
THE HARMONIUM

"Lieutenant O'Sarrin," the police chief said over the speaker phone, "I need you to execute a search warrant. A courier will be bringing you a copy."

Louis O'Sarrin was perplexed. "Sir, if you don't mind me asking, why do you need SWAT to serve a search warrant?"

"The warrant is for the Temple of the Abyss," the speaker phone replied. "I need a tough cop that's going to care about doing the job write."

Louis raised an eyebrow. He'd been waiting his entire career to serve a warrant to that damned Temple. He would have preferred an arrest warrant, of course, but a search still sent a strong message. "I understand sir. I take it that this is one of those 'special cases', then."

There was a grunt of acknowledgement. "The investigative team will catch you up on the case. Just don't leak anything to your Factol. Is that clear?"

Louis was sure that Conway was already aware of the warrant, but assured the Chief that he'd stay quiet on the matter.

By the time he was off the phone, Lieutenant O'Sarrin was wearing a broad grin on his mouth. He switched over to the master police radio frequency. He had a feeling that this would be one of those days that reminded him of why he joined the Harmonium.

"All SWAT teams: report to the Barracks Courtyard for duty."

Since the Faction War, the Harmonium has been tested in countless trials. These trials have taught the Hardheads many lessons. The most important of these is that achieving their vision of a Multiverse united in harmony will take more than just convincing everyone to join the Harmonium. The faction itself must be in agreement. While the Hardheads once took internal cohesiveness for granted, the modern Harmonium has learned that it is still vulnerable to disagreement, even strife. It was a hard lesson, but in the end, the Harmonium learned it well. Today, even as the Hardheads struggle to resolve the arguments that stir between themselves, it's difficult for them not to be optimistic about the future.

Philosophy: Universal harmony through force of arms

Nicknames: Hardheads, Taser-jockeys

Headquarters: Meladonia in Arcadia; Ortho in the Prime Material

Major Races: Aasimar, dwarves, human, zenythri

Favored Classes: Strong Hero, Dedicated Hero, Charismatic Hero

Faction Prestige Classes: Hardhead Commando; Arbitor; Evangelist of Harmony

Factol: Allison Conway (LG female aasimar, Dedicated 4/Investigator 8/Arbitor 5)

Prominent Members: Louis O'Sarrin (LN male human, Tough 4/Shadow Hunter 7/H-Commando 2), Dorgar Tsuchi (LG male dwarf, Strong 3/Dedicated 2/Soldier 3/Holy Knight 2), Mellakar the Stranger (LN female Fraal, Smart 2/Charismatic 4/Ambassador 1/Telepath 7)

Alignment: Lawful Good and Lawful Neutral

Symbol: A sword thrust downward in front of a shield (old), or a saber and missile crossing in front of a laurel wreath (new).



Philosophy

The Harmonium ground their beliefs in a couple of very simple premises. The first is that peace and harmony the preferred state-the *perfect* state-for the Multiverse to be in. Obvious, right? Life is more pleasant when no one is trying to put you in the dead book. Given that peace and harmony are the preferred condition of the Multiverse, it makes sense that the only belief worth adhering to is one that brings about peace and harmony. Any other belief is ultimately selfish.

The second premise is that the opposites of peace and harmony-strife, conflict, and war-are caused by disagreement. This is especially true when it's a disagreement is one of belief. Take the Pantheon War: the divine realms of Arvandor, Green Fields, and Tir Na Og were completely destroyed in a war that started over a disagreement between the two sides. Sure, the priests have their own rationalizations, and the Lost go into every sodding detail of how the War started, but disagreement is basically what it boils down to. If there was some way to eliminate disagreement, then there is no catalyst for willful destruction.

From these postulates, it is clear that a belief centered on achieving selfless consensus can bring about peace and harmony, and will succeed in this once *everyone* in the Multiverse follows it. So it's up to those who've already realized The Truth to enlighten everyone else. A very tall order, given that the Multiverse is home to horrors that personify Chaos and Evil. And that merely tops the list of beings that, for whatever reason, are violently opposed to harmony. Bringing about universal peace, then, takes more than just belief-the faithful have got to believe in harmony so strongly that they will *fight* for it.

