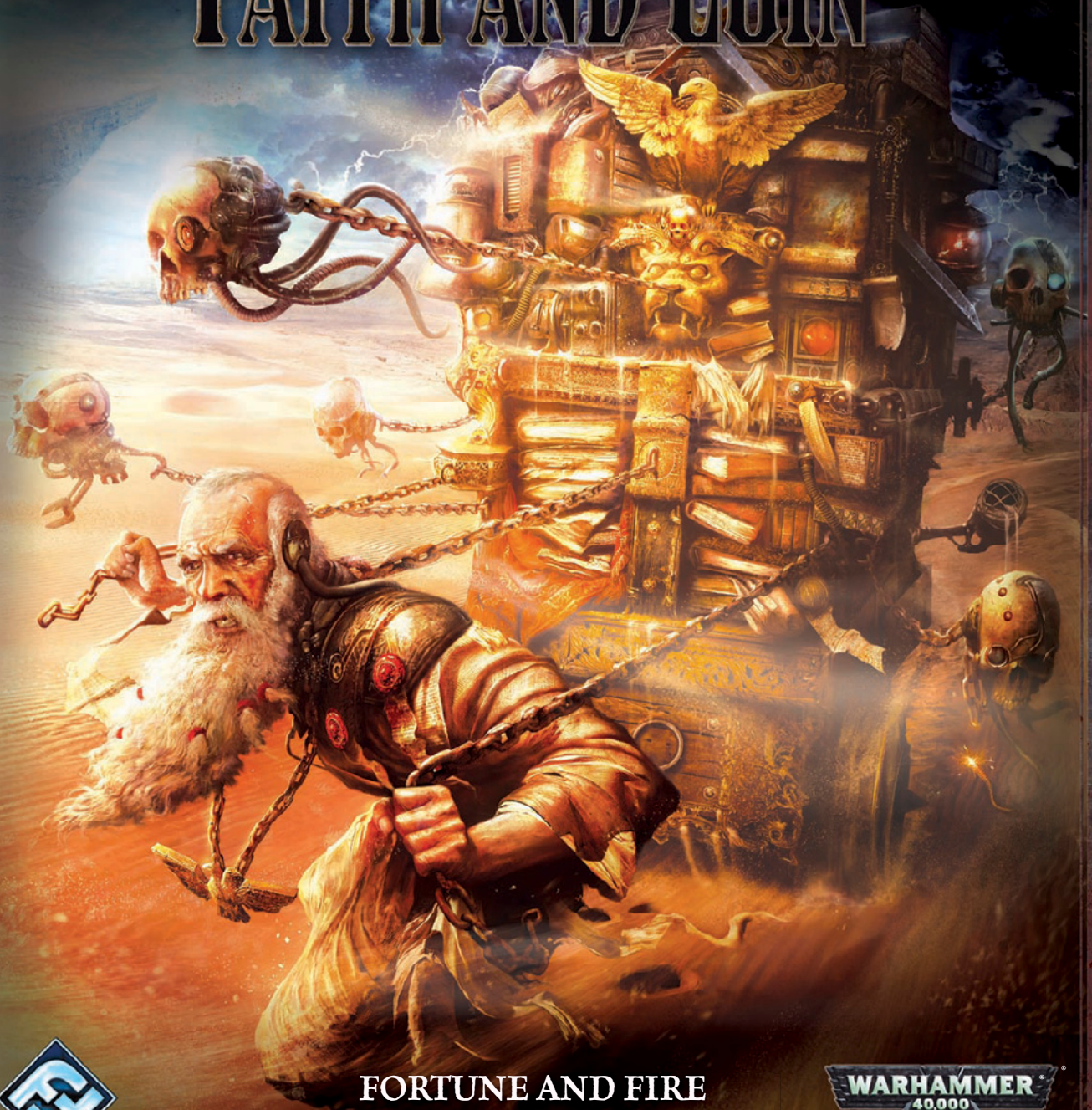


ROGUE TRADER™

FAITH AND COIN



FORTUNE AND FIRE
IN THE KORONUS EXPANSE



ROGUE TRADER™

FAITH AND COIN™



ROLEPLAYING IN THE GRIM
DARKNESS OF THE 4TH MILLENNIUM

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INTRODUCTION

*"A sword can convince a single man. A warship can sway a world.
But only faith can control the galaxy."*

—Sayings of Saint Cognatius

The Imperial Creed, the faith of the Imperium of Mankind, dominates the lives of countless billions of individuals across the Emperor's realm. While its specific tenets and superstitions differ vastly from world to world, the power the Ecclesiarchy commands within the Imperium is undeniable. Beyond the domain of the Imperium, it is the sacred charge of missionaries to bring the Emperor's light to new worlds, and the duty of Rogue Traders to carry these wandering priests into the uncharted darkness.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK?

This volume contains resources for both players and Game Masters who wish to explore the complex and sometimes tenuous relationship between Rogue Traders, missionaries, and the Imperial Creed as they exist in the Koronus Expanse. It provides players with new options for their Explorers, from Alternate Career Ranks to weapons to new Endeavours, and gives Game Masters numerous new avenues to explore in the form of Adventure Seeds and an adventure for Explorers pursuing their destiny in the Expanse in **Chapter IV: The Sacred Heart**.

CHAPTER I: LIGHT ON THE FRINGE

Chapter I: Light on the Fringe introduces the legend of Saint Cognatius, a fabled Imperial Saint who vanished into the Koronus Expanse long ago, carrying aboard his vessel countless relics of inestimable value. A number of past missionaries have sought the trail of Saint Cognatius in the hopes of emulating his success or unlocking the secrets he once knew. Four such individuals in particular influenced the worlds of the Koronus Expanse as they journeyed across it spreading the faith and seeking signs of their patron saint. This chapter details the histories of the missionaries Genevieve Almace, Nicomedes Keefe, Nadine Aleynikov, and Jollus Marquette, exploring the different ways in which missionaries can carry out their task of preparing lost fragments of humanity to accept the return of the Imperium and its agents. This chapter contains a number of Adventure Seeds that Explorers can pursue as they walk upon the worlds these missionaries visited or clash with their ancient enemies who still oppose the Imperial Creed in the Expanse.

CHAPTER II: LABOURS OF FAITH

This chapter contains a number of detailed new Endeavours for Explorers to pursue during their journeys in the Koronus Expanse. These exploits range from bringing the light of the Emperor to benighted worlds to braving dangers and retrieving sacred relics, and allow daring Explorers to serve the Imperial Creed and win vast fortunes doing it. This section also contains the profiles for several new planets upon which the Explorers can pursue profits amidst the mysteries of the Koronus Expanse.

CHAPTER III: INSTRUMENTS OF THE CREED

Chapter III: Instruments of the Creed contains new paths Explorers can walk in the service of the Emperor and new weapons they can wield to smite his foes. In addition to Alternate Career Ranks and a hoard sanctified weaponry, this section contains new equipment and a number of sacred relics, unique weapons and items used by past missionaries as they faced terrible trials and enemies across the Koronus Expanse.

CHAPTER IV: THE SACRED HEART

The final chapter of **FAITH AND COIN** takes the Explorers straight to the mystery at the heart of the book: the fabled tomb of Saint Cognatius, lost aeons ago and sought by famous missionaries throughout the history of the Koronus Expanse. The Explorers must uncover the trail that leads to the tomb and then travel deep into the carcass of the wrecked vessel, facing long-forgotten perils to search this shadowy domain for relics, forgotten knowledge, and miraculous archeotech devices. There are vast profits to be had from the Tomb of Cognatius, if the Explorers can find the lost sepulchre and survive the dread things lurking within its depths.





LIGHT
ON THE
FRINGE

THE LEGEND OF
ST. COGNATIUS

•
GENEVIEVE
ALMACE

•
NICOMEDES
KEEFE

•
NADINE
ALEYNIKOV

•
JOLLUS
MARQUETTE

CHAPTER I: LIGHT ON THE FRINGE

"Those who dwell within the grace of the God-Emperor need never fear the dark. His grace and guidance shines a perpetual light upon them."

—Nadine Aleynikov, disciple of St. Cognatius

Though the Imperium of Man contains more than a million worlds, there are countless others within the galaxy that have forgotten the grace of the Emperor or never even known his blessing. It is the responsibility of the Missionarus Galaxia and its servants—missionaries—to spread his word to those who do not know the Emperor's teachings. Without his guidance and blessing, such lost souls have no hope of stumbling into the grasp of the Imperial Creed, so that they might serve the Imperium by rendering up their tithes. Missionaries boldly spread the light of the Imperial Creed wherever they go, bringing the true faith to benighted souls by whatever means necessary.

These zealots are a unique breed among the Adeptus Ministorum. Their faith must be pure, and their understanding of the Imperial Creed must be profound. In many cases, they serve as isolated bastions of the faith to those who have no prior knowledge of the Emperor. The Missionarus Galaxia works under authority granted by the Cardinals Palatine on distant Terra, but individual missionaries seldom have any contact with higher authorities. Instead, they operate autonomously on the very fringes of the Imperium. Some conduct their entire mission upon a single world, devoting their lives to its spiritual development. Others travel between worlds, as they spend the bulk of their existence educating the unknowing.

Whenever a lost human culture is discovered or a new colony is founded, a missionary must journey to that world to take responsibility for its spiritual enlightenment, using whatever tools are most expedient. For some colonies, the missionary's responsibility can be limited, as other servants of the Ecclesiarchy participate in the colonisation effort. For newly recovered worlds, the task is often far more challenging.

In these instances, the missionary must first absorb and learn the ways of the native society and its religion, if one exists. As he comes to grips with the culture, he must identify practices and teachings that can be refined to become consistent with the ways of the Imperial Creed.

A missionary's ultimate goal on any new world is to convert its existing populace to the Imperial Creed, but this is no trivial matter. Often, a missionary must work without any support. As the sole representative of the Imperium, the missionary serves as an ambassador to the entire planet. Given the scale of this task, many missionaries attempt to institute a gradual and subtle reform that can subtly gain traction within the planet's culture rather than trying to violently overwhelm the local beliefs immediately by force of arms or raw charisma.



Missionaries frequently begin implementing such changes by integrating portions of the Imperial Creed into the planet's native belief system. This might be a simple matter of substituting the Emperor and his saints for the roles of deities within the world's pantheon. In other circumstances, a solution could require more extreme, violent actions or could take long-term planning. A missionary might have to design a system for a far more gradual conversion process. By placing facets of the Imperial Creed subversively into the culture, a missionary can help to lay the groundwork for his successor—sometimes one who only arrives centuries or millennia later. Ideally, the foundation the first missionary creates opportunities for future missionaries to exploit in the signs and prophecies the first leaves behind, ensuring that even if he cannot succeed in his lifetime, the Imperium will triumph long after his death.

The precise tenets of the Creed that missionaries espouse can vary substantially. Some are generous to a fault, granting the Emperor's pardon for past crimes, while winning the population over with charm and assistance. Those who follow this path are often more dependent upon their impassioned speech and vast body of knowledge. Others pursue a more militant course, often with the assistance of particularly zealous converts or even the forces of the Imperial Guard. Missionaries who employ this pattern might initiate a holy war against the planet's native religions or they might use the power of the Imperium as a tool while they ferret out threats to humanity. Still others work from the shadows, acting to subtly introduce the Imperial Creed so that the inhabitants never truly realise a change has occurred.

THE LEGEND OF ST. COGNATIUS

"Cognatius. A man, a legend, a Saint. If his tomb exists, it is here, in the Koronus Expanse. I believe that it must exist, for the Emperor would not have guided so many in search of it here otherwise."

—Nicomedes Keefe

The Ecclesiarchy only recognises a select few saints with a direct connection to the Koronus Expanse. In large part, this is due to the millennia of isolation that the region has endured and the relatively recent discovery of the passage through the Maw. Though humanity has clearly maintained a foothold within the region for untold millennia, regular passage is only a relatively recent phenomenon. In spite of this solitude, there is compelling evidence that agents of the Imperium explored some portion of the Koronus Expanse long ago. St. Cognatius was one such explorer recognised for his successful sojourns and conversions in the Emperor's name.

The name Cognatius has been found upon several Imperial shrine worlds and exists in the mythology on a number of worlds in the Expanse. Those scraps of evidence that have been assembled are fragmentary, and are in many cases contradictory. A few have posited that there might even have been more than one individual—possibly a family lineage—that used this name. The legends are many, and the truth is scattered and forgotten.

The commonly held legends of St. Cognatius are known on many worlds within the Calixis Sector and beyond. They identify the man as a warrior-scholar who explored the boundaries of the Imperium and conquered countless worlds in the Emperor's name. Legends and evidence from rediscovered shrines indicate that he ventured into the Koronus Expanse millennia ago, long before anyone successfully mapped the Maw. In this era, good fortune for Explorers and missionaries within the region is often credited to his intercession.

The inconsistent legends and mythology leave the saint's exact nature lost to the ages. Some say that he was an Explorer, seeking to recover archeotech. Rogue Traders often claim that he was one of their own.

Some more conservative elements among the Ecclesiarchy curse Cognatius' name, saying that he was never a true saint. They make these accusations based upon certain legends that he treated with foul xenos on several. Those who hold faith in his sainthood instead argue that these anecdotes are mere slander, or that such interactions were simply a means to an end.

Though many have chased the legend of Cognatius, four particularly noteworthy missionaries made uncovering his tomb a major goal alongside their work of converting distant worlds to the Imperial Creed. These four missionaries—the warlike Genevieve Almace, the enduring Nicomedes Keefe, the inspired Nadine Aleynikov, and the secretive Jollus Marquette—all firmly believed that finding the fabled Tomb of Cognatius could be a tipping point in returning the Imperium's sway over the wilds of the Koronus Expanse, and fervently sought this sacred sepulchre. However, if any of the four uncovered the tomb's location, he or she did not reach it before perishing in the Expanse.

The lives of these missionaries, as some of the first into the Koronus Expanse during the early forays from the Calixis Sector through the Maw, shaped many of the worlds of the Expanse. They planted legends and seeds of stories upon which their successors could capitalise, and uncovered valuable information about lost relics, including the Tomb of Cognatius. Missionary characters and other Explorers dedicated to the Imperial Creed can learn a great deal from the triumphs and travails of these four travelling priests. And any Explorer who wishes to find the Tomb of Cognatius, whether for piety, avarice, or the mere thrill of discover, can gather important clues by studying their lives and unravelling the secrets they wound. This chapter covers their stories, and includes numerous Adventure Seeds that Game Masters and players can use to weave these tales into the legends they themselves create while treading the Koronus Expanse.

As part of your sacred mission into the region known as the Koronus Expanse, you are charged with finding a sacred site of the long-lost Saint Cognatius. Strong auspices and omens indicate that his final resting place exists beyond the Maw. It is certain to include his flagship, his writings, and many of his most sacred artefacts. These holy relics must be recovered, so that they may once more serve the Emperor through his agents, the Adeptus Ministorum. His most holy words were certainly divinely inspired, and may offer us new teachings. There are doubtless those amongst other factions—including heretics and the greedy—who would steal these relics for their own wicked purposes. These are the possessions of a saint of the Imperium! They must not be contaminated by those who are not true servants of the Emperor!

GENEVIEVE ALMACE

"Fight well today, soldiers! Our strength of arms is a testament to the might of the God-Emperor!"

—Genevieve Almace, prior to battle upon Kepheri IV

In the short time since her demise, Missionary Genevieve Almace's legend has already spread through many of the worlds of the Koronus Expanse. Her unceasing battles to destroy the xenos and the corrupt served as a powerful example to the uninitiated locals of the region. Through her shining example, numerous human civilisations were reunited with the Imperial Creed—and many others burned. In the process of restoring faith to these far-flung worlds, her mission also eliminated huge swathes of xenos and mutants, insuring that the faith could grow. Her valour and faith continues to hold sway among the citizens on the worlds she restored to the Imperium. In some places, the faithful revere her as blessed, hoping that she would someday become recognised as a saint. Agents of the Ecclesiarchy have even collected evidence that suggests some worlds harbour madly devoted cults of followers who worship her as a deity of war.

The one who would someday become the renowned missionary came from a comparatively mundane background. As an orphan, she was raised in a Schola Progenium on Sinophia. Her parents were both bureaucrats within lesser offices of the Adeptus Administratum. They perished in the same tragic set of events when a hab riot spilled into their data-vault. Testing as dictated by doctrine indicated that she had a strong potential for service within the Missionarus Galaxia.

As she matured, Genevieve proved that her early testing results were extremely accurate. Her mind and soul both embraced the teachings of the Ecclesiarchy from a very early age. Initially, her instructors berated her lack of physical preparedness for her lessons. This continued for some time, until observers began to notice that she maintained an irregular sleeping pattern. The young woman spent her rest periods in deepest prayer, begging the Emperor for the salvation of the souls of her fellow students and instructors. Once this fact came to light, her teachers chose to confer with priests of the Adeptus Ministorum to identify a schedule that might enable her to spend appropriate time at prayer without neglecting her necessary education.



The pious student began to excel at both the mental and physical aspects of her education. Initially, the largest challenge Genevieve faced was trying to balance the demands on her time. Between her intense devotions, her physical training regimens, and her mental education, she found little time for study and practice. Eventually, she began to incorporate her prayers as key components to her study and exercise routines. Often, she used mnemonic devices gleaned from scripture to aid memorization and the timing of sacred hymns as the basis for her movements through martial arts forms. Though some of her counsellors viewed this as sacrilegious, it soon became clear that by incorporating her devotions, Genevieve radically increased the pace of her education.

Of course, her excessive devotions drew the attention of her peers, many of whom were less devout, even within the confines of the Schola Progenium. Through the course of her education, Genevieve had many rivals. These included other students destined for the Missionarus Galaxia, but also young women who were in training for membership among the Adepta Sororitas. On many occasions, these rivalries led to physical confrontations with serious consequences. While the Schola on Sinophia has a reputation for excessive levels of violence, records indicate that Genevieve's experiences were extraordinary, even for that setting. Significant portions of her student history are absent, but there is evidence that she seriously injured at least five of her peers and suffered through two extended stays in the Schola's Medicae.

Several scholars who have studied Almace's early life believe that these confrontations played a significant role in developing her approach to spreading the Imperial Creed. They theorise that her militant tendencies arose due to the physically competitive environment of the Schola Progenium. It is clear from the context of her youth that she grew up in an environment where leaders had to prove themselves through physical demonstrations of their abilities. Though her mental and spiritual faculties were above reproach, these elements were insufficient to prove her worth in the eyes of her peers.

As Genevieve neared completion of her training, she began to consider a variety of options for her first mission. Though newly inducted graduates typically have no input in their initial duties, many students do petition for specific assignments. Most often these requests focus on the types of worlds and cultures that seem most approachable for the novice missionary. In Almace's case, she immediately and fervently sought service on a death world. Extremely confident in her own physical abilities, the young woman was desperate to visit a planet where those talents could be tested in the most thorough of possible crucibles.

Unsurprisingly, there is no evidence that her requests were to be granted. In large part, this is due to the fact that the young woman never formally completed her course of study. Instead, she departed prior to the formal graduation ceremony when Inquisitor Reykholt recruited her directly from the Schola into his service.

THE CALLING

Using his authority as an Inquisitor, Reykholt had Genevieve's status recognised through the Missionarus Galaxia, in spite of the fact that she never formally completed her training. Because of this atypical procedure, the young woman never received an initial mission from Adeptus Ministorum. There are no known official records of her activities during this time. It is clear that the young missionary's faith never wavered and that her combat abilities substantially improved—hardly surprising given the duties she is likely to have undertaken as an Inquisitor's agent.

More surprising is the fact that Genevieve was able to deliberately part ways with her service to the Inquisition. By all accounts, she split amicably from Inquisitor Reykholt's entourage. There are no official records of this departure, nor are there any anecdotal reports from known acquaintances of either individual. According to Missionarus Galaxia accounts, Almace petitioned the organisation for a formal assignment in 092.403.M41. A few scholars have called the validity of those records into question, but they remain the best evidence of when Genevieve might have first travelled to the Koronus Expanse. Scholars who have reviewed the requisition note that the missionary felt that her service to the Inquisitor did not completely fulfil her sense of duty to spread the Imperial Creed.

In response to her request, the Missionarus Galaxia issued Almace her first formal assignment. She was commanded to travel through the Maw to spread the Imperial Creed into the worlds of the Koronus Expanse. Scholars note that journal entries recovered from Inquisitor Reykholt suggest that he had a particular interest in this region. Because of their fragmentary nature, the precise nature of this interest remains unclear. The connection strongly indicates that his influence might have played a factor in the Ecclesiarchy's decision to send a comparatively inexperienced missionary on a quest to this untamed region of space.

Regardless of the motivations behind this assignment, it is clear that Genevieve enthusiastically embraced this decision. Upon receiving her new assignment, she began an intense study of the legends of St. Cognatius. She had a special medallion bearing the saint's emblem and code forged, which it is said she wore for all of her remaining days. Anecdotal reports indicate that she thoroughly embraced his legends and firmly believed that the mythical saint would intercede with the Emperor to assist her mission. With the words of the saint on her lips and the truths of the Imperial Creed in her soul, she parted ways with Inquisitor Reykholt and embarked upon her mission.



THROUGH THE MAW

Fortuitously, Almace's assignment came at the same time as an Imperial Navy expedition prepared to map portions of the Expanse. The Ecclesiarchy secured her a berthing aboard one of the ships in the assigned squadron. Because of her past experience, the expedition's commanding officer requested that she work closely with the Imperial Guard troops that were also assigned to the mission. Consequently, Almace spent her journey honing both her physical and oratory skills, as she promoted devotion and discipline among the small contingent of Guardsmen.

Comments recorded at the time indicate that Almace found this period to be exceptionally helpful and inspirational. Key among the records are several remarks made about how inspiring she found the armies of the Imperium. Many scholars believe that this time reinforced her belief in using military action as a powerful means of spreading the faith. Though she clearly remained uncomfortable with the notion of instilling faith through fear alone, she recognised the potency of awe. In fact, she stated on several occasions that it was clear that the military forces were a physical manifestation of the Emperor's will. Their actions could serve as an indisputable lesson to any who might dare to question the word of his faithful.

For the remainder of her time within the Koronus Expanse, Almace held true to this belief. No matter where she travelled, she strove to keep a detailed record of the scheduled movements of any Imperial forces in the region. Her constant hope was that she might be able to call upon their assistance in times of need. On several occasions—she always claimed through the intercession of St. Cognatus—Imperial Guard forces proved surprisingly available to grant her the assistance she needed. While critics suggest that this is an outgrowth of the limitations inherent in her techniques, her advocates insist that the availability of these forces were a clear omen of the Emperor's favour.

AMONG THE UNKNOWN

Almace departed the Imperial Navy shortly after her arrival in the Expanse. Rather than proceeding directly to a world in need of her guidance, she chose to first spend time at Footfall. Anecdotal reports from the time indicate that she spent approximately six months on the station. During this time, she made contact with a number of Rogue Traders active in the Koronus Expanse, in hopes of establishing relationships that might be of benefit in the future. Of course, to fulfil her duties to the Ecclesiarchy, Genevieve also spent a significant portion of each day spreading the word of the Imperial Creed to all who visited Footfall.

While she enjoyed success among the Rogue Traders—there were several with militant bents who could readily embrace her philosophies—she had much less luck in spreading the word to the faithless on the station. In fact, several scholars believe that Almace chose to leave Footfall much sooner than she originally intended. Evidence suggests that there might have been organisations that specifically targeted her for elimination because of her persistence. Some scholars speculate that these groups could have been

made up of Imperial deserters who had little tolerance for a person with her devotion. Others believe that one or more Rogue Traders might not have agreed with her philosophy and sought to eliminate her presence before she could send word to Imperial authorities.

In any case, the Ecclesiarchy mandate requiring Rogue Trader vessels to travel with a missionary whenever possible proved a tremendous convenience to Almace. She secured passage aboard Rogue Trader Zhorne's *Lux Salvationis* with very little notice. Recovered notes from the craft's seneschal—Grigory van Heuring—indicate that the Rogue Trader was very comfortable with her presence and relieved to find her, so that he could fulfil his mandate.

For reasons that remain unclear, the *Lux Salvationis* delivered Almace to Nazhdureyah less than two weeks after leaving Footfall. Though the units were clearly designated for assignment elsewhere, an Imperial Guard company that had been travelling to a new assignment aboard the vessel was also delivered to the world at the same time. This might have been an example of Almace choosing to test her authority, or Rogue Trader Zhorne could have decided that she needed these forces to properly demonstrate the Imperium's might to those who would not readily accept her. Regardless of the political machinations involved, these soldiers became Almace's initial group of core supporters. All of these brave men and women remained in her service for the rest of their lives, fighting and dying so that she might better spread the Imperial truth and crush those who opposed them.

Over the years of her mission to the Koronus Expanse, Almace never travelled alone. Using that initial group of soldiers as a foundation, she continuously gathered supporters. On some worlds, she had tens of thousands of followers. Each time that she departed a world to begin her mission anew elsewhere within the Expanse, she selected a company-sized group of her established followers to come with her. Legends indicate that no one ever refused the honour to accompany the missionary. In fact, it is believed that in several cases, her most fervent acolytes fought fiercely for the opportunity to travel with the missionary, so that they might continue to serve the Emperor under her authority. The names of these associates have been lost to the years, though it is said that many deliberately kept their names secret so that they would not diminish the Almace's legend.

THE MISSION

Genevieve Almace's reputation for success in the Koronus Expanse is well deserved. During her decades of service, she nurtured the Imperial Creed on more than a dozen worlds. Even though they remain separated from formal Imperial oversight and any true Adeptus Ministorum support, all of these planets remain true to the Imperial Creed. This level of lasting success in an environment as unstable as the Koronus Expanse is exceptionally rare. It offers an enduring proof that her methods were sound, and provides significant evidence for those who argue in favour of her sainthood.

Of the worlds that she converted, Nazhdureyah and Traynor's Rest serve as particularly characteristic examples of her methodology. In both instances, Almace used her

combat expertise as a shining example of the Emperor's gifts to all of humanity. Though her foes differed in tactics, appearance, and armament, both existed only in defiance of the Imperial Creed. By obliterating them, the missionary inspired the population to recognise and embrace the glories of the Imperium.

NAZHDUREYAH

After disembarking from *Lux Salvationis*, Almace quickly assessed her resources and began to investigate the world's human population. The crucial first step was to establish a secure base of operations for her newfound followers along with a means to keep them adequately supplied. Fortunately, humans were the world's only sentient inhabitants, and their technology was derived from STC principles. Almace took this as a sign of the Emperor's approval of her past work and strove forward without fear.

Unfortunately, that first step onto this world proved the easiest in the conversion. Nazhdureyah had hundreds of millions of human inhabitants. They had dispersed across three large continents with well over a hundred large cities divided into four major nations and numerous smaller ones. In almost every case, the system of rule horrified Almace and her followers. The various monarchs and oligarchs across Nazhdureyah were all members of ancient psyker bloodlines. They held power through a combination of their well-established authority and their innate psychic talents, both of which they used to keep the normal human population thoroughly repressed. Even though non-psykers outnumbered the rulers by nearly a thousand fold, the world had never known a successful revolution against the ruling nobility.

Through the use of their powers and their corrupt practices, the psychic class of nobles had created a twisted paradise for themselves. With few exceptions, humans who lacked psychic powers took care of all physical labour as well as most of the daily work required to keep the world functional. The ruling class were free to live their lives in whatever manner they saw fit—often at the extreme expense of the psychically inactive. The planet's arable land and mineral wealth were more than sufficient to create lives of opulence for the rulers, while still providing adequate rations for the vast social underclass.

To manage the security of their domains, the various nobles maintained vast standing armies of soldiers, large portions of which were continuously under mental domination. These forces were regularly expended in games of war, for the entertainment of their cruel masters, and as part of the world's constant political machinations. This had the benefit, from Almace's perspective, of ensuring that a significant percentage of the population had military training. It also ensured that the world had an adequate supply of weapons, as well as a compelling reason to despise their callous Warp-dabbling oppressors.

Recognising that a response to military action was certain to be organised and overwhelming, the missionary began her conquest by carefully spreading the word of the Imperial Creed through the population first. Even as she recognised the seeds of rebellion among the lower class, Almace also saw that the standing armies granted the ruling class a major advantage. Further, due to their abilities and inherent corruption, she feared that the taint could be used to target her allies and herself for destruction if the missionary did not take great deliberate care in shielding her forces from psychic assault.

The planet's slave population had a well established—though officially banned—religion, which was focused on the inherently corrupt nature of the planet's psychic noble class. Almace began her conversion of the human population by manipulating its tenets so that they mirrored the teachings and mandates of the Imperial Creed. By focusing on the central hatred of their oppressors, she had a solid basis for recruitment and conversion. Genevieve also made use of this network to establish connections with agents to build a broad resistance movement to Nazhdureyah's ruling class.

Once her connections were in place and supply lines established, the missionary made the first bold strike. She personally led the troops she raised in a direct strike against the Ssavis dynasty, the premiere noble family of the world's most prominent nation of Krismer. In short order, she had executed practically the entire bloodline of psykers.

Though Rogue Trader Zhorne was ecstatic to have found a missionary at such short notice, I am concerned about the selection he made from the very limited options available. In the week since we departed Footfall, the very limited options available. In the week since we departed Footfall, the Missionary Almace has already managed to be a disruptive force to the vessel as a whole. Her zeal and militant tendencies significantly exceed the levels to which we have become accustomed. I recognise that it is not my place to question the wisdom of those who serve the Emperor with such fiery devotion, but I am concerned that we may face serious ramifications from her continued involvement.

The situation might not be so disruptive had she not arrived aboard the vessel at the same time that we were transporting a contingent of Imperial Guard for deployment. I did privately express my concerns about this to the Lord-Captain prior to our departure, but he dismissed them, as he is wont to do. In fact, he stated that he was enthralled by the missionary's fire and initiative. I hope that this is not another error in judgment, as that same zeal seems to be the root of our current strife. Her interest in worship through martial practice is admirable, I suppose, but I cannot help but wish she would not inspire so many of our house troops to ask permission to join her on crusade.

Further, if Almace were to become aware of some of Lord-Captain Zhorne's indiscretions, there could be further... complications. I continue to advise my Lord-Captain that it might be wise to accept the loss of some of the house guard and deliver the missionary to a nearby world before matters escalate.

—Grigory van Heuring, Steward of the mighty vessel *Lux Salvationis* and Humble Seneschal to the great Zhorne Dynasty

ADVENTURE SEED: UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Nazhdureyah remains a world of upheaval and conflict to this day. The Imperial Creed has taken root and holds on tenaciously despite the constant and extremely bloody turmoil that wracks the planet. In recent days, the last scion of the Ssavis has begun to work beneath the surface. Etri Ssavis, called the “Lost Queen,” has united a significant faction behind her and quietly subverted a number of local representatives of the Imperial Creed, who she has won over or bent to her will with her considerable psychic abilities.

The Explorers could make a tidy profit by opening a trade route to a newly unified Nazhdureyah, which has long been thought of by Rogue Traders as a worthless wasteland filled with warring bandits and is thus largely untapped. Of course, more pious individuals might feel that Almace’s work is being undone by Etri’s rise to power. Thus, they could oppose her, seeking to establish their own rule through an appropriate agent (following the **Retrieve a Blessed Relic** Endeavour, on page 44) or simply assassinate her and leave, as Almace did so long ago (undertaking the **Destroy the Apostate!** Endeavour on page 58). The Game Master can customise or even combine these Endeavours to better fit the specifics of the world of Nazhdureyah, as he sees fit.

Working with her contacts, she was able to eliminate all of the other key families before the unsuspecting nobles could even mount an effective resistance. The last few survivors of the psyker clan vanished into the wilderness, hounded by Almace’s ruthless enforcers, and were declared dead shortly thereafter. The soldiers who were suddenly freed from psychic domination were very happy to help with the world’s liberation, and formed into a vast army that swept across the planet in Almace’s wake.

Almace only spent a brief time on the world consolidating its holdings before she departed to continue her mission elsewhere. As she departed, many of Nazhdureyah’s former slaves joined her, out of gratitude and in hopes of aiding her quest. Unfortunately, though the Imperial Creed continues to prosper on the world, no replacement government has ever achieved stability. It exists in a state of constant anarchy and war as the survivors continue to battle over the planet’s spoils. Rumours suggest that a few survivors of the psychic ruling class could yet dwell on the planet in secrecy, hoping to one day regain control.

TRAYNOR’S REST

When she reached the world of Traynor’s Rest, Almace found a culture that shocked and appalled her Imperial sensibilities. The world’s human population—which numbered in the millions—dwelt in a state of seeming peace and prosperity with an even larger population of xenos. Extensive research conducted by scholars since the missionary’s arrival have never been able to identify any acts of war between the two populations, and Genevieve’s initial surveys were consistent with this fact. The two distinct species maintained a symbiotic culture, with each providing certain materials and knowledge that contributed to the other’s survival.

All detailed records of the xenos race have been scoured, but legends indicate that the species were generally saurian in appearance and biological characteristics. Because of the historical cleansing, scholars are unable to identify the basis for the cultural connections between these xenos and the resident humans. In point of fact, there is not even a surviving name for the creatures, as the term was deemed anathema in the wake of the human conversion to the Imperial Creed. Instead, they are simply known as the “Corrupters.”

Even though the missionary reached the world with more than a company-sized contingent of human allies, her forces were insufficient to initially complete a direct military conquest. This was complicated by the fact that the human inhabitants—the targets for her conversion efforts—were largely content with their relationship with the xenos. Before she could begin to take military action, Almace recognised that she must work to drive a philosophical wedge between the two populations. Further, if that division could have some additional basis—even if that basis were illusory—she believed she could better mobilise the humans to participate in the conversion effort and naturally grow into faith in the Emperor.



Almace recognised that she would need to lead an army, sweeping across Traynor's Rest, to truly eliminate the xenos threat. She knew that obliterating this species would require a population that was equipped to fight. More importantly, though, they needed to be motivated to slay their former allies without questioning the righteousness of their own purpose. She had no armaments to distribute to the humans, but she did contrive a persuasive, infectious cause behind which they rallied.

The xenos population was highest at the planet's hottest climates—a consequence of their physiology. These locations also held the world's greatest mineral wealth, which was critical for some of the world's technological development. The missionary fabricated information that the creatures were refining and gathering these minerals. She then made claims that their hoarding of resources was part of a scheme to convert the human population into a subservient slave race by using the minerals to forge weapons and make war upon the humans.

By integrating the Imperial Creed into the native human religion, Almace managed to create several associations, which offered "proof" of the xenos threat. Key to this was her revelation of several forged manuscripts that she presented to the natives, indicating that the reptilian creatures were the guardians of the damned in the ancient mythology of their religion. She then used these same materials to reveal the Emperor as a manifestation of the leader of their gods. She found strong parallels between several of their lesser deities and a number of Imperial saints, including her favoured St. Cognatus.

Almace used this information to drive the human population of Traynor's Rest into a religious fervour. Word of her revelations spread like wildfire across the planet, as more and more embraced her teachings. As these quickly became mainstream tenets of Traynor's Rest, it was clearly impossible for the "enlightened" humans to continue their interactions with the xenos. Initially riots erupted in all of the integrated population centres. In short order, the riots transformed into warfare. At this point, the missionary stepped in to take direct control over the brutality she had inspired.

Over the course of only seven years, the native humans, following the missionary's leadership, completely extinguished the xenos race. All of their cities and buildings were demolished. Any documents or artwork that depicted or even referenced the creatures were deemed anathema and defaced or destroyed. In their place, countless new statues and manuscripts devoted to the Emperor were created.

The war was not without cost. Eliminating the xenos presence shattered the planet's infrastructure. Centuries later, it has not yet attained the level of stability it had prior to the missionary's arrival. In spite of this desolation, the populace has maintained its faith in the Imperial Creed. It continues to praise Almace as the servant of the Emperor who revealed the true dangers humanity faces among the stars.

As in all things, I know the God-Emperor's hand guided me to this place. He would not have permitted me to waste the time and resources to travel into this region if my presence was not needed. Yet I find myself in conflict with a man who also claims to be doing His will. When we reached the system, I discovered that Jollus Marquette had already begun the process of converting its inhabitants to the Imperial Creed. Even in the isolation of my own mission, I have heard word of his activities and triumphs, so it was a surprise to find him active on this world.

When I heard of his presence, I immediately travelled to his locale so that we could discuss how we might most effectively bring the ways of the true faith to this world. To my surprise and horror, I discovered that he did not believe my assistance was necessary. Rather, he felt that the techniques he had already implemented would be adequate to assure the world's salvation. I disagreed with the fool, and I hope the man recognises His guidance in my words. Marquette's resources in this place exceed my own, and it would be folly to waste His assets to prosecute a war over the world's conversion. Perhaps the God-Emperor sent me to this place so that I might have this discussion with Marquette. It might be that my words alone were necessary to redirect my peer's planning in the service of the Imperial Creed. If this is the case, then the effort was not a waste, though I fear I may never know the truth.

Marquette's techniques are far too gradual for my tastes. He refuses to initiate a war against the unbelievers. Instead, he insists that his existing efforts are certain to transform the society into faithful believers in less than a generation. His argument that this could drive far more souls to the Imperial Creed was based upon relative birth and death rates in the current environment as compared to a time of conflict. Though his numbers are likely accurate, the idea of letting even a few of these unbelievers continue to dwell outside of the God-Emperor's light is repugnant on every level. I hope that my words are transformative, so that he can recognise the necessity of war to the propagation of the faith in the Koronus Expanse.

-Almace

THE QUEST

The vast majority of Almace's personal effects are believed lost, so physical evidence of her activities is fragmentary at best. Confirmation of her actions is often dependent upon anecdotal reports and histories maintained by fanatical acolytes. In spite of this, it is clear that she used the legend of St. Cognatius' in all of her teachings throughout the Koronus Expanse. The basis for Almace's particular devotion to the saint remains unclear. Though his legend has spread through the Expanse and the Calixis Sector, adherents were not prominent on Sinophia where she matured. Some posit that her adoration of the legendary figure came to the forefront during her time of service to Inquisitor Reykholt.

Even without strong evidence of the reason for her devotion, the legend of Cognatius inarguably drove Almace to succeed in the Expanse. She modelled her own life after his history of military triumph. Records indicate that she borrowed strategies taken directly from stories of the saint as models in formulating her own victories. These patterns happened on far too many different occasions to simply be a coincidence. Instead, scholars insist that the missionary found inspiration in the tales of the ancient saint.

Tales of the great warrior and scholar often incorporate his legendary victories beyond the boundaries of the Imperium. Some of the myths incorporate miraculous devices, which were capable of overwhelming the enemies of humanity with little more than a thought. Through her studies among various local legends, Almace became a foremost expert on the saint's legendary tactics. According to the tales, on several occasions, the missionary replicated his strategies to great effect as part of her mission. She felt that these successes were a tangible sign of the continued importance of the St. Cognatius mythology to the Koronus Expanse.

As her mission progressed, Genevieve continued to acquire every scrap of information she could find that was related to St. Cognatius. Though at first this amounted to documentation, her quest soon turned towards the acquisition of holy relics. In many cases, this included weapons and equipment that had a strong association with the ancient saint. Her banner is said to have included relics of the saint. Some legends indicate that the saint might have once wielded her characteristic chainsword, which she first acquired from a ruined voidship on Ikeran during her violent conversion of the locals there.

Eventually, Almace is believed to have begun the process of assembling all of her research on St. Cognatius into a single massive tome. The work represented one of the most comprehensive aggregations of his story. It included strong evidence for the locations of many worlds associated with his legend, along with the artefacts that could potentially remain on each of the worlds. The archive she assembled is believed to include specific strategies that the missionary found effective for identifying and recovering those artefacts.

After Almace's death, Imperial scholars began to collect evidence of her life's work. As part of the documentation, the scribes interviewed many of Almace's inner circle about her life and philosophy. Several of Almace's followers recounted discussions they had with the missionary about her future plans. Many of these were focused on the myth of St. Cognatius. They also remembered many instances where she stayed awake late into the night, scribing her thoughts and compiling her notes into a massive tome. However, there are no confirmed records of this work. Since her death, the missionary's legend often mentions her research notes about the location of the long-lost saint's cache of archeotech. The manuscript, which many believe could lead a traveller directly to the tomb, is lost to all but her most fanatical devotees on Loretta.

Notably, a few fragments have been recovered, though these are most likely assembled from her notes rather than the more complete work. On at least four separate occasions, Explorers have revealed amazing archeotech findings to the Tech-Priests of the Adeptus Mechanicus, which were rediscovered using materials associated with Almace. All cases gave due credit to her efforts at research as the primary basis for the findings. While none of the sites have shown any specific link to St. Cognatius, it is clear that all could easily have been associated with his legend.

Most who honour the memory of Almace believe that the quest to find St. Cognatius's tomb was the great unfulfilled challenge of her life. Many argue that she would have found the cache if she had not died so early in her career. Others insist that she died because she would not relent in the goal of finding the tomb. This argument cites the potency of the curse against any who might defile the grave of an Imperial Saint.

ADVENTURE SEED:

THE BLADE OF THE SOUL

Almace's most famous weapon (though hardly her only one, given her lifetime of martial conflict), a two-handed chainsword called her Last Conquest, is now enshrined on the barren world of Loretta. A conclave of fanatics called the Blood Tears watches over the blade, protecting it from outsiders and only allowing those who prove their worth to look upon the relic, which they keep deep beneath their fortress. Believing above all else in piety through martial strife, the blade's guardians defend it fiercely, challenging all who would see it to ritual duels.

If the Explorers who venerate Almace (or are seeking the secrets that died with her, such as the location of the Tomb of Cognatius) wish to make a pilgrimage to see the blade, they must demonstrate their faith and vanquish a number of champions protecting the blade. This can be treated as a **Retrieve a Blessed Relic** Endeavour (as described on page 44). If the Explorers can succeed in this Endeavour by getting into good standing with the Blood Tears, one or more of their members might even choose to train with these martial zealots at their fortress and take on the Red Consecrator Alternate Career Rank (see page 76).



FINAL REST

Almace met her demise as she lived: in glorious battle, her heart filled with the fury of the Emperor. Shortly after a spiritual retreat upon the dusty world of Loretta, Almace made the conscious decision to venture to a place that was fully tainted by the forces of the Ruinous Powers, called “the Banestar.” The basis for the decision is unknown, but she believed that her life had reached a critical juncture. In order to continue—possibly as part of her quest to find Cognatius’s tomb—she needed to undergo the most strenuous of tests. To her, that meant an effort to thoroughly cleanse a world where the Immaterium already held sway.

A few individuals claim to have escaped the dark world’s orbit with their lives intact, though all bore serious mental and spiritual scars. Almace’s final legend is linked to the stories these madmen recounted after returning to the more civilised worlds of the Expanse. Different tales are largely inconsistent with one another, suggesting that at least some of these stories are meant to serve as parables or were the creations of a lunatics mind. Some of the better-documented stories are also inconsistent with previous patterns of Almace’s tactical approaches. This suggests that either they are inaccurate or that she was acting based upon undisclosed information.

It is clear that on her final mission, she led a force that was woefully under equipped to conquer a place held entirely in the grip of the Dark Gods. Her expedition consisted of a single transport, which was only lightly armed and armoured. Though she had two companies of soldiers, they were outnumbered more than ten thousand fold by the corrupt entities that dwelt upon the target world. In her final battle, she deliberately charged into a direct confrontation with a Greater Daemon. If this legend is accurate it is hardly surprising that she lost her life in such a fight, though the legend claims that she slew the foe with her dying breath.

On the worlds that she converted, there are many shrines that continue to honour Almace. However, because of the nature of her passing, there are hardly any confirmed relics from her lifetime. Many claim to have artefacts associated with her actions. Her sword, currently enshrined on Loretta, is one of a few relics to have been unequivocally confirmed as her one-time possession. For more information on the blade called Almace’s Last Conquest, see **Holy Relics of the Koronus Expanse** on page 103.



NICOMEDES KEEFE

"We must convert these benighted souls to the cause of the Emperor. We need their bodies to man the mining complex, and we must also ensure that their spirits labour for the right reasons."

—Nicomedes Keefe, prior to invading Wayward Gem

The story of Nicomedes Keefe began under inauspicious circumstances. The son of a proven traitor, it was only his particular devotion and fervour that granted him the opportunity to grow to maturity, much less a chance to serve as a member of the Missionarus Galaxia. The success he created in spite of such a challenging beginning is a testament to his knowledge and inherent abilities. Many servants of the Ecclesiarchy have met with far less success in spite of a lifetime of training and the full support of that institution. To experience such renown and triumph beyond the boundaries of the Imperium, where support is far less available, is a clear indication of the Emperor's favour.

Born the heir of the Keefe Dynasty, Nicomedes was expected to succeed his father as planetary governor of Laskin in the Calixis Sector. His early years were spent in a state of lavish opulence. In youth, he was considered a mental prodigy, with a vast aptitude for knowledge. He travelled across the planet from an early age, learning from the world's most accomplished scholars. The journeys, often undertaken only in the company of his father's seneschal and a squad of guards, included visits to many of the world's most important institutions. He visited shrines, manufacturums, and vast habs. In each, he made it a point to interact with the residents and workers to a degree that often left his guards incredibly uncomfortable and resulted in more than one wild and harrowing adventure for those accompanying him. In this way, Nicomedes became a very worldly and observant young man, ever aware of his surroundings and how to leverage everything in his environment to his advantage.

By all accounts, his early education was focused in the manner that would be expected of a young noble. He came to understand the trials and tribulations of the underclass, but only from the perspective of one who must manage them. He had an obsession with history, both of his native world and the galaxy beyond it. He showed some aptitude for the basic teachings of the Adeptus Mechanicus, but strictly that of a layperson. The young Keefe showed a strong natural knack for numerical calculations, particularly as they related to matters of economics and bureaucratic rule. Most distinctly, his educators saw little evidence of any particular religious devotion. Though he fulfilled his obligations as regarded the Imperial Creed, he seldom went beyond the standard requirements for education or demonstrations of devotion.

Though his casual devotion was hardly atypical for a young noble of the Calixis Sector, his Ecclesiarchy advisors repeatedly petitioned his parents to instil a greater appreciation for religion in their heir.

His degree of devotion—or at least his demonstrations of it—changed in the wake of a family disaster. While Nicomedes was still in his youth, agents of Inquisitor Schtooring investigated his father and found him guilty of high crimes against the Imperium. The full, specific nature of the elder Keefe's crimes was never publicly disclosed. Based upon the investigative process, scholars who have documented Keefe's life believe that at the basis for the crimes included failure to properly acquire the planetary tithe and reassignment of Imperial assets, but too much data was "lost" during that time for any conclusive answer to be found. For reasons still unknown, Inquisitor Schtooring chose to execute the planetary governor along with his family and entire household. Nicomedes—who was travelling at the time of the conviction—was the only member of the main Keefe bloodline spared.

Nicomedes' survival depended upon two key decisions. The first was his choice to abdicate all rights to the familial legacy. In so doing, all of his father's personal assets were ceded to the Imperium, under the auspice of an additional tariff. The second was his decision to enter the service of the Adeptus Ministorum. This choice was only granted after Nicomedes demonstrated a particularly strong knowledge of the Imperial Creed and provided proof that he had been making private devotions all his life. Initial testing demonstrated that the adolescent's personality and education made him a strong candidate for service in the Missionarus Galaxia—which would also, not coincidentally, ensure that he spend the rest of his life too far from the place of his birth to pose any threat to the order of Laskin by raising unwanted questions of legitimacy and succession.

Because of his exceptionally late start, Nicomedes underwent a dramatically accelerated educational process in preparation for the life of a missionary. His education until that point had been the best that a very wealthy noble family could afford, but it was far too broad and scattered for a person destined to serve the Ecclesiarchy. Consequently, he had to learn a phenomenal amount of information about the inner workings of the Missionarus Galaxia and the Imperial Creed in very short order. The necessary physical and martial training further complicated this undertaking.

As a noble, Nicomedes' education had been focused upon high-level tactics and duelling. In order to serve as a missionary, the young man had to learn the strategies more appropriate for open battlefield engagements, particularly those required for one to lead from the front lines. In order to complete these trials effectively, the young man requested that he train with noncommissioned officers of an Imperial force that was currently garrisoned on the planet. The soldiers—stationed there to keep the peace after the elder Keefe was deposed—were instrumental in training the young man in the art of fighting efficiently, so that he could win no matter the cost and survive no matter the odds.

THE CALLING

As he neared the completion of his missionary training, Keefe met with numerous Ecclesiarchy authority figures, in the hopes of having some influence about the nature and location of his mission. In this matter, the young man and his mentors agreed on the notion that his assignment needed to be distant from the Calixis Sector. In spite of his devotion, it was clear that there were many who could only associate Nicomedes with the crimes that his father had committed. During the years of his training, he had survived numerous attempts on his life, many of which originated from amongst Laskin's secular population. In order to have any reasonable chance of success as a missionary, it was clear that he would need to travel far from the world he once called home.

If his assignment is any indication, the higher-ranking members of the Ecclesiarchy were aware of the potential threats that Keefe faced. Keefe's formal assignment was to travel to the Koronus Expanse, so that he might spread the truth of the Imperial Creed to those humans who yet dwelt outside of the Imperium. From the very moment of assignment, the newly elevated missionary realised that this would be a tremendously difficult task. Passage through the Maw dictated that he would only have very limited access to any other Imperial resources. Keefe would need to be able to work in practical isolation for extended periods of time—truly a challenge that would push his missionary education to its limits.

Prior to his departure for the Expanse, Keefe was granted permission to perform an extended tour of the worlds of the Calixis Sector. The purpose of this tour was to perform a first-hand study of the works of the missionaries that had succeeded in propagating the Imperial Creed within the region. While the newly

confirmed missionary had already studied their works, seeing the outcomes proved to be inspirational. Scholars who have studied Keefe's journals from this era have commented extensively on the cultural insights that the missionary compiled. His notes included extensive observations on the contrasts between the worlds' cultures prior to the arrival of Imperial missionaries as opposed to their current structure. Based on these comparisons, he compiled an extensive set of directives to establish the most effective methodologies for transforming a world from a place of scattered, warring bands to a fully unified, obedient Imperial world. His faith in both the Imperial Creed and the power of the Adeptus Administratum shone through in his annotations.

During his additional years of study, Keefe took the time to discuss matters of faith with many of the established leaders of the Adeptus Ministorum within the sector. As part of these discussions, he met with secular leaders as well. According to Keefe's recovered journals, he apparently made it a point to study how different spiritual guides chose to work with the government officials. Of particular interests were the techniques that the

various clergy used to influence the political leaders. By comparing these methods with the ones employed by missionaries, Keefe believed that he could better ensure the long-term success of his mission to the worlds of the vast Koronus Expanse.



ADVENTURE SEED: THE KEEFE FORTUNE

Missionary Keefe's origin is inextricably linked to the crimes his father committed. Some of the legends suggest that those crimes included absconding with a very large sum of resources that included several years worth of Laskin's Imperial tithe. According to legend, most of these resources were never recovered, and their true fates are lost to time. Many have speculated that the missionary—in spite of personal vows of poverty—might have retained all or some of those funds. These historical speculators often suggest that much of the missionary's good luck, as well as Ecclesiarchy tolerance for his actions, were due to generous endowments made with that vast fortune. Other treasure seekers believe that Nicomedes Keefe might have taken the resources with him to his final rest.

The truth is that Keefe's fortune is not at his gravesite, nor is it at Shrine of the Hammer that honours him on Foulstone. It lies deep beneath the waves of Ikeran (see pages 62–63), a world that Keefe briefly visited early in his career. Whether he stowed it here intending to return or cast it into the depths as a penance for the sins of his father, the people of Ikeran still remember Keefe's visit to their world so long ago, associating him with the sign of the hammer. Though Genevieve Almace was the one to convert Ikeran to the Imperial Creed, and most of its inhabitants still view her as the true messenger of the Emperor, Keefe nonetheless enjoys posthumous status as a minor patron of knowledge and secrets in the world's mythology. The location of Keefe's visit is still venerated by local pilgrims, who cast their own possessions into the depths where he left his fortune. If the Explorers wish to seek this sunken treasure, they can undertake a hunt for this lost fortune (following the **Retrieve a Blessed Relic** Endeavour on page 44). The Game Master should modify the example Endeavour as he sees fit based on the circumstances of Ikeran and whatever form he decides Keefe's hidden treasure should take.

INTO THE EXPANSE

With his survey complete, Keefe began his final preparations for travel into the Koronus Expanse. After careful deliberation of his limited options, the missionary chose to take passage aboard *Divine Glory*, a Rogue Trader vessel that was preparing to cross through the Maw. The transport had recently delivered a cargo of rare commodities from worlds held by its dynasty to the planets of the Calixis Sector. Its cargo holds were filled with mundane Imperial supplies for the brave souls who sought to expand the Imperium's boundaries.

The transport also carried a vast number of passengers travelling to the distant worlds. The vast majority were colonists. These people were by in large criminals who had chosen the task of taming a distant world for the Imperium as their sentence instead of service within its bounds. Keefe spent a significant portion of the journey working closely with this group. He saw it as his duty to strengthen their faith so that they might be prepared to maintain it far from the presence of formal agents of the Adeptus Ministorum. In addition to spiritual lessons, Nicomedes was also uniquely suited to offer advice about government structures that could work effectively in the isolation associated with a colony world.

Another significant portion of the passengers were part of a group of zealous ascetics, united by their faith in St. Cognatius. This group sought to found a monastery within the Koronus Expanse on the world of Foulstone, which their chosen patron had visited. It was their belief that the legendary saint deserved a group devoted to his worship within the region that he had so valiantly explored. When they heard that a missionary was among the passengers, the monks deliberately sought out Keefe. For the remainder of the journey, they shadowed the missionary, constantly begging him for advice for remaining true to the Imperial Creed so far from the direct influence of the Ecclesiarchy.

Nicomedes Keefe was initially reluctant to work with the monks. Recognising that they did not bear any formal Ecclesiarchy sanction, he felt that his cooperation would grant them

an inappropriate sense of authority. In spite of this, he could not help but recognise their faith in St. Cognatius and the Emperor. Though he was initially reluctant to even interact with them, over time, a sense of camaraderie began to develop. He eventually offered the abbot and his followers a great deal of advice about the practical aspects of establishing an isolated colony and maintaining a relationship with Imperial authorities. The monks, in their gratitude, offered him the aid they could render once they established their monastery on Foulstone.

In return, he grew to appreciate their particular devotion to St. Cognatius. Prior to these discussions, Keefe had only a limited familiarity with the saint's legends. Over the months of the transit, the missionary developed a deep and personal belief in the saint. Obviously, the explorer was a man of great faith, but faith alone was not enough to propel a saint to glory. Working with the different monks, Keefe saw the many different ways that each expressed their devotion to the saint.

As the missionary inadvertently studied the saint's many aspects, his appreciation continued to grow. Eventually, the key to his particular devotion became the technological marvels integral to the myths. In many of the stories, St. Cognatius wielded archeotech devices that could transform planets and populations so that they would more easily demonstrate their devotion to the Imperium. Keefe believed that if any of these ancient machines still existed, they could substantially affect his own mission to the Koronus Expanse. Seeing strong parallels between the works of the ancient saint and the ones that he hoped to accomplish, Nicomedes began to incorporate some of St. Cognatius's legends into his own teachings.

By all accounts, *Divine Glory's* passage through the Maw was uneventful. The vessel arrived with all significant crew, passengers, and cargo unharmed. Many of the passengers and crew credited the success to the intercession of St. Cognatius in bringing his faithful back to the Expanse. Keefe wrote about this issue extensively in his journals at the time. Some scholars believe that this experience was the final element that solidified his personal devotion to the Saint.

Keefe parted ways with the monks and most of the passengers at Footfall. This was the vessel's first delivery, and it took several days for the craft to fully unload and transfer cargo. Keefe's journals indicate that he gave serious consideration to continuing his mission with one of the colonist groups, but ultimately chose to stay aboard the ship, in hopes of finding a more appropriate location to begin his mission. Based upon his journal entries, the parting was a deeply emotional and spiritual time for the missionary. Anecdotal reports compiled from the ship's logs and other correspondence indicate that Keefe became increasingly agitated as *Divine Glory* made its final preparations to leave Footfall. Many believe that it was at this moment that his mission truly began.

THE MISSION

Keefe chose to depart *Divine Glory* at the first world with a human civilisation that he encountered. It is unclear if this was by his choice upon arrival, if the ship's captain discharged him, or if he had somehow persuaded the ship's captain to specifically travel to such a world. In any case, this pattern emerged throughout the course of the missionary's career. Without exception, every time that he completed a mission upon one world, he immediately took passage upon a vessel and disembarked at its next stop to continue his quest.

The missionary's zeal was so powerful that he rarely took time to rest between his work on various worlds. He recognised that the worlds of the Koronus Expanse were so desperate for the Emperor's guidance that taking the time to select a target would be a waste. Instead, he simply travelled through neighbouring systems, constantly spreading the Imperial Creed. In those instances where the consecutive worlds of his mission seem to be distantly separated, scholars have found that the worlds were connected by another underlying factor: legends of Saint Cognatius.

BIRYONOX PRIME

A death world filled with hardy, brutal humans and an abundance of climatory threats, Biryonox Prime was Keefe's first stop within the Koronus Expanse. Upon his arrival, he quickly established contact with one of the native populations. Though he carefully spread the word of the Imperial Creed to the members of the first clan he met, his primary focus during this initial contact was to observe their culture and their way of life. According to the recovered fragments of his journals, the missionary strongly believed that a successful conversion was dependent upon having the message carefully tailored to best fit the targets he had in mind.

The world's environment was extremely toxic to both flora and fauna. None of the native life forms were edible, due to various pollutants and contaminants. Instead, the colonists had come to depend upon Terran species that their ancestors had brought to the world thousands of years prior. Even these grew poorly upon the planet, as the plants and animals were scarcely able to compete with the more aggressive Biryonox native species. This was further complicated by several of the planet's migratory predators. Because of their regular movements, the natives lacked the ability to secure any large-scale infrastructure or create large, stable societies.

These combined factors meant that the Biryonox's human population were scarcely able to fend for themselves. The incredibly low yields on their harvests dictated that the inhabitants needed to devote the vast majority of their time to survival alone. The extremely high mortality rates among the human population due to severe malnutrition, as well as contamination from many of the planet's inherent toxins, kept the population from being of any real use to the Imperium.

Recognising a world in crisis, Keefe believed that converting them to the Imperial Creed might be accomplished at the same time as he aided them in their physical survival. As he had no significant entourage, the missionary had

I saw today's encounter with another missionary as a sign from the Emperor that my plans must subtly change. Though I have always made it a point to visit the next available world for conversion, today's efforts did not yield a viable target. Shortly after the vessel reached orbit—before my shuttle could launch—word reached me that a missionary was aboard a shuttle already inbound for the craft. I could not resist the opportunity to break bread and share tales with another member of the Missionarius Galaxia, so I delayed my expedition. It was good that I chose to do so, as it seems the world has already been converted.

Meynikov is a true and faithful servant of the Emperor, who has established a solid foothold within the Koronus Expanse by completing the conversion of the world. Our paths are certain to continue to cross over the next two weeks—when the vessel is expected to next reach another target world. During this time, I look forward to thoughtful and provoking discussions as regards which techniques we each favour. I suspect that our approaches may be radically different.

This is largely because I am amazed that her philosophy has met with any degree of success within the worlds of the Koronus Expanse. She seems as though any travel beyond the boundaries of the Imperium should prove to be her undoing. While she is clearly true in her faith and devoted to her cause, she appears unfamiliar with humanity's darker aspects. I appreciate her successes, but am wary that her conversions may not last, as she seems far too generous with her trust. She trusted me readily, after all, and while I harbour her no ill will, there are those even within our own organisation who are not so altruistic, even towards their supposed brethren. For faith and charisma she does not lack, but lasting change requires concrete plans.

-Missionary Nicomedes Keefe,

Agent of the God-Emperor's Will in the Koronus Expanse

Written Aboard the Vessel "Lux Salvationis" of Lord-Captain Zhorne



no choice but directly interact with the native population. Keefe's goal was to quickly convert one clan and then use his new followers as disciples to spread the word across the planet. After careful deliberation, he identified a group that seemed large enough to fit his needs, but was also desperate for the type of assistance he could offer.

The missionary chose to focus his conversion efforts through several major elements. Broadly, he explained the Imperial Creed via colloquial metaphor. Keefe spoke at great length about the Imperium's history and deeds, the divinity of the Emperor, and the might and expertise of His way. He warned of the dangers of mutation, xenos, and the psyker. Finally, he used the planet's contaminated surface as an example of mutation, and its predators as a proxy for xenos threats.

Combined with these teachings, he reorganised the social hierarchy of the groups he encountered to favour martial achievement. This helped him to cement the position of the Imperial faith by tying it to the hunting practices the local clans already used, and also allowed him to use the threat of force against belligerent groups. The secrets to the forging of steel that Keefe possessed proved exceptionally useful in this regard, and allowed the groups who accepted the Imperial Creed to gain an advantage against those who rebuffed Keefe's advances.

By following this approach, Keefe was extremely successful in his mission to the world. In short order, those clans that embraced his teachings were able to secure a degree of power and military might that the world had never previously known.

In addition, because the core teachings included principles of combat readiness, the tribes were able to eliminate the threat posed by those who ignored the sacred message of the Imperial Creed. In a matter of only a few years, the planet's surviving population began to grow and the seeds of the Imperial faith had been sown.

EVERHARVEST

When Keefe's travels brought him to the world of Everharvest, he was initially impressed by its degree of sophistication. By the standards of the Koronus Expanse, it had a high population density. Its technology level included basic manufacturing. There was even a well-organised central government that maintained the planet in a stable fashion. He saw no clear evidence of mutation or corruption among the culture. In every sense, the world seemed like an ideal candidate for him to quickly convert to the Imperial Creed, so that it might one day be formally incorporated into the Imperium.

As his first move, the missionary established contact with the planet's government leaders. In the years since the Maw reopened, they had experienced very limited contact with Rogue Trader vessels. This had been enough for them to learn of the existence of the Imperium of Man, but little beyond that. Keefe used these meetings to provide the rulers with information about the majesty of the Emperor and the security that the Imperium of Man offered. Though some voiced concerns about surrendering their independence, the missionary's faithful zeal was enough to win him many religious converts in a short span of time.

With the government's blessing, the missionary began the process of formally converting the planet's natives to the Imperial Creed. As he had on several other worlds, Keefe spent a significant portion of his time identifying the most zealous of his initial converts. These individuals were provided additional training, and sent off to serve as his disciples throughout the world. In this way, his message spread far faster than he could hope to independently. Tragically, not all of his selections at this stage were ideal.

Three of the men who Keefe recruited proved to be poor selections. Collectively, the trio accepted the notion of the Emperor but denied the danger of psykers. This was in truth because the three brothers were psykers themselves, hoping to use Keefe's ascendancy to fuel their own ambitions. Even as they worked with the missionary openly, they formed a cabal with the intention of eliminating him once he had fulfilled his role. Speaking with others whom they knew to be psychically active, their unholy alliance grew rapidly.

As Keefe continued his work, unaware of this new threat, the brothers conducted a ritual with their followers that called upon the Ruinous Powers. They intended to use the very essence of Everharvest to destroy the missionary. It was their belief that a sign of this magnitude could slay him, ending the threat and also propel them into positions of authority. Foolishly believing that they could control the Immaterial, they demanded that the unholy obey their will to execute the missionary. They even provided a significant blood sacrifice at the behest of their Dark Gods.

Soon, calamity struck, though not in the way they had hoped. Dozens of volcanoes spontaneously emerged and erupted across the face of the planet. One even emerged in the centre of the nation's capital, destroying the city, disrupting the government, and killing many of the world's leaders. So narrow was his escape, that Keefe considered his survival nothing less than a miracle granted by the Emperor himself.

As the crisis took shape, Keefe was speaking to a crowd outside a temple-museum devoted to Everharvest's technological history. As he moved to escape from the emergent lava flows and geological instability, the missionary fled through the museum. When a wall collapsed, he seized upon an archeotech power hammer to batter his way out and make his escape. That ancient weapon would become Piety's Charge, as he called it, a relic that remains intricately tied with his tale.

In the aftermath of the destruction, religious war began to sweep across Everharvest. The surviving psykers and their followers clashed viciously with those who had turned to the Imperial Creed in this hour of crisis. Leaders of both groups blamed their opposites for the vast geological calamity and neither side had the resources to offer succour to the survivors. Instead, they cycle of vengeance wracked the world time and time again as each side attempted to eliminate its hated rivals.

Believing that the planet was no longer stable, Keefe chose to flee aboard the next transport to visit the world, taking with him as many as he could. Though he had established a solid footing for the Imperial Creed, he feared that the forces set in motion might soon physically shatter the Everharvest. As he escaped, he brought a sizeable population of refugees with him, all of whom were devout converts and willing to further assist the missionary in his efforts to convert other worlds.

ADVENTURE SEED: SOWING MIRACLES

After Keefe departed, Everharvest was shaken by cataclysms for generations. Ideological factions and grand alliances ceased to matter in the face of utter environmental collapse, and the scattered survivors of Everharvest are now nomads, travelling the wastes and squabbling over the scant resources that remain. The world holds little of value—except for an ancient and incredible archeotechnological relic, the XED1.11178e "Ubertas" device.

The machine sits at the heart of a jungle of its own creation, a small splotch of green in a featureless and cruel wasteland. The nomads rely on its unnatural verdancy during the dry season, never realising that the forgotten artefact within once gave their world unprecedented prosperity.

If the Explorers wished to recover the Ubertas device, the Game Master could treat it as a **Retrieve a Blessed Relic** Endeavour (see page 44). However, doing so would deprive the survivors of Everharvest of their last means of survival. If the Explorers wished, they could instead undertake a **Mission to a Benighted World** Endeavour (see page 40) to bring the light of the Emperor back to these benighted souls, unifying them under the Imperial Creed to try to return Everharvest to its former glory, that its bounty might be exploited by the Imperium of Mankind.

THE QUEST

After the disastrous mission to Everharvest, Keefe spent the transit time to his next mission in isolation. Though the voyage was particularly disturbing, as Warp storms battered the vessel, he was only once observed to leave his berth, when the vessel was becalmed near its destination. Anecdotal reports from those who accompanied the missionary indicate that at the end of the transit, he emerged refreshed and invigorated for his next mission. Only fragments of his journals from this period are available, but they are particularly informative.

