

# The Grim Legion



Violence is an endless cycle; perhaps the only true self-perpetuating force that exists in the universe. Hatred generates more hatred. Spilled blood almost always whets the world's thirst for more. Death is inevitable, true enough, but the deaths experienced by those who serve the Grim Legion are never timely and seldom take place after a long life well spent in the pursuit of happiness. The Grim Legion is peopled solely by the ghosts who've been killed by violent means, and to say that they have a bunker mentality is to be guilty of gross understatement. Simply put, outsiders are not welcome.

People are murdered everyday. Bullets, knives, poison, even violent beatings – all of these provide the proverbial one-way ticket. Wars, gang activities, armed robberies, intoxicated drivers and the ever more popular sexual crimes send people into the Legion's arms every day. And so, with every violent death, the Legion of the Grim grows that much stronger. With every violent death, another enemy is added to the Grim Legion's roster of future victims.

The Grim Legion is a vast army of wraiths, and most of them are filled with an overwhelming hatred for at least one of the living. Comprised of the victims of Violence, as a rule these wraiths tend to hold a grudge for a long, long time. If the actual target of the wraith's ire dies, more often than not the wraith's hatred is passed down like an inheritance of malice. Some Grim Legionnaires have been haunting particular families of mortals for centuries, and show no signs of being willing to let the matter drop.

As with all of the Legions, there is a great deal of recruiting going on under the banner of the Smiling Lord. One of the major differences between the Grim and other Legions is simply that there are few members of the Grim Legion who aren't thrilled to be there, at least, not once they see the alternatives. That's because the Smiling Lord makes each and every new recruit and offer neither she nor her Shadow can refuse.

The Smiling Lord promises retribution for past crimes, a chance for revenge. With so little for most wraiths to look forward to in the Shadowlands, that promise is a powerful tool. More importantly, the Smiling Lord always keeps his vows to the best of his ability – which means that regardless of the *Dictum Mortuum*, every wraith gets at least one shot. What the wraith does with it is up to him, but if there's any way to arrange it, each Legionnaire gets at least one chance to even his personal ledger.

Perhaps more than any other Legion, the Grim Host actively seeks its enemies among the ranks of the Hierarchy. Some members of the Grim Legion span the majority of their existences seeking out the murderers who have found their way into the other Legions, seeking to locate them and confirm their guilt or innocence. These sleeper agents don't take retribution personally for the deeds the target committed. Instead, they make reports to their superiors, and the matter is handed over to a group of specially trained hunters called Retrievers, whose sole task is to hunt down and capture the accused for trial. If circumstances make capturing the accused impossible, the Retrievers then arrange for the victims of their target to have a chance for a one-on-one "discussion". These little chats normally end with one of the wraiths finding out the truth about what lies beyond the Shadowlands. Most of the

membership of the Grim Legion makes it a point to know how to fight in the hopes that, one day, each will meet her murderer.

Ironically, few wraiths seem to truly comprehend just how powerful the Legion is, because much of the recruiting that takes place for the followers of the Grim Lord waits until after the members have been accepted into another Legion. Some claim the leader of the Grim Legion is always smiling because he knows the darkest secrets of his enemies; with the elaborate spy network he's established over the centuries, they just might be right.

The Smiling Lord's network of spies doesn't care about hidden treasures or secret trysts between lovers who've promised themselves to someone else. Money is not important to them, nor is gaining political power high on their agenda. The Grim care only about the secrets behind the deaths of their own. Who killed their ranks, and why? The Smiling Lord's soldiers may not always know the answer when they're Reaped, but the Grim Legion does all it can to find the answers to any unsolved murders in their ranks. When the mysteries stand revealed, the guilty – among both the Quick and the Dead—often come to regret the choices they've made. That is, if the Grim allow them the time.

## Politics

It's fair to say that the Grim Legion treads the line between formal behavior and going the way of the Heretics. When dealing with other Legions, those in command of the Grim Legion are normally formal and polite, at least in public. When dealing with matters of importance to the Hierarchy as a whole, the Grim normally abstain from voting or side with the arguments that offer the most benefits to the general welfare of the Hierarchy as a whole. When dealing with Spectres and Renegades, Grim Legionnaires are among some of the most ruthless, vicious fighters in existence, never taking prisoners unless the soul forges need more fuel.

