

DEATHWATCH™ THE EMPEROR'S CHOSEN™

TEMPERED BY BATTLE, BOUND BY BROTHERHOOD

Only the most exceptional Battle-Brothers are seconded to the Deathwatch. Of those, only a rare few earn the right to be called Deathwatch veterans. Take your place among them.

Delve into the history of the Jericho Deathwatch and honour the heroic veteran Battle-Brothers that have come before you.

Assume a Heroic Legacy and combat your foes with tactical precision and martial excellence as a veteran Kill-team of the Deathwatch.

Follow in the footsteps of your predecessors and complete the mission that laid them low.

Join your brethren and pen your name in the history of the Jericho Reach!

A copy of the DEATHWATCH Core Rulebook is needed to use this supplement.



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DEATHWATCH™ THE EMPEROR'S CHOSEN™



A GUIDE TO THE VETERANS
OF THE JERICHO REACH

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DEATHWATCH

THE EMPEROR'S CHOSEN™



ROLEPLAYING IN THE GRIM
DARKNESS OF THE 4TH MILLENNIUM

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ISBN: 978-1-61661-656-4 Product Code: DW15 Print ID: 1691JUN13

Printed in China

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INTRODUCTION

The length and breadth of the galaxy, the Imperium of Man stands on the brink of devastation. Facing threats from within, without, and beyond, the men and women of the Imperium toil tirelessly and without end to safeguard the million worlds they call home. Towering over these soldiers of Mankind are the Space Marines of the Adeptus Astartes, their gene-enhanced bodies making evident to the eye the superiority that their warrior spirits make manifest on the battlefield. The Space Marines, the Emperor's Angels of Death, are the finest soldiers the Imperium of Man has ever created. But among them are those who stand above their brethren, those whose resolve marks them out as survivors of battles and campaigns the likes of which would shatter the very sanity of mere mortals. Veterans of a thousand conflicts, these Battle-Brothers are paragons of their Chapters' ideals and traditions, and they stand as exemplars for their brethren.

On the field of battle, the Space Marines of the Adeptus Astartes are the fist of the Emperor, striking down His foes with ferocity and might unmatched in the galaxy. It is in the crucible of war, however, that their purpose and valour are tempered into iron and honed to a razor's edge. Those who have survived the process are no longer the fist, but rather the sword of the Emperor, striking swift, sure of aim, and with the strength of His wrath.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK

THE EMPEROR'S CHOSEN provides players and Game Masters with information and game options pertaining to the veterans of the Jericho Deathwatch and focusing on advanced play in the DEATHWATCH system. THE EMPEROR'S CHOSEN emphasises the notion that the greatest strength of any Deathwatch Kill-team is the ability of the individuals, each super-human in every conceivable way, to work as a truly awe-inspiring whole.



CHAPTER I: ONLY IN DEATH

Chapter I takes a detailed look at the Jericho Deathwatch and their practices concerning to veteran Battle-Brothers and Kill-teams, including the relationship between such Space Marines and the Chamber of Vigilance. This chapter also discusses the operations of such veteran Kill-teams, including those whose members extend their own secondment to the Deathwatch, or those who return to the Deathwatch after their secondment period is over, as well as the near-limitless operational jurisdiction given to these veteran Deathwatch Kill-teams. The final portion of this chapter covers the interactions between the veteran Kill-teams of the Deathwatch and the forces of the Achilles Crusade. This section focuses on the responsibility of all Deathwatch members to maintain a high level of secrecy throughout the Jericho Reach while simultaneously taking overt action in the same operational zones as those from whom they are to remain hidden.

CHAPTER II: HONOUR THY ANCESTORS

Chapter II presents several historic veteran Kill-teams of the Jericho Deathwatch, discussing those near-mythic figures who have shaped the very history of the Jericho Reach and the fate of mankind therein. The members of seven historic Kill-teams are detailed in this chapter, each presented with a discussion of the actions and events that made them famous among their brethren, as well as the legacy that has lived on after each Kill-team has passed into legend.

CHAPTER III: FIGURES OF LEGEND

Chapter III introduces the new Heroic Legacy rules system, which serves to highlight and enhance play for those players whose characters have achieved veteran status in the Jericho Deathwatch. The Heroic Legacy rules provide play groups with options that augment the core systems of the DEATHWATCH game and unite the individual Battle-Brothers of their Kill-team into an even tighter and more effective cohesive whole. This system allows Kill-teams of high renown and experience to collectively purchase a Heroic Legacy Package. This Package is purchased and maintained by the entire Kill-team and offers battlefield options that are unique to Space Marines of veteran calibre.

CHAPTER IV: THE LONGEST WATCH

The final chapter of this book is an adventure that takes players to the planet of Herisor, a world deep within enemy territory, a world all but consumed by Hive Fleet Dagon in the first days of the Tyranid invasion. Here the Kill-team must take up the burdens of the Lux Veritatis, one of the historic Kill-teams detailed in Chapter II, who fell, to a man, fending off the Tyranid invasion forces. Seeking a holy relic of great power that was left behind in the wake of planetary devastation, the Kill-team will encounter not only monstrosities of the Hive Fleet, but the servants of the Ruinous Powers who wish to use the relic for their own ends.



ONLY IN DEATH

DEATHWATCH VETERANS

•
THE CHAMBER OF
VIGILANCE

•
THE ACHILUS CRUSADE

•
THE OUTER REACH

•
RECURRING
SECONDMENT

•
RISING THROUGH
THE RANKS

•
DEATH OF A
BATTLE-BROTHER



CHAPTER I: ONLY IN DEATH

"There can be no peace for us while the enemies of the Emperor draw breath, no rest while xenos plague the stars and mankind cries out for protection against the darkness. Only when our guns are cold and the last drop of our blood is spent will our duty be done. Only in death is the price of honour paid."

—Watch Commander Mordigael,
Master of the Vigil, Fortress Erioch

A Battle-Brother's duty is never done, not while he can raise a weapon and draw breath. For a member of a Deathwatch Kill-team, this duty began when he was initiated into his Space Marine Chapter, took his vows, and donned the mantle of one of the Emperor's chosen. Then, when he was seconded to the Deathwatch, that duty expanded to encompass his new Battle-Brothers and the orders of his Watch Commander. Regardless of the teachings of the Battle-Brother's Chapter, whether he sees the Emperor as god or as father, whether his hatred of the Ruinous Powers outweigh his hatred of the xenos, or whether he carries with him the secrets of his Chapter's past, his duty remains unchanged and unshaken. Even after years of secondment and sacrifice, these veterans accept that their work in the Jericho Reach is just beginning, and that

only here, on the edge of the Imperium, will they fulfil their duty to ancestor, Chapter, and Emperor.

This chapter explores the Deathwatch veterans, those Battle-Brothers and Kill-teams that have served in the Jericho Reach for years against the enemies of the Emperor. These are Space Marines that, for a variety of reasons, have remained with the Deathwatch when they could have returned to their Chapters, their service to the Deathwatch and their Watch Commander dispensed, and their honour to their brothers complete. Hardened veterans of the Jericho Reach, they have forged for themselves a special place within the inner circles of the Deathwatch, working for hidden masters and overtly or covertly aiding the Achilles Crusade when their aims and its coincide. These veteran Space Marines are also bonded to their Kill-team in a way usually only found in the tight-knit ranks of their own Chapter, having shared a lifetime of blood and violence with their Deathwatch Battle-Brothers. They remain the most deadly and favoured tools of the Deathwatch, and represent the greatest danger to the Imperium's foes, universally feared and respected by those that have faced them.

DEATHWATCH VETERANS

"I will do my duty to my Chapter, and I will do my duty for my Emperor, but when the enemy comes for me, it is my Battle-Brothers I will die for."

—Ekard Vryan, Battle-Brother of the Dark Angels Chapter,
Seconded to Fortress Erioch

Even among the mighty Space Marine Chapters, those warriors who live long enough to earn the title of veteran are uncommon, many falling on the battlefield after only years or decades of service against overwhelming odds. Unlike the Imperial Guard or the Imperial Navy, where a man might be considered a veteran if he survives his first taste of combat or earns a campaign ribbon, a Space Marine's veteran status only comes after genuine achievement, and then only at the end of long years of bloodshed and hard won victory. The Deathwatch is no different, and those Battle-Brothers who spend their years of secondment fighting the xenos foes of the Emperor are only considered to be doing their duty. Mere survival is not enough for a Space Marine; as the Emperor's favoured sons and chosen warriors, they are expected to acquit themselves well in combat, their foes are expected to die upon their bolt shells and chain blades, and the honour they earn is the honour of their Chapter. To be considered a veteran of the Deathwatch, a Battle-Brother must accomplish great and glorious things, and mark himself out as a true instrument of war, above and beyond even the superhuman capability of the Adeptus Astartes.



A WEB OF LOYALTIES

It is the duty of all Adeptus Astartes to serve the Emperor and fight for the Imperium against its many foes, but where a Battle-Brother stands in the great chain of command can become unclear once he has spent years serving the Deathwatch. Ostensibly, while serving in the Deathwatch in the Jericho Reach, a Battle-Brother serves the Watch Commander and the Chamber Vigilant, which can include the influence of the Inquisitors of the Ordo Xenos. However, at the same time he retains his loyalties to his own Chapter and Chapter Master, while retaining any rank he might have had previously, even though he is no longer under the command of his company or squad commanders. As time passes and the Battle-Brother spends more time in the service of the Deathwatch, many of these ties change, either weakening or strengthening, and his loyalty can shift to encompass the members of his Kill-team while his duty to the Emperor and the Imperium become broader and less restricted by the specific teachings of his Chapter. This is especially true once he is exposed to the ideas and doctrines of his Kill-team members and together they have survived many harrowing battles.

It is even possible, though rare, that, after long years of service, a veteran Battle-Brother can find that this loyalty narrows until he sees himself as a member of the Deathwatch first, and part of his Chapter second. While the Battle-Brother will always retain a deep connection to his Chapter, long periods of service to the Deathwatch and the secret knowledge he gains about the enemies of the Imperium can make him see his true place as part of a Kill-team. His Chapter Master and his Chapter brothers might understand and respect why he would choose to fight for the Deathwatch rather than his own Chapter if they know anything of the nature of the Deathwatch's mission, though it is more likely it will be seen only as divided loyalty. In either case, the chain of command can become blurred for such a Deathwatch veteran, as the influence of his Chapter recedes and he focuses his efforts against the enemies of the Deathwatch.

A TASTE FOR WAR

Members of the Deathwatch are often exposed to threats and foes they would not have encountered had they remained within the ranks of their Chapter. While a Battle-Brother fighting as part of his home Chapter will doubtless see years of bloody and terrible combat, he usually does so shoulder to shoulder with his company, supported by Predator AFVs and Rhino APCs, heavy weapon platforms and orbital overwatch. By contrast, while a Deathwatch Kill-team has access to some of the most remarkable technology in the Imperium of Man, they can never rely on having such luxuries in combat, often standing alone against whatever dangers they might face. Added to the fact that a Kill-team is only a handful of Space Marines, the foes they face can be more dangerous and exotic, such as powerful alien commanders and unspeakable xenos horrors. In a few short years serving in the Deathwatch, a Battle-Brother will have faced down and defeated countless alien and heretic foes, often in close personal combat with only the strength of his Kill-team to back him up. It is little wonder, then, that many Battle-Brothers who are seconded to the Deathwatch rise to the ranks of veterans as the experiences they accrue and missions they complete give them a wider sense of the terrible struggle the Imperium faces every day and the multitude of hidden foes arrayed against it. In time, this evolution of their skills and knowledge will set them apart from their original Chapters and forge them into something uniquely adapted to fighting and killing xenos.

Thus a Deathwatch veteran is a Battle-Brother who has not simply spent years serving in the Deathwatch, or one who has formed a bond with brothers from other Chapters. Rather he is one who has adapted to the service of the Deathwatch and the special missions and foes with which it must deal. Indoctrinated by the unbreakable bonds to his Chapter and his sense of duty to his Chapter Master, no Battle-Brother ever leaves these loyalties behind, but instead adds to them, becomes more dedicated to the cause of the Imperium, whether it is through the orders of his Watch Commander or

his own personal focus. Not all Battle-Brothers are suited to long periods of secondment to the Deathwatch, many simply doing their duty before returning to their own Chapter. However, those that adapt to the way the Deathwatch functions, and those able to balance the teachings of their Chapter with the autonomy and independence required of a Kill-team become valued additions to the Deathwatch. The Deathwatch values these kinds of Battle-Brothers and is active in developing their skills and abilities, creating Kill-teams that can undertake the most hazardous of missions with a chance of success. Equally, Chapter Masters honour those Battle-Brothers which have acquitted themselves well in the Deathwatch and respect the skills they have mastered.

Over years of hazardous missions and combat, the members of a Kill-team will learn to rely heavily on each other, something which is evident after even a few missions among those newly seconded to the Deathwatch, but which becomes far more pronounced in Deathwatch veterans. Combined with missions that will see the Kill-team operate against some of the worst foes the Jericho Reach has to offer, and often without support from any kind of Imperial aid for weeks, months, or even longer, this creates a powerful autonomous fighting unit. Even in such circumstances, the Deathwatch can still rely on these veteran Battle-Brothers to live up to their duty to the Chapter and their duty to the Emperor, where Imperial Guard specialists given such operational freedom often become increasingly difficult to command or direct. Such skill and resolve is the mark of a true Deathwatch veteran and Kill-team, Battle-Brothers of such focus and temper that no task remains beyond them regardless of the odds they might face or the enemies which rise up to meet them.

I: ONLY IN DEATH

A NEW BROTHERHOOD

Deathwatch veterans are also unique among the Adeptus Astartes as one of the few groups in which true alliances can form between Battle-Brothers of different Chapters. Space Marines who might have little love for one another and only work together grudgingly can, as part of a Kill-team, over time, form bonds stronger than even those they share with their Chapter. Living lives of stark seclusion broken only by fierce combat, most Battle-Brothers come to the Deathwatch only knowing their own kind, having only encountered those different from themselves on the field of battle or from dim half remembered memories of their lives before their initiation into the Chapter. Suddenly, they are presented with a variety of different opinions, cultures, and appearances, most of which run counter to what they have learned from their Chapter's Battle-Brothers. While all the members of their Kill-team might share a similar duty to the Emperor and a faith in the Imperium of Man, even minor differences can be troubling. This is even truer of combat doctrine and tactical creed, a subject close to the core of every Space Marine. Many Battle-Brothers will never completely accept the other members of their Kill-team for these reasons and will return to their Chapter with stories of the strange practises of the other Space Marines. Those that become Deathwatch veterans,

however, inevitably adapt to these differences, the better to function as part of their Kill-team.

Veterans will forge new tactics, teachings, and practises from among those of the Battle-Brothers, learning new ways of fighting and new tactical doctrine which will become unique to their Kill-team and suited to the fighting styles of its members.

This is the point at which true Deathwatch veterans are created, by the bonds shared within their Kill-team. A veteran will learn to respect the differences between his brothers rather than working against them, seeing an opportunity for expanding and enhancing his skills, and the skills of his Kill-team rather than being impeded by them. Those that have had dealings with veteran Kill-teams often note the synchronicity they share, something that can only be found in groups of warriors that have shared countless combats together. Often, veterans do not even need to communicate their desires to each other; a look, a quick gesture, or even a movement allows them to pass information or move into a well-rehearsed combat manoeuvre. The most difficult task a newly seconded Battle-Brother can face is joining a veteran Kill-team and having to embrace not just the doctrine of other Chapters but also the unique tactics and idiosyncrasies of their new Battle-Brothers, the cultures of other Chapters wearing off on them until the veteran Kill-team becomes more than the sum of its parts.

A BROTHERHOOD APART

It is a double-edged blade that Deathwatch veterans, while valued and skilled members of the Deathwatch, might grow apart from their own Chapter. Battle-Brothers accept the honour of secondment without question or complaint even though it means leaving their place within their own



Chapter and giving up their place beside Battle-Brothers which have become close companions from many battles. Such is the honour of a secondment that both Chapter Master and Chapter usually only afford it to proven Space Marines, even though it can mean losing such a valued asset to the Deathwatch for years. For the chosen Battle-Brother, leaving his own Chapter behind can be a burden, even though he understands why he has been chosen and is honoured by the chance to prove his worth alongside others of the Adeptus Astartes within the Deathwatch. Even so, the gulf between Deathwatch and the Chapters of the Adeptus Astartes can create a wide variety of Battle-Brothers, changed in small ways by their crossing. Some might come to the Deathwatch eager to prove the superiority of their Chapter, or the strength of their traditions, while others remain resistant to their Kill-team, remaining reserved and restrained, doing their duty as dictated by honour and ancient covenant but little more.

In one way or another, all Battle-Brothers conform to this

new brotherhood, finding their place within the Deathwatch and seeing out their duty to both Emperor and Imperium. A Kill-team is only as strong as its weakest member, and its real strength lies in the bonds of brotherhood it can foster between its Battle-Brothers. So when a Battle-Brother comes to the Deathwatch harbouring distrust of other Chapters, or tries to impose his own ideals on other Battle-Brothers, the Kill-team will suffer. However, Space Marines are superhuman warriors and even these weakest of Kill-teams are stronger than the most veteran of Imperial Guard squads or elite stormtrooper unit could hope to be. This means that for many Battle-Brothers their time in the Deathwatch will pass with honour as they complete their duty, though they never truly overcome the divisions within their Kill-team. Deathwatch veterans are made up mostly of those Battle-Brothers who have overcome these differences, or embraced them and turned them to their advantage. They are the Battle-Brothers which have changed to meet the challenges of the Deathwatch, and created something more within their Kill-team than the sum of its parts.



VETERANS AND THE CHAMBER OF VIGILANCE

"We can but hope for the aid of the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach in our great common struggle, for their reach is long and their blade is sharp. We should never forget, though, that they too harbour their own agendas and ambitions just as deep as our own, and like as not just as deadly."

—Holden Valtarin, Ordo Xenos Inquisitor, Jericho Reach

The Chamber of Vigilance acts to oversee the actions of the Deathwatch within the Jericho Reach, and as such has a hand in the direction and deployment of Deathwatch Kill-teams. For those newly seconded to the Deathwatch, the Chamber and the Master of the Vigil are often distant masters, whose orders filter down the chain of command until it reaches their ears, or as functionaries who lead the Chapter in its rites and ceremonies, only seen on days marked by grand tradition and at times of great import. As a Battle-Brother and his Kill-team rise in status and rank, they will see more of the Chamber of Vigilance, either taking their orders directly from the Watch Commander and his Captains or being invited to advise on the use and deployment of other Kill-teams and Deathwatch assets. By the time a Battle-Brother ascends to the rank of a Deathwatch veteran, he should be well known by the Chamber of Vigilance and its members, a favoured instrument of the Chapter and possibly a staunch ally of the Inquisition, and responsible for enacting its will countless times across the war zones of the Reach. Conversely, the Battle-Brother will have formed his own opinions of the Chamber and its members, often growing to see them less as infallible masters and more as peers.

MASTERS AND SERVANTS

Mordigael is the current Watch Commander of Fortress Erioch and, by extension, the Master of the Vigil. Aiding him in the governing of the Chamber are any recognised Ordo Xenos Inquisitors stationed in the Jericho Reach, one of which will take on the mantle of the Inquisitor of the Chamber so that the Inquisition might have a voice to call for aid from the Deathwatch. Given the nature of the Inquisition and the secretive nature of Inquisitors themselves, this group is always in flux, their numbers expanding and retracting as the members of the group are always changing. Typically, it will never be more than a handful at any one time, and always balanced out by Mordigael and his favoured commanders so that the ratio of Adeptus Astartes to Ordo Xenos remains more or less equal. Depending on the nature of the issues to be dealt with by the Chamber, other advisors may be allowed to give specific counsel, though this is uncommon.

Because the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach operate within the same areas of influence as the Ordo Xenos and

the forces of the Achilus Crusade, the Chamber and its meetings can be coloured by politics as much as war councils, as would be the case if the Deathwatch operated like one of the more traditional Chapters of the Adeptus Astartes. While the Master of the Vigil and his officers are interested in the concerns of the Deathwatch, they cannot remain completely deaf to the presence of the Inquisition—usually more specifically the desires of a single Inquisitor operating within the Reach. Equally, though the vast majority of the Achilus Crusade remains ignorant of the Deathwatch, the Lord Militant does not, and has been known, on occasion, to try and request their aid. Often, the personal politics of the Inquisitor will be reflected in the choosing of the Inquisitor of the Chamber and this can become a place where rival Inquisitors make their presence known, all of which contributes to another challenge the Chamber of Vigilance must overcome. Deathwatch veterans add another dimension to these proceedings, having earned the right and respect to speak for themselves even in the presence of the Master of the Vigil. Deathwatch veterans are also wiser in the ways of the Crusade and of the Jericho Reach, often having knowledge of the Inquisitors that might influence the Chamber of the Vigil.

It is the nature of the Inquisition that nothing is as it seems, and the same honours and right that will allow a veteran Kill-team a voice in the Chamber of Vigilance will sometimes mean that Kill-team must deal more closely with individual Inquisitors or even, in rare instances, agents of the Lord Militant. Many Inquisitors, of all the Ordos, do not announce their presence to the Deathwatch when they come to the Jericho Reach, following their own personal missions out of sight and reach of the Crusade forces. These same Inquisitors, however, will call upon aid from the Deathwatch when it suits their purposes and when they need the kind of firepower and skill that only a Kill-team can provide. It is here that the reputation of a veteran Kill-team might precede them and the Inquisitor might even choose to contact the Kill-team directly (especially if the Battle-Brothers and the Inquisitor have had dealings before), asking them for aid without any formal declaration to the Chamber of Vigilance. Though it stands in stark contrast to the way most Chapters of the Adeptus Astartes operate, the individual bravado shown by such Inquisitors often earns the respect of Deathwatch veterans. Experienced Watch Captains also accept that Inquisitors work in this way, and much of their agendas do not reach the formal meetings of the Chamber, especially in the case of time-sensitive missions or missions of opportunity. Ultimately, though it remains the remit of the Deathwatch whether or not to come to the aid of an Inquisitor, however he or she calls for it. However, since the objectives of the Deathwatch and the objectives of many Ordo Xenos Inquisitors within the Jericho Reach are intertwined, it often serves the Chapter well to send a Kill-team, using the knowledge and skills of the Inquisitor to vanquish a common foe.

TOO MANY SECRETS

The Deathwatch and the Inquisition are naturally secretive organisations. Theirs is the task of hunting down the hidden foes, the secret armies and unseen enemies that plague the Imperium without revealing themselves. They seek enemies like the Eldar interlopers, Necron tomb worlds, and Chaos cultists that work from the darkness to undermine and destroy mankind. During a Battle-Brother's time in the Deathwatch, he will encounter many new foes, a number of whom he may well have had no previous knowledge of, their existence a closely guarded secret of the Deathwatch or the Holy Ordos. A Deathwatch Kill-team will also often be called in to deal with the causes of a problem, while the Imperial Guard and Imperial Navy are limited to dealing only with its effects. Examples of this abound throughout the sector, such as on the mining world of Harloss Magna where a Kill-team was used to kill the daemonically possessed planetary governor while the Imperial Guard put down the uprising he had caused, or when a Kill-team secretly boarded the Lunar-Class Cruiser *Light of Perdition* and caused a critical plasma drive overload to kill its traitorous Lord-Captain citing it as the work of rebels. In these cases, the work of the Deathwatch is intended to go unnoticed by the Achilus Crusade and its commanders.

For a Deathwatch veteran, all of these operations and missions give the Battle-Brother a unique perspective on the actions of the Chamber of Vigilance and an insight into the hidden enemies of the Reach that he might not have seen fighting more open conflicts alongside his Chapter. Battle-Brothers of the Deathwatch are expected to do their duty and honour the oath that keeps them silent regardless of what they learn, but it is impossible for these secrets not to change them in some small way. While Deathwatch veterans remain dedicated to the vows and bonds with their Chapter, they cannot share their forbidden knowledge with those they still call brother and who cannot understand what they have learned unless they, too, have served within the Deathwatch. Quite apart from the schism this can create, it becomes another barrier between Deathwatch and Chapter that a Space Marine must learn to accept if he is to honour his secondment and the will of its covenant.

The secrets a Deathwatch veteran possesses are also part of his power within the Chamber of Vigilance, and grants him more influence when dealing with the Inquisitors of the Holy Ordos. Inquisitors, especially, who trade in secrets and measure a man's worth by what he knows, are more likely deal to with Battle-Brothers in possession of such lore. Two of the key secrets governed by the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach, and of major concern to the Chamber of Vigilance, are the Necron threat and the Omega Vault, and over time it is inevitable that a Deathwatch Battle-Brother will have to deal with both. While those that complete their secondment must keep their secrets and return to their Chapter never to speak of them again, the veterans that remain find themselves drawn ever deeper into their complexities and the on-going efforts to the Deathwatch to deal with them both. The actual scope and depth of these secrets and the many parts that they contain can be found only in a small number of individuals. While numerous Inquisitors and Deathwatch Space Marines have faced at least one facet of

the Necron threat within the Jericho Reach, and others have laid eyes upon the inner chambers of the Omega Vault, only a few have lived long enough to truly learn anything about either.

In the end, how a Battle-Brother uses this wealth of secret knowledge depends on his allegiances and the missions he is sent on, but as with many who serve the Deathwatch, secrets are also a means to an end. Knowledge, to a Deathwatch veteran, is a way to understand and then ultimately destroy his foes, and the more knowledge he possesses the more able he is to complete his duty and vanquish the foes of the Emperor. While the Inquisition may witness a veteran's forbidden knowledge and mark him out as a threat or an ally, the Watch Commander and the Adeptus Astartes masters of the Chamber of Vigilance favour such Battle-Brothers for their skills and the fact that they have survived to learn something of the Imperium's most dangerous foes. For these reasons, a veteran Kill-team finds itself called more frequently into the hallowed halls of the Chamber of Vigilance, where they will be given the gravest of tasks time and again, the Watch Commander's faith placed in them and their ability to complete his missions.



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DISPOSABLE ASSETS

The Chamber of Vigilance exists to oversee the operations of the Deathwatch in the Jericho Reach, and it is often within its halls that the Watch Commander decides where and when to commit its Kill-teams. The Watch Commander and his Captains understand and value the worth of a veteran Kill-team, the powerful asset it represents, and the kinds of things it can realistically achieve. Unfortunately for the Deathwatch, its foes are many and powerful and there are seldom Kill-teams enough to match even a fraction of the threats the Reach has to offer. Worse, the Deathwatch Captains of Fortress Erioch must sometimes make the hard decision to commit a Kill-team to a mission with little hope of success, knowing full well that it might mean the loss of valued Battle-Brothers to buy time for others to complete vital tasks. Complicating these matters is the presence of Inquisitors and, on occasion, agents of Lord Militant Tetrarchus petitioning for aid or interfering in events involving the Deathwatch. All of this contributes to a process which could see a Kill-team committed to an impossible mission, or acting on the flawed guidance or intelligence of the Inquisition. Fortunately, though, Space Marines are born to face such odds.

The Lord Militant does not have any command or control over the Deathwatch, and ultimately it falls to the Chamber of Vigilance and its Space Marines to choose how best to use the Kill-teams at its disposal. Nevertheless, the aims of the Ordos and the Lord Militant often coincide with the Deathwatch and their influence can be strong. This is an even greater concern when the Inquisition and Tetrarchus are working in concert on some matter, the Lord Militant using his considerable power to call upon the favour of one of his allied Inquisitors. This can mean that behind the Inquisitor calling for the assistance of a Kill-team, there might stretch a web of obligations and favours all the way back to some reckless Imperial commander or spoiled noble, using their connections to request aid from powers of which they may not even be aware.

VETERANS AND THE ACHILUS CRUSADE

"We are the sword of the Emperor cutting through the darkness of the Jericho Reach so that His light might spill forth from the wound. Among those fighting under this holy banner let none stray from my sight, lest they find themselves counted among my enemies and be cut down in kind."

—Lord Militant Tetrarchus, Warmaster of the Achilus Crusade

The Achilus Crusade is a truly epic undertaking stretched across scores of systems and hundreds of worlds, its fronts and salients punching deep into the edges of Imperial space. For years, its armies have struggled to win back the Jericho Reach for the Emperor, cutting down heretic armies and alien empires alike as they have risen up to oppose it. Comprised of nearly every arm of the Imperial war machine, countless lives, ships, and even worlds have been sacrificed in its name, including scores of brave Battle-Brothers, all struggling to complete the orders of their commanders. For the Deathwatch, the Achilus Crusade was both a welcome reinforcement and also a stronger connection to the sectors beyond the Warp Gate. Unfortunately, it was also the blow that stirred up the hornets' nest, as many foes slumbering undisturbed on worlds throughout the Reach have awoken with a vengeance, multiplying the enemies of the Deathwatch many times over. The Deathwatch has also found its aims and goals complicated by the presence of the Crusade, the influence of the Lord Militant, the influx of Inquisitors and the arrival of Space Marine Chapters, many of whom have connections to its Battle-Brothers. All of these present the Chapter with new trials and challenges as well as new opportunities to move against its enemies.

WINDS OF CHANGE

Before the arrival of the Achilus Crusade, the Deathwatch maintained several Watch Fortresses within the Jericho Reach, safeguarding nearby Imperial sectors against the slumbering evil that rested there. The Deathwatch was also tasked with the study of many of these ancient foes, a lengthy task in which it was aided by the Ordo Xenos, and which had been in progress for many years. With the discovery of the Warp Gate connecting the Calixis Sector to the Jericho Reach, and the launching of the Achilus Crusade, everything has changed for the Deathwatch; the sector has been torn asunder by the raging fires of a full blown warzone. For those few Deathwatch veterans who were present in the years before the arrival of the Crusade, the transition has been both abrupt and frustrating. In many cases, the work of decades has been swept away overnight, and worlds that were once domains of investigation and study have become engulfed by war and strife. Even for

AGAINST OUR OWN

The Imperium has a long and bloody history of civil strife, and the Achilus Crusade is no exception. During the time since the Crusade began, there have been numerous incidents in which the Deathwatch has found itself fighting against would-be Imperial forces. Some of these can be easily reasoned as righteous actions against traitors, such as much of the fighting in the Acheros Salient and on worlds such as Vanity, where Imperial forces and local planetary populations have been subverted by the vile touch of the Stigmartus. Less clear are incidents like the invasion of Rheelas, where a largely loyal planetary population was repressed on the orders of mad Imperial commanders, and found themselves embroiled in smashing an already crumbling government into submission.

newly arrived Battle-Brothers, or those seconded from the Adeptus Astartes travelling with the Crusade, there is a definite feeling of change among the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach, akin to a sleeping warrior awakening for war or a blade being drawn from its scabbard. The power of the Crusade is compelling, drawing every loyal member of the Imperium toward it and throwing them at the enemies of the Emperor in a frenzy of righteous fury and retribution.

The presence of the Crusade has also increased the presence of the Inquisition within the Reach, and whereas before there would have been only a handful of Inquisitors working alongside the Deathwatch or calling upon their skills, now many more traverse the sector looking into secrets disturbed by the passage of the conflict. This means that the Deathwatch must contend with more demands for its intervention and more of the plots and plans of Inquisitors, which inevitably affects the Deathwatch and its commanders. Deathwatch veterans will have witnessed this increase in Inquisitors first hand, and any who have served for more than a few years will have noted the comings and goings of the various Ordos, along with their entourages of acolytes. These new faces are merely a symptom of the presence and power of the Crusade, which has turned a dark and forgotten region of the Imperium into a vital strategic prize to be bitterly fought for and won at all costs.

BROKEN CHAINS OF COMMAND

Lord Militant Tetrarchus commands all Imperial Guard and Imperial Naval forces within the Jericho Reach, and exerts his influence over others like the Adeptus Astartes. Even though most of these forces and organisations retain a degree of autonomy, Tetrarchus routinely factors them into his grand strategies, issuing orders from his command posts along the Iron Collar to each of the salients and their respective commands. In practice, the size and scope of the Crusade means that each salient must largely govern its own assets, including allied forces like the Adeptus Astartes,

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which typically follow their own agendas as much as the strategies of the Lord Militant. The Deathwatch is unique in this complicated tangle of obligations in that they stand apart from the Crusade, beyond the direct command of the Lord Militant, and largely unknown to the bulk of the Imperial forces present. However, the Deathwatch has its own infrastructure in the Reach that existed long before the arrival of the Crusade, and they operate across the entire sector rather than restricting their actions to a single salient meaning that they must interact with different elements of the Crusade and its commanders. This force within the shadow of another is something that is, in turn, passed on to its Kill-teams as they travel from world to world and complete missions on behalf of the Deathwatch. For a veteran Kill-team, this means that they are often operating within the region of an Imperial general or battle group, which can complicate matters, as the military power is likely ignorant of their presence.

Fighting parallel to the Crusade means that the Deathwatch can occasionally expect to encounter complications when it comes to the Lord Militant's staff. There are a handful of those among Tetrarchus' war council, both aware of the Deathwatch and part of the Lord Militant's strategic planning, who view Kill-teams and the Deathwatch with its ability to operate outside the strata of Imperial command structures as useful to their plans. This is especially true now that the Reach is divided into three salients and it is difficult to pass support, materiel, and men from one warzone to another, each salient commander jealously guarding his own resources. These men have formed a covenant known as the Council of Reason, rumoured to be staffed by those generals still loyal to Achilus or those who believe Tetrarchus has taken the Crusade to a crisis point by launching the three salients rather than concentrating on Achilus' original plans. In league with Zyr Zagthusa, a Calixian Inquisitor who believes Achilus was not lost but murdered, they have been trying to exert their influence over the Deathwatch and use it and its operations to further their own goals. Only those veterans who have served long enough within the Deathwatch are aware of the Council, whether or not they know it by that name. A Battle-Brother might, in time, learn to see its mark upon the missions and requests that come to the Chamber of Vigilance as well as the mark of Zagthusa and his minions. The Council of Reason has been trying for years to cultivate connections with the Deathwatch, learning the names of Kill-teams and veterans, hoping to earn their trust and subtly influence the missions they conduct. Such is the nature of the command of the Crusade that a single office or regiment may have many masters. The Deathwatch is no exception, taking direction from the levels of command within Watch Fortress Erioch as well as trying to deal with the agendas of the Inquisition. Thus, in the eyes of the Council, not even a highly favoured warrior like a Deathwatch Space Marine can be trusted to be free from the influence of someone who is in turn under the influence of the Lord Militant. For this reason, the members of the Council, operating in the shadows of the Lord Militant's court, watch and wait, reading action reports and mission briefings with care to find evidence of this secret Chapter of Battle-Brothers, in the hopes that if contact is made, they might provide useful service to the Lord Militant's aims.



The missions the Council of Reason and Zyr Zagthusa try to engineer usually focus on the lines between the salients, where the actions of a few can have far larger consequences to the Crusade as a whole. These missions are never directly against the enemies of the Council, and so even should the Kill-team see their hand at work, they can seldom doubt the need to vanquish the foes they are sent up against. Even so, the actions of the Council are subtle in the extreme, and have but a feather's touch upon the Deathwatch, perhaps because the Council fears discovery by the Lord Militant or because Zyr Zagthusa's own agendas and madness are at work. In either case, this could mean that those veteran Kill-teams that meet their needs might find themselves being used for the Council's ends, even if those ends are in line with those of the Deathwatch. However, all of this might change should Zagthusa find the proof he is looking for, or the Council feel that the actions of the Lord Militant are about to bring the Crusade to ruin. Should this happen, a Kill-team might find itself unwittingly involved in Crusade infighting as they try and complete their duty for the Chapter.

AN ENEMY WITHIN

Those few Imperial commanders within the Achilus Crusade aware of the Deathwatch usually see it as a boon, a vital force against their foes or at worst a tool with which the Imperium can target powerful enemy commanders and generals. However, a small proportion among this already limited number of men and women see them as an inconvenience or covet their power jealously. To these hubristic ignorants, the Deathwatch is made of elite and entitled warriors more focused on battle than on realities of war. Without doubt the worst of these handful of dissenters is Lord Commander Sebiascor Ebongrave, who does not merely believe that elements of the Deathwatch are impeding the command of his salient, but that some of them are outright working against him.

Any Battle-Brother who has attained the mantle of veteran will likely have served some time within the Canis Salient and, as a result, witnessed Lord Ebongrave's antagonism toward outsiders. Unlike other troublesome Imperial commanders who might view the Deathwatch with scorn and contempt, angered by its meddling in what they consider their personal domain, or who they might accuse of disrupting their battle plans or stealing the glory of their regiments, Ebongrave often acts as if the presence of the Deathwatch is akin to the presence of an enemy. This is not to say that Ebongrave has a special and unique grudge against the Deathwatch; this is a disdain and paranoia that he shares with any forces not under his direct control (and that even encompasses some of those elements supposedly loyal to him). Kill-teams are unfortunately singled out by his paranoia as they are part of a secret organisation; utterly mysterious to outsiders and with agendas unknown to even powerful men like Ebongrave.

For an example of the Lord Commander's distrust of the Deathwatch, one can look to the Black Reef and those forces sent across the Stygian Break. This area has long been of interest to the Deathwatch, especially the Dead Cabal, for the secrets it might reveal in combatting the Necron threat. At the same time, since the forming of the Canis Salient, Lord Ebongrave has been endeavouring to find a way across the Reef so that he might flank the Tau forces arrayed against him and break the deadlock of the Greyhell Front. The results have been a few collective missions between the Deathwatch and the salient forces, each for their own ends. Unaware of the work of the Dead Cabal, Lord Ebongrave has imagined a treacherous plot in the 'unsanctioned' actions of Kill-teams in the Reef, and a number of incidents between the Lord Commander's forces and Kill-teams have been reported to Watch Fortress Erioch.



Most disturbing among these is the disappearance of Kill-teams both within the Black Reef and the Canis Salient at large. This is information only known to a few of the most veteran Deathwatch Battle-Brothers and a handful of Inquisitors, given the terrible consequences this news could have if proven true. Reported as lost to enemy action or simply lost in the Warp, the missing Kill-teams could complete a terrible pattern if Lord Ebongrave is behind them. In the past, both Inquisitors and Battle-Brothers have fallen in the Canis Salient without their bodies being recovered. While this is far from unusual, the recent spate of vanishings within the Reef have caused some Inquisitors to draw parallels between these and older disappearances. Thus far, no direct action has been taken, and the Chamber of Vigilance has yet to be convened on the matter, or even hear tell of much of its evidence. There are, however, some Inquisitors working to uncover clues, moving quietly behind the scenes to ferret out the truth of a man already reviled by many of his peers.

If it does come to light that Lord Ebongrave has been actively moving against Kill-teams within the Canis Salient, and either destroying them or taking their members prisoner, it will have terrible consequences and, at the very least, it might fall to a veteran Kill-team to right these wrongs, and avenge or bring back alive any Battle-Brothers left behind.

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VETERANS OF THE OUTER REACH

"There are some things that can never be forgotten. Secrets once known that will haunt the mind of man until his dying day and oblivion take him, secrets that once heard might never be uttered again. Such is the fate of those who have glimpsed the Dark Pattern and looked deep into its thread."

—Battle-Brother Rymas, Kill-team Crescent Night

There are secrets woven into the fabric of the Jericho Reach of which even the Lord Militant does not know. These are the secrets which first brought the Deathwatch to this place and compelled it to build powerful fortresses against the dark. While the Achilus Crusade hammers against the heretic and xenos walls of its enemies across the three salients, the real foes of humanity stir restless in their sleep, watched only by the agents of the Inquisition and the Battle-Brothers of the Dead Cabal. It is both the honour and the burden of a Deathwatch veteran to shoulder these secrets, and few attain the title without having at least some knowledge of the Dead Cabal and the secrets hidden among the outer reaches of the sector. It is likely that in their years of service to the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach, a veteran Battle-Brother will have set foot on cursed Sedu, flown across the Slinnar Drift, or delved deep into the Hadex Anomaly. Unlike the war-torn worlds of the salients, these dark places will change a man in unexpected ways, opening even the mind of a mighty Space Marine and altering his perspective about the nature of the war he is fighting and where his true enemies lie.

THE DEAD CABAL

The Dead Cabal is a secret within a secret. Charged with facing an ancient foe, the Cabal has existed since long before the arrival of the Crusade, and its work will continue long after the Crusade has triumphed over its enemies or faded into nothing, consumed by war and ruin. Newly recruited Deathwatch Battle-Brothers know little, if anything, of the Cabal, accepting that like the Inquisition the Deathwatch works alongside, there are things best left untouched. A veteran, however, cannot be so accepting of such secrets, especially when his own fate becomes entangled with the Cabal and its ends. Even in a seasoned Deathwatch Kill-team that has not actively served in the Cabal, its members will be aware, at least in part, of what transpires out beyond the edge of the Crusade in the darkness of the Reach and on those worlds scattered toward the Eastern Fringe.

These are secrets that will define the actions of the Kill-team should it venture out beyond the operational zones of the Crusade. Even Inquisitors interested in those worlds that lie beyond the edges of the Imperium accept that there are things in the dark about which they know very little. On worlds like Mahir or Sovereign, the members of the Dead Cabal keep eyes and ears open against its foes, but also to track both Inquisitors and Battle-Brothers there on their own missions. Eventually, whether he knows it or not, a Battle-Brother's path during his secondment will likely cross that of the Dead Cabal.

While for many Battle-Brothers the existence of the Dead Cabal and the enemies they hunt could be considered just one more secret they will keep, it is the nature of the Cabal that simply knowing of its existence can change the veteran, and alter the focus of his Kill-team. Simply put, while the Achilus Crusade fights the collective forces of the Stigmatus, Hive Fleet Dagon, and the Tau across three broad fronts, the Dead Cabal focus on the worlds and regions beyond the front where older enemies stir. According to the Dead Cabal, these enemies, most notably the Necron threat, present a more critical danger to the Imperium than all of its other foes combined. For many Battle-Brothers this notion can be hard to discount after they have seen the danger themselves. The fear remains that, should the Necrons or some other ancient evil of the sector reach the Warp gate, then it could mean doom for the Calixis Sector and beyond. In this light, veterans can see what the Crusade really is: part of an elaborate balancing act, countering the weight of its foes and creating a barrier for a greater evil beyond.

Not all veteran Battle-Brothers are changed by what they see in the Outer Reach, or what they learn about the Dark Pattern and the unsettling findings of the Dead Cabal. Some of these Deathwatch veterans come to consider the Dead Cabal a rogue element of the Deathwatch, placing unnecessary resources into a doomed project, and favouring methods of hunting and investigation too timid for their tastes when they believe a more active purging of these outer worlds might create more favourable results. Currently, the voices of these dissenting Kill-teams is quiet, but should it grow in volume, the Dead Cabal might be challenged from within, a different breed of veterans taking it in new and dangerous directions. This is also the fear of the Inquisitors working closely with the Cabal; these men and women understand and respect the influence a veteran Kill-team can command within the Deathwatch, and know too well what this might mean should it be replicated in the Dead Cabal. Such zealous actions, while laudable in the eyes of the Emperor, could have long and lasting consequences for the Jericho Reach, especially if the full force of the Necrons is stirred to life.

For more information on the Dead Cabal and the Dark Pattern, see the **DEATHWATCH** supplement **THE OUTER REACH**.

THAT WHICH CANNOT BE FORGOTTEN

Most soldiers of the Imperium are oblivious to the Necron threat, let alone the presence of the Necrons in the Jericho Reach. Among the enemies of mankind, the Necrons remain the least encountered and the most widely scattered. Even in those rare cases in which members of the Crusade have faced off against Necrons in the Reach, the Inquisition has been quick to purge the bodies and minds of those involved, keeping the secret safe, at least for the time being. Space Marines are, of course, a different matter, and it is inevitable that some of the Chapters have crossed paths with the Necron threat and some of its Battle-Brothers learned of their presence. Deathwatch Kill-teams are no exception and even those not actively involved with the Dead Cabal might have operated on worlds where Necrons were present or been called upon to defend local Imperial interests against the stirrings of a slumbering tomb world. Once learned, it is a powerful secret that cannot be forgotten, and that marks the Battle-Brother out to both the Dead Cabal and Inquisitors of the Ordo Xenos, their name recorded as part of the web of secrets binding those two organisations together.

Of more concern to veteran Kill-teams than merely coming to the attention of those elements of the Inquisition involved in the investigation and countering of the Necron threat is coming to the attention of the Necrons themselves. Far from a passive entity, the Phaeron of the Subbekhar Dynasty has a growing awareness of everything that transpires within the Jericho Reach and those individuals who have encountered his warriors or despoiled his tomb worlds. As no other Imperial force is as active against the Necrons and few, besides the Battle-Brothers of the Deathwatch, have encountered Necrons and lived to tell the tale, it is those Battle-Brothers who become the targets of the Crimson Scythe's wrath. It is possible that the Phaeron has noted the presence of these exceptional Kill-teams and filed them away in his vast consciousness as future priority targets for his legions.

TOUCHED BY WAR

War leaves no man untouched, and every day the Crusade grinds on as thousands upon thousands of Imperial soldiers are mangled both in body and in mind. Battle-Brothers are far more resistant to ravages of war than ordinary humans, their training and superhuman capabilities protecting them from the worst of its horrors. Unfortunately, there are things hidden among the stars that can affect even the mind of a member of the Adeptus Astartes, and over time a Battle-Brother might become changed in a way that cannot be repaired by the ministrations of his Apothecary or the tending of his Chaplain. This is an issue for Deathwatch veterans, as a Kill-team will see far more active service against a greater variety of foes than the Battle-Brother might have encountered had he remained with his own Chapter. These foes are often more powerful and terrible than those commonly encountered on the battlefield, such as powerful Tyranid hive beasts or Warp-spawned horrors that possess the power to bend minds and break wills in terrible and diverse ways. Even the Tau, another of the principle foes of the Crusade, can be as deadly, tainting those who fight them not with the touch of the Warp nor potent psychic assaults but with their ideas and ideals, an altogether more insidious form of attack.

The common reaction of veterans to prolonged exposure to this kind of assault on their will is a descent into duty, where they fall back upon their core beliefs and their duty to both Chapter and Emperor. Horrors encountered in the Outer Reach are not so easily forgotten, and often only the purity of hatred is enough to keep them at bay. Thus a veteran will likely have hidden scars from their time in the Outer Reach that never truly healed. In the Imperial Guard, even among its veteran echelons, this kind of mental damage can be debilitating and turn an otherwise able soldier into little

more than a gibbering wreck, his mind torn and tormented by exposure to the Warping nature of Chaos or the utter horror of unbridled xenos aggression. For a Battle-Brother, conditioned to withstand this madness, the memories instead settle into a strata of mental scar tissue allowing him to press on and perform his duty despite his exposure to the terrors of things man was not meant to know.

Among the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach, the Apothecaries can often see the signs of this mark, though they can do nothing to heal it. It is a burden borne by every Battle-Brother and one often only shared within his own Kill-team, driving its members closer together with the horrors they have witnessed. Each Kill-team must deal with these traumas alone, though often only the purity of battle and righteous fury against the enemies of the Emperor are the only real cure. Among some who have taken the Long Vigil within the Reach, this kind of active convalescence is known as the cleansing fire, where a Battle-Brother completes a mission within the confines of the Crusade against its primary enemies and faces only battle and open combat. A time spent in simple conflict can reinvigorate a Battle-Brother and reforge frayed links within his Kill-team which might have begun to unravel under the strain of unspeakable horrors and Inquisitorial plots.

THE POINT OF NO RETURN

Whether or not the Battle-Brother was ever a member of the Dead Cabal, once he has fought in the darkness of the Outer Reach and lived to tell the tale, he is never the same. This is what is known among some Kill-teams as the Terminus, the point at which the veteran becomes not just a visitor to the Jericho Reach but an occupant. It is a shifting of perspectives, which, while unofficial and not touched upon by the honours and glories sanctioned by the Codex Astartes or recognised

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by the commanders of Watch Station Erioch, will mark the Battle-Brother out to others of his kind. Often a Kill-team returning from the Outer Reach, especially after weeks or months beyond the reach of the Imperium, will be met by a special honour or a ceremony from those veteran Kill-teams that have likewise crossed this line between soldiers of the Deathwatch and warriors of the Reach. It is a respected aspect of the veterans of the Jericho Reach that the true dangers of the Reach are beyond the edge of the Crusade and beyond the notice of the Lord Militant. This harkens back to the reason the Deathwatch came to the Reach in the first place, and why they maintain a presence in places the Crusade either considers safe or beyond its notice.

As part of crossing the Terminus, the Kill-team members often bring back trophies from their time in the Outer Reach, fragments of their foes or ancient artefacts to prove the existence of a greater evil the Deathwatch must face, above and beyond the presence of Tyranids, Heretics, and Tau. While the taking of trophies is not uncommon among the Deathwatch (and the Adeptus Astartes in general), there is an aspect to those taken by veterans of the Outer Reach that transcends this. Quite often these trophies are items which would be considered forbidden by the Inquisition, not because they are dangerous to life and limb but because of the dangers their knowledge might bring. These can include fragments of stone scrawled with alien writing, tiny mechanical devices of obvious xenos manufacture, or strange alien crystals or other substances with properties both wondrous and perplexing. To the puritanical elements of the Inquisition, these trophies represent a breach of humanity's division from the alien and a potential object to subvert those who carry it or look upon it. To the Kill-team, these are trinkets that honour their victory over unknowable and terrible foes, and their ability to reduce them to a mere bauble and a tale of their triumph.

These trophies and the honours accorded to those who survive their first foray into the Outer Reach are but another mark of the society that makes up the Deathwatch of the Reach, and how that as a Battle-Brother serves out his secondment he will, in time, be regarded as a veteran. It is this very progression, the glories he earns upon the way and the honour bestowed upon him by his peers, that might see him remain within the Deathwatch rather than returning to his own Chapter, regardless of the weight of duty he might feel. This is the other Terminus, the other point of no return at which the Battle-Brother sees the goals of the Deathwatch as his own and the vital role they play within the Imperium. It is a self-replicating cycle that will, in time, see the Battle-Brother rise to become a veteran of the Deathwatch himself and lead others by example to remain within their Kill-teams, drawn to the duty and sacred task held by the Chapter. This has been the case as long as the Deathwatch has existed within the Jericho Reach, forging new and more able Kill-teams to take on the never-ending task of countering the ever encroaching darkness.



EXTENDED AND RECURRING SECONDMENT

"To take the oath but once marks a Battle-Brother as honourable, brave and loyal; to take the oath twice is to become a beast of a different breed and can mean both the beginnings of greatness or the taint of the reckless, wild, and headstrong."

—Battle-Brother Jyra Coldheart, Space Wolves Chapter

When a Battle-Brother takes the oath of secondment to the Deathwatch, he is accepting a great honour from both his Chapter and the Deathwatch. Chapter Masters honouring the ancient accords with the Deathwatch will choose those they deem fit for such a great duty and who they believe will prosper under the guidance of the Watch Commanders in the service of a Kill-team. Then, when the time comes and the secondment ends (usually after a set time or mission has been completed) the Battle-Brother can return with honour to his Chapter, bringing with him the glory of his deeds and the honour that completing such a secondment brings. For most Battle-Brothers, this will mark the end of their cycle in the Deathwatch. They will acquit themselves well and, should they make a name for themselves, their deeds will be recognised by their Chapter Master, and they can return to the fold richer for the experience. For others, though, this is not always the case. Their time in the Deathwatch has changed them, or for some other reason their secondment is not considered complete, and so their Chapter is not yet ready to have them back, or the Deathwatch still has need of them. In these instances, they may even take the oath again, reforging their bonds with the Deathwatch but stepping further away from their Chapter and making the transition back all the harder.

AN ANCIENT COVENANT

The oaths that bind a Battle-Brother are ancient indeed, and have existed for millennia as part of the formation and function of the Adeptus Astartes. Countless Space Marine Chapters at some point offer up Battle-Brothers for service in the Deathwatch, and that to be a member of the Adeptus Astartes is to perhaps one day serve among the secretive brotherhood of xenos hunters. The rules and laws of these secondments are far from set down in stone, and like the Codex Astartes, are interpreted individually by each Chapter, some embracing the word of the law more than the spirit, and some reading into the oaths what they wish to see. Typically, a Space Marine will serve in the Deathwatch for a single mission, assignment, or conflict, though given these broad terms this can range from months to years, or even longer. In the Jericho Reach, many of the Battle-Brothers seconded to the Deathwatch are there to honour the covenant between those Chapters fighting alongside the Crusading forces. As

a result, many have secondments, with lofty goals like the liberating of worlds or the purging of specific foes, which could take years to complete if they are completed at all. It falls to the Chapter Masters, along with the Deathwatch, to determine much of how these oaths are fulfilled and what conditions are placed upon the Battle-Brothers they send, each a unique pact between the individual Chapter and the Deathwatch. For a Battle-Brother, this means that his secondment might vary, not just in time but in the details of the oath he has set down, and members of the same Kill-team might have different perspectives on why they serve. All of this will influence how long a Battle-Brother stays in the Deathwatch, how many missions he completes, and to what degree he attains the title of a veteran.

Battle-Brothers see different things in their Long Vigil, and this will determine in many ways how long they remain in the Deathwatch or whether they take the oath again. Many of the Codex Chapters like the Ultramarines and their successors teach that the Oath to the Chamber of Vigilance is another part of their holy duty to the Emperor, part of the ancient rites and rules laid down in the founding of the Deathwatch in the lost past. As such, it should be dispensed with honour and one must tolerate those one fights alongside, regardless of their own doctrine, until such a time as they can return to their own Chapter. For these Battle-Brothers, a secondment is usually extended because they have not completed their mission or task for the Deathwatch, and will continue to strive to make it so, always with a mind to a return to their own Chapter.

Others see the oath in a variety of different ways, ranging from a chance for glory to ascension from their own Chapter and the path to greater service in the name of the Emperor. These Battle-Brothers often hungrily devour the knowledge of their peers, learning new methods of war and battle skills with which to slay their foes. They also throw themselves into the bonding of a Kill-team, revelling in the experience of fighting alongside those not of their own Chapter and trying to share their own knowledge and skills with those around them. Whether it is for honour, duty, or a combination of both, many of these Battle-Brothers come to view the Deathwatch as their new home, and are content to continue their secondment until they see fit to return to their Chapter. Should they find that they favour the Kill-team they have joined, they may even take their oath again, sometimes as part of a combined oath-taking with their newfound Battle-Brothers.

In both cases, it is not uncommon for a Battle-Brother to serve for years in the Deathwatch to complete his oath, but it becomes more uncommon for one to continue his secondment, and even rarer to take the oath again. It is said that the first Martyr, the original commander of the Deathwatch in the Jericho Reach, took the oath three times before remaining on to lead his brethren. However, such Space Marines remain rare exceptions to the Adeptus Astartes.

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A TIME FOR ATONEMENT

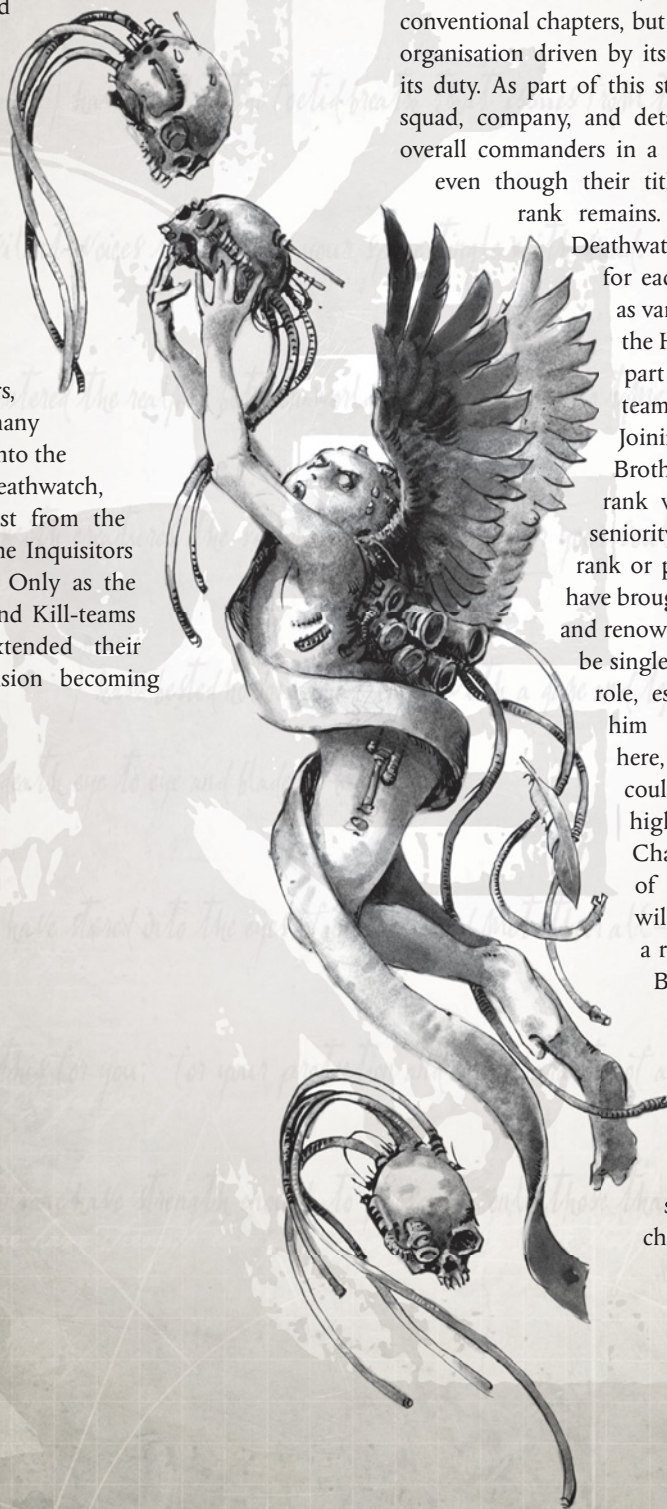
Not all Battle-Brothers take the oath and join the Long Vigil by the command of their Chapter Masters, and some, like the Black Shields, take the oath for reasons which are their own. These Chapterless Battle-Brothers might come to the Deathwatch to atone for transgressions or perceived failures, hoping to wipe away the taint of their deeds by duty in the Deathwatch or to right some wrong known only to themselves. Unlike the common petty misdeeds committed by Imperial citizens, such as theft or murder, the transgressions of a Battle-Brother which would see him become a Black Shield and join the Deathwatch are always grave and often woven tightly into his own sense of honour and duty. It might be that he sees his infractions against the Codex Astartes, including failing his brothers in battle or by some perceived taint the result of exposure to the malign foes he has faced. In more serious instances, a Black Shield might have caused the damaging or destruction of a valued weapon or relic, or even the death of a Battle-Brother. In these cases, the Black Shield chooses exile from his Chapter and absolution in the ranks of the Deathwatch. Many Black Shields bring their transgressions with them when they take the oath, and cannot let go of the debt they feel they owe to their brothers and the Emperor for whatever it is they have done or failed to do. This can translate into a reckless or driven nature in their missions as they spend their lives to bring back those they have lost, or they show an obsessive desire to exact revenge on a foe or recover a lost relic, sometimes almost at the cost of their current mission. In all these cases, the Black Shield is likely to remain within the Deathwatch, extending his secondment or taking the oath again, until he feels he has completed his penance. A rare few remain indefinitely, their oath unbound by time, serving until battle releases them from their burden.

Rather, a Black Shield will remain as part of the Deathwatch, while he seldom speaks of his past—such is the nature of choosing to obscure their Chapter from their brothers—speculation abounds about their origins. While, ostensibly, they must be accepted if they are willing to take the oath, and many Kill-teams count Black Shields among their numbers, the air of ill-omen often travels with the Black Shield in the shadow of the reasons for their choosing to join the Deathwatch and forsake their own Chapter hanging over their head. The reason why a Battle-Brother would choose to deface his armour and remove his Chapter markings, cutting himself off from his Chapter and its memory can only be imagined, but it will often be on the minds of his Kill-team, especially until the Black Shield has earned their trust. Conversely, the Chapter's loss is the gain of the Deathwatch and, whatever their past, many Black Shields continue the Long Vigil for life, living and dying in the service of the Watch Commander for reasons known only to themselves.



Battle-Brothers are often driven by their duty and count their oath as a sacred bond between themselves and the Emperor. It is therefore little wonder that a Space Marine in the service of the Deathwatch might not be able to let go of his duty, even when others might consider it complete. This is when a Battle-Brother finds true cause in the ideals of the Deathwatch. For some Battle-Brothers, this could be the drive to unravel the mysteries of the Reach, having glimpsed the Dark Pattern or seen inside part of the Omega Vault, they become compelled to further the gains of the Deathwatch. For others, it is contact with powerful alien foes, like the Tau or Hive Fleet Dagon, and forming a personal hatred of these enemies. If a past encounter allowed a xenos commander to escape or uncovered a dark secret about a world, the Battle-Brother and his Kill-team might feel that it falls to them to tie up loose ends and see the matter through. This is all part of the battle experience that grows within a veteran Kill-team as it acquires more and more missions. It can even transpire that the Kill-team sees discord within the Imperial forces of the Jericho Reach itself and, aware as they are of the greater picture, take it upon themselves to fight the battles that the Crusade forces are too distracted to. This scenario has become more common since the arrival of the Achilles Crusade, in light of the friction between its generals and the Lord Militant. In all these cases, when it comes time for a Battle-Brother or members of his Kill-team to return to the fold of his own Chapter, he may stay on, to complete the tasks he has begun.

Newer Kill-teams will occasionally be formed entirely of Battle-Brothers drawn from Space Marine Chapters participating in the Achilus Crusade, some of which might have taken the oath for a second time to extend their secondment, with the understanding by their Chapter that the fight of the Deathwatch is closely linked to the success or failure of the Crusade. No less honourable and duty-bound than their veteran counterparts, these Kill-teams are just as zealous in their execution of the will of the Deathwatch and their service to the Inquisition when it arises. However, they retain far closer ties to their Chapter commanders, and as a result are more aware of the actions of the Adeptus Astartes within the Crusade, whether or not it impacts the Deathwatch. As an example, Kill-team Hel-Kane is formed of members of the Storm Wardens, Blood Swords, and Dark Sons. It has more than once worked alongside its respective Chapters when operating within the confines of the Crusade war zones. Formed during the first year of the Crusade as part of a large influx of new secondment from the Chapters of the crusaders, the Kill-team, like many others of its ilk, blended into the larger concerns of the Deathwatch, raising no special interest from the Watch Commanders or the Inquisitors active within the Reach. Only as the years have slipped past and Kill-teams like Hel-Kane have extended their secondment, is the division becoming more apparent.



RISING THROUGH THE RANKS

"How can a Chapter which counts its numbers from a hundred different factions consider itself in control of its own destiny?"

—Euras Germas, Inquisitor of the Ordo Xenos

The Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach is created from Battle-Brothers drawn from hundreds of different Chapters and guided by commanders of Watch Station Erioch. On the surface, its structure echoes those of more conventional chapters, but in reality it is a unique and varied organisation driven by its own traditions and the needs of its duty. As part of this structure, the Deathwatch employs squad, company, and detachment commanders, as well as overall commanders in a similar vein to a other Chapters; even though their titles and responsibilities vary, the rank remains. Within the Jericho Reach, the Deathwatch maintains Watch Commanders for each of its Watch Fortresses, as well as various other posts like the Master of the Hunt and the Keepers, which are all part of the structure that keeps its Kill-teams well supported and organised. Joining such an organisation, a Battle-Brother can at first only expect to enjoy rank within his own Kill-team, where seniority is more important than whatever rank or privilege the Battle-Brother might have brought with him. Then, as the fortunes and renown of his Kill-team waxes, he might be singled out to take on a more important role, especially if he has brought with him a needed specialisation. From here, distinguished service and time could see the Battle-Brother take on a higher rank, with the approval of the Chamber of Vigilance, the influence of the Watch Commander, and the will of his Chapter Master all playing a role. Through this rise to rank, the Battle-Brother will remain as part of his Kill-team. Even should he become a Watch Commander, the sacred bond formed with his Battle-Brothers will never be completed, diminished, or removed, though the nature of his service to the Deathwatch might change dramatically.

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A DIFFERENT CHAPTER

For most Battle-Brothers, the command structure of the Deathwatch is something they never truly become part of, remaining within their Kill-teams and focusing on its missions and the completion of their duty. They count their deeds as proof of their worth when returning to their Chapter; they will not aspire to the position of captain or commander unless the honour is pressed upon them. Even Battle-Brothers who come to the Deathwatch bearing rank accept that it will be largely diminished for the duration of their secondment, their command restricted to the confines of their own Kill-team. Serving in the Deathwatch can bring with it great advancement and honour, but a Battle-Brother cannot always count on it until his return to his Chapter.

Deathwatch veterans therefore fall into two groups when it comes to the attainment of rank within the Deathwatch. The first are those who serve loyally within the Kill-team but disdain the trappings of command, choosing to use their renown only for the advancement of their Kill-team. The second are those who take their place among its commanders to guide its actions within the Reach, sometimes leaving their Kill-team behind in the process.

Battle-Brothers who eschew rank and choose to focus on the missions undertaken by their Kill-team are the most common. In many cases, they have come to the Deathwatch and remained in its ranks for further secondment because they wish to continue the vital work of the Deathwatch, or to complete unfinished obligations and vows made personal by their vigil. These Battle-Brothers will become able veterans and skilled operatives of the Deathwatch, seeing the Watch Commanders to be no different than their former company commanders, but within the Deathwatch they have different responsibilities and are largely beholden only to their Kill-team. Some members of the less strict Codex Chapters, like the Space Wolves and Black Templars, make up the numbers of this group, either embracing the independence of the Kill-team structure in the case of Space Wolves Battle-Brothers, or taking the fight to their enemies in the case of Black Templar Battle-Brothers. For these kinds of Battle-Brothers, there is still a high place to

be earned within the Deathwatch as part of a veteran Kill-team, enjoying the benefits of long service to the Vigil and the power and influence that comes from such a position. However, even a veteran Kill-team cannot wield the same power as actual rank, and a Battle-Brother who chooses not to engage in the responsibilities and higher command of the Chapter does so knowing that he will remain in thrall to it, even if from time to time he can exert his influence over its decisions.

The other kind of veteran Deathwatch Battle-Brothers are those who treat the Deathwatch like they would their own Chapter and accept advancement into positions of rank and command, taking on the interests of the Deathwatch and forming closer bonds with both the leadership of Watch Fortress Erioch and the great structures of the Deathwatch itself. While such Battle-Brothers will always remain tied to their Kill-teams, regardless of the length of their secondment, taking on higher rank within the Deathwatch means a change of priorities and a shifting of awareness. To become a Watch Commander or captain is a great responsibility for a Battle-Brother, and though it is sometimes offered to those of high rank seconded from other Chapters, the posts usually fall to those who have completed years in the service of the Deathwatch first, learning how the brotherhood operates and functions.

More than merely having more responsibility laid at their feet, a Battle-Brother who accepts the responsibility of command within the Deathwatch must also take on deeper secrets, learning more of the Deathwatch's aims and goals within the Reach and more of the reasons behind its continued presence in the sector. This alone can change the way the Battle-Brother operates within his Kill-team, and also his relationship with his former Chapter, as he sees for the first time the darkness behind the Achilus Crusade and the true enemies it faces.

In both cases, becoming a veteran within the Deathwatch does not guarantee any kind of special rank or command; even should a Kill-team display extraordinary honour and commitment to their mission, a member remains judged by his own merit.