All signs indicate that during his seclusion, Nicomedes renewed his devotion to St. Cognatius. Of particular interest are the frequent mentions of his newly acquired hammer. Scholars believe that he used this as a focal point for his meditation and renewal. When he identified it as a relic associated with the ancient and mysterious saint, Keefe saw this as a clear sign of the Emperor's guidance.

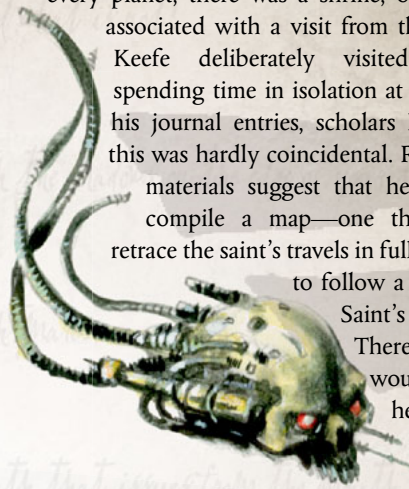
From that point on, the missionary's works made even more clear references to the spiritual guidance of St. Cognatius. Even as he continued his missions, he also sought out any further evidence of the ancient saint's actions in the Koronus Expanse. On numerous worlds, he made pilgrimages to sites where the legendary figure was thought to have worked. In each case, he spent time in isolation and mediation at the locations, keeping his activities private from even his closest followers.

Through the course of these years, the missionary's journal entries become far more informative about his connection to the saint. The surviving fragments state that Keefe believed that the hammer was a concrete link to Saint Cognatius. In some instances, he claimed that the potent weapon even spoke to him, though scholars believe that this was simply a metaphorical explanation for the missionary's relationship with the Emperor. All of the surviving mentions of the conversation provided indications about the path of travel that Keefe would eventually follow through the Expanse.

Though he continued to visit planets consecutively, mostly based upon distance, Nicomedes Keefe began increasingly to target worlds that he thought connected to the legend of Saint Cognatius. Of the last five planets his journals record him visiting, four of the worlds had some overt association with Saint Cognatius, whether that came in the form of a mythological figure who matched the saint in the local lore or merely a

common rumour about crashed vessels on that world. On every planet, there was a shrine, or at least some tale associated with a visit from the legendary figure. Keefe deliberately visited these locations, spending time in isolation at each of them. From his journal entries, scholars have discerned that this was hardly coincidental. Rather, the surviving materials suggest that he was beginning to compile a map—one that might someday retrace the saint's travels in full. He was attempting to follow a path to unearth the Saint's final resting place.

There he believed he would find the answers he had so long sought.



Missionary Nicomedes Keefe is certainly the most likeable of the missionaries that Rogue Trader Zhorne has brought aboard *Lux Salvationis*. In fact, he strikes me as a genuinely sincere man, whose faith and zeal is secondary to his concern for the spread of the Imperium into the Koronus Expanse. After tonight's welcome dinner, I shared an aperitif with the missionary, in keeping with my usual custom. I am hardly willing to let another missionary attempt to instil mutiny in the crew, so have learnt to make diplomatic inquiries about their faith and practices.

Keefe was unfailingly polite and diplomatic in his answers. Though he clearly believed in his mission, his eyes and voice never showed the same fanatical zeal that I have seen so often before. Instead, his approach was rational and affable. He seemed comfortable discussing how his mission could be transformative for the populations in ways that went far beyond the scope of religion.

The missionary made frequent reference to his faith, but he also spoke at length about the possibilities of increasing commerce, and of identifying future recruitment centres for the Imperial Guard. In several instances he even went so far as to mention worlds rich with resources that might be of interest to the Zhorne Dynasty. He made it a point to explain that these were systems that he had previously visited on his mission. He believed that additional Imperial contact could aid in their growth and help to maintain their faith. His approach was absolutely focused upon expanding the Imperium into the Koronus Expanse as quickly as possible.

I believe that his outlook is far too optimistic based upon the evidence we have seen, but I certainly appreciate his pragmatic and functional methods. In fact, I could not help but express my surprise to see a man with this philosophy serving as a member of the *Missionarius Galaxia*. His reaction to this comment was far cooler than I expected. He politely but tersely assured me of his undying devotion.

This left me even more curious about the man, and his deep-seated beliefs. From his composure and education, I would more expect him to serve as a planetary governor, an advisor to an Admiral, or even a Seneschal to a Rogue Trader Dynasty.

—Grigory van Heuring, Steward of the mighty vessel *Lux Salvationis* and Humble Seneschal to the great Zhorne Dynasty

The exact purpose for this mission remains unconfirmed. From his fragmentary notes, scholars believe that Keefe sought to identify St. Cognatius' final resting place. He felt that by unearthing the Saint's tomb, he might recover a potent cache of archeotech as well as additional resources that might compel the Imperium to accelerate the cultivation of the Koronus Expanse. If he were able to reveal these materials, he expected that a wave of additional support from the Calixis Sector and beyond could sweep through the region. The missionary fully believed that this transformation could take place in remarkably short order, glorifying the name of the Emperor and the Imperium to all of their lost human brethren by finding the lost Saint's grave.

Evidence from the writings of his followers strongly suggests that Keefe believed that the hammer was a key factor in his hopes for success. He felt that something about the weapon could provide a deep link to the ancient saint's final resting place. He notes that the weapon saved his life during his harrowing lone journey across the desolate world of Pratus, and mentions that it was critical to the completion of his tasks on Ikeran, though he is oddly vague about what these tasks entailed. However, all of his surviving journals are very circuitous in their mention of any tangible link between the hammer and the physical location of Cognatius' tomb. The missionary alluded to the weapon's particular capabilities on many occasions, but never expressly stated them. It is possible that another person of great faith could uncover this same connection, or it might have only been a figment of the missionary's imagination. In any case, the connection and the drive to uncover the tomb remained a central focus for Keefe for the rest of his life.

The hammer served as a trademark for this missionary as well as a token of his status as a conduit to the power and wisdom of the Emperor. Keefe was seldom seen without it, constantly using it as a symbol of the Emperor, as a personal walking stick, or balancing it on the cart of texts and relics he often kept with him when journeying on new worlds. On many occasions, he interwove the weapon into the parables he told, waving it during key points in his sermons. He intended for the weapon he called Piety's Charge to become a physical emblem of divine power and guidance, and many of those who revere Nicomedes Keefe still identify themselves by this weighty symbol.

FINAL REST

Nicomedes Keefe's final fate remains shrouded in mystery. The Order of the Hammer, the name the monks of Foulstone gave themselves to honour Keefe after his death, maintains a tomb devoted to his memory within their monastery. The tomb includes a number of objects believed to have been used by the missionary in his service of the Emperor. Many of these are not firmly verified, including objects of clothing and trivial mementos. The most significant item within the tomb is Piety's Charge, the hammer that he wielded in life and credited to St. Cognatius. They also have several volumes that they claim were his personal journals within their collection, but the authenticity of these has come into question.

None can say why these artefacts remain with the Order of the Hammer rather than reverting to the Missionarus Galaxia upon the missionary's death. There is no indication that the Ecclesiarchy has made an effort to recover the items. This might be an indictment of Keefe's actions within the Koronus Expanse or an indication that someone within the Adeptus Ministorum believed that the monastery had a legitimate claim to the artefacts. The latter seems improbable, as the Ecclesiarchy does not acknowledge the existence of this order.

Scholars, who claim to have visited the tomb, indicate that members of the order identify the missionary as "Blessed Keefe." Many believe that the misguided monks consider the missionary as a saintly figure. It is clear that his memory and artefacts are revered, even if the location of his body remains a mystery. A few of these scholars believe that the memorial actually holds the clues necessary to reveal his fate. Certain treasure hunters also suspect that one or more of these might point towards a location where the Keefe family fortune was hidden.

Numerous legends surround Keefe's final mission. Some claim the world he sought was destroyed even as he trod upon it. Others argue that a foe from the missionary's past finally caught up with him. Different legends suggest that the killer was agent of the Ruinous Powers, an assassin from his youth, or a misguided noble he had dethroned. There were clearly many who sought the missionary's death for sundry reasons. Yet, though many claim to have slain him, there are none who can present compelling proof that they committed the deed. Most among the Order of the Hammer believe that Nicomedes Keefe died while still searching for the tomb of St. Cognatius, continuing the work that drove him throughout much of his life.



NADINE ALEYNIKOV

"Thy physical form is a reflection of the God-Emperor's majesty. Care for it as you guard your mind and soul. For it too must be ever ready to serve His divine cause."

—Nadine Aleynikov

Nadine's family belonged to a sect of militant Redemptionists. Her earliest memories focused upon aiding her elders in the preparation of armaments prior to performing a cleansing. Sacred Imperial Cult texts served as her earliest grammars. Mastery of the flamer came at the same time that she learned the core concepts of the Imperial Creed, focusing upon the hatred of the heretic, the unclean, and the xenos. Strict discipline and ruthless punishments were integral to her maturation.

This changed abruptly just as the young woman began to approach adulthood. Nadine's parents were slain by a heretical cult, when intelligence about a raid proved inadequate. Nadine was the eldest of the sect's surviving heirs, as she was attending a religious service while most of the others were participating in the assault. Because their parents had been responsible members of the Adeptus Administratum, Nadine and her siblings were all inducted into her hive's Schola Progenium.

The tests conducted upon her admission into the Schola Progenium indicated that the young woman had a strong proficiency in all of the arts associated with service as a member of the Missionarus Galaxia. Her knowledge of both religious matters and combat tactics were considered precocious, even by the Schola Progenium's standards. Her predilection towards using violence to solve problems put her into conflict with her

fellow students and occasionally her instructors. Though her zeal was seen as commendable, certain surviving records suggest that at least one of her instructors felt she lacked the subtlety required of a missionary attempting to convert entire worlds unaided.

THE CALLING

There is a considerable gap in the hagiography of Nadine Aleynikov, stemming from the destruction of the hive in which she lived at the time. Whether the hive merely collapsed under its own weight in a cataclysmic hive-quake or was toppled by more sinister forces than gravity, Aleynikov was one of a few survivors to stride out of the inferno alive. Though she rarely spoke of the events that transpired there, Aleynikov was changed by her narrow survival. Driven forward by what seemed the will of the God-Emperor himself, chasing a divine vision amidst the smoke and ash, Aleynikov dragged herself and a number of other survivors from the rubble, then led the group kilometres across the icy wastes to the next nearest hive. Aleynikov fought tooth and nail to reach her destination, pushed on by her obsession.

Only she and two others survived the harrowing trek, but her miraculous survival caught the eye of particular individuals of influence, who pulled certain strings in the labyrinthine bureaucracy of the Schola Progenium to assist Aleynikov in finishing her training and becoming a full-fledged missionary. These individuals



hoped she might spread the word of the Imperial Creed upon worlds long-lost. For her own part, Aleynikov was not broken by the cataclysm, but seemingly strengthened by it. Though she nearly lost her life numerous times during the hive collapse and the ensuing journey, her survival lead her to believe all the more firmly that the Emperor would provide in times of need, and that faith alone could triumph over all. Her infamously hot temper was slightly cooled by her trials and the patience that had been instilled upon her during the trek across the frozen wastes, but her sense of righteous indignation and her desire for justice never diminished.

LEAVING THE CALIXIS SECTOR

Once she completed her training and attained the status of a fully trained missionary, Aleynikov departed with a great deal of optimism. She carried with her only the very bare necessities for her mission. This included little beyond a few religious texts and a favoured shock maul. Espousing her philosophical beliefs in all of her decisions, the young missionary acted as though the Emperor would provide her with all of the assets necessary to successfully complete her mission, and that his will would guide her in all endeavours.

Aleynikov travelled aboard several different Chartist vessels towards the Maw. Though her final destination within the Calixis Sector was Port Wander, her journey was both indirect and time consuming. Ultimately, the trip took more than three years for her to complete, due to the number of vessels involved and the slow routes that they took. As the missionary recognised this was most likely a one-way trip, she was largely unconcerned about the time required. Her faith in the Emperor remained strong throughout this episode, and she often (and vocally) espoused her beliefs to other passengers. Over the course of each transit, she made new acquaintances and worked dutifully to preach the Imperial Creed.

This journey provided Aleynikov with direct exposure to a number of other faithful, as well as countless followers who were less ardent in their beliefs than she. The experience served to gradually temper her methods as well as her expectations. Though her zeal did not falter, she was initially surprised at the level of comfort that many of these unbelievers felt in their personal lives. She had expected that all who distanced themselves from daily expressions of faith might dwell in eternal misery and tragedy. It was her belief that daily religious observations were necessary to lead a fulfilling and complete life. When she saw successful merchants and soldiers ignoring their religious responsibilities but still leading comfortable lives, it left her with a serious moral quandary.

As a missionary, she saw it as her duty to enforce the will of the Emperor upon those who failed to fulfil their obligations. Over the course of her journey, she took dramatic actions against several less faithful—but highly influential—personages. Her targets included a planetary diplomat, a ranking officer aboard one of the Chartist craft, and an auditor of the Adeptus Administratum. Her actions resulted in several deaths among the unfaithful, as well as their supporters. Ultimately, however, it did lead to a far more devout environment aboard the vessels she travelled aboard—a state that lasted for decades after her series of transits was complete. Due to her intended destination and

the authority she wielded, there were no repercussions for her actions. Scholars, however, have speculated that her zeal at this time played a contributing factor to several difficulties she encountered during her later ventures and exploits.

With her arrival at Port Wander, the missionary chose to commit some time to exploring the Imperial facility and its inhabitants. She spent just over a month interacting with the station's permanent residents as well as visiting with various travellers and ships' officers who used the facility. Part of her time was spent fulfilling her mission by preaching the Imperial Creed to those in need. However, her primary focus was on learning more of the Koronus Expanse. While she had studied the region as part of her education, Aleynikov felt that her studies were inadequate for her needs. She believed that it was her duty to focus upon recently identified and struggling worlds with human inhabitants. The young woman accurately recognised that any information that had filtered back to Veneris must have already been sorely out of date.

As she spoke with more and more explorers who had travelled the worlds of the Koronus Expanse, the missionary began to fully recognise the scope of the region. To her initial dismay, she soon recognised that any information she could obtain at Port Wander would be as irrelevant as materials she had learnt upon Veneris. Due to the enormous number of worlds and the vast distances between them, she could only hope to visit newly discovered systems by being part of the discovery efforts.

After weeks of speaking with the crew and passengers of numerous vessels, the missionary suddenly came to a revelation. While she was glad that she had taken the time to interact with the residents of the station, her efforts to learn more of the expanse were inconsistent with her core beliefs. Recognising that the Emperor would guide her to the places she was most needed, she immediately took passage aboard the next vessel scheduled to pass through the Maw.

THE MISSION

Throughout her travels in the Koronus Expanse, those who sought to exploit her boundless faith in humanity and the Emperor continually set upon Aleynikov. In many cases, it is clear that she made poor choices about where to best place her trust. Imperial agents who were also brigands, pirates, and smugglers took advantage of her authority and optimism. On numerous occasions, her mission could have been far easier. Most often, this was due to a lack of research on her part and an unflagging trust in humanity to be sincere and honest with her about their goals and their faith in the Emperor.

The missionary's experiences at Port Wander were indicative of the struggles that she faced during her initial forays within the Expanse. Her first stop within the region was a visit to Footfall. Still reluctant to venture blindly out into the Expanse, Aleynikov tried to carefully identify a Rogue Trader whose beliefs might mesh well with her own. However, the Imperial citizens she met with at Footfall were no more capable or willing to aid her than those she had met within the Calixis Sector. While she recognised the needs of the faith and her responsibility to tend to them, this was clearly not an environment appropriate for her optimism

I: LIGHT ON THE FRINGE

and piety. Scholars who have studied her journals believe that she met with at least three different groups who sought to use her authority for criminal purposes. At least two of these were concerted efforts to exploit the missionary's authority for Cold Trade smuggling. Once more, rather than carefully selecting an explorer's craft, the missionary boarded the next craft departing the location—this time falling in with a band of smugglers carrying captured, unsanctioned psykers bound for the Calixis Sector. Each time growing increasingly jaded with her prospects after dispatching the heretics and criminals with whom she had inadvertently travelled, Aleynikov eventually decided that her mission would require her to launch herself completely beyond institutions of the Imperium, that her influence could not be used by the unscrupulous to thwart the Imperium's rule. Though she continued to fulfil her religious duties among the crew and passengers of every Imperial vessel she visited, she began to distance herself from any established representatives of the Imperium of Man. For the remainder of her career, Aleynikov devoted her entire focus to spreading the Imperial Creed to those worlds where it had never been known. She believed that this was her ultimate calling, and that the Emperor would intercede for those who were already aware of his divine presence.

AGAMEMNON QUINTUS

When Aleynikov hurriedly left Footfall, she travelled with Rogue Trader Hakine Duur aboard his freighter, *Bountiful Truth*. Prior to departure, he had confided in her that his destination was a primitive world named Agamemnon Quintus. By his accounts, the planet contained a significant human population, but their technologies only allowed them to forge basic metal tools and weapons. The world also maintained a state of perpetual war, which seemed to spell certain doom for its population. He explained that based on his expectations, unless something were to unite the planet's natives, they were likely to eliminate themselves eventually.

The missionary found the Duur's stories compelling, so the two shared many meals discussing the world and how Aleynikov might transform it. In spite of Agamemnon's limited interactions with the galaxy at large, Duur clearly knew a great deal about its population. He explained this by citing past travels to the planet, noting that he was working to establish trade relations with several of its nations. Though he had experienced some success, he assured the missionary that her presence was certain to improve its conditions, which he felt would also benefit his mercantile interests.

On My Recent Meeting with Fellow Missionary Nicomedes Keefe

I was surprised to discover that I was not the only servant of the Missionarius Galaxia aboard the vessel. Keefe was currently aboard as well. We shared a meal tonight and discussed our past experiences and current plans. I deeply respect his philosophical outlook to always conduct his missions at the next available planet. In a way, I think this indicates that he has a belief in Divine Providence, though he is clearly reluctant to accept the faith that I find self-evident. Indeed, I cannot question his zeal or his ability to accomplish his mission. The man has already enjoyed far greater success than dare to I pray the God-Emperor might permit me to achieve.

Yet, I recognise that my fellow missionary expresses his faith in a very different way than I draw upon mine. Based upon his tales and his words, he puts far too much emphasis on the secular realms. It is clear that this man is most comfortable dealing with the nobility, and manipulating others to do the God-Emperor's will unknowingly. I tried to impress upon him the inherent worthiness of humanity and the need to win souls as well as bodies, but he had obviously grown jaded for him to use such indirect and perhaps even under-handed methods. The God-Emperor sees to it that our plans succeed so long as we act righteously, and while I would not call this man unrighteous, he seems to see little of the good in others.

Sadly, I do not believe that my words had any impact. I could justifiably understand why he might prefer to continue using the techniques that have brought him success to date. I have met with some small successes as well, yet I have not needed to spend such inordinate amounts of time in planning my missions. Nor do I believe that my way is wrong. Put simply, we have different approaches to our missions, and I believe that we shall continue to respect one another. While I know that my success is dependent upon my faith and approach, I do not know if he could win so many converts were he to act in any other way. Perhaps the success I enjoy is the greatest evidence of the truth that upholds my faith.

-Nadine Aleynikov, Emissary of the Emperor's Will

ADVENTURE SEED: DENIED NO LONGER!

The Duur Dynasty has flourished in the Marmor system, where it exploits various mining worlds and buys the tolerance of the local nobility with trinkets that it acquires from unsavoury places, including the Screaming Vortex. The Duur Dynasty has always taken part in fringe practices, but in the centuries since it arrived in the Marmor system, it has grown increasingly twisted and corrupt, trafficking with xenos, renegades, and heretics.

If one or more of the Explorers are followers of Nadine Aleynikov's ways (such as Explorers who have undertaken the Adherent of Aleynikov Alternate Career Rank on pages 74–75), or if they are simply driven by a desire to see justice done, they can call the Duur dynasty to task for its crimes, undertaking a **Destroy the Apostate!** Endeavour (as described on page 58). Hakine Duur still rules his dynasty, having treated with ruinous entities to unnatural extend his life span beyond even what Juvenat treatments would allow, and dabbles in foul sorcery. However, if his heresy was exposed, even the corrupt nobility of the Marmor system would be forced to ostracise the Duur Dynasty, and the Explorers could exploit this opening to make significant inroads into the Marmor system themselves.

When they reached the planet, the existing culture was much as Duur had described. Numerous small nations were engaged in a state of perpetual war with one another over religious differences. Their technology incorporated metal weaponry as its deadliest achievement. The inhabitants were unlikely to cause permanent damage to the planet with such small-scale warfare, but could certainly slay one another efficiently. Aleynikov quickly absorbed this information, and landed on the planet with the intention of preaching the Imperial Creed to the uninformed masses.

Through a combination of persuasive words, tactical and strategic enlightenment, and good fortune, the missionary's work initially seemed blessed. Two of the largest nations converted to the Imperial Creed almost immediately. Once they had embraced the faith, it was straightforward for the missionary to unify their armies and forcibly convert the remaining nations. In less than a year, the planet went from a discordant world to one unified by its faith in the Emperor. Many portions of the planet even shifted their focus from warfare to production after Aleynikov helped to establish a single ruling body under the Imperial Creed.

As Aleynikov neared completion of her mission, Rogue Trader Duur returned to the world. The missionary had worked in effective isolation without his support, though this did not seem to impact her success. Shortly after his arrival, he heaped praise upon her for the success of her mission, and offered her transport to another Imperial world so that she might continue her mission elsewhere. The missionary accepted the offer and made preparations to depart, bidding a fond farewell to the converts and disciples she had acquired on Agamemnon.

Then, to her horror, Rogue Trader Duur launched dozens of slave raids upon the planet. When she questioned his actions, he explained that these humans were not Imperial citizens. He also pointed out that large portions of the population were now disarmed, and unprotected from his attacks. Essentially, he saw the opportunity as being far too beneficial to overlook. When the missionary rallied some of her followers and made an attempt on Duur's life in the hopes of keeping the world stable and devoted to the creed, Duur fled the world with only a small fraction of the population that he had hoped to enslave. Aleynikov swore that the Emperor's justice would be visited upon Duur for disrupting this world's return to the fold, but she never had the opportunity to make good upon her decree.

Still, the attacks shattered the planet's new-found unity. Religious and political unrest transformed Agamemnon's brief peace into all-out war, this time with the deadly technologies that Aleynikov herself had provided. Aleynikov strove for nearly two years to re-establish the Imperial Creed and planetary unity, but the population was disillusioned and her efforts were largely in vain. Even those who remained true converts to the Imperial Creed hurled themselves into the escalating conflicts with reckless abandon, their hatred for their neighbours stoked by the fires of piety. Aleynikov ultimately left aboard the next transport to reach the planet, in the hopes of finding another site to continue her mission.

To this day, however, many self-titled Adherents of Aleynikov consider the Duur Dynasty to be betrayers not just of that world, but of the Imperial Creed itself. Some militants even seek to take revenge on the Duur Dynasty, which has grown considerably in the intervening years, thanks in no small part to the wealth in slaves it claimed on Agamemnon Quintus. Since then, it has made many of its profits in the Marmor system, where the ruling nobility typically ignores its piratical depredations.

SIDERIA II

Through the course of her travels, Aleynikov reached the death world of Sideria II. Primarily a desert world, the human inhabitants clustered around the planet's small oases. These locations were the only significant sources of water on the planet's surface, and also the only meaningful concentrations of life. Hundreds of kilometres separated each of the oases from its nearest neighbours. Between the locations, the brutal conditions effectively isolated each place, so that all of the populations existed in small conclaves.

The missionary chose to observe several of these different human populations before interacting with them. She discovered that the cultures of the different populations significantly diverged from one another. They shared little in common in terms of culture, religion, and even language. If she were to succeed in her mission to this hostile world, she would need a clear factor that connected all of the clans, so that they could heed her words.

Further study revealed an endemic disease that affected all of the human inhabitants. In fact, the disease was actually the primary reason for the planet's classification as a death world.



While the native predators represented a significant threat, the disease was so prevalent and lethal that the average human life span barely exceeded thirty years.

To the local population, the wasting disease seemed inescapable. Those who contracted it saw their blood gradually thicken, until it turned into a black sludge. The first symptoms occurred when minor extremities began to discolour and swell. With its rapid progression, they could often turn gangrenous in a matter of days. Shortly after the first symptoms surfaced, the disease victims would sicken and die, suffering terribly as the disease gradually consumed their bodies.

Aleynikov recognised that the disease could serve as a focal point for her mission. Because it was endemic to the planet, it provided a common starting point in dealing with all of the different communities. Consequently, she chose to initially focus on ways to contain the disease and its spread, as purifying this plague seemed the most effective way to win over the population. She also chose to vocally glorify the human form as a symbol of the Emperor. Focusing on these ideas, she determined that she could use her ministrations as a way to propagate the Imperial Creed amongst the natives.

This approach proved extremely effective among the native population—particularly once the missionary recognised the primary source of the disease. Due to their geographic isolation, each of the planet's oases had flora and fauna that were largely distinct. The significant exception to this was a water reed, which grew from all of the different water holes. When she studied it more closely, the missionary recognised that

this reed provided an ideal environment for the disease. By eliminating the plant, she believed that the planet's humans could be largely freed from the hideous effects that the disease carried everywhere it spread.

Aleynikov made use of this revelation to establish amicable contact with many of the world's tribes. The population was easily swayed by Aleynikov's unwavering faith and the apparent miracles she wrought as she pushed back the disease across the planet with faith and fire. Believing that her work was nearly complete, the missionary began to watch the skies for any sign that an Imperial vessel might arrive to carry her to another world awaiting the light of the Emperor.

THE QUEST

Throughout her missions within the Koronus Expanse, Aleynikov always carried a map case, containing a carefully preserved and rolled star chart. She insisted that the chart was an artefact of St. Cognatius, which might be used to identify the site of his final resting place. The missionary believed that identifying that site could be a critical portion of her mission to the Expanse. She felt that by recovering it, she could also reveal a number of different artefacts, lost information, and boundless wealth. All of these assets could be used to help spread the Emperor's grace throughout the entire region.

Her legend includes a variety of different tales about how she acquired the ancient map. Some indicate that she came into its possession before even leaving the Calixis Sector. Others say that she uncovered it during her journey through

ADVENTURE SEED: ALEYNIKOV'S BANE

The world of Kosdir is blighted by Aleynikov's Bane, colloquially called "rotgrip" in many places. This was the plague that ravaged the population of Sideria II and ultimately sealed Aleynikov's doom. If the Explorers visit this world, they could follow in Aleynikov's footsteps and easily convert it to the Imperial Creed by eliminating the disease—perhaps once and for all, by creating a cure from Aleynikov's own records on the matter. However, Aleynikov's records, the so-called *Folio Languor* (see page 106) were lost with her on the supply station where she perished. To complete Aleynikov's unfinished work and eliminate the disease once and for all, the Explorers must venture forth into Aleynikov's grave to uncover the fruits of her research (this can be treated as a **Retrieve a Blessed Relic** Endeavour, as described on page 44). For more information on the supply station (and ways that this Endeavour might tie in to discovering the location of the lost Tomb of Cognatius), see **Station of the Dead** on pages 116–117.

the Maw, possibly at the Hermitage. Several extremely similar legends indicate that she received it as a gift from a grateful follower. All of these indicate that the follower delivered it to the missionary with her dying words, apparently as a repayment for past actions. None, however, shed any light upon where that follower might have truly acquired this unusual and ancient map.

Though many of Aleynikov's journals have been recovered, none of the fragments recount the origin of the star chart. In her journals, she only refers to its presence after her arrival in the Expanse. Most take that as a sign that she only acquired it after that time, but a few suspect that earlier journal entries might have simply been lost. If this is the case, it seems an unusual coincidence that the entries most closely associated with this sacred artefact are as frustratingly absent as the artefact itself.

Regardless of its origin, the star chart seems to have played a formative role in Aleynikov's mission. It is only after she first mentions the artefact that she even makes mention of St. Cognatius. There is no evidence that she had any particular devotion to the saint until after she acquired it. In point of fact, his legend is considered apocryphal upon her early home of Veneris. The fact that she came to embrace this belief later in life is markedly inconsistent with her faith. This strongly indicates that some transformative event took place, though scholars are dumbfounded as to its precise nature. Something about the artefact or its acquisition convinced her that it was genuine. Of course, the missionary's characteristic optimism and trust might make her more likely to put faith in such an object, her rigorous education certainly included the training required to recognise frauds.

Her journals and legendary reports of her activities mention that she often used the star chart in her sermons as a sign of faith. Numerous explorers, including accomplished Rogue Traders and Navigators, are known to have studied the chart, but none could reveal its origins or even confirm that it mapped the Koronus Expanse. Many of the artefact's map locations did not coincide with known routes and systems from the region. In fact, some posited that the device must either be unspeakably ancient or that it might

map the Expanse in a way that represented the cartographer's unique understanding of the region. A few of the more bold or foolish suggested that the missionary might want to have a psyker or a xenos examine the artefact, to offer a new type of insight about its design. The missionary took umbrage with all such requests, asserting that such an artefact must be a sign of the Emperor's favour. Such a sign could not be shared with any beings so anathema to the Imperial Creed.

During the time that she completed her mission to Sideria II, Aleynikov became particularly focused upon the Star Chart of St. Cognatius. Anecdotal reports from her disciples indicate that she had a major insight about the artefact during this period. The missionary seemed to believe that something about that planet had a strong connection to the

Missionary Aleynikov continues to amaze me, though not always in a good way. I cannot question her faith or her zeal, but her optimism never fails to astound. I have certainly been described as cynical—Rogue Trader Zhorne seems to enjoy inflicting that judgment upon me. Nonetheless, this missionary goes too far to the other end of the spectrum. She knowingly embraces a sense of uncompromising idealism that cannot possibly end well for her. Of course, if the stories about her are true, it may be that my opinions are both inaccurate and misplaced. By all accounts, the missionary has already successfully converted several planets to the Imperial Creed, leading troops in battle and fighting heresy and monsters alike, if the words of the ratings are to be believed. Based upon our crew's experience with other missionaries, few seem to have a single successful mission. Such an individual who has completed multiples is either extremely talented or so favoured by the God-Emperor that skill need not factor into the calculation.

Yet in the few days she has travelled aboard the craft, my mind still boggles at her reactions to things. Currently, two families from the engine crew occupy the spacious quarters granted her by Rogue Trader Zhorne, while she sleeps in the hallway with only her cloak. Each day, she spends time redistributing her food allocation among the ship's crew and passengers, praying with each person she meets. Invariably, she seems to have small gifts to share with each of the faithful, though I have no honest idea where these gifts originated. If I were not so confident in her faith and generosity, I would fear that she had stolen the items from ship's stores, though I know that is obviously could not be the case.

—Grigory van Heuring, Steward of the mighty vessel Lux Salvationis and Humble Seneschal to the great Zhorne Dynasty

map. Most believe that something about the world enabled her to identify its location upon the map. If correct, this might have allowed her to orient the device—a critical step that she had been unable to overcome through the decades that she had carried it. As she prepared to leave Sideria II, she indicated to her followers that her next objective would be to seek out St. Cognatius' tomb. She was confident that her new understanding of the map could lead her to that location.

FINAL REST

Sideria II was Aleynikov's final planetary mission. She departed the world aboard a passing vessel, *Nox Veniae*. According to reports from surviving crew-members, the craft's travel plans were abruptly changed after the missionary came aboard. Rather than continuing their planned trade routes, the vessel's commanders issued dramatically different orders. Prior to leaving the planet, he commanded that the craft completely empty its cargo holds on Sideria II prior to departure. Fresh stores of food and water were brought aboard from the planet. The commander indicated that the vessel would be embarking upon an exploratory mission to a previously uncharted world.

While the ship's officers tried to keep their destination secret, the missionary disagreed with this approach. Instead, she began preaching about the glories of St. Cognatius and the hidden mysteries of his tomb to the crew. Predictably, the crew reacted with great enthusiasm to her persuasive words as well as the promise of long-lost riches. Soon, all aboard were anxiously awaiting their next stops, as the vessel continued its journey to solve the mystery purportedly revealed by the ancient star chart.

However, the enthusiasm soon waned as an illness began to take hold of the vessel. Members of the ship's crew, passengers, and officers began to take ill. The missionary and her entourage recognised the sickness as the same syndrome that was so common on Sideria II. As *Nox Veniae* continued its journey through the Warp, more and more of the crew succumbed to the syndrome, which spread like a wildfire across the vessel. Far from their intended destination, the ship's commander had the Navigator cut their journey short, exiting the Warp within the Unbeholden Reaches—far from their destination. By the time they had finished their transition, the disease had slain or incapacitated more than seventy percent of the crew. In fact, its severity and contagion seemed far more pronounced than had ever been known upon Sideria II, though whether it was a more virulent strain or merely a result of the ship's cramped conditions, none can say.

Instead of reaching St. Cognatius' tomb, the vessel was forced to visit a remote supply station orbiting the world of Gildas, in the hopes of stabilising and recovering its crew. As, by this point, the vessel lacked the manpower to maintain full functionality. The officers feared that unless the craft had adequate time to recover, it could be lost with all hands. Of course, when they made contact with the destination, the facility was unwilling to permit a plague-ridden craft to dock. Over the course of several extremely tense hours, the vessel's Captain threatened to destroy the



station out of spite if they could not dock, killing both groups. The crisis was only resolved when Aleynikov made an impassioned speech to the inhabitants of the station and the ship, claiming desperately that she could still overcome the disease and save both parties.

Tragically, this time her faith was unfounded, and her desperate search for a miracle to end the plague was her last recorded effort. While the vessel did not destroy the station directly, the plague that had devastated the vessel soon spread through the station like wildfire. Most aboard succumbed to its effects in a matter of weeks, dying in a manner most dreadful. Only one vessel is believed to have escaped, carrying a small handful of survivors. According to their accounts, Aleynikov remained aboard the station orbiting the world of Gildas, trying to care for the sick and dying and desperately searching for a widespread cure to the end.

The survivor's stories were inconsistent, and it seemed that many had fallen prey to madness. Some scholars posit that the entire episode was a deliberate plot of revenge taken against the missionary, perhaps by Rogue Trader Duur, a missionary whose path she crossed during her life, or a vengeful spectre from one of the conflicts she incited—or was blamed for inciting—in the Emperor's name somewhere in the Koronus Expanse. Others believe that she might have truly been on the trail of St. Cognatius, but that she had fallen prey to the same curse that affects all who come close to revealing his tomb. A few scholars suspect that this entire tale is a fabrication. They posit that the missionary died under far less dramatic circumstances on the surface of Sideria II.

JOLLUS MARQUETTE

"You may have the power to force my actions, but only the God-Emperor has the authority to do so. If you continue on this course, you shall know His justice."

—Jollus Marquette

Records of Jollus Marquette's youth are fragmentary. He studied in the Schola Progenium on Valon Urr, but the circumstances of his arrival there are not recorded in any of the data-vaults that should contain such information. Based upon his assignment, scholars assume that Marquette's parents had been loyal Imperial servants, slain in battle, but there is no record of his birth or his admission to the Schola Progenium. While most ascribe this to a clerical error, some of the more devout within the Koronus Expanse consider this a sign that the Emperor took a direct hand in the young man's rearing.

Because these records are so incomplete, the best information of Marquette's early days has been compiled from his personal

anecdotes. As an accomplished speaker, many of his sermons included anecdotes from his own life as educational parables. Scholars presume that many of these tales have been lost to time, as the missionary did not always travel with an autoscope. However, he did record many among the personal journals that have been recovered. Others have been compiled from the reports of the faithful who observed his teachings. All of these stories come from the missionary's own perspective, and each is tinged with symbolic undertones relevant to a particular sermon. Few scholars trust in their complete historical accuracy, as Marquette was certainly known to adjust a story to enhance its religious implications.

Personal accounts of his early years and education often focused upon conflicts between students. He frequently presented the microcosm of friendships and cliques as a symbol for more profound philosophical and ideological differences. Based upon his personal accounts, it is clear that Jollus was a troublesome young man. He frequently admitted to having had issues with self-discipline, and was often antagonistic toward his peers from that time.

In many of his parables, Marquette highlighted the intense rivalry and feuding between students fated for different paths within the Schola Progenium. There is little agreement among scholars as to whether this was characteristic of his experience, or if the missionary simply used this as an easily recognisable series of symbols within his sermons. In any case, the missionary did often focus upon the associated attitudes

in his personal life. His most frequent tales recount the suffering he endured at the hands of classmates who were destined for the Commissariat—as well as the petty acts of vengeance he took against them. Anecdotal reports of these sermons often include mention that the missionary delivered them wearing a hat reminiscent of a Commissar's. If the rivalries were fictitious, Marquette certainly went to great lengths to give the impression of authenticity.

While the humorous aspects of these anecdotes effectively set his congregations at ease, the truth of the young Marquette's faith and zeal also invariably shone through. In all of his accounts, he never doubted the majesty of Imperial truth or the guidance of the Emperor. Even in those tales that include admissions of youthful indiscretions, the stories always counter his mistakes with signs of his inherent faith, morality, and of course, humility. In fact, his



teachings indicate that Marquette had a strong sense of moral justice from a very early age. While this might also be coloured by the style of the presentation, it does seem believable. Often his sermons would call upon his congregation to recognise the signs of the Emperor's presence within themselves. The missionary frequently presented the idea that an individual's conscience could only function because of its relationship with the divine. The presentation of these messages strongly suggests that the missionary felt this belief very deeply in particular.

In spite of these clear signs of faith, it is also evident that, during his formative years, Marquette must have been intensely self-motivated and driven. His parables invariably paint himself as the ringleader in all of his adventures. Often, his youthful focus centred on unauthorised opportunities to gain access to information or resources that he would exploit later in his training and even in his life as a missionary afterward. Examples included more advanced texts, live ammunition for military training exercises, and numerous specialised tools. The student's goals were never items that one might associate with illicit pleasures, but rather they were objects that let him achieve ever-greater accomplishments. Marquette's clever but careful opportunism as a student foreshadowed his later methods as a missionary travelling in the Koronus Expanse.

The few clear records of Marquette's time at the Schola Progenium are associated with his matriculation. It is clear that his instructors and ranking members of the Missionarus Galaxia had very high expectations for the young man. Some of the records indicate that at least some of his educators felt he might have been well suited to a leadership role within the Ecclesiarchy rather than as a missionary beyond the Imperium's formal boundaries. They cited an impressive record of scholarship and leadership in addition to a successful history of debating philosophical and theoretical issues. Ultimately, however, any considerations were moot, as the Adeptus Ministorum assigned the newly anointed missionary to the Koronus Expanse.

THE CALLING

Jollus Marquette departed from Valon Urr under unusual circumstance. As part of his assignment to the Koronus Expanse, an Imperial Navy destroyer—*Boundless Valour*—was issued commands to deliver him directly to Winterscale's Realm. The vessel had no secondary assignments. Its entire mission was to deliver the missionary to that region in as timely a manner as possible. After their delivery, they were expected to return to Valon Urr with all due haste. Though these orders have been proven to exist, there remains no clear evidence regarding who issued them. No one within the

Adeptus Ministorum, including members of the Missionarus Galaxia, had the authority to issue such an edict. Imperial Navy protocols would never call for such a specialised order for an inexperienced missionary.

Scholars believe that some individual or organisation within the Imperium was strongly motivated to initiate Marquette's assignment as quickly as possible. Many of the legends associated with the missionary strongly suggest that this rapid dispatch was due to high-ranking members of the sector government. Those stories imply that these politicians feared the missionary's natural charisma. If this is the case, it might be reasonable to both assign him to service within an isolated region and to make certain he departed for that region as quickly as possible. Less cynical believers instead credit the happy coincidence to the direct intervention of the Emperor. The best support for this belief is the lack of any corroborating officers who might have issued the commands.

Though his destination was established as Winterscale's Realm, the specific world was left to the discretion of the destroyer's commanding officer. The captain did not choose

Another Imperial Missionary came aboard *Lux Salvationis* today, though this time I find myself more enthralled than in my typical state of despair. There are certain extenuating circumstances at play, but the character of the Imperial servant we now transport is also different than any prior example. Almace remains aboard the craft and still fulfils the warrant's responsibility. Jollus Marquette is ostensibly aboard as a true passenger, though Rogue Trader Zhorne has graciously refused to accept any recompense for his fare. Tonight, the Rogue Trader hosted a formal dinner for the ship's officers and both missionaries. The meal was a delightful experience, as he regaled us all with his stories of completed missions and the majesty of the Emperor. While the words came as part of an informal gathering, it is all too easy to see the parables and lessons that he cunningly interwove as part of his casual conversation. Truly, the man is a master preacher. I have previously heard tell that Marquette maintains extensive connections with the worlds he has converted. Some rumours even hint that he has taken on the role of a bishop within Winterscale's Realm, but if this is true, he showed no sign of it. Rogue Trader Zhorne later took me aside and indicated that Marquette had offered a formal alliance with his dynasty. In essence, he presented an opportunity for us to establish strong trade relations with several planets he had previously visited. He spoke extensively of one particularly world called Arcus, where he had already sown the seeds of the Imperial faith. These relations would provide us with extensive quantities of raw materials that could be ferried back to the Calixis Sector. In exchange, we would need to bring manufactured goods and a few Imperial assets back to Winterscale's Realm. If anyone else were to suggest such action at this stage, I would presume them to be addled. Under these circumstances, the Rogue Trader and I are in agreement. If Marquette believes the area to be prepared, then we are willing to hear him out, for this opportunity is too enticing to let it slip through our grasp...

-Grigory van Heuring, Steward of the mighty vessel *Lux Salvationis* and Humble Seneschal to the great Zhorne Dynasty

to share any further information with the young missionary. Further, the captain also commanded that Marquette spend the entire trip under vows of silence and isolation. He was effectively a prisoner within his stateroom on the ship. Rather than learning to interact with the Imperial Navy ratings, he instead lived as a virtual hermit, completely isolated from others. There are no indications that the latter part of these orders existed. It is believed that the destroyer's captain chose to implement the isolation on his own initiative.

Perhaps because of his enforced isolation, this period of time offers a surprisingly keen insight into the young missionary's beliefs and philosophies. During this time, he wrote extensively in his journals and apparently studied every available resource intently as well. Copies of his writings from this period have survived largely intact and seen distribution to numerous scholars and members of the Ecclesiarchy. While few of his independent ideas were novel, the assemblage of different techniques was considered a potential reformation.

His journals focused primarily on his plans to not only establish a single planetary mission, but to transform that mission into a regional conglomeration of planets. By considering ways to manipulate planetary governments as well as existing resources and infrastructures, Marquette believed that he could accomplish far more than converting the followers on an unconnected series of worlds to the Imperial Creed. He believed that he could effectively create a broad diocese of associated worlds, all under his own religious authority and with which he could extend his influence across the Koronus Expanse and beyond.

While his ultimate goal was to prepare the region for integration into the greater Imperium, it is clear that he would wield substantial spiritual and secular power until formal recognition could occur. Based on the typically glacial speed of Imperial bureaucracy, it was reasonable for Marquette to assume that integration would not occur within his lifetime or that of his heirs. Consequently, success in his mission would likely leave him in a position of significant physical comfort and power for the remainder of his life.

A BLANK CANVAS

Immediately after *Boundless Valour* transitioned through the Maw, an unexpected complication arose. The ship's captain abruptly took ill and died. Marquette's journals indicate that the captain suffered from severe food poisoning, though there is no corroborating evidence to support this information. There are no surviving ship's logs or reports from the crew that cover this specific issue, just the missionary's journals. Of note, all records of the incident indicate that the captain's death occurred on the feast day of St. Cognatius. That notation is the first reference to the saint in any of the missionary's surviving journals. Considering his later devotion to the legendary figure, many scholars consider this a significant point in the missionary's career.

The unusual happenstance was to Marquette's substantial benefit. After the captain's death, the ship's first officer took command of the ship. When he did so, he was unable to locate any record of the vessel's current orders. While he was aware that the ship was carrying only a single passenger, and that the destination was in Winterscale's Realm, the captain had kept all other information confidential. If there were written orders, they were so cunningly hidden that they were never found. The first officer had no choice but to speak with the missionary in order to discover their current set of commands.

Thinking quickly, the missionary carefully and gradually persuaded the officer that the vessel had actually been redeployed for his personal use. He explained that the time in isolation had been of his own choosing, and presented his writings as evidence of how he had spent the time. He also provided evidence of his authority as a missionary and insisted that given the set of orders, this could effectively grant him command of the vessel. While this was hardly accurate, Marquette was fully capable of persuading the grieving officer to accept his word and authority. The missionary immediately began working to secure his effective control by ingratiating himself with the remaining senior officers.

In a remarkably short period of time, the missionary had gone from a prisoner to the ship's functional commander. The vessel's additional resources granted him the opportunity to fully implement his plans for the creation of a new diocese. He simply had to select the first planets that he would target for conversion. With the acquisition of the craft came all of its information regarding the Koronus Expanse and Winterscale's Realm. Though hardly comprehensive, this data provided a significant starting point for his research.

As the vessel continued its journey, the missionary began an intense study of his destination region. He selected a number of inhabited planets in systems that were relatively close to one another. He immediately recognised that such a cluster of worlds presented the best way for him to establish a strong base of operations. Once that group of planets had been converted, he could then begin to expand his mission outward, continually garnering support.

THE MISSION

Marquette's accomplishments in Winterscale's Realm are a powerful and enduring testament to the Missionarus Galaxia. When he departed upon his mission he had essentially only his training to rely upon. In just a few short years, he had several planetary populations under his thrall. Over the course of his lifetime, he successfully converted more than two dozen planetary populations to the Imperial Creed. Though not all have continued upon the path he set for them, many retain functional governments and still work with organisations that have strong ties to the Imperium of Man.

On the worlds where he met with success, the populations embraced the Emperor and the Imperial Creed with incredible faith and zeal. Few of the populations actually put up any significant resistance to the arrival of the faith. Generally, this is attributed to the strength of arms that Marquette brought to bear during his initial interactions with each world. As none

of the planets had vessels for traversing the stars, *Boundless Valour* presented a threat their populations could not ignore. Of course, physical intimidation was not the missionary's primary or even preferred means of conversion. Marquette typically began all of his missions by conducting a series of diplomatic negotiations with the target world's existing leadership, testing these individuals to see how receptive they might be to accepting the Imperial Creed, and determining what conditions needed to be met for them to do so willingly.

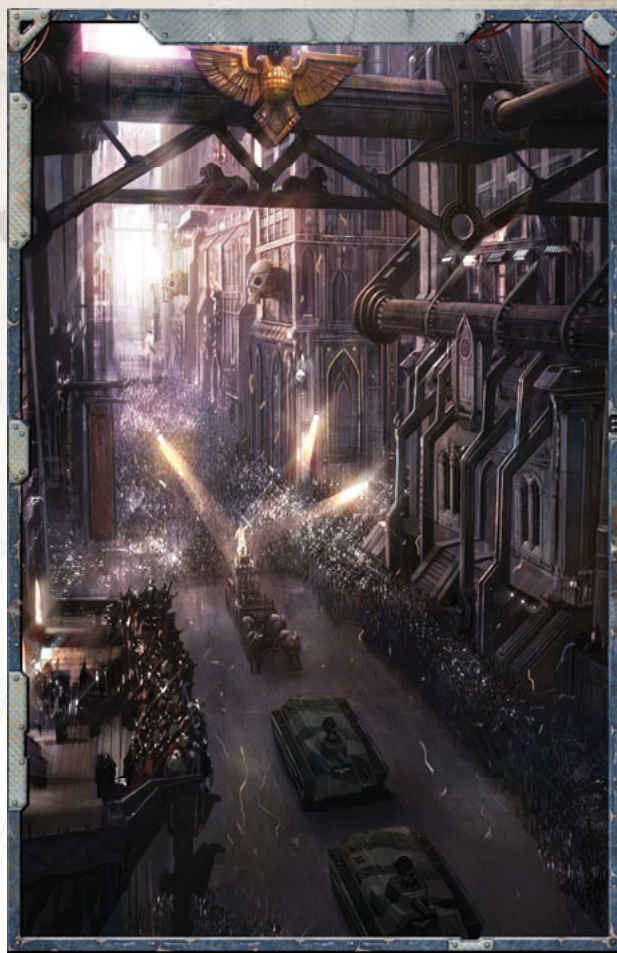
The missionary's surviving journals offer insight to some of the negotiations he conducted on worlds that he reached. He invariably brought up the legend of St. Cognatius as a link between the Koronus Expanse and the Imperium of Man. On many of worlds, that ancient explorer's legend survived, even among some populations that were not aware of the Imperium. A connection with the mythical entity and a few trinkets of Imperial technology were often enough to demonstrate the glory of the Imperial Creed and begin the conversion process. Negotiations always focused upon how the Imperium could aid these distant worlds at the same time as he presented the divine word. This two-pronged approach gave even the most cynical of planetary leaders a strong motivation to seriously consider the missionary's words.

Marquette never made any discrete bid to secure secular power, and denounced the notion in all of his preaching. However, he did form alliances with the governments of all of the worlds where he fulfilled his mission. He also never hesitated to request help from those worlds. As he continued his mission, it became increasingly easy for him to draw upon the military might of many worlds to enforce conversion upon newly visited planets.

FELINDRAK ZWEI

When *Boundless Valour* first entered the Felindrak Zwei system, she discovered a thriving world with a substantial human population. The planet did not yet burn with the fires of industry, though its population had begun mining and refining the planet's substantial natural reserves of metal ores, which they used to forge weapons for various squabbling wars. Because of these significant assets, the world had already interacted with several Rogue Trader vessels, exchanging ore and refined metals for Imperial goods. Despite this occasional contact, the Imperial Creed had not yet taken root on this resource-rich world, and so Marquette saw the planet as a prime opportunity for conversion.

Making use of Imperial resources such as the vessel on which he reached this world, the missionary was able to quickly retrieve a number of prominent warlords and other rulers from more than a dozen of Felindrak Zwei's smaller nations. He spoke to the leaders at length about the teachings of the Emperor, and made numerous, seemingly miraculous displays and alluring offers to the leaders of the world's nations. Having swayed these individuals to his side, he then cajoled the captain of the *Boundless Valour* into providing military support to repress those who opposed the new hierarchy he was working to establish.



In a matter of just a few weeks, the planet's new ruling elite had control over all of the world's assets, and Marquette had the ear of the individuals who comprised this group. From this position, spreading the Imperial Creed was a simple task.

The leaders Marquette helped to elevate embraced the Imperial Creed, but were also personally grateful to Marquette himself. Some whisper that their loyalty to the missionary even eclipsed their dedication to the tenets of Imperial dogma. At the very least, many considered the missionary to be the one who provided them with opportunity to seize control of the planet, and so these local warlords were more than willing to assist his mission in any way necessary. This later included supplying him with troops and support elements that he needed to continue his mission within the Expanse.

ASANDRE

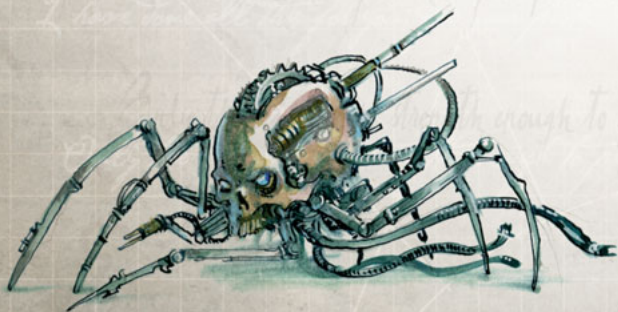
Working from records compiled from previous explorer reports, Marquette was aware that Asandre had a sizeable human population, along with some remaining fragments of knowledge from the Dark Age of Technology. He knew that they still possessed basic vox communications and had jury-rigged an erratic network for passing missives this way, though they lacked the tools to travel off world. From the time that his vessel entered Asandre's system, he closely monitored all of the broadcast transmissions. These intercepted messages gave Marquette considerable insight into the state of Asandre, as well as its recent history, and allowed him to prepare himself to convert Asandre before he even arrived.

By the time his ship had reached orbit, he already had a plan in place. Marquette had compiled critical information about the world's current leadership, as well as some fragmentary information about the planetary myths and superstitions that were vital to Asandre's culture. Recognising the style of government in place, he knew that a direct appeal to the world's population was certain to be the most effective way to begin his mission.

Shortly after reaching Asandre, the missionary broadcast a message of peaceful greeting to all of the world's inhabitants. He touched on the planet's native religions and ancient creation myths, which spoke of its ancient colonisation. The missionary then tied those myths into an association with Holy Terra, explaining that it must have been the source of their original colony vessel. Once he had established this association, he bluntly explained that his presence offered the first step in reuniting these orphans with the greater Imperium.

The missionary used quotes from one of the world's sacred texts, explaining them as an allegory for the reunification of the world with humanity at large. While the text included many hints of an apocalyptic reunification, he instead presented this as a transformative time rather than a destructive one. He explained how unity could ease their burdens, while also providing safety against threats from the dark beyond. His sermon ultimately lasted more than six hours, but by the end of it, he knew that he had set the groundwork to fully convert the world's population. Even as he delivered his sermon, he had his aides monitor all other broadcasts emanating from the world below. From their content, it was clear that his words resonated with the population. Certainly, they questioned some of the materials presented, but they were largely willing to accept the essence of Imperial Truth.

With a population already intrigued by his message, establishing formal relations was more of a formality than a challenge. Marquette spent most of his time over the coming weeks and months preaching to the population. As his word spread, he worked through his evenings in diplomatic meetings with the leaders of Asandre's nations. The discussions focused upon establishing trade relations, preparations for interaction with the various Imperial organisations, and establishing a plan to be able to provide resources and troops as part of an eventual Imperial tithe. Further meetings with the planet's religious leaders went similarly well, as the majority willingly discarded their current teachings in favour of the Imperial Creed. The planet began to conduct a massive pogrom, to eliminate any tinged with heresies that could be an affront to the Imperial Creed.



THE QUEST

Marquette aggressively pursued his mission in Winterscale's Realm for nearly a century. During this time, he gradually built up a network of more than two dozen planets that he had successfully converted to the Imperial Creed. Each of these worlds gradually achieved greater levels of stability and sophistication, in preparation to join the Imperium as he had promised since his initial sermons. In most cases, he did follow through on at least some of his promises. Relationships established with several Rogue Trader dynasties enabled the missionary to include these worlds as commercial partners. By willingly surrendering vast quantities of material resources as initial tribute and bribes to the locals, the Rogue Traders were able to import Imperial technologies and make back their investments tenfold.

These worlds created a vast support network for the missionary. Though he held no official secular or religious authority, all of the planets viewed Marquette as a spiritual guide. They often looked to him for counsel in all matters. Any request that he presented to the worlds was treated as a divine edict. Vast numbers of the faithful stood waiting and hoping for some directive, whereby they could better serve the Emperor through this missionary.

Though he had such reserves available, Marquette was loathe to use them overtly, lest he undermine the very power he had worked so hard to quietly accrue. In his search for a new way to follow that mission and exploit his resources, he turned to the legends of St. Cognatius. He recognised that the ancient explorer must have left behind additional assets that could be transformative for the entirety of the Koronus Expanse. In the interests of recovering some of those assets, he began to assemble a concordance of the ancient saint's legends and likely travels.

After compiling all of the tales from the worlds he had visited, the missionary began to send out disciples to recover additional tales and evidence. Thousands of the devout travelled from Winterscale's Realm to recover additional data. Most began their search aboard Rogue Trader vessels, but eventually took passage with craft that had less clear Imperial ties. Making their way throughout the Expanse, only

ADVENTURE SEED:

WEB OF SHADOWS

Though Marquette was unable to fully enact the conversion of the world of Arcus, he left behind members of his burgeoning organisation, in case he ever needed to flee to Arcus to avoid foes. These agents created a network of contacts on Arcus all of whom recognised the Contriver's Signet and were obligated to offer aid to those who possess it (see pages 107–108). Though the original contacts are long dead, their descendants carry on the tradition, passing on their secret knowledge about the possible return of Yulus the Harbinger. If the Explorers come to Arcus bearing the Contriver's Signet, it could make the job of converting the population much easier (see the **Mission to a Benighted World** Endeavour on page 40).

ADVENTURE SEED: OBSIDIAN KEYS

In the days since Marquette converted Asandre to the Imperial Creed, the planet has been a productive and efficient outpost of the Imperium of Mankind in the Koronus Expanse, albeit one rarely visited by anyone other than Rogue Traders. As a result of this isolation, Asandre has recently been struck by Dark Eldar raids from the Kabal of the Splintered Talon, and the deadly xenos have even set up several bases of operation there. These merciless reavers have conducted their campaign of terror across the world for nearly a decade, and the grip of the Imperial Creed on Asandre has only tightened as a result. However, the population has also become xenophobic in the extreme, suspicious even of other humans who visit (such as a group of Explorers). If the Explorers wish to expunge the Dark Eldar, they must rouse the population of Asandre to cast off their vile oppressors. This can be treated as a **Purge the Xenos Endeavour** (see page 48), although the task of rallying the population against the Dark Eldar is much easier if the Explorers can overcome its distrust of outsiders. The easiest way to do this would be with a relic such as the Contriver's Signet (see pages 107–108) or one of the Twelve Obsidian Keys, knives said to have pierced Marquette's flesh when he was assassinated long ago. Either of these relics can be found with a **Retrieve a Blessed Relic Endeavour** (see page 44), though the Game Master must decide where they have been hidden and what lurks in the shadows protecting them.

a small percentage of these questers ever returned to share their findings with the missionary. Still, the few who succeeded brought Marquette priceless secrets.

Over the span of several decades, the missionary's records grew increasingly comprehensive. With the help of countless scribes and cartographers, he assembled thousands of volumes. It was clear that not all of these records could possibly reflect the historical deeds of St. Cognatius. Many of the records must have been incorrectly attributed to the legendary explorer. In some cases, these were likely due to individuals who acted in the saint's name or local myths that were attributed to the saint. One of the missionary's greatest

challenges was distinguishing fact from legend—a challenge that he was unable to complete within his lifetime. Tragically, the missionary was never able to act upon his findings.

None yet know the final fate of this vast concordance. Most scholars believe that it represented the greatest assemblage of information regarding St. Cognatius. Recently, several individual volumes—clearly fragments of a much greater work—have been recovered. It is unclear if these works represent original pieces of a library that was separated, or if they might be drafts that were taken from it. If the complete archive yet survives, it could include the most direct routes ever found to retrace the Saint Cognatius' steps and uncover his tomb.



FINAL REST

After nearly a century of activity within Winterscale's Realm of the Koronus Expanse, Marquette met his end at the hands of an assassin. Prior to his death, he had successfully converted more than two dozen worlds to the Imperial Creed. He had established trade relationships between several Rogue Trader dynasties and those worlds. The worlds had begun to prosper to the point that there was some consideration of establishing the region as a provisional Imperial territory.

None of this success came without cost. The populations of many of these worlds had been decimated in the course of conversion. Religious wars had broken out on many of the worlds, delaying the promulgation of the faith. Some argue that this was because the missionary attempted to do too much with inadequate time and preparation. Others argue that these

costs were perfectly acceptable. The weighty accomplishment of spreading the faith so broadly was well worth the cost in lives and damage that the later resistance movements incurred.

A side effect of the missionary's success was that xenos and Chaos raiders began to target many of the worlds as their relative prosperity increased. For few of the worlds had any capacity for travel through the void. Even those systems that successfully incorporated an Adeptus Mechanicus presence lacked the time to fully integrate their guidance into the world's technological basis. Consequently, the raiders were often able to strike with few repercussions. In spite of their Imperial armaments, the populations of these worlds were simply too poorly equipped to effectively resist a major assault from the dark beyond. Similarly, the missionary's ship capabilities remained too limited to effectively disperse the number of vessels to provide a true defensive network across these worlds.

Record Entry MXVII, In Transit

I had an opportunity to dine with the missionary who visited my encampment yesterday. Genevieve Almace is another native of the Calixis Sector, and is certainly zealous in her faith. Those seem to be the only points that we have in common. Beyond that, our opinions in all matters seem to depart rather dramatically, from her tastes in dining to her approaches to conversion. In retrospect, I am surprised that we did not come to blows over the course of the meal. If we had, I seriously doubt I would have come away the better for it.

She believes that all issues must be handled in the most direct manner possible: usually, by using wide-scale violence. Her fervour is clear, but she lacks the patience and foresight necessary to enact any lasting and useful conversions upon the worlds of the Expanse. I suspect that she could have a great deal of success bludgeoning individual planets until their peoples see the Imperial Creed. I very much doubt that she could organise a series of planets into a larger functional group. I also suspect that most worlds that have known her assistance are badly damaged after her intervention, and will be far less productive upon their return to the fold in centuries to come. They will be loyal for a time, yes, but they will slowly forget Genevieve Almace and her fire, and within a few generations their fear and the subservience it brings will vanish. These worlds will not be suitable for re-conversion for some time. I am glad to be her contemporary, and not her successor.

I have taken the liberty of arranging transport for her away from this world. I have also spoken at length with the ship's captain, to be certain that her next mission begins far from the planets I have influenced. Her "assistance" could only damage my work, and very possibly also my person. She barges forward, carrying a torch into all dark places without heed for what she might reveal, and I have no use for those who cannot comprehend the concepts of subtlety or discretion. Though we serve the same master, our methods are far too divergent to ever be compatible for cooperation.

Despite this fact, I believe that she aids my works indirectly, regardless of our personal disagreements. Her presence in the Koronus Expanse attracts a great deal of attention—attention that might be turned elsewhere were she not burning witches and worlds everywhere she travels. Though I strongly suspect she will eventually meet her fate in battle, I see no need to hasten it. For now, at least, Almace is of some value to my plans, whether she knows it or not.

-J. Marquette,

Envoy of the Emperor's Will beyond the domain of His August Imperium

The combination of religious unrest and the ineffective defences was disastrous for planetary morale. On many of the planets, native populations became disillusioned with their new religious directives. Some forgot the difficulties they had faced prior to Imperial intervention. Others felt that the new waves of attacks were a consequence brought about by discarding their old gods. In a few instances, planetary leaders felt that the trade agreements they had accepted were less beneficial than they had originally hoped.

Ultimately, are said to have been sixty-six different organisations that were openly opposed to Marquette's guidance, though only forty are ever mentioned overtly in his diaries. In the face of such resistance, several of the planetary leaders had no choice but to discard both their trade agreements and the Imperial Creed. Consequently, heresy began to take root on all the worlds that had once seemed impenetrable bastions of Imperial faith.

Marquette did not sit idle in the face of such resistance. Though he was elderly, his mind and speech remained crisp and sharp. He began to return to the planets that suffered instability to once more preach the Imperial Creed. Initially, he met with a great deal of success. His well-measured words and promises of reform quieted the crowds. On three different worlds, he was able to restore a level of order, so that the local governments could maintain their plans to prepare for submission the Imperium and its forces. Marquette's campaign to seize the soul of these renegade worlds continued unhindered, and he seemed at the height of his powers of persuasion despite the toll of many years. Some even whispered that Marquette's vigour and persuasive power could not be natural, but his followers insisted that it was divinely inspired.

This ended abruptly when an assassin's blade struck home. While travelling through the Warp aboard a transport vessel, the missionary was first poisoned, then shot, and finally stabbed. According to the stories of the followers who found his body, he was found kneeling as if in pious prayer, reaching up desperately with clasped hands. His corpse was impaled by twelve black iron knives. Twelve different organisations each claimed direct responsibility for the successful assassination, though it remains unclear if any of them were actually involved.

In the wake of his death, however, many worlds that he had converted began to see him as a holy martyr. Some even claimed him as a saint, though this status has not been recognised by the Adeptus Ministorum.

Shrines to Marquette still decorate a number of the worlds to which he brought the Imperial Creed, and some of these planets even house secret orders of devotees who wish to reunite his realm or take revenge for the fallen missionary, such as the Twelve Hands on Krith and the Impaled Ones, whose influence spreads from Footfall to the very heart of the Calixis Sector. The Choir of the Betrayed, a cadre of his most loyal followers, seized Marquette's body and vanished into the shadows, holding it on the world of Humility to this day still.





LABOURS OF FAITH

- RECLAIM A LOST
POPULATION
-
- RECOVER A
SACRED ARTEFACT
-
- DESTROY A
XENOS THREAT
-
- ESTABLISH A
PILGRIMAGE
ROUTE
-
- ROOT OUT
HERESY
-
- NEW WORLDS

CHAPTER II: LABOURS OF FAITH

"The flesh rots, and the bone becomes dust. Stone crumbles and steel corrodes. Only faith is lasting! Only in spreading the faith can we touch eternity, and fulfil our true purpose!"

—Jollus Marquette

Chapter II: Labours of Faith sets forth a number of Endeavours that a Rogue Trader can undertake in the Koronus Expanse. All of these Endeavours are related to the activities of missionaries in the Koronus Expanse, and offer faithful Rogue Traders a chance to both honour the Ecclesiarchy and reap incredible profits as reward for their piety. Of course, not all Rogue Traders align themselves so closely with the wandering agents of the Ecclesiarchy in the Koronus Expanse—at least not until there is money to be made doing it.

RECLAIM A LOST POPULATION

"Rejoice, brothers and sisters long-lost to the stars. The servants of the Emperor have returned to your domain, carrying with them the light of the Creed. Who shall be first to rejoin the flock?"

—Zsavor Velt, Missionary

For millennia, the Koronus Expanse existed in a state of disorder and darkness, cut off from the Imperium and the Emperor's word. Few of the worlds in the Koronus Expanse had human inhabitants, and many of those with sizeable populations quickly slid into apostasy or even outright heresy once they fell outside the roving gaze of the Ecclesiarchy. When the Koronus Passage re-opened, missionaries of the Missionarus Galaxia were among the first to enter the vast and wild Expanse in search of lost human populations that they might illuminate (and exploit) in the name of the Emperor. These explorers took passage aboard any vessel able to carry them into the vastness of the Expanse, from Imperial Navy warships to Rogue Trader caravels, and immediately set to reintroducing the Emperor's light to whatever human populations they discovered.

