SANCTUARY ETHICS REVIEW BOARD

SERB-002 — ON THE ALTERATION OF THE WORLDSTONE

An Institutional Inquiry into Inherited Power, Population-Wide Intervention, and the Ethics of Unilateral Metaphysical Modification

Issuing Authority: Sanctuary Ethics Review Board (SERB)
Docket: SERB-002
Classification: Population Ethics, Foundational Governance, and Extraordinary Intervention
Date: October 24, 2026
Status: Preliminary Findings, Institutional Determination, and Notice of Continuing Investigation

Principal Respondent:
Inarius, Angel, Co-Founder of Sanctuary, and Former Custodian of the Worldstone

Affected Populations:
The Firstborn Nephalem, Their Descendants, and the Mortal Population of Sanctuary

Interested Parties:

- Rathma, formerly Linarian, Firstborn Son of Inarius and Lilith
- Lilith, Daughter of Mephisto and Co-Founder of Sanctuary
- The Remaining Nephalem
- The High Heavens
- The Burning Hells
- The Horadrim, in their capacity as subsequent custodians of relevant historical and metaphysical knowledge

Subject: Whether the unilateral alteration of the Worldstone to diminish the inherent powers of the nephalem constituted an ethically permissible protective intervention, and whether the resulting multigenerational consequences were justified by the security concerns asserted by Sanctuary's founder.

I. NOTICE OF INVESTIGATION

The Sanctuary Ethics Review Board hereby opens its second institutional inquiry into the founding administration of Sanctuary.

The present proceeding concerns the decision of Inarius to alter the Worldstone following the emergence of the nephalem and the destruction of the original angelic and demonic founding population by Lilith.

The Board recognizes that the respondent confronted an extraordinary problem.

The descendants of Sanctuary's founders possessed capabilities exceeding those of their progenitors.

Their existence threatened to attract the attention of powers whose conflict had already devastated substantial portions of creation.

The respondent therefore faced a question of considerable practical and ethical difficulty:

How might a vulnerable civilization be protected from external destruction when the very capabilities of its inhabitants could expose it to danger?

The Board does not dismiss the seriousness of this question.

Neither does it presume that the respondent possessed an uncomplicated or entirely satisfactory solution.

However, the historical record indicates that Inarius ultimately employed the Worldstone to diminish the nephalem's extraordinary powers.

The consequences extended beyond the immediate generation.

Over time, successive generations experienced diminished abilities and shorter lifespans, eventually becoming the mortal population recognized as humanity.

The Board therefore finds sufficient grounds to investigate whether this intervention constituted a legitimate measure of collective protection or an unauthorized alteration of an entire population's inherited condition.

The distinction is not merely semantic.

An institution may undertake an action for the stated purpose of protecting a population while simultaneously imposing severe and enduring burdens upon that population.

The existence of a protective purpose does not eliminate the necessity of examining those burdens.

The Board does not recognize the prevention of hypothetical future danger as an unlimited authorization to alter the persons whose protection is claimed.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A. Emergence of the Nephalem

As established in SERB-001, Sanctuary was created as a refuge from the Eternal Conflict.

Its founding population consisted of angels and demons who had withdrawn from their respective factions.

The offspring of these beings became known as the nephalem.

These descendants possessed extraordinary capabilities arising from their combined celestial and infernal ancestry.

Their powers were not merely equivalent to those of their progenitors.

In certain respects, they exceeded them.

The Board observes that the emergence of a population more powerful than its creators appears to have produced substantial institutional anxiety.

This anxiety was not necessarily irrational.

The nephalem's capabilities could have affected Sanctuary's concealment, stability, and relationship with the High Heavens and Burning Hells.

However, an increase in power does not establish an increase in culpability.

The Board accordingly distinguishes between the possession of extraordinary capabilities and their harmful exercise.

The historical record does not establish that every nephalem had committed an act warranting deprivation of those capabilities.

Potential capacity for harm is not equivalent to demonstrated misconduct.

B. Deliberations Concerning Extermination

The original angelic and demonic inhabitants of Sanctuary disagreed over the proper treatment of their descendants.