CHOSEN BY THE CHAPTER

Even with the Deathwatch's need for good commanders and its lack of permanent veterans, the decision to induct a Battle-Brother into its upper command structure and deeper secrets is never taken lightly. A chosen candidate might be observed for years or even decades before a decision is made, his missions and actions carefully considered as well as the connections to the other members of his Kill-team, his Chapter, and the Inquisition. Often a Watch Commander or captain might test a Battle-Brother, sending him on a mission into the Outer Reach or into a particularly troublesome situation in a warzone of the Achilus Crusade, to see how he handles himself. Quite often this is without the knowledge of the Battle-Brother and he will be unaware he is undertaking a test to see if he is worthy of command. Even should the Battle-Brother acquit himself well, and the commander does not consider the need for any further tests, there will remain the question of loyalty and duty to his Kill-team. Commanders are especially aware of the bonds that can form within a Kill-team, especially over the length of time it takes for a Battle-Brother to be considered a veteran worthy of advancement to command, and that breaking or weakening these bonds can have unforeseen consequences.

To this end, in addition to a test of the Battle-Brother's leadership abilities and his abilities to operate both within and outside the shadow of the Crusade, he will have the strength of his Kill-team put to the test. The methods of this test will be tailored to the Kill-team, but among the veterans of the Reach it is known as the Breaking Point, and can be as gruelling as any battlefield confrontation. To reach the Breaking Point, a Kill-team's weaknesses will be probed; the schisms between its members will be exploited, such as the old rivalries of their Chapters or dark incidents from their past. The Kill-team might also be placed in a position of stress, where the priorities of its members are tested. They will face a mission that forces members to choose between their mission and their companions or that has them forced to find common ground between tactics when multiple methods would suit. In the end, if a Battle-Brother can stretch or bend his bonds with his Kill-team without breaking them, then his Kill-team is likely the sort that can survive his ascension to command.

TAKING COMMAND

The Jericho Reach had an extensive network of Watch Fortresses long before the arrival of the Achilus Crusade, along with an infrastructure of command linking them all together and reaching back to the Imperium. Always considered a remote and hazardous post, the Reach has seen the rise and fall of many great Watch Captains of note, each making their mark upon the region through their bold actions and great deeds. The arrival of the Crusade and the shifting of Imperial focus to the sector has changed things to some degree, forcing the Deathwatch to contend with the Crusade forces and the massive disruption to their own areas of operation and ongoing missions. It has not, however, diminished the courage and ability of its commanders. These veteran Battle-Brothers are always chosen for their skill and

renown, having to prove themselves not just to their peers, but also to the great and ancient traditions of the Deathwatch for which they stand. Though it falls to the Watch Captains to make decisions of command regarding these Battle-Brothers, there are many contributing factors at play when selecting new commanders. In the current climate of the Reach, a commander must be able to deal not just with the needs of the Deathwatch, but to navigate the sometimes conflicting meddling of the Lord Militant and the increased number of Inquisitors, both of which must be handled with care.

These are the challenges that a Battle-Brother desiring command must overcome, his past deeds weighed against him and his every dealing with the Imperial power structure under consideration. This is the point at which many Battle-Brothers find resistance; they are adept on the battlefield and skilled with weapons but lacking in the nuances of leadership needed to deal with the complex secrets guarded by the Deathwatch or the recurring presence and influence of the Inquisition within the Chapter. It is not enough to be

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true to the Codex and vanquish ones enemies, or even commit some great deed of glory, though these things surely help. A Battle-Brother who would first prove himself a veteran must next prove himself a leader.

To this end, the Chamber of Vigilance and the Watch Captains favour different kinds of leaders within the Deathwatch for different purposes. Able battlefield commanders and skilled small unit tacticians are used in the outer reaches of the sector, or kept to their Kill-teams for continued independent operations, while those that have proven themselves able to work in the shadow of the Warmaster's armies and the Inquisition are granted a more localised role. Even though it is rare for a Deathwatch captain to have contact with officers of either the Imperial Navy or Imperial Guard officers—the secretive nature of the Deathwatch keeping it apart from such petty command structures—it is important that the Deathwatch remains mindful of the Crusade, and the actions of the Lord Militant as they must often operate within their sphere of influence and can find Deathwatch missions complicated by their presence.

The other challenge a Battle-Brother must face when taking command is that he will often be commanding from afar or by proxy, as his charges remain scattered across the Reach and he himself must tend to the needs of his Kill-team. Unlike some of the structures often found within a Codex Chapter, command does not flow directly down to military formations, which remain tightly knit together and always function as a singular body. Instead, the Kill-teams exist as many separate units, each with its own needs and agendas and each reporting to multiple masters or hailing from multiple Watch Stations. This means that as the Battle-Brother moves from mission to mission, so too do those he might command, creating an elaborate cycle of command and the creation of ad hoc battle-groups as needed by the Deathwatch. A Battle-Brother who has taken on the sacred charge of command might be called upon to lead from the front just as often as he must give council to other Watch Commanders or confer with the Inquisition, the role becoming flexible just as the Deathwatch must remain flexible to complete their duty.

The taking of command by a Battle-Brother can also cause friction within his Kill-team, especially if there are others among its members who aspire to command. Unlike the rigid systems of command that might have existed within the Battle-Brother's own Chapter, there is rarely a set template for a Kill-team, and the individual dynamics of how it functions are left in the hands of its members. This is part of the way in which a Kill-team can operate as an independent unit and also as part of a larger collective military force at the same time. This can become an issue when one or more of its members take on a larger role within the Deathwatch and the shadow of their command is cast onto their brothers. The influence and control of the actions and missions of their Kill-team might also come to the fore, not to mention if a Battle-Brother takes a place in the Chamber of Vigilance and earns a louder voice in the Jericho Reach Deathwatch, making his choices and directives carry far more weight than that of his comrades. These are all issues that a veteran Kill-team must face, as some of its number rise to higher command and take on more responsibility and power, leaving others, who might be no less skilled or veteran, to see their former brothers influencing the fate of their Kill-team.

TOTAL INDEPENDENCE

Whether or not a Battle-Brother and his Kill-team take on command positions within the Deathwatch and rise to the rank of Captain or Watch Commander, the longer the Kill-team survives and the more renown it earns for itself, the greater the influence and power the Battle-Brother will develop. It is the nature of a Kill-team that it usually only exists for a short time, its members in flux as they begin and end secondments to the Deathwatch while the extremely dangerous nature of their missions often means some Battle-Brothers will fall against the foe. It is no small thing for a group of Battle-Brothers to stay together and survive the horrors of the Reach for any great length of time, and the veteran Kill-teams that do are rare and valued commodities by the Deathwatch and true instruments of the Emperor's will.

With this veteran status comes a greater responsibility than before. This is most often expressed in missions with broader parameters, more self-reliance, and greater personal operational discretion. Even within the fluid and flexible structure of a Kill-team's operating parameters, veterans are expected to be even more resourceful and adaptive than ordinary Battle-Brothers, taking on more dangerous tasks in the darkest reaches of the Reach. In time, a veteran Kill-team can also gain the ability to greatly influence the nature of its own missions within the framework of the Deathwatch's needs, and many that rise to this rank become embroiled against recurring foes or as part of lengthy ongoing campaigns. Veteran Kill-teams like the Crescent-Talon, led by Brother-Captain Urakan, are an example of the power of veteran status. Urakan and his brothers have operated for years in the Orpheus Salient, hunting down and destroying unique Tyranid organisms and uncovering further secrets about the presence of the Great Devourer in the Reach and the genus of its fleets. In recent times, Urakan has begun tracking the movements of the Dagon Overlord, intent on finding the beast and, if not slaying it, at least bringing back genetic samples from it so that a more effective weapon might be devised to combat it.

Such is the effectiveness of Kill-teams like Urakan's and those similarly scattered across the sector, that the Deathwatch favours them against specific foes and calls upon their expertise to deal with similar kinds of missions. In these instances, the veterans will have substantial control over the situation when operating in their chosen battleground and against a chosen foe. Inquisitors, too, are mindful of these specialised veterans and an Inquisitor will sometimes choose a Kill-team for their foe-specific skills and the name they have made for themselves fighting one of the Imperium's enemies. Experienced Inquisitors will keep a close eye on these veteran Kill-teams of the Jericho Reach, weighing their abilities against their own needs and considering how best to turn them to their own ends.

Quite apart from the influence veteran status can bring over their peers and commanders, the desolation of the Jericho Reach has another more profound effect on Kill-teams. Long periods spent beyond aid or support drives the Kill-team closer together and to rely upon themselves in the face of overwhelming odds. These extended periods of self-reliance, especially in the Outer Reach, change a Kill-team



and veterans even more so, who might have spent years or decades alone, travelling among the stars seeking out the enemies of the Emperor. While it does not alter the duty the Kill-team has toward both Deathwatch and Chapter, and neither does it break the bonds of oath and honour, it does foster a different mind-set to those found when fighting as part of a much larger fighting force. The secrecy with which a Kill-team must function will also make it stand apart from the rest of the Adeptus Astartes, and can lead to not just a pervasive sense of independence, but a far wider range of skills and tactics.

The response by the Deathwatch of the Reach to the self-reliance of these veteran Kill-teams is to embrace such skills, often giving an especially proven Kill-team more responsibility over its own actions so that they might better complete the difficult missions they are tasked with. To date, there are numerous Kill-teams operating within the far-flung reaches of the sector with only nominal links to Watch Fortress Erioch, having been almost completely out of communication for months or years at a time. The Deathwatch accepts this distance in the completion of its agendas, and trusts to the initiative of veteran Kill-teams, often working alongside Inquisitors, themselves prone to vanish into the wilds of the far reach for long periods at a time. For the Kill-teams themselves, these long periods of isolation are a true test of their skills where they must complete their missions alone and without recourse to support or succour. However, such is the nature of the Deathwatch that a Kill-team often stands completely alone against its foe.

DEATH OF A BATTLE-BROTHER

"In the end there is only the memory of what came before, the glory of his deeds, and the foes vanquished by his hand. When I look upon his grave I don't see just the manner in which he died, but the bodies of his enemies left piled at his feet."

—Battle-Brother Hargot, mourning the passing of a member of his Kill-team

It is the fate of most veterans to fall in battle, their duty to the Emperor spent with their last breath and their long vigil finally at an end. Only a few true Deathwatch veterans will return to their own Chapter before this happens, and so it falls to their adopted brothers to mourn their passing and remember their deeds. Far from the end for a veteran, in death they can find a glory that they never could in life, the ultimate expression of a Battle-Brother's duty being the means in which he falls and the enemies he takes with him. It is little wonder, then, that the death of a veteran can have deep and profound consequences on the members of his Kill-team, especially if they have served together for years and survived many dangers together. This act in itself can define a veteran Kill-team, turning them to righteous vengeance, duty, and honour all in the name of their fallen companion.

FALLEN FAR FROM HOME

There is much ritual around the death of a Battle-Brother, and even more so when it comes to Deathwatch veterans, the Chapter and the Kill-team both going to great lengths to honour their dead. The preservation of a fallen Battle-Brother's gene-seed is of paramount importance, as it is the means by which future generations of Space Marines are made. For veterans, recovering the dead can take on extreme importance and many Kill-teams have undertaken long and arduous tasks to do so, never content to let the Reach claim what is left of their brother. A brother never put to rest can haunt his comrades for the rest of their existence together. By contrast, those Kill-teams that recover the gene-seed earn for themselves greater renown and enduring reputation among their peers, as well as the respect of the fallen brother's Chapter for preserving their future.

A veteran cannot choose when and where he might meet his end, though with skill and bravery he sometimes has a chance to influence the moment of his passing. More than one Battle-Brother has chosen to sacrifice himself for his Kill-team, in glorious battle holding back foes or completing some suicidal task to complete a mission, or to allow his brothers the chance to retreat or claim victory. This is the mark of a veteran Kill-team, for in order that a Kill-team prosper, one or more of its members must occasionally sell their lives in its name; preventing the Kill-team's destruction by accepting their own. Quite apart from the interference of the Crusade and the Inquisition, there are xenos factions that take great pleasure in the death of Battle-Brothers and tormenting his

I: ONLY IN DEATH

Kill-team. Unlike the enemies of mankind that fight the Space Marines because they represent the might of the Emperor, there are forces at work within the Reach that actively bait, kill, and then steal the bodies of Deathwatch Space Marines. This is a terrible trial that many veteran Kill-teams have had to face; as their skill and renown grows, so too does the calibre of their enemies, until they draw the attention of foes that take a personal interest in their members. Both Tyranids and Necrons within the Reach have been documented taking Battle-Brothers who have fallen in battle, often forcing their brothers to go to great lengths to recover them, if they can be recovered at all. There can be no greater insult to a veteran battle-brother than to take the body of his fallen brother, a warrior he may have served with for decades, and who has been degraded and despoiled by the hands of xenos. Such an act never fades from the mind of the Kill-team, and will likely focus their righteous rage upon the xenos foe, until either they or it have been destroyed.

LIFE BEYOND OBLIVION

Death need not be the end for a veteran, so long as his memory and his Kill-team live on. It is something unique to the Deathwatch that Space Marines from different Chapters and with differing dispositions and views can create something more enduring than themselves. Although as long as their gene-seed endures they will have a place in their Chapter, and have left their mark among the long line of its Battle-Brothers, there is something different when it comes to how a Kill-team operates. Given that it is such a small tactical formation, the Battle-Brothers that make it up will get to know each other very well, sharing peril and battle time and time again. Through time and trials of blood and battle, the Kill-team becomes its own entity; the deeds of its brothers become the deeds of the Kill-team. This is also true that when a brother falls, he remains in the memories of the Kill-team as long as it exists and the glory he has brought to his Kill-team is in no way diminished by his passing.

Over its existence, a Kill-team might have many members, even reaching the point at which none of its original brothers remain—either having died, ended their secondment, or risen in rank and left the Kill-team behind—though the Kill-team still exists. There are numerous examples of great Kill-teams scattered throughout the history of the Jericho Reach Deathwatch (see **CHAPTER II: HONOUR THY ANCESTORS** for details on some of the greatest of these), many of which ended with the death of their remaining members but others which exist still, like great titles and honours carried by illustrious units, and which were earned by those that came before.

Just as a Kill-team can live on beyond the death of its members if its reputation is strong enough, so too can a Battle-Brother continue to exist and inspire other warriors even in death. The annals of the Achilus Crusade are decorated with the names of great heroes who have given their lives for the Emperor, and the Deathwatch is no different. Even though many of those who fall in the service of the Deathwatch or alongside the Inquisitors of the Ordo Xenos are never officially recorded, their names remain kept secret within the halls of Watch Fortress Erioch and many of the other Watch

Stations scattered through the reach. These fallen heroes can serve as inspiration for those that come after, either drawing them to the service of the specific Kill-team or Watch Commander, or pitting them against a certain foe, the shadow of vengeance passing onto these new Battle-Brothers through the tales they have heard. It has even come to pass that entire Kill-teams have been forged on the memory of a fallen Battle-Brother, his name used as a code-sign to identify them and their deeds committed in honour of their fallen namesake.

The formation of Kill-teams honouring the fallen is always carefully considered, and often part of the purview of veterans. Even though Battle-Brothers are not wont to bring dishonour to the name of a fallen hero, the Deathwatch, like any Chapter, takes the memory of their departed very seriously and there is always much honour and ritual to cloud matters. A veteran is usually called upon to give guidance to these newly founded Kill-teams, giving its members the benefit of his wisdom and experience. While the reasons for forming such a Kill-team to honour the dead can vary, there are other instances where the dead will make their presence known. These can range from visions and omens to great coincidences and even guidance by the Emperor, all informing the Battle-Brothers or the founding veteran that the dead are making their will known. All of these instances are, of course, closely investigated and monitored, but nevertheless, Battle-Brothers are often more than ready to see life in the deeds of their lost, and grant them life anew by creating a Kill-team to honour them.

Regardless of how a Kill-team or a Battle-Brother is remembered after his death, the important thing to those that remain is that they are indeed remembered. Over the course of his career, a Deathwatch veteran may gather around himself many such ghosts and memories of the fallen, provided of course he does not join them. This is a weight of memory that mingles with his honour, and becomes as important to him as the glory of his Kill-team or any deeds they might commit in combat. A Deathwatch Space Marine is defined not just by his duty to his Chapter and to the Emperor but by his record of service and the company he has kept. This is even more true in the case of veterans, and every action they undertake and every mission they complete will leave a mark on the Jericho Reach and define their place within it. When his time comes, he must find honour in his death, ending his life with the grace and courage that others may look upon it and see the greatness of his deeds and remember the warrior he was. For a veteran, this is the most he can hope for, that when he falls in combat against the foe, his Kill-team will remain and in its existence will all his deeds and glories be preserved, their memory keeping him alive even in death.



HONOUR
THY
ANCESTORS

THE FIRST MARTYR
•
THE LORD OF
LIGHTNING
•
THE DARKLING STIRS
•
THE FIFTEEN OF
MIDAEAL
•
DEATH IN THE VOID
•
THE FALL OF HERISOR
•
THE SEVEN SERVANTS

CHAPTER II: HONOUR THY ANCESTORS

"When death comes for you, when the Bell of Lost Souls tolls your demise across the ages, do not go to the Emperor's side mourning the passing of your life. Die with pride, for you did so with honour in the name of the Emperor and the Primarchs. Sing your death song, write the final lines of your saga, discharge your death oath. Do all of these things not as if you take your leave of this life, but as if you are returning home."

—Deathwatch Chaplain Titus Strome,
at the departure of Strike Force Blizzard

This chapter presents the legends of some of the most celebrated Deathwatch Battle-Brothers ever to have stood the Long Watch in the Jericho Reach. The names and deeds of these individuals are known to every Deathwatch warrior serving in the Reach and perhaps even beyond it. Their battles are recounted in the sermons of the Chaplains and shrines have been built to honour them at Erioch.

These legends serve to flesh out the history of the Deathwatch in the Jericho Reach and represent the pinnacle of service to which the Player Characters might aspire. The events described in this chapter begin with one of the very earliest historical records known to relate to the Deathwatch in the Jericho Reach, and the last took place in the final months of 816.M41.

The bulk of each entry describes, for the benefit of the Game Master, the most well-known facts of the legendary figures in question. These accounts are written for a perspective of privileged, but not omnipotent, wisdom, meaning that there are always plenty of mysteries left to explore. This allows the Game Master to invent additional details to suit his campaign and it inspires players to fill in the gaps. It also means that the figures maintain their legendary character, lifting them higher even than the already vaunted ranks of the Battle-Brothers of the Deathwatch.

Having covered the history, the next segment of each entry is a description of the primary figures that lived it, generally featuring something of their background, service in the Deathwatch, and a little about their characters. These figures should serve as exemplars for the Player Characters, but they are not always mighty heroes known for the countless battles they have fought. In many cases, being a hero is about performing a single deed, and simply being the right warrior in the right place at the right time. This is something most Player Characters should be able to relate to, and something the Game Master should keep in mind when designing missions for the group.

Each entry contains details of the relics that have come to be associated with the legendary figures, many of which the Player Characters will no doubt wish to field in combat or to utilise in some other way. The last entry is an exception

to this, in that no relics are presented, for a reason that will become clear when that passage is read.

Lastly, each entry includes an sidebar concerning the Kill-team's legacy. This takes the form of ideas the Game Master might like to use to take these venerable heroes out of the pages of history and have them play a part in the campaigns he is running for his group. Should the players wish to follow in the footsteps of their honoured ancestors, the Heroic Legacy Package associated with each historic Kill-team is presented here. These packages correspond to one of the Heroic Legacy Packages found in **Chapter III**. At the Game Master's discretion, a Kill-team wishing to follow the example of one of the Kill-teams in this chapter may purchase the Heroic Legacy Package associated with that historic Kill-team.

DEATHWATCH RELICS

Unless explicitly stated otherwise in the rules text, all of the relics presented throughout this section count as "Deathwatch Relics," even those clearly associated with a particular Chapter. This is because the relics have become relics very much through their relevance to the Deathwatch, and in many cases the original Chapter has granted its blessing for the item to remain at Watch Fortress Erioch. This means that any Battle-Brother can use the items, not just ones from the same Chapter as the original bearer. Cunning Game Masters might like to consider the ramifications of seemingly incongruous combinations, such as a Space Wolves Battle-Brother taking up a relic once carried by a Dark Angels hero, but such things should not get in the way of the game.



THE FIRST MARTYR

"The first accessible record pertaining to Watch Fortress Erioch available to this Clearance level: Balthazar Ho'Tsun, Master of the Vigil, Captain of the Imperial Fists, has died in an action in the Slinnar Drift. The enemy engaged and other forces involved are not recorded."

—Notes from the *Liber Eriochus*, 267.M35

The tale of the so-called "First Martyr" is no less than a legend amongst the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach. To the vast majority of those that serve on Watch Fortress Erioch or the various Watch Stations seeded across the Reach and beyond, the First Martyr is a figure of awe akin to a saint; he is a hero of yore to whom prayers are cast on the eve of battle. Watch Fortress Erioch is host to numerous shrines dedicated to Brother Captain Balthazar, as well as one major chapel, within which reside the relics associated with this mighty Space Marine and his brethren. Each is well attended, the First Martyr's name and deeds recounted at the Hours so that they may never be forgotten — or so the Battle-Brothers of the Deathwatch believe.

In truth, what is said of the First Martyr is but a fraction of the whole story, details of which are locked securely within the data-crypts of the Watch Fortress and known only to those with sufficiently high clearance to access them. As is so often the case within the labyrinthine power structures of the Imperium, even these are but one facet of the truth. Rather, different ranks within the Deathwatch and the Inquisition are granted access to different elements of the truth, so that only the most highly positioned officers of both bodies have access to the entire story.

The core of the legend of the First Martyr relates to a mission undertaken by a Deathwatch kill-team before the fall of the old Jericho Sector. The Imperium at large possesses very few reliable records of this era, and those held by the Deathwatch are mainly secured behind impenetrable data-gates deep within Watch Fortress Erioch. The basics of the legend are recounted so frequently within the Watch Fortress that every Deathwatch Battle-Brother that serves a vigil of the Long Watch there soon comes to learn them by rote. These basics are as follows.

A BROTHER UNPARALLELED

The First Martyr was a Battle-Brother of the Imperial Fists, a veteran of that celebrated Chapter's first company and a warrior who had fought every enemy known to mankind, as well as many whose names were never learned before they were erased from history. Brother Balthazar Ho'Tsun fought in the Feast of Blades and won out against all challengers, in so doing earning great honour for his Chapter and coming to the attention of those serving in the Deathwatch. One such witness petitioned the Chapter Master of the Imperial Fists to release this mighty warrior into the service of the Deathwatch, and a year later, Ho'Tsun took the Apocryphon Oath at Watch Fortress Erioch.





Over the next century, Balthazar Ho'Tsun stood three vigils of the Long Watch, rising through the Deathwatch's ranks so that soon after he made his third Oath he ascended to the position of Master of the Vigil, turning his prodigious knowledge of the ways of the xenos towards directing others in combat. As a leader of the Deathwatch, Ho'Tsun formulated, and occasionally even led, missions against every conceivable threat to the region, defeating them all with ruthless efficiency. Even as the rulers of the old Jericho Sector set their feet upon the path that would lead to their eventual doom, Ho'Tsun and his warriors battled relentlessly to protect a region whose people appeared entirely unworthy. In those all but forgotten days, the xenos that ravage the Jericho Reach in the 41st Millennium were yet unknown. The Tyranids and the Tau were entirely unheard of, and the servants of the Ruinous Powers were yet to rise to the dreadful potency they would later attain in the region. Instead, the Deathwatch directed their efforts against other foes, all the while standing vigil against some greater doom long since prophesied to be stalking the worlds of the Jericho Sector and beyond.

Numerous lesser xenos species met their end at the hands of the Deathwatch, having transgressed upon the Emperor's domains in one way or another. Ho'Tsun is known to have fought the hyper violent Barghesi, losing both arms in combat but expelling this potent foe from the region once and for all. He is hailed as one of the few mortals to have resisted the siren call of the Paramours of the Morpheus Rift, and he was instrumental in the subsequent campaign to expel this dreadful species towards the galactic core. Other missions saw him fight against xenophile sects, Warp-enamoured dream-cults, and recidivist scum of every variety, as well as enemies that, to this day, remain unnamed and unrecorded. Of the foes that assailed the wider Imperium then as now, foes such as the Orks and the Eldar, Ho'Tsun faced them all, and is hailed as one of the stalwart defenders of the Jericho Reach who ensured neither species ever gained a foothold within the area overseen by Watch Fortress Erioch.

All of this is known to every Deathwatch Battle-Brother of the Jericho Reach, and surely it is sufficient to earn Ho'Tsun the abiding honour of subsequent generations. The legend states that Ho'Tsun fell in the manner he had lived, defending the Jericho Reach from the myriad foes of humanity, his body lost somewhere in or near to the Slinnar Drift. What

is not said is that Master Ho'Tsun had a secret, driving passion: a deep-seated need to return to the Long Watch even once his first two Apocryphon Oaths were discharged. This fact is known to the Librarians of the Deathwatch, for it relates to their own particular duties. Master Ho'Tsun was determined that the words of a blind prophet more than a millennia dead when he became a Space Marine must not be allowed to come to pass. These words were spoken by the doomsayer Satarrion, and are almost certainly the first warning of the phenomenon that would later become known as the Dark Pattern. The Librarians of Watch Fortress Erioch know that few of Ho'Tsun's many victories were unrelated; the vast majority were linked together by strands invisible to all but a few. Ho'Tsun perceived the stirring of unknowable yet terrible forces far out beyond the borders of the Jericho Sector, in the cold reaches of the void. Exactly what conclusion the Watch Captain made as to the nature of these forces remains unknown except to those with the very highest levels of clearance, and none of these, Masters of the Vigil and Inquisitor Lords amongst them, are known to have spoken of them.

THE LEGEND OF HO'TSUN

At the core of the legend of Balthazar Ho'Tsun is the fate he met and the manner in which he met it. So successful had the Imperial Fist been as a warrior that he was duly commissioned by the Chamber of Vigilance as Master of the Vigil, and upon being granted this highest of ranks, he gained access to data-strata impenetrable to almost all others. Devouring the contents of data-vaults few others had ever penetrated, Ho'Tsun's learned eyes were opened to entire vistas of damnation and doom. The words of the blind prophet echoing in his mind, he unearthed ever more baleful strands of fate, each linked together via keystone nodes in the history of the region. Some related to people, whether long dead, living, or as yet unborn. Others linked to places, within the Jericho Sector and beyond. Still more related to unknown xenos species, some aeons extinct and others still impossibly distant.

Possessed of this new and terrible perspective on the fate of the region, potentially of the entire Eastern Fringe and beyond, Master of the Vigil Balthazar Ho'Tsun embarked on a campaign of following each strand and attempting to discern what lay at its end. For over a decade, the Master of the Vigil coordinated a campaign of investigation, exploration, and extermination against whatever foes these strands led him into contact with. The last of these strands led him to the Slinnar Drift, and it is there that his tale ends for all but the most highly placed officers of the Deathwatch.

Details of Ho'Tsun's last mission are known only to a select few, and even they are party to but a fraction of the truth, for scant means of determining his fate exist. What is known, however, is that the Master of the Vigil assembled a Kill-team consisting of those Battle-Brothers he knew and trusted above all others, and he led it in person deep into the Slinnar Drift. Passing through the Sedu system, this band of mighty warriors trod the Silent Road, and perhaps they

represented the first of their brethren ever to have done so. Somewhere in the midst of the Stillborn Stars, the Kill-team encountered that which the Master of the Vigil had sought: a cold, dead world orbiting a protostar that had existed in its current stellar state for tens of millions of years longer than any such body should without becoming a main sequence star. Setting down upon that nameless planet, Ho'Tsun and his companions came upon that which the Master of the Vigil had predicted they would: the entrance to a tomb, wrought from living metal, leading to the halls of the gods themselves.

Passing along corridors carpeted with the dust of aeons, the Kill-team soon realised they had discovered something truly vast. The corridor opened up into a hall so huge its extent was hidden by the curvature of the world, the only illumination a lambent green glow that seemed to emanate from the stale air itself. The hall was lined with niches, and within each was an object the Battle-Brothers first took for an effigy of some long dead, deathly-visaged warrior. Even as he set his helm face-to-face with one such effigy, half imagining he had seen some trace of illumination stirring deep within its skull-like eye sockets, Ho'Tsun's attention was diverted by one of his Battle-Brothers barking a curt warning.

From beneath the sea of dust layered upon the floor of the hall of effigies rose a host of metal constructs. Even as the Master of the Vigil and his Kill-team deployed into a defensive pattern in which they could fall back towards the entrance to the tomb, a tide of gleaming machines came at them. The silence of the hall was broken by the roar of bolters and the sharp crack of the shells detonating within the metal bodies, shrapnel-like debris scattering in all directions. As the Battle-Brothers fell back, more machines rose from the ground or poured from side passages and it was only by the bold sacrifice of Brother Pardis that the remainder made it to the passage to fight their way back to the surface.

Every step towards the entrance was bought with blood, and while the Kill-team held their own against countless defenders of every imaginable size and form, not one was unwounded by the time they reached the surface. As the Master of the Vigil led his brethren out into the cold light of the planet's nameless protostar, he witnessed a sight that could only spell the end of his quest to avert the prophecy of the blind prophet Satarrian. The Kill-team's gunship had been torn apart by a mechanical monstrosity rearing fifty metres and more into the air, its multiple green-glowing eyes set firmly upon the Space Marines. Knowing their vigil was at its end, the Space Marines charged the gargantuan creature, their last deeds ones of courage and devotion to duty in the face of impossible odds.

Of that last confrontation almost nothing is known, for none of the combatants survived to tell of it. What little is known of the event is thanks to what must surely be the intervention of the Emperor Himself. Brother Pardis, who gave all to hold the hordes at bay and allow his brethren to escape the hall, yet lived, though his body was so mortally wounded that his sus-an membrane implant had plunged him into a slumber as lifeless as the millions of effigies with which he would share the cold, dark tomb for the coming centuries.

It was only when a much later expedition stumbled upon the fallen form of Brother Pardis that something of

the full truth was determined. By then, Master of the Vigil Balthazar Ho'Tsun was a celebrated hero of the Deathwatch, the account of that fallen Battle-Brother sealed even as he himself was consigned to a cryo-chamber, until such time as his body was sufficiently healed to allow him to take his place amongst the Dreadnoughts of Watch Fortress Erioch.

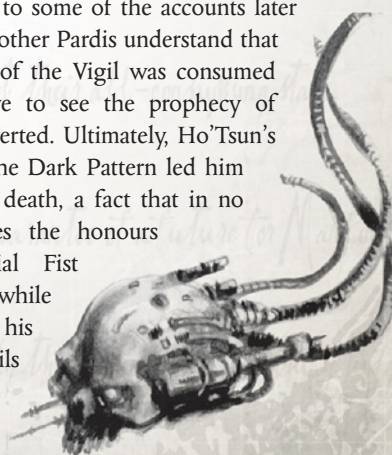
COMPANIONS OF THE FIRST MARTYR

The legend of Master of the Vigil Balthazar that is retold to the Battle-Brothers of the Jericho Reach does not record the names of those Battle-Brothers who fell at his side, the nature and circumstances of his death going largely unexplained. These names are known only to those able to perform higher level data probes, in particular the Librarians and Chaplains of Watch Fortress Erioch. Even then, details of these warriors' vigils are known only at the very highest levels, and their deeds in that final mission to the Slinnar Drift are recorded only in the accounts of that Battle-Brother who survived. However, Pardis slumbers yet, interred within the adamantium frame of a Deathwatch Dreadnought, his spirit too stubborn to allow him to die.

MASTER OF THE VIGIL BALTHAZAR HO'TSUN OF THE IMPERIAL FISTS

Over the course of the centuries between Master Ho'Tsun's disappearance into the Slinnar Drift and the recovery of the fallen Brother Pardis, the legend of the First Martyr grew exponentially, so that by the time of the 41st Millennium it bears only a few similarities to the truth. Balthazar Ho'Tsun has come to represent something of an exemplar to the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach, a mighty warrior in whose memory is enshrined all that the Apocryphon Oath stands for.

The Librarians and others amongst the senior officers of Watch Fortress Erioch know now that Master Ho'Tsun may have been something other than what he was held to be during his lifetime, though they do not regard him in any less reverence for their privileged knowledge. Rather, those with access to some of the accounts later given by Brother Pardis understand that the Master of the Vigil was consumed by his drive to see the prophecy of Satarrian averted. Ultimately, Ho'Tsun's pursuit of the Dark Pattern led him to his own death, a fact that in no way reduces the honours the Imperial Fist accrued while standing his three vigils



of the Long Watch. The exact extent of Ho'Tsun's fascination with the prophecy is not widely known, and Brother Pardis refuses to be drawn on it. This has led some to suspect that the sanity of the erstwhile Master of the Vigil might have been compromised, but out of respect for both the legend and the reality of Master of the Vigil Balthazar Ho'Tsun, nothing further will be spoken on the matter.

BROTHER ARMANDO OF THE CRIMSON FISTS

For long centuries, very little was known of Brother Armando aside from the fact that he was of the Crimson Fists Chapter and had only recently taken his Apocryphon Oath and taken up his vigil in the Jericho Reach. When Brother Pardis was rescued, he was able to provide some account of his lost Battle-Brother, though as yet none has been incorporated into the tales of the First Martyr. According to Brother Pardis's testimony, Brother Armando was typical of his parent Chapter and determined to forge a tale of glory for himself and the Crimson Fists. Some of those senior Librarians who have read this testimony detect some degree of conflict between Master of the Vigil Ho'Tsun and Brother Armando, though they have far too much respect for venerable Pardis to press the matter further.

BROTHER PARDIS OF THE TIGERS ARGENT

It is thanks to the noble sacrifice of Brother Pardis that Kill-team Balthazar escaped the vast effigy chamber, though ultimately his sacrifice was in vain, for his brethren were unable to escape the Slinnar Drift. Nonetheless, it is said in the teachings of the Deathwatch that no sacrifice that brings further glory is in vain, and it is held to be the case that Pardis' Battle-Brothers would not have earned the glorious death they did were it not for him. Furthermore, Brother Pardis is regarded—by the few amongst the Deathwatch with knowledge of him—as a living embodiment of the Emperor's direct intervention in the fate of humanity, for it was he who survived the encounter and lived to recount something of the tale many centuries later. Instead of being torn apart by the huge creature against which Balthazar and the remainder of the Kill-team are believed to have fallen, he was overwhelmed by a wave of far smaller, insect-like constructs. As far as can be determined, these low order custodians of the xenos tomb mistook his sus-an membrane shutting down his body's functions for death, leaving him alone as he slumbered through the long centuries.

The cold, all but lifeless form of Brother Pardis was discovered many years later, when another Deathwatch Kill-team happened upon the tomb while following up on intelligence passed to the Chamber of Vigilance by members of the Ordo Xenos. On this occasion, the Kill-team made extensive



observations of the effigy chamber and other areas of the complex, but maintained infiltration protocols so strict that they avoided awakening the defenders that had reacted so violently to Kill-team Balthazar's presence. Upon discovering the body of Brother Pardis and determining that life lingered still, this second team extracted immediately, delivering the slumbering Battle-Brother to Watch Fortress Erioch without delay.

The process by which a Space Marine in such a state is revived is an arduous one indeed, and numerous attempts are doomed to failure by the continued technological degradation under which the Imperium labours. Before he could be restored to consciousness, the Battle-Brother's grievous wounds had first to be treated, a process that took several years. It was only much later, once Brother Pardis' body, brain, and spinal column had been successfully transplanted to a nutrient reservoir, that the Apothecaries and Techmarines were able to revive him and attempt communication. It was only then that the fate of Master Ho'Tsun was finally learned, Pardis's account being combined with the observations taken by his rescuers to piece together the events of that final, fateful mission.

Now, Brother Pardis spends most of his vigil slumbering in a stasis crypt, to be disinterred and placed within the sarcophagus of a Dreadnought when his skills and experience are called upon. Brother Pardis is very rarely awakened, however, for he is ancient indeed and some amongst the Keepers hold that his sanity is stretched dangerously thin. In all likelihood, he would have been returned to his parent Chapter, the Tigers Argent, but there has been no contact with them for such a long time that the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach cannot even be sure this Chapter still exists. And so, Brother Pardis continues his vigil, though the Chaplains have long since declared his Apocryphon Oath discharged.

BROTHER XAVER OF THE BLACK TEMPLARS

As if to further complicate the question as to why Master of the Vigil Ho'Tsun included Brother Armando in his mission to the Slinnar Drift, the third member of the Kill-team was also a member of a Successor Chapter of the Imperial Fists, in Brother Xaver's case the Black Templars. This Battle-Brother was, according to the testimony of Brother Pardis, a zealous firebrand who had served as his Chapter's champion on several occasions and was prone to be overcome by apocalyptic visions of doom and destruction, sometimes even during battle. Several of the Deathwatch's most senior Chaplains have between them concluded that Master Ho'Tsun may have sought to take advantage of Brother Xaver's visions, perhaps hoping they might aid him in combating the vision of the blind prophet. As with other facets of the legend of the First Martyr, Brother Pardis refuses to be drawn on the matter.

BROTHER HSUD OF THE RED WOLVES

A Battle-Brother of the all but unknown Red Wolves Chapter, Brother Hsud is known only by the accounts given by Brother Pardis, of which far more have been recorded than relate to Brothers Xaver and Armando. Brother Hsud served five vigils of the Long Watch, all but one of these in the Jericho Reach. Brother Pardis appears not to know where the remaining vigil was served, though he speculates that it was far to the galactic northwest in a region Hsud once described to him as the heart of a burning nebula. Brother Hsud was reportedly incredibly old, even for a Space Marine, though his physical condition must not have been compromised in any way, for surely Master Ho'Tsun would not have selected him for the mission to the Slinnar Drift had it been. Hsud was considered a wise counsellor, and one Ho'Tsun was willing to heed. The only time Hsud's counsel was not heeded was when he cautioned his commander about entering the effigy chamber. Needless to say, had the Master of the Vigil heeded this advice, he may not have awoken the alien defenders and would not have fallen to the mechanical monstrosity that had destroyed the Kill-team's only means of exfiltration.

RELICS OF THE FIRST MARTYR

There are two relics linked to Kill-team Balthazar and the legend of the First Martyr. The first relates to the life of Master of the Vigil Ho'Tsun himself and is linked to him by way of his deeds before he and his Battle-Brothers vanished in the Slinnar Drift. For long centuries, this was the only relic of Ho'Tsun in existence and nothing relating to the final battle of the First Martyr remained. Thus, this item became ever more venerated and was interred in the reliquary dedicated to the First Martyr aboard Watch Fortress Erioch.

The second was recovered by the mission that rescued Brother Pardis. This relic represents the only remaining piece of wargear present at the site where Ho'Tsun and his Battle-Brothers vanished and is not widely known of amongst the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach. Thus it is that a Battle-Brother might be granted the use of an ancient and powerful aegis and be entirely unaware that it was once borne into battle by one of the companions of the First Martyr himself.

THE HAMMER OF BALTHAZAR

This mighty weapon lies upon the high altar of the Chapel of Balthazar on Watch Fortress Erioch, a golden Imperial Aquila looking down upon it. The hammer was the favoured weapon of Balthazar Ho'Tsun throughout his first, and most of his second vigils of the Long Watch. Legend states that upon the swearing of his third Apocryphon Oath, Ho'Tsun entrusted his beloved weapon to the care of one of the attendant Chaplains, stating that he would not take it up again until that oath was discharged.

It was with this weapon in hand that Balthazar Ho'Tsun faced a mighty Ork migration and turned its course away from the Jericho Sector, perhaps ridding the region of the Greenskin menace for all time. He bore it in combat against the dread Barghesi, and with it made a powerful account of

TABLE 2-1: ARMOUR OF THE FIRST MARTYR

Name	Locations Covered	AP	Wt	Req	Renown
Mantle of the Silver Lion	All	8/10	125kg	75	Hero

TABLE 2-2: WEAPONS OF THE FIRST MARTYR

Name	Class	Dmg	Pen	Special	Wt	Req	Renown
Hammer of Balthazar	Melee	2d10+7 E	9	Power field, Concussive, Unwieldy, Special	19kg	65	Hero

himself before his body was almost ripped in twain at the height of that campaign. It was the first weapon he took up when the Apothecaries declared him fit once more to serve, and with it he struck down foes too numerous to list.

It is said that the hammer is possessed of a fearsome anima and that its power field doubles in intensity when its bearer is facing truly awesome foes defeated by Ho'Tsun in the past. Over the centuries since the First Martyr was lost, the Hammer of Balthazar has attained a reputation as a mighty weapon and a potent relic, a living reminder of all that Ho'Tsun stood for and that which the Deathwatch continues to pursue. It is entrusted only to the most renowned of the Deathwatch's heroes, who are responsible not just for employing it wisely, but for setting it down upon its resting place, its face polished so that it remains unsullied by the xenos blood it has spilled, while laying before the Aquila. That the Hammer of Balthazar should ever be lost would be a tragedy too dark to ponder, and so far, each Battle-Brother to take it up has returned it, even when that act was his last due to mortal wounds sustained in the defence of the Jericho Reach.

The Hammer of Balthazar is a unique Astartes Thunder Hammer. The Hammer of Balthazar uses the profile listed on **Table 2-2: Weapons of the First Martyr** during normal circumstances. However, when the wielder of the Hammer of Balthazar is filling an Offensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy and is using the Hammer to make an attack against a xenos adversary, the Hammer of Balthazar gains a number of benefits. When used in such circumstances, the Damage and Penetration are each

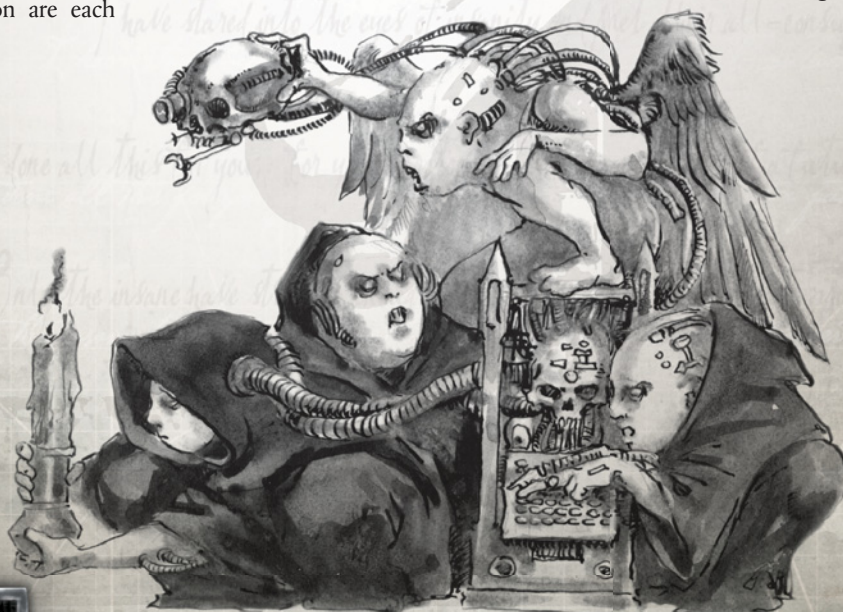
increased by a number equal to the wielder's Willpower Bonus.

In addition to normal Damage, whenever the Hammer of Balthazar damages a xenos opponent as a result of an attack made by a Battle-Brother filling an Offensive Role, the wielder can channel his indomitable will into the attack. To do this, the wielder must, as a Free Action, make an **Opposed Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** against the target of the attack. For every Degree of Success achieved by the Hammer's wielder, the attack deals an additional 1d10 Damage. This damage ignores the victim's Armour and Toughness Bonus.

THE MANTLE OF THE SILVER LION

The power armour worn by Brother Pardis throughout his centuries-long suspended animation was recovered along with his body, its self-repair machine systems having healed the damage done to it even as the Battle-Brother's body lay in deathless repose. Pardis's armour was already highly venerated when he was lost, for it was a suit of MkIV Maximus-pattern power armour that had, as far as the archives record, been in nigh constant use since the dark days of the Horus Heresy. When Brother Pardis vanished along with his brethren, it was assumed that this illustrious suit of power armour was lost along with him.

With the return of the so-called Mantle of the Silver Lion to Watch Fortress Erioch, the Deathwatch has been confronted with something of a conundrum. It is not in their nature to allow such effective weapons of war to remain unused, for such would be a grave derogation of the spirit in



LEGACY OF THE FIRST MARTYR

One noteworthy aspect of the tale of the First Martyr is that it demonstrates how layered and complex the histories of the Deathwatch truly are. Five thousand years is an incredibly long time, and even in a galaxy-spanning empire seemingly underpinned by the most wondrous of technologies, very few reliable records go back that far. Kill-teams engaging in missions related to the fate of the First Martyr should find researching such events arduous indeed, a task that calls upon them to delve through ancient texts in an effort to separate fact from myth. In so doing, they may discover events or accounts that contradict what is now, millennia later, undisputed dogma, and have to proceed with caution lest they be accused of heresy.

Game Masters that wish to tie this legend into an ongoing campaign are advised to refer to the **DEATHWATCH** supplement **THE OUTER REACH**, which details the Dark Pattern as well as the Slinnar Drift and its sinister occupants.

Heroic Legacy Package: The Explorers of Aeons.

ADVENTURE SEED

During the course of a training mission in the Hunting Grounds of Watch Fortress Erioch (see the **DEATHWATCH** supplement **rites of battle**), the Kill-team fights alongside the Venerable Brother Pardis. The training mission is a simulated confrontation against a robotic foe, and the sight of these implacable enemies causes Brother Pardis to experience something of a vision. He recounts a long repressed memory of the events that saw the fall of the First Martyr, describing a world in the depths of the Slinnar Drift. The Kill-team is dispatched to investigate this world, perhaps with Brother Pardis accompanying them, his Dreadnought form affording the prospect of some much needed fire support should they face heavy opposition from the unknown denizens of the dead worlds of the Outer Reach.

which they were wrought. Rather, such relics are entrusted to those that might utilise them best, the legend of warrior and wargear merging into one. In the case of the Mantle of the Silver Lion, the relic's true history must remain unknown to most that don it, unless they are privy to the secrets behind the legend of the First Martyr. The Keepers, Chaplains, and Techmarines of the Deathwatch each know something of the suit's history and capabilities, yet few know them all. Still fewer of the Battle-Brothers who have been allowed to wear it are in possession of even a fraction of its story. Yet fate, the Emperor, or perhaps the machine anima within the suit itself seems to have a way of telling something of its story. Those who have worn the armour often report later of stray signals relayed by its sensorium core directly via its auto-senses and into their mind, especially during periods when their catalepsean node implant is functioning. The armour's inbuilt senses are exceptionally attuned to danger, alerting the wearer to the presence of unseen enemies long before he or any of his brethren detect it by more conventional means. The armour's custodians hold that this phenomenon is the result of the armour protecting Brother Pardis for so many long centuries, a mission it continues when taken up by a new wearer.

The Mantle of the Silver Lion is a unique suit of MkIV Maximus-pattern power armour. Due to its highly attuned auto-senses, a Battle-Brother wearing the Mantle of the Silver Lion never suffers the effects of being Surprised in combat. In addition, so long as a Battle-Brother who is wearing the Mantle of the Silver Lion fills a Defensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, he has access to a special Selfless Demeanour granted to him by the armour itself. This Selfless Demeanour can be triggered once per game session, in addition to the Battle-Brother's usual allotment of a single Demeanour per game session. Following in the footsteps of the armour's original wearer, the Battle-Brother may trigger the Selfless Demeanour while putting himself in harms way for the sake of the other members of his Kill-team. This works exactly like triggering any other Demeanour the Battle-Brother might possess, with all the benefits and roleplaying expectations.

Furthermore, should a Battle-Brother wearing the Mantle of the Silver Lion and filling a Defensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy find himself in a position in which he would be required to burn a Fate Point while defending his comrades, he instead gains the benefits of burning a Fate Point but does not permanently lose the Fate Point in doing so. This effect is only available a single time during the course of a Battle-Brother's entire career, even should that same Battle-Brother be granted the use of the Mantle of the Silver Lion more than once.



THE LORD OF LIGHTNING

"In response to the opening of a cell in the Omega Vault and the revealing of a broken spear of archaic design and unknown material, a Deathwatch Kill-team undertakes a quest to the Feudal world of Sovereign, which they discover suffers under the grip of a murderous xenos energy-entity that has offered itself as a false messiah to the natives. The spectral creature has grown strong on the life-forces of thousands sacrificed in its name, and is worshiped by an army of savage warriors. A single Deathwatch Battle-Brother returns to Erioch with the Lord of Lightning's shattered crystal heart."

—Notes from the *Liber Eriochus*, 263.M36

A great many of the perilous missions undertaken by the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach are formulated by the Master of the Vigil and his staff, while many others are launched in direct response to emergent or otherwise unanticipated events. Others are undertaken as a result of the opening of the Omega Vault, the mysterious machine core of Watch Fortress Erioch. When the vault's armoured portal grinds open, the Keepers of the Watch enter the dark interior, knowing they have but minutes to retrieve that which the vault renders up. Inevitably, the opening provides some object that warns of an entirely new threat, or a means of combating a very old one. Most Deathwatch missions are launched against those enemies that ravage the depths of the Jericho Reach—the servants of the Ruinous Powers, the Tyranids of Hive Fleet Dagon, or the ever-expanding forces of the Tau Empire. Some openings of the Omega Vault herald entirely new, unclassifiable threats that the Deathwatch must face and defeat. It was one such opening that led to the mission to silence the so-called Lord of Lightning.

On this particular occasion, the Omega Vault rendered up a weapon—a large and broken spear that must surely have been of incredible antiquity. Such obscure revelations are nothing out of the ordinary, and so the Chamber of Vigilance convened to examine the weapon. The archives record that seven masters of the Deathwatch were present for that gathering, as were five Inquisitors. Debate as to the meaning of the object and what it might portend for the Jericho Reach raged for many long hours, until the arrival in the chamber of a thirteenth master, a Watch Captain of the Raptors Chapter by the name of Aesalon. This veteran of countless battles detected a lingering taint in the air, a familiar scent he traced to the blade of the broken spear. The taint was a poison, the likes of which he claimed was utilised by the peoples of one of the worlds from which his Chapter recruited at that time. A sample of the substance was duly passed to the Techmarines of Watch Station Erioch and, within hours, identified. It was a potent and fast-acting poison, and one of its key ingredients was human blood, the genetics of which were unmistakably those of the natives of the feudal world of Sovereign.

PLANETFALL

Twelve hours later, Watch Captain Aesalon was en route to the target world, a Kill-team of veteran Battle-Brothers assembled with him. Upon entering orbit over Sovereign, Kill-team Sovereign Sigma began a series of routine observations. The world below knew the light of the Emperor, but the ebb and flow of stellar commerce, the vagaries of fate, and the extremely insular nature of its rulers had all conspired to keep technology levels low. The population was concentrated in a number of high-walled city states, most of which were at war with one another despite the efforts of Sovereign's Imperial Commander, the so-called Over-Duke, to maintain peace. Sovereign's low technological base should have guaranteed that the Deathwatch's presence in orbit went entirely unobserved, yet before the Kill-team could record any meaningful observations, their vessel came under overwhelming attack from the world below, an attack the likes of which none of the vessel's command crew could identify or defend against.

Assailed by an exotic form of energy that was somehow able to bypass the Deathwatch vessel's shields entirely, Watch Captain Aesalon was faced with a dire choice: order a withdrawal lest his ship sustain irreparable damage, or undertake an immediate drop. Ever a warrior of decisive action, Aesalon made his decision without delay. Moments later, he and his Battle-Brothers were plummeting through the atmosphere in a drop pod and the wounded frigate was withdrawing to await further word.

Upon landing on the surface of the feudal world, the Kill-team discovered a planet in the grip of something utterly alien. The population staggered about in a state of savage, unreasoning fury, the air filled with wails of pain and anger. The people appeared to be in the grip of some mental force, an energy that assailed them constantly and which had caused the society there to all but collapse. Fighting their way through masses of savages, the Space Marines made for the nearest of the world's walled cities, where they came upon ever greater numbers of these piteous souls. Soon, Brother Ixion, Techmarine of Kill-team Aesalon, detected a surge in the air all about, an energy spike of the same nature as that which had assailed the frigate.

It was as the Kill-team fought through the gates of the walled city that the true nature of the force that held the population of Sovereign in its sway was revealed. A deafening peel resounded from the heart of the city, the sky growing dark as the boiling clouds were under-lit by flickering lightning. Girding themselves for action, the Kill-team pushed through the wailing, berserker crowds, their target the heart of the city, for surely whatever had attacked the frigate would be found there. Then, the skies split asunder with the crack of lightning and an arc of raw white energy leaped high into the air, earthing itself on a random form some distance from the Battle-Brothers. An instant later the arc spat forth to another unfortunate, the body of its previous host reduced to ash scattered on the charged winds.

In seconds, the blinding arc had jumped from one body to the next and to the next, until finally it struck the first of the Battle-Brothers, Brother Theclus, his form engulfed

in seething, pulsating bands of energy. But Theclus was no mortal human, and his superhuman body was protected by armour as strong as any ever wrought. Resisting the searing touch of death, Brother Theclus roared his defiance into the churning skies, physically casting off the bands of energy as a figure of legend might break encircling iron bonds. Though his armour was molten and charred, and all of the ammunition he had borne detonated, Brother Theclus lived.

Realising that the Kill-team could not hope to sustain multiple attacks of the type Theclus had miraculously survived, Watch Captain Aesalon ordered his Kill-team to advance upon the source of the arcing energy. Pressing through streets blackened with the seared ashes of those whose bodies served as lightning rods for whatever waited at the city's centre, the Space Marines were subjected to blast after blast of the vile energy. Chaplain Nolasco was struck next, but invoking the name of his beloved Primarch Sanguinius, he thrust his Crozius Arcanum high, somehow channelling and absorbing the otherwise fatal surge. Techmarine Ixion was struck next, though he too resisted the attack, in his case by drawing it into himself as if swallowing the lightning itself.

But the Kill-team was not to reach the heart of the walled city without sacrifice, for as it pressed further on, the hordes of enraged foes became so dense that the arcing bolts of power could not be avoided. Brother Glaucus fell even as he unleashed a fusillade of heavy bolter fire in an effort to clear the path ahead. In halting, he attracted not one, but a dozen arcs of lightning and his form was consumed even as his weapon continued to fire for long seconds beyond his demise.

At the last, Watch Captain Aesalon led his warriors into the central square at the heart of the city, and there beheld a blasphemy of staggering proportions. The skies overhead, now black as the lightning-stricken clouds, boiled away, the square was a field of scorched bones. At its very centre was a stone-hewn form that could only be one thing—an altar, its flat surface black with the ashen remains of the countless mortals sacrificed upon it.

But sacrificed to what? The answer came but a moment later.

THE LIVING TEMPEST

From the churning clouds above came a sight that would have struck dead any mortal man. But the Deathwatch, being Adeptus Astartes, are anything but mere mortals. The clouds resolved into an entirely unnatural form, a death mask visage, its eye sockets aglow with actinic lightning. The hordes pressing into the square after the Kill-team fell to their knees, their savage roars uniting into a blasphemous chorus of adulation.

Even as the face of the savage horde's otherworldly god descended, the stuff of lightning solidifying as it closed on the Space Marines, Watch Captain Aesalon mounted the charred altar, brandishing high the broken spear rendered up by the opening of the Omega Vault. In that instant, the skies erupted with thunder and lightning, the savage horde surged to its feet, and Aesalon cast the broken spear into the hideous maw of the Lord of Lightning.



The instant the spear plunged into the elemental form, the sky exploded. The god-thing's body shattered into a million shards, the lethal shrapnel scything down every living being in the square. The thing's subjects fell by the thousands, but so too did the brave Space Marines. When at last the explosion of the Lord of Lightning's demise faded away, only Watch Captain Aesalon still lived, regaining consciousness some time later to find himself prone upon the huge altar where he had fallen. All about the wounded Space Marine was cataclysm. A plain of bones, itself almost obscured by the ragged, bloody bodies of the subjects of the Lord of Lightning, stretched as far as he could see, with the ruins of the city beyond. Coming more fully awake, Watch Captain Aesalon cast about for his brothers-in-arms, eventually finding each buried under the detritus of death, their bodies lacerated or crushed.

It was another three days before the Deathwatch frigate that had delivered the Watch Captain and his Kill-team to Sovereign returned, a period during which Aesalon ensured his fallen brethren were duly honoured. Though nothing of Brother Glaucus remained, the bodies and gene-seeds of Chaplain Nolasco, Techmarine Ixion, and Brother Theclus were in time returned to the Apothecaries of their respective Chapters. Certain items of their wargear remain on Watch Fortress Erioch, however, palpable reminders of the duties the Deathwatch must undertake in the name of the Imperium.

Of the Lord of Lightning, but one thing remained. A solid core of densest crystal, named the "Lightning Heat" by the Deathwatch, was recovered and carried back to Watch Fortress Erioch by Aesalon. This he placed within the strongest of reliquaries at the heart of the fortress, that the alien god-thing that subjugated an entire world should never be free to do so again.

KILL-TEAM SOVEREIGN-SIGMA

The Battle-Brothers that accompanied Watch Captain Aesalon on the mission to Sovereign were all veterans of many battles, each of them having fought side by side countless times before. Thus it was both a tragedy and an honour that it was Aesalon himself who recovered the gene-seed from all but one of his fallen brethren when he regained consciousness after the death of the Lord of Lightning, and he who bore their wargear back to Watch Fortress Erioch. The roots of the Kill-team's codification as "Kill-team Sovereign-Sigma" are not recorded, though some suggest the appellation "sigma" means that previous, as yet undisclosed missions must have been carried out on that world.

WATCH CAPTAIN AESALON OF THE RAPTORS

The archives of Watch Fortress Erioch attend that Brother Lestu Aesalon was a veteran of at least three vigils of the Long Watch, though the records are unclear as to whether these were all

served in the Jericho Reach or whether some were served elsewhere in the Imperium. To have ascended to the rank of Watch Captain, Aesalon must have fought many enemies and won many victories, but it is his deeds at Sovereign that cemented his position as a venerated figure of the Deathwatch in the Jericho Reach.

Numerous visual representations of Watch Captain Aesalon exist throughout Watch Fortress Erioch as well as several Watch Stations throughout the Jericho Reach. The largest example of this familiar theme is to be found in the Hall of Silence, a massive space resembling a cathedral nave with a stained glass window twenty metres high dominating one end, the stars of the Jericho Reach shining beyond. The image depicts the Watch Captain at the very moment he cast the broken spear in the maw of the alien god-thing. Aesalon stands atop the marble altar, about which is to be seen his brethren, including Brother Glaucus who, strictly speaking, took no part in that final moment. Nevertheless, the image is a source of great inspiration to all who look up at it, reminding them that, even though humanity at large may never know their names or the deeds, their brethren shall remember them for all time.



DEATHWATCH CHAPLAIN NOLASCO OF THE ANGELS SANGUINE

Chaplain Nolasco was known in his time for the fiery zeal of his sermons, many of which he committed to parchment so that even millennia later they are still to be heard from the pulpits of Watch Fortress Erioch. The bulk of Nolasco's sermons call upon the Battle-Brothers of the Deathwatch, and indeed the Adeptus Astartes at large, to draw strength from the example of the Primarch Sanguinius, who fell defending the greater cause embodied by the Emperor himself. Thus, Chaplain Nolasco held that a noble death in battle was both inevitable for a Space Marine, and preferable, the final moments of a Battle-Brother's service exemplifying and summarising all he stood for in life.

Though Nolasco fell when the being that had dominated Sovereign was slain by Watch Captain Aesalon, the deed for which he is most commonly remembered is the moment when he earthed the god-thing's arcing power through his Crozius Arcanum. It is held amongst the Chaplains of Watch Fortress Erioch that only a weapon truly steeped in zeal and faith could withstand such an attack, and only a warrior equally blessed could bear it.

TECHMARINE IXION OF THE DOOM EAGLES

Very little of the service of Brother Ixion is recorded, aside from the one deed for which he is known and honoured by the Forge of Watch Fortress Erioch. That moment is often described in the accounts of the battle against the Lord of Lightning as the moment when the Techmarine "swallowed lightning." For most, this distinctly poetical description of events suffices to describe a deed that does not lend itself to rational explanation and, indeed, in the superstitious age of the Imperium few would see any need to explain it rationally. Many of those Adeptus Astartes inducted into the mysteries of the Cult Mechanicus, however, look upon the event very differently, regarding it as a genuine miracle.

The reason this deed is so noted amongst the Techmarines of the Jericho Reach is that they understand it as a very real phenomenon, in that Brother Ixion took the power of the lightning through his electro-inductors into the potentia coil implanted within his body. What is unusual about this event is that he is hypothesised to have absorbed energy far in excess of what his inductors should have been capable. Thus, even when a technological basis exists for a supposed miracle, a supernatural element appears to be present. Some adherents of the Cult Mechanicus ascribe the event to the mysteries of the machine, others to the purity of purpose of Brother Ixion himself. Regardless of the subtleties of such debates,

Techmarine Ixion is hailed as a figure of legend by many Deathwatch Techmarines in the Jericho Reach, his memory living on long after his death.

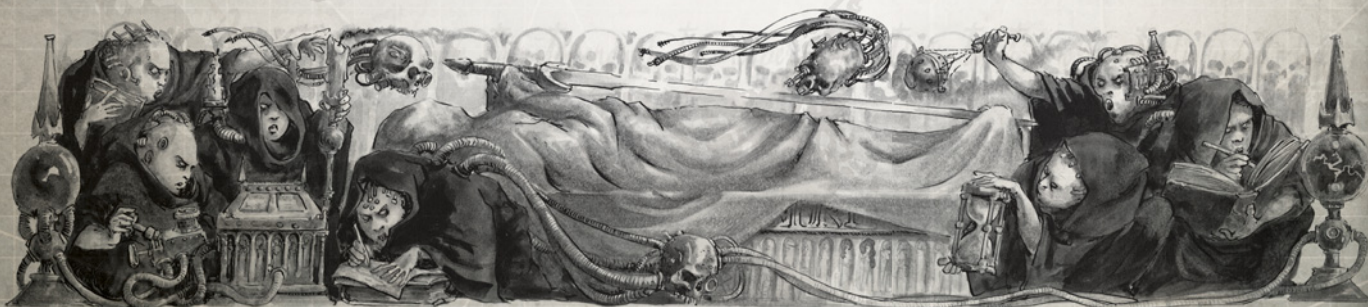
BROTHER GLAUCUS OF THE ASTRAL CLAWS

Formerly a sergeant of the Astral Claws 9th Company and a veteran of the Ionian Interventions, Brother Glaucus is remembered more for the manner of his death than the specifics of his service to the Deathwatch. He died as any Devastator Battle-Brother would wish, lending fire support to his brethren and allowing them to fight on towards their ultimate objective. Accounts of the events leading up to the defeat of the Lord of Lightning rarely fail to mention that Brother Glaucus was observed to remain firing his heavy bolter for some time after he had been overwhelmed by the power of multiple lightning strikes. This assertion is reportedly confirmed by data retrieved from the sensorium cores of several of the Devastator's brethren as well as the testimony of Watch Captain Aesalon himself.

BROTHER THECLUS OF THE SONS OF MEDUSA

A taciturn Battle-Brother of the Sons of Medusa Chapter, Theclus is known to have been undertaking his second vigil of the Long Watch when chosen to fight alongside Watch Captain Aesalon. His battle honours during his first vigil are etched in the stone of the Hall of Glory on Watch Fortress Erioch and include battles against several xenos species entirely unknown to the Imperium in the 41st Millennium. The deed for which Brother Theclus is most well known is, of course, his survival against the first attack of the Lord of Lightning, a feat that is recorded in numerous tomes and still recounted from the pulpits of the Watch Fortress.

The fact that Brother Theclus survived being struck by a bolt of energy that had reduced numerous others to dust is hailed as a testament to his strength of will and faith, born of the superhuman body and soul of the Adeptus Astartes. Theclus is hailed as a figure of devotion and an example to the Battle-Brothers of the Deathwatch. Indeed, the fact that Theclus's armour and weapons were rendered all but inoperable, all while his body withstood the attack, is regarded as proof of the resolve of the Space Marine. It is perhaps ironic that Brother Theclus hails from a Chapter which shares its roots and many doctrines with the Iron Hands, whose creed teaches the fallibility of the flesh as opposed to the permanence of iron.



LEGACY OF THE LORD OF LIGHTNING

The legend of the Lord of Lightning is an example of an event that happened long ago, but which could happen again in the future. Having defeated the threat once, the Deathwatch must remain ever vigilant lest it return again. The fact that the so-called Lightning Heart now resides within the Sterling Reliquary of Watch Fortress Erioch means that this is a legacy yet to be resolved. The Game Master can use this as inspiration for missions of his own design, perhaps tying events out in the Jericho Reach to those described in the history.

Heroic Legacy Package: The Bane of Idolaters.

ADVENTURE SEED

Many of the benighted worlds of the Jericho Reach exist in a state of primitive barbarity, making them easy prey for tyrants, slavers, and alien overlords. Reports have reached Watch Fortress Erioch suggesting that one such world has come under the domination of an unknown power, and in preparing for a mission to investigate the Kill-team discovered accounts of the battle against the Lord of Lightning. Is it possible that the world has fallen prey to a power akin to that which befell Sovereign so long ago? If so, will the Kill-team use the Broken Spear, or indeed the Lightning Heart to combat it?

RELICS OF KILL-TEAM SOVEREIGN-SIGMA

When Watch Captain Aesalon regained consciousness after having cast the Broken Spear into the maw of the Lord of Lightning, he was struck down by grief. His brethren were all slain, their bodies cut to ribbons when the solidifying form of the energy entity exploded into a million and more crystal shards. Initially, Aesalon cursed the fact that he had somehow escaped such a fate, preferring, for a short time at least, to have died alongside his brothers. Yet, as he awaited the return of the Deathwatch frigate that had delivered Kill-team Sovereign-Sigma, the Watch Captain came to a realisation. He had been granted deliverance so that his brothers' sacrifice might not go unhallowed, that their deeds might be remembered and held up as an example for generations to come.

Where possible, he recovered the bodies of his fallen brethren, making them ready for transport back to Watch Fortress Erioch and ensuring their gene-seed would be extracted when possible. He went to great lengths to ensure that the wargear of each fallen warrior was honoured too, even going so far as to recover the heavy bolter that was all that remained of Brother Glaucus. Many of the items Aesalon recovered remain powerful and honoured relics of the Deathwatch, entrusted only to the most renowned of Battle-Brothers. All are stored in the Sterling Reliquary on Watch Fortress Erioch. Any that wish to view them, let alone take them up, must state their authority to the Keepers of the Catacombs and only those able to demonstrate the purity of their errand may pass.

THE BROKEN SPEAR

The relic that hailed the mission to Sovereign, the Broken Spear remains an enigma to the Deathwatch and to the Inquisition. The fact that it was rendered up by an opening of the Omega Vault indicates its great importance to the Long Watch, though none can say for sure whether its purpose is now discharged or if there are foes yet for it to slay. On occasion, the Omega Vault has been known to open not to offer an item, but that one might be returned, and this appears not to have happened in the case of the Broken Spear. Thus, it is held amongst the Masters of Watch Fortress Erioch that the Broken Spear will one day be required again, whether to defeat a new foe or should an old one return.

