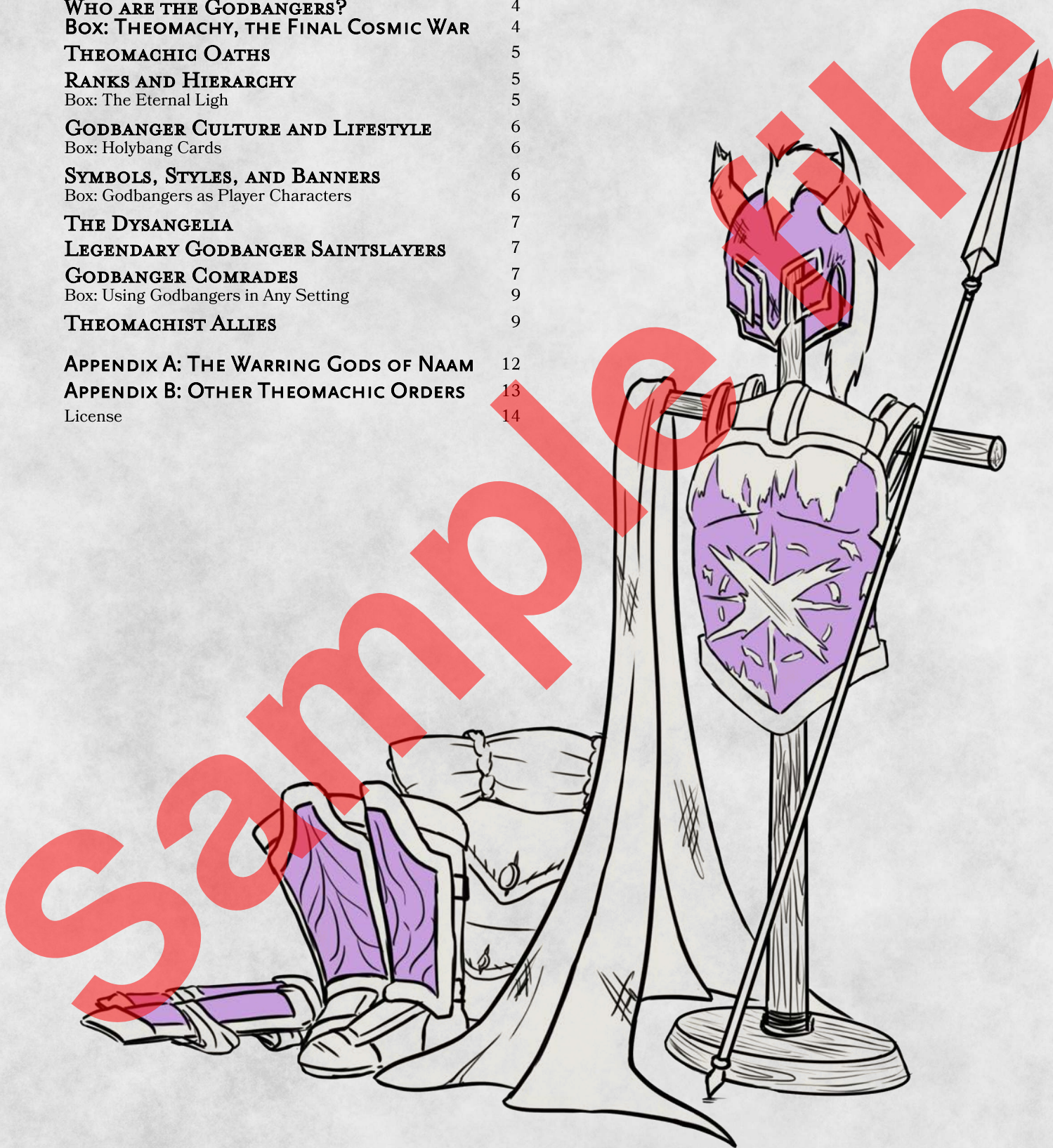


CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
THE FIRST DEFIANT PALADINS	4
WHO ARE THE GODBANGERS?	4
BOX: THEOMACHY, THE FINAL COSMIC WAR	4
THEOMACHIC OATHS	5
RANKS AND HIERARCHY	5
Box: The Eternal Ligh	5
GODBANGER CULTURE AND LIFESTYLE	6
Box: Holybang Cards	6
SYMBOLS, STYLES, AND BANNERS	6
Box: Godbangers as Player Characters	6
THE DYSANGELIA	7
LEGENDARY GODBANGER SAINTSLAYERS	7
GODBANGER COMRADES	7
Box: Using Godbangers in Any Setting	9
THEOMACHIST ALLIES	9
APPENDIX A: THE WARRING GODS OF NAAM	12
APPENDIX B: OTHER THEOMACHIC ORDERS	13
License	14



GODBANGERS!

ROWDY PALADINS FIGHTING EVIL GODS

“Renounce always, pray against them without ceasing, condemn them in all circumstances; for this is the only way to defeat the false gods.”

—Dysangelist Lethimus

INTRODUCTION

Paladins are the archetypal holy warriors, wielding divine magic for justice and all that is good in the name of a deity. But what happens when the lines between good and evil are blurred? What if deities are unjust and delight in oppressing mortals? What if a bit of divine magic resides within the soul of each mortal?

In any world where gods are cruel and demand obedience instead of inspiring faith, some mortals will always stand up and defy the divine despite the consequences. In the world of Naam in the Theomachy setting and beyond, any mortal who rebels against unjust gods is a theomachist.

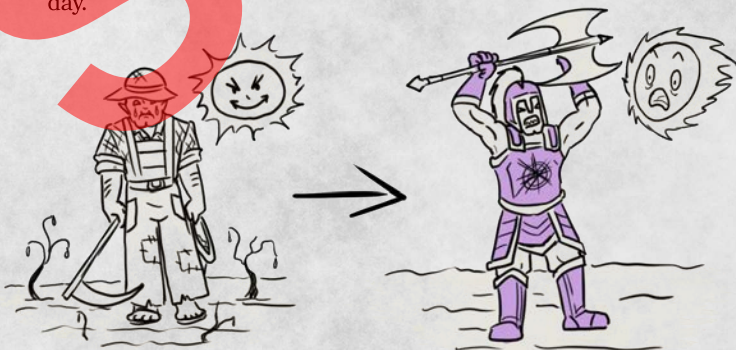
THE FIRST DEFIANT PALADINS

The brave mortals who first rebelled against the warring gods and their servants became known as the first paladins of the Order of Theomachy. These ancient warriors took oaths of vengeance and defiance against the gods. With the aid of rebellious elven clerics, they studied the Eternal Light, the source of divine power, and discovered how to harness it through sheer force of personality.