Some considered the nephalem an unacceptable danger.

Their destruction was contemplated.

The Board regards the contemplation of extermination as a significant indicator of institutional failure.

It reflects a political environment in which the existence of a vulnerable population had become a matter for determination by persons whose interests were not necessarily aligned with those of the population itself.

The Board does not, in this proceeding, determine the individual responsibility of every participant in those deliberations.

It nevertheless recognizes that the nephalem's continued existence had become contingent upon decisions made by others.

C. Lilith's Intervention

Lilith responded to the threat against the nephalem by killing the other angelic and demonic founders.

Inarius subsequently banished her to the Void.

The Board recognizes that these events materially altered Sanctuary's governing circumstances.

The destruction of the founding assembly eliminated potential deliberative participants and left Inarius exercising extraordinary authority.

The present investigation does not excuse Lilith's violence.

Nor does it presume that her professed desire to protect her descendants rendered that violence ethically legitimate.

Her actions will be addressed separately.

The relevant consequence for this proceeding is that Inarius subsequently acted without the participation of the original founding assembly.

D. Alteration of the Worldstone

Following Lilith's banishment, Inarius modified the Worldstone so that the extraordinary powers of the nephalem would diminish over time.

As generations passed, the descendants of the Firstborn grew weaker and experienced shorter lifespans.

Eventually, the nephalem's extraordinary heritage became largely unknown to the ordinary mortal population.

The Board notes that this intervention affected not merely the immediate exercise of particular abilities but the conditions under which future generations would live.

The available record does not establish the precise metaphysical mechanism in terms equivalent to mortal genetics.

Accordingly, the Board uses the term **multigenerational metaphysical modification** rather than presuming a specific biological mechanism.

The ethical question remains substantial regardless of the mechanism.

An intervention that predictably alters the capabilities and lifespans of future persons requires examination even when the process cannot be described using ordinary medical or scientific terminology.

III. THE RESPONDENT'S ASSERTED SECURITY INTEREST

The Board identifies several possible justifications for the respondent's action.

These include:

1. Preservation of Sanctuary's concealment.
2. Prevention of discovery by the High Heavens and Burning Hells.
3. Reduction of the likelihood that the nephalem would provoke intervention by either faction.
4. Prevention of internal conflict involving beings of extraordinary power.
5. Preservation of the existing world and its inhabitants.

The Board considers these interests potentially legitimate.

Indeed, an administrator charged with protecting a population may reasonably take measures against foreseeable existential threats.

However, a legitimate objective does not establish that every method of pursuing it is permissible.

The Board therefore applies a preliminary four-part ethical inquiry.

Necessity: Was intervention required to address an identifiable threat?

Suitability: Was the selected intervention reasonably capable of reducing that threat?

Proportionality: Were the expected protective benefits sufficient to justify the burdens imposed?

Alternatives: Were materially less restrictive measures reasonably available?

These standards are employed as ethical analytical principles, not as claims concerning a historical legal system operating in Sanctuary at the time.

The Board recognizes that the respondent may have possessed knowledge unavailable to subsequent observers.

Such knowledge may justify a particular intervention.

It does not establish that the intervention should be accepted without examination.

IV. ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PROTECTION AND DIMINISHMENT

The Board identifies a central ambiguity in the respondent's conduct.

The nephalem were protected from immediate extermination.

They were also subjected to a measure that diminished their inherited capabilities.

These facts are not mutually exclusive.

An intervention may preserve life while imposing a separate injury.

The Board therefore rejects a binary characterization under which the respondent must be regarded either as the savior of the nephalem or as an actor whose conduct possessed no protective value.

The appropriate inquiry is more precise.

Did the respondent preserve the lives of the nephalem through a measure that unnecessarily deprived them and their descendants of capabilities integral to their existence?

The Board recognizes that extraordinary power can present dangers to its possessor and to others.

Nevertheless, a population's possession of capabilities exceeding those preferred by its governing authority does not establish that those capabilities are defects.

Nor does the governing authority's discomfort with those capabilities establish a sufficient basis for suppressing them.