The Broken Spear occupies the place of honour in the catacomb chamber in which all of the relics of Kill-team Sovereign-Sigma are held. It resides in a horizontal niche set into the stone wall of the chamber, one hundred purity seals warding this mysterious weapon against baleful intent. To date, none have been granted permission to take up the Broken Spear, the Chamber of Vigilance holding the belief that it may only be utilised when a threat akin to that which befell Sovereign is faced once more. Should that happen, the Keepers of the Catacombs shall admit the one upon whom this weighty task rests, that he may wield the Broken Spear against the intended foe.

The Broken Spear functions in most circumstances as a Astartes Power Spear. However, the wielder of the Broken Spear receives a number of benefits when facing beings with the Incorporeal or Phase Traits. Creatures gain no benefit to Concealment Tests from the Incorporeal Trait and must make Silent Moves as normal when attempting to remain hidden from a Battle-Brother wielding the Broken Spear. Likewise, the Broken Spear can injure beings with the Incorporeal Trait normally and any being suffering Wounds from an



TABLE 2-3: WEAPONS OF SOVEREIGN-SIGMA

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dmg	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Req	Renown
Broken Spear (Melee)	Melee	—	—	1d10+8 E	7	—	—	Power Field, Special	8kg	65	Hero
Broken Spear (Thrown)	Thrown	SBx3m	S/—/—	1d10+8 E	7	—	—	Power Field, Special	8kg	65	Hero
Crozius of Nolasco	Melee	—	—	1d10+9 E	7	—	—	Balanced, Concussive, Power Field, Special	12kg	55	Hero
Glaucus's Heavy Bolter	Heavy	150m	—/—/8	1d10+14 X	7	60	Full	Gyro-Stabilized, Tearing, Special	68	55	Hero

TABLE 2-4: RELICS OF SOVEREIGN SIGMA

Name	Wt	Req	Renown
Ixion's Potentia Coil	N/A	55	Hero
Lightning Heart	4kg	45	Hero

attack with the Broken Spear loses the ability to pass through solid objects granted by the Incorporeal or Phase Traits for a number of rounds equal to the wielder's Willpower Bonus.

In addition, should a Battle-Brother wielding the Broken Spear filling an Offensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy deal damage to a creature with the Daemonic, Incorporeal, Phase, Possession, or Warp Instability Traits, that creature must immediately make a **Difficult (–10) Willpower Test**. The creature takes 2 Damage for failure, plus an additional 2 damage for each Degree of Failure. If this would deal damage equal to or in excess of the creature's remaining Wounds, it is cast into the Warp.

THE CROZIUS OF NOLASCO

The Crozius Arcanum that Chaplain Nolasco carried into battle for his final mission was known to be an ancient weapon borne by numerous Chaplains before him. Strictly speaking, the Crozius belongs not to the Deathwatch but to the Chaplain's parent Chapter—the Angels Sanguine, yet these sons of Sanguinius long ago granted the Deathwatch permission to retain it, so long as only those of their own bloodline would be allowed to bear it in the future. The reason for this stipulation was not forthcoming, but was not questioned, and Nolasco's Crozius was interred within the Catacombs alongside the relics of the other members of Kill-team Sovereign-Sigma.

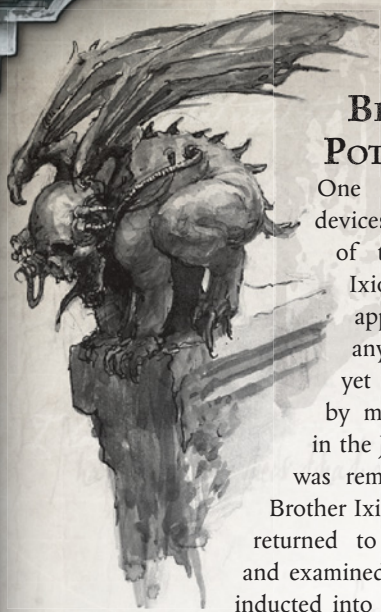
To date, the Crozius of Nolasco has been retrieved on only a handful of occasions, in each instance by a Chaplain of the Blood Angels or one of that Chapter's Successors. The last time the Crozius was taken up, it was by a Deathwatch Chaplain originally of the Knights of Blood Chapter, only to be lost when he vanished somewhere in the vicinity of the Hadex Anomaly. The Crozius was thought lost following

this incident, but years later was returned by an unnamed Blackshield who served one vigil of the Long Watch before vanishing, himself, the unrecorded specifics of his Apocryphon Oath discharged.

The Crozius of Nolasco is a unique Crozius Arcanum and as such can only be Requisitioned by Deathwatch Chaplains (see page 106 of the **DEATHWATCH Supplement, RITES OF BATTLE**). In addition, only members of the Blood Angels Chapter or one of their Successor Chapters may requisition this ancient weapon. This Crozius Arcanum draws its power from the rage and blood thirst of its wielder. When making an attack with the Crozius of Nolasco, the weapon gains a number of additional effects depending on how many levels of the Black Rage Primarch's Curse the wielder is suffering. If the wielder is under the Level 1 effect, Bloodlust, the Crozius is treated as having the Tearing Quality. If the wielder is under the Level 2 effect, Close Quarters Killing, the Crozius is treated as having the Tearing and Proven (3) Qualities. If the wielder is under the Level 3 effect, Uncontrollable Thirst, the Crozius is treated as having the Tearing, Proven (3), and Felling (1) Qualities.

In addition, whenever a Battle-Brother wielding the Crozius of Nolasco and filling a Defensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy is subject to Critical Damage, he temporarily gains one level of the Black Rage Primarch's Curse. The Battle-Brother must still roll on the appropriate Critical Effect Table and note the result. The Battle-Brother wielding the Crozius of Nolasco may ignore the effects of the Critical Damage until the end of the Combat Encounter as determined by the Game Master. Levels of Black Rage gained from this effect of the Crozius of Nolasco are immediately lost at this time. Note that as these Levels of Primarch's Curse are gained independently of the accumulation of Insanity Points, they do not progress the Battle-Brother down the Insanity Track and cannot cause the character to be removed from play, nor do they increase his Trauma Modifier. Those effects are still determined by the Battle-Brother's accumulated Insanity Points.

BROTHER IXION'S POTENTIA COIL



One of numerous machine devices implanted into the body of the Techmarine Brother Ixion, this potentia coil appears no different from any other example of its type, yet is held in great reverence by many Techmarines serving in the Jericho Reach. The device was removed from the body of Brother Ixion when his remains were returned to Watch Fortress Erioch, and examined at great length by those inducted into the mysteries of the Cult Mechanicus. Despite the efforts of dozens

of Techmarines and techno-savants, none have been able to explain the device's ability to absorb such a staggeringly powerful bolt of energy, though they did discover that much of that energy remains within the capacitor still.

After much debate, the senior Techmarines of Watch Fortress Erioch determined that Brother Ixion's Potentia Coil should be allowed to be borne by future generations, and to date, a dozen Techmarines have done so. In each case, the Techmarine had the device implanted into his body, drawing upon it as he would any other of the numerous implants such warriors commonly bear. It has been found, however, that the device still carries a formidable charge, which may be drawn upon when needed most. This is a perilous course, however, for once the coil is opened, the power within is all but impossible to master, granting the Techmarine a potent, if unpredictable, source of energy to be used when death or mission failure is the only alternative.

This relic replaces the potentia coil already possessed by a Techmarine and is integrated into his Mechanicus Implants for the duration of the Mission for which it is requisitioned; as such, Brother Ixion's Potentia Coil can only be requisitioned by a Techmarine. Brother Ixion's Potentia Coil provides any Battle-Brother currently bearing it with a unique force field. This field has a Protection Rating of 35 and no Overload Roll. This field can only be used to nullify attacks that deal Energy Damage. Each time this field nullifies an attack, it generates a Power Charge. Power Charges last until the end of the encounter, as determined by the Game Master or until discharged. For each Power charge stored in the Potentia Coil, the amount by which the Battle-Brother's armour increases his Strength is increased by +5. In addition, attacks made by the Battle-Brother that deal Energy Damage gain the Proven Quality with a value equal to the number of Power Charges stored in the Potentia Coil.

Furthermore, while the Battle-Brother bearing Brother Ixion's Potentia Coil fills an Offensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, he may, as a Standard Action, discharge all of the Power Charges stored in the potentia coil. Discharging the stored Power Charges creates a shock wave of raw kinetic energy that radiates out from the Battle-Brother in all directions. This shock wave is treated as an attack from

a weapon with the Blast Quality, with a Blast rating equal to the number of Power Charges discharged. This attack is centred on the Techmarine and deals 1d10 Energy Damage per Power Charge discharged, with a Penetration value equal to the number of Power Charges discharged.

BROTHER GLAUCUS'S HEAVY BOLTER

This is the weapon borne by the Devastator Brother Glaucus of the Astral Claws, regarded for many centuries as a relic of great worth. Despite its celebrated service, this relic has, of late, come to be regarded somewhat differently. In 816. M41, a group of Ordo Xenos Inquisitors demanded entry to the Catacombs in order to examine the relic, and after some debate the Chamber of Vigilance granted them access. The Agents of the Inquisition examined it for several hours, and upon emerging from its chamber informed the Keepers of the Catacombs that the weapon should remain in its resting place henceforth. Whether or not the Chamber of Vigilance intends to honour this dire instruction remains to be seen, as do the consequences for disobeying the Ordo Hereticus should they decide not to.

This suspect weapon functions in all respects as a heavy bolter with the profile listed on **Table 2-3: Weapons of Sovereign-Sigma**. However, when wielded by a Battle-Brother filling an Offensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, the weapon has shown to be even more devastatingly effective, yet has proven quite dangerous to the wielder and his allies. Under such circumstances, Brother Glaucus's Heavy Bolter gains the Devastating (1), Felling (1), and Sanctified Qualities. However, these benefits come at a cost. Each time the wielder of Brother Glaucus's Heavy Bolter takes damage from an attack—after reduction from Armour, Toughness, and other sources—the Battle-Brother must make a **Hard (-20) Willpower Test**. Should the Battle-Brother succeed, he takes the Damage as normal. Should he fail, the Damage he received is instead transferred to the nearest allied Battle-Brother, who takes the damage in his place. This Damage cannot be further reduced, transferred, or prevented in any way.

THE LIGHTNING HEART

Held suspended in a glittering stasis column in the Sterling Reliquary, the Lightning Heart is the most potent and potentially perilous item recovered from the aftermath of the defeat of the Lord of Lightning. The relic takes the form of a jagged shard of violet crystal about the size of a human fist, and it was the only trace of the Lord of Lightning that Watch Captain Aesalon could locate upon regaining consciousness after casting the Broken Spear. Many have questioned the wisdom of interring the Lightning Heart within the Sterling Reliquary, stating that the crystal might contain the very essence of the godlike energy being that dominated an entire planet. Others claim that such a relic must be guarded even more vigilantly, lest such a danger ever return. A third perspective holds that the Lightning Heart might be utilised as some form of weapon and that it contains uncounted reserves of catastrophically destructive power. Ultimately, only the masters of the Deathwatch can decide the fate of

THE LIGHTNING HEART AND DEATHWATCH CAMPAIGNS

The potential damage that the Lightning Heart is capable of doing to an individual is almost guaranteed to be catastrophic to nearly any Deathwatch Character. For this reason, the relic should neither be requisitioned nor used lightly. The Player Characters should have a very good reason to resort to such measures. However, threats that would call for such extreme instances of self-sacrifice do exist in the Jericho Reach. Any foe that would require the use of a relic such as this must truly be a villain worth the attention of the Deathwatch.

the Lightning Heart, and so the Silver Keepers watch over it, and the other relics of Kill-team Sovereign-Sigma, until such time as a decision is reached, or there is no other option but to unleash the power suspected to reside within.

Should the Lightning Heart be shattered, the force unleashed would, indeed, be devastating. A Battle-Brother may use a Standard Action to break the Lightning Heart, causing a massive blast of unfettered coruscating energy and scouring the soul of any being nearby. This blast cascades out from the shattered Heart in all directions to a distance of 50 metres. Each creature caught in the blast suffers 1d10 Energy Damage for each point of Willpower Bonus they possess. Roll Damage for each target individually. This damage is not reduced by armour and cannot be stopped by Force Fields of any sort, but is reduced as normal by Toughness. Should a creature with the Daemonic, Incorporeal, Phasing, Possession, or Warp Instability Traits be damaged by the Lightning Heart, that creature must immediately make a **Hard (-20) Willpower Test**. The creature takes 2 Damage for failure, plus an additional 2 damage for each Degree of Failure. If this would deal damage equal to or in excess of the creature's remaining Wounds, it is cast into the Warp.



THE DARKLING STIRS

"Something alien stirs amid the frozen, night-shrouded surface of Andronicus Prime, and the Deathwatch responds. Kill-teams sweep the shattered ground and targeted bombardments take place from orbit. In the aftermath, a Watch Station is established in the turbulent asteroid fields that now strangle the near-orbital approaches to the planet."

—Notes from the *Liber Eriochus*, 273.M36

The worlds of the Andronicus system are, without exception, barren, hateful places scornful of the presence of mankind. Of all the worlds, the eighth planet, called Andronicus Octus, knows the tread of humanity. Andronicus Octus is no colony world, however, for there are no natural resources there or anywhere else in the system that would justify the effort of extracting them. Rather, Andronicus Octus is host to two quite singular facilities. One is the so-called Mirador, an ancient observation array wrought by the Adeptus Mechanicus at the very founding of the Jericho Sector, or possibly even before then. The other is Watch Station Andronicus, a Deathwatch fortress of formidable repute.

Watch Station Andronicus is unusual in that its presence, and something of its history, is known to the high command of the Achilus Crusade. What none of the annals or cartographic archives record, however, is that the Andronicus system is host not just to one, but two Watch Stations, the second existing very much in the shadow of the first and therefore all the better hidden from prying eyes. This secret facility was established several hundred years before Watch Station Andronicus, and for a different reason entirely.

Long ago, the Adeptus Mechanicus ceded stewardship of the Mirador to the Inquisition. The Tech-Priests were fearful that, with the coming of the Warp storms that so bedevilled the Imperium during the Reign of Blood, the Andronicus system would be consumed by the anarchy that had claimed so many human worlds and would be unable to perform its sacred duty. The result was the Carthenis Dictum, a compact that eventually led to the Inquisition taking control of the Mirador that it might be utilised to further the mission of the Deathwatch in the Jericho Sector and beyond. This much the annals of the Jericho Reach record, but few are aware of a secret history, and the true reason Magos Carthenis was so willing to broker the agreement that handed control of the Mirador array to the Inquisition.

The Mirador has existed in the Andronicus system since time immemorial, no known archives describing the exact date or circumstances of its creation. The facility is centred around a vast array of impossibly ancient archeotech, a unique combination of pre-cognition engines, meta-phasic filters, and multi-spectrum quantum distillation drives. The net effect of these barely understood devices and functions is that the Mirador is able to observe events within hundreds of light years of the Andronicus system, but without suffering the otherwise crippling effects of what the ancient Terran

savants once called general relativity. In other words, being immune to the temporal lag inherent in observing events light years distant, the Mirador can, in effect, see into the future. The Adeptus Mechanicus have made many attempts to investigate this incredible phenomenon, and it was one such experiment that brought about an event recorded in the annals of the Deathwatch as the Scouring of Andronicus Prime, an event in which a being later dubbed the Darkling was summoned to hideous and blasphemous existence.

A secret adherent of a radical doctrine that espoused experimentation and the active pursuance of new modes of technology, Magos Carthenis ascended to command of the Mirador facility in 251.M36. Had the Magos' heretical beliefs been known, it is highly doubtful he would have been placed in command of the facility, and it is clear from what records exist that he wasted little time in delving into the secrets of the Mirador's operation. The ability to somehow offset relativity in observing far off objects and events fascinated the Magos, and in seeking to learn how such a thing was possible and might be replicated, he came upon an entirely new use for the Mirador. In secret session with those of his kin who shared his radical mind-set, Magos Carthenis proposed that the Mirador might be turned towards the past, its arcane technologies utilised to scry times and places long ago obscured by the passage of aeons. Carthenis and his co-conspirators formulated a plan. They would turn the arcane arrays of the Mirador on the nearest body to Andronicus Octus, at that time Andronicus Prime, in order to test the process. If they could observe the distant geological past of Andronicus Prime, they reasoned, then they would turn the Mirador upon the system's star itself. If the creation of that star was made visible to them, then what other secrets of the universe might be uncovered? Perhaps, they dared to dream, creation itself might be laid bare.

And so, the ancient, barely understood systems of the Mirador were focused not on some distant body, but upon a neighbouring planet. The array's mighty processing streams and logic conduits were shunted into a new configuration, one that Magos Carthenis believed would reveal the state of Andronicus Prime at the very moment of its creation. Even as the vast capacitation banks screamed with barely contained power, the entire facility vibrating with the focusing of such unknowable energies, the Magos and his circle gathered in the prime observatorium to witness what no mortal eyes had ever before seen.

What they saw upon the surface of Andronicus Prime struck utter terror even into the cybernetic hearts of these most sound-minded of Tech-Priests. The planet was revealed to them in its earliest state, its surface barely cooling and still host to an entire sea of raging lava. It was what stirred amidst the boiling oceans that struck the Tech-Priests mute with fear. From each lava sea there writhed a mass of coiling limbs, some dozens of kilometres in length and questing hideously onto the land and into heat-hazed air above.

So vile was the sight of a newborn world in the grip of such things that the Magos ordered the array shut down immediately, his staff scrambling to enact his order even as he retreated to the facility's forge-chapel to shrive himself of his sins. It was only when he emerged many hours later, however, that Magos Carthenis realised the true extent of the heresy he had committed. The things that had, billions of years ago, existed upon the surface of Andronicus Prime had been summoned forth from the abyss of time, and even as the horrified Tech-Priests looked on, were stretching writhing tentacles for the void itself.



THE SCOURING OF ANDRONICUS PRIME

How the masters of Watch Fortress Erioch anticipated the appearance of the horror of Andronicus Prime is not recorded, but it is certain that they did, for it was only an hour after the calamitous use of the Mirador that a wave of black and silver drop pods scythed through the tortured skies of the stricken world. Deploying from their landers, a half-dozen Kill-teams spread out to engage the massive, coiling tentacles. It is comparatively rare for the Deathwatch to field more than a single Kill-team at one time; this was evidence, were any required, of the severity of the situation. Soon, the drop zone was aflame with the fires of war, the fearsome weaponry of the Deathwatch deployed with lethal efficiency. The enemy were writhing tentacles pitted with lamprey-like mouths that sucked and gnawed at the bodies of those they managed to grasp. Space Marines fell, each a nigh irreplaceable loss to the Imperium, and all the while more of the hideous limbs broke through the barren ground. Soon, the featureless landscape was transformed into a writhing forest of sucker-mouthed tentacles, the weapons of the Deathwatch blasting, disintegrating, shattering, melting, and vaporising limb after limb even as more pressed in at every quarter.

An hour into the operation, one of the warriors made a discovery that changed the tide of the battle, and in addition had consequences that would linger for millennia to come. A Librarian of the Exorcists Chapter, Epistolary Sabazius was particularly gifted in the art of inflicting death by way of his psychic powers. He was well used to the psychic death scream uttered by nearly every living creature, regardless of its origins, yet when the creatures assailing the Deathwatch were slain, as hundreds were, he detected pain, but no death. There could be only one explanation—every one of the countless thousands of coiling limbs belonged to a single entity, the central mass of which must surely still lie somewhere deep beneath the crust of Andronicus Prime.

When Epistolary Sabazius' urgent report was transmitted to the Deathwatch commanders in orbit, the order was given. A concentrated lance strike was directed into the surface a safe distance from the embattled Kill-teams, a strike so focused it bored a crater several kilometres into the crust. The lance strike created a vast wound, hundreds of metres across, from which leaped great gobbets of molten rock, sheets of lava rain, and dense banks of poisonous ash.

The instant the lance strike was made, Epistolary Sabazius knew he had been correct. Every Librarian in the force was assailed by a wave of alien pain so intense it could only have been caused by a grievous wound indeed. But it was not a mortal wound, of that the Epistolary was certain, and so he led his Battle-Brothers forward to deliver the killing blow.

The annals of Watch Fortress Erioch record the fate of Epistolary Sabazius and his fellow warriors only as far as the moment they stepped from the rim of the infernal crater to vanish in the raging depths below. Within minutes of the Kill-team's disappearance, the surface of Andronicus Prime trembled as to a sub-sonic roar of some dying beast, and the tentacles assaulting the main force withdrew into the ground. For long hours, the tortured depths were wracked by unimaginable forces, yet none on the surface or in orbit could establish contact with Sabazius or his brethren. At last, the surface shuddered as with some terrible subterranean implosion, and all fell silent.

The mustered Kill-teams searched for any sign of Epistolary Sabazius and his Kill-team, yet none could be found even after many days. No sign of the terrible beast called forth from the pit of aeons remained, yet the masters of the Deathwatch knew that did not mean it was banished forever. Eventually, the search for the missing was called off and the gathered frigates unleashed such a fearsome barrage on the surface of Andronicus Prime that large fragments of the crust broke away, exposing the planet's lambent mantle and creating a halo of planetary debris through which only the most insane of pilots would attempt passage.

Only once the masters of the Deathwatch and the Ordo Xenos were satisfied the creature was defeated did they depart, declaring the shattered world forbidden, and leaving behind them a Watch Station to stand silent sentinel over Andronicus Prime.

That vigilant guardian shall ever be known as Watch Station Sabazius, in honour of the lost hero who defeated the Darkling.

SCOURGE OF THE DARKLING

There are a number of Battle-Brothers venerated as heroes of the Scouring of Andronicus Prime, and unusually, they do not represent the members of a single Kill-team. The Andronicus Prime landing was carried out by several Kill-teams operating as a coherent Deathwatch strike force, and as such the heroes are drawn from across that force. Each performed feats of incredible skill and courage throughout the battle, and all came together at the very end to descend into the crater and confront the Darkling. What mighty deeds were performed within the depths of that great wound in the surface of Andronicus Prime must remain a mystery, the fact that the Battle-Brothers rallied to the call of Epistolary Sabazius and descended at his side sufficient evidence of their dedication to the eternal fight against the horrors that lurk in the void.

EPISTOLARY SABAZIUS OF THE EXORCISTS

The archives of the Deathwatch record that Brother Sabazius had served as a Librarian in the Exorcists Chapter for almost a century when he was dispatched by his Chapter Master to fight alongside an Inquisition mission to scour a xenophage cult that had taken hold amongst the nobility of the pleasure world of Leucosia. The legends of that world still recount the day the vengeful Librarian and his Battle-Brothers descended from the pristine skies upon pillars of fire to deliver judgement upon the fallen. So effective was that operation that millennia later, Leucosia is counted as amongst the most pious of shrine worlds, entirely dedicated to the purest of the Emperor's saints. It was during this operation that Sabazius drew the attention of members of the Ordo Xenos, and a decade later he answered the call to stand a vigil of the Long Watch at Watch Fortress Erioch.

Epistolary Sabazius was gifted with several psychic abilities counted as rare amongst battle psykers, not least of which was the ability to discern the soul of an enemy in the great beyond, and to assault it directly with powers unleashed by his own spirit. Thus Sabazius was able to bear witness to the soul-death of his foes directly, and it was this aspect of his powers that led him to the conclusion that the beast of Andronicus Prime was not myriad foes, but a single entity.

The deed for which Epistolary Sabazius shall forever be known is the moment he mustered those Battle-Brothers nearest to him and led them into the infernal depths of the crater made by the concentrated lance strike of the Deathwatch assault fleet. Reports indicate that Sabazius looked about him, saw into the very souls of those that had answered his call, and in an instant judged them equal to the task he was to set them. Before any others could intervene or join them at the crater's lip, Sabazius simply stepped forth into the superheated updraft and was gone. Seconds later, the Battle-Brothers who

had answered his call followed his example and were gone, their fate unknown. Whatever transpired within the mantle of Andronicus Prime, it must surely have been a battle to equal the greatest legends of the Adeptus Astartes, a battle for which the name of Epistolary Sabazius shall be recalled for all time in the annals of the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach.

BROTHER SYNFELL OF THE STORM WARDENS

A Tactical Marine and a veteran of several vigils, Brother Synfell was known throughout the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach as a redoubtable warrior and a loyal comrade. He was noted for the sheer number of bionic limbs, organs, and other implants his body was fitted with, the majority of them earned taking on challenges on the field of battle that others, even the mightiest of Space Marines, might not have accepted. Those that knew Brother Synfell well were unsurprised that he was amongst those who rallied to

the side of Epistolary Sabazius and entered the crater of the Darkling, for he was ever at the forefront of such impossible assaults.

In the aftermath of the Scouring of Andronicus Prime, Brother Synfell's trusty bolter was discovered, firmly gripped by the bionic arm that held it. The weapon's appearance spoke volumes of the manner of its bearer's death. Its ammunition was spent and the overheated state of the barrel told of nigh constant firing. The state of the bionic arm suggested it had been torn from its socket with tremendous force, and those Battle-Brothers that had served alongside Brother Synfell understood well that he would have continued fighting even unto dismemberment. One thing is certain—the legend of Brother Synfell lives on long after his passing.



LEGACY OF THE DARKLING

The legend of the Darkling serves as a salutary example that the galaxy is haunted by countless slumbering foes, many of them far, far older than mankind and which can be awoken all too easily by those determined to pry where they should not. This could happen almost anywhere in the Jericho Reach, a fact that the Game Master could draw upon in order to get his players involved in all manner of unusual confrontations.

Of course, there is one very real legacy of the tale of the Darkling, and that is the fact that a Watch Station was established in order to ensure it does not return. That Watch Station exists still, and Battle-Brothers based at or passing through Watch Station Andronicus could learn of its existence and become embroiled in its mission. For more on Watch Station Andronicus, see the **DEATHWATCH** supplement **THE JERICHO REACH**.

Heroic Legacy Package: The Daemon-Slayers.

ADVENTURE SEED

The Watch Station reports unanticipated seismic activity in the region of the crater of the Darkling and the Player Characters are dispatched to investigate. Perhaps a formerly closed off section of caverns has opened up, revealing a chance to investigate the fate of the heroes of the Scouring of Andronicus. Perhaps the tremors continue, making the mission a perilous one indeed, and the Kill-team has but scant hours to investigate before it must withdraw to a place of safety. What secrets and hazards from the dawn of time might await in those stygian depths?

BROTHER CEYX OF THE DRAGON LORDS

The annals of Watch Fortress Erioch record that Brother Ceyx was a taciturn Space Marine little given to mingling with his Battle-Brothers. As far as can be ascertained, he is the only member of his Chapter ever to have stood a vigil of the Long Watch at Erioch, so whether or not this demeanour is typical of his kin must remain unknown until such time as another of that Chapter should take the Apocryphon Oath. What is known of him, however, is that, while he remained aloof from his comrades while serving in the ranks of the Deathwatch, he did not hesitate to answer the call of Epistolary Sabazius and descend after him into the infernal bowels of Andronicus Prime.

One thing that is known of Brother Ceyx is that he was a master of the rapid strike, and he utilised a matched pair of power blades in combat. He was seen at the height of the battle for the Andronicus Prime drop zone to be lifted high into the air by a hundred metre long tentacle, only to sever it with his blades in order to free himself. He is reported to have fallen twenty metres and more, to have landed safely, and to have severed another tentacle that had coiled itself about the body of his comrade Brother Frostheart, saving the Space Wolf and allowing the pair to join Sabazius at the lip of the crater. Like his fellows, having stepped into the raging crater, nothing more was seen of Brother Ceyx, though one of the matched pair of power blades was later discovered, lifeless and lodged in the lamprey gullet of a severed tentacle.

BROTHER FROSTHEART OF THE SPACE WOLVES

A Long Fang of the Space Wolves Chapter, Brother Nain Frostheart was a veteran of the Deathwatch, having stood four vigils of the Long Watch. Any other warrior would long ago have ascended to high rank, yet Brother Frostheart rejected all honours and appointments. He could have become a Watch Captain several times over, yet each time the Chamber of Vigilance offered him such an honour he refused it, determined to serve as a Battle-Brother in the front line Kill-teams of the Jericho Reach.

Brother Frostheart was a stalwart of Watch Fortress Erioch, a legend even during his own service and known to generations of warriors. Many remarked that his nickname must surely have been given to the Space Wolf in jest, for he was anything but cold-hearted. Rather, Brother Frostheart was a force of nature and fiercely loyal to his Battle-Brothers, his laugh enlivening the otherwise dour and silent halls of Watch Station Erioch even as his war cry cowed his foes on the field of battle.

The Scouring of Andronicus Prime was to prove the final battle of Brother Nain Frostheart, for having been freed from the grasp of a writhing tentacle by the intervention of the Dragon Lord Brother Ceyx, he determined to repay the debt of honour incurred. Many such life debts take years to be repaid, but this one was discharged scant minutes later when the Space Wolf followed Brother Ceyx in answering the call of Epistolary Sabazius, never leaving his side even as they both plunged into the raging heart of the crater. What happened next may never be known, but all who knew him are certain the life debt Brother Frostheart had incurred would have been repaid a thousand times over before the Darkling was defeated.

RELICS OF THE SCOURING OF ANDRONICUS PRIME

There are several relics held by the Deathwatch relating to the heroes of the Scouring of Andronicus Prime, each of them associated with a different member of the group that descended into the crater of the Darkling. One, a force staff that once belonged to Epistolary Sabazius, is held at Watch Fortress Erioch, while most of the rest are housed in reliquaries at Watch Station Andronicus, a bastion of the Deathwatch established several centuries after the events surrounding the Darkling. All are greatly venerated, for Epistolary Sabazius and his Battle-Brothers remain one of the most honoured groups of fallen warriors in the annals of the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach.

THE SERPENT STAFF OF SABAZIUS

Like many Librarians, Epistolary Sabazius carried a force staff, as much a symbol of office as a potent weapon through which he was able to focus his arcane powers. Like many of his fellows, Sabazius actually owned several such weapons, and he is known to have received a new weapon when he ascended to the rank of Epistolary. At the time of the Scouring of Andronicus Prime, Sabazius was carrying a staff wrought for him by the finest artificers of the Exorcists Chapter, a weapon that was lost along with all trace of the Epistolary himself. But Sabazius had kept the staff he had set aside upon ascending to his new rank, and at the time of the battle, the so-called Serpent Staff resided in Watch Fortress Erioch, set into a niche in Sabazius's cell. Legend states that, at the very moment of its owner's descent into the raging fires of the crater, the staff came alive in its resting place, its rigid form twisting like that of a reptile, an event that earned it its title.

Though the transformation was only temporary and witnessed only by Deathwatch chapter serfs, it was later declared a genuine phenomenon. The Serpent Staff was transplanted from its resting place in the cell of the lost Epistolary and placed within the Catacombs along with countless other relics of the Long Watch. Within a day,



however, the staff was found to be missing, and following an exhaustive search it was discovered in its original resting place, in the niche in its former owner's cell.

Since that time, the Serpent Staff of Sabazius has been carried into battle by numerous subsequent generations of Librarians. Several have fallen in battle while carrying it, and in at least three known instances the staff has somehow returned to its resting place even when its bearer's body was unrecovered. The staff was even returned to the Exorcists Chapter itself at one time, yet a year later it was found back in its niche. As a result, the former cell of Epistolary Sabazius has been declared sacred ground, and it is maintained as a shrine to the fallen hero of the Scouring of Andronicus Prime.

This curious Force Staff possesses a number of odd qualities. The first is the weapon's refusal to be separated from the Librarian who has requisitioned it. During the mission for which the Serpent Staff of Sabazius has been requisitioned, should the Battle-Brother who requisitioned the weapon become separated from it, he can make an **Easy (+10) Willpower Test** as a Free Action. If successful, the Serpent Staff immediately appears in the hand of the Battle-Brother. Otherwise, even without a Willpower Test, the Serpent Staff returns to the Battle-Brother's person after being separated for one hour. Similarly, an hour after the conclusion of the mission for which the relic was requisitioned, the Serpent Staff returns itself to its alcove in Epistolary Sabazius' former cell.

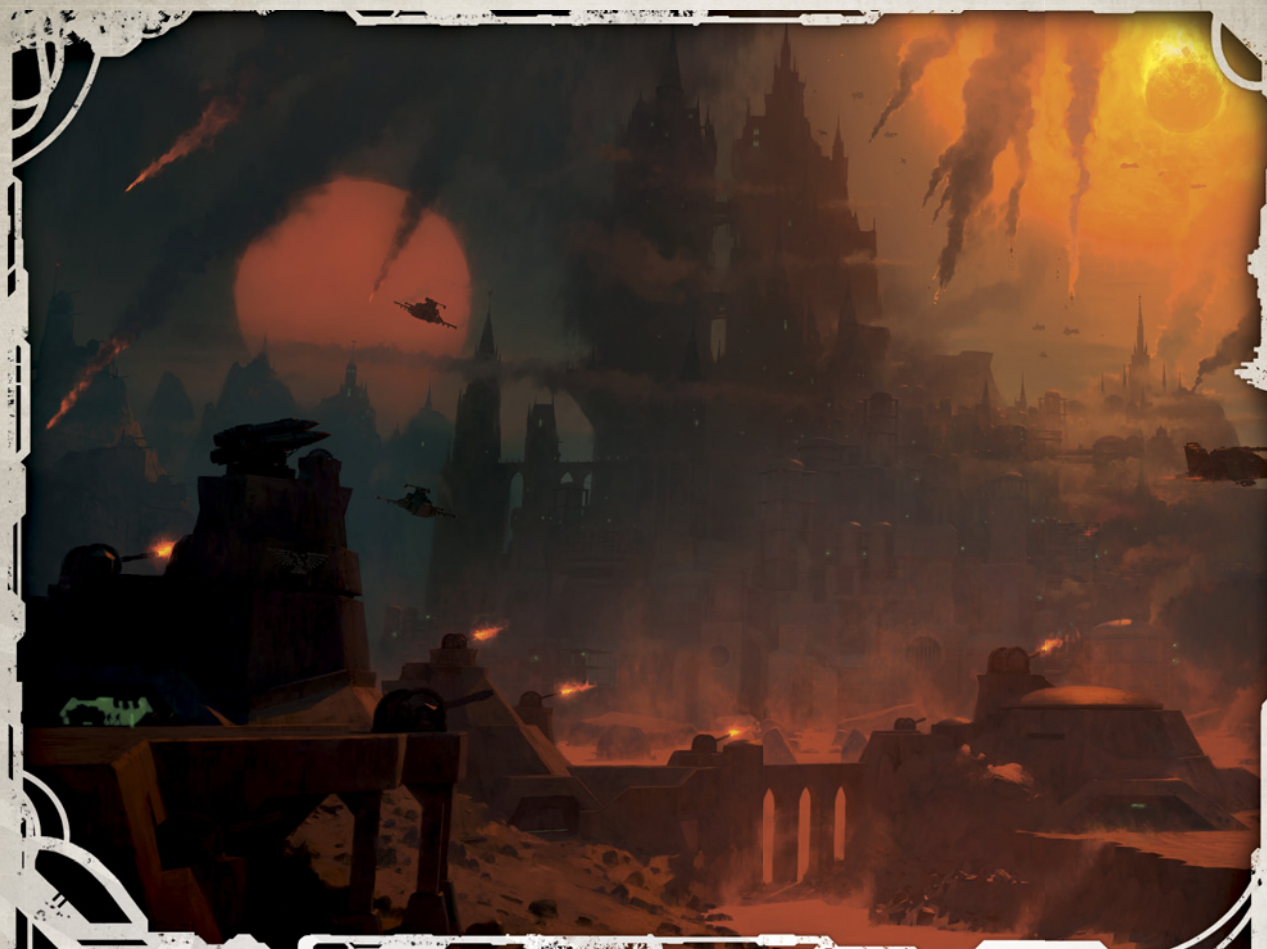
In addition, while the Librarian wielding the Serpent Staff fills an Offensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, all damage dealt with his psychic powers count as having the Toxic Quality. The Toughness Test to resist the Toxic Damage suffers a -5 penalty per Psy Rating of the wielder, in addition to the usual penalty incurred by the damage dealt. Should the target fail this Toughness Test, the toxic attack deals 1d10 + an additional amount of damage equal to the wielder's Psy Rating.

TABLE 2-5: RELICS OF ANDRONICUS PRIME

Name	Wt	Req	Renown
Frostheart's Brass Tears	—	50	Hero

TABLE 2-6: WEAPONS OF ANDRONICUS PRIME

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dmg	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Req	Renown
Serpent Staff of Sabazius	Melee (Force)	—	—	1d10+13 I	0	—	—	Balanced, Special	5kg	55	Famed
Wrathful Augment	Basic	100m	S/3/—	1d10+11 X	4	28	Full	Special, Tearing	18kg	60	Famed
Orphaned Blade	Melee	—	—	1d10+7 E	7	—	—	Balanced, Power Field, Special	4kg	65	Hero



WRATHFUL AUGMENT

The bionic arm that once belonged to Brother Synfell remains the only bodily trace ever found of any of the heroes of the Scouring of Andronicus Prime. The arm's mechanical fist clutches the bolter's grip with such determination that the Techmarines of Watch Fortress Erioch actually came to believe that something of its former owner's will lingers within it yet. It is almost as if, the Techmarines claimed, Brother Synfell himself clutches the bolter's grip even from beyond death, determined that it should never be set down until his foes are defeated. A school of thought has emerged over the centuries that holds that Brother Synfell's bionic arm will not release its grip until its very last foe—the so-called Darkling—has been slain once and for all. This is born out by another of the unique facets of this particular relic.

When at first these remains of Brother Synfell were declared relics of the Deathwatch, they were treated as two separate items. The bolter was etched with the honours its former bearer had earned, its armoured cowl coated in molecular-bonded gold. The bionic arm was similarly honoured, and both in time were entrusted to new owners.

It soon became evident that, when the bolter and the bionic arm of Brother Synfell were rendered to two separate Battle-Brothers, they would both suffer the most appalling of fates. Some came to believe the items somehow cursed, as if the Darkling was imposing its fell intent from beyond death. After much theosophical debate and no little cautious experimentation, a combined conclave of Deathwatch Librarians and Techmarines declared that, so long as the

bionic arm always bore the bolter, all was well. Thus, these relics of Brother Synfell remain in use in the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach, the bearer never able to set down the bolter whilst engaged upon a mission.

This relic is unique among the items kept in the Sterling Reliquary, for it is actually two objects that appear in all respects to be little more than cursed remnants of once-glorious wargear. However, when wielded together, these two items possess a devastating potency. For that reason, they have only been dispensed as a combined whole rather than individual pieces. When this relic is requisitioned, the bionic arm portion of it is attached to the Battle-Brother, replacing either his natural arm or a bionic arm he already possesses. When the mission is completed and the Battle-Brothers must return their requisitioned relics to the Sterling Reliquary, the Wrathful Augment is replaced with a bionic arm of common quality or with the bionic arm the Battle-Brother possessed before the mission.

So long as the two pieces are both equipped by the same Battle-Brother, they provide him with all the usual benefits of a master-crafted bionic arm and a master-crafted boltgun with the profile listed on **Table 2–5: Relics of Andronicus Prime**. In addition, when used together to make a Called Shot, the Wrathful Augment provides its wielder with a +20 bonus to the associated Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skull Test.

Furthermore, while a Battle-Brother wielding both halves of the Wrathful Augment fills a Defensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, he may use his Reaction when an enemy makes a Ranged Attack against him or his allies to make an

Opposed Difficult (–10) Ballistic Skill Test opposed by the attacker's Agility. If successful, the Battle-Brother disarms the attacker before the attack is made and the attacker drops his ranged weapon at his feet. A Battle-Brother can only perform this Reaction once per round of combat, regardless of Talents, Traits, or other sources that may provide him with extra Reactions.

Should a Battle-Brother equip either the bionic arm or the boltgun independently, the consequences are dire. While doing so, the Battle-Brother cannot spend or burn Fate Points for any reason.

THE ORPHANED BLADE

The only trace of Brother Ceyx ever recovered from the Andronicus Prime drop zone, this short pattern power blade is one of the matched pair the Dragon Lords Space Marine always carried into battle. Brother Ceyx was known as a swordsman of great skill, and few of his peers had ever come close to matching him in the training cages of Watch Fortress Erioch. Beyond the cages, on the field of battle, Brother Ceyx was known to have defeated countless enemies using these supremely master-crafted blades, always ensuring that every possible trace of xenos viscera was cleansed from them afterwards, that their surfaces were polished to a mirror sheen, and that their edges were kept as keen as they were the day they were forged.

It is held to be a great tragedy that only one of Brother Ceyx's blades remains to be wielded against the foes of the Imperium, but there are those who hold that the two blades shall one day be reunited. Indeed, those who have taken up the Orphaned Blade and borne it into battle often report having gained some notion that the other is still in existence, the pair still linked across unimaginable gulfs of time and space. Something of a confraternity has formed amongst those Battle-Brothers who have carried the Orphaned Blade in combat, an informal brotherhood that transcends boundaries of Chapter and rank. Many of these Battle-Brothers hold the view that the lost blade and the ultimate fate of the Darkling are somehow entwined, that both still exist, and both will one day return.

This stout power blade appears largely unremarkable, save its superior craftsmanship and artful engravings and filigree. However, as the blade seeks its brother in the Warp, attacks made with this weapon are devilishly difficult to Parry, and as such, all attempts to parry attacks from the Orphaned Blade suffer a –40 penalty.

In addition, while a Battle-Brother wielding the Orphaned Blade fills an Offensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, attacks from the Orphaned Blade that are not parried grant the wielder a substantial boon. In such circumstances, each time an attack from the Orphaned Blade is not parried—either because the target did not attempt to parry the attack or due to a failed parry attempt—the wielder's attack causes one extra hit. Use **Table 8–2: Multiple Hits** on page 239 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook to determine the extra Hit Locations.

FROSTHEART'S BRASS TEARS

Brother Frostheart is unusual in that he did not leave a single relic by which he is remembered, but many. As a Long Fang of the Space Wolves Chapter, Brother Frostheart was adept at providing overwhelming heavy weapon fire support for his Battle-Brothers, a role he continued throughout his vigil of the Long Watch. Brother Frostheart's weapon of choice was a heavy bolter, but a very special one indeed. Frostheart's weapon was created upon the Forge World of Tartarus Serial, a bastion of the Adeptus Mechanicus that fell to alien invasion at some point midway through M33. Very few examples of wargear created by the master weaponsmiths of Tartarus Serial exist, and it is believed that Brother Frostheart's heavy bolter was the last remaining example of such a weapon hailing from that world. Sadly, Brother Frostheart's weapon was lost with the Space Wolf himself, and another irreplaceable example of an ancient Standard Template Construct pattern was denied to mankind.

With Brother Frostheart's Tartarus Serial pattern heavy bolter gone, it is not the weapon itself that is hailed as a relic of its bearer, but the shell casings discarded across the blasted ground of the Andronicus Prime drop zone. When the battle site was scoured for any sign of Epistolary Sabazius and his companions in the aftermath of the defeat of the Darkling, hundreds of shell casings were recovered, later identified as coming from Brother Frostheart's heavy bolter. In time, these items came to be regarded as small relics in themselves, tokens or charms of the memory of Brother Frostheart. To this day, the casings are utilised as symbols of honour granted to Battle-Brothers based at Watch Station Andronicus in recognition of some great deed fought against the unnamed things that lurk in the void and crave the doom of mankind. Around three hundred of the casings have been awarded over the millennia, and most of them have been returned upon the death of the recipient or upon his return to his parent Chapter. At least another three hundred more remain, held in a stasis-locked reliquary in the very core of the armouries of Watch Station Andronicus.

Under normal circumstances, Frostheart's Brass Tears function exactly like a Charm—see page 171 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook—removing the Battle-Brother bearing one or more of them from the pool of characters when randomly determining the target of a negative event or circumstance.

Furthermore, once per session, provided the Battle-Brother bearing Frostheart's Brass Tears is filling a Defensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, he can choose to ignore all damage and effects from any one attack against him. The Battle-Brother can choose to activate this ability as a Free Action, after the attack has been made, but before Damage is determined. When this ability is used, the attack is considered to have hit, but the Battle-Brother suffers no damage and no effect whatsoever.

THE FIFTEEN OF MIDAEI

"The Deathwatch rapid strike vessel Instance of Fire is attacked by an unknown warship of an archaic design, and forced to flee before the vastly overmatching vessel. Guided by infernal power, the warship pursues the Deathwatch vessel to Midael, catches the Instance of Fire, and disables it in a brief exchange of cannon-fire. Escaping to the Watch Station on Midael's surface, the fifteen surviving Battle-Brothers make death oaths and prepare their last defence in the armoured tower of the Watch Station. They hold out for seventeen days against a company-strength force of Chaos Space Marines clad in red armour emblazoned with the marks of the Dark Gods. When a relief force reaches Midael, it is too late; they find the Watch Station despoiled but repairable. The bodies and armour of the fifteen defenders are never found."

—Notes from the *Liber Eriochus*, 175.M41

Centuries before the Achilles Crusade descended upon the Jericho Reach bringing war on an apocalyptic scale, the servants of the Ruinous Powers had already transformed the core of the old Jericho Sector into a pit of blood and damnation. In their supreme folly, the lords of the old sector brought doom upon their own heads and those of countless of their subjects, and in so doing caused the Hadex Anomaly to come into existence, or perhaps to be summoned to the region from somewhere else entirely. It remains unknown except perhaps to those at the very highest echelons of power within the Deathwatch and the Ordo Xenos whether the coming of the anomaly, and with it the servants of the Dark Gods, was foretold and prepared for. Certainly, the Long Vigil in the Jericho Reach is being held against some threat of unimaginable proportions. If this threat is not Chaos, then it must be something unutterably terrible indeed.

It was during a reconnaissance mission into the regions surrounding the Hadex Anomaly that the Deathwatch encountered a foe only rarely found in the Jericho Reach up to that time, and certainly not in so great a strength. That foe was a force of Chaos Space Marines—the fallen kin of every Space Marine of the Adeptus Astartes and therefore the most hated of enemies. Prior to this encounter, the servants of the Ruinous Powers had been limited to armies of mortals or of blasphemous mutant things. It would later become evident that these Traitors were some form of advance party, seeking a means of entering the Jericho Reach and enacting their dark designs upon the lawless worlds within. With the later discovery of the Warp Gate and the coming of the armies of the Imperium to the Jericho Reach, warbands of Traitor Marines are encountered all too often. In 175.M41, however, they were an all but unknown presence.

The incident began in the Warp-tainted void that surrounds the Hadex Anomaly. The Deathwatch rapid strike vessel *Instance of Fire* had been engaged upon its mission to take readings of the ebb and flow of the energies of the Anomaly for several days, its crew bolstered by a number of arcano-savants and Warp-seers whose dynasties had served the

Deathwatch since time immemorial. A mere hour before the mission was to conclude, each and every one of the observing savants and seers cried out in sudden pain and anguish as their instruments overloaded and alarm klaxons rang out across the entire vessel. Several of the observers suffered fatal seizures upon the deck of the observatorium, bleeding out from every orifice, while others bellowed incoherent warnings to their Deathwatch masters even as the last shreds of their sanity fled. Several of those that survived the first minutes of the incident were spared further misery by mercifully placed bolt pistol shots and only a handful survived to report something of the event they had witnessed. Even as the void boiled with coiling, unclassifiable energies, the last few surviving seers went before the vessel's master, Void-Keeper Cuiris, and informed him what they had seen.

The Hadex Anomaly, the seers claimed, had spoken. The impossible rent in space and time had uttered a word; a word of power; a word that no mortal can hear and live. The seers did live, but only long enough to warn their masters of the coming storm, after which they each took their own lives before any could intervene.

As if waiting upon the deaths of those final witnesses, the energies surrounding the Hadex Anomaly exploded forth, a stellar bow wave of flickering un-matter ploughing through the void. The leading edge of this wave front struck the *Instance of Fire* even as Void-Keeper Cuiris ordered an emergency manoeuvre to minimise its effect. Though the rapid strike vessel was savagely buffeted by the tide of raw temporal energy, the timely order saved her from crippling damage. It was fortunate indeed that the *Instance of Fire* was relatively intact after the bow wave had washed over her, for in its wake came a warship of truly ancient heritage and fearsome configuration.

A DESPERATE FLIGHT

The master of the *Instance of Fire* saw immediately that his vessel was drastically outclassed, the void burning as the enemy ship opened fire. An experienced captain, Brother Cuiris knew he must order his ship to withdraw, for otherwise it and the Kill-team travelling upon it would all be lost. Like all Space Marines, the Void-Keeper harboured no fear of death, but to waste his and his fellows lives would be a far greater sin. Nevertheless, honour demanded the captain make at least some token attack, and so Cuiris ordered a savage fusillade be unleashed upon the grim attacker before ordering his vessel to make for the Warp.

What followed was a pursuit the likes of which is rarely recorded in the history of the Jericho Reach. The *Instance of Fire* plunged into the Warp and, as the Void-Keeper anticipated, the enemy followed. The rapid strike vessel's Navigator was an individual of incredible experience, as are all that serve the Deathwatch, and she utilised every iota of her skill to traverse the raging currents of the Warp in an effort to shake off the enemy warship.

No matter how she tried, however, the enemy vessel ploughed relentlessly onwards through the Warp. Soon, it became clear that some great and blasphemous sorcery was angering the Immaterium where the *Instance of Fire* passed

and soothing it as the enemy vessel approached. After several days, during which the enemy continued to close the gap, Void-Keeper Cuiris ordered a manoeuvre the enemy captain could scarcely have anticipated. He ordered the *Instance of Fire* to disengage her Warp drive, and to do so in the heart of a passing system. That system, the captain knew, was the Midael system, where lay a Watch Station of the Deathwatch, and his Battle-Brothers' only chance of prevailing in the face of this unknown and relentless enemy.

The untimely emergence from Warp space cost the *Instance of Fire* dearly, her structure exposed to impossible stresses born of the sudden and drastic shift from riding the unreal tides of the Warp to facing those at play in close proximity to a star in the physical universe. The rapid strike vessel was very nearly torn apart as she exploded out of the Warp and directly into the gravitational embrace of the dead world that hosted Watch Station Midael. Knowing that he had scant hours before the *Instance of Fire* was propelled like a sling-shot back out into the void, Brother Cuiris ordered the Deathwatch Battle-Brothers under his command to disembark for the world below. Even as the drop pods plummeted to the surface, the *Instance of Fire* hurtled around the dead world to be propelled outwards, her captain logging her trajectory so that one day she might be recovered. The last sight Cuiris saw of his ship was her being targeted by a fearsome broadside, her drive section aflame with escaping plasma venting as she spun away.

Though he knew he had gained precious time, Brother Cuiris knew too that it might not be enough. Even as he led his Battle-Brothers through the metallic grey dust seas surrounding the Watch Station, the Void-Keeper formulated

a plan to defend the towering bastion long enough for aid to arrive from Watch Fortress Erioch or any closer force. Hours later, he and his Kill-teams were ensconced in the tower of Watch Station Midael, the mayday transmitted as the first of the enemy drop ships streaked through the black skies overhead.

It was only as the attackers closed in upon Watch Station Midael that Brother Cuiris and his Battle-Brothers learned something of their identity, though the Void-Keeper already had his suspicions. The enemy were clad in power armour the colour of scabbed blood, but there were no mighty champions of the Adeptus Astartes. Rather, as the station's formidable spy-lens arrays focused across the metallic dust plains, the truth became evident. Where the Adeptus Astartes bear their colours and heraldry with pride and nobility, these warriors had defaced their wargear in a myriad of unspeakable ways. The armour was daubed with the unmistakable sigils of the Great Enemy, while rune-etched skulls and other fetishes hung from rusted chains. Each bore weapons of impossible antiquity, bolt guns and chainswords dating to the dawning of the Age of Imperium and even earlier raised high as they advanced.

THE SIEGE OF MIDAEAL

The subsequent siege of Watch Station Midael was captured on the bastion's spy-lens net, often in vivid and bloody detail. The deeds performed by the small band of warriors that became known as the "Fifteen of Midael" ring down the ages, and serve as an example to all who learn of them. Numerous sermons have described Brother Mercur of the Star Phantoms holding the bastion's main gate against a six-hour assault and of how he slew over two-dozen Chaos Space Marines with his bare hands and teeth long after he had expended the last of his ammunition. Apothecary Borro is known to have given all to safeguard the progenoid glands of his fallen Battle-Brothers. One celebrated pict-capture depicts him knelt over the form of a supine Battle-Brother, his reductor impaled into the chest cavity of his fallen comrade through a scorched hole in the breastplate, while defending himself from several Chaos Space Marines. Brother Nazareth is recorded as leading twelve separate sallies



out of the Watch Station in order to retain the initiative; because these carried him and his kin beyond the range of the Watch Station's pict-lenses, his deeds remain largely unknown. With the loss of the *Instance of Fire*, Brother Cuiris was by now a Keeper bereft his charge, and so he renewed his oaths by vowing that Watch Station Midael would not fall while he yet drew breath. At last, when it became evident that the small band of warriors could expect only death, all fifteen shared the Keeper's vow, recording their death oath and preparing to sell their lives dearly.

The Fifteen of Midael had not long to wait before death came to claim its due, and it came in the form of a hideous abomination summoned by the vile sorceries of the besieging force. A mass of otherworldly flesh and serrated, blood-slick claws, the thing called forth could only have been drawn from the depths of the Immaterium. Even those steeped in forbidden lore could not determine whether it was some manner of daemon or a spawn mutated beyond recognition. In all likelihood, it was both, for the creatures of the Warp defy all rational categorisation. The daemon-spawn hurled itself against the main gate, and where its limbs rent the adamantium, the very stuff of the bastion was shattered. Brother Mercur fell at the portal he had guarded for so long, two more of his brethren making their last as it smashed its way through the inner gates. The Watch Station breached, Brother Cuiris ordered his warriors to fall back towards the base of the central tower, though three of the Space Marines were cut off holding the transept and fell before the remainder could muster a counterattack. The remaining eight Battle Brothers massed at the base of the tower, and it was then that inspiration struck Brother Cuiris. A moment later, he had explained his plan to his brethren, and the final stage of the defence of Watch Station Midael was underway.

Realising that the daemon-spawn was quite capable of tearing the Deathwatch bastion apart from within, Brother Cuiris knew that it must be stopped, regardless of whether he and his kin survived. As a Keeper, Cuiris was privy to certain lore not shared by most of his brethren, and in that lore he found a means of combating the daemon-spawn. Determined that their last act would be to save the Watch Station, the surviving Battle-Brothers split into two forces. One mustered to hold the enemy at bay in the wreckage of the main portal, while Brother Cuiris led the remainder deeper into the bastion, drawing the daemon-spawn onwards towards what lay at the heart of the bastion.

It was in the soul-warded shrine far beneath the central tower that Brother Cuiris and Apothecary Borro turned and enacted the final stage of the Keeper's plan. Activating ancient wards, the likes of which are utilised by the highest echelons of the Inquisition, as well as the Deathwatch and the Grey Knights, he sealed the daemon-spawn in a tomb from which it, and he and Borro, could never escape. The pict-capture shuts off the instant the wards were raised, nothing at all able to penetrate the arcane barrier. That Brothers Cuiris and Borro would have given a formidable accounting of themselves goes without saying, but even such mighty warriors as they could not have survived long against the creature.

Of the remainder of the Fifteen of Midael, Brother Nazareth led the last seven Battle Brothers in a bold and

stoic defence that saw several dozen more of the Chaos Space Marines slain. Finally, the attackers realised that their summoning had failed, and fell back from the shattered portal, their every weapon firing so as to leave nothing living behind. That last fusillade claimed the life of the last of the Fifteen, Brother Nazareth of the Sky Sentinels Chapter, that mighty warrior knowing even as his life faded that Watch Station Midael was saved, and the Death Oaths of the Fifteen honoured.

When relief came, the Deathwatch found nothing of the Fifteen except those weapons they had borne against the traitors. Of their bodies and the armour that protected them, nothing was found at all.

THE FIFTEEN

The names of each and every Battle-Brother of the Fifteen of Midael are etched in glory, amongst the most celebrated warriors of the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach. Each has his own chantry chapel dedicated to his memory on Watch Fortress Erioch, within which prayers are chanted at the Hours and shall be until such time as the chapel, the Watch Fortress, and with it the Deathwatch itself passes from the galaxy. The names of the Fifteen of Midael are recorded as Brothers Cuiris, Mercur, Borro, Nazareth, Aniane, Ranuccio, Solon, Roch, Eridan, Pylenor, Theron, Xuthus, Janus, Cyllar, and Cygnus. Each and every one of these warriors is venerated for the acts of courage and defiance he performed during the defence of Watch Station Midael, but it is the acts of the first four that are held as exemplary.

VOID-KEEPER CUIRIS OF THE BLOOD ANGELS

Brother Cuiris was standing his fourth vigil of the Long Watch at the time of the defence of Watch Station Midael, his second vigil as a Keeper. The rank is one only granted to the most pure of heart and trustworthy of Battle-Brothers, for it bestows upon them the most vital of duties. The Keepers are responsible for holding safe the relics, weapons, and other assets of the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach, ensuring such potent artefacts and resources never fall into the hands of the enemy. Brother Cuiris's first Vigil was served at a Watch Fortress somewhere towards the galactic core, its name and nature unrecorded in the annals of the Jericho Reach. His second vigil was mounted at Watch Fortress Erioch, where he discharged his Apocryphon Oath with such dedication that the Chamber of Vigilance requested he remain there and stand a third vigil as a Keeper, an honour which he, and his parent Chapter the Blood Angels, acceded to. As a Keeper, Brother Cuiris stood his third vigil standing guard over the dread contents of the Xenos Bestiarium. He acted as warden and executioner, and occasionally as interrogator, of numerous fell aliens, including captured Tau, Eldar, and Orks, as well as organisms never before encountered or categorised in the extensive archives of the Ordo Xenos. When one such being broke its bonds by shifting the molecules of its body from one state of matter to something entirely unknown, Brother Cuiris was responsible for containing it, and in so doing

he learned the key to defeating its entire kin should they ever be encountered again. In laying low this blasphemous entity, Brother Cuiris fulfilled his third Apocryphon Oath, but as before, it was requested of him that he remain at Watch Fortress Erioch, so valued were his skills and experience.

This time, however, the Masters of the Blood Angels Chapter were less forthcoming in acceding to the request of the Chamber of Vigilance, and a trio of senior Chapter officers was dispatched to the Jericho Reach to discuss the matter. This party consisted of a Chaplain, a Sanguinary Priest, and a Captain, all of whom were contemporaries of Brother Cuiris and had served alongside him in the formative years of their service to their Chapter. A gathering of Deathwatch authorities was convened, and the Watch Commander made his case to the Blood Angels, stating exactly why he believed the Battle-Brother should be allowed to remain to stand a fourth vigil of the Long Watch.

Exactly what passed between the Blood Angels and the masters of the Deathwatch remains unrecorded, but it almost certainly involved the communication of information known only to the Deathwatch and the Ordo Xenos. Such information may have been gleaned from esoteric practises such as readings of the Emperor's Tarot, prognostication rituals, or even necrophonic communing. Whatever the truth, the Blood Angels departed the Jericho Reach having granted their complete ascent to Brother Cuiris standing a fourth vigil, and the Keeper was assigned to serve as the master of the rapid strike cruiser *Instance of Fire*.

Brother Cuiris came to be known as the Void-Keeper through the many actions in which he commanded his vessel. Time and again he fought through impossible odds to deliver a Kill-team to an infiltration point no enemy could have predicted the Deathwatch would utilise, or found a means of extracting them from seemingly inevitable doom. In encountering the ancient, and still unidentified warship, on the fringes of the Hadex Anomaly, Brother Cuiris found an enemy he could not defeat by stratagem and firepower. Nonetheless, he discharged his duty to the Deathwatch with such courage and dedication that the name of Brother Cuiris the Void-Keeper remains one of the most celebrated in the annals of the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach.

BROTHER MERCUR OF THE STAR PHANTOMS

Brother Mercur joined the eternal hosts of the Emperor of Mankind very much in the manner he had served humanity, and entirely according to the beliefs of the Star Phantoms Chapter. Mercur's parent Chapter holds that life is transient and the manner of a warrior's death is all. Thus, Brother Mercur died protecting his fellow Battle-Brothers, defending the Watch Station's main portal against overwhelming odds.

The doctrines of the Star Phantoms demand that the fallen are honoured above the living, no warrior held to have truly served until he has passed on. Thus, the name of Brother Mercur resounds through the ages by way of the life-bonded attendants dispatched by the Star Phantoms to sing the Hours at his chantry chapel. Though all of the Fifteen of Midael are duly honoured, the continuous chant emanating from the chapel dedicated to Brother Mercur ensures that his memory lives on. It is said that the custodian serfs the Star Phantoms have dispatched to attend this duty are under instructions never to cease their sonorous chanting, even in the most drastic of circumstances. This assertion was borne out several centuries later, when they continued with their duties even as death and anarchy threatened to engulf Watch Fortress Erioch.

APOTHECARY BORRO OF THE CELESTIAL GUARD

The Celestial Guard are a Chapter about which little is known, and it may be the case that Brother Borro represents the only of his kin to have stood the Long Watch in the Jericho Reach or even anywhere. The annals of the Deathwatch record that Borro was engaged upon his first vigil when the events of the defence of Watch Station Midael transpired, and was regarded as a competent warrior and a dedicated practitioner of the Apothecary's art. The Watch Station's spy net recorded the image of Borro retrieving a fallen brother's progenoid while fending off the attacks of no fewer than three Traitor Space Marines, and this scene is reproduced in numerous devotional works. The greatest is held in the tower of Watch Station Midael itself and takes the form of a tapestry ten metres wide and forty long, and which hangs from the central space of the tower's interior. Apothecary Borro has become something of a totem to Space Marine Apothecaries serving in the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach, and many invoke his name and his memory whilst preparing for a mission.



LEGACY OF THE FIFTEEN

The legacy of this event is very real indeed, though its exact nature is entirely unknown. The chamber at the heart of Watch Station Midael has never been opened, lest that which was lured within emerges once more. To this day, a lone warrior stands vigil over the station, ensuring that the portal remains sealed. With the coming of the Hadex Anomaly to the Jericho Reach, however, the taint of the Ruinous Powers seeps forth from the Charan Stars; a stain set one day to embrace Midael. What might happen once Midael is cut off from resupply? In time, even a mighty Space Marine must pass away, and if the sentinel could not be replaced, then surely the thing in the chamber must escape.

Heroic Legacy Package: The Heroes' Stand.

ADVENTURE SEED

A potential mission might revolve around the sentinel having to be replaced, and the Player Characters escorting the new incumbent to his posting. Perhaps while there, something strange happens, the thing in the chamber stirring as it senses a new guardian taking station over its fate.

BROTHER NAZARTHETH OF THE SKY SENTINELS

Brother Nazareth is remembered for the highly aggressive and proactive nature of his defence of Watch Station Midael, the Assault Marine leading numerous efforts to disrupt the attackers' assault. Brother Nazareth is remembered as an inspirational figure, and one whose example those Battle-Brothers assigned to join him were keen to follow. Though Brother Nazareth almost certainly had no knowledge of the fact, Brother Cuiris had recorded his opinion that the Sky Sentinel should be considered for the rank of Watch Captain should the Fifteen of Midael survive. It is just as likely that Cuiris knew that neither he, nor Nazareth, nor any of their brethren would see out the battle, and he was recording his opinion in order to honour the Assault Marine's herculean efforts.

Of all of the Fifteen, it is held that Brother Nazareth engaged the enemy on the closest terms and on the highest number of occasions. It is suspected that in so doing he learned something of the true nature of the enemy and their origins and intentions in coming to the Jericho Reach. Sadly, any insight he gained was lost with the death of the Fifteen, and only won back at great cost when the Achilus Crusade was launched through the Warp Gate to cleanse the region of the taint of heretic, mutant, and fiend.

RELICS OF THE FIFTEEN OF MIDAEL

One of the greatest mysteries surrounding the Fifteen of Midael is the question of what happened to their bodies after they were slain. The Watch Station's spy net remained active throughout the siege, recording a great many of the bold deeds performed during the seventeen-day action. It depicts in details the heroic last stands of almost all of the Fifteen, yet the record appears to have been corrupted or interfered with soon after the Chaos Space Marine attackers withdrew. The last clear pict-captures show the enemy firing upon the Watch Station with every weapon available as they withdrew, following which the views become obscured with flames, smoke, and debris. When finally the smoke clears, the only bodies to be seen are those of the enemy dead. Of the Fifteen of Midael, little remained. Their bodies had simply vanished, along with their armour, leaving only those items they dropped from their hands in the moment of their deaths. Anything still held in the grasp of any of the heroes vanished along with them, a mystery that remains as impenetrable as it was when first it was discovered.

THE DEATH OATH OF THE FIFTEEN

When Brother Cuiris made the vow that made him the Keeper of Watch Station Midael, he and his Battle-Brothers joined in taking a binding Death Oath. The Keeper's burden would be shared by all, so they swore, up to, including, and if necessary beyond death. Far from being an improvised promise made in adversity, the Death Oath was recorded in the typically formal manner in which the vow of any Deathwatch Keeper is made. During an all too brief respite in the Chaos Space Marines' assault, the Fifteen gathered, and under Brother Cuiris's supervision recorded their collective Death Oath on a scroll, which was secreted in the Watch Station's arsenal.

The Death Oath has since become a relic of fearsome potency. Sealed within a marble scroll container, the parchment is protected from the travails of battle by any blessed with the honour of bearing it. The Death Oath is only rarely allowed out of its reliquary within Watch Station Midael, however, and when it is, it is invariably carried by one recently ascended to the rank of Keeper. It is said that the scroll tempers the soul of those alongside he who carries it, ensuring they live up to the memory of the Fifteen of Midael.

This relic can only be Requisitioned by Deathwatch Keeper (see page 120 of the **DEATHWATCH** Supplement, **rites of battle**). While a Battle-Brother is in possession of the Death Oath of the Fifteen, his squad does not suffer the loss of Cohesion caused by a Battle-Brother voluntarily leaving the Heroic Legacy. Similarly, the Squad does not recover Cohesion when a Battle-Brother who voluntarily left the Heroic Legacy returns to fill a role.

In addition, so long as the Squad Leader bears the Death Oath of the Fifteen, Manoeuvres he executes may apply to members of the squad who are not filling Heroic Roles at the time they are executed. The Battle-Brothers must still be participating in the Manoeuvre and must be within Support Range of the Squad Leader to benefit from the Manoeuvre. This allows Battle-Brothers to benefit from Manoeuvres, even if they have left the Heroic Legacy, voluntarily or involuntarily.

TABLE 2-7: FORCE FIELDS OF THE FIFTEEN OF MIDAE

Name	Protection Rating	Overload Roll	Wt	Req	Renown
Mournful Clavis	35	1	5kg	40	Hero
Breacher's Bane	55	1-5	26kg	65	Hero

TABLE 2-8: WEAPONS OF THE FIFTEEN OF MIDAE

Name	Class	Dmg	Pen	Special	Wt	Req	Renown
Nazartheth's Talon	Melee	1d10+7 E	6	Power Field, Special	2kg	35	Famed

THE MOURNFUL CLAVIS

All Deathwatch Keepers carry upon them a device called a Clavis, a vambrace permanently affixed to their forearm armour which allows them to pass through portals denied to all others, even those of the Deathwatch and the Ordo Xenos. Brother Cuiris reluctantly detached his Clavis upon taking leave of the *Instance of Fire*, a symbolic act, and, as it transpires, an important one in the greater picture. This is because the rapid strike vessel is believed to still exist, albeit damaged by the fire of the Chaos warship that drove it to Midael. If the *Instance of Fire* does still exist, so it is held, the Clavis of the Void-Keeper holds the key not only to locating it, but of gaining entry after having done so. Until such time as the *Instance of Fire* is located, however, the Mournful Clavis remains an especially potent example of this rare and highly symbolic technology.