In truth, there have been numerous acts of out and out violence committed on the other Legions with the Grim Legions fingerprints all over them. These sudden attacks normally target particular individuals who did the one thing that truly enrages a Grim Legionnaire – kill someone violently while they were alive. Even among the Heretics and the Renegades, there are huge numbers of murder victims, and they too seek revenge. With the aid of the Grim Legion, even these outlaw wraiths get their chance. All costs are a little assistance from time to time, and the willingness to attack a few select targets in any skirmishes.

Murderers often come to violent ends, in which case finding them is easy enough. Those who have lived and died by the sword are Reaped by the Grim Legion and brought before a tribunal comprised of three judges and, if possible, accusers who were the *Enfant's* victims. The new wraiths are given no time to prepare, merely told to justify the violent ends they perpetrated upon others. Should the judges decide the new wraith has the right to continued existence, the victims of the newly dead soul still have the right to claim retribution. These situations are normally resolved in ritual combat. In such situations, the victims have distinct advantages over the murderers; especially if they've been among the Dead for a while and had time to learn any *Arconoi*. Should a murderer manage to kill his victim a second, final, time, he is judged again silently. If he is found wanting, his fate is sealed: as soon as he has claimed his vengeance on the persons responsible for his death, he is escorted to the soulforges and made into a useful element in society, if not exactly a sentient one. If the killer's actions in bringing about his victims second death seemed inoffensive enough, he is allowed to continue his existence as a wraith instead of a tool.

The Grim Legion tends to turn deaf ears and blind eyes in the direction of wraiths that violate the *Dictum Mortuum*, provided the cause of violation is against the living. The rest of the Hierarchy frowns upon this policy, but little can be done about the situation. Punishment within the Grim Legion is meted out by members of the Grim Legion, and the most any of the ranks has ever suffered for this gross dereliction of duty is an occasional slap on the wrist, followed by a surreptitious pat on the back. There are many in the Grim Legion who openly encourages retribution against the Quick, and a great number of the Reapers within the Legion take a special pleasure in capturing the souls of those guilty of murder. The soulforgers under the Legion's control seldom lack for raw materials.

The Renegades and Heretics – those who have been murdered as their entrance to the Shadowlands – have a quiet ally in the Grim Legion. While the Legion officially condemns Heretics and Renegades, the posturing of politics can often take a back burner to the need for revenge. Vengeance makes for strange bedfellows, and that's especially true in the case of the Grim Legion. Heretics and Renegades who met their ends by foul means are aided by the Grim if they seek vengeance; the only stipulation is that they in turn must aid the Grim Legion in seeking justice.

For the most part, the Grim Legion dislikes the supernatural entities that charge through the Skinlands. Too many Legionnaires know intimately the pain that vampires, werewolves and other so-called supernaturals can blithely inflict. Many find the mages; those foul reality-warpers of the Meat World, moderately appalling, and have a special loathing for the Euthanatos. The Hollow Ones, on the other hand, are often considered friends by the Legion. Even if the Goth mages do nothing to aid the Legion as a whole, they're at least willing to speak with the occasional wraith, and some have even aided a few members of the Smiling Lord's troops in their efforts to find justice. Vampires are, by and large, considered a threat by the Grim Legion, especially the Tremere and Giovanni, who often make use of wraiths against their will. Only the Samedi are spared the Grim's hatred, for only the Samedi go out of their way to aid the Restless in seeking their vengeance against the Quick. Though some in the Legion actually have dealings with the Silent Striders, most consider the Garou a threat, which should be eradicated. Death by werewolf bite or slash is never a pleasant thing, and all too many Legionnaires have found themselves on the wrong end of a Garou's indiscriminate assault. The Veil doesn't apply to the Dead, after all.

Among the changelings, only the slough are considered worthy of notice. With their network of information about virtually everything, the whispering nightmares of Russian children have become a valuable tool in the Grim's quest to gain retribution. The Grim Legion is only too willing to reciprocate the favors the slough perform for them. Redcaps have a special place in the hate filled hearts of the Grim Legion. Many of the violent Kithain are already on the ever-growing list of living entities who will be punished when the Grim comes into their own.

In short, the Grim seek to punish anyone who offends them, regardless of power or species. More than one of the Awakened has entered the Shadowlands to find a welcome party comprised of crack Grim Legion troops waiting for him. Samuel Haight learned his lesson at all too well when he passed from the Skinlands into the Shadowlands; the terror of the Skindancers is now an attractive and cunningly worked soulforged ashtray in a minor Hierarchy functionary's desk.

