

WARHAMMER  
AGE OF SIGMAR  
ROLEPLAY

# SOULBOUND™

# BALANCING THE SCALES



FIGHT TO SAVE THE CITY OF ANVILGARD IN THE CLIMACTIC ADVENTURE  
FOR THE SHADOWS IN THE MIST CAMPAIGN!

# CREDITS

**Writing:** KC Shi

**Editing:** Christopher Walz

**Producer:** Emmet Byrne

**Cover Art:** JG O'Donohue

**Cartography:** Dániel Kovács

**Illustration:** Runesael Flynn, Dániel Kovács, Sam Manley, Clara-Marie Morin, JG O'Donohue, Rafael Teruel

**Graphic Design and Layout:** Rory McCormack

**Proofreading:** Lynne M. Meyer

**Cubicle 7 Business Support:** Anthony Burke, Elaine Connolly, Donna King, Eileen Murphy, and Kieran Murphy

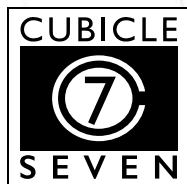
**Cubicle 7 Creative Team:** Dave Allen, Emmet Byrne, Dave Chapman, Walt Ciechanowski, Zak Dale-Clutterbuck, Cat Evans, Runesael Flynn, Dániel Kovács, Elaine Lithgow, TS Luikart, Rachael Macken, Rory McCormack, Dominic McDowall, Sam Manley, Pádraig Murphy, Ceíre O'Donoghue, JG O'Donoghue, Síne Quinn, and Christopher Walz

**Publisher:** Dominic McDowall

**Warhammer Age of Sigmar: Soulbound Designed by** Emmet Byrne and Dominic McDowall

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## INTRODUCTION

**Crucible of Life** takes a party of Soulbound heroes out into the deadly jungles surrounding the city of Anvilgard. This is the third adventure in the *Shadows in the Mist* campaign, a sprawling six-part adventure that will see the party explore the city of Anvilgard and the surrounding lands. In *Shadows in the Mist*, the party are tasked by Lord-Castellant Ephrem Vanhelm of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer with rooting out corruption in the city and exposing the mysterious Blackscale Coil — an organisation made up of members of the Darkling Covens, Scourge Privateers, and other Aelven outcasts.

Readers who are familiar with the **Warhammer Age of Sigmar** battlegame will know that the Blackscale Coil, led by the High Oracle of Khaine Morathi, have already made

their move on Anvilgard. The events of this attack are detailed in the **Warhammer Age of Sigmar** book *Broken Realms: Morathi*. We will not spoil the story here, but it is safe to say that Morathi's attack on Anvilgard will forever change the city.

The *Shadows in the Mist* campaign takes place before Morathi's attack, and gives players and GMs a chance to explore the City of Scales and meet some key figures who will be important in upcoming events. For players and GMs who want insight into what happens to Anvilgard after the events of *Broken Realms Morathi*, the complete *Shadows in the Mist* campaign book will have a section dedicated to the events and ramifications of that story.







The cult embedded in Anvilgard spent weeks preparing for this moment. They replaced the High Architect with one of their own, stole the artefact powering the jungle's verdant growth, and crafted a substance that fertilises anything it touches with Nurgle's fecund gifts. Now all their preparations come to a head with one final ploy, as they replace the defoliant that shrouds the entire city with a tainted mist of their own making. Cultists and corrupted flora strike from every direction, including within, and in a single night, Anvilgard is overrun. In the last chapter of *Shadows in the Mist*, the party must take their city back, gathering every ally they have in order to cleanse the infection once and for all.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Long before the party arrived, a cult to Nurgle known as The Last Breath festered within Anvilgard, led by the Conclave member Tibor Hallowgate. Throughout *Shadows in the Mist*, the characters have gotten closer to finding Tibor's true allegiance, and now, fearing exposure, the cult leader enacts his plan ahead of schedule. Together with the current High Architect, Zadreh Kragward, he alters the cannons so that they spray a new substance, a noxious gas that bolsters — and corrupts — the plants surrounding Anvilgard. Within hours, the transformed wilds, now enslaved to Nurgle, engulf the streets.

The party must race through the city to defend their homes, their allies, and the people of Anvilgard. Among these civilians is the former High Architect, Irina Heiksdotr, who knows the defoliant better than anyone and has a plan to neutralise it. By escorting the Duardin and her machine to one of the highest points in the city, the characters can cut off further Nurgle reinforcements, but in doing so they

draw the ire of hundreds of Maggotkin. In what seems like a desperate last stand, the party buy time for Irina's device to work. Only when all seems lost do the clouds part, and the *Blackfin*, a ship 'flying' upon the ethersea, descends to rescue the group.

The last time the characters saw the *Blackfin*, it abandoned them at the bottom of the Searing Sea during the events of *Blood Tide*, and the last time they saw its captain, he was probably betraying them for the second time during the events of *Aqua Nurglis*. But Theriel Kaltis wants his city back too, and if that means working with his favourite allies-by-necessity, then all the better. He introduces them to the true power behind the Blackscale Coil, and together they launch a targeted strike on the leaders of Nurgle's forces in an epic confrontation to decide the fate of Anvilgard.

## GETTING STARTED

**Balancing the Scales** is the final chapter of *Shadows in the Mist*, and it relies heavily on characters and events that appeared in previous adventures. Folk often say that nowhere is safe in the Mortal Realms, but that is true now more than ever. The characters are hunted and harried as they work to liberate Anvilgard, with all their previous bastions of safety overrun and enemies pressing against them from all sides.

**Rumour:** All of the recent turmoil in Anvilgard suggests a conspiracy, orchestrated by a single hand.

**Threat:** Sulémek, an Idoneth who works with the Blackscale Coil, gives the party a chilling warning before vanishing into the mists: the enemy they seek is within the Conclave itself.



# PART 1: THE GARDEN AWAKENS

Morgan Kassan, the party's contact with the Conclave of Anvilgard, sends them a cryptic message. Delivered via trained Gryph-hound courier, the entire missive fits on a tightly rolled scroll of parchment no bigger than a finger.

*My friends,*

*Anvilgard faces the worst kind of enemy there is. Meet me at the west gate at sunset. I need your help.*

— M. K.

The letter is uncharacteristically short for Morgan, but her handwriting and seal are genuine. It won't be long until sunset, and the party have just enough time to gather their equipment and each other.

## SUNSET AT THE WALLS

What Morgan didn't write, for fear that her enemies within the Conclave would intercept her message, is that her superior Tibor Hallowgate has sabotaged the perimeter cannons in the name of the Chaos God Nurgle. Tibor has many allies on the Conclave, and furthermore mentored Morgan in the affairs of governance for years. For reasons both practical and sentimental, she wants to be absolutely certain before making her move against him. She has gathered the characters here to brief them and to search for evidence, but unbeknownst to both her and the party, she is taking action just barely too late.

Morgan is absent when the characters arrive, cultists having subdued and captured the Councillor before she ever left the Conclave. The party can investigate if they wish, but as Morgan never made it to the walls in the first place, there are precious few clues to find. The Freeguilders patrolling the perimeter don't know anything about Morgan, but speaking of Conclave members, one guard recalls a Duardin Councillor passing through earlier.

Before the party can search much further, the sun sets. Night falls on Anvilgard, lit a deep orange-pink by the volcanoes on the other side of the jungle, streaked red by the fiery tail of the moon Evigaine. In an atmosphere of such tranquility, it would be easy to ignore the sudden quiet that descends on the walls, but to any long-time resident of the city, the silence feels like the gap where a missing tooth should be. The omnipresent background noise of defoliant hissing through the pipes fades away,

and seconds later, every one of Anvilgard's dragon-headed guard towers sputters to a halt.

It only takes a moment for the cannons to resume, but when they do, they spew a sour yellow gas quite unlike the defoliant that normally shrouds the city. Where the new mist settles on the plants closest to the Anvilgardian perimeter, the shriveled ferns and desiccated saplings twitch, then straighten, then swell. Wet pops echo in the jungle as the fruits on the trees stretch too big for their skins, followed by a rising chorus of agitated croaks, finally punctuated by a repetitive wheezing a madman might call laughter.

The characters can hear other sounds behind them, coming from the city: the crash of brick and marble toppling to the ground, the reverberations of powerful magic, the shouts of civilians as they realise what is happening. But before the party can turn back, Nurgle's Menagerie arrives at the walls.

## THE JUNGLE UNLEASHED

**Beasts of Nurgle** (see page 27) bound toward the walls while **Feculent Gnarlmaaws** (see page 28) twist out of the soil and **Plague Drones** (see page 30) swarm overhead. As the infectious defoliant seeps deeper into the jungle, the party can see a towering gangle-limbed creature with a long flicking tongue step out of the trees further along the wall, streaks of lizard scale on their otherwise soft, diseased flesh testifying to the reptilian beasts they were before Nurgle's plagues transformed them. The creature is a **Pox Maggoth** (see page 30), and the party must face them later (see **Pox and Plague**, page 9). Use this scene to foreshadow the beast, describing it smashing through the walls and crushing the Freeguild soldiers underfoot.

The characters have repelled breaches in Anvilgard's walls before, but this time the attack is no mere jab by errant monsters. Nurgle's forces assault every inch of the perimeter at once, and while the party might defend a section or two, it is only a matter of time before the ones around them fall. Even destroying the defoliant cannons does not stop the onslaught, for blocking the mouths of the cannons only causes the pipes to rattle with built-up pressure before bursting further down the street.

There is one Beast of Nurgle and Feculent Gnarlmaaw per character, as well as a Plague Drone leading the charge. Each of these monsters of Nurgle heals 3 Toughness at the start of its turn, as the tainted defoliant sizzles along their wounds and knits their diseased flesh back together. If it ever seems like the characters are gaining the upper hand, a fresh wave of Maggotkin emerges from the jungle. Truly

insurmountable numbers, like thirty Beasts of Nurgle all bounding towards the walls at once, should impress upon the party the scale of the threat they face — though, as the Gamemaster, you should give the party ample time to retreat before the attacks come pouring in.

The characters can achieve minor victories in this scene by saving Freeguilders or capturing Zadreh Kragward, but make sure the party understands that ultimately this is a fight they cannot win.

## THE VALIANT GUARDS

The Freeguilders on the walls scramble to mount a defence, but an assault of this calibre has not been seen since the Necroquake. The corrupted monsters shatter the ranks of the small patrols with the first charge. Desperate calls for reinforcements go unanswered, and the outer walls crumble as guards stumble, choking, away from defoliant-shrouded battlements. In the face of such Chaos, all the party can do is save what lives they can.

The characters can help by rallying the scattered Freeguilders into a fighting retreat with a **DN 5:2 Mind (Guile)** or **Body (Intimidation)** Test, or by pulling individual soldiers out from under the rubble with a **DN 5:2 Body (Might)** Test. Other Skills may apply depending on the character's approach, or they might bypass making a Test entirely with the creative use of a spell or Miracle.

If more than half the characters attempt to save Freeguilders and succeed, the Charrwind Rangers — elite troops led by Freeguild General Dignan 'Ironwhiskers' Crant — return in the final part of the adventure to aid in the battle to retake Dauntless Hall.

## ZADREH'S FLIGHT

At the start of the second round, characters with a Natural Awareness of 2 or higher spot a hooded figure retreating in the chaos. As the figure checks over his shoulder, the hood falls back long enough to reveal Zadreh Kragward, the new High Architect. The shock in his eyes when he sees the characters, followed by his immediate haste to get away, is enough to tell anyone watching that he's guilty of something.

Zadreh has Initiative 6 and immediately takes the Flee Action on his turn if possible. The party can capture him by subduing or restraining him before his turn. If Zadreh successfully flees from the battle, a party member can pursue him but must also take the Flee Action, increasing Doom by 1. Capturing Zadreh requires the party member to succeed an **Opposed DN 4:1 Body (Athletics)** Test. If the party all take the Retreat Action to leave the fight in pursuit of Zadreh at the end of

the turn, Doom does not increase but the DN of the Test increases to **5:1**. If the party wait until after the fight to pursue Zadreh, the DN increases to **6:1**.

Alternatively, if you prefer a more cinematic pursuit, you can use the chase rules found on page 15 of *Petrified Wood*.

Up close, the characters can see Zadreh's features have taken a sallow, unhealthy pallor, though his eyes are bright and manic. Tibor has infected him with a pox he promised would augment Zadreh's memory and focus, but the more he embraces the effects, the more Nurgle's grip tightens. He has useful information if the party interrogate him, though depending on how they pin him down, the characters might have to find a safe place to question him first.

The characters must succeed on a **DN 4:2 Mind (Guile)** or **Soul (Intimidation)** Test for every question they ask Zadreh, earning only silence or surly taunts on a failure. After three such failures, Zadreh purses his lips and refuses to answer any more questions.

**What are you doing here?** Zadreh came to perform the final recalibrations necessary for the cannons to spray the new defoliant. Rather than keep the city and the jungle separate, his revolutionary formula integrates the wild flora into Anvilgard's defense. His genius shall usher in a new way of life for Anvilgard, one full of bounty, prosperity, and growth. Zadreh's voice falls to a taut whisper as he talks, trembling with unhinged intensity.

**What is happening in the city?** While Zadreh handled the outer defenses, his allies summoned reinforcements from lairs scattered inside Anvilgard. *'This city is ours! It doesn't belong to pirates and thugs and Aelves slinking in the dark. Sigmar's tin soldiers never lifted a finger against them but our god is generous, our god offers aid...'* Zadreh doesn't give coherent details, but he promises the characters the worst has yet to come.

**Where is Morgan?** Tibor has called a meeting of the Conclave to 'explain' the changes coming to Anvilgard. Morgan must be with him. Zadreh smiles and refuses to say anything more on the subject.

**What's wrong with you?** Zadreh has clearly undergone some changes since the last time the characters saw him. If asked about his motives, he shakes his head, writhing against his bonds. *'I've been holding myself back. You've all been holding me back. But now we're all going to get a chance to grow, grow, grow to our full potential!'*





**How do we stop the new defoliant?** ‘You can’t,’ Zadreh sneers. ‘No one knows the pipes better than I do.’ He is confident no other engineer in Anvilgard has the skills or experience to undo his changes to the defoliant system, and even if one does, there is no way they could work fast enough for it to matter. A **DN 4:1 Mind (Intuition)** Test reveals a crack in his confidence as he remembers the former High Architect Irina Heiksdotr, while demoted, still lives in the city.

The party can kill Zadreh, take him with them, or imprison him at a secure location. If any Freeguilders survive the assault on the walls, they offer to jail him at their garrison, where he awaits more thorough questioning by a Lord-Veritant. If Zadreh escapes, he reports back to Tibor at the Conclave, where he ensconces himself until the final part of this adventure.

## A CITY UNDER SIEGE

The party find no reprieve after they escape the battle at the walls. Nurgle’s forces run unchecked through the streets, and perversely the more people gather together for safety, the more tantalising targets they become for both the monsters and the diseases they carry. A rumble echoes in the distance as the roof of the Dauntless Hall falters and collapses. Oozing buboes rise up from the wounded hall, breathing in the sweet air of Aqshy.

No one is coming to save Anvilgard. The heroes are on their own. At the end of this scene, Doom increases by 3. If the party aided the Freeguilders in **The Valiant Guards**, Doom instead only increases by 2.

### A FORTIFYING CORRUPTION

As with the monsters at the walls, all Maggotkin in contact with the tainted defoliant heal 3 Toughness, up to their maximum, at the start of their turns. This healing does not apply if the enemies are indoors or else cut off from the corrupted defoliant – perhaps the characters used a Spell like *Favourable Winds* to temporarily disperse the fog. It does not heal Swarms, whose individual members only have 1 Toughness. This citywide effect ends once the characters neutralise the poison in Part 4.

## PART 2: THROUGH THE MIST

The party must navigate an occupied city. To drive the horror of the invasion home, describe how the Maggotkin have defiled locations where the characters once rested, shopped, or spent time in leisure. Places once reserved for the burgeoning communities of Anvilgard are now nothing more than playgrounds for the obscenities of Chaos.

If Doom is below 5, the civilians of Anvilgard, ever cognisant of the threats beyond the walls, prepared for this day by building sturdy bunkers and drilling their emergency evacuation sequences often. The only ones who remain outside now are those who trust more in their own strength than Sigmar’s walls, such as the Aelves of the Blackscale Coil, and even then they gather together in secure locations. On the other hand, if Doom is 5 or more, Nurgle’s forces catch Anvilgard utterly unprepared. Civilians flee between shattered buildings, huddling in whatever safe haven they can find before their tormentors discover them again.

No matter what, the mist over Anvilgard soon takes on a jaundiced pall as the cannons continue to pump corrupted defoliant in and around the city. The protection of the Binding (or the divine energy of Azyr, for Stormcast Eternals) protects the heroes from the worst effects of the tainted fog, but most others are not so lucky. Native Anvilgardians make do with veils and cloth masks, while Azyrite settlers wear holy symbols — which vary in efficacy — on their wrists or around their necks. Pets and livestock are confined indoors, and the farmers abandon the few fields within the walls to the Nurgle daemons sprouting in place of crops.

The mist is key to Nurgle’s takeover of Anvilgard. It both provides a constant supply of fresh reinforcements and rejuvenates the forces already within the city. If the characters want to free Anvilgard, they must begin by dealing with Zadreh’s defoliant.

## WHERE TO NEXT?

The party might want to visit several locations in the aftermath of the invasion. This part of the adventure is a time for them to collect themselves and assess the damage to their city before moving forward.

Of course, that does not mean the danger has abated. As the characters move between locations, consider having them assign a Point Guard with good **Awareness** and a Rear Guard with good **Stealth**. If the Point Guard or Rear Guard fail a Test (or if you feel like the party is simply getting too comfortable), you can roll 1d6 or pick one of the encounters on the table below.

## HOME

The home of the party, wherever that may be, escaped the thick of the fighting, but has not gone undisturbed. Someone broke in recently and did not bother to hide their tracks. They left the doors hanging ajar, shoved the furnishings into the corners, and overturned the party's belongings. Nothing, however, was taken. With a **DN 4:1 Mind (Awareness)** Test, a hero can tell the intruder came looking for the party, and after failing to find them took to searching for secret passages or hiding spots. With 3 additional successes or more, the hero finds a wisp of torn silk thread caught on a splinter, of the kind Tibor Hallowgate likes to wear in his voluminous sleeves.

If the party have multiple homes, then they were all searched, though some may have escaped Tibor's notice if the heroes who lived there took particular pains to keep them secret.

Should the party linger, they hear the dolorous moans of **Plaguebearers** shambling down the streets. Four Plaguebearers per character have sniffed out the party, and unless the heroes move soon then the Daemons discover them and attack. If the party use any weapons with the *Loud* Trait or if the combat lasts more than one round, then the sounds of fighting attract additional reinforcements.

## ALLIED LOCATIONS

Throughout *Shadows in the Mist*, the party could have befriended any number of people in Anvilgard, from the pit fighters of the Blackscale Coil, to the sailors at the docks, to even the Seraphon of the nearby Jade Temple. If the characters wish to visit any of these locations, now is their opportunity to do so. Appropriate Maggotkin threaten these areas: Beasts of Nurgle and Feculent Gnarlmaaws infect the outer ring of Anvilgard and the surrounding jungle, while mortal cultists and their Daemons stalk the inner circles of the city.

Most of the party's allies cannot even walk outside for fear of breathing in the corrupted defoliant, but they provide what resources or aid they can spare. Whichever allies the characters take the time to help should appear again in the final battle against the Great Unclean One. (See **The Reinforcements** on page 24 for more information.)

## ANVILGARD ENCOUNTERS

| 1d6 | Encounter  |
|-----|--|
| 1   | The street collapses as a chained Wyr-maggot, directed by Rotbringers – mortal servants of Nurgle – digs the borders of a colossal pit. Each character must make a <b>DN 5:1 Body (Reflexes)</b> Test to keep their footing. Those who fail slip into the Wyr-maggot's wake, where the oblivious Rotbringers dump a foul slurry of decaying limbs and writhing vermin onto them. Characters who fell into the pit are <i>Poisoned</i> until they finish a Rest.  |
| 2   | A pipe bursts underfoot, spraying shrapnel and corrupted defoliant into the air. Characters must pass a <b>DN 4:2 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Blinded</i> and <i>Poisoned</i> until they finish a Rest, as the jet of caustic fog burns their eyes and the poison fills their lungs.  |
| 3   | A horse, escaped from some battle or besieged stable, lies collapsed in the rubble. Its breathing is heavy and laboured, and the long wound on its flank is turning black with decay. Its rider, still strapped to the saddle, is several hours dead. It takes a <b>DN 6:8 Mind (Medicine)</b> Extended Test to nurse the creature back to health. A character can make one Test per day. After the first success, the horse can at least walk again. Alternatively, the party can feed the horse a sphere of Aqua Ghyranis to bring it back to full strength. The horse has the <i>Warhorse</i> Trait ( <i>Soulbound</i> , page 307). |
| 4   | Guttural voices count in droning unison just around the bend. Three <b>Plaguebearers</b> ( <i>Soulbound</i> , page 325) per character trudge down the street, herding a group of Anvilgardians from a nearby tenement. The Daemons ignore the hacking, coughing, pleading, and sobbing of the civilians, their focus entirely on keeping a correct tally of their master's diseases.   |
| 5   | The party stumble across yet another place dear to them, now strewn with bloated corpses. Oozing vines snake through the rubble, and a carpet of vermin crunches underfoot no matter where the heroes step. The sight weighs heavy on even the most stalwart among the party. Doom increases by 1.   |
| 6   | A Human woman, wearing the utilitarian uniform of the Ironweld Arsenal, hauls a heavy bag of supplies across the cobbles. When she sees the party, she explains that she's getting rations back to her fellow engineers, whose food stores have gone rotten, and begs for help returning to the Bellows. For more information on the Bellows, see the section <b>The Siege of the Bellows</b> on page 9.   |



Two notable allied locations feature later in this adventure: the Bellows of the Ironweld Arsenal and the Spireroot of the Sylvaneth. If the party go to the Bellows, skip to **The Siege of the Bellows**. If the party go to Spireroot, see the section **Branching Possibilities** for more information on how the Sylvaneth react to them.

## REALMGATES AND OTHER ESCAPE ROUTES

Anvilgard possesses four realmgates within its walls, but these are secured within the Black Nexus which is guarded at all times by the Anvils of the Heldenhammer. When the servants of Nurgle breached the city walls, the Anvils sealed the doors to the Black Nexus. The Nexus is a vital strategic location not only to the city, but to Sigmar's war effort throughout the realms, and he can not afford for it to fall to the forces of Chaos.

Should the party arrive at the Black Nexus, they see it besieged by the forces of Nurgle. A small detachment of Anvils of the Heldenhammer, lead by **Zenius the Dirge** (see *Aqua Nurglis*, page 11) and their loyal Gryph-hound, desperately fight to push back the hordes and defend the Nexus. The party can aid them if they wish. If the party decides to help, there is one **Beast of Nurgle** (see page 27) per party member, one Swarm of 10 **Plaguebearers** (*Soulbound*, page 325) per party member, and a single **Plague Drone** (see page 30). Once the battle is over, the Anvils have a moment to catch their breath. Doom is reduced by 1. During the brief respite, Zenius informs the party that under no circumstances will the Anvils open the Nexus for they cannot risk it falling into the hands of

Chaos. Zenius and the other Anvils can not abandon their post either, for even now the party can see Nurgle's hordes mustering for another assault. For now, the party are on their own.

## THE DAUNTLESS HALL

The party can see the hulking silhouette that crushed the Conclave from anywhere in Anvilgard, but only up close do the ruins of the Dauntless Hall come into view. The austere facade of the building is now covered with a sheen of pus and slime, while the Great Unclean One called Morbithrax the Bountiful smashed most of the interior to pieces to make room for his prodigious girth. Morbithrax commands the Maggotkin of Anvilgard from his new headquarters, offering 'presents' to captives brought before him and congratulating his subordinates for their catches like a doting uncle. Rank upon rank of Maggotkin surround him, and to even approach him in the seat of his power is pure folly.

Historians in the party recognise the name Morbithrax if they succeed on a **DN 5:1 Mind (Lore)** Test. A Greater Daemon of Nurgle renowned for his sloth and sheer corpulence, Morbithrax played a key role in the invasion of Cotha. He was the one who first infected the Icebreaker Whales of those frigid seas, converting them into seafaring vessels for the children of Nurgle. Though he possesses great sorcerous and physical strength, historically he has preferred to command from afar. Whomever summoned him must have possessed time and power both.

## THE DEFOLIANT PRODUCTION FACILITY

The defoliant production facility is under heavy guard.



Tibor used the Skaven invasion that occurred in *Petrified Wood* as an excuse to triple the security around the facility, installing guards and overseers loyal to his cult. Now, before the building even comes into view, the party can hear the chanting of fell sorcerers echoing from within, while **Plague Drones** (see page 30) buzz around the perimeter, ripping apart anything that comes close. Like the Dauntless Hall, it would take an army to seize the facility.

Studying the pipes and other equipment used to create the defoliant from a safe distance requires a **DN 4:3 Mind (Crafting)** Test. Success reveals that the engineers of the Ironweld Arsenal did their jobs perhaps too well, for the defoliant system has so many redundancies and fail-safes that even destroying the central production facility will not stop the cannons. Knowing how and where to strike requires expert familiarity with the entire system's schematics — something only the High Architects of Anvilgard possess.

## PART 3: THE HIGH ARCHITECT

Several forces are pushing the characters to find the former High Architect of Anvilgard, Irina Heiksdotr. The party might be escorting another Ironweld Engineer back to the safety of the Bellows, or Sulémek might have appeared to advise them to seek out Irina's aid. Zadreh himself might have pointed the party toward Irina, through either insecure boasting or outright fear.

### FINDING IRINA

However they came to seek the former High Architect, there are only a few plausible places for the characters to search.

### IRINA'S HOME

Irina's residence, which the party might have investigated in *Rotten to the Core*, lies in Hammercroft. Its location is no secret, and even if the party don't know her exact address, Irina is the type of person who lives close to her work.

Irina's workshop is empty, but all signs indicate she left of her own volition. The door is locked, the windows are unbroken, and the scrapyard out front is in no more disarray than usual. Inside, circles in the dust on her mantelpiece indicate she took her precious belongings before leaving, and a conspicuously empty glass case

has a plaque in front of it reading 'Mk. VI Frodsdottir Grudgehammer Torpedo.'

### PRISON

In *Rotten to the Core*, the party might have presented the Grand Conclave with (false) evidence implying Irina had connections to the Blackscale Coil. In that case, Irina has spent the last few weeks languishing in **Dum Duraz** (*Anvilgard City Guide*, page 16), awaiting interrogation. The penitentiary is located in the industrial district of Anvilgard as well, owing to some complicated Dispossessed jurisdiction mandating that Duardin prisoners be kept in Duardin custody.

However, when the party arrive at Dum Duraz, they find

### SULEMAK'S GUIDANCE

Sulémek, the so-called 'First Mate' of Theriel Kaltis, has been keeping an eye on the city while his partner finishes vital business on the Searing Sea. Using the mind-altering and illusory magic of the Idoneth to stay undetected, Sulémek patrols the city and keeps tabs on any remaining pockets of Anvilgardian resistance, including the party.

If, after seeing the formidable defences of the Dauntless Hall or the defoliant production facility, the characters still decide to attack, Sulémek unveils himself and warns them it's a mistake. Tibor Hallowgate briefed Morbithrax on each of the characters when the invasion began, and should they somehow manage to get past the initial layer of security, they will find themselves facing powerful Maggotkin who already know their every weakness and vulnerability. Alternatively, Sulémek appears if the party seem like they need guidance, as he has a better use for them than wandering around the city and saving random civilians.

However he appears, Sulémek advises the party to seek out Irina Heiksdotr, the former High Architect. The Aelf knows better than to approach Irina himself, as she holds a deep grudge against the Blackscale Coil. Sulémek implies, in his taciturn manner, that if the characters and Irina can clear the skies of the corrupting mist, then he and Theriel Kaltis could provide the city with further aid.



it is now barely more than rubble. Rampaging Beasts of Nurgle collapsed most of the walls, killing many of the prisoners but freeing almost all the rest. An hour of searching reveals that Irina is not among the bodies, but that a promising trail leads from her former cell.

## FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

Tracking Irina from either her workshop or her cell is a **DN 4:2 Mind (Survival)** Test. Her trail leads to a few nearby residences — the homes of friends and loved ones she visited when the situation became serious — but these are all empty as well. Finally, it ends before a juggernaut of a building more iron than stone, the air around it shimmering with furnace heat: the Bellows. The party might also have gone to the Bellows directly if they were escorting a civilian here in search of shelter, or if a hero had a connection to the Ironweld Arsenal and knew Irina would have gone here for safety.