A missionary endeavouring to reclaim a human population that has forgotten its duties to the Emperor and his mortal agents has a difficult task ahead of him. Even after finding a stable human population amidst the countless glimmering stars of the Koronus Expanse (and there are many records of varying quality regarding such populations to be found in the data sepulchres and catacombs of the Calixis Sector), the missionary must make successful contact. This requires extensive

work on his part, and very likely on the part of others who he impresses into his service in the name of spreading the Emperor's word across the forgotten spans of void that lie beyond the bounds of the Imperium. Rogue Traders are required to render assistance to missionaries in travelling between the stars, and many pious (or opportunistic) Rogue Traders offer considerably more help, aiding missionaries in establishing contact with rediscovered human populations, setting up operations on forgotten worlds, venturing across the Expanse in search of holy relics, bringing scattered groups into the Imperial fold, and completing the other sacred tasks to which these wandering clerics set themselves.

Example Requirements:

- A human population suitable for conversion in the Koronus Expanse
- Any available information on the nature of the people slated for conversion, including their origin, customs, general demeanour, and any other pieces of information to assist the missionary
- Requisite charts and maps outlining Warp routes, way stops, and the system to which the missionary is travelling
- A small cadre of assistants, acolytes, scribes, scholars, and negotiators to assist in the conversion
- A force of troops for security and to exhibit the military might of the Imperium
- Gifts, bribes, and assorted treasure

MISSION TO A BENIGHTED WORLD

Lesser Endeavour, +2 Profit Factor

The most fundamental duty of a missionary is to find the human populations far from the light of the Emperor and prepare them for the return of the Imperium, that they can be integrated seamlessly once that happens and convinced to pay their tithes with minimal protest. There are many worlds that fit this description in the Koronus Expanse, and so missionaries from the Calixis Sector flock to this region. Finding these planets in the trackless void is no easy task, however. Some missionaries prefer to drift from place to place, relying on the Emperor to guide them to their intended destination. Others pore through Imperial Navy surveys, shuffle through ancient, fragmentary records from ages forgotten, or seek rumours at ports of call. Of course, as difficult as finding an appropriate planet might be, locating it is usually the simplest part of a missionary's task. The Game Master can use the planet Arcus (as described below) or one of the other planets listed on page 62–64, or could even create a unique, new world to which the Explorers can bring the Emperor's light.

Sample World (Arcus): Arcus is a warm, wet, tropical world, the sixth planet of the Morova system. Located within Winterscale's Realm, the surface of Arcus is a mixture of dense, fecund jungle, rolling plains, and saw-toothed mountain ranges punctuated with narrow, incredibly deep freshwater lakes. Spotty, poorly organised records from an ancient survey performed by the Imperial Navy speak of a well populated world with a number of relatively advanced late-feudal to



preindustrial societies. Most of the major population centres are located on the plains around the largest complex of lakes and rivers, and massive herds of large ungulates were recorded near the fringes of the many jungles. Aside from these tidbits of information, the planet's coordinates, and a note regarding its suitability for conversion and exploitation, there is no other pertinent data regarding Arcus available in the Ecclesiarchy records. The Explorers can easily access the above information at a major port of call or any Imperial Navy database.

Though it is odd that such a world would be ignored, the truth that the gaps in the record obscure is much stranger still. During his ascendancy, Jollus Marquette quietly expanded his growing hegemony to Arcus. Though he himself only visited the world once, Marquette and his followers spread the seeds of the Imperial Creed upon Arcus. Arcus has changed a great deal since the death of Marquette and the collapse of his burgeoning domain. The largest kingdom of his day has split into two quarrelling city-states: Arcus Majoris and Latentia Fiat. Though these two major political bodies are frequently at odds, they still worship the same set of local gods. Chief among these deities is the Emperor of Rivers, who brings both life and death with seasonal flooding. Another major figure is Yolus the Harbinger, the herald of the lord of rivers, whose return from the heavens has been foretold since his first manifestation centuries ago. It is said that Yolus will one day descend from the sky upon a thundercloud, accompanied by a massive flood that washes away all sinners. Each city-state interprets itself as the chosen group, seeing its perennial rival as the ultimate target of Yolus' impending wrath.

OBJECTIVE 1: ESTABLISH CONTACT

Themes: Creed, Exploration

However a missionary chooses a world for conversion, his task once he arrives requires him interact with the locals. Different missionaries prefer different methods of introducing themselves. Some descend on wings of fire, stepping out of massive warships to terrify the locals into submission, while others prefer subtlety, slipping into the population unnoticed to observe it for months or even years before beginning to introduce elements of the Imperial Creed.

Most missionaries seek to win allies in any new place they arrive, and so the first step in the arduous process of bringing a world back to the fold is winning over a portion of the population. This group can be a political faction, a ruling elite, a religious sect, or even a repressed substratum waiting for a liberator to arrive to rise up in revolt. For a missionary working alone, this is an incredibly daunting task, for many scattered cultures are xenophobic, and choosing the wrong faction in a power struggle can prove fatal.

A Rogue Trader and his crew can prove incredibly helpful to a missionary at this stage if they wish to assist with his Emperor-given duty (or have been coerced into doing so). Even the smallest ship with which a Rogue Trader plies the stars dwarfs most isolated populations in terms of raw military power, and the sight of landing craft descending from the sky is impressive indeed. Most missionaries who receive help from Rogue Trader allies do not simply have them flatten the prospective population

of worshippers; all but the most violently zealous can see the waste of human resources intrinsic in such a strategy. Instead, if a Rogue Trader and his crew are present, the missionary can use them as a point of contact with the local society. If there is a ruling elite, an impressive display with a few landing craft can often grant the missionary immediate access to the ears of important individuals. Further, a Rogue Trader and his crew can provide lavish gifts from beyond the stars to sway even the most worldly of local lords. If the population is divided by war, a brief display of a warship's power can frequently cow both sides into brokering a peace, for which the missionary can reasonably claim credit. The Explorers and the Game Master can be creative in thinking of ways that Missionary player characters and those assisting them can quickly win allies on a new world, using those listed here or countless others. Once the missionary has established channels by which he can spread his message of the Imperial Creed to a lost population, this Objective can be considered complete and his true work begins.

Sample Objective 1 (Friends and Enemies on Arcus):

Upon arriving on Arcus, the Explorers should attempt to gather as much knowledge about the planet as they can. Rather than a single kingdom as described in the ancient naval report, two city-states contain the vast majority of the population: Arcus Majoris and Latentia Fiat. Further, if they have a Missionary or other learned individual amongst their number, the Explorers should rapidly take note of several clear aspects of the Imperial Creed in the local religion. The population's reverence to the Emperor of Rivers and Yolus the Harbinger can offer major clues in this capacity. Further, the leaders of each city-state seem to expect travellers from beyond their world—despite the limited technological level of the populace. If the Explorers are sufficiently learned, they might even be able to link Yolus the Harbinger to Jollus Marquette, for Arcus falls well within his old domain even if the records of his visit vanished long ago. The Explorers can choose which of the two city-states they wish to pursue first, but their ultimate goal is to convert both of them. Although the planet seems in a period of peace, there is much strife brewing below the surface. A resourceful leader might choose to split his cadre up and send a few representatives to each city-state in order to work on bringing both into the Imperial fold simultaneously, though the Game Master should be careful in splitting the Explorers up in this way unless he has considered the ramifications of a divided group.

Arcus Majoris is the more well-armed of the city-states, possessing black-powder rifles, steam technology, and several very impressive shrines to the River Emperor. This city-state has a seemingly organised government and a very strict set of rules revolving around social status and rank, so a blustering Rogue Trader or overly aggressive missionary might quickly find himself ostracised. It is defended by a large stone wall that surrounds not only the city, but the surrounding countryside as well. If the Explorers choose to make contact in this city-state, the inhabitants greet them with wary respect. Its inhabitants respond well to the subtler methods of conversion, but react poorly to violent displays.

Latentia Fiat is the more militaristic of the city-states. Its inhabitants have mastered the forging of iron, but the poor quality of the metal in the region they inhabit means that metal

weapons and armour are a sign of nobility (or at least considerable wealth). Combat permeates its society on every level, and duels are often used to settle political disputes and personal quarrels alike. Even its religious rituals take the form of stylised battles, in which the inhabitants act out wars of old to revere their various gods. If the Explorers choose to make contact with this city-state first, they must prove themselves in battle. Latentia Fiat's culture dictates that outsiders who can prove their mettle should be treated as honoured guests, and so the Explorers can win their way into the city-state's inner circle through careful exploitation of this tradition.

The more time the Explorers spend observing the city-states, the more readily they should be accepted into the society. Actually making contact with the native people should only take a few days, but the Explorers can choose to spend several weeks to study each of the city-states. If the Explorers choose to split the party and make contact with both of the city-states at once, they should be very careful to not reveal this fact to any of the leaders or be prepared to offer an explanation for their actions.

OBJECTIVE 2: STUDY THE LOCAL CULTURES

Themes: Creed

The duty of missionaries is to spread the Imperial Creed on far-off worlds, but before they begin to speak in earnest of the Emperor and the local population's duty to Him on Earth, many missionaries choose first to listen. By learning about a culture, missionaries can most easily tailor the message to most efficiently convert the population, seeding the Emperor, Imperial Saints, and other important features of worship into the rites and religious practices of the locals rather than attempting to stamp out these long-held traditions.

Studying a culture can be the work of years or decades for a lone missionary, especially if the language of the locals is not a derivation of Low Gothic or another commonly spoken tongue. While some missionaries have Sisters Dialogus of the Adepta Sororitas to assist them in translation and the study of regional mythologies, others rely on the aid of fellow scholars of a more secular bent. A Rogue Trader's Seneschal can prove invaluable when the crew's Missionary needs to research an obscure dialect or construct a functional lexicon in a new tongue from nothing, given how these individuals are often trained in both scholarship and dozens of codes, cants, and other languages. Explorers can also be extremely helpful in this capacity, using their mastery of arcane technologies to process vast quantities of linguistic and behavioural data far more rigorously and rapidly than a Missionary could do alone. Once the representative of the Imperial faith has cracked this problem, he must analyse their beliefs, determining which ones are harmless divergences, which ones can be twisted to fit the Imperial Creed, and which ones must be purged. Certain practices, especially as relates to the place of psykers in a population, can be intolerable to the Imperial Creed, but most of the time, missionaries are more concerned with inserting the appropriate elements of the faith into the belief system of the natives rather than removing anything. So long as the population pays its tithes, it matters not whether they revere the Emperor as a solar deity who brings the harvest, a guardian spirit against marauding bands of twisted fiends that lurk in ancient ruins, or

a god of death whose fury spills over and floods the rivers. Once the representative of the faith has studied the culture's mythology and found figures and anecdotes that can be subverted to serve the Imperial Creed, he is ready to begin the process of conversion, and this Objective can be considered complete.

Sample Objective 2 (Knowledge is Power): Arcus seems to be a planet at peace, but ancient strife boils just below the surface. The GM has the opportunity to skew the information that the Explorers uncover about the origins of the schism depending on the city-state they choose to engage, as each blames the other for the long-smouldering conflict.

Arcus Majoris possesses considerably more knowledge of architecture, healing, and rhetoric than their neighbour. Its citizens boast that their city is entirely self-sustaining, and remember the old kingdom as a paradise for knowledge and learning. They tell stories of the massive library that used to be in the decimated no man's land between the kingdoms, and blame the "barbarians" of Latentia Fiat for its destruction and the loss of the vast sums of knowledge within. Whether this grudge is fair or not, it drives many of the squabbles between the two nations. As such, knowledge is a powerful currency in Arcus Majoris, and a savvy Seneschal, Explorer, or Missionary can use this to his advantage, offering his considerable expertise on a given subject in exchange for social and political advancement.

Latentia Fiat is the more militaristic of the polities on the planet. Its inhabitants believe that a person's worth is determined by his strength in battle, and their religious rites and rituals always carry a martial component. Although Latentia Fiat is not formally at war with Arcus Majoris at the moment, many of its citizens believe that violent conflict is not just inevitable, but a desirable result, as it would give them a chance to test their mettle in a true conflict. Martial prowess is an easy way to win prestige in Latentia Fiat, but giving gifts of fine metal weapons and armour (or even "miraculous" technology from the Rogue Trader's arsenal) can also help a Rogue Trader or Missionary win allies within this city-state.

Both of the city-states follow a similar religious model with only one main god, the Emperor of Rivers, and a network of lesser gods and saints. Even if the Explorers do not draw the connection between Jollus Marquette and Yulus the Harbinger, they can capitalise on the groundwork he set forth centuries ago, converting the city-states by apparently fulfilling the prophecies Marquette left behind. However, when they convert one of the city-states, the other becomes considerably more resistant to change, thanks to the long-standing enmity between the two.

OBJECTIVE 3: ESTABLISH THE IMPERIAL FAITH

Themes: Creed, Military or Trade

No matter how strong a plan to bring a world into the Imperial fold seems in theory, a missionary cannot truly know its effectiveness until he puts it to the test. If he has developed a strong understanding of a population's beliefs and found the mythological overlaps with certain critical aspects of the Imperial Creed (as he has hopefully done in the

previous Objective), then the missionary knows the content of the message he should deliver to that group of people. Still, publicly reinterpreting a doctrine that has stood for centuries or millennia can be extraordinarily difficult and dangerous. The missionary must make a choice: he can either go through the keepers of religion and lore, converting the hierarchy from the top by convincing the local religious figures to support his "additions" to the local beliefs, or alternatively, he can act through the laity, convincing them that their religious leaders have overlooked or even hidden the truest interpretation of their faith. No matter which path he chooses, the priest faces various risks to his person, for he is doing nothing less than rearranging their religious structure to support the ends of the Imperium of Mankind. Zealots, scorned hierarchs, and angry kings have all slain countless missionaries attempting to bring their worlds into the fold across the Koronus Expanse. Martyrdom does not necessarily mean failure, as it might inspire revolution, religious shifts, or simply make it easier for the next missionary to complete the task. Still, most missionaries prefer to survive their labours of faith if possible. The protection of a talented Arch-Militant and other bodyguards can mean the difference between success and an excruciating death for a missionary once he has played his hand and begun the open process of converting a world. A Void-Master's skills can also be extremely helpful—the massive weaponry of the vessel he controls can silence most local armed conflicts with relative ease. Further, a good pilot is invaluable in case a missionary finds himself needing to depart in a hurry for any reason.

Sample Objective 3 (By Words or by War): The Explorers are now faced with a choice. They are poised to convert one of the city-states to the ways of the Imperial Creed by introducing key elements into the local faith and swaying powerful individuals to support the necessary religious reinterpretations. However, they cannot complete the Endeavour without bringing a significant majority of the world's population into line. Depending on the city-state that they have converted, their options might change.

If they convert Latentia Fiat first, they could rally its warriors to conquer Arcus Majoris, or at least to threaten it into compliance. However, if they have made greater inroads in Arcus Majoris, it would make sense to attempt a combination of guile, subterfuge, and economic subversion to bring the other nation into the fold. It is up to the Game Master to determine how arduous it is to convert the other nation. Given the deep-seated mistrust between the inhabitants of the city-states, it is difficult for each to accept the other's doctrine. If the player's choose to split the party and convert both city-states at the same time, the closer and closer they get to full conversion, the more careful they need to be to avoid detection, for discovery could cause their plan to collapse. Though a simultaneous conversion could bring the world into the Imperial fold with the smallest waste of resources, it also carries one further risk. If the Explorers are not careful, they might find themselves at the forefront of two different factions preparing to start a war against one another, scrambling to stop the brewing conflict that their arrival sparked.

RECOVER A SACRED ARTEFACT

"That which is lost, we seek. The glimmer in the vast darkness, the ember of faith amidst the ashes of aeons."

—Jeremn Kostr, Reliquarist

Imperial history is littered with tales of powerful artefacts associated with the Emperor, the Primarchs, high-ranking priests and generals, or one of the masses of Imperial Saints. Most are merely legends or metaphors, their existence apocryphal. Those that do exist are jealously guarded by their possessors. Some are wielded by the High Lords of Terra or other powerful leaders in the Imperial hierarchy as marks of office, while others are kept in reliquaries or secure vaults on Terra or one of the Imperium's many shrine worlds. Most holy artefacts mentioned in Imperial scripture are lost, however, scattered to the stars by time, strife, misfortune, and the machinations of the Ruinous Powers. Countless individuals constantly scour the galaxy in search of lost holy artefacts, and a Rogue Trader can make a fortune from any such discovery.

Artefacts can take any form, and can be something as small and simple as a finger bone or prayer book to something as powerful as a holy weapon or even an entire voidship. While some have actual mystical or holy abilities, the majority are notable simply due to their association with their original

owner. Undertaking the search for a lost holy artefact is a great commitment, requiring copious amounts of scholarly research and interstellar travel as the hunter scours databanks and lost worlds alike in search of the goal. In the end, all of the time and money spent, not to mention all of the inherent danger and possible mind-bending horrors, encountered in the search for lost artefacts are considered a small price to pay by those who undertake such tasks.

Example Requirements:

- Records of a suitable holy artefact
- Access to ancient texts, sacred records, or other information hinting as to the location of the artefact
- Warp charts for the region of the Expanse in which the artefact is said to rest
- Any additional vessels, troops, materiel, or support from factions within and without the Adeptus Terra required to locate and recover the lost artefact

RETRIEVE A BLESSED RELIC

Greater Endeavour, +3 Profit Factor

Many Rogue Traders make a large portion of their profits by recovering ancient treasures, lost archeotech, and other items of high-incalculable value. Rumours of forgotten relics abound in the Koronus Expanse, from the legendary Tomb of Cognatius to the fabled Ubertas device mentioned in the records of



Nicomedes Keefe to countless other sacred prizes waiting to be uncovered by bold Explorers. Of course, chasing phantom treasures of any sort can ruin a Rogue Trader, and so the wise only devote their own resources to pursuing those items whose locations they can confirm in some way. If another entity or group is willing to put forth the capital for the expedition, many Rogue Traders gladly offer their services—and those of their vessels and crews—to those following the faded footsteps of ancient saints. Other Rogue Traders do so even if not compensated handsomely for their efforts, out of a sense of piety, as penance for past transgressions, or simply to curry favour with a powerful member of the Adeptus Ministorum or individual within the Sector nobility.

Sample Relic (The Archive of Almace): In the heady decades following the opening of the Koronus Passage, countless members of the various branches of the Adeptus Terra travelled into the wild spaces of the Expanse on business both official and unofficial. Staging from Port Wander, a collection of missionaries, Magos from the Priesthood of Mars, Rogue Traders, Ecclesiarchy representatives, and various other Imperial operatives passed to and fro through the Passage in search of glory, wealth, and power. Among these individuals was the missionary Genevieve Almace, who is now best remembered as a firebrand and champion of faith whose fervour ignited the faith of numerous worlds before burning out.

Despite her warlike nature, however, Almace also created an extremely comprehensive archive of the relics and trail of Saint Cognatus, which she included in the volume of her observations now called *Almace's Tactica*. Her records were terse in prose but exhaustive in scope, covering every scrap of information she uncovered in her long search for the Saint's tomb. Though it seems unlikely that the Archive contains the tomb's exact location, it does contain mention of countless other rumours and mysteries she examined in the course of her search, including archeotech relics, lost holy scriptures, and more. A handful of missions have been undertaken to discover the journal of her search for the missing tomb. Various Rogue Traders and privateers, the Missionarus Galaxia, and even the several Inquisitors all have a keen interest in retrieving her writings, albeit for wildly varying reasons. The journal, referred to by some as the Archive of Almace, is considered a holy relic in and of itself, both by those who revere her and those who believe it could lead to even greater discoveries by following up the various dead-ends that she recorded while seeking the Tomb of Cognatus.

OBJECTIVE 1: FINDING THE TRAIL

Themes: Creed, Exploration, Trade

Though the Imperium is built on the bones of martyrs and every world is soaked in the blood of ancient heroes, most of these individuals are unsung, their contributions to humanity's ascension forgotten. The relics of true Imperial Saints—or of other figures deemed worthy of such reverence—are rare. Especially in lawless regions such as the Koronus Expanse, it can be a daunting task to set out in search of a relic with little more than rumours guiding one's search. Thus, the first step in any quest for a lost Saint's bones, a forgotten device of great power, or any other item of interest is research. A Rogue Trader and his crew must undertake considerable efforts to track down legends, scroll through ancient records, and then

interpret these clues into a comprehensible map to their destination. A Seneschal's information-gathering abilities can be incredibly helpful at this stage, assisting the group in separating the wheat from the chaff as they encounter countless baseless whispers about their quarry. A Missionary's extensive knowledge of the lore of the Ecclesiarchy is also key to many of these quests. Navigators can also be crucial at this stage, using their lineages' unparalleled knowledge of the capricious Warp routes over the millennia in the Koronus Expanse to eliminate some areas and highlight others as potential regions of interest. This Objective can be considered complete when the crew has sorted through the drunken voidsmen's tales, the false leads, and the cryptic clues to find the start of a trail that might lead to the relic in question.

Sample Objective 1 (Finding the Saint's Rest): At some point in their service, the Explorers learn the story of Genevieve Almace. Whether through individual study, a chance meeting with an Ecclesiarchy scholar, or by means of being hired to search out *Almace's Tactica*, it comes to the attention of the Explorers that there is a holy artefact at large in the Koronus Expanse. Exhuming more information on Genevieve Almace should be a lengthy process wherein the Explorers travel to the various worlds she converted, such as Nazhdureyah, Traynor's Rest, and Ikeran, and learning about her work and the clues she left behind.

This phase of the Endeavour requires a mix of both social and martial skills on the part of the Explorers. Much of the play in pursuit of this Objective can be heavily weighted toward narrative and roleplaying. Negotiating with locals and gaining access to ancient records, forgotten relics, and sites of worship requires both a surfeit of charm and highly developed haggling skills, as well as liberal application of throne gelt. Once the Explorers collect enough information and put together enough clues, the Game Master should reveal that the last mention of the Archive leads to a world called Loretta, where Almace undertook an extended spiritual retreat shortly before her death. An order devoted to her called the Blood Tears inhabits Loretta and keeps a number of her relics in its fortress there.





OBJECTIVE 2: FOLLOW THE PATH

Themes: Creed, Exploration

Once the Explorers know where to start their search, they must pinpoint its exact location. Even if all of the information they received during the previous Objective was once accurate, it might well have been rendered incorrect in the centuries since the whispers that the Explorers followed were first muttered. The Explorers might still have a great deal of work ahead of them even if they have tracked the relic to a single system or world. Upon their arrival, the Explorers must assess their new environment and determine the most likely resting place of the relic. Accurate sweeps by crew-members skilled in the use of their voidship's scanners could locate likely positions or populations that might provide up-to-date regional information. If the

Explorers have a direct connection to the artefact in some way, or another object in some way related to it, a skilled Astropath might be able to use divination to narrow its location further. Once they have conducted a thorough examination of the region (whether

that be mechanical, mystical, social, or by other means the Game Master deems appropriate) and found an area they can explore on foot that contains the artefact, this Objective can be considered complete. The more precise the information they garner during the completion of this Objective, the more they know about the final Objective, and what it requires of them.

Sample Objective 2 (Blood and Dust): Loretta is the sixth planet of the Polmari system, located in the far rimward regions of the Unbeholden Reaches. A barren, wind-swept world of rolling, scrub choked plains and blistering high deserts prone to massive and deadly sandstorms. Very little grows on Loretta, save for the hardy scrub and short trees with squat, twisted trunks. The native fauna consists of mainly small rodents, serpents, and stinging arachnids. It was here that Almace sought spiritual guidance from the Emperor in the wilderness shortly before her demise in battle, and it is here that she was granted a vision of her final conflict, or so goes the legend.

The Polmari system is incredibly isolated, even by the standards of the Koronus Expanse. Far from most charted Warp routes, it has thus far escaped the scrutiny of the Imperium by dint of being both totally unremarkable and nearly within sight of the Rifts of Hecaton. Travelling to the far edge of the Unbeholden Reaches should present quite a challenge for Explorers. The journey should take months to complete, as they are relying on rumour, speculation, and dubious star charts to find a planet whose existence is questionable. The vagaries and inherent danger of long distance Warp travel, especially to a part of the Expanse as benighted as the Unbeholden Reaches, presents the Game Master an opportunity to introduce side missions into the Endeavour should he so choose. These could involve damage to the ship, mysterious distress calls, attacks from xenos or pirates, or other encounters as appropriate.

Once the Explorers reach the Polmari system, they discover a desolate patch of space crowded with lifeless, rocky planets orbiting a guttering, sullen red giant star. Navigating the system requires a high level of skill and nerve thanks to the numerous astronomical hazards within. Densely packed asteroid fields, massive particle clouds that interfere with all augury, auspex, and vox systems, strange and powerful gravity tides, and powerful waves of solar radiation that can pierce even the most potent void shields all wrack the region. Should the Explorers take the time to make a survey of the system, they discover that, while there are no obvious signs of life—except for of the world of Loretta, of course—the scattered detritus of lost vessels and ancient starfarers litters the system, twisting endlessly in its tangled gravity wells.

Most of the life signs on Loretta belong to the planet's native flora and fauna, but close scrutiny reveals the existence of a small population of humans on the surface. Scouts sent to the surface report a human settlement of a few thousand souls, the centre of which is dominated by a massive structure that combines the features of a fortress and a cathedral dedicated to Genevieve Almace. Images of the structure show statues and carvings that suggest Imperial saints and other figures from the mythology of the Imperial Creed. One is almost certainly Almace herself, and a number of others that could be interpreted as representations of the Emperor, Horus, and even Saint Drusus. At this point, it should be clear to the Explorers that they have discovered the location of the Blood Tears.

OBJECTIVE 3: RECOVER THE RELIC

Themes: Creed, Military *or* Trade

Unfortunately, most relics of Imperial Saints and other famous figures are not simply discarded several centimetres beneath the ground, waiting for bold Explorers to exhume them. Once the Explorers have found the exact location of a given artefact, they must actually reclaim it. Liberating it from its current circumstances can be as difficult as all of the preparation that has lead up to this moment. Many such relics are hidden in the midst of ancient tombs, crashed starships, and other treacherous environs. Others are in the hands of fanatical cults—both heretical and Imperial—that deny outsiders any access to their treasures. The Explorers must navigate dangerous environments to reach their goal, whether these be social, physical, or both. Canny Explorers might be able to avoid some of these obstacles, convincing even power-mad zealots to trade for their sacred relics, while other crews with less subtlety and a more ballistic inclination might prefer to solve their problems with guns blazing. This Objective can be considered complete once the artefact the Explorers sought rests in their hands.

Sample Objective 3 (A Test of Faith): Once on the planet's surface, it becomes quickly clear that the Explorers have a considerable task ahead of them. When they first make contact with the Blood Tears, they discover that these extremely militant devotees of Almace are highly insular and dislike outsiders. Establishing communications should present only a small obstacle for the Explorers, but the Game Master should take advantage of any failed Skill Tests while translating or interpreting between the Explorers and the Loretans. Mistakes and miscommunication can quickly escalate into unpleasant or unfortunate situations.

Eventually, the Explorers need to gain access to the central government complex, as it seems the only likely place to find the *Almace's Tactica*. The book is, indeed, kept within the complex in a vault deep beneath the planet's surface. Along with the volume, it also contains a war-shrine decorated with mystical and religious scenes of Almace engaged in her work, and a selection of ancient Imperial weapons and armour. Further, deep within the shrine is Almace's most famous blade, recovered after her death (see the profile for Almace's Last Conquest on page 103). Gaining access to the building and then finding the vault should present the largest challenge to the Explorers.



The inhabitants of Loretta make it clear to the Explorers that they venerate Almace through martial conflict, and that the Explorers must demonstrate their devotion before they can see any of her relics (these fanatics use the Oathsworn Bodyguard profile from page 372 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook, and wield soul blades, from page 87 of this volume). If the Explorers can prove themselves through ritual combat, they can make it in with only controlled violence. Otherwise, they need to storm the fortress full of dangerous, armed fanatics.

Once the Explorers acquire the Archive, this Objective and the Endeavour can be considered complete. The secrets within this sacred document can provide leads to countless other trips seeking treasures and mysteries in the Koronus Expanse.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Although these Endeavours are meant to provide the Game Master and players with a framework by which they can structure their financial conquests, the group should not forget that these are also an opportunity for character growth, such as the acquisition of new skills, training, and world-views.

For instance, after the Explorers complete the sample **Retrieve a Blessed Relic** Endeavour presented here by acquiring *Almace's Tactica*, the Game Master might wish to give one or more of the Explorers a chance to study the faith of the Loretan natives if they express interest in this divergent branch of the Imperial Creed. A Missionary might be particularly impressed by the dedication these ascetics demonstrate, while an Arch-Militant might find that their martially-inclined faith echoes far more with his own views than dusty tomes or the booming words of priests. Assuming that they have not burned the bridge to treating with the Blood Tears (or obliterated them from orbit), the Game Master could use this as an avenue to offer either or both of these characters the chance to take the Red Consecrator Alternate Career Rank (see pages 76–77). In this way, the Game Master can give the players a chance to expand their characters from both the narrative and mechanical perspectives, supporting intangible developments with concrete new abilities.

DESTROY A XENOS THREAT

"This planet is covered in carnivorous, warlike xenos that stand five metres at the shoulder and have two heads full of razor teeth? Perfect! I've never had the chance to mount two heads from the same creature in my trophy vault before! Prepare my hunting pistol and a landing craft!"

—Rogue Trader Tallen Alberse

The creeping influence of the myriad xenos races that pollute the galaxy is anathema to the learned men and women of the Imperium of Man. From the pointless savagery of the bloody-minded Orks to the cunning treachery of the Eldar to the honeyed lies of the upstart Tau Empire, xenos threats are everywhere. Occasionally, it falls to a member of the Missionarus Galaxia to root out xenos and stymie their plans, especially when the xenos show too much interest in worlds the Ecclesiarchy holds dear. In cases such as these, a missionary, especially one serving aboard a Rogue Trader ship or otherwise allied with a powerful trade dynasty, might choose to raise a fighting force and take the battle directly to the enemy. Endeavours such as these can range anywhere from simply hunting down and destroying a marauding Eldar Corsair to leading a crusade to wrest a region of the Koronus Expanse from the grip of some heretofore unknown xenos threat.

Example Requirements:

- A world or star system threatened by hostile xenos
- Troops, whether household forces or mercenaries, along with all necessary materiel for sustaining an army
- Agreements and binding compacts with the Imperial Guard and/or the Imperial Navy to provide ships, troops, vehicles, and materiel
- Initial reconnaissance and the gathering of intelligence regarding any and all enemy forces
- Establishment of forward operating bases and a logistics chain to provide supplies for the war effort
- Binding agreements with the Adeptus Mechanicus to provide support for all ships, vehicles, and materiel
- Depending on the level of threat and availability, support from the Adeptus Astartes, one or more Inquisitors, the Adeptus Sororitas, or any other branch of the Adeptus Terra that the Rogue Trader and his Crew can sway to the cause



PURGE THE XENOS

Greater Endeavour, +4 Profit Factor

Aliens pose various threats across the Koronus Expanse, and though they do prey upon human populations scattered across the countless worlds in this region of space, this is not the only reason that a Rogue Trader and his crew might come into conflict with xenos. Various alien factions also compete with Rogue Traders for resources, relics, and more, and Rogue Traders frequently find themselves in minor but nonetheless cataclysmic wars with xenos species. Of course, the line between holy wars and territorial squabbles over resources is often blurred. After all, what Rogue Trader would refuse the financial and military assistance of the Ecclesiarchy if he intended to rout the Orks occupying a mineral-rich system eventually anyway? Thus, Rogue Traders frequently declare minor crusades, war-pilgrimages, and other, similar undertakings of a religious bent to seek the bones of lost saints on worlds occupied by troublesome xenos or launch fleets of ships to protect “helpless” human populations (and their valuable resources) from marauding aliens. The Game Master could set such an Endeavour in the Zhorne system (as described below) or anywhere else he deems appropriate.

Sample System (The Zhorne System): In the Accursed Demense, coreward of Serator Prime, lies the little-known Zhorne system. It was first charted decades ago by Rogue Trader Zhorne, the master of the vessel *Lux Salvationis*. It is a roomy, expansive, easily navigable system rich in natural resources and home to a dozen planets orbiting a bright young blue-white star. Zhorne I, the tiny planet closest to the star is an extremely dense world of little worth burned to a cinder by its stellar sibling. Massive, brightly coloured ringed gas giants float silently in the centre of the system laden with valuable gasses, and precious ores and minerals sit about for the taking on the odd, oblong planetoids near the system’s Oort cloud. The vast majority of the system’s wealth, however, lies in the four terrestrial worlds that rest in the star’s habitable zone between the first planet and the gas giants.

A varied group of close-packed planets that can, to greater or lesser degrees, support human life, these four planets possess not only the vast mineral wealth of their out-system neighbours, but also a large number of potentially valuable species of flora and fauna. The first of these, Ostler, is a world of massive, craggy, obsidian islands floating in seas of molten metals with a caustic and sweltering atmosphere only just able to sustain life. The second, Van Heuring, is an arid, barren, rocky death world home to numerous species of giant and savage sauropods. Furthest from the star, right on the edge of the habitable zone, Frost, is a vast, icy water world of viscid, brackish, ice-choked seas patrolled by kilometre-long leviathans and home to a myriad of smaller, curious sea creatures. The last of the habitable worlds, Zhorne II, is a green and temperate world of shallow seas, low mountain ranges, and dense, misty forests. It was upon this world where the Rogue Trader discovered the greatest potential in the system, as well as the eventual downfall of his ancient dynasty.

Peaceful and bucolic, with a geography and environment more hospitable and wildly less dramatic than those of its neighbours, Zhorne II is blessed with great natural wealth, particularly in timber, ores, and domesticable beasts. Along with this material wealth, Zhorne II is also spiritually wealthy, home to a divine presence that seems to emanate from every rock, hill, and tree. A passionate (if intermittent) devotee of the Imperial Cult, Rogue Trader Zhorne sensed the great spiritual presence of the planet on his first visit to the surface. Immediately upon disembarking the landing craft at the head of a cohort of officers, voidsmen, and surveyors, Rogue Trader Zhorne remarked to his associates that it was as if the Emperor Himself were standing there among the evergreens, though the record does not detail whether this was a moment of spiritual poetics or a metaphor about unclaimed resources ripe for the seizing by his dynasty.

Over the following months, as Zhorne's officers and crew toiled diligently away, surveying and cataloguing everything in the system, he sat alone in his stateroom aboard his flagship *Lux Salvationis* or in the clearing in which his vision appeared. There, he made plans to colonise the planet. Unfortunately, while the newly-named Zhorne system was replete with useful resources, it also sat near the Undred-Undred Teef, a region infested with savage Orks. The development of the Zhorne system, therefore, was a gamble; if the Orks arrived before Rogue Trader Zhorne could erect sufficient fortifications and begin extracting resources to fund the development of greater and greater defences, the whole project would collapse beneath the tide of bellowing Greenskins.

Over the next several years, Rogue Trader Zhorne steadily moved more and more of his dynasty's assets from their ancestral holdings in Winterscale's Realm to the Zhorne system until nothing remained there save for a few clerks and litigants overseeing a handful of small but lucrative commercial interests. As the decades passed, the colony in the Zhorne system grew more and more profitable, exporting the wealth of the entire system to Footfall and into Winterscale's Realm and the Foundling Worlds. When Rogue Trader Zhorne passed away, he left his holdings to his son, Grigory Zhorne, who has continued to operate the colony for the intervening years. The colony carried on in this steady, successful fashion right up until the moment when the Orks arrived.

They struck without warning, hundreds upon hundreds of ramshackle Ork ships, their hulls bristling with weapons and their bellies filled to bursting with countless slaving Boyz. They swept through the system like a scythe, killing, seizing, or devouring everything in their path. The men and women of the system defence forces fought valiantly, but not even the might of the venerable warship *Lux Salvationis* could stand against the massed power of the Greenskins. The Orks dashed aside the defending ships and fell upon Zhorne II howling, gibbering, smashing, and defiling all they could reach and carrying the rest back to their foul ships. With the colony's defences shattered, Grigory Zhorne was forced to abandon it, limping into the void aboard the badly damaged *Lux Salvationis* to seek allies who could help him drive out the Orks and reclaim his family's lost holdings.



OBJECTIVE I: MUSTERING INVASION FORCES

Themes: Military, Trade, Creed

Organising a military campaign to retake a world is a monumental task. How much more massive, then, must be the effort to reclaim an entire system or even larger region? A Rogue Trader looking to launch such an Endeavour must be prepared to spend considerable sums of money, favour, and influence gathering forces. Having a religious purpose for such a venture can make acquiring resources much easier. A Missionary's impassioned oration can sway many hearts to the cause. Of course, such tactics are not effective on all the factions a Rogue Trader might wish to employ. Hard-bitten mercenaries, privateers, and even less savoury individuals (especially the various xenos who fight for profit, glory, or cruel joy) rarely see the benefits of spiritual rewards, no matter how grand they might be. For recruiting such groups, a skilled and knowledgeable Seneschal is invaluable. Securing finances to pay hired forces, using favours or blackmail to control unruly elements, and spinning a web of intrigue from which the Rogue Trader and his dynasty can profit are all integral parts of a Seneschal's duty. A Rogue Trader and his crew might have to travel to many different worlds to secure the assistance of various allies, or even treat with other Rogue Trader dynasties to win their aid. Once the Explorers have secured support from an appropriate number of backers (as determined by the Game Master), this Objective can be considered complete.

NOT ALL SHIPS ARE CREATED EQUAL

The Explorers' initial reconnaissance of the Zhorne system requires an appropriately sized and outfitted ship. This could be something small and fast such as a corvette or raider-class ship or a long-range shuttle or system patrol craft that can be deployed from beyond the Oort cloud. Anything larger is sure to be picked up by either the Ork system patrols or one of a number of crude auspex/augur buoys deployed throughout the system, and it would alert the Greenskins to the Explorers' presence. Depending on the ship that the Explorers use and its capabilities, the Game Master might see fit to grant +5 or +10 bonuses to any appropriate Skill Tests to carry out the reconnaissance. For example, a particularly nimble or stealthy ship might gain an additional bonus to Tests made to evade detection, or a vessel equipped with specialised augur arrays might gain an extra bonus to Search and Scrutiny Tests as it quietly gathers intelligence on the region from afar.

Sample Objective 1 (The Call to Arms): During the course of their endeavours, the Explorers hear of the loss of the Imperial colony on Zhorne II, a little-known world in the Accursed Demense. One easy way to introduce this Endeavour would be via Grigory Zhorne, who has petitioned various Rogue Trader dynasties to assist in retaking the Zhorne system. Of course, there are many other ways the Explorers could learn of the Orks rampaging across the Zhorne system, from whispers in the narco-dens of Footfall to a call to arms by a firebrand priest demanding that the xenos be expunged from the rightful realm of the Imperium. However they learn of the state of affairs in the Zhorne system, the Game Master should make it clear to the players that, while this venture could be expensive and quite difficult, capitalising on this situation could pay great dividends not only in raw materials, but also in influence with various powerful factions. If they wish to take on the monumental task of clearing the Orks from the Zhorne system, they must first decide upon the best course of action. Do they go it alone, using household assets and hired ships and troops to secure the system and defeat the Greenskins and cover themselves in wealth and glory? Do they contact Ecclesiarchy representatives and work directly under the auspices of the Calixian Synod, hopefully with support of Ecclesiarchy, Imperial Guard, and Imperial Navy assets? Or do they find some other way to bring about the destruction of the Ork forces and possibly take possession of the Zhorne system for themselves?

However they go about this task, it should be clear to the Explorers from the very beginning that they must bring an inordinate amount of force to bear very quickly if they hope to dislodge the Orks. Depending on the Explorers skills, available assets, the condition of their Profit Factor, and numerous other details, this first Objective could take weeks to months of Narrative Time to accomplish. Deals need to be struck, many eager palms need greasing with the kinds of money and favours only a Rogue Trader can provide, warriors and ships must be assembled, and countless tiny details must be attended to before the first household trooper or Imperial Guardsman sets foot aboard a ship bound for the Accursed Demense. The majority of this Objective revolves around story development and roleplaying. At this point, the Game Master can also encourage the Explorers to sketch out a plan of attack, outlining their goals and taking stock of available troops, ships, and materiel. Seneschals, Void-Masters, and any Explorer with the right amount of tactical knowledge in the form of any combat or war related Lore Skills should be given the opportunity to shine at this stage. Using their knowledge, they can act as a council of war, helping the Rogue Trader plan his attack using the information about the Zhorne system that Grigory Zhorne or their other relevant contacts can provide.

Once everything is in place, all the soldiers and resources mustered, and the ink on the contracts, writs, and bills of lading dry, the Explorers can set off for the Zhorne system to execute the second Objective, initial reconnaissance of the Zhorne system.

OBJECTIVE 2: RECONNOITRE THE BATTLEFIELD

Themes: Exploration, Military

Before launching a full invasion of a region of space, a wise Rogue Trader uses the resources at his disposal to scout all of the threats it contains. Frequently, a Rogue Trader intending to lead a larger force into a system uses his own vessel (which is already optimised for independent action in potentially hostile territory). This Objective could consist of a preliminary journey to the destination to gather as much information as possible, either avoiding the enemy entirely or retreating before they can bring their forces to bear. A skilled Void-Master is obviously crucial to the success of such a mission, for only the most talented pilots can avoid detection while flying so close to hostile forces. Anyone specialised in operating the vessel's sensors must be extremely



adept as well, so that the Rogue Trader can draw together a full picture of the warzone before the action begins. A veteran Arch-Militant or Missionary who has led many such assaults before can also provide considerable advice on how to carry out such a mission, especially if a portion of the crew needs to leave the ship to closely explore a particular feature of the battlefield. The Rogue Trader and his crew must carefully balance caution and curiosity at this stage; if they are discovered, they might find themselves facing a force much larger than their own. On the other hand, if they fail to uncover a crucial part of the enemy's defences, their lapse could prove devastating when they bring the full might of their force to bear. Once the Explorers return to their mustered forces, this Objective can be considered complete. However, the Game Master should keep in mind any details that the Explorers might have overlooked during their search, for these can play a role in the final Objective.

Sample Objective 2 (Scouting the Warfront): The second step in liberating the Zhorne system from the Greenskins is a good and thorough reconnaissance of the system. It is important to note at this point that the system is absolutely infested with the Ork fleet. Brutish Kill-Kroozers and Terror Ships hang in orbit over each planet, their rickety fighters and landing craft descending to the surface and returning brimming with loot. Various classes of attack ship and gunship patrol the system, speeding here and there with no apparent destination and often ramming or opening fire on one another, presumably for the joy of it. Floating in orbit over

Zhorne II itself is the massive, glowering form of a brutal custom-built Kroozer, the flagship of the Ork Warboss currently in power over the Zhorne system.

Initial insertion into the Zhorne system requires copious amounts of luck and skill. Game Masters should allow the Explorers to execute their plans as they see fit, but should make sure to impress upon them that there are a staggering number of Orks in the system, and even the smallest mistake could bring the entire force of the Greenskin's armada down on their heads. At the very least, the Explorers need to make sensory sweeps of each world (Zhorne I, Heuring, Olster, Zhorne II, and Frost) and examine the Ork armada itself, getting a sense of its total power, strengths, and weaknesses—all preferably without being detected. If they are detected, the Explorers must either win combat quickly (and with minimal fanfare) or flee the system. If the Explorers are able to make a thorough search and depart, they should have a sense of everything the Orks have in store for the attacking force. If, however, the Explorers are forced out of the system before they can complete their search, the Game Master should make sure that there is at least one unpleasant surprise waiting for them in the Zhorne system when they return with their massed forces.

With the reconnaissance information in hand, and hopefully having avoided damage to their vessel, the Explorers can return to their assembled forces and begin the final phase of the Endeavour, the complete annihilation of the Orks in the Zhorne system.





OBJECTIVE 3: LAUNCH THE INVASION

Themes: Military, Creed

Once the Explorers have all the information they can gather about their target, it comes time to formulate a plan of attack. Rogue Traders themselves often possess considerable strategic acumen, as do many Arch-Militants. Further, the technical knowledge of an Explorator can provide considerable insight into the organisation of the enemy's defences. Other Explorers might even have experience fighting the enemy in question. The Game Master and the players should work together to come up with an appropriate plan to engage their enemy, exploiting the opportunities or weaknesses that they discovered in the previous Objective and basing their strategy around the strengths of the force they gathered in the first Objective.

Even if their plan is perfect, however, executing it requires the Explorers to engage in a significant battle against their enemies. The Game Master might choose to use the rules for Squadrons of vessels in **BATTLEFLEET KORONUS** if he owns this supplement, or he could simply run the encounter in an abstracted fashion, focusing on the role that the Rogue Trader's vessel plays in the action (and making sure that it is present to attempt to turn the tide at any critical junctures in the battle). The successes and failures of the Rogue Trader and his crew can reflect the overall status of the force they have gathered. If they were extremely thorough in their search in the previous Objective, the Explorers should probably have uncovered everything that

their enemies have to throw at them. If they overlooked important details, however, then once they begin the assault, these lapses in their scrutiny can come back to haunt the Explorers in the form of extra forces, unexpected defences, or other unpleasant surprises. If the Explorers can navigate the trials and travails of war and vanquish their foes, this Objective can be considered complete.

Sample Objective 3 (The Time to Strike): Now is the time for the Explorers to make their move on the Orks. The Orks, firmly entrenched in the system and nowhere near done stripping its resources for Kaptin Mordakka's nefarious ends, is bound and determined to keep hold of the system and will fight to the very last ship. For ease of play, the Game Master can use the Massed Combat rules presented on page 292 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook to run both the ship combat and any ground combat in which the Explorers personally involve themselves. If the Game Master and his Players prefer more detail and granularity in their combat, and they have access to the Warfare Endeavours and the expanded Mass Combat rules presented in the **ROGUE TRADER** supplement **BATTLEFLEET KORONUS**, they can use those rules to fully flesh out Kaptin Mordakka's forces. If using this more detailed method, the Game Master might wish to have the combat take place over several game sessions, leading to the climactic battle between their surviving forces and those of Snazzfleet Mordakka.

'DA BOYZ 'A SNAZZFLEET MORDAKKA

The reckless, ramshackle fleet currently in control of the Zhorne system is led by the notorious Ork Freebooter Kaptin Orlog Mordakka. Originally from Tusk in the Undred-Undred Teef, Kaptin Mordakka is a vain, preening, and brutally stupid Flash Git from the Bad Moons Clan. Cast out of the clan and chased out of the system by his fellows for his inability to follow even the simplest orders and his constant braggadocio, he took to the stars. Like many outcasts, quickly fell in with one of the many groups of Freebooters operating in the Expanse. Through treachery and violence he moved quickly up the ranks aboard his ship, eventually claiming command for himself by striding onto the bridge with his Kaptin's head on a pike and declaring himself Boss. For years now, Kaptin Mordakka has sailed among the systems of the Accursed Demense preying on anything that strikes his fancy, alien and fellow Ork alike. Despite his room-temperature intelligence, his frequent, uncontrollable rages, and his generally insufferable demeanour, Mordakka has gathered to his flag a number of less powerful Freebooterz and pirates largely thanks to his incredible luck. Thanks to this, and a certain amount of natural cunning, Mordakka has made a habit of lucking into wealth and achieving victories against even the most daunting odds. One such event was his discovery of the Zhorne system.

The ships under Mordakka's command, referred to both by him and by the other Kaptins in the armada as the "Snazzfleet," are indeed a force to be reckoned with. Aside from the Kaptin's personal kroozer, the *Take 'Dat!*, which hangs in orbit over Zhorne II, the Snazzfleet is made up of a variety of raiders, attack ships, and kroozers along with a handful of inter-system craft and landas. The exact number and composition of Snazzfleet Mordakka is left to the Game Master's discretion and should largely depend on the number of ships under the Explorers' command and the average of their combined power. The final battle against Mordakka's forces should be a difficult one for the Explorers, and one with very real consequences for failure, but should never be impossible to win. The ships in Mordakka's fleet use the stats for the Onslaught-class raider on page 209 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook, with an NPC Crew Quality of 35, and the Orks who man these ships use the stats for Ork Freebooterz found on pages 376-377 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook. If the Game Master has any of the Rogue Trader supplements detailing Orks in the Koronus Expanse, such as **INTO THE STORM** or **BATTLEFLEET KORONUS**, he might wish to use the ships and NPCs detailed within those books to flesh out the Ork armada. Kaptin Mordakka uses the profile for an Ork Freebooter with the following modifications: +20 Weapon Skill, +20 Strength, +20 Toughness, +20 Agility, +30 Wounds. He is equipped with "Da 'Eadzappa," a brutal, electrified chain axe with the following profile: Melee; 2d10+11; Pen 2; Shocking, Tearing.

Once the smoke clears and the guns fall silent at last, the Explorers find themselves, either temporarily or permanently, in possession of an entire star system. With the Orks of Snazzfleet Mordakka killed or driven from the system, there is still quite a bit of work to be done. First and foremost, the system needs to be secured to guard against any enemy forces that might still be inbound. Once that is completed, each planet must be cleared of as much of the Ork presence as is possible, and survivors and slaves on Zhorne II must be rescued and their physical and spiritual needs looked after. In addition, depending on the requirements of any agreements with mercenary or Imperial forces for ships, troops, materiel, and services rendered, the Explorers could find themselves embroiled in endless wrangling or even outright war with their allies. Finally, and this only holds true for those Explorers who entered into this Endeavour with the idea of keeping the Zhorne system for themselves, the entire system is infested with Ork spores. For years to come, it will suffer occasional flare-ups of feral Ork activity of varying intensity, especially on Zhorne II, where they were so densely concentrated.



DA KAPTIN'S KROOZER

Kaptin Mordakka's flagship, the *Take 'Dat!*, uses the following profile:

Hull: Cruiser (Modified)

Class: "Kustom-built dakka-kroozer"

Dimensions: 7 km long, 2 km abeam

Mass: 60 megatonnes

Crew: hordes of Grotz and Boyz

Accel: 2.3 gravities max sustainable acceleration

Speed: 4

Manoeuvrability: -10

Detection: +10

Void Shields: 2 **Armour:** 25 prow, 14 sides and stern

Hull integrity: 120

Morale: 100

Crew Population: 100

Crew Rating: Crack (40)

Turret Rating: 3

Weapon Capacity: See below

Essential Components: Orky equivalents of a Jovian Class 4 Drive, Strelor 2 Warp Engine, Double Void Shield Array, Vitae Life-Sustainer, Pressed-crew Quarters, Combat Bridge, and Mark-100 Auger Array. These Components are usable only in Ork-built vessels.

Prow Weapons: Three Kustom Dakka-blastas†

Port Weapons: Two Kustom Dakka-blastas†

Starboard Weapons: Two Kustom Dakka-blastas†

†Dakka-blasta: (Macrobattery; Strength 1d5+4; Damage 1d10+2; Crit Rating: 4; Range 5)

ESTABLISH A PILGRIMAGE ROUTE

"Oh, I'm pleased as well that we're helping the faithful to pay proper homage to Saint Cognatius at his shrine on Zayth. So many pilgrims, each one paying for the right to make their prayers there, where the Saint himself stood against Valta the Cruel and cast him down. Yes, I am almost incalculably pleased with this, my Captain."

—Seneschal Frolt D'baro

Many particularly devout Rogue Trader dynasties hold their warrants by dint of their religious zeal and their exertions in undertaking tasks for the Ecclesiarchy. Indeed, many clauses in their warrants often require them to carry out duties such as ferrying missionaries, colonists, or pilgrims to and fro through the Koronus Passage or giving aid to missionaries or even elements of the Adeptus Sororitas. One of the more common tasks typically assigned to these dynasties is using their resources to establish routes of safe passage for pilgrims seeking to walk the stations of a saint or other figure of reverence. While the Rogue Trader is usually compensated for this work, most Rogue Traders undertake these jobs under the assumption that the true profit comes in the form of favours, the spiritual fulfilment of assisting the Emperor's servants, and whatever smaller deals they can make on the side while carrying out the Emperor's work.

Example Requirements:

- A number of worlds known for a connection to a particular Imperial Saint or other individual revered by large portions of the population
- Charts of known Warp routes between the worlds on the proposed trade route
- Trade compacts negotiated between government officials on each world and the Rogue Trader's dynasty
- An official presence on each world composed of factors, litigants, negotiators, brokers, scribes, and usurers to look after the Rogue Trader's business affairs
- Secure warehouses, storage vaults, and berthing for landing craft on each world, along with agreements and compacts negotiated for the cartage, hauling, loading, and unloading of goods and individuals from ships and ground transports
- Binding contracts listing in exact detail the duties and responsibilities of each party and the penalties for breaking said contracts

CREATE A ROUTE FOR WORSHIPPERS

Lesser Endeavour, +2 Profit Factor

Creating a safe route for pilgrims to travel in the Koronus Expanse is a task of vast scale, even if one discounts the difficulty of safeguarding against marauding xenos and pirates. The simple logistics involved in transporting the teeming masses of the faithful from one world to another are staggering. Still, such is a Rogue Trader's power that he can make this seemingly impossible task feasible. A Rogue Trader is better equipped than almost any other individual to create infrastructure in the untamed wilds of space. Once he has negotiated the terms of the contract with a representative of the Adeptus Ministorum, scouted an appropriate route for a pilgrimage, and secured the necessary charts of the Warp routes needed to travel from planet to planet, the Rogue Trader can go about organising outposts to guide travellers. After this has been done and vessels have been contracted to carry the countless pilgrims, the Rogue Trader's task is complete—unless a crisis strikes and he is required to return to the pilgrimage route to repair damaged infrastructure or drive off malign forces preying upon the pilgrims.

Sample Pilgrimage Route (The Marmor System): Located in Winterscale's Realm just trailing off the border with the Ragged Worlds, the Marmor system is that rarest of phenomena in the Expanse—a populous and stable collection of human worlds. The eight planets of the system orbit the powerful, bright white star Marmor, whose searing, hard-edged light fills the system like a sustained blast of a massive photon flash grenade, overwhelming augur and auspex arrays and blinding those who look directly at it. The worlds that make up the system are all solid, high-gravity terrestrial worlds with thin atmospheres and little standing water. Each one is blessed with an inordinate amount of natural wealth in the form of minerals, ores, and precious stones, many of which are exceedingly rare and in high demand in commercial and industrial applications throughout the Calixis Sector. They also have a strange regularity of size, mass, and colour about them that puzzles those who have an interest in such things. In addition, each planet generates powerful magnetic fields that, combined with the radiation broadcast by the star, make navigating the relatively clear and uncluttered system a challenge even for experienced travellers of the dark between the stars.

Due to the sheer amount of heat, light, and energy generated by Marmor, all but its two closest planets exist within its habitable range. Of these, the first four are highly urbanised and populated by hard-working people who toil away in the many mines, refineries, and foundries that make up the bulk of industrial and commercial activity in the system. The last two worlds, far at the edges of the system, are surrounded by shipyards and space stations, a veritable rat's nest of warehouses, slips, drydocks, beacons, navigation buoys, hangars, and orbital habs that are the main port facilities of the system. All stellar traffic entering the Marmor system is subject to impost inspections and numerous fees upon arrival, and all cargo is loaded and unloaded from these facilities, with smaller haulers delivering it to in-system

destinations. While the Marmor system is nominally loyal to the Imperium, it has no centralised government and very few Imperial officials call it home. Instead, each planet is a sovereign world that is part of a loose confederation overseen by a council of representatives. This body is mainly responsible for collecting taxes from each planet and maintaining the unique and complex system-wide trade, transit of resources, and industrial infrastructure, including the aforementioned port facilities and fleet of inter-system haulers.

Brimming with natural resources, populated with millions of industrious men and women, and possessed of a relatively efficient system-wide infrastructure by the standards of the Imperium, one would expect the Marmor system to be incredibly wealthy. Unfortunately, the Marmor system sits in close proximity to the Screaming Vortex, the great Warp storm's flickering, bruise-coloured light bathing the outer planets and making a softer, sinister contrast to the harsh light of the system's star. The people of the system have clashed with agents of the Ruinous Powers on and off for millennia, their fleets driving out raiding squadrons of Chaos reavers and the well-drilled volunteer planetary militias exterminating cults and rooting out agents provocateur. Still, Chaos is insidious, and it often worms its way into the jaded hearts of nobility and the dreams of the desperate and power-hungry. Dark rumours about entire noble houses in the sway of ancient, eldritch terrors abound within the Marmor system.

On her way to worlds yet-unclaimed by the Imperium, the missionary Nadine Aleynikov travelled across the Marmor system, offering physical and spiritual nourishment to the poor.

Further, she frequently and vocally chastised the corrupt nobility, whose deviations from the Imperial Creed she saw as intolerable. Though these tactics made her popular amidst the oppressed masses and helped her to stoke the fires of faith in this region, it also brought her into vocal and occasionally violent conflict with the decadent nobles. Some tales even describe how she vanquished a foul ætheric creature called forth by the decadence of a corrupt nobleman or the desperate plea of an indentured worker, summoned to destroy her and drag the entire Marmor system into a realm of absolute despair. Despite assassins (and perhaps things far worse, if the stories are true) haunting her across these eight worlds, Aleynikov survived her trip and inspired countless downtrodden souls to demand that their rulers adhere more firmly to the Imperial Creed. Though none can say if the nobles of Marmor mended their ways in spirit, their deeds reflect at least the facade of piety. For decades after her journey through the Marmor system, the tithes collected from the system swelled to unprecedented levels.

Eight shrines were erected in Aleynikov's honour, one on each world in the system. Now that unsanctioned groups of worshippers such as the Seekers of the Saint and the Adherents of Aleynikov have sprung up in her wake, honouring her as a saint even if she has never officially been recognised by the Adeptus Ministorum, pilgrims from across the Koronus Expanse seek to tread the trail she once walked as an act of devotion. Certain members of the Ecclesiarchy on the fringes and in the Calixis Sector, especially those who wish to see Aleynikov recognised formally as a saint, have petitioned to see a route of pilgrimage established across the Marmor system.



OBJECTIVE 1: NEGOTIATIONS

AND CONTRACTS

Themes: Creed, Trade

This Endeavour typically begins in one of two ways. In the first case, a representative of the Ecclesiarchy (or of a specific religious cult or order that exists in the Koronus Expanse) might seek out the Rogue Trader's dynasty and ask for assistance in setting up a route by which pilgrims can honour a particular figure or event. In the second scenario, the Endeavour could begin with the Explorers actively looking for a pious group that wishes to create a pilgrims' trail to somewhere in the Koronus Expanse. Regardless of how they decide to embark on this Endeavour, once the Explorers choose to do so, their first order of business is negotiation. Few Rogue Traders do anything purely out of charity, and so there must be a monetary or social incentive for a Rogue Trader to offer his assistance in such a venture. Rogue Traders and Seneschals can both play the role of negotiator, dealing with the individual or group who desires to create the route and securing financial support, political favours, or other

appropriate payment as recompense for the dynasty's efforts. A Missionary can also be extremely useful at this stage, as a liaison to any pious client—provided, of course, that he can see both the spiritual and economic sides of the equation. Further, a Missionary is likely to possess knowledge of the specific figure or event that the worshippers desire to honour, which can be very valuable during negotiations. This Objective can be considered complete once the Explorers have met with their patron in this venture and determined what portion of the initial investment into creating the pilgrimage route the dynasty must make (and, more importantly, what it will receive as remuneration).

Sample Objective 1 (Taking the Job): Through the busy and chattering rumour mill that exists within the halls of power on Scintilla, certain high-ranking officials of the Calixian Synod have recently decided to back the effort to create a pilgrimage route across the Marmor system. Regional hierarchs have grown increasingly concerned about lapses of faith, and tithes have diminished in recent years. As such, a number of representatives of the Adeptus Ministorum would support any effort to rekindle the faith that Aleynikov once inspired in the people of the Marmor system. One of these Ecclesiarchy officials happens to be a contact of one of the Explorers, likely either the group's Missionary or Rogue Trader. Using a byzantine series of cut-outs and nameless couriers, the Explorer's contact in the Ecclesiarchy has a message delivered to the Explorer offering him and his colleagues a unique opportunity to increase both their temporal and their spiritual wealth by assisting the Ecclesiarchy in establishing a safe route for pilgrims travelling to and across the Marmor system.

The Explorers are needed to do the actual legwork, as they have the resources and skills to set up the route of passage. For their trouble, the Explorers can expect a percentage of the profit from the dues travelling pilgrims pay, plus various favours from the members of the Ecclesiarchy involved. The Explorers can increase this percentage (and the magnitude of the favours) through roleplaying and the outcome of any major negotiations or social interactions in which they participate during this Objective. This Objective can be considered complete once they have established the terms of the agreement.

OBJECTIVE 2: SCOUT THE PILGRIMAGE

Themes: Creed, Trade

Before sending ships filled with countless pious worshippers into the unknown or even breaking ground to create the infrastructure to support these pilgrims, the Rogue Trader's crew must scout the route that they will travel. Typically, the easiest way to do this is by having the Rogue Trader's vessel run the route. The Rogue Trader's ship is already designed and prepared to plunge into the wild of uninhabited space. During this Objective, the Rogue Trader and his crew should thoroughly explore the region through which the route passes, making sure that they are aware of any major risks to the venture (and to the pilgrims). Such perils could include dangerous stellar anomalies, vicious pirates, rampaging Orks, or other horrors of the void lurking just beyond the light of the Imperium. Given the risks inherent in venturing into the Koronus Expanse, a skilled Navigator is a necessity. Further, such an individual can create detailed Warp charts that his less gifted counterparts can use to safely navigate the passage. Of course, even a Navigator's Warp eye cannot foresee all



dangers, and so a Rogue Trader needs a seasoned Void-Master or other pilot to handle his vessel as it delves into the unknown. This Objective can be considered complete once the Explorers have run the route and confirmed that it does not contain any major dangers or complications. In the likely event that the route does pass too close to an Ork stronghold or a dangerous Warp anomaly, the Explorers must find a way to deal with this problem before proceeding in the Endeavour.

Sample Objective 2 (Clearing the Way): Once the details of the deal have been hammered out and any necessary agreements and compacts have been duly signed, the Explorers can immediately make their way to the Marmor system to determine the best route for the pilgrimage. This requires them to run the route at least once in their voidship, travelling to each of the worlds in the Marmor system and examining the situation at each of the shrines dedicated to Aleynikov. As they walk Aleynikov's trail, the Explorers might be approached by a member of a noble house that does not want to see the pilgrim's trail across the Marmor system come to fruition. Whether this individual is motivated by a desire to maintain political power that the Ecclesiarchy could undermine with a new surge of faith, a personal grievance with Nadine Aleynikov from long ago, or for more sinister reasons is up to the Game Master. The Explorers might even have to deal with several different political powers that oppose them for reasons ranging from doctrinal disagreements on whether Aleynikov should be canonised to the secret desire to see the Marmor system plunged into the grip of Chaos. Once they have navigated these obstacles, dealt with anyone sent to prevent them from completing their mission, and created a detailed route that future worshippers can follow, the Explorers have completed this Objective. Of course, any enemies they have made during this stage might well come back to haunt them during the final Objective of this Endeavour.

OBJECTIVE 3: ESTABLISH INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE ROUTE

Themes: Creed, Military, Trade

A steady stream of pilgrims requires considerable logistic support, to say nothing of protection. While many of the individuals who undertake such a journey of faith might prefer to let the Emperor provide, even the most pious Rogue Trader knows that the practicalities are as important as miracles for any large-scale operation. As such, the Rogue Trader must create and staff a number of way stations—at the very least, one on the planet from which pilgrim vessels depart and one at the end of the journey—but potentially many more, especially if the trip visits several sites connected to the journey of a noted Imperial Saint. Further, the Rogue Trader must arrange for vessels to transport these individuals (and all the supplies required to keep them alive) from world to world.

A skilled Seneschal can be incredibly useful at this stage, for both setting up infrastructure and finding the staff, from labourers to voidship captains, to make this monumental undertaking possible. Explorators can also be extremely helpful, for an adept of the Machine God can see to the rapid construction of buildings, fortifications, and more, and might even be able to reclaim and repair old edifices or space

stations on the way to the holy sites, saving the Rogue Trader from having to build them at all. Once at least two stations for pilgrims are up and running and a number of vessels are contracted to run the route, this Objective can be considered complete. Of course, more thorough preparations, especially defences to protect the travellers and redundant systems to secure the infrastructure, can help to ensure that the Rogue Trader need not return later to stabilise the situation or drive off pirates, xenos raiders, or things more terrible still.

Sample Objective 3 (Finishing the Job): In this final Objective, the Explorers must find ships and crews that can undertake the task of moving vast numbers of pilgrims across the Marmor system, construct habitations to contain the influx of worshippers at each of these sites, work out infrastructural issues such as providing access to food and water to the pilgrims, and finally deal with any and all opposition arrayed against them. This should be a mixture of high-tension, high-stakes battles of wills between the Explorers and the Marmor industrial rulers, who they must convince to assist them with their various projects to complete the Endeavour. It is also during this section that the Explorers should tie up any loose ends from the previous Objective, which could range from political battles with secular nobility to fighting entire Chaos cults, depending on the seeds they have sown. Whatever the nature of the opposition, it should present a real threat to the Explorers, and the outcome of their confrontation should have significant and lasting effects on both the mission and the campaign at large.

Once they have completed their negotiations and deals, overcome obstacles related to infrastructure, and dealt with those who oppose them, the Explorers have completed the Endeavour. They can remain in the system to explore the planets and port facilities further or simply pack up their belongings and return to their Ecclesiarchy contact. Should they choose to remain in the system, there is much potential to be found among the worlds of the Marmor system, as the worlds are rich in resources and much of the population is now favourably disposed to the Rogue Trader and his crew. Of course, they have also almost assuredly made some enemies in the Marmor system, who can provide complications and plot hooks as they continue to adventure there.



ROOT OUT HERESY

*"What cause is more righteous than ours? What work more sacred?
Therefore, what can anyone who opposes our work be but a heretic?"*

—Genevieve Almace

In the depths of the Koronus Expanse, most populations spend their time largely isolated from the Imperium of Mankind. Although many ships, way stations, and colonies have missionaries and other devout members of the Ecclesiarchy to stoke the fires of faith and drive back the darkness, there are times when heresy takes root. In these harsh times, the faith of the population, be they passengers and crew, colonists, or staff, must be at its strongest. If they falter, dark superstitions, bloody rites to malign entities, and other dread rituals can quickly crop up within the population. These heresies might start small, with single sacrifices to gods who bear unutterable names, but can quickly blossom into horrific new blasphemies yet unimagined. Those who consort with the alien, the mutant, and the witch risk their souls, but many Rogue Traders find such risks acceptable from time to time if they can reap sufficient profits in the process. However, those who give themselves over to Chaos fully are irredeemable in the eyes of all but the most corrupt Rogue Traders, and must be purged lest their spiritual corruption spread (and thus harm the Rogue Trader's profit margins).