The Harmonium is well aware of the enormity of the job before them. The wiser Hardheads acknowledge that much of what their faction now knows about peace and harmony has come through millennia of trial and error. These Hardheads, usually part of the Corps of Arbitors, admit that the Harmonium has made mistakes, and will likely make them again. But if a cutter is willing to fight for a belief, then he must also put aside his fear of error as well. As far as the Harmonium has to go before peace and harmony reign supreme in the cosmos, they refuse to abandon their cause. Because if the Hardheads won't fight for peace, then who will?

Brief History

Following the Faction War, the Harmonium became much less active in Sigil. Factol Faith recognized that the Tempest of Portals would make continued activity in Sigil of questionable value for the short term. Instead, the Hardheads focused their efforts on the rest of the Outer Planes. They made a few gains during this time, including restoring Menausius to Arcadia (a gain that was reversed thanks to the Pantheon War). Back on Ortho, the Harmonium's home-Prime, priorities shifted from expanding on the Outer Planes to mending old wounds left from expanding to alternate Prime Material Planes. Without the support of Ortho, the Hardheads began to do something they were not used to at all-they started to disagree.

The Pantheon War warped these disagreements into a schism. At first the Harmonium swayed between neutrality (the signal being sent from Ortho) and supporting the Celtic-Dwarven-Egyptian Alliance (since there was scarce room for neutrals in this war). That all changed with the Green Fields Massacre. The Massacre by the Alliance provoked the fury of St. Cuthbert, who was the closest



blood the Hardheads had to a Patron Deity. Before you could say "Praise Aoskar!", Hardhead was fighting Hardhead in Meladonia.

Amazingly, the schism was repaired almost as soon as it began. Horrified by the split, the high-ups on both sides of the divide decided to return en masse back to Sigil, the one neutral location in the War. Back in the Cage, the Harmonium basically sat out the War, speaking out against what had become fighting for fighting sake. It was also during this period that the Corps of Arbitors was formed. The Arbitors were responsible for ensuring that the Harmonium would never be divided again. They would do so by acting as a third party for disputes between Hardheads of equal rank.

When the Harmonium came back to Sigil, many of their enemies were hoping to witness a mass flaying for breaking the Lady's Edict. Instead, Her Serenity lifted the ban on Sigil shortly after the Hardheads moved back in. At first, the Harmonium was too busy licking its wounds to take advantage of its head start. Once the War was over, the leaders of the faction decided it would be a good idea to move back to the Barracks. The one problem was that it was occupied by the Sodkillers, and they were in no mood to relinquish it. Frustrated, the Hardheads made a move that reshaped Sigil. The faction pressed through a referendum that transformed the 9-being Sigil Advisory Council into a 333-being Sigil Parliament. Thanks to their ability to act in unison, the 'Hardhead Bloc' was a frequent member of the Coalitions that controlled Parliament. Among the various accomplishments of the earliest Sigil Governments, the first branch stations of the Sigil Guard were opened in the Market Ward and Clerk's Ward, which allowed the Hardheads to return to doing police work.

At the end of the Age of Pain, events in Ortho once again drew the Harmonium's focus away from the City of Doors. This time, it came in the form of an all-out war with the Githyanki. The Harmonium turned towards investing resources on Arcadia and Mount Celestia into a new invention Ortho knew would be crucial to winning the war: factories. At the same time, the Hardheads searched for allies in the Astral War. One patrol on the Astral, a holy knight of Torm named Dorgar Tsuchi, discovered a colony of Norse worshippers that settled on the Gods-Islands of the Aesir who fell in Ragnorak. They had been battling the Githyanki for a long time, and were eager to send them a message they would not soon forget. Shortly after the Astral Norse agreed to an alliance, Ortho Spelljammers made First Contact with the Fraal, an alien species that used the Astral for interstellar travel. The Fraal were also tired of the Githyanki, and joined sides with Ortho and the Astral Norse. Together, the three allies smashed the Githyanki and occupied their citadel of Tul'ranth (which they renamed Freehold).