## THE SIEGE OF THE BELLOWES

The Bellows (*Anvilgard City Guide*, page 13) is the unofficial headquarters of the local Ironweld Arsenal, named both for the enormous furnaces in which smiths create the pipes, canisters, and cannons integral to Anvilgard's defoliant system, and for the frequent shouts of frustration and pain that generally accompany such an occupation. (The famous Aqshian temper on display, some foreigners whisper.) While almost all of the Bellows sits under a single roof, the building contains over a dozen separate forges, a high-vaulted garage for the Arsenal's experimental vehicles, and a walled courtyard for testing explosives.

The smithing complex has become an impromptu fort with the invasion of Anvilgard, sheltering Duardin and Human alike against Nurgle's menagerie. Shredded cultist corpses and the stinking aetheric sludge left behind when a Daemon is slain surrounds the Bellows like a macabre moat, a testament to the bloody encounters that have already occurred here.

If the characters succeed in tracking Irina or go to the Bellows directly, then a Duardin sentry perched on the roof hails them as they approach. Once the party establish they are not a threat, the sentry taps out a staccato rhythm on the rain gutter, and seconds later the doors of the Bellows swing open. Duardin and Human civilians crowd around the characters as they step inside, eager to welcome more survivors and hear news from the city at large.

Just a few minutes after the party members arrive — long enough for them to answer a couple questions or try to squeeze past the crowd — an insistent banging comes down through the gutter. A hush falls over the crowd, like a held breath, but as the banging picks up in volume the civilians scatter. Two Ironweld Engineers rush forward to bar the doors with steam-powered locking mechanisms, while shouts of alarms echo along the building's lofty halls. If any of the characters ask what the banging means, the engineers simply say, *'They're coming!'* The party have arrived just before a fresh wave of Maggotkin attackers.

Otherwise, if the characters take too long to find the Bellows, the sound of roars and explosions draws them toward the shelter. The battle begins while they are still outside.

## POX AND PLAGUE

Figures shamble out of the mist, marching in rhythm as they count off the diseases they will rain upon the Bellows. Above them all towers the hulking silhouette of the **Pox Maggoth** they saw at the walls. The corrupted beast has chosen the Bellows for its next target, and it has gathered quite a following as it stomps toward the hated edifice of smoke and steel. The Plaguebearers limping after the Maggoth have no chance of actually controlling it, but they hope to capitalise on its sour fury by attacking in its wake.

The characters play a vital role in this battle, for they are the only ones who stand a chance against the Pox Maggoth. The slaving beast shrugs off most of the Ironweld Arsenal's gunfire and the Plaguebearers rally around it whenever their ranks seem to falter. Additionally, it and other Maggotkin recover 3 Toughness each round due to the corrupted defoliant.

If the party kill the Pox Maggoth, then the other Maggotkin break and flee, but until then the waves of Daemons seem endless. In addition to the **Pox Maggoth** (see page 30), the party must contend with four **Plaguebearers** (*Soulbound*, page 325) per character, with an additional two per character joining the fray at the start of every round. All around them, the defenders of the Bellows clash with swarms of Maggotkin, but this should serve as a backdrop for the characters' fight — you need only keep track of allies or enemies directly involved with the party's actions.




Creatures inside the Bellows have *Total Cover* from attacks made outside the building. The Bellows is not a proper fortification and lacks features like ramparts or ditches, but heroes can make ranged attacks through the windows or by climbing up to the roof. At the start of the second round, Duardin engineers start distributing Cinderblast Bombs to anyone with eyes to aim them and arms to lob them. With a **DN 5:1 Mind (Guile)** Test (alternative Skills may apply), a hero could persuade the engineers to part with one of their Grudgehammer Torpedo launchers, on the grounds that it would find better use in their hands.

The Cinderblast Bombs are single-use ranged weapons with the following profile:

- ✱ *Blast (4), Loud, Range (Short)*
- ✱ The Grudgehammer Torpedos are ranged weapons with the following profile:
- ✱ *Blast (5), Loud, Range (Long), Reload, Two-handed*


Outside, the characters can enter the melee with the Maggotkin or harry them from the shelter of nearby buildings, a separate zone that provides *Partial Cover*. The Ironweld Arsenal cannot risk opening the doors to let the characters inside while the attack is ongoing, so any heroes outside the walls must first clear the Nurgle forces before they can enter the Bellows.

If the Pox Maggoth still lives by the start of its turn on the third round, it deals a crushing blow to the building, smashing open a hole through which Plaguebearers charge. After this, the number of Plaguebearers that appear at the start of every round increases to three per character. If the Pox Maggoth survives to its fifth turn, then the Bellows is lost. The party might still prevail in this battle, but not before the Pox Maggoth reduces the headquarters of the Ironweld Arsenal to so much rubble.



### DESCRIBING THE BATTLE

A battle between the Maggotkin of Nurgle and the Ironweld Arsenal is an assault on all the senses. Frequent detonations, far too close for comfort, leave the characters' ears ringing, while the horrific stench of the Daemons can make even a Stormcast Eternal gag. When explosive Duardin weapons impact against the distended, boil-ridden Plaguebearers, the resulting fountain of ichor, pus, and other unmentionable fluids spatters warm and wet over all creatures nearby.





## THE BELLWS AT REST

The Pox Maggoth falls to the ground with a leaden thump, and the smoke clears as the last of the Plaguebearers retreat. The Ironweld Engineers begin to torch any corpses too close to the perimeter, and thank the characters for their part in the battle. The Duardin can take the party directly to Irina if they wish, but they might also want to take a moment to rest and explore the Bellows.

The flame of hope flickers and gutters here. Human and Duardin alike sought sanctuary in the hybrid factory-armoury, but while the Ironweld Arsenal has ammunition, weapons, and scrap metal in abundance, it sorely lacks in supplies. All these hungry mouths go through food like an Ogor through a barnhouse, and recently Nurgling infiltrators snuck inside and reduced many of their stores to piles of rotten, oozing muck. No matter what inventive firearms the Cogsmiths bring to bear, a ticking clock hangs over all their heads as their provisions dwindle.

The characters can tend to the wounds of the injured with a **DN 4:2 Mind (Medicine)** Test or lift spirits with a **DN 4:2 Soul (Entertain)** Test. If any heroes participate in such acts of charity, Doom decreases by 1.

The characters can also see about acquiring more weapons from the Ironweld Arsenal. The engineers part with a number of Cinderblast Bombs equal to a hero's successes on a **DN 4:S Mind (Guile)** Test, with the Difficulty raised by 1 if the Pox Maggoth broke through the walls — the engineers cannot spare much without exposing the Bellows even further. Unscrupulous characters might bypass the engineers and steal some ordnance for themselves with a **DN 4:S Body (Stealth)** Test. If the hero achieves 3 successes or more on either of these Tests, they may instead choose to acquire a Grudgehammer Torpedo.

## TALKING TO IRINA

The characters find Irina in one of the workshops in the courtyard. A hammer goes flying out the window as they approach, followed by a stream of inventive Khazalid curses. Through the hole in the glass, the characters can see the former High Architect, grease-stained and bare-shouldered, wearing the feather-and-cog emblem of her near-extinct Duardin lineage on a chain around her neck. A gas mask in the style of a Kharadron Quadbreather (though perhaps not as sleek) dangles from her ear — she loosened it to better shout abuse at her machine.

Her attitude ranges from surly, if the characters presented the evidence that led to her imprisonment, to grateful, if they attempted to defend her before the Conclave. Her

fellows in the Ironweld Arsenal never truly questioned her loyalty, chalking up her dismissal (or sentence) to Conclave politicking, and welcomed her with open arms when she returned to the Bellows. Talking with the party, Irina can't help but remind them every few minutes that she was right and they should have listened to her, but there is a tinge of sorrow in her voice. She mourns her former student Zadreh, and the bright young mind the world lost to Chaos.

## IRINA'S MACHINE

Irina takes great pride in her invention when she's not berating it for being the worst piece of junk the Mortal Realms has ever seen, and shows it off as soon as the characters give her the slightest excuse. She built most of the techno-arcane device using parts from a downed Gyrocopter, and has nicknamed the resulting mess of scrap metal and salvage 'The Gyrocleanser'. Pipes and canisters have been welded like jigsaw pieces all over its surface, and the frame is frigid even when inactive, its iron surface slick with condensation. When Irina flips a lever near the machine's base, the rotor blades at its heart begin to rotate, slow at first but picking up speed, while nozzles on its side disperse an odourless, green-white 'aero-solution' formed from Aqua Ghyranis.

Irina demonstrates the machine's function by pointing to the broken window, through which drifts wisps of the ambient, corrupted defoliant that cloaks the city. The aero-solution and the defoliant meet like waves crashing into each other, before both dispersing into invisibility. Irina is confident that, once she works out the last few kinks, she can use the Gyrocleanser to neutralise Zadreh's defoliant city-wide.



At that point a gasket bursts, and Irina kneels, grumbling, to make repairs. The party have a chance to inspect her device and ask her questions.

**How does the neutraliser work?** Knowing it would be an uphill battle to fight Zadreh on the field of her former student's choosing, so to speak, Irina designed a neutralising agent that did not require access to the defoliant system in order to function. The former High Architect can't help but lapse into impenetrable techno-babble when she gets excited, but the gist of her explanation is that the aerosolution emitted by the Gyrocleanser smothers the tainted defoliant upon contact. Furthermore, if deployed correctly, the gas should diffuse over Anvilgard like a protective shield. Though imperceptible to the naked eye, in this state it would render any current or future corrupted defoliant inert for at least a couple days — long enough for the resistance within Anvilgard to strike back against the invaders and find a permanent solution for the corrupting mist.

**What do you mean, 'deployed correctly'?** The aerosolution is heavy compared to air. In order to maximise its effectiveness, the Gyrocleanser has to be activated at a point within Anvilgard above the defoliant — '*a local maxima, if you will*' — from which the neutraliser can flow like water running downhill. Characters who participated in the events of *Petrified Wood* or who are familiar with the city know there's one place that fits the criteria: Spireroot.

**How do you plan on moving it?** That was to be Irina's next project after she got the Gyrocleanser functional. She has some sketches on her desk for a Freeguild Steam Tank modified to house and transport the Gyrocleanser, but the Bellows doesn't have the infrastructure to build that kind of heavy machinery in a timely manner. However, now that the characters are here, Irina might be able to delegate that particular problem. The party's spells, Miracles, special equipment, or sheer brawn could provide a solution that an Ironweld Engineer would never be able to devise.

Characters with Training in Crafting can help Irina complete the Gyrocleanser. With a **DN 5:1 Mind (Crafting)** Test, the hero finds a way to build upon or streamline Irina's design. Each character may only attempt to improve on the Gyrocleanser once. Keep track of how many improvements the characters make to the Gyrocleanser, as they will be relevant when it comes time to deploy the machine.

Irina has a scientist's curiosity and welcomes all suggestions that could make her machine better, but she doesn't mince words if the party's ideas are unsound. Should none of the characters pass the Crafting Test, either because they failed or could not try, Irina shoos them out of the room and says she needs to focus. If she works through the night, she can finish the Gyrocleanser by tomorrow morning. The characters have an opportunity to Rest in the relative safety of the Bellows if they wish, or can venture out into the mist to help the city. If the party choose to leave the Bellows to help the people of Anvilgard, Doom decreases by 1.

## A NEW DAY

One way or another, by the time the light of Hysh rises, the Gyrocleanser is complete. Irina insists that wherever the Gyrocleanser goes she follows, in case she needs to make any field repairs or last-minute adjustments, but otherwise she defers to the party when it comes to planning.

If none of the characters identified Spireroot as an ideal place to deploy the machine, then Irina pulls out a map and points out the grove's merits. Nothing can force the characters to go to Spireroot if they don't want to — perhaps the party ran afoul of the Sylvaneth in previous adventures — but in that case, they must find another way to raise the Gyrocleanser to an appropriate elevation, as the surrounding neighbourhoods do not reach above the mist. The party can also postpone their departure if they wish, but every day that passes the larger the Maggotkin force within the city becomes, and the closer the realmgates of Anvilgard get to becoming permanently shut. For each day that passes, Doom increases by 1.

Once the characters decide to leave, the Ironweld Engineers see them off. They are a practical sort and have no elaborate rituals or farewell ceremonies, but their hopes are riding on the party, and they want to help as much as they can before the party leaves. The older Longbeards give the characters gruff, sensible advice, of the kind that saw their Dispossessed ancestors through long centuries of exile, while the engineers press 'just in case' packets of gears, bolts, and sprockets into the heroes' hands.

Irina says her own private farewells, and gives the feather-and-cog emblem around her neck a good polish before she tells the party she's ready to go. The Duardin is well liked here, and will be missed if she does not return.



## PART 4: SPIREROOT

The party have found a way to neutralise Zadreh's tainted defoliant. Together with Irina Heiksdotr and her Gyrocleanser, they journey into the Nurgle-ridden streets of the city to end the corruption hanging over Anvilgard.

As tall as a typical Stormcast Eternal and three times as heavy, the Gyrocleanser requires a beast of burden like a Horse or a character with good Might just to pull it at a slow, plodding pace. Miracles like *Favourable Tides* might facilitate the Gyrocleanser's movement, or the party might have spent their time at the Bellows designing something that could help transport Irina's machine — perhaps even affixing an aether-endrin to the device.

Towing the machine is a **DN 5:10 Body (Might)** Extended Test, with attempts made hourly, and the Difficulty or Complexity lowered as appropriate by the party's aid. For the purposes of combat, the Gyrocleanser has 3 Armour and 15 Toughness. Irina, or characters with Training in Crafting, can restore Toughness to the Gyrocleanser equal to their successes on a **DN 4:S Mind (Crafting)** Test over the course of an hour.

During the journey, the Gyrocleanser may suffer complications that Irina cannot easily repair. These can manifest as mechanisms bent out of shape by a hasty retreat, or acid damage caused by a sudden, suicidal ambush of Nurglings. Keep track of the number of complications that occur over the journey, as, like the characters' improvements, they will be relevant when it comes time to deploy the machine.

### THE DESPONDENT RANKS

As the party move through the city, they see a foreboding new development. More and more Anvilgardians have given in to despair, embracing Papa Nurgle's touch rather than fighting him. These corrupted mortals limp through the streets to maximise their exposure to the tainted defoliant, shepherded by cultists ringing rusted iron tocsins.