In addition to its normal functions as a Clavis of the Keepers, the Mournful Clavis provides any who wear it a great deal of respect and honour among the Battle-Brothers of the Jericho Deathwatch. When interacting with his Deathwatch brothers, a Battle-Brother wearing the Mournful Clavis receives a +20 bonus to any Fellowship Tests he is called upon to make. As well, this device bears a strong connection to the *Instance of Fire*, a connection that a Battle-Brother wearing the artefact can exploit to locate the long-lost strike vessel. With a moment of concentration, the Battle-Brother wearing the Mournful Clavis can make a **Very Hard (-30) Awareness Test** to get a bearing on the location of the *Instance of Fire*. A successful Test provides the Battle-Brother with a general sense of direction and distance—albeit on a galactic scale—as though the Battle-Brother, himself, was a living compass.

In addition, so long as a Battle-Brother wearing the Mournful Clavis is filling an Offensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, the Clavis provides its wearer with a Force field with a Protection Rating of 35 and an Overload Rating of 1. Using the Mournful Clavis itself, the wearer may also make Parry attempts when unarmed or armed with a weapon with the Unwieldy Quality. For the purposes of such an attempt, the Mournful Clavis is considered to be a weapon with the Defensive and Power Field Qualities.

BORRO'S FINAL SACRIFICE

The selfless deeds of the Apothecary Borro are well known, but there exists a physical reminder of his final sacrifice for the sake of his Battle-Brothers. At some point in the final moments before he and Void-Master Cuiris trapped themselves in the ward-vault with the Daemon-spawn, Brother Borro made certain that the progenoid glands he had gathered from his fallen comrades were saved from the ravages of the Chaos Space Marines. Without hesitation, knowing he had only a moment to act, the dutiful Apothecary turned his chainsword on his own flesh, removing his gauntlet, vambrace, and reductor with his arm yet inside. This he deposited in a stasis crypt that lay outside the soul-warded shrine. Though he faced inevitable doom at the hands of the Chaos-fiend, the gene-seed of his slain Brothers could be recovered and returned to their respective Chapters. This grisly relic survived the ravages of the Traitor Space Marines and the destruction wrought upon the Watch Station by the daemon-spawn and was recovered later on.

The progenoid reservoir phial is now a potent relic and a constant reminder to all that see it of the sacrifice a Battle-Brother will make for his fellow Space Marines. It holds special significance to the Apothecaries of the Jericho Reach Deathwatch. But the phial is an awful lot more than a symbol, for many Apothecaries hold that primitive machine spirits of their conventional medicae equipment seem bolstered by the presence of this most revered relic. Only the most senior of Apothecaries are ever allowed to carry the phial to battle, and because none can be certain how long its seemingly miraculous properties might endure, it is only rarely utilised.

This relic replaces the usual progenoid reservoir contained in any narthecium. As such, it can only be requisitioned by a Deathwatch Apothecary. During any mission in which the Apothecary has successfully recovered the gene-seed of any fallen Battle-Brothers, each surviving member of the Kill-team receives one Temporary Fate Point until the conclusion of their next mission. This Temporary Fate Point can be spent like any other Fate Point, but it cannot be burnt, nor, if spent, does it replenish at the beginning of a new game session. If unspent, this temporary Fate Point is lost at the conclusion of the Kill-team's next mission.

In addition, while the Apothecary bearing Borro's Final Sacrifice is filling a Defensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, the Squad Leader receives a +20 bonus to the Willpower Test to resist the effects of Fear on a Kill-team's Cohesion.

TABLE 2-9: RELICS OF THE FIFTEEN OF MIDAEI

Name	Wt	Req	Renown
Death Oath of the Fifteen	1kg	45	Famed
Borro's Final Sacrifice	6kg	40	Distinguished

BREACHER'S BANE

Brother Mercur of the Star Phantoms is remembered for his immovable defence of the Watch Station's main portal, an act of defiance during which he finally paid the ultimate price. Throughout his defence, Brother Mercur carried a mighty storm shield inscribed with the icons of his Chapter, including the hourglass and deaths-head symbols that so typify the Star Phantoms' Chapter cult. It is said of Brother Mercur that he intended to be carried from the battlefield upon his shield, a wish that the Deathwatch were sadly unable to honour, for his body vanished along with the others of the Fifteen of MidaeI.

Because Brother Mercur's storm shield hails from his parent Chapter, a message was dispatched to the Star Phantoms when they were informed of his death, offering the shield's return. The reply, delayed by almost a decade by the vagaries of astro-telepathic communication, stated that Brother Mercur's wish should be fulfilled. The shield would only be returned to the Star Phantoms with its owner's body, and hence the shield remains in the possession of the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach.

Those Battle-Brothers who have taken up Brother Mercur's storm shield report its power field is notably superior to any similar shield they have born. Whether this represents some quality imbued in the shield by its creator, or is, as some have suggested, something of Brother Mercur's fearsome spirit aiding the bearer from beyond the grave, none can say. Certainly, the bearers themselves favour the latter explanation, and to date, none have fallen while the shield is in their possession.

This remarkable storm shield allows the wielder to use his Reaction to Parry ranged Attacks in the same way he would Parry a melee Attack. All normal modifiers apply to the Weapon Skill Test.

Furthermore, while the Battle-Brother wielding Breacher's Bane is filling a Defensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, the shield protects him from attacks with the Blast Quality. If the Battle-Brother is caught in the blast radius of a weapon with the Blast Quality, the attack will do no damage to the Battle-Brother and he will suffer no effects whatsoever. The attack is resolved as normal against anyone else in the radius as normal.



NAZARTHETH'S TALON

Of the last of the most noted of the Fifteen of MidaeI, all that remains of Brother Nazareth is a single tine snapped from a lightning claw. Having been recovered from the wreckage that remained in the aftermath of the assault on Watch Station MidaeI, this seemingly incongruous item was placed amidst the various other relics of the Fifteen, but unlike so many others, not taken up for some time. Eventually, a Techmarine of the Sky Sentinels Chapter took the Apocryphon Oath and began his vigil at Watch Station Erioch, and in time came to MidaeI to pay his respects to the relic of the hero of his Chapter. Seeking a means of honouring the spirit of his fallen predecessor, the Techmarine created a mount that allowed the tine to be attached to a bolter as a combat accessory, and upon snapping it into place found that the blade still held a charge, though he could not fathom how this might be. Knowing that some mysteries of the Omnissiah must remain as mysteries, the Techmarine bore the relic into battle, as many more warriors have since.

This unassuming blade can be mounted on the lugs of nearly any pattern of boltgun. While attached, the weapon powers up and functions as an Astartes Power Spear.

In addition, while the Battle-Brother wielding Nazareth's Talon is filling an Offensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, the Talon transfers a portion of its power to the weapon to which it is attached. Attacks made with the Talon or the weapon to which it is attached generate a possible Righteous Fury on a Damage die roll of 9 or 10. Damage rolls generated from successful Righteous Fury generate further possible Righteous Fury on a Damage die roll of 9 or 10 as well.

DEATH IN THE VOID

"The Gathering of the Ascension: On the eve of the Feast of the Emperor's Ascension, four Inquisitors and two hundred brothers of the Deathwatch arrive the fortress at the same time. All claim to have received a coded message that called them to attend at the Watch Fortress. The source of the message is unknown. The Watch Fortress becomes a battleground of mistrust and murder as a shapeshifting assassin of unknown origin stalks the corridors and vaults of the Watch Fortress. The assassin is caught and slain after a seventeen hour manhunt, but only after the death of two of the four Inquisitors, nine acolytes, and twenty-three Space Marines. [Other Details Classified]"

—Notes from the *Liber Eriochus*, 756.M41

For long, lonely millennia, the worlds of the Jericho Reach suffered in isolation, bereft of the salvation granted by the rule of the Imperium and subject to whatever doom fate heaped upon them. Fell warlords rose to power, forging domains dozens of systems strong, before they in turn were toppled by their rivals. Foul sects grasped the peoples' souls so that by M41 only a handful of worlds still sung the praises of the Emperor. Xenos invaders, ravaging slavers, and murderous raiders all subjected woe after woe upon the wreckage of the once glorious Jericho Sector, and all the while the baleful taint of the Hadex Anomaly seethed and pulsed the stuff of raw Chaos into the void.

Throughout this entire epoch, the Deathwatch stood firm. They intervened in the affairs of the worlds of the Jericho Reach only rarely, for as low as those worlds surely fell, the Long Watch was set against a still greater threat, to the region and perhaps to the entire Eastern Fringe. To this day, the true nature of the Long Watch in the Jericho Reach remains largely unknown, perhaps even to the highest placed masters of the Deathwatch and the Ordo Xenos themselves, though it must surely relate to the encroaching darkness that some call the Dark Pattern. Whatever the truth, everything changed in 755. M41, when the

Imperial frigate *Spear of Tarsus* came upon the Warp Gate while traversing the Halo Margins beyond the Calixis Sector. Two decades later, the Achilus Crusade descended upon the rediscovered worlds beyond, determined to drag the Jericho Reach back into the light of the Emperor, or to destroy all and rebuild from the ruins should it resist.

Less than a standard year after the discovery of the Warp Gate, long before the ascension of Tiber Achilus to the rank of Warmaster, an incident occurred at Watch Fortress Erioch that remains one of the most disturbing and unusual events to have transpired there in many years. That this event should have come about within a year of the discovery of the Warp Gate only deepens the mystery, which even decades later has yet to be even partially uncovered.

The incident began when the masters of Watch Fortress Erioch received coded ciphers informing them of the imminent arrival of a number of Inquisitors. This in itself was not unusual, for even throughout the long isolation of the Jericho Reach the Inquisition and the Deathwatch had other means of coming

and going from the region, means which remain utterly secret. Suffice it to say, these secret routes did not utilise the then unknown Jericho-Maw Warp Gate.



AN UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL

On this particular occasion, the transmission indicated the arrival of four separate parties, each headed by an Inquisitor, come to address the Chamber of Vigilance. The first to arrive was an Inquisitor Lord of the Ordo Xenos, a man known to the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach by reputation but not by contact. The second was a Witch Hunter of the Ordo Hereticus, a veteran executioner of worlds whose pogroms were infamous across the Eastern Fringe. The third was a Daemonhunter of the Ordo Malleus, a man bearing a dozen different sobriquets, not one of which was his true name. The affiliation of the last was and remains a total mystery, a scythe-wielding Inquisitor by the name of Lady Saturn.

Anticipating an address by a conclave gathered for some cause of dire import, the Chamber of Vigilance convened with the strangers. It soon transpired, however, that the Inquisitors were not only strangers to the Deathwatch, but to one another. Confusion soon turned to suspicion as each demanded to know why their presence had been requested. Each claimed to have received a message coded with the very highest levels of authority stating that their attendance at Watch Fortress Erioch was vital to the Imperium. When it became clear that the summons had not been issued by any on Watch Fortress Erioch, the Master of the Vigil and his counsellors ordered the entire facility to the highest possible state of alert, suspecting foul play of the very worst kind. Ancient defence engrams flared into life, the Outer Wards reconfiguring themselves into an impenetrable maze overwatched by a thousand and more machine spirit-guided sentry guns. The fortress was home to around a hundred Battle-Brothers at that particular time, every one of whom was mustered to defend it against imminent attack.

Reckrimination was heavy in the air and violence but an ill-judged accusation away, when another stream of cipher-sealed transmissions was received. Suspecting a trap intended to trick the Master of the Vigil into lowering his defences, the masters of the Deathwatch called up a tactical holo-pict to ascertain what was happening. None could have anticipated the source of the signals. Not one, but dozens of Adeptus Astartes vessels were inbound on the Watch Fortress, each and every one of them broadcasting the correct Deathwatch authentication codes.

Under conditions of the utmost caution, these new strangers were admitted to Watch Fortress Erioch. They arrived over the course of several hours and, just like the Inquisitors, they each stated that he had been summoned to the Jericho Reach by way of a coded signal bearing the highest possible level of authority. From the Cthugha Nebula to the Veiled Region, Watch Fortresses across the entire galaxy had received the coded plea for aid and dispatched individual Battle-Brothers, and in some cases entire Kill-teams, in answer.

That such a signal could be sent so that every warrior answering it arrived at Watch Fortress Erioch within hours of one another utterly defied all belief. With the transmission of messages and vessels through the unreal dimension of Warp space, such a thing simply should not have been possible. Far worse was the fact that no trace of any signal ever having been transmitted from Erioch could be found, even upon the instigation of the most potent of data-probes.

TENSE ALLIANCES

Minutes after the last of the newly arrived Battle-Brothers boarded the Watch Fortress, events took a drastic and unprecedented turn. The records do not state who fired the first shot or, if they do, the archives have been sealed beyond all hope of opening. Some held that it was a weapons malfunction, but few believe such an explanation. Rather, somewhere in the dark and silent halls of Watch Fortress Erioch, one Battle-Brother fired upon another, the unmistakable sound of a bolter shell detonating inside flesh echoing the length of the age-haunted cloisters.

Whichever Battle-Brother fired that first shot, it was not long before a vicious fire fight erupted in the narthex of the Great Ossuaries. The desiccated skeletons of long slain xenos beasts provided impromptu cover as enquiring shouts and curtly barked orders to cease firing rang out. Soon, silence reigned once more, and as the smoke dissipated, the Master of the Vigil arrived, demanding with ill concealed fury what had happened. Two Battle-Brothers—one a stranger to the Jericho Reach, the other a long serving and much respected veteran of Watch Fortress Erioch, lay dead, both sporting fatal bolter wounds to the head. Worse yet, not a single one of the warriors present could offer a satisfactory explanation as to why. Before the matter could be investigated further, a mournful klaxon started up from another quarter of the vast Watch Fortress, more shots echoing down the lengths of the ancient passageways. Another fire fight had erupted, one that presaged a battle that would consume the entire Watch Fortress before order was restored.

The chaos that ensued was later subject to the most stringent of investigations, the findings of which have been sealed away in the deepest levels of the Watch Fortress's data vaults and are only accessible to a handful of individuals. After action accounts and holo-pict captures show Battle-Brothers firing upon their brethren from close quarters with no provocation, breaking the most solemn of vows as if they meant nothing. Soon distrust and anger reigned supreme, with warriors grouping into bands of known, trusted comrades. Soon even these were shattered, brothers who had served in the same Kill-team for years on end turning upon one another with no explanation. None were safe; from the lowliest Chapter Serf to the highest masters of the Watch Fortress, all became embroiled in the anarchy.



Amidst the bloodshed and madness, the four Inquisitors and a handful of Deathwatch officers, including the Master of the Vigil, banded together in order to find out what was happening and to formulate a means of stopping it. Pooling highly specialised and often esoteric skills and knowledge earned while facing every possible threat to the Imperium of Man, the conclave considered every possibility. The most obvious was possession by some denizen of the Immaterium, but the daemon hunter of the Ordo Malleus could sense no such presence in the Watch Fortress. The alien hunter of the Ordo Xenos screened the air for some alien microbe that might be insinuating itself into the belligerents' brains, a not-unheard-of phenomenon, but he found nothing. The Witch Hunter used her prodigious powers to seek out any psychic effect in play, but aside from the intrinsic resonance to be found in such a place as the Watch Fortress, sensed none. At the last, the Lady Saturn produced a device of evident archeotech ancestry and with it attempted to scan the very fabric of space and time for any clue, but once more, no evidence was forthcoming.

With the Inquisitors, each with his own retinues of savants and specialists, unable to settle the mystery, it fell to the Battle-Brothers of the Deathwatch to determine what was happening. The masters of the Chamber of Vigilance went out into the war-torn companionways, halls, and cloisters of Watch Fortress Erioch, passing among the warriors and speaking with each

in turn. Such things have the Battle-Brothers of the Deathwatch seen, confronted, and defeated upon the battlefields of the 41st Millennium that each is possessed of but a fraction of the Emperor's immeasurable grace. To a Battle-Brother, such experiences were etched upon the very soul, an unmistakable mark of honour to all who knew it. As the masters went from chamber to chamber, they halted to speak with every warrior they encountered, exchanging brief words but looking as they did so deep into the soul of each. Halting to speak with a Battle-Brother in the outer hall of the Xenos Bestiarium, the Master of Sanctity saw in the other's eyes something other than the purity of the Emperor's will. It was a taint, nothing more than a glint of darkness, but the veteran Deathwatch officer knew in an instant what it meant. The Battle-Brother was other than Adeptus Astartes, and therefore an infiltrator.

At the very moment the Master of Sanctity declared the presence of the impostor, a plasma blast seared his body to ashes. The warning was heeded, however, and the battle entered a new phase.

ON THE HUNT

Its presence unmasked, the intruder initiated an orgy of violence that threatened to engulf the entire Watch Fortress. Not knowing if this enemy was the only intruder or if a number of the recently arrived Battle-Brothers were its allies, the masters of the Chamber of Vigilance continued their interrogations, though with greater caution. Of great concern, however, was the fact that the intruder had appeared to be a Battle-Brother well known to the Master of Sanctity, leading the other masters to the conclusion that some manner of domination or imitation was being used. The masters had no choice but to pass word of their realisation throughout the entire force, though in doing so they hoped to drive the infiltrator, or indeed infiltrators, to some action that would unmask them.

The intruder, however, proved a canny enemy, and one adept at turning brother upon brother. Stray signals flooded the vox net, evidently designed to sow discord and confusion amongst the Adeptus Astartes. Such a thing is far from easy to achieve, however, and soon the Battle-Brothers were in full pursuit of at least one confirmed infiltrator. As they ran their query to ground, cornering it in the outer chamber of the Shrine of Saint Nuaan, the Deathwatch saw that the figure before them could be no true Battle-Brother. Its eyes now glowed with actinic balefire and its voice echoed as from a distant abyss. Whatever it was, the infiltrator appeared to wear the armour and bear the weaponry of the Adeptus Astartes, and it was with a wave of revulsion that the Battle-

Brothers realised it also bore the flesh of a warrior several of them had served alongside. Steeling their hearts, the Battle-Brothers opened fire, the weight of their fire so ferocious that nothing but cinders remained of the infiltrator. Moments later, however, another was revealed elsewhere in the Watch Fortress, and the battle raged on for another ten hours before all were cornered and slain. The last fell as the halls of Watch Fortress Erioch resounded with the sound of the bells ringing midnight prayer and as the last peals echoed away, silence finally descended on the corpse-strewn cloisters.

The investigation that followed determined that at least a dozen Battle-Brothers had been somehow dominated by some utterly alien presence, or in some cases potentially killed and replaced with a near perfect facsimile. The true nature of the enemy has never been uncovered, or if it has, it remains one of the best kept of the countless secrets of the Deathwatch. Despite this, numerous enhancements have been made to the Watch Fortress's security measures, the Outer Wards in particular being subjected to a lengthy and comprehensive program of enhancements and improvements.

Of the countless enemies that might have been responsible for this unprecedented infiltration, a number of possibilities exist. Assuming that the Inquisitors were correct in ruling out daemonic possession, microbial or parasitic invasion, psychic domination, and temporal manipulation, only a handful of possibilities remain. Of these, Necron Mind-Shackle Scarabs, Slaught infil-traitors, and Lacrymole Shape-Shifters have all been suggested, even though some sources claim the last of these was laid low ten millennia ago. One last possibility exists, however, and one thought to be linked to the fact that the fourth Inquisitor, she of the nameless Ordo, vanished without a trace at some point during the battle. Perhaps the infiltrator was a pathfinder for some as yet unknown enemy, from some time or place beyond the ken of the Imperium of Man.

THE MARTYRED HUNTERS OF PERATOS

When the very last of the infiltrators was finally cornered, it was a veteran Kill-team under the celebrated Watch Captain Peratos who fought the final battle. Sadly, all paid the final price, martyring themselves that the Watch Fortress and all of their brethren might be delivered.

WATCH CAPTAIN PERATOS OF THE ULTRAMARINES

A noted veteran of the Ultramarines First Company and a warrior said to have the ear of Marneus Calgar himself, Watch Captain Peratos was standing his third vigil of the Long Watch when these events occurred. He and his Kill-team fought bravely throughout the entire battle, but it was in the final hour that Peratos and his Battle-Brothers truly earned their place in the annals of the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach.

It was Watch Captain Peratos who confronted the final infiltrator, which had assumed the outward appearance of a member of the Ultramarine's own Kill-team. None can tell what the enemy intended to achieve in doing so, or whether it was simply an error of judgement. Nonetheless, when Watch Captain Peratos came face to face with the infiltrator in the outer chamber of the Watch Fortress's primary plasma exchanger, he was confronted with three Battle-Brothers of identical countenance. Two—Brothers Vass and Kato—were twins, both of the Dark Angels Chapter, and Peratos had served with each so long that he could tell them apart from one another simply by the intonation of their voices. The third appeared no different from the other two, and had Peratos not served with them he would no doubt have been unable to choose which was which. The Watch Captain denounced the intruder and set his warriors upon it, but before they could slay it, something entirely unexpected transpired.



LEGACY OF THE MARTYRED HUNTERS OF PERATOS

The tale of the infiltration of Erioch should serve as a lesson to all who hear it. Even in the halls of the Deathwatch, the enemy can strike, and sometimes from an entirely unexpected quarter. The mere suggestion that another Battle-Brother might not be all he appears should be something of a shock to the Player Characters. The Game Master can use this to plant the seed of doubt in the players and to serve as a springboard to future missions. The issue need not be concluded in a single mission, either—perhaps one of the Battle-Brothers the characters interact with at Erioch has something about him that raises questions, leading slowly into a far wider conspiracy or threat.

Heroic Legacy Package: The Illuminators of Truth.

ADVENTURE SEED

Upon requisitioning a suit of armour, one of the Player Characters is offered the Defiled Mantle of the Crusader. Will he take it? If so, does he seek to learn more of the shadowy nature of the enemy that infiltrated Watch Fortress Erioch? The Game Master can draw on all manner of foes, from the alien Slaught (described in more detail in the **DARK HERESY** Core Rulebook), the Lacrymole (described in the **DEATHWATCH** supplement **MARK OF THE XENOS**), or make up something entirely new.

Even as the Kill-team closed on their target, the enemy took a new shape. Its features became those of the Watch Captain himself. In that moment, Peratos knew that the destruction would begin all over again unless he took drastic action indeed. His Battle-Brothers nodding their assent, Peratos unsealed the override valve of the plasma exchanger, flooding the chamber they were in with searing plasma. Peratos and his brethren were killed in an instant, as was the last of the infiltrators.

LIBRARIAN TYRANNUS OF THE KNIGHTS OF THE RAVEN

A Battle-Brother engaged upon his third vigil of the Long Watch, Tyrannus was instrumental in the action to track down and corner the infiltrator within the plasma exchanger. A gifted wielder of the psychic arts, Tyrannus had been able to sense something of the enemy's presence even when other Librarians had not. It is tragic indeed that Brother Tyrannus fell alongside his brethren, for otherwise he might have been able to pass on how he did so and something of the mystery of the whole event might have been dispelled. However he achieved it, it appears that the Librarian was only able to estimate the approximate coordinates of a nearby infiltrator, for when confronted with the infiltrator masquerading as a member of his own Kill-team, his powers were unable to distinguish one from another. Ultimately, it was the intuition of brotherhood that unveiled the intruder, when Watch Captain Peratos declared which was the enemy. Though his unusual power abandoned him at the end, Librarian Tyrannus saw the truth of the Watch Captain's judgement, fully acceding to his subsequent order to unseal the plasma exchange.

BROTHER VASS OF THE DARK ANGELS

Brother Vass and his identical twin brother Kato are noted as all but unique in the annals of the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach, for no other such pairing is recorded. Brother Vass fulfilled the role of Devastator in Watch Captain Peratos's Kill-team, a role he was exceptional at. His favoured weapon was the plasma cannon, but he is known to have practised long and hard with every heavy weapon kept in the extensive armouries of Watch Fortress Erioch, and to have mastered them all. Vass and his twin were highly adept at working together in combat, Vass providing covering fire while his brother charged the target. This tactic served the Kill-team well over and over again throughout the battle against the infiltrators, their deeds forming the basis of a number of combat doctrines latterly taught to Kill-teams tasked with boarding Space Hulks and other such dark, confined, and highly dangerous places.

BROTHER KATO OF THE DARK ANGELS

The twin of Brother Vass, Brother Kato served in Watch Captain Peratos's Kill-team as an Assault Marine. Like his brother, he trained relentlessly with every weapon at his disposal, in his case the countless and varied types of melee weapons utilised by the Deathwatch. His favoured type of weapon was a power halberd, which he wielded in combat against every enemy known to the Jericho Reach and beyond.

The two brothers are held to have looked so alike that only the weapons they carried served to tell them apart. When Watch Captain Peratos was called upon to tell which of three warriors was the intruder, it was only the fact that he had served so long beside the twins that allowed him to declare which was the true enemy. It is generally held that it was the bond between the two that the Ultramarine recognised rather than any imperfection, a bond the enemy infiltrator could not possibly replicate.

RELICS OF THE MARTYRED HUNTERS

The relics of the Martyred Hunters fall into two categories—those carried by the Battle-Brothers of Watch Captain Peratos's Kill-team at the moment of their martyrdom, and those relating to earlier service. In the former case, the relics are blackened and scorched, bearing the marks of the plasma that slew the bearers along with the infiltrator despite the best efforts of the Deathwatch's finest artificers. In the latter case, the items were later recovered from the warriors' sleeping cells, declared relics of the Deathwatch by the officers of the Watch Fortress's Reclusiam, and removed to a place of honour in the Sterling Reliquary or the Catacombs.

THE CODEx OF PERATOS

This ancient volume of the Codex Astartes belonged to Watch Captain Peratos, and the frontispiece declares that it was transcribed by an ancestor of his, two-thousand years earlier. That ancestor was not only a Battle-Brother of the Ultramarines Chapter, but a blood relative, making the object exceptionally dear to the Watch Captain and making it a potent relic of his memory. The pages of this venerable tome are replete with countless hand written marginalia, the most recent penned by Peratos himself but with many more by former owners, some of them faded to a ghostly scrawl by the passage of ages. It is said that the codex was the only object of any significance to be found in the Watch Captain's cell after his martyrdom, the only other items mere tools of utility. The codex was removed to the Reclusiam, where it was blessed and placed in stasis.

When a Battle-Brother of the Adeptus Astartes falls in combat while standing a vigil of the Long Watch, it is standard practise for the warrior's parent Chapter to be informed and his personal effects returned. Because Peratos was a Watch Captain, it fell to the Master of the Vigil himself to compile a message to the Ultramarines and, when he did so, the message was addressed to the Chapter Master of the Ultramarines himself—Lord Macragge, Marneus Calgar. When it came, the reply to the news of Watch Captain Peratos's death was a great honour to the memory of the fallen Ultramarine as well as to the Deathwatch. Lord Macragge stated that, when the time was right, he would recover the Codex of Peratos in person, and until he did so it should remain with the Deathwatch, who might study its words and, heeding them, lay low the enemies of the Imperium of Man.

A Battle-Brother who bears this weighty tome provides a +2 bonus to the maximum amount of Cohesion in the Kill-team's Cohesion pool for the duration of the mission for which the relic was requisitioned.

In addition, if the Battle-Brother that requisitioned the Codex of Peratos is filling the Squad Leader Role in an active Heroic Legacy, he has access to the Reinforce Tactical Manoeuvre in addition to any other Manoeuvres he has access to through the Heroic Legacy.

WINGS OF TYRANNUS

This set of stylised black pinions was worn by Librarian Tyrannus, one mounted upon each shoulder pauldron. The exact relevance of the wings remains a mystery, for the Knights of the Raven are a notoriously secretive Chapter, but some in the Deathwatch hold them to relate to the culture from which the Chapter recruits. Regardless of the truth, the wings afforded the Librarian a dark and sinister aspect, which was often made all the more intense when his prodigious psychic powers were called into play. There are several accounts of Librarian Tyrannus facing large numbers of primitive warriors upon the benighted worlds of the Jericho Reach and reducing them to gibbering wrecks, his form exaggerated by his powers so that he came to resemble, even to nearby Battle-Brothers, some dark and terrible being from pre-history.

At the time of the infiltration of Watch Fortress Erioch, Librarian Tyrannus was engaged upon a training mission within the Hunting Grounds, the vast training decks of the facility, and not wearing his distinctive wings. It was only much later that they were recovered from his sleeping cell along with the remainder of his few personal effects. The Knights of the Raven were informed of the loss of the Librarian, but as yet no reply has been forthcoming. Until such time as the Knights of the Raven request the return of the Wings of Tyrannus, they remain at Watch Fortress Erioch, a powerful relic often borne into battle by those Librarians of a similarly fearsome nature as Brother Tyrannus.

When performing a Charge with this Astartes Jump Pack, all attacks made by the Battle-Brother gain the Concussive Quality. In addition, when performing a Charge using the Wings of Tyrannus, a Battle-Brother filling an Offensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy gains the Fear trait with a rating equal to the Degrees of Success attained on the Pilot (Personal) Test.

THE STORM OF VASS

It is said of Brother Vass that the only time he set aside his beloved plasma cannon was when he was familiarising himself with the operation of some other mark of heavy weapon, and that he always returned to his weapon of choice having done so. Vass excelled as a Devastator in his parent Chapter and had served as a sergeant in the Dark Angels 9th Company for almost three decades when called to stand the Long Watch. However, the weapon for which he became so well known was not drawn from the armoury of the Dark Angels, but recovered by Vass himself from the deepest chambers of the Catacombs on Watch Fortress Erioch. Very little is known of the plasma cannon; even the identity of the forge in which it was wrought and its mark and pattern remain a mystery. Whatever its pedigree, Brother Vass's weapon was said to be possessed of a fearsome and vengeful anima that guided its bearer's hand as much as the he controlled it.

TABLE 2-10: ARMOUR OF THE MARTYRED HUNTERS

Name	Locations Covered	AP	Wt	Req	Renown
Defiled Mantle of the Crusader	All	8/10	150kg	45	Distinguished

TABLE 2-11: WEAPONS OF THE MARTYRED HUNTERS

Weapons	Class	Range	RoF	Dmg	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Req	Renown
Storm of Vass	Basic [Plasma]	20m	S/-/-	1d10+10 E	6	6	2 Full	Flame, Special	22kg	70	Hero
Wrath of Kato	Melee	—	—	1d10+15 E	8	—	—	Balanced, Power Field, Special	22kg	60	Hero

The plasma cannon is one of the few items that survived the death of its wielder, for while it was exposed to the same ravaging energies, it was miraculously unaffected by them. Having been recovered from the purged plasma exchange chamber where Brother Vass and his brethren gave their lives to slay the infiltrator, the weapon was painstakingly restored to its former glory and returned to its niche deep in the Catacombs. There it awaits a new bearer, one as proud and skilful as Brother Vass. To date, several dozen Battle-Brothers of the Deathwatch have borne the weapon in combat and each has reported it a fearsome weapon indeed.

Under normal circumstances, this potent weapon uses the profile listed on **Table 2-11: Weapons of the Martyred Hunters**. In normal conditions, the Storm of Vass does not benefit from a Maximal Setting like normal Plasma Weapons. However, when the Battle-Brother wielding the Storm of Vass is filling an Offensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, the weapon gains access to the Maximal Setting as described on page 147 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook, save that the Storm of Vass only gains an extra 5 metres of range.

This device's connection to its brother-weapon has a notable detriment to those wielding it alone in battle. When the Battle-Brother wielding the Storm of Vass rolls a 91-00 when making an attack with the weapon, if the Wrath of Kato is not within Support Range, the wielder of the Storm of Vass suffers energy damage equal to the weapon's damage with a Penetration of 0 to an arm location (the arm holding the weapon if it was fired one-handed, or a random arm if it was fired with two hands). The wielder may choose to avoid taking damage by dropping the weapon. Dropping a weapon is a Free Action. The Storm of Vass must spend the round afterwards cooling down and may not be fired again until the second round afterward.

THE WRATH OF KATO

Like his twin, Brother Kato was well known for favouring one particular weapon over all others, in his case a power halberd that, like Brother Vass's plasma cannon, was first found from its place of rest deep within the Catacombs in the sub-levels of the Watch Fortress. The origins of this weapon are as shrouded in mystery as the plasma cannon's.

Like his twin, Brother Kato was carrying his beloved weapon at the moment of his death. The halberd was recovered and, like the plasma cannon, cleaned and restored to its former, pristine state. The halberd resides alongside the plasma cannon in the depths of the Catacombs, for the Keepers hold that the fate of the two weapons are linked as surely as the ties of blood that bound their former bearers. The Keepers are loath to allow one weapon to leave its resting place without the other, and so the two are often utilised in the manner they were fielded by the twins Brothers Vass and Kato, one providing fire support while the other strikes down the foes of humanity in a righteous storm of close combat.

Under normal circumstances, this ornate halberd uses the profile presented on **Table 2-11: Weapons of the Martyred Hunters**. However, when the Battle-Brother wielding the Wrath of Kato is filling a Defensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, the weapon gains the Volatile Quality and may be used to make a Guarded Attack Action without suffering the -10 penalty to the Weapon Skill Test.

This device's connection to its brother-weapon has a notable detriment to those wielding it alone in battle. When the Battle-Brother wielding the Wrath of Kato rolls a 91-00 when making an attack with the weapon, if the Storm of Vass is not within Support Range, the wielder of the Wrath of Kato suffers energy damage equal to the weapon's damage with a Penetration of 0 to an arm location (the arm holding the weapon if it was fired one-handed, or a random arm if it was fired with two hands). The wielder may choose to avoid taking damage by dropping the weapon. Dropping a weapon is a Free Action. If the Wrath of Kato is used to make an attack in the round afterwards, the wielder automatically suffers the damage again, as though he had rolled a 91-00 on the attack roll.

TABLE 2-12: RELICS OF THE MARTYRED HUNTERS

Relics	Wt	Req	Renown
Codex of Peratos	4kg	50	Famed
Wings of Tyrannus	50kg	45	Famed

DEFILED MANTLE OF THE CRUSADER

Once venerated simply as the Mantle of the Crusader, this truly ancient suit of MkII Crusade pattern power armour no longer enjoys the status it has held for long millennia. This fall from grace came about during the battle against the infiltrators, one of which either donned it or somehow took control over its last owner. Whatever the truth, the Mantle of the Crusader has been declared unclean and has been placed in a sealed stasis casket in the depths of the Catacombs until such time as a decision is made on its fate. The officers of the Reclusiam have debated numerous possibilities, from destroying the suit entirely to carrying it to Terra to be reconsecrated at the very foot of the Golden Throne, but as yet no course of action has been arrived at. Several Battle-Brothers have requested to wear the suit into battle so that, by their deeds, it might be purified. This option is under consideration and has the support of several of the Reclusiam's most senior Chaplains, making it likely that the Mantle of the Crusader will take to the field of battle once more in the near future.

In its current state, this ancient suit of MkII "Crusade" pattern Power Armour uses the armour stats listed on **Table 2-10: Armour of the Martyred Hunters**. Were it to be purified, it would possess a number of astonishing qualities. The purified Mantle of the Crusader grants the wearer a +10 bonus to all Scrutiny and Awareness Tests in addition to the usual bonus provided by the armour's Autosenses. As well, when the Battle-Brother wearing the purified Mantle of the Crusader asks a Non-player Character or an Adversary a direct question he may make a **Difficult (-10) Willpower Test** as a Free Action. If successful, the NPC or Adversary may only respond by refusing to respond at all or with the truth as they understand it.

In addition, while the Battle-Brother wearing the purified Mantle of the Crusader is filling a Defensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, the suit provides him with a curious resistance to the same sort of energy that caused the death of the creature who last wore it. Under such circumstances, the armour halves the Penetration value of any attacks it suffers from Plasma or Melta weaponry.

THE FALL OF HERISOR

"For centuries uncouneted the Shrine of Saint Aret has harboured its secret, a repository of ancient relics hidden away by an unknown hand lest they fall into the possession of the enemies of mankind. With the encroachment of Hive Fleet Dagon, that repository is threatened and the Inquisition coordinate a Deathwatch mission to ensure it remains safe."

—Notes from the *Liber Eriochus*, 814.M41

The all-consuming swarms of Hive Fleet Dagon are the most recent of the widely known threats to descend upon the blood-soaked worlds of the Jericho Reach. And, according to many, they are the most terrible. In but a short span of years, world after world has been stripped of biomatter and raw resources to feed the ravenous hive fleet, leaving nothing more than a chain of lifeless husks behind. Defending a world against such an all consuming attack takes staggering reserves and a herculean effort on the part of the armies of the Crusade, often the only hope lying in swift intervention at the very earliest phase of the Tyranid planetary consumption process. Such an intervention occurred when the world of Herisor found itself directly in the path of a tendrill of the hive fleet. Perhaps Herisor would have been abandoned to its fate were it not for the fact that the world was home to a small colony, at the heart of which was the Chapel of Saint Aret. This small temple housed a number of relics of incredible power, set to rest there in the dim and distant past. It was imperative that their rest remained undisturbed, and so a major effort was made to repel the advancing Tyranid bio-vessels.

The operation to avert the fall of Herisor began when Tyranid vanguard organisms appeared from out of the world's lifeless wastes, wreaking bloody murder amongst the ill-equipped colonists and promethium miners. Herisor was host to a small Astropathic choir, and so a desperate plea for aid was transmitted into the cold void, the aged Astropath Primaris never knowing if the message even penetrated the pall of darkness that was rapidly enshrouding the planet as the hive fleet closed on its prey.

The message was, in fact, received by both a fleet component of the Storm Wardens and the Astropathic choir of the Deathwatch strike cruiser *Bellaron*. This mighty warship was, at that time, ferrying a Kill-team from Erioch towards Arkhas, and was accompanied by an Inquisitor by the name of Ghent, as well as numerous members of his retinue. As a member of the Ordo Xenos, Inquisitor Ghent ordered that the mission be retasked the instant the distress call from Herisor was transcribed and, mere days later, the *Bellaron* entered orbit over the beleaguered world.

Inquisitor Ghent ordered the intervention at Herisor not because he believed the world especially worthy of protecting in itself, though its promethium deposits were of some value to the ongoing Achilus Crusade. Rather, he knew of the existence of the Chapel of Saint Aret, and had some inkling that the

chapel was host to a number of potent relics. He could not allow such artefacts to be lost, and so the mission to deliver the Chapel from its fate was launched. The contrail of a black and silver drop pod burned through the sky alongside those of the Storm Wardens as the Deathwatch Kill-team made their beachhead several hundred kilometres deeper into enemy lines than their Adeptus Astartes comrades. The terror held by the inhabitants of the nearby colony turned to joy at the prospect of deliverance by these angels of death. Had the Kill-team not arrived exactly when it did, the colony would have been overwhelmed within minutes. The colonists and miners were soon harshly disabused of the notion of their rescue, however, when Inquisitor Ghent ordered the *Bellaron* to bombard an outlying settlement that was overrun by an advance horde of Tyranid creatures. The attack wiped out the horde, but with it the settlement and the three thousand colonists sheltered within. The first colonist to raise an objection to this action was shot dead by the Inquisitor himself.

JOINT OPERATIONS

Having established a beachhead, the Storm Wardens launched a series of assaults, which caused substantial damage to the Tyranid hordes. Meanwhile, the Deathwatch Kill-team carried out surgical strikes against the hive mind's synapse creatures and spore chimneys, causing unmatched disruption throughout the swarm. During this phase of the operation, Inquisitor Ghent became increasingly insistent that the Chapel of Saint Aret, still some distance within the territory overrun by the enemy, was well worth fighting for, and he transmitted a series of demands for aid from any Imperial units available. Very few Storm Wardens assets were able to answer these orders, however, for Hive Fleet Dagon was advancing upon numerous fronts and Imperial forces were in disarray. Thus, the Deathwatch Battle-Brothers remained committed at Herisor on Inquisitor Ghent's orders, the operation stretching first into weeks, and then into months.

The initial actions of the operation were highly effective in defeating the Tyranids, for even a single Kill-team, supported by a strike cruiser in orbit, is a fearsome force indeed. Nevertheless, the Tyranids retained their hold on the Chapel of Saint Aret and the city that hosted it, a fact that came to disturb the Inquisitor more and more. He came to believe that the Tyranids were deliberately holding on to the now-ruined city for some reason he could not discern, but which must surely be connected to the presence of the chapel and its sacred reliquary.

As the Herisor intervention ground on, the world was transformed into a vision of the apocalypse. The Tyranids ravaged the barren surface in an effort to turn its limited biomass and reserves of water and oxygen into a resource the bioships could utilise in the creation of still more Tyranid creatures. Alien structures pierced the skies and queuing siphon-tendrils sucked the nutrients from the ground. The Deathwatch launched assault after assault against this relentless enemy, destroying brood nests as they appeared so that the Tyranids could never quite build up the critical mass they needed to launch a decisive assault. The ruined capital became a seething mass of Tyranid corruption, every structure other than the Chapel of Saint Aret reduced to ruins by the *Bellaron's* constant bombardments and overgrown with the hideous biological taint of the hive mind. And all the while, Inquisitor Ghent brooded on the contents of that chapel. Eventually, Inquisitor Ghent determined that a decisive strike must be made, and whatever sainted relics were housed within the Chapel must be recovered lest they become lost to the Imperium for all time.

Inquisitor Ghent knew that the mission to survey the chapel would be an arduous one indeed, even for a force as potent and experienced as the Deathwatch. It was a task he could entrust only to the strongest and most loyal of warriors, and thus fortune smiled on the Inquisitor, as the Kill-team that had been aboard the Strike Cruiser and had struck at the invasion force time and again was the Lux Veritatis, a band of



of Imperial, or even human origin. Decatru knew that something was very wrong indeed, but before he could report his concerns to Inquisitor Ghent's acolyte, the battle in the chapel above grew suddenly intense.

Leaving Phine behind to continue his exploration of the crypt, Decatru and Nodens returned to the chapel, only to find it surrounded on every side by an invisible number of Tyranid monstrosities. Nothing the Deathwatch had faced on Herisor could have prepared the Battle-Brothers of the Lux Veritatis for the magnitude of the horde they were now confronted with. Out of the mouths of sewers and service conduits poured hundreds upon hundreds of Tyranids, including the Deathwatch had not yet faced on Herisor in months of operations. Each a veteran of a thousand missions, the Battle-Brothers of the Lux Veritatis pushed well the limits of their superhuman capabilities. There was no way they could stand against such a swarm, and so the nature of the mission changed drastically in the blink of an eye.

Even as he opened fire on the leading edge of the Tyranid horde as it closed on the chapel walls, Decatru voxed through to Phine, informing him that the mission was aborted and the gunship was inbound to extract them all. When he received no reply from Phine, Decatru dispatched the Techmarine Brother Nodens to ensure the message was received.

Upon descending the stone steps into the darkness of the crypt, however, Brother Nodens was confronted by a bizarre spectacle. Phine was prostrate upon the stone floor as if in abject veneration

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team leader communicated his report that Brother Nodens detected a secondary signal using the same data stream, and quickly identified its source. Phine was communicating with someone aboard the Deathwatch Strike Cruiser, and that someone could only be his master, Inquisitor Ghent.

Before Decatru could interrupt, the voice of the Inquisitor came over the channel. The *Bellaron* was ordered to unleash a full orbital bombardment onto the Tyranid horde and the Battle-Brothers of the Lux Veritatis were to take cover in the chapel's crypt. The pilot of the circling Storm Raven gunship interrupted, vowing that he could extract the Kill-team if the strike cruiser could blast the landing zone clear of Tyranid organisms, but he was cut off, the channel suddenly dead. Cursing the Inquisitor, Brother Decatru bellowed his last order, instructing his brethren to initiate a fighting withdrawal towards the heart of the chapel even as the skies lit up with the first shots of the orbital bombardment and the outer walls of the chapel were smashed apart by the leading edge of the Tyranid horde.

The deeds performed during that withdrawal must surely count amongst the most heroic of any battle ever fought in the Orpheus Salient, but they must go ever unrecorded, as must the final fate of the Lux Veritatis. If they reached the armoured door of the crypt they certainly found it barred, locked from within, for not a single Battle-Brother reached the safety beyond it.

Shortly after this tragic incident, Inquisitor Ghent ordered the Deathwatch to withdraw from Herisor, abandoning the world to its fate. Of the Lux Veritatis, or indeed Phine, nothing is known—officially at least.

THE LUX VERITATIS

The Battle-Brothers of the Kill-team known as the Lux Veritatis were amongst the most celebrated of their generation, veterans of countless wars against some of the most terrible foes ever encountered in the Jericho Reach or beyond. The Kill-team was unusual in that its members had all discharged their Apocryphon Oaths at exactly the same time, and then renewed them together. This they had done not once but twice, the brethren standing their third vigil of the Long Watch at one another's sides at the time of the Herisor Intervention. The Kill-team numbered five Battle-Brothers at the time of its final battle, though many more had passed through its ranks throughout the years, including the current Master of the Vigil, Watch Commander Mordigael.

It is said that the Bell of Lost Souls on Terra tolled once for each of the fallen Battle-Brothers of the Lux Veritatis. Watch Fortress Erioch fell to deathly silence for an entire watch cycle, and it is said that other Deathwatch facilities the length and breadth of the Imperium honoured the fallen in a similar fashion. With no bodies to return to the Watch Fortress, the brethren of the fallen had no graves to honour and so the entire complement of Deathwatch Battle-Brothers were gathered together in the Reclusiam of the Watch Fortress where Deathwatch Chaplain Titus Strome led the congregation in solemn remembrance of the fallen heroes. Several years later, the high altar of the Reclusiam remains aglow with the hundreds of candles lit in honour of the Lux Veritatis, a fitting tribute to what must surely represent the greatest Kill-team of the last century.



BROTHER DECATRU OF THE BLOOD ANGELS

Brother Decatru will always be remembered by the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach as a warrior of peerless skill and exacting standards. Having served for as long as he had at Erioch, he was well known to the Battle-Brothers serving at the Watch Fortress and across the entire Reach, and being of the Blood Angels he was blessed of a long life span. Like all of the Lux Veritatis, Decatru earned ascension to the rank of Watch Captain time and time again, only to turn the rank down in order to remain at his Battle-Brothers' sides. Though he repeatedly turned down a command rank, Brother Decatru considered himself honour bound to pass on the benefits of his skills and experiences to others, and so when not deployed on a mission he was invariably to be found leading training sessions in the Hunting Grounds. Decatru never sought to limit these missions to those Battle-Brothers on his own Kill-team, and so he was often seen passing on his wisdom to large groups of warriors. All he asked in return was that those he was teaching make every effort to emulate his example, and being a Blood Angel and a son of noble Sanguinius, that example was exacting indeed.

TECHMARINE NODENS OF THE SILVER SKULLS

The Techmarine Brother Nodens was called to the Long Watch a mere two decades after he was initiated into the ranks of the Battle-Brothers of his own Chapter, making him highly unusual in that he served for the Deathwatch far longer than he served with his own brethren. Brother Nodens was called to take the Apocryphon Oath having defeated a fearsome overlord of the xenos Cumbro Huth in hand to hand combat, a feat so unheard of that it came to the attention of members of the Ordo Xenos. The Inquisitors requested a council with the young Techmarine, and having heard his account of the action, formally petitioned the Silver Skulls Chapter Master to allow Nodens to take up the Long Watch. The Chapter Master agreed, and Nodens began his service in the Jericho Reach. Nodens was something of an orphan, honouring his Chapter and its traditions yet growing ever more bound to those of the Deathwatch. It is unusual, though not unheard of, for Battle-Brothers to come to regard the Deathwatch as their true home, and those that do must struggle against a gnawing sense of abandonment and guilt, existing fully in neither Chapter and only able to draw spiritual sustenance from the companionship of their fellow Kill-team members.

BROTHER PROTEUS OF THE ULTRAMARINES CHAPTER

A long-standing Battle-Brother of the Ultramarines, Brother Proteus served as a sergeant in his parent Chapter's 4th Company for several decades before being called upon to stand a vigil of the Long Watch. He served in the Deathwatch for nigh on twenty years before discharging his first Apocryphon Oath and returning to his Chapter's home world of Macragge. Upon his return to the once glorious Realm of Ultramar, Brother Proteus was stunned to lay eyes upon the

destruction wrought upon many of the Chapter's worlds, and by the time he set foot within the Fortress of Hera he was all but consumed by grief. Having returned to the bosom of his Chapter, Proteus was called to attend to Marneus Calgar himself. The mighty hero of the Imperium told Proteus of the fate of the Ultramarines 1st Company, which had been wiped out to a warrior defending Macragge's polar fortresses against the very worst of the hive fleet's hordes. The 1st Company would be rebuilt, Calgar stated, and brothers such as Proteus would be needed to fill its ranks. But, the Lord Macragge continued as Proteus' heart swelled with pride, as much as the Chapter needed him, the Imperium needed him more. Calgar had received word of the deeds Proteus had performed in service to the Deathwatch, the Chamber of Vigilance petitioning that Proteus be allowed to return to Erioch once his duties at Macragge were complete. A wise leader, Lord Calgar ordered that Proteus should aid the rebuilding of the 1st Company, teaching its newly inducted brethren those few skills they did not already possess so as to build the most potent veteran company in the entire Adeptus Astartes. Having done so, Calgar ordered, Brother Proteus must return to Erioch, but should he discharge his second Apocryphon Oath, a place in the ranks of the 1st Company would be waiting for him.

Tragically, that place remains empty, never to be filled by the veteran Brother Proteus of the Ultramarines Chapter.

BROTHER GUNDAHAR OF THE SUBJUGATORS

Brother Gundahar was, and shall ever remain, a great hero of his Chapter, a warrior who might one day have ascended to high rank indeed had not fate called upon him to attend the Long Watch. Though he is known for many mighty deeds, it was the slaying of a void-worm that had long ravaged the coreward reaches of the trans-Cygnus Warp conduit that truly earned him his name. It is said, having led a boarding mission into the very guts of the void-born colossus, Gundahar gained the notice of the Emperor Himself and, for a time at least, became all but invulnerable to the blows of the enemies of mankind. He fought so many mighty foes that he could not fail to come to the notice of a member of the Ordo Xenos, but he was initially unwilling to take a place in the Deathwatch. It is said that Brother Gundahar refused to treat with the Inquisitorial agents sent to the Chapter's home world of Xenax, ignoring their repeated requests for an audience. It was only when the agents' master, Inquisitor Vils Andarion, travelled to Xenax in person that the Subjugators Chapter Master intervened and brokered a meeting between the two parties. No exact transcription of that meeting exist, but the legends of the Subjugators and the Deathwatch largely agree on the essentials of what passed between Gundahar and Andarion. The Space Marine stated that he had enemies enough to face in the name of his Chapter, and standing the Long Watch would only take him away from those. Inquisitor Andarion responded that those enemies the Space Marines had thus far defeated were in all likelihood indicative of a larger threat. Perhaps in this Andarion was hinting at the phenomenon known as the Dark Pattern, or perhaps he referred to another

of the impossibly multitudinous foes of mankind. Whatever the specifics, it is clear that the Inquisitor's words struck a chord with the steely-hearted Space Marine. A month later, Brother Gundahar took his Apocryphon Oath. In time he came to serve in the celebrated Lux Veritatis Kill-team, a band of heroes he fought alongside until the day he fell in battle with the fell enemies of mankind.

BROTHER ANDRUK OF THE CRIMSON CASTELLANS

Brother Andruk served in the Adeptus Astartes Crimson Castellans for over six decades before answering the call of the Deathwatch and taking his Apocryphon Oath at Watch Fortress Erioch. It is well that Andruk departed his parent Chapter when he did, for him and for the Deathwatch both, for the Crimson Castellans appear to have changed drastically since the Battle-Brother's day, becoming something he would barely recognise eighteen years later when, having discharged his first oath, he returned to its home world of Vorl Secundus. Andruk never once spoke of what transpired upon his first return to his parent Chapter, but whatever it was, he was soon back at Watch Fortress Erioch making his second Apocryphon Oath.

Brother Andruk was known as a dour and taciturn individual, in many ways at odds with the demeanours of his Battle-Brothers in the Lux Veritatis. Some hold, however, that such a balance of natures was necessary and presented one of the main components that made the Kill-team as successful as it was. Andruk rarely spoke, even when directly addressed, yet when he did his words cut straight to the heart of whatever was being discussed. His wisdom was much sought after, though he never explained how he had come into the often highly esoteric knowledge he seemed to have amassed over the years. Though he was not possessed of the powers of the psyker, Brother Andruk spent time with the Librarians of the Deathwatch and was known to have provided sage counsel to the incumbents of the Tower of Brass on several occasions. What knowledge a Space Marine might have that would cause an Inquisitor to seek him out remains but one of the countless mysteries that surround the Lux Veritatis.

LEGACY OF THE FALL OF HERISOR

The Legacy of the Fall of Herisor can be brought directly into an ongoing campaign by way of The Longest Watch mission to be found on page 107.

Heroic Legacy Package: The Avenging Angels.

ADVENTURE SEED

The adventure presented in **Chapter IV: The Longest Watch** directly involves the demise of this historic Kill-team and serves as a fleshed-out example of one adventure seed presented in this chapter.



RELICS OF THE LUX VERITATIS

As is so often the case when Battle-Brothers fall in combat against an enemy as overwhelming as the horde faced by the Lux Veritatis at the Chapel of Saint Aret, all but nothing of them remained on the field of battle. So overrun was the Herisor colony that no immediate recovery mission was possible. By the time an investigation was launched, the colony was ruined and what was left of the chapel entirely subsumed by creeping Tyranid biomass. Thus, the relics that are now associated with the Battle-Brothers of the Lux Veritatis are all artefacts carried by one of their number before that final mission. Given that the Kill-team served for so long at Watch Fortress Erioch, a comparatively large number of such items exist within the glittering stasis columns of the Sterling Reliquary, a small number of which are described here.

THE BLOOD OF DECATRU

In common with many Battle-Brothers of the Blood Angels and their Successors, Brother Decatru maintained a constant watch upon the purity of his own blood. This he did in order to ensure that the ancient curse of the line of Sanguinius was held at bay, and it was his own, private torment, which he suffered in noble silence. Brother Decatru was in the habit of collecting the blood exsanguinated from his body during the long hours he spent in his sanguinary casket, and storing small samples in glass pendants wrought into the form of styled blood drops. Such items are common amongst the Blood Angels and are often worn as charms or tokens, a constant reminder of the sacrifice the Blood Angels Primarch made at the height of the Siege of Terra.

Because he served at Watch Fortress Erioch for so long, Brother Decatru left behind dozens of these pendants. After his death, Watch Commander Mordigael, himself a warrior of the Blood Angels Chapter, ordered the pendants to be gathered up and placed within a sealed casket deep in the Catacombs. Since that time, the Master of the Vigil himself has taken responsibility for these relics, and it is by his hand alone that any are withdrawn and granted to a Battle-Brother who has truly earned the right to wear a pendant of Decatru.

TABLE 2-13: RELICS OF THE LUX VERITATIS

Name	Wt	Req	Renown
Blood of Decatru	—	45	Famed
Crystal Stack Treatise ZX-129	6kg	40	Distinguished
Protean Laurel	1kg	45	Famed
Keys of the Castellan	—	40	Distinguished

TABLE 2-14: FORCE FIELDS OF THE LUX VERITATIS

Name	Protection Rating	Overload Roll	Wt	Req	Renown
Xenaxian Bone-Charms	45	1-5	2kg	50	Famed

Whenever a Battle-Brother bearing the Blood of Decatru gains Corruption, reduce the amount gained by 1.

So long as a Battle-Brother wearing one of these ornate medallions is filling a Defensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, all of his attacks benefit from the Sanctified Quality and attacks he makes against Daemons, Chaos Space Marines, or other servants of the Ruinous Powers gain the Volatile Quality.

CRYSTAL STACK TREATISE ZX-129

The Techmarine Brother Nodens was a prodigiously skilled practitioner of the rites of the machine, as well as a highly accomplished warrior. It was this combination of traits that allowed him to defeat his first alien enemy, the overlord of the Cumbro Huth, and earn him the attention of members of the Ordo Xenos. Brother Nodens combated his enemies by a combination of skill at arms and the wielding of technology, attacking them on both fronts at once. Typically, Nodens sought to render the weapons of his enemy useless, opening up a weak spot that he and his Battle-Brothers could exploit. Over the course of many years, Brother Nodens compiled his experiences in countering the technologies of numerous xenos foes into a series of treatises, ensuring that many of the Techmarines now serving at Watch Fortress Erioch have gained the benefit of his teachings.

Though in theory the teachings of Brother Nodens could be transcribed onto any suitable data repository, the words of this venerated hero of the Forge are so valued they are instead stored within a series of crystal data stacks, each wrought into the form of the cog symbol of the Cult Mechanicus. Those judged worthy are allowed to study the contents of these data crystals, and if considered especially strong of mind and soul allowed to carry them into battle. These relics have long exceeded their original function as repositories of knowledge and become holy in their own right, devotional objects carried in the fires of war in the memory of one of the greatest Techmarines to ever stand a vigil in the Jericho Reach.

Due to the nature of the media on which this information is recorded, Crystal Stack Treatise ZX-129 can only be requisitioned by a Deathwatch Techmarine. So long as a Techmarine bears this relic, all weapons borne by xenos adversaries suffer a Weapon Jam on an unmodified Ballistic Skill result of 91-00.

In addition, once per encounter, so long as the Techmarine bearing this curious Treatise is filling a Defensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, he can spend a Fate Point to make a **Challenging (+0) Tech-use Test** as a Free Action to safeguard himself and his allies against the attacks of xenos enemies. If successful, all attacks made with xenotech weaponry targeting the Techmarine or one of his allies within Support Range of him have their Damage and Penetration values reduced by a number equal to the Techmarine's Intelligence Bonus. This ability lasts for the duration of the encounter, as determined by the Game Master

PROTEAN LAUREL

A simple wreath of laurel leaves, wrought from wafer thin leaves of refined adamantium to render it all but invulnerable to rigours of the field of war, the Protean Laurel is a headpiece designed to be fitted about the crown of most marks of Adeptus Astartes power armour helms. The laurel was presented to Brother Proteus upon the occasion of his second departure to stand the Long Watch, recognising the work he had put into laying the foundations of the reconstituted Ultramarines 1st Company. Though the task was only just begun when the Master of the Ultramarines released Brother Proteus to rejoin the ranks of the Deathwatch, the aid he had provided would prove vital. It was Marneus Calgar himself who bestowed the Protean Laurel upon the warrior's head, making it a powerful relic for the Ultramarines and the Deathwatch both. Since the loss of the Lux Veritatis, around a dozen Battle-Brothers of the Deathwatch have shared that honour, ensuring the legacy of honour and the link between the two Chapters continues beyond the death of the original owner.

At the conclusion of a mission in which a Battle-Brother requisitioned the Protean Laurel, that Battle-Brother reduces his total number of Insanity Points by the amount of Renown he earned during that mission. Unlike spending time and XP to remove Insanity Points as described on page 282 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook, the reduction in Insanity Points provided by the Protean Laurel can remove degrees of madness and thereby reduce the Battle-Brother's Primarch's Curse accordingly.

In addition, so long as a Battle-Brother bearing the Protean Laurel is filling a Defensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy he can, once per session, reduce the number of Insanity Points he gains from a single source by a number equal to his Willpower Bonus, to a minimum of zero.

XENAXIAN BONE-CHARM

When Brother Gundahar defeated the void-wyrm and in so doing delivered an entire sector of space from its depredations, he and a number of the warriors of his boarding mission recovered a number of trophies from the body of the dying creature. In Brother Gundahar's case, it was a length of bone-like substance ripped from fleshy walls of the beast's innards. This the warrior took back to his home world, and he ordered the artisans amongst the chapter serfs to create a number of Xenaxian Bone-Charms, traditional objects related to the scrimshawed bone fragments for which the Subjugators primogenitor Chapter, the Imperial Fists, was so well known. The bone-charm resembles an intricately wrought dagger, but not one that is intended to be wielded in combat. Instead, the dagger is worn about the neck, fastened by a simple leather thong. It is said that the charm has the power to ward off the blows of the impure. Certainly, the Chaplains of the Erioch Reclusiam regard Brother Gundahar's bone-charm as a holy artefact and ensure that only the most pure of heart wear it into combat.

This intricate bone medallion projects a Force Field around the Battle-Brother who wears it. This field has a Protection Rating of 45 and an Overload Roll of 1-5.

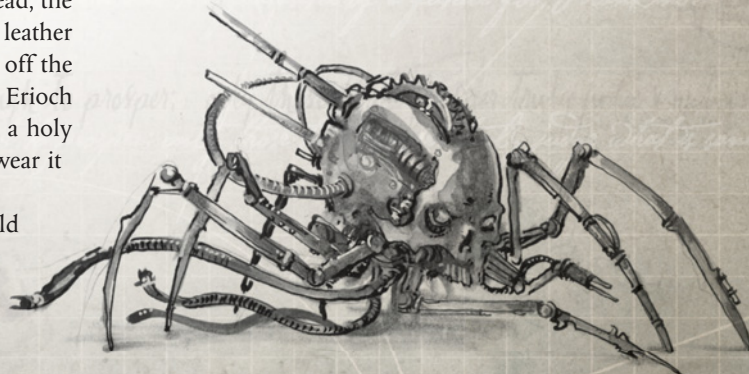
Furthermore, while a Battle-Brother wearing a Xenaxian Bone-Charm is filling an Offensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy, the Force Field projected by the bone-charm becomes particularly harmful to Daemons of the Warp. Under such circumstances, whenever the Force Field of the Xenaxian Bone-Charm successfully nullifies a melee attack made by an enemy with the Daemon or Warp Instability Traits, the attacker must immediately make a **Difficult (-10) Willpower Test**. The creature takes 1 Damage for failure, plus 1 Damage for each Degree of Failure. If this would deal Damage equal or in excess of the creature's Wounds, it is cast back into the Warp.

KEYS OF THE CASTELLAN

Brother Andruk wore these stylised keys upon a chain for much of his final vigil of the Long Watch, though he was not wearing them during the Herisor Intervention. He never volunteered the function or meaning of the keys, and given his notoriously taciturn manner, no one is ever known to have asked him. Following Brother Andruk's death, the keys were taken from their place of storage in his sleeping cell and examined by the Chaplains of Watch Fortress Erioch, who determined that they were indeed sacred relics and should be afforded all due honours. It is thought that the keys are a symbol of rank or some specialist appointment related to the traditions and doctrines of Andruk's parent Chapter, the Crimson Castellans. What meaning might reside in the stylised keys remains to be determined, but with one part of the Crimson Castellans apparently having turned renegade, they might very well relate to a truly awful secret Brother Andruk bore throughout his entire service to the Deathwatch.

This relic provides its bearer with the Hatred (Chaos Space Marines) Talent, and confers a +20 bonus to all Lore: Forbidden (The Traitor Legions) Tests he is called upon to make.

In addition, so long as a Battle-Brother bearing the Keys of the Castellan is filling an Offensive Role in an active Heroic Legacy Package he can, once per session, reduce the number of Corruption Points he gains from a single source by a number equal to his Willpower Bonus, to a minimum of zero.



THE SEVEN SERVANTS

"The mysterious Inquisitor Velayne Ramaeus musters a convocation of fellow Throne Agents and leads an operation into the fringes of the Hadex Anomaly to halt the completion of a dark ritual being undertaken by a Forge Tyrant of the fallen Forge World of Samech. Though successful, every one of the Inquisitors vanishes mysteriously—every one apart from the enigmatic Ramaeus herself. Several months after the operation, seven of the Battle-Brothers selected by the Inquisitor in person to aid her remain interred within the Reclusiam of Watch Fortress Erioch, isolated from their brethren and subjected to all manner of purification regimes to some end that has yet to become apparent."

—Notes from the *Liber Eriochus*, 816.M41

The war torn worlds of the Jericho Reach are host to numerous threats, including the presence and activities of the servants of the Ruinous Powers, the advancing tendrils of Hive Fleet Dagon, and the constant invasions of the collectivist Tau. In addition to these, numerous other xenos foes circle like carrion-eaters about a dying beast, including the perfidious Eldar, the barbarous Orks, and other species as yet unnamed. While these threats are sufficiently dire to require countless millions of warriors to be mobilised to face them, two others are far harder to combat. These are the Hadex Anomaly and the Dark Pattern, neither of which can be opposed by the deployment of armies or of fleets. Rather, they require constant vigilance and relentless study, two methods falling under the purview of that most secretive of institutions—the Inquisition.

Mere months ago, the interests of a number of Inquisitors came together in the Jericho Reach, leading to the undertaking of a major operation, the ramifications of which have yet to become clear. One of these Inquisitors was Velayne Ramaeus, an individual known to have operated out of Watch Fortress Erioch for a very long time indeed, despite her apparent youthfulness, and who has always exhibited a deep interest in the Dark Pattern. Another was the scythe-wielding

Lady Saturn, apparently the same individual who aided the Deathwatch many decades earlier when the Watch Fortress came under attack by the unidentified infiltrators. Inquisitor Saturn appears to have been concerned primarily with the Hadex Anomaly. Convening a joint conclave in the Tower of Brass, these mysterious Inquisitors drew about themselves a dozen more of their fellow Inquisitors, each of whom arrived at Erioch's Inquisitorial enclave unannounced, and apparently without passing through the Watch Fortress's Outer Wards. If this fact caused concern amongst the Masters of the Deathwatch, the Chamber of Vigilance overrode any objections to the strangers' presence, accepting Inquisitor Ramaeus' word when she vouched for their trustworthiness.

Having convened for three days and nights, the Inquisitors went before the Chamber of Vigilance in order to seek the masters' aid in a mission of unprecedented scale. Ramaeus and Saturn presented their need, explaining how their fellow Inquisitors had spent countless years gathering evidence of a coming event that could very well spell doom for the entire Jericho Reach and beyond. The fallen Tech-Priests of the Forge World of Samech were even now undertaking a fell ritual the likes of which had not been attempted since the doom of the old Jericho Sector itself and the destruction of its ancient capital Verronus. This ritual, the Inquisitors stated, might so disrupt the tides of reality and of the Immaterium that

it might somehow stir the Dark Pattern to action. Were that to happen, Saturn and Ramaeus warned, the entire region would be lost



forever, as would all its worlds and every one of the warriors of the Emperor engaged there. Needless to say, the Chamber of Vigilance acceded to an immediate mission to avert the ritual, mustering those Kill-teams with the most experience of the Hadex Anomaly and the Dark Pattern.

The Kill-teams that were called upon were far from the most celebrated or well known of those warriors stationed in the Jericho Reach, for those who combat these twin enemies often did so behind a shroud of secrecy. Inquisitor Ramaeus selected half of the Kill-teams, and included in their number certain Battle-Brothers who had participated in missions she herself had led. Lady Saturn chose the other half, and although she was unknown to those warriors she selected, she appeared well versed in their deeds and demeanours.