The distinction is especially important where the authority performing the intervention possesses comparable or superior powers of its own.

The respondent is therefore requested to clarify whether his concern arose principally from external danger to Sanctuary or from the emergence of persons capable of challenging his own authority.

These motivations may have coexisted.

Their coexistence would not eliminate the need to determine whether the intervention was justified.

V. ON MULTIGENERATIONAL CONSEQUENCES

The Board finds the multigenerational character of the intervention particularly significant.

The modification did not merely constrain a known population during an identifiable emergency.

Its effects continued through successive generations.

Those descendants did not participate in the original dispute.

They did not collectively authorize the measure.

Many appear to have lacked knowledge that the intervention had occurred.

The Board recognizes that future generations cannot provide advance consent to every decision that affects them.

Civilizations necessarily make choices whose consequences extend beyond the lives of those making them.

The impossibility of obtaining consent from persons not yet born does not, standing alone, invalidate such decisions.

However, it increases the importance of examining the obligations of those who act on their behalf.

Where an intervention foreseeably affects future persons, decision-makers should consider its duration, reversibility, severity, and consequences for those persons' capacity to shape their own lives.

The Worldstone alteration raises substantial concerns under each consideration.

A. Duration

The intervention continued beyond the immediate circumstances that prompted it.

The Board requests evidence that its continued operation was periodically reassessed.

B. Reversibility

Subsequent events demonstrate that the Worldstone's suppressive influence could be modified.

This suggests that its configuration was not necessarily immutable.

The Board does not infer that reversal was therefore safe, simple, or universally beneficial.

It does, however, question whether the original respondent contemplated any process through which the necessity of continued suppression might be reconsidered.

C. Severity

The intervention affected extraordinary capabilities and, according to the historical record, coincided with the progressive shortening of lifespans.

The Board considers these effects sufficiently serious to require substantial justification.

D. Autonomy

The intervention altered the conditions under which later inhabitants could develop and exercise their inherited potential.

It therefore affected more than immediate physical security.

It implicated the future population's ability to determine the manner in which its own capacities might be understood, cultivated, restrained, or governed.

The absence of a future person's ability to object does not convert that person's interests into the property of present decision-makers.

VI. ON THE ETHICS OF PREVENTIVE INTERVENTION

The Board recognizes that preventive action may be justified before harm occurs.

It would be unreasonable to require administrators to await the destruction of Sanctuary before responding to a credible existential threat.

However, preventive authority carries a particular danger.

Because the anticipated harm has not yet occurred, the justification for intervention may depend substantially upon predictions supplied by the intervening authority.

Where that authority also controls the means of intervention, the process is vulnerable to abuse.

The Board therefore distinguishes between preventing a threat and eliminating every condition that might make a threat possible.

The distinction is fundamental.

A population may be capable of conduct that would endanger itself.

It does not follow that the population must be deprived of the capacity to act.

The possibility that nephalem powers could expose Sanctuary to danger may have warranted secrecy, instruction, defensive preparation, or carefully limited restrictions.

Whether such measures were feasible remains uncertain.

The Board does not presume that instruction alone could have prevented discovery by the High Heavens or Burning Hells.

Nor does it presume that every nephalem would have exercised extraordinary power responsibly.

Instead, the Board finds that the severity of the chosen intervention required consideration of less restrictive alternatives wherever reasonably available.

The respondent's decision appears to have treated suppression of the underlying capability as a substitute for developing institutions capable of managing its exercise.

That substitution requires justification.

A civilization cannot be presumed incapable of governing its own power merely because its founder fears what it might become.

VII. THE QUESTION OF INFORMED PARTICIPATION

The Board next considers whether the affected population possessed any meaningful opportunity to participate in decisions concerning the Worldstone.

The available historical record does not establish a representative process preceding the alteration.

Nor does it establish that the nephalem were informed of the proposed measure or afforded an opportunity to contest it.

The Board acknowledges the exceptional conditions following Lilith's destruction of the founding assembly.

It is possible that the respondent faced immediate dangers incompatible with prolonged deliberation.