Every three hours, the characters encounter another one of these morbid processions. They number 15 diseased Anvilgardians (use stats for a **Plaguebearer** to represent them in combat, except their attacks deal +S Damage and have the *Crushing* Trait), plus 1 **Filth Pit Summoner** (see page 29) per character and a variable contingent of Maggotkin Daemons. Roll 1d6 or pick from the following list to determine the nature of the band's Daemoniac escort.

- ✧ **1–2: 4 Nurglings** (see page 28) per character, clambering over the eaves and jeering at the mournful marchers below.
- ✧ **3–4: 2 Plaguebearers** (*Soulbound*, page 325) per character, a visual demonstration of these Anvilgardians' eventual fate.
- ✧ **5–6: 3 Beasts of Nurgle** (see page 27), oozing along in the hopes they can play with whichever one of the marching mortals falters.

Irina advises the party avoid them. She fears the servants of Nurgle will damage her machine if it comes to open combat, and even if it does the heroes might want to show these people more clemency than they would ordinary servants of Chaos — any character who succeeds on a **DN 4:1 Mind (Intuition)** Test can tell the shuffling ranks are not beyond saving. Many stumble or step out of the crowd before the bell-ringers shove them back in line, and they have confused, bleary expressions on their faces, like people caught in the delirium of a high fever.

Stealth is difficult when escorting a device so bulky, but with careful timing and precise movements, the party can move the Gyrocleanser past the procession undetected. Sneaking past the corrupted throngs is a **DN 5:1 Body or Mind (Stealth)** Test for each character, with the DN increased to 5:3 for whoever takes charge of moving the machine. If half or more of the party succeed, the heroes make it through the street unscathed, but if less than half succeed, the characters are in for a fight.

A character can also make a **DN 6:3 Soul (Determination or Devotion)** Test to pull the infected, either literally or metaphorically, out of the fog that clouds their minds. Many Anvilgardians worship Sigmar, but the characters need not appeal to a specific god, only the civilians' sense of hope and resilience. On a success, the shambling civilians blink and shake their heads, as if jolted awake. Doom decreases by 1. Many scatter, running in blind panic, while others fall to the ground, hacking and coughing, for as they have turned against their diseases so their diseases have turned against them. A few attack the cultists or the Daemons escorting them, giving the party a chance to keep moving. On a failure, the character's actions fail to reach the infected. The ringing of bells soon drowns out their words, as the cultists call for their subjects to charge.

If it comes to combat, the infected civilians throw themselves at the characters, while the Daemons and the Filth Pit Summoners, suspicious of the machine, target the Gyrocleanser. The Gyrocleanser suffers a complication for every 3 Damage it takes, and it suffers an additional complication if the characters take the Flee or Retreat Actions, its delicate mechanical parts damaged in the rush to get away. Remember to keep track of these complications!

## BRANCHING POSSIBILITIES

At the end of their journey through Anvilgard's streets, the characters reach Spireroot. The three spires that support the Sylvaneth enclave rise above the corrupting mist, beacons of wholesome growth amid a sea of depravity. What was once a design of mere convenience — the home of the Sylvaneth sits out of reach of the defoliant because it gives the children of Alarielle rashes and headaches — has turned into a lifesaving advantage.

The current state of the Grove depends on the resolution of *Petrified Wood*.

## A FLOURISHING GROVE

If the party protected Spireroot from the worst of the Skaven assault and all three of the Branchwyches are still alive, the closer they get to the enclave, the more displays of Sylvaneth strength they see. The arrow-riddled corpses of Rot Flies adorn the roofs of nearby buildings, and a couple of errant plague-ridden hands still stick to the sides of the spires where the Kurnoth Hunters bifurcated their limbs mid-climb. Sylvaneth members of the Binding can hear a rhythm of vigilance and defiance in the Spirit-Song as they get closer to the top of the towers.

Upon approaching Spireroot, the living vines — which act as the fastest method of reaching the Sylvaneth grove — descend to lift the party and the Gyrocleanser up.

When they reach the top, Spite-branch greets them with a pair of Kurnoth Hunters. Though her expression remains locked in a wooden scowl, by her stance and her tone even non-Sylvaneth can tell she is happy to see them, and she welcomes them all as friends. She asks what the purpose of their machine is, and though the Branchwych is wary of both Irina Heiksdotr and her metal contraption, she accepts both into Spireroot if the party vouch for them.

Inside Spireroot, the party find Sylvaneth have temporarily halted the early stages of their departure to fight the Nurgle menace. Though vastly outnumbered, the children

of Alarielle have so far repelled every attempt by Nurgle's forces to invade their enclave, and stand ready to assist the party if it means thwarting their goddess's ancient foe.

In this case, the Sylvaneth aid the party in defending the Gyrocleanser once they deploy it. All Zones within Spireroot become *Major Hazards* and *Difficult Terrain* for Daemons and those Corrupted by Chaos, as the Sylvaneth pepper their enemies with arrows and snag their feet (and pseudopods, and chitinous legs) with animated roots.

## A CLOISTERED GROVE

If the party stopped the Clan Pestilens scheme in *Petrified Wood* but one or more of the Branchwyches perished in the Defilement, the Sylvaneth closed Spireroot weeks ago in order to prepare for their departure from Anvilgard in safety. The Maggotkin invasion, on top of the grove's already sizeable troubles, has pushed the Sylvaneth to the brink. This is the situation by default if your group skipped *Petrified Wood*.

In a desperate attempt to protect their enclave, the surviving Branchwyches have encased Spireroot inside a dome of iron-hard bark, covered with combustible firemoss and territorial Spites. A few errant Plague Drones buzz around the dome when the party arrive, but there is no great urgency to their movements: the Maggotkin are content to first secure their hold on Anvilgard before cracking open the sweet treat that is the as-of-yet unspoiled Spireroot.

With the living vines damaged in the Defilement, the party must make a **DN: 4:8 Group Test** (see *Soulbound*, page 297) using **Body (Might)** to transport the Gyrocleanser up the abandoned towers. On a failure, the characters still manage to get the machine up to Spireroot, but they incur a complication as they push and shove it up the steps. Alternatively, the party could make the same Group Test but use **Mind (Crafting)** and **Body (Might)** to move the Gyrocleanser higher using winches or pulleys.

Upon ascending the spire, the party face an additional challenge: they must persuade the Sylvaneth to let them inside (or attempt less diplomatic methods, at the cost of friendly relationships with Spireroot). Misunderstandings cause the Sylvaneth to lash out, damaging the Gyrocleanser and inflicting it with a complication, though with patience the party can still impress upon the Sylvaneth that the Gyrocleanser will undo the defoliant's harm, not compound on it. Sorrow-branch is inclined to trust the party but is paranoid about the risk of infection to the Soulpod Grove. She does not admit any of the party into Spireroot until she thoroughly checks them for signs of disease, and even then she watches them constantly, as tense as a Ghyran flytrap.



Within the Grove, the characters see that many of the Sylvaneth have slipped into a kind of early winter dormancy in order to minimise their exposure to the tainted defoliant, their branches carefully pruned by the Branchwyches to keep them free of rot. Those Sylvaneth that remain active patrol the borders of Spireroot under Spite-branch's command, providing she survived the Defilement, with wards of crushed cyclestone painted into their bark, and do not dare descend any lower into the city, where the defoliant is denser and more potent.

In this case, the Sylvaneth are stretched too thin to join the party in defending the Gyrocleanser. Unwilling to hide in the Soulpod Grove as she did during the Defilement, Sorrow-branch joins the party, making all Zones within Spireroot *Difficult Terrain* for Daemons and mortals corrupted by Chaos as long as she lives. Spite-branch and the other Sylvaneth forces focus on defending their own from the incoming horde of Nurgle abominations.

## A DESOLATE GROVE

If the party utterly failed to defend Spireroot in *Petrified Wood* and all the Branchwyches of the coven died, then the Sylvaneth have long ago abandoned Anvilgard. Spireroot is deserted. Only leafless, skeletal trees remain, and a mournful wind whips between the branches.

As in the previous scenarios, the party must find a way to get the Gyrocleanser up to Spireroot proper. The DN of the Group Test increases to **4:10**, as the abandoned towers are once more filled with poverty stricken and now thoroughly terrified citizens.

A few Nurglings have already taken residence in the ruins. Characters with a Natural Awareness of 3 or higher spot them sneaking through the decaying underbrush, and must dispatch them within one round before they get away. If the Nurglings escape, the early warning they provide to their Maggotkin allies counts as a complication.

While the party meet no resistance when entering Spireroot, they must deploy and defend the Gyrocleanser alone.

## DEPLOYING THE GYROCLEANSER

Irina positions the Gyrocleanser as close to the center of the Grove as possible in the forest, though the Sylvaneth hiss if she plants the machine too close to their sacred trees. She finishes any last-minute repairs, and then, after looking to the party for approval, flips the Gyrocleanser on. Read or paraphrase the following:

*The machine rattles as if with anticipation as the rotors within whirl into motion. White fog gushes from the nozzles, then swirls past your ankles, before tumbling in great sheets down the sides of Spireroot, like a waterfall in slow motion. From up here, you can watch the wave of neutralising gas peel back the tainted defoliant street by street, unveiling — totally unshrouded for the first time in who-knows-how-long — Anvilgard, a resilient city, bloodied but not beaten. One by one Irina's aero-solution reveals the shops dotting Harbour Avenue, and then the dome of the Court of Knaves, and then the market districts.*

*It also reveals what must be hundreds of Maggotkin, lining the streets. They hiss and bat at the wave of cleansing fog, and their heads turn as one towards its source.*

The party have a few minutes to steel themselves as a tide of enraged Maggotkin approaches (enough to Take a Breather). When battle is joined, they must defend the Gyrocleanser for five rounds by default, so that the neutraliser washing over the city has time to reach critical density. For every improvement they made to the machine in the Bellows, they must defend the machine for one less round. For every complication that occurred on their journey, they must defend the machine for one additional round.

If the party abandon the Gyrocleanser before the requisite number of rounds, then Zadreh's defoliant swirls back over the city over the next couple hours. If the party retreated after less than half the number of required rounds, then the tainted fog resurges at full strength. Otherwise, it returns slightly paler, and only heals 1 Toughness at the start of a Maggotkin's turn instead of 3.



## THE NOXIOUS SWARM

The tainted defoliant cannot reach this elevation and the Maggotkin do not heal here at the start of their turns, but the waves of diseased monsters still seem endless. To begin, one **Plague Drone** (see page 30) per character flies up to Spireroot, their Rot Flies filling the air with a low, angry buzz. Half the Plague Drones keep their distance and bombard the party with Death's Head projectiles, while the others swoop in close, commanding their Rot Flies to stab and rend with their armour-piercing stings. Every round thereafter, one more Plague Drone joins the assault.

At the start of the second round, a Swarm of six **Nurglings** (see page 28) per character skitter along one of the three roots suspending Spireroot. The diminutive, antlered Daemons find no humour in this situation, and instead seek only vengeance against the spoilsports who deprived them of their wonderful mist. Every round thereafter, another Swarm of six Nurglings joins the assault.

At the start of the third round, a Swarm of four **Plaguebearers** (*Soulbound*, page 325) per character charge along the suspending roots towards the party. Any party members looking over the edge can see Plaguebearers now carpet the sides of the abandoned towers like ants over a corpse, their Plagueswords sheathed in gross protrusions on their backs as they climb. Every round thereafter, another Swarm of four Plaguebearers joins the assault.

Reinforcements continue to arrive for as long as the party defend the Gyrocleanser. As the Gamemaster, feel free to adjust the timing and amount of enemies to better challenge your party.

## CLEAR SKIES

At the start of the second to last round (or when you feel the party have been pushed to their very limit), a shadow rises out of the wall of fog where the neutraliser and the tainted defoliant meet. At first it seems like another Nurgle abomination come to throw itself at the party, but as the silhouette comes into view the heroes can see it lacks wings or foul mouthparts. Instead, the *Blackfin* sails upon currents of ethersea using Súlemek's magic, with parts salvaged from the Kharadron airship *Bulz Mulnkumeron* providing it extra lift — and firepower.

*'There my favourite do-gooders are!'* Theriel Kaltis shouts over the wind, as his ship approaches Spireroot. *'I suppose I should thank you for clearing the skies! It's been hard sailing with the weather we've been having.'*

The *Blackfin* reaches Spireroot when there are only one or two rounds left. It circles overhead as its crew drops rope ladders down to the party below. The Corsair yells for the characters to flee with him as his first mate wards off Plague Drones with magic from The Deeps, but Irina throws out a hand and says, *'Not yet! Just a little longer!'*

Once the party have defended the Gyrocleanser for the full number of rounds, there is no more reason to stay. The heroes, Irina, and any Sylvaneth survivors clamber aboard the *Blackfin*, and with one final volley from its modified aethermatic cannon, the ship flies out toward the bay.

## MAKING A STAND

Here are a couple tips for running this scene:

Have fun describing the effects of the Gyrocleanser's improvements and complications in the moment! Perhaps a coolant rigging designed by one of the heroes lets the machine synthesise its aero-solution faster than Irina had ever anticipated. On the other hand, maybe the hacking of Plagueswords or insidious magical rust damaged a key component during the journey, causing the Gyrocleanser to tremble dangerously as the inner motors spin out of alignment. This way the party can get a sense of the impact their previous actions had on this battle.

In addition, try to give the party clear indications as to how much longer they must defend the Gyrocleanser. Fights like these can feel interminable if the players don't have a sense of the progress they're making, so describe how the neutraliser pushes the tainted defoliant back with every passing round, or have Irina shout progress updates as she tends to her machine. In the third to last round, Irina starts a 15 second countdown toward the neutraliser reaching peak efficacy.

Finally, remember that it can feel cheap for an NPC swoop in to rescue the party when they're supposed to be the heroes of the story. This is why Theriel appears before the Gyrocleanser finishes operating, not after: it gives the party a chance to make a choice and stand their ground, rather than flee at the first opportunity. If you can, foreshadow the *Blackfin*'s arrival earlier in the adventure, such as with Súlemek telling the party that if they clear the skies then help will come. The flying ship's presence is only possible because of what the party has done.





## PART 5: THE HEAD OF THE COIL

With the characters and their allies safely aboard, the *Blackfin* retreats. Plague Drones pursue the flying ship, but pulses of Deep magic from Sulémek's staff causes them to slip off their befuddled Rot Flies, their cyclopean eyes rolling back into their heads. Soon, the *Blackfin* leaves behind its Maggotkin pursuers. Strangely, even though the Anvilgardians below have started to step out of their homes to breathe in the fresh air, none of them so much as look at the ship flying over their heads.