When it comes to the other Legions, the attitude of the Grim Legion is simple: let the punishment fit the crime, within reason. Each individual is regarded as an individual, regardless of his position... within reason. The Grim Legion is not comprised exclusively of fanatics, and the Legion will forgo vengeance if revenge goes hand in hand with catastrophe. A known killer in a seat of power is still a known killer, but the title and duties carried out by the individual are respected, even if the person wielding that power is considered an enemy. When surfing the political tides in Stygia and the Shadowlands, the Smiling Lord insists on proper decorum from his underlings. Despite the official

neutrality of the Grim, the Smiling Lord understands that making the wrong enemies could well lead to disaster for the entire Legion under his command. Personal vendettas are set aside for reasons of state...at least until the time for retribution is properly arranged. There is always time for vengeance away from the Machiavellian arena.

In the eyes of the Grim, the Skeletal Legion, the Emerald Legion and the Paupers Legion are generally regarded more highly than the other Legions, while the Penitent Legion is often frowned upon. Madness is not an excuse for murder in the eyes of the Grim Legion, or surely Stalin would have to be forgiven his transgressions. The Silent Legion is ignored. Any fool stupid enough to throw away his life because he had a bad day, or several bad days, is beneath contempt. Not only did the fool get stuck in the Shadowlands, he also managed to get himself wrangled into a group of maudlin, depressed losers who also killed themselves because life wasn't treating them nicely enough. The standard question among the Grim Legion is: "Do they plan on killing themselves again as soon as death starts shitting on them?" Anyone who throws away the precious gift of life is little better than a murderer.

The current Smiling Lord seems to favor contact with the other Dark Kingdoms. Several representatives of the Smiling Lord, referred to as the Sardonicai, are used as "ambassadors" to the other Dark Kingdoms. While progress is often slow, strong connections have been made with most of the Dark Kingdoms, and certain transactions have been made to produce even stronger ties to the Obsidian Kingdom and the Jade Empire. Officially, the Sardonicai worked toward a union of forces against the Spectres and Oblivion. Most of the Lords of the other Legions tend to believe there is far more going on than the Smiling Lord will admit. Naturally, they are correct in their assumptions.

The organization of the Grim Legion appears haphazard when first viewed from the outside. To no one's surprise, there is a method to the Smiling Lord's madness. The Legion follows the basic Hierarchy setup throughout Stygia and the Shadowlands. Legionnaires make up the ranks of the military forces held by the Smiling Lord, and over an entire Citadel is set an Anacreon. Beyond that point, however, the Smiling Lord's unique thoughts on management to be seen expressed to their fullest.

In truth, Grim Anacreons hold almost complete autonomy over their Citadels, though each is expected to make a weekly report to the Smiling Lord via courier in order to receive tithings. Should the Deathlord of the Grim Legion find an Anacreon wanting, someone is sent to take that wraith's place, and is enforced by 100 of the Smiling Lord's personal shock troops, the Executioners (a.k.a. the Grim Guard). How each Anacreon arranges matters is entirely her affair, provided she continues to serve the primary purpose of the Grim Legion – vengeance.

Anacreons are expected to serve the Hierarchy to the best of their ability, and they're expected to keep careful records of precisely how well the battle goes against Spectres, Heretics, Renegades and other Legions in their Citadels.

## Non-Military Duties

Only a fraction of the Grim Legion actually works within the military. The vast majorities work in more mundane jobs, ranging from bookkeeping to Reaping. For the most part, there are no set hours during which the wraiths of the Grim Legion must perform their duties. The Smiling Lord understands the need to handle personal matters all too well. The only expectation is that each individual wraith performs her duties in their entirety every day. Those who fall behind in their assigned tasks are often replaced by someone more capable. This is not punishment, but rather recognition of the fact that the

wraith in question is obviously preoccupied with other matters. Just the same, once a soul has been removed from a position rank, he must go through the entire process of seeking promotion again – from the bottom. When the wraith gets demoted, any rank achieved to that point is removed, along with any special privileges that rank might carry. The Smiling Lord maintains a policy of lenience, but still expects the work he assigns to be accomplished.

One of the most important assignments anyone in the Hierarchy can receive is that of Infiltrator. Infiltrators are expected to work harder than most of their counterparts, because their task is to discover the truth behind how members of the Legion died. These detectives often interact with the supernatural entities moving through the Skinlands, exchanging information and seeking out the parties guilty of murder. Though Infiltrators once carried the title Requitters, they have long since adopted the name given to them by the masses in Stygia. The Infiltrators changed their name to suit the truth of the matter; as often as not, the very super naturals they deal with are on the list of those the Grim Legion means to punish. That being the case, the Infiltrators often work to gain the trust of entities in question, even as they are working out the details of that individual's demise. While their work is exceedingly important to the Grim Legion, few Infiltrators are well liked or trusted by their counterparts. Any group, which regularly works as judge, jury and executioner as often as the Infiltrators do, is certain to develop a dark reputation. Frighteningly enough, most of these wraiths seem to thrive on the subtle fear they generate in other Restless.

