately, to infect the entire Faith with the pride of progress. But they'd be happy to win the town of Hermon, as a major blow against the Faith. They're already thrilled with ruining the Steward's life and controlling the Deacons (and, by extension, having most of the town under their sway).

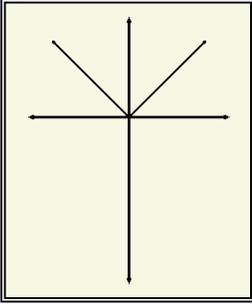
+ WHAT DO THE DEMONS WANT THE DOGS TO DO?

In this situation, they really wouldn't mind seeing them dead. (The demons' goals would be best served if the Dogs had never come.) But they're hoping that the Dogs will decide to forsake Hermon utterly, which would be a victory for the dark spirits. They don't want to lose Cyrus or the other Deacons, and they certainly don't want to see Hermon cleansed.

+ WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE DOGS DIDN'T COME?

The situation with Brother Cyrus would come to a head, and Hermon's leadership (both the Deacons and the Territorial Authority) would have to make a decision: continue to allow Cyrus to act on his heinous urges, or allow the evil inside him to manifest in other ways.

Of course, not everyone knows exactly how this evil would play out – but even the officials of the T.A. understand that Cyrus serves a purpose. But sooner or later, the evil that lives in Hermon will grow too big for it, and will try to spill over into other communities.



DEFIANCE

Hermon was a bustling metropolis compared to Defiance, which consists of only a small handful of families. In fact, Defiance isn't even on the Dogs' map – which means one of two things: that **(a)** the Ancients of the Faith don't even know of its existence, or **(b)** they didn't intend for this party of Dogs to go there. Either way, it will be a complete surprise to the Dogs when they stumble upon it.

HISTORY

(All of this information will, of course, be related to the Dogs by the residents of Defiance.)

The town was founded about [30] years ago by a man named Joseph Sheldon. The townspeople speak of him with reverence – as a man of striking character, willpower, and faith. These qualities he exhibited in the face of withering adversity – directed at both himself, and the rest of the community. More than once, they compare him with scriptural figures such as Job and Daniel.

Before the founding of Defiance, Brother Joseph* led a small caravan (consisting of only four or five families and their worldly possessions) in search of a place to call home. They wandered the barren West for several years before they realized that the King planned for them to settle on the Eastern border of Faithful territory.

** It is notable that they refer to him as Brother, even though the founder of a town would often be addressed as Steward.*

SET APART

From the earliest days of this community, everyone was keenly aware that they were somehow different from other Branches of the Faith. Adversity took many and varied forms (astounding rates of infant mortality; chronic and fatal illnesses; frequent altercations with the Mountain People; etc.)... but at the same time, the King's divine and miraculous power was manifested just as strongly (miraculous healings; prophetic words and dreams; acts of surpassing courage by men and women strong in the Faith).

SHELDON'S SIN AND DESTINY

Naturally, the townspeople will be reticent to speak of this, but Brother Joseph harbored a dark secret – a besetting sin that he barely kept under control.

2 CORINTHIANS 12:7

⁷Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me – to keep me from exalting myself!

A man of great faith is often plagued with a fleshly temptation of equal weight, with which he must constantly battle. In the case of Brother Joseph, his flesh led him down paths of unthinkable degradation – most often in the company of young children.

This is not to say that he was a habitual sinner – his was a daily struggle, to which he succumbed only rarely (a failure which was always followed by a long period of self-inflicted penance and acute withdrawal from his community).

His community's response to this sin may speak volumes about their spiritual perspective. Each time his flesh asserted itself, they responded with unequivocal understanding and forgiveness – to the point that they would cover up his sin with kind words and sealed lips.

As the townspeople tell it, Brother Joseph died while holding the utmost respect of his followers. His grave lies on the outskirts of the settlement, and is still honored each season with a solemn worship service and celebratory feast.

A NEW FACE

A couple of weeks ago, a young boy found his way to Defiance. Appearing to be a Mountain Person, but fluently speaking the language of the Faithful, he remained silent on his past. Nonetheless, the people of Defiance felt led to welcome him into their community – and although the Walker family has taken custody of him, he remains a treasure (and source of pride) of the entire town.