Theriel Kaltis stands at the forecandle of his ship, obviously pleased with its performance. If the characters speak with him, he assures the heroes he means them no harm and that he acts for the liberation of Anvilgard, but otherwise asks them to reserve their questions until they make it back to the safety of the bay.

Once it reaches the water, the *Blackfin* makes its descent. It graces the ocean with barely a ripple — and then continues to sink, enclosed within a bubble of ethersea, until the entire ship vanishes beneath the waves.

### THE SAFETY OF THE BAY

Anvilgard's bustling port sees ships and goods from all along the Charrwind Coast, though for obvious reasons the docks have gone quiet in recent days. The waters just beyond are redolent with sunken ships, and as the *Blackfin* sinks into the water, misdirecting Idoneth magic disguises it as just another wreck.

As the *Blackfin* slowly submerges to the seafloor, read or paraphrase the following:

*Through the shimmering surface of the ethersea bubble, you glimpse a rare underwater perspective on Anvilgard's bay. Long-necked plesiosaurs undulate past the ship, and crabs scatter from the seafloor as the Blackfin comes to rest in the sand. The ship has settled at a depth where sunlight still reaches, a certain death if not for the magic of the Deeps. Theriel, with a wry smile, says you are free to go where you wish, but that he takes no responsibility if you expose yourself to ancient marine predators or the crushing pressure of the ocean.*

This is the calm before the storm, and the party's last chance to regroup and recover before the final confrontation.

## THE NEW BLACKFIN

Now that they are not fleeing for their lives, the characters can inspect the *Blackfin* up close. Theriel Kaltis has not been idle since the events of **Blood Tide**, and used his salvage from the *Bulz Mulnkumeron* to great effect. His flying ship hybridises Kharadron technology with Idoneth magic, held together with a healthy dose of Corsair cunning. In many ways, the *Blackfin* now resembles the Binding: an alloy of disparate cultures, made stronger by its many origins.

Where before the *Blackfin* could only ride upon gouts of summoned ethersea, now the ship is capable of sustained flight, and has the firepower to defend itself against the threats of the sky. A perennial enchantment lingers over many of Theriel's most dramatic modifications: the characters find their attention sliding away if they look for any length of time. Heroes must pass a **DN 4:3 Soul (Determination)** Test to remember looking at all, and even then the details sit blurry in their minds.

Theriel acknowledges his vessel might draw the enmity of the Kharadron, but he has no objections to resupplies of aether-gold that come to him instead of the other way around. He doesn't mention that his Idoneth allies intend to shield the *Blackfin* from Kharadron memory and view, in the hopes of keeping the frequency of Kharadron pursuers manageable, and that if it must come to a fight, then Duardin souls are as good as any other to the Deepkin.

Many members of Theriel's old crew still serve with him (their attitudes ranging from enthusiasm to unease, depending on how much they like heights), but he has also brought aboard a number of blind Namarti sailors, as well as a duo of Isharann Idoneth who are as dour and laconic as Sulémek. The very name of their enclave is a closely guarded secret, and the habit of isolation is so strong that they refuse to speak to any of the characters, even other Idoneth.

## A TEMPORARY REPRIEVE

With the Gyrocleanser's neutralising 'shield' weakening by the hour, the party cannot stay here long. But Irina assures them that her aero-solution will last at least the night, and Theriel Kaltis gives the characters the freedom of the *Blackfin* for as long as they need to rest and lick their wounds. No one has used the guest quarters since the events of **Blood Tide**, and Theriel jokes that all the party's things are right where they left them.

If Sylvaneth survivors came with the party from Spireroot, then there is little room for them anywhere except the crowded crew quarters, which already contain more pale, silent Idoneth than Theriel's sailors would prefer. Instead, the Sylvaneth elect to take root on the *Blackfin's* forecandle, where they perform mourning rituals for their fallen before setting themselves to the solemn work of preparing once more for war. Joy-branch, if she lives, sits near the railing of the ship, watching the kelp wave with the current. After a night of meditation with any of her remaining sisters, she confers with Theriel and declares the Sylvaneth will fight alongside the Blackscale Coil for as long as Nurgle's corruption remains in the city.

Irina is uneasy about working the Blackscale Coil, but grudgingly acknowledges they have a common enemy. Her fascination with the additions Theriel has made to his ship outweighs any misgivings about cooperating with the syndicate, and she badgers Sulémek constantly to let her inspect the Kharadron technology '*without my eyes crossing like I've been on the Bugman's*'. She makes arrangements with Theriel to return to the Bellows once the ship resurfaces, so she can rally the Ironweld Arsenal to join the fight.





## DRUSA KRAETH

If the party wants to get some answers out of Theriel, he shows them to his personal quarters, where they can sit and talk in comfort. Otherwise, he waits for them to finish a Rest before extending his invitation.

His cabin is as immaculate as ever, with not a single phial of poison or polished sword out of alignment despite the speed of the *Blackfin's* retreat. The party, however, are not his only guests. An Aelf dressed head-to-toe in Bataari firesilk examines the nautical charts on the far wall. Between her robe and veil, not an inch of her skin is exposed, except the space around her eyes. This is Drusa Kraeth, the mysterious head of the Blackscale Coil in Anvilgard. Likely unbeknownst to the party, they may have already met Drusa during *Aqua Nurglis*, where she used the name Ahnika.

Drusa welcomes the characters with open, inviting warmth, her gaze lingering over any heroes who spoke with her previously. Theriel shows her respectful (though not slavish) deference, introducing her by her true name, Drusa Kraeth. He tells the party *“Think of her as my captain. Though I suppose that would make her an admiral... Regardless, I’ll let you get acquainted.”* Then he steps aside and gives the floor to the Darkling Sorceress. Read or paraphrase the following, directed toward the most forward character:



*Drusa lays a gloved hand over yours: a light touch, demanding nothing, but open to suggestions. ‘How trying these past few days must have been for you,’ she says, ‘though Sulémek tells me you’ve risen quite admirably to the occasion.’ She sighs. ‘Still, after all the trouble you’ve met here, you must think Anvilgard a mess. I assure you, things ran much more smoothly when this city laid in more... delicate hands.’ Her eyes twinkle in an unseen smile, as if she’s inviting you into a private joke.*

*Then the moment passes, and she straightens, looking over the party. ‘Let me be frank. The Blackscale Coil wants its city back, and I presume so do you. Theriel, subtle as a Troggoth he may be, has sought allies such as yourself to aid us in achieving our mutual ends. I won’t force your hand: you can leave us and sit idly by while this rot festers in our city, or you can join us in defending Anvilgard during its time of greatest need. But it seems an easy choice to me.’*

Once Drusa finishes speaking, each character must make a **DN 6:2 Soul (Determination)** Test or be *Charmed* by her for the rest of the scene. Drusa exudes a constant, bewitching aura of magical charisma, which she can do no more to prevent than her own heartbeat. However, she does not intend to do anything untoward toward those ensnared by her sorcery. If anything, she loses interest in them, preferring to speak instead with those who resisted her charms.

If the characters agree to join forces with the Blackscale Coil, Drusa outlines her plan of attack. Even with the tainted defoliant cleansed, Nurgle’s forces are too numerous to fight head-on. Instead, she believes the best course of action is to sneak a small, elite team into the Conclave — this she says with a pointed look to the party — to isolate the cult leaders and vanquish them one by one, culminating with the Great Unclean One. With the Maggotkin leadership silenced, Drusa can then lead an allied coalition of Anvilgardian troops to rout the confused and disarrayed Daemons, sweeping them out of the city for good.

Drusa listens to strategic feedback from the party unless it is obviously unsound, though depending on how dramatic the characters’ alterations to the plan are, you may have to adjust the encounters in the final part of the adventure. She also explains anything the party still don’t understand, with patience and good humour.

**Are you the leader of the Blackscale Coil?** Drusa laughs. 'Not at all,' she says. 'That honour belongs to one beyond any of us.' If the characters press further, she offers to trade a secret for a secret. In return for something she does not know — something which gives her influence, leverage, or power — Drusa gives the party a name: *Visharhein*. Further investigation into the mysterious leader of the Blackscale Coil must wait until after the party deal with the Maggotkin.

**Who are the leaders of the Maggotkin?** The Blackscale Coil has long suspected a corrupting influence inside the Conclave of Anvilgard, but to their regret the rot went far deeper than they ever thought. Now, as the cult moves in the open, Drusa can confidently name its three mortal leaders: Tibor Hallowgate, Zadreh Kragward, and Morgan Kassan. Her accusation against Morgan is false and Drusa knows it, but the Councillor has been a thorn in the Coil's side for a long time, and Drusa never wastes an opportunity to dispatch an inconvenient enemy. If the characters question Drusa's claims about Morgan, she raises questions about Morgan's recent suspicious behaviour. Has she not served as Tibor's right hand for years? Where was she the night the Binding went to meet her at the walls? Doesn't it seem convenient that on the night of the invasion, she brought the heroes where the fighting would be the thickest and they would be the most vulnerable?

**What other allies do you have?** The most powerful faction on the Blackscale Coil's side are the Idoneth of Sulémek's enclave. The Deepkin refuse to spend lives on a bloody and protracted battle in the streets, but they have agreed to finish off the Daemonic foot soldiers if the characters can assassinate the Maggotkin generals. Other pockets of resistance from the Darkling Covens, the Scourge Privateers, and the Order Serpents all await Drusa's order to strike. If the characters sought out any allied groups earlier in the adventure, then Drusa has sent messengers their way, telling them to prepare for battle.

**Where's the Crucible of Life?** The last time the party saw Theriel Kaltis, the Corsair might have absconded with the Crucible of Life, a powerful magical artefact from the Age of Myth, while the heroes were otherwise occupied. Unfortunately, he did not have the divine influence necessary to cleanse the chalice of its corruption, so he sold it to Drusa, who then passed it on to her own benefactors. If the party seek it out, their search returns a dead end. In truth, the Crucible is now in the hands of Morathi. The High Oracle has cleansed the artefact of its Chaos taint and has given it a new, remarkably sanguine aspect.

Once they have settled on a plan, Drusa bids the party prepare themselves. Sulémek can take them to the Conclave as soon they are ready, while Theriel watches from the skies, ready to provide support once the assault on the Great Unclean One begins. They should act soon if they want to capitalise on the opening made by Irina's neutraliser.

### WRIGGLING OUT OF THE COIL

The characters can spurn the Blackscale Coil's help if they so choose. After all, the leaders of the syndicate are exactly the type to stab the party in the back after their alliances of convenience are done, and the Binding might have already suffered two betrayals at Theriel's hands.

In this case, Drusa nods slightly, as if she's neither disappointed nor angry but simply perplexed. Voice still quite pleasant, she gives the characters one more chance to rethink before shrugging her shoulders and waving the party out of the room. Theriel sends the party, along with any allies the heroes can convince to come with them, up to the surface on a small skiff, and from that point on they are on their own.

The party must find their own way to infiltrate the Conclave, and the Blackfin does not appear to aid them in the battle against the Great Unclean One. Allied groups still appear as described in *The Reinforcements*, provided the party do the legwork of contacting them first and coordinating a cohesive assault. If the characters still prevail despite all these added difficulties, then when the city is saved, the Blackscale Coil have much less power in Anvilgard's new order, and it is up to the party which factions they elevate in the syndicate's place.







## PART 6: A SURGICAL STRIKE

When the characters are ready, Sulémek escorts them across the bay toward a secret entrance into the Conclave. With the use of ethersea, the underwater trek is no more difficult than an ordinary walk, though thalassophobic heroes might have to endure a fright or two as the ocean currents whoosh overhead. As they get closer to the city, Sulémek advises the party to watch out for drifting streams of sewage, which may be infected with Nurgle corruption.

Eventually, Sulémek brings the characters into a partially flooded cave, the air stale but breathable, which connects to the tunnel network beneath the entire city. This passage leads straight to the Conclave vaults, which the party might have visited in *Aqua Nurglis*. If the characters ask Sulémek how this suspiciously convenient security breach came to be, he shrugs, as if the idea that the Conclave could keep anything out of reach of the Blackscale Coil or its allies is barely worth entertaining.

The Aelf tells the party that they will reach the Dauntless Hall if they follow the tunnel along its course, taking the junctions that lead up wherever the path forks. He warns them that several times it will seem like the tunnel terminates in a dead end, but if they keep walking, they will find the illusory stone to be as insubstantial as mist. Then he dives back into the water, leaving the characters to their mission — Sulémek has other parts to play in the coming battle.

## CLEANSING THE CONCLAVE

True to Sulémek's word, the path from the secret cave to the Dauntless Hall is a straightforward one. None of Anvilgard's underground denizens interfere with the characters along the way, as the monster-hunting Corsairs long ago established that they would suffer no intruders along this particular stretch of ground. The party reach the Dauntless Hall within the hour if they follow Sulémek's instructions.

The party can tell they are close when they pass through the final illusory wall, and find themselves face to face with a massive steel vault door, embedded in the far wall of the tunnel. The door is decorated with a raised engraving of Grungni working at his anvil. No guards have patrolled down here since the Maggotkin invaded, and the sudden influx of Chaos magic overhead destabilised many of the spell-wards. Nonetheless, a few of the vault protections remain, so each of the characters must make a **DN 4:2 Body (Stealth)** or **Mind (Awareness)** Test or else run afoul of the lingering security measures. Heroes who fail have their dice pool reduced by 1 for Tests to navigate the Dauntless Hall, as their clumsiness alerts the Maggotkin overhead to the presence of intruders.

When the characters emerge from the vaults, they find themselves in a basement at the heart of the Dauntless Hall. Most of the Conclave functionaries who once walked these halls are dead, imprisoned, or worse, and in their place scamper Nurglings bearing reports

for their pestilent masters. In order to find their three targets — Tibor Hallowgate, Zadreh Kragward, and Morgan Kassan — the characters must navigate the Dauntless Hall undetected. Doing so is a **DN 5:10** Group Test (see *Soulbound*, page 297 for more on Group Tests) made for each of the three targets. At least one hero, leading the party, must name a target and succeed on a **Mind (Awareness)** Test to track down the target, but the other characters can contribute as they see fit. Suggested Skills include Reflexes, Stealth, or even Ballistic Skill and Weapon Skill if the heroes have *Subtle* weapons.

If the characters succeed, see the following sections for each target. If they fail, any Conclave members they have not already dealt with are alerted to their presence, and (barring Morgan) rush to warn the Great Unclean One. In this case, instead of fighting them separately, the characters must contend with the Councillors who escaped and Morbithrax together.