Sworn to fight for the greater good by any means necessary, and seeing value in diversity and strength in numbers, the order welcomed anyone who was willing to defy the gods and wield the Eternal Light against them, regardless of species and social status. Any commoner could set aside the tools of their trade and pick up weapons against the gods as a member of the Order of Theomachy. Once helpless victims, people who lost their livelihoods or even their families due to the cruelty of the warring gods now had the chance to take vengeance against them.

In time, the ranks of the order were made up almost exclusively of commoners willing to live fast, fight hard, and usually die young in the war against the gods.

Engaged in their grand cosmic war, the gods ignored the defiant paladins at first, but as the order expanded, it became a powerful force that opposes divine will across Naam to this day.



WHO ARE THE GODBANGERS?

No historian is able to pinpoint the exact date when the affectionate epithet ‘Godbanger’ became associated with the Order of Theomachy, but sometime during the Age of Freedom the term became so widespread that the members of the order began identifying as godbangers, mortals who literally swear to fuck the gods up.

Today, millennia later, the first defiant paladin order is still officially known as the Order of Theomachy, but no one outside strictly official settings calls it that. The Godbangers are the champions of the common folk. They are the paladin order that welcomes anyone who is willing to fight divine injustice in their ranks.

Paladins with oaths of vengeance and defiance make up the majority of the order’s members. There is a godbanger cleric for approximately a hundred paladins, and one can rarely find non-paladin godbangers (including creatures who cannot wield the Eternal Light), or paladins with different oaths among the order’s ranks.