Back in Sigil, the Harmonium faced a new crisis. The Fraternity of Order, which was the leader of the ruling coalition at the time, issued a massive bounty on the Order of Being for pumping hallucinatory gas into the ventilation system of the Sigil Subway. Within hours, the Sodkillers were piling up bodies outside the Barracks. The Harmonium was appalled – the Laughers were a bunch of delinquents, to be sure, but they weren't 'terrorists'. When a Hardhead talks about 'terrorists', he's talking about Sinkers and Anarchs, Githyanki pirates and Tanar'ri marauders - cutters that are out to put you in the dead book. He certainly isn't referring to some non-violent Druggies. Clearly action was needed, though it wasn't clear what sort.

The Harmonium Factol at the time, John Zaphsky, called a meeting of the Arbitors to figure out what should be done. In that meeting, one of the younger Arbitors named Allison Conway proposed an unusual course of action: The Harmonium, both police



officers and civilians, should go on strike and protest in front of Rhys Hall in the Clerk's Ward. The more the idea was discussed, the better it sounded – A Hardhead rally would be the clearest rebuke of the Guvners' actions. Also, while law and order would deteriorate in the very short term, the Cagers that put the Guvners in power will want to see order returned as soon as possible. The proposal was adopted, and within a few days, virtually the entire faction was assembled before Parliament in full colors. A few reporters commented that the Hardheads were too organized for their own good, as the protest looked more like a military parade. Still, the people of Sigil rallied against the Guvner's extreme measures, and the Government collapsed with a Vote of No Confidence. The Bounty was withdrawn on virtually all the Laughers. When Zaphsky, he recommended that Conway replace him. Ortho's Planar Committee accepted his recommendation and named Allison Conway the new Factol of the Harmonium.

Goals

The Harmonium's ultimate goal remains the same: Multiversal Harmony via Multiversal Membership. Obviously, this is a *very* long-term goal, so the Hardheads keep their eyes out for opportunities to spread the faction's reach while guarding the gains they've already made. Any major operations are periodically reviewed by the Ortho World Government (led by the former Supreme Commander of the Ortho/Fraal/Norse Alliance, Xyclann 'Seven-Stalks').

Within Sigil, the Harmonium wants to regain complete control of the Police Department. The Harmonium sees the modern Sodkillers as more comparable to organized crime than the Mercykillers of old (who at least cared about Justice). Unfortunately, many of Sigil's elite are immortals that remember how the Hardheads ran Sigil back in the day. At present, the Harmonium has decided to allow the Sodkillers to build their own case for being released from its policing duties. Nevertheless, a few Evangelists of Harmony are trying to demonstrate to Sodkillers on the beat that there is a Better Way.

Internally, the Harmonium is dealing with the impact of the Church of the Universal Prophet on its newest generation of recruits. Quite a few denominations of the Church are predisposed towards the Harmonium's philosophy. The Hardheads would be thrilled, if not for the tendency of Herdees (especially Clueless Herdees) to call any deity except their "One, True God" a duplicitous demon spawn. When these barbs are thrown in the direction of St. Cuthbert, tempers flare to boiling point. Factol Conway would prefer that both faiths coexist peacefully, and is working closely with Church leaders and the Athar to bring some sanity to the situation.

Beyond Sigil, the Harmonium is busy solidifying their hold on the Astral. Though they were defeated, the Githyanki remain a constant threat to peace in the Silvery Void. Also, dozens of groups have now moved into the Astral to fill the power vacuum. The Harmonium has a head start, however, and with the support of the Fraal, the faction will certainly have an important part of whatever Balance of Power arrangement emerges. In addition, a group of Hardheads led by Dorgar Tsuchi (now Governor of Freehold) are trying to maintain ties with their other ally from the Astral War, the Norse. Most of his fellow factioneers have written the Astral Norse off as a current ally, though, and simply want to make sure they don't turn into a foe.