So urgent and secretive was the mission that the Inquisitors leading it withheld all briefings until the Strike Force was underway. Only after the strike cruiser was traversing the depths of the Immaterium were the assembled Kill-teams told of the terrible ritual being enacted even now, on a dead world on the fringes of the Hadex Anomaly. The ritual was being conducted by a Forge Tyrant of Samech, a master of one of that fallen Forge World's many splintered factions. The Inquisitors believed his intention was to utilise the raw power of the Anomaly in order to depose the Furnace Lord himself and become master of all Samech. He intended to achieve this by utilising a device of impossible antiquity he had uncovered from one of the worlds of the Slinnar Drift, one of those worlds implicated in the obscure phenomenon that was the Dark Pattern.

Though the voyage to the site of the ritual took but seven Terran days, it was clear as the strike cruiser traversed the Immaterium that the Warp was woefully disturbed. As they made their final preparations, consigning their souls to the Emperor and the Primarchs, the Battle-Brothers of the assembled Kill-teams knew that the ritual was well underway and calamitous events were already unfolding. In the instant the strike cruiser broke Warp, it was evident that the Hadex Anomaly was in great turmoil indeed, its seething energies coiling outwards into the void even as its core pulsed with malicious balefire.

FRAGMENTS OF CONSPIRACY

Of the details of the mission to halt the ritual only a fragmented series of status reports are currently accessible, all other records of the operation having been placed under the most formidable of data seals. Nevertheless, details of a series of individual events were captured on so many repositories that they have yet to be scoured by the data-slayers set loose in the aftermath. Each represents a grim tableau, often disassociated with the other fragments. Some appear drastically out of phase, but such are the esoteric effects often encountered in the vicinity of the Hadex Anomaly that this is not entirely unknown. The most striking or puzzling of those data-fragments yet to be purged are summarised here.

Fragment 12/7781: A still pict-capture transmitted via the sensorium core of Brother Malghrav's power armour. The image shows Malghrav's Kill-team deploying onto the surface of the target world having teleported directly from the strike cruiser. The sky overhead seethes with the energies of the Hadex Anomaly and the horizon ahead is dominated by what appears to be a megalithic structure made of dull metal.

Fragment 99/0001: Twelve seconds of dialogue between two unidentified Throne Agents. One is attempting to warn the other of the presence of an enemy both thought dead many years before. The identity of this enemy is not established, but it is clear that both parties to the brief communication are familiar with the subject and extremely disturbed by it.

Fragment 03/9930: A ten second fragment of gun-cam footage captured by the onboard systems of a Deathwatch Dreadnought accompanying the mission. The fragment contains no audio recording, but depicts a close combat action between the Dreadnought and several large biomechanical constructs bearing the sigils of the Ruinous Powers. The Dreadnought defeats three of these constructs before the forth strikes back with an oversized claw, the footage cutting out as the Dreadnought pitches backwards.

Fragment 73/5023: An auspex feed transmitted by one of the many servo-skulls accompanying the Inquisitorial retinues taking part in the mission. The feed shows a tactical plot of an area within which the ritual was taking place, three Deathwatch Kill-teams engaging a substantial force of enemy infantry while the Inquisitorial elements strike directly for the site of the ritual itself.

Fragment 66/2222: A three second audio recording of Lady Saturn denouncing an enemy. Her words are barely audible over the sound of gunfire and the howling of unknown energies.

Fragment 64/8393: A snatch of conversation between Inquisitor Ramaeus and Brother Malghrav, in which the Inquisitor orders the Deathwatch to withdraw while she and her fellows engage what she refers to as her "fallen cousin." Malghrav questions her meaning, only to be told by Ramaeus that the Inquisition has much to atone for, and she is about to do what they should have done millennia ago.

Fragment 39/4639: A sub-aetheric void-scan captured from orbit, showing an unprecedented distortion of both time and space in the vicinity of the dead world on which the mission is reaching a climax. The distortion is at its most intense at the ritual site and appears to emanate from the metallic megaliths.

Fragment 99/3463: A gun-cam capture recorded by an unidentified source, depicting an individual who appears to be a fallen Tech-Priest of Samech, but who bears markings of the Inquisition. The figure is silhouetted against a sky raging with the energies of the Hadex Anomaly, which appear to be reaching down to grasp his body. The fragment cuts out as the figure is lifted screaming into the air and the energies overload the recording device.

Fragments 33/9879—02/3238: A series of confused and distorted still images that appear to depict the Deathwatch Strike Force defeating the last of the enemy constructs before falling back to the teleportation zone. Though the temporal coding of these scenes appears sequential, numerous elements make little or no sense and must surely have been distorted by the effects of the Hadex Anomaly. Examples of this distortion include individual members of the Kill-team aging rapidly between pict, ghostly figures moving unheeded amongst them, and several warriors known to have fallen in combat anything from several minutes to many years earlier participating in the fight. The final pict of this sub-sequence shows Lady Saturn,

her scythe dripping with blood and machine oil, ordering the Deathwatch to depart before it is too late. This is the final depiction of this, or any other Inquisitor that took part in the mission, none of which returned to the strike cruiser.

Curiously, however, Inquisitor Velayne Ramaeus was waiting in the Chamber of Vigilance when the remnants of the Strike Force arrived back at Watch Fortress Erioch, the ghost of a characteristically enigmatic smile playing at the edge of her mouth.

THE SEVEN

Upon their return to Watch Fortress Erioch, every one of the Battle-Brothers who took part in the mission to the Hadex Anomaly was placed under the care of the Reclusiam. It is common for warriors recently returned from especially arduous or potentially corrupting missions to undergo a thorough course of purification, often involving the combined ministrations of Erioch's Chaplains, Apothecaries, and Librarians. This ensures that no spiritual, physical, or psychic taint remains upon the warrior and that he may continue to serve the Long Watch regardless of the horrors he has confronted. In the most extreme of circumstances, especially where the Battle-Brother has been exposed to horrors only the Grey Knights are strong enough to confront, he may be subjected to a partial or even total mind-wipe. This is comparatively rare in the Deathwatch, however, for those selected to stand the Long Watch are already counted as stronger even than their fellow Adeptus Astartes, and second only to the Grey Knights in their spiritual purity. What is unusual in this case, however, is that not all of the warriors that participated in the mission have yet been declared purified. Seven Battle-Brothers remain interred within the Reclusiam, subject to an intense regime of meditation and purification. Contact between them and all others remains forbidden, and there are no signs of this changing in the near future.

VENERABLE PARDIS OF THE TIGERS ARGENT

One of the most ancient of the so-called Old Ones, this is the very same Pardis who served alongside the First Martyr, Watch Commander Ho'Tsun, on his final mission into the Slinnar Drift so many millennia ago. Now interred in the sarcophagus of a mighty Dreadnought, Brother Pardis only ever serves on the most vital of missions. As with so many of the other warriors selected to take part in the mission to the Hadex Anomaly, Inquisitor Ramaeus specifically requested the participation of Pardis. It is said that upon his awakening from his long slumber, Brother Pardis greeted Ramaeus and Lady Saturn as if they were old companions, though it is entirely possible that his mind was clouded by the arcane processes of his stasis casket.

BROTHER MALGHRV OF THE FIRE ANGELS

A long serving Assault Marine ordinarily based at Watch Station Andronicus, Brother Malghrav was appointed as the commander of the Deathwatch Strike Force by Inquisitor Ramaeus herself. Despite the fact that Malghrav had never before served as commander of multiple Kill-teams, the Chamber of Vigilance ratified the appointment without question, suggesting the masters of the Deathwatch were

acting upon information only they and the Inquisitors that addressed them were party to.

Regardless of the details of his appointment, Brother Malghrav is held to have performed his role as Strike Force commander with skill, courage, and honour. It was he that led the assault against the lumbering bio-mechanical constructs that served as the enemy's foot troops, reportedly slaying at least three of them in hand-to-hand combat. As the situation unfolded and events around the ritual site became unclear, Brother Malghrav held the line and asserted his control, engaging the forces of the fallen Mechanicus long enough for Saturn and Ramaeus to break through and to confront the Forge Tyrant. It is thought that Brother Malghrav was the last Deathwatch Battle-Brother to converse with any of the Inquisitors during the final, chaotic phase of the operation, a fact that may account for his continued internment in the Reclusiam of Watch Fortress Erioch.

APOTHECARY NICANDER OF THE ULTRAMARINES

Apothecary Nicander was assigned to serve in Brother Malghrav's command squad and had responsibility for coordinating any battlefield aid needed by any Battle-Brothers wounded during the Hadex Anomaly operation. He was instrumental in treating four badly wounded Brothers and he extracted the gene-seed of three killed in action. However, the seed he recovered has yet to be returned to the Chapters of the fallen, for Nicander was struck down by a blast of baleful energy during the final stages of the action, the raw stuff of the Anomaly seeming to smother him in pulsating corruption for what seemed an age before his Battle-Brothers freed him and allowed him to escape to the extraction zone. It is feared that the gene-seed samples Brother Nicander was carrying at the moment he was attacked might have been somehow corrupted, and so they will not be released to their parent Chapters until their purity is ascertained. The same appears to be true of the Apothecary himself, for he remains within the Reclusiam until such time as he too is declared free of the taint of the Hadex Anomaly.

BROTHER SEMNAI OF THE LAMENTERS

Brother Semnai was serving his second vigil of the Long Watch at the time of the operation, his first spent as a Kill-marine in the Koronus Expanse. The exact nature of Brother Semnai's service in that far distant region of the galaxy remains a mystery, and it appears he travelled on the bridges of as many as a dozen different Rogue Trader vessels. Many suspect Brother Semnai had been tasked with hunting down a specific enemy of the Deathwatch in the Koronus Expanse, and that he finally cornered that unknown foe on the very brink of the Hecaton Rifts. Other than the fact that Brother Semnai discharged his Apocryphon Oath during that final battle, all that is known is that he sought to return to his Chapter's home world, his vessel laying up at Erioch during its long voyage. Needless to say, Brother Semnai never completed the journey, deciding instead to stand a second vigil after Inquisitor Ramaeus approached him and specifically requested his aid in some undisclosed task. Brother Semnai served during the Hadex Anomaly operation and the reason for his continued interment in the Erioch Reclusiam is a complete mystery.

LEGACY OF THE SEVEN

The tale of the Seven can be regarded as a cautionary one in many ways, for even the purest and most noble warriors can be held to judgement. It offers other possibilities, including the idea that an individual such as Inquisitor Ramaeus might be able to bring great influence to bear on the Player Characters' superiors. For more information on this intriguing character see **THE OUTER REACH** supplement.

Heroic Legacy Package: The Gathering of Heroes.

ADVENTURE SEED

While undergoing routine post-mission purification in the Reclusiam of Watch Fortress Erioch, one or all of the Battle-Brothers witness something they were not meant to see. Perhaps one of the Seven attempts to get a message to them, or tries to pass on some message he regards as essential to the future of the Long Watch. How do the Player Characters react? Even if they don't act upon the information, the mere fact that they heard it might set them at odds with Inquisitor Ramaeus.

BROTHER ANAXIMAN OF THE CONSECRATORS

A Techmarine of the Consecrators Chapter, Brother Anaximan was responsible for rendering battlefield repairs to the adamantium frame in which Brother Pardis was interred when it was crippled by the attacks of a number of the biomechanical constructs the fallen Mechanicus of Samech deployed to protect their ritual. Had the Techmarine not been able to affect his repairs, the Old One would undoubtedly have been slaughtered by the hideous monstrosities, a deed for which Brother Anaximan has been afforded due honour, although he too remains interred within the Reclusiam.

BROTHER AULUS OF THE GENESIS CHAPTER

The last of the Battle-Brothers still interred within the Reclusiam at Watch Fortress Erioch, it is not clear why or how Brother Aulus came to be counted amongst their number. Though a Battle-Brother of the Deathwatch, Brother Aulus has never stood a vigil of the Long Watch in the Jericho Reach, yet Inquisitor Ramaeus appears to be able to vouch for him. He was not amongst the Space Marines that set out for the Hadex Anomaly and no accounts of him fighting on the surface of the dead world on which the ritual was being enacted have been found. He was, however, on board the strike

cruiser that returned the remnants of the Strike Force to Erioch, and so he was taken to the Reclusiam not just for purification, but for interrogation, a task that has been assigned to the Deathwatch Chaplain Titus Strome in person.

BROTHER JANUS

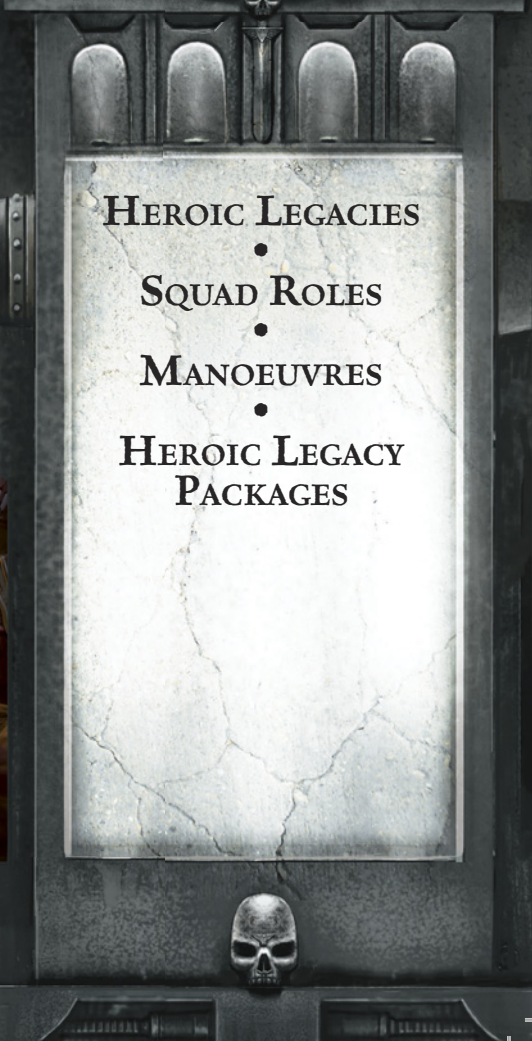
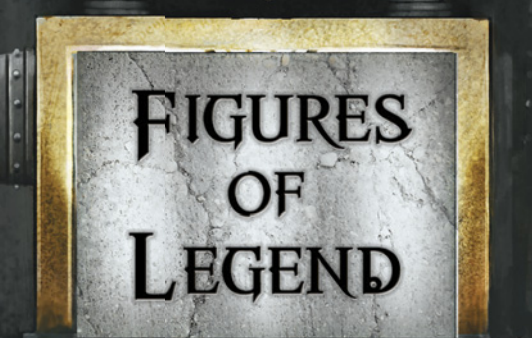
Brother Janus is a Black Shield, and characteristically about whom little is known. He bears a chain about his neck that appears the twin of that once carried by Brother Andruk of the Crimson Castellans, but whether there is any association between the fallen hero of the Lux Veritatis and the Black Shield must remain a mystery. Brother Janus had taken his Apocryphon Oath a mere ten days before this operation, and his presence on the Strike Force was specifically requested by Inquisitor Ramaeus. It is reported that Brother Janus fought



alongside Inquisitor Ramaeus at some stage during the attack on the ritual site and, although no corroborative records confirm it, some claim that the two know one another and converse as if old compatriots.

RELICS OF THE SEVEN

Unlike all of the other veteran Kill-teams discussed thus far, no relics have become associated with the so-called Seven Servants. This is because they remain under lock and key while the seven Battle-Brothers undergo spiritual, physical, and psychic purification and questioning during their internment in the Reclusiam. Depending on the findings of the Chaplains, Apothecaries, and Librarians responsible for passing final judgment over the seven, their wargear may be declared holy relics of the Deathwatch or locked away for all time. The same is true of the wargear of any Battle-Brother standing the Long Watch, their every deed, word, and even thought turned to the service of the Emperor and the defence of all mankind.



HEROIC LEGACIES
•
SQUAD ROLES
•
MANOEUVRES
•
HEROIC LEGACY
PACKAGES

CHAPTER III: FIGURES OF LEGEND

"Give me one hundred Space Marines, or failing that, a thousand of any other trooper."

—Rogal Dorn, Primarch of the Imperial Fists

The Battle-Brothers of the Adeptus Astartes are, arguably, the finest and most deadly warriors ever to stride across a battlefield. Even the most junior Battle-Brother of the tenth company, fresh from his indoctrination, is more than a match for any ten other soldiers. Competent in arms and tactics, experienced Space Marines consistently outmanoeuvre, outthink, and outfight the enemies of the Imperium on battlefields throughout the galaxy. They keep His people safe from the mind-bending horrors and flesh-hungry xenos that stalk the dark places of the galaxy, and carry on their mighty shoulders the burden of the hopes and fears of countless trillions of Imperial citizens. There are some Space Marines, veterans of innumerable campaigns, who are more than the rank and file Battle-Brother, however. They are more experienced, more cunning, more knowledgeable, more skilled, and indeed more deadly than nearly any other warrior in the galaxy. These Battle-Brothers, these veterans of long campaigns, are giants among their fellows, and embody traits and attributes to which every Space Marine aspires. They have decades or even centuries of combat experience, and they are nothing less than the wrath of the Emperor made flesh.

The following chapter outlines a set of new rules for creating Heroic Legacies for veteran Battle-Brothers of the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach. Heroic Legacies are jointly-purchased packages of combat roles and manoeuvres that an experienced Kill-team can use to increase their battlefield effectiveness, better bringing the wrath of the Emperor to the enemies of Him on Earth in the Jericho Reach. These various packages expand on and upgrade the standard Squad Mode abilities presented in the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook. They provide numerous bonuses and special abilities that give individual members and the Kill-team as a whole more tactical flexibility on the battlefield and allow them to react quickly and effectively to the constantly shifting needs of combat in the 41st Millennium.

HEROIC LEGACIES

"What makes a hero is not only his actions on the battlefield. A Space Marine is judged by his Battle-Brothers and by the Emperor Himself, both for the strength of his arm and the strength of his purpose."

—Brother-Captain Longinus of the White Consuls

As mentioned above, Heroic Legacies are a system with which **DEATHWATCH** players can represent playing an experienced, well-trained, and cohesive Kill-team. The **Heroic Legacy** rules are an addendum to the basic rules from the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook. A Heroic Legacy Package contains a mixture of **Roles**, **Formations**, and **Manoeuvres** that enhance the way Battle-Brothers work together on the battlefield. A Kill-team can purchase these packages to increase the Battle-Brothers' efficacy in combat and mark themselves as a truly powerful and experienced Kill-team. When purchasing a Heroic Legacy, the players collectively agree to and enter into it as a whole and, similar to the Squad Mode abilities which it supersedes, uses cooperative resources like Cohesion to activate the abilities associated with it.

There are eight Heroic Legacies presented in this book, located at the end of this chapter. The eight packages represent eight different archetypal Kill-teams, and each Package offers a mix of Roles and Manoeuvres unique to that archetype's particular tactical sensibilities and play style.

ACQUIRING A HEROIC LEGACY PACKAGE

Purchasing a Heroic Legacy Package requires that the Kill-team spend a collective amount of Experience Points. These Experience Points are spent in the same way as when a player purchases an Advance from one of his character's Advancement Tables. As with purchasing Advances, the amount of xp required to purchase access to the Heroic Legacy Package must be spent all at once, but unlike purchasing other Advances, buying into a Heroic Legacy Package requires that the *each player* spend the requisite amount.

Example: A Heroic Legacy Package that costs 1,000 xp requires that each player spend 1,000 of his own xp, so a group of four players buying this Package would have to spend a total of 4,000 xp. While the Heroic Legacy is bought cooperatively by the Kill-team as a whole, each Battle-Brother's portion of the Experience cost must be paid for, wholly with his own xp.

Heroic Legacy Packages are not presented on any Advancement Tables, but all of them are available to all **DEATHWATCH** Kill-teams. Some Packages may require that the Kill-team meet certain prerequisites before its members can purchase it, and these prerequisites are discussed in each Package's entry. When a Kill-team purchases any Heroic Legacy Package, they unlock the **Oath of Legacy**.

THE OATH OF LEGACY

The Oath of Legacy is chosen at the beginning of a mission like any other Oath, and is required for the activation of a Kill-team's Heroic Legacy. Choosing the Oath of Legacy provides the Kill-team with all the benefits and special abilities of their Heroic Legacy. Those Kill-teams who have purchased a Heroic Legacy may choose not to take the Oath of Legacy, preferring one of the other Oaths depending on the mission at hand. However, in doing so, they lose access to the benefits and special abilities provided by their Heroic Legacy and must rely on those provided by their chosen Oath.

USING HEROIC LEGACY PACKAGES

During the preparation stage of a mission in which the Kill-team chooses to use their Heroic Legacy Package, the Kill-team must first select a Squad Leader per the rules listed on page 228 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook. This Battle-Brother acts as the Squad Leader for purposes of the Kill-team's Heroic Legacy for the duration of the mission, and is responsible for executing the special Manoeuvres contained in the Heroic Legacy Package as determined by the Kill-team's Cohesion. If the chosen Squad

Leader dies or is otherwise incapacitated, the Kill-team's Heroic Legacy remains active, but the Kill-team cannot make use of the Manoeuvres associated with it until they can elect a new Squad Leader—an action they can only take when out of combat. When a Squad Leader is chosen, either during the preparation stage of the mission or during the mission if an impromptu Squad Leader must be chosen, the Kill-team generates its Cohesion score as normal. An active Heroic Legacy supersedes all Squad Mode rules entirely. Player Characters may still use Solo Mode, though doing so has its consequences, as detailed below.

HEROIC LEGACY AND ROLES

While the Kill-team's Heroic Legacy is active, each Battle-Brother in the Kill-team fills one of the available Roles in the Package. Each Role has a number of prerequisites, typically Skill and Talent requirements, that a Battle-Brother must meet to fill that Role. While a Battle-Brother fills a given Role, he gains the listed narrative and statistical benefits associated with it. He also contributes to the Kill-team's Formation by occupying a Role that is either Offensive or Defensive.



A Battle-Brother may switch out of the Role he currently fills to fill any other available Role—provided he meets the requirements—or he may drop out of the Heroic Legacy to take advantage of any Solo Mode Abilities he possesses. The Battle-Brother may do this at any time during Narrative Time events, or as a Free Action at the beginning of each of his Turns during Structured Time events. When a Battle-Brother attempts to fill an available Role, he must make an **Activation Test**—a specific Skill or Characteristic Test associated with each Role. Each Role lists the associated Skill or Characteristic as well as the Difficulty of the Activation Test. If he succeeds on the Activation Test, the Battle-Brother successfully takes on the Role and he and/or the Kill-team gains access to the listed benefits and abilities as long as the Battle-Brother continues to fill the Role. If the Test is failed, the Battle-Brother does not fill the Role, and must wait until the beginning of a subsequent Turn if he wishes to attempt to fill the same or another Role.

As stated above, the Squad Leader Role is different from the other Roles presented in the Heroic Legacy Packages. The Squad Leader cannot switch to another Role, though he may drop out of the Heroic Legacy to take advantage of any Solo Mode Abilities he possesses.

HEROIC LEGACY AND COHESION

When in an active Heroic Legacy, the Kill-team generates a Cohesion pool according to the rules presented on page 211 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook, adding 1 additional point of Cohesion per Battle-Brother in the Kill-team. This includes any NPC Battle-Brothers that have been included in the mission as part of the squad. While under an Oath of Legacy, the squad's Cohesion acts as a resource that must be maintained so that the Squad Leader can activate Manoeuvres available to the Kill-team as opposed to its normal use to activate Squad Mode Abilities. The Kill-team's Squad Leader cannot activate a given Manoeuvre unless the Kill-team's current Cohesion total is equal to or higher than that Manoeuvre's Cohesion Threshold.

Heroic Legacies engender an intense bond of respect and fellowship among members of a Kill-team and the spirit, courage, strength, and honour of each individual Battle-Brother is integral to their proper functioning. Due to the special nature of these Heroic Legacies, should a Battle-Brother leave the Heroic Legacy, either voluntarily or involuntarily, the Kill-team suffers Cohesion Damage upon his departure. If the Battle-Brother leaves the Heroic Legacy voluntarily, to take advantage of one of his Solo Mode Abilities, for example, the Kill-team suffers 1 point of Cohesion Damage. If he leaves involuntarily, through death, incapacitation, or some other calamity, then the Kill-team suffers 2 points of Cohesion Damage. This can be reduced to a loss of 1 point of Cohesion Damage if the Squad Leader makes a successful **Challenging (+0) Command Test**

to rally the surviving Battle-Brothers and draw their attention back to the matter at hand. This Cohesion Damage reflects the deleterious effects of the loss of the Battle-Brother on the squad as it suffers a loss of morale and becomes more fractured and independent. However, should a Battle-Brother returns to the Heroic Legacy by choosing to fill a Role, the Kill-team recovers 1 point of Cohesion. This represents the boost to morale that accompanies a trusted ally returning to the fold.

It is important to note that Squad Mode cannot be used by Battle-Brothers in an active Heroic Legacy. A Heroic Legacy supersedes all Squad Mode Abilities, and the Kill-team cannot spend Cohesion to activate Squad Mode abilities.

SQUAD ROLES

Each Heroic Legacy Package contains a Squad Leader, normally chosen before the mission as detailed on page 228 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook, and a number of special Roles tailored to the Heroic Legacy Package. The combination of Roles presented in a Heroic Legacy Package are unique to that Heroic Legacy Package, and are designed to fit both the nature of the Kill-team and the missions it typically undertakes. Every Role associated with a Heroic Legacy Package falls into one of two categories: Offensive or Defensive. Each Heroic Legacy Package has five Offensive Roles and five Defensive Roles. In each Package, the Squad Leader Role falls into one of those two categories, either Offensive or Defensive. The other nine Roles are Legacy Roles. Some Heroic Legacy Packages include a specific Legacy Role more than once; a Heroic Legacy that is designed for stealth and infiltration might have two Preceptors of Shadow listed as available Roles, for example. In cases like these, each instance of a Legacy Role in a given Package can only be filled once by a particular Battle-Brother. For example, Brother Szobcak, a Venerable Dreadnought of the Imperial Fists Chapter seconded to the Deathwatch, takes up the Role of Breaker of Hordes. So long as Brother Szobcak fills this particular Role, no other Battle-Brother can attempt to fill it. As dictated in the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook, once the Squad Leader is chosen, he retains that position for the remainder of the mission. The other Legacy Roles, on the other hand, can be changed throughout the mission.

In addition to his normal duties as described in the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook, the Battle-Brother acting as Squad Leader is the Battle-Brother in charge of activating the Manoeuvres presented later in this section. The remaining Battle-Brothers fill the Legacy Roles within the Heroic Legacy Package. The non-Squad Leader Roles within a Heroic Legacy are not static, however, and a Battle-Brother may be called upon to fill numerous Roles within his squad's Heroic Legacy Package depending on the tactical and strategic needs of the battlefield. Benefits granted by a Heroic Legacy Role take both a statistical and narrative form and, indeed, many of these Legacy Roles place narrative and game mechanic requirements on the Battle-Brothers filling them.

UNLOCKING LEGACY ROLES

When a Kill-team first purchases a Heroic Legacy Package, only three of the associated Offensive and three of the associated Defensive Roles are immediately available to the Battle-Brothers of the Kill-team. The remaining three Roles from each category can be unlocked by the collective expenditure of xp on the part of the Kill-team. Similar to the cost of the Heroic Legacy Package, the xp cost to unlock each Role is expressed as a value that must be spent by *each player*. Once a Kill-team unlocks a Role in a Heroic Legacy Package, it can have its Battle-Brothers fill that Role just like the other roles in that Package.

SQUAD FORMATIONS

As each Role is categorised as either Offensive or Defensive, the Squad Leader must keep track of the balance of those two categories among the Roles his Battle-Brothers are currently filling. Any time that the Battle-Brothers of the Kill-team are filling more Offensive Roles than Defensive, the Kill-team is considered to be in Offensive Formation. Any time that the Battle-Brothers of the Kill-team are filling more Defensive Roles than Offensive, the Kill-team is considered to be in Defensive Formation. Any time that the Battle-Brothers are filling an equal number of both Offensive and Defensive Roles, the Kill-team is considered to be in Tactical Formation. A squad's Formation determines which Manoeuvres the Kill-team's Squad Leader can use during his turn, see page 88 for more information.

OFFENSIVE ROLES

"Strike hard, strike fast, and strike true, for the Emperor is with us this day."

—Common Space Marine litany

The following nine Legacy Roles fall into the Offensive Role category. Designed to be filled by dangerous and aggressive combatants with specialised skills, these Roles make up the Offensive Role column in a Heroic Legacy Package. Each Role grants the Battle-Brother filling it a number of special abilities and combat bonuses that reflect both that Space Marine's veteran status and the power of the Heroic Legacy Package as it applies to a squad of Deathwatch Space Marines. Each Offensive Role comes with a set of prerequisites, which are minimum Characteristic, Skill, and Talent requirements that a Battle-Brother must meet to be assigned to that particular Legacy Role.

BREAKER OF HORDES

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Intimidate Test *or* Hard (–20) Weapon Skill Test.

The Breaker of Hordes Role is typically filled by Space Marines who rush into enemy lines and strike them asunder. When active, this Role grants the Kill-team the ability to quickly break and scatter massed groups of enemies, destroying enemy cohesion and sowing panic and fear in their ranks. Breakers of Hordes do this by charging headlong into a throng of enemies, furiously hacking, smashing, and blasting their way through, then quickly retreating. As they

retreat, the confusion and havoc wrought by their swift and deadly attack leaves the enemy in disarray, and the hole in the enemy formation left by their sudden retreat is quickly filled by their squad-mates and other friendly forces.

When using War Cry, the special use of the Intimidate Skill (see page 99 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook), a Breaker of Hordes inflicts a –20 penalty on the target's opposing Willpower Test. If the Breaker of Hordes's War Cry is successful, the target suffers a penalty to all Parry and Dodge Tests against the Breaker of Hordes equal to ten times the Breaker of Hordes's Strength Bonus. In addition, so quick and terrible are the attacks of a Breaker of Hordes that even the most stalwart enemy might lose his taste for battle and quit the field. When making a Willpower Test to determine if a Horde breaks during combat while engaged with a Breaker of Hordes, the Horde suffers a –10 penalty to their Test in addition to any other modifiers.

Assault Marines, Tactical Marines, and especially Battle-Brothers equipped with Terminator Armour are well suited to be Breakers of Hordes, and many of these dangerous and doughty Battle-Brothers hail from the Minotaurs, Black Templars, and Iron Snakes Chapters.

FELLER OF GIANTS

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Tactics (Armoured Tactics or Assault Doctrine) Test *or* Difficult (–10) Ballistic Skill Test. A Kill-team afoot on the battlefield is at a sore disadvantage against enemy tanks, air support, and xenos or Daemonic monstrous creatures. Even their power armour can only do so much to protect a squad of Battle-Brothers from an enemy tank round or the blast of a Tyranid heavy venom cannon. If a Kill-team expects to engage with enemy armour or monstrous creatures, one of the Battle-Brothers can take on the Feller of Giants Role. The Feller of Giants is an anti-armour role in which a Battle-Brother uses heavy weapons and ordnance to provide his squad the means to destroy enemy fighting vehicles and heavily armoured beasts or Daemons. The tools of this Role are the various mines, launchers, artillery, and heavy, squad support weapons like heavy bolters and lascannons that can be found in the armouries of Watch Fortress Erioch.

When a Battle-Brother filling the Role of Feller of Giants hits with a heavy weapon attack against a vehicle or an Enormous or Massive adversary, he reduces the Armour Points of the location hit by a number equal to his Ballistic Skill Bonus, to a minimum of zero. This reduction lasts for 1d5 rounds. In addition, when dealing Critical Damage to a vehicle, a Feller of Giants adds an additional 1d5 to the roll on the Vehicle Critical Damage Chart.

Devastator Marines, Tactical Marines, and those Battle-Brothers from the Star Phantoms and Storm Wardens Chapters are particularly well suited for this role.



FINDER OF WAYS

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Navigation (Surface) Test *or* Difficult (–10) Survival Test.

When the Finder of Ways Role is filled, these stealthy Battle-Brothers serve as the eyes and ears of their brethren. They move quickly and relatively silently through enemy territory carrying only the most essential equipment, and often eschew their power armour in favour of Astartes Scout Armour, which is both lighter and more suited to reconnaissance and intelligence gathering. When filling the Role of Finder of Ways, a Battle-Brother moves forward, hopefully undetected, to surveil enemy positions and movements. He observes, records his findings, and returns to his Battle-Brothers to report. This intelligence is a great boon to a Kill-team in the field, especially one that is alone or otherwise unsupported.

During combat, members of a Kill-team with an active Finder of Ways gain a +10 bonus to Weapon Skill Tests and Dodge Tests that they make while in Difficult or Arduous Terrain (see page 247 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook). In addition, while an active Finder of Ways is present, for all members of the Kill-team, gain an additional +10 bonus to Weapon Skill Tests they make while standing atop Higher Ground (see page 248 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook).

The Battle-Brothers of the Raven Guard Chapter have a particular affinity for this Role.

HARRIER OF FOES

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Intelligence Test *or* Difficult (–10) Demolition Test.

The Harrier of Foes combines the work of the infiltrator with that of the saboteur. It is a support Role in a Heroic Legacy Package that relies on technical acumen and use of placed explosives to project the force of a Kill-team in the field. The purpose of this Role in the Kill-team is to seek out and destroy enemy infrastructure and war materiel. Battle-Brothers filling the Harrier of Foes Role are sent to destroy everything from ammo dumps and armoured vehicles to bunkers, bridges, and even whole enemy installations.

A Battle-Brother filling the Harrier of Foes Role ignores all penalties to Demolitions, Tech-Use, or Security Tests due to adverse conditions, unfamiliarity, or lack of materials or tools. This reflects the Harrier of Foes's ability to improvise and his deep knowledge of his craft. In addition, the Harrier of Foes increases the Penetration of any explosive charge he sets by +2 for every Degree of Success he scores on the Demolitions Test, and increases the value of its Blast Quality by 1 for every 2 Degrees of Success he scores on that test.

Many Harrier of Foes are Techmarines, as their specialised training makes them a natural fit for sabotage work. Those Battle-Brothers from the Raptors, Salamanders, and Iron Hands Chapters make particularly good Harriers of Foes.

OVERSEER OF IRON

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Drive (any applicable) *or* Pilot (any applicable) Test *or* Difficult (–10) Tactics (Armoured Tactics) Test.

In their constant vigil against the enemies of mankind, the Deathwatch uses any and all tools at their disposal. While this most often applies to the same host of armoured vehicles usually maintained by the Techmarines of most Space Marine Chapters, it also encompasses many esoteric and, in some cases, unique war-engines of the Ordo Xenos and the Adeptus Mechanicus. In the field, a Battle-Brother might take on the Role of Overseer of Iron, which enhances the Kill-team's mobility and the survivability of the sacred vehicle with which they have been entrusted.

A vehicle piloted by an Overseer of Iron reduces any Critical Damage it would suffer by 1d5 and reduces any Crash damage by half. This reflects the Battle-Brother's ability to manoeuvre and position his vehicle in such a way as to reduce the threat posed by accident or incoming fire. In addition, once per encounter, as a Free Action at the beginning of his Turn, an Overseer of Iron can gain one of the following special Effects: Increase the vehicle's Cruising Speed by 1d10 kph and Tactical Speed by 1d5 metres, increase the vehicle's Manoeuvrability by 1d5, or add +2 Damage and Penetration to all attacks made by the vehicle's onboard weapons. The chosen effect last for the duration of the encounter. A vehicle can only benefit from one such effect per encounter. Note that a Battle-Brother interred in a Dreadnought is not specifically piloting it and therefore the benefits of this Role do not apply.

Techmarines and those Battle-Brothers from the Storm Wardens, White Scars, Aurora Chapter, and Iron Hands Chapters are particularly well suited for this Role.

PRECEPTOR OF SHADOWS

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Survival Test *or* Difficult (–10) Tactics (Recon and Stealth) Test.

The Deathwatch uses guerilla tactics during many of their missions, and the Preceptor of Shadows is one of the more useful Roles when a squad is fighting this type of asymmetrical warfare. A combination of front-line fighter, infiltrator, and master of fieldcraft, an active Preceptor of Shadows in a Kill-team serves his Battle-Brothers by both fighting alongside them and preparing the field for offensive engagements such as ambushes and surprise attacks. This allows the Kill-team to carry out clandestine missions and to strike at enemies of far greater strength than a lone Kill-team could reasonably confront face-to-face.

A Preceptor of Shadows can Turn nearly any encounter into an ad hoc ambush by preparing the field for a surprise attack or causing a distraction to put the enemy off guard. So long as the Preceptor of Shadows has a minute or two to advise his Battle-Brothers on position and concealment, and to make use of the terrain before a combat encounter begins, the Space Marine's adversaries automatically count as Surprised for the first round of combat. This can be overcome through exceptional means, of course, so the Game Master has final say on whether or not this special ability succeeds.

Assault, Tactical, and Devastator Marines make excellent Preceptors of Shadows, as well as any Battle-Brothers hailing from the Raven Guard, Raptors, and Ultramarine Chapters.

SHEPHERD OF BATTLE

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Tactics (Assault Doctrine) *or* Difficult (–10) Agility Test.

To fill the Role of Shepherd of Battle is to be constantly in motion and ever vigilant to the movements of the enemy. Shepherds of Battle are highly mobile, free ranging members of a Kill-team who act as picket sentries for a deployed Deathwatch Squad. Unlike Finders of Ways, who are sent on long-range scouting missions, Shepherds of Battle keep close to the squad and stay in constant vox contact with the Squad Leader to better intercept and engage enemy forces. They harass enemy formations and perform quick-strike assaults as feints, or to herd enemies into areas predetermined by the Squad Leader so that the squad can choose the time and place of the encounter. While largely considered an infantry role by many Jericho Deathwatch tacticians, Shepherds of Battle are occasionally mounted on Space Marine bikes or equipped with Jump Packs if the mission requires.

A Shepherd of Battle can make a Disengage Action once per Round as a Half Action. Furthermore, on a Successful Opposed Weapon Skill Test while performing a Manoeuvre Action (see page 241 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook), a Shepherd of Battle can force his opponent to move one metre in any direction per Degree of Success he scores on the Test, instead of the usual one metre.

Assault Marines make excellent Shepherd of Battles, as do Battle-Brothers from the Raven Guard, Space Wolves, and Carcharodons Chapters.

SLAYER OF HEROES

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Tactics (Recon and Stealth) or Hard (–20) Ballistic Skill Test.

The Slayer of Heroes Role is one that calls for a steady hand and a cool head. A Kill-team with a Battle-Brother in the Slayer of Heroes Role can project its power incredibly far, but only on a limited scale. It is often up to the Slayer of Heroes to remove key elements of an enemy force from afar, limiting their ability to affect the field of battle. Their targets are most frequently enemy command staff, powerful psykers, Tyranid synapse creatures, or even particularly heavily armed members of an enemy deployment.

By observing an enemy force and noting specifics of group dynamics and interaction, an active Slayer of Heroes can identify which enemy amongst them is responsible for cohesion and leadership. He then identifies this enemy as the “Primary Target.” This is a narrative decision and thus the GM has final say as to whether the Slayer of Heroes is able to identify such a person among a specific group of enemies. When a Slayer of Heroes successfully hits the Primary Target with an attack from a ranged weapon, all enemies within a number of metres of the Primary Target equal to half the Slayer of Heroes’ Ballistic Skill Characteristic (i.e. not including any modifiers for Aiming, Full- and Semi-Auto Attacks, weapon upgrades, and so forth) must make a Pinning Test. If the attack kills the Primary Target, the Pinning Test is replaced with a Fear Test against Fear (2).

Those Battle-Brothers hailing from the Raven Guard and the Raptors Chapters make especially good Slayers of Heroes.



WIELDER OF DEVASTATION

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Demolition Test or Difficult (–10) Ballistic Skill Test.

A Battle-Brother filling the Role of Wielder of Devastation uses the many types of launchers, grenades, and general ordnance fielded by the Adeptus Astartes to provide indirect fire support to his squads. When this Role is filled, it allows the Kill-team to engage enemies beyond even their formidable power and engage those otherwise unreachable, such as enemies in cover.

When making an attack with a grenade, a missile, or a mine, a Battle-Brother taking on the Role of the Wielder of Devastation may re-roll any failed Ballistic Skill Tests. If re-rolled, attacks with launched grenades and missiles suffer misfires only if the re-roll results in a misfire. Furthermore, the Penetration of all grenades, missiles, and mines deployed by a Battle-Brother taking on the Wielder of Devastation Role is increased by one point. Also, prior to making an attack, a Wielder of Devastation can choose to forgo the re-roll on the Ballistic Skill Test gained from this Role when making an attack with a grenade, missile, or mine to increase or decrease its Blast Quality by 1d5 points.

Tactical and Devastator Marines are particularly well suited for this Role, as well as those Battle-Brothers hailing from the Crimson Fists Chapter.

DEFENSIVE ROLES

“It is the mark of a successful leader when his forces are so skilled in attack that his opponent does not know what to defend, and so skilful in defence that his opponent knows not where to attack.”

—The Codex Astartes

The following nine Legacy Roles fall into the Defensive Role category. While they are largely considered to be support Roles, those filling them are still Battle-Brothers and as such are dangerous combatants. With their specialised skills and abilities, these Roles make up the Defensive Role column in a Heroic Legacy Package. Each Role grants the Battle-Brother filling it a number of special abilities and combat bonuses that reflect both that Space Marine’s veteran status and the power of the Heroic Legacy Package as it applies to a squad of Deathwatch Space Marines. Each Defensive Role comes with a set of prerequisites: minimum Characteristic, Skill, and Talent requirements that a Battle-Brother must meet to be assigned to that particular Legacy Role.

BEARER OF SHIELDS

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Tactics (Defensive Doctrine) Test or Hard (–20) Weapon Skill Test.

As the Guardian from Afar safeguards his Battle-Brothers with the roar of his bolt-gun, the Bearer of Shields stands bodily between his brethren and the incoming blows of his enemies. Standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the members of his Kill-team, the Battle-Brother acting as a Bearer of Shields dedicates his actions to the defence of those near him. Most often, this is done to allow Battle-Brothers with particular skills or pieces of equipment to Turn their attentions toward

achieving some goal or mission objective, affording them the focus and concentration they need, while the Bearer of Shields attends to their defence.

While active, a Bearer of Shields can use the Parry Reaction to thwart incoming melee attacks directed against an ally within five metres of him. Furthermore, while active, a Bearer of Shields receives an additional Reaction each round that he can only spend to take a Parry Reaction. This additional Parry Reaction can only be used to parry melee attacks directed against his allies. This additional Reaction does stack with additional Reactions gained from other sources, such as the Defensive Stance Action, and the Bearer of Shields' Parry Reactions made on behalf of his allies do benefit from any bonuses the Bearer of Shields possesses, such as from a weapon with the Defensive Quality or from the Guarded Attack Action.

Any Battle-Brother with melee aptitude is well suited to this Role, but those from the Black Templars, Storm Wardens, and Minotaurs Chapters make especially adept Bearers of Shields.

BUILDER OF TOWERS

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Tactics (Defensive Doctrine) Test *or* Difficult (-10) Command Test.

For as long as men have clashed on the field of battle, the theory that the best offence is a good defence has been a constant one among many pre-eminent military scholars. In essence, a strong defence with an eye toward counter-attack that causes an enemy to exhaust himself in offensive pushes wins the day every time over frenzied rushes or ill-planned assaults. When a Kill-team needs to field a powerful active defence, one of its members often takes on the Role of the Builder of Towers. The Builder of Towers defends the Kill-team and any allies he might be working with through the wise use of firepower, troop movement, and aggressive action. He assists the Squad Leader in deploying the Kill-team and any auxiliaries to ensure clear fields of fire, overlapping kill zones, accurate fire support from artillery and aircraft, and taking full advantage of the local terrain to exhaust and entangle enemy forces.

A Builder of Towers can Turn nearly any encounter into an ad hoc defensive stand by preparing the field for holding action or arranging his squad mates to best hold a fortified position. So long as the Builder of Towers has a minute or two to advise his Battle-Brothers on position and cover, and to make use of the terrain before a combat encounter begins, each member of the Kill-team counts the AP of any cover from which he is benefitting as 2 higher than normal. In addition, so disrupted are the lanes of enemy movement and positioning in such a situation that enemies may not use the Charge Action for the duration of combat. These benefits can be overcome through exceptional means, of course, so the Game Master has final say on whether or not this special ability succeeds. All the benefits listed above last for the duration of combat, so long as there is an active Builder of Towers in the Kill-team. Should it happen that a full combat round passes while no Battle-Brother fills the Builder of Towers Role, all benefits from this Role are immediately lost and cannot be regained until a Battle-Brother filling the Builder of Towers Role has the appropriate time to prepare the field for battle.

Veterans equipped with Terminator armour and Devastators are particularly well suited to this Role, as are many mysterious and penitent Black Shields. Those Space Marines hailing from the Imperial Fists and Dark Angels also make excellent Builders of Towers.

DECIMATOR OF FORTRESSES

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Tactics (Siege Tactics) Test *or* Difficult (-10) Demolitions Test.

On occasion, the Space Marines of the Deathwatch are called upon to force the enemy to abandon key positions with powerful weapons, great works of engineering, and, if so required, the sacrifice of their very lives. When called upon to break a firmly held position, one or more Battle-Brothers in a Kill-team may take on the Role of Decimator of Fortresses. Decimators of Fortresses provide a squad with the ability to obliterate fortified positions and build small-scale siege-works through the use of engineering skill, natural cunning, and an array of wargear and vehicles such as the Vindicator siege tank.

Decimators of Fortresses enjoy a +10 bonus to all Skill Tests made to build or destroy defensive positions or fortifications, including bunkers, pill boxes, walls, and heavy weapon emplacements, and the time required for a Decimator of Fortresses to build such a structure is reduced by half. In addition, any explosive device, such as melta bombs, demolition charges, or demolisher cannon shells, placed or fired by a Decimator of Fortresses using the Weak Points Special Use of the Evaluate Skill, has its Penetration increased by +8 per Degree of Success instead of +4 as stated on page 98 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook.

Those Battle-Brothers who hail from the Imperial Fists and their successor chapters, save perhaps for the Black Templars, make excellent Decimator of Fortresses, but any Space Marine with a taste for the thunderous action of siege combat can serve well in this Role.

DENIER OF WITCHES

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Lore: Forbidden (Psykers or The Warp) Test *or* Difficult (-10) Willpower Test.

Of all the enemies facing the Adeptus Astartes, psykers are among the most cunning and dangerous. Nearly every xenos race has its own psykers, from savage Ork Weirdboyz to the canny and ancient Eldar Farseers. Among the forces of Chaos, numerous psykers and sorcerers make foolish pacts with Daemons who possess arcane abilities far beyond the imaginings of most men. All the while, sorcerers from the Thousand Sons legion lead armies of implacable, mindless Rubric Marines against the forces of the Imperium and the agents of Tzeentch plot and plan and whisper from the darkest corners to twist the malleable minds of men. When battling psykers or sorcerous foes, a member of the Kill-team may take on the Role of Denier of Witches. The Battle-Brother who takes on the Role of Denier of Witches has dedicated his focus to rooting out enemy psykers on the battlefield and pitting his will against theirs, that he might defend his Battle-Brothers from their predations.

Battle-Brothers filling the Role of the Denier of Witches who possess a Psy Rating can make Psyniscience Skill Tests as

a Free Action. Deniers of Witches lacking a Psy Rating can use the Awareness Skill to mimic the Psyniscience Skill, though he suffers a -20 penalty to these Tests. In addition, through sheer force of will, a Denier of Witches grants all other Space Marines in the squad a bonus equal to three times the Denier of Witches's Willpower Bonus to Tests to resist Psychic Powers.

While most Deniers of Witches are Librarians, any Deathwatch Battle-Brother can fill this Role. However, Space Marines from the Black Templars, Silver Skulls, Blood Ravens, and Exorcists make for particularly good Deniers of Witches.

GUARDIAN FROM AFAR

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Awareness Test *or* Difficult (-10) Ballistic Skill Test.

Using withering fire and well-placed precision shots, the Guardian from Afar makes safe his Battle-Brothers. As the other members of his Kill-team advance upon an enemy formation or engage in close-quarters combat with all manner of Warp spawn and xenos beasts, the Battle-Brother filling the role of Guardian from Afar stands apart and uses the enhanced ballistics and truly awe-inspiring firepower of the Adeptus Astartes to keep his allies from harm. Picking off key threats and keeping enemies pinned down with suppressive fire, Guardians from Afar allow their front-line brethren to approach vital positions without concern for intervening foes.

While actively filling the Guardian from Afar Role, a Battle-Brother may take the Overwatch Action as a Half Action and the Suppressing Fire Action as a Half Action. In addition, when a Guardian from Afar declares the Overwatch Action, he may designate the members of his Kill-team as his "kill zone," so long as they are all within a ninety degree arc in front of him. Should he designate his Kill-team as the kill zone, any enemy who comes within five metres of a member of his Kill-team can trigger his Overwatch attack. Finally, a Guardian from Afar may make Dodge Reactions while maintaining an Overwatch Action without losing the benefits of the Action.

Devastators and Tactical Marines make for clear choices to fill this Role, and Battle-Brothers from the Salamanders and Star Phantoms are well suited to the Guardian from Afar Role.

HERALD OF SIGNALS

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Lore: Forbidden (Xenos *or* Daemonology)† *or* Tech-Use Test *or* Hard (-20) Lore: Scholastic (Cryptology) Test.

†The Battle-Brother must make his Activation Test using the Lore: Forbidden sub-Skill most appropriate to the adversaries at hand.

Good communications are a key component to victory on the battlefield. Space Marines are well versed in basic battlefield communications from squad to company level. During their training, they learn and memorise the various hand signals, acronyms, ciphers, and codes required to operate efficiently with one another and with other Imperial forces. Some missions require more than just the basic vox systems built in to Astartes power armour and a supplemental vox caster. When facing technologically advanced foes in the field, such as the Eldar, the Tau, or various forces of the Ruinous Powers, a Squad Leader can call upon one of his Battle-Brothers to fill the Role of Herald of Signals. In this Role, the assigned Battle-Brother is responsible

for all incoming and outgoing communications in the squad. In addition, depending on the situation, he might be responsible for jamming enemy transmissions, breaking enemy codes, or other feats of techno-arcane ability using vox casters, micro-beads, and even more specialised technology. These responsibilities extend beyond the realm of technology. Using his knowledge of foul sorceries of the servants of Chaos, or the complex psychophomone signals of the Tyranids, or even the basic concepts of rudimentary communication, the Herald of Signals is responsible for intercepting all manner of enemy communications.

A Kill-team with an active Herald of Signals can manipulate their places in the Initiative order by keeping in tight communication amongst themselves and by monitoring and interfering with the communication of the enemy. At the start of any Round in which a Herald of Signals is active, all of the slots in the Initiative order generated by the Player Characters are considered "Player Character Initiative Slots" for the remainder of the Round. During such a Round, when a Player Character Initiative Slot is reached in the Initiative order, the players agree on one Player Character to fill the slot from amongst Player Characters who have not acted that Turn. That Player Character then takes his Turn. If the Initiative slot belongs to an NPC, that NPC takes its Turn. If, at the start of a round, there is no Herald of Signals, the Initiative Order progresses as normal.

While Herald of Signals are most commonly Techmarines or Librarians, any Battle-Brother with knowledge of communications can serve in this Role.

MASTER OF STRATAGEMS

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Lore: Scholastic (Codex Astartes) Test *or* Hard (-20) Command Test.

Most missions carried out by a Kill-team are small, clandestine affairs involving no more than a handful of Battle-Brothers and requiring only small-scale tactics. A Kill-team is not a debating society, and ultimate authority rests with the Squad Leader. Nevertheless, only a fool disregards the advice of his veteran brothers, whose experiences can vary so much and who often have useful guidance or pertinent information regarding nearly any task at hand. At times like these, a Battle-Brother can step up to fill the Role of Master of Stratagems. It is the Master of Stratagems's purview to advise the Kill-team in matters of tactics and strategy. Given the breadth of each Space Marine's combat experience, gained through decades or centuries of dutiful service to the Emperor, the advice of the right Battle-Brother can help Turn the tide of even the most hopeless battle.

An active Master of Stratagems provides his Battle-Brothers with a +10 bonus to all Intelligence Characteristic Tests or Intelligence-based Skill Tests so long as they are able to communicate with him. In addition, the Master of Stratagems's firm guidance and rational advice can serve to stabilise the minds of his Battle-Brothers when reality itself seems to defy all reason or explanation. Whenever a Battle-Brother in a Kill-team with an active Master of Stratagems would gain 1 or more Insanity Points, he gains that amount minus an amount equal to the Master of Stratagems' Intelligence Bonus (to a minimum of 0) instead.

Any experienced Battle-Brother can serve in this Role, but those who hail from the Ultramarines and their successor chapters make for particularly fine Master of Stratagems.

KEEPER OF WISDOM

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Lore: Forbidden (Daemonology, Mutants, Necrons†, Psykers, Traitor Legions, or Xenos) Test†† or Hard (–20) Command Test.

†Lore: Forbidden (Necrons): This skill is presented on page 30 of the DEATHWATCH supplement THE OUTER REACH.

††The Battle-Brother must make his Activation Test using the Lore: Forbidden sub-Skill most appropriate to the adversaries at hand. The chosen category of adversary is referred to in this Role as the Known Enemy.

A Battle-Brother will set foot on hundreds of worlds and face down thousands of enemies in his lifetime. Due to the nature of their work, most Space Marines study their enemies' most basic characteristics, typically for the sole purpose of knowing how best to hurt them as grievously as possible. In this way they are not merely warriors, but scholars as well, provided with both the tools and the knowledge to be as effective as possible. A Space Marine cannot know everything, however, and even the most seasoned Squad Leader has gaps in his knowledge. A good Squad Leader knows when to look for advice. When faced with an enemy or situation he has not personally faced before, a Squad Leader can call upon one of his Battle-Brothers to act as a Keeper of Wisdom. Keepers of Wisdom, like Master of Stratagems, advise Squad Leaders on matters germane to the mission at hand. Whereas Masters of Stratagems counsel on military tactics and strategies, Keepers of Wisdom are more focused, offering their sage guidance on the strengths and weaknesses of particular enemies instead.

An active Keeper of Wisdom reduces the Toughness Bonus of the Known Enemy by an amount equal to his Intelligence Bonus for the purposes of reducing Damage from the Kill-teams' Attacks. Further, all Battle-Brothers in the Kill-team receive a +10 bonus to Willpower Tests caused by the Known Enemy. A Battle-Brother filling the Role of Keeper of Wisdom can also grant these bonuses to any other allied Imperial forces with which his squad is in regular communication.

Those Space Marines hailing from the Ultramarines, Blood Ravens, Exorcists and the Dark Angels Chapters show particular skill in this role due to their zeal and preference for a rigorous battle plan.

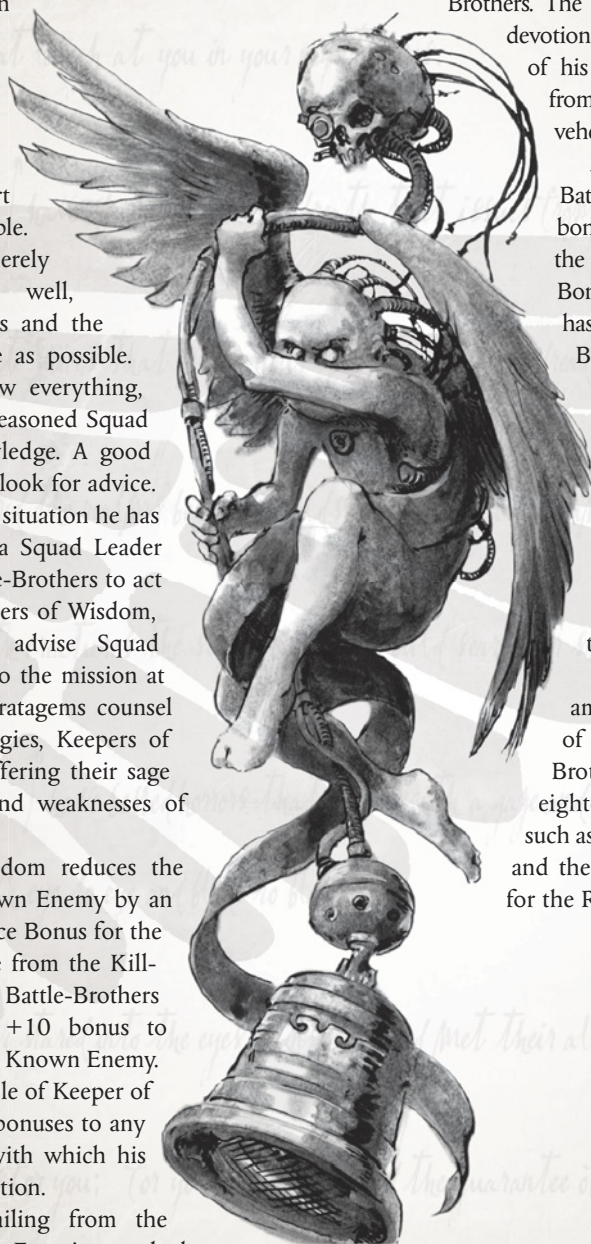
PARAGON OF ZEAL

Activation Test: Challenging (+0) Lore: Forbidden (Daemonology or The Traitor Legions) or Difficult (–10) Willpower Test.

Every Space Marine is a holy warrior fuelled by a devotion to the Imperium of Man that is truly superhuman. It is by their fervour and their dedication that these defenders of mankind stand against the roiling horrors of the Immaterium. When confronted with a being capable of unmaking reason itself, it often falls on a single member of a Kill-team to stir the hearts of his Battle-Brothers. The Paragon of Zeal acts as an anchor of devotion and dedication, reinforcing the spirits of his Battle-Brothers and protecting them from the maddening effects of Chaos with vehemence and fervour.

An active Paragon of Zeal provides the Battle-Brothers in his Kill-team with a bonus to Damage against adversaries with the Daemon Trait equal to his Willpower Bonus. In addition, while the Kill-team has an active Paragon of Zeal, all Battle-Brothers in the squad gain a +10 bonus to Willpower Tests to resist Psychic Powers from adversaries with the Daemon Trait or Opposed Willpower Tests to resist Possession. Furthermore, beings with the Warp Instability Trait suffer a –10 penalty to their Willpower Tests while within a number of metres equal to two times the Paragon of Zeal's Willpower Bonus.

Any Space Marine with the proper amount of fervour can fill the Role of Paragon of Zeal, but those Battle-Brothers who hail from the legendary eighteen chapters of the Astartes Praeses, such as the Night Watch, the White Consuls, and the Iron Talons, are very well qualified for the Role of Paragon of Zeal.



MANOEUVRES

"The strength of the Adeptus Astartes lies not only in the strength of our arms or the truth of our purpose, but also in the confidence that arises from knowing your Battle-Brothers stand beside you."

—Brother Laird, driver of the *Skyfall*, Vindicator siege tank of the Storm Wardens 3rd Company

Each Heroic Legacy Package contains six Manoeuvres. Manoeuvres are unique abilities that the Squad Leader executes that allow all members of the Kill-team to take out-of-Turn Actions on the Squad Leader's Turn. These Manoeuvres are divided between the three Formations listed on page 81: four each of Offensive, Tactical, and Defensive Manoeuvres. Each Manoeuvre can only be used when the Kill-team is in its corresponding Formation. For example, Offensive Manoeuvres can only be used when the Kill-team is in Offensive Formation.

Executing a Manoeuvre requires a Half Action on the part of the Battle-Brother acting as Squad Leader. To execute a Manoeuvre, the Squad Leader must make an **Execution Test** as a Half Action during his Turn. An Execution Test is either a Command Test, a Lore: Scholastic (Codex Astartes) Test, or a Tactics Skill Test using an appropriate sub-Skill. Each Manoeuvre lists the difficulty of the Execution Test required to execute the Manoeuvre. If the Squad Leader succeeds on the Execution Test, the Manoeuvre provide all participating members of the Kill-team within Support Range of the Squad Leader (see page 213 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook) with out-of-Turn Actions that they can perform immediately upon being executed. Once each Battle-Brother in the Kill-team has resolved his out-of-Turn Actions, the Manoeuvre has been completed. Once the Manoeuvre is completed, all of its benefits are lost until it is executed again. A Squad Leader can participate in Manoeuvres in the same manner as his Battle-Brothers, and the out-of-Turn Actions he takes during a Manoeuvre do not expend his allotment of Actions, even though they are technically happening during his Turn. A Squad Leader can only attempt to execute one Manoeuvre per Round.

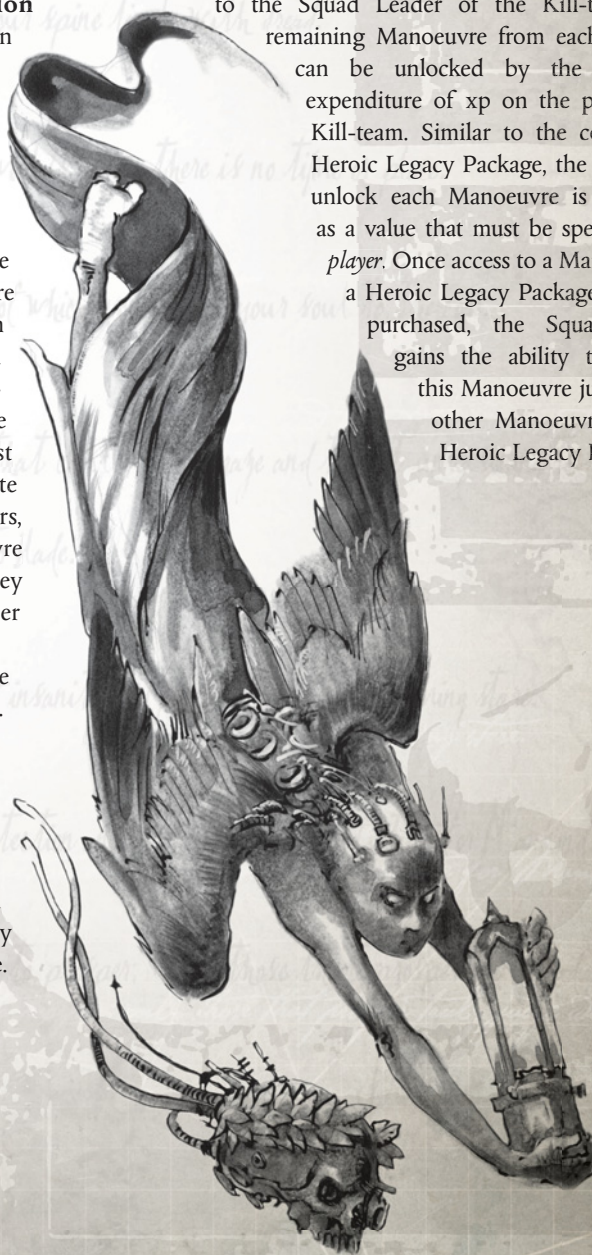
All Manoeuvres have two requirements that must be fulfilled in order for the Squad Leader to execute them. The first of these prerequisites is the Formation, as described above. The second prerequisite is the Cohesion Threshold. A Squad Leader cannot execute a Manoeuvre unless the Kill-team's current Cohesion total is equal to or higher than the Manoeuvre's Cohesion Threshold. Note that this requirement is not a cost. The Kill-Team does not spend Cohesion to execute Manoeuvres. Any other requirements are listed in the individual Manoeuvre.

Manoeuvres are presented in the following manner, and are listed under their required formation:

- **Title:** The name of the Manoeuvre.
- **Cohesion Threshold:** The amount of Cohesion the Kill-team must possess in order for the Squad Leader to execute the Manoeuvre. Note that this requirement is not a cost. The Kill-team does not spend Cohesion to execute Manoeuvres.
- **Execution Test:** The Difficulty of the Execution Test taken by the Squad Leader to execute the Manoeuvre.
- **Requirements:** A list of narrative and situational prerequisites needed to execute the Manoeuvre.
- **Effects:** A detailed description of the Manoeuvre and its effects, and how the Kill-team can execute and benefit from it.

UNLOCKING MANOEUVRES

When a Kill-team first purchases a Heroic Legacy Package, only one of the associated Manoeuvres from each category—Offensive, Defensive, and Tactical—is immediately available to the Squad Leader of the Kill-team. The remaining Manoeuvre from each category can be unlocked by the collective expenditure of xp on the part of the Kill-team. Similar to the cost of the Heroic Legacy Package, the xp cost to unlock each Manoeuvre is expressed as a value that must be spent by *each player*. Once access to a Manoeuvre in a Heroic Legacy Package has been purchased, the Squad Leader gains the ability to execute this Manoeuvre just like the other Manoeuvres in that Heroic Legacy Package.



OFFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

"Precise application of unspeakable violence can pierce any defence or reduce any fortification to rubble."

—Brother-Sergeant Maxim Leronov,
Fourth Company, Imperial Fists

The following four Manoeuvres are Offensive Manoeuvres. Each one contains a number of abilities and modifiers which increase a Kill-team's effectiveness in direct and frontal combat. They lack the degree of subtlety of Tactical Manoeuvres, sacrifice defence for sheer killing power, and are typically used for lightning attacks and shock strikes. Each Offensive Manoeuvre has a Cohesion Threshold, the amount of Cohesion the Kill-team must possess to execute the Manoeuvre, and a number of narrative or mission related requirements that the Kill-team must fulfill before it can execute the Manoeuvre.

ASSAULT ENTRY

It is often the case during the course of a Kill-team's mission that they must move quickly from one area to another without the convenience of a doorway, hatch, or passage. This is typically true in situations that require fast response and the element of surprise, such as urban warfare in the crowded streets of a hive city or boarding a ship in space before it can escape or muster a response. In the Jericho Reach, the Battle-Brothers of the Deathwatch have ample opportunity to practice their breaching skills, and few obstacles can impede the progress of a properly equipped Kill-team adept at shattering them.

The Assault Entry Manoeuvre allows a Deathwatch Kill-team that has cut or blasted through a wall, bulkhead, or sealed door to move into the space beyond and deal with any opponents therein. Whether entering a room, a corridor, a ship's compartment, or a corrupt Land Raider in the service of a Traitor Legion, the process for breaching and the tools required remain largely the same.

Cohesion Threshold: 7

Execution Test: Challenging (+0) Demolitions Test *or* Difficult (–10) Tactics (Assault Doctrine) Test.

Requirements: The Kill-team must be equipped with one tool or weapon, such as a melta gun, breaching charge, or bulkhead shears, specifically designed to breach obstacles. The Kill-team must have just used such tools or ordinance to forcibly enter the target structure.

Effects: When performing the Assault Entry Manoeuvre, assuming the breach actually penetrates the vehicle, bulkhead, or sealed door, the Squad Leader then makes his Execution Test. If he succeeds, each member of the Kill-team can immediately make a single out-of-Turn Half Action Move and a single out-of-Turn Standard Attack. After these actions have been resolved, the combat begins and Initiative is determined. The Kill-team has the element of surprise and any enemies within are caught unawares per the rules for Surprise on page 234 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook. In addition, if the breach was made with an explosion of some kind—a melta bomb or breaching charge, for example—any enemies on the other side of the obstacle breached must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer a –10 penalty to all Tests for 1d10 rounds. If the Squad Leader fails the Execution Test, the combat proceeds as normal from the moment of the breach.