Unbeknownst to anyone present, this boy is Benjamin Mayland – a Mountain People orphan, first adopted by the people of the New Gilead Branch. He escaped that settlement when the fact of his depraved urgings came into public awareness. Miraculously making his way to Defiance, it remains to be seen what Benjamin's true intentions are...

- Does he believe he can start his life anew and be rid of his sin, or does he want to continue in his depravity, believing he can keep it hidden from the people of Defiance?
- d

+ PRIDE

Developed after the death of Joseph Sheldon (who, by all accounts, was a pious and sincere man). The people of Defiance have carried on Sheldon's mission and tradition, but they have added their own pride to his legacy. Believing themselves to be set apart by the King of Life for a special purpose (spiritual conflict with the demons), they feel themselves entitled to special treatment, understanding, and support (see SIN, below).

+ INJUSTICE

The only injustice is to other communities, that likely know nothing of Defiance. If they are given partiality in any sense, then the justness of the King of Life is thrown into doubt.

+ SIN

The people's problems run deep, as do their spiritual talents and callings. (See TOWNSPEOPLE, pg. xx). But one oversight will stand out to the Dogs: they have no Steward.

+ DEMONIC ATTACKS

Well, these are somewhat in place already, given the nature and position of Defiance – but the people's sin really rolls out the carpet for them. Unfortunately, the attacks' manifestations are pretty much indistinguishable...

- Crop blights
- Infant mortality
- Crippling illnesses
- Severe injuries
- Disputes and disunity
- Mental and emotional instability

+ FALSE DOCTRINE

They believe that the King of Life speaks through each of the Faithful, and because of His grace and power, not every Branch needs to have a Steward. This rejection of a divinely-appointed authority could lead them to dismiss the Dogs as they exercise theirs.

+ CORRUPT WORSHIP

The absence of a Steward puts the whole Branch at odds with the King of Life's divine order. As a result, their services – as freeform and compelling as they may be – lack any true depth or connection with the King.

+ FALSE PRIESTHOOD

Having no strict leadership hierarchy, the entire town qualifies as a FALSE PRIESTHOOD.

+ SORCERY

The demons are pitted against Defiance in an esoteric conflict – but at the same time, individual spirits are bound to do the bidding of each townspeople, which creates conflict between the Faithful that is easily mistaken for demonic attack. This leads the people to defend their beliefs based on perceived 'attacks', when in fact the increased conflict is their own fault.

* * * * *

Done. No **Hate & Murder**.

+ TOWNSPEOPLE

· **xx:** xx

+ WHAT DO THE TOWNSPEOPLE WANT FROM THE DOGS?

They want their 'new' doctrine approved. They also wouldn't mind the Dogs' help in battling the demons. (Which would, of course, only create more conflict among the people of Defiance – and also draw the Dogs into it.)

· **xx:** xx

+ WHAT DO THE DEMONS WANT?

To incite enough conflict (by encouraging pride) that Defiance tears itself apart.

+ WHAT DO THE DEMONS WANT THE DOGS TO DO?

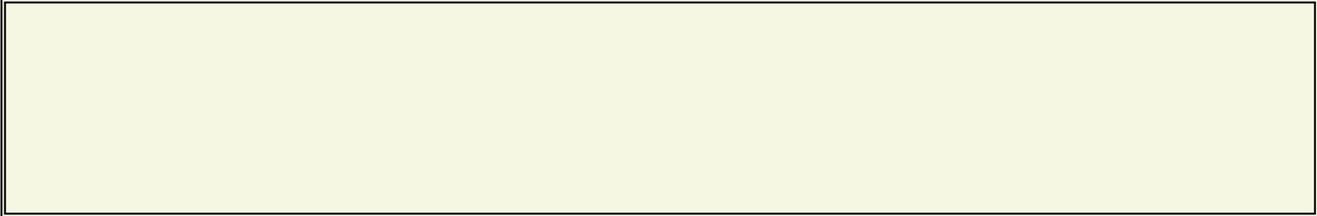
To become enamored with the glamour of Defiance's calling, and to therefore side with the Townspeople. If the demons can bring down the Dogs along with this pivotal branch, it would be a major victory for them.

+ WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE DOGS DIDN'T COME?