The Harmonium has continued its research into combat drugs ever since the breakthrough that first produced Web. The Harmonium is working on the refinement process, as well as examining other possible performance enhancers. Even while the



Arbitors are still developing what constitutes "acceptable" use of these drugs, Web and AngelBlood-C are now circulating among Hardhead combatants. The faction's work on combat drugs has opened the door for them into the pharmaceutical industry, as well as gives them unique insight on drug rehabilitation. This last point puts the debate on appropriate narcotics law back on the Arbitors' agenda.

On the economic front, the Harmonium continues to create organizations and companies that push for greater accountability and responsibility in the corporate world. Their biggest success has been with business accounting and independent auditing. With little of the preaching they normally give, the Harmonium educated investors on how to protect themselves from putting their money with unsound businesses. Corporations, realizing that their shareholders wanted to see a clean bill of health, turned to a group of companies that the Hardheads had established centuries ago on Ortho (to ensure that provinces and colonies remained financially stable). Although several firms independent of the Harmonium has entered the auditing industry, the phrase "Hardhead, Inc." is now a part of the Cant to describe this group of companies.

Allies & Enemies

The Hardheads have a strong collective memory, so they've retained many of their old relationships, both positive and negative. In particular, they continue to view the Xaositects, the Doomguard and the Revolutionary League as the most immediate obstacles to the Harmonium's goals. The Harmonium also remains close to the Fraternity of Order, thanks to their similar beliefs on how the Multiverse works. And the Transcendent Order still has a way of weirding out most Hardheads. But even these relations have changed subtly. A few canny Hardheads have learned to exploit internal divisions amongst their old foes - it also provides a clear demonstration of why Harmony is preferable. The faction was also clearly bothered by the way the Guvners have been trying to deal with the Order of Being. Finally, a number of Arbitors are studying the Ciphers in closer detail, hoping to find a way to help the Harmonium maintain harmony in its own ranks.

With the encouragement of Factol Conway, the Harmonium has developed a working relationship with the Athar. The hope is that the Defilers can get the Herdee recruits to stop being so, well, *clueless* when it comes to expressing their beliefs. Relationships with the Sodkillers as a whole are stressed. Still, they can't find much at fault with the current Chief of Police - and high-up man to Hardheads on the beat - Gareth Saros (other than not being a Hardhead). For his part, Saros knows that staying on good terms with the Harmonium is a critical component of keeping his position, as the Hardheads usually hold the Ministry of Security as part of whatever Coalition controls Sigil's Parliament - a position currently held by Mellakar the Stranger (a former Emissary of the Fraal who was among the first of her kind to join the Harmonium). The Harmonium has developed a favorable view of the Revealing Light, despite the fact that it was a Shiner that leaked the ingredients for making Web. The Revealing Light has played a key role in bringing several crooked politicians and executives to justice, and the Harmonium is eager to see who the next Golden Lord to get netted is; besides, there's nothing Hardheads' love more than a high-profile perp-walk.

The Harmonium isn't exactly sure what to make of the Order of Being. The dark of it is that the Order says they want to promote "love and happiness," which sounds an awful lot like "peace and harmony" as long as you don't split hairs (something Hardheads are not fans of). Where the Laughters diverge is in how to reach this.



The Harmonium thinks the best way to reach Harmony is to actively push for more beings to see things your way, *not* by pumping happy gas into subways! Still, even Hardheads find dealing with the Order of Being much more preferable to, say, the Doomguard. When a Hardhead unit responds to complaints about Wastrel antiques, the officers often just shake their heads, or give an amused look to their partner, when they see for themselves the cause of the complaint, and then make the arrest while still chuckling. When the Harmonium is the target of Laughter pranks, though, you can be sure the Hardheads aren't chuckling.



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