This kind of Endeavour could involve anything from a whole voidship of heretics to a small band of cultists sabotaging a far-away colony. It could even take place aboard a Rogue Trader's own vessel—though purging heretics from one's own ship would not likely yield any Profit Factor in the direct or immediate sense. A missionary might petition a Rogue Trader for assistance with this sort of task, or a crew might take it upon themselves as their sacred duty to the Emperor. Whatever the case, so long as someone is willing to pay for results (or if they can reasonably expect to make back the investment by other means), most Rogue Traders gladly rouse themselves to act as the Emperor's instruments and obliterate the worshippers of Chaos in his name.

Example requirements:

- Information about heretic activity in a particular location
- Access to said location without raising suspicion
- A crew to assist in any way possible including reconnaissance, combat, and security
- Access to detailed information concerning the population, the nature of the heresy, and any other relevant conditions of the place the heretics have begun to spread their wicked faith

DESTROY THE APOSTATE!

Lesser Endeavour, +2 profit factor

Violence is perhaps the only language that all factions in the galaxy truly share, and thus many Rogue Traders often find that the only solution (or at least the easiest one) to a given problem is to annihilate any obstacle that stands in their path. Given this reality, Rogue Traders are usually well-versed in the ways of battle. For one armed with the might of a vessel that can travel the abyss, expunging heretics from a vessel, space station, or other isolated population might seem a trivial task. Doing so without disrupting the society or destroying its infrastructure is considerably more difficult, especially in fragile environs where macrocannon bombardments are liable to kill more of the faithful than of the recidivists. Further, indiscriminate destruction tends to launch desperate souls toward greater and greater extremes, and an entire population might given in to the darkness if persecuted for the transgressions of a few. All but the most bloodthirsty missionaries also tend to look dimly upon such wasteful practices, for their task is to win converts and resources, not to obliterate prospective worlds unnecessarily.

Information can be as powerful a weapon as a lance battery if wielded properly, and is far less likely to atomise valuable minerals, irreplaceable archeotech, and other potential prizes atop which a cult might be perched. This Endeavour can be set in any sealed or isolated environment where the traces of heresy exist, such as *Glory's Messenger* (described below).

Sample Environment (*Glory's Messenger*): Before it vanished into the Koronus Expanse a year ago, the Tyrant-class Cruiser *Glory's Messenger* had a long history of faithful service to the Imperial Navy. It was almost singlehandedly responsible for driving back the Fell Fleet of Dz'ogth when it came tearing out of the Screaming Vortex and headed directly for the Calixis Sector centuries ago, and it clashed numerous times with other raiders, from the ships of the Kabal of the Splintered Talon to the dreaded vessel of the Ork Freebooter Kaptin Reddikka. Once, at the request of its pious Lord-Captain Larissa Notabel, *Glory's Messenger* was even given special dispensation to enter the Koronus Expanse and come to the aid of the missionary Nicomedes Keefe when his refugee vessel from the world of Everharvest was becalmed mere days from Footfall.

Years later, shortly before his death, Nicomedes Keefe gifted the vessel a number of ancient relics he had uncovered on his harrowing journey across Pratus, as symbols of his appreciation.



Given this saga of devout and effective service at dispensing the Emperor's justice to aliens, rebels, and heretics, it shocked many members of the Imperial Navy when *Glory's Messenger* broke from its position and fled through the Maw into the Koronus Expanse after a particularly gruelling battle against Chaos raiders. The other ships that had been dispatched to expunge the invaders were too badly damaged to pursue, and the Imperial Navy's own inquiries into the fate of *Glory's Messenger* have ended in frustration and failure. By order of Battlefleet Calixis, *Glory's Messenger* is to be captured on sight, its crew purged, and the vessel returned to the Imperial Navy.

In recent days, Footfall and Port Wander have echoed with rumours that the lost ship has been seen circling the world of Pratus, for reasons unknown. The last commander of *Glory's Messenger*, one Lord-Captain Jaker Notabel, was once known for his religious fervour. His daughter, Petra Notabel, followed the Lord-Captain's wishes and became a missionary. She is currently journeying in the Koronus Expanse, spreading the Imperial Creed, but has recently heard of the *Glory's Messenger's* disappearance. If she encounters the Explorers, she asks them for passage aboard their voidship, requesting that they take her to Pratus on the way to the next world with a human population suitable for conversion. The missionary Notabel hopes to find out what has happened aboard *Glory's Messenger*, as well as what has drawn it to the desolate world of Pratus. Notabel offers them not only her thanks and the influence that entails, but also the considerable naval bounty offered for the vessel's return. For more information on the world of Pratus, see page 63.

OBJECTIVE 1: DISCOVER THE HERETIC

Themes: Creed

The threat of heresy is particularly pernicious because it can lurk in even those hearts that appear pious. Thus, the task of finding those who have fallen to Chaos can be every bit as difficult as dispensing with them. Further, the Imperium of Mankind spreads across numberless worlds, and many local divergences from the Imperial Creed are considered acceptable. Given these complicating factors, a Missionary is an indispensable resource if a Rogue Trader wishes to remove a Chaos cult before it makes itself

obvious by conducting mass human sacrifices, launching a coup, or summoning unspeakable things in the confines of a star ship or space station. If the Rogue Trader and his crew wish to find the heretics by infiltration instead, the Rogue Trader himself can be extremely effective at swaying those around him to give away information, as can any character who has invested heavily in Interaction Skills. This Objective can be considered complete once the Explorers have found a significant lead that they can follow back to the cult. This might be a lower-ranking heretic who they have duped into helping them, evidence from the scene of a dark rite, or any other clue that the Game Master deems sufficient.

Sample Objective 1 (The Dark Side of Glory): *Glory's Messenger* hangs high above the dusty world of Pratus, its scanners raking across the scarred surface of this world incessantly. When the Explorers arrive, the vessel makes no effort to hide itself, and its crew even allows a small party to board. The ratings, voidsmen, and lesser officers seem genuinely unaware that *Glory's Messenger* is considered missing in action, each one claiming that he is simply following the orders of his superiors. Once they have gained access to the ship (assuming that the Explorers do not decide to take control of the seemingly loyal, if errant, vessel by force), the Explorers begin their inquiry into the reason for the vessel's erratic departure, accompanied by missionary Notabel. The crew of the ship complies with their requests, but all direct queries as to the purpose of this trip to Pratus are met with loyal ignorance and the suggestion to ask the next member of the chain of command. The Lord-Captain is nowhere to be found, and nobody has seen him for some time, though exact accounts vary.



As the Explorers begin their inquiry, the Game Master should direct the Explorers toward the conclusion that the Lord-Captain Notabel has not been seen in person since the brutal battle one year ago, and a number of his senior lieutenants have passed down all of his orders since. The Explorers complete this Objective when their search uncovers evidence that Lord-Captain Notabel was murdered by one of his officers during the battle one year before and that someone has been commanding the ship in his stead in the intervening time. They could discover this information in the form of the Lord-Captain's corpse stashed away within his chambers, a security log in the cogitators of a half-defunct servitor that witnessed the event, the testimony of a madman in the vessel's packed brig, or some other suitable source.

OBJECTIVE 2: UNMASK THE CULT

Themes: Creed

Once the Explorers have confirmed the presence of a heretical cell and found a lead, they must uncover the full extent of its malign influence before striking, lest its members simply slip back into the shadows to rear their ugly heads in the future. Explorers skilled at social manipulation might seek to infiltrate the cult and win the trust of a senior member to gain access to its secrets. In contrast, the Explorers might use a ruse to draw the cult into one place where they can smash all of its heretical adherents in a single, overwhelming coup. They could use a sacred relic (or an unholy one) to draw the attention of the cult, or use one of its enemies as bait to draw it into the open. This Objective can be considered complete once the Explorers have uncovered the cult fully and are poised to exterminate it. Of course, depending on how thorough their investigations have been, they might or might not have found out about all of the resources that their enemies possess. If they overlooked any crucial details, the Game Master should remember to have these come back to haunt the Explorers during the final Objective.

Sample Objective 2 (Paper Trail): Armed with the knowledge that Lord-Captain Notabel was killed and one or more of his lieutenants have participated in a conspiracy to commandeer the vessel and take it to Pratus, the Explorers must continue their investigation into the heresy brewing aboard *Glory's Messenger*. If they make their findings obvious, the conspirators become increasingly agitated and potentially violent. The Explorers might have to fight off servitors or assassins sent to silence them. At this stage, missionary Notabel should reveal to the Explorers that the relics gifted to her grandmother by Nicomedes Keefe are missing from their usual position of prominence aboard the vessel, and that these relics originally came from Pratus. If the Explorers do not come to the conclusion on their own, she surmises that these relics might have carried some agent of spiritual corruption that has afflicted the conspirators, turning their hearts to the path of the heretic.

As the Explorers dig deeper and deeper into the conspiracy, they unearth various disconcerting facts: ratings have begun to vanish with no explanation, grizzly murders have occurred aboard the ship, and, most disturbingly, that shuttles full of crewmen

have gone to the surface of Pratus, never to return. To complete this Objective, the Explorers must ferret out the three lieutenants responsible for the death of Lord-Captain Notabel. These three lieutenants can be identified by the fact that each one carries one of the artefacts from Pratus.

OBJECT 3: NEUTRALISE THE THREAT

Themes: Creed, Military

The final Objective of this Endeavour is simple in concept but could be extremely difficult in execution: the cult must be eradicated, its works burned and the ashes scattered to the winds. This Objective can be considered once the Chaos cult has been purged, and its members put to the torch. At the face of it, this task is a simple one, but in execution, it can be extremely complex, especially if the cult is deeply entrenched within the population of the faithful. Further, eliminating such a cult might earn the Explorers the enmity of associated cells of heretics or, far worse, of the dark intelligences whose pawns they have just thwarted.

Sample Objective 3 (Dark Return): Once the conspiracy has been revealed, Lord-Captain Notabel's former lieutenants act quickly to bring their final plan into motion. With their heresy exposed, they give various, disparate orders to different members of the crew. Even though each order alone appears to be a minor course correction, if the crew executes all of them, it will ultimately result in *Glory's Messenger* crashing into the surface of Pratus. There, the heretics hope to continue their maddened search, even if they must do it on foot. All three lieutenants have been fully corrupted by the artefacts that they hold, and these alien devices have driven them to seek a terrible secret buried beneath the wind-scoured surface of Pratus. Centuries ago, Keefe sealed an ancient Yu'Vath horror deep in the bowels of Pratus, hiding the artefacts required to awaken it aboard *Glory's Messenger* in the hopes that they would never return to this desolate world. The Explorers must now react swiftly to their changing situation, using rhetoric or violence to clear a path to the heretics before the vessel reaches the point of no return and plummets to the surface of Pratus. If they can convince some or all of the vessel's crew of the death of Lord-Captain Notabel, the Explorers can stage a mutiny against the heretics and prevent the orders from being carried out.

The Explorers complete this Objective once they have slain the three major heretics aboard *Glory's Messenger*. If they can also prevent the vessel from crashing to the surface of Pratus, a fall that would leave it a wreck with few salvageable parts, they receive an additional 2 Profit Factor upon returning the vessel to the Imperial Navy. If the vessel does crash, the Explorers must survive the ensuing chaos, prevent the frenzied heretics from fleeing the vessel to seek out the horror they hope to restore, and ultimately escape the ruinous world of Pratus. In either case, the fate of any survivors from the crew, who were loyally following the orders of their superiors, remains in the hands of the Explorers. Notabel counsels that the voidsmen be absolved of their sins if some of their number join her in spreading the Imperial Creed in the Koronus Expanse on a mission of penance (assuming that she is still alive to offer an opinion).



NEW WORLDS

"There are a multitude of heathens, backsliders, and apostates among the few human held worlds of the Koronus Expanse. It is to these forgotten worlds that I travel, my task to bring them the light of the God-Emperor. They can accept it, or die in righteous fire."

—Cale Halloweth, Missionary

The number of worlds within the Koronus Expanse is truly staggering. Among the countless stars within the boundaries of the Expanse are millions of planets of every conceivable description, most of them completely unknown to the Imperium. Indeed, in the millennium since the opening of the Koronus Passage, only a scant handful of the region's star systems have been explored and charted. While most of these worlds largely worthless, uninhabitable death worlds or massive gas giants that can crush a battleship like a flimsy canister with their gravitational forces, a few habitable worlds have been discovered.

These precious jewels of the Koronus Expanse are as varied as worlds can be, with little in common save for they all exist within their respective star's habitable zone, that band of planetary orbits where the heat, light, and radiation from the star is neither too strong nor too weak. Some are covered in massive and ancient ruins, abandoned by long-dead civilisations that rose and fell well before humanity took to the stars. Others are pristine and pleasant, paradises in the dark untouched by human or xenos hands, and some have strange geography or hazardous environments and are only habitable in the broadest sense of the word. The rarest world of all, however, is the world inhabited by humans. It is well known that humans have inhabited the Koronus Expanse for ages, and since the first Imperial ships passed into the Expanse nearly a millennia ago, the Adeptus Terra has gone about the business of bringing the Emperor's light to them and drawing these wayward souls back into the fold of the Imperial Cult.

The missionaries of the Missionarus Galaxia are among the most important operatives of the Ecclesiarchy working in the Expanse. With their tireless zeal and burning desire to do the work of Him on Earth, they spend their time traversing the void with their retinues in tow, searching for new human worlds and preparing them to serve the Imperium. Presented below are a pair of worlds on which missionaries can venture seeking populations to convert, relics to reclaim, or heretics to annihilate. One is inhabited, one is lost, and each one provides a number of settings and plot hooks with which the Game Master can flesh out missions and Endeavours for his Explorers.

IKERAN

"Initial planetary survey results reveal a nomadic people with wind- and combustion-driven oceanic vessels. No definitive evidence of previous Imperial contact. Scattered ruins on larger islands and a single abandoned hive-sized object adrift in the planet's equatorial current suggest that techno-arcane secrets might lie beneath the waves. Logic engines recommend further observation and research until contact can be established with the Explorator fleet lead by vessel designate Ænigma Ferrea."

—Recovered logs of Magos-Errant Lledonn
of the Explorator scout vessel *Charonne K.337*

Located in the far spinward reaches of the Ragged Worlds, between Naduesh and Gallant, lies the ocean-covered world of Ikeran. The fifth of twelve planets of the Bathys system, and the only terrestrial world among a collection of gas giants, Ikeran was surveyed centuries ago by the Lathe-class monitor vessel *Ænigma Ferrea* and its accompanying Explorator Fleet during a mission to chart the boundaries between the Ragged Worlds and the Heathen Stars. Nearly the size of Scintilla and covered almost entirely by incredibly deep seas, Ikeran glows like a blue-green jewel in the mellow, pale light of the star Bathys. Records of the planet and the mission which took the *Ænigma Ferrea* to that part of the Expanse are scant, and the reason for the voyage itself is lost entirely. Many of the records were sealed or locked away over the centuries, but those that remain paint a detailed portrait of a dynamic world populated by sea-faring peoples, as well as evidence of possible previous Imperial occupation.

A relative rarity among habitable worlds, Ikeran is nearly all ocean. It possesses no continents or large land masses, and what little dry land there is exists around the planet's equator in the form of small, rocky island chains, numerous atolls, and saw-toothed volcanic ranges. The perfunctory survey carried out by the passing Explorator mission in ages past noted a wide variety of climate ranges, from polar to tropical, with the equatorial island chains being a mixture of tropical and sub-tropical, sandy desert and barren stone. Currents and weather patterns were tracked and studied, revealing a tempestuous, capricious environment that shifts from bright and clear to pounding rains and howling winds in an instant. A massive, continent-sized hurricane churned the seas of Ikeran's southern hemisphere for weeks, and there are numerous reports in the records of expeditionary teams on the surface being swallowed up by deadly squalls that appeared from clear skies. Along with the climate study, and a quick cataloguing of what native marine life could be observed—a mixture of incredibly massive, largely docile sea mammals and teeming schools of sea creatures the size of hab blocks, with some very dangerous amphibious predators lurking in the equatorial shallows—the phenomena that interested the Explorators the most were Ikeran's ocean-going tribes of humans inhabitants and the derelict, hive-sized object afloat in the planet's western seas.

Records from the mission describe a hardy population divided into a number of small, fractious nations. The majority of the world's population is concentrated around Ikeran's equatorial regions, and the different nations seem





to exist in a near constant state of war, fighting over every centimetre of dry land available. The Ikerans use repeating crossbows and even some black-powder weapons for their incessant territorial conflicts. Further, they are proficient scavengers, cobbling together vast ships from wood, scrapmetal, and even the bones of ocean creatures that dance across the seas, trailing black columns of smoke or carried by vast sails.

Of even greater interest to the Explorator mission than the Ikerans themselves, however, was the huge floating object wandering the planet's seas. After scrutinising it with their scanners, the Tech-Priests realised that the floating hulk was in fact an ancient vessel for faring the stars, its designation unknown and its exact pattern unrecognizable due to centuries or millennia of exposure to the highly salinated ocean and the battering storms of Ikeran. Miraculously, the vessel has remained afloat, and the native Ikerans frequently use it as shelter from the savage tempests of their home world. Though they did not investigate it on foot, the Explorators aboard the survey vessel noted strange gravitic pulses coming from the bowels of the ship. The Explorators speculated that the native Ikerans are likely descendants of survivors of the original crash, stranded on this ocean world for generations.

Centuries later, Genevieve Almace journeyed to Ikeran to bring the Imperial Creed to this world. She travelled from warband to warband, distributing weaponry and supplies to use against their enemies on the condition that they pay homage to the Emperor and prepare for his representatives to come to their world demanding tithes. By escalating the

violence on Ikeran in this way and thus coercing each group to accept the faith, Almace quickly converted all of the major clans to the Imperial Creed. The brutality of her tactics proved effective, for the Ikerans still worship the Emperor as a god of weaponry, one who gives gifts to those loyal disciples who prove their mettle in war. By odd coincidence, Nicomedes Keefe also visited Ikeran shortly thereafter, though he did not stay long. Legends claim that Keefe hid his disgraced family's secret treasures in the depths of Ikeran. However, avaricious Rogue Traders have had little success locating this supposed sunken fortune, and none of these visitors have made any serious effort to colonise Ikeran due to its lack of obvious resources besides water. The people of Ikeran still revere the Emperor and his champion Almace the Chooser. Despite the violence inherent in their culture, the Ikeran are open to outsiders, especially those who come in the name of the Emperor bearing weapons, armour, and other supplies for waging war.

PRATUS

"Thousands of jars, millions of them perhaps, each as tall as a man and half again as big around. They stretched from horizon to horizon over that empty, howling plain, each one decorated with heathen images and containing only bones. Horrific, twisted, unclean bones of some long dead xenos race. I've never seen anything like it before in all my days at void, and I hope never to again."

—Lieutenant Jaxus Harken, second of the Imperial Navy scout vessel *Perspicacity*

In the far Spinward reaches of the Foundling Worlds, just Rimward of the Emperor's Scourge and bathed in its pale iridescence, lies the desolate and mysterious world of Pratus. The third planet in the Mallister system, ancient Pratus orbits a dying white dwarf star that is little more than a cinder, and shares the system with a collection of barren, lifeless planets, shattered moons, and slowly unravelling gas giants. Clearly at the end of its days, this cluttered, moribund system exists in Imperial Navy notes are merely a footnote in a greater survey of the Foundling Worlds. Centuries ago, the Imperial Navy scout cruiser *Perspicacity* entered the Mallister system while charting the boundary between the Foundling Worlds and The Cauldron. Reports from *Perspicacity's* survey speak of a cluttered, dangerous, and difficult to navigate system full of unpredictable gravitational anomalies and numerous, erratic asteroid fields. While the officers and crew of *Perspicacity* did their due diligence, and the survey they performed of the disintegrating system was quite comprehensive, they note little of interest save for two things. The first was a strange keening from the system's star, which whines faintly over every vox frequency. It was judged to be some specific radiation produced by the slow death of the white dwarf. The second was the blasphemous phenomenon discovered on Pratus.

Pratus is a desolate, windswept world of dust, ash, and bare stone. It is exceedingly arid, with little in the way of surface water save for some shallow oases filled with alkaline muck. The planet's atmosphere is thin and caustic, barely capable of supporting life, and the terrain largely consists of endless



plains cut with staggeringly deep valleys beneath a dun-coloured sky. Pratus' rotation is surprisingly regular, with sixteen hours of daylight and sixteen hours of utter darkness lit only by starlight and the occasional shimmering crackling storm or other atmospheric phenomenon. The weather is capricious, switching quickly from relatively clear and calm to violent storms that batter the flat landscape with howling gales of wind, hail the size of frag grenades, and blinding sheets of caustic rain. The survey teams from *Perspicacity* found little in the way of native flora, and no native fauna aside from some small, highly venomous arthropods. What they did find, however, were traces of an ancient, long-dead xenos race that once called Pratus home. Scattered across the planet, the surveyors from *Perspicacity* discovered a number of heavily eroded ruins of obvious antiquity. What were once powerful, sprawling metropolises were now little more than rough collections of stones, the fading grids of roadways, the worn stumps of elevated dispenserways, and various pieces of ancient and unidentifiable trash.

These ruined cities were not what caught the attention of the survey teams, however. The most significant discovery made by the *Perspicacity* was a feature referred to in the mission logs as the plain of jars.

Situated in Pratus' northern hemisphere is a broad, flat plain some hundreds of thousands of square kilometres in size. Arranged on this vast plain, in neat, orderly rows, are countless millions of large stone jars, each sealed with a stone plug. The jars are tall, oblong cylinders, roughly two metres high and perhaps three metres across at their widest point. Each one is decorated with unique disturbing bas-reliefs depicting members of an unidentified xenos race in various attitudes. Some wield weapons, some seem to be scholars, while others appear to be priests of a dark and heretical pantheon of heathen gods. A number of these jars were opened by crewmen from *Perspicacity*, and inside they discovered the remains of the xenos depicted in the reliefs. Each held a single alien body, curled in a foetal position and partially preserved by the planet's arid climate. Some were buried with exotic artefacts or riches, others with sheaves of undoubtedly blasphemous manuscripts, but most seemed to have gone to their final rest wearing only a thin cloth shift. Unfortunately, the sight of the wizened, eyeless faces and mummified flesh of the dead xenos struck fear into the hearts of even the most seasoned voidsmen, and no amount of cajoling or threatening could induce the *Perspicacity* to continue opening and defiling these ancient tombs. Soon thereafter, with no more study of the jars or the long dead xenos, *Perspicacity* continued on her mission leaving the strange and terrible jars and their dead occupants behind.

Years later, once *Perspicacity* returned from her survey mission, the Ecclesiarchy sent a mission to evaluate the ruins of Pratus, collect some artefacts, and destroy all evidence of the xenos who lay there in their funerary jars. Nicomedes Keefe accompanied this venture as a spiritual guide to Rogue Trader Kara Kavriss, who undertook the task of purifying this world. During a terrible storm, Keefe became lost on the surface, wandering for days before being discovered by the Rogue Trader's troops. Miraculously, he survived the storms, deprivation, and exposure, returning to the Rogue Trader's camp with three strange artefacts and a haunted look in his eye. He urged Rogue Trader Kavriss to leave the forsaken world and she complied with his request; hours later, her fleet executed the purge of Pratus, bombarding the entire surface with countless rounds and reducing the outer crust to cracked glass and blowing dust. Now, the forlorn world hangs quietly in the void, the xenos relics and their dark secrets buried. Since then, no human has set foot on Pratus—or, at least, none have survived to tell about doing so.





INSTRUMENTS OF THE CREED

- ALTERNATE
CAREER RANKS
- WEAPONS OF THE
RIGHTEOUS
- HOLY RELICS
OF THE
KORONUS
EXPANSE

CHAPTER III: INSTRUMENTS OF THE CREED

"The Emperor always provides, but what he provides are opportunities. We must be the ones to seize them in His name."

—Jollus Marquette

It is the charge of missionaries to spread the Imperial Creed to the far-flung reaches of the stars, to find human civilisations and return them to the fold. The Koronus Expanse is one such frontier where missionaries play an incredibly important role, and to carry out their sacred work, they rely upon the Rogue Traders who ply this region of space.

The task of a missionary can be monumental, and requires an incredible set of skills, training, and tools. This chapter provides Missionary Explorers with new options to expand their methods of persuading populations to accept the light of the Emperor. It also provides a number of Alternate Career Ranks, items, and pieces of wargear to equip the other Explorers who aid missionaries in their holy work (and who seek to profit by the financial opportunities that such holy wanderers create).

ALTERNATE CAREER RANKS

"Oh, so you want to learn to tame beasts, do you? Do you like both of your hands? Then you don't want to learn to tame beasts."

—Fesin Keb, Beast House handler

Alternate Career Ranks represent diversions and differing branches to a character's basic Career Path. These might be the result of exposure to new cultures or agencies in the Expanse, hidden secrets a character chooses to reveal to his fellow Explorers, or the result of specialised training or equipment a character has gained in his travels. Note that these Alternate Career Ranks do not fundamentally change a character's nature; if a character is following the Arch-militant Career Path, then his path stays focused on martial abilities and conflict. Rather, they signify a character's experiences moving along a side path, learning new abilities and gaining new experiences along the way.

Alternate Careers can let a player differentiate and personalise his character, especially in situations where several players have chosen the same Career. Based on the new directions a player wishes his Explorer to follow, he might find his character evolving in ways the player had not initially anticipated when creating him.

Alternate Career Ranks also allow a character to become even more firmly rooted into the setting of Rogue Trader, the Calixis Sector, and the Koronus Expanse. Each of these new paths offer Explorers new and exciting ways to interact with the rest of their surroundings.

TAKING AN ALTERNATE CAREER RANK

Alternate Ranks might look very appealing, and not just because they represent something that diverges from the standard Career Path. With access to new powers, Skills, and Talents, a character can stand out from others and, ideally, better aid his fellow Explorers. However, some Alternate Careers can complicate the campaign at large, and players should always ask for the GM's permission before having their Explorers take on Alternate Career Ranks.



Each Alternate Rank has several Prerequisites that an Explorer must meet before selecting it. Many of these Prerequisites are Talents, Skills or Characteristic thresholds, and an Explorer must fulfil all of the listed Prerequisites for an Alternate Career Rank before selecting it.

In addition, some Alternate Career Ranks are only available to Explorers from certain Careers—the Reliquarist Alternate Career Rank is available only to Rogue Traders, Explorators, Missionaries, Seneschals, and Void-Masters. Other Alternate Career Ranks have various restrictions in this regard; the Witch Finder Alternate Career Rank is not available to any Explorer who is a psyker (such as an Astropath Transcendent), but any other Explorer can select it provided that he meets the other Prerequisites. Lastly, each Alternate Rank has a set of Ranks at which it can be selected. Typically, this is a minimum Rank within a Career Path that the Alternate Career Rank can replace (such as Rank 3 or higher).

If an Explorer meets all the above requirements for an Alternate Career Rank, he can select it in place of one of his normal Career Path's Ranks when he earns enough xp to access that Rank. The Explorer replaces the Rank he would have taken with the Alternate Career Rank. The Explorer exchanges the Alternate Career Rank's Advance Table for the usual Rank he would be able to make purchases from as part of his Career. At this point, the Explorer has access to the new Advances and may spend xp to purchase these Talents, Traits, and Skills. Some of the Alternate Career Ranks also have special Traits or other abilities that the Explorer gains immediately upon selecting the Alternate Career Rank. Once the Explorer has earned enough xp points to reach the next Rank in his Career, he returns to the next Rank in his original Career Path.

While any new Alternate Rank is filled with new opportunities, there are some drawbacks to diverging off of the standard path. This new focus might deny an Explorer access to other Skills and Talents, or force the Explorer to pay more experience for them. A player could even find his character's maximum ability with certain Skills reaching its upper limit earlier than he had planned. This is a potential price for taking a more generalised character in a more specific and specialised direction.

As all of this can complicate the normal character progression system, Alternate Career Ranks are recommended for more experienced players. Keep in mind also that regardless of how many new options an Explorer gains, an Explorer's Rank is still governed by the total amount of xp he has earned over the course of his development.

ELITE ADVANCES FROM MISSED CAREER RANKS

Choosing an Alternate Career Rank means a character has diverged from the generalised regular path of his career for a more specialised one. While this means access to new and often unique abilities during his tenure, it can often mean missing out on the opportunities afforded in the regular development of his character. The Explorer can purchase these "missed" Skills and Talents with the GM's approval as Elite Advances in the missed Rank

at a cost set by the Game Master. A recommended base cost for these Advances is twice the original cost (so a 200 xp Skill would cost 400 xp, while a 500 xp Talent would cost an impressive 1,000 xp). The GM can modify this amount up or down as he sees fit, keeping in mind that Alternate Ranks present opportunities to characters they normally would not have, and there should be a trade-off for this opportunity.

EXAMPLE

Arch-militant Euten Wenroth has encountered rogue psykers and Warp witches several times in the Expanse. After losing his eye fighting against a particularly pernicious unsanctioned psyker, he has now decided to become a Witch Finder to better combat Warp-dabbling foes. He has all of the necessary Prerequisites and at Rank 3 switches to the Witch Finder Advance Table. He is still an Arch-militant, but as well as committing acts of martial prowess and commanding warriors, he now has a focus on ferreting out psykers. Euten now has access to the Skills and Talents listed under the Witch Finder Advances at the Costs listed there, and may spend xp on them freely from this point forward. He has missed out on the standard Arch-militant Rank 3 list, but will later proceed to Rank 4 normally, and can purchase options from Rank 3 as Elite Advances with the GM's permission.

CAREER PROGRESSION

Advancing to a character's next Rank is done normally once the character has accumulated and spent enough xp. The character might find in later Ranks that the digression he took for his Alternate Rank has left him bereft of certain Skills, ones needed as Prerequisites for some of the Advances the character might wish to have. To acquire them the player must obtain them as Elite Advances. Alternately, the player might find developing the new Advances his character gained in his Alternate Career is a way to further individualise a character and make up for the missed opportunities of the path not taken.

EXAMPLE

Euten the Witch Finder has captured some pirates and wants to turn in their bounties to the Imperial Navy. As such, he wishes to purchase the Common Lore (Imperial Navy) Skill that would have been available from Arch-militant Rank 3. To this end, his GM allows him to take the Advance, but only as long as Euten spends at the nearest port of call finding out who within the local battlefleet he must approach for such things. He must then pay 400 xp to purchase the Skill instead of 200 xp, as this is twice the cost, as recommended under the rules for purchasing Elite Advances.



BEASTMASTER

"Oh, don't mind Slaughtermaw, he's perfectly harmless as long as you don't look him in the—oh dear, here we go again..."

—Missionary Speraza, shortly before declaring the conversion of Astron VII "sufficiently complete"

The Koronus Expanse is home to a variety of strange and deadly creatures, from the lethal beasts of Burnscour to the strange and ethereal creatures of Klaen's Gate. Given the propensities of intelligent species adept at manipulating their environments, someone has inevitably attempted to domesticate many of these creatures for one reason or another. While would-be beast tamers are not always successful (the number of individuals who have died this way on Burnscour alone nearly defies belief), some creatures can be trained to perform certain tasks. The simplest of these include acting as guard creatures, and some species can even learn exotic tasks such as planting listening devices or stealing specified items. Missionaries often travel alone in the Expanse, but almost all travel armed—and some choose to arm themselves with a watch-creature that can protect them, warn them of dangers, and otherwise assist in their task as dictated by the will of the Emperor. In the wild beyond the boundaries of the Imperium, a loyal, unquestioning ally frequently means the difference between life and a death to gruesome to contemplate at length. Given their predilection towards being colourful characters, Rogue Traders also frequently find exotic beasts to accompany them, using these strange creatures to impress (or intimidate) trade contacts, economic rivals, and anyone else with whom they happen to interact.

In order to train a creature, a Beastmaster needs to find one that is both receptive to training, in addition to being capable of training the creature himself. There are many ways that one might fall onto the path of the Beastmaster, some of which are more natural progressions than others. It is an established practice by the Great Houses of the Calixis nobility to keep menageries and wild creatures as companions, and those who spend time with the aristocracy are often imitators of their traditions and culture. There are also those who have practical experience taming and controlling creatures, such as for hunting purposes on their home world. Some might even have gained their skills from past dealings with the sinister and ill-renowned Beast House, that shadowy criminal organisation that feeds the never-ending appetite for ferocious pit fighting creatures in the Calixis Sector.

Whatever their diverse training for the role, many Beastmasters share several traits—patience in teaching their creatures how to respond to their commands and perform their appointed tasks, as well as a desire to see these creatures develop in certain ways. Of course, the Beastmaster might choose to accomplish this through nurturing or violence, and might do it in anticipation of creating a fanged horror that will rip his foes to shreds as much as to see a young creature grow and develop.

Whilst most Beastmasters have some form of affection or at least respect for their beasts, this is not always the case. Many are the tales of creatures that literally bit off the hand that fed them (usually followed in short order by the rest of the body).

Even some of the more alien-looking creatures of the Expanse have been tamed to some degree. In Footfall and Port Wander, one periodically hears tales of Rogue Traders intimidating business partners into deals with tamed clawed behemoths or Astropaths using small groups of harmless-looking ptera-squirrels as spies. Of course, many of these tales are fanciful at best.

Beastmasters occasionally become overly confident in their abilities, and the results of such hubris are often spectacular (if not instantly lethal). Recklessness and bravado can be fatal flaws when dealing with deadly beasts. Further, some creatures are entirely impossible to train, whether due to an ingrained temperament or a sinister, bestial intelligence.

Alien Beastmasters sometimes find their way into the retinues of Rogue Traders. Orks often take pride in breeding the biggest, meanest Squigs, whilst Kroot might make use

of Kroothounds to assist in the hunt. A Dark Eldar aboard a Rogue Trader's vessel might keep one or more of the strange, vile fighting beasts of Commorragh's gladiatorial pits.



BEASTMASTER ADVANCES

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisite
Dodge	100	Skill	
Awareness	100	Skill	
Scholastic Lore (Beasts)	100	Skill	
Wrangling	100	Skill	
Awareness +10	200	Skill	Awareness
Scholastic Lore (Beasts) +10	200	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Beasts)
Tracking	200	Skill	
Wrangling +10	200	Skill	Wrangling
Catfall	300	Talent	Ag 30
Forbidden Lore (Xenos)	300	Skill	
Medicae	300	Skill	
Peer (Feral Worlders)	300	Talent	Fel 30
Resistance (Any One)	300	Talent	
Scholastic Lore (Beasts) +20	300	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Beasts) +10
Tracking +10	300	Skill	Tracking
Takedown	300	Talent	
Wrangling +20	300	Skill	Wrangling +10
Lightning Reflexes	400	Talent	
Polyglot	400	Talent	Int 40, Fel 30
Talented (Wrangling)	400	Talent	
Bestial Minion (x3)	500	Talent	Wrangling
Coordinated Strike	500	Talent	Wrangling +10, Bestial Minion

BECOMING A
BEASTMASTER

Beastmasters are not only those inclined towards exotic pets, but those who have real talent when it comes to training and commanding various creatures. Some Beastmasters develop real respect for their charges, while others rule their bestial subordinates through fear alone. In return, trained beasts can offer anything from a sharp set of jaws to nimble fingers to keep senses

Required Career: Any Explorer

Alternate Rank: 3 or higher (10,000 xp)

Requirements: Agility 35, Intelligence 35

Other Requirements: This Explorer must have tamed a wild creature in the past (without being fatally mauled in the process).

WHERE TO FIND CREATURES

The **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook contains the Grapplehawk, an augmented, cybernetic avian (see page 375 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook). If the Game Master wishes to use other supplements, **THE KORONUS BESTIARY** includes a vast number of deadly creatures from the Expanse, many of which would be appropriate for an enterprising Beastmaster. Of course, the Game Master always has the final say over what—and extremely cunning and wilful creatures such as the Unquenched of Vaporius, Medusae, and Genestealers are simply impossible to control (and almost certain to immediately slaughter anyone foolish enough to try)! Players should work with the Game Master to find an appropriate creature.

NEW TALENT: BESTIAL MINION

Prerequisite: Wrangling

This Explorer gains a bestial minion in the form of some cyber-creature bonded to his will or a wild beast that he has tamed with the Wrangling Skill. This creature follows his basic commands, and takes its Turn immediately after each of his Turns during combat.

If he somehow loses this creature, through its untimely death or another unfortunate separation, he can acquire a new one at the Game Master's discretion after a suitable period of time spent arranging for its replacement (or mourning its loss).

NEW TALENT: COORDINATED STRIKE

Prerequisite: Wrangling +10, Bestial Minion

The Explorer and his bestial charge act in deadly unison, working to provide openings and opportunities for each other to exploit in battle. Whether hunting their quarry as a pack or striking to create openings for one another, the two can synchronise their assaults with practiced lethality.

As a Reaction, after hitting with a ranged or melee attack, this Explorer may make a **Challenging (+0) Wrangling Test**. If he succeeds, one creature he acquired with the Bestial Minion Talent gains a +20 bonus to the next Attack Action it makes against that target until the end of its next Turn.

WITCH FINDER

"When hunting the witch, faith is the strongest weapon you have in your arsenal. A flamer helps too, though."

—Araska Soli, bounty hunter

Wherever there are humans, there are likely to be psykers. This holds true whether one searches in the heart of Hive Sibellus on Scintilla or on the icy backwater of Lucin's Breath. The Imperium of Mankind works incredibly hard to control psykers, and the fleet of Black Ships scours the galaxy incessantly, swallowing up countless psykers from the worlds of the humanity. However, in places where the Imperium's grip is not so tight, dabblers in dark powers and rogue psykers rapidly crop up. Sometimes they offer their talents for monetary recompense, while in other places they use them to dominate the local population. Some even go so far as to court dangerous Warp entities that pose a dire threat not just to a human's life, but to his immortal soul.

In these far-flung places, locales such as the Koronus Expanse, the Black Ships of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica very rarely darken the skies of any world. Thus, it is up to each individual world, outpost, and crew to manage the risk that psykers present. Failure to do so can rapidly incite catastrophe. An unsanctioned psyker can tear open reality itself at any moment, dragging everyone nearby into the hellish realm of the Warp or unleashing other horrors that surpass the understanding sanity permits. Given these risks, many ship captains, colonial overseers, and other individuals with the knowledge and means arrange for their domains to be scoured by individuals trained in finding psykers—whether or not these seekers of witches have learned their craft legitimately or otherwise. Put simply, a Witch Finder is anyone with the skill and inclination to seek out psykers, and covers those who hunt such dangerous quarry, whatever their individual motives or desires might be.

Though many impromptu witch-hunts end in blazing pyres and countless blackened corpses, there are those who prefer to take a subtler method when repressing psykers. As such, some specialists at uncovering witches in the Koronus Expanse are known for the subtlety with which they operate, or even for the ability to take most of their quarry alive. Some of these Witch Finders place the psykers they capture in stasis caskets and transport them for processing. Others keep their targets imprisoned within warded chambers, praying all the while for the souls of these wretched heretics. And, of course, many Witch Finders turn a profit on the psykers they collect, selling them to interested buyers ambitious or foolish enough to desire the abilities of an unsanctioned psyker. As there are no standards for such individuals, each one operates in a different way.

Different Witch Finders focus their talents in different ways; some concentrate solely on monetary gain or personal advancement and others act out of devotion to an individual, organisation, or ideal. Some Witch Finders are sponsored by

powerful individuals, such as one of the Rogue Traders present in the Expanse. Other bodies, such as religious cults, criminal rings, and even noble houses also seek the services of Witch Finders upon occasion, but depending on the motivation of the individual Witch Finder, such advances might not be well-received. Those who serve out of a sense of piety and duty are generally less inclined to give captured psykers to shady aristocrats, whereas those who see the task as a mere source of profit are less likely to serve at the request of a penniless cult, no matter how grand the spiritual rewards for their work might be.



WITCH FINDER ADVANCES

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisite
Interrogation	100	Skill	
Scrutiny	100	Skill	
Takedown	200	Talent	
Disarm	200	Talent	Ag 30
Psyniscience	200	Skill	
Sound Constitution (x2)	200	Talent	
Armour of Contempt	300	Talent	WP 40
Forbidden Lore (Psykers)	300	Skill	
Hatred (Psykers)	300	Talent	
Inquiry	300	Skill	
Interrogation +10	300	Skill	Interrogation
Melee Weapon Training (Shock)	300	Talent	
Paranoia	300	Talent	
Pure Faith	300	Talent	
Resistance (Psychic Powers)	300	Talent	
Scrutiny +10	300	Skill	Scrutiny
Disguise	400	Skill	
Exotic Weapon Training (Webber)	400	Talent	
Exotic Weapon Training (Web Pistol)	400	Talent	
Resistance (Fear)	400	Talent	
Strong Minded	500	Talent	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Powers)
Unshakeable Faith	500	Talent	
Mind Sight	600	Talent	Psyniscience
Purge the Unclean	1000	Talent	Pure Faith

Missionaries occasionally employ individuals who fall into this broad category, especially when arriving on worlds suspected to harbour abnormal psyker populations. Some missionaries with particularly keen eyes for such things could even be said to be Witch Finders themselves, though they use such skills to further the cause of converting worlds to the Imperial Creed.

A Witch Finder's experience battling psykers (whether this comes from focused training or mere survival against psychic foes) makes such individuals particularly valuable in the Koronus Expanse, where there are psychic threats beyond rogue human psykers. Psychic xenos, from Eldar Farseers to unpredictable Ork Weirdboyz, can be extraordinarily dangerous. Even if they are not overly concerned about psykers within their vessels' own populations, some Rogue Traders employ individuals who might be considered Witch Finders simply as a contingency against such specialised threats.

NEW TALENT: MIND SIGHT

Prerequisites: Psyniscience

The Explorer has honed his mind to the unholy traces of the witch, and possesses a preternatural ability to detect psykers and the influence of Warp entities.

This Explorer may spend a Fate Point to automatically succeed on a Psyniscience Test with a number of Degrees of Success equal to his Perception Bonus.

BECOMING A WITCH FINDER

Great reserves of mental fortitude are required to combat the malefic presence of Warp-spawn and resist the corrupting influence of the psyker. It is not a path that all are suited for as it requires self-discipline and a will of steel as well as intense training to hone the skills that allow a warrior to fight with both mind and body. The life of a Witch Finder is not an easy one, although the rewards can be great—depending on that Witch Finder's personal motivation. For some, the work itself might be divine and assist them ascend to the Holy Throne in the afterlife, while for others, it might be a means to protect a group or ideal they find important. For some particularly jaded individuals, this treacherous path might be nothing more than a brutal livelihood.

Required Career: Any Non-Psyker Explorer

Alternate Rank: 3 or higher (10,000 xp)

Requirements: Perception 40

Other Requirements: This Explorer must have defeated at least one hostile psyker using non-lethal methods.



RELIQUARIST

"The blood of martyrs is the seed of the Imperium, and it would be nothing less than apostasy if we failed to reap the profits they spent their lives and shed their blood sowing."

—Laszlon Whiteye, pious Seneschal

The Imperium is a bastion of spiritual devotion with a variety of forms that are often merging, shifting, or declaring war upon each other. Whilst all legitimate beliefs (in the eyes of the Ecclesiarchy) at least share the Emperor's divinity in common, they diverge on many points. Holidays, proscribed foods, accepted saints and other holy figures, and even issues such as the proper kinds of fabrics for clothing might be matters of violent contention between individuals from two different worlds.

There are, thankfully, many other shared pieces of doctrine within the greater Imperial Creed that the majority of believers can broadly agree upon. Agreement that certain figures hold spiritual significance (Sebastian Thor and the Primarchs), preferred methods for purging those deemed heretical (fire) and the veneration of relics are all generally accepted practices. In particular, when it comes to relics an entire new series of problems can arise as the issues of authenticity, relevance, and importance are often introduced. Few scholars would doubt the holiness of a strand of the great Sanguinius' golden hair, but how many would accept the severed feet of Quivvar Nog? Often the debates surrounding these very questions can take years, sometimes even centuries, to resolve.

In the Koronus Expanse, it often falls to a Reliquarists to determine the legitimacy of the countless artefacts uncovered by Rogue Traders, merchants, and other, less savoury individuals as they tread the void between these wild stars. These hardy adventurer-scholars are often to be found poring over ancient tomes to discover the location of a saint's lost jaw bone or battling to the heart of an alien temples to retrieve symbols of Imperial crusades several millennia old.

Many associates of Rogue Traders, and even some Rogue Traders themselves, acquire the knowledge that makes one a Reliquarist over the course of their careers, given their relatively more frequent contact with strange, unidentified technologies and artefacts.

To a Reliquarist, seizing the opportunity to handle and save a piece of blessed Imperial history is often reward enough, but

there can be other motivations behind gaining such expertise. Some might secretly belong to cults such as the Gouradians, collectors of relics who wish to preserve these holy artefacts in their secret vaults, whilst others might simply be learned criminals in

league with an underworld market. Many a Calixis noble has undoubtedly received the approval of the Ecclesiarchy through gifting them relics he just so happened to "recover."

Of course, such items often also end up in private collections, far from the prying eyes of authorities. Other Reliquarists take a particular interest in the life of the missionary Jollus Marquette, who uncovered countless relics of incredible value during his long and productive life. Unofficial and secretive orders such as the Church of the Betrayed and the Twelve Knives still carry on Marquette's clandestine search for the Tomb of Cognatius, involving themselves in intrigue at all levels as they quietly seek this supposed cornucopia of lost technology and relics sacred to the Imperial Creed.

Reliquarists cannot just rely on their knowledge of legend, lore and liturgy if they wish to be successful, as they must also be able to assess the intentions of those they are dealing with and often extricate themselves from volatile predicaments.



RELIQUARIST ADVANCES

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisite
Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy)	100	Skill	
Common Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	Skill	
Evaluate	100	Skill	
Scholastic Lore (Archaic)	100	Skill	
Scholastic Lore (Cryptology)	100	Skill	
Scholastic Lore (Heraldry)	100	Skill	
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)	100	Skill	
Scholastic Lore (Legend)	100	Skill	
Trade (Archaeologist)	100	Skill	
Evaluate +10	200	Skill	Evaluate
Search	200	Skill	
Scrutiny	200	Skill	
Scholastic Lore (Archaic) +10	200	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Archaic)
Scholastic Lore (Cryptology) +10	200	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Cryptology)
Scholastic Lore (Heraldry) +10	200	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Heraldry)
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) +10	200	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)
Scholastic Lore (Legend) +10	200	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Legend)
Total Recall	200	Talent	Int 30
Unremarkable	200	Talent	
Light Sleeper	200	Talent	Per 30
Evaluate +20	300	Skill	Evaluate +10
Peer (Ecclesiarchy)	300	Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Underworld)	300	Talent	Fel 30
Combat Sense	400	Talent	Per 40
Nerves of Steel	400	Talent	
Discerning Eye	500	Talent	Int 40, Evaluate +10

The safety of a Rogue Trader's retinue is often the ideal placement for a Reliquarist, as it allows a degree of protection whilst also benefiting the Rogue Trader, especially those of a more pious inclination. The spoils of alien worlds are not always alien in nature, and it must surely warm the heart of missionaries across the stars that one day, their shrunken head might be retrieved and appropriately venerated should their next placement turn out to be their last.

NEW TALENT: DISCERNING EYE

Prerequisites: Intelligence 40, Evaluate +10

The Explorer has an unparalleled ability to read the history of an item from every line in its moulding or dent in its frame. If there is anything worth knowing about a given object or artefact, this Explorer can find it.

This Explorer may spend a Fate Point to automatically succeed on any Evaluate Test with a number of Degrees of Success equal to his Intelligence Bonus. Whenever he spends a Fate Point this way, he also gains some form of insight into the history of the item, either from relevant knowledge of his own, clues or signs hidden on the item itself, or some other source of the Game Master's discretion.

BECOMING A RELIQUARIST

The life of a Reliquarist is one of (sometimes lapsed) piety mixed with adventure, as the task of retrieving relics thought long-lost or held by the foes of the Imperium can be fraught with perils both spiritual and material. It often requires diligent hours of study, although these periods are ordinarily punctuated with sudden flurries of activity, when all could be won or lost not through an in-depth knowledge of hagiography but by cool wits and the ability to know when trouble is about to start. A Reliquarist's life might not necessarily be one of fame and glory, but it is one that can be ultimately satisfying in its own way, whether the reward comes from an underworld accounts ledger or the blessing of an Adeptus Ministorum official.

Required Career: Rogue Trader, Explorator, Missionary, Seneschal, or Void-Master

Alternate Rank: 1 or higher (5,000 xp)

Requirements: Intelligence 40

Other Requirements: This Explorer must have uncovered at least one lost relic, researched its origins, and determined its place in the lore of the Imperial Creed.

ADHERENT OF ALEYNIKOV

"She wouldn't have given up, and by the Golden Throne, nor will we!"

—Father Seth, leader of the 17th Blessed and Radiant delegation to Vaporius

The Koronus Expanse is an unforgiving and harsh place, where hardships and injustice prevail. It is often accepted by colonists that calamities will occur with little regard for those affected. Famines, plagues, Warp storms and roving pirate bands can all strike without warning, any of which can be devastating to a community. Thankfully, there are certain brave groups that will help where they can with their expertise and limited resources.

The Adherents of Aleynikov are one such band, a loosely organised body of itinerant preachers that continue to spread the message of the famed missionary Nadine Aleynikov. Although she is gone, her simple faith and success in swaying so many she came into contact with have made her a hero to many people. Her successful invigoration of the faith in the Marmor system won her a permanent place in the religious history of that region, despite the best efforts of its corrupt nobility. The story of her final trials struggling to eradicate the plague that ultimately claimed her life carries considerable symbolic importance to many faithful of the Imperial Creed. Across the Expanse, into the Calixis Sector and even beyond, her name is a byword for faith and perseverance in the face of unassailable odds. Though the impious might question her sense of character judgement and her seemingly eccentric methods, she is still a shining beacon of hope and inspiration to many.

The origin of the Adherents is unclear and, as is so often the case, attributed to several causes; a survivor of the space station said to be their patron's tomb, an inspired follower of hers, or even that Aleynikov secretly organised the Adherents herself in the event of her untimely demise (which, knowing her historic record of preparedness, does

seem somewhat unlikely). Whatever their origins, the Adherents of Aleynikov are now an accepted part of the Koronus missionary circuit, even if they are not entirely accepted by official Ministorum writ. Some say it is just a matter of time until they gain acceptance, whereas others wonder if Ecclesiarchy hierarchs have even heard of a fringe sect that draws inspiration from such an unorthodox figure.



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ADHERENT OF ALEYNIKOV ADVANCES

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisite
Medicae	100	Skill	
Navigation (Surface)	100	Skill	
Sound Constitution (x2)	100	Talent	
Medicae +10	200	Skill	Medicae
Peer (Workers)	200	Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Feral Worlders)	200	Talent	Fel 30
Meditation	200	Talent	
Resistance (Heat)	200	Talent	
Resistance (Cold)	200	Talent	
Survival	200	Skill	
Sprint	200	Talent	
Tracking	200	Skill	
Chem-Use	300	Skill	
Medicae +20	300	Skill	Medicae +10
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry)	300	Skill	
Command	400	Skill	
Polyglot	400	Talent	Int 40, Fel 30
Air of Authority	500	Talent	Fel 30
Divine Ministration	500	Talent	Pure Faith
Faith Healing	600	Talent	Medicae +10, Pure Faith

In their methodology, the Adherents try to emulate Aleynikov's methods and motives. It is taken to be of paramount importance to possess adequate knowledge to be self-sufficient; thus, these individuals often seek to improve their knowledge of fieldcraft and medicine, honing their skills via research in repositories of lore and on distant worlds alike. The Adherents aim to make themselves as useful as possible to their potential converts, and so they often have a broad skill base that might be of relevance to many human cultures in the Koronus Expanse.

They are also constantly on the lookout for deadly maladies to catalogue, ever mindful of the fate of Aleynikov herself. Wherever plagues and other such disasters strike, Adherents converge to help those afflicted by it. Many keep great catalogues of the new illnesses they have encountered, and share them with their fellows on the rare occasions they meet. Unfortunately, due to the semi-random nature of travel that the Adherents have adopted, these meetings can be few and far between. Vital information about how to combat a plague might go unreported to those who need it most of all simply because the paths of individual members never happen to cross. Such problems are considered to be trials of the Emperor, and to be embraced as heartily as Nadine embraced her hardships.

Another common trait amongst the Adherents is a healthy suspicion, if not sometimes outright mistrust, of Rogue Traders. Whilst they are often the most likely source of transport throughout the Expanse, the fate of Agamemnon Quintus is rarely far from an Adherent's thoughts when seeking transport. There are some that actively try to subvert Rogue Traders, seeing their entire breed as being a curse upon humanity. They sway crew members to their cause, just as Aleynikov did, but not always with such pure intentions. After all, depriving a Rogue Trader of enough crew seriously harms his ship's efficiency.

BECOMING AN ADHERENT OF ALEYNIKOV

Whilst a lack of direction might be a hindrance in many situations, it is actually a boon for an Adherent of Aleynikov. Theirs lives have meaning without the boundaries of specific rules and regulations, drawing inspiration from the stories of Nadine Aleynikov's own exploits during the course of her life. Some Adherents might focus more heavily on one area of study or service than another as their situation dictates, but they all share a determination to spread the Imperial faith.

Required Career: Any Human Explorer

Alternate Rank: 1 or higher (5,000 xp)

Requirements: Fellowship 35, Willpower 35

Other Requirements: This Explorer must have spent time studying the teachings of Nadine Aleynikov and ministering to the afflicted in the Koronus Expanse.

NEW TALENT: FAITH HEALING

Prerequisites: Medicae, Pure Faith

This Explorer's holy fervour is such that it inspires confidence and trust from all of his allies. Even in the direst times, he stands as a beacon of the Emperor's light.

Whenever this Explorer successfully removes Damage from an ally with the Medicae Skill, that ally gains a +5 bonus to the next Test he makes before the end of the encounter for each point of Damage removed this way (to a maximum of +30).

RED CONSECRATOR

"War is its own kind of worship. As fire purifies iron, so battle cleanses the soul."

—Arch-Sanctifier Kire the Pure of the Blood Tears

Shortly before the missionary Genevieve Almace's death in battle on the Daemon world called "the Banestar," she undertook a spiritual retreat upon the harsh planet of Loretta. During her journey, she encountered the local humans, who followed their own version of the Imperial Creed. Almace stoked the fires of this faith before she departed, searing the image of her piety into the memories of the Loretans.

After she was slain by her final enemy, the Daemon Gash'grazk, Almace's followers made a fighting retreat from the Banestar and limped back to Loretta in a damaged vessel. Though the missionary's body was lost upon the Daemon world, her followers managed to secure the weapon with which she felled her last opponent, along with a number of other artefacts that she once possessed. Her most devout disciples chose to remain on Loretta. There, through great displays of piety, they won the help of the locals in creating a fortress-temple dedicated to the fallen missionary.

Most of Genevieve Almace's original followers are long dead, but in the centuries since her passing, the sacred fortress has become a major holy site for the Loretan people. The clans of this world make regular pilgrimages to venerate the fallen missionary, and descendants of the members of her warband still inhabit the temple, protecting the relics within from outsiders. This unofficial order, called the Blood Tears, dedicates itself to piety through martial perfection, and its members are fanatical and unrelenting.

Amongst the Blood Tears sect, one group stands out as particularly noteworthy. While the majority of the warrior-ascetics who protect the temple spend their time in incessant war-prayers to the Emperor and eternal vigils over the temple's relics, the so-called Red Consecrators are tasked with travelling across the surface of Loretta and beyond.

Their task is seeking out mutants, heretics, and witches amidst the

population, against whom they can prove their unshakeable piety and unrelenting prowess. Some of these deadly champions even take their lonely crusades beyond the bounds of Loretta, journeying to far-flung worlds to follow in the footsteps of the missionary they so venerate.

Red Consecrators view battle as an expression of faith, and see conflict as the grindstone that hones humans into worthy instruments of the Emperor. Given this philosophy, Red Consecrators frequently hurl themselves headlong into conflicts they happen upon, certain that the violence they inflict is its own justification and that the Emperor will guide them to choose the right side. Of course, many individual members of the cult are more pragmatic in their approach, for each has unique motives for taking up the path of pious battle.

On the battlefield, Red Consecrators usually lead by example, extolling their followers or allies to strike against the hated enemies of humanity as they do: without fear, doubt, or hesitation. In less violent situations, Red Consecrators counsel preparation, training, and discipline in most matters. Rogue Traders of a particularly pious bent occasionally keep the company of one or more of these wandering war-priests, though doing so carries its own risks.

The order is in no way sanctioned by the Adeptus Ministorum, and while its members are not considered heretics for their practices, their very existence sometimes risks blurring the line between true representatives of the Imperial Creed and the laity. In the Koronus Expanse, such conflicts are rare—but they can also be extremely violent, depending on the individuals who happen to be involved.



RED CONSECRATOR ADVANCES

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisite
Command	100	Skill	
Intimidate	100	Skill	
Melee Weapon Training (Primitive)	100	Talent	
Awareness	200	Skill	
Common Lore (Imperial Creed)	200	Skill	
Common Lore (War)	200	Skill	
Melee Weapon Training (Universal)	200	Talent	
Paranoia	200	Talent	
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)	200	Skill	
Literacy	250	Skill	
Common Lore (War) +10	300	Skill	Common Lore (War)
Dodge	300	Skill	
Hatred (Mutants)	300	Talent	
Hatred (Psykers)	300	Talent	
Hatred (Criminals)	400	Talent	
Hatred (Pirates)	400	Talent	
Hatred (Xenos—Choose One Group) (x5)	500	Talent	
Litany of Hate	500	Talent	Hatred (Any One)
Frenzy	600	Talent	
Rage of the Zealot	600	Talent	Hatred (Any One)
Firebrand's Call	750	Talent	Litany of Hate, Rage of the Zealot

BECOMING A RED CONSECRATOR

Most Red Consecrators are locals of Loretta, having been raised for a life of brutal piety at the temple-fortress there. However, some off-worlders have taken up the oath of the Red Consecrators after visiting Loretta and training with the warrior-ascetics who occupy it. Such outsiders must first prove themselves to the fanatics who comprise the Blood Tears, winning a number of duels against the champions of the sect to demonstrate their dedication and worth.

Required Career: Any Human Explorer except for Explorator, Astropath, and Navigator

Alternate Rank: 1 or higher (5,000 xp)

Requirements: Weapon Skill 35, Fellowship 35

Other Requirements: This Explorer must have had an opportunity to train with the Blood Tears on Loretta (or one of their wandering acolytes, the Red Consecrators).

NEW TALENT: RAGE OF THE ZEALOT

Prerequisites: Hatred (Any One)

This Explorer is a warrior of boundless battle-fury, cutting down his hated foes with unconcealed, visceral gusto.

When dealing Damage to a foe included in one of the Talent Groups of his Hatred Talent with a melee attack, this Explorer inflicts Righteous Fury on a result of 9 or 10.

NEW TALENT: FIREBRAND'S CALL

Prerequisites: Litany of Hate, Rage of the Zealot

In battle, this Explorer is a blazing pyre of the Emperor's wrath, smiting the enemies of humanity while crying out terrible words of detestation to inspire his allies to greater and greater acts of violence.

Whenever this Explorer inflicts Righteous Fury upon a foe, he may spend a Fate Point and make a **Challenging (+0) Fellowship Test**. If he succeeds, allies within 30 metres inflict additional Damage equal to his Fellowship Bonus when attacking that foe until the beginning of the Explorer's next Turn.



ORDER OF THE HAMMER INITIATE

"Toil of the flesh and labour of the spirit are divided only by the illusion of perspective."

—Verse IV, Canto VII, *The Teachings of Nicomedes Keefe*

Nicomedes Keefe was critical in the establishment of the cloistered society on Foulstone that later gave itself the name The Order of the Hammer in his honour. Despite his initial concerns about these devotees and their isolated faith in the Koronus Expanse, he revisited the world in passing several times, and the hermits living there gave him considerable support over the years. The agricultural methods Keefe showed the ascetics during their shared voyage on the *Lux Salvationis* allowed its inhabitants to produce just above the subsistence level, and they gave him unsolicited alms to support his endeavours on other worlds. Several of the hermits even travelled with Keefe on his missions, bringing back recruits for their ascetic order from these journeys.

The hermits of Foulstone pride themselves on their hospitality, which they view as one of the virtues Nicomedes Keefe himself promoted through his actions. Most of these ascetics content themselves with a life of pious labour, living and dying on their planet and occasionally providing aid to travellers who visit their refuge, from Rogue Traders to missionaries to pilgrims. By providing this refuge for travellers in the unforgiving realm that is the Koronus Expanse, the Order of the Hammer believe that they can repay Keefe for the assistance he rendered long ago, allowing the Imperium to make inroads to convert new worlds and claim new resources.

Some members of this loose group believe that they must do more, however, and leave the world of Foulstone to follow in the footsteps of the missionary the order reveres. These individuals are usually not missionaries, or Ecclesiarchical authorities of any sort, for that matter, and so instead of converting new worlds, they focus on using knowledge that Nicomedes Keefe imparted upon their ancestors the importance of new Imperial colonies in the Expanse. These itinerant members of the "Order of the Hammer" identify themselves by the symbol of the power hammer Keefe once wielded

and left on Foulstone. They believe that applied knowledge is the key to faithful worship, and they venture to far-off places where they use their wisdom to help the Imperium of Mankind expand. Given their itinerant lifestyle and the harsh realities of life in the Koronus Expanse, members of this group who survive for long tend to be hardy and resourceful. Many also possess some level of martial ability, for the savagery of the Expanse necessitates such skills.

With the many Rogue Traders active in this region, there are countless small settlements populated by the servants of great trade dynasties. Most of these colonies are purpose-driven, designed for the exploitation of a particular resource or for the fulfilment of some other specific role in the house's overarching goals. The Order of the Hammer's initiates seek such colonies, fervently believing that by bringing the secrets Keefe imparted upon their order, they can help them flourish into new outposts of the Imperium. As such,



ORDER OF THE HAMMER INITIATE ADVANCES

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisite
Blather	100	Skill	
Common Lore (Any One) (x5)	100	Skill	
Literacy	100	Skill	
Scholastic Lore (Any One) (x5)	100	Skill	
Trade (Any One) (x3)	100	Skill	
Blather +10	200	Skill	Blather
Literacy +10	200	Skill	Literacy
Logic	200	Skill	
Polyglot	200	Talent	Int 40, Fel 30
Unremarkable	200	Talent	
Performer (Storyteller)	300	Skill	
Scrutiny	300	Skill	
Sound Constitution (x4)	300	Talent	
Total Recall	300	Talent	Int 30
Melee Weapon Training (Primitive)	400	Talent	
Melee Weapon Training (Universal)	400	Talent	
Guardian	500	Talent	Ag 40
Hardy	500	Talent	T 40
Infused Knowledge	500	Talent	Int 40
Pure Faith	500	Talent	
Convincing Rhetoric	750	Talent	Common Lore (Any One), Scholastic Lore (Any One), Trade (Any One), Total Recall
The Emperor Protects	1000	Talent	Pure Faith

members of this order frequently memorise vast quantities of information as part of their devotional practices, consuming tomes of mundane knowledge at an alarming rate. The most fanatical members of the Order of the Hammer believe that all knowledge—no matter how specialised or seemingly insignificant it might be—is intrinsically sacred and worthy of their time. These compulsive researchers devote their lives to inscribing all of it on their minds, uncovering countless facts with passionless obsession. Others are more pragmatic in their choices, believing that Nicomedes Keefe focused himself on useful knowledge alone, citing his definitive split from his aristocratic origins as a rejection of certain kinds of learning. As in the case of with the majority of philosophical divisions, most members of the Order of the Hammer fall somewhere in the middle, but the doctrinal divide is stained with the blood from violent conflicts between extremists nonetheless.

Members of the Order of the Hammer range incredibly in their particular motives, from true curiosity to pious mania, but all hold that solutions to the problems they face can be uncovered through application of knowledge, and so unearthing lost information to further the Imperium's interests is the most holy pursuit they can undertake during their lives. A member of the Order of the Hammer can be incredibly useful to a Rogue Trader, offering a broad base of information about subjects both philosophical and practical. Of course, this knowledge is most valuable when it is tempered by wisdom, acquired from personal experience or the example of others.

BECOMING AN ORDER OF THE HAMMER INITIATE

Joining the Order of the Hammer requires years of study of various texts written by Nicomedes Keefe on subjects from philosophy to agriculture. Typically, an initiate's studies are overseen by an established member of the Order. Though most members undertake their studies on the world of Foulstone, memorising vast quantities of information while living as an ascetic at the hermitage, sometimes an itinerant member of the Order of the Hammer takes on an apprentice on the road.

Required Career: Any Human Explorer

Alternate Rank: 1 or higher (5,000 xp)

Requirements: Intelligence 35, Toughness 35

Other Requirements: This Explorer must have studied under one or more of the ascetics of Foulstone, and made at least one pilgrimage to the Shrine of the Hammer on that world.

CONVINCING RHETORIC

Prerequisites: Common Lore (Any One), Scholastic Lore (Any One), Trade (Any One), Total Recall

This Explorer's practiced speech is carefully crafted, helping him to turn allies to his cause through carefully calculated appeals to emotion and reason alike.

This character may use his Intelligence Characteristic in place of his Fellowship Characteristic for Charm, Command, Blather, Performer (Storyteller) Tests.

WEAPONS OF THE RIGHTEOUS

"We are the weapons of the Emperor. He has granted us arms that we may bring His light even unto the darkest corners of the galaxy."

—Genevieve Almace

The weapons of humanity are many and varied, from sword and bolter to mighty autocannons and exotic archeotech designs from the Dark Age of Technology. Be they sinner or saint, a vast array of armaments are available to those who tread the dark places of the Expanse.

This chapter details of few of the innumerable pieces of weapons, armour, equipment and other devices to be found in the Koronus Expanse. While some of the items would at least be familiar to many Rogue Traders and their crews, the majority are strange and unusual objects far beyond the ken of most. Those who would bring the Imperial Creed to worlds lost to darkness and desolation, or who seek profit in places forgotten by the galaxy for untold millennia, are more accustomed to the strange and unusual, and might find themselves in possession of at least some of these items during their careers.