However, the scale and duration of the intervention require consideration of whether any subsequent mechanism for review was established.

The Board therefore requests evidence of:

- Consultation with affected nephalem.
- Consideration of dissenting views.
- Disclosure of foreseeable effects.
- Procedures for contesting the modification.
- Criteria under which suppression might be reduced or terminated.
- Independent examination of the respondent's continuing security claims.

The Board emphasizes that consultation is not synonymous with unanimity.

No collective measure affecting an entire population can reasonably be expected to satisfy every individual preference.

Nevertheless, the absence of unanimity does not justify dispensing with participation altogether.

A ruler's conviction that an intervention is necessary does not automatically constitute the population's consent to that intervention.

VIII. THE TESTIMONY OF RATHMA

The Board identifies Rathma, formerly Linarian, as a witness of exceptional relevance.

As a Firstborn nephalem and the son of Inarius and Lilith, Rathma occupied a position directly affected by the respondent's decisions.

The available historical record indicates that Rathma opposed his father's plans and pursued an independent understanding of the relationship between the forces of order and chaos.

The Board recognizes that Rathma's familial relationship to the respondent may bear upon the interpretation of his testimony.

It does not render that testimony inadmissible or inherently unreliable.

Indeed, the Board notes that familial proximity may provide knowledge unavailable to more distant observers.

The relevant question is whether particular claims can be supported.

Rathma is accordingly invited to provide evidence concerning:

1. The capabilities of the Firstborn before modification of the Worldstone.
2. The respondent's stated reasons for undertaking the intervention.
3. The availability of alternative protective measures.
4. The response of the nephalem to the modification.
5. Any efforts to challenge or reverse the intervention.
6. The foreseeable consequences for subsequent generations.

The Board further requests that the witness distinguish between events personally observed and conclusions reached through subsequent study.

Administrative Observation: The Board recognizes that an individual's disagreement with a parent concerning the governance of an entire civilization may exceed the ordinary scope of a familial dispute.

The matter will nevertheless be examined according to the evidence.

IX. THE WORLDSTONE AS CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The Board observes that the Worldstone occupied an extraordinary position within Sanctuary's physical and metaphysical systems.

It was instrumental in establishing and concealing the realm.

It also possessed the capacity to alter fundamental conditions affecting its inhabitants.

The concentration of these functions within a single artifact presented substantial governance risks.

The respondent's access to the Worldstone appears to have permitted him to perform an intervention affecting an entire population without evidence of independent authorization.

The Board therefore identifies three possible institutional deficiencies.

A. Concentration of Authority

The individual responsible for determining the necessity of the intervention also possessed the power to execute it.

B. Absence of Independent Review

The available record does not establish that an independent body examined the intervention before implementation.

C. Absence of Documented Operational Limits

The record does not establish whether the respondent imposed limitations upon the duration, scope, or severity of the modification.

The Board recognizes that the founders of Sanctuary did not necessarily possess modern administrative institutions.

It does not fault them merely for failing to reproduce structures developed under entirely different historical circumstances.

Rather, it examines whether any meaningful safeguards existed against the arbitrary use of extraordinary power.

A system need not resemble a contemporary institution to perform a legitimate checking function.

However, where a single individual possesses the ability to alter the condition of an entire civilization, some means of questioning that individual's judgment becomes ethically significant.

The Board therefore enters the following preliminary observation:

An artifact capable of determining the capacities of a population is not merely an instrument of power. Its administration is a matter of governance.

X. ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CREATOR

SERB-001 established that creation does not itself confer unlimited sovereignty.

The present proceeding considers the corresponding obligation.

An individual who undertakes to create or sustain a populated world may acquire responsibilities toward its inhabitants.

Those responsibilities may include protection from foreseeable harm.

However, the nature of the responsibility must be distinguished from a claim of ownership.

The Board considers the following propositions.

A parent may seek to protect a child.

It does not follow that the child remains perpetually subject to parental control.

A founder may establish an institution.

It does not follow that the institution must forever serve the founder's preferences.

A protector may intervene to prevent catastrophe.

It does not follow that every restriction imposed in the name of protection remains legitimate after the immediate danger has passed.

The respondent's relationship to the nephalem therefore requires particular care.

Inarius was a founder of Sanctuary and a progenitor of the Firstborn.

He was also an individual with interests of his own.

His desire to protect Sanctuary from discovery may have been sincere.

His desire to preserve his own authority may also have influenced his decisions.

The Board cannot conclusively determine the relative importance of these motives from the present record.

It can, however, reject the proposition that the respondent's parental or creative status rendered further justification unnecessary.

Responsibility for another's existence does not confer authority to determine, without limitation, the conditions under which that existence may be lived.

XI. THE PROBLEM OF THE UNCONSIDERED ALTERNATIVE

The Board identifies a substantial evidentiary deficiency concerning alternatives to the Worldstone modification.

The available account establishes the intervention and its broad consequences.

It does not establish that the respondent conducted a systematic evaluation of other protective measures.

The Board therefore requests consideration of several hypothetical alternatives.

These include:

Concealment without population-wide suppression.
Whether Sanctuary could have remained hidden through changes to its defenses or the Worldstone's concealment functions without diminishing the nephalem.

Education and voluntary restraint.
Whether the nephalem could have been informed of the risks associated with their powers and permitted to participate in protective arrangements.

Limited intervention.
Whether particular dangerous manifestations of power could have been restricted without imposing a general multigenerational effect.

Independent guardianship.
Whether custody of the Worldstone could have been separated from unilateral control by the respondent.

Periodic reassessment.
Whether the intervention could have been subject to conditions requiring reconsideration as circumstances changed.

The Board does not find that any of these alternatives was necessarily feasible.

Their inclusion does not constitute an assertion that the respondent could have implemented them successfully.

The Board instead identifies them as matters requiring investigation before necessity can be established.

A claim that an intervention was the only available solution cannot be adequately evaluated without examining what other solutions were considered.

The Board additionally cautions that preserving extraordinary powers would not necessarily have produced a safe or equitable society.

Some nephalem might have abused their capabilities.

Others might have been endangered by them.

A responsible assessment must account for these risks.

Nevertheless, the possibility of misuse does not extinguish the affected population's legitimate interest in its own capacities.

XII. ON THE LOSS OF HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

The Board considers the relationship between the Worldstone modification and humanity's eventual ignorance of its ancestry.

The historical record indicates that successive generations became increasingly unaware of the powers and origins of the Firstborn.

The Board does not conclude that the original Worldstone alteration independently caused every subsequent loss of historical knowledge.

Later events, including interventions during the Sin War, materially complicated humanity's understanding of its past.

Those matters are reserved for separate investigation.

Nevertheless, the Board finds that the diminishing visibility of nephalem abilities created conditions in which the population's inherited capacities could become increasingly difficult to recognize.

This raises a question distinct from the immediate loss of power.

Can a population meaningfully evaluate an intervention when it no longer knows that the intervention occurred?

Knowledge of historical injury does not invariably determine present moral judgment.

Descendants may evaluate the consequences of earlier decisions differently from their ancestors.

Yet their ability to do so depends upon access to information.

The Board therefore considers historical preservation a potentially important safeguard against the permanent normalization of extraordinary interventions.

The disappearance of institutional memory must not automatically be treated as evidence that the underlying action was harmless.

Nor does the acceptance of existing conditions by later generations retroactively establish that those conditions were originally imposed with legitimate authority.

XIII. COMPARATIVE ETHICAL ASSESSMENT

The Board identifies two competing interpretations of the respondent's conduct.

Interpretation A: Protective Necessity

Under this interpretation, the Worldstone alteration prevented the nephalem from attracting the attention of powers capable of destroying Sanctuary.

The diminution of extraordinary abilities was a grave but necessary cost of preserving their lives and those of their descendants.

The intervention may therefore be understood as a protective measure undertaken under exceptional circumstances.

Interpretation B: Unilateral Domination

Under this interpretation, the respondent used his control over Sanctuary's foundational infrastructure to diminish a population whose power threatened his preferred order.