Defiance would tear itself apart, probably culminating in a righteous bloodbath. All the while, the Townspeople would believe themselves to be chosen, set apart, possessing special knowledge from On High, etc.



OTHER MATERIAL



DEMONS

+ DEMONIC ATTACKS

From the text of *Dogs in the Vineyard*:

“The presence of sin opens a community to attacks from Demons. Since demons are non-corporeal, the demonic attacks take various material forms, some subtle, some overt. The demons will assess the character of the community and act on some or all of these goals: isolate the community, endanger the community’s survival, exacerbate the community’s injustices, prosper the community’s sinners, oppress the community’s faithful. The demons might see the PCs’ arrival as a threat or an opportunity.”

From the description of Defiance (pg. xx), here are several ways in which demons might choose to manifest:

- Crop blights
- Infant mortality
- Crippling illnesses
- Severe injuries
- Disputes and disunity
- Mental and emotional instability

SUMMARY

Demons are perceived as forces of nature. To someone outside of the Faith, they are indistinguishable from the customary troubles and woes of everyday life.

+ POSSESSION

Again, from the text of *Dogs in the Vineyard*:

“A possessed person must be either a) a willing, knowing heretic, that is a believer in false doctrine, but possibly acting alone; or else b) a sinner within the false priesthood of a Sorcerer. In the latter case the Sorcerer has to perform a ritual to make the possession happen, but the possessed person needn’t be willing or informed.”

From the text of [some previous Branch?]...

JOB 1:6-12

⁶Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.

⁷The LORD said to Satan, “From where do you come?” Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.”

⁸The LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil.”

⁹Then Satan answered the LORD, “Does Job fear God for nothing?”

¹⁰“Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

¹¹“But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face.”

¹²Then the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.” So Satan departed from the presence of the LORD.

+ PURSUIT

Dogs in the Vineyard presents two ways in which demons commonly manifest. Firstly (and most often), demons attack a community of Faithful because of un-confessed sin. In the second case, possession, a demon inhabits someone who either (a) knowingly invites the spirit, or (b) has a ritual of possession performed on him by someone else.

There is, however, a third way in which a demon can specifically manifest to a person. Pursuit occurs when a particularly strong spirit is charged (by an even higher spirit in demonological hierarchy?) with hounding, or besetting, someone strong in the Faith (for the purpose of our story, a Dog). As opposed to normal demonic attacks, it is the victim’s spiritual strength (faith) that attracts the demon to him.

MANIFESTATION

A demon in pursuit will manifest in ways very similar to a standard aggressive spirit (see the short list on the previous page). The victim and those around him might call it a ‘run of bad luck’.

PURPOSE

The demons’ only motive is fairly straightforward: to bring trouble, hardship, and adversity to the lives of the Faithful – especially to those that can do the most good (such as the Dogs). **XX**

However, there is another that could give purpose to a demon’s pursuit: the King of Life. It is said that it is the King’s divine grace that allows the Dogs to perform their duties. So – what if this grace was retracted, for a time, for the purpose of testing a Dog’s personal strength?

THE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE



+ OVERVIEW

ACCORDING TO THE FAITH

From the text of *Dogs in the Vineyard*, we know that the Faithful were hardly the original inhabitants of the West. The native residents, being nomadic tribesmen, were elsewhere during the period of settlement, and only later returned to discover that their homeland had been occupied.

Again, from the original text:

“According to the doctrines of the Faith, the Mountain People are a fallen remnant of an ancient Faithful civilization.” [\[More?\]](#)

ACCORDING TO THE REST OF THE WORLD

Officially (according to traditional wisdom Back East), the Mountain People are the original inhabitants of the North American continent. In the current cultural climate of Westward expansion, they are considered a curiosity at best, and a nuisance (or even a blight) at worst.

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THE TERRITORIAL AUTHORITY

+ OVERVIEW

The Territorial Authority (T.A.) is a military arm of the government Back East, specifically charged with keeping the peace and protecting national interests on the frontier.

To the Faithful, they are an ever-present reminder of a secular government and culture Back East, that constantly threatens to push out West and uproot the Faith's way of life.

OPERATIONS

For the most part, the T.A. keeps to a small handful of forts and outposts, spread throughout the frontier. However, it is hardly uncommon to glimpse squads of T.A. cavalry patrolling the area.