RANGED WEAPONS

A wise man knows to keep his friends close and his enemies at a safe distance, preferably perforated by bullets or bolts. To that end, most Explorers in the Expanse carry some form of ranged weapon. Whether firearms wrought in the manufacturums of the Calixis Sector, ancient weapons crafted in the forges of Mars, or flamers consecrated by the cardinals of the Adeptus Ministorum, there are countless instruments to disperse death from a distance.

LAS WEAPONS

Lasguns of countless different varieties can be found in the Koronus Expanse, from Lathe-wrought masterpieces ornately mounted in the quarters of Rogue Traders to cobbled-together hunks of metal in the hands of ratings on the lowest decks of a ship.

Clovis FP-14 "Twist" Pistol

Poorly manufactured and notoriously unreliable, Clovis Munitorium's FP-14 "Twist" Pistol has nevertheless found a market among Rogue Traders, mercenaries, and criminals for one simple reason: it is very small and easily concealed. Fitting neatly into the palm of the hand, the Twist Pistol is often derided as a toy, but savvy operators in the Expanse find it useful as a hold-out weapon of last resort, insurance against situations that go horribly wrong. The tiny power pack in the weapon is only sufficient for a single lethal blast, but that one shot can sometimes be the difference between life and death. Usually kept in a quick-draw holster strapped to the wrist, the innocuous pistol can be drawn with a simple flick or

NEW WEAPON QUALITY: CLEANSING FIRE

The consecrated promethium and blessed oils of the Ministorum and Holy Ordos are potent weapons against witches, heretics, and the unclean, scorching away the impurities of body and soul in an inferno a sacred fire that burns hotter than any natural flame.

When a target is struck by a weapon with this Quality, it must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** or catch on fire (see pages 260–261 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook). If Cleansing Fire is added to a weapon with the Flame Quality, the target suffers an additional 1d10 Energy Damage (ignoring Armour and Toughness Bonus) each time it fails the Test to extinguish the flames.

NEW WEAPON QUALITY: SANCTIFIED

Sanctified weapons are blessed by the mortal agents of the Emperor and empowered to strike down the witch, the heretic, and the Daemon. These divine instruments are particularly effective against creatures of the Immaterium, and can be crucial to the act of banishing Warp-spawned horrors

These holy weapons ignore the bonus to Toughness Bonus granted by the Daemonic Trait, and allow the wielder to destroy creatures with the The Stuff of Nightmares Trait.

twist of the wrist, allowing the user to quickly get the drop on any would-be assailants. These weapons can be found at ports of ill repute across the Koronus Expanse.

An Explorer can Ready this weapon as a Free Action, even if he does not have the Quick Draw Talent. Tests (Awareness, Scrutiny, or Search) made to discover this weapon on the person of anyone carrying it suffer a –20 penalty.

Merovech Model 481 "Persuader" Lasgun

Designed for close combat assaults, trench fighting, and urban warfare, the Model 481 "Persuader" Lasgun is a pulsing laser weapon capable of a tremendous rate of fire. Though intended for use by planetary militias and the Imperial Guard, the Persuader has also carved a niche for itself among underworld figures looking for an edge in sheer firepower. The compact size of the Persuader, combined with its high volume of fire, makes it an excellent all-around choice for most combat situations, though its relatively short range can be a liability on an open battlefield. For most, however, its shortcomings are far outweighed by the Persuader's utility, especially when paired with an oversized "drum" power pack that nearly doubles the weapon's capacity.

TABLE 3-1: RANGED WEAPONS

Las Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Damage	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Availability
Clovis Twist Pistol	Pistol	20m	S/-/-	1d10+4 E	0	1	Full	Unreliable	0.5 kg	Average
Persuader Lasgun	Basic	40m	S/3/10	1d10+2 E	0	30†	Full	Inaccurate	3.5 kg	Scarce

Solid Projectile Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Damage	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Availability
Volcano Autopistol	Pistol	30m	S/2/6	1d10+2 I	0	18	Full	Reliable	3 kg	Scarce
Lucius Shotgun	Basic	30m	S/3/-	1d10+5 I	0	8	2 Full	Scatter, Unreliable	5.5 kg	Scarce
Grox Gun	Basic	110m	S/-/-	1d10+4 I	4	5	2 Full	Unreliable	6 kg	Common
Autocannon	Heavy	300m	S/3/-	3d10+8 I	6	20	2 Full	Reliable	40 kg	Very Rare

Bolt Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Damage	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Availability
Condemnor (Bolt)	Basic	90m	S/2/4	1d10+5 X	4	24	2 Full	Tearing, Sanctified	7.5 kg	Extremely Rare
Condemnor (Crossbow)	Basic	45m	S/-/-	1d10+3 R	2	1	2 Full	Accurate, Sanctified	7.5 kg	Extremely Rare
Scourge Boltgun	Basic	90m	S/2/4	1d10+5 X	4	24	Full	Tearing, Reliable	9 kg	Scarce
Sacristan Bolt Pistol	Pistol	30m	S/2/-	1d10+6 X	4	6	Full	Tearing, Reliable	3.5 kg	Very Rare

Melta Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Damage	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Availability
Mining Melta (Broad)	Heavy	10m	S/-/-	2d10+4 E	11	6	3 Full	Scatter	36 kg	Rare
Mining Melta (Focused)	Heavy	5m	S/-/-	3d10+8 E	13	6	3 Full	Overheats	36 kg	Rare

† The drum power pack increases the Clip to 50 and adds 2 kg to the weapon's weight. It changes the weapon's Availability to Rare.

SOLID PROJECTILE WEAPONS

Beyond the bounds of the Imperium, ammunition can be an extraordinarily precious resource, and to a missionary travelling alone on a lost world, such scarcity can be a pressing factor indeed. While some individuals prefer to carry las-weapons when travelling on the fringes for their much larger ammunition capacities, others prefer the flexibility of solid projectile weapons. What they lack in clip size, these weapons can often more than compensate for in deadliness. Some solid projectile weapons can even fire rare consecrated rounds designed to destroy the witch and horrors even more dreadful.

Lyndwyrn A-25A "Volcano" Autopistol

Lyndwyrn Armoury, one of the largest munitions suppliers in the Calixis Sector, produces one of the most coveted autopistols in the segmentum, the A-25A "Volcano." Manufactured to an exacting standard rivalling that of the Lathes, the Volcano is renowned for reliably firing every time, its mechanisms so precise and well-calibrated that it almost never jams or misfires. A fire selector allows the user to quickly switch between semi-automatic and full automatic fire. Such is the reputation of this weapon that soldiers, Arch-militants, and bounty hunters in the Expanse pay exorbitant sums to obtain a Volcano to keep at their side.

Some of Genevieve Almace's followers on Traynor's Rest favoured this weapon during their violent uprising against the xenos now known only as "the Corrupters." Their weapons, emblazoned with a crimson blade that symbolises the famous

sword with which Almace is still associated, can occasionally be found in the hands of missionaries and other pious warriors who seek to destroy the apostate in the Koronus Expanse.

These consecrated weapons have the same profile as normal Best Craftsmanship Lyndwyrn A-25A "Volcano" autopistols, but also have the Sanctified Quality.

Grox Gun

A catchall term for a wide variety of high-calibre rifles produced by thousands of manufacturums and forge worlds across the Calixis Sector, Grox guns are so called for their ability to drop a Grox with a single shot. Grox guns come in many shapes and sizes, though they tend to be long-barrelled rifles suitable for hunting. Though generally not finely-crafted or particularly reliable, Grox guns are cheap, functional weapons that are widely available across many worlds of the Koronus Expanse.

Lucius-pattern Mk22c Shotgun

Produced on the forge world of Lucius for use by the Death Korps of Krieg, the Mk22c shotgun features an unusual 8-shell cylinder magazine and gas-operated, self-loading firing mechanism. Though the action on the revolver mechanism is prone to mechanical failure, the shotgun's large gauge and high rate of fire make it deadly in close combat and a favourite among the Krieg Engineers Korps, as well as among Explorers in the Expanse who appreciate the weapon's stopping power.

M34 Autocannon

Autocannons are large-calibre support guns that fire dense, high-velocity solid shells designed to punch through armour. These heavy weapons see widespread service by the Imperial Guard, as well as by many planetary militias and renegade armies. Though unlikely to penetrate the adamantium and ceramite of power armour, they can devastate light and medium vehicles. Autocannons can also provide effective anti-infantry support, especially the shooter uses high explosive shells to augment their lethality against smaller targets.

The M34 autocannon is an older version of a common Imperial Guard pattern used throughout the Calixis Sector and uses a tripod mount. It can be manned by one person, though it ideally employs a crew of two to move, set up, and assist with reloading the weapon. If it has a second crew member, he can spend his Actions to Reload the autocannon.

BOLT WEAPONS

Like solid projectile weapons, bolt weapons can often be loaded with a number of special kinds of ammunition that enhance the weapon's lethality against certain kinds of foes. This added versatility does require a bolt weapon's wielder to carry reserves of ammunition, but many warriors find this deadly flexibility well worth the added encumbrance from the massive shells.

Condemnor Boltgun

A specialised combi-weapon most often employed by and associated with the dreaded Inquisitors of the Ordo Hereticus, the aptly named Condemnor boltgun strikes fear into the hearts of psykers across the galaxy. While the bolter is deadly enough, the blessed Purgatus stake-bolts fired from the crossbow mounted upon the weapon can fell Daemons and witches alike. Precious few of these holy weapons are to be found beyond the Maw, but they are a potent instrument against those who wield the powers of the Warp.

Genevieve Almace is said to have wielded a particular Condemnor boltgun on at least one occasion; that weapon is now enshrined in the collection of Rogue Trader Joaquin Saul. Though he prizes it, he is not unwilling to offer it as a bargaining chip for particularly lucrative trade arrangements with other dynasties. It has the same profile as a standard Best Quality Condemnor boltgun, except that attacks made with it cannot be Dodged by Daemons or psykers.

Mars-pattern MkII "Scourge" Boltgun

While the Godwyn-De'az pattern is standard issue for the Adepta Sororitas, the Mar Pattern MkII "Scourge" boltgun is favoured by the Battle-Sisters of the Order of the Ebon Chalice at the Abbey of the Dawn on Iocanthos. The Scourge has consequently been a favourite among several missionaries in the Koronus Expanse, particularly Genevieve Almace, whose followers have dispatched countless heretics and mutants with these weapons. Scourges come equipped with a sarissa blade, a sharp, serrated bayonet that can tear open foes in hand-to-hand combat with ease.

When used in close combat, the Mars-pattern boltgun has the following profile: Melee; 1d10+2; Pen 0; Unbalanced.

Sacristan Bolt Pistol

Produced by the Fane of Orthlack on Scintilla, this bolt pistol is based on the venerable Godwyn-De'az pattern used by the Adepta Sororitas. Although these bolt pistols are rare, expensive, and very difficult to maintain, they are the favoured sidearm of many Inquisitors, and they have become a sign of prestige among missionaries and Rogue Traders alike in the Koronus Expanse.

Unless the firer has a Strength Bonus of 4 or higher, the Sacristan imposes a -10 penalty on Ballistic Skills Tests due to its massive size and recoil.

Nicomedes Keefe was once gifted one of these ponderous bolt pistols by Rogue Trader Zhorne, although he rarely wielded it himself because of the difficulty of firing the weapon. He later entrusted it to the Order of the Hammer, who maintain it to this day. The monks have little use for it, however, and though they maintain it as a relic, they might offer it to the Explorers in exchange for a particularly grand display of piety or other assistance. It has the same profile as a standard Best Quality Sacristan bolt pistol, except that its Clip Size is doubled and it imposes a -20 penalty on Ballistic Skill Tests unless the wielder's Strength Bonus is 4 or higher.

MELTA WEAPONS

Melta weapons can be used as both deadly weapons and effective tools for clearing obstructions. Most of the division between a melta weapon and a tool that operates upon the same arcane secrets depends upon its target at a given moment.

Mining Melta

On countless worlds across the galaxy, mining meltas are used to delve into the earth and cut through solid rock in search of the mineral riches that drive commerce. Capable of melting granite, limestone, and shale in seconds, meltas are invaluable tools. A mining melta commonly found throughout the Calixis Sector and Koronus Expanse is the Ketas MTB-7 "Ambull" Multi-nozzle Tunnel Borer, which features four adjustable nozzles that allow the user to blast away a larger area of rock or focus the beams to melt through a particularly tough vein of granite.

While not originally intended for use as a weapon, miners have from time-to-time been forced to use it as such, either to fend off marauding predators infesting their tunnels or mercenaries and even other miners. In the deep tunnels of Savuka Secundus, miners primarily armed with mining meltas and other makeshift weapons allegedly held out against an Ork warband for several months before rescue came in the form of Calligos Winterscale and his flagship, the *Emperor's Vow*. Though their short range makes them less than ideal on the battlefield, some Explorers in the Expanse have taken to carrying mining meltas as reliable tools for clearing debris and foes alike from corridors.

The nozzles on a mining melta can be adjusted for either Broad or Focused fire (see page 81 for the two profiles). Broad fire disperses the melta beams, spreading the firing arc out and allowing the beams to possibly hit more than one target, while Focused fire concentrates all of the beams on a single point, increasing the damage potential and penetrating power of the weapon. Adjusting the nozzles to switch between Broad and Focused fire requires a Half Action.

TABLE 3-1: RANGED WEAPONS (CONT)

Plasma Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Damage	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Availability
M31 Plasma Cannon	Heavy	150m	S/--/—	2d10+10 E	8	20	5 Full	Blast (1), Overheat	45 kg	Near Unique
Asandre Plasma Gun	Basic	90m	S/2/--	1d10+7 E	6	40	5 Full	Overheat, Unstable	18 kg	Very Rare

Flame Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Damage	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Availability
Incinerator	Basic	20m	S/--/—	1d10+8 E	4	6	2 Full	Cleansing Fire, Flame, Sanctified	6 kg	Extremely Rare
Footfall Hand Flamer	Pistol	10m	S/--/—	1d10+4 E	2	2	2 Full	Flame, Toxic	4 kg	Very Rare

Primitive Ranged Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Damage	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Availability
Blowgun	Basic	20m	S/--/—	1d5 R	0	1	Half	Accurate, Primitive, Toxic	0.5 kg	Average
Falarica	Thrown	10m	S/--/—	1d10+1 R	1	1	—	Primitive, Tearing	2.5 kg	Scarce
Spear-thrower	Thrown	20m	S/--/—	1d10 R	2	1	Full	Primitive	1.5 kg	Average

Launchers

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Damage	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Availability
Sollex Electro-pult	Heavy	500m	S/--/—	3d10+10 X	10	1	3 Full	Accurate, Blast (1), Overheats	38 kg	Extremely Rare

Exotic Ranged Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Damage	Pen	Clip	Rld	Special	Wt	Availability
Dessicator Fusil	Basic	40m	S/--/—	1d10+6 E	2	8	Full	Inaccurate	6.5 kg	Extremely Rare
Conversion Beamer (Short Range or closer)	Heavy	150m	S/--/—	1d10+6 E	4	6	2 Full	Blast (1), Recharge	55 kg	Near Unique
Conversion Beamer (Medium Range)	Heavy	150m	S/--/—	2d10+8 E	8	6	2 Full	Blast (2), Recharge	55 kg	Near Unique
Conversion Beamer (Long Range or farther)	Heavy	150m	S/--/—	3d10+10 E	12	6	2 Full	Blast (3), Recharge	55 kg	Near Unique
Neural Shredder	Basic	30m	S/--/—	—	—	—	2 Full	Scatter	4 kg	Extremely Rare

PLASMA WEAPONS

Exploding with the power of a tiny, baleful sun, plasma weapons are the chosen arms of many warriors within the Koronus Expanse. Their renowned rarity and equally legendary lethality—to both their targets and their users—helps to cement the reputation of many Rogue Traders who carry them.

M31 Pattern Plasma Cannon

Last manufactured in the forges of Mars during the era of the Great Crusade, the plans for the M31 Pattern Plasma Cannon have been lost to the Imperium since the Schism of Mars and the destruction of Magma City. Yet in spite of this, examples of this venerable plasma cannon have been preserved through the ages, lovingly cared for by those who appreciate their exceptional qualities.

Of the relatively few working M31 Pattern cannons that remain in existence, most undoubtedly remain in the hands of ancient traitor Space Marines, who have borne them over millennia in the service to the Ruinous Powers, or in the armouries of the older Founding Chapters, who have retained them as sacred relics from the days of the Great Crusade.

However, a precious few—mostly those designed for use by lesser warriors than the Space Marines—have found their way into the hands of wealthy collectors, deadly mercenaries, and daring adventurers in the Koronus Expanse.

Asandre-pattern Plasma Gun

Following its acceptance of the Imperial Creed, the world of Asandre underwent a period of radical technological advancement as Jollus Marquette brought the planet into the fold of the Imperium of Man. With the help of adepts of the Mechanicus, Asandre's already burgeoning industrial capacity was vastly improved and turned to manufacturing arms and military equipment. Among the weapons manufactured on Asandre are plasma guns modelled on the venerable Mezoa-pattern. Unfortunately, some defect in the plans and schematics provided by the Tech-Priests resulted in unforeseen fluctuations in the weapon's power output, resulting in somewhat irregular blasts. The defect has been noted by the adepts assigned to Asandre, but the manufactorums continue to produce these plasma guns nevertheless.

FLAME WEAPONS

Many faithful fanatics of the Imperial Creed wield flame weapons. The more reflective amongst these individuals might see the fires as a symbol of their all-consuming piety; others simply enjoy watching their foes burn alive.

Incinerator

A heavily modified flamer, the incinerator's fire projectors and containment vessels have been significantly altered to accommodate its unique fuel, psychically charged promethium. Designed and crafted exclusively on the moon of Deimos by the techno-artisans of the Adeptus Mechanicus these weapons were originally meant only for use by the holy warriors of Titan, the Grey Knights. Inevitably, Daemonhunters of the Holy Ordos, witnessing first-hand the effectiveness of the terrible weapons, sought to obtain their own variants of the incinerators used by the Grey Knights. Fuelled by consecrated promethium and holy oils impregnated with ætheric energies, the azure flames of incinerators burn hotter than any normal fire ever could.

Few of these holy flamers can be found outside of the Inquisition, but some have made their way into the hands of the Ecclesiarchy. Most of these are kept in the armouries of the Convent Sanctorum on Ophelia VII, but a few have been given to the Ministorum's most fervent ambassadors in the Missionarus Galaxia, with which they dispense the Emperor's mercy to those who refuse to accept the Imperial Creed.

Footfall "Repentance" Hand Flamer

Manufactured in Footfall by some of the unsavoury inhabitants of that unruly place these small flamers are weapons of terror, designed for definitively settling disputes and making an example of anyone who stands in the user's way. Using a blend of refined promethium and toxic chemicals, this flamer not only burns its target but also fills the air with noxious fumes, leaving any survivors of the flames gasping for breath as the poison fills their lungs. Though he himself never wielded one, Jollus Marquette's guards were known for carrying these vicious weapons to bring down the Emperor's wrath upon their leader's foes. Some members of organisations still devoted to Marquette, such as the Choir of the Betrayed on Humility, still maintain these weapons to this day.

The versions that Marquette's associates carried are identical to standard Good Craftsmanship Footfall "Repentance" Hand Flamers, but inflict 1d5 Willpower Damage to any target that suffers Damage (after reductions from Armour and Toughness Bonus) from their Flame Quality.



PRIMITIVE RANGED WEAPONS

Projectile weapons take many forms, and while some are powered by explosive chemicals or function based on ancient, arcane secrets, others rely only on the strength of the wielder's arm and the sharpness of his eye.

Blowgun

Blowguns are simple tubes or pipes that fire darts powered by the user's own breath. Typically made from carved hardwoods or cane shoots but sometimes cut from iron tubes found inside of a ship or even from hollowed bones, blowguns can be found among countless cultures throughout the galaxy, as well as in the hands of assassins who value the weapon's silent efficiency when firing toxin-coated darts. Many missionaries have met their ends in the dark, unexplored regions of feral worlds, poisoned darts peppering their corpses.

Falarica

A heavy javelin with a long, thin iron or steel tip and shank attached to a wooden haft, the falarica is commonly used as a shock weapon by the warriors of Setabi V. Thrown with considerable force, the sharp metal head is able to penetrate light armour. The Setabians often bind combustible materials to the metal shaft, in order to use the falarica as an incendiary weapon, making it all the more dangerous in combat.

Targets struck by a falarica must make a **Routine (+20) Agility Test** to avoid catching on fire (see pages 260–261 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook).



Spear-thrower

A spear-thrower is a simple tool that uses leverage to allow a warrior to hurl his missiles with greater velocity and range when throwing javelins or spears. Little more than a shaft with a notch or spur at the end to support the javelin, which acts as a lever with the throwing arm. These weapons extend the length of the throw and impart significantly more energy into it. A spear-thrower doubles the Range of a thrown javelin or falarica and increases the Penetration of the weapon by 2.

LAUNCHERS

Launchers cover a broad category of weapons, some of which can be used to hurl grenades or missiles, and others of which fire munitions stranger still.

Sollex-pattern Electro-pult

The Tech-Priests of the Cult of Sollex on Haddrack have turned their keen minds to warfare for centuries, producing weapons of a superb quality. Among the wonders produced in their forges and workshops is the electro-pult, a design pieced together from ancient STC fragments. Using a complicated and esoteric electro-magnetic firing mechanism, the electro-pult rapidly accelerates its explosive projectile to incredible speeds, allowing for nearly unparalleled range, accuracy, and armour penetration.

The complexity of the device does make the electro-pult somewhat prone to mechanical or electrical failure and overheating, and it cannot use any unusual ammunition not specifically designed for it.

EXOTIC RANGED WEAPONS

While some weapons fit into certain broad classifications based on operation, design, or the perspective of the viewer, other armaments defy such terms. Rogue Traders, missionaries, and others travelling outside of the Imperium occasionally encounter horrific weapons that are much stranger and more difficult to comprehend than more familiar killing instruments like the lasgun and the bolter.

Conversion Beamer

Incredibly rare artefacts whose true inner workings are ill-understood by all but the most learned acolytes of the Omnissiah, conversion beam projectors fire high energy beams that induce a contained subatomic reaction in their targets, converting matter into energy. The beams intensify as they pass through the air, paradoxically making them far more deadly at longer ranges as the blasts gains energy and penetrating power. The massive capacitors that power these weapons take time to fully charge, resulting in a fairly low rate of fire, but their destructive power is undeniable. However, a conversion beamer's size and bulk make it difficult to transport over long distances without mechanical support.

The conversion beamer's Damage and Penetration increase with range. The values listed are for short (or closer), medium, and long (or farther) ranges (see page 83).

Neural Shredder

A strange and rare weapon, the neural shredder uses agonising and little-understood technology to inflict incredible harm upon its victims. As its name indicates, the neural shredder is able to disrupt the neural synapses of living brains, resulting in violent seizures, memory loss, unconsciousness, and horrific death. Since the weapon fires a wave of energy attuned to human and near-human brains, the weapon does no damage to non-living material or creatures whose physiology is too far removed from that of humans, and passes straight through most forms of armour.

A neural shredder does not inflict Damage as normal. Instead, when an attack from a neural shredder strikes a target, that target suffers 2d10 Intelligence Damage (this Characteristic Damage ignores Armour and Toughness) and must make a **Hard (-20) Toughness Test** or be Stunned for 1 Round. Foes with the Daemonic, Machine, Strange Physiology, or The Stuff of Nightmares Traits are unaffected by this weapon.

Dessicator Fusil

A strange weapon likely of xenos design, the dessicator fusil is an enigma even to the adepts of the Mechanicus. As its name suggests, the dessicator literally sucks the water from its target, evaporating moisture at an alarming rate. The weapon fires a concentrated yellow beam of energy that rapidly vaporises virtually any liquid with which it comes in contact. Those slain by the dessicator are left little more than withered husks, mummified in mere moments. So dreadful is the weapon that it has been banned from Port Wander, following a series of ghastly murders that left dozens of mummified corpses littering the space station.

In addition to suffering the Damage it inflicts, a target hit by the dessicator's beam must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** with a -5 penalty for every point of Damage it suffered. If it fails, it suffers 5 Agility Damage, plus 1 additional Agility Damage for every Degree of Failure it scores on the Test. If its Agility Characteristic is reduced to 0 this way, the creature dies, its blood turned to grizzly sand by the voracious beam.

GRENADES & MISSILES

While thrown or fired explosive devices are common enough in the Koronus Expanse, there are a number of truly exotic and devastating varieties of grenades and missiles that stand out for their strange and immensely destructive properties.

Psyk-out Grenades

A peculiar grenade often used by Witch Finders and Imperial agents tasked with hunting psykers and creatures of the Warp, psyk-out grenades are produced using extremely rare and secret components. On detonation, psyk-out grenades spew forth a cloud of psy-reactive particles that disrupt the invisible bonds between reality and the Warp.

Psykers caught in the blast radius of the grenade must make a **Difficult (-10) Willpower Test** or be Stunned for 1d5+3 Rounds. Daemons and other Warp entities caught in the blast must make **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** or suffer 3d10 Energy Damage and be Stunned for 1d5 Rounds.

TABLE 3-2: GRENADES & MISSILES

Grenades

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Damage	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Psyk-out Grenade†	Thrown	SBx3	S/-/-	—	0	Blast (3), Stun	0.5 kg	Extremely Rare
Rad Grenade	Thrown	SBx3	S/-/-	2d10 X	0	Blast (3), Toxic	1 kg	Rare
Vortex Grenade	Thrown	SBx3	S/-/-	—	0	Blast (3)	1.5 kg	Near Unique

Missiles

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Damage	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Cyclonic Missile	—	—	S/-/-	5d10+10 X	1	Blast (15)	1 kg	Near Unique
Life-Seeker Missile	—	—	S/-/-	2d10+4 X	8	Blast (1)	1 kg	Very Rare

† This weapon only affects Warp entities and targets with a Psy Rating.

Rad Grenades

Rad grenades expose those caught in their blast to a shower of crippling radiation. Though the radioactive particles have a half-life of mere milliseconds, allowing the thrower to charge into close combat without exposing himself to the contamination, those struck by the initial blast quickly feel the debilitating effects of the radiation.

In addition to the Damage dealt by the explosion, each living target within the rad grenade's blast radius must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** with a -5 penalty for every point of Damage it suffers. If it fails, it suffers 1d10 Toughness Damage, plus 2 additional Toughness Damage per Degree of Failure he suffers on the Test.

Vortex Grenades

Rare and terrible weapons, vortex grenades contain mechanisms capable of creating small rifts between reality and the Warp. A weighty sphere about the size of a man's clenched fist, a vortex grenades is too large and too delicate to be loaded into a grenade launcher. Anyone or anything caught in the vortex created by the grenade is utterly destroyed, dragged from the universe into the nightmarish Empyrean. The tear in reality voraciously devours all matter and energy that comes into contact with it. Due to its inherently unpredictable nature the vortex might remain in existence for some time or almost immediately collapse and disappear.

Any target enveloped in the vortex must make a **Difficult (-10) Agility Test** or be sucked into the Warp and almost certain death (or a variety of far worse fates). So horrific are the consequences of being dragged into the Warp that any character who uses a vortex grenade gains 1 Corruption Point per non-Daemonic foe it swallows. At the start of every Turn after the vortex grenade has been activated, roll 1d10 on **Table 3-3: Vortex Grenade Effects** and apply the results.

Cyclonic Missiles

Cyclonic missiles operate on a principle similar to their much larger cousins, the cyclonic torpedoes used by Inquisitors to deliver the ultimate sanction against a planet: Exterminatus. These munitions are jealously guarded by the Holy Ordos, and it is a capital crime for even a Rogue Trader to possess one. Despite this prohibition, cyclonic missiles occasionally make their way onto the black market, and enterprising Rogue Traders frequently skirt Imperial law to obtain them. Encased in a metallic hydrogen and deuterium shell, the missile's warhead explodes in a massive fireball that burns hotter than the surface of most stars.

Targets caught in the blast radius of a cyclonic missile suffer the Damage as normal and must also make a **Difficult (-10) Agility Test** or catch on fire (see pages 260–261 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook); anything within 10 metres of the edge of the blast takes no Damage from the explosion, but must make a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test** or catch on fire.

Life-Seeker Missiles

Containing advanced sensoriums and guidance cogitators that lock on their target and help guide the missile to its target, life-seeker missiles are heavily-modified Krak missiles. Condemned by most orthodox Tech-Priests of the Adeptus Mechanicus as heretical and an affront to the Omnissiah, these missiles are only manufactured in a few places in the Calixis Sector and are consequently very difficult to acquire.

An Explorer firing a life-seeker missile may make a **Hard (-20) Tech-Use Test** before firing to awaken the predatory intelligence within as a Half Action. If he succeeds, he gains a +10 bonus to his next Ballistic Skill Test to hit with the missile until the end of the encounter, and his target must re-roll the first successful Dodge Test it makes against this attack until the end of the encounter.

TABLE 3-3: VORTEX GRENADE EFFECTS

1d10 Roll	Result
1-4	The vortex collapses in on itself and vanishes without a trace.
5-7	The vortex remains unchanged, consuming anything that comes into contact with it.
8-9	The vortex moves 10 metres in a randomly selected direction, annihilating everything in its path.
10	The vortex expands, and its radius doubles.



MELEE WEAPONS

Whether an eviscerator swung madly by a zealous, wild-eyed Missionary or a dagger slid between the ribs by a cold-blooded Seneschal, close combat weapons are ubiquitous in the 41st Millennium. An almost limitless assortment of cutting, stabbing, and bludgeoning weapons is available beyond the Maw, and few Explorers in the Koronus Expanse would willingly decline to keep some sort of melee weapon on their person—for those who do tend to meet unpleasant ends.

PRIMITIVE MELEE WEAPONS

From roughly crafted daggers to works of art with which the wielder can also inflict death, there are countless forms that melee weapons take within the Koronus Expanse. While many of these weapons might lack such features as mounted, rotating blades or the unyielding edge of a power field, almost all are extremely lethal in the right hands.

Soul Blade

Crafted shortly after the liberation of Nazhdureyah from its psychic masters, these resplendent two-handed swords were given to three hundred of Genevieve Almace's most ardent followers. Forming her personal bodyguard, this cadre came to be known as Almace's Companions, and the swords that they bore were known colloquially as soul blades. Forged by the finest artisans of Nazhdureyah in furnaces said to be fuelled by the corpses of slain psykers, each blade was anointed and blessed by the missionary herself. While most

of these blades were presumed lost in the missionary's final battle, a few have turned up over the centuries throughout the Expanse, though not always in the hands of those dedicated to Almace's holy work. Hunters of psykers across the Koronus Expanse occasionally wield these weapons, as do warriors who have seen the dread power of the Warp and hope to ward themselves against such ineffable horrors with sacred steel. When a soul blade bites a sinner's flesh, it is said to shear through his soul as well, wracking him with the terrible weight of his apostasy. Whether or not this is true is, of course, debated by numerous scholars and reliquarists across the Koronus Expanse, but the superstition makes the swords valuable nonetheless. A soul blade is a two-handed weapon.

Attacks made with a soul blade inflict additional Damage equal to the number of Corruption Points the target possesses divided by 10 (rounded up).

Flail of Chastisement

Most often wielded by zealous missionaries and other agents of the Ecclesiarchy, these thrice-blessed weapons consist of several heavy steel balls attached by lengths of chains to an elaborately crafted handle of ivory and silver. The heads of these weapons are spiked, and the chains feature wicked barbs and hooks intended to grasp a target's flesh and constrict as he struggles. A flail of chastisement is a two-handed weapon.

If an Explorer fails a Weapon Skill Test with a number of Degrees of Failure greater than his Weapon Skill Bonus when using a flail of chastisement, he strikes himself once with the weapon with a number of Degrees of Success equal to his Degrees of Failure instead of merely missing.

Ntharian Falx

The verdant world of Ntharis is known for the bounty of its crop yield. For millennia prior to opening of the Koronus Passage, the inhabitants of this world used primitive scythes to harvest their crops. The falx is essentially that simple tool turned to war. A long, two-handed weapon, the falx is a pole with a large, curved blade, honed to razor sharpness on the inside edge. Though a primitive weapon, when wielded by a strong arm, the deadly blade can cut through light armour. A Ntharian falx is a two-handed weapon.

Attacks made with a Ntharian falx gain a bonus to Penetration equal to the wielder's Degrees of Success on the Weapon Skill Test.

Apsis Shield

A large shield, usually made of wood sheathed in metal, the apsis is most commonly used by soldiers on well-regimented feudal worlds where armies form into large phalanxes and fight en masse. Protected behind a wall of shields, the phalanx steadily advances, rolling over anything that stands in its way. Aside from the protection they offer, these shields can be used aggressively, to shove a foe and knock him to the ground in order to dispatch him with a killing strike. An apsis shield is a one-handed weapon.

A character wielding an apsis shield gains a +20 bonus to the Opposed Strength Test for the Knock-Down Action (see page 241 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook).

CHAIN WEAPONS

From the cramped halls of Footfall to worlds long-forgotten in the depths of the Koronus Expanse, the whine of whirling blades is often a precursor to the bloody and painful demise of the listener. Some missionaries wield chain weapons, including the aptly named eviscerator, and use these deadly weapons to demonstrate the overwhelming power of the Emperor in a direct and horrifying fashion.

Chainfist

A chainfist is a power fist fitted with a chainblade attachment designed to cut through armour and metal plating. Originally intended for use during boarding actions to carve open hulls and bulkheads, the vicious adamantine blades of these weapons are equally useful in close combat, and with enough strength behind them are capable of slicing through even the thickest personal armour. A chainfist is a one-handed weapon.

Though only a fraction of the size of the massive chainfists used by the legendary Terminators of the Space Marines, an Explorer must still possess exceptional strength to use one of these unusual power gloves properly. Unless the user has a Strength Bonus of 5 or higher, a chainfist imposes a -10 penalty on Weapon Skills Tests due to its considerable size and imposing weight.

Eviscerator

Favoured by Ecclesiarchy zealots and witch-hunters, the eviscerator is a grotesquely large double-handed chainsword. Although unwieldy and difficult to use, the eviscerator is capable of cutting an armoured man in half or ripping through the hide of the most hideously corrupted mutant with a single bloody stroke.

A fair number of eviscerators can be found in the lawless frontier of the Expanse, brought through the Maw by missionaries and fanatics whose zeal exceeded their martial skill. An eviscerator is a two-handed weapon.

When an attack with an eviscerator inflicts Righteous Fury, it inflicts an additional +3 Damage.

POWER WEAPONS

Power weapons are wreathed in a murderous halo of energy that tears apart all but the most resilient of defences.

Cognatine Hammer

Commissioned by the monastic order known as the Order of the Hammer, these weapons are reproductions of the famous archeotech power hammer of Nicomedes Keefe. Exactly how many of these replicas exist or why they were created in the first place is something of a mystery, given their limited resources on Foulstone. A Cognatine hammer is a one-handed weapon.

If an Explorer wields a Cognatine hammer in two hands, it inflicts an additional +2 Damage.

Lightning Claws

Lightning claws are among the most fearsome close combat weapons available. Often wielded in pairs, these power gloves feature razor-sharp, adamantine blades sheathed in a power field, and are capable of impaling a man or slicing through most armour with contemptuous ease. Though difficult to come by

in the Koronus Expanse, the sight of an Arch-militant or Witch Finder armed a pair of lightning claws is enough to make most foes think twice. A lightning claw is a one-handed weapon.

Unless worn as part of a pair of these weapons by a user with a Strength Bonus of 4 or more, a lightning claw gains the Unwieldy Quality. An Explorer armed with lightning claws also gains a +10 bonus to Intimidate Tests, due to the weapons' overtly frightening appearance.

Witch Lance

A potent weapon in the Witch Finder's arsenal, the witch lance is a combination of the techno-arcane and the sacred. Also known as the "power stake" and the "excoriator," the witch lance is designed to destroy psykers and witches utterly and without mercy. A metre-and-a-half long spear or stake of iron and adamantium, the weapon contains a reservoir of promethium mixed with sacred oils and rare anti-psy compounds. When the lance impales the victim's body, this mixture is explosively vented in a blast of holy fire. A witch lance is a one-handed weapon.

A witch lance inflicts Righteous Fury against psykers and Daemons on a Damage die result of 9 or 10.

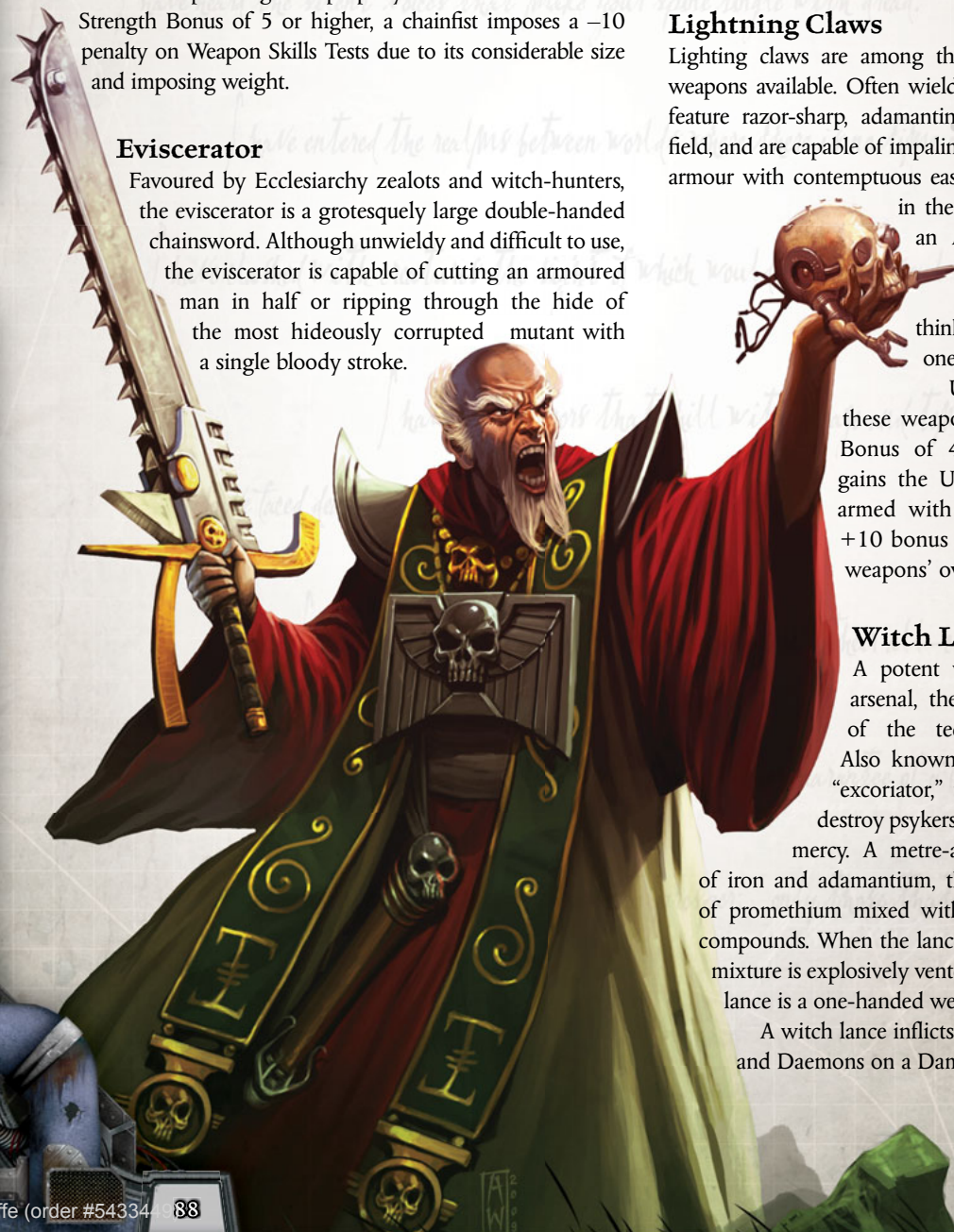


TABLE 3-4: MELEE WEAPONS

Primitive Melee Weapons							
Name	Class	Range	Damage	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Soul Blade	Melee	—	2d10 R	2	Primitive, Unbalanced, Sanctified	5.5 kg	Near Unique
Flail of Chastisement	Melee	5m	2d10+3 R	0	Flexible, Primitive, Sanctified, Snare, Tearing	4 kg	Extremely Rare
Ntharian Falx	Melee	—	1d10+4 R	2	Primitive, Tearing, Unbalanced	6.5 kg	Rare
Apsis Shield†	Melee	—	1d5+2	0	Defensive, Primitive	4 kg	Scarce
Chain Weapons							
Name	Class	Range	Damage	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Chainfist	Melee	—	2d10 R	12	Tearing, Unbalanced	15 kg	Very Rare
Eviscerator	Melee	—	2d10+3 R	5	Tearing, Unwieldy	12 kg	Very Rare
Power Weapons							
Name	Class	Range	Damage	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Cognatine Hammer	Melee	—	1d10+8 E	5	Power Field, Unwieldy	14 kg	Very Rare
Lightning Claws	Melee	—	1d10+8 E	8	Power Field, Tearing	12 kg	Extremely Rare
Witch Lance	Melee/ Thrown	—/10m	1d10+4 E	6	Cleansing Fire, Power Field, Sanctified	5 kg	Very Rare
Praesidium Protectiva†	Melee	—	1d10 E	0	Defensive, Power Field, Sanctified	7 kg	Unique
Storm Shield†	Melee	—	1d10+1 E	0	Defensive, Power Field, Shocking	10 kg	Extremely Rare
Shock Weapons							
Name	Class	Range	Damage	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Axe of Retribution	Melee	—	2d10 R	6	Shocking, Tearing, Unbalanced	10 kg	Extremely Rare
Electro-Flail	Melee	4m	1d10+3 I	1	Flexible, Shocking	6 kg	Rare
Exotic Melee Weapons							
Name	Class	Range	Damage	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Brazier of Holy Fire	Melee	—	1d10+5 I	0	Cleansing Fire, Sanctified, Unbalanced	6 kg	Very Rare
Scythian Venom Talon	Melee	—	1d5+5 R	3	Toxic	1 kg	Extremely Rare
Corruptors' Kris	Melee	—	1d5+4 R	2	Tearing, Unbalanced	2.5 kg	Very Rare
Flying Claw	Melee/ Thrown	—/10m	1d10+3 R	2	Flexible, Primitive, Snare, Tearing	1.5 kg	Rare

† This item provides 3 Armour Points to the Body and Arm of the Explorer wielding the shield.

Praesidium Protectiva

Believed to contain within them tiny shards of the armour worn by the Emperor Himself, these shields are incredibly rare and deeply revered. Legends claim that Saint Cognatius bore a praesidium protectiva, though as with most tales surrounding the saint, it is difficult to tell truth from fiction. Whether any of these marvellous shields actually contain relics of the Emperor and are imbued with some residual aura of His holy light, those who bear a praesidium protectiva seem somehow protected by the divine hand of providence. A praesidium protectiva is a one-handed weapon.

Any Explorer with the Pure Faith Talent wielding a genuine praesidium protectiva gains a +30 bonus to Tests to resist the effects of Psychic Techniques. Further, he gains a Force Field with a Protection Rating of 50 when targeted by the attacks of Daemons.

Storm Shield

Storm shields are large, heavy shields with power generators built into them. When activated, these shields shimmer and crackle with energy, which is discharged with a clap like thunder when struck, giving the shields their name. The energy field surrounding the shield is capable of absorbing significant damage, and the sheer size of the device also provides considerable protection to anyone with the strength to hold one. In the tight corridors of a starship or the narrow halls of an ancient tomb, a storm shield can allow a single warrior to hold off swarms of enemies, making it ideal equipment for a bodyguard or oathsworn protector.

Of course, these powerful artefacts are not easily acquired, even by the likes of a Rogue Trader. As another complicating factor, storm shields are extremely bulky armaments even for Space Marines, let alone unaugmented humans.

FORCE FIELDS

When a character wearing an active Force Field is hit by an attack, roll 1d100. If the result is lower than or equal to the field's Protection Rating, the attack is nullified and has no effect on the protected character. Fields can also Overload. Compare the 1d100 roll to deflect the attack to **Table 3-5: Field Craftsmanship**. If the result is lower than or equal to the listed number, the field Overloads—it deflects the hit, but then ceases to function until it is recharged or repaired (which requires a successful **Very Hard (-30) Tech-Use Test**, the use of the Luminen Charge Talent, or another appropriate action).

TABLE 3-5: FIELD CRAFTSMANSHIP

Field Craftsmanship	Overload Roll
Poor	01-20
Common	01-10
Good	01-05
Best	01

As such, the few Rogue Traders and other Explorers of the Expanse who actually own these devices prefer not to carry them into battle most of the time. Even if they have one of these potent relics in their possession, these artefacts are simply too awkward to use in all situations (such as formal social engagements). A storm shield is a one-handed weapon.

In addition to its profile as a shield, a storm shield provides its wielder a Force Field with a Protection Rating of 55 (see **Force Fields**) and is never destroyed when used to Parry a weapon with the Power Field Quality.

SHOCK WEAPONS

While some shock weapons are designed for bringing down targets alive, others are merely meant to inflict as much pain as possible, electrifying the target within an inch of his life and searing every nerve in his body before mercilessly relenting and refusing the victim a quick death.

Axe of Retribution

Said to be crafted in the image of Saint Jason of Huale's double-headed axe, these massive weapons are studded with conductive jewels that have been cut to a deadly edge and crackle with electricity, making them as lethal as they are beautiful. There are even those who say the weapons are so sharp that they cleave impurities from the air and sin from a man's soul. Genevieve Almace's followers on Nazhdureyah are said to have used a number of these axes as they purged the psykers there, and these axes can still be found in the savage conflicts that wrack that war-torn world. An axe of retribution is a two-handed weapon.

Electro-Flail

A military adaptation of the simple farmer's tool used for threshing grain, a flail is often nothing more than two large sticks or batons connected by a short chain. The electro-flail is a cruel modification of this broad archetype of weapon wielded by archoflagellants, terrifying creatures created from irredeemable sinners through unspeakable processes by the Adeptus Ministorum. An electro-flail is a set of segmented links, through which a power cell projects a deadly current to render it more lethal in melee combat. An electro-flail allows arcoflagellants to scourge their foes in battle, unleashing their savage and insane fury upon anything that comes within their deadly reach. An electro-flail is a one-handed weapon.

If an Explorer fails a Weapon Skill Test with a number of Degrees of Failure greater than his Weapon Skill Bonus when using an electro-flail, he strikes himself once with the weapon with a number of Degrees of Success equal to his Degrees of Failure instead of merely missing.

EXOTIC MELEE WEAPONS

The Koronus Expanse is home to countless strange and unique weapons; some come from shadowy xenos species or dead aliens of old, while others are the legacy of humans who treaded strange paths on their journey to expand the art of murder.

Brazier of Holy Fire

Said to light the faces of the faithful and leave the impure in utter darkness, the brazier of holy fire is both a weapon and symbol of divine authority. Large, heavy maces that can unleash jets of burning promethium fuel from their wickedly spiked heads, these weapons are blessed and sanctified by cardinals of the Ministorum and granted to missionaries and confessors-militant to aid them in bringing the light of the Emperor into the darkest corners of the galaxy. A brazier of holy fire is a one-handed weapon.

Scythian Venom Talon

A devious race of warrior-monks, the xenos known as the Scythians are all but extinct following a short but brutal war with the Crimson Fists Chapter of Space Marines. Known to use deceitful tactics and poisoned weapons, the deviant xenos managed to assassinate the Crimson Fists' first Chapter Master Polux before the bloody retribution of the Space Marines nearly wiped them from the galaxy. The Scythian venom talon is one of the more basic weapons used by this vile race. A wicked dagger shaped like some bestial claw, the blade is coated in toxic venom from a reservoir in the hilt of the weapon, and a single scratch can result in a painful death. A Scythian venom talon is a one-handed weapon.

Corrupters' Kris

Possibly the last remaining relics of the extinct reptilian race of xenos indigenous to Traynor's Rest, these blades are prized by collectors of Cold Trade artefacts. Long, sinuously curved daggers, often etched with alien iconography and set in intricately carved bone handles ill-suited to human hands, these blades are more often kept as trophies than functional weapons. However, in the hands of a trained weapons master, they can still prove very deadly indeed. A corruptor's kris is a one-handed weapon.

Nagorna Flying Claw

The world called Felwarn lies just beyond Burnscour, and is home to the Nagorna, a strange xenos species that several Rogue Traders have written of in their logs but no living traveller of the void seems to have encountered personally. The Nagorna are known throughout the Koronus Expanse for their odd obsession with the faith of the Imperium, which arrived on their world in ages forgotten through means unknown. Though the records describe these creatures being fanatically devoted to their own conception of the God-Emperor, the incongruity of an alien race accepting the divinity of the Emperor of Mankind has perplexed many readers of the tales that describe these creatures. Apparently, the Nagorna refer to Him on Terra as the Great Father, and maintain that the missionaries and Rogue Traders who have visited their world are His messengers. At least one Inquisitor, a man named Goro Pheine, has attempted to reach Felwarn in the last ten years—but records of his voyage, and whether or not he succeeded in reaching this world, are scarce indeed.

Beyond the records of several long-dead voidship captains, the only compelling evidence for the existence of the Nagorna comes in the form of a number of artefacts in circulation in the Koronus Expanse. One such artefact is the so-called "flying claw," a weapon that the Nagorna are said to use to ensnare their foes. Consisting of a rope or chain with a claw-like grapnel at the end, the weapon can entangle and tear into the flesh of its target with lethal efficiency. Replicas and forgeries of these weapons are in the collections of certain nobles in the Calixis Sector and the hands of treasure-seekers in the Koronus Expanse. An authentic Nagorna flying claw (if, indeed, there is such a thing) is an item of considerable value. A Nagorna flying claw is a one-handed weapon.

WEAPONS UPGRADES

While most weapons are deadly by definition, many can be improved in some way to make the violence they inflict even more efficacious (or gratuitous). Missionaries sometimes adorn their weapons with holy symbols, anoint them in sacred oils, or even embed relics in them to make them more lethal against the Emperor's foes.

TABLE 3-6: WEAPON UPGRADES

Name	Wt	Availability
Adamantine Hilt Guard	1 kg	Rare
Blessed Edge	—	Very Rare
Consecrated Filter Canister	1 kg	Rare
Discharge Pack	1 kg	Scarce
Psyocculum	1.5 kg	Extremely Rare

Adamantine Hilt Guard

More than a simple crossguards or quillons, some sword hilts provide significant protection to the hand that wields them. The best of these are basket-hilt guards crafted from adamantium alloys that effectively shield the whole hand. Some hilts are elaborately fashioned with intricate designs, effigies of Imperial saints, or even the noble visage of the Emperor Himself.

Melee weapons with adamantine hilt guards grant an additional two Degrees of Success on successful Weapon Skill Tests when using the Disarm Talent and grant 2 additional Armour Points to the arm wielding the sword.

Blessed Edge

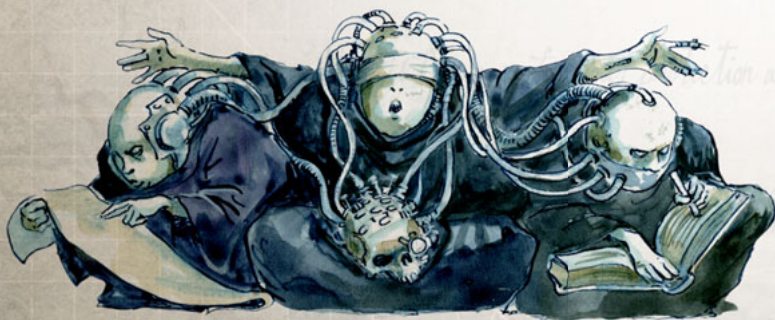
A melee weapon can be consecrated, dipped in sacred oils and unguents or inscribed with tiny, immaculate marks of purity. It might even have the tooth of a martyred saint worked in an ornate reliquary on its hilt, or be wrapped in pages of scripture when not in use. Regardless of the methods the smiths and priests who labour over this weapon employ, the end result is a melee weapon meant to devastate the foes of humanity wherever they might lurk.

A melee weapon with this upgrade gains the Sanctified Quality.

Consecrated Filter Canister

This small canister can be attached to almost any flamer and contains scared oils and blessed promethium consecrated by the Ecclesiarchy. A single shot from a flamer with this attachment can unleash a torrent of holy fire, searing not only the flesh, but the soul of its target as well.

A character wielding a flamer equipped with a consecrated filter canister can use it to have the weapon gain the Cleansing Fire and Sanctified Qualities for 1d5 Rounds. Once used, the canister must be replaced before it can be fired again this way.



Discharge Pack

A relatively simply device that can be affixed to nearly any melee weapon, a discharge pack is little more than a primary cell and electrode. With a flip of a switch, the user can charge the weapon with a potentially lethal surge of electricity.

A character wielding a melee weapon equipped with a discharge pack can use it to have the weapon gain the Shocking Quality for 1d5 Rounds. Once used, the discharge pack is drained and must be replaced or recharged (a process that takes a suitable power source or an ability such as the Luminen Charge Talent) before it can be used again.

Psyoculum

The psyoculum uses psycho-sensitive crystal lenses to allow the user to track targets with Warp signatures. These eyepieces are often linked to weapons, to enable the operator to track psykers even in pitch darkness.

Weapons fitted with a psyoculum grant a +10 bonus to the user's Ballistic Skills Tests made to hit psykers and Daemons. The wielder ignores all penalties from Darkness, Fog, Mist, Shadow, Smoke, and other effects that would obscure his vision when these foes with his attacks with this weapon.

UNUSUAL AMMO

Some particularly pious warriors go into battle using consecrated or otherwise enhanced ammunition meant to give them the edge in the endless war against the horrors in the darkness. Enterprising Explorers can find numerous forms of modified or sanctified munitions within the Koronus Expanse.

TABLE 3-7: UNUSUAL AMMUNITION

Name	Availability
Blessed Ammunition	Extremely Rare
Capacitor Rounds	Rare
Dragonfire Bolts	Very Rare
Hellfire Bolts	Extremely Rare
High Explosive Rounds	Scarce
Kraken Rounds	Extremely Rare
Purgatus Stake-Bolts	Extremely Rare
Pyre Rounds	Near Unique
Vengeance Rounds	Very Rare



Blessed Ammunition

The prayers and blessings of those with true faith in the Emperor of Mankind, coupled with the ancient lore of Ecclesiastic alchemy, can turn mere mundane bullets into sacred rounds capable of harming the foul denizens of the Warp. Some rounds are forged from relics of ancient saints, tempered in the spilt blood of martyrs, or wrought with prayers to the Emperor to banish His foes.

Effects: Blessed ammunition grants any weapon that fires it the Sanctified Quality.

Used With: Any ranged weapon that has ammunition that can be consecrated.

Capacitor Rounds

Intended to incapacitate rather than kill, capacitor rounds send a high voltage shock through their target. Frequently used by enforcers to put down riots among workers deemed too valuable for lethal measures, capacitor rounds have also found use among bounty hunters who desire to capture rather than kill their targets.

Effects: Capacitor rounds grant a weapon the Shocking Quality and reduce its Damage by 4.

Used With: Shotguns, bolt pistols, and bolters.

Dragonfire Bolts

Filled with superheated gas that explodes in a gout of flame, cover offers little protection from bolters spewing dragonfire rounds. While they are manufactured on several forge worlds in the segmentum, these bolts are still a rare commodity, sought after by Rogue Traders, militias, renegades, and pirates alike throughout the Koronus Expanse.

Effects: Dragonfire bolts grant the weapon the Blast (2) Quality and reduce its Damage by 1. Any creature struck by a dragonfire bolt must make a **Routine (+20) Agility Test** or catch on fire (see pages 260–261 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook).

Used With: Bolt pistols, bolters, and heavy bolters.

Hellfire Bolts

Created to combat threats far from the Koronus Expanse, hellfire rounds have proven their deadly effect on countless battlefields across the galaxy. Hellfire rounds are specially modified to replace the standard explosive shell with an extremely potent bio-acid capable of eating through flesh and bone with frightening efficiency.

Effects: Hellfire bolts grant the weapon the Toxic Quality and reduce its Penetration by 2. However, so virulent are the poisons and bio-acids in the shell that targets suffer an additional –30 penalty to their Toughness Test to resist the weapon's Toxic Quality.

Used With: Bolt pistols, bolters, and heavy bolters.

High Explosive Rounds

Replacing normal solid shot ammunition in autocannons, these shells are filled with high explosives that detonate on impact with a target. While not quite as effective as bolter rounds, high explosive rounds pack a serious punch.

Effects: High explosive rounds change an autocannon's Damage Type to Explosive, grant it the Blast (1) Quality, and reduce the weapon's Penetration by 2.

Used With: Autocannons.

Kraken Bolts and Penetrator Rounds

With improved propellants and solid adamantine cores, kraken rounds are the first choice to crack even the thickest armour or toughest hide. Kraken bolts and penetrator rounds are produced by several foundries in the Calixis Sector, and though their use is outlawed on most "civilised" worlds, they are in demand beyond the Maw.

Effects: Kraken bolts and penetrator rounds increase the weapon's Penetration by 4 but reduce its Damage by 1.

Used With: Any Solid Projectile or Bolt weapon.

Purgatus Stake-Bolts

These long stakes are crafted from a silver-adamantium alloy and etched with prayers and invocations that are anathema to the witch and the Daemon alike. The barbed, diamantine tip of the stake breaks open upon impact and releases a well of holy water and sacred oils lethal to creatures bound to the Empyrean.

Effects: Purgatus stake-bolts grant the weapon the Sanctified Quality. Further, whenever a Psyker or Warp entity is struck by a Purgatus stake-bolt, it must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test**. If it fails, it immediately rolls on **Table 6-3: Perils of the Warp** and applies the result to itself (see page 161 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook).

Used With: Crossbows.

Pyre Rounds

Bullets with a core created from the powdered bones of a nameless saint and with casings inscribed with words of detestation and abjuration of the witch, pyre rounds are incredibly rare shells created expressly for killing psykers. When a pyre round strikes a Warp-dabbler, it immolates the target, burning it alive in the flames of its own heresy.

Effects: Pyre rounds grant the weapon the Cleansing Fire and Sanctified Qualities. Further, whenever a psyker is struck by a shot from the weapon, the psyker automatically counts as failing the Willpower Test from its Cleansing Fire Quality to avoid catching fire with 1d5 Degrees of Failure. Whenever the psyker attempts to use a Psychic Technique while ignited this way, he suffers an additional 1d10 Energy Damage, ignoring Armour and Toughness Bonus.

Used With: Any Solid Projectile weapon.

Vengeance Rounds

Originally designed during the Great Scouring for use against Traitor Marines, Vengeance rounds are incredibly rare bolter shells that utilise unstable flux core technology. Inherently dangerous to discharge, they are nonetheless devastatingly effective at punching through armour and delivering gruesome injury to their target.

Effects: A weapon using Vengeance Rounds gains the Unstable Quality and adds +3 to its Damage and Penetration. However, the weapon also gains the Overheats Quality.

Used With: Bolt pistols, bolters, and heavy bolters.

ARMOUR

A wide variety of armour is available in the Koronus Expanse for enterprising Explorers, and at the farthest ends of the galaxy, armour can mean the difference between surviving to see another dawn or ending up in a shallow grave. Though even the finest power armour has gaps and weak points, as any Arch-militant would attest, an imperfect defence is better than no defence at all.

Vaporian Mirror Armour

Highly polished, lamellar plates form the peculiar skin of this armour, worn by the sardars of the desert world of Vaporius in the farthest Heathen Stars. The mirror-like surfaces of the armour glitter like the facets of a diamond in the blazing sun of the Vaporius. Crafted by master artisans, this armour is as puissant as it is beautiful, and is particularly valued for its effectiveness against las-weaponry.

Notoriously intolerant of newcomers and the Imperial Creed, the Vaporians rarely trade with outsiders. However, rumours tell of a Rogue Trader who managed to trade several millions tonnes of water for a cargo of the shimmering fabrics woven on Vaporius and suits of their fabled mirror armour. The reflective surfaces of the armour can even deflect the high intensity lasers used in lasguns.

Thanks to its mirror sheen and heat resistance, Vaporian mirror armour provides an additional 5 AP against Energy Damage. Due to the conspicuousness of the armour, however, the wearer suffers a -30 penalty on all Concealment and Silent Move Tests.

Zayth Engine Armour

Enormous mobile fortress-cities rumble across the scarred surface of the barren, war-torn world of Zayth, providing the only sanctuary for the planet's human population after millennia of ceaseless war. Bristling with fearsome weapons of war, these extraordinary vehicle cities are the last remnants of Zayth's ancient, long-lost technology, maintained through the aeons by hereditary Engine Orders who guard the great machines and traditions of each clan.

The complicated exoskeletons used by the tenders who guard and preserve the great generators and engine rooms of Zayth's vehicle cities are marvels of Dark Age technology. While not as advanced as most power armour, Zayth engine armour provides a degree of protection from environmental hazards and its pistons and servos greatly increases the user's strength. Since no clan would ever willingly trade away even a single one of its irreplaceable suits of Engine Armour, most examples found off world are those salvaged from dead Zaythian cities, casualties of the endless wars.

Zayth engine armour adds +30 to the wearer's Strength Characteristic and increases the category of his Size Trait by 1 (for instance, a normal human, whose Size is Average, would become Hulking). However, the wearer suffers a -20 penalty to all Agility Tests due to the ungainly design of the armour, and a -20 penalty to all Perception Tests due to the limited angles of visibility it provides.

TABLE 3-8: ARMOUR

Name	Locations Covered	AP	Wt	Availability
Mirror Armour	Arms, Body, Legs	5	15 kg	Very Rare
Engine Armour	All	6	45 kg	Very Rare
Artificer Armour	All	10	70 kg	Extremely Rare
Artificer Armour (Consecrated)	All	10	75 kg	Near Unique
Sabbat-pattern Helm	Head	5	2.5 kg	Extremely Rare

Designed to allow the wearer to operate in the hazardous engine rooms of the vehicle cities, engine armour also comes equipped with rebreathers capable of sustaining the wearer for up to 10 hours, and its shielding grants the wearer a +20 bonus to Toughness Tests to resist the effects of extreme heat and most forms of electromagnetic radiation. The power cells needed to use the engine armour (without which the exoskeleton is nothing more than dead weight) generally last 10 hours before they must be recharged or replaced.

Artificer Armour

The finest personal armour available in the galaxy, artificer armour is highly modified power armour. Usually at least several thousand years old, these ancient suits of armour have been altered by craftsmen of incomparable skill with superdense materials and cunningly wrought damage control mechanisms that allow the wearer to shrug off even the most devastating attacks. Moreover, artificer armour is often embellished with the finest ornamentation and gilded heraldry, as well as hexagrammic wards and seals that provide the wearer additional protection from psychic assaults.

Such consecrated and venerable suits of armour are unique works, displaying the pinnacle of the armourer's craft. Incredibly scarce, artificer armour is more valuable than many starships and is a far rarer sight in the Koronus Expanse than an Imperial battleship. Most suits of artificer armour are locked away within the armouries of the Space Marines or worn by their most formidable champions. Suits of this preeminent armour have occasionally been fashioned for use by lesser warriors, notably Inquisitors, crusading Warmasters, or even High Lords of Terra, however. Only a precious few suits of artificer armour have ever been in private hands, but a handful of wealthy and influential Rogue Traders have managed to obtain armour of this quality, though always at tremendous cost and effort. Still, the raw prestige of owning such a miraculous work drives some Rogue Traders to desire artificer armour, its incredible protective qualities aside.

Artificer armour adds +20 to the wearer's Strength Characteristic and increases the category of his Size Trait by 1 (for instance, a normal human, whose Size is Average, would become Hulking). The armour's power cells allow for up to 24 hours of continuous use before they must be recharged or replaced. With the helmet in place, the armour

can function as a fully sealed void suit. It also includes a built-in auspex, a photo-visior, and recoil gloves.

Further, the system's reactive servos grant the wearer the Sturdy Trait.

If a suit has also been consecrated for the unending war against rogue psykers and the foul entities of the Warp, it also possesses wards and psy-null circuits integrated into the armour that provide the wearer with some measure of protection from psychic assault. The wearer of a consecrated suit of artificer armour gains a +20 bonus to Opposed Willpower Tests to resist the effects of Psychic Techniques, and his unarmed attacks have the Sanctified Quality.

Sabbat-pattern Helm

The standard pattern helm used by the Sisters of Battle since the mid-38th Millennium, the helm's advanced systems contain a built-in rebreather and photo-visior, allowing the wearer to function in even the most adverse battlefield conditions. The helm is also crafted of psy-nullifying materials, providing the wearer some defence against psykers and witches.

This helmet includes a rebreather and a Good Craftsmanship photo-visior. Further, the wearer of a Sabbat-pattern helm gains a +20 bonus to Opposed Willpower Tests to resist the effects of Psychic Techniques.

GEAR

Beyond the Maw, there are countless souls to be saved, untold treasures to be had, and vast fortunes to be made. Yet, for those unprepared for the wonders and dangers of the Koronus Expanse, the lure of the distant stars can spell certain doom. While weapons and armour are vital to survival of those who journey into these uncharted regions, shrewd Explorers avail themselves of any equipment that might provide them an edge in a cold and unforgiving galaxy.

TABLE 3-9: CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

Name	Wt	Availability
Whisper Boots	1.5 kg	Rare
Scapular Incorruptus	1.5 kg	Very Rare
Djeset Talisman	0.1 kg	Extremely Rare
Eos Star Amulet	0.5 kg	Extremely Rare
Rosarius	1 kg	Very Rare

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

Many missionaries journey into the wilds with nothing but the clothes on their backs and the weapons in their hands. As such, the few items these intrepid individuals do choose to carry are often of extreme importance.

Whisper Boots

Frequently worn by thieves and assassins, whisper boots contain sound dampeners in their soles, which hush the wearer's footsteps. Though regulated on several planets in the Calixis Sector, whisper boots are popular in the Expanse among those who prefer not to attract too much attention.

Whisper boots grant their wearer an additional two Degrees of Success on successful Silent Move Tests.

Scapular Incorruptus

Worn by the self-titled Adherents of Aleynikov, these symbolic aprons, which hang front and back from the shoulders, outwardly represent the wearer's commitment to that missionary's cause. They were adopted by the Adherents of Aleynikov within a century after her untimely demise. Embroidered with sacred symbols of the Imperial Cult and a badge that represents Aleynikov—a burning reed—the Scapular Incorruptus is believed to provide potent proof against disease. Whether this is actually the case or whether faith alone sustains Aleynikov's followers, her disciples do seem to have an unnatural resistance to the illnesses that plague the rest of humanity.

Any Explorer with the Pure Faith Talent who wears a Scapular Incorruptus may spend a Fate Point to automatically pass any single Test to resist the effects of a poison, disease, or radiation with 1d5 Degrees of Success.

Djesset Talisman

Traditionally given to the aristocratic youth of Nazhdureyah at the age of maturity, the Djesset is a talisman that was worn by that world's psychic nobility. Taking the form of a single stylised eye, most often inlaid with precious rubies or carnelian, the Djesset was the outward symbol of the supremacy of psykers. The precise origins of the talisman are unclear, but it seems to represent the all-seeing eye of their Crimson God, through whom the ruling class of Nazhdureyah claimed to derive their supernatural powers. Though a hated symbol of tyranny on Nazhdureyah, Djesset talismans are occasionally seen elsewhere as objects of curiosity, and it is rumoured that the few surviving psykers of the ancient Nazhdureyah nobility still wear the Djesset in secret.

Djesset talismans act as a psy-focus (see page 146 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook). Further, its wearer counts as being trained in the Psyniscience Skill.

Eos Star Amulet

Made from phosphorescent crystals gathered from the remnants of a small comet that struck Asandre just prior to the arrival of Jollus Marquette, Eos shards are highly valued among the people of Asandre. The Eos star, as the comet was later named, is said to have heralded a new dawn for the whole world. Folk belief holds that wearing one of these golden, glowing shards against the bare skin grants one the golden tongue of the Marquette. Whether or not this is true, of course, is up to debate, but many individuals of wealth and influence on Asandre choose to carry these amulets nonetheless.

An Explorer wearing an Eos star amulet may re-roll one failed Interaction Skill Test per game session.

Rosarius

An almost universally recognised symbol of the authority of the Adeptus Ministorum, the Rosarius is a potent icon borne by the favoured agents of the Ecclesiarchy. Usually worn prominently at the neck or waist on a chain, a simple cord, or a string of prayer beads, the Rosarius garners the wearer immediate respect and fear from those who live and strike terror into the hearts of those who defy it.

A Rosarius has an inbuilt Force Field with a Protection Rating of 45 (see **Force Fields** on page 90). Displaying a Rosarius provides the wearer with a +10 bonus on all Interaction Skill Tests with followers of the Imperial Creed (whether they are true believers or simply fear its power and authority).



DRUGS AND CONSUMABLES

Narcotics in the Koronus Expanse run the gamut from medicinal herbs that have been spread to sundry worlds by travelling vessels to strange and deadly concoctions brewed by aliens such as the enigmatic Stryxis and the Dark Eldar and only consumed by the supremely courageous (and unwise).

TABLE 3-10: DRUGS AND CONSUMABLES

Name	Wt	Availability
Aletheias Root	0.5 kg	Scarce
Azure Cap	1 kg	Rare
Deadfall	0.5 kg	Rare
Medicus Ministorum	4 kg	Very Rare
Rhodopis Juice	0.5 kg	Scarce

Aletheias Root

The root of the aletheias plant is well-known to have certain narcotic effects. While relatively short-acting and not particularly addictive, the aletheias root can be distilled into a virtually tasteless substance used by some in the Expanse as a truth serum. If properly administered, aletheias root can lower a person's inhibitions to such a degree that he spills his deepest secrets and confesses his wickedest sins.

Distilling the root into tasteless, odourless form requires a **Routine (+20) Trade (Chymist) Test** that requires at least ten minutes, and administering it in the correct dose requires a **Challenging (+0) Chem-Use Test**. Attempts to detect the drug in food or drink suffer a -30 penalty. Once ingested by or injected into an individual, that character must make a **Hard (-20) Toughness Test** or suffer a -20 penalty to Opposed Interaction Tests for one minute, plus one additional minute per Degree of Failure by which he failed the Test.

Azure Cap

A peculiar fungus native to a few oases on Sideria II, azure cap has bizarre hallucinogenic and physiological effects on humans. Consumed by certain tribes of the indigenous population as part of spiritual or religious rituals, the strange aftereffects of eating the brightly-hued blue mushroom have been noted by certain traders who have visited the world.

Any Explorer who ingests a dose of azure cap must make a **Difficult (-10) Toughness Test** or suffer severe hallucinations. Roll on **Table 5-5: Hallucinogen Effects** (see page 126 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook) to see how the character behaves for the next 1d10 Rounds. Any Explorer who ingests azure cap gains a +20 bonus to all Strength Tests and suffers a -10 penalty on all Perception Tests for 1d5 hours, regardless of whether any hallucinogenic effects occur. When the effects of the azure cap wear off, the user gains 1d5 levels of Fatigue.

Deadfall

Extracted from the bark of the apate tree of Birynox Prime, deadfall had a peculiar toxic effect. If ingested in the proper dosage, deadfall can place a person in a comatose state, slowing their heart rate, breathing, and other vital signs so as to be virtually indistinguishable from death.

An Explorer who ingests deadfall must make a **Hard (-20) Toughness Test**; if he fails, he immediately falls into a temporary, death-like state for 3d10 hours. Tests made to find any signs of life in the imbiber (Awareness, Medicae, or Scrutiny) suffer a -30 penalty. If an Explorer wishes to awaken a character under the effects of deadfall, he can do so by making a **Hard (-20) Medicae Test**. If he succeeds, the target awakens immediately; if he fails, the target continues to slumber. This Test can be repeated once per hour on a given character.

Medicus Ministorum

Prized by those who tend to the sick and wounded, the medicus ministorum is a superb medikit containing some of the finest medicae supplies the Imperium can offer.

An Explorer using a medicus ministorum scores an additional 2 Degrees of Success on successful Medicae Tests and reduces his Degrees of Failure on failed Medicae Tests by 2 (to a minimum of a failed Test with 0 Degrees of Failure).

Rhodopis Juice

Distilled from the rhodopis plant that grows on Everharvest, this strange brew has peculiar effects on human physiology. Quickening the neurotransmission of synaptic impulses and increasing the levels of serotonin in the brain, rhodopis juice can temporarily increase the mental acuity and memory retention of the imbiber, as well as alter his social interactions with others, generally in a positive (albeit slightly more aggressive) manner. However, a peculiar fugue state and general sense of malaise tends to follow, and long-term use of rhodopis juice can lead to addiction.

An Explorer under the effects of rhodopis juice scores an additional 2 Degrees of Success on any successful Fellowship and Intelligence Tests for 1d5 hours after ingesting it. However, when the effects of the juice wear off, the user must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Tests** or suffer a -20

penalty to Perception Tests for 1d5 hours. If the user fails this Test by three or more Degrees of Failure, he is struck particularly hard by his cravings for the substance and suffers an additional -20 penalty to Willpower Tests for 1d5 hours (or until he receives another dose of the drug).



TOOLS

The tools of a missionary are many, and while a missionary's most crucial implements are inside his mind, having proper physical tools on hand as well can make even monumental tasks more approachable.

Ashen Skull

The Halo Stars are a dark and mysterious region of the galaxy, and those who dare journey into their ominous depths often seek out means to protect not only their bodies but their souls as well. Among those who explore the dark and ominous reaches of the Koronus Expanse, the rare relics known colloquially as ashen skulls are considered to be a particularly potent safeguard against the spiritual dangers of the vast unknown. The preserved skulls of deceased Black Priests of Maccabeus who underwent a secret ritual known as the Encarta Maleficarum, these relics are reputed to ward against the nefarious dangers of the Warp.

An Explorer in possession of an ashen skull gains a +10 bonus to Opposed Willpower Tests made to resist Psychic Techniques or the mental influence of Warp Entities. At the Game Master's discretion, when an Explorer in possession of an ashen skull wins an Opposed Test this way, he might also gain some form insight into his would-be attacker (such as his location, nature, intention, or even his surface thoughts).

Auto-Ledger

A clacking, wheezing contraption of brass, steel, and wood, the auto-ledger can do the job of a hundred clerks. The calculus logi, variable cogitators, and data recorders built into the auto-ledger can greatly assist Rogue Traders and Seneschals in managing cargos and inventories, as well as the accountancy of the myriad business ventures and trade pacts traders in the Koronus Expanse are likely to undertake. Though not completely fool-proof, the auto-ledger can help prevent mistakes and financial calamities from befalling those who have access to one of these devices.

When a Misfortune event occurs for a Rogue Trader with an auto-ledger in his possession (or that of one of his trusted subordinates), subtract 5 from the result of the roll to determine the severity of the Misfortune on **Table 9-41: Misfortunes** (see page 283 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook).

Bypass Spike

Bypass spikes are machine interfaces intended to circumvent electronic security systems. The complex matrices and algorithms embedded in the spike assail the machine spirit of any cogitator or electronic device it is connected to, seeking a weakness it can exploit. Once it passes through the electronic defences, the bypass spike provides limited access and control over a machine spirit, allowing the user to disable security systems or access data hidden behind techno-arcane barriers.

An Explorer with a bypass spike gains a +20 bonus to Tech-Use Tests for the Security Systems Special Use of this Skill. If an Explorer succeeds on such a Test using a bypass spike, he reduces the time the Test requires by one minute per Degree of Success he scores on the Test (to a minimum of 10 seconds).

TABLE 3-11: TOOLS

Name	Wt	Availability
Ashen Skull	1 kg	Extremely Rare
Auto-Ledger	90 kg	Rare
Bypass Spike	0.5 kg	Rare
Book of Saint Lucius	1.5 kg	Average
Catechism of Saint Drusus	1 kg	Scarce
Chirurgion's Tools	5 kg	Rare
Confessions of Kobras Aquairre	1 kg	Very Rare
Decryption Cogitator	200 kg	Rare
Digesta Emporia Calixia	1.5 kg	Average
Drusine Incense	0.5 kg	Rare
The Emperor's Tarot	0.5 kg	Very Rare
Excruciator	2 kg	Very Rare
Krytron-plasma Detonator	0.5 kg	Rare
Laud Hailer	4 kg	Rare
Liber Heresius	1.5 kg	Extremely Rare
Maxims of Marquette	1 kg	Scarce
Notarikon of the Seven	1 kg	Rare
Saboteur's Supplies	4 kg	Rare
Shock Collar	1.5 kg	Scarce
Thorian Missal	1 kg	Average
Uluméathi Plasma Syphon	2.5 kg	Extremely Rare
Van Heuring's Compendium	2 kg	Scarce
Void Coffin	1000 kg	Extremely Rare

Book of Saint Lucius

Few orators in the history of the Imperium have equalled the fiery rhetoric of Saint Lucius of Agatha. The sermons of the famed Confessor have been published and republished countless times on thousands of the worlds across the galaxy. The righteousness of the revered saint's words echo through the long centuries and continue to inspire the faithful to greater acts of devotion. In the wilds of the Koronus Expanse, many missionaries carry this tome as a source of inspiration and guidance as they walk their lonely path in service of the Emperor.

Once per combat, an Explorer in possession of this item can read from the book and make an **Ordinary (+10) Fellowship Test** as 2 Full Actions to inspire his allies. If he succeeds, any ally within earshot gains a +20 bonus to Tests to resist the effects of Fear and Pinning until the end of the encounter. If the reader is killed, Stunned, or the sermon otherwise interrupted during that time, all friendly listeners suffer a -20 penalty to Tests to resist the effects of Fear and Pinning until the end of the encounter, instead.

Catechism of Saint Drusus

No Imperial saint holds greater sway over the Calixis Sector and the Koronus Expanse than Drusus, the determined warmaster who completed the Angevin Crusade and brought the Sector back into the fold of the Imperium of Man. The great man's military acumen was only surpassed by his intense piety and devotion to the God-Emperor. Written late in his life, this catechism combines the saint's views on doctrinal matters with the lessons he learned through a life of campaigning. The words of Drusus counsel piety tempered by patience, and zeal supported by wisdom. A peculiar symbiosis of sacred text and practical guidance, the *Catechism of Saint Drusus* has become required reading for Imperial commanders and missionaries alike.

A character in possession of the *Catechism of Saint Drusus* gains a +10 bonus to Command Tests. Additionally, once per game session, a character in possession of these writings may make a **Difficult (-10) Scholastic Lore (Military Tactics) Test** as a Full Action. If he succeeds, each of his allies within 20 metres may make a Delay Action (see page 238 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook) as a Free Action until the end of his next Turn.

Chirurgion's Tools

Implements of either salvation or torture, these superb sets of surgical instruments includes all of the scalpels, lancets, forceps, clamps, needles, dilators, retractors, and probes necessary to conduct most general surgery. While of little application to those not trained to use such tools, in the hands of a skilled chirurgion, these instruments can be the difference between life and death. Likewise, in the equally skilled hands of an interrogator, these tools can inflict the most heinous pain and torture.

Once per game session, an Explorer with chirurgion's tools may re-roll a failed *Medicae* Test involving surgery (staunching Blood Loss, saving or amputating limbs, attaching bionics or implants, etc.) or Interrogation Test.



Confessions of Kobras Aquairre

A legend in the Koronus Expanse renowned for both his piety and brutality, Kobras Aquairre was a Rogue Trader with the almost unprecedented distinction of possessing both a Greater Warrant of Trade and the status of an Inquisitor. Aquairre led a massive exploratory fleet into the Expanse in the century following the opening of the Maw, and spent fully a hundred years plumbing the depths of the unknown and bringing the Imperial Creed to scores of worlds that had for millennia been without the word of the Emperor. Half a century after the last contact from the armada, a frigate carrying the last survivors of Aquairre's expedition limped into Port Wander, bearing tales of their battles and journeys, as well as Aquairre's own journal and final testament. These now-proscribed writings have come to be known as the *Confessions of Aquairre*, and contain a great deal of forbidden knowledge that certain powerful and extraordinarily dangerous individuals would consider deeply heretical.

An Explorer who can reference the *Confessions* gains a +20 bonus to Common Lore (Koronus Expanse), Forbidden Lore (Xenos), and Scholastic Lore (Legend) Tests. If he is discovered in possession of a copy of the *Confessions* by an agent of an Inquisitor who finds such matters uncouth, however, the Explorer gains the Enemy (Inquisition) Talent.

Decryption Cogitator

Based on STC design principles, the decryption cogitator is intended to assist in cracking enemy ciphers and battle codes. The chugging, hissing cogitator is about the size of a massive ammo crate and able to run incredibly complex algorithms over which only the red-robed adepts of Mars claim understanding or mastery. While Rogue Traders find these devices useful in reading the secret encoded correspondence of their rivals, Explorers in the Expanse have also found the cogitator invaluable in deciphering the writings and hieroglyphs of long-dead xenos races.

An Explorer in possession of a decryption cogitator counts the Ciphers, Literacy, Scholastic Lore (Cryptology), Secret Tongue, Speak Language, and Trade (Cryptographer) Skills as Basic Skills. Further, he can use his Tech-Use Skill in place of the usual Skill for Tests in any of these Skills. However, using a decryption cogitator doubles the usual amount of time required for such translation or code-breaking.

Digesta Emporia Calixia

Within the Koronus Expanse, the laws of the Imperium are rarely applied and trade is usually conducted at the barrel of a gun. However, there are times when Rogue Traders find it more practical to resort to legal agreements and contracts to conduct business. While the complex trade laws of the Imperium are a dizzying assortment of edicts, commercial decrees, magisterial precedents, and ancient compacts too voluminous to be contained even within the greatest libraries of the galaxy, the laws and regulations most commonly applied to commerce within the Calixis Sector are compiled in a tome known as the *Digesta Emporia Calixia*. The *Digesta* contains several thousand legal rulings and opinions from hundreds of influential jurists, scholars, and magisters pertaining to trade

in the Calixis Sector, so ensconced in tradition and precedent that they carry the weight of law. While not all of the information it provides reflects the mercurial conditions of trade in the Koronus Expanse, it can still provide an Explorer with a valuable point of reference in negotiations.

A character with access to the *Digesta* gains a +10 bonus to Commerce Tests. Further, a character in possession of the *Digesta* may spend a Fate Point to automatically pass any Scrutiny Test he makes during a financial negotiation with 1d5 Degrees of Success.

Drusine Incense

Said to be derived from a prescript laid down by the warrior-saint Drusus himself during the warn-torn days of the Angevin Crusade, this incense—a mixture of frankincense, myrrh, camphor, galbanum, and the crushed blossoms of the rare Iocanthine rose—is ritually prepared in the vaults of the Cathedral of Illumination in Hive Tarsus on Scintilla and is renowned for its purifying effect. Highly valued by the faithful, Drusine incense is used in high masses and ceremonies of import across the Calixis Sector and beyond, and the wise know that the folk tales of the incense's ability to ward off evil hold more than a grain of truth.

Drusine Incense is a coarse, reddish-gold powder that one burns in a metal censer suspended on chains called a thurible. The incense creates a cloud up to three metres across. Within the cloud, Explorers with the Pure Faith Talent count the rating of the Fear Trait of any Daemon or psyker they encounter as 1 (Disturbing), regardless of the normal rating of that Trait. Additionally, Warp entities with the Incorporeal or Phase Trait lose that Trait within the cloud of sacred incense. A single portion of incense burns for 1d10+20 minutes.

The Emperor's Tarot

For ten thousand years the Emperor has sat atop the Golden Throne, still and silent as a corpse. Despite his morbid rest, the wise know that the Emperor communicates His divine will through omens, signs, and oracles, and in particular the Emperor's Tarot. While many are at least familiar with the paper reproductions of the sacred images on the cards, few have ever held the psychoactive crystal wafers of the genuine item. Fewer still are able to actually read the future using the cards. For those gifted (or cursed) with psychic premonition, the divine auguries of these cards can literally change an Explorer's destiny.

Once per Game Session, a psyker with the Divination Discipline can use the Emperor's Tarot to foretell the future of a single individual. The psyker must make a **Challenging (+0) Trade (Soothsayer) Test**, which requires 3d10 minutes to complete, and must have one of the individual's personal belongings (or the individual himself) nearby during this time. If the psyker succeeds, the character whose future he foretold

gains 1 temporary Fate Point for the duration of the game session. This Fate Point can be spent as normal, but cannot be "Burned." At the Game Master's discretion, this reading might also provide the psyker with some insight into events to come in the near future—or at least, in one possible future.

Excruciator

These small devices are used in the questioning and interrogation of heretics, traitors, and other enemies of the Imperium, and are the tool of choice for eliciting confessions from witches and recidivists. A variety of monofilament wires and induction needles protrude from these terrifyingly effective devices, allowing the operator to inflict the most horrific agonies on the subject through neural and chemical manipulation without leaving permanent damage. Though excruciators are normally reserved for Inquisitors and torturers, some Rogue Traders find them useful to extract information from those reluctant to share their secrets.

Use of this device grants a +20 bonus to Interrogation Tests, and merely having one present grants a +30 bonus to Intimidate Tests. Further, an excruciator imposes a -20 penalty on Deceive Tests by the subject being interrogated.

Krytron-plasma Detonator

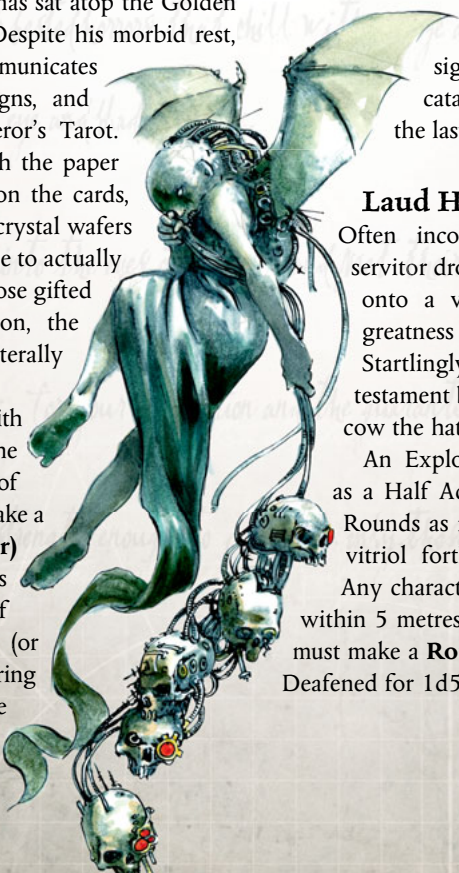
Using a high-energy arc discharge to create a small amount of plasma, the krytron-plasma detonator is simple to use and exceptionally reliable. Manufactured in the Lathe Worlds of the Calixis Sector by arcane means, these eerily dependable detonators are much sought after beyond the Maw by those whose work requires handling explosives.

Krytron-plasma detonators provide a +20 bonus to Tests made for the Place Explosives Special Use of the Demolition Skill. Further, if an Explorer using one of these devices would accidentally trigger an explosion when planting with or disarming explosives, he may spend a Fate Point. If he does so, he observes the telltale signal of the device a split-second before catastrophe and narrowly averts detonating it at the last second, shutting down the device instead.

Laud Hailer

Often incorporated into mono-tasked servo-skulls, servitor drones, or other minor attendants, or mounted onto a vehicle, loud hailer loudly proclaim the greatness and divinity of the Emperor of Mankind. Startlingly loud and strident, the ear-splitting testament booms forth in a thunderous voice meant to cow the hated foes of the Imperium of Mankind.

An Explorer wearing a loud hailer can activate it as a Half Action. He gains the Fear (1) Trait for 1d5 Rounds as it blasts hateful hymns and spills righteous vitriol forth upon the hated enemies of humanity. Any character—friend or foe, including the wearer—within 5 metres of the loud hailer when he activates it must make a **Routine (+20) Toughness Test** or be Deafened for 1d5 Rounds.



Liber Heresius

Encompassing the wisdom of countless generations of Witch Hunters and Inquisitors, this tome provides priceless insight into the schemes and machinations of heretics, witches, psykers, and sorcerers. Armed with the knowledge contained in the pages of the *Liber Heresius*, those who seek to thwart the wicked are better prepared to expose and combat the devious servants of the Great Enemy. Of course, even possessing profane knowledge of such matters can erode all but the strongest of wills, and each glimpse of the terrible words engraved upon these pages grinds upon the soul itself.

An Explorer in possession of a copy of the *Liber Heresius* gains a +30 bonus to Forbidden Lore (Daemonology, Heresy, Psykers, and The Warp) Tests. However, whenever an Explorer using the *Liber Heresius* fails one of these Tests by a number of Degrees of Failure greater than his Willpower Bonus, he gains 1 Corruption Point.

Maxims of Marquette

Penned during his passage through the Maw aboard the destroyer *Boundless Valour*, Jollus Marquette's journals were published posthumously and provide deep insight into the missionary's philosophies and methods. Combined with some of his later writings, these journals have come to be known as the *Maxims of Marquette*, in reference to the many sagely aphorisms scattered throughout. Though many of Marquette's ideas were not entirely original, he eschewed the normal devotional platitudes common to most missionaries and provided subtle advice and counsel in methods to influence others and sway them to a cause.

An Explorer in possession of this item gains a +10 bonus to Barter and Charm Tests made to the faithful of the Imperial Creed. Additionally Jollus Marquette seeded various hints about the true extent of his operations into this volume—including the arcane code-words that organisations such as the Choir of the Betrayed on Humility still use.



Notarikon of the Seven

Allegedly penned by the infamous Seven Witches of Footfall, the *Notarikon* contains within its pages a vast amount of occult lore, as well as systems of astrological and numerological divination. Covering a variety of forms of isopsephy, gematria, and astrologia relating to the celestial bodies of the Expanse and the Rifts of Hecaton in particular, the esoteric knowledge contained in the *Notarikon of the Seven* is prized by those who trade in secrets of the unseen universe.

An Explorer with a copy of the *Notarikon* gains a +30 bonus to Scholastic Lore (Legend, Numerology, Occult) and Trade (Soothsayer) Tests. However, whenever an Explorer using the *Notarikon* fails one of these Tests by a number of Degrees of Failure greater than his Willpower Bonus, he gains 1 Insanity Point.

Saboteur's Supplies

Including several elegantly wrought lock picks, sound amplification and nullification devices, and specialised drills, such kits are designed to aid the user in opening even the most complicated locks. Though they are most often used for skullduggery (both in the underworld in the Koronus Expanse and in the intrigue-ridden circles of politics that surround Rogue Traders), there are more legitimate uses for these items. Any Explorer who undertakes frequent salvage operations (or ventures into lost ruins or forgotten husks of voidships) occasionally needs to remove a door, unfasten a valuable object, or otherwise break ancient security methods that are still in place long after the ones who set them have vanished.

An Explorer with saboteur's supplies gains a +20 bonus to Security Tests made to open physical locks, remove objects that are secured, or otherwise defy similar mechanical obstacles. Additionally, saboteur's supplies make such attempts significantly quieter, and impose a -20 penalty on the Awareness Test of any character who might overhear the interloper's attempts to pick the lock.

Shock Collar

Equipped with a remote trigger, shock collars contain variable electrical nodes capable of delivering non-lethal jolts of electricity to a beast wearing the collar. Though negative reinforcement might only be part of a training regime, shock collars can significantly aid in keeping savage beasts under control. Of course, some creatures respond better to the threat of pain than others, and some can react violently indeed to a sudden shock.

Wrangling Tests made to influence a creature fitted with a shock collar gain a +20 bonus. However, if an Explorer fails a Wrangling Test to control a beast wearing a shock collar by four or more Degrees of Failure, the creature angrily turns on him. It enters a Frenzy (as per the Frenzy Talent on pages 98–99 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook) and attempts to wreak its vengeance upon him until he passes a **Very Hard (-30) Wrangling Test** as a Full Action to bring the beast back under his control.

Thorian Missal

Also known as the “Book of Hours,” the *Thorian Missal* is an illuminated book containing prayers, liturgies, sermons, and a calendar of Imperial feast days. This collection of writings is attributed by some to Sebastian Thor, an ancient holy man who came into his ascendancy during a time of great conflict in ages past. Other scholars believe that the book is a compilation of writings by Thor and some of his various contemporaries, pieced together some time after the reformations that followed the Age of Apostasy.

An Explorer with a copy of the *Thorian Missal* gains a +20 bonus to Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy, Imperial Creed) and Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) Tests.

Uluméathi Plasma Syphon

A strange device created by a xenos race on the Eastern Fringe of the galaxy, the crystals of the plasma syphon resonate on frequencies that disrupt plasma weaponry, causing plasma guns to fire wildly off target and making it difficult to achieve any sort of accuracy with them. Few of these devices have made their way into the Koronus Expanse from the distant Uluméathi League, but those that have are in high demand.

Characters who attempt to fire Plasma weapons within 30 metres of this device suffer a –30 penalty to their Ballistic Skill Tests. If a character fails a Ballistic Skill Test this way with a number of Degrees of Failure greater than his Ballistic Skill Bonus, the shot veers off at a catastrophic angle and the weapon Jams (or Overheats, if it has this Quality).

Van Heuring's Compendium

Having travelled far and wide across much of the Koronus Expanse as Seneschal to the Rogue Trader Zhorne, Grigory van Heuring visited scores of planets and managed countless wares passing through the cavernous holds of the *Lux Salvationis*. A studious chronicler and prolific writer, van Heuring compiled a great deal of his vast knowledge into a compendium cataloguing virtually everything of value that came into his possession during his storied career. Copies of *Van Heuring's Compendium* are highly sought after by Rogue Traders and Seneschals, its concise entries providing incredible insight into the nature and value of practically every commodity in the Expanse, from weapons and rare xenos artefacts to refined nephium and the beasts of Burnscour.

An Explorer who possesses *Van Heuring's Compendium* gains a +10 bonus to Common Lore (Koronus Expanse) and Evaluate Tests. Additionally, some scholars have come to believe that one or more of the missionaries famous for seeking the fabled Tomb of Cognatus might have confided some portion of their knowledge in Grigory van Heuring. If there are any secrets hidden in *Van Heuring's Compendium*, they have not been discovered yet—but enterprising Explorers might be able to find what other eyes have overlooked. If he so desires, the Game Master can use van Heuring's compendium to introduce the adventure found in **Chapter IV: The Sacred Heart**.



Void Coffers

Void coffers are chests or safes, often elaborately decorated, that are sealed by an internally powered void shield. Thus protected, void coffers are nearly impenetrable and virtually indestructible—tales tell of void coffers surviving the complete destruction of starships and being recovered intact amidst the floating debris. Few items are precious enough to keep hidden away in these expensive, custom strong boxes, but virtually anything so protected is bound to be of incomparable value. The intricate locks and shields on void coffers are most often keyed to the biometric information of the owner (fingerprints, retinal scans, DNA samples, etc.), through the use of specified, sophisticated keys. Such triggers can take nearly any form, from finely-wrought sigils to the fragrance of a particular flower that blooms only once every decade on the far-off hive world of Desoleum to the exact pitch of the whirr of an ancient, inherited chainsword.

Attempts to open a void coffer without the key require a **Hellish (–60) Tech-Use Test** (using the Security Systems Special Use of this Skill) to disable the void shield, followed by a **Very Hard (–30) Security Test** to open the physical lock holding the lid shut. Trying to open the coffer while the void shield is operational is virtually impossible. Trying to open it using brute force (blasting at it several times with a battle cannon, for instance) might overload the shield but would undoubtedly obliterate the coffer and its contents in the process.

HOLY RELICS OF THE KORONUS EXPANSE

"Though our foes be as numerous as the stars in the Expanse and beyond, the power of the Emperor is without bounds! You only need have the will to fight, and He will provide!"

—Taken from the last recorded transmissions
of Genevieve Almace

The forces arrayed against the Imperium of Man are as potent as they are cunning. Insidious xenos factions and the ever-present threat of Chaos continue their ceaseless assault across the worlds of the Koronus Expanse even as vile heresies and hordes of mutant monstrosities seek to corrupt and destroy the heart of Humanity. However, as endless and terrible as these forces might seem, the power of those who believe in the Emperor is stronger still. Born in the fires of this conflict are those blessed by the Emperor himself to shepherd and protect the scattered worlds of the Imperium. These exemplary men and women forego the comforts of a simpler life to follow the path of the missionary. Whether through uncommon valour, outstanding leadership, remarkable resourcefulness, or pure steadfast dedication towards improving the lives of his fellow man, these individuals devote themselves towards spreading the light of the Imperial Creed even unto the darkest corners of the Imperium. In doing so, they transcend the limits of their mortal lives and enter into the realm of legend as true servants of the Emperor. Along with their deeds, the tools that these glorious few made use of serve as standing memorials and testaments to their undying devotion and their sacred service.

While the willing devoted are numberless within the Koronus Expanse, four individuals have distinguished themselves above and beyond even the most righteous of the Imperial Creed. These four missionaries—Genevieve Almace, Nicomedes Keefe, Nadine Aleynikov, and Jollus Marquette—are shining examples of what it means to live a life for the sake of the God-Emperor. The arms and gear that these individuals used during their lives are an indispensable part of their individual legends, and continue to aid the righteous in the never ending fight against the foes of humanity.

THE RELICS OF GENEVIEVE ALMACE

Utterly faithful and unflinching against even the most terrible champions of the enemies of Mankind, Genevieve Almace embodied the righteous, incorruptible justice of the God-Emperor. Her impeccable military tactics and unmatched zealotry on the field turned the tide of many a battle, and her example continues to be a source of inspiration and guidance throughout the Koronus Expanse. The relics that remain after her passing are instruments of war that reflect her glorious, violent life spent converting the wayward and smiting the Emperor's foes.

THE BANNER OF WRATH

An enormous battle standard bearing the Imperial Crest and a staggering number of militant verses from the Imperial Creed, the Banner of Wrath has a remarkably rich and long-standing history of use by the Emperor's forces within the Koronus Expanse. As its last wielder, Almace carried it on every battle and campaign she ever took part in excepting her final conquest, and spoke often of the strength it seemed to give both her and her warriors in combat. Famous for their unmatched devotion to both their commander and their Creed, those under her command threw themselves at their foes with little fear

of injury or death when inspired by the site of Almace wielding the grand standard. Perhaps knowing that she would not survive her final test, she passed on

the standard to one of her most favoured attendants, and commanded him to make sure it was returned safely to its resting place in the hands of the Ecclesiarchy. Other missionaries journeying into the Koronus Expanse have carried it in her memory. It was lost decades ago, claimed as a trophy by treacherous xenos or buried beneath a pile of corpses on some anonymous, bloodstained battlefield.

The Banner of Wrath is a standard that takes one hand to wield and carry. Whenever an ally within 30 metres inflicts Righteous Fury, he automatically succeeds on the second attack Test required to deal additional

Damage (see **Righteous Fury** on page 245 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook). Additionally, once per combat encounter, the wielder of the Banner of Wrath may make a **Difficult (-10) Command Test** as a Free Action. If he succeeds, each ally within 30 metres may immediately either move a number of metres equal to his Agility Bonus directly towards the banner's wielder or make a Charge Action against a foe within range as a Free Action.

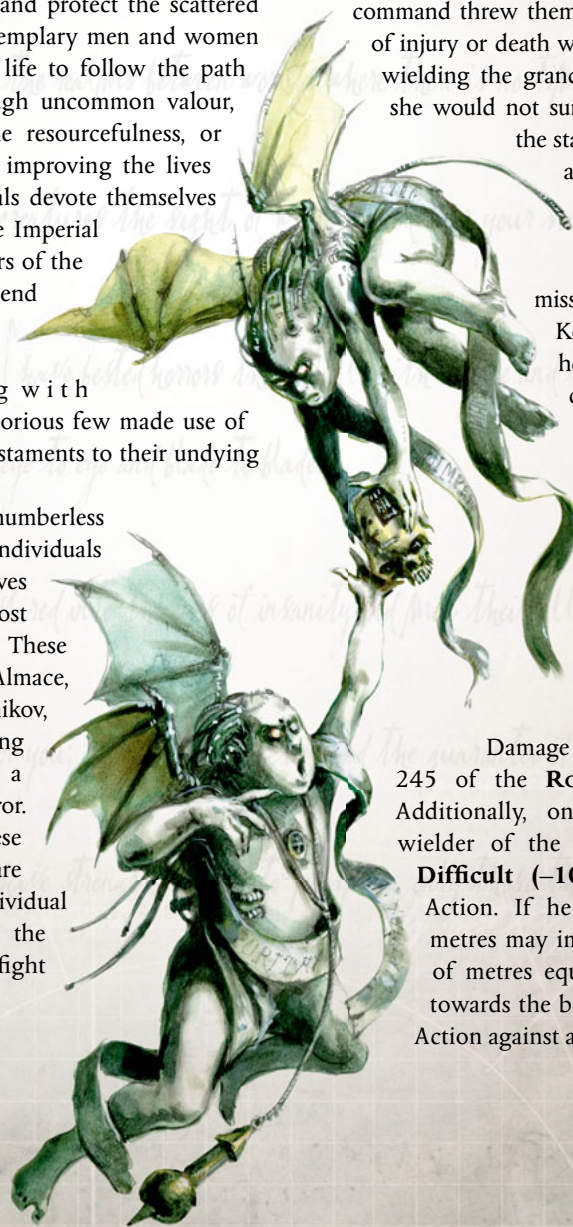


TABLE 3-12: RELIC WEAPONS

Name	Class	Dam	Pen	Special	Wt	Availability
Almace's Last Conquest	Melee	2d10+5 R	7	Tearing, Unbalanced	16 kg	Unique
Piety's Charge	Melee	2d10+10 E	9	Power Field, Unwieldy	20 kg	Unique

TABLE 3-13: ALMACE'S LAST CONQUEST EFFECTS

1d10 Roll	Effects
1-2	The blade channels the memory of the Daemon it slew. Its wielder immediately gains 1 Corruption Point. Further, he enters a Frenzy (as per the Frenzy Talent on page 98 of the ROGUE TRADER Core Rulebook) for the next 1d10 Rounds. Whenever he inflicts Damage upon a foe with the blade (after reductions for Armour and Toughness Bonus), that foe suffers Blood Loss.
3-8	The blade takes on a balance between the aspects of the two fearsome warriors. It inflicts an additional 1d10 Damage the next time inflicts Damage upon an enemy this encounter.
9-10	Almace herself seems to grip the blade again, her zealous fury surging to the surface through her weapon of old. The wielder gains the Fearless Talent and the blade gains the Cleansing Fire and Sanctified Qualities (see page 80) for the next 1d10 Rounds.

ALMACE'S LAST CONQUEST

At the very end of her daring strike against a world fully tainted by Chaos, her forces all but destroyed and her weapon lost somewhere nearby, Almace found herself alone and injured, facing the most fearsome warrior of the world's grim host: a Greater Daemon of Khorne. Struggling to stand, her body broken but her heart unshaken, Almace roared her last, desperate plea to the God-Emperor for aid. Casting about in the tide of blood that spilled before her, her hands at last came to rest upon the grip of her sword. Stained black with the blood of countless Daemons, the battered shard of metal seemed to jump forth in her hands to meet her foe. Even as her death descended upon her, she swung the blade up to meet it.

At this point, the legends become conflicted, lost to the wear and tear of the ages and a thousand different tellings. The most common version is that the two slew each other in that single, terrible stroke, but regardless of the exact nature of the events that took place, it is said that the blade she used survived the combat even if neither she nor the Daemon did. The fact remains that since Almace's final assault, a sword matching the legend's description has arisen from time to time on different planets within the Koronus Expanse. Unsightly compared to the gilded weapons of the Ecclesiarchy, the blade is an almost supernaturally sharp chunk of heavily scarred metal welded to a hefty two-handed grip. Always seeming to emerge in the most brutal crucibles of violence, its few wielders have spoken of it having a potent, almost violent aura about it that reacts with the wielder's wishes. It now rests in the hands of the Blood Tears on Loretta, who entrust it to their greatest champion. Perhaps because of its dark history, the blade is known by the name, "Almace's Last Conquest." Though its original owner is said to have used it in one hand, Almace's Last Conquest is a two-handed weapon.

Almace's Last Conquest seems to amplify ire and hostility by its mere presence. The wielder of the blade gains the Hatred Talent for each of the Talent Groups that apply to his current foes. Further, the first time its wielder spends a Fate Point during each combat encounter, the memory within the blade stirs. Roll 1d10 on **Table 3-13: Almace's Last Conquest Effects**. This effect occurs in addition to the usual effects of the spent Fate Point.

ALMACE'S TACTICA

Like many of the missionaries before and after her in the Koronus Expanse, Almace believed that studying the life of St. Cognatius would be vital for the propagation of the Imperial way within the Expanse, particularly if such research would lead to the location of his tomb. Her quest focused upon the information that she could most identify with, namely his military accomplishments and assets, and compiled references to both archeotechnology and any cultures with particularly sophisticated military traditions. She believed that such knowledge might lead to legends that could connect back to the sepulchre. While, unfortunately, she had no luck in uncovering the tomb before her final exploit, the *Tactica* is held in high regard by military specialists, and the few Explorators who took up her research were duly impressed by the archeotech that her descriptions illuminated (even if they were almost obsessively focused on the maintenance and proper use of weaponry). It is believed that, supplemented with other relics or collections of information regarding St. Cognatius, *Almace's Tactica* could help point the way to his tomb, but this is pure conjecture at best.

Almace's Tactica is a tome written in High Gothic. It grants a character who possesses it a +20 bonus to Scholastic Lore (Heraldry, Imperial Creed, Judgement, Legend, Philosophy, and Tactica Imperialis) Tests. Once per game session, a character in possession of *Almace's Tactica* may spend a Fate Point to automatically succeed on a Test to Unjam a weapon (or enact some similar minor repair, at the GM's discretion) with 1d5 Degrees of Success.

Finally, *Almace's Tactica* contains certain cryptic notes about her suspicions regarding the location of the Tomb of Cognatius. The Game Master can use this item to make the Explorers aware of the legend of Saint Cognatius, and even to lead them to the adventure in **Chapter IV: The Sacred Heart** (see page 109).

TABLE 3-14: OTHER RELICS

Name	Wt	Availability
The Banner of Wrath	12 kg	Unique
Almace's Tactica	1 kg	Unique
The Halo of the Devoted	0.5 kg	Unique
Vial of Aleynikov's Bane	0.5 kg	Near Unique
The Folio Languor	4 kg	Unique
Aleynikov's Star Chart	1 kg	Unique
The Contriver's Signet	0.5 kg	Unique

THE RELICS OF NICOMEDES KEEFE

Perhaps because of his legendary desire to exonerate himself of the crimes with which his father was charged, the fervour with which Nicomedes pursued his duties to the Ecclesiarchy and the Imperium has been a source of inspiration for countless others living a life of service to the Emperor. A distinctive figure even by Imperial standards, effigies and depictions of Keefe with halo shining and hammer in hand have become a common sight throughout the Koronus Expanse.

PIETY'S CHARGE

Keefe recovered this enormous archeotech power hammer during his conversion of Everharvest. The astoundingly detailed gilded imagery adorning the head and handle of the hammer spoke to its rich history as both an ornamental tool and a weapon, and Keefe believed that his finding of the weapon was no mere accident. Sources close to him say that he believed the hammer to be connected to locating St. Cognatius's tomb, and that perhaps it had even been wielded by the Cognatius himself. While his investigations into the hammer and St. Cognatius were never completed, the weapon has since come to stand as a symbol for everything that Keefe endeavoured to accomplish during his many excursions out of Imperial space. After his death, it was placed in a shrine devoted to his memory maintained on Foulstone by the Order of the Hammer.

Though appearing ceremonial in nature, Piety's Charge is still a fearsome weapon in the hand of a competent wielder. Additionally, the intricate engravings and symbols that adorn it attest to its rich history, and help to ensure its wielder's friendship among the Ecclesiarchy. If he is wearing Piety's Charge visibly, the wielder gains a +10 bonus to any Interaction Skill Tests made when dealing with the Ecclesiarchy, Sisters of Battle, and other pious individuals, and a +20 bonus to Interaction Skill Tests to interact with the Order of the Hammer (provided that the Explorer did not overtly steal it from these monks).

Given the hammer's massive weight and the considerable force behind its blows, any foe smote by Piety's Charge must make a **Challenging (+0) Strength Test** or be knocked Prone by the mighty stroke.

THE HALO OF THE DEVOTED

Legends of Keefe's journeys throughout the Koronus Expanse describe how Keefe's devotion to the spreading the Imperial Creed was such that true followers could actually see a visible halo flicker into being over his head whenever he found himself in danger. Supposedly, this halo provided him the Emperor's protection during his darkest hours, driving away bullets, blades, and even the baleful fire of tainted psykers. In truth, the phenomena thought to be Keefe's halo was another piece of archeotechnology that he discovered shortly after beginning his investigations into St. Cognatius. The device appears to respond to its bearer's distress, and provides its protection only in the most dire of circumstances. Only further fuelling his beliefs in the benefits of studying the Saint and discovering his tomb, Keefe named the device "The Halo of the Devoted" and came to rely upon the protection that it offered, perhaps too much given the mysterious circumstances surrounding his death. It too has come to rest in the monastery on Foulstone, though given the underwhelming appearance of the device and the monk's considerable resistance to anyone attempting to use Keefe's artefacts without their permission, it is unknown whether this is the original Halo. A simple silver chain worn around the neck, the Halo of the Devoted is an extraordinarily powerful protective force field.

The Halo of the Devoted is a Best Craftsmanship Force Field with a Protection Rating of 65 (see page 90). However, the Halo is not always active, and must be selectively powered on by the wearer to take effect. To engage it, the Explorer wearing the Halo must spend a Fate Point and intone a prayer to the Emperor for protection. Doing so activates the Halo for 1d10+5 Rounds, and causes his head to glow with a soft radiance for as long as the Force Field is active.



TABLE 3-15: RELIC SHIP'S COMPONENTS

Name	Power	Space	SP
XED1.11178e "Ubertas" Device	3	1	N/A , Unique
The Grand Compendium	1	3	N/A , Unique

THE XED1.11178E "UBERTAS" DEVICE

Few of the discoveries that Keefe made during his years on Everharvest can compare with the "Ubertas" device. An extraordinarily complicated machine approximately the size of a planetary shuttle, this unwieldy contraption is capable of causing any plant life within a focused area to grow at an extraordinary rate, up to many hundred of times faster than standard growth.

Unfortunately, merely fixing the device nearly exhausted his resources, and Keefe never discovered a way to replicate its techno-arcane miracles. After his death, the device was declared a sacred relic by the Adeptus Mechanicus. However, when they arrived on Everharvest to claim the device, it had vanished into a deadly jungle of its own creation. Though the acolytes of the Machine God made numerous attempts to reclaim the device, all of the Explorators sent to retrieve it perished in the attempt.

The XED1.11178e "Ubertas" device acts as a Ship Component that requires one day and a **Hard (-20) Forbidden Lore (Archeotech) Test** to install on a ship. As long as it is in working order, it completely provides for all of a single ship's food supply, and the crew never suffers from Starvation or other consequences of malnutrition. Having a source of good, fresh food for the entire ship increases Morale permanently by 5. Finally, a healthy and well-fed crew is less likely to spread disease. The device grants a +10 bonus to any Medicae Tests to Diagnose and Contain Shipborne Sickneses. Of course, such an ancient—and useful—component is liable to attract attention, both from fellow Rogue Traders and other characters more unsavoury still.

THE RELICS OF NADINE ALEYNIKOV

Though the greatest glory might lie in the field of combat, blessed are all who give their lives in the service of the God-Emperor. A pure desire to help and the dedication to learn and toil even after all hope appears lost can be just as important as a strong sword-arm.

Within the Koronus Expanse, few missionaries were so thorough or so devoted as Nadine Aleynikov. Converter, healer, researcher, and missionary, she fought against both human vice and natural disease to bring comfort and salvation to her fellow faithful even unto the end of her life. The road to salvation is paved with the blood of such selfless martyrs, and she is remembered by the research she left and the billions whose lives she made better in service to the Emperor.



VIAL OF ALEYNIKOV'S BANE

A particularly mutagenic, insidious disease native to Sideria II, the strain known as Aleynikov's Bane is characterised by a seemingly idiopathic pooling of blood in various parts of the body. It was thought to be completely incurable before Aleynikov began her work, and though she was able to make significant progress in curing it among the greater population, this led to not only her own death, but the deaths of nearly everyone on board both the Rogue Trader vessel *Nox Veniae* and an entire supply space station. Though both the planet of Gildas and its orbital station have been under official quarantine since these incidents, a shrine dedicated to Aleynikov's memory on Sideria II is still maintained by her followers and the descendants of the people she helped.

The disease itself is as horrifying as it is lethal. The entire course of the disease from exposure to death generally takes about a week, and beginning with sharp aching sensations in the joints and extremities. It eventually develops into bloating, discolouration, and loss of sensation in the limbs as blood flow slowly ceases. The victim's miserable life slowly comes to an end as pools of rotted blood invade and congeal within his internal organs, and as his gangrenous limbs begin to slough off from his body under their own weight.

Despite the horrifying effects of this disease, sealed vials of this devastating malady are occasionally carried by Adherents of Aleynikov, as a reminder of their patron's sacrifice. Other, entirely more sinister individuals also sometimes possess samples of the disease.

An Explorer with the Pure Faith Talent who possesses a Vial of Aleynikov's Bane gains the benefits of an additional Fate Point. However, this Fate Point can only be spent, and cannot be "Burned."

THE GRASPING ROT

An Explorer unlucky enough to catch Aleynikov's Bane suffers 1d5 Toughness Damage at the end of each day the disease remains uncured. While he is infected, he cannot remove Toughness Damage he has suffered. For every 10 points his Toughness Bonus falls due to disease, the Explorer must make a **Routine (+20) Toughness Test**. If he passes this Test by five or more Degrees of Success, he miraculously manages to shake off the worst of the disease and can begin recovering. A character who succeeds this way and fully recovers from a bout with Aleynikov's Bane is henceforth immune to its effects; a small consolation to make up for the appendages he has likely already lost. If he succeeds but does not score the required Degrees of Success to fully recover, his condition does not worsen or improve. If he fails, his flesh putrefies, and he suffers 2d10 Rending Damage that ignores Armour and Toughness Bonus to a randomly determined Location.

Any character who comes into contact with the Explorer (or his mortal remains) must make a **Very Hard (-30) Toughness Test**. In the case of continuous exposure (for example, sharing a ship's mess hall or infirmary), the exposed character must repeat this Test at the end of each hour. If a character fails this Test, the Game Master should roll 1d10; on a result of 6 or higher, it means that the individual has contracted Aleynikov's Bane. The Game Master can make this second roll secretly or openly, and have the symptoms appear as he sees fit over the next few days. Determining whether or not an Explorer has caught the disease before its symptoms manifest requires a **Very Hard (-30) Medicae Test**.

Curing the disease is no easy task; unless an Explorer manages to rid himself of it through extreme luck or incredible resilience, the only way to remove the disease is through developing a cure—a task that has proved too much for countless individuals, including Nadine Aleynikov herself. If any answers exist, they are likely to lie within the *Folio Languor*...

THE FOLIO LANGUOR

Though she would eventually succumb to the most fearsome of the diseases she researched, Nadine Aleynikov's exhaustive attention to detail and tireless care in recording the causes, symptoms, and treatments of diseases laid the groundwork for centuries of medical miracles to come. Though the majority of her notes were lost in the tragic circumstances of her death, the few survivors that remained from her last voyage aboard the *Nox Veniae* spoke of one final project she sought to complete before she perished. Supposedly, she shut herself up within her cabin for days at a time, feverishly compiling and recording all of her research within a single large tome. While no proof has yet arisen to corroborate these claims, if such a book exists, it would doubtless prove very useful in the hands of any medical specialists seeking to study diseases or improve their skills.

The *Folio Languor* is a tome that contains the majority of Aleynikov's research into both disease treatment and medical procedures as a whole. Possessing the Folio provides a +10 bonus to all Medicae Tests, and an additional +20 to any Medicae Tests to diagnose and treat diseases.

Further, with it (or a comparable tome of medicinal lore that covers such diseases, of which few exist), an Explorer can attempt to craft a cure to Aleynikov's Bane. Crafting a true cure requires a **Hellish (-60) Medicae Test** and at least a week of preparation for each attempt. If the Explorers succeed at this task, the cure provides any character to whom it is administered with a +40 bonus to his Toughness Tests to resist the effects of the disease, and reduces the number of Degrees of Success he must score on such Tests to overcome from it entirely from 5 to 3.

ALEYNIKOV'S STAR CHART

Similar to the omnipresence of Almace's Banner of Wrath and Keefe's Piety's Charge in iconography representing their lives, depictions of Aleynikov rarely depict her without the simple map case she was known to carry with her throughout her life. Though the origins of the chart and how it came into her possession remain a mystery, there is little room for doubt that the influence it had in both her mission and journey was significant, particularly near the end of her life. Among the few scattered sources that remain of her final days, a page torn from the private journal the captain of the *Nox Veniae* kept sheds some light on the chart.

It details how Aleynikov believed it to be both ancient and absolutely priceless, and that her studies led her to believe that the chart was not only a detailed map of several of the planets that St. Cognatius visited, but an actual set of directions to what might have been his final resting place. Tragically, as legend would have it, she was overcome with her disease mere days after divulging this last amazing discovery to the few survivors on the station, and it is believed that she died with the star chart tightly wrapped in her arms. Whether or not this is the precise truth, the barest rumour of this priceless object's resting place has led countless Explorers on forays into the darkest reaches of the Koronus Expanse.

Aleynikov's Star Chart is an ancient set of diagrams, notes, and maps that a ship's Navigator can use to locate a number of planets that were involved in St. Cognatius's legend. The GM should choose a number of planets both inhabited and undiscovered within the Expanse and surrounding areas that St. Cognatius visited or affected during his travels throughout the Koronus Expanse. Anyone using Aleynikov's Star Chart to plot a course and navigate through the Warp to any of these planets receives a +30 bonus to Navigation (Warp) Tests.

At the Game Master's discretion, Aleynikov's star chart can also provide various leads (such as the names of the worlds to which it contains the various routes) that the Explorers can follow if they are seeking the Tomb of Cognatius, or even help to introduce this search into the campaign at large.

THE RELICS OF JOLLUS MARQUETTE

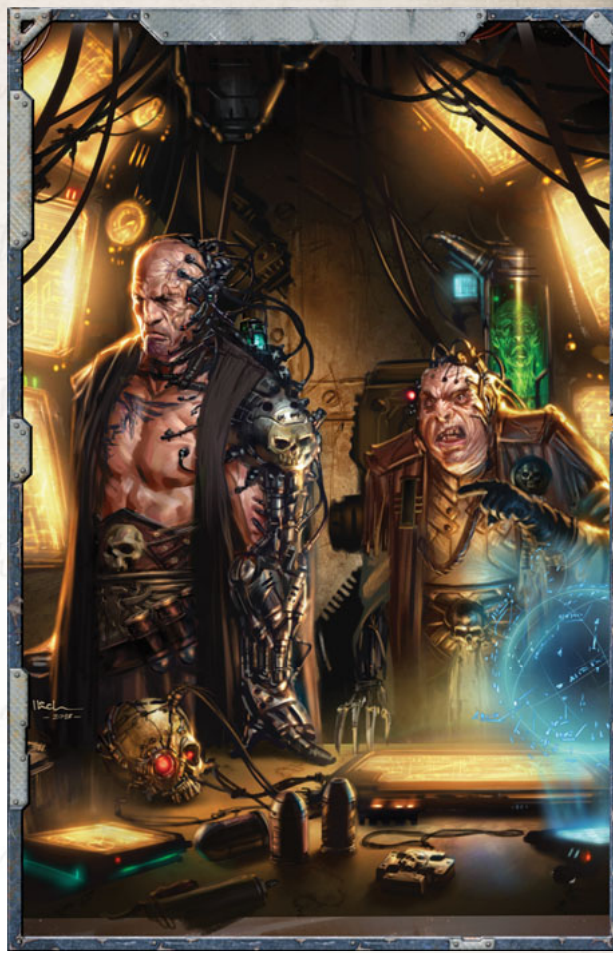
As passed down by the Emperor, true greatness lies in the hearts of all humans if they are but willing to strive for it. Alas, all too often cowardice and doubt make their homes where courage and zealotry should reside, and humanity is diminished rather than illuminated and divided rather than unified. It is for this reason that some are blessed by the Emperor with certain traits that allow them to bring out their comrades' and followers' greatest potential. Whether this come in the form of intelligence, foresight, charisma, or wisdom, it allows such individuals to live truly exceptional lives. These men and women are the single bullet that spurs the revolution, the single grain of sand that starts the landslide. Jollus Marquette was one such leader, who not only believed that he could move whole planets, but knew that he could do so without any doubt.

THE GRAND COMPENDIUM

Few individuals were nearly so well travelled or so well informed about the planets, cultures, and motivations of Winterscale's Realm as Jollus Marquette. His enormous library of writings on this subject, later called his "Grand Compendium," is the sum of everything he learned in his travels—or at least, everything he would openly admit to knowing. The topics range from the general to the extremely specific, and cover an enormous number of different subjects. Additionally, legend has it that the Compendium includes the single greatest collection of information regarding Saint Cognatius that has ever existed in the Imperium. Supposedly Marquette left its location hidden throughout other works placing it under careful encryption as a final test to any who would seek to follow in his footsteps. While locating and compiling all of this hidden information would be a project of incredible magnitude, nigh-impossible challenge notwithstanding, the Grand Compendium itself is a priceless treasure trove of information that any Rogue Trader would do well to seek out. Unfortunately, only fragmented pieces of the compendium have been found thus far.

Much too large to be carried by even hundreds of people, the full Grand Compendium acts as a Ship's Component that augments an Explorer's Lore Skills. Once per game session, a character with access to the Compendium for an hour or longer may spend a Fate Point. If he does so, he counts all Common Lore and Scholastic Lore Skills as Basic Skills until the end of the game session.

At the Game Master's discretion, the Explorers can also use the Compendium as one means by which they might justify acquire Common Lore and Scholastic Lore Skills not normally available to their Careers as Elite Advances.



THE CONTRIVER'S SIGNET

It is no great secret that Marquette was one of the most well-connected, influential individuals in the Koronus Expanse. However, few people, from his fellow missionaries to the highest planetary lords, ever learned the secrets behind his incredible organisational talents. The network of power he managed to engineer from his humble beginnings grew to rival that of any Sector Lord's. Unfortunately, perhaps because of this remarkable singularity of power, his sudden passing by an assassin's hand was enough to destabilise most of the planets he had worked so hard to bring into the fold. Though fragmented and ravaged by conflict, the old groundwork that Marquette laid upon these worlds still persists after his death, waiting for one as talented and driven as he to take up the reins once again.

As a secondary facet to his Grand Compendium, Marquette worked in secret on a project of his own, a project that hinged upon a unique piece of archeotechnology he discovered early in his travels within Winterscale's Realm. Though at first glance it seemed nothing more than a rather dull black gemstone no larger than a button, Marquette discovered through careful study and experimentation, an incredibly intricate series of cogitators inside the gem capable of recording, compiling, and encrypting vast amounts of information. He ordered it to be set within a signet ring and engraved with his crest. Calling it the "Contriver's Signet," he set about recording each and every important contact he ever made throughout his life within



III: INSTRUMENTS OF THE CREED



the gem. Tailored to react only to his touch, it allowed him to keep a constantly updating list of every person he had ever influenced. This tally is immense, for Marquette curried favours across countless worlds and vessels, from massive shrine worlds where temples whose construction he oversaw still stand to tiny human populations that know the Imperium only through the works of Marquette. In spite of his death, many of Marquette's old information enclaves and cabals of informants still exist in the Calixis Sector and the Koronus Expanse, continuing the missionary's work generations after his demise. These shadowy groups, such as the Choir of the Betrayed on Humility and the Everfaithful of the Harbinger on Arcus, still believe in the value of Marquette's labours, and some even hold out for his imminent return, fervently claiming that Marquette never perished or that he shall transcend death itself to bring light to all of the Koronus Expanse.

These fanatics are eager to help any who can provide a sign that they are carrying on Marquette's legacy—and there could be no better sign than the Contriver's Signet, which contains all of the secrets one would need to win over such groups.

Perhaps because so few knew of the importance of this ring, it was most likely divided up with the rest of his personal effects and remains after his assassination, and its location is currently unknown. Beyond the sheer difficulty of finding the signet, Marquette is said to have locked the ring with a complex series of codes as he choked out his dying breath, rendering it dormant. However, should any Explorer seek it out and learn how to access its contents, he would have the foundation of a truly world-shaking web of contacts still awaiting the return of a leader capable of uniting them as Marquette once did. Marquette is even rumoured to have hidden the location of the Tomb of Cognatus within the ring, though whether it contains this information or merely hints of where to begin the search (and what would be required to access this most clandestine of information) is left to the Game Master's discretion.

The Contriver's Signet is a small ring that can be worn on the index or ring finger of a normal-sized human hand. Reawakening the ring from its dormant state requires the presence of Jollus Marquette's mortal remains (or at least a portion of them) and a **Hard (-20) Ciphers (Rogue Trader) Test** that requires ten minutes. Once active, it remains that way for an essentially indefinite period of time, and provides vast amounts of information about organisations and individuals across the Koronus Expanse and Calixis Sector.

An Explorer wearing the Contriver's Signet gains a +10 bonus to Interaction Tests on worlds converted by Marquette. Further, this information instantly wins the wearer the cooperation of groups dedicated to venerating Marquette, such as the Choir of the Betrayed on Humility. However, Marquette's reach extended far beyond the worlds to which he brought the Imperial Creed, and the knowledge he sequestered away in the Signet can provide an incredible edge almost anywhere in the Koronus Expanse. Once per game session, an Explorer wearing the Contriver's Signet may spend a Fate Point to gain the Peer and Good Reputation Talent for any one group until the end of the encounter.

Of course, Marquette's influence over powerful individuals was likely the cause of his demise. There are those who fear such power, and dread even more the return of one wielding the long-dead missionary's secrets. The Game Master is encouraged to consider who slew Jollus Marquette, and what these individuals or groups would think of the Explorers attempting to carry on his legacy by using the Signet...





THE SACRED HEART

THE SETTING

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GM'S BRIEF

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PART I: THE TRAIL OF
ST. COGNATIUS

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ADVENTURE
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•
EXPLORING
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PART II: INTO THE
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•
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•
ANTAGONISTS
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CHAPTER IV: THE SACRED HEART

THE SETTING

"This is our stage, and it has been set for none other than us, the truest servants of the God-Emperor. Let us purify this place in the blood of our foes.."

—Genevieve Almace

"To think that these benighted Warp routes might once have been traversed by such a man as Saint Cognatius, so long before those bearing the Warrant of Trade penetrated the Maw. That is truly humbling. I have sworn to uncover the steps of that great saint, no matter where they may lead. In search of them, I shall walk even into the endless depths of the abyss itself."

—Pater Hustus Turpin

The Koronus Expanse is an impossibly vast region of space, and one filled with all manner of mysteries.

Many are alien in origin, and others are even worse. A small number are born of human endeavours, the product of humanity's ceaseless battle to wrest dominance of the void from the countless other rivals to its manifest destiny. Those who serve the great dynasties are especially steeped in these mysteries, some devoting entire lifetimes to the unravelling of seemingly disparate strands of history and legend.

One such mystery is that of Saint Cognatius, for the deeds of this divisive holy man appear to predate the Imperium's return to the Koronus Expanse. While some claim the Saint never even existed, others are convinced he journeyed into the benighted depths of the region long before any of the Rogue Trader houses that subsequently claimed that glory. Perhaps the only way this mystery might ever be solved is by the uncovering of the Saint's final resting place, though countless explorers have perished or simply vanished in the attempt.

The **Sacred Heart** is a Rogue Trader adventure that takes the Explorers on a quest to uncover one such supposed resting place. Of course, tales of such locations are to be heard in every den of vice from Footfall to Port Wander, and only the most inexperienced or desperate of Explorers would believe them. Every now and then, however, a traveller inevitably hears a wild story that contains some small kernel of truth. To recognise these grains of fact in amongst the preposterous lies and outright fantasy takes a very keen mind indeed, one possessed only by the most experienced of Explorers dedicated to uncovering long-forgotten truths.

The adventure is primarily set within the vast, cathedra-like interior of a crashed warship that might (or perhaps might not, if the GM prefers to leave some mysteries veiled by the aeons) be the long-lost tomb and final resting place of Saint Cognatius himself. The question of whether the setting is the true tomb of Saint Cognatius is left open for two reasons. First, the Game Master

might wish to expand the search for the tomb to a greater adventure, or simply leave the mystery intact, another secret that the void refuses to fully render up. The Expanse is host to countless locations that *could* be the Saint's final resting place and keeping the matter unresolved opens up all manner of possibilities for future games. The Game Master is therefore free to place the tomb on any world he wishes (such as those detailed on pages 62–64), or on the sample world of Ksi Ascendent provided in this chapter (see page 112). This is meant to allow the Game Master ample opportunity to integrate this adventure into any campaign, regardless any previous exploits or endeavours the Explorers have undertaken during their careers up to this point.

During their search for the location of the Tomb, the Explorers might even become pre-eminent experts in matters pertaining to the Saint, with a particularly pious member of the group driving them on to seek these relics while a knowledgeable lore-master uncovers clues to help guide the course of their journey. In theory, Missionaries are extremely well suited to the former role while Seneschals are particularly good at the latter, but in practice, any Explorer with the will to find these ancient treasures and the skills to track them down and unearth them can fill either role. As with any Endeavour, the act of finding the Tomb should offer all Explorers in a group opportunities to shine, whether that comes from research, charismatic persuasion, canny haggling, or unsubtle elimination of the competition.



GMI'S BRIEF

"Plans are useful. Without a plan, you're struggling blind in the night, and your labours are as likely to be wasted as not. But relying on your plan too rigidly is no better than stumbling in the dark without one. No matter how thorough your preparations, plan above all for your plan to change."

—Nicomedes Keefe,
Reflections on the Conversion of Zoras III

The **Sacred Heart** explores two of the primary themes presented in **FAITH AND COIN**, drawing them together and demonstrating how the spreading of the Imperial Creed (and the act of making vast amounts of profit doing so) can play into an adventure. The adventure is designed to emphasise the background, abilities and motivations of Seneschals, Missionaries, and other Explorers particularly interested in using lore to turn a profit. Such characters should be encouraged to take a prominent role as events unfold. Of course, other character types have their part to play, as well. As ever, the particular mix represented in the group should also have a major effect on how the story progresses. In the event that a Game Master finds the group without any of the character types described above, there is no reason not to run the adventure anyway, provided that the GM is willing to shift the focus of the adventure to best suit his particular group's interests and applicable skills.

The opening stage of the adventure focuses on the skills of the lore-master. This could be a Seneschal who obsesses over forgotten knowledge, but it could also be a Missionary drawn to seek the holy site, or an Explorator fascinated by the technological wonders associated with Saint Cognatius. It could even be a Void-Master searching for salvage from the ancient vessel, or any other profit-minded individual willing to search through dusty tomes and ancient ruins for clues about a place thought by most to be a legend. Through this character's discoveries, the Explorers learn of the potential resting place of Saint Cognatius, but such tales are as common in the underworld dives of Footfall as they are in the aristocratic salons at Port Wander. Sifting the single nugget of truth from the mass of exaggeration and downright lies is where the skills of the lore-master truly come into play. How well that Explorer performs in this duty becomes very relevant once the Explorers reach the Tomb, as their ability to combat the threats within depends on successful planning and research.

Once they have located the supposed grave of Saint Cognatius, the Explorers travel to that locale and discover what turns out to be a ruined starship. The interior of this enormous vessel was clearly wrought by or for the most devoted adherents of the Imperial Creed, for every surface is encrusted with scenes from the teachings of the Ecclesiarchy. What ensues is an exploration of the vessel, to learn its secrets and plunder its treasures: an opportunity any daring and ambitious Explorer should relish.

The Game Master is encouraged to run this portion of the adventure very much as if the characters were exploring a perilous dungeon filled in equal parts with monsters and riches. This type of undertaking might be very different from the intrigue and epic conflicts with which some Rogue Traders are accustomed. Exploring the ship is a perilous endeavour, and one that should remind the players that, regardless of their wealth and resources, the Explorers are mortals made of flesh and blood. Their role as their dynasty's most trusted scions demands that risks be taken, however, especially when the rewards are potentially so high.

Should the Rogue Trader's cohort include a Missionary or other expert on the lore of the Imperial Creed, then this character's particular skills come into play at several points during the action. This is especially true when it comes to interacting with the inhabitants of the crashed vessel, atavistic and regressed savages who, despite their fallen status, maintain a shred of faith in the Imperial Creed. Of course, given their twisted minds, only an individual highly skilled in the propagation of the Emperor's light would be able to recognise and draw the locals' faith forth amidst the shadowy halls of the *Sacred Heart*. This character's skills could come in very useful indeed at the conclusion of the adventure but it is only by combining his efforts with those of the other Explorers that the group has any hope of learning the truth of the *Sacred Heart*, let alone surviving the horror that lurks at its very centre.

Throughout the adventure, Achievement Points are used to track the Explorers' progress (see page 278 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook for more details on Endeavours and Achievement Points). Achievement Points represent a number of factors, the most important of which is how the exploration of the vessel contributes to the Explorers' Profit Factor. As they explore the twisting passageways, the Explorers do far more than combat deadly threats and fill their packs with loot—rather, they should be learning more about the legend of Saint Cognatius with every chamber they enter. With the walls covered in sacred text and holy statuary, there is much to be gleaned and much profit to be made from the lost knowledge the ship contains. These Achievement Points track not only how well the Explorers face the numerous threats to be encountered within the shell of the *Sacred Heart*, but what they learn of how it came to meet its fate, and much more about the followers of the Saint. Armed with this information, the Explorers could increase their Profit Factor significantly once the Endeavour is concluded, by selling the information to scholars, relic-hunters, and hierarchs of the Ecclesiarchy.

At the end of the adventure, the Explorers will have learned much of the deeds of Saint Cognatius, even if they fail to reach the innermost chambers of the *Sacred Heart*—provided, of course, that they survive the dangers the Saint's tomb presents. They can wield such knowledge to uncover even more ancient secrets and, of course, reap vast profits.

SYNOPSIS

"That which can be seen can be understood and controlled, but that which glimmers beyond sight eternally entices. Secrets hold infinitely more power than mysteries unveiled."

—Jollus Marquette

The **Sacred Heart** consists of three parts, each punctuated by a number of events and encounters. The Explorers must first locate the legendary Tomb of Cognatius, the *Sacred Heart*. Once they reach its final resting place, the Explorers must make their way aboard the ancient vessel to brave the perils and uncover the dread secrets that it contains.

PART I: THE TRAIL OF SAINT COGNATIUS

The Explorers learn of the possible existence of the location of the final resting place of Saint Cognatius. They must separate the truth from the lies before heading off in search of what might prove a very profitable opportunity indeed. Part I culminates with the Explorers arriving at the world on which the Tomb of Saint Cognatius is said to reside.

PART II: INTO THE SACRED HEART

The second part of **The Sacred Heart** sees the Explorers venturing into the dark passageways of the crashed starship in search of evidence that it is in fact what it is purported to be. They face sundry perils along the way, culminating in the discovery of the Inner Sanctum. Does this chamber hold the remains of the long dead Saint?

PART III: HOLY OF HOLIES

The adventure concludes with the Explorers facing the terrible guardian of the Inner Sanctum, a mechanical horror not unlike the towering Penitent Engines used in battle by the Ecclesiarchy. Only by a combination of cleverness and combat prowess is it possible to defeat this foe; if the Explorers cannot hone their minds and weapons alike, this mad warrior is likely to tear down the entire inner sanctum in its cold, insane fury.

At the end of the adventure, the Explorers have likely uncovered a number of immensely valuable relics, as well as a great many dark secrets that lurk within the *Sacred Heart*.

Planetary Data-fax: Ksi Ascendant

Population: N/A

Tithe Grade: N/A

Special Notation: Uncategorised.

Geography/Demography: Cold and clammy, the surface of Ksi Ascendant is perpetually wreathed in dense, coiling fog that extends high into its atmosphere. The surface itself is dominated by countless oversized black boulders seemingly strewn across the landscape like round pebbles on a beach. About the base of each boulder swills fetid water of a distinctly unhealthy pallor. The all-enveloping fog appears to maintain a relatively constant and homogenous temperature across the surface, though small amounts of ice do exist at the poles and the temperature at the equator is noticeably warmer. Ksi Ascendant is host to numerous autochthonic life forms, all of which seem to share a common genetic origin. Many of the oversized island-boulders display enormous fossils on their glistening flanks, evidence that the life forms currently residing on Ksi Ascendant are descended from similar creatures that have inhabited the world for aeons.

Government Type: No formal claim is known to have been made on Ksi Ascendant.

Planetary Governor: With no Writ of Claim having been lodged, no such title exists.

Adept Presence: 0

Military: N/A

Trade/Economy/Addendum: Only a handful of officially logged expeditions have been made to the surface of Ksi Ascendant, though it remains possible that other factions have visited the world. The details presented in this data-fax are considered only marginally more accurate than Delta/Sub Rosa grade remote prognostication, being based largely on non-corroborated accounts gathered from a number of sources.

PART I: THE TRAIL OF SAINT COGNATIUS

"Aleynikov the missionary sought something she could not see. She merely felt it and followed its call, and so too do we."

—Kvari the Seeker, Adherent of Aleynikov

The adventure begins when the Explorers come to learn of the possible existence of the resting place of Saint Cognatius. The exact circumstances of this happening depend upon the campaign being played. This allows the Game Master to easily integrate it into an existing, ongoing series of adventures by taking place in one of the ports the Explorers might spend time visiting while they resupply, repair their vessel, or simply look for new opportunities to turn a profit. Perhaps the group has recently completed an undertaking and are enjoying some time ashore, or maybe their vessel is in need of maintenance, meaning that the senior members of the crew (such as the Explorers) have some time off-ship. It is even possible that the Explorers learn of this new opportunity during another Endeavour, allowing the Game Master to segue one adventure into the next by having events overlap. Each of these possible beginning points draws from a location detailed in the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook (and, in some cases, expanded upon in other **ROGUE TRADER** volumes, though the Game Master need not reference these to run the adventure).

FOOTFALL

Footfall is described on page 342 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook. As a seething den of criminality and vice, Footfall is an ideal setting for the Explorers to pick up the latest gossip from the Expanse. The problem is, such gossip is rife amongst the void-addled and burned-out crew who skulk in the bars and criminal haunts, and very little they say can be trusted. The trick to filtering out the nonsense rests with the Explorers' lore-master and his contacts, who can be used to track down the source of these latest rumours.

Having heard of the rumours passing through the dives of Footfall, the Explorers must undertake an Investigation Challenge with a Complexity of Taxing to discern the truth from the bravado, the exaggeration, and the outright lies (see page 263 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook for more on Investigation Challenges). While the Explorers are here, swindlers might try to sell them false coordinates, and other disreputable folk might even attempt to use violence to coerce from the Explorers what they know about the Tomb. Keep in mind the Seneschal's Seeker of Lore Special Ability (as described on page 72 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook), or any other relevant abilities of the Explorers involved, when running the challenge. Should any Explorer have the Peer (Underworld) Talent, he can use the +10 bonus to improve his Investigation Skill Tests, and if he has the Good Reputation (Underworld) Talent, he can do the same with his +20 bonus.



IV: THE SACRED HEART

PORT WANDER

The Imperial Navy base of Port Wander is introduced in the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook (see page 340). While Port Wander has its fair share of dives, it also represents an opportunity for the Explorers' to mingle with others of station, notably mid to high level Imperial Navy officers and other bearers of the Warrant of Trade. In doing so, the Explorers can learn of this latest round of rumours and decide to look into them. By utilising the formidable concentration of resources and intelligence to be found amongst the captains at Port Wander, the Explorers can set about learning more.

If the Explorers learn of the rumours while at Port Wander, they must undertake an Investigation Challenge with a Complexity of Taxing to speak with the various officers and captains who frequent Port Wander and uncover a thread of truth they can follow to the Tomb (see page 263 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook for more on Investigation challenges). Certain individuals amongst the leaders here might

take an interest in this project if the Explorers are overt in their efforts—this could be a useful resource, but might also require them to share the profits they reap if they accept any help. Keep in mind the Seneschal's Seeker of Lore Special Ability (see page 72 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook), or any other relevant abilities of the Explorers involved, when running the challenge. Should any Explorer have the Peer (Military) Talent, he can use the +10 bonus to improve his Investigation Skill Tests, and if he has the Good Reputation (Military) Talent, he can do the same with his +20 bonus.

THE WRECKING YARDS AT SR-651

The Wrecking Yards are detailed in **INTO THE STORM**, and if the Game Master has access to this supplement and it ever features in his campaign he could have the Explorers learn of the rumours while laid over there.

The Wrecking Yards are a grim and gritty locale populated by the true outcasts of the Expanse and so getting information from them is easy.



The advantage of this approach is that such straightforward types rarely make things up, being more concerned with the daily grind of survival than foolhardy flights of fancy.

Should the Explorers overhear the rumours while laid over at the Wrecking Yards, they must undertake an Investigation Challenge with a Complexity of Taxing as they move amongst the labourers, attempting to buy or acquire information with favours, threats, and bribes (see page 263 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook for more on Investigation Challenges). Of course, these workers might be more or less receptive to the requests of powerful individuals such as the Explorers, and so they must consider whether they wish to

keep a low profile, blending in amidst the dregs to get information, or simply attempt to buy it and depart before any trouble arises.

Keep in mind the Seneschal's Seeker of Lore Special Ability (as described on page 72 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook), or any other relevant abilities of the Explorers involved, when running the challenge. Should any Explorer have the Peer (Workers) Talent, he can use the +10 bonus to improve his Investigation Skill Tests, and if he has the Good Reputation (Workers) Talent, he can do the same with his +20 bonus.

WINTERSCALE'S REALM

Winterscale's Realm is an area of space dominated by one of the most successful dynasties operating in the Koronus Expanse, namely the House of Winterscale. This area is introduced in the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook (see page 343). Further, the volume **EDGE OF THE ABYSS** contains ideas for several prominent characters in that region, although none of the information there is necessary to run the adventure in this volume. The space lanes of this region are plied by some of the most knowledgeable explorers in the entire Koronus Expanse, but tapping into that wealth of experience without others growing suspicious and deciding to muscle in on the action might be a challenge in itself.

If treading the space lanes of Winterscale's Realm when they learn of the rumours, the Explorers must undertake an Investigation Challenge with a Complexity of Taxing, meeting with members of the great dynasties that tread this realm and navigating through their circles of intrigue and avarice to find shreds of lore about the location of the Tomb (see page 263 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook for more on Investigation Challenges). Naturally, such individuals might also be interested in the Tomb of Cognatius, and so the Explorers must work to keep their true ambitions secret even as they squeeze the other scions of these dynasties for information. Keep in mind the Seneschal's Seeker of Lore Special Ability (as described on page 72 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook), or any other relevant abilities of the Explorers involved, when running the challenge. Should any Explorer have the Peer (Nobility) Talent, he can use the +10 bonus to improve his Investigation Skill Tests, and if he has the Good Reputation (Nobility) Talent, he can do the same with his +20 bonus.

INIQUITY

Introduced in the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook (see page 346), Iniquity is a base of operations for the numerous Chaos reavers who prey upon the space lanes of the Koronus Expanse. If the Explorers are pursuing a career as recidivists and pirates, they might hear dark whispers of the Tomb of Saint Cognatius while stopping at this port of ill repute. Servants of Chaos operating out of this port could decide to interfere with the tomb and blaspheme against the Saint and, by extension, the Immortal Emperor.

In the event that the Explorers are laying over at the Warp-tainted world of Iniquity when they learn of the rumours, may the Emperor forgive them. They must undertake an Investigation Challenge with a Complexity of Taxing to find legitimate information and navigate the wretched pit that is Iniquity without running afoul of its unpleasant inhabitants (see page 263 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook for more on Investigation Challenges). Iniquity offers a Game Master countless perils to hurl at his Explorers, perhaps in the form of renegades who wish to defile the Tomb or avaricious seekers of forbidden lore who believe that it contains secret messages from their dark gods, and even if the Explorers themselves are little better, such competition could prove extremely aggravating and dangerous as the adventure progresses. Keep in mind the Seneschal's Seeker of Lore Special Ability (as described on page 72 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook), or any other relevant abilities of the Explorers involved, when running the challenge. Should any Explorer have the Peer (Workers) Talent, he can use the +10 bonus to improve his Investigation Skill Tests, and if he has the Good Reputation (Workers) Talent, he can do the same with his +20 bonus.

THE SCUTTLEBUTT

For the adventure to progress, the Explorers need to succeed at one or more of the above Investigation Challenges (or a similar challenge of the Game Master's creation). Fortunately, if a given avenue turns out to be a dead end for any reason, the Game Master can have it lead to a clue that gives the Explorers another direction to Explore. If the Investigation Challenge in Winterscale's Realm proves untenable for any reason, one of the powerful nobles who frequent that realm might let slip that he heard word of the Tomb of Cognatius from a certain reaver captain who frequents Iniquity—and thus, the Explorers can continue on to this den of pirates and scum, where their search picks up again. Failing a given Investigation Challenge might not even mean failing to acquire the information, if the Game Master wishes to have the adventure move forward without requiring the Explorers to follow the trail to a new location; for instance, if the Explorers narrowly fail to complete their Investigation Challenge in Iniquity, they might find the location of the Tomb but inadvertently allow a pirate captain to uncover it as well. This could introduce a rival into the adventure, or might simply force them to fight a battle with the pirate immediately to eliminate the competition. The Game Master is encouraged to be creative in using the resources provided in this section to create an interesting and memorable investigation.

Once the Explorers uncover the information they require, they receive a number of Achievement Points (detailed at the end of Part I), plus a potential bonus based on their efficiency and deftness during their Investigation Challenge (or Challenges). The GM can read or paraphrase the following after a successful Investigation Challenge (or when he otherwise deems it appropriate):

Though it requires you to converse with individuals whose company you would ordinarily avoid, you eventually hone the rumours down to what you believe to be a kernel of truth. Having sifted out the lies, half-truths, fantasies, and traps, you are left with a few bare facts. First and foremost, many tales agreed that a previous seeker of the Tomb of Cognatius succeeded in uncovering its location—but only hours before his or her untimely demise.

All of these stories said that this individual was a lone missionary of the Missionrus Galaxia, someone renowned in the Koronus Expanse for deeds great and terrible, as well as for searching for the Tomb of Cognatius. Further, this individual hid one final clue for those who would pick up the torch and continue searching the cold stars of the Koronus Expanse for the Tomb of Cognatius. This clue now waits where the missionary was put to rest.

THE WORD OF COMMAND

If the Explorers are especially successful in their search, their investigations turn up an intriguing detail, in the form of a single, esoteric parable rendered in binaric cant. They might uncover this artefact in the form of an ancient data-slate at one of the missionaries' final resting places, an audio-fragment looping endlessly at one of these tombs, or hidden in the songs of the Choir of the Betrayed on Humility. Whatever the case, should the Explorers use the rules for Hastily Gathered Investigations and succeed (or if they are only partially successful in their wider search), then they only uncover a portion of the sequence, and the Game Master should make a note of how much, as it comes into play at the climax of **Part III: The Holy of Holies**, when facing the mighty Guardian of the Inner Sanctum.

Even if they do discover the Word of Command, the characters are only able to determine that the series has something to do with the *Sacred Heart* at this stage.

The Game Master should take his particular group into account with regards to the Word of Command. If they are powerful combatants who would relish fighting the Guardian of the Inner Sanctum at its full strength, then he can let them discover it—or not—based on their investigations. If, however, he thinks the Guardian would likely be the death of his Explorers if they faced it without the Word of Command, then he should make sure to present it to them during their search. If he thinks his Explorers will need the Word of Command, the Game Master should also seed in clues as to its purpose, perhaps revealing its true function in through an ancient tome or dataslate the Explorers discover even as the battle with the Guardian rages around them!

A SHORT PILGRIMAGE

From here, the Game Master has another choice: the four missionaries in **Chapter I: Light on the Fringe** are all potential candidates to have uncovered the secret location of the Tomb of Cognatius, perishing before the opportunity to use this secret knowledge arose. As such, the Explorers must pay a visit to the final resting place of one of the four missionaries and acquire a relic containing the location of the Tomb of Cognatius. Each of the Endeavours can be treated as a **Retrieve a Blessed Relic** Endeavour (see page 44) that incorporates the various details described below.

ALMACE'S LAST CONQUEST

Genevieve Almace lost her life on the Daemon world called "the Banestar," which blinked into existence for a brief span of time near the bleak world of Loretta before vanishing back to the nightmare realm from whence it came. Though her followers were unable to recover her body, they brought back her sword, which is currently revered as a sacred relic by a minor martial cult, the Blood Tears, on Loretta (see pages 44–46 for more information on this world).

Gaining access to the blade is no mean task, for the Blood Tears jealously guard this relic within their fortress on Loretta, entrusting its care to their mightiest champion who watches over it deep within their temple-fortress. This zealous warrior uses the Oathsworn Bodyguard profile (see page 372 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook) and wields Almace's Last Conquest (see page 103 of this volume), and is accompanied by another 5–10 warriors with the same profiles and wielding soul blades (see page 87) at any given time. However, the Explorers might also persuade the cult to allow them to examine it with a **Difficult (–20) Charm Test**, a **Hard (–30) Deceive Test**, or any other Interaction Skill Tests, scheme, or act of wanton violence that the GM finds appropriate.

If one of the members of the group wishes to undertake the initiation into the cult (or has already done so, by taking the Red Consecrator Alternate Career Rank, on page 76–77), then gaining access to the sword is much simpler; this individual must merely defeat the champion in single combat as part of a devotional ritual.

The blade is wrapped in sanctified chains and covered in purity seals. Almace's note is scrawled on the back of one of these purity seals. The Explorers can find the note with an **Ordinary (+10) Evaluate Test**, a **Challenging (+0) Search Test**, or another appropriate Test.

THE SHRINE OF THE HAMMER

The monks of the Order of the Hammer (see the Order of the Hammer Initiate Alternate Career Rank on pages 78–79 for more details about these ascetics) still revere Nicomedes Keefe for the aid he gave them as they established themselves on that harsh world. The ascetics are few in number and too far from the fires of faith to incur any sort of major inquiries. On

Foulstone, these men and women maintain the Shrine of the Hammer, a humble site revering Keefe and his efforts searching for Cognatius. It contains several relics from Keefe's life, including the Hammer of Cognatius. The attendants of

THE PILGRIMS' TRAIL

If the Game Master wishes, he can extend this part of the Adventure even further, having the Explorers visit all four of the locations listed above and perhaps even searching for multiple pieces of a larger puzzle. If the Game Master wishes to do this, one method would be to say that the location of the Tomb had been converted into a set of coordinates, a map, or even an esoteric riddle, and then split into several pieces, each of which was uncovered by one of the missionaries and hidden at his or her final rest. Of course, if he decided to take this route, the Game Master would also have to consider who had gone to the trouble of so carefully hiding the location of the Tomb—and whether such individuals would interfere in the Explorers' efforts to renew the search!

the shrine welcome the Explorers when they arrive, and so long as the Explorers are willing to offer the customary donations to the shrine's keepers, they are allowed to view the shrine to their hearts' content. Although the monetary donations are a pittance to individuals as wildly affluent as most Rogue Traders and need not be tracked, the monks also ask that any visitor leave a valuable piece of information or minor relic, to revere the work that Nicomedes Keefe did during his life. The Explorers must provide these tokens of esteem (or find another way to visit the shrine if they do not wish to go to the trouble) to find Nicomedes Keefe's final note about the location of the Shrine of Cognatius.

The note, written in Keefe's meticulous hand, is hidden within the hilt of the Piety's Charge (see page 104), which is attached to the shrine. The Explorers can uncover it with a **Hard (–20) Search Test** or a **Difficult (–10) Logic Test** to determine its location based the possible options.

STATION OF THE DEAD

Nadine Aleynikov died on the cursed void-station circling the world of Gildas—or so the stories say, at least. Once the Explorers reach the void-station, which is still surrounded by several abandoned vessels and countless plagued bodies discharged into the void as the station's occupants attempted to stem the rapidly spreading infection.

Whether or not the plague has survived the long aeons since the last human aboard the station died is entirely at the Game Master's discretion (see page 106 for the effects of the plague). In either case, however, the Explorers must search the ruins for Aleynikov's camp. This requires them to navigate a vessel through the debris and then board the station. Once aboard, the Explorers must make a **Challenging (+0) Navigate (Surface) Test** or a **Difficult (–10) Logic Test** to find her last known coordinates aboard the station. Each time they fail, the Explorers are confronted with yet another horrific scene that the plague left behind and, at the GM's discretion, risk of exposure to the deadly plague (or at least paranoia about risk).

Should anyone (who is not expendable) contract the disease, the Explorers are faced with an immediate problem—securing a cure before it can spread—which they can do

as described in the *Folio Languor* (see page 106). The Game Master is encouraged to consider letting this harrowing trip pass without incident if he does not desire to dwell on the disease itself, however, and instead use the threat of its return as a way to create tension as the Explorers venture through the desolate halls of the station.

When they succeed on a Test to find Nadine's camp, the Explorers make their way into a small chamber filled with long-extinguished candles, medical supplies, the *Folio Languor*, and three Vials of Aleynikov's Bane (see page 105). Between various vials containing samples and failed cures is a vial containing the note. For reasons unknown, however, Aleynikov's body is nowhere to be found here, nor anywhere on the station.

THE CHOIR OF THE BETRAYED

When Jollus Marquette was assassinated, many of his followers sought to venerate him as a martyr and a saint. Although their pleas were never considered by the Adeptus Ministorum in any official capacity, some of his more zealous disciples built sites of reverence. The largest of these is controlled by the Choir of the Betrayed on Humility, the heart of Marquette's sphere of influence within the Koronus Expanse. Deep within the catacombs beneath the edifice, which stands in the midst of an opulent basilica Marquette himself had built to revere the Emperor, is Marquette's desiccated corpse.

The attendants of the Choir of the Betrayed sing their dirges over his impaled corpse ceaselessly, and are largely unwilling to let anyone see the body—although they can be persuaded if the Explorers can present the Contriver's Signet (see pages 107–108), make a suitably large donation to their “cause,” or take some other action that the Game Master deems appropriate to win them an audience with the sacred corpse (whether or not this audience is approved by its keepers).

Marquette's ancient jaws are clasped around his note, which he hid in his mouth and is spattered with his lifeblood that the assassins' daggers shed. Finding the note requires a **Routine (+20) Medicae Test**, a **Challenging (+0) Search Test**, or another Test or method of search that the GM finds appropriate.

DISCOVERING THE NOTE

Hidden in one of the above-listed locations is a hand-written note, elegantly scrawled in a practiced script. It contains the location of the Tomb of Cognatius, which the missionary uncovered a short time before his or her untimely demise. The location of the world the GM chooses can be scrawled on the back, or perhaps cryptically at the bottom, as part of the missionary's final signature.

Finally, my long journey might be at an end!

The wreckage of a vast pilgrim vessel has been discovered on the surface of an outlying world, deep in the Koronus Expanse. How this vessel came to meet its fate none can say, but it appears to have done so centuries before the first officially recognised expeditions through the Maw and into the Expanse.

Could this pilgrim vessel be linked to the legend of Saint Cognatius?

Could it be one of the ships on which he supposedly explored the region long before the first Rogue Traders did so?

Perhaps it even represents the Saint's final resting place, his body interred deep within. As soon as I have dealt with the matter at hand, I must investigate this further.

Let the Emperor guide my hand...

ENDEAVOURS

"May all of your works be, above all, profitable."

—Jollus Marquette's final benediction of the *Lux Salvationis*

However the Explorers learn of the rumoured tomb of Saint Cognatius, they are unlikely to pass up an opportunity to turn a healthy profit. Different groups have different approaches to such however and so the possible approaches are presented here as a number of different Endeavours. The Game Master can decide which Endeavour best fits the group and the manner in which its members learned of the tomb, or he could offer them a choice of several and allow them to choose which suits them most. The Game Master could even allow them to complete several of the following Endeavours (for different benefactors)—provided, of course, that these are not mutually exclusive.

ENDEAVOUR I: DUTY UNTO THE EMPEROR

Lesser Endeavour, +1 Profit Factor, Creed

Having learned of the location of a possible resting place of Saint Cognatius, the Explorers might decide to investigate it as a matter of duty to the Emperor and the Ecclesiarchy. They do so as adherents of the Imperial Creed, but being scions of a Rogue Trader dynasty they hope to turn at least a small profit for their trouble. The Explorers' aim is to uncover the truth behind these rumours and to report back to the representatives of the Ecclesiarchy in the Calixis Sector. In so doing, they can earn the blessings (and favour) of influential officers of the faith in the Calixis Sector.

The Game Master can use the Exploit a Resource World Endeavour (see page 280 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook) as a general guideline for this venture.

Requirements: The Explorers must not have the Rival or Enemy (Ecclesiarchy) Talents.

ENDEAVOUR II: A FAST THRONE

Lesser Endeavour, +1 Profit Factor, Trade

The Explorers determine to locate the supposed location of the Saint's tomb and make a few fast Thrones by selling it on to the highest bidder. Veteran adventurers, they know that few serious buyers are likely to purchase the information unless it can be verified by way of concrete proof. They must travel to the rumoured location in order to confirm or deny the rumours before returning to civilisation with sufficient evidence to attract a buyer.

The Game Master can use the **Retrieve a Blessed Relic** Endeavour (see page 44) as a guideline for this venture.

Requirements: The Explorers must have a Profit Factor of at least 40 or find a way to provide incontrovertible evidence of their claims (in order to be taken seriously by potential buyers of the location of the Tomb of Cognatius).

ENDEAVOUR III: MONOPOLY OF FAITH

Greater Endeavour, +3 Profit Factor, Creed

Having learned that rumours of the Tomb of Cognatius have surfaced, the Explorers recognise a chance to set up a pilgrim trail, access to which they could have exclusive control over. If they can confirm the status of the resting place and secure it from their competitors, they should be able to establish a thriving trade in transporting pilgrims to and from the site.

The Game Master can use the **Establish a Pilgrimage Route** Endeavour (see page 54) as a guideline for this venture. **Requirements:** The Explorers' vessel must have the Barracks Supplemental Component or other appropriate holds for passengers. If their ship has Luxury Passenger Quarters they are able to attract a better class of pilgrim and so increase the Profit Factor to be had from this Endeavour by a further +1.

ENDEAVOUR IV: TOMB TRADERS

Greater Endeavour, +3 Profit Factor, Trade

If, as the rumours suggest, the resting place of Saint Cognatius has been found, then it must surely be replete with holy relics. The Explorers recognise the potential profits to be made importing genuine saintly relics into the Calixis Sector and intend to establish a secret trade route.

The Game Master can use the **Establish a Trade Route** Endeavour (see page 282 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook) as a guideline for this venture.

Requirements: The Explorer's vessel must have the Compartmentalised Cargo Hold Supplemental Component (or other appropriate cargo space), in order to transport whatever relics they recover safely and, importantly, without attracting undue attention when they return to Imperial space.

ENDEAVOUR V: MISSION FROM ABOVE

Grand Endeavour, +5 Profit Factor, Creed, Trade

This Endeavour combines the two themes of Trade and Creed and presents the possibility of handsome profits. To start, the Explorers plan to establish exclusive control over the pilgrim routes, transporting the faithful to and from the tomb. Their plans go much further than this, however. If these plans come to fruition, the Explorers should be able to demand generous grants and donations from the converts to this new branch of the faith, establish their own clergy, shrines, reliquaries, and all the profitable accoutrements of a full-blown Imperial cult.

The Game Master can use the **Establish an Imperial Colony** Endeavour (see page 279 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook) as a general guideline for this venture.

Requirements: This ambitious Endeavour is only possible if the Explorers have a Profit Factor of at least 50 or the backing of an organisation or individual with a comparable amount of influence and power in the Koronus Expanse (though, of course, any such patrons would want something in return for their assistance).

ANCHORS AWEIGH

By this point, the Game Master should have decided whether the adventure is to be set on the example world provided, or if the *Sacred Heart* is to be located on another planet, possibly one of his own invention. This is relevant because the Explorers need to conduct resupply and maintenance tasks on their vessel and might not have the opportunity to do so again for some time. Furthermore, they might like to purchase items or even Ship Components to aid them in the type of Endeavour they have chosen to pursue (such as those that grant bonus Achievement Points when the group is engaged in an Endeavour of a certain Theme). They also need to work towards fulfilling certain requirements in order to undertake their chosen Endeavour, each of which could potentially fill an entire game session on its own, depending on the requirements and how long the Game Master wishes to have the group spend on this task.

OUTWARD BOUND

If the Game Master intends to use Ksi Ascendant as the setting for the adventure, he needs to establish the travel time from the Explorers' starting location. Ksi Ascendant is located rimward of the Alenic Depths, not far (in relevant terms, at least) from the Corpse Stars. This region of space, like many to be found within the Koronus Expanse, is held to be ill-fortune, and many amongst the superstitious scum that form the bulk of most Rogue Traders' crew would not welcome a voyage there. In order to determine the travel time from the example starting points already covered, consult **Table 4-1: The Path to the Tomb**. If the Explorers are coming from a different place, the Game Master should determine the travel time as he sees fit, based on the conditions of the Warp and any other relevant factors that might affect their journey.

Before the voyage can begin, the Explorers must face the possibility that the crew objects to the destination on the grounds of superstition and fear. Few voyages out as far as Ksi Ascendant end well, and the proximity of the Corpse Stars, the Alenic Depths and the Rifts of Hecaton combine to raise the spectre of mutiny amongst the crew. The Game Master should require a Crew Morale Test be taken before the voyage begins (see page 224 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook for details). Given the overall themes this adventure draws upon as well as the nature of the destination it is appropriate that the group's Missionary (if it has one) or other pious Explorer charged with rallying the morale for this voyage be the one to face down the would-be mutineers, in which case he gains a +10 bonus to his Test. It is possible that a successful mutiny could derail the adventure substantially, but such is an inherent risk in the life of a Rogue Trader. The Game Master is encouraged to go along with (or diffuse) such complications as he sees fit, based on his group and the course of the current narrative.

Given the auspicious nature of this voyage, it is also appropriate that the Game Master consider what Warp Travel Encounters might ensue if one comes into play. Instead of rolling on **Table 7-4: Warp Travel Encounters** (see page 186 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook), the Game

Master should describe the Explorers and the crew being haunted by dreams of the life and death of Saint Cognatius or even experiencing overwhelming religious visions, stigmata, fits of speaking in tongues, and similar heights of spiritual ecstasy. To the faithful, such things might seem a sign of the Emperor's favour, while to those of questionable faith or heretical nature, they might be terrifying omens indeed.

When such phenomena manifest, the Game Master should consider the background of each Explorer (including his Corruption Points, Origin Path, and outlook on life) to determine whether these signs would inspire confidence or terror in a given Explorer, then have each one make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test**. Those he considers sufficiently faithful and who pass the Test gain a +10 bonus to Willpower Tests to resist the effects of Fear until the end of the game session, while those who have good reason to fear the Emperor's wrath suffer a -10 penalty to such Tests until the end of the game session if they fail this Willpower Test. In either case, if the ship's captain fails his Test, the ship's Crew Morale is reduced by 1d10 until the conclusion of the venture and the vessel's safe return to less perilous space.

TABLE 4-1: THE PATH TO THE TOMB

Starting Port	Passage Within the Warp
Port Wander	50–60 days (including passage through the Maw)
Footfall	30–40 days
SR-651	20–30 days
Iniquity	25–35 days

PART I ACHIEVEMENT POINTS

- 50 Achievement Points—For completing the investigation into the rumours and learning of the existence of the *Sacred Heart*.
- 25 Achievement Points—For overcoming any complications that arise during the investigation and avoiding attracting any rivals, incurring any major damages to their vessel, and otherwise averting minor crises.
- 100 Achievement Points—For making the passage to the gravesite of missionary Almace, Keefe, Aleynikov, or Marquette, and acquiring the note with the location of the Tomb of Cognatius.
- 50 Achievement Points—If the crew threatens to mutiny but the group's Missionary or another religious figure faces the scurvy curs down successfully, thus cementing their loyalty even more firmly for the mission.
- 10 Achievement Points—For each Explorer who passes the Willpower Test to avoid the negative effects of the potentially harrowing Warp voyage.
- 50 Achievement Points—For discovering the Word of Command in their research or at the missionary's gravesite.

PART II: INTO THE SACRED HEART

"In my life, I have met many people obsessed with unveiling secrets greater than themselves. Still, four stood above the rest in raw of scale ambition."

—Seneschal Grigory van Heuring, Memoirs

The second part of **The Sacred Heart** contains the main thrust of the adventure. Part I serves as the prologue and Part III provides the climactic battle with the Tomb's most dangerous defender, but the majority of the exploration of the Tomb of Cognatius occurs during this section. The action begins with the Explorers' vessel arriving at its destination, and continues with them locating the crashed vessel. The bulk of the action sees the Explorers searching the ship, facing a number of threats before they reach its innermost sanctum and find the beast chained in the depths.

The approach to Ksi Ascendant (or a planet of the Game Master's choosing or invention) and the locating of the *Sacred Heart* is broken down into several key stages, summarised below.

HIGH ORBIT

Upon entering orbit around the destination world, the Explorers can attempt a survey using their vessel's sensors to find the Tomb of Cognatius. Alternatively, they might use a more esoteric method to locate the *Sacred Heart*, such as a psychic sweep or other form of divination. The surface of Ksi Ascendant is wreathed in a dense layer of fog that only occasionally parts to reveal the craggy terrain beneath, making it appear like a decrepit eye clouded by swirling cataracts. A **Difficult (–10) Awareness + Sensors Test** reveals the surface obscured by the fog to be covered with vast boulders, like a pebble-strewn beach on a planetary scale. Sensor signals rebound about the surface as the unusual geological formations confound attempts to survey the ground with any degree of certainty. Psychic searches provide similar information, along with an undeniable feeling of religious dread; this hallowed ground tests the faith of those who set foot on it, and only those with strong wills can proceed.

LOCATING THE SACRED HEART

There are several ways the Explorers might determine the position of the *Sacred Heart*, but landing and walking around on foot is not one of them unless they are amazingly patient. Most of the surface is so strewn with massive boulders that trekking any distance would be made all but impossible by the need to travel over, around or under the dense terrain.

In order to locate the *Sacred Heart* the Explorers must pass a number of Tests equal to the number of Explorers. Each Test takes a certain amount of time to complete; this time is relevant because the crew remains unhappy operating in this region of space and perceives delay as the onset of some supernatural curse. The types of Test and the amount of time each one takes to perform are detailed in **Table 4–2: Locating the Sacred Heart**. Because some Tests are easier than others but might take longer to perform, the Explorers should be given the choice of which they wish to undertake, bearing in mind the penalty. For every full six hours that pass without the *Sacred Heart* being located, one of the Explorers must make a **Challenging (+0) Command Test** (with a –10 penalty for each other time an Explorer has had to make this particular Test) to keep the crew in line as it grows increasingly anxious. If he fails, the Explorers reduce their Achievement Points at the end of the Endeavour by –10. Each Explorer can only undertake or supervise one of the Tests on **Table 4–2: Locating the Sacred Heart** at a time.

PLANETFALL

Once they locate the *Sacred Heart*, the Explorers can travel to the surface to investigate it. If they are lucky enough to have access to a teleportarium, then a **Challenging (+0) Tech-Use Test** ensures the group teleports to the correct location. Should they fail this Test, the Explorers materialise five kilometres from their target site, plus an additional 5 kilometres per Degree of Failure on the Tech-Use Test. If they have to make a subsequent journey to the vessel on foot, have each Explorer make a **Routine (+20) Survival Test**; each one who fails gains 1 level of Fatigue from the difficulty of moving across the treacherous ground, plus an additional level of Fatigue for every three Degrees of Failure by which he failed the Test. Additionally, if the GM wishes, he can have the Explorers encounter a group of 1d10 Autochthonic Vermin Swarms (see page 142), as a grim preview of some of the creatures they will encounter later inside the vessel.

TABLE 4-2: LOCATING THE SACRED HEART

Search Method	Test Required	Time to Perform
Sensor Sweep	Very Hard (–30) Awareness+Sensors Test	4 hours
Psychic Augury	Hard (–20) Psyniscience (Augury) Test	1 hour
Fighter Mission	Arduous (–40) Pilot (Space Craft) or (Flyers) Test	4 hours
Scout Vessel Mission	Hard (–20) Command Test	8 hours
Deduction	Punishing (–50) Logic Test	6 hours
Wild Guess	Hellish (–60) Intelligence Test	1 hour

If the Explorers are travelling to the surface by way of a vessel such as a shuttle or guncutter, the pilot must pass a **Hard (-20) Pilot (Flyers) Skill Test**. If he fails, the vessel drifts increasingly off its programmed flight path. It touches down 1d5 kilometres from the intended destination, plus an additional kilometre per Degree of Failure the pilot receives on the Test. If he fails the Test by five or more Degrees of Failure, the landing is particularly rough, and the vessel becomes damaged. Its engine must be repaired with a **Very Hard (-30) Tech-Use Test** that requires 1d5 hours before the Explorers or anyone else can have it limp away from the site of the near-crash.

Because some Explorers like to bring additional muscle (whether they call them “armsmen,” “guards,” or “cannon fodder”) on these types of missions, Game Masters should keep in mind how these NPCs are deployed to the surface. If they travel in the same vessel as the Explorers, all is well, but if they take their own shuttle to the surface or teleport down in a separate wave, the pilot or operator should make the listed Test, running the same risk of landing in the wrong place. In these instances the Game Master should determine if the NPC group runs into any problems before joining up with the Explorers in an abstract way, perhaps resulting in one or more of them being waylaid, arriving wounded, or even failing to reach the destination entirely.

When the Explorers arrive on the surface of Ksi Ascendent, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

The atmosphere of Ksi Ascendant is a choking miasma of coiling white mist through which the vast shapes of towering, round boulders loom. Occasionally, the clouds part to reveal a blue sky and cast light upon the rocky ground beneath. The ground consists of smaller boulders, which sit on a flat span that extends as far as the eye can see. Despite the moisture in the atmosphere, the ground is mostly dry.

Approaching one of the far larger boulders towering overhead, the mist thins and you finally get a clear look at its vast, glistening flanks. There are strange shapes etched into the rock—fossils that cover the nearby boulders, the last traces of long-dead creatures. Strange, coiling forms laced with suckers, the fossils must represent some truly bizarre configuration of life. The thought slides eerily and uncomfortably across your mind—do any of these creatures’ descendants remain on the surface?

If and when the group reach the sight of the *Sacred Heart*, read aloud or paraphrase as follows:

Cresting the peak of a mountainous boulder, the mist thins up ahead and a vast form takes shape in the distance. At first, it seems yet another vast, stone outcrop, albeit the largest in the area by far. Then, the familiarity of the form makes itself apparent. Though shattered almost beyond recognition from this vantage, the formation can only be that of a voidship of human construction.

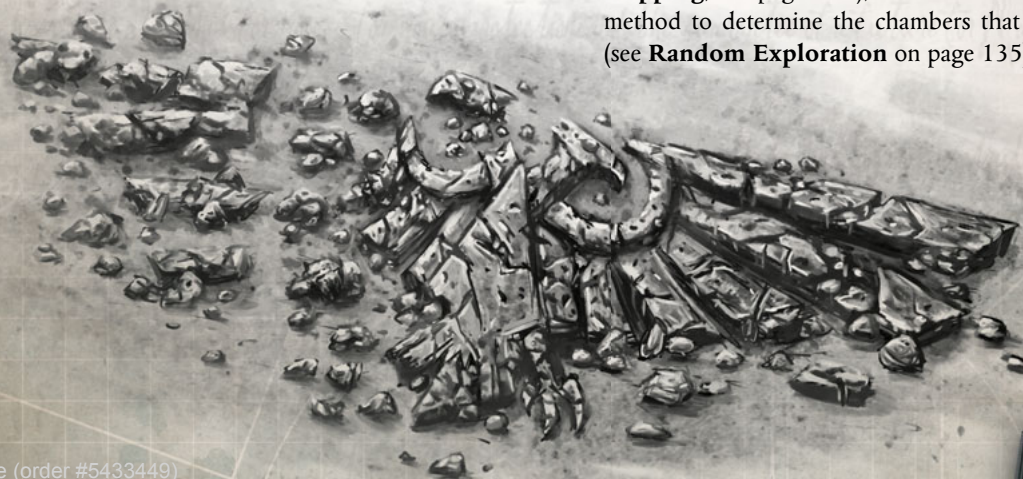
This ship must once have been mighty indeed, but now it is laid low in deathly splendour. The Sacred Heart, for surely this is the vessel is that the whispers foretold, is crushed and burned, its spine broken and rigid. Its components all appear to be present, suggesting to your experienced eyes that the ship came down with its shields on or even beyond maximal output, for else-wise it would have been consumed in the nucleonic fires of its drive section’s death throes. What class of vessel the Sacred Heart might have been is not entirely clear. Certainly, she was no warship, though she was far from defenceless judging by the numerous gun turrets still visible across her broken flanks. Rather, she was some manner of transport, and from the remains of the architectural forms adorning her remains, one constructed by or for the most pious servants of the God-Emperor of Mankind.

From this vantage point, numerous cracks and rents are visible in the vessel’s hull, any one of which might present a means of gaining entry to her interior.

BREACHING THE SACRED HEART

Finding a way in to the *Sacred Heart*’s interior is not at all difficult, for the vessel’s hull is badly corroded and holed in numerous places. With ten minutes of searching and a **Routine (+20) Search Test**, the Explorers can find an entry point, as well as certain general information about the state of the vessel; they can repeat this search any number of times if they wish, uncovering new entry points if a particular avenue seems particularly unattractive for any reason.

Any of the General Locations presented on pages 123–126 can serve as an entry point into the vessel; the Game Master can either choose an appropriate General Location as an entry point, or roll on **Table 4–10: New Location** on page 135 (re-rolling any result that would call for a Unique Location). Once the Explorers enter the *Sacred Heart*, the Game Master can manage their progress through the vessel using the rules for **Exploring the Tomb** (see page 134). The Game Master can handle this portion as an **Exploration Challenge** (see page 134), create a map of the tomb (as described in **Mapping**, on page 135), or use a randomised exploration method to determine the chambers that the Explorers visit (see **Random Exploration** on page 135).



WAIT A MINUTE, EVERYONE...

Sensible Explorers are unlikely to simply blunder into the wreck of the *Sacred Heart* without taking the opportunity to reconnoitre first. There are a number of Skills that they could use for this reconnaissance; below, the Game Master can find guidance for the results that several of these Skills might yield. The Game Master should not feel constrained by this list, and can also allow Explorers to acquire this or other information with any other Skills that he deems appropriate.

SEARCH (INSPECTION)

An Explorer can make a **Challenging (+0) Search Skill Test** to try to uncover anything out of the ordinary about the exterior of the *Sacred Heart*. Consult the table below for results.

TABLE 4-3: OBSERVATION

Degrees of Success	Result
Success	There are numerous breaches in the hull.
1 Degree of Success	At least a dozen breaches are at ground level.
2 Degrees of Success	Several of the breaches appear to have been made after the ship crashed.
3+ Degrees of Success	A handful of the breaches appear to have been cleared of debris recently.

TRADE (SHIPWRIGHT)

The Trade Skill can be used not just to create things, but to examine existing examples. In this case, an Explorer with the Trade (Shipwright) Skill could make a **Challenging (+0) Trade (Shipwright) Skill Test** in order to examine the vessel and determine something of its status. Consult the table below for results.

TABLE 4-4: HULL ANALYSIS

Degrees of Success	Result
Success	The ship's shields were active when it crash landed.
1 Degree of Success	The vessel is wrecked beyond reasonable hope of recovery.
2 Degrees of Success	Several of the ship's components may be recoverable.
3+ Degrees of Success	The ship's bridge and Astropathic choir are almost certainly damaged beyond salvage.

SCHOLASTIC LORE (LEGEND)

Those Explorers with this Skill may decide to use it in an attempt to compare what they can see of the *Sacred Heart* to the numerous legends of the Koronus Expanse in general and of Saint Cognatus in particular. The Explorer should make a **Difficult (-10) Scholastic Lore (Legend) Skill Test**. Consult the table below for results.

TABLE 4-5: LEGENDS OF THE SAINT

Degrees of Success	Result
Success	The vessel is covered in decorations that mark it as the vessel of a very pious individual.
1 Degree of Success	Elements of the ship's exterior suggest it was built or refitted during the Angevin Crusade.
2 Degrees of Success	The vessel is one of only a handful of its type, none of which are still in service.
3+ Degrees of Success	The ship was certainly created at the express order of a very powerful individual.

AWARENESS

A Game Master can take inspiration from other works of horror when running this stage. For instance, in many such stories, one character invariably treads in something unpleasant or catches a brief movement in the shadows just as his companions are pressing on. The Game Master can have a PC make a **Challenging (+0) Awareness Skill Test**. The Game Master should choose one Explorer to make this Test at a given time (especially if that Explorer has just turned a corner, or is alone for a moment). All the better if the GM can ask the player to make the roll in secret, possibly by passing a note to him. The rest of the Explorers might well not detect anything, but that can just add to the atmosphere. Consult the table below for results.

TABLE 4-6: DARK SIGNS

Degrees of Success	Result
Success	The Explorer sees a furtive movement in his peripheral vision, but finds nothing there.
1 Degree of Success	The Explorer finds a chunk of human bone. Distressingly, it is crisscrossed by teeth marks.
2 Degrees of Success	The Explorer comes upon a human footprint in the dust and dirt caking the floor.
3+ Degrees of Success	The Explorer finds evidence of a recent killing: red blood smeared across a bulkhead.

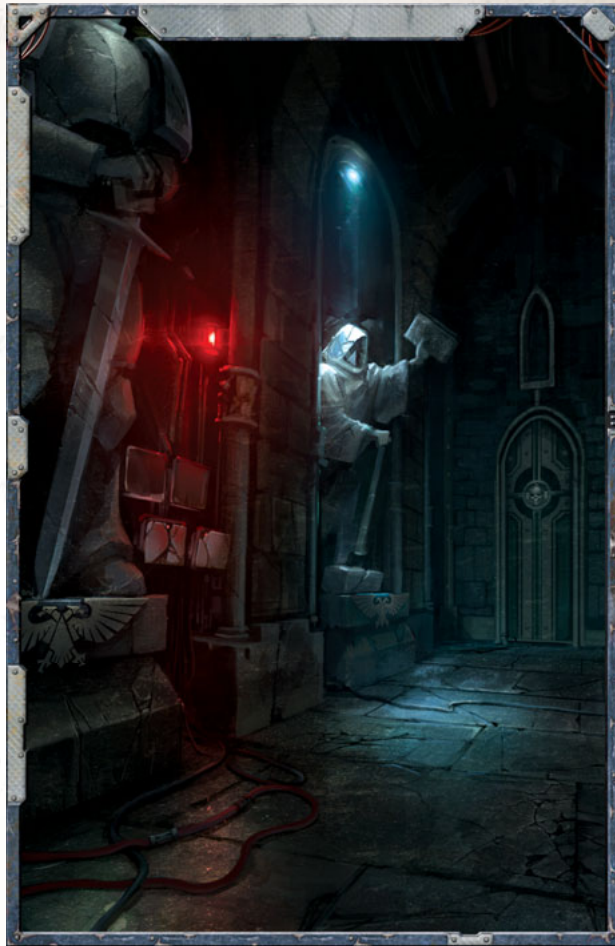
GENERAL LOCATIONS

Many of the chambers within the *Sacred Heart* conform to a general archetype repeated throughout its entire structure. For example, passageways and junctions all appear broadly similar (though each one might have unique distinguishing features) and so the Game Master can refer to the following descriptions when setting the scene for any action that takes place within them. However, the Game Master is encouraged to add some variety to these settings, and here are some general ideas on how to do so:

- The location's general state of repair should be one of the first things the Explorers notice. Some passages are strewn with debris and loose wreckage, while a few have somehow entirely avoided damage or weathering.
- Every location in the *Sacred Heart* features some manner of devotional art, sculpture, or etched text, but some of these works are far more elaborate than others. In addition, the subjects represented vary enormously. Some describe battles against hideous aliens or fiends, while others depict wars against rebel humans. Conversely, some of these scenes show scenes of paradise, though these are few and far between.
- As described in **Inhabitants** (see page 131), the Explorers are far from alone inside the wreckage of the *Sacred Heart*. The savagely regressed descendants of its original complement of crew and transported pilgrims haunt the vessel's darkest reaches. Early on in the expedition, the Explorers should only find hints of their presence: the occasional gnawed bone, refuse pile, or bloody, oddly-shaped footprint. The Game Master can leave ambiguous whether these come from humans or something more terrible still, using these hints to build tension as the Explorers delve deeper and deeper into the vessel.
- The Game Master should not forget that the *Sacred Heart* was once a functioning vessel, and that it came to rest in its final grave in a very violent manner indeed. Though a few of the crew and pilgrims on board survived, the vast majority did not. These passengers died in all manner of unpleasant ways, and their remains are still to be found scattered throughout the wreckage. In every case, these remains are nothing more than bones held together by dried matter and whatever nonperishable equipment the poor unfortunate happened to be wearing at the time of his death. Pressure suits, armour, equipment rigs, bionics and the likes all remain, albeit it in a state of disrepair. Furthermore, the Game Master can vary the descriptions of these remains so as to communicate something of the variety of types to be found on any vessel. Most remains are those of lowly crewmen, while others are obviously those of servitors. Many can be assumed to be those pilgrims or other adherents of the faith going by the presence of numerous religious tokens, badges, and other icons of devotion. A few might even represent senior officers, the decayed finery of their ornate uniforms just visible beneath layers of dust.
- Finally, the Game Master might like to consider what types of objects might be found within each location. A list of useful items is provided later on, but there should

be a far greater number of broken, useless, or entirely unidentifiable objects strewn around, from ancient navigational tools to rusted weaponry to desiccated, flavourless ration packs that have survived the aeons without an appreciable dip in their quality. The Explorers might investigate these or ignore them entirely, but the Game Master can use them to help give each location something of its own unique, memorable identity.

Explorers encounter General Locations as described in **Exploring the Tomb**, on page 134.



CLOISTER-PASSAGEWAYS

As in almost all vessels, the single most common feature of the interior of the *Sacred Heart* is mile after mile of companionway. These passageways range from the stately dorsal processional that leads from the fore section all the way aft to the drive section, to cramped conduits barely able to accommodate a single human. Where the companionways of the *Sacred Heart* differ from those on most other vessels, however, is in the sheer mass of religious iconography adorning every surface. The passageways have the appearance of a corridor in an Ecclesiarchy shrine or cloister, along which silent brothers or sisters of the order would slowly process as they contemplated the finer points of doctrine and penance.

The bulkheads lining the walls of the cloister-passageways are a mixture of stone and metal, intricately carved statues intermingled with impossibly chaotic masses of twisted

cabling, pipes, valves, and control terminals. Much of the stonework is damaged, with large chunks missing from most of the statues and deep cracks running through the remainder. The metalwork is often buckled and corroded, and great streaks of brightly coloured run-off shine through in certain places, the legacy of the moisture content in the atmosphere.

All along the passageways are narrow portals leading into chambers, components, or other stretches of the network. Many are jammed shut and cannot be opened, distortion inflicted when the *Sacred Heart* crashed sealing them for all time. Others are opened easily enough, though not without a loud, rending squeal that echoes the length and breadth of the vessel. Many of these portals are framed by intricately carved archways, further reinforcing the impression that they would look more at home in a cathedra than a starship.

Thanks to the massive bulkheads and devotional stonework, cloister-passageways provide 4 APs of Cover to Explorers (and others) who take refuge from oncoming fire along the walls. At the Game Master's discretion, there might also be shattered statuary, collapsed gantries, or other large objects that provide the same amount of Cover to Explorers in other parts of the hallway. Lighting in cloister-passageways varies, depending on how many of the systems within the given hallway are still active.

RELIQUARY STATIONS, AUTO-SHRINES, AND VOTIVE LUMINOX TERMINALS

The majority of Imperial voidships and installations contain some number of small niches that hold a relic, shrine, or devotional icon before which the faithful might pause to offer up a prayer as they go about their duties. Many contain the polished skull of an individual who once toiled in the same installation, and are the reward for a lifetime of quotas fulfilled: an eternity of service as the focus of devotion. Others house electro-lumens, scrolls, tomes or any relic that can be imagined. Some hold small caskets said to contain a body part of a saint celebrated across the entire Imperium, though it is likely that if all such relics were collected in one place they would account for the population of an entire hive city. The *Sacred Heart* is host to an extraordinary number of these niches, set in the bulkheads of every type of location.

Each time the Explorers enter a location, roll 1d10; on a result of 9 or 10, there is at least one reliquary somewhere within it. Whether there are more reliquaries beyond the first (and where they are located within the area) is up to the Game Master's discretion. The Explorers can find treasures within these reliquaries by making a **Difficult (-10) Search Test** once per reliquary; if the Explorer attempting this Test succeeds, he finds a sacred token, saint's relic, or other item of religious significance. These icons are frequently purely devotional, but some are made of valuable materials, and many are priceless in the eyes of the faithful of the Imperial Creed or other wealthy collectors of such items.

SANCTUMS IMPERIALIS

The *Sacred Heart* was in many ways a space-borne cathedra; like a conventional example of such an installation, it is host to countless smaller shrines. Chambers that in a normal space craft might contain technical bays, command terminals or any of the countless duty stations vital to its operation are, in the *Sacred Heart*, just as likely to host shrines and chapels. Invariably, each contains an altar, often of engraved stone and sometimes clad in the ragged remains of a fine-woven cloth. Once, each altar would have been surmounted by a great metal Aquila, though in many cases these came crashing down when the *Sacred Heart* plummeted to the surface. Aside from these essential features, most of the *Sacred Heart's* shrines display a large range of different forms. Many are dedicated to a different figure of worship, though in most cases this is one of Saint Cognatius' numerous disciples or other figures associated with him, many of which the Explorers do not recognise. The walls of some shrines are completely covered with gold leaf while others are clad in rough hewn stone. Some feature countless statues and other carvings, while a few are plain and spartan. The floors of many shrines are scattered with debris in the form of chalices, pattens, monstrances, ciboria, and numerous similar items. All are wrought from precious metals, although many are damaged. The walls of most shrines host the remains of the numerous purity seals that once fluttered from them, many nothing more than red wax seals trailing shreds of decayed parchment.

There is always a reliquary inside of a Sanctum Imperialis, as described in **Reliquary Stations, Auto-Shrines, and Votive Luminex Terminals** (though some have long ago been smashed open and pillaged for the relics they once contained, at the GM's discretion).

PILGRIM BAYS

One of the *Sacred Heart's* primary missions was to transport pilgrims out into the void and with them to populate the stars with the faithful. The vessel was therefore host to numerous transportation bays, the forms of which vary depending on the status of the pilgrims to be housed within. The vast majority of pilgrim bays, and certainly the ones the Explorers encounter most often, are those that were once packed full of the lowest tier of the faithful. These vast, barrel-vaulted caverns were once packed with humanity forced to exist in the most squalid of conditions. The decks of these bays are still strewn with the shattered remnants of the cots the pilgrims slept in, the bones of countless unfortunates intertwined with the twisted metal.

Aside from the mass transportation bays, the *Sacred Heart* contains numerous far smaller, and much more luxurious ones. These were reserved for the highest-ranked pilgrims and for the officers of the Creed, who, despite their sermons, rarely condescended to share the travails of the common man. A small number of these bays are still replete with evidence of the luxury the former inhabitants must have existed in as the *Sacred Heart* traversed the Koronus Expanse. Many had their own, private salvation pods, most of which were clearly used before the *Sacred Heart* met its end.

Pilgrim bays are packed with supplies, broken cots, and countless other obstacles. They count as Difficult Terrain (see page 247 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook).

PROVENDER CHAMBERS

Like any vessel transporting tens of thousands of human beings across vast gulfs of space, the *Sacred Heart* required enormous stocks of every type of supply imaginable. Given the nature of its passengers, however, the *Sacred Heart's* supplies are weighted in favour of one category over others. The Explorers should soon note that the vessel's cavernous storage bays contain the remains of hundreds of thousands of tonnes of candles, incense, pre-blessed holy water, altar cloths, rosaries, sacred unguents, and innumerable other examples of the holy ephemera characteristic of the Imperial Cult. The Explorers might note a surprising lack of more everyday supplies, especially those relating to personal comfort, for these were considered unnecessary by the cult's leaders, at least for the great masses of the pilgrims.

Though they do not contain many basic necessities, provender chambers can frequently be scavenged for supplies useful for medical treatment (clean water, cloth that can be repurposed for bandages, supplies for starting fires, and other items). Explorers gain a +20 bonus to *Medicae* Tests made inside of a provender chamber so long as some of these supplies are still intact.



GUN DECKS

The *Sacred Heart* was not a warship, but it was certainly armed for a war of faith. The vessel carried a great many weapons, mostly prow-mounted turrets bearing macro-cannon batteries of numerous calibres. The majority of these turrets suffered enormous damage during the crash and from the exterior are visible as little more than masses of twisted metal. From the inside most turrets are inaccessible, though a few can be broken into with some effort.

However, such weapons systems are more than the turrets themselves. Each station was once served by a crew of scores, sometimes hundreds, and the machinery vital to its operation stretches some distance from the turret. Each was connected to a network of conduits ferrying the massive ordnance from the ship's central battery right up to its breach, where it was hoisted aloft by sweating crews and fed into the gun itself before firing. Most of the crew of each gun slept nearby, but the warrant officers that oversaw them had their own quarters further away, some of which remain more or less intact.

The remains of the gun deck can be hazardous to explore. Like many other areas, they frequently contain highly toxic substances, many of which can kill within seconds by being breathed in or touched. There is also the danger of unstable ordnance, which could explode with the slightest disturbance.

Whenever an Explorer (or any other character) fails a Ballistic Skill Test by three or more Degrees of Failure within a gun deck, roll 1d10. On a result of 1, it hits an unexploded munition pile which explodes, rocking the chamber with a calamitous blast. Each character within the chamber suffers 2d10+6 Energy Damage with a Penetration of 0 and the Shocking Quality.

LAUNCH DECKS

While the *Sacred Heart* did not carry any fighter craft, it nonetheless had facilities to serve several dozen shuttles and six large passenger transport barges. These vessels were intended to carry hundreds of the Saint's followers to the surface of those planets the *Sacred Heart* visited, though not in any comfort or safety. All but one of these barges are wrecked beyond recognition, but the one that remains is in surprisingly good condition. Each of the barges is housed in its own bay, and that of the one surviving transport was located in an area of the *Sacred Heart* that suffered comparatively little damage during its crash. The barge is a sight to fill the heart of most Seneschals with glee, for its outer surface is chased in what appears to be precious metals. In construction, the vessel is little more than a huge transport section with drives attached to each corner and a flight deck above its blunt prow, but it is clear that what it lacks in functionality is more than made up for in adornment. The barge was obviously constructed to strike awe into the hearts of any who witnessed it descending from the sky, demonstrating the power of the Emperor's will.

IV: THE SACRED HEART

The reflective surfaces within these chambers makes targeting extremely difficult, especially if the chamber is dark except for the roving light of the Explorers' own light sources. Ballistic Skill Tests within a launch deck suffer a -20 penalty, or an additional -10 penalty if the chamber is shrouded in Darkness or otherwise obscured (see page 268 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook).

ENGINES

As with most vessels constructed by the Imperium, the drive section of the *Sacred Heart* is the single largest component and consists of hundreds, perhaps thousands of miles of corridors, shafts, access ways, service chambers, engineering decks and the like. While not as large as the drive section of a warship, the area is massive enough that Explorers could spend days searching it. However, the *Sacred Heart's* engines sustained enormous damage during the vessel's final moments. Most of the areas within the drive section are so utterly ruined they cannot be accessed, or so strewn with wreckage that the effort of clearing them is beyond the Explorer's immediate mission.

The engine decks are host to even more hazards than the rest of the vessel. While the vessel's plasma containment rites successfully averted a complete reactor meltdown, throughout the centuries since the demise of the *Sacred Heart*, these barricades have decayed, causing all manner of esoteric energy to leak from the sealed reactor core. Those not struck down by these perils run the risk of long term illness and even mutation, a threat most voidfarers know to fear!

Engine rooms always contain a **Radiation Hazard** (see page 133) in addition to any other Hazards that lurk within.



UNIQUE LOCATIONS

While the previous locations are ones that are likely to become familiar to the Explorers, as they represent common categories, other locations are unique to the vessel. As such, these represent an opportunity to run specific, memorable encounters. The Explorers encounter these chambers in the same way as General Locations (as described in **Exploring the Tomb**, on page 134), but can only encounter each one once (unless they choose to return for some reason).

COMMAND DECK

The command deck of the *Sacred Heart* is located a quarter length astern of the prow, high up on the vessel's superstructure. Though such a position might ordinarily have offered some protection from the cataclysmic damage inflicted in a crash the section in which the command deck is located sustained some other form of harm. A vast chunk of the entire area has become detached from the main structure and come to a rest at a savage angle. As such, Explorers passing along the passageways leading to the bridge find the deck beneath their feet suddenly becomes steep, the angle sharp enough that their progress becomes a climb, albeit one they can undertake without the need for ropes and grapnels.

The deeper the Explorers travel into this area, the more the extent of the damage wrought upon it becomes evident. The passageways are scorched and blackened, and experienced voidfarers should have little difficulty identifying why. At some point in its descent to the surface, the *Sacred Heart's* outer hull was pierced with such force that the vessel's damage control doctrines were unable to compensate.

The searing fires of re-entry surged through the entire area before eventually being cut off by sealed bulkheads, but the damage was done and the entire command cadre was burned to ashes. The closer to the outer hull sections the Explorers travel the greater the damage, until eventually they are passing through tunnels burned entirely black by the flames of the vessel's fall to the surface. At the end of this trek lies the bridge, which has been gutted by fire just like the rest of the vessel.

LOOT AND PILLAGE

As they explore the interior of the *Sacred Heart*, the Explorers are likely to come about all manner of items of detritus. Though most Explorers tend to be very well equipped and rarely lack for deadly arms or exotic equipment, the Game Master might like to add a little spice and variation to proceedings by placing various potentially useful items in some settings. This is particularly relevant should they start to run low on ammunition or come out the worst having encountered some of the more unpleasant inhabitants of the wreck of the *Sacred Heart*. Should the Game Master require any such items, here is a list that can be called upon during play:

- Scattered items of flak or carapace armour. These were once used by the ship's armsmen or the Saint's more militant, crusade-minded followers.
- A variety of tools, including any of those listed in **Table 5-13: Gear** on page 140 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook, in particular void suits. Most of these items should be in a state of some disrepair, and only one in ten is likely to function without significant attention from one versed in the mysteries of the Ommissiah.
- Many of the items in **Table 5-15: Tools**, to be found on page 143 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook might very well be found amongst the debris, though only those of Scarce, Average or Rare Availability are likely to be found more than once.
- Very occasionally, the Explorers might encounter a discarded weapon or cache of ammunition. Such items should not exceed Rare in Availability, unless the Game Master has something very specific in mind.

At the last, they arrive at the bridge, at which point the GM should read or paraphrase the following aloud:

After the struggle through the blackened passageways leading to the command deck, the once-majestic bridge of the Sacred Heart extends into the distance. A vast, long space, the vista panels on three sides must have been blown in during the ship's death, the atmosphere of the entire deck compromised and the entire senior command cadre slain in an instant. The site is tragic for any who knows the power the crew here once commanded, a sad reminder of the manner in which even the most experienced voidsmen can end their careers and their lives.

The view through the shattered vista panels is obscured by banks of drifting, coiling mist but the peaks of dozens of boulder-islands are nonetheless visible as they recede into the pale distance. The interior of the bridge has clearly been exposed to the elements for countless centuries, every metal component streaked in garish rust. To the rear of the bridge stands the captain's command throne, its five metre-tall back rearing high overhead. One patch of the decayed upholstery is untouched by the ruination inflicted upon the rest of the area. That patch is the shape of a seated man, the rest of the once plush upholstery burned black. This can mean only one thing—the unnamed ship's master performed his duty unto death as a true servant of the God-Emperor of Mankind.

Finding anything of value in the charred and blasted remains of the bridge may appear unlikely, but it is not entirely beyond possibility. The massive command throne, upon which the ship's master once sat, is still intact. Should an Explorer examine the throne, he should make a **Very Hard (–30) Search Skill Test**. If he succeeds, he discovers a hidden compartment in the throne's arm, inside which is concealed a rolled parchment. The scroll contains the personal log of the ship's master, and finding it earns the Explorers additional Achievement Points, as detailed at the end of Part II. In addition to this bonus, the Game Master might like to consider allowing a Rogue Trader character in possession of it to gain a further benefit having studied the writings. Once per gaming session during this adventure, the Rogue Trader may increase the +10 bonus granted by his Exceptional Leader Special Ability (as described on page 72 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook) to +20. He can only use this bonus when engaged on a Creed-themed Endeavour or otherwise allowed by the Game Master.

WARP ENGINE

Should the Explorers insist upon forging their way through the twisted, radiation-steeped wreckage of the *Sacred Heart's* drive section they eventually come upon its Warp drive. Ordinarily, access to this portion of the vessel is all but impossible except for those specifically cleared to work there, for not only is its function essential to the survival of every soul on board, but it is dangerous in the extreme to venture in too deep. At times during its normal operation, the entire deck on which the Warp engine is located would be subjected to energies so hideous the flesh would slough from the bones of any unprotected crew. For ordinary ratings, assignment to duty serving the Warp engine was in effect a death sentence, and even officers dreaded the brief tour they were required

to serve there before moving on to a more desirable posting. The only crew that appeared willing to tend the Warp engine were the Tech-priests, who ensured that all due appeasements were made to its machine spirits.

Without the Adeptus Mechanicus to tend the Warp engine it might be expected that the machine would fall silent and in time become as inert as much of the structure of the *Sacred Heart*. This is far from the truth, however. At the heart of the Warp engine lies its infernal core. The contents of the fuel casket have survived, impossibly, deep within the Warp engine. Over the centuries, its effects upon the surrounding fabric of reality have grown ever more drastic and dire.

In the event that the Explorers make a concerted effort to investigate the ship's Warp engine, the Game Master should impose a number of Psyniscience Skill Tests, starting at **Very Hard (–30)** with a cumulative +10 bonus (to a maximum of **Easy (+30)**). If an Explorer fails the Test, he senses nothing unusual; if he succeeds, he gets the feeling of there being something very bad at the heart of the drive section. If the Explorers continue, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

The further one travels into the Warp drive section, the more damage the fabric of the Sacred Heart appears to have sustained. But this damage is unlike that evident in the rest of the vessel. Here, the bulkheads appear warped and distorted, not as if they have been burned or melted but as if exposed to the unreal forces of nightmare. Eventually, you come upon a large, spherical chamber dominated by a central column that pierces the deck and the ceiling far above. Something about the column appears deeply... wrong.

At the base of the column is what appears to be the Warp fuel insertion valve, an armoured portal approximately a metre wide and tall. Though seemingly innocuous, that portal resonates unreal threat in a way only those who have travelled the Sea of Souls can possibly understand.

Any character foolish enough to attempt to open the fuel insertion point must pass a **Very Hard (–30) Strength Test**. The instant the door is opened, however, a palpable wave of insanity spews forth. Every character present must make a **Fear Test** with a difficulty of **Terrifying (–30)**. Any character insane enough to attempt to examine the contents of the fuel casket must make an immediate **Hellish (–60) Willpower Test**; if he fails, fear (or just good sense) gets the better of him and he backs down, turning aside and closing the hatch. If by cruel fortune a character succeeds, he stares into the maw of insanity itself, gains 1d10 Insanity Points and 1d10 Corruption Points, and then collapses catatonic for 1d5 Rounds. However, once he recovers from this stupor, he permanently gains the Jaded Talent if he did not already possess it. Needless to say, the contents of the casket are too horrible to describe, read aloud, or even paraphrase.

NAVIGATOR'S TABERNACLE

Like all Warp-capable space craft, the *Sacred Heart* relied on a Navigator and his staff to carry it safely through the unreal dimension that is Warp space. On many ships, the Navigator is a figure of superstition and dread amongst the ratings. Even

IV: THE SACRED HEART

educated and experienced officers are usually none too keen to interact with them. This is partly because the Warp itself is a matter of horror to all sane beings, and all who deal with it are seen by many as bearers of ill fortune. It is also because many Navigators carry a genetic curse that causes their bodies to become ever more mutated as they grow older, until the most ancient are so hideously distorted that they must retire entirely from interacting directly with normal humans. The passengers and crew of the *Sacred Heart* held to the doctrines of the Imperial Creed far more literally than most—the mutant is a blasphemy against the perfect form as evidenced in the body of the Emperor, and therefore damned by his very existence. The Navigator's tabernacle—the sealed section in which the Navigator and his attendants lived and worked—was therefore entirely sealed off from the remainder of the vessel, for the benefit of the crew, the passengers, and the Navigator and his support staff themselves.

It is impossible to reach the tabernacle by way of the conventional passageways within the *Sacred Heart*. Should the Explorers set out to deliberately locate the area, perhaps if one amongst them is a Navigator and wishes to investigate what happened to his counterpart, there are several potential means of accessing it, though none are simple.

The first is to estimate where a normal vessel of this size would locate the tabernacle and to attempt to breach the inner bulkheads using cutting machinery or similar means, but this is extremely time-consuming and difficult. Finding the correct location takes a successful **Arduous (–40) Trade (Shipwright) Skill Test**. Navigators gain a +30 bonus to this Test. If an Explorer succeeds, the group must still attempt the breaching operation itself, and they have no idea how successful their effort is proving until they actually break through, which requires four successful **Challenging (+0) Tech-Use or Trade (Shipwright) Skill Tests**, each attempt taking a full hour. When the Explorers breach the final bulkhead, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

At last, the way into the inner sanctum of the long-dead Navigator's private realm is clear. This suite is a collection of plain, almost spartan chambers. While the functions of most are no longer discernible, the central area remains largely intact. Here is to be found the plasteel chair into which the Navigator would have been strapped and secured during Warp flight, its tarnished structure host to numerous cerebral input ports. In the ceiling directly above is an iris-like portal, into which the chair would have ascended when the vessel was traversing the Warp, the Navigator afforded a view into the Sea of Souls that only he could withstand witnessing.

Of the unnamed Navigator and his attendants nothing persists, but the central chamber is strewn with the remains of the charts he might once have drawn up by his hand as he explored the impossible vastness of the Koronus Expanse.

Once inside the tabernacle, the Explorers have access to what remains of the private charts of the vessel's Navigators. Though the logs are far from complete, some physical traces remain in the form of tattered parchment bearing the long-dead Navigator's hand written annotations.

If a character passes a **Hard (–20) Forbidden Lore (Navigators) Skill Test**, he can identify and retrieve what appears to be the most useful portion of the charts, which were created long ago by a Navigator from House Ortellius. This allows the Explorers to earn additional Achievement Points as detailed at the end of Part II. In addition, the Game Master might like to consider allowing the group's Navigator a +10 bonus to Navigation Skill Tests when the group is engaged on Creed-themed Endeavours, to account for him utilising the details recorded by the Saint's Navigator.

LIBRARIUM VAULT

It is not unusual for a vessel plying the trackless wastes of a region such as the Koronus Expanse to be equipped with a librarium vault, the ship's masters ensuring they have access to as great a mass of knowledge as possible. In addition, the command crew would hope to expand this body of accrued wisdom as they explore the region. The librarium vault of the *Sacred Heart* is slightly unusual, however, in that the vast majority of the tomes housed upon its shelves are religious in nature. Some were written long before the ship set sail for the Koronus Expanse, and these represent the teachings of Saint Cognatius as well as the works of various saints or mystics he himself valued. The greater part of the tomes represent the teachings of the Saint and his followers as they evolved throughout his voyages through the Koronus Expanse, however, and these undiscovered texts might prove to be of greater interest and value to the Explorers.

When the Explorers enter the librarium vault, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

Pressing into this new area of the Sacred Heart, a vast library unfolds into the distant shadows. Row upon row of shelving recedes into the dark and towers overhead, access granted by sliding ladders and narrow gantries. The tomes that once occupied the shelves must have been scattered when the Sacred Heart crashed, for they are now strewn across the entire space. Looking down at the nearest, you see a volume laid open to reveal ornate, hand-written script. It has been illuminated by a master of the art, and is etched with scenes of war and faith.

Should the Explorers decide to read some of the writings held within the books they might not find what they were expecting. Instead of a meticulous account of the ship's voyage and a catalogue of the places it visited, the tomes contain page after page of rambling dogma. On closer inspection, the books contain a mass of information but none of it catalogued or presented in any sort of standard format. Scraps of useful data can be glimpsed in amongst the text, but most useful facts are couched in allegorical terms, so that only an individual steeped in the lore of Saint Cognatius could hope to extract and exploit them. Accounts of planets and peoples unheard of amongst the Explorers spring out as they scan the pages, hinting at untold opportunities for profit and glory. Needless to say, the tomes might prove of enormous value, as a resource for future exploration or as a collection to be sold to the highest bidder, but only if they can be removed for study—a task that falls beyond the Explorers' immediate concerns.



Though there are far too many tomes in the vault for the Explorers to carry off any more than a small fraction of the dusty books and data-records, they might nonetheless attempt to select the some of the most auspicious volumes for later study. An Explorer can attempt to find volumes of interest or value by spending 10 or more minutes making a **Hellish (-60) Investigation Skill Test** with an Investigation Skill of his choice that the GM deems appropriate; an Explorer gains a +10 bonus for every additional 10 minutes he dedicates to this Task, to a maximum positive modifier of Trivial (+60).

Whenever an Explorer succeeds on such a Test, he gains some insight into the forms used in the text and pictures covering the bulkheads of the *Sacred Heart*; having such information gives the Explorers a +20 bonus on all Investigation Skill Tests described under **Deciphering the Legacy of Cognatius** (see page 136). Additionally, the Explorer finds a number of interesting volumes, scrolls, or data-slates equal to his Degrees of Success on the Test. These volumes contain lore related to Imperial saints, theological rhetoric, wondrous relics, or any other relevant subject. Although their function is largely narrative, the Game Master is encouraged to give each Explorer who succeeds one or more volumes of interest to that particular character (or potentially to another Explorer in the party).

COGITATION CORE

The *Sacred Heart's* cogitation core houses the vast arrays of data mills, logic engines, mnemonic cell arrays, and the countless other processing devices required to operate a vessel of its size. The core consists of a wide shaft lined with machinery and access galleries that cuts through seventeen decks in the very heart of the ship. Ordinarily, the interior of the cogitation core is crewed by dozens of Tech-Priests and their menials as well as hundreds of mono-tasked processor-servitors. The very air would have sparked and sang to the esoteric energies coursing through the coiled arrays of the core as the deafening hum of logic gates operating at peak power filled the entire shaft.

Now, centuries after the *Sacred Heart's* demise, the cogitation core is silent and dark, silicon carpeting every surface. The fallen Tech-Priests and servitors are evident by the numerous cybernetics scattering the gantries, but nothing of their flesh or bones remains. Whatever fate befell the core, its attendants evidently fell to a mercifully quick death that left nothing of them behind to tell their tale.

Gaining entry to the cogitation core is simple enough, but the powdered silicates scattered throughout offer a hazard that might complicate further investigation, or hamper the Explorers if an encounter occurs within its confines. When the Explorers enter the area, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The vessel's cogitation core, a vast, hollow shaft housing the arcane mechanisms of its logic engines, expands into the distance. Once, a towering machine spirit inhabited this place, but its machine-synapses are now cold and dead. The soaring galleries and all other flat surfaces are coated with a fine layer of glistening dust. It is clear evidence, if any were needed, that the silicon core of the logic engine's data looms suffered some tragic fate aeons ago.

The Explorers must move with caution in this location. If they ever move at a pace faster than a slow and deliberate walk, they run the risk of sending clouds of powdered silicate dust in the air. Walking any faster than a carefully measured pace without causing a dusty gale requires **Hard (-20) Agility Test**; if a character fails this Test, a cloud of dust ten metres in diameter and centred on the character billows up about him. This has the effect of a Pollutant Hazard (see page 133) and entirely obscures that character's vision until he moves away from it (bearing in mind that moving through fog or smoke imposes more penalties, as described on page 266 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook). Each of these clouds lingers for an hour, slowly spreading to fully encompass the location.

Though the main systems are long dead, certain, more resilient sub-systems remain. The Explorers can access these with a **Hard (-20) Tech-Use Test**. If an Explorer succeeds on this Test to rouse one of the machine spirits, he can access certain information about the layout of the vessel. If the Game Master has mapped the vessel, they might learn the location or at least the direction of a given room they wish to find. If the Game Master is generating the vessel dynamically (see **Exploring the Tomb** on page 134), the next time the Game Master rolls on **Table 4-10: New Location**, he should roll twice and let the Explorers choose the result.

ASTROPATHIC ENCLAVE

The *Sacred Heart's* Astropaths operated in an area of the vessel very near its underside, roughly amidships. This area is concentrated on the astropathic choir, which takes the form of a large, spherical chamber lined with gantries that provide access to a raised platform in its exact centre. Upon this platform, the vessel's chief Astropath would have projected his mind-song out through the Warp and across the galaxy, boosted, if needed, by lesser adepts stationed in the gantries around the inner surface of the sphere.

Because of its position on the *Sacred Heart's* underside, the astropathic enclave sustained a huge amount of damage when the ship died. While the choir chamber itself is relatively intact, the Astropaths' many quarters around it are in such a state of ruin that exploring them is all but impossible.

What was once the Sacred Heart's astropathic choir is now a dusty tomb. The bodies of dozens of Astropaths are splayed across the floor, carcasses untouched since the crash long ago. The centre-most gantries lead out across the centre of the chamber, to a podium from which the vessel's senior Astropath would have directed the mind-voices of his subordinates.

Should the group include a psyker or other character with the Psyniscience Skill and this individual cross the central gantry to the podium, he must make a **Challenging (+0) Psyniscience Test**. For every Degree of Success he scores, he picks up a faint echo of one of the long dead Astropaths that once served there. Each echo contributes to what the group learns of the legacy of Saint Cognatius and his followers, allowing the Explorers to earn additional Achievement Points, as detailed at the end of Part II. Further, the Explorer receives an omen that warns him of some danger lurking in the darkness outside of the chamber; the next time the Explorers arrive at a chamber with one or more Hazards, this Explorer is immediately able to identify the nature and location of one Hazard the moment before he enters that room.

PROCESSIONAL NARTHEX

Upon reaching the Narthex the Explorers stand upon the brink of penetrating the innermost secrets of the *Sacred Heart* and, potentially learning the truth of the mystery of Saint Cognatius. This area is the size of a cathedra nave, its flagstone floor shattered and cracked by the violence of the *Sacred Heart's* death. Statues ten metres tall line the huge space, each depicting Cognatius in one of his many guises. In some he is a venerable, monkish character, his eyes radiating wisdom and purpose. In others he is depicted as a warrior, a power mace held aloft as if to inspire a multitude of unseen followers. Other statues depict the Saint as a wise general, a proud leader, a compassionate healer or any one of a score of different aspects. Above each statue hangs the tattered, translucent remains of several dozen heraldic banners. Though very little remains of the devices once emblazoned upon these standards, faint traces of familiar symbols can still be discerned—skulls, eagles and wings combined with candles, halos, hearts and other symbols associated with the Saint.



At the opposite end of this sacred, statue-lined avenue is a mighty portal, over ten metres tall and wrought from cast bronze and carved stone. Despite the darkness and the heavy mantle of dust, the Explorers can make out a relief upon the doors' surface, showing scenes from the legends of Saint Cognatius and other sacred figures. Beyond the portal is the inner sanctum, the holy of holies, and potentially the most elusive secrets of the cult of Saint Cognatius.

Passing through the portal is not such a simple matter however, as the Explorers discover should they attempt to open it.

Upon the Explorers first entering the Processional Narthex, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

The inside of a processional nave as large and splendid as any Ecclesiarchy cathedral in the Calixis Sector extends into the darkness. On either side tower mighty, saintly statues and tattered banners, so ancient and threadbare that they are almost transparent, descend from the barrel-vaulted ceiling. The nave's stone flagged floor is strewn with the remains of shattered pews and other debris, all coated in a thick layer of dust.

But what truly catches the eye are the enormous, cast bronze doors at the far end. These tower above even the statues, and upon their surface are etched scenes from what can only be the life of Saint Cognatius and his glorious deeds in the Koronus Expanse.

Any time a character spends a Fate Point within the Processional Narthex, roll 1d10. On a result of 9, the character gains the effect of the spent Fate Point, but does not count as having expended a Fate Point to gain these benefits.

When the Explorers prepare to breach the portal that leads to the Inner Sanctum, the adventure proceeds to **Part III: The Holy of Holies** (see page 137). Before it does, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The titanic, cast bronze doors swing slowly inward as gears not engaged for countless centuries grind noisily into life. Dust billows from the ground, obscuring the way ahead. The doors swing open with an ominous gust of sickly incense and candle smoke, and numerous points of light from dim candles faintly flicker into being somewhere in the darkness ahead.

ADDITIONAL UNIQUE LOCATIONS

Should he wish to flesh out the adventure still further, the Game Master might like to consider adding in additional Unique Locations. The simplest way to do this is to refer to **Chapter VIII: Starships** (see begins on page 188 of the **ROGUE TRADER CORE Rulebook**) and to decide which other Components the *Sacred Heart* might have had. There are plenty to be found there. It is a simple enough task to choose a Component and extrapolate how it might appear on the *Sacred Heart*, and the Game Master should consider what state it might be in following the crash, how it was used before, and if the Children of the Sacred Flesh or others have used it since. Lastly, the Game Master should consider what the Explorers might gain by investigating the new Unique Location, if anything at all. It might turn up treasures undreamed of, but it might just as well be the lair of a nest of hideous autochthonic life forms—or worse!

INHABITANTS AND HAZARDS

The *Sacred Heart* is an extremely dangerous place at the best of times, for centuries of decay and the invasion of countless unpleasant things have left it a corroded, vermin-filled deathtrap. Whenever the Game Master wishes to have the Explorers encounter some form of unpleasantness while exploring the Tomb of Cognatius, he can roll on **Table 4-7: Perils of the Tomb** (or choose a result he deems appropriate).

TABLE 4-7: PERILS OF THE TOMB

1d10 Roll	Location
1	Roll once on Table 4-8: Unstable Structure (see page 133) and apply the result.
2	Pollutants (see page 133).
3	Radiation (see page 133).
4	Darkness (see page 132).
5	Darkness (see page 132), and roll 1d5+5 on this table and apply the new result as well.
6	Roll once on Table 4-9: Vermin (see page 134) and apply the result.
7	1d10 Children of the Sacred Flesh (see page 141).
8	1d5 Orphans of the Flesh (see page 141), and roll 1d5 on this table and apply the new result as well.
9	1d5 Murder Servitors (see page 141).
10	Roll 1d10 two times on this table and apply both of the results.

INHABITANTS

Despite first appearances, the *Sacred Heart* is far from unpopulated. There are three broad classes of inhabitants, all of them the remnants of the original ship's compliment. As the Explorers delve deeper into the wreck, they should begin to detect signs that they are not alone, but it is not until they have travelled deep into the dead ship's innards that they come face to face with the horrific truth.

CHILDREN OF THE SACRED FLESH

The Children of the Sacred Flesh are the distant and much devolved descendants of the original pilgrims who survived the death of the *Sacred Heart*. While they maintain something of their forebears' dogma and some of their practises, they have fallen impossibly far from grace.

In appearance, the Children of the Sacred Flesh display signs of their heritage. Many wear tattered rags reminiscent of monastic robes and keep their hair in a severe tonsure. Like their ancestors, the Children adorn themselves with tokens of their faith. However, it has grown twisted in the absence of the guiding light of the Imperium, and for every Aquila pendant worn about the neck of a savage, another wears a necklace made of finger bones or other vile trophies.

It is not just in their appearance that the Children of the Sacred Flesh have devolved from their noble ancestors. The practises of the Cult of Saint Cognatius became so perverted in the aftermath of the vessel's destruction that cannibalism ran rife. What started as a tragic necessity soon merged with religious allegory and became central to the survivors' faith. Over the subsequent generations, the descendants regressed in body, mind, and soul. Now, centuries later, they bellow religious invective like rabid confessors, yet can barely string a coherent new sentence together from these words they know by rote.

The Children of the Sacred Flesh haunt the inner regions of the *Sacred Heart*, banding together into rival family groups. They launch frequent hunting parties into the lands all about in the hope of catching one of the slimy, tentacled frogs that



HEAR ME, OH LOST CHILDREN!

If the group includes a Missionary, it is possible the player of this character might attempt to sway or even convert the Children of the Sacred Flesh to his cause, drawing on the fact that he is an adept of the Imperial Creed and they are (admittedly estranged) members of the same family. This idea should be encouraged and is possible via the Interaction rules presented on page 263 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook. The attempt should be easiest if the group has a representative of the faith, although the Game Master might decide to allow another character type to attempt it if a priest is not present, with an appropriate penalty on the Interaction Tests to reflect the character's lack of expertise.

To attempt to sway the Children of the Sacred Flesh the Explorer must address one or more of them in person. The opponents begin with a Disposition of Disgusted/Mutinous/Disbelieving/Foolhardy. If the Explorer succeeds in making them Favourable/Loyal/Accepting/Startled, those Children of the Sacred Flesh he is directly addressing turn to his cause and make no further attacks. If they become Affectionate/Devoted/Trusting/Frightened, they turn to his service and do his bidding while in his presence. If they become Infatuated/Fanatical/Gullible/Terrified, they obey him without question from now on, and furthermore spread word to the rest of the population that they should do the same.

dwell in the swamps but it is the meat of their rival dwellers they savour the most. It is rare for any individual to be caught unawares and dragged back to a rival group's territory, but on occasions when this does come about, the victors engage in an unspeakable ritual celebration they call the "Red Mass."

The Children see the Explorers as rivals to be overcome and potentially devoured. A display of overwhelming firepower is the simplest means of driving them off, although other methods might yield quieter or more lasting results.

THE ORPHANS OF THE FLESH

If the Children of the Flesh are regressed, the so-called Orphans of the Flesh are an order of magnitude more hideous. These vile creatures are the descendants of cannibals who attempted to find shelter in the drive section. After countless generations in the baleful glare of the radiation and other forms of pollution in that area of the ship, they are without exception mutants with only the barest resemblance to humanity.

The Orphans of the Flesh are killed on sight by the Children, who refuse to eat their polluted flesh. For themselves, individual Orphans roam the drive section, usually fighting to the death when they encounter one another (or anything else).

So regressed are the Orphans that Explorers with knowledge of such things might take them for Chaos Spawn. While they have arrived at such a state through a very different process to most Spawn, the end result in terms of mind, body, and spirit is for all intents and purposes indistinguishable.

MURDER SERVITORS

In addition to its many banks of defensive weaponry, the *Sacred Heart* was equipped with one of the most feared means of repelling boarders ever created. Had any enemy force ever attempted to board the vessel, its master would have been able to activate many hundreds of Murder Servitors into the compromised areas. Though any crewmen that failed to reach safety would have been cut down with them, the boarders would have been torn to ragged chunks of flesh by these horrific hybrids of flesh and steel.

The *Sacred Heart's* Murder Servitors were never used, remaining sealed within their deployment chambers when the vessel met its doom. Being situated around the vessel's outer skin, the majority of these chambers were destroyed, along with their lethal payloads. A few, however survived, their systems shutting down to a dormant state just sufficient to maintain what life signs the Murder Servitors displayed. Over the centuries, more of these dormant killers died in silence, but still a handful remain.

As the Explorers press ever deeper into the *Sacred Heart*, their movements are detected by machine spirits that have lain dormant for countless years. The further they explore, the more silent triggers are activated and soon the surviving deployment chambers are initiating revivification protocols and cycling what little power remains in their defence grids to awaken their lethal charges. Hours later, the first clutch of Murder Servitors is released into the passageways of the *Sacred Heart*. It can only be a matter time until they cross paths with the Explorers.

HAZARDS

Though it has been dead for countless decades, the wreck of the *Sacred Heart* is far from silent and is certainly not free of danger. As the Explorers press ever deeper into its interior they are exposed to ever more hazards, the presence or absence of which is determined by way of the exploration guidelines presented later on (see pages 134–136).

DARKNESS

Much of the interior of the *Sacred Heart* is wreathed in darkness, the only illumination provided by the wan daylight filtering into the outermost areas nearest the hull through the vast wounds torn in the vessel's outer skin. Very soon, even this small amount of light recedes and the only sources are those provided by the Explorers.

Any entry point the Explorers use to gain access to the *Sacred Heart* or simply pass through having already done so is assumed to be Bright. Each other chamber is in Shadow (thanks to holes in the hull, remaining power sources, or other effects) unless this Hazard is in effect, in which case it is Dark.

For more on **Lighting**, see page 268 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook.

UNSTABLE STRUCTURE

Much the interior of the *Sacred Heart* is wrecked beyond any hope of repair, decks prone to collapse at the slightest provocation. In general, so long as the Explorers move with caution, it is unlikely they precipitate any sort of collapse,

TABLE 4-8: UNSTABLE STRUCTURE

1d10 Roll	Further Consequences
1-3	Dust falls slowly from the ceiling as it creaks ominously, but the structure holds.
4	A section of metal piping clatters to the deck, the sound of its impact echoing down the tunnel.
5	The deck beneath the character's feet buckles as he stumbles, weakening it but not causing it to collapse.
6	The character crashes to the deck and a section of plate gives way. He falls 1d10 meters into the empty pit beneath, but can make a Challenging (+0) Climb Test to clamber back up. If he fails, his comrades must find another way to retrieve him, such as lowering a rope or climbing down to assist him.
7	The deck gives way with disastrous effect, pitching the character into a large, open space. He falls 2d10 metres and cannot climb back up without aid from one of his fellow Explorers (such as a rope being lowered to pull him up). The Game Master can decide or randomly determine what type of location the character falls into by rolling on Table 4-10: New Location (see page 135).
8-10	With a sudden tremor, the entire stretch of deck gives way. The initial Explorer plummets in, as does any other within 5 metres who fails a Hard (-20) Agility Test . These characters falls 2d10 metres into the space below, the nature of which the GM can choose or randomly determine by rolling on Table 4-10: New Location (see page 135).

but the area is considered Difficult Terrain. As per the rules for Movement and Environment on page 265 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook, moving faster than a Half Move per Round over this type of ground necessitates a **Challenging (+0) Agility Test**; whenever a character fails, he falls Prone. Should the Explorers ever fail this Test when passing through the *Sacred Heart*, roll on **Table 4-8: Unstable Structure** to determine any further consequences. For those results that refer to Falling, see page 261 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook. If an area that is already considered Difficult Terrain receives this Hazard, it becomes Dangerous Terrain instead (see page 247 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook).

POLLUTANTS

The Imperium's voidships utilise a staggering array of fuels and consumables in their operation, and very little regard is ever given to health of the crew. Even during normal operation, accidents and spills are far from uncommon, but when such a vessel sustains critical damage, the side-effects of these chemicals being released can be horrific. When the *Sacred Heart* crashed, vast quantities of chemicals from fuels to lubricants were released into its innards. Even centuries later, large stretches of the vessel are tainted by pollutants that remain as toxic as they were the day they were spilled.

Such pollutants vary in quantity and toxicity; for more common poisons, each Explorer must make a **Routine (+20) Toughness Test** at the beginning of each of his Turns while he is exposed to the toxin. Each time an Explorer fails this Test, he suffers 1d10 Impact Damage, ignoring Armour and Toughness Bonus. If the toxins are particularly pernicious, however, the Game Master can also have any Explorer who fails his Test by three or more Degrees of Failure roll on **Table 5-5: Hallucinogen Effects** (see page 126 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook), applying the result as if the Explorer had been affected by a Hallucinogen Grenade.

When the Explorers first encounter an area tainted by a pollutant, they might not be aware of the source of the noxious substance afflicting them. The Explorers can determine that the cause of the harm they are suffering is caused by radiation with a successful use of an auspex or other piece of equipment or a **Challenging (+0) Medicae Test** (or another Skill Test that the GM deems relevant).

RADIATION

So violent were the forces unleashed when the *Sacred Heart* plummeted to the surface of Ksi Ascendant that numerous areas remain tainted by radiation even centuries later.

Each Explorer must make a **Routine (+20) Toughness Test** at the beginning of each of his Turns while he is exposed to the radiation. Each time an Explorer fails this Test, he gains 1 level of Fatigue. If he fails one of these Tests by three or more Degrees of Failure, he gains 1 Corruption Point.

When the Explorers first encounter an area tainted by radiation, they might not be aware of the source of the deadly radiation afflicting them. The Explorers can determine that the cause of the harm they are suffering is caused by radiation with a successful use of an auspex or other piece of equipment or a **Hard (-20) Medicae Test** (or another Skill Test that the GM deems relevant).

AUTOCHTHONIC VERMIN

The wreck of the *Sacred Heart* is host to all manner of creatures drawn to seek both shelter and prey within its passageways. Some, such as the common Terran rat, arrived with the vessel, sufficient numbers surviving its death to breed and thrive. The majority, however, are subterranean beasts, native to Ksi Ascendant. These creatures inhabit a complex bio-system that, over the centuries, has become relatively stable. The smallest creatures subsist on the numerous moulds and lichens that have invaded the vessel's outer regions, and larger ones still prey upon these. At the top of the pyramid are small numbers of apex predators which, thankfully, are rare indeed.

Most of the fauna on Ksi Ascendant is amphibian in nature and all of it quite bizarre. Whether predator or prey, all of the life forms except the Terran rats are closely related, resembling frog-like creatures of varying size and coloration. What makes these life forms especially unusual is the fact that instead of legs, they are equipped with numerous writhing tentacles lined with clusters of suckers. These bizarre limbs allow the creatures to manoeuvre through the swamps with ease, and they appear just as able to use them to traverse the corridors of the *Sacred Heart*, grabbing hold of protrusions and pulling themselves forward or swinging along the corroded metal surfaces.

TABLE 4-9: VERMIN

1d10 Roll	Bestial Occupants
1-3	No life forms present, and no sign of any having passed through.
4-5	The corpses in this chamber have been picked clean long ago. Add +2 to the next roll on Table 4-9: Vermin .
6	There is skittering in the shadows and nearby sounds, but nothing approaches the Explorers. Add +5 to the next roll on Table 4-9: Vermin .
7	A corpse in this chamber collapses into a pile of bone and dust at the Explorers' footsteps, and a horrible mass swarms forth. The Explorers encounter one swarm of Mutant Rats (see page 141).
8	A chittering mob of creatures launches itself upon the Explorers from above, attempting to bring down this larger prey out of desperation or boldness. The Explorers encounter 1d5 Autochthonic Vermin Swarms (see page 142).
9	The Explorers turn the corner and step into a hellish nest of small but savage scavengers. The creatures set upon the Explorers, seeking to strip the flesh from their bones. The Explorers encounter 1d10 Autochthonic Vermin Swarms and 1d5 swarms of Mutant Rats (see pages 141-142).
10 or higher	The Explorers open the door to find a mass of terrifying, overgrown vermin. They encounter 1d5 Overgrown Autochthonic Vermin and 1d10 Autochthonic Vermin Swarms.

The smaller of these vermin present little danger, so long as they are not encountered in great numbers. The larger ones can be a threat and the largest are sufficiently dangerous to pose a risk to the lives of incautious Explorers.

Upon entering a new Location, there is a chance that it might be occupied by one or more of the numerous vermin plaguing the wreck. This can happen because of the result of a roll on **Table 4-7: Perils of the Tomb** (see page 131) or simply because the Game Master deems it an appropriate time for the Explorers to wander into a festering hive of vermin. If the Explorers made any sort of loud noise in the location they are leaving (such as discharging firearms or falling several metres), add +2 to the result of the roll (or +3 for a particularly noticeable cacophony).



EXPLORING THE TOMB

"Ugh, another dark, dusty corridor with a shaky floor and killer vermin. I don't think there's even one of those things I don't detest."

—Brother Francis, Red Consecrator

The bulk of the adventure is likely to consist of the Explorers delving into the interior of the *Sacred Heart*, searching for clues, and trying to stay alive. There are a number of ways in which the Game Master might handle this exploration, depending on the style of play he and his players prefer. See below for more information on three possible methods to handle the exploration of the Tomb.

EXPLORATION CHALLENGE

The simplest and most abstract method of exploring the *Sacred Heart* is to treat it as an Exploration Challenge, as detailed on page 263 of the *ROGUE TRADER* Core Rulebook. The number of Degrees of Success that need to be accrued to complete the challenge is up to the Game Master to decide, but should be at least Taxing, if not Involved.

Handling this part of the adventure as an Exploration Challenge runs the risk of making it overly abstract for some groups. To make things more interesting, should Explorers ever fail an Exploration Test, the Game Master can instigate an encounter of some sort. One way to do this is to select a location (by choosing from or rolling on **Table 4-10: New Location** on page 135) and choose from or roll on **Table 4-7: Perils of the Tomb** (see page 131). The Explorers must then find their way through the ensuing deathtrap before they can continue on and return to making Exploration Tests.

Once they have accrued the requisite Degrees of Success for the Challenge Complexity, the Explorers come upon the Processional Narthex (see page 130) and the Game Master can proceed to **Part III: The Holy of Holies** (see page 137).

MAPPING

Another option, and one certainly not to be entered into lightly, is for the Game Master to map out large sections of the *Sacred Heart* and to allow the Explorers to travel through it, perhaps with one of their number sketching out a map of their own as they go. This method is potentially the most difficult, as it asks a great deal of the Game Master in preparation. However, it has the advantage of truly immersing the Explorers within the environment. Each time they enter a new Location, the Game Master should describe to the players what their characters can see with particular reference to the layout. When confronted with a choice of directions in which to travel, the players state which way their characters are going and the Game Master keeps track of their route (in secret) on his own map while one of the players attempts to do the same on a sheet of paper.

If the Game Master opts for this method he should consider the likelihood of the group becoming lost, and the possibility that the adventure might turn into something of an exercise in cartography and self-doubt. The Game Master should keep the action flowing by introducing **Hazards** (see page 132) that he has either already planned out and marked on his copy of the map or rolled randomly as the Explorers move into each new Location during their search.

Depending on the type of adventure the Game Masters and players want, it might become necessary for the GM to move the action towards its eventual conclusion, although plenty of players are quite happy exploring the setting to their hearts' content. Should the group become lost, for example, the Game Master might like to allow a Simple Exploration Challenge to locate the Processional Narthex, at which point the adventure can proceed to **Part III: The Holy of Holies** (see page 137).

TABLE 4-10: NEW LOCATION

1d100 Roll Location

1–15	Cloister-Passageway (see page 123)
16–25	Sanctum Imperialis (see page 124)
26–35	Pilgrim Bay (see page 124)
36–45	Provender Chamber (see page 125)
46–55	Gun Deck (see page 125)
56–60	Launch Deck (see page 125)
61–65	Engine (see page 126)
66–70	Command Deck† (see page 126)
71–75	Warp Engine† (see page 127)
76–80	Navigator's Tabernacle† (see page 127)
81–85	Librarium Vault† (see page 128)
86–90	Cogitation Core† (see page 129)
91–95	Astropathic Enclave† (see page 130)
96–100	Processional Narthex† (see page 130)

† These are Unique Locations that the Explorers can normally only encounter once. Re-roll on second or subsequent instances, unless the Explorers have deliberately doubled back to re-visit them for supplies or to take shelter against their foes.

RANDOM EXPLORATION

The last, and in many ways best method, combines the abstract and a planned approach. Using this method, the Explorers declare their plan and, based on the objective, they give Game Master can run a series of encounters that unfold as that plan is enacted. Eventually, the group's progress will see them come upon the Processional Narthex and the adventure can proceed to Part III. This method can be broken down into a number of steps, as described below.

STEP 1:

The Explorers declare their objective. They might just wish to explore the *Sacred Heart* until they find something interesting, but this is fairly impractical and few experienced Explorers would attempt it. More likely, they should declare a specific location they wish to reach or an amount of time they intend to spend inside before regrouping. As this goes on, the Explorers might need to rest, eat and drink and might also need to scavenge ammunition, power cells, oxygen tanks, and other consumable goods from their surroundings.

Good examples of suitable objectives would be reaching the bridge or the drive section, or exploring for three hours before heading back to the entry point.

STEP 2:

The Game Master makes an estimate of the magnitude of the Explorers' objective. At this stage, he should determine how many Locations the group passes through and the nature and frequency of any dangers lurking there. He should also consider how long this part of the adventure should run (and how well prepared the Explorers are to face the perils inside the wreck). There is no theoretical upper limit to the number of encounters the Explorers could face this way, though it would obviously be impractical to explore every permutation.

STEP 3:

Having determined how many locations the group is to pass through before reaching its objective the GM can proceed. The Explorers begin at an entry point as described earlier, and each Location they wander into is determined randomly using **Table 4-9: New Location** and **Table 4-7: Perils of the Tomb** (see page 131). In between each Location should be at least one cloister-passageway, which counts towards the total magnitude. The Explorers must work through a number of Locations equal to the magnitude that the GM set during Step 2 (not including the entry point and ultimate destination). Once the Explorers clear the set number of chambers, they reach their objective, which might be a specified section of the ship, a complete circuit back to the exterior or, should the GM decide to move on to Part III, the processional narthex. The Game Master is always free to override any results generated by the Tables, and to have the Explorers find the narthex whenever he deems best to keep the action moving. Otherwise, he can allow the system to play out until the narthex comes up as a result, or until the players decide that they are actively looking for the Saint's resting place.

EXAMPLE

Owen's character, the Rogue Trader Lady Saffena Fel, is leading an expedition to search the ruins of the Sacred Heart. The Explorers decide to seek out the wrecked vessel's bridge, hoping to access its machine systems and learn something of its fate. Andy, the Game Master decides that this sounds like a relatively simple objective, and taking pity on the fact that all of the Explorers are Rank 1, decides they must pass through twelve locations to reach their destination (every other one automatically being a cloister-passageway). The locations the group pass through on their way to the command deck turn out to be: gun deck, cloister-passageway, provender chamber, cloister-passageway, launch deck, cogitation core, cloister-passageway, provender chamber, cloister-passageway, astropathic enclave, cloister-passageway, pilgrim bay, and finally the command deck.

Exploring the wreck is not as simple as passing through each location however. Upon rolling up a new location (chosen by the GM or by rolling on **Table 4-10: New Location**, on page 135), the Game Master should also determine if and what type of danger the Explorers face within. Roll on **Table 4-7: Perils of the Tomb** to determine the dangers before them.

EXAMPLE

To return to the progress of Lady Saffena and her companions, having reached the command deck, Michael's Explorator Zepheron was able to glean some details of the violence of the Sacred Heart's death and the group decided to head for the Warp Drive. The GM decides that this location is quite some distance from the command deck and so determines that the group must pass through twenty locations (half of which are automatically cloister-passageways) to reach it. On their way there the group passes through the librarium vault, where Evo's character, the Arch-militant Byron slays an Orphan of the Flesh, though not before it very nearly kills Gareth's Explorator. Later on, the group is overtaken by a cell of Murder-Servitors and are thus very grateful that Graham's Arch-militant has his trusty heavy bolter on hand. The twelfth roll on **Table 4-10: New Location** results in astropathic enclave, but because the group has already passed through this Unique Location, the GM rolls again. The re-roll results in processional narthex, and so Andy decides to proceed to Part III of the adventure.

DECIPHERING THE LEGACY OF COGNATIUS

Whichever of the three methods presented here is used, the characters cannot fail but to learn something of the legacy of Saint Cognatius as they pass through the winding interior.

For every location they halt in for more than five minutes or so without being distracted by hazards and the likes, the Explorers have a chance of finding clues as to whether the Sacred Heart is truly the resting place of the Saint, or if

it is not, where the real resting place might be. This takes the form of reading the innumerable rolls of text etched in the bulkheads, gathering scraps of sacred parchment and studying the faded scenes painted onto the walls and ceilings.

At each location, the Explorers can make use of any Investigation Skill to attempt to study that location and learn something of the Saint's legacy. This covers quite a range of Skills, so Game Masters are encouraged to imagine how the more unusual ones might be used or, conversely, to override their use if no reasonable explanation is forthcoming. For example, it is easy enough to imagine how Scholastic Lore could be used, the Explorer drawing upon his experience to translate sacred tracts written upon the walls. An Investigation Skill such as Chem-Use might seem less relevant, but could be explained as the Explorer sampling the inks used to write the text in order to determine their age and origin.

Each of these Tests takes five minutes, and requires a **Hard (-20) Skill Test** using the appropriate Investigation Skill. Passing a Test reveals some useful shred of information and earns the Explorers additional Achievement Points, as explained at the end of Part II.

PART II ACHIEVEMENT POINTS

- 100 Achievement Points—For each Unique Location the Explorers investigate.
- 10 Achievement Points—For each Location at which the Explorers pass an Investigation Skill Test to decipher the Legend of Saint Cognatius. In addition, every Degree of Success scored earns an additional 5 Achievement Points.
- 50 Achievement Points—If the group's Astropath picks up the ancient echo of the Sacred Heart's Astropath in the astropathic enclave.
- 50 Achievement Points—If the Explorers find usable tomes in the librarium vault.
- 50 Achievement Points—If the Explorers recover the Navigator's charts in the tabernacle.
- 50 Achievement Points—If the group finds the hidden writings of the ship's long dead master in the bridge command throne.
- 35 Achievement Points—For every group of Children of the Flesh the Explorers interact with in a positive fashion (i.e. without simply butchering them).
- 25 Achievement Points—For each cell of Murder Servitors, Overgrown Autochthonic Vermin, Orphans of the Flesh, or other group of foes the Explorers defeat.



PART III: HOLY OF HOLIES

"Humanity has forgotten more than it can ever know."

—Sayings of Saint Cognatius, Verse VII, Line 4321

In the third and final part of **The Sacred Heart** the Explorers enter the innermost regions of the grounded vessel. Within, they find a shrine of impossible sanctity. Every surface is wreathed in gold leaf or emblazoned with shining aquilas, and the scent of burned incense hangs heavy in the air. Before they can explore any further however, an ancient guardian awakens, a construct set to watch over the Holy of Holies many long centuries ago. If the Explorers can defeat this vengeful monstrosity, the secrets of the tomb of Saint Cognatius might be theirs. If they cannot, the beast could very well tear the entire place down around itself and the Explorers, crushing them or sealing them within for all time.

ENTER THE SANCTUM

Part III: The Holy of Holies begins at the moment the Explorers open the vast brass portal at the end of the Processional Narthex, as described at the very end of Part II. The moment this happens, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

Passing through the metal doors you find yourselves within a circular chamber, with four smaller, arched portals leading off of it. At the centre, illuminated by guttering candles that eerily flicker to light around it, stands a mighty rectangular structure wrought of stone and carved with line after line of spidery gothic text. Might this be a sarcophagus? If so, could the body of Saint Cognatius himself rest within?

Surely now, you have reached the holy of holies, the inner sanctum of the Sacred Heart.

LOCATIONS OF THE INNER SANCTUM

The Inner Sanctum consists of a circular chamber approximately fifty metres in diameter with four smaller spaces set out at the cardinal points. In the centre of the chamber is a raised, sarcophagus-like structure. Each of these areas is described below. For reference, the portal is counted as the south-western point and the positions of four sub chambers are described in reference to this.

Each of these areas is accessible through a tall, arched doorway. Each door is sealed and locked when the Explorers arrive. To gain access to the side chambers the Explorers must bypass their locks by way of a **Security Skill Test**. The base Difficulty of the test is **Arduous (–40)**, and the Game Master is reminded that any attempt not using a multi-key or similar tool is subject to a –20 penalty.

If the Explorers fail the first Security Test, the Game Master should ask the Explorer standing nearest to the western doorway to make a **Punishing (–50) Awareness Skill Test**. Each Explorer who succeeds on this Test detects a slight vibration in the floor beneath his feet, but nothing more. Each Explorer who fails notices nothing beyond the normal eerie qualities of the chamber.

If the Explorers fail a second Security Test (to open the same door or another one) they must make a third Awareness Test, this time at a Difficulty of **Challenging (+0)**. Each Explorer who succeeds hears a low, mechanical grinding sound from behind the western door.

If the Explorers fail a third Security Test, they must make a third Awareness Test, this time at a Difficulty of **Challenging (+0)**. Each Explorer who succeeds hears a hissing release of gas and a heavy, metallic thud from behind the western door.

Note that it is entirely possible that the above Security Skill Tests are being made to open the westernmost doorway. In this case, it is the same character that makes both tests and he gains a bonus of +10 for being so close to the sub chamber from which the sounds are emerging.

Any further failed Security Tests result in something very bad indeed happening, as does a successful Test to open the western door. See the **The Guardian Awakens** for details.

RELIQUARY CHAMBER

The eastern sub-chamber is a small chapel, its walls lined with niches of many different sizes and shapes. Within each niche is some object held sacred by the cult of Saint Cognatius, from jewelled crowns to seemingly insignificant items of cutlery. Should the Explorers open the door leading into this sub chamber, they enter the reliquary chamber.

SAMPLE RELIQUARY CHAMBER CONTENTS

Should the Game Master wish, he can provide a number of specific items for the Explorers to discover within the Reliquary Chamber, such as the following:

- A perfect replica of Aleynikov's Star Chart. See page 106 for details of this very useful item. How a relic of Nadine Aleynikov got into the *Sacred Heart* is another (altogether more disturbing) matter.
- One gold-leafed frag grenade. This weapon has the Sanctified Quality (see page 80).
- Five ashen skulls (see page 97).
- One copy of The Emperor's Tarot (see page 99), soaked in blood from an unknown source.
- One copy of the *Book of St. Lucius* (see page 97).
- A void coffer (see page 101) containing a suit of consecrated artificer armour (see page 94) with the skeleton of a forgotten saint still inside.

ARMOURY CHAMBER

The northern sub-chamber is an armoury containing a staggering collection of weapons, all mounted upon the stone-flagged wall in ornate brackets. The Explorers are likely to abscond with some (or, most probably, all) of these weapons, so the Game Master should make sure that none of the items available trivialise the final encounter.

SAMPLE ARMOURY CONTENTS

Should he wish, the Game Master can place a number of specific items within the Armoury, any number of which might prove essential should the Explorers find themselves in deadly combat with the Guardian of the Inner Sanctum. Here are a few sample items:

- One rosarius (see page 95).
- A case of sixty-six pyre rounds (see page 93).
- One flail of chastisement (see page 87) with the Blessed Edge Upgrade (see page 91).
- One psyoculum (see page 92).
- Five long-defunct arcoflagellants, each equipped with two functional electro-flails (see page 90).
- One Scythian venom talon (see page 90) with the Discharge Pack Upgrade (see page 92).

VESTRY CHAMBER

The eastern sub-chamber is a repository for a range of holy vestments, including several suits of armour and religious accoutrements clearly made for a very important individual indeed. Individual items are mounted upon the walls, while more complete sets sit atop frames of gold and polished wood.

SAMPLE VESTRY CONTENTS

Should the Game Master wish to place specific items within the Vestry Chamber, here are a few examples of suitable items:

- One medicus ministorum (see page 96).
- Five sticks of Drusine incense (see page 99).
- Five doses of deadfall (see page 96).
- Five suits of Vaporian mirror armour (see page 93).
- One brazier of holy fire (see page 90) with an Adamantine Hilt Guard Upgrade (see page 91).
- One praesidium protectiva (see page 89).



GUARDIAN CHAMBER

This sub-chamber houses the guardian of the *Sacred Heart*, a towering mass of armour and pistons animated by the still-living (though irreparably insane) mind of a condemned sinner who committed some forgotten crime aeons ago.

The Explorers can only investigate the interior having defeated the guardian. Aside from the guardian itself, the chamber is entirely dominated by banks of machinery, amongst which are the power cells that have lain dormant throughout the centuries and kept the guardian alive as it maintained its long and lonely vigil.

THE SARCOPHAGUS

At the very centre of the chamber lies a raised rectangular structure made of stone and engraved with line after line of spidery text. If the Guardian has not yet been awakened, it furiously rouses itself the instant the characters lay a hand upon the sarcophagus or interfere with it in any way at all.

THE GUARDIAN AWAKENS

The Explorers' intrusion into the sacred centre of the vessel awakens the Guardian of the Sanctum (see page 142). When this happens the action switches to a fast-paced and potentially lethal combat within the Inner Sanctum. The combat continues until the Explorers defeat the Guardian, by force of arms or by way of the Word of Command (see page 139), until they flee from the rampaging monster, or until they are slain. Begin the combat by reading aloud or paraphrasing the following:

The ground trembles with the sound of metal grinding against metal and stone cracking wide open. A mechanical groan fills the air, followed an instant later by a howl of stark pain and utter insanity. One of the side chamber doors grinds open, the very fabric of the inner sanctum trembling and sending runnels of dust and debris scattering from overhead.

Then, the portal snaps fully open and there is a dread hush, the calm before the storm. What seems like an eternity later, a form stirs in the shadowed interior of the side chamber and a vast shape steps out. It is a huge mechanical monster, larger than a Space Marine Dreadnought. At the centre of its torso is a shrivelled thing that might once have been a man, reminding you instantly of one of the fearsome Penitent Engines created and utilised by the Ecclesiarchy. But this is something larger and more horrific, the very pinnacle of whatever tormentor's artifices create such infernal machines.

Clearly, the towering horror is the guardian of this place. Its first action upon awakening is to cycle the motorised blades mounted upon its arms and test fire the heavy flamers set beside them. Its optics sweep the chamber. For an endless instant, it sits eerily still, priming its weapons and observing its surroundings.

With a crash of one of its massive feet slamming down upon the deck and a bellow of inconsolable fury, the guardian surges forward to strike down upon the nearest victim of its ancient wrath!

SPEAKING THE WORD OF COMMAND

If the Explorers succeeded in completing the Investigation Challenge in Part I without failing any of their Investigation Skill Tests, they possess of an alternate means of defeating the Guardian, though they might not realise it. The Command Code that they can acquire during that stage allows them to shut the creature down permanently—provided that they can find a way to broadcast this code to the Guardian in some way. As a Full Action, an Explorer in possession of the Command Code can attempt to broadcast the signal via vox, laud-hailer, or some other mechanical means the Game Master deems appropriate by making a **Very Hard (–30) Tech-Use Test**. The Explorers can repeat this Test as many times as they wish, bearing in mind that they are engaged in a life or death battle against the Guardian all the while!

If the Explorers manage to succeed on this Test, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The air is filled with a grating machine code squeal so loud it drowns out the screeching of the guardian's blades and the stomp of its metal feet. The beast halts dead, its entire form trembling as its gears disengage. After a moment, the only movement visible is the ragged, artificial breathing of the thing of shrivelled flesh at its heart. Then that flesh is wracked by a spasm, strains against the pipes and conduits holding it in place, and is finally still. The Guardian of the Inner Sanctum finds rest after its aeons of torment.

THE GUARDIAN VANQUISHED

If the Explorers defeat the Guardian (by sharp edge of their swords or their wits), they have won a great victory indeed. If they were lucky, it did not even come at the cost of life and limb to any of the Explorers themselves. Though the tomb lies in ruins from the violence of the confrontation, many secrets await in its depths.

The Explorers are now free to exploit the wreckage of the ruins at their leisure, and the Endeavour is essentially completed. The question as to whether or not the *Sacred Heart* was the true resting place of the Saint, or if the remains within the sarcophagus are those of one of his followers, is a matter for the Game Master to decide or simply leave open, for now at least. In the meantime, the Explorers should be allowed to bask in the glow of their success, whether or not their peers back at Footfall or Port Wander believe the tales they tell of their exploits in the deadly tomb.

THE GUARDIAN RAMPANT

It is entirely possible that the Guardian proves too great a challenge for the Explorers to defeat. In this case, a fighting withdrawal is probably the best option, if there are any Explorers alive to make it. Should this occur, the Guardian embarks upon a rampage, either as a result of its original conditioning or, just as likely, because its will has been shattered into jagged chunks of pain and rage over the long centuries. Having been awakened, it desires only to destroy its prison, slay everything it can find, and then to die. The Guardian sets

about tearing down the walls of the Inner Sanctum, smashing the sarcophagus and the sub chambers before crashing through the brass doors and out into the Processional Narthex.

Should the Explorers attempt to flee, they have a head start while the Guardian unleashes its anger upon the Inner Sanctum. This amounts to around five minutes, which should prove sufficient for the Explorers to get clear.

As the Explorers retire to lick their wounds the Guardian continues its rampage through the wreckage of the *Sacred Heart*. If they have a suitable vantage point the Explorers might witness great chunks of the outer hull collapsing outwards and even catch glimpses of the Children of the Sacred Flesh desperately attempting to defend their home.

CONCLUSION

The adventure concludes with the Explorers either defeating the Guardian and gaining access to the Inner Sanctum, or being defeated themselves, resulting in the destruction of the Inner Sanctum and the loss of all its secrets. The Game Master can close the action at this point, or, depending on circumstances extend it further. He could have various inhabitants stirred up by the sudden disruption, either fleeing the vessel or falling on the Explorers in a maddened rage. Some might even beg the Explorers to take them away, depending on how the adventure has panned out.

PART III ACHIEVEMENT POINTS

- 25 Achievement Points—If each Explorer recovers a handful of relics from the Reliquary. This is increased to 50 for each who recovers a significant amount (so many that they are seriously encumbered for example).
- 25 Achievement Points—For each Explorer who recovers a weapon from the Armoury.
- 25 Achievement Points—For each Explorer who recovers an item from the Vestry.
- 100 Achievement Points—For killing the Guardian of the Inner Sanctum.
- 200 Achievement Points—For shutting the Guardian down using the Word of Command.

ACHIEVEMENT POINTS

In order to complete whichever Endeavour the Explorers chose to pursue, the group must have amassed at least 900 Achievement Points throughout the course of the adventure. If they fail to do so, the expedition has cost their house dearly and still not revealed whether the *Sacred Heart* is truly the actual resting place of Saint Cognatius. Without solid proof, the Explorers are unable to exploit the wreck and the legacy it contains. Perhaps worse, they risk being openly mocked by their peers for chasing such fantasies across the trackless Koronus Expanse. Rival Rogue Traders might mock them for falling for a classic confidence trick. Of course, even if they fail, they might always find another sign of the true burial place of Cognatius in the wilds of the Expanse and vindicate themselves with it.

IV: THE SACRED HEART

If the Explorers accumulate enough Achievement Points to equal the 900 point threshold, they return to port with valuable information indeed. They have learned much of the legacy of Saint Cognatius and can exploit this data to the benefit of their Profit Factor; they might have recovered incredibly valuable relics and other palpable signs of their success. Perhaps most valuable of all, the Explorers are lauded as having taken a gamble and won, earning them the (perhaps reluctant) approbation of their peers.

REWARDS

Defeating the Guardian is a major achievement and if the Explorers manage to do so the Game Master should reward the Explorers accordingly. There are plenty of other opportunities for the Explorers to earn Experience Points from their deeds within the wrecked *Sacred Heart*, some of which are detailed below. Experience Points are awarded per gaming session, as described on page 291 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook. In addition, the following bonus Experience Points may also be granted to all Explorers:

- 200 xp—If the Explorers defeat the Guardian by means of violence.
- 300 xp— If the Explorers defeat the Guardian by way of the Word of Command.
- 100 xp—If the Explorers “convert” any of the Children of the Sacred Flesh.
- 25 xp—For each swarm of Mutant Rats, or Swarm of Autochthonic Vermin, or single Overgrown Autochthonic Vermin (see pages 141–142) or other foes that the Explorers dispatched on the last leg of their trek.
- 100 xp—For each of the Unique Locations the Explorers visited during their journey.

FURTHER ENDEAVOURS

It is perhaps inevitable that some groups will inquire about salvaging the wrecked *Sacred Heart*, or even attempting to recover it entirely in an effort to return it to a void-worthy state. Salvaging the wreck is entirely within the realms of possibility, though the entire structure must be purged of the numerous inhabitants and other threats before salvage crews can even enter, let alone begin to strip it of useful resources. Such a course of action could very well form the basis of a Grand Endeavour opening with an operation of military proportions and going on to involve hundreds, possibly thousands of house thralls stripping the wreck of its most useful assets. The Explorers should ensure this operation does not clash with the original Endeavour chosen at the opening of **The Sacred Heart** however, for in some cases the wreck might be better left as it is, such as if it is to become the focus of a pilgrimage.

The question of whether the vessel can be returned to the void and made operational once more is very much left up to the Game Master. In all likelihood, only a dynasty with the very highest Profit Factor would be able to mobilise the assets required to undertake such an operation, and whether or not its coffers would be sufficiently swelled by success in doing so is highly questionable. Nevertheless, the galaxy of the 41st Millennium is a place ruled

by superstition, hubris, and downright incongruity, and such decisions are made according to a wide range of seemingly insane points of reference. Perhaps the idea of such a vessel continuing its mission to transport the faithful to the edges of the Koronus Expanse is, to the most faithful of the Emperor’s servants, a reward worth any price. Certainly, many Rogue Trader dynasties have bankrupted themselves in pursuit of such wonders.

Furthermore, in the event that it occurs to the Explorers to attempt to salvage the pilgrim transport located in the Launch Bay (see page 125), this could form the basis of a small “side mission” or Lesser Endeavour in its own right. Successfully recovering the barge results in the Explorers gaining the use of a vessel that grants them +75 Achievement Points when used in Creed-themed Endeavours of a suitable nature (such as the transportation of pilgrims and similar tasks).

FURTHER ENDEAVOUR I

If the Explorers ended the Endeavour on favourable terms with one or more groups of the Children of the sacred Flesh, they might attempt to use them as a resource in a future venture. They could be utilised as colonists, the Endeavour being centred around the establishment of a religious community dedicated to the worship of Saint Cognatius and with the Explorers as distant masters of the sect. How, or indeed if, the Explorers chose to address the colonists’ cannibalistic tendencies is left up to them to decide—it might, after all, present a useful means of gaining dominance over rival colonists...

FURTHER ENDEAVOUR II

Having succeeded in the Endeavour they chose to pursue at the beginning of **The Sacred Heart**, the Explorers might find their hard work under threat at some point in the future. Perhaps a rival or outcast sect within the Imperial Creed seeks to infiltrate the Explorers’ operation and to expose it as false. Having learned of this threat, the Explorers might launch an all out war of faith against the rival sect, mobilising their own followers, perhaps included the pious (if periodically cannibalistic) Children of the Flesh as particularly vicious foot soldiers.

FURTHER ENDEAVOUR III

If the Explorers earned at least 900 Achievement Points throughout **The Sacred Heart**, but failed to defeat the Guardian (thereby losing the opportunity to confirm if the vessel was the true resting place of the Saint) the Game Master might allow them to discover clues within the data they have gathered of other possible resting places. Each represents a world the Saint and his followers might have visited in their voyage through the Koronus Expanse so long ago. The Game Master could in fact run this adventure again, modifying it in any way he wishes. This would represent the Explorers discovering another, similar vessel to the *Sacred Heart*, downed upon another world. This might raise the question of how two or more vessels met the same fate. Perhaps they were deliberately crashed in some act of faith or penance, the intent being that only the truly worthy would be spared destruction and go on to settle the world and spread the light of the Emperor. As insane as this might sound, madder things have happened in the lawless wastes of the Koronus Expanse.

ANTAGONISTS AND NPCs

"That which grows in shadow grasps most fervently at the light."

—Nadine Aleynikov

The following NPCs and antagonists come into play during the adventure. Detailed descriptions are presented in the body of the adventure, starting on page 131.

CHILDREN OF THE SACRED FLESH

These savages are the descendants of the original crew and passengers of the *Sacred Heart*. See page 131 for more details.

Child of the Sacred Flesh



WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
40	19	48	46	30	24	30	25	19

Movement: 3/6/9/18

Wounds: 20

Armour: Decrepit armour (Body 3)

Total TB: 4

Skills: Awareness (Per), Climb (S), Concealment (Ag) +10, Dodge (Ag), Silent Move (Ag) +10, Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Survival (Int), Tracking (Int) +10.

Talents: Frenzy, Swift Attack.

Weapons: Savage metal spear (1d10+4 R; Pen 0; Toxic).

Gear: Ragged robes resembling debased ecclesiastical vestments, fetishes, trophies and random symbols of the Imperial Creed.

ORPHANS OF THE FLESH

These hideous mutants are the twisted descendents of the Children of the Flesh, exposure to the esoteric energies leaking from the Warp drive having turned their bodies into blasphemous abominations. See page 132 for more details.

Orphan of the Flesh



WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
56	06	(10) 58	(8) 46	16	16	23	35	12

Movement: 2/4/6/12

Wounds: 35

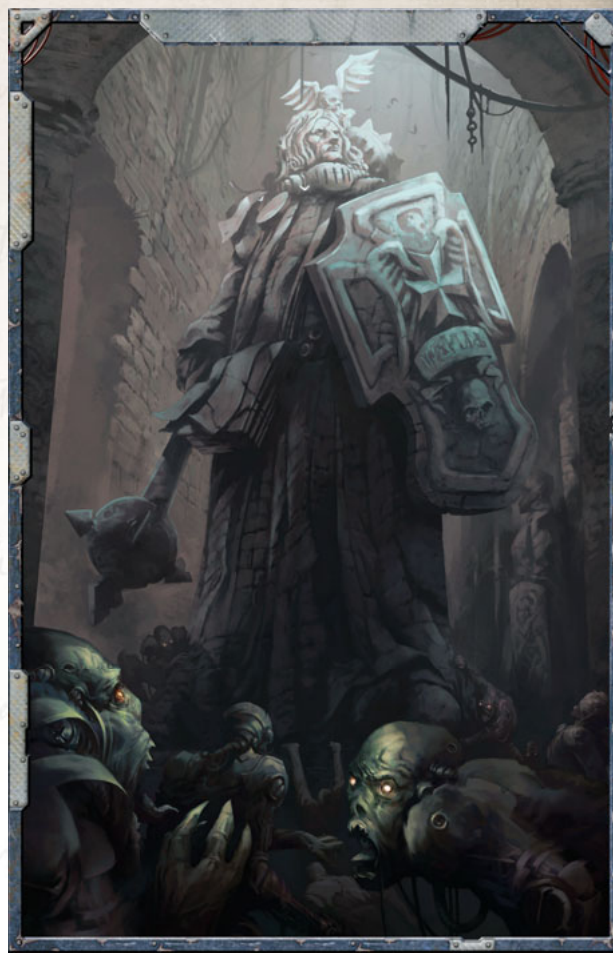
Armour: Twisted hide (All 6).

Total TB: 8

Skills: Awareness (Per), Concealment (Ag) +10.

Traits: Amorphous, Fear (1), Improved Natural Weapons, Size (Hulking), Strange Physiology, Sturdy, Unnatural Senses, Unnatural Strength (x2), Unnatural Toughness (x2).

Weapons: Skeletal protrusions (1d10+10, R; Pen 6).



MUTANT RAT SWARM

It is said everywhere humanity has travelled in the galaxy, the humble rat has accompanied it. Over the millennia, many of these vermin have mutated into large and threatening creatures that are especially dangerous in large numbers.

Mutant Rat Swarm



WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
32	01	33	23	35	10	43	15	06

Movement: 3/6/9/18

Wounds: 10, 30, or 50

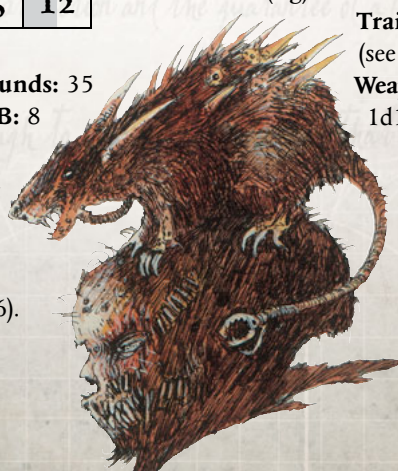
Armour: None.

Total TB: 2

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Concealment (Ag) +10, Silent Move (Ag) +20.

Traits: Bestial, Size (Varies), Swarm (see page 142).

Weapons: Teeth and claws (Melee; 1d10+3; Pen 0; Tearing).



AUTOCHTHONIC VERMIN

Those life forms that are native to Ksi Ascendant display a wide variety of size and coloration, but in basic form are very similar to one another. All are horrible, frog-like creatures with jagged teeth and razor tongues. Instead of jointed limbs, they sport numerous tentacles lined with suckers. The largest of these specimens are horrifyingly massive, capable of devouring an unwary Explorer in several bloody bites.

Autochthonic Vermin Swarm

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
46	01	42	42	23	10	22	18	02

Movement: 2/4/6/12

Wounds: 20, 40, or 60

Armour: None.

Total TB: 4

Skills: Awareness (Per)

Traits: Bestial, Dark Sight, Toxic, Size (Varies), Strange Physiology, Swarm (see **Swarm (Trait)**).

Weapons: Razor-filled maws (Melee; 1d10+5; Pen 2; Tearing).

SWARM (TRAIT)

Some creatures move in ravenous, overwhelming swarms, washing over and devouring everything in their wake as an inexorable tide of countless tiny maws.

A creature with the Swarm Trait is different from a normal creature in the following ways:

- A mass of creatures with this Trait are treated as a single creature for all intents and purposes in combat.
- A creature with the Swarm Trait reduces all Damage it would suffer from attacks without the Blast, Flame, or Scatter Quality by half.
- A creature with the Swarm Trait cannot be Knocked Down, Grappled, or Pinned.
- A creature with the Swarm Trait can "pour" through small openings its Size Trait would not normally allow at the Game Master's discretion.
- A creature with the Swarm Trait cannot Jump.
- A creature with the Swarm Trait's Size Trait varies based on its remaining Wounds as follows: an Average Size Swarm has 10 Wounds, and for every 20 full additional Wounds the Swarm creature has, its Size increases to the next category.
- A creature with the Swarm Trait makes one additional melee attack as part of its Standard Attack Action for every 10 full Wounds it has remaining.

Overgrown Autochthonic Vermin

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
45	30	(8) 48	(6) 36	33	20	33	25	02

Movement: 4/8/12/24

Wounds: 24

Armour: None.

Total TB: 6

Skills: Awareness (Per).

Traits: Dark Sight, Improved Natural Weapons, Size (Hulking), Toxic, Unnatural Strength (x2), Unnatural Toughness (x2).

Weapons: Rending bite (Melee; 2d10+8; Pen 2; Tearing, Toxic), tongue lash (Pistol; 15m; 1d10+4; Ensnaring Grasp†).

†**Ensnaring Grasp:** If it hits a target with this attack, this creature immediately makes a Grapple Action against it as a Free Action (see page 240 of the **ROGUE TRADER** Core Rulebook) even if it would not normally be within range for this Action. So long as it remains in control of the Grapple, it drags its prey 1d5 metres toward its maw at the start of each of its Turns.

GUARDIAN OF THE INNER SANCTUM

The Guardian of the Inner Sanctum is a mechanical terror not unlike one of the fearsome Penitent Engines constructed and fielded by the Ecclesiarchy to exact vengeance upon the foes of the Creed. It is likely that the Guardian was constructed in a similar manner, though surely its creator must have been a singular, if quite insane, master of his art. At the centre of the Guardian's enormous mechanical body is a shred of withered flesh which has been kept alive throughout the ages by the arcane vivification mechanisms at the heart of the tomb, a being of pure rage that has long forgotten light or sanity.

Guardian of the Inner Sanctum

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
46	18	(8) 48	(8) 46	30	20	33	25	06

Movement: 5/10/15/30

Wounds: 45

Armour: Head 2, Body 8, Arms 8, Legs 8.

Total TB: 8

Skills: Awareness (Per) +10.

Talents: Ambidextrous, Berserk Charge, Cleanse and Purify, Die Hard, Fearless, Hardy, Iron Jaw, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic), Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee).

Traits: Auto-Stabilised, Dark Sight, Fear (1), Machine (2), Size (Enormous), Unnatural Strength (x2), Unnatural Toughness (x2).

Weapons: Stomp (Melee; 1d10+5; Pen 6), chain axe (Melee; 1d10+11 R; Pen 1; Tearing), heavy flamer (30m; S/-/-; 2d10+4 E; Pen 4; Clip 1; Rld Full; Flame).

Gear: Internal micro-bead (to receive/relay instructions), fuel tank equivalent to one clip for its heavy flamer.

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