

WARHAMMER
40,000

DATASLATE



OFFICIO ASSASSINORUM

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**DATASLATE:
OFFICIO
ASSASSINORUM**

INTRODUCTION

OFFICIO ASSASSINORUM



'Thought begets Heresy; Heresy begets Retribution.'

- Anon



The Imperial Assassins are the hidden blades wielded by the High Lords of Terra. They are the slayers of kings and false messiahs, the bane of traitors and rebels across the stars. Once an agent has been despatched, he is as relentless and inescapable as the march of time itself. Every facet of his impeccable training is turned to the business of a single kill. Though the temples of the Officio Assassinorum are shrouded in the utmost secrecy, all men of influence fear the shadows they cast, for their operatives are the Emperor's Justice made real.

In a realm the size and scope of the Imperium, it is all too common for planets to escape the vigil of the High Lords. With communication and travel at the mercy of the Warp's shifting tides, a populace can go for ten, twenty, even a hundred years without being contacted by the wider Imperium. It is a fragile system indeed, and given the crushing grind of Imperial life, one that has seen many worlds fall into the thrall of heresy.

Left to fend for themselves against a hostile galaxy, it is easy for a planet's citizenry to harbour the seeds of corruption. A world may fail to pay its tithes, allow its psyker containment routines to slip, or come under the rule of an unsanctioned government. Some simply crave independence away from the dictates of the Administratum, the Ecclesiarchy, and a galaxy ruled by twelve faceless figures in the name of a distant Emperor.



Regardless of whether the new order is benevolent or tyrannical, its orchestrators make themselves targets for the most violent of retributions. Though their government may thrive in the short term, word will eventually reach the Adepts of the Imperium of their disobedience. Sometimes the resultant confrontation leads to open war, but it is just as often resolved by covert means. Coercion, bribery, threats, blackmail and murder are all weapons in the armoury of those whose iron grip defines the realms of Man. To this end, the Imperium has developed several institutions to exploit these weapons to their fullest; ancient organisations that trace their history back to the Great Crusade and the very birth of the Imperium. One such organisation is the Officio Assassinorum.

The Assassins of the Imperium are able to change the fate of worlds with the pull of a single trigger. Where the length of the Emperor's reach needs to be made abundantly clear, a Vindicare sniper will put a bullet in the target's head whilst the errant individual is surrounded by his followers. If the traitorous creed has spread to an entire organisation or military force, an Eversor will instead be set loose; a bio-enhanced berserker that will slaughter dozens if not hundreds of rebels alongside the key individual he has been sent to slay. Should the deed require more subtlety, an operative from the Callidus temple will instead be despatched; in such cases it is all but impossible to detect the presence of these shape-shifting Assassins until the deed is done. If the target is a psyker, one of the rare and fearsome Culexus will be sent to hunt them down – beings with a strange void in place of a soul that makes them the bane of all who treat with the Warp.

The weapons of the Assassins range from simple knives and garrotes, to exotic neural shredders and phase swords that can cut through armour and force field alike. Even bare-handed, these operatives are lethal foes; each is trained extensively in unarmed combat and is more than capable of fighting their way free from the mayhem that ensues from their kill. Returning to their masters, they are extensively debriefed and examined before being given a new mark and mission to accomplish. In this way, each Assassin is locked into a constant cycle of headhunting that spans the breadth of the Imperium, reforging

the fragile chains of Imperial rule even as the Time of Ending breaks them apart.



THE EMPEROR'S KNIVES

The training of an Assassin is a long and arduous business. Almost every recruit is an orphan, taken from the wreckage of his or her former life among the population of a death world, feral society or hive city, and transported to the Schola Progenium for tutelage. There, they train alongside the youths who will become the foremost agents of the Imperium.

Life in the Scholas is extremely hard, a relentless grind of physical and mental challenge where only the strongest thrive. Taught to strive for excellence and obedience in all things, the minds and bodies of the recruits are sharpened to a killing edge whilst their spirit learns to embrace the Emperor as master and immortal father. Most of these intense young men and women go on to train as Militarum Tempestus Scions, Commissars or, in the most unusual cases, Inquisitors. Those of their number who are born killers, however, are instead appropriated by the shadowy figures that haunt each Selection Day. Those recruits are never seen again by their fellows. From that day onwards, their only true friend is death itself.

Training starts even as the Assassinorum ships return to Terra, with the Officio instructors testing their prospective pupils mercilessly. The recruits must survive on limited food or air for days at a time. They must constantly fight each other in armed and unarmed combat, in conditions of total darkness or blinding light, zero-G or crushing weight, stifling heat or freezing cold. By the time of their arrival, there may be only a tenth of the prospective Assassins left, or sometimes – if the instructors deem every recruit to be unworthy – none at all.



Upon arrival at Terra, the surviving initiates begin the next stage of their training. Sailing past the space-borne basilicas, immense queues of pilgrim craft and military cordons that congest Terra's outer orbit, they are carried down into the Temples Assassinorum under the most advanced of shrouding protocols. In subterranean safehouses, these new recruits are divided amongst the hidden temples of the Officio Assassinorum. Each temple has its own ancient ways and mysteries, and each specialises in a different aspect of the art of murder. There are many such temples, some of which are known to the others and some that remain completely secret. There, the initiates train for a full decade, labouring under the auspices of Lord Assassins so harsh they make the drill abbots of the Schola Progenium look like kindly uncles by comparison.

The training procedure becomes ever more rigorous over the years as the temples test each candidate to his or her utmost limits. Days are spent battling with bone-wrenching exercise engines, fighting in deadly bouts or mastering their tolerance for pain. Initiates must survive lengthy courses of psycho-indoctrination and aggressive hypnosis, undergo physical tests of ever-escalating severity, and digest vast quantities of information about the Imperium that will soon be their hunting ground. They must train in the most esoteric of weaponry and steel their bodies against the ravages of endless steroids and stimms. Even then, they have only scratched the surface of their temple's potential arsenal. The hidden orders of the Assassinorum conceal masterpieces of destruction, some of which were devised by the Primarchs, Malcador the Sigilite, and even the

Emperor himself. Truly, it is said that each temple houses a thousand deaths and more.

‘An Assassin’s body is his most powerful weapon. He can smash through steel with his hands and feet. He can climb sheer surfaces, leap gaping chasms, run as fast as the wind, and endure hardships that would kill a lesser man. None can withstand pain or hurt like an Assassin. He can place his hand in boiling lava without flinching, he can endure flame or cutting blade. Even mortal wounds will not blunt his purpose. He works silently and without thanks, for he is the bloody-handed and secret saviour of the Imperium.’

- The Nature of the Knife, Grand Master Relistocles

AN ARMY OF ONE

Unlike other warriors of the Imperium, who are able to focus on war and war alone, the Assassin must be truly autonomous. Once an operative is in the field, he must be able to cross the galaxy from one side to the other, by means fair or foul. He must not only master his own lethal calling, but also be proficient in a dozen others. He must know how to drive and sanctify everything from an armoured bike to a small spacecraft, must be able to convince truculent machine spirits to do his bidding, and clean, disassemble and reconsecrate his wargear whenever necessary. He must have a professorial knowledge of the Imperium’s history, organisation, and common languages. His understanding of human anatomy must be complete, and every fact the Imperium has uncovered about the physicality of the xenos is bequeathed to him under oaths of secrecy.

Few human minds can process such vast quantities of information, let alone master them. Not all survive the rigours of their training with their spirits intact, and many have fallen into madness at the sheer quantity of the trials they face. Yet an initiate that joins the ranks of his temple’s operatives will have all these skills at his command.

Key to the uncanny might of the Assassin is the surgery he must undergo during his ten years of tutelage. Augmentative nodes are stitched into his brain, and sub-muscular acoustic surgery prepares his body for the punishment that will be visited upon him in the line of duty. The level of arcane technology necessary is perhaps the most advanced the Imperium can provide – for good reason, it is constrained to Holy Terra to minimise the chance of it being captured by the enemies of Humanity. It is well that such ancient techno-magicks are revered so, and maintained with such painstaking care. Without them, the polymorphic drugs and reality-shifting devices used by the more esoteric temples would literally tear their operatives apart.


Even if an Assassin survives his training, his leash is still held suffocatingly tight. Only by a successful petition to the High Lords of Terra themselves and a two-thirds majority in the subsequent vote can an Assassin be sanctioned and released into the galaxy to complete the task he was born to do.

The fact that the ultimate luminaries of the Imperium give their direct attention to the deployment of a single individual shows just how exceptional these killers are. The records of the Officio temples are as detailed as they are scrupulous, a source of great pride to the masters that watch over them. Across the millennia, occasions where the despatch of an operative has not resulted in the desired result are extraordinarily few and far between. Be the target man, witch, beast or daemon, the result is the same, for an Imperial Assassin is death incarnate.



SYNSKIN

One of the exotic pieces of equipment used by the Assassins is synthetic skin or synskin. This is a rubbery black layer that the Assassins spray onto their bodies, forming a close-fitting suit that enhances the function of the muscles beneath. Even items of equipment can be sealed in place by successive layers. Synskin acts like a flexible form of armour, absorbing blows and dissipating the energy of a blow. Synskin also feeds the body with oxygen and metabolic booster chemicals, allowing the wearer to endure burning heat, freezing cold, or even the hard vacuum of space for a limited time.





THE VINDICARE TEMPLE

'Exitus Acta Probat: the outcome justifies the deed.'

- Dictatus Vindicare

Vindicare Assassins are cold, calculating killers that eliminate their targets with contemptuous ease. They aim to bring inglorious death to the enemies of the Emperor with a sniper's bullet, and have elevated the skills of the marksman to an art form. It is said that a Vindicare can pick out a target's jugular vein or pupil from extreme range, even should the distance be traced through the ruins and smokestacks of an underhive sprawl.

To complement their superhuman accuracy, the Vindicare temple emphasises stealth and evasion techniques. One of the temple's maxims is that a clean kill can only be made from an excellent firing position, and Vindicare Assassins have been known to occupy a given location for weeks, waiting for their quarry to reveal himself before finally taking the perfect shot. By meditating on the immortal glory of the Emperor, these superb marksmen can slow down their metabolism to an almost hibernatory state. Though an operative's heart beats perhaps once per minute when in this state, subliminal triggers ensure he is roused into total focus the instant his target shows himself. In this way, the Vindicare can be likened to a spider or mantis, waiting motionless as stone before springing into action at the critical moment.



The skills of the Vindicare temple are commonly used to slay those who use mob rule and rousing oratory to inspire wars against the Imperium. They reply to sedition with the unstoppable retribution of an invisible, untraceable sniper. When such charismatic

figures meet their sudden death at the hands of a faceless servant of the Emperor, their followers are easily subdued once more by the weight of Imperial rule. Many false prophets have fallen mid-sermon with large-calibre bullet holes through their foreheads. So it is that revolutionaries, hive city demagogues and battlefield commanders alike live in fear of being gunned down without warning. Even the suspicion that such Assassins exist is enough to lend uncertainty to the words of these would-be leaders, robbing their credo of conviction. In this way, the shadow of the Vindicare has undermined a thousand would-be rebels without their presence even being required.

Vindicare Assassins are always in great demand to support Imperial forces on the battlefields of the war-torn galaxy. Successful alien commanders and dangerous visionaries are targets that often fall beneath the crosshairs of the Vindicare. In one incident, a massed Eldar assault in the Lammas campaign was halted by a lone Vindicare Assassin hiding in a ruined hab-tower. The tower enjoyed a commanding view of the surrounding terrain and, time and again, the Eldar advance was stalled by a succession of pinpoint shots that slew Exarchs, Warlocks and support weapon crews in quick succession. The Eldar called in their Rangers to clear the tower, but when they entered the sniper's nest, they found only a string of grenade traps ready to meet them.




THE WEAPONS OF THE UNSEEN

Vindicare Assassins are pragmatic in the extreme. Of all the temples, they rely on the tools of their trade the most – if their Exitus rifle is not in peak condition when the trigger is pulled, the entire mission can be compromised and the opportunity lost. For this reason, a Vindicare lavishes an obscene degree of care and attention upon his gun. All of the human affection and protective instincts that a normal man would show towards his family is instead transferred to the machine spirit of that most deadly instrument.

The Exitus rifle is no ordinary sniper's tool. Each of these magnificent weapons is purpose built for its wielder, its large bore barrel balanced so perfectly and stock so cunningly wrought that, once aimed, it becomes an extension of the Assassin's body. Its breech is capacious and advanced enough to house a variety of cutting-edge ammunition types selectable at the press of a rune, each geared towards a certain kind of kill.

The ammunition used by the Vindicare are marvels of occult science, for the targets of these Assassins are usually cloistered with all manner of protective measures, both physical and metaphysical. Shield-breaker shells, for instance, include destabiliser cores that collapse Imperial force shields, Ork bubble fields and even the protective rune-magicks used by the Eldar. Due to the hexagrammatic runes and exorcisms that the Assassin inscribes in tight spirals upon each shell casing, they are able to render Daemons and their ilk vulnerable a microsecond before impact. In this way, they can destroy even aetheric foes, blasting through their semi-corporeal forms in an explosion of dissipating ectoplasm.

Turbo-penetrator shells are segmented cylinders, each portion tipped with a concentrated melta charge that activates with a staggered detonation. This allows a single bullet to blast through successive layers of armour, no matter their thickness or composition. With just such a shell, the Vindicare Jutos Markov famously shot the noted paranoiac Velvian Thrisp with a bullet that penetrated through not only the hull of his flagship, but also the adamantium hide of the personalised Land Raider the renegade was hiding inside.



'We do not determine the guilty; we do not decide the punishment; we are merely the cold instruments of the Emperor's vengeance. There is no form of death unknown to us; there is no form of terror beyond our means; there is no enemy outside our reach. We are the blade that hovers over the throat of the traitor; we are the bullet that awaits the heretic's skull; we are the poison in the throat of the alien.'

- Decree Assassinorum



Hellfire shells are loaded with a wide cocktail of acids, each keyed to maximum lethality against the Imperium's corporeal foes. More potent even than the equivalents used by the superhuman warriors of the Adeptus Astartes, these horrible concoctions can chew away the chitin of even a Tyranid commander-organism until there is nothing left but smoking black gunk.

It is not only the Assassin's rifle that holds these murderous charges, but also the sidearm known as the Exitus pistol. Used primarily in circumstances where the Vindicare must engage a foe at close quarters, this bulky weapon is every bit as versatile as its long range equivalent. Some Vindicares only use their Exitus pistols in the direst of circumstances – when fighting their way through the baying throngs that attempt to block their escape, they break their foes with blunt trauma and broken necks rather than expend their precious ammunition on such low priority kills.



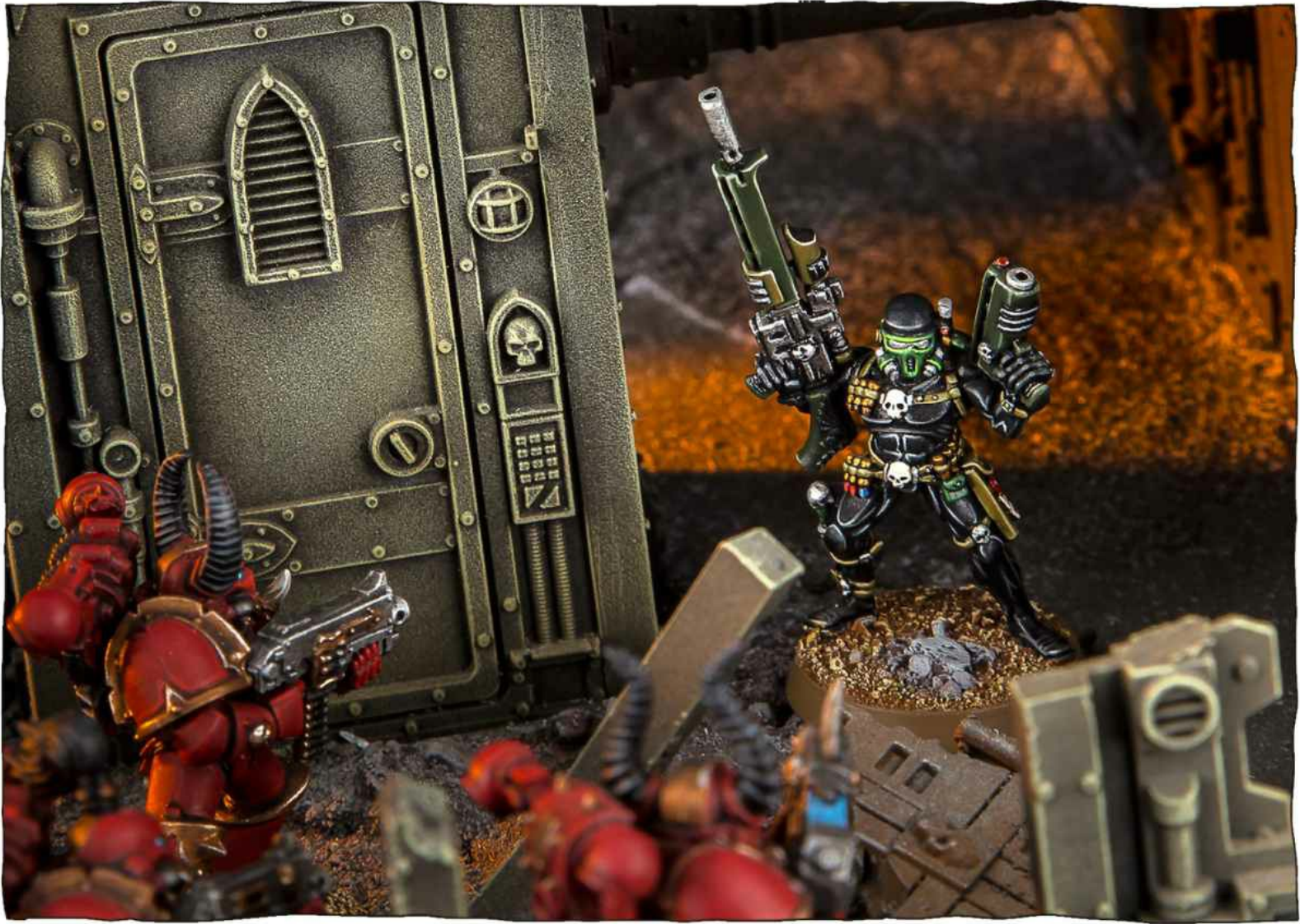
THE HERO'S SHADOW

The Adeptus Astartes and the agents of the Officio Assassinorum have never seen eye to eye, despite the fact that their ultimate goal is essentially the same. Because of the long-standing warrior traditions and codes of honour by which the Space Marines operate, the vast majority of Chapters see the Assassin's trade as distasteful at best. Some have even gone so far as to brand the Officio Assassinorum a despicable blight on the Imperium's honour, little realising that in doing so, they are courting the crosshairs themselves.

Though the Officio's operatives have fought alongside the Space Marines on countless battlefields across the Imperium, there are several incidences in the history of the Adeptus Astartes where Assassins have been implicated as enemies rather than allies. There is evidence to suggest their presence in shipyard reports prior to the abortive Warp translation that led to the disappearance of the Fire Hawks Chapter. A strangely empty set of early-model power armour was discovered near the site of the ambush at Alantor X, where the Angels of Retribution fell to a man. It is widely rumoured amongst the Adeptus Astartes present on Armageddon that the snipers that picked off the Celestial Lions' Apothecaries – and therefore doomed the Chapter to a slow death without gene-seed – were in the employ of the Vindicare temple. Some amongst the Crimson Fists blame the Officio Assassinorum for the disaster at Rynn's World, where a faulty missile ignited the very arsenal from which it was launched, killing over half of the Chapter and ruining its fortress monastery in a single apocalyptic explosion.

The truth, as is usually the case when the Officio Assassinorum is involved, will remain shrouded in mystery. Suspicion thrives nonetheless. It is a rare day indeed

when the Imperial Assassins and the Adeptus Astartes will work together in harmony, for each institution is convinced that the other is a wayward perversion of the Emperor's Will.



THE CALLIDUS TEMPLE



'To assume the shape of the accursed, and deliver death from the purity within you.'

- Dictatus Callidus



The Callidus temple is the subtlest of the ancient temples of the Officio Assassinorum, specialising in the artful deception of the enemies of the Imperium. The methods of the Callidus Assassin are those of utmost cunning and duplicity. They are sometimes used on missions where overt interference by the Imperium would upset the intricate balance of power maintained by the High Lords of Terra. It is quite possible for a Callidus operative to complete their task without the enemy force in question knowing they have been there at all. However, as the tumultuous times of the 41st Millennium draw to a close, the Callidus temple is making its presence felt upon the fields of battle more so than ever.

The techniques that the Callidus temple uses to bring down its targets are many and diverse, and can go far beyond that of simply killing the perpetrator. The Callidus temple undertakes many covert operations that may involve an Assassin infiltrating an enemy civilisation for weeks, months or even years. Specialists in infiltration, deceit and impersonation, these human chameleons will often take the place of a trusted aide or adjutant through their utmost mastery of disguise. Using this technique, the Callidus Assassin can get close to enemy commanders or powerful warlords, influencing their strategy and finally killing them when the opportunity arises. On the battlefield, they get as close to the chosen target as possible before making the kill at a critical time, often at the crux point of a conflict already in full flow. With the commander of an enemy force suddenly slain, the balance of the battle can be skewed dramatically in favour of the Imperium.

Should their target be dispatched without alerting his acolytes, the Callidus might then assume their identity instead. By disguising themselves with the recently deceased's clothes, armour and wargear, and using specialised elixirs to change their appearance, the Callidus Assassin can assume the identity of almost anyone in the enemy force. Using their newly appropriated persona, they will either countermand the organisation's standing agenda with a few well-chosen commands, or sow as much disruption as possible before disappearing altogether. In this way, the Callidus assassinates not only the individual, but any contagious beliefs or policies they have spread to their fellows. As the Lord Assassins of the temple like to point out, although other temples may be able to slay their targets in a faster or more dramatic fashion, only the Callidus can kill their ideology as well.

THE CREATURE WITHIN

To achieve their exacting tasks, the Callidus temple specialises in the use of the shape-altering drug Polymorphine. Whilst using Polymorphine, an Assassin must have complete control of their body, as well as a total understanding of the subject they are attempting to replicate. The high level of discipline required by the temple's gymnastic martial arts also helps the Assassin achieve the total calm and concentration required for shape-shifting. Over the centuries, the masters of the Callidus temple have learnt that the female body and psyche is better able to implement these changes, and that women make for better chameleons than the men. For this reason, members of the Callidus temple are almost exclusively female.



An injection of Polymorphine allows a trained Callidus Assassin to change their appearance dramatically. Under the influence of the drug, the user's body undergoes dramatic changes that only a fully trained individual can keep under control. Essentially, the bonds that hold together flesh, bone and nervous system are broken down, allowing the user a brief period to rearrange their physicality through sheer willpower. Whilst under its influence, they can lengthen bones, stretch skin, change the size and shape of their internal organs, convert muscle to fat and vice versa.

Even sanctums thought sealed and safe can be penetrated by one skilled in the use of Polymorphine. Its metamorphic properties allow the user to extend, wriggle and squeeze like a hunting snake through vents and pipelines that lead to the Assassin's quarry before reverting to humanoid shape in time for the kill.

Only once the Polymorphine drug has done its work does the Assassin release her body from its agonising ordeal. The operative is then set in her new form until the next injection of Polymorphine allows her to re-assume her original shape – or change to another.

With Polymorphine alone, a Callidus may masquerade as any human being they may choose, from a fresh-faced female officer to a crippled Ministorum priest. Stranger still, the Medicus Adepts of the Imperium have developed a range of surgical implants to allow Callidus Assassins to mimic members of abhuman cultures or xenos races, even those with morphologies as extreme as Orks and Eldar. These implants consist of flexi-cartilage and hardened synskin, substances similar to those used in the black carapace of Space Marines. When the Assassin is in their normal form, these implants lie dormant under their flesh and within their bones. It is only when Polymorphine is injected that these implants react to stimulants within the drug and transform. Genetically encoded shapes push through the Assassin's muscular form, allowing her to restructure her body into the grotesque form of an Ork, or the lithe and graceful body of an Eldar. There are even temple legends of a revered operative who underwent extreme surgery in order to transform herself into the totally alien form of a Genestealer hybrid. From that point on, the Assassin could only take the shape of the monster lurking within her, a sign of her true devotion to the arts that has never been bettered.

‘A dagger in the dark is worth a thousand swords at dawn.’

- Anon

Callidus Assassins undergo years of rigorous training to become one of the living weapons of the Imperium. As part of this training, the Callidus temple practises innumerable ancient and secret martial arts. These operatives must move among the

enemy as one of them, so choice of weaponry is always limited – in some cases the Assassin may be forced to fight bare-handed. A Callidus Assassin is a deadly foe unarmed, but when carrying the powerful signature weaponry of their temple, they are all but unstoppable.

Though Callidus Assassins usually bear a variety of poisoned knives and hidden garrotes around their person, the signature weapons of their temple are the phase sword and the neural shredder. Phase swords are extremely advanced artefacts rumoured to be of xenos origin. Some of the temple's scholars believe they were originally forged from inert splinters of a C'tan necrodermis, the same material used by the Necron race to bind their former masters into service. Regardless of their provenance, these blades are able to cut through physical armour and metaphysical protection alike. The neural shredder, a weapon originally devised by the Adeptus Astra Telepathica, is able to destroy a man's mind in a single ray of disruptive psychic power. All must fear the Callidus, for there is truly no protection against her strike – even by the act of seeking allies, her target invites death into his house.



THE WARS OF VINDICATION

A few months after the death of the traitorous High Lord Goge Vandire and the end of the Wars of Apostasy, the Imperial Palace was once again rocked by the violence of all-out war. This time a far more sinister element was involved: the Officio Assassinorum. Somehow, entrance to and from the palace had been barred, despite no order coming from the High Lords. Trapped within its confines, many had barricaded themselves in their chambers as the palace echoed to the sound of gunfire and shook with the force of devastating explosions. Vandire had managed to corrupt many within the Officio Assassinorum, just as he had bribed and blackmailed his way to influence within the Adeptus Astra Telepathica, Ecclesiarchy, Administratum and Astra Militarum. Foremost amongst his agents was one Tziz Jarek of the Callidus Temple. Using Polymorphine, Jarek had assassinated the true Grand Master and assumed his identity. However, unbeknownst to Jarek, the Grand Master had expected such a plot and had a loyal Callidus Assassin take his place in his chambers. So it was that Jarek had not killed the true Grand Master, who secretly mustered those Assassins still loyal to him to fight against this usurper. A heinous battle raged within the Imperial Palace itself, with many innocents dying as the Assassins brought their terrible skills to the war.

The ancient arsenal of the Officio Assassinorum was opened and terrifying weapons used once more, weapons whose use had been banned by the Senatorum Imperialis since their discovery. Gene-sympathetic nerve gases polluted the corridors, while neutronic warheads destroyed whole wings of the Palace. In the end, the true Grand Master assassinated Jarek and then disappeared in self-

imposed exile. It was this chain of events that led to the formation of the Ordo Sicarius, that branch of the Inquisition that is specifically tasked with ensuring the Officio Assassinorum remains as true to the goals of the High Lords as humanly possible.



THE EVERSOR TEMPLE

‘Fear me, for I am your apocalypse.’

- Dictatus Eversor

The Eversor is possibly the most gruesome weapon of the Officio Assassinorum. The temple specialises in shock and terror tactics, instilling fear of Imperial retribution in the hearts and minds of all who hold positions of power. Eversor Assassins are primarily used against rebels who have plans to move against the Imperium with a large armed force. When the long, grinding war of attrition that is the Astra Militarum’s forte is ruled out – perhaps because it is likely to leave a valuable planet ravaged – the High Lords will sometimes sanction the use of an Eversor Assassin.

An Eversor distils the brute force of an entire strike team into a single human body, and hence rarely has just a single target. His mission will be to rip the heart out of the rebel operation, wreaking havoc and destruction. Such brutality ensures that the renegade leaders are destroyed in one fell swoop, and that no would-be successors may take over.


In order to better enact these one-man killing sprees, the Eversor temple trains its operatives to be utterly ruthless and completely dedicated to the Imperium. The temple engineers its inductees to be super-human killing machines, their bodies driven far beyond normal human capabilities. Once this process is complete, the temple introduces a range of stimms and implants to alter the Assassin’s state of mind into a boiling cauldron of murderous intent.



The only way an Eversor Assassin can be kept from constantly committing grievous acts

of carnage is to keep them in suspended animation until they are required for a mission. Each Eversor Assassin is stored in a cryo-crypt on board one of the many hidden ships that the temple has scattered across the Imperium. These ships maintain a constant state of alert, waiting only for orders from the High Lords of Terra to unleash their deadly cargoes.

When an Eversor is selected for a mission, he is transferred from the cryo-crypt to a special drop pod, where neuro links feed the details of the mission to him during his cryo-suspension. The pod is launched at the target planet, as remote links with the spaceship reanimate the Assassin and ready his finely-tuned body with all he needs to complete the mission. When the pod impacts, the Assassin will be fully awake and ready to begin his grim task. He will be totally unaware of the time spent in cryo-suspension – he might have spent years or even centuries in a frozen state – but to the Assassin, the time gap between the end of the last mission and the start of the next will be mere moments. He will be psyched up and ready to satiate his desire to slaughter the enemies of the Imperium; a desire fulfilled using bolt shells and toxin needles from his Executioner pistol, stabbing thrusts of his power sword, hypodermics and shock generators built into his neuro-gauntlet, melta bomb blasts, throat-crushing punches, and whatever else is to hand. The Eversor's assault is so swift and ruthless that his foes are rarely aware that they are under attack – that is, until the doors of their sanctuary are torn off their hinges and the skull-like mask of the Assassin looms out of the darkness toward them.



'For those that defy the Imperium, only the Emperor can judge your crimes. Only in death can you receive the Emperor's Judgement.'

- Motto of the Officio Assassinorum



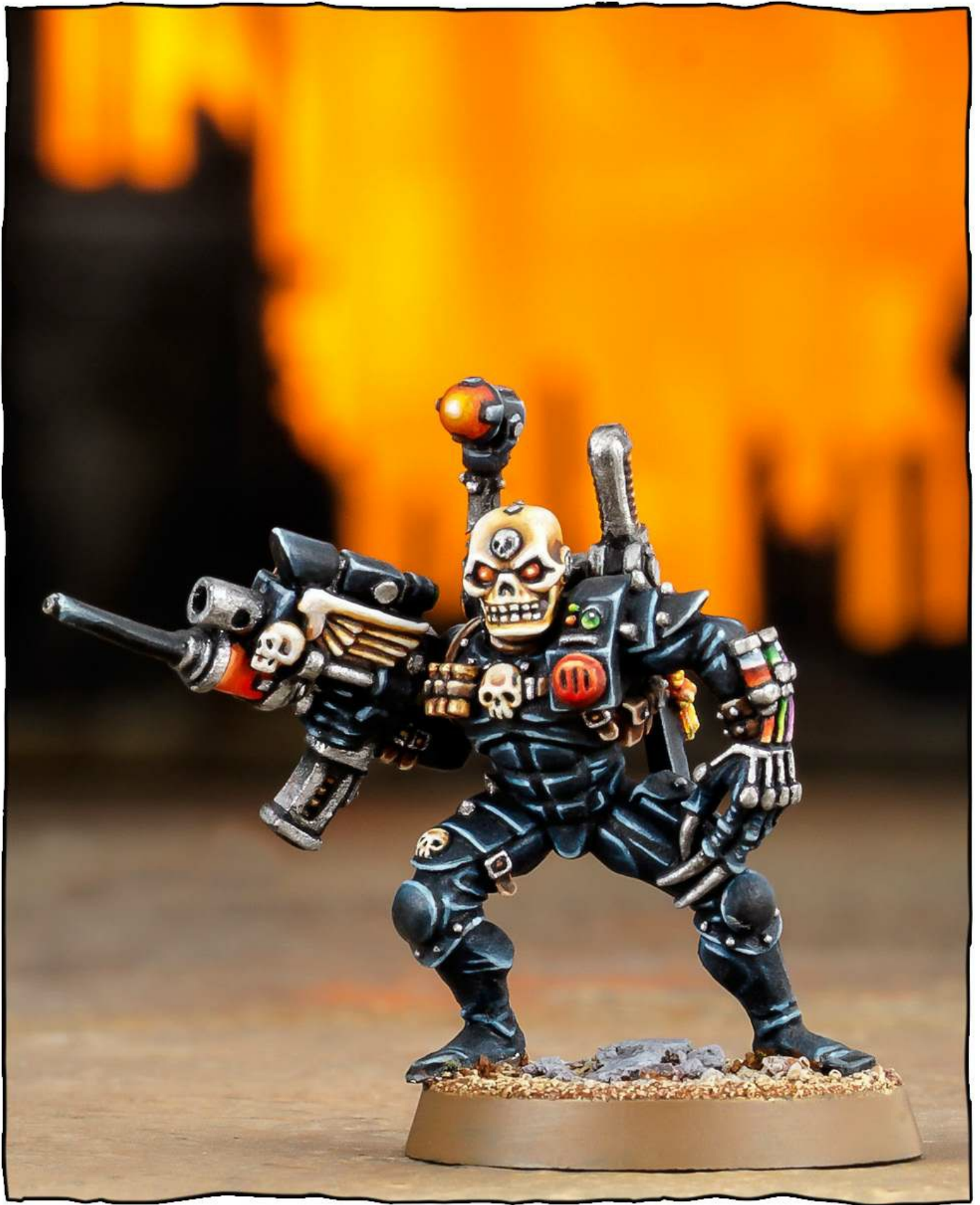
CREATING A MONSTER

Recruits for the Eversor temple are invariably chosen from the youngest of the available novitiates. This is because only a body yet to fully develop is able to accept the many genetic alterations that the novitiate will undergo. The process of becoming an Eversor is arduous and long, the extensive testing, genetic manipulation and drugs turning each Assassin into a living, breathing weapon of war. At first, results from training exercises are assessed to determine which alterations would be most suitable. After that, the real experiments begin.

The masters of the Eversor temple and the Medicus Adepts are constantly developing and adapting a special programme of genetics, bio-implants and chemical boosters to enhance the Assassin's body far beyond what a normal human could achieve. The Medicus Adepts make the most of these adaptations when an Assassin is chosen for the Eversor temple.

The novitiate Assassin undergoes endoskeletal restructuring, increasing his stamina and aerobic performance and allowing him to fight for days without tiring. Muscular hypertrophy enables the Assassin to explode into a fury of activity that lasts for hours at a time. In order to cope with these changes, the Assassin is given a second heart. Not only does this give the Assassin extra survivability should one heart be damaged in combat, but also ensures that when he is really driving his body to the limits, both organs can kick in, maintaining the excessively high heart rate demanded by his frantic killing frenzy.


If the trainee's body survives all of the implants and modifications, his cerebral cortex is also enhanced by genetically coded lobo-chips. These chips amplify the Assassin's state of mind, turning a mere dislike for the enemy into raging hatred, or the wish to serve the Imperium into determination to complete his mission at any cost. Adrenal ducts are implanted and electro-elixirs injected, speeding up the brain's higher functions and allowing the Assassin to make complex calculations and tactical decisions in seconds.



The process of turning a normal human being into a bio-enhanced killing machine is not

without its dangers. Many Assassins have died on the operating table or, more often, from some unforeseen side-effect of their many complex modifications. Many of the side effects are known to the Medicus Adepts and can be countered by glandular implants that constantly feed the necessary counter-active agents into the Assassin. However, every Eversor Assassin's body is in a state of constant agitation and conflict. Whilst the Eversor lives, he can keep everything under control using his hyper-immuno system and an advanced cortex that maintains safe combinations of chemicals within his body.

However, should the Assassin's hearts stop or his brain fail, the concoctions inside him will react at a rapidly accelerating rate. As the dying Assassin's control over his body deteriorates, he spontaneously combusts with such explosive force that his bio-meltdown can kill those standing nearby. This is not something that the Assassins resent, for they will use any weapon they can to fulfil their violent quest. Even in death, they will slaughter and destroy, for they are true killers, and relish every life they can extinguish.



'No world shall be beyond my rule; no enemy shall be beyond my wrath.' Thus spake the almighty Emperor on the summit of Mount Vengeance, on Thor. And a number of his most loyal servants did meet together, eager to serve the Emperor as best they could, to help enact his dreams of conquest and rulership of the galaxy. Skilled were they in stealth and subterfuge, accomplished in the arts of death were they. They hunted down those who would bring ruination to the Emperor's divine plan and struck them down as a bolt from the heavens. In secrecy they acted, preferring not to have praise from the Emperor, for they felt themselves unworthy of such attentions amidst the vast sacrifices and destruction of the Great Crusade.

Silently did they enact their executions, moving unseen from world to world in the Emperor's wake, ensuring that promises were not reneged upon, that treaties and pacts were adhered to. In time, these loyal servants realised that they could never hide from death forever, and that their skills must be passed on to a new generation, to continue their great works. Thus, they finally revealed themselves to the Emperor and he did see the magnificent duty they had taken upon themselves, and he was most pleased. Great temples were constructed on Terra and the most skilful and deadly youths were sought out. Thus the Officio Assassinorum was created, and the names of Callidus, Venenum, Culexus, Vindicare, Eversor and Vanus were forever immortalised. The strongest survived their rigorous training, and in turn passed on their skills to others. New skills were learnt and new temples founded; the art of blade and pistol, poison and garrote were honed in every aspect conceivable.

So it is that now there is indeed no world beyond the Emperor's rule; no enemy beyond the Emperor's wrath.



THE CULEXUS TEMPLE

‘That which is unknown and unseen always commands the greatest fear.’

- Dictatus Culexus

The Culexus temple is in all likelihood the most sinister of all the Assassin temples. Its operatives are skull-helmed harbingers of death, nigh-invisible terrors whose merest touch can extinguish the victim’s soul. Even amongst the upper echelons of the Officio Assassinorum, this temple is always viewed with extreme caution. This is not because of the way that the Culexus operate, nor because of any particularly hideous methods they use to kill their targets. It is because of the Assassins themselves.


First and foremost, a potential Culexus Assassin is chosen because he possesses a very rare genetic defect, something that is at once unique and yet utterly abhorrent to the Imperium. Every living being has some sort of presence in the Warp, where the soul is reflected through from the real universe. For non-psykers this will usually be little more than a minute spark. For psykers, however, their soul blazes like a shining beacon that can be seen by other psykers and creatures that live within the Warp. The more powerful the psyker, the brighter their soul burns within the realm of the Empyrean. Culexus Assassins are true terrors because they have, or appear to have, no presence in the Warp – in its place, there is simply a void. They are, to all intents and purposes, soulless.

This extremely rare defect occurs in less than one in a billion individuals. Those who suffer from this condition are known by the name of Pariah, or untouchable, and meeting one is something that no normal human being can ever forget. Their cold calculating stare draws attention to their eyes; pools of blackness that seem to pull one into a pit of nothingness. The very presence of a Pariah makes those around them feel fearful and increasingly paranoid, as an all-pervading sense of wrongness causes skin to crawl and senses to rebel. Some may complain of excruciating head-pains, or steadily increasing levels of directionless panic, their hearts hammering and their breath coming in ragged gasps. For a psyker, this sensation is infinitely worse, manifesting as horrified panic attacks, seizures, and a monstrous sensation of being smothered or drowned. Such horrible phenomena make Pariahs outcasts among human society. And yet it is these very powers that the Culexus temple refines and amplifies to create their terrifying Assassins.

THE FORTRESS OF THE SOULLESS

Most of the other ancient temples are granted a certain amount of autonomy, allowing the general day-to-day running, training and sometimes mission assignation to be taken care of by older, more experienced Lord Assassins. However, the Culexus temple is ruled

directly by high-ranking officials of the Officio Assassinorum. The temple itself is located not upon Holy Terra, but within a fortified complex upon a dead moon, outside the range of the Astronomican. This is the Fortress of the Soulless, an echoing, armour-clad fastness that lays always beneath a suffocating blanket of dread. All Pariahs and Culexus Assassins are kept within the fortress unless on active duty. If any are ever allowed to leave, then it is always under a veil of secrecy and with the highest levels of security. It cannot be doubted that the Culexus temple has proven itself of invaluable use to the Imperium on countless occasions. Even so, there are factions within the Imperium that would see every Pariah executed and the Culexus temple utterly destroyed.



‘Pain is an illusion of the senses, despair an illusion of the mind.’

- Assassin proverb



When the Culexus temple receives a mission, an Assassin is chosen and transported to the arena of conflict on board a specially shielded ship, much like the Black Ships of the Inquisition. In addition to this, the Assassin wears a huge helm called an Animus Speculum. Grotesquely outsized and skull-faced, this device turns the Culexus’ silhouette into that of a monstrous aberration. Though its primary purpose is to mask the Assassin’s unsettling aura, the Animus Speculum doubles as a potent weapon, able to leech the power of the Warp and project it as bolts of searing energy. The helm is only partially effective at muffling the Assassin’s null-presence, even when operating at full power; most people can barely stand to be in the same room as the wearer due to the nauseous, head-spinning effect that is the trademark of a Culexus Assassin’s presence. When it is switched off altogether, the mayhem that ensues is terrifying to behold. Victims in close proximity may flee in wild-eyed terror, or freeze in place, hyperventilating and shaking uncontrollably. Others collapse, clutching their heads as bloody froth oozes from tear-ducts and gaping mouths. Psykers scream in horror as their connection to the Warp is severed, the Assassin’s powers snuffing out their own like the flame of a candle. However, such overt action inevitably forces the Culexus to reveal themselves. Thus, deactivating the Animus Speculum is a tactic reserved for the open battlefield, or when the Assassin is backed into a corner by overwhelming numbers of foes.



A LIVING WEAPON


Once dispatched to kill a specific foe, the Culexus Assassin attacks using his own innate abilities enhanced by years of training, mental exercises and arcane wargear. He carries no guns or hand-to-hand weapons, for he needs none; the Culexus' very touch is death, leeching the soul from its victim before shredding it like smoke before a hurricane. Victims are not simply killed, but instead are utterly destroyed, their essence torn apart even as their body is reduced to a scorched shell. A single punch from a Culexus can prove lethal, and if the Assassin is able to take a firm grip of a living foe, their doom is all but assured.

Whilst closing with his mark, the Culexus operates under the protective field of his Etherium – a highly advanced form of Aegis Suit that is built into the Culexus Assassin's synskin. This, combined with the wearer's innate and disturbing qualities, makes him all but impervious to psychic attack. Weapons that are in any way connected to non-material dimensions simply pass through him as if he were no more than a ghost. Perhaps most unsettling of all, the Etherium also renders the Culexus Assassin nearly impossible to detect, whether by conventional senses or via complex mechanical sensors. For this reason, the advance of the Culexus is more of a relentless prowl than a headlong rush, as the Assassin stalks towards the target with the inevitability of death itself. A Culexus can stand in the very same room as his target yet remain hidden, his victims feeling only a mounting sense of unease, and glimpsing nothing but phantoms haunting their peripheral vision.

With the enemy in sight, the Animus Speculum is used – an unnaturally powerful weapon that is deadly to all, but especially horrifying to those with psychic ability. When the helm's saviour protocols are deactivated, the large eye in the helm opens and the magnified intensity of the Assassin's horrific capabilities floods the surrounding area. This is most devastating of all when several psykers are grouped together, such as when the psychic choirs of the Eldar take the field, for the Animus Speculum's negative


feedback loop gets stronger the more its victims attempt to resist.

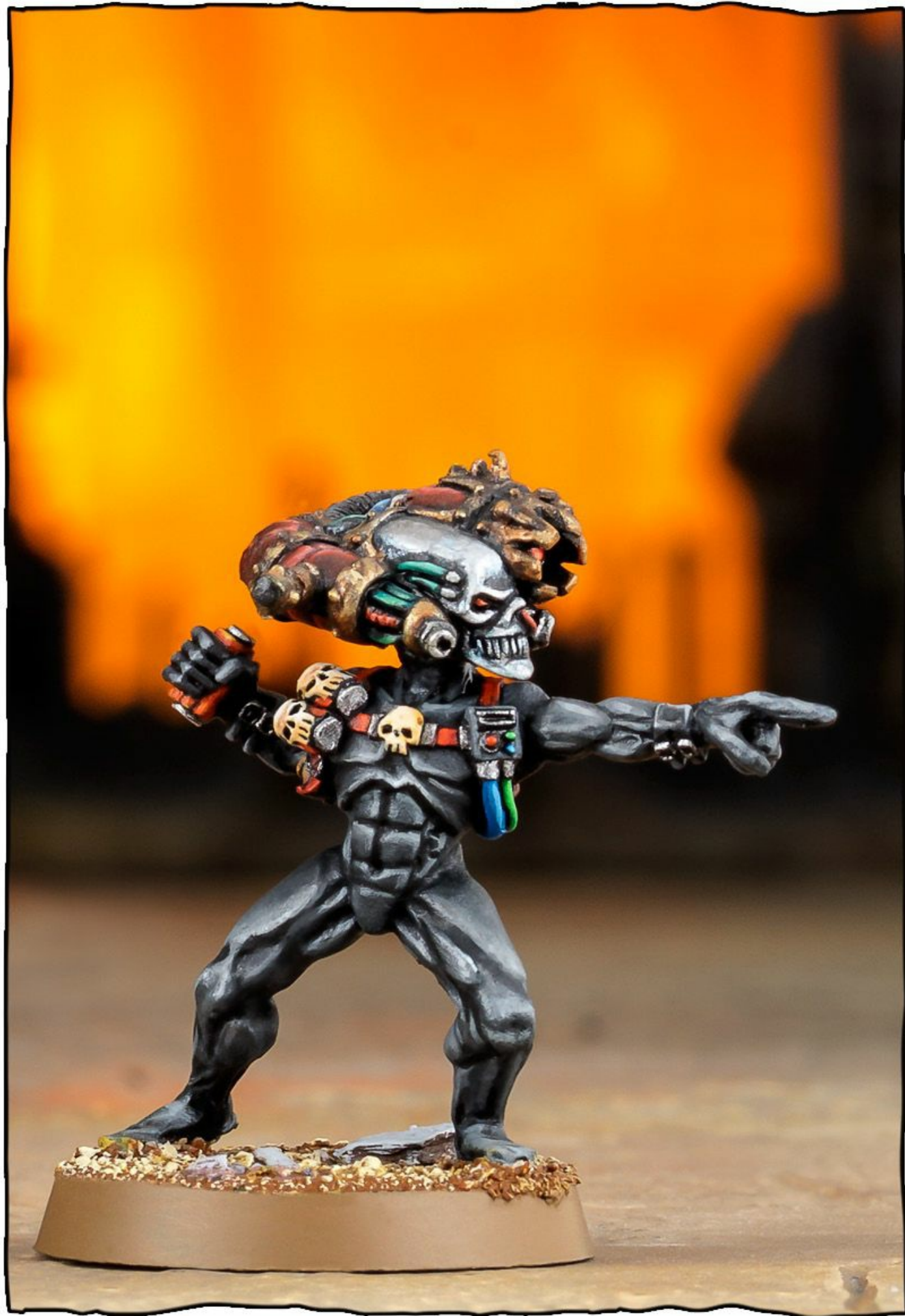
Under the cover of his own repugnance, the Assassin slips through battle lines and bodyguards, his negative aura muddling the minds of conventional troops. Whilst he is closing with the foe, the Culexus will hurl psyk-out grenades – each loosing a swirling storm of psycho-reactive dust from the Golden Throne itself – that swathe those nearby in crippling confusion. As his panicked quarry reel from this extra-sensory assault, the stalking Assassin moves in for the kill. His Animus Speculum blazes with negative energy, scorching his target's brain until they collapse, eye sockets smoking, skull burned out from within.



‘A single death can prevent a war that would claim a billion lives.’

- Assassin's maxim





HIDDEN BLADES

There exist two major temples of the Officio Assassinorum that specialise in untraceable kills. The Vanus temple works to engineer their mark's doom via their consummate command of information. The Venenum temple, whose mastery of poisons is unparalleled outside the Dark City of Commorragh, sows within its targets time-delayed toxins that afford its operatives ample time to escape suspicion. Echo Malensis, now a Lord Assassin of her temple, became so deft in the use of psychopoisson that she was able to time her target's death to the second of her return to the Venenum debriefing chambers.

Though they have not the pedigree of Vindicare, Callidus, Eversor or Culexus, these temples are just as ferocious in their pursuance of the Imperial cause. The Venenum temple has the best of all ratios of risk and reward, having lost only a handful of operatives in the field since its inception – by the time their impeccably tailored poisons take effect, the operative is usually long gone. The Vanus temple wages a far more complex war, taking the art of the stealth kill to the next level. Their modus operandi is to learn everything possible about not only their target but also those closest to him, then to tacitly manipulate circumstances so that their mark's death is brought about by his own folly or – preferably – by the hand of a once-trusted friend or comrade. It is the Vanus temple that the Imperium employs when the revelation of a prominent figure's heresy would cause more damage than the knowledge of the resultant retribution. Many a shining saint or vaunted figurehead has met with premature martyrdom after some secret heresy has reached the ears of the Vanus. It was Sire Augustus Gulle's consort-commander Evanduela who buried her husband alive whilst he was sleeping in his bed – the Vanum temple ensured she found out about Gulle's indiscretions with a rival knightly house, and the battle cannons of her Freeblade allies did the rest.

*'The cleanest kill is one that another performs in your stead,
with no knowledge of your incitement.'*

- Dictatus Vanus



THE CHAINS THAT BIND



Over the course of the Imperium's history, the agents of the Officio Assassinorum have claimed millions of lives for their masters. But their tactics differ greatly from the worldwide slaughter brought to bear by the Astra Militarum or the unrelenting force of an Adeptus Astartes strike. Each death they bestow upon the enemies of the Imperium is a carefully crafted link in the chain that binds the realm of Man to the Emperor's immortal will. Though every one of these kills is extensively documented in the appropriate temple's datacrypts, only a very small fraction have entered the legends of the Imperium, known by few outside the vaulted halls of the High Lords themselves.

c.M31 THE HORUS HERESY

After the Warmaster Horus' treachery is revealed, an early incarnation of the Officio Assassinorum sends four operatives, one from each of the major temples, to hunt down and destroy the traitor Primarch. All four are found wanting, for Horus is powerful beyond the reach of mortal men, and his destiny lies elsewhere.

c.M31 DEATH OF A PRIMARCH

The Primarch of the Night Lords, Konrad Curze, is plagued by visions of his own demise – a kill-strike ordered by the Emperor himself. The knowledge of his spiritual father's betrayal festers within him, and he becomes the fiendish traitor known as Night Haunter. As the Heresy unfolds, the Callidus temple is charged with the Primarch's death. Though his Legionnaires fight to catch the killer in their midst, the Assassin M'Shen enters Night Haunter's throne room to find him unresisting. By allowing the Emperor to kill his own son, the creature that was once Konrad Curze believes his rebellion vindicated forever – for in death, he has proved the Emperor is as callous as he has always maintained.

546-646.M32 THE BEHEADING

The High Lords of Terra are slain to a man when the Grand Master of the Officio Assassinorum, Drakan Vangorich, mounts a bloody coup decades in the making. Thus begins a hundred-year period of anarchy in which the Imperium is all but torn apart. It is only at great loss that a Space Marine retribution force delivers the Emperor's justice to Vangorich and his acolytes. In the aftermath, over fifty Space Marine leaders arrive upon Terra, accompanied by a crusade-strength 'honour guard.' After a long council with the great and the good behind closed doors, twelve new High Lords are placed in office, and stability thus returns to the Imperium.

990.M32 A GHOST AMONGST DEVILS

The Culexus Assassin Dranos is sent to destroy the Sorcerer Xantaka before he can conjure any more daemonic legions from the Warp. Being all but invisible to not only the aethersight of Xantaka's Daemon armies but also his Rubricae bodyguard, Dranos simply walks up to the Sorcerer Xantaka and burns his brains to ash with a blast of negative energy.

340.M33 MOTHER GULLET

A Callidus Assassin, sent to steal away the firstborn child of the dangerously self-centred Planetary Governor Thygmus van Spracht, disguises herself as the infant's matron-vigilus. By widening her craw with Polymorphine and swallowing the princeling whole, she walks past the elite Palace Guards without so much as a whisper of resistance. She carries the prize in her belly to her masters before regurgitating it whole, mewling but safe. Pict-skull footage is sent to the governor, and he falls back into the Imperial fold within the week.

452.M34 THE BLINDED SEER

A Culexus Assassin is sent to claim the head of the manipulative Farseer Lithandros-Esmanthil. The Eldar senses the threat and scries the skeins of fate accordingly, but is increasingly alarmed to find he is unable to locate the thread corresponding to his pursuer. After a long and terrifying hunt, the Assassin ambushes his prey in the lonely halls of Saim-Hann's Dome of Reflection. Rendered psychically inert and driven to exhaustion by the chase, Lithandros-Esmanthil gives himself up to the sinister violence that follows.

372.M35 THE CULL OF THE GOLIATHS

The abhuman goliaths of Thugrock Secundus, a recruitment moon for the Astra Militarum, develop a blood cult that consumes the planet's ruling caste. In an unprecedented display of miscommunication, no fewer than six Eversor assassins are dispatched to slay the leaders of the indigenous population. By the time the single surviving Eversor is recovered, not one Thugrock Goliath is left alive, and when the news reaches the Astra Militarum, they are most displeased that such a rich resource has been wasted. To this day, the event is used as a cautionary fable to illustrate the dangers of despatching several Assassins at once.

c.200.M36 THE REIGN OF BLOOD

Goge Vandire, Ecclesiarch and High Lord of the Adeptus Administratum, falls from the Emperor's light. His tremendous influence, charisma and determination to overhaul the Imperium sparks a civil war that lasts for seven decades. His insurrection only ends when a counter-crusade mounted by Sebastian Thor tears power from the traitor's cold and clutching claws.

501.M37 DEATH OF A RECIDIVIST

The influential cardinal Jerome the Unsaintly of Oristia IV secedes from the Imperial Creed. He amasses an insane amount of wealth through illegal levies, hoping to gather an army of Frateris Militia to rival that of Goge Vandire. He is shot in the roof of the mouth by a Vindicare Assassin whilst singing subversive hymns.

563.M37 THE MORISHA INCIDENT

Urhua Thereaux, Assassin of the Venenum Temple, is dispatched to assassinate the renegade Governor Yawell of Morisha. During transit, the starship is caught in a Warp rift, holding the vessel in temporal stasis for some six hundred and ninety-eight years. Not knowing that this has occurred, Thereaux proceeds to her target, only to find Yawell long since dead and replaced by an anti-Imperial democratic committee consisting of over a thousand members. Faced with such an extreme task, Thereaux only succeeds in killing the committee members after spending three days poisoning all the chairs in the council's auditorium prior to a meeting of the full committee.



003.M38 THE STARGAZER'S DEMISE

The progressive astrologer Lenas Scard is marked for death before his heretical discoveries shake the Imperial Creed any further. The Vindicare Assassin Erasmus Menst hangs upside-down from a promethium relay pipe for six days, awaiting his prey, only to realise that Scard is aware of his pursuit and has holed up inside his observatory. Menst abandons his plan and instead climbs to the highest spire of Hive Mendicantus, knowing that it is only a matter of time before the glint of Scard's scrying scope appears. Sure enough, as the planet's moon is bisected by the spire, a telltale flash from Scard's observatory appears. Menst is able to put a shot through the telescope's lens and into the eye socket of the stargazer behind it.

386143.M38 THE FALL OF ORLENZA TRIARTES

The planet of Orlenza Triartes severs its ties from the Imperium, hoping for better trade terms. The Planetary Governor tricks his Adeptus Arbites into quelling a prison break that

turns out to be a carefully crafted ambush, placing the Arbitrators under lock and key alongside those same criminals they had arrested. Word reaches the Imperium, and two regiments of Imperial Guard are sent to intervene. The preening aristocrats at the heart of the rebellion muster their forces and attack, only to find that their chief military advisor, a vulgar but effective mercenary known as Le Kard, was not who they thought he was. The Orlenza forces find their dispersal to be extremely ineffective, and they are surrounded and cut off within a week. When Le Kard's airtight cell is opened it is found to contain only a set of discarded clothes and a synskin-clad Callidus, crouching like a hyperfelid ready to pounce. The Assassin cuts a swathe through the planet's nobility before disappearing without a trace.

209.M38 THE GROT THAT TURNED

The petite but fearsome Callidus Assassin Militzia Scarvelli infiltrates Big Mek Oilguzla's workshops in the guise of a gretchin slave-creature. Just as Oilguzla launches his Deff Dread horde at the Space Marines protecting Hive Imperator, Scarvelli recovers her phase sword from its hiding place in a nearby stack of scrap metal and attacks. Though it takes her almost a full minute to do so, she hacks the Big Mek into fist-sized chunks before overloading his force-field generator and bringing the stomping advance of the Deff Dread mobs to a grinding halt.

243.M39 STATUESQUE

The Vindicare temple is given a kill order to take out the predatory Dark Eldar pilot known as the Skyknife. Knowing that to enter Commorragh would be to court almost certain failure, the Vindicare Assassin Dejedris Garamach determines the site of a previous sighting of the Skyknife's Razorwing Jetfighter. He mounts his vigil in the eye socket of the Threndian Colossus, subsisting on moss and the raw flesh of the birds that use the statue as its nest whilst never taking his eyes from the sky. Six years later, his vigil is rewarded when the Skyknife appears from midair in a flash of azure light. Within a half-second of its appearance Garamach puts a turbo-penetrator round into the cockpit, killing the pilot instantly.

718924.M40 TO SLAY A WAAAGH!

The Ork Warlord Urgak the Unstoppable is on the verge of completing his Gargant and launching a Waaagh! into the Vondiac Sector when a Vindicare Assassin sends a bullet into the reactor core of the giant effigy. The thing catches fire and then explodes spectacularly, killing not only Urgak himself but also the vast majority of the Meks in his employ. The Waaagh! is halted before it even begins, putting the lie to Urgak's self-aggrandising title and plunging the surviving Orks into a bloody civil war.

231.M41 THE TIGERS CAGED

Hetman Gretch of the 593rd Kadaveran Tigers becomes so incensed at constantly being interrupted by the Tactical Auto-Reliquary of Tyberius that he 'accidentally' deactivates it with a ceremonial mace. It is the first step in a rebellion that sees not only the 593rd, but the entirety of the Kadaveran Tigers, turn against the Imperium. A Callidus Assassin is

sent to infiltrate Gretch's advisor corps, assuming the identity of his eyeless Astropath before killing the traitorous commander and taking his place. When the Tigers open hostilities against the Cadian 342nd, their orders suddenly become contradictory and counter-intuitive, and when the command staff is obliterated by an artillery strike called down upon their own position, the entire war effort falls to pieces. The Kadaverans, their forces decimated within the hour, quickly see the error of their ways and submit themselves for a regiment-wide court martial. Though the Tactical Auto-Reliquary is recovered and later repaired, they are found guilty and executed to a man.



290.M41 A DESTINY DENIED

The Officio Assassinorum, having failed to destroy the obscenely powerful Chaos Lord Malfecius with operatives from the Eversor and Vindicare temples, sends the Culexus Assassin Vaedrex instead. The Culexus haunts the steps of Malfecius across the Eye of Terror. Only when Malfecius ascends to Daemon Princehood does Vaedrex finally strike. With Malfecius' latest incarnation rendering him vulnerable to Vaedrex' psyk-out grenades, the Culexus finally manages to kill the reeling Daemon Prince with a punishing series of blasts from his Animus Speculum.

353.M41 THE DREAD GESTALT

The Wyrdvane Psykers of the Vostroyan Firstborn 122nd come through a difficult Warp translation as a gestalt entity of terrifying psychic power. Revelling in their new abilities, they rise up amongst the ranks of their former comrades and enslave every one of them to their bloodthirsty desires. When the regiment arrives on Sylvanus II they set about the murder of the populace. The Hammers of Dorn are sent on a planetfall mission to destroy the Dread Gestalt, but the powers of the Wyrdvane Psykers are so swollen that the Space Marine attack is repelled with terrifying ease. Only when the Culexus Assassin known as the Revoker is unleashed into the Vostroyan ranks does the Dread Gestalt lose its power, flopping back to earth as weak as newborns. They are killed to a man by Vostroyan

bayonets even before the Revoker can close with his target to finish the job.

886.M41 SONS OF THE INTERSTICE

The Lubricae Cult arises within the Adeptus Mechanicus, a body of heretics that worship the interstitial substances that keep the universe running smoothly. All twelve of the senior Technomagi gather around a black and shimmering pool of arcanoil, anointing themselves with a mixture of war-virgin's blood and boiling grease as they declare open war on their former brethren. A slick black devil bursts from the pool's depths when the Eversor Assassin sent to slay them reveals himself. Within moments every one of the Lubricae Cult is slain. Their Skitarii legions attack nonetheless, but without leadership they are quickly defeated by their loyalist counterparts.

999.M41 THE FOE UNTOUCHABLE

Within the Eye of Terror, a Black Crusade of unprecedented size musters to break open the Cadian Gate. Rumours abound that its supreme warlord is empowered by the Gods of Chaos, and that whilst he enjoys their favour, cannot be laid low by mortal weaponry. The agents of the Officio Assassinorum are dispatched en masse to slay the Warmaster Abaddon and his most favoured lieutenants before they breach realspace. One by one they reach a succession of grisly ends, and still Abaddon remains at large.

**DATASLATE:
OFFICIO
ASSASSINORUM**

DATASHEETS

DATASHEETS INTRODUCTION



Dataslates contain collections of one or more datasheets. Each datasheet lists its Faction, and will present either an Army List Entry (the rules and point values for a single model, vehicle or unit) or a Formation (a specific group of models, vehicles or units that enables you to use special rules when you include them in your army).

ARMY LIST ENTRIES

An Army List Entry provides all the relevant information to field a single unit in games of Warhammer 40,000, including its points value and Battlefield Role.

FORMATIONS

A Formation presents a collection of units that fight alongside one another in a particular way. Each Formation will tell you what units you need to take and what, if any, options or restrictions apply to the units that make up that Formation. The Army List Entries for each unit in the Formation (the units' profiles, points values, unit types, unit composition, special rules, battlefield role etc.) can all be found in this dataslate.

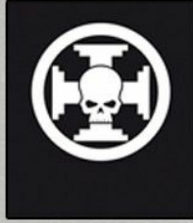
FACTION AND ALLIES

All units in this Dataslate (Vindicare Assassin, Callidus Assassin, Eversor Assassin and Culexus Assassin) have the Officio Assassinorum Faction, shown by the icon below. They are part of the Armies of the Imperium and ally as such, as described in the Allies section of *Warhammer 40,000: The Rules*.



OFFICIO ASSASSINORUM

DETACHMENT



COMPULSORY

1 Elites

OPTIONAL

None

RESTRICTIONS:

The unit chosen must have the Officio Assassinorum Faction.

COMMAND BENEFITS:

Operation Assassinate: If the mission you are playing uses Victory Points, you receive one bonus Victory Point at the end of the game if the enemy's Warlord was removed as a casualty as a result of a Wound inflicted by a model with this special rule.



ASSASSINORUM EXECUTION FORCE



The agents of the Officio Assassinorum are a deadly scalpel deployed when the sledgehammer of the Imperium's armies is too blunt and unsubtle a weapon. These masters of the art of death are perhaps the most proficient in the entire human race. Unleashed only on the direct sanction of the High Lords of Terra themselves, their influence extends from the coldest reaches of the Halo Zone to the dark heart of the Eye of Terror.

Yet there have been those times in history when even the assignment of an Imperial Assassin was deemed inadequate for the kill in question. At such times, the High Lords have ordered the despatch of an Execution Force – a number of Assassins working in concert. Where a single operative may find his skills wanting in the final reckoning, the combined lethal repertoires of the major temples will be more than sufficient to exterminate the foe.

To send forth an Execution Force is to deploy such a precise and specialist weapon that their replacement, should they be lost, would take decades. As a result these forces are assembled only rarely, and only when the future of an entire sector – or even the Imperium itself – hangs in the balance.



FORMATION:

- 1 Callidus Assassin
- 1 Culexus Assassin
- 1 Eversor Assassin
- 1 Vindicare Assassin

RESTRICTIONS:

None

SPECIAL RULES:

- **Preferred Enemy (Warlord)**
- **Operation Assassinate:** If the mission you are playing uses Victory Points, you receive one bonus Victory Point at the end of the game if the enemy's Warlord was removed as a casualty as a result of a Wound inflicted by a model with this special rule.





VINDICARE ASSASSIN



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Vindicare Assassin	8	8	4	4	3	7	4	10	-

UNIT TYPE:

Infantry (Character)

UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Vindicare Assassin

WARGEAR:

See *Warhammer 40,000: The Rules* for the following wargear:

- **Blind Grenades** (see Defensive Grenades)
- **Close combat weapon**

SPECIAL RULES:

- **Fearless**
- **Infiltrate**
- **Move Through Cover**
- **Stealth**

Deadshot: All successful To Hit rolls made by a Vindicare Assassin, excluding Snap Shots, have the Precision Shots special rule.

Independent Operative: A model with this special rule can never be joined by another character. If a model with this special rule is your army's Warlord, it never has a Warlord Trait.

Lightning Reflexes: A model with this special rule has a 4+ invulnerable save. In addition, they do not suffer the penalty to their Initiative for charging enemies through difficult terrain.

No Escape: Enemy characters suffer a -2 penalty to their Look Out, Sir tests against any Wounds inflicted by a model with this special rule.

WARGEAR OF THE VINDICARE TEMPLE

Exitus Rifle: *Exitus weapons are marvels of Imperial technology, and their ammunition perhaps even more so. They carry shield-breaker rounds with disruptive flux cores that scramble even the most sophisticated force fields; turbo-penetrator rounds capable of punching through the hull of a spaceship; and hellfire rounds so toxic that not even extra-galactic creatures can survive their searing kiss.*

	Range	S	AP	Type
Exitus rifle	72"	X	2	Heavy 1, Sniper, Exitus Ammo

Exitus Pistol: *Just like its larger rifle equivalent, each Exitus pistol is precision engineered to complement the lethal skills of its individual wielder. It is usually employed when a Vindicare Assassin needs to escape from a horde of angry heretics, or an army of disciples sent into a fury by the execution of their master.*

	Range	S	AP	Type
Exitus pistol	12"	X	2	Pistol, Sniper, Exitus Ammo

Exitus Ammo: Each time a Vindicare Assassin fires a weapon with this special rule, choose one of the three following types of ammunition and apply the chosen ammunition's rules to that shot:

- **Shield-breaker:** Invulnerable saves cannot be taken against Wounds, glancing hits, or penetrating hits from a shield-breaker round.
- **Turbo-penetrator:** Against vehicles, shots from a turbo-penetrator round count as Strength 10. Against all other targets, shots from a turbo-penetrator round inflict D3 Wounds, rather than just 1.
- **Hellfire:** Shots from a hellfire round always wound on a 2+.

Spy Mask: *The Vindicare's distinctive mask contains nutrient cartridges that allow him to hunt for months at a time without need to resupply, as well as a comms-thief sensor and a wide-spectrum auspex visor that can pick out the assassin's victims at incredible distances.*

All successful To Hit rolls made by a Vindicare Assassin, excluding Snap Shots, have the Ignores Cover special rule.





CALLIDUS ASSASSIN



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Callidus Assassin	8	8	4	4	3	7	4	10	-

UNIT TYPE:

Infantry (Character)

UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Callidus Assassin

SPECIAL RULES:

- Fearless
- Fleet
- Infiltrate
- Hit & Run
- Move Through Cover
- Precision Strikes

Independent Operative: A model with this special rule can never be joined by another character. If a model with this special rule is your army's Warlord, it never has a Warlord Trait.

Lightning Reflexes: A model with this special rule has a 4+ invulnerable save. In addition, they do not suffer the penalty to their Initiative for charging enemies through difficult terrain.

No Escape: Enemy characters suffer a -2 penalty to their Look Out, Sir tests against any Wounds inflicted by a model with this special rule.

Polymorphine: When a Callidus Assassin is deployed using her Infiltrate special rule, she can be set up anywhere on the table that is more than 1" from any enemy unit, whether deployed enemy units can draw a line of sight to her or not. If a Callidus Assassin starts the game in Reserves, she can choose to move on from the enemy board edge when she arrives. In either case, during the first game turn, or during the game turn in which

the Callidus Assassin arrives from Reserves, enemy units can only fire Snap Shots when targeting her.

Reign of Confusion: If your army includes a Callidus Assassin, you can re-roll the dice when attempting to Seize the Initiative. In addition, your opponent suffers -3 to the first Reserve Roll he makes during the game.



WARGEAR OF THE CALLIDUS TEMPLE

Neural Shredder: *The neural shredder is an exotic and extremely rare weapon originally used by the Adeptus Astra Telepathica. It fires a burst of energy that destroys the minds of those caught in its sights, leaving the assassin’s victims no more than brainless, drooling meat.*

Range	S	AP	Type
Template	1	2	Pistol, Neural Shock

Neural Shock: Hits caused by this weapon always wound on a 4+. This special rule has no effects on vehicles or buildings.

Phase Sword: *The Phase Sword is thought to utilise alien technology, though the Callidus Temple keeps its nature a close secret. Worn as a long blade attached to the forearm, this weapon is able to phase in and out of realspace by molecular realignment, bypassing not only physical armour but also its metaphysical equivalents.*

Range	S	AP	Type
-	User	2	Melee, Phasing Hits

Phasing Hits: Each successful To Wound roll of a 6 made by a Phase sword results in a Phasing Wound. Invulnerable saves cannot be taken against Phasing Wounds.

Poison Blades: *The needle-like poison blades a Callidus keeps about her person enable the operative to make her kill even when appearing defenceless. Each Callidus trains in the art of driving these blades through weak spots in armour, scaly hide, or the eye sockets of protective helms.*

Range**S****AP****Type**

-

User

-

Melee,
Poisoned (3+),
Rending



EVERSOR ASSASSIN



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Eversor Assassin	8	8	4	4	3	7	4	10	-

UNIT TYPE:

Infantry (Character)

UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Eversor Assassin

WARGEAR:

See *Warhammer 40,000: The Rules* for the following wargear:

- Power sword
- Melta bombs

SPECIAL RULES:

- Fearless
- Feel No Pain
- Infiltrate
- Furious Charge
- Move Through Cover

Bio-meltdown: If an Eversor Assassin is ever reduced to zero Wounds, before removing the model as a casualty, each nearby unit (friend or foe) suffers a Strength 5 AP- hit for each model it has within D6" of the Eversor Assassin. After resolving any additional damage, remove the Eversor Assassin from play as a casualty.

Fast Shot: Whenever an Eversor Assassin fires his executioner pistol, he does so 4 times. All of these shots must be at the same target, but can be any mixture of bolt pistol and needle pistol shots.

Independent Operative: A model with this special rule can never be joined by another character. If a model with this special rule is your army's Warlord, it never has a Warlord Trait.

Lightning Reflexes: A model with this special rule has a 4+ invulnerable save. In addition, they do not suffer the penalty to their Initiative for charging enemies through difficult terrain.

No Escape: Enemy characters suffer a -2 penalty to their Look Out, Sir tests against any Wounds inflicted by a model with this special rule.



WARGEAR OF THE EVERSOR TEMPLE

Executioner Pistol: *The Executioner Pistol is a menacing hybrid of needle and bolt pistol. It is able to change modes at the twitch of a finger, firing hypertoxin darts one second and mass-reactive shells the next. Many of the Eversor’s victims are treated to both, just to make doubly sure of a messy death.*

	Range	S	AP	Type
Needle pistol	12"	1	-	Pistol, Poisoned
Bolt pistol	12"	4	5	Pistol

Frenzon: *The cocktail of distilled combat stimms that pump through the Eversor’s circulatory system is so potent it would burst a normal man’s heart. In the heat of battle, these drugs can drive an operative Eversor into such a berserk state he becomes a living whirlwind of violence.*

An Eversor Assassin rolls 3D6 when determining his charge range, adding the results together. In addition, an Eversor Assassin receives 3 bonus Attacks in a turn in which he charged, rather than just 1.

Neuro-gauntlet: *This killing apparatus, worn as an exoskeletal hyper-alloy glove, has neurotoxin injectors fitted in place of fingernails. Even the faintest scratch triggers the delivery of a fatal dose.*

	Range	S	AP	Type
	-	User	-	Melee, Fleshbane, Shred

Sentinel Array: *The Sentinel Array worn by all Eversor Assassins processes targeting information at giddy speed, enabling its wielder to efficiently engage targets even when he is at risk of becoming overwhelmed.*

An Eversor Assassin fires Overwatch using his full Ballistic Skill.





CULEXUS ASSASSIN



	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Culexus Assassin	8	8	4	4	3	7	4	10	-

UNIT TYPE:

Infantry (Character)

UNIT COMPOSITION:

1 Culexus Assassin

SPECIAL RULES:

- Fear
- Fearless
- Infiltrate
- Move Through Cover
- Preferred Enemy (Psykers)

Independent Operative: A model with this special rule can never be joined by another character. If a model with this special rule is your army's Warlord, it never has a Warlord Trait.

Lightning Reflexes: A model with this special rule has a 4+ invulnerable save. In addition, they do not suffer the penalty to their Initiative for charging enemies through difficult terrain.

Life Drain: Armour saves cannot be taken against Wounds inflicted by a Culexus Assassin's close combat attacks. Any close combat attack inflicted by a Culexus Assassin that rolls a 6 To Wound has the Instant Death special rule. Any close combat attack inflicted by a Culexus Assassin that is allocated to a Psyker has the Instant Death special rule.

No Escape: Enemy characters suffer a -2 penalty to their Look Out, Sir tests against any Wounds inflicted by a model with this special rule.

Psychic Abomination: Psykers, friend or foe, within 12" of a Culexus Assassin have -3 Leadership, do not generate any Warp Charge (i.e. they do not add dice to their owning player's Warp Charge Pool in the Psychic phase) and only harness Warp Charge points on a 6. A Culexus Assassin can never be targeted or affected by psychic powers – other units in the Culexus Assassin's vicinity that are hit by beam or nova powers, or by Witchfire powers that use templates, are hit/affected normally. Any blessing or malediction psychic powers affecting a unit immediately cease to be in effect if the unit moves within 12" of a Culexus Assassin or vice versa.



WARGEAR OF THE CULEXUS TEMPLE

Animus Speculum: *The Animus Speculum is an elaborate helm that can absorb and fire focussed blasts of negative Warp energy. Primarily used to dampen the vile aura of the Culexus en route to his target, its polarity can be reversed in order to magnify the soul-draining horror of its wearer to lethal levels.*

An animus speculum is a ranged weapon that is fired in the Psychic phase instead of the Shooting phase. Firing the animus speculum does not prevent the Culexus Assassin from Running or shooting another weapon at the same or a different target in the Shooting phase. The Animus Speculum can fire Snap Shots but cannot be used to make Overwatch attacks.

Range	S	AP	Type
18"	5	1	Assault X, Absorbed Warp Charge

Absorbed Warp Charge: When firing an animus speculum, first add up the combined mastery levels of all Psyker units, friend or foe, that are within 12" of the Culexus Assassin, and pick up that many dice. You can then add up to 3 more dice to this hand by removing them from your own Warp Charge pool. The total number of dice in your hand is the number of shots the animus speculum now fires.

Etherium: *The Etherium is a highly advanced nodal layer built into the Culexus' synskin that shifts the wearer's body out of phase with realspace. This makes his physical form ghost-like and absent from the physical world, all but invisible to mortal eyes, just as his mind is absent from the spiritual plane.*

Whenever enemy units target a Culexus Assassin with shooting or close combat attacks, the shots/attacks are always resolved as if the attacking unit had Ballistic Skill and Weapon Skill 1.

Psyk-out Grenades: *Psyk-out grenades are produced using an extremely rare substance thought to be a by-product of the esoteric processes that sustain the Astronomican. Upon detonation, each grenade scatters a dense cloud of psi-refractive particles across the target area.*

SHOOTING PHASE

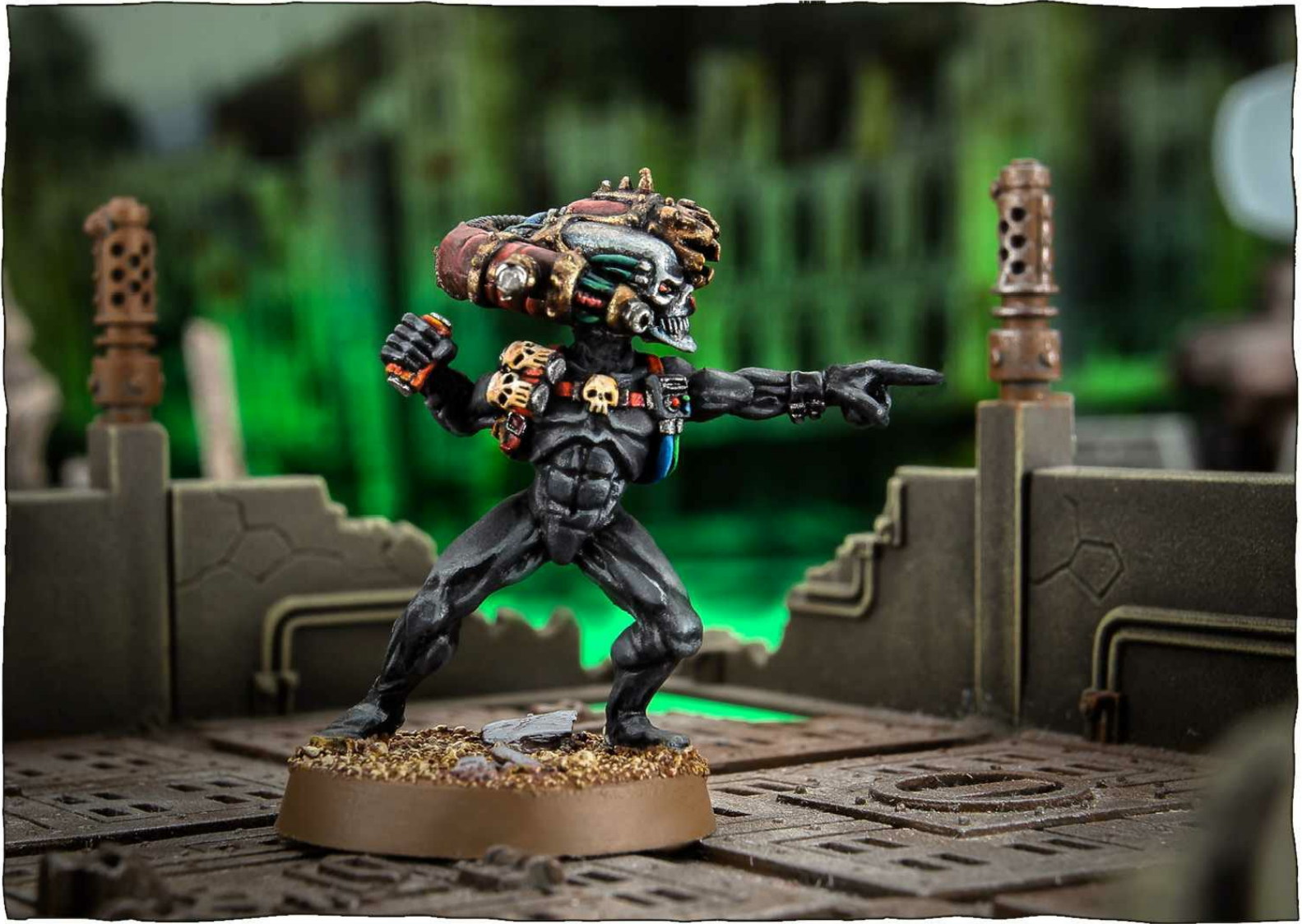
Range	S	AP	Type
8"	2	-	Assault 1, Blast, Psi-shock

Psi-shock: If a unit containing at least one Psyker (i.e. a model with the Psyker, Brotherhood of Psykers/Sorcerers or Psychic Pilot special rule) is hit by a weapon with the Psi-shock special rule, one randomly determined Psyker model in that unit suffers Perils of the Warp in addition to any other damage.

ASSAULT PHASE

Models that are Psykers do not gain bonus Attacks when charging a Culexus Assassin. However, if the Culexus Assassin is already locked in combat from a previous turn, or has gone to ground, its grenades have no effect and the attackers gain bonus Attacks as normal.





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