## TIBOR HALLOWGATE

The party find Tibor in the rubble of a ruined meeting room, pontificating before a row of captive Conclave Councillors. His skin has split open all over his body, but particularly around his abdomen, exposing his muscles and organs to the air, and he has pushed his sleeves back to his shoulders, revealing arms laden with trembling boils. His voice is hoarse from explaining the benefits of his current condition to his former friends and associates, all of whom are bound and gagged, but that does little to slow Tibor's meandering, spittle-flecked speech. Tibor is accompanied by two **Filth Pit Summoners** (see page 29), one enraptured by his words and another whose attention seems to be drifting.

Statistics for **Tibor** can be found on page 31. Tibor might also possess the Crucible of Life, if the characters recovered it in *Aqua Nurglis* and returned it to him. He has been drinking deep from its corrupted waters, and the growths caused by drops sloshing over the rim have fused his swollen hand to the artefact he so prizes. If so, he gains the following Trait:

- ✱ **The Crucible of Life:** Tibor possesses a powerful artefact filled with corrupted Aqua Ghyranis. At the start of his turn, it may restore 5 Toughness to a Maggotkin within Close Range, including himself. Alternatively, it can douse an enemy within Close Range with corrupted water, forcing them to make a **DN 5:2 Body (Fortitude)** Test. On a failure, the target's maximum Toughness decreases by 1 and they contract the Burstings. (See page 4 of *Aqua Nurglis* for more information on the disease.)

In combat, Tibor prioritises spreading Nurgle's pestilent gifts among the party, convinced that the heroes will see the error of their ways once they feel the Plaguefather's blessed touch. Once he starts to suffer Wounds, Tibor attempts to flee. His intent is to find safety in Morbithrax's great shadow and warn him of the intruders, then face the Binding with the Greater Daemon by his side.

If the characters get Tibor to shut up long enough to question him about Morgan, he only smiles and says, *'Of course she serves me. She has always served me.'*

## ZADREH KRAGWARD

If Zadreh Kragward escaped during **The Garden Awakens**, he sits atop a pile of rubble overlooking the Great Unclean One's amphitheatre, working on a new invention. Bald patches on his head mark where he has torn out his own decaying hair in frustration, and he curses Irina with every other breath, determined that the next move in their game of defoliant and counter-defoliant will be their last.

Next to Zadreh stands a rust-caked artillery piece modified to launch projectiles of pure Nurgle filth. His 'Bileblaster Spewgun' has leech-like teeth around its rim, and any who look down its mouth soon find their eyes watering from the putrid fumes emanating from within. Statistics for Zadreh can be found on page 32. Five **Plaguebearers** (*Soulbound*, page 325) assist him with loading the gun and recording his notes, though Zadreh can handle the cannon alone if it comes to combat.



Zadreh can see all of the surrounding, flattened rubble from his vantage point and spots the party approaching at Extreme Range unless the heroes succeed on a **DN 5:3 Body (Stealth)** Test. He has fired enough test shots that no alarms are raised as he swivels the cannon to the party and launches a few more, but he abandons the gun to warn Morbithrax once hostiles enter his Zone.

If the party failed their Test to navigate the Dauntless Hall and Zadreh knew they were coming, he instead hides with his gun in an alcove built specifically for this purpose. The characters can root him out with a **DN 6:2 Mind (Awareness)** Test. If they fail, he unveils himself during the battle against Morbithrax, raining bile down upon the party from above. Entering Zadreh's Zone from below requires a **DN 4:2 Body (Athletics)** Test unless the character is able to fly.



## MORGAN KASSIN

The characters find Morgan lying in her office, on a cot she used to sleep on when Conclave work ran late. Her prison has no bars and the door isn't even locked, for Morgan is wasting away, too weak to raise her head. Her skin is pockmarked with sores from the 'gifts' Tibor has lavished upon her, and her breathing is irregular and shallow. There is a slick puddle on the floor, flecked with blood, from where Morgan has been retching her water.

The only way for Morgan to gather the strength to stand is to accept Nurgle's corrupting influence, but instead she has fought the Plaguefather with all her might for days on end. Near comatose with fatigue, she doesn't react when the party enter the room, though Miracles like *Revitalise* or a sphere of Aqua Ghyranis can restore her to consciousness. Then, she finds strength enough to whisper one sentence through her cracked lips: *'I knew you'd come.'*

The characters can kill Morgan with ease if they suspect a trick or believe Drusa Kraeth's lie. If they do so, Doom increases by 1 as one of Anvilgard's truest servants is killed and labelled a traitor. Alternatively, they might end her life out of mercy, as her condition is serious enough that even with all the magical and medical help in the Mortal Realms, she might never fully recover. But if the party keep hope, then they can lend her what aid they can, and come back for her when the battle for Anvilgard is over.

## THE GUILT OF MORGAN KASSIN

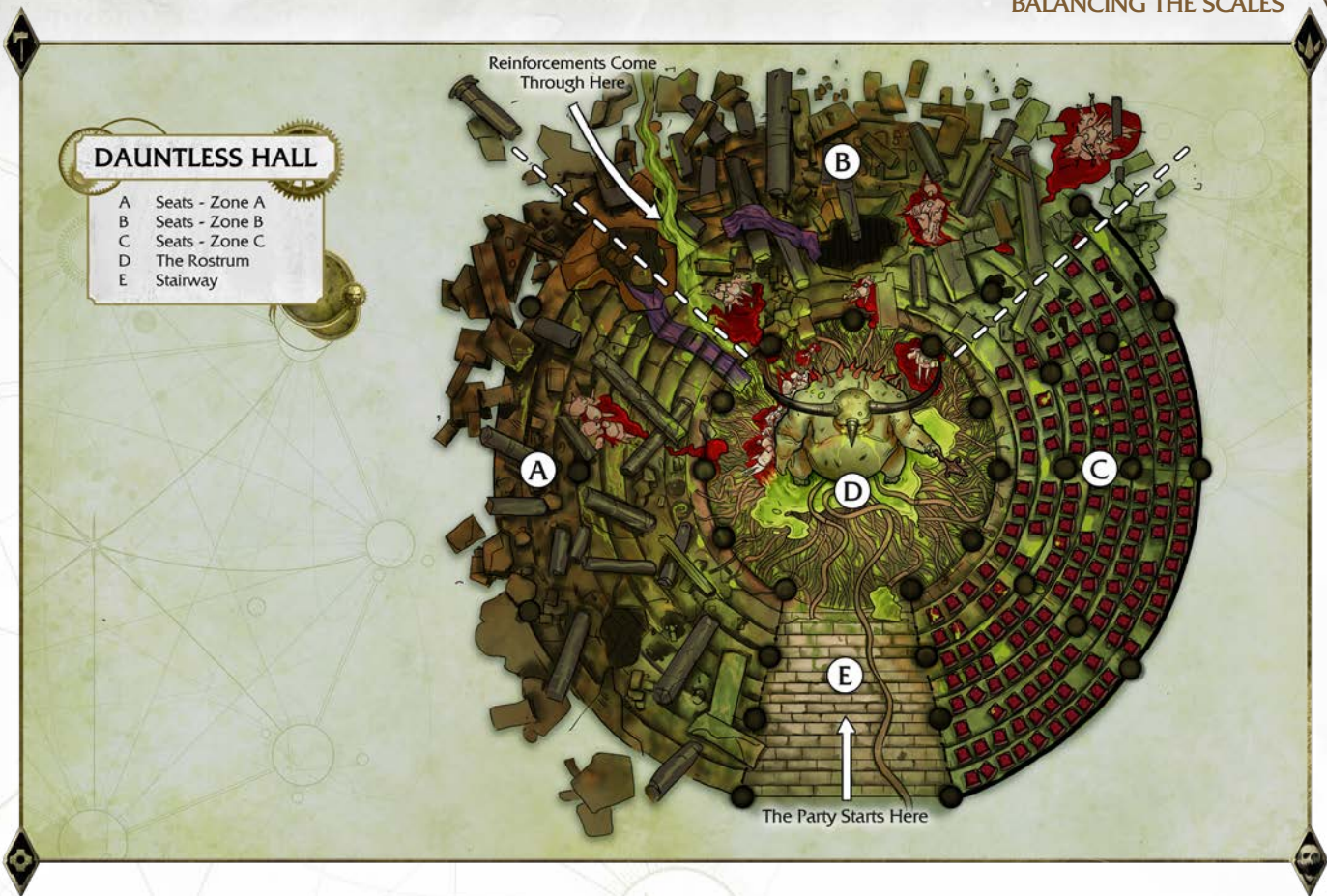
Drusa Kraeth and the members of the Blackscale Coil claim Morgan serves Nurgle, and the cult leaders Tibor and Zadreh do not deny this if asked. In Zadreh's case, he enjoys the party's despair and tells whatever lies he must to push the heroes closer to giving up hope, while Tibor truly believes Morgan has been on his side this entire time and that she only needs a little time to think before they can work together again.

Ultimately, there's very little concrete evidence to prove Morgan's true allegiance either way. The intent in this adventure is for the Binding's choice to be rooted purely in the heart: after everything Morgan has done for Anvilgard, do the characters trust her enough to spare her, even when all other voices say she is corrupt? Whatever they decide, the answer says more about the heroes than it does Morgan.

## MORBITHRAX THE BOUNTIFUL

However the party dealt with the Conclave members, the time eventually comes when they must face Morbithrax the Bountiful. Morbithrax is a **Great Unclean One (Soulbound)**, page 325) with the following adjustments.

- ✧ Morbithrax adds +1d6 per Doom to all Channelling Tests and Attacks.
- ✧ Morbithrax's *Corpulent Mass* Trait heals an additional amount of Toughness equal to the current Doom.



The Greater Daemon called Morbithrax the Bountiful sits in the ruins of the Dauntless Hall's central chamber, chortling as Nurglings bring him news of Anvilgard's descent into decay. His corpulent mass overflows the rostrum of the ruined amphitheatre, while the multi-tiered rings of seats around him are now piled with decaying bodies. Though his mood has soured with the cleansing of Zadreh's defoliant, he still wears a beneficent smile, for he knows that the neutraliser — like all things, really — is just a temporary setback to the final victory of his sire.

The characters have Advantage on Opposed Tests to ambush Morbithrax if they dispatched the other leaders quietly, but if Morbithrax received warning, there is no way for the party to approach him undetected. When Morbithrax sees the characters, his putrid folds of flesh shake with laughter, and he opens his arms as if to welcome the heroes into his stinking embrace. *'My little moppets,'* he says, in the garbled tongue of the Maggotkin. Mouths strain open along his stomach, repeating his proclamation in a dozen different languages. *'Your protestations do you credit. But come, come now. It is past time for Papa to put you to bed.'*

At least twice now the Binding have had to retreat from battle: once at the walls, and again at Spireroot. This time, however, is different. The allied forces of Order are relying

on them to vanquish Morbithrax, giving the coalition a chance to take advantage of the confusion and flush out the servants of the Plaguefather. If the characters fail here, Nurgle will bring Anvilgard into his seeping embrace.

## THE REINFORCEMENTS

At the start of the second round, Morbithrax calls for reinforcements. They appear — for both sides.

The angry buzz of Rot Flies fills the air, only to be cut short by the boom of cannons. The clouds pull back to reveal the *Blackfin*, circling above the Dauntless Hall, already wreathed in smoke as it fires a second volley at the swarm of Plague Drones beneath it. Theriel's airship bombards a Zone at the start of every round, making it a *Major Hazard*. A character can use an Action to call out a Zone for Theriel to target. Otherwise, Theriel focuses on the Great Unclean One.

At the same time, ranks of moaning Plaguebearers line up along the edges of the amphitheatre, preparing to charge the party. Their low grunts soon turn to confusion and pain, though, as new voices on the other side of the rubble rise in a triumphant chorus. *'Sigmar!'* some shout, while others yell, *'For Anvilgard!'* Hollow bellows resonating through tree bark, the whoosh and whistle of soaring rockets, and the roar of giant lizards might join them.



Every faction the party protected or contacted earlier in the adventure returns to help them in this battle. Any of the following groups might appear to fight alongside the characters:

- ✧ The Ironweld Engineers of the Bellows
- ✧ The Sylvaneth of Spireroot, if they survived *Petrified Wood*
- ✧ The Charrwind Rangers and the Freeguild regiments
- ✧ The pit fighters of the Blackscale Coil
- ✧ The dockworkers of Harbour Avenue
- ✧ The Seraphon of the Jade Temple

Feel free to add representatives from other factions as befit the party's actions and the events of your campaign.

Without interference, six Swarms of 10 **Plaguebearers** (*Soulbound*, page 325) each join the fray. Remove one Swarm of Plaguebearers from this combat for every allied group that appears. In addition, Morbithrax suffers 1 Damage, ignoring Armour, at the start of his turn for every allied group present, as the many peoples of Anvilgard each lend their strength to chip away at the tyrant's gruesome bulk.

Morbithrax's eyes bulge in shock at the appearance of so many ungrateful children, and his pretensions at paternal affection do not stay his hand as he lays waste with blade and flail.

## FREEING ANVILGARD

If the characters defeat Morbithrax, the Great Unclean One topples with an agonised moan. The impact of his body on the ground causes the earth itself to tremble, and those still standing grab onto each other to weather what feels like the Greater Daemon's final, deadly convulsions. A stunned silence follows. Then, as the dust settles and Morbithrax's flesh sags, the people of Anvilgard cheer.

Drusa, robe whipping in the wind, nods to the Binding from the bow of the *Blackfin*: the party has finished their part in the battle and the Blackscale Coil can handle the liberation of Anvilgard from here. She motions for Theriel to set a course for the docks, where awaits one army for them to lead and another for them to destroy.

Named allies, such as Irina and Joy-branch, stumble down into the amphitheatre to check on the characters. They have all endured serious injuries, but the elation of victory masks their pain. There will be time to assess the damage later. For now, they celebrate.

## AFTERMATH

After Morbithrax falls, Idoneth soldiers rise up from Anvilgard's bay and rout Nurgle's now-leaderless forces with ease. They also help themselves to their fair share of souls, but so subtle is their theft that no one suspects them until weeks after the fighting is over. The many civilians who go missing in the confusion of the battle are presumed dead by both the authorities and their loved ones.

