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The bastions of Cadia prove no match for the ferocity of the Kabalite onslaught.

DARK ELDAR

A Book of Immortal Evils



By Phil Kelly

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INTRODUCTION

This book is the definitive guide to collecting and playing with an army of twisted and decadent Dark Eldar in the Warhammer 40,000 wargame. Theirs is world of madness and stark terror. Enter it at your peril...

THE WARHAMMER 40,000 GAME

The Warhammer 40,000 rulebook contains all the rules you need to fight futuristic battles with your Citadel miniatures in the battle-ravaged universe of the 41st Millennium. Every army has its own Codex book that works with these rules, allowing you to turn your collection of miniatures into a deadly fighting force ready for your games of Warhammer 40,000. This Codex details everything you need to know about the Dark Eldar.

WHY COLLECT DARK ELДАР?

Dark Eldar are steeped in ancient and unnatural evil. They have chosen this path for themselves, and revel in their own cruelty, drawing physical sustenance from the infliction of pain. They inhabit a realm known as Commorragh, the Dark City, an impossibly vast stronghold from which they launch piratical raids across the length and breadth of the galaxy. The Dark Eldar live to inflict misery and death; what happens to the captives they bring back to Commorragh is best left undescribed. They are vain, devious and utterly self-serving, with no respect for any living creatures, not even themselves.

Because of this the Dark Eldar have a diabolical appeal. They are the evil kings and super-villains of the 41st Millennium, and they have all the right tools for the job. The Dark Eldar are very fast-moving, have lots of firepower, and boast some of the most lethal close combat units in the game. Better still, their army gets more powerful the more enemy units it destroys, and these murderous xenos are pretty scary to begin with. However, because they conduct their raids at lightning speed, the Dark Eldar lack any real heavy armour and are hence quite fragile – it takes guile and cunning to use them well. If you possess the skill, though, your Dark Eldar army can run rings around its opponents, leaving them shell-shocked, terrified and utterly defeated. Best of all, the models in the Dark Eldar range are truly jaw-dropping examples of the sculptor's craft. In just about every way, the Dark Eldar are an army for the true connoisseur!

HOW THIS CODEX WORKS

Codex: Dark Eldar contains the following sections:

The Dark Eldar: The first section of this book introduces the Dark Eldar, their origins, and their place in the Warhammer 40,000 universe. It spans the star-shattering fall of the ancient galactic Eldar empire, the perilous and surreal battlegrounds of the Dark City, and the bloody catalogue of the war against realspace. To read this section is to stray deep into the secrets of Commorragh, but be warned; you may not come back.

Denizens of the Dark City: A rogues' gallery of all the different troop types, vehicles and heroes that fight for the Kabals, Cults and Covens of the Dark Eldar. Each page features a description of the unit, from the cruel Kabalite Warriors to Supreme Overlord Asdrubael Vect. You will find rules for each unit and any unique wargear or special rules it may have. The section culminates with the eldritch wargear that the Dark Eldar use to scythe down their foes.

Collecting Dark Eldar: This section is packed to the gills with colour photos of the extensive range of Dark Eldar miniatures available for your collection. Brought to life by our world-famous 'Eavy Metal painters, these models are in a class of their own. Colour schemes and insignia are also provided to help you collect and paint your own Dark Eldar army.

Dark Eldar Army List: The army list takes all of the units and heroes (well, anti-heroes would be more accurate) presented in 'Denizens of the Dark City' and arranges them so you can choose an army for your own games. Each unit type also has a points value attached to help you pit your force against an opponent's army of equal size.

FIND OUT MORE

Codex: Dark Eldar offers you everything you need to collect and use an army of these merciless alien killers, but as with all aspects of the Games Workshop hobby, there's always more to learn. The monthly magazine *White Dwarf* contains articles about all aspects of the Warhammer 40,000 hobby, and you can find articles specific to Dark Eldar on our website:

www.games-workshop.com







THE DARK ELДАР

This is a tale of evil incarnate. The Dark Eldar epitomise everything that is wanton and cruel about the ancient race from which they descend. Fiercely intelligent and devious to a fault, these piratical raiders revel in pain, for feeding upon the suffering of others is the only way they can stave off the slow death of their own souls. The Dark Eldar see themselves as the true inheritors of the ancient Eldar empire, and look down upon everyone else as either cowards or dim-witted prey. The boundless and brilliant potential of their kind is put to every terrible purpose they can imagine, and because their lives span millennia, the Dark Eldar have all the time in the world to perfect their stygian arts.

The warrior castes of the Dark Eldar are tall and lithe without exception. Their alabaster skin is almost corpse-like in its pallor, for there is no true sunlight within their shadowy realm. Their athletic physiques are lined with whipcord muscle, honed and enhanced until they are superior even to those of their Craftworld Eldar cousins, for the Dark Eldar prize martial prowess most highly. 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, eternally thirsting for the anguish of others in order to fill the aching void at their core.

The Dark Eldar quickly learn to fight with every weapon at their disposal in order to survive. Little distinction is drawn between the sexes, for an individual's skill and cunning is far more important than physical traits such as height or gender. Their senses are keen to the point of paranoia, their shadowed eyes and tapered ears alert to the slightest disturbance. In the Dark City in which they make their lair, the incautious do not survive for long.

While countless generations of physical conflict have ensured the Dark Eldar have better reaction speed and greater physical strength than other elements of the Eldar race, 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.

Though it is manufactured instead of psychically grown, the weaponry of the Dark Eldar is just as advanced as that used upon 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 indeed – their favourite tools of war include splinter weapons that can set every nerve aflame with pain, darklight beams, whips that bleed acidic ichor, and eldritch soul-traps. The Dark Eldar are so confident of their own abilities 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.

They turned their backs upon the material dimension long ago, but 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

cabals 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 upon baroque grav-craft before leaping down to experience the slaughter first-hand. Sprays of arterial blood and spasming corpses mark their passage, the laughter of these merciless warriors the last thing their victims ever hear.

To these cursed individuals, 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 process of crushing the 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.

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, for to fail in an invasion's execution is to bring an entire Kabal that much closer to its downfall. This is why Dark Eldar warriors are such determined opponents, and why there is such rivalry amongst them. Working in concert ensures that not only the greatest amount of punishment is 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.

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 as long as possible so that their captors can gain even more sustenance from their misery.

ANCIENT HISTORY

The Dark Eldar have fallen from grace in the most profound of ways. Trace their lineage back far enough and their roots can be found at the height of the ancient Eldar society, when theirs was a highly advanced and sophisticated race that ruled the stars. The Eldar boasted the greatest civilisation since that of the Old Ones, and the various descendent cultures that exist in the 41st Millennium are but pale reflections of their glory.

The ancient Eldar had perfected their science to such an extent that they could reforge planets to their liking and quench stars at a whim. Hard work became a distant memory. The Eldar, proud in the belief that they had already mastered their own destiny, spent more and more time in esoteric pursuits in order to escape the ennui that set in over the course of their centuries-long lives. The Eldar psyche is a thing of duality 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 the Eldar empire – once a masterpiece of civilisation – became centred around the pursuit of individual fulfilment.

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 the fruits 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 their powerbases into the labyrinth dimension

known as the webway, for such was their influence that they could command entire sub-realms to be crafted in which to continue their debased works. Unseen, these dilettante lords grew in power and influence, initiating more and more of the ancient Eldar into their strange and shadowy creeds.

The Eldar are psychically gifted above all other races, and as corruption gradually took hold upon them, echoes of ecstasy and agony 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 and attract more of such abstract energies to themselves. The constant stream of indulgence pouring from the Eldar empire was as unstoppable as the tide. It nourished and empowered that which lay within – a nascent god of excess, content for now to wait, and to grow.

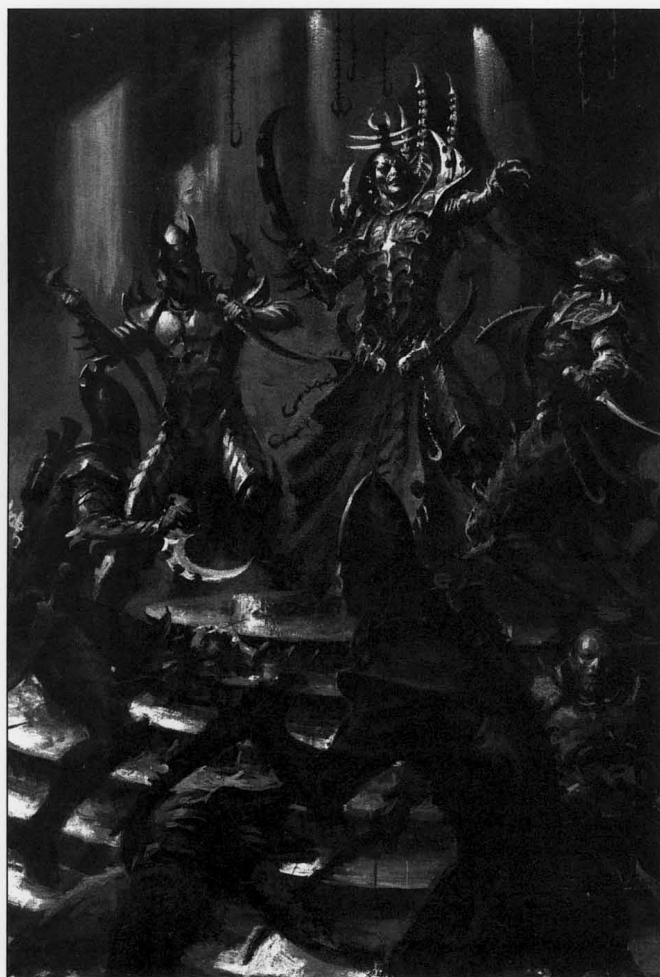
THE FALL OF THE ELDAR

As the Eldar empire began to sink into the mire of its own corruption, brother turned against brother in pursuit of ever darker pleasures. There were, however, 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, and instead 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 the planets they protect.

Amongst the last to escape were the forefathers of the Craftworld Eldar. As their society devolved into madness they looked upon their works and recoiled in horror from what they had become. Realising that they stood upon the brink, they bent their considerable resources to the construction of immense Craftworlds, graceful space-cities the size of small moons. The Eldar of the Craftworlds retreated into asceticism and introspection, preserving what they could of their ancient culture. They left the heartlands of the Eldar empire for the dubious safety of the void, to the jeering contempt of those who remained behind. Some even managed to flee far enough to escape the devastation that was to follow.

GODS AND MONSTERS

As far as the Dark Eldar are concerned, the Eldar gods died in the Fall, and they despise them for it. That the gods had become so weak that they could be consumed by the ascendancy of the Eldar's collective depravity is a sign they did not deserve to exist in the first place. The exceptions are Khaine, who is still held in high regard in Commorragh, and the lesser powers known as the Dark Muses – they who epitomise carnal and selfish vice, and whose clandestine worship contributed to the demise of the original Eldar gods.



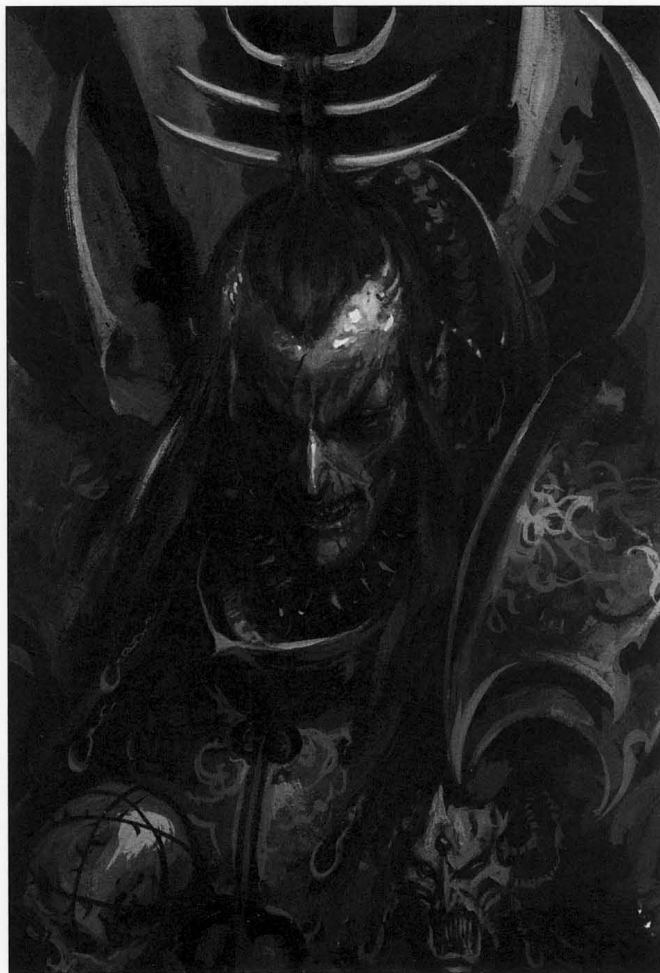
As depravity riddled every aspect of their society, the cults of excess sought ever more violent thrills. Before long the streets of the Eldar cities ran with blood. The elegant architecture of their palaces became battlegrounds as the Eldar preyed upon each other, revelling in the cruellest of crimes.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

Slaanesh's birth-screams were so powerful that they destroyed countless billions of souls in a psychic shockwave that coursed throughout the galaxy. In that instant, most of the Eldar race was destroyed, consumed by a cataclysm of terror and pain. The epicentre of their empire was sucked into the Warp, leaving a yawning void of pure Chaos in its place. Slaanesh gorged upon their despair. Unstoppable in its ascendancy, the new god consumed the ancient deities of the old Eldar empire and scattered their remains to the corners of the Warp.

The Eldar civilisation was gone. All that was left were the Exodites of the furthest-flung Maiden Worlds, the Craftworlders who had travelled far enough to escape the aftershock of destruction caused by Slaanesh's birth, and those hidden in the sub-realms of the webway. Much of the webway was shattered into ruin, but unlike the Craftworld Eldar who fled the catastrophe in realspace, those Eldar who had built their own jealously-guarded empires in the webway remained physically unaffected by Slaanesh's birth. The echoes of the new god's apotheosis still resounded within them, but unlike their kin in realspace they had escaped destruction. In their supreme arrogance they did not cease their quest for excess, even for a moment. Repentance and atonement were outmoded concepts to a people who acknowledged no limits to their power.

The change that was wrought upon those Eldar sealed within the webway was far more subtle. 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 hate and fear Slaanesh above all, for she was given life by their actions, and yet she waits hungrily upon 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 mystical spirit stones and infinity circuits, the Eldar of the webway became exceptionally good at ensuring that lesser beings suffer in their stead.

Provided they steeped themselves in the most evil 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 murderers who feed 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 race has unwittingly exchanged a horrible but mercifully quick death for an eternity of hunger.



To this day the Dark Eldar raid and pillage the galaxy at large from their hidden sub-realms in the webway, sowing as much misery and destruction as possible and spiriting away millions of captives to their lairs for their own horrible ends. They are experts in techniques 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 of power, 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 his former grandeur, desperately hunting for a taste of pain with which to stave off the gnawing in the depths of his soul.

"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*



THE DARK CITY

Commorragh's origins date back to the zenith of the Eldar, thousands of years before Humanity even suspected its existence. It does not exist in realspace, but in the webway, a realm that writhes with hidden life.

THE WEBWAY

The webway, sometimes called the labyrinth dimension, is not a true dimension at all. It has been described as an incredibly complex network of arteries and capillaries, a maze of glowing tunnels, and a mystic tapestry of hidden threads that spread across the veil between realspace and the Warp. These analogies are crude at best, for the webway is a construct that spans the dimensions. It is defined by the fact 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. It was they who mastered the original webway network, though it has changed drastically since the height of the Eldar empire, torn open by war and disaster. Moving between the dimensions is a technique fraught with danger, but such is the skill and intellect of the Eldar that they still use it without hesitation.

The webway was created by an ancient race called the Old Ones as a conduit that allowed its masters to travel at will to countless far-flung worlds without risking the fickle tides of the Warp. Since the Fall, the webway has become a realm 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, the lair of the Dark Eldar; called the Dark City by those who fear to speak its name. Commorragh is no mere metropolis, for it is to the largest of Imperial Hives as a soaring mountain is to a mound of termites. Its dimensions would be considered impossible if they could be read by conventional means.

If anything, Commorragh is more like a vast collection of satellite realms and cities linked by uncounted 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 short-cuts. From within the webway's confines, the immense distances between each sub-realm can be crossed with a single step.

Commorragh appears within the webway as a composite entity of impossible scale, a shimmering, contradictory realm the dimensions of which pluck 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. And not only is it the society of the Dark Eldar that festers within. 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 Commorragh 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.

Commorragh was originally the greatest of the webway port-cities, able to transport a fleet to any of the most vital planets of the Eldar empire. Because of the access it granted to the far-flung corners of realspace, Commorragh 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. Precisely because of its autonomy, and the fact that it existed outside the jurisdiction of the great Eldar councils of that time, the city-port quickly became a magnet for those that wished their deeds to be hidden from prying eyes. The realm of Commorragh expanded unstoppably as wealth and influence flowed across its borders. It spread outward into the void, consuming other webway port-cities, private estates and sub-realms with each new expansion, growing ever larger and more impressive as it fed on plundered wealth.

THE SATELLITE REALMS

If a traveller were somehow to breach Commorragh's runic wards, he would first bear witness to its tributary realms shimmering and distorting around it. One minute these vassal domains would glimmer in the distance, the next they would loom so close that their palaces and minarets could be seen by the naked eye. To venture unheralded past these satellite realms is to invite destruction. 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.

Over the course of its millennia-long history, Commorragh has subsumed all of the vassal domains it has not destroyed, linking one palatial sub-realm to another with ancient portals and gates. 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.



Commorragh 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.

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.

THE DESOLATION OF LOW COMMORRAGH

Girdling the titanic central spires of the Dark City are the trading districts of the old Empire. Even the lowliest port was once an architectural masterpiece, but the ravages of civil war have not been kind. Low Commorragh is now a hotch-potch 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. The outer zones are so congested that a traveller could wind through their labyrinthine depths for months on end without so much a glimpse of a stolen sun. Many areas are haunted by scavengers and spectres, 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 Commorragh the lost and the feral thrive.

The outer districts of Low Commorragh are so many and varied that one cannot possibly visit them all in a single lifetime. Even to attempt to catalogue them would be fatal, for the Dark Eldar are highly territorial and tend to kill intruders on sight if only to pass the time. One such outer district is Hidden Blade, a crucially placed Kabalite stronghold that sticks out like a jagged knife thrust between the sloping shoulders of Port Carmine and Nightsound Ghulen. Hidden Blade's asymmetrical citadels bristle with disintegrator cannon, and each of its myriad parapets and steeples is hung with vanquished foes in various states of dismemberment. Its hangar-nodes are host to wings of Razorwing jetfighters and Voidraven bombers, their pilots itching for a chance to annihilate an unwelcome visitor.

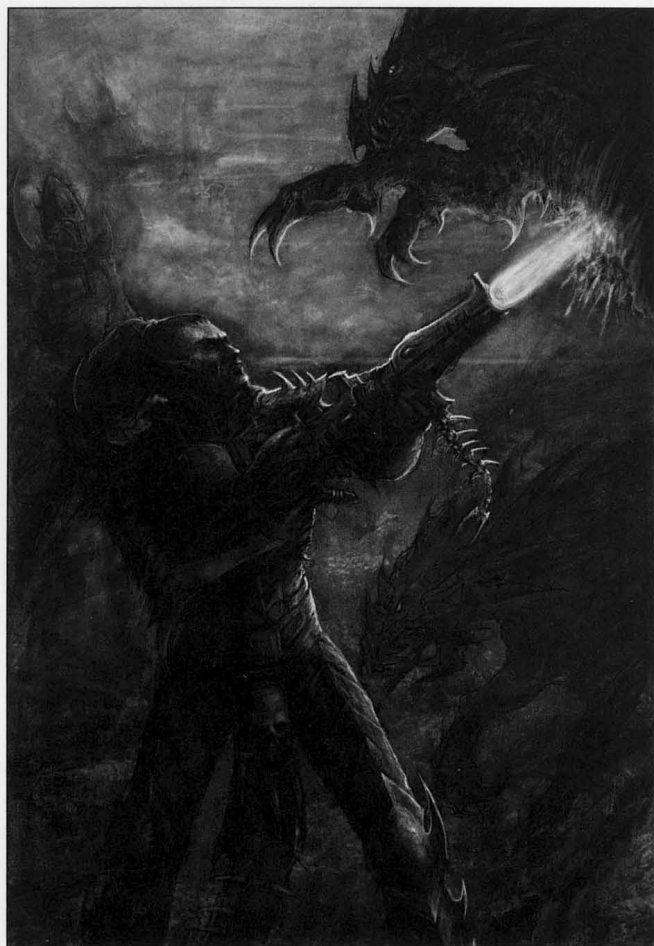




Port Carmine is second only in violent reputation to the Port of Lost Souls. The eye-wateringly tall spars of the starport sprout outward for miles, each host to a fleet of ornate spacecraft. The central docks of Port Carmine play host to the jaw-dropping spectacle of two major kabalite fleets at full anchor; the Slashed Eye Kabal and the bloodthirsty Stolen Conscience, locked in a never-ending struggle for dominance. It is from Port Carmine that the renegade pirate Duke Sliscus stole the flagship *Incessant Agony*, a fact that drove its previous owner, Khaenite Aeriace Lex, to the edge of violent madness.

The war-torn ruins around Port Carmine are known as the Sprawls. Through their bleak streets wander the Parched – cadaverous Dark Eldar who have fallen from grace and wound up on the periphery of society. These ravenous wretches seek to vicariously experience acts of extreme violence and rejuvenate their wasted bodies, drinking in scraps of spectacle or revelling in the savagery of an airborne brawl between winged Scourges or Hellion skyboard gangs. Whenever a battle breaks out the Parched will cluster all about like freezing men to a flame. Just occasionally, they will drag the fatally wounded into the dark alleyways, fighting each other for scraps of the departing soul.

The Sprawls give way to a network of atriums and chambers through which flow the acid-green River Khaïdes. This polluted waterway winds around and through the outer districts of central Corespur, shrouded in subterranean darkness and wreathed in mist. Above its toxic surface drift thin grav-craft bedecked in faded grandeur, each host to a lost soul who earns what little he can by hooking corpses from the Khaïdes and selling them on as slave-food. Jetbikes



and sky-chariots streak through the winding archways and ducts at dizzying velocity, slashing apart the corpse-fishers below in merciless contests of speed.

Further coreward can be found the mercenary district Sec Maegra, more popularly known as Null City; a nation-sized shanty town permanently riven by civil war. A thick mist of cordite-scented pollution 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 and assassinations turn sour. Occasionally, xenos mercenaries can be found stalking Null streets; it is rumoured that from time to time the most vicious of their number are called upon to serve the Kabals.

INWARD TO CORE

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. Their sweeping wings and mansions are crested by citadels full of proud aristocratic warriors, each of whom descends from the architects of the Fall. Sorrow Fell, the largest of the city-states that can trace its lineage to the ancient Eldar, girdles a promontory that leads into the region known as Corespur. Thirteen screaming statues of Supreme Overlord Asdrubael Vect stand sentinel over Sorrow Fell, each representing one of the Foundations of Vengeance. Their presence is a constant reminder that even the most powerful noble house was ultimately undone by raw intellect.

One of the Dark City's ancient city-states has literally fallen into shadow. Aelindrach it is called, and is it one of several Commorrite districts that exist in more than one dimension at once. 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. Rumour has it that somewhere in that inky pitch is a portal to a world of shade-daemons that can freeze the soul with but a touch.

The outskirts of Aelindrach give way to the Bone Middens of the Wych Cults, a district almost buried under mounds of calciferous matter. Here can be found the remains of a representative of each sentient species in existence, positioned in grim tableaux and mock battles. Millions of skeletons, ranging in size from insects to towering colossi, strike unnatural and anguished poses throughout the Middens in a testament to the Dark Eldar's status as apex predator of the galaxy.

Ranged beneath these inner districts are weapon and food factories shocking in scale, spreading outward and down into the lower spires underneath the Old City. These factories ravenously consume millions of workers and slaves each year. Humans, Orks, Tau and even Dark Eldar are amongst their number, for to a Dark Eldar, the cyclical monotony and sensory deprivation of the slave-pits is a keener punishment than any pain. The slaves are watched over by divisions of cruel taskmasters, each of which is locked in a murderous rivalry with their 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.

THE TOWERS OF HIGH COMMORRAGH

The vast majority of the Dark City's vertical mass is the province of the warrior elites. Impossibly high structures of polished stone, alloy, resin, flesh and glass compete in their insane grandeur. Thousand-foot idols of Kabalite Archons and Dragons stand incomplete amongst spiralling starscrapers that vanish beyond sight. Blood drips down from the highest spires in squalls of red rain. Slaves crawl maggot-like across the facias of titanic buildings, suspended in near-invisible webs as they labour to carve titanic likenesses of their cruel masters. Gargoyle-encrusted scimitar spines curve into the sky, and everywhere barbed spires reach high towards the captive suns like stilettos plunging into a heart of dark fire.

Further toward the core, the central mass of towers, statues and spires forms a close-packed theatre for inter-Kabalite war. Anti-grav transports hurtle past the jagged shrines and massive obsidian fortresses of the Incubi, where violent death awaits. Mercenaries and armoured bounty hunters clad in segmented ghostplate move stealthily under the vaulted arches, stalking those with a high price on their heads.

Though most of High Commorragh is under the iron rule of the Kabalite masters that control them, there is a battleground that exists above the thickets of spires and graceful antennae – 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 Commorragh consider themselves blessed, and have little but contempt for those who fester in what they scornfully term *Ynnealidh*, 'the necropolis below'.

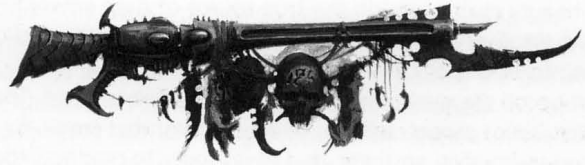
The further down into the murk of Commorragh one travels, the smaller the vessels that dart through its streets. The Middle Darkness, as it is known, is an area plagued by Hellions. These skyboard-riding rebels careen through the foul air in great swarms that attack on sight. Though the Hellion gangs are feral and wild, they are not averse to allying with the Kabals when a realspace raid is in the offing, and have even impressed the gladiators of the Wych Cults with their incredible displays of manoeuvrability and speed.

THE ARENAS OF THE WYCH CULTS

The Wych Cults fulfil a vital role in Commorrite society. They stage displays of ultraviolence in the massive arenas built into their lofty citadels and razor-edged ziggurats, allowing the citizens of High Commorragh to feed upon acts of murder and wanton killing refined to the level of an art form. Each arena is a multi-level structure of breathtaking complexity, its insides clustered with barbed stages upon which thousands of warriors and slaves meet a gory end. The arena's spectators observe from ornate thrones or from pleasure-craft, drinking in the pain from a thrillingly unsafe distance.

The arena plays host to some of the most elaborate displays of fighting skill in the universe. Each Wych is a paragon of physical perfection, and the Syrens and Succubi that rule over them are supernaturally adept at bestowing the gift of death. These champions enjoy a position of extreme prestige in Dark Eldar society, for the pain and terror they wring from their captives in the arenas rejuvenates and sates all those who witness it. Most Wych Cults enjoy the patronage of one or more Kabals – the Kabals who are able to host the most impressive gladiatorial spectacles are

generally secure in the safety of their throne. After a successful realspace raid, it is common for Archons to make gifts to allied Wych Cults of vicious alien beasts, elite warriors of the lesser races, and those Kabalites convicted of treason. They know that without the imaginative displays of killing put on in the Wych arenas, Dark Eldar society would soon collapse in order to slake its eternal thirst for suffering. The practice of feeding the hot-blooded warrior populace of High Commorragh with regular displays of bloodletting is known amongst the Archons as *Llith'antu Khlavh*, 'the knife that stays the blade'.



The Wych Cults constantly strive to outdo each other in their performances, many of which spread into the audience in interesting and deadly ways as the excitement builds to fever pitch. Reaver jetbikers and Hellions duel with impossibly agile warrior-athletes that bound across bladed anti-grav platforms, spinning, slashing and twisting mere feet from the viewers so that arterial spurts of blood rain down into the rapt audience. The amphitheatres crackle with tension, every viewer leaning forward in his seat with eyes wide and the leer of a hungry predator etched upon his face. Once the final acts draw to a close, the Dark Eldar stride back to their lairs looking younger and more vital than when they entered the arena.

But the Wych Cults have far more to them than their main arenas. Below the elegant sprits and weapon-nodes of each Wych arena'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 house keeps an extensive menagerie, re-stocked by its Beastmasters with an endless supply of alien captives and dangerous species. Different Wych Cults practice 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 Cult of Strife espouses a creed of sheer speed over strength.

Around the peaks of the Wych Houses are the toroid arenas, elaborately curved racetrack complexes famous for their death races. The combatants that duel within are called Reavers, cliques of elite jetbike pilots whose reflexes are so sharp that they fight battles at breakneck speeds around the curvilinear interior of each arena. They hurtle past the ingenious traps and moving blades of each deathscape, careening into each other with their custom-bladed craft and mowing down those nearby with blasts from their sophisticated weaponry.

A Wych House 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 a chance for the Wyches who 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.



THE DWELLERS BENEATH

The underside of Commorragh, if it could be termed as such, is host to almost as many edifices and spires as the top. They cluster together in anarchic profusion, many hollowed out by controlled acts of destruction until they form cavernous lairs. The underworld that lies underneath Commorragh is an exceptionally dangerous place. It is the domain of the Haemonculi, a twisted brotherhood of torturers and monsters so ancient and steeped in evil that their continued existence requires daily acts of indescribable torment.

The Haemonculi deal in body modification, drug distillation, and beauty elixirs, though the true source of their power lies elsewhere. Every member of Commorrite society will wind up asking for their help at some point or another, for the Haemonculi are masters of the flesh, be it alive or dead. They are terrible of aspect, tall and slender in form but surgically altered to an alien aesthetic that owes more to madness than beauty. Many Haemonculi believe themselves to be divine in nature, for to them, death is but a minor inconvenience.

Haemonculi 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 practice their vile experiments, melding the flesh of those that fall into their clutches and savouring pain as a gourmet would savour a fine meal. There is something of the alchemist in the Haemonculi's craft, but they prefer to consider themselves artists. To them, each foray into realspace is not so much an act of war as an exhibition of their talents. It is said that Haemonculi are so ancient and jaded that they need to witness incredible amounts of pain each day or risk their soul withering away completely, though pain is not something that is in short supply in the oubliettes of the Haemonculi.

Most Haemonculi covens dwell at the bottom of spiral-edged pits underneath the Core. Their narrow and twisting walkways are illuminated only by dim lamps sewn into the eye sockets of incautious visitors, for ranged along the walls are wretched figures fused into the superstructure. The eldest and most vile Haemonculi dwell at the heart of each spiralling labyrinth, revelling in epic depravities of their own invention. To cross a Haemonculi, or even to obstruct his Wrack servants as they go upon their grisly errands, is counted the most foolish of all sins in the Dark City. Though the consequences of such an act may take a long time to manifest, manifest they will, and when they do they are likely to be horribly protracted and inventive.

THE ETERNAL CYCLE

The Eldar gestation cycle takes many laborious years to complete. As such, conventionally born children are rare symbols of status, usually granted their every indulgence and raised to be just as calculating and evil as their parents. Though procreation still occurs, artificially grown Dark Eldar are far more commonplace. Once impregnated, a nascent egg can be removed from the womb and implanted in one of the amniotic tubes that honeycomb the breeding-walls of the Haemonculi. Using a repulsive, insectile science developed many millennia ago, the embryo's growth can be hyperaccelerated within these tubes, each new specimen drizzling 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 true triumph of the Haemonculi's science is not the ability to create new life but to deny death. Dark Eldar society thrives on treachery. Murder is rife, and each realspace raid carries a high chance of mortality, for the lesser races of the galaxy are not without their defences. How then can Commorragh endure against the omnipresent shadow of sudden death?

Most Dark Eldar warriors, including each Kabal's ruling elite, will at some point enter into a terrible pact with the Haemonculi that lurk beneath the core. The pact 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 upon 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 ever-so-unfortunate accident – can return to life.

The key to this terrible process, of course, is pain. The Dark Eldar are rejuvenated by witnessing agony, and if saturated with enough of it, they can heal the most grievous of wounds. 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 some form of regenerative state. The patients literally drink in the dark energy of the torturer's craft as the Haemonculi works upon his victim below, ably assisted by his Wrack servants and the semi-sentient Engines of Pain. As a cacophony of shrieks rises and falls around the chamber, those installed in the cocoons above slowly feast upon the resonant 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.

A REALM UNBOUND

And yet these are but a fraction of the surreal sights and landscapes scattered throughout dread Commorragh. Across the Rift of Dead Hope, pillars of bone reach up to form a makeshift bridge into the Pale Fortress. In the City of Titans enormous statues enact historic assassinations and coups with terrible inevitability. Vitreous Heap is filled to capacity with piles of glassened body parts, sorted into a landscape of limbs, torsos and heads, and in the bleak wilds of Iron Thorn the choking gut-clouds of the red smog bring the corpses of the cursed back to life. Cyclopean gates of crackling jade fire link one realm to another, guarded by the most vigilant of warriors, and in Devil's Orchard noisome hanging gardens of grave-lotus sprout from a mosaic of the dead.

There is no end to the depths of the Dark City, just as there is no end to the chilling depravity of its children.

THE RISE OF VECT

Commorragh has grown from shrouded beginnings into a nightmare of galactic proportions. Its expansion is the manifestation of the vast intellect of Asdrubael Vect, who rose from slavery to become Overlord of the Dark City.

COMMORRAGH IN FLAMES

Four thousand years after the fall, in the time that Mankind calls M35, Commorragh was to undergo its greatest ordeal. The slave Vect had risen, through pure guile and murderous ambition, to become the Dracon of what he called the Kabal of the Black Heart, when the elite forces of the Imperium mounted a full-scale invasion of Commorragh. At the time Vect, the hidden architect of this time of strife, was opposed at all turns by the most influential of the Dark City's noble houses – Xelian, Kraillach and Yllithian. By the time the invaders had been repelled, the powerbases of these houses were in ruins, their Archons slain. It was not long before Vect had replaced them as the true power in the Dark City.

The seeds of the Imperial invasion were sewn 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. General practice was to avoid it at all costs. Unbeknownst to the Imperium, there existed a vast portal into a main arterial of the webway within Desaderian space, shielded by holofields that made it appear nothing more than a shimmer in the starlight. Behind this portal lurked the pirate fleets of Commorragh, waiting for unwary prey like a trapdoor spider ready to pounce.

The Dark Eldar noble houses preyed upon Imperial shipping lanes only rarely in order to escape retribution; and hence the missing ships were considered acceptable losses or else written off as bureaucratic errors. Vect's first 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 Imperial Guard 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. This campaign saw the Kabal of the Black Heart grow rich in plunder, and though Vect's detractors thought him a fool for antagonising the Imperial war engine, the raids continued apace.

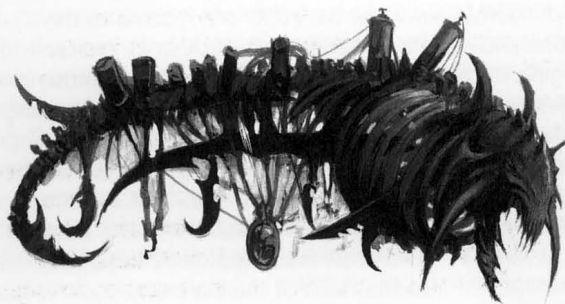
With ponderous slowness the Imperium reacted to the disappearances in the Desaderian Gulf. A strike cruiser belonging to the Salamanders chapter of the Adeptus Astartes was close enough to investigate – it was prowling the edges of the Gulf in search of the sacred artefacts and relics of their Primarch. Captain Phoecus of the Salamanders ordered his ship deep into the Desaderian Gulf. After a short but extremely violent skirmish with Vect's Kabalite fleet, Phoecus' craft *Forgehammer* was crippled by haywire bombs and transported into the heart of the Dark City.





The furore that resulted from this audacious capture set the spires of High Commoragh aflame with intrigue. A Captain of the Adeptus Astartes was a prize indeed, for such an individual could withstand extreme and prolonged torture before divulging his vital secrets. Before long Vect found his fleet dwarfed by the armada of the Archon Lord Xelian. The *Forgehammer*, still rendered impotent by Vect's haywire field, was 'confiscated' by Xelian, taken to High Commoragh, and analysed for a long and exquisite dissection process.

In his arrogance, Lord Xelian had reckoned without the resourcefulness of the Space Marines trapped within. The ship's comms network was shorted out by the haywire field, but unbeknownst to Xelian there remained a more pervasive method of communication available to the Astartes. Captain Phoeus's close companion, the gifted Librarian Hestion, had sent a psychic request for aid as soon as the ship's systems had been disabled. Hestion was acting like a living beacon to the rest of his Chapter; a beacon that was nestled deep within the spire-clustered confines of Xelian's realm.



When Lord Xelian sent the elite of his warrior court to bring the Space Marines to his torture chambers, they were met with far sterner resistance than they had anticipated. The Dark Eldar found it relatively easy to carve through the hull of the strike cruiser and gain entrance to its dark and cluttered passageways, but overpowering the Space Marines proved nigh impossible. Lit only by the intermittent flash of disciplined boltgun fire, a vicious and desperate battle took place within the *Forgehammer* until Astartes and Dark Eldar blood mingled together in its corridors.

Xelian was quick to realise that he had underestimated his quarry. Changing tack, he returned the salvage rights of the vessel to the Kabal of the Black Heart, ostensibly appearing generous but in truth intending to seize the Astartes once they had been taken captive. Vect readily agreed, forming small strike forces of all those warriors in his Kabal that he suspected to be double agents and sending them into the lion's den piecemeal. Vect's Kabalite Warriors, victorious on a dozen worlds, ventured into the *Forgehammer* without fear. The crippled ship echoed to the thump of explosions for days on end, and its stained-glass viewports lit with bursts of promethium flame. The Space Marines were not giving up.

Lord Xelian was content to let Vect slowly drive his so-called Kabal to destruction, thinking the Dracon a fool for not attacking with all due force. Vect casually played a waiting game, systematically feeding elements of his Kabal into the guns of the Space Marines in order to buy himself time, and even employing Commorrite mercenaries with ties to Xelian's court, none of whom emerged from the *Forgehammer* alive.

On the sixteenth day of the siege, the skies above High Commoragh yawned wide. Somehow the Salamanders Chapter had received coordinates that had led them to their beleaguered battle brothers, and the Desaderian portal had mysteriously been left fully operational, 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 jaw-dropping, even for the jaded Commorrites in the streets below. Two dozen strike cruisers, each a bullish chunk of gothic architecture built for war, hammered through the wide-open portal into the skies of the Dark City. 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 jutting ram that ploughed straight into the spire where Xelian stood, crushing it like a hammer driven into a priceless sculpture of crystal and light.

THE BATTLE IN THE SKY

The Dark Eldar reacted swiftly. From nearby Port Shard came hundreds of exotic craft, each but a splinter next to the slab-like Imperial ships, 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 each strike cruiser. Though many of them were blown out of the sky by roaring broadsides, they systematically took out the Imperial ships' guns with focused void lance fire and sustained barrages from disintegrator cannons. The battle barge *Vulkan's Wrath* was caught by thick tentacles of electrical force crackling out from Port Shard's salvage spars, rendering the majority of its weapons systems useless. One by one the Imperial guns were silenced.

But the Space Marines were tenacious foes. Ejecting from each of the strike cruisers came Drop Pods, fired out at such velocity they became weapons in their own right. So thick was the barrage of these meteoric transports that many smashed straight through the soaring Dark Eldar craft, or ploughed into elegant starscrapers and smashed clean out the other side. The Drop Pods hurtled down, each bearing a squad of Space Marines into the depths of Commoragh, who deployed upon impact with guns blazing. They left ruin in their wake; spires toppled and statues fell.

WAR IN THE STREETS

The Salamanders' counter-attack had robbed the Dark Eldar of the initiative. Within minutes of the Drop Pod assault, the Space Marines had established a perimeter in the obsidian-paved streets of the Kraillach Quarter and, though they were taking heavy fire from the Kabalites and Scourges that soared through the skies above, their power armour was holding proof against the splinter weaponry of their foes. Even those Space Marines who took direct hits gritted their teeth and fought through the pain coursing through them.

It was not long before the darkness began to gather in earnest, the denizens of the Dark City drawn to the conflict like sharks to blood. Through the boiling air came massed swarms of skyboard-mounted Hellions and Reaver Jetbikers,

swooping down to rake and tear at the Space Marines. The jinking one-man craft proved too fast for bolter volleys to intercept, so the Salamanders instead sent up great roaring sheets of promethium from their flamers. Whole gangs of Hellions caught fire and wheeled away, shrieking in pain.

From the gloom came the Mandrakes, for the alleyways of Commorragh have ever been their hunting grounds. The half-daemon beasts clambered upwards from the Space Marines' own shadows to close their freezing fangs upon unprotected faces and slice throats with silvered blades. Through the streets came Raider transports full of Dark Eldar Warriors, each squad leaping down into the ranks of the Space Marines scattered throughout the districts and laying about themselves with knife and splinter pistol. Battle was joined from one side of High Commorragh to the other, and before long it devolved into a melee of terrifying proportions. The streets seethed with violence, but the Space Marines held their own. Entire sections of High Commorragh burned as the invading Space Marines cut down or incinerated each new breed of horror that fell upon them. Word spread quickly of the invasion. High up in the arenas, the gladiators of the Wych Cults mobilised for war.

The Space Marines within the city were now almost five hundred strong, and they had established a perimeter throughout the Kraillach Quarter. High Archon Kraillach himself had led a massed charge against the Space Marines, intending to crush the invaders that were tearing out the heart of his personal fiefdom. At first he cut a path through the disciplined ranks of Space Marines, his force-fields surrounding him with flickering doppelgangers so that it was impossible to tell his true location. The ancient Archon struck like a cobra, killing Space Marines with every thrust of his powered blade, until his rampage was halted by a stray blast from a dark lance that vapourised him where he stood.



It was then that the Wyches of the Cult of Strife joined the fight. Hundreds of beautiful but deadly warriors leapt and spun through the ranks of the mustered Space Marines with dizzying speed. Heads began to roll as razorflails and impalers found their mark, knives plunged deep into eye sockets and hydragauntlets flashed red in the twilight. At their head fought Lelith Hesperax; grace and power incarnate. Warriors fell apart before her; chainswords fell from lifeless hands and bolter rounds hurtled through empty space where a blood-spattered she-devil stood a split second before. In the streets ahead, the patrician Archon Yllithian of the Silent Scream saw a chance for further glory, and joined the fight to prove his right to rule. The Space Marines fell back; they had lost half their number already, and badly needed to regroup. Lelith and her attendants paused for barely a second before cutting down Yllithian and his warriors without mercy. Their part in Vect's grand plan played out, Lelith and her Wyches melted away into the mists.

A MIRACULOUS REPRIEVE

As the *Forgehammer* lay shackled with electric force high in the spires, the battle in the skies was intensifying. Xelian's last command had been to destroy the captive ship no matter the cost – should mere humans recover his stolen prize, the Archon's authority and that of his noble-born peers would be shattered forever. Flights of winged Scourges armed with haywire blasters and heat lances began to systematically disassemble the ship, and a fleet of Ravager gunships met any who dared to counter-attack with punishing fusillades that forced them back into cover. Then, in a storm of light, Terminators from the Salamanders First Company teleported directly onto the hull of the *Forgehammer* and returned fire. The Scourges were driven back, and Brother-Captain Phoecus seized his moment. His men emerged from cover as one, sending a single krak missile soaring into each of the nine towering spars that held his craft captive with beams of electromagnetic force. Miraculously, each missile seemed to trigger a chain explosion, and the burning spars crashed down into the streets below. Librarian Hestion summoned a storm of his own, a raging inferno in the shape of a flaming drake that tore the Ravagers out of the sky one by one. The *Forgehammer* had suffered terribly, but it was free from the Dark City's bonds once more. With a great shuddering roar, the strike cruiser began its ascent to freedom.

Far below, the Space Marines fighting in the Xelian Quarter had become completely surrounded. Commorragh had come alive around them and warriors from a dozen noble houses were converging upon their position. Nonetheless, the *Forgehammer* had torn itself free. A single curt comm-signal was sent and, within moments, the main bulk of the Space Marines battling in the Dark City teleported away in a blaze of light. Those that had been cut off from the main assault gave their lives to buy their brethren time, or else were paralysed with hypertoxins and taken away to fight and die as warrior-slaves.

Confusion reigned as the haywire fields that had shackled the Imperial craft were disengaged one by one. The jetfighter squadrons of the High Archons moved to intercept, but were met by such an enormous volume of firepower from both friend and foe that they were forced to disengage. The battle barge *Vulkan's Wrath*, now joined by the critically wounded *Forgehammer*, fired retros and extricated itself from the burning ruins of what had once been Archon Xelian's pride and joy. The vast ship's engine blast flattened spires and starscrapers before the Space Marines made their escape. The Astartes fleet passed through the still-yawning webway portal above High Commorragh and escaped into realspace.

It was the aftermath of the Imperial invasion that changed Commorragh forever. The power vacuum left by the vanquished noble houses of High Commorragh was quickly filled by Asdrubael Vect and his jubilant Kabal, who had proven their dominance over their rivals in the fires of war. The old order of Commorragh was in total flux and nothing was certain. In the years that followed Vect played the angles like a true master, forever asserting the meritocracy of the Kabals over the aristocracy of the noble houses. So it was that the Kabal of the Black Heart rose to ascendancy in place of the old nobility, and Archon Vect's stranglehold upon the fate of the Dark City began in earnest.

THE PANACEA WARS

As Vect's influence grew ever greater, the Archons of the newly-formed Kabals sought audience in his court. Their petty schemes and veiled doublespeak bored him greatly. Even the famous beauty and barbed wit of the latest Archon to enter Vect's throne room, Lady Aurelia Malys, stirred him not at all. Eventually Vect summoned all those who sought his favour to his throne room and set them an impossible task. The loss of a human world's population was of little import to the star-spanning empire of Man; humans bred like insects and were easily replaced. Vect's challenge was not to destroy a single world or star system, but to poison the entire Imperium and return with proof of the deed.

Vect had set his challenge purely to thin the resources of those Kabals who had wasted his precious time. He did not expect any of these so-called Archons to achieve the task set out before them, and if some of them met their demise in the attempt, then so much the better.

As Vect's task was laid down, the Archon known as Lady Malys allowed herself a slight smile. Outwitting the lesser races was child's play to her, and as large as the Imperium was, it was still only human. Gathering to her side the entirety of her Kabal, the Poisoned Tongue, Malys mobilised her fleet and made haste into realspace. Through her connections with the Harlequins of the webway she had knowledge of an Imperial forge world that had suddenly become far more heavily defended than any of its neighbouring planets – the entire system had concentrated its military strength upon a single world, leaving the others lightly garrisoned and extremely vulnerable.

The industrial planet of Verdigris IX, settled deep in the heart of Segmentum Obscurus, now literally bristled with defence batteries and interceptor cannon. Its Hives were thronged to the point of claustrophobia with regiment after regiment of Imperial Guard and the armies of the Adeptus Mechanicus, and the God-Machines of the Titan Legions loomed through the polluted air of the wastes around the Hives' borders.


Evidently something extremely valuable existed upon Verdigris, and Malys alone knew its nature. Her spies had informed her that archaeo-technologists had unearthed a rare and vital relic from when the Imperium was at its height – a 'standard template construct' that could act as a blueprint for large-scale advancement across the galaxy. Every STC is of inestimable value to the Imperium of Man, but this particular construct, a medical miracle codenamed the Panacea, could save billions of human lives from death by poison and disease.

THE BAITING OF THE BEAST

A conventional assault was out of the question. The High Fabricator of the planet had fortified his macrocomplex to such an extent that he could fill the skies with burning metal in an instant, an inverse rain of bullets and blasts that would shred a Dark Eldar strike force in a matter of moments. Malys intended to retrieve the prize herself, but she could not do it alone. A blunt instrument was needed, and a big one at that.

The fleet of the Poisoned Tongue entered realspace through the Ophidian Gulf, emerging right on the tail of an immense Ork fleet. The flotilla of ramshackle spacecraft stretched off in all directions, a roving scrapyards of gunned-up junk with a





single vast space hulk at its heart. Malys commanded her captains to disable their night shields and fire at will. Her order was met with raised eyebrows at best, for the Ork ships outnumbered them fifty to one and many of the greenskin craft were already changing heading to an intercept course. Scowling, Malys led by example, personally manning her flagship's void cannon and blasting apart three Ork ships one after the other. Chastened, her captains quickly took up the fight, dispatching squadrons of sleek fighters to make hit-and-run attacks on the largest Ork ships. Anarchy reigned as the Ork armada attempted to change course and intercept the alien fleet harrying its rear like metallic sharks ripping at the flukes of a void whale.

Suddenly, as one, the Dark Eldar fleet retreated at speed. The Orks, spoiling for a fight, mounted a hasty pursuit. The ensuing running battle lasted a dozen hours, the Dark Eldar ships staying tantalisingly out of reach before Verdigris appeared on the greenskin fleet's screens. Gathering a deadly momentum, the single-minded Orks pursued the Dark Eldar at speed, careening straight towards the High Fabricator's beloved macrocomplex. Then, just as Verdigris' autodefences illuminated the night sky with myriad ruby stabs of laser fire, the Dark Eldar simply vanished.

The Ork ships ploughed into the world of Verdigris like a mailed fist into an unprotected face. Hundreds were reduced to ruin by defence laser fire, but such was their sheer bulk that on they came, megatonnes of burning wreckage slamming into the defence networks of the macrocomplex. The surviving Orks that had bullied through the High Fabricator's firestorms hacked their way out of their burning craft and into the ranks of the defenders. In the dust wastes outside the Hive, the Legio Titanicus mobilised to intercept the greenskins, and the earth shook at their advance as they mercilessly hammered the Orks infesting the Hive. Then, with terrible inevitability, the space hulk *Foot of Gork* thundered out of the clouds. In a single earth-shaking instant, the God-machines were crushed flat. Almost half of the macrocomplex was blasted apart in the explosion, its autodefences crippled and its surviving defenders hurled to the ground.

THE HAMMER AND THE KNIFE

It was then that the skies wrenched open. Through a storm of jade light came the pirate fleet of Lady Malys, its deadly elegance the absolute antithesis of the brutish Ork armada. The Kabalites gunned down humans and Orks alike and fed upon their screams. Metal behemoths roared as Ork Battlewagons engaged the tank companies of the Imperial Guard, and still more Ork spacecraft smashed down into the city, the ground quaking with each new impact. As buildings toppled around them, Dark Eldar skimmers soared into the heart of the macrocomplex, for Malys knew that her prize would be deep in the vaults. Packs of Incubi plunged into the midst of the deafened, disorientated Guardsmen milling in the breach, their tormentor fields sending out waves of black agony as their klaive-blades carved open into human flesh. In the heart of the city, the dark feast was beginning in earnest. Malys and her handpicked elite slaughtered the Guardsmen and Adeptus Mechanicus Skitarii that guarded the palace of the High Fabricator. In their wake came hundreds of Kabalite Warriors, meeting each Imperial Guard counter-charge with punishing salvos of raw firepower.

Lady Malys stepped and twirled through the blood-mad brawl as if she were enjoying a pleasant walk instead of cutting her way through a war of her own design. She personally dismembered the armoured Stormtroopers at the heart of the macrocomplex and commanded her warriors to break open the inner chamber within which the STC was hidden. But the chamber was already open, its door a smoking wreck. Ork bullet casings covered the floor, and within the vault the High Fabricator lay in a pool of his own blood, his legs sheared off at the knees. The prize was gone.

Malys flew into a red rage, killing several of her attendants who she suspected of betraying her. Her plans lay in tatters. The macrocomplex, so efficiently plunged into total war, had now become irrelevant. Only the STC mattered. There was little chance of mustering the entire Kabal whilst they were at feast; the complex had degenerated into chaos and confusion abounded. Malys gathered her court to her side, ordering her jetfighter squadrons to cease their punishment of the Imperial Guard and act as reconnaissance agents. In a matter of seconds Malys had news of a massive column of smoke-belching Ork vehicles trundling out of the city and heading back towards the space hulk that had crash-landed out in the dust wastes. Lady Malys summoned her personal transport and took off in pursuit.

The story of the battle between Lady Malys' airborne elite and the sprawling Ork convoy has become infamous in the upper echelons of High Commoragh. A frontal attack would have been suicide, so Malys circled the gigantic Ork convoy from a distance, picking off its outriders unit by unit. When the Orks moved to intercept, the Dark Eldar withdrew into the clouds, arrowing downwards once more to strike at a different location. Through the shattered skies Reavers duelled with clumsy, smoke-belching Ork flying machines and packs of Scourges methodically sniped the Stormboyz that careened through the skies to intercept Malys' force. Hour by gruelling hour, the Dark Eldar strike force whittled down the hurtling flotilla of Ork vehicles until a broken line of scrap metal and smouldering green corpses stretched all the way back to the outskirts of the macrocomplex. Malys herself led the final assault, leaping down from her transport in a flurry of courtly robes onto the iron roof of the Ork Battle Fortress at the head of the vastly diminished column. Her warriors followed suit, and though the Orks fought with true fury, the Dark Eldar were high on pain and moved like quicksilver. Before long Malys had retrieved the lead-encased STC from the corpse of the Big Mek riding at the head of the Ork armoured column. The Dark Eldar swiftly withdrew from the battlefield, leaving a raging war behind them.

Upon her return to Commoragh, Lady Malys did not return straight to Vect's throne room, but instead headed with her prize into her inner chambers. Her bootheels clacked smartly on the polished obsidian floor of her trophy halls as she strode back to her throne, pausing only to place the stolen STC upon a stasis pedestal between the mummified head of a human technosavant and the gilded hands of Saint Cerulia the Just. Word of her success spread fast, for the tongues of Commoragh's gossips are never still. That evening Malys found herself the recipient of a personal invitation to dine with Vect at her convenience, for her unbridled success had impressed even him. So it was that Lady Aurelia Malys became one of the Supreme Overlord's inner circle.



THE WAR OF DARK REVELATIONS

In the closing years of M41, realspace found itself under attack from a new threat – the merciless and all-consuming Hive Fleets of the Tyranids. It was not long before Vect had charged his minions and collaborators with a mission to gather intelligence. Hidden within the webway, Commorragh had little to fear from such biological terrors, but if nothing else Vect saw a useful tool in the Tyranid race.

In contrast, the young and dynamic empire of the Tau was absolutely terrified. The sophisticated armed forces of the Tau had barely repelled the ever-evolving Hive Fleet Gorgon and could ill afford another system-wide conflict. Hive Fleet Kraken had pushed its tendrils so far into the eastern fringe that the Tau empire was virtually surrounded. The Tau sought to employ every mercenary, ally and confederate they could find in the war effort to hold back the unceasing tide of Tyranids, and damn the consequences.

When an alien lord calling himself Urien Rakarth contacted the Tau High Command via a grainy, static-laced vid capture, the Fire Caste were more than willing to parley. Rakarth offered to join the war against the Tyranids in return for what he called 'a cultural exchange', and despite his hideous appearance, the Tau officers eagerly accepted the deal. Certainly Rakarth and his so-called Haemonculi seemed strange, but they had a lordly air about them, and seemed to perceive the Tyranid invaders as a fairly minor threat.

At first the Tau High Command's decision to join forces with Rakarth's Prophets of Flesh seemed both timely and prudent. Upon the hyper-verdant planet of Vigos the conflict between the Tau and Hive Fleet Kraken raged fiercest of all, but wherever the Tau were at risk of being completely overrun by Tyranid wave attacks, blade-like craft would descend through the clouds. Dropping onto the lush battlefield from each craft came clutches of sickle-handed, bare-chested warriors. They instantly strode into the swarming ranks of the Tyranids, shrugging off mortal wounds as if they were only a minor inconvenience and delivering clinical decapitations in return.

Where the scythe-limbed assault beasts of the Tyranid swarms penetrated the Tau lines, Dark Eldar attack craft would disgorge monstrous creations of corded muscle and sculpted bone. Raw-skinned and heaving with chemically-induced battlelust, the blank-helmeted horrors plunged into the fray, their pallid Haemonculi masters drifting above them with macabre grace. To the Tau Fire Warriors, each new meat-monster seemed like an evil effigy come to life, a mad artist's vision of fleshy excess given form purely in order to kill. The fiendish creations fell upon the Tyranids with a dire energy, augmented limbs and metal gauntlets spasming, hacking, and ripping until even the most ferocious Tyranid creatures had been reduced to a tangle of chitin and sticky black gore.

Though a great many of Rakarth's masked minions were dismembered or gouged open by the larger Tyranid beasts, they seemed totally impervious to pain. Even when missing limbs or set afire by bio-plasma the flesh-creatures came on. The Tyranid assaults broke against them like waves against a cliff, and the Tau took full advantage of the reprieve. Where the elite of the chitinous Tyranid swarm stormed into the fray, Talos Pain Engines and Cronos Parasite Engines drifted in to wither away their life essences or pull them limb from limb.

Where the Tyranid leader-beasts strode towards the front lines, the Haemonculi themselves would employ strange and unknowable weapons; gauntlets that turned synapse beasts to dust, flickering ghost-rays that drained the life force from Tervigon brood-mothers, and hexrifles that turned serpentine Trygons into gigantic glass statues.

Though the Haemonculi's warriors were stomach-churning, they had turned the tide on dozens of fronts. The Tau High Command were mightily impressed, but also a little shocked at the cavalcade of hideous monsters employed by the Haemonculi. Yet the Tau already counted amongst their armed forces the cannibalistic Kroot and the insectoid Vespids, and the Prophets of Flesh were clearly from an advanced civilisation. Just in case, High Command mobilised their reserves from the pristine world of Rubikon. The Tau upon Vigos breathed a collective sigh of relief. The Tyranid attack had been stalled, and reinforcements were on their way.

THE PATH TO DAMNATION

Before long the wizened face of Urien Rakarth appeared upon the screens of the Tau High Command once more. He spoke theatrically about the sadness in his heart at the loss of so many of his valued footsoldiers, and though there was no hint of sincerity in his words, none could deny that Rakarth's minions had borne the brunt of the Tyranid ground assault. In recompense, the Haemonculus requested seventy-seven Tau from each caste as part of the cultural exchange. A smile upon his ravaged lips, Rakarth requested they be accompanied by a delegation of seven Ethereals.

The Ethereal caste is sacrosanct to the Tau, and that part of the deal was deemed unacceptable. However, the Tau were prepared to pay almost any other price for the greater good of their empire. High Command selected a delegation of dutiful volunteers from every other caste, and far above the planet of Vigos, a detachment of Manta transports made their way into orbit toward a crackling sky-portal that widened at their approach. Through this they passed into the unknown. Their fate was sealed.

The next phase of the war against Hive Fleet Kraken was a focused counter-attack. The Tau wished to reclaim the polar continent from the Tyranids, and the Prophets of Flesh once more agreed to add their might to the offensive. Massed Tau hunter cadres flew through the snowstorms in perfect formation, teams of airborne battlesuits decimating the Tyranid hordes below. Winged Tyranids moved to intercept, hurtling through the blizzards to physically pull apart the Tau with tooth and claw. On the front lines, the Haemonculi unleashed their newest creations. Long-limbed Grotesques moaned in despair as they hacked through the swarms, flesh-golems flailed and clawed with nests of clutching limbs. The firepower of the Tau battlesuits and the fury of their fleshy allies complemented each other perfectly, but still the Tyranids came on. The casualties on both sides were horrendous, but if anything, the Haemonculi seemed energised by the violence unfolding before them.

The battle raged for six days, and ultimately the Tau were victorious. In the post-battle debrief, however, a terrible suspicion began to dawn. Vid-captures from Tau drones showed that their sinew-riddled allies were not pallid as before, but a blue-grey coloration all too familiar to the Tau.



THE PRICE

Mere seconds after the Tau realised what had become of their 'cultural exchange', Rakarth's face appeared on every vid-screen upon the planet of Vigos. He demanded that either the Tau handed over the Ethereals, or seven thousand and seventy-seven other Tau in their place. His request was met with outrage. High Command would see Rakarth punished for his crimes if it took their lives to achieve it. The Tau reserve scrambled in response and made its way to intercept the Haemonculi craft in orbit. They found nothing but mirages and empty space.

Suddenly a desperate message from Commander O'Shaev blurted onto their screens. Rubikon, the planet the Tau reserve had left behind, was under attack from thousands of sky-craft. Its garrison cadres were suffering heavy losses against a foe stranger than even the Tyranids. They needed help, and fast. High Command was caught in a deadly trap. Somehow the Haemonculi had moved with impossible speed, and they had invited their allies to the feast.

Amongst those who had joined the invasion upon the lightly defended planet of Rubikon was Asdrubael Vect himself. As a reward for delivering the jewelled heart of the Tau star system right into his hands, Vect gave Urien Rakarth and his Prophets of Flesh the privilege of leading the assault.

The Haemonculus and his coven of morbid fiends did not disappoint. The battle upon Vigos was but a skirmish compared to the punishment visited upon Rubikon. The Prophets of Flesh led a massed charge of the monstrous and

the insane; seen from above, the lands appeared to writhe with pallid bodies like a bed of maggots. At first, Tau garrison cadres put up a spirited defence. Massed pulse rifle fire cut through the invaders until the battlefield smelt of burning meat. Thousands of Wracks, Grotesques and pain engines fell to Crisis Battlesuit attacks and Hammerhead tank columns, and yet on the invaders came, crawling and flailing in their death throes to kill Fire Warriors by the dozen. The Tau resolve began to waver. How could they drive back that which did not accept death?

Worse still, the Tau had reckoned without the military genius of Vect. The initial Haemonculi attack was not intended to bring victory; only pain. When the Kabals of the Dark Eldar attacked, the planet was already a vision from hell. The Tau were fighting for their lives against unholy and blasphemous monsters, many of whom had once been their comrades-in-arms. Vect's Kabalites feasted well, each energised and invigorated to such an extent that even a single Dark Eldar warrior proved a match for an entire unit of Fire Warriors. The war raged on, but the Tau were hopelessly outmatched.

When the sparse reinforcements that the Tau High Command could spare reached Rubikon, they were confronted with a world in ruin. The Tau battle complexes were breached and burning, the cadavers of thousands of Kroot and Vespid auxiliaries arranged into macabre sigils of destruction that could only be seen from space. Of the Tau, there was no sign. Every last one of them had vanished. The entire planet was barren, its populace stolen away into the darkness to feed the eternal hunger of Commorragh.



THE TALE OF ETERNAL SIN

The blood-soaked history of Commorragh stretches back through the millennia to the height of the Eldar empire. From shrouded beginnings in the hidden corners of the webway, the Dark Eldar thrived, growing in strength and ambition until they became a force like no other. Their history is one of constant discord, and to fully define it would be impossible. Nonetheless, though much is recorded only in allegory and fable, there remain many wars and periods of strife so dire that they have been burnt forever into history.

A DARK GENESIS (c.M18-M32)

THE PORT COMMORRAGH

c.M18

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 of the jurisdiction of the Eldar councils, Commorragh acts as a magnet for those who wish to avoid attention.

THE TWILIGHT CULTS

c.M18-M20

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, each of which is powered by the energy of a stolen sun. 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.

THE AILING PANTHEON

c.M19-M24

The worship of the traditional Eldar gods begins to wane as new sects and societies rise to power. The Dark Muses, many of whom are synonymous with sensual vice and sin, become the unofficial figureheads of the new order.

DARKNESS RISING

c.M25-M30

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.

EXODUS

c.M30-M31

Sensing the end, a portion 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. Hundreds of Craftworlds sail into the sea of stars in search of the relative safety of the untrammelled void.

THE FALL OF THE ELДАР

c.M31

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 his birth 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.

COMMORRAGH ASCENDANT

c.M31-M32

In the wake of the Fall, the unrepentant Eldar hidden within the webway consolidate their power. The next millennium sees the port-cities and sovereign realms of the labyrinth dimension grow steadily in size and influence, and Commorragh becomes a sprawling realm unto itself. The Dark City thrives under the oppressive rule of the noble houses that lurk at its heart.

THE RISE OF VECT (c.M32-M37)

A LEGACY BEGINS

c.M32

A slave known only as Vect vows that he shall rule the Dark City, even if it takes all 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.

THE WAR OF THE SUN AND THE MOON

c.M33

The Solar Cults that control the Dark City's stolen suns rise in power and influence, ultimately declaring war upon the noble houses who would see Commorragh plunged into permanent night. An aerial war rages for centuries, but ultimately the noble houses emerge victorious.

THE COUP OF HIGH COMMORRAGH

c.M35

Asdrubael Vect launches a series of punishing raids into Imperial space, triggering a massive counter-attack from three chapters of the Adeptus Astartes through the Desaderian Gulf. Vect manipulates the invasion to cripple the powerbases of the patrician Archons and, in the aftermath, takes their place as ruler of High Commorragh.

THE KABALS ASCENDANT

c.M35-M36

The aristocracy of Commorragh is in disgrace. It is soon replaced by the Kabalite system, as pioneered by Vect and his Kabal of the Black Heart. Privilege and status are supplanted by sheer ambition and murderous capability. Many elder noble houses reinvent themselves as Kabals, though they never forgive Vect for usurping their power.

THE BREACHING

c.M37

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 around them; huge edifices that are permanently guarded by Vect's elite Incubi and Kabalite Warrior garrisons. One by one, each of the satellite realms and sovereign city-states of the webway are conquered by the Kabal of the Black Heart and their vassal cults. Over several millennia of civil war and violent strife, Commorragh expands into and throughout these once-autonomous regions until they become integral to the Dark City. With the exception of the city of Shaa-dom, Vect's stranglehold upon Dark Eldar society becomes total.

THE AGE OF PAIN (c.M35-M41)

THE GHOST PLANET

156.M35

A far-flung Imperial Hive World stubbornly maintains radio silence after its unsanctioned decision to hire Eldar mercenaries. Five years later a large-scale Imperial designation is sent to investigate the lack of forthcoming tithes. When they make planetfall they find no human life signs whatsoever. The entire planet, every hive, hab-block and spire, is completely deserted.

THE BATTLE FOR THAXAR RIFT

745.M35

The Chaos-worshipping pirates and renegades that make their lairs in the Thaxar Rift become so powerful that they prove a serious problem to The Severed, whose Kabalite fleets seek to plunder the rift at their leisure. The Imperial Navy, after mysteriously receiving the exact whereabouts of the renegade Chaos base they had been hunting, slowly brings its great mass to bear and alerts the Adeptus Astartes to their intent. The Thaxar Wars turn into a grinding stalemate that last for six years before the area is declared lost and subjected to systematic and aggressive Exterminatus. The Dark Eldar watch and learn from the spectacle. After eradicating all the Imperial ships left in the system, they claim the Thaxar Rift with their own fleets.

VECT'S GIFT

677.M36

Asdrubael Vect tricks his would-be rival Archon Kelithresh into opening a casket that has ostensibly been presented as 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.

THE PLAGUE OF GLASS

926.M36

The celebrated Commorrite Jalaxlar reveals his latest works – a set of astonishingly lifelike renderings of Dark Eldar in black glass-like crystal. Jalaxlar earns great acclaim from his patrons, for he has perfectly captured expressions of terror and shock in each of his sculptures. When a rival house attacks Jalaxlar's galleries that same evening, his sanctum-laboratories are smashed apart, and his secret is revealed. The sculptor had isolated a viral helix that quickly turns living material into crystalline glass. The virus, now free in the air, spreads with alarming speed. It vitrifies thousands of Commorrites before the Haemonculi coven known as the Hex take control and release a counter-virus. The virus is later weaponised.

THE SLOW DEATH OF GRAEGUS

345.M37

The Kabal of the Poisoned Tongue comes into conflict with a fleet of Ork Freebooterz stationed out of Graegus. Lady Aurelia Malys is incensed that mere barbarian pirates should deny her will. Personally capturing a musclebound Ork Nob, Malys instructs her Lhamaean poisoners to prepare a surprise for the greenskins upon Graegus. Lady Malys' Kabal makes planetfall weeks later, fighting their way into the centre of the Ork capital city and impaling their barely-living captive upon a half-built Gargant before melting away into the night. The corpse begins to shed millions of spores into the air, each of which bears a cargo of terrible wasting toxins. As the infected spores corrupt the Orkoid reproductive cycle, the population of Graegus grows weaker and weaker. When Malys returns it is a simple matter to slaughter the survivors.





WAR IN THE WEBWAY

579.M37

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

THE TOWER OF FLESH

796.M37

The Haemonculi stronghold known as the Tower of Flesh is created – a living, breathing fortress, made from 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.

THE BLADE OF VECT

984.M37

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 realm and a burning Imperial 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 all manner of daemonic entities 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.

THE LAST ACT OF LORD KORSCHT

182.M38

The thrice-decorated Inquisitor Lord Korscht of the Ordo Xenos second-guesses the Dark Eldar raid upon the industrial world of Demoisne. When the Kabal of Immortality Denied bursts into realspace above the planet's capital, they are met with not only the firepower of six hundred quad-guns and Icarus lascannons but also the full fury of a company of the Deathwatch. The Dark Eldar withdraw empty-handed within minutes of their arrival. Korscht's absence is keenly felt at the post-action debrief, and the Inquisitor Lord's underground fortress complex is investigated. His remains are spread thinly upon every page of every occult tome in his library.

WAAAGH! ZOGGIT

227.M38

The Ork Warlord Zoggit, famous for killing anyone foolish enough to imply he might be a bit of a Weirdboy, declares a Waaagh! straight into the vermilion spacerift encroaching upon the world of Zogg-Dis. He and his Boyz emerge in the Commorrite port-spar of Blackblood, much to the surprise of its resident Kabal. The resultant storm of violence carries hundreds of thousands of Orks into the twisting byways of Commorragh. War is joined in earnest when the Dark City turns its attention to the Orkoid invasion, systematically isolating each Ork army in order to

destroy it piece by piece. However, each Kabal is so preoccupied by trying to turn the unexpected invasion to its advantage that the Orks cause far more damage than any of the Kabals thought possible. Several districts of Commorragh are toppled or burnt to cinders by wave upon wave of howling Orks. Eventually the Orks are coralled and over 10,000 greenskins are captured by the Wych districts. The resultant orgy of violence keeps the arenas of the Wych districts packed to capacity for almost an entire fortnight.

BEAUTY RELINQUISHED

717.M38

A new fashion sweeps the spires of Commorragh, and soon every member of the noble houses has paid to have himself horribly disfigured. The suddenly fashionable Haemonculi consider it to be a very good year, but the trend is predictably short-lived. The Time of Reparations proves even better for business, and suspicions abound.

PANDAIMON BETRAYED

799.M38

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.

A GRUESOME LESSON

933.M38

During the prolonged campaign for Massgrave, the 121st Cadian Elite, famed across Ultima Segmentum as the 'Eldar Killers', disappear completely without so much as a comm-signal. Weeks later thousands of headless and armless human bodies with Imperial Eagle tattoos are found roaming aimlessly along the arched streets of Commorragh's Vault District, moaning, staggering and bumping into each other before being put out of their misery by Hellion hunter-gangs.

THE THIEVES OF THE ICE MISTS

616.M39

Upon the ice-locked planet of Fenris, aspiring Space Marine recruits begin to disappear during their Lone Hunt. Each aspirant has been implanted with the geneseed of Leman Russ, and only the strongest have iron will enough to prevent it from ravaging their bodies and effect permanent devolvment into beasthood. The Wolf Priests notice that an unprecedented number of these aspirants are going missing and, after fruitlessly patrolling the wilderness of Asaheim, focus their scrutiny on nearspace. Sure enough a Dark Eldar fleet is stationed above the ice caps of the neighbouring planet of Mydgarthen. The Space Wolves mount a lightning invasion upon the Mydgarthen ice caps, their Thunderhawks descending on tongues of flame to bring the last remaining xenos there to battle. The Space Wolves fight with the fury of the storm, but soon enough the Haemonculi covens garrisoned there fade away into the mists, their mocking and distant laughter receding into nothing. The Space Wolves find a series of white-capped chambers leading deep down into the planet's crust. Each is empty of life – empty, that is, save for witless brutes of bulging muscle and fur incarcerated in tubular pods, some of whom resemble the Primarch Russ himself. The Space Wolves still do not speak of this day.

DESPERATION'S END

272.M39

The frontier planet of Desperation unwittingly sows the seeds of its own demise when it sends an astropathic message detailing an invasion of daemonspawn. 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 the creation of especially large Grotesques. After the desolation of the planet's cities, the Haemonculi disappear with holocaptures of their vile creations at work. Years later, the Imperial 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 Children of Bone far more than the Imperial troops, but nonetheless the world is purged within the space of a week.

THE DARK WITHIN THE LIGHT

117.M40

The reviled cryptoscientist Vorsch perfects a technique he calls photonic transubstantiation, transforming himself into a living beam of light and travelling interstellar distances purely in order to proclaim his genius. He is eventually captured in a prism-trap by the Kabal of the Black Sun, who use Vorsch's technologies to stage large-scale terror attacks upon the peace-loving Naiad Republic.

THE HUNTERS HUNTED

835.M40

Duke Sliscus is hunted by the Groevian Fiends, an elite reptilian bounty-hunter cadre who have a reputation for completely annihilating their targets. Sliscus instructs his agents upon the Groevian flagship *Last Chance* to place a device of the Duke's own invention in the metal belly of the craft. Just as Sliscus is about to pass through an ancient webway portal, it seems the game is up – the *Last Chance* emerges from a gas cloud in hot pursuit, guns blazing, and follows it into the webway. The Duke's ships emerge above the home world of the Groevians, primed and ready for planetfall. The flagship *Last Chance*, its navigational coordinates corrupted by the device placed amidships, emerges in the blazing heart of Groevia's sun.

THE COUP-DAEMONS

248.M41

The vainglorious Archon Ysclyth of Talon Cyriix bridles against the tyrannical dictates of Vect and his forbiddance of Old Empire knowledge. Deciphering the archaic rites inscribed upon the crypts below his palace, he learns how to contact the Daemons of the Warp and bind them to his will. Though his plan takes almost a century to come to fruition, Ysclyth stages his coup against Vect with shocking and unstoppable force. Under the soaring sky craft of his Kabal comes a ravaging daemoniac host that drives all life before it. Before the horde can wreak too much damage Vect activates an ancient failsafe and completely seals off the spur of Talon Cyriix from the rest of Commorragh. It is not long before Archon Ysclyth finds out that his control over his daemoniac allies is not as complete as he imagined.

THE HARVEST OF CHOGROS

543.M41

The Kabal of the Broken Sigil begins a series of realspace raids onto the feral planet of Chogros. The hulking and brutish Ogryns that live there have ever been popular opponents in the Wych arenas and make excellent raw material for the Haemonculi covens. After a brief and brutal war, thousands of abhumans are rounded up and

forced aboard Dark Eldar transport ships. The Imperial Guard, who use Chogros as a recruiting station for their own Ogryn forces, are incensed greatly and send Catachan, Elysian and Katon regiments upon search and destroy missions. Those Guardsmen that are not killed in the ensuing struggle against the Broken Sigil are captured and sold into the Wych arenas, where they are forced to fight for their lives against the very Ogryns they intended to free from Dark Eldar persecution.

THE LONG MIDNIGHT

891.M41

The Last Hatred ravages the hive world of Persya in a six-cycle long siege, using arcane technologies to bring pitch darkness to its principle hives and sending Mandrakes and Ur-Ghuls into the confines. Many hive workers go mad with terror, but are taken back to Commorragh nonetheless.

AN UNEXPECTED ALLY

995.M41

The Craftworld of Iyanden, struggling to survive after its horribly narrow victory over Hive Fleet Kraken, is forced to engage Waaagh! Rekkfist in order to prevent Iyanden being invaded again. Early engagements cause crippling damage on the greenskin empire, but the Orks counter-attack in force. Iyanden is left with no choice but to disturb more and more of their revered ancestors from their deathly slumbers and place their spirit stones into mighty Ghost Warriors in order to contain the counter-invasion. Just as all seems lost, the Wraithkind Kabal and the Cult of the Flayed Hand burst through the webway portal at the Craftworld's rear. Fighting alongside Iyanden's Aspect Warriors and their Ghost Warrior allies, the Dark Eldar drive off the Orks. When asked by Iyanden's Council of Seers as to why they intervened, the Dark Eldar reply that they find Iyanden's angst-ridden forays into the world of necromancy extremely entertaining.

A MONSTROUS UNDERTAKING

In late M41, the Wych Cult of the Seventh Woe rose to power in the arena districts after mounting a series of daring realspace raids and returning with a clutch of chitinous monsters never before seen in Commorragh. The Seventh Woe became the foremost experts on the weapon-beasts that had begun to infest the east of the galaxy, the creatures that mankind calls Tyranids. Deducing that the Hive Fleets were attracted to worlds rich in biomass, the Seventh Woe spiked the grey mass of clouds above the Imperial planet Eurydix Secundus with high-yield metastereoids, slowly turning those Hive citizens who drank its water into deformed giants. Sure enough, a Tyranid Hive Fleet diverted its course to Eurydix Secundus, vanguard organisms revealed themselves, and the planet was swarming with Tyranids within the week. The Cult of the Seventh Woe left the cover of the cloud banks as the Imperial forces began to fight back. As the Wyches joined the fray, the carnage escalated, and ever larger and more dangerous Tyranid weapon-beasts were deployed. The Cult of the Seventh Woe captured many of the alien monsters with runic hexcages before disappearing into the webway. In their wake, Eurydix Secundus was tyrannofomed and harvested by the Hive Fleet.



DENIZENS OF THE DARK CITY

This section of the book details the forces used by the Dark Eldar – their weapons, their units and some infamous ‘special characters’ to lead your force. Each entry describes the unit and gives the specific rules you will need to use them in your games of Warhammer 40,000. The army list given at the end of the book refers to the page numbers of these entries. Read on, but be wary, for the vile and sadistic warriors of Commorragh await...

The Denizens of the Dark City section is divided into two parts. The first part describes all the troops and vehicles fielded by the Dark Eldar. The second describes the horrendous alien wargear at their disposal.

An entry in the first part will begin with the name of a unit, followed by some background information describing it. After this is listed the unit’s profile, and the profiles of any other models that may be included in that unit. Next is listed its Unit Type (Infantry, for instance) and occasionally, if the unit type is Vehicle, a transport capacity. This is in turn followed by the unit’s basic wargear, though the army list at the back of the book may include further upgrades and options. When a wargear item is unique to one unit, such as

the Ichor Gauntlet used by Urien Rakarth, it is detailed in that specific unit entry; otherwise it will be detailed in the second part of this section or in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

Next are listed the unit’s special rules. Those that apply to the majority of Dark Eldar units are described below, though certain units will have unique special rules detailed in their entry. Some special rules are so commonplace that they are not explained in full; these ‘universal special rules’ can be found in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

The second part of this section details the equipment used by the Dark Eldar, the arcane weaponry of the Haemonculi covens, and the upgrades available to their vehicles.

DARK ELDAR SPECIAL RULES

Power from Pain

Dark Eldar feed on the souls of their foes, becoming imbued with supernatural might and resilience, eventually turning into uncontrollable killing machines, blind to all discipline. Whenever a Dark Eldar unit with this rule destroys a non-vehicle enemy unit, it immediately gains a ‘pain token’. Place a marker with that unit; a coin or other trophy will do. Each pain token confers a special rule to the entire unit, as shown in the list below. For example, a unit with one pain token has the Feel No Pain rule, one with two pain tokens has Feel No Pain and Furious Charge, etc. It might happen that several of your units are involved in a combat against one or more enemy units, which are destroyed because of the assault’s results. In this case, you receive one pain token per enemy unit destroyed, and then randomly assign them amongst your units in that combat. Note that pain tokens can be gained by other means – some units even start the game with one!

No. of Pain Tokens	Effect
1	Feel No Pain
2	Furious Charge
3 or more	Fearless

Sharing the Pain: If a Dark Eldar unit is joined by one or more characters with pain tokens, all of the pain tokens for the unit and the characters that have joined it are pooled. We call this ‘sharing the pain.’ For instance a unit of Grotesques (one pain token) is joined by a Haemonculus (one pain token) – all models in that unit will therefore have Feel No Pain and Furious Charge. If an Independent Character leaves a unit with one or more pain tokens, you must divide them as equally as possible. The owning player decides who gets any remaining tokens – just be sure to tell your opponent.

Night Vision

The Dark Eldar spend most of their long lives in the shadowy labyrinth of Commorragh, and their eyes have adapted to pick out their prey during pitch darkness. To represent this, many Dark Eldar units have the Night Vision special rule.

Fleet

Dark Eldar are lithe and quick, and further augmented by surgery, experimentation and stimulant use. To represent this, many Dark Eldar units have the Fleet special rule.

Combat Drugs

Though they drastically shorten the life expectancy of those who take them, drugs and stimulants are in widespread use throughout Commorragh. It’s anyone’s guess as to what will be in vogue or available in large quantities before a realspace raid. Roll a dice before deployment and consult the following table. All units in your army that have combat drugs will benefit from the effect listed for the entire game. Note that the effects are not cumulative.

D6 Result	Effect
1	Hypex: All affected units roll three dice when making Run moves, picking the highest result.
2	Serpentin: All affected units gain +1 Weapon Skill.
3	Grave Lotus: All affected units gain +1 Strength.
4	Painbringer: All affected units re-roll failed To Wound rolls in close combat.
5	Adrenalight: All affected units gain +1 Attack.
6	Splintermind: All affected units start the game with a bonus pain token (see opposite).

Poisoned Shooting Weapons

Much Dark Eldar ranged weaponry relies on poisoning the enemy rather than causing physical damage. Poisoned shooting weapons work in a similar way to poisoned close combat weapons. They do not have a Strength value, but they always wound on a fixed number, shown in brackets. These weapons cannot damage enemy vehicles, and always count as defensive weapons when mounted on vehicles. Note that this rule does not apply to the model’s close combat attacks, not even if it is armed with a poisoned pistol.

KABALITE WARRIORS

The Warriors of the Kabals form the beating heart of each Dark Eldar strike force. They are the cruellest and most rapacious of their caste, hungry for power and thirsty for the suffering of others. Each Warrior will have carved out a fearful reputation for himself in the war-torn halls of High Commorragh, and has proven himself time and time again as a merciless fighter. The more vicious and ruthless a warrior is, the better his chances of advancement within the Kabal. It takes a born killer to thrive in the constant strife of the Dark City after all, and still only a chosen few enjoy the privilege of striking at the heavily-defended worlds of realspace and returning with the living, screaming bounty their Kabal requires for survival.

The most martially gifted Dark Eldar of each sector are selected to become Kabalite Warriors. Male or female, Warriors are tall and athletically built, more powerful in stature and violent of temperament than their city-bound peers. When going to war each Warrior girds himself with a sophisticated bodysuit of segmented armour. These suits are donned during lengthy and unnecessarily painful pre-battle rituals, the better to ensure their wearer's psyche is honed to a single point of murderous intent. Much of the bodysuit is held in place with long metal barbs and hooks that penetrate deep into the wearer's nerve bundles, sharpening his senses with the constant sting of pain. It is pain that energises the Kabalite Warriors, and pain they seek to inflict upon their quarry – the more agonising the better.

To this end, Kabalite Warriors carry a wide array of exotic and fiendish weapons. Foremost amongst these are the dreaded splinter rifles, long-barrelled and elegant guns that fire a stream of jagged crystalline slivers. Each needle shard is impregnated with a wide spectrum of virulent hypertoxins. A splinter rifle slays its targets over several excruciating seconds, allowing the grinning wielder to savour their agonising demise as a connoisseur savours a fine wine.

Though the distilled poisons of the splinter weapon can bring down even the monstrous biological terrors of the Tyranid Hive Fleets, it is of very little use against enemy vehicles. A squad of Kabalite Warriors will usually carry a far more destructive weapon for such a purpose – the blaster is a particular favourite, for it can destroy even a Land Raider with but a single squeeze of the trigger.

Though all Kabalite Warriors are expert combatants at close quarters, few have the influence needed to ensure regeneration in the lairs of the Haemonculi. As a result Warriors frequently employ heavy weaponry that can slay the foe from afar. The sightlinks built into their splinter cannons and dark lances not only improve accuracy, but also allow the wielder to see the agony-wracked look on his victim's face when each salvo hits home. Enterprising operators use mnemonic scopes to record such moments, replaying the resultant hologhosts upon their return and basking in the envy of their peers.

Each squad of Kabalite Warriors is led to war by a Sybarite, typically the most experienced of their number. Sybarites are not only veteran realspace raiders, but also the Kabalites who initiate each Warrior into the violent mysteries of their sect.



Though their seniority engenders not a shred of loyalty from their charges, the Sybarites' orders are obeyed to the letter upon the battlefield, for they are masters in the craft of war.

KABALITE TRUEBORN

The Kabalites that escort their Archons to battle are known as Trueborn – an elite group that excludes any half-born birthed in an amniotic tube. Led by a Dragon, these hardened killers carry an assortment of expensive and deadly weapons wherever they go, ostensibly to better protect their Archon but in truth to increase the amount of damage they can inflict. Trueborn delight in dramatic displays of firepower, sending punishing fusillades into the enemy's armoured columns and leaving pillars of foul-smelling black smoke in their place.

	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+
Dragon	4	4	3	3	1	5	3	9	5+

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Splinter rifle, Kabalite armour.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain.

WYCHES

The Wych Cults of Commorragh are second in prestige only to the Kabals that sponsor them. The Dark Eldar thrive upon expert displays of bloodletting and in the craft of murder the Wyches are talented indeed. Gladiatorial fighters and athletes without equal, the Wyches are true artistes of physical combat. Most of the Hekatarii, as the Wyches call themselves, are female, for females find it easier to attain the pinnacle of poise and grace their craft demands. Male Wyches ensure that their Wych Cult is never wanting for strong offspring; they are valued, but rarely attain high rank.

Close range kills are invigorating to the Dark Eldar. This tendency is magnified in the cults of the Wyches, whose curved knives flicker out like the tongues of serpents as they bathe in the proximity of each wound. The knife is symbolic to the Wych Cults; each is artisan-crafted and kept in a sheath with an inbuilt sharpening field to ensure it stays eternally keen.

The manifold fighting styles of the Wych Cults are all based on cunning and deception. They 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. Many Wyches actively specialise in such weaponry. Amongst their number are the Lacerai, who use segmented razorflails that can split apart and lash out like whips; the Hydrae, who use crystal gauntlets of extraplanar origin that can sprout and regrow a deadly profusion of blades; and the Yraqnae, who use electrified shardnets and extendable twin-bladed impalers to ensure their quarry cannot escape alive.



All Wyches take great pride in their appearance. They enter the fray dressed with as much care as if going to meet a lover, for each battle is a chance to parade their art. Regardless of their cult, Wyches wear the bladed armour of the arena over one side of an impeccably elegant and skintight bodysuit. The other side has sections cut away to expose naked flesh, bared as if to tempt death himself.

The Wyches use a variety of distilled combat drugs, galvanising them to ever-greater heights of balletic dexterity. When outnumbered in battle, Wyches will roll, backflip and pirouette out of harm's way, stabbing through visors and neck-joints, slicing open a throat here and piercing a heart there. They flow around the blows of their opponents like water, their expressions of aloof disdain melting away into savage smiles as they feed upon each fresh scream of pain.

HEKATRIX BLOODBRIDES

Each squad of Wyches is led by a Hekatrix, who in turn reports to the Wych Cult's Succubus. It is common for a Succubus to gather the most talented of her Hekatrix handmaidens into a clique of murderesses, led by a Syren. These cliques, known as Hekatrix Bloodbrides, are plagued by fierce rivalries. On the field of battle, however, they unite to become an unstoppable force, anointing themselves with the blood of the foe in a dark testament to their own prowess.

	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+
Hekatrix Bloodbride	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	6+
Syren	4	4	3	3	1	6	3	9	6+

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Close combat weapon, combat drugs, plasma grenades, splinter pistol, wychsuit.

Shardnet and impaler: A shardnet and impaler count as two close combat weapons. Furthermore, to represent the entangling effects of the shardnet, every enemy model in base contact with the wielder fights with one less Attack (to a minimum of 1).

Hydra gauntlets: These count as two close combat weapons, however, instead of granting +1 bonus attack as normal, they confer +D6 bonus attacks. Roll at the beginning of each round of combat to determine the number of bonus attacks.

Razorflails: Razorflails count as two close combat weapons. To represent the fact that her flails are almost impossible to block or parry, the bearer may re-roll failed To Hit and To Wound rolls in close combat.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain.

Dodge (4+): Wyches have a 4+ invulnerable saving throw against wounds caused by close combat attacks.



HELLIONS

The bruised skies of Commorragh are warzones just as perilous as its barrios and shrouded spires. Through the acrid mists soar arrogant lordlings and winged killers on the hunt. The most savage of these airborne terrors are the Hellions, gangs of feral Dark Eldar that descend upon their prey in a flurry of hooked blades before hurtling away to safety.

Hellions are reprobates and miscreants without exception. Their numbers include aspirants not yet old enough to be chosen as Kabalites, those who have been cast out or exiled by their Archons, and those who have rejected the Kabals in favour of a lifetime of independence. Packs of Hellions haunt the desolate regions of the Dark City, existing on their wits alone, and they take pride in the scars and bruises of their savage lives. Hellions gather together into large gangs the better to survive, some of which are as numerous as a lesser Kabal. Hellion gangs have fierce rivalries with the Reavers and Scourges of the upper levels, for they resent above all those who flaunt privilege and status. Though a Hellion might outwardly maintain that he lives for the terror and anarchy of the mean streets, each Hellion secretly burns with ambition to become a power in his own right.

Hellions ride to war upon skyboards, single-pilot anti-gravity boards that are highly prized as symbols of independence. Each skyboard is personalised with trophies and glyphs, though most have changed hands several times, won in ritual knife-fights or claimed as bounty. Skyboards are sensitive to the slightest pressure. Because of this, and for the sheer thrill

of it, Hellions take combat drugs that enhance their reactions still further until they can flip and jink at incredible speed, their reflexes as sharp as their artfully filed teeth.

Unpredictable and wild, Hellions attack the Kabals just as often as they participate in realspace raids. It is unusual for the Archons to bring their wrath to bear in return, for they consider such street scum beneath their notice, and a bounty hunter skilled enough to bring a particular Hellion to the torture chambers of his employers is rare indeed. Nonetheless Hellions make valued terror troops, and the Helliarchs that lead them are not above dealing with the Kabals and Wych cults – for the right price, of course. Many realspace invasions are led by waves of howling, drug-crazed Hellions.

In battle, Hellion gangs will swoop into the midst of the foe, screaming curses and mocking taunts. Their signature weapon is the hellglaive, a double-bladed polearm with recurved hooks that allow a skilled wielder to latch onto nearby objects and change direction in a heartbeat. Each hellglaive is kept murderously sharp – it is common for Hellions to ‘call’ a particular part of the body they intend to cut off with each pass. Such is their skill that a swarm of Hellions can fall upon a knot of enemy soldiers and lop off limbs and heads before scattering once more, a single choice victim borne into the skies to be taken apart at their leisure.

	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.

WARGEAR: Combat drugs, wychsuit.

Skyboard: Models on skyboards are Jump Infantry and have their armour save increased to 5+ (bonus included in the profile, above). Skyboards also mount underslung splinter pods that can be fired with the depression of a heel-stud.

	Range	Strength	AP	Type
Splinter Pods	18"	X	5	Assault 2, Poisoned (4+)

Hellglaive: A hellglaive is a two-handed weapon that grants both an additional attack and +1 Strength.

Stunclaw: A stunclaw is a close combat weapon that confers +1 Strength. It can also be used as a grapple with which to snare and entrap an enemy leader. When performing a Hit and Run, an Helliarch may nominate an Independent Character in the same combat and roll a D6. On the roll of a 2+, the Helliarch may ‘snatch’ the nominated model – it is moved with the Hellions, borne aloft by a mob of cackling maniacs! When their Hit and Run move is finished, leave as many Hellions in base contact with the ‘snatched’ model as possible – this new combat will be resolved next turn.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain, Hit and Run.



RAEVERS

The Reavers of Commorragh are fascinated by the art of war at speed. They ride to battle upon the most streamlined and pared-down of all skycraft – the anti-grav jetbike, a perfect fusion of raw motive power and finely-honed lethality.

The Eldar experience sensations to a far greater degree than any other race, and their psyches are easily given to obsession. Reavers, having cultivated a taste for high-speed violence during realspace raids, are Dark Eldar consumed with the act of the maximum-impact kill. It is not enough for them to end a life, or to fly through the air at breakneck velocity – these black-hearted gladiators must accomplish both at once to be truly sated. The instant of a well-placed and fatal blow delivered at obscene speed is a spike of murderous joy that the Reavers consider the ultimate thrill.

In the toroid arenas that girdle the highest spires, the Reavers duel amongst themselves for supremacy. Here these vain and ultra-competitive riders engage in nightly death races, their craft screaming round each arena in running battle for the edification of the bloodthirsty crowd. No quarter is asked for nor 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's vanes and blast-engines, fit targeting holograms for their in-built weaponry, pierce their craft's fairings 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.

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 driver, whereas a well executed drop-down inverted decapitation can warm the icy heart of even the most jaded Archon.

Because of their no-holds-barred approach, weapons are used extensively in the prestigious toroid arenas. 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-sensing anti-grav caltrops that detonate in spectacular chain explosions behind them.

The Reavers are so attuned to their beloved jetbikes that in battle they use them as extensions of their own bodies. Though the Reaver jetbike typically houses a splinter rifle, the craft itself is the rider's favoured killing tool. The Reavers pilot their jetbikes with such uncanny precision that they can take off a head or even slash open a throat with a single pass of the keel blade. A favoured tactic is to dive down from the clouds above the battlefield in a streak of dark metal, corkscrewing the craft at the last moment so that the razored edges of their blade-vanes dismember those unfortunates they zoom past – or, in some cases, straight through.

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

UNIT TYPE: Bikes (Eldar jetbikes).

WARGEAR: Wychsuit, splinter pistol, close combat weapon, combat drugs.

Reaver Jetbike: The Reaver jetbike adds 1 to the Reaver's Toughness and increases his armour save to 5+ (bonuses included in the profile above). In addition, Reaver Jetbikes have an inbuilt splinter rifle. Lastly, Reaver jetbikes are so incredibly fast that they may move up to 36" when moving with Turbo Boosters.

Bladevanes: When moving with Turbo Boosters, a Reaver unit may slash its foes with its bladevanes. Mark the start and end points of the unit's move, and trace an imaginary line between the two points. Once the move is complete, the unit inflicts D3 S4 AP- hits per Reaver on one unengaged, non-vehicle unit that lies under the line, resolved immediately. Cover saves may be taken as normal.

Cluster caltrops: A model with cluster caltrops inflicts D6 S6 AP- hits with its bladevanes (see above).

Grav-talon: A grav-talon can be used in the same way as bladevanes, inflicting D3 S4 AP- hits (see above). In addition, if the target unit suffers one or more unsaved wounds from a grav-talon, it must immediately take a pinning test.

SPECIAL RULES: Night Vision, Power from Pain, Skilled Riders.



BEASTMASTERS

Over the millennia since Commorragh's founding its sand-filled arenas have drunk the blood of millions. Each arena has witnessed countless spectacles of perversity and death, but there is one gladiatorial favourite that never fades in popularity – the wild hunts of the Beastmasters.

The Beastmasters themselves are technically part of the Wych Cults, though they are mostly male and remain remote from the Hekatarii. Some suspect they are part of a shamanic tradition, for when the Beastmasters go to battle, they wear totems and masks echoing the nature of the alien predators under their control. It is partially because of these artefacts that they enjoy such mastery over their ferocious beasts, for their masks harbour complex sonic emitters and pheromone traps. Even unmasked Beastmasters have a natural ability to dominate, and the most senior of their number can subdue a rampant Megasaur with a baleful glare.

When accompanying a realspace raid, Beastmasters gladly involve themselves in the business of bloodletting. They hover above the gore-spattered ground upon modified skyboards, goading their charges into the fray with whip and lure and laying about themselves until their enemies are torn to shreds and frequently messily devoured. In the Dark City, their arenas have played host to a broad variety of dangerous creatures, including blade-legged Helsingers, hyper-violent Bhargesi, and even captured Adeptus Astartes warriors. Three species remain in perennial use, however, and the largest of these 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. The Clawed Fiend is a towering hulk of muscle and fur that has extremely advanced senses, able to see in several spectrums at once. 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' skills as a spirit-hunter. Each Khymera is a denizen of the chaotic dimension known as the Empyrean, borne from the stuff of a Daemonworld. 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 onto the battlefields of realspace can wreak utter havoc before fading away like mist.

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.

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

UNIT TYPE: Beasts.

WARGEAR: (*Beastmasters only*) – Wychsuit, close combat weapon, skyboard (this is the same as the Hellions' skyboard on page 28, except that the Beastmasters' unit type is beasts rather than jump infantry).

SPECIAL RULES: (*Entire unit*) – Night Vision.

(*Beastmasters only*) – Power from Pain.

(*Clawed Fiends only*) – **Bestial Fury:** Clawed Fiends are at their most dangerous when their blood has been spilt. A Clawed Fiend gains +1A each time it loses a Wound.

(*Khymerae only*) – **Invulnerable Save (4+):** Khymerae are creatures of nightmare made half-real and so have a 4+ invulnerable save.

(*Razorwing Flocks only*) – **Whirlwind of Blades:** Razorwings flock together to form a hurricane of scalpel-sharp beaks. Razorwing Flocks have the Rending special rule.



INCUBI

The Incubi are an order of Dark Eldar that hone themselves for war and war alone. Warriors of the highest calibre, the Incubi dedicate themselves to the perfection of the killing strike. Despite their asceticism, no shred of virtue exists in their bloodstained souls, for though they profess a desire for perfection, their true goal is to kill as often as possible.

Everything about a fully armoured Incubus conveys menace. His armour is spiked and segmented from top to toe, and his horned helmet is framed by a pair of great razored blades. He walks with the measured surety of a stalking sabrecat, and despite his formidable armour he makes no sound as he does so, for each Incubus warsuit is so perfectly designed it barely inhibits his dexterity.

The Incubi lead rigorously disciplined lives; some whisper they can even be trusted to keep their word. They are highly valued as bodyguards and shock troops, and they take a cold joy in proving their deadly skill in times of war. Mercenaries all, the Incubi will fight for anyone, at any time, and will even impart their skills to those that prove themselves worthy. Their forbidding obsidian shrines, each presided over by a Hierarch, are thronged with patrons and aspirants eager to steep themselves in the murderous arts. Through long and gruelling practice, the strong prosper and learn, whereas the weak are cut down and their bodies burnt as an offering to the iron statue of Khaine at the heart of each shrine. Should an aspirant live long enough to best a proven Incubus and take his armour, the final training will begin. Only when that initiate has killed an Aspect Warrior of the Eldar Craftworlds in single combat, shattered his quarry's precious soulstone, and rebuilt it into one of the psychic torture devices known as tormentors, can he be fully inducted as an Incubus.

The Incubi concentrate solely upon killing in the most efficient way possible. Though they train in every form of blade, they favour great powered swords they call Klaives. A Klaive is a masterpiece of balance and form; the Incubi consider them to be the one true weapon, though their Klaivex war-leaders sometimes favour variants such as the versatile demi-klaives. Each Klaivex is a born killer; so lethal are they that some say they possess supernatural powers.

Despite their prowess as duellists, even Incubi scorn a fair fight. When they close upon their foe they send waves of neural energy coursing outward from the tormentors mounted upon their chests, leaving their foes wracked with agony before the killing begins in earnest.

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

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Incubus warsuit.

Klaive: Klaives are two-handed power weapons that confer +1 Strength.

Demiklaives: Demiklaives are power weapons that can either be wielded separately – adding +2 to the bearer's Attacks – or clasped together to form a much larger blade that confers +2 to the wielder's Strength (choose which to use each round before the bearer makes his attacks).

Bloodstone: Forged from the broken soulstone of an Eldar Exarch, a Bloodstone is a rare and exotic weapon that can boil the enemy's blood with a single pulse of energy.

Range	Strength	AP	Type
Template	3	3	Assault 1

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain.

SPECIAL RULES: (*Klaivex only*)

Onslaught: The Klaivex leads his squad in a storm of motion and slashing blades. In an assault, any to wound roll of a 6 made by the Klaivex or an Incubus in his unit allows that model an immediate bonus attack. This bonus attack cannot generate further attacks.

Murderous Assault: The Klaivex marks his chosen foe with an imperious gesture. He may nominate an enemy Independent Character at the beginning of each round of combat. The Klaivex has Preferred Enemy when attacking that model.



SCOURGES

If a trespasser were to climb amongst the jutting spars of upper Commoragh and stare past the highest peaks, he might just make out winged figures flitting and soaring upon the hot thermals of the city. Should he watch carefully, he might recognise them as the Scourge, altered Dark Eldar who have been refashioned into something far more deadly. If his gaze lingers too long, he will find those same figures arrowing through the flame-lit clouds toward him, seizing him and impaling him bodily upon the spires of their aeries.

Scourges are an intrinsic part of the lifeblood of Commoragh. The intrigues of the Dark City thrive on information, without which even the greatest Kabal is soon rendered impotent. The most secure transmission can be intercepted, and psychic communication is forbidden. Instead the nobility of the Dark Eldar pay handsomely for the Scourges to take their missives to their destination by hand. Each communique 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 intrigues of the Dark City that to kill one is to invite a very painful demise.

Considered the pinnacle of body modification, the metamorphosis from warrior to Scourge is a lengthy and painful process. A rich and daring Dark Eldar may surrender himself to the Haemonculi, requesting that his bones be hollowed out by the cold metal drills of a Talos, that bands of new muscle be grafted onto his torso, and powerful wings and adrenaline dispensers be attached to his shoulders so that he is capable of true flight. Even should these procedures be successful, the individual is still not considered a Scourge, for he must then fly all the way up to the trophy-strewn aeries of his new 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, and he must fight through deadly fatigue, warring Hellion gangs, vicious Reavers and all manner of unnatural airborne terrors to get there. 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 with disdain upon the earthbound kin they left behind.

Many Scourges – especially the veterans known as Solarites – are so far removed from their former lives that they sport quills, feathers in place of hair, or elongated skulls. No matter their appearance they all relish the gory feasts of full-scale war. Because of this, and because of the wealth they earn



from the Kabals, all Scourges sport highly advanced wargear. Clad in supple and porous body armour called ghostplate, they descend from above, shrieking with exhilaration as they mow down those who try to escape.

Scourges prefer to engage the foe at range, for they are protective of their expensively altered bodies. They lay down punishing salvos of firepower, drinking in the screams of their enemies with their sharpened senses before redeploying and striking again. The weapons of the Scourges are hence devised to be fired on the wing. The most popular is without doubt the shardcarbine, an advanced iteration of the splinter rifle with a far higher rate of fire, though Scourges also favour the haywire blaster, which releases the electromagnetic energy of Commoragh's captive suns in a powerful burst, and the heat lance, which can atomise a foe where he stands.

"You think that's summer rain falling? Ha! It is the blood of those who crossed the Scourges, boy. You cannot see them, but your foolish kin adorn the spires and crenellations of High Commoragh like grisly fruit upon the bough. Up there they bleed out their last, moaning and helpless, impaled through and through. No! Do not look upward! Catch a Watcher's eye, and it will be your blood that rains down next..."

– Edric Shiverhand, Slave-Elder of Gomor Sump

	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.

WARGEAR: Shardcarbine, ghostplate armour, plasma grenades.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain.

MANDRAKES

Within the shrouded corners of the labyrinth dimensions lurk the creatures known as Mandrakes. This vile breed is secretly feared by even other Dark Eldar, for a Mandrake can pull itself into reality straight through another being's shadow, emerging with a hiss to sink its ice-cold claws and teeth into warm flesh. Their inky skin writhes with forbidden runes, and their faces shift and flow; one moment sealing over into an expressionless mask, the next parting like a reopened wound filled with needle teeth. Mandrakes exist both in reality and a cursed otherworld, and to fight them is to fight living shadow, for they are not fully corporeal.

The origins of the Mandrakes are shrouded. Some claim the Mandrakes descend from Eldar who engaged in heinous union with unholy entities when their empire was at its most decadent. Others maintain that the mysterious stalkers are descended from a forbidden cult that found its own way to escape the Fall, passing into shadow and emerging as something altogether more alien. Younger Dark Eldar call the Mandrakes 'creepers', whispering that they can slink from one shadow to another or crawl their way out of reflections to emerge in the real world. They believe that Mandrakes are unlight given life and, in many ways, they are right.

All these wild theories do not seem so far-fetched when one considers the Mandrakes' appearance. Their flesh is coal-dark and seems to absorb rather than reflect light, their features shift like oil, and their lank hair is as pale as splintered bone. Surrounding them is an aura of darkness and cold that saps

the strength of those nearby – often the first sign of Mandrake attack will be a thin rime of ice hanging in the air. The twisting shapes set into their flesh are sigils of destruction that pulse brightly whenever the Mandrake feeds upon the pain of its prey. Mandrakes are capable of channelling these stolen energies, shaping blasts of cold fire that roar out from their claws to freeze their victims in place. When they fall upon their shuddering prey they do so with not only talon and fang, but also with blood-encrusted blades reminiscent of the surgical tools of the Haemonculi.

Like all the denizens of Commorragh, the Mandrakes thrive on the malevolent infliction of pain, and because of their unsurpassed stealth many a Dark Eldar Archon has sought their services when mustering his forces for a realspace raid. The Mandrakes usually ask for slaves as payment, but sometimes they will ask for 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 of those that have betrayed them. They are infamous for their ability to track down their quarry, and they are able to manifest anywhere that shadows gather in the gloom. When a cold claw closes upon an ankle or wrist in the darkness, the icy bite of the Mandrake is never far behind.

	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.

WARGEAR: Evil-looking blade or sickle-sword (close combat weapon).

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain, Infiltrate, Move Through Cover, Stealth.

Baleblast: A recently fed Mandrake can channel the energies stolen from his prey into blasts of freezing ice. Whenever a unit with this rule has at least one pain token, each model has the following Shooting attack:

Range	Strength	AP	Type
18"	4	4	Assault 2, Pinning

Invulnerable Save (5+): To represent the fact they exist partially in a dimension of pure shadow, Mandrakes have a 5+ invulnerable save.



"There is a very good reason why so many of the galaxy's cultures and societies are afraid of the dark."

– Inquisitor Bastalek Grimm

ARCHONS

The Archons of the Dark Eldar Kabals are the true monarchs of Commoragh. They sit at the pinnacle of the pyramid, the apex of the hierarchy that controls their twilight domain. Each wields influence enough to collapse portions of realspace, stall an Imperial Crusade or steal away the populations of entire planets. Though a Kabal's overlord is always a terrifying opponent to face in battle, he has attained his lofty heights not merely through prowess in the arts of war or the brute suppression of the weak, but through consistently emerging victorious in the most convoluted contest of all – the game of intrigue at the heart of the Dark City.

Each Archon is as poisonous as a serpent in word and deed. His mind is as labyrinthine as the darkest reaches of the webway. After all, to sit at the very peak of power is to make oneself a prominent target indeed. Though each Archon is a conceited megalomaniac certain of his own superiority, he will retain rulership only for as long as he can stave off the coups and assassination attempts of his rivals, enemies and Dracon lieutenants. Placing even a single foot wrong in the upper echelons of the Dark City will inevitably lead to a fatal fall. Because of this, Archons have an uncanny ability to predict the schemes of others, and take a cold delight in turning the traps laid out before them upon their heads.

Despite the elaborate network of allegiances within the Dark City, the overlords of the Kabals run rings around those who seek to beat them at their deadly game. The endless ambition of their underlings keeps the Archon's paranoia razor-sharp, and hence it is at the business of treachery that the Archons truly excel. Their strategies stretch across the millennia, wheels turning within wheels as centuries-old plays finally come to fruition. Some of the Lords of Twilight, who govern from the highest spires of Commoragh, even claim to have seized their thrones in the times before the Fall. These elder Archons look upon the rest of their race as squabbling children, and do not suffer fools gladly. A single syllable out of place may rouse an Archon's deadly wrath, and in matters of Kabal hierarchy, Archons will seek solutions that work to the detriment of all other parties purely out of spite.

*"You think to challenge me, pitiful human?
I, the bane of empires, the father of pain? Let me
educate you; I need a new pet..."*

– Archon K'shaic, Kabal of the Bladed Lotus

Revelling in the depths of the abyss always has a cost. Over the years in which they have clawed their way up the precipice of power, the Archons of the Dark Eldar have become something altogether more otherworldly. They have fed upon the pain of others for so long that it takes a true atrocity to invigorate them. Archons regularly lead full-scale planetary raids, for drinking in wholesale excruciation is the only way they can properly rejuvenate. Thousands of slaves are sacrificed before the oldest Archons each night and still this might not be enough to grant them a youthful sheen.



Hence elder Archons sometimes cover their black-veined visages with masks; some stylised and beautiful, some fashioned from the flayed faces of rivals whose schemes weren't as foolproof as they liked to think.

When going to war an Archon visits his weapon museums, savouring the process of selection as he chooses between the most arcane and lethal of all the technologies of Commoragh – eldritch soul-traps, whip-like agonisers, and forcefields that shroud the wearer in tendrils of darkness. The Archon's most favoured retainers and pets, each of whom specialises in bestowing the gift of death in its own fashion, accompany him to the battlefield. Even the least of the Kabalite overlords can move like the wind, seeming almost to vanish from sight and reappear again when their blade has done its bloody work. Few mortal warriors have set eyes upon an Archon and still kept them within their sockets.

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

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Kabalite armour, close combat weapon, splinter pistol, plasma grenades.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain, Independent Character.

THE COURT OF THE ARCHON

A Kabalite lord surrounds himself with a coterie of favoured retainers and bodyguards. Depending on the personality of the overlord, these can be as varied as the tools in his torture chamber, but they fit loosely into the categories below.

MEDUSAE

The visored slave-beings that Archons use to record the roiling emotions of the battlefield are hosts to strange creatures of the webway, known as Medusae. These highly empathic parasites look like a collection of brains and spinal cords one atop another, and they float through the ether like jellyfish, feeding on daydreams and nightmares. Medusae can latch onto a host that intrudes into their realm, absorbing their emotions directly and providing a means of motive power in realspace. Though meeting the gaze of a Medusae's host can cause instant emotional haemorrhaging, these hybrid creatures are highly valuable in Commorragh, for they absorb and store extreme sensations. Consuming one of the Medusae's brain-fruit brings back all the vivid and anarchic emotions of a raid as if they were happening then and there.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Medusae	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	9	5+

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Kabalite armour.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Power from Pain.

Eyeburst: A Medusae's host can open its 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	Strength	AP	Type
Template	D6+1*	D6*	Assault 1

*Roll every time you fire

UR-GHULS

Archons keep all manner of deadly alien creatures in their courts, from worm-like Haemovores to greater Shaderavens, whose croaking caw drives those who hear it insane. Though innumerable species of atavistic bloodbeasts prowl Commorragh, it is perhaps the Ur-Ghul that is the most hideous of all; a sightless but agile troglodyte that hails from the labyrinthine ziggurats of Shaa-dom. Once one of these whip-thin horrors has smelt you out with its rows of quivering scent-pits there is no escape from the violence that follows.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ur-Ghul	4	0	4	3	1	5	3	3	-

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Claws and needle-teeth (count as a single close combat weapon).

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Feel no Pain, Furious Charge.

LHAMAEANS

An Archon's courtesans will take many strange forms, however the mysterious sisterhood of Lhilitu are desired above all others, for they are not only extremely imaginative lovers but also poisoners without equal. Descending from the original Cult of Lhamaea, they draw from the knowledge of Shaimesh, Father of Poisons. The presence of a Lhamaeen can ensure a supply of the most virulent toxins, which she will share with her Archon before each realspace raid. It is said that even a kiss blown upon the wind by a Lhamaeen can kill in seconds.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Lhamaeen	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	9	5+

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Kabalite armour, splinter pistol, poisoned weapon (2+).

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain.

Mistress of Poisons: All poisoned weapons (both shooting and close combat ones) carried by the Lhamaeen and the Archon she belongs to are upgraded to poisoned (2+).

"Death? You want death?
I'm afraid that would be far too boring."

– Lord Sarnak, Kabal of the Black Heart

SSLYTH

True Dark Eldar make rather dubious bodyguards due to their treacherous nature. Instead, Archons employ the more reliable alien mercenaries that inhabit Commorragh to protect them from the inevitable coup. Though these bodyguards hail from all across the galaxy, favoured amongst them are the Sslyth, hulking serpent-bodied warrior-fiends whose race fell to the temptations of unbridled excess millennia ago. Having two sets of arms, Sslyth mercenaries sport enough guns and jag-sharp blades to easily make a mess of any assassin or would-be usurper.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Sslyth	4	4	5	5	2	4	3	3	5+

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Kabalite armour, shardcarbine, close combat weapon, splinter pistol.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Feel no Pain.



SUCCUBI

The Succubi are the ruling elite of the Wych Cults. Impossibly elegant and beautiful, they stalk through the mayhem of battle as if born to it, surrounded by cliques of their lethal handmaidens who search out worthy alien opponents for their mistresses to slay. Long-limbed and athletic, each is famous across Commoragh for the grace and flair of her kills. The Succubi are the true icons of the gladiatorial arenas, and when they are in full flow they enjoy an envy as close to veneration as the Dark Eldar ever get.

Sometimes informally referred to as Archites, Succubi are collectively known as the *ynnitach*, or 'brides of death'. Each Wych Cult is traditionally ruled over by a council of three such figures. One of them tends to hold the true power, whilst the remaining two constantly try to outdo each other in the magnificence of their gladiatorial spectacles, always seeking to increase their power and popularity. Competition is fierce within this trio of hellcats, though 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 intensely vain, and not without good reason. The arena's crowd demands not only a bloody spectacle but also one that is pleasing to their perverse aesthetic; Wyches with one too many scars will often find themselves up against insurmountable odds purely for the crime of being imperfect. Only those who epitomise hypnotic allure and deadly skill ever make it to the ranks of the *ynnitach*.



The Succubi of the Wych Cults are ravishing in their physical beauty, their supple alabaster flesh clasped within bladed corsets and high-necked skinsuits of liquid silk. Their every movement is entrancing, and their sinuous, serpentine grace is almost hypnotic as they flow through the battle towards their prey. A Succubus will do almost anything to preserve her stunning appearance, including putting dozens of lesser warriors to a gruesome death moments before she enters the arena, feeding on their last gasps of anguish in order to better present a youthful sheen.

When she descends from her lush aerial boudoir onto the field of battle it is with the arrogance and majesty of a cruel-hearted queen. Though each Succubus may be delicious upon the eye, theirs is a cold and haughty allure, and one who observed a Succubus with spirit-sight would like as not see a grey and shrivelled hag instead of a merciless beauty of the flesh.

Many of the greatest Succubi seek to transcend the earthly violence of the arena and become one with the act of the kill itself. It is these most exemplary of warriors that follow in the wake of the Dark Muses, hoping to become synonymous with a certain style of murder in their own right. Currently amongst their ranks are the lethally amorous Helica Venomkiss, Yctria the Flayer Queen, whose flaring temper is legend, and of course Lelith Hesperax, who once famously decapitated a dozen rival Wyches with her signature bladed pirouette.

No Succubus is secure in her position without constant and undeniable proof of her skill. They regularly take the lead in the war against realspace, not only for the feast of plunder but also to hunt the champions of the lesser races and defeat them in showy displays of sheer skill. Though the Dark Eldar generally look upon the defenders of humanity with contempt, a Succubus would gladly duel a Chapter Master of the Adeptus Astartes, for even in Commoragh such a kill carries serious prestige. It is not unusual for the trophy collections of a Succubus to boast the head of an Ork Warboss, a synapse-beast of the Tyranid Hive Swarms or, most coveted of all, an Autarch of the Craftworld Eldar. Aside from the sheer adrenaline-pumping thrill of it, each such personal conquest is an opportunity for a Succubus to prove her supremacy with a trophy kill – the more witnesses the better.

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

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Wychsuit, close combat weapon, splinter pistol, combat drugs, plasma grenades.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain, Independent Character.

Dodge (4+): Succubi have a 4+ invulnerable saving throw against wounds caused by close combat attacks.

HAEMONCULI

Ancient and horrific, the Haemonculi are deranged flesh-sculptors that dwell in the dark bowels of Commorragh. They are master torturers, true connoisseurs of pain that revel in every nuance of the suffering they inflict. To while away the centuries they craft long symphonies of agony from those unfortunates held captive in their oubliettes and dungeons. All Dark Eldar secretly fear the Haemonculi, for they are alchemists of not just the body but also of the soul.

The covens of the Haemonculi are integral to the survival of Commorrite society due to their mastery of regenerative practices, yet they remain figures of terror and suspicion. All know that to earn the ire of the Lords of Pain is to end up on the slab oneself. Haemonculi specialise in body modification and alteration, and they delight in getting their claws into fresh new subjects. Perhaps their client fancies barbed quills upon his shoulders, the scaled face of a snake, or to have his eyes replaced by those of a Viridian wraithspider – no request is too bizarre for these inhuman surgeons. The Haemonculi are only too willing to show off their skills with scalpel and hypersteroid, teeth bared in glee all the while.

How an individual becomes a Haemonculus is uncertain. They are all of incredibly advanced age, though, 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, but this can never be known for sure, for each Haemonculus has altered himself so drastically that he no longer resembles those he mockingly calls his people.

Despite their peculiar modifications, Haemonculi are always attenuated and twisted. Their sparse alabaster frames have not an ounce of fat upon them, quite unlike those of their more wild 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 spines are elongated and extended – from the lower back, their vertebrae meld into whipping prehensile bone-tails that can curl around the throats of their prey. From the backs sprout antler-like protrusions of bony matter that often frame the Haemonculus' head, hung with peculiar syringes and drug dispensers that channel directly into their spinal sump.

Being functionally immortal, the Haemonculi feel no need for the undignified rushing of younger Dark Eldar. They move with an ethereal grace, sometimes held aloft by powerful suspensor crystals, sometimes slithering along on elongated spine-tails. Unhurried and patient, they know that to grant a truly interesting death takes time. Over the millennia their tastes become increasingly exotic – a Haemonculus might dine only on the left hands of his victims, or sup with withered lips from a fluted glass full of tears. Having transcended common notions of wealth, they prize unusual ingredients for their alchemical elixirs – the heart of an Arbites judge, distilled into a few drops of liquid, 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, pointed tongues.

In battle, the sinister 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 desiccate their foes in an instant. A Haemonculus drifts across the field of battle with a macabre elegance, gifting those too slow to escape with one unimaginably painful death after another. Should he himself die, he does so with a leering grin etched upon his face, for he will soon be back to seek an inventive revenge.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Haemonculus Ancient	5	5	3	4	3	5	3	9	6+
Haemonculus	4	4	3	4	2	4	2	8	6+

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Gnarlskin, close combat weapon, splinter pistol.

SPECIAL RULES: Night Vision, Power from Pain, Independent Character.

Altered Physique: To a Haemonculus, pain is a weapon and a salve alike. Haemonculi begin the game with a pain token.



WRACKS

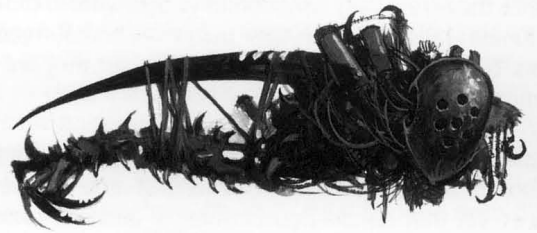
Each Wrack is an abhorrent example of his master's surgical craftsmanship, an individual cut apart and refashioned into a walking instrument of torture. Masked and modified to better instil fear into those they encounter, they act as the hands of the Haemonculi in the world outside, and upon the field of battle they will defend their creators with their lives.

Every ruler needs obedient servants, and Wracks are literally fashioned for the task. Formally known as Haemacolytes, each Wrack's sole duty is to dutifully serve his master, whether at the slab or upon the battlefield. To this end they are physically modified to better perform their gory duties. In the Wrack's surgically enhanced frame lies a shocking strength, for they know not the physical limits of creatures whole and sound. In battle they lay about themselves with a variety of sickled blades, corrosive whips, stun-rods and silvered hooks.

Because Haemonculi tend towards megalomania or even delusions of godhood, they surround themselves with supplicants and minions to enact their orders. In fact, most Haemonculi prefer not to sully themselves with physical labour of any kind, and consider themselves somehow polluted if they have to exert themselves in any way. Instead, the dirty work of each Haemonculus is performed by his Wracks. Most Wracks hope to one day transcend their previous lives entirely – a Wrack will endure almost any degradation in the hope that one day he may ascend to the ranks of the coven lords himself. A typical scene in the oubliettes and laboratories of the



Haemonculi is a single figure looming over a partially dissected victim whilst hunched Wracks scramble to enact his disturbing commands.



Wracks often have heavy metal gauntlets grafted in place of their hands that can inject or withdraw fluids from their subjects with the flex of a wire-taut tendon, or be coated with searing venom when accompanying their master on a raid into realspace. Spinal grafts and rampant bone growth is common in these disturbing composites, often forming baroque exterior racks and hooks from which samples and serums can be suspended so they are readily at hand when their Haemonculus needs them. They will also be further modified to ensure that they can defend their creator in battle, or pillage a community in order to gather fresh specimens for their master's pleasure. Their finger and toenails are severed and replaced by razor-sharp talons that skitter and scratch on the cold stone floors of their underground needle-lairs, and their faces are covered by inscrutable metal masks, for identity has no place in the Wrack's existence. Wracks wear only the most rudimentary of clothing in their day-to-day lives, going about their business in stained butcher's aprons and tabards, twilight glinting from a bewildering variety of torturer's tools hung from their belts.

Perhaps the most sickening aspect of the Wrack's strange plight is not his hideous appearance or simmering bloodlust, but the fact that he has chosen this fate for himself. It is a peculiar trait of the Dark Eldar psyche that after a few centuries they often request to be modified in to a form other than that of their birthright, for such voluntary surgery staves off ennui and gives up a whole new suite of experiences and debaucheries to savour. For this reason a Dark Eldar who has nothing to lose will give himself to the Haemonculi, emerging from his foul metamorphosis something far more frightening than ever before.

	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.

WARGEAR: Gnarlskin, two poisoned weapons (4+).

SPECIAL RULES: Night Vision, Power from Pain.

Altered physique: Pain is the Wrack's constant companion. Units of Wracks begin the game with a pain token.

GROTESQUES

Towering and monstrous, Grotesques are insane creations that are employed when their Haemonculi masters have need to commit extreme physical violence. One does not become a Grotesque voluntarily. Though they generally begin existence as Dark Eldar, these tragic and repulsive constructs have been reborn in the most hideous of ways as punishment for some real or perceived slight to the Haemonculi.

The process by which a captive becomes a Grotesque begins with a series of painful and humiliating body modifications. Dark Eldar are narcissists at heart, and the cruel Haemonculi take a sinister joy in distorting the flesh of those that have angered them. Though the process often takes years to complete, the hapless victim is constantly pumped full of growth elixirs, macrosteroids, and muscle stimulants until his form has swollen grossly out of proportion. Bone growth is driven into hyperactivity by injections of osseovirals, resulting in external spines that curve over the meaty back of the tortured recipient. His thick, muscled forearms are augmented with blades and toxin-dispensing gauntlets, and his hands are replaced with grasping claws or dripping tubes that can eject a great spray of the victim's own blood-ichor. At this point the Grotesque is usually clinically lobotomised, though some are left dimly aware of their surroundings the better to understand the full horror of what has befallen them. Either way, the Grotesque becomes mindlessly obedient, able to comprehend and execute only the simplest of tasks. His slack and terror-etched face is sealed forever behind an mask of black iron, and he lumbers dripping from the Haemonculi

flesh-pods a new and entirely subservient creature whose only desire is to serve his dark masters.

On the march to battle these meat-hulks shamble forlornly after their macabre keepers, but when given the command to kill, they transform into engines of destruction. Racks of syringes depress in their spinal sumps to dump potent stimulants into their ichor-stream, ridged bellow-pumps connected to primary lungs wheeze and contract at triple speed, 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. They absolutely will not stop until they receive their master's command to cease. If this command is not heard, perhaps because their master is temporarily deceased or the din of war is too great, the Grotesques will continue to kill everything within reach – including other Dark Eldar. Whether the tiny spark of the individuals left within the Grotesques take a measure of satisfaction in this unbridled carnage can never be known, but one thing is certain – a Grotesque has plenty of pent-up aggression within its bruised and muscular frame, and it is not a good idea to be nearby when it is released.

	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.

WARGEAR: Gnarlskin, close combat weapon.

SPECIAL RULES: Night Vision, Power from Pain.

Altered Physique: Though Grotesques are far beyond any traditional notions of agony, they are still empowered and invigorated by the scent of suffering. They begin the game with a pain token.

Berserk Rampage: If a unit of Grotesques does not include an Independent Character at the beginning of the Movement phase, roll a dice. On the roll of a 1, the Grotesques go on the rampage, inflicting 2D6 S5 AP- hits on all units within 2D6" (friend or foe) before being removed from play. Vehicles are hit on their side armour. If a 2+ was rolled, the Grotesques act as normal.

Bulky: Grotesques are lumbering and distorted meat-devils that make for highly unpleasant company. Each Grotesque counts as two models for the purposes of transport capacity.

"Kill them, my children, but make it slow..."

– Vaeghex,
Haemonculus Ancient of the Thirteen Scars





TALOS PAIN ENGINE

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 one is part organic and part mechanical, festooned with surgical apparatus and horrible-looking weapons of war. Though they vary greatly in construction each Talos is always well equipped to visit hideous retribution upon those that earn their master's ire. From the clanking Chainghoul favoured by the Prophets of Flesh to the drill-legged Shriveners that guard the Everspiral, each is an unholy terror many times the size and strength of its creator. These semi-sentient constructs drift along with menacing slowness, the whine of their anti-gravitic motors in counterpoint to the flicker-clack of silvered blades as they close with their prey.

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 agonies 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. But it is the manipulators and scalpel-keen claws that hang underneath a Talos' segmented carapace that are truly to be feared. When a Talos catches an enemy warrior, it holds him

tight with a pair of grasping steel limbs and begins a rapid and efficient disassembly of its victim with the rest. Motors hum and drills whine as it works away with its surgically sharp implements, drawing each constituent part into itself, stripping and rendering down the physical form of its prey layer by layer until nothing is left but a few drops of blood.



In battle, this gruesome process is immensely pleasing to the Haemonculus owner, for not only does it provide an entertaining spectacle but it also affords the Talos even greater motive power as it harnesses and consumes its fleshy bounty. Clacking and twitching as if revelling in the kill, the Talos advances with renewed vigour, its high-tech weaponry spitting indiscriminate death into the ranks of the foe. When it catches its next quarry the process begins anew, but the fate of one caught by a Talos does not end in death – upon the Talos' return to its coven's oubliettes, the constituents of its victims will be siphoned out from within its metallic shell and used to create yet more potions and elixirs.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Talos Pain Engine	5	3	7	7	3	4	D6	10	3+

UNIT TYPE: Monstrous Creature.

WARGEAR: Armoured carapace, close combat weapon, twin-linked splinter cannon.

Ichor injector: This foul device injects its targets with the boiling ichor of the Talos' own bloodstream. For every unsaved wound suffered from this special close combat weapon, the victim must take a Toughness test. If it fails any of these tests, the model suffers instant death, regardless of its Toughness.

Stinger pod: Talos are often armed with occult weapons that fire great pulses of raw agony.

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

Chain-flails: The Talos wields a profusion of barbed chains that whip outwards. A Talos with this special close combat weapon rolls two dice when generating the number of attacks it makes and takes the highest result.

SPECIAL RULES: Night Vision, Power from Pain, Fearless, Move Through Cover.

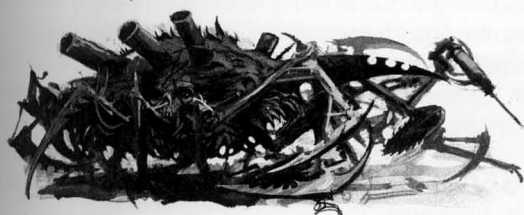
Random attacks: When a Talos detects nearby prey it will lash out in a storm of blows. A Talos has D6 Attacks (plus the bonuses for assaulting, etc). Roll separately to determine how many attacks it makes each round of combat.



CRONOS PARASITE ENGINE

The Cronos resembles a giant biomechanical insect or spined parasite, its burnished shell covered in bristling antennae and twitching vanes. 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 stranger machine. Through the strange blend of alchemy and science practiced by the Haemonculi covens, the Cronos drains away not the physical constituents of its victims but their life essence. What remains of its prey when the vile creature has drunk its fill is a testament to the diabolical skill of its creators, for in its wake a Cronos leaves little more than grey and shrivelled husks.

The Cronos earned its reputation because of the horrific effects of its signature weapon, a fluted and crystalline device that sprouts from its sensory bundles like a weapon or hangs from its head like the proboscis of an alien 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. To the onlooker, a victim of the Cronos' invisible attentions seems to age at an incredibly rapid rate, his body wrinkling and rotting until nothing is left but an ancient-looking cadaver.



Bizarre as it may seem, this is not the end result of the Cronos' macabre feeding habits. The stolen vitality of the machine's victim is then magnified within its shiny carapace, fed through its ribbed capacitor-valves and projected from its resonator vanes once more. Pulsing waves of spirit-essence flow outward to those Dark Eldar standing near the Cronos – usually its Haemonculus master and his ghastly carnival of monstrosities. These beneficial effects are by no means confined to the covens, however; all Dark Eldar can absorb the life forces purloined by the Cronos, becoming stronger and more vital every time the beast successfully feeds. In this way the metallic monstrosity nourishes and rejuvenates those nearby, driving them on to ever-greater feats of destruction. Some are modified to be able to cast their feedback loop across great distances, others are built to drain every last shred of their prey by plunging their syphons directly into their flesh. Amongst the superstitious denizens of the Imperium, the Cronos are known as 'time-thieves', for they steal youth and vigour from their prey and gift it to their sadistic keepers.

Archons who expect a raid to become protracted will pay handsomely for a Cronos to accompany their mission, for should their warriors become bogged down in a roiling battle, a nearby Cronos can drive them to such heights of murderous passion that the scales are quickly tipped in the Dark Eldar's favour. The feeling of stolen essences washing over one's flesh is extremely enjoyable – it is not uncommon for a wealthy Archon to keep a Cronos close by so that he can make the most out of the occasions when his servants displease him.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Cronos Parasite Engine	3	3	5	7	3	4	2	10	3+

UNIT TYPE: Monstrous Creature.

WARGEAR: Armoured carapace, close combat weapon.

Spirit syphon: A Cronos' spirit syphon can cast out a field of baleful energy that allows it to feed upon those nearby.

Range	Strength	AP	Type
Template	4	3	Assault 1

If a spirit syphon kills one or more enemy models, choose one of your units within 12" of the Cronos (this can be the Cronos itself). That unit immediately gains a pain token.

Spirit vortex: Cronos are sometimes modified to incorporate a spiral-etched device that can hurl out a massive burst of negative force, draining the life force of dozens of victims.

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

If a spirit vortex kills one or more enemy models, choose one of your units within 12" of the Cronos (this can be the Cronos itself). That unit immediately gains a pain token.

Spirit probe: Some Cronos can eject a jutting metal tube directly into their victims, ingesting the life force of each foe and spewing it back out into the Dark Eldar nearby. If a Cronos with a spirit probe kills one or more enemy models during the Assault phase, choose one of your units within 12" of the Cronos at the end of that phase (this can be the Cronos itself). That unit immediately gains a pain token.

SPECIAL RULES: Night Vision, Power from Pain, Fearless, Move Through Cover.

"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 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,
Yria Massacre

HARLEQUINS

The Harlequins are an Eldar warrior elite that draw no delineation between art and war. Each pinpoint thrust of the blade, each somersault over a fresh kill, each whipcord kick to the throat is an act of worship to their trickster deity, the Laughing God. The Harlequins embody an age-old enigma that has haunted the Eldar since the Fall, for they alone know the secret of how to deny Slaanesh and keep their souls burning bright.

Harlequins are not true Dark Eldar at all. Though they often frequent Commorragh they exist outside of Eldar society altogether, and their motives are shrouded and unclear. The Harlequins primarily dwell within the shattered corners of the webway, and they usually only deign to 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' performance 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.

A Harlequin troupe's performance will always culminate with the tale of the Fall, a tale of particular significance to the oldest Archons, many of whom find Act One gratifyingly familiar. Because of their status as outsiders, there have been many reports of Harlequins working as intermediaries between the Eldar Craftworlds and the ruling bodies of Commorragh. If the Harlequins have loyalty to any save the Laughing God, it is to the Eldar race as a whole, and they would see it restored.

Even a handful of these warrior-dancers can turn the tide of a battle with their coruscating assault. They make haste to the front lines, killing or capturing certain individuals for their own mysterious reasons before vanishing into the webway once more. In contrast to their Dark Eldar kin, the Harlequins move as scintillating blurs of bright colour across the battlefield, their holographic 'domino fields' confounding and distracting the foe. Once the leaping, spinning dance of death begins, even the most cynical Dark Eldar raider finds himself raising an eyebrow at the skill with which these warrior-artists cut apart their prey.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Harlequin	5	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	-
Death Jester	5	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	-
Shadowseer	5	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	-
Troupe Master	5	4	3	3	1	6	3	10	-

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Close combat weapon, shuriken pistol.

Flip Belts: The anti-gravity flip belts of the Harlequins enable them to bound and somersault over even the most treacherous of footing. They ignore difficult terrain.

Holo-suit: Harlequins use a sophisticated holo-suit to fragment their image and foil incoming fire and blows from their enemies. They benefit from a 5+ invulnerable save.

Fusion Pistol: This compact hand-held melta weapon has an elegance that belies its potency.

Range	Strength	AP	Type
6"	8	1	Pistol, Melta

Harlequin's Kiss: A sharpened tube attached to the forearm, the Kiss can be punched into an enemy and the monofilament wire inside allowed to uncoil, reducing the target's insides to a gory soup in an instant. Close combat attacks made by a Harlequin's Kiss have the Rending rule.

SPECIAL RULES (Entire unit): Fleet.

Dance of Death: A Harlequin troupe coordinates its attacks with bewildering speed, leaving corpses in their wake. They have the Furious Charge and the Hit and Run special rules.

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. 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 unholy terror upon the foe or even remove the Harlequin's presence from their minds altogether.

WARGEAR: Close combat weapon, shuriken pistol, flip belt, holo-suit.

Hallucinogen Grenades: The Shadowseer's entire squad counts as being armed with plasma grenades.

SPECIAL RULES:

Veil of Tears: A Shadowseer is a psyker and always has the Veil of Tears psychic power. This power is available permanently, so she does not need to take a psychic test to use it. The Shadowseer uses her powers to confuse and terrify her foe. Any enemy unit wishing to target the Shadowseer or the unit she is with must roll 2D6x2. This is their spotting distance in inches. If the models are not within spotting range, they may not fire that turn.

DEATH JESTERS

The Death Jesters are heavy weapon specialists, sinister warriors who stand apart from their fellow Harlequins. Their costumes feature skulls and death's head masks, usually decorated with bones of their predecessors. Their morbid sense of humour is appreciated throughout the Dark City.

WARGEAR: Flip belt, holo-suit.

Shrieker Cannon: A Death Jester's shrieker cannon fires shuriken impregnated with virulent genetic toxins, causing its victims to rupture and explode in a shockingly violent fashion.

Range	Strength	AP	Type
24"	6	5	Assault 3, Pinning

VENOMS

The Dark Eldar rely heavily on surprise and raw speed, and hence their skycraft are all fast and manoeuvrable. The most deft of all Commorrite transports is the Venom, an arrow-swift skimmer that carries an elite cadre of warriors into battle to strike like a poisoned dart at the heart of the foe.

Rather than present a single obvious target, a Dark Eldar strike force will attack in waves, with a dizzying number of craft pouring out of the fractured skies in order to confound the guns of the foe. Although many Dark Eldar vehicles may still be intercepted by enemy flak, even a disciplined gun battery cannot hope to stop the entirety of the malignant swarm that descends upon it. Furthermore, as any experienced Dark Eldar commander knows, it is the largest and most populous transports that are the target priority of well-drilled enemy soldiers. So it is that the most devious Dark Eldar ride to war upon craft no larger than the Vypers of the Eldar Craftworlds, or the sky-chariots of the ancient Eldar empire that preceded them. Speed is paramount – should even a single Venom 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.

Though the Venom's booster engines and anti-gravitic ribbing are similar to those of other Dark Eldar craft, the transport is so deft and sensitive to the commands of its pilot that it can jink through a storm of incoming fire, its holographic flickerfield confounding enemy marksmen. It is said that a skilled Venom pilot can even traverse the parts of the

webway designed only for the passage of single individuals. For this reason Venoms are very popular with Commorrite hunters, and also those aristocrats of the upper spires who enjoy running their enemies down for the sake of sport.

Despite its small size, the Venom is capable of carrying a small clique of hand-picked warriors who are well used to fighting as a coordinated unit. Though most Dark Eldar lords and champions will lead their Kabalite Warriors into battle from a personalised Raider, this does not always sit well with those who prefer not to consort with mere footsoldiers. Sometimes Venoms are used to transport but a single warrior to battle in style; usually those Dark Eldar nobles too arrogant or paranoid to trust even their own bodyguards. Those who have seen the Dark Eldar in action know that a single warrior is sometimes all it takes – a Venom's true poison is its passengers, not its guns.

	Type	[Armour]			
		BS	F	S	R
Venom	Skimmer, Fast, Open-topped	4	10	10	10

TRANSPORT: The Venom has a transport capacity of five.

WARGEAR: Twin-linked splinter rifle, splinter cannon, flickerfield (see page 63).

SPECIAL RULES: Night Vision.



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; not to honour their skill, but purely in order to learn more of their power.

In this way truly mighty Dark Eldar from ages past have become almost folkloric figures. Many epitomise a particular form of vice, whose clandestine worship led to the weakening of the ancient Eldar gods and, indirectly, the Fall. They are known collectively as the Dark Muses, and they are figures of terrible power. Favoured by assassins and murderers is Shaimesh, Lord of Poisons, the treacherous brother of Saim-Hann the Cosmic Serpent. The courtesan elite of the Cult of Lhamaea pay homage to Lhilitu, Consort of the Void, whereas powerful Archons are more likely to follow the tenets of Vileth, a figure synonymous with immense arrogance. On the eve of battle many traditionalist Wych Cults invoke the Red Crone Hekatii, or make sacrifices to Qa'leth, Mistress of Blades.

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.

RAIDERS

The first sign of a Dark Eldar realspace raid is a glimmer of unlight that appears in the sky, unfolding and spiralling outward to become a shimmering portal ablaze with green flame. Through this ethereal gateway come dozens of bladed skycraft, arrowing towards their bewildered quarry with the single-mindedness of sharks that scent blood. The most common of these anti-gravity skimmers are known as Raiders, the favoured transports of Dark Eldar across the galaxy.

Lightweight and extremely manoeuvrable, Raiders epitomise the Dark Eldar belief that velocity triumphs over durability. Unlike the sluggish vehicles of the Imperium, Raiders do not hold their passengers within metallic shells. Instead they are more like the gliding pleasure boats of the ancient Eldar, albeit adapted for extreme speed, and fitted with sword-sharp fins and jagged keels with which to cut apart the foe.

The primary motive power of the Raider comes from compact turbo engines, and they are held aloft by anti-grav ribbing that allows them to skim over even rugged terrain at a tremendous pace. Though each of these craft is customised by its owning Kabal and adorned with the body parts of conquered victims, all have certain key features in common – a repulsor keelblade manned by a talented steersman, aethersails to harness the energies flowing from the portal from which they descend, and a prow-mounted heavy weapon to sow terror amongst the enemy. The curved hull of each Raider is sheltered by sweeping fairings, and its metal deck is pierced through with tessellating designs to lessen the

craft's weight. Sickle-blades, electroshock rams and gun racks are also frequently mounted upon Raiders, for the Dark Eldar will gladly use any weapon at their disposal.

At first glance, the Raider is so pared-down and streamlined that it appears to be more of a racing craft than a troop transport. True enough, when its engines are at full burn it is capable of keeping pace with even the miraculous skimmers of the Craftworld Eldar. Nonetheless, troop transport is the Raider's primary function – such is the surety and confidence of its Dark Eldar passengers that they can hang onto the balustrades and trophy-hooks of the Raider with ease, rejoicing in the thrill of the hunt as shrapnel bursts all around. It is the work of but a second to detach from the side of a Raider and drop down into the enemy's midst, teeth bared in anticipation of the bloodletting to come.

Once the enemy is vanquished, enemy survivors will be lashed or chained to the Raider or simply impaled upon its trophy hooks. Those Dark Eldar who have died in the raid are also carried back to Commorragh with a marked lack of dignity, heaped in a gory tangle of limbs or hung like rag dolls from the Raider's spiked hull.

	Type	Armour			
		BS	F	S	R
Raider	Skimmer, Fast, Open-topped	4	10	10	10

TRANSPORT: Raiders have a transport capacity of ten.

WARGEAR: Dark lance.

SPECIAL RULES: Night Vision.



Private Malko stared up in wonder as the eclipse manifested with stately grace above him. The disc of the red moon slid across the sun until its rays were no more than a fiery halo framing a dark void. Malko squinted, his brow furrowed as he spotted a point of jade light within. It seemed to split and grow outwards, opening like a mouth or a baleful eye. He fumbled for the comm-link to report the strange vision to Commissar Radczek, but his voice caught in his throat.

It looked for all the world like a sharp blade of a craft had burst out from the heart of the rift above, impossibly close, and it was soaring straight for him. Another emerged, then another, then a dozen at once, screaming out of the skies like the poisoned darts of a hunter-god.

Malko stumbled backwards, remembering the stories Goodwife Ingrid used to tell him as a child, grisly tales of a changeling folk who came from the skies to steal the innocent away into hell.

'Man the guns!' shouted Malko, his voice hoarse with terror. 'For the love of the holy, MAN THE GUNS!'

RAVAGERS

The Ravager gunship is just as arrow-swift as its brother craft, the Raider. In place of a transport capacity, however, the Ravager mounts three devastatingly powerful heavy weapons. Upon the battlefield it fulfils the role of armoured fire support, engaging the heaviest of enemy targets, but comparing the Ravager to a gun-tank of the Imperium is like comparing a swift-winged raptor to a lumbering beast of burden. Ravager gunships are so fast and manoeuvrable that they can ambush an enemy tank and destroy it in a single devastating pass, disappearing again before the enemy knows what hit them.

Ravagers can be said to fulfil the role of assassins in the war against realspace, though their assigned targets are armoured vehicles instead of individuals. Each Ravager crew will have a priority target allocated to it that it must take down or face dire punishment upon its return to its parent Kabal in the depths of Commorragh.

The targeting arrays of the Ravagers are outfitted with as much information about their quarry as their Kabal can muster, and each grav-skiff's crew briefed as to the best way to annihilate the enemy vehicle in question. This ensures that the Ravager's capricious gunners focus on a particular task, such as crippling the enemy's prized war engine, bringing an armoured column to a shuddering halt or denying the foe his means of escape. Once this task is achieved the Ravager crew have carte blanche to swoop around the battlefield causing whatever carnage they see fit and pitilessly obliterating whoever happens to fall under their gunsights.

It is perhaps indicative of the wider mindset of the Dark Eldar that the Ravager, the most ubiquitous of their gunship designs, bears little more in the way of armour plating than the personnel transports of Mankind. Speed is prized above all. The Ravager's crew reason that if they are already elsewhere when retribution is sought, their chances of survival are far higher than those who wallow around waiting to be hit. This tactic is frustrating to the officers of the Imperium, where war is waged with the sledgehammer rather than the thrust of the rapier. But the proof of its efficacy is undeniable. A Ravager squadron is fully capable of appearing from nowhere, delivering the death blow to a God-Machine of the Adeptus Mechanicus in a single volley, and disappearing over the horizon before the behemoth has even toppled to the ground.

	Type	⌈ Armour ⌋			
		BS	F	S	R
Ravager	Skimmer, Fast, Open-topped	4	11	11	10

UNIT TYPE: Vehicle.

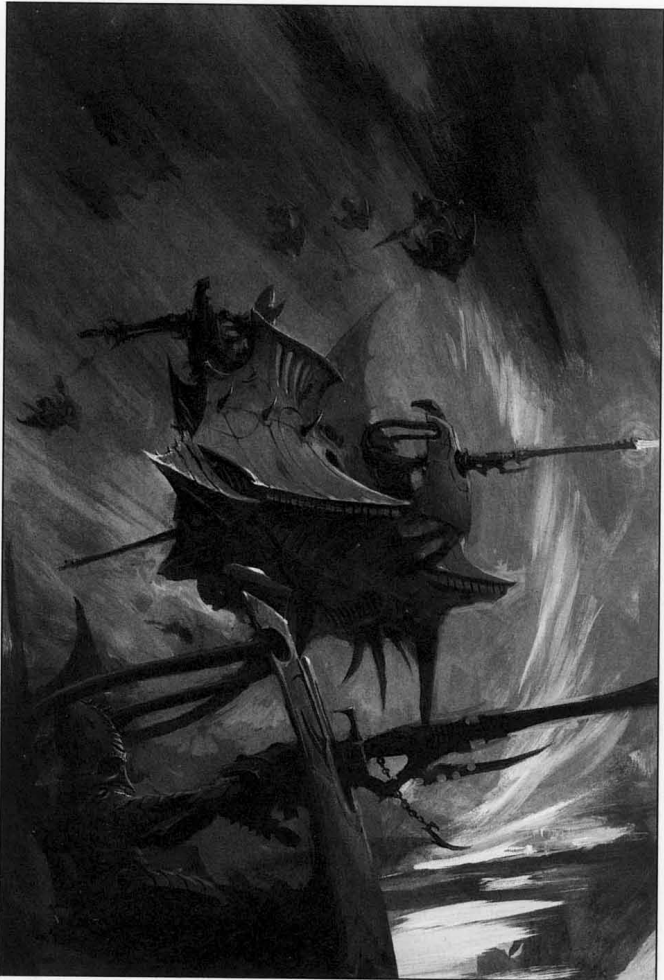
WARGEAR: Three dark lances.

SPECIAL RULES: Night Vision.

Aerial Assault: Due to the largely open construction of its decks and the sophisticated targeting matrices used by its crew, a Ravager that moved at cruising speed may fire all of its weapons.

In a storm of searing light, yet another trio of sleek, blade-keeled vehicles burst into existence less than a hundred metres from the Ork lines. A great roar went up from the ramshackle greenskin encampments arrayed about the walls of the fat-bellied Ork fortress – this was looking like a proper fight after all. As one, the Orks took the bait.

A flood of Greenskins poured out from the shanty towns around the fortress as a huge Battlewagon with rusted metal jaws and 'Da Gobbla' sprayed across its blunt nose hurtled over the entrance ramps, leading an armoured column of Ork nastiness straight towards the night-shrouded invaders. Nine beams of unlight seared out from the gathering gloom, each a pinpoint lance that struck a vital point on the metallic behemoth – the axles, the vision slits, the engine block, the fuel tank. Da Gobbla came apart in an explosion so powerful it flipped two eager Ork Trukks end over end, wreckage careening under the massive spiked treads of the Battlewagons behind them. Da Red Smasha was next to die, utterly disintegrated within a cloud of roiling crimson plasma. The remaining Ork vehicles slewed and careened through the confusion, sporadic groups of Boyz sprinting forwards into the darkness in their haste to spill the blood of the invaders. Those still within the fortress could hear the sounds of battle in the unnatural mists, though the sounds were fading. When rest of the Ork horde finally arrived, the invaders were long gone. Of the several hundred battle-hungry Orks that had rushed to intercept them, there was no sign.



RAZORWING JETFIGHTERS

Through the vortex-torn mists of each Dark Eldar raid come the twin contrails of Razorwing Jetfighters, alien aircraft so fast that their fusillades of missile fire can hit home just at the instant the air is rent by a thunderous sonic boom.

Even the most conceited Archon knows that the armoured vehicles of the lesser races, though thuggish and unsubtle, are still potentially dangerous. An airborne raid that is intercepted by well-directed artillery fire can often find itself repelled with disastrous losses. To ensure that the foe cannot call upon such support, the Dark Eldar employ Razorwing Jetfighters to sow destruction and panic in the midst of the foe. No prey is fast enough to outpace these aggressive and consummately skilled fighter craft, for each of their pilots was once a member of the Reaver elite, and to them fighting at breakneck speed is second nature.

In silhouette, Razorwing Jetfighters appear like jagged, double-edged blades, their crescent wings and sword-sharp curves conveying their lethal power. Imperial commanders often mistake Razorwings for the interceptor fighters of the Craftworld Eldar, for they bear the signature grace of all Eldar craft, and carve through the skies at a similarly breakneck pace. However, the pilots of Razorwing Jetfighters specialise not in aerial interception but in the wholesale slaughter of ground targets. Veterans of the Dark City's death races, they have earned enough wealth to escape the arenas forever, and now seek to maim and destroy everything they can find without risking their own skins. The pilot of a Razorwing likes

little more than roaring through an inferno of his own creation whilst mowing down the panicked survivors scurrying below.

Razorwing Jetfighters boast an array of diabolically effective missiles. When a squadron of Razorwings looses a salvo it often appears as if the ground is being raked by monstrous invisible talons. Most surgically efficient of all is the dreaded monoscythe missile, remotely steered by the Jetfighter's pilots into the thick of the foe. The secret to their terrifying reputation is in their warheads; 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. Such a clinical multiple kill is very satisfying to the jetfighter's pilots, for all Dark Eldar appreciate a well-administered death.

*"They come for your souls, I've seen it.
They've come to feed on your souls..."*

— Oelle Blackwinter,
Primaris Psyker



	Type	Armour			
		BS	F	S	R
Razorwing	Skimmer, Fast	4	10	10	10

UNIT TYPE: Vehicle.

WARGEAR: Twin-linked splinter rifles, two dark lances.

Monoscythe missile: The monoscythe missile is the signature armament of the Razorwing Jetfighter.

Range	Strength	AP	Type
48"	6	5	Assault 1, Large Blast, One Shot

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

Range	Strength	AP	Type
48"	X	5	Assault 1, Large Blast, Poisoned (2+). Pinning, One Shot

SPECIAL RULES: Night Vision, Deep Strike.

Aerial Assault: A vehicle with the Aerial Assault rule that moves at cruising speed may fire all of its weapons.

Supersonic: A vehicle with the Supersonic rule that moves flat out may move up to 36".

VOIDRAVEN BOMBERS

Though the Dark Eldar consider the Voidraven Bomber to be the ultimate in heavy weapons deployment, it is still capable of outstripping even the agile fighter craft of the Imperium with ease. The Voidraven shares many similarities with the Razorwing Jetfighter, having distinctive sickled wings and comparable aerodynamic design, but it carries a far larger and more deadly payload than its smaller cousin – the dreaded void mine.

Much like the Razorwing Jetfighter, a Voidraven Bomber’s pilot is a veteran of the high-speed death races that girdle the tall spires of High Commorragh. Speed is in his blood, and he thinks nothing of breakneck aerial manoeuvres that would kill a lesser steersman. It is not the pilot of the Voidraven Bomber that defines its role, however. It is the gunner at its front that is the true maestro in the symphony of mayhem that the Dark Eldar inflict upon their prey.

At the fore of each Voidraven is a crystal pod housing a saddle much like that upon a Reaver’s jetbike, surrounded by targeting holographs and crosshair runes that flicker and dance over the gunner’s unwitting prey. From this lavishly appointed cocoon the Voidraven’s gunner will unleash searing fusillades from the craft’s void lances.

Unlike the Razorwing Jetfighter, whose pilots rejoice in the earsplitting crack-boom of its passage, the Voidraven Bomber mounts complex sonic dampers that completely obscure the sound of its engines. Often the first an enemy emplacement will know of a Voidraven’s presence is when twin beams of ruby-red light sear great scars into whatever defensive artillery they might have employed against it.



And yet, as lethal as it is, the void lance is not the most feared of the Voidraven Bomber’s weapons. Once the gunner has ensured that he can work without interruption, he will deploy the craft’s void mine from the Voidraven’s weapon nacelles. The void mine, delivered with pinpoint accuracy, detonates not one but two warheads, one a split second before the other. The first has no direct effect, for it merely establishes a sphere of force, a bubble in reality 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, though, anything trapped inside the crackling sphere is annihilated. All that is left is a smoking, hemispherical crater scooped out of the earth and the contrails of the rapidly disappearing Voidraven high above.

	Type	Armour			
		BS	F	S	R
Voidraven	Skimmer, Fast	4	11	11	10

UNIT TYPE: Vehicle.

WARGEAR

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

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

Void mine: The void mine is a triumph of Dark Eldar weapons technology.

Range	Strength	AP	Type
See below	9	2	Assault 1, Blast, One Shot, Lance

During the Voidraven Bomber’s Movement phase, it may place a small blast marker centred upon any one model it has passed over that turn and roll a scatter dice. If an arrow is rolled move the template D6" in that direction. Once the final position of the template has been determined, resolve the effects above. Note that this counts as using a weapon.

Implosion missile: These heavy and menacing-looking devices emit a field of molecular dissonance 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	Strength	AP	Type
48"	See below	2	Assault 1, Blast, One Shot

Models hit by an implosion missile must take a characteristic test based on their Wounds value (i.e. the one on their profile, not their current Wounds). If they fail the test, they implode spectacularly and suffer instant death regardless of Toughness. Cover saves and invulnerable saves may be taken as normal. Vehicles are unaffected by implosion missiles.

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 a blast of percussive force that shatters its frozen victims into pieces.

Range	Strength	AP	Type
48"	7*	-	Assault 1, Large Blast, One Shot

**A Shatterfield missile may re-roll failed To Wound rolls – if the first blast doesn’t get you, the second will!*

SPECIAL RULES: Night Vision, Deep Strike. Aerial Assault, Supersonic (see opposite).

BARON SATHONYX

The Lord Hellion

In the rotten underbelly of Commorragh there dwells a warrior who commands the dispossessed, ruling over an army of outcasts like a cruel king. He is the self-styled Baron Sathonyx, the Helfather, Lord of the Middle Dark, and his influence spreads throughout the underworld. It is whispered that not a single Hellion gang rides to war without his blessing, and that only each gang's leaders know how to find his airborne court, for the Baron wears secrecy like a tattered shroud.

Sathonyx was once a noble of some standing in the Slashed Eye Kabal, and his boundless thirst for the thrill of realspace raids was well known. It was during the Alaitoc Raids that Sathonyx captured no less a prize than an enemy Farseer, a fact proclaimed loudly to all who would listen upon his return. As far as Archon Cythrax, Lord of the Slashed Eye, was concerned, however, Sathonyx had placed the entire Kabal in jeopardy by bringing a psyker into his house. Sathonyx was banished and escorted into the bowels of the Dark City by his own Kabal-brothers. Seething with rage, Sathonyx waited for his moment, killed his guards in a wrathful frenzy and fled into the undercity.

From that day forth there has been a high price upon Sathonyx's head. Experienced bounty hunters and alien bloodhounds took up the chase, but one by one they were found strung upside-down from the towers and minarets of the Slashed Eye.



Next came the elite Kabalite Trueborn, who carved a red path through the guts of the Dark City in order to bring Sathonyx before Cythrax's throne. Somehow he evaded even them. Sathonyx slowly earned himself serious respect as a survivor who fought tooth and nail every day of his life. As his legend grew, he became something of a hero to the Hellion gangs and those who resented the stranglehold of the Kabals. The Baron gathered a ragged army of exiles, rebels and iconoclasts. In a year-long campaign of fire, he brought the house of Cythrax to its knees.

To this day, not even his most senior lieutenants know of the Baron's secret. Amongst the trinkets that line his bloodstained coat are the remains of the very Farseer whose capture led to his banishment. By scattering these crystal-veined bones in a pool of blood, Sathonyx can see dimly into the future. Because of this the Baron is the bane of his hunters, and his court of sky-borne exiles always remains one step ahead of their pursuers.

Baron Sathonyx enjoys a grudging respect from the Archons of the upper spires. Better the devil you know, they say; since Sathonyx's ascendancy the Hellion gangs can at least be bargained with, for they have no loyalty save their allegiance to the Lord Hellion. What those same Archons would never admit is that the Baron is an expert at espionage and blackmail; the fact that some of the more recent rulers to seize power once belonged to Sathonyx's Hellion gangs is a closely guarded secret. The Baron sees all, as Sathonyx likes to say. Given that he has risen from disgrace to become the kingpin of the Commorrite underworld, perhaps he is right.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Baron Sathonyx	6	6	3	3	2	6	3	9	5+

UNIT TYPE: Jump Infantry.

WARGEAR: Shadow field, wychsuit, hellglave, splinter pistol, phantasm grenade launcher.

Custom skyboard: Sathonyx's custom skyboard counts as a normal skyboard (see page 28). In addition, it adds +2 Strength to his attacks in any turn in which he assaults.

Bones of the Seer: To represent the Baron's 'foresight', an army that includes Sathonyx adds one to the dice roll when determining which side chooses deployment zone.

Twilight shroud: Sathonyx's skyboard incorporates a sophisticated device that draws darkness inward. The twilight shroud confers the Stealth rule to Sathonyx and his unit.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain, Independent Character, Hit and Run.

Master of the Skies: Sathonyx and any unit of Hellions he joins may re-roll failed dangerous terrain tests. Also, when using their Hit and Run rule, they can re-roll both the Initiative test and the dice to determine how far they move.

LELITH HESPERAX

Lelith is the undisputed champion of the gladiatorial arenas. Most deadly of all her kind, Lelith's skill in the arts of combat bear all the hallmarks of true genius. Lelith is grace embodied, her movements hypnotic, sensual and spellbinding – watching Lelith go about her blood-soaked business is a privilege that only the wealthiest Dark Eldar can afford. To see such a superbly talented Succubus perform first-hand is a dream come true for most Kabalites, for it energises and reinvigorates even the eldest of their kind.

Though the purr of her voice has been likened to honeyed velvet, Lelith rarely speaks, for she is an artiste, not a politician. Nonetheless, her pronouncements are always carried out to the letter by her handmaidens, the Cult of Strife, who look in jealous awe at their mistress's flawless form and supernatural physical dexterity. On the eve before a realspace raid, Lelith will often pad like a hunting-cat into the halls of an Archon preparing for battle, flanked by dozens of hand-picked Wych acolytes. Lady Hesperax blesses raiding Kabals with her presence in this manner only in order to search out unusual prey; she loves to match her abilities against the most formidable elites and champions in the galaxy. She has yet to return without blood upon her blades and a new clutch of grisly trophies for her private museums.

Alone amongst the Wych Cults, Lelith does not use combat drugs to enhance her performance. Lelith's disciples, 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.

The harpies of 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 – like all born predators, Lelith prefers to fight up close. 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 such 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.

In battle, Lelith uses her body as a weapon as well as her blades. Her mane of silky hair is sewn through with barbs and hooks that she uses to snare the blades of her foes much in the manner of the shardnets of the Yraqnae. Her long legs and bare feet are edged with spurs, the better to tear open a throat with a perfect pirouette kick, and her fingernails have been reinforced and honed to scalpel sharpness. Lelith can kill a dozen lesser warriors in the space of a few seconds, her blades tracing a spiralling path between each fatal slash, before finishing with flourish and poise. Indeed, vid-steals of her doing so are traded throughout Commorragh and beyond by those with a twisted taste for violence. Perhaps, her spectators say, it is not only mortals who gaze with rapt attention as Lelith weaves her deadly dance.

Lelith Hesperax

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

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Wicked blades and barbed hair (counts as shardnet and impaler), wychsuit, plasma grenades.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain, Independent Character.

Quicksilver Dodge (4+/3+): Lelith is far more agile than a mere Wych or Succubus. She has a 4+ invulnerable saving throw, which is increased to 3+ against wounds caused by close combat attacks.

The Penetrating Blade: Lelith places her blows with such uncanny precision she can always find a chink in the enemy's armour. Her attacks ignore armour saves.

A League Apart: Lelith gets a number of bonus Attacks equal to the difference between her Weapon Skill and the highest Weapon Skill amongst enemy models she is in base contact with. For example: Lelith is in base contact with a mob of Orks (WS 4) led by an Ork Warboss (WS 5). Lelith will therefore get four bonus attacks that round (Lelith's WS 9 minus the Warboss's WS 5), plus an additional bonus attack for wielding an additional hand weapon – a grand total of nine attacks!



KHERADRUAKH

The Decapitator

The Mandrake known as the Decapitator is a figure of stark terror who haunts the alleys and spars of Commorragh. Little is known about Kheradruakh – whose name literally translates as ‘He Who Hunts Heads’ – other than the fact that he can crawl out from even the slightest shadow and that he always takes the heads of his prey. Occasionally a victim may perceive this shadow-stalker for long enough to see that he has empty sockets in place of eyes and an extra set of taloned arms, though whether these traits are a part of Mandrake physiology or the work of a Haemonculus is unknown. Though Kheradruakh seems to kill randomly and without motive, he has been known to work as an assassin, claiming the head of an employer’s chosen victim in exchange for an exorbitantly steep price in souls. The Decapitator has been known to bolster a realspace raid unbidden, taking a single skull and disappearing just as stealthily as he arrived. Only the Mandrakes know what will come to pass should Kheradruakh’s macabre quest reach completion.

Without a sound, Kheradruakh will neatly sever the head of his chosen victim with his long, sharp blade and, following a cursory inspection of his prize, disappear back to the catacombs in which he makes his lair. Around him, the inner walls of his vast hemispherical sanctum are ranged with row upon row of captured skulls, each placed with incredible precision so that they are all staring directly at a point just above the empty dais in the centre of the lair. There he will sit like a grotesque black insect,

quickly and efficiently peeling away the flesh and sinew from his grisly prize. Once the skull is stripped completely, the Decapitator turns it round and round in his hands, examining every dent and contour with his long fingers and probing tongue. If this prize fails to meet his stringent requirements, Kheradruakh will toss the skull to one side to join countless others littering the ground, sullenly crushing it underfoot before he sets out once more to hunt fresh prey. If it passes muster, however, he will delicately climb up and around the walls of his cavern, clawed fingers reaching for purchase in jaws and eye sockets until he reaches the top circle and inserts the skull into an empty niche with the care of an obsessive artist. Though barely one skull per decade passes muster, there are only a few empty niches left in the walls of the Decapitator’s lair, and the air in the chamber is already saturated with forbidden power.

Each of his carefully-selected skulls harbours an echo of its former occupant’s soul, and their own empty sockets all stare at exactly the same point in space using a form of perception that is anything but conventional. Some of his disciples believe that once a critical mass is achieved, the weight of the skulls’ collective stare will bore a hole into the dimension beyond the shadows, and the malign creatures therein will stare back. Slowly, as the skulls stare unblinking at a single point in space, a breach in the fabric of the webway will manifest above Decapitator’s dais, darkness gathering like a living thing until the baleful energies of the shadowed realm beyond plunge the depths of Commorragh into a new and pitch-black hell. Then, perhaps, the Dark Eldar will feel the true power of the Mandrakes and their horrific allies, and the Dark City will dance to Kheradruakh’s tune.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Kheradruakh	6	5	5	3	3	6	4	9	-

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Decapitator: This is a power weapon that on a roll of a 6 to wound causes instant death, regardless of the enemy’s Toughness.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain, Move Through Cover, Baleblast (see page 33), Stealth, Invulnerable Save (5+).

Shade Stalker: Kheradruakh must be held in reserve, regardless of mission. When he arrives from reserve, simply place him anywhere on the battlefield that is not within an inch of an enemy model (preferably with an evil chuckle). He may not assault that turn, but may otherwise act normally.

Hunter of Heads: Nominate an enemy Independent Character at the beginning of the game as the unfortunate whose skull the Decapitator intends to take. Kheradruakh has the Preferred Enemy rule for attacks made against this model.

Altered Physique: Kheradruakh is a creature of ancient darkness. He begins the game with a pain token.



DUKE SLISCUS

The Serpent

The Eldar Pirate Fleets that ply the sea of stars are as varied as the planets they prey upon; some abide by codes of honour, some are pitiless and cruel. Duke Traevelliath Sliscus is the most capricious of them all. He has no qualms about imperilling every ship in his fleet if it will mean that he can destroy an enemy flagship in style, for no-one remembers those who play it safe. His armada of pirates follow him regardless, for they know that beneath Sliscus' mania lurks an inner steel that has proven the death of entire fleets.

Legend has it that the Duke tired of the constant political grind of Commorragh and decided to leave with a bang rather than a whimper. Recruiting a coterie of like-minded captains, he waited until Commorragh was deep in the throes of one of its many civil wars and then staged a stunt of incredible audacity; stealing no less than three Kabalite flagships at once and fighting his way clear of Commorragh's naval ports. The rage of the three humiliated Archons who had lost their prized vessels was incandescent, but it was too late – Sliscus had escaped into the void, never to return.

An intense megalomaniac, Sliscus has been the commander of the Sky Serpents for many thousands of years, and is convinced that it is his right to rule the stars. Though he has a hundred different names and titles, the Duke's reputation has spread from Alpha Prime to the Omegon belt. Sliscus is famous above all for his unpredictable behaviour. One moment he is charming and charismatic, the next utterly ruthless and unrepentant in his thirst for blood and pain. He was once described by Lady Malys as 'amoral, despicable and impeccably dressed into the bargain.'



Sliscus once famously agreed to parley with a human planetary governor who pleaded for clemency, only to have every one of the primary hive's noblemen put to death when the human envoy mispronounced his name. His habit of turning from smiling libertine into vicious murderer has earned him the epithet 'the Serpent', a name that Sliscus finds wryly amusing. He is far more dangerous than any mere beast, venomous or not, and has remarked that all serpents should be named after him instead of the other way round. Despite his much-vaunted sense of humour, the Duke's closest advisors believe Sliscus cherishes above all the look of despair upon his victims' faces when they realise there is no mercy in his heart; the melting point where relief is replaced with abject terror. He does, as his many admirers put it, so love to play with his food.

Sliscus' actions have become increasingly bizarre over the years, for endless and unrestrained power can take its toll. His alabaster skin is almost translucent, for he has it scrubbed thoroughly by teams of his concubines every time he shares the same air as a member of a lesser species. He never wears the same clothing twice, each new outfit incorporating the remains of his latest foe. The Duke dines on poisoned food in order to build up his immunity to toxins and, when in a pensive mood, likes to carve epic poems into the flesh of his captives. His personal colours are made from the flayed skin of the Admiral of Bakka, whose Segmentum Fortress and vast naval powerbase proved little defence against Sliscus' sabotage and infiltration tactics.

The Duke remains an extremely popular figure amongst the Dark Eldar, and a champion to those in exile from the Dark City of Commorragh. The Duke's trio of stolen flagships is surrounded by a flotilla of cruisers, corsairs and warships that have flocked to his banner, and Sliscus is slow to discourage them, for when times are lean the serpent turns upon its own. In the meantime his low-orbit raids continue to plague the rich and privileged, and his legend grows with every fresh slaughter.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Duke Sliscus	6	6	3	3	2	6	3	9	4+

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Blast pistol, shadow field, plasma grenades, ghostplate armour, combat drugs.

The Serpent's Bite: Duke Sliscus fights with twin venom blades that exude a cocktail of exotic alien poisons. These blades count as two Poisoned Weapons (2+). Furthermore, so virulent is their toxin that any To Wound rolls of a 5+ ignore armour saves.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain, Independent Character.

The Serpent's Venom: Pick a unit of Kabalite Warriors or a unit of Kabalite Trueborn at the beginning of the game. Sliscus must be deployed with this unit. All splinter weapons in that unit are upgraded to poisoned (3+), to represent the Duke's collection of hypertoxins in action.

Contraband: Sliscus has unparalleled access to unusual intoxicants pillaged from across the galaxy, one of two compelling reasons why the Duke is so very popular with the Wych Cults. An army that includes Sliscus can roll twice on the chart when determining which combat drugs are available and choose which result applies.

Low Orbit Raid: Due to Sliscus' preference for vertical attack vectors all Raiders, Venoms and Ravagers in the same army as Duke Sliscus have the Deep Strike special rule.

DRAZHAR

Master of Blades

Even amongst the insular ranks of the Incubi, the enigmatic Drazhar remains a mystery. All that is known of his origins is that he entered the Great Shrine of the Incubi unannounced and unbidden, clad in the segmented armour of a senior member of the Incubus creed. He cut his way into the inner sanctum, leaving those who tried to stop him clutching bloody stumps as their blades clattered to the flagstones, and saluted the shrine's enthroned Hierarch in challenge. Incensed at this upstart newcomer's contempt for proper protocol, the Hierarch rose from his throne, entered the candlelit duelling circle and took up the battle stance. 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 dismembered body. By rights the challenger was entitled to take the throne then and there, but Drazhar merely cleaned his blade and sketched a simple bow.

Drazhar's mysterious appearance gave rise to many wild theories and unanswered questions. After weeks of rumour and gossip, it was confirmed that none of the Incubi shrines across Commoragh had ever heard of Drazhar, or recognised his unique and ancient battle gear. Some say he is Arhra, the fabled Dark Father of the Incubi incarnate, others that his armour is filled with nothing more than bone-dust. What was soon confirmed beyond a doubt was

that no matter how skilled the challenger, Drazhar always emerged victorious from his duels. 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.

Though Drazhar has become an integral part of the Great Shrine since his dramatic appearance, he has famously never spoken, nor even removed his helmet, not even to eat or sleep. 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, and it is only the most senior Incubi that are accorded even this scant courtesy. The lords of other Incubi shrines treat the Master of Blades with extreme suspicion, for despite their revered position each was once a lesser warrior, flawed and mortal. Though their original names and identities have been left far behind, a small flame of ambition flickers yet in their black hearts. Drazhar alone remains incorruptible by emotion or pride. He simply exists to kill; nothing more, nothing less.

Taller and more lithe than even other Incubi, Drazhar has a deadly mantis-like speed, and he strikes with his demiklaives at any that so much as raise a weapon in his direction. He has an uncanny ability to move like lightning, darting through even the most chaotic melee to cut his chosen foe down before their blade can fall or their trigger-finger twitch. One chosen as Drazhar's prey had better commend himself to the gods he holds dear, for he has only seconds left to live.

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

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Ancient Incubus warsuit, demiklaives.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain, Independent Character, Eternal Warrior, Fearless.

Master of Blades: Drazhar may only join units of Incubi. However, any unit of Incubi that he joins becomes Fearless as long as he is in the unit. Drazhar also has the Klaivex powers 'Onslaught' and 'Murderous Assault' (see page 31).

Darting Strike: At the beginning of any round of close combat in which Drazhar is involved, he may move to any part of the same combat where there is room to place him. He must be placed in base-to-base contact with an enemy model and remain in coherency with any unit he has joined.

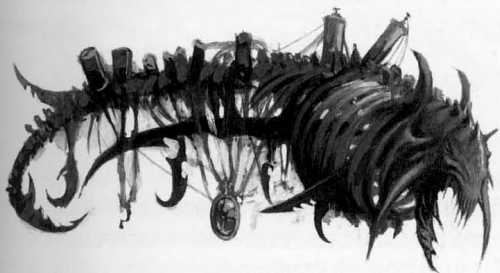
Riposte: Such is Drazhar's skill that when he makes an armour save of 6 in close combat he may make a single bonus attack at his basic Strength, directed at the unit that caused the wound, and made at the same Initiative step.



LADY MALYS

Though less than a thousand years of age, Lady Aurelia Malys is the only Archon who has proven able to match Asdrubael Vect's soaring intellect time and time again. Even before the fateful events that led to her ascendancy, Malys' mind was built like an incredibly complex timepiece, a latticework of tiny golden cogs each clicking away in its place. She is consummately cunning, but at all times she conducts herself with perfect decorum and even a frosty politeness that hides her lethal intentions. Her hauteur and aloof manner is echoed throughout her court, for only the quickest of wit are admitted to the Kabal of the Poisoned Tongue.

The accuracy with which Malys can predict her enemies' moves borders on supernatural. Malys' detractors like to imply that she has a degree of psychic ability, but most believe her uncanny prescience comes purely from having a mind like a steel trap. She has an astonishing ability to be elsewhere when her enemy's blade falls, be it political or physical – one who sees Malys casually despatch a mob of howling Orks with her exotic blade and razor-edged fan is left in no doubt that she is as lethal in action as she is in word.



The story behind Malys' strange ability to outguess her opponents is far more peculiar. Long ago, Lady Aurelia was a consort of Asdrubael Vect – the Supreme Overlord found her astoundingly complex mind stimulating enough that he took her as a lover and a courtier. Within less than a decade, though, he had tired of his new distraction, and he began to treat Malys as little more than an annoying insect before banishing her from his court for good.

Malys did not take it well. Flying into a violent rage, she and her most favoured followers left Commorragh and struck out on their own into the webway. Her self-imposed exile had unforeseen consequences. In the depths of the labyrinth dimension, Lady Malys came across a scintillating being of pure light. Though it banished her followers with a single gesture, the half-real creature engaged Malys in a contest of wills – a contest in which the loser's own heart would be forfeit. To their mutual surprise, Malys held her own against this celestial trickster's incessant riddling, and incredibly she eventually emerged triumphant. The being vanished with a chuckle, leaving in its place a strange blade that moved of its own accord, and its heart – a fist-sized lump of crystal pulsing with light. Half-crazed by her ordeal and determined to get her revenge upon Vect no matter the cost, Malys seized the strange blade, cut out her own heart and replaced it with that of her enigmatic foe. Her flesh fused around it until no blemish could be seen. The crystal heart beats there still.

When Lady Malys returned to Commorragh she slowly but surely regained her position as Archon of the Poisoned

Tongue. Her plans and ploys seemed impenetrable, each a perfectly executed tapestry of cause and effect. In realspace raids Malys became a true terror, fighting like a woman possessed and outguessing and outmanoeuvring the strike forces of other Kabals to ensure she escaped with the lion's share of the spoils. Throughout her rise to the top of the echelons of power, Malys smiled not once, her face ever a mask of self-assurance and contempt for the Dark Eldar that once more clawed and scraped for favour. When she is sure no-one is around, however, Malys will gaze long into her own reflection, grinning, then giggling, then bursting into terrifying seizures of laughter that seem for all the world to come from two throats at once. For the being that now shares her soul is powerful indeed, and with its assistance, Malys may hold the keys to the demise of Vect – and to the fate of Commorragh itself.

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

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Plasma grenades, kabalite armour, steel fan (counts as a close combat weapon).

The Crystal Heart: To represent the strange powers of the trans-dimensional being whose heart beats in her breast, Lady Malys is completely immune to the effects of psychic powers, as is any unit she joins.

The Lady's Blade: Malys returned from her sojourn carrying a weapon imbued with a malign and bloodthirsty sentience. The Lady's Blade is a power weapon. Furthermore, Malys makes two bonus attacks every round of combat – roll these separately. If any double is rolled for these two attacks when rolling to hit, the sentience inside the blade rebels – the two attacks miss automatically and no more of these bonus attacks may be made for the rest of the game.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain, Independent Character.

Invulnerable save (4+): It is a simple matter for Malys to predict where the enemy's blade will fall. To represent this, Malys has a 4+ invulnerable saving throw.

Precognisant: Lady Malys is always one step ahead of her enemies. After both sides have been deployed at the start of the game, the Dark Eldar player may redeploy D3 units in his army, including placing them in reserve.

"Another flawless victory. Ah well. It almost makes one long for a loss, just to keep things interesting. Almost, but not quite..."

– Lady Aurelia Malys, the Dhenial Massacre

URIEN RAKARTH

Twisted beyond measure, the being known as Urien Rakarth has such a mastery over the arts of the flesh that he has died and risen back to life time and time again. 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.

Urien's wizened body has long passed the ability to regain the glory of a recently-fed Dark Eldar, for he is several thousand years old. Over that great span Urien has died to bolt, flame, blade, bullet, toxin, eviscerator and more grisly fates besides. Each time he dies, Urien's remains are used to slowly grow another iteration of the Master Haemonculus, for Urien 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 baroque 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. 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 it forces him to improvise.

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 repugnant creations that shamble out from his flesh-pens; a menagerie of horrors that strains the sanity of all who behold it. 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 Kabal or Wych Cult. To set his creations loose upon the field of battle is to display his masterpieces to the world at large, and every true artist needs an audience. To his faint amusement, competition is extremely fierce for the honour of the Master Haemonculus' presence. Few spectacles are as extreme as the gnashing, thrashing carnival of pain Rakarth unleashes upon his prey.



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

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Close combat weapon, gnarlskin, Casket of Flensing, clone field.

Ichor gauntlet: Rakarth can inject his victims with boiling ichor. The ichor gauntlet is the same as a flesh gauntlet, except that it is a poisoned weapon (3+).

SPECIAL RULES: Night Vision, Power from Pain, Independent Character.

Meld the Flesh: Rakarth automatically heals a single wound at the beginning of each of his turns as his body stitches itself back together. He cannot exceed his starting value.

Father of Pain: Urien begins the game with a pain token. Furthermore, to represent Rakarth's fleshcrafting, choose D3 units at the beginning of the game. These must be Wrack or Grotesque units. Each of these units gains a pain token.

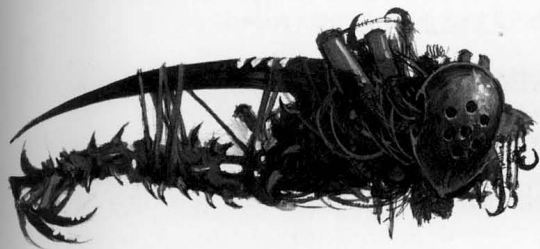
ASDRUBAEL VECT

Supreme Overlord of Commorragh

Vect is the rotten canker at the heart of Commorragh, the black spider at the centre of a galactic web. It was Vect that over the course of millennia transformed the Dark City from a sprawling port into a galactic metropolis. It was Vect who conquered the noble houses and brought their sub-realms under his command one by one. It is Vect's iron will that rules Commorragh to this day.

Asdrubael Vect is quite simply the most devious and intelligent Dark Eldar ever to have existed. His milk-white skin bears not a single scar, though his void-black eyes convey so much hatred that his soul must be calloused indeed. Such is his mind's complexity that it could be likened to a fractal's edge or the crystal labyrinth of Tzeentch. His psyche is a near-infinite palace of plans, counter-measures and ploys that take centuries to come to fruition, but to one who has lived for many millennia, the passage of a hundred years is little more than the passing of a season. There is no intrigue Vect has not thwarted a dozen times over, no treachery he has not foreseen and turned upon itself.

Vect began life as a low-class underling sold into slavery as a child. He has never been truly accepted by the high-born of the Dark Eldar. This perhaps goes some way to explaining his razor-sharp mind and boundless ambition to conquer, for Vect's intrigues have always had to be even sharper than those of his privileged 'betters'. Rung by tortuous rung, Vect climbed up the hierarchical structure that lies within the Dark City. He left behind him a trail of corpses, though it was never his own blade that bore the bloodstains – Vect was far too prudent for such direct measures. For much of his early life Vect thrived on being underestimated; by the aristocracy of Commorragh, by his rivals, even by his own warriors. Under the cover of his lowly birth he gathered more and more power, founding the Kabal of the Black Heart – an organisation that began as a flickering flame, but has since been fanned into a searing firestorm.



By the time the lords of Commorragh conceded that this upstart posed a genuine threat, it was too late. Vect's political stranglehold tightened relentlessly. Forcibly uniting the disparate sub-realms founded prior to the fall, Vect's powerbase grew wider and wider until it had consumed almost all of the Dark Eldar's territory. The last sub-realm to fall was thrice-cursed Shaa-dom, which Vect destroyed without a hint of remorse, leaving nothing but haunted ruins in its place. For almost six thousand years the mastermind has reigned as Supreme Overlord of the Dark City.

And yet, though none dare state it out loud, Vect's hold upon the Dark City is showing signs of loosening. Those who have long lurked in the shadows are emerging to take their chance. With increasing frequency Vect visits uncharacteristically blunt displays of retribution upon his foes. The Supreme Overlord's wrath is not confined to the Dark City, either – with every passing year Vect's realspace raids become more and more frequent. Some believe his long-abused body has passed beyond rejuvenation, others that his peers have found a crucial chink in his armour. Theories abound; there are whispers that Vect is tired of success, of rulership, or even tired of life; that he is gambling against himself merely to ensure a challenge; and that this is merely another plan to force his enemies to reveal themselves. One thing is for sure: If Vect falls, whatever the reason, the Dark City will be consumed by war.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Asdrubael Vect	8	8	3	3	4	8	5	10	4+

UNIT TYPE: Infantry.

WARGEAR: Shadow field, ghostplate armour, splinter pistol, plasma grenades, haywire grenades.

Obsidian Orbs: Asdrubael Vect carries extremely advanced spheres of soul-tech known as obsidian orbs.

Range	Strength	AP	Type
12"	10*	3	Assault 1, Blast

* Roll against the enemy's Leadership instead of their Toughness. Models without a Leadership value are unaffected. Each wound caused by an obsidian orb will heal a wound Vect has suffered earlier in the battle.

Sceptre of the Dark City: This ornate sceptre of office contains sophisticated pain-inducers. It is a power weapon that always wounds on a 3+.

SPECIAL RULES: Fleet, Night Vision, Power from Pain, Independent Character, Fearless.

Master Tactician: Vect seizes the initiative on the roll of a 4+ (turns out he had it all along!).

Ancient Nemesis: Vect knows the weaknesses of every living thing, and those of his own race most thoroughly of all. He has the Preferred Enemy rule against all units. Against Eldar or Dark Eldar units, Vect also re-rolls failed To Wound rolls.

THE DAIS OF DESTRUCTION: Vect may ride to battle upon the Dais of Destruction; a special Raider dedicated transport with three Dark Lances and sophisticated force shields that give it Armour 13 on all sides. The Dais of Destruction must begin the game carrying nine models in addition to Vect himself. Other than this, it is treated exactly like a Raider (see page 44).

DARK ELDAR WARGEAR

This section of *Codex: Dark Eldar* lists the weapons and equipment used by the armies of the Dark Eldar, along with the rules for using them in your games of Warhammer 40,000.

Weapons and equipment that can be used by more than one type of unit are detailed here, while items that are unique to a single unit (plus those carried by named special characters) are detailed in the appropriate entry in the previous section. We have included page numbers for quick reference. For

example, splinter rifles are carried by many models, and so are detailed in this section. The klaive, however, is unique to the Incubi and you are therefore directed to the Incubi entry. Also included here is a list of arcane weaponry used by the Haemonculi, and upgrades available to Dark Eldar vehicles.

WEAPONS

Agoniser: An agoniser is an extremely sophisticated close combat weapon that drives a victim's sensorium haywire, causing excruciatingly severe pain as nerves burn out with agony. Though agonisers come in a variety of forms, the most common are whips or barbed flails. Agonisers are power weapons that always wound on a 4+, regardless of the enemy's Toughness.



Cluster Caltrops: See page 29.

Demiklaives: See page 31.

Darklight Weapons

The weapon shops of Commoragh 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 of theses claiming 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 vapourise a foot soldier in an instant. Even to perceive a beam of darklight without the correct protection leaves permanent slash-scars upon the retina.

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

Disintegrator Cannon: The disintegrator cannon fires a particle of unstable matter harnessed from a stolen sun. The disintegrator cannon is far more sophisticated than conventional plasma-based weaponry, however, for it maintains a high rate of fire and always remains cool to the touch despite the ravaging energies housed within.

	Range	Strength	AP	Special
Disintegrator cannon	36"	5	2	Heavy 3

Djin Blade: A djin blade usually takes the form of a blade of polished crystal with a scowling bestial face upon its hilt. It has a bloodthirsty and resentful sentience of its own, usually that of a former rival bound eternally to the service of the blade's owner. A djin blade is a power weapon. Furthermore, the bearer makes two bonus attacks every round of combat – roll these separately. If any double is rolled for these two attacks when rolling to hit, the blade rebels against its wielder – the two attacks automatically hit the bearer.

Electrocorrosive Whip: An electrocorrosive whip is a lashing tongue of venom-soaked polymer with a high-yield dynamo in its hilt. Its touch is painful and debilitating in the extreme, sapping the strength and robbing the will to fight. An electrocorrosive whip is a power weapon. Models that suffer one or more unsaved wounds from an electrocorrosive whip halve their Strength (rounding fractions up) for the remainder of that close combat round.

Flip belt: See page 42.

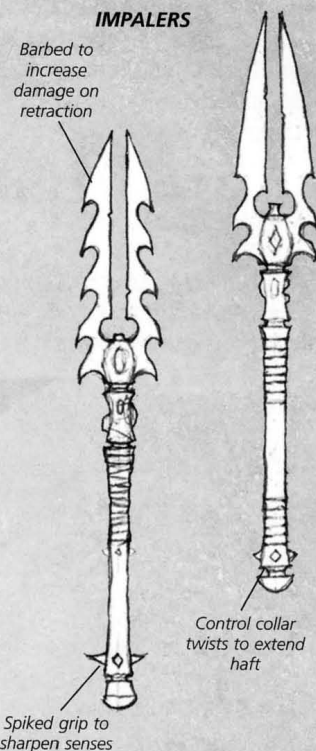
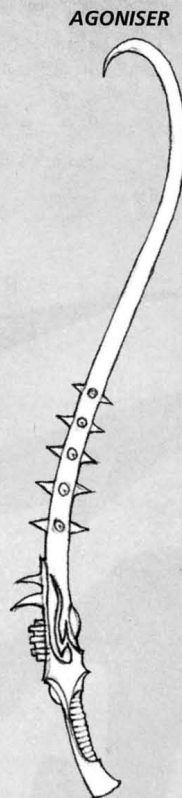
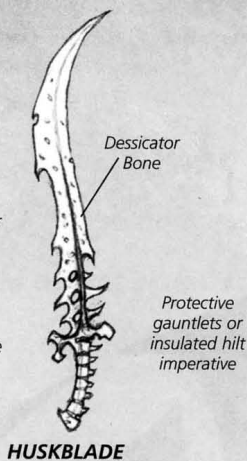
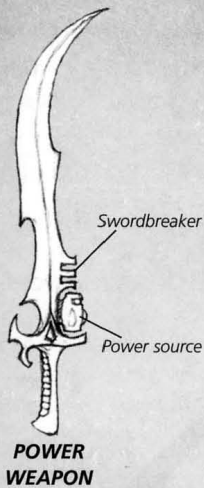
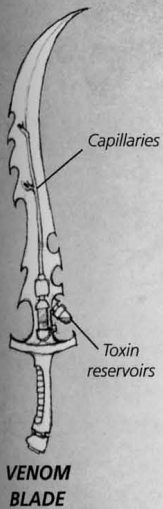
Fusion Pistol: See page 42.

Grav-talon: See page 29.

Harlequin's Kiss: see page 42.

Haywire Grenades: Haywire grenades are used for disabling or crippling enemy vehicles. They send out a powerful electromagnetic pulse that shorts out and destroys electrical circuits. These grenades can be used as normal to attack vehicles. Roll a D6 for each hit scored to determine the effect on the target vehicle.

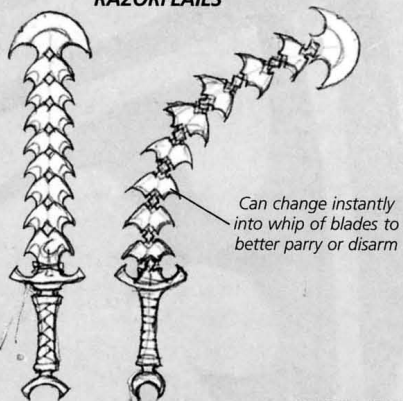
1	No effect
2-5	Glancing hit
6	Penetrating hit



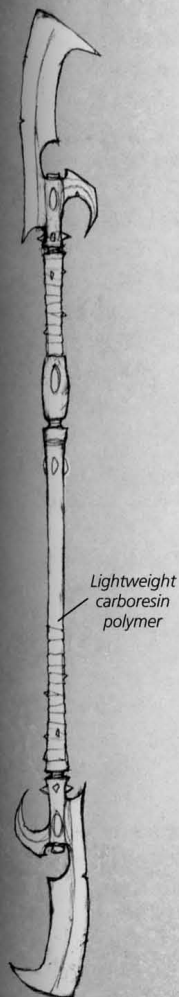
WEIGHTED FLAILS



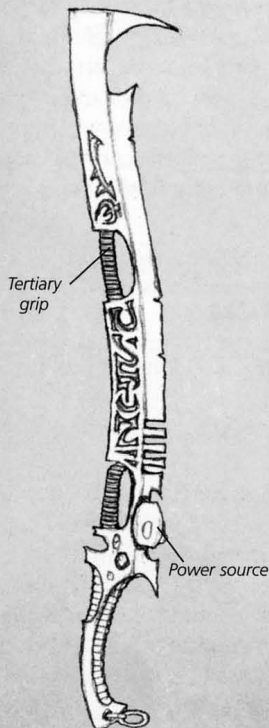
RAZORFLAILS



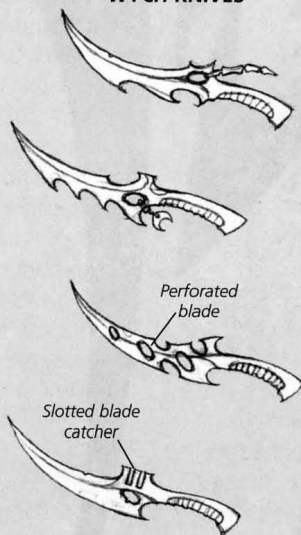
HELLGLAIVE



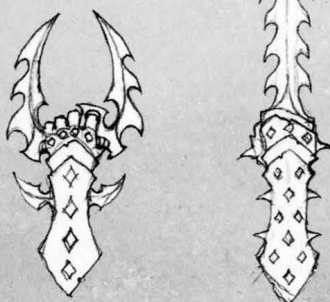
KLAIVE



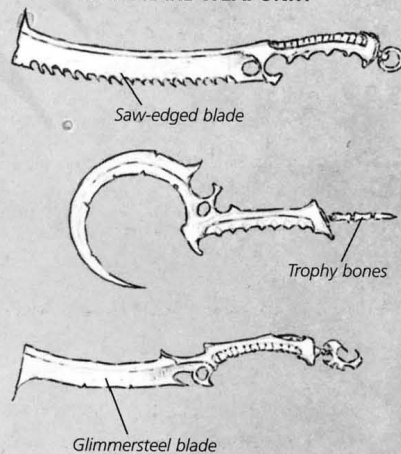
WYCH KNIVES



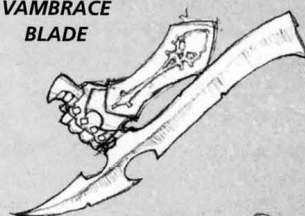
PUNCH DAGGERS



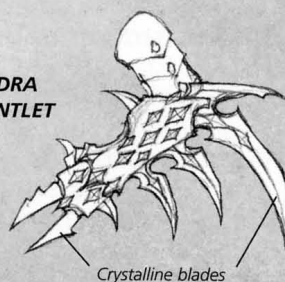
MANDRAKE WEAPONRY



VAMBRACE BLADE



HYDRA GAUNTLET



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 tank's control systems in a single shot.

	Range	Strength	AP	Special
Haywire Blaster	24"	4	4	Assault 1

If a Haywire blaster hits a vehicle, resolve its effects as normal. Then roll a further D6. On a 1, nothing happens. On a 2-5, the vehicle takes a glancing hit. On a 6, it takes a penetrating hit.

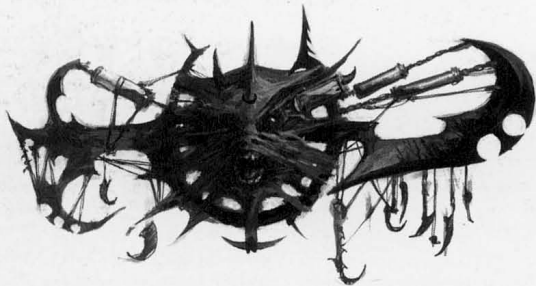
Heat Lance: The long-barrelled heat lance combines melta and high-yield las technology into a weapon that has extreme destructive potential.

	Range	Strength	AP	Special
Heat Lance	18"	6	1	Assault 1, Lance, Melta

Hellglaiive: See page 28.

Huskblade: Leaving smoking trails as it carves through the air, a huskblade instantly evaporates the moisture in anything it touches, reducing its targets to shrivelled and gruesome corpses that fall away to dust in the breeze. A huskblade is a power weapon that causes instant death upon any model that suffers an unsaved wound, regardless of the victim's Toughness.

Hydra Gauntlets: See page 27.



Klaive: See page 31.

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. A mindphase gauntlet is a special close combat weapon. An Independent Character or Monstrous Creature that has been hit by a mindphase gauntlet must take both a Strength test and a Leadership test per hit suffered. If any test is failed, that model has succumbed to the mindphase gauntlet and may not make any further attacks in that Assault phase.

Phantasm Grenade Launcher: Wealthy Dark Eldar warriors often wear specially modified backpacks that can hurl a volley of small, disc-shaped grenades from twin tubes. These grenades are made from a highly reactive substance that, upon contact with the air, dissolves into clouds of psychotropic gas so potent that to even catch a whiff of it fills the mind with horrific nightmares and delusions. A model with a phantasm grenade launcher counts as having both assault and defensive grenades, as does any squad he joins.

Plasma Grenades: See the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

Power Weapon: See the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

Razorflails: See page 27.

Reaver Jetbike: See page 29.

Shardnet and Impaler: See page 27.

Shredder: The shredder unleashes an expanding mesh of monofilaments with miniscule barbs along their length. The mesh entangles the victim in an invisible net that slices apart the target as it struggles.

	Range	Strength	AP	Special
Shredder	12"	6	-	Assault 1, Blast

Shrieker Cannon: See page 42.

Shuriken Pistol: See the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

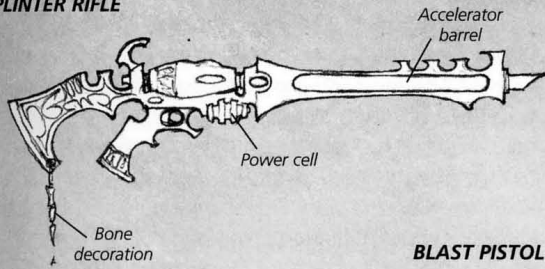
Splinter Weapons

Splinter weapons fire shards of splintered crystal using a powerful magno-electric pulse. These shards are covered in incredibly virulent and fast-acting toxins the better to ensure a painful death. The favoured armament of the Kabalite Warrior is the splinter rifle, often fired on the move from the balustrade of a Raider or Venom transport. The splinter pistol, its handheld cousin, 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 amongst the winged Scourges, and the splinter cannon, a weapon able to mow down entire squads at a time.

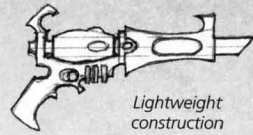
Weapon	Range	Strength	AP	Type
Splinter pistol	12"	X	5	Pistol, Poisoned (4+)
Splinter rifle	24"	X	5	Rapid Fire, Poisoned (4+)
Shardcarbine	18"	X	5	Assault 3, Poisoned (4+)
Splinter cannon	36"	X	5	Assault 4 or Heavy 6*, Poisoned (4+)

**A splinter cannon can either be fired as a Heavy weapon or as an Assault weapon (note that vehicles with splinter cannons always use the Heavy option).*

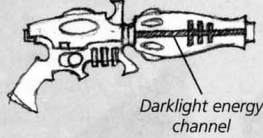
SPLINTER RIFLE



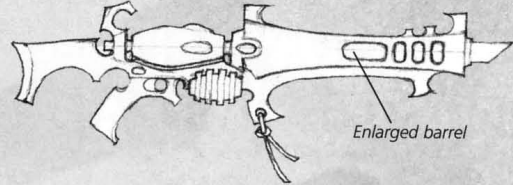
SPLINTER PISTOL



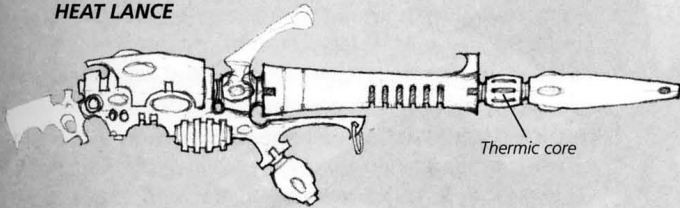
BLAST PISTOL



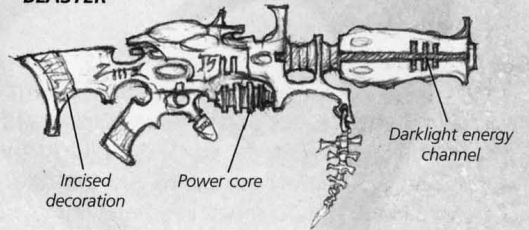
SHARDCARBINE



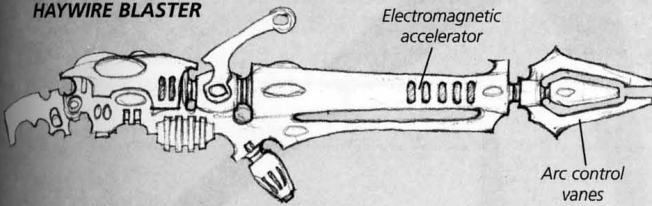
HEAT LANCE



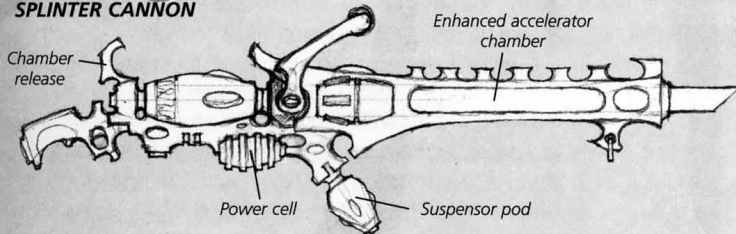
BLASTER



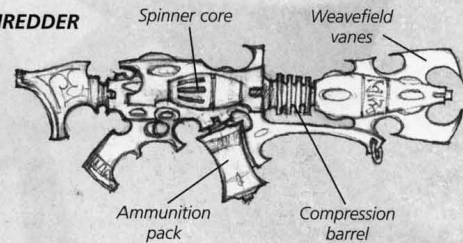
HAYWIRE BLASTER



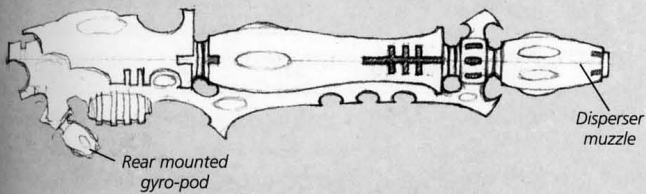
SPLINTER CANNON



SHREDDER



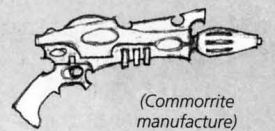
DISINTEGRATOR CANNON



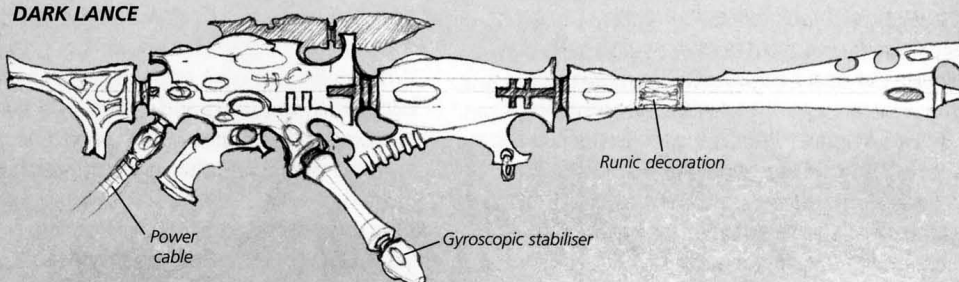
STINGER PISTOL



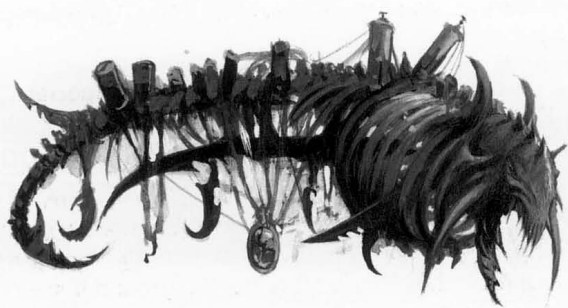
FUSION PISTOL



DARK LANCE



- Skyboard:** See page 28.
- Spirit Probe:** See page 41.
- Spirit Syphon:** See page 41.



- Spirit Vortex:** See page 41.
- Stunclaw:** See page 28.

Venom Blade: A venom blade is the hallmark of the Dark Eldar aristocracy. Each such weapon has thousands of micropores that constantly exude a distilled elixir of hypertoxins – the most poisonous substances in the galaxy. A venom blade is a poisoned weapon (2+).

THE BLACK ARTS OF SHAIMESH

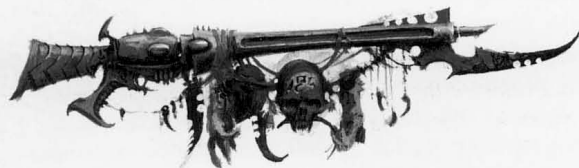
The Dark Eldar are expert in the use of toxins. Entire districts of Commorragh are given over to the manufacture of the most potent necrolixirs and vitriolic compounds that can eat through duralumin as if it were soft flesh. Many of the weaponised syringes and needlers used by the Dark Eldar contain 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, and should one come too close one would find that their sting is always poisonous. Their toxin-based weaponry, of which the liquifier gun is most infamous, fires organo-acidic compounds that can trigger blood vessel explosion or implosion, pharyngeal contraction, extensive haemolysis, skeletal disintegration, sclerotic corrosion, intercostal spasms, hyper-reacted thermoreceptors, subcutaneous necrolysis, Eustachian collapse, cardiac and respiratory atrophy or wide-scale exsanguination – 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 refuge of the weak.

ARCANE WARGEAR

Arcane wargear is extremely rare. Used only by the Haemonculi and their twisted minions, such devices are so strange in function that to a lesser mortal they seem like the tools of a magus or sorcerer. Each item from this section marked with an asterisk (*) may only be included once in your army, so choose carefully...

Archangel of Pain*: Inside an ornate cask is the essence of a captured Daemon, driven insane by the runes of binding that hold it within. Upon the Daemon's release it appears as a winged, blinding figure before returning to the Warp, its triumphant screams incapacitating even the bravest foe. Once per game, in your Shooting phase, a model with an Archangel may choose to release it instead of firing. All enemy units within 3D6" of the bearer must pass a Ld test or have their WS and Initiative reduced to 1 until the end of the turn.



Animus Vitae*: This detestable creation resembles a tightly-packed sphere of sentient barbed wire that can be made to explode outwards, capturing its prey and then contracting quickly to cut apart its victim. The psychic by-product is highly invigorating to those with the strength of will to consume it. The Animus Vitae is a special close combat weapon. If the bearer kills one or more enemy models in a round of combat (including vehicles), he may take a Leadership test at the end of the round. If he passes the test then he immediately gains a pain token.

Casket of Flensing*: When this casket is opened and the activation words spoken, invisible spirits fly outward towards the bearer's prey. Before long the Haemonculus' foes find themselves covered in dozens of circular bites that manifest in flesh and armour alike. If enough of the bearer's ethereal imps find their mark, they will strip their prey's head clean of flesh, pull the skull free from the spine, and carry their grisly trophy back to their Haemonculus master whilst the brain inside writhes in abject horror.

	Range	Str	AP	Special
Casket of Flensing	12"	D6	D6	Assault 2D6, One Shot

Crucible of Malediction*: The Haemonculi refer to this extraordinary weapon as 'the kin-gift', for it is especially dangerous to their Craftworld cousins. Each crucible contains the essence of psykers captured and tortured until death. When released, their unquiet spirits hurtle across the battlefield, shrieking and crying in a cacophony that drives nearby psykers insane. Once per game, in the Shooting phase, a model with a Crucible of Malediction may choose to open it instead of firing. Every psyker within 3D6" of the bearer must pass a Leadership test or be removed from play as they go stark raving mad. No saves of any kind are allowed.

Dark Gate*: A dark gate is a runic tetrahedron that opens a portal to one of the forbidden zones of the webway. Many impossible entities make their lairs in these sealed-off fragments, and an open portal is an irresistible lure. Shortly after the dark gate is cast into the fray, a grasping tentacle or flickering pseudopod lashes out from the gate and crushes anyone it can catch in its clammy grasp. A dark gate is a ranged weapon with the following profile:

	Range	Str	AP	Special
Dark Gate	12"	10	-	Assault 1, Large Blast, One Shot

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, bursting apart in a welter of steaming, heaving matter. A flesh gauntlet is a poisoned weapon (4+). Furthermore, a model that takes an unsaved wound from a flesh gauntlet suffers instant death (and a truly unpleasant one), regardless of its Toughness.

Hexrifle: The long-barrelled hexrifle fires crystal cylinders that each contain a tiny amount of the glass plague that assailed 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	Str	AP	Special
Hexrifle	36"	X	4	Assault 1, Sniper

A model that suffers an unsaved wound from a hexrifle must take a characteristic test based on their Wounds value (i.e. the one on their profile, not their current Wounds). If they fail the test, they are removed from play, with no saves of any kind. Vehicles cannot be affected by hexrifles.

THE KABAL OF THE PLAYED SKULL

The Kabalites of the Played Skull are instantly recognisable by the stylised bloodstreaks that they sport upon their snarling faces.

In terms of sheer military force they are second only to Asdrubael Vect's Kabal of the Black Heart. The Kabal'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 Played Skull once famously conquered the world of Thrandium without a single Kabalite setting foot upon the ground.



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 Haemonculi 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 target. To represent this, roll for the liquifier gun's AP value every time it is fired.

	Range	Str	AP	Special
Liquifier Gun	Template	4	D6	Assault 1

Orb of Despair*: An orb of despair is a heavy black sphere that has sat within the oubliettes of the Haemonculi for millennia, absorbing the pain and horror of the damned souls trapped within. When hurled at the ground it sends out shockwaves of negative emotional energy that plunge those around into the darkest reaches of anguish.

	Range	Str	AP	Special
Orb of Despair	6"	10*	1	Assault 1, Blast, One Shot

**When rolling to wound, an orb of despair rolls against its target's Leadership, not against its Toughness. Models without a Leadership characteristic are unaffected.*

Scissorhand: The scissorhand looks a little like a pair of surgical shears bearing expensive toxins so that its wielder can better incapacitate those whose limbs it amputates. It is a poisoned weapon (3+), that grants +1 Attack. Note that this can be combined with an additional close combat weapon for a total of +2 attacks.

Shattershard*: The legendary Shattershards were originally part of a complex transdimensional portal called the Mirror of Planes. Since the portal's destruction, each shard has been painstakingly tracked down and weaponised by the demented genius Vorsch. By catching the enemy's reflections in the Shattershard and then breaking it to pieces, those reflected will find themselves shattering into pieces too. A Shattershard is a ranged weapon with the following profile:

	Range	Str	AP	Special
Shattershard	Template	X*	X*	Assault 1, One Shot

**Any non-vehicle model hit by the Shattershard must take a Toughness test. If they fail this test they are removed from play with no saves of any kind allowed.*

Stinger Pistol: A stinger pistol is a lightweight sidearm characterised by a long syringe-like barrel and a venom reservoir that holds searingly potent 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, invariably with horrific results.

	Range	Str	AP	Special
Stinger pistol	12"	X	5	Pistol, Poisoned (2+)

OTHER EQUIPMENT

Armoured Carapace: Engines of Pain like the Talos and Cronos are clad in finely-wrought armoured shells that protect their grisly organic components from harm. They have a 3+ armour save.

Clone Field: The clone field projects several hololight images of the wearer, all identical in aspect and moving in perfect synchrony. When the bearer is in combat, roll a D3 at the beginning of each round of combat to represent how many clone images are in effect. The result is the number of hits upon the bearer that he may completely nullify that round, just before the roll to wound. The bearer may choose which attacks are nullified. Once the roll to wound is made, though, there's no going back, so choose which attacks to nullify carefully!

Ghostplate Armour: Those Dark Eldar who desire a substantial amount of protection whilst retaining a high degree of mobility sport armour made from hardened resins and shot through with pockets of lighter-than-air gas. Ghostplate armour also incorporates minor forcefield technology to better protect its wearer. Ghostplate armour confers a 4+ armour save and a 6+ invulnerable save.

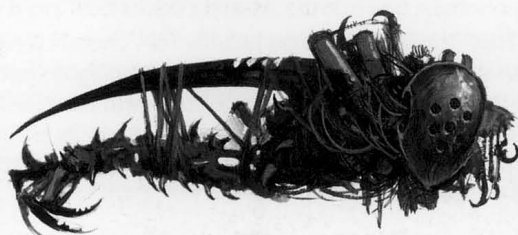
Gnarlskin: The Haemonculi and their hideous, fleshy creations have toughened, scarred hides that have been subjected to so many brands, burns and abrasions they have become leathery and resistant to enemy blows. Gnarlskin confers a 6+ armour save.

Incubus Warsuit: All Incubi wear a close-fitting suit 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 a suit 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.

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 shadow field will short out, leaving its wearer vulnerable. A shadow field provides a 2+ invulnerable save, but if the save is ever failed, the field is destroyed altogether. Roll separate dice, one by one, to save each wound inflicted upon the bearer to see whether the shadow field shorts out.

Soul-trap: Though soul-traps vary in size and appearance, from folding pyramidal prisms to jewelled skulls engraved with vampiric runes, they all have one ghastly function – to capture the soul of a powerful enemy within its confines and empower the bearer with the stolen energies. Whenever the bearer kills an enemy Independent Character or Monstrous Creature, he can choose to take a Leadership test. If the test is passed, the enemy's essence is drawn into the soul-trap. The bearer immediately doubles his Strength for the rest of the game (to a maximum of 10).



Vexator Mask: A vexator mask often takes the form of a delicate skein of bone and skin adorned with runes of confusion and illusion. It projects the image of the viewer's most trusted friend, beloved ruler, or loved one, often buying the wearer a second of precious time. Enemy units in base contact with a model with a vexator mask must pass a Leadership test before they make any of their attacks. If they fail, they balk at the sight of such highly personal illusions and may not attack the bearer this round, though they may attack other models as normal.

Webway Portal: This is a portable form of the portals used to link together places via the webway. Once per game, in your Shooting phase, a model with a webway portal may choose to activate it instead of firing. Place a spare small blas marker or a similarly sized counter in base contact with the bearer when he activates the portal. He may not activate the portal whilst inside a vehicle. From then on, any of your units arriving from reserve may move onto the board from the portal marker's edge instead of entering as normal (it does not matter whether these units were intending to deep strike, outflank, simply move on from their own table edge, and so on). The portal counts as impassable terrain and cannot be destroyed. After activation, the model that had the portal may freely move away, leaving the portal in place. If you have a webway portal in your army, you may keep units in reserve, regardless of mission being played. Vehicles may not enter play via a webway portal.

Wychsuit: Wyches wear flexible bodysuits that have been designed to protect one side of the Wych's body (usually the side they habitually turn towards their opponents) whilst not impeding movement at all. A Wychsuit confers a 6+ armour save.

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.

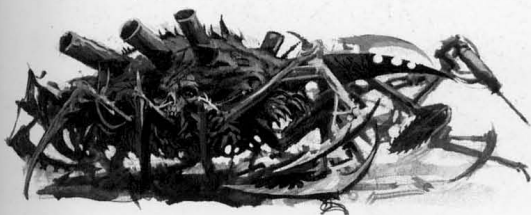


VEHICLE ARMOURY

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 drag them to their death, so much the better. A vehicle with chain-snares causes D3+1 S4 AP- hits on all unengaged non-vehicle enemy units that it passes over during the Movement phase, resolved immediately. Cover saves may be taken as normal.

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 model with enhanced aethersails can move an additional 2D6", though passengers may not disembark that turn, and the vehicle and its passengers may not shoot in the following Shooting phase.

Envenomed Blades: The blades that sprout from the vehicle's hull are coated in virulent poisons. When an enemy unit attacks the vehicle in the Assault phase, it suffers a Strength 4 AP- hit for every to hit roll of a '1' it makes whilst attacking that vehicle (distributed as shooting).



Flickerfield: The vehicle has a highly advanced optical force shield that makes it appear to flicker in and out of reality. A vehicle with a flickerfield has a 5+ invulnerable save.

Grisly Trophies: The skimmer is adorned with the disembodied heads of the Dark Eldar's enemies 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. A friendly unit within 6" of a vehicle with grisly trophies may re-roll any failed Leadership tests.

Implosion Missiles: See page 47.

Monoscythe Missiles: See page 46.

Necrotoxin Missiles: See page 46.

Night Shields: The vehicle's deck is covered by a broad-spectrum displacement field, enveloping the vehicle in cold and inky darkness. This has the effect of reducing the range of enemy units wishing to fire at the vehicle by 6". For instance, a unit armed with bolters (range 24") would be treated as having a range of 18" when firing at a vehicle with a night shield. This adjustment may put the vehicle out of range from an enemy shooting attack, in which case the shooting automatically misses. The extra distance is also counted for working out if the vehicle is in rapid fire range, half range for a melta shot, and so on. Night shields have no effect on template or barrage weapons, as well as weapons with a maximum range of 6" or less.

Torment Grenade Launchers: Some Dark Eldar skimmers are modified to 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. To represent this, any enemy unit that is within 6" of one or more vehicles with torment grenade launchers suffers a -1 penalty to its Leadership. Enemy units must pass a Morale check if they wish to assault such a vehicle – if this test is failed, they may not assault that turn.

Retrofire Jets: The vehicle is fitted with jet engines that can suddenly slow its descent, allowing it to drop from the skies straight into the enemy ranks. A vehicle fitted with retrofire jets can Deep Strike. However, troops on board may not disembark that turn.

Shatterfield Missiles: See page 47.

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 formations and even shatter the hulls of enemy vehicles. To represent this a vehicle with a shock prow can Tank Shock enemy units. It counts its front armour value as D3 higher than usual when ramming enemy vehicles (roll each time a ramming attempt is made).

Splinter Racks: The vehicle's passengers are trained extensively in the art of shooting the vehicle's bountiful anti-personnel weaponry at high speed, allowing those within to unleash punishing fusillades into the enemy. Models with splinter rifles or splinter pistols that fire when embarked upon the vehicle may re-roll their To Hit rolls to represent the boundless ammunition available to them.

Void Mine: See page 47.

Void Lance: See page 47.

THE SEVERED

The Severed are a spacebound Kabal that left the Dark City hundreds of years ago. Nevertheless, they are more than familiar to the Imperium, as the Severed have plagued the systems of the Ghoroid Strip for 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 right hands reduced to talons or replaced by augmetic claws.



COLLECTING DARK ELДАР

The thrill of staging your own realspace assault upon the tabletop battlefield is considered by many to be the ultimate Dark Eldar experience. Others prefer to bask in the glory of a well-painted collection without a dice in sight. Either way, you're going to need an army! Collecting, assembling and painting a force of Dark Eldar is an immensely rewarding process. It takes more than a little patience and dedication, however – amassing a warhost is a long-term project – so we've set aside this section of the book to give you some guidance.

THE MASTER PLAN

Though most players make their selections on impulse, it's worth giving some thought to how you want your army to appear, and how it will function on the tabletop. Do you see yourself owning an all-airborne, serpent-fast strike force that is at the enemy's throat before he has time to react, or do you intend to outclass him with sheer firepower? A Dark Eldar Lord wishes for nothing less than to rule his particular corner of the universe with an iron fist, so spend some time devising your own master plan. It might be worth perfecting an evil laugh too whilst you're about it!

The Dark Eldar army is so versatile that there are several different styles in which to play it (there's more about these on pages 94-5). Try to familiarise yourself with the army list before you amass your force. Some aspiring conquerors even make a rough list of the collection they would ideally want to own and work towards its completion, with every unit they paint up taking them closer to the fruition of their nefarious goals. Your master plan will invariably adapt and change as you learn more about your army and its capabilities; but this is all well and good. The important thing is to enjoy the process.



GETTING STARTED

Maniacal cackling and villainous monologues aside, the best place to start is with a few infantry units. Try assembling a few Kabalite Warriors or Wyches just to familiarise yourself with the plastic kits and get the hang of how the Dark Eldar can be put together. There is a near infinite amount of combinations and modelling options available, but some poses will look especially cool, so it's worth trying out each assembly in a 'dry run' before you break out the glue. There's no pressure to get it right first time. After assembling a few units straight out of the box, feel free to channel your inner Haemonculus and try some bizarre and extreme experiments; after all, the Dark Eldar prize individuality. When it's time to put together the leader of your force you should already be a dab hand at crafting the disturbing denizens of Commorragh.

Once you've assembled some models and maybe even a vehicle or two, the next thing to choose are the uniforms for your kabals, cults and covens. The following pages are crammed with inspiration courtesy of our world famous 'Eavy Metal team. You might simply want to copy some of the examples here, or devise your own from scratch. Either way it's a good idea to paint up a few models before addressing the army in earnest – you could use your first infantry models

as test pieces. Then, once you're happy with the colours you've settled on, you can start painting whole batches of models. Painting a unit at a time is a fast and efficient way to get a good-looking collection together, and it ensures all the members of each squad are united by the same visual elements. Better still, you only need to have a couple of units and a character model in order to get playing.

When choosing your army's colours, bear in mind how you will apply them to the vehicles in your force. That peach-and-bone combination might look cool on a single Wych model, but will it look as good when painted in large blocks on your armoured support vehicles?

TROPHIES GALORE

When assembling your models, take care to keep hold of the parts of each frame that you don't use straight away. Spare heads, weapons and limbs are great raw material for ensuring the maximum amount of variety in your collection. A simple one-piece swap can completely change the dynamic of a model or allow your model to sport some exotic wargear; you'll find that the plastic pieces from the Dark Eldar boxed sets interface perfectly with each other and even on the metal models in the range. Some examples can be found on the following pages. Glued onto a separate base, accessories such as alien skulls, captured helmets and the like can make great pain tokens too, which every Dark Eldar player should keep at hand in order to reward his successful units. After all, what self-respecting Archon doesn't keep a few decapitated heads around to brighten up the place?

As with all collections, the golden rule is to focus your efforts on the parts of the army that really capture your imagination. Once you've got a small force together you'll want to expand it to include more and more units, and as time passes your army will begin to mature into a true warhost. After that, well, there'll be no stopping your rise to power...

THE POWER OF NAMES

Giving your collection of murderous alien scum a cool-sounding name and a bit of background can really enhance the enjoyment you get out of it. There are plenty of Kabal and Wych cult names throughout this book; feel free to use them as they are, mix and match, or invent your own. As your collection grows you'll find that a narrative and history will build around your own strike force; your characters become more interesting as they enact feats of villainy and derring-do. Some players even like to name every squad and vehicle in their collection, the better to enrich their gaming experiences in the battlescape of the 41st Millennium.



The Kabal of the Black Heart and their sinister allies strike from the depths of the webway.



Urien Rakarth, Master Haemonculus.



Archon with huskblade and soul-trap.



These two Archon models have been customised using spare plastic weapons, heads and other components from the Kabalite Warriors and Wyches kits. They are now armed with splinter pistol and power weapon (left) and blast pistol and agoniser (right).



Lelith Hesperax, Mistress of the Cult of Strife.



Archon with huskblade and soul-trap.



Incubi.



Incubus.



Incubi are armed with deadly klaives.



An Archon and his Incubi retinue repel the twisted minions of Chaos.



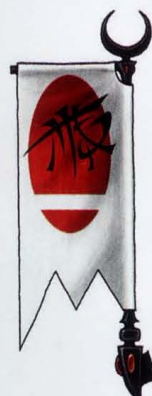
Warrior Sybarite
with splinter pistol and agoniser.



Kabalite Warrior
with splinter cannon.



Banner from the Kabal
of the Black Heart.



Banner bearing
a Sigil of Discord.



Kabalite Warriors with splinter rifles.



Banner from the Kabal
of the Slashed Eye.



Sybarite with blast pistol
and power weapon.



Kabalite Warrior
with shredder.



Kabalite Warrior
with blaster.



Kabalite Warrior
with dark lance.



Kabalite Warriors.



Kabalite Warriors of the Black Heart penetrate the defences of an Imperial City.



The icon of the Poisoned Tongue.



Sybarite and Warriors of the Kabal of the Poisoned Tongue.



Kabalite Warriors.



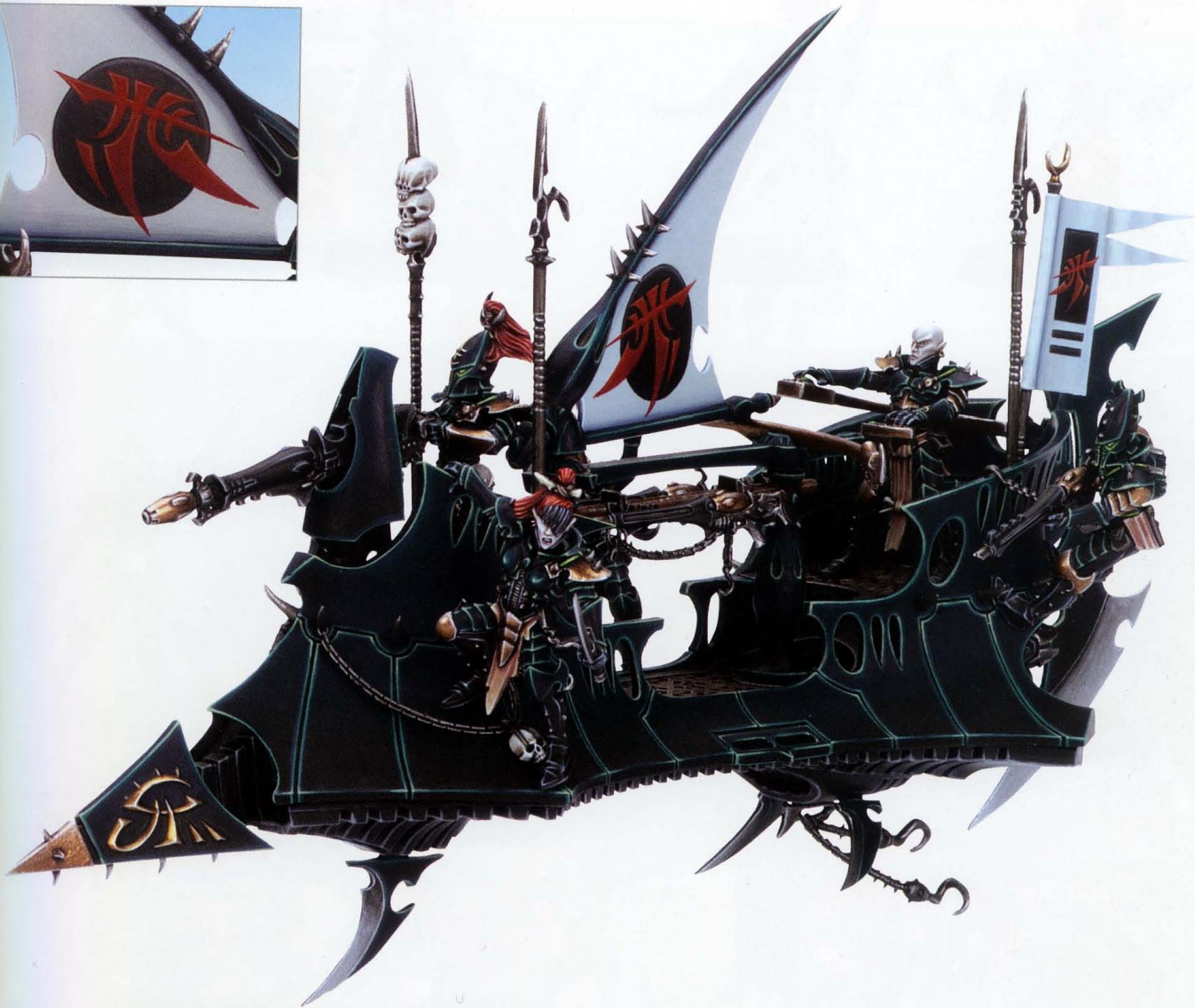
Dark Eldar raiders assault the Fortress of Redemption upon Leonia VI.



The icon of the Kabal of the Obsidian Rose.



Sybarite with phantasm grenade launcher and Warriors of the Kabal of the Obsidian Rose.



Raider of the Kabal of the Black Heart.



The symbol of the Wych Cult of Strife.



Hekatrix with splinter pistol and power weapon.



Wych with hydra gauntlets.



Wych with shardnet and impaler.



Wyches of the Cult of Strife.



Wych with shardnet and impaler.



Wyches.



The symbol of the Wych Cult of the Seventh Woe.



Hekatrix and Wyches from the Cult of the Seventh Woe.



The symbol of the Wych Cult of the Blade Denied.



Hekatrix and Wyches from the Cult of the Blade Denied.



Hekatrix with blast pistol and agoniser.



Wych.



Hekatrix with splinter pistol and power weapon.



Wych.



Lelith Hesperax and the Cult of Strife face their Craftworld cousins blade to blade.



Helliarch with agoniser, splinter pistol and underslung phantasm grenade launchers.



Hellion.



Hellion.



Hellions armed with hellglaives.



Helliarch with stunclaw, splinter pistol and underslung phantasm grenade launchers.

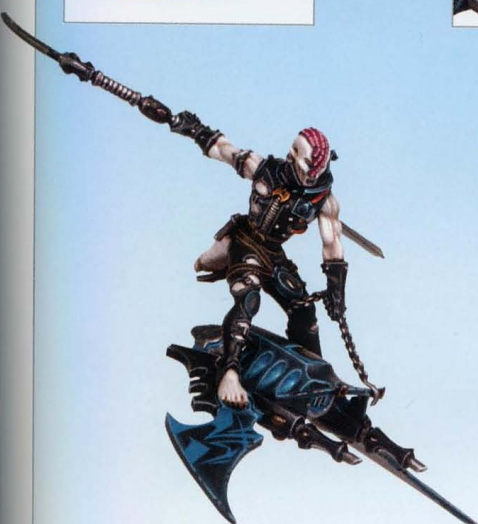


Hellions.





The Ripskins Hellion gang careens from the sky, intent on spilling Catachan blood.



Hellion of the Ragged Wound.



Hellion of the Crimson Helwings.



Helliarch of the Sky Devils.



Reaver on jetbike armed with a heat lance.



Heat lance.



Blaster.



Reaver.



Grav-talon.



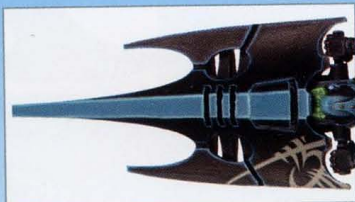
Cluster caltrops.



Reaver.



Reaver.



Reaver of the Cobalt Vipers.



Reaver of the Corespur Elite.



Mandrakes are armed with lethal blades and sickle-swords.



A pack of Mandrakes rises from the shadows to assail the rearguard of the Black Legion.



Ravager from the Kabal of the Black Heart, with dark lances and chain-snares.



Ravager with three disintegrator cannons and a shock prow.



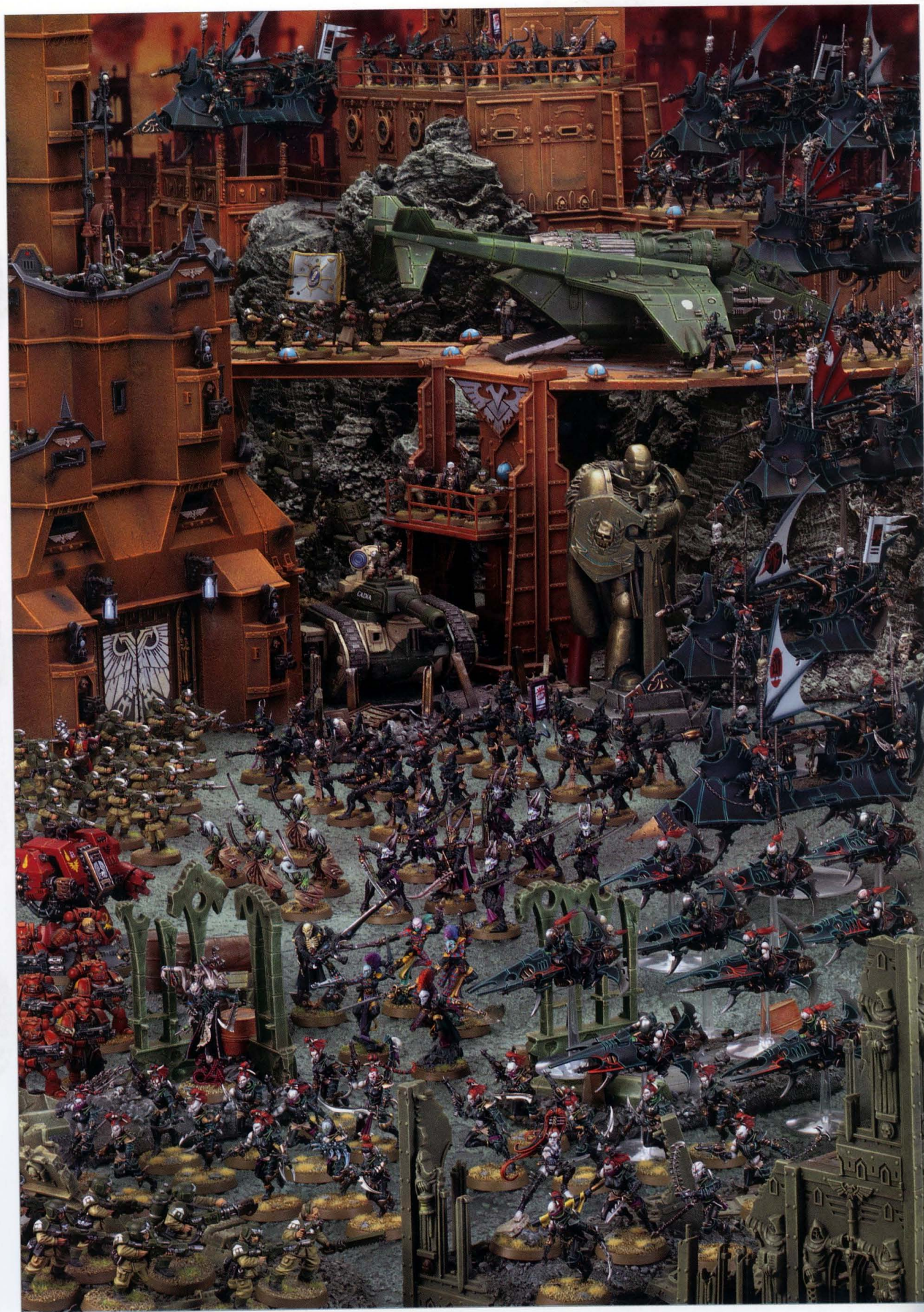
Wyches of the Cult of the Red Grief.



Hellion.



The Cult of the Red Grief brings bloodshed to the Tau Empire.



The Dark Eldar ravage the industrial planet of Hintergeist.

DARK ELDAR ARMY LIST

The following army list enables you to field an army of Dark Eldar and fight desperate battles using the scenarios included in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

USING THE ARMY LIST

The Dark Eldar army list is split into five sections: HQ, Elites, Troops, Fast Attack and Heavy Support. All of the vehicles, squads and characters in the army are placed into one of these sections depending on their role on the battlefield. Each model is also given a points value, which varies depending on how effective that model is in battle.

Before you choose an army, you will need to agree with your opponent on the type of game you are going to play and the maximum total number of points each of you will spend. Then you can proceed to pick your army.

USING A FORCE ORGANISATION CHART

The army list is usually used in conjunction with the force organisation chart from a scenario. Each chart is split into five categories that correspond to the sections in the army list, and each category has one or more boxes. Each grey-toned box indicates that you may make one choice from that section of the army list, while a dark-toned box is a compulsory selection.

This army list is primarily designed for use with the Standard Missions from the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook. We have included the chart used for Standard Missions below. This army list may be used in conjunction with other missions and scenarios that use the force organisation charts, but please note that play balance may be affected if they are used for anything other than a Standard Mission.

Each unit entry in the Dark Eldar army list is split into several different sections:

Unit Name: At the start of each army list entry you will find the name of the unit, alongside the points cost of the unit without any upgrades.

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

Composition: This section will show the number and type of models that make up the basic unit, before any upgrades are taken. If the Composition entry includes the word 'Unique', note that you may only include one of this unit in your army.

Unit Type: This section refers to the Warhammer 40,000 Unit Type Rules chapter. For example, a unit may be classed as infantry, vehicle or cavalry, which will subject it to a number of rules regarding movement, shooting, assault etc.

Wargear: This section details the weapons and equipment the models in the unit are armed with. The cost for all these models and their equipment is included in the points cost listed next to the unit name.

Special Rules: Any special rules that apply to the models in the unit are listed here. These special rules are explained in further detail in either the Denizens of the Dark City section or the Universal Special Rules section of the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

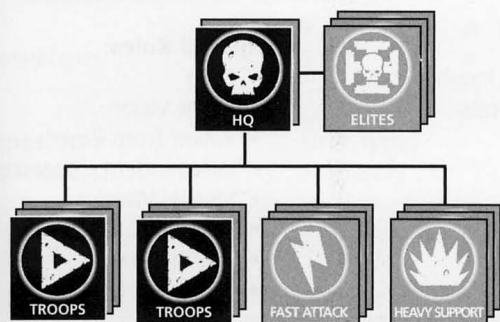
Dedicated Transport: Where applicable, this section refers to any transport vehicles the unit may take. These have their own army list entry on page 91. The Transport Vehicles section of the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook explains how these dedicated transport vehicles work.

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 options entry states that you may exchange one weapon 'and/or' another, you may replace either, neither, or both, provided you pay the appropriate points cost.

CHARACTERS AND RIVAL KABALS

You'll notice that the named characters in the Dark Eldar army list are drawn from different and sometimes even rival factions, but they can still be used in the same army if you wish. This can represent the relatively common occurrence of several Kabals fighting alongside each other to conquer the same world. Alternatively, you can use the model and rules for a named character to represent an evil villain of your own invention – you just need to come up with a new name, and maybe a bit of back story for his exploits. This is a great way to personalise your army, just make sure that your opponent is aware what every model in the army represents.

STANDARD MISSIONS



COMPULSORY

1 HQ
2 Troops

OPTIONAL

1 HQ
4 Troops
3 Elites

OPTIONAL

3 Fast Attack
3 Heavy Support

The Force Organisation chart for standard missions.

ARMY LIST ENTRIES

Each entry in the army list represents a different unit. More information about the background and rules for the Dark Eldar and their options can be found in the Denizens of the Dark City section, while information and examples of the Citadel miniatures you will need to represent them can be found in the Collecting Dark Eldar section on the previous pages.

HQ

ASDRUBAEL VECT240 points

Page 55

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Vect	8	8	3	3	4	8	5	10	4+

Composition:

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Shadow field
- Ghostplate armour
- Splinter pistol
- Plasma grenades
- Haywire grenades
- Obsidian orbs
- Sceptre of the Dark City

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Independent Character
- Fearless
- Master Tactician
- Ancient Nemesis

Options:

- Vect may be mounted upon:
 - The Dais of Destruction200 points

LADY MALYS130 points

Page 53

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

Composition:

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Plasma grenades
- Kabalite armour
- Steel fan
(close combat weapon)
- The Crystal Heart
- The Lady's Blade

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Independent Character
- Invulnerable Save (4+)
- Precognisant

DRAZHAR, MASTER OF BLADES230 points

Page 52

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

Composition:

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Ancient Incubus warsuit
- Demiklaives

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Independent Character
- Eternal Warrior
- Fearless
- Darting Strike
- Master of Blades
- Riposte

LELITH HESPERAX175 points

Page 49

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Lelith Hesperax	9	9	3	3	3	9	4	9	6+

Composition:

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Wicked blades and barbed hair (shardnet and impaler)
- Wychsuit
- Plasma grenades

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Independent Character
- Quicksilver Dodge (4+/3+)
- The Penetrating Blade
- A League Apart

HQ

URIEN RAKARTH190 points

Page 54

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

Composition:

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Close combat weapon
- Gnarlskin
- Casket of Flensing
- Clone field
- Ichor gauntlet

Special Rules:

- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Independent Character
- Meld the Flesh
- Father of Pain

Master Haemonculus: Wracks are Troops choices in an army that includes Urien Rakarth. Any unit of Grotesques in the same army as Urien Rakarth can be upgraded from S5 to S6 at the cost of +5 points per model.

DUKE SLISCUS THE SERPENT150 points

Page 51

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Duke Sliscus	6	6	3	3	2	6	3	9	4+

Composition:

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Blast pistol
- Shadow field
- Plasma grenades
- Ghostplate armour
- Combat drugs
- The Serpent's Bite

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Independent Character
- The Serpent's Venom
- Contraband
- Low Orbit Raid

KHERADRUAKH, THE DECAPITATOR140 points

Page 50

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Kheradruakh	6	5	5	3	3	6	4	9	-

Composition:

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Decapitator

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

- Move Through Cover
- Baleblast
- Stealth
- Invulnerable Save (5+)
- Shade Stalker
- Hunter of Heads
- Altered Physique

BARON SATHONYX105 points

Page 48

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Baron Sathonyx	6	6	3	3	2	6	3	9	5+

Composition:

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type:

- Jump Infantry

Wargear:

- Shadow field
- Wychsuit
- Hellglaive
- Splinter pistol
- Phantasm grenade launcher
- Custom skyboard
- Bones of the Seer
- Twilight shroud

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Independent Character
- Hit and Run
- Master of the Skies

The Lord Hellion:

Hellions are Troops choices in any army that includes Baron Sathonyx.

ARCHON60 points

Page 34

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

Composition:

- 1 Archon

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Kabalite armour
- Close combat weapon
- Splinter pistol
- Plasma grenades

Special Rules:

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

Options:

- Replace close combat weapon and/or splinter pistol with:
 - Venom blade5 points
 - Blast pistol15 points
 - Power weapon15 points
 - Blaster15 points
 - Agoniser20 points
 - Electrocorrosive whip20 points
 - Huskblade35 points
- Take any of the following:
 - Haywire grenades5 points
 - Ghostplate armour10 points
 - Combat drugs10 points
 - Soul-trap10 points
 - Djin blade20 points
 - Clone field*20 points
 - Phantasm grenade launcher25 points
 - Shadow field*30 points
 - Webway portal35 points

* A model may not have both a shadow field and a clone field.



THE COURT OF THE ARCHON

Page 35

You may include one Court of the Archon for every Archon (including Asdrubael Vect and Lady Malys) in your army. This squad does not use up a Force Organisation chart selection.

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

Composition:

- 1-2 Lhamaeans 10 points per model
- 1-2 Medusae 15 points per model
- 1-3 Sslyth 35 points per model
- 1-5 Ur-Ghuls 15 points per model

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Options:

- May take a Raider or a Venom as a dedicated transport (see page 91 for points costs).

LHAMAEAN

Wargear:

- Kabalite armour,
- Splinter pistol,
- Poisoned weapon (2+)

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Mistress of Poisons

MEDUSAE

Wargear:

- Kabalite armour

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Power from Pain
- Eyeburst

SSLYTH

Wargear:

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

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Feel No Pain

UR-GHUL

Wargear:

- Claws and needle-teeth (close combat weapon)

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Feel No Pain
- Furious Charge

HQ

SUCCUBUS65 points

Page 36

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

Composition:

- 1 Succubus

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

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

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Independent Character
- Dodge (4+)

Options:

- Replace close combat weapon and/or splinter pistol with:
 - Venom blade5 points
 - Power weapon15 points
 - Agoniser20 points
 - Electrocorrosive whip20 points
- Replace both close combat weapon and splinter pistol with:
 - Hydra gauntlets5 points
 - Shardnet and impaler5 points
 - Razorflails10 points
- Replace splinter pistol with:
 - Blast pistol15 points
- Take:
 - Haywire grenades5 points



HAEMONCULUS ANCIENT80 points

HAEMONCULUS50 points

Page 37

Page 37

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Haemonculus Ancient	5	5	3	4	3	5	3	9	6+
Haemonculus	4	4	3	4	2	4	2	8	6+

Composition:

- 1 Haemonculus or
Haemonculus Ancient

You may include between one and three Haemonculi per HQ choice, though only one of these may be a Haemonculus Ancient.

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Lord of Covens:

Wracks are Troops choices in any army that includes a Haemonculus or Haemonculus Ancient.

Wargear:

- Gnarlskin
- Close combat weapon
- Splinter pistol

Special Rules:

- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Independent Character
- Altered Physique

Options:

- Replace close combat weapon and/or splinter pistol with:
 - Venom blade5 points
 - Stinger pistol5 points
 - Power weapon10 points
 - Mindphase gauntlet10 points
 - Flesh gauntlet20 points
 - Agoniser20 points
 - Electrocorrosive whip20 points
 - Huskblade35 points
- Take up to two of the following pieces of arcane wargear:
 - Animus Vitae5 points
 - Casket of Flensing10 points
 - Liquifier gun10 points
 - Soul-trap10 points
 - Vexator mask10 points
 - Scissorhand15 points
 - Archangel of Pain15 points
 - Hexrifle15 points
 - Shattershard15 points
 - Crucible of Malediction20 points
 - Orb of despair20 points
 - Dark gate25 points
 - Webway portal35 points

ELITES

INCUBI22 points per model

Page 31

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

Composition:

- 3-10 Incubi

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Incubus warsuit
- Klaive

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

Character Options:

- One Incubus may be upgraded to:
 - Klaivex15 points
- The Klaivex may replace his klaive with:
 - Demiklaives20 points
- The Klaivex may take:
 - Bloodstone15 points
- The Klaivex may have any of the following powers:
 - Murderous Assault10 points
 - Onslaught15 points

Transport:

- The squad may take a Raider or a Venom as a dedicated transport (see page 91 for points costs).

GROTESQUES35 points per model

Page 39

	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+

Composition:

- 3-10 Grotesques

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Gnarlskin
- Close combat weapon

Special Rules:

- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Altered Physique
- Berserk Rampage
- Bulky

Options:

- One Grotesque may exchange his close combat weapon for:
 - Liquefier gun10 points

Character Options:

- One Grotesque may be upgraded to:
 - Aberration10 points
- The Aberration may take one of the following:
 - Venom blade5 points
 - Mindphase gauntlet10 points
 - Scissorhand15 points
 - Flesh gauntlet20 points

Transport:

- The squad may take a Raider as a dedicated transport (see page 91 for points costs).

THE SEALS OF THE HAEMONCULI COVENS

The seals of the Haemonculi are a familiar sight in the bowels of Commorragh. They appear chalked upon the walls and archways of the Dark City, tattooed on each coven's Wrack servants and branded into the flesh of its Grotesques.



The Ebon Sting.



The Hex.



The Black Descent.



The Altered.



The Everspiral.



The Prophets of Flesh.



The Coven of Twelve.



The Dark Creed.

ELITES

WRACKS

10 points per model

Page 38

	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+

Composition:

- 3-10 Wracks

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Gnarlskin
- Two poisoned weapons (4+)

Special Rules:

- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Altered Physique

Options:

- For every five models in the squad, one Wrack may replace a poisoned weapon with:
 - Liquifier gun10 points per model

Character Options:

- One Wrack may be upgraded to:
 - Acothyst10 points
- The Acothyst may take one of the following:
 - Stinger pistol5 points
 - Venom blade5 points
 - Mindphase gauntlet10 points
 - Hexrifle15 points
 - Scissorhand15 points
 - Flesh gauntlet20 points
 - Agoniser20 points
 - Electrocorrosive whip20 points

Transport:

- The squad may take a Raider or a Venom as a dedicated transport (see page 91 for points costs).

MANDRAKES

15 points per model

Page 33

	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	-

Composition:

- 3-10 Mandrakes

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Evil-looking blade (close combat weapon)

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Infiltrate
- Move Through Cover
- Stealth
- Baleblast
- Invulnerable Save (5+)

Character Options:

- One Mandrake may be upgraded to:
 - Nightfiend10 points

HARLEQUINS

18 points per model

Page 42

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Harlequin	5	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	-
Death Jester	5	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	-
Shadowseer	5	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	-
Troupe Master	5	4	3	3	1	6	3	10	-

Composition:

- 5-10 Harlequins

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Close combat weapon
- Shuriken pistol
- Flip belts
- Holo-suits
- Hallucinogen grenades (Shadowseer only)

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Dance of Death
- Veil of Tears (Shadowseer only)

Options:

- Any model may replace its close combat weapon with:
 - Harlequin's Kiss4 points per model
- Up to two models may replace their shuriken pistol with:
 - Fusion pistol10 points per model

Character Options:

- One Harlequin may be upgraded to:
 - Death Jester (replacing his shuriken pistol with a shrieker cannon)10 points
- One Harlequin may be upgraded to:
 - Shadowseer30 points
- One Harlequin may be upgraded to:
 - Troupe Master20 points
- The Troupe Master replaces his close combat weapon with:
 - Either a power weapon or a Harlequin's Kissfree

ELITES

KABALITE TRUEBORN12 points per model

Page 26

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

Composition:

- 3-10 Kabalite Trueborn

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Splinter rifle
- Kabalite armour

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

Options:

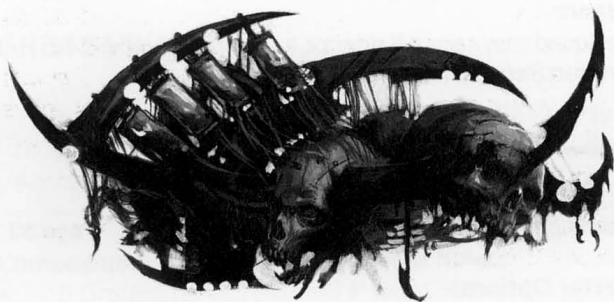
- Any model may exchange his splinter rifle for:
 - Splinter pistol and close combat weaponfree
 - Shardcarbine5 points per model
- Up to four Kabalite Trueborn may replace their splinter rifles with:
 - Shredder5 points per model
 - Blaster15 points per model
- Up to two Kabalite Trueborn may replace their splinter rifles with:
 - Splinter cannon10 points per model
 - Dark lance25 points per model
- The entire squad may be armed with any of the following:
 - Plasma grenades1 point per model
 - Haywire grenades2 points per model

Character Options:

- One Kabalite Trueborn may be upgraded to:
 - Dracon5 points
- The Dracon may take:
 - Ghostplate armour10 points
 - Phantasm grenade launcher20 points
- The Dracon may replace his splinter pistol with:
 - Blast pistol15 points
- The Dracon may replace his close combat weapon with:
 - Venom blade5 points
 - Power weapon10 points
 - Agoniser20 points

Transport:

- The squad may take a Raider or a Venom as a dedicated transport (see page 91 for points costs).



HEKATRIX BLOODBRIDES13 points per model

Page 27

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

Composition:

- 3-10 Hekatrix Bloodbrides

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

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

Transport:

- The squad may take a Raider or a Venom as a dedicated transport (see page 91 for points costs).

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Dodge (4+)

Options:

- For every three models in the squad, one may replace her splinter pistol and close combat weapon with one of the following:
 - Razorflails10 points per model
 - Hydra gauntlets10 points per model
 - Shardnet and impaler10 points per model
- The entire squad may be armed with:
 - Haywire grenades2 points per model

Character Options:

- One Bloodbride may be upgraded to:
 - Syren10 points
- The Syren may replace her splinter pistol with:
 - Blast pistol15 points
- The Syren may take:
 - Phantasm grenade launcher10 points
- The Syren may replace her close combat weapon with:
 - Venom blade5 points
 - Power weapon10 points
 - Agoniser20 points

TROOPS

KABALITE WARRIORS

9 points per model

Page 26

	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+

Composition:

- 5-20 Kabalite Warriors

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

- Splinter rifle
- Kabalite armour

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

Options:

- One Kabalite Warrior may replace his splinter rifle with:
 - Shredder 5 points
 - Blaster 15 points
- For every ten models in the squad, one Kabalite Warrior may replace his splinter rifle with:
 - Splinter cannon 10 points
 - Dark lance 25 points

Character Options:

- One Kabalite Warrior may be upgraded to:
 - Sybarite 10 points
- The Sybarite may take:
 - Ghostplate armour 10 points
 - Phantasm grenade launcher 20 points
- The Sybarite may replace his splinter rifle with:
 - Splinter pistol and close combat weapon free
- The Sybarite may replace his splinter pistol with:
 - Blast pistol 15 points
- The Sybarite may replace his close combat weapon with:
 - Venom blade 5 points
 - Power weapon 10 points
 - Agoniser 20 points

Transport:

- The squad may take a Raider or a Venom as a dedicated transport (see page 91 for points costs).

WYCHES

10 points per model

Page 27

	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+

Composition:

- 5-15 Wyches

Unit Type:

- Infantry

Wargear:

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

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Dodge (4+)

Options:

- For every five models in the squad, one may replace her splinter pistol and close combat weapon with one of the following:
 - Razorflails 10 points per model
 - Hydra gauntlets 10 points per model
 - Shardnet and impaler 10 points per model
- The entire squad may be armed with:
 - Haywire grenades 2 points per model

Character Options:

- One Wych may be upgraded to:
 - Hekatrix 10 points
- The Hekatrix may replace her splinter pistol with:
 - Blast pistol 15 points
- The Hekatrix may take:
 - Phantasm grenade launcher 10 points
- The Hekatrix may replace her close combat weapon with:
 - Venom blade 5 points
 - Power weapon 10 points
 - Agoniser 20 points

Transport:

- The squad may take a Raider or a Venom as a dedicated transport (see page 91 for points costs).

FAST ATTACK

HELLIONS16 points per model

Page 28

	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+

Composition:

- 5-20 Hellions

Unit Type:

- Jump Infantry

Wargear:

- Combat drugs
- Wychsuit
- Skyboard
- Hellglaive

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Hit and Run

Character Options:

- One Hellion may be upgraded to a Helliarch10 points
- The Helliarch may take:
 - Phantasm grenade launcher20 points
- The Helliarch may replace his hellglaive with a splinter pistol and one of the following:
 - Venom bladefree
 - Stunclaw5 points
 - Power weapon5 points
 - Agoniser15 points

SCOURGES22 points per model

Page 32

	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+

Composition:

- 3-10 Scourges

Unit Type:

- Jump Infantry

Wargear:

- Shardcarbine
- Ghostplate armour
- Plasma grenades

Special Rules:

- Fleet
- Night Vision
- Power from Pain

Options:

- For every five models in the squad, two Scourges may replace their shardcarbines with:
 - Shredder5 points per model
 - Splinter cannon10 points per model
 - Haywire blaster10 points per model
 - Heat lance12 points per model
 - Blaster15 points per model
 - Dark lance15 points per model

Character Options:

- One Scourge may be upgraded to a Solarite10 points
- The Solarite may replace his shardcarbine with a splinter pistol and one of the following:
 - Close combat weaponfree
 - Venom blade5 points
 - Power weapon10 points
 - Agoniser20 points
- The Solarite may replace his splinter pistol with:
 - Blast pistol15 points

BEASTMASTERS12 points per model

Page 30

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

Composition:

- 1-5 Beastmasters

Unit Type:

- Beasts

Wargear (Beastmasters):

- Wychsuit
- Skyboard
- Close combat weapon

Special Rules (Entire unit):

- Night Vision

BEASTMASTER

- Power from Pain

CLAWED FIEND

- Bestial Fury

Options:

- Each Beastmaster may be accompanied by one of the following options (these models join the unit):
 - 0-5 Khymerae12 points per model
 - 0-1 Clawed Fiend40 points per model
 - 0-2 Razorwing Flocks15 points per model
- One Beastmaster may replace his close combat weapon with one of the following:
 - Venom blade5 points
 - Power weapon10 points
 - Agoniser20 points

KHYMERA

- Invulnerable Save (4+)

RAZORWING FLOCK

- Whirlwind of Blades

FAST ATTACK

REAVERS

22 points per model

Page 29

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

Composition:

- 3-10 Reavers

Unit Type:

- Bikes
(Eldar jetbikes)

Wargear:

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

Special Rules:

- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Skilled Riders

Options:

- For every three models in the squad, one Reaver may replace his jetbike's splinter rifle with:
 - Heat lance12 points per model
 - Blaster15 points per model
- One model per three Reavers may take either:
 - Grav-talon10 points per model
 - Cluster caltrops20 points per model

Character Options:

- One Reaver may be upgraded to:
 - Arena Champion10 points
- The Arena Champion may replace his close combat weapon with:
 - Venom blade5 points
 - Power weapon10 points
 - Agoniser20 points

DEDICATED TRANSPORTS

Certain units have the option of selecting a dedicated transport vehicle. These vehicles do not use up any Force Organisation chart selections, but otherwise function as separate units. Note that units may not select a dedicated transport if the number of models in the unit is higher than the transport capacity of the vehicle.

RAIDER

60 points

Page 44

	Armour			
	BS	F	S	R
Raider	4	10	10	10

Composition:

- 1 Raider

Wargear:

- Dark lance

Unit Type:

- Vehicle (Skimmer, Fast, Open-topped)

Special Rules:

- Night Vision

Transport Capacity:

- 10 models

Options:

- Replace its dark lance with
 - Disintegrator cannonfree
- Take any of the following:
 - Shock prow5 points
 - Torment grenade launchers5 points
 - Enhanced aethersails5 points
 - Retrofire jets5 points
 - Chain-snares5 points
 - Grisly trophies5 points
 - Envenomed blades5 points
 - Splinter racks10 points
 - Night shields10 points
 - Flickerfield10 points

VENOM

55 points

Page 43

	Armour			
	BS	F	S	R
Venom	4	10	10	10

Composition:

- 1 Venom

Wargear:

- Twin-linked splinter rifle
- Splinter cannon
- Flickerfield

Unit Type:

- Vehicle (Skimmer, Fast, Open-topped)

Special Rules:

- Night Vision

Transport Capacity:

- 5 models

Options:

- Replace its twin-linked splinter rifle with:
 - splinter cannon10 points
- Take any of the following:
 - Retrofire jets5 points
 - Chain-snares5 points
 - Grisly trophies5 points
 - Envenomed blades5 points
 - Night shields10 points

HEAVY SUPPORT

RAVAGER105 points

Page 45

	[Armour]			
	BS	F	S	R
Ravager	4	11	11	10

Composition:

- 1 Ravager

Wargear:

- Three dark lances

Unit Type:

- Vehicle (Skimmer, Fast, Open-topped)

Special Rules:

- Night Vision
- Aerial Assault

Options:

- Replace any of its dark lances with:
 - Disintegrator cannonsfree
- Take any of the following:
 - Shock prow5 points
 - Torment grenade launchers5 points
 - Enhanced aethersails5 points
 - Retrofire jets5 points
 - Chain-snares5 points
 - Grisly trophies5 points
 - Envenomed blades10 points
 - Night shields10 points
 - Flickerfield10 points

TALOS PAIN ENGINE100 points

Page 40

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Talos Pain Engine	5	3	7	7	3	4	D6	10	3+

Composition:

- 1 Talos Pain Engine

Special Rules:

- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Fearless
- Move Through Cover
- Random Attacks

Unit Type:

- Monstrous Creature

Wargear:

- Armoured carapace
- Close combat weapon
- Twin-linked splinter cannon

Options:

- Replace one of its close combat weapons with one of the following:
 - Twin-linked liquifier gun5 points
 - Ichor injector5 points
 - Chain-flails10 points
- Take:
 - Additional close combat weapon15 points
- Replace its twin-linked splinter cannon with one of the following:
 - Stinger pod5 points
 - Twin-linked haywire blaster5 points
 - Twin-linked heat lance10 points

CRONOS PARASITE ENGINE80 points

Page 41

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Cronos Parasite Engine	3	3	5	7	3	4	2	10	3+

Composition:

- 1 Cronos Parasite Engine

Wargear:

- Armoured carapace
- Close combat weapon
- Spirit syphon

Special Rules:

- Night Vision
- Power from Pain
- Fearless
- Move Through Cover

Options:

- Take any of the following:
 - Spirit probe10 points
 - Spirit vortex20 points

Unit Type:

- Monstrous Creature

HEAVY SUPPORT

RAZORWING JETFIGHTER145 points

Page 46

	[Armour]			
	BS	F	S	R
Razorwing	4	10	10	10

Composition:

- 1 Razorwing Jetfighter

Unit Type:

- Vehicle (Skimmer, Fast)

Special Rules:

- Night Vision
- Deep Strike
- Aerial Assault
- Supersonic

Wargear:

- Twin-linked splinter rifles
- Two wing-mounted dark lances
- Four monoscythe missiles

Options:

- Replace both its wing-mounted dark lances with:
 - Disintegrator cannonsfree
- Replace its twin-linked splinter rifles with:
 - Splinter cannon10 points
- Replace any monoscythe missile with:
 - Necrotoxin missile5 points each
 - Shatterfield missile5 points each
- Take any of the following:
 - Night shields10 points
 - Flickerfield10 points

VOIDRAVEN BOMBER145 points

Page 47

	[Armour]			
	BS	F	S	R
Voidraven	4	11	11	10

Composition:

- 1 Voidraven Bomber

Unit Type:

- Vehicle (Skimmer, Fast)

Special Rules:

- Night Vision
- Deep Strike
- Aerial Assault
- Supersonic

Wargear:

- Two void lances
- One void mine

Options:

- Take up to four missiles, of any of the following types:
 - Monoscythe missiles10 points each
 - Necrotoxin missiles10 points each
 - Shatterfield missiles10 points each
 - Implosion missiles30 points each
- Take any of the following:
 - Night shields10 points
 - Flickerfield10 points

THE SYMBOLS OF THE GREAT KABALS

Each of the Kabals of High Commoragh has a distinct symbol, comparable to a crest or coat of arms, flown proudly from its highest spires. These heraldic devices are often simplified and rendered onto the banners, armour and vehicles of the Kabal's warriors, and each has a meaning or myth behind it, frequently with origins that date back to the days of the Fall.



The Black Myriad.



The Lords of Iron Thorn.



The Bladed Lotus.



The Bleaksoul Brethren.



The Wraithkind.



The Baleful Gaze.



The Broken Sigil.



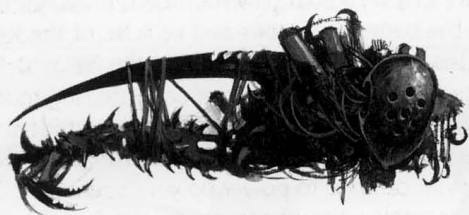
The Last Hatred.

CONQUERING REALSPACE FOR BEGINNERS

Some Warhammer 40,000 armies are robust and forgiving, able to take a beating after a tactical blunder and still come back for more. The Dark Eldar, as you may have guessed, are not amongst them. They lack the tenacity and rugged durability of the Space Marines and they are unable to muster the sheer numbers upon which the Orks and Tyranids thrive. However, they have an incredible potential for lightning-fast aggression that leaves their sluggish rivals in the dust. If used intelligently the Dark Eldar army can dish out pain like no other, leaving the enemy crippled, confused and completely at your mercy. To help you cull the weakling fools that would deny you your prize, we present here a few simple tactical tips and ploys to get you started on your long and bloody career of conquest.

STRIKING FROM THE SHADOWS

The warriors of Commorragh are creatures of darkness and cunning. Though they have an amazing selection of offensive weaponry, their inherent fragility will usually see them fare badly in an open shooting contest. If you wish to begin your own reign of terror, you must become proficient at using terrain to your advantage and making the most of any cover saves you can find. Even the heaviest Dark Eldar vehicles can theoretically be brought down by small arms fire. This is the price they pay for being some of the fastest vehicles in the game, able to get your warriors into the thick of the action in double-quick time. Hug cover like it's an old friend, deploy your vehicles out of sight of the enemy's fire support, move from cover to cover as you close with your prey, and only expose your units to the guns of the enemy when you absolutely have to – usually just before you launch a devastating assault. Keep these general principles in mind and you won't go far wrong. Once your units have made it into position, there is very little the enemy can do to save himself from swift and violent death.



DEATH BY A THOUSAND CUTS

At the core of the Dark Eldar army are the warriors of the Kabals. A single Kabalite Warrior is not a terrifying prospect to face, but a whole unit is capable of tearing chunks out of the enemy army. Though they are quicksilver-fast and can outmatch their human equivalents in both ranged fire and bloody close combat, your Kabalite Warriors should be committed to an assault only when you have the enemy at a disadvantage. Their true strength lies in their manoeuvrability. They carry rapid fire weapons, so they can pour twice as much firepower into nearby foes, and their open-topped transports allow them all to fire in any direction even when moving at speed across the battlefield. The Scourges, jump

infantry units who wield shardcarbines as standard, also excel in the role of fire support. A skilled Dark Eldar player can run rings around his foes, his Raider-mounted Warriors and Scourges reducing an enemy unit to tatters each turn, jagged salvos of splinter weapon fire decimating the enemy without once allowing him to bring his full strength to bear. Though such light weaponry may not penetrate power armour, the sheer volume of your firepower will soon take its toll. Because they are so manoeuvrable, Raider-mounted squads of Kabalite Warriors are also great at claiming objectives; just make sure you take every advantage of cover to ensure you don't get shot down too early.

The best thing about splinter weapons is that they wound the enemy on the roll of a 4+, no matter how high the target's Toughness. This makes them the absolute bane of large, expensive monsters such as Carnifexes, Greater Daemons and Avatars – it shouldn't be too long before your trophy cabinets boast the heads of several of the 41st Millennium's most feared beasts.

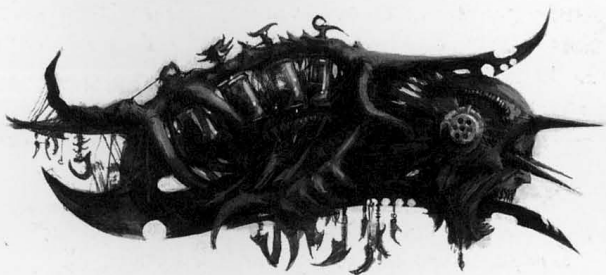
"The Dark Eldar see the other inhabitants of the galaxy as little more than cattle, livestock that can be brought to bay or slaughtered at any time. Their fodder, however, is not meat and muscle, but the anguish and despair of the weak. The Dark Eldar do indeed drink blood, but also tears, and most sustaining of all the raw essence of pain that they wring out of their captives."

– Inquisitor Lord Czevak

SLICING AND DICING

There's no denying it; Dark Eldar are an extremely potent assault army. For many of the Dark Eldar's units, the safest place to be is in close combat. Wych Cult armies exemplify this, for they are masters of the blade, not the rifle. All Wyches, vulnerable to ranged attacks due to their poor armour, can claim a formidable 4+ invulnerable save in an assault, often augmented by a pain token or two. It's imperative your Wyches, Hellions and Beastmasters get stuck in as early as possible. Their insanely high Initiative, combat drugs, multiple attacks and access to specialist assault weapons allow them to chew through enemy units. Mandrakes are able to get into the fray nice and early due to their Infiltrate and Move Through Cover abilities (try to deploy them near a small enemy squad if possible to give them an easy starter before the main course), and Harlequins and Incubi can carve apart even elite Space Marine squads with ease due to their weapons' ability to cut through armour. The Dark Eldar HQ section is chock full of close combat supremos, too – given a power weapon or agoniser, an Archon or Succubus has enough attacks to take out an enemy unit on their own. Getting them there's the hard part – a canny foe will do everything to ensure your powerful close combat units are left stranded with no-one to play with. This where your other trump card, sheer speed, comes in.

One of the most vital aspects of the Dark Eldar tactical repertoire is dictating how and when the game's assaults take place. Your opponent will shoot down a few of your transports before you hit his lines – get used to the idea – but he will be hard pressed to take out more than a couple, especially if you've used speed and cover to your advantage. Ensure you present multiple threats from multiple locations; ready to launch several assaults in a single turn. This is easy enough with lightning-fast troops such as Hellions and Reavers, who excel at getting into position, and for the rest you have access to wonderfully mobile transports. Half a dozen Raiders full of your Troops units backed up by some small but powerful elites mounted in Venoms forms a very capable army indeed. Because your transports are open-topped you can move quickly, disembark, make a run move and assault all in the same turn, giving your units a massive reach. Try splitting your Independent Characters off from their escort units once they've disembarked in order to assault the maximum number of enemy units in a single turn – this will rob your opponent of his ability to make a retaliatory strike.



ARROGANCE AND FIREPOWER

The Dark Eldar, much like their Craftworld cousins, can muster an unholy amount of high-end heavy weaponry. Dark lances and disintegrator cannons abound; the first ideal for busting open enemy tanks, the second invaluable against enemy elites. The trick is to make sure you get the drop on the enemy – it doesn't matter how many big guns you've got if your prize units have been reduced to smoking ruin before they get to fire. With fragile but heavy-duty support units such as the Ravager, Razorwing Jetfighter and Voidraven Bomber it's important to expose yourself to a minimum of threat – used properly these vehicles should be able to see their target unit and nothing else. Dark Eldar have a great Ballistic Skill, so you should be sure of at least neutralising your targets, especially if you concentrate your fire on a particular unit until it's out of the picture. Don't spread your firepower out across the entire enemy army – you might end up achieving very little real damage. Instead, pick your targets wisely, and let the dizzying profusion of cannons, missiles, and bombs available to your shootiest units do the rest.

THE CARNIVAL OF FLESH

Not all Dark Eldar units are fragile. There will come a time when you fancy fielding some really chunky, tough and stubborn troops that can take punishment as well as dish it out. Step forward the Haemonculi and their disturbing creations. Some players like to go the whole hog and field an entire coven of flesh-fiends, complete with Wracks as Troops, Grotesques as Elites, and as many Haemonculi as they can afford, all backed up by Talos and Cronos Engines

of Pain, of course. Such an army is a horrific prospect to face, not only because of the dark and terrible arcane wargear it can bring to battle, but also because it starts the game with lots of pain tokens. It may be slow and cumbersome compared to a conventional Dark Eldar army but it can take a tremendous amount of punishment and still keep on coming. Wracks are great for claiming and protecting objectives; get them in cover and then pounce on anything that comes too close. Grotesques can stomp enemy infantry and tanks alike with ease due to their high Strength, Toughness and Attacks values, and a Talos Pain Engine can carve its way through a Space Marine squad double-quick. Though the Cronos Parasite Engine might seem like the poor cousin at first glance, just wait till it starts augmenting your close assault units with even more pain tokens; the Furious Charge special rule can make even a humble unit of Wracks a terrifying prospect. Once you've started to accrue pain tokens in earnest you'll reach a kind of critical mass, with all your units powered up and ready to take on anything the opponent can throw at them.



"The Dark City feeds, rotting in the ether like an immeasurably vast and evil parasite with its barbed jaws buried in the soft belly of the material dimension. Black, vampiric, devoid of all warmth, it saps the vital juices of the galaxy and casts out only hatred and fear in return."

– On the Hidden, Aierulian

BRINGING THE PAIN

Pain tokens, though not vital to tabletop success, add a bit of spice to your recipes for disaster. Once a Dark Eldar unit has destroyed something it becomes a lot more resilient. This might seem quite tricky to achieve at first, but you can get pain tokens from other sources too – combat drugs, Urien Rakarth's special ability, and the spirit syphon of the Cronos, for example. The idea behind this unusual special rule is that although many of your decadent killing machines will die on the battlefield, those that remain will be in the ascendant, stealing more and more energy from their fallen victims until they stride through the carnage like gods of war. You should jump on every opportunity you can find to power up your squads, so pick on small and vulnerable units whenever you can (just like an Archon should) and make sure you have plenty of tokens on standby. Beware, though, for all this juicy power has a tendency to corrupt – it's easy to get overconfident when things are going your way, and we all know that this is when an evil mastermind is at his most vulnerable.

That's the basics covered. We've only really begun to examine the dizzying tactical spectrum available to the Dark Eldar player, though, and no doubt you'll have lots of fun finding out cunning new tricks and abilities and swapping war stories and techniques with rival generals. Remember to play like a sophisticated moustache-twirling villain, employ the canny guile of an Archon, and you should find plenty of opponents willing to take you on. Evil laugh on standby!

SUMMARY

TROOP TYPES

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv	Page
Aberration	4	1	5	5	3	4	4	4	6+	39
Acothyst	4	4	3	4	1	4	2	9	6+	38
Archon	7	7	3	3	3	7	4	10	5+	34
Arena Champion	4	4	3	3(4)	1	6	2	9	5+	29
Asdrubael Vect	8	8	3	3	4	8	5	10	4+	55
Baron Sathonyx	6	6	3	3	2	6	3	9	5+	48
Beastmaster	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	8	5+	30
Clawed Fiend	4	0	5	5	4	5	4	5	6+	30
Cronos Parasite Engine	3	3	5	7	3	4	2	10	3+	41
Death Jester	5	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	-	42
Dracon	4	4	3	3	1	5	3	9	5+	26
Drazhar	7	7	4	4	3	7	4	10	2+	52
Duke Sliscus	6	6	3	3	2	6	3	9	4+	51
Grotesque	4	1	5	5	3	4	3	3	6+	39
Haemonculus										
Ancient	5	5	3	4	3	5	3	9	6+	37
Haemonculus	4	4	3	4	2	4	2	8	6+	37
Harlequin	5	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	-	42
Hekatrix	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	6+	27
Hekatrix Bloodbride	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	6+	27
Helliarch	4	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	5+	28
Hellion	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	8	5+	28
Incubus	5	4	3	3	1	5	2	8	3+	31
Kabalite Trueborn	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	9	5+	26
Kabalite Warrior	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	5+	26
Kheradruakh	6	5	5	3	3	6	4	9	-	50
Khymera	4	0	4	3	1	6	3	5	6+	30
Klaivex	6	5	3	3	1	6	3	9	3+	31
Lady Malys	7	7	3	3	3	7	4	10	5+	53
Lelith Hesperax	9	9	3	3	3	9	4	9	6+	49
Lhamaean	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	9	5+	35
Mandrake	4	4	4	3	1	5	2	8	-	33
Medusae	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	9	5+	35
Nightfiend	4	4	4	3	1	5	3	9	-	33
Razorwing Flock	4	0	3	3	5	5	5	5	6+	30
Reaver	4	4	3	3(4)	1	6	1	8	5+	29
Scourge	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	4+	32
Shadowseer	5	4	3	3	1	6	2	9	-	42
Solarite	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	9	4+	32
Sslyth	4	4	5	5	2	4	3	3	5+	35
Succubus	8	6	3	3	3	8	4	9	6+	36
Sybarite	4	4	3	3	1	5	2	9	5+	26
Syren	4	4	3	3	1	6	3	9	6+	27
Talos Pain Engine	5	3	7	7	3	4	D6	10	3+	40
Troupe Master	5	4	3	3	1	6	3	10	-	42
Ur-Ghul	4	0	4	3	1	5	3	3	-	35
Urien Rakarth	5	5	3	5	3	5	3	9	6+	54
Wrack	4	4	3	4	1	4	1	8	6+	38
Wych	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	8	6+	27

VEHICLES

	BS	Armour			Page
		Front	Side	Rear	
Raider	4	10	10	10	44
Ravager	4	11	11	10	45
Razorwing Jetfighter	4	10	10	10	46
Venom	4	10	10	10	43
Voidraven Bomber	4	11	11	10	47

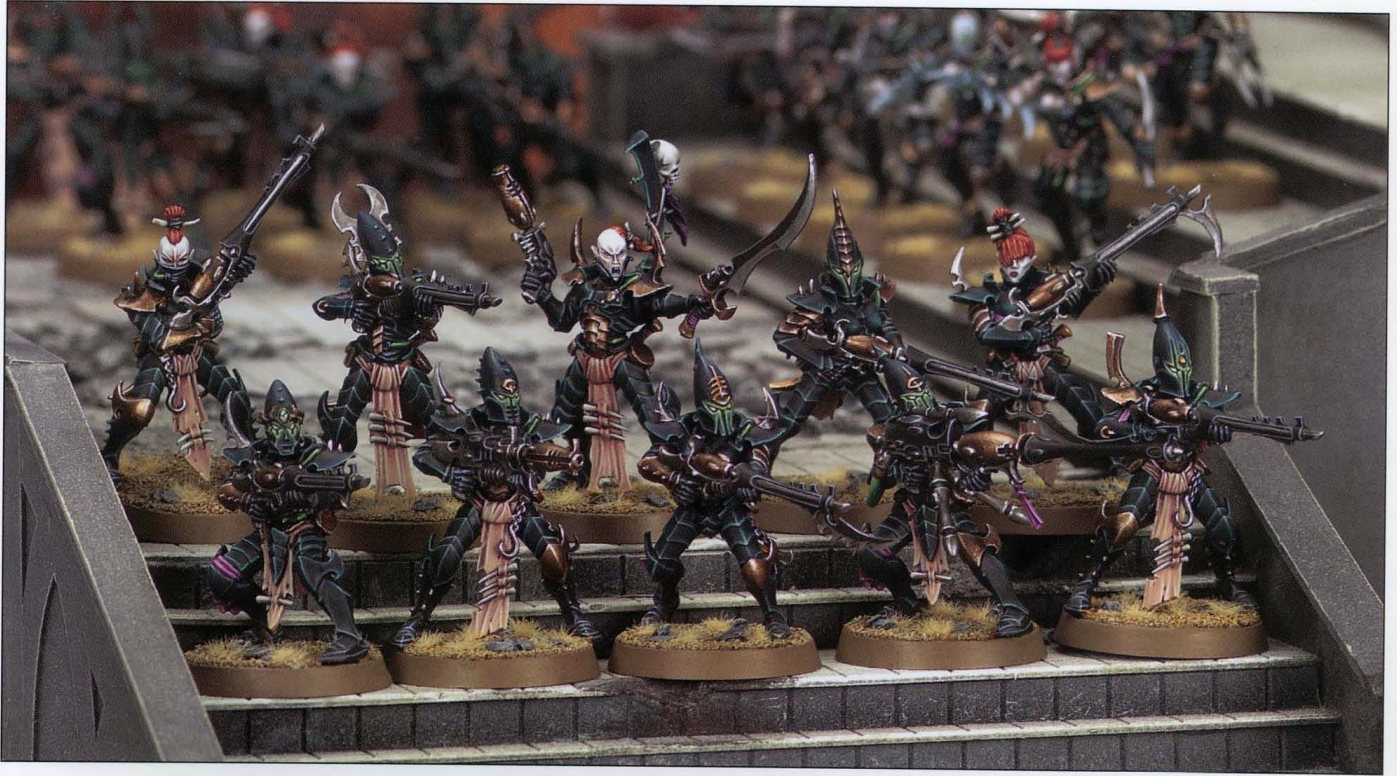
WEAPONS

Weapon	Range	Str.	AP	Type	Page
Baleblast	18"	4	4	Assault 2, Pinning	33
Blast pistol	6"	8	2	Pistol, Lance	56
Blaster	18"	8	2	Assault 1, Lance	56
Bloodstone	Template	3	3	Assault 1	31
Dark lance	36"	8	2	Heavy 1, Lance	56
Disintegrator cannon	36"	5	2	Heavy 3	56
Eyeburst	Template D6+1	D6		Assault 1	35
Fusion pistol	6"	8	1	Pistol, Melta	42
Haywire blaster*	24"	4	4	Assault 1	58
Heat lance	18"	6	1	Assault 1, Lance, Melta	58
Implosion missile	48"	*	2	Assault 1, Blast, One Shot	47
Monoscythe missile	48"	6	5	Assault 1, Large Blast, One Shot	46
Necrotoxin missile	48"	X	5	Assault 1, Large Blast, Poisoned (2+), Pinning, One Shot	46
Shardcarbine	18"	X	5	Assault 3, Poisoned (4+)	58
Shatterfield missile	48"	7*	-	Assault 1, Large Blast, One Shot	47
Shredder	12"	6	-	Assault 1, Blast	58
Shrieker cannon	24"	6	5	Assault 3, Pinning	42
Shuriken pistol	see the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook				
Spirit syphon	Template	4	3	Assault 1	41
Spirit vortex	18"	3	3	Assault 1, Large Blast	41
Splinter cannon	36"	X	5	Assault 4, or Heavy 6*, Poisoned (4+)	58
Splinter pistol	12"	X	5	Pistol, Poisoned (4+)	58
Splinter pods	18"	X	5	Assault 2, Poisoned (4+)	28
Splinter rifle	24"	X	5	Rapid Fire, Poisoned (4+)	58
Stinger pod	24"	5	5	Assault 2, Blast	40
Void lance	36"	9	2	Assault 1, Lance	47
Void mine	*	9	2	Assault 1, Blast One Shot, Lance	47

ARCANE WEAPONRY

Weapon	Range	Str.	AP	Type	Page
Casket of Flensing	12"	D6	D6	Assault 2D6, One Shot	60
Dark gate	12"	10	-	Assault 1, Large Blast, One Shot	61
Hexrifle*	36"	X	4	Assault 1, Sniper	61
Liquifier gun	Template	4	D6	Assault 1	61
Obsidian orbs	12"	10*	3	Assault 1, Blast	55
Orb of despair	6"	10*	1	Assault 1, Blast, One Shot	61
Shattershard	Template	X*	X*	Assault 1, One Shot	61
Stinger pistol	12"	X	5	Pistol, Poisoned (2+)	61

* These weapons have additional rules (see the relevant entry).



Kabalite Warriors of the Black Heart.



The Dark Eldar prepare to bring war and strife to realspace.



DARK ELДАР™

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"Pray they don't take you alive..."

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