Dark Heresy™

Ascension™

EVERYTHING YOU KNEW WAS A LIE

WARHAMMER® 40,000™ ROLEPLAY

Dark Heresy

Ascension

ROLEPLAYING IN THE GRIM
DARKNESS OF THE 41ST MILLENNIUM

CREDITS

Lead Developer
Ross Watson

Written by
Alan Bligh, Andy Hoare, John French, and Sam Stewart

Additional Writing by
Owen Barnes

Editing
Leigh Anne Gross

Dark Heresy Designed by
Owen Barnes, Kate Flack, and Mike Mason

Graphic Design & Layout
Kevin Childress and Mark Raynor

Cover Art
Henning Ludvigsen

Interior Art
Mark Bedford, John Blanche, Alex Boyd, Matt Bradbury, Kevin Chin, Victor Corbella, Paul Dainton, Sascha Diener, Simon Eckert, Wayne England, David Gallagher, David Griffith, Illich Henriquez, Imaginary Friends Studio, Nuala Kennedy, Igor Kieryluk, Anton Kokarev, Karl Kopinski, Clint Langley, Fares Maese, Aaron Panagos, Adrian Smith, Greg Smith, Theo Stylianides, Tiernan Trevallion, Andrea Uderzo, Kev Walker, John Wigley, and Liu Yang

Art Direction
Zoë Robinson

Production Manager
Gabe Laulunen

Managing RPG Developer
Michael Hurley

Publisher
Christian T. Petersen

Games Workshop

Licensing Manager
Owen Rees

Licensing & Acquired Rights Manager
Erik Mogensen

Intellectual Property Manager
Alan Merrett

Head of Legal & Licensing
Andy Jones

Proofreaders
Jay Little, Thaadd Powell, James Savage, and Paul Tucker

Special Thanks
Craig Williams with Cheona Crabb, Stefan Elliot, Leonard Goulds, David Thatcher, Danica Zuks, "Bring the Noise" James Savage with Davie Gallacher, Thomas S. Ryan, Stewart Strong, "Curious Pastimes" Paul Tucker with Ben Cawkwell, Sarah Cawkwell, Pel Pearcey, "Sons of a Rogue Trader" Robin Everett-McGuirl with Chris Brandmeier, Adam Hargraves, Peter Larotta, Bob Leuzarder, Matthew Robenhymer, Nate Taylor, David Schumpert with David Hudock, Martin Linde, Adam Schumpert, Pierre Wagenseil, Benn Williams with Gary Beller, Chris Lancaster, Aric Wieder, Rebecca Williams, Eric Young, and Bo Hasle Buur

FANTASY FLIGHT GAMES

Fantasy Flight Games
1975 West County Road B2
Roseville, MN 55113
USA

Copyright © Games Workshop Limited 2010. All rights reserved. Games Workshop, Warhammer 40,000, the Warhammer 40,000 logo, Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay, the Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay logo, Dark Heresy, Ascension, Calixis Sector, and all associated marks, logos, places, names, creatures, races and race insignia/devices/logos/symbols, vehicles, locations, weapons, units and unit insignia, characters, products and illustrations from the Warhammer 40,000 universe are either ®, TM and/or © Games Workshop Ltd 2000–2010, variably registered in the UK and other countries around the world. All rights reserved. Published under license to Fantasy Flight Publishing Inc. Fantasy Flight Games and the FFG logo are trademarks of Fantasy Flight Publishing, Inc. All Rights Reserved to their respective owners. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the publishers.

ISBN 978-1-58994-711-5 Product Code DH11 Print ID: 716DEC09

Printed in China

For more information about the Dark Heresy line, free downloads, answers to rule queries, or just to pass on greetings, visit us online at

www.FantasyFlightGames.com

Contents

Introduction
What is in this Book? 5

Chapter I: Additional Rules
Expanded Ranks and Experience Scale 9
Fate Points for Ascended Characters 10
The Gift of Fate 10
Spending Fate Points 11
Burning Fate 11
Influence and Acquisition 13
Measuring Influence 14
Using Influence 15
Manipulating Others 16

Chapter II: Inquisitor and Cadre
Forming a Team of Agents 20
Creating New Ascended Characters 23
Acolytes to Agents 23

Chapter III: The Path to Ascension
Transition Packages 30
Using Transition Packages 30
Crusader Packages 30
Death Cult Assassin Packages 31
Desperado Packages 32
Hierophant Packages 34
Inquisitor 35
Interrogator 37
Judge 38
Magos 39
Primaris Psyker 40
Sage 42
Storm Trooper 43
Vindicare Assassin 44
General Transition Packages 46
Ascended Careers 49
Skills 49
Ascended Traits 49
Crusader 50
Death Cult Assassin 54
Desperado 58
Hierophant 62
Interrogator 66
Judge 70
Magos 74
Primaris Psyker 78
Sage 82
Storm Trooper 86
Vindicare Assassin 90
Inquisitor 94

Chapter IV: Ascended Skills and Talents
The Purpose of Ascended Skills and Talents .. 100
Mastered Skills 101
Using Mastered Skills 101
Gaining Mastered Skills 102
New Skill Groups 103
Paragon Talents 104
Gaining Paragon Talents 104
Talents of Influence 110
Positive and Negative Influence 110
Peers and Enemies 112
Reputation and Power 113
Other Ascendant Talents 120

Chapter V: Ascended Psychic Powers
Manifesting Psychic Powers 124
Psychic Ascendancy 125
Special Rules of Ascended Psychic Powers 126
Stormwroth 128
Maelstrom of Destruction 129
Will Unleashed 129
Burning Apocalypse 130
Daemonsbane 131
Witchesbane 132
Psychokinesis 132
Temporal Manipulation 133

Chapter VI: Ascended Armoury
Commissioning Items and Weapons 136
New Weapon Special Qualities 137
Ranged Weaponry 138
Melee Weapons 141
Armour 143
Force Fields 144
Gear 145
Unusual Ammo 147
Implants and Augmetics 148

Chapter VII: Serving the Inquisition
The Holy Remit 151
Sanctions 154
The Bearers of the Seal 157
Factions 160
The Balance of Power 165
Becoming an Inquisitor 165
The Inquisitorial Rosette 166
Inquisitorial Cadres 167
The Inquisitorial Household 168
The Ordos 169
Interaction 174

Chapter VIII: Game Mastery
The Inquisitor and His Cadre 182
Power and the Inquisitor 183
How the Cadre Functions 185
Threats and Challenges 187
There is No Satisfaction Without Toil 187
There is Always a Bigger Fish 188
The Immediate Threat 188
The Conspiratorial Threat 189
Running a Campaign 191
The Campaign Focus 191
Campaign Types 192

Chapter IX: Ascended Adversaries

Ordo Hereticus Adversaries 197
The Burning Princess 197
Eversor Assassin 198
Governor Malaki Vess 199
Magos Vathek 201
Zashlun, Shroud Mistress of the Pale Throng 202
Ordo Malleus Adversaries 203
Herald of Khorne 203
Marabas, Lord of Change 204
Ordo Xenos Adversaries 206
Dire Avenger Exarch 206
Slaugth Intendant Recusant 207
Slaugth Warrior Vassal Construct 209

Chapter X: The Red Wake

The Setting 212
GM's Briefing 212
Synopsis of the Adventure 213
Lords of the Imperium 213
GM Resources 215
The Principal Actors 215
Sydom's Conspiracy 215
The Noble Houses of Malfi 216
The Temple Aleph 218
Dramatis Personae 219
Part I: A Feast Among Vipers 227
You are Cordially Invited…. 227
What the Holy Ordos Knows 228
What the Holy Ordos Wants to Know 228
The Burning Parade 229
The Feast of Welcome 230
The Festivities 230
Part II: Death at High Mass 235
The Ceremony of Investiture 236
Darkness, Panic and Murder Most Foul 236
The Breaking Storm 237
Part III: Cause and Consequence 242
Going After Ensor 242
Into the Catacombs 242
Ceremonies of Mourning and Guilt 244
Rewards 245
Matters of Church and State 245
Antagonists & NPCs 246
The Clergy and their Servants 246
The Noble Houses 248
The Commercia 249
The Powers of Ruin 250
Map of The Temple of Alepth 251
Map of The Tabernacle 252
Ascension Character Sheet 253

Introduction

"This time you will stand alone and fight for yourselves. Now you will pay the price of your freedom in the currency of honest toil and human blood."

–Inquisitor Czevak, address to the Council of Ryanti

Ascension is a book about power. It is about playing characters who wield great and terrible powers; the power of a master of the arts of death to strike down enemies, the power of those who are peers of the Imperium with the right and duty to exercise that power for the protection of the Imperium of Mankind. Characters using the tools within this book have entered a new realm of possibility where they wield the power of the Inquisition unmediated by others, but not without consequence. The power of life and death now rests within the character's hands, for good, or for ill.

Having ascended to a new plane of personal power and authority it might, perhaps, be tempting to think that the darkness subsides—that the problems one faced when one was merely an Acolyte will dissolve in the face of the great power the characters now possess. This is a lie. The Calixis Sector is a dark and dangerous place for an Acolyte, and it is no less so for those who ascend to be masters of the Imperium. The darkness deepens, the dangers become more complex. Who do you trust? What will the consequences of your actions be? The possession of unlimited power is simply a door into a world of lies, treachery, and uncertainty where the newly ascended would be well advised to follow the wisdom of the ancients: trust no one and assume nothing.

WHAT IS IN THIS BOOK?

Ascension contains all the tools needed by both players and game masters to play ascended games of **Dark Heresy**, which is a shorthand way of saying the characters will possess either full Inquisitorial rank or similar power. These tools include wider and more powerful personal abilities and rules for how characters can wield and develop their political and temporal power within the Calixis Sector. The process of a character transferring to the ascended realm of play is addressed both in terms of the mechanics of **Dark Heresy**, and the in-game transition for the character. Also provided is guidance for a game master wishing to run an ascended game, a selection of suitably powerful adversaries, and an adventure that showcases the ascended game of **Dark Heresy** itself and the perils of high politics and religion in the 41st Millennium.

Chapter I: Additional Rules

Chapter One introduces new rules for use in ascended games of **Dark Heresy**. Here you will find the rules for expanded Characteristic increases and gaining additional ranks beyond the eighth rank. It also features new options for spending and burning Fate Points and rules for a new game system called Influence, which represents an ascended character's ability to wield authority.

Chapter II: Inquisitor and Cadre

Chapter Two looks at the formation of a cadre of Throne Agents around an Inquisitor. It presents the options available to characters that ascend from the careers in the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook to ascended careers. Guidelines and advice are also presented for those who wish to create brand new characters at the ascended tier.

Chapter III: The Path to Ascension

This chapter begins with Transition Packages for each ascended career, representing how a character ascends from Acolyte to Throne Agent. Chapter Three contains twelve ascended careers: Inquisitor, Interrogator, Crusader, Death Cult Assassin, Desperado, Hierophant, Judge, Magos, Primaris Psyker, Sage, Storm Trooper, and Vindicare Assassin.

Chapter IV: Ascended Skills and Talents

Chapter Four presents a broader, more powerful form of skills; Mastered Skills. It also presents a new type of talent—the Paragon Talent—and a number of other new talents for use by ascended characters. Also presented in this chapter are talents that characters can take to enhance and personalise their influence within the Calixis Sector.

Chapter V: Ascended Psychic Powers

Chapter Five presents new ways for ascended psykers to use their powers, and presents new potent psychic powers.

Chapter VI: Ascended Armoury

Chapter Six contains information and rules for iconic weaponry and equipment used by Inquisitors and Throne Agents. A wide variety of equipment, from combi-weapons to the specialised gear of the Vindicare Assassin, may be found here.

Chapter VII: Serving the Inquisition

Chapter Seven delves into the secrets of the Inquisition and how it operates within the Imperium of Mankind. It focuses on the place of an Inquisitor as a peer of the Imperium, the power of Inquisitor Lords, and the nature of the Ordos.

Chapter VIII: Game Mastery

Chapter Eight focuses on the challenges faced by a Games Master running an ascended game of **Dark Heresy**. How to deal with issues of player-character authority within the game universe, as well as advice on creating wide-ranging threats and running long-term campaigns are all discussed in detail.

Chapter IX: Ascended Adversaries

Chapter Nine presents new adversaries for Throne agents to face. From the influential and corrupt Imperial Commander to the remorseless Eversor Assassin, ascended characters will not lack for enemies to match their ascended power.

Chapter X: The Red Wake

Chapter Ten is a complete adventure designed for ascended play. Murder comes to the great temple Aleph on Malfi during the investiture of a senior priest of the Ecclesiarchy. With power, wealth and treachery in abundance the Inquisitor and Throne Agents find a way out of the maze of lies and blood, and if they find the truth, do they let it be known—or substitute their own?

Designer's Note

Ascension takes Dark Heresy characters from the position of Acolytes working for an Inquisitor and propels them into the position of Throne Agents, working directly for the Holy Ordos. No longer will the characters simply take orders from invisible patrons. Instead, the Inquisitor himself is by the Throne Agents' side every step of the way. Thus, this book is written with the understanding that one of the player characters will take on the role of an Interrogator or an Inquisitor. Therefore, if the group does not possess an Interrogator or Inquisitor amongst them, the GM may need to make some appropriate adjustments. The GM should keep in mind that a sufficiently authoritative Throne Agent such as a Judge or Magos can also effectively fill the required role.

"Some may question your right to destroy ten billion people. Those who understand realise that you have no right to let them live!"

–In Exterminatus Extremis

Additional Rules

Expanded Ranks and Experience Scale

•

Fate Points for Ascended Characters

•

Influence and Acquisition

Chapter 1: Additional Rules

"As an Ensign, I served once with Captain Leoten Semper. He was a bold man, and never let the enemy set the rules of the engagement. Captain Semper always used to say it was better to make them dance to your tune than the other way around."

–Imperial Navy Admiral Joachim Wellax

This book contains a wealth of new, additional rules to enhance the experience of your **Dark Heresy** campaign. **Ascension** takes **Dark Heresy** Acolytes to the next tier, bringing them to greater heights of both power and peril... for the Inquisition is rife with bitter rivalry, treacherous schemes, and enemies far more deadly and dangerous than mere cultists. This is the book that details what happens to a **Dark Heresy** character who advances beyond Rank 8.

It is important to note, however, that **Ascension** does not replace the core game rules of **Dark Heresy**. Rather, **Ascension** adds to those rules, bringing new options for player characters and presenting an entirely new way to play the game at a higher tier.

This chapter introduces new levels of Characteristic Advances to grant a **Dark Heresy** character greater aptitude, a new and expanded Rank structure for experience points and Advances, new ways to use Fate Points, and the introduction of Influence—a system to represent an Inquisitor's power and authority in the 41st Millennium.

One important distinction introduced in this book is that the player characters are no longer assumed to be Acolytes. Instead, they are now Throne Agents, people who are trusted and relied upon by the Holy Ordos of the Inquisition. In the name of the God-Emperor of Mankind, the player characters do the work of the Inquisition on a whole new level.

Throne Agents?

Also known as a Trusted Acolyte, the term "Throne Agent" is used throughout this tome to indicate an Acolyte who has ascended to the higher ranks of the Inquisition. Throne Agents have much greater degrees of freedom, power, and responsibility than an Acolyte, and therefore have earned their title.

Expanded Characteristic Advances

A Characteristic Advance is an increase to a character's raw abilities. When a character gains a Characteristic Advance, he adds +5 to the Characteristic on the character sheet. In **Dark Heresy**, Characteristic Advancements are divided into four progression levels: Simple, Intermediate, Trained, and Expert. **Ascension** introduces two additional levels: Heroic and Master.

As a character improves his characteristics, he must advance through each of the progression levels in turn, starting at Simple. Once the character has attained the Expert level, he may then increase his characteristic to the Heroic level, and once there, he can further improve to the Master level. In order to take the Heroic and Master level Characteristic Advances, a character must have already moved into one of the Ascended Careers in this book.

The cost for these increases for each Ascended Career is listed in the relevant Ascended Career section in a table that looks like this:

Vindicare Assassin Characteristic Advance Scheme

Characteristic	Heroic	Master
Weapon Skill	1,500	2,000

As you can see, the Heroic level +5 increase to a Vindicare Assassin's Weapon Skill costs 1,500 xp. The next +5 (at the Master level) costs 2,000 xp.

The costs for Characteristic Advances are cumulative. Therefore, you could not simply pay 2,000 xp for a +10 increase. Rather, you would pay 1,500 xp for the Heroic Advance and then pay 2,000 xp for the Master Advance.

Example

Ross wants to increase the Weapon Skill of his character, who has the Vindicare Assassin Ascended Career. The character's current Weapon Skill is 45, and it costs 1,500 xp to buy the Heroic Weapon Skill Advance. Ross spends 1,500 xp and increases the character's Weapon Skill to 50. Ross wants to raise his character's Weapon Skill even higher. Therefore, he spends another 2,000 xp (the cost of the Master Advance) to increase the Vindicare Assassin's Weapon Skill by another +5. In the end, Ross's Vindicare Assassin has increased his Weapon Skill to 55 (45 + 5 + 5=55) and has spent 3,500 xp to do so (1,500 + 2,000 = 3,500).

Negative Value Advances

A negative value advance is an advance that imposes a negative or inhibiting effect on a character. These advances are intended to deepen the options for character development by allowing characters to actively choose a limitation or drawback for their character. These advances are almost exclusively Influence Talents that limit or focus the use of the cadre's Influence (see page 13 in this chapter). Negative value advances are listed with a minus sign in front of them. When a character takes one of these advances, he gains the number of experience points listed to spend on other advances. Only one such advance of each kind (i.e., Rival and Enemy) may be taken by a Throne Agent, although an existing advance may be upgraded to a higher level, at which point the Rival becomes an Enemy instead. Therefore, a character may only have one Enemy and one Rival at a time, but the Enemy and the Rival may be different organisations. Naturally, the GM may 'award' more than one Rival or Enemy to a character as the campaign requires.

Example

Adam decides to take Rival (Chartist Captains) as a negative value advance at Judge rank 14. This advance has a cost of minus 200. When Adam takes this advance his character immediately gains 200 experience points to spend.

Expanded Ranks and Experience Scale

A character's Rank is a general measure of his experience and capabilities. It represents the progression of a character's abilities as he grows in power and status. Rank is determined by the total amount of Experience Points that the character has spent. Each Rank has a corresponding Advancement Scheme that contains a combination of Skills, Talents, and other bonuses that the character may purchase with xp.

A character may buy Advances from any Rank Advancement Scheme he currently holds or has previously earned. As the character climbs in Rank, he gains access to more and more Advancement Schemes, and therefore gains more options for the player to customise.

Ranks are initially easy. However, gaining new Ranks becomes progressively harder throughout the life of a character. Reaching the rarefied heights of power in the Imperium is a long and difficult climb, but the rewards are well worth the effort!

Adjusting the Ranks for Dark Heresy Campaigns

The Expanded Rank Table in this Chapter presents a slightly altered rank structure from the one presented in the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook. This is an intentional change in order to make a character's Rank progression more balanced and smooth.

If you want to use this Rank structure with an existing **Dark Heresy** character (or adopt it for your campaign), note that the largest change occurs at Rank 6 and continues with some smaller adjustments thereafter. Most **Dark Heresy** characters do not experience any changes, and at worst, some characters gain some of the higher Ranks earlier than they did before.

The Expanded Rank Table presented here also brings the Rank structures in **Dark Heresy** and **Rogue Trader** closer together and integrates the Ranks for future books in the Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay line.

Table 1-1: Expanded Rank Advance Table

Rank 1	Rank 9
XP: 0–499	XP: 13,000–16,999
Rank 2	**Rank 10**
XP: 500-999	XP: 17,000–20,999
Rank 3	**Rank 11**
XP: 1,000–1,999	XP: 21,000–24,999
Rank 4	**Rank 12**
XP: 2,000–2,999	XP: 25,000–29,999
Rank 5	**Rank 13**
XP: 3,000–4,999	XP: 30,000–34,999
Rank 6	**Rank 14**
XP: 5,000–6,999	XP: 35,000–39,999
Rank 7	**Rank 15**
XP: 7,000-9,999	XP: 40,000–44,999
Rank 8	**Rank 16**
XP: 10,000–12,999	XP: 45,000–49,999

Gaining Ranks

Characters automatically gain Ranks by spending xp. Once a character's total amount of spent xp reaches the necessary number, the character's Rank increases. Note that Rank increases always occur after an Advance has been taken.

All of the Careers in Ascension require the same amount of spent xp in order to increase in Rank. The spent xp needed to advance in Rank is listed on the table above.

Most characters in Ascension begin at Rank 9, having spent 13,000 Experience Points. Existing **Dark Heresy** characters who are moving into an Ascended Career may begin with a higher amount (however, most existing **Dark Heresy** characters entering an Ascended Career begin at Rank 9).

Example

Ross's Vindicare Assassin has spent a total of 38,000 xp on various Advances. In the course of the game, Ross earns an additional 2,000 xp, which he decides to spend upon a Characteristic Advance. He receives permission from the GM to take the Advance, then adjusts his unspent xp total by 2,000 to reflect the change. He notes down the Advance on his character sheet and alters his Characteristic Profile to account for the Advance he took. Finally, he adds the 2,000 xp to his current total of spent xp. Ross's character has now spent 40,000 xp (38,000 + 2,000=40,000). When he consults the Rank table on this page, he sees he has enough spent xp to earn Rank 15. He removes his old Rank (14) and notes that his Vindicare Assassin is now Rank 15 upon his character sheet.

Destiny Awaits: Fate Points for Ascended Characters

"Strike true, and strike with precision!"

–Storm Trooper battle cry often heard during the Margin Crusade

Since the first day he realised he was entering the God-Emperor's service, the Throne Agent knew he was bound for a greater destiny. Fate had elevated him above the huddled trillions, the terrified masses that inhabit the Imperium. He had been given a purpose, and as his fellow Acolytes bled, died, or were found wanting in their duties, the Throne Agent stayed true to that belief.

Now, he has taken a great step in the service of the Inquisition. No longer a single, faceless Acolyte amongst an Inquisitor's web of servants and contacts, he is now an Agent of the Throne. Surely, the destiny that awaits him is close at hand.

The Gift of Fate

A Throne Agent has survived and perhaps even prospered throughout a long and dangerous career as an Acolyte. This is at least in part due to the power of Fate he is able to manipulate to his own ends. Now that he is either a trusted agent of the Inquisition—or even a full-blown Inquisitor—Fate continues to play an ever-more active role in his life and career. After all, why would he have survived this long, if not for some purpose?

Upon entering his Rank 9 Career, each Throne Agent receives a number of additional, permanent Fate Points. The number of Fate Points each Throne Agent gains is linked to how many Fate Points he has remaining after a dangerous life hunting down heretics, daemons, and aliens. Each Throne Agent should consult **Table 1–2: Additional Fate Points** to see how many Fate Points he receives. Remember, however,

Table 1-2: Additional Fate Points

Fate Points a Throne Agent Currently Has	Fate Points Awarded
0	3
1	2
2	1
3+	0

that more than anything else, Fate is fickle. Those who have taken more risks and nearly suffered death more often may find Fate favours them more than those who have played it safe during their lives.

Controlling Your Destiny: Maximum Fate (Optional Rule)

Fate is a vital characteristic for both Acolytes and Agents and greatly increases their chances for survival in a deadly and uncaring universe where a stray bolt shell or vengeful chain blade can swiftly end their existence in a shower of blood and gore. For this reason, having at least a few Fate Points is important—however, the GM should be careful not to allow PCs to amass too many; five or more Fate Points can lead to situations where PCs become blasé about situations in which their character might be killed, knowing that they have numerous 'lives' up their sleeve. The GM should also be aware of the increased combat potency which a large store of Fate Points grants a character, providing them bonuses to tests, re-rolls, and instant healing. Finally, Fate Points are special and should feel that way. If a character only has 1 or 2 Fate Points remaining, the player is going to carefully consider how and when he spends them.

For these reasons, it is recommended that GMs limit a character's Fate Points to a maximum of five. This is, however, only a guideline, and the GM can allow his players greater Fate Point totals if he feels it suits the style of his campaign. The GM should also take note of the Favoured by Fate Talent on page 121.

SPENDING FATE POINTS

Over his career, a Throne Agent has learned what risks he can take and just how far he can push his luck. As he enters the next phase of service to the Inquisition, he finds that his luck stretches further and fortune smiles on him more frequently. Or perhaps, it only seems that way. After all, a Throne Agent has survived where so many of his fellows have died.

Fate Points are still used following the same mechanics laid out in the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook, and all the options presented there are still valid. Each player has a pool of Fate Points equal to their number of Fate Points that they may spend each session. Once spent, a Fate Point may not be spent again until it is 'restored' at the beginning of the next gaming session, but spending a Fate Point does not remove it permanently.

However, instead of spending Fate Points to perform the actions listed in **Dark Heresy**, a Throne Agent may now also spend one Fate Point to do one of the following:

- Re-roll any test, whether or not the test failed or succeeded. This is done after dice are rolled. The results of the second roll are final—an additional Fate Point cannot be spent to re-roll again.
- After inflicting Damage on a target, re-roll all dice used to determine that amount of damage. The results of the second roll are final—an additional Fate Point cannot be spent to re-roll again.
- Gain a +10 bonus to a test. This must be chosen before dice are rolled.
- Count as rolling a 10 for Initiative. The Fate Point can be spent after Initiative has been rolled normally.
- Add two degrees of success to a test. The Fate Point must be spent immediately after rolling the test.
- Instantly remove an amount of Damage equal to the Throne Agent's Toughness Bonus. This cannot affect Critical Damage. The Fate Point must be spent at the beginning of the Throne Agent's Turn.
- Immediately recover from being Stunned and remove all levels of Fatigue. The Fate Point must be spent at the beginning of the Throne Agent's Turn.

Spending a Fate Point is always treated as a free action.

BURNING FATE

As described in **Dark Heresy**, player characters have the option of avoiding certain death by permanently burning Fate Points. By burning a Fate Point, they are reducing their overall number of Fate Points by one, but that is infinitely preferable to dying. Of course, a Throne Agent must have at least one Fate Point (the Fate Point may either be spent or unspent) in order to burn it.

When a Throne Agent burns a Fate Point to avoid death, he has two options he may choose from:

- The first option is the Throne Agent survives the situation that kills him, but only just. He does not suffer any permanent penalties that would have been inflicted by the Critical Hit table, and eventually recovers. This option is exactly the same as the option found on page 185 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook.
- The second option is that the Throne Agent survives what would have killed him, and rises to his feet, bloody and battered, but unbowed. The Throne Agent ignores whatever penalties (permanent or not) would have been applied from the Critical Hit table due to the injury, and immediately regains 1d5+1 wounds. The drawback of this, however, is the Throne Agent can still be killed again during the session, which may necessitate him burning more Fate Points to survive.

There is a third way for a Throne Agent to burn Fate Points. In this situation, it is not to avoid death, but to accomplish a truly epic task.

- The Throne Agent may burn one Fate Point to automatically succeed in any Test (Characteristic Test, Skill Check, or roll to Hit) he is required to make. If the Throne Agent does this, he succeeds at the Test without having to roll, scoring a number of successes equal to the bonus of the Characteristic being tested.

Only Human: Maximum Wounds (Optional Rule)

By the time an Acolyte reaches the point where he is ready to ascend, he has probably accrued a significant number of additional wounds purchased through advancements from his existing career path. For most of the career paths, this total is probably going to be less than 25, though some (such as Guardsmen) could have more.

While there is no absolute limit on the number of wounds a character may have, it is recommended that the GM not let characters have more than 25 wounds. After all, as powerful as Acolytes become, they are still (for the most part) human and limited to the frailties of their bodies. If the GM does wish to allow a character to exceed 25 wounds, he should, with the player, consider the reasons behind his level of extreme robustness. Excessive wounds should always come with a price, however, be it the inhuman mechanical monster a Tech-Priest might become or the augmented mountain of meat a gene-engineered Guardsman might evolve into.

Mind and Soul: Dealing with Insanity and Corruption

Life as an Acolyte can be both mind-bending and terrifying, and it is almost unheard of for a character to attain the maximum rank in their basic career without accruing at least some Insanity and Corruption points. For the most part, this is entertaining and character-building. However, it can become a problem as these characteristics creep towards 100 and the prospect of losing a well-loved character. In this book, there are a number of ways for characters to reduce their levels of both Corruption and Insanity, from transition packages to talents. However, especially in the case of characters particularly badly affected by one or both of these maladies, it may be that these are not enough or not suitable for them in particular. In this case, the GM is encouraged to offer alternatives to removing IP and CP. All three of the following options represent different methods that the Acolyte can undertake to address his condition, including anything from therapy to meditation and reflection upon the horrors he has faced—or even a kind of grim acceptance of the inevitable result of opposing the forces of heresy and Chaos.

Spending Experience: As a general guideline, the GM should allow players to use experience to buy off both Corruption and Insanity points at a rate of 100 xp per point. If the character has a large number of Corruption or Insanity Points, however, the GM may decide to be a bit more generous and reduce this to 50 xp or less. If points are removed in this way, the GM should be lenient with lasting effects, since the players has spent hard earned experience to remove them.

Sacrificing Characteristics: Another method is to allow the character to remove points at a price to the Acolyte's mind, body, or soul as he is cleansed. Instead of using experience (or if the character has no experience to spend), the character suffers damage to his characteristics. A general guideline is 2 points of permanent characteristic damage allows an Acolyte to remove 1d10 points of either Insanity or Corruption. The GM can decide exactly what method is being used based on the characteristic damaged. For example, the loss of Intelligence might reflect memory wipes whilst the loss of Fellowship might involve tattooing the 999 Holy Words of Saint Drusus across the Acolyte's entire body. A character may suffer a maximum of 6 characteristic damage in this manner. The characteristic damage must be allocated in 2-point groups to a single characteristic.

Trading Insanity for Corruption: The final method involves trading either Insanity for Corruption or vice versa. This should be a straight swap of points, so if the character loses 10 points of Corruption, he immediately gains 10 points of Insanity. This can be reasoned out in a similar fashion to ability damage. For example, if the character loses Corruption but gains Insanity, he may have reasoned out this growing taint by reading proscribed texts and looking into the beyond, whilst if he lost Insanity and gained Corruption, it may be that he has come to terms with his madness by embracing darker powers. In either case, the GM and player should work together to come up with a reason that suits both the character and the campaign.

Influence and Acquisition

The Inquisition is the shadowy left hand of the Golden Throne, and arguably the most powerful single organisation in the Imperium of Man. As such, each individual Inquisitor wields a measure of that power and authority—and has at his back the resources of a million worlds. While the least of the Inquisition's operatives may scrimp and save Throne Gelt, an Inquisitor does not concern himself with the minutiae of earning, accumulating, and investing wealth. Nor should he, for the safety and preservation of humanity are dependant on his ever-vigilant attention towards those who would destroy it.

To ensure an Inquisitor has what he needs to perform his duties, the Imperium is quite willing to supply him with considerable resources. In the Calixis Sector, for example, a portion of the collected Imperial Tithe is funnelled through the Tricorn and into the coffers of the Calixian Conclave. Trying to determine the specifics of the Tricorn's finances is, of course, extremely unwise, even for most of the Conclave's members. However, it can be assumed that no matter how miniscule the diverted fraction of the overall Tithe, the staggering quantities of wealth involved guarantee that the Conclave's resources (both monetary and in other forms) rival the value of some sub-sectors.

These resources are distributed to the multitude of Inquisitors in the Calixis Sector as needed. The Inquisitors, in turn, allocate them amongst their trusted agents and colleagues. Thus, a trusted Throne Agent should never be forced into petty crime for inconsequential wealth, and is in the rare and enviable position amongst the Imperium's masses of not having to concern himself with money.

What an Inquisitor and his Throne Agents are concerned with, however, is Influence. Far more important than monetary wealth, Influence allows an Inquisitor to conduct far-reaching investigations, direct the actions of the likes of planetary governors and Lords Militant of the Imperial Guard, and even requisition the vast and shadowy resources of the Conclave itself. After all, the Inquisition is an organisation of politics and favours, blackmail and back-stabbing, and Influence is a measure of an Inquisitor's success in navigating that treacherous ocean. Too little Influence, and he quickly finds himself sinking below the surface, sent on trivial errands of little consequence or even used and exploited by his more powerful peers. Should he amass enough, however, he soon finds himself rising to the heights of the Inquisitorial hierarchy, perhaps even sitting on the Calixian Conclave's High Council at Lord Inquisitor Caidin's right hand.

Rather than a single, quantifiable resource, Influence represents many aspects of a Throne Agent's career: his choices, accomplishments and failures, debts owed, promises given and received, reputation amassed, friends, rivals, and foes. Influence also represents the funds he can draw on as a member of the Inquisition and Calixian Conclave. Influence can be used softly, to subtly influence actions and events, or bluntly with the full power of an Inquisitor's Rosette of Office. It can be used to requisition supplies and equipment for an Inquisitor and his Agents, manipulate the actions of other members of the Adeptus Terra, or even allow the Inquisitor to issue absolute orders to almost any Imperial citizen. It can also be used for much, much more.

Influence is a single statistic that is used communally amongst all players in a group. The actions of any member of the group can affect the Influence as it pertains to the whole. This section covers some more common uses of Influence, as well as how Throne Agents can accumulate, use, and lose Influence.

Requisition and Commission: Influence is used by Throne Agents to obtain the use of specialist equipment, services, and supplies for varying periods of time, or obtain rare and valuable items for their personal use and duties.

Manipulate and Control Others: Throne Agents can bring their Influence to bear in order to manipulate others into doing their bidding. This can either be subtly—to the point that the target may not realise he is being manipulated or who is behind it—or bluntly with Rosette and threat of the Inquisition's wrath. This can also be used to bring the Inquisition's considerable resources in to deal with a situation.

Expanded Test Difficulties

In Ascension, characters face greater challenges and possess greater resources than ever before in Dark Heresy. This means that tasks are sometimes trivially easy or hellishly difficult, depending on the circumstances of the situation. Below, you will find a handy table that outlines these expanded difficulties and the modifiers associated with each level of difficulty. The difficulty modifier is applied to the governing Characteristic associated with the Test.

Table 1-3: Expanded Test Difficulty

Difficulty	Test Modifier
Trivial	+60
Elementary	+50
Simple	+40
Easy	+30
Routine	+20
Ordinary	+10
Challenging	+0
Difficult	–10
Hard	–20
Very Hard	–30
Arduous	–40
Punishing	–50
Hellish	–60

Measuring Influence

In **Dark Heresy**, Influence is typically measured as a value between 1 and 150, though it can go higher. The higher the value, the more Influence the Throne Agents command. Influence is measured as a single value shared amongst a group of Throne Agents, with each Agent's actions contributing to its increase or decline. Therefore, each Agent can affect the status of the entire group. It is, after all, assumed the Throne Agents are working as a team.

The Throne Agents' cell should start with 40 Influence, although the GM may increase or decrease this starting value if he sees fit.

Influence usually increases when the Throne Agents accomplish great deeds, perform useful services to more powerful individuals, or accumulate favours and debts from others. Influence usually decreases when the Throne Agents fail in their tasks or duties, abuse their Influence and anger their superiors, or when an enemy turns former allies against them.

Increase as a Reward

When the Throne Agents successfully complete adventures or missions, the GM should award Influence as well as experience. The amount awarded should be tied into the difficulty and importance of the mission (representing the Throne Agents' increasing good standing and reputation amongst the Inquisition) and can be left up to the GM's discretion. However, a good guideline for the GM is to total up the average amount of experience earned by a player during the adventure. For every full 1,000 experience earned, the GM should award 1 Influence to the group, to a suggested maximum of 4 Influence per session.

Table 1-4: Influence Levels

Influence	Example
5	Hab Supervisor, Hive Gang Boss
10	Mid-spire Noble, Imperial Guard Captain
20	Chartist Captain, Commissar
30	Upper-spire Noble, Imperial Guard Regimental Commander
40	Newly-minted Inquisitor, Planetary Governor of a Frontier World
50	Sub-sector Ministorum Official, Hive World Governor
70	Calixian Battlefleet Admiral, Established Inquisitor
90	Sector Ministorum Official
110	Lord Inquisitor, High Archmagi of the Lathes
130	Member of the Calixian Conclave's High Council, Lord-Sector Hax
150+	Lord Inquisitor Caidin, The Calixian Conclave

Table 1-5: Availability Modifiers

Availability	Modifier
Unique	–70
Near Unique	–50
Extremely Rare	–30
Vary Rare	–20
Rare	–10
Scarce	+0
Average	+10
Common	+20
Plentiful	+30
Abundant	+50
Ubiquitous	+70

Table 1-6: Duration Modifiers

Duration	Modifier
A single mission (1–2 sessions)	+20
An entire adventure	+0
Permanently	–20

Increase Based on Player Actions

Players may choose to focus on increasing their Influence by performing vital services for more senior Inquisitors, senior members of the Adeptus Terra, or other powerful individuals. As a reward for these actions, the GM should establish an amount of Influence (between 1–5, depending on the difficulty and importance of the service) the players receive should they successfully complete the task. However, if the service is being performed for an individual or organisation whose own Influence is less than 50, each Throne Agent should receive a Peer (that individual or organisation) Talent, instead—representing the fact that someone with relatively small Influence is in no position to aid the Throne Agents across the sector.

Decreases Due to Failure

Influence is a fickle thing, and just as it can be increased by the Throne Agents' successes, so can it be decreased by their failures. Once stories of failure circulate amongst the Inquisition or even the other Adeptus Terra, individuals and organisations are less likely to trust or aid the Throne Agents. Should the players fail to successfully complete an adventure or task that would normally award Influence, the GM should decrease the group's influence by the amount that would have been gained. If the players would have gained a Peer Talent instead of influence, they do not lose influence. However, the GM can give them an Enemy Talent instead, if the failure was particularly horrendous.

Numbers and the Inquisition

For the services of things like large-scale organisations and Imperial Navy vessels, the Number Modifiers do not apply. The Throne Agent must make one Requisition Test for each organisation, item, or vessel in turn.

Additionally, the Inquisitor may acquire the services of a larger group than a company, but doing so is usually more of a factor of the plot of the campaign rather than a single die roll. The Inquisition has great power, but it is often easier to take a force that is already present and re-direct its efforts rather than building such a force from scratch.

Table 1-7: Number Modifiers

Numbers	Modifiers
A single person	+0
A squad (2–5)	–10
A platoon (10–30)	–20
A company (50–100)	–30

Decreases Due to Excessive Use

Among other things, Influence is a measure of one's standing amongst his peers, and abuse of Influence can turn them against him. Whenever a Throne Agent fails an Influence Test by four or more degrees, his group's Influence is decreased by 1.

"This One Thing I Ask of You"

In certain desperate cases, a Throne Agent may use all the leverage at his disposal to force someone to perform a vital task, gain access to a deeply proscribed artefact, or find success in some other important but difficult situation. In this case, the Throne Agent can voluntarily lower his group's Influence score by 1d5 to automatically succeed at an Influence test. Naturally, it is recommended that the Throne Agent consult with his fellows (and especially the Inquisitor) before taking such a drastic step!

USING INFLUENCE

Whenever a Throne Agent wants to use his Influence—whether to requisition or commission equipment or items, or influence or manipulate the actions of others—he must make an Influence Test. The Influence Test is a 1d100 roll against his group's Influence, much in the same way as a Characteristic Test. In some situations, degrees of success or failure can also come into play (see "Decreases Due to Excessive Use" above). In addition, certain factors can modify the Influence value being tested against.

Influence Tests can take two forms, depending on whether a Throne Agent is attempting to requisition or commission items, services, or equipment, or control or manipulate the actions of others.

Influence Tests for Requisitioning

Throne Agents can use their Influence to obtain mundane or specialist equipment for specific missions, rent the use of apartments or villas, procure Inquisitorial relics and ancient weapons for dangerous tasks, or obtain the services of individuals or organisations affiliated with the Inquisition or Adeptus Terra. This last could be anything from a ride aboard a Navy frigate, to a team of scribes delegated to search an archive, to a company of Imperial Guardsmen to storm a hive-spire. In general, procuring goods and services is known as requisitioning.

To make an Influence Test for requisitioning, the Throne Agent must first determine what (or who) he is requisitioning, what organisation or individual he is making the requisition from, and the duration of the requisition as shown on Table 1–5. Then, the Throne Agent must roll less than his Influence (after modifiers) on 1d100. The roll may be modified by the duration of the requisition, the Availability of the Item, or the number of individuals providing services.

If the roll is less than or equal to the group's Influence, the Test is successful and he requisitions the items or services for the time specified.

If the roll is greater than the group's Influence, then the Test fails, and the Throne Agent does not gain the requisition. In addition, if the Test fails by four or more degrees, the group loses 1 Influence.

Requisitioning Services

Sometimes an Inquisitor may require the services of individuals outside his personal cadre. This could be anything from a squad of Imperial Guard Storm Troopers, to a single scribe tasked with organising three years of overdue reports to the Conclave.

Requisitioning services is performed in the same fashion as other requisitions, with the following caveats. Requisitioning the services of a group or individuals can only be performed by an Inquisitor, or an Inquisitor's agent vested with his authority (usually in the form of his Inquisitorial Rosette). In addition, the requisition of very large groups, though technically possible for any Inquisitor, is in practice a very sticky political issue that can easily backfire. Usually only someone as powerful as an Inquisitor Lord attempts to requisition and command entire armies or fleets.

Influence and Profit Factor

The Influence mechanic in **Ascension** has certain similarities with the Profit Factor mechanic in **Rogue Trader**. These two systems are, in fact, parallel. However, they are not interchangeable. Profit Factor is concerned primarily with wealth, while Influence is concerned with authority and prestige amongst one's masters and peers. While Profit Factor can be used to influence others, and Influence can be used to obtain items, a group of Throne Agents could be relatively poor and still have a high Influence Score. This reflects the focus of each game—Rogue Trader is focused on the accumulation of wealth, while **Dark Heresy** is less concerned with counting Throne Gelt, and more with authority and power.

However, if the GM wishes to, Influence and Profit Factor can be used alongside one another. Both can be used to influence and persuade others via opposed tests, so it is perfectly acceptable to test Influence vs. Profit Factor if say, a Throne Agent is trying to persuade a Rogue Trader to do something (or vice versa!).

Table 1-8: Availability Modifiers Based on Services Provided

Availability	Example Services
Plentiful	Underhiver informants
Average	Low level Adepts in the Administratum, Ministorum Servants
Scarce	Full Ecclesiarchy Clerics, Adeptus Arbites Arbitrators, transport aboard commercial transport vessels
Rare	Military Forces from the Imperial Guard or Navy, Senior Adepts of the Administratum, transport aboard (or use of) Rogue Trader or Chartist Vessels
Very Rare	Tech-Priest Magos, Arbites Judges, Imperial Guard Storm Troopers, transport aboard (or use of) Naval frigates
Extremely Rare	Adepta Sororitas Battle Sisters
Near Unique	Transport aboard (or use of) a Naval ship of cruiser size or larger
Unique	Adeptus Astartes Space Marines

Requisitioning services must take Number modifiers into account as well as Duration modifiers. In addition, the GM should assign an Availability Modifier based on the individuals whose services are being requisitioned.

MANIPULATING OTHERS

A Throne Agent inevitably finds that he must convince others to do his bidding, either subtly or directly. Perhaps he needs the local enforcers to conduct purges of certain criminal elements in a hive in order to distract those criminals from the Throne Agent's true activities. Maybe the Throne Agent needs to request information from Administratum archives, or convince a powerful merchant house to recall a transport suspected of smuggling proscribed elements. In these cases, the Throne Agent can use his Influence to force others to do his bidding.

Using Influence to manipulate others takes the form of an opposed Test between the Throne Agent's Influence and the Influence of the individual or organisation he is trying to manipulate. The GM should determine the other party's Influence by assigning a value based on Table 1–4 on page 14. Both sides Test against their Influence statistic. Whoever scores the greater number of successes (or fewer failures) wins the Test. The GM can modify the difficulty of the Throne Agent's Test due to circumstances, and should also take into account whether the Throne Agent has any relevant Talents that may pertain to the test (such as Peer or Enemy Talents).

Should the Throne Agent win, he can force his opponent to do his bidding or obey his commands on a single specific topic. This does not grant the Throne Agent complete authority to force his opponent to obey his whims forever. Alternatively, the Throne Agent can choose to use the test to manipulate future interactions with his opponent. In this case, every degree of success grants him +5 on all Interaction Skill Tests with the opponent for the remainder of the mission.

Influence: Other Factors

Besides the factors listed in the chapter, many other things can affect one's influence.

Peers and Enemies

Obviously, Influence is more effective amongst one's friends than one's enemies. In **Dark Heresy**, this can be represented by the Peer and Enemy Talents (and other Influence Talents).

If a Throne Agent has a talent, such as the Peer Talent, he gains his interaction bonus to any Influence Tests when dealing with that particular group. In the case of Peer this is +10. However, if a Throne Agent has an Enemy or Rival Talent, any influence tests with that group automatically fail, unless he is using his Influence subtly. In that case, he suffers a –30 penalty instead. Even when concealing his identity, a Throne Agent has more contacts amongst a group whom he counts as an ally.

Other talents may effect the use of influence. See Talents of Influence on pages 110–120 in Chapter IV: Ascended Skills and Talents.

Appearance

Though no Inquisitor worthy of the Rosette would make the mistake of judging solely by appearances, others may not be so wise. Fine clothes, ornate armour, expensive and ostentatious weapons, and trappings of the office of Inquisitor may increase one's presence and influence. Meanwhile, the plain robes of an adept or itinerant street preacher likely have the opposite effect. The GM can modify the Influence Test by anywhere between +20 to –20 to take into account the appearance a Throne Agent displays.

Note: If the group is using Influence subtly, the GM should only award bonuses or penalties if the Throne Agent is wearing an appropriate disguise (see page 18).

Social Skills

Just as appearances may affect a Throne Agent's ability to influence others, so can his bearing, attitude, or ability to handle social situations. Before attempting any sort of Influence Test, the Throne Agent may request to use a single Interaction Skill (specifically Charm, Deceive, Intimidate, or Command) to favourably influence his opposition. The skill must be relevant to the situation, and the GM must agree to its use. He may then test the skill. For every degree of success, he can increase his Influence by 2 for that Influence Test only.

Borrowing with No Intention to Return

Needless to say, most organisations frown on those who abuse their goodwill and provide an undue drain on their resources. Some organisations or individuals are less willing to aid the Throne Agents in the future, while others, such as the Inquisition, may decide on more direct action.

If a player makes a requisition for a specific duration, then keeps it past that duration, the GM should determine the Influence of the organisation or individual that owned the requisition previously. The Throne Agent group's Influence should be decreased by a value equal to 10% of that organisation's or individual's Influence. In addition, if the requisition was an item of Near Unique availability or higher, each member of the group should receive an Enemy Talent pertaining to the organisation or individual they slighted. These penalties can be somewhat mitigated (reversing the Influence loss by 1/2 the amount and/or removing the Enemy Talent) if the item is returned. Naturally, the organisation still looks unfavourably upon the borrower and sees them as untrustworthy for the future.

Conversely, every degree of failure penalises future Interaction Skill Tests with that opponent by –5.

The Power of the Rosette

The uses for Influence detailed here mainly concern an Inquisitor's influence and standing among individuals and organisations with a similar power level. In other words, these are organisations that may have enough power and influence to refuse an Inquisitor's request and get away with it, such as Sector Governors, Lord Admirals of the Navy, and other Inquisitors.

The vast majority of the Imperium is much less powerful than this, however. For them, the mere sight of a Rosette is enough to inspire abject terror and instant obedience in equal measure. The mere fact that an Inquisitor is who he claims to be is enough for them obey his every order.

If an Inquisitor (or other Throne Agent with his Inquisitor's Rosette and authority) wishes to use his Influence with any non-Adeptus Terra organisation or individual (local PDF, factory bosses, chartist captains, or even minor planetary officials) with an influence of 40 or less, he automatically succeeds provided the target knows his true identity and authority.

The Peril of the Rosette

The perils of an Inquisitor using his authority openly are subtler than the benefits, but no less dangerous for it. The biggest risk, of course, is that for an Inquisitor to use his authority openly, he must reveal who he is.

Though this may not seem like a problem, the mere presence of an Inquisitor will most likely send malcontents, heretics, and renegades—the very individuals he may be investigating—fleeing for their lives. The Inquisition is feared, and rightly so, but this fear can work against an Inquisitor who must find witnesses and suspects to interrogate, and evidence to study. Whole investigations have been ruined on planets when a mere rumour of an Inquisitorial presence was spread; the targets of the investigation ceasing any illicit activities and vanishing into as deep a hole as they could find.

On the other extreme, the enemies the Inquisition hunts can control adversaries just as dangerous as a Throne Agent. Sometimes, these enemies decide it is more prudent to go on the offensive, and whole cells of unwary Throne Agents have been wiped out when they walked blithely into traps and ambushes after their identity was exposed.

In **Dark Heresy**, the consequences of a Throne Agent using his authority and influence openly are not quantifiable, but this does not mean they cannot be dire. The GM should carefully consider the type of investigation being run, who the Throne Agents reveal their identity to, and just how dangerous and resourceful their adversaries are, before devising an appropriate response.

Subtle Influence

The most successful Throne Agents learn quickly when to hide their identity and tread carefully, and when to use their authority to the fullest. Therefore, a Throne Agent may always attempt to test Influence subtly, meaning he is attempting to succeed at a test without anyone realising his true identity.

Before making the test, the Throne Agent must declare he is using his Influence subtly. If he does so, the test suffers a –20 penalty. In addition, if he succeeds, it takes 2d5 days for the effects of the test to be realised, minus the number of successes the Throne Agent scored (to a minimum of one day—the time frame can be modified at the GM's discretion based on circumstances).

In exchange for these penalties, the Throne Agent is able to use his Influence without identifying himself. In addition, he does not lose Influence for failing tests by 4 degrees or more.

Example

Judge Gordon Titus is conducting an undercover investigation on Malfi, and needs the local Arbites to raid a smuggling den he suspects is a front for the Beast House. He does not wish to use his influence openly, however, so he elects to use some old friends in the sub-sector Arbites to get the job done subtly. Titus's Influence is 55, and testing subtly imposes a –20 penalty, down to 35. However, Titus, being a Judge himself, has the Peer (Arbites) Talent, for a +10 bonus. His total is thus 45, and he makes an opposed roll against the local Arbites Marshal (Influence 37). Titus rolls a 23, meaning two degrees of success, while the Marshal only rolls a 35, resulting in success with no degrees. Titus wins, sending an anonymous message to the Marshal's superiors, who in turn put pressure on the Marshal to do what Titus wants.

Representing Failure

Just because the group fails an Influence Test doesn't mean that their target has directly defied the might of the Inquisition, inviting and deserving horrible retribution for his insolence. Most groups within the Imperium know full well the penalty for directly defying the Inquisition. However, failure can be represented in other ways. In the case of a requisition request, the item or service being requisitioned may not be available, and the players simply have to get on without it, or try at a later date. If they are attempting to manipulate others, perhaps their target does not know the information they seek, does not have the authority to accomplish their request, or simply ties their request up in the endless red tape of Imperial bureaucracy.

Pocket Money and Monthly Incomes

If a group does not want to use the Influence Rules presented here to obtain items, and prefers to determine their purchasing ability based on the **Dark Heresy** income system, each Throne Agent should receive a monthly income of 1,000 Thrones multiplied by their character rank. This means a rank nine character (the starting rank in Ascension) receives 9,000 Thrones every month.

Alternatively, a Throne Agent may need to obtain spending money in the course of an undercover investigation to facilitate expenses or maintain a fictional cover. The Calixian Conclave does provide its members with certain blind accounts from which they may withdraw funds to facilitate their operations. Accessing an account requires a **Routine (+20) Influence Test** with no other modifiers, and provides the Throne Agent with 500 Thrones. For every additional 500 desired, the Test becomes one degree more difficult. Unless the GM rules otherwise, accessing these accounts should only take place at the beginning of the mission.

II

Inquisitor and Cadre

Forming a Team of Agents

•

Creating New Ascended Characters

Chapter II: Inquisitor and Cadre

"The Daemon has many forms. You must know them all. You must tell the Daemon from his disguise and root him out from the hidden places. Trust no one. Trust not even yourself. It is better to die in vain than to live as an abomination. The zealous martyr is praised for his valour; the craven and the unready are justly abhorred."

–From *The First Book of Indoctrinations*

As Acolytes, best serving the Inquisition meant following orders, no matter how difficult to understand or achieve; accepting any challenge, no matter how dangerous or deadly; and acknowledging that any true understanding of the machinations the Acolytes are involved in may never be reached. However, upon ascension to the ranks of the Inquisition itself, all of that changes, utterly and forever. Acolytes no longer, these individuals have ascended to join the ranks of the most trusted and powerful extensions of the Emperor's Will—they are now Throne Agents, and they form the retinue (also known as a cadre) of an Inquisitor, and sometimes become Inquisitors themselves.

Forming a Team of Agents

The nature of a Throne Agent is complex, but at its core, it revolves around the concepts of power, responsibility, and scale. Throne Agents possess many resources that Acolytes do not, ranging from the nearly limitless authority of the Inquisitor's Rosette to the blend of sophisticated technology and lethal skills of the Vindicare Assassin. In addition, more is expected from a Throne Agent than from an Acolyte—the level of responsibility grows, and the risks of failure increase commensurate with the threats Throne Agents routinely confront. For most Throne Agents, it is not enough to simply uncover a conspiracy or locate the core of a heretical cult. Instead, Throne Agents are often solely responsible for completely rooting out the conspiracy, or are charged with the utter and complete destruction of every cult cell within a system. Throne Agents also work on a completely different scale than Acolytes. The affairs of an Inquisitor are moves in a very dangerous and complicated game played by the various factions and Ordos of the Inquisition itself. To serve as (or directly with) an Inquisitor is to place oneself squarely as one of the foremost pieces on the game board, and there are many both within the Inquisition and without (often powerful members of the Adeptus Terra) who seek to use the Throne Agents to their own ends. No longer is it enough to merely confront the enemies of Man—Throne Agents must also watch their back and prepare for the machinations of their allies.

Strength in Diversity

Ascension opens many new doors for **Dark Heresy** characters, and offers a multitude of ways to take characters in new directions. In some ways, taking a group of Acolytes and ascending them to Throne Agents is like starting anew with a shared purpose. This is a great opportunity for the GM and the players to take a fresh look at their characters and talk things over collectively to round out the group's strengths and weaknesses. For example, this would be a good time to note that Fellowship may become much more important to many groups!

At this stage, many groups benefit from asking and answering the question, "What kind of **Dark Heresy** game are we most interested in playing?" Groups that value investigation, for example, could take this chance to bulk out some investigation-oriented Skills and Characteristics, whilst another group that has had difficulty in combat might instead seek more militant Talents to become more effective when fighting the Imperium's many foes.

Just as each Acolyte in **Dark Heresy** has his niche, so do the Ascended Careers. Each have their own speciality and expertise. This Chapter presents a number of options for a group of **Dark Heresy** characters to realise their full potential and undergo ascension.

Options for Adepts

Adepts are uniquely suited to the acquisition and organisation of knowledge. Service to the Inquisition often involves the manipulation of knowledge, from the presentation of pertinent facts to the (often brutal) suppression of forbidden lore. Many say that "knowledge is power," and in the Inquisition, that claim is often proven true.

For those Adepts who have a great dedication to solving ancient puzzles and accumulating secrets, the **Sage** Ascended Career is a natural fit.

Adepts may also become **Inquisitors** and **Interrogators**, turning proclivities for ferreting out facts towards the persecution of the Imperium's many foes. The learned Ordo Xenos Inquisitor Van Vuygens began in this way, and is still considered a prominent scholar in his field.

Options for Arbitrators

Arbitrators often have a focus and a drive that many other Acolytes lack, and more than a few Inquisitors prefer to rely upon an Arbitrator's sense of justice and determination when the stakes are high. Often, Arbitrators continue to perform their duty even under the most onerous of circumstances. Reliable and determined Acolytes are often rewarded by Puritan-minded Inquisitors, and the knowledge and skills of a street-wise Arbitrator are never to be discounted lightly.

Arbitrators who have given years of diligent service to the Adeptus Arbites are often promoted to the rank of **Judge**. Many Inquisitors consider the counsel of a learned Judge to be priceless, especially when dealing with the other Adeptus Terra of the Imperium or the lawless depths of an underhive.

The discipline of an Arbitrator also suits them well for transitioning into other Ascended Careers focused on combat and protection, such as the **Crusader**.

In addition, some Arbitrators find that their normal duties pale in comparison to hunting down heretics and cleansing a world from a cult's pernicious influence. Such Arbitrators often leave the Arbites behind to become an **Interrogator** or even a full **Inquisitor**—Inquisitor Astrid Skane is a good example of just such a path.

Options for Assassins

The Inquisition has many places for those who make the dealing of death their vocation. A loyal and faithful Assassin is of great interest to an Inquisitor, for in the byzantine operations of the Holy Ordos, there is always a need for a troublesome obstacle to be removed in a most final fashion.

Assassins that focus on delivering death face-to-face in the wild melee of blades and blood often enter the **Death Cult Assassin** Ascended Career. Others with a talent for slaying a target at range are sometimes given a rare opportunity to be reborn as a **Vindicare Assassin**.

Other Assassins find that their talents lead them in other directions, and a sponsoring Inquisitor can arrange for them to be trained as a **Storm Trooper** or a **Crusader**.

In some rare cases, an Assassin may ascend to become more than he was, and grow beyond the simple role of a death-dealer into an **Interrogator**, or even more rarely, an **Inquisitor**.

Options for Clerics

Many Inquisitors consider the services of a Cleric to be critical when facing heresy and the daemons of the warp. Proper application of fiery faith can turn the tide of recidivism and make even hardened traitors think twice. Some Inquisitors seek to maintain good ties with the Ecclesiarchy for the purpose of ensuring that the zeal of the Imperial Creed remains a useful tool in their investigations. For those Clerics who serve such an Inquisitor, they find many opportunities for advancement—and not only amongst the ranks of the faithful.

Clerics that excel in the service of the Imperial Creed and the Holy Ordos are often raised up to become **Hierophants**, living examples of the power of faith.

Particularly militant-minded Clerics are also often selected for the **Crusader** Ascended Career.

Some Clerics that have a special talent for seeking out and persecuting heretics and unbelievers occasionally join the Holy Ordos themselves as **Interrogators,** and eventually, **Inquisitors**. Witch Finder Rykehuss and Inquisitor Al-Subaai are two examples of where the Cleric career may lead whilst in service to the Inquisition.

Options for Guardsmen

The Imperial Guard encompasses professional soldiers from a numberless amount of cultures, backgrounds, and specialities, containing experts in a bewildering variety of fields. The Inquisition is no stranger to taking advantage of the Imperial Guard's impressive manpower and versatility, and several Inquisitors regularly place skilled Guardsmen at the core of their retinues.

Guardsmen that excel on the field of battle are sometimes hand-picked to join the ranks of the elite **Storm Troopers**.

Other Guardsmen who are no strangers to close-quarters battle may be chosen to achieve the Ascended Career of a **Crusader**.

In some rare cases, the Imperial Guard produces an individual with peerless skills at striking from the shadows as a sniper. The most skilled from amongst these are occasionally taken into the service of the Officio Assassinorum and become **Vindicare Assassins**.

Some Guardsmen show an aptitude for leadership above and beyond taking command of a platoon on the bloody field of battle. The Holy Ordos sometimes finds a special use for such rare men, and it is not unknown for an Inquisitor to take such a Guardsmen into his retinue as an **Interrogator**, perhaps eventually to earn his own rosette as a full **Inquisitor**.

Options for Imperial Psykers

The use of Sanctioned Psykers in the Imperium is a necessity to keep the far-flung borders of the Emperor's realm united and strong. Although many Puritan Inquisitors frown on the use of psykers, many more amongst the Holy Ordos recognise the inherent benefits of their skills. Psykers are found amongst many an Inquisitor's retinue, often serving as either the first line of defence against the horrors of the alien and the daemon, or as a lightning rod to draw such foes out into the open where they may be crushed.

Particularly powerful and reliable psykers are sometimes chosen to be trained by the elite of the Scholastica Psykana to reach their full potential as **Primaris Psykers**.

Other psykers hone their gifts towards methods more divinatory than destructive. These valued psykers are sometimes embraced by a particular Inquisitor and elevated to the rank of **Interrogator**. Some **Inquisitors** are themselves psykers, such as the mysterious Inquisitor Vownus Kaede.

Options for Scum

The Inquisition cannot always operate openly—many cults and conspiracies are too canny to remain when rumours of less-than-subtle Inquisition involvement fly fast and heavy. Therefore, many Inquisitors rely upon their own unsavoury resources in the form of Acolytes who are linked into the ebb and flow of the underworld—in short, Scum. Armed with such an Acolyte, Inquisitors are much more able to operate without attracting undue attention and can often catch their prey unawares.

Scum are supremely suited to the fringes of Imperial society, and the most able amongst their number often survive to gain the **Desperado** Ascended Career.

A handful of Acolytes can survive long enough in the service of the Inquisition to attract the attention of their superiors. In this manner, Scum are sometimes singled out to become an **Interrogator**. If a good service record is maintained, they may even be able to overcome the challenges of their past and gain the rosette of an **Inquisitor**.

Options for Tech-Priests

For the Adeptus Mechanicus, knowledge and dedication to the Machine Cult are among the most important measures by which a Tech-Priest grows in power and influence. Service to the Holy Ordos of the Inquisition is often another path to greater responsibility and the discovery of secrets brings one closer to the Omnissiah's will.