With the occupying forces expelled, the long process of rebuilding begins. Many Conclave Councillors perished during the emergence, and later fight, with the Great Unclean One, and those who end up filling the empty seats clamour for the city to fund reconstruction efforts. But as the days pass, an inordinate amount of that money finds its way into the pockets of Blackscale Coil businesses, and the people in the streets mutter about who exactly nominated the names to fill all those sudden Conclave vacancies.

In truth, though, the people of Anvilgard mind the Blackscale Coil's tightening grip on the city less than before. Their trust in the Anvils of the Heldenhammer plummeted during the invasion, for the Stormcast Eternals were nowhere to be seen when the city needed them most — the fact that they were defending the Black Nexus means little to average citizens. Instead, the people of Anvilgard look to the shadowy syndicate for protection — and failing that, they turn to the party themselves. The city owes its liberators a great debt, and the characters enter the annals of Anvilgard's history to stand among its most valiant heroes.

The Conclave reinstates Irina as High Architect. If Morgan lives, she issues the order herself, her voice whisper-thin and trembling as she recovers her strength. As soon as High Architect Heiksdotr wears the badge again, the Duardin engineer sets about undoing Zadreh's influence on the defoliant system. Within the week, the old equilibrium between the jungle and the city is re-established, and a familiar grey-green mist settles over Anvilgard once again.

## WHAT NEXT?

For everything they did for the city, the party gains influence in both Anvilgard's Conclave and its shadowy underworld. Heroes can use this influence selflessly, by ensuring reconstruction funds get distributed where they're actually needed or by helping more people like Morgan earn seats in the Conclave. They can also spend it to advance their reputation among the Blackscale Coil, using their proximity to Drusa Kraeth to cow once-fierce pirates and sorceresses into submission.

The Last Breath falls apart after Morbithrax's death and their lingering plagues burn out over the coming months, but one corruption never fades — the Crucible of Life's defilement. A god's power tainted the mystic chalice, and only a god's power may cleanse it. Alarielle seems the most appropriate choice, and if the party need help getting to Ghyran, then Morgan mentions that an Anvilgardian Cogfort named the *Harbinger of Trouble* is departing soon for the Realm of Life. The Harbinger intends to reinforce the frontlines near a city called Greywater Fastness, and Captain Heinz allows the party on-board gratis if they promise to aid him in the coming battle. (For more on the *Harbinger* and Greywater Fastness, see the upcoming adventure supplement *Blackened Earth*.)

The party can also approach other gods to purify the chalice, but their influence may have unintended side-effects. If the party lost the Crucible of Life to the Blackscale Coil, this has already happened. Infused with Morathi's essence, the Crucible of Life now drips with warm blood. Some whisper that, in the depths of Hagg Nar, Morathi used the Crucible of Life to resurrect Khaine himself, but so many wild tales come out of Ulgu these days that it's impossible to separate truth from fact. The jungle can survive without the artefact, but any surviving Sylvaneth warn the party that the region shall feel the chalice's absence in the generations to come.

This is one of many hints that imply Morathi's interest in Anvilgard. The truth is that Morathi is the *Visharhein*, master of the Blackscale Coil, and she ordered Drusa to save the city because she wants it for herself. Discreetly, she also wanted to test the Idoneth's trustworthiness and their ability to fight alongside Khainite and Blackscale Aelves, for she formed a secret alliance with the Idoneth's High King in preparation for her takeover.

As Anvilgard rebuilds, Morathi's servants and sleeper agents make their final preparations, while the Idoneth raid settlements along the Charrwind Coast to bolster their soul-supplies. The party can investigate this conspiracy, but if they announce their findings too loudly then Drusa, Theriel, and Sulémek are ruthless in silencing them. At best, the party can smuggle a few civilians out of Anvilgard before Morathi's scheme begins.

A half-season from now, no matter how much it has recovered from the Maggotkin invasion, Anvilgard falls to Morathi and becomes Har Kuron, the City of Khaine. The party cannot prevent this — a goddess's schemes sweep aside even the most powerful Soulbound and Stormcast Eternals. But if the party proved they can cooperate with Drusa Kraeth and the Blackscale Coil, they win a place in Har Kuron's new order. Their exact titles and privileges depend on what responsibilities they are willing to accept, but the more power they have, the more allies they can spare from the new regime's worst cruelties.

On the other hand, the party might also be in position to spearhead the Anvilgardian resistance. Those who would defy Morathi are beleaguered, disorganised, and divided, but the party has the influence to bind these factions together. Through small acts of resistance, the party and their allies can prove the loyalist battlecry true. Now and always, *'Anvilgard endures!'*

## AWARDING EXPERIENCE

As well as awarding XP for achieving any personal or party Short- or Long-term Goals, award additional XP for the following:

- ✧ For completing the adventure, award 1 XP.
- ✧ If the party successfully cleansed the defoliant, award 1 XP.
- ✧ If the party spared Morgan Kassan's life, award 1 XP.
- ✧ If the party rallied three or more factions to aid them during the battle with Morbithrax, award 1 XP.
- ✧ If the party completed the *Shadows in the Mist* campaign, award 10 XP.



# APPENDIX

## ALLIES AND ENEMIES

### BEAST OF NURGLE

Combine the worst aspects of a slug, a leech, a rotting corpse, and a walrus, and you might begin to understand the horror that is a Beast of Nurgle. These bounding monstrosities share Nurgle's joy and generosity, leaving acidic splotches in their wake as they range in search of friends. Utterly unaware of their own strength, they pulverise bones when they land on mortals and rip limbs in pieces in their eagerness to wrestle, but they are equally oblivious to their playmate's well-being and don't stop until long after they reduce their new buddy to a slowly dissolving ragdoll.

| BEAST OF NURGLE  |           |           |        |
|--|-----------|-----------|--------|
| <i>Large Daemon (Maggotkin of Nurgle), Warrior</i>   |           |           |        |
| ☠ Good   | ☹ Poor    | ⚖ Average |        |
| Armour   | Toughness | Wounds    | Mettle |
| 0  | 9         | –         | –      |
| <b>Speed:</b> Fast<br><b>Initiative:</b> 2<br><b>Natural Awareness:</b> 1<br><b>Skills:</b> Athletics (+1d6, +1), Awareness (+1d6), Fortitude (+2d6), Might (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+1d6)  |           |           |        |
| TRAITS   |           |           |        |
| <b>Acidic Slime Trail:</b> The Beast of Nurgle exudes a corrosive slime as it bounds across the battlefield. Any Zone in which the Beast of Nurgle enters becomes a <i>Major Hazard</i> for any non-Maggotkin until the end of combat. |           |           |        |
| <b>Disgusting Resilience:</b> The Beast of Nurgle is disgustingly resilient. It gains a bonus to its Toughness equal to its Training in Fortitude. This is included above.   |           |           |        |
| <b>Grandfather's Blessing:</b> The Beast of Nurgle is immune to being <i>Poisoned</i> and any other effects associated with sickness and disease.  |           |           |        |
| ATTACK   |           |           |        |
| <b>Claws and Tentacles:</b> Melee Attack (Good), 5d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Slashing</i> . A creature damaged by this weapon must make a <b>DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.        |           |           |        |
| <b>Slobbering Tongue:</b> Melee Attack (Good), 5d6, + S Damage. <i>Reach, Restraining</i> . A creature damaged by this weapon must make a <b>DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.  |           |           |        |
| BODY   | MIND      | SOUL      |        |
| 4  | 1         | 2         |        |





## FECULENT GNARLMAW

When the blessed rot of Grandfather Nurgle reaches saturation and the soil itself succumbs to disease and plague, the seeds of Feculent Gnarlmaaws can bear their blighted fruit. Originating from the Garden of Nurgle itself, these towering carnivorous trees are spore-spewing and Nurgling-birthing gifts that perpetuate their Daemonic father's multitudinous blessings. It is whispered that the Gnarlmaaw's worm-like roots slither down through the very fabric of the realms themselves, to writhe among

| FECULENT GNARLMAW  |           |           |        |
|--|-----------|-----------|--------|
| <i>Enormous Daemon (Maggotkin of Nurgle), Champion</i>   |           |           |        |
| ☞ Good   | ☹ Poor    | ☐ Average |        |
| Armour   | Toughness | Wounds    | Mettle |
| 3  | 18        | –         | 2      |
| <b>Speed:</b> None<br><b>Initiative:</b> 1<br><b>Natural Awareness:</b> 1<br><b>Skills:</b> Might (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6)  |           |           |        |
| TRAITS   |           |           |        |
| <b>Garden of Nurgle:</b> The Feculent Gnarlmaaw fills the area with noxious fumes and poisonous spores. Creatures who enter or start their turn in the same Zone as the Feculent Gnarlmaaw must make a <b>DN 4:2 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or become <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.   |           |           |        |
| <b>Grandfather's Blessing:</b> The Feculent Gnarlmaaw is immune to being <i>Poisoned</i> and any other effects associated with sickness and disease.   |           |           |        |
| <b>Nigh Unkillable:</b> The Feculent Gnarlmaaw is impossibly resilient. Its Toughness is equal to (Body + Mind + Soul) × 2. This is included above.  |           |           |        |
| <b>Nurgling Eruption:</b> Nurglings erupt from the boils and growths on the Feculent Gnarlmaaw's body. As an Action, the Feculent Gnarlmaaw disgorges 1d6 Nurglings per Doom.  |           |           |        |
| <b>Planted:</b> The Feculent Gnarlmaaw is rooted into the ground. It cannot move of its own volition and cannot be forced to move by other effects.  |           |           |        |
| ATTACK   |           |           |        |
| <b>Bark Bite:</b> Melee Attack (Good), 6d6, 2 + S Damage. <i>Piercing.</i> A creature damaged by this attack must make a <b>DN 4:2 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.   |           |           |        |
| <b>Feculent Roots:</b> Melee Attack (Good), 6d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Crushing, Reach.</i> A Medium or smaller creature that suffers Damage from this attack is <i>Restrained</i> , as the roots wrap around them. A <i>Restrained</i> creature can use an Action to make a <b>Body (Might or Reflexes)</b> Test opposed by the Feculent Gnarlmaaw's Body (Might) to escape. |           |           |        |
| BODY   | MIND      | SOUL      |        |
| 4  | 1         | 4         |        |

those of their siblings in the Realm of Chaos, and that any mortal consumed by the trees is birthed upon the other side as an accursed Plaguebearer.

## NURGLING

The diminutive children of Nurgle are rotund little Daemons, swollen with weeping puss and sputtering gas that leaks through their sore-blighted skin. They giggle and cavort constantly, utterly blissful in their role as playful gift bringers. When they spot any tragic mortals lacking Nurgle's blessings, they rush towards them excitedly, to play nibble upon their flesh with their razor-sharp, filth-smearred teeth and horns. When slain, they pop like ripe boils, projecting their rotting insides with a gaseous burp in one final parting gift, accompanied by a shriek of joy as they further their beloved grandfather's work.

| NURGLING   |           |           |        |
|--|-----------|-----------|--------|
| <i>Tiny Daemon (Maggotkin of Nurgle), Minion</i>   |           |           |        |
| ☞ Poor   | ☹ Poor    | ☐ Average |        |
| Armour   | Toughness | Wounds    | Mettle |
| 0  | 1         | –         | –      |
| <b>Speed:</b> Normal<br><b>Initiative:</b> 4<br><b>Natural Awareness:</b> 1<br><b>Skills:</b> Awareness (+1d6), Reflexes (+2d6), Stealth (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+1d6)   |           |           |        |
| TRAITS   |           |           |        |
| <b>Disease-ridden Demise:</b> When a Nurgling dies, it erupts in a spray of thick mucus and noxious spores. Each creature in Close Range suffers 1 Damage, which ignores Armour, and must make a <b>DN 4:1 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or become <i>Poisoned</i> until they complete a Rest.   |           |           |        |
| <b>Grandfather's Blessing:</b> The Nurgling is immune to being <i>Poisoned</i> and any other effects associated with sickness and disease.   |           |           |        |
| <b>Swarm:</b> If three or more Nurglings occupy the same Zone they become a Swarm. The Nurgling Swarm acts as one. Add +1d6 to attacks and +1 Toughness per Nurgling in the Swarm. The Swarm suffers double Damage from effects that target a Zone. When a Nurgling Swarm is damaged, each creature in Close Range suffers the effects of its <i>Disease-ridden Demise</i> Trait. However, both the Damage suffered and the Complexity of the Test increase by 1 per Nurgling slain. |           |           |        |
| ATTACK   |           |           |        |
| <b>Tiny Razor-sharp Teeth:</b> Melee Attack (Average), 2d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Slashing.</i> A creature damaged by this weapon must make a <b>DN 4:1 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn  |           |           |        |
| BODY   | MIND      | SOUL      |        |
| 1  | 1         | 1         |        |



## FILTH PIT SUMMONER

When Nurgle's mortal worshippers wish to open a path to his putrid garden, they dig Filth Pits. Laid out to resemble Nurgle's tripartite symbol, excavated by chained Wyrmmaggots who chew earth and spew slime, these pus-lined craters poison the land for miles around. Furthermore, Nurgle's worshippers often sacrifice defiant warriors here, tossing them into the vermin-infested mire to drown among the Grandfather's gifts. Filth Pit Summoners, the humming stewards who oversee these ritual sites, shove down any who attempt to climb out — until they return as diseased Daemons, at which point the Summoners gleefully help the one-eyed Plaguebearers crawl free.

## PLAGUE DRONE

All Maggotkin live by cycles, and when a Plaguebearer's standing waxes high, they may dip their plaguesword seven times in a cauldron of filth, pick up a sack of stitched heads dripping with infectious slop, and call themselves a Plague Drone. These flying knights go to battle astride Rot Flies, Daemonic beasts born when a slug-like Beast of Nurgle suffers one too many rejections and metamorphosises into a creature of hard chitin, buzzing wings, and burning spite. Together, Plague Drone and Rot Fly pursue all who shamed their previous incarnations, a reminder that no disease stays in remission forever.

## POX MAGGOTH

Pox Maggoths are irascible, gangle-limbed creatures with neither eyes nor ears, but long tongues which flicker out constantly, scenting the air. Multiple rings of teeth surround their leech-like maws, from which some Maggoths can belch gallons of corrosive bile, and translucent pustules line their bodies, trembling with Nurgle's accumulated gifts. Like all Maggotkin, they spread plague wherever they walk, though Maggoths seem to do it less out of joy than undiluted hatred toward all untainted things.