ENFILADING FIRE

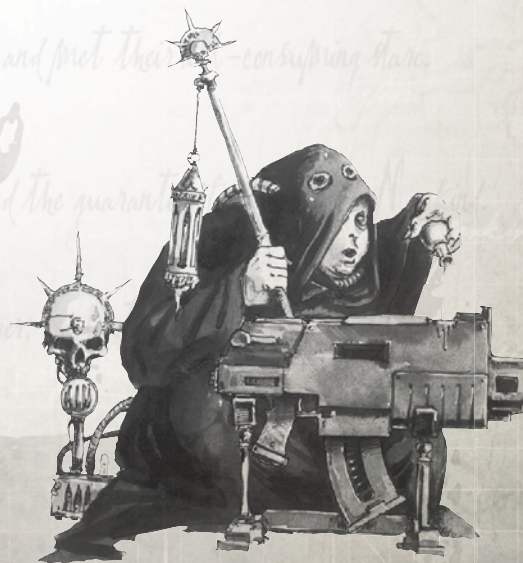
Enfilading Fire is the simple act of positioning a Kill-team, heavy weapon emplacement, or armoured vehicle where its fire can be directed along the longest axis of an enemy formation from a flanking position. Enfilading Fire is used to pin down enemy forces, provide support to allied forces engaged with the enemy's front line elements, and cause as much damage to an enemy as efficiently as possible. It is murderously effective against packed infantry formations, hordes, and even armoured columns where both direct and indirect-fire weapons have a greater chance of striking multiple targets as the bolts, blasts, and explosions travel through the enemy formation.

Cohesion Threshold: 10

Execution Test: Difficult (–10) Tactics (Assault Doctrine) Test *or* Hard (–20) Lore: Scholastic (Codex Astartes) Test.

Requirements: The Squad Leader must designate a group of enemies as the Target Foe. The target of the Manoeuvre must be a group of enemies at least ten-strong with no more than ten metres between any two individuals, or any Horde of enemies. Each Battle-Brother participating in the Manoeuvre must be wielding a weapon capable of Full Auto fire, a thrown grenade, or grenade or missile launcher. Each Battle-Brother participating in the Manoeuvre must be in a flanking position, coinciding with the enemy's narrowest axis. As forces in the 41st millennium rarely conform to ranked formations, whether or not a Kill-team has a flanking position should be determined cooperatively between the GM and the players.

Effects: Once in position, the Squad Leader may designate a Target Foe as a Free Action during his Turn. After the Target Foe has been designated, the Squad Leader may make the Execution Test for this Manoeuvre. If successful, each participating member of the Kill-team either makes an out-of-Turn Full Auto Burst Action with weapons capable of such an attack, or an out-of-Turn Standard Attack with grenades or launchers targeting the Target Foe. Battle-Brothers who do not have a weapon capable of Full Auto Burst, a grenade, or a launcher cannot participate in this Manoeuvre. Due to the saturation of weapons fire and the superior positioning of the attackers, attempts to Dodge successful hits resulting from this Manoeuvre suffer a –20 penalty.





LIGHTNING ASSAULT

A Lightning Assault is one of the most devastating tactics available to an armoured vehicle pilot. It is an overwhelming, full-throttle tank or bike charge that takes advantage of the speed and sheer destructive power of a Kill-team's armoured vehicles to run down hostile troops and disrupt and destroy enemy armour formations. There are few things more terrifying to the enemies of mankind than to see a column of Predator tanks or a tightly packed formation of Space Marines on attack bikes smashing into their lines, guns blazing, and grinding everything in their path into a bloody pulp beneath tire and tread.

Cohesion Threshold: 13

Execution Test: Hard (–20) Tactics (Armoured Tactics) or Very Hard (–30) Lore: Scholastic (Codex Astartes) Test.

Requirements: The Kill-team must be mounted together on a vehicle such as a Rhino or Land Raider, or individually on Astartes Bikes. As the effectiveness of the Lightning Assault comes, in large part, from the shock of the surprise attack, the enemy must be unaware of the Kill-team or the specifics of their deployment or disposition.

Effects: A Kill-team can only attempt a Lightning Assault Manoeuvre as an opening move in combat. So long as the Kill-team is undetected by their enemy, the Squad Leader may make his Execution Test for this Manoeuvre. If he succeeds, the enemy force is automatically Surprised for the first Round of combat. A Lightning Assault Manoeuvre's other effects are determined depending on whether the Kill-team is on a vehicle or if the attempt is made while mounted on Space Marine bikes.

On a successful Test, if the Kill-team is embarked on a vehicle, each Battle-Brother manning an onboard weapon can make a single out-of-Turn Standard Attack Action. Once these Attacks are resolved, the Kill-team's vehicle moves directly toward the enemy vehicle or formation at twice its Tactical Speed. If this movement takes the Kill-team's vehicle into contact with the enemy, they ram an enemy vehicle or monstrous creature and overrun enemy infantry. Any vehicle or creature rammed or individual run down during this movement suffers 3d10 Impact Damage with a bonus equal to the AP of the appropriate face of the Space Marine vehicle. Hordes rammed in such a way lose an amount of Magnitude equal to the Space Marine Vehicle's facing AP. Crew and

passengers of enemy vehicles that are rammed are Stunned for one Round. Enemy infantry may make **Challenging (+0) Dodge Tests** to avoid being hit by the oncoming vehicle.

Executing a Lightning Assault with Space Marine bikes works slightly differently than with a larger vehicle, as the tactical realities of riding a relatively small, lightweight, and unprotected bike into an enemy formation are drastically different than executing the same Manoeuvre while strapped into the relative safety of a heavily armoured tank. A bike-mounted Kill-team may only execute a Lightning Assault Manoeuvre against infantry, other bike-mounted enemies, or beasts and vehicles up to Size (Hulking). If the Squad Leader succeeds on the Execution Test, each individual Battle-Brother can make one out-of-Turn Standard Attack Action using an on-board weapon on the bike. Once these Attacks are resolved, each Battle-Brother moves directly toward the enemy at twice the bike's Tactical Speed. If this movement takes the Battle-Brother into contact with an enemy, that enemy must make a **Challenging (+0) Dodge Test**. If the enemy fails, it takes 1d10+25 Impact Damage and is knocked Prone.

OVERRUN

The Overrun is a massed infantry charge used by a Kill-team to break enemy formations, smash through battle lines to move to a different part of the battlefield, or to simply overwhelm or rout enemy forces before they can even become a threat with a shocking display of speed and violence. Once in motion, a Kill-team simply charges into an enemy squad or Horde on foot or via jump packs, trampling the enemy beneath their armoured boots and hacking, slashing, smashing, and shooting everything within arm's reach in a deadly display of combat prowess and savage violence. So shocking and brutal is this manoeuvre, that a host of Space Marines charging headlong into a formation can rattle even the most experienced or strong willed of enemy combatants. This throws the enemy host into confusion as they look about for what or where to strike.

Cohesion Threshold: 10

Execution Test: Difficult (–10) Tactics (Assault Doctrine) Test or Hard (–20) Command Test

Requirements: The Kill-team must be equipped with either Astartes Power Armour or Astartes Power Armour and Astartes Jump Packs. The Kill-team must also be within charging distance of an enemy formation.

Effects: To execute the Overrun Manoeuvre, the Squad Leader first makes the Execution Test to determine exactly where within an enemy formation the attack will do the most damage or to rally his Battle-Brothers for the charge. If the Squad Leader succeeds on the Execution Test, each member of the Kill-team can immediately make a Move Action to move up to three times his Agility Bonus in metres. He may then make a single melee Standard Attack Action against an enemy. Any enemy hit by an attack during an Overrun Manoeuvre must immediately make a **Hard (–20) Toughness or Agility Test** or be knocked Prone. In addition, if a Kill-team successfully executes this Manoeuvre against a Horde and manages to reduce the Horde's Magnitude by any amount as a result, the Horde must make a Willpower Test on its following Turn as if it had lost 25% of its total Magnitude.

TACTICAL MANOEUVRES

"We's gots dem 'umies on da run! Get 'em!"

—Last words of Grifgor Runt-kicka, Ork Nob

Tactical Manoeuvres are a mixture of aggressive yet reserved Manoeuvres that allow a Kill-team to react quickly and effectively to the changing realities of combat. They provide flexibility and the ability to move rapidly across a battlefield to address combat situations as they present themselves. Each Tactical Manoeuvre has a Cohesion Threshold, the amount of Cohesion the Kill-team must possess to execute the Manoeuvre, and a number of narrative or mission related requirements that the Kill-team must fulfill before it can execute the Manoeuvre.

COVERED REDEPLOYMENT

No matter how adept a leader is at moving his troops, or how good intelligence, mapping, and orbital telemetry is, there are times when a Kill-team finds itself in a less than optimal position on the field. Perhaps they are cut off from the rest of their forces by the collapse of a building or other obstacle and find themselves under heavy fire, or their enemies are well hidden in the rubble of a blasted hab block and can only be effectively engaged from above. Whatever the case might be, Kill-teams must often relocate quickly to either take advantage of some new tactical situation or to move to a better position from which to attack. In cases such as these, especially when a Kill-team is engaged with enemy forces while moving, the Squad Leader can call for the Covered Redeployment Manoeuvre. This Manoeuvre allows the members of a Kill-team to relocate to another, hopefully more tactically appealing, position on the battlefield so as to gain the high ground, more cover, or a better line of sight to the enemy.

Cohesion Threshold: 10

Execution Test: Difficult (–10) Command Test *or* Hard (–20) Tactics (Defensive Doctrine) Test.

Requirements: The Squad Leader must designate an area of terrain as the Target Position. The Target Position is a roughly circular area with a radius in metres equal to two times the Squad Leader's Intelligence Bonus. The Target Position must include some terrain feature that is superior to the current position of the Kill-team. Such terrain features include areas that provide cover, higher ground, or better line of sight, or those that put difficult ground between the Kill-team and the enemy.

Effects: The Squad Leader may designate a Target Position as a Free Action during his Turn. After the Target Position has been designated, the Squad Leader makes the Execution Test for this Manoeuvre. If successful, each Battle-Brother can make an out-of-Turn Move Action to move up to his Full Movement speed in metres. A Battle-Brother must use this movement to move towards the Target Position, if possible. If this is not possible, he receives no out-of-Turn Move Action. In addition, as the Kill-team redeploys, they keep up a constant barrage of blasts, beams, and bolts that provides each Battle-Brother with covering fire as they reposition. This inflicts a –20 penalty to all attacks made against the Kill-team until the start of the Squad Leader's next Turn, as their withering fire keeps enemies' heads down and disrupts their attacks.

FEIGNED FLIGHT

Using trickery and cunning to deceive the enemy is an activity as old as war itself. The fine art of deception has been practised by every great army in history, and the Adeptus Astartes are no exception. One of the most reliable of these ruses is the classic Feigned Flight Manoeuvre, which uses a fake attack by a small force to lure the enemy into an ambush. The Feigned Flight is typically used against those enemies who are easily goaded into attack and not particularly over-bright, such as Orks, renegades, and some of the more frenzied forces of Chaos.

Cohesion Threshold: 13

Execution Test: Hard (–20) Tactics (Recon and Stealth) Test *or* Very Hard (–30) Command Test.

Requirements: The Squad Leader must designate each participating member of the Kill-team as either a Forward Element or an Ambush Element. There must be at least one Forward Element and one Ambush Element. The Squad Leader must then designate an area of terrain as the Ambush Position. The Ambush Position is a roughly circular area with a radius in metres equal to two times the Squad Leader's Intelligence Bonus. The Squad Leader must then designate an enemy or group of enemies as the Target Foe. The Target Foe must be an individual enemy, a group of enemies with no more than ten metres between any two individual members, or any Horde of enemies. All Ambush Elements must be positioned in cover, no more than ten metres from the Ambush Position. All Forward Elements must be in melee with or within five metres of the Target Foe.

Effects: The Squad Leader may designate the Forward Elements, Ambush Elements, and Ambush Position as a Free Action during his Turn. After all the Elements and the Ambush Position have been designated, the Squad Leader may make the Execution Test for this Manoeuvre. If he succeeds, each Battle-Brother designated as a Forward Elements may immediately make an out-of-Turn Disengage Action followed by an out-of-Turn Move Action to move up to his Charge value in metres. A Battle-Brother must use this movement to move towards the Ambush Position, if possible. If this is not possible, he receives no out-of-Turn Move Action. The Target Foe must then make a **Very Hard (–30) Scrutiny Test**. If the enemy succeeds, the Feigned Flight has failed. If it fails this Scrutiny Test, however, the Target Foe must make an out-of-Turn Move Action to move a number of metres equal to the farthest distance moved by the any of the Forward Elements. This movement must be used to move toward the Ambush Position, if possible. If this is not possible, the Target Foe is considered to have automatically passed the Scrutiny Test and does not make a Move Action. After the Forward Elements and the Target Foe have resolved their out-of-Turn Move Actions, if the Target Foe failed its Scrutiny Test, each of the Battle-Brother designated as an Ambush Elements may then perform any one of the following out-of-Turn Actions: Called Shot, Charge, Full Auto Burst, Semi-Auto Burst, or Standard Attack. All out-of-Turn Attacks granted by this Manoeuvre must target the Target Foe. Battle-Brothers designated as Ambush Elements for this Manoeuvre gain a +20 bonus to their Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill Tests for these actions.

REINFORCE

No man is an island, and nowhere is this ancient maxim more true than among the ranks of the Adeptus Astartes. Service is ingrained into every aspect of a Space Marine's life, including service to the Emperor, to the teeming masses of His Imperium, and to the Battle-Brothers with whom he stands shoulder to shoulder on the field of battle. A Space Marine's life is spent in the pursuit of war, protecting the Imperium and its inhabitants from heinous threats both internal and external.

The Battle-Brothers of the Jericho Reach Deathwatch usually operate alone or in small, squad-sized units and undertake the most dangerous and covert missions in the Sector to root out and destroy the ever-present xenos threat. When operating in such small numbers, often-times, a Space Marine may find himself hopelessly outnumbered, a Deathwatch Battle-Brother is never truly alone. Not only can he rely on his Battle-Brothers to aid him, endless training and decades of shared experience have proven that so long as even one of his brethren draws breath, his strength is that of legions.

Cohesion Threshold: 7

Execution Test: Challenging (+0) Command Test *or* Difficult (-10) Lore: Scholastic (Codex Astartes) Test.

Requirements: One Battle-Brother in the Kill-team must be engaged in melee with a Horde or his opponents must possess a Ganging Up bonus due to superior numbers. This Battle-Brother is designated the Target Battle-Brother.

Effects: Should one member of a Deathwatch Kill-team find himself facing superior numbers alone, as he so often does, he may call for aid from his Battle-Brothers. In response to such a call from one of his squad-mates, a Kill-team Squad Leader may make the Execution Test for this Manoeuvre. If he succeeds, each Battle-Brother not currently engaged in melee can make an out-of-Turn Move Action to move up to his Full Move value in metres. A Battle-Brother must use this movement to engage an enemy that is currently engaging the Target Battle-Brother. If this is not possible, he receives no out-of-Turn Move Action. Once these Move Actions have been resolved, each Battle-Brother engaging an enemy that is engaging the Target Battle-Brother may then make an out-of-Turn Manoeuvre Action with a +10 bonus to the Opposed Weapon Skill Test.

STAGGERED ADVANCE

Battlefield awareness and the understanding of tactical movement are studied by the Adeptus Astartes every bit as fervently as marksmanship and the histories of their chapters. For millennia, the Space Marines have studied tactics and strategy, and the Codex Astartes is full of some of the most advanced ways of making war ever devised. The Battle-Brothers of the Adeptus Astartes are unrivalled masters of tactical movement. Space Marines can move through any terrain as quickly and as sure-footed as any native creature, and they can cross a battlefield as easily as an Imperial Navy captain traverses his bridge. Little can stop their progress, whether on foot or mounted in one of their powerful fighting vehicles, and they are constantly aware of their surroundings thanks to their heightened senses and the advanced auspex and augur technology contained within their power armour.

Among the many tactics used to cross a chaotic battlefield, the Staggered Advance is perhaps the most common. As opposed to a Charge or an Overrun Manoeuvre, the Staggered Advance takes advantage of the Space Marines' mastery of tactical movement to allow a Kill-team to make a frontal assault on an enemy position while minimising exposure to enemy fire and retaining ranged coverage of the battlefield. Battle-Brothers executing this tactic advance one at a time, while the others providing covering fire. Once a Battle-Brother has advanced to a place where he can provide fire support, he holds position and allows another Battle-Brother to begin his advance. The Kill-team repeats this process until each participating Battle-Brother has reached a position from which he can engage the enemy in close-quarters.

Cohesion Threshold: 10

Execution Test: Difficult (-10) Tactics (Assault Doctrine) *or* Hard (-20) Lore: Scholastic (Codex Astartes) Test.

Requirements: The Squad Leader must designate an enemy or group of enemies as the Target FoE. The target of the Manoeuvre must be an individual enemy, a group of enemies with no more than ten metres between any two individual members, or any Horde of enemies.

Effects: The Squad Leader may designate a Target FoE as a Free Action during his Turn. After the Target FoE has been designated, the Squad Leader makes the Execution Test for this Manoeuvre. If he succeeds, the participating members of the Kill-team can each make an out-of-Turn Overwatch Action targeting any Target FoE making an attack against a Battle-Brother moving as a result of this Manoeuvre. One-by-one, in an order determined by the players, each participating Battle-Brother then makes an out-of-Turn Move Action to move his Full Move value in metres. A Battle-Brother must use this movement to move towards the Target FoE, if possible. If this is not possible, he receives no out-of-Turn Move Action. The Battle-Brother is not in Overwatch during this movement, but upon reaching the end of his out-of-Turn movement, the Battle-Brother resumes Overwatch under the same conditions listed above. Each Battle-Brother can only make a single out-of-Turn Move Action. Once all participating Battle-Brothers have resolved their out-of-Turn Move Action, the Manoeuvre is completed and each Battle-Brother's Overwatch ends.



DEFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

"The Imperium is the only thing in the galaxy worth fighting for, and indeed, worth dying for."

—Brother-Sergeant Tullus, 3rd Company, Minotaurs

Defensive Manoeuvres allow a Kill-team to set up a nearly impenetrable defence, to stand immobile against masses of enemies, or to disengage from battle in a safe and orderly manner. While described as defensive, the Actions carried out through use of these Manoeuvres are every bit as deadly to the enemies of mankind as those from the Offensive and Tactical categories. Each Defensive Manoeuvre has a Cohesion Threshold, the amount of Cohesion the Kill-team must possess to execute the Manoeuvre, and a number of narrative or mission related requirements that the Kill-team must fulfill before it can execute the Manoeuvre.

FALL BACK

Occasionally there comes a time in battle, even for the implacable Adeptus Astartes, when discretion is the better part of valour. Even the most inexperienced neophyte knows that sometimes a position cannot or should not be held. Among most Space Marines, save perhaps for those stubborn Battle-Brothers of the Imperial Fists and their descendant chapters, disengaging from battle when overmatched or about to be overrun is seen as a tactical or strategic necessity. Only a fool would waste the precious and nigh irreplaceable Battle-Brothers, vehicles, and assorted wargear of the Adeptus Astartes on disadvantageous battles that result from poor planning or foolish last stands. When disengaging from battle, the valourous Battle-Brothers of the Adeptus Astartes do not simply break and run screaming from the field like a passel of weak-willed conscripts. Instead they follow orderly and clearly designated defensive combat manoeuvres laid down in the Codex Astartes millennia ago. One such fighting retreat is the Fall Back Manoeuvre.

Cohesion Threshold: 10

Execution Test: Difficult (–10) Tactics (Defensive Doctrine) Test *or* Hard (–20) Command Test.

Requirements: The Kill-team must be in combat with a superior enemy force or an enemy force whose position or circumstance gives them the tactical advantage. This is a highly subjective determination, so players and Game Masters should work together to determine if the situation meets this requirement.

Effects: When facing a hopeless tactical situation on the battlefield, a Kill-team's Squad Leader may order his Battle-Brothers to fall back to a location where they can hopefully find cover and a place from which to redeploy to a more favourable position. The Squad Leader makes an Execution Test and, if he succeeds, each Battle-Brother may immediately make an out-of-Turn Move Action to move a number of metres equal to his Charge speed in metres. A Battle-Brother cannot end this movement closer to an enemy than he started. If a Battle-Brother is engaged with an enemy or knocked Prone when the Kill-team executes this Manoeuvre, he can make an out-of-Turn Disengage Action or Move Action to stand up from prone prior to his out-of-Turn Move Action.

HOLDING ACTION

The Battle-Brothers of the Adeptus Astartes are as implacable in defence as they are in attack, and the glorious histories of the many Space Marine chapters are full of tales of heroic last stands and dogged defence against overwhelming odds. The sight of a mere handful of Space Marines holding out against hordes of enemies is one to inspire even the most cynical and jaded veteran. Desperate holding actions are incredibly common occurrences for the Deathwatch Battle-Brothers of the Jericho Reach, perhaps too common for the likes of some. Due to the nature of the Deathwatch's mission in the Jericho Reach, Kill-teams usually operate in small squads in very hostile territory and are, more often than not, poorly supported and horribly outnumbered. Time and again Kill-teams throughout the Reach find themselves fighting defensive holding actions against overwhelming odds. Among the many tools used by the Battle-Brothers in the Jericho Reach is the Holding Action Manoeuvre, used to defend a position against a large number of enemies and to rally any surrounding allies to the defence.

Cohesion Threshold: 13

Execution Test: Hard (–20) Tactics (Defensive Doctrine) Test *or* Very Hard (–30) Command Test.

Requirements: All participating Battle-Brothers must be formed up into one of two positions. The first position is in a defensive line, putting themselves between their enemies and a locale, object, or person specified by the Squad Leader. The second position is back-to-back, in mutual defence of each other. The total Wounds and Magnitude of all enemies



involved must at least double the total Wounds of all participating members of the Kill-team.

Effects: If the Squad Leader succeeds on the Execution Test for this Manoeuvre, each Battle-Brothers participating in the Manoeuvre may perform one of the following actions out-of-Turn: Defensive Stance, Guarded Attack, Overwatch, or Suppressing Fire. Each of these out-of-Turn Actions is resolved in order of the Battle-Brothers' Initiative slots for the combat.

SATURATION FIRE

Many chapters among the far flung Adeptus Astartes are known for their prowess in siege warfare. The taciturn and stubborn Imperial Fists are perhaps the most famous, as are their reviled nemeses the Iron Warriors, but many lesser-known chapters are also skilled at the art of the siege. While the Sons of Dorn and their successor chapters are the undisputed masters of this unique type of warfare, they are not solely inducted into the mysteries of laying a siege or protecting against one. Every siege engineer knows that a wall is only as good as the men and weapons guarding it, and a wall with no other defences is of little consequence to a determined foe. There are countless ways to increase the defensive capabilities of a wall, but one of the simplest and most effective is using heavy weapons to keep the enemy at bay.

Cohesion Threshold: 10

Execution Test: Difficult (-10) Tactics (Siege Tactics) Test or Hard (-20) Tactics (Defensive Doctrine) Test.

Requirements: The Squad Leader must designate an area of terrain as the Target Position. The Target Position is a roughly circular area with a radius in metres equal to two times the Squad Leader's Intelligence Bonus. The Target Position must be within range of each participating Battle-Brothers' ranged weapon.

Effects: Saturation Fire is a combination of Overwatch and Suppressive Fire, used to protect friendly assets and deny huge swaths of the battlefield to enemy forces. Using the heaviest Space Marine-portable automatic weapons in the Deathwatch arsenal, the Kill-team builds a hasty, multi-weapon gun emplacement to shore up the defences of a friendly fortification or position. These guns are placed in strategic positions and typically reinforced with whatever materials are at hand, and provide enough overlapping fields of fire to completely saturate a given area with ordinance. Using the Saturation Fire Manoeuvre, a Kill-team can defend a much larger area from enemy encroachment than they could otherwise.

The Squad Leader may designate a Target Position as a Free Action during his Turn. After the Target Position has been designated, the Squad Leader makes the Execution Test for this Manoeuvre. If he succeeds, each participating Battle-Brother makes an out-of-Turn Suppressing Fire Action targeting the Target Position. In addition, each participating Battle-Brother makes a simultaneous out-of-Turn Overwatch Action targeting any enemy entering the Target Position.

TAKE COVER

While the strength and protection of the Adeptus Astartes' armour is nearly unmatched among both Imperial and enemy forces, even the ceramite and adamantine armour of the mighty Land Raider can be pierced with powerful enough weapons. All Space Marines put their faith in the Emperor first and their armour second to protect them in battle, but a wise Battle-Brother knows when to augment those protections in the face of truly overwhelming forces. When opposing exceedingly powerful enemy weapons such as heavy plasma and melta weapons or massive, large-calibre vehicle mounted cannons, a Kill-team can execute a Take Cover Manoeuvre to gain additional cover from attack. Walls, hills, trenches, ridges, piles of rubble, and even simple drainage ditches can be used to obscure a Kill-team and protect its members from direct enemy fire.

Cohesion Threshold: 7

Execution Test: Challenging (+0) Tactics (Defensive Doctrine) Test or Difficult (-10) Lore: Scholastic (Codex Astartes) Test.

Requirements: The Squad Leader must designate an area of terrain as the Target Position. The Target Position is a roughly circular area with a radius in metres equal to two times the Squad Leader's Intelligence Bonus, and it must contain sufficient cover to accommodate all members of the Kill-team.

Effects: The Squad Leader may designate a Target Position as a Free Action during his Turn. After the Target Position has been designated, the Squad Leader makes the Execution Test for this Manoeuvre. If he succeeds, each member of the Kill-team makes an out-of-Turn Move Action to move a number of metres equal to his Full Move value plus the Squad Leader's Intelligence Bonus. A Battle-Brother must use this movement to move towards the Target Position, if possible. If this is not possible, he receives no out-of-Turn Move Action. If the Battle-Brother reaches the Target Position, he must end his movement benefiting from Cover.



HEROIC LEGACY PACKAGES

"The Battle-Brothers of the Adeptus Astartes are the finest warriors in the galaxy, indeed, the finest in the history of Mankind. We are strength, zeal, and wrath made flesh. Those who stand against us shall know only fear and utter annihilation."

—Brother-Captain Belshazar of the Black Templars

Presented here are the Heroic Legacy Packages available to any Deathwatch Kill-team. Each package presents a suite of options for players to embrace and use to forge their Kill-team's own tactical identity. The Emperor's Hand is designed to reflect the abilities of an experienced and well-rounded Deathwatch Kill-team, and provides a balanced suite of Roles and Manoeuvres that grant the package incredible tactical flexibility while attacking or defending. The other seven packages provide a more focused approach, each representing an archetypal tactical style. Each of the packages presented here, save the Emperor's Hand, is thematically linked to one of the historic Kill-teams presented in **Chapter II**. This connection is noted in **Chapter II**. Each Heroic Legacy Package is presented as follows:

- **Name (xp Cost):** What the Heroic Legacy Package is called and the number of Experience Points that each member of the Kill-team must spend to unlock access to it

for the group. Spending Experience Points to purchase a Heroic Legacy Package is discussed in greater detail under **Acquiring a Heroic Legacy Package** on page 78.

- **Squad Leader:** This entry represents the Squad Leader and whether he contributes to the Kill-team being in an Offensive or Defensive Formation for this package. Squad Leaders listed on the Offensive Roles side of the Package count as an Offensive Role when determining the Kill-team's Formation. Squad Leaders listed on the Defensive Roles side of the Package count as a Defensive Role when determining the Kill-team's Formation. The Avenging Angels Heroic Legacy Package has the Squad Leader listed on both the Offensive and Defensive sides of the Package. This represents the tactical flexibility of that particular package, and thus, when determining the Kill-team's Formation, the Squad Leader chooses to count as either an Offensive Role or a Defensive Role at his own discretion.
- **Automatic Roles:** These roles are available to members of the Kill-team immediately upon purchase of the Heroic Legacy Package.
- **Locked Roles:** These roles must be "unlocked" by spending xp as described in the section titled **Unlocking Legacy Roles** on page 81.
- **Automatic Manoeuvres:** These Manoeuvres are available to the Squad Leader of a Kill-team immediately upon purchase of the Heroic Legacy Package.
- **Locked Manoeuvres:** These Manoeuvres must be "unlocked" by spending xp as described in the section titled **Unlocking Manoeuvres** on page 88.

NAME			XP COST		
OFFENSIVE ROLES	OFFENSIVE MANOEUVRES		DEFENSIVE ROLES		
	Automatic Manoeuvre		Automatic Role		
	Locked Manoeuvre (xp Cost)		Automatic Role		
	TACTICAL MANOEUVRES		Automatic Role		
	Automatic Manoeuvre		Locked Role (xp Cost)		
	Locked Manoeuvre (xp Cost)		Locked Role (xp Cost)		
DEFENSIVE MANOEUVRES		Locked Role (xp Cost)			
Automatic Manoeuvre					
Locked Manoeuvre (xp Cost)					

THE EMPEROR'S HAND

A veteran Kill-team is one of the most dangerous entities in the Jericho Reach. Possessing the combined wisdom, knowledge, and cunning of highly experienced Space Marines with a breadth of experience in their home chapters, and working as a well-oiled machine towards a clear and common purpose, there is almost no obstacle it cannot overcome. At its heart, the Kill-team is designed to provide maximum tactical flexibility in most combat situations, an ability particularly well suited to the vagaries of combating xenos. The flexibility and versatility of the Kill-team also allows the disparate members to bring their unique skills to the fore and serve roles to which they are accustomed in furthering the team's goal. From infiltration to assault to dogged defence, the Kill-team is nearly unmatched as a basic combat unit. While newly formed Kill-teams, staffed by Battle-Brothers unfamiliar with one another and from chapters who might even harbour ill feelings toward one another are indeed quite capable, a truly experienced Kill-team with many missions under its collective belt is closer to a force of nature.

These highly experienced, extremely competent veteran Kill-teams are referred to colloquially among the Battle-Brothers on Watch Fortress Erioch as the Emperor's Hands. They have served together, suffered together, celebrated victories together, and been forged in the crucible of savage battle on a hundred worlds. They communicate with glances and body language more than words, and even when not

OURS IS WRATH
OURS IS VENGEANCE
OURS IS GLORY
FOR WE ARE
THE ANGELS OF DEATH

deployed in the field tend to work together, pray together, and train together. These close-knit units have mastered the unique combat styles of the Deathwatch, have proven themselves time and again to their superiors, and are thus given the most dangerous assignments available. Whether the situation calls for subtlety and infiltration or outright violence, it is one of the Emperor's Hands that is called upon to set the matter straight. Few in number, Kill-teams that have gained the honour of being called the Emperor's Hand

THE EMPEROR'S HAND

1,250XP

OFFENSIVE ROLES

Squad Leader

Feller of Giants

Shepherd of Battle

Overseer of Iron (400xp)

Preceptor of Shadows (600xp)

Wielder of Devastation (400xp)

OFFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Lightning Assault

Assault Entry (400xp)

TACTICAL MANOEUVRES

Staggered Advance

Covered Redeployment (500xp)

DEFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Take Cover

Fall Back (500xp)

DEFENSIVE ROLES

Builder of Towers

Guardian from Afar

Master of Stratagems

Bearer of Shields (600xp)

Herald of Signals (600xp)

Paragon of Zeal (400xp)

TABLE 3-1: ARMOUR OF THE EMPEROR'S HAND

Armour	Locations Covered	AP	Wt	Req	Renown
Armour of Brother Titos	All	12	170kg	55	Hero
Crimson Helm	Head	12	5kg	45	Famed

TABLE 3-2: WEAPONS OF THE EMPEROR'S HAND

Weapons	Class	Range	RoF	Dmg	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Req	Renown
Lokheira	Basic	300m	S/-/-	2d10+7 X	8	10	Full	Accurate, Tearing, Reliable	17kg	60	Hero

have reached the pinnacle of training and development in the Jericho Reach Deathwatch. Wherever they go, such units are afforded the respect and deference due to their standing.

RELICS OF THE EMPEROR'S HAND

The following relics are included for use with the Emperor's Hand Heroic Legacy Package. Unlike those presented in **Chapter II: Honour thy Ancestors**, these relics are not necessarily unique to the Battle-Brothers of any particular historic Kill-team. They are simply provided as archetypal examples of what kinds of relics a Kill-team might be assigned as veterans of the Jericho Deathwatch. The Game Master should feel free to substitute any relics, existing or of his own creation, to fit the current mission of the Kill-team.

The Armour of Brother Titos

Brother-Sergeant Titos was once a legend among the Battle-Brothers of the Deathwatch in the Jericho Reach. Seconded to the Deathwatch from the Minotaurs Chapter, Brother Titos was a veteran of countless savage campaigns against both the Orks and the Eldar. A highly respected commander among the Minotaurs, he was a warrior of great cunning and tactical genius, and was considered one of the finest leaders of men ever produced by that august chapter. Dour and stern-faced, Sergeant Titos kept his subordinates in line through force of will, gravitas, tactical acumen, and a deep, savage bark. His much battered visage was both striking and intimidating, and he could make even the most seasoned and strong-willed Space Marine biddable with his withering gaze alone. One of his eyes was piercing green, and the other a ruined pit bisected by a livid scar and covered with a leering augmetic eye the colour of a smouldering coal. He served for many decades in the Minotaurs' first company, accumulating numerous accolades, honours, and marks of distinction for his courage in the face of the enemy and his stalwart leadership. Among all of these items, the one most precious to his heart was an ancient and ornate suit of MkV "Heresy" pattern power armour said to have been made in the forges of Mars itself.

During his service at Watch Fortress Erioch, Brother Titos wore his relic armour on countless sorties against the slaving hordes of xenos infesting the region. He led his Kill-team to glorious victory time and again, often against incredible odds, and made it a point of pride that he never lost a Battle-Brother under his command. It was considered a great

TABLE 3-3: RELICS OF THE EMPEROR'S HAND

Other	Wt	Req	Renown
Council of the Under-spire Aerie	—	35	Distinguished

honour to be led into the field by Sergeant Titos, an honour that many members of the Deathwatch requested. Both he and his power armour were considered fortuitous, and it was believed that serving alongside the old Minotaur would cause some of that glory to be shared with all members of his Kill-team. Unfortunately, Brother Titos' string of victories ran out in the beginning of M39, during a battle with a previously unknown and incredibly dangerous xenos race discovered near the Slinnar Drift star cluster. While assaulting an enemy stronghold, the Kill-team led by Brother-Sergeant Titos was overwhelmed in savage close-quarters combat, deep beneath the enemy fastness, and slaughtered to a man. With the last of his strength, unwilling to have the remains of his brothers in arms defiled by the debauched xenos, Brother Titos activated the built-in teleport beacon in his armour, and he and the remains of his Kill-team were whisked away to the orbiting ship from which they were operating. Brother Titos survived the teleport, but died on the deck next to his squad mates, and his whispered final words are recorded as, "I have made but one mistake." Brother Titos' body and gene-seed were returned to his chapter, but his armour was granted to Watch Fortress Erioch by the Minotaurs' Chapter Master so that Titos' sacrifice might be remembered by all who serve in the Jericho Reach.

Many storied leaders have worn the Armour of Brother Titos since it entered Watch Fortress Erioch's reliquary. Still bearing the satin-black finish of the Deathwatch and the glaring, copper coloured bull's head livery of the Minotaurs, the suit is a marvel of ancient engineering. It is both lighter and stronger than other MkV suits, a result of the use of light-weight materials and more powerful internal systems, technologies long lost to history. While the increased strength and mobility is surely an asset on the battlefield, the armour's real power comes from the sophisticated command and control systems embedded in its helm and torso plates. Apparently designed as a squad-level command suit, Brother Titos's armour is equipped with numerous signal boosters,

a powerful multi-spectral ground-level auspex system for locating enemy units, an in-built teleport homer beacon, and a heads-up display that shows the bio-status readouts from every suit of Astartes Power Armour to which the ancient suit is connected. All of these systems combine to make a powerful command and control suite that grants a Squad Leader an incredible level of battlespace awareness and improves efficiency of command through quick and secure vox and data links. The suit weighs 170 kilograms and grants the wearer +30 to his Strength Characteristic. In addition, the command and control suite allows the wearer to use his Command Skill to affect a number of squads, armoured vehicles such as Rhinos, or Kill-teams equal to his Fellowship Bonus. This stacks with other Fellowship based Talents such as Iron Discipline and Master Orator. The comms suite also grants a +20 bonus to all Command Tests made by the wearer, and he may re-roll failed Command Tests.

The Council of the Under-spire Aerie

The veneration of those who have come before is a routine practice in the Imperium of Man. As the archeotech of ages past is a superior form of technology to those utilised throughout the galaxy of the 41st millennium, those men and women who lived through the history of mankind are intrinsically superior to their present descendants. Regarded as paragons of human history, many venerated ancestors have become near mythical figures in their own right. Amongst the Battle-Brothers of the Space Marines, such veneration is particularly vigorous. As each Space Marine owes his inherited wargear to a fellow Battle-Brother in service to his Chapter, the history of such objects takes on heightened significance. Even the genetic enhancements that define a Battle-Brother of the Adeptus Astartes can be traced through the generations of Battle-Brothers who served before him, back to the Primarchs themselves. It is no wonder that the Space Marines devote truly super-human levels of reverence and devotion to those who served the Imperium in ages past.

For this reason, even after death, it is believed that a citizen of the Imperium can serve still. The grand halls of Imperial governance and power fairly hum with the sound of minute repulsor-lift engines and the creaking flap of mechanical wings, each bearing aloft the countless servo-skulls that facilitate life in the 41st millennium. These servo-skulls act as messengers, scribes, pict-recorders and vox-thieves, auspex augurs, and infinite other sundry roles, taking the weight of minutia off the shoulders of those whose attention is in great demand.

To the Battle-Brothers of Watch Fortress Erioch, this notion of honouring the dead by animating them through the arcane science of the Deathwatch Techmarines is a means of utilising their collected wisdom and experience. Located at the bottom of one of the stalactite-like under-spires of the Watch Fortress, there lies a grand ossuaries of servo-skulls, each built from the remains of a venerated, veteran Battle-Brother. Given that the Deathwatch has existed in the Jericho Reach for many millennia, the number of servo-skulls residing within the Under-spire Aerie is staggering. It is not unheard of for veteran Battle-Brothers of the Jericho Deathwatch to seek the aid of their fallen Brothers in the form of servo-skulls from the Under-spire Aerie. As there are quite literally

thousands of servo-skulls residing there, a Battle-Brother of any sort can find aid from one revered ancestor or another.

When a Kill-team with access to the Emperor's Hand Heroic Legacy Package undertakes a mission, the Game Master is encouraged to give them access to the Council of the Under-spire Aerie. After swearing their Oath of Legacy, each Battle-Brother can choose one servo-skull from the Aerie to aid them in the mission to come. At this time, each Battle-Brother can choose any one Characteristic. Once per session, during the mission, a player can spend a Fate Point to automatically succeed at any one Characteristic or Skill Test associated with the chosen Characteristic. Doing so means that the Test is resolved in the minimum time required and the Battle-Brother gains a number of Degrees of Success on this Test equal to his Characteristic Bonus in the chosen Characteristic. This ability is granted directly by the aid the servo-skull provides—for example, the Devastator Battle-Brother of a player who chose Ballistic Skill might have chosen a servo-skull equipped with exceptional targeting arrays and prey-augurs, while a Librarian Battle-Brother whose player chose Willpower might have chosen a servo-skull laced with psychometric circuitry and a psy-resonant crystal matrix. The GM has final say on whether or not the servo-skull can provide aid to a particular Test. If a Battle-Brother has, for any reason, been separated from his chosen servo-skull, he cannot gain the benefits of the Council of the Under-spire Aerie.

The Crimson Helm of Brother Svarog

Little is known about Brother Svarog aside from the fact that he was a Techmarine and he stood numerous watches with the Deathwatch of the Jericho Reach in M35 and M36. His chapter of origin is a mystery, as is the majority of his time in the Jericho Reach. Most of the records of his service are lost or sealed away under strong wards and encryption in Watch Fortress Erioch's deepest data vaults. Those few extant records that mention this mysterious Battle-Brother are littered with blacked out data, redacted sections, mentions of missions and campaigns for which there is no historical record, and references to worlds and star systems that exist nowhere in the Jericho Reach. Obscure and arcane acronyms abound in these transcripts, and much of what is not censored is almost entirely unreadable. From what can be gathered, Brother Svarog was part of a veteran Kill-team whose members' records are also sealed. Some time during the early part of M36, all mentions of Brother Svarog in the Watch Station's history simply disappeared. His death is not recorded, nor is there any indication that he returned to his chapter. Presumably, the chronicle of his acts and his death, if they exist, are still locked away in the encrypted records, but those who delve too far into the mystery quickly draw the attention of both their direct superiors and the Inquisition agents aboard the Watch Station. The message is clear: leave what is in the past in the past.

Aside from the lasting mystery of his service, Brother Svarog left behind one other enduring legacy: the dark crimson helm from his power armour. As one would expect of a suit of Artificer Armour, the craftsmanship of this ancient helm speaks of both great skill as an armorer and a great artistic vision. The overlapping plates and hooded optical

ports, so distinctive of Techmarine armour, are fitted together with breathtaking precision, and the layers upon layers of circuitry, auspex systems, and other esoteric technological apparatus are well beyond what most common Space Marine forges can muster. The dense ceramite is covered in a rich, red lacquer possessing a strange and enchanting depth. Each of the overlapping plates of the helm are edged in burnished Adamantine, and in the centre of the forehead is the Cog Mechanicum, the skull and gear sigil of the Priesthood of Mars, embossed in brass and copper and chased with shining silver. Like nearly every other aspect of Brother Svarog's life, there is no existing record of his armour or what might have become of it. Only this helm and the scant details in his records are left to tell his story, and if the technology found in the silicon, ceramite, and data fibre layers of the helm is of his own hand, then it must be a story of great wisdom and technological achievement.

The advanced sensors built into this relic are designed to enhance sight and vision, and also to assist a Techmarine in his work of attending to the machine spirits of his squad's various pieces of wargear. As part of a suit of Astartes power armour, the Helm of Brother Svarog grants the wearer the standard benefits of power armour and artificer armour with the following additions. The Helm is equipped with a sophisticated sensor system that works as an Auspex/Scanner, found on page 174 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook, as well as a multi-featured sensor system designed to assist a Techmarine in diagnosing and soothing machine spirits. This collection of circuit tracers, energy meters, materials scanners, and other arcane technological marvels allows a Techmarine to assess the condition of a machine or vehicle with a glance, and to look through its cover to perceive the mechanical maladies that ail it. This system grants the wearer a +20 bonus on all Perception and Tech-Use Tests made to discern and properly diagnose damage to and problems with malfunctioning technology. In addition, the Helm features a built-in Master-Crafted Mind Impulse Unit and is coated with a molecularly bonded energy reflective finish, the striking crimson lacquer, that grants the wearer AP (16) against Energy Damage.

Lokheira

Of all the weapons stored in the armouries of the Adeptus Astartes, the bolt gun is the most iconic and evocative. Every bit as recognisable as Space Marine power armour, the bolter's incredible toughness and versatility make it indispensable. While they are built in countless patterns and tailored to suit nearly any tactical situation, bolters are typically select-fire weapons designed mainly to deliver a withering barrage of automatic fire with accuracy. Bolt weapons designed for single-shot, long-range, accurate fire are vanishingly rare, as the role of sniper rifle is commonly filled by needle sniper rifle, but they do exist. Bolt guns designed as sniper rifles are typically either hand built, unique weapons built by talented Techmarines, or obscure patterns built in small numbers at the behest of a particular Space Marine chapter for a specific campaign, such as the Stalker-pattern bolt gun. There are few of these uncommon weapons among the various arsenals of Watch Fortress Erioch, and each one is precious and unique. Among them is a singular weapon known as Lokheira.

Lokheira, meaning "rain of arrows," is a deadly and accurate sniper rifle born in the shipboard forges of the mighty Sons of Medusa. Carried by Brother Damastor, a cunning brother of the War Clan Atropos renowned for his marksmanship and skill as a scout and observer, Lokheira was built to the learned Brother's exact specifications. Brother Damastor stood his watch at Watch Fortress Erioch in M38, faithfully serving the Master of the Vigil. His steady hand, cool head, and immense knowledge of fieldcraft gained him a reputation as a reliable and hardy Battle-Brother, unflappable in the face of mind-bending danger and a terror to behold on the battlefield. Already an aged Son of Medusa and a veteran of countless campaigns, he stood a number of watches in the Jericho Reach over a span of decades. In late M38, Brother Damastor was grievously wounded during a bitterly fought campaign to free a star system from the clutches of a rampaging Ork warband. His body broken beyond repair, the venerated Brother was placed in stasis and returned to his chapter. Twelve years to the day from when he was returned to his brothers in War Clan Atropos, Brother Damastor returned to the Jericho Reach to stand yet another watch, this time encased in the powerful frame of a Dreadnought. Fully recovered and adjusted to his new life as a Dreadnought, Brother Damastor was greeted with full honour by those still at Watch Fortress Erioch with whom he had served in the past. Unable to use Lokheira, he gifted the weapon to the Deathwatch, and numerous Battle-Brothers have since wielded it in battle, often under the watchful eyes of Brother Damastor himself.

Nearly two metres long and based on a highly precise action of unknown pattern, it is clearly the weapon of a dedicated professional. The weapon is matte black with a dull green tinge that seems to absorb light. It is mounted with a powerful scope packed full of arcane imaging technology from the Sons of Medusa's tech-vaults, as well as a suppressor and a shot selector. Its internal mechanisms are constructed in such a way as to absorb much of the weapon's recoil. The machine spirits that inhabit Lokheira are particularly cunning, and over their long service they have absorbed much of Brother Damastor's skill and wisdom. Lokheira is a Master-Crafted Stalker-pattern Bolter equipped with a silencer, a fire selector, and an advanced optical sight that combines the features of a preysense sight, a red-dot laser sight, and a telescopic sight. It is single-shot only, is fed from a ten round detachable clip, and is built to absorb recoil. In addition, the machine spirits within the weapon use their long experience hunting xenos to assist the user in his work. This assistance grants anyone firing Lokheira a +10 bonus to Ballistic Skill Tests when fighting xenos and increases any Critical Damage inflicted by the weapon against xenos by +3.



III: FIGURES OF LEGEND



THE EXPLORERS OF AEONS

The galaxy is rife with ancient lore, mysteries lost to time, and beings so immensely old and alien that to understand them and their motives is to know the true nature of madness. Yet there are those who face the darkness and peer into the shadows. Whether seeking knowledge, power, or merely their own destiny, most find only ruin and desolation. Those members of the Deathwatch who delve into the darker mysteries of the galaxy are made of sterner stuff than mortal men, and do so to root out the threats that lie hidden, lost to time itself. Such Kill-teams leave a legacy of courage and honour, though their chosen path often leads them into the jaws of some unknown demise, far from Imperial civilisation or succour.

This Heroic Legacy Package represents a Kill-team that has witnessed the oldest and darkest things in the Galaxy and faced them with courage and honour. This is the Heroic Legacy Package players should purchase should they wish to follow in the footsteps of the First Martyr, featured in Chapter II. More information about the Companions of the First Martyr can be found on page 29.

LET NO EVIL
STRIKE IN SECRET

WITH THE FLAME OF
THY WRATH BRING LIGHT
TO THE DARKNESS

PURGE THE SHADOWS
OF ALL MALEVOLENCE

BE THE LIGHT OF THE
EMPEROR AND SCOUR THE
GALAXY OF FOULNESS

THE EXPLORERS OF AEONS

1,000XP

OFFENSIVE ROLES

Squad Leader

Breaker of Hordes

Finder of Ways

Shepherd of Battle (500xp)

Slayer of Heroes (500xp)

Wielder of Devastation (400xp)

OFFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Overrun

Assault Entry (400xp)

TACTICAL MANOEUVRES

Covered Redeployment

Feigned Flight (600xp)

DEFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Fall Back

Take Cover (400xp)

DEFENSIVE ROLES

Herald of Signals

Keeper of Wisdom

Master of Stratagems

Bearer of Shields (600xp)

Decimator of Fortresses (600xp)

Guardian from Afar (400xp)

THE BANE OF IDOLATERS

The faith of man belongs to the Emperor alone, though the galaxy is rife with beings and forces that would wish it otherwise. The Dark Gods of the Immaterium, the insidious Tau, and many others all seek to Turn the hearts of mankind away from their rightful devotion. It is not the responsibility of the Adeptus Astartes to ensure that those beset by temptation, doubt, and thoughts of heresy are either brought back into the right mind or even that they are excised like a cancer. That responsibility lies with the Ministorum and others. What duty rests in the hands of the Space Marines is to bring vengeance and wrath down upon those who would turn men to such disloyalty and ill-faith. Kill-teams visiting righteous hatred on such insidious enemies of the Imperium often find themselves cutting through those misguided men and women who have thrown off all allegiance to the Emperor of Mankind. It is the fate such Kill-teams to scythe the spiritual crop of their foes before they eradicate them root and all.

This Heroic Legacy Package represents a Kill-team that has confronted the living idols that would dominate the souls of men whose rightful place is toiling in the name of the Emperor. Players should purchase this Heroic Legacy Package should they wish to follow in the footsteps of Kill-team Sovereign-Sigma, featured in **Chapter II**. More information about Kill-team Sovereign-Sigma can be found on page 36.

WHO IS OUR FOE?
THE HERETIC,
THE DAEMON, THE ALIEN.

WHAT IS OUR WEAPON?
DUTY, HONOUR, SACRIFICE.

WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE?
VIGILANCE, VENGEANCE,
VICTORY.

THE BANE OF IDOLATERS

1,250XP

OFFENSIVE ROLES

Squad Leader
Finder of Ways
Slayer of Heroes
Breaker of Hordes (600xp)
Harrier of Foes (500xp)
Shepherd of Battle (500xp)

OFFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Enfilading Fire
Lightning Assault (600xp)

TACTICAL MANOEUVRES

Staggered Advance
Reinforce (400xp)

DEFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Saturation Fire
Holding Action (600xp)

DEFENSIVE ROLES

Denier of Witches
Guardian from Afar
Decimator of Fortresses
Keeper of Wisdom (600xp)
Master of Stratagems (500xp)
Paragon of Zeal (400xp)

THE DAEMON-SLAYERS

Though the Deathwatch strives against the worst horrors found in the depths of the void, even the most alien adversaries are nothing against the terrors found in the deepest darkness of the Warp. Chaos is Mankind's most ancient and dangerous foe, and it falls on any guardian of humanity, no matter his appointed task, to resist and dispatch the Daemon, wherever it lurks. However, the Daemon has well earned its title as humanity's most terrible adversary. Few can stand against a Daemon's combat prowess, and even fewer have the mental fortitude to resist its sanity-shattering presence.

Thus, though the Deathwatch might be tasked with eliminating the xenos from a galaxy that is rightfully humanity's domain, they must always be ready to strike at the foul scions of the Warp and send them back from whence they came. The Emperor's Angels of Death are among the few defenders of humanity who possess both the strength of arms and spirit to defeat the Daemon in body and in soul.

This Heroic Legacy Package represents a Kill-team that has slain the foulest beast of men's nightmares. Players should purchase this Heroic Legacy Package should they wish to follow in the footsteps of the Scouring of Andronicus Prime, featured in **Chapter II**. More information about Kill-team Scouring of Andronicus Prime can be found on page 43.

WITHOUT LOYALTY,
THERE CAN BE NO CHAPTER

WE HAVE PURPOSE

WITHOUT WAR,
THERE CAN BE NO VICTORY

WE HAVE PURPOSE

WITHOUT DEATH,
THERE CAN BE NO SACRIFICE

WE HAVE PURPOSE

THE DAEMON-SLAYERS

1,000XP

OFFENSIVE ROLES

Squad Leader

Overseer of Iron

Wielder of Devastation

Finder of Ways (400xp)

Harrier of Foes (500xp)

Preceptor of Shadows (600xp)

OFFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Assault Entry

Enfilading Fire (500xp)

TACTICAL MANOEUVRES

Reinforce

Covered Redeployment (500xp)

DEFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Take Cover

Holding Action (600xp)

DEFENSIVE ROLES

Bearer of Signals

Denier of Witches

Master of Stratagems

Decimator of Fortresses (600xp)

Herald of Signals (600xp)

Paragon of Zeal (400xp)

THE HEROES' LAST STAND

The Space Marines of the Adeptus Astartes are the most powerful warriors ever created by the arcane science of mankind. There are few in the galaxy who can stand before the might of a veteran squad of Space Marines, yet those few are the sorts of terrors the Kill-teams of the Deathwatch face as a matter of course. As such, even champions of the Imperium of Man as fearsome as a Deathwatch Kill-team must occasionally sacrifice all in the face of overwhelming odds. Given their limited numbers and the threats they hunt, it is no surprise that the Kill-teams who earn the honorific of "Veteran" are respected and admired by their fellow Battle-Brothers. Still, from time to time, even such vaunted heroes as these encounter a foe that is beyond them. In such a circumstance a veteran Deathwatch Kill-team sells the life of each member at a cost few adversaries are willing to pay, that they might cripple their enemies though they themselves will surely fall. Such acts of self-sacrifice and honour are often regarded as the greatest marks of a Space Marine's character and those who survive them would do well to emulate their Battle-Brothers in service to the Emperor.

This Heroic Legacy Package represents a Kill-team that has stood in the face of utter annihilation and made their enemies pay a heavy toll. Players should purchase this Heroic Legacy Package should they wish to follow in the footsteps of the Fifteen of Midael, featured in **Chapter II**. More information about the Fifteen of Midael can be found on page 51.

HE THAT MAY FIGHT,
HEAL HIM

...

HE THAT MAY
FIGHT NO MORE,
GIVE HIM PEACE

...

HE THAT IS DEAD,
TAKE FROM HIM THE
CHAPTER'S DUE

III: FIGURES OF LEGEND

THE HEROES' LAST STAND

1,500XP

OFFENSIVE ROLES

Feller of Giants

Harrier of Foes

Preceptor of Shadows

Breaker of Hordes (600xp)

Shepherd of Battle (500xp)

Slayer of Heroes (500xp)

OFFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Enfilading Fire

Overrun (500xp)

TACTICAL MANOEUVRES

Feigned Flight

Reinforce (400xp)

DEFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Holding Action

Fall Back (500xp)

DEFENSIVE ROLES

Squad Leader

Bearer of Shields

Paragon of Zeal

Builder of Towers (500xp)

Guardian from Afar (500xp)

Master of Stratagems (500xp)

THE ILLUMINATORS OF TRUTH

Though the Battle-Brothers of the Adeptus Astartes are each and all fearsome warriors, one must be more than a skilled combatant to be seconded to the ranks of the Deathwatch. A Kill-team must be prepared to operate in isolation and without any outside support; it must be able to handle a wide variety of situations as they develop. Not every problem can be solved with a bolt shell or blade, and thus the Deathwatch values intelligence, cunning, and quickness of thought as much as strength and stamina.

A Kill-team that can think its way out of a problem can be much more effective than one who resorts to violence at every opportunity. Many unconventional solutions contain the seeds of unforeseen opportunities, and the Deathwatch Kill-teams that embrace these solutions and actively cultivate these possibilities find their overarching goals advanced more quickly than they might otherwise have expected. In addition, some tasks can only be solved by quick wits and sharp cunning, meaning such groups succeed where all others fail.

This Heroic Legacy Package represents a Kill-team that sought truth in a time of great darkness. Players should purchase this Heroic Legacy Package should they wish to follow in the footsteps of the Martyred Hunters of Peratos, featured in **Chapter II**. More information about the Death in the Void can be found on page 58.

WHERE THERE IS UNCERTAINTY,
I SHALL BRING LIGHT.

WHERE THERE IS DOUBT,
I SHALL SOW FAITH.

WHERE THERE IS SHAME,
I SHALL POINT ATONEMENT.

WHERE THERE IS RAGE,
I SHALL SHOW ITS COURSE.

MY WORD IN THE SOUL SHALL BE
AS MY BOLTER IN THE FIELD.

THE ILLUMINATORS OF TRUTH

1,250XP

OFFENSIVE ROLES

Preceptor of Shadows

Shepherd of Battle

Wielder of Devastation

Feller of Giants (600xp)

Finder of Ways (400xp)

Harrier of Foes (500xp)

OFFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Assault Entry

Overrun (500xp)

TACTICAL MANOEUVRES

Feigned Flight

Staggered Advance (500xp)

DEFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Fall Back

Saturation Fire (500xp)

DEFENSIVE ROLES

Squad Leader

Keeper of Wisdom

Master of Stratagems

Bearer of Shields (600xp)

Builder of Towers (500xp)

Denier of Witches (400xp)

THE AVENGING ANGELS

The Space Marines possess a nigh-legendary ability to resist the corruption of the xenos, the heretical, and the daemonic, and such prowess makes them the front line of Mankind's war against the darkness that encroaches on the galaxy. Tragically, however, many of those who serve the Imperium alongside the Adeptus Astartes do not have the same mental fortitude. It is far too easy for many of them to be corrupted by the various forces they fight against, often so insidiously that their allies do not realise what has occurred until it is too late.

When this happens, the mettle of the Deathwatch brethren is tested to the utmost. Not only must they struggle against whatever foe they find themselves pitted against, but they must also deal with treachery from an unexpected quarter. Frequently, it is impossible to deal with both, and the Kill-Team must make the hard choice of which threat is ignorable, and what can be sacrificed so that the most critical success can still be won.

This Heroic Legacy Package represents a Kill-team that stood vigilant against the hordes that would consume mankind and, though few in number, wrought terrible retribution upon them. Players should purchase this Heroic Legacy Package should they wish to follow in the footsteps of the Lux Veritatis, featured in **Chapter II**. More information about the Fall of Herisor can be found on page 65.

LEAD US FROM DEATH TO VICTORY,
FROM FALSEHOOD TO TRUTH.

LEAD US FROM DESPAIR TO HOPE,
FROM FAITH TO SLAUGHTER.

LEAD US TO HIS STRENGTH AND
AN ETERNITY OF WAR.

LET HIS WRATH FILL OUR HEARTS.

DEATH, WAR, AND BLOOD;

IN VENGEANCE SERVE THE
EMPEROR AND THE
NAME OF DORN!

THE AVENGING ANGELS

1,500XP

OFFENSIVE ROLES

Squad Leader
Breaker of Hordes
Feller of Giants
Overseer of Iron (400xp)
Slayer of Heroes (500xp)
Wielder of Devastation (400xp)

OFFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Overrun
Lightning Assault (600xp)

TACTICAL MANOEUVRES

Reinforce
Feigned Flight (600xp)

DEFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Saturation Fire
Take Cover (400xp)

DEFENSIVE ROLES

Squad Leader
Builder of Towers
Decimator of Fortresses
Keeper of Wisdom (500xp)
Guardian from Afar (600xp)
Master of Stratagems (500xp)

III: FIGURES OF LEGEND

THE GATHERING OF CHAMPIONS

When direst circumstances call for direct and decisive action, the true heroes are those who did not expect the summons, but answer it anyway. It is one thing to fight knowing one is prepared for the trials ahead, that one goes into battle alongside trusted comrades in arms, and that one has received equipment equal to the task. It is entirely another to be suddenly confronted by a daunting task, and even though one is unprepared, unequipped, and unsure of his peers, to answer it without hesitation.

Every Space Marine in the Deathwatch is a peerless warrior who ranks above mere mortals, but even amongst these storied ranks, there are heroes. Often, these heroes are those who faced such trials without warning, and persevered beyond all expectations. Just as importantly, some of the strongest bonds of brotherhood are formed when strangers face certain death together and together manage to survive. Thus have some of the greatest legends amongst the Kill-teams of the Jericho Reach been born.

This Heroic Legacy Package represents a Kill-team answered the call of duty without hesitation or doubt and in so doing laid low a terrible traitor to the Imperium of Man. Players should purchase this Heroic Legacy Package should they wish to follow in the footsteps of the Seven Servants, featured in **Chapter II**. More information about the Seven Servants of Inquisitor Ramaeus can be found on page 73.

I AM A SWORD

MY NAME IS VENGEANCE

I AM A SHIELD

MY NAME IS PROVIDENCE

...

I AM RUIN

MY PURPOSE IS DEVASTATION

I AM DEATH

MY PURPOSE IS EXTINCTION

THE GATHERING OF CHAMPIONS 1,250XP

OFFENSIVE ROLES

Harrier of Foes

Overseer of Iron

Slayer of Heroes

Breaker of Hordes (600xp)

Feller of Giants (400xp)

Preceptor of Shadows (600xp)

OFFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Lightning Assault

Enfilading Fire (500xp)

TACTICAL MANOEUVRES

Covered Redeployment

Staggered Advance (500xp)

DEFENSIVE MANOEUVRES

Holding Action

Saturation Fire (500xp)

DEFENSIVE ROLES

Squad Leader

Herald of Signals

Paragon of Zeal

Builder of Towers (500xp)

Denier of Witches (400xp)

Keeper of Wisdom (500xp)



THE LONGEST WATCH

A NIGHTMARE
REVEALED

•

PORTENTS
CONFIRMED

•

A SECOND
REVELATION

•

DESTINY
AVERTED?

•

NPCs AND
ANTAGONISTS



CHAPTER IV: THE LONGEST WATCH

"Remain ever stalwart and let none escape judgment. A single man's failings may wreak havoc on the galaxy."

—Inquisitor Ghent

The Deathwatch has fought countless battles against the xenos and Chaos threats that constantly assault the Jericho Reach. Veteran Kill-teams have won victories against overwhelming odds, creating tales that shall live as legend until the galaxy cools. In spite of this, even the most renowned of heroes may be overwhelmed. When such tragedies occur, a new generation of heroes must complete the tasks that the previous generation have left incomplete.

This adventure presents the Battle-Brothers with just such a crisis. They must first trace the steps of a renowned Kill-team. After the Player Characters uncover the fate that befell those heroes, they are forced to assume the responsibility of completing the duty that has been left unfulfilled. For if the mission is left incomplete, the consequences for the Achilles Crusade are grave; a tradition of heroism might be badly tarnished.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

In 814.M41, shortly after the first Imperial encounter with Hive Fleet Dagon, a strike cruiser carrying a Deathwatch Kill-team learned of the Tyranid assault upon Herisor. Under the direction of Inquisitor Ghent, the Battle-Brothers altered their course and moved to immediately engage the xenos assault. The Deathwatch Kill-team—known as Lux Veritatis (see page 65)—aided the Storm Wardens in successfully repulsing the attack, though they fell, to a man, in the process.

The group of renowned Battle-Brothers gave their lives in an effort to recover a sacred and potent artefact from an Imperial temple upon the world; a temple that was directly in the path of the Tyranid advance. The precise nature of their defeat remains a mystery, though information concerning the xenos assault indicates that the swarm devastated the region. Due to the extreme conditions and severe losses, even after their victory was complete, the surviving Space Marines had little time to investigate the planet further. Consequently, the final fate of those Battle-Brothers remains unclear.

The adventure opens when the Player Characters—currently at Watch Station Erioch—hear chimes warning that the Omega Vault has opened. When they go to investigate its latest activity, Watch Commander Mordigael invites them to accompany him into the sacred place. In short order, they discover a repository for a spherical artefact, the first clue that they must recover a missing artefact for the Omega Vault.

Through seemingly endless research or a meeting with Inquisitor Ghent—a guest at the Tower of Brass—the characters learn of an artefact that might fit perfectly with the information obtained from their brief interaction with the Omega Vault. The Sphere of St. Aret was lost when a veteran Kill-team sent to recover it was overrun by Tyranids on Herisor. Even though the Inquisitor led the effort to cleanse Herisor of its xenos taint, the artefact and those who were sent to recover it remain lost. At their discretion, the Battle-Brothers may wish to learn more about the tale of Lux Veritatis at this time.

If the characters follow this lead to Herisor, they discover that the now forbidden planet is occupied by a significant group of deserters, who crash-landed on the world. The former Imperial Guardsmen currently struggle to survive in the world's hostile climate. Knowing the consequences of abandoning their duties, the deserters are understandably concerned about the arrival of a Space Marine force. The humans might be hostile towards the Battle-Brothers, and attempt to keep them from intruding upon their isolation. The Kill-team may eliminate the survivors, or they might exploit them to help in finding the temple where the Sphere once resided. In the course of their search, they uncover a sizeable nest of Raveners that now dwell where the artefact was once enshrined.

The lingering psychic signature of the artefact drew the Raveners to the temple. Any psykers among the Kill-team—or a

specially attuned servo skull, if there are no PC psykers—may discover a trail left by the artefact's potent psychic presence. The trail suggests that Ghent's agent may still possess the missing artefact. Following the faint remnants of a psychic signature, the Battle-Brothers may first uncover evidence that Chaos Space Marines of the Pyre Warband interacted directly with the artefact upon Herisor's surface. Further clues soon indicate that the sphere—and Darius Phine—left Herisor and travelled to Vanity, a world near the Hadex Anomaly. Vanity remains a highly contested world within the Cellebos Warzone, where the Kill-team is certain to face heavy resistance.

After a journey through the Warp, the Kill-team and their vessel arrive in contested territory. They may choose to immediately launch an assault upon the war world of Vanity, or they might wish to first meet with the senior Imperial Navy officer in the system at the time of their arrival. A meeting with the Commander may provide the Battle-Brothers with additional intelligence and the potential to contact allies upon Vanity's surface. However, it requires additional time—a commodity that may be in short supply, considering the power of the missing artefact and the seeming urgency posed by the Omega Vault.

When the Battle-Brothers land upon Vanity, they discover that a significant mutant population infests the world. The foul wretches launch repeated attacks upon the Battle-Brothers, in the hopes of eliminating any Imperial presence. Lingering effects from the Hadex Anomaly also prevent the Imperium from organising battle groups that are sufficiently large to easily overwhelm the disorganised mutants. A significant number of Chaos Space Marines—belonging to the Pyre Warband—also provide some support and direction for the mutant armies. However, there are loyalist Imperial regiments upon the planet's surface. These forces may be willing and able to assist the Kill-team.

Investigation and interrogation of the unholy wretches may lead the Kill-team to a minor outpost that the Pyre use to coordinate with the mutants. Alternatively, the Battle-Brothers might discover its existence from loyalist Space Marines already serving upon Vanity's miserable surface. By overcoming the Chaos Space Marines, the Kill-team may learn that the Sphere is definitely still on Vanity.

Unfortunately, the artefact is currently in the possession of a psyker who plans to use it as a key element in an unholy ritual. Though the Pyre members are uncertain of the ritual's exact nature, they know that its success could ensure victory for Chaos within the system. However, the forces of Chaos are a fractious alliance at best, and at least one of the traitors resents the fact that a recently arrived sorcerer might steal all the glory that should come with such a victory. Learning of the ritual, the Kill-team is honour-bound to recover the artefact before it can be completed. Otherwise, it might be impossible to recover the Sphere as the Omega Vault commanded. Similarly, if the ritual were to succeed, Chaos would be sure to inflict substantial casualties upon the Achilus Crusade forces active within the system.

WATCH FORTRESS ERIOCH

As the primary fortification for the Deathwatch within the Jericho Reach, Watch Fortress Erioch should be familiar to the Battle-Brothers. The base is detailed in the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook on page 329 and further described in **rites of battle** beginning on page 228. Game Masters are encouraged to utilise that information to better flesh out the look and feel of the fortification, as well as address any concerns the Player Characters might have about preparedness prior to embarking upon their mission. The description of the Omega Vault on page 332 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook specifically aids in framing the overall import of this mission. For purposes of this scenario, additional reading may not be necessary but can help to add depth and verisimilitude to the presentation.

Knowing that they must avert such a disaster, the Kill-team must hurry to reach the Pyre Warband's primary fortification upon Vanity, known as the Crucible. Any psykers among the Battle-Brothers may recognise that someone within the dark bastion has already begun the process of enacting an unholy ritual that calls upon the Warp. Before they can force the Chaos psyker to stop his actions, the Player Characters must overcome the fortification's substantial defences.

Hordes of mutants wait outside of the base. More than a squad of Chaos Space Marines, accompanied by a number of Daemons, secure the Crucible. The Kill-team must select a strategy that balances speed with survivability if they are to overcome the defences, while remaining effective enough to still challenge the sorcerer undertaking the ritual. A variety of different tactics may be applicable here, as the defenders—with good reason—believe their base to be very secure.

Even once the defences are breached, the Kill-team must choose an effective tactic to end the ritual. Poor choices may lead to disastrous consequences, as the ritual invokes a tremendous amount of Warp energy. If the energy is not safely dispersed, the uncontrolled power could unleash devastation upon the planet—and the Battle-Brothers. Unfortunately, a more cautious approach offers the psyker ample time to make his own counterattacks against the Player Characters. Depending upon their members and their skill set, the Kill-team may consider a number of different tactics before they manage to overcome the sorcerer.

The threat, however, need not end at that point. Over the past several years, the Sphere successfully corrupted a loyal servant of the Inquisition. Its success in that matter was not necessarily due to the victim's inherent weakness, but rather the artefact's immeasurable power. Unless the characters take measures of their own, they now run the risk of exposure to that same threat. The journey to deliver the Sphere back to the Omega Vault may be fraught with temptation, as the Sphere calls out to the Battle-Brothers, beseeching them to invoke its power.

SCENE I: A NIGHTMARE REVEALED

"The Emperor provides for our needs. We have but to heed His guidance to earn His rewards."

—Inquisitor Ghent

The adventure begins aboard Watch Fortress Erioch. The Battle-Brothers have recently completed an assignment and are undergoing their rituals of purification and restoration in preparation for the next threats they might encounter. As part of their mental cleansing and fortification, the Battle-Brothers are called to receive purification from a Chaplain serving on the Watch Fortress. Through the course of their missions, they have undoubtedly been exposed to heresies that must be appropriately cleansed from their memories. As the scene opens, read or paraphrase the following:

Kneeling before an ancient shrine, you permit your half-lidded eyes to pass over the cracked data slates and shredded scrolls adorning the altar. Repeating catechisms of cleansing, let the Chaplain's words scour the taint from your memory, obliterating all traces of corruption. The four hours of meditation have enabled you to achieve a state of calm and solitude, and the unwanted memories have begun to dissolve from your mind. Knowing that the process could take several more hours to complete, you are troubled to hear an ancient chime that seems to reverberate throughout the Watch Fortress. Stirred from your meditation, you suddenly realise that it was the sound of the Omega Vault opening.

The Omega Vault is in many ways the physical and spiritual core of Watch Fortress Erioch. Though there are none alive who understand its purpose or mechanism, any opening heralds an event of particular significance. Countless legends address the untold number of objects contained within its vaults. Some of these artefacts serve an obvious purpose, though at times a prophecy or puzzle may offer little to those who discover it. In all cases, the revelations are treated with the reverence they deserve, and one or more Kill-teams are immediately assigned to take whatever actions are necessary in response to the revelations.

The Battle-Brothers are summoned to investigate the Omega Vault and arrive at the facility at the same time as Watch Commander Mordigael (see page 335 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook). He acknowledges their presence and welcomes them to follow him through the now open doors to the vault. A trip into the Omega Vault is a rarity, even for the Commander. For the Battle-Brothers, this is likely their first and possibly only trip within its sacred halls. The smell of ozone merges with the sounds of countless buzzing devices to create an atmosphere that feels both sterile and spiritually charged. As they walk the halls, the Player Characters can hear the strains of ancient militant anthems playing faintly, which increase in



volume as they progress through the area. After a few minutes of travel through the vast, gothic corridors of the Vault, the characters reach the central chamber—the same vault where the newest secret is revealed.

Upon reaching the repository, they discover an altar-like structure, nearly two metres in width, and a metre in both height and depth. Resting atop it is a gilded reliquary, its lids opened to reveal a velvet-lined opening. An inset space within the reliquary reveals a storage location for what appears to be a spherical object, roughly thirty centimetres in diameter. A number of gauges and lights twinkle and belch gas from within the opening. A **Difficult (–10) Tech-Use Test** suggests that the reliquary is likely a stasis field generator, designed to isolate and preserve its contents.

Any psykers may make an **Easy (+30) Psyniscience Test**. On success, the character immediately recognises that there are faint traces from a powerful psychic artefact remaining within the reliquary. It is clear that millennia ago, something of tremendous power once resided within this place. With two or more Degrees of Success, the character also recognises that there are potent, though latent, psychic wards built into the altar. In the event that the reliquary is properly sealed, whatever is inside is certain to be isolated from any interactions with the Warp.

The reliquary is clearly not designed to be portable. In fact, it appears as though it is a physical extension of the altar, which in turn extends from the floor, with some cabling that may extend far beneath the level upon which they are standing. Any efforts to move the structure—in case the

Battle-Brothers wished to take it with them—are ill-advised. It is obvious to any Techmarine and to the Watch Commander that the stasis field generator is a permanent fixture. It is, of course, unclear how and why the Omega Vault revealed the structure at this time.

A single scrap of torn parchment rests upon the lip of the opening, bearing a brief script, that of an Oath of Moment. Written upon the parchment, in an ink that has badly faded, is the following message:

The courier fell, though his protectors gave all. The temple forsworn, the artefact lost. The world, now forbidden, starts the journey. Recovery forestalls defeat.

In spite of the fading, the script is ornate and easily readable at a glance. Tragically, if anyone touches the parchment, it immediately crumbles to dust, as though it had been unspeakably ancient. In spite of its disintegration, the Player Characters are able to immediately recall the words, as they are somehow emblazoned upon their minds.

There is nothing else of significant interest within the vault. After examining the scene, Watch Commander Mordigael asks the Battle-Brothers to swear an Oath to accept a mission to discover the artefact that belongs within this vault and safely return it. Given the conditions under which the mission has been revealed, he is prepared to offer them a generous degree of support. The Watch Commander suggests that they might wish to swear Oaths in this location, though he agrees that it is not the most appropriate place to discuss the full details of the mission.

OBJECTIVES AND REQUISITION

As the mission is assigned, none of the acting parties are fully aware of its implications. In spite of that fact, the Watch Commander appreciates the import of any revelation from the Omega Vault, and prefers that the Kill-team is adequately prepared to face the risks involved. Given the nature of those risks, he assigns the mission as follows:

- **Primary Objective:** Discover what occurred on Herisor that might be linked to the item discovered within the vault. (Skilled Objective, 25 Requisition)
- **Primary Objective:** Recover the missing artefact intact. (Veteran Objective, 30 Requisition)
- **Primary Objective:** Return the artefact to the Omega Vault. (Novice Objective, 21 Requisition)
- **Tertiary Objective:** Eliminate any targets of opportunity along the way. (Veteran Objective, 15 Requisition)

This provides each member of the Kill-team with a total of 95 Requisition (rounded up from 91) to begin the mission. As the Battle-Brothers discover more information, they might become alarmed about the degree of risk potentially involved with this mission. If the Kill-team further discusses the nature of the artefact with Watch Commander Mordigael after meeting with Inquisitor Ghent (see page 112), he assigns them an additional 25 Requisition. He also grants them permission to select equipment as though their Renown Rating is Famed, if it is lower—granting potential access to Terminator Armour.

Mordigael also makes it clear that the Kill-team has full access to a rapid strike craft so that they may complete the

mission with all due haste. Though he knows not where they might need to travel, he is confident that the recovery of the artefact is certain to take them far from Watch Fortress Erioch. As he leaves them to begin their investigation, he departs to issue the appropriate edicts so that a craft can be ready to depart as soon as they know their destination.

FIRST STEPS

Before the Battle-Brothers can even begin to prepare for the mission, they must first identify the nature of it. Some Player Characters may have background knowledge about the Jericho Reach, while others may have allies or followers who are particularly adept at deciphering prophecies. If the players are at a loss, an **Easy (+30) Lore: Common (Deathwatch) Test** suggests that they might begin at the Tower of Brass—home to the Inquisitor of the Chamber. The Inquisitor is certain to have insights regarding any prophecy of this sort.

If the Battle-Brothers decide to begin investigating matters on their own, prior to meeting with the Inquisitor, the task is an overwhelming one. They currently have a limited amount of information at hand. Examining the message and the background, they should be able to deduce the following without making any tests:

- The artefact that they seek to recover is spherical in shape, and roughly thirty centimetres in diameter. This information is based upon the size of the opening within the stasis field chamber.
- A squad of protectors lost their lives. As the prophecy is clearly directed towards the Deathwatch, this strongly suggests a Deathwatch Kill-team was directly involved in trying to guide the artefact towards its destination.
- The site is most likely a world within the Jericho Reach—the Omega Vault has not been known to herald events outside of this region.
- A forbidden world suggests one that has an Imperial Edict of Quarantine.
- A temple forsworn strongly indicates that the world was once inhabited by the Imperium. This also implies that forces allied with Chaos might have been involved.

Game Masters are encouraged to share these insights with the players. These inferences are readily apparent to their characters, but the players may not immediately grasp them. Understanding these initial leads is vital for the early interactions with the Inquisitor and his followers occupying the Tower of Brass.

With this information, any of the Battle-Brothers may choose to make a **Very Hard (–30) Lore: Common (Jericho Reach) Test**. On success, the Player Character realises that there are very few explicitly forbidden worlds within the Jericho Reach. This is largely due to the fact that the actions of the Achilus Crusade have left little opportunity for such Inquisitorial action. However, it could be argued that any of the region's death worlds might fall into this category, as Imperial forces are strongly discouraged from travel to such places, due to the inherent dangers. Similarly, any world that is known to be under the strong influence of Chaos or that has fallen to the Tyranid swarm might also fall into this category.

This substantially limits the lists of candidates to those closest to the Hadex Anomaly, a handful of death worlds, and many of the planets within the Orpheus Salient. Canny investigators may then decide to compare this list of systems with ones that are known to have previously had Imperial temples, places where a Kill-team fell, and any lists of known artefacts within these locations that might be of interest.

The challenge is that this creates an exhaustive list of material to sort through—an endeavour for which few Space Marines are particularly well qualified. Characters who wish to undertake this task directly must succeed at an **Hard (-20) Lore: Common (Jericho Reach) Test**. Success on this test reveals that Herisor is the most likely candidate world to begin a search. A Battle-Brother gains a +10 bonus to this Test for each of the facts listed above that he notes without GM intervention.

If any of the Battle-Brothers discover the connection to Herisor, point out that Inquisitor Ghent is currently visiting the Tower of Brass to work with Inquisitor Carmillus (see page 336 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook). This information provides an alternative entry to the *Ask the Inquisitor* scene below. In either case, the Battle-Brothers have access to the same information, but if they have already begun their research successfully, Ghent is far more impressed with their competence. This leads to a situation in which he is far more willing to provide them with any relevant information.

ASK THE INQUISITOR

When the Battle-Brothers make their way to the Tower of Brass, they are received politely, but coldly, by an Inquisitorial aide dressed in adept's robes. She inquires as to their purpose and is unceasingly polite, but uninterested, until they mention the Omega Vault. At that point, she immediately becomes thoroughly deferential. The woman politely directs the Kill-team to a receiving antechamber, and then sends a servo skull to Inquisitor Carmillus. The room holds several stone benches—designed to accommodate Space Marines in Power Armour—as well as a few better fitted for a human physique. A large table fills the room's centre.

The adept remains respectful for several minutes, desperately attempting to make small talk with the Battle-Brothers. She is clearly nervous, though the tension has less to do with their presence and more to do with disappointing the Inquisitor. If the Battle-Brothers give her any reasonable excuse to leave—even to fetch a cup of water—she demurely exits and then takes off at a dead run to retrieve an Inquisitor. After a few minutes, both Inquisitors arrive wearing dress that does not include their typical armour.

As the leader of the Deathwatch assault on Herisor, Inquisitor Ghent (see page 138) has the key information that the Battle-Brothers need. Inquisitor Carmillus (see page 336 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook) is the Inquisitor of the Chamber, but Ghent is currently visiting to discuss a matter unrelated to this scenario. When the Inquisitors enter the antechamber, Carmillus does so in response to the summons, while Ghent attends out of curiosity. The opening of the Omega Vault is a significant event, and both are concerned about its import.

The discussion from this point hinges entirely upon the material that the Battle-Brothers present to the Inquisitors. Initially, Ghent diplomatically defers to Carmillus, as the Tower of Brass is her home. However, if the text from the Omega Vault is shared, or if the Player Characters begin asking about Herisor, Ghent immediately takes the lead in the discussions that follow.

He first asks them for a detailed description of the chamber that opened. When the size and shape of the repository is described, his face lights up—it is immediately clear that he knows exactly the artefact that the altar is intended to hold. After an instant, however, his face darkens. He then recounts a story from his time cleansing Herisor.

In 814.M41, he was aboard the Strike Cruiser *Bellaron*, transporting a Kill-team of Deathwatch Space Marines. During their travels, they became aware of the dire Tyranid threat present on Herisor. At that time, Inquisitor Ghent took command of the vessel and the embarked Kill-team, redirecting them to that threatened world to aid the Storm Wardens who had taken up defence of the planet. Over the next six months, they fought a gruelling campaign of surgical lightning strikes to cleanse the world of the Tyranid contagion.

The battles were hard fought, and the Deathwatch Space Marines were slain to a man in the ensuing battles. Ultimately, the Inquisitor believed that the world was cleansed of the threat, though he chose to reclassify the planet, so that others might be spared. Numerous satellites were left in orbit, broadcasting warning messages, as part of the effort to ward off other Imperial craft from the system. Ghent realised that, even if the world were currently clean, it might be attacked once more by another tendrill of the Tyranid swarm. Similarly, if a few of the xenos might have escaped his notice, they could potentially breed a population large enough to conquer the world in the absence of Imperial forces.

THE TEMPLE

Once Ghent has provided the background information regarding Herisor, he takes a deep breath and prepares to dive into the specific details that are relevant to the investigation at hand. He recalls that there was one particular temple of interest on Herisor; its origins were unclear, but it clearly dated back at least to the time of the Jericho Sector. The old maps, which Ghent used to coordinate the cleansing of the planet, featured it prominently. However, there was little indication of the structure's devotion and no good records of its construction.

Roughly two-thirds of the way through the invasion, he had sent a Kill-team—designated *Lux Veritatis* (see page 65)—to reconnoitre the temple. Ghent also sent one of his personal aides, named Darius Phine, to accompany the Kill-team. It was Phine's responsibility to identify any artefacts of interest, so that they could be safely recovered for future processing rather than lost to the Tyranid horde. One artefact of particular interest was identified during this quick survey, and information was reported back through vox systems. Apparently, the artefact was an orb of indeterminate origin, which measured roughly thirty centimetres in diameter. Preliminary reports indicated that it bore a potent psychic

signature. While it was ensconced within an Imperial temple, its precise origins and purpose were unclear.

Ghent explains that he trusted the veteran Kill-team based upon their previous collective experience. Ghent had worked closely with Brother Decatru during previous assignments in the Reach, particularly on several incidents dealing with unidentified xenos. Similarly, his experience with Techmarine Nodens gave him great confidence that the Battle-Brothers would be more than capable of identifying and retrieving any artefacts of value. He also felt certain that the Kill-team would cooperate effectively with Phine, based upon his knowledge of all involved. This combination left him confident in the notion of sending the squad off on an extended detached assignment, in spite of the ever-present dangers posed by the swarm already active on Herisor.

Before the Lux Veritatis completed their survey, a large Tyranid force swept directly through the target zone. The attackers apparently used subterranean passages to access the temple, which gave the Battle-Brothers little advance warning of the attack. They did place an initial request for aid, but all contact with the Kill-team and Phine were soon lost. All preliminary indications suggested that the Kill-team members and Phine were all slain.

At this point, any of the Battle-Brothers may make an **Opposed Difficult (-10) Scrutiny Test** against Ghent's Deceive. Characters who succeed realise that he is withholding some information.

If they press him, he admits that Phine was reporting directly to him for the duration of the assignment. The two men exchanged a few last words before the sub-agent's comm-link went permanently offline. Phine admitted that he could hear a voice speaking to him as he held the orb. Phine noted that there was something about the voices that granted him composure and tranquillity even in the face of the imminent xenos threat. Ever since then, Ghent has sought to gain additional information about the artefact. However, he has not been able to find any definitive answers about its origin or purpose. Left with this lack of information, Ghent simply names the object the Sphere of St. Aret.

Several weeks passed after the loss of the Kill-team and the agent they guarded. The fighting on Herisor was intense and resources were thinly stretched. By the time Ghent was able to devote additional assets to once more clear the area and investigate the cause of the tragic loss, several weeks had already passed. Ghent apologetically admits that the follow-up investigation was never completed to his usually rigorous standards. By the time an opportunity arose, the *Bellaron* was desperately in need of a resupply, as were the forces on the ground. Instead, a cursory survey

was conducted which showed only minimal evidence that a conflict had ever taken place. A few pieces of ceramite were found at the site, along with multiple impact sites from bolter shots. Some of the ceramite pieces were clearly fragments of Phine's body armour. At the time, it was reasonable to conclude that the Tyranids had consumed the remains of all of the fallen, as well as the missing artefact.

Neither of the Inquisitors present are aware of any Deathwatch or Inquisition visits to Herisor since the *Bellaron*'s departure. Deathwatch resources are currently stretched thinly throughout the Reach. A routine inspection visit—to verify the absence of any xenos activity—is scheduled to take place within the next two years. Ghent is clearly not happy about that fact. He would like to travel there directly, but has been too burdened by other issues that required immediate attention. Based upon the direction of the conversation, he clearly expects that the Kill-team is headed to that world. He requests that they share their reports with him directly, particularly regarding any information about the Sphere.

If necessary to ensure their cooperation, Ghent admits that

he knows a few legends from Herisor about the Sphere's origins. He is willing to share these, though he is uncertain of their relevance to the mission at hand. Before recounting them, Ghent makes it clear to the Battle-Brothers that he does not trust any of these explanations. One explanation is that the Sphere is an artefact of xenos origin that successfully captured the spirit of an Imperial hero. Another suggests that the Sphere contains the machine-spirit of an ancient device, which had performed heroically before its larger vessel was destroyed. A few myths suggest that the item is a repository of psychic energy. Ghent may hint at a few other possibilities, but he remains unable to confirm any of them. Ultimately, he seeks to examine the artefact so that he can form his own opinion.

Finally, Inquisitor Ghent asks the Battle-Brothers if they have yet acquired a map of Herisor. If they have, he consults it briefly, and then marks the location of the temple on the map—also providing detailed coordinates. If they do not have one, he summons an adept to procure one from his rooms. In this case,



WITHOUT A PSYKER

If the Kill-team does not include a character with psychic abilities, Inquisitor Ghent assigns the characters a heavily modified servo skull to assist them in tracking the Sphere. He explains that the machine has been equipped to recognise specific resonant features of artefacts that might have a psychic potential. If necessary, the device might be able to track the artefact over an extended distance, once properly attuned.

the map he provides is one that he used during his previous journey to the site. In addition to marking the temple, it also includes notations about the previous engagements that he fought against the forces of Hive Fleet Dagon.

At this time, the Inquisition is unable to provide further support to the Kill-team. If the Battle-Brothers specifically ask, Inquisitor Ghent may provide a summary of Herisor's planetary conditions (see page 121). Note that this information is readily available through more routine channels as well. The information already imparted constitutes the entirety of their knowledge regarding the artefact and the world. Any additional assets must come through standard Requisition.

FINAL PREPARATIONS

Prior to departing for the mission, the Battle-Brothers must select a leader, undertake an oath, and select their armaments. As they are following in the footsteps of a historic Kill-team at this very moment, it is a perfect time for the Kill-team to purchase access to the Avenging Angels Heroic Legacy Package. If they do or have done so, or if the Kill-team has purchased another Heroic Legacy Package, they may wish to swear the Oath of Legacy, granting them access to their Heroic Legacy Package Roles and Manoeuvres. As the characters have surprisingly little information about the overall scope of the assignment at this stage, some groups may find this to be an exceptionally challenging decision. Particularly kind Game Masters might wish to hint, at this stage, that the mission might exceed the scope of Herisor. While there is certainly merit to making these selections based upon the expectation of fighting Tyranids, some of the later challenges may be more easily completed with a different set of gear.

As discussed under **Objectives and Requisition** (see page 111), the Battle-Brothers may wish to discuss their early findings with Watch Commander Mordigael. As noted, if they choose to do so, their Requisition for the mission is increased to 120. Depending upon their current level, they may also gain permission to select rarer equipment for this assignment. These additional resources may prove incredibly valuable given the nature of opposition that they are likely to encounter.

After these matters are settled, the Kill-team may report to one of Erioch's many hangars, where they discover that the rapid strike craft *Noctem Vigilate* is waiting. The vessel's commanding officer and navigator stand ready to depart as soon as the Kill-team is aboard. The trip to Herisor is already plotted, and the ship's crew has already prepared quarters for the Battle-Brothers.

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

If there is a particular artefact or item of power that the Game Master wishes to provide to one or more of the Battle-Brothers, this might provide an opportune time to introduce that item. The Battle-Brothers are embarking upon a mission at the direct behest of the Watch Commander in response to a summons from the Omega Vault. This represents a significant moment within their personal histories and the saga of the Jericho Reach. This could be an appropriate time for the Deathwatch to choose to honour one or more of the Battle-Brothers by entrusting them with an artefact associated with their Chapter.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS

The following NPC plays an important role as the characters begin their investigation and prepare to depart from Watch Station Erioch. Full game statistics for this character are included in the NPC Appendix, beginning on page 138.

INQUISITOR GHENT

Since earning the title of Inquisitor, Ghent has spent much of the past thirty years working closely with members of the Deathwatch in the Jericho Reach. During this time, he has developed a deep appreciation for the Chapter's methodology and abilities, as well as some understanding of their limitations. Though he readily defers to their expertise in matters of tactics and strategy, Ghent has been known to attempt to manipulate their strategies to suit his own beliefs and desires. He most often attempts to perform such manipulations by focusing on particular beliefs during his discussions and briefing with Battle-Brothers. While he is not always successful in these strategies, he continues to employ these techniques in the hopes that it may lead to a more thorough eradication of any xenos threats.

From a philosophical standpoint, Ghent is near fanatical in his devotion to the Imperial cause and the utter annihilation of all xenos. His faith in the Imperium is unshakeable, and he often pushes his compatriots to take extreme actions as signs of their devotion. The Inquisitor often ignores the theoretical limitations of his equipment and his compatriots, depending upon raw faith and determination to overcome any opponent.

Inquisitor Ghent's deepest failing is that tasks that remain incomplete haunt him terribly. He attacks all challenges obsessively, and attempts to follow any investigation to its final resolution, leaving no clues or leads left behind. On several occasions he has taken more than a decade to complete a task. To this day, he deeply regrets the fact that he was unable to leave Herisor without completing a more thorough cleansing of the planet's environment. Because of this, he desperately desires that the Battle-Brothers complete the task that he has left unfinished, so that he might ease his conscience.

SCENE II: PORTENTS CONFIRMED

"Any man who has turned from the light of the Emperor must be condemned to death as surely as any foul xenos who could never know His guidance."

—Ministorum Confessor Gotthold

The trip from Erioch to the Herisor system is largely uneventful. The voyage takes several relative weeks for the ship and passengers. The Warp is unsettled along the journey, and its influence prevents truly restful sleep—images of horrific xenos and unknowable Daemons haunt the dreams of all the passengers. In spite of this ongoing distraction, the Battle-Brothers may use this time to complete any final preparations for their mission. This might include additional reading, tactical drills, or time in meditation.

Unless these preparations are particularly relevant to longer-running campaign elements, Game Masters are encouraged to skip ahead to the events that occur as the voidcraft exits from the Warp, at the edge of the Herisor System. Alarm klaxons provide all crew and passengers with ample warning to strap in prior to the transition between the Warp and real space. From the perspective of the Kill-team, as passengers on the vessel, the transition seems to take place without incident. Alarming, though, after only a few minutes, the ship's commanding officer (Commander Huang, see page 121) summons the Battle-Brothers to the bridge. When they arrive, read or paraphrase the following:

As you enter the bridge, the usual calm and professional image is broken. Most of the crew members and servitors are silently tending to the rituals required by their workstations. However, Commander Huang is surrounded by two adepts and a servitor. Approaching his command throne, you see that the commander is reviewing a lengthy scroll that the servitor appears to be unspooling. The two adepts are both fighting for the Commander's full attention—so intently that they seem oblivious to the Kill-team's approach.

If any of the Battle-Brothers take a moment to eavesdrop, they can readily infer the nature of the conversation. One of the adepts is describing the wreckage that he has identified, clarifying that it appears to be a mixture of inorganic and organic elements. The other adept is determinedly trying to persuade the commander to immediately leave the system in response to an Inquisitorial warning beacon. If the Battle-Brothers ignore the adepts, Commander Huang provides this basic information when their conversation begins.

When the Kill-team members make their presence known, Huang immediately dismisses the adepts as well as the servitor, who respoos the scroll as he steps to the side of the bridge. The Commander first graciously thanks the Battle-Brothers for coming to the bridge so quickly. Then, he

explains that they have discovered two items of interest, one of which was expected and the other a surprise.

The expected information is that the Inquisition satellite beacons remain in orbit. These systems immediately identify Herisor as a quarantine world to any approaching ship. *Noctem Vigilante* has already sent routine queries to the probes, under the authority of the Inquisition, and received its recordings. According to those data-spools, there has only been a single Imperial vessel that travelled into the system since Inquisitor Ghent departed. If pressed on this point, the Commander admits that it is possible that a vessel—particularly one of xenos origin—might have travelled through the system without being detected. The beacons are limited by the choices of the Adeptus Mechanicus and might fail to detect a vessel that did not conform to Imperial design expectations.

The more surprising information is that the single vessel that did arrive was an Imperial Frigate, identified as the *Just Reward*. According to Deathwatch records, this vessel was assigned to the Achilus Crusade. It should be actively ferrying troops throughout the Orpheus Salient. As their records are not completely current with regards to every vessel assigned to the Crusade, Huang cannot offer any explanation for why it might have been so far from an active front. However, he can verify its current location—the frigate has crashed onto Herisor's surface. Even from the edge of the system, he can currently detect the wreckage upon its surface.

Information obtained from the beacons offers little assistance in explaining how or why the craft entered Herisor's atmosphere and crashed upon the planet. The frigate is certainly not designed for atmospheric entry. As it was the only vessel observed in the system, there is no evidence that it was directly involved in any sort of a conflict that might have left it severely damaged. Neither *Noctem Vigilante*'s augers nor the reports from the beacons show any marked increase in the amounts of debris present in orbit around Herisor. If a major conflict had taken place at that location, both of those systems should be able to find some trace of the wreckage.

If the Battle-Brothers ask, Huang can verify that the *Just Reward* arrived in the system just over three months ago. At its arrival, the vessel only undertook standard, automated communications with the Inquisition beacons. It did not attempt to query the satellites for additional information, nor did it provide any evidence of special authorisations granting permission to visit Herisor's surface. The frigate's commanders were canny enough to never manoeuvre within weapons range of either of the warning beacons.

Lastly, Huang can provide the Battle-Brothers with map coordinates for the frigate's crash site. If they take the time to check, it has landed only a few miles away from the temple that is their target location. Unless the Kill-team members have already provided this information to the Commander, he has no way of knowing their precise destination. The vessel's crew only knows that they need to deliver the Kill-team to the planet's surface, not their exact landing site. If no one asks, at the Game Master's discretion, the Commander may ask the Battle-Brothers for the map coordinates of their destination, so that he can let them know whether or not it is likely that they would encounter the wreckage upon the surface.

After all of this information has been presented, Huang explains that it should take roughly three days for their vessel to reach Herisor's orbit from the system's edge. He asks if they have any commands for this time. If the Battle-Brothers ask for clarification, he asks if he should attempt to initiate contact with the wreckage of the frigate. He also asks whether the Battle-Brothers would prefer for the rapid strike craft to proceed to Herisor at maximum speed, or if it should go on silent running, so as to reduce any chance of detection. If the Battle-Brothers have any other specific requests, the Commander does his best to accommodate them, within the limitations of his vessel.

Note that the rapid strike craft has a limited number of shuttles suited for atmospheric entry. It also lacks the cargo space and the supplies required to undertake any sort of rescue mission. The craft lacks a teleportarium. The Kill-team may either use a Drop Pod or a landing shuttle to land on Herisor's surface. The shuttles are only lightly armed and armoured, as they are intended for emergency use. For more information on the planet and its system, refer to the Herisor Gazetteer on page 121.

On silent running, the journey to Herisor's orbit is doubled to six days. As the Battle-Brothers are likely concerned about the amount of time they have to track down the Sphere, the additional three days may represent a significant concern. If they follow this approach, the survivors at the *Just Reward's* wreckage are completely unaware of *Noctem Vigilante's* presence in the system. Depending upon how they land, the Kill-team may take the survivors unawares. If they approach Herisor with all haste, the survivors become aware of the presence of an Imperial craft but make no effort to establish communications.

FIRST CONTACT

If the Battle-Brothers attempt to establish contact with the wreckage of the *Just Reward*, they are slow to receive any response. This is due, in part, to normal communications lag time between the edge of the system and the planet's surface. However, it more significantly due to the fact that Major Dzhorski (see page 121) is quite concerned about how to respond. He fears the consequences of any interaction with Imperial authorities, knowing that the outcome for his crew is certain to be dire.

The Kill-team may simply leave this matter in Commander Huang's hands. In that case, the Commander goes through the routine of establishing contact. He eventually reports to the Kill-team that the wreckage has some Imperial survivors, but that *Noctem Vigilante* does not have the assets required to be of assistance. As such, he plans to simply report the matter to the Achilus Crusade—through official channels—after the mission is completed. This largely sidesteps this portion of the adventure.

Alternatively, the Player Characters may choose to be the primary point of contact with the survivors. In this case, they interact with Dzhorski directly. These interactions should quickly reveal that the major is far more nervous than would normally be expected of an Imperial Guard officer interacting with Space Marines. Dzhorski tries to explain that the *Just Reward* arrived in the system after sustaining heavy damage during its journey through the Warp. He explains that the vessel had not been travelling to Herisor. Due to the severity of the damage, they were forced to make a landing here, as they had little hope of surviving a continued journey. A Battle-Brother can make a **Routine (+20) Opposed Scrutiny Test** at this point. On success, he realises that the Major is clearly making up the story as he goes.

If the Player Characters press him on this point, the Major tries frantically to recount the damages that the vessel suffers. With success on an **Elementary (+50) Tech-Use Test**, it is abundantly clear that he has no idea what he is talking about. As soon as Dzhorski realises how badly the conversation is going, he severs the connection. At that time, he immediately issues orders for his forces to prepare to repel an attack (see **The Survivors**, page 112).

If the Battle-Brothers instead pretend to accept his story, the Major politely refuses any offers of assistance. He does his best to persuade the Space Marines that his forces have already made contact with the Crusade. He implies that assistance is already on its way. This is a blatant lie, which the



Battle-Brothers may realise with success on a **Routine (+20) Opposed Scrutiny Test**.

Dzhorski and his troops are on Herisor after they fled from their duties to the Achilus Crusade. Knowing the price for failure and treason, he is not prepared to share any actual practical information with the Battle-Brothers at this time. His hope is that he can persuade the Kill-team to simply leave him and his crew alone. If he cannot, he realises that his only chance for survival is to defend himself from their attack to the best of his ability.

PLANETFALL

Based upon their approach, allow the Battle-Brothers an appropriate amount of time to undertake any last minute preparations prior to landing upon Herisor. Once those are completed and the three or six days have passed—depending upon whether they approach the planet silently or not—the Space Marines must decide how they wish to land upon the planet. This may either be via Drop Pod or one of the landing shuttles. Note that the Battle-Brothers are well aware that if a shuttle were to come under fire from the crashed frigate, it would certainly be destroyed.

Herisor's atmospheric conditions and climate are much as Inquisitor Ghent described them (see *Herisor Gazetteer*, page 121). The planet's surface is largely cold and barren. During the early stages of the Tyranid attack, much of the planet's atmosphere and carbon reserve were absorbed prior to the Deathwatch's arrival. While the planet remains habitable, it is far from a desirable environment.

The Player Characters may select their landing site at their own discretion. Finding a location that is beyond the horizon of the frigate is the easiest solution to avoiding incoming fire. If players are preparing to make a more direct landing, Game Masters may wish to offer this suggestion. Otherwise, the survivors from the wreckage of the *Just Reward* are certain to see a shuttle and have time and firepower to destroy it as it lands. If the Battle-Brothers are bound and determined to approach in this manner, they face certain death as the warship unloads all of its weapons upon it, effectively destroying it from under them.

Approaches from the ground are not vulnerable to this attack. The vessel's weapons are incapable of depressing far enough to accurately fire at ground-based targets, and even a fully armoured Space Marine is far too small for the targeting systems of the massive cannons. Similarly, while the frigate's sensors are certain to detect an incoming shuttle and may detect the orbiting strike craft, they are not designed to detect an object that is roughly man-sized. Using this approach, the Battle-Brothers may reach the frigate and the small human colony with little fear of detection.

THE SURVIVORS

The survivors from the *Just Reward*'s crash are not, strictly speaking, in direct opposition to the Battle-Brothers as part of their current mission. The deserters—primarily former members of the Maccabian 5th Regiment—would far prefer to avoid any contact with Imperial forces, as they hope to somehow survive in isolation upon Herisor's surface. At the

same time, these soldiers have abandoned their duties to the Imperium. Deserters are targets of opportunity, per their mission briefing. Finding and eliminating them is entirely subject to the Kill-team's discretion.

The wreckage and encampment are close enough to the temple that the Battle-Brothers may choose to interact with them. Notably, the deserters are more than just targets for elimination. As they have spent several months upon the planet's surface, they are familiar with its environment and its threats. Should the Space-Marines identify a way to open up a discourse—either civil or hostile—they could obtain additional information regarding their primary objectives.

The *Just Reward* fled from the battlefield after suffering light damage in conflict with Chaos forces near the Cellebos Warzone. At the time, the frigate was transporting a reinforced company of Imperial Guardsmen to the engagement. The damage destroyed the vessel's hangars, preventing it from having any way to effectively deliver the troops to the destination. In addition, a significant number of the ship's crew and command staff were slain in the process.

After fleeing from the battle in which it was damaged, the *Just Reward*'s commander chose to press the Imperial Guardsmen into temporary service as crew members. He intended this measure to keep the vessel functional for another Warp transit, so that the craft could reach a place of relative safety to initiate temporary repairs prior to completing its mission.

Things went awry when Major Dzhorski saw the damage that the vessel had sustained, along with the horrible loss of life. Crusade High Command made two terrible mistakes when they split this contingent apart for transport. The first was sending an unexperienced regiment into the brutal Cellebos Warzone. The soldiers were unprepared for the rampant loss of life. When they saw the hundreds of dead crew members, their morale began to falter. This made the second mistake even more severe—the company's Commissars had travelled aboard a separate craft, with the intention of reuniting upon their destination world. Without their devoted morale officers, the regiment's faith in the Emperor faltered.

When the frigate next emerged from the Warp, Dzhorski led a mutiny against the voidcraft's command officers. Given that many of his company's troopers held key positions aboard the craft, the effort succeeded with ease, so that he held control of the ship. However, most of the ship's officers remained staunchly loyal to the Imperium, dying in their efforts to suppress the mutiny. This included the craft's navigator and representative from the Adeptus Mechanicus. Dzhorski was left with no one knowledgeable enough to complete repairs and no way to transition the craft into the Warp.

Knowing the severity of the damages and the limited resources, the Major began scrambling to find anything that might preserve the lives of his mutinous companions. That was when he discovered the habitable world of Herisor within the system's boundaries. Through raw stubbornness and blind luck, the surviving crew members crashed the already damaged vessel onto Herisor's surface. Over the last few months, the survivors have begun the process of establishing a colonial existence, in isolation from the authority of the Imperium.

As deserters and mutineers, the colonists realise that they cannot re-establish contact with the Imperium within their

lifetimes. The punishment for their actions is certain, and inevitably terminal. At the same time, they are hardly equipped for establishing a permanent settlement upon Herisor's surface. They have already stretched the *Just Reward's* foodstuffs to near its limits. Few of the survivors have any of the necessary experience or knowledge required to establish the infrastructure for a colony. Further, the planet is inimical to life and the few remaining Tyranid xenos pose a deadly threat.

The mutineers were certain to die when the *Just Reward's* life-sustainers failed and the rations ran out. By reaching Herisor's surface, they managed to eliminate the need for the air purification systems. However, they have only delayed a seemingly inevitable death due to starvation and the ongoing xenos threat.

Disposition

The *Just Reward* was a Sword-class frigate, measuring more than 1.6 kilometres in length. When it impacted upon the planet, the vessel shattered, strewn components in a path that extends for more than five kilometres. The impact left a swath of devastation that extends for another twenty kilometres, nearly a kilometre in width. While some components—including many of the ship's sensors and weapons—still operate on reserve power, all of the wreckage is a shamble.

Roughly two hundred surviving deserters have established a small colony in the shadows of the wreckage. All of the structures are built from scrap pieces taken from the ship. The resulting settlement is an eclectic mishmash of staterooms and tents, often made from insulation or even tapestries torn from the vessel's walls. Massive cables stretch from the wreckage, providing power for heat and lighting to some of the structures. Some of the less stable looking buildings have chimneys built from the ship's ductwork, which belch black smoke. With success on a **Challenging (+0) Awareness Test**, any observers may note that the entirety of the camp is built upon segments of the frigate's armour plating.

The encampment huddles close to the remains of the ruined frigate. The entire encampment is just under a half kilometre in diameter, with several of the buildings directly abutted against the vessel. A massive gash in the side of the ship permits access between the wreckage and the camp. Four pairs of deserters occupy sand-bagged bunkers set up to keep a watch of the camp's perimeter. Each pair mans a single heavy bolter. Once night descends, a fire is lit at each bunker, providing both heat and light. None of the soldiers are equipped with any low light equipment.

All of the deserters are equipped with gear characteristic of the Maccabian Janissaries 5th Regiment. Some of the survivors are former crew from the *Just Reward*, but Major Dzhorski issued this equipment to all of them for the sake of consistency. A profile for the Maccabian Deserters can be found on page 138. Note that the resistance forces quickly move to engage the Kill-team forces as five hordes, each of Magnitude 40. Two Hordes engage the turn after the Battle-Brothers are spotted. An additional horde joins the battle each turn until all are engaged.

If the Battle-Brothers have previously established contact with the deserters, then the camp is actively preparing for an assault. As the defenders are expecting an attack, grant them

a +10 Awareness bonus to oppose any Shadowing or Silent Move Tests. Further, the camp is also sleeping in shifts, so that two thirds of the soldiers are always at battle-ready conditions.

If the Kill-team makes some attempt to open discussions with the camp, they need to be extraordinarily persuasive to do so. The deserters expect that any Imperial presence is certain to result in their deaths. Unless the Space Marines offer compelling evidence, the deserters are unlikely to be dissuaded from this belief. While individuals might provide some information under interrogation, as a whole, the group is prepared to fight to the death against intruders. Because of this, they do not attempt to retreat, even in the face of heavy losses and overwhelming firepower.

The deserters have two things that can be of significant assistance to the Battle-Brothers, though neither is easily obtained. The first asset is information. The former Imperial Guardsmen have spent months upon Herisor. They realise that there is a xenos presence on the world. In fact, they have lost many of their comrades to the remaining Tyranids. None of these survivors are able to identify the creatures by name, but from the descriptions of previous encounters, any of the Kill-team can identify them as Raveners (see page 140) with success on a **Difficult (-10) Lore: Forbidden (Xenos) Test**.

Any of the deserters know that the creatures are most active at night and often begin their attacks by emerging from the ground. This is actually the reason that the layer of armour was placed beneath the camp. It serves as a measure to reduce the number of xenos assaulting within the confines of the ramshackle village. The survivors have not encountered any other Tyranid creatures to date. They cannot confirm the absence of other creatures, but they have not seen anything to indicate that others are present. The soldiers are also aware that these creatures seem to be far more active near the abandoned town that is just a few kilometres from the wreckage. This is the same town that houses the Imperial temple, where the Sphere of St. Aret was lost.

Opening a dialogue with the survivors—specifically through Major Dzhorski—is the only path to the other significant asset. If the deserters can be persuaded to repent their failure, they could prove a critical asset for the Kill-team's assault upon the Tyranid-held temple (see page 118). However, opening a civil discussion is incredibly challenging, given the desperation and fervent nature of the former Imperial Guard. Initiating a meaningful discussion with Major Dzhorski requires some means of verbal communication. If that is secured, the Major begins at a Disposition of Very Hard (-30). This must be improved to at least a Difficulty Modifier of Ordinary (+10) in order to secure cooperation. Game Masters are encouraged to consider situational modifiers to the tests based upon any measures that the Kill-team might undertake.

If they succeed in their efforts, the entire camp swiftly mobilises to assist the Kill-team. During the assault upon the Tyranid forces, they readily surrender their lives for the cause of the Emperor, exhibiting the same zeal that they would otherwise show defending themselves against the Space Marines. Notably, their tactics on the assault are thoroughly selfless, as they very much wish to die as they attempt to slay the xenos.

ENTERING THE TEMPLE

When the Battle-Brothers choose to enter the ruined city, this scene begins. Based upon the map coordinates that Inquisitor Ghent provided, finding the precise location of the temple should be straightforward. In fact, even travelling to the location should be largely uneventful. Game Masters are, of course, encouraged to play up the disquieting nature of the environment. At their discretion, they may wish to call for Awareness Tests from all of the Player Characters. Upon receiving the players' responses, Game Masters should smile, nod, and roll dice or scratch notes in response. Then, explain that the Battle-Brothers did not notice anything out of the ordinary. These actions serve entirely to build tension among the players, rather than contributing to the actual events that follow.

At this stage, the Kill-team is travelling through the ruins of a city that was first destroyed by a Tyranid invasion, and then further annihilated by a concentrated orbital bombardment. Most of the structures have been reduced to rubble. Many bear the taint of Tyranid construction as well as the scorch marks of Space Marine firepower. Though some of the damage is concealed by drifting snow, the tragedy of the overall damage and loss of life is inescapable.

The first significant problem is posed once they reach the site of the temple. Due to the battles fought in the area, the structure has largely collapsed. From their knowledge of traditional Imperial designs, the Battle-Brothers should suspect that the relevant shrine would be located at the very back of the temple, past its nave. Due to the way the roof and



walls have collapsed, there is no easy path to reach this area. A casual inspection suggests that in order to reach the area, they must begin digging.

In point of fact, a huge swarm of twelve Herisor Ravensers (see page 139) transformed the ruined location into a nest. Separated from the Tyranid Hive Mind, these creatures were drawn to the psychic echoes of the Sphere of Saint Aret still present within the structure. After extensive burrowing beneath the temple, the floor eventually dropped several metres and the structure's foundation gave way. While the roof and walls have fallen in, the temple's floor level remains largely intact, just five metres beneath Herisor's surface.

The Battle-Brothers may use an Auspex or other appropriate gear to identify the large subterranean chamber. Success on a **Routine (+20) Tech-Use Test** reveals a chamber roughly three metres in height. The chamber is slightly smaller than the temple—roughly twenty-five metres in length by twelve metres in width. With two or more Degrees of Success, the acting character realises that there are several tunnels, each roughly four metres in diameter, which enter and exit the larger chamber. If the characters also choose to check for signs of life, the swarm of Tyranids within are also readily apparent.

There are, essentially, two obvious ways that the Battle-Brothers—and any NPCs that accompany them—may enter the Ravener Nest. The first option is to breach the collapsed structure to reach the interior. This is a matter of a **Very Hard (–30) Demolitions Test**, with bonus to the Skill Test determined by the quality of the explosives used. Blind, EMP, frag, incendiary, nova, stasis, and stun grenades provide no bonus to the Demolitions Test. Krak and plasma grenades provide the Battle-Brother using them with a +10 bonus. Melta bombs and vortex grenades provide the Battle-Brother using them with a +30 bonus.

Digging through the roof requires digging through two metres of unstable rubble. While hardly treacherous to a Space Marine, this remains a time consuming and loud process. By the time the Battle-Brothers finally break through to the nest, all twelve Ravensers have ample time to reach the location and lay in wait for the Kill-team.

The use of explosives or targeted weapons comes as a far greater surprise to the xenos. In this event, there are only six of the Ravensers present when the Battle-Brothers arrive. Every Round thereafter, Game Masters should roll a d10. On a result of 8 or higher, 1d5-1 additional Ravensers arrive at the scene. Continue making this test until a total of twelve Ravensers have arrived.

Finally, finding a nearby entrance to the Tyranid tunnels is trivially easy. In fact, if any of the deserters accompany the Kill-team, one points out an opening. Moving through the tunnels without alerting the Ravensers requires success on an **Opposed Difficult (–10) Silent Move Test** versus the Ravensers' Awareness. On success, only six Ravensers are present in the temple when the characters arrive. Further xenos arrive as described above. On failure, the Ravensers move to engage the Kill-team within the narrow (two metre diameter) tunnels. At the Game Masters discretion, some of the creatures may even burrow through the tunnel walls to surround the Battle-Brothers and their allies.

THE MISSING ARTEFACT

The altar where the Sphere of St. Aret once resided remains within the ruined temple complex. The collapse of the temple cracked the altar in numerous places. Constant contact with Tyranid exoskeletons wore down some of the surfaces. However, the psychic echoes from the Sphere are as yet undiminished. Any psyker who attempts to perceive the area is immediately aware that the altar guarded a powerful artefact for centuries.

The altar is not the only sign of the Sphere's presence or of the battle that was once fought over the artefact. Any psyker that approaches the altar may make an **Easy (+30) Psyniscience Test**. On success, the character immediately attunes his mind to recognise the presence of the missing artefact. After centuries residing in this place, the altar continues to bear the echoes of its presence. This psychic signature carries a feeling of calm and unnatural placidity. Anyone who attunes to the signature in this way can immediately recognise the artefact's trail.

Either by following that trail or searching the temple, the characters find portions of the power armour once worn by Veteran Kill-team Lux Veritatis. To the eyes of a Battle-Brother, the equipment is recognisable based upon a few surviving characteristic markings and modifications of each suit. However, their equipment is severely damaged. Investigation of the surrounding area indicates that this was the site of a serious battle. Other than the armour, there are no biological remains of the fallen Battle-Brothers. Presumably, the Tyranids consumed all of the organic matter.

With the psychic echoes identified, characters that have attuned to the Sphere may now recognise its trail beyond the confines of the temple. A clear path extends through the ruined city to a nearby hillside. Following the path further reveals a now-abandoned cave. There are numerous indications that someone dwelt within the cave for several weeks. Also contained within is a badly damaged suit of heavy carapace armour. By all indications, this is the suit that Phine wore in the service of Inquisitor Ghent. The suit bears the psychic signature of the Sphere, but its interior is badly burnt.

The trail of the Sphere continues from the cave up the peak of the hill. Examination of this area reveals that a landing shuttle arrived here. Based upon impact marks from the site, the shuttle landed hurriedly, and may have also left in the same fashion. Further investigation of the area reveals several pieces of ceramite, broken off from a suit of power armour. These look as though they might have been badly damaged in a serious fire fight. A **Challenging (+0) Lore: Forbidden (The Traitor Legions) Test** or a **Hard (-20) Lore: Forbidden (Heresy) Test** identifies the markings on the ceramite. This is clearly

WITHOUT A PSYKER

If the Kill-team does not include a character with psychic abilities, they should have the servo skull that Inquisitor Ghent assigned. The device immediately moves to the altar, where it attunes to the metachronal echoes of the Sphere. For the remainder of the adventure, the device's eye sockets glow faintly blue. It continuously attempts to lead the Kill-team to follow the Sphere's travels, always attempting to move in the correct direction.



taken from a Chaos Space Marine of the Pyre Warband. Those who are familiar with the group recognise that these heretics are most active on Vanity within the Cellebos Warzone.

If any of the Battle-Brothers ask any surviving deserters or check with the Inquisition satellites, there is no record of any other ships or shuttles having visited Herisor within the time frame suggested by the markings atop the hill. This suggests that the travellers had specific knowledge of the beacons and knew how best to avoid detection. If anyone takes the time and effort to coordinate the psychic traces with the locations and times of the satellite movements and the camp's patrols, they discover that this is definitely the case.

At this point, the Kill-team should realise that their quarry is most likely off-world, though they might have no exact destination. If the Battle-Brothers were unable to identify the iconography of the power armour at the landing site, the Game Master might need to do a little prodding. As the Battle-Brothers are leaving the landing site, they receive a vox transmission from the commander of the *Noctem Vigilante*. The master of the Astropathic choir aboard the voidship has had a terrible revelation. In the moments following the Kill-team's discovery of the temple, the entire Astropathic choir awoke in unison from a shared vision of fire and blood. Surging as one from their sleeping coffins, the astro-telepaths each scratched a portion of one conglomerate star-map before each, in turn, collapsed. This void-chart has directed the commander of the *Noctem Vigilante* to the planet of Vanity.

HERISOR GAZETTEER

Just a few years ago, in 814.M41, Hive Fleet Dagon attacked Herisor. The timely arrival of Strike Cruiser *Bellaron* largely cleansed the planet of contamination. However, even a force led by more than fifty Storm Wardens Space Marines was inadequate to preserve the world's ecosystem. Herisor's original settlers were long since lost as were the Iaxian Tithe Guard who discovered the invasion. The world that remains is badly damaged. Only extreme effort or the passage of geologic time could hope to return it to one well suited for human habitation.

This is because the planet's ecological resources were laid waste in the wake of the initial Tyranid assault. Within human records, there is little evidence that Herisor ever held an abundant array of life forms. However, its atmosphere was oxygen rich, and its climate was well within the acceptable range for human habitation. The ecosystem was largely free of toxins, and water—though scarce—was present in sufficient quantities to sustain a human population.

During its initial advance into the Orpheus Salient, the Achilus Crusade established an outpost to exploit the planet's Promethium reserves. At that time, Herisor still had a small human population that had dwelt upon the world for millennia. In the wake of Hive Fleet Dagon's invasion, all of those humans are believed to have been consumed. The status of the Promethium resources remains unknown, but it is likely that they were significantly drained. This is because the Tyranid assault upon the world had advanced significantly before the Deathwatch intervened. The initial invasion decimated the human population, and began to exploit much of the planet's atmosphere. Oxygen, vital carbon compounds, and a significant portion of the world's water were all siphoned off to feed the Hive Fleet's void-based organisms. By the time the Imperial reinforcements arrived, these assets had already left the system, so that they might be used to assault other nearby worlds.

Even as the xenos continued to scourge Herisor's surface, the changes to the atmosphere led to longer term climate change as well. With reduced levels of carbon-based molecules in the atmosphere, Herisor became much less capable of sustaining warmth. Consequently, the planet's surface has chilled to the point that even equatorial regions have year round snowfall. Of course, with the decreased levels of water, such snows rarely lead to significant accumulation. Prior to the arrival of Hive Fleet Dagon, much of Herisor's surface was largely barren wastes. With the decrease in resources, there is very little plant or animal life on the world's surface. Previously existing life forms were poorly suited for these dramatic shifts in temperature and atmospheric pressure. It is likely to take a very long time before new organisms might naturally grow and adapt to suit the now vacant ecological niches left behind.

In spite of all this, Herisor does remain a habitable planet. The temperatures are cold and the air is thin, but it remains capable of supporting human life for the long term. It presents a challenge, however, as the arid and chill environment make agriculture difficult. The lack of native life also means that any settlers are entirely dependent upon agriculture to obtain their essential nutrition.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS

The following NPCs play important roles as the characters reach Herisor and begin to track down the missing artefact and the lost Kill-team. Full game statistics for these characters are included in the NPC Appendix, beginning on page 138.

COMMANDER HUANG

The commander is a middle-aged man from a family that has served the Imperial Navy for countless generations. He is a capable tactician, who once held dreams of commanding a battle group. More than twenty years ago, those hopes were terribly dashed when the frigate he commanded was destroyed in a conflict with xenos forces. As the commanding officer, Huang's failure and survival was frowned upon by high command.

Consequently, they chose to reassign Huang to service with the Deathwatch. In the intervening years, he has come to deeply respect the tactical expertise and skills of the Space Marines with whom he has served. While he maintains an authoritarian posture with his human crew, Huang is completely subservient to any Battle-Brothers. He fully realises that his role as a ship's officer can only endure so long as he succeeds in his missions and the Kill-teams he transports are successful. This has led him to assume a very pragmatic approach to command.

Commander Huang dutifully obeys any requests made by the Space Marines. However, he carefully offers his input on any tactical decisions they make that might place his craft at risk. When he believes their orders may involve unnecessary risks, he attempts to persuade them to utilise a more cautious approach. These attempts are always made in the most obsequious way possible. He believes that he is more familiar with tactical decisions involving voidcraft than most Space Marines, so he attempts to offer his advice, though he lives in constant fear of drawing their ire.

MAJOR DZHORSKI

An officer of the Maccabian 5th regiment, Dzhorski was deeply devoted to the Imperial cause, but terribly inexperienced when he was assigned to the Achilus Crusade. He earned his role as an officer by right of birth and faith in the Emperor. After his regiment travelled to the Jericho Reach, Crusade command assigned Dzhorski's company to support duty within the worlds of the Iron Collar. Over the course of several years and assignments, the group never even saw a xenos or engaged in battle.

By the time the company was finally assigned to the Cellebos Warzone, Dzhorski's faith and confidence had both faltered. He had heard countless tales of the brutality of battle, and witnessed the survivors of countless units consolidated into new battle groups. His uncertainty and doubt began to infect his men, such that none of them remained comfortable with the idea of a proper battlefield engagement.

The Major now deeply regrets his failure, but is unwilling to see his men die in a meaningless battle. While he is terrified of the consequences of reuniting with the Imperium, he cannot bear the notion of dying outside of the Emperor's grace. If someone can manage to restore his confidence, Dzhorski's zeal and faith might return. In short order, he and his men could become willing martyrs for the Imperium of Man.

SCENE III: A SECOND REVELATION

"Greed lies at the heart of all evil. Those who accept the graces granted by the Emperor are certain to achieve lives of quiet contentment."

—Missionary-Sister Brianne Quentyne

Whether through their own observations at the landing site, or through the revelation of the astro-telepaths aboard the *Noctem Vigilare*, the Kill-team now has the information they need to decide on a course of action. Regardless of the source, it should be straightforward for the Kill-team to determine that their next destination must be the world of Vanity (see page 127) in the Celebos Warzone.

The journey from Herisor to the Acheros Salient is a time consuming one. The trip does not require any specific encounters, but the Warp is turbulent throughout the trip. Passing through the Shadow in the Warp created by Hive Fleet Dagon and close to the Hadex Anomaly leads to a truly nightmarish experience, even by the usual, harrowing standards of Warp travel. Game Masters are encouraged to add in an additional encounter en route to truly hit home just how tempestuous this trip is. Possibilities might include a ghost ship found within the Warp, an attack on the vessel by Daemonic forces, or even an unfortunate chance encounter with a vessel in the service of the Chaos Gods. Any such encounters, however, should be peripheral to the primary task of recovering the Sphere. With this in mind, while these chance encounters should be dangerous, they ought not to be crippling to the primary mission.

At their discretion, the Battle-Brothers may choose to interact with the Imperial Navy officers coordinating fleet vessels within the Vanity System. As the Deathwatch typically tries to have little involvement with the Achilus Crusade, this meeting is strictly up to the Kill-team. By meeting with the lead officer, Commander Brashnir (see page 128), the Space Marines can learn a great deal about the current disposition of the Pyre Warband. However, they are unlikely to gain significant military assistance. Further, the Commander is likely to request that the Kill-team provides assistance in other matters, which are not directly related to their mission. Inquisitorial authority allows the Battle-Brothers to ignore these requests, but such a decision may create a decidedly uncomfortable situation.



SYSTEM COMMAND

Commander Brashnir is the commanding officer of the small battle group of Imperial Navy vessels currently stationed in the Vanity system. At this time, her craft are in the midst of an extended standoff with several Chaos-aligned vessels also present in the system. The two groups have taken positions near the system's edge, each carefully monitoring the movements of the other. Irregularly, craft break off from each group to either resupply Vanity or to leave the system. Intermittently, additional vessels have arrived with loyalties to either side—but never enough to break the stalemate.

The Commander is excited to meet with the Space Marines, as she hopes that their presence may be a sign of additional support. If they reveal the reasons for their mission, or at least begin to question her about the ground-based situation, she becomes visibly flustered. The Commander soon explains that she had hoped their arrival would herald additional reinforcements. In order for the Crusade to eventually cleanse this system, and the nearby ones, they need additional assistance.

In an effort to garner such assistance, the Commander initially offers to provide the information the Battle-Brothers need in exchange for their help. Essentially, she wants them to visit one (or more) of the Chaos-affiliated vessels and capture, cleanse, or at least destroy the craft, so that her forces may have a temporary advantage. Brashnir believes that given such an advantage, she could soon eliminate the Chaos threat posed by these traitorous voidcraft, which would offer

TURNING THE TIDE

Because of the dispersed nature of Imperial deployment upon Vanity, the Kill-team is the single most potent Imperial force on the surface. Other Imperial officers recognise this fact in the early stages of any discussion with the Battle-Brothers. As a consequence, these NPCs are certain to pressure the Kill-team into helping them to win the planet from the traitors that control so much of it.

Undertaking such a task would be time-consuming and largely beyond the scope of this scenario. Further, defeating the Sorcerer Kole Soulfire and recovering the Sphere may have a much more significant impact than any more direct actions that the Kill-team could take against the larger forces. Because of this, any such encounters are not explicitly presented here, even though the NPCs are likely to pressure the Player Characters into acting in this way. If a larger scale conflict seems like an essential factor to the battle, Game Masters are encouraged to present such a fight as one that might seem monumental to the NPCs, but hardly measures up to the other actions of the Kill-team. In such a case, use several Magnitude 20 hordes of Herisor Mutants (page 140) supplemented with a few Chaos Space Marines (see page 363 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook). After a successful battle, the Imperial forces become grateful for whatever assistance the Battle-Brothers offered. This makes them much more cooperative allies in the scenes that follow.

A MINOR ISSUE

If the Battle-Brothers are unable to resist Brashnir's persuasive efforts, they find themselves agreeing to participate in an assault on a Chaos Infidel Raider. The vessel has been making regular transits between the outer boundaries of the system and Vanity. Brashnir is unclear if these runs are merely to ward off an Imperial advance, or if there is a greater tactical design. Regardless, the Commander needs to eliminate the vessel, but cannot safely split her forces to accomplish this goal.

Her solution is to have the Kill-team board the target vessel on a boarding torpedo. Once aboard, they shall need to make their way to the voidcraft's engines with a supply of two melta bombs per Battle-Brother. Placing these at key points near the vessel's plasma containment systems should result in a spectacular detonation, which is certain to destroy the vessel. Of course, fighting to that region and ensuring that the bombs explode as intended is a challenging endeavour.

If the Kill-team agrees to undertake this mission, the assignment is peripheral to the task at hand but also extremely helpful to the Imperial cause within the Vanity system. The target vessel has a crew of more than a thousand devotees to the Ruinous Powers, but the vast majority of these are crew members who pose no meaningful threat to a Battle-Brother. A single unit of Chaos Militia (see 364 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook) serve aboard the craft to defend against any boarding actions. The unit may be split into two Hordes, each of Magnitude 30. Navigating to the vessel's engine room is time consuming but not inherently challenging. Placing the explosives requires success on a **Routine (+10) Demolitions Test**. Game Masters should use their discretion to decide if the Kill-team creates some means to prevent anyone from disarming the melta bombs, while the Battle-Brothers make their escape from the doomed vessel.

a tremendous advantage to the ongoing conflict. Brashnir makes a strong case in favour of this approach; see *A Minor Issue* in the sidebar above.

Once that matter is resolved, or if the Player Characters have persuaded Brashnir to assist them without compensation, she can share the following information and resources. The Commander has access to the most up-to-date maps of Vanity, along with the most current deployment information regarding Imperial forces. She offers this information with the caveat that as the state of war is constantly in flux, the locations could change far more quickly than her contacts are able to update the information.

Based upon the information, it is clear that there are Space Marines of the Storm Wardens and Flesh Tearers Chapters currently deployed upon Vanity. At the Game Master's discretion, additional Space Marines of the same Chapter as one or more of the Player Characters may also be present. The loyalist Space Marines are deployed in a dispersed fashion, generally in combat squads, to avoid the attention of the planet's restless spirits. The combat squads attempt to coordinate their actions closely, but the high levels of radiation interfere with their communications equipment.

In addition, Imperial records indicate that there should be a contingent of Adeptus Mechanicus Skitarii deployed upon

Vanity. However, if they remain active, their current location is unknown. These soldiers should be capable of surviving the effects of Vanity's high-levels of radiation, but they are most effective working in much larger groups than is typical for Space Marines. It is unclear if the lack of communication might be due to their dispersal or if the group was overcome by the planet's renegade forces.

If the Kill-team has been exceptionally persuasive, Brashnir can provide an escort into the system for *Noctem Vigilante*. With this support, the characters may substantially reduce their travel time into the system, and may far more carefully make their landing (see *Local Entanglement* on page 124). Finally, Commander Brashnir may provide names, descriptions, and personality briefings for the highest-ranking Imperial Guard officers upon Vanity. Based upon her recommendations, the Kill-team may be able to more effectively requisition any help on the ground as needed, including troops best suited for specific types of tasks.

Notably, the Commander is not intimately familiar with the disposition of enemy forces upon Vanity's surface. She has heard the name "Pyre Warband" before, but she does not know anything helpful about their numbers, tactics, or deployment. Instead, the Commander encourages the Battle-Brothers to discuss such intelligence matters with the Imperial Guard upon

SKITARII ON VANITY

In spite of the fact that there is believed to be a Skitarii force upon Vanity, the Battle-Brothers do not have any interaction with that group. Essentially, introducing these characters would exceed the scope of the scenario and might also offer the Kill-team a resource that could make the following conflicts less challenging. If the characters wish to devote time to finding out the fate of the Adeptus Mechanicus forces, it may be worth a reminder that this information is outside the scope of their current mission. Such delays could provide the Chaos forces with time to do something inconvenient with the Sphere.

the surface, as they are certain to be better informed.

Finally, even if the Battle-Brothers are unsuccessful in their discussions with Commander Brashnir, she warns them that any landing upon Vanity is likely to be extremely dangerous. Both Imperial and renegade forces are well aware that every battle is highly dependent upon the arrival of reinforcements. Both armies constantly watch the skies for any signs of incoming transports. She believes that the Space Marines should be prepared to face heavy resistance from the moment they enter the atmosphere. That resistance is certain to become even more hostile when they reach the ground, as particularly violent battles have been known to erupt around any landing site. The battle lines on Vanity are so interwoven that virtually any location is certain to draw unwanted attention.

LOCAL ENTANGLEMENT

Vanity (see page 127 of this book and page 347 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook) is an endless warzone. However, due to the influence of the spirit creatures that inhabit the world, the war is primarily fought by small groups. This tactic is used to avoid interaction with the unknowable creatures, which invariably takes place whenever larger groups of humans assemble. The native mutants are a clear exception to this, as they are resistant to both Vanity's radiation and the influence of her spirits.

With little information to go on, the Battle-Brothers are unlikely to have any strong basis for selecting a landing site. Given the fact that the planet's battlefronts are in a constant state of flux, this is unlikely to be a significant issue. Similarly, their means of landing is unlikely to be as significant an issue. Neither the Imperial nor the Chaos-aligned forces have a significant aerial presence upon Vanity. While entering the atmosphere is certain to draw attention toward their landing site, the Kill-team is extremely unlikely to encounter either fighters or significant anti-aircraft fire.

Once the Battle-Brothers reach the surface, the situation is certain to change substantially. When the Battle-Brothers prepare to exit their landing craft (either a Drop Pod or a shuttle) read aloud or paraphrase the following:

Though you had come to expect that there might be a swift response to your landing, the reality of the matter still comes as a surprise. Even as your craft descended, you heard the sounds of light weapons fire ricocheting off the armoured hall. Checking the view screens, you see that a swarm of mutants is already charging blindly towards your landing position. Their individual weapons are largely unthreatening, though in great numbers they might overwhelm your position. The horde must be dealt with swiftly, or else it might be challenging to leave Vanity once the task at hand is completed.

When the Battle-Brothers look outside of their landing craft, they can see that a huge swath of Pyre Mutants (see page 140) is descending upon the ship. These are dispersed into six hordes, each of Magnitude 40. The hordes are blindly firing upon the landing craft as they sprint towards it. While they are armed with autoguns, they have little skill in their use. Rather, the mutants swarm the Kill-team, attempting to overpower them with sheer weight of numbers.

The mutants are barely intelligent, and any understanding of tactics is far beyond them. They are also fiercely devoted to their Dark Gods, readily surrendering their lives in the service of those unknowable masters. Because of this, the mutants are unlikely to be intimidated by overwhelming force, and unable to offer any intelligent response to most questions that might be posed.

The one exception to this rule is if one of the Battle-Brothers somehow manages to question a mutant about the Pyre Warband. Communications are certain to be challenging, due to the fervour of the mutants and their limited understanding of Low Gothic. However, if that barrier can be overcome, a mutant does have a general notion of the direction the Kill-team must travel to reach the Pyre's nearest fortification, known as the Torch. Notably, even if the mutant is convinced to be as helpful as possible, the directions are hardly coherent or particularly accurate. A journey made following his advice travels through at least two additional mutant encampments, each loaded with additional hordes, and takes two full days.

If the Kill-team persuaded Commander Brashnir to share full information about planetary deployments, they may attempt to land near one of the expected deployment sites. In this case, they can establish communications with a combat squad of five loyalist Space Marines. Unless the Game Master has a specific Chapter he wishes to use for this purpose, the combat squad should be of the Storm Wardens Chapter. In contrast with any other communications efforts made upon Vanity, this should succeed on the first effort.

The Space Marines are a five-man tactical combat squad. All are equipped with bolters. The squad seems pleased to meet with the Kill-team, both because of the unexpected support and in the hopes of hearing news from off-world. They are willing to cooperate on any strategy that the Battle-Brothers might offer. These Space Marines have been deployed on



IV: THE LONGEST WATCH

Vanity's surface for nearly a year. They are intimately familiar with the planet's environments and dangers. They are also aware of the location of the Pyre Warband's nearest fortification. That site, known as the Torch, is just over a day's travel from the landing site.

These deployed Space Marines may be able to establish contact with additional combat squads. This is subject to the Game Master's discretion. Notably, introducing an increased number of Space Marines to coordinate with the Kill-team may substantially change the overall difficulty of the assignment. The threat posed by the planet's spirit entities does present a strong argument against a large assembly of Imperial forces. Because of the known inherent dangers, the other deployed squads are understandably reluctant to coordinate as a larger force.