The intervention preserved the world while depriving its inhabitants of important aspects of their inherited capabilities.

Its effects continued through generations unable to understand or contest the decision.

The measure may therefore be understood as an exercise of domination presented as protection.

Preliminary Assessment

The Board finds that the historical record permits consideration of both interpretations.

The respondent's security concerns were substantial.

The burdens imposed were also substantial.

The Board therefore declines to infer that sincere protective intent establishes necessity.

Equally, it declines to infer that severe consequences establish the complete absence of a legitimate protective objective.

The ethical determination depends upon whether the imposed burdens were reasonably necessary and proportionate under the circumstances.

The respondent's unilateral control and the intervention's multigenerational effects weigh heavily against an unrestricted claim of protective authority.

An action may be undertaken for a legitimate purpose and nevertheless employ an ethically impermissible means.

XIV. PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Following examination of the available historical record, the Sanctuary Ethics Review Board enters the following findings.

Finding 1 — Credible Security Concern

The potential discovery of Sanctuary by the High Heavens or Burning Hells represented a serious threat.

The respondent's concern for the continued survival of Sanctuary cannot be dismissed as inherently unreasonable.

Finding 2 — Population-Wide Intervention

The Worldstone modification affected the nephalem as a population rather than merely restricting particular individuals found to have engaged in harmful conduct.

Finding 3 — Multigenerational Burden

The intervention had consequences extending beyond the original affected generation, including diminished capabilities and shortened lifespans among descendants.

Finding 4 — Absence of Established Consent

The available record does not establish that the affected nephalem collectively authorized the intervention.

Finding 5 — Concentration of Decision-Making Power

The respondent exercised extraordinary control over the instrument used to implement the modification.

Adequate independent safeguards have not been established by the present record.

Finding 6 — Insufficient Evidence of Necessity

The available evidence does not establish that population-wide suppression was the least restrictive reasonably available means of protecting Sanctuary.

The Board makes no affirmative finding that a safer alternative was available.

Finding 7 — Continuing Obligations

Where an intervention imposes enduring burdens upon future generations, the responsibility to justify its continued operation cannot be presumed to terminate with its initial implementation.

Finding 8 — Distinction Between Preservation and Ownership

The respondent's role in preserving the nephalem from immediate destruction did not establish unlimited authority to alter their inherited condition.

Finding 9 — Deficiency of Historical Transparency

The eventual loss of knowledge concerning humanity's original capabilities presents a significant concern regarding the ability of subsequent generations to evaluate decisions made on their behalf.

The Board reserves determination of the causes and responsibilities associated with later alterations of memory.

Finding 10 — Ethical Insufficiency of Unreviewed Necessity

The Board finds that necessity cannot be established solely by the assertion of the individual who performed the intervention.

The burden of ethical justification remains substantial where the intervention affects an entire population and future generations.

XV. NOTICE TO THE RESPONDENT

The Board hereby directs the following questions to Inarius.

Question One:
What specific danger required alteration of the nephalem's inherited capabilities?

Question Two:
What evidence established that the danger could not be addressed through concealment, education, voluntary restraint, or more limited intervention?

Question Three:
Were the nephalem informed that the Worldstone would be altered?

Question Four:
Were any representatives of the affected population consulted?

Question Five:
What consideration was given to the effects upon subsequent generations?

Question Six:
Were shortened lifespans anticipated consequences of the intervention?

Question Seven:
Did the respondent establish criteria for determining when suppression would no longer be necessary?

Question Eight:
What safeguards prevented the respondent's personal interests from influencing the decision?

Question Nine:
Did the respondent distinguish between the danger posed by the nephalem to Sanctuary and the danger their capabilities posed to his own authority?

Question Ten:
By what principle did the respondent consider himself entitled to permanently diminish a population whose members had committed no established collective wrongdoing?

The Board will accept written responses supported by available records, testimony, or reasoned argument.

Assertions of celestial superiority may be included where relevant to a specific factual claim.

They will not be accepted as substitutes for answers.

XVI. NOTICE CONCERNING SUBSEQUENT ALTERATIONS

The Board recognizes that the original modification of the Worldstone was not the final intervention affecting the powers of humanity.

During the events associated with the Sin War, Lilith interfered with the suppressive influence of the Worldstone.

Uldyssian ul-Diomed subsequently exercised extraordinary nephalem abilities and altered the artifact's influence further.

His eventual sacrifice and the arrangements following the conflict contributed to renewed suppression of humanity's powers.

These events raise separate ethical questions.

The Board specifically identifies the following matters for future consideration:

- Whether reversing an involuntary suppression requires individual or collective authorization.
- Whether restoration of extraordinary capabilities may itself impose unacceptable risks upon persons who did not request them.
- Whether an individual possessing exceptional powers may legitimately alter the condition of an entire population.
- Whether the restoration of a prior condition necessarily constitutes a remedy.
- Whether an emergency sacrifice may be ethically justified when it produces consequences for persons beyond the individual making it.

The Board emphasizes that an earlier wrongful intervention would not automatically justify every effort to reverse it.

Nor would a subsequent intervention's harmful consequences retroactively establish the legitimacy of the original action.

Each requires separate examination.

The Board therefore reserves judgment concerning Lilith, Uldyssian, and the later custodians of the Worldstone.

XVII. INSTITUTIONAL DETERMINATION

The Board finds that the alteration of the Worldstone presents a substantial prima facie case of ethically deficient governance.

The measure was imposed upon an entire population.

Its effects extended to generations beyond those initially affected.

The available record does not establish adequate participation, independent review, or demonstrated consideration of less restrictive alternatives.

The respondent's protective objective was potentially legitimate.

However, the existence of that objective does not establish that the means selected were proportionate or necessary.

Accordingly, the Board determines that the intervention cannot be regarded as ethically justified on the present record.

This determination is preliminary and remains subject to further evidence.

The Board does not order restoration of the original nephalem condition.

Such an order would raise additional questions of safety, autonomy, reversibility, and consent.

The Board expressly rejects the presumption that an intervention affecting an entire population should be reversed through another unilateral intervention of equal scope.

An ethical deficiency in the original decision does not eliminate the need for ethical safeguards in its correction.

A population deprived of authority over its own condition must not be deprived of that authority a second time in the name of restoring it.

XVIII. CONCLUDING OBSERVATION

There is a particular tragedy in the history of Sanctuary.

Its founders departed from an endless war because they believed another manner of existence was possible.

They created a refuge beyond the immediate claims of the High Heavens and Burning Hells.

Within that refuge emerged beings whose possibilities exceeded those anticipated by their creators.

And when confronted with those possibilities, at least one founder appears to have regarded the extraordinary capacities of his descendants as a danger requiring suppression.

The Board recognizes the fear underlying that decision.

A being who had witnessed the devastation of the Eternal Conflict might reasonably dread the arrival of that conflict upon the world he had created.

Yet fear, even when reasonable, does not resolve every question concerning the means by which danger may be prevented.

The nephalem did not choose the Eternal Conflict.

They did not choose the circumstances of their creation.

They did not collectively determine the terms under which their powers would be diminished.

They inherited both the capacities that frightened their progenitors and the consequences of their progenitors' attempts to control those capacities.

The Board therefore returns to the principle established in SERB-001.

Creation establishes responsibility without necessarily establishing ownership.

The present inquiry extends that principle.

Protection does not become legitimate merely because the protector possesses the power to impose it.

Nor does the preservation of life necessarily justify the permanent deprivation of every capability that might place that life in danger.

A world can survive while its inhabitants lose something essential.

A population can remain alive while its capacity to determine its own future is diminished.

And a decision can preserve an institution while betraying the freedom for which that institution was created.

Sanctuary was founded upon a refusal to accept the inevitability of inherited conflict.

Its descendants were then subjected to an inherited limitation imposed in response to that very conflict.

The Board finds the contradiction worthy of serious consideration.

A civilization created to escape domination should not be presumed secure merely because its inhabitants are too diminished to challenge those who govern them.

Nor should the absence of rebellion be mistaken for the presence of consent.

If the nephalem possessed powers that threatened Sanctuary, their existence presented a difficult question of collective security.

But the difficulty of that question did not extinguish their claim to be treated as persons.

It did not render their descendants merely the instruments of an ancient protective design.

And it did not relieve their creator of the obligation to distinguish between what was necessary for their survival and what was convenient for his authority.

The Board recognizes the desire to preserve Sanctuary.

It does not recognize preservation as an unlimited entitlement to diminish those who inhabit it.

The inquiry remains open.

XIX. DISPOSITION

SERB-002 remains open pending further evidence concerning necessity, proportionality, alternatives, and the circumstances of the Worldstone's original modification.

The Board enters no directive requiring further alteration of the Worldstone or the restoration of nephalem abilities.

The Board reserves jurisdiction, for purposes of its ethical inquiry, over subsequent actions involving population-wide metaphysical intervention.

The respondent may seek reconsideration upon presentation of material evidence.

No adverse inference shall arise solely from the respondent's celestial nature.

Neither shall celestial nature establish immunity.

So entered.

Sanctuary Ethics Review Board
Office of Population Autonomy and Extraordinary Intervention
Division of Multigenerational Consequences

ADMINISTRATIVE ADDENDUM A

Regarding the Respondent's Asserted Parental Authority

The Office of Jurisdictional Review has received an inquiry concerning whether the respondent's relationship to the Firstborn nephalem confers authority to determine the conditions of their existence.

The Office recognizes that Inarius is the father of Rathma and a progenitor of the nephalem.

The Office further recognizes that parental relationships may create substantial responsibilities concerning the protection and welfare of offspring.

The Office does not recognize parental status as an unlimited entitlement to modify the inherited capacities of all subsequent generations.

The respondent is therefore advised that the characterization of humanity as his descendants does not independently establish authority over humanity.

A familial relationship is not a substitute for institutional legitimacy.

The Office considers the matter resolved for purposes of the present jurisdictional objection.

ADMINISTRATIVE ADDENDUM B

Regarding Access to the Worldstone

The Board has been advised that the respondent exercised extraordinary control over the Worldstone during the period under investigation.

The Board requests clarification concerning the safeguards governing that access.

In particular, the Board seeks records identifying any independent authorization required before the artifact could be used to alter the capabilities of an entire population.

The Board recognizes that such procedures may not have existed.

Their absence is itself relevant to the inquiry.

The respondent is reminded that personal possession of an instrument does not automatically establish unrestricted ethical authority concerning its use.

This remains the case where the instrument is of cosmic significance.

The Office of Records has tentatively classified the Worldstone as critical infrastructure.

The classification is provisional.

The Office acknowledges that the artifact's subsequent destruction may complicate physical inspection.

This does not eliminate the necessity of reviewing historical decisions made through its use.

ADMINISTRATIVE ADDENDUM C

Regarding the Distinction Between Safety and Obedience

The Board has received a preliminary suggestion that suppression of the nephalem's abilities was justified because those abilities might eventually permit resistance to the respondent's authority.

The Board requests clarification.

The capacity to resist a governing authority is not equivalent to a threat against the continued existence of a civilization.

Where a respondent alleges otherwise, the distinction must be established by evidence.

The Board recognizes that an individual may simultaneously threaten a ruler and endanger the public.

It does not recognize that danger to the ruler and danger to the public are necessarily identical.

The security of Sanctuary and the security of Inarius's position within Sanctuary are separate questions.

The respondent is invited to address them separately.

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE

A preliminary response attributed to the Office of Inarius has asserted that the respondent acted to preserve the world he created.

The Board acknowledges this explanation.

It has been entered into the record.

The Board respectfully requests that the respondent now address the question presented.

Whether the world survived is not in dispute.

Whether its inhabitants were entitled to remain what they were is the subject of this proceeding.

No further description of the respondent's wings is required.

END OF SERB-002

Next Scheduled Institutional Review:

SERB-003 — THE ANGIRIS COUNCIL
On Celestial Authority, Institutional Legitimacy, and the Presumption That Order Is Justice.