Pox Maggoths are incredibly rare, with only three being known to exist. These terrifying creatures serve as mounts for the Maggoth Lords — Bloab Rotspawned, Orghotts Daemonspew, and Morbidex Twiceborn.

| FILTH PIT SUMMONER  |           |        |        |
|---|-----------|--------|--------|
| <i>Medium Mortal (Corrupted by Chaos), Warrior</i>  |           |        |        |
| ☠ Poor  | ☉ Good    | ☠ Poor |        |
| Armour  | Toughness | Wounds | Mettle |
| 0   | 7         | —      | —      |
| <b>Speed:</b> Normal<br><b>Initiative:</b> 6<br><b>Natural Awareness:</b> 3<br><b>Skills:</b> Arcana (+1d6), Awareness (+1d6), Ballistics Skill (+2d6), Channelling (+2d6, +1), Fortitude (+1d6), Reflexes (+1d6)   |           |        |        |
| TRAITS  |           |        |        |
| <b>From Filth Reborn:</b> The Filth Pit Summoner specialises in converting souls to the path of Nurgle. As an Action, the Filth Pit Summoner can summon a <b>Plaguebearer</b> from the corpse of a person within Medium Range who died of disease.  |           |        |        |
| <b>Grandfather's Blessing:</b> The Filth Pit Summoner is immune to being <i>Poisoned</i> and any other effects associated with sickness and disease.  |           |        |        |
| <b>Spellcasting:</b> The Filth Pit Summoner is a spellcaster. It knows the <i>Aetheric Armour</i> , <i>Arcane Blast</i> , <i>Arcane Bolt</i> , <i>Mystic Shield</i> , and <i>Stream of Filth</i> spells. Additionally, the Filth Pit Summoner can unbind spells per the <i>Unbind</i> Talent.   |           |        |        |
| <i>Stream of Filth:</i> DN 5:1. The Filth Pit Summoner unleashes a deluge of infectious ooze. One target within Medium Range suffers 1 Damage, and must succeed on a <b>DN 4:S Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the start of the Filth Pit Summoner's next turn. This Damage increases by +1 per additional success. |           |        |        |
| ATTACK  |           |        |        |
| <b>Rusted Dagger:</b> Melee Attack (Poor), 1d6, + S Damage. <i>Piercing, Subtle, Thrown (Short)</i> . A creature damaged by this weapon must make a <b>DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.   |           |        |        |
| <b>Vermin's Head:</b> Ranged Attack (Good), 3d6, + S Damage, Medium Range. <i>Spread</i> . A creature damaged by this weapon must make a <b>DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.  |           |        |        |
| BODY  | MIND      | SOUL   |        |
| 1   | 4         | 2      |        |

| PLAGUE DRONE   |           |        |        |
|--|-----------|--------|--------|
| <i>Medium Daemon (Maggotkin of Nurgle), Champion</i>   |           |        |        |
| ☠ Good   | ⚙ Average | ☠ Good |        |
| Armour   | Toughness | Wounds | Mettle |
| 1  | 8 + Doom  | –      | 1      |
| <b>Speed:</b> Normal. Can fly at Normal Speed when mounted on its Rot Fly.<br><b>Initiative:</b> 4<br><b>Natural Awareness:</b> 1<br><b>Skills:</b> Awareness (+1d6), Ballistics Skill (+2d6), Beast Handling (+2d6), Fortitude (+2d6), Reflexes (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6, +1) |           |        |        |
| TRAITS   |           |        |        |
| <b>Cloud of Flies:</b> The Plague Drone is surrounded by a swarm of bloated flies. Its Defence is one step higher when it is targeted by a ranged attack.  |           |        |        |
| <b>Grandfather's Blessing:</b> The Plague Drone is immune to being <i>Poisoned</i> and any other effects associated with sickness and disease.   |           |        |        |
| <b>Disgusting Resilience:</b> The Plague Drone is disgustingly resilient. It gains a bonus to its Toughness equal to the current Doom.   |           |        |        |
| <b>Rot Fly:</b> The Plague Drone sits astride a Rot Fly, which functions as a mount. On its turn, the Plague Drone can forego an Action to direct the Rot Fly to Attack with its Venomous Sting.   |           |        |        |
| ATTACK   |           |        |        |
| <b>Death's Head:</b> Ranged Attack (Average), 6d6, + S Damage, Medium Range. <i>Close, Spread.</i> A creature damaged by this weapon must make a <b>DN 4:2 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.                                     |           |        |        |
| <b>Plaguesword:</b> Melee Attack (Good), 6d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Slashing.</i> A creature damaged by this weapon must make a <b>DN 4:2 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.   |           |        |        |
| <b>Venomous Sting (Rot Fly):</b> Melee Attack (Great), 8d6, 2 + S Damage. <i>Piercing, Rend.</i> A creature damaged by this weapon must make a <b>DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.                                       |           |        |        |
| BODY   | MIND      | SOUL   |        |
| 4  | 2         | 2      |        |

| POX MAGGOTH   |           |          |        |
|---|-----------|----------|--------|
| <i>Large Beast (Corrupted by Chaos), Champion</i>   |           |          |        |
| ☠ Superb  | ⚙ Average | ☠ Superb |        |
| Armour  | Toughness | Wounds   | Mettle |
| 1 + Doom  | 20        | –        | 1      |
| <b>Speed:</b> Normal<br><b>Initiative:</b> 6<br><b>Natural Awareness:</b> 2<br><b>Skills:</b> Awareness (+3d6), Ballistic Skill (+2d6), Determination (+1d6), Fortitude (+3d6), Reflexes (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6)  |           |          |        |
| TRAITS  |           |          |        |
| <b>Blind, Dumb, and Angry:</b> The Pox Maggoth, which lacks eyes and tracks prey with its keen sense of smell, is the definition of obdurate. It is immune to being <i>Blinded</i> , <i>Charmed</i> , <i>Deafened</i> , or <i>Frightened</i> .  |           |          |        |
| <b>Grandfather's Blessing:</b> The Pox Maggoth is immune to being <i>Poisoned</i> and any other effects associated with sickness and disease.   |           |          |        |
| <b>Infectious Belligerence:</b> A Pox Maggoth takes no rider unless Nurgle himself commands it, and its attitude spreads to even the most loyal companions. Beasts in the Pox Maggoth's Zone disobey all orders unless their handlers succeed on a <b>DN 6:1 Soul (Beast Handling)</b> Test.  |           |          |        |
| <b>Nigh Unkillable:</b> The Pox Maggoth is impossibly resilient. Its Toughness is equal to (Body + Mind + Soul) × 2. This is included above.  |           |          |        |
| ATTACK  |           |          |        |
| <b>Disgusting Bile:</b> Ranged Attack (Average), 9d6, Doom + S Damage, Medium Range. <i>Spread.</i> A creature damaged by this weapon must make a <b>DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.   |           |          |        |
| <b>Monstrous Claws:</b> Melee Attack (Superb), 9d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Rend, Slashing.</i> A creature damaged by this weapon must make a <b>DN 4:3 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.  |           |          |        |
| <b>Slavering Tongue:</b> Melee Attack (Superb), 9d6, + S Damage. <i>Reach, Restraining.</i> A Medium or smaller creature that suffers Damage from this attack is <i>Restrained</i> , as the slime-coated tongue wraps around them. A <i>Restrained</i> creature can use an Action to make a <b>Body (Might or Reflexes)</b> Test opposed by the Pox Maggoth's Body (Might) to escape. |           |          |        |
| BODY  | MIND      | SOUL     |        |
| 7   | 1         | 2        |        |



## TIBOR HALLOWGATE

*Medium Mortal (Corrupted by Chaos), Chosen*

☠ Poor

☯ Good

☪ Average

**Armour**

**Toughness**

**Wounds**

**Mettle**

1

12

6

3

**Speed:** Normal

**Initiative:** 6

**Natural Awareness:** 3

**Skills:** Arcana (+1d6), Awareness (+1d6), Channelling (+2d6, +2), Fortitude (+2d6), Guile (+3d6, +2), Intuition (+2d6, +1), Lore (+1d6), Theology (+2d6)

### TRAITS

**Cloud of Flies:** Tibor Hallowgate is surrounded by a swarm of bloated flies. His Defence is one step higher when he is targeted by a ranged attack.

**Dark Shroud:** The air around Tibor Hallowgate is saturated with dark magic, distorting its form and confounding enemies, and growing stronger as the influence of Chaos grows. Tibor's Defence increases one step for each point of Doom. The minimum Doom of 1 has already been included above.

**Grandfather's Blessing:** Tibor Hallowgate is immune to being *Poisoned* and any other effects associated with sickness and disease.

**Oracular Visions:** Tibor Hallowgate bestows the gift of foresight on an ally, granting them a glimpse of the future. As an Action, Tibor can choose an ally within Long Range. The target's Melee, Accuracy, and Defence increases one step until the start of Tibor's next turn.

**Spellcasting:** Tibor Hallowgate is a spellcaster. He knows the *Aetheric Armour*, *Arcane Blast*, *Arcane Bolt*, *Mystic Shield*, *Daemonic Power*, and *Deleterious Contagion* spells. Additionally, Tibor can unbind spells per the Unbind Talent.

**Daemonic Power:** DN 5:2. Tibor bestows his allies with Daemonic essence, boosting their strength to unholy levels. All allies in a Zone within Medium Range deal +1 Damage until the start of Tibor's next turn. Each additional success extends the duration by 1 round.

**Deleterious Contagion:** DN 5:2. Tibor Hallowgate bids the flesh open to receive Nurgle's gifts. An enemy within Medium Range must succeed on a **DN 4:S Body (Fortitude)** Test or be *Poisoned* until the start of Tibor's next turn. Enemies that are already *Poisoned* must instead succeed on a **DN 4:S Body (Fortitude)** Test or take a Minor Wound, regardless of their Armour and current Toughness.

### ATTACK

**Putrid Bileblade:** Melee Attack (Poor), 2d6, 1 + S Damage. *Penetrating, Piercing.* A creature damaged by this weapon must make a **DN 4:2 Body (Fortitude)** Test or be *Poisoned* until the end of their next turn.

**Sorcerer Staff:** Melee Attack (Poor), 2d6, 1 + S Damage. *Crushing, Two-handed.*

**BODY**

**MIND**

**SOUL**

2

5

5

## TIBOR HALLOWGATE

Tibor Hallowgate is the leader of The Last Breath and the one instigating Anvilgard's recent trouble. An Azyrite who always admired 'the fierce virility of the colonies,' and in particular the fecundity of the Crucible of Life, he hopes to transform Anvilgard into a city that captures the best aspects of both Aqshy and Ghyran, mastered by a mind trained in Azyr (his own). Of course, once Nurgle caught wind of his ambitions, it was only a matter of time before Tibor became hopelessly corrupt. His appearance, which combines elderly dignity with a kind of gruff bravado, decays rapidly once his allegiance becomes clear.



# ZADREH KRAGWARD

Irina Heiksdotr's ambitious protégé always preferred sulfur and iron to softer sciences. But once he graduated from his studies at the Ironweld Arsenal and started to work closer with the Conclave, Tibor convinced him that the mind is flesh and that one god molds flesh better than all others. Now Zadreh whole-heartedly believes that Nurgle's infections are making him more aware and clear-headed than ever before, and that by sharing these discoveries with Anvilgard he can wrest control of the city back from the Blackscale Coil. To do so, he has corrupted everything from Anvilgard's defoliant system to the artillery that protects its walls.

| ZADREH KRAGWARD   |           |        |        |
|---|-----------|--------|--------|
| Medium Mortal (Corrupted by Chaos), Champion  |           |        |        |
| ⚔ Poor  | 🎯 Great   | 🛡 Poor |        |
| Armour  | Toughness | Wounds | Mettle |
| 2   | 7         | –      | 1      |
| <b>Speed:</b> None. Zadreh's Speed is Normal if he abandons his Bileblaster Spewgun.<br><b>Initiative:</b> 6<br><b>Natural Awareness:</b> 3<br><b>Skills:</b> Awareness (+1d6), Ballistics Skill (+2d6), Crafting (+2d6, +1), Lore (+2d6, +1)   |           |        |        |
| TRAITS  |           |        |        |
| <b>Calculating Aim:</b> Zadreh uses his Mind instead of his Body when making ranged attacks.<br><b>Grandfather's Blessing:</b> Zadreh is immune to being <i>Poisoned</i> and any other effects associated with sickness and disease.<br><b>Master Engineer:</b> Zadreh can conduct extensive repairs in the heat of battle. As an Action, Zadreh can repair broken armour and machinery. This Trait restores 1 Armour to damaged armour. It cannot be used to improve armour beyond its normal value. |           |        |        |
| ATTACK  |           |        |        |
| <b>Bileblaster Spewgun:</b> Ranged Attack (Great), 7d6, 3 + S Damage, Long Range. <i>Loud, Reload, Spread.</i> A creature damaged by this weapon must make a <b>DN 4:2 Body (Fortitude)</b> Test or be <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next turn.  |           |        |        |
| BODY  | MIND      | SOUL   |        |
| 1   | 5         | 1      |        |



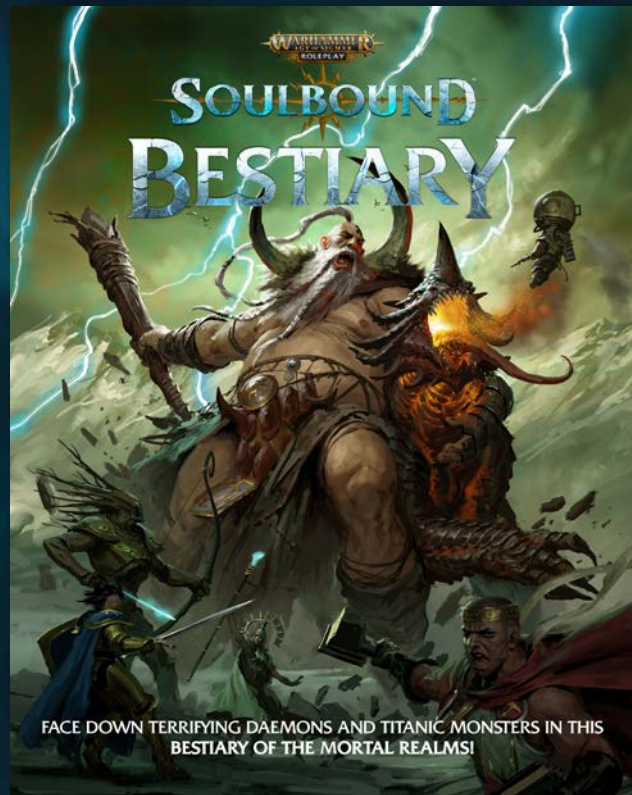


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