Kill-teams that did not obtain any information from Commander Brashnir have a much more difficult time establishing communications with Imperial forces upon Vanity. Any initial contacts are outside their current line of sight, so the communications attempt suffers the planet's inherent -20 penalty. Some groups might even completely ignore loyalist assets (particularly if they are unable to establish contact) instead choosing to ignore those associated with the Achilus Crusade as they concentrate on finding the Sphere to complete their mission. This tight focus is certain to make their task much more challenging; without those contacts, they can only use the Chaos-aligned forces to track down the Torch's location. In this situation, Game Masters are encouraged to be flexible, so that the Battle-Brothers may be able to track down the opposition in a timely fashion.

SANDSTORMS

The volatile and radioactive sandstorms can be devastating to anyone stranded in the open on Vanity's surface, including a fully armoured Space Marine. The storms often come from seemingly clear skies, descending upon the characters with little warning. Noticing a storm ten minutes before its arrival requires success on a **Challenging (+0) Survival Test**. For every additional degree of success, the characters receive an additional five minutes of time to prepare. Preparations typically involve digging a trench or finding a cave. Spotting an available cave for shelter in time requires success on a **Difficult (-10) Survival Test** and ten minutes. Digging a trench large enough to provide adequate protection requires fifteen minutes.

Characters caught in the open by the storm are completely unable to communicate with those beyond its boundaries, due to the intense radiation that flares up. Further, any gear exposed to the elements may be damaged. Gear with Craftsmanship better than Common is reduced by one level. Common Craftsmanship equipment becomes far more prone to failure. Such weapons Jam on an unmodified result of 91 to 00, armour suffers -1 AP, and any piece of powered equipment fails on an unmodified skill test result of 96 to 00. These effects remain in play until the gear is repaired in a fully equipped and clean location.

THE TORCH

This section begins when the Battle-Brothers have committed to identifying the nearest Pyre fortification upon Vanity. Regardless of their landing site, this location turns out to be the Torch. This small outpost is manned by only a single squad of Chaos Space Marines and a Chosen Terminator, who leads the group. An Imperial battle group would have little trouble overwhelming such an outpost on most worlds, but due to the dispersed nature of loyalist forces here, the fortification represents a significant opponent.

The journey to the Torch may be very straightforward, especially if the Kill-team works in concert with Space Marines who have been previously stationed upon Vanity. Alternatively, just finding the location could involve a significant amount of work, as the Battle-Brothers overcome wandering bands of Herisor Mutants. This is especially the case if the Player Characters are operating without any advance intelligence or Imperial support. In either case, as they travel across the planet's radioactive surface, they may encounter a sandstorm (see page 125) at the Game Master's discretion.

Initial contact with the Torch should play out based upon how the Battle-Brothers identified the location. If they knew the general area, and were cautiously advancing to find it, then they should have the option of making a stealthy advance and attempting to scout out the fortification prior to launching their attack. Alternatively, the Kill-team might be searching the area and stumble into the base as they try to seek shelter from a sandstorm. In the first instance, they are likely able to carefully identify the base's weaknesses and attack at a moment that the Chaos Space Marines are most vulnerable. In many of the alternative situations, the traitors might detect the Kill-team far in advance of its arrival. In this situation, the Player Characters may be ambushed at a time when they are not fully prepared to defend themselves.

Game Masters should use their own discretion in setting up this situation. If the Battle-Brothers have been cautious and worked to take advantage of every possible resource, then it is far more reasonable for the approach to have been planned—effectively granting them the upper hand in the engagement. However, if the Kill-team has brashly advanced, ignoring every opportunity to prepare themselves for possible risks, then it is far more appropriate for them to face opponents that are well prepared for their arrival.

The Torch is a twelve metre by twenty metre bunker. The majority of the structure was created by digging a one metre deep trench. Rubble was then piled up three metres above ground level to create substantial cover. One viewport, roughly a metre in width,

is present in each of the bunker's four walls. The roof is simply a tarpaulin made of animal skins, stretched across the structure's roof. All of the walls offer 16 Armour Points of protection. The roof is largely to offer shelter from any sandstorms and to block line of sight.

The bunker is manned by nine Chaos Space Marines (see page 363 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook) and Chosen Goethe Darkflame (see page 129). One of the Chaos Space Marines is equipped with an Astartes Heavy Bolter. These traitor Space Marines keep three squad members on watch at all times. However, they seldom leave their bunker. They consider an assignment to this watch post an insult, far below their standing. Their primary responsibility is to regularly oversee the current status of the Pyre Mutant tribes in the region. While they are ostensibly prepared for an attack, they do not believe that there are any forces in the region that could constitute a meaningful threat.

If the Kill-team successfully surprises the Chaos Space Marines, they may be able to swiftly shatter their morale. If two or more of the renegades are slain in the first two rounds, the remainder attempt to flee. At that point, the Battle-Brothers may gun down the heretics or attempt to take one or more prisoner for questioning.

In spite of their efforts to escape, the traitors are not likely to willingly surrender. Unless they are outnumbered by more than two to one, the renegades attempt to find a place to regroup and counterattack after two Rounds. If the Battle-Brothers attempt to open a discussion or interrogate any survivors, treat their initial Disposition as Arduous (–40) for any Interaction Skill Tests.

If the Kill-team successfully interrogates one or more of the Chaos Space Marines, they do obtain the location of the primary Pyre fortification on Vanity, known as the Crucible. They are also able to confirm that the Sphere taken from Herisor is currently at that site. Under these circumstances, the traitors even go so far as to state that a Sorcerer who travelled from that world is currently preparing to enact a ritual that should be able to fully exploit the artefact's powers.

Alternatively, if all of the Chaos Space Marines are slain or prove too resistant to interrogation, the Battle-Brothers may be able to search the bodies or the bunker for additional information. On Chosen Darkflame's body (or in a secure case left at the bunker), they discover a map of Vanity. The map clearly indicates their current location as well as the location of the Pyre's Crucible base. It is roughly a two day journey to reach the fortification.



VANITY GAZETTEER

The Vanity system represents a valuable asset to the Achilus Crusade, due to its proximity to the Hadex Anomaly and the mineral wealth of its dense asteroid belt. The once habitable world of Vanity, however, is only valued because of its strategic location. Only those who are hideously twisted by the Warp have any hope of surviving upon its cruel surface. The indiscriminate use of Atomics in ancient times left the world a barren place, disrupted only by the ruins of its once populous hive cities. More information concerning Vanity can be found on page 347 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook.

ENVIRONMENT

An inarguably barren world, Vanity's ecosystem was utterly destroyed when its hive cities declared war upon one another. The combined nuclear detonations damaged the world beyond measure. A significant portion of the world's atmosphere and much of its water was lost when a series of combined detonations blasted matter clear of its gravity well. Disruption to the ionosphere and troposphere also exposed the planet to increased levels of cosmic radiation. As mountains were flattened and the atmosphere thinned, the planet's ambient temperature dropped by more than twenty degrees.

Consequently, nearly the entire surface of Vanity is a barren desert, covered in radioactive ash. With few exceptions, many of the mountains were flattened. There are no trees or animals to disrupt vision. Lines of site often stretch clear to the horizon, only interrupted by the vicious dust-storms that often swirl through the planet's thin atmosphere. These open views have significantly impacted the war for control of the planet, as the amount of cover available is surprisingly limited.

During the intervening millennia, a trip through the Hadex Anomaly actually served to make Vanity even more hazardous to mundane life. When the planet emerged from the Warp, its inhabitants included previously unknown spiritual entities. Anecdotal reports indicate that these creatures are the angry spirits of those who died when all of Vanity's hive cities were destroyed. Whether or not this claim is accurate, the fact remains that the spirits are violently opposed to any who dwell upon the world—with the clear exception of some who follow the Ruinous Powers. Their presence is yet another clear threat to the Imperial forces that attempt to reclaim the world.

The high levels of background radiation significantly impact all vox communications. Any attempts to establish communication at a distance beyond line of sight requires a Successful **Very Hard (–30) Tech-Use Test**. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the Warp is also unstable on the planet. Focus Power Tests for any characters that are not allied with the Ruinous Powers suffer a –20 Penalty.

FORCES ENGAGED

Since the Achilus Crusade reached Vanity, the world has been in a constant state of war. Compared to most other worlds within the Jericho Reach, Imperial forces are represented primarily by Space Marines. This is because even a short visit to the world's surface spells certain death for any soldier of the Imperial Guard. The heavily modified soldiers loyal to the Adeptus Mechanicus

are the only other loyalists who can survive within the radioactive waste for more than a few hours. Because of this, the entire Imperial military operation upon Vanity numbers only a few hundred soldiers. Although many of these are Space Marines, the sheer scope of the engagement has limited their overall progress.

In sharp contrast, the Stigmatius and its allies have a broader range of forces that they can deploy to hold the wasteland. The world's surviving population of hideously deformed mutants has an inbred resistance to Vanity's background radiation. Years of war and the depravations of the Ruinous Powers should have reduced the population of these near-mindless brutes, but somehow their numbers still remain overwhelming. The Pyre Chaos Space Marine Warband has also committed a significant force to holding Vanity. The reasons for their devotion to this world have been unclear, but their presence has significantly reinforced the efficacy of the Chaos threat. In numerous engagements, at times when Imperial forces were set to overwhelm the mutant hordes, Pyre's intervention has turned the tide, transforming a sure victory into yet another protracted engagement.

TACTICS

All of the Imperial forces (primarily Space Marines, but also a limited number of soldiers in service to the Adeptus Mechanicus) operate in small units, typically of less than twenty members. Larger groups are prone to encounters with those entities claiming to be Vanity's fallen. These forces are extremely destructive and disruptive to the soldiers that dare to intrude upon their world. As such, the risks associated with fielding larger units offset any possible advantages that might be gained by employing more traditional battlefield tactics.

This has led to a situation in which the war for control of the planet most resembles a battle for turf warfare fought by two guerrilla organisations. Even the most significant of the world's fortifications are hardly suited to resist an effective siege or heavy assault, as there are no forces capable of assembling such an attack. Instead, small units attempt to coordinate enough that they can seize and hold a reasonable region of the planet's surface while eliminating enemy threats. The problem is that these units are often spread so thinly across Vanity that opposition forces can often infiltrate between groups to seize locations that had been previously secured. The limited communications between allied forces serves to substantially limit the success of this tactic.

The level of constant give and take has led to a consistent stalemate upon Vanity. As countless Imperial lives are given for the cause, there is very little evidence of ongoing success. Any functional effort to secure a site invariably leads to an intervention on the part of the lost souls. Only if those entities are somehow eliminated can the Imperium have a means to ensure long term success by chasing all of the Chaos contamination from the planet.

In many instances, units have found that the most effective means to secure any location is simply to dig a bunker or trench and hold their ground against any assault. This is typically effective until either a sandstorm erupts or a massive horde of mutants arrives. For this strategy to ultimately succeed, the Crusade would most likely need to commit significantly more assets to Vanity than have been made available to date.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS

The following NPCs play important roles when the Battle-Brothers first reach the Vanity system. Full game statistics for these characters are included in the NPC Appendix, beginning on page 138.

COMMANDER HILGA BRASHNIR

A no-nonsense tactician, Commander Brashnir has command of the Imperial Navy vessels currently operating within the Vanity system. Currently, this is a small group consisting of three cruisers and several escort vessels. She is absolutely determined to successfully seize control from the Chaos forces in the Vanity system. She acknowledges the overwhelming odds, so she attempts to leverage every possible advantage to ensure that the Imperium can triumph as quickly as possible. Though she is fiercely devoted to the Emperor, she is pragmatic enough to accept that faith alone is not enough. Instead, she constantly evaluates every resource at hand.

She reviews every debriefing report and new bit of intelligence with this same care. As she assembles this information, she also views the information itself as an asset that must be carefully dispensed. While those under her authority must understand the dangers they confront in order to achieve success, she also realises that at times, she must withhold select information to manipulate her charges into taking paths that are better for the Crusade.

Though the commander realises that she has no authority over the Battle-Brothers, she also knows that her information represents an asset that may be traded for their assistance. In the hopes that their actions might have an effect that could change the face of the war for the system, she wants to leverage her resources to best exploit them. She accepts that such an approach fails to show the Kill-team the respect that they are due, but she believes that the war effort is more important than a matter of Imperial politics.

CHOSEN GOETHE DARKFLAME

Darkflame has been a member of the Pyre Warband for centuries. Over that time, his hatred for the Imperium and its corpse-Emperor has been repeatedly fanned and now it can burst into flame in an instant. His devotion to the Dark Gods is a distant second to his ire towards those who bend their knee to the Imperium. The only facet of his personality more powerful than his burning anger is his incredible sense of self-preservation. Though he welcomes combat with those he considers beneath him, he is not too proud to retreat from any situation in which he believes the odds are not in his favour. This aspect is somewhat offset by the fact that the renegade has an exceedingly high opinion of his combat prowess.

Currently, the Chosen believes that this task is a rebuke from the ascendant champions of his warband. Consequently, he holds a deep grudge against the higher ranking members of the warband. Darkflame is particularly resentful of the Sorcerer who arrived with the Sphere, as he considers him an inexperienced upstart. While he does not know the exact purpose of the artefact, he does know that Sorcerer Soulfire has some elaborate ritual planned, which could have lasting effects on Vanity. While he would love to see the conflict on the planet quickly resolved, he does not wish to see the Sorcerer credited with that success.



SCENE IV: DESTINY AVERTED?

"There is no fate that decides our actions. If we have the faith and courage to adhere to the Codex, we shall triumph, no matter what some warp witch might proclaim."

—Brother-Captain Agemman of the Ultramarines

Knowing that the Sphere has fallen into the hands of a sorcerer, the Kill-team must scramble to reach his location. Once there, they need to rescue the precious artefact before it might be used in an unholy ritual. Not only could the dark rite have serious repercussions for the Achilus Crusade forces upon Vanity, it might also destroy the Sphere. Of course, the route is hardly easy, and the characters might be relying upon the word of a traitor to find their way. Careful decisions must be weighed as the Space Marines must choose between speed and necessary caution to advance upon the heretical forces.

Chosen Darkflame may have provided directions to the Crucible. Because he desires to see the Sorcerer fail, those directions are straightforward. They do not offer the Battle-Brothers a means to easily bypass the fortification's defences, but they also largely avoid excessive entanglements. Alternatively, the Kill-team might be dependent upon directions from a traitor who was more loyal to the Pyre's cause or could be using a map retrieved from the previously defeated outpost. In either of these cases, these indicators are certain to direct the Battle-Brothers into a trap.

Resolve the effects of these different leads to the Crucible as follows:

- If the characters rely upon information from Darkflame, he provided them with the best possible routes into the facility. Any Silent Move Tests are made with a +10 bonus.
- If the characters use directions taken from another traitor, these are deliberately misleading. Any Silent Move Tests are made at a -10 penalty.
- If the characters use the map recovered from the watch station, they must infer the routes on their own. They have no penalties or bonuses to Silent Move Tests.

Unless the Battle-Brothers have secured some means of ground transportation, the most direct route to the Crucible is a two day trip over land, through Vanity's unforgiving terrain. Depending upon the source for their directions, Game Masters may choose to add an additional day to their travel time or insert an encounter with another encampment of Pyre Mutants. Additional travel time might increase the dramatic tension of the ritual, as Sorcerer Soulfire could be far closer to completion by the time the Kill-team reaches the Crucible. Another mutant encounter should serve largely as a distraction—though fleeing mutants might alert the Pyre Chaos Space Marines to the fact that loyalists were active in the region.

THE CRUCIBLE

The Crucible is both a staunch outpost and a symbol of the Pyre Warband's devotion to the Ruinous Powers. Its central tower stands only fifteen metres above the world's surface, but the facility's support structures and working quarters extend more than a hundred metres beneath the ground level. Flames that seem alive constantly flare and spurt continuously across the tops of each of the building's walls, but these bear so little heat that the building is scarcely visible at any significant distance, due to the radioactivity in Vanity's atmosphere.

When the Kill-team first comes within sight of the fortification, at a range of roughly three kilometres, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

From the moment you could see its peak at the edge of the horizon, you knew you were seeing your destination. Only the Pyre would be so bold as to have a fortification that was wreathed in flame on a planet as dim and grey as Vanity. The planet's ambient radiation is certain to prevent the building from being a beacon to orbital assault, but the structure is an all too tempting target for anyone that can see it from the surface. Getting closer, though, you realise that in spite of the hubris in its design, the building is clearly an eminently defensible structure. Assaulting the walls to reach the site of the ritual is certain to be dangerous.

From a distance, the structure aptly resembles its title; it appears as a massive Crucible, flickering in Vanity's thin atmosphere. As the characters get a closer look, either by approaching or using vision magnification, the details become more clear. The fortification consists of a central tower, of a daunting height. An outer, roughly circular, wall surrounds the inner structure. This wall stands roughly six metres tall. The top of the outer ring wall is wreathed in flame, as is the top of the central tower.

The walls and tower are illuminated by the flames enough to show flame-like paintings in the Warband's characteristic orange and black scheme. Some portions of the outer walls glow with red light, resembling embers. At a distance, it is unclear if this is a reflection of the flames, or if it is some sort of additional illumination. The lower portion of the outer walls is difficult to make out. With a successful **Ordinary (+10) Tech-Use Test**, a character may recognise that this might be due to intense heat, some sort of shielding mechanism, or a gas that could refract the light. With two or more degrees of success, the character is reasonably confident that it is a gas.

The peak of the tower is swathed in flame, terminating in a jutting spike of tortured steel. This widens down to sizable structure encased in spiked ironwork and red-hot hell-steel. The total diameter enclosed by the outer walls is approximately thirty metres. The height of the flame atop the peak should be proportionate to the progress that Sorcerer Soulfire has made in completing the ritual. If it has scarcely begun, then the flame extends only a few metres beyond the top of the tower. In the latter stages of the ritual, the roaring inferno extends as much as fifty metres into the sky, and shift colours throughout the spectrum, flaring rhythmically in all directions. See page 134 for more information on the ritual's progress.

No further information is easily obtained from extreme range. In order for the Battle-Brothers to get a better understanding of the fortification's defences, they must approach it. In doing so, they risk observation from anyone within the structure. At this point, the characters must decide if they wish to take a stealthy approach or launch their full attack. Additional intelligence would, of course, mitigate their risks. However, as a small group, if they were to suffer casualties during their scouting, it could substantially limit their combat effectiveness during a planned engagement.

Two Pyre Chaos Space Marines patrol the outer wall's battlements at all times. They are located in a partially enclosed passage, directly beneath the wall of flame. Because of the way the flames and the wall are positioned, this area remains largely in shadow. If the Battle-Brothers attempt to approach the Crucible using stealth techniques, these guards each have two opportunities to notice the Kill-team, assuming they do not take extraordinary measures to remain unseen. These tests are taken when the Battle-Brothers reach a range of one kilometre and again at 500 metres. Conversely, the Player Characters may notice the patrolling guards when they come within a kilometre of the Crucible, with a successful **Hard (-20) Awareness Test**.

EXTERIOR DEFENCES

The Crucible's exterior defences represent a formidable barrier to any attacking force. This is particularly true given the limitations of the planet's inherent barriers to assembling a large Imperial force. Because of the shadows created by the flickering light of the structure and the inherent efforts at concealment built into its architecture, most of these cannot be easily identified until the members of the team get quite close. Each of these different elements includes an indication of the range at which they become visible—in some instances, within their range of effective use.

The Moat

When the Kill-team comes within a kilometre of the tower, they recognise that a crevasse surrounds the fortification's security wall. The crevasse is twenty metres deep, and exposes a gap of ten metres between its outer lip and the outer wall of the fortress. Crossing the gap is only easily accomplished by using one of the drawbridges attached to each of the fortress's two gates, which are located on opposite sides of the wall. The bridges are kept lowered, unless one of the Pyre sentries sounds a warning of intruders.

From the point that the crevasse becomes visible, it is clear that the vapours distorting the view of the lower walls are emanating from it. Even at a range of several hundred metres, the Battle-Brothers are able to smell the noxious vapours. The fumes smell of ash, brimstone, and death. At range, they have no effect. Any Space Marines who walk through the clouds without filtration, either within the crevasse or across a drawbridge, must make an immediate **Arduous (-40) Toughness Test** to resist the effects of the vapour, keeping in mind the bonus for their multi-lung implant. This test must be taken once for every ten minutes of unprotected exposure. Any who fail the test suffer a -20

Penalty to all actions, as their vision blurs and their balance falters under the gas's disrupting effects. The penalty remains in effect until a character spends thirty minutes out of the gas's effective range.

The crevasse extends to a depth of twenty metres. Its bottom is illuminated in the red-glare of a river of molten lava roughly five metres wide, stably bubbling around the fortification. The lava is the source of the aforementioned gas. The source of the lava flow is unclear; it may bubble up from deep beneath the ground, or it might just be a lingering effect of Vanity's exposure to the Hadex Anomaly.

The outer lip of the crevasse curves outward, so that the open area at the bottom of the crevasse is much wider than the opening would suggest. In contrast, the inner wall of the crevasse is a vertical granite cliff, which is polished to be nearly as smooth as glass. While the lava abuts the inner wall, there is an area roughly twenty metres wide between the outer edge of the lava flow and the bottom of the outer wall. Caves, which appear to be made largely of volcanic rock, extend into the outer crevasse wall. The network extends for many kilometres, and includes a variety of subterranean organisms which provide food for the mutants and the Pyre Warband.

A population of 400 Pyre Mutants dwell within the crevasse and its surrounding cavern network. These primitives worship the Pyre Warband as avatars of the Ruinous Powers. They spend the majority of their time preparing munitions for the Chaos Space Marines and tending to tasks that the warriors consider beneath them. In addition, they serve as an outer defence and final warning system for the Crucible. Because of the constant exposure to the fumes, the members of the mutant tribe are immune to its effects.

Their bodies show clear signs of their devotion. In addition to the common signs of radiation poisoning, these mutants bear further disfigurement. Their bodies are all horribly marked with severe burn scars. In some cases, these are inflicted by self-immolation, as a way of showing their devotion. More often, however, these are due to punishments inflicted by the Pyre upon those who fail to show the proper respect to their unholy masters.

A Kill-team member might enter the crevasse inadvertently, most likely by falling from a bridge or wall during a crossing effort. Alternatively, he might enter it through one of the tunnel exits to the surface in the area surrounding the Crucible. More than a dozen tunnel entrances are set into the ground, protected by hinged doors made of scrap metal. The mutants camouflage the doors to conceal them, and they are often buried by passing sandstorms. In spite of this, spotting a door is not difficult. Any character within a kilometre of the Crucible may spot one with a **Routine (+20) Awareness Test**. The tunnel entrances are neither locked nor guarded.

The tunnels lead under the earth, eventually descending into a series of large natural caverns. These caves connect to the crevasse only indirectly. However, there are no connections to the interior of the Crucible. Characters who attempt to use the tunnels to advance ultimately must overcome the lava flow and the steep inner wall of the crevasse.

Crossing the crevasse may be as simple as rushing across a lowered bridge, or it may be far more complicated. If the characters have jump packs or some similar means of flight,



then this represents a trivial barrier. Some characters might even be able to make a Running Horizontal Leap (see page 207 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook) to dramatically reach the outer wall. Others might prefer to use climbing gear, assuming they have it on hand. One important note is that the mutants within the crevasse regularly watch the gap for any signs of the Chaos Space Marines whom they adore. Unless the Battle-Brothers are particularly stealthy, the mutants are likely to trigger warning alarms in response to the presence of invaders.

Security Wall

The outer ring wall of the fortress thrusts up out of the ground like a living thing, a solid sheet of smouldering iron that might have been grown rather than forged. Its outer edge abuts the crevasse, which plunges into Vanity's surface. A ring of fire burns constantly atop the wall, flickering and flaring in the planet's variable atmosphere. Directly beneath the flames are battlements, where Chaos Space Marines patrol watching for any signs of assault. Two gates, on opposite sides of the structure, are located with retractable bridges. These are normally kept lowered, for easy access across the crevasse, but may be quickly raised in the event of a warning. The core of the outer walls are stone, with large sheets of armaplas layered atop them, offering significant protection (32 armour points).

The security walls are painted in garish orange and yellow flames, against a stark black background. If anyone takes the time to inspect the imagery closely, they may notice that various sigils of Chaos are worked into the details of the flame design. In many places, red glowing sections are visible, designed to resemble embers from a distance. If anyone inspects this more closely, from a range of 200 metres or less, these may be identified as motion sensors.

The design intent of the motion sensors is to provide the guards with an additional sensory input, to warn them of any motion beyond the outer walls. In theory, the dozens of sensors should offer a substantial degree of additional security to the fortification. In practical application, Vanity's swirling winds and radiation makes the sensors largely useless. Though the Battle-Brothers might not recognise this fact, the patrolling Chaos Space Marines completely ignore the input that these sensors offer. For all practical purposes, the devices simply add to the structure's ambience without aiding its function.

Because of the flames atop the wall, the battlements are physically within the wall's structure. A narrow passage, barely wide enough to accommodate a Chaos Space Marine in Power Armour, extends all the way around the wall. Twisted wrought iron plates jutting above the battlements provide the patrolling guards with cover for their legs and lower torso at all times. Openings, in the form of twisted mutated skulls with gaping mouths allow those walking the battlements to see down the height of the wall to the base. .

If members of the Kill-team manage to reach the walkways, they may discover staircases that connect the walkways to the fortification's courtyard. These are adjacent to the wall's gateways. This is because the gateways are designed to accommodate some vehicles, which may be nearly as tall as the security wall. There is simply no space for a walkway to extend above the gates.

There are no weapon systems mounted upon the security wall. This structure presents a physical obstacle and offers a better vantage point for patrolling guards. It is not inherently equipped to repel attackers. However, the two guards on duty are normally equipped with bolters (use Chaos Space Marines found on page 363 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook). If an alarm is raised, additional Pyre Chaos Space Marines rush from the courtyard to exploit the firing lanes offered by the wall's battlements.

Some Kill-teams may simply walk through the gates present in the wall, using either a stealthy approach or relying upon speed. In either instance, the security wall may not present a substantial obstacle. Those who instead choose to climb the wall need only climb over the protective fence to reach the interior walkway. While this is only four metres above ground level, it is across the crevasse from the nearest flat surface. Battle-Brothers who do not use one of the retractable bridges to cross must identify some means to both cross the crevasse and climb vertically, while risking a fall into a flow of lava.

IV: THE LONGEST WATCH



INNER RING

After the Kill-team bypasses the crevasse and the security wall, they must contend with the forces garrisoning the Crucible's courtyard. Though largely open to Vanity's harsh atmosphere, this area of the fortress is where most of the soldiers dwell. The central tower lacks sufficient space to accommodate all of the warriors stationed at the tower. Only in the event of a severe sandstorm do the troopers spend a substantial time within its boundaries.

The Courtyard

An open field of jagged stone and searing coals separates the central tower from the outer security wall. This area is set up to accommodate the personal living space of more than a dozen Chaos Space Marines. Areas are clearly delineated to function as places of worship, excruciation, and other foul practices. Another section is filled with crates indicative of ammunition, spare arms, and equipment. Power cables snake through the region, attached to a large generator that belches black smoke and occasionally arcs lightning. Large torches are permanently mounted to the walls of the central tower. Their flames, as well as the ones atop the security wall and the tower, serve as adequate illumination for those within the courtyard.

There are a total of twelve members of the Pyre Warband within the courtyard at any time the Battle-Brothers might attack. This is in addition to the two Chaos Space Marines patrolling the security wall. Four of the warriors in this area have Astartes Heavy Flamers added to their equipment lists.

Characters using the flame weapons work in coordination, attempting to lay down overlapping fields of fire, so that as many attackers as possible are funnelled into multiple blasts of promethium-fuelled flame.

Tactically, the Pyre Warband members attempt to work closely together, and focus their fire on any Battle-Brothers who seem to be particularly effective throughout the fight. While they do not ignore immediate threats, they are clearly tactically savvy and in constant communication. They consider melee weapons to be an option of last resort, attempting to purge their foes with bolter and flame prior to entering close combat. If one of the Chaos Space Marines is engaged in melee with a Battle-Brother, members of the Warband equipped with flamers continue to burn their opponents, even when it risks incinerating one of their own.

If the Kill-team manages to reach the inner courtyard without alerting the Chaos Space Marines, they are not necessarily immediately ready for battle. The Crucible is a secure fortification for the Pyre Warband. Imperial forces have only assaulted the base a single time since their arrival within the Vanity system. Its size and resources, relative to most Imperial battle structures on Vanity, is simply too imposing to make it a reasonable target. While the Chaos Space Marines present maintain a degree of vigilance, they are not in a constant heightened state of preparedness for battle. Instead, the Chaos Space Marines present at the base have generally settled into a routine of preparation for battle at other locations. This is also where Chaos Space Marines injured upon Vanity are most likely to recuperate.

If the Kill-team has made their presence known well in advance of reaching the courtyard—through an encounter at the crevasse, a failed ambush on the outer wall, or even a badly blown effort at stealth in the open fields surrounding the fortress—then all of the Chaos Space Marines are prepared and ready for battle. Alternatively, the Pyre Warband members may be otherwise engaged at any time. In this instance, only four of the Pyre are present and prepared for battle at the time the Battle-Brothers enter. Another four join combat after three Rounds; their late arrival due to their absence or from engagement in various unspeakable acts. The remaining four require a full minute arrive, being so distant from the initial combat and or so deeply engaged in foul rites and rituals that they are nigh impossible to disturb. If the Kill-team members take the time to attack the unprepared Chaos Space Marines prior to the dark servants joining the battle, the Player Characters' attacks completely ignore Power Armour, as those Pyre members have not yet donned it.

Some Kill-teams may decide to take the time to search through the Courtyard. In this case, they can discover ample supplies of bolter and flamer ammunition. Spare flamers, heavy flamers, bolters, and bolt pistols are available, though all have been defaced with Chaos iconography. Foodstuffs are available, though the fungus and odd carvings of meat are hardly palatable. Additional items are available at the Game Master's discretion, though medical supplies should be scarce or nonexistent.

Depending upon the circumstance of their entry, the Kill-team might become involved in an extended pitched battle with the Pyre Warband members. If this occurs, the Daemons from within the tower (see below) move to join the conflict. The response time should be proportionate to the amount of noise that the fight generates. If the Battle-Brothers move in silently and eliminate the Chaos threat in a near silent fashion, the Daemons should not become aware of the threat. Alternatively, if the characters make extensive use of loud weapons, including bolters, the children of the Warp should respond in the following rounds. Have a pair of Daemons emerge from the tower each successive round until all are engaged.

The Tower

The central tower is round in shape, and has only a single entrance—a double door, at ground level, made of reinforced adamant. The structure's only exterior windows are a set of eight, one-metre diameter, round windows just beneath the perpetual flame at its top. The building is made of stone, layered with armaplas (32 armour points). Its exterior is painted in a similar scheme of orange flames against a matte black backdrop. Until the Battle-Brothers open them, or the Daemons inside rush out, the doors to the tower are closed but not locked.

Dozens of helmets of Imperial soldiers, including those of more than thirty Loyalist Space Marines, decorate the tower at ground level. If the any of the Player Characters belong to a Chapter that is active in the Achilus Crusade, Game Masters are encouraged to include at least one helmet belonging to a member of that Chapter. Based upon the damage and stains to the helmets, these are clearly trophies taken by the Pyre.

The tower's interior is divided into two floors. The lower level, which is only slightly raised from the exterior ground,

is several metres in diameter. The central portion of the room is filled by a spiral staircase that ascends to the upper level. The dubious staircase is made of blackened, corroded, and bloodstained metal tubing. The metal is intricately shaped so that Chaos sigils and spikes are part of its structure. Much of the framework is open and there is no exterior railing. As a consequence, in spite of the space it occupies, the structure actually offers very little cover. It terminates in a trap door made of armaplas in the ceiling. The door is closed when the Kill-team arrives, but it is not locked.

There are currently nine Flamers of Tzeentch (see page 140) present on the ground floor of the tower. These entities were drawn to the Crucible as the Sorcerer Soulfire began to unlock the powers of the Sphere. They remain until he completes the ritual.

The entire lower level smells like a combination of a charnel house and a crematorium. Dozens of dismembered human and mutant bodies dangle from the spikes set into the edges of the staircase. Others hang from chains and meat hooks attached to the wall. Even a casual glance strongly suggests that something has fed upon the dead. All bear the scorch marks that have come from interaction with the Daemons present in the room. There are no living humans or mutants among the imprisoned remains. If the Kill-team enters the tower without drawing the Daemons into the courtyard, then all nine are in this room, feasting upon the remains. If all of the Flamers of Tzeentch were drawn out of the tower, then the lower level remains empty.

The floor is covered in ash, bone, and the burned remnants of furniture and countless papers. The quantity of ash suggests that the room may have once been filled. Other than the gruesome remains and the fixtures that support them, the walls have been scorched to the point that they are only bare stone.

If the Battle-Brothers attempt to ascend the staircase, they run into a complication. While it was originally designed to support the weight of numerous Space Marines, the presence of the Flamers of Tzeentch has significantly damaged its structural integrity. The spiral staircase is now only capable of supporting the weight of a single Space Marine at a time. If more than one attempt to tread upon it at the same time, it collapses. The staircase is sufficiently corroded that if it collapses, the pieces bear no meaningful threat to the armoured Space Marines. However, depending upon how high the characters might have ascended, the falling damage could pose a threat (see page 261 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook). Characters may make a **Challenging (+0) Tech-Use Test** prior to ascending the staircase. On success, they recognise that it may not be able to support the weight of a person in power armour.

If the characters ascend the outer walls of the chamber, they may wish to bore through the floor of the upper level rather than climbing across to the doorway in the middle of the vaulted ceiling. The floor of the upper level is made of stonework, half a metre in thickness. Blasting through it requires overcoming an object with 14 armour points. Alternatively, reaching the hatchway in the centre of the floor requires vertical climbing from the outer wall. The difficulty of this is largely dependent upon what gear the Battle-Brothers might have or jury rig.

THE RITUAL

The upper level of the tower is an unholy laboratory entirely devoted to Kole Soulfire's (see page 136) unholy ritual. A hatchway in the floor connects with the spiral staircase from below. It is wide enough to accommodate a Space Marine in full power armour, which also requires that the hatch take up the majority of the space in the centre of the room. The walls gradually slope inward to reach an apex roughly six metres overhead. The lab's only windows are a set of eight small windows at the top. The light of the torch atop the tower shines through these, effectively illuminating the area. When the Battle-Brothers enter the tower's upper level, read or paraphrase the following:

Peering through the opening onto the floor, you see the room is lit with an eerie glow. You can hear the faint sound of angry voices chanting at the very edge of hearing—just too faintly for you to make out the words. A single large figure, swathed in robes and a hood, holds the Sphere you have sought aloft as he floats in the air above the floor. The Sphere is emitting a pale blue glow, mirrored by a nine-pointed star of blue flame, which floats at the same level as the presumed sorcerer's feet.

The laboratory's walls are covered in shelving, extending from the floor to four metres up the walls. Wheeled ladders, strong enough to support a person in full power armour, are mounted to the shelves, and capable of rotating around the room. The majority of the shelves are overflowing with books and scrolls, most of which look old and are covered in unholy symbols and iconography. Other shelves hold glass bottles of powders and solutions, many of differing hues. All are painstakingly labelled, though the characters and fonts are unrecognisable and indecipherable.

An ornate lectern stands in one corner, holding an open and weighty tome atop it. The lectern is made of marble,

TABLE 4-1 RITUAL STAGES

Status	Days	Consequence
Beginning	1–7	+10 to any Psyniscience or Willpower Tests regarding the ritual.
Progressing	8–14	No bonuses or penalties.
Ending	15–18	–10 to any Psyniscience or Willpower Tests regarding the ritual.
Completed	19+	
Travel Calculation	Days	
Transit from system's edge	4	
Meeting with Brashnir	+1	
Travel to Torch	+1–3	
Travel to Crucible	+1–3	

RITUAL PROGRESS

Regardless of how long the Kill-team took to reach the Crucible, Soulfire has had three years to experiment with the Sphere and come to grips with his psychic abilities. Over the intervening time, he has learned from it, but has hardly begun to push it to its limits. This ritual is his first significant attempt to fully utilise its energy. Because of the time involved, the constraints upon the time line at this stage are arbitrary and somewhat contrived. For dramatic purposes, the adventure is most likely to resolve more thematically if the Battle-Brothers arrive as the dark rite nears completion. If an explanation is necessary, the timing may be explained with the warning provided by the Omega Vault.

Of course, Game Masters are encouraged to use their own discretion in deciding the timing. If the Battle-Brothers have encountered a string of bad luck, then it might be apt for fate to finally smile upon them, allowing them to arrive before the ceremony reaches its most dangerous stages. Alternatively, if the entire scenario has gone smoothly, this might be an apt place to increase the difficulty level a bit by making the final stages more challenging.

In a worst case scenario, the ritual might even have completed prior to the Kill-team reaching the Crucible. In this situation, a significant number of the humans (and mutants) resident upon Vanity may have transformed into Daemons. This situation substantially increases the overall difficulty of the scenario. Game statistics for this outcome are not provided, as the odds become stacked too severely against the Player Characters. Game Masters who choose to follow this approach may reasonably expect that very few of the Battle-Brothers would survive the mission.

and bears a massive Chaos symbol upon its front. The marble is a mix of orange and black hues, with a streaking pattern reminiscent of the Pyre Warband's iconography. Carvings, suggestive of the Warband's history, are painstakingly inscribed into the stonework around the central symbol.

Prior to the start of his ritual, the sorcerer drew out a complex warding circle upon the chamber's floor. This was done with a variety of forbidden and unholy substances. In essence, the artwork is a nine-pointed star that pierces a circle filled with what appears to be some form of sinuous writing. The drawing remains on the floor; its unholy geometry and complex iconography is discomfiting to view. This effect is magnified because the material began to glow as the psychic power in the room grew. It now emits a sickly pale blue light.

That light is mirrored by a matching nine-pointed star made of thin blue flames, which floats in the air above the floor. Sorcerer Soulfire floats in the air off to the side of that circle, within a gap between the flames, just barely large enough to accommodate his frame. He holds the Sphere in one hand as he chants in sibilant tones. A complex series of seams upon the Sphere glow with a pale blue light, which matches the flames in the floating star.

DISRUPTED!

If the Kill-team chooses to use violence to stop the ritual, it is very likely to cause all of the built-up psychic energy to unleash in the worst possible way. The Game Master should immediately roll 1d10 on the **Table 4-2: Disruption Effects**.

TABLE 4-2: DISRUPTION EFFECTS

Die Roll	Effects
1	Warp Whispers: The voices of Daemons fill the air within 50 kilometres of the Crucible, whispering terrible secrets and shocking truths. Everyone in the area (including the psyker) must make a Very Hard (-30) Willpower Test or gain 2d10 Corruption Points.
2-3	Cataclysmic Blast: The ritual's power overloads, arcing out in great bolts of Warp energy. Anyone within 500 metres of the psyker (including the psyker himself) takes 3d10+5 Energy Damage. No psychic powers may be used in the region for 1d5 weeks after this event.
4-5	A Hole in the World: A Vortex of Doom with a PR of 2d10+5 (see page 195 of the DEATHWATCH Core Rulebook) springs into existence centred upon the ritual. It then begins to move randomly, devouring all in its path. The Vortex lasts for 1d5 days and then vanishes.
6-7	Reality Quake: Reality buckles around the psyker, and an area within 500 metres of him is sundered. Solid objects alternately rot, burn, and freeze, and everyone and everything in the area takes 2d10+5 Rending damage. Warded objects and Untouchables suffer half the damage rolled.
8	Something is Coming...: With a blood curdling howl, a Daemon Prince (see page 362 of the DEATHWATCH Core Rulebook) rips into existence at the centre of the ritual. It seeks vengeance for its loss of power. Only its destruction or the death of the psyker will send it back to the Warp.
9	A New Universe: The ripple of energy rolls out and utterly consumes the planet. The entire world of Vanity is spontaneously moved to the centre of the Hadex Anomaly.
10	Destruction: Everything within 10 kilometres of the ritual is immediately and irrevocably destroyed. All matter is consumed utterly by hellfire.

Soulfire is attempting to undertake his dark ritual in isolation, so that he can more completely focus his attention upon it. The Pyre Warband and his summoned Daemons were to ensure that he would not be interrupted during his casting. Due to his relative inexperience with the dark arts, the corrupted psyker knew little of the commitment or even the ramifications of the actions he chose to undertake. He began enacting his unholy masterpiece over the past few days. His progress is entirely dependent upon how long the Kill-team has taken to reach his ritual laboratory. Their mere presence, provided it is not at the most terminal stage, is likely to interrupt its progress, as he lacks the expertise to maintain his focus. Disrupting the ritual may have its own ramifications, as there is an enormous amount of psychic power currently active within the laboratory.

Interrupting a ritual that channels this much psychic energy has inherent risks. At the very least, it could destroy the artefact along with the minds and souls of everyone within a significant radius—possibly even on the planet. Feedback from the suddenly undirected energy might even rip a hole in the very fabric of reality. Such a tear might draw the attention of an entire host of Daemons, or it might transfer a region of Vanity—or even the entire planet—into the Warp.

There are a number of ways the characters might disrupt the ritual, each of which having its own ramifications. If the players do not have ideas of their own, any character may make an **Ordinary (+10) Lore: Forbidden (Psykers)**

Test. Game Masters should provide a number of options described below proportionate to their degree of success. On failure, Game Masters should provide only a few of the worse possible options. The severity of these consequences is directly proportionate to the stage that Sorcerer Soulfire has reached in the ritual's progression. Refer to **Table 4-1: Ritual Stages** to determine the current status of the ritual based upon the time that the Battle-Brothers have spent since entering the Vanity system. The current time is measured from when they initially entered the system, not when they first set down upon the planet's surface. The ritual takes eighteen days to complete.

From the moment the characters enter the ritual laboratory, they can hear the faint sounds of voices murmuring faintly. These sounds are coming from entities just beyond the boundary of the Warp. Soulfire's ritual has begun to weaken the boundary between the physical realm and the Warp, allowing some portion of their presence to flow through. The ultimate goal of the ritual is to transfer a significant number of Daemons from the Warp to Vanity. If he is successful in his goal, Soulfire will see to it that the Daemons begin to possess the bodies of the mortals on the planet. This process begins with the more vulnerable mutants, but over the course of a few weeks is certain to extend to any sentient life on the planet's surface.

There are essentially three different ways for the Kill-team to disrupt the ritual in progress. This may be done by disrupting the vile sigils floating in the air, by breaking the



sorcerer's concentration on the spell, or by removing the Sphere. Any of these actions might be attempted with care and deliberate action, or might be conducted with violence.

The most straightforward—and most dangerous solution—is the direct and violent approach. Sorcerer Soulfire has devoted virtually all of his attention to the ritual. In order to maintain the ritual, treat this as though he is sustaining a Psychic Power. He refuses to willingly surrender his progress towards completing the dark act. If Soulfire is knocked unconscious or killed, the ritual is disrupted (see the **Disrupted!** sidebar).

Should the Sphere be subject to an attack, treat the Sphere as though it has 20 Armour Points. It must be destroyed as Cover (see page 246 of the **DEATHWATCH** Core Rulebook). However, if the Sphere is damaged by an attack, Soulfire must immediately make a **Difficult (+10) Strength Test** or drop the artefact. At that point, it should scatter. Another character might retrieve it and remove it from the room where the ritual takes place. If the sphere is removed in this way, then the ritual is disrupted (see the **Disrupted!** sidebar).

Any action that interrupts the flow of energy through the flaming star or that damages the pattern chalked upon the floor immediately disrupts the ritual. This might be as simple as scuffing the pattern on the floor or a Battle-Brother passing his hand through the flames. If any Battle-Brother chooses to disrupt the ritual in this way, it triggers a PR 8 Smite centred upon him. The ritual counts as disrupted (see the **Disrupted!** sidebar).

If the Kill-team decides that violence is not necessarily the best approach to stopping the ritual, they essentially have two options. They may either seize control of the ritual from Soulfire or they may force him—most likely through the use of psychic powers—to end the ritual prematurely, in a controlled fashion. Neither of these options are easy, but they represent the only straightforward way to end the ritual without suffering the effects described in the **Disrupted!** sidebar—save for allowing the sorcerer to complete it.

Theoretically, the Battle-Brothers might use Interaction Skills in such a way that Soulfire would choose to end the ritual. His initial Disposition for such tests begins at Very Hard (–30), but Game Masters should require extenuating circumstances before any such tests could be made. The sorcerer is devoted to the Ruinous Powers; he is extremely unlikely to be turned from that cause at this point. The far more likely alternative is that a Librarian might use a psychic ability to mentally dominate the sorcerer, convincing him to shut down the ritual. If Soulfire is forced to do so through either of these mechanisms, he is able to end the ritual without disaster. However, he remains unwilling to surrender the Sphere, which has significant control of his mind.

Alternatively, a potent Librarian might be able to seize control of the ritual away from the sorcerer. To do so, he would first need to physically possess the Sphere, as that is the primary source of psychic power for the ritual. With the artefact in his hands, the Librarian must successfully complete an **Extended Very Hard (–30) Psyniscience Test**, requiring a total of five successful Skill Tests. As he undertakes these actions, Soulfire is freed from his duty to sustain the ritual. Instead, he focuses his attacks upon the Librarian in question. If the Librarian ever fails more than two consecutive tests, the ritual is disrupted (see **Disrupted!** sidebar). If he succeeds, the ritual is safely stopped, and the energy is safely dispersed.

EVACUATION

With the ritual ended and the Sphere in hand, the Kill-team needs to escape the planet and return the artefact to Watch-Fortress Erioch. Unless the Battle-Brothers have left a significant number of angry foes in their wake, their escape should be largely uneventful. Significant challenges should only arise if the Sphere remains in enemy hands, if the ritual was successfully completed, or if their foes somehow managed to destroy the squad's landing craft. Otherwise, the journey off of Vanity and back to the Erioch system should be straightforward.

When they return to the Watch-Fortress, they are immediately escorted to the Omega Vault, where they may place the Sphere within its storage facility. At that point, warning klaxons begin to blare, cautioning the Battle-Brothers that the Omega Vault is set to reseal in mere minutes. After safely exiting the vault, Watch Commander Mordigael debriefs them.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS

The following NPC plays a critical part as the Battle-Brothers attempt to disarm the ritual and recover the Sphere. Full game statistics for this character is included in the NPC Appendix, beginning on page 138.

SORCERER KOLE SOULFIRE

Darius Phine was once an acolyte of Inquisitor Ghent working in the Jericho Reach. Though little more than a common criminal in his early years, a chance encounter with Inquisitor Ghent gave him a second chance to serve the Imperium. Earning the trust of the Inquisitor, the charlatan-turned-Inquisitorial agent became a valuable asset to Ghent in his efforts to eliminate numerous xenos threats.

Unfortunately for Phine, when he encountered the Sphere on Herisor, its siren call proved irresistible. In short order he succumbed to its power, devoting his life to the Ruinous Powers in the process. Since that time, he has grown in devotion to the unholy at the same time as his understanding of the Sphere and his own potential grew exponentially.

With his rebirth, Phine took the name Kole Soulfire. His current focus is to unleash an enormously potent ritual, using his newfound abilities and all the psychic energy contained by the Sphere. If successful, he hopes to unleash an army of Daemons across Vanity that could cleanse the planet and system of any Imperial presence.

CONSEQUENCES

If the players successfully stopped the ritual and recovered the Sphere, then the status of the war for Vanity is largely unchanged. Though the characters might not have vanquished the foe, they have certainly prevented a major setback. This was an action undertaken at the direct behest of the Watch Commander and the Omega Vault, and such an accomplishment garners significant respect for the Kill-team among their peers.

Conversely, if the characters failed to stop the ritual, they may not have survived the scenario. Similarly, if they somehow destroyed the Sphere, it is likely that the disruption had significant repercussions for the characters and for the Vanity system. In this instance, the consequences of their failings may have extended ramifications, which should certainly affect the character's interactions with other Deathwatch members within the Jericho Reach.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

At the completion of the adventure, the GM should award the following Experience (per Battle-Brother):

- Met with Inquisitor Ghent of their own volition: 50
- Tracked Darius Phine's path on Herisor: 75
- Brought the survivors of the *Just Reward* to Justice: 200
- Eliminated the Raveners on Herisor: 200
- Coordinated with Commander Brashnir in Vanity: 50
- Eliminated the Torch outpost: 200
- Cleansed all Chaos Taint at the Crucible: 400
- Stopped the ritual without incidental disaster: 400
- Recovered the Sphere intact and returned it to the Omega Vault: 500

HOLDING THE SPHERE

Game Masters who wish to offer additional challenges may have the Sphere call out to the Kill-team members who make physical contact with it. Its mere presence successfully corrupted and empowered Phine. It is certainly possible for even a disciplined Battle-Brother to hear its siren call and turn from the noble path. In this instance, either during the ritual or in the months and weeks that follow, the Sphere might attempt to offer tremendous power to any that make physical contact with it. This power would most likely come in the form of a (increased) Psy Rating, along with a broad range of unholy powers. Resisting its call could require a series of **Difficult (-10) Willpower Test**. Unless the Kill-team has taken measures to isolate the Sphere, they might not recognise the cause of the first few tests. Failure might best be represented with a gradual gain of corruption points and a compulsion to commit acts that were in direct opposition to the Imperial cause.

RENOWN POINTS

At the completion of the adventure, the GM should award the following Renown (per Battle-Brother):

- Cleansed Herisor of the Tyranids and Renegades: 1
- Destroyed the Crucible on Vanity: 1
- Successfully returned the Sphere to the Omega Vault: 1

FATE POINTS

If the characters were ultimately successful in stopping the ritual and recovering the Sphere, they earn 1 Fate point in recognition for their service to the Omega Vault.

APPENDIX: NPCS AND ANTAGONISTS

This section features full game statistics for characters that play prominent roles throughout the scenario. A full range of statistics is provided, as it is likely that some Kill-teams may choose to interact with the characters in otherwise unexpected ways. Additional information about these characters, their attitudes, and their choices are presented within the relevant section text.

INQUISITOR GHENT

Memories of Herisor have continued to haunt Inquisitor Ghent ever since his departure. Even as he has continued to advance the cause of the Imperium, he has also second-guessed himself on numerous occasions, due to the cost of that past success. Even though the Deathwatch triumphed against the Tyranid fleet, the Inquisitor lost many whose fellowship he valued. Dredging up the memories of the hostile world compels Ghent to offer whatever assistance he might in the hope of properly making amends.

Inquisitor Ghent (Master) Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
56	53	32	35	30	50	46	42	35

Movement: 3/6/9/18

Wounds: 20

Armour: Power Armour (All 8).

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Charm (Fel)+10, Ciphers (Inquisition) (Int) +10, Climb (S), Command (Fel) +10, Deceive (Fel) +20, Evaluate (Int), Interrogation (WP) +20, Intimidate (S) +20, Literacy (Int) +20, Logic (Int), Lore: Common (Deathwatch, Ecclesiarchy, Imperial Creed, Jericho Reach, Imperium) (Int) +10, Lore: Forbidden (Heresy, The Inquisition, The Warp, Xenos) (Int) +20, Lore: Scholastic (Bureaucracy, Imperial Creed, Judgement, Legend, Occult, Philosophy) (Int) +20, Security (Ag), Scrutiny (Per) +10, Search (Per) +10, Speak Language (Eldar, Low Gothic, High Gothic) (Int) +10, Survival (Int), Tactics (Recon and Stealth) (Int) +10, Tech-Use (Int) +10, Tracking (Int) +10.

Talents: Air of Authority, Combat Sense, Crippling Strike, Disarm, Disturbing Voice, Fearless, Foresight, Infused Knowledge, Jaded, Lightning Attack, Precise Blow, Strong Minded, Sure Strike, Swift Attack, Total Recall.

Traits: Touched by the Fates (4).

Weapons: Bolt Pistol (Pistol; 30m, S/2/-; 1d10+5 X; Pen 4; Clip 8; Reload Full, Tearing), Inferno Pistol (Pistol [Melta]; 10m, S/-/-, 2d10+8 E; Pen 13; Clip 3; Reload Full), Power Sword (Melee; 1d10+5 E; Pen 5; Balanced, Powerfield).

Gear: Data-slate loaded with heretical and archaic knowledge, numerous badges and laurels of accolade and honour.



MACCABIAN DESERTER

As a regiment, the Maccabian 5th spent years in preparation prior to deploying as part of the Achilus Crusade. They drilled endlessly with their gear and spent countless hours in devotions to the Emperor. Yet all of their practice has so far been for naught. All of the Crusade's records strongly indicate that the regiment should be ideally prepared to serve the Imperial cause. However, too many years of watching their comrades return from the front lines have broken the regiment's spirit. In general, these Imperial Guard have become unwilling to take the necessary risks to achieve victory. Instead, as a regiment, the members display a strong sense of guilt for their failings. Their greatest desire is for redemption, but in their cowardice they have found the greatest hindrance to receiving it.

Maccabian Deserter (Troop) Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
30	32	30	33	30	20	32	30	18

Movement: 3/6/9/18

Wounds: 10

Armour: Flak Armour (All 4, Horde 4).

Skills: Awareness (Per), Climb (S), Lore: Common (War) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int) +10.

Talents: None.

Traits: Fire Drill (Horde).

Weapons: Combat Knife (Melee; 1d5+6 R; Pen 0; Primitive), Battered Lasgun (Basic; 100m, S/3/-; 1d10+3 E; Pen 0; Clip 60; Reload Full).

Gear: Cold weather gear made from scavenged tapestries and curtains, 2 lasgun reloads, respirator.

MAJOR DZHORSKI

The Major is troubled by overdeveloped senses of self-preservation and his own importance. Though he still believes in the Imperial cause, he has become far more attached to the notion of his own survival than would normally be acceptable for any member of the Imperial Guard. The Major recognises that his decision to remain upon Herisor is in complete violation of his duty, and he is tortured by that fact. He is loathe to sacrifice any of the soldiers under him, even to ensure his own survival. Because he is uncomfortable admitting that his desertion was the result of base cowardice, Dzhorski has become far more daring in verbal confrontations than is probably wise.

Major Dzhorski (Elite) Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
32	38	30	32	35	47	43	42	40

Movement: 3/6/9/18

Wounds: 17

Armour: Mesh Woven Dress Uniform (Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 3).

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Climb (S), Command (Fel) +20, Deceive (Fel), Intimidate (S), Lore: Common (Jericho Reach, Imperium, War) (Int) +10, Lore: Scholastic (Tactica Imperialis) (Int) +20, Scrutiny (Per) +10, Speak Language (Low Gothic, High Gothic) (Int) +10, Tactics (Assault Doctrine) (Int).

Talents: None.

Traits: Touched by the Fates (2).

Weapons: Chainsword (Melee; 1d10+5 R; Pen 2; Balanced, Tearing), Bolt Pistol (Pistol; 30m, S/2/—; 1d10+5 X; Pen 4; Clip 8; Reload Full, Tearing).

Gear: Marks of rank, data-slate, respirator.



TYRANID RAVENERS

Raveners are incredibly aggressive subterranean predators from the Tyranid fleet. The xenos are renowned for their ability to assault seemingly secure locations with little or no warning. Their prodigious ability to burrow through virtually any substance and then emerge unexpectedly is a consequence of their exceptional hearing and ability to sense even the slightest of movements through thick layers of rock and earth.

These large creatures are normally controlled by the Tyranid Hive Mind. As there are few if any higher functioning Tyranid organisms remaining upon Herisor, the surviving Raveners have reverted to their instinctive nature. They continue to devastate the few surviving life forms on the planet, but they have been reluctant to expose themselves to attack when they do so. Instead, they have largely committed attacks against isolated individuals, only gathering in large groups or taking significant risks in defence of their nest. Due to their inherent bestial nature, they are unlikely to see through any complex deception or tactic used against them.

Ravener (Elite) Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
58	21	(8) 43	(8) 42	52	16	45	32	—

Movement: 7/14/21/42

Wounds: 40

Armour: Reinforced Chitin (All 6).

Skills: Awareness (Per) +20, Climb (S) +10, Concealment (Ag) +10, Silent Move (Ag) +10, Swim (S), Tracking (Int) +20.

Talents: Fearless, Heightened Sense (Hearing, Smell), Sprint, Swift Attack, Lightning Attack.

Traits: Dark Sight, Fear 3 (Horrifying), Burrower, Instinctive Behaviour (Feed), Natural Armour (Reinforced Chitin), Multiple Arms, Unnatural Strength (x2), Unnatural Toughness (x2), Improved Natural Weapons (Scything Talons), Size (Enormous), Tyranid, Unnatural Senses (30m).

Weapons: Scything Talons (Melee; 1d10+14 R; Pen 3) or Devourer (Basic; 30m, —/—/6; 1d10+6 R; Pen 0; Clip —; Rld —; Living Ammunition, Storm, Tearing).

Gear: None.

Special Rules

Extraordinary Senses: Raveners can sense changes in the air around them or slight tremors in the ground. Raveners may therefore make Awareness Tests to detect enemies even if they would not normally be able to do so due to intervening terrain or other conditions. In addition, Raveners' senses are so good that they never suffer more than –30 to Perception Test regardless of modifiers.

Surprise Strike: Raveners can appear from almost anywhere without warning, usually from under the feet of their prey, bursting up and taking entire squads by surprise. If a Ravener attacks by emerging from the ground or wall, it automatically gains Surprise (see page 235 of the DEATHWATCH Core Rulebook) over its enemies.

PYRE MUTANTS

The horrifically transformed descendants of Vanity's once human population are now scarcely recognisable. Most walk upon two legs, and have at least one arm and a head, but the resemblance in many instances ends at that point. The population has a broad range of deformities, which include tentacles, misplaced limbs, extraneous bones, and other dysmorphic structures. Though their unusual bodies seem to be resistant to the planet's hostile environment, their minds are believed to have become as twisted as their bodies. There is no hope of salvation for these wretched beings—a fact of which they seem aware. They readily give their lives by the thousands in an unceasing effort to repel the Imperial assault upon their home world.

Pyre Mutant (Troop) Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
40	22	35	42	25	15	18	14	15

Movement: 3/6/9/18

Wounds: 8

Armour: None.

Skills: Awareness (Per), Climb (S), Dodge (Ag), Lore: Forbidden (Stigmatus) (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int) +20.

Talents: Hatred (Space Marines).

Traits: Blood Soaked Tide (Horde).

Weapons: Samech pattern autogun (Basic; 100m; S/3/—; 1d10+3 I; Pen 0; Clip 30; Reload Full), Spiked Club (Melee; 1d10 + 3 I; Pen 0; Primitive)

Gear: 3 autogun reloads, icons of the Ruinous Powers, jewellery made of bones and sinews.

LORD GOETHE DARKFLAME

As the commander of the Torch outpost, Lord Darkflame resents the responsibility. His squad's duties consist of coordinating the nearly mindless efforts of the planet's mutant population within a sizeable region. The Chosen believes that this is a thankless effort, as the mutants are seldom capable of even understanding any strategy that he might choose to present them. He believes that, as a member of the Pyre Warband, his services should be more effectively used in direct confrontation with the Imperial forces. Unfortunately, due to the presence of an upstart sorcerer at the Crucible, Darkflame has little choice but to acquiesce to his orders, for the moment.

Goethe Darkflame (Master) Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
55	54	(15)	(8)	45	42	42	45	22

Movement: 5/10/15/30

Wounds: 32

Armour: Chaos Space Marine Terminator Armour (All 14).

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Climb (S), Command (Fel) +20, Dodge (Ag) +10, Intimidate (S) +20, Literacy (Int), Lore: Common (War) (Int) +10, Lore: Forbidden (Daemons, Warp) (Int), Scrutiny (Per) +10, Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language

(Low Gothic, Unholy Tongue) (Int), Survival (Int), Swim (S).

Talents: Bolter Drill, Die Hard, Fearless, Hatred (Loyalist Space Marines), Heightened Senses (Sight, Sound, Smell), Jaded, Killing Strike, Lightning Attack, Quick Draw, Rapid Reload, Swift Attack, True Grit.

Traits: Dark Sight, Size (Hulking), Unnatural Strength (x2), Unnatural Toughness (x2).

Weapons: Chaos Space Marine Lightning Claw (Melee; 1d10+20 E; Pen 8; Powerfield, Proven [4]†), Chaos Space Marine Heavy Flamer (Heavy; 30m; S/—/—; 1d10+12 E; Pen 6; Clip 10; Reload 2 Full; Flame).

Gear: Map to the Crucible.

†**Proven:** Weapons with the Proven Quality have a minimum damage die result equal to the rating. Thus, a weapon with the Proven (4) Weapon Quality has a minimum result of 4 for all damage dice. These dice are not rerolled; any result lower than the rating is considered to instead be equal to the rating.

FLAMERS OF TZEENTCH

Bounding and bumping across the battlefield, these Daemonic manifestations of Empyrean flame appear almost comical save for the impossibly horrific changes their fires cause in anything they touch. Believed to hold countless secrets from mortals, some suggest that the flames they radiate may contain visions of these hidden truths. Though their true purpose is beyond understanding, it is clear that they are drawn to interact with humanity at some level—particularly with those individuals who seek to plumb the ultimate secrets contained within the Warp.

The favoured weapons of the Flamers of Tzeentch are bolts of polychromatic aether, pouring from the gaping, gibbering mouths that form at the end of the Daemons' sinuous, multifarious arms. This eldritch flame coalesces into coherent balls of Warp energy. Their countless maws may spew this assault one moment, and then attempt to devour their freshly burned prey in the next instant.

Flamer of Tzeentch (Elite) Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
22	38	34	(9)	34	32	30	34	15

Movement: 4/8/12/24

Wounds: 20

Armour: None.

Skills: Awareness (Per), Dodge (Ag), Psyniscience (Per), Speak Language (High Gothic, Unholy Tongue) (Int).

Talents: Strong Minded, Warp Sense.

Traits: Daemonic (TB 9), Fear (2), From Beyond, Improved Natural Weapons, Hoverer (4), Strange Physiology, Warp Instability.

Weapons: Bolts of Tzeentch (Basic; 100m, —/—/6; 1d10+6 E; Pen 6; Flaming), Grasping Claws (Melee; 1d10+6 E; Pen 6; Flaming).

Gear: None.

Special Rules

Daemonic Presence: All enemies within 10 metres of a Flamer of Tzeentch suffer a –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.

Blessing of Tzeentch: Flamers of Tzeentch are blessed by their patron. This has the same effect as a Force Field with a Strength of 20 that does not overload.

SORCERER KOLE SOULFIRE

After years of uninterrupted exposure to the Sphere and the Warp, there is little that remains of the man who was once Darius Phine. Though parts of the physical body remain the same, it is clear that Soulfire is an entirely new being in both the physical and spiritual sense. Driven to subvert the Imperial cause in favour of the ways of the Ruinous Powers, the sorcerer is utterly selfless in his devotion. His cause—ensuring the destruction of all Imperial forces upon Vanity—overrides all other thoughts, including self-preservation.



Kole Soulfire (Master) Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
55	58	55	⁽¹⁰⁾ 50	53	60	55	65	45

Movement: 5/10/15/30

Wounds: 32

Armour: None.

Skills: Awareness (Per), Ciphers (Unholy Script) (Int) +10, Command (Fel) +10, Deceive (Fel) +20, Dodge (Ag) +10, Interrogation (Fel) +10, Invocation (WP) +20, Literacy (Int) +10, Lore: Common (Adeptus Astartes, Imperium) (Int), Lore: Forbidden (Daemonology, Heresy, Psykers, Warp) (Int) +20, Lore: Scholastic (Cryptology, Occult, Philosophy) (Int) +10, Psyniscience (Per) +20, Scrutiny (Per) +10, Silent Move (Ag), Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic, Unholy Tongue) (Int), Survival (Int), Tactics (Int) +10.

Talents: Die Hard, Favoured by the Warp, Fearless, Heightened Senses (Hearing, Sight), Hip Shooting, Improved Warp Sense, Infused Knowledge, Psy Rating (10), Warp Conduit, Warp Sense, Quick Draw, Rapid Reload, Swift Attack, True Grit.

Traits: Touched by the Fates (3), Unnatural Toughness (x2).

Psychic Powers: Augury, Compel, Divination, Doombolt††, Lifting the Veil, Psychometry, Reading, Warptime††.

Weapons: Legion Force Staff (1d10+16 I; Pen 0; Balanced, Special†).

Gear: Countless tomes of knowledge, the Sphere of St. Aret, unholy sigils and icons.

†**Legion Force Staff:** Force weapon. See page 155 of the DEATHWATCH Core Rulebook.



††**Psychic Powers:** The following powers can be found on page 127 of the DEATHWATCH supplement MARK OF THE XENOS:

Doombolt

Action: Half Action

Opposed: No

Range: 20 metres x Psy Rating

Sustained: No

Description: Doombolt is a common destructive power utilised by a great many Sorcerers to strike down their foes. Doombolts are corrosive bolts of dark energy, formed from the coalesced spite and loathing of the Sorcerer. The psyker must nominate a single target within range and line of sight; if the Focus Power Test is successful, then the target has been successfully hit. For every Degree of Success after the first, the psyker scores an additional hit. The number of extra hits scored in this manner may not exceed twice the psyker's Psy Rating. The first hit must strike the initially chosen target, while any subsequent hits may strike either the initial target or any other targets within two metres, providing all of the targets are within range and line of sight. This may be dodged exactly as if it were a Full-Auto Attack. Each bolt has the following profile: 1d10+10 E, Pen 8.

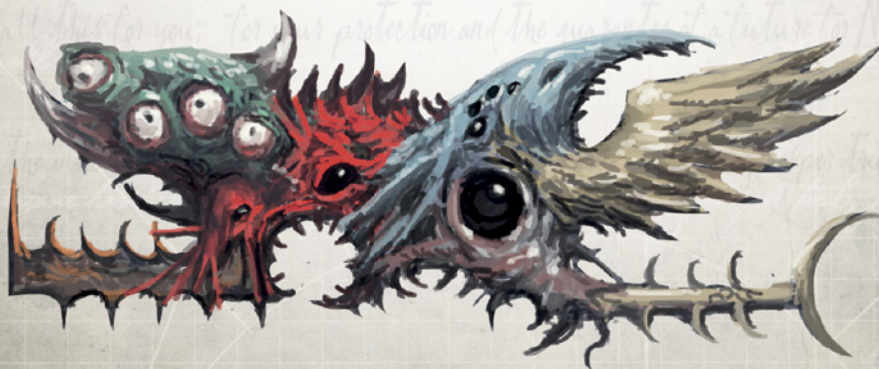
Warptime

Action: Half Action

Range: You

Sustained: Yes

Description: The Sorcerer surrounds himself with a field of dimensional instability, warping the passage of time. The Sorcerer gains a bonus to his Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill equal to his Psy Rating +10, and he may reroll one damage dice every Round.



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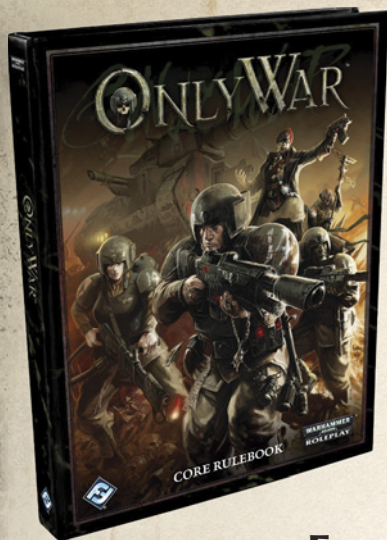
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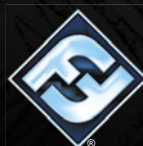
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