THEOMACHY, THE FINAL COSMIC WAR

The Theomachy is the cosmic war between gods for supremacy, using mortals as pawns. Any creature who rejects divine authority and fights the gods as they fight among themselves is a theomachist. The warring gods rule mighty empires that clash against each other, while theomachists have banded together in an alliance of independent city-states and small nations that still resist them. Mortal theomachists may sometimes find allies in powerful beings who also refuse to subject to divine authority, including defiant dragons, fey creatures, and even demons and eldritch entities older than the warring gods.

"Many are the sorrows of the theomachist, but a free mind and a peaceful death await those who renounce the gods."

—Dysangelist Martana

THEOMACHIC OATHS

Many godbangers know how to read and write, but being able to read the defiant scriptures known as the dysangelia is not a requirement to join the order. The exact oaths of the order are outlined in the scriptures, and every godbanger is expected to at least understand the spirit of the oaths they take against the gods. These oaths, often transmitted through word of mouth among illiterate godbangers, may take many forms, but the core concepts of the three main oaths in order of power and significance are:

First Oath: Fight the Greater Evil. Always seek conflict with the greater evil, knowing there is no greater evil than an evil god. Oppose them at any cost. This oath is often colloquially expressed as: "I solemnly swear to fuck the gods up".

Second Oath: Strive for the Greater Good. Use any means necessary to achieve the greater good, but don't be tricked into accepting charity from the warring gods, for they are the greater evil. Many godbangers interpret this oath to include mercy towards enemies who abandon their ways and join the theomachic cause. This interpretation is responsible for many former criminals and even monstrous servants of the gods becoming theomachists after a paladin gave them the choice to join the order or face execution.

Third Oath: Defend the Defenseless. Fight for those who cannot. Protect the children, the elderly, the weak, and the innocent creatures hiding in unspoiled places. Defend the defenseless so that there is a home to return to after the cosmic war is over.

When these oaths are in conflict, a godbanger is expected to suspend the third oath in order to uphold the other two, and suspend the second oath in order to uphold the first oath.

RANKS AND HIERARCHY

The Order of Theomachy started off as a military organization with strict hierarchy. However, as the order transitioned and gradually morphed into the Godbangers, the hierarchy became looser. Some regiments still maintain formal military ranks, while others, especially those made up mainly of former criminals or creatures commonly considered "monstrous", follow a looser organization that sometimes means that the strongest members become leaders.

A number of godbanger generals are responsible for the top-down strategic decisions. At the top of the hierarchy, the Master General leads the order from Infidelis Citadel, a sprawling palace repurposed into a fortress in Freycrown, the theomachic metropolis in the heart of the Free Realms.

However, any godbanger who aids in the defeat of a saint and claims the title of Saintslayer instantly earns tremendous power and respect among the order, often outstripping generals, at least in the eyes of the common paladin. Saints are terrifyingly powerful creatures whom the gods have chosen as their avatars. Slaying a saint eternally curses a mortal with divine wrath, and saintslayers are often seen as doomed people living on borrowed time before the gods claim their souls forever. The Master General always consults with any living saintslayers for matters of great theomachic importance, seeking their valuable insight on how to defeat the strongest agents of the gods.

THE ETERNAL LIGHT

In the Theomachy setting, divine magic is a timeless source of power without expressed will that the warring gods hoard and wield against each other, threatening to undo the entire creation. This force is known as the Eternal Light. Each of the gods has claimed dominion over the Eternal Light and for them, anyone else who uses this power without their permission is a heretic, be it mortal or another god.

Clerics and paladins who wield the Eternal Light, do so either with the blessings of the warring gods as their devout followers; or as theomachists who find sparks of the Eternal Light within themselves, or liberate it from the gods' grasp to use against them. Defiant clerics wield the Eternal Light through sheer willpower (Wisdom) and their convictions against divine injustice. Defiant paladins, such as the Godbangers, wield the Eternal Light through force of personality (Charisma) and their powerful passion to right the wrongs of the warring gods.

However, each time a theomachist uses the Eternal Light without the blessing of the warring gods, the gods take offense and might strike them down.

In terms of game mechanics, theomachist clerics and paladins are identical to their devout counterparts. When they channel divinity, they channel the Eternal Light against the gods or in spite of the gods. Powerful expressions of the Eternal Light, such as divine intervention, are instead expressed as divine interdiction, which is what happens when a daring theomachist cleric manages to directly oppose the will of a warring god.



GODBANGER CULTURE AND LIFESTYLE

Made up largely of commoners who swore vengeance against evil gods, the Godbangers are not a typical paladin order. They are loud and foul-mouthed, spontaneous and rowdy. The average godbanger has suffered because of the gods and is relentless in their pursuit of vengeance against them, even if this means lying or employing underhanded means, as long as they uphold their oaths.

As most godbangers used to be peasants, they have meager worldly possessions and no land to their name. Unless they march to face the servants of the gods in one of their reckless war campaigns or undertake defiant quests alongside other theomachists, the average godbanger usually lives together with other members of the order, often squatting communally in abandoned mansions and half-burned castles.

Many godbangers form strong relationships with each other, and marriages between two fellow paladins are not uncommon. However, for most godbangers the communal living extends to their sex lives as well. Unless they are in a monogamous relationship or they are just not interested in sex at all, godbangers often partake in massive orgies before and after each major battle, as well as on annual celebrations of past victories. These orgies sometimes include consensual sex games that serve to strengthen the bonds among fellow paladins and boost morale before battles where the majority of the paladins are not expected to survive. Faced with the terror of fighting the gods themselves, these defiant mortals find brief respite and abandonment in carnal celebrations.

HOLYBANG CARDS

In their spare time, godbangers obsess with a card game known as Holybang Cards. This is a blasphemous parody of the Holy Cards, a pious praying card game with an ever-growing deck depicting the gods and their servants that is popular in the devout empire of Moredus. Whenever a godbanger obtains a Holy Card, they promptly deface it, adding obscene features to turn it into a Holybang Card. Expert Holybang players collect and create a wide range of cards to improve their deck, and then face off against each other using a complex set of gaming rules where different cards have synergistic effects and the most outrageous combinations of obscene depictions across several cards are worth the most points.

"The best way to drive out the faithful, if they will not yield to the texts of the dysangelia, is to jeer and flout them, for they cannot bear scorn."

—Dysangelist Krotius



GODBANGER SYMBOLS, STYLES, AND BANNERS

Despite the great diversity within the order, a godbanger paladin is often easy to recognize. The color purple (once the color of royalty, but now liberated by the common folk) and the theomachic X, the iconic symbol of defiance, feature prominently on their armor and their banners. Low-ranked godbangers (and especially those with unusual anatomies, like ogres and goblins) are often clad in mismatched pieces of armor and assorted metal parts, some of them clumsily painted purple. The order grants godbanger officers and those who have distinguished themselves in battle imposing purple panoplies, full suits of masterfully crafted plate armor. However, due to the sheer number of the Godbangers, for every one such full panoply, there are four paladins with mismatched armor.

The core symbols of the Godbangers include satiric and often obscene depictions of the warring gods aimed to ridicule divine authority and inspire defiance to the members of the order. These blasphemous depictions also work to taunt and demoralize devout enemies of the order. For example, when the Godbangers march in battle against the dwarven armies of Brotan, the forceful and oppressive god of mountains, they may fly banners depicting Brotan having group sex with goblins, as a literal mountain of shit with a beard, or as a frail miner who struggles to take a dump. When they march in battle against the celestial host of Pelia, the arrogant and imperious goddess of the sun, the Godbangers may fly banners depicting Pelia as a naked elf who squats on the tip of a pyramid, as a filthy troglodyte who flies on impossibly large and donkey-like ears, or having passionate sex with creatures of the night. These banners may also depict several gods together in blasphemous situations, often in undignified fistfights, in ridiculous and exaggerated sexual acts, or in combinations of both.

GODBANGERS AS PLAYER CHARACTERS

Playing a god-defying paladin and fight against divine authority can put a refreshing spin on tried and tested paladin archetypes. Any paladin can become a godbanger, but they most commonly seek vengeance against the gods.

In terms of game mechanics, a player can create a godbanger paladin by picking any paladin subclass and using the Theomachic Oaths in addition to, or as a replacement of, the standard tenets of that subclass.

"If they try to break my spirit, I will not bend, I will not waver. Their hammers will break on the rock of my faithlessness."

—*Dysangelist Krotius*

THE DYSANGELIA, THE FOUNDATIONS OF DEFIANT THEOSOPHY

Several theomachists of ages past have left behind written advice and detailed accounts of their fight against the gods. Among these theosophical scriptures, the three dysangelia stand out as the cornerstones of theomachic ideology and the foundations of the defiant theosophy.

The rebellious sun elf cleric Lethimus was the first to formalize the defiant ideology of the early theomachists into what became known as the Dysangelion of Lethimus, the first theomachic scripture. Lethimus identified the moral shortcomings of each warring god of his time, causing many clerics to abandon their faith.

Almost twenty-five centuries after Lethimus, the cheerful human wizard Martana breathed new life into the theomachic cause during a time of great turmoil. Her personal diary and her epistles became the Dysangelion of Martana, a colorful book full of the young mage's optimism and her passion for freedom.

Exactly one year short of two millennia after Martana penned the first word on her diary, Krotius, a seemingly unassuming dwarf warrior, rose up to lead a legendary rebellion against Brotan, the warring god of mountains who claimed dominion over every dwarf. Krotius' epic fights against Brotan's agents, and according to some accounts Brotan himself, made him the most famous mortal hero of his time, inspiring a wave of defiance across the world of Naam. Krotius' journal, detailing the fight against Brotan and his burning passion for justice, but also his personal struggles, became the Dysangelion of Krotius.

All three dysangelia end abruptly, as the dysangelists all fell in battle against the warring gods before they were able to complete them.

"In fighting the gods, I only fulfil my duty towards my fellow mortals."

—*Dysangelist Martana*

LEGENDARY GODBANGER SAINTSLAYERS

The history of the Godbangers spans more than fifty centuries, and the feats of many legendary heroes who earned the title of **saintslayer** have been lost in time. Only a few **saintslayers** emerge each century, and most are slain shortly after they earn the title. Here are some important **saintslayer** godbangers who gave their lives fighting for justice that are still remembered today:

Saintslayer Vanurethis, a noble sun elf and one of the first theomachist paladins. Anointed by Dysangelist Lethimus himself in ancient times, Vanurethis fell in battle less than a year after he slew a saint whose identity has been long forgotten.

Saintslayer Caraleigh Arco, a human commoner who struck down a saint of Pelia, the warring goddess of the sun, alongside Dysangelist Martana. Based on Martana's writings, Saintslayer Caraleigh Arco is believed to have been one of the dysangelist's lovers.

Dragonsaintslayer Septana Sadler, a legend even among saintslayers, this imposing half-elf woman slew Qdis Khalida, a dragon who was also a saint of Tempestos, during the first Civil Dragonwars. Septana Sadler died in the same wars, leaving behind a child whose identity remains a mystery to this day.

Saintslayer Cromar the Chainbreaker, an orc ex-slave who sparked the orcish emancipation by slaying Saint Ovinia of Tiridus, his half-angel "owner". Treachery felled Cromar at the height of his power as he was murdered by **Keldon Row**, a half-elf sorcerer who betrayed him to become a saint of Nelchior, the warring god of night and dark secrets.

Saintslayer Kaidan Wyden, a charismatic human paladin who slew multiple saints, including **Saint Keldon Row**, the murderer of Saintslayer Cromar the Chainbreaker. Kaidan Wyden lived a relatively long life for a saintslayer and fathered an impressive number of children, many of which became theomachists after his death. Kaidan Wyden fell in battle against the dwarf **Saint Karaldur Faithforge**, also known as Brotan's **Unbroken Fist**, who is rumored to be impervious to all damage and is still alive to this day.

"I am free. I am ungodly. I am theomachist."

—*Dysangelist Lethimus*

GODBANGER COMRADES

Today, the Godbangers include some uniquely colorful and positively interesting individuals. Here are some possible godbanger comrades a paladin of the order, or a fellow adventurer, might get to meet:

Ishar Wyden is a young half-elf woman and one of the numerous children of the fallen Saintslayer Kaidan Wyden. Growing up in a theomachic temple orphanage, she trained to become a paladin of the Pure Mind (see Appendix B) while serving in the city guard. As an adult, she realized she would rather fight in the wild and reckless campaigns of the Godbangers than spend her life in strict discipline and bearing oaths of purity as a paladin of the Pure Mind. Now, she follows in her father's footsteps, doing all she can to oppose the agents of the warring gods across the Free Realms that still defy them.

Sir Adremis Portus is a hulking non-binary half-elf paladin with a gentle heart. Formerly a paladin of the Pure Mind, Adremis Portus had to tell numerous willing lies to uphold the greater good and was forced to leave their old order in shame. The Godbangers welcomed them eagerly, but they are still struggling to come to terms with the wild lifestyle of a godbanger.

Captain Barnaluk and his crew of twenty-one pirates are former criminals, most of them humans, free orcs, and half-orcs, who were captured by a clever godbanger and their illusionist wizard friend, and given the choice to join the Godbangers or face execution. Captain Barnaluk and his crew took their oaths reluctantly, but have since become fervent fighters against the gods, their life given new meaning through the Theomachic Oaths (and the frequent orgies).



**Rindar of Little Faith,
Orc Godbanger Paladin**

Rindar of Little Faith was once a peaceful yet foul-mouthed orc farmer, working the land and providing for his family in the quiet village of Stonepea. After the Theomachy brought destruction to his farm and death to his family, Rindar picked up arms against the gods and became a godbanger. Rindar is easy to anger and seems menacing, but deep down he is a romantic orc who hopes to one day find love and start a new family again. Rindar's never-ending struggle against the gods and their minions brought him to the ruins of Whitebay, where he faced a difficult dilemma and had to trust his new friend and ally Lucifae Carver (see "Theomachist Allies" later in the book) in order to overcome the evil schemes and divine machinations the warring gods had put in his way. Rindar loves Holybang Cards and has some particularly rare cards in his possession.

Evia McDole is a cheerful human officer who is fiercely protective of her paladins. Her regiment protects the northern borders of the Free Realms and engages in massive orgies in the fort under her command. Evia is a terrible Holybang Cards player but maintains an impressive deck and loves to play even though she loses more often than not.

Sir Delric Thorson is a human paladin of the Pure Mind who was claimed by demons more than a century ago. Against all odds, he emerged from a demonic portal in the company of an unlikely demonic ally against the gods, the powerful planar sentinel known only as Xerribex (see "Theomachist Allies" later in the book). Unable to return to his former order, he joined the Godbangers along with Xerribex, guiding her through the world of mortals as she had guided him through the hell of Maleficum. Since joining the Godbangers, Sir Thorson has distinguished himself as one of the most formidable Holybang Cards players.

Vuluk is a male ferrogoblin (hobgoblin) survivor of a massacre by the armies of Gorg, the god of war. Vuluk is a fierce warrior with astounding command over the Eternal Light. He appears to scorn orgies, celebrations, and frivolities, focusing instead on perfecting his skills in the war against the gods. In secret, he likes to collect miniature soldiers and would want nothing more than to share his passion with others, yet he is too shy to admit it openly.

Stonehead Sturpaga is an outrageously loud and freakishly strong ogre woman and the runaway daughter of an ogre chief who sold his soul to Gorg, the god of war. Refusing to follow her father's example, she broke his spine and fled her tribe, cutting a path of mayhem and chaos to reach the borders of the Free Realms. There, she proclaimed herself a theomachist hero and demanded an audience with "the chief of the elves", which made her instantly accepted in the Godbangers. Sturpaga is a fierce Holybang Cards player and also has her own card that depicts the moment she refused to submit to Gorg and broke her father's spine.

Granny Kimra is a venerable orc godbanger who has survived countless battles. Too old to fight anymore, Granny Kimra focuses on healing the wounded and preparing hearty meals using ingredients of dubious origins. She has several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and at least five of them are named after her, including: Little Kimra, Kimra Quarter-Orc, Magi-Kimra, Kimra the Trollslayer, and Kimra the Man.