Tech-Priests who achieve great works in the Omnissiah's name and build a comprehensive knowledge in one or more areas of science and technology may be granted the title of **Magos**.

The Adeptus Mechanicus values the accumulation of knowledge, and some Tech-Priests quest endlessly for more and more data. Such Tech-Priests are drawn to the **Sage** Ascended Career.

Options for Adepta Sororitas

The ranks of the Adepta Sororitas—also known as the Sisters of Battle—are ideal candidates to recruit into the ranks of the Inquisition. Due to the martial nature and fanatical faith of the Adepta Sororitas, many find themselves drawn to the Ascended Career of the **Crusader** where their natural hate for the heretic lends them martial strength. Battle Sisters are also immersed in the Imperial Creed and righteous zeal of the Ecclesiarchy, and thus are well-suited to the **Heirophant** Ascended Career. Not surprisingly, many Sisters of Battle who serve as Acolytes in the Inquisition naturally move on to greater service in the name of the Golden Throne. For these women, there can be no higher calling than to be chosen as an **Interrogator** and eventually an **Inquisitor**.

Creating New Ascended Characters

"Duty unto the death of the enemies of Mankind, and beyond."

–Creed of the Crusader

The acolytes of the Holy Inquisition are commissioned with a grim and often thankless lot. They are tasked with descending into the dark and filthy depths of mankind's civilisation to fight humanity's vilest foes. They scrabble desperately for information they pass on to their superiors without understanding, and are sometimes even sacrificed without knowing why. Only the most dutiful Acolyte could refrain from desiring the power and privilege of his superiors, even occasionally envying them in their lofty status amongst the Imperium's elite.

What they may never know is that their envy and desire is sorely misplaced. Power, their superiors do possess, but hand in hand with that power is the direst duties. Throne Agents are fated to know the true secrets of the Imperium.

ACOLYTES TO AGENTS

Players make Throne Agents in two different ways. The first is by levelling up an existing Rank 8 character from **Dark Heresy**. In this situation, the player should follow the steps found on page 28, taking their character through the Transition Package Process, choosing an Ascended Career, and spending the 500 experience automatically awarded once a character reaches Rank 9.

The second way is to build a Throne Agent from scratch. There could be several reasons for a player to do this. Perhaps he has newly joined a group whose characters have already levelled up to Throne Agents, or possibly he is a veteran player whose previous character was killed or otherwise lost during or just before an Ascended Campaign. Or perhaps a group of players simply want to start out a campaign at a higher level, and begin playing with their characters already at Rank 9.

In any case, players have to make their characters using both this book and **Dark Heresy**. After all, Throne Agents are not green recruits in the Inquisition, or lowly citizens of the Imperium only recently offered a chance at something greater. Throne Agents are often seasoned veterans who have served the Inquisition for years, if not decades, and survived to tell of it. Even if they are newly joined in the ranks of the Holy Ordos, one does not become a Throne Agent unless that person can demonstrate exceptional talent and aptitude in an area the Inquisition finds useful (which covers a wider range of categories than one might think). Either way, a Throne Agent—even one newly minted—possesses a wealth of skills and talents far beyond the average Imperial Citizen.

The High Reaper of the Moritat

The Moritat are a secretive death cult devoted to a form of the Imperial creed. They are devotees are masters of death with razor, sword, and serrated edge. The internal organisation of the Moritat is made up of cells led by individual masters or mistresses. Each Master is part of a complex hierarchy that leads through killers of ever greater skill until it reaches one lone master of death referred to variously as the High Reaper, the Angel of Cut, or one of a profusion of sinister titles. The High Reaper is said to be the only one of the Moritat to know, and have mastered, the two hundred and nineteen sacred cuts. She possesses over ten thousand vials of blood taken from those who have died on the edge of her blades. Unlike the other masters of the Moritat, the High Reaper is said to keep no cell of faithful assassins around her, but instead keeps a single disciple as her personal companion and apprentice. To this disciple she teaches the most sacred methods of death. From the disciple, however, the High Reaper keeps the single most revered cut: the cut that cannot be taught, but only given by the Emperor's divine inspiration; the only cut by which the High Reaper herself may be defeated. Once the disciple realises this truth, he attempts to slay his mistress. If he succeeds, he is gifted the final, most venerated cut as a revelation at the moment that he uses it to kill her. In so doing, he becomes the High Reaper. If, however, the revelation does not come, the disciple dies and another is selected to take his place. Whether this figure exists in truth is a matter much discussed amongst peers of the Calixian Conclave. Some believe that there is no High Reaper, that it is merely a lie created to shield the identity of the Moritat's creators and patrons within the Holy Ordos. Others think that the High Reaper is all too real and that her master may be closer to them all than anyone suspects.

What this means, in game terms, is that when making a new Throne Agent from scratch, a player is going to have a great deal of experience to spend before his character is finished. First, however, there are several steps the player must take. These steps are very similar to the ones taken when creating a **Dark Heresy** character, but in a different order. The player should obtain an unused **Dark Heresy** character sheet (like the one presented on page 253 of this book), then proceed with the following steps.

- **Choose an Ascended Career:** The player needs to decide what type of Throne Agent he wants to play. Whether a brash Desperado, calculating Sage, or dangerous and cunning Inquisitor, the player must select one of the 12 Careers found starting on page 49.
- **Generate the Character:** The player now returns to **Dark Heresy**—on page 13 he finds a list of home worlds, as well as instructions to generate Characteristics for his character (if the player wishes to use any alternate

home worlds provided in supplemental **Dark Heresy** books, he should feel free to do so at this time). The player should generate his character's Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Strength, Toughness, Intelligence, Perception, Agility, Willpower, and Fellowship using the standard method described on page 22 of **Dark Heresy**. Once this is completed, the player should roll for Fate Points, starting Wounds, and his character's Divination, and then note the results down on his character sheet along with any benefits or detriments granted by the character's home world choice.

- **Select a Dark Heresy Career:** The player should now select a **Dark Heresy** Career for his character. When doing this, the player should make sure that this Career is compatible both with his selection of home worlds and his selection of Ascended Career. Not all Careers work with either. If need be, the player may need to modify his choice of home world in order to work with his choice of Career and Ascended Career, or vice versa. At this point, the player should not spend any experience on Background Packages or Advancements.
- **Generate Insanity and Corruption:** No veteran Throne Agent can achieve his status without seeing the worst the universe has to offer, and seldom does such an individual emerge unscarred. Take 8d10 dice, then subtract 1d10 for each point of Willpower Bonus the character currently possesses. Roll the remaining dice. This is how many Insanity Points the character possesses. Now take 8d5 dice, then subtract 1d5 for each point of Willpower Bonus the character currently possesses. Roll the remaining dice and add the results together to determine how many Corruption Points the character possesses. Make note of these results on the character sheet. Then turn to pages 234–239 of **Dark Heresy**, and consult the rules for Insanity and Corruption, determining whether the character has any mental disorders, malignancies, or mutations. In the case of malignancies, the player should roll on the chart as normal, as in the case of mutations. In the case of mental disorders, which are provided by the GM, the player should simply note that his character has one or more of them. He has opportunities to rid his character of them before he is finished—if he does not, the GM can then create a suitable disorder for the character.
- **Select a Transition Package:** Most **Dark Heresy** and Ascension Careers have a Transition Package linking them. Provided the player has taken compatibility into account when selecting each career, he should now have several options to choose from. He should select the Transition Package he feels fits his character's concept the best, and apply its effects to his character immediately.
- **Spend Experience:** Once the previous steps are accomplished, the player now has a character with 13,000 experience to spend on his previous career before he can advance into his character's career as a Throne Agent. There are two ways to do this.

Spending Experience

When creating a Throne Agent from scratch, the player finds himself with a great deal of experience to spend on his character's previous Career as an Acolyte—13,000 experience, to be exact. This experience must be spent on rank and characteristic advancements from the character's previous career. The player has two different options as to how to do this. The first option is the most straightforward, but also the most time consuming. The second option is slightly more complex, but also faster. These are referred to as the bottom-up and top-down approaches.

Bottom-up Approach

The simplest way to spend the experience is to start at the bottom and work up. The player begins by selecting any desired background packages, then spending his experience in the same manner as described on **Dark Heresy** pages 41-43. Basically, he is creating his character in the same way as he would if he played his character up through Rank 8—but at a vastly accelerated rate. All the usual rules for levelling a character apply here: the player must spend a certain amount of experience before advancing his character to the next highest level, he may choose any advancement that is at his current level or lower, and he may take Alternate Ranks provided he replaces certain Ranks with them. He also has to choose between various branches on his Rank Advancement scheme for his Career. Once he has spent 13,000 experience, he may continue to complete his character as a Throne Agent.

This approach has the advantage of being straightforward and uncomplicated. It follows all the rules for increasing in Rank provided in **Dark Heresy**. However, it is time consuming, which is why the top-down approach was created.

Top-down Approach

The top-down approach allows players to build their character in a quicker and more free-form manner. To do so, the player begins by selecting a background package for his character, if desired. He also notes if he is going to want to take any Alternate Ranks, and what those Careers are.

The next step is to spend experience on Characteristic Advances. All the rules for purchasing Characteristic Advances apply, and the player must purchase Advances from his character's Career. He may purchase up to the Expert level in any of his Characteristics provided he has the experience to do so.

After this, the player should decide how many Sound Constitution Advances he wishes to purchase. For this, the player should consult the following chart, rather than using his character's Career advances.

Table 2-1: Sound Constitution Advances

Career	Number of Sound Constitution Advances
Adept	6
Arbitrator	8
Assassin	6
Cleric	8
Guardsman	9
Imperial Psyker	5
Scum	7
Tech Priest	8
Adepta Sororitas	9

Each Sound Constitution Advance costs 100 experience. Note, this amount of Sound Constitution Advances may be less than would normally be available to a Career, and likely costs less Experience. Both of these factors have been taken into account.

Once the player has purchased as many Sound Constitution Advances as he wishes, he should tally his remaining experience. Then—ideally starting with the Rank 8 advances in his Career and working backwards—he simply selects any advancements he likes from any branches of any rank in his Career or any Alternate Ranks he may have chosen beforehand. When doing this, several rules apply:

- The player is not required to spend any amount of experience at any particular rank. He may spend any amount of available experience at any rank he chooses.
- The player is not required to select a particular branch in his career. All branches are open for him to select advancements from.
- The player is not required to replace a rank with an Alternate Rank. He simply may select advancements from the Alternate Rank as well.
- The player may not select Sound Constitution Advances at this point. He's already had a chance to do so.
- The player does not select Skills in the order of Skilled, +10, +20. Instead, he must select the highest level of training he wants in that Skill, and note that level's cost. If that level is "Trained' he must pay that cost. If that level is "+10" he must pay that level's cost x2. If that level is "+20" he must pay that level's cost x3. Any Skills not normally allowed for the Career may be purchased as Elite Advances, each costing 500 xp. Skills gained in this manner begin at Skilled and may be then upgraded to +10 and +20 as listed previously.
- Any Talents selected must have any prerequisites satisfied by the time the character is finished.
- If by some chance the player has the option of purchasing an Advance for one experience cost at one rank, and at a different cost at another rank (such as an Advanced Rank or two different aspects of the same branch) he must always pay the higher of the two costs.
- The player continues spending experience until he has spent the remainder of his 13,000.

This process is designed to be a much simpler way to create a **Dark Heresy** character than doing so from the bottom-up. Players also get the opportunity to spend their experience far more freely. However, this is balanced by the premium they pay on some Skills and Talents, and the likely reduced opportunities to purchase Sound Constitution.

Finishing the Character

Whichever way a player chooses to spend their experience in creating their character, eventually they find themselves with a 13,000 experience character, newly entering Rank 9 as a Throne Agent. The player should then check the Fate Point Chart on page 10 to determine the number of Fate Points possessed by his Throne Agent. The player should then proceed to page 28 and follow the steps found there, to complete his character's final steps.

III

The Path to Ascension

Transition Packages

•

Ascended Careers

•

Crusader

•

Death Cult Assassin

•

Desperado

•

Hierophant

•

Interrogator

•

Judge

•

Magos

•

Primaris Psyker

•

Sage

•

Storm Trooper

•

Vindicare Assassin

•

Inquisitor

Chapter III: The Path to Ascension

"All who serve the Emperor are children of greatness."

–Ancient Imperial Maxim

With **Ascension**, your character stands on the cusp of a grand new world. His life as he knows it is set to change and progress beyond the surly bonds of Imperial society, taking him to places both wondrous and terrifying. The process of ascending an existing **Dark Heresy** character follows a series of steps similar to those laid out in **Chapter I: Character Creation** in the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook. Each of these five steps—from choosing your intended ascended career path to spending a bonus allotment of experience on your Ascended Career's Rank 9 advances—quickly and easily converts your character and completes his ascension to his new career path and position within the Inquisition.

Step One: Choosing Your Path

The first step in ascending your character is to select an ascended career path. This new career path adds to your old path, representing a progression of your character's development. You may select one Ascended Career from the options presented for your **Dark Heresy** Career Path. Each **Dark Heresy** Career Path has a number of options available:

- Adept—Inquisitor, Interrogator, and Sage
- Arbitrator—Inquisitor, Interrogator, Crusader, and Judge
- Assassin—Inquisitor, Interrogator, Crusader, Death Cult Assassin, Storm Trooper, and Vindicare Assassin
- Cleric—Inquisitor, Interrogator, Crusader, and Hierophant
- Guardsman—Inquisitor, Interrogator, Crusader, Storm Trooper, and Vindicare Assassin
- Imperial Psyker—Inquisitor, Interrogator, and Primaris Psyker
- Scum—Inquisitor, Interrogator, and Desperado
- Tech-Priest—Magos and Sage
- Adepta Sororitas—Interrogator, Inquisitor, Crusader, and Hierophant

It is important to remember that whilst choosing an ascended career path opens new doors for your character and gives him access to powerful new skills, talents, and traits, it does not prohibit him from taking advances from his old career path, reflecting the years of training and practice he already possesses in his chosen vocation.

Step Two: Making the Transition

Once you have chosen your intended ascended career path, the next step is to choose a Transition Package. Note that you only have to select a Transition package once, and this is done upon moving from Rank 8 to Rank 9 or for creating a new Ascended character. You do not have to select a Transition Package if your character changes from one Ascended Career to another (most often, this would only occur when moving from Interrogator to Inquisitor—see page 49). Transitioning from an Acolyte to a Throne Agent typically does not happen overnight! The Transition Package is a way of explaining what happened to the character between the end of Rank 8 and the beginning of Rank 9 when he ascends to a Throne Agent.

These packages represent the event, special training, or circumstances that have led to your character's ascension. Each Transition Package contains a set of changes—usually to Characteristics, Talents, or Insanity and Corruption—which you must apply to your character to represent the particular trials and training he has had to endure to enter his ascended career path.

Should your GM agree, you can even create your own Transition Packages to reflect the unique nature of your own characters and campaigns.

All the details for using Transition Packages, as well as a collection of packages, can be found below.

Transition Packages and Time

The Transition Packages in this section provide a representation of the time between Rank 8 and Rank 9 for a Dark Heresy character as he completes his ascension. That period of time may vary from months to years. If the GM desires, he can establish that all the characters in the same Dark Heresy campaign have taken the same period of time to complete their training. Those characters who ascend faster than others are considered to have spent the remainder of that time being involved with low-level investigations and other tasks to aid the Inquisition until such time as the other Throne Agents are fully prepared. There is no set amount of time for each Transition package. However, if the GM wishes, he may either assign a number of months or years for completing each or roll 3d10 and add up the result for the number of months that the Transition Package required to complete.

Step Three: Choose your Ascended Traits

After applying the effects of your Transition Package, the next step is to choose an ascended trait from your new career path. Every career path has powerful traits associated with it, reflecting the potent nature of those that walk the path of an ascended career. All characters that enter the career automatically receive the first (the Interrogator receives both the first and second) of these traits and they should be added to your character immediately. Of the others, however, you may only select one. Each of these additional traits represents a different aspect of your chosen career and provides a way of personalizing your character. Choose carefully, however, as you do not get a chance to choose from these traits again, and once your choice is made it shapes the kind of ascended character you eventually become.

A list of your possible ascended traits can be found in this Chapter at the start of your chosen career path's advancement tables.

Step Four: Adjust to Ascension

When your character ascends, he passes a significant milestone in his existence and has a chance to restore and replenish his vitality as well as mend the mental and physical scars of years of Inquisitorial service. To reflect this, adjust your Fate Points, Wounds, Insanity Points, and Corruption Points using the guidelines in Chapter 1.

Step Five: Spending XP

Finally, your newly ascended character receives a bonus 500 experience points to immediately spend on Rank 9 advances for his new career. These bonus experience points must be spent on advances available to your new career and not on advances from your previous career path. At your GM's discretion, he may also allow you to immediately spend any stored experience points from your previous career on advances from your ascended career.

Your character is now ascended and ready to do the will of the Emperor!

The Adeptus Mechanicus and the Inquisition

The doctrines and dogmas of the Cult Mechanicus demand that the servant of the Omnissiah surrender not just everything he owns, but everything he is and everything he could otherwise have been. The rites of the machine change not only the initiate's body, but also his mind and very soul. It is a route from which there is no return, for once the glory of the Omnissiah is revealed to a Tech-Priest, every other strand of faith and every other calling seems frail and hollow. As the Tech-Priest's limbs are augmented with prosthetics of iron, so is his brain matter is replaced with silicon. However, despite these physical changes, it is the soul of the Tech-Priest that is altered the most. The truths of the universe revealed unto him are so terrible that without the protective Rites of the Omnissiah, his soul would be shattered. Although the Quest for Knowledge might take him into regions of thought and deed many would proclaim as heretical, it is to the Omnissiah, in all its forms, that the Tech-Priest owes his deepest allegiance.

So all-encompassing is the Quest for Knowledge, so total a Tech-Priest's surrender of mind, body, and spirit to the Omnissiah, that he may never espouse any other calling or creed. He may not therefore become an Inquisitor, an Interrogator, or a devout member of the Ministorum, for each of these makes equally stringent and mutually exclusive demands on his being.

Transition Packages

"Arise, my servant—the Emperor has work for you…"

The following section provides a set of rules called Transition Packages. These are included by way of an explanation of how your character 'Ascended' to the dizzy heights of their new career in the ranks of the Inquisition—in short, the Transition Package details how the character is able to enter his new Ascended Career. Each provides a background explanation for the ascension, as well as a number of hooks and story strands GMs and players can use to progress the character further still. Some contain ideas for how the character might be roleplayed, such as the Sage who has contracted a 'meme-virus', or the Hierophant who has spent untold time in the figurative and literal wilderness before emerging the pious individual they are today.

Furthermore, each Transition Package contains a set of alterations you should make to your character's profile. In most cases, these are alterations to characteristics, such as an increase or decrease in Willpower or Fellowship. These changes represent the specialised training the character has undergone, or other events he has experienced that have left an indelible mark on his psyche. Some Transition Packages include Talents, which further define their effect on the character's career. Lastly, a number include an increase or a decrease in Insanity or Corruption Points. The former indicates the character has undergone a traumatising experience during his ascension, the latter that he has been cleansed, whether spiritually or mentally. Both provide great opportunity for roleplaying and storytelling.

Using Transition Packages

Transition Packages provide a set of adjustments to Characteristics, Insanity Points, Corruption Points, and (in some cases) Talents. Any adjustments made to your character by selecting a Transition Package does not count as an Advance for the purposes of increasing your Rank, nor do increases or reductions count toward the improvement of your Characteristics through normal means.

To select a Transition Package, you must be ascending to the career indicated. All of the following Transition Packages are organised by Career Path, and thus, you may only select a package that matches the career you are ascending to. You may find that packages grant you Talents you might not otherwise be able to take because of Characteristic restrictions. You do not have to meet the requirements of any listed Talent gained from the package.

You may only choose one Ascension Transition Package, and you must choose one. You should discuss your choice with your GM, so that between the two of you, a background that matches you character and campaign can be developed. If at all possible, it's a good idea to avoid any two characters in your group having the same Transition Package, although this is not always possible. Discussing the matter with your GM ensures that the story is progressed to everyone's benefit.

Example

Adam has been playing his character, Arbitrator Rex, for some time now. Through many trials and tribulations, he has reached the lofty rank of Justicar. The group's GM determines that the characters are all ready for ascension. The group gets together to plan the next stage in their characters' careers, and everyone agrees that Rex is the best candidate for the role of Inquisitor. Adam looks at the Transition Packages available, and likes the look of Baptism by Fire. Discussing this choice with the GM, the two decide that this fits in nicely with their last adventure, in which Rex's actions narrowly averted the destruction of an entire hive spire on Fenksworld. Adam adds 10 to Rex's Perception Characteristic, and rolls 1d5 to see how many Insanity Points he gains, resulting in 5. Inquisitor Rex is born!

Crusader

The following Transition Package is intended for use with characters ascending to the career of Crusader.

Induction

"My Crusader House teaches ninety-nine of the sacred strikes—and I have discovered for myself a further six. Any who approaches too close to my charge this day will die by my hand, and perhaps I'll discover another strike."

–Crusader Mikaelus, at the Conclave of the Ninth Sun

An Acolyte that serves the Inquisition well, whilst displaying exceptional martial abilities combined with an iron shod spiritual fortitude, may attract the attentions of one of the Crusader Houses. A Crusader is a warrior-ascetic sworn exclusively to serve the Inquisition. They do so by offering up their very lives to protect that of an Inquisitor, accompanying the master wherever he may go in the course of his Emperor-granted duties to the Imperium.

Induction into a Crusader House is on an invitational basis only. A warrior whose deeds have become near legendary may be quietly approached by a servant of a Crusader House. This hooded individual radiates a palpable aura of strength and fortitude, his voice low, and his movements fluid, yet unassuming. The servant speaks of honour, duty, and the heights of martial attainment at which a warrior may become one with the Emperor himself. He may promise to teach the warrior such methods as can scarcely be imagined possible. However, there is a price.

That price is the voluntary divestment of self and the shedding of material things. Only those who the servants of the Crusader Houses have observed from afar, and already judged worthy, are invited to join their ranks. Thus, it is very rare that a warrior-Acolyte refuses.

If he agrees, the Acolyte is inducted into an entirely new world of ritual, duty, sacrifice, and training. He undergoes trials, practice, and instruction into the hidden mysteries each House keeps. The induction period may last months or even years. The warrior sleeps upon the stone floor of a tiny cell. He drinks only water, and studies and trains with his every waking hour. His life becomes one grand meditation, and he attains such a trance-like state that he may well find difficulty later on remembering this period clearly. Eventually, the warrior is judged whether or not he is worthy to take up the mantle of Crusader. Those who are deemed insufficient to the task are never heard from again.

Upon completing the training, the Crusader awaits such a time as the House is approached by an Inquisitor in need of its services and is assigned his duty. The Crusader may attend to the Inquisitor for a single, short mission or be detached for an extended period. Either way, he never leaves the Inquisitor's side, so utterly dedicated is he to protecting the charge. Many Crusaders serve alongside a specific Inquisitor for their entire lives, never returning to their House. These individuals become utterly in tune with their master, and serve as the Inquisitor's right hand, enacting the will of the Inquisition with peerless dedication.

Effects

Characteristics: Increase Toughness by +5.
Insanity Points: Remove 1d5 Insanity Points.
Corruption: Remove 1d5 Corruption Points.

DEATH CULT ASSASSIN

All of the following Transition Packages are intended for use with characters ascending to the career of Death Cult Assassin.

Baptism of Blood

"I've seen so much these last few years, but there's really only one thing that matters—the shedding of the blood of those who would deny us our future."

–Jhen Harrak, Assailor of the Widow-Maker Cult

The lives of many Throne Agents are blood-soaked and often short, with violence and insanity the only constant. Small wonder, then, that some become so enamoured of death that they gravitate towards one of the many Imperial Death Cults.

It is unlikely, of course, that an Acolyte awakens one day and decides that the spiritual balm he so craves is to be found in the arms of a Death Cult. More likely, he becomes slowly more obsessed with delivering the Emperor's Justice to his foes, such that the act of slaying becomes the focus of his activities—the mean becomes the end in itself. A spiritual pall settles over the Acolyte's soul, a fugue that only lifts during the wild, pure rush of combat. He becomes withdrawn when not engaged on a mission, and spends all of his down time practising his blade craft and maintaining his weapons. He seeks out works on those of the Imperium's plethora of warrior-scholars who endorse such a life, seeking comfort in the fact that many of the greatest of martyrs had the blood of millions upon their hands.

In time, the Acolyte may seek out a Death Cult, or in fact a Death Cult may find the Acolyte. If fortunate, the Acolyte comes into contact with one of the few cults that accept outsiders into their ranks and demonstrates his suitability for induction. There may follow a period of indoctrination into the outer circles of the cult's mysteries, setting the Acolyte on a path that sees him progress through the cult's ranks, one tier at a time, until eventually, the ultimate secrets are revealed.

Returning to his compatriots in the service of the Inquisition, the Acolyte is entirely rejuvenated, filled with a new purpose and divested of the spiritual malaise that had afflicted him. Such converts make exceptional, if somewhat single-minded Throne Agents, for their new role as a Death Cult Assassin fulfils a fundamental drive that stems from deep within the soul. That drive is to shed the blood of the Emperor's foes, and it is the ultimate honour a Man can offer the creator and saviour of Humanity.

Effects

Characteristics: Increase Weapon Skill by +10.
Insanity: You gain 1d5 Insanity Points.

The Calixian Candidate

"Somehow, the call has always been there, the whisper in the blood, the blessing in its shedding. Only now, I can hear it clearly."

–Adept Zalkov, Vindictor of the Cult of the Sacred Blade

Death Cults exist across the length and breadth of the Imperium, and the Calixis Sector is home to more than its fair share. Membership ranges from less than a dozen individuals to many thousands. Most operate on a hereditary basis, whereby members are born into the cult and may never leave it, under pain of death. Other Death Cults operate a system whereby new members are normally recruited in incremental steps so that the true nature of the cult is not divulged until the very last. There is another type, however, whose methods are the very stuff of nightmares.

Such Death Cults forcibly recruit their members. They do this through a wide range of methods, but the most common is simply to kidnap the individual and spirit him away to some secret lair, then to 'convert' the poor unfortunate with ritualised psycho-conditioning techniques. Needless to say, many of the Death Cults that practice such methods are proscribed across the entire sector and subject to ruthless purging whenever discovered. Yet, many of the 'legitimate' Death Cults utilise such methods as well, this fact being conveniently overlooked by the authorities should they have need of the services of their members.

The process by which the agents of a Death Cult select a candidate for the process varies, but it is likely the two parties have crossed paths at some point. Perhaps the Acolyte served alongside one of the Death Cult's Assassins in an Inquisitorial cadre, the cultist reporting back the suitability for later recruitment. Or the exact opposite may be the case—the agents crossed swords with the Death Cult, and the Acolyte's suitability was noted as some cruel joke.

At some point, a team of Death Cult Assassins are dispatched, their mission to abduct the Acolyte. This might occur during an unrelated mission, the assassins taking advantage of a confused combat to strike and spirit their target away, or the attack might occur when the Acolyte is alone and his guard is down.

When the Acolyte awakens, he finds himself in a personal hell. He is restrained and subjected to a terrifying range of mental and spiritual assaults. He may undergo cerebral intrusion and ritual re-education, a process that combines the very worst of pseudo-surgical and occult practices. If fortunate, the Acolyte remembers none of this, but in many cases, he retains an indelible total recall. Worst of all, perhaps, is the fact that the Acolyte may remember every detail of the ordeal. However, some regard the conditioning as a positive process akin to spiritual cleansing.

Assuming the process is successful and the Acolyte survives, he is fundamentally changed. Some are unaware of the change, yet it is there nonetheless, whilst others feel the change and welcome it. Regardless, as part of the conditioning, the Acolyte has been thoroughly indoctrinated into the most secret rites of the cult, and is utterly in thrall to its tenets. The new Death Cult Assassin is as deadly and dedicated an adherent as a cultist raised in the very bosom of the temple.

Afterwards, the new cultist may return to his duties as a Throne Agent, there to utilise his new talents towards the furtherance of the cult's objectives as well as those of the Inquisition. Many are counted amongst the most dedicated and deadly of the Inquisition's weapons, relishing their new calling as only a new convert may.

Effects

Characteristics: Increase Weapon Skill by +5 and Willpower by +5.
Insanity Points: You gain 2d5 Insanity Points.

DESPERADO

All of the following Transition Packages are intended for use with characters ascending to the career of Desperado.

Ghost from the Past

"You never expected to see me again? Your mistake. Luckily, it's your last mistake."

–Credited to the killer of Gang-lord Drasca

Many have a difficult time saying farewell to their former lives. They are unable to see the power and resources that come with being a part of the Inquisition without considering them through the outlook of a criminal, and exploit them accordingly. Others, however, see their service in the Holy Ordos as an opportunity, a chance to make a clean break with their former life and become something far greater than they could have ever expected as a street thug.

However, before a Scum can make a clean break with his past, there is always some loose end he must tidy up. Perhaps he has family or relations who are indebted or indentured to an underworld baron or petty official. Perhaps he is the one who is in debt, or possibly there is someone who harmed him or those close to him in the past, who must be repaid in kind. Whatever the situation, he is not able to serve the Holy Ordos wholeheartedly so long as this issue hangs over him. Therefore, he must ask his superiors for time to resolve the situation.

This resolution can take months, or even years. The Inquisition, of course, would never provide one of its servants with official backing to accomplish a personal goal, so the Scum must accomplish it using his wits, skill, and personal resources. Luckily, these are all things Scum are known to have in quantity.

Once the Scum's past phantoms are laid to rest, he leaves them behind him and returns to the service of the Holy Ordos. There, he is able to serve untroubled by his past life.

Effects

Characteristics: Gain +5 Willpower.
Talents: Lose one Enemy or Rival Talent of your choice.

Lord of the Underworld

"The God-Emperor may rule the Imperium, but down here in the sump, you worship me."

–Lorin Martelle, 'King' of the Infernis

Whilst most of those who enter the Inquisition's service leave their previous lives behind, some Throne Agents have been known to maintain closer ties to their former existence than usual. This can prove especially true for the Scum who elect to serve under the Inquisitorial seal.

A true criminal recognises the value in who he knows. Scum often have extensive contacts from their past life amongst the Imperium's underbelly; friends and comrades they stay in touch with, and enemies and foes they are unwilling to forget. These contacts can keep them tied to their pasts, resulting in a split between the criminal they were, and the Throne Agent they have become.

Eventually, of course, each must make a choice. Some beg leave from their masters, taking time to return to their old worlds and old lives to resolve what they see as unfinished business. If and when a Desperado returns home, his enemies often learn, to their sorrow, that the Throne Agent's harrowing adventures in a wider galaxy have made him a far more dangerous foe than when he left.

When a Desperado returns home, there are only two possible outcomes. Even if he does not wish to rise to the top of the hierarchy of outlaws, those who already occupy that position likely see the Desperado as a threat to their status, and act accordingly. The criminal hierarchy is brutal and simple: the strongest and smartest rise to the top, and they stay there only as long as they can eliminate their competition. Therefore, the Desperado is faced with a stark choice—kill or be killed.

The ensuing power struggle to control the Desperado's local criminal underworld can last weeks, months, or even years. However, the outcome is seldom in doubt. Desperados have cut their teeth destroying malefic cults, xenos, or daemonic foes. A local crime baron often proves an insignificant obstacle in comparison. That isn't to say the Desperado won't take a few knocks along the way—or far more than a few—but eventually, he becomes the master of criminal enterprises in a city, hive, or even a minor world.

Of course, as powerful as the Desperado has become, he is still wise to remember that he serves a master who is far mightier and far more ruthless. The Desperado lets his new enterprises tend to themselves in order to make himself available to the needs of the Inquisition. In turn, many Inquisitors tolerate their Throne Agents' unique proclivities, as in turn they gain an operative who wields a surprising amount of personal resources.

Effects

Influence: You gain a +5 Influence bonus that only applies to your character, as well as the Peer (your criminal enterprises and operations) Talent.
Characteristics: Gain +5 Intelligence.

Hard Knocks: You have permanently lost one Wound. As a result of your injuries, you have replaced one body part of your choice with a common-Craftsmanship bionic implant.

HIEROPHANT

All of the following Transition Packages are intended for use with characters ascending to the career of Hierophant.

Pilgrim's Progress

"Until you've added your own voice to three million others, every one chanting the death-song of Saint Drusus, you'll never understand what faith can be. Never…"

–Frater Kuluminius, Rector-Cardinate

There exists across the entire Imperium a class of Humanity largely invisible to the bulk of Mankind. Each year, countless billions of the faithful put aside their lives to ply the warp routes as pilgrims. Pilgrims hear the call of long dead saints, and are compelled to answer. Any may hear the call, from pampered noble to scabrous hive-scum, all being equal, it is said, in the eyes of the God-Emperor. Some are able to purchase luxurious berths on one of the hundreds of merchantmen that serve each sector, whilst others must stow-away, praying the cargo container they are hidden in is not destined for a vacuum-sealed hold. Despite the risk and the fact that uncounted numbers perish on these voyages into the unknown, the drive to embark on a pilgrimage is, for many, impossible to ignore.

Pilgrims travel from one sacred site to the next, often hoping to attend the shrine of a particular saint at the height of that saint's holy festival. Countless works are published each year, setting out the holy days, months, and years of every saint in a particular sector, the most exhaustive taking the forms of mighty illuminated tomes for the consumption of the privileged. Conversely, innumerable poorly copied or entirely fictitious guides are published each year to be sold to destitute pilgrims, many promising the secrets of how to reach a particular destination while avoiding any unnecessary official entanglements.

The objects of these pilgrimages are the countless Shrine and Cemetery Worlds to be found across the Imperium. Many of these worlds are dedicated entirely to the worship of a single saint, perhaps a great figure who fought a mighty battle there long ago. At particular high days, the populations of these worlds can swell many times as an influx of pilgrims arrives to worship. The streets become filled with the chanting masses and violence simmers just below the surface, ready to erupt into riot should the pious hordes feel the ultimate object of their pilgrimage denied them by officious temple attendants. Hawkers ply their wares, selling supposed relics at exorbitant prices to those desperate for some memento of their act of devotion.

Even an Acolyte may become a pilgrim, and embark upon a journey to a distant Shrine World such as Drusus, Orendal's Tomb, or Pilgrim's Pause. Some attend just the one location before returning to service, whilst others spend many years travelling from one Shrine World to the next. The experience is said to be humbling and supremely enriching, as one's will is supplanted within the mass of the faithful. To become just one pilgrim in a seething ocean of chanting piety is to surrender oneself to an experience quite unlike any other, and many who return are changed beyond all recognition. They have witnessed miracles, and shared, to some small degree, the holy sacrifice of the God-Emperor of Mankind.

The ultimate pilgrimage, which few ever make, is to travel to distant, near-legendary Terra, the cradle of Mankind and seat of the Emperor and the Senatorum Imperialis. Only the greatest of the great ever sets foot upon that sacred ground, but many hope one day to attempt that most hazardous and sanctified of journeys.

Effects

Characteristics: Increase Fellowship and Willpower by +5.

The Shriving

"I went into that wilderness with nought, nought but my pain. I returned enriched, the word of the Emperor booming in my ears, and ready to face whatever horrors the galaxy can throw at me."

–Prelate-Imperialis Alkinwak Dias
(sometimes called the 'Mad Monk of Mara')

As a servant of the God-Emperor progresses along the spiritual journey that is a lifetime of service to the Saviour of Mankind, it is not uncommon for them to pause along the way in order to test themselves before continuing. Such self-imposed penance takes many forms, some proscribed by the writings of learned Adeptus Ministorum theosophists, others revealed on a more personal level during prayer or fasting. In order to be recognised as a Hierophant, an individual must demonstrate a burning, inner faith that often comes only after they have faced and conquered such threats as would shatter the belief of a lesser man. This process is often referred to as the Shriving.

The essence of the Shriving is that an adherent of the Imperial Creed has faced things that are a direct blasphemy against the God-Emperor of Mankind, and emerged with their faith not weakened, but confirmed. As such, it is only undertaken by those utterly dedicated to the teachings of the Ecclesiarchy, for there may be great risk in exposing one's soul to the uncounted vile heresies at large in the galaxy.

The blasphemies that must be endured during the Shriving are many and varied. They range from exposure to heretical doctrines through delving into forbidden archives, to facing the enemies of Mankind on the field of battle. Following the exposure, the individual experiences a period of fundamental spiritual crisis, and often seeks to separate himself from the bulk of humanity. Many literally go off into the wilderness, walking miles into toxic wastes or ravening Death World jungles in order to endure inner and outer turmoil and to face every challenge to their faith imaginable. There, the individual meditates upon the nature of his faith, praying fervently day and night and fasting until purged, body and soul. How long is spent in this state depends upon the individual as well as the nature of the blasphemy they were exposed to. He may have sustained bodily, as well as spiritual wounds, and needs to heal injuries inflicted by the slavering xenos or the unholy followers of the Ruinous Powers. Some experience a short, but burning period of revelation, attaining a state of grace and oneness with the Emperor even the most holy Ecclesiarch could scarce imagine. Others entirely lose their minds for a period of years, until one day they emerge from the wilderness, ragged and filthy, but visibly filled with the Emperor's power.

Effects

Characteristics: Increase Toughness by 1d10.
Corruption: Reduce Corruption points by 1d5.
Insanity: Add 1d5 Insanity Points.

INQUISITOR

All of the following Transition Packages are intended for use with characters ascending to the career of Inquisitor.

Baptism of Fire

"To know the true heart of a man, he must have faced his worst nightmare, and refused, utterly refused to yield, even in the face of his doom. Whatever else he sees, knows, or does, then holds for him no dread."

–Inquisitor Sajinavus, Convenor of the Third Tier

A common route by which an individual attains the Inquisitorial Seal is for him to be put to some terrible test, in which his life, and often that of many others, is in mortal danger. It is very likely that the individual being tested has no idea at all that the world-shattering events unfolding around him have been orchestrated by a distant master. In some cases, the imposition of the test may never come to light at all, or turn up in a dusty archive many generations later. Such was the case when Inquisitor Lord Okonawk discovered that the mission during which, as a senior Acolyte, he had lost his entire Cadre and 100,000 citizens of Acreage had burned was in fact a test of his fortitude imposed by his then master, Inquisitor Lord Khazul. Okonawk slew his erstwhile master, so bitter had he been made by his baptism of fire.

One form of test has been referred to as the 'Armageddon Protocol.' This method involves exposing the individual being tested to increasingly disturbing portents of destruction. These portents can ultimately only point to an imminent 'Armageddon Event'—i.e., the destruction of an entire world. The actions of the aspirant as he attempts to avert the end of the world are studied in great detail, and responses to his actions orchestrated from afar. To lend the Armageddon Protocol verisimilitude, genuine acts of destruction are often performed, the innocent giving their lives unknowingly that the Inquisition might ensure the calibre of future Inquisitors. In many cases, the unknowing aspirant actually fails to avert the Armageddon Event. In fact, he may actually have had no chance of success. How many times the counter has reached zero and the world has not ended cannot be known. It may be that the aspirant was being tested on whether or not he would surrender to fate or carry on to the last, even when failure and annihilation loomed large before him.

Another type of baptism by fire is even more deadly. The aspirant (again, often unaware that his master is testing him) finds himself awakening from an unexplained fugue, body stiff with fatigue. Upon raising his head to look around, he discovers he is lying naked in a jungle clearing, a data slate bearing a grid reference relating to a position an entire continent away laying nearby. It is soon evident that the planet is a Death World (such as Phyrr or Zel Secundus), and the aspirant has no choice but to face its terrors if he has any hope of reaching the indicated coordinates and escaping.

A particularly cruel variation on the Death World trial involves the aspirant being abandoned in the midst of the

wastes at the bottom of a Hive World and being forced to survive the attentions of anarchic Hive gangs to escape. To make matters worse, he may find that all record of his identity has been removed from any municipal systems, meaning he must rely entirely on his own wits to escape.

The individual that emerges from a baptism by fire may be changed entirely from his former self. He may be deeply scarred by the experience, or he may be reborn, having triumphed in the ultimate test of fortitude. He has gained new skills and discovered inner strengths previously hidden to him, making him an ideal bearer of the Inquisitorial Seal.

Effects

Characteristics: Increase Perception by +10.
Insanity Points: You gain 1d5 Insanity Points.

Ritual Trial

"Of that ritual I will not, cannot speak—except perhaps to say, I left my lifeblood upon that altar, yet I came away with so much more…"

–Inquisitor Quillentius of the Ordo Hereticus

Within the unknowable echelons of the Inquisition there exist countless groupings. Some are formal, such as the three Ordos, others less so, such as the many and varied factions. Many are little more than a gathering of individuals brought together by fate, whilst others have come to resemble something of a secret society within the dark workings of the Inquisition.

Many of these groups are bound together by rites and ceremonies passed down from one generation of practitioners to the next, stretching perhaps as far back as the founding of the Calixis Sector, or even beyond. Should an Inquisitor sponsor a pupil to bear the Seal, he may gather his compatriots and enact a secret ritual. During the ritual, the aspirant is exposed to a sanity-shattering ceremony designed to test his faith and strength to the very limit. The purpose of this ceremony is fulfilled when the individual that emerges is fully capable of performing the terrible duties that are expected of him.

These rites and ceremonies vary as much as their participants, and due to the secrecy that surrounds them, few outside of the sealed circle of participants are ever likely to bear them witness. Many rituals are intended to seal an alliance, or cabal of Inquisitors. Perhaps the most effective way of ensuring such an alliance holds strong is to expose all of its members to the same risks, for them all to bear the same burden, and for no secrets to exist between them. Thus, should one participant become compromised, all are in mortal danger, ensuring every member has not only his own interests in mind, but also those of his fellows.

Some rituals are very simple in form, lacking the pomp and circumstance common in the Imperium's upper echelons. They may consist of little more than the speaking of an oath or the placing of a personal sigil. Others may be highly complex and ritualised, and last many hours (or even days). Such rituals involve scores or even hundreds of hooded, anonymous participants.

The focus of the ritual is obviously the aspirant. Having first proved his mettle as an Interrogator, his time has now come to be judged if he is worthy of the rosette. What trials and tortures the would-be Inquisitor must undergo varies hugely. In some rituals, the aspirant is required to witness terrible things, perhaps being restrained, his eyes forced open so he may not turn away from the truth. In others, the aspirant has a long and complex part to play in the ritual, practiced for many weeks before hand, the deviation from which may be a crime so terrible his life may be forfeit.

Effects

Characteristics: Increase Willpower by +10.
Insanity Points: You gain 1d5 Insanity Points.

Spiritual Retreat

"I came with questions, and left in silence. Truly, the horrors of the universe were revealed unto me, and truly, I fear them not."

–Inquisitor Doniss, the Scourge of Zakkon City

None can tell for certain the true extent of the Inquisition's holdings in the Calixis Sector, but it is certain that it maintains far more resources than what little is visible, such as the Tricorn. It is likely that entire worlds are turned over to the exclusive use of the Ordos for every dark purpose imaginable—from biological weapons testing to xenos quarantining. Every major settlement in the sector hosts safe-houses owned by an Inquisitor. Such places are attended to by loyal servants for many years until needed (perhaps only once) by an Inquisitor and his cadre. Aside from these holdings, the Inquisition maintains many secret retreats, places of sanctuary in which an Inquisitor in need of spiritual respite might seek peace.

Retreats can take many forms. One is little more than a chapel atop an isolated mountain, whilst another is a mighty spear of rock rising from a storm-wracked ocean. One is an impeccably-maintained garden in the midst of an urban sprawl, whilst another is an abutment clinging precariously to the sheer side of a rearing hive tower. All are well hidden from prying eyes, and even those seemingly staffed by only a handful of occupants are protected from harm by terrible weapons of unknown manufacture.

Some of these retreats are home to a number of incredibly wise teachers, learned in every aspect of the Inquisition's duties. Many are ancient and stooped sages, others are Inquisitors too aged or crippled to take to the field. Such teachers may offer their wisdom to those who would seek it, and be judged worthy of tuition.

One of the purposes to which these retreats are put is the judging of those aspiring to bear the Inquisitorial Seal. Sponsored by a master, the aspirant (having spent some time as an Interrogator) makes the journey to the retreat, a task that often forms part of the trial in itself. Once there, the individual must gain entrance, often by convincing a gatekeeper that he is worthy to do so. Having gained admittance, the aspirant is invariably required to undergo a number of tasks in order to

prove himself worthy of the teacher's attentions. The nature of these tasks varies according to the character of the teacher, but they range from philosophical debate to tests of the aspirant's resistance to torture and pain. If these tests are considered passed, the aspirant enters a period of instruction, which might range from the imparting of a single, world-shattering truth, to several years of intense study.

Whatever the nature of the tests and study, the aspirant returns from the retreat a changed individual, able to face whatever horrors the galaxy throws at him. Some, however, never return at all, having been found wanting by those who maintain the terrible secrets of the Inquisition.

Effects

Characteristics: Increase Willpower by +5.
Corruption: You lose 1d5 Corruption Points.

INTERROGATOR

All of the following Transition Packages are intended for use with characters ascending to the career of Interrogator.

Friends in High Places

"Perhaps the only thing worse than well-placed enemies, are well-placed friends…"

–Interrogator Maxim Locke,
prior to his mission to Zel Secundus

Whilst some Acolytes find themselves judged and tested at every turn before attaining the rank of Interrogator, others find their ascent inexplicably unobstructed. These are the rare individuals who appear to have the patronage (whether they are aware of it or not) of a friend in a very high place indeed.

Within the shadowy circles of the Inquisition, it is nigh-impossible to trace even a small fraction of the impossibly complex web of influence and intrigue that connects each member. However, it is undoubtedly the case that some Inquisitors 'sponsor' promising Acolytes, lending them aid, often from afar, in the pursuit of their duties. The exact reason for doing this depends on both the Acolyte and the Inquisitor.

There are some Inquisitors who indulge in anonymous patronage as what appears to be some form of cruel entertainment. They issue mysterious commandments and set nigh-impossible tasks whilst ensuring that the Acolyte has all the tools and every opportunity to succeed. In time, an Acolyte in such a position is likely to become resentful or paranoid, but if he can endure such torment for long enough, his capricious master grants him the rank of Interrogator.

In other cases, there may be some form of binding link between Interrogator and patron, which again, the former may be entirely ignorant of. Several times in the histories of the Ordos Calixis, an Acolyte has found himself raised to the rank of Interrogator, and discerned throughout his subsequent career the hidden hand of an unknown patron. Such was the case for Interrogator Abigayle Cruz, who ascended to the rank of Inquisitor after a career as an Interrogator that lasted only three years. She subsequently discovered that the father she had believed long dead was in fact an Inquisitor Lord, and that he had ensured her meteoric rise. Upon becoming an Inquisitor, her first act was to denounce her new-found sire for such blatant abuse of his position, and the two became sworn enemies.

The aid which an Interrogator might receive from a distant patron ranges from cryptic messages containing high-level access ciphers received at exactly the moment they are most needed, to entire companies of Imperial Guard being dispatched to extract him from an otherwise hopeless situation.

Some might wonder what the patron gains out of this arrangement. In many cases, there is indeed a price to be paid, a debt to be called in at some undisclosed point in the future. Many are the newly ascended Inquisitors who have found themselves beholden to a superior in this manner. The example of Witch Hunter Rzeel is a case in point. This zealous, fiery individual rose through the ranks from Acolyte to Inquisitor in spectacular fashion, being invited to join the ranks of the Ordo Hereticus within a decade of being granted the Seal. It was only upon his induction into the Ordo that he discovered his rise had been sponsored and orchestrated by one Inquisitor Nhekalax; an individual ostracised by his fellows and widely believed to be set upon the path of the Radical. Rzeel found himself indebted to Nhekalax to such an extent that he had little choice but to share in the dark path of his erstwhile patron.

Effects

Characteristics: Increase Fellowship by +5.
Talents: You gain Peer (Inquisition) and Good Reputation (Inquisition).

Gaze From on High

"For many years, I felt the presence of an unseen master; a whisper in the darkness, a furtive movement in the shadow, a stray shot in the fusillade. Only much later did I discover the truth. By the Emperor, I wish I had not…"

–Interrogator Nunnis, *Ruminations on Damnation* (suppressed)

To attain the position of Interrogator, an individual must have attracted the attention of the most highly placed of Inquisitors, for few take on the responsibility of training a pupil in the ways of the Inquisition. In fact, it is the lot of the vast bulk of Humanity to toil away an entire lifetime and never receive a word of thanks or recognition. Thus, to attain the notice of a potential master is a great honour and achievement in itself. Such individuals become trusted Acolytes, yet they are haunted by the notion that their every action is being scrutinised, even if they have no reason to explicitly believe this to be the case.

Step by step, these Acolytes come to realise that the eye of a hidden master is upon them. Perhaps they receive information their fellow Acolytes do not. Perhaps they are given secret objectives that appear at odds with the cadre's mission. Perhaps they are questioned or criticised far more than the others during a mission debrief.

Eventually, the day comes when the Acolyte discovers that his fellow agents are expendable, or at the least secondary to mission considerations. It is the Acolyte's actions on which the success of the mission is judged. To be scrutinised in such a manner is to have one's soul stripped bare by the blinding, all-seeing gaze of the Emperor's Inquisition. Many are those who wither and perish under that glare, unable to meet the gaze or confront what they know is being revealed.

Those Acolytes who can withstand the scrutiny, however, are granted the rank of Interrogator. Some might imagine the terrible scrutiny they have been subjected to for so long is at an end. They are mistaken, for it has only just begun; the judgement, examination, and scrutiny is set to increase a hundred-fold. Though many are judged wanting, such scrutiny is a sign that great things have been foretold for the Interrogator; that he is numbered amongst the greatest servants of the Inquisition.

Effects

Fate Points: Gain an additional permanent Fate Point.

JUDGE

The following Transition Package is intended for use with characters ascending to the career of Judge.

Groomed for Command

"Task force, Verispex? We are the task force."

–Judge Gordon Titus

The vast majority of the Adeptus Arbites are made up of the Arbitrators and Proctors. Black-armoured and armed with shotguns and suppression shields, they are the face of Imperial justice to the average citizen of the Imperium. Their duties consist mainly of patrol, direct enforcement, and suppression. Alongside them are the Verispex technicians who process forensic evidence, and the Chasteners who conduct interviews and suspect interrogation. Above them are the Marshals, who can direct the efforts of Arbites stretched across an entire planet.

Only the most competent Arbitrators are considered for promotion to the rank of Judge. Such Arbitrators must be well-rounded individuals, capable of reciting rote passages from the Lex Imperialis, navigating the byzantine mazes of precedence and jurisdiction, and wielding the tools of enforcement—shock maul, combat shotgun, and bolter—with consummate skill. An Arbitrator who can lead a suppression raid into the low hive and consider how ten thousand years of case law

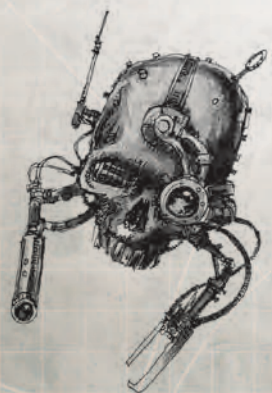
applies to a current decision often draws the attention of his superiors, and is placed on the path towards becoming a Judge. Many Arbitrators do not meet these exacting standards, but the Adeptus Arbites do not compromise on the demands of the law. Judges bear both great power and responsibility in their station, able to mobilise massive forces of Arbitrators to deal with insurrection and rebellion with the harsh punishments dictated by the Lex Imperialis. Very few within the Imperium can afford to dismiss the remit of an Adeptus Arbites Judge, for they possess sweeping powers and authority within their purview.

Many factions within the Inquisition have a habit of working closely with the Arbites. In fact, many Inquisitors count Arbitrators amongst the ranks of their trusted agents. These Arbitrators may choose to work more closely with the Inquisition, forgoing their ties and authority within the Arbites to join the ranks of the Holy Ordos. If they do not, however, and choose to maintain their ties with the Arbites, often their Inquisitors see the wisdom in helping them rise in station. After all, Judges wield power and authority not many other Throne Agents possess.

With Inquisitional backing, an Arbitrator's promotion to Judge is more likely, though by no means guaranteed. However, the Arbites expects the newly promoted Judges to serve them as well as their masters. In these situations it is traditional for new Judges with Inquisitional involvement to temporarily leave the service of the Holy Ordos and be assigned to a world unfamiliar to them (though usually in the same sector). Considering the powers and responsibilities of a Judge, working with an Inquisitor is often more like a partnership than servant/master relationship. Although the Inquisitor is unquestionably the greater authority, few amongst the Holy Ordos ignore the experience, training, and instincts of a hardened Judge. Simply put, Judges are too valuable an ally to dismiss lightly! Thus, it is not uncommon for an Inquisitor to lend his influence to a favoured Arbitrator Acolyte and see that Arbitrator given a chance to fulfil his full potential as both a Judge and a Throne Agent. The Judge's respect for the Lex Imperalis, commitment to justice, and hard-earned practical experience make them a common sight in the retinues of Puritan-minded Inquisitors, where they strike fear into the Inquisitor's foes.

Effects

Characteristics: Gain +3 Intelligence and +3 Fellowship.
Corruption: Lose 1d5 Corruption Points.



MAGOS

All of the following Transition Packages are intended for use with characters ascending to the career of Magos.

Access Denied

"You damn me now, but I promise soon you will beg me for the wisdom I have won."

–Magos Deltanak (detained pending trial)

Whilst engaged upon the Quest for Knowledge, there are those amongst the Adeptus Mechanicus that discover lore so terrible it becomes a nigh-unbearable burden weighing down upon the soul. Such individuals may find themselves engaged in areas of research considered anathema or expressly forbidden by the Cult Mechanicus. However, a sufficiently experienced and senior Magos often considers himself outside of the constraints quite rightly placed upon lesser Tech-Priests and continues in his researches.

The knowledge uncovered might stem from xenos technology, and therefore run counter to the doctrine that machines created by any other than Mankind are corrupted. The research might have uncovered some artefact of psychic-engineering, such as that utilised by the Eldar in their creation of Wraithbone. It might relate to the nature of the warp and the vile things that lurk in its depths. It might even relate to the absolutely forbidden realm of thinking engines.

A Magos engaged in the pursuit of such knowledge might find himself shunned or outright rejected by his peers. The Cult Mechanicus is conservative in the extreme, and very slow to adopt a new technology. Far better that old knowledge is recovered, many Tech-Priests believe, than new knowledge created. Despite this inherent conservatism, many so-called heresies have given rise to new technologies, often following decades or even centuries of investigations by the most senior of Tech-adepts. It may be that the originator of a new technology is purged as a 'heretek,' only to be raised centuries later to a status akin to that of a saint.

If this research is unknown to his fellows, a Magos is wise to separate himself from potential enemies, for a time at least. A Magos engaged upon such a quest might find his path crossing with those outside of this order, such as Inquisitors, with whom he shares a common interest. An Inquisitor hunting down a pernicious xenos threat, for example, might value an alliance with a Magos who is particularly knowledgeable on that species. An agent seeking to purge a mutant cult might find common cause with a Magos whose particular speciality is geno-cleansing.

A Magos engaged in investigations in this manner seeks to return one day to his order. There, he bows down before the altar of the Omnissiah and shares his knowledge with the Machine God. If the Magos and the knowledge he brings are found worthy, the sum of knowledge is increased, if only by an incremental sum. Such is the life's work and greatest reward of those who serve the Machine God.

Effects

Talents: You gain the Good Reputation (Inquisition) and Enemy (Adeptus Mechanicus) Talents.

The Rite of Clear Thought

"Some say they 'know no fear', but really, they mean that they have mastered their fear, conquered it, and fought on. I was like that once. Now, I truly know no fear. It is alien to me; as alien as doubt, rage, or mercy."

–Magos Arkenald, Master Artificer of Forge-Stack Epsilon 12.

As a Magos advances in his service to the Machine God and furthers the eternal Quest for Knowledge, he gradually replaces his body's biological components. Arms are replaced with powerful claws, hands with tentacle-like manipulators, eyes with brass-rimmed lenses capable of viewing the microscopic, and he acquires neural plugs that link his brain to a cogitator's machine spirit. Central to the doctrine of the Cult Mechanicus is the absolute certainty that the flesh is weak, and the machine superior. Only through casting off the inferior biological body and replacing it, one part at a time, can Man transcend the limitations of creation and evolve to the next level.

However, it is not only the biological body that the Cult Mechanicus seeks to upgrade in this manner. The mind itself is subject to replacement and enhancement. The Biologus Adepts have mastered the arts of neuromancy, excising specific parts of the brain and replacing them with superior, augmetic components such as memo chips, ingrams and electrografts. Mental capacity can be greatly increased by augmenting the cortex and replacing crude, soft grey matter with hard, ever-lasting silicon. Enhancement of the cerebellum radically increases the Magos' capacity to learn and form hypotheses.

It is accepted as essential to the doctrine of the supremacy of the machine that as biological neurological organs are replaced with mechanical counterparts, so too does the psyche of the Magos change. He becomes ever more focussed and single-minded, less susceptible to the distractions of an undisciplined mind. Emotions recede, to be replaced with cold, hard logic. The ultimate expression of this core article of faith is the Rite of Clear Thought.

During a ritual surgery conducted by the highest ranking and most skilled of Biologus Adepts, the entire right hemisphere of the Magos' brain is excised and replaced with machine components. The removal of the hemisphere held to control the intuitive and creative aspects of the human mind and its replacement with a mechanical augmentation of the left hemisphere—that which controls logic and analysis—results in an entirely changed individual. Gone are the weaknesses of emotion, the distractions of empathy, and the cares of interaction. In their place, the Magos finds his capacity to learn and analyse increased exponentially. For the first time in his life, the Magos thinks clearly, his mind quiet and focussed and able to commune with the machine as an equal, though others who are not similarly gifted may consider him divorced from reality and driven mad. His thought patterns are remoulded as new synaptic pathways are seared into what remains of the grey matter of the brain, itself kept alive by horrifically produced anti-agapic elixirs. His thought patterns are remoulded as new synaptic pathways are seared into what remains of the grey matter of the brain. Blessedly, the Magos thinks as a machine, and is that much closer to the Omnissiah.

So central is the Rite of Clear Thought to the dogma that it is used as the order's symbol—the skull with the right side replaced with a machine augmetic. A Magos that has received the Rite of Clear thought is a powerful ally for an Inquisitor; he is able to function under enormous pressure and resist temptations that would seduce even the most strong-minded and pure of Throne Agents.

Effects

Prerequisite: The character must possess the Rite of Clear Thought Talent.
Characteristics: Reduce Fellowship by –10, and increase Intelligence and Willpower by +5.

PRIMARIS PSYKER

The following Transition Packages are intended for use with characters ascending to the career of Primaris Psyker.

Judged by Your Peers

To become a Primaris Psyker is no easy task. The Scholastica Psykana is the final judge of who is worthy to bear the rank of Primaris, for it is more than simply a title. Primaris Psykers are some of the most powerful psykers sanctioned by the Imperium, and more importantly, they are given a measure of trust and responsibility not awarded to lesser psykers. Throughout the Adeptus Terra, Primaris Psykers are placed in positions of power and authority; in the Imperial Guard they can even be granted battlefield commands. This means that the Scholastica Psykana is unwilling to grant a psyker the rank of Primaris casually.

Potential candidates are brought to one of the Scholastica's facilities, where they are tested and tried by other Primaris Psykers. These trials take many different forms, and often last for weeks or even months. During this time, the subject is pushed through gruelling mental endurance regimes, has his mind probed by high level telepaths for any chinks in his mental armour, and is forced to participate in duels with cadres of battle-psykers.

Part of this test is to see just how powerful the candidate is, for it is not uncommon for psykers to unlock greater levels of power as they grow and mature. A delta level psyker may have become a gamma or even beta level since he was first sanctioned. However, the Scholastica is more concerned with learning just how strong the psyker's mind is against perils such as possession or psychic witchery. Since one of the perks of being a Primaris Psyker is far greater independence from the watchful eye of the Scholastica Psykana and the Imperial authorities in general, the Scholastica must be positive they

are not granting that to someone who easily falls prey to malefic forces.

The final stages of the Primaris Sanctioning Rites consist of deep mental conditioning and the embedding of wards, runes, and other psychic defences into the psyker's scalp and skull. This process alone takes weeks, during which the psyker lives in a dream-like fugue state, responding only instinctually to the pain/pleasure impulses and cerebral goads of the conditioning process. Recovery takes even longer, however the end result is a psyker who can stand amongst the more powerful in the Imperium and is worthy of the title "Primaris."

Effects

Characteristics: Gain +5 Willpower. Lose 5 Toughness.
Insanity: Lose 1d5 Insanity and 1d5 Corruption.

Tempered by Fire

"I don't care what brought you here, you'd better grab that lasgun or you'll be just as dead as the rest of us!"

–Sergeant Vitalie Orshenko to a new arrival at the front.

Many of the Inquisition's psykers are sent to serve the Holy Ordos directly from the Scholastica Psykana. The Inquisition's voracious appetite for psykers of all types is never sated. Psykers are used for interrogations, protecting their masters from the assaults of witches and daemons, precognitive abilities, and, of course, the dangerous powers they can wield on the battlefield. All this, plus the fact that psykers often have an unfortunate tendency to be consumed by their own abilities, means that the Inquisition snaps up psykers as fast as the Scholastica can provide them. In fact, Inquisitors have often been known to take promising psychic individuals from the other Adeptus Terra to accomplish their goals.

Unfortunately, this does tend to mean that such psykers are woefully untrained in one area the Inquisition would find very useful—the art of warfare and combat. The Scholastica Psykana focuses on training a psyker's mind, not his physical prowess, and many of the branches of the Adeptus Terra are more concerned with administration, supply, and governance. Even many of the psykers in the Imperial Guard must be accompanied to the battlefield by 'minders' who are tasked with both protecting them if they come under direct attack, and dealing with them should their powers overwhelm their control.

An Inquisitor, however, often needs a psyker who is capable of cool-headed thinking in dangerous situations, handling himself physically, and is not completely reliant on his mental powers. Such psykers are usually hard to find, thus, an informal tradition has arisen amongst certain Inquisitors, specifically those serving in the Calixis Sector. These Inquisitors make a habit of identifying promising psykers from amongst the ranks of their low-level operatives. These psykers are not integral to the Inquisitor's operations, nor are they irreplaceable. The Inquisitor then dispatches them on some task or minor investigation that sees them attached to a regiment of the Imperial Guard being dispatched to a combat zone. Some Inquisitors mention to their psykers that they will be joined with the Guard unit for the duration of their combat tour, others choose not to.

The task the psyker was assigned to complete usually has little actual importance. It is simply an excuse to get the psyker assigned to a situation where he is plunged into the crucible of battle. After all, in a war zone there are no non-combatants, and the psyker has no choice but to learn the soldier's trade—close combat, tactics for small and large units, survival skills, weaponry training and any number of other useful talents—or die.

Eventually, the psyker's master comes for his servant. If all has gone well, he finds a psyker hardened by the fires of war, far more suited for his service with the Golden Throne. In addition, although he has not formally gone through the Scholastica's approval process, the Inquisition has little trouble getting him sanctioned and approved as a Primaris Psyker. Of course, in war, one's survival is by no means guaranteed, and many psykers do not survive their trial by fire. However, to the Inquisition, the potential payoff is worth the risk.

Effects

Characteristics: Gain +3 Weapon Skill, +3 Ballistic Skill, and +1 Wound.
Skills: If you do not already have them, gain Common Lore (War) and Survival as Trained Skills.
Insanity: Gain 1d10 Insanity Points.
Corruption: Gain 1d5 Corruption Points.

SAGE

All of the following Transition Packages are intended for use with characters ascending to the career of Sage.

Curse of the Autosavant

"Leave? Please master, no, we can't leave now! I have only three giga-stacks remaining to compile, we can't leave!"

–Adept Lissen, 90 seconds before the detonation of the nucleonic pile at New Thule

Many Adepts are prone to extremes of behaviour when it comes to their particular field of expertise or specialist knowledge. Some scholars seek out every last fact relating to their particular field, whilst there are those census-enforcers who do not leave a world until every last citizen is accounted for. For some, the obsession becomes so deep they begin to exhibit signs of psychosis, leading to the metaphorical contraction of what in some quarters is referred to as a meme-virus.

An individual with a meme-virus exhibits extremes of obsessive behaviour far in excess of even the most thorough of census-enforcers. They are, in a literal sense, mentally and physically addicted to the gathering and processing of information. Furthermore, they cannot help themselves but to pass on this data to others, leading to the condition being described as a virus. In this case, the meme, or datum, is the body seeking to replicate itself, and the sufferer as an autosavant. An individual suffering from a meme-virus does not appear to be suffering at all, unless deprived of a source of fresh data. Then, the victim exhibits exactly the same behaviour as a drug addict experiencing withdrawal; in extreme cases, it has been known to have fatal consequences.

The Inquisition, of course, has found great utility in autosavants, for they are living, walking, talking cogitators with a tireless drive to uncover every hidden fact. Let loose in the catacombs of the Prol IX archives, for example, an autosavant could uncover secrets entirely unknown to the generations of Decatalogues that have laboured there for centuries. The only issue from an Inquisitor's point of view is the fact that the sufferer not only seeks to acquire and process the data, but is driven to transmit it onwards, engaging in a near-constant stream of seemingly unconnected and irrelevant facts to any within earshot. The Inquisitor must be sure that secrets recently uncovered are not spilled to those who should not be party to them. Many Inquisitors gag their autosavants. Others have their vocal ability removed so that they must communicate silently by way of a constant stream of spidery text written upon spools of parchment. These are often referred to as the 'silent-savants,' for obvious reasons.

Although the services of an autosavant are of great value to the Inquisition, those afflicted by the meme-virus often end up as tragic figures. They become increasingly addicted to the gathering of information, until eventually they are unable to communicate on the same level as the remainder of Humanity. Only a very fortunate few end their days as archivists of one of the Administratum's vast data-repositories, entirely submerged in planet-wide oceans of information. The unfortunate find themselves stranded or abandoned, every available scrap of data absorbed and processed, until insanity and death claims them.

Effects

Characteristics: Increase Intelligence and Perception by +5. Reduce Fellowship by –10.

The Burden of Truth

"I had the most terrible nightmare. A nightmare in which my body was flayed, layer by layer, my organs removed and held before my very eyes that I might witness the ruin done to me. And then I awoke, and pain was all I knew…"

–Adept Ventus, Mnemonicus-Logi of Bureau Omega-M, sub-archive 4949444.1

During a period of service to the Inquisition, an Acolyte is likely to come into contact with a wide range of secrets denied to the greater mass of Humanity. The Ordos Calixis utilise untold numbers of adepts, each an unparalleled expert in their field, and the question of who can be trusted to keep the Inquisition's secrets is an ongoing concern. Many are the Acolytes or other contacts that simply find out a secret so damaging they cannot be allowed to live with such knowledge in their heads. These unfortunates disappear, likely at the hands of a Death Cult Assassin or other agent of the Inquisition, never to be seen again. Some, however, are brought into custody that their continued existence might be debated and decided.

To awaken strapped into a filth-encrusted chair at the heart of a pulsing mass of cables and gleaming probes is perhaps one of the most terrifying of ordeals a Throne Agent can undergo, particularly as they are fully aware that their captors are their erstwhile employers. An Acolyte brought into captivity in this manner is all too knowledgeable of the ruin a skilled Excrutiator can enact upon his mind and body, and his sanity is stretched to the very limit as his captors bear down upon him and the questioning begins. Accompanying the questions may be the administration of serums and elixirs, each with the purpose of eliciting a biological or psychological response to which the victim has no defence. The Acolyte reveals every last corner of his soul, every secret ever hidden away in the depths of his unconscious mind. A skilled practitioner of the Inquisitor's arts can deconstruct the subject's psyche to such an extent that he is left with only the purest essence of what

makes that individual who he is. Afterwards, the measure of the man may be taken, and judgement passed—life or death.

Those judged unworthy of life or simply too dangerous to be allowed to bear the Inquisition's secrets are disposed of there and then. A very unfortunate few are revived only to have the judgement delivered to them. A fortunate few are judged strong enough to carry the knowledge into which they have come into possession. These are revived, their psyche rebuilt stronger and purer than before.

Upon awakening, the individual is acknowledged as worthy and able to keep the secrets of the Inquisition. A whole new world of secrets is opened to him, a fact that at first might seem the greatest of honours. In fact, many come to rue the fact that they were judged worthy at all, so terrible are the things they must know of and do in the name of the Holy Ordos of the Emperor's Inquisition.

Effects

Characteristics: Increase Willpower by +10.
Insanity Points: You gain 1d10 Insanity Points.

STORM TROOPER

The following Transition Package is intended for use with characters ascending to the career of Storm Trooper.

Schola Progenium Storm Trooper Training

"First to victory."

–Motto of the 1st Scintillan Storm Trooper Company

The Schola Progenium exists to adopt children whose parents died in the Emperor's service and train them to become the bedrock of the Imperium. The Schola's graduates are scattered across Imperial society: the Ecclesiarchy, Administratum, Adeptus Arbites, Commissariat, Adepta Sororitas, or even the Inquisition. However, for those who prove to be particularly martial and aggressive, the Schola reserves its most difficult and dangerous training. This is the instruction provided to the famous Imperial Guard Storm Troopers.

Storm Trooper Training begins immediately after the Schola Progenium's primary education but does not supplant it. After all, potential Storm Troopers are expected to be more than simply warriors. Each is expected to be both well-schooled in basic education and Imperial lore and history, and be unwaveringly loyal to the Imperium as well (something a Schola education works diligently to impart).

Although the vast majority of Storm Troopers are progena, at times a senior official of the Imperium (such as an Inquisitor) uses his authority to have an individual inducted into the Storm Trooper Training of the Schola Progenium. In these situations, the Schola Progenium makes no distinction between a barely-teenage new recruit and a grizzled veteran with years of service, and any complaints those veterans may have are quickly crushed under the weight of training. When (or if) those recruits emerge as Storm Troopers, they are often removed from their squad and assigned to their patron, instead.

To be selected to become a Storm Trooper in this manner happens but rarely, usually after some act of outstanding courage and dedication. The candidate must show developed martial skills, a strong mind resistant to terror and panic, and a deep faith in the Imperial Creed. Naturally, the sponsoring Inquisitor has his own, often obscure, agenda for sponsoring an Acolyte into this training as well. Storm Troopers make excellent Throne Agents, often serving as an Inquisitor's bodyguard in extremely dangerous situations and valued for their martial training and knowledge.

Often, such an unusual candidate is examined carefully by the Drill Abbot instructors before being declared fit to the train with the Storm Trooper progena. Rigourous study with the Inquisition is also required for the candidate in order to acquire the same knowledge already learnt by the other progena—this often includes an understanding of the Tactica Imperialis, advanced stealth techniques, and a basic communion with the machine spirits of their special wargear, such as targeters and grav chutes. In most cases, the 'proper'

Storm Trooper progena never recognise the qualities of the outsider candidate, and prefer to remain aloof. The candidate, after all, has entered the training from the sponsorship of a higher power, and many of the other progena will doubt his own personal qualifications for such an honour. Traditionally, the Drill Abbots stand apart from the social aspects of their charges, and provide the candidate with no more and no less instruction than given to any other progena. Many a grizzled veteran may find his pride difficult to swallow when treated no differently than a raw and untested recruit by the Drill Abbots. However, swallow it they must if they are to complete their training and fulfil the expectations of their sponsor.

Should the candidate survive the gruelling regime of harsh training, he is now an Imperial Storm Trooper. However, candidates sponsored by the Inquisition are not meant to join a proper Storm Trooper unit, nor to deploy with the Imperial Guard. Instead, these Storm Troopers, with their training complete, are taken by their sponsor to serve a higher purpose—a permanent place on an Inquisitor's retinue.

Effects

Characteristics: Gain +3 Ballistic Skill, and +3 Willpower. If your Strength is below 40, gain +5 Strength. If your Toughness is below 40, gain +5 Toughness. Lose –10 Fellowship.

VINDICARE ASSASSIN

The following Transition Package is intended for use with characters ascending to the career of Vindicare Assassin.

The Art of Death

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

–Motto of the Officio Assassinorum

Most Imperial Assassins are trained from early childhood, specially chosen from the progeny of death world populations, feral world warrior societies, and the hunter-gangs of the most dangerous hive cities in the Imperium. However, in some rare cases, particularly exceptional recruits are found amongst adults who have proven themselves fearsome and ruthless killers, strong in mind, body, and faith. Such a recruit must first establish himself as a standout amongst his peers, uniquely talented and capable of executing murder in a variety of methods. Cunning or crude, the results of the killer's methods are weighed most carefully before he is designated as a potential candidate to become an Imperial Assassin.

The Officio Assassinorum

The Officio Assassinorum is one of the most secretive organisations in the Imperium. Its hidden Grand Master is one of the High Lords of Terra, the cabal of awesomely powerful individuals whose every decision affects untold billions of people and immense tracts of the Imperium.

Only the High Lords themselves can sanction the deployment of an Imperial Assassin, fearing that their own weapons may be used against them. It is said that in the distant past, Grand Masters used assassins to further their own ends, and a reign of terror clutched even the High Lords themselves. In the anarchic Wars of Vindication, the Grand Master himself fell to the Assassin's knife. Following these events, the Inquisition stepped in to maintain a certain level of oversight over the Officio Assassinorum with the foundation of the Ordo Sicarius.

To those few who are aware of its existence, the Officio Assassinorum is often considered to be the ultimate Imperial tool of destruction and diplomacy. In an Imperium that spans an entire galaxy, there are many who believe they can defy its authority. Some simply crave independence from the Imperial Creed and the endless bureaucracy of the Adeptus Terra. Others have fallen under the domination of heretics and the foul whispers of Chaos. This is the Assassin's battleground, to punish the misguided, the foolish, and the overly ambitious, to purge the enemies of the Emperor.

Planetary Governors and Imperial Commanders across the Imperium must understand that abuse of their power is not tolerated, and results in the justice of sword, venom, and gunfire. Some may be able to avoid the Judges of the Adeptus Arbites, flee the wrath of the Adeptus Astartes, or hide from the soldiers of the Imperial Guard, but very few indeed escape the vengeance of an Imperial Assassin.

These unusual candidates are often identified by certain Inquisitors or other highly-placed Imperial agents throughout the Imperium, all part of a network of information maintained by the shadowy masters of the Officio Assassinorum. Some Inquisitors occasionally make a request for an especially promising acolyte to be trained, trading on the Officio Assassinorum's desire to maintain goodwill with the Ordo Sicarius.

If a particularly gifted killer meets the appropriate requirements, he is given an opportunity to prove his skills. The candidate is anonymously contracted to slay a particularly challenging target, often another killer of his own calibre or a similarly difficult task. If the candidate passes this first test, he is given passage to Terra aboard a swift vessel. Upon arrival, he is sedated and blinded and taken to the Temple that has chosen him.

There, his senses are restored, and he begins his indoctrination into the traditions and techniques of that Temple. His formal training has truly begun. Again and again he is taken to the brink of death in brutally lethal scenarios designed to instruct the candidate in the Temple's signature methods of execution. If the candidate survives this merciless training regimen, his skills are honed to a razor-sharp edge. Over a long period of time, he becomes a living weapon, an instrument of the Emperor's Judgement.

At the conclusion of his training, the candidate is chemically placed into a brief catatonic state and purified in holy oils. His body is ritually blessed and augmented with special bionic and genetic upgrades to heighten his speed, accuracy, and reaction time. He receives hypno-conditioning to harden his mind against all moral threats, and any remnant of his former life is cast away, often ceremonially burned to ash.

When he awakens, he is an agent of the Officio Assassinorum. His former life has ended, and he dons the black synskin of an Imperial Assassin—a symbol of mourning for the lives he snuffs out in the Emperor's name.

Effects

Characteristics: Increase Ballistic Skill by +5, Weapon Skill by +5, Willpower by +5, and Agility by +5. Intelligence and Fellowship are reduced by –5. You suffer 1d10 Insanity Points.

Fate Points: You permanently lose one Fate Point. This is subtracted after you receive your additional Fate Points for becoming a Throne Agent (see page 10).

The Assassin Temples

Imperial Assassins of the Officio Assassinorum are indoctrinated into one of many secret Temples. Each Temple approaches the art of death in its own unique style, and each trains its assassins to use highly specialised wargear and techniques to carry out missions of murder. Four of the most prominent Temples are summarised below:

Vindicare: Assassins from the Vindicare Temple specialise in the arts of stealth and killing from long range. Marksmen without peer, Vindicare Assassins bring inglorious death to the Emperor's foes with a sniper's precision.

Callidus: The most subtle of the Assassin Temples, Callidus Assassins utilise the shape-altering drug known as polymorphine to adopt a nearly-impenetrable disguise. The Callidus Assassin is a living weapon, often dropped behind enemy lines to assassinate a particular individual and take his place. Often, the misinformation they sow is just as effective as their more lethal arts.

Eversor: The Eversor Temple specialises in shock and terror tactics, and its Assassins are instruments of brutal destruction. Eversor Assassins are engineered to become superhuman killing machines with advanced bionic, genetic, and chemical augmentations. In addition, the Assassin's mind is focused entirely upon the annihilation of his targets with psycho-conditioning techniques and a vast array of combat drugs, turning him into a nearly unstoppable killing machine. These hyper-aggressive killers are carefully stored in cryo-suspension between each mission.

Culexus: Among the most sinister of the Assassin Temples, the Culexus Assassins are usually deployed to destroy enemy psykers, sorcerers, and others who rely upon warp-tainted powers. The Culexus Temple takes in Untouchables, beings who have a null psychic signature in the warp and are therefore antithetical to psykers and their strange abilities. These killers are soulless, horrifying creatures that are closely observed and controlled by the Temple.

General Transition Packages

The following Transition Packages are designed to be selected by multiple careers. Each provides general benefits that can be useful to almost any Throne Agent, and represents occurrences that could happen to almost anyone. Almost any Acolyte that did not receive access to Psychic Powers may want to consider the Mind's Eye Opens, for example, in order to unlock their full psychic potential. On the other hand, if a character is nigh-crippled by Corruption or Insanity, they may be willing to pay the heavy price to purge themselves of their burden with Cleansed and Purified or A Mind Repurposed.

A Mind Repurposed

"What do you remember about your operations in the Gorgonoid Mine?"

"Not to be impertinent, sir, but where's that?"

–Unknown subject undergoing mind-cleansing

Ascended Career: Any

Insanity is a constant problem for the agents of the Holy Ordos. The terrors they must deal with on a regular basis can easily drive lesser individuals mad. Throne Agents are by no means lesser individuals. However, even they cannot withstand the mind-blasting horrors they must confront and emerge unscathed. Too many Throne Agents are retired from the service of the Holy Ordos prematurely, exiled to sanatoriums or convalescent homes where their worst enemies are their own twisted, haunted memories and imaginings.

For most, that is where their story ends. However, some individuals have the mental fortitude required to fight through their mental prisons. Such persons are incredibly rare. However, the Inquisition makes a point of recruiting such individuals, and thus a Throne Agent is far more likely to recover from their mental nightmares than most.

Should a Throne Agent demonstrate such a potential, the Inquisition has certain resources it can bring to bear to hasten and enhance his recovery. Such resources vary depending on the Throne Agent, as well as the whims of his superiors. Some prefer lengthy convalescence on paradise planets reserved for Imperial nobility, or on worlds dedicated to the Adeptus Ministorum. Time surrounded by the relics and trappings of Imperial faith can do much to restore and reinforce one's mental fortitude. Other Inquisitors prefer mind-cleansing and mental reprogramming and conditioning. Such techniques are brutal and invasive. However, often the most effective way to repair a damaged mind is to force it to forget the trauma it suffered to begin with.

A Throne Agent who undergoes this conditioning emerges with a new-found mental clarity and fortitude, ready to continue serving his superiors against the horrors that beset mankind. And if the conditioning leaves the subject slightly duller and less mentally acute, well, that is a small price to pay.

Effects

Insanity Points: Reduce your number of Insanity Points to 1d10+4. You lose any Disorders you possessed.
Characteristics: Permanently lose 1d5+2 Intelligence.
Familiar Patterns: Though your thoughts are calmed, they may yet stray into familiar patterns. At the GM's discretion, should your character earn any Disorders in the future, they should automatically be Disorders you possessed before you purchased this Transition Package.

Cleansed and Purified

"In pain there is redemption. In trial there is salvation."

–Mantra of the Flagellant

Ascended Career: Any

Few members of the Inquisition can perform their duties and keep their soul pure and unsullied. The twisted nature of malefic-tainted foes, the insidiousness of xenos infestation, and the pure corrupting influence of the warp—all are perils a Throne Agent undoubtedly faces over the course of his career. All of them are also threats to more than his physical body, but also his very soul.

This is an all-too common problem amongst the Imperium's militant forces. If the corruption is not severe, tainted individuals continue to be utilised to serve the Imperium's needs. Too often, however, such corruption is overwhelming enough that such individuals are doomed, and may doom their fellows as well. In that case, Imperial doctrine is as cautious as it is unforgiving, stating that those who become 'irreversibly contaminated' are to be granted the mercy of a quick death.

However, at times, such individuals are too valuable to be cast aside. In these rare cases, the Inquisition is able to employ certain techniques to purify an individual's soul. These are exhaustive, invasive, and time consuming. The techniques usually consist of a combination of flagellation, shrive-surgery, prayer, contemplative fasting, and chemical compounds and vitae-purifiers cycled directly through the subject's body. It is an exorbitantly expensive process that can only be utilised by the most powerful of the Imperium's organisations. Even then, an individual's survival is by no means guaranteed.

Those that emerge from this process whole are reborn, purified, and reaffirmed in their duties to the Golden Throne. Their bodies are cleansed of malignancies just as their soul is cleansed of darkness, and in a very real way, they have been granted a second life they can spend in service.

Effects

Corruption Points: Reduce your number of Corruption Points to 1d10+4. You lose any Malignancies and Mutations you possessed.
Characteristics: Permanently lose 1d5+2 Toughness.
Dark Tendencies: Though your soul and body are pure, they may yet stray into familiar patterns. At the GM's discretion, should your character earn any Malignancies or Mutations in the future, they should automatically be Malignancies or Mutations you possessed before you purchased this Transition Package.

Hero of the Inquisition

Your name will be remembered for millennia.

–Engraved on the entrance to the Lucid Palace's Hall of Heroes

Ascended Career: Any
Though the Inquisition is a secretive organisation, the deeds of some can still stand out. Contrary to popular belief, one does not have to be an Inquisitor to become famous amongst the ranks of the Holy Ordos. During the Angevin Crusade, the Crusader Welgon Rouss became a hero amongst the Inquisitorial personnel attached to the endeavour for his actions on the world of Gelmiro Tertius during the War of Brass. When rebel psyker-sorcerers summoned fell daemons to their side and attacked the gates of Sub-Hive Mortia–5, Rouss stood alone against their onslaught. Though the main gates were wrought asunder, the breach was only wide enough for three men to stand abreast, and this was where Rouss made his stand. With suppression shield and blessed power sword, he held back the daemonic incursion for four hours, until the forces of Daemonhunter Markus Eddards-Konnor launched a drop-pod assault into the heart of the malefic beings and scattered them to the winds. Rouss would go on to lead the bodyguards of no less than four Lords of the Calixian Conclave.

In more recent centuries, Adeptus Arbites Judge Astrid Skane became famous amongst the Inquisition when she rooted out a series of pleasure cults amongst the nobility of Scintilla's hives. The cults' malign influence extended as far as the world's ruling governance and had tendrils rooted deep in the Magistratum. Skane found herself fighting a lonely battle against adversaries wielding power both political and martial. Her success (with several allies from the Tricorn) eventually saw her inducted to the ranks of the Calixian Conclave and elevated to the status of Inquisitor.

Needless to say, not all heroic actions need be as far-sweeping or life-changing as these, but they must be beyond the scope of a Throne Agent's expected duties in order for his actions to be noticed by the wider Conclave. Independently organising crucial investigations and operations, heroic rescues of important Imperial personnel, single-handedly dredging up important clues to questions long gone unanswered, all these can cause a Throne Agent's star to ascend in the eyes of the Calixian Inquisition.

Such an individual finds many doors opened to them that would otherwise be closed; advanced training, better equipment, and extensive opportunities to advance in rank. However, such rapid ascension through the Inquisition is likely to draw unfriendly eyes as well. A Throne Agent whose name is spoken in many places is likely to earn detractors and enemies—whether due to resentment, doctrinal differences, or darker reasons—he never even knows about, until it is too late.

Effects

Characteristics: Gain +5 Fellowship.
Talents: Gain the Peer (Inquisition) and Good Reputation (Inquisition) if you do not already have them. If you do, gain +2 Influence. However, the GM secretly chooses one faction of the Inquisition. You gain the Rival Talent for that Faction.
War Wounds: You have permanently lost one Wound. As a result of your injuries, you have replaced one body part of your choice with a common-Craftsmanship bionic implant.

Sole Survivor

"Three thousand souls went down in Drop Shuttle Three. One returned to orbit."

–Redacted report on Mara Drop-site Massacre

Ascended Career: Any

The missions of the Holy Ordos are seldom simple, and almost never safe. The Inquisition fights against the tri-fold enemies of mankind—the enemy without, the enemy within, and the enemy beyond—in their most dangerous and insidious forms. Lawbreaking and recidivist behaviour are handled by the Arbites and Enforcers, whilst full-scale wars are dealt with by the Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, and the Space Marines. The Inquisition's purview falls on those threats too dangerous for the former, and too subtle and secretive for the latter. It is unsurprising that its agents constantly flirt with death.

Thus, it is also not uncommon for a Throne Agent to be temporarily assigned to a team or cadre—possibly because of specialist skills or rare talents—that is dispatched on a mission that turns out to be much more deadly than it first appeared. Perhaps the team's enemies learned of the Inquisition's interest, and rather than fleeing the wrath of the Holy Ordos, decided to attack them head-on instead. Suicide raids, deadly ambushes, or even launching full-fledged insurrections or wars are all possible, and often not even a team of Throne Agents can survive unscathed. Or perhaps, the team simply got caught up in something unexpected and unrelated. Three Acolyte cells of Inquisitor Lord Caidin were wiped out on Tranch when the Pale Throng sparked the planet into uprising, simply caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. Perhaps more tragic was the case of Interrogator Hawle, who was leading a party of savants and sages to Fenksworld's Library of Knowing to conduct decades of research. Their ship was found adrift and dead twenty years after they set out—their Gellar Field had apparently failed while in transit.

Occasionally, however, a Throne Agent survives the circumstances that kill off his entire team, and emerges battered but unbowed by terrible circumstances. Some members of the Holy Ordos shun these individuals, considering them cursed or ill-fated. Others, however, prefer to employ these sole survivors, reasoning that someone who has cheated death once may likely be able to do it again.

Effects

Characteristics: Gain +5 Perception, +3 Agility, and +3 Willpower. Lose –5 Fellowship.

Scars: Gain 2d5 Insanity Points and permanently burn one Fate Point (after receiving your additional Fate Points for becoming a Throne Agent). As a result of your injuries, you have replaced one body part of your choice with a common-Craftsmanship bionic implant.

The Mind's Eye Opens

"I've seen things…you wouldn't want to believe."

–Interrogator Albin Thrace,
newly returned from sanctioning

Restrictions: Imperial Psykers and Tech-Priests may not take this Transition Package.

Prerequisites: Psy Rating 1 or higher or Nascent Psyker (Trait)

Ascended Career: Interrogator, Inquisitor, Primaris Psyker, Sage

Most psykers are detected whilst they are yet young and their powers are rude and immature. They are scooped up by the Black Ships and sent to Holy Terra where they are judged according to their ability and potential. According to Imperial Law, this is something all psykers must undergo, and indeed the vast majority do. The remainder—rogues, witches, and renegades—are hunted down, to be sent to the Black Ships in turn, or burnt on the pyre. In fact, one of the duties of the Inquisition, and the Ordo Hereticus especially, is to do just that.

However, there are cases of psychic powers manifesting in individuals later in their life. Sometimes these individuals are already servants of the Holy Ordos. In these cases, that person (and possibly his superiors, depending on how forthcoming the individual is about his newfound powers) is faced with a choice. His first option is to attempt to hide his abilities from those around him. This can be difficult; the effects of psychic powers can be easily recognised, and Imperial servants are charged to always be watchful for rogues. However, his status in the Inquisition may aid him, as an Inquisitor and his closest retinue are generally considered beyond the reach of Imperial law. His second option is the exact opposite; come clean and submit willingly to the Black Ships. Indeed, for most puritan Inquisitors, this is the only choice.

Those who travel to Holy Terra to be judged by the Scholastica Psykana run the risk of being sacrificed to power the Astronomicon or nourish the God-Emperor with their souls. In truth, however, the risk is far less for a tried and tested Throne Agent. His years of service have likely hardened his mind against horrors that would drive a lesser soul mad, and his veteran experience is not something to be discounted.

Most Throne Agents return to serve alongside their colleagues after several years. Their minds are honed and opened by the rigourous training of the Scholastica Psykana, and their souls are strengthened against the predications of the warp.

Effects

Psy Rating: Increase your Psy Rating by +1. If you do not currently have a Psy Rating, gain Psy Rating 1. Select one Major Psychic Power and two Minor Psychic Powers from the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook.

Sanctioning: Gain the Sanctioned Psyker Trait (**Dark Heresy** Rulebook page 26), but increase your age by 1d5 years instead of 3d10. Roll once on the Table 1–5: Sanctioning Side Affects on page 26 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook.

Characteristics: Decrease Toughness by 1d5.

Ascended Careers

"One strike from the shadows, and I can change the tide of battle."

–Vindicare Assassin cognomen-designate LIIVI

The following Ascended Careers all utilise the same basic structure and rules as the Career Paths found in Chapter II of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook. All the starting gear, unless stated otherwise, is of common craftsmanship.

Skills

If, for some reason, the character does not already possess these skills, all of the following Ascended Careers have access to the Literacy, Speak Language (High Gothic), and Tech-Use Skills as Elite Advances for a cost of 200xp each.

Ascended Traits

Each Ascended Career has a special ability that sets it apart from the others. In addition, each Ascended Career has a selection of bonus Ascended Traits that the character may choose from when entering the Ascended Career. Therefore, when a character enters an Ascended Career, he gains both the Ascended Trait associated with that Ascended Career and may choose one additional Trait from that Ascended Career's selections.

Interrogators to Inquisitors

The inclusion of the Inquisitor Career presented here is intended to represent the ability to play as an Inquisitor right from the start when using Ascension. The Transition Packages for the Inquisitor Career include a relatively small period of time serving as an Interrogator, representing a highly motivated or blessed individual who is granted his rosette in short order.

Many Inquisitors spend a significant amount of time as an Interrogator, and if the GM prefers, he can instead treat the Inquisitor Career as an Elite Advance Package and require a character first complete at least one (and potentially more, depending on the GM's wishes) Rank in the Interrogator Career. Using this option means that the granting of the rosette is entirely up to the GM and is likely to occur within the campaign itself. This could be quite an opportunity to recognize a particular group's roleplaying talents in the context of the ceremony.

When using this option, a Throne Agent with the Interrogator Career may transition into the Inquisitor Career at any point that the GM feels it is appropriate. Normally this occasion is a momentous one, although the exact circumstances may vary depending on the current state of the campaign.

Making the Transition

Becoming an Inquisitor is treated as an Elite Advance that costs 2,000 xp and requires the GM's permission. An Interrogator moving into the Inquisitor Career abandons his Ascended Career—he may select advances from any former rank he has previously held at the GM's discretion, but from that point forward he selects advances from the Inquisitor Career of his current Rank. The character loses the His Right Hand Ascended Trait and replaces it with Indomitable Will of the Inquisition. The character does not gain any additional Ascended Traits from the Inquisitor Career, but he may trade in any other existing Ascended Traits (with the exception of Wild Skills and Talents) to gain an Ascended Trait of his choice available to the Inquisitor Career.

Example

Ross's Dark Heresy character is a cleric named Zane Tokari. Zane has taken the Interrogator Ascended Career and has risen to Rank 11 as an Interrogator. Having received his GM's permission and spending 2,000 xp, Zane may become a Rank 11 Inquisitor. Zane loses the His Right Hand Ascended Trait and gains Indomitable Will of the Inquisition. He also trades in his Master Questioner Ascended Trait for Conviction is Strength. Zane may select any advances from Ranks 9–11 of Interrogator, Ranks 9–11 of Inquisitor, and Ranks 1-8 of Cleric. However, for selecting any advances from a higher Rank, Zane may only select advances from the Inquisitor Career.

Transitioning from other Ascended Careers

If the GM wishes, he can allow other characters to transition into the Interrogator Career as if it was also an Elite Advance Package. The GM follows the same guidelines as presented above, except that the character should choose one Ascended Trait from his previous career to keep, then gain only the His Right Hand Ascended Trait from the Interrogator Career. Then eventually, the newly minted Interrogator can progress to become an Inquisitor. However, the GM should think carefully before allowing a player to do this.

The following careers cannot transition into Interrogators: Death Cult Assassin, Magos, and Vindicare Assassin.

Crusader

"By this oath, I pledge to stand by thee, against traitor, beast, or fiend, for only in death does duty end."

–Crusader Kardronus Stown, protector of Inquisitor Sefidi for twelve decades.

Across the Imperium there exist countless orders that combine martial and religious ideals, each venerating and serving the God-Emperor according to its own ideals and traditions. To such warrior-monks, war and worship are one and the same. One type of order, little known to anyone outside of the Inquisition, is the Crusader Houses.

Crusaders are warriors of utmost dedication and potency, sworn to serve the agents of the Inquisition with no regard for their own desires whatsoever. These puissant warriors are inducted into one of the Crusader Houses, each of which is a closed and secretive community with as few as a dozen or as many as several thousand members. Many of these Houses are located near to Inquisitorial facilities, and some are housed inside the larger Inquisitorial fortresses. The Tricorn in Hive Sibellus on Scintilla hosts a number of Crusader Houses, the warriors of each always close at hand to accompany Throne Agents wherever their duties may take them.

The duty of a Crusader is to protect a specific Inquisitor, to whom he is bonded by a solemn, unbreakable oath. However, they are more than mere bodyguards. A Crusader is the Inquisitor's right hand which delivers the coup de grâce or parries the attacks of his foe. To have been inducted into a Crusader House, the warrior must have been judged nigh-incorruptible, at least in so far as any mortal can be judged so. Induction into a Crusader House occurs only at the invitation of one of its senior members, and only after the subject has been scrutinised from a distance, sometimes for many years. Having joined the cloistered ranks of the Crusaders, the inductee puts aside all thoughts of personal ambition and dedicates himself body and soul to the House and the greater cause pursued by the Holy Orders of the Emperor's Inquisition. From that moment on, the Crusader casts off wealth and all possessions beside his weapons, armour, and the articles of his faith. He takes residence in a bare stone cell within the Crusader House until such time as he is called upon to serve an Inquisitor. Then, he goes where his master wills.

Crusaders study every aspect of the arts of close combat, excelling in the use of melee weapons. As a matter of dogma, they eschew ranged weapons, believing that the pure essence of duty is only to be found in the clash of steel on steel, where blood is shed and bone hewed asunder. Crusader Houses teach many and varied martial techniques, many houses favouring a specific, signature weapon by which its members are known. Such weapons are invariably ancient and highly venerated, bedecked in devotional scripts and purity seals. They bear the intricately inscribed names and deeds of former owners, reminding the current bearer of his duties and that the eyes of the past are ever upon him. Many Crusader Houses favour long, heavy power swords, their reach able to intercept any blow that threatens their charge. Others favour massive polearms, often wielded two-handed so that the mighty haft breaks the blade of any blow it parries.

In addition to their melee weapons, many Crusaders carry suppression shields of one type or another. Over the centuries, the shield has become something of an emblem of the Crusader, symbolising the essentially defensive nature of their calling. Yet, common to all suppression shields is some type of offensive capacity. Many house a compact generator that delivers a powerful stun charge when an enemy's weapon comes into contact with its outer surface, stunning the attacker so that the Crusader can deliver the killing blow or rendering them insensible and ready for the Inquisitor's attentions. Other suppression shields incorporate single-use fragmentation rounds, melta charges, or even gas release devices.

Many Inquisitors call upon the services of a Crusader, and Witch Hunters in particular are known to value their skills and spiritual fortitude. Although many Inquisitors are more than capable warriors themselves, others are more thinkers than fighters, preferring to surround themselves with specialists. A Crusader provides the very best personal protection an Inquisitor could hope for, allowing him to pursue his own duties safe in the knowledge that no danger can approach whilst the Crusader stands watch.

STARTING SKILLS, TALENTS, AND GEAR

Gear: Best-craftsmanship power sword, crusader suppression shield, best-craftsmanship carapace armour, badge of office, micro-bead.

Ascended Traits

When you take up the path of the Crusader, you automatically gain the Shield Against Harm Trait. You must also choose one other trait from the list below.

Shield Against Harm

Part of a Crusader's role is to protect his Inquisitor—with his life if need be. This can entail interposing himself between his master and danger or taking damage so that his lord may escape unscathed. During combat, a Crusader may perform the following abilities if he is no more than 4 metres from his Inquisitor's side:

• The Crusader may make a Parry test as a Reaction to block an attack made against the Inquisitor.

• Sacrificing his next turn, the Crusader may take all of the damage from one hit just suffered by his Inquisitor.

Choose One…

Scourge of Heretics

The Crusader has taken a vow to purge heretics wherever he finds them and has honed his skills in dispatching them. This is not a blood-fuelled rage but rather a cold, calculated skill drilled into the Crusader through countless hours of training and prayer. The Crusader gains a +10 to his WS and a +2 to melee weapon damage when combating heretics. It is up to the GM to decide exactly which enemies count as heretics.

Hunter of Aliens

Aliens are a foul and constant threat to the Imperium, and the Crusader has taken a vow to ride the galaxy of their foul presence. Though he knows such a task is greater than his actions alone, he hopes that vile xenos blood he spills goes some way to winning the Emperor's war against this most terrible of foes. The Crusader gains a +10 to his WS and a +2 to melee weapon damage when combating aliens.

Slayer of Daemons

Vowing to battle the beyond, the Crusader has marked the warp-spawned for death. A most terrifying and brutal foe, few Crusaders who choose to take the battle to the denizens of the warp live long and happy lives—although the Inquisition praises them for their courage. The Crusader gains a +10 to his WS and a +2 to melee weapon damage when combating creatures with the Daemonic trait.

Crusader Characteristics Advances

Characteristic	Heroic	Master
Weapon Skill	1000	1500
Ballistic Skill	3000	3500
Strength	1000	1500
Toughness	1500	2000
Agility	1000	1500
Intelligence	3000	3500
Perception	1500	2000
Willpower	3000	3500
Fellowship	3000	3500

Rank 9 Crusader Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Basic Weapons Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Workers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Death Cults)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Melee Weapon Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Observation Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Exotic Weapon Training (Choose One)	500	Talent	
Sound Constitution (x3)	500	Talent	
Guardian	500	Talent	Ag 40
Unarmed Warrior	500	Talent	Ag 40
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)	500	Skill	—
Peer (Ecclesiarchy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Feral Worlders)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Inquisition)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Hivers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30

Rank 10 Crusader Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Death Blow	500	Paragon Talent	WP 50, St 40
Mental Aegis	500	Paragon Talent	WP50
Fieldcraft Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Peer (Enforcers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Guard)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Navy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Middle Class)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Pilgrims)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Favoured by Fate	1000	Talent	—
Sturdy	1000	Trait	—

Rank 11 Crusader Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Athletic Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Driving Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Storm of Blows	500	Paragon Talent	WS 35, Ag 40
Peer (Adeptus Arbites)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Nobility)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (PDF)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Planet (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Underworld)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Workers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Workers)
Enemy (Death Cults)	–200	Influence Talent	—

Rank 12 Crusader Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Blade Dancer	500	Paragon Talent	Ag 40, Acrobatics skill, WP40, Melee Weapon Training
Favoured by Fate	700	Talent	—
Peer (Academics)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Death Worlders)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Government)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Officio Assassinorum)	–300	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Enforcers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Enforcers)
Good Reputation (Military)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Military)
Good Reputation (Middle Class)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Middle Class)
Good Reputation (Pilgrims)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Pilgrims)
Unarmed Mastery	700	Talent	WS 45, Ag 45, Unarmed Warrior

Rank 13 Crusader Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Heightened Reactions	500	Paragon Talent	Ag 40, Per 40
Peer (Adeptus Astartes)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Administratum)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Ecclesiarchy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Ecclesiarchy)
Good Reputation (Feral Worlders)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Feral Worlders)
Good Reputation (Inquisition)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Inquisition)
Good Reputation (Nobility)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Nobility)
Good Reputation (PDF)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (PDF)
Good Reputation (Planet (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Planet (specific))
Enemy (Underworld)	–200	Influence Talent	—

Rank 14 Crusader Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Pure Faith	700	Faith Talent	—
Berzerker	500	Paragon Talent	WP 50, St 40
Unassailable Grace	500	Paragon Talent	Agility 50, Dodge
Peer (Adeptus Mechanicus)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Astropaths)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Navigators)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Void Born)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Academics)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Academics)
Good Reputation (Adeptus Arbites)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Arbites)
Good Reputation (Death Worlders)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Death Worlders)
Good Reputation (Government)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Government)
Good Reputation (Hivers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Hivers)
Good Reputation (Imperial Guard)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Guard)
Good Reputation (Imperial Navy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Navy)
Enemy (Officio Assassinorum)	–300	Influence Talent	—

Rank 15 Crusader Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
The Emperor Protects	700	Faith Talent	Pure Faith
Peer (Adepta Sororitas)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Adeptus Astartes)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Astartes)
Good Reputation (Administratum)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Administratum)
Forbidden Lore Mastery	800	Mastered Skill	—
Blessed Radiance	700	Faith Talent	Pure Faith
Sound Constitution (x3)	700	Talent	
Unarmed Ascendant Mastery	700	Paragon Talent	WS 45, Ag 45
Favoured by Fate	1000	Talent	—

Rank 16 Crusader Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Rite of Protection	800	Other Talent	WP 40
Watched From On High	800	Influence Talent	—
Member of the Tyrantine Cabal	800	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Chartist Captains)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Adeptus Mechanicus)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Mechanicus)
Good Reputation (Astropaths)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Astropaths)
Good Reputation (Navigators)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Navigators)
Good Reputation (Void Born)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Void Born)
Wrath of the Righteous	700	Faith Talent	Pure Faith

Death Cult Assassin

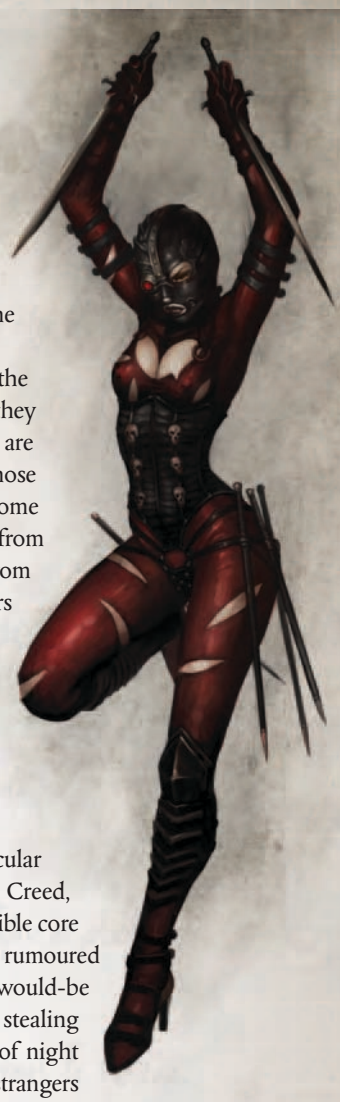
"Let this death be sacred to the Emperor, let this blood be His sacrament. With this blade, I bless thee…"

–Dakloss, Assassin of the Inner Circle of the Thrice Blessed

Uncounted Death Cults are known to exist, scattered across the length and breadth of the Imperium, from the densely populous worlds of Segmentum Solar to the most isolated of frontier planets. Death Cults are essentially religious sects composed of utterly ruthless killers dedicated to shedding the blood of the enemies of Mankind in honour of the blood of martyrs (the seed of the Imperium) and the Emperor of Mankind. All such cults are highly secretive, and indulge in a wide range of ritual practices. As such, most Death Cults walk a perilous line between fanatical dedication to the Imperial Creed (albeit expressed in a quite singular manner) and outright doctrinal heresy. Many, in fact, step over an invisible line. Thus, they become pawns, knowingly or ignorantly, of the ruinous powers. Many are the cults that have stumbled into the arms of the Blood God or the Prince of Pleasures through increasingly extreme ritualistic practice. It is little wonder that the Ecclessiarchy views the Death Cults with great distrust, and that the Inquisition keeps a very close eye on them indeed.

The life of a Death Cult Assassin is utterly dedicated to ritualised death. No two Death Cults are exactly alike, but all share the belief that the ultimate worship of the Emperor is to carry on the work of slaying of the enemies of Mankind. Cult Assassins train endlessly in a wide range of weapons, honing their skills so that every stroke of the blade, every drip of blood spilled is an offering to the Emperor. Often, Death Cultists have many deviant practices, including devouring human flesh in cannibalistic rituals and performing ceremonies focused around the drinking of blood. The vast majority of Death Cults eschew the use of ranged weapons, though a number make use of short ranged weaponry such as throwing stars, stilettos, and the like. Many Death Cults prefer to use a number of highly-specialised and lovingly maintained melee weapons, including punch-daggers, rending claws shaped like eagle talons, or even entire blades carved from the bones of the faithful.

The targets of the Death Cult Assassins are those deemed by the cult's leadership to be deserving of death. Few cults engage in indiscriminate murder, for local authorities would soon challenge them, although those in more isolated regions may occasionally do so. Most instead concentrate their efforts on a particular group of enemies. Some hunt down those they have deemed heretical in the eyes of the Emperor, perhaps adherents of a rival Death Cult or natives of a planet that once defied the will of the Emperor. Others hunt down particular species of alien. Some cults defend a specific territory, believing perhaps that the Emperor Himself once trod there and any who trespass upon such holy ground must be slain. Death Cultists believe themselves purified by consuming the corpse of an enemy. Drinking the enemy's blood claims the enemy's strength and skill for themselves. Many offerings of blood are drained from the dead and presented to the Emperor during a pilgrimage to a great Cathedral of the Ecclessiarchy.



In addition to the specifics of those they hunt, many Death Cults are equally discerning in those they employ as hunters. Some Death Cults recruit only from a particular region, or from a specific class. Others recruit assassins from those who have no hope, such as the dispossessed orphans of hive gangs or refugee communities. Still more recruit exclusively from the followers of a particular strand of the Imperial Creed, creating in effect an invisible core within the faithful. It is rumoured that some cults abduct would-be assassins at a young age, stealing babes away in the dead of night to be raised by hooded strangers until inducted into the cult. Some cults employ only men, others only women, citing a myriad of reasons as varied as the cults themselves.

When not engaged in the hunt, a Death Cult Assassin either hones his martial skills, meditates upon some aspect of the cult's dogma, or engages in one of the cult's bloody rituals. Most of these rituals involve the shedding of blood in some manner. Sometimes, it is the blood of the cult's adherents that is spilled, in remembrance of that shed by the Emperor in the name of Mankind. Others conduct grisly ritual sacrifices of captured foes, and these often stray perilously close to heresy and excommunication.

Because of their prodigious skills, many Death Cult Assassins end up in the service of individual Inquisitors. It appears that there is no formal connection between the two groups. Rather, the Inquisitors strike some manner of pact with individual Death Cults, perhaps overlooking a doctrinal transgression in return for the services of a Death Cult Assassin. In some cases, an Inquisitor has been known to be inducted into the cult's membership or to have persuaded the cult to take on a trusted Acolyte and teach him the arts of death in which it specialises.

To become a Death Cult Assassin, an individual must display both exquisite martial skills and an utter dedication to the Emperor. It is this unique blend of deathly expertise and religious fervour that makes Death Cult Assassins the utterly lethal weapon they are. In a Death Cult Assassin, an Inquisitor can be certain he has the services of one dedicated to a singular cause from which he may never be knowingly turned.

STARTING SKILLS, TALENTS, AND GEAR

Talents: Peer (Cult (Death Cult)) (Influence Talent)
Gear: Two best-craftsmanship power swords, best-craftsmanship synskin or hardened bodyglove, injector with three doses of Slaught, badge of office, micro-bead.

Ascended Traits

When you take up the path of the Death Cult Assassin, you automatically gain the Preternatural Speed Trait. You must also choose one other trait from the list below.

Preternatural Speed

The life of a Death Cult Assassin is one of constant training and sacrifice. Only when they have truly given up their ties to mortality and pointless shackles of morality can they arise to the bloody heights as masters of death—combat masters who can perform feats of physical prowess almost supernatural in their agility and grace. A Death Cult Assassin can use Swift Attack and Lighting Attack as a Half Action rather than a Full Action. In addition, the Death Cult Assassin may use the Swift Attack and Lightning Attack Talents during a Charge.

Choose One…

Cult of Blood

There are countless death cults within the Imperium, all of which prescribe to a slightly different aspect of worship of the Emperor. Most train long and hard in the arts of murder and are supremely skilled in dealing out damage, pain, and death. The Death Cult Assassin automatically confirms all Righteous Fury rolls when inflicting damage with a melee weapon. In addition, the Penetration of all melee weapons the Assassin is using in combat are increased by 1.

Cult of Death

Whilst some cults worship the means and execution of killing, others worship death itself. Rumours say that some of these cults have knowledge of killing that surpasses mere skill at anatomy and enters into the supernatural. Once per combat, the Death Cult Assassin may achieve Righteous Fury on any melee weapon's damage dice result of a 7 or higher during one Round. In addition, all critical hits with melee weapons that the Assassin makes are increased by 1.

Cult of Pain

While most death cults are highly skilled at inflicting both pain and death on others, there are some who also teach the skills of resisting such torments. Followers of these cults injure themselves almost unto death, bleeding themselves white or breaking their bones so that they may learn how to kill even when death itself reaches for them. Once per game session, the Death Cult Assassin may ignore all wounds from a single hit, including any special effects or damage it would have caused. In addition, all critical hits on the Assassin are reduced by 1 point.

Death Cult Assassin Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Heroic	Master
Weapon Skill	1,000	1,500
Ballistic Skill	1,500	2,000
Strength	1500	2,000
Toughness	1,500	2,000
Agility	1,000	1,500
Intelligence	3,000	3,500
Perception	3,000	3,500
Willpower	1,500	2,000
Fellowship	3,000	3,500

Rank 9 Death Cult Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Basic Weapons Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Melee Weapon Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Storm of Blows	500	Paragon Talent	WS 35, Ag 40
Fieldcraft Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Stealth Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Peer (Feral Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Cult (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Death Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Pilgrims)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Unnatural Agility (x2)	1000	Trait	
Exotic Weapon Training (Choose One)	500	Talent	
Sound Constitution	500	Talent	
Guardian	500	Talent	Ag 40
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)	500	Skill	—

Rank 10 Death Cult Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Blade Dancer	500	Paragon Talent	Ag 40, Acrobatics skill, WP40, Melee Weapon Training
Athletic Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Forbidden Lore Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Shadow Craft Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Peer (Underworld)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Ecclesiarchy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Enforcers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Military)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Enforcers)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Combat Sense	500	Talent	Per 40
Thrown Weapon Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—

Rank 11 Death Cult Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Heightened Reactions	500	Paragin Talent	Ag 40, Per 40
Driving Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Observation Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Hidden Cultist	500	Influence Talent	—
Favoured by Fate	700	Talent	—
Peer (Planet (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Adeptus Arbites)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Hivers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (PDF)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Adeptus Arbites)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Feral Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Feral Worlders)
Unarmed Warrior	500	Talent	WS 35, Ag 35

Rank 12 Death Cult Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Mental Aegis	500	Paragon Talent	WP50
Unassailable Grace	500	Paragon Talent	Agility 50, Dodge
Crimelord	500	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Academics)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Government)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Guard)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Navy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Inquisition)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Middle Class)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Cult (specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Cult (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Cult (specific))
Good Reputation (Death Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Death Worlders)
Good Reputation (Pilgrims)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Pilgrims)
Good Reputation (Underworld)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Underworld)
Peer (Enforcers)	200	Talent	Fel 30
Enemy (Enforcers)	–200	Influence Talent	—

Rank 13 Death Cult Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Exotic Weapon Training (Choose One)	500	Talent	—
Rival (Ecclesiarchy)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Ecclesiarchy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Ecclesiarchy)
Good Reputation (Enforcers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Enforcers)
Good Reputation (Military)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Military)
Good Reputation (Planet (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Planet (specific))
Good Reputation (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))
Enemy (Adeptus Arbites)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Unarmed Master	500	Talent	WS 45, Ag 40

Rank 14 Death Cult Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Pure Faith	500	Faith Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Astartes)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Adminstratum)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Nobility)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Adeptus Arbites)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Arbites)
Good Reputation (Hivers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Hivers)
Good Reputation (PDF)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (PDF)
Enemy (Cult (specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
Fear (1) Disturbing	1000	Trait	
Unarmed Ascendent Mastery	1000	Paragon Talent	WS 45, Ag 40

Rank 15 Death Cult Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Wrath of the Righteous	700	Faith Talent	Pure Faith
Worthy of the Calixian Elite	800	Influence Talent	—
Member of the Tyrantine Cabal	800	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Mechanicus)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Astropaths)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Navigators)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Academics)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Academics)
Good Reputation (Government)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Government)
Good Reputation (Imperial Guard)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Guard)
Good Reputation (Imperial Navy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Navy)
Good Reputation (Inquisition)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Inquisition)
Good Reputation (Middle Class)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Middle Class)
Enemy (Ecclesiarchy)	–300	Influence Talent	—
Unnatural Agility (x3)	1000	Trait	Unnatural Agility (x2)

Rank 16 Death Cult Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Rite of Protection	700	Other Talent	WP 40
Watched From On High	800	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Adepta Sororitas)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Chartist Captains)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Officio Assassinorum)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Adeptus Astartes)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Astartes)
Good Reputation (Adminstratum)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adminstratum)
Good Reputation (Nobility)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Nobility)
Unnatural Agility (x4)	800	Trait	Unnatural Agility (x3)

Desperado

"Well now, Master No-neck. Seems what I've got 'gainst you and your four toughs is this here pistol. Want to get another four bullet-soaks, just so things are fair?"

–Nilus Borres, dealing with a spot of trouble on Varaxinhive.

Certain Inquisitors have always been willing to utilise the human scum found in the Imperium's underbelly. After all, many have certain talents the Inquisition might be hard-pressed to find elsewhere, be it burglary, confidence schemes, infiltrating a criminal underworld, or simply a certain lack of morals. Quite simply, the Inquisition has plenty of dirty jobs that need doing, and all too often, criminal-minded operatives are uniquely suited to the task.

This is not to say that all Desperadoes are criminals—the term identifies a certain man on the edge of society, whether he is a charming rogue, a bounty hunter, a tracker of mutants or a glory-hounding gunslinger.

However, when it must use these types of individuals, the Inquisition demands the very best. Certain individuals tend to rise to the top of the Imperium's criminal hierarchy, and their fellow miscreants refer to them in awed terms simply as Desperados.

Just as there are countless varieties of vice and crime, a Desperado can come in many forms. Some are crime barons, persons who have claimed a portion of the underworld and rule it with an iron fist. Others can be charming cons able to work the highest strata of society, cunning smugglers and pilots, master thieves, or simply a lethal hand with a gun or blade.

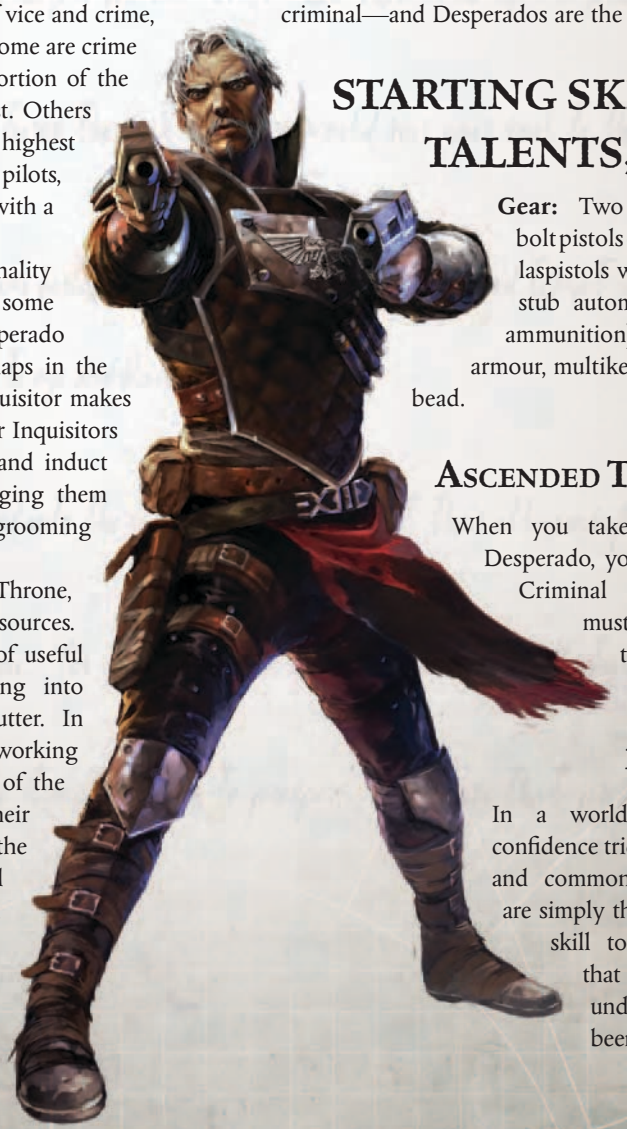
It is these shining examples of criminality that certain Inquisitors seek out. In some cases, an already established Desperado attracts the Inquisitor's attention (perhaps in the course of an investigation), and the Inquisitor makes him an offer he truly can't refuse. Other Inquisitors prefer to locate promising miscreants and induct them into their service early, encouraging them to develop their unique talents while grooming them to become valued Throne Agents.

However they come to serve the Throne, Desperados are extremely valuable resources. Each is likely to possess a wide array of useful skills which can range from breaking into a security-room to piloting a guncutter. In addition, Desperados are very used to working alone, without the monolithic support of the Imperium behind them. That, plus their intimate familiarity and comfort with the Imperial underworld and its criminal classes, makes them highly skilled and resourceful covert operatives.

Many Desperadoes favour the use of twin pistols, and tend towards a sense of pride in accurate hip-shots and blazing away from both hands in a firefight. Others (particularly bounty hunters or ex-slavers) prefer to use powerful rifles, shock mauls, and nets or whips. Desperadoes often dress in sturdy protective clothing that usually conceals padded or plated armour for added protection.

Often, Desperados have more problems when teamed with other Throne Agents, especially those whose backgrounds are very different from their own. Certain Throne Agents—especially those with a background in enforcing Imperial Law—may dismiss them as worthless out-of-hand. Of course, Desperados in general have a much less 'orthodox' view of the Imperium and its monolithic institutions. From their viewpoint, the Imperium has been more of an opponent to be defied than an authoritarian entity to be obeyed. Other Throne Agents may be disquieted or even offended by these opinions. A Desperado may not think much better of their viewpoints, and may also have trouble working within the very institutions of law and order he spent much of his life trying to evade.

However, when a team of Throne Agents is dispatched to the dark depths of a world's underhive, or is sent to investigate the operations of criminals and cultists, few can deny the Desperado's utility. Beyond even his considerable skills, a Desperado's mindset gives him a unique insight into the Inquisition's myriad investigations into lawbreakers of all types. After all, who better to catch a criminal than another criminal—and Desperados are the best criminals there are.



Starting Skills, Talents, and Gear

Gear: Two common-craftsmanship bolt pistols or two best-craftsmanship laspistols with overcharge packs (or stub automatics with man-stopper ammunition). Best-craftsmanship flak armour, multikey, badge of office, micro-bead.

Ascended Traits

When you take up the path of the Desperado, you automatically gain the Criminal Mastermind Trait. You must also choose one other trait from the list below.

Criminal Mastermind

In a world of thieves, muggers, confidence tricksters, rakehells, gangers, and common murderers, Desperados are simply the best. Part of that is the skill to operate unhindered in that world, or any Imperial underworld, as if one had been born there. Once per

game session, a Desperado may automatically succeed on any one Interaction Skill Test in the minimum time possible, provided the Skill Test involves any group for which the Desperado possesses a Peer or Good Reputation Talent. Should degrees of success be a factor, then the Desperado is considered to have rolled a 01 on this test.

Choose One…

Master of Coin

It is a Desperado's business to understand the way thrones move and flow throughout the Imperium. A skilled master of coin knows just when to sell, when to buy, just what should be paid, and just how much he can get away with. Whenever the Desperado, or a group being headed by a Desperado, makes an Acquisition or Influence Test to purchase goods or services, add +5 to the roll. The GM may, at his discretion, decide that this bonus does not apply in cases where the either no coin is involved or the Desperado would very obviously not be able to use his abilities.

Shady Reputation

Many criminals draw a web of respect, fear, and awe around themselves and value their reputations almost as much as their own lives. Death can come from anywhere in the underworld—it can leap out at the most unexpected times, and those who survive have a seemingly preternatural awareness of danger. The Throne Agent gains the Rapid Reaction Talent if he did not already possess it, and may automatically succeed at any one Dodge Test (instead of rolling) once per game session. Should degrees of success be a factor, then the Desperado is considered to have rolled a 01 on this test.

Master of Locks and Tricks

While those that reach the heights of Desperado seldom do their own dirty work, there are still those who revel in their skill at thievery. Such men and women are never content to simply stand by and let others have all the fun; not when they still crave the challenge of swindling others and lifting their goods. Once per gaming session, the Desperado can automatically pass a Concealment, Disguise, Security, Silent Move or Sleight of Hand Test. Should degrees of success be a factor, then the Desperado is considered to have rolled a 01 on this test.

Desperado Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Heroic	Master
Weapon Skill	1500	2000
Ballistic Skill	1000	1500
Strength	3000	5000
Toughness	3000	5000
Agility	1000	1500
Intelligence	1500	2000
Perception	1500	2000
Willpower	1500	2000
Fellowship	1000	1500

Rank 9 Desperado Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Inquiry +20	500	Skill	Inquiry +10
Intimidate +20	500	Skill	Intimidate +10
Shadow Craft Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Combat Master	700	Talent	WS 30
Lightning Reflexes	700	Talent	—
Pistol Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Chartist Captains)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Cult (Specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Hivers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Rogue Trader)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Underworld)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Workers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Middle Class)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Government)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Decadent Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Rival (Enforcers)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)	500	Skill	—
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—

Rank 10 Desperado Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Athletic Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Stealth Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Heightened Reactions	500	Paragon Talent	Ag 40, Per 40
Basic Weapons Expertise	600	Paragon Talent	—
Melee Weapon Expertise	600	Paragon Talent	—
Crimelord	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	–200	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Adeptus Arbites)	–200	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Underworld)	1000	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Underworld)

Rank 11 Desperado Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Commerce Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Observation Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Tech-Lore Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Gunfighter Saint	500	Paragon Talent	—
Peerless Marksman	600	Paragon Talent	BS 40
Peer (Administratum)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Ecclesiarchy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Inquisition)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Planet (Specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Workers)	1000	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Workers)
Good Reputation (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	1000	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))
Rival (Government)	–200	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Nobility)	–200	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Unarmed Warrior	500	Talent	WS 35, Ag 35

Rank 12 Desperado Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Charismatic Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Fieldcraft Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Piloting Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Thrown Weapon Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Unarmed Ascendant Mastery	500	Paragon Talent	WS 45, Ag 45
Unassailable Grace	500	Paragon Talent	—
Storm of Blows	600	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Cult (Specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Enforcers)	1000	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (PDF)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Nobility)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Planet (Specific)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Shadow Lord	700	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Hivers)	1000	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Hivers)
Good Reputation (Middle Class)	1000	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Middle Class)
Good Reputation (Rogue Trader)	1000	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Rogue Trader)
Favoured by Fate	1000	Talent	—
Rival (Cult (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Combat Sense	800	Talent	Per 40

Rank 13 Desperado Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Common Lore Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Investigation Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Indomitable Fortitude	500	Paragon Talent	—
Sleeper Agent	700	Influence Talent	—
Voice of the Masses	800	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Nobility)	1000	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Workers)
Good Reputation (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	1000	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))
Enemy (Enforcers)	–300	Influence Talent	Rival (Enforcers)
Unarmed Master	500	Talent	WS 45, Ag 45, Unarmed Warrior

Rank 14 Desperado Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution	800	Talent	—
Linguistic Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Death Blow	500	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Sleeper Agent	700	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (PDF)	1000	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (PDF)
Good Reputation (Planet (Specific))	1000	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Planet (Specific))
Member of the Tyrantine Cabal	800	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Rogue Trader)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Nobility)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Adeptus Arbites)	–300	Influence Talent	Rival (Adeptus Arbites)
Enemy (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	–300	Influence Talent	Rival (Recidivist Organisation (specific))
Target Selection	800	Talent	BS 40

Rank 15 Desperado Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Hidden Cultist	700	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Cult (Specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Death Worlders)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	1000	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))
Watched from On High	1000	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Chartist Captain)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Ecclesiarchy)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Cult (Specific)	–300	Influence Talent	Rival (Cult (Specific))
Soul of Stone	600	Paragon Talent	—

Rank 16 Desperado Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution	800	Talent	—
Blade Dancer	700	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Officio Assassinorum)	700	Influence Talent	—
Sleeper Agent	700	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Government)	1000	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Government)
Enemy (Chartist Captain)	–200	Influence Talent	Rival (Chartist Captain)
Enemy (Government)	–400	Influence Talent	Rival (Government)
Enemy (Rogue Trader)	–400	Influence Talent	Rival (Rogue Trader)
Lord of Domains	1000	Influence Talent	—

Hierophant

"Ask me not to define faith, for faith is that which defies definition. It is that which, when everything around you collapses and is proven a lie, remains, pure, intact, pristine."

–Frater Millay, Confessor to Inquisitor Krand, addressing Interrogator Eulis at the Cleansing of the Palace of Sin

Hierophants are members of the Adeptus Ministorum who have risen above the multitudinous ranks of the common clergy. They are judged to have transcended the confines of the Ecclesiarchy's hierarchy through their service to the Imperium at large, and taken on a new duty to the Emperor.

That duty is to exemplify, in every word and deed, the irrefutable truth of the Imperial Creed. This sacred mission is to be carried out according to the Hierophant's own judgement, as he responds to the will of the Emperor as revealed to him in his heart. Such individuals burn with the fervour of their calling. Their very presence instils in the faithful unshakeable devotion, and fills the hearts of Mankind's enemies with unutterable terror. As such, many Hierophants find a common cause with those of the Inquisition who go out boldly amongst Humanity, rallying the Emperor's flock against the terrors of the universe. Others find themselves serving amongst more clandestine Inquisitorial cadres, their presence and wisdom bolstering the hearts of their fellows so that they may prevail in the face of otherwise insurmountable odds. Frequently, an Inquisitor's duties lead him to uncover things forbidden to common man—the presence of a Hierophant provides a lifeline by which the cadre might be pulled back from the precipice of heresy should they stray too close. Some Hierophants even serve as personal confessors to their Inquisitor, providing wisdom and insight and hearing his most dire of admissions. The Hierophant thereby has the power to grant absolution, and is entrusted with one of the most valuable and coveted assets in the entire Imperium—the soul of an Inquisitor.

The common view of a Hierophant is of an individual swathed in holy raiment and bellowing testament to the Emperor. Though by far the most common type, others exist. Some Hierophants exude a serenity so pure it touches the souls of all who come near. Others are endowed with palpable wisdom or an air of authority.

It is from amongst those servants of the Imperial Creed known as Hierophants that many Imperial Saints are eventually drawn. The Imperial Canon recognises a staggering number of its devotees as Saints. Each of the million and more worlds of the Imperium venerates particular figures, and over the millennia, uncounted numbers of these legendary figures have been recognised as Saints. The vast majority of these 'beatifications'—the bestowment of the title of 'Saint'—occur centuries, even millennia after the death of the Hierophant. Only after an exhaustive series of investigations by many generations of Ministorum officials is the title bestowed. Often the title 'Hierophant' is bestowed alongside it, again, long after the recipient's death, in order to affect an air of legitimacy regardless of the new Saint's status and pedigree.

Some Hierophants, however, come to be regarded as Saints in their own lifetime. Such an occurrence is highly unusual, and there exists no formal procedure by which it comes about. Such individuals radiate the Emperor's glory and often attract multitudes of followers in their wake. They are able to call upon the Emperor and enact his will through miracles and acts of faith so startling that the faithful often drop to their knees and weep, believing themselves to be witnessing one touched by the saviour of Mankind himself. The nature of such manifestations might vary enormously and is rarely predictable. At times, the saint's eyes blaze with a blinding holy light that sears the very soul. At other times, the saint rises into air as if lifted in the arms of the Emperor himself. Sometimes, the saint is blessed with the strength of ten men, able to strike down the heretic and the blasphemer with nigh-supernatural strength.

When such 'Living Saints' arise, the Ecclesiarchy and the Inquisition often seek to establish their nature and ensure the Saint's agenda does not present a threat to their own. Should any clash of ideals be identified, the authorities may act to terminate the individual, often covertly, lest the multitudes rise in vengeance. Should the Saint be judged genuine, he may end up working alongside the Ministorum or the Inquisition, their interests co-aligned in the name of the God-Emperor of Mankind.

STARTING SKILLS, TALENTS, AND GEAR

Talents: Peer (Ecclesiarchy) (Influence Talent) and Pure Faith.
Gear: Best-craftsmanship chainsword, flamer or hand flamer, carapace armour or Rosarius, badge of office, micro-bead.

Ascended Traits

When you take up the path of the Hierophant, you automatically gain the Favoured of the Emperor Trait. You must also choose one other trait from the list below.

Favoured of the Emperor

Those that live in the light of the Emperor live knowing that His divine hand protects them from harm. For a Hierophant, this becomes more than faith and is an actual shield against the denizens of the warp and the twisting influence of the anathema of man. Such is the potency of this protection that creatures with the Daemonic trait must pass a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** each Round to make melee attacks against the Hierophant. In addition, once per game session, the Hierophant can ignore a single increase to his Corruption Points regardless of its size or source.

Choose One…

Voice of the Emperor

The cult of the God-Emperor grows on the strength of His teachings and the glory of His words. Hierophants often become skilled orators for this very reason, and many become capable of incredible impassioned speeches and damning litanies capable of moving a crowd to rapture or murderous rage. When dealing with the faithful of the Emperor (the true faithful of the Imperial Creed), the Hierophant gains a +30 to all Interaction Skill Tests. In addition, if he has the Master Orator talent, then the Hierophant can now affect anyone that can hear and draw line of sight to him with Interaction Skills.

Wrath of the Emperor

The Emperor is vengeful, and Hierophants can channel his anger through their weapons, especially when striking out against the most hated foes of Man—creatures of the warp. Melee attacks made by the Hierophant, and by those within 4 metres of him, count as holy and blessed attacks when applying damage.
Note that this power does not affect, and is not affected by, any Faith powers the Hierophant may have. Instead, this ability exists in addition to any Faith ability.

Mercy of the Emperor

A skilled Hierophant can use his connection to the Lord of Mankind to mend wounds and restore the broken, though it is a rare and special gift given only to a few. The Hierophant can perform a faith healing a number of times per day equal to his Fellowship Bonus. To perform this miracle, he must lay both his hands on the subject and make a **Routine (+20) Fellowship Test**. This restores 2 wounds to the subject plus an additional 2 wounds for each degree of success. This counts as a Full Action if performed in combat. This healing may only be performed once per person per injury.
Note that this power does not affect and is not affected by any Faith powers the Hierophant may have. Instead, this ability exists in addition to any Faith ability.

Hierophant Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Heroic	Master
Weapon Skill	1,500	2,000
Ballistic Skill	1,500	2,000
Strength	1,000	1,500
Toughness	1,000	1,500
Agility	1,500	2,000
Intelligence	3,000	3,500
Perception	3,000	3,500
Willpower	1,000	1,500
Fellowship	1,000	1,500

Rank 9 Hierophant Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Basic Weapons Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Soul of Stone	500	Paragon Talent	WP 40
Pious Observation	500	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Adepta Sororitas)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Ecclesiarchy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (PDF)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Pilgrims)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Workers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Polyglot	1000	Talent	
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)	500	Skill	—

Rank 10 Hierophant Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Pure Faith	500	Faith Talent	—
Mental Aegis	500	Paragon Talent	WP50
Charismatic Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Peer (Academics)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Administratum)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Feral Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Enforcers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Government)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Hivers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Military)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Planet (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	–300	Influence Talent	—

Rank 11 Hierophant Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Purge the Unclean	500	Faith Talent	Pure Faith
Melee Weapon Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Transendent Hate	500	Paragon Talent	Fel 30
Driving Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Wide Correspondence	500	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Arbites)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Death Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Guard)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Navy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Middle Class)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Cult (specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Adepta Sororitas)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adepta Sororitas)
Good Reputation (Ecclessiarchy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Cult (specific))
Good Reputation (PDF)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (PDF)
Good Reputation (Pilgrims)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Pilgrims)
Good Reputation (Workers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Workers)

Rank 12 Hierophant Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Divine Ministration	500	Faith Talent	Pure Faith
Berzerker	500	Paragon Talent	WS 50, St 40
Voice of the Masses	500	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Astartes)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Astropaths)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Inquisition)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Nobility)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Adeptus Mechanicus)	800	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Underworld)	800	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Academics)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Academics)
Good Reputation (Administratum)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Administratum)
Good Reputation (Feral Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Feral Worlders)
Good Reputation (Enforcers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Enforcers)
Good Reputation (Government)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Government)
Good Reputation (Hivers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Hivers)
Good Reputation (Military)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Military)
Good Reputation (Planet (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Planet (specific))
Enemy (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	–300	Influence Talent	—
Warmonger	500	Influence Talent	—

Rank 13 Hierophant Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Wrath of the Righteous	500	Faith Talent	Pure Faith
Death Blow	500	Paragon Talent	WP 50, St 40
Observation Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Ally of the Departmento Munitorum	700	Influence Talent	—
Lord of Domains	700	Influence Talent	—
Conciliator	700	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Astropaths)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Adeptus Arbites)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Arbites)
Good Reputation (Death Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Death Worlders)
Good Reputation (Imperial Guard)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Guard)
Good Reputation (Imperial Navy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Navy)
Good Reputation (Middle Class)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Middle Class)
Enemy (Cult (specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—

Rank 14 Hierophant Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
The Emperor Protects	500	Faith Talent	Pure Faith
Indomitable Fortitude	500	Paragon Talent	T 40, WP 40
Storm of Blows	500	Paragon Talent	WS 35, Ag 40
Worthy of the Calixian Elite	700	Influence Talent	—
Hidden Cultist	800	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Navigators)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Adeptus Astartes)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Astartes)
Good Reputation (Astropaths)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Astropaths)
Good Reputation (Inquisition)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Inquisition)
Good Reputation (Nobility)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Nobility)
Enemy (Adeptus Mechanicus)	–300	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Underworld)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Unarmed Warrior	500	Talent	Ws 35, Ag 40

Rank 15 Hierophant Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Blessed Radiance	500	Faith Talent	Purge the Unclean, Divine Manifestation, The Emperor Protects
Common Lore Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
The Ear of the Lord Sector	700	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Specific Inquisitor)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Chartist Captains)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Specific Noble)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Astropaths)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Unarmed Master	700	Talent	WS 45, Ag 45, Unarmed Warrior

Rank 16 Hierophant Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Forbidden Lore Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Watched From On High	700	Influence Talent	—
Revolutionary	800	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Navigators)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Navigators)
Favoured by Fate	1000	Talent	—
Unarmed Ascendant Mastery	1000	Paragon Talent	WS 45, Ag 45
Sound Constitution (x3)	700	Talent	
Member of the Tyrantine Cabal	800	Influence Talent	—

Interrogator

"I've served at my master's side for twelve years now. I've seen him stare down a Pit Thing as if it were a yaprat and send an Ambull scurrying back down its hole in terror. If I ever learn one tenth of what he knows, I swear I'll be Lord Sector by the age of 50…"

–Interrogator Lenk, prior to his death on Zel Secundus

Those who have served an Inquisitor as an Acolyte may be granted the rank of Interrogator. Few Acolytes ever earn such an honour, and most Inquisitors only make the appointment after they themselves have served for many decades. An Interrogator is, in essence, an Inquisitor's apprentice. He is a student set upon a path that ultimately sees him granted the Inquisitorial Seal, or, more likely, perish long before being judged worthy of that singular responsibility.

Interrogators are drawn from a wide range of backgrounds. Although most have served as Acolytes, others may have been plucked unexpectedly from obscurity, unaware of having been observed by their new master from afar. Some Interrogators are dispatched to hidden collegia, there to study assiduously with others of their station before being assigned a master. Others are appointed directly by an Inquisitor, to accompany him at all times and to learn his vocation through first-hand experience.

However, an Interrogator is far more than a journeyman Inquisitor yet to come into his full abilities. An Interrogator knows that the eye of judgement is upon him at all times. His every act is weighed in the balance, recorded, and judged. Each success takes him that one step closer to the ultimate honour of being awarded the Inquisitorial Seal; every failure may be his last. Many Interrogators pursue their apprenticeship with a fervour that would put to shame the most bombastic Drill Abbot, pushing themselves to greater extremes to prove themselves worthy in the eyes of their master. Many such individuals pay the ultimate price for their zealousness, performing the greatest of service to the Inquisition and giving their lives that their masters might prevail. Countless are the Interrogators that have interposed themselves bodily between master and foe, suffering mortal wounds but buying time for that master to deliver the killing blow to the enemy. Some say that the Interrogator is uniquely blessed, existing in a state of grace. As such, Interrogators often seem to be the recipients of some form of divine protection and intervention. Many are the writings of ancient Inquisitor Lords that appear to lament the loss of such grace upon their appointment to Inquisitor.

There exists no formal structure to an Interrogator's training. Some may serve for decades, their master teaching them every aspect of the Inquisitor's duties with minute attention to detail. Others may find themselves Inquisitors in short order, perhaps in recognition of some great service performed in the course of an investigation. In general, however, it is expected for the Interrogator to learn the most important aspect of their vocation, that which gives them their title—the art of interrogation. It is said that no secret can be withheld from an Inquisitor, for they seek the truth in the name of the Emperor Himself. Few would be capable of deceit in the face of an Inquisitor, for they are figures of myth and horror across the Imperium, as feared in their way as the mutant and the witch. Those who do withhold the truth must be brought to heel, the Inquisitor peeling back layer after layer of deceit until the truth is finally revealed. The methods used range from subtle guile and artful cunning to the horrors of the auto-rack and psychic trepanning. An Interrogator must master all such methods before being judged worthy of progressing to the rank of Inquisitor.

There are many more fields in which an Interrogator may be schooled, the depth and scope dependent upon the methods and skills of their own master. They may also be schooled by other members of their master's cadre. They may learn martial skills from a loyal bodyguard, or the arts of communion with the machine-spirit from a learned Magos of the Adeptus Mechanicus. Each of these tutors impart their specialised knowledge, and their judgement is sought by the master in the Interrogator's progress. Yet, despite all of the knowledge and skills an Interrogator may learn throughout the course of their tutelage, there is one quality that cannot be taught. They must prove beyond all doubt that they are willing and able to look in the eye the most terrible of Mankind's foes, and not falter, even should their life be forfeit. Only when judged able to bear the most terrible of truths does the Interrogator have any hope of receiving the Inquisitorial Seal.

Starting Skills, Talents, and Gear

Talents: Watched From On High (Influence Talent)
Gear: One basic weapon of choice (may not have an Availability greater than Rare), one melee weapon of choice (may not have an Availability greater than Rare), best-craftsmanship flak armour, badge of office, micro-bead.

Ascended Traits

When you take up the path of the Interrogator you automatically gain the His Right Hand Trait and Wild Skills and Talents. You must also choose one other trait from the list below.

His Right Hand

An Interrogator's role is to enact the will of his master, when and where it is needed. In this capacity, they learn the basics of many skills and abilities, often mimicking those of their master. Once per game session, an Interrogator may count as having a Talent or Skill (though not Paragon Talent, Special Talent or Mastered Skill) possessed by his Inquisitor. He does not need to meet the normal requirements to use this Talent or Skill (with the exception of Tech-Priest and Psychic Talents), and its effects last for a full encounter or the duration of one combat.

Wild Skills and Talents

The first two Ranks of the Interrogator Career Path contain a number of Skills (Any) and Talents (Any). These are skills and talents that can be chosen from ANY basic career path from the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook (excluding Tech-Priests and Imperial Psykers), reflecting an Interrogator's wide range of aptitudes. Prerequisites for these skills and talents must be met as normal. Note that Sound Constitution may not be selected by this ability.

Choose One…

Inquisitorial Student

An Interrogator is a student of his Inquisitor and has learned the secrets and skills that his master and mentor have to pass on. In this way, an Interrogator hangs on the words of his master, soaking up his knowledge and speeding his own learning. Any Talent, Paragon Talent, Skill or Mastered Skill that is available to an Interrogator as an advance (and which he of sufficient Rank to take)—which has also already been taken by his Inquisitor—may be purchased at a discount of 100xp (to a minimum of 100xp).

Master Questioner

It is not without reason that Interrogators' bear their title, and many are well versed in the art of interrogation and finding truth. Once per game session, the Interrogator may automatically pass one Interrogation test, even if penalties would normally make passing such a test impossible. Should degrees of success be a factor, then the Inquisitor is consider to have rolled a 01 on this test. In addition, the GM may allow the Interrogator to use the Interrogation skill on subjects normally immune to its effects.

The Psyker's Gift

As with their masters, many Interrogators are psykers and develop their powers under their master's tutelage. You must already be a psyker to select this trait. You may select the Minor Psychic Power Talent as an Elite Advance for 500xp, the Major Psychic Power Talent as an Elite Advance for 750xp, or the Ascended Psychic Power Talent as an Elite Advance for 2,000 xp. You may also increase your current Psy Rating by +1 as an Elite Advance for 1,500 xp. The xp cost of the Ascended Psychic Power Talent may be reduced in the normal fashion (see page 125).

Interrogator Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Heroic	Master
Weapon Skill	1,500	2,000
Ballistic Skill	1,500	2,000
Strength	3,000	3,500
Toughness	3,000	3,500
Agility	1,500	2,000
Intelligence	1,000	1,500
Perception	1,000	1,500
Willpower	1,500	2,000
Fellowship	1,000	1,500

Rank 9 Interrogator Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Basic Weapons Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Pistol Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Academics)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Inquisition)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Workers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Skill (Any)	700		—
Skill (Any)	700		—
Skill (Any)	700		—
Talent (Any)	700		Prerequisites must be meet as normal
Talent (Any)	700		Prerequisites must be meet as normal
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Choose one)	700	Talent	—
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)	500	Skill	—

Rank 10 Interrogator Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Gunfighter Saint	700	Paragon Talent	BS40, Ag 40, Pistol Weapon Training (any)
Driving Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Peer (Government)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Middle Class)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Military)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Administratum)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Guard)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Navy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Underworld)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Void Born)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Skill (Any) +10	700	Skill	Skill (Any)
Skill (Any) +10	700	Skill	Skill (Any)
Talent (Any)	700	Talent	Prerequisites must be meet as normal
Talent (Any)	700	Talent	Prerequisites must be meet as normal
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	

Rank 11 Interrogator Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Peerless Marksman	700	Paragon Talent	BS 40
Fieldcraft Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Linguistic Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Favoured by Fate	700	Talent	—
Peer (Enforcers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Feral Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Ecclesiarchy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Hivers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Pilgrims)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Planet (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Adeptus Mechanicus)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Astropaths)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Workers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Workers)

Rank 12 Interrogator Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Heightened Reactions	700	Paragon Talent	Ag 40, Per 40
Mental Aegis	700	Paragon Talent	WP50
Charismatic Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Forbidden Lore Mastery	800	Mastered Skill	—
Investigation Mastery	800	Mastered Skill	—
Observation Mastery	800	Mastered Skill	—
Pious Observation	700	Influence Talent	—
Lord of Domains	800	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Arbites)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Death Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Navigators)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Nobility)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (PDF)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Inquisition)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Inquisition)
Good Reputation (Academics)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Academics)
Good Reputation (Government)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Government)
Good Reputation (Middle Class)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Middle Class)
Good Reputation (Military)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Military)

Rank 13 Interrogator Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Melee Weapon Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Common Lore Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Scholastic Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Stealth Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Renowned Warrior	700	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	–100	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Enforcers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Enforcers)
Good Reputation (Feral Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Feral Worlders)
Good Reputation (Ecclesiarchy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Ecclesiarchy)
Good Reputation (Hivers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Hivers)
Good Reputation (Pilgrims)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Pilgrims)
Good Reputation (Planet (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Planet (specific))

Rank 14 Interrogator Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Storm of Blows	700	Paragon Talent	WS 35, Ag 40
Shadow Craft Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Tech Lore Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Worthy of the Calixian Elite	800	Influence Talent	—
Hidden Cultist	700	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Astartes)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Cult (specific))	–100	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Adeptus Arbites)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Arbites)
Good Reputation (Death Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Death Worlders)
Good Reputation (Navigators)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Navigators)
Good Reputation (Nobility)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Nobility)
Good Reputation (PDF)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (PDF)

Rank 15 Interrogator Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sleeper Agent	700	Influence Talent	—
Member of the Tyrantine Cabal	800	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Underworld)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Administratum)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Administratum)
Good Reputation (Imperial Guard)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Guard)
Good Reputation (Imperial Navy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Navy)
Good Reputation (Underworld)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Underworld)
Good Reputation (Void Born)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Void Born)
Enemy (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	–100	Influence Talent	—

Rank 16 Interrogator Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Warp Lore Mastery	800	Mastered Skill	—
Cryptological Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Revolutionary	700	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Chartist Captains)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Cult (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Adeptus Astartes)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Astartes)
Good Reputation (Adeptus Mechanicus)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Mechanicus)
Good Reputation (Astropaths)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Astropaths)
Enemy (Cult (specific))	–100	Influence Talent	—

Judge

"You are bound by the Lex Imperialis! Submit in the Emperor's name, or I will strike you down with His will!"

–Judge Gordon Titus, during the purge of Solomon's Interior Zone 13.

The Imperium's laws are iron and absolute. They must be, for they are the only bulwark between the huddled masses of humanity and a sure descent into chaos and destruction. To enforce those laws—taken from the Book of Judgement, and known as the Lex Imperialis—the Imperium relies on the strength of the Adeptus Arbites. The laws of the Imperium as a whole are the Arbites' jurisdiction. They are the Imperium's police, as well as the watchful eyes ensuring that local authorities and planetary governors maintain their loyalty to the greater Imperium. Within the Adeptus Arbites, there are the Arbitrators—the militant arm and the fighting forces used to quell rebellions and the like—and the Judges. Judges are lords of justice who have great powers and sweeping influence within their purview not far below that of an Imperial Inquisitor. Judges are given both the power of enforcing the law and passing judgement on those who break it.

A Judge must be able to pass judgement just as ably as he dispenses justice, and although the Lex Imperialis is uniformly harsh in its sentences, it is also fair. For every crime there is a punishment, established through millennia of rulings, legal decisions, and precedents. At some point in their career, if not from the very outset, all Judges make a pilgrimage to Terra and the great Hall of Judgement to study there amongst the vast and ever-growing labyrinth of laws and ordinances that govern the Imperium's scattered worlds. Although portable cogitators exist that contain a portion of the relevant Lex Imperialis for a Judge's purview—suitable for simple issues of precedence and crime amongst the Adeptus Terra—a vastly more lengthy process is necessary when dealing with more heinous and elaborate crimes. Whilst the Book of Judgement is extensive, it is not a perfect science, and finding the correct answer can take years, even decades or centuries in particularly complex cases. Most cases involve contradictory laws that would result in differing results for the accused. In the inner sanctum of the Hall of Judgement, Judges spend much time immersed in this reality until they are truly ready to render a fit judgement to those who stand beneath the Emperor's justice. Many Judges never leave, a lifetime of deliberation and scrutiny passed on to the next Judge, and the next, and so on for millennia, until the accused are long dead—but still a ruling must be found, and justice meted out to the vaguest of descendants and those obliquely associated with the original accused.

This does not mean that a Judge is any stranger to violence and bloodshed. On the contrary, the Lex Imperialis dictates a Judge must be as willing to dispense his judgement as he is to pronounce it. Sometimes this judgement is public floggings, exile to a prison world, condemnation to a penal legion, or even a public execution. Far more often, judgement is pronounced as a summary execution and delivered from the barrel of a bolt pistol. For the most widespread and heinous crimes, retribution involves deploying the uncompromising and brutal power of the Arbitrators. When the Pax Imperialis is truly broken, the full military might of the Emperor's armies can be brought to bear, such is the power and influence of the Judges—peers of the Imperium.

For their part, Judges are some of the most willing agents of the Inquisition. They see the Holy Ordos' work as an extension of their old duties, bringing justice to the miscreant, criminal, and heretic. They also tend to maintain ties with their former colleagues, and can call on the resources of the Arbitrators, as well as those of the Inquisition. Unlike many other Throne Agents, Judges often carry on with their duties to the Adeptus Arbites whilst accompanying a Puritan Inquisitor, the two's work being mutually beneficial to both. This combination of investigator and militant is what makes Judges so appealing to the Inquisition. Judges have a valued place within the Ordos as highly valuable Throne Agents.

However, Judges tend to be rather unyielding and absolute when Imperial Law is involved. This can prove to be a problem when an investigation requires bending those rules. Judges are required to be intractable and incorruptible, and are often unwilling to overlook lawbreaking (or break laws themselves) in order to pursue a larger investigation. They may also be unwilling to work with Throne Agents with backgrounds originating amongst the Imperium's criminal underworld.

For these reasons, Judges often find themselves working with Inquisitors and Throne Agents of a more Puritan mindset.

Starting Skills, Talents, and Gear

Gear: Best-craftsmanship combat shotgun with Executioner rounds, common-craftsmanship bolt pistol, common-craftsmanship Arbites carapace armour, power maul, badge of office, Arbites badge.

Ascended Traits

When you take up the path of the Judge, you automatically gain the Imperial Authority Trait. You must also choose one other trait from the list below.

Imperial Authority

For most of those who live on Imperial worlds, obedience is not a virtue, but a necessary means of survival. Absolute, unquestioning obedience of Imperial authority has been drilled into most Imperial citizens since birth, as well as the terrible consequences for failing to do so. A Judge can issue orders that Imperial citizens are conditioned to obey. If this takes place during combat, it counts as a free action that a Judge may perform once per turn. When the Judge issues this order, a number of targets equal to his Willpower Bonus must make an **Easy (+30) Willpower Test** or obey the order. The targets must be Imperial citizens, must be able to hear and understand the order, and the order must be simple (able to be accomplished during a single round). Some possible orders are "halt," "get into cover," or "stop that man!" In addition, the Judge must be carrying something to identify himself as Arbites (this could be a badge, power maul with an Arbites logo, etc.). The GM may determine that certain targets (such as long-time cultists or hardened recidivist criminals) are immune from this ability. If the Judge is wearing a full set of Arbites Judge's regalia (Arbites carapace armour and Arbites badge) and the target can see the Judge issuing the order (this can include a pict-caster screen!), the test becomes Challenging (+0) instead. If the Judge has the Air of Authority Talent, he can affect a number of targets equal to 10x his Willpower Bonus instead.

Choose One…

Hammer of Heretics

Many judges specialise against a particular menace, learning everything they can about their adversaries so that they might be more adept at bringing it to justice. Heretics are a common foe who represent a constant threat to law and order. The Judge gains a bonus of +20 when making Intimidate or Interrogate Skill Tests against heretics. In addition, heretics that are also Imperial Citizens suffer a further –10 against his Imperial Authority power. It is up to the GM to decide exactly which enemies count as heretics.

Master of Mutants

Mutants form a large proportion of the population of many Imperial worlds, where they are used as cheap and plentiful labour. As any Judge will tell you, however, mutants are nothing but trouble. The Judge gains a bonus of +20 when making Intimidate or Interrogate Skill Tests against mutants. In addition, mutants that are also Imperial Citizens suffer a further –10 against his Imperial Authority power.

Judge Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Heroic	Master
Weapon Skill	1,500	2,000
Ballistic Skill	1,000	1,500
Strength	3,000	3,500
Toughness	1,000	1,500
Agility	3,000	3,500
Intelligence	1,000	1,500
Perception	1,500	2,000
Willpower	1,500	2,000
Fellowship	1,500	2,000

Rank 9 Judge Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Command +20	700	Skill	Command+10
Search +20	700	Skill	Search +10
Talented (Interrogation)	700	Talent	—
Basic Weapons Expertise	400	Paragon Talent	—
Pistol Expertise	400	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Arbites)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Enforcers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Hivers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Workers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Adeptus Arbites)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Adeptus Arbites)
Good Reputation (Enforcers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Enforcers)
Rival (Underworld)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)	500	Skill	—

Rank 10 Judge Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Dodge +20	700	Skill	Dodge +10
Talented (Command)	700	Talent	—
Talented (Intimidation)	700	Talent	—
Talented (Scrutiny)	700	Talent	—
Charismatic Mastery	400	Mastered Skill	—
Driving Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Investigation Mastery	400	Mastered Skill	—
Observation Mastery	400	Mastered Skill	—
Indomitable Fortitude	400	Paragon Talent	—
Melee Weapons Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Government)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Middle Class)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Inquisition)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Hivers)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Hivers)
Outspoken Monodominant	400	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))	–100	Influence Talent	

Rank 11 Judge Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Talented (Search)	700	Talent	—
Common Lore Mastery	400	Mastered Skill	—
Athletic Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Heroic Leadership	400	Paragon Talent	—
Gunfighter Saint	500	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Nobility)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Underworld)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Administratum)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Planet (Specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Middle Class)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Middle Class)
Good Reputation (Government)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Government)
Good Reputation (Inquisition)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Inquisition)
Revolutionary	400	Influence Talent	—
Pious Observation	500	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Cult (Specific))	–100	Influence Talent	—

Rank 12 Judge Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Stealth Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Peerless Marksman	400	Paragon Talent	—
Storm of Blows	400	Paragon Talent	—
Conditioned Intellect	500	Paragon Talent	
Peer (Ecclesiarchy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (PDF)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Cult (Specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Nobility)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Nobility)
Watched from on High	400	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))	–100	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	Rival (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))
Enemy (Underworld)	–200	Influence Talent	Rival (Underworld)
Unarmed Warrior	500	Talent	WS 35, Ag 35

Rank 13 Judge Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Shadow Craft Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Unarmed Master	500	Talent	WS 45, Ag 45, Unarmed Warrior
Soul of Stone	400	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Academics)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Military)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Guard)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Planet (Specific))	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Planet (Specific))
Good Reputation (PDF)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (PDF)
Conciliator	400	Influence Talent	—
Warmonger	400	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Nobility)	–200	Influence Talent	—

Rank 14 Judge Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Scholastic Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Cryptological Mastery	600	Mastered Skill	—
Heightened Reactions	500	Paragon Talent	Ag 40, Per 40
Heavy Weapons Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Blade Dancer	600	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Chartist Captains)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Academics)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Academics)
Member of the Tyrantine Cabal	500	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Chartist Captains)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Unarmed Ascendant Mastery	500	Paragon Talent	WS 45, Ag 45

Rank 15 Judge Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Peer (Adepta Sororitas)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Chartist Captains)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Chartist Captains)
Shadow Lord	500	Influence Talent	—
Worthy of the Calixian Elite	500	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))	–100	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Cult (Specific))	–100	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	Rival (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))
Enemy (Cult (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	Rival (Cult (specific))
Enemy (Nobility)	–400	Influence Talent	Rival (Nobility)
Combat Sense	700	Talent	Per 40

Rank 16 Judge Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Forbidden Lore Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Peer (Planet (Specific))	400	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Adepta Sororitas)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Adepta Sororitas)
Ear of the Lord Sector	700	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))	–100	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Rogue Trader)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	Rival (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))
Enemy (Chartist Captains)	–200	Influence Talent	Rival (Chartist Captains)

Magos

"I grow weary of this flesh I was born into, strangely disgusted by its nature. I crave only the cold, clean certainty of steel and silicon, that I might become one with the Blessed Machine. I do not expect you to understand, you who cling to your flesh as if it were immortal, seeking only to preserve it, to protect it. One day, you will see the folly of your ways, and then no doubt you will come begging to my order to preserve you…"

–Magos Deruss, making polite conversation with a minor scion of the House of Persis

A Magos is an adherent of the Cult Mechanicus who has served the Machine God for so long and with such dedication that the greater part of his body now takes the form of the sacred machine. Over decades, even centuries of service, the Magos' limbs and organs have been replaced, one by one, with superior cybernetic versions that never grow weak, never tire, and never wither with age. The further along this path, the more machine parts the Magos has. In fact, the oldest Magos have none, save a small core of grey matter buried deep within an armoured cortex amidst a mass of cables, ports, and vents.

As a servant of the Omnissiah advances further in his Quest for Knowledge, it is not only his physical appearance that alters. Even as his body is rebuilt, so too does his mind change. The Quest for Knowledge exposes the Magos to all manner of alien technologies and esoteric doctrines, many of which threaten the individual's very sanity with their expositions on the nature of reality. Many pursue such lines of inquiry to the exclusion of all other duties, sometimes spending decades at a stretch locked away in a laboratorium, studying some scrap of technology from a long-lost civilisation. The outcome is there exists an entire class within the Adeptus Mechanicus who appear to an outsider to be actively pursuing all manner of heresies. Yet, these 'heresies' do not spread, as they perhaps would within another institution. Were a Priest of the Adeptus Ministorum to actively seek out daemonological texts for example, it would be expected that he would become tainted, and that the cancer of heresy would spread in short order, condemning hundreds to the pyre. It is rarely so amongst ranks of the Magos, for these individuals are so far from human and so preternaturally single-minded that notions of heresy and forbidden knowledge are entirely below them. They approach the mysteries of the universe with an objective detachment entirely appropriate to their calling, their machine-augmented minds all but filtering out the echoing voices of long-dead xenos.

Individuals pursuing a similar line of investigation within the great Quest for Knowledge often band together, forming factions within the greater body of the Adeptus Mechanicus. Undisputed masters of technological achievement, a Magos often becomes known by his particular specialty. Among these titles are Magos Technicus, Magos Metallurgicus, Magos Alchemys, Magos Physic, Magos Biologis, Magos Ordinatos, and many more.

In addition to his pursuit of technological esoterica, the Magos is able to commune with the greater will that is the Omnissiah. It is said that as the body and mind of the servant becomes more mechanical, so his communion with the Machine God becomes stronger. They attend to the Machine Altars of the Forge Worlds, each of which is interconnected with the rest so as to form a galaxy-wide web through which the will of the Omnissiah and the unadulterated sum of the knowledge of the Cult Mechanicus is transmitted. As they shed their inherited biological weaknesses and become one with the machine, so the Magos become more and more part of the gestalt sum of ultimate knowledge. Eventually, at the end of his Quest for Knowledge, the Magos divests himself of the last shred of Humanity, uploading the contents of his cerebral cortex, and perhaps his very soul, by way of the Machine Altar, and becoming one with the Omnissiah.

But until that time, the Magos continue their quest, wherever it may take them. Many find themselves serving alongside Inquisitors during the course of their quest, the interests of both groups converging, if only for a time. An Inquisitor finds a Magos a powerful member of his cadre, able to uncover and exploit knowledge that would drive others insane.

STARTING SKILLS, TALENTS, AND GEAR

Talents: Peer (Adeptus Mechanicus) (Influence Talent).
Gear: Best-craftsmanship carapace armour or common-craftsmanship power armour, power axe or power maul, best-craftsmanship hellgun or common-craftsmanship bolter with red-dot laser sight, two Best-craftsmanship bionic implants or cybernetic limbs of choice, badge of office, auspex, combi-tool, vox-caster.

Ascended Traits

When you take up the path of the Magos you automatically gain the Soul of Iron Trait. You must also choose one other trait from the list below.

Soul of Iron

True servants of the Omnissiah inevitably give up humanity in order to embrace the glory of the machine god. This is especially true of most Magos who only vaguely remember a time when the concerns of mortals plagued their mind. All Interaction Skill Tests used against a Magos suffer a –30 penalty. The Magos should choose one appropriate Common Lore, Scholastic Lore, Forbidden Lore, or Trade Skill as his main focus and area of expertise. The Magos gains one bonus degree of success with any of his successful Skill Tests involving Tech-Use or his chosen Skill, and in addition gains +10 to any Opposed Test involving Tech-Use or his chosen Skill.

Choose One…

Weapon-Tech

All Magos become masters of machine spirits and the sacred workings of tech. Many, however, specialise learning the blessed and secret intricacies of particular devices such as guns. Once per combat, the Magos can enhance his weapon, or seek out the weak points in an opponent's armour, increasing the Magos' deadliness. Once per game session, a weapon personally wielded by the Magos from the las, melta, plasma, shock, or power category (this may also include the Exotic category at the GM's discretion) increases its Damage and Penetration by an amount equal to his Intelligence Bonus for one Round.

Armour-Monger

The finest armours and most powerful shields are all products of the followers of the machine god, based on the fabled and ancient designs of man's glorious past. With years of training, a Magos can learn to enhance these protections, or use them in their optimum fashion. The Magos increases the Armour Points of any armour he wears by 2 on all locations it would normally cover as long as he has at least an hour each day to bless and prepare the armour. This bonus applies only to armour worn by the Magos.

Tech-Tinker

Not all Magos focus on war. Some favour the workings of other more miscellaneous kinds of machinery. A Magos can increase the effectiveness of a piece of technology, increasing its function or output. Once per day as a Full Action, the Magos can increase the power of a piece of technology which is neither a weapon nor protective device. This, in effect, increases its function by 50%, be it the range of the signal it can broadcast or the amount of items it can fabricate. This boost only lasts for the duration of a single scene or encounter (this amount of time may be extended at the GM's discretion). The GM always has final say in the exact effects of a boosted piece of tech.

Magos Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Heroic	Master
Weapon Skill	3,000	3,500
Ballistic Skill	1,000	1,500
Strength	1,500	2,000
Toughness	1,000	1,500
Agility	3,000	3,500
Intelligence	1,000	1,500
Perception	1,000	1,500
Willpower	1,500	2,000
Fellowship	N/A	N/A

Rank 9 Magos Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Call of Iron	500	Paragon Talent	Mechanicus Implants
Driving Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Tech Lore Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Peer (Adeptus Mechanicus)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Cult (specific))	–100	Influence Talent	—
The Flesh Is Weak 1	500	Talent	
Exotic Weapon Training (Choose One)	500	Talent	
Sound Constitution (x3)	500	Talent	
Trade (Any) +10	500	Skill	
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)	500	Skill	—

Rank 10 Magos Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Basic Weapons Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Machine Spirit Empathy	500	Paragon Talent	Int 30, Fel 30, Mechanicus Implants
Peer (Academics)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Workers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Planet (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Adeptus Mechanicus)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Military)
Rival (Ecclesiarchy)	–300	Influence Talent	—
The Flesh Is Weak 2	500	Talent	The Flesh Is Weak I
Heavy Weapon Training (Choose One)	500	Talent	
Sound Constitution (x3)	500	Talent	
Trade (Any) +20	500	Skill	
Machinator Array	1000	Talent	

Rank 11 Magos Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Electro Illumination	500	Paragon Talent	Mechanicus Implants
Voice of the Omnissiah	500	Paragon Talent	Mechanicus Implants
Observation Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Ally of the Departmento Munitorum	500	Influence Talent	—
Conciliator	500	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Enforcers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Hivers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Government)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Navy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (PDF)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Adepta Sororitas)	–300	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Cult (specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
The Flesh Is Weak 3	500	Talent	The Flesh Is Weak 2

Rank 12 Magos Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Conditioned Intellect	500	Paragon Talent	Int 40
Mental Aegis	500	Paragon Talent	WP 50
Soul of Stone	500	Paragin Talent	WP 40
Forbidden Lore Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Warmonger	500	Influence Talent	—
Favoured by Fate	700	Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Arbites)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Adeptus Titanicus)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Administratum)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Guard)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	800	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Enforcers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Enforcers)
Good Reputation (Hivers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Hivers)
Good Reputation (Academics)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Academics)
Good Reputation (Workers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Workers)
Good Reputation (Planet (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Planet (specific))
Enemy (Ecclesiarchy)	–300	Influence Talent	—
Enhanced Bionic Frame	1000	Talent	
The Flesh Is Weak 4	500	Talent	The Flesh Is Weak 3

Rank 13 Magos Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Exemplar of Metal	1000	Paragon Talent	Mechanicus Implants
Melee Weapon Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Piloting Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Peer (Astropaths)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Adeptus Astartes)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Government)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Government)
Good Reputation (Imperial Navy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Navy)
Good Reputation (PDF)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (PDF)
Enemy (Adepta Sororitas)	–300	Influence Talent	—

Rank 14 Magos Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Gravitic Levitation	500	Paragon Talent	Mechanicus Implants
Revolutionary	500	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Cult (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Inquisition)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Navigators)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Void Born)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Adeptus Arbites)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Arbites)
Good Reputation (Adeptus Titanicus)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Titanicus)
Good Reputation (Administratum)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Administratum)
Good Reputation (Imperial Guard)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Guard)
Sturdy	1000	Trait	Exemplar of Metal
Heavy Weapons Expertise	1000	Paragon Talent	

Rank 15 Magos Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Purity of the Machine	500	Paragon Talent	Mechanicus Implant
Cryptological Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Member of the Tyrantine Cabal	800	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Chartist Captains)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Astropaths)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Astropaths)
Good Reputation (Adeptus Astartes)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Astartes)
Good Reputation (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))
Armour Plating	1000	Trait	Machine Trait
Unnatural Toughness (x2)	2000	Trait	Exemplar of Metal
Unnatural Intelligence (x2)	1000	Trait	

Rank 16 Magos Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Indomitable Fortitude	500	Paragon Talent	T 40, WP 40
Mnemonic Purging	500	Other Talent	Int 45, WP 45
Watched From On High	800	Influence Talent	—
Oath Bonded to the Angels of Death	800	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Rogue Trader)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Cult (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Cult (specific))
Good Reputation (Inquisition)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Inquisition)
Good Reputation (Navigators)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Navigators)
Good Reputation (Void Born)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Void Born)
Hoverer (6)	2000	Trait	Gravitic Levitation
Unnatural Strength (x2)	2000	Trait	Exemplar of Metal

Primaris Psyker

"Defy me, and I will split open your thoughts and sear your very soul."

–Primaris Psyker Haddrin Malfumme

There are many fates awaiting a psyker in the Imperium of Man. The vast majority are doomed from birth—too unstable or corruptible to be trusted—they are gathered by the Black Ships and sent to Holy Terra. There, they are consumed by the Emperor to prolong his life, or drained whilst powering the Astronomicon. Others are trained under the Adeptus Astropathica, and some show the aptitude to be seconded directly to the Inquisition for training.

However, not all psykers are equal in power. Those that show both power and the aptitude to control it are sent to the Scholastica Psykana. There they are trained to serve the Imperium with their abilities, in order to repay their debt of being born with an innate connection to the dreaded Immaterium. Those who survive the training become Sanctioned Psykers, and in time, may develop their abilities to the point where they are considered Primaris.

Like Sanctioned Psykers, Primaris Psykers (also referred to as primary-psykers or psyker-lords) are seconded by the Scholastica Psykana to the Imperium's myriad Adeptus Terra. For example, those who show expertise in the arts of divination and telepathy often find themselves working amongst the Administratum, where their powers can augment the workings of the Imperium's overarching bureaucracy. Meanwhile, more militant and destructive psykers are sent to serve as battle psykers in the Imperial Guard. And of course, a not inconsiderable number are swept up to serve in the ranks of the Inquisition as Throne Agents.

For those Inquisitors willing to trust them, Primaris Psykers provide a host of abilities far beyond those possessed by other Throne Agents. A Primaris Psyker can burn a room full of enemies to ash, know the thoughts of a suspect without speaking a word, or even project his consciousness into the aether to hunt down the Imperium's enemies.

However, these fantastic abilities come with a price. Like all psykers, the Primaris Psyker must live with the constant threat of being consumed by the power he draws upon. The warp lurks at the back of the psyker's subconscious, waiting for the moment when he overreaches himself and leaves an opening for something to slip through. To help combat this, the Scholastica Psykana provides Primaris Psykers with several fail-safes. Some of these are tangible; complex micro-circuitry and neuro-active wiring can be built into a hood or collar grafted onto a Primaris Psyker, and the Scholastica Calixis has even been known to inlay such devices into the bone of the psyker's skull. Such systems can help to bleed off residual warp energy or alleviate the worst of a psy-overload. After all, Primaris Psykers are considered a highly valuable resource by their masters, and it is worth a great deal of expense to preserve them.

Of course, there are certain situations where even the most powerful and resilient psykers can fall prey to the corrupting influence of the Immaterium. Such situations may result in horrifying phenomena, possession, or worse. In those situations, the psyker's only hope is to trust that his mental conditioning allows him to kill himself, rather than becoming the means of not only his own destruction, but that of his colleagues, friends, and any number of innocents.

STARTING SKILLS, TALENTS, AND GEAR

Gear: Common-craftsmanship force weapon or best-craftsmanship power weapon, common-craftsmanship bolt pistol or hellpistol, best-craftsmanship flak armour, psy-focus, badge of office, micro-bead.

Ascended Traits

When you take up the path of the Primaris Psyker, you automatically gain the Scholastica Psykana Failsafes Trait. You must also choose one other trait from the list below.

Scholastica Psykana Failsafes

Wards and psy-active micro-circuitry have been surgically grafted into the Primaris Psyker, granting him some manner of defence against the warp's predications. When the Primaris Psyker is required to roll on the Perils of the Warp Table (but not the Psychic Phenomena Table), he may modify the result rolled by 1d5 (either increasing it or decreasing it as he chooses). In addition, if the Primaris Psyker ever rolls a result on the Perils of the Warp Table that would result in him being possessed, he must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test**. Success means his conditioning activates, and he kills himself with whatever weapon he has at hand (or his Psykana Mercy Blade). The Psyker may still permanently burn a Fate Point to avoid death; if he does so, he does not count as having suffered any of the listed effects from his Perils roll.

Choose One…

Psychic Soldier

Many Primaris Psykers end up in the ranks of the Imperial Guard, serving as part of a high ranking officer's command. However, such a position does not protect them from combat, and such assignments often see them on the front lines, where they must learn to use their powers swiftly and without mercy. Once per combat, the Primaris Psyker may use a psychic power that normally requires either a Full Action or a Half Action as a Free Action. He may still only use a single psychic power in his turn.

Untainted Core

Some Primaris Psykers can create a calm around them within the warp, stilling the raging energies that they must channel in order to use their powers. These skilled individuals are almost impossible to disrupt, disturb, or cut off completely with the use of warp witchery. Once per turn, the Primaris Psyker may ignore the effects from a single source that affects either his chances of invoking the perils of the warp or rolls he makes on the perils of the warp table (including psychic phenomena). If affected by multiple sources of disruption, the Pysker must choose which to ignore at the start of his turn. Note that this ability does not overcome sources that block psi powers, such as Untouchables, but only those that disrupt them and make them more unstable.

A Ghost in the Warp

It is useful to the Imperium, especially the Inquisition, to have Psykers that can move about undetected and without a trace. Such men and women are feared even by other Psykers, for surely such a dark ability can only lead to evil. Once per game session, the Psyker can leave no signature or trace when using psychic powers and can choose for his powers to have no visual or auditory effects (unless these would be required for the power to function). In all other respects, his powers function as normal. At the GM's discretion, he may decide that some powers are so potent or destructive that they cannot be hidden by this ability.

Primaris Psyker Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Heroic	Master
Weapon Skill	3,000	3,500
Ballistic Skill	1,500	2,000
Strength	1,500	2,000
Toughness	1,500	2,000
Agility	3,000	3,500
Intelligence	1,000	1,500
Perception	1,000	1,500
Willpower	1,000	1,500
Fellowship	3,000	3,500

Rank 9 Primaris Psyker Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Dodge +20	700	Skill	Dodge +10
Ascended Psychic Power	1,000	Talent	—
Warp Lore Mastery	400	Mastered Skill	—
Melee Weapon Expertise	400	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Astropaths)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Inquisition)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Revolutionary	800	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Ecclesiarchy)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Adepta Sororitas)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Exotic Weapon Training (Choose One)	500	Talent	—
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)	500	Skill	—

Rank 10 Primaris Psyker Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution†	700	Talent	—
Psy Rating +1	800	Talent	Psy Rating 1+
Forbidden Lore Mastery	400	Mastered Skill	—
Pistol Expertise	400	Paragon Talent	—
Conditioned Intellect	500	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Navigators)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Administratum)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Astropaths)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Astropaths)
Sleeper Agent	800	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Inquisition)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Inquisition)
Rival (Cult (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Adepta Sororitas)	–400	Influence Talent	Rival (Adepta Sororitas)

†*You may take this Talent up to two times at this Rank.*

Rank 11 Primaris Psyker Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ascended Psychic Power	1,000	Talent	—
Observation Mastery	400	Mastered Skill	—
Soul of Stone	400	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Cults (Specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Academics)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Navigators)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Navigators)
Good Reputation (Administratum)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Administratum)
Member of the Tyrantine Cabal	400	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Underworld)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Ecclesiarchy)	–400	Influence Talent	Rival (Ecclesiarchy)

Rank 12 Primaris Psyker Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Psy Rating +1	800	Talent	Psy Rating 1+
Sound Constitution	800	Talent	—
Investigation Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Decadent Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Hidden Cultist	700	Influence Talent	—
Hidden Cultist	700	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Void Born)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Middle Class)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Government)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Guard)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Military)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Nobility)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Sleeper Agent	700	Influence Talent	—
Pious Observation	800	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Academics)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Academics)
Rival (Middle Class)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Cult (Specific))	–300	Influence Talent	Rival (Cult (Specific))

Rank 13 Primaris Psyker Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ascended Psychic Power	1,500	Talent	—
Scholastic Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Heightened Reactions	500	Paragon Talent	Ag 40, Per 40
Good Reputation (Military)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Academics)
Good Reputation (Nobility)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Nobility)
Ally of the Departmento Munitorum	400	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Cult (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))	–300	Influence Talent	Rival (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))

Rank 14 Primaris Psyker Advances

Advance	**Cost**	**Type**	**Prerequisites**
Psy Rating +1	800	Talent	Psy Rating 1+
Storm of Blows	400	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Arbites)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Cults (Specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Navy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Sleeper Agent	700	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Government)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Government)
Good Reputation (Void Born)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Void Born)
Lord of Domains	400	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Adeptus Arbites)	–300	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Enforcers)	–300	Influence Talent	—
Unnatural Willpower (x2)	1000	Trait	

Rank 15 Primaris Psyker Advances

Advance	**Cost**	**Type**	**Prerequisites**
Ascended Psychic Power	1,500	Talent	—
Blade Dancer	500	Paragon Talent	—
Hidden Cultist	700	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Chartist Captains)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (PDF)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Rogue Trader)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Imperial Navy)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Imperial Navy)
Worthy of the Calixian Elite	500	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Cult (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Government)	–300	Influence Talent	—

Rank 16 Primaris Psyker Advances

Advance	**Cost**	**Type**	**Prerequisites**
Psy Rating +1	500	Talent	Psy Rating 1+
Heroic Leader	500	Paragon Talent	—
Indomitable Fortitude	600	Paragon Talent	—
Sleeper Agent	700	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (PDF)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (PDF)
Good Reputation (Chartist Captains)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Chartist Captains)
Good Reputation (Rogue Trader)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Rogue Trader)
Rival (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Cult (Specific))	–300	Influence Talent	Rival (Cult (Specific))
Enemy (Adeptus Astartes)	–500	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Officio Assassinorum)	–500	Influence Talent	—
Unnatural Willpower (x3)	2000	Trait	

Sage

"Of course I can trace the Duke's great great grand uncle three times removed, I just need to conduct an alpha-omega meta-probe of the Saint Capeline Repository. It'll have to be a silent scan though, don't want those data-sentinels back-tracing my cogitation pattern. That can hurt…happened once during a mission on Malfi, I was unconscious for three days, or so I'm told…had the strangest dreams…did I tell you I can trace the Duke's relative for you? All I need to do is…"

–Adept Gatasis (presumed dead)

Many Inquisitors amass a veritable army of scholars and scribes throughout the course of their duties, each contributing specialised knowledge and skills otherwise entirely beyond even an Inquisitor's ken. During the course of his duties serving alongside other Acolytes, an Adept has seen sights none of his kind could imagine and learned secrets that would damn others to mind-wipe. At the conclusion of such duties, an Inquisitor may be presented with a conundrum—scour the Adept's memories and return him (possibly as a drooling idiot) to his former masters, or induct him fully into the secrets of the Inquisition. Such are the unique mental abilities of many Adepts that they are able to uncover and decipher any riddle to which they are exposed, leading many Inquisitors to recruit them on a permanent basis lest they unintentionally expose secrets the Inquisition wishes to remain hidden.

Sages (also sometimes known as Savants, Calculus Logi, or Lexmechanics) are those Adepts who have moved beyond the confines of their previous vocation. Whilst many maintain links to past lives that they can exploit in the course of their duties, they have become permanent members of an Inquisitor's staff. Others serve the Inquisition as a whole, being cloistered in such places as the Tricorn until detached to serve on the cadre of an Inquisitor in need of their services. Thanks to the Sage's largely unintentional thirst for knowledge, most Inquisitors prefer to make use of their own, more trusted Sages, preferring that these walking repositories of damned knowledge remain close at hand at all times.

The reason that Sages are of such use to the Inquisitor is that there is no secret so veiled, no archive so sealed, and no mystery so impenetrable that the truth cannot be revealed. Sages are utterly dedicated to the unearthing of every last fact, no matter how apparently obscure. They display a dedication to the unearthing of trivia so far beyond the abilities of a normal Man that it is commonly held that they must be gifted, or indeed cursed, by some form of genetic predisposition not unlike that which allows a Navigator to guide a vessel through the Warp. A Sage is capable of penetrating the machine-systems of any archive, navigating strata of millennia-old data, accessing files long sealed, and unlocking ciphers intended to be unbreakable.

It often falls to the Inquisitor to draw conclusions from the information the Sage recovers, but a skilled overseer allows his data-hounds a long leash. The Sage might spend countless hours immersed in an invisible realm of data, conducting 'meta-probes' of ancient archives. Many become so immersed they must be supervised lest they neglect their bodily needs and functions. Some even succumb to what has been described as a range of 'meme-viruses,' driving them to acquire more and more seemingly worthless information in an endless quest to piece together the most obscure truths of the universe.

The most long-serving of Sages find that their heads eventually become filled with the knowledge they have acquired and refused to forget. The mind of man appears capable of absorbing a staggering wealth of information, and few use their Emperor-given potential to its full. Some Sages, however, find themselves weighed down by the sheer amount of knowledge they have amassed. They might enhance their abilities with cerebral implants provided by the Adeptus Mechanicus, sacrificing something of their humanity for the added memory capacity. Others undergo a process by which memories they regard as superficial are expunged, leaving only the facts gleaned in the pursuit of their duties. Such individuals become increasingly detached with each application of the process, able to remember in minute detail every mission they have embarked upon, yet unable to recall what happened in between missions.

Sages engaged on a mission often find themselves getting into all manner of perilous situations from which their fellows must protect them. Very often, a simple data-probe turns into a full sweep, but the Sage remains entirely unaware that his fellow agents are fighting off wave after wave of enemies whilst he processes the information from the terminal he is accessing. It often appears that Sages have very little sense of self-preservation, their unquenchable thirst for raw data driving them ever

onwards no matter the risks to themselves or their compatriots. Despite the risks, however, most Inquisitors find the services of a trusted Sage entirely indispensable in the quest to expose the activities of the enemies of the Imperium.

STARTING SKILLS, TALENTS, AND GEAR

Talents: Peer (Academics) (Influence Talent).
Gear: Best-craftsmanship hellpistol or solid projectile pistol of choice, best-craftsmanship flak armour, one best-craftsmanship cybernetic implant of choice, cerebral plug, auto-quill, badge of office, data-slate, micro-bead.

Ascended Traits

When you take up the path of the Sage, you automatically gain the Knowledge is Power Trait. You must also choose one other trait from the list below.

Knowledge is Power

A Sage's mind is an incredible thing, always working, always in motion, as it considers countless possibilities and outcomes. Once per session, a Sage may automatically pass an Intelligence Test or a Skill Test based on Intelligence. This automatic pass is only considered a standard success and does not grant any additional degrees of success.

Choose One…

Cyclopaedic Learning

Sages accumulate a vast store of knowledge over their lives and learn far more about the universe than anyone truly has a right to know. Most Sages also focus on a single area of expertise and become exhaustive encyclopaedias of knowledge on that subject. The Sage can choose a single Common Lore, Scholastic Lore or Forbidden Lore skill (not a Mastered Skill) to master. From now on, all tests against this skill automatically succeed. If degrees of success are required, the Sage is considered to have rolled a 01 on his test.

Unknown and Unnamed

Such is the vast amount of data a Sage gathers during his studies that he is likely to know at least a little about almost anything. The Sage may treat all Common, Scholastic, and Forbidden Lore Skills as Basic Skills. In addition, he may use this trait to make a Lore skill test (using the Lore skill of his choice) to learn about things for which no Lore skill exists. The GM, however, has the final say on what can be learnt using Lore skills. The Sage also gains a bonus degree of success with any successful Investigation Skill Test.

Unfazeable

In his studies, a Sage often comes across things that can break the minds of mortal men. For this reason, many Sages become adept at "reading without reading" and gleaning knowledge from texts without looking too closely at the writings. The Sage no longer gains any Insanity Points or Corruption Points from indirect sources, such as reading books or similar texts. The GM, of course, may still rule that particularly vile or warp-touched tomes have other effects on the Sage.

Sage Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Heroic	Master
Weapon Skill	1,500	2,000
Ballistic Skill	1,500	2,000
Strength	1,500	2,000
Toughness	1,500	2,000
Agility	3,000	3,500
Intelligence	1,000	1,500
Perception	1,000	1,500
Willpower	1,000	1,500
Fellowship	3,000	3,500

Rank 9 Sage Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Conditioned Intellect	500	Paragon Talent	Int 40
Common Lore Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Linguistic Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Wide Correspondence	500	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Government)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Unnatural Intelligence (x2)	1000	Trait	
Exotic Weapon Training (Choose One)	500	Talent	
Sound Constitution	500	Talent	
Combat Formation	800	Talent	Int 40
Polyglot	500	Talent	
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)	500	Skill	—

Rank 10 Sage Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Commerce Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Forbidden Lore Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Scholastic Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Peer (Military)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Administratum)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Pistol Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Sound Constitution	500	Talent	
Mental Aegis	1000	Paragon Talent	WP 50
Infused Knowledge	700	Talent	
Favoured by Fate	1000	Talent	—

Rank 11 Sage Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Cryptological Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Driving Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Pious Observation	700	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Enforcers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (PDF)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Adeptus Mechanicus)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Planet (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Government)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Government)
Soul of Stone	1000	Paragon Talent	WP 40
Favoured by Fate	1000	Talent	—

Rank 12 Sage Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Basic Weapons Expertise	800	Paragon Talent	—
Tech Lore Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Mnemonic Purging	500	Other Talent	Int 45, WP 45
Peer (Adeptus Arbites)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Guard)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Navy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Astropaths)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Military)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Military)
Good Reputation (Administratum)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Administratum)
Favoured by Fate	1000	Talent	—

Rank 13 Sage Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Shadow Lord	700	Influence Talent	—
Lord of Domains	800	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Astartes)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Ecclesiarchy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Inquisition)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Middle Class)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Middle Class)
Good Reputation (Enforcers)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Enforcers)
Good Reputation (PDF)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (PDF)
Good Reputation (Adeptus Mechanicus)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Mechanicus)
Good Reputation (Planet (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Planet (specific))

Rank 14 Sage Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Revolutionary	700	Influence Talent	—
Ally of the Departmento Munitorum	700	Influence Talent	—
Favoured by Fate	700	Talent	—
Peer (Adepta Sororitas)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Nobility)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Void Born)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Ecclesiarchy)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Adeptus Arbites)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Arbites)
Good Reputation (Imperial Guard)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Guard)
Good Reputation (Imperial Navy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Navy)
Good Reputation (Astropaths)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Astropaths)

Rank 15 Sage Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Observation Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Worthy of the Calixian Elite	700	Influence Talent	—
Member of the Tyrantine Cabal	800	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Chartist Captains)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Cult (specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Navigators)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Administratum)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Adeptus Astartes)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Astartes)
Good Reputation (Ecclesiarchy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Ecclesiarchy)
Good Reputation (Inquisition)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Inquisition)
Unnatural Intelligence (x3)	2000	Trait	Unnatural Intelligence (x2)

Rank 16 Sage Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
The Ear of the Lord Sector	700	Influence Talent	—
Watched From On High	700	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Titanicus)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Academics)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Inquisition)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Adepta Sororitas)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adepta Sororitas)
Good Reputation (Nobility)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Nobility)
Good Reputation (Void Born)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Void Born)
Enemy (Ecclesiarchy)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Unnatural Intelligence (x4)	3000	Trait	Unnatural Intelligence (x3)
Favoured by Fate	1000	Talent	—

Storm Trooper

"Valkyrie Beta, begin low altitude insertion, fifty metres elevation. Squad Primus, prepare for low level jump. Last one on the dirt carries my pack!"

–Sergeant Marcus Blaine, making his 100th assault drop.

Scorned by the average Guardsmen—who refer them as "Glory Boys" and "Big Toy Soldiers," Storm Troopers are nevertheless the elite of the Imperial Guard. Equipped with heavy carapace armour and other speciality gear, and armed with high-powered armour-piercing hellguns, a single squad of Storm Troopers can be more dangerous than an entire company of regular Guardsmen.

The vast majority of Storm Troopers are the children of high ranking Imperial servants—such as commanders of the Imperial Guard and Imperial Navy, Administratum, or Adeptus Arbites—who fall in battle. These orphans are taken to one of the Schola Progenium orphanages scattered throughout the galaxy, where they are raised. There, they are given a consummate education, consisting of a regime of unremitting prayer, study and physical exercise. They are also taught to love the Emperor, instilling in them an absolute loyalty and debt of repayment to the Imperium that has expended so much effort in raising them.

Once they come of age, those orphans who show the correct combination of aptitude and skill are sent through exhaustive training regimes. Few complete their training, and some do not survive. Those who do become Imperial Storm Troopers.

Storm Troopers are the special operatives of the Imperial Guard, scattered throughout Guard regiments in squads or companies to augment and support standard Guard formations. They are trained and equipped for almost any mission, sabotage, airdrops, spearhead assaults, and operations behind enemy lines.

It is this versatility and competence that makes Storm Troopers so appealing to the Inquisition. The Holy Ordos does not make a point of maintaining standing armies. However, Inquisitors often find themselves needing professional soldiers in the course of their operations. When they do, they often requisition squads from Imperial Guard Storm Trooper Companies, who serve with the Inquisitor for the duration of the investigation. Some Inquisitors of a more militant mindset may develop an understanding with a particular squad of Storm Troopers, and keep them in his services for an extended length of time. And sometimes, an Inquisitor is so impressed with a particular Storm Trooper, he permanently adds him to his retinue.

A Storm Trooper's training means he is little use in an Inquisitor's more subtle investigations and operations. Their education in the Schola Progenium deliberately omitted the study of esoteric, ancient, or forbidden secrets and knowledge to preserve their mental purity. Still, Storm Troopers are a valuable asset to any cadre of Throne Agents. Simply put, when it comes time to execute armed tactical operations against aliens, mutants, and heretics, few members of an Inquisitor's retinue are better prepared. Whether leading an assault on an underhive cult, airdropping into a xenos kill-strike, or leading his fellow Throne Agents in the maelstrom of combat, a Storm Trooper is always an expert.

STARTING SKILLS, TALENTS, AND GEAR

Gear: Good-craftsmanship Storm Trooper carapace armour, good-craftsmanship hellgun, good-craftsmanship hellpistol, three frag grenades, 3 krak grenades, badge of office, *The Imperial Infantryman's Uplifting Primer* (Calixis Edition).

Ascended Traits

When you take up the path of the Storm Trooper you automatically gain the Special Operations Training Trait. You must also choose one other trait from the list below.

Special Operations Training

Storm Troopers train to proficiency with almost every weapon and piece of military equipment used in the Imperium's militant forces. However, they are especially proficient in their signature weapons and equipment; hellguns and carapace armour. When a Storm Trooper is firing a hellgun or hellpistol, these weapons gain the Tearing Quality as a result of constant practice with these guns. In addition, Storm Troopers wearing Imperial-issue carapace armour do not count that armour's weight against their carry limits (see page 215 in the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook).

Storm Troopers are skilled with wearing and maintaining their carapace armour—therefore, a Storm Trooper's carapace armour always counts as one step higher in Craftsmanship. For example, a Storm Trooper that dons a set of common-craftsmanship carapace armour gains the benefit of wearing good-craftsmanship carapace armour.

Choose One…

Specialist: Field Command

All Storm Troopers are trained to use their initiative and be aggressive on the battlefield. Particularly talented Troopers are singled out for field commands and given the extra training and skills to lead men in battle. One per combat, the Storm Trooper may, as a Full Action, choose to direct allies within range of his voice (this could also include those who can hear his voice over a vox or via psychic means) with a successful **Challenging (+0) Command Test**. Those under his direction gain a +2 to their Initiative scores and may re-roll failed Ballistic Skill Tests (for using personal weapons, not those on a vehicle or any other outside source) for that turn.

Specialist: Drop Trooper

Storm Trooper regiments use a variety of vehicles to both carry them into battle and fight once there. Storm Troopers are especially skilled in aerial insertions and extractions using Valkyrie assault carriers. The Storm Trooper gains +10 to all Skill Tests made to drive or pilot a military ground vehicle, walker, skimmer, or flyer. When using a grav-chute, the Storm Trooper automatically passes all tests to manually deploy his chute.

Specialist: Recon

Storm Troopers are frequently used as recon and covert assault troopers (one of the reasons they are favoured by the Inquisition). Often, entire Storm Trooper companies receive specialised training in the art of stealth and infiltration. The Storm Trooper gains +10 to Concealment and +10 to Silent Move checks, and +2 to Initiative. However, carapace armour is the heaviest armour a Storm Trooper can wear and still gain these bonuses. In game terms, any armour with more than 7 AP negates these benefits.

Storm Trooper Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Heroic	Master
Weapon Skill	1,000	1,500
Ballistic Skill	1,000	1,500
Strength	1,000	1,500
Toughness	1,500	2,000
Agility	1,500	2,000
Intelligence	3,000	3,500
Perception	1,500	2,000
Willpower	3,000	3,500
Fellowship	3,000	3,500

Rank 9 Storm Trooper Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +10	700	Skill	Awareness
Chem Use +10	700	Skill	Chem Use
Command +10	700	Skill	Command
Concealment +10	700	Skill	Concealment
Interrogation +10	700	Skill	Interrogation
Intimidation +10	700	Skill	Intimidation
Silent Move +10	700	Skill	Silent Move
Swift Attack	700	Talent	WS 35
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Athletic Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Fieldcraft Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Pistol Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Basic Weapon Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Imperial Guard)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Exotic Weapon Training (Choose One)	500	Talent	—
Strong Minded	500	Talent	WP 30, Resistance (Psychic Powers)
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)	500	Skill	—

Rank 10 Storm Trooper Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Awareness +20	700	Skill	Awareness +10
Chem Use +20	700	Skill	Chem Use +10
Command +20	700	Skill	Command +10
Concealment +20	700	Skill	Concealment +10
Interrogation +20	700	Skill	Interrogation +10
Intimidation +20	700	Skill	Intimidation +10
Silent Move +20	700	Skill	Silent Move +10
Lightning Attack	700	Talent	Swift Attack
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Driving Mastery	400	Mastered Skill	—
Heavy Weapon Expertise	700	Paragon Talent	—
Melee Weapon Expertise	700	Paragon Talent	—
Peerless Marksman	700	Paragon Talent	—
Good Reputation (Imperial Guard)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Imperial Guard)

Rank 11 Storm Trooper Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Talented (Command)	700	Talent	—
Talented (Intimidate)	700	Talent	—
Stealth Mastery	400	Mastered Skill	—
Tech Lore Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Berserker	700	Paragon Talent	—
Indomitable Fortitude	700	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Death Worlders)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Feral Worlders)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (PDF)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Enforcers)	–200	Influence Talent	—

Rank 12 Storm Trooper Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Observation Mastery	400	Mastered Skill	—
Piloting Mastery	400	Mastered Skill	—
Death Blow	500	Paragon Talent	WS 50, S 40
Storm of Blows	500	Paragon Talent	—
Soul of Stone	600	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Imperial Navy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Military)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Void Born)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (PDF)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (PDF)
Good Reputation (Death Worlders)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Death Worlders)
Unarmed Warrior	500	Talent	WS 35, Ag 35

Rank 13 Storm Trooper Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Decadent Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Heroic Leadership	600	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Inquisition)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Planet (Specific))	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Feral Worlders)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Feral Worlders)
Good Reputation (Military)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Imperial Guard)
Renowned Warrior	1000	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Cult (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Planet (Specific))	–300	Influence Talent	—
Combat Formation	700	Talent	Int 40
Guardian	500	Talent	Ag 40
Target Selection	500	Talent	BS 40

Rank 14 Storm Trooper Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Common Lore Mastery	500	Mastered Skills	—
Gunfighter Saint	500	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Mechanicus)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Adeptus Arbites)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Imperial Navy)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Imperial Navy)
Good Reputation (Void Born)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Void Born)
Good Reputation (Inquisition)	400	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Inquisition)
Enemy (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))	–300	Influence Talent	Rival (Recidivist (Specific))
Unarmed Master	700	Talent	WS 45, Ag 45, Unarmed Warrior

Rank 15 Storm Trooper Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Investigation Mastery	600	Mastered Skill	—
Transcendent Hate	600	Paragon Talent	—
Peer (Adepta Sororitas)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Cult (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Cult (Specific))	–400	Influence Talent	Rival (Cult (Specific)
Enemy (Planet (Specific))	–500	Influence Talent	Rival (Planet (Specific)
Member of the Tyrantine Cabal	700	Influence Talent	—
Sound Constitution (x3)	500	Talent	
Exotic Weapon Training (Choose One)	500	Talent	
Unarmed Ascendant Mastery	600	Paragon Talent	WS 45, Ag 45

Rank 16 Storm Trooper Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Peer (Adeptus Titanicus)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Adeptus Astartes)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Good Reputation (Adepta Sororitas)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Adepta Sororitas)
Good Reputation (Adeptus Arbites)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50 Peer (Adeptus Arbites)
Watched from On High	500	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Recidivist Organisation (Specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Cult (Specific))	–400	Influence Talent	Rival (Cult (Specific)
Favoured by Fate	1000	Talent	

Vindicare Assassin

Exitus Acta Probat: The Outcome Justifies the Deed.

–Dictatus Vindicare

Imperial Assassins are specially trained, equipped, and conditioned killers that serve the Officio Assassinorum, dispatched by the Lords of Terra to eliminate threats to the Imperium of Man. Selected from the galaxy's most ruthless killers and hunters of men, the Imperial Assassin is a feared symbol of Imperial might. Assassins are conditioned and trained by one of a number of Assassin Temples, each with their own unique style and approach to the art of death.

Normally, Assassins are trained from early childhood when they are selected from amongst the most dangerous regions of the Imperium, including everything from death worlds to feral societies to the industrial depths of hive cities. These recruits are then taken to Terra, and their training begins even before they set foot upon the starship that will bring them there. The instructors are merciless in their testing, weeding out the weak and foolish right from the start so that only the bravest and fiercest candidates hold up under the enforced discipline.

Candidates must survive on limited food and air for days at a time, and are constantly tested in combat against each other, armed and unarmed, in conditions of total darkness or blinding light, zero-gravity or bearing crushing weights, withstanding stifling heat or freezing cold. By the time the recruits arrive on Terra, there may only be a fraction remaining, and sometimes, the ship arrives empty—all the recruits having somehow failed during the journey.

Upon arrival, the candidates are divided up amongst the hidden temples of the Officio Assassinorum, and the training becomes even more rigourous and thorough than before. The recruits are tested to their utmost limits, with days spent in battle against complex and deadly exercise-engines, whilst simultaneously mastering the specialist equipment, weapons, and techniques of their Temple. Thus, the Officio Assassinorum provides the High Lords of Terra with only the most finely honed and efficient living weapons—the lethal disciples known as Imperial Assassins.

Assassins of the Vindicare Temple are master snipers and nearly matchless at remaining unseen and unheard; a lethal shadow who strikes from hiding and fades away. These Assassins eliminate enemy leaders with one precise, surgical strike. Vindicare Temple Assassins are often assigned to slay those who use mob rule and rousing oratory, rewarding sedition with the seemingly divine retribution of an invisible, untraceable sniper. Many false clerics have fallen to a Vindicare's bullet as they preached their blasphemous credo. Rebellious politicians, cultist rulers, and revolutionary leaders who speak out against the wisdom of the Imperium constantly fear being cut down upon the rostrum. When such charismatic figures die at the hands of a faceless servant of the Emperor, their followers become disillusioned and fearful. This method ensures that many heresies are silenced with a single shot.

Often, Vindicare Assassins are dispatched when the Imperium cannot or will not send a larger force. The disruptive effect of a sniper upon enemy morale and its chain of command can keep entire armies pinned in place, its leaders frightened that making any move will lead to their doom. The Vindicare Temple trains its Assassins to infiltrate quietly onto a planet's surface and locate a prime position to observe the enemy. Vindicare Assassins are renowned for selecting only the most advantageous location to take their shot, sometimes waiting unseen for weeks on end to make the perfect kill.

The signature weapons of the Vindicare Assassin are his Exitus rifle and pistol, exquisitely-designed and maintained firearms specially constructed by the Adeptus Mechanicus and customised to each individual Assassin. With these tools in hand, the Vindicare Assassin is a lethal expression of the Emperor's Judgement, doling out death to those who dare defy the Imperium. The Exitus weapons are the instrument of the Vindicare's symphony of death, guiding uncannily accurate fire from target to target until his scope is clear.

Like all Imperial Assassins, the Vindicare is extremely adept at evading enemy attacks. His reflexes are honed to a razor's edge and boosted via special conditioning, neural implants, and hypno-training. Few opponents are capable of landing a blow upon an Imperial Assassin, and fewer still survive the experience.

Imperial Assassins are often dispatched to assist an Inquisitor if his need is particularly great, for the skills and abilities of the Assassin are highly valued by the Holy Ordos. The Vindicare Assassin is particularly prized for his exceptional talent in the arts of stealth and for his ability to kill with precision.

Many times, the Vindicare Assassin is dismissed as a simple sniper by those who have never seen one in action. Throne Agents who work alongside an Imperial Assassin, however, are well aware that these exceptional killers are more than simply

the sum of their parts. Aside from the specialist skills and equipment, Imperial Assassins provide a unique outlook upon any situation, quickly able to determine and weigh risks against rewards. Although often considered a grim and humourless lot, many Vindicare Assassins possess a dry, sarcastic wit, and there are some quite creative and even artistic personalities amongst their number. In the course of their assignments, Imperial Assassins must often find unusual solutions to the challenges that lie between them and their prey.

The conditioning of an Imperial Assassin means that they are usually quite guarded from forming friendships or attachments, for those whose calling is death must be prepared to kill or be killed at a moment's notice.

STARTING SKILLS, TALENTS, AND GEAR

Gear: Stealth suit, spy mask, Exitus Rifle, Exitus Pistol, one Exitus hellfire, shield-breaker, and turbo-penetrator round, mono-knife.

Ascended Traits

When you take up the path of the Vindicare Assassin, you automatically gain the Temple Assassin Trait. You must also choose one other trait from the list below.

Temple Assassin

Imperial Assassins are trained and augmented to be ultimate killing machines. They exist for this single purpose and so are bred for combat, their minds and meat carved into forms useful to the Emperor and the power of the Imperium. This physical superiority grants the Assassin two main benefits. The first is physical perfection which grants him a re-roll on any Acrobatics, Climb, Contortionist and Swim Test. The second is a preternatural grace which allows the Assassin a number of extra Reactions equal to his Agility Bonus. These bonus reactions may only be used to make Dodge or Parry tests. The Assassin may still only attempt a single Dodge or Parry against each attack made against him. Additionally, the Assassin may attempt to Dodge any attack, including attacks that are not normally eligible for a Dodge Test, such as massive explosions, a descending titan's foot, or an invisible psychic attack (The GM should make the final decision on which attacks may not be Dodged, and at his discretion, this ability may not apply).

Choose One…

Sacrificial Past

It is common for an Assassin's past to be purged when he is inducted into the Temple. Such a process wipes away most of who the person once was, but remakes them stronger and more stable. When this trait is chosen, the Assassin loses all his accrued Insanity and Corruption Points and any effects related to Insanity or Corruption. However, he must now re-roll his Intelligence, Willpower and Fellowship using 2d10+20, losing his old characteristics forever. All advances to his previous characteristics (of those listed above) are also lost. Apply any effects from Transition Packages to Intelligence, Willpower and Fellowship after the Assassin has generated his new scores.

Note: This trait may not be combined with any other talent or Transition Package which reduces Insanity or Corruption.

Killing Sprint

Assassins are taught to kill swiftly and without mercy. Unlike Death Cultists, a Temple Assassin does not revel in the blood and pain of his victims, but only cares that they are dead. If the Assassin kills (reduces to 0 wounds or less) an opponent in his turn, then he gains either a +10 to WS (if the kill was made with a melee weapon) or +10 to BS (if the kill was made with a ranged weapon) in his following turn against a new target. This can continue if the Assassin continues to make a kill each turn up to a maximum of +30 to either WS or BS.

Conditioning

An Assassin's mind is his fortress, shielded against those that would try and subvert him from his mission. Fellowship Tests and Skill Tests based on Fellowship have no effect on a Assassin. In addition, any attempt to control or influence the Assassin using tech, psychic powers, or drugs either imposes a –20 penalty to the aggressor or a +20 bonus to the Assassin to resist. The GM has the final say in what powers and effects can be affected by this trait.

Vindicare Assassin Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Heroic	Master
Weapon Skill	1,500	2,000
Ballistic Skill	1,000	1,500
Strength	3,000	5000
Toughness	3,000	5,000
Agility	1,000	1500
Intelligence	1,500	2,000
Perception	1,000	1,500
Willpower	1,500	2,000
Fellowship	3,000	5,000

Rank 9 Vindicare Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition)	500	Skill	—
Forbidden Lore (Officio Assassinorum)	500	Skill	—
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)	500	Skill	—
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)	500	Skill	—
Speak Language (High Gothic)	500	Skill	—
Athletic Mastery	800	Mastered Skills	—
Fearless	700	Talent	—
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Basic Weapons Expertise	800	Paragon Talent	—
Pistol Expertise	800	Paragon Talent	—
Peerless Marksman	800	Paragon Talent	—
Unnatural Agility (x2)	1000	Trait	

Rank 10 Vindicare Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ciphers (Throne Agent)	500	Skill	—
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry) +10	700	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Chymistry)
Scholastic Lore (Judgement)	700	Skill	—
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10	700	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis)
Stealth Mastery	800	Mastered Skill	—
Unarmed Warrior	800	Talent	WS 35, Ag 35
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Target Selection	400	Talent	—
Heightened Reactions	800	Paragon Talent	Ag 40, Per 40
Mnemonic Purging	400	Special Talent	—

Rank 11 Vindicare Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +10	400	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Judgement)
Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +20	400	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Tactica Imperialis) +10
Sleight of Hand +20	400	Skill	Sleight of Hand +10
Perfect Shot	400	Talent	—
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Talented (Concealment)	700	Talent	—
Talented (Tracking)	700	Talent	—
Unnatural Toughness (x2)	2000	Trait	—

Rank 12 Vindicare Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Forbidden Lore (Officio Assassinorum) +10	800	Skill	Forbidden Lore (Officio Assassinorum)
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)	400	Skill	—
Observation Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Autosanguine	700	Talent	—
Exotic Weapon Training (Choose One)	700	Talent	—
Resistance (Psychic Powers)	700	Talent	—
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Talented (Acrobatics)	700	Talent	—
Unnatural Strength (x2)	1000	Trait	—

Rank 13 Vindicare Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition) +10	500	Skill	Forbidden Lore (Inquisition)
Pilot (Military Craft) +20	700	Skill	Pilot (Military Craft) +10
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Talented (Silent Move)	700	Talent	—
Unarmed Master	800	Talent	WS 45, Ag 40, Unarmed Warrior
Unassailable Grace	800	Paragon Talent	Agility 50, Dodge
Combat Formation	1000	Talent	Int 40
Infused Knowledge	1000	Talent	Int 40

Rank 14 Vindicare Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Forbidden Lore (Inquisition) +20	700	Skill	Forbidden Lore (Inquisition) +10
Scholastic Lore (Chymistry) +20	700	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Chymistry) +10
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) +10	700	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed)
Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) +20	700	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) +10
Exotic Weapon Training (Choose One)	700	Talent	—
Peer (Inquisition)	700	Talent	—
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Unarmed Ascendant Mastery	800	Paragon Talent	WS 45, Ag 45

Rank 15 Vindicare Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ciphers (Throne Agent) +10	700	Skill	Ciphers (Throne Agent)
Forbidden Lore (Officio Assassinorum) +20	700	Skill	Forbidden Lore (Officio Assassinorum) +10
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent) +10	700	Skill	Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)
Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +20	700	Skill	Scholastic Lore (Judgement) +10
Speak Language (High Gothic) +10	700	Skill	Speak Language (High Gothic)
Exotic Weapon Training (Choose One)	700	Talent	—
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—

Rank 16 Vindicare Assassin Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Ciphers (Throne Agent) +20	700	Skill	Ciphers (Throne Agent) +10
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent) +20	700	Skill	Secret Tongue (Throne Agent) +10
Speak Language (High Gothic) +20	700	Skill	Speak Language (High Gothic) +10
Good Reputation (Inquisition)	700	Talent	—
Exotic Weapon Training (Choose One)	700	Talent	—
Sound Constitution	700	Talent	—
Indomitable Fortitude	800	Talent	Toughness 40, Willpower 40
Unnatural Speed (x2)	600	Trait	—

Inquisitor

"I come to set straight that which is twisted; to cleanse that which is unclean; to judge he who is guilty; to punish he who has sinned. These things I do in the name of the most Holy God-Emperor of Mankind, and I do them gladly."

–The 'Missive to the Damned', issued by Lady Garielle of the Ordo Hereticus by way of planet-wide vox-cast, upon her arrival on Fenksworld.

Inquisitors are tasked with the most terrible of all sacred missions and privy to the most soul-crushingly stark of secrets. Their duty is to walk amongst Humanity, protecting the Imperium from threats so dark the common man would be reduced to a gibbering wreck at the vaguest description. More often than not, Humanity must be protected from itself, for Man has ever dabbled in the forbidden in the eternal search for power or immortality. Inquisitors must sit in judgement over their fellow human beings and be prepared to cast a million souls into the fires of purgation that a billion more might be saved. Such is the weight of duty that rests upon the shoulders of the agents of the Holy Ordos of the Emperor's Inquisition.

Amongst the teeming billions of Humanity, only the most singular of individuals prove worthy of becoming an Inquisitor. None can say how many Inquisitors are at large in the Imperium, but it is certain that those few who bear the title are individuals possessed of a devotion to the Imperium and a will to protect it that is unparalleled amongst the masses of anonymous Mankind. For such properties to have been noticed at all is in itself a sign that the individual has the weight of fate bearing down upon his shoulders. To be judged worthy of induction into the outer circles of the Inquisition, the individual must have displayed great potential indeed. To survive as an Acolyte in the service of a Master, they must have displayed utter dedication and prodigious skill. To be granted the Inquisitorial Seal, the individual must have been judged able to bear the terrible weight of that office and to be capable of enacting the ultimate of sanctions so that the Imperium might prevail in a universe set upon the eradication of Humanity itself.

Inquisitors stand first and foremost alone against the terrors of the galaxy. Each is invested with the authority to condemn entire worlds to the fires of Exterminatus, and it is to their own conscience that an Inquisitor must answer. Though they share many qualities, no two Inquisitors are exactly alike. Over decades and even centuries of service, each develops a unique method, outlook, and approach to the duties of the Inquisitor. Some become intolerant and quick to condemn, seeing heresy in the souls of all and enemies in every shadow. Others retreat into those shadows themselves, orchestrating vast networks of agents from afar and never revealing their face to those who serve them. Many Inquisitors become supremely idiosyncratic in temperament, method, or appearance, testament to the fact that few can face the horrors that would enslave Mankind and emerge unscathed.

Despite the weight that they alone bear, few Inquisitors engage in their duties in isolation. Most utilise allies and servants; individuals possessed of skills of use to the course of the Inquisitor's duties. Some maintain only small retinues of trusted servants, whilst others are possessed of entire household armies.

Whatever their individual approach to their duties, all Inquisitors are utterly dedicated to their mission. They have the strength of will to face the unutterable horrors of the universe and stand firm in their dedication to the survival of Mankind. However, this singular mindset brings with it what is at once the Inquisition's greatest strength and most insidious vulnerability. Each Inquisitor must pursue their mission as they see fit, leaving no stone unturned in the righteous hunt for heresy and deviation. None are above the Inquisitor's scrutiny, even other Inquisitors. No fact is above their questioning, even forbidden archives sealed by the highest order. Many Inquisitors pursue lines of investigation that ultimately lead to them being confronted by their peers and condemned as heretics themselves. Such is the weight of responsibility that every Inquisitor must bear.

Wherever their investigations may lead, the Inquisitor pursues the enemies of the Imperium unto their very last breath. They may confront alone the mutant overlord in putrid, stygian sewers. They may lead a cadre of handpicked warriors against a cult that has infiltrated an entire planetary government. They may lead an entire regiment of Imperial Guard seconded to their command. They may stand upon the bridge of an Imperial Navy battleship, watching dispassionately as a world burns by their pronouncement. The power of the Inquisition is total, and the dedication of the Inquisitor terrible to behold.

Starting Skills, Talents, and Gear

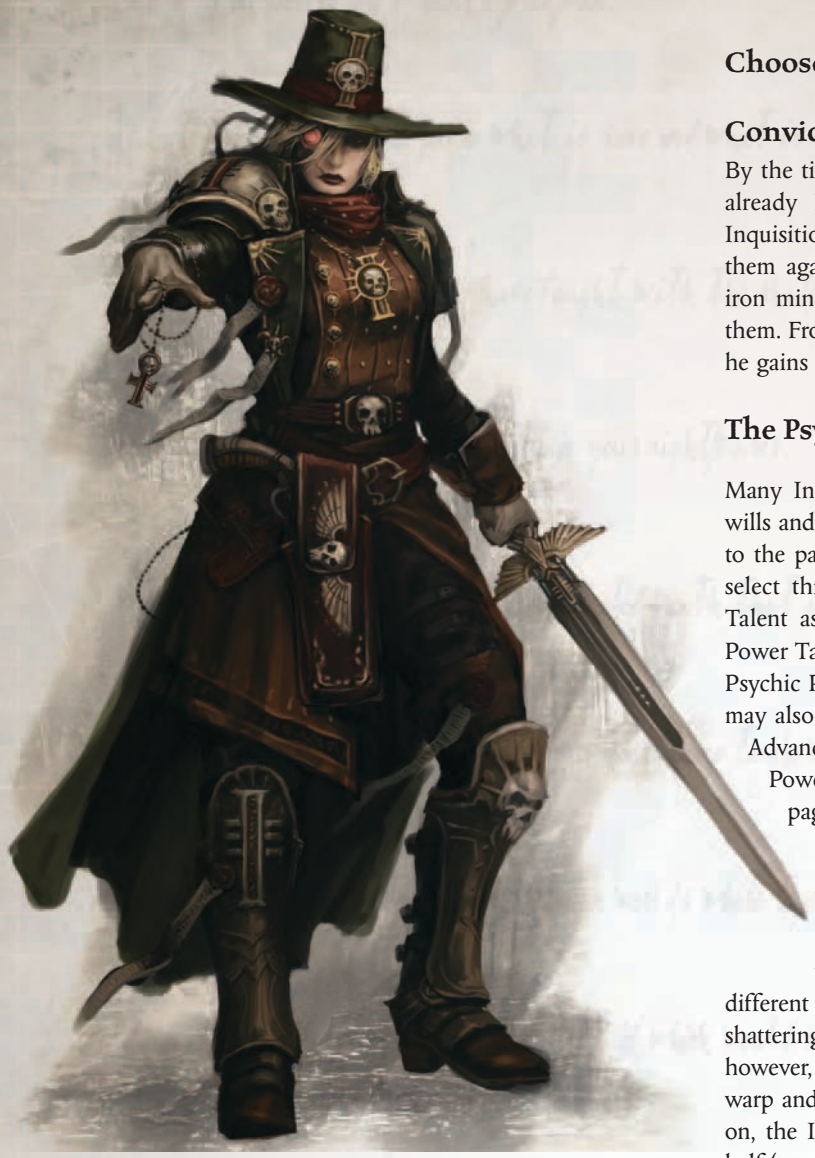
Talents: Peer (Inquisition) (Influence Talent)
Gear: Best-craftsmanship autopistol or bolt pistol, common-craftsmanship power sword or best-craftsmanship chainsword, Inquisitional Rosette, one digital weapon of choice, micro-bead.

Ascended Traits

When you take up the path of the Inquisitor, you automatically gain the Indomitable Will of the Inquisition Trait. You must also choose one other trait from the list below.

Indomitable Will of the Inquisition

To become an Inquisitor is to have strength of will beyond that of normal men, to be able to look into the face of man's worst fears and carry on regardless. No one who carries the rosette does so without the will to back it up. Once per game session, the Inquisitor may automatically pass one Willpower test (this may also include skill tests based on Willpower and psychic powers). Should degrees of success be a factor, then the Inquisitor is considered to have rolled a 01 on this test. This ability can be used before or after the character makes the Willpower Test, and can always be made regardless any other modifiers that apply to the Test.



Choose One…

Conviction is Strength

By the time an Inquisitor receives his rosette, he has usually already had a great deal of experience in serving the Inquisition and dealing with its foes. For many, this steels them against the horrors they must face and protects their iron minds against whatever evils the universe may hurl at them. From now on, the Inquisitor reduces all Insanity Points he gains by half (rounding down).

The Psyker's Gift

Many Inquisitors are also psychically gifted, their powerful wills and intimate knowledge of the warp lending themselves to the path of the psykers. You must already be a psyker to select this trait. You may select the Minor Psychic Power Talent as an Elite Advance for 500xp, the Major Psychic Power Talent as an Elite Advance for 750xp, or the Ascended Psychic Power Talent as an Elite Advance for 2,000 xp. You may also increase your current Psy Rating by +1 as an Elite Advance for 1,500 xp. The xp cost of the Ascended Psychic Power Talent may be reduced in the normal fashion (see page 125).

Purity Is The Only Defense

To be an Inquisitor is to have a rare insight into the very soul of the Emperor. This affects men in different ways, sometimes affirming their faith and sometimes shattering it. Those who stay true to the path of the Emperor, however, have a powerful shield against the darkness of the warp and the insidious whispers of its inhabitants. From now on, the Inquisitor reduces all Corruption Points he gains by half (rounding down).

Inquisitor Characteristic Advances

Characteristic	Heroic	Master
Weapon Skill	1,500	2,000
Ballistic Skill	1,500	2,000
Strength	3,000	3,500
Toughness	3,000	3,500
Agility	1,500	2,000
Intelligence	1,000	1,500
Perception	1,000	1,500
Willpower	1,000	1,500
Fellowship	1,000	1,500

Rank 9 Inquisitor Advances (Continued on Next Page)

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Basic Weapons Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Charismatic Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Driving Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Forbidden Lore Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Investigation Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Favoured by Fate	700	Talent	—

Rank 9 Inquisitor Advances, Continued

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Peer (Feral Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Government)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Hivers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (PDF)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Military)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Recidivist Organisation (specific)	700	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Chartist Captains)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Inquisition)	500	Influence Talent	Fel
Peer (Navigators)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Nobility)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Underworld)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Acolyte Network	700	Influence Talent	—
Unnatural Willpower (x2)	1000	Trait	
Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)	500	Skill	—

Rank 10 Inquisitor Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Heroic Leadership	700	Paragon Talent	Fel 30, WP 30, Command
Mental Aegis	700	Paragon Talent	WP50
Pistol Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Linguistic Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Wide Correspondence	700	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Academics)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Administratum)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Ecclesiarchy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Enforcers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Guard)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Imperial Navy)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Middle Class)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Planet (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Workers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Cult (specific))	–200	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Underworld)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Recidivist Organisation (specific)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Common Lore Mastery	500	Mastered Skill	—
Observation Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Stealth Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—

Rank 11 Inquisitor Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Indomitable Fortitude	700	Paragon Talent	T 40, WP 40
Scholastic Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Shadow Craft Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Shadow Lord	700	Influence Talent	—
Pious Observation	700	Influence Talent	—
Lord of Domains	700	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Arbites)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Astropaths)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Death Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Pilgrims)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Void Born)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Ecclesiarchy)	–100	Influence Talent	—

Rank 11 Inquisitor Advances, Continued

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Good Reputation (Feral Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Feral Worlders)
Good Reputation (Government)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Government)
Good Reputation (Hivers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Hivers)
Good Reputation (PDF)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (PDF)
Good Reputation (Military)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, (Military)
Melee Weapon Expertise	500	Paragon Talent	—
Peerless Marksman	500	Paragon Talent	BS 40

Rank 12 Inquisitor Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Cryptological Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Fieldcraft Mastery	700	Mastered Skill	—
Renowned Warrior	700	Influence Talent	—
Revolutionary	700	Influence Talent	—
Sleeper Agent	700	Influence Talent	—
Conciliator	700	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Enforcers)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Inquisition)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Inquisition)
Good Reputation (Academics)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Academics)
Good Reputation (Administratum)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Administratum)
Good Reputation (Ecclesiarchy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Ecclesiarchy)
Good Reputation (Enforcers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Enforcers)
Good Reputation (Imperial Guard)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Guard)
Good Reputation (Imperial Navy)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Imperial Navy)
Good Reputation (Middle Class)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Middle Class)
Good Reputation (Planet (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Planet (specific))
Good Reputation (Workers)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Workers)
Rival (Specific Inquisitional Faction)	–300	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Specific Inquisitor)	–300	Influence Talent	—

Rank 13 Inquisitor Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Exotic Weapon Training (Choose One)	500	Talent	—
Worthy of the Calixian Elite	700	Influence Talent	—
Warmonger	700	Influence Talent	—
Member of the Tyrantine Cabal	800	Influence Talent	—
Hidden Cultist	700	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Adeptus Astartes)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Adeptus Mechanicus)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Cult (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Adeptus Arbites)	500	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Administratum)	500	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Adeptus Arbites)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Arbites)
Good Reputation (Astropaths)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Astropaths)
Good Reputation (Death Worlders)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Death Worlders)
Good Reputation (Pilgrims)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Pilgrims)
Good Reputation (Void Born)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Void Born)
Enemy (Ecclesiarchy)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Specific Inquisitional Faction)	–300	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Specific Inquisitor)	–300	Influence Talent	—
Tech Lore Mastery	800	Mastered Skill	—
Warp Lore Mastery	800	Mastered Skill	—

Rank 14 Inquisitor Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Soul of Stone	700	Paragon Talent	WP 40
Conditioned Intellect	700	Paragon Talent	Int 40
Rite of Protection	800	Other Talent	WP 40
The Ear of the Lord Sector	800	Influence Talent	—
Committed Xanthite	700	Influence Talent	—
Denouncer	700	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Adepta Sororitas)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Peer (Rogue Trader)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Adeptus Astartes)	–300	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Adepta Sororitas)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Astropaths)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Navigators)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Chartist Captains)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Chartist Captains)
Good Reputation (Navigators)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Navigators)
Good Reputation (Nobility)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Nobility)
Good Reputation (Underworld)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Underworld)
Enemy (Enforcers)	–100	Influence Talent	—

Rank 15 Inquisitor Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Pure Faith	700	Faith Talent	—
Transcendent Hate	700	Paragon Talent	Fel 30
Outspoken Monodominant	700	Influence Talent	—
Oath Bonded to the Angels of Death	800	Influence Talent	—
Peer (Officio Assassinorum)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 30
Rival (Adeptus Mechanicus)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Chartist Captains)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Navigators)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Adeptus Astartes)	800	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adeptus Astartes)
Good Reputation (Adeptus Mechanicus)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer, (Adeptus Mechanicus)
Good Reputation (Cult (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Cult (specific))
Enemy (Adeptus Arbites)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Administratum)	–200	Influence Talent	—

Rank 16 Inquisitor Advances

Advance	Cost	Type	Prerequisites
Purge the Unclean	700	Faith Talent	Pure Faith
Storm of Blows	800	Paragon Talent	WS 35, Ag 40
Mnemonic Purging	800	Other Talent	Int 45, WP 45
Watched From On High	800	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Rogue Trader)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Inquisition)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Rival (Officio Assassinorum)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Good Reputation (Adepta Sororitas)	700	Influence Talent	Fel 50, Peer (Adepta Sororitas)
Good Reputation (Recidivist Organisation (specific))	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, (Recidivist Organisation (specific))
Good Reputation (Rogue Trader)	500	Influence Talent	Fel 50, (Rogue Trader)
Enemy (Adeptus Astartes)	–300	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Adepta Sororitas)	–200	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Astropaths)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Enemy (Navigators)	–100	Influence Talent	—
Unnatural Willpower (x3)	2000	Trait	Unnatural Willpower (x3)

IV

Ascended Skills and Talents

Mastered Skills

•

Paragon Talents

•

Talents of Influence

•

Other Ascended Talents

Chapter IV: Ascended Skills and Talents

"To the ancients, a mind able to correlate all its contents was considered an impossibility that would result in terror and madness. As one who has achieved this ascendancy to the impossible, I can say that the ancients were wrong; for I feel no terror and I can assure you that I am quite sane."

–from the unfinished writings of Witchfinder Morndark

The chosen few who ascend through trails of fire and death to serve as Inquisitors or their close associates are possessed of abilities and knowledge that have been acquired through the test of danger and adventure. To experience the power and resources of the Inquisition opens possibilities of learning and progression that are greater still. To the studied knowledge of the venerable sage, the possibility of hypno-transference and inference conditioning can open new heights of intellectual achievement, while to the skilled warrior, noetic-imprinting and training by the finest tutors can raise his skills to a sublime and terrifying level. It is not only knowledge and skill with blade and bolter that sets apart the peers of the Imperium; it is also the influence that they hold over the machinery that turns beneath the surface of the Imperium, and how they choose to exert that influence, that makes them more than their fellow servants of the God-Emperor. This chapter shows how such skills and abilities can be related to ascended characters in **Dark Heresy**.

The Purpose of Ascended Skills and Talents

The purpose of the skills and Talents presented in this chapter is to give ascended characters abilities that reflect the status and position they have achieved. These abilities are deliberately powerful and approximate the qualities of many lesser abilities that can be acquired separately. They are the abilities of true lords and masters of the Imperium in their chosen paths. They are also intended to reduce the number of entries on a character sheet and remembered or referenced by a player. It is intended that ascended characters have fewer, more powerful abilities, with a greater scope of application than characters created from the **Dark Heresy** rulebook and other **Dark Heresy** supplements.

Mastered Skills

"Knowledge is power: power beyond that of guns, or swords or thronging armies. It is power because in a realm of ignorance those with knowledge are lords of all."

–Corwanius Tare

Mastered skills represent a character's mastery over a broad area of endeavour which contains a number of individual skills. Mastered skills replace a number of individual skills, or skills with a number of skill groups with a single Mastered Skill. This grants the character a bonus to all of the skills that it replaces. Mastered skills can also be used in conjunction with a number of characteristics depending on the type of skill test being taken. Mastered Talents also allow for the possibility of a character having a particular speciality within a Mastered Skill.

Example

A character may have had the Acrobatics, Climb, Contortionist, Dodge, and Swim skills, all at different degrees. When he purchases Athletic Mastery, however, he would remove all of these individual skills from his character sheet and simply use the bonus granted by Athletic Mastery to all of the skill tests that would have been covered by the individual skills.

USING MASTERED SKILLS

Mastered Skills are used in skill tests in the same way as described on page 182 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook. A Mastered Skill always grants a character a +20 bonus to skill tests to which it can be applied. A Mastered skill can be applied to all of the circumstances covered by the skills which it replaces, and may also be applied to other circumstances that the GM deems appropriate. In this way, the skills replaced by a Mastered Skill are guides for what kinds of circumstances the mastered skill may be applied to.

Characteristics

Skills normally have an associated characteristic that is specified for use in conjunction with that skill. Mastered skills do not have a specified characteristic; they may be used for skill tests in conjunction with a variety of characteristics depending on what the character is trying to do. In the case of activities that were covered by a skill that has been absorbed and replaced by a mastered skill, the characteristic associated with the normal use of that skill should be used. If, however, a player introduces a use of a Mastered Skill that is not covered by the skills it replaced then the GM should specify what characteristic should be used fir the skill test.

Example

A character is wants to dodge a blow which has successfully hit him. He has Athletic Mastery, which replaces the Dodge skill and tests using his Agility (the characteristic associated with dodging) and applies the +20 bonus granted by Athletic Mastery.

Skill Descriptors

Skills normally have a descriptor which tells the players and Game Master what type of activity that skill is used for (see page 96 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook for more details). Mastered Skills do not have a single descriptor; they may replace a number of skills with different descriptors and so may be used as a combat, crafting, interaction, investigation, movement, or operator skill as required by the type of task the skill is being used for.

Specialities

Even after a character has acquired a mastered skill, it is possible for him to enhance his ability in a particular field. This is referred to as a speciality, and can be taken for any of the skills that the Mastered Skill has replaced. When a character passes a skill test relating to one of his specialities, he counts as passing by an extra degree of success.

Gaining Specialities: Mastered Skill specialities are the areas of specialisation that are covered by the skills the Mastered Skill replaces. Thus, a character with Athletic Mastery may gain a speciality in climbing by purchasing the Climb Skill again. However, the cost of this speciality is only 100 xp. A character may have a number of specialities in a Mastered Skill up to the number of skills it replaces.

Example

For example if a character has Athletic Mastery and a speciality in climbing, he would make tests to climb with a +20 bonus. If he passed, he would count as having succeeded with an extra degree of success.

Talented, and Other Skill-Effecting Rules

There are a number of rules that can affect skill tests, such as the Talented Talent. These rules are unchanged by the use of Mastered Skills and apply to only the specific use of a mastered skill that was covered by the originally specified rule.

Example

If a character has the talented (Acrobatics) Talent and Athletic Mastery, he gets the +10 bonus when performing acrobatics. The +20 bonus from Athletic Mastery would then be combined with the +10 from the talented (Acrobatics) Talent to grant the character a +30 bonus to his skill tests for performing acrobatics.

The Limits of Mastered Skills

Mastered Skills have their limits. While they have very broad applications, they are not universal. There are always things that even a master of a particular field cannot be capable of. This is particularly important for Mastered Skills which replace skills that have a large number of skill groups. In these cases, it is assumed that the Mastered Skill does not allow access to areas not specified in a skill's original set of skill groups.

Example

If a character has Linguistic Mastery, he speaks and writes High Gothic, Hive Dialect, Low Gothic, Ship Dialect, and Tribal Dialect, but does not have the same mastery of the Eldar tongue.

GAINING MASTERED SKILLS

Mastered Skills may be gained by characters in two ways: by purchasing them with experience points from a rank or as an elite advance, or by mastering all of the Skills which the Mastered Skill replaces.

Purchasing Mastered Skills: Mastered skills are available as advances in the careers featured in this book (see pages 49-98 in Chapter II: Ascended Careers).

Replacing Existing Skills: If a character has achieved +20 in all of the skills listed as being replaced by a Mastered Skill, he gains the Mastered Skill at no cost. Remove the individual skills from the character sheet and replace them with the Mastered skill.

Athletic Mastery

Replaces: Acrobatics, Climb, Contortionist, Dodge, Swim
Athletic mastery reflects a complete control over motion, power and coordination by a character.

Commerce Mastery

Replaces: Barter, Evaluate, Trade (Merchant)
Commerce mastery is the mastery of all manner of commercial transactions and estimation of potential value.

Common Lore Mastery

Replaces: Common Lore (all skill groups)
A mastery of common lore reflects a profound knowledge of the Imperium and those who dwell within it.

Cryptological Mastery

Replaces: Ciphers (all skill groups), Secret Tongue (all skill groups)
A character with cryptological mastery is an expert in all manner of secret communications and is able to crack codes and create complex cryptic languages.

Table 4-1: Mastered Skills

Mastered Skill	Replaces
Athletic Mastery	Acrobatics, Climb, Contortionist, Dodge, Swim
Commerce Mastery	Barter, Evaluate
Common Lore Mastery	Common Lore (all skill groups)
Cryptological Mastery	Ciphers (all skill groups), Secret Tongue (all skill groups)
Decadent Mastery	Carouse, Gamble, Performer (all skill Groups)
Charismatic Mastery	Blather, Charm, Command
Driving Mastery	Driving (all skill groups)
Fieldcraft Mastery	Navigation (Surface), Survival, Tracking, Wrangling
Forbidden Lore Mastery	Forbidden Lore (all skill groups)
Investigation Mastery	Inquiry, Interrogation, Intimidate,
Linguistic Mastery	Lip Reading, Literacy, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic, Ship Dialect, Tribal Dialect)
Observation Mastery	Awareness, Scrutiny, Search
Piloting Mastery	Pilot (all skill groups), Navigation (Stellar)
Scholastic Mastery	Logic, Scholastic Lore (all skill groups)
Shadow Craft Mastery	Deceive, Disguise, Security, Slight of Hand
Stealth Mastery	Concealment, Silent Move, Shadowing
Tech Lore Mastery	Chem-Use, Demolition, Medicae, Tech Use
Warp Lore Mastery	Invocation, Psyniscience

Decadent Mastery

Replaces: Carouse, Gamble, Performer (all skill Groups),
Decadent mastery is the fruit of a life spent in epicurean indulgence and reflects expertise in imbibing all forms of intoxicants, gambling, and revelling with abandon.

Charismatic Mastery

Replaces: Blather, Charm, Command
Charismatic mastery reflects a peerless ability to influence others through force of personality, oratory, skill with conversation, and flattery.

Driving Mastery

Replaces: Driving (all skill groups)
A character with driving mastery has the ability to control all forms of vehicle with equal skill.

Fieldcraft Mastery

Replaces: Navigation (Surface), Survival, Tracking, Wrangling
Fieldcraft mastery is the total command of the skills needed to survive in the wilderness or far from civilisation.

Forbidden Lore Mastery

Replaces: Forbidden Lore (all skill groups)
Forbidden Lore Mastery represents a character's extensive knowledge of things that it is better not to know; from the ways of aliens to the mysteries of the warp and the power of daemons.

Investigation Mastery

Replaces: Inquiry, Interrogation, Intimidate,
Investigation Mastery is the mastery of the skills used in conducting an investigation such as gathering information from witnesses or extracting confessions from suspects.

Linguistic Mastery

Replaces: Lip Reading, Literacy, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic, Ship Dialect, Tribal Dialect)
A character who has Linguistic Mastery has command of High and Low Gothic and can decipher all its derivative dialects in verbal and written form.

Observation Mastery

Replaces: Awareness, Scrutiny, Search
Observation Mastery represents a highly trained ability to notice details about places, people, and situations.

Piloting Mastery

Replaces: Pilot (all skill groups), Navigation (Stellar)
A character who has achieved Piloting Mastery controls all craft that soar through the air and void with peerless skill.

Scholastic Mastery

Replaces: Logic, Scholastic Lore (all skill groups),
Scholastic Mastery represents total mastery of all branches of scholarly knowledge.

Shadow Craft Mastery

Replaces: Deceive, Disguise, Security, Slight of Hand
Shadow Crafts are the skills of those who exist in a world of lies, of false identities and secrets. Mastery of Shadow craft makes the character a master of this other world of shadows and lies.

Stealth Mastery

Replaces: Concealment, Silent Move, Shadowing
A character with Stealth Mastery moves like a ghost, unseen and unheard unless he wishes to be.

Tech Lore Mastery

Replaces: Chem-Use, Demolition, Medicae, Tech Use
Tech Lore Mastery is the mastery of all of the knowledge of machines, their spirits, of biology and the alchemical mysteries of chemicals.

Warp Lore Mastery

Replaces: Forbidden Lore (Warp), Invocation, Psyniscience
Warp Lore Mastery is the Mastery by a psyker of their perception of the warp and the means to summon its power.

NEW SKILL GROUPS

Ciphers (Throne Agent)

Used to communicate a private and pre-arranged code between given agents of the Inquisition. Note that these codes are unique to specific Ordos within the Inquisition.

Note: This Skill Group simply replaces and updates Ciphers (Acolyte).

Forbidden Lore (Officio Assassinorum)

Secret knowledge of the Officio Assassinorum, the Assassin Temples, their particular wargear, styles, and methods of operation.

Secret Tongue (Throne Agent)

A pre-arranged series of code phrases and inflections intelligible only to a fellow Throne Agent. Note that each group of Throne Agents has a unique version of this language.

Note: This Skill Group simply replaces and updates Secret Tongue (Acolyte).

Creating Other Mastered Skills

The mastered skills presented here cover all of the skills from the Dark Heresy Rulebook and can be used without any intervention from the Game Master. A Mastered Skill is made up of a group of skills that are linked by a common theme or mode of use. If Game Masters and players wish to create a new or alternative Mastered Skills, they simply have to select the skills that the Mastered Skill encompasses and a rationale for why they can be grouped together. It is best to group skills based on an area of knowledge that they represent portions of, or because they represent a wider ability made up of several skills.

Paragon Talents

"Yes, yes of course there are others who claim to be the finest pistol knave that Gunmetal has ever produced. In the case of my friend here, she really is; a fact which you are all about to witness."

–Inquisitor Kaede confronting the magi of the Mirrored Visage

Paragon Talents represent the pinnacle of achievement in a particular sphere. They combine the effects of a number of ordinary Talents and usually grant a further benefit in addition. Paragon Talents have prerequisites that a character must meet in order take the Talent and use its abilities in the same way as other Talents in **Dark Heresy** (see pages 110-122 in **Chapter IV: Talents** in the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook). Paragon Talents may also list two or more Talents which they replace. If a character gains a Paragon Talent and they have any of the Talents listed as being replaced, they are removed from the character sheet. The Paragon Talent counts as all of the original Talents for the purposes of prerequisites for other Talents, Traits or rules.

GAINING PARAGON TALENTS

Paragon Talents may be gained by characters in two ways: by purchasing them with experience points from a rank or an elite advance, or by obtaining all of the Talents which the Paragon Talent replaces.

Purchasing Paragon Talents: Paragon Talents are available as advances in the careers featured in this book (see pages 49-98 in **Chapter II: Ascended Careers**). The amount of experience that these advances cost is not reduced if the character already has one or more of the Talents that the Paragon Talent replaces. These advances cost an amount of experience to purchase. This amount is not reduced if the character already has one or more of the Talents which the Paragon Talent replaces (see below).

Replacing Existing Talents: If a character has acquired all the Talents that a Paragon Talent replaces, then he may replace these Talents with the Paragon Talent for no experience cost. For example, if a character has the Ambidextrous, Two-Weapon Fighting, Dual Shot, Independent Targeting, and Gunslinger Talents, he could replace them all with the Gunfighter Saint Paragon Talent without spending any experience.

Basic Weapons Expertise

Replaces: Basic Weapon Training (Bolt, Flame, Las, Launcher, Melta, Plasma, Primitive, SP)

The character can use all basic weapons, with the exception of exotic weaponry, without penalty.

Table 4-2: Paragon Talents

Paragon Talent	Prerequisites	Replaces
Basic Weapons Expertise		Basic Weapon Training (Bolt, Flame, Las, Launcher, Melta, Plasma, Primitive, SP)
Berserker	WS 50, S 40	Battle Rage, Berserk Charge, Frenzy, Furious Assault
Blade Dancer	Ag 40, Acrobatics skill, WS 40, Melee Weapon Training (any)	Assassin's Strike, Blade Master, Combat Master, Counter Attack, Wall of Steel
Call of Iron	Mechanicus Implants	Ferric Lure, Ferric Summons
Conditioned Intellect	Int 40	Foresight, Total Recall
Death Blow	WS 50, S 40	Crippling Strike, Crushing Blow, Precise Blow, Sure Strike
Electro Illumination	Mechanicus Implants (Electoo Inductor/Potentia Coil)	Energy Cache, Luminen Blast, Luminen Charge, Luminen Shock
Exemplar of Metal	Mechanicus Implants	Enhanced Bionic Frame, Machinator Array, Mechadendrite Use (Gun, Manipulator, Medicae, Optical, Utility), The Flesh is Weak
Gravic Levitation	Mechanicus Implants	Maglev Grace, Maglev Transcendence
Gunfighter Saint	BS 40, Ag 40, Pistol Weapon Training (any)	Ambidextrous, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic), Dual Shot, Independent Targeting, Gunslinger
Heavy Weapons Expertise		Heavy Weapons Training (Bolt, Flame, Las, Launcher, Melta, Plasma, Primitive, SP)
Heroic Leadership	Fel 30, WP 30, Command	Air of Authority, Iron Discipline, Into the Jaws of Hell, Master Orator
Heightened Reactions	Ag 40, Per 40	Quick Draw, Paranoia, Rapid Reaction, Rapid Reload, Leap Up, Light Sleeper, Lightning Reflexes
Indomitable Fortitude	T 40, WP 40	Die Hard, Hardy, Iron Jaw, Resistance (Cold, Heat, Poisons), True Grit
Machine Spirit Empathy	Int 30, Fel 30, Mechanicus Implants	Binary Chatter, Electro Graft Use, Gun Blessing, Technical Knock
Melee Weapon Expertise		Melee Weapon Training (Primitive, Chain, Shock, Power)
Mental Aegis	WP 50	Mental Fortress, Resistance (Psychics), Strong Minded
Peerless Marksman	BS 40	Crack Shot, Deadeye Shot, Marksman, Mighty Shot, Sharpshooter
Pistol Expertise		Pistol Training (Bolt, Flame, Las, Launcher, Melta, Plasma, Primitive, SP)
Purity of the Machine	Mechanicus Implants	Autosanguine, Chem Geld, Orthoproxy, Prosanguine, Rite of Pure Thought
Storm of Blows	WS 35, Ag 40	Ambidextrous, Dual Strike, Lightening Attack, Swift Attack, Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)
Soul of Stone	WP 40	Armour of Contempt, Fearless, Insanely Faithful, Jaded, Resistance (Fear), Unshakeable Faith
Thrown Weapon Expertise		Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive, Chain, Shock, Power)
Transcendent Hate	Fel 30	Hatred (all), Inspire Wrath, Litany of Hate
Unarmed Ascendant Mastery	WS 45, Ag 45	Disarm, Unarmed Master, Unarmed Warrior, Takedown, Street Fighting
Unassailable Grace	Ag 50, Dodge	Deflect Shot, Hard Target, Step Aside
Voice of the Omnissiah	Mechanicus Implants	Disturbing Voice, Feedback Screech, Mimic, Rite of Awe, Rite of Fear

Berserker

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 50, Strength 40
Replaces: Battle Rage, Berserk Charge, Frenzy, Furious Assault
The character fights with an unrestrained fury that only the death of all those who stand against him can sate.

When the character makes a charge manoeuvre, he gains a +20 bonus to Weapon Skill instead of the usual +10 and may instantly enter a Frenzied state as a free action. While frenzied, the character gains a +10 bonus to Weapon Skill, Strength, Toughness, and Willpower, but suffers a –20 penalty to Ballistic Skill and Intelligence. While frenzied, the character must attack the nearest enemy in melee combat if possible. If the character is not engaged with the nearest enemy, he must move towards that enemy and engage them if possible. While frenzied, the character is immune to fear, pinning, stunning effects, and the effects of fatigue and will not retreat or flee but may Parry and Dodge. The character remains Frenzied for the duration of the combat. Whenever the character hits an opponent whilst using the All-Out Attack Manoeuvre, he may spend his reaction to make an extra attack (this extra attack retains any bonuses or penalties of the original attack).

Blade Dancer

Prerequisites: Agility 40, Acrobatics skill, Weapon Skill 40, Melee Weapon Training (any)
Replaces: Assassin's Strike, Blade Master, Combat Master, Counter Attack, Wall of Steel
The character fights with a deadly, athletic grace; flipping over opponents, deflecting blows, repositioning and killing with swift, precise cuts.

When attacking with a sword or a knife of any type, including chainswords and powerswords, the character may re-roll a missed attack once per round, and may make an additional parry once per round. In effect, this gives the character a second Reaction that may only be used to parry, thus allowing him to make two parries in a turn. Note he may still only attempt a single parry against any one attack. When the character successfully parries an opponent's attack, he may immediately make an attack against that opponent using the weapon which was used to parry. This attack takes a –10 penalty to the test.

Opponents fighting the character in hand-to-hand gain no bonuses for outnumbering.

After the character makes a melee attack, he may make an Acrobatics test to make a move equal to half his move rate. This move is as a Free Action and the opponent may not take the customary free attack for the character Fleeing (see page 192 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook).

Call of Iron

Prerequisites: Mechanicus Implants
Replaces: Ferric Lure, Ferric Summons
The character may lift or move any unsecured metal objects weighing up to 2 kilograms per point of Willpower Bonus within a 40m range. He may move the objects slowly anywhere within 30m but cannot make attacks with objects he manipulates. Once he ceases controlling the object, it falls to the ground. Alternatively, the character may instantly call the metal objects to him. The character must make a Willpower Test and spend a Half Action to activate this Talent, and it may be ended as a Free Action.

Conditioned Intellect

Prerequisites: Intelligence 40
Replaces: Foresight, Total Recall
By spending ten minutes studying or analysing a problem, the character gains a +10 bonus to his next Intelligence Test. If the character succeeds, he counts as having passed by an additional degree of success. The character can also automatically remember any piece of information he might feasibly have picked up in the past. When trying to recall more detailed or obscure facts, such as the precise layout of a crime scene or a page he read in an ancient grimoire five years ago, the character must make an Intelligence Test.

Death Blow

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 50, Strength 40
Replaces: Crippling Strike, Crushing Blow, Precise Blow, Sure Strike
The character can kill with a single, immensely powerful blow to the enemy's most vulnerable points.

The character adds +2 to all damage he inflicts in melee. Further, when the character deals critical damage to an opponent using a melee weapon, he deals an additional 4 points. The character may nominate the location hit by any successful melee attack. The nominated location is automatically the location hit by the attack.

Electro Illumination

Prerequisites: Mechanicus Implants
Replaces: Energy Cache, Luminen Blast, Luminen Charge, Luminen Shock
The Tech-Priest has mastered the electricity that flows through his biological and mechanical components, allowing him to use it as a deadly weapon or to feed the hungry circuits of machines.

The Tech-Priest may blast his enemies with electricity at a distance by making a ranged attack (requiring a Ballistic Skill test) against a single target within 10 meters, ignoring all range modifiers (the bonus for Aiming still applies, but not for Short or Point-Blank range). The Tech-Priest may also deliver a deadly shock to an opponent in combat by either making a single melee attack, or by grappling to deliver the blast (yes, this Talent may be used while grappling). The attack does 1d10 + Willpower Bonus Energy damage, has a Penetration equal to the character's Willpower Bonus, and has the Shocking quality. The Tech-Priest may opt to spend wounds to boost the Damage and Penetration of the attack by one point each per wound. If the loss of these wounds cause critical damage, it counts as Energy Damage to the Tech-Priest's body.

On a successful Toughness Test, the Tech-Priest may use his bio-electrical field to recharge or power machinery. This takes one minute of meditation and ritual incantation to activate. The difficulty of the Toughness Test varies depending on the nature of the technology, as follows:

Difficulty	Example
Ordinary (+10)	Chemical Battery, Glow Globe
Challenging (+0)	Las Gun Charge Pack, Data Slate, Personal Heater
Difficult (–10)	Overcharge Pack, Air Conditioning Unit, Servo-skull
Hard (–20)	Land Speeder Engine, Las Cannon Charge Pack, Servitor
Very Hard (–30)	Industrial Press, Cogitator Engine, Xenos Tech

Note that at the GM's discretion, some technology is simply too arcane, broken or power hungry to activate.

Exemplar of Metal

Prerequisites: Mechanicus Implants
Replaces: Enhanced Bionic Frame, Machinator Array, Mechadendrite Use (Gun, Manipulator, Medicae, Optical, Utility), The Flesh is Weak
Haloed by prehensile mechadenrities bearing blades, tools and weaponry, the Tech-Priest has passed far from the weak human form and is now an exemplar of the strength of the machine. The Tech-Priest has been enhanced to the point where his body is a powerful frame of metal driven by pistons and servos rather than muscle.

This Talent completely exchanges its benefits for those of the Talents it replaces (including the Characteristic increases from Machinator Array and the Armour increases from The Flesh Is Weak). The Talents that are replaced by Exemplar of Metal can nevermore be taken by the character. The character's Strength and Toughness are increased by +10 each, and his Agility and Fellowship reduced by –5. The character weighs three times as much as a normal person of his size, may no longer swim, and has the Auto-stabilised and Machine (7) Traits (see page 329 and page 330 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook). The Tech-Priest may use any type of mechadendrite and any Ballistic Mechadendrite he possesses, and may mount a single pistol type weapon or close combat weapon for which he has the Weapon Training Talent to use, rather than the usual compact laser design.

Gravitic Levitation

Prerequisites: Mechanicus Implants (Potentia Coil)
Replaces: Maglev Grace, Maglev Transcendence
The character has mastered the secrets of anti-Gravitic field generation. He floats above the ground and can even raise himself to float through the air in defiance of gravity.

The character may hover, at will, 20 to 30 centimetres off the ground, and may move normally while doing so. He may deactivate and reactivate this effect at will as a Free Action. Should the character fall, he takes no damage so long as this rite is active when he reaches the ground. Once every 6 hours, the character may spend a Half Action to gain the Flyer (3) trait, which he may maintain for a number of minutes equal to the character's Toughness Bonus.

Gunfighter Saint

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 40, Agility 40, Pistol Weapon Training (any)
Replaces: Ambidextrous, Two-Weapon Wielder (Ballistic), Dual Shot, Independent Targeting, and Gunslinger Talents.
The character is a gunfighter of terrifying skill; in his hands, pistols seem to have a will of their own, a will that wants only to bring death to the living.

When this character is fighting with two pistols at the same time, he may shoot with either hand without penalty. When using the Multiple Attacks Combat Action, he may fire both pistols at the same target by making a single Ballistic Skill Test, or he may shoot one pistol at one target and his other pistol as a second target by making two separate Ballistic Skill Tests.

Heavy Weapons Expertise

Replaces: Heavy Weapons Training (Bolt, Flame, Las, Launcher, Melta, Plasma, Primitive, SP)
The character can use all heavy weapons, with the exception of exotic weaponry, without penalty.

Heroic Leadership

Prerequisites: Fellowship 30, Willpower 30, Command
Replaces: Air of Authority, Iron Discipline, Into the Jaws of Hell, Master Orator
The character's presence, deeds, and words inspire those around him to face the darkness without fear and perform deeds equal to the greatest heroes of the Imperium.

On a successful Command Test, the character may affect a number of friendly targets equal to 1d10 x his Fellowship Bonus. All those affected by his command test are 'inspired' by his Leadership. He may attempt to get non-servants to follow his commands by making a Command Test with a –10 penalty. While he is visible to them, his minions and those 'inspired' by his leadership are immune to fear and pinning and may re-roll failed Willpower Tests. Note that this Talent may affect those whom he does not normally have formal authority over. In this case it is his inspiring words and deeds that motivate those around him, regardless of relative rank or status. In addition, all other Fellowship Tests and Fellowship-based Skill Tests can affect 10 times the normal number of people.

Heightened Reactions

Prerequisites: Agility 40, Perception 40
Replaces: Combat Sense, Quick Draw, Paranoia, Rapid Reaction, Rapid Reload, Leap Up, Light Sleeper, Lightning Reflexes
The character is constantly attuned to danger and reacts faster than sight when under pressure.

When rolling for Initiative, the character has a +2 bonus and may add either twice his Agility Bonus, or his Agility and Perception bonus, to the roll. When surprised or ambushed, he may make an Agility Test to act normally. He is always considered to be awake, even if he is asleep, when making Awareness Tests. In addition, the GM may secretly test the character's Perception to see if he notices hidden threats. Ready actions and standing up are Free Actions for the character, and all reload times are reduced by half (round down)—so a half action reload become a Free Action, a full action reload becomes a half action and so on.

Pure Faith

For more information about Pure Faith and other related Talents, see pages 50–51 of **The Inquisitor's Handbook**.

Indomitable Fortitude

Prerequisites: Toughness 40, Willpower 40
Replaces: Die Hard, Hardy, Iron Jaw, Resistance (Cold, Heat, Poisons), True Grit
The character's unbending will, combined with a constitution like tempered steel, allows him to disregard injuries that would cripple others.

The character has a +10 bonus to Toughness tests to resist the effects of heat, cold, poisons, suffocation (see page 210 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook), vacuum (see page 210 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook), to avoid permanently losing a broken limb (see page 211 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook) and to resist the negative effects of critical damage. Whenever the character does suffer critical damage, halve the result (rounding up). Further, when the character suffers from blood loss, he may roll twice to avoid death. For the purposes of removing damage, the character is always considered to be lightly wounded, and when he becomes stunned, he may make a Toughness Test with a +10 bonus to shrug off its effects.

Machine Spirit Empathy

Prerequisites: Intelligence 30, Fellowship 30, Mechanicus Implants
Replaces: Binary Chatter, Electro Graft Use, Gun Blessing, Technical Knock
The character can form close bonds with the spirits of devices and machinery; coaxing information from them, soothing their anger, and persuading them to do his bidding.

The character gains a +10 bonus to any attempt to instruct, program or question servitors, semi-sentient devices, data stores and similar systems, and gains a further +10 bonus to Common Lore, Inquiry or Tech-Use Tests while connected directly to a machine via a data point. The character may also un-jam a weapon by touching it as a Half Action. He may restore an uncooperative but intact machine to function by touching it and passing a **Challenging (+0) Fellowship Test**. As a Full Action, the character may un-jam weapons within a 10 meter radius by passing a **Challenging (+0) Intelligence Test**. If the test is passed, the character may un-jam a number of weapons equal to their Intelligence Bonus plus the number of degrees of success.

Melee Weapon Expertise

Replaces: Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Power, Primitive, Shock)
The character can use all melee weapons, with the exception of exotic weaponry, without penalty.

Mental Aegis

Prerequisites: Willpower 50
Replaces: Mental Fortress, Resistance (Psychics), Strong Minded
Either through subconsciously repeated words of warding, or through sheer force of will, the character is armoured against witchery and the powers of the warp. Such are the strengths of the character's defences, that should a psyker turn his gaze on the character the backlash may kill him.

The character has a +10 bonus to all tests he makes to resist the effects of all psychic or warp based effects (including daemonic abilities and sorcery) and may re-roll failed Willpower Tests to resist any psychic powers that affect his mind. In addition, when the character is the target of a psychic attack of any kind (including direct physical attacks using telekinesis) he may force the attacking psyker to make a Willpower Test. On a failure, the attacking psyker suffers 1d10 points of damage plus 1 damage per point of the character's Willpower Bonus. This damage is considered Impact Damage, directed at the head (more specifically, the face). The attacking psyker can reduce this damage by an amount equal to his Willpower Bonus but this damage bypasses armour and Toughness Bonus.

Peerless Marksman

Prerequisites: Ballistic Skill 40,
Replaces: Crack Shot, Deadeye Shot, Marksman, Mighty Shot, Sharpshooter
The character's marksmanship is so developed that he can kill a distant target with a single shot.

The character adds +2 to damage inflicted with ranged weapons, and when he inflicts critical damage with a ranged weapon, he causes a further 4 points of damage. Further, when making a called shot, the character does not incur the normal –20 penalty and suffers no penalties for shooting at long or extended range.

Pistol Expertise

Replaces: Pistol Training (Bolt, Flame, Las, Launcher, Melta, Plasma, Primitive, SP)
The character can use all pistols, with the exception of exotic weaponry, without penalty.

Purity of the Machine

Prerequisites: Mechanicus Implants
Replaces: Autosanguine, Chem Geld, Orthoproxy, Prosanguine, Rite of Pure Thought
The character has been freed of the weakness of his remaining flesh's desires and physical vulnerability. Blessed technology filters the character's blood, making him immune to its whispers and mitigating its vulnerability, while cranial circuitry suffuses his thoughts beneath layers of binary prayer.

For the purposes of healing, the character is always considered to be Lightly Wounded. In addition, the character heals at an increased rate, removing 2 points of damage each day. Once every 12 hours, the character may make a Tech-Use Test. On a success, he may remove 1d5 points of damage plus one point per degree of success. This process of regeneration takes ten minutes of meditation and ritual incantation to activate.

This paragon Talent grants the character a +20 bonus to Willpower Tests made to resist mind control, interrogation and intimidation, and he is immune to Fear and Pinning. Seduction attempts against him automatically fail, and the difficulty of all Charm Tests made against him increases by two steps (a Challenging (+0) Test becomes Hard (–20) and so on).

When taking this Talent, the character gains 1d5 insanity points. The GM should remove any Mental Disorders that are no longer relevant to the character's machine-like psychology, and substitute new ones of equal severity.

Storm of Blows

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 35, Agility 40
Replaces: Ambidextrous, Dual Strike, Lightning Attack, Swift Attack, Two-Weapon Wielder (Melee)
The character becomes a storm of violence and death in battle, raining blows on his enemies with remorseless fury.

As a Full Action, the character may make three melee attacks. If the character is armed with a melee weapon in each hand he may make four melee attacks as a Full Action, choosing how many attacks he makes with each weapon. These attacks, made with either hand, do not suffer any penalty to hit. When armed with two melee weapons and taking a Full Action to make multiple attacks, the character may make swap two attacks for a single attack made with both weapons simultaneously as a Full Action. Make a single Weapon Skill Test. On a success, the target is hit with both weapons. The target's armour gets applied as normal to both hits individually, but Toughness only counts once against the combined damage rolls of both hits. A single successful Dodge or Parry Test from the target avoids both blows. The remaining two attacks may be made normally with either weapon or swapped for a further simultaneous strike with both weapons.

Soul of Stone

Prerequisites: Willpower 40
Replaces: Armour of Contempt, Fearless, Insanely Faithful, Jaded, Resistance (Fear), Unshakeable Faith
The character's soul is as cold and unfeeling as stone. Sights that would terrify others are as nothing to them and the corrupting claws of the warp can find no purchase within them.

The character is immune to the effects of fear, pinning, and intimidation, and never gains insanity points from sights of blood, death or violence, or indeed any mundane horror. Whenever the character would gain corruption points, reduce the amount he would earn by 5. In addition, he may test Willpower as a Free Action to ignore the effects of his accumulated corruption for 1 minute.

Thrown Weapon Expertise

Replaces: Thrown Weapon Training (Primitive, Chain, Shock, Power)
The character can use all thrown weapons, with the exception of exotic weaponry, without penalty.

Transcendent Hate

Prerequisites: Fellowship 30
Replaces: Hatred (all), Inspire Wrath, Litany of Hate
The character's hate for his enemies is so profound that it has transcended single groups and is projected onto any who stand against him.

The character may declare any enemy a hated foe and gain a +10 bonus to all Weapon Skill Tests made to attack him. As a Full Action, the character may make an **Easy (+20) Charm Test** to extend the effects of his Hatred Talent to those around him. A successful test grants two allies per point of the character's Fellowship Bonus a +10 bonus to Weapon Skill Tests when fighting the hated foe. The effects last for the duration of the encounter. In addition, this Talent grants the character a +20 bonus to Interaction Tests when inspiring hatred or anger, and allows him to affect double the normal number of individuals when doing so. This Talent can be combined with Master Orator to further increase the number of listeners affected.

Unarmed Ascendant Mastery

Prerequisites: Weapons Skill 45, Agility 45
Replaces: Disarm, Unarmed Master, Unarmed Warrior, Takedown, Street Fighting
The character has mastered techniques of unarmed combat to such a level that he is as lethal unarmed as armed; able to strike with hammer-like force, knock out opponents with a well-placed blow, or take an enemy's weapon from his hands at will.

The character's unarmed combat attacks do 1d10+SB (I) points of damage and no longer have the Primitive quality. If the character deals critical damage when unarmed, using an improvised weapon, or a knife, then he deals an additional +4 points. As a Free Action, the character may declare that he is attempting to takedown an opponent before testing Weapon

Skill. If he hits and does at least 1 point of damage, this damage is ignored and the opponent must make a Toughness Test or be stunned for a number of rounds equal to the character's Strength Bonus. When engaged with an opponent wielding a melee weapon, the character may use a Full Action to disarm his opponent by making an Opposed Weapon Skill Test. If the opponent loses, he drops his weapon at his feet. Should the character get three or more degrees of success, he not only disarms his opponent, but also takes his weapon.

Unassailable Grace

Prerequisites: Agility 50, Dodge
Replaces: Deflect Shot, Hard Target, Step Aside
The character reacts to attacks so quickly and fluidly that he seems to dance through blade swings and gunfire, knocking bullets from the air and pivoting aside from danger.

The character may make an additional reaction per round. In effect, this gives him a second Reaction that may only be used to Dodge, thus allowing him to make two Dodges in a turn. Note he may still only attempt a single Dodge against any one attack. The character may spend a reaction to knock an incoming ranged attack out of the air with a melee weapon, so long as the attack is from a Primitive or Thrown weapon. If the character fails to knock the attack out of the air, he may also try to dodge the attack so long as he has a reaction remaining. Additionally, whenever the character charges or runs, all opponents take a –20 penalty to Ballistic Skill Tests made to hit him with a ranged weapon. This penalty lasts until the start of his next turn.

Voice of the Omnissiah

Prerequisites: Mechanicus Implants
Replaces: Disturbing Voice, Feedback Screech, Mimic, Rite of Awe, Rite of Fear
The character has total control over the emissions from his vox unit implants enabling him to produce blurts of disturbing binary code, imitate others voices, or turn his own synthesised voice into a fearful distorted rasp.

The character may produce a terrifying voice to gain +10 bonus to all Intimidate or Interrogation Tests. Activating this effect is a free action.

The character may attempt to mimic the voice of others. The character must have listened to the target for at least ten minutes in order to study his voice properly. The character must also understand the language and be of the same race (a human, for example, cannot convincingly copy an Ork). Listeners must succeed on a **Difficult (–10) Scrutiny Test** to realise the character is not the person he is mimicking.

As a Full Action, the character may cause all creatures within a 50 metre radius to make a Willpower Test or lose a Half Action on the next turn and take a –10 penalty on their next test. All enemies consider the character to have a Fear Rating of 1 for two minutes, during which time the character may not speak but may otherwise act normally.

Talents of Influence

"Ah, I see that you think to take this matter up with the Lord Marshall? Yes? Oh, but I am afraid that Lord Gorman and myself have a mutual understanding of considerable pedigree. You understand, I am sure, my dear."

—words of Inquisitor Rathbone in confrontation with Senior Arbitrator Drusil

Talents of influence are Talents which represent a character's relationships and influence with other organisations within the Imperium. By taking Talents such as being a Peer of a particular division of the Imperial apparatus, or by deliberately setting themselves in opposition to particular factions using negative influence Talents, characters can build their own place within the ever-turning wheels of Imperial power. The Talents in this section work in concert with the systems presented in the Influence and Acquisition section (see Subtle Influence on page 18 in **Chapter I: Additional Rules** for more details), though a number also have an affect on immediate character interactions.

Positive and Negative Influence

Talents which interact with Influence can have either a positive or negative effect on exerting influence over a particular group or organisation. Both negative and positive influence Talents are available as advances for Ascended Characters (see **Chapter III: The Path to Ascension**), with positive influence Talents costing a character experience and negative influence granting a character an amount of experience to spend on other advances in recompense. Negative influence Talents may represent an enemy, or a negative perception of the character held by a particular organisation. Talents which have a positive effect on influence may be a good reputation, accolade or honour that a character has earned.

Tainted by Association

A character that has a negative relationship or poor reputation with a particular group has a negative effect on the group's attempts to use Influence. This is because the character's negative relationship taints all his fellows by association. The group may, of course, attempt to use their influence subtly to mitigate these consequence of negative influence, but this is always more difficult (see page 18 in the Influence and Acquisition section of **Chapter I: Additional Rules** for more details).

Table 4-3: Organisations and Factions

Organisation	Description
Administratum	The vast bureaucracy of the Imperium that administers the domains of the God-Emperor of mankind.
Adeptus Arbites	The keepers of Imperial law and enforcers of loyalty to the Golden Throne.
Adeptus Astartes	The genetically enhanced, power armour clad angels of death, specific to a single Chapter.
Adeptus Mechanicus	The Tech Priests who are the preservers of technology and fabricators of machines, specific to a single Forge World
Adepta Sororitas	The female holy orders who include the Sisters of Battle, specific to a single Convent
Adeptus Titanicus	The Titan Legions whose vast war machines shake planets when they walk, specific to a single Legio.
Astropaths	The telepaths who are soul bound to the Emperor and who unite the Imperium through their telepathic communications
Chartist Captains	The masters of space craft who voyage within the bounds of the Imperium
Cult (specific)	One of numerous cults of the Imperial creed, heretical faith or Chaos worship.
Ecclesiarchy	The keepers of faith in the Emperor's divinity
Enforcers	The keepers of local laws imposed by the decree of planetary, sub-sector or sector governors, specific to a single planet, sub-sector, or sector
Government	The ordained means of government within a particular part of the Imperium, specific to a single planet, sub-sector, or sector
Imperial Guard	The Imperium's vast armies of men and women
Imperial Navy	The forces of warships that defend the worlds of the Imperium, carry its troops to battlefronts and persecute its wars in the darkness between stars, specific to a single Battlefleet
Inquisition	The secretive protectors of the Emperor's dominion, specific to a single Ordo or faction.
Navigators	The mutants whose abilities allow starships to pass through the warp and so travel between distant stars, specific to a single house (i.e., Modar, Reshar, Rey'a'Nor, Banetek, Gazmati, and Term'L).
Officio Assassinorum	The secret bringers of death, specific to a single Temple (i.e., Callidus, Culexis, Eversor, or Vindicare)
PDF	The military forces raised on planets to defend against invaders, specific to a single planet or system
Recidivist Organisation (specific)	One of the many criminal organisations that exist in the shadow filled corners of the Imperium
Rogue Trader	One who possesses a charter granting them the right to voyage beyond the borders of the Imperium with power unbound, specific to a single Rogue Trader dynasty
Schola Progenium	The schools that teach orphans of Imperial officials who have given their lives in the service of the Emperor.
Scholastica Psykana	The organisation that trains and sanctions Imperial Psykers.

Building the Map of Influence

By taking both positive and negative Talents of influence, a character is creating a set of favourable and unfavourable dispositions that relate to the other powers that operate within the Imperium. Combining together the influence traits of the entire group, you can build a map of where the influence of an Inquisitor and his close associates lies; where it is strong, where it is neutral, and where it stops or runs into complications, rivalry, or animosity.

Organisations and Factions

The Imperium is a complex machine made up of many divisions and sub-divisions of authority, power, and responsibility. In addition to the many layers of organisation within the Imperium, there are countless more that exist outside the official architecture of power, or exist only within particular locales of the Imperium. Included here is a list of some of the organisations that are used in the descriptions of the Talents that follow.

Organisations of the Adeptus Terra

Organisations of the Adeptus Terra are an established part of Imperial authority and so span the galaxy, transcending local differences in government, society, and custom. When using Influence, whether or not an organisation is part of the Adeptus Terra can be relevant. For clarity, the following organisations are considered Adeptus Terra organisations and all other organisations are non-Adeptus Terra organisations. Note that there are others but they are unlikely to be encountered in a game of **Dark Heresy**; if they are it is the Game Master's responsibility to make their status clear.

Adeptus Terra Organisations: Adeptus Arbites, Adeptus Astra Telepathica, Adeptus Astartes, Adeptus Astronomica, Adeptus Custodes, Adeptus Mechanicus, Adepta Sororitas, Adeptus Titanicus, Adeptus Administratum, Adeptus Astra Telepathica, Adeptus Ministorum, Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, Inquisition, Navis Nobilite, Officio Assassinorum, Imperial Commanders, Departmento Munitorum, Planetary Governors, Schola Progenium, Scholastica Psykana

Table 4-4: Social Groups

Organisation	Description
Academics	The savants, archivists and sages who lurk in libraries and data vaults across the Imperium
Death Worlders	Those born and raised on worlds whose environments are hostile to life and on which human settlement is a miracle
Feral Worlders	Those from worlds who have regressed to primitive savagery
Hivers	Those born in one a teaming urban hives
Middle Class	Those who have a profession rather than a duty of labour or a craft; medicae, copyists, traders, technicians and adepts might be considered typical of this social group
Military	Those whose craft is the waging of war
Nobility	The high born elite of the Imperium
Pilgrims	Those who voyage between the stars at the calling of the faith
Planet (specific)	Those who were born and raised on a specific planet, or who have dwelt on that planet for a significant time
Underworld	Those who are part of, or are associated with, criminals and recidivists
Void Born	Those who were born not on a planet but in the void on a starship or space station
Workers	Those who in their uncountable numbers toil at industry, agriculture or another manual trade

Social Groups

In addition to the countless organisations that exist within the Imperium, its population is in places stratified; divided or united by broad social groups with varying degrees of outlook and culture in common. A character's affinity with one of these social groups represents his understanding of that group, his connections within it, and his perceived standing in relation those who belong to that group. Just as many organisations transcend those that exist within the Imperium, so too do different social groups penetrate into each and every organisation within the domains of the God-Emperor of Mankind. Presented here are a selection of the most easily identified social groups within the Imperium, though there are countless more that Game Masters and players should feel free to create and detail as needed.

PEERS AND ENEMIES

The Talents featured in this section represent the broad relationship between a character and a particular organisation or social group, both positive and negative. The Talents in this section appear in other **Dark Heresy** books, but have been modified here to accommodate the use of Influence and to allow for the greater scope of association and influence open to Ascended Characters. Therefore, the Talents in this section replace existing Talents of the same name in order to make use of the Influence system described in Chapter I.

Enemy

Talent Groups: Academics, Adeptus Arbites, Adeptus Astartes, Adeptus Mechanicus, Adepta Sororitas, Adeptus Titanicus, Administratum, Astropaths, Chartist Captains, Cult (specific), Death Worlders, Ecclesiarchy, Enforcers, Feral Worlders, Government, Hivers, Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, Inquisition, Middle Class, Military, Navigators, Nobility, Officio Assassinorum, PDF, Pilgrims, Planet (specific), Recidivist Organisation (specific), Rogue Trader, Underworld, Void Born, Workers

The opposite of Good Reputation, you are particularly despised by a specific social group or organisation. You suffer an additional –10 penalty to Fellowship Tests when dealing with this group. This Talent is cumulative with the Rival Talent, for a total –20 penalty.

The GM and player may agree to award this Talent when appropriate to the adventure or campaign. This Talent can be removed with an Elite Advance, and the approval of the GM, if the Acolyte has redeemed himself with the group in question.

Good Reputation

Prerequisites: Fellowship 50, Peer (of that group)

Talent Groups: Academics, Adeptus Arbites, Adeptus Astartes, Adeptus Mechanicus, Adepta Sororitas, Adeptus Titanicus, Administratum, Astropaths, Chartist Captains, Cult (specific), Death Worlders, Ecclesiarchy, Enforcers, Feral Worlders, Government, Hivers, Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, Inquisition, Middle Class, Military, Navigators, Nobility, Officio Assassinorum, PDF, Pilgrims, Planet (specific), Recidivist Organisation (specific), Rogue Trader, Underworld, Void Born, Workers

You are well respected within your social group or organisation. You gain an additional +10 bonus to Fellowship Tests when dealing with this group. This Talent is cumulative with Peer, for a total of a +20 bonus. This bonus also applies to Influence tests when dealing with this particular group. The GM and player may agree to award this Talent when appropriate to the adventure or campaign.

Peer

Prerequisites: Fellowship 30

Talent Groups: Academics, Adeptus Arbites, Adeptus Astartes, Adeptus Mechanicus, Adepta Sororitas, Adeptus Titanicus, Administratum, Astropaths, Chartist Captains, Cult (specific), Death Worlders, Ecclesiarchy, Enforcers, Feral Worlders, Government, Hivers, Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, Inquisition, Middle Class, Military, Navigators, Nobility, Officio Assassinorum, PDF, Pilgrims, Planet (specific), Recidivist Organisation (specific), Rogue Trader, Underworld, Void Born, Workers

You know how to deal with a particular social group or organisation. You gain a +10 bonus to all Fellowship Tests when interacting with your chosen group. The GM and player may agree to award this Talent when appropriate to the campaign.

The Balance of Influence of Inquisitor Glavius Wroth

Glavius Wroth is a staunch Amalathian who has built a reputation as a pragmatic but steadfast defender of Imperial order and stability. While he does take a personal hand in many of his operations, he also maintains a wide sphere of influence that is balanced by the fact that he has as many enemies as he has allies; not least of which are a number of powerful Inquisitors within the Calixian Conclave.

Close Allies: Wroth has very close ties with the Adeptus Arbites and has cultivated key allies within their senior ranks including Kae Drusil of the Divisio Immoralis, and Lord Marshal Gorman, the most senior member of the Arbites in the sector. He also has close friendship with General Kasir, commander of Imperial forces on Tranch. Amongst the ranks of the Ecclesiarchy, Wroth has formed a number of useful relationships chief amongst which is Deacon Priam. High Prefect Momulus, Administratum overseer of the Golgenna Reach, has long been one of Wroth's closest allies and informants on the internal politics of the Imperial bureaucracy in the sector.

Well Disposed Individuals and Organisations: Wroth has great respect for Lord Inquisitor Caidin, a compliment which the Lord Inquisitor broadly returns in recognition of Wroth's effectiveness as a bulwark against instability. Although it is a close secret, Wroth is in correspondence with the mysterious Inquisitor Marr, a relationship that has profited both Inquisitors.

Conflicting Interests: Wroth sees Lord Sector Marius Hax as a paranoid fanatic who is a long-term risk to the stability of the sector; an opinion that Wroth has not succeeded in keeping secret from the Lord Sector's allies within the Inquisition. On a number of occasions, Wroth has clashed with the Lord Sector's upstart military police, the Chaliced Commissariat, and there is little love lost between the Inquisitor and 'Hax's hounds.' Wroth has always mistrusted the function and intent of the Tyrantine Cabal, and relations between him and most members of the Cabal are strained at best. His denouncements and persecution of two radical Inquisitors in the course of his career puts him in broad conflict with all Inquisitors of a radical persuasion.

Enemies: Though Wroth does not know it, Inquisitor Lord Anton Zerbe, convenor of the Tyrantine Cabal is an enemy that even now moves against him. Wroth's suspicions regarding the Tyrantine Cabal, and information that he has assembled about the secret Tenebrae Collegium within the Cabal, have made him an intolerable threat to Zerbe's plans.

Rival

Talent Groups: Academics, Adeptus Arbites, Adeptus Astartes, Adeptus Mechanicus, Adepta Sororitas, Adeptus Titanicus, Administratum, Astropaths, Chartist Captains, Cult (specific), Death Worlders, Ecclesiarchy, Enforcers, Feral Worlders, Government, Hivers, Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, Inquisition, Middle Class, Military, Navigators, Nobility, Officio Assassinorum, PDF, Pilgrims, Planet (specific), Recidivist Organisation (specific), Rogue Trader, Underworld, Void Born, Workers

Essentially the opposite of Peer, this Talent represents aggressive competition and some animosity with a particular social group or organisation. You suffer a –10 penalty to all Fellowship tests when interacting with the group in question.

The GM and player may agree to award this Talent when appropriate to the storyline. This Talent may be removed with an Elite Advance and the approval of the GM if the character has taken suitable actions to earn the trust of the group.

REPUTATION AND POWER

The Talents in this section represent how a character's achievements and honours can affect his influence within the Imperium, and are intended to give characters a richly flavoured ways of using their cadre's influence. As such, they are intended to be used with the Influence and Acquisition section on pages 13–18. Using them, a character can build up a particular type of reputation and way of operating that both opens possibilities for using influence and closes others. For example, having a reputation as a warmonger may make those of like mind more easily swayed by the application of influence, but may have the reverse effect on those who have a more subtle and nuanced approach to the threats that face the Imperium.

Table 4-5: Talents of Reputation and Power

Talent Name	Careers That May Select The Talent
Acolyte Network	Inquisitor
Ally of the Departmento Munitorum	Hierophant, Magos, Primaris Psyker, Sage
Conciliator	Hierophant, Inquisitor, Judge, Magos
Committed Xanthite†	Inquisitor
Crimelord	Desperado or Death Cult Assassin
Denouncer	Inquisitor
Hidden Cultist	Death Cultist, Desperado, Hierophant, Inquisitor, Interrogator, Primaris Psyker
Lord of Domains	Hierophant, Inquisitor, Interrogator, Sage, Primaris Pysker
Member of the Tyrantine Cabal†	All
Oath Bonded to the Angels of Death	Inquisitor, Magos
Outspoken Monodominant†	Inquisitor, Judge
Pious Observation	Hierophant, Inquisitor, Interrogator, Judge, Primaris Psyker, Sage
Renowned Warrior	Inquisitor, Interrogator, Storm Trooper
Revolutionary†	Hierophant, Inquisitor, Interrogator, Judge, Magos, Sage, Primaris Pysker
Shadow Lord	Desperado, Inquisitor, Judge, Sage
Sleeper Agent	Desperado, Inquisitor, Interrogator, Primaris Psyker
The Ear of the Lord Sector	Hierophant, Inquisitor, Judge, Sage
Voice of the Masses	Hierophant, Desperado
Warmonger	Hierophant, Inquisitor, Judge, Magos
Watched From On High	All
Wide Correspondence	Hierophant, Inquisitor, Judge, Sage
Worthy of the Calixian Elite	Death Cult Assassin, Hierophant, Inquisitor, Interrogator, Judge, Sage, Primaris Pysker

† *Selecting this Talent means that the character may not possess any other choices with this designator.*

What These Talents Do

The Talents in this section grant characters an advantage in using influence in particular ways, usually by granting them the chance to re-roll their Influence Test if they are doing something where the Talent may apply. Conversely, some Talents may inhibit the use of influence under particular circumstances, either by forcing a successful Influence Test, or by preventing influence being used in a particular way. Some Talents may also open up uses of influence that are only available to characters that have that Talent.

Re-rolls

Many of the Talents in this section grant re-rolls to players or force re-rolls of successful Influence Tests. If two Talents would both grant a re-roll under a particular set of circumstances only one re-roll may be made. If two Talents apply to an Influence Test in which one allows a re-roll for a failure and one forces a re-roll of a success, the Talents cancel out and no re-roll is made, of either successes or failures.

Gaining Slights, Dishonour and Accolades

The Talents featured in this section are available as advances in the careers and character packages featured in this book. By taking them, a character can introduce in game effects to mirror how they see a character's evolving influence within the Calixis Sector. Game Masters are, however, encouraged to award this type of Talent as rewards for role-play and for the players taking particular actions. If, for example, an ascended character spends a great deal of time in acts of obvious piety, awarding them the Pious Observation Talent is both a reward for committed role-play and reinforces that part of the character's behaviour in the future. Game Masters and players are also encouraged to modify and invent Talents that effect influence to meet the circumstances of their campaign or character.

Career Restrictions

All the Talents in this section have a career restriction that lists the career that a character has to be in order for him to take that Talent. This restriction is intended to limit the Talents that a character may take to those that he could reasonably have acquired through his actions. Game Masters should feel free to remove or change these restrictions to meet the needs of the campaign.

Acolyte Network

Career: Inquisitor

The character maintains one or more cells of chosen acolytes who perform missions for him, and can act as his proxies and agents when he are not present. These acolytes are talented servants who carry out dangerous missions and investigations at the will of their Inquisitor, often on their own and with little direct intervention from their master. The number of acolyte cells an Inquisitor maintains beyond his personal cadre varies as much as the nature of individual Inquisitors. Some maintain vast networks of dozens of acolytes working alone or in cells, others maintain only a single cell of carefully

chosen servants. The advantage of maintaining an acolyte network is that an Inquisitor can address many tasks without being personally present and can draw on a pool of loyal and experienced operatives who are personally loyal to him.

Effect: At the point that the character gains this Talent, he must reduce his Influence by –5 for every acolyte cell he sets up. This loss represents the cost and resources required to set up a network of acolytes. The character may spend more Influence points in this manner at any time to create new Acolyte cells or to replace one that was lost or destroyed. The character may use his acolyte network in two ways: to carry out specific missions, or as a resource of people to draw on.

Missions: To set an acolyte cell on a mission, the character simply needs to set out the mission objective. The GM then decides, in secret, if the mission succeeds and to what extent; if he wishes to do this randomly, he should make a test using the character's influence modified as he sees fit for the difficulty of the mission. As the Inquisitor is not acting directly in the mission a –20 penalty is imposed on this test.

Personal Resource: The character may attempt to requisition individuals of a particular expertise from amongst the acolytes he maintains to accompany him in person. This is done in exactly the same way as requisitioning personnel using Influence, but no negative modifiers for the duration of requisition apply, and the character can only requisition individual acolytes. This means that he has to test for every acolyte he wishes to requisition in this way.

Ally of the Departmento Munitorum

Career: Hierophant, Magos, Primaris Psyker, Sage

The character is a close associate of the Departmento Munitorum, the military arm of the Adeptus Administratum that is responsible for the gathering and distribution of every aspect of the resources consumed by the Imperium's armed forces. The character may be closely involved in the supply of men or material to the Munitorum, or indeed have held a position of importance within the Departmento, and so has close ties with senior figures within its ranks. Such connections are of great use in securing the supply of weaponry, equipment and military aide.

Effect: The character may re-roll failed influences tests when attempting to requisition equipment or troops from the Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, or a PDF.

Conciliator

Career: Hierophant, Inquisitor, Judge, Magos

The character has a reputation for working towards the conciliation of, and unity amongst, the various factions, divisions, and organisations that exist within the Imperium. This reputation allows the character to access equipment and aid from within those organisations that are the central pillars of Imperial order. Many Inquisitors of Amalathian conviction, and their most trusted comrades, have such reputations.

Effect: This Talent grants the character the option to re-roll a failed Influence Test when attempting to requisition or commission equipment or services from the Adeptus Administratum, Imperial Guard, Ecclesiarchy, or Adeptus Mechanicus. This Talent may only be used when the cadre's influence is being used overtly; it may not be used when influence is being used subtly.

Committed Xanthite

Career: Inquisitor

Within the Inquisition, the character is viewed as a radical who embraces the Xanthite doctrine of using the enemies' weapons against them. This view may have been formed through deeds, rumour, or open declaration. To be viewed as a Xanthite is highly dangerous as, perhaps of all radicals factions, Xanthites are prone to the censure of their peers.

Effect: This Talent grants the character the ability to attempt to requisition items of a forbidden and dangerous nature through exerting influence over other Xanthites. He may also re-roll failed Influence Tests when trying to exert any type of influence over other Xanthites or any of their servants. The character's radicalism, however, means that any overt use of influence on puritan Inquisitors, or their servants, automatically fails.

Crimelord

Career: Desperado or Death Cult Assassin

The character is a respected and feared figure amongst criminal organisations within the Calixis sector. His Inquisitorial associations are either not known by his criminal associates, or rumours of his power within the governing powers of the sector only help to enhance his mystique. The character's association with an Inquisitor and his Cadre may be extremely useful in acquiring information and less than savoury help, but also makes dealings with keepers of Imperial or sector laws extremely difficult.

Effect: This Talent grants the character the option to re-roll failed Influence Tests when dealing with the underworld and recidivist organisations, and low-life scum such as hive gangs, assassin guilds and smugglers. This Talent, however, may not be used in conjunction with overt displays of Inquisitorial or Imperial authority. The character's association with the Inquisitorial cadre means that successful Influence Tests made to influence the Adeptus Arbites or Enforcers must be re-rolled. If influence is used subtly, however, no re-roll is needed.

Denouncer

Career: Inquisitor

The character has denounced the actions of one or more of his peers, calling them unclean in the sight of the Emperor and citing evidence of their crimes. Such a denunciation can make others within the Inquisition see the character as an unflinching servant of justice, while to others it may make him seem a traitor to the realities of the Inquisition. Not all denunciations result in the denounced Inquisitor being condemned; if he is not, then by making an unsupported denunciation, an Inquisitor casts his own judgement into doubt and makes at least one enemy who never forgives him.

Effect: The character and the GM must agree who was the subject of the PC's denunciation and whether the denunciation was sustained in the eyes of his Inquisitorial peers. If it was sustained, the character may re-roll Influence Tests which involve aggressively using his influence within the Inquisition and its associated vassals. The GM should, on occasion, impose a –20 penalty to Influence tests of the same type to represent the negative reputation that even a successful denunciation can cause within the ranks of the Inquisition. If it is agreed that the denunciation was not sustained, then the character must re-roll successful tests to aggressively use his influence within the Inquisition. Any player taking this Talent should also acquire at least one dogged and bitter enemy within the Inquisition which should be handled by the GM as he sees fit.

Hidden Cultist

Career: Death Cultist, Desperado, Hierophant, Inquisitor, Interrogator, Primaris Psyker

The character is secretly a member of the inner circle of a cult. His identity concealed, the character can manipulate the workings and activities of the cult from within, using them as weapons against other enemies or as part of a wider and more subtle conspiracy. The cult in question may be a sect of the Imperial Creed, or a more sinister organisation that follows heretical beliefs, or even one that is engaged in the worship of daemons and the Dark Gods of Chaos. In these later cases, the character treads a dangerous path of radicalism, on one side of which is the wrath of the heretics they manipulate, and on the other discovery by and condemnation of their peers.

Effect: The player and Game Master should agree on a specific cult that the character is manipulating from within. Possibilities might include the Red Redemption, The Pale Throng, The Brotherhood of Horned Darkness, or any that are active in the campaign being played (for ideas of possible cults and details of their activities see **Disciples of the Dark Gods**). The character may only subtly influence the cult, but does not suffer any negative penalty for doing so. When attempting to manipulate the cult, if the character fails his Influence Test by four degrees or more, his identity and role have been discovered by the cult or by others outside of it (such as other members of the Inquisition). The Game Master should decide which, and on appropriate consequences of this revealing of the hidden cultist.

Lord of Domains

Career: Hierophant, Inquisitor, Interrogator, Sage, Primaris Pysker

The character has holdings on a number of worlds within the Calixis Sector. These holdings may vary from great estates maintained by armies of servants, to a quiet retreat on a distant pleasure world. These holdings are the bases of operation for the character and their comrades, as well as fortresses from interference and places were things may be done and stored in private. Such holdings, however, drain wealth like a glutton at feast; thousands of servants, materials and supplies must all be bought and paid for alongside guards and security, without which such holdings would be worthless to a servant of the Inquisition.

Effect: When a character takes this Talent he must specify how many holdings he is going to maintain, what the nature of each of those holdings is, and where the holdings are located in the Calixis Sector. For every holding, the cadre's influence is reduced permanently by the amount indicated in the Influence column in Table 4–6: Domain Guidelines. Once created, the domain counts as an organisation under the control of the character. The domain has an Influence value equal to the amount listed under the Influence column on Table 4–6.

Table 4-6: Domain Guidelines

Domain Type	Influence	Properties
Secret Sanctuary	3	Small building or living quarters that is secret from all outside the cadre
Isolated Retreat	5	Medium sized building such as a lodge or tower in an isolated location
Fortified Manse	10	A large building with several wings, extensive security, guards, library, dungeon, and other facilities
Grand Estate	15	A vast area of land, or volume of hive, enclosed and guarded; several separate buildings exist within it, the primary manse is vast and houses luxurious living quarters

The table above presents only broad guidelines of the cost and nature of domains and Game Masters should feel free to modify them as they see fit for the needs of their campaign. The players and GM may mutually agree on any details they please about the holdings (such as names, layout, etc.), but can also keep such details vague. It is also recommended that the player selecting this Talent talk over this selection with the rest of the group.

If a player wishes to use a resource that is linked to one of their domains, such as guards, then the Game Master may either make a judgement about what is available from a domain or may opt to decide randomly if a domain has such a resource available for use by its masters. To decide if a domain has a particular item, the character makes a resource test using the domain's Influence. For example, if a character thought that he might have a particular book about archaic history in the Library of his Grand Estate, he would make a resource test using the estate's Influence of 15. If the test is passed, the book is found to be in the library. If the test is failed, then the book is not in the estate's library or perhaps simply cannot be found.

Member of the Tyrantine Cabal

Career: Any
The character is a member of the Tyrantine Cabal and has been branded with an electoo in the form of a star haloed chalice which is the mark of the Spectarians. The character is an acknowledged member of the Cabal whose chief concern is the meaning of the Prophecy of Darkness and the Tyrant Star. As such, he has access to the resources amassed by Lord Inquisitor Zerbe in the Bastion Serpentis on the Scintillan moon of Lachesis, which includes vast stores of knowledge, cells, laboratories, dangerous objects, and weaponry. It is also possible for him to call on the aide of other Spectarians and even can try and mobilise the collective will of the Cabal to a particular end. Much, however, depends on the character's status within the Tyrantine Cabal and the disposition of its other disparate members. Much of the most precious information and resources are hoarded by Zerbe's inner circle and are both unknown and unavailable to most members of the Cabal.
Effects: The character may gain access to the Bastion Serpentis without the use of Influence. He may also re-roll failed Influence tests when trying to influence other members of the Tyrantine Cabal, or to requisition equipment or services from those resources assembled by the Cabal for the use of its members.

Oath Bonded to the Angels of Death

Career: Inquisitor, Magos
The character has an honour bond with one of the chapters of Adeptus Astartes; a bond that is formed from debts of respect and blood and sealed with solemn oaths. Such a bond is a very rare thing even within the ranks of the Inquisition and is one of the greatest expressions of military power an individual can possess. Though an oath bond carries with it no deference nor submission to the direct command of the Inquisitor, it affects the heart and soul a Space Marine: his pride and honour. Invoking a bond of oaths, an Inquisitor can call on the might of the Space Marines with a familial request, and receive their aid with greater swiftness and surety than the most renowned Inquisitors who petition a Chapter Master citing only the authority of the Holy Ordos. Such a bond may, however, inhibit him in his dealings with other Chapters of Space Marines who may see the character's oath bond as precluding their involvement with one so closely connected to a single Chapter.
Effect: The character and Game Master must agree on a specific Space Marine Chapter that the Inquisitor is oath bonded to. When requisitioning aide from this Chapter the character counts any negative availability modifiers greater than Extremely Rare (–30) as Extremely Rare (–30) (see **Table 1–5 Availability Modifiers** in **Chapter I: Additional Rules**) and may re-roll all failed Influence tests involving the specified Chapter, including tests for requisitions. If the character uses his influence with any Chapter of Space Marines other than the one he has an oath bond with, he suffers a –20 penalty to all Influence tests.

Outspoken Monodominant

Career: Inquisitor, Judge
The character is a fanatical puritan of the Monodominant creed who announces loudly his beliefs with impassioned rhetoric and a history of deeds soaked in blood and fire. Such firebrand puritans are seen by many of their peers as, at best, lacking subtlety, and at worst as crude, short-sighted, and dangerous. To others who share the character's bombastic and intolerant beliefs, he is a shining example of what a true servant of the God-Emperor should be, and many can use their reputation to great effect when dealing with those of a like mind. The Mondominant's intolerance of psykers and mutants of all kinds also puts them into conflict with the Adeptus Astra Telepathica, the Navis Nobilite, and indeed other members of the Inquisition.
Effect: The character and his cadre suffer a –50 penalty when attempting to use influence subtly (rather than the usual –30 penalty). He must also re-roll any successful test to use influence on Astropaths, psykers, Navigators, and Radical Inquisitors. He may, however, re-roll failed tests when attempting to influence an Individual or organisation that broadly shares the Monodominant intolerance of all deviancy, heresy and mutation. Within the Calixis Sector, the cult of the Red Redemption is one such organisation.

Pious Observation

Career: Hierophant, Inquisitor, Interrogator, Judge, Primaris Psyker, Sage
The character makes a great show of his devotion to the Imperial Creed, and his intense faith in the Emperor is well known throughout his peers and those of consequence. The character caries with him an air of gravity and holy purpose, often quoting from sacred works to illustrate his points, and is arrayed in clothes woven in holy writ and is ever seeking guidance through prayer. Such a reputation for devotion makes him the natural ally of the Ecclesiarchy and those of most closely bound to the Imperial Creed.
Effect: The character may re-roll failed Influence Tests when overtly influencing members of the Ecclesiarchy.

Renowned Warrior

Career: Inquisitor, Interrogator, Storm Trooper
The character is a warrior famed for his skill and bravery and whose deeds are spoken of with respect by fellow soldiers. Such a hero can use his renown as a tool to manipulate those who idolise him or are awed by his reputation. From persuading Imperial Guard officers to change their plans, to getting access into the restricted records of Battle Fleet Calixis, the renown of a warrior earned in blood can open many doors far away from the battlefield.
Effect: The character may re-roll failed tests when overtly using his influence to manipulate or control members of the Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, or PDF.

Revolutionary

Career: Hierophant, Inquisitor, Interrogator, Judge, Magos, Sage, Primaris Pysker
The character believes in dangerous philosophies that countenance change in the body Imperium. These views, even if not loudly voiced, make him distrusted by the conservative forces that pervade the Imperium. Such individuals, however, often cultivate contacts and relationships with the most brilliant minds in the Imperium and their allies may be found in unexpected places both high and low.
Effect: The character must re-roll successful Influence Tests when attempting to overtly Influence within the Administratum, Ecclesiarchy, Adeptus Arbites or puritan Inquisitors who follow the Amalathian philosophy. He may, however, choose a number of organisations in which he has comrades of a similar progressive spirit. The number of organisations that the character may nominate is equal to his Fellowship bonus. When subtly using influence within the organisations, the character may re-roll failed Influence Tests and cannot be forced to re-roll successful Influence tests when it is being used subtly on the specified organisations.

Shadow Lord

Career: Desperado, Inquisitor, Judge, Sage
The character dwells in a realm of secrets and lies where he is one of the masters of the hidden and unseen. Using spies, trickery and subtle manipulation of peerless nuance he achieves his ends without his enemies realising who has undone them, and his allies never know who they are aiding. Such shadow lords are the true masters of the hidden and secret wars that rage within the heart of the Imperium.
Effect: The character only suffers a –10 penalty for using influence subtly. The character also never loses Influence for failing an Influence Test by four or more degrees when he is using his influence subtly (see Decreases Due to Excessive Use on page 15).

Sleeper Agent

Career: Desperado, Inquisitor, Interrogator, Primaris Psyker
The character retains an agent imbedded within the organisation of his supposed allies or enemies. These agents may have had their true identities concealed, even from themselves, by psychic manipulation or may simply be masters of infiltration and deception. These sleeper agents spend years working their way into the heart of an organisation. Once imbedded, they wait until they are activated. Most sleeper agents are only of use for a very limited time once activated, and so are only used in the greatest of need.
Effect: Setting up a sleeper agent within an organisation permanently reduces the Throne Agents' Influence by -5. When attempting to use his influence to subtly manipulate or control others, the character may declare that he is activating a sleeper agent. The use of this Talent must be declared before the Influence Test is made. Once the use of a sleeper agent is declared, the test is passed automatically with no need to roll. If the number of degrees of success needs to be determined, they are equal to the roll of 1d5. Once the effects of the successful test are worked out, the sleeper agent is expended and cannot be used again. However, the Throne Agent may reduce the group's Influence by -5 to set up another sleeper agent in a different organisation.

The Ear of the Lord Sector

Career: Hierophant, Inquisitor, Judge, Sage
The character is able to exert influence over one of the most powerful men in the Calixis Sector: Lord Sector Marius Hax, the Imperial Commander of the Sector who rules it in the name of the God-Emperor of Mankind. The character's influence over Hax may be because he is a trusted confidant or advisor to the Lord Sector, or alternatively, he may have corrupted a number of his inner circle so that they whisper certain advice in the great man's ear. Having the ability to manipulate such a powerful individual is a weapon of unparalleled power; using it can effect changes far beyond the scope of the character's power. To manipulate an individual such as Marius Hax is a dangerous enterprise; the Lord Sector is paranoid, intelligent, and his anger is formidable. Making the slightest wrong move in manipulating him is potentially fatal.
Effect: The character may elect to subtly manipulate the Sector Governor to exert his influence to achieve the character's ends. Such a manipulation requires an Influence test with a –20 modifier (for using influence subtly) to manipulate Marius Hax to use his influence as the character desires. The test is not opposed. If the test is failed by two degrees of failure or more, then this Talent is lost permanently and may never be purchased again. If the test is failed by four degrees of failure or more, this Talent is lost permanently and Lord Sector Marius Hax becomes the cadre's personal enemy. If the test succeeds, then the character may immediately use an Influence value of 130 for a single Influence Test of any kind.

Voice of the Masses

Career: Hierophant, Desperado
The character has cultivated a wide and popular reputation as someone who empathises with those outside of the spheres of direct Imperial power. Such a reputation may have been acquired from sermons on the importance of all faithful subjects of the God-Emperor, or it may be that he has acquired a reputation as one who has backed the weaker local faction

against the might of the great organisations of the Imperium. No matter what its source, such a reputation carries great weight amongst those who stand outside or beneath the iron pillars of Imperial authority.
Effect: When the character is using his influence, both subtly and overtly, with any non-Adeptus Terra organisation or individual, he may re-roll any failed Influence Tests.

Warmonger

Career: Hierophant, Inquisitor, Judge, Magos
The character is a notorious warmonger who ferments violence and is unceasing in his advocacy of breaking any threat with iron and fire. Such a reputation can win the character many allies amongst the agencies of war within the Imperium. It may also, however, turn others who hold a more subtle and conciliatory philosophy away from aiding him.
Effect: The character may re-roll failed Influence Tests when overtly attempting to requisition weapons and military forces. However, he also suffers a –20 penalty to Influence Tests when attempting to use their influence in any other way.

Watched From On High

Career: Any
The character has been marked for greatness by the powers that be who watch the progress of his career with a keen interest. When the character succeeds, the attention of his superiors is confirmed, and his power and prestige is enhanced by that of those whose eye he is beneath. Those who watch over the character may be secret watchers whom the character is completely unaware of, or they may be powerful mentors amongst the most senior ranks of the organisation in which they serve.
Effect: Whenever Influence is awarded for completing an adventure successfully, the cadre gains a bonus of+1 Influence to the group's total.

Wide Correspondence

Career: Hierophant, Inquisitor, Judge, Sage
The character communicates widely, and has countless people with which he exchanges information, rumours, and ideas. These correspondences may take the form of encrypted astropathic messages to and from Administratum Prefects, sealed parchment letters carried from the hand of writer to reader by trusted couriers, or pictographic recordings held on data-slates carried by intermediaries. Such a correspondence brings to light all manner of information, some of great import, others seemingly trivial pieces of gossip, but all are of incalculable wealth to someone who knows when and how to deploy such information.
Effect: The character may use influence to try and gather information on any topic from any source within the Imperium, though he must always do so with the subtle use of influence. In addition the Game Master and player should also mutually create close correspondents who are individuals who regularly correspond with the character. The maximum number of these close correspondents is equal to the character's Fellowship bonus. Each close correspondent should be a named individual and their position within the Imperium should be agreed upon.

Excommunicate Traitoris

There is one Talent of Reputation and Power that is not one that players can purchase on their own. That Talent names the Inquisitor and his Cadre to be Excommunicate Traitoris, and this status denotes a significant change in the group's status with the Inquisition. To be Excommunicate Traitoris is to be an enemy of the Inquisition and the Imperium as a whole, and thus it is not something to be taken lightly! The GM should carefully consider whether this Talent should be awarded to a Throne Agent—in most cases, such a judgement is only handed down after important and thorough evidence and debate amongst the Ordos. Placing this status under the GM's control ensures that he will be aware of the circumstances and consequences for his Dark Heresy Campaign.

Excommunicate Traitoris (Talent of Reputation and Power)

Career: Any but by extension all members of the Inquisitor's cadre
The character has been judged by his peers to have betrayed the ideals they were oath bound to uphold, to have broken with the ancient trust of the God-Emperor of Mankind, and to have become an enemy to those who once called him brother and stood by his side. Being named Excommunicate Traitoris effectively means that the Inquisitor and his Cadre can no longer take their place amongst their peers without their lives being forfeit. They also will not have access to many of the resources that they once enjoyed and will be hunted for the rest of their days by other Inquisitors. This exiled and condemned status, however, is far from the end of an Inquisitor's power. Using sympathetic comrades and allies within the Inquisition, hy can still achieve much. On many worlds, there is little or no means for other Imperial authorities to confirm an Inquisitor's status and very few would dare do so in any case.

Effect: The character, and by extension the entire cadre, may not use influence within the Inquisition, though they may continue to do so subtly. In any circumstance where the player overtly uses his Inquisitorial authority with members of Imperial organisations, there is a chance that other members of the Inquisition will hear of it and come to bring the character down. The chance should be determined by the GM, but in most cases it can be considered to be equal to the Influence of the organisation, or individual, that the character is attempting to influence. For example, if an Imperial official had an Influence of 45, then the GM would roll a d100. If the result was equal to or under 45, then the excommunicated character would soon find other Inquisitors and their Acolytes or Throne Agents coming for them with violent intent.

The character may ask a 'special favour' of these correspondents, which allows him to use subtle influence on the organisation which the correspondent is a part of, without the usual negative penalty for doing so. However, if the character fails the Influence test by three degrees or more, after having asked to use a 'special favour,' the close correspondent breaks off communication and is lost. It is also recommended that both player and GM occasionally write in-character correspondence between the character and his named correspondents as this greatly adds to the enjoyment of playing such a character.

Worthy of the Calixian Elite

Career: Death Cult Assassin, Hierophant, Inquisitor, Interrogator, Judge, Sage, Primaris Pysker

The character moves amongst the most refined social circles of the sector, and is welcomed in the company of the most wealthy and powerful as an equal. Such associations give the character unrivalled influence over, and knowledge of, the nobility. However, as is true for any who move amongst the high born, the character has acquired enemies and vendettas like a flame gathers insects.

Effect: The character may re-roll any Influence Test when using their influence on the nobility or others who might be considered part of the high-born elite (such as very wealthy merchants). He also, however, has a number of enemies who have sworn a vendetta against him for some real or imagined insult or slight. The character has a number of enemies equal to the cadre's influence, divided by ten, rounding up. As the cadre's influence increases, the character acquires new enemies amongst the nobility. Each enemy actively works against the character to undermine him, thwart his activities, or assassinate him. Each enemy must be individually identified by the Game Master, though their identities may be unknown to the character. Each enemy has an influence equal to the cadre's influence at the time that the enemy is made, –10. This means that as the cadre's influence grows, the character makes progressively more and more powerful enemies amongst the sector's elite.

Other Ascendant Talents

"Do not linger too long on your own greatness; it is as ash and your pride as fragile as sun bleached bone. Think instead only of the light of Him on Earth, which illuminates both life and death, rise and fall, and is forever unfailing in its greatness"

–from *Reflections of Purity*, dictated by Arch Deacon Procurator Priam

The Talents presented in this section represent new Talents used by characters created using the rest of this book. They represent the options and abilities not reflected by Paragon Talents or other Talents used in **Dark Heresy**.

Ascended Psychic Power

Prerequisites: Psy Rating 1+

The Throne Agent may select one Ascended Psychic Power. He gains the ability to use the Rank 1 version of that Power for no additional experience cost. At any point later in his

Table 4-7: Other Ascendant Talents

Talent Name	Prerequisite	Benefit
Ascended Psychic Power	Psy Rating 1+	The character gains an Ascended Psychic Power.
Combat Formation	Int 40	Use Intelligence Bonus for Initiative.
Combat Sense	Per 40	Use Per Bonus instead of Ag Bonus for Initiative.
Enhanced Bionic Frame	Machinator Array	The character gains the Auto-Stabilised Trait.
Favoured by Fate		The character gains a Fate Point.
Guardian	Ag 40	Switch location with an ally.
Infused Knowledge	Int 40	Treat Common and Scholastic Lore as Basic Skills.
Machinator Array	Mechanicus Implants	The character has advanced Mechanicus augmetics.
Mnemonic Purging	Int 45, WP 45	The character can remove memories.
Perfect Shot	Vindicare Assassin, BS 60	The Vindicare Assassin may Aim after slaying a target.
Polyglot	Int 40, Fel 30	The character has an innate ability with languages.
Rite of Protection	WP 40	The character can protect themselves from corrupting and mentally damaging experiences.
Target Selection	BS 50	The character can shoot into melee without penalty.
The Flesh is Weak	Mechanicus Implants	The character gains the Machine Trait.
The Emperor Protects	Pure Faith	Spend a Fate Point to inspire fearlessness and heroism.
Unarmed Master	WS 45, Ag 40, Unarmed Warrior	Attacks do 1d10+SB damage and lack the Primitive quality.
Unarmed Warrior	WS 35, Ag 35	Deal 1d10–3+SB with unarmed attacks.

career, he may purchase the use of that Power's Ranks 2 and 3 by spending the Experience listed under each rank. Further information on Ascended Psychic Powers are found on page 124. Note that purchasing this advance lets the character gain access to a particular set of ranks within one Ascended Psychic Power. Buying additional ranks for an Ascended Psychic Power to which the character has access does not require purchasing an Advancement from his Ascended Career Advancement Charts—instead, the character may spend the required xp cost and acquire the additional ranks from that Ascended Psychic Power at any time.

Combat Formation

Prerequisites: Intelligence 40
The Throne Agent has directed his comrades to be prepared for danger, planning out their actions for many contingencies if attacked. Before rolling initiative, all other members of the group may choose to use the character's Intelligence Bonus for all initiative rolls rather than their individual Agility Bonuses.

Combat Sense

Prerequisites: Perception 40
The Throne Agent has the ability to consciously recognise the proddings of his subconscious as it reacts to his preternaturally sharp senses, giving him an edge that mere speed cannot match. He can use his Perception Bonus in place of his Agility Bonus when rolling Initiative.

Enhanced Bionic Frame

Prerequisites: Machinator Array
The Throne Agent's already impressive bionic body structure is steadied by a gyro-array guided by a targeting system linked to the machine-spirit. The Throne Agent gains the Auto-stabilised Trait (see **Dark Heresy** page 329).

Favoured by Fate

Prerequisites: None
The Throne Agent is particularly blessed by the Emperor's Grace, or perhaps simply destined for greatness. The Throne Agent gains 1 permanent Fate Point.

Guardian

Prerequisites: Agility 40
Years of serving as a bodyguard allows the Throne Agent to put himself in the line of fire, or to take a murderous attack that was intended for another. He may sacrifice all of his Actions for the next Round to switch places with an ally within 2 metres (as long as there is no obstruction in the way). This may be done at any time, even interrupting another action. The character becomes the target of any attacks previously targeting the ally. This Talent may not be used more than once per combat.

Infused Knowledge

Prerequisites: Intelligence 40
The Throne Agent has been infused with a great wealth of lore and knowledge, either through punishing noetic techniques or by arcane methods kept secret by the guardians of technology and knowledge. The Throne Agent treats all Common and Scholastic Lore Skills as untrained Basic Skills. This Talent also provides a +10 bonus to any Tests involving Common or Scholastic Lore for which he already possesses the Skill.

Machinator Array

Prerequisites: Mechanicus Implants
The Throne Agent has returned to the crèches of the Mechanicus so they can bring him closer to the most holy of forms, adding an extensive machinator array to his existing augmetics. The Throne Agent's Strength and Toughness Characteristics are increased by +10, and his Agility and Fellowship are reduced by –5. His mass increases to three times that of a normal person, and he may no longer stay afloat or swim in water or similar liquids. The character may mount a single pistol type or close combat weapon on any Ballistic Mechadendrites he possesses. He must still have the proper Talent to use the mounted weapon.

Mnemonic Purging

Prerequisites: Intelligence 45, Willpower 45
The character has been conditioned and trained so that he is able to deliberately remove his memories. Such an ability may be used to prevent others extracting dangerous information from the character by torture or psychic violation of his mind. It might also be used by the character to protect himself from insanity or the corrupting touch of Chaos by removing the memories of past events.

To use this Talent, the character must specify a particular memory he wants to remove. The character must then make a Willpower test, modified by the GM for the approximate size of the memory involved using the guidelines in Table 4–8: Memory Purging Modifiers and Required Time.

Table 4-8: Memory Purging Modifiers and Required Time

Size of memory	Modifier	Time Required
An instant	+30	5 minutes
A few seconds	+20	10 minutes
A few minutes	+10	15 minutes
An hour	+0	Half an hour
A day	–10	One hour
A year	–20	A day
Several Years	–30	A day per year of memory

If the test is passed, the memory is removed. The character is no longer able to recall any part of it, and it is inaccessible using any effect that allows access to others' memories. In addition, any Insanity points acquired during the period of memory that has been removed are lost, along with any attendant disorders

that the character has acquired as a result. Half of any Corruption points acquired (rounding up) during the remembered period are also lost. If the character fails the test, the memory is not removed and he acquires an additional Insanity point for every degree of failure up to a maximum of five.

The character also requires an amount of uninterrupted time to purge a memory. The approximate time required to purge memories of different sizes is listed in Table 4–8: Memory Purging Modifiers and Required Time. If the character is interrupted during this time his attempt automatically fails and he gains 1d5 insanity points.

Perfect Shot

Prerequisite: Vindicare Assassin, BS 60
Vindicare Assassins are renowned for their matchless skill as a sniper—slaying one target leads naturally to centring the next in the cross-hairs. If the character kills a target with an Exitus weapon, he may use a reaction to Aim at another eligible target (as if he were taking a Half Action to Aim).

Polyglot

Prerequisites: Intelligence 40, Fel 30
The Throne Agent has an innate ability to derive meaning from unknown languages and make himself understood using this intuitive grasp. He treats all languages as Basic Skills. This is not the same as true knowledge of the language, and tests using this Talent suffer a –10 penalty due to the simplistic nature of translation.

Rite of Protection

Prerequisites: Willpower 40
The character is able to deliberately induce a state of consciousness where he can function, but remembers nothing of what has passed after a certain time. This ability is taught to agents of the Inquisition as the Rite of Protection and is used when confronting things the mere memory of would break the mind and soul of even the most hardened operative. When such a perilous phase of a mission is begun, the character prepares his mind so that after it is complete he has no memory of the horrors he has faced. Thus, being Rite protected, he can face what horrors await and, if he survives, be untouched in mind and soul.

To use this Talent the character must pass a **Routine (+10) Willpower Test** and specify how long he wishes the Rite of Protection to last. If the test is failed, the character does not gain the benefits of the Rite of Protection and may not attempt to use it again until 24 hours have passed. The length of time specified for the duration of the Rite of Protection can be no greater than a day, but may be expressed in terms such as 'until we have cleansed the Temple Catacombs.' If the test is passed, the character can act normally, but at the end of the specified time he loses all memory of what happened from the point that he began the Rite of Protection until that moment. Any Insanity gained during this time is removed and the effects of any resulting shock, trauma or mental disorders are lost. Likewise any corruption gained during this time is halved.

Target Selection

Prerequisites: BS 50
The character's dread gaze marks out his chosen victim, and not even the riotous confusion of close combat interferes. The character may shoot into melee with no penalty.

The Emperor Protects

Prerequisites: Pure Faith
The power of the Emperor flows through the Explorer, protecting the faithful and emboldening them to heroism in the face of terrible things.

By spending a Fate Point, the character grants himself and a number of allies equal to his Willpower Bonus immunity to the effects of Fear and Pinning. Additionally, all ranged or close combat acts made against the character and the specified allies are at a –10 modifier. These benefits last for the duration of the encounter.

By burning a Fate point, the character may allow an ally (never himself) to resist the effects of any single attack, effectively allowing the ally to emerge unscathed as if by a miracle. The Fate point must be burnt once the attack has hit but before Damage has been rolled.

The Flesh is Weak

Prerequisites: Mechanicus Implants
The Throne Agent's body has undergone significant bionic replacement to the point where he is far more machine than man.
This Talent grants the Throne Agent the Machine Trait (see page 365 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook) with Armour Points equal to the number of times this Talent has been taken. The Throne Agent may purchase this Talent multiple times in accordance with his Career Advances. In this case, note the number of times this Talent has been taken, such as The Flesh is Weak 3.

Unarmed Master

Prerequisites: Weapon Skill 45, Agility 40, Unarmed Warrior
The Throne Agent has developed unequalled mastery of unarmed combat techniques. His unarmed combat attacks do 1d10+SB (I) Damage and his attacks no longer have the Primitive quality.

Unarmed Warrior

Prerequisites: Weapons Skill 35, Agility 35
Due to extensive training in unarmed combat, the Throne Agent's unarmed combat attacks do 1d10–3 (+SB) I Damage instead of 1d5–3. Because of his advanced training against both armed and unarmed foes, he does not count as Unarmed, as defined on page 199 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook, when making attacks against armed opponents. The character's attacks still count as having the Primitive quality.

Ascended Psychic Powers

Manifesting Psychic Powers

•

Psychic Ascendancy

•

New Psychic Powers

Chapter V: Ascended Psychic Powers

"I counted twenty thousand souls bound for service. Men, women and children. Young and old. The sick and the sound. I sensed their pain and felt their chains as if bound about my own body. But the decision was not mine to take, to separate those who would live from those who must die. I am a guardian of the Adeptus. Souls such as these I carry to the Emperor's table."

–from the confession of a unknown Adept

To be a sanctioned and approved psyker within the Imperium is to be part of a select few. The vast majority of psykers in the Imperium are deemed too unstable to train and too weak to resist the corruption the warp can spew into their unprotected minds. These hapless souls are rounded up on the great Black Ships of the Inquisition and taken to Holy Terra itself. There, they are sacrificed in unimaginable numbers, either to power the Astronomicon, the beacon that guides the Imperium's ships through the warp, or to sustain the continued existence of the God-Emperor.

The Scholastica Psykana serves as the training organisation for the psykers of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica. The supreme task of the Scholastica Psykana is to ensure that Mankind is protected from psykers who would misuse their gifts. Therefore, all psykers are collected by the infamous Black Ships of the Inquisition and rigourously tested upon Holy Terra to cull the most dangerously weak-willed, mad, and otherwise unsuitable from the rest. Those who survive this testing are separated according to the needs of the Adeptus Terra. Some psykers are destined to be given to the Adeptus Astronomica and consumed by the luminous power of the Astronomican, the beacon that shines in the warp and allows Navigators to find a path through the immaterium. More powerful psykers undergo the ritual of Soul Binding, their eyes burned out as they join the ranks of the Astropaths whose psychic communications hold the Imperium together. From amongst the stronger psykers, a rare few are selected as suitable for advanced battle-training, and are conditioned to use their bizarre abilities to smite the Emperor's foes in the fires of war.

The Scholastica Psykana and the Inquisition

Within the Calixis Sector, the Scholastica Psykana and the Inquisition have an understandably close relationship. The reason for this is simple—to fulfil its duties, the Inquisition needs a steady supply of the most talented, reliable, and disciplined psykers the Scholastica trains.

Sometimes these psykers are identified while still in training on Terra, and claimed by an Inquisitor immediately upon their graduation from the Scholastica. Other times, the Scholastica notices a sanctioned psyker who seems unusually talented, and passes this information along. And of course it is always possible that the Inquisition itself comes across a likely candidate and inducts him into their ranks, only later informing the Scholastica Psykana of their actions.

It is far rarer, though not unheard of, for a high-ranking agent of the Inquisition (sometimes even an Inquisitor) to manifest a latent psychic ability. The most common course of action within the Calixis Sector is for these individuals to be sent to the Scholastica Psykana to be trained in their newfound abilities. Normally, such an individual would be sent all the way to Holy Terra. However, in some unique circumstances, Inquisitors and Throne Agents are given the change to be judged "in the field" due to their lofty position. In any case, the individual must undergo the rites of sanctioning and gruelling training to become a sanctioned psyker. He may take comfort in one fact, however. His time serving the Inquisition has hopefully left him strong-willed enough that his chances of being sacrificed to the Emperor are relatively small.

MANIFESTING PSYCHIC POWERS

To be an Imperial psyker is to constantly flirt with madness, death, and far, far worse. To fuel their supernatural abilities, psykers draw on the limitless potential of the Immaterium. However, the warp is anathema to humanity, filled with predatory creatures and malign intelligences. Should a psyker drink too deeply from the warp's power, he runs the risk of attracting the unpleasant attention of its denizens.

If a psyker survives long enough to be elevated to the rank of Primaris, he learns how to mask his presence from the warp. A psyker can modulate, or fetter, his powers, reducing the the warp energy he syphons through his mind. Doing so has the drawback of reducing the sheer power behind his abilities. However, the psyker's presence does not stand out amongst the warp's chaotic and shifting tides.

Of course, sometimes caution must be forsaken if circumstances are dire enough. Just as the psyker can temper the power he taps from the warp, so can he exceed his limits and gather as much as his psyche can hold, and more. This is known as 'pushing,' and both the results and the consequences can be truly impressive.

When a psyker wishes to use a psychic power, he has the option of using it at a fettered level, an unfettered level, or he can push. This is in addition to the rules for "Using Psychic Abilities" found on page 161 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook. A psyker may attempt to manifest any of his psychic powers at any of these three levels, unless the power specifically states otherwise (including Minor, Major, and Ascended Powers).

When using psychic powers, a psyker rolls a number of d10s related to his Psy Rating, then adds his Willpower Bonus, with the goal of the final result equalling or beating the power's Psychic Threshold. If a psyker wants to use his power at a fettered level, he may only roll a number of d10 dice equal to or less than half his Psy Rating (rounding up). However, his roll does not invoke Psychic Phenomena, no matter how many 9s he rolls.

If a psyker wants to use his power at an unfettered level, he may roll a number of d10 dice equal to or less than his Psy Rating. If the psyker does this, he manifests Psychic Phenomena normally as described on page 161, rolling once on the Psychic Phenomena Table for every result of 9.

Example

Scarus Vane is a Primaris Psyker with a Willpower of 51 and a Psy Rating of 6. He wants to manifest the Ascended Power My Will, Known, which has a Threshold of 20. If he chooses to play it safe and manifest this power at a fettered level (allowing him to avoid Psychic Phenomena if he rolls any 9s), he can choose to only roll three dice (equal to half of his Psy Rating of 6). However, this means the dice have to achieve a combined result of 15, possible but by no means guaranteed.

Instead, Scarus chooses to use his power at an unfettered level, rolling five dice (less than his Psy Rating of 6, but more than he could use at the fettered level). His results are a 9, 0, 1, 3, and 4. He manifests the power with a combined result of 32 (adding in his Willpower), and even achieves a two levels of Overbleed. However, he also managed to roll a 9, and must also roll on the Psychic Phenomena table.

If a psyker wishes to push his power, however, he must roll a number of dice equal to his Psy Rating plus three additional dice. When a psyker pushes to use a psychic power, he automatically invokes Psychic Phenomena and must roll on the Psychic Phenomena table. In addition, he adds +5 to his result for every 9 he rolled to use the power. If his roll results in Perils of the Warp, the psyker does not add the +5 to his Perils of the Warp roll.

Table 5-1: Levels of Power

Level	Power	Consequences
Fettered	Dice equal to one half Psy Rating or less	Cannot invoke Psychic Phenomena
Unfettered	Dice equal to Psy Rating or less	Invokes Psychic Phenomena for every dice result of 9.
Push	Dice equal to Psy Rating +3	Automatically invokes Psychic Phenomena, a +5 to the roll for every 9.

Psychic Ascendancy

For Primaris Psykers, and other psykers of similar skill and training, the concept of psychic disciplines begins to take on less importance. Rather than limiting their powers to a particular area of expertise, these psykers tend to focus on perfecting their mastery over several individual abilities, learning to manipulate them with consummate skill. In doing so, the psyker willingly allows his understanding in some periphery abilities to lapse, but what he sacrifices in breadth, he more than makes up in depth.

In addition to any career restrictions to taking an Ascended Power, the psyker must be at least a Rank 9 character. Learning an Ascended Power costs a considerable amount of experience. However, the psyker may reduce the amount of experience he must spend to access an Ascended Power (via the Ascended Psychic Power Talent) by trading some of his existing Major and Minor Psychic Powers. When a psyker trades a Power, he willingly gives up his ability to use it, as if he never had it in the first place. However, for every Minor power he trades when purchasing an Ascended Power, he reduces the cost of the Advanced Psychic Power or Talent by 100 xp. For every Major Psychic Power he trades, he reduces the cost by 500 xp. A psyker may trade in as many Major or Minor Powers as he likes, however, he may not reduce the cost of the Advanced Psychic Power or Talent below 500

xp. Note that the xp gained from 'trading in' psychic powers in this manner is intended to be used for purchasing new Ascended Psychic Powers and not for any other purchase. The GM may, at his discretion, decide that the xp gained from trading in psychic powers can be used for other purposes.

Example

Scarus Vane wants to purchase the Ascended Psychic Power Talent to gain access to the Stormwroth Ascended Power. Normally, he would have to spend 1500 experience to do so, but Vane only has 1000 experience. However, Vane is willing to trade in some of his lesser powers in order to lower the Talent's cost. He trades in the Major Power Force Bolt (he expects to be doing far more damage with Lightning Arc), reducing the cost by 500 experience. Then, Vane uses the opportunity to trade in several Minor Powers he seldom uses; White Noise, Wither, Spasm, Deja Vu, and Call Creatures. This reduces the cost by another 500 experience, meaning Vane can pick up Stormwroth, and still have 500 experience left over.

Once a psyker learns an Ascended Power, he may use the Power's Rank 1 ability. To access the Rank 2 or 3 abilities, he must spend experience equal to the amounts listed next to the ability. A psyker may only unlock Ranks in an Ascended Power that he has already purchased. However, once the Power has been purchased, he is able to unlock those Ranks in the same manner as purchasing any other Advances. There are no level requirements for unlocking ranks.

Example

Scarus Vane has just purchased the Stormwroth Ascended Power. At this point, he can only use the Rank 1 ability; Lightning Arc. After purchasing the power, he gains another 500 eperience points and now has a total of 1,000 experience. This is enough to unlock the Rank 2 ability, Lightning Field, which costs 1,000 experience. Vane does so, and now can use Stormwroth's Rank 1 and Rank 2 abilities.

Purchasing Ascended Powers

Some players may wonder how 'trading in' psychic powers works in game, or feel that it does not fit with how they envision their psyker. After all, why should their psyker 'forget' how to use a power like Wither in exchange for using a power like Will Unleashed?

Trading in lower level psychic powers is not mandatory, of course. If a player wants to pay the full experience cost for an Ascended Psychic Power, that is his choice. The option to 'trade in' is given so that players can divest their characters of powers they no longer find themselves using. On reaching rank 9, a Sanctioned Psyker often has dozens of Minor and Major powers, many of which he will no longer use once he has access to Ascended Powers. Trading them in can be justified by saying a psyker has further refined his abilities, or simply no longer uses his powers in the 'lesser' manner that a Minor Power represents. In addition, psykers are not sorcerers, and their powers are innate and instinctual to a degree. Psykers must practice with their powers, and it is possible for a psyker to forget how to use a psychic power after long periods of disuse.

Players may also notice that some Ranks cost more Experience than others, and some Ranks cost less than taking the Ascended Psychic Power Talent did in the first place. This is done deliberately as a balance mechanic between the various powers.

By What Name, Power?

The reader may notice that some ranks share similar names with pre-existing powers, though their actual abilities are always different. This is because, unlike sorcery, true psychic power is an innate ability, focused and affected by those who wield it. Therefore, psychic powers are often different in subtle but vital ways.

All this makes no difference to the average Imperial citizen, of course. To them, one ability that imbues a psyker's hands with glowing power and allows him to rip apart adamantine bulkheads is the same as the next. The subtle variances are unimportant.

SPECIAL RULES OF ASCENDED PSYCHIC POWERS

Shooting Attack: Certain Ascended Powers are classified as shooting attacks. The psyker does not need to test Ballistic Skill to attack the target unless the power states otherwise; if he succeeds in meeting the Power's Threshold, the target (or targets) is automatically hit. These Ascended Powers always count as hitting the target's body, and the target can gain additional APs from cover. The pysker may increase the Power's Threshold by 4 to strike the body location of his choice, instead.

The target may also use a Dodge reaction to avoid the attack. If the Power generates multiple attacks, the number of successes on a Dodge reaction equals how many attacks the target can avoid, and the psyker can allocate his attacks to any number of targets within 10 metres of each other. If affecting a target in melee, a shooting attack has a 25 percent chance of striking the target's opponent(s).

GM Unnatural Willpower and Ascended Psychic Powers

In Ascension, it is possible for psykers to gain the Unnatural Willpower Trait. The GM should be aware of the impact of Unnatural Willpower on psychic powers. Often, it is very high-rated Psykers who possess Unnatural Willpower, meaning that characters with this Trait will be considered both extremely powerful and extremely dangerous by their peers.

Table 5-2: Ascended Psychic Powers

Name	Cost	Threshold	Focus Time	Sustained	Range
Stormwroth					
Lightning Arc	†	16	Half Action	No	30m
Lightning Field	1,000 xp	21	Full Action	Yes	Self
Lightning Storm	1,000 xp	30	Full Action	No	20m
Malestrom of Destruction					
Malleus Hammerhand	†	17	Half Action	Yes	Self
Enrage	1,000 xp	19	Free Action	No	10m
Bloodboil	2,000 xp	27	Full Action	No	4m
Will Unleashed					
My Will, Known	†	20	Full Action	Yes	10m
My Will, Obeyed	600 xp	22	Half Action	Yes	20m
My Will, Manifest	1,200 xp	30	2 Full Actions	Yes	Self
Burning Apocalypse					
Flameshroud	†	16	Half Action	Yes	Self
Conflagration	1,000 xp	24	Full Action	No	20m
Inferno	1,500 xp	32	Full Action	Yes	20m
Daemonsbane					
Banishment	†	18	Full Action	No	5m
Sanctuary	500 xp	21	Half Action	Yes	Self
Word of the Emperor	1,000 xp	25	Full Action	No	30m
Witchesbane					
His Will Be Done	†	20	Full Action	No	20m
Hammer of Witches	1,000 xp	22	Half Action	No	24m
Purgatus	1,000 xp	24	Full Action	No	36m
Psychokinesis					
Lift	†	14	Half Action	Yes/No	30m
Barrier	500 xp	22	Full Action	Yes	Self
Tempest	1,000 xp	30	Full Action	Yes	100m
Temporal Manipulation					
Precognition	†	18	Free Action	No	Self
Stasis Shell	1,000 xp	24	Free Action	No	20m
Warp Time	1,500 xp	36	Free Action	No	15m

†The first rank of a particular power is granted by purchasing the Ascended Psychic Power Talent. To gain access to more than one Ascended Psychic Power, the character must purchase the Ascended Psychic Power Talent again, once for each Ascended Psychic Power Talent he wishes to have access to.

Area Attack: Certain Ascended Powers do damage to anything over a wide area. The attacks may not be dodged, and cover provides no protection against them. They affect anything and anyone—friend or foe—caught in the blast. The size of the area affected is detailed by the power.

Manifestation Limit: A psyker can only attempt to manifest one Ascended Power per turn (though he may be sustaining several others).

Sustaining Ascended Powers: Sustaining ascended psychic powers works in a similar manner to sustaining other psychic powers. For every 10 rounds a psyker maintains a psychic power, he must make a Power Roll equal to or greater than the power's threshold to continue to maintain it. If the sustained power had an Overbleed ability the psyker was benefiting from, the psyker does not need to reach the Overbleed threshold this second time—he must just reach the power's basic Threshold. In addition, this Power Roll is performed as a free action at the start of the psyker's turn, and the psyker cannot manifest Psychic Phenomena from it.

If a psyker becomes unconscious or is killed, any powers he is sustaining end instantaneously.

The rules for sustaining multiple psychic powers are found on page 164 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook.

Stormwroth

The psyker focuses on summoning warp lightning to smite his enemies or wreathe him in a protective field of electricity. Those who master the ability to manipulate this etheric energy are greatly prized by the Imperial Guard.

Rank 1: Lightning Arc

Threshold: 16
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 30 metres
The psyker channels the warp into electric energy that crackles from his fingertips, burning through his foes. The psyker launches a number of lightning bolts equal to his Willpower Bonus at his target(s). Each bolt is treated as a shooting attack dealing 1d10+10 Energy damage with a Penetration of 3 and the Shocking Quality.
Overbleed: For every 5 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may launch one additional bolt or boost the power's range by 5 metres.

Rank 2: Lightning Field

Cost: 1000 xp
Threshold: 21
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: Self
The psyker surrounds himself in a cracking, sparking nimbus of electricity, daring his enemies to strike him. Whenever an opponent hits the psyker in melee, he takes Energy damage with the Shocking Quality equal to 1d10 plus the psyker's Willpower Bonus. If the psyker is hit by a weapon that has the Shocking Quality while manifesting this power, he automatically passes the Toughness Test to see if he is stunned.
Overbleed: None.

Rank 3: Lightning Storm

Cost: 1000 xp
Threshold: 30
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 20 metres
With charged air and the stench of ozone, the psyker reaches into the warp and lets forth a blast of etheric lightning. Bolts arc in all directions, striking all those the psyker chooses. Every opponent of the psyker's choice within the range of the power is targeted by a shooting attack doing 2d10+10 Energy damage with a Penetration of 5 and the Shocking Quality.
Overbleed: For every 2 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may extend the range of Lightning Storm by 1 metre.

Maelstrom of Destruction

The psyker delights in the frenzied chaos of the melee, using his powers to turn himself into an unstoppable, deathdealing berserker.

Rank 1: Malleus Hammerhand

Threshold: 17
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: Self
The psyker's hands glow with otherworldly power as they are infused with a terrible strength. He is unable to hold any weapons, but he does not require them, as his fingers can gouge armour plating, and his fists can shatter ceramite. The psyker's hands count as melee weapons—meaning the psyker counts as being armed—dealing 2d10 Impact damage, plus double the psyker's Strength bonus. This damage is not primitive, and the psyker can parry melee attacks. When parrying or being parried, the psyker's hands count as possessing the Power Field quality. If the psyker does not already have it, he gains the Two Weapon Wielder (Melee) Talent, allowing him to make two attacks, one with each hand. These follow all rules for fighting with two melee weapons.
Overbleed: For every 5 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may increase the Damage of his Hammerhand attacks by 1, or the Penetration by 1.

Rank 2: Enrage

Cost: 1,000
Threshold: 19
Focus Time: Free Action
Sustained: No
Range: 10 metres
The psyker reaches into the minds of his opponents, momentarily crushing their psyche with a blank, murderous rage. Rational thought, sense, and even skill with weapons are lost in an overwhelming desire to slay the source of their sudden hate. The opponent must make an opposed Willpower Test with the psyker. If he fails, on his next turn he drops any ranged weapons and attempts to enter melee combat with the psyker. He directs any melee attacks solely against the psyker using any melee weapons he has, but suffers a –30 penalty to Weapon Skill. This effect lasts for one turn only.
Overbleed: For every 7 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold he may affect one additional target, or gain one additional degree of success (or one less degree of failure) on the opposed Willpower Test. When affecting multiple targets, the psyker should test his Willpower once and compare it to all of his opponents' tests.

Rank 3: Bloodboil

Cost: 2000
Threshold: 27
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 4 metres
The psyker's frenzy for destruction burns hot in his soul. At a thought, it flashes out from him and heats the blood of his opponents to boiling temperatures, cooking them from the inside out. The psyker must immediately make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test**. Success means every enemy within range of the psyker takes 1d10 wounds ignoring armour or Toughness. For every additional success, each enemy suffers an additional 1d10 wounds. Needless to say, this power does not work on machines, or other targets that do not have blood or some other ichor within them. Every time a Psyker uses this power, he suffers one level of Fatigue.
Overbleed: For every 5 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may gain one additional degree of success (or one less degree of failure) on his Willpower Test.

Will Unleashed

The psyker's mind has grown in potency until it is far too powerful to remain within his skull. At the apex of this power, his psyche roams free, unfettered by flesh, reading the thoughts of others at a whim, and frying their synapses where they stand.

Rank 1: My Will, Known

Threshold: 20
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 10 metres
The psyker's awareness radiates out like a blanket, suffusing the very atmosphere around him with his consciousness. All those present feel a strange sensation, like delicate fingers tracing the inside of their skull. Unless they are shielded from his senses in some way, the locations of all creatures within the power's range are known to the psyker, as are their surface thoughts. Though this is not sufficient to pry forth their deepest secrets, they psyker does know the individuals' immediate plans and intentions. In a combat situation, this grants the psyker a +10 bonus to Ballistic Skill, Weapon Skill, Dodge, and Parry Tests as long as the power is active—after all, he knows his enemy's intentions as soon as they do.

The psyker can also touch the minds of his allies, warning them of danger and guiding their attacks. The psyker can spend a Half Action and make a **Difficult (–10) Willpower Test** to share this bonus with one other individual within the power's range. If he fails the test, the psyker retains the bonus.
Knowing the current thoughts of an individual can also be very useful in many other non-combat situations.
Overbleed: For every 5 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may extend the range of the power by 5 metres or affect one additional ally.

Rank 2: My Will, Obeyed

Cost: 600
Threshold: 22
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 20 metres
The psyker projects his consciousness into another, fighting through the target as if wearing his flesh. The psyker may select one human target to project into. The target must be aware of the psyker's intent and accept it.
If the target is aware of the the psyker's intent and accepts it, the psyker occupies the mind with little trouble. While the power is active, he effectively controls the possessed as if it were his own body. His own body goes into a trance while the power is active, although the psyker is always aware of it and what is going on around it.

While occupying the possessed, the psyker manipulates the target's actions, effectively using the target's body instead of his own. He does not have access to the target's deeper thoughts and memories, only surface thoughts. In combat, however, he can access any combat training the target has. In effect, this means the psyker can use the target's Weapon Skill, Ballistic Skill, Strength, Toughness, Agility, and Perception, any Skills related to these Characteristics, and any combat related Talents (if there is any question as to what constitutes a combat related Talent, the GM is final arbitrator). For all other Skills, Talents, and Characteristics, the psyker uses his own.

The psyker may also manifest powers while occupying another. In all cases, ranges are measured from the possessed, not the psyker's body. For every ten minutes the psyker maintains this power, he suffers one level of fatigue. (This time may be increased or decreased at the GM's discretion). If the possessed is killed while the psyker is maintaining this power, the psyker takes 2d10 wounds ignoring armour and Toughness. If the target possesses a psy-focus, the range of this power becomes 20 kilometers per Psy Rating applied to this power.
Overbleed: For every 2 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may increase the range by 20 metres.

Rank 3: My Will, Manifest

Cost: 1200
Threshold: 30
Focus Time: 2 Full Actions
Sustained: Yes
Range: Self
The psyker's psyche leaves its fleshy prison, roaming free as an invisible being of etheric energy. In this state, the psyker is all but invulnerable to mundane threats, and can travel great distances while leaving his body behind.

When this power is manifested, the psyker's body collapses, and for all appearances goes into a deep coma. The psyker becomes an ethereal being of light and crackling energy with the Incorporeal Trait. He is also completely invisible to non-psykers, although anything with a Psy Rating perceives him normally, and mechanical devices perceive strange 'auspex ghosts' or 'visual anomalies.' The psyker's new form has a movement speed equal to his Willpower bonus, though a successful **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** allows him to quadruple his speed for 10 Rounds. The psyker may use other powers in this form as normal. In this state, the psyker perceives the world differently—psy-active beings or items glow with brilliant light whilst more mundane surroundings seem muted and grey.

Unlike normal Incorporeal beings, in this state the psyker may attack non-Incorporeal targets with a Psy Rating, and they may attack him in turn. Both may make melee attacks using Willpower instead of Weapon Skill, and dealing 1d10 plus their Willpower bonus in damage, ignoring armour and Toughness.

If the psyker's body is killed while in this state, the psyker dies. If the psyker wants to return to his body, he must move back to it and spend one half action to renter it. He may renter it instantaneously from any location—however if he does so, he immediately takes 2d10 wounds, ignoring armour and toughness.
Overbleed: None

Burning Apocalypse

The psyker's soul burns with the intensity of a barely contained inferno. Pyrokinetics are rare, and those who can control their abilities enough to avoid self-immolation are rarer still. The few that can often focus on their 'inner fire' to the exclusion of other disciplines and abilities—obsessed with the destruction they can render.

Rank 1: Flameshroud

Threshold: 16
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: Self
Should the pyrokinetic wish to survive his self-generated holocausts, he must learn to endure the flames he creates. Powerful psykers can summon flames from nothing, enveloping themselves in a roiling fire that never consumes them.

Although the psyker is covered in fire, his clothing, weapons, and equipment are unharmed. While maintaining the flameshroud, the psyker is immune to Flame weapons; the fires surrounding him seem to draw the flames into the shroud, making it burn even brighter. The psyker also takes half damage from las, plasma, and melta weapons, and any Psychic Power involving flame and fire (with the exception of Holocaust). Any melee attacks the psyker makes (with the exception of power weapons) forces the target to make an Agility Test or catch on Fire. Likewise, anyone making a melee attack against the psyker must make an Agility Test or catch on Fire.

Although these abilities are impressive, the true purpose of the flameshroud is to let the psyker lose himself in the flames, and in doing so gain greater control over them. While sustaining the flameshroud, the psyker does not suffer threshold penalties for manifesting other psychic powers involving fire or pyromancy.
Overbleed: None.

Rank 2: Conflagration

Cost: 1,000
Threshold: 24
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 20 metres
The air around the psyker is choked with ash and cinders, swirling in an unseen wind. The very atmosphere grows hot, burning the eyes and throat. With a thought, the psyker can send the cinders whipping around an unlucky individual, enveloping him in flame.

This power fills the area within range of the psyker with heat, ashes, and cinders. Easily flammable items, such as paper or promethium, ignite. (Although the focus time is only a Full Action, these effects may linger for some time.) Beyond that, Conflagration has two potential effects.

The first option is that the psyker may select a number of targets less than or equal to his Willpower Bonus who are within the power's range. Each target takes 2d10 Energy damage with a Penetration of 4 (although it is not a shooting attack, the target can Dodge). If the target takes damage, he must make a further Agility Test or be set on fire.

The second option is the psyker can fill the area with choking ash and smoke. The area is considered to be suffering from darkness (though the psyker can see through it with no problem), and everyone within the area of affect must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or begin suffering from Suffocation. The cloud persists for 1d10 rounds.
Overbleed: For every 5 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he can select one additional target. For every 10 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he can double the power's range.

Rank 3: Inferno

Cost: 1,500
Threshold: 32
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 20 metres
Some of the most powerful pyrokinetics can wipe out whole hab-blocks or villages by summoning a true inferno. The fire washes out from them like waves, burning all unlucky enough to be near them. However, what is truly terrifying about this power is not the ease with which a powerful pyrokinetic can summon it, but the difficulty they have in putting it out.

When a psyker manifests the inferno, fire erupts out of him in all directions, indiscriminately incinerating anything in its path. Anything within range of the power takes 1d10 times the psyker's Willpower Bonus in Energy Damage, and is automatically set on fire. (At the GM's discretion, things like heavy ceramite shielding or deep pools of water can protect individuals from this power.) For every round this power is maintained, the range of the power increases by 10 metres, and everyone within range of the psyker takes the above damage, and is automatically set on fire if they are not already.

This power is taxing on the psyker, however. For each turn past the first the psyker maintains the power, he must make a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or suffer one level of fatigue. This test increases in difficulty by one step for every subsequent turn that the power is sustained. To end the power, the psyker must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test**. Failure means the power continues to be sustained. Of course, if the psyker cannot maintain control over his inferno, and passes out, he is consumed and suffers the same damage as his victims. This damage takes place after he becomes unconscious, and is an exception to the rules covering sustaining psychic powers (see page 164 in the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook).
Overbleed: None

DAEMONSBANE

The Inquisitors and psychic Daemonhunters of the Ordo Malleus learn to turn their prodigious mental powers towards the destruction of their warp-spawned adversaries.

Rank 1: Banishment

Threshold: 18
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 5 metres
The psyker focuses his mental powers on the bonds that tie the Daemon to the immaterium, snapping it with his indomitable will. This power may only be used against a creature with the Daemonic or Warp Instability Trait. The psyker makes an Opposed Willpower Test with his target. For every degree by which the psyker wins, the target takes 1d10 damage ignoring armour and Toughness. If the psyker wins by five or more degrees, the Daemon is flung screaming back into the warp—counting as destroyed.
Overbleed: For every 5 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he can either extend the range of the power by 5 metres or impose a –10 penalty to the target's Willpower Test.

Rank 2: Sanctuary

Cost: 500
Threshold: 21
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: Self
The glory of the God-emperor is channelled through the psyker, causing all who would strike him and those who stand with him to quail against the terrible radiance. While this power is active, anyone who wants to target the psyker with a ranged attack or approach within 3 metres of him must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** or forego their turn. In addition, any attacks with the Warp Weapon Trait that hit the psyker do not ignore armour and deal half damage.

If the psyker makes any ranged attacks, the power ends immediately.
Overbleed: For every 4 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he can extend the benefits of Sanctuary to one ally within 3 metres of him. If the ally makes a ranged attack or move more than 3 metres from the psyker, he loses the benefits of Sanctuary and cannot regain it unless the power is re-manifested.

Rank 3: Word of the Emperor

Cost: 1,000
Threshold: 25
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 30 metres
The psyker's belief in the power of the Emperor is so strong, it overpowers the minds and wills of the Daemon and unbeliever. His holy liturgies and chants crush their puny psyches. The psyker may select a number of targets equal to his Willpower Bonus. Each must make a **Hard (–20) Willpower Test**. If they fail the test, they must forego their next turn. If they fail the test by 4 degrees or more, they take 2d10 damage ignoring armour and toughness as the holy words of the Imperial Creed sear their minds and cause their ears to bleed.
If a target fails the first test, he must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** on the next turn they can act or forego that turn as well. This continues until he makes a Willpower Test or Combat ends.

This power has no effect against a staunch and true believer of the Imperial Creed (the GM should determine who qualifies as this).
Overbleed: For every 10 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he can increase the difficulty of the initial and subsequent Willpower Tests by one step.

WITCHESBANE

Although the witchhunters of the Ordo Hereticus abhor the witch and unsanctioned psyker, many are not above using psychic abilities to accomplish their goals. Many claim their powers are a gift of the Emperor, and therefore acceptable to use. Others simply acknowledge that the ends always justify the means.

Rank 1: His Will Be Done

Threshold: 20
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 12 metres
The psyker's mind reaches out to the minds of his friends and allies. Emboldened by his indomitable will, they become furious manifestations of the Emperor's justice.

The psyker may select a number of allies, without the Machine or Bestial Traits, equal to his Willpower bonus. Each ally must immediately make a Standard Attack Action (ranged, or melee if adjacent) against a target of the psyker's choice. Each individual affected still takes a full turn during his next turn.
Overbleed: For every 4 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may select one additional ally.

Rank 2: Hammer of Witches

Cost: 1,000 xp
Threshold: 22
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: No
Range: 24 metres
The psyker reaches to the strings that connect a psyker to his source of power, the warp. With a swift blow, he overwhelms the psyker's control of those strings, inviting the dangers of the warp.

The psyker selects one target with a Psy Rating within the power's range. The target may not use psychic powers during his next turn, and must make a **Hard (–20) Willpower Test**. If he fails, he must immediately roll on the Psychic Phenomena table.
Overbleed: For every 2 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may force his target to add 10 to his roll on the Psychic Phenomena and Perils of the Warp Table. For every 6 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may increase the difficulty of the target's Willpower Test by one step.

Rank 3: Purgatus

Cost: 1,000 xp
Threshold: 24
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: No
Range: 36 metres
The psyker's sinister gaze pins a heretic in his sights, his potent will flaying the unfortunate's mind until it is an empty husk. This is the fate of those who defy the God-Emperor—to be lost in mind as well as body.

The psyker selects one target within the power's range. The psyker and his target must immediately make an opposed Willpower Test. For every degree by which the psyker wins, the target must take 1d10 permanent Willpower damage. Should this reduce the target to 0 Willpower, the target is reduced to a drooling vegetable, his mind utterly destroyed. If the psyker loses, he takes one level of fatigue.

This power does not work against targets with the Bestial or Machine Trait.
Overbleed: For every 4 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may increase the difficulty of his opponent's Willpower Test by one step.

PSYCHOKINESIS

Most psykers are able to master the ability to manipulate and move objects with their mind to some degree. Somewhat rarer, however, are the true psychokinetics, psykers able to lift cargo-eight haulers with a thought and hurl them at their enemies with a gesture.

Rank 1: Lift

Threshold: 14
Focus Time: Half Action
Sustained: Yes/No
Range: 30 metres

The most basic of the psychokinetic powers is the ability to move objects with one's mind, and it is an ability that can be used in a wide variety of ways. When manifesting this power, the psyker should choose one of the following effects:

Move: The psyker may lift and move any object within range that weighs less than 50 kilograms times the psyker's Willpower Bonus. The psyker may move the object up to his Willpower Bonus in metres each round as a Half Action. When the object is dropped, it falls normally. This version of the power can be sustained, and must be sustained if the psyker wants to move the object over multiple rounds.

Hurl: The psyker picks up a nearby object weighing 10 kilograms times the psyker's Willpower Bonus or less with his mind and throws it at his target. This is a shooting attack where the psyker must make a Ballistic Skill Test. If he hits, the projectile deals 2d10 Impact damage, plus two points for every five kilograms of weight. For this power to function, there must be an item available to pick up, and depending on what the item is, the GM may determine that it deals more damage or has additional affects.

Levitate: The psyker gains the Fly (X) Trait, where X equals the psyker's Willpower Bonus. This version of the power can be sustained, and must be if the psyker wants to fly over multiple rounds.

Overbleed: The effects of overbleed vary depending on the way this power is used.

Move: For every 5 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may increase the weight moved by 50 kilograms, or the speed he moves the object by 1 metre per round.

Hurl: For every 2 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he increases the damage dealt by all projectiles thrown by 1. For every 10 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may throw one additional available projectile at the same, or an additional, target (test Ballistic Skill separately for each projectile).

Levitate: For every 4 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he increases his Fly value by 1.

Rank 2: Barrier

Cost: 500 xp
Threshold: 22
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: Self

The psyker's mind is so agile he is able to swat aside projectiles with a thought, causing them to deflect harmlessly mere inches from his skin. The psyker becomes immune to damage from Primitive and SP weaponry (or any other weapons that rely solely on solid projectiles to deal damage; needle weapons or webbers would be two examples). Bolt, Launcher, Las, Plasma, and Melta weapons (or any weapons that rely both on intense heat or energy as well as kinetic force) deal half rolled damage. Flame weapons deal damage as normal.

Overbleed: None

Rank 3: Tempest

Cost: 1000 XP
Threshold: 30
Focus Time: Full Action
Sustained: Yes
Range: 100 metres

The most powerful psychokinetics can agitate the very air around them, creating swirling vortexes of wind and debris. Though this power is arduous to maintain, the damage it can deal is truly devastating.

The psyker summons up what is essentially a psychic storm. The psyker occupies the storm's eye, and around him, out to the limit of the power's range, are high winds, freezing temperatures, and possibly rain or even hail. Any unsecured objects lighter than five kilograms are picked up and flung around by the winds, and the swirling debris, rain, and dust reduce visibility to 1d10 metres (roll once when the power is manifested)—the psyker's vision is not affected. All Ballistic Skill Tests suffer a –20 penalty. Additionally, all those caught in the tempest must make a **Challenging (+0) Strength Test** or only be able to take a Half Action each round.

During the psyker's subsequent rounds, he may spend a Half Action and make a Willpower Test to briefly focus his thoughts on one specific area, sending a barrage of debris scything through it. This shooting attack deals 1d10 damage to all targets within 2 metres of a specific point, plus an additional 1d10 damage per degree of success. This attack always strikes the targets' Body locations.

For every round after the first that the psyker sustains this power, he must make a successful **Ordinary (+10) Toughness Test** or suffer one level of fatigue.

Overbleed: For every 5 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may do an additional 1d10 damage with successful attacks. For every 10 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may increase the range of the Tempest by 100 metres.

TEMPORAL MANIPULATION

That the warp can have an affect on the passage of time is well known. It is a phenomena experienced by those starship captains who have travelled short times in the immaterium, only to arrive at their destination and discover centuries have passed in the rest of the galaxy.

Less known and understood are those few psykers who use this aspect of the warp to twist time to their own ends. Conventional wisdom of the Calixian representatives of the Scholastica Psykana holds that such psykers simply 'speed up' or 'slow down' the perceptions of themselves and their fellows, rather than actually manipulating time. Perhaps they can also see glimpses of future events, granting them a far better chance of success in certain actions, but no more.

Their arguments are unconvincing, however the majority of the Calixian Conclave accepts them—perhaps because the potential ramifications of the alternatives are too terrible to contemplate.

Rank 1: Precognition

Threshold: 18
Focus Time: Free Action
Sustained: No
Range: Self

One aspect of temporal manipulation that most often manifests in psykers is the ability of precognition—an ability to see the myriad possibilities of the future. Even the strongest psykers can only see the possibilities of the next few moments of their life, and even then, only for a brief instant. However, that can often be enough.

While in combat, precognition can be used at any time during the psyker's turn, and its effects last until the beginning of the psyker's next turn. After the power is manifested, the psyker can re-roll any failed Ballistic Skill, Weapon Skill, Dodge, and Parry Tests (his glimpse of the future showing him which of his actions will be successful and which will fail).

Out of combat, this power can be used in a similar way, allowing the psyker to determine whether actions will be successful or not before undertaking them. However, as this power only allows the psyker to see a few moments into the future, each manifestation only allows him to determine the success of an action that would take roughly six seconds. As an example, the psyker could tell if entering a passcode into a secured door would set off an alarm or not, but could not predict how a suspect would react over the course of an interrogation.

Overbleed: For every 8 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may extend the effects of precognition for one additional round while in Combat, or for an additional six seconds outside of combat.

Rank 2: Stasis Shell

Cost: 1,000 XP
Threshold: 24
Focus Time: Free Action
Sustained: No
Range: 20 metres

The psyker creates a spherical area in which time seems to completely stop, leaving whatever is inside perfectly frozen in time. When the affect ends, the occupants do not realise any time has passed. The psyker selects a spherical area roughly three metres in diameter that is fully within range of his power. Anything fully within this area is effectively frozen in time, and may not take actions, move, speak, or do anything. In turn, however, they may not be harmed or affected by any means. Anything outside the area of the stasis shell may not enter or pass through the area affected by the shell, which is treated as an invulnerable barrier. Anything partially within the barrier when it manifests rolls 1d10, on a 6 or higher, they are treated as inside the shell, on a 5 or lower, they are treated as outside the shell. The stasis shell lasts for 1d5 rounds.

A psyker may only manifest one stasis shell at a time. Should the psyker attempt to manifest the shell on something that is too large to fit within it (such as one section of a Leman Russ Battle Tank, the power does not take effect. Instead, the psyker is treated as being within a stasis shell for 1d5 rounds, as time backlashes against him. (GMs may provide a certain amount of leeway here. For instance, the stasis shell may encapsulate part of the floor of a hab-building without a problem, even though technically the shell does not envelop the entire building.)

Overbleed: For every 4 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may increase the time the stasis shell lasts by one round. For every 8 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may extend the diameter of the shell by one metre.

Rank 3: Warp Time

Cost: 1,500 XP
Threshold: 36
Focus Time: Free Action
Sustained: No
Range: 15 metres

The most powerful psychic adepts of the temporal arts are able to speed and slow the passage of time, both for themselves, their allies, and their enemies. Before using this power, the psyker must announce whether he is going to Slow Time or Hasten Time.

Slow Time: The psyker selects a number of targets within range of the power equal to his Willpower Bonus. Each target loses one half action during their next turn.

Hasten Time: The psyker selects a number of targets (including himself, if he wishes) within range of the power equal to his Willpower Bonus. Each target (including the psyker) must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** at the beginning of their next turn. If they fail, nothing happens. If they succeed, however, they gain an additional full action during their turn. All the normal limits to taking actions during a turn apply, with the exception that they may make an additional attack action with this extra full action.

Both of these powers end at the beginning of the psyker's next turn. If the psyker manifests Psychic Phenomina and then rolls Perils of the Warp, in addition to suffering all effects of the roll, the psyker may not take any actions for the following 2d5 turns, as reality takes back the time he stole with interest.

Overbleed: For every 4 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may extend the power's range by 5 metres. For every 8 points by which the psyker exceeds the threshold, he may affect one additional target.

Ascended Armoury

- Ranged Weaponry
- Melee Weaponry
- Armour
- Gear

Chapter VI: Ascended Armoury

"God-Emperor, infuse this weapon with your wrath, that I might deliver your righteous anger unto your enemies."

–Munitorum Battle Blessing

Just as a Throne Agent is expected to take on the Imperium's direst enemies, the Inquisition equips him with weaponry and equipment to make him equal to the task. Though a Throne Agent's best weapons are his wits and mental fortitude, he cannot be expected to fight his foes with determination and his fists. Throne Agents can expect the vaults of the Calixian Conclave to be opened to them (within reason, of course), and a varied arsenal of weapons, amour, and sundry gear made available.

Commissioning Items and Weapons

Though most Throne Agents are unconcerned with mundane possessions, many of them do prefer to personalise their kit to a degree. This can often take the form of weapons, armour, or other gear that has been commissioned by them personally and is constructed by the finest artisans or other craftsmen. After all, many Throne Agents see no reason to use anything but the best in the prosecution of their duties, and the influence of their office gives them the authority to do just that.

Commissioning an item means the Throne Agent is charging an artisan to construct it for his personal use. To locate such an artisan and convince him to do the work, the Throne Agent must make an Influence Test. This Test suffers no modifiers for Duration, simply for Scarcity. Only a single item may be commissioned through the Test, and only one item may be commissioned per session. At the GM's discretion, a Throne Agent may have multiple items being produced for him at once.

The item commissioned must be any weapon, armour, or non-consumable item of gear or equipment that is Imperial in origin (no xenos technology or weaponry) of Best Craftsmanship. If the test is successful, the Throne Agent must still wait for the item to be crafted (or restored or upgraded, if the commission is to repair and improve an existing item). The time is 1d5 weeks for every degree of rarity above Scarce, minus one week

for every degree of success the Throne Agent scores on his Influence Test (to a minimum of one). At the GM's discretion, this time period may be lengthened or shortened based on circumstances within the game.

The GM should also determine whether an item can be commissioned at all, considering in-game circumstances. If a player wanted a plasma pistol, for example, it is highly unlikely he could commission one from a hive world artisan. The technology to construct plasma weaponry is very rare, and usually only available on forge worlds (where the Mechanicus guards it zealously). The character would either have to travel to a forge world to make the commission, or (if he already had a plasma pistol of lesser quality), he could commission a hive world artisan to improve the item he already possessed.

NEW WEAPON SPECIAL QUALITIES

Sanctified

Damage inflicted by a sanctified weapon counts as Holy Damage, which has certain effects on some Daemonic and warp creatures. All weapons with this special quality must be of either Good Craftsmanship or Best Craftsmanship.

Storm

A weapon with the Storm Quality doubles the amount of hits inflicted on the target. Every degree of success (for Full Auto) or two degrees of success (for Semi-Auto) up to the weapon's listed rate of fire results in two hits instead of one (including when firing a single shot). A weapon with the Storm quality uses up ammunition twice as fast as usual (meaning that if a Storm weapon fires on semi-auto with a rate of fire equal to 2, it uses 4 rounds of ammunition).

Twin-linked

A Twin-linked weapon represents two identical weapons connected together and linked to fire at the same time, often through one pull of the trigger or push of the button. Twin-linked weapons are built this way in order to increase the chances of scoring a hit through the crude expedience of blasting more shots at the target. A weapon with the Twin-linked Quality gains a +20% bonus to hit when fired and uses twice as much ammunition. In addition, the weapon may score one additional hit if the attack roll succeeds by two or more degrees of success. Lastly, the weapon's reload time is doubled.

Table 6–1: Ranged Weapons

Name	Class	Range	RoF	Dmg	Pen	Clip	Rld	Wt	Special	Availability
Las Weapons										
Hellgun	Basic	50m	S/3/–	1d10+4 E	7	30	2 Full	6 kg		Rare
Hellpistol	Pistol	20m	S/2/–	1d10+4 E	7	40	2 Full	4 kg		Rare
Exotic Weapons										
Digi-las	Pistol	3m	S/–/–	2d5+5 E	5	1	Special	0.1 kg		Extremely Rare
Digital Explosive	Thrown	SBx3	S/–/–	3d10 X	5			0.1 kg	Blast (3)	Extremely Rare
Purgatus Crossbow	Basic	50m	S/–/–	1d10+5 I	2	5	2 Full	6.5 kg	Reliable, Sanctified	Very Rare
Executor Pistol (Bolt)	Pistol	30m	S/2/–	2d10+4 X	5	16	Full	5.5 kg	Tearing	Near Unique
Executor Pistol (Needle)	Pistol	30m	S/2/–	1d10+5 R	3	16	Full	—†	Toxic	Near Unique
Exitus Pistol	Pistol	30m	S/3/–	2d10+2 I	9	5	Full	5 kg	Accurate	Near Unique
Exitus Rifle	Basic	200m	S/–/–	2d10+2 I	9	10	Full	9 kg	Accurate	Near Unique
Melta Weapons										
Hellax Infernus	Pistol	10m	S/–/–	2d10+6 E	14	5	2 Full	2 kg	Sanctified	Unique
Plasma Weapons										
Ryza-pattern Plasma Pistol	Pistol	30m	S/2/–	1d10+6 E	6	10	3 Full	4 kg	Overheats	Very Rare
Ryza-pattern Plasma Gun	Basic	90m	S/2/–	1d10+7 E	7	40	Rld 5 Full	9 kg	Overheats	Very Rare
Bolt Weapons										
Malleus Psycannon	Heavy	120m	S/–/5	2d10+5 X	5	40	3 Full	20 kg	Tearing, Reliable, Sanctified	Extremely Rare
Ryza-pattern Storm Bolter	Basic	90m	S/2/4	1d10+5 X	4	60	Full	9 kg	Storm, Tearing	Extremely Rare

† *The Executor Pistol combines both the bolt and needle weapons into one, therefore the weight listed in the bolt category is for the entire weapon.*

Ranged Weaponry

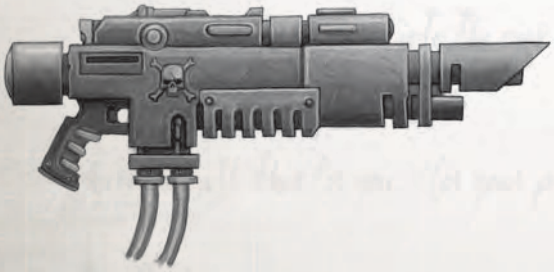
The Inquisitional armouries maintain a large collection of esoteric weaponry. Many of them are melee weapons, but there are a wide variety of guns (and gun-like weapons) as well. These range from military-issue hellguns to hand-crafted Purgatus Crossbows.

Cadian-pattern Hellgun and Hellpistol

There are many different variants of the boosted las-weapons known as hellguns and hellpistols, although as a general rule these weapons hit harder and cut through more armour than the standard lasgun. Their prohibitive manufacturing requirements, reliance on bulky backpack power units, and less reliable nature keeps them from being issued en masse to Imperial Guard regiments. However, hellweapons (or 'hot-shot las-weapons' as they are also known) are still favoured by the Imperial Guard's elite Storm Troopers—as well as any number of agents for the Throne—as powerful weapons.

The Calixian Storm Trooper Companies prefer to equip their forces with the Cadian pattern hellweapons. Constant warfare means these weapons have been enhanced to the point that they can cut through something as tough as power armour, making them extremely popular on the front lines.

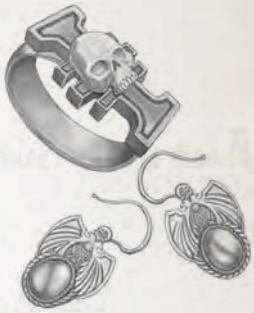
Hellguns can either be used with a Backpack Power Pack (see page 145), or smaller backpack units designed to be slung under standard field packs. These smaller units weigh 10 kg, and provide the hellgun with the listed ammunition capacity and reloading times. Cadian pattern hellguns and hellpistols are also equipped with built-in targeters. This does not count towards the weapon's one-sight limit.



Digital Weapons

Digital weapons, or digi-weapons, appear to be rings or other jewellery, but are actually powerful ranged weapons, either archeotech or of xenos manufacture. The most common of these (if common can be used to describe such wondrous items) are crafted by the ape-like aliens known as the Jokaero. Their creations are so marvellously constructed that even Throne Agents of the Holy Ordos have been known to wear them.

Two of the most popular types of digital weapons amongst the agents of the Calixian Conclave are the digi-las weapons, and digital explosives. Digi-las weapons are usually modelled in the form of rings, and can be used in close combat as a pistol. Digital explosives are made to look like a wide variety of jewellery, are armed by applying precise pressure to certain points, and then thrown. Of course, both have their drawbacks: digi-las weapons take considerable time to replenish their tiny power reserves (1d5 hours before the weapon may be fired again), and digital explosives are strictly one use only, making them an expensive investment.



Executor Pistol

This combi-pistol is rarely seen in Imperial space, despite (or perhaps because of) the fact that it is used by one of the Imperium's most dangerous killers. The Eversor Assassins, skull-faced slaughterers of the Officio Assasinorum, carry these weapons in addition to their lethal array of close-combat gear. The Executor is an unusual example of a combi-weapon. Instead of being one weapon grafted crudely onto another, it is a seamless joining of two individual firearms. The Executor is a bolt pistol with an under-slung needle pistol beneath the barrel, allowing the wielder to choose between the destructive power of the bolt weapon, or the quiet lethality of the needle weapon. It is this versatility, combined with the exquisite craftsmanship of every Executor pistol, that makes them such a popular choice for one of the Imperium's sanctioned assassins.

The weapon incorporates the heights of arcane tech-lore in its construction. It incorporates a bi-stabilised targeting sight, and its polymorphic grip is genetically coded to the individual Assassin. Even if an opponent was able to somehow gain control of an Executor, he would be unable to fire it. In addition, the needle pistol uses a synthesised neuro-toxin to incapacitate its target.

An Executor Pistol can always be fired as either a bolt pistol or needle pistol, although the bearer may only fire it in one mode per turn. The entire weapon counts as Best craftsmanship. An Executor Pistol is programmed to be used by a single individual when it is crafted. Changing the weapon's programming requires either access to secret Officio facilities (something that is almost impossible even for members of the Holy Ordos), or success on a **Hellish (–60) Tech-Use Test**. In addition, the needle pistol's toxins are so potent that whenever

Combi-weapons

Combi-weapons are actually two different weapons that have been combined into one firearm. The idea is to provide the user with the versatility of two different types of guns without requiring him to switch between them (not to mention carry them both) on the battlefield. Each combi-weapon starts with a primary weapon, often a lasgun, autogun, or boltgun. Slung under the primary weapon's barrel is a one-shot secondary weapon. This is usually more powerful than the primary weapon; since it only carries one shot, it had better be a powerful one. Combi-meltas, combi-plasma, and combi-grenade launchers are all popular variations of combi-weapons (combi-weapons are usually named after their secondary weapon). Combi-weapons are most common in the Guard, Adepta Sororitas, and Adeptus Astartes, though many more militant-minded Throne Agents prefer them to bulk out their personal firepower.

Any two basic ranged weapons or any two pistol weapons can be combined into a combi-weapon. First, select which weapon is the primary weapon and which is the secondary weapon. The primary weapon retains its statistics—rate of fire, ammo capacity, and so forth—while the secondary weapon has its clip size reduced to one and its rate of fire becomes S/–/–. The weight of the new, combined weapon is equal to the weight of the primary weapon plus half the weight of the secondary weapon. The rarity is equal to the rarity of the rarer of the two weapons, plus one additional step. The GM has the final say on which weapons may and may not be combined.

a target is hit by a shot, he must succeed on a **Challenging (+0) Toughness Test** or take 1d10 wounds ignoring armour or toughness; the shot does not need to wound the target.

Exitus Rifle

The signature weapon of the Vindicare Temple, this rifle is amongst the finest examples of Imperial weaponsmithing. Hand-crafted by a Magos-Artisan of the Adeptus Mechanicus, each Exitus rifle is part of a matched set—both pistol and rifle customised to the specifications of the individual Assassin. The Exitus weapons contain sophisticated machine-spirits and utilise ammunition constructed from special heavy-gravity alloys to penetrate nearly all forms of known protection. All Exitus weapons incorporate a silencer and a selector switch. The Exitus rifle has a built-in telescopic sight. Exitus weapons are manufactured at the Best craftsmanship level. The firer may load one round as a half action (normally for one of the special issue ammunition loads). If the firer has the Rapid Reload Talent, he may instead use a Reaction to load a single round.

Exitus Pistol

The Exitus pistol is a masterpiece of craftsmanship, a weapon as elegant as it is deadly. Unlike the larger rifle, the Exitus pistol is mainly considered a backup weapon for the Vindicare Temple, primarily used in those rare circumstances where the Assassin is discovered, cornered, or in need of rapid-fire capability. Under those circumstances, the Exitus pistol performs admirably, and more than a few Vindicare Assassins owe their lives to this weapon. The Exitus Pistol has a built-in silencer and is manufactured at the Best craftsmanship level.

Hellax Infernus

In the dark history of the Conclave Calixis, one individual is spoken of with equal parts dread and admiration; Cassilda Cognos. Little is known about the mysterious inquisitor, save that she was the founder of the Tyrantine Cabal, and is now long dead. However, her legacy lives on in the deep data vaults of the Bastion Serpentis, in the activities of the Tyrantine Cabal itself, and in the rare artefacts associated with her that have been scattered across the Calixis Sector.

The Hellax Infernus is a weapon both elegant and extremely potent. In appearance, it is an antique inferno pistol, with a long thin barrel, sculpted handle, and barrel-basket with ever-flickering flame. However, the Infernus is constructed with strange, arcane technology. Its flames sear hotter than even the most potent melta-weapon; hot enough, it is said, to burn one's very soul.

The Hellax Infernus ignores the defences from Fields and all protective benefits granted by psychic powers (including benefits such as bonuses to Dodge, as well as powers that specifically reduce energy damage or damage from melta-weapons). In addition, if a target is hit by the Hellax Infernus and survives, he must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test**. If he fail, he permanently reduces his Willpower by 1d10.

The Hellax Infernus uses the standard ammunition for inferno pistols, and counts as a Best craftsmanship weapon.

Malleus Psycannon

Psycannons are powerful weapons, often reserved for the Ordo Malleus. Similar in form to the Holy Bolter, a psycannon fires powerful ammunition charged with psychic energy and possessing ritually inscribed silver tips backed by a rare isotope explosive. Each blessed round can unerringly penetrate the psychic defences and shields of a target, making them a preferred weapon for Inquisitors planning to hunt the daemon or the witch. In addition, a powerful psyker can imbue each shot with a measure of his mental force, bringing ruin to his target with each shot. However, psycannons are

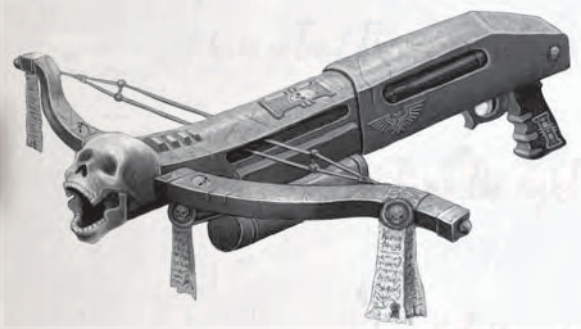
rare weapons, each handcrafted by artisans watched and sanctified by the Adeptus Ministorum and the Holy Ordos.

Psycannon bolts ignore all protective benefits granted by psychic powers (including benefits such as bonuses to Dodge) and the increased Toughness Bonus from the Daemonic Trait. Malleus psycannons also have in-built Suspensor technology, meaning that the wielder counts as possessing the Auto-Stabilised Trait. Finally, an individual with a Psy Rating may imbue the psycannon with additional damage equal to the user's Psy Rating. This is considered a Minor Psychic power with a Threshold of 10 that can be used as a Free Action. Psycannons always count as Good craftsmanship weapons, which is reflected in their rules.

Ammunition: A psycannon fires handcrafted bolt shells that are Extremely Rare.

Purgatus Crossbow

Throughout the millennia, Witch Hunters have seen the humble crossbow as a symbol of their trade, able to drive a thick bolt of thrice-blessed wood into the heart of a daemonic or heretical opponent. With that in mind, some Inquisitors have commissioned skilled artisans to transform these primitive weapons into something far more deadly.



The Purgatus appears a fusion of boltgun and crossbow, able to fire with more force than a shotgun blast. However, it is its ammunition that is the true marvel; heavy wood and silver stakes inscribed with wards and runes designed to disrupt a creature's contact with the immaterium.

If the Purgatus does at least one point of damage, the stake becomes lodged in the target. Removing the stake without proper medical care and operating facilities (such as on the field of battle) takes one Full Action, and deals 1d5+1 wounds to the target removing it, ignoring armour or Toughness.

For every round a creature with the Daemonic Trait leaves a Purgatus stake in itself, it must make a Warp Instability Test (described on page 333 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook) at a –10 Penalty, even if it would not normally be required to test for Warp Instability. As long as any creature with a Psy Rating has a Purgatus stake imbedded in it, the Power Threshold for any psychic powers it manifests is increased by 20. Purgatus Crossbows are always manufactured at a Good craftsmanship level, which is reflected in their rules.

Ammunition: Purgatus Crossbows fire blessed stakes that must be handcrafted. A quiver of 20 has an Availability of Very Rare.

Ryza-pattern Military Plasma Weapons

The plasma weapons produced for the Imperium's militant forces by the Ryza Forge World are of a much higher quality than those made for noble dilettantes, chartist captains, and other 'civilians.' The Ryza-pattern weapons are designed to hold larger hydrogen flasks, and a reinforced containment system allows the weapon to be fired more rapidly. Perhaps more importantly, Ryza incorporates a 'maximal' setting into its weapons.

The Ryza-pattern plasma pistol is prized amongst the Imperium's various militant orders. It is often carried by mid and high-ranking officers of the Imperial Guard and Adeptus Astartes, though Ryza plasma pistols are, on occasion, issued to elite units that need heavy firepower in a portable form. Ryza-pattern plasma guns are rare and valued weapons, and Imperial Guard Storm Troopers are among the only forces that can reliably requisition them. Amongst those units they are prized as a man-portable weapon that can destroy armoured opponents and light vehicles equally well.

Firing Military Plasma Weapons

Military plasma weapons can be fired on two modes, normal or maximal fire. The second fires a higher-temperature burst of plasma over a greater distance, effectively doing far more damage at longer ranges. The drawback, however, is that firing a plasma weapon on maximal setting temporarily depletes the plasma reserves, necessitating a short recharge time to return the reserves to firing levels.

A military plasma weapon's firing settings may be switched between Normal and Maximal Mode once per turn as a free action. On Normal, the weapon operates per its given profile. On Maximal, the weapon gains +10 metres to range, +1d10 to Damage, and +2 to Penetration. If the weapon has the Blast Quality, it also gains +2 to the Blast. However, each Maximal shot takes 3 rounds of ammunition, and the weapon gains the Recharge Quality whenever fired on Maximal. (Note: once the weapon has been fired on Maximal, it must spend the next turn recharging, even if reset to Normal).

Ryza-pattern Storm Bolter

Storm weapons arose from experiments in combining weapons together to achieve greater rates of fire. The Ryza-pattern Storm Bolter links two bolters to form a single weapon that can shred most foes in a single burst. Rarely seen outside of the Adeptus Astartes, these relic-weapons are typically covered with scripture and purity seals that speak of their ancient origin.

Melee Weapons

In the Inquisition's long history of combating malefic, heretical, and xenos forces, it has found that all-too often the most reliable weapon proves to be the simple sword or hammer, rather than an impressive-looking firearm that is noisy, dependent on ammunition, and prone to failure. Of course, amongst the Inquisition's armoury, few of its melee weapons can truly be called 'simple.'

Ultima-pattern Arbites Power Maul

The power maul of the Adeptus Arbites is as much a symbol as it is a weapon, and one that is seared into the minds of petty criminals and serious recidivists alike. While rank-and-file arbitrators make do with simple shock-mauls, veteran proctors or the feared Judges prefer to wield something far more impressive.

The power maul is a versatile, one-handed weapon with two power settings. At its low setting, the maul's head delivers an electrical shock powerful enough to stun (and sometimes kill) its targets, just like a regular shock maul. At the high setting however, the energy forms a crackling power field that can sunder steel, armour, and flesh.

The user may switch settings on his power maul once per turn as a free action.

The Twelve Daemonhammers of the Crusade

Daemonhammers are more than simply a powerful and legendary weapon. When an Inquisitor wields one, he is wielding the very symbol of the Ordo Malleus. Daemonhammers are large, two-handed hammers made from rare ores and composites from humanity's ancient past. Their hafts are covered in hexagramic wards and seals of warding, while their heads are emblazoned with the burning sigil of the Inquisition, from which emanates a crackling power-field.

Daemonhammers are extremely rare, and granted only to the most trusted and respected Inquisitors of the Ordo Malleus. Although no details are known, it is rumoured that the number of Daemonhammers the Calixian Conclave possesses is very small. It is possible the only Daemonhammers in the Sector are those known as the Twelve Daemonhammers of the Crusade; legendary weapons said to be wielded by the Council of Twelve. These heroic daemonhunters are said to have fought at the forefront of the Angevin Crusade, and their weapons are in great demand amongst the Conclave's most powerful members.

Table 6-2: Melee Weapons

Name	Class	Rng	Dmg†	Pen	Wt	Special	Availability
Power Weapons							
Arbites Ultima-pattern Power Maul (Low Power)	Melee	—	1d10 I	0	3 kg	Shocking	Rare
Arbites Ultima-pattern Power Maul (High Power)	Melee	—	1d10+5 I	5	3 kg	Power Field	Rare
Daemonhammer	Melee	—	2d10+1 I††	8	5 kg	Power Field, Sanctified, Unwieldy	Extremely Rare
Power Stake	Melee	—	1d10+7 E	5	1 kg	Power Field, Unbalanced, Sanctified	Very Rare
Primitive Weapons							
Kineblades	Melee	WPB x5m	1d5 R†††	2	0.5 kg	—	Very Rare
Shock Weapons							
Suppression Shield	Melee	—	1d10 I	0	5 kg	Defensive, Recharge, Shocking,	Rare
Exotic Weapons							
Neuro-Gauntlet	Melee	—	1d10 R	8	2.5 kg	Tearing, Toxic	Extremely Rare

†Characters using melee weapons add their Strength Bonus to the Damage they inflict.
††Add double the user's Strength Bonus to Damage inflicted.
†††The psyker adds his Willpower Bonus instead of his Strength Bonus to Damage inflicted with kineblades.

It is said that there were actually 13 Daemonhammers, but that one has been long lost to the forces of the arch-enemy. If this is true, the person who could return such a weapon to the Holy Ordos would be lauded amongst its ranks.

When used against a creature with the Daemonic trait, the Daemonhammer's wielder scores Righteous Fury on any damage die result of 8–10, instead of only natural 10s as normal.

In addition, Daemonhammers are always Best craftsmanship weapons, granting +10 to the wielder's Weapon Skill Tests and +1 to all Damage rolls. That damage is included in the weapon's profile.

Damaskin Kineblades

A true telekine prefers not to stoop to using the mundane weapons of non-psychic 'blunts.' Instead, they rely on a weapon that is infinitely more elegant, concealable, and—under the control of the right mind—lethal.

In appearance, the kineblade can be best compared to a two-edged knife that lacks a hilt. The thin, strong blades taper to a needle point on either end, making them impossible for a non-psyker to pick up and wield. Underneath the outer layers of razor-sharp alloy, kineblades are inlayed with psycho-active materials, granting their user much greater control and finesse. In the hands of a trained user, a cloud of kineblades can fly, swoop, and slash as if they had minds of their own.

To use a kineblade, the wielder must manifest any psychic power that allows him to lift and move objects (Spectral Hands, Fling, Telekinesis, and Lift are all possibilities). The power is manifested as normal. However, instead of its usual effect, the user animates a number of kineblades equal to half his Psy Rating (rounding up). He must sustain the power if he wishes to animate the blades over multiple turns.

The blades hover and fly in mid-air. They must remain within the psyker's Willpower Bonus x5 metres. However, the psyker may move them anywhere within that zone as a free action (within reason, of course. Kineblades cannot move through solid objects). During the psyker's turn, he may attack with half his kineblades as a half action, or all of them as a full action (he may not make other attacks if he does this). To attack, he must make a Weapon Skill Test for each kineblade. He can attack multiple targets, and only suffers a –10 penalty for called shots.

Kineblades are also desirable for their easily-concealed nature. They can be woven into clothing, inlayed on equipment, or disguised in any number of other cunning ways. Any Search Tests made to discover a concealed kineblade are three degrees more difficult than they would be normally.

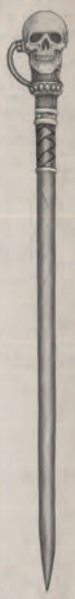
Neuro-Gauntlet

Neuro-Gauntlets are subtle weapons, but no less vicious for that. Prized by assassins and torturers, the neuro-gauntlet is a glove constructed from a flexible adamantine hyper-alloy, with neuro-toxin injectors fitted into each finger. Each injector is diamond-hard and incredibly sharp, allowing it to slice through armour and into the vulnerable flesh below.

The cuts from a neuro-gauntlet are deceptively small. However, the poisons they produce are some of the most potent and crippling toxins known to the Officio Assassorium. Neuro-Gauntlets have the Toxic Quality; if the target fails its Toughness Test, in addition to suffering damage as normal, all his Characteristics are halved for 1d5 minutes. This specific effect is not cumulative, and does not affect targets with the Daemonic or Machine Traits.

The toxins within the neuro-gauntlets may be replaced by different toxins (including one that mimics the effect of a Hallucinogen Grenade).

The Power Stakes of Witch Hunter Rykehuss



The Power Stake is another item in the Inquisitor's arsenal that is designed to be as much a symbol as a weapon. It takes the form of a solid metre-long shaft of cold-forged iron, tapering to a wicked point on one end. The other end is fashioned into a handle, containing a power field generator. All along the shaft are thousands of etched runes, each a prayer against the psyker and an invocation against the warp. The power stakes of Witch Hunter Rykehuss were specially commissioned by that noted Inquisitor to be a bane against the witch and psy-user. He has actually commissioned several dozen, which by now have been scattered throughout the Sector with his blessing, to do the God-Emperor's holy work.

If this weapon strikes a target with a Psy Rating, it deals an additional 1d10 damage for every point of Psy Rating the target possesses (so a target with Psy Rating 3 would take an additional 3d10 damage). A Power Stake of Witch Hunter Rykehuss is always considered a Best craftsmanship weapon, granting the user +10 to Weapon Skill Tests and +1 damage, which has already been included in the profile.

Hydraphur-pattern Suppression Shield

Suppression shields are common equipment for the Adeptus Arbites, although upon seeing their effectiveness, many other organisations and individuals have moved to obtain them. The suppression shield is both a bulwark and a weapon, a heavy slab of ceramite large enough for the wielder to take cover behind. Each has a built-in arc-lumin at the top, and a powerful shock-plate in the shield's centre. If the wielder strikes with the shield, he can discharge the shock-plate on impact, delivering a powerful electrical blow.

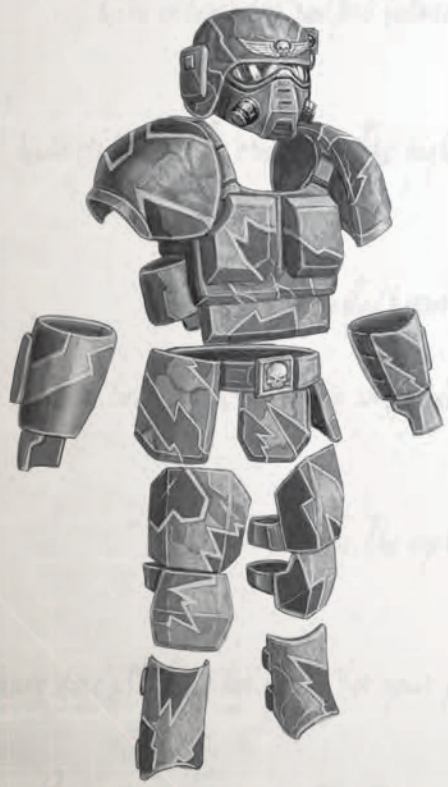
Suppression shields have the Recharge quality, since the shock-plate takes time to build to dangerous levels. It can still be used as a weapon during rounds where it is recharging, however,

in those cases it loses the Shocking quality and gains the Primitive quality. A suppression shield requires one hand to use, and provides +4 APs to that arm and the torso of the wielder. These APs do not become Primitive when the shield is Recharging.

Arbites suppression shields are also designed with lock-grips on the upper corners. These allow a character to fire one basic class weapon with one hand without penalty. Crusader suppression shields are designed for combating the malefic and warp-spawned powers, and are inscribed with hexagrammic wards. These grant the wielder a +20 bonus on Tests made to resist any psychic power that directly affects him. Additionally, a crusader shield grants double Armour Points against damage-dealing psychic powers, and keeps its AP value against attacks with the Warp Weapon quality.

Armour

The armour granted to the Inquisition's Throne Agents is a motley collection accumulated from any number of the Imperium's militant organisations, or specially commissioned by powerful Inquisitors. Often, such armour is designed to protect the wearer's soul as much as his body.



Cadian-pattern "Kasrkin" Storm Trooper Carapace

The Departmento Munitorum in the Calixis Sector has long adopted the Cadian pattern carapace armour for its Storm Trooper units, feeling that a design used by one of the Imperium's most vital fortress worlds has an implicit recommendation. Storm Troopers are elite and versatile troopers, and their armour must be equally versatile.

"Kasrkin" carapace is designed to be worn as a complete suit. It has an integral auspex unit with wrist display and attachments for a grav-chute. The carapace helmet is equipped with a rebreather, photo-visor, encrypted micro-bead, and a clip attachment on the side of the helmet for either a lamp pack or a vid-recorder. These systems are powered by a small charge pack (equivalent in size and cost to a lasgun charge pack) that must be replaced after a week of continuous use.

Hydraphur-pattern Judge's Carapace

The distinctive matte-black and red light carapace armour of the Arbites is as distinctive as it is intimidating, and the armour of an Arbites Judge is only more so. The armour of a Judge is designed to reflect his authority as the Lex Imperialis made manifest, and to sow terror in the criminal and malcontent. It shares the same basic pattern as Arbites carapace, but incorporates a storm coat and helm topped with a massive golden eagle.

Judge's carapace armour has a helmet equipped with an integral encrypted micro-bead, good quality photo-visor (granting him Dark Sight and allowing him to ignore photon-flash grenades), and a vox-amplifier (allowing the user to amplify his voice to near-deafening levels). A small stab-light can also be attached to the shoulder pads. These systems are powered by a small charge pack (equivalent in size and cost to a lasgun charge pack) that must be replaced after a week of continuous use.

Ignatus-pattern Power Armour

Although not as durable as the suits of power armour worn by the Adeptus Astartes, Ignatus Power Armour is a far step above the patterns of armour sold to dilettante nobles and mercantile cartels. Ignatus armour is produced by skilled Mechanicus artisans for the express purpose of equipping agents of the Inquisition. Many militant Inquisitors equip themselves with Ignatus armour, girding their bodies with ceramite just as they gird their souls with faith.

Table 6-3: Armour

Name	Location(s) Covered	AP	Wt	Availability
Cadian-pattern "Kasrkin" Storm Trooper Carapace	All	6	15 kg	Very Rare
Hyrdraphur-pattern Judge's Carapace	All	5	15.5 kg	Very Rare
Ignatus-pattern Power Armour	All	8	65 kg	Extremely Rare

Like all suits of power armour, Ignatus armour consists of an ingenious merging of thick ceramite protective plates and a complex system of muscle-like, electrically motivated, fibre-bundles to augment the user's movements and strength. This technology is so miraculous that one wearing power armour can move and fight as if he was unencumbered, his suit's augmetic systems compensating entirely for the armour's crushing weight and bulk.

Ignatus Power Armour provides the following benefits:

The suit's removable helmet contains the equivalent of integral Good quality photo-visors (providing the user with the Dark Sight Trait and making the wearer immune to the effects of photon flash grenades), micro-bead, and an integral auspex. These devices can be controlled by speaking to the armour's machine spirit, or the wearer can commune with his armour directly if he has a cerebral plug, MIU, or similar device.

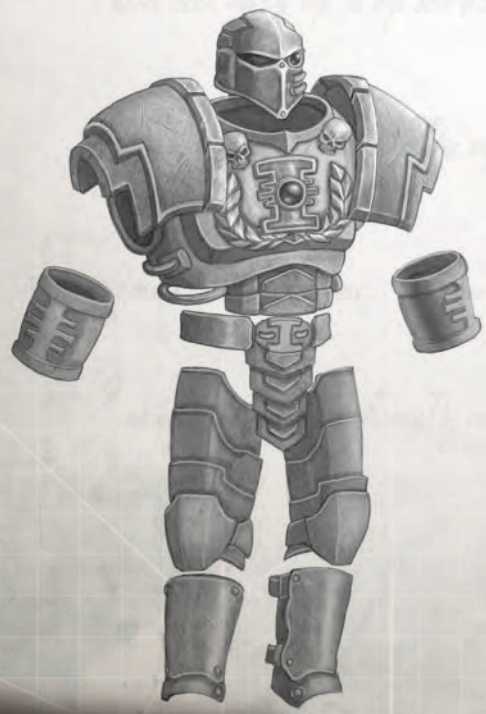
When the helmet is attached, the suit has a self-contained life sustainer that allows the bearer to ignore toxic atmospheres and gasses, and even survive underwater or in a vacuum. The system operates as long as the armour has power.

As long as the wearer is wearing the entire suit (besides the helmet), he gains +20 Strength and +1 to his movement value. As long as he is wearing at least the chest piece, backpack, and leggings, his size is increased one step (see page 332 in the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook).

The suit has an integral backpack power supply that can last for five days of continuous combat operations (if the power armour is not being used in combat, its power supply can last for far longer). If the suit becomes unpowered, it becomes a rigid tomb for the wearer, who must make a **Hellish (–60) Strength Test** to simply move. The helmet's machine spirit does open exterior vents automatically before powering down, so that its wearer does not suffocate.

The first suits of power armour date back to the God-Emperor's Crusades to reclaim the galaxy, and many are maintained for centuries or millennia as much religious relics as protective gear. Ignatus armour is no exception, and it is not uncommon to find suits encrusted with religious iconography, inscribed with holy runes of warding, or inlaid with subtle defensive systems.

Ignatus Power Armour is commonly inlaid with Hexagrammic Wards. This increases its rarity by one step. Hexagrammic Wards provide the wearer with a +20 bonus on any Test made to resist psychic powers or attacks, and doubles the armour's AP against psychic attacks dealing direct damage. Warp weapons (and similar devices) do not ignore the APs of hexagrammically warded armour.



FORCE FIELDS

Despite the undeniable benefits of personal armour, not every situation allows for a Throne Agent to be wearing full battle kit. Additionally, there are a multitude of weapons designed to punch through even the thickest power armour.

Fields, however, provide an altogether different level of protection. They have the twin benefits of being small and easily concealed, and have the ability to stop the most powerful attacks. Each is also a relic, centuries old if not older, and extremely difficult for the Tech-Priests to recreate. Therefore, they are only issued to the most valued members of the Imperium; Imperial Guard officers, Adeptus Astartes Chapter Masters, and senior members of the Holy Ordos.

Table 6-4: Force Fields

Name	Protection Rating	Wt	Availability
Refractor Field (Lathe-pattern)	30	0.5 kg	Very Rare
Rosarius (Maccabien)	50	0.5 kg	Extremely Rare
Icon of the Just (Daemonsbane)	55	0.5 kg	Near Unique
Null Blocker (Lathe-pattern)	60†	0.5 kg	Extremely Rare

†*Protects against psychic powers only.*

Field Rules

A character may only benefit from one field at a time, regardless of how many different fields he may have equipped. When a character wearing an active field is attacked, roll d100. If the result is less than or equal to the field's protection rating, the attack is nullified and has no effect on the protected character (although the attack may have an impact on the character's surroundings or other nearby characters, such as weapons with the Blast quality).

Fields may also overload. Compare the result of the d100 roll to avoid damage to the chart below. If the result is less than or equal to the listed number, the field is overloaded and ceases to function until it is recharged or repaired (requiring the Luminen Charge Talent or a successful **Very Hard (–30) Tech-Use Test)**.

Table 6-5: Force Field Overloading

Force Field Craftsmanship	Overload Roll
Poor	01–15
Common	01–10
Good	01–05
Best	1

Lathe-pattern Refractor Field

Refractor field devices see service with highly ranked and trusted Imperial agents of all kinds. No smaller than a pistol ammunition clip, they disperse the energy of an attack throughout the total area of the field effect. They are noticeable when activated as they surround the user with a hazy glow of light, making them easily detectible in low-lighting or at night.

Maccabien Rosarius

More than a simply a field projector, a Rosarius is an icon of the Imperial Creed, and is often only entrusted to the highest officials in the Ecclesiarchy. A Rosarius appears to be a square, stylised cross of adamantium or some other dense and durable metal, with a jewel or Ecclesiarchy symbol in the centre. It is worn around the neck or waist on prayer beads or a sash. However, within each is a powerful field mechanism. A Maccabien Rosarius is named because each includes a small chip of stone cut from the bedrock of that sacred world.

A Rosarius does not give off the same glow as a Refractor Field. However, they do convert some of the energy they observe into visible light, causing them to flash and spark when they are hit. They are also a holy icon, meaning they do not suffer the touch of the foul enemies of mankind. An Ecclesiarchical Rosarius always overloads on a roll of 20 or lower when wielded by a servant of the Ruinous Powers, daemon, alien, or heretic.

Daemonsbane Icon of the Just

Like a Rosarius, Icons of the Just are at once both powerful field mechanisms and symbols of the Ordo Malleus. They are granted to the Ordo's most skilled daemonhunters, to aid them in the work. Often they are worked into the shape of the Inquisitorial seal, though small hammers and iconographs of the God-Emperor are also popular.

Each Icon of the Just is blessed with wards and holy shields against the daemon, so much that the malefic powers cannot stand to touch the field it generates. Whenever a creature with the Daemonic Trait attacks someone bearing an Icon of the Just, that attack suffers a –10 penalty.

Lathe-pattern Null-blocker

These small, matte-black boxes do not attract attention. However, they are constructed with psy-inert ceramics, and filled with delicate circuitry that at least partially creates the affect generated by an untouchable. They are issued to members of the Inquisition to provide protection against psyker and warp-spawned opponents. They can be worn around the neck or affixed to armour, but can only shield one person.

Null-blockers behave like any other field, except that their field ability only applies to psychic powers. When the wearer is affected directly by a psychic power, he may make his field save. If he is successful, the power has no affect on him. Of course, the field is useless against indirect attacks from psychic powers, such as dropping a large stone on the wearer from a great height using telekinetics.

Gear

Throne Agents find they have access to many other strange and even archaic devices that may prove useful to them. These may be accumulated from the Inquisition, the Adeptus Terra, or even less-known cults and organisations.

Badge of Office

Though only Inquisitors can carry the Inquisitorial Rosette, the Calixian Conclave has made a habit of issuing trusted Inquisitorial Agents with a badge of office to identify them as working under the authority of the Holy Ordos. Depending on the need for secrecy and subtlety, this may take the form of an actual gene-coded badge with credentials, a concealable electoo on an arm or the torso, or even a message inscribed psychically in the Throne Agent's mind. In any case, these symbols of authority are difficult to forge and even more difficult to refute.

Whatever form a badge of office may take, it proves the bearer is an agent of the Holy Inquisition, with all the rights and responsibilities that entails. It is not, however, the Rosette of a full Inquisitor. When a Throne Agent procures his Badge of Office, he must choose which form it takes.

Backpack Ammo / Power Pack

The backpack ammo/power pack is designed to supply the user with additional ammunition for his personal weapon when on extended missions (or in situations when he doesn't want to spend time reloading). The backpack power pack

Table 6-6: Gear

Name	Wt	Availability
Badge of Office	—	Near Unique
Backpack Ammo / Power Pack	15 kg	Common
Cerebral Plug	—	Common
Grav-chute	20 kg	Scarce
Sentinel Array	12 kg	Near Unique
Spoor Targeter	—	Very Rare
Vindicare Spy Mask	2 kg	Near Unique
Vindicare Stealth Suit	5 kg	Near Unique

is worn like a normal backpack, but has half the standard carrying capacity. The other half is taken up by ammunition storage. For energy weapons, this is an additional source of power, flame weapons have large promethium tanks, while projectile weapons simply have stacks of bolter or stubber ammo. In all cases, feeder lines or power cables connect the ammunition storage to the bearer's weapon.

A backpack ammo/power pack replaces a ranged weapon's standard ammo capacity. Most pistols, basic weapons, and man-portable heavy weapons can use backpack ammo/power packs, however there are some exceptions. For example, the ammo for most Launcher weapons is too large and unwieldy to be supplied through feeder lines, and extremely powerful heavy weapons such as man-portable lascannons would drain all but the largest or most advanced backpack power pack in a single shot. The ammo capacity depends on the ammunition used. A backpack power pack can supply 300 shots for Las weapons (except the high-powered hellguns and hellpistols, which drain two charges for every shot), 80 shots for Plasma and Melta weapons, 200 rounds of ammunition for Bolt and SP weapons, or 60 shots for Flame weapons.

Cerebral Plug

Cerebral plugs and similar devices are a common sight in the Imperium, where the use of technology to augment (or repair) the human form is commonplace. A cerebral plug is installed in the skull, and links into the brain via several-dozen wires and electrodes. The other end is the actual 'plug,' which can be attached to any number of devices.

The cerebral plug allows an individual to link with devices that require a direct mind interface, providing no bonuses beyond this. Most electronic devices can be modified to work with cerebral plugs, allowing the user to use them while keeping his hands free (these are usually auspexes and other augury devices, cogitators, or extremely simple servitors).

Grav-chute

Grav-chutes are the Imperial Guard's preferred method of deploying elite troops during airborne assaults. Each 'chute' is actually a device worn in the same manner as a backpack, with two side-mounted counter-grav generators. Though these generators are not strong enough to fly with—unlike true jump-packs—they slow a person's plummeting descent to a survivable speed—most of the time. Usually, a chute's power reserves are exhausted after one jump, and must be recharged before being reused.

Grav-chutes are pre-programmed to deploy at a certain distance above the ground, usually several hundred meters. When the grav-chute deploys, roll 1d10. On a result of 1, the chute failed to deploy. The wearer may make an **Ordinary (+10) Agility Test** to reach the emergency deployment drogue and activate the chute manually. During the time this test takes, the wearer falls an additional 100 metres.

Once the chute is activated, the wearer falls to the ground relatively slowly, although he is a helpless target drifting in mid-air during that time. A grav-chute requires a minimum distance of 50 metres to deploy and slow the wearer to a survivable speed.

Sentinel Array

The Sentinel Array is a highly advanced sensor pack, combining motion trackers, heat sensors, and target acquisition systems. Through the miracles of ancient technologies, the device is only the size of a standard backpack, although it has several antennae and lens-viewers that extend above the bearer's shoulders.

The wealth of information provided by this incredible device cannot be displayed on a simple screen. Instead, it must be uploaded directly into the user's brain via a cerebral plug. This has a very real danger of overloading the user's mind with data. However, those who can master the Sentinel Array obtain a heightened awareness of their surroundings impossible to duplicate with mundane auspex devices, and are even able to track targets even through solid objects.

The Sentinel Array must be worn on the back, and may only be used by individuals with a cerebral plug, MIU interface, or similar device that allows the Array to connect directly with the brain. When activated, the user must immediately make an **Ordinary (+10) Willpower Test**. Whether or not he succeeds, he may still use the Array, but failure means he suffers 1d5 levels of fatigue as well.

The Sentinel Array's power supply lasts for 10 hours. While connected to it, the user gains +30 to Awareness Tests, Unnatural Senses with a range of 50 metres, can 'see' in all directions, and may detect targets through walls, undergrowth, trees, or other obstructions. Solid walls at least one metre thick (and without openings) block the Array. The user may also use the array to 'lock on' to a specific target as a Half Action (or he may load a specific bio-metric readout into the Array beforehand, in which case the Array locks on automatically). The Array may track that target up to 100 metres away, and always distinguishes between it and other targets.

Spoor Targeter

Highly rare and reserved for the Imperium's elite forces, Spoor Targeters are gun-scopes that contain highly spore-sniffers and miniaturised cogitators linked directly to their attached weapon. These targeters inhibit their guns from firing when pointed directly at someone they recognise as an ally, making it literally impossible for their user to shoot his comrades in the swirling confusion of combat.

A Spoor Targeter may be loaded with the profiles of up to 10 allies (a process that takes 10 minutes and a **Routine (+20) Tech Use Test)**. Once an ally's profile has been loaded into the targeter, the attached weapon cannot shoot that ally. Even if pointed directly at the ally, the weapon simply refuses to fire. This means the user may fire into a melee combat involving those allies and suffer no penalties to his BS Test. None of the weapon's shots hit anyone who's profile is loaded into the targeter.

Spoor targeters are scopes, and only one scope may be attached to a weapon at a time. Any pistol, basic, or heavy weapon may be equipped with a Spoor Targeter, provided that weapon does not have the Flame, Blast, or similar qualities. Installing a Spoor Targeter requires some modifications to the weapon, in the form of wires, circuitry, one hour, and a **Difficult (–10) Tech Use Test**.

Vindicare Spy Mask

Issued to Imperial Assassins of the Vindicare Temple, this wargear's systems are incredibly advanced and sophisticated. It is said that the design for the Spy Mask is little-understood even by the Tech-Priests of Mars. The spy mask contains cartridges of concentrated food and water for extended operations, and a multi-channel comm sensor (both vox and pict) for monitoring enemy communications. Its main feature is a wide-spectrum visor which can pick out heat and energy sources at tremendous distances.

The mask includes a built-in auspex, advanced high-quality magnoculars, good-quality photo-visor (granting the wearer the Dark Sight Trait and making him immune to the effects of photon flash grenades), pict-recorder, re-breather, and vox-caster. In addition, the wearer may re-roll any failed Perception-based Test, and does not suffer a change to the range bracket when firing a ranged weapon at a target protected by Cameleoline.

It should be noted that the equipment of a Vindicare Assassin is often gene-coded to that individual and no other, and that it would take a great deal of effort—and a **Very Hard (–30) Tech-Use and Medicae Test**—to adjust the gene-coding for another user.

Vindicare Stealth Suit

This item of wargear appears as a matte-black bodyglove, specially fitted for the individual Assassin. The Vindicare Temple has a long-standing pact with the Adeptus Mechanicus to craft these exquisite suits, each one combining Cameleoline-laced materials with a complex version of "synskin." This material bonds with the Assassin's body, enhancing his reflexes and protecting him from poisons, gases, and other hazards of the battlefield. Each suit is supple and silent, allowing the Assassin to move with perfect freedom whilst still retaining its protective qualities.

The Stealth Suit may not be worn under any form of armour. It provides 3 points of Armour to all locations and incorporates all the benefits of synskin. The Stealth Suit grants a +10 bonus to Dodge Tests and to Toughness tests to resist any form of toxin, and a +20 bonus to Concealment and Silent Move Tests. The wearer may attempt a Concealment Test as a Half Action instead of a Full Action, and may make the attempt even whilst being observed. If the wearer remains stationary, he counts as being one range bracket further away for all ranged attacks against him. The Stealth Suit makes the wearer invisible to the Dark Sight Trait, preysense, and infa-red sensors of all kinds. This item is manufactured at the Best craftsmanship level.

It should be noted that the equipment of a Vindicare Assassin is often gene-coded to that individual and no other, and that it would take a great deal of effort—and a V**ery Hard (–30) Tech-Use and Medicae Test**—to adjust the gene-coding for another user.

Table 6-7: Unusual Ammo

Name	Availability
Executioner Shotgun Shells	Very Rare
Exitus Rounds	Near Unique
Exitus Hellfire Rounds	Near Unique
Exitus Shield-Breaker Rounds	Unique
Exitus Turbo-Penetrator Rounds	Unique

UNUSUAL AMMO

A selection of unusual ammunition often acquired for (and used by) Throne Agents is found below.

Executioner Shotgun Shells

These rare and specialised shells (whose use is often limited to the upper echelons such as Judges and important members of the Castigators and Mortiurges of the Adeptus Arbites) contain miniaturised propulsion and stabilisation systems allowing the shell to lock on and track its target. The mechanisms that achieve this are little understood and extremely hard to replicate, and so remain within the purview of those Magos-Munitorium that provide the Arbites with their sanctioned and ordained arms.

Effects: The weapon loses the Scatter Quality, but adds +4 to its base Damage and +1 to its base Penetration. Ballistic Skill Tests for shots that miss at short or standard range may be re-rolled, and the defensive value of any cover for your target is ignored. When firing Executioner rounds, the weapon may not be used for Semi-Automatic or Automatic fire.

Weapons: Shotgun, Pump Action Shotgun, Combat Shotgun.

Exitus Ammunition

All Exitus ammunition (including all special rounds) contain miniaturised cogitator targeting-spirits that make them nearly impossible to avoid. Any attempt to Dodge an attack from an Exitus rifle or pistol suffers a –20 penalty.

Exitus rounds can also be programmed to self-destruct. The rounds are disintegrated, consumed as if destroyed by a virus, and leave no trace behind.

Special Exitus Ammunition

Vindicare Assassins are normally issued a set of special ammunition when sent on an assignment. These unusual shells are very rare, each extremely difficult and time-consuming to craft. Therefore, the Assassin is usually given a single shell of each type. Occasionally, other special rounds (such as the hyphosphus incendiaries) are issued in their place.

The ammunition described below may only be utilised by the Exitus Rifle and the Exitus Pistol.

Shield-breaker Round

This round is a specially-treated with a psychically-charged imprint, and contains a complex circuit of anti-phase technology that is little understood even by the Mechanicus.
Effects: This ammunition ignores the Daemonic Trait, any protection from a Psychic Power, and the protection from any Field item. When this round hits a target utilising a protective Psychic Power and/or an item with the Field quality, that Psychic Power and/or Field ceases to function for 1 Round.

Hellfire Round

The Hellfire round has devastating effects on organic matter—its core is filled with a vial of mutagenic acid. Thousands of armour-piercing micro-needles inject the target with this acid upon impact, eating away flesh and metal alike with horrific speed.
Effects: The weapon inflicts +1d10 damage and may inflict Righteous Fury on any damage die results of a 9 or 10. In addition, the weapon gains the Tearing Quality.

Turbo-penetrator Round

The turbo-penetrator round is a hypervelocity, adamantine-jacketed shell surrounding a special magno-sealed flux needle. These special rounds are renowned for their ability to pierce nearly any armour, and the hypervelocity shell wreaks havoc upon any target, often by the secondary effects of its passage through the target's molecular structure.
Effects: The weapon inflicts +2d10 Damage and adds +5 to its Penetration. In addition, the weapon ignores any increase to a target's base Toughness Bonus from the Unnatural Toughness Trait (but does not ignore the Daemonic Trait, nor the Toughness Bonus associated with that Trait).

IMPLANTS AND AUGMETICS

Plasma-cutter Mechadendrite

Plasma-cutters are heavy industrial tools designed to cut through the thickest metal and ceramite plates with focused, searing starfire. Tech-Priests find these devices exceedingly useful in the completion of their duties, and often attach them to modified mechadendrites. In desperate situations, plasma-cutters can also be overloaded to serve as improvised yet deadly weapons.

A plasma-cutter is a mechadendrite fuelled by photonic hydrogen stowage-flasks. It can cut through a metre of adamantine plating up to 20 centimetres thick every minute (thinner material can be cut through faster). In addition, a Tech-Priest with a plasma-cutter mechadendrite may boost the power past its safety tolerances to use it as a weapon. The Tech-Priest may use this mechadendrite as his Reaction for the round, or as a Half Action Attack during his turn (so long as the mechadendrite only makes one attack per round). When used to make an attack, the mechadendrite counts as a Ryza Pattern Plasma Pistol (see page 140) with a range of 10 metres and no option to fire on Maximal Mode.

The plasma-cutter may operate for 20 minutes of cutting, or may fire 40 shots before it must be refuelled. The Mechadendrite Use (Gun) Talent applies to this mechadendrite.

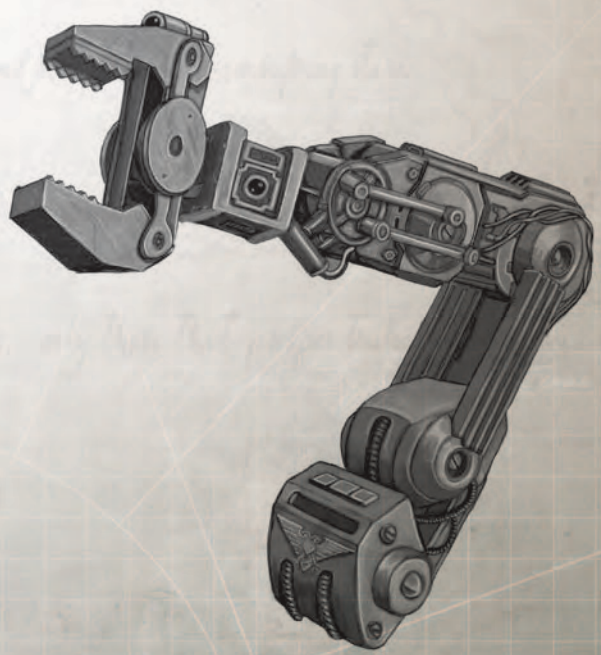
Servo-arm

Adepts of the Mechanicus working with heavy machinery or other particularly large devices—such as the Enginseers of the Imperial Guard—are often required to move and manipulate weights far in excess of anything their fleshy frame could handle. Therefore, may of them install servo-arms onto their cyber-mantles.

Servo-arms are vastly stronger versions of manipulator mechadendrites, and although they are both shoulder mounted, a properly constructed servo-arm also has stabilisation and support systems running throughout a Tech-Priest's body. Though they serve roughly the same function, a Tech-Priest with a servo-arm (and the proper bracing and stabilisation systems) can lift one side of a Rhino APC to repair a broken tread link.

A servo-arm is a shoulder-mounted mechadendrite that can extend to a length of 1.5 metres. When using his servo-arm, a Tech-Priest uses the arm's Strength value of 65 with Unnatural Strength (x2) rather than his own (this value cannot be increased or decreased through devices or abilities that affect the Tech-Priest's strength). The limb is equipped with gripping and crushing pincers or mandibles that allow the Tech-Priest to pick up and lift heavy objects or anchor himself to a suitable anchor point as a Free Action. In addition, the servo-arm can be used as a deadly (albeit improvised) weapon. The Tech-Priest may use this mechadendrite as his Reaction for the round, or as a Half Action Attack during his turn (so long as the mechadendrite only makes one attack per round). This attack is made using the Tech-Priest's Weapon Skill at a –10 penalty, and deals 2d10+12 Impact Damage with Pen 2.

The Mechadendrite Use (Utility) Talent applies to this mechadendrite.



VII

Serving the Inquisition

The Holy Remit

•

Sanctions

•

Bearers of the Seal

•

Factions

•

Becoming an Inquisitor

•

The Inquisitorial Rosette

•

The Ordos

•

Interaction

Chapter VII: Serving the Inquisition

So great has been the calamitous nature of these times, and such is the malice of the heretics, that there has been nothing ever so clear in our statement of faith; nothing they, at the instigation of the enemy of the human race, have not defiled by some sort of error. For this cause, the holy Inquisition hath made especial care to condemn and anathematise the principal errors of the heretics of our time, and to deliver and teach the true and Imperial doctrine; even as It has condemned, and anathematised, and decreed.

–Declaration of the Inquisitorial Mandate, Inquisitorial representative, Senatorum Imperialis.

Throughout the long, dark, bloodstained millennia that the Imperium has endured, there has existed a cadre of men and women empowered to undertake any course of action necessary to ensure the continued survival of the Domains of the God-Emperor of Mankind. Some say that the bearers of this terrible burden walk in the shadow of the Emperor Himself, standing removed, patient, and still, as the Saviour of Mankind united the benighted and scattered worlds of Man during the Great Crusade. Others believe that these individuals came only later, long after the glories of the Great Crusade had been laid low by the galactic cataclysm that was the Horus Heresy. In all likelihood, the truth of the matter is buried beneath the dust of aeons, or sealed within vaults that none may enter, upon pain of death.

The Inquisition, or to give the institution one of its many archaic titles, the Holy Orders of the Emperor's Inquisition, is at once one of the most powerful and most secretive of the myriad institutions of the Imperium. Unlike the militant arms of the Adeptus Terra, such as the Imperial Guard and the Imperial Navy, the Inquisitors do not combat their many and varied foes through the application of military power. Instead, the Inquisition employs individuals of unparalleled skill and devotion, to hunt out the signs of the deeds of Mankind's foes: the enemy within, the enemy without, and the enemy beyond. Once discovered, the enemy is eradicated according to the methods and the whim of the Inquisitor and the nature of the threat. Some are faced down in single combat, while others are ground to dust as entire crusades are launched, millions of the Imperium's warriors giving their lives that billions might live.

None can say how many Inquisitors there are at large in the Imperium, for while some go about their business with bombastic zeal, others move silently in the shadows, never revealing their true identity. Plenty of worlds, indeed many sectors, may never be visited by an Inquisitor, at least to the knowledge of planetary governments and sector authorities. Others, the Calixis Sector being a case in point, play host to significant numbers, so seething are they with heresy, corruption, and war.

THE HOLY REMIT

"You accuse me of being a madman. What right have you to judge what is sane and what is not? I have fought with the shadows on the edge of your vision. I have seen the faces that laugh at you in your nightmares. I have felt the foetid breath that issues from the mouth of hell itself. I have heard the silent voices that make your spine tingle with dread. I have entered the realms between worlds where there is no time or place. I have clashed with creatures the sight of which would sear your soul to the core. I have bested horrors that chill with a gaze and tempt unreasoning terror. I have faced death eye-to-eye and blade to blade. I have stared into the eyes of insanity and met their all-consuming stare. I have done all this for you; for your protection and the guarantee of a future for Mankind. And yet you accuse me of being a madman, you, who have never had your sanity tested so sorely. What right have you to call me heretic and blasphemer, who have not heard the whisper of dark gods in your ear? You are weak. Vulnerable. Human in your frailty. I am strong, yet you still judge me for my sins, you who art most sinful to the heart. Only the insane have the strength enough to prosper; only those that prosper truly judge what is sane."

–Inquisitor Felroth Gelt

The mission undertaken by the Inquisition is far-reaching, yet ill defined. There are scant limits on its powers, meaning that threats can be reacted to as best befit the situation in the mind of the Inquisitor on the spot. In addition, the Inquisition is, at least formally, a very flat organisation, with little in the way of formal ranks. All of this is necessary that the Inquisition may take whatever action is needed to ensure the continued existence of the Imperium of Man.

The remit of the Inquisition knows no formal, and few practical, limits. Should an Inquisitor discover the worship of proscribed gods amongst the population of a hive, he has the power to raze the entire structure to ashes, should he deem it necessary. Were an Inquisitor to uncover a planetary government in the thrall of mind-eating xenos, he would be quite within the bounds of his authority to instigate a cull of the world's entire ruling class. The remit of the Inquisition empowers it, indeed, requires of it, any act, no matter how ruthless, to protect the future of Mankind.

The threats to the Imperium are manifold, ranging from the disastrous consequences of neglecting to control emergent psykers, to consorting with aliens.

Rebellion

"Keep them hungry, keep them weary, keep them sore. Feed them, pamper them, succour them, and treachery shall be your thanks."

–Duke Khalanak (deposed), on the subtle art of governance.

The Imperium is beset by war on all fronts. Tragically, the majority of the blood shed is human, as brother turns against brother in the savage battle for survival. Civil unrest is ruthlessly suppressed wherever it may appear; the governments of many worlds are ill-equipped defend themselves should an entire population take arms against an oppressive regime. The reasons for such uprisings are many and varied, from starvation to injustice. Such conditions are the norm on most of the Imperium's worlds, and so rebellion is common. Such uprisings are often led by charismatic leaders, gifted with the ability to turn the hearts of thousands, even millions of people. Under the influence of such men and women, the masses rise up, casting down the symbols of the oppressor's power, and slaying those who have ruled over them for so long. In short order, anarchy prevails, and the world's productivity plummets. Unless the leaders of the rebellion can impose a new order, the world's tithes suffer and, whether in a year or in a century, the Imperium's retribution is forthcoming.

The Inquisition's response to a rebellion is normally swift and brutal. The instigators are targeted by kill-teams and assassins, or captured, to be publicly executed in order to put down the rebellion. After the event, it is likely the Inquisitor seeks answers as to how such an event was allowed to happen, and a tireless investigation may follow. The Inquisitor's enquiries may highlight weakness and incompetence at levels of a planetary government's structure, resulting in show-trials and public executions. The blame may even be placed at the very top, the world's Imperial Commander being executed as an example to those who succeed him.

There are times, however, when a rebellion may be allowed to occur, or when the Inquisition itself is behind events. Such may occur when an Inquisitor decides that a world's government must be replaced, for whatever reason, but they have not the immediate resources to bring this about. Who knows how many charismatic demagogues have been Inquisitors or their agents, promising the downtrodden deliverance from a corrupt government and leading the masses in revolution.

On other occasions, a rebellion has occurred before any off-world institutions have become aware of the situation. The Imperium is so vast, and communications so bedevilled by the capricious nature of astro-telepathy, that the Adeptus Terra may never hear of the event. So long as tithes are forthcoming, the Imperium may have no reason to suspect anything is amiss. Even should such an event come to the attention of the Imperium at large, and a subsequent Inquisitorial investigation be launched, it may be determined that there is no reason to revert to the previous regime.

Secession

"Truly it is said, the Imperium is far greater than the sum of its many parts. Without the humble Agri-World, the Hive World starves. Without the Hive World, the Forge World falls silent. Without the Forge World, the Garrison Worlds fall. Without the Garrison Worlds, Mankind is lost. Allow but a single world to slip through your fingers, and all is lost. Who then is the traitor?"

–Prefect Sallanus

While rebellion describes the population of a world rising against that world's rightful government, secession describes a government rebelling against the Imperium itself. The Imperium exercises very little influence over the manner in which a world governs itself, so long as tithes are delivered and fealty is maintained, and so few Imperial Commanders have any reason to dream of independence from the ultimate rule of Terra. Yet, some planetary governors become so obsessed with their own sense of destiny that they commit the direst of crimes—secession from the Imperium and the rule of the Adeptus Terra.

Such a crime cannot go unpunished, for each year the Imperium loses untold worlds to the ravages of war. Although new worlds are always being colonised, many fail, and it takes centuries for a subsistence-level colony to become, for example, a productive hive world. Humanity can only prevail if every world stands together against the horrors of the galaxy. Plagues of psykers can only be contained if the Black Ships of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica can enact their culls. An Imperial Commander that withdraws from the fraternity of worlds can expect no quarter and no mercy from the Inquisition. His line is eradicated, his name stuck from all records.

The Inquisition maintains a close watch upon those Imperial Commanders it suspects of harbouring such ambitions. In all likelihood, agents have infiltrated the governor's staff, occupying key positions from which an attempt at secession can be crushed. If the governor is a popular figure amongst his subjects, the mission may be tantamount to suicide, for an assassin is forced to escape from an entire world of hostile, mourning secessionists. In such instances, the Inquisition may attempt to discredit rather than assassinate the rogue governor, slowly turning his people against him. They can then establish a replacement, supporting the installation of a more pliant leader loyal to the Adeptus Terra.

There are several bodies at large within the Imperium that attempt to keep a watchful eye upon those Imperial Commanders who might one day betray their oaths. The Orders Famulous of the Adepta Sororitas is one such body, for one of their many tasks is to monitor the bloodlines of the Imperium's noble families. Should any hint of genetic deviancy or xenos taint come to the notice of the Orders Famulous, then the matter is quickly referred to the Ordo Hereticus and an execution cell dispatched. On many occasions, such a cell has returned from a successful mission with the body of its victim, which, during autopsy, has been revealed to be concealing all manner of mutation. Only the constant vigilance of the Orders Famulous and their close cooperation with the Witch Hunters ensures such tainted bloodlines do not one day inherit the entire Imperium.

One body within the Ordos Calixis even goes so far as to attempt to predict or divine which of the Imperium's servants will cast off their oaths. These are the Ocularians, a faction unique to the Calixis Sector, who are entirely absorbed with the need to control the future. Ocularian Inquisitors, particularly those within the Ordo Hereticus, have been known to execute Imperial Commanders with no evidence of a crime being committed. So secretive and

Inquisitor Lords

The Inquisition is an institution of individuals, each ultimately charged with the defence of the Imperium. How each Inquisitor chooses to go about the prosecution of their mission is first and foremost a matter of individual conscience. Hence, all Inquisitors are considered equals. Yet, some attain the title 'Inquisitor Lord'. As with so many aspects of the Inquisition, there appears to be no consistent criteria for such a title, and indeed, an individual who in one sector commands great respect from their peers may not be addressed as a lord elsewhere. In the Calixis Sector at least, the title Inquisitor Lord is used more as a term of (sometimes begrudging) respect, an acceptance of superiority and indication that the greater number of members of the Ordos Calixis hold the Inquisitor in some esteem. The words of an Inquisitor Lord are heeded, even amongst the most bitter of rivals, for to speak against such an individual may prove costly for those in opposition. Inquisitor Silas Marr is a case in point. This worthy of the Ordos Calixis is called Lord by many, yet despite his influence, there are those who refuse to do so.

paranoid is this faction that its members rarely explain their actions—they do not have to, for they are, after all, bearers of the Inquisitorial Rosette. The truth of the matter is that by way of Ætheromancy, Sciomancy or any one of a dozen equally esoteric practices, the Ocularians have determined that the individual will one day turn traitor. Far better, so the Ocularians reason, to forestall such treachery long before it can blossom, regardless of the immediate consequences.

Heresy

"Be warned, scion of Humanity! The Universe is a large and terrifying place and you are but a mote of dust. But let not your seeming insignificance blind you to duty! Horrors unbounded sit 'neath the thin veneer of civilisation which Mankind has taken to the stars. Secret dark terrors dance on the edge of perception, hidden monsters that wait and plot for their day in the starlight. Every man, woman, and child throughout the Imperium carries within them the twin seeds of our defeat. The unstable gene is a mutant beast waiting to erupt, the unstable thought a Heretic Apparent. The Mutant bears his Heresy on the outside, the Traitor hides his in his soul. Trust no one! Fear all! Any one of your fellows may carry the mark. The Will of the Emperor alone cannot protect you. You must be strong! You must join the crusade and take your place in the unceasing struggle!"

–Inquisitor Tannenberg, of the Ordo Hereticus

Every world in the Imperium maintains its own traditions, culture, dialects, and idiosyncrasies, and even those institutions that span systems, sectors, and regions display a vast divergence. What constitutes heresy on one world might be the norm on another, with all manner of outlandish traditions or prejudices holding sway from one world to the next.

Heresy, then, is in the eye of the beholder. Yet, if that beholder is an Inquisitor, an individual with unlimited remit and nigh-inexhaustible assets, then the consequences of being declared a heretic can be terrible indeed.

Perhaps the most common accusation of heresy relates to blasphemy against the Emperor. In a galaxy where the Emperor is worshipped in as many different modes as there are planetary cultures, blasphemy of one type or another can be found at every turn. The most zealous of Inquisitors see heresy everywhere they look, but most develop a keen eye, seeing past the superficial, cultural mores to the underlying foundations of a population's faith. So long as the essential core of belief is consistent—the knowledge that the Emperor lives and watches over Mankind from afar—then massive divergence in the modes of worship is regarded as normal. But when preachers start teaching that the Emperor has turned his face from Mankind, alarm bells start to ring. When demagogues claim that the Emperor has perished, then action must be taken, lest the worship of gods other than the Emperor take root.

There exist many other types of heresy, many relating to the structures and doctrines that bind the Imperium together as a conglomeration of institutionally autonomous worlds. It is comparatively rare for the culture of an independent world to be labelled heretical, so much variance is there between worlds. Those institutions that span the entire Imperium, however, can become conservative in the extreme, sporting to their own cultural identities, mores and doctrines. Heresy within the Administratum for example might take the form of an Arch-Overseer of Records attempting to introduce an entirely new cataloguing system; heresy in the Officio Munitorum might take the form of a Lord-Quartermaster of Arms deciding to change the ammunition used by the warriors of an entire sector. Such institutions are incredibly reactionary, following generation upon generation of procedure and never daring to question the way things are. Such changes do take place, but only at a tectonic pace, and invariably as a result of entropy or ignorance. It is not uncommon for Throne Agents to become involved with the institutional heresies of the various divisions of the Adeptus Terra, for often a seemingly insignificant twisting of dogma hides something far darker, and more dangerous to the Imperium.

Corruption

"Greed and avarice lies ever at the heart of Man. Both must be purged, for only Faith should reside within."

In essence, the sin of corruption takes place when an individual, whether Imperial Commander or lathe-serf, places his own desires above his duty to the Emperor. Although a simple concept, corruption, as with heresy, is very much in the eye of the beholder. It is self-evident that the Imperium is seething with corruption and selfishness, from the spire-noble whose house relies on slavery to maintain its position, to the merchant prince who dines on fine liquor shipped in from light years away while the beggars on the streets below starve to death. The Inquisition has not the luxury to become diverted by such notions as equality or rights. It must maintain a ruthlessly strategic view, concentrating on those corrupt individuals and organisations whose activities threaten the wider Imperium.

Imperial Commanders who divert resources from their tithes to swell their own coffers, militia leaders who withhold the best of their warriors from the founding of a new Imperial Guard regiment, mining combines that allow output to drop. These are all crimes that, if not detected by any of the myriad of Administratum oversight bodies, eventually draw the notice of the Inquisition, for each has a consequence and an effect upon the Imperium as a whole.

Corruption is held by many within the Inquisition to be a sure indicator of deeper heresies. To turn from the Emperor's light entirely takes a great effort, even courage of a sort, but the process might in some cases happen in small increments, without the individual even realising. What starts out as petty criminal activity might eventually turn into full-scale recidivism. One who trades in stolen goods may one day come into possession of cursed artefacts, and even come under their sway. Sometimes what appears to be a relatively harmless criminal enterprise is, in fact, a front for the activities of cults, rebels or even xenos infiltrators.

The agents of the Inquisition cannot possibly hope to maintain a watch upon the multitude of criminal activities and organisations that flourish throughout the Imperium. Instead, they must allow the Enforcers and the Adeptus Arbites to do their jobs. Many Inquisitors maintain networks of agents and informers within these, and other organisations, so that they might receive early warning of the actions of their enemies.

SANCTIONS

"Illuminate every shadow, lift every stone. Let no doubt, no mercy, stay your hand in the execution of your duty. To show forgiveness to those who would blaspheme against the Emperor is to commit such blasphemy yourself."

The Inquisition has the remit to investigate all of these matters and a great many more. Many Inquisitors become adept in a wide range of mission profiles, but others gravitate towards the workings of particular enemy groupings. These are the Ordos, and they are discussed in depth further on, for the crimes of the foes of Mankind are many and varied. When heresy, corruption or any other sin against the Emperor is uncovered, the Inquisition has the power, indeed the obligation, to enact the vengeance of the Imperium, to combat the threat and to ensure it never rears its head again. The Inquisition is nigh unlimited in the acts it can undertake in the punishment of its foes, but a few of the more conventional sanctions are listed below.

Execution

"By your deeds I condemn you. By my hand I end your wickedness and render your soul unto the Emperor's judgement."

Many an Inquisitor's investigation ends in an execution, but whether it is a clean, merciful kill or a tortuous death at the hands of an Excoriator depends very much on the views of the Inquisitor and the nature of the accused's crimes. Some Inquisitors hold the view that a full confession rendered without delay earns the criminal the right to a quick death, while others hold that such a death is meaningless unless accompanied by the cleansing effect of physical pain. The Inquisition has invented many terrible and ingenious methods of ending a criminal's life, from the quick and painless device that kills in the blink of an eye, to machineries that rend and flense yet sustain life indefinitely. The Inquisition has been in existence for ten thousand years, perhaps more, and has had plenty of time to develop the most fiendish devices imaginable.

Whatever the nature, the execution is likely to take place at the conclusion of some form of trial, or at least the deliverance of a verdict. There is no centralised book of law by which the agents of the Inquisition must operate, instead determining guilt and punishment by their own judgement. Some conduct exhaustive trials, replete with pomp and circumstance, in which an army of officials, scribes, clerks, and archivists attend to the process. Such trials might last for years, but despite the appearance, it is unlikely that the accused has any chance of refuting the evidence against him, unless he occupies a very

high rank indeed. The aim of such a trial is not to establish the fact of the accused's guilt, but to uncover its full extent. Dozens, even hundreds or thousands of witnesses are paraded before the presiding Inquisitor, each denouncing the accused with increasingly fervent testimony, hoping no doubt that they do not become entangled in the intricate web of guilt and intrigue themselves.

Other Inquisitors prefer a far less formal process. Having determined the guilt of the accused, they may simply record judgement and proceed to the execution with no right of appeal or representation. Again, only a very highly ranked individual would have any hope of appeal, so long as his own peers have not abandoned him to his fate.

The execution itself might be carried out in a dark cell with no witnesses, or it might occur very publicly, before a throng of millions rounded up and forced to witness the event. The manner often depends on the message or lesson the Inquisition wishes to impart and whether or not they wish their involvement to be noted. Often, a public execution of a known rebel leader discourages their fellows, but other times it may foment further rebellion should the individual come to be regarded as martyr. Oftentimes, the trial or interrogation of the accused results in many more rebels or heretics being rounded up and executed alongside him. In such cases, many thousands may burn upon the pyre, entire generations of heretics being expunged once and for all so that no trace of their crimes survives to pass on to the next.

Regime Change

"One or a thousand, I will kill them all."

–Vindicare Assassin cognomen-designate LIIVI

Although each of the Imperium's worlds is responsible for its own rule, the Inquisition has it within its power to effect a change of regime where deemed necessary. Following the putting down of a rebellion or the execution of a rebel leadership, the Adeptus Terra ensures that a new, loyal government is installed. It may fall to the agents of the Inquisition to impose this change.

No two worlds are governed in exactly the same manner. Some are ruled by councils of elders, others by reigning noble families. Some are ruled by theocracy and others still by the strongest of a world's warlords. The Administratum takes little interest in the specifics, and has no concern for the rights of those being ruled. All that matters is that one individual holds the position of Imperial Commander, in whom the rulership of a world is vested. However their position is maintained, Imperial Commanders exercise a massive amount of power, but they must also bear a prodigious weight of authority, for should they be judged weak or corrupt by the Adeptus Terra, they may find the Administratum moving in to replace them. It is not uncommon for the Administratum to call upon the Inquisition in such cases, although it may not prove necessary, for agents of the Inquisition might already be active upon the world in question.

A regime change may be affected by way of covert activity, overt denouncement, or by outright conquest with an Inquisitor leading an entire army of Imperial Guard or company of Space Marines against the denounced ruler. It may be the case that only the ruler himself is deposed, to be replaced by an heir fully under the control of the Inquisition. It may be that an entire ruling body is removed—there are records held in the archives of the Tricorn Palace that describe gene-keyed virus strains being released to wipe out every member of a hereditary ruler's line. In some cases, the entire apparatus of government is dismantled, and uncounted numbers of civil officials purged, to be replaced by a sizeable Administratum Mission that stays in place for many years to come.

Assassination

"One shot at midnight, or one million at dawn; the scalpel or the sledgehammer. Both are equally effective tools. It all depends on what you intend to achieve…"

–Inquisitor Felroth Gelt

Assassination is a tool used extensively throughout the Imperium, from the lowliest, most savage hive gang to the most rarefied height of government. Countless renegade Imperial Commanders, rebel leaders and arch-traitors have been removed from power by way of a well-placed, high velocity bullet, a silent knife in the dark, or a drop of lethal poison. Assassins are amongst the most valued of the Inquisition's servants, for they not only prosecute their duties with ruthless efficiency, but they do so in such a manner as to inspire fear and loyalty throughout every level of the Imperium's vast machine of authority.

An entire institution exists in order to service this dire necessity—the Officio Assassinorum. A secretive order divided into highly specialised temples, the Officio Assassinorum brings to justice those whose very existence has been judged counter to the good of the Imperium. By far the most common of targets are rogue officials such as Imperial Commanders, generals, apostate clerics and Adepts, but the Assassinorum extends its reach to any all enemies of Mankind, including the alien and the fiend.

The Inquisition maintains ancient links with the Officio Assassinorum, allowing it to enact ritual protocols and call upon the aid of the legendary Temple Assassins. Which Temple is called upon depends on the nature of the threat and the manner in which the execution must be enacted—a sniper's bullet is fired by an assassin of the Vindicare Temple, for example, while the Callidus Temple produces shape-changers able to deliver death while disguised as anything from a trusted bodyguard to a favoured concubine. It is said that none are beyond the reach of the Temple Assassin, but certainly rogue Imperial Commanders and the like have invested the resources of entire worlds in a vain effort to bar their doors from death. None have succeeded, dying alone behind metres of rockrete, their last days spent in terror, paranoia and insanity as the knowledge of death's approach consumes them.

Aside from the nigh-mythical Temple Assassins, many other types exist. Most commonly found in the employ of an Inquisitor are the Death Cult Assassins. These ritual killers enact a unique brand of worship of the God-Emperor, making their venerations in the shedding of the blood of the Emperor's foes. Many individual Inquisitors maintain their own connections with various Death Cults, ensuring they can call upon the services of lethal killers sworn exclusively to them.

Outright War

"In war we discover the essential truth of ourselves. We know what we truly are, and what we must do for the sake of all Humanity. Embrace that truth, make it your creed, and no enemy can stand before us."

The galaxy of the 41st Millennium is riven with war. Many wars are fought for the survival of a regime, to enact petty territorial quarrels, or to withstand the depredations of aliens. Others are fought against rogue elements within the Imperium itself, wars of conquest launched to reclaim worlds, systems, or entire sectors from the hands of rebels and heretics. It is not uncommon for the Inquisition to have a hand in such events. It may be that an Inquisitor has brought about the conquest, petitioning sector or segmentum commands to bring down the nigh inexhaustible armies of the Imperium upon those who have turned away from the light of the Emperor. More often than not, the Inquisitor in question remains in the shadows, while Lords-Martial of the Imperial Guard or Chapter Masters of the Adeptus Astartes lead their armies against the foe. Some Inquisitors, however, adopt a more belligerent stance, leading in person many millions of warriors. Such fiery individuals may become figures of legend and adoration, their role as Inquisitors supplanted by that of warrior-hero of the Imperium.

To take to the battlefield is an essential part of an Inquisitor's vocation. Those who have only recently ascended in particular tend to be firebrands who revel in leading their forces against the strongholds of their foes. As an Inquisitor grows in experience, so too do they become more adept in the military arts, and able to command larger armies. An Inquisitor who has served for several decades might no longer lead his forces from the front, but instead order them from a distant command bunker or the bridge of a warship in orbit far above the battlefield. An Inquisitor with a century or more of service behind him might be quite adept at commanding entire armies and conducting full-scale planetary invasions. Such is the varied nature of the duties of the Inquisitor.

Exterminatus

"I hereby sign the death warrant of an entire world and consign a billion souls to Oblivion."

Exterminatus is the last resort in war and punishment, used by the Imperium when all other options are exhausted. To declare Exterminatus upon a world is to visit total and utter destruction upon it. It is to sign the death warrant of every living creature upon a world, and to render the surface a blasted wasteland, inimical to life for millennia. To have earned such a fate, a world's population must have been judged irredeemable in its crimes, every single individual being found guilty of the very worst of heresies.

There are many forms of Exterminatus, and many ways of delivering it. One method uses a biological agent that renders all living matter to a decaying sludge within hours, releasing a staggering amount of oxygen into the atmosphere as its does so. This oxygen is then burnt off, igniting the entire atmosphere and incinerating everything on the surface. Another method involves the use of Cyclonic Torpedoes, a category of weapons that use varying means of scouring the world's surface with nucleonic fire, raw plasma or deadly radiation. Some worlds might be virus bombed—sometimes the viral agents might be keyed to a specific gene code, so as to target aliens, mutated humans, or simply rebels with a predominant hair colour.

Exterminatus may only be ordered by the very highest level of authority, and any who enact it are answerable to the High Lords of Terra. While raw manpower remains the Imperium's greatest asset, worlds are not so easily replaced, and those who squander such resources seldom remain in power long enough to make the same mistake a second time. The Inquisition regards it as both an absolute right and a terrible burden that theirs is the nigh exclusive duty of declaring Exterminatus. Though other bodies may petition for this ultimate sanction, Inquisitors bear the power to destroy worlds at a word. In practice, it is only the most senior, powerful and experienced of Inquisitors who declare Exterminatus. This is because any who do so are not only answerable to the High Lords, but to their peers, whose judgement, if Exterminatