

ELDAR

The Eldar race has a long and complex spacefaring history, so long in fact that little is known for certain about the course of their physical evolution and early planet-bound existence. The original Eldar Homeworld was destroyed during the catastrophic collapse of the Eldar civilisation known as the Fall of the Eldar. The remnants of Eldar culture that survived that cataclysm preserved much of their racial history in the form of traditional stories, songs and dance. Written records, monuments, and visual records were almost completely destroyed except for a few instances where they were taken aboard spacecraft fleeing from the doomed planets.

BEFORE THE FALL

Although the whereabouts of the Eldar homeworld is unknown, it is likely that it lay in the region of the galaxy now known as the Eye of Terror. This area lies to the galactic north and east of Earth and forms a circular 'eye' shape approximately ten thousand light years across at its widest point. The Eldar believe that their homeworld and the extent of their ancient civilisation formerly covered the Eye of Terror, and that during the Fall their spacial realm was overwhelmed by Chaos. Today the Eye of Terror is known as the largest region of warp-real space overlap, where Chaos and the Material Universe mix into each other.

The Eye of Terror is not devoid of habitable planets, and it may be that the secrets of the Eldar past still lie there awaiting rediscovery. However, these worlds no longer form part of the real universe and are not bound by the normal logic of astro-physics. Instead they are controlled and in many cases actually shaped by the Chaos Powers or mighty daemons. For this reason these worlds are known as the Daemon Worlds. These planets take many bizarre forms, including worlds which are flat, where rivers of blood pour from the sky, where gigantic burning trees provide the only illumination, and many others created from the daemoniac imaginations of their rulers.

Even so, these planets are not devoid of life, but are home to countless mortal followers and champions of the Chaos Powers as well as immortal daemons and their masters. Among the mortal inhabitants can still be found Eldar, some preserved since the time of the Fall, who

champion the cause of Chaos on the Daemon Worlds and throughout the galaxy.

Eldar are physically similar to humans, although not entirely identical by any means. They have longer and cleaner limbs, and fine ascetic features with penetrating and slightly slanted eyes. Their ears are also slightly pointed, but otherwise they could pass as human at first glance. The most obvious difference between humans and Eldar can only be seen when they move, for the movements of an Eldar radiate a subtle grace which is impossible for a human to emulate. This can be seen in even their slightest gestures or the dexterity with which they manipulate small objects.

Dance, mime and other gestural art forms are very important to the Eldar, their formal art investing a whole range of gestures and stance with precise meanings. Much of the early history of the Eldar is recorded in the form of traditional dances, recounting the stories of the ancient houses of Eldanesh and Ulthanash, the children of Kurnous and Isha, Gea and her twin consorts Khaine the Bloody Handed God and Asuryan the Phoenix King. The legends surrounding these mythical immortals and the birth of the Eldar form a complex cycle of ritual dance and song known as the Dream of Asuryan. Although mythic rather than historic in nature, this cycle of dance and song is said to embody profound secrets about the Eldar past within its subtle movements and tonal variations. In their highest form these dances are performed only by the Warrior Dancers called Harlequins, and only they really understand all of the myriad secrets hidden within these extremely physically demanding and incredibly precise dances.

The Eldar mind, while similar in general to the human mind, is far more inclined towards extremes. Because of this Eldar are more intelligent but also far more intense than humans. Although an Eldar and a human can both feel grief or joy, the Eldar's experience is likely to be far more extreme.

This natural inclination towards emotional extremes is both a blessing and curse to the Eldar. On the positive side it gives them an unparalleled appreciation of life and an unrivalled ability to express themselves through music and other creative arts. A melody or gesture made with grace and skill can elicit an intensity of pleasure which is unimaginable to a human. On the negative side this potential for joy is paralleled by an equal capacity to feel despair, ambition and even hatred. Confronted by grief or personal loss an Eldar suffers mental torments which far exceed the boundaries of human anguish.

The extreme nature of their temperament makes it very important that the Eldar retain a measure of self-control at all times, for it is dangerously easy for them to become entranced by and ultimately dependent upon the experiences that their culture offers them. At the same time they must learn how to control the darker side of themselves, the side which feels jealousy, rage and hatred, and which is no less a part of their personalities.

THE PSYCHIC RACE

As far as is possible to tell, the Eldar have always been a psychic race. This manifests itself in a variety of unusual talents. One natural ability which is common to many Eldar is called psychomorphism by the human Xenobiologists of the Imperium. In crude terms this gives them the ability to shape matter and create simple artefacts from raw materials. More complex things can be made by several individuals working together or with the aid of forging machines to enhance the creative process.

Eldar can also move small objects by a form of psychokinesis and it is by this means that they build their most sophisticated devices.

Some Eldar can influence the structure of growing matter by a form of empathic telepathy. This empathic ability may have been particularly important during the early development of the Eldar race enabling them to promote the fruitfulness of edible crops and reshape the growth of trees to make simple shelters. During their primitive evolutionary stage the Eldar undoubtedly benefitted greatly from these skills. The first Eldar villages and towns are supposed to have been living structures grown from trees, often covering many square miles and reaching high into the air. Structures like this can still be found on worlds colonised by the Eldar in later times.

Because of their psychic abilities the Eldar race learned how to make and shape raw materials at a very early stage of cultural development. By means of their mental powers they were able to refine minerals and shape the resulting metals and stones into whatever they wanted. Eldar technology has a very ancient history and the pace of its progress is closely tied to the slow evolutionary development of the race.

There was never a sharply defined industrial phase of Eldar history (as for example there was in human history)

but rather a steady growth in competence and knowledge over a very long period of time. A particularly Eldar aspect of their technology is that its forms often adhere closely to natural biological shapes and structures. This is quite understandable, as there is no real difference between technology and nature in the Eldar mind - they amalgamate into a single process by which the Eldar imbue living things with function and functional things with life.

THE TEARS OF ISHA

Artefacts called spirit stones have existed for as long as the Eldar can remember. The story about how they were created is told in the Dance of Asuryan. One night the Goddess Lileath had a dream in which she saw Khaine the War God torn to pieces by a mortal descendant of Kurnous the god of the hunt and Isha the goddess of the harvest. Kurnous and Isha had many children who included immortal gods as well as the very first mortals - the Eldar. When Lileath told Khaine about her dream he resolved to destroy the mortal children of Kurnous and Isha, and pursued them through the Heavenly Realm, trapping and slaying many before Asuryan the Phoenix King heard the weeping of their mother Isha and came to see what was happening. When he discovered what Khaine had done, Asuryan banished the remaining Eldar to the Mortal Lands and forbade all further contact between mortals and gods.

Kurnous and Isha were dismayed at being parted from their offspring and asked their uncle Vaul the Smith god to help to reunite them. Vaul took the tears shed by Isha and turned them into spirit stones. By means of the stones an Eldar could talk to the gods, and in this way the Eldar and gods could communicate even though they could never meet. Although Vaul knew Asuryan had forbidden contact between mortals and gods he gave one of the stones to Isha and the remainder to her mortal children the Eldar.

By means of the stones the Eldar talked to Isha. They learned how to use the stones to draw runes, and were shown how the energy of the stones could be combined with the runes to make skeletal frameworks for all kinds of structures and craft. Unfortunately, Khaine overheard Isha one day as she talked through her stone to the Eldar, and the War God immediately told Asuryan.

Asuryan was so enraged that his order had been disobeyed that he gave Kurnous and Isha to Khaine to do with as he pleased. Vaul could not bare to see his brother and sister harmed by Khaine so he struck a bargain in return for their safety. Khaine agreed that if Vaul were to make him a thousand enchanted weapons by the same time the following year he would let Kurnous and Isha go free.

Vaul worked hard all year, but at the end of the time the final weapon, a long sword, still lay unfinished on the anvil. To conceal the shortfall Vaul picked up an ordinary sword and mixed it into the others, and gave the weapons to Khaine who was too pleased to spot the deception. Vaul, Kurnous and Isha hurried away. As they made good their escape Khaine discovered the ordinary sword hidden among the weapons and roared with anger, calling Vaul a cheat and crying out for revenge.



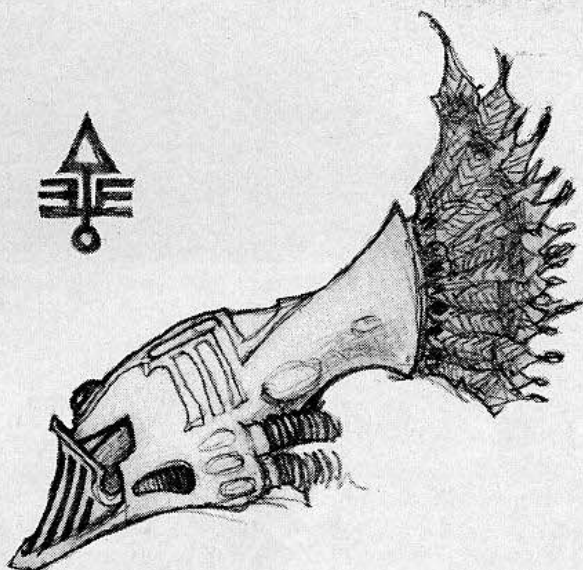
PSYCHIC ENGINEERING

The Eldar use Wraithbone to make the skeletal cores of their buildings and spacecraft. Much as the skeleton of an animal provides a framework for its fleshy tissue, so the Wraithbone skeleton of an Eldar spacecraft is a living core around which its functional structures are arranged.

The Wraithbone not only gives the construction rigidity, but also provides channels for psychic energy. This facilitates internal communication between systems, transmits power, and enables the craft to act as an organically integrated whole. In this way the Wraithbone skeleton not only performs the mechanical tasks which a bony skeleton would perform in an animal, but also the role of the nervous system and blood stream too.

The Wraithbone core of a spacecraft is surrounded by a structure which is literally grown into the required shapes. This is accomplished by a special class of Eldar called Bonesingers. These Bonesingers use their psychomorphic talents to accelerate the formation of psychotropic crystals around the Wraithbone. They then shape the resulting mass into fibrous bulkheads, supporting walls, floors, and conduits. The resulting shell completely surrounds the Wraithbone core and forms the hull and major internal divisions of the spacecraft. The same process is used to make any large structure including vehicles, but spacecraft are typical works of Eldar psychic engineering and serve as a good example of the process.

JES GOODWIN



EXARCH - SWOOPING HAWK

Following this episode the Dream of Asuryan tells how Khaine and Vaul fight each other, and how Vaul reforges the unfinished sword to use against his enemy. After a series of battles Vaul is finally caught by Khaine who cripples him and chains the Smith God to his own anvil. Vaul's Sword then passes into the hands of the mortal hero Eldanesh, who finally confronts Khaine and is torn apart and killed.

Asuryan was so appalled by the murder of Eldanesh that he cursed Khaine and made his hands drip eternally with the blood of Eldanesh so that everyone would remember what he had done. The sword then passed through the hands of Eldanesh's descendants until it was finally lost in the Sea of Broken Tears by Inriam the Young.

SPIRIT STONES

Spirit stones are glassy spheres which are warm to the touch. They respond to the psychic emanations of anyone who holds them, glowing brightly in the hands of a mighty Bonesinger, blue if touched by a Parseer, and red or orange if handled by a Warlock. All of these are types of Eldar Seer - the name given to Eldar who have been trained to use their psychic powers.

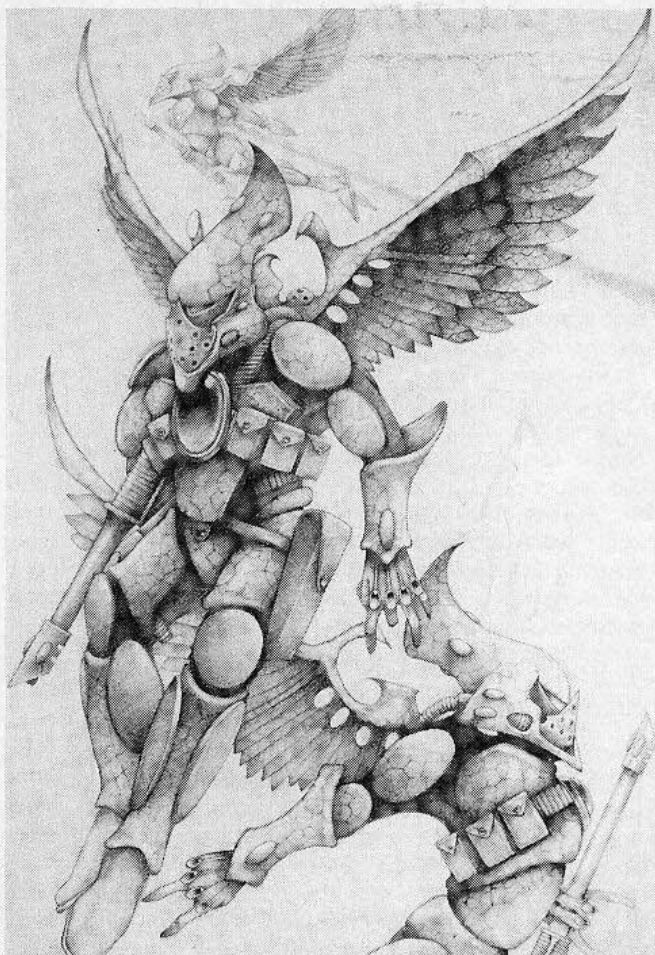
A spirit stone is a tool which allows a Bonesinger to draw raw energy from the warp and shape it into matter. The matter created in this way is called Wraithbone, and it can be psychically teased and manipulated by the Bonesinger into almost any form he wishes. Wraithbone is extremely tough and resilient. It forms the backbone of spacecraft and large structures as well as countless smaller items. Nor is Wraithbone used only for utilitarian artifacts like spacecraft, it is also used to create sculptural works of art.

Because Wraithbone is a solidified form of warp energy it has several special properties. It never really loses its physical connection to the warp, so that in a sense part of it remains in the warp at all times. As a result Wraithbone can channel psychic energy much as an electric cable carries current. At the same time it also contains psychic forces and can shield the forces it contains from other psychic energy.



FIRE-DRAGON EXARCH

ADRIAN SMITH



WAYNE ENGLAND

Once the Bonesingers have laid the basic structure over a Wraithbone core, the spacecraft is ready to be fitted out. Individual systems can be either fabricated on board the ship by psychomorphism or made elsewhere and installed subsequently. Most of the craft's operating systems are connected directly to the Wraithbone core. The many thousands of systems draw power through the Wraithbone and are constantly monitored and ultimately controlled through it.

Because of the unique practices of Eldar psychic engineering, any Eldar construction, whether building, vehicle or spacecraft, resonates with sympathetic psychic energy. The Wraithbone core provides a psychic channel through which an Eldar can evaluate and control various mechanical functions. This is the basis on which Eldar technology is achieved. Although it is very different from the simple mechanical processes used by humans, individual devices and structures usually look similar to comparable human artefacts. As a general rule, Eldar artefacts have an organic, flowing appearance and tend to lack hard angular edges.

ELDAR RUNES

Wraithbone is also used to make small but psychically potent items including runes. Eldar runes are complex interwoven shapes each of which has its own distinct pattern. Because they are made of Wraithbone the runes retain a connection with the warp, and have the ability to both direct and contain psychic energy.

Small runes are cast upon the ground by Eldar Seers who interpret the pattern and the proximity of one rune to another in order to divine the future. The runes are vital to every Seer because they enable him to focus and direct psychic energy, and by concentrating on a particular rune he can evoke a specific psychic power.

The runes used by Bonesingers function as templates or patterns for the various devices or structures which they grow from psychotropic crystals. The runes also have a protective function which is important to all Eldar Seers. Because the runes are made from Wraithbone, which is itself impervious to external psychic energy, they act as simple fuses. If a Seer draws too heavily upon his psychic energies, or if malign forces attempt to reach him while he is in a trance, then the runes will be destroyed severing the psychic connection between the Eldar and the warp. Were it not for the runes it is doubtful that the Eldar could use their psychic powers at all, as they would soon fall prey to the malicious entities of the warp.

THE FALL OF THE ELDAR

Over ten thousand years ago the Eldar race suffered the greatest tragedy ever to befall a major intelligent race. The Eldar civilisation was at its height and spanned a significant portion of the galaxy. Their worlds were places of great beauty and peace, paradises of personal contentment and cultural achievement. However, all this was to end in a cataclysm of destruction which was to wipe out the inter-planetary civilisation of the Eldar at a single stroke. This cataclysm is known simply as the Fall.

All Eldar tend towards extremes of emotion and intellect so that the temptation to pursue a life of pleasure, art, and intellectual gratification is very great. Even before the Fall the majority of Eldar recognised these temptations and fought against them, refusing to be drawn into the inescapable pleasures which their sensibilities and culture afforded.



JES GOODWIN

SLAANESH

The warp is an alternative universe inhabited entirely by psychic energy generated by the thoughts, emotions and mental life of the inhabitants of the material universe including the Eldar. These thoughts and emotions cannot die, they are eternal, so that over the ages they accrue and become stronger as they are reinforced by the similar thoughts and experiences of others. Eventually, a single idea or emotion can become so powerful within the warp that it attains a consciousness of its own and becomes a daemon or a god. These daemonic entities are known as Chaos Powers. The most powerful of these are the four Great Powers Khorne the god of war, bloodshed and anger; Tzeentch the god of change, plots and intrigue; Nurgle the god of plagues and morbidity; and Slaanesh, the god of pleasure and personal gratification. Slaanesh is particularly associated with the Eldar, and only came into being with their final Fall. Prior to this time Slaanesh was growing in power but not fully conscious - rather like a sleeping monster bellowing and kicking in its dream-disturbed sleep.

As the Eldar pursued their road to destruction so their emotional life degenerated into the reckless pursuit of pleasure, exotic experience and intellectual indulgence. The mental energies released into the warp as a result coagulated into an entity, an entity which was potentially very powerful but which was not yet fully conscious. This was, of course, the entity called Slaanesh. Although Slaanesh was not yet fully conscious some Eldar had already begun to worship the god's sleeping form. For centuries the Eldar had predicted the Coming of the Lord of Pleasure, so that many had come to disbelieve the prophets and their endless tales of doom. As the disturbed dreams of Slaanesh began to infiltrate the psychic minds of the Eldar, so their degeneration accelerated apace, further feeding Slaanesh in the warp, and creating an unbreakable cycle of doom. While there were Eldar sane enough to be appalled by the degeneration of their race, their horror kept Slaanesh from achieving full consciousness.



TONY HOUGH

However, the very act of fighting against their own nature had an unbalancing effect upon their minds. Hysteria, insanity and a multitude of racial psychoses began to affect almost the entire population. Some Eldar gave in to their hedonistic impulses, joining exotic cults in their pursuit for novel experiences, esoteric knowledge and sensual excess. As these cults proliferated, Eldar society became increasingly divided. Foreseeing the collapse of their civilisation, some Eldar began a series of mass migrations to newly seeded planets where they planned to set up utopian societies free from the taint of hedonism. These Eldar called their migrations the Exodus, and referred to themselves as Exodites. Many early Exodites were wiped out by marauding Orks or became embroiled in the eternal wars of humans, but some were successful. These Exodites eventually founded a second generation of frontier civilisations based around a core of noble houses. Their descendants still rule these worlds after ten thousand years and are known as the Eldar Knights.

Between the survivalist Exodites and the uncaring pleasure seekers were Eldar who were still mentally stable, and who remained behind in the hope that they could help restore order to their civilisation. They became increasingly few in number until even they realised their dream of recovery was hopeless. Eventually even these few die-hards were forced to abandon their homes as the whole Eldar civilisation fell apart in an apocalypse of destruction and madness. The last of the true Eldar eventually deserted their planets on board the few remaining spacecraft, beginning a new phase of Eldar civilisation - the age of spaceborne travel and the Craftworlds. The creatures that screamed and cackled over the ruins of the Eldar worlds could no longer be called Eldar.

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EXARCH - FIRE DRAGONS

JES GOODWIN

Overhead, a sun the colour of blood beat down, turning the ash plain into a lake of crimson light. A good omen, Karhedron decided. They would sweep the foul influences of Chaos from this world.

He surveyed the scene through the eyes of his Warlock mask, his long thick robes fluttering in the breeze. He scanned the horizon, hoping to catch sight of the enemy.

In his mind lethal energies pulsed and surged. He felt the urge to unleash them creep through him. He was a vessel for transcendent power. All he had to do was focus it through his channelling runes or his witch blade to bring death to his enemies.

His mind cast back to his time as an Aspect Warrior, an experience he had hoped never to have submit himself to again. Countless times had he stood waiting like this for battle to commence. As a Fire Dragon Karhedron had fought on fields of ice under turquoise skies, danced through whirling red dust on burning desert plains, crept through underground labyrinths of dank dark stone. The ancient weapon he bore remembered too. It had not always been his - he had retrieved it from beside the fallen body of the famous Warlock Tathaya, where she lay surrounded by dead Orks.

The song of wings filled the air as a group of Swooping Hawks soared ecstatically into the warm sky. They drifted lazily upward, catching thermals like giant birds of prey. Karhedron knew that their seeming indolence was illusory. The Keen-eyed Ones kept careful watch in case the enemy attempted a surprise attack.

He studied the squad of Aspect Warriors sitting on the nearby rocks, meditating on the inner nature of their weapons. The sun glinted off their blue armour, highlighting the Fire Shrine rune that marked them as belonging to their Craftworld. Their shuriken catapults lay dormant across their knees. Karhedron was not fooled by their apparent passiveness. He knew that the Dire Avengers could shift from quiet repose to instant action in the blink of an eye.

A high-pitched keening wail filled the air as the Howling Banshees performed the Dance of Skulls near their dropship. Karhedron watched as the women sparred in slow motion with invisible foes, each movement part of some greater intricate pattern, as if the whole unit were one organism sharing a single mind. Scarlet tresses swept through great arcs as the women swayed. Langorous kicks just seemed to miss each of the dancers. As the ritual continued the pace of the footstamping and handclapping speeded almost imperceptibly until the Banshees moved and tumbled almost too fast for the eye to follow.

A shimmering of air between the gateway tetrahedrons announced the arrival of a squad of chitinously armoured Striking Scorpions. They skittered across to the Farseer's position and bowed before Kelmon, the chosen Battleseer. Kelmon acknowledged their presence with an ornate salute.

Mandiblasters clicked acknowledgement then they turned and moved to take up a perimeter position.

Nearby atop a great butte, Dark Reapers, arranged in three-man fireteams, stood immobile as statues. Their massive forms radiated menace yet their presence was strangely reassuring. Karhedron knew no enemy could approach without being the target of their missile launchers.

A line of Fire Dragons weaved across the plain as the Eldar army arrived through the gateways and assembled, squad by squad, on the plain. A thrill passed through Karhedron as he realised the extent of the force the Craftworld was fielding. Unit after unit of Guardians arrived and took their place in the formation. Mighty Spirit Warriors stalked among the ranks on long insect-like legs.

As the last of the force assembled Karhedron speculated on the nature of the enemy they were to face. The corruption of chaos must be mighty indeed to justify the deployment of such a massive military strength, he thought.

As the formation was nearly complete a change of mood swept through the army. He felt tension galvanise the nearby Dire Avengers. The Banshees ceased their dance and stood poised like ballerinas, waiting. A hush of expectation settled over the assembled Eldar. The whole army held its breath.

Suddenly the smell of ozone filled the air. A crackling, hissing sound emerged from the gateway tetrahedrons. The runes along their sides blazed as if being overloaded with power. A bloody glow illuminated the area between the pyramids.

Space seemed to warp and then the Avatar was there, looming over his honour guard of Exarchs. Even the mighty masked warriors were dwarfed by his massive presence. The incarnation of Khaine stood half-again as tall as those who surrounded him. In his left fist he clutched a gigantic battle blade. Blood dripped from the fingers of his left hand. Crimson eyes glowed like red-hot rock within his helm. He swept a burning glance over his awe-stricken followers. Karhedron felt a cold wash of horror drench his soul as he beheld the god-like being, followed by an unholy thrill of anticipation.

The Avatar's incandescent gaze seemed to bore into the very heart of the Eldar warriors, kindling the fire of battlelust there. All fear, all hesitation was burned away by unholy joy and murder lust. The killing power within them stirred in answer to the being's call. A cry of pure exultation was torn from Karhedron's throat. It mingled with the great roar of the entire army.

The warcry rumbled like thunder over the plain, a shout to inspire pure terror in any living thing that heard it. It continued to rise into crescendo after crescendo till the Avatar made a short chopping gesture for silence. Instantly all was quiet.

Then, following their Bloody-handed God, the Eldar marched to war.



THE ELDAR AND DEATH

The Fall was to have a further terrible result for the Eldar race, for their natural psychic natures made them especially vulnerable to the predations of daemonic creatures and especially to the newly awakened Slaanesh. As the representation of the Eldar mind, Slaanesh is able to gather up the psychic energy of Eldar as it flees their dying bodies. This means that when an Eldar dies the eternal psychic part of him, his soul, is immediately consumed by Slaanesh. Needless to say, this evokes great horror in the Eldar who will go to any means to avoid this fate.

In order to save their souls from destruction by Slaanesh, every Eldar wears a small spirit stone called a Waystone. If the Eldar dies his psychic self is absorbed by the Waystone. The Waystone can then be taken back to the Eldar's own Craftworld and embedded into the Wraithbone core where it will grow into a larger spirit stone. Once the spirit stone is implanted, the soul of the Eldar can travel freely through the Wraithbone, mingling with other Eldar souls and forming part of the communal spirit of the Craftworld itself. All the souls contained within a Craftworld are collectively known as the Infinity Circuit. Individual Eldar souls can enter specific parts of the Craftworld to provide the energy and controlling intelligence which is needed by many Eldar Technical devices. Other souls can leave the Infinity Circuit for a short while by entering Waystones which are then placed within robot bodies. The soul contained in the Waystone animates the robot body and enables the dead Eldar to move about the Craftworld and even fight alongside the living in the form of Wraithguard.

When the cataclysm finally came there were few sane Eldar left on their home planets, only millions of millions of squawking, insane creatures crying and squealing with self-inflicted torment. The quickly-accelerating decline of the Eldar had fed the energy of Slaanesh until the god was ready to burst into consciousness, like a mighty dam about to break and release immeasurable flood waters.

As the few remaining sane Eldar fled aboard the flotillas of trading ships Slaanesh finally awoke. With a scream the god was shaken to consciousness and the other three Chaos Powers were driven scattered through the warp by the waking terror of Slaanesh like ships before a storm. The energy of that scream swept across the entire galaxy, and blew through the minds of psykers everywhere, destroying them in untold millions. Where the energy was concentrated most, in the area where the Eldar home planets were, the boundaries between the warp and real space were torn apart.

The intermixing of the two realities wiped out most of the inhabitants of the Eldar planets and formed the areas of warp real-space overlap the largest of which is now known as the Eye of Terror. Those Eldar who had succumbed to the temptations of pleasure were particularly vulnerable. Other Eldar, those who had resisted the decline of their civilisation, were better protected. Even so, many billions died even as they fled in the giant trading ships, but some survived - protected by their mental resilience or by the psychically impervious Wraithbone structure of the spacecraft themselves.

THE SURVIVAL OF THE ELDAR

The Eldar are fully aware of their extreme predicament. From an early age they are taught about the tragedy of their race, and how their eternal souls face extinction due to the predations of Slaanesh. Their numbers are now a tiny fraction of the teeming billions which once spread across the universe. Now the Eldar race maintains its grip upon existence only because of a grim determination to survive. That determination is fuelled by an awareness of their past failing to control their own nature leading to the creation of their greatest enemy Slaanesh.

Because of their vulnerability to Slaanesh the Eldar have developed ways of protecting themselves when they use their natural psychic powers. The most important of these is the development of the Eldar Path - a social learning system which restricts the abilities and experiences an Eldar is subject to until such time as he is mentally strong enough to face them. Another important development is the use of runes to protect the principle psychic members of the race - the Seers.

The Eldar nurture a dream in which they confront Slaanesh in the warp, and overthrow their great enemy, freeing themselves from the constraints his existence places upon them and safeguarding the survival of their souls in the warp. Although the Eldar souls preserved in the Infinity Circuits of the Craftworlds can muster only a tiny amount of energy compared to that of Slaanesh, the Eldar hope that one day there will be enough souls to unite to fight and overthrow Slaanesh. It is a faint hope, but the only hope for the Eldar who must otherwise face the eternal threat of their own racial psyche.

THE CRAFTWORLDS

During their heyday the Eldar travelled the galaxy in vast trading ships called Craftworlds. These trading Craftworlds were whole self-contained communities housing hundreds of Eldar families. A typical trading mission might take the Craftworld away from its home planet for centuries, travelling thousands of light years beyond Eldar space before returning home. These Craftworlds developed a strong sense of independence, so that they were for the most part unaffected by the general malaise of Eldar society. Because a Craftworld might return to its home planet only three or four times in a thousand years, the decline of their civilisation was all the more apparent to them, whilst those who remained behind grew accustomed to the slow degeneration and so failed to heed the danger signs.

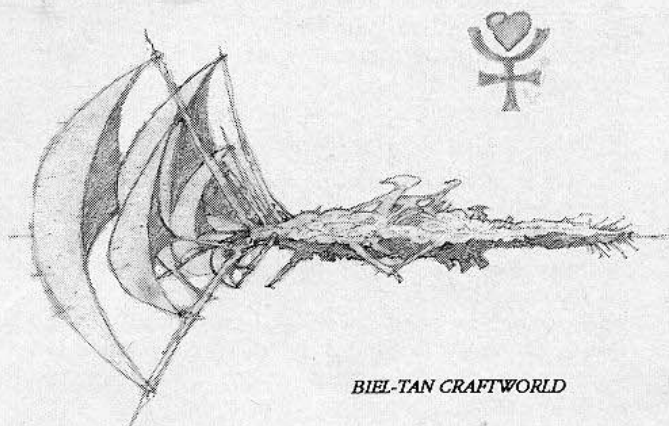
In the final weeks leading to the Fall, the returning Craftworld crews found their worlds in ruins. They rescued those of their kind who were still sane, and fled into the depths of space through the rapidly collapsing warp tunnel network. Many Craftworlds lingered too long in attempting to rescue their kinsmen. Finding themselves in orbit at the moment of the Fall they were either destroyed by the psychic overspill or sucked through into the warp and consumed by Slaanesh.

Craftworlds travel through space via a system of warp tunnels which stretch through the galaxy. Long ago the Eldar learned how to make these holes through the warp which link two fixed places. It is likely that originally nearly all Eldar planets and Craftworlds were interconnected by warp tunnels. However, during the Fall a great part of the network was destroyed so that travel is no longer as easy as it once was. Some tunnels were attacked and destroyed by daemonic intrusions from the warp - their entrances had to be sealed or destroyed to keep Chaos from swallowing entire Craftworlds. Other tunnels simply collapsed or the places they led to were destroyed or desolated. Today the tunnel network still connects Craftworlds to each other and to millions of places throughout the galaxy but there are significant gaps in the system, and some Craftworlds are completely isolated. Because of the partial breakdown of their warp tunnel network, the Eldar find it impossible or extremely difficult to reach certain parts of the galaxy.

Since the Fall the original Craftworlds have grown considerably in size, so that they are now ten or a hundred times larger than the original trading ships which lie at their cores. Because they have expanded steadily over the years many are at least partially ruinous and have zones which await reclamation or very old zones which are largely uninhabited.

Each Craftworld is a self-contained biosystem, with zones which contain forests and natural flora as well as urbanised areas. These natural zones act as green lungs, furnishing a breathable atmosphere and providing renewable resources for the Eldar. Vast Space Docks are located on the outside of the Craftworld housing fleets of spacecraft. These Fleets carry the Eldar armies through the warp tunnels which connect the Craftworld to the rest of the galaxy.

Each Craftworld is independent and conducts its own affairs and wages its own wars. Craftworlds do sometimes ally together to face a common threat, or to achieve a



BIEL-TAN CRAFTWORLD

common objective, but such alliances are usually temporary and have no lasting significance. Of course, all Eldar are united by a common culture and racial identity, but that means little when it comes to defending the interests of their own particular Craftworld. Wars between one Craftworld and another are certainly not uncommon. Such wars are almost always fought over a locally disputed world, or colonising and mining interests. Such conflicts grow out of local disputes, and are usually resolved within a short time. For one Craftworld to actually assault and attempt the destruction of another would be regarded as a terribly wasteful and purposeless enterprise. Although such calamitous events have happened in the past they are not common.

CRAFTWORLD COLONIES

Since the Fall, the Eldar Craftworlds have established many colonies of their own. These colonies are not independent, but remain a part of their society, and provide troops and raw materials for the home Craftworld. Colony planets are connected to their Craftworlds by means of warp tunnels. The number of colony planets associated with a Craftworld is tremendously variable, some have hundreds while others have only one or two. Most have about a dozen. These colonies are quite distinct from the earlier phase of colonisation by Exodites prior to the fall. The Eldar Knights, as the Exodites call themselves, remain fiercely independent. Although they trade and sometimes aid the Craftworlds they conduct their societies along entirely different lines, regarding the Craftworld civilisations as being dangerously close to the old Eldar ways which led to their downfall.

THE ELDAR AT WAR

Although each Craftworld is a completely independent and self-contained realm, Eldar society is remarkably constant from one Craftworld to the next. The descriptions and army lists that follow are therefore representative of Eldar Craftworlds in general. Some Craftworlds, however, have unique variations which we have not had time to fully explore here. The troops you choose from the army lists will reflect some of these differences. Other differences will become clear over the next few months as we introduce new alternatives.

Flanked by his apprentices Kelmon prepared himself for the battle. His fingers toyed idly with the wraithbone tiles of the battlerunes. The air carried the scent of ozone and blood. He gazed into the viewing tesseract and studied the disposition of the armies, fixing them in his mind.

The Light in Infinite Darkness forces stretched out across a long front. The Avatar and most of the Aspect Warriors held the centre in strength. Spirit Walkers guarded the right flank. The left flank was secured against the base of a huge butte. Dark Reapers commanded the heights. A strike force of Banshees waited in the gulleys ready to advance in cover along the dry stream bottom. The Guardian Squads reinforced the centre. Swooping Hawks cast long shadows on the ash plain. The Eldar force was a river of colour suddenly frozen.

The chaos cultists faced them along the top of the ridge, a huge ragged army of depraved humans clutching ill-assorted weapons. Ofnc perhaps they had been part of the Planetary Defence Force before this world fell to the forces of depravity. Now they stood mouthing silent obscenities. A few hastily converted Rhinos lay hull down against the great ridge. The sign of Slaanesh was splashed in red paint along their side. The skeletal fingers of dead tree branches clutched at the sky. Beyond them Kelmon sensed rather than saw an obscenely powerful presence. A dozen rusty Dreadnoughts lumbered into position on the humans' left flank.

It was time. Kelmon breathed deeply and entered the trance. His fingers danced through the air scattering the red and blue runes representing the opposing forces. He emptied his mind and sifted through the possible futures, searching for a probability line that would give the Eldar victory. As always the future was turbulent, waves of possibility and psychic power and passion clouded the potential course of events. The power of the Avatar itself warped the timelines round it.

He felt a surge of exhilaration as the power flowed through him - nothing could compare with this feeling of power. All the game-playing and Event challenges among the Seers were only preparation for it and offered only pale hints of its satisfactions. He focussed all his attention on the runes, and under his scrutiny they moved delicately into conjunction with each other, establishing the weave of the pattern. The runes danced around him, shifting like a shoal of fish in ocean depths. Each represented a part of the assembled forces, and through them he could maintain a psychic link with the Eldar troops.

The blue stone representing the Spirit Walkers moved off cautiously, and on the battlefield the great war-machines strode forward. In his multi-compartmented mind a dozen potential futures blossomed. He saw the machines fall blasted by heavy weapons. He saw them stride among the dreadnoughts and engage in melee. He saw them stumble on the rough ground.

In the air the red runes rearranged themselves. In his minds eye he saw the human heavy weapons belch.

Flowers of flame bloomed at the feet of the Spirit Walkers. Kelmon reeled, feeling the pattern of the conflict emerging from the maelstrom of probability. Events were rapidly speeding up, and the dance of the runes reflected this. He struggled to keep track of the pattern as it became ever more complex and intertwined, twisting into impossibly convoluted designs symbolic of the state of the battle.

As one group of runes moved, another set responded in-turn. Images flickered through his mind. Swooping Hawks soared over the enemy front line dropping explosive grenades. A storm of laserbursts erupted round them. Several Hawks dropped like wounded birds into the ranks and were swiftly torn to pieces. Their rune flicked away from its endangered position and the airborne troops drifted into the sky out of laser range.

A wave of screaming humans raced forwards. They slid down the slope of the ridge, plumes of ash billowing round their feet, bolters blazing, looks of ecstatic bloodlust frozen on their faces. The Rhinos provided supporting fire. The red runes span round each other like a catherine wheel and touched the blue rune of the Dark Reapers. A hail of missiles leapt from the mesa top and tore the cultists to shreds. Another of the blue runes moved into the pattern and the Banshees started sneaking forward up the culverts of the stream bottom.

Pain flared through him as the Avatar rune grew in size and luminescence, attracting more blue runes around it as the Bloody-Handed One led the Scorpions and the Dragons towards the survivors of the human charge. Kelmon threw his efforts into following the new probability line the Avatar had instigated. The Hawks flew down across the ridge to assault the snipers and the Rhinos. The attack wasn't elegant but it distracted the humans from the frontal assault as they concentrated on the fliers.

Human reinforcements raced down the ridge, throwing themselves into the fray, seemingly unafraid of the Avatar. Once again Kelmon sensed the presence of some daemonic power. The rune of the Accursed One span into the middle of the pattern, and the sense of looming presence intensified. Men screamed as the Dragons' meltaguns charred their flesh. The Scorpions ripped through them, mandiblasters spitting death.

On the right, the Spirit Walkers had bogged down in an exchange of fire with the dreadnoughts. They seemed to be losing. The Spirit Walker rune flipped into a new position, placing itself in conjunction with the defence rune. The Walkers moved further to the right seeking cover.

The Dreadnoughts were on the move now, heading towards the swirling melee at the ridge bottom. In his minds eye Kelmon saw the Avatar turn and shred a mighty machine as if it were made of paper. Blood and oil mixed as the man within was ripped in two.

Warlocks danced through the fray, blasting their foes with psychic bolts. Kelmon sensed the ebb and flow of their power within the runes. There was a

brief flicker of unexpected contact where he looked through the eyes of the Warlock Karhedron. He felt the shock of contact as the Warlock rammed his witchblade into the stomach of a cultist then withdrew it almost before the blood spurted.

The Rhinos started to move, rumbling forwards, bolters blazing. The hail of fire shredded through cultist and Eldar alike. It pattered off the Avatar's armour like gentle rain. When the armoured vehicles came into range the Dark Reapers moved into action. Orange contrails of rocket fire flickered hellishly, and explosions ripped the earth around the Rhinos. A direct hit reduced one vehicle to mangled wreckage.

The withering rain of missiles stopped the armoured advance. Kelmon let his attention slide elsewhere. The Screaming Banshees had reached the hillside, and their rune twisted as they charged up the slope to clear the ridgetop. The outcome of this move was strangely obscured and when they were in position he found out why.

His heart skipped a beat as he felt empathically the terror of the warrior women. Row upon row of human warriors waited and when Kelmon recognised the being that led them he realised what had hid them from his vision. A Keeper of Secrets. A Greater Daemon in the service of Slaanesh towered over the assembled throng. Jewelled eyes glittered in its bull-like head. Its huge pincer arms caressed the head of a priestess almost lovingly. It beckoned with one of its other pair of human arms and a wave of cultists surged towards the Banshees.

The dancers held their ground, vaulting among the frenzied soldiers. Their masks screamed and Kelmon could hear the high pitched wailing in his head. Men fell clutching bleeding ears, faces liquefying under the impact of high intensity ultra-sound. Then the Daemon entered the fray and the Banshees died. The creature's fury was awesome to behold.

The Slayer of Slaanesh seemed almost to gloat as it thundered through the Eldar force, pincers ripping off heads. It lifted one frail body and tossed it aside casually, like a discarded toy. Laser bolts reflected from its glowing skin. It ignored the strike of the Banshee leader's power sword before playfully disembowelling her. The Banshees tried to retreat but they were cut off by the cultists surrounding them. Mad laughter frothed from the humans' foam-flecked lips as they killed the Aspect Warriors.

Now the Keeper of Secrets emerged onto the ridge top, holding the shattered body of a Banshee over its head. It stood there silhouetted against the sunlight and roared its contempt of the enemy below. It plucked the brightly-glowing waystone from the woman's armour and popped it in its mouth like a sweetmeat. A look of obscene pleasure passed across its face as it consumed the soul contained within.

The Eldar army froze. Moans of terror issued from a few lips. A lull settled over the battlefield and even the chatter of small arms fire seemed to recede.

The Avatar turned its burning gaze on the Daemon, silently responding to its mocking challenge. The

slow drip-drip-drip of blood from its left hand intensified. Its blade glowed brightly in its clenched right fist.

Kelmon sensed that they had reached the crisis point of the battle. Two mighty probability waves were about to clash, one bringing screaming terror and defeat to his people, the other bringing joyous victory. The outcome was unclear. Forces beyond his ability to comprehend had been unleashed here.

The Daemon led its followers down the ridge. The Eldar charged to meet them. Great clouds of dust rose around the combatants. Now all subtlety was thrown aside in the primal fury of conflict. The fighting became close and deadly as the two forces mingled. The Avatar and the Keeper of Secrets ploughed towards each other, leaving red destruction in their wakes. Swooping Hawks entered the melee. The Daemon rent two Exarchs asunder before it confronted the Avatar.

The earth shook as the two mighty beings clashed. The Avatar and the Daemon wrestled, each seeking advantage. Auras of power flickered around their heads as they duelled with blades of psychic force. The Daemon's claws locked tight on the Eldar's armour, striving to crush the being within. The Bloody-Handed One's left hand closed on the Daemon's throat as it sought to strangle its foe.

Kelmon felt a surge of power as the Warlocks entered the fray. Their witch blades flashed, cutting into the daemon's hide, distracting it for a second as it lashed out with its fists, breaking bodies with each terrific blow.

For a long moment the conflict stood in the balance. The Avatar and the Daemon stood locked, straining to their uttermost, neither able to break the deadlock. Kelmon sensed the total nature of the combat. Here were two beings, driven by burning hatred, battling on every level, physical, mental, spiritual; re-enacting an old cosmic battle. Around them the struggles of man and Eldar were dwarfed by the energies unleashed. It was like two giants fighting in an ant-heap.

Slowly, painfully, the Avatar forced the Daemon back. The Daemon held its ground, but was forced to sway, curving its back away from its foe. The Avatar seemed to grow as it exerted itself more fully. Suddenly, with a final desperate surge it lifted the Daemon and broke its back over one armoured knee. A terrible psychic scream rang out. The feedback through the runes almost caused Kelmon to faint.

The Avatar stood now in the centre of battle and raised its blade in triumph. The cultists moaned, having seen their god destroyed. The Avatar glared around. Its gaze fixed on one man who fell to his knees screaming. The Avatar reached out with its bloody hand. There was a great splintering and rending of bones as the man's heart burst out through his chest and floated into the Avatar's grasp. The cultists fell back demoralised.

The battle was over. The massacre began.

THE ELDAR PATH

Eldar enjoy a naturally long life-span and can live for a thousand years or more. During this time, almost all of them pass through a series of distinct lifestyle stages, dramatically changing their social role at irregular intervals. For example, an Eldar might be a technician for a few decades before he adopts another role and becomes a warrior, following which he might choose to become a galactic trader or a colonist. Each new role does not totally replace those that went before, but merely adds to the Eldar's accumulated experience. As Eldar pass through these different stages they explore the many aspects of their own character. An Eldar of a thousand years or more will have usually experienced lots of different roles and attained a very sophisticated understanding of the universe.

This cyclical process is called the *Eldar Path*. As a social institution it evolved during the time of the decline and fall of the Eldar, when their ancient society began to break apart and the whole race seemed doomed. The fall of the Eldar was due to the intensity of the Eldar character and mind. Their heightened sensibilities offered an opportunity for intellectual and emotional gratification far beyond the sluggish human comprehension. It was uncontrolled self gratification which created the Chaos Power Slaanesh and which subsequently destroyed the old Eldar civilisation. The Eldar Path was envisaged as a way of allowing every Eldar to live within their full emotional and intellectual capacity in a safely controlled and progressive manner.

By concentrating on only one facet of their complex and overwhelming character at a time, the Eldar are free to explore that area in depth without dangers of distraction. As total awareness of each facet is achieved, the Eldar move to another, thus building a deeper understanding of the universe and their own capabilities. As an Eldar grows older and his comprehension of his own nature deepens, a wider range of more challenging roles becomes available to him. One of these is the role of Warlock - Eldar who open up their psychic minds and learn to control the forces of the warp itself. One of the most demanding of all roles is that of Warrior - the *Warrior Path* as this facet is called. An Eldar who embarks upon the Warrior Path chooses one of the many different *Warrior Aspects*, each of which is characterised by a different school of martial combat, distinctive armour, special weapons and tactics.

ONE VARIATION OF
THE SWOOPING
HAWK ASPECT'S
WARPAINT



ASPECT WARRIORS

Most Eldar follow the Path of the Warrior at some time or other during their lives. Both male and female Eldar move along the Eldar Path in the way described, so Warriors are equally likely to be male or female. An Eldar entering the *Aspect of a Warrior* assumes one of several distinct and quite separate aspects of the Warrior Path.

Each of the Warrior Aspects represents one facet, or aspect, of the Eldar god of war known as the *Bloody Handed God*. In the Eldar tongue this god is called the Kaela Mensha Khaine, which translates roughly as Bloody Handed Khaine; the word Khaine signifying the essence of murder. The Bloody Handed God embodies the destructive impulse which underlies the Eldar psyche.

The Eldar Path is designed to steer the Eldar away from this dark, self-destructive side of their character. By assuming one of the many aspects of the Bloody Handed God, an Aspect Warrior faces and learns to live with the inner terror which his own potential for destructive violence evokes inside him.

When an Eldar becomes an Aspect Warrior he does not cease to utilise the facets of his character which he has already developed through his progress along the Eldar Path. Indeed, he deliberately continues to pursue the arts of peace, and will typically keep on practicing and perfecting his own artistic talents. Thus Aspect Warriors form a community of practising artists, poets, orators, dancers, and musicians. This is a strong contrast between their role as fighting warriors, as indeed it is meant to be.

Because Eldar perceive everything so much more sharply than humans, the passionate excitement of fighting and killing is too much for them to tolerate for long periods at a time. Should an Eldar spend too long actively fighting in the guise of an Aspect Warrior he may find it hard, if not impossible, to ever leave the Warrior Path.

In order to counter-balance his life as a fighter, the Aspect Warrior deliberately continues to cultivate the opposite side of his nature. To demark his fighting self from his true self, he carefully cultivates a separate distinct warrior personality, embodied within the armoured fighting suit of the Aspect Warrior. Only when he wears the suit does he become an Aspect of the Bloody Handed God - the terrible destructive impulse of the Eldar psyche.

The donning of the war suit is an act of special significance because it symbolises the sharp division between the Eldar in normal life and the same Eldar as an Aspect Warrior. It takes several hours to perform the ancient ceremonies designed to enable the Warrior to put his own personality aside and adopt an Aspect of the War God. In his guise of Aspect Warrior he feels no guilt, remorse or pity. It is as if he were another person entirely while he wears the masked suit. When he puts the suit aside and returns to his normal life he does so in the knowledge that no matter what violent or murderous things he has done he remains untainted by them.

THE MANY ASPECTS OF THE WARRIOR

There are many different Aspects of the Bloody Handed God, each emphasising some facet of the War God's murderous character. Some of these are particular to certain Craftworlds, but the following six Aspects are common to almost all Craftworlds and account for the majority of Aspect Warriors. Their appearance, battlefield roles, and tactical preferences are described in detail in the lists that follow. Other Aspects are not covered in this list, but remain to be described as new models are released.

Dire Avengers
Howling Banshees
Striking Scorpions
Swooping Hawks
Fire Dragons
Dark Reapers

The special armour and weapons of each Aspect are kept in shrines dedicated to the Bloody Handed God. Each shrine is tended by one or more Eldar who have passed from being ordinary Aspect Warriors to become Exarchs. The same suits and equipment are used year after year, passing from one Aspect Warrior to another.

EXARCHS

Although Eldar accept that the Path of the Warrior is an essential and natural part of their nature, the blood-drenched Aspect Warrior still evokes extreme feelings of horror and repugnance which are hard for humans to fully understand. If ordinary Aspect Warriors elicit such feelings, at least it is understood that they will one day enter another cycle and put aside the warrior's suit for the final time.

Not all Eldar manage to pass beyond the Path of the Warrior. Some are unable to resist the passionate lure of battle and develop an unquenchable lust for blood-letting. They become trapped in the role they have chosen, unable to escape from the Aspects of the War God they represent. These Eldar are called *Exarchs*. They are regarded with a disturbing mixture of awe and revulsion.

Exarchs are held in awe because they single-mindedly pursue a side of their nature which most Eldar fear to even contemplate. On the other hand they are pitied because they have deserted the Eldar Path with its promise of new experience and constant development in favour of a life of bloodshed and battle. Perhaps, most horrifying of all to the Eldar mind, is the knowledge that every one of them holds the potential to become an Exarch, to lose their way along the Eldar Path and become addicted to their own lust for blood and death which only being an Exarch can truly satisfy.

Although only a few Eldar become trapped in the Aspect of the Warrior, it is not unknown for others to desert the Eldar Path for one reason or another. The intensely capable Eldar mind sometimes rebels against the highly structured delineation of achievement which the Eldar Path offers. Others find they are insufficiently prepared



for a role they have chosen and they become so obsessed by it that they can never leave. Without the protection of the Eldar Path individuals are likely to be driven crazy and eventually succumb to self-destructive urges. The Eldar Harlequins are one specific example of individuals who have left the Eldar Path. The Exarchs are another form of this same universal peril - although in this case they have a special place within society. The worst fate of all is known as the Path of Damnation - but of this aberration no Eldar will speak and so almost nothing is known. Regarding this and many other subtleties of the Eldar Path we shall have much to say in the future.

EXARCHS AND THEIR WARRIOR ASPECTS

Exarchs sometimes remain trapped within the Path of the Warrior but continue to cycle from one Aspect to another. When they go to war this enables them to wear one of two or more armoured suits representing the different Aspects they have undertaken. Similarly, they choose weaponry appropriate to any of these Aspects. Exarchs who continue to cycle in this manner are sometimes called the Lost Warriors - or *Menshad Korum* - which roughly translates as, 'hunters in pursuit of themselves'.

In most cases however, Exarchs cease to change their Warrior Aspect once they become Exarchs, although they may pass through several cycles as different Aspect Warriors before they are finally trapped by the Warrior Path. The Eldar then becomes an Exarch of his final Warrior Aspect, a Fire Dragon Warrior can thus become a

Fire Dragon Exarch, or a Dire Avenger Warrior a Dire Avenger Exarch. He still retains all the battle-skills he has learned in any previous Warrior Aspects, so Exarchs tend to have a broader understanding of the Path of the Warrior than ordinary Aspect Warriors.

When he becomes an Exarch the Eldar assumes one of the ancient names which reflects his particular Aspect. For example, Horned Serpent, Gleaming Scale, and Slicing Fang are all names which have been assumed by Fire Dragon Exarchs. These names are particular to specific Craftworlds and specific shrines to the War God within each Craftworld.

Only one Exarch can bear a particular name at once. The name is associated with a set of Exarch armour which the Exarch wears in battle. Only if the Exarch is killed can another Aspect Warrior take the same armoured suit and name. Although the same suit is thereby worn by many Exarchs over thousands of years, the result is to continue the legendary life of the single heroic identity represented by that suit and name. This assumption of an ancient heroic identity emphasises the break with the Eldar's old life and the Eldar Path.

The Exarch's fighting suit is an elaborate and superior version of that worn by the ordinary members of his Warrior Aspect. Their very age means that they preserve much ancient workmanship, long-abandoned decorative styles, and various emblems and ornamentation which may now mean nothing to a typical Eldar.

Worked into the suit is a spirit-stone containing the spirit of the very first hero to have worn it, the Eldar whose name all subsequent Exarchs have perpetuated. When the Exarch enters the suit it is this spirit which merges with his own, adding its own accumulated memories and experiences to his. This enables the Eldar to understand much about the ancient weaponry and armour he is using, as well as giving him general knowledge about the distant times when the hero was alive. In this way, the Exarch is initiated into one of the most closely guarded of all Eldar secrets - the origin of the Exarchs during the time of the fall of the Eldar itself.

EXARCHS AND THE SHRINES OF THE WAR GOD

When Exarchs are not fighting they tend the shrines of the Bloody Handed God. Each Warrior Aspect usually has a single shrine on the Craftworld. Some Craftworlds have more than one shrine to a particular Aspect, others may lack an Aspect altogether. There are therefore six shrines on a typical Craftworld - a Dire Avenger shrine, a Howling Banshee shrine, a Stinging Scorpion shrine, and so on.

These shrines are not just holy places, they are also armouries and places where the warriors learn martial arts and complete their weapon training. It is to these shrines that the Exarchs and Aspect Warriors gather when they are called to war, where they undergo the ritual transformation which culminates in the assumption of their warrior identities. The Exarchs are priests of the Bloody Handed God but they are also armourers and instructors who are responsible for maintaining the shrine's war gear and training the Aspect Warriors.

AVATARS

When Kaela Mensha Khaine, the Bloody Handed God of the Eldar, fought with Slaanesh the Lord of Pleasure, he was quickly overwhelmed and his energy captured by the newborn God. For the Bloody Handed God was as much a part of Slaanesh as of Khorne - being a product of that part of the Eldar nature which finds gratification in murder and pleasure in bloody violence. Khorne the Blood God, the Patron of War, Murder and Battle, roared with rage to discover one of his own taken from him in this way. Then Khorne and Slaanesh clashed headlong, the Blood God fighting to recover the portion of his power that had been robbed from him, Slaanesh driven by his uncontrollable hunger to consume everything in his path. The Bloody Handed God of the Eldar was tossed this way and that, at first grasped by Slaanesh, then tugged back into the compass of Khorne.

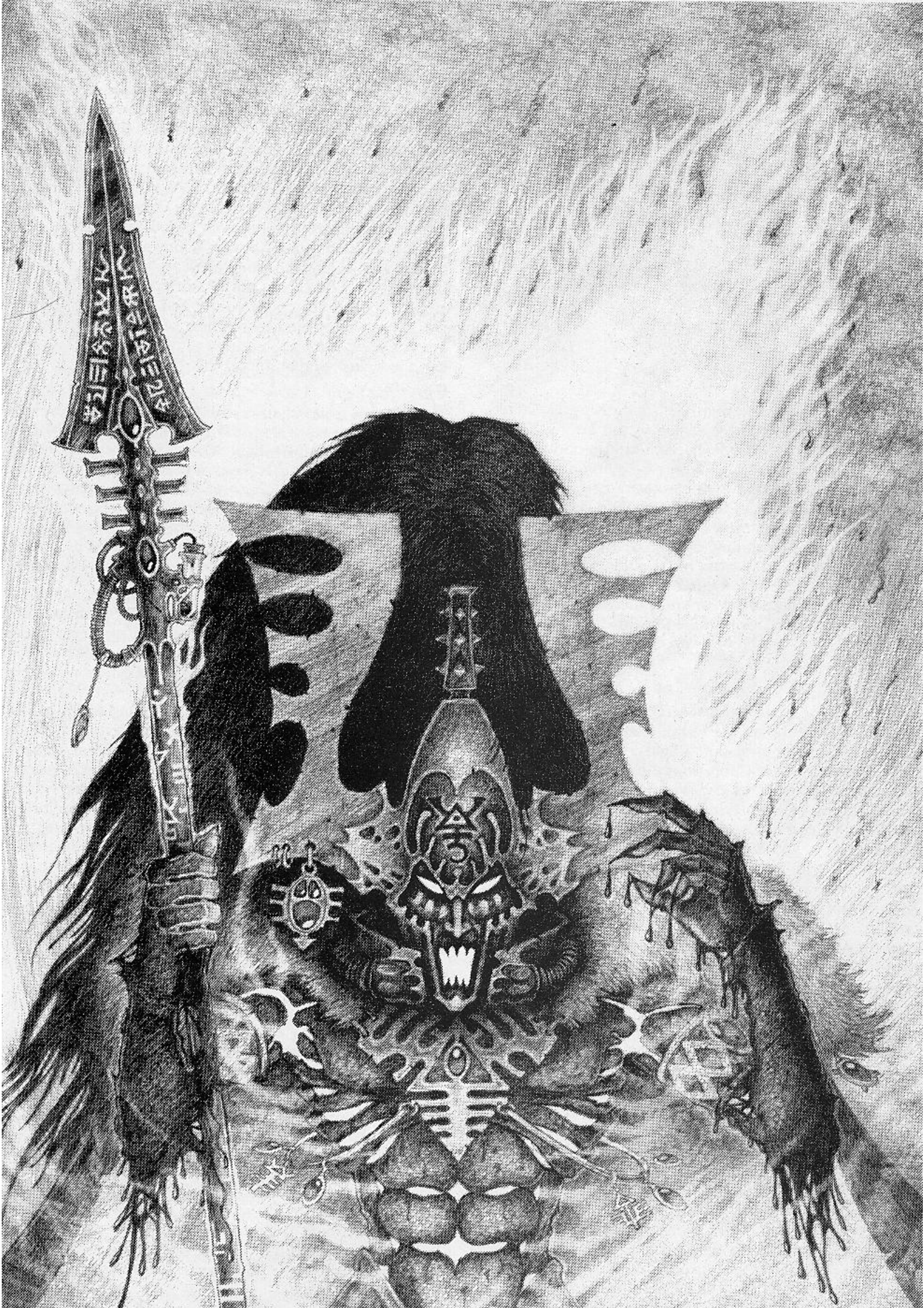
Eventually the rage of the Blood God and the passion of the Lord of Pleasure were exhausted, and the boundaries between them were established. Like a leaf in the eye of a hurricane, Kaela Mensha Khaine fell among the calm, down through the Realm of Chaos and into the material universe. As he entered the material universe he divided into many shards of energy, scattering his power so that neither Khorne or Slaanesh could ever find him again. Each shard entered the body of an Eldar, filling the body with his own mind, possessing it, so that it became a virtually indestructible blood-lusting murderer - the material manifestation of the Bloody Handed God. These are the *Avatars of the Bloody Handed God*.

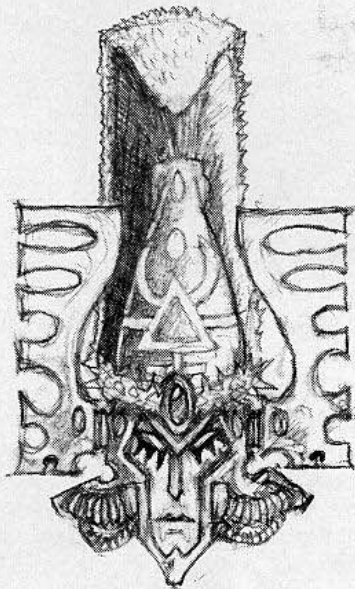
THE THRONE OF THE WAR GOD

At the core of every Craftworld is a sealed chamber. Inside this chamber, upon a throne of smouldering iron, sits an Avatar of the Bloody Handed God. The Avatar is as still as a statue of ancient metal, pitted with age and encrusted with the patina of corrosion. His eyes reveal only an empty darkness as if his whole body were a hollow metal shell. The chamber is built of gleaming wraithbone whose skeletal structure stretches throughout the entire Craftworld, its strands connecting every part of the Craftworld to the throne.

When the Eldar prepare for war the metal body of the Avatar begins to glow as the heat of his fiery blood is kindled. His metal heart begins to quicken and his iron flesh starts to pulse with life. Liquid iron boils through his veins, and his whole body crackles and hisses like a furnace. When he stirs upon his throne Exarchs and Aspect Warriors all over the Craftworld feel the vibrations reverberate through the gleaming threads of wraithbone which spread like naked ribs throughout its caverns and chambers. Recognising the Avatar's battle-call, the Exarchs and Aspect Warriors hurry to the shrines of the War God to begin the rituals of preparation.

As the Avatar's first stirrings are felt, the oldest Exarchs - one from each of the principal shrines on the Craftworld - gather outside the chamber and begin the ritual of Awakening. They wear their ritual masks and armour. They are accompanied by another Exarch called the *Young King*. The Young King is selected every year by the ritual divination of the Craftworld's Farseers - the psykers who guide the Craftworld's political decisions. The position is held only for one year, after which the





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Exarch steps down and another Young King is elected. The Awakening ceremony begins as the Young King is ritually disrobed and his body painted in blood with the runes of Kaela Mensha Khaine - weaving shapes that evoke the annual orbit of the sun, its rise in the solar dawn and its inevitable autumnal fall. With due ceremony the Exarchs bring the ritual regalia of the Avatar from its place in the various shrines of the War God, and present it to the Young King. Across his shoulders is draped the long mantle fastened by its golden pin. In his right hand he carries the long dark weapon of the Avatar - the *Stun Daellae* - the Doom that Wails. Into his hand is pressed the *Cup of Criel* - the bloody cup containing blood drawn from his own body.

The six Exarchs, the Young King, and a huge choir of Eldar Seers position themselves outside the massive bronze doors of the throne room, watching as its ancient metal grows hotter and starts to glow with a ruddy light. Behind them the Seer Choir sings the Hymn of Blood and the Exarchs take up its cry. From within the chamber come sounds of splintering metal and cracking flame. Very slowly the bronze doors begin to open. The interior is filled with brightness, in the very centre of which is the iron throne and, sat upon it, the Avatar himself, a great dark shadow amongst the unbearable light. The Young King steps inside as the Hymn of Blood reaches a crescendo of ritualised screams, seemingly random, but actually as carefully orchestrated and rehearsed as the rest of the ceremony. Slowly and deliberately the brazen doors close.

The music and the singing cease and the noises within the chamber become dull and bass like the sound of distant thunder. The Exarchs join hands forming a continuous circuit and begin their vigil. Groups of Exarchs take it in turns to maintain a continuous humming chant. Sometimes they must wait for several days, but usually an hour or two elapses before the Avatar awakes. He awakes without any warning. Suddenly there is a loud inhuman scream and the bronze doors are thrown aside by an explosion of energy and light. The Exarchs struggle against the hurricane of force, trying desperately to remain on their feet and maintain their closed circle. The Avatar walks from his throne and at that moment in shrines throughout the Craftworld the Aspect Warriors don their helmets in the culmination of a ritual that has paralleled that before the throne room.

THE AVATAR WALKS

The Avatar's previously empty shell is now filled with a powerful energy. His eyes glow like coals and as he moves his whole surface crackles and spits like smouldering metal. Molten iron flows through his veins and bubbles of fiery ichor burst and solidify upon his skin. Dark tendrils of smoke and flying cinder enwreath him. Mixed with the hot smell of brazure and coal is the unmistakable taint of blood. He wears the mantle fastened upon his shoulder with its dagger-pin. His long powerful arms are covered with blood up to his elbows. Thick red blood oozes from his hands and drips from his fingers and leaving steaming red droplets behind him. In his right hand he carries the Doom that Wails. The runes etched upon it appear to writhe and struggle inside the weapon, as if tortured by the heat of the Avatar's bloody grasp. Of the Young King there remains no trace - unless it is the sickly seeping blood that drips from the Avatar's gory arms.

The Avatar's outer shell resembles a suit of war armour and is encrusted with individual spirit-stones which pulsate with vermillion light. These contain the spirits of all the Young Kings that have ever entered the chamber. The personalities and memories these spirit-stones contain fortify the Avatar and enable him to call upon the experiences of the Young Kings themselves. In a sense, therefore, Exarchs who become Avatars never die - they are united with the Avatar himself and continue to live in him forever.

SEERS

All Eldar are incredibly sensitive to psychic energies and can manipulate these energies to a certain extent. However, every Eldar fully realises the inherent dangers of using psychic power without the preparation of proper training and experience. Uncontrolled psychic emanations can attract daemons and cause rifts in the warp through which malevolent forces move into the material universe. Because of this most Eldar deliberately choose to suppress any psychic tendencies they have. Only Eldar who have passed through many stages of the Eldar Path are likely to feel sufficiently confident of their mastery over their own minds to develop their psychic powers in an open way. These Eldar are known as *Seers* and they are said to follow the *Path of the Seer* or the *Witch Path*.

Seers learn how to develop their powers by means of special *Seer Runes*. These runic shapes are made from wraithbone and are usually kept in a special bag or case. Sets of Runes may be thousands of years old, and are passed on from one Seer to another, often with the addition of new Runes invented by his predecessor. Seers also wear spirit-stones containing the dead spirits of Eldar Seers. These are the Seer's spirit-guides - their purpose is to guide him along the Path of the Seer and protect him from the dangers of the warp. It is these spirits which gather the power of the warp and channel it through the Runes to provide his psychic energy. In this way the Runes and spirit-stones act as psychic fuses, protecting the vulnerable Eldar mind from the awesome power of the warp.

Every Seer explores his psychic potential in his own way. Some learn how to manipulate objects by kinetic forces, for example, and use these powers to create living symphonies of shape and movement. Some learn how to use empathic powers to heal or counsel others. The range of abilities is vast and will depend to a large extent on the roles already explored along the Eldar Path. An Eldar who has enjoyed a career as an engineer, for example, may learn how to apply his psychic skills to the structuring and arrangement of matter into buildings or bridges.

WARLOCKS

The vast majority of Seers are unable to develop their powers in any militaristically useful way, and their powers are wholly restricted to peaceful or artistic purposes. These individuals can still fight in the Guardian Squads, but their abilities are not used in anger any more than are the abilities of other Eldar pursuing a career on the Eldar Path. However, Seers who have previously fought as Aspect Warriors can and do fight on the battlefield and are known as *Warlocks*. Because of their experiences as Aspect Warriors, they are able to develop combative psychic powers. Not all Seers who have been Aspect Warriors choose to develop this side of their nature. Indeed, many Seers regard it as a potentially dangerous and slightly unhealthy thing to do so.

When the Avatar stirs upon his throne and the Aspect Warriors make for their shrines to take up their battle gear, a Seer can also go to the shrine of his old Warrior Aspect. Although no longer treading the Warrior Path, he will be welcomed as a brother and invited to join in the ritual. He does not put on the weapons or armour of the Aspect Warrior, but when the time comes to put on masks, he is offered a special Warlock mask from the shrine. If he feels able to fight he accepts the mask and in doing so he recreates the two-fold division of his mind into self and warrior. He can only do this because he has already undergone the training necessary as an Aspect Warrior. He can always refuse the mask in the final event and his doing so brings no shame upon him.

Warlocks wear *Rune Armour* consisting of breast-plates, bangles, and other ornaments made from wraithbone. These runic shapes are interwoven with spirit-stones, creating an energised psychic field which protects the Warlock from harm.

FARSEERS

After a number of years Seers usually pass on to some other life to continue their exploration of the rich possibilities of the Eldar Path. However, a Seer can give up the endless cycle of the Eldar Path and instead become a *Farseer*. Once an Eldar becomes a Farseer he is trapped upon the Witch Path and unable to change his future role. He uses his remaining years to learn and explore more about psychic power. Farseers spend much of their time casting the Seer Runes and making endless calculations and prognostications, trying to guide the fortunes of the Craftworld and anticipate any future difficulties. Because the calculations of the Farseers may



WARLOCK WITH FORCE STAFF

JES GOODWIN

be based upon predicted events happening hundreds of years in the future, their immediate effect is rather hard to determine. However, the Eldar consider Farseers to be a vital part of their Craftworld, basing all of their political decisions around their predictions.

The Eldar Army is sometimes accompanied by a single Farseer - more cannot be spared from their task of guiding the future of the Craftworld. Their powers are greater even than those of the Warlocks but are mostly concentrated on casting the Seer Runes to determine courses of action which will be most fortunate for the army.

OTHER PATHS

The Paths of the Warrior and Seer are just two of the many roles which Eldar can assume during their lives. Some of these roles are quite clearly defined, with traditions and ritualised behaviour patterns of their own. Others are less structured and therefore offer less guidance - they allow a certain amount of freedom and rely on the inner strength that the Eldar has already attained. These roles allow the Eldar to fulfill the functions of technicians, civil administrators, fabricators, colonists, traders, explorers, and so on. However, we are not immediately concerned with these other Eldar as their part on the battlefield is not directly linked to their place upon the Eldar Path. Regardless of their current vocation, all Eldar are trained to take their position in the Eldar armies when they are needed. They serve in the Guardians as combat troops, weapon crews, drivers, technicians, and in all the other functions which are necessary to any fighting force. If danger is sufficiently pressing, every Eldar on a Craftworld can pick up a gun and rally to his or her designated Guardian unit.

Karhedron walked across the plain of ash. All around Bonesingers in wraithbone armour loomed from the twilight, their ornate helmets and baroque armour turning them into menacing spectral figures. They stood over the bodies of the Eldar dead, singing the Requiem for Fallen Heroes.

A thousand points of light glittered in the shadows transforming the battlefield into a carpet strewn with tiny stars. Each small fire was a waystone, pulsing with the soul of a slain warrior, a refuge against the ultimate death. Slowly the lights winked out as the Bonesingers reverently collected them for merger with the Infinity Circuit.

Karhedron passed the burned out remains of a fallen Spirit Walker. The machine was shattered beyond repair, its external carapace pitted with blast craters, its great head fused to molten slag. It lay on its side like the skeleton of a fallen giant.

He remembered the Spirit Walker as it had marched to battle, striding like an elegant thoroughbred, spidersilk pennons aflutter. He mourned its passing. Another artefact of ancient times destroyed, another object of irreplaceable beauty removed from the universe by the forces of senseless destruction.

He stepped over a human corpse. The man looked small and pitiful now he was dead, hands outstretched, begging for mercy he never received. His eyes were open, looking up to the unforgiving sky with an expression of shock. The Warlock bent down and closed his eyes gently, thinking that no-one should gaze out into the darkness forever.

Shocking quiet had fallen over the field now that the battle was over. Karhedron found it hard to believe that only hours earlier he had been trapped in a roaring melee, partially deafened by the clamour of battle. Now his ears seemed to ring with the absence of sound.

Nearby a Dire Avenger sat cross-legged by the body of her fallen comrade. She had removed her mask and crystal bright tears ran down her face. He knew her name was Talessa. He placed his hands on his own mask and toyed with the idea of removing it. He did not.

He knew that when he did so, the last remnants of his fighting persona would fall away and he would have to confront his own reaction to the battle. Then he too would weep. At the moment, armoured in the role of Warlock, he could ignore the worst of his sorrow.

He stalked through the aftermath of carnage, wondering if it was always like this, the grief and the hollowness of heart. He began to understand why some of the Eldar became trapped on the warrior path. Dealing with the sight of so much ruin could be too much to bear.

We have won this battle, he thought, but we can never win the war. In the end this ceaseless conflict will destroy us. Every fight leaves us diminished, a few more souls lost to the Warp forever.

He thought of Shiera, the Banshee whose waystone the daemon had devoured. That bright joyous girl would dance no more at the Feast of Forgotten Sorrows. She was gone now and a small part of the Eldar race had departed with her. The universe is colder for her passing, he thought.

All the bloodlust and the bright madness of battle had gone now. It was as if the Avatar had taken it with him when he vanished back to his nether-realm in the heart of the Craftworld.

Contemplating the darkness of spirit that the Bloody-Handed One's presence had revealed to him, Karhedron almost hated the creature. Part of him had enjoyed the battle, had revelled in the taking of life and the terrible excitement the being had led them into. The Avatar is part of us, he thought. We cannot escape that fact or shift the blame to him. We created him and we summoned him. His destructive potential is part of every Eldar. The Avatar's presence was simply an excuse for unleashing our darker selves. He is only our reflection, an incarnate nightmare of violence and death made real by our desires.

He reached the centre of the field where the remaining troops were gathered. Most of the Aspect Warriors had removed their masks, were becoming themselves again. Some sat quietly, some wept, some laughed. The faceless precision of the Aspect Squads was gone, replaced by the reactions of individual Eldar.

A group of people had gathered around the Farseer. Among their ranks Karhedron could make out the face of his mentor, Lahessa. Kelmon emerged to be greeted by their quiet approbation. His face was flushed, triumphant. He was raised on high by two Guardians, who lifted his thin, wasted body easily, and was taken down towards the bulk of the army.

Somewhere, someone struck up a tune on the splinterpipe. The wild melody drifted over the battlefield, moving slowly from a mood of melancholic sadness to exultant triumph. It was the music of survival, of people who had passed through the inferno of combat unscathed. It spoke of the strange joy of victory, of the simple gladness of being alive. It mourned the passing of the dead yet spoke to the beating hearts of the living. It said tomorrow we will grieve but tonight let us give thanks for our lives. All things pass, life goes on.

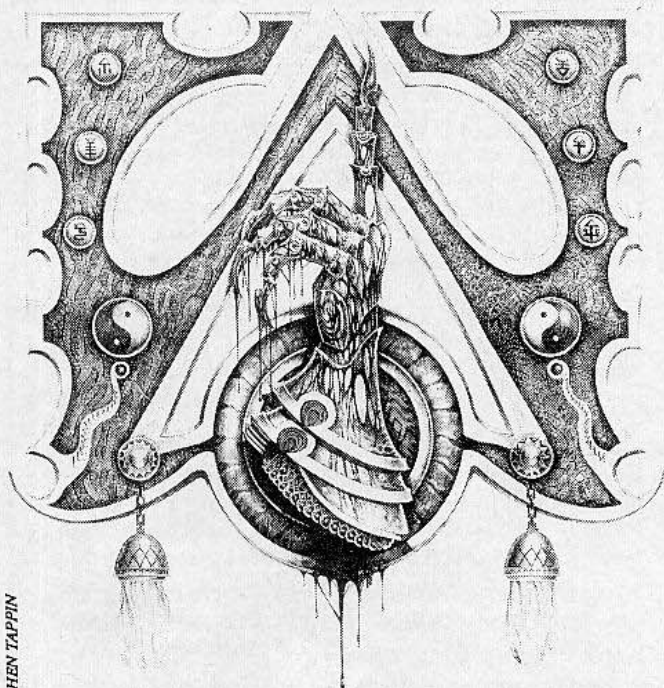
Still armoured as a Warlock, Karhedron was unmoved by this. He was frozen in the role of the hero, the eternal warrior. He confronted the Seer Lahessa. She met his gaze steadily.

'It's over,' she said. 'The time for heroes is past.'

For a long time he looked at her, wondering whether he could face being a simple mortal again, a dying thing in a dying world. The music and the message of her eyes reached out to him and Karhedron took off his mask, became truly himself again, and wept.

THE AVATAR

Points Value 300



STEPHEN TAPPIN

The Avatar represents the incarnation of the Bloody Handed God Kaela Mensha Khaine aroused from his throne of smouldering iron to lead the Eldar into war.

If he is present in the army the Avatar also represents the player as commander of the entire force - it is his responsibility whether the army succeeds or fails. Which troops he chooses from those available are as much part of winning the battle as how the army is deployed and manoeuvred once the battle has begun.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
6	D6+4	D6+4	D4+4	D4+4	D4+3	D4+6	D4+1	10	10	10	10

Each Avatar's profile is unique - the Avatar from one Craftworld will have an entirely different profile to one from another. The player randomly determines the profile for the Avatar model before the first game, and may then continue to use the same Avatar for future battles. Alternatively, the old Avatar may be abandoned and a new profile generated before the next game.

Armour

The Avatar has a D6 saving throw of 2 or more on a D6 and always confers a save of at least 4, 5 or 6 irrespective of any modifiers.

For example, an Avatar hit by a Las-cannon has a saving throw of 4, 5 or 6, even though a -6 modifier is normally applied. Another effect of the Avatar's hardened exterior is that he cannot sustain more than D4 wounds from a single hit. If the number of wounds caused by a particular weapon or enemy is more than D4 (such as D6, 2D6, or D10) then a D4 is rolled instead.

Weapon

The Avatar is armed with a ritual weapon - the *Suin Daellae* - the Doom that Wails. This weapon can appear in many guises - as a sword, a spear, or an axe for example. In hand-to-hand combat the Avatar fights using the *Suin Daellae* and has the specified number of attacks at his own strength. The enemy's D6 saving throw rolls are reduced by -6 and will therefore always fail unless the target has a minimum save value (as the Avatar himself for example).

Psychology

The Avatar cannot be affected by psychology of any kind and cannot be routed. He causes *fear* in all living opponents.

Special Invulnerabilities

The Avatar does not need fresh air to breathe and so is unaffected by gas weapons of any kind. His supernatural metabolism is red-hot, so melta weapons, plasma weapons and flamers are less effective than normal against him. This includes equivalent grenade types. Work out hits and damage as normal, but do not apply the armour save modifiers - all hits from melta, plasma or flamer weapons are therefore saved on a 2 or more.

Powers

As the manifestation of the Bloody Handed God, the Avatar has D4 special *Warrior Powers*. The number of these is randomly generated, and each Warrior Power is generated from the Warrior Power Table at the end of these lists. These Warrior Powers are unique to the Eldar race and only the Avatar can have more than 1.

Loss of the Avatar

The Avatar represents far more than just the commander of the army. He is the Bloody Handed God himself, and the focus of the power inherent in all the Aspect Warriors.

If the Avatar is slain in battle this is a calamitous event for the Eldar. The Avatar himself seems to fade and evaporate before he disappears altogether. In fact he is drawn back to his Craftworld by means of a permanent warp-link between himself and his iron throne. Meanwhile, the Eldar forces remaining on the battlefield are thrown into disarray by his loss. An immediate rout test must be taken by each unit, vehicle and character model.

THE ELDAR MOONS

Although the whereabouts of the original Eldar homeworld is lost, it is known that the world had three moons: Lileath the Maiden Moon which was white, Kurnous the Hunter's Moon which was greenish and dim, and Eldanesh the Red Moon. According to the legends embodied in *Dance of Asuryan*, when Khaine slew Eldanesh the dead Eldar Lord was turned into a moon and coloured blood red in memory of Khaine's bloody-handed deed. The moon is always said to be a symbol of bad fortune and even today the Eldar regard the symbol of the red moon as a portent of disaster.

DIRE AVENGER ASPECT WARRIORS

Points Value 160

The Dire Avengers cultivate the Aspect of the War God as the embodiment of the noble warrior - merciless to his enemies and unstinting in his devotion to his own people. They are the most flexible and therefore the most tactically ubiquitous of all Aspect Warriors. Dire Avengers are armed with the deadly Shuriken Catapult - the weapon which most readily characterises the Eldar at war. They wear special armour called *Avenger Armour*, composed of many interlocking flexible plates and coloured mostly blue with detailing and badges of a distinctive contrasting colour such as yellow. Each Squad wears its own variation of the basic colour scheme which identifies it in battle.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	9	9	9	9

Each Dire Avenger Squad consists of 5 Dire Avenger Warriors and costs 160 points.

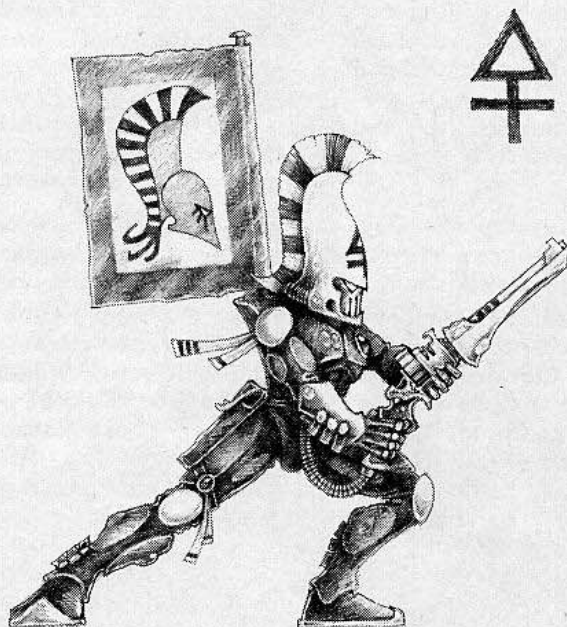
All Avengers are identically equipped as follows.

Weapons

The Avenger carries a Shuriken Catapult - the archetypal weapon associated with the most renowned Eldar Warriors. A Laspistol is also carried for fighting in close combat. Eldar Laspistols are often very ornate and elegant weapons of great antiquity and beauty.

Avenger Armour

This confers a basic saving throw of 4, 5 or 6.



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FIRE DRAGON ASPECT WARRIORS

Points Value 160

Because Fire Dragon Warriors are heavily armoured they are less agile than other Aspect Warriors, although this is more than made up for by their greater level of protection. Their whole style of dress and warfare emulates the mythical beast that gives them their name. Even their armour is distinctively knobbly and spiny, and has a rather reptilian look to it. They are armed with devastating heat-blasting Meltaguns whose smoking nozzles and searing beams of heat make them look even more like Dragons. Dragon Armour is always a fiery colour such as red or flaming orange, and varies from squad to squad, each having its own distinctive pattern.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	4	4	3	3	1	4	1	9	9	9	9

Each Fire Dragon Squad consists of 5 Fire Dragon Warriors and costs 160 points.

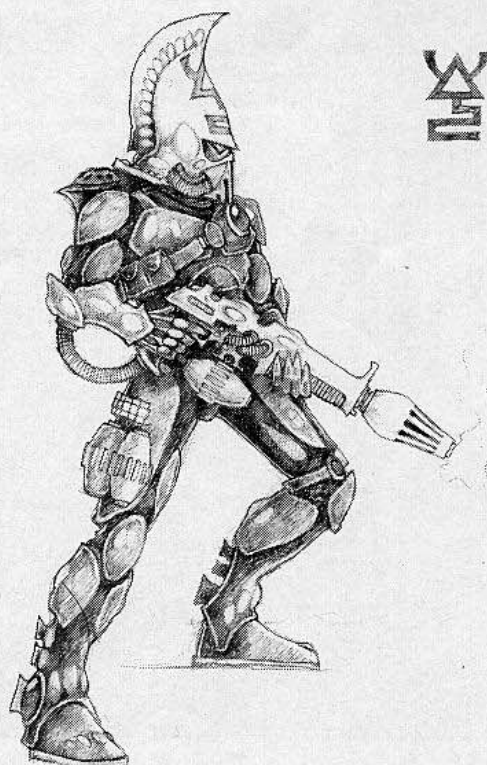
All Fire Dragon Warriors are identically equipped with:

Dragon Armour

Conferring a basic saving throw of 3, 4, 5 or 6.

Weapons

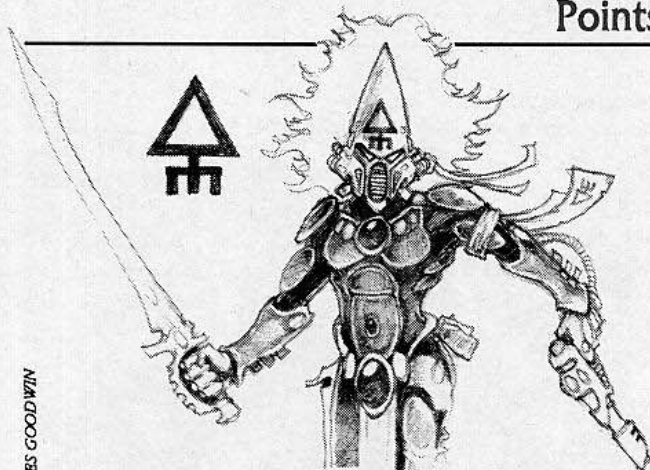
The Fire Dragon Warrior is armed with a Meltagun and a Laspistol for hand-to-hand fighting.



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HOWLING BANSHEE ASPECT WARRIORS

Points Value 180



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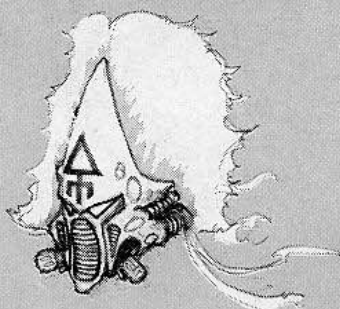
The Howling Banshee Warriors are the most lightly equipped of all the Aspect Warriors. They are swift and highly mobile troops and are most effective when fighting at close quarters. They derive their name from the Banshee Masks which they wear. These Masks contain a special sonic amplifier which intensifies their screaming battle cry and raises its pitch to a piercing shriek. Many Howling Banshee Warriors are female - as indeed are many of the fighting troops of the Eldar. Their Banshee Armour is a light bone or off-white colour with detail in a striking contrasting colour and design unique to each Squad. The helmet has a large, wild mane of hair which is usually red or bright orange.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
5	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	9	9	9	9

Each Howling Banshee Squad consists of 5 Howling Banshee Warriors and costs 180 points.

BANSHEE MASK

The Banshee Mask of the Howling Banshee Warriors contains a special psychosonic amplifier. This weapon amplifies the psychic sensations of rage which the Banshees evoke by means of their piercing battle cry. The sound of the howl itself is amplified, raised in pitch and added to the psychic barrage to make the overall effect even more devastating. Howling Banshees are trained how to release their rage as they charge into combat, and taught how to focus and project the resultant psychic scream against their enemies. Those who are fully exposed to this psychic scream suffer almost total paralysis as their central nervous system is flooded with unbearable levels of psychic energy.



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He found her in the arbor, gazing into the heart of a purple iris. She silently acknowledged his approach, continuing to study the delicate dark petals of the flower. Elshar expected no more greeting. Since he had become trapped in the Aspect of the Warrior his feelings for Irillith had lessened to such a point that he could now barely remember them. Their paths had forked apart, but he still felt respect for her. She was a fine warrior, an honour to her Aspect.

All the Eldar sensed the growing tension which heralded the awakening of the Avatar and the summoning of the Aspect Warriors. A time of darkness and blood, a time when they had to trust their darker sides to preserve them from evil. He supposed she resented it, or was saddened by it, while he, as an Exarch, welcomed the coming conflict. He found peace-time monotonous, only the thrill of battle made him feel truly alive. He was like a hunting hound being taken out to the chase.

'You've heard the news?' he asked her.

She shivered slightly at the rhetorical question, and turned to face him, her dark hair gliding over her shoulders.

'Yes, we go to fight again. The wraithbone hums with the message of war. I feel... *him*. He is beginning to wake. Soon I shall be assuming my Aspect, and you... Do we need to say farewell Elshar, or will you even care to remember me?'

All Howling Banshees are identically equipped in the traditional and highly ritualised regalia of the Howling Banshee Warrior. This consists of:

Weapons

Howling Banshees carry a Power Sword and a Las pistol.

Banshee Armour

Conferring a basic saving throw of 4, 5 or 6.

Banshee Mask

Because they wear a Banshee Mask the Howling Banshee Warriors can utter a psychic scream when they charge into combat. This has the effect of stunning the central nervous system of their target.

The target may neither run away nor stand and fire at the charging Banshee Warrior, but is obliged to hold his ground. Furthermore, the target may not attack during the first round of combat unless the player succeeds in rolling a 6 on a D6. This does not affect the target's ability to defend itself as normal.

The Banshee Mask is only effective when the Howling Banshee charges - it has no effect if the Howling Banshee is charged by an enemy model. In the second and subsequent rounds of a close combat engagement the Mask also has no effect.

STRIKING SCORPION ASPECT WARRIORS

Points Value 180



JES GOODWIN

The Striking Scorpion Warriors are the most powerful of all hand-to-hand fighting Aspect Warriors. Their special Scorpion Armour and curving helmets emphasise the resemblance with the deadly creature after which they are named. The curving mandibles on their helmets conceal special weapons called *Mandiblasters* - these provide the deadly sting which is the unmistakable mark of the Striking Scorpion. Scorpion Armour is generally green, but often combines various shades of green together with detail in yellow, black or orange. Each Squad is identified by its own unique interpretation of this basic colour scheme.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	9	9	9	9

Each Striking Scorpion Squad consists of 5 Striking Scorpion Warriors and costs 180 points.

All Striking Scorpions are identically equipped with the traditional and highly ritualised regalia of the Striking Scorpion Warrior. This consists of:

Scorpion Armour

Conferring a basic saving throw of 3, 4, 5 or 6.

Weapons

The Striking Scorpion Warrior carries a Chainsword and Shuriken Pistol.

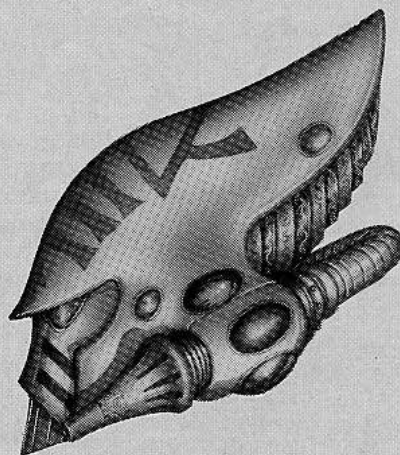
Mandiblasters

The helmet of a Striking Scorpion Warrior incorporates mandible-like nozzles which conceal a deadly combination of weapons. This is the Mandiblasters - or the Sting of the Scorpion! If the Scorpion Warrior strikes at least 1 close combat hit with normal weapons, then he can follow up with a single special Mandiblasters attack. It does not matter if their normal hit or hits fail to cause damage or if the target subsequently saves thanks to its armour - the Mandiblasters attack still proceeds so long as at least 1 hit is scored.

Searing laser arcs leap from the Striking Scorpion's helmet mandibles and send jets of laser energy into the already weakened target. The Mandiblasters attack automatically hits - there is no need to roll a dice. Roll a D6. If the total score is equal to or more than the target's toughness 1 wound is sustained. Saving throws from Mandiblasters attacks are resolved with a -2 dice modifier.

MANDIBLASTERS

The helmets of the Striking Scorpions incorporate a pair of weapon pods positioned and shaped much like the mandibles of a Scorpion. Each pod houses a mandiblasters - or Mandiblasters - a unique and deadly device also known as the Sting of the Scorpion. The Mandiblasters is an extremely short range weapon, useful only at a distance of a foot or so. It is activated by a psychic pick-up in the helmet, and fires a stream of tiny metallic needles straight forward into the target. These needles cannot do much damage themselves, although in the case of unarmoured targets they can tear and lacerate flesh, but rather they act as a conductive medium through which the Striking Scorpion delivers an intense laser energy sting. This laser energy vaporises the tiny slivers of metal into plasma which rips straight into the target. The Mandiblasters is a highly effective secondary weapon which is designed to be used to follow up a successful blow from another weapon. It is brought into play while the Aspect Warrior's opponent is still reeling from the effects of a conventional attack, enabling the Eldar to get in close to deliver a vital attack before the enemy can recover and while he is most vulnerable.



KEVIN WALKER

SWOOPING HAWK ASPECT WARRIORS

Points Value 210



The Swooping Hawk Warriors wear a special winged harness which enables them to fly through the air - making them the swiftest and most mobile of all Eldar Warriors. Their Hawk Armour and much of their equipment is made from a cellular material full of tiny air-pockets much like the bones of birds; this makes it extremely light without affecting its outward appearance. One of their favourite tactics is to drop grenades from special launcher packs as they fly over enemy units. Hawk Armour is basically light grey, and each squad has details, badges and usually a helmet, of a different colour. The wings, and especially the outer span of feathers, are also coloured either in a single solid colour or two or more contrasting colours forming a readily identifiable pattern.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	4	4	3	3	1	6	1	9	9	9	9

Each Swooping Hawk Squad consists of 5 Swooping Hawks and costs 210 points. All Swooping Hawks are identically equipped with the armour and weapons of the Swooping Hawk Warrior consisting of:

Hawk Armour

Conferring a basic saving throw of 5 or 6.

Weapons

The Swooping Hawk Warrior carries a Lasgun, a Laspistol and a special grenade launcher pack. This grenade pack is fastened to the Eldar's leg in such a way that it releases grenades downwards while the Eldar is in the air. Single grenades can also be taken from the pack and thrown normally. During flight the Eldar can drop up to 3 grenades anywhere directly underneath his flight path. Work out hits exactly as for grenades thrown at point blank range. Grenade launcher packs are fitted with Krak and Frag grenades, and can be used to launch either type or a mixture of both as the Eldar flies. It is most convenient to work out grenade drops during the Eldar's movement rather than in the shooting phase. Dropping grenades from the air does not count as shooting - the Eldar can still shoot his Lasgun in the shooting phase.

Wings

The Swooping Hawks' wings are in fact a sophisticated combination of anti-gravity lifter and jet propulsion motors. The wings themselves form the control surfaces and enable the Eldar to glide for short distances. Swooping Hawks can use their wings to make a long aerial leap during their movement phase instead of a normal move. The following rules apply:

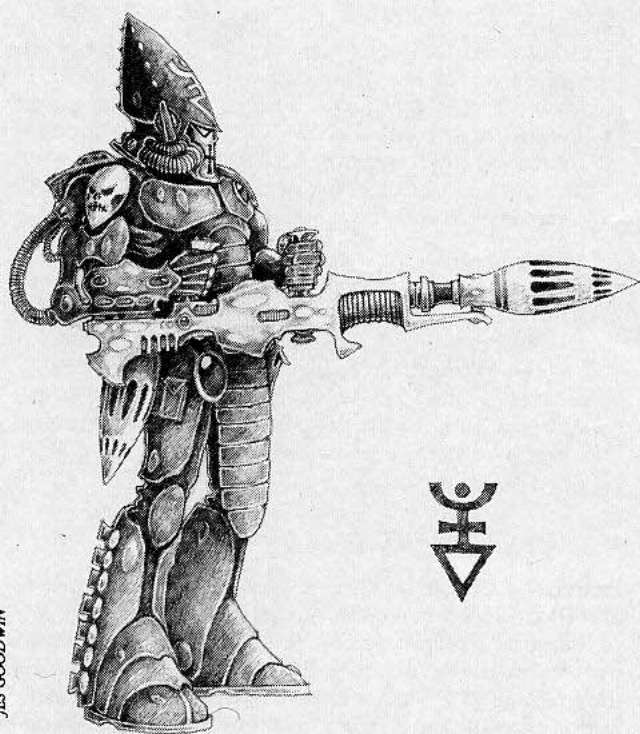
1. The leap begins and ends on the ground - the model cannot remain in the air from one turn to the next.
2. The leap is always made in a straight line and must be between 6" and 18" in length.
3. No Eldar model may land within 1" of any cover, a wood, building, or any other model including other Swooping Hawks. Such features would interfere with the wing membranes during the landing and cause them to crash. The exception is that Swooping Hawks can fly into close combat and then receive close combat bonuses as if they had charged. However, even when flying into close combat they must not land within 1" of obstacles, other Swooping Hawks, or any feature other than enemy models.
4. During their leap the Eldar can fly over any obstacle without penalty.
5. During their leap Swooping Hawks can drop grenades as described above.
6. Unit coherency does not apply while in the air, but comes into effect as soon as the Eldar land.

The Swooping Hawks can also use their wings to fly high into the sky in order to escape from the battlefield altogether. The following rules apply:

1. At the start of their movement phase the Swooping Hawk unit declares it is flying away from the battle and the models are removed from the table. They may make no other movement on the table that turn.
2. Models may fly away from a hand-to-hand combat engagement in this way without incurring blows against them.
3. Swooping Hawks which leave the table spend the entire turn off the game table and cannot do anything. They are soaring high above the table out of range of all weapons including the effective range of their own grenades - any grenades dropped from this height automatically miss and cause no damage, explode in the air, or fail to function.
4. A Swooping Hawk unit which left the battle in a previous turn may land back on the table anywhere it wishes during its following movement phase but may not make any other movement that turn. A returning Swooping Hawk unit may shoot as normal, but is unable to drop grenades in that turn.

DARK REAPER ASPECT WARRIORS

Points Value 210



JES GOODWIN

The Dark Reapers are the most heavily equipped of all the Aspect Warriors. Their armour is made from heavy interlocked plates and has very characteristic heavy armoured boots. These provide extra stability for firing the Missile Launcher that Dark Reapers carry. Special range-finders link the weapon's view-sight directly into the Dark Reaper helmet whose receptor vanes make the

Macthen drew back respectfully as Elshar strode past. The Exarch didn't appear to have noticed him. They used to be as close as brothers when they fought together as Aspect Warriors. While Macthen had travelled the Path of the Warrior and re-emerged into the light, Elshar had become increasingly caught up in the Aspect until he entirely surrendered to it. And now the Time of War was upon them, and Elshar had been elected the Young King. Macthen didn't envy him his role.

He'd once officiated at the awakening of the Avatar, and the terrible experience still haunted his dreams. Now he followed a different path he couldn't remember the details of the ceremony very clearly, but the image of the Avatar bursting through the doors of bronze would remain with him always.

Elshar was an Exarch of some standing now, his daring exploits celebrated in song and dance through many Craftworlds. Now all that separated him from his ultimate fate was the span of two days and a mortal body. It was a great honour to join the Avatar in immortality, but Macthen found the idea and the process involved quite horrifying.

ASPECT ARMOUR

The armour worn by Aspect Warriors is made from a pliable but resilient natural material overlaid with flexible but very tough plates of varying sizes. The flowing organic shapes of Eldar armour are typical of the biologically derived shapes which they use for most of the things they make. The design of the armour depends on the Aspect represented, each Warrior Aspect having its own distinctive design and basic colour scheme. Aspect Armour is psychically sensitive to its wearer, and can transmit energy through its fabric to provide the extra power to lift heavy objects. This means that an Eldar Aspect Warrior never suffers from the movement penalties associated with heavy weapons - particularly in the case of the Dark Reapers whose main armament is a missile launcher. This does not overcome the weapon's inherent slowness, so it is not possible for a Dark Reaper to move and fire in the same turn even with the benefit of Aspect Armour. This unique armour is the Eldar equivalent of Power Armour, and it has the same ability to provide a safe isolated environment for the individual wearing it, protecting the Eldar from most gas weapons for example. Most importantly of all, the Aspect Armour suit is fitted with a Waystone which will gather the Eldar's soul should he be slain, preserving his psychic self so that it can be recovered and taken back to his Craftworld.

Aspect warrior look even more threatening. Dark Reapers wear armour of a very dark colour, a near black or very dark blue which echoes the night sky. Each Squad has details and badges of a distinctive colour and pattern.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
3	4	4	3	3	1	4	1	9	9	9	9

Each Dark Reaper Squad consists of 3 Dark Reapers and costs 210 points. Dark Reaper Squads are smaller than other Aspect Warrior Squads as this allow the same number of warriors to fight over a larger battle-front - lending their support where it is needed rather than in one concentrated mass.

All the war gear of a Squad of Dark Reaper Aspect Warriors is identical. This equipment consists of:

Reaper Armour

Conferring a basic saving throw of 3, 4, 5 or 6.

Weapons

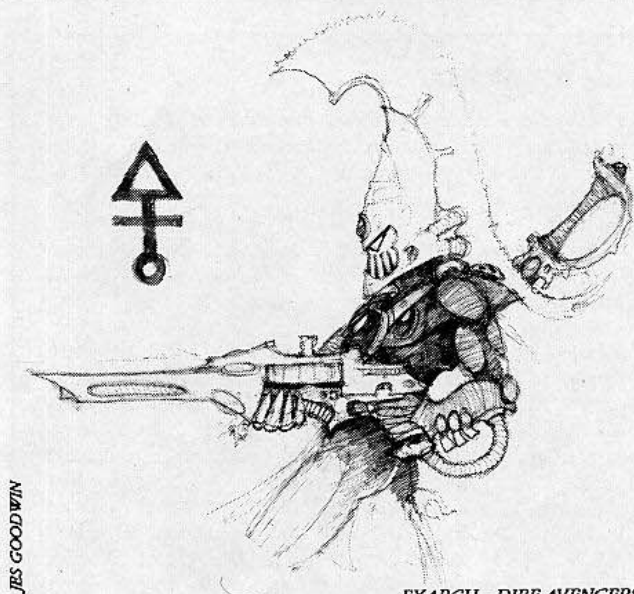
The Dark Reaper carries a Missile Launcher. It contains sufficient missiles to last for the duration of a battle. Every Dark Reaper carries Frag, Super-Krak and Melta missiles. A Laspistol is also carried for use in hand-to-hand combat or as an alternative weapon at short range.

Reaper Range-Finder

The Dark Reaper's helmet is fitted out with special range finders which help the Eldar to locate and lock the Missile Launcher onto its target. This adds plus +1 onto the 'to hit' like any other target, but also enables the firer to track fast moving targets. The normal negative modifier for firing at a fast moving target is therefore ignored.

EXARCHS

Points Value 80 + optional Ancient Weapon at 25 points



EXARCH - DIRE AVENGERS

The Exarchs are the guardians of the shrines to the Bloody Handed God and the mentors of the Aspect Warriors. They are awesome and frightening individuals, having become so caught up in their Warrior Aspect that they are no longer able to continue along the Eldar Path. Exarchs always belong to a specific Warrior Aspect, so they are Howling Banshee Exarchs, Dire Avenger Exarchs, or whatever.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	6	6	4	4	2	8	2	10	10	10	10

The army may include one Exarch for every Aspect Warrior Squad. So, for example, if the army includes 4 Aspect Warrior Squads then it can include up to 4 Exarchs - it can include less or none at all if the player prefers. The player can choose any type of Exarch so long as there is at least 1 Squad of that Warrior Aspect in the army. For example, if the army includes one Squad each of Howling Banshees, Dire Avengers, Striking Scorpions, and Swooping Hawks, then it may include up to 4

THE CRONE WORLDS

The old Eldar homeworlds still exist in the Eye of Terror - although they have been transformed into hellish places where daemons rule over subjugated races of mortals. The Eldar call these the *Crone Worlds* - referring to Morai-heg the Crone Goddess. The Crone Worlds remain the primary source of spirit stones. Acquiring new spirit stones is extremely hazardous because it necessitates an expedition to an area of warp-real space overlap such as the Eye of Terror. However, there are said to be untold secrets buried on the Crone Worlds since the time of the Fall and this attracts thousands of Eldar in search of their legendary past. According to legend the spirit stones were made by Vaul from the Tears of Isha. This is interpreted as a metaphor for the crystallization of psychic energies caused by the interface between the warp and the material universe. This process is associated with the Fall, and especially with the final catastrophe which ended the Eldar civilisation.

Elshar fixed his gaze to the opposite wall and held himself rigidly still. The attendant Exarchs moved around him silently, and he felt, rather than saw, them start to paint the runes on his naked body. The blood dried instantly, burning corrosively into his skin. He could feel the pattern creeping over his body, as if he were being covered with a net of fire.

A tiny part of him, which he thought long gone, whimpered softly in fear, and he suppressed it viciously. He had climbed to the peak of his terror and elation, and now all feelings were falling away. Emotionally and spiritually he was growing numb, bleakness filled his soul. His thoughts, the finish and beginning of his existence were polarised into a single point of time, bearing down upon him like a ball of fire...

Exarchs which can be chosen from the 4 Aspects present, and so could be 1 of each type, 2 each of one type, all 4 of the same type or any combination you wish so long as the total does not exceed 4. Exarchs cannot be included if they belong to a Warrior Aspect not present in the army - in our example the Exarchs could not be Fire Dragons or Dark Reapers as neither Aspect appears in the army.

Regardless of his Aspect the Exarch costs a basic 80 points. He fights as an individual or can join any Aspect Warrior Squad and lead it if he wishes. The Exarch's profile is not significantly better than that of the Aspect Warriors. His superior prowess is represented by a single special Warrior Power. This is generated randomly for each Exarch in turn using the Warrior Powers Table given at the end of the list.

Exarch Armour

Exarchs wear armour which is generally tougher and lighter than that of their equivalent Aspect. It also includes very efficient neurally activated servo-mechanisms which make the Exarch faster and more agile than an equivalently armoured Aspect Warrior. Exarch Armour confers a basic saving throw of 3, 4, 5 or 6 on a D6.

Weapons

Exarchs carry the same armament as the Warriors of their Aspect. Alternatively any Exarch may surrender this equipment in favour of a single randomly generated weapon from the Ancient Weapons Chart given at the end of this list. This costs an additional 25 points.

Special Aspect Gear

An Exarch of the Howling Banshees retains his Banshee Mask, an Exarch of the Swooping Hawks retains his Wings, and a Striking Scorpion keeps his Mandiblaster. A Dark Reaper loses his special targeter if he surrenders his Missile Launcher as this is considered to be attached to the weapon. Hawks lose their grenade packs along with other weapons if they substitute their armament for an Ancient Weapon.

ELDAR GUARDIAN SQUAD

Points Value 60 points per Squad



JES GOODWIN

GUARDIAN - BIEL-TAN CRAFTWORLD

The greater mass of Eldar who live on the Eldar Craftworlds are not currently Aspect Warriors, but pursue some other vocation or study not directly connected with warfare. Some fulfill the roles of engineers and constructors, others are engaged in providing essential services, a few become academics, philosophers and historians, still others explore their personal potential as athletes or entertainers.

Although these Eldar are not warriors they are still trained to fight as Guardian troops in the Eldar armies. Some will have been Aspect Warriors in the past, and their military skills are harboured to provide officers. Every Eldar on the Craftworld is ready to fight if they are needed. In times of emergency almost the entire population can be mobilised - in which case the number of Guardian Squads will far outweigh the number of Aspect Warriors. Their armour and appearance varies a great deal, sometimes even within a single Squad, although each member of a Squad generally has the same basic weaponry. Unlike the Aspect Warriors, their war gear is not dictated by ritual pattern, but can include a variety of weapon combinations.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	3	3	3	3	1	4	1	8	9	8	8

Each Guardian Squad consists of 5 Eldar and costs 60 points.

All members of the Squad, including its leader, have identical basic equipment and weapons, but these may be upgraded or changed as explained below. This basic armament consists of:

Mesh Armour

A suit of interwoven flexible plates similar to, but somewhat lighter than the armour worn by Aspect Warriors. This confers a basic saving throw of 5 or 6.

Weapons

The Eldar trooper is equipped with a Lasgun and Laspistol.

OPTIONAL WARGEAR

The entire Squad may exchange its basic weaponry of Lasgun and Laspistol for another combination of weapons. This turns the Squad into either a Close Combat Squad if it is re-equipped with close combat weapons, or a Battle Squad if it is uparmed with more effective weaponry.

Close Combat Squad. All members of the Squad may exchange their basic armament of Lasgun and Laspistol for either two Laspistols or a Laspistol and Power Sword. All Eldar in the Squad change to the same new armament. This costs no extra points.

Battle Squad. All members of the Squad may exchange their basic armament of Lasgun and Laspistol for Shuriken Catapult and Laspistol. This costs an extra 40 points per Squad. BUT the maximum number of Guardian Squads that may be converted to Battle Squads is half the total number in the army. Thus - if the army has a total of 4 Guardian Squads it may only have a maximum of 2 Battle Squads. This does not restrict the number of Guardian Squads that can be converted to Close Combat Squads - an army may include 2 Close Combat and 2 Battle Squads for example.

JET BIKES

The Eldar make great use of Jet Bikes. It is certainly the case that many of the unique Warrior Aspects not covered by this article ride Jet Bikes. Jet Bikes can also be ridden by Eldar Combat Squads. This practice is more common on some Eldar Craftworlds than others, and we may make provision in the future for whole armies of Jet Bike riders. However, these lists deal with a representative or typical Craftworld where only a limited proportion of Eldar would be equipped in this way.

Up to two Eldar Combat Squads may be equipped with Jet Bikes at an additional cost of 150 points per Squad. This includes bikes to mount a Standard Bearer and Musician if they are present. Jet Bikes are armed with two forward firing Shuriken Catapults.

THE MAIDEN WORLDS

Before the Fall the Eldar seeded many dead worlds with life as part of a program of colonisation which would take many thousands of years to reach fruition. Many of these worlds did not become inhabitable until many years after the fall, and some were then settled by humans and Orks who were quite unaware that they were living on a planet originally intended as an Eldar colony. The Eldar refer to these worlds as the Maiden Worlds, or Lilaethan after Lilaeth the Maiden goddess of the Eldar. Since the Fall fresh colonies have been settled from the Craftworlds themselves, often on worlds seeded before the fall, but sometimes on newly seeded or newly discovered habitable planets. The Eldar refer to all such worlds as Maiden Worlds as opposed to the lost Crone Worlds of their ancient civilisation.

OPTIONAL WEAPONS FOR LEADERS

The Squad's Leader model may substitute his weaponry for one of the following combinations:

New Weapons	Pts
Plasma Gun and Laspistol	10
Powerglove and Powersword	10
Flamer and Powersword	5
Chainsword and Shuriken Pistol	0
Laspistol and Shuriken Pistol	0

OTHER WEAPON OPTIONS

A single member of any ordinary Guardian or Battle Squad may substitute his weapons for those listed below. In the case of Battle Squads this does not affect the points already paid for Shuriken Catapults. Close Combat Squads may not include these weapons as they are either too bulky or inappropriate for hand-to-hand fighting.

1 model in the Squad may substitute its weapons for:

New Weapons	Pts
Las-cannon and Laspistol	60
Missile Launcher* and Laspistol	35
Melta-gun	10

* Missile launchers have Super Krak and Frag shells.

STANDARDS AND MUSICIANS

Each Squad may include a Standard Bearer and/or a Musician in addition to its normal fighting strength. This costs 10 points per model. Thus a Squad with both a Standard Bearer and Musician will actually have 7 models rather than 5 and costs an extra 20 points. These models have the same profile and armour as the rest of the Squad and carry either Laspistols or Power Swords or both. They fight as parts of their unit as normal.

Irillith and Berel clasped each other closely, the last moment of human contact before they assumed their warrior aspects. Around them, the walls of the shrine were humming with tension, sparkles of psychic energy running along the wraithbone.

They pulled apart and took their positions with the others on the floor. The Exarch raised her arms and the ceremony began. As the Eldar intoned the ritual chants and performed the familiar gestures they felt their humanity sliding away as the dark side of their nature was slowly released. Irillith's natural gentleness, her fears, her pity for Elshar were washed away by the relentless tsunami of the Aspect of the Warrior. As the mental breakwaters seceded, the part of her that was Irillith was swept further and further back until it was exiled to a tiny refuge in the core of her being.





Fully suited now, but still holding their masks, the Banshee warriors received the final blessing. The Exarch passed among them, dipping her finger in blood and drawing the sacred rune of the aspect on their foreheads.

The psychic tension was now almost unbearable, and the mane of hair on the Banshees' helmets stood on end with static. As one, they closed their eyes and raised their masks to their faces. A psychic shockwave boomed through the Craftworld as, simultaneously, the Avatar burst through the doors of bronze and the Aspect Warriors donned and fastened their masks.

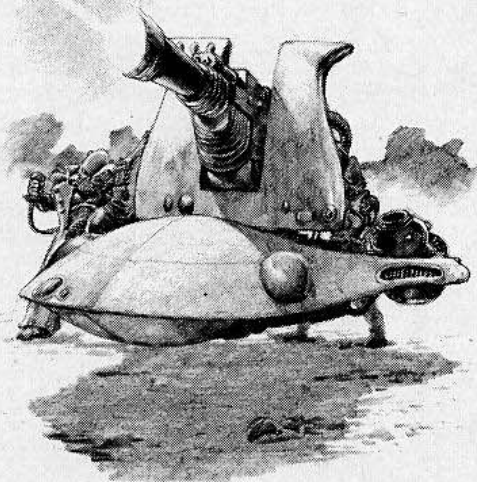
Irillith snapped open her eyes, and a film of pure red washed down over them. Blood, she smelled blood. The call to battle raced through the veins of her body. She wanted to leap, to sing with the joy of death. Most of all, she wanted to *kill*.

THE WORLD RUNES

Of all the many Craftworlds four of the largest and most famous are Ulthwe, Biel-tan, Saim-hann, and Iyanden. Like all Craftworlds these are represented by their own badge or symbol called the *World Rune*. The Runes symbolise each particular Craftworld and are used as its badge on banners, vehicles, and spacecraft.

Craftworld Name	Meaning of Name	Rune	Name of Rune
Ulthwe	The Song of Ulthanash		The Eye of Isha
Biel-tan	The Rebirth of Ancient Days		The Reborn
Saim-hann	The Quest for Enlightenment		The Cosmic Serpent
Iyanden	Light in Infinite Darkness		The Shrine of Asuryan

ELDAR SUPPORT TEAMS



KEVIN WALKER

Eldar Support Teams are drawn from Eldar currently pursuing Aspects which emphasise technical expertise. These Eldar are enrolled into their own guardian units and trained how to operate support weapons such as Lascannons, Distort Cannons, and other heavy equipment. On the battlefield these teams provide the additional fire-power needed to destroy enemy armoured formations, fortifications, heavily armoured troops, and massed targets. Each Support Team consists of two Eldar crewmen and a heavy weapon mounted on a mobile platform. These platforms allow the weapon to be moved easily by the crew and as a result Eldar support weaponry is extremely fast moving and flexible.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	3	3	3	3	1	4	1	8	9	8	8

Each Support Team consists of 2 Eldar plus a support weapon mounted on a mobile platform. A Support Team including its weapon costs the number of points shown below.

Heavy Plasma Gun.....	80 Points
Scatter Laser	60 Points
Las-cannon.....	120 Points
Distort Cannon	150 Points

The Support Teams crew are armed and equipped with:

Mesh Armour

A suit of interwoven flexible plates as worn by the Guardian Squads. This confers a basic saving throw of 5 or 6. If a crewman is hit all wounds resulting from that hit are ignored on the D6 roll of a 5 or 6. Modifiers from specific weapons or opponents may reduce this save or even make it impossible to save altogether.

Weapons

Each crewman is equipped with either a Laspistol or Shuriken Pistol.

MOBILE PLATFORMS

The Eldar mobile platform has anti-gravity suspensors and small jet propulsion motors built into it so that it floats above the ground surface and can be moved with only the slightest effort. Each crew model remains within 1" of the weapon whenever possible, and when one is obliged to move away (as a result of close combat/routes/etc) he will always attempt to return to his weapon if it is still intact. So long as both crew are within 1" of the weapon and are otherwise unoccupied the weapon may be moved up to 4" and fired during the turn. Normal movement penalties applying to the crew also apply to the gun, so deduct 2" for crossing a wall and move at half rate in a wood, for example.

When an enemy shoots at either gun or crew work out whether the shot hits, and then randomly determine whether it is the gun itself or a crewman which is hit. This can be done quite simply by nominating one crewman as 1-2, the other as 3-4, the weapon as 5-6, and roll a D6. The weapon and mobile platform has a nominal toughness of 4 - if any damage is caused roll a D6.

1 Platform Destroyed.

Weapon is immobilised for the rest of the game. It cannot be turned, but may continue to be fired within its normal arc.

2-6 Weapon and platform destroyed.

If a weapon is destroyed then its crew may function as a small independent unit from then on. Alternatively, they may move towards and join another Support Team and act as reserve crew - taking over if the weapon's own crew are killed.

A single crewman may either shoot the weapon or move it during the turn, but not both in the same turn, turning the weapon to face a new direction is considered to be moving. If both crew are killed the weapon is left in place. It can be taken over and used by other Support Team crews, but not by enemy troops. Enemy troops may destroy the weapon by moving into base to base contact with it once all crew are gone.



EXARCH - STRIKING SCORPION

WARLOCKS

Points Value 100



Eldar who feel their destiny is to thoroughly explore their own psychic natures become Seers. Seers who have already had experience as Aspect Warriors may become Warlocks and accompany the Eldar to war in this capacity.

Warlocks wear flowing robes and richly decorated Rune Armour. Runes made from Wraithbone cover their costume and are worn as jewellery. The Warlock focuses his power through these runes, and they act as a sort of psychic fuse, protecting the psyker from the daemons of the warp. Interwoven with the runes are spirit-stones containing the souls of dead Warlocks - these act as spirit-guides and advisers to the Warlock and enable him to draw upon the experiences and powers of long-dead comrades.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	2	2	2	3	1	4	1	8	9	8	9

Warlocks operate independently - they never lead units of troops although they can join and fight alongside other Eldar as they wish.

Each Warlock costs 100 points and is equipped with the following gear.

Weapons

The Warlock carries a Laspistol and a force weapon. This force weapon is randomly generated from the Warlock Weapon Chart. The most common weapon is the long dark blade called a *Witch Blade*. A Witch Blade is a unique kind of force sword - its psychic matrix is especially tuned to the Eldar mind. It works exactly like a normal force sword except that any power points used to charge the blade are doubled.

Rune Armour

The Warlock's helmet, armour, and clothing are enscribed with runes which bind protective psychic forces about him. These can deflect a bullet or the force of an enemy weapon before it even touches the Warlock. Because of this Rune Armour the Warlock has a D6 saving throw of a 4, 5, or 6. This saving throw cannot be affected by weapon save modifiers - no matter what the weapon hits the Warlock he always has a saving throw of 4+. Even the fantastic energies of Lascannons or Plasma Guns may be diverted by Rune Armour.

Runic Powers

Eldar psykers operate in a way quite different from human or other races. This is because they cannot tap energy directly from the warp without attracting the daemonic forces of Chaos. A Warlock would be instantly destroyed if he even attempted such a thing. To bypass this danger, the Eldar's spirit guides draw energy indirectly from the warp through special runes. The psychic abilities an Eldar can use are therefore called *Runic Powers*.

A Warlock can have up to 4 Runic Powers at his disposal. He can use 1 Power during the turn - this is normally declared at the start of the turn and not in the psionic phase. Each Runic Power costs an additional 25 points and is generated randomly from the Runic Powers Table. If the same result is rolled a second time the Warlock can choose any other Power off the table instead. The table below lists 4 Runic Powers. Note that this is completely experimental at the moment - we might be tempted to change the entire system if we have any better ideas! At the very least we plan to expand the number of entries considerably in the course of further games development.

Psychic Power Points

Strictly speaking Eldar Warlocks don't need power points to use their psychic abilities. However, they do need some power points to use their force weapons. They can also use power points to enhance their psychic saving throws against psychic attack. Each Warlock has 2D6 power points for these purposes. These are generated at start of the battle and are recorded by the player as they are used.

The moment must be very near now, thought Macthen, nearly upon us. Over his head, the wraithbone sparkled and pulsated with power. He tried not to think consciously about his work, his Seer's mind empathically absorbing the psychic waves that danced through the core of the Craftworld. He felt the energy being channelled through his body, rippling down his arms, flowing through his wrists and hands to the sculpture. When the shockwave of the Avatar's awakening had passed, he looked down at his creation. From the crude iron ingot a leaping figure of an Avatar arced gracefully up. He was not surprised that the daemon mask of its armour echoed Elshar's face.

FARSEER

Points Value 100



A Farseer is one the most potent psykers on the entire Craftworld. Farseers are so important to the Craftworld that they only leave it when the need is extremely urgent indeed. Farseers spend most of their time in a deep trance in which they study the possible futures of the Craftworld, working out the potential effect of current events on each of an almost infinite number of possible futures. If dangers threaten the Craftworld the Farseers will anticipate them - hopefully - no matter how subtle or how far in the future they might lie. Thus their visionary skills protect and guide the Craftworld and ensure its survival. When the powers of a Farseer are needed on the battlefield he wakes from his trance in anticipation and prepares himself to fight.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
6	D4	D4	D4	D4	D4+3	D6	1	10	10	10	10

Each Farseer's profile is unique in the same way as Avatars. Because Farseers spend extended periods of time almost immobile their bodies sometimes become wasted. This is reflected in the random nature of the profile. The player randomly determines the profile for the Farseer model before the first game, and then may continue to use the same Farseer and same profile for future battles. Alternatively, a new Farseer and a new profile can be generated for each new battle.

Farseers operate independently in the same way as Warlocks - they never lead units of troops although they can join and fight alongside other Eldar as they wish.

The Farseer costs 100 points and is equipped with the following gear.

Weapons

The Farseer is armed with a Laspistol and a Warlock Force Weapon. This force weapon is usually a Witch Blade as described already for Warlocks. It works exactly like a normal Force Sword except that any power points used to charge the blade are doubled. Generate the Farseer's weapon from the Warlock Force Weapons Chart at the end of the list.

Rune Armour

The Farseer's helmet, armour, and clothing are enscribed with Eldar Runes which bind protective psychic forces about him. This protective focus is the special wraithbone breastplate which he wears upon his chest. This can deflect a bullet or the force of an enemy weapon before it even touches the Farseer.

Because of this Rune Armour the Farseer has a D6 saving throw of a 4, 5, or 6. This saving throw cannot be affected by weapon save modifiers - no matter what the weapon hits the Farseer he always has a saving throw of 4+. Even the fantastic energies of Lascannons or Plasma Guns may be diverted by Rune Armour.

Psychic Power Points

As with Warlocks, Farseers don't need power points to use their psychic abilities. However, they may need some power points to use their force weapons.

They can also use power points to enhance their psychic saving throws against psychic attack. The Farseer has 6+D6 power points for these purposes. These are generated at start of the battle and are recorded by the player as they are used.

Runic Powers

A Farseer may have any of the Runic Powers already described for Warlocks or any of the following additional Runic Powers. The Farseer can use 1 Power during the turn - this is normally declared at the start of the turn and not in the psionic phase.

The four Runic Powers from the Warlock's section cost 25 points for a random roll in exactly the same way as for a Warlock. The Runic Powers listed below also cost 25 points per random roll. If the same result is rolled a second time the Farseer can choose any other Power off the table instead.

THE CRYSTAL SEERS

As Farseers grow older their close association with the life of their Craftworld begins to affect them - their psyches becomes inextricably linked to the Wraithbone core of the Craftworld and their physical bodies grow increasingly dormant. Eventually, a Farseer of great age will retreat to the Dome of Crystal Seers, a bio-dome many miles across where the Wraithbone core of the craft breaks through to the surface and forms a forest of Wraithbone trees. Once a Seer enters the Dome his body begins to crystallise and grow transparent, first affecting his lower body so that his upper torso still lives normally whilst his feet are rooted to the spot, then creeping upwards so that only his head is still flesh, finally turning him entirely to transparent crystal. Once this has happened the Farseer is part of the Craftworld, his consciousness has flowed into the Wraithbone core where it will be preserved forever in the Infinity Circuit. Other Eldar sometimes come to wander round the Dome of Crystal Seers to look upon the Seers of old whose forms are preserved forever amongst the changeless Wraithbone glades.

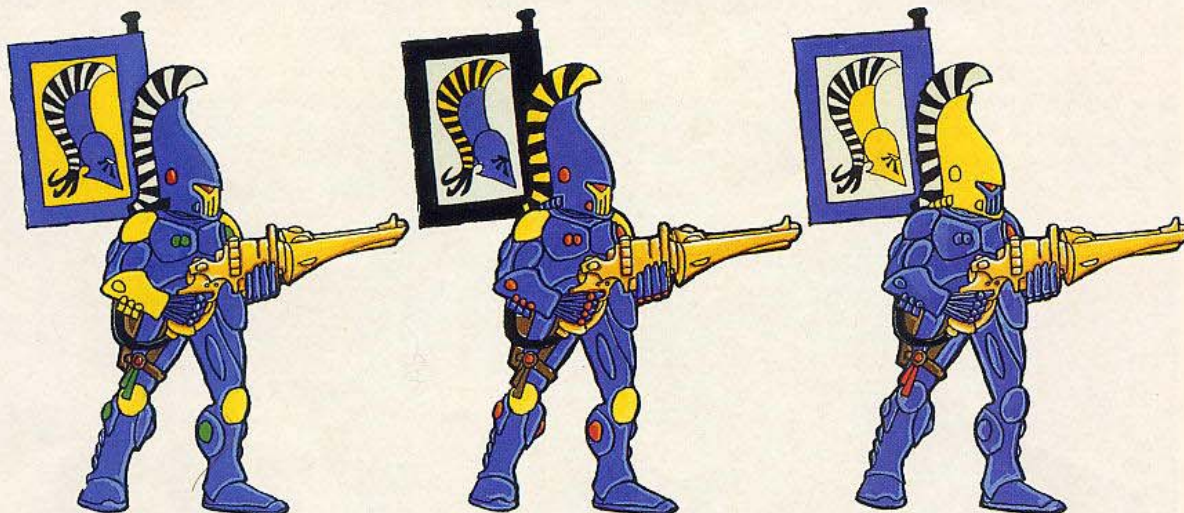
ELDAR

ASPECT WARRIORS

Runes - some Squads apply Aspect runes to prominent parts of their armour such as their helmets



DIRE AVENGERS



Banners - any or all models in an Aspect Warrior Squad may carry a back banner displaying the traditional symbol of their Aspect. These symbols allow the Squad to be identified from afar.



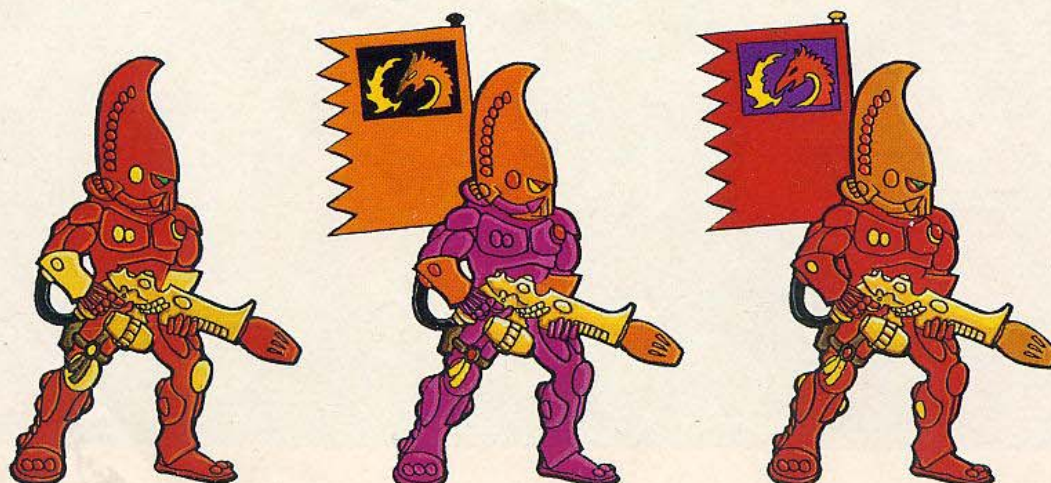
SWOOPING HAWKS



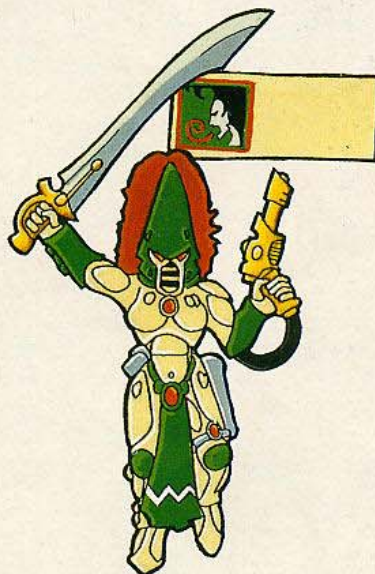
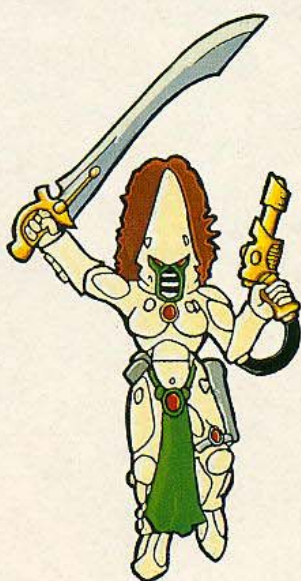
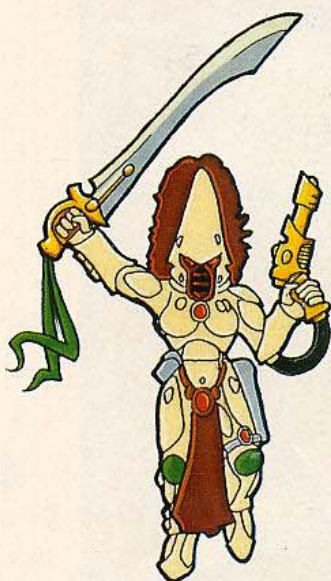
Weapon banners - any or all Swooping Hawks in a unit may have a weapon banner instead of a back banner.



FIRE DRAGONS



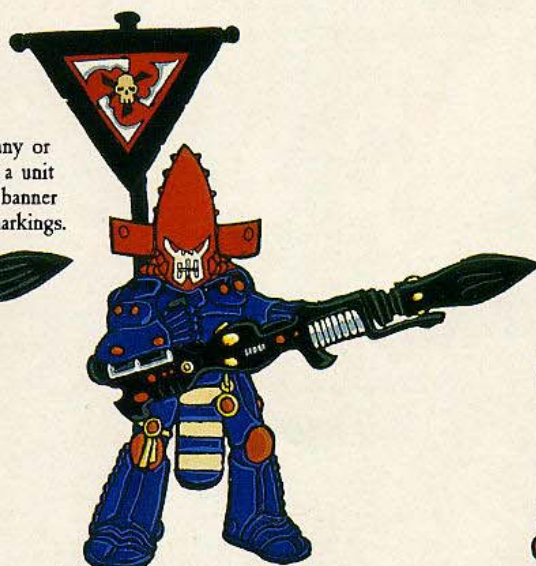
Each Warrior Aspect has its own typical uniform colour schemes, weapon combination and tactical role. These are remarkably consistent from one Craftworld to the next with only minor variations in uniform details to distinguish the various Aspect Warrior squads. Each basic uniform colour reflects the role of the particular Aspect - for example, the base colour of the Howling Banshee's is that of bone, the Dark Reapers are the colour of night, the Swooping Hawks are the colour of the ashen sky, the Fire Dragons are the colour of flame, and so on. This basic colour obviously varies a little depending on how it is interpreted - the illustrations below show typical examples of these basic colours. Each Squad is further distinguished by contrasting detail colours - the secondary colours shown below are examples but might equally well be other colours or a combination of several colours and these are sometimes also displayed on ribbons attached to weapons.



**HOWLING
BANSHEES**



Weapon banners - any or all Dark Reapers in a unit may have a weapon banner with skulls for kill markings.



**DARK
REAPERS**



Scorpions don't often carry back banners into battle as their close quarter fighting role often makes this impractical



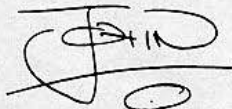
**STRIKING
SCORPIONS**



PRESENTED BY JOHN BLANCHE

In this month's 'Heavy Metal' we are concentrating on the superb new Eldar miniatures shown on the back cover. The models are the first releases in an extensive range covering the entire Eldar army list. If the first six Aspect Warriors and two Warlocks are anything to go by, these new Eldar promise to be Jes Goodwin's finest miniatures yet.

Also featured are Rob Baker's Deathwing Terminator conversions. And not described below but definitely worth a close look are Steve Mussared's excellent Skeletons on the Marauder Miniatures page. Thanks to both Rob and Steve for their efforts.



ASPECT WARRIORS

All Aspect Warriors have very simple colour schemes, making them quick to paint. I found that the simplest approach is to paint a base colour over the entire miniature except for the helmet and the weapons. As each of the Aspects has a definite range of colours, the choice of base colour was a simple matter: deep red for the Fire Dragons; dark blue for the Dire Avengers; black for the Dark Reapers; dark green for the Striking Scorpions; dark grey for the Swooping Hawks; and deep bone for the Howling Banshees.

As well as the painted models on the back cover, there are more examples of Aspect Warrior painting schemes on the full-colour page in the Eldar army list itself. As you can see, each scheme is different but each Aspect uses the same basic colours. Using this basic set of colours, you'll find an endless variety of actual painting schemes can be devised, giving each squad its own individual appearance and at the same time making its Aspect instantly identifiable.

FIRE DRAGONS: I gave the miniature a base coat of a mix of Imperial Purple and Red Ink. I then thinned this down to a wash which I applied over the entire miniature except for the helmet and weapons. For the next step, I applied the first stage highlights with Blood Red. The softer areas of the Aspect suit need to remain darker than the hard plates, so I gave them only small highlights on the edges of the creases and raised areas. I picked out each of the hard plates in Blood Red and highlighted them with Blood Angel Orange and Skull White. I gave the helmet a base coat of Spearstaff Brown with a spot of Orange Ink, highlighted with Sunburst Yellow and Skull White.

I decided that painting the Aspect rune on the front of the helmet in black would look dramatic and add to the feel of the model. These runes can actually be painted on any part of the armour or left off altogether – it's up to you. I find the easiest way to paint them is to use a sharp pencil to lightly draw out the rune, then paint it in using Chaos Black thinned down with Black Ink. When you use a pencil to draw onto a model, it's important to make sure that the paint is completely dry and hard, and that you only draw very lightly.

DIRE AVENGERS: I got the overall blue colour scheme by putting a base coat of Marine Dark Blue on in a thin wash. When this was dry, I highlighted with Ultramarine and Skull White. The undersuit was left darker than the top plates so there were no final highlights.

I chose yellow as the secondary colour because of the striking contrast with blue. I gave these areas a base coat of Spearstaff Brown highlighted with Sunburst Yellow and Skull White. The black and white stripes on the helmet crest and gun are particularly effective and are a clear way of indicating the squad.

DARK REAPERS: I used a black undercoat on this miniature instead of the normal white. This creates a deep shadow, just leaving the highlights to be added. On the undersuit, the highlights are a mix of Chaos Black and Skull White with the final highlights in Elf Grey.

I highlighted the top plates with a mix of Chaos Black and Moody Blue, then added Skull White for the final highlight mix. I picked red as the secondary colour because it contrasts dramatically with the black and bone of the overall scheme. Finally, a coat of gloss varnish of the helmet makes the whole miniature particularly effective.

STRIKING SCORPIONS: I thinned down a mix of Woodland Green and Chaos Black and applied this as a base coat over the whole model apart from the weapons. I highlighted the softer areas by adding Skull White to the original colour; for the hard plates I used Goblin Green and Bilious Green to highlight.

I chose yellow as a contrasting colour as it combines very effectively with the black on the underside of the helmet and backpack, as shown on the rear of the model. The Blood Red gems look very dramatic set against the green armour.

SWOOPING HAWKS: Squads of Swooping Hawks are often differentiated by the colour of the outer feathers on their wings; I picked yellow and turquoise because they look striking together and go very well with the overall feel of the model. I made up the turquoise colour by mixing Ultramarine and Woodland Green in a ratio of 1:2. I then highlighted this base colour by adding Skull White to the mix. Once the highlights were dry, I painted on a few very thin washes of turquoise ink to enrichen the colour. This ink is mixed from Blue and Green Inks in the same 1:2 ratio as the paint.

HOWLING BANSHEES: I got the bone effect on the Banshee armour by applying a base coat of Bestial Brown and Orc Brown. I then highlighted this with Bronzed Flesh and Skull White with a final highlight of pure Skull White round the edge of the plates.

I painted the hair using a base coat of Terracotta, highlighted with Blood Angel Orange and Skull White. I then added a wash of Chestnut Ink to tone down the white and create a richer colour. If you want, the Banshee's loincloth is an ideal area on which to paint the Aspect rune or just a decorative pattern.

WEAPONS: The look I wanted to achieve for the weapons was an antique gold effect to suggest venerable age and fine craftsmanship. I used a base coat of Chaos Black over all the weapons to create a very deep shadow. I then covered this almost completely with a mix of Shining Gold and Brown Ink, highlighted by adding more Shining Gold and Mithril Silver to the base mix. A final thin glaze of Brown Ink helped to smooth it all out. You can achieve an even more intricate effect by painting fine filigree work on the weapons. To do this, I use a base coat of Chaos Black; when it's dry, I paint on very fine interlacing lines of Skull White, adding a thin glaze of Orange Ink to give a gold effect.

BANNERS: At the bottom of the page are some banner designs for the six Aspects; you should photocopy these and paint in the appropriate colours. You may find it easier to paint the banners if you tape the photocopied sheet onto the back of a book or other hard surface and only cut it out once you've finished.

After I'd painted the Swooping Hawks' banner, I fastened it to the underside of the gun with superglue and bent it around the model to give a feeling of grace and movement.

WARLOCKS: The only thing that I had to bear in mind when painting the two Warlocks was that they have dark robes and their helmets are a bright contrasting colour. I got the purple colour by using a base coat of Imperial Purple and Chaos Black, highlighted with Imperial Purple and Skull White. For the blue, I used Space Marine Blue highlighted with Ultramarine and Skull White. The runes on the robes were painted on in Skull White and shaded with Yellow and Brown Ink.

ROB BAKER

Rob has managed to capture the ethnic feel of these Deathwing Terminators by removing the helmets and replacing them with faces cut off Genestealer Hybrids. He's added long hair and head bands with modelling putty to cover up the join between the new pieces.

The addition of feathers, runes and pictograms of animals all add to these evocative conversions, as do the natural leather colours that he's painted them. You can get this sort of leather effect by using a base colour of Orc Brown, highlighted with a mix of Orc Brown and Skull White. A wash of Brown Ink helps to give deep shading and definition.



Mike



Ivan



Dale



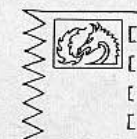
Tim



DIRE AVENGER



DARK REAPER



FIRE DRAGON



HOWLING BANSHEE



STRIKING SCORPION



SWOOPING HAWK