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DARK  
ELDAR

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**DARK ELDAR**



**PRAY THEY DON'T TAKE YOU ALIVE...**



# INTRODUCTION



**The Dark Eldar are black-hearted reavers to whom the galaxy and all of its peoples are but cattle to be enslaved at will. These alien pirates strike hard and fast from the shadows of the webway, vanishing again before the foe can fight back.**

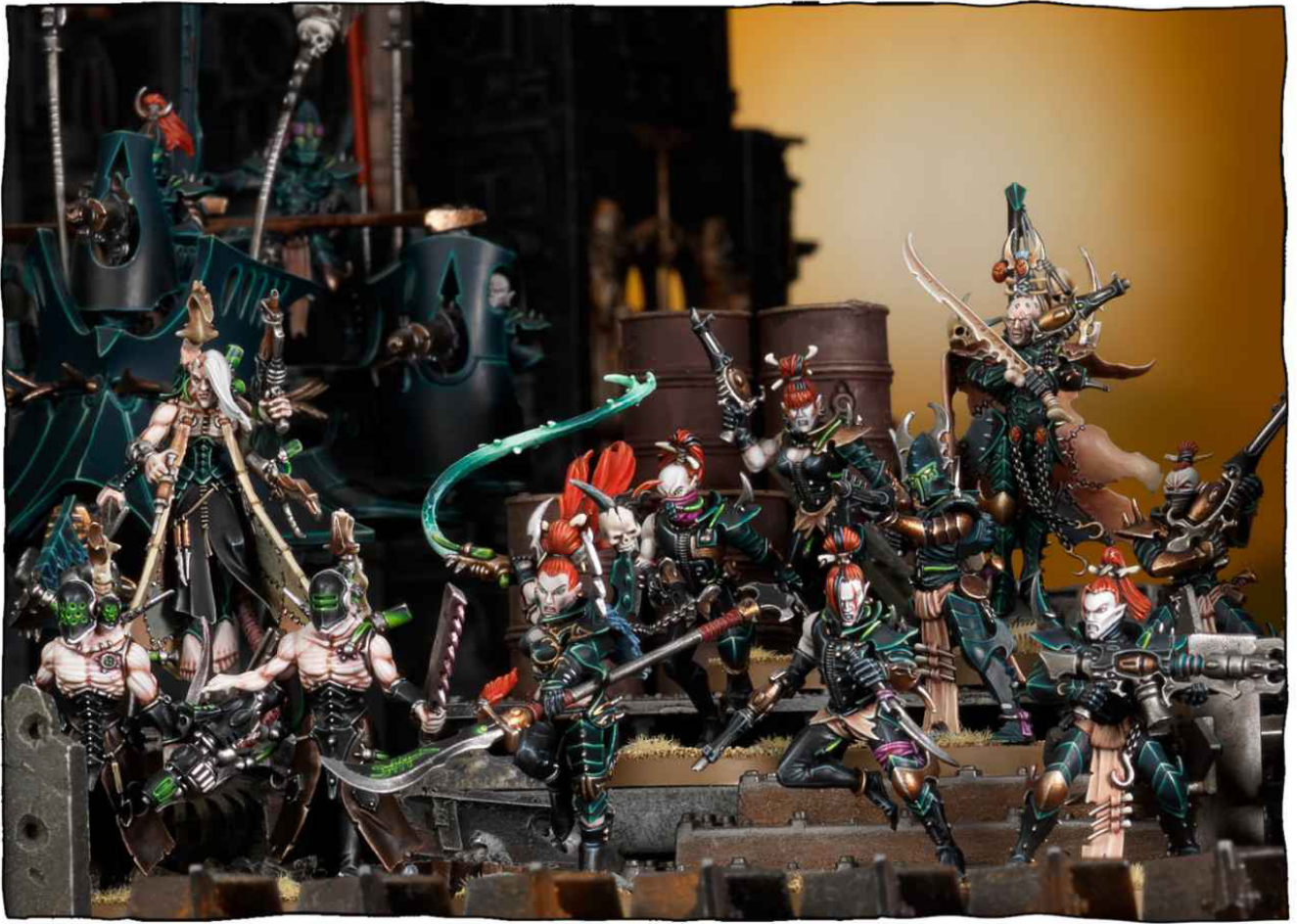
The Dark Eldar are a twisted reflection of their craftworld kin. They dwell in the strange realm known as the webway, inhabiting Commorragh – a cyclopean inter-dimensional metropolis rightly feared as the Dark City. The Dark Eldar feed on negative emotion, dedicating themselves to a non-stop war with realspace in which they strive to inflict as much pain and misery as they possibly can. Forced through a dark quirk of fate to abandon their once potent psychic abilities, the Dark Eldar instead epitomise physical excellence. Their athleticism and speed are unmatched, except perhaps by their towering arrogance. Add to this their lethal, arcane science, and the Dark Eldar are amongst the greatest of threats in a deadly galaxy.

## DARK ELДАР

Dark Eldar raiding parties are as varied as they are deadly, consisting of a mixture of skilled Kabalite Warriors, super-agile Wyches and the nightmare creations of the Haemonculus Covens. Blade-shaped skimmers and aircraft streak overhead, while stranger horrors creep through the shadows towards the foe. For all their elegant lethality, however, a Dark Eldar raiding party is a fragile thing, and a Commorrite overlord must fight with all of their cunning to achieve crushing victory over the lesser races.

## HOW THIS CODEX WORKS

Within these pages you will find the twisted history of the Dark Eldar and descriptions of the Kabals, Cults and Covens that make up their society. You will also find a showcase of fantastically painted Dark Eldar miniatures, redolent with the menacing colour schemes and iconography of the Dark Eldar race. Finally, you will find a set of datasheets containing a full description of each Dark Eldar unit and the rules for its use, which enable you to organise the Citadel miniatures in your collection into a force worthy of the Dark City.



**DARK ORIGINS**





**Ten thousand years ago, amid the apocalyptic screams of a newborn god, the mighty Eldar empire fell to ruin. Yet the architects of this catastrophe were spared the worst of its wrath, hidden deep within the bounds of the webway. They lurk there still, a race of unrepentant monsters damned to suffer an eternal thirst for the pain of others.**

The ancient empire of the Eldar was the greatest civilisation since that of the Old Ones, the various cultures that exist in the 41st Millennium mere reflections of its glory. Yet the Eldar were to fall from grace in the most profound of ways. The origins of those who now call themselves the Dark Eldar can be found hidden amidst the atrocity and mayhem of that terrible time.

The ancient Eldar had perfected their sciences to such an extent that they could travel vast distances in a heartbeat, reforge planets to their liking and quench stars at a whim. With the galaxy prostrate at their feet and arduous labour but a distant memory, the Eldar were gradually overcome by an arrogant sense of entitlement. Free to indulge their every curiosity, they spent ever more time engaged in esoteric pursuits, desperate to escape the ennui that set in over the course of their centuries-long lives.

The Eldar psyche is a thing of extremes and intense complexity; it can experience zeniths of bliss and nadirs of horror far more keenly than that of other races. It is just as capable of falling into corruption as it is of transcending to the sublime. With so much power at their beck and call, the core of their realm – once a masterpiece of civilisation – became centred around self-gratification and the pursuit of individual fulfilment. Slowly, the proud empire of the Eldar began to rot from within.

Amongst the pleasure-seekers and the interminably curious were those whose pursuit of excess became ever more extreme. These included a great proportion of the aristocracy of ancient Eldar society; those with the wealth and the time to truly explore every aspect of decadence. One by one, the leaders of the cults of excess that were taking over Eldar society became obsessed with their own power. They relocated into the labyrinth dimension known as the webway, taking over hidden ports and setting up strongholds at key nodal points within which to continue their debased pursuits. Almost invariably, these realms were linked via portals to the sprawling and exhilaratingly lawless city of Commorragh.

Commorragh was originally the greatest of the webway port-cities, impossibly vast and able to transport a fleet to any of the most vital planets of the Eldar empire by virtue of its many portals. Because of the access it granted to the far-flung corners of realspace, this mighty metropolis was reckoned to be the most important location in the entire webway. It was too valuable to the Eldar as a whole to belong to any single aspect of their empire, so it existed outside the jurisdiction of the great Eldar councils of that time. Precisely because of its autonomy, the city-port quickly became a magnet for those that wished their deeds to remain hidden from prying eyes.

The realm of Commorragh expanded unstoppably as wealth flowed across its borders. It spread outward into the void, consuming other webway port-cities, private estates and sub-realms with each new expansion. Commorragh grew ever larger and more impressive as it fed on their plundered resources. Unseen, the dilettante lords who ruled Commorragh's spires and dens of vice grew in status alongside their adoptive city, initiating more and more of the Eldar into their shadowy creeds.

The Eldar are exceptionally psychically gifted as a race, and as they wallowed ever deeper into corruption, echoes of both agony and ecstasy began to ripple through time and space. In the parallel dimension of the Warp, the reflections of these intense experiences began to coalesce, for the shifting tides of the Empyrean can take form around raw emotions, feeding on them and growing strong, even sentient. The constant stream of indulgence and depravity pouring from the Eldar empire was as unstoppable as a tide. It nourished and empowered that which crystallised at its centre – a nascent god of excess, content at first simply to wait, and to grow.





# THE FALL OF THE ELДАР

As the Eldar empire began its descent into madness, there were some who foresaw the disaster awaiting them and fled to safety. The first of these were the Exodites, those who saw their peril clearest of all. They chose to establish a network of colonies far away from the blighted heart of the empire. Many of them exist there still, their cultures living in a symbiotic relationship with the world-spirits of their planets.

Amongst the last to escape were the forefathers of the craftworld Eldar. As their society became ever more depraved, they recoiled in horror from what their once-noble kin had become. Realising that they stood upon the brink, they turned their considerable resources to the construction of immense craftworlds: graceful space-cities the size of small moons. The Eldar of the craftworlds fled into the void, desperate to escape from the punishment that must surely fall upon their race. Some would even succeed. Those left behind jeered at the craven flight and narrow minds of their departed cousins. Yet the more cunning amongst them watched, and wondered, shoring up the defences of their occluded webway strongholds even as they continued their hedonistic pursuits.

As depravity riddled every aspect of Eldar society, the cults of excess sought ever more violent thrills. Before long the streets of the Eldar cities ran with blood. The elegant architecture of their palaces became battlegrounds as the Eldar preyed upon each other, delighting in the cruellest of crimes. Their insanity and tainted passion poured into the Warp until it achieved critical mass. With a thunderous metaphysical roar that tore the heart out of the empire, a new god was born – Slaanesh, the Dark Prince of Excess.

Slaanesh's birth screams destroyed countless souls in a psychic shockwave that rolled across the galaxy. Whole star systems fell amid orgies of cannibalism and violence. In that instant, most of the Eldar race was destroyed, consumed by a cataclysm of terror and pain. The epicentre of their realspace empire was sucked into the Warp, leaving a yawning maelstrom of pure Chaos in its place. Slaanesh gorged upon their despair. Unstoppable in its ascendancy, it consumed the deities of the old Eldar empire, scattering the few survivors to the corners of the Warp.

The Eldar civilisation was reduced to a broken diaspora, their realm destroyed by the aftershock of Slaanesh's birth. Yet those hidden in the webway remained all but untouched. Much of the labyrinth dimension itself was shattered into ruin, but many of those Eldar who had built personal empires in and around Commorragh survived the birth of Slaanesh. The echoes of the new god's arrival had wrought insidious changes within them, changes whose horrific nature would not be guessed until later, but the Commorrite Eldar had escaped destruction. In their supreme arrogance they did not cease their quest for excess, even for a moment. Repentance and atonement were alien concepts to a people who acknowledged no limits to their power.

The Eldar sealed within the webway had not escaped the Fall untouched. Rather than having their essence consumed in one great draught, their souls were slowly draining away into the Warp – consumed over time by Slaanesh, the entity the Eldar call 'She Who Thirsts'. The Eldar fear Slaanesh above all, for it was given life by their actions, and yet waits hungrily on the other side of the veil to claim each and every one of them. Whereas the Eldar of the craftworlds learned to deny Slaanesh's hold upon them using the mystical spirit stones and infinity circuits, the Commorrite Eldar became expert at ensuring that lesser beings suffered in their stead.

Provided they steeped themselves in the most extreme and decadent acts, the Eldar of the webway found that the curse of Slaanesh could be abated. The agony of others nourished their withered souls and kept them vital and strong, filling their frames with unnatural energies. Assuming they could feed regularly enough, the Eldar of the webway became physically immune to the passage of time. So it was that the Dark Eldar were born, a race of sadistic parasites who subsist upon the anguish of others in order to prevent the slow death of their immortal souls. Ten thousand years later, in the 41st Millennium, Slaanesh's thirst pulls at them still. There truly is no escape. The Dark Eldar have unwittingly doomed themselves, exchanging a horrific but mercifully swift end for an eternity of ghoulish starvation.

To this day the Dark Eldar raid the galaxy from the canker that is Commorragh, sowing misery and destruction and spiriting away countless captives to their lairs for their own horrible ends. They are

masters of torture and degradation, for the longer a Dark Eldar can drag out the punishment of a captive, the more nourishment he can derive from it. A Dark Eldar who has recently fed upon the torment of others shines with a cold and startling aura, his form restored to perfection even as his soul festers within. One who is starved of such energies for long enough will become a shadow of himself, desperately hunting for a taste of pain with which to stave off the gnawing pangs in the depths of his soul.



## THE SATELLITE REALMS

*If a traveller were somehow to breach Commorragh's runic wards, they would first bear witness to the Dark City's tributary realms shimmering and distorting around it. One minute these vassal domains glimmer in the distance, the next they loom so close that their palaces and minarets can be seen by the naked eye. To venture unheralded past these satellite realms is to invite destruction – many large and territorial Kabals of Dark Eldar reside within their twisted geometries, deadly pirate bands of pitiless warriors who live only to inflict pain on others, and will suffer no intrusion on their realms. Worse things lurk in their crooked shadows, or swoop swiftly and silently through the air above in their never-ending hunt for prey. These are the hidden domains in which the Dark Eldar enact their vile rites and devilish schemes. Their origins lie in the tumultuous times that preceded the Fall; as the cults of excess began to thrive, their private realms in the webway flourished unseen until the largest of their number grew powerful enough to threaten Commorragh itself. However, over the course of its millennia-long history, Commorragh has subsumed all of the vassal domains it has not destroyed. Within the gilded corridors and flesh-pits of the myriad sub-realms frolic those Eldar who engineered the fall of their own race, laughing still at the warnings of their sombre craftworld cousins.*

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## EVIL INCARNATE

Fiercely intelligent and devious to a fault, Dark Eldar revel in pain, feeding upon the suffering of others. In them, the boundless and brilliant potential of their kind is given terrible purpose, and because their lives span millennia, the Dark Eldar have all the time they need to perfect their stygian arts. These blackhearted pirates are the dark mirror of their craftworld kin, for whom they know nothing but contempt. Indeed, the Dark Eldar see themselves as the true inheritors of the ancient Eldar empire, and look down upon everyone else as cowards or dim-witted prey. Meanwhile, to the craftworlders the Commorrites are a reviled reminder of a shameful past they would rather escape. This state of mutual antipathy is near constant, set aside only occasionally in the face of a sufficiently deadly mutual foe.

The warriors of the Dark Eldar are tall and lithe without exception. Their alabaster skin is corpse-like in its pallor, for there is no true sunlight within their shadowy realm. The Dark Eldar prize martial prowess above all other fields of achievement, excepting perhaps duplicity. Their athletic physiques are lined with whipcord muscle, honed and enhanced until they are superior even to those of their craftworld cousins. They stride through the fires of battle with the surety and poise of demigods, but their magnificence is only skin deep. Viewed with the witch-sight, Dark Eldar are repugnant monsters. The flesh of their soul-selves is gnarled and cadaverous, while their eyes glow with an icy and maleficent hatred for all living things.

The Dark Eldar quickly learn to fight with every weapon at their disposal, and to kill without mercy or hesitation. To do any less would lead them to a swift death, for amongst the entire Dark Eldar race

there is not a single shred of compassion or mercy. Such traits are worthless upon the night-black streets of Commorragh, and are best discarded in favour of a surfeit of cruelty, arrogance, and merciless ambition. Little distinction is drawn between the sexes, for an individual's skill and intellect are far more important than traits such as raw strength or gender. Dark Eldar senses are keen to the point of paranoia, their shadowed eyes and tapered ears alert to the slightest disturbance. It is said they can see in complete darkness, that they can taste fear upon the air, and that they can hear the beat of a terrified heart through a solid bulkhead door. All Dark Eldar exhibit a predatory instinct that is otherworldly in its intensity, and utterly necessary to their continued survival. In the Dark City, the incautious soon fall prey to their lethal peers.



## KHAINE'S GATE

*In the depths of Commorragh's central Undercore, in a region known only to a select few, stands a massive, circular metal door. This door – known as Khaine's Gate – is emblazoned with glowing runes of warding, bound shut with chains of superdense starsteel. For millennia, since the time of the Fall, it has remained this way. Beyond Khaine's Gate lies the madness of the Warp, a hideous rent in the webway that can never be stitched shut or severed. The consequences for the Dark City would be dire indeed were Khaine's Gate ever to be breached, for Commorragh would be opened to the realm of the Warp.*

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Countless generations of physical conflict have ensured that the Dark Eldar are natural – even instinctive – warriors, this natural talent magnified by their cruelty. However, the innate psychic abilities of their forebears have atrophied. To channel the energies of Chaos within Commorragh would be to invite disaster, for such psychic pyrotechnics could draw the gaze of She Who Thirsts, the nemesis of the Eldar race. As such, the use of psychic powers is one of the few things forbidden within the Dark City. This is not to say, of course, that it has never been attempted. Rather, the punishments for those caught dabbling with the powers of the Warp are so incredibly gruesome and drawn out that few indeed dare take the risk. Fewer still survive to make a second attempt.

Though it is manufactured instead of psychically grown, the weaponry of the Dark Eldar is just as advanced as that used on the Eldar craftworlds. In matters of war the Dark Eldar are artisans supreme, their technology refined to such a point that it may as well be magical. Their endless imagination and skill has led them down a sinister path; their favourite tools of war include splinter weapons that can set every nerve aflame with pain, beams of darklight, whips that bleed acidic ichor, and eldritch soul traps. The Dark Eldar are so focused on the agony of others that their lightweight bodysuits incorporate bladed plates not only for protection, but also to give them yet another weapon to use upon their prey. Collectively, the warriors of Commorragh know all the ways there are to kill the other denizens of the galaxy, and delight in perfecting as many as they can.

Though they turned their backs upon the material dimension long ago, when the Dark Eldar emerge from their twilight realm they revel in their ability to outclass their enemies. They rarely sully their tongues with the grunting languages of the lesser races, using translator technology on the occasions that communication is unavoidable. The warrior Kabals strike swiftly and without warning from portals opened within the labyrinth dimension of the webway, only to disappear like ghosts when enemy resistance becomes too severe. Their piratical raids attack from above, whole armies screaming into the midst of the foe aboard baroque grav-craft before leaping down to experience the slaughter first hand. Sprays of arterial blood and explosively dismembered corpses mark their passage, the laughter of these merciless warriors the last thing their victims will hear.

To the Dark Eldar, the sweet fruit of horror is as pleasing as the caress of a razored blade across soft flesh. They relish breaking the bodies of their captives, but prize even more highly the crushing of their spirit, for nothing is more gratifying to a Dark Eldar than securing utter dominion over one who has resisted them. They drink in every nuance of woe until their captives gibber and plead for death – a mercy the Dark Eldar are famously slow to grant. Even this is not a release for some, for the foul Dark Eldar Haemonculi hold the power of life and death in their claws. Many captives, when too broken to provide further sport, will be rent and reshaped into undying trophies or even grotesque items of jewellery or furniture – more than one Haemonculi's lair has sported a moaning, twitching throne fashioned from the remains of his favourite victims. Other unfortunates are rendered down, their final fate to be imbibed as an elixir or narcotic by the monstrous beings who stole their lives.



## REALSPACE RAIDS

The strike forces of the Dark Eldar, despite consisting of treacherous and scheming murderers, work like well-tuned machines upon the battlefield. Raids are planned in meticulous detail by the Archons and Succubi that lead them, and hidden routes through the webway are opened in readiness for the assault. Only the most capable are recruited for each realspace raid, which is why Dark Eldar warriors are such determined opponents, and why their bitter rivalries are set aside during battle. Working in concert ensures that not only is the greatest amount of punishment inflicted upon realspace but also that the maximum number of victims can be taken back to Commorragh. Vendettas are revisited only once the captives are divided, for above all the Dark City requires a steady intake of fresh souls.

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*'Every weapon your prey wields can be turned against them, given sufficient application of wit.'*

- Archon Drekarth X'uskul

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The Kabals regularly launch piratical invasions, so there is much to be gained from being part of such an organisation – the thrill of hunting lesser mortals, the chance to personally capture new slaves, but most importantly, the revitalising feast of unbridled destruction at hunt's end. Upon the Kabal's return to Commorragh, thousands of captives will be traded as currency, put to work in the hellish depths of the weapons shops, rendered down in flesh-troughs or tormented unto death, their demise drawn out so that their captors can gain the greatest amount of sustenance from their misery.

Though many raiding forces coalesce around the warriors of a particular Kabal, the Dark Eldar armies that fall upon realspace are far from uniformly Kabalite in their composition. The Wych Cults who entertain Commorrite society with their nightly displays of ultra-violence are powerful military organisations in their own right; many Archons will insist upon recruiting bands of Wyches from the Cult they patronise, for such warrior-acrobats make deadly shock troops. Similarly, the vile Haemonculus Covens that lurk in the bowels of Commorragh have standing armies of their own. These shambling hordes of flesh-twisted nightmares are often purchased to bulk out a raid with frightening and resilient warriors, or else accompany their leering creators as bodyguards and assistants both.



Typical raiding parties will have their ranks swelled further by hirelings or opportunists from the many mercenary subcultures that exist within Commorragh. Whooping gangs of Hellions and hurtling Reaver jetbikes perform high speed fly-by strikes. Jagged supersonic aircraft and flocks of murderous Scourges supply the Kabalites with air cover, while hovering Ravager Gunships pick off armoured targets with contemptuous ease. Incubi, Mandrakes, Grotesques and other freakish specialists lend a raiding party strength and versatility, and it is common for a powerful Archon to surround himself with as many such varied warriors as he can. The process of recruiting such multifaceted raiding parties is known in the Dark City as *K'lthrael Aht'Ynris Khlave*, or 'tailoring the toxin to the blade', and is intended to ensure a raiding party can swiftly and decisively overcome any opposition, no matter its nature or strengths.

Sometimes a powerful Wych Cult will organise its own raid, marshalling whole fleets of Raiders and Venoms to bear its bands of gladiatrixes into battle. Such raids will often be executed with a specific acquisition in mind, be it deadly new beasts for the arenas or esoteric living ingredients to render down into the potent cocktails of combat drugs that the Wych Cults favour. A raiding force of Wyches prefers close assault over all other forms of warfare, and will often be supported by Beastmasters, Reavers and other such warriors of the arenas. Some Wych Cults, most notably the Pain Eternal, are as active in raiding realspace as the most warlike of the Kabals, channelling their fearsome resources into proving their skills in battle against the varied foes of the galaxy at large.

Similarly the Covens of the Haemonculi will sometimes launch raids of their own volition. Though usually content to squat like bloated spiders amid their webs of shadow and pain, the Haemonculi need a steady flow of victims as much as any other part of Commorrite society. Many of the more discerning Haemonculi prefer to orchestrate raids of their own, picking out those they wish captured with a discerning eye, or savouring the act of indulging their own peculiar tastes with the relish of a connoisseur. A Coven at war is a terrifying sight: a rampaging tide of warped bone and bulging, veined muscle that glitters with a myriad of blades and needles. Grotesques thunder into the enemy ranks alongside buzzing, clicking engines of pain, while the gruesome weapons of the Haemonculi torment, rupture and liquefy the foe in spectacular fashion.



## THE DARK CITY

**Commorragh's origins date back to the zenith of the Eldar empire, thousands of years before Humanity even suspected its existence. It does not exist in realspace, but in the webway – a realm haunted by hidden life. Yet Commorragh itself is a place of death, and the worst nightmares of the lesser races would do it little justice.**

The webway, sometimes called the labyrinth dimension, is a construct of shimmering arterial pathways that spans both realspace and the Immaterium. It is defined by the fact that it sits between the material realm and the roiling tides of the Warp – an interstice comparable to the surface of a mirror, or the fabric of a veil cast over something foul. The ancient Eldar discovered that it was possible to exist within that silvered surface, to move within the threads of that veil. Since the Fall, the webway has become a realm both shattered and dangerous, its splintered reaches infested by strange beings from different realities. Yet the webway's portals still allow the brave and the bold to strike without warning at millions of locations throughout realspace.

## **COMMORRAGH**

In the depths of the webway lies Commorragh, named by many in fearful whispers as the Dark City. Commorragh is no mere metropolis, for it is to the greatest cities of realspace as a soaring mountain is to a mound of termites. Its dimensions would be considered impossible if they could be read by conventional means, its population greater than that of whole star systems. If anything, Commorragh is more like a vast collection of satellite realms and cities linked by myriad portals and hidden pathways. Viewed from one perspective, Commorragh is a loose collection of far-flung nodes spread throughout the arteries of the webway like a malevolent virus. Its clustered concentrations are in reality scattered across the galaxy, thousands of light-years apart in places. Yet these locations are linked together by shimmering dimensional shortcuts. Within the webway, the immense distances between each sub-realm can be crossed with a single step.



## **THE STOLEN SUNS**

*Far above the glinting metallic peaks of Commorragh are the Ilmaea, or 'black suns', dying stars ablaze with poisoned light that were harnessed at the height of the Eldar empire. Though held in sub-realms of their own, these celestial phenomena provide a near-endless supply of energy to the Dark City. Their twilight hues glint from the hulls of grav-vehicles that swarm from spire to tower, from arena to battleground. Every now and then, a thin solar flare curls from a captive sun out into Commorragh, briefly illuminating the horrors below. Each such flare is reflected from a billion panes of crystal across the Dark City, and yet it will be barely heeded by the teeming citizens, for they know that the suns' claws were blunted long ago. Though a few solar cults still exist in Commorragh, most Dark Eldar view their tame stars with contempt; to them, they are but another resource to be mercilessly exploited. It is said that no starlight can shine upon the Dark Eldar without being harnessed, bled away and eventually snuffed out altogether.*

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Commorragh appears within the webway as a composite entity of impossible scale, a shimmering, contradictory realm that plucks at the sanity of those who approach it. Thousands of ships dock each day within its outflung spines, for the Dark Eldar are far more numerous than even their craftworld kin suspect. It is not only the society of the Dark Eldar that festers within this terrible realm – Commorragh plays host to many diverse species of alien mercenaries, bounty hunters, and renegades, all risking their souls in the hope of claiming the riches of the Dark City.



The reaches of space around Commoragh are stitched with scintillating light-trails as vessels pass to and fro between the Dark City and the portals that surround it. Some of these gateways into realspace are small and dim, but the arterial portals above the largest city-states blaze with ethereal light. Each can accommodate a pirate fleet with ease. To focus on the city that these portals serve is near impossible. Each distant peak of spires and starscrapers is larger than the last, each border below almost fractal in its complexity. A profusion of thorned dock-spars jut from every archipelago and tower, and ornate spacecraft, held fast in crackling beams of electromagnetic force, occupy every berth. The Dark City seethes with a constant flow of corruption, as it draws evil to itself only to breathe it back out into the void.

Commoragh today is an endless nest of architectural contradictions and spatial anomalies. Each of its estates has been overdeveloped to such an extent that their growth has been forced into the vertical plane, the rival regions sprouting upwards like a tangle of needle-plants fighting for a scrap of sunlight. Each of the spires and towers is linked to its fellows by hundreds of curved arches and strands, and crested with complex silver structures that glow with stolen energies. Its towering aeries and palaces reach both upward and downward, spiralling into the depths of captive space. With every passing year, the parasitic city seeks to devour ever more of the hidden dimension that acts as its host.

## IMPOSSIBLE REALMS

Commoragh is complex on a dimensional scale, a monolithic and ever-changing tangle of impossibilities that could no more be accurately or comprehensively mapped than could the currents of the Warp themselves. Yet it is navigable, for the Dark City has many recognisable districts within its shifting bounds, though their number is almost beyond counting. Some are well-known and well-travelled, densely inhabited regions of tangled spires and bone-paved streets carved into fiercely defended territories by warring Kabals. Others are death to enter unbidden, the personal realms of powerful Archons or cadaverous Haemonculi who do not take kindly to unsolicited intrusions. Yet most dangerous are those regions that have fallen into disuse, due to either structural or dimensional collapse. These may take the form of monster-haunted wastelands of vitreous wreckage and ossified remains, or lakes of seething poisons and screaming shadows. The latter will often have suffered dimensional breaches due to the partial or total collapse of the webway around them, and may be bombarded by the light of dying stars, or exist within fields of entropic radiation that will wither living creatures to dust in seconds.



## DESOLATE OUTSKIRTS

Girdling the titanic central spires of the Dark City, Low Commoragh is a hotchpotch of shattered ruins and scavenged glories. Once-proud fortress complexes and barter-ports spread out in all directions, and the black and angular spires of lesser Kabals riddle their extremities with opportunistic growth. Many areas are haunted by packs of Ur-Ghuls and Khymerae, and are twisted beyond recognition by the tremendous upheaval of the Fall. Their pitch-dark catacombs are prowled by far larger and uglier things than the Dark Eldar, for in Low Commoragh the lost and the feral thrive like carrion in a graveyard.

A vast swathe of these war-torn ruins form a region known as the Sprawls. Through their bleak streets



wander the Parched – cadaverous Dark Eldar who have fallen far from grace. These ghouls gather on the periphery of others' fights and misfortunes, vicariously feeding on pain like frozen men flocking to a flame. Another region, known colloquially as Central Corespur, plays host to the torturous bends and falls of the acid-green River Khaïdes. Along this river race Hellions and Reavers, who compete in blisteringly fast aerial duels. The losers are sent spinning to their deaths, their dissolving corpses adding to the potency of the caustic sludge that swills around them.

Further coreward can be found the mercenary district Sec Maegra, more popularly known as Null City – a nation-sized shanty town permanently riven by internecine conflict on a scale akin to civil war among the lesser races. A thick mist of poisonous smoke hangs over its roofs, and with every passing minute fresh screams pierce the silence. At night, the scorched streets resound to solid-shot gunfire and the crack-spit of splinter rifles as negotiations turn sour and rivals are assassinated. Xenos mercenaries can be found here in profusion, vying fiercely for the lucrative murder-contracts offered by many of the Kabals.

## THE INNER RINGS

As violent as they are, the districts of Low Commorragh are but playgrounds in comparison to the inner rings that surround the Dark City's core. Here can be found the oldest noble houses, which have ruled their demesnes with irresistible force for millenia. Their sweeping wings and towering mansions are crested by citadels full of aristocratic Trueborn warriors, each of whom descend from one of the original orchestrators of the Fall.

Among these inner rings, one of the Dark City's ancient city-states has literally fallen into shadow. In Aelindrach, shadows thicken and writhe as living things, flowing into one another and crawling up the legs of those that trespass amongst them. Here amongst the velvet domes the dreaded Mandrakes make their lairs, bathing in the darkness. The outskirts of Aelindrach give way to the Bone Middens of the Wych Cults, where the skeletal remains of every sentient species in existence can be found, positioned in grim tableaux and mock battles by the Wyches who slew them.

Ranged beneath these inner districts are immense weapon and food factories, spreading down into the lower spires underneath the Old City. These factories consume millions of workers and slaves each year. The slaves are watched over by divisions of cruel taskmasters, each locked in a murderous rivalry with its peers. It is the world beneath the Old City that allows Commorragh to wage its ceaseless war against realspace, for without a prodigious output of war materiel, the Dark City would soon be forced to feed upon itself.



## HIGH COMMORRAGH

The vast majority of the Dark City's vertical mass is the province of the warrior elites, and rife with constant inter-Kabalite warfare. Impossibly high structures of polished stone, alloy, resin, flesh and glass compete in their insane grandeur. Slaves crawl maggot-like across the fascias of titanic buildings, suspended in near-invisible webs as they labour to carve titanic likenesses of their cruel masters. Gargoyle-encrusted scimitar spines rear in the sky, anti-grav gunships hurtling between them as their passengers trade volleys. Here the greatest Kabals make their lairs, engaged in wars of subterfuge and outright violence. Above even these looming towers exists a world of Scourge messengers and assassins, of terrifying aerial predators, and the lightning-fast jetfighter pilots that

hunt them for sport. Those who dwell in the aeries of High Commoragh consider themselves blessed, and have little but contempt for those who fester in what they scornfully term *Ynnealidh*, 'the necropolis below'.



## KABALS OF COMMORRAGH



**The Kabals are autonomous organisations somewhere between criminal cartels, pirate fraternities and noble households. Though forever set at each other's throats, the Kabals form the primary military strength of Commoragh, and are largely responsible for the constant flow of slaves upon which the Dark City feeds.**

The Kabals occupy the upper tiers of Commoragh's power structure, defining the martial aspect of the Dark Eldar and maintaining a stranglehold on all aspects of the Dark City. Even the most minor Kabals consist of hundreds of Dark Eldar, though their territories may be confined to hidden locations and scattered hideouts. The largest Kabals comprise millions of skilled Warriors. The baleful influence of these monstrous coalitions stretches from one side of the galaxy to the other, plaguing lesser civilizations and inferior races with slave raids and acts of blood-soaked piracy.





## THE KABAL OF THE OBSIDIAN ROSE

*The Kabal of the Obsidian Rose control the greatest swathe of weapons shops in the Dark City. Through the inventive genius of their Archon, Aestra Khromys, they maintain a deathgrip on the Commorrite arms trade. Khromys is an exceptionally skilled artisan in the field of weapons manufacture, and a blade or pistol bearing her signature mark will sell for a huge price in slaves and souls. Yet she was not always the Kabal's leader. Indeed, having failed to bend the knee to the Obsidian Rose's previous master, Archon Vhloriac, Khromys was flung into the Kabal's vast weapons shops to suffer death by ennui. Yet Aestra worked tirelessly to produce perfect weapons until eventually she and her fellow weaponsmiths were called upon to present their work as tribute to Vhloriac himself. The coup that followed was executed with exceptionally crafted hidden weapons, Khromys and her retinue gunning down the Archon and his guards when their own firearms mysteriously failed to fire...*

*These days, the Kabal of the Obsidian Rose has a flawless reputation for its firearms and blades. Its perfectionist Archon does not tolerate any lapse of quality in her weapon shops' produce, and will personally descend into the bowels of Commorragh to make an example of those accused of imperfect workmanship. These punishments are invariably horrific, administered as they are by Khromys' personal Pain Engine, 'The Overseer'. The Archon spends much of the rest of her time leading slave raids against realspace, for only Eldar slaves – be they Commorrite, craftworlder or Exodite – have the requisite dexterity to satisfy the Archon of the Obsidian Rose, and she prefers to select them herself.*

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## THE GENESIS OF THE KABALS

Dark Eldar society once revolved around a small number of noble houses. The scions of these aristocratic institutions plumbed the depths of hedonism that led to the Fall. The Commorrite nobility jealously guarded their positions, seeking out and killing any who threatened them or questioned their primacy. The central mass of Commorragh – a mind-boggling metropolis of skyscrapers, archshrines, palatial spires and pleasure temples – was the province of the noble houses alone. Entry could be gained only by birthright, and elitism was a way of life.

So it was for several millennia after the Fall of the Eldar. The society of Commorragh remained as stagnant and corrupt as its ancient masters. In all likelihood it would have continued to do so indefinitely, had it not been for a young warrior-slave by the name of Asdrubael Vect, who brought the



old order of the nobility crashing down. Vect's own warrior-clique – or 'Kabal' – had prepared for their founder's ascension, seeding their agents into every aspect of Dark Eldar civilisation throughout Commorragh and beyond.

In the wake of Vect's uprising, the fickle Dark Eldar adopted the Kabalite system with an enthusiasm born of self-preservation. Sensing which way the wind was blowing, even the surviving noble houses reinvented themselves as Kabals in their own right, though in their hearts they still covet the notion of their inherent superiority. Yet none can deny that the Kabalite system has gone from strength to strength. Power is no longer inherited in Commorragh, it must be fought for and taken by force. The authors of the Dark City's fate are those who wield the sharpest minds and blades alike, the precarious nature of their position ensuring complacency can never take root.



## ORDER FROM ANARCHY

In a society as treacherous as that of the Dark Eldar, a single power-hungry individual soon makes enemies. It is never long before the loner finds a dagger at his throat or feels nerve-searing poison flowing through his veins. Only those affiliated to larger organisations enjoy any degree of security; there is safety in numbers, they say, and even in the shadow-haunted twilight realms of the Dark City this remains true. To kill a Kabalite is to commit a hostile action against an entire Kabal. Regardless of status, sect or species, few Commorrites are prepared to make such an influential enemy without good reason, and those who do must ensure they have powerful friends of their own to protect them against the inevitable vicious retribution.

Competition for Kabalite membership is beyond fierce, despite the varied and often violent initiation rites that must be undergone. The constant supply of fresh aspirants means that the Kabals themselves enjoy a kind of loose immortality. Each has the might to make its displeasure keenly felt should it be threatened or slighted. It is unusual for an entire Kabal to be wiped out altogether. Only the Supreme Overlord Asdrubael Vect can visit such a fate upon his enemies without triggering city-wide outrage or inviting punitive violence on a massive scale. Yet Vect ensures that Commorragh is eternally riven by gang warfare, and not a single night goes past in the Dark City without the streets echoing to running battles between Kabalite factions – the Archons of the Kabals do not care for the notion of peers.

## THE KABALS AT WAR

Though all Kabals offer a measure of sanctuary – from outside influences, at least – the true prize for the established Kabalite is to take part in a realspace raid. The war with the material dimension is a never-ending campaign of extreme violence against every other sentient race in the galaxy. A successful raid offers the victors not only the twin bounties of slaves and a feast of pain, but will also do much for the political standing of those who planned and executed it. As such, successful realspace raids are one of the most straightforward ways in which a Dark Eldar Kabal can rise to prominence over its rivals. The largest and most well-respected Kabals launch raids on an almost constant basis, their sleek attack-craft descending upon one hapless world after another to plunder and enslave.

It is extremely rare for an Archon to commit the warriors of his Kabal to a battle he has not already meticulously planned. Kabals employ countless spies, mercenaries and informers whose task it is to



scout out potential raiding sites in exhaustive detail. Further, the Covens of the Haemonculi can be prevailed upon to provide stranger means of surveillance, be it whisperglass mirrors, flocks of invisible familiars or parasitically invested abductees. These services always come at a price, of course, yet a successful realspace raid will normally justify the cost of such bargains tenfold.

Once a raid is launched, Kabalite forces will work to keep the foe on the back foot at all times, using superior technology and local knowledge torn from the minds of captives to stay one step ahead of the enemy. Stand-up fights are never entered into voluntarily, for the warriors of the Kabals view concepts such as valour or honour as weaknesses to be exploited. Their raiding parties will strike hard and fast where the foe is at its most vulnerable, aiming to cripple command and control structures, undermine logistics and spread terror and confusion. Should an organised response coalesce, the Kabalites will simply fade away and attack elsewhere, aiming above all else to avoid being pinned down in a war of attrition. Ambush, trickery, the turning of foes against one another, and the bloody quest for personal glory – such are the hallmarks of a Kabalite hunt.

Many Kabals will have a bias towards particular methods of warfare, most often the product of their Archon's personal conceits or origins. Some, such as the spaceborne Kabal of the Severed, favour great wings of attack craft that shatter and scatter the strength of their victims before a single Dark Eldar foot touches alien soil. Others – such as the Kabal of the Storm's Spite or the Kabal of the Bloody Scream – favour the deployment of overwhelming firepower, fielding whole squadrons of Ravager Gunships and murderous flocks of Scourge mercenaries who pick the foe apart from a distance. Conversely, a great many Kabals prefer to get in close, fighting where they can feel every hot splash of blood and hear every last rattling breath. Kabals such as the Shuddering Blade and the Silver Fang are especially well known for orchestrating such bloodbaths, and competition is fierce to accompany them to the field of battle. Perhaps the strangest of all are the Kabal of the Thirteenth Whisper, whose members keep their faces shrouded at all times and who are reputed to traffic heavily with the Mandrakes of Aelindrach. Raids by this Kabal are nightmarish affairs, tides of shadow proceeding their advance while chill-eyed horrors stalk the darkness with blades in hand.



## THE KABAL OF THE POISONED TONGUE

*The Kabalites of the Poisoned Tongue are universally sharp of wit, with a flair for duplicity so pronounced that they can tie their rivals in knots and dissect them with words alone. They have carved their own niche in the Dark City through constantly misleading and wrong-footing their rivals, and ensuring their 'allies' bear the brunt of the fighting during realspace raids whilst they plunge the knife into the foe's delicate underbelly. They even use failure and mischance as weapons, elegantly scapegoating and framing others whenever their plans turn sour. Nobody trusts the forked tongues of this infamously sly Kabal, but seeing as no Dark Eldar trusts another in any case, this isn't much of a handicap.*

*Led by the intellectual she-devil known as Lady Malys, the Kabal of the Poisoned Tongue enjoys a position right at the forefront of Commorrite society. Their number includes many Trueborn – the closest to nobility in the Dark Eldar society that Vect's mercilessly enforced Kabalite system will allow. The whispersmiths have it that the Lady has her own mysterious patron, for those bold or foolish enough to eavesdrop on her personal chambers have reported two distinct voices when only one lifestein registers within. Few such spies survive long, for Lady Malys has her little ways, and she is invariably several steps ahead of the competition. The only being Malys has thus far proven incapable of second-guessing is her ex-lover, Asdrubael Vect – though in recent years, even that is beginning to change...*

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## THE KABAL OF THE LAST HATRED

The Kabalites of the Last Hatred have a morbid interest in the forbidden arts. Though they outwardly seek to master the transition between life and death, their aims are far grander than those of petty necromancers. Some say the Last Hatred seek to transcend mortality entirely, others that they wish to exterminate the Eldar race and enslave whatever entity is born from the ashes. Madness this may seem, but any who have looked into their eyes will never truly dismiss their ambition. So it is that they prosecute their kin-strife against the craftworld Eldar and their Exodite cousins with unmatched fury.

Originally famous for their pain-farms and a talent for keeping their wretched captives alive indefinitely, the quest to drain every last drop of suffering from their 'clients' has led them into infamy. In recent years, the Kabal have mastered the technique of permanently binding a soul to the cadaver from which it would usually depart at the moment of death. Yet the carnival of corpses that accompanies them to war is merely a distraction to draw attention from something far more sinister, for down in the pits under their stronghold, the Kabal practises ever more complex rites. Here the Kabalites unpick the tapestry of life, studying the postponement of entropy in gardens hung with wax-skinned undead arranged in artful but unnatural poses. Should they ever succeed in their quest, the lines between life and death may be irrevocably blurred.



## THE KABAL OF THE BLACK HEART

The Kabal of the Black Heart is the oldest and greatest of its kind. It is a vast and sprawling organisation, able to support numerous rival Archons within its hierarchical structure. Each Archon controls a separate faction within the Black Heart, and each vies fiercely with his rivals for the patronage of Supreme Overlord Vect. None brave outright murder, however, for only a fool would blunt one of Asdrubael Vect's favourite tools. So complete is Vect's stranglehold upon Commorragh that none of these highly placed subordinate Archons dare challenge the Overlord's supremacy in anything but the most private dreams or fantasies. Even then, they do so with caution, for it is said that Vect knows well the scent of treachery, and reads the minds of lesser mortals like an open book.

This Kabal's military strength is virtually unassailable. Countless thousands of Kabalite Warriors, Commorrite mercenaries and lethal gunships stand ready to exterminate their foes at the slightest crook of Vect's corpse-white finger. A cast iron bond with the Wych Cult of Strife puts yet more might at the Supreme Overlord's fingertips, providing him with the closest thing the Dark City has seen to genuine allies. Coupled with the impossibly intricate web of spies, informers and agents that Vect has scattered through every stratum of Commorragh, the Kabal of the Black Heart holds more power than several of their largest rivals combined.





## THE KABAL OF THE DYING SUN

Those who fight under the sigil of the Dying Sun belong to one of the oldest Kabals, renowned for their overweening pride and disdain for anything that has not endured for millennia. They prefer to raid at sunset, for their leader, Archon Vorl-Xoelanth, is obsessed with the transition from light and hope to darkness and despair. The Kabal's wild claims that they retain the ability to extinguish stars are infamous, though their rivals have never quite managed to explain the deterioration of the sun Echillos during the Aleuthan Persecution.

The truth is that the Kabal of the Dying Sun possess ancient fragments of forbidden arcana, heirlooms from the days of the Eldar Empire of old. Their stronghold – the Pinnacle of Disdain – is an impenetrable mountain of elegant, buttressed armour and echoing chambers, within which the Kabal hide their darkest secrets. These timeless artefacts, hidden away in shadowy vaults, possess the power to kill stars, suck the life-force from worlds and exterminate whole races of sentient beings. However, they are ill-understood and, in many cases, charged with psychic potential. This, in turn, makes them as lethal to their owners as they are to their victims, not least because it would attract the violent displeasure of the Dark City at large should their existence become known. Thus they are used very sparingly, deployed by the Trueborn elite of the Kabal only as a last resort.



## THE SEVERED

The Severed are a spacebound Kabal that left the Dark City hundreds of years ago. They are more than familiar to the Imperium, as the Severed have plagued the systems of the Ghoroid Strip since time immemorial. Their Archon, S'aronai Ariensis, once botched a coup that cost him his place in the Dark City and most of his left hand. He defiantly refuses to regenerate his wound, and his warriors are often mutilated in the same manner, their left hands reduced to talons or replaced by augmetic claws.

It is testament to Archon Ariensis' utter ruthlessness that, having lost such face before his followers, he managed to retain the reins of power. Indeed, in the days following his and his Kabal's exile from the Dark City, Ariensis faced challenges to his authority almost daily. Each was answered with sudden, shocking violence, the Archon making such hideous examples of his rivals that those who remained soon lost all desire to attempt coups of their own.

Now the Severed are a force to be reckoned with once again. With his authority beyond dispute, Archon Ariensis has fought a centuries-long campaign against all who cross his path. His Kabal's pirate fleet – once a ragtag collection of battle-damaged craft – has become a sleek flotilla of hundreds. They strike at will, navigating the broader sections of the webway with peerless skill to strike against worlds across the galaxy and even, on rare occasions, Commorragh itself...



## THE LORDS OF IRON THORN

Masters of the sub-realm of Pandaimon, embittered remnants of a long-gone aristocracy, the Lords of Iron Thorn are Commorragh's pre-eminent weapons crafters. Prowling squadrons of Ravager Gunships and sleek-sailed Raiders fill the skies of Pandaimon, sweeping between its spires in great numbers.

Long ago, this proud and ancient Kabal were brought to their knees after an ill-fated rebellion against Asdrubael Vect by their then-master, Archon Qu. However, in the centuries since, they have rebuilt their power through ensuring the Kabal of the Black Heart remains well supplied with Iron Thorn war machines. This Kabal's weapon factories and grav-docks are so sprawling they would cover the surface of a small moon, and they ring night and day with the hellish clangour of slave-driven industry. It is said that the mark of the Iron Thorn upon a Raider's hull is akin to Aestra Khromys' brand upon the stock of a gun – a mark of quality that is second to none.

The Lords of Iron Thorn are highly active in the raids upon realspace, not least because every successful attack proves afresh the power of their airborne armada. They believe in the application of overwhelming firepower, and delight in proving the superiority of their finely crafted gunboats over the lumbering war engines of the lesser races.



## THE BROKEN SIGIL

The Kabal of the Broken Sigil takes its icon from the ancient Eldar glyph *Drethuchii*, loosely translated as 'the Shattering of Harmony'. Like its namesake, the Kabal is synonymous with acts of discord. Wherever order and prosperity abound, the Broken Sigil will strike with overwhelming force, bringing confusion and despair to the most idyllic planets in the galaxy. Terror tactics are much beloved by the Kabalites of this sect, so much so that the Broken Sigil's Archon, Lord Xerathis, is looked down upon by his rivals for the predictability of his strategies. True enough, his Kabalites are not above sky-writing, blanket-bombing with hallucinogenic gas or hijacking communications channels to ensure their victims are frightened half to death before the invasion starts in earnest. Yet the Kabalites of the Broken Sigil maintain that the price they pay in forewarning the enemy is far outweighed by the rich feast of fear that awaits them when the onslaught begins.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Broken Sigil are amongst the most feared and infamous of the Kabals, especially amongst the worlds of the Imperium. Entire conclaves of Ordo Xenos Inquisitors seek their demise, and on multiple occasions Lord Xerathis has found himself the personal quarry of Deathwatch Kill Teams. If this concerns the toweringly arrogant fearmonger, he conceals it well. Instead, Xerathis boasts of the fine slaves such post-human warriors make, and insinuates knowingly that, with the correct persuasion, even Space Marines can be made to cower in fear...



## BLADES FOR HIRE



Commorragh broods beneath the shadow of constant, internecine warfare. This storm of



**battle and bloodshed draws opportunist sellswords from all across the galaxy, while simultaneously breeding sub-cultures of warriors whose entire existence is rooted in the bloodshed that birthed them.**

Even the smallest Commorrite Kabal enjoys access to a plethora of deadly warriors and weapons. Murderous bands of Kabalites strive to outdo one another in their Kabal's service, the better to earn their place in the next raid upon realspace. The sprawling weapon shops of Low Commorragh churn out a never-ending tide of deadly weapons with which to arm the Archons and their followers. Potent techno-arcana, squadron upon squadron of anti-grav fighting vehicles, and elaborate networks of spies and informers all add to a Kabal's might. Most such organisations deal – to a greater or lesser degree – in narcotics, gambling, smuggling, trafficking, assassination, labyrinthine political manoeuvring, and all manner of illicit esoterica that further adds to their power base.

Those Kabals with a more established lineage may also boast entire cadres of Trueborn. These arrogant warriors root their sense of superiority in the purity of their natural birth, for most of the Dark City's denizens are brought into being by other, fouler means. While they may not be loyal by any definition that a human would understand, the Trueborn feel keenly any slight against their Kabal, for such insults call into question their own towering sense of self-worth. These pureblood Dark Eldar will fight harder than any of their peers to further the cause of the Kabal, if only through heightened self-interest.

Life in Commorragh is a constant battle for survival, however. Even with all of these powerful assets at their command, the Archons of the Kabals are always seeking anything that can give them an edge over their rivals. To this end many Archons – not to mention a number of Haemonculi and Succubi – will resort to hiring followers from among the mercenary sects that haunt the Dark City's most deeply shadowed corners. From the ferociously disciplined blade-skills of the Incubi to the slithering, otherworldly horror of the Mandrakes, such bargains can open up all manner of strategic advantages and ploys to an ambitious Archon. Yet any who strike such bargains must be cautious indeed, for – as they say in the blood-soaked Parlours of Misfortune – every deal in Commorragh comes with two prices: the one that you see clearly, and the one that you do not.

## **THE SHRINES OF THE INCUBI**

The Incubi are an order of faceless warriors, masters in the use of the long-bladed weapon known as the klaive. Everything about a fully armoured Incubus conveys menace. His armour is spiked and segmented from top to toe, and his ornate helm is framed by a pair of great razored horns that lend him an almost daemonic aspect. Incubi possess a sinuous and sinister grace, and each of their movements sings with their barely suppressed potential for violence. Their every waking moment is dedicated to the absolute perfection of their craft – that of killing as frequently and as cruelly as possible with their ritual weapon. In this way the Incubi echo the Aspect Warriors of their craftworld kin, supplanting purity of purpose with twisted obsession, and icy calm with channelled hate.

There are dozens of Incubi shrines dotted throughout the Dark City, from towering pinnacles of black crystal to labyrinthine networks of brazier-lit caverns. While the smallest of these shrines may play host to no more than a handful of Incubi – taking the form of a central shrine surrounded by the trophy-hung cells of the Incubi who train there – the larger shrines are rather more spectacular. The Hierarchs of these shrines are powerful individuals in their own right, mercenary warrior kings who know that to flaunt their wealth and status is to see it increase. Their domains are sprawling bastions, forested with howling marble statues and grotesqueries of twisted architecture. In their cavernous central shrines, aspirants and supplicants in their thousands come to barter for the services of the Incubi, or to beg entrance into this black-hearted brotherhood. Monstrous statues of Khaine loom over the bloody proceedings below, graven from precious metals and strange stones gathered from realspace and the depths of the webway alike. Those whose demands or pleas are denied may find themselves ritually gutted, their still-living bodies flung into the green fires of the ceremonial pits that surround the statues. The screams of these unfortunates echo to the arcing vaults above, the flickering firelight seeming to make Khaine's visage sneer in approval.

For every supplicant fed to the murderflame, however, there is another whose offerings are considered sufficient. For such individuals the Incubi will march to war, lending their skills to their

employer's cause with a totality of focus that is frightening to behold. When acting as bodyguards to an Archon, the Incubi will surround their master in an impenetrable ring of flickering blades, the Archon pacing calmly through the fiercest melee as if in the eye of a blood-slick storm. The Incubi also serve as exceptional enforcers; more than one Commorrite pleasure den or smuggler's spire has been reduced to a limb-strewn abattoir by a host of Incubi sending a message to their employer's rivals.

Incubi see themselves as living weapons; each warrior is one with his klaive and conditioned to follow the commands of his Klaivex leader to the letter. However they are deployed, whatever task they are set, a band of Incubi will act as a deadly blade in their employer's hand. Of course, this is still Commorragh, and even the finest blade can cut both ways...



## THE SCOURGES OF THE CITY ABOVE

A rich and daring Dark Eldar may surrender himself to the Haemonculi, requesting to be transformed into a Scourge. His bones are hollowed out by the cold metal drills of a Talos, bands of new muscle are grafted onto his torso, and powerful wings and adrenaline dispensers are attached to his shoulders so that he is capable of true flight. Skulls are elongated, feet augmented with wicked talons, and quilled feathers stitched carefully through the flesh in place of hair.

Should these procedures be successful, the individual is still not yet considered a Scourge, for he must then fly all the way up to the blood-spattered aeries of his prospective brethren. His raw and bleeding wings carry him from the oubliettes of the Haemonculi to the topmost spires in which the Scourges make their home. He must fight through deadly fatigue, warring Hellion gangs, vicious Reavers, and predatory horrors such as fleshwings and the dreaded shattered angels. One who makes this vertical pilgrimage and still survives earns the right to call himself a Scourge, one of an exclusive mercenary clique of sky warriors that look down with disdain upon the kin they left behind.

Information is the lifeblood of Commorragh. Its steady flow is as crucial to the Kabals as are slaves and souls, for without information even the most elaborate of intrigues would soon wither on the vine. The most secure transmissions can be intercepted, and psychic communication is strictly forbidden. Instead, the nobility of the Dark Eldar pay handsomely for the Scourges to take their missives to their destination by hand. Each communiqué is sealed with tailor-made toxins, the antidotes to which – in theory at least – are possessed only by the recipient. The Scourges are so vital to the Archons of the Dark City that to kill one is to invite a prolonged and painful demise.

## THE SHADOWS OF AELINDRACH

The Mandrakes of Aelindrach are among the strangest and most terrifying allies that an Archon can seek out. Some claim these fiends descend from the heinous union of Eldar pleasure-cultists and unholy horrors in the days before the Fall. Others maintain that the mysterious stalkers are the dispossessed shadows of murderers, or that they are the spent souls of solar flares from Commorragh's captive suns. Rumours persist that Mandrakes can flit from one shadow to the next without setting foot in-between. Some claim they can slither through a victim's reflection, or that their strange forms can twist and squirm into any space, the better to shock and terrify their prey as they

strike from a seemingly impossible quarter. It is said that once a Mandrake has chosen its prey, there is no safe place to hide.

Like all the denizens of Commorragh, the Mandrakes thrive on the malevolent infliction of pain. Because of their unsurpassed stealth, many an Archon or Haemonculus has sought their services when mustering their forces for a realspace raid. The Mandrakes usually ask for slaves as payment, but sometimes they will demand something far more esoteric such as a heartbeat, a true name or a voice. Such requests are rarely denied, for Mandrakes go to war clad in the patchwork skins and sutured hides of those who have earned their displeasure. They are worth any price, for they are infamous for their ability to track down their quarry, and they are able to manifest anywhere that shadows gather in the gloom.

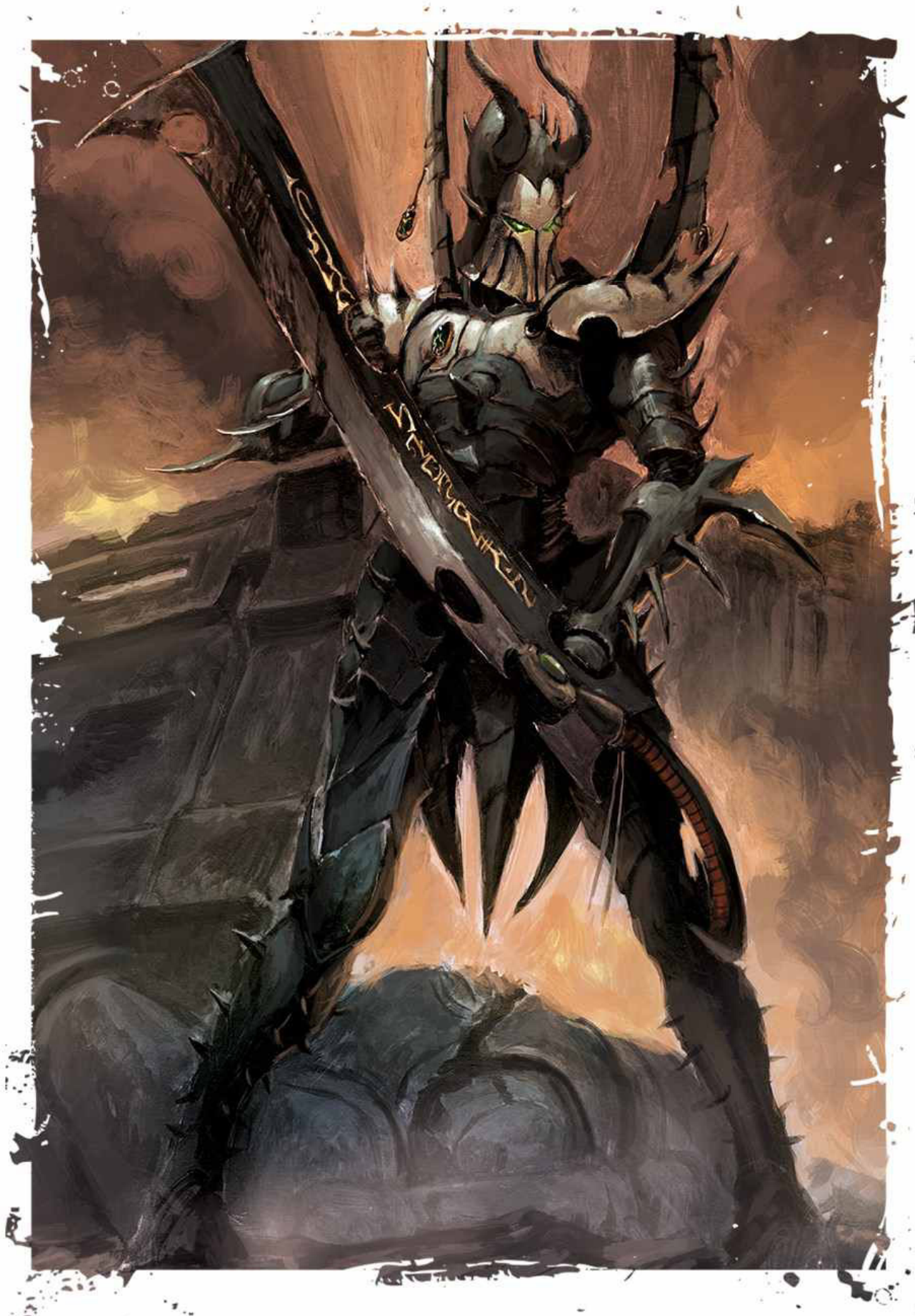
## **THE COURTS OF THE ARCHONS**

There are those Archons whose paranoia has reached such heights that they can no longer trust Kabalites, Trueborn or even Incubi to guard them during battle. It is this culture of mistrust that makes the Dark City such a hotbed of mercenary activity. Though being hired to guard the life of so prestigious and powerful an individual can garner almost unimaginable rewards, the task is incredibly perilous – not least because of the murderous nature of the Archons themselves. With most Archons enduring constant attempts upon their lives, it is a rare bodyguard indeed who lives long enough to enjoy their newfound wealth.

Of all the species to haunt Commorragh's satellite realms, most Archons have found the Sslyth to be the most reliable – and survivable – bodyguard species available for hire. These four-armed, serpentine monstrosities hail from a world long lost to the caress of She Who Thirsts, yet their short-sighted and self-indulgent nature makes them safe enough for the Dark Eldar to exploit. All but inured to physical pain, and happy to be paid in slaves and sensory gratification, these warriors make excellent, if dull-witted bodyguards.

The remainder of an Archon's Court will usually consist of pets and personal slaves of various sorts. Such beings either lack a mind of their own, or else are so broken to the will of the Archon that they would rather experience their own death a hundredfold than see their lord and master fall. Some Archons even take to fitting their retainers with empathic collars slaved to their own animus, ensuring that the bodyguard that fails to prevent the Archon's death will indeed enjoy the very same fate. Nothing motivates a servant to keep a knife from his master's back like the threat of a blade in his own, after all.







# DARK ELDAR RAID ON GREYSHROUD

In 944.M41 the Kabal of the Poisoned Tongue struck at the Imperial hive world of Greyshroud. Throughout the battle, the Kabalite forces displayed effortless superiority over the Imperial defenders, making the humans appear clumsy and foolish as they reeled from one crippling blow after another. Yet the breathtaking precision and efficiency of the Greyshroud raid was the product of many months' meticulous planning by one of the Dark City's greatest minds, Lady Aurelia Malys herself. Over a period of a single day, Lady Malys and her allies enacted a complex plan of attack that crippled the planet's infrastructure, confounded its defenders, and allowed the Dark Eldar to successfully make off with many millions of captive souls.



1

**HOURL 1** Out-system augur platforms are silenced with pinpoint lance fire from Kabalite spacecraft, their destruction timed to coincide with solar flare activity from Greyshroud's star. Their loss goes undetected and unremarked, yet it leaves the hive world deaf and blind.

2

**HOURL 4** Orbital Defence Platform 'Angel Defiant' goes ominously silent. Scourges slip undetected from the webway, deploying haywire weaponry to knock out the platform's primary generatorum.

Plunged into freezing darkness, their oxygen venting rapidly, the garrison have no way to call for help as Mandrakes crawl from the shadows and begin the hunt.



**HOURL 7** Some days previous, the Imperial Navy warship *Hammer of Pride* was stationed in orbit above Greyshroud in response to localised pirate activity. After routine vox-hails to Angel Defiant go unanswered, a request is made to the *Hammer's* captain to investigate. Privately cursing the ineptitude of the planetary defence force, the captain acquiesces and the *Hammer* makes to rendezvous with the platform. It never reaches its destination.



**HOURL 8** *Hammer of Pride* comes under sudden, furious attack. Swarms of Razorwing Jetfighters and Voidraven Bombers appear as if from nowhere, harassing the ship mercilessly and crippling key shields and weapons. Swamped by targets, the *Hammer's* turrets fail to intercept a salvo of barbed warheads that arc down to strike the warship's bridge. Though they cause only minor damage, the missiles discharge a tailored puppet-plague into the air of the bridge. Moments later, the crew lose control of their own bodies as the neural infection compels them to place the *Hammer of Pride* onto a new heading. Its crew shrieking with helpless, horrified laughter, the *Hammer* is seized by Greyshroud's gravitic field and drawn onto a collision course. Following a perfectly calculated trajectory, the warship plunges through the atmosphere and crashes into the barracks-fortress of the 4th Greyshroud PDF, engulfing the complex in a storm of plasma and killing hundreds of thousands.



**HOURL 9** Under cover of severe atmospheric disruption caused by the impact of the *Hammer of Pride*, a sizeable force of Raiders, Ravagers and Venoms emerges from the webway above the continent of Morlos. With the 4th PDF annihilated, few stand ready to oppose the invaders. An elite force of Incubi, Kabalite Trueborn and Scourges breaks open the defences of Morlos' generatorum primus, gleefully butchering all resistance. Moving with slick efficiency, the Dark Eldar rig the plasma generators with hyperdense containment fields. For over an hour the generators run at ever greater outputs, unable to vent or disengage until their own enhanced efficiency causes them to detonate. A vast power surge roars out through underground ducts and cabling, overloading systems across Morlos and beyond. As the void shields and defence batteries of Morlavia Hive experience sudden power loss, Lady Malys' force – which has been waiting patiently in the lower atmosphere for a window of opportunity – descends. Gaping rents are blasted in the hive's iron hide and swarms of piratical craft and whooping Hellions pour inside. By the time the hive's backup generators begin to kick in, it is far too late.



**HOURL 11-20** As word of the plight of Morlavia Hive spreads across Greyshroud, PDF units scramble to mobilise. On the southern continent of Larnos, Imperial reinforcements are forced to reroute after dozens of outlying settlements come under attack. Wings of Valkyries soar over the snowfields, but each time the defenders arrive too late. In several cases Imperial forces are ambushed shortly after deployment, corralled and massacred by lightning-fast Reavers and Wyches. On Sarlon, the 1st and 5th Greyshroud PDF deploy en masse in response to reports of deformed horrors raiding agriponic settlements near Salarad Hive. Piling out of Chimeras and Tauroxes, the PDF find the agriplexes deserted. Yet terror engulfs the soldiers when crop-misting servitors shudder into action, releasing clouds of atomised combat stimms. Amid the banks of purple-tinged fog, the PDF troopers fall upon one another in a frenzy, tearing at each other until the walkways run red. On the northern continent of Galmar, a trio of 2nd Regiment drop-craft clear the southern coast, their passengers unaware that they are carrying monstrous stow-aways. Crushed into the hollow spaces within each craft's superstructure, Grotesques lie dormant as the timers on their spinal sumps run slowly down to zero. One after another, the lurking horrors are activated, stimulants flooding their bodies until they tear their way into the troop-bays with deafening roars. The interior of each lander becomes an abattoir as



the Grotesques vent their fury upon passengers and crew alike. One by one, the craft plunge into the icy waters of the ocean to disappear without trace.



**HOOR 21** Bereft of reinforcements, cut off in the dark, the citizenry of Morlavia Hive are harvested in their millions. Localised Arbites forces manage only a token resistance, while the nobles of the hive spire lock themselves away behind gold-chased bulkheads and abandon their people to their fate. This does not save them. By the time the battered forces of the Greyshound PDF finally reach the crippled hive city, millions of citizens have been spirited away by Lady Malys' forces, never to be seen again.

## WYCH CULTS OF THE ARENAS



**The Wych Cults provide their kin with a feast of agonies that, for a while at least, keeps their blades from one another's throats. Each Cult's arena is unique, each performance more violent and outlandish than the last, for these gladiatorial sisterhoods are locked in constant competition to offer up the greatest show for their hungry-eyed audience.**

Commorragh exists in a delicate but well-established balance. Its citizens would gladly stab each other in the back just for the looks on their victims' faces, for to witness another's anguish is the only way the Dark Eldar have left to feed their withered souls. Yet for the ruling Archons of Commorragh to allow the natural bloodthirst of their kin to be unchecked would be to invite total societal collapse.

Because of their kind's unending need to bathe in murderous sensations, the Dark Eldar have evolved the Hekatarii, known in common parlance as the Wych Cults. Each Wych Cult is a thousands-strong organisation of gladiators that put on nightly displays of the most incredible violence; not only for the edification of the masses, but also for their literal sustenance. Such is the scale of the carnage staged by these armies of warrior-athletes that their audiences leave the arena with the glow of well-fed predators. In this way the populace is kept from full-scale anarchy – at least, those portions of Commorragh wealthy enough to attend the Wych Cults' nightly performances.

### BLOOD ON THE STAGE

Each Wych Cult has its own arena, which is as much a display of their wealth and status as it is a stage for their spectacles of violence. Comparing architectural masterpieces such as The Crucibael or Moedh Stair to the primitive amphitheatres of other civilisations would be much like comparing a glittering palace to a mud hut. Likewise, the Dark Eldar athletes that perform within them make the most gifted human acrobat look like an uncoordinated ape by comparison. Each arena has its own deadly charms and challenges, from staples such as spinning blades and enraged predatory beasts, to gravity-wells, kinetic inversion snares or even more esoteric and inventive hazards.

Each Wych Cult is constantly in competition to outdo its rivals with the sheer scope and imagination of its gore-soaked games. Many performances spread into the audience in interesting and deadly ways as the excitement builds to fever pitch. Arterial spurts of blood rain down into the rapt audience as battle takes place over their heads, or even amidst their stalls. The arenas crackle with tension, the viewers leaning forward in their seats with eyes wide and the leers of hungry predators etched upon their faces. Be they aerial ballets of bloodletting, zero-gravity mass murder or carefully selected menageries on the prowl, all Cult performances have one thing in common – the arena is slick with blood and gore by the end of each night.

Most of the Hekatarii are female, for they are more often able to attain the pinnacle of poise and grace their craft demands. Male Wyches ensure that their Wych Cult is never wanting for strong offspring, yet though they are valued they rarely attain high rank. Certainly the Succubi who rule over the Wych Cults are universally female. So it has been since the earliest days of the Dark City, and so shall it

always be.



## BEYOND THE ARENA

Almost every Wych Cult enjoys the patronage of a powerful Archon, for there is much glory to be had for the founders of the feast. More than this, however, the Wych Cults are powerful allies. After all, each is comprised solely of trained killers who enjoy nothing more than to prove their consummate skills in battle. This mutually agreeable arrangement ensures that the Wych Cults never run short of slaves and exotic combat stimulants. A good patron is always generous lest his stable of warrior athletes decides to bite the hand that feeds them. Meanwhile, the Archon gains the allegiance of a sisterhood of exceptionally trained Hekatarii to lend their blades to his raids upon realspace.

The Wych Cults take every chance they can to prove their martial skills superior to those of the lesser races, both within the arena and without. Though they profess nothing but contempt for the warrior castes of realspace, the Wyches get an undeniable thrill out of matching themselves against any suitably impressive opponent. The trophy halls of a successful Succubus will thus boast the heads of Adeptus Astartes heroes, conquering Ork Warbosses and Tyranid Hive Tyrants alike.

There is much more to a Wych Cult than its arena. Below the elegant spires and weapon-nodes of each Cult stronghold's exterior are academies and training complexes devoted to every aspect of the close quarter kill. Anti-gravity hemispheres and gruelling 'living landscapes' ensure each Wych is at the peak of physical fitness. Each Cult keeps an extensive menagerie, re-stocked by its Beastmasters with an endless supply of alien captives and dangerous species. Different Wych Cults practise their own specialities, endlessly discussed by the arena's crowd. The Bladed Hand, for instance, hones the art of the unarmed kill (though they are famous for blurring the line), whilst The Stilled Heart specialise in the use of poisons, venoms and paralytic elixirs.



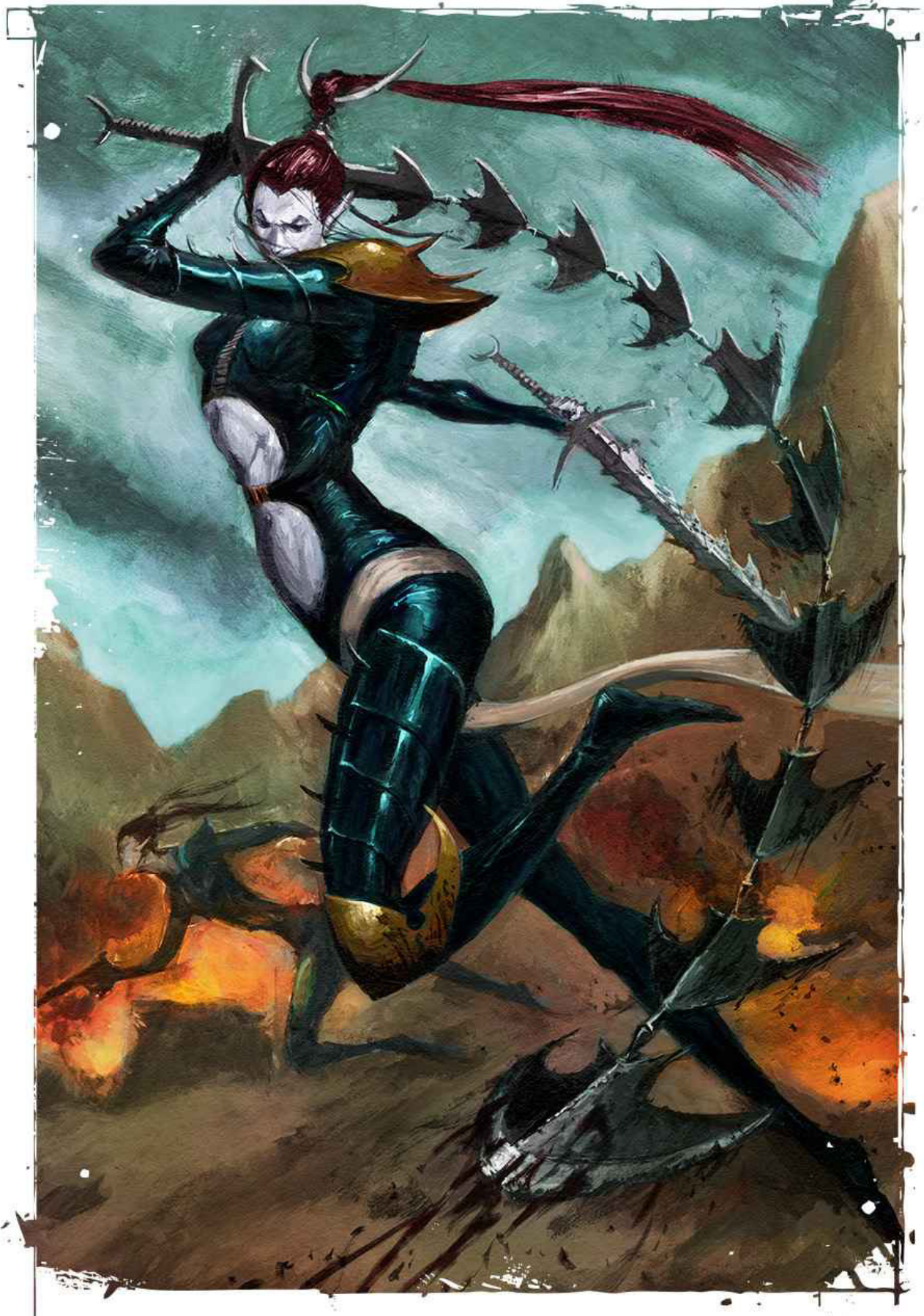
A Wych Cult will often stage realspace raids purely at the behest of its Succubus. These raids are not only to gather new fodder for the arenas, but also to provide a chance for the Wyches to match their skills against the finest warriors of the lesser races. A Wych Cult raid is considered high art by many Dark Eldar, who will pay handsomely to fight alongside the massed gladiators, alien beasts and speeding aerial acrobats that each Succubus unleashes upon her prey.

Other raids are quite literally performances in their own right. While the Wych Cult's Raiders and Venoms scream down into the foe's midst and force their desperate victims to fight for their lives, Commorrite pleasure-barges drift high above. Aboard these craft, wealthy spectators swill intoxicating nectars and offer polite applause to the high points of each bloody slaughter, while bets are won or lost on the performance of favoured combatants. Such spectacles are especially popular amongst the smirking ranks of the Trueborn, who delight in watching others do the work for them while soaking up the miasma of agonies that rises off the battle below.

Yet for all their foppish hangers-on, Wych Cult raids are veritable blizzards of violence. They are direct and unstoppable strikes that – like the Wyches themselves – scorn the cumbersome protection of armour in favour of the safety that pure speed provides. Like a perfectly placed knife-thrust to the heart, a raid by a Wych Cult is swift, deadly and precise, capable of felling even the largest and most dangerous foes before they even realise they are under attack. Amid hurtling squadrons of Reavers and Hellions, overswept by the half-glimpsed shadows of Razorwing Jetfighters and Voidraven Bombers, the Wyches leap and plunge into the midst of their enemies with joyous abandon, and leave mountains of corpses in their wake. Only when the foe's numbers become overwhelming, or

there are no further victims to face the fury of their knives do the Wyches retreat, disappearing as suddenly as they came and leaving absolute carnage in their wake.





## SUB-CULTS OF THE HEKATARII

As well as the knife-wielding warrior athletes who make up the bulk of the Wych Cults, the Dark City plays host to numerous sub-cults of gladiatorial combatants. When a Cult goes to war against the warriors of realspace, these sub-cults lend their particular skills to the raid in exchange for a bounteous feast of pain.

### SHAMANS OF THE SANDS

A male-dominated offshoot of the Wych Cults, the tribal bands of the Beastmasters remain remote and aloof from the Hekatarii. As a rule they have their own areas within a Cult's arena complex and will keep to these except when their beasts are required for the nightly shows. Many Beastmasters maintain a nomadic lifestyle, roaming the remote wastes and wildernesses between the districts of the Dark City with their beast-packs in tow. Such wandering tribes will descend upon a different arena every few nights, offering the spectacle of their latest captured horrors in exchange for an opportunity to take part in that night's banquet of agonies.

A Beastmaster's entire existence revolves around the mastery of others, be it over the beasts he goads into battle or the foes upon whom he unleashes them. To become a Beastmaster, a Commorrite must first undergo a do-or-die initiation, flung unarmed into the arena with a raging pack of the very creatures he seeks to tame. He must crush the beasts' wills and break them to his own, whether by strangling the pack's dominant alpha with his bare hands, subduing each beast in turn by striking crucial nerve clusters, or some other decisive display of superiority. In this way will an aspirant earn his place among the Beastmasters, as well as the command of his first pack of beasts.

In the Dark City, the arenas have played host to a bewildering variety of dangerous creatures, including blade-legged Arachen Hespiders, hyper-violent Barghesi, and even captured warriors of the Adeptus Astartes. Three species remain in perennial use, however, the largest of which is the Donorian Clawed Fiend. Long ago the main webway portal into the Donorian system split under the pressure of a Warp storm, and the tunnels that spread out from it became infested with Fiends. It did not take long for captive specimens to appear in the packs of Beastmasters in the Dark City, where their value in the arenas was quickly recognised. These towering hulks of muscle and fur possess extremely advanced senses, and are able to see in several spectrums at once. As if this wasn't enough, a Clawed Fiend enters a berserk state when it is wounded – few warriors are quick enough to evade a raging Fiend that has scented the rotten tang of its own ichor.

The Warp-beasts called Khymerae are living proof of the Beastmasters' skill as spirit-hunters. Each Khymera is a denizen of the chaotic dimension known as the Empyrean, borne of the stuff of a Daemon world. These strange non-creatures coalesce around vivid nightmares as a pearl forms around grit, taking the shape of a long-fanged, many-eyed, sinewy beast. Beastmasters must hunt down and harness their own Khymerae in perilous fugues or dream-quests, but if they are successful, they can draw entire packs of Khymerae back across the veil to the physical dimension to do their bidding. Khymerae set loose on the battlefields of realspace can wreak utter havoc before fading away like mist. Those that stalk the arena floors, meanwhile, never fail to elicit delighted screams from the crowd as they leap clean through solid objects or flicker out of nowhere to maul their shocked prey.

Of all the alien terrors employed by the Beastmasters, the Razorwing flocks remain one of the most popular. These raptors are swift of wing enough to catch even a lightning-fast Hellion, and they are possessed of an insatiable hunger for bone. Razorwing flocks fall upon their quarry with knife-sharp feathers and razored beaks, stripping flesh from frame in a hurricane of frantic motion. Neither do they stop there, for a well-trained Razorwing flock will parade their blood-slicked and skeletal prize around and above their masters before tearing it apart in one final, savage feeding frenzy.





## THE DEATH-RACERS OF THE SPIRES

The Reavers of Commoragh are fascinated by the art of war at speed. They ride to battle upon the most streamlined and pared-down of all sky craft, the anti-grav jetbike – a perfect fusion of raw motive power and finely-honed lethality. Most Reavers begin as Wyches, but swiftly demonstrate an aptitude for – and obsession with – spectacles of extreme speed. They may have won a Reaver jetbike on the arena floor, or may simply have murdered the owner of such a craft and stolen it for their own. In Commoragh possession is most certainly nine tenths of the law, and no questions will be asked even should an unknown contestant appear one day riding the distinctive jetbike of another. However they inveigle their way onto the starting line, once a Wych has tasted the thrill of their first death race there is no going back.

Almost every Cult arena boasts toroid arenas wound about their highest reaches. Such racing tracks take a variety of forms dependent upon the whims of their creators. Yet whether constructed from tunnels of brushed silversteel, lit up like a warzone, graven from blood-red haemoquartz, or studded with flaming braziers and twisted sculptures of flesh and bone, the purpose of each track remains the same. Much as the more conventional arenas below play host to gladiatorial battles to the death, so the toroid tracks host nightly spectacles of high velocity carnage. No quarter is asked and none given in these races, for to come last is literally a death sentence.

Reavers will pull every trick they can to secure even a millisecond's advantage. The arena champions endlessly modify their craft, and even themselves. They retool and adjust vanes and blast engines, fit targeting matrices for their built-in weaponry, pierce the craft's farings so that the shriek of their passage is a different pitch to that of their peers, and wear flexible 'second skins' to cut down on air resistance. Some will even go so far as to have their bone structures hollowed like those of the Scourges, the better to cut down racing weight. All Reavers use stimulants to enhance their performance in the death races. They are cheats and liars all, and respect only the 'elegant kill' – it is considered gauche to merely maim a fellow pilot, whereas a well executed drop-down inverted decapitation can warm the heart of even the most jaded Archon.

Because of the no-holds-barred approach of the death-race arenas, weapons are used extensively in the majority of competitions. Indeed, as the jetbikes howl around the track, hugging the optimum racing lines and blazing away at one another with outlandish firearms, the spectacle begins to resemble a battlefield in its own right. Some of the most celebrated Reavers employ underslung grav-talons to push their rivals into the artfully bladed contours of the arena, or release clusters of proximity-activated anti-grav caltrops that detonate in spectacular chains of explosions behind them. Needless to say, when the Wych Cults go to war, all of this lethal expertise stands the Reavers in very good stead as high velocity shock troops beyond compare.

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*'I call Heads! Sever their ugly, stinking heads! The one with the red helmet is mine!'*

- Kaelith, Helliarch of the Scythewing Gang

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## THE HELLION GANGS

Though not a direct offshoot of the Wych Cults, the Hellion gangs that haunt the middledark of Commoragh still bear many similarities to the Hekatarrii. Riding into battle upon blade-edged anti-gravity skyboards, these athletic thrill-seekers are rebels even by the standards of their self-centred race. Comprising outcasts, anarchists and wanted felons, the Hellion gangs prey upon any who cross their path and are luckless enough to seem easy game. Whooping with exhilaration as combat-stimms race through their bloodstreams, the Hellions descend upon their victims like a hurricane. Their hellglaives cut the air like liquid streaks of lightning, lopping heads and limbs from the prey as the Hellions shriek through their midst. By the time the foe reacts, the Hellions are already long gone, leaving only mocking laughter skirling in their wake.

The more established Hellion gangs maintain close ties with Wych Cults, for the arrangement proves mutually agreeable. Affiliation with a Wych Cult can provide Hellions with a ready source of combat



drugs, as well as a powerful source of protection against rival gangs and other threats. Meanwhile, these thrill-crazed gang warriors provide excellent sport in the arena, not to mention being able to keep pace with their patron Cult during realspace raids.



# THE CULT OF STRIFE



**The Wych Cult of Strife has become the most influential in Commoragh, largely due to the sublime talents of Her Excellence, Lelith Hesperax. This Cult has risen to the apex of power not through treacherous politicking, but through the creed of speed over strength and the elevation of bloodsport to a high art.**

Though the Cult of Strife boasts dozens of the best warrior-athletes in the galaxy, Lelith herself is the flawless diamond at the centre of the crown. Her allure draws in hundreds of thousands of spectators every night, each of whom is prepared to pay a high price for the privilege of watching her perform.

Most deadly of all her kind, Lelith's skills in the arts of combat bear all the hallmarks of a true genius. She is grace embodied, her movements hypnotic, sensual and spellbinding. Alone amongst the Wych Cults, Lelith does not use combat drugs to enhance her performance. The Cult of Strife maintain that their mistress needs nothing more than a piece of edged steel to outclass her foes. Sure enough, although she is expert in the use of all the exotic weapons used by her kind, Lelith can most frequently be seen fighting with two simple but perfectly weighted knives.

Her green-eyed detractors among the rival Wych Cults whisper that Lelith's incredible skill is from an unnatural source – that she has somehow persuaded the Haemonculi to replace her blood with hyperdrenaline, that as a child she suckled upon a steroid-syringe, that she sleeps in a baryonic sarcophagus filled to the brim with stimulant serum. The truth is far simpler – Lelith is a born predator, preferring to look her prey in the eye at the moment of death. The use of combat drugs is for the weak, for they corrupt the instant where the killing strike hits home and the lifeblood flows out. How can one properly appreciate the delicate nuances of a victim's dying breath when one's senses are polluted by intoxicants? To forsake chemical enhancement is usually suicidal in the lightning-fast world of the arena, yet such is Lelith's skill that her pristine flesh remains unscarred. Though her rivals would never accept such a straightforward explanation, Lelith Hesperax is simply that good.

Night after night, Lelith dances her way through massed ranks of stumm-enhanced Orks, gut-wrenching Grotesques, disgraced Archons and more, the crowd roaring its approval as she gifts each victim the kiss of death with a contemptuous flick of her blades. Vid-steals of Lady Hesperax practising her art are traded throughout Commoragh and beyond by those with a taste for violence. Perhaps, her spectators say, it is not only mortals who gaze with rapt attention as Lelith weaves her deadly dance.

## A POWERFUL PATRON

Amongst Lelith's many admirers is Asdrubael Vect himself, and the Cult of Strife has long been affiliated with the Kabal of the Black Heart to the mutual benefit of both. Whether this is a bond of reciprocal admiration or the wary respect of natural born killers is immaterial, for the alliance has proven as strong as steel, and strength is hard currency in Commoragh. Thanks to the unparalleled power and generosity of their patron, the Cult of Strife's arena, the Crucibael, is the most lavishly appointed and spectacular in all of Commoragh. From the city-sized laser-grid of its toroid Reaver arena to the black-veined living jade of its mighty galleries, the Crucibael is one of the Dark City's greatest spectacles. As Vect himself was once heard to say, Lelith Hesperax is the greatest treasure of the Dark City, and one does not display one's finest emerald amid squalor.

The alliance between the Kabal of the Black Heart and the Cult of Strife brings constant benefit to both. Even the most impulsive and hot-tempered Succubus must recognise that a challenge to the Cult of Strife is likely to incur the wrath of Asdrubael Vect himself. Equally the Kabal of the Black Heart basks nightly in the reflected glory of Lelith's sublime victories on the arena sands. This unique symbiosis is magnified a hundredfold on the battlefields of realspace, where the followers of Lelith and Vect fight alongside one another with merciless synchronicity. The pin-point firepower of the Kabalites and the point-blank ferocity of the Wyches mesh to deadly effect. The gladiatrixes of the

Cult of Strife weave sinuously through the covering fire of the Black Heart to fall upon the surviving foes in an orgy of blood-letting. Freed from the customary necessity of watching their supposed allies for signs of treachery, both Commorrite factions are able to fight at their full potential against their luckless prey.

On those rare occasions that the belladonna of the arenas deigns to take to the field in person, the spectacle of this alliance at war is raised to the sublime. Such a raid occurs only rarely, for Lelith's first duty is to the baying crowds of the arenas. Yet when it does take place, the competition to join the raiding party is so fierce it has on occasion triggered full-blown inter-Kabalite war.





# THE GHORVENFAL RAID

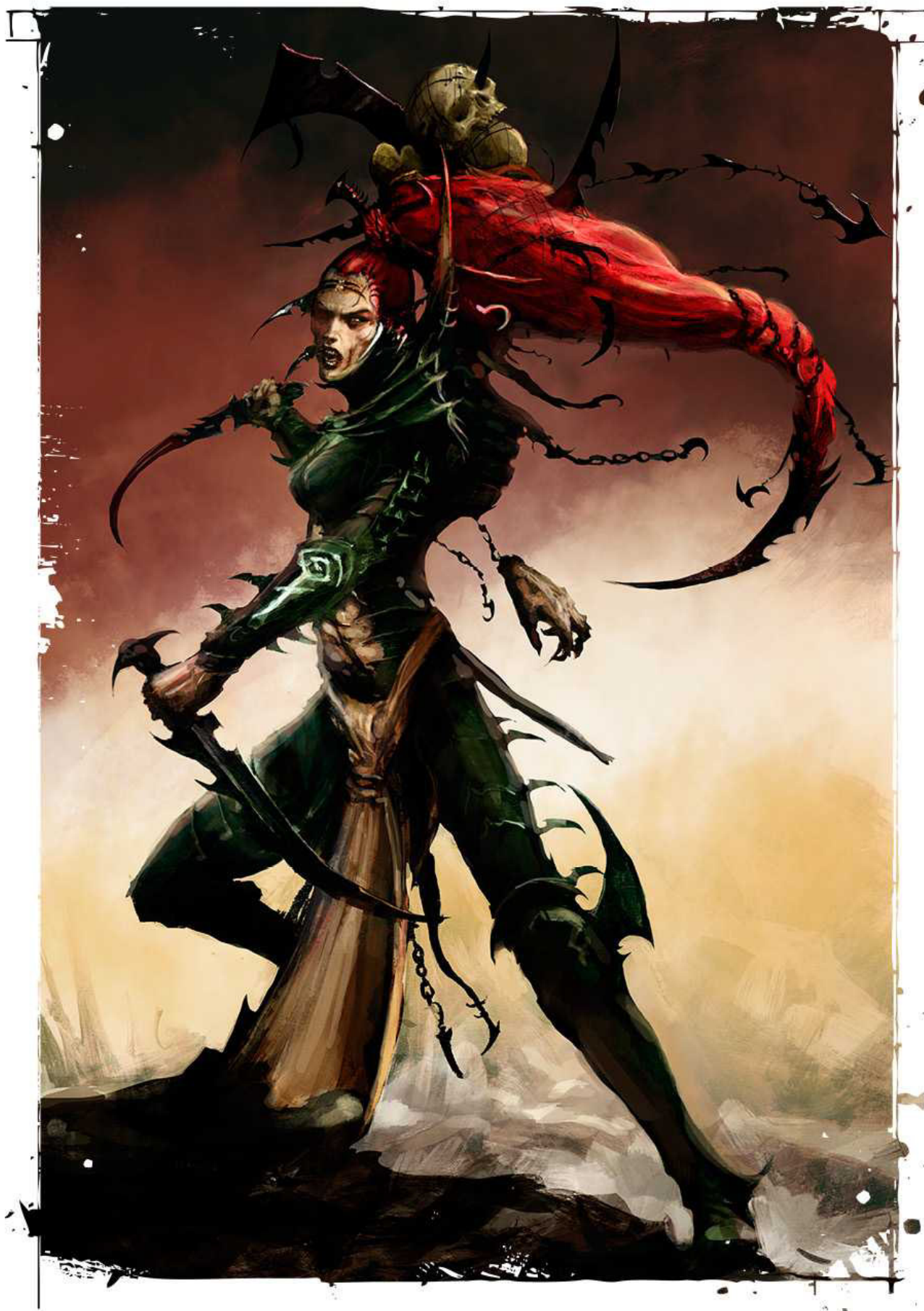
One of the more infamous joint endeavours between the Kabal of the Black Heart and the Wych Cult of Strife was the raid upon the world of Ghorvenfal. The planet was a stronghold of the Alpha Legion, a Chaos Space Marine faction synonymous with the arts of stealth and subterfuge. For decades an Alpha Legion warlord by the name of Jaghathra Vrax had operated out of a fortress in Ghorvenfal's Black Mountains. A noted bladesman, he plagued surrounding systems with piratical raids, evading the Imperium's clumsy reprisals with ease.

However Vrax eventually overreached himself. Having discovered that the Kabal of the Black Heart planned to raid the Imperial factory world of Melidrantis, he elected to use the Dark Eldar as pawns in his own schemes. Vrax concealed Alpha Legionnaires on the planet's surface, ordering them to wait until the raid was well underway. At the battle's height they struck, catching both the Kabalites and their beleaguered Cadian foes by surprise and exacting a heavy toll upon them both. Vrax' forces escaped with a huge stockpile of weaponry and left the Black Heart to retreat empty-handed. Needless to say, such an insult could not be allowed to stand. Asdrubael Vect spared no effort in tracking down this mysterious assailant and prepared an attack to make an example of them. This was not to be a slave raid, but a slaughter. It was at Vect's request that Lelith Hesperax herself joined the forces arrayed for the attack, for to her would fall the task of personally humbling Jaghathra Vrax.

The raid began as Ghorvenfal's bloated sun rose red and bloody on the horizon. As a swirling webway portal tore the skies above the Black Mountains, the Alpha Legionnaires were caught completely by surprise. From the portal flew dozens of attack craft, falling like a rain of knives towards the squat immensity of the Alpha Legion stronghold where it nestled amid the mountain peaks. By the time the Chaos air defences cycled up and flak batteries began to pound, it was already too late. Sleek fighter craft streaked overhead, bombs and missiles silencing one quad-gun after another and tearing rents in the fortress' armoured hide.

Through these poured the Kabalites of the Black Heart and the Wyches of the Cult of Strife, leaping straight from the decks of their Raiders into the smoke-shrouded corridors of the fort. Towering traitors strode to meet them with bolters blazing and blades bared. The Hekatarii sprinted and leapt into their enemies' midst, cutting down the armoured giants with no thought for their own horrific casualties. Kabalite Warriors advanced in the Wyches' wake, their firepower laying low those traitors who evaded the gladiatrix' blades.

The surviving Alpha Legionnaires were finally surrounded in their primary arming chamber, massively outnumbered and outgunned. It was here that Hesperax met Vrax in single combat, mockingly offering the Chaos Lord and his followers their freedom should he defeat her. A lethal swordsman with daemonic strength burning in his veins, Vrax set upon his slender foe with his hell-forged broadsword. Hesperax met him with a simple knife in each hand, standing firm with a slight smile quirking one corner of her perfect lips. The fight that followed was a storm of blades too fast for the eye to follow, and within moments Vrax's sword struck the floor, his severed hands still wrapped around its grip. Hesperax – bare flesh unmarred but for the Chaos Lord's blood – did not stop there, swiftly truncating his arms and legs to leave him roaring in helpless fury at her feet. Even as the Chaos Lord fell, her followers closed in once more. Only one Alpha Legionnaire left the fortress alive that day, and his limbless form still howls its endless agony above the Onyx Gate of Vect's palace to this day.



## THE CULT OF THE CURSED BLADE

In Commorragh the term 'cursed blade' does not refer to a physical weapon, but instead to an individual or organisation that rebels against its masters. The Cult of the Cursed Blade has earned its name many times over, so much so that even for a well-protected Archon to invite Wyches from this Cult into his palace is tantamount to cutting his own throat. Treachery is held as the greatest of all virtues by the Cursed Blade, for by a process of hyper-accelerated natural selection the warrior women of the Cult ensure that only the strongest and most cunning within their ranks survive. Weapons that deceive and wrong-foot the foe are popular within their warrior cliques. Many a harmless-looking ornament worn by the Wyches contains a hidden snap-sword, poison barb or pair of flickblades, and it is common to see many razorflails wielded among their ranks.

The stronghold of this devious Cult is known as the Nhexus Arena, and is far more deadly than its elegant architecture would suggest. Every curve and line contains sprung monofilament nets, venomous dart-launchers, toxin-loaded syringe-drills and a myriad of other lethal surprises. Nor is this cornucopia of misfortune confined to the arena floor, for these deadly booby-traps are ever-shifting and as likely to spring up amid the audience as to lacerate or impale the performers. This is merely part of the fun, of course, adding a delicious frisson of very real danger that many Dark Eldar simply cannot resist.



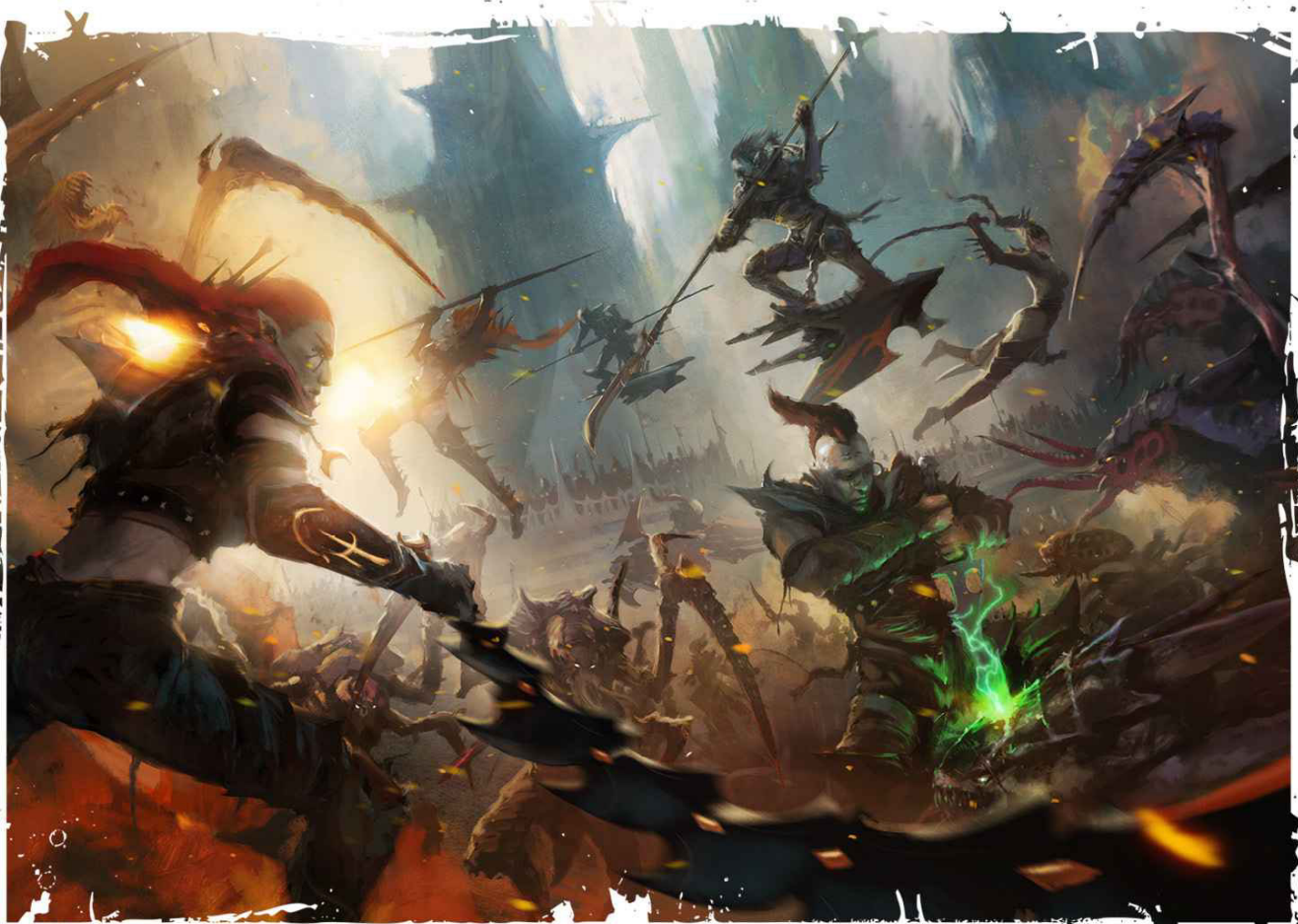


## THE CULT OF THE RED GRIEF

All Wych Cults believe that the best defence is simply not to be there when the opponent's blade falls, but the Cult of the Red Grief takes this to extremes. Their raiding forces employ whole flotillas of Raiders that fly in close formation towards the foe, escorted by Reavers, Venoms and Hellions. When the aerial formations close with the enemy, the Wyches will bound and spring from Raider to jetbike to skyboard and back again with athletic precision, dismounting and mounting so swiftly that the transports barely have to slow. Only the Wyches themselves ever deign to touch the ground, and even then only to deliver the killing blow to an enemy who is still trying to adjust to the fact that he is under attack.

The Red Grief's main arena, the Pit, is an especially unforgiving structure built into the peak of a towering spire. Its galleries are made from transparent crystal, revealing that the audience are suspended only moments from a sickening plunge to their deaths. The arena proper truly has no floor – just a yawning gulf prowled by drifting anti-grav platforms. Hellions duel here, their skyboards trailing lines of monofilament wire that unspool in an ever more complex web around the arena's struts and spars. Such bouts are brief, for the slightest error will lead to a messy dismemberment or decapitation.





## COVENS OF THE HAEMONCULI

**Beneath the Dark City lurk the Covens of the Haemonculi. Universally feared, these twisted beings are crucial to the continued survival of the Dark Eldar race, for their unnatural sciences give them power over life and death. Yet those who deal with the Haemonculi should be wary, as there is always a price to pay...**

The underworld beneath Commorragh is an extremely dangerous place. It is the domain of the Haemonculi, a twisted brotherhood of ancient torturer-alchemists. These fiends are so steeped in evil that sustaining their existence requires the infliction of near continuous atrocities.

### THE DWELLERS BENEATH

The Haemonculi deal in body modification, drug distillation, and beauty elixirs. However, the true source of their power lies elsewhere. Every member of Commorrite society must eventually ask for their help, for the Haemonculi are masters of the flesh, be it alive or dead. Those of a like mind gather together into Covens, and each Coven occupies a vast demesne of cells and laboratories under the core. Here these diabolical figures slice and meld the flesh of those that fall into their clutches, savouring their pain as a gourmet would savour a fine meal.

The dungeon-strongholds of the Haemonculi take many forms, each echoing the madness in the minds of their creators. Labyrinths of fractured mirrors, spiral-edged pits with narrow, twisting walkways, towers of living flesh illuminated by millions of glimmering eyes – all of these unspeakable sights and more await the unwary traveller in the darkness beneath the core. The eldest and most vile Haemonculi dwell at the heart of each nightmarish lair, revelling in epic depravities of their own

invention. To cross these monstrous beings is considered beyond foolish. Not only is their vengeance terrible to behold, but the Haemonculi have the power to bestow – or withhold – life after death.





## THE HEX



*The Haemonculi Coven known as the Hex possess a warped flair for the dramatic. They consider themselves the most artistically gifted of the Dark City's many Covens, and will participate in raids upon realspace only if the locale or victims involved serve as a suitable muse.*

*Much of their 'art' is presented on a scale as large and shocking as possible, taking the form of gory friezes or sculptures crafted from the sliced and stitched remains of dozens, or even hundreds of victims. Such an industrious creative process requires a substantial workforce to butcher, flense, heft and arrange its luckless material components. Thus the Haemonculi of the Hex tend toward large retinues of Wracks, whose muscular physiques and bladed limbs are perfect for the task at hand. In the wake of – or even during – their realspace raids, the Haemonculi of the Hex will compete fiercely to secure the greatest number and variety of living victims, that they might have a suitably broad palette with which to outdo their peers.*

*The grand unveiling of their work is of as much importance to the Hex as the creation of the pieces themselves. As such, they will always ensure that their victims have enough time to call for help before finishing them off. Once reinforcements arrive, the Hex will allow them to fully appreciate each macabre exhibit, drinking in their waves of terror and revulsion from shadowed hiding places. Only when insanity and hysteria have taken hold do the Hex strike, destroying their audience's transports and slowly hunting them down in what is considered a fitting finale to their monstrous masterpieces.*

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## THE ETERNAL CYCLE

The Eldar gestation cycle is much longer than that of many of the lesser races, and conventionally born children are rare symbols of status. Artificially grown Dark Eldar are far more commonplace. Once fertilised, an egg can be implanted into one of the amniotic tubes that honeycomb the breeding-walls of the Haemonculi. Using a repulsive, insectile science developed many millennia ago, an embryo's growth can be hyperaccelerated within these tubes, each newgrown specimen wriggling from its chrysalis-sac in a drizzle of unclean fluids before being taken away by Wrack attendants. These 'half-born' are seen with contempt by Trueborn Dark Eldar, who believe them inherently inferior. Yet the real triumph of the Haemonculi's science is not the ability to create new life but to deny death. It is this that affords them such power within Commorrite society.

Most Dark Eldar warriors, including each Kabal's ruling elite, will at some point enter into a terrible

pact with the Haemonculi. This devil's bargain states that the Haemonculi will regenerate the warrior's body should he die, and in exchange, the seeker will leave the Haemonculi a permanent portion of his soul. Even a corpse that has been all but destroyed in the crucible of war can be restored to its former glory; the Master Haemonculus Urien Rakarth once crafted a perfect new Archon Vriech from a single withered hand. Provided this process is enacted within a day or so of the warrior's demise, and his will is strong enough that some of his spirit still resonates within his remains, his animus will slowly regenerate along with his physical form. Hence Kabals on realspace raids take great pains to strike hard and fast, returning before the night is out with the remains of their deceased in order that their strongest warriors – barring the occasional individual who encounters an unfortunate accident – can return to life.

The key to this terrible process is, of course, pain. The Dark Eldar are rejuvenated by witnessing agony, and if saturated with enough of it, they can heal from almost any wound. As such the mortal remains of those delivered to the dubious care of the Haemonculi are installed into crystal-fronted pods arrayed above the pain racks and torture tables.

These sarcophagi are arrayed in concentric circles that rise up into the darkness, each holding a semi-cocooned Dark Eldar warrior in a regenerative state. The patients literally drink in the dark energy of the torturer's craft as the Haemonculus works upon his victim below, ably assisted by his Wrack servants and the semi-sentient Engines of Pain. As a cacophony of shrieks rises around the chamber, those installed in the cocoons slowly feast upon the energies, ever so gradually growing back their bodies – skeleton first, then muscle and sinew, then alabaster skin until they are whole once more. During times of war, it is common for every one of an oubliette's regeneration pods to be filled with leering, red-raw fiends that shiver and rattle with every fresh scream.





## THE NIGHTMARE DESCENDS

To the Haemonculi, each foray into realspace is not so much an act of war as an exhibition of their talents. Members of a Coven will compete to create the most pleasingly abhorrent monstrosities in the lead-up to a realspace raid, releasing them upon the foe and watching the results with interest. The Haemonculi consider such competition inspiring, and will offer a heartfelt compliment should their rivals' creations achieve some especially impressive act of violence.

Realspace raids by Haemonculus Covens are comparatively unhurried affairs, their leaders having lived for thousands of years and seeing no call for unseemly rushing around. Instead they will strike from unexpected quarters, preferring if possible to use offshoot webway portals that open deep within abandoned mines, shadowed forests or other sites local lifeforms consider to be cursed. The Coven will emerge like horrors from primitive folklore, glorying in the unreasoning terror that spreads before their advance. Engines of Pain drift between iron-masked Wracks and Grotesques as they hack and carve the enemy's soldiery to ruin. With the defenders slain, the Coven gather up the choicest victims then disappear back into the shadowed realm from whence they came.

## THE COVENMASTERS

How an individual becomes a Haemonculus is uncertain. They are all of incredibly advanced age, and their withered and nightmarish appearance speaks of one who has passed well beyond the ability to recapture a youthful physique. It is possible that amongst the elder Haemonculi's number are those who initiated the very first cults of pleasure and pain. Yet each Haemonculus has altered himself so drastically that he no longer resembles those he mockingly calls his people, and his secrets are his own to keep.

Haemonculi are physically twisted and repulsive. Their sparse alabaster frames have not an ounce of fat upon them, quite unlike those of their wilder creations, and their waspish waists are devoid of internal organs, the better to present a fashionably disturbing appearance. Some Haemonculi harbour their viscera, lungs and heart in a muscled hunk of meat that sprouts from their shoulders – a rich repository for stimulants and elixirs that often boasts secondary limbs of its own. Others replace their blood so that searing ichor or even acid flows through their modified veins. Their backs sprout antler-like protrusions of bony matter that are often hung with syringes and drug dispensers that channel directly into their spinal sumps.

All of this monstrous self-mutilation leaves many Haemonculi unable or unwilling to engage in physically demanding tasks. Indeed, most Haemonculi consider themselves somehow polluted if they are ever forced into a state of exertion. Instead, these megalomaniacal Coven-lords surround themselves with supplicants and minions, the greatest of which are the Engines of Pain.

The Engines of Pain are amongst the most terrifying creations of the Haemonculi. Drifting into battle on thrumming gravitic emitters, these malevolent machines are flesh fused with metal through dark alchemy to create something monstrous indeed. Superlative terror weapons, the spectacle of an Engine of Pain at its bloody work is often so shocking that foes turn tail and flee rather than face a visceral unmaking at the construct's bladed hands.



## THE DARK CREED



*Fear has a special place in the withered hearts of the Dark Creed. Every fiend that staggers dripping from their flesh-pods is truly terrifying, sculpted to conform to a dark aesthetic that is considered of paramount importance. The Dark Creed have built strong links with the Mandrakes of Aelindrach, entering into unspeakable pacts with these otherworldly terrors to ensure their support during raids into realspace. This arrangement costs the Haemonculi thousands of slaves every year, not to mention the more esoteric offerings demanded by the enigmatic Mandrakes. Yet the Haemonculi of the Dark Creed pay willingly enough, for the allegiance of creatures that seem all but composed of raw fear is too tantalising to resist.*

*The Dark Creed make their lair in the Whispering Void, a vast vaulted space as large as a city far down in the depths of Commorragh. Through the efforts of the Dark Creed, this massive cavern has been shifted slightly out of step with the reality against which it now subtly jars. The Whispering Void is rightly feared by all as an unnavigable mass of shadows, mists and half-heard threats. The chambers of the Haemonculi can only be reached by following the glowing orbs that drift through the murk, guiding the Coven and their servants from one stable pocket of reality to another. Yet these leprous will-o'-the-wisps can be extinguished at a single thought from any Haemonculus of the Coven, leaving hapless intruders to wander lost amid half-glimpsed ghosts and whispered threats until their hearts stop from sheer terror.*

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## FROM THE MINDS OF MONSTERS

Each Engine of Pain is an individually crafted abomination, a semi-sentient fiend of stitch-puckered flesh and jagged metal dredged from the darkest recesses of its creator's psyche, and built for an eternity of service to its monstrous master. Some Haemonculi will transform their most hated rivals – or at least, parts of them – into Engines of Pain. Others, perversely, reserve this awful fate for their most favoured minions. Whatever the case, a Haemonculus will construct his Engine of Pain with as much care as an artist would lavish upon his magnum opus. Working with an insectile patience that does not quite mask his shudders of pleasure, the Haemonculus will return time and again to the looming horror gradually taking shape at the heart of his laboratorium. Some of these monstrous constructs will be pulled apart long before they are finished, their creator fastidiously unpicking stitch from flesh in a fit of artistic pique. Yet many others will eventually be deemed complete and released from their shackles, ready to obey their master's every whim. These menacing constructs are conditioned to be utterly subservient, and possess no real minds of their own.

Spawned from the diseased minds of the Haemonculi, every Engine of Pain is different. However, these foul machines do follow certain patterns and templates, and those engines that bear enough similarities to one another are loosely grouped together for ease of reference. The Haemonculi are not short on imagination, however, and so there are many hundreds of variant Engines of Pain at large in the oubliettes of the undercity. Some, such as the foul Wireweaver, the flesh-dripping Maiden of Sorrows, or the terrifying Moonwidow are thankfully rare. Yet other Engines of Pain find regular usage, their popularity guaranteed by their versatility and resilience. Chief among these are the Talos Pain Engine and the Cronos Parasite Engine.

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*'Kill them, my children, but make it slow...'*

- Vaeghex, Haemonculus Ancient of the Thirteen Scars

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## ENGINES OF DESTRUCTION

The Talos performs several roles in the oubliettes of the Haemonculi, for it is both a guard-creature and a mobile torture chamber that can inflict a dizzying variety of excruciations upon those it catches in its steely grasp. A Talos is valuable to the Haemonculi not only as a shield, for its metal shell makes it all but impervious to enemy fire, but also as a tool, for it allows its master to punish the slow and the impudent without lifting a crooked finger. The bladed forelimbs of a Talos can scissor even an Ogryn into bloody chunks, and the ichor-spewing funnels that siphon fluids from a Talos' thorax can reduce a lightly armoured victim to primordial ooze.

Though it is employed to the same end as the Talos and other Engines of Pain – to torture and destroy – the Cronos is an even more horrifying machine. This macabre construct earned its reputation because of the horrific effects of its signature weapon, a weird tubular device that sprouts from its head like the proboscis of an enormous insect. The name of this terrifying device can be loosely translated as a 'spirit syphon', for it can generate a feedback loop of negative energy that drains the life force of those caught in its field. Victims appear to age decades in mere seconds, writhing in agony as their vitality is physically stripped from their bodies. The stolen energies are processed by the arcane machineries within the Cronos' hunchbacked body, before being beamed back out to wash over Dark Eldar in close proximity. To the Commorrites the sensation of stolen essences washing over their flesh is extremely pleasurable, yet the benefits of the Cronos' emissions go beyond mere enjoyment.

Dark Eldar can absorb the life forces harvested by the Cronos, becoming stronger and more vital even as their foes wither and crumble to dust. In this way the metallic monstrosity nourishes and rejuvenates those Dark Eldar nearby, driving them on to ever-greater feats of destruction. Some are modified to be able to cast their feedback loop out like a coruscating energised net, while others are built to drain every last shred of their prey by plunging their syphons directly into their flesh. However these engines go about their horrific work, the energies they steal can sustain an entire raiding party in the heat of battle.





**URIEN RAKARTH**  
**SCULPTOR OF TORMENTS**



**Amongst the oubliettes of the Haemonculi, there is one name that is feared above all others – Urien Rakarth. Belonging to no single Coven, following no agenda but his own, this twisted and inscrutable artist of pain is a figure of fear even amongst his own kind. He is the Master Haemonculus, a force of pure evil who exists only to revel in the suffering of others.**

From the lowliest menial to the highest lord, there is not a soul in the Dark City that does not know the name Urien Rakarth. He is a dark legend, to some a figure of virtual folklore, to others a grim and monstrous fact. Infamous for his perverse carnivals of pain, the ancient Haemonculus is feted amongst the Dark City's upper echelons as a truly gifted artist of agonies. Yet the black well of Urien Rakarth's evil desires is dug far deeper than anyone knows.

## **THE MASTER OF HIS ART**

Urien's wizened body has long lost the ability to regain the glory of a recently-fed Dark Eldar, for he is indeterminably ancient. Over the ineffable span of his existence, Urien has died to bolt, flame, blade, bullet, toxin, hard vacuum and more grisly fates besides. Each time he dies, Urien's remains are used to slowly grow another iteration of the Master Haemonculus, for he is the progenitor of the regeneration process and each of his surgically altered bones holds the key to a dark resurrection. Rakarth has crossed the veil so many times that he savours death like a fine wine, revelling in the peaks of agony and the transcendent knowledge that comes with each new demise.

In recent centuries, however, something seems to have been corrupted in the regeneration process, and Urien's latest incarnations have each borne a vestigial part of the one before. So it is that Urien is now a truly horrific sight, his compound spines sprouting from his back in ghastly profusion and his leering face tied onto his skull with cords of leathery flesh. Rakarth boasts many sets of limbs – some stripped, silvered and re-strung as fully functional appendages; some atrophied and disturbing, pushing out of his many-spined sump to beckon weakly at those nearby.

Most Haemonculi are to some degree political creatures, at least within the ranks of their own Coven. It is not in the nature of the Dark Eldar to be content with their lot, and normally the more powerful a Commorrite becomes, the more elaborate the plots and intrigues that surround him. Not so Urien Rakarth, who has long ago left behind such petty squabbles.

For long centuries now Rakarth has been a dark force of nature, so steeped in the Haemonculus' arts that some believe him to be practically a demi-god of torment. This is not to say that Rakarth overlooks those rare fools who attempt to work against his interests. Rather, their horrific fates are sealed so suddenly that it seems as though they were indeed struck down by some vengeful – and revoltingly creative – deity.

Like all Haemonculi, Urien has an undying enthusiasm for crafting symphonies of pain. He carries a variety of strange weapons to war, including a gauntlet that can inject his own highly mutagenic ichor into his foes and a blade that can kill with the slightest scratch. But the true weapons of this demented fiend are the sanity-blasting horrors that he creates in the darkness of his laboratories.

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*'Pain is the only universal constant. Pain is all. It is the key to creation and destruction both. Thus does he who masters pain become a god.'*

- Urien Rakarth, an excerpt from his address to his audience prior to the  
Mallendroch Massacre

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Blood-spattered Wracks and towering Grotesques stalk between living sculptures that moan and stagger as rapacious haemovores writhe in the gore beneath. At the head of this gruesome procession comes Rakarth himself, theatrically conducting the carnage about him like a ringmaster at some hellish circus.

Rakarth often deigns to enter realspace accompanied by a Coven, Kabal or Wych Cult. To set his creations loose upon the field of battle is to display his masterpieces to the galaxy at large, and every true artist needs an audience. Few spectacles are as extreme as the gnashing, thrashing carnival of pain Rakarth unleashes upon his prey, and competition is extremely fierce for the honour of the Master Haemonculus' presence. Urien feels nothing but a faint tinge of amusement at such squabbling, yet the constant queue of ready catspaws serves him well. In recent years, Rakarth has demanded the aid of Kabal and Cult alike to gather an ever-growing tide of living victims from the material dimension. His allies are too caught up in their own machinations to question whether the Master Haemonculus has a deeper purpose; they simply assume that Rakarth requires this living ocean of tribute to sustain his experiments. Their ignorance suits Urien's purposes well, for it would not do to have his deeds examined too closely by the upper echelons of Commorrite society.



## THE BLACK ARTS OF SHAIMESH

*The Dark Eldar are experts in the use of toxins. Entire districts of Commorragh are given over to the manufacture of the most potent necrolixirs and vitriolic compounds that can eat through duralumin as if it were soft flesh. Many of the weaponised syringes and needlers used by the Dark Eldar Haemonculi contain potent cocktails of the most virulent venoms available, for the Kabals appreciate the toxic spectrum much as an artist would the myriad colours of a sunrise.*

*The Haemonculi are the most skilled of all when it comes to administering a painful death, craving variety above all and striving always to elicit some new response or physical reaction in their victims. Their toxin-based weaponry, of which the necrotoxin missile is the most infamous, fires organo-acidic compounds that can trigger an incredible array of appalling reactions in living tissue. Nerves burn out in explosive supernovas of pain, muscles spasm or wither, bones fracture and split, flesh necrotises or swells to bursting point, and organs implode or explode – sometimes all at once.*

*Toxin traders thrive in Commorragh, and though antidotes exist, they are difficult to obtain and generally frowned upon as being the last refuge of the weak. Whether poison or cure, all such philtres can be traced back to the laboratories of the Haemonculi in the darkness beneath the core. Bubbling away in cauldrons of bone, or sluicing sluggishly through elaborate alchemical apparatus, toxins and poisons are brewed by the gallon for sale in the city above. Yet no greater customer do the Covens have for their poisons than the Cult of Lhamaea, for the blades of the Lhilitu sisterhood are ever thirsty for death.*

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## THE CARNIVAL SET LOOSE

When a horde of Rakarth's creations descends upon their chosen target, the main attractions travel in specially modified Raiders, chained down with heavy manacles or trapped inside barbed cages. They will attack in the dead of night, or from the midst of some spectacular natural phenomenon – whatever Urien judges will lend his show the most gravitas and display his exhibits in their best light. His audience skim low amid the slaughter, watching with ghoulish avidity from the decks of sleek pleasure-skiffs as truly appalling torments are inflicted on the chosen prey.

To view such high art is a rare privilege for any Commorrite, and even those Archons who have gone beyond the hope of rejuvenation will leave the carnival of pain with the healthy sheen of one centuries younger. Indeed, among those who consider Rakarth to be a deity-in-waiting – perhaps even one of the Dark Muses reborn – the apparently miraculous properties of his displays only serve to provide more proof. Yet in the Dark City, nothing comes for free. Though the Master Haemonculus has no interest in such tawdry concepts as fiscal remuneration, the Dark Eldar who attend his displays must pay a price nonetheless.

From some, Rakarth will ask a simple favour, a marker to be called in at some point in the future when it suits him best. These individuals are held to their bargain by the secret implantation of parasitic slit-worms. These vile little horrors lay dormant in the host until such time as the Master Haemonculus comes to collect. Should the indebted attempt to wriggle out of their deal, the last thing they will ever feel is a sudden, peristaltic surge of motion throughout their body. Seconds later, the slit worms burst from every pore, exsanguinating their victim before expiring themselves amid a cacophony of horrific squeals.

From others, the price for attending the carnival of pain is more straightforward, if no less unpleasant. Perhaps they will be asked to donate a patch of their own skin, or a year of their memories. Perhaps more will be required, an eye, perhaps a limb, even a name. The least fortunate may be taken altogether, their destiny to be transformed into the next exhibit that Rakarth wishes to display. Yet even the threat of so terrible a fate does nothing to dissuade Rakarth's audiences, for this thrill of personal danger does more to entice than it does to dissuade.

Whatever the eventual fate of those who attend a carnival of pain, the spectacle they will first enjoy justifies almost any price. As Rakarth's horrors burst from their restraints, a waking nightmare descends upon the foe. Local defenders and panicked citizens are torn limb from limb, messily devoured, or dragged from their hiding places to take unwilling roles in the madman's pageant that has engulfed their homes. As the pace of the carnage increases, rolling tidal waves of terror and agony engulf Coven forces and onlookers alike, sending the Dark Eldar into ecstasies so potent that their effect surpasses even the gladiatorial displays of the Wych Cults.

While these horrifying spectacles are undeniably impressive, there are those who theorise that Rakarth's blood-soaked exhibitions are but a means to an end. Rumours in the Dark City persist of his vast riches being put to strange, clandestine uses, and of shield-shrouded Venoms despatched on secret missions while his audience's eyes are fixed elsewhere. Indeed, if the Master Haemonculus is in fact working toward some greater end than art for its own sake, he has so far kept the secret well.



**HARLEQUINS OF THE LAUGHING GOD**



Frequent visitors to the Dark City, yet a unique power in their own right, the Harlequins are an enigmatic body of warrior acrobats whose true goal remains impossible to divine. Often responsible for brokering fragile alliances between the Commorrites and their disdainful craftworld kin, the Harlequins are ambassadors, warriors and performers all.

Harlequins are undeniably part of the Eldar race, yet they owe no allegiance to any given craftworld or Kabal. Though they often frequent Commorragh they exist outside of Eldar society altogether, and their motives are shrouded and unclear. These enigmatic warriors are often credited with supernatural powers, and many amongst Commorrite society believe that the Harlequins know most, if not all, of the secret paths through the endless maze of the webway.

The Harlequins see no distinction between art and war, and their outlook can best be explained by reference to the legend of the Fall; one of their self-appointed duties is to keep this legend alive through their performances. The central figure of Harlequin belief is Cegorach, the Great Harlequin – also known as the Laughing God. None truly know how this strange being survived the birth of Slaanesh where the other Eldar gods did not. However, every Harlequin is firm in the belief that Cegorach escaped into the bounds of the webway, existing there still behind myriad disguises and mocking She Who Thirsts from behind the veil. The Laughing God is the only authority that the Harlequins recognise, and their every deed is thought to be in furtherance of his own inscrutable agenda.



## THE DANCE OF THE BLINDING BLADE

*Every seventeen years the arena of the Wych Cult of the Seventh Woe plays host to a unique and auspicious display of martial skill. In a day of lethal contests known as the Dance of the Blinding Blade, the best amongst the Cult of the Seventh Woe compete with a visiting troupe of Harlequins in a series of bloody, blisteringly fast bouts.*

*Duels are fought in which the first to inflict thirteen shallow cuts upon their foe with a shard-knife is declared the victor. Ravening beasts are released into the arena in waves while small bands of Harlequins and Wyches compete to slay a greater tally in ever more inventive and spectacular ways. Marksmanship, agility, resilience and speed are tested to their limits amid polychromatic storms of light and hurtling anti-grav blades. The culmination of each Dance of the Blinding Blade sees one of the triumvirate of Succubi who rule the Seventh Woe face off against the leering form of the Harlequins' Troupe Master in a duel to the death. Such an enthralling blizzard of blades provides the audience with a thrill almost beyond compare, and some duels have been known to go on for many hours before the defeated combatant finally tumbles dead onto the bloody sand.*

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As well as being entertainers, Eldar Harlequins are deadly warriors all. In battle, they use their acrobatic skills and a range of specialist equipment to devastating effect. The Harlequins' ritual garb is as much a part of their arsenal as it is a feature of their performances; their masks – which Harlequins are believed to wear at all times – project terrifying or disorienting images into their foes' minds, while their *dathedi* holo-suits break up their outlines into streaks of multicoloured diamonds. Enemies are left cursing in desperation as their targeting systems reel in confusion, volleys of shots flying wide as the Harlequins close with their prey. Once in close quarters their potent weaponry and lethal grace turns every motion into a killing strike, foes falling dead after every spin, flip and pirouette.



Troupes of Harlequins usually only treat with other Eldar the night before a particularly auspicious battle. They emerge unbidden from hidden portals, staging dazzling performances that tell of the legends of the Eldar race. The Harlequins' masque is spellbinding; such extremes of emotion are reached in these stunning displays that a troupe can hold an audience of Dark Eldar completely in thrall as surely as any gladiatorial bloodbath. In these pageants, each Harlequin plays the role of one of the figures from Eldar legend, acting out stylised versions of Eldar mythic cycles. When presenting their stories upon the stages of the Dark City, a Harlequin troupe's performance will always culminate with the tale of the Fall. This is a story of particular significance to the oldest Archons, many of whom find Act One gratifyingly familiar.

The Harlequins doubtless possess countless secrets that would be of great benefit to the Archons of Commorragh were they to know of them, not least how they keep their souls from the grasp of She Who Thirsts. They are the guardians of the enigmatic Black Library, a mysterious craftworld reputed to exist only in the webway and to contain all of the Eldar race's combined lore on the true nature of Chaos. There can be little doubt that, were the sanity-blasting secrets of this repository laid open to the Dark Eldar, the consequences would be bloody. Yet none amongst the aristocracy of the Dark City are foolish enough to waylay the visiting troupes of Harlequins openly, and the Laughing God's servants seem able to predict those snares that are laid for them in secret. Only Asdrubael Vect has ever dared to publicly cross these enigmatic warrior artists, for a terrible doom indeed is believed to fall upon those who do.

## SHADOWSEERS

Shadowseers are specialist psykers whose abilities are centred around confusion and fear. They add to the potency of their performances by releasing programmed hallucinations from their *creidann* grenade launcher backpacks. These strange devices create billowing clouds of psychoreactive gases that heighten the emotional responses of the onlookers. During the masques, the Shadowseers act as storytellers, forming scintillating phantoms that dance and duel in the air. In battle, they can force visions of terror upon their foe or even hide the Harlequins' presence from their minds altogether.

The Shadowseers are the only psykers permitted open passage within the bounds of Commorragh, for the Dark Eldar know that these warrior mystics are shrouded from the sight of She Who Thirsts. It is believed that every Shadowseer works to their own, private agenda, giving or withholding information in whatever way best suits their needs. Many have sat upon the war councils of Archons, Succubi and Haemonculi, some as voluble as a thespian stood centre stage, others as silent and enigmatic as statues. Despite this, the Shadowseers are viewed with distrust by Commorrite society, and it is considered exceptionally bad luck to harm one.

Especially brazen Archons have, on occasion, attempted to arrange ambushes upon Shadowseers under the protection of their rivals, using third party mercenaries or warriors dressed in the stolen armour of another Kabal. Yet such plans always seem to backfire through forewarning on the part of the target or else outrageous quirks of fate, with invariably hideous consequences for the perpetrators.



## DEATH JESTERS

Death Jesters are heavy weapons specialists who wield horrific shrieker shuriken cannons. These sinister warriors stand apart from their fellow Harlequins, for they play Death in the masque and thus must walk aloof from their brethren. Their costumes feature skulls and death's head masks, decorated with the bones of their predecessors. Their morbid sense of humour is appreciated throughout the Dark City, for they are as every bit as inventively cruel as the most black-hearted Commorrite. To a Death Jester, the madness of the battlefield presents infinite inspiration and boundless opportunities for lethal practical jokes. A Death Jester may wait until an enemy squad believes themselves safe within a bunker, before placing a single shot through the closing door with his shrieker cannon. The explosive effects of the weapon turn the haven into a tightly packed death trap, eliciting screams that are music to the Death Jester's ears.

In the name of satiating their desire for morbid amusement, these strange sadists have been known to dress up unconscious foes in the charred skin and bone of their fallen comrades. They have arranged the bodies of the fallen in bleakly amusing positions, and perpetrated any number of other awful acts of inexplicable humour. Even the Death Jester's own troupe find his antics distasteful, but they understand the role that he plays. The Dark Eldar, meanwhile, enjoy every nuance of the agonies these skull-faced fiends extract from the foe. After all, the waves of horror and pain that wash out from the Death Jester's victims are as a feast to the nearby Commorrites, providing them with entertainment and sustenance both.



*The Harlequin Masque known as the Midnight Sorrow are often seen amid the spires of High Commoragh. Their renditions of the tale of the Fall are wildly regarded amongst Commorrite high society as the pinnacle of the Harlequins' art, and their every step is perfectly choreographed to evoke the sorrow and terror of that ancient catastrophe. No foot is set out of place, nor artful motion wasted. Indeed, the Masque of the Midnight Sorrow are so committed to their performance that many of their players have, over the centuries, lost their original identities altogether. Now they walk the paths of the webway as echoes of that terrible age – reminders of an evil so voracious that it still consumes lives and souls to this very day.*

*Upon the battlefield, the Masque's warrior-acrobats move and fight with the same perfect grace that they display upon the stage. The Masque's name stems from the eighteenth verse of the third act of the Fall; that infamous scene wherein Cegorach witnesses the darkest time ever to have befallen his wayward children.*

*Echoing the bleak misery and clashing violence of this scene, the Midnight Sorrow will always endeavor to strike at their foes as the witching hour tolls. Their masks contorted in mournful grimaces, and domino fields shimmering through the night's gloom, the Midnight Sorrow strike suddenly and leave nothing but ruin and misery in their wake.*

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# KABAL OF THE FLAYED SKULL



**The Kabalites of the Flayed Skull are instantly recognisable by the stylised bloodstreaks that they sport upon their snarling faces, echoing the sinister design of their Kabal's symbol.**

In terms of sheer military force they are second only to Asdrubael Vect's Kabal of the Black Heart. The Flayed Skull's Archon, Lord Vraesque, began his long and dishonourable career as a Reaver, and has since become a master of airborne attacks.

As such the Kabal boasts a great many Reavers, Razorwing Jetfighters and Voidraven Bombers, and competition is fierce to claim the first blood spilt in any raid. The Flayed Skull once famously conquered the world of Thrandium without a single Kabalite setting foot upon the ground.

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*'We are the masters of the shadowed sky.*

*Not for us a grubbing crawl through the mud and filth of battle.*

*Leave that to the lesser races.*

*We shall only set foot upon the soil these vermin call home in order to place our  
bladed heels upon their throats'.*

- Archon Vraesque Malidrach, Kabal of the Flayed Skull

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# ARCHON VRAESQUE MALIDRACH

The self-styled Murderprince of the Poisoned Crown, Archon Vraesque began his climb to power as a half-born Reaver in the arena of Khad Mhetrul, the Bitterspire. With his signature brand of high speed violence, Malidrach has fought his way to mastery of his own Kabal. He specialises in airborne warfare, preferring to slaughter his foes in swift, shocking raids.



## TRUEBORN THE WYDOWBANE PUREBLOODS

Led by Dracon Sahella Wydowbane, Archon Vraesque's cold and heartless consort, these Trueborn look down sneeringly upon the rest of their Kabalite comrades.

## KABALITE WARRIORS THE SPEARSWORN

Only the finest of the Flayed Skull join the ranks of the Spearsworn, each pledging dark oaths of lasting fealty at the point of their Archon's spear, *Sorrowthirst*.

## KABALITE WARRIORS THE STRIFESTALKERS

Those Kabalites recently inducted to the Flayed Skull join the Strifestalkers. Hurlled first into every battle, these wild-eyed Warriors have everything to prove.

## KABALITE WARRIORS THE BLOODED BLADES

The Blooded Blades comprise numerous bands of Warriors, a viciously competitive host that forms the heart of the Kabal's strength during realspace raids.

## RAIDERS THE SKYSCYTHES

A fleet of Raiders bears the Kabal of the Flayed Skull into battle. Many mount grisly trophies, Vraesque's craft bearing a brazier of burning soulstones at its prow.

## AIRCRAFT THE POISONED SKY

These arrogant aircrews fly in support of Archon Vraesque's Kabal, adding their Razorwing Jetfighters and Voidraven Bombers to his airborne arsenal.



## HAEMONCULUS



## **MAELOCH XHOLL**

A powerful ancient within the Prophets of Flesh, Xholl regenerates the fallen warriors of the Flayed Skull. Some believe that he now owns more of the Kabalites' souls than they do themselves.

## **CRONOS PARASITE ENGINES**

### **THE TIME THIEVES**

Maeloch Xholl is always accompanied by at least one Cronos Parasite Engine, its bulky form drifting at his shoulder and bathing him in waves of stolen life-force.

## **TALOS PAIN ENGINES**

### **THE MASOCHITES**

The Haemonculus Ancients of the Prophets of Flesh are particularly skilled in the art of creating Talos Pain Engines. These horrors are the pinnacle of their craft.

## **WRACKS**

### **THE WILLING**

Maeloch Xholl is attended by several hunch-spined bands of Wracks, who surround him in a worshipful mass when he accompanies the Flayed Skull to battle.



## **SUCCUBUS**

### **ELYRA NARCISTYN**

A newly elevated Succubus of the Cult of Strife, Elyra has secured an allegiance with Archon Vraesque in the hopes of escaping the shadow of Lady Hesperax.

## **HEKATRIX BLOODBRIDES**

### **NARCISTYN'S KNIVES**

Succubus Elyra unashamedly plays favourites with her followers, fostering vitriolic competition for a place amongst her Bloodbride handmaidens.

## **WYCHES**

### **THE FRENZY OF BLADES**

Several bands of Wyches fight at Narcistyn's side, each striving to impress their mistress in the hopes of winning praise and favour.

## **HELLIONS**

### **THE THORNSPIRAL**

A vicious pack of impulsive opportunists, the Hellions of the Thornspiral will attach themselves to any raiding party that does not drive them off.

## **REAVERS**

### **VAEKH'S VELOCITARII**

Patronised in the arenas by Archon Vraesque himself, the Velocitarii are a toweringly arrogant band of ultra-violent showmen who delight in the spectacle of war.

## **BEASTMASTERS**

### **THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE LASH**

A feral band of warrior-nomads, the Brotherhood of the Lash have fought for Narcistyn several times, though the reasons for their loyalty remain unclear.



## **THE COURT OF THE ARCHON**

### **VRAESQUE'S COTERIE**

A collection of brutish Sslyth, slaving Ur-Ghuls and bale-eyed Medusae, this group of pets and bodyguards hang upon their master's every callous word.

## **SCOURGES**

### **THE BLOODWINGS**

Archon Vraesque recently forged a pact with the airborne mercenaries known as the Bloodwings, whose potent firepower now supports his Kabal's raids.

## **MANDRAKES**

### **THE WHISPERS IN THE DARK**

Packs of hissing Mandrakes often bursts from the shadows during the Flayed Skull's raids. Their skills in battle are deadly, yet the price for their aid is high...

## **INCUBI**

### **THE SHRINE OF SPLINTERED BONE**

These Incubi claim the bones of slain foes, carving them into fetishes that line the inside of their segmented warplate, pressed close to their pale flesh.

## **THE RISE OF VECT**



**Four thousand years after the Fall, Commorragh was to be subjected to a full-scale invasion by some of the Imperium's most elite warriors. This catastrophic battle saw the rule of the ancient noble houses brought crashing down. They would be replaced by a city of Kabals under the rule of Overlord Asdrubael Vect, the architect of this time of strife.**

## **POWER AT ANY COST**

Asdrubael Vect began his days as a slave. Yet through pure guile and murderous ambition he eventually rose to become the leader of a militant organisation that he named the Kabal of the Black Heart. By the time Vect had established this powerbase, he had been recognised by the Trueborn aristocracy as a genuine threat. The Kabal of the Black Heart was opposed at all turns by the most influential of High Commorragh's noble houses – Xelian, Kraillach and Yllithian. So it was that Vect – ever the master of turning foe against foe to his own advantage – concocted a plan to bring the fury of the Imperium of Mankind to bear against his many enemies.

So audacious was this scheme that, to the eyes of most, it would have seemed like a horrific gamble. This could not have been further from the truth. Every angle had been carefully considered, every necessary loyalty bought beyond any danger of doubt. Asdrubael Vect's plan to achieve ascendancy demonstrated that his mind was like some intricate and unstoppable clockwork machine – by the time

the plan had run its course, millions had been ground between its merciless gears. Vect, meanwhile, elevated himself to a position of total supremacy, borne to unimaginable heights upon an ever-growing mountain of cooling corpses.

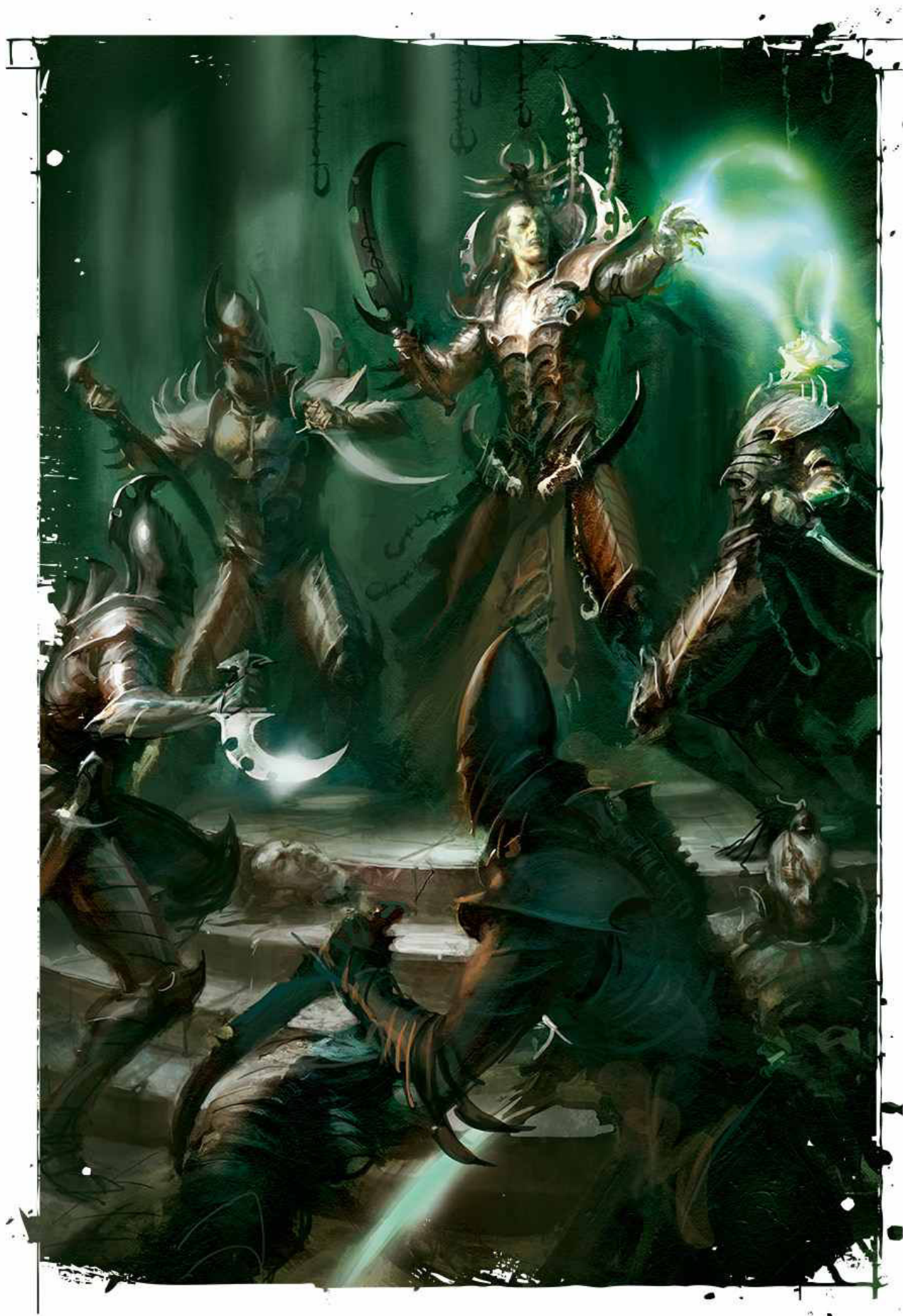
## BAITING THE TRAP

The seeds of Vect's conflict were sown in the area known as the Desaderian Gulf. This region of wilderness space was well known amongst the starfarers of Segmentum Tempestus for the number of craft that had disappeared within its boundaries. Unbeknownst to the Imperium, there existed a vast portal into a main artery of the webway within Desaderian space, shielded by holofields that made it appear nothing more than a shimmer in the starlight. The Dark Eldar fleets preyed upon the Imperium's shipping lanes from within this veiled rent in reality. Yet they did so only rarely in order to escape retribution; the missing ships were considered acceptable losses or else written off by the Imperium's scribes as bureaucratic errors.

Vect's first overt move was to increase the frequency of these piratical raids tenfold. He made it his Kabal's priority to capture every warship and invade every human world within reach of the portal. He tore apart the Astra Militarum regiments garrisoning the planets of the Desaderian system, devastated their fortifications, and disappeared with his living bounty to the depths of the Dark City. Vect left nothing but ruin in his wake. The campaign saw the Kabal of the Black Heart grow rich in plunder, and though Vect's detractors thought him a fool for antagonising the Imperium's war engine, the raids continued apace.

Eventually, as Vect had known they would, the Imperium reacted to the disappearances in the Desaderian Gulf. The Strike Cruiser *Forgehammer* – a warship of the Salamanders Chapter – was close enough to investigate, and Brother Captain Phoecus ordered his ship deep into the Desaderian Gulf. Like predators stalking their kill, Vect's Kabalite fleet shadowed the *Forgehammer*, encircling it undetected before striking in overwhelming force. After a short but extremely violent skirmish, the *Forgehammer* was wreathed in a crippling haywire field and towed back to the Dark City.

The furore that resulted from the capture of so many live Space Marines – precious commodities for the arenas – set the spires of High Commorragh aflame with intrigue. The noble houses could not be seen to permit the upstart Kabal to retain their prestigious prize. Before long Vect found his fleet dwarfed by the armada of Lord Xelian and the *Forgehammer* 'confiscated'. The Salamanders ship, still sheathed in a crackling haywire field, was dragged back to the spires of High Commorragh and tethered to Lord Xelian's stronghold, ready for dissection. Yet the noble lord had underestimated the Space Marines trapped within. Though the *Forgehammer*'s comms were inoperable, Captain Phoecus' gifted Librarian, Brother Hestion, had sent a psychic call for aid as soon as the ship's systems had been disabled. Hestion was acting as a living beacon for the rest of his Chapter; a beacon that was nestled deep within the spire-clustered confines of High Commorragh.





## THE ENEMY OF MY ENEMY IS MY BLADE

When Lord Xelian sent his warriors to bring the Space Marines to his torture chambers, they were met with far sterner resistance than he had anticipated. The Dark Eldar carved through the hull of the Strike Cruiser with ease, but overpowering the Space Marines proved a far greater challenge. The *Forgehammer* was a sizeable warship, its every crawlspace and corridor fortified against boarding actions. The Space Marines were on familiar territory, and they fought with utter, unshakeable determination. After sustaining significant losses, Xelian changed tack, returning the salvage rights of the vessel to the Kabal of the Black Heart. After all, the Space Marines could always be seized later, once Vect's Kabal had born the brunt of their fury.

Vect, ready for this move, casually played a waiting game. He systematically fed the least trustworthy elements of his Kabal into the guns of the Space Marines, eliminating them while buying time for the Imperium to respond. On the sixteenth day of the siege, the skies above Commorragh yawned wide. The Salamanders Chapter had homed in on Brother Hestion's psychic beacon. They found the Desaderian portal mysteriously unveiled, its guards slain and its controls locked out so that it could not close.

The fury of the Imperium thundered from the crackling jade webway portal directly above Archon Xelian's personal spire. Through it came ships bearing the heraldry of not only the Salamanders but also the insignia of the Howling Griffons and the Silver Skulls. The spectacle of their vertical entrance was jawdropping, even for the jaded Commorrites in the streets below. Two dozen Strike Cruisers, each a bullish colossus of gothic architecture built for war, hammered through the wide-open portal into the skies above the Dark City with all guns blazing. At their heart was the Battle Barge *Vulkan's Wrath*, an immense hulk of a ship with broadside batteries that could flatten whole cities. Its prow was a vast ram that ploughed straight into the spire where Lord Xelian stood and obliterated him utterly.

## COMMORRAGH IN FLAMES

Once their initial amazement had worn off, the Dark Eldar reacted swiftly. From nearby Port Shard came hundreds of exotic craft, each but a splinter next to the slab-like ships of the Imperium, but deadly nonetheless. Voidraven Bombers and Razorwing Jetfighters careened out of their towering hangars like bats pouring from a cave, descending in a great flock upon the Space Marine vessels. Even as the air-war erupted with pyrotechnic ferocity, each Strike Cruiser ejected a thunderous volley of Drop Pods. The tight-packed attack transports smashed down into the heart of the Kraillach Quarter, disgorging hundreds of Space Marines who were met by the stirring fury of the Dark City.

The fighting spread like wildfire, and High Commorragh burned as the warriors of House Kraillach engaged the Space Marines in brutal battle. Hellions and Reavers screamed through the skies above the combatants, while Mandrakes crawled from the shadows and Scourges plunged down from on high. Raiders packed with Wyches skimmed through the Space Marine ranks, disgorging agile warrior acrobats whose blades clashed and sparked against the revving chainswords of their foes.

Leading this brutal counter-attack came Lords Kraillach and Yllithian, burning with outrage at this sudden defilement of their realm. Lord Kraillach cut a red swathe through the Adeptus Astartes, his blade drinking blood with every blow. Yet his rampage was brought to an abrupt end when a stray dark lance shot vaporised him where he stood. The patrician Lord Yllithian, meanwhile, found himself privileged to lead the charge alongside none other than Lelith Hesperax and her Wych Cult of Strife. The Space Marines were hurled into full retreat by this unstoppable assault. Yet Lord Yllithian's appreciation of the spectacle was soured somewhat when Hesperax's silvered blades burst through his chest, the ruins of his black heart skewered on their tips.

Though the battle raged on for many hours, the deaths of Lords Xelian, Kraillach and Yllithian marked the triumphant conclusion to Asdrubael Vect's scheme. Their regeneration pacts went unfulfilled, for their remains were inexplicably dragged away into the shadows of Aelindrach by hissing Mandrakes. Though numerous, the Space Marines could not hope to defeat the entire Dark City roused to war. Yet after the mysterious collapse of the haywire field that imprisoned it, the *Forgehammer* made good its escape along with the bulk of the invading Space Marine forces. This, coupled with the devastation of High Commorragh, completed the humiliation of the old noble families. Their lords

were dead beyond recovery, their strongholds reduced to nothing but flaming wreckage.

Into the yawning power vacuum stepped Asdrubael Vect and his Kabal of the Black Heart.

Eschewing all pretence at innocence, Vect ensured that word of his machinations became public. All would know that to stand in the way of Asdrubael Vect meant certain death, and in the centuries that followed his grasp on power would inexorably tighten.



## THE DARK MUSES

*Though the Dark Eldar typically do not worship anyone apart from themselves, they do pay homage to those they respect. Vaunted warriors or dark artists may become revered amongst their own kind. In this way truly mighty Dark Eldar have become almost folkloric figures. Many epitomise a particular vice, whose clandestine worship led to the weakening of the Eldar gods and, indirectly, the Fall. They are known collectively as the Dark Muses, and are figures of terrible power. Favoured by assassins and murderers is Shaimesh, Lord of Poisons. The courtesan elite of the Cult of Lhamaea pay homage to Lhilitu, Consort of the Void, whereas Archons are more likely to Vileth, a figure synonymous with immense arrogance. It is thought that Asdrubael Vect may one day join the ranks of the Dark Muses, though given his uncanny ability to cheat death, that day may be a long time in coming.*

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## THE RAID ON BOLGROG'S WORLD



**Successful Kabalite raids see the Dark Eldar return to Commorragh with rich crops of slaves. Many of these unfortunates are human, for the Imperium's planets are often densely populated and thinly defended. However, this is far from universally true – when Archon Vraesque led the Flayed Skull to Bolgrog's World he sought an entirely different sort of prey.**

For the Dark Eldar, life is a whirlwind of violent impermanence. They face a constant battle against spiritual starvation, their every thought and action bent towards staving off a gradual, withering degeneration. There is therefore an undeniable appeal to the more powerful amongst them in raising monuments to themselves. After all – barring another Archon tearing it down – a suitably gigantic and armour-clad effigy will never wither, falter, or fade. It was for this reason that Archon Vraesque Malidrach decided to celebrate his glories by building a giant statue of himself atop his Kabal's stronghold. Archon Vraesque faced an unusual difficulty, however; his Kabal makes their lair amid an elaborate tangle of vents and pipes known as the Poisoned Crown. The foul fumes billowing from these twisted chimneys come all the way up from the Coven-lairs of the Undercore, and are so toxic that no human work-gang can long survive them. Vraesque realised that, if he wanted his towering monument completed, he would require a hardier breed of slave. The Archon gathered a raiding party – complementing his Kabal's aerial strength with a rogue's gallery of mercenaries and horrors – and prepared to acquire slaves equal to the task at hand.

## FROM OUT OF THE STORM

The planet that Archon Vraesque's party chose for their raid was once an Imperial hive world with a population of trillions. Decades ago, a violent climate shift had left the world ravaged by billowing toxic storms. Its human populace had withered, the final blow coming when the Orks of Waaagh! Bolgrog attacked. The greenskins tore the hives down around their inhabitants' ears, slaughtering the weakened defenders to the last. Now the planet belonged to the greenskins alone, themselves reduced to a fraction of their former strength by the hostile climate. Yet those Orks who survived had become all but immune to the poisonous atmosphere in which they lived. Their apparent good fortune ironically marked them out as the perfect slaves to fulfil Archon Vraesque's vision.

Bolgrog – being a wily and grizzled old skarboy – had built his fortified lair in the ruins of Hive

Cadestin, the greatest of the Imperial cities of old. In the hands of the Orks the hive had become a great, teetering fortress of tumbled wreckage, studded with ramshackle gun emplacements and jagged battlements. A string of huge arched bridges linked this fastness to the rubble-strewn shantytowns that were all that remained of the outhive, each cluster of lean-tos still teeming with Orks, yet far less defensible than the heart of the old hive. It was upon a stretch of the anarchic outhive, therefore, that Vraesque's blow fell.

When the Kabal of the Flayed Skull struck, they did so hard and fast. Bladed warriors in crimson and bone rode their Raiders out of the leprous clouds of a toxin-storm. Many Orks had hunkered down behind barricades and heaps of scrap, hoping to weather the gale-force winds. Now they looked up in surprise as dark, barbed shapes shot low through the murk, spitting volleys of fire into their midst. Amid drumming gunshots and wind-torn explosions, dozens of Kabalites disembarked from their craft and began to encircle their shocked prey.

The winds and toxic clouds were no impediment to the Dark Eldar, whose elaborate rebreathers and gryostabilised armour compensated for the effects of both. Not so the Orks, who were forced to lean into the gale, squinting through blast-goggles and fizzling fog-scopes as they sought their attackers. Dashing forward through the ruins with their blades bared, the Dark Eldar set about themselves with whoops of glee. The Orks fought back furiously, lunging through the toxic clouds to hack apart Commorrites in sprays of blood. Yet the greenskins were at a terrible disadvantage, their belligerence and ferocity no match for the Kabalites' carefully executed ambush. Streams of crystalline splinters cut the Orks to pieces, or hurled them convulsing to the ground. Incubi stalked from one fight to the next, blades glinting blood-wet in the half-light as they sliced off heads, arms and legs with graceful flourishes of their klaives. For every greenskin butchered, many more were paralysed or rendered insensible by carefully tailored venoms, snared in crackling electro-nets and hauled aboard waiting Raiders like some bizarre fisherman's catch. The Kabalites sprinted across tangled streets and flitted through blasted ruins, laying low each surprised band of Orks as they encountered them.

Matters might have continued in this one-sided fashion had not the storm suddenly abated, stripping away the raiding party's cover. Becoming aware of the battle raging on their city's outskirts, hundreds more greenskins began to flock toward what sounded to them like a pretty good fight. Ramshackle bikes and buggies roared down the scrap-strewn streets. Mobs of Orks scrambled through the ruins lugging cumbersome heavy weapons while columns of ramshackle tanks crashed through walls and rubble. Meanwhile, in the heart of the city, larger engines bellowed into life.

Vraesque had planned his raid carefully, however. He knew that should his forces be surrounded, they would be swiftly buried by the overwhelming numbers of the foe. Thus as the greenskins surged through the city toward the raiding party, dark specks plunged from the skies above. Screaming low over the Ork mobs, Razorwing Jetfighters and Voidraven Bombers struck at key targets amid the enemy advance. The craft dived from on high, engines screaming like the damned as they strafed the Orks' weapon batteries. Flakkadakka guns chugged as they pumped streams of shots into the air and swatted several Dark Eldar craft from the skies. Yet the Orks had the worst of it, their batteries detonating one by one as dark beams of energy and shatterfield missiles punched through their armour to smash them to ruin. Voidraven Bombers streaked over the rusted arterial bridgeways, void mines gouging great glowing craters out of the Ork warbands charging across them. One by one the old, rusted roadways shuddered and gave way, collapsing amid the scream of tortured metal and plunging hundreds of Orks to their deaths. Scourges swooped above the advancing greenskins, diving through an ill-aimed storm of fire to strafe their foes again and again. The winged mercenaries struck, retreated, and struck again, gradually luring the aggressive enemies away from the Archon and his warriors. Casualties amongst these diversionary forces were high, yet their efforts pulled ever more greenskins away from the real fight. As the Orks spread thin, Mandrakes flickered through the shadows, snatching stragglers into the darkness. Panic spread in their wake, Orks firing blind into darkened alleys or clustering back to back, unaware that their tormentors had already moved on. Gradually, the onrushing greenskin advance stalled amid chaos and confusion.

Finally, through the madness came Bolgrog himself, riding aboard his towering Stompa *Badbasha*. Spotting the huge war engine lurching through the city ruins gave even Vraesque pause, yet the sight of the grandiose bosspole that jutted from its shoulders told him the Orks' leader had joined the fight



at last. Vraesque had no use for the Warboss as a captive, but his death – writ large across the battlefield where none could miss it – would surely throw the Orks into confusion. The Archon ordered an immediate withdrawal, hacking a path through the massing greenskins to leap back aboard his Raider. Some of the Kabalites were cut off, overrun by the foe or blasted apart by sizzling energy weapons. Yet the remainder followed their Archon's lead, their attack craft arrowing up away from the green horde and making for the Stompa. Closing fast on their massive foe, the Dark Eldar craft hurtled around the towering war engine, tearing at it like a furious flock of shrikes.

The Stompa's guns blazed and roared, filling the sky with a hurricane of fire that sent Razorwings and Raiders tumbling end over end to explode amid the ruins below. At the same time, however, the Dark Eldar guns were cutting the war engine apart. Dark beams of energy stabbed into the behemoth's hull, boring through armour plates and steam pipes. Explosions tore through the Stompa's decks as stockpiles of ammo detonated in a thunderous chain. Raging fires filled the engine from top to toe, flaming grots leaping screaming to their deaths from open hatches. Still the Stompa's guns roared, the Orks on board refusing to accept that *Badbasha* could possibly be destroyed. But finally – even as Bolgrog dashed for the escape hatch – the Stompa went up with a thunderous boom, the shockwave of its explosion hurling Dark Eldar and Orks alike from their feet.

With their Warboss blown to bits along with his biggest and best weapon, the greenskins lost all cohesion. The Dark Eldar stalked the city for several hours more, preying on isolated knots of the foe. Finally, weighed down with slaves, the Kabalites swept skyward once more. Vraesque's raid had been a great success; though barely half the raiding party returned to Commorragh alive, they did so in victory. And of course, the Archon's statue would be completed at last, built upon the broken backs of the Orks of Bolgrog's World.



# THE THREE AGES OF THE DARK CITY



The history of the Dark Eldar is one of unrelenting horror. Much of it is hidden in shadow, recorded only in allegory and fable by those races whose worlds they have ravaged. Records are kept, however – tomes scribed in still-living flesh using bladed quills of bone. These histories divide the tale of Commorragh into three ages – ill-defined and overlapping though they are – each more redolent with cruelty and evil than the last.

## THE AGE OF DARK GENESIS

### **C.M18 The Port Commorragh**

Commorragh establishes itself as the primary nodal port of the webway, growing larger with every passing decade. Built entirely within the labyrinth dimension and hence outside the jurisdiction of the Eldar councils, Commorragh acts as a magnet for those who wish to avoid attention.

### **C.M18-M20 The Twilight Cults**

Those leading the new paradigm of total self-indulgence rise in status and power until they can secede entirely from the physical plane. They take up permanent residence in the webway, from which they can plumb the depths of decadence undisturbed by puritans and weaklings. Over time, their sovereign estates grow into entire sub-realms, many of which are powered by the energy of stolen suns. The solar systems plunged into darkness by the Eldar's star-theft wither and die in the freezing cold of the void, but the Eldar care not.

### **C.M25-30 Darkness Rising**

The depravity of the Eldar race plumbs terrible new depths. Cults of pleasure and pain flourish in the

hidden reaches of the webway, and even the core worlds of Eldar society become obsessed with ever-greater acts of excess. As the lines blur between sensation-seeking and outright evil, a new force stirs in the Warp.

### **C.M30-M31 Exodus**

Sensing the end, portions of the Eldar race combine and modify their spaceships into craftworlds, gigantic living vessels able to accommodate an entire planet's population. One by one they begin to escape the corruption that plagues their empire. Hundred of craftworlds sail into the sea of stars in search of the relative safety of the untrammelled void.

### **C.M31 The Fall of the Eldar**

A new god is born, collapsing the entire Eldar empire – Slaanesh, the Dark Prince, whose birth-screams tear out the heart of the empire and leave pure Chaos in its place. The shockwave of the new god's apotheosis plunges a vast section of realspace into the Warp. Most of the Eldar craftworlds are destroyed in the psychic backlash. Only the Exodites, the Eldar of the farthest-flung craftworlds, and those hidden in the sub-realms of the webway survive. The Eldar race is shattered forever in a single apocalyptic instant.



## THE RISE OF VECT

### **C.M32 A Legacy Begins**

A halfborn slave – known only as Vect – vows that he shall rule the Dark City, even if it takes an eternity to do so. Vect founds the Cult of the Black Heart, the first organisation to openly refer to themselves as Eladrith Ynneas or 'Dark Eldar'. The Thirteen Foundations of Vengeance are laid down at this time, an intricate code of dishonour destined to spread through the society of the Dark City in the centuries to come. The impact of Vect's rise to power will resonate through Commorragh's history for millennia to come.

### **C.M33 The War of the Sun and the Moon**

The solar cults that control the Dark City's stolen suns rise in power and influence, ultimately declaring war upon the noble houses that would see Commorragh plunged into permanent night. An aerial war rages for centuries, but ultimately the noble houses emerge victorious. Vect's Cult of the Black Heart transforms to become the first true Kabal during this troubled time, and is instrumental in the final defeat of the Cults during the Battle of the Seven Shrouds.

### **C.M35 Vect Ascendant**

Asdrubael Vect launches a series of punishing raids against the Imperium's shipping lanes in the Desaderian Gulf. True to his plans, this triggers a punishing counter-attack from three Chapters of the Adeptus Astartes. Vect manipulates the invasion to cripple the powerbases of the patrician Archons and, in the aftermath, takes their place as ruler of High Commorragh. Shortly after, the Desaderian portal is forcibly collapsed, triggering a massive implosion and annihilating Imperial naval elements mustering for a second attack.

### **C.M37 The Breaching**

Vect causes the hidden portals that link each satellite realm and port-city of the webway to be revealed, forcing them open and building the Great Gates: huge edifices that are permanently guarded by Vect's elite Incubi and Kabalite Warrior garrisons. Over several millennia of civil war and violent strife, Commorragh expands into these once-autonomous regions until they become integral to the Dark City. Only the realm of Shaa-dom remains autonomous.

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# THE AGE OF PAIN

## 745.M35 The Battle for the Thaxar Rift

The Severed begin to plunder the region of space known as the Thaxar Rift. They find their efforts hindered by Chaos-worshipping renegades, who have a substantial presence in the region. Rather than face the renegades directly, Archon Ariensis ensures that his foes come to the attention of the Imperial Navy and Adeptus Astartes, and a grinding war ensues. The Severed haunt the edges of this conflict, tales of murderous ghosts and xenos pirates spreading like wildfire in their wake while they test and study the Imperium's way of war. Eventually the Imperium's forces are reduced to a shadow of their former might. They are forced to resort to selective Exterminatus to annihilate what remains of their traitor foes. While the doomed worlds still smoulder, the Severed descend in full force. They annihilate the surviving Imperial Navy ships left behind to watch over Thaxari space, before proceeding to plunder and pillage at will.

## 677.M36 Vect's Gift

Asdrubael Vect tricks his would-be rival Archon Kelithresh into opening a casket that has ostensibly been presented as a tithe. Held precariously in the collapsing field of the casket is the unstable essence of a black hole. Kelithresh's entire realm is plunged into a howling, yawning vortex.

## 724.M36 The Black Conquest of Yaelindra

Yaelindra of the Blackened Tear uses her preeminent grasp of the arts of Shaimesh to poison an entire hive world. Even as the populace of Tybor III are withering into desiccated husks, Yaelindra is granted a boon by Asdrubael Vect. She chooses to take a spire of her own in High Commorragh, founding the Cult of Lhamaea and training an army of deadly courtesan warriors to further her deadly works.

## 926.M36 The Plague of Glass

The noted Commorrite artisan Jalaxlar is feted for his incredibly lifelike black-glass statues of Dark Eldar. His rivals soon discover that he is using an isolated viral helix to create his masterpieces from living victims. In the fight to control this deadly virus it is accidentally released, running rampant through several districts of the Dark City. The Plague of Glass is eventually contained and weaponised by the Hex, whose Haemonculi are intrigued by its artistic possibilities.

## 579.M37 War in the Webway

A coven of Chaos Space Marine Sorcerers of the Thousand Sons conduct a great ritual in the webway, hoping to gain access to Commorragh. At the ritual's climax, hundreds of Dark Eldar pour from an invisible portal into their ranks, led by vaulting troupes of Harlequins. Battle is joined as the Tzeentchian Sorcerers counter-attack; the fabric of the webway is breached in the process and its arterial walls buckle and burst. The backlash strands the combatants in a shattered pocket reality with no way out. It is rumoured in Commorragh that they fight there still, locked in an endless cycle of war and rebirth for the rest of time.

## 796.M37 The Tower of Flesh

The Haemonculi stronghold known as the Tower of Flesh is created – a living, breathing fortress, made of the bodies of those who defied the Coven of the Thirteen Scars. The renegade Space Marine Fabius Bile is tutored in the dark arts within its blood-slicked halls. Bile is accompanied to the Dark City by Lucius the Eternal, who is declared by his 'hosts' – the Wych Cult of the Wrath Unbound – to be endlessly entertaining both on and off the arena floor.

## 984.M37 The Blade of Vect

The sub-realm of Shaa-dom grows steadily in influence and power until Archon El'uriaq, the self-proclaimed Emperor of Shaa-dom, declares himself more worthy of rule than Asdrubael Vect. Vect publicly vows that all of Shaa-dom will feel the edge of his blade, much to the amusement of El'uriaq's famously well-funded and elite forces. Three days later, a Warp rift opens suddenly above the satellite realms and a burning Imperial Navy battleship thunders downward, plunging deep into

the hidden city's heart before its Warp drive detonates. The palace-fortress of El'uriaq is torn apart. The Warp rift allows Daemons to invade the city, and in a matter of a single week the devil-haunted realm of Shaa-dom is reduced to cinders. Vect is reported to have allowed himself a rare smile at the moment of its fall.



### **182.M38 The Last Act of Lord Korscht**

Inquisitor Lord Korscht of the Ordo Xenos second-guesses the Dark Eldar raid upon the industrial world of Demoisne. The moment the Kabal of Immortality Denied blink into existence above Demoisne's capital, they are all but annihilated in a thunderous firestorm. Korscht's absence is keenly felt at the post-action debrief, however, and the Inquisitor Lord's underground fortress complex is investigated. His remains are found, spread thinly upon every page of every occult tome in his library.

### **799.M38 Pandaimon Betrayed**

The trans-dimensional satellite realm of Pandaimon declares independence from Commorragh, instantly triggering a great war between Archon Qu, Lord of the Iron Thorns, and the Kabal of the Black Heart. Qu is ready for Vect's attack, but not for the treason of his own daughter, who reveals herself as one of Vect's many courtesans. Civil war rages for weeks but ultimately the realm of Pandaimon is delivered into Vect's hands.

### **272.M39 Desperation's End**

The frontier planet of Desperation unwittingly sows the seeds of its own demise when it sends an astropathic message detailing an invasion of hellspawn. In fact, Desperation has been chosen as the theatre for the latest unveilings of the Children of Bone, a clique of Haemonculi who specialise in unusually large Grotesques. After the desolation of the planet's cities, the Haemonculi disappear with holocaptures of their vile creations at work. Years later, the rescue ships that enter Desperation's orbit determine the natives of the planet to be heretical beyond recovery, for they now worship the Children of Bone instead of the Emperor. The natives fight with frenzied tenacity, for they fear the Haemonculi far more than the Imperium's troops, but nonetheless the world is completely purged within the space of a week.

### **226.M41 A Gauntlet Thrown**

Lelith Hesperax issues a challenge to the Dark City. Should anyone produce an inhabitant of realspace that can pose her a genuine challenge in the arena, that individual will be honoured beyond their wildest dreams by Hesperax herself. The competition sparked by this challenge is immediate, violent and widespread. Archons lead raiding parties to strike at the length and breadth of the material realm, returning with ever mightier champions and deadlier monsters trammelled in their holds. Yet Hesperax defeats every victim brought before her, carving down hissing Tyranid Hive Tyrants, choppa-wielding Ork Warbosses and righteously indignant Space Marine heroes with equal ease. Archon Khargiel of the Bleaksoul Brethren finally presents Hesperax with a foe that can answer her challenge. In an especially daring and costly raid, Khargiel has kidnapped Brother Captain Cadulon of the Iron Knights Space Marine Chapter. Known as the Saint of Blades, Cadulon is an exceptionally talented swordsman who has twice been declared victor at the ritual Feast of Blades.

As Hesperax meets his eye across the arena floor she knows she faces a worthy foe. With a predatory grin, the belladonna of the Dark City goes to work, her blades ringing against Cadulon's sword in a blizzard of sparks to the maddened roar of the crowd. The duel lasts for over six hours before Cadulon finally falls, leaving Hesperax victorious with but a single, bloody cut across her midriff. Amid the sudden hush, Archon Khargiel descends to the arena floor to accept his reward. Yet his look of triumph curdles as Lelith kicks the fallen Space Marine's blade across the floor to land at the Archon's feet, explaining that the greatest honour she can bestow is the deadly kiss of her knives. To the amusement of the crowd, Khargiel is lucky to last six minutes...

### **312.M41 The Reaving of Garmos**

The Garmos system is plunged into a war between the Imperium and the Orks of Waaagh! Deffsmasha. Throughout the conflict, the Coven of the Dark Creed and the Kabal of the Bladed Lotus lead raiding parties to prey on both sides. They subtly tip the balance of power back and forth, extending the war far past its natural duration and reaping the harvest of fear and misery that results.

### **327.M41 The Dancing Dead**

The insane Archon Thyndrak of the Last Hatred launches a raid on the hive world of Tamantra's Folly. During fierce fighting between her Kabalite forces and the Tallarn 8th Infantry, Archon Thyndrak abducts the planet's tyrannical governor and his entire sadistic household. Within the cycle, the luckless abductees have been fitted with neural restraints, dressed in improbable and torturous finery, and installed in life support tubes built into the ceiling of Archon Thyndrak's grand ballroom. Trapped in an agonising half-life, the nobles can be lowered down to the Archon's dance floor at will on wheezing brass armatures, their mere presence leaving the hall awash with an aura of pain and misery that the Commorrites find most refreshing. Needless to say, Thyndrak's new toys are something of a coup, her guests delighting in dancing and frolicking with the whimpering humans amid the mocking laughter of their peers.

### **394.M41 The Raven's Prey**

The Kabal of the Obsidian Rose suffer an unacceptable defeat when they are overwhelmed by the armoured might of the Cadian 346th 'Ironheads' on the mining planet of Greystar. Determined to save face, Archon Khromys orders diversionary attacks against key points all across the planet. While battle rages, a single squadron of Voidraven Bombers – crafted by Khromys herself for just such an occasion – swoops undetected into the primary spoil-shaft of the northern polar mines. Hurling through narrowing tunnels and jinking between slab-sided industrial machinery, the Voidravens' superior systems see them reach the deepest extent of the mine workings. Here, dangerously close to Greystar's molten heart, they deploy a trio of masterwork void mines that trigger an apocalyptic chain-reaction. Even as the Voidravens hurtle to safety, the Obsidian Rose retreat to the webway laden with slaves and plunder. In their wake, Greystar tears itself to pieces, billions dying along with their planet in order to satisfy Khromys' need for revenge.



### **399.M41 The Plague of Becoming**

A narcissist without equal, Archon Vhane Kyharc of the Black Myriad releases the Doppelganger Virus on the planet of Phlogiston VI. This transmorphic plague rewrites the biology of every living

creature on the planet, forcing their features to reform in the likeness of their alien conqueror.

### **421.M41 Steel Fang**

A nameless messenger butchers the Inner Council of Craftworld Lugganath, smashing apart a statue of Khaine and using the shards as deadly weapons. Fleeing into the webway with a holocapture of her murderous deed, the young warrior calling herself Steel Fang is welcomed by the Wych Cults of the Dark City. She soon founds her own Cult, and her teachings in the art of improvised weaponry spread throughout the arenas of Commorragh.

### **462.M41 Fear the Shadows**

The Kabal of the Black Heart strike at the hive world of Lapradus, but are hurled back in disarray by the intervention of Titans from the Legio Castigatum. Mere days later, Princeps Gendath – the author of Castigatum's victory – is murdered on his own bridge. He is hacked to shreds within his amniotic tank by hissing horrors that slither into being amid the thrashing soup. The murky shapes disappear as suddenly as they struck, leaving only a half-frozen mulch of blood and shattered armaglass in their wake.

### **346497.M41 Just Beyond the Door**

It is on this date that word reaches Asdrubael Vect of a disturbance at Khaine's Gate. Something has begun to pound slowly – rhythmically – impossibly – on the other side. Vect stations five hundred Incubi to watch over the Gate chamber as a delaying measure. He pays exorbitant sums to ensure their discretion, while simultaneously ensuring all those Incubi hired hail from brotherhoods who have defied or hindered his machinations in the past. As further insurance, Vect deploys several of his more esoteric arcane weapons within the chamber itself, ingenious failsafes that include temporal flux-mines, the Seventh Shard, and a tri-prismic dimensional mirror keyed to hurl anything reflected in its surface into the heart of a sun.

### **518.M41 The Veiled War**

The Wych Cult of the Red Grief engages the warriors of Craftworld Saim-Hann in battle over a broken alliance. The war is fought at breakneck speeds through the cloud-archipelagos of the planet Stratos, where visibility is almost zero and the smallest misstep threatens a deadly plunge into the void-ocean far below. The warring factions are eventually forced to disengage by the onset of a vast superstorm, leaving scores unsettled and bad blood festering between them.

### **543.M41 The Harvest of Chogros**

The Kabal of the Broken Sigil begins a series of raids on the planet Chogros, capturing the Ogryn natives for the arenas. When Astra Militarum regiments arrive to intervene, the conflict escalates into a planet-wide engagement. Though they fight hard, the men of the Imperium are eventually defeated. The Crucibael is thronged for many nights to come as the captured Imperial Guardsmen are forced to fight the very Ogryns that they were sent to save.

### **601.M41 The Enemy Beyond**

The Incubi standing guard over Khaine's Gate report new and disturbing developments to Asdrubael Vect. In accompaniment to the slow, relentless pounding, the Gate has begun to vibrate at the microscopic level. Worse, those who stand too close to the portal report hearing whispered voices. Though he shows no outward signs of concern, Vect continues to lay new plans.

### **626.M41 The Shadow-Hunt**

The Kabal of the Baleful Gaze and Wych Cult of the Wrath Unbound cripple the infrastructure of the industrial world of Durondas II using sustained haywire bombing. The Cult then lands great packs of hunting beasts, Khymerae and Clawed Fiends, the beasts loping through the darkened streets and tearing the planet's defenders to shreds. Buried in darkness, weapons fried and transportation crippled by the haywire bombs, the terrified Astra Militarum and their civilian charges are forced to fall back time and again. The hunted survivors are finally herded together in the Grand Templum District



of Durondas' capital city. Here the Dark Eldar Beastmasters loose their feral pets en masse, beginning a horrifying massacre that takes several long and bloody days to conclude, and from which no human emerges alive.

### **824.M41 The Panacea Wars**

Vect sets his Archons a seemingly impossible task: 'poison the Imperium of Man, and bring proof of the deed'. Lady Malys proves equal to the task. Through the Harlequins she has learned that the Tech-Priests of Verdigris IX have recovered an STC codenamed the Panacea, a miracle cure that could save billions of human lives. Using hit and run raids, Malys' Kabal of the Poisoned Tongue lure the might of an Ork Waaagh! down upon the heavily defended forge world. The Ork fleet literally ploughs headlong into Verdigris IX, one massive ship after another slamming into the world's surface to cause untold destruction. As wave upon wave of Orks disembark from their wrecked spacecraft, the planet's surviving defenders find themselves embroiled in a desperate war for survival. Malys and her Kabal swoop into the midst of the resultant havoc, cutting down anyone who stands between them and their prize. After prying the Panacea template from the gnarled fingers of the Ork Big Mek who had stolen it before her, Malys returns to the Dark City, leaving Verdigris IX to burn in her wake. Asdrubael Vect is reportedly impressed with this audacious raid – even as Malys is setting the Imperium's miracle cure atop a pedestal in her personal trophy hall, she receives an invitation from Vect to dine with him by way of congratulations.



### **842.M41 The Nobility Resurgent**

Descendants of the noble houses deposed during Vect's ascension, Archons Xelian, Kraillach and Yllithian attempt a coup. They successfully resurrect the ancient Archon El'Uriach, once Emperor of Shaa-dom and the last individual to present a genuine challenge to Vect's supremacy. However, their schemes go horribly awry, leading the Dark City into a period of strife unlike any it has seen for thousands of years. As a result of their actions, a mighty daemonic Dysjunction shakes Commorragh to its very foundations and forces Asdrubael Vect himself to take drastic action lest his city slip into oblivion altogether.

### **864.M41 The Vandred Atrocity**

Archon Thysk leads his Kabal of the Bloody Storm against Vandred, a feudal world from which the Angels Sanguine Space Marine Chapter recruits new aspirants. Sure enough, a strikeforce of Angels Sanguine makes planetfall within days, yet they are playing into the Archon's hands. Thysk releases a blood-plague acquired at great cost from the Haemonculi Coven of the Altered, a virus that taps directly into the tragic gene curse of Sanguinus' sons. Aware of their madness but unable to stop, the Angels Sanguine butcher and devour those they came to save before falling upon each other, while the Dark Eldar drink in the agony, terror and despair.

### **891.M41 The Long Midnight**

The Last Hatred ravages the hive world Persya in a six-cycle long siege, using arcane technologies to bring pitch darkness to its principal hives and sending Mandrakes and Ur-Ghuls into its confines. Many hive workers go mad with terror, but are taken back to Commorragh nonetheless. It is claimed that during this siege, Kheradruakh the Decapitator selects an unprecedented seven worthy skulls for

his macabre lair.

### **990.M41 The War of Dark Revelations**

Tau forces defending Vigos against the onrushing might of Hive Fleet Kraken make the fatal decision to ally themselves with Urien Rakarth. Despite initial victories alongside their twisted allies, the Tau soon become alarmed by Rakarth's demands that they engage in ever more costly 'cultural exchanges'. They finally resolve to strike back when he transforms Tau warriors into monstrous Grotesques, and begins demanding a tribute of their sacred Ethereals. The Tau muster their reserves from the world of Rubikon, yet when their blow falls they find Rakarth's fleet already gone leaving only holograms and sensor-ghosts in its wake. Panicked distress calls begin to issue from the defenceless Rubikon mere hours later. These gabbled reports of twisted, pale-fleshed invaders calling themselves the Prophets of Flesh. Yet it is far too late for the woefully outmanoeuvred Tau forces to respond, and they can only listen in anguish to the death-cries of their world.

## **THE AGE OF PLENTY**



**As the 41st Millennium draws to a close, the galaxy is riven with war as never before. Madness and mayhem consumes whole systems, affording the denizens of the Dark City ample chance to raid at will. Yet there are those who whisper that even Commoragh is not proof against the horrors that draw near.**

### **994.M41 Vect's Declaration**

Asdrubael Vect looks upon the war-racked galaxy and declares this to be an age of plenty. The races of realspace are beset by woes, their civilisations battling a never-ending tide of enemies, each more monstrous than the last. Vect orders his lieutenants to take advantage of the galaxy's worsening plight, to strike wherever the lesser races are spread too thin and pillage unopposed. Slaves and riches flow into Commoragh in a tide, and the Dark Eldar revel in their own unmatched might. However, all of this is but a distraction, albeit on an unimaginably vast and complex scale. While Vect's subjects glut themselves upon the hapless peoples of the material dimension, their eyes are turned outward, away from the dark deeds of their ruler.

### **996.M41 Danger Unseen**

In the Undercore, the phenomena that beset Khaine's Gate become ever more pronounced. Many of the strange portal's guards have been driven mad by the whispering voices that now pervade the Gate chamber. Those who have not hacked each other apart or taken their own lives have begun carving 'Let us in' into the walls of the chamber, some scratching this unsettling mantra directly into their flesh. The air of the chamber shimmers with half-glimpsed shapes, while Mandrakes and shaderavens gather in increasing numbers in the tunnels around and about. Overlord Vect continues to suppress knowledge of these phenomena with cruel efficiency, while quietly relocating ever more of his own powerbase to hidden sub-realms behind multiple, well-guarded portals. A number of Archons who had believed their Kabals out of favour are delighted when Vect presents them with reconciliatory gifts of prime territory, ceded from the ownership of the Kabal of the Black Heart and located directly above the Undercore.

### **998.M41 Rakarth's Larder**

Urien Rakarth recognises similarities between his kin's frenzied reaving of realspace and the blood-mad days that led up to the Fall. Ancient beyond mortal comprehension, Rakarth still dimly recalls that apocalyptic event. His memories are enough to prompt him to precautionary action – though Rakarth has no interest in the survival of either realspace nor his own race, without the living resources that both provide his personal quest for depravity would come to a crashing end. Thus the Haemonculus begins stockpiling what he views as raw materials, leading raids to seize vast quantities of slaves and dragging them back to the oubliettes in chains. As the scale of his raiding operations increases, Rakarth enlists the aid of several powerful Covens, including the Black

Descent, the Coven of Twelve and the Prophets of Flesh. These monstrous cliques claim new sub-realms within the webway and begin to fill them with countless ranks of stasis-pods that fade away for miles into the gloom. Each contains a living being, stolen from realspace in order to stock the vile larders of the Haemonculi against hard times to come.

### **924999.M41 Warpsurge**

A mighty storm front rolls through Warp space, plucking at the edges of the labyrinth dimension. Arterial passageways shudder uncontrollably while smaller, more damaged offshoots tear or collapse altogether. Khaine's Gate glows white hot for several moments, and one of the mighty chains that bind it snaps with a sound like a thunderclap. At the exact same moment, every single portal within the Dark City flickers out and then comes back to life, plunging hundreds of thousands into limbo or tearing them apart in transit. The Dark City is soon in uproar, and demands that Overlord Vect take action to prevent a full blown Dysjunction become ever louder. Vect suspects the hand of Lady Malys in this agitation, but his attempts to procure proof are foiled by troupes of Harlequins that appear from nowhere to slay Vect's agents or abduct his informants.

### **978999.M41 Stealing the Void**

The Kabal of the Black Heart and the Wych Cult of Strife lead a massive raid against the Imperial Navy moorings at Bakka. The attack causes immense destruction and leaves a swathe of the Imperium open to further raids, yet this is merely a by-product of Vect's true purpose. While the bulk of the raiding forces are fully engaged with the Imperial Navy, a small Dark Eldar force breaks away under the cover of advanced night shields. Led by Vect himself, with Lelith Hesperax at his side, this force assails the Inquisitorial stronghold concealed behind Bakka's third moon. In the ensuing battle, the Black Heart successfully kidnaps a handful of very specialist personnel. Aberrant anti-psychic mutants, the very presence of these so-called Nulls deadens the tides of the Warp and is anathema to the Daemons of Chaos. The Nulls are smuggled into the depths of the Dark City, destined for grotesque machines arranged around the Undercore. Yet, though the luckless mutants are moved with the greatest care and secrecy, Vect's plan does not go entirely unnoticed, for the eyes of Lady Malys are everywhere.

### **995999.M41 The Great Eye Opens**

The Thirteenth Black Crusade surges from the Eye of Terror, armies flooding from across the Imperium to oppose it. Kabalite raids descend upon realspace in their thousands to take advantage of the mayhem, yet now battle is also joined in the Dark City. Through arcane channels, Lady Malys has learned of the developing situation around Khaine's Gate. Fearing that Vect plans to intentionally trigger its opening and drown his rivals in Daemons, the Archon of the Poisoned Tongue activates assets all across the Dark City. Waves of empyric energy roll from the Eye of Terror to batter Commorragh, collapsing sub-realms and breaching portals. Bands of Kabalites, Wyches and Harlequins loyal to Malys or Vect engage in increasingly bitter skirmishes around the Undercore, oblivious to the irony that both factions are fighting to achieve the same end. Meanwhile, in a chamber filled with swirling madness, hairline cracks spread across Khaine's Gate, and the caged Nulls begin to scream...



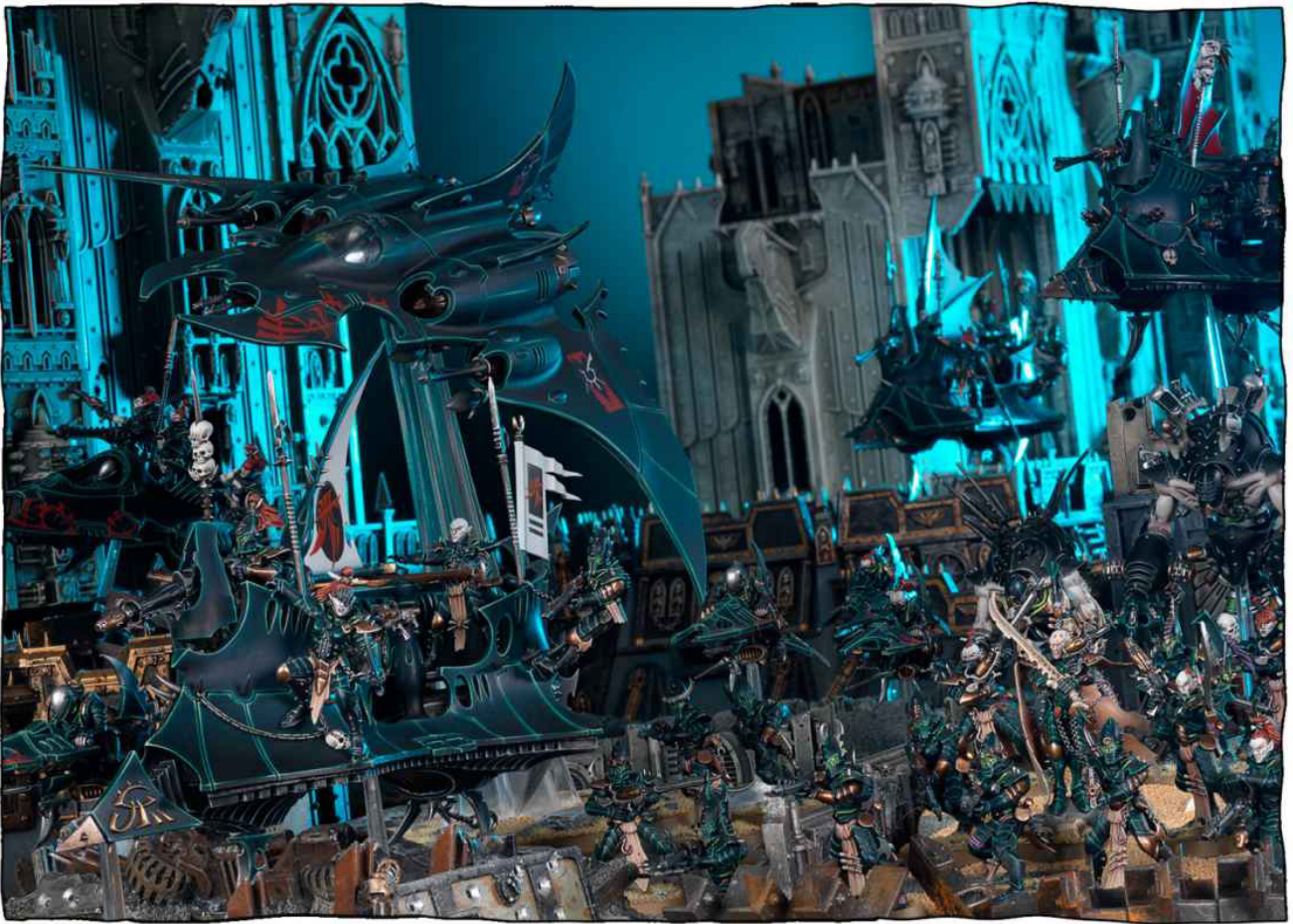


## COMMORRITE RAIDERS

Dark Eldar armies are amongst the most visually striking on the battlefields of the 41st



Millennium. With a combination of sleek and jagged lines, vividly contrasting colour schemes, and an array of intricate iconography, each force presents its own distinct spectacle, as can be seen in this section.







**Archon Vraesque Malidrach, ruler of the Kabal of the Flayed Skull, attended by his Court of the Archon**



**Incubi of the Shrine of Splintered Bone**





**Kabalite Trueborn of the Kabal of the Flayed Skull**



**The Bloodwings are mercenary Scourges in the pay of Archon Vraesque.**









The Reavers known as Vaekh's Velocitarii come hurtling through the skies in search of prey.







**Lords of Iron Thorn Ravager with Raider escort**

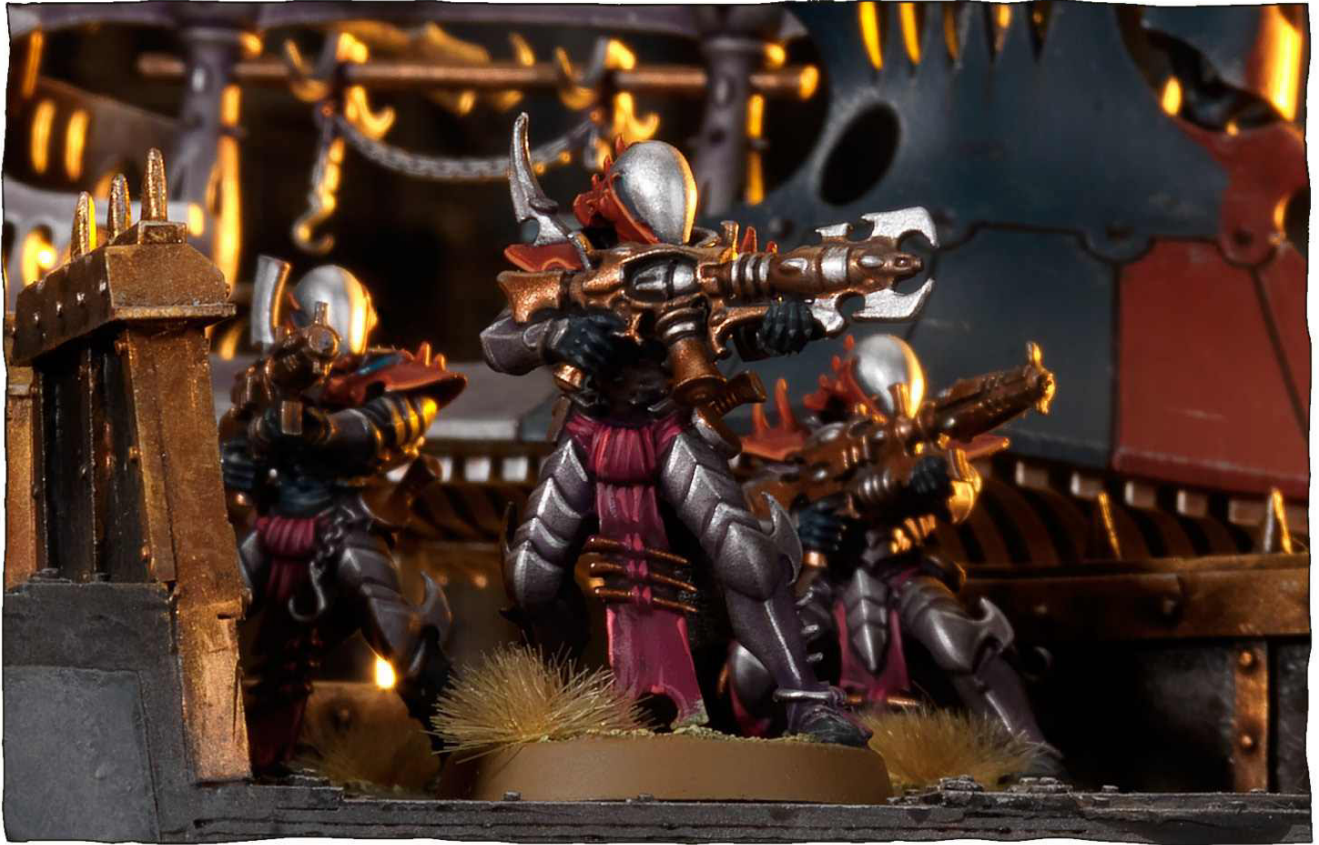


**Archon Khadys Abrahak, undisputed ruler of the Lords of Iron Thorn**









**Meshael the Proud's Kabalite Trueborn**



**Lady Malys, ruler of the Kabal of the Poisoned Tongue, employs numerous lieutenants and mercenaries to enact her will. Here, Archon Achara Witherchill leads his Court of the Archon and a band of klaive-wielding Incubi into battle on his mistress' behalf.**













**Amelica Theskis, Succubus of the Wych Cult of the Seventh Woe, sprints into battle amid her massed Hekatarii.**



**Khyvoc, Beastmaster ally of the Seventh Woe, sets his packs loose upon the foe.**









# FORCES OF THE DARK ELДАР



The following section details background and rules information that describe the forces used by the Dark Eldar – their warriors, their vehicles and the characters that lead them to battle. This section will enable you to forge your collection of Dark Eldar miniatures into an army ready to fight battles in your games of Warhammer 40,000.

## DATASHEETS

Each Dark Eldar unit in this book has a datasheet. These detail either Army List Entries or Formations, providing all the rules information that you will need to use your models in your games of Warhammer 40,000.

## ARMY LIST ENTRIES

Each Army List Entry contains the following information:




2

3
150  
POINTS
4

# LELITH HESPERAX

## QUEEN OF KNIVES

Lelith Hesperax

WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
9	9	3	3	3	9	5	9	6+

5

6 **UNIT TYPE:**  
Infantry (Character).

7 **UNIT COMPOSITION:**  
1 Unique

8 **WARGEAR:**

- Wychsuit
- Two close combat weapons
- Plasma grenades

9 **WARLORD TRAIT:**

- Blood Dancer

10 **SPECIAL RULES:**

- Fleet
- Independent Character
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Rampage

**A League Apart:** Lelith Hesperax re-rolls all failed To Hit and To Wound rolls whilst fighting a challenge.

**The Penetrating Blade:** Armour saves cannot be taken against Wounds inflicted by Lelith Hesperax's Melee weapons.

**Quicksilver Dodge:** Lelith Hesperax has a 4+ invulnerable save. This is increased to a 3+ invulnerable save against all Wounds inflicted in the Fight sub-phase.

11 **OPTIONS:**

- May replace one close combat weapon with an impaler...15 pts

**1. Faction:** The unit's Faction is shown here by a symbol. All units that have this symbol, which is all the units described in this book, have the Dark Eldar Faction.

**2. Battlefield Role:** The unit's Battlefield Role is shown here by a symbol. Units in this book have one of the following Battlefield Roles: HQ, Troops, Elites, Fast Attack, Heavy Support and Lords of War. The symbols for these Battlefield Roles are defined in Warhammer 40,000: The Rules.

**3. Unit Name:** Here you will find the name of the unit.

**4. Points Cost:** This is the points cost of the unit without any upgrades, used if you are choosing an army to a points value.

**5. Unit Profile:** This section will show the profile of any models the unit can include.

**6. Unit Type:** This refers to the unit type rules in Warhammer 40,000: The Rules. For example, a unit may be classed as Infantry, Cavalry or Vehicle, which will subject it to a number of rules regarding movement, shooting, assaults, etc.

**7. Unit Composition:** This section will show the number and type of models that make up the basic unit, before any upgrades are taken.

**8. Wargear:** This section details the weapons and equipment the models in the unit are armed with, many of which are described in more detail in the Armoury of the Dark City section of this book. The cost for all the unit's basic equipment is included in its points cost.

**9. Warlord Traits:** Sometimes a character's datasheet will have a specific Warlord Trait, in which case it will be listed here.

**10. Special Rules:** Any special rules that apply to models in the unit are listed here. Special rules that are unique to models in that unit are described in full here, whilst others are detailed either in the

Appendix section of this book or in the Special Rules section of Warhammer 40,000: The Rules.

**11. Options:** This section lists all of the upgrades you may add to the unit if you wish to do so, alongside the associated points cost for each. Where an option states that you may exchange one weapon 'and/or' another, you may replace either or both, provided you pay the points cost for each. The abbreviation 'pts' stands for 'points' and 'pts/model' stands for 'points per model'. Where applicable, this section also refers to any Transports the unit may take. These have their own Datasheets. Dedicated Transports do not use up any slots on a Force Organisation Chart, but otherwise function as separate units. The Detachments section of Warhammer 40,000: The Rules explains how Dedicated Transports work.

**ARTEFACTS OF CRUELTY**

**The Executioner's Armour:** This ceremonial suit of armour is a masterwork of Eldar craftsmanship thought to have been made in an age before the Fall. The Executioner's Armour confers a 2+ Armour Save.



Even amongst the insular ranks of the Incubi, Drazhar remains an enigma. He entered the Great Shrine of the Incubi unannounced and unbidden, his segmented armour of a senior member of the Incubus creed. Drazhar cut his way to the inner sanctum and saluted the shrine's enthroned Hierarch. The Hierarch's self-assured superiority soon evaporated when his challenger blurred into action, moving so quickly that it was hard to follow him by the flickering tallow-light. The duel was over within minutes, and the newcomer stepped over the Hierarch's cooling corpse. By rights the challenger was entitled to take the throne, but Drazhar merely cleaned his blade and sketched a simple bow. Though he has never shown any inclination to take up the position of Hierarch or Klaivex, his merciless skill in the battle arts of the Incubi is unparalleled. So it is that Drazhar occupies the post of Executioner, the champion of his order, lethality personified. He has famously never spoken, nor once removed his helmet. Even the name Drazhar is ceremonial, meaning 'living sword'. The most that can be expected from Drazhar by way of conversation is an occasional slight nod or tilt of the head, yet in battle his flickering blades speak louder than words ever could.

**12. Artefacts of Cruelty:** Some entries have unique items of wargear, the description and rules for which will be listed here

**13. Unit Description:** This section provides a background description of the unit, detailing their particular strengths and weaknesses along with the tactics and methods they employ to wage war in the grim darkness of the 41st Millennium.



## FORMATIONS

Formation datasheets are identified by this symbol. The rules for Formations can be found in Warhammer 40,000: The Rules. A Formation datasheet will list the Army List Entries which make up the Formation, any restrictions upon what it may include, and any special rules the Formation's units gain.

# DARK ELDAR WARGEAR LIST



These lists detail the points values of various items of wargear available to units in your army. Many unit entries in the army list that follows may include wargear options from one or more of these lists – in each instance, the Army List Entry will tell you (in bold text) exactly which of these lists you may use.

## Melee Weapons

A model may replace its Melee weapon with one of the following:

Power sword... *15 pts*

Agoniser... *25 pts*

## Special Weapons

A model may replace its ranged weapon with one of the following:

Shredder... *5 pts*

Blaster... *15 pts*

## Heavy Weapons

A model may replace its ranged weapon with one of the following:

Haywire blaster <sup>1</sup>... *10 pts*

Heat lance <sup>1</sup>... *10 pts*

Splinter cannon... *15 pts*

Dark lance... *20 pts*

## Arcane Wargear

A model may take one of each of the following:

Haywire grenades... *5 pts*

Soul-trap... *10 pts*

Phantasm grenade launcher... *15 pts*

Clone field <sup>2</sup>... *20 pts*

Webway portal ... *35 pts*

Shadow field <sup>2</sup>... *40 pts*

## Weapons of Torture

A model may replace their close combat weapon with one of the following:

Mindphase gauntlet... *5 pts*

Flesh gauntlet... *10 pts*

Scissorhand... *10 pts*

Venom blade <sup>3</sup>... *10 pts*



Electrocorrosive whip <sup>3</sup>...20 pts

Agoniser...25 pts

## Tools of Torment

A model may replace their ranged and/or Melee weapon with one of the following:

Stinger pistol...5 pts

Hexrifle ...10 pts

Liquifier gun...15 pts

## Wych Cult Weapons

A model may replace their close combat weapon and splinter pistol with one of the following:

Two hydra gauntlets...5 pts

Two razorflails...5 pts

Shardnet & impaler...5 pts

## Dark Eldar Vehicle Equipment

A model may take one of each of the following:

Chain-snares...5 pts

Enhanced aethersails <sup>4</sup>...5 pts

Grisly trophies...10 pts

Shock prow <sup>4</sup>...10 pts

Night shields <sup>4</sup>...15 pts

Torment grenade launchers <sup>4</sup>...15 pts

Splinter racks <sup>4</sup>...15 pts

## Artefacts of Cruelty

Only one of each Artefact of Cruelty may be taken per army. A model may take one of the following:

The Parasite's Kiss <sup>5</sup>...5 pts

The Armour of Misery...15 pts

The Animus Vitae...20 pts

The Archangel of Pain...25 pts

The Helm of Spite...25 pts

The Djin Blade <sup>5</sup>...30 pts

<sup>1</sup> Scourges only.

<sup>2</sup> A model may not have both a clone field and a shadow field.

<sup>3</sup> Acothyst only.

<sup>4</sup> May not be taken by Venoms.

<sup>5</sup> Replaces a model's ranged or Melee weapon.



# ARCHON



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Archon	7	7	3	3	3	7	4	10	5+

**UNIT TYPE:**  
Infantry (Character)

**UNIT COMPOSITION:**  
1 Archon

- WARGEAR:**
- Kabalite armour
  - Splinter pistol

- Close combat weapon
- Plasma grenades

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Fleet
- Independent Character
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

## OPTIONS:

- May replace close combat weapon with a huskblade...25 pts
- May replace splinter pistol with one of the following:
  - Blast pistol... 15 pts
  - Blaster... 15 pts
- May take items from the **Melee Weapons**, **Arcane Wargear** and/or **Artefacts of Cruelty** lists.
- May take a Venom as a Dedicated Transport.



The Archons are the masters of the Dark Eldar Kabals. Regal and monstrous in equal measure, each wields the power to enslave worlds and destroy civilisations. Their might has not been easily won – to rise to the lofty pinnacles of power in Commorragh requires indisputable warrior skill, a lethal aptitude for politicking, and a will of unbreakable iron. The game of intrigue at the heart of the Dark City is sometimes known as the thyllian ai-kelethril, or ‘path of shards’. It is savage and unforgiving, and only those possessed of true genius survive it long enough to claw their way to the top. Those that do then have to defend their status – and their selves – forever after. Power in Commorragh is a prize to be torn free with bloody hands, not a birthright that can be casually claimed. After all, it is whispered that even the great Vect himself began his days as nought but a slave. Over their long



years of life, Archons have fed upon the pain of so many others that it takes a true atrocity to invigorate them. They must lead ever more raids against realspace, for only the bounty of horror and pain offered by all-out war is enough to slake their thirst. In battle they move like the wind, wreathed in the foul powers of dark science and armed with the Dark City's deadliest techno-arcana.



## COURT OF THE ARCHON



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Lhamaean	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	9	5+
Ur-Ghul	4	0	4	3	1	5	3	3	-
Medusae	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	9	5+
Sslyth	4	4	5	5	2	4	3	3	5+

### UNIT TYPE:

Infantry

### UNIT COMPOSITION:

See below.

### WARGEAR:

*Lhamaean*

- Kabalite armour
- Splinter pistol
- Shaimeshi blade

*Medusae*

- Kabalite armour
- Eyeburst

*Sslyth*

- Kabalite armour
- Shardcarbine
- Splinter pistol
- Close combat weapon

### SPECIAL RULES:

*Lhamaean*

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

*Medusae*

- Fleet
- Power from Pain

*Ur-Ghul*

- **Fear**
- **Feel No Pain**
- **Fleet**
- **Furious Charge**

*Sslyth*

- **Feel No Pain**
- **Fleet**

## **OPTIONS:**

- A Court of the Archon unit consists of between 1 to 12 of the following models, chosen in any combination:
  - Lhamaean... *10 pts/model*
  - Ur-Ghul... *15 pts/model*
  - Medusae... *25 pts/model*
  - Sslyth... *25 pts/model*
- May take a Raider or Venom as a Dedicated Transport.

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**Retainers:** For each Archon included in a Detachment, the Detachment can include a Court of the Archon that does not take up a slot on the Force Organisation chart.

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Kabalite lords surround themselves with coterie of favoured retainers, pets and bodyguards. From the looming, serpentine mercenaries known as Sslyth to packs of drooling, fang-mawed Ur-Ghuls from the haunted pyramids of Shaa-dom, such a retinue can be as varied as the tools in an overlord's torture chamber. Lhamaeans lurk in their master's shadow, unobtrusive until the moment they strike, their poisoned blades slicing armour, flesh and bone. Medusae shuffle forth at their master's behest, foul parasitic flesh-sacs bobbing in their wake as their visors spew nauseous anti-light that hurls foes into contraempathic comas. Though each member of an Archon's Court is deadly in its own right, it is when these fiends are combined that they become a truly deadly instrument of their master's will.



## SUCCUBUS



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Succubus	8	6	3	3	3	8	4	9	6+

### UNIT TYPE:

Infantry (Character)



## UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Succubus

## WARGEAR:

- Wychsuit
- Splinter pistol
- Close combat weapon
- Plasma grenades

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Combat Drugs
- Independent Character
- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

**Dodge:** A model with this special rule has a 4+ invulnerable save against all Wounds inflicted in the Fight sub-phase.

## OPTIONS:

- May replace close combat weapon with an archite glaive...*20 pts*
- May replace splinter pistol with a blast pistol...*15 pts*
- May take haywire grenades...*5 pts*
- May take a webway portal...*35 pts*
- May take items from the **Melee Weapons**, **Wych Cult Weapons** and/or **Artefacts of Cruelty** lists.



The Succubi are the ruling elite of the Wych Cults. They are impossibly lithe, famously beautiful, and utterly deadly. Collectively known as the ynnitach or ‘brides of death’, a council of three such queens of murder traditionally rules over each Cult. Competition between these hellcats is fierce, as they strive to outdo one another with spectacles of violent excess. Unlike the immortal games of the Archons, the queens of the Wych Cults are far more likely to resolve their feuds with a perfectly-executed decapitation than with a twist of the political knife. Succubi are ravishing in their beauty, their supple alabaster flesh clasped within bladed corsets and high-necked skinsuits of liquid silk, and their sinuous, serpentine grace is almost hypnotic. The arena’s crowd demands not only a bloody spectacle but also one that is pleasing to the most jaded eye. Thus a Succubus will do almost anything to preserve her appearance, including putting dozens of lesser warriors to death and feeding on their last gasps of anguish to maintain a youthful sheen. No Succubus is secure in her position without constant proof of her skill. They regularly take the lead in realspace raids, not only for the feast of pain but also to hunt the champions of lesser races and defeat them in showy displays of their sheer skill.



# LELITH HESPERAX

## QUEEN OF KNIVES

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Lelith Hesperax	9	9	3	3	3	9	5	9	6+

## UNIT TYPE:

Infantry (Character)

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Unique

## WARGEAR:

- Wychsuit
- Two close combat weapons
- Plasma grenades

## WARLORD TRAIT:

- Blood Dancer

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Fleet
- Independent Character
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Rampage

**A League Apart:** Lelith Hesperax re-rolls all failed To Hit and To Wound rolls whilst fighting a challenge.

**The Penetrating Blade:** Armour saves cannot be taken against Wounds inflicted by Lelith Hesperax's Melee weapons.

**Quicksilver Dodge:** Lelith Hesperax has a 4+ invulnerable save. This is increased to a 3+ invulnerable save against all Wounds inflicted in the Fight sub-phase.

## OPTIONS:

- May replace one close combat weapon with an impaler... *15 pts*





Lelith is the undisputed champion of the gladiatorial arenas, the personal favourite – and some say occasional courtesan – of Overlord Asdrubael Vect himself. Most deadly of all her kind, Lelith’s skill in the art of combat bears all the hallmarks of a true genius. She is grace embodied, her movements hypnotic, sensual and spellbinding – watching Lelith Hesperax go about her blood-soaked business is a privilege that only the wealthiest Dark Eldar can afford. To see such a supremely talented Succubus perform first-hand is a dream come true for most Kabalites, for it energises and reinvigorates even the eldest of their kind. Lelith blesses raiding Kabals with her presence only in order to search out unusual prey – she loves to match her abilities against the most formidable champions in the galaxy. She has yet to return from a raid without blood upon her blades and a new clutch of grisly trophies for her private museums. In battle, Lelith uses her body as a weapon as well as her blades. Her lustrous mane of hair is sewn through with barbs and hooks, her legs and feet are edged with bladed spurs, and her fingernails have been honed to scalpel sharpness. Lelith can kill a dozen lesser warriors in the space of a few seconds before finishing with flourish and poise.



# HAEMONCULUS



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Haemonculus	5	5	3	4	3	5	3	9	6+

## UNIT TYPE:

Infantry (Character)

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Haemonculus

## WARGEAR:

- Gnarlskin
- Splinter pistol
- Two close combat weapons

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Feel No Pain
- Independent Character
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

**Master of Pain:** The model and his unit treat the current turn as being one higher than it actually is when determining what special rules they benefit from as the result of the Power from Pain special rule. This is cumulative with the Agonising and/or Architect of Agony special rules.

## OPTIONS:

- May take items from the **Weapons of Torture**, **Tools of Torment** and/or lists.
- May take any of the following:
  - Crucible of malediction...*20 pts*
  - Webway portal...*35 pts*



*Ancient and horrific, the Haemonculi are deranged flesh-sculptors that dwell in the dark bowels of Commoragh. They are master torturers and expert poisoners, dark alchemists who revel in every nuance of the suffering they inflict upon others. To while away the centuries the Haemonculi craft long symphonies of agony from those unfortunates held captive in their oubliettes. So horrific are their practices that they are feared by all denizens of the Dark City, even the most powerful Archons and Succubi. Over the millennia, each Haemonculus' tastes have become increasingly twisted and incredibly specific. Having transcended common notions of wealth, they prize unusual ingredients for their alchemical elixirs – the distilled heart of an Arbites judge may yield a striking flavour of pure resolve, whereas the essence of a once-proud Planetary Governor gives a tang of vainglory that thrills on their black tongues. In battle, the Haemonculi orchestrate the carnage around them with the passion of an artist. They use extreme and terrible wargear, able to cause uncontrollable growth with a single touch or turn their foes to glass in an instant. A Haemonculus drifts across the field of battle with a macabre elegance, gifting those too slow to escape with an unimaginably painful death.*



## URIEN RAKARTH SCULPTOR OF TORMENTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Urien Rakarth	5	5	3	5	3	5	3	9	6+



## UNIT TYPE:

Infantry (Character)

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Unique

## WARGEAR:

- Gnarlskin
- Close combat weapon
- Ichor injector
- Clone field

## WARLORD TRAIT:

- Ancient Evil

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Feel No Pain (4+)
- Independent Character
- It Will Not Die
- Night Vision
- Master of Pain
- Power from Pain

**Father of Pain:** Urien Rakarth's Master of Pain special rule affects all friendly units within 12" of him, not just his own unit.



### ARTEFACTS OF CRUELTY

*Casket of Flensing: When this puzzle-box is opened, a swarm of evil spirits is released that sets upon the head of Urien's chosen victim with needled fangs. The prey's skull will be stripped to the bone, torn free from the spine, and borne back to the ancient Haemonculus whilst the brain inside writhes in abject horror.*

Range	S	AP	Type
12"	3	3	Assault 2D6, One Use Only



*Twisted beyond measure, the being known as Urien Rakarth has almost total mastery over life and death. A depraved genius in the fields of bodily manipulation and anatomical sculpture, Rakarth's skill as a fleshcrafter is legendary. Though he once enjoyed a senior position in the intrigues that bind Commorragh, he has transcended squabbles over power and prestige entirely. Now Rakarth exists only to revel in depravity. Ancient beyond the recollection of even the eldest Archon of the Dark City, Rakarth has been reborn from death so many times that even he can no longer keep count. So profoundly have these constant regenerations affected Urien's metabolism that his artificially toughened flesh is able to reknit and heal at an incredible rate – Rakarth welcomes all forms of injury, especially upon the battlefield, for they force him to improvise. He carries a variety of strange weapons to war, including a horrific tool with which he can inject his own foul ichor into his unfortunate victims, bestowing upon them a hideous and agonising death. Nonetheless, this demented fiend is most rightly feared for the repugnant creations that shamle from his flesh-pens. His menagerie of horrors strains the sanity of all who behold it, and is made available by Rakarth to the highest Commorrite bidder.*



# DRAZHAR

## MASTER OF BLADES

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Drazhar	7	7	4	4	3	7	4	10	2+

### UNIT TYPE:

Infantry (Character)

### UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Unique

### WARGEAR:

- Demiklaives

### SPECIAL RULES:

- Eternal Warrior
- Fearless
- Fleet
- Independent Character
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Rampage

**Master of Blades:** Drazhar can only join friendly units of Incubi. Whilst Drazhar is part of an Incubi unit, all Incubus and Klaivex models in the unit add 1 to their Weapon Skill.

**Murderous Assault:** Drazhar gains a bonus Attack, made at the same Initiative step, each time he rolls a 6 To Wound in close combat. These bonus Attacks do not themselves generate any further bonus Attacks.

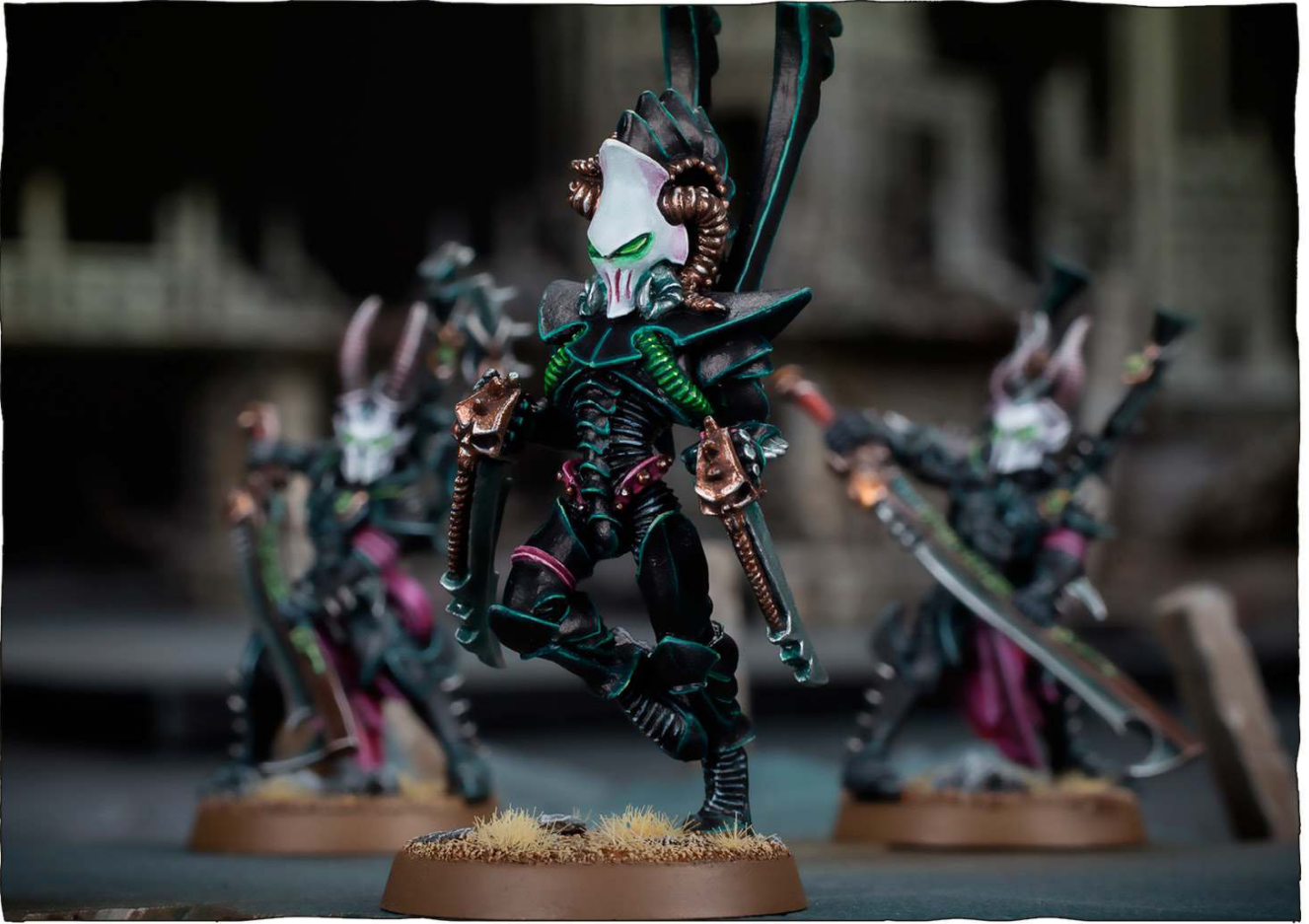


### ARTEFACTS OF CRUELTY

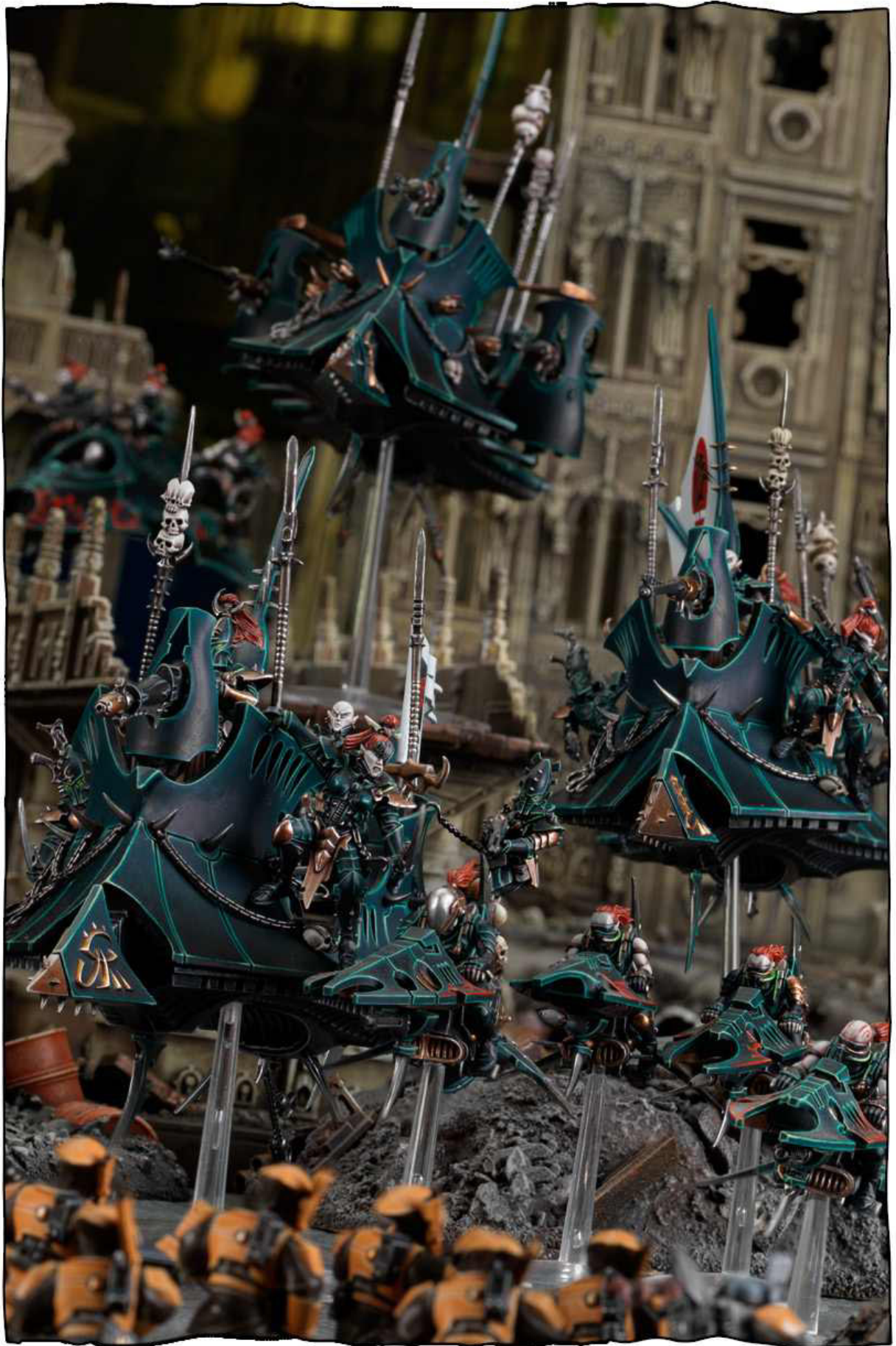
**The Executioner's Armour:** *This ceremonial suit of armour is a masterwork of Eldar craftsmanship thought to have been made in an age before the Fall.*

The Executioner's Armour confers a 2+ Armour Save.





*Even amongst the insular ranks of the Incubi, Drazhar remains an enigma. He entered the Great Shrine of the Incubi unannounced and unbidden, clad in the segmented armour of a senior member of the Incubus creed. Drazhar cut his way to the inner sanctum and saluted the shrine's enthroned Hierarch in challenge. The Hierarch's self-assured superiority soon evaporated when his challenger blurred into action, moving so quickly that it was hard to follow him in the flickering tallow-light. The duel was over within minutes, and the newcomer stepped over the Hierarch's cooling corpse. By rights the challenger was entitled to take the throne, but Drazhar merely cleaned his blade and sketched a simple bow. Though he has never shown any inclination to take up the position of Hierarch or Klaivex, his merciless skill in the battle arts of the Incubi is unparalleled. So it is that Drazhar occupies the post of Executioner, the champion of his order, lethality personified. He has famously never spoken, nor once removed his helmet. Even the name Drazhar is ceremonial, meaning 'living sword'. The most that can be expected from Drazhar by way of conversation is an occasional slight nod or tilt of the head, yet in battle his flickering blades speak louder than words ever could.*





# KABALITE WARRIORS



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Kabalite Warrior	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	5+
Sybarite	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	9	5+
Kabalite Trueborn	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	9	5+
Dracon	4	4	3	3	1	5	3	9	5+

## UNIT TYPE:

Kabalite Warrior and Kabalite Trueborn are **Infantry**. Sybarite and Dracon are **Infantry (Character)**.

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

5 Kabalite Warriors

## WARGEAR:

- Kabalite armour
- Splinter rifle
- Close combat weapon

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

## OPTIONS:

- May include up to fifteen additional Kabalite Warriors... *8 pts/model*
- May upgrade all Kabalite Warriors to Kabalite Trueborn, changing the unit's Battlefield Role to Elites... *3 pts/model*
- One Kabalite Warrior may be upgraded to a Sybarite... *10 pts*
- One Kabalite Trueborn may be upgraded to a Dracon... *10 pts*
- The Sybarite or Dracon may take items from the **Melee Weapons** list.
- The Sybarite or Dracon may take any of the following:
  - Haywire grenades... *5 pts*
  - Phantasm grenade launcher... *10 pts*
- The Sybarite or Dracon may replace their splinter rifle with one of the following:
  - Splinter pistol... *free*
  - Blast pistol... *15 pts*
- One Kabalite Warrior may take an item from the **Special Weapons** list. If the unit numbers twenty models, then up to two may do so.
- For every ten models in the unit, one Kabalite Warrior may take an item from the **Heavy Weapons** list.



- Up to four Kabalite Trueborn may take items from the **Special Weapons** list.
- Up to two Kabalite Trueborn may take items from the **Heavy Weapons** list.
- The unit may select a Raider or Venom as a Dedicated Transport.



*Kabalite Warriors are the poison lifeblood of their Kabal. Each warrior must carve out a fearful reputation in the war-torn halls of High Commoragh, proving himself time and time again. Even then, only a chosen few enjoy the prestige of raiding the worlds of realspace. Be they male or female, Kabalite Warriors are tall and athletically built, powerful in stature and violent in temperament. When going to war, each Warrior dons a sophisticated bodysuit of segmented armour. This is held in place with long metal barbs and hooks that penetrate the wearer's nerve bundles, sharpening his senses with the constant sting of pain. Kabalite Warriors carry a wide array of fiendish weapons, predominately long-ranged in nature, for few have the influence to ensure regeneration in the lairs of the Haemonculi, and so they prefer to kill from afar.*



## WYCHES



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Wych	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	8	6+
Hekatrix	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	6+
Bloodbride	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	6+
Syren	4	4	3	3	1	6	3	9	6+

## UNIT TYPE:

Wych and Bloodbride are **Infantry**. Hekatrix and Syren are **Infantry (Character)**.

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

5 Wyches

## WARGEAR:

- Wychsuit
- Splinter pistol
- Close combat weapon
- Plasma grenades

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Combat Drugs
- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

**Dodge:** A model with this special rule has a 4+ invulnerable save against all Wounds inflicted in the Fight sub-phase.

## OPTIONS:

- May include up to ten additional Wyches... *10 pts/model*
- May upgrade all Wyches to Bloodbrides, changing the unit's Battlefield Role to Elites... *3 pts/model*
- One Wych may be upgraded to a Hekatrix... *10 pts*
- One Bloodbride may be upgraded to a Syren... *10 pts*
- The Hekatrix or Syren may take items from the **Melee Weapons** list.
- The Hekatrix or Syren may replace their splinter pistol with a blast pistol... *15 pts*
- The Hekatrix or Syren may take any of the following:
  - Haywire grenades... *5 pts*
  - Phantasm grenade launcher... *10 pts*
- One Wych or Bloodbride may take an item from the **Wych Cult Weapons** list, unless the unit numbers ten or more models, in which case up to three Wyches or Bloodbrides may do so.
- The unit may select a Raider or Venom as a Dedicated Transport.





The nightly battles between the gladiatrixes of the Wych Cults draw baying crowds to every Commorrite arena. Wyches – or ‘Hekatarii’ – wield a variety of outlandish weapons that can whip out, extend, enmesh, retract, split in two, or snap an opponent’s blade with the twist of a supple wrist. Some Wyches – such as the Lacerai, Hydrae, and Yraqnae – specialise in such deadly esoterica. Furthermore, all Wyches are skilled knife-fighters who can kill a foe many times their size with the smallest of blades. The Wyches use a variety of combat drugs, galvanising them to ever-greater heights of balletic dexterity. They flip and pirouette around their enemies, slicing open a throat here and piercing a heart there. The Wyches flow through the elegant steps of battle, expressions of disdain twisting into savage smiles as they feed upon each fresh scream of pain.



## INCUBI



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Incubus	5	4	3	3	1	5	2	9	3+
Klaivex	6	5	3	3	1	6	3	9	3+

### UNIT TYPE:

Infantry. Klaivex is Infantry (Character).



## UNIT COMPOSITION:

3 Incubi

## WARGEAR:

- Incubus warsuit
- Klaive

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Rampage (Klaivex only)

## OPTIONS:

- May include up to seven additional Incubi...*20 pts/model*
- One model may be upgraded to a Klaivex...*10 pts*
- The Klaivex may replace his klaive with demiklaives... *15 pts*
- The unit may select a Raider or Venom as a Dedicated Transport.



*The Incubi are a mercenary order of Dark Eldar who dedicate themselves to the perfection of the killing strike. Their services are in great demand, whether as bodyguards or shock troops, and the Incubi will fight for any who can afford to purchase their loyalty. Their obsession is the mastery of the klaive, a bladed weapon that becomes as much a part of an Incubus as his own murderous heart. In battle the Incubi wield these weapons with lethal precision, their every swing severing limbs and shattering blades with contemptuous ease. The act of becoming an Incubus is dangerous in the*

*extreme; through long and gruelling practice, the strong prosper, while the weak are cut down and their bodies burnt as an offering to the statue of Khaine at the heart of each Incubus shrine.*



# MANDRAKES



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Mandrake	4	4	4	3	1	5	2	8	-
Nightfiend	4	4	4	3	1	5	3	9	-

## UNIT TYPE:

**Infantry.** Nightfiend is **Infantry (Character)**.

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

**3 Mandrakes**

## WARGEAR:

- Baleblast
- Close combat weapon

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Fear
- Fleet
- Infiltrate
- Move Through Cover
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Shrouded
- Stealth

## OPTIONS:

- May include up to seven additional Mandrakes... *12 pts/model*
- One model may be upgraded to a Nightfiend... *10 pts*



## KHERADRUAKH, THE DECAPITATOR

*A four-armed, hollow-eyed haunter of Commorragh's depths, the Mandrake known as the Decapitator is a figure of stark terror to all. The walls of his lair are lined with hundreds if not thousands of skulls, claimed from victims on battlefields all across the galaxy. What Kheradruakh wants with this collection of macabre trophies is anyone's guess. Yet all are fastidiously arranged, staring with non-existent eyes at a single point in space directly above the Decapitator's dais, and the air almost hums with a building sense of forbidden power about to break through the veil.*

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*Within the realm of Aelindrach lurk the Mandrakes, vile terrors that can pull themselves into reality through another being's shadow. Their inky skin writhes with forbidden runes, and their faces shift and flow; one moment sealing over in an expressionless mask, the next parting like a wound filled with needle teeth. It is said that once a Mandrake has chosen its prey, nothing stays its inexorable pursuit, and no barrier will hold it back. Mandrakes on the hunt are silent but for the occasional ragged gasp or hiss. Their violent onset is heralded by a thin rime of creeping ice and a susurrus of half-heard whispers. When Mandrakes fall upon their victims they do so in a sudden explosion of ferocity, sinuous stealth cast aside in favour of piercing screams and the maddened hacking of flesh with grossly out-sized surgical blades.*





# WRACKS



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Wrack	4	4	3	4	1	4	1	8	6+
Acothyst	4	4	3	4	1	4	2	9	6+

## UNIT TYPE:

Infantry. Acothyst is Infantry (Character).

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

5 Wracks

## WARGEAR:

- Gnarlskin
- Two Wrack tools

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Feel No Pain
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

## OPTIONS:

- May include up to five additional Wracks... *10 pts/model*
- For every five models in the unit, one Wrack can replace a Wrack tool with one of the following:
  - Liquifier gun... *15 pts/model*
  - Ossefactor... *15 pts/model*
- One model may be upgraded to a Acothyst... *10 pts*
- The Acothyst may take items from the **Weapons of Torture** and/or **Tools of Torment** lists.
- The unit may select a Raider or Venom as a Dedicated Transport.



*'Forgive you? My dear, what is there to forgive when you will be my greatest masterpiece to date?'*

- Krallyx, Haemonculus of the Altered



*Wracks are abhorrent examples of their master's surgical craftsmanship, cut apart and refashioned into walking instruments of torture. Each Wrack's sole duty is to serve his master, whether at the mortuary slab or upon the battlefield. In the Wrack's surgically enhanced frame lies a surprising strength, and even terrible wounds are but an inconvenience to these freakish acolytes. In battle they lay about themselves with sickled blades, needled claws and silvered hooks, seeking to inflict the greatest amount of suffering upon their hapless foes in as short a time as possible. Perhaps the most sickening aspect of the Wrack's strange plight is that they choose this terrible fate for themselves. Most hope to transcend their previous lives entirely – a Wrack will endure almost any degradation in the hope that one day he may become a Coven lord in his own right.*



## GROTESQUES



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Grotesque	4	1	5	5	3	4	3	3	6+
Aberration	4	1	5	5	3	4	4	4	6+

## UNIT TYPE:

Infantry. Aberration is **Infantry (Character)**.

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

3 Grotesques

## WARGEAR:

- Gnarlskin
- Close combat weapon
- Flesh gauntlet

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Bulky
- Feel No Pain
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Rampage

## OPTIONS:

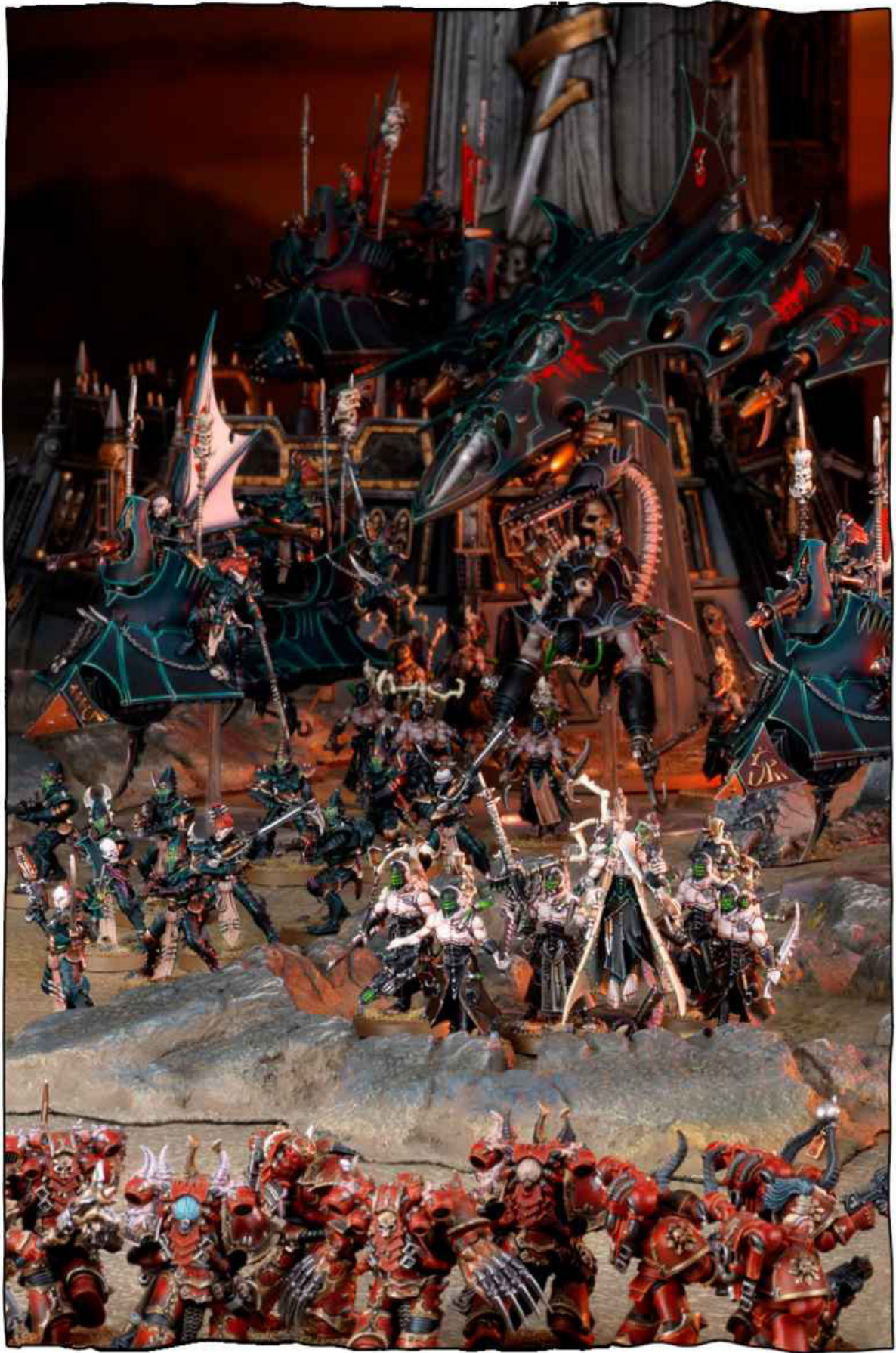
- May include up to seven additional Grotesques... *35 pts/model*
- Any model may replace their close combat weapon with a liquifier gun... *15 pts*
- One model may be upgraded to an Aberration... *10 pts*
- The Aberration may take items from the **Weapons of Torture** list.
- The unit may select a Raider as a Dedicated Transport.





*Though they begin existence as Dark Eldar, Grotesques undergo a hideous rebirth as punishment for some real or perceived slight to the Haemonculi. Over the course of months or even years the hapless victim's body is pumped full of growth elixirs and subjected to torturous surgical enhancement until they become a subservient, weaponised horror whose only desire is to serve its dark masters. When given the command to kill, these meat-hulks transform into engines of destruction. Racks of syringes dump potent stimulants into their ichor-stream and veins throb near to bursting as tube-punctured hearts are forced into overdrive. With a great, muffled roar the Grotesques thunder into battle, butchering all within reach with greathook, claw and cleaver until commanded to cease or hacked bodily into many pieces.*





# BEASTMASTERS



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Beastmaster	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	8	5+
Khymera	4	0	4	4	1	6	3	5	6+
Razorwing Flock	2	0	3	3	3	5	4	5	6+
Clawed Fiend	3	0	5	5	3	5	4	5	6+

## UNIT TYPE:

Beast

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

See below

## WARGEAR:

*Beastmaster*

- **Wychsuit**
- **Close combat weapon**
- **Beastmaster skyboard**

## SPECIAL RULES:

*Beastmaster*

- **Night Vision**
- **Power from Pain**

*Clawed Fiend*

- **Night Vision**
- **Rage**

*Khymera*

- **Daemon**
- **Night Vision**

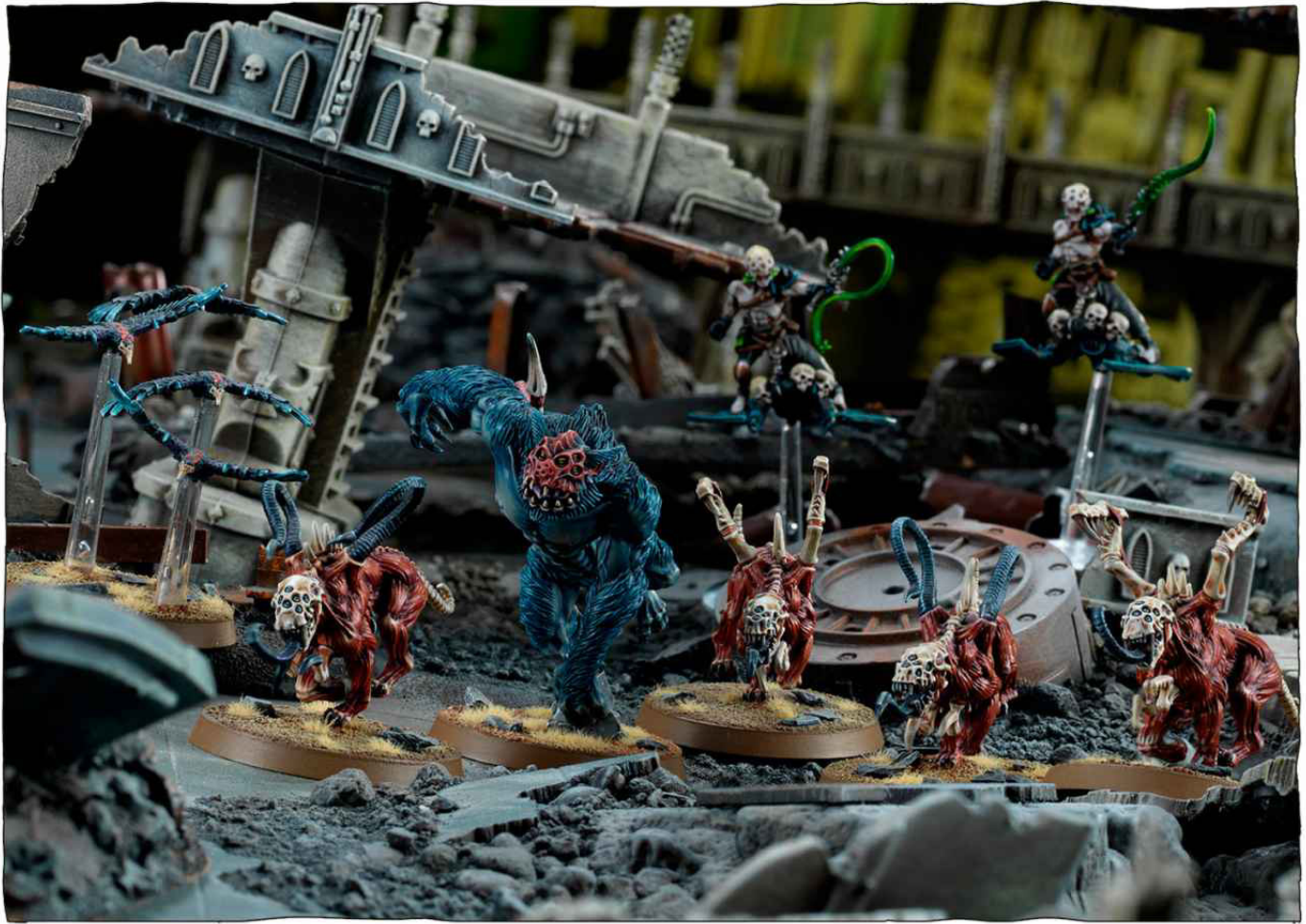
*Razorwing Flock*

- **Night Vision**
- **Rending**
- **Swarms**

## OPTIONS:

- A Beastmasters unit consists of between 1 to 12 of the following models, chosen in any combination:
  - Beastmaster... *10 pts/model*
  - Khymera... *10 pts/model*
  - Razorwing Flock... *20 pts/model*
  - Clawed Fiend... *30 pts/model*
- Any Beastmaster may take items from the **Melee Weapons** list.





In the arenas of Commorragh, the wild hunts of the Beastmasters are always popular. Packs of beasts stalk their prey amid the screams of the crowd, bound to the commands of the figures that drift above them. Some believe that Beastmasters are part of a secretive shamanic tradition, for when they go to battle, they wear masks that echo the nature of the alien predators under their control. These potent artefacts harbour sonic emitters and pheromone traps, magnifying the Beastmasters' dominance over their packs. When accompanying a realspace raid, Beastmasters hover upon modified skyboards, goading their charges into the fray. From the otherworldly Khymerae and swirling, bone-hungry Razorwing Flocks to the berserk rage of the towering Donorian Clawed Fiend, the Beastmasters' monstrous pets are deadly indeed.



## RAIDER



	[Armour]				
	BS	F	S	R	HP
Raider	4	10	10	10	3

### UNIT TYPE:

Vehicle (Skimmer, Fast, Open-topped, Transport)

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Raider

## WARGEAR:

- Disintegrator cannon

## SPECIAL RULES:

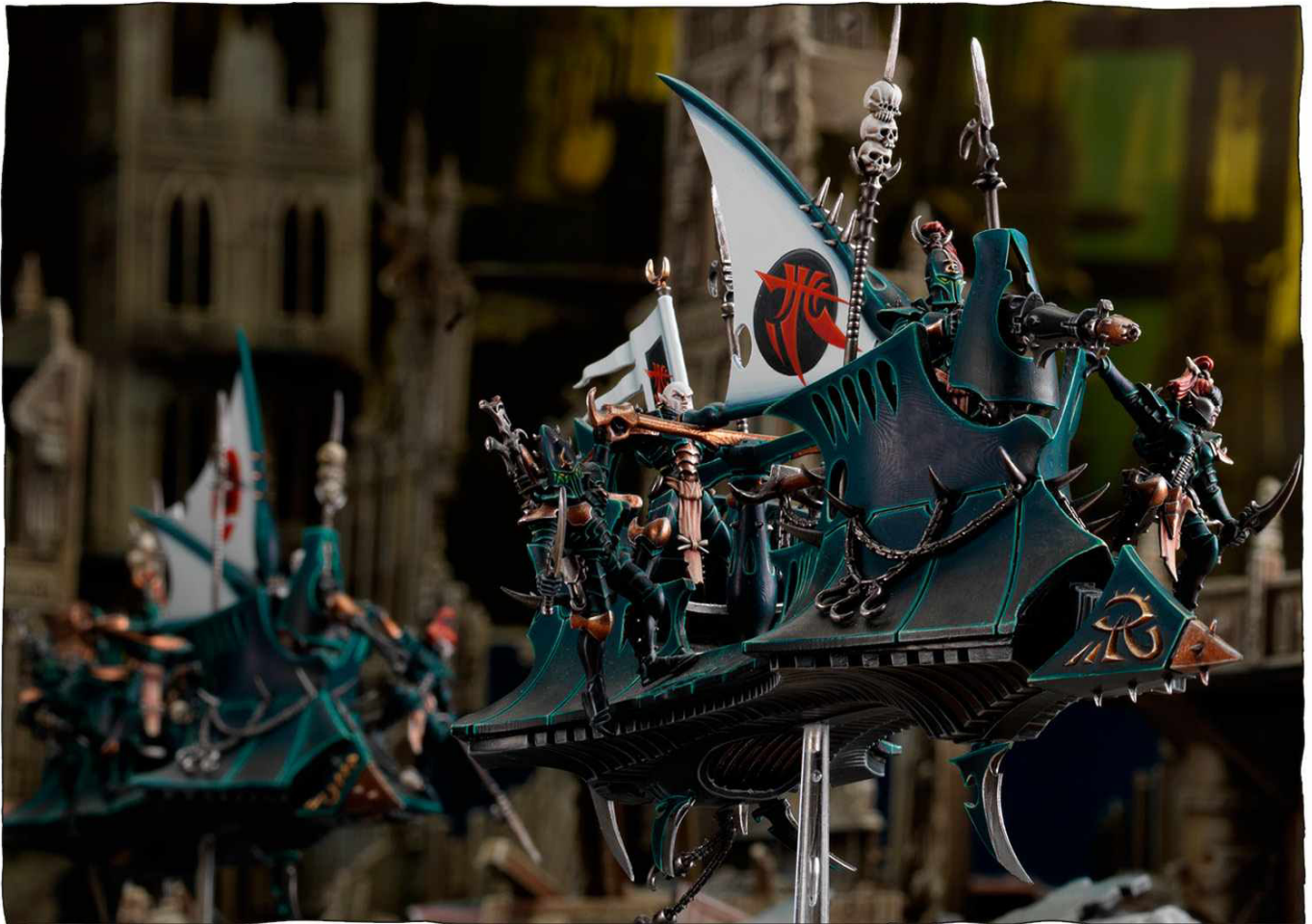
- Deep Strike
- Night Vision

## TRANSPORT:

- 10 models.

## OPTIONS:

- May replace disintegrator cannon with dark lance...5 pts
- May take items from the **Dark Eldar Vehicle Equipment** list



*Lightweight and manoeuvrable, Raiders are open-decked piratical skiffs whose hulls are fitted with sword-sharp fins and jagged keels with which to cut apart the foe. Though each of these craft is customised by its owning Kabal, all have certain key features in common – a repulsor keelblade manned by a talented steersman, aethersails to harness the energies flowing from the webway portal from which they descend, and a prow-mounted heavy weapon to sow terror amongst the enemy. Raiders are ideally suited for the fast-paced running battles of a Dark Eldar raid, swarming around and above the enemy like sharks scenting blood. After a successful attack, enemy survivors will be lashed or chained to the Raiders, or simply impaled upon their trophy hooks like blood-soaked dolls.*





# VENOM



⌈Armour⌋					
	BS	F	S	R	HP
Venom	4	10	10	10	2

## UNIT TYPE:

Vehicle (Skimmer, Fast, Open-topped, Transport)

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Venom

## WARGEAR:

- Twin-linked splinter rifle
- Splinter cannon
- Flickerfield

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Deep Strike
- Night Vision

## TRANSPORT:

- 5 models.

## OPTIONS:

- May replace twin-linked splinter rifle with splinter cannon... *10 pts*
- May take items from the **Dark Eldar Vehicle Equipment** list.



*'We are swift, and we are lethal. We are a poisoned dagger thrust into the heart of the foe. We are the hidden blade, the strike so sudden that the enemy falls before they ever know they are under attack.'*

- Ybdriss Khaal, Venom Steersman, Kabal of the Flayed Skull





Dark Eldar raids rely heavily on surprise and raw speed – qualities that are embodied by the Venom. Rather than present a single obvious target, a Dark Eldar raid attacks in a malignant swarm in order to confound the guns of the foe. During such attacks, it is the largest craft that bear the brunt of enemy fire. The most devious Dark Eldar therefore ride to war mounted upon Venoms. Should even a single such craft penetrate the enemy defences it can be enough to sow the seeds of destruction, laying down supporting fire as its lethal cargo goes to work. The best Venom pilots use the Raiders of their erstwhile comrades for cover, darting between them at breakneck speeds as they close on the foe. This makes Venoms especially popular with the aristocratic Trueborn, who think nothing of allowing their half-breed kin to soak up enemy fire intended for them.



# REAVERS



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Reaver	4	4	3	4	1	6	1	8	5+
Arena Champion	4	4	3	4	1	6	2	9	5+

## UNIT TYPE:

Eldar Jetbike. Arena Champion is Eldar Jetbike (Character).

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

3 Reavers

## WARGEAR:

- Wychsuit
- Splinter pistol
- Close combat weapon
- Reaver jetbike
- Bladevanes

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Combat drugs
- Hit & Run
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Skilled Rider

## OPTIONS:

- May include up to nine additional Reavers... *16 pts/model*
- One Reaver may be upgraded to a Arena Champion... *10 pts*
- The Arena Champion may take items from the **Melee Weapons** list.
- For every three models in the unit, one Reaver may replace their reaver jetbike's splinter rifle with one of the following:
  - Heat lance... *10 pts/model*
  - Blaster... *10 pts/model*
- For every three models in the unit, one model may take one of the following:
  - Grav-talon... *5 pts/model*
  - Cluster caltrops... *15 pts/model*



The Eldar experience sensations to a greater degree than any other race, and their psyches are easily given to obsession. Reavers, having cultivated a taste for high-speed violence, are consumed with the act of the maximum-impact kill. They scream into battle astride Reaver jetbikes that move faster than the eye can see, their aerobatic skill matched only by their desire for murder. Reavers fly with such uncanny precision that they can take off a head or slash open a throat with a single pass of their jetbike's keel blade. A fatal blow delivered at speed provides a murderous joy that Reavers consider the ultimate thrill. In the toroid arenas that girdle the highest spires, these vain and competitive riders engage in nightly death races, screaming round each arena in running battles for the entertainment of the bloodthirsty crowd.



# HELLIONS



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Hellion	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	8	5+
Helliarch	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	5+

## UNIT TYPE:

Jump Infantry. Helliarch is **Jump Infantry (Character)**.



## UNIT COMPOSITION:

5 Hellions

## WARGEAR:

- Close combat weapon
- Hellglaive
- Hellion skyboard

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Combat Drugs
- Fleet
- Hit & Run
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

## OPTIONS:

- May include up to fifteen additional Hellions... *13 pts/model*
- One model may be upgraded to a Helliarch... *10 pts*
- The Helliarch may take a phantasm grenade launcher... *15 pts*
- The Helliarch may replace their hellglaive with one of the following:
  - Splinter pistol and stunclaw... *10 pts*
  - Splinter pistol and power sword... *15 pts*
  - Splinter pistol and agoniser... *20 pts*



*Hellions are feral warriors who ride bladed anti-grav skyboards, and gather into great swarming*

gangs to join realspace raids en masse. They are outcasts all, whether juveniles who have not yet proven themselves worthy of membership within a Kabal, or those exiles who were already Kabalites but deserted or were driven out. Territorial, disdainful, and indiscriminately violent, Hellions resent all those who flaunt privilege and status. For the sheer thrill of it, they take combat drugs that enhance their reactions until their reflexes are as sharp as their artfully filed teeth. In battle they wield their hellglaives with such skill that they can hook them around almost any obstruction to perform suicidally sharp turns, or 'call' specific body parts to lop off before hurtling through the enemy ranks and claiming their gory trophies.



## RAZORWING JETFIGHTER



	[Armour]				
	BS	F	S	R	HP
Razorwing Jetfighter	4	10	10	10	3

### UNIT TYPE:

Vehicle (Flyer)

### UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Razorwing Jetfighter

### WARGEAR:

- Two disintegrator cannons
- Four monoscythe missiles
- Twin-linked splinter rifle

### SPECIAL RULES:

- Night Vision
- Supersonic

### OPTIONS:

- May replace both disintegrator cannons with two dark lances... 10 pts
- May replace twin-linked splinter rifle with a splinter cannon... 10 pts
- May replace any monoscythe missile with one of the following:  
Necrotoxin missile... free  
Shatterfield missile... 5 pts each
- May take night shields... 15 pts



Razorwing Jetfighters are so fast that their attack runs seem little more than a hallucinatory blur of streaking shadow. Yet the carnage they leave in their wake is breathtakingly real. While Razorwings are well equipped for dogfights, their pilots prefer to rain death on helpless ground targets. Razorwings are brazen craft specifically designed to terrify the foe with their screaming approach. Their pilots delight in executing murderous strafing runs and watching the panicked survivors scatter for cover. Indeed, more than once, their punishing attack runs have prevented realspace raids from being overwhelmed by the massed infantry of their foes, swathes of proud warriors reduced to mangled meat with each bombardment of terrifying monoscythe missiles.



# SCOURGES



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Scourge	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	4+
Solarite	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	9	4+

**UNIT TYPE:**  
**Jump Infantry.** Solarite is **Jump Infantry (Character).**



# UNIT COMPOSITION:

5 Scourges

## WARGEAR:

- Ghostplate armour
- Shardcarbine
- Close combat weapon
- Plasma grenades

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

## OPTIONS:

- May include up to five additional Scourges... *16 pts/model*
- Up to four Scourges may take items from the **Special Weapons** and/or **Heavy Weapons** lists.
- One model may be upgraded to a Solarite... *10 pts*
- The Solarite may replace their shardcarbine with one of the following:
  - Splinter pistol... *free*
  - Splinter pistol and venom blade... *5 pts*
  - Splinter pistol and power lance... *10 pts*
  - Splinter pistol and agoniser... *15 pts*
- The Solarite may replace their splinter pistol with a blast pistol... *15 pts*



The winged mercenaries known as Scourges are masters of the Dark City's skies. Their deadly flocks soar silently between the jagged minarets and towering pinnacles of their domain, flame-wracked clouds swirling in their wake. Hopelessly enamoured of their own avian lethality, the Scourges relish the gory feasts of full-scale war. Yet they prefer to engage the foe at range, for they are vain and protective of their expensively altered bodies. Scourges therefore arm themselves with the finest in lightweight but powerful weaponry that the workshops of the Undercore can provide. These they use to lay down punishing salvos of firepower, drinking in the screams of their enemies with sharpened senses before redeploying and striking again.



## TALOS



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Talos	5	3	7	7	3	4	3	10	3+

**UNIT TYPE:**  
Monstrous Creature

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Talos

## WARGEAR:

- Armoured carapace
- Two close combat weapons
- Twin-linked splinter cannon

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Fearless
- Feel No Pain
- Night Vision

## OPTIONS:

- May include up to two additional Talos... *120 pts/model*
- Any model may replace one of its close combat weapons with one of the following:
  - Chain-flails... *5 pts/model*
  - Ichor injector... *10 pts/model*
  - Twin-linked liquifier gun... *15 pts/model*
- Any model may replace its twin-linked splinter cannon with one of the following:
  - Stinger pod... *5 pts/model*
  - Twin-linked heat lance... *5 pts/model*
  - Twin-linked haywire blaster... *10 pts/model*



*The Engines of Pain, of which the Talos is the most widespread, are seen as the pinnacle of the Haemonculi's art. Creations of mad genius, each is a twisted fusion of the organic and the*



*mechanical, festooned with surgical apparatus and weapons of war. From the clanking Chainghoul favoured by the Prophets of Flesh to the drill-legged Shriveners that guard the Everspiral, each is an unholy terror. These semi-sentient constructs exude unhurried menace, the drone of their anti-gravitic motors a counterpoint to the flicker-clack of silvered blades as they close with their prey. When a Talos catches an enemy warrior, it begins a rapid and efficient disassembly of its victim, drawing each constituent part into itself to create noxious potions and elixirs.*



## CRONOS



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Cronos	3	3	5	7	3	4	3	10	3+

### UNIT TYPE:

Monstrous Creature

### UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Cronos

### WARGEAR:

- Armoured carapace
- Spirit syphon

### SPECIAL RULES:

- Fearless
- Feel No Pain
- Night Vision

### OPTIONS:

- May include up to two additional Cronos...100 pts/model
- Any model may take one of the following:
  - Spirit probe...25 pts/model
  - Spirit vortex...25 pts/model



*'Down from the skies it came, buzzing and clicking, a bristling profusion of antennae and a glinting carapace the colour of dried blood. We thought we had*

*more pressing concerns, for to repel a Commorrite invasion is to fight against a hurricane of blades. Bolters spat fury. Then my brothers began to fall, soundlessly, to the ground. Brother-Captain Alkon was unresponsive. I wrenched off his helmet to find a wizened skull leering back. It was then the xenos attack doubled in its force...'*

- Epistolary Thule of the Silver Skulls



*Through a blend of alchemy and science, the Cronos drains away not the vital fluids of its victims but their life essence. What remains of its prey when the engine has drunk its fill is a testament to the diabolical skill of its creators – to the onlooker, the Cronos' victims seem to age at an incredible rate, wrinkling and rotting until nothing is left but ancient-looking cadavers. Once the Cronos has fed on its prey, their stolen vitality is magnified and projected from its resonator vanes. Pulsing waves of spirit-essence flow outward to those Dark Eldar standing near the Cronos, rendering them stronger and more vital even as the foe wither and crumble to dust. Many Archons will pay handsomely for one or more Cronos to accompany their forces, for should the fighting become protracted, having such an invigorating horror on hand can make all the difference.*



## RAVAGER



	⌈Armour⌋				
	BS	F	S	R	HP
Ravager	4	11	11	10	3

## UNIT TYPE:

Vehicle (Skimmer, Fast, Open-topped)

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Ravager

## WARGEAR:

- Three disintegrator cannons

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Deep Strike
- Night Vision

## OPTIONS:

- May replace any disintegrator cannon with a dark lance...5 pts each
- May take items from the **Dark Eldar Vehicle Equipment** list.



*'The scions of the Dark City would never admit that the unceasing hunger at their core is what drives them to such heights of cruelty. Instead, they maintain that they act only upon their own desires. Some have even managed to convince themselves of this. In truth, unless our cousins in the webway feed upon a constant diet of extreme emotion they will slowly wither away, leaving naught but a soulless husk. We of the craftworlds deny all such urges, and in doing so become less than ourselves. Perhaps it is those that we left to perish who are the lucky ones.'*

- Spiritseer Iyanna Arienal, Meditations





Though it fulfils a similar role to the battle tanks of other races, the Ravager carries little armour. Instead, Ravagers are so nimble that they can ambush an enemy tank and destroy it in a single devastating pass, disappearing again before the foe knows what hit them. Shadows streak suddenly overhead, tanks exploding in gouts of flame as lances of dark energy tear through their hulls. Defenders scramble to respond, gunfire spitting in all directions. Panic and confusion spread like a plague, while the Ravagers slip away ready to attack again elsewhere. In this way enemy strongpoints or tank columns can be reduced to smouldering wreckage without the cost of a single Dark Eldar life, the dazed survivors left defenceless as the rest of the raiding party descends.



## VOIDRAVEN BOMBER



	⌈Armour⌋				
	BS	F	S	R	HP
Voidraven Bomber	4	10	10	10	3

**UNIT TYPE:**  
Vehicle (Flyer)

## UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Voidraven Bomber

## WARGEAR:

- Two void lances
- Void mine

## SPECIAL RULES:

- Night Vision
- Supersonic

## OPTIONS:

- May take one of the following:
  - Four shatterfield missiles...*40 pts*
  - Two shatterfield missiles and two implosion missiles...*50 pts*
  - Four implosion missiles...*60 pts*
- May replace both void lances with two dark scythes...*free*
- May take night shields



*The Voidraven Bomber is the ultimate in Dark Eldar heavy weapons deployment. Its aerodynamic design and supersonic turn of speed allow it to dance through the sky with balletic grace, and the Voidraven's pilot will invariably be a veteran of the death races around the spires of High Commorragh, thinking nothing of breakneck aerial manoeuvres that would kill a lesser steersman. Voidravens are invisible to all but the naked eye and mount complex sonic dampers that completely obscure the sound of its engines. Sensors and early-warning equipment are rendered useless by a*



stealth warfare suite of such potency that the craft might as well be obscured by dark sorcery. Enemy pilots are equally helpless, their comms filling with panicked shouts as they try to hunt fast and deadly ghosts that their instruments insist simply do not exist.



## KABALITE RAIDING PARTY



*When a Kabalite Raiding Party attacks a world in realspace, they do not go in search of territorial conquest. Nor do they seek to defeat the entire strength of the world they attack. They fight not to enforce an ideology or defend an endangered realm, but to inflict as much suffering and terror as they possibly can before retreating to the Dark City with a screaming bounty of slaves clutched in their merciless grasp. These forces will be primarily composed of Kabalite Warriors, competitive bands of killers who form the backbone of the raid. Borne into battle on sleek Raiders and blade-swift Venoms, these black-hearted pirates will fight like Daemons to win the greatest glory for themselves and see friend and foe alike humbled at their feet.*

*At the head of every Kabalite Raiding Party stands an Archon, their ancient cunning and infinite cruelty bent towards outwitting the foe at every turn. Archons strive to ensure that their fragile forces retain the element of surprise for as long as possible, striking from the shadows and exploiting every iota of speed and lethality their followers possess to ensure their prey is felled before they even recognise the danger. Meanwhile, Kabalites who feel the pitiless eyes of their master and his monstrous court upon them will fight all the harder, channelling the death-agonies of their foe into ever-greater atrocities until the battlefield rings with the screams of the damned and dying. Typically, raiding parties of this sort will be supported by specialist elements from within the Kabal's own ranks – such as the kill-hungry crews of the Ravager gunships – and by heartless Commorrite mercenary bands such as the Incubi of the shrines or the Scourges of the highest spires. Taken as a whole, what a Kabalite Raiding Party lacks in resilience and survivability, it more than makes up for in speed and lethality. The Kabalites strike without warning, wreaking havoc amongst the unprepared foe before vanishing once more into the webway. Typically, they leave little but butchered corpses and terrified madmen in their wake.*

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*'The blade that I wield is an extension of my self, as I am an extension of my blade. We both thirst for blood. We both seek only murder. Only in death do we find purpose in life.'*

*- Klaivex Khyrassos, the Brotherhood of the Void*

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## FORMATION:

- 1 Archon
- 1 Court of the Archon
- 1 unit of Incubi
- 1 Ravager
- 6 units of Kabalite Warriors
- 1 unit of Scourges
- 1 unit of Hellions

## RESTRICTIONS:

All units in this Formation, except the Archon, must take a Raider or Venom Dedicated Transport if they have the option to do so. The Archon may choose whether or not to take a Venom Dedicated Transport.

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## SPECIAL RULES:

**Architect of Agony:** If the Archon in this Formation is your Warlord and he is alive, all units in this Formation with the Power from Pain special rule treat the current turn as being one higher than it actually is when determining what special rules they benefit from. This is cumulative with the Agonising and/or Master of Pain special rules.

**Hunt from the Shadows:** During the entire first game turn, and during any turn in which the Night Fighting rules are in effect, all Troops units from this Formation have a 5+ cover save, and all other units from this Formation have a 6+ cover save.

**Realspace Raider:** If this Formation is your Primary Detachment, you can re-roll the result when rolling on the Warlord Traits table in *Codex: Dark Eldar*.

# APPENDIX



This section of the book details many of the rules for using an army of Dark Eldar in your games of Warhammer 40,000, including their unique Warlord Traits, wargear, Tactical Objectives and the Realspace Raiders Detachment. The Profiles section at the end provides unit and weapons profiles.

## DARK ELДАР SPECIAL RULES

A Dark Eldar army uses a number of special rules that are common to several of its units, which are collected here for your convenience. Special rules that are unique to particular units are presented in the relevant unit entry instead. Other, more common rules are simply listed by name – these are all described in full in the Special Rules section of *Warhammer 40,000: The Rules*.

### COMBAT DRUGS

*Though they drastically shorten the life expectancy of the user, chemical stimulants are widely used to heighten combat performance.*

After determining Warlord Traits, but before deployment, roll a D6 and look up the result on the Combat Drugs table. All friendly models that have the Combat Drugs special rule receive the characteristic bonus listed on the table for the duration of the battle.

#### Combat Drugs Table

D6	Bonus
1	<b>Adrenalight:</b> +1 Attack
2	<b>Grave Lotus:</b> +1 Strength
3	<b>Hypex:</b> +1 Initiative
4	<b>Painbringer:</b> +1 Toughness
5	<b>Serpentin:</b> +1 Weapon Skill
6	<b>Splintermind:</b> +1 Leadership

### POWER FROM PAIN

As Dark Eldar feed on the souls of their foes, they become imbued with supernatural might, eventually turning into killing machines.

At the start of each game turn, look up the game turn number on the Power from Pain table. All models with the Power from Pain special rule gain the special rules listed on the table, in addition to any other special rules they have.

#### Power from Pain Table

Turn	Special Rules
1	None.
2	Feel No Pain (6+).
3	Feel No Pain.
4	Feel No Pain, Furious Charge.
5	Feel No Pain, Furious Charge, Fearless.
6+	Feel No Pain, Furious Charge, Fearless, Rage.

## WARLORD TRAITS

*The leaders of the Dark Eldar are great warriors – ancient, cruel and cunning beyond mortal measure.*

When generating their Warlord Traits, a Dark Eldar Warlord may either roll on one of the Warlord Traits tables in *Warhammer 40,000: The Rules*, or roll on the table below.

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# WARLORD TRAITS TABLE

## D6 Warlord Trait

**1. Ancient Evil.** *So long has this Warlord lived, steeped in horror and cruelty, that he is now shrouded in a malefic aura capable of paralyzing his foes with fear.* The Warlord, and all friendly units with the Dark Eldar Faction within 12" of the Warlord, have the Fear special rule.

**2. Labyrinthine Cunning.** *The Warlord has a mind like a steel trap, assimilating every detail of a situation. There is no circumstance he cannot turn to his benefit, nor any vagary of fate that can take him by surprise.*

The Dark Eldar player can re-roll the dice when they attempt to Seize the Initiative, determine if the Night Fighting rules are in effect, and when they make Reserve Rolls.

**3. Soulthirst.** *In place of a soul, this withered and ancient Warlord plays host to a howling chasm of horror and madness. He must swallow thousands of souls each day simply to stave off complete degeneration, his thirst lending him a lethal ferocity.*

The Warlord has the Rage special rule.

**4. Hatred Eternal.** *The Warlord is disgusted by the younger races that infest the galaxy, sickened by the unwashed and unrefined multitudes wallowing in their own filth. He will take any opportunity to exterminate such vermin, revelling in every unworthy life he and his followers extinguish.*

The Warlord has the Hatred special rule.

**5. Blood Dancer.** *A star of the Commorrite arenas, the Warlord excels at close quarters combat. The skills they display before the baying crowds on the blood-soaked sands of the arena floor come in equally useful on the battlefield.*

The Warlord receives +1 to the Weapon Skill characteristic on his profile.

**6. Towering Arrogance.** *The Warlord is possessed of the absolute belief that he is universally preeminent. He has nothing but scorn for the foe, no matter how horrifying their aspect. Such is the power of this conviction that the Warlord and his followers will stand their ground with a derisive sneer, regardless of the odds stacked against them.*

The Warlord, and all friendly units with the Dark Eldar Faction within 12" of the Warlord, have the Fearless special rule.

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## ARMOURY OF THE DARK CITY



This section of *Codex: Dark Eldar* lists the weapons, equipment and arcane devices used by the Dark Eldar, along with the rules for using them in your games of Warhammer 40,000. Equipment that is carried by named special characters is detailed in the appropriate entry in the Forces of the Dark Eldar section, while weapons and equipment used by all the other types of units are detailed here.

### MELEE WEAPONS

Profiles for the following weapons are listed in the Profiles section. Their full rules can be found in *Warhammer 40,000: The Rules*:

Close combat weapon  
Power weapons

#### Agoniser

*An agoniser is an extremely sophisticated weapon that drives a victim's sensorium haywire, causing excruciatingly severe pain as nerves burn out from overload. Though agonisers come in a variety of forms, the most common are toxin-soaked whips.*

Range	S	AP	Type
-	User	3	Melee, Poisoned (4+)

#### Archite Glaive

*These power glaives are exquisitely crafted pole-arms employed to lethal effect by Succubi in both*

the gladiatorial arenas of Commoragh and the battlefields of realspace. They can be wielded with both hands, to bisect a foe with ease, or used in combination with another weapon to cut through a host of victims.

	Range	S	AP	Type
Archite glaive				
Double-handed	-	+1	2	Melee, Two-handed
Single-handed	-	User	3	Melee

## Chain-flails

Chain-flails consist of lengths of barbed chain wound tight under gravitic pressure. As a Talos glides into battle, these chains are loosed, hurtling from their housings to lash around wildly. As their barbs find purchase in flesh, the chains' grav-winchers re-engage, reeling in at lightning speed to snap bones and tear bodies asunder.

	Range	S	AP	Type
	-	User	-	Melee, Shred

## Demiklaives

Demiklaives are power weapons that can either be wielded separately for speed, or clasped together to form a more powerful blade.

	Range	S	AP	Type
Demiklaives				
Single blade	-	+1	2	Melee, Two-handed
Dual blades	-	User	3	Melee, Dual Wield

**Dual Wield:** A model fighting with demiklaives (Dual blades) receives +1 bonus Attack.

## Electrocorrosive Whip

An electrocorrosive whip is a lashing tongue of venom-coated polymer with a high-yield dynamo in its hilt. Its touch is painful and debilitating in the extreme, sapping the strength of its victim and robbing them of the will to fight.

	Range	S	AP	Type
	-	User	3	Melee, Concussive, Poisoned (5+)

## Flesh Gauntlet

A claw-glove crammed with syringe-like protrusions and vials, the flesh gauntlet can inject potent electrosteroids that force rapid and unnatural growth. Its victim will literally outgrow his own skin, suffering a truly unpleasant death as he bursts apart in a welter of steaming, heaving gobs of matter.

	Range	S	AP	Type
	-	User	-	Melee, Lethal Dose, Poisoned (4+)

**Lethal Dose:** Any To Wound roll of a 6 inflicted by this weapon has the Instant Death special rule.

## Hellglaive

*A hellglaive is a lightweight, twin-bladed halberd. Though it requires some effort to master, this weapon can spin and block like a stave, cut like a scythe, or impale like a barbed spear. From the back of a Hellion skyboard such a weapon can prove especially lethal, lopping off heads and severing limbs with every blow.*

Range	S	AP	Type
-	+1	5	Melee, Two-handed

## Huskblade

*Leaving smoking trails as it carves through the air, a huskblade instantly evaporates the moisture in anything it touches, reducing targets to shrivelled and gruesome corpses that fall away to dust on the breeze.*

Range	S	AP	Type
-	User	3	Melee, Instant Death

## Hydra Gauntlet

*Hydra gauntlets are made from a flexible weave of semi-sentient, extraplanar crystal. Smooth and glassy when inert, a hydra gauntlet can be compelled by a strong-willed wearer to sprout and regrow an impossible profusion of lethal crystalline blades.*

Range	S	AP	Type
-	User	5	Melee, Shred, Specialist Weapon

## Ichor Injector

*This device injects its targets with the noxious ichor of the wielder's own bloodstream. Its victims boil alive from the inside out, while foul, steaming fluids bubble from their mouths and eye sockets.*

Range	S	AP	Type
-	User	-	Melee, Fleshbane, Lethal Dose

**Lethal Dose:** Any To Wound roll of a 6 inflicted by this weapon has the Instant Death special rule.

## Klaive

*Klaives are massive ritual powerblades of brutal aspect. Shimmering with dark energy, these weapons are impossibly light for their size and can slice through the thickest armour and toughest flesh with insulting ease.*

Range	S	AP	Type
-	+1	2	Melee, Two-handed

## Mindphase Gauntlet

*The mindphase gauntlet is an advanced neural controller that saps both strength and will. It can stop a rampaging foe in his tracks with a single touch, leaving him glassy-eyed and shuddering with overwhelming fatigue.*



Range	S	AP	Type
-	User	-	Melee, Concussive

## Razorflail

*Razorflails are wielded as a twinned pair of blades that at first glance resemble long, flimsy and unwieldy swords. Yet with a single flick of the wrist each can split apart and lash out like a whip, their whistling blades almost impossible to block or parry.*

Range	S	AP	Type
-	User	5	Melee, Blade Whip, Specialist Weapon

**Blade Whip:** Models fighting with a razorflail re-roll all failed To Hit rolls in close combat.

## Scissorhand

The scissorhand looks a little like a pair of surgical shears, and harbours expensive toxins so that its wielder might better incapacitate those whose limbs it amputates.

Range	S	AP	Type
-	User	-	Melee, Poisoned (4+), Rending

## Shaimeshi Blade

Whether elegant short sword, curved dagger or even barbed hair pin, the core of each Shaimeshi blade is shot through with reservoirs of breathtakingly lethal poisons, while its surface is riddled with microscopic vents through which these venoms can flow. With each graceful swing or lightning fast stab, it parts flesh to vent its poisons where they can do the most harm.

Range	S	AP	Type
-	User	-	Melee, Lethal Dose, Poisoned (2+)

**Lethal Dose:** Any To Wound roll of a 6 inflicted by this weapon has the Instant Death special rule.

## Shardnet & Impaler

Typically used as a ritual pair, these weapons are a deadly combination. The wielder first entangles their foe in the hooked mesh of their electrified shardnet before administering the killing blow using their extendable, twin-bladed impaler.

	Range	S	AP	Type
Impaler	-	User	5	Melee, Impale
Shardnet & impaler	-	User	5	Melee, Ritual Pair

**Impale:** A model fighting with an impaler re-rolls all To Wound rolls of a 1 when fighting in close combat.

**Ritual Pair:** A model fighting with a shardnet and impaler always gains the +1 bonus Attack for fighting with more than one Melee weapon. A model fighting with a shardnet and impaler re-rolls all To Hit and To Wound rolls of 1 in close combat.

## Stunclaw

Stunclaws are viciously barbed grapnels, often attached to lengthy metal chains. In battle a stunclaw can be anchored in the armour or flesh of a luckless victim, who is then hoisted agonisingly aloft and borne away amid a flock of jeering Hellions, either to a horrible and bloody fate at the end of the Hellions' blades, or a brief and violent death by virtue of simply being dropped from a great height.

Range	S	AP	Type
-	+1	6	Melee, Snatched

**Snatched:** When fighting in a challenge, this weapon has the Instant Death special rule.

## Venom Blade

A venom blade has thousands of micropores that constantly exude a distilled elixir of deadly hypertoxin – one of the most poisonous substances in the galaxy.

Range	S	AP	Type
-	User	-	Melee, Poisoned (2+)

## Wrack Tool

Wracks wield a sickening variety of sickle-blades, saws, knives and mauls into battle, all of which are coated in searing venom.

Range	S	AP	Type
-	User	-	Melee, Poisoned (4+)

# DARK ELDAR WARGEAR



*Agoniser*





*Klaive*



*Dark lance*



*Heat lance*





*Blast pistol*



*Splinter cannon*



*Disintegrator cannon*





*Blaster*



*Haywire blaster*



*Shardcarbine*





*Shredder*



*Splinter pistol*



*Splinter rifle*





*Glimmersteel sickle*



*Wych knife*



*Wych knife*



# RANGED WEAPONS

## Baleblast

Mandrakes can channel the energies stolen from their prey into blasts of freezing flame, wreathing their victims in spectral fires that burn through flesh and soul alike.

Range	S	AP	Type
18"	4	4	Assault 2, Soul Blaze



## Darklight Weapons

The weapon shops of Commorrhagh are infamous for their ability to cheat the natural laws of physics in order to design ever more efficient and exciting ways to kill. Blasters and dark lances epitomise this, for they do not employ standard laser technology but instead fire a stream of what is, for want of a better term, 'darklight'. The origin of this substance is unknown, although there are a number who claim it is sourced from black holes, warp storms and other celestial phenomena of great magnitude. Darklight works by reacting catastrophically with its target, producing a blast that can bore a massive hole in a vehicle regardless of armour, or vaporise a foot soldier in an instant. Even to perceive a beam of darklight without the correct protection leaves permanent slash-scars upon the retina.

	Range	S	AP	Type
Blast pistol	6"	8	2	Pistol, Lance
Blaster	18"	8	2	Assault 1, Lance
Dark scythe	24"	8	2	Heavy 1, Blast, Lance
Dark lance	36"	8	2	Heavy 1, Lance

## Disintegrator Cannon

The disintegrator cannon fires particles of unstable matter harnessed from a stolen sun, each shot capable of atomising the most heavily armoured warrior. Far more sophisticated than conventional plasma-based firearms, it maintains a high rate of fire and always remains cool to the touch despite the ravaging energies housed within.

Range	S	AP	Type
36"	5	2	Heavy 3

## Eyeburst

*A Medusae can open its host's steel visor and paralyse those under its gaze with a wave of raw anguish, plunging them into a coma from which there is no recovery.*

Range	S	AP	Type
Template	4	3	Assault 1

## Haywire Blaster

Haywire blasters are long-barrelled weapons that siphon the electromagnetic energy crackling around Commorragh's highest aeries, to later release it in a terrifyingly powerful burst. A well-aimed haywire blaster can cripple an enemy vehicle's control systems in a single shot.

Range	S	AP	Type
24"	4	4	Assault 1, Haywire

## Heat Lance

The heat lance combines melta and high-yield las technology into a weapon that has both surprising reach and extreme destructive potential.

Range	S	AP	Type
18"	6	1	Assault 1, Lance, Melta

## Hexrifle

The hexrifle fires crystal cylinders containing a tiny sample of the Plague of Glass that afflicted the Dark City in M36. On contact with bare flesh, the hexrifle's arcane payload spreads quickly, turning its victim into a transparent statue with an expression of shock etched upon its visage forevermore.

Range	S	AP	Type
36"	X	4	Assault 1, Arcane Payload, Sniper

**Arcane Payload:** Any Precision Shot made with this weapon has the Instant Death special rule.

## Implosion Missile

Upon detonation, these missiles emit a molecular dissonance field that causes those caught in their path to implode, instantly collapsing in upon themselves and leaving nothing more than a scorched silhouette to mark their passage.

Range	S	AP	Type
48"	6	2	Assault 1, Blast, One Use Only

## Liquifier Gun

The liquifier gun fires a spray of incredibly potent acid that eats through anything it touches. Wracks, Grotesques and other minions of the Haemonculus Covens often have liquifier guns built into their bodies so that they can fire out great gouts of their own acidic blood. The amount of devastation

wreaked by this fearsome weapon depends on how much of its vitriolic ammunition splashes over its unfortunate target.

Range	S	AP	Type
Template	3	D6*	Assault 1

\* Roll for this weapon's AP value each time it is fired, after the target has been chosen.

## Monoscythe Missile

These signature missiles are remotely steered by the Razorwing's pilot into the midst of the foe. When detonated, they emit not a conventional blast but one that is constrained to a specific plane by complex in-built powershields. A great horizontal sheet of force explodes outward at a certain height, decapitating or even cutting in half everyone caught in the blast zone.

Range	S	AP	Type
48"	6	5	Assault 1, Large Blast, One Use Only

## Necrotoxin Missile

At the heart of a necrotoxin missile is a large reservoir of virulent poisons. When the missile detonates, it splinters into shards of jagged shrapnel, each carrying thick gobbets of its deadly payload.

Range	S	AP	Type
48"	1	-	Assault 1, Fleshbane, Large Blast, One Use Only

## Ossefactor

The ossefactor employs weaponised osteocytic impulsion-waves, normally used by the Haemonculi to craft bone structures and fashion spinal sumps. It projects a focussed overdose of this energy at its victim, triggering uncontrolled osteocytic multiplication. Bones twist and lengthen violently, shooting out dozens of spurs like the branches of some hideous tree. The luckless victim is rent apart by their own warped skeleton, even as their horrified squad mates find themselves impaled on the calcific spears that burst from their body.

Range	S	AP	Type
24"	1	2	Assault 1, Fleshbane, Calcific Spears

**Calcific Spears:** If a non-vehicle model is removed as a casualty due to an unsaved Wound caused by this weapon, that model's unit immediately suffers D6 additional hits. These hits are Randomly Allocated and have the Ignores Cover special rule. The Strength of these hits is equal to the Toughness characteristic of the model removed as a casualty, and they are resolved at AP-.

## Phantasm Grenade Launcher

Wealthy Dark Eldar warriors often wear modified backpacks or launchers that hurl a volley of small, disc-shaped grenades at the foe. These are made from a reactive substance that, upon contact with the air, dissolves into clouds of psychotropic gas. This vapour is so potent that the merest exposure causes delusions of such horror that its victims are literally scared to death in seconds.



Range	S	AP	Type
18"	1	-	Assault 1, Blast, Soulfright

**Soulfright:** At the end of the Shooting phase, a unit that has suffered one or more hits from a weapon with this special rule in that phase must make a Leadership test. The unit suffers a single additional Wound, with no armour or cover saves allowed, for each point this test is failed by. Wounds cannot be allocated to models with the Fearless or And They Shall Know No Fear special rules (any excess Wounds are lost).

## Shatterfield Missile

A shatterfield missile actually houses two separate detonator cores. On impact, the first of the cores sucks away all warmth, turning those caught within its blast into brittle statues. An instant later, the second core sends out a blast of percussive force that shatters its frozen victims into a thousand pieces.

Range	S	AP	Type
48"	7	-	Assault 1, Large Blast Shred, One Use Only

## Shredder

The shredder unleashes an expanding mesh of monofilaments with miniscule barbs along their length, entangling the victim in an invisible net that slices him apart as he struggles to free himself.

Range	S	AP	Type
12"	6	-	Assault 1, Blast, Shred

## Spirit Syphon

The Cronos Parasite Engine can cast out a field of baleful energy that allows it to feed upon those nearby.

Range	S	AP	Type
Template	3	3	Assault 1

## Spirit Vortex

Cronos Parasite Engines are sometimes modified to incorporate a spiral-etched device that can hurl out a massive burst of negative force, draining the lifeforce of dozens of victims.

Range	S	AP	Type
18"	3	3	Assault 1, Large Blast

## Stinger Pistol

A stinger pistol is a lightweight sidearm characterised by a long syringe-like barrel and a venom magazine that holds searingly effective toxins. When fired, it ejects a long sliver of hollow glass that can pierce a foe's skin and introduce the toxins straight into his bloodstream, with invariably horrific results.

Range	S	AP	Type
12"	1	5	Pistol, Poisoned (2+)



## Splinter Weapons

*Splinter weapons fire shards of splintered crystal covered in incredibly potent toxins using a powerful magno-electric pulse. The favoured armament of the Kabalite Warrior is the splinter rifle, often fired on the move from the balustrade of a transport. The splinter pistol is an elegant sidearm beloved of assassins and street fighters across the galaxy; though it is designed for precision short ranged shots, the toxins inside its reservoir pod are no less deadly. Some Dark Eldar become addicted to the distorted grimaces of pain made by the targets of splinter weaponry, and hence employ larger versions of the splinter rifle. Amongst these are the shardcarbine, popular with the winged Scourges, and the splinter cannon, a weapon able to mow down entire squads at a time.*

	Range	S	AP	Type
Splinter pistol	12"	1	5	Pistol, Poisoned (4+)
Splinter pods	18"	1	5	Assault 2, Poisoned (4+)
Shardcarbine	18"	1	5	Assault 3, Poisoned (4+)
Splinter rifle	24"	1	5	Rapid Fire, Poisoned (4+)
Splinter cannon	36"	1	5	Salvo 4/6, Poisoned (4+)

## Stinger Pod

Talos Pain Engines are often armed with sinister weapons that fire great pulses of raw agony. The victims of these weapons often break their own bones or rupture their own organs with the force of their agonised convulsions, while survivors are left catatonic with pain, unable to defend themselves against the Talos' bloody ministrations.

Range	S	AP	Type
24"	5	5	Assault 2, Blast

## Void Lance

The void lance fires pulses of highly destructive eldritch energy harvested from beyond the shattered spars of the webway.

Range	S	AP	Type
36"	9	2	Assault 1, Lance

## Void Mine

This bizarre bomb detonates two warheads, one a split second before the other. The first merely establishes a sphere of force that protects everything outside and condemns everything within. The second contains a particle of purest darklight, released from its containment field by the primary detonation. The effects of introducing even a tiny amount of darklight into realspace are catastrophic. If it were not for the force sphere established by the primary detonation, the resultant implosion would destroy not only the enemy but also the Voidraven into the bargain. As it is, anything trapped inside the crackling sphere is annihilated utterly, and in total silence.

Range	S	AP	Type
-	9	2	Bomb 1, Large Blast, Lance, One Use Only

## ARMOUR

### Armoured Carapace

*Engines of Pain like the Talos and Cronos are clad in finely wrought armoured shells that protect the most vital of their grisly organic components from harm.*

An armoured carapace confers a 3+ Armour Save.

### Ghostplate Armour

*Those Dark Eldar who desire a substantial amount of protection whilst retaining a high degree of mobility wear armour made from hardened resins and shot through with pockets of lighter-than-air gas. Ghostplate armour also incorporates minor forcefield technology the better to protect its wearer.*

Ghostplate armour confers a 4+ Armour Save and a 6+ invulnerable save.

### Gnarlskin

*The Haemonculi and their hideous, fleshy creations have toughened, scarred hides that have been subjected to so many brands, burns and abrasions that they have become leathery and resistant to blows.*

Gnarlskin confers a 6+ Armour Save.

### Incubus Warsuit

*All Incubi wear close-fitting suits of ritual battle armour that can turn aside all but the most well-placed blows.*

An Incubus warsuit confers a 3+ Armour Save.

### Kabalite Armour

*Dark Eldar Kabalites go to battle clad in suits of segmented plates, usually part of a larger bodysuit that is secured in place with serrated barbs and hooks.*

Kabalite armour confers a 5+ Armour Save.

### Wychsuit



*Wyches wear flexible bodysuits that have been designed to protect one side of the body – usually the side they habitually turn towards their opponents – whilst not impeding movement at all.*

A Wychsuit confers a 6+ Armour Save.

## ARCANE WARGEAR

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**Profiles for the following weapons are listed in the Profiles section. Their full rules can be found in *Warhammer 40,000: The Rules*:**

Haywire grenades

Plasma grenades

### Beastmaster Skyboard

*The skyboards of the Beastmasters are calibrated to reflect their specialised needs. Able to move at high velocities while hugging the the ground, they automatically swoop around hazards, leaving their riders free to ply the lash on their feral charges.*

Models on Beastmaster skyboards have the Beast unit type. Beastmaster skyboards also confer a 5+ Armour Save, and are armed with splinter pods.

### Bladevanes

*These hooked, razor-sharp blades jut from the sleek hulls of Reaver jetbikes. In battle the riders crouch low over their steeds before streaking through the midst of the enemy ranks, using their bladevanes to lop off heads and limbs with every pass.*

All Hammer of Wrath attacks made by a model with bladevanes are resolved at Strength 4 and have the Rending special rule.

### Clone Field

*The clone field projects several hololight images of the wearer, all moving in perfect synchrony. Such is the artifice of these simulacra that even the sharpest senses cannot put the lie to them. Foes find themselves surrounded by a multiplicity of identical warriors through whom their blades pass like smoke on the breeze.*

A clone field confers a 4+ invulnerable save.

### Cluster Caltrops

*Some Reaver jetbikes are modified to mount micro-bomblet dispensers within their sleek hulls. These can be triggered as the jetbike passes through the midst of the foe, stitching them with vicious point-blank blasts. Some riders even learn to spin as they discharge their cluster caltrops, hurtling through the foe's ranks amidst a whirlwind of razor shrapnel and lethal explosives.*

A model with cluster caltrops makes D6 Hammer of Wrath attacks instead of just one. These are resolved at Strength 6 and have the Rending special rule.

### Crucible of Malediction

*Haemonculi refer to this extraordinary weapon as 'the kin-gift', for it is especially dangerous to their psychically attuned craftworld cousins. Each crucible contains the essence of psykers tortured to death. When released, their spirits hurtle across the battlefield, shrieking in a cacophony that drives nearby psykers insane.*

Once per game, a model with a crucible of malediction can unleash its contents instead of making a shooting attack in the Shooting phase. If he does so, all units that include one or more models with the Psyker, Brotherhood of Psykers/Sorcerers or Psychic Pilot special rules (friend or foe) within 3D6"

of the bearer immediately suffer a Strength 6 hit, with no saves of any kind allowed.

## Grav-talon

*The grav-talon is an adaptation of the traditional Reaver jetbike blade vanes. As well as slicing its way through foes unlucky enough to feel its bite, a grav-talon can discharge a localised pressure wave. This smashes the enemy flat with a dull boom, forcing them to abase themselves and leaving them at the mercy of their predatory foes.*

All Hammer of Wrath attacks made by a model with a grav-talon have the Concussive special rule.

## Hellion Skyboard

*These anti-grav boards are highly prized as symbols of independence. As such they are personalised by their owners with trophies and glyphs. They are sensitive to the slightest pressure, allowing their riders to flip and jink at incredible speeds while firing their splinter pods into the foe with the simple depression of a heel-stud.*

Models on Hellion skyboards have the Jump Infantry unit type. Hellion skyboards also confer a 5+ Armour Save and are armed with splinter pods.

## Reaver Jetbike

*Reaver jetbikes are the most streamlined and pared-down of all skycraft, a fusion of raw motive power and finely-honed lethality.*

Models on Reaver jetbikes have the Eldar Jetbike unit type, and have their Armour Save increased to 5+ if it is normally lower. Reaver jetbikes are armed with a splinter rifle.

## Shadow Field

*The shadow field surrounds its wearer in a dark miasma of energy that is almost impossible to penetrate. However, should a solid blow connect the field will short out, leaving its wearer vulnerable.*

A shadow field confers a 2+ invulnerable save. The shadow field save is lost for the rest of the battle at the end of any phase in which the model suffers one or more unsaved Wounds.

## Soul-trap

*Soul-traps vary in appearance, from folding pyramidal prisms to jewelled skulls engraved with vampiric runes, but they all have one ghastly function: to capture the soul of a powerful enemy within their confines and empower the bearer with the stolen energies.*

A model with a soul-trap receives +1 Strength (up to a maximum of Strength 10) for the rest of the battle for each unsaved Wound it inflicts in a challenge on an enemy character.

## Spirit Probe

*A spirit probe is a conductor for agony; a device that ensures no scrap of pain or misery escapes the Cronos' contra-empathic net. Running hot on tides of excruciation, it boosts the resilience of nearby Dark Eldar, allowing them to stride laughing amid volleys of fire and rains of blows that would otherwise tear them apart.*

The model, and all friendly units with both the Dark Eldar Faction and the Feel No Pain special rule within 6" of one or more models with a spirit probe, receive a +1 bonus to their Feel No Pain (e.g. Feel No Pain would become Feel No Pain (4+)). This is cumulative with any other modifiers to Feel No Pain, but cannot improve their Feel No Pain beyond 4+.

## Webway Portal

*These are small, easily carried versions of the mighty webway portals used by the Dark Eldar to*

*travel across vast distances instantaneously. Appearing as jagged, rune-graven crystals, these devices are simply hurled into the air where they hang impossibly, in defiance of gravity. With a crackle of dark energy they tear a rent in the skin of reality, flaying open a route into the webway through which murderous Dark Eldar can pour.*

If a model with a webway portal is in Reserves or Ongoing Reserves, then the model and any unit it has joined or is embarked upon has the Deep Strike special rule. This model, and his unit, will not scatter if arriving from Deep Strike Reserve.

## **DARK ELДАР VEHICLE EQUIPMENT**

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### **Chain-snares**

*Some Dark Eldar vehicles are fitted with several underslung chains and barbed hooks, the better to gouge at the flesh of those they pass over – if the vehicle happens to snatch up a victim or two and drags them to their death, so much the better.*

A vehicle with chain-snares is allowed to Tank Shock even if it is not a Tank. However, it may not Ram.

### **Enhanced Aethersails**

*Aethersails are used to capture the aetheric winds that flow out from open webway portals. Many vehicle crews are meticulous in the construction of these sails, incorporating frictionless alloys, vibro-pods and angled booms to enhance their bursts of speed.*

A vehicle with enhanced aethersails can move up to 24" when it moves Flat Out.

### **Flickerfield**

*Flickerfields are highly advanced optical force shields that make the vehicle they are fitted to appear to flicker in and out of reality.*

A vehicle with a flickerfield has a 5+ invulnerable save.

### **Grisly Trophies**

*Some Dark Eldar vehicles are adorned with the disembodied heads of slain foes and daubed with copious amounts of enemy blood. The sight of the festering remains of once-proud foes instils the Dark Eldar with arrogant pride.*

All friendly units with the Dark Eldar Faction within 6" of a vehicle with grisly trophies can re-roll failed Leadership tests.

### **Night Shields**

*The vehicle is covered by a broad-spectrum displacement field, enveloping it in cold and inky darkness. Foes find the vehicle hard to target, hidden as it is within a cloak of roiling shadow.*

A vehicle with night shields has the Stealth special rule.

### **Torment Grenade Launchers**

Some Dark Eldar skimmers incorporate hull-mounted launchers that send barbed grenades spinning into the ranks of the foe. Each grenade spews out an ochre cloud of phantasm gas that causes abject terror in the minds of those nearby.



Range	S	AP	Type
24"	1	-	Assault 1, Blast, Soulfright

**Soulfright:** At the end of the Shooting phase, a unit that has suffered one or more hits from a weapon with this special rule in that phase must make a Leadership test. The unit suffers a single additional Wound, with no armour or cover saves allowed, for each point this test is failed by. Wounds cannot be allocated to models with the Fearless or And They Shall Know No Fear special rules (any excess Wounds are lost).

## Shock Prow

*The shock prow is an energised ram that sends out a directional wave of electromagnetic force, allowing the skimmer to carve its way through infantry and even shatter the heavy hulls of enemy vehicles.*

A vehicle with a shock prow can Tank Shock and Ram even if it is not a Tank. In addition, when the vehicle executes a Ram, it is treated as having a front Armour Value of 14 when working out the effect of the Ram upon both the vehicle and its target.

## Splinter Racks

*Some Dark Eldar vehicles carry additional racks of anti-personnel weaponry on their decks. This allows passengers to quite literally empty their weapons' magazines in great raking fusillades, before discarding their spent guns in favour of fully-loaded replacements.*

Whilst a model is embarked on a vehicle with splinter racks, all splinter weapons have the Twin-linked special rule.

# ARTEFACTS OF CRUELTY



**Artefacts of Cruelty** are items of horrendous power, which the Dark Eldar value for their ability to inflict torments of rare quality on their unfortunate victims. Only one of each of the following relics may be chosen per army.

## The Animus Vitae

*The Animus Vitae appears to be a smooth orb, until it is thrown at the feet of a victim and explodes into a lashing tangle of barbed wires that wrap around its prey. Slowly and spitefully, the Animus Vitae begins to constrict, cutting through armour, flesh and bone until its victim's agonised cries become desperate, nerve-sawing screams. All the while the foul weapon radiates this agony, saturating the battlefield with pain so that the bearer and his kin can drink it in like a vintage draught.*

Range	S	AP	Type
8"	4	2	Assault 1, Agonising, One Use Only

**Agonising:** If an unsaved Wound is inflicted with the Animus Vitae, all models with the Power from Pain special rule (friend or foe) treat the current turn as being one higher than it actually is when determining what special rules they benefit from. This benefit applies for the remainder of the battle and is cumulative with the Architect of Agony and/or Master of Pain special rules.

## The Archangel of Pain

*In the days before the Fall, the prophet Ynshimael sought to save himself by crafting a device to trap daemonic entities. Ynshimael's artifice was clever yet inadequate in the face of Slaanesh's birth, and*

*his soul was devoured in seconds. Since those days, the device has been perverted by Ynshimael's Commorrite successors, becoming the metaphysical prison known as the Archangel of Pain. It is used to trap Daemons, binding them in a pit of barbed nothingness that tears and tortures their empyric substance. When released, these entities flee back into the Warp, their soul-rending psychic screams driving those that hear them irredeemably mad.*

Once per game, the bearer can open the Archangel of Pain instead of firing a weapon in the Shooting phase. When he does so, each enemy unit within 9" of him must take a Leadership test with a -2 penalty; a unit suffers a single Wound, with no armour or cover saves allowed, for each point this test is failed by. Hits cannot be allocated to models with the Fearless or And They Shall Know No Fear special rules (any excess Wounds are lost).

## The Armour of Misery

*Crafted by the artisan Kalmael using psychoempathic shards of poisoned wraithbone, this armour is the ultimate expression of Commorrite contempt. Its barbed plates provide its wearer with exceptional protection, but it is not its durability that makes this armour so sought after – the armour emanates crippling waves of pure dread. Only those with an iron will can withstand such mental torture – others slump to the floor defeated, weapons falling from trembling hands as they are overcome with fear.*

The Armour of Misery confers a 4+ Armour Save, a 6+ invulnerable save and the Fear special rule. All enemy units within 6" of the bearer suffer a -2 Leadership penalty.

## The Djin Blade

*Forged from an unknown alloy that retains a perfect mirror sheen, the Djin Blade reflects an idealised reflection of whoever looks at it; an image of themselves that exudes power, beauty, wisdom – whatever they most desire. Any who takes up the Djin Blade will fall under its spell, guarding it jealously and listening to its whispers day and night. Though the blade lends its wielder incredible prowess, it will feed off their essence until it deems them drained and turns upon them. On that day the wielder's reflection shifts into something malefic, the true face of the Djin leering out at them in their last moments before it turns their heart to ash and their soul to drifting cinders.*

Range	S	AP	Type
-	User	3	Melee, Sentient Blade

**Sentient Blade:** When fighting with the Djin Blade, the wielder gains +2 bonus Attacks. Immediately after resolving all of the attacks made with this weapon, roll a single D6 – on a result of 1, the model using this weapon immediately suffers a single Wound, with no saves of any kind allowed.

## The Helm of Spite

*The children of the Dark City look down upon those fools who would use psychic witchery in battle. Not only does such a thing tempt the gaze of She Who Thirsts, but it also risks the far more immediate wrath of Asdrubael Vect. Through necessity, the Dark Eldars' psychic abilities have been allowed to atrophy, leaving them less able to defend themselves against the reckless Warpcraft of their foes. The Helm of Spite redresses this balance, shielding its wearer from harm and setting up a field of violent psionic feedback that can cook a psyker's brain inside their skull.*

The bearer of the Helm of Spite, and all friendly units with the Dark Eldar Faction within 12" of the bearer, have the Adamantium Will special rule. In addition, enemy Psykers that are within 12" of the bearer suffer Perils of the Warp when they roll any double when making a Psychic test.

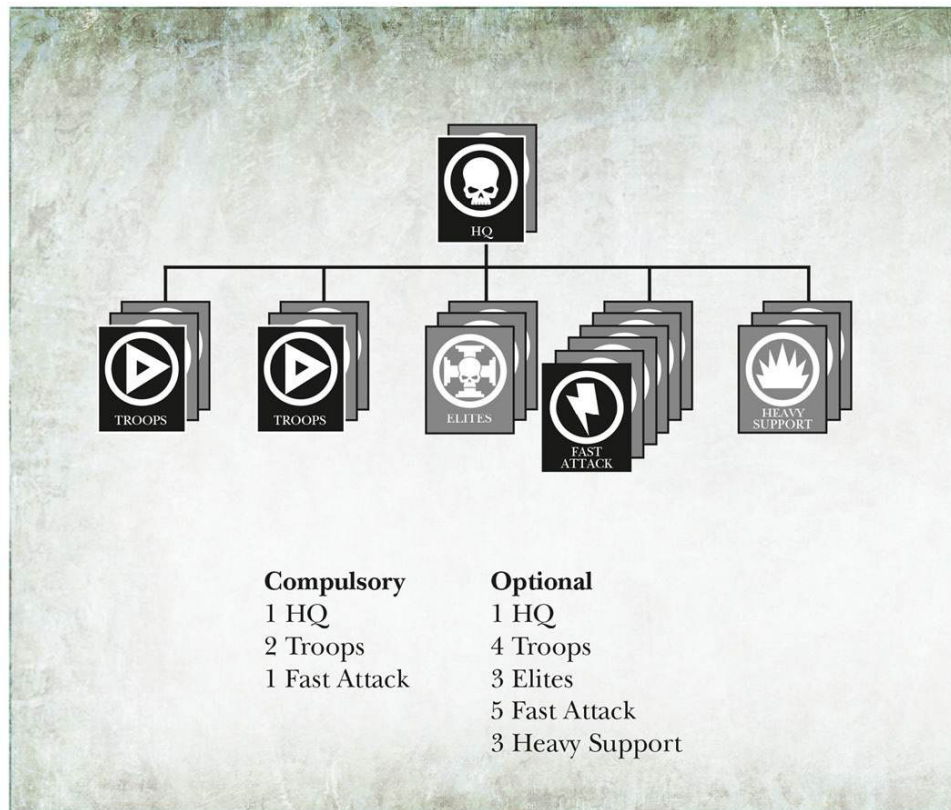
## The Parasite's Kiss

*Thought to be the finest splinter pistol ever crafted, this weapon spits out crystalline darts bound with psycho-vampiric circuitry. Upon biting into flesh, the target's very soul is leeched, one gasp of pain at a time, and transferred back to the gun's wielder. As the luckless victim withers and shrivels like rotten fruit, their murderer flushes with vigour and youth, revelling in their stolen life energies while their foe crumbles away to dust on the breeze.*

Range	S	AP	Type
12"	1	5	Pistol, Master-crafted Poisoned (2+), Soul-leech

**Soul-leech:** Each time the bearer inflicts an unsaved Wound with the Parasite's Kiss it immediately gains one Wound lost previously in the battle.

## REALSPACE RAIDERS DETACHMENT



**Codex: Dark Eldar** details a unique Detachment – the Realspace Raiders Detachment – that reflects the lightning fast nature of a Dark Eldar raid. This follows all the Detachment rules presented in *Warhammer 40,000: The Rules*.

### Restrictions

All units in this Detachment must have the Dark Eldar Faction (or have no Faction).

### Command Benefits

**Realspace Raider:** If this Detachment is your Primary Detachment, you can re-roll the result when rolling on the Warlord Traits table in *Codex: Dark Eldar*.

**Hunt from the Shadows:** During the entire first game turn, and during any turn in which the Night Fighting rules are in effect, all Troops units from this Detachment have a 5+ cover save, and all other units from this Detachment have a 6+ cover save.





# DARK ELДАР TACTICAL OBJECTIVES



**Codex: Dark Eldar** describes six Tactical Objectives to use in your games that are exclusive to Dark Eldar players and help to reflect their cruel and sinister method of war.

If your Warlord has the Dark Eldar Faction, these Tactical Objectives replace the Capture & Control Tactical Objectives (numbers 11-16) described in *Warhammer 40,000: The Rules*.

If a Warhammer 40,000 mission has the Tactical Objectives special rule, players use the normal rules for using Tactical Objectives (see *Warhammer 40,000: The Rules*) with the following exception: when a Dark Eldar player generates a Capture & Control objective (numbers 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 or 16), generate the corresponding Dark Eldar Tactical Objective instead, as shown in the table below.

Other Tactical Objectives (numbers 21-66) are generated normally, as described in *Warhammer 40,000: The Rules*.

## D66 Result

- |    |                          |
|----|--------------------------|
| 11 | Take Them Alive!         |
| 12 | Fear and Terror          |
| 13 | Death by a Thousand Cuts |
| 14 | No Escape                |
| 15 | Pain, in All its Forms   |
| 16 | Trophy Hunter            |

## 11 TAKE THEM ALIVE!

## **TYPE: DARK ELДАР**

***Commorragh is always in need of fresh slaves. Close with the prey and capture them alive.***

*Score 1 Victory Point at the end of your turn if at least one non-vehicle enemy unit was completely destroyed during your Assault phase. If an enemy with the Independent Character special rule was removed as a casualty during your Assault phase, score D3 Victory Points instead.*

## **12 FEAR AND TERROR**

### **TYPE: DARK ELДАР**

***Sow terror and panic in the ranks of your foes. Drink in their fear like a fine wine.***

*Score 1 Victory Point at the end of your turn if at least one enemy unit failed a single Morale, Pinning or Fear test during your turn.*

## **13 DEATH BY A THOUSAND CUTS**

### **TYPE: DARK ELДАР**

***Strike and fade! Watch the enemy's army weaken and die as you bleed it one warrior at a time.***

*Score 1 Victory Point at the end of your turn if at least one model was removed as a casualty from at least 3 different enemy units during your turn. If at least one model was removed as a casualty from 6 or more different enemy units during your turn, score D3 Victory Points instead.*

## **14 NO ESCAPE**

### **TYPE: DARK ELДАР**

***No enemy can outrun us; no foe can hide from our sight. Murder any who would seek to escape the kiss of our blades.***

*Score 1 Victory Point at the end of your turn if at least one enemy unit that was falling back, or one enemy unit with either the Stealth or Shrouded special rule, was completely destroyed during your turn.*

## **15 PAIN, IN ALL ITS FORMS**

### **TYPE: DARK ELДАР**

***Revel in the suffering of others, unleash pain upon your foes in all its delicious forms.***

*Score 1 Victory Point at the end of your turn if at least one enemy unit was completely destroyed during either your Shooting phase or your Assault phase. If at least one enemy unit was completely destroyed during both your Shooting phase and your Assault phase, score D3 Victory Points instead. If at least 3 enemy units were completely destroyed in both your Shooting phase and your Assault phase, score D3+3 Victory Points instead.*

## **16 TROPHY HUNTER**

### **TYPE: DARK ELДАР**

***The lords of Commorragh demand a trophy, either a bauble from the field of battle or the head of an enemy champion.***

*When this objective is generated, your opponent must nominate one Objective Marker and one of his characters. Score 1 Victory Point at the end of your turn if you control the nominated Objective Marker or the nominated enemy character has been removed as a casualty. If you control the nominated Objective Marker at the end of your turn and the enemy character was removed as a casualty during the same turn, score 2 Victory Points instead.*

---

## **Designer's Note – Tactical Objectives Card Deck**

*If you own a deck of Dark Eldar Tactical Objective Cards, you can generate your*

*Tactical Objectives by shuffling the deck and drawing the top card instead of rolling a D66. These should be kept face up, so your opponent can see which Tactical Objectives you have generated, unless the mission you are playing instructs you otherwise.*

---

## PROFILES

	HQ									
	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv	Unit Type
Archon	7	7	3	3	3	7	4	10	5+	In (ch)
Drazhar	7	7	4	4	3	7	4	10	2+	In (ch)
Haemonculus	5	5	3	4	3	5	3	9	6+	In (ch)
Lelith Hesperax	9	9	3	3	3	9	5	9	6+	In (ch)
Lhamaean	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	9	5+	In
Medusae	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	9	5+	In
Sslyth	4	4	5	5	2	4	3	3	5+	In
Succubus	8	6	3	3	3	8	4	9	6+	In (ch)
Ur-Ghul	4	0	4	3	1	5	3	3	-	In
Urien Rakarth	5	5	3	5	3	5	3	9	6+	In (ch)

	TROOPS									
	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv	Unit Type
Hekatrix	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	6+	In (ch)
Kabalite Warrior	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	5+	In
Sybarite	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	9	5+	In (ch)
Wych	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	8	6+	In

	ELITES									
	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv	Unit Type
Aberration	4	1	5	5	3	4	4	4	6+	In (ch)
Acothyst	4	4	3	4	1	4	2	9	6+	In (ch)
Bloodbride	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	6+	In
Dracon	4	4	3	3	1	5	3	9	5+	In (ch)
Grotesque	4	1	5	5	3	4	3	3	6+	In
Incubus	5	4	3	3	1	5	2	9	3+	In
Kabalite Trueborn	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	9	5+	In
Klaivex	6	5	3	3	1	6	3	9	3+	In (ch)
Mandrake	4	4	4	3	1	5	2	8	-	In
Nightfiend	4	4	4	3	1	5	3	9	-	In (ch)
Syren	4	4	3	3	1	6	3	9	6+	In (ch)
Wrack	4	4	3	4	1	4	1	8	6+	In



FAST ATTACK										
	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv	Unit Type
Arena Champion	4	4	3	4	1	6	2	9	5+	Ejb (ch)
Beastmaster	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	8	5+	Be
Clawed Fiend	3	0	5	5	3	5	4	5	6+	Be
Helliarch	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	5+	In, J (ch)
Hellion	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	8	5+	In, J
Khymera	4	0	4	4	1	6	3	5	6+	Be
Razorwing Flock	2	0	3	3	3	5	4	5	6+	Be
Reaver	4	4	3	4	1	6	1	8	5+	Ejb
Scourge	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	4+	In, J
Solarite	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	9	4+	In, J (ch)

HEAVY SUPPORT										
	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv	Unit Type
Cronos	3	3	5	7	3	4	3	10	3+	Mc
Talos	5	3	7	7	3	4	3	10	3+	Mc

VEHICLES										
Armour										
	BS		F S R			HP			Unit Type	
Raider	4		10 10 10			3			S, F, O, T	
Ravager	4		11 11 10			3			S, F, O	
Razorwing Jetfighter	4		10 10 10			3			Fl	
Venom	4		10 10 10			2			S, F, O, T	
Voidraven Bomber	4		10 10 10			3			Fl	

Weapon	RANGED WEAPONS			
	Range	S	AP	Type
Baleblast	18"	4	4	Assault 2, Soul Blaze
Blast pistol	6"	8	2	Pistol, Lance
Blaster	18"	8	2	Assault 1, Lance
Dark lance	36"	8	2	Heavy 1, Lance
Dark scythe	24"	8	2	Heavy 1, Blast, Lance
Disintegrator cannon	36"	5	2	Heavy 3
Eye burst	Template	4	3	Assault 1
Haywire blaster	24"	4	4	Assault 1, Haywire
Haywire grenade	8"	2	-	Assault 1, Haywire
Heat lance	18"	6	1	Assault 1, Lance, Melta
Hexrifle Payload,	36"	X	4	Assault 1, Arcane Sniper
Implosion missile	48"	6	2	Assault 1, Blast, One Use Only
Liquifier gun	Template	3	D6*	Assault 1
Monoscythe missile	48"	6	5	Assault 1, Large Blast One Use Only
Necrotoxin missile  Only	48"	1	-	Assault 1, Fleshbane, Large Blast, One Use

\* Roll for this weapon's AP value each time it is fired, after the target has been chosen.

Weapon	RANGED WEAPONS			Type
	Range	S	AP	
Ossefactor	24"	1	2	Assault 1, Fleshbane, Calcific Spears
Phantasm grenade launcher Soulfright	18"	1	-	Assault 1, Blast,
Plasma grenade	8"	4	4	Assault 1, Blast
Shardcarbine	18"	1	5	Assault 3, Poisoned (4+)
Shatterfield missile	48"	7	-	Assault 1, Shred, Large Blast, One Use
Only				
Shredder	12"	6	-	Assault 1, Blast, Shred
Spirit syphon	Template	3	3	Assault 1
Spirit vortex	18"	3	3	Assault 1, Large Blast
Splinter cannon	36"	1	5	Salvo 4/6, Poisoned (4+)
Splinter pistol	12"	1	5	Pistol, Poisoned (4+)
Splinter pods	18"	1	5	Assault 2, Poisoned (4+)
Splinter rifle (4+)	24"	1	5	Rapid Fire, Poisoned
Stinger pistol	12"	1	5	Pistol, Poisoned (2+)
Stinger pod	24"	5	5	Assault 2, Blast
Torment grenade launcher Soulfright	24"	1	-	Assault 1, Blast,
Void lance	36"	9	2	Assault 1, Lance
Void mine	-	9	2	Bomb 1, Large Blast,



Weapon	MELEE WEAPONS			
	Range	S	AP	Type
Agoniser	-	User	3	Melee, Poisoned (4+)
Archite glaive				
Single-handed	-	User	3	Melee
Double-handed	-	+1	2	Melee, Two-handed
Chain-flails	-	User	-	Melee, Shred
Close combat weapon	-	User	-	Melee
Demiklaives				
Single blade	-	+1	2	Melee, Two-handed
Dual blades	-	User	3	Melee, Dual Wield
Electrocorrosive whip	-	User	3	Melee, Concussive, Poisoned (5+)
Flesh gauntlet	-	User	-	Melee, Lethal Dose, Poisoned (4+)
Haywire grenade	-	2	-	Haywire
Hellglaive	-	+1	5	Melee, Two-handed
Huskblade	-	User	3	Melee, Instant Death
Hydra gauntlet	-	User	5	Melee, Shred, Specialist Weapon

Weapon	MELEE WEAPONS			
	Range	S	AP	Type
Ichor injector	-	User	-	Melee, Fleshbane, Lethal Dose
Impaler	-	User	5	Melee, Impale
Klaive	-	+1	2	Melee, Two-Handed
Mindphase gauntlet	-	User	-	Melee, Concussive
Plasma grenade	-	4	4	-
Power lance	-	+1/User	3/4	Melee
Power sword	-	User	3	Melee
Razorflail	-	User	5	Melee, Blade Whip, Specialist Weapon
Scissorhand	-	User	-	Melee, Poisoned (4+), Rending
Shaimeshi blade	-	User	-	Melee, Poisoned (2+), Lethal Dose
Shardnet & impaler	-	User	5	Melee, Ritual Pair
Stunclaw	-	+1	6	Melee, Snatched
Venom blade	-	User	-	Melee, Poisoned (2+)
Wrack tool	-	User	-	Melee, Poisoned (4+)

## UNIT TYPES

*Beast = Be, Character = (ch), Fast = F, Flyer = Fl, Infantry = In, Eldar Jetbike = Ejb, Jump unit = J, Monstrous Creature = Mc, Open-topped = O, Skimmer = S, Transport = T*



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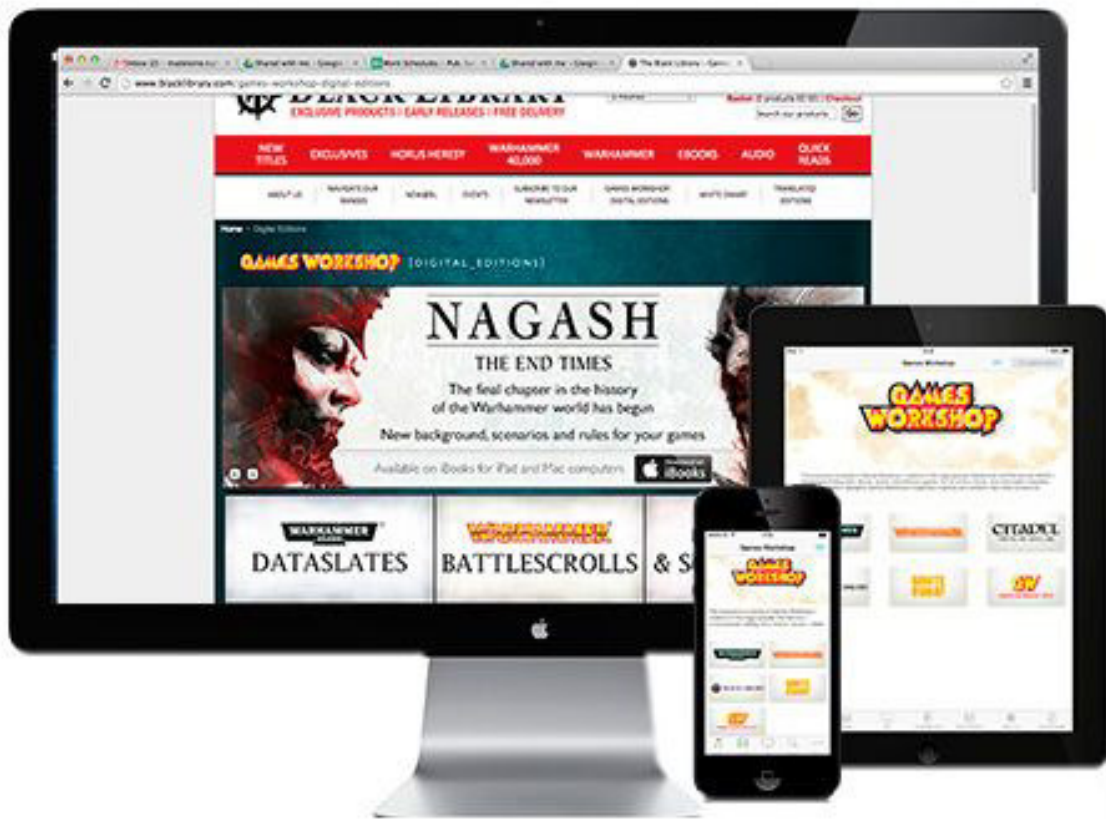


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