Reapers in the Grim Legion do not work in quite the same way as many of their peers. In addition to Reaping the souls of murder victims, they are also responsible for gathering those responsible for the murders. The Grim Legion considers any wraith guilty of murder as “fair game,” despite the protests of the other Legions. Numerous skirmishes have broken out as result of this policy, though the tendency of some Anacreons to return the disorporated remains of wraiths accused of murder to the other Legions claiming them is often considered an appropriate act of appeasement. Most Grim Legionnaires seem to accept that the disorporation of the guilty wretch is punishment enough for the crimes committed, but there are always exceptions.

One duty that must be performed by all members of the Legion, regardless of their rank, is the “fingering” of guilty souls. Any wraith accused of Flesh–Murder is an instant enemy of the Grim Legion, unless he can defend his actions. Murderers captured by the Grim Legion can request a hearing to decide whether or not they should be punished outright or given the chance to face their accusers in a court of law. The Grim Legion fully acknowledges the fact that its courts are not fair. Grim Legionnaires also point out that murdering someone isn't very fair, either.

While the Grim Legion doesn't believe an openly snatching the accused from the Shadowlands for instant punishment – unless the Legionnaires are certain they won't get the blame – they do believe in trying to remove any such blights from the Shadowlands. Every Citadel has a veritable army of arbitrators whose sole purpose is to make public the accusations of the “guilty” and to seek their punishment through Stygian law. Many of the other Legions have been forced to come up with their own advocates in order to combat the number of legal eagles employed by the Grim Legion. Even in the Shadowlands, lawyers are a blight on society. The Smiling Lord fully accepts that this particular curse is entirely his fault.

The last great task kept by the Grim Legion is the continuing work in progress they simply call the Great Ledger. This massive tome comprises the truths about the vast majority of murders committed in the Skinlands, and his eyewitness accounts more often than not. While the work is unavoidably biased, the Great Ledger holds far more in the way of truth than it does lies. After a tale of a murder is told, the Smiling Lord sends out his special investigators to study the facts of the case. Any discrepancies between a wraith's story and what the facts seem to show are carefully noted. Most of the

Legion's consider this a wasted effort, a futile attempt to make a record of facts that are simply not important anymore. The Grim Legion believes otherwise. The very act of keeping the manuscript up-to-date is very cathartic for many of the murdered Dead. For that reason alone it is a job worth the immense effort it takes, at least in the eyes of the Grim Legion.

The Great Ledger is kept in a vault in the depths of Stygia, guarded by a veritable army of proficient soldiers who self-deprecatingly refer to themselves as the Librarian's Guild. These guards take their duties very seriously, as numerous attempts have been made to destroy the text. In addition to the guards, there are hundreds of scribes whose sole duty is to write down the stories of the victims of Violence and meticulously file the pages. The Smiling Lord is known to visit the office of the Great Ledger regularly, and often spends a few hours out of every day reading over the files which contain the truth about more cases than most minds could ever hope to comprehend.

## Military Life

When it comes to battle the Grim Legion has earned its title. Over the centuries, countless thousands of soldiers have died violently, and the military tacticians who met their deaths on the battlefield number in the thousands. Many innocent victims of war also end up in the Grim Legion, eager for a chance to one day meet with and destroy those who ended their mortal lives. From the first, the armies of the Grim have been dedicated to a singular purpose. They seek revenge against those who slew them. What better assurance of vengeance than a chance to train in combat situations while waiting for the right time?

The Grim Legion willingly battles Spectres and spends countless time guarding the Byways against the minions of Oblivion. What better testing ground is there for soldiers of Stygia than the Tempest? And so the Grim Lord pushes his troops to the limit here.

All Grim soldiers dress alike, with little to distinguish them save their rank. Bodies are covered by heavy gray clothes, which are in turn covered by armor not unlike that worn by the legions of Rome centuries ago. Over this armor the soldiers wear black mantles that seem to absorb any light that comes their way. Though each soldier may choose a different weapon, and many choose to add their own touches to the uniforms, all wear the same masks – heavy helmets designed in imitation of the human skull. Though stylized, these masks have been known to strike fear into the enemies of the Grim Legion, especially when one considers the silence with which the Smiling Lord's soldiers fight. There are no war cries from the Grim Legion, no screams of rage or sorrow. Instead there is a silence that hides a tide of awesome rage.

The Grim Legion believes in discipline on the field of combat. Each move made by a warrior of the Grim Legion should be as a note in a symphony of destruction. Soldiers who tend to swing wildly in combat are seldom around long enough to become a true nuisance. More often than not, their own cohorts destroy them. Wild acts of random violence are not tolerated in the Grim Army, as that often leads to injuring the wrong targets.

Perhaps more so than any other Legion, the Grim Warriors understand the art of war. Many of their greatest commanders created the combat maneuvers taken for granted by modern-day soldiers, and death has not slowed these innovator's minds. Unique methods for fighting off overwhelming odds are one of the Legion's specialties. Tight phalanx formations to stave off spectral rashes are another favorite, and a Grim Legion "turtle" is often the spearhead that punches through enemy lines during local Maelstroms.

# Enemies of the Grim

Spectres are the first and foremost enemies of the Grim Legion, just as they are the scourge of all the Legions. Battling against the Spectres is a duty that all of the Legion's soldiers take seriously. But when called upon, Grim warriors consider any one a fair target once they've been given the official word. There are a few zealots within the ranks that consider anyone who is not a murder victim to be a potential murderer. Fortunately, such inclusionists are few and far between, and normally watched carefully. That sort of unbridled fanaticism leads, to often, down the path to Oblivion if unchecked.

## Special Orders

Perhaps the most notorious of the Grim Legion's special orders is the Executioners. Members of the Smiling Lord's special guard are renowned for their fighting skills and fanatical tendencies. No fool, the Smiling Lord is never seen away from his stronghold without 50 or more of his bodyguards surrounding him. While other wraiths in the Legion tend to their own business at the end of their shifts, no one can honestly say they've ever seen an Executioner relax. Some claim there is more to the Executioners than anyone really knows. Certainly there are rumors enough about them. One of the longest standing rumors is that the Executioners take turns bearing the mask of the Smiling Lord. This notion is usually ridiculed, as the Smiling Lord's voice never changes, and he seldom leaves the Seat of Burning Waters; placed, as it is, in the center of a lake of disincorporated souls. Besides, the Smiling Lord's policies seldom change, and his benevolent rule – so far as his own Legion goes – remains unaltered.

The Executioners' actual numbers are unknown to any but the Smiling Lord. While at least 50 surround him at all times, it's well known that large companies of the Executioners leave Stygia regularly to enforce the Smiling Lord's orders in Citadels throughout the Shadowlands. Though they are often seen, the Executioners are seldom heard, save in combat when they often make use of Keening. To date, the only words spoken by the Executioners in public have been commands to attack and exhortations never to retreat.

## Sardonicai

The Sardonicai are the elite of the Smiling Lord's Marshals. These highly decorated individuals take phenomenal risks, venturing to other Dark Kingdoms in an effort to improve the Legion's relations with the wraiths of the world. While they officially have little authority, Sardonicai are always treated with respect and deference by the Grim Legion's Anacreons when they visit various Citadels and Necropoli. The Sardonicai often take large entourages with them wherever they go, and usually bring Artifacts of incredible beauty and power as offerings in other Kingdoms. Many return bearing gifts for the Smiling Lord, and most carry tokens from other Kingdoms with them. Exactly how successful these

wraiths have been is unknown, but the Grim Legion has recently made clear that it will not take part in conflicts against the Yellow Springs or the so-called Dark Kingdoms of Obsidian.

## Infiltrators

The Infiltrators are generally hated by those who discover their identities. While most wraiths have no reason to be afraid, for many there is always the fear that they will be fingered for a crime they didn't commit – and that an Infiltrator will be the one shouting “I accuse!” Infiltrators officially only work to point out the guilty, allowing the Stygian chain of command and judicial powers to handle actual matters of prosecution and whatnot. However, no one really believes that's all Infiltrators do. Too many wraiths disappear every day for that. Certainly some of the missing are taken by the Infiltrators – at least, according to the would-be prophets in the Agora.

## Retrievers and Arbiters

Officially referred to as the Retrievers, this group specializes in getting their hands on the parties publicly accused by the Grim Legion. The Retrievers make public the crimes of those they seek, and offer evidence to anyone who cares to listen. Along with Infiltrators, the Retrievers are the highest-profile non-military faction of the Grim Legion. Retrievers prefer to use the legal methods set up within Stygia as the *modus operandi*, but that doesn't mean they won't break the law if it suits their needs. More than one a Retriever has made the same claim as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police: “We always get our man.” Some notice the double meanings in their words and smile, as the Retrievers are comprised almost entirely of the ghosts of murdered women.

## Black Masks

The Black Masks are a group of wraiths that, if rumor can be believed, actually work as assassins for the Smiling Lord. Their duties supposedly include hits on wraiths the Legion can't get their hands on through normal means and the permanent disposal of any Restless Dead who don't agree with the agendas of the Smiling Lord. The claims as to what this alleged group has accomplished include removing at least one previous Smiling Lord, arranging for the abdication of the previous Laughing Lady and the destruction of numerous bothersome Anacreons over the past 30 or so decades since they first became a part of the rumor mill.

If such a group existed, they'd doubtlessly be the very best of the Grim Legion's warriors, and Naturally, no organization like this exist at the current time. Just ask the Smiling Lord. He'll tell you.

# Notable Wraiths Within the Grim Legion

Contrary to what many might think likely, most of the best remembered murder victims, military and otherwise, have never come to light as figures of influence within the Grim Legion. Indeed, it seems that many of the Legions best only come to shine in their own right after they've passed away.

## The Smiling Lord

The Smiling Lord is normally seen sitting on his Seat of Burning Waters where it rests on a small island within a lake of fiery liquid. (There is no doubt that the Burning Waters are actually the souls of those he's decided to punish. The poor unfortunates can be heard screaming faintly, even after they've been rendered into their present state.) One small stone bridge leads to the Seat, and around that simple arch stands an army of Executioners, as has always been the case.

That's about all that is as it used to be. Whoever now wears the skeletal mask of the Smiling Lord has taken a decidedly different angle on how best to run the Legion. The past few decades have shown massive improvements in efficiency and contentment for the masses of the Grim Legion. Where once all opposition was met with assault, the Grim Legion these days is now more likely to negotiate, albeit from a position of strength. Where Anacreons of the Smiling Lord once feared his wrath and ruled with threats of punishment, they now offer rewards for services rendered and loyalty. It seems there's a kinder, gentler soul behind the mask of the Smiling Lord. His soldiers fight with renewed vigor in the ever-growing battle against Oblivion. The Scribes of the Great Ledger allegedly work with a nearly fanatical need to get as much done as possible, as if every day might be the last chance they have to finish the great work. The Sardonicai are making leaps and bounds in their efforts across the Tempest in distant lands. Why, then, is everyone so afraid? No one knows, or if they do, they aren't willing to speak about it.

## Hiram, the Master Scribe

Just what inspired Hiram to write down his death story is anyone's guess. Most likely, it was simply the need to understand why he'd been murdered. That was centuries ago. The second death story Hiram wrote down was that of the first Smiling Lord, who wanted someone to record his method of passing. Emboldened by this confidence, Hiram then spoke to the Deathlord of the Grim and asked permission to collect more death stories. "Someone should remember us, even after we've gone on to our final rewards, whatever they might be." Hiram's words almost fell on deaf ears, until he added a final statement: "Someone should also remember those who killed us, and just perhaps they can get revenge for those of us who cannot."

The Smiling Lord agreed, granting Hiram the title "Master Scribe," and ordering that all of the Grim pass down the talks of how they died. Those who couldn't write were sent to Hiram and a growing army of assistants. That was the start of the Great Ledger. Hiram still works alongside the

other Scribes, writing down the details of how each individual met his end. Along with a select handful of other wraiths, Hiram even takes notes from members of other Legions, the Heretics and the Renegades for inclusion in the Ledger's appendices. Hiram and his Scribes do more than merely file papers away, though. They actively venture forth from the Great Library and seek out the cases of individual wraiths throughout the Shadowlands.

Hiram's goal is to transcribe the truth, not just the perceptions of victims everywhere. His small army of investigators researches any cases that pique outsiders' interest. Hiram has no concern for who the victims whose tales he transcribes are. He just wants the truth, and for his own reasons.

It's Hiram's secret belief that the time will come when Christ will return and the Great Ledger will be used to seal the fates of many souls come Judgment Day. Hiram hides this heretical belief and drowns out his prayers with the scratching of pens, but deep inside, he prays that Judgment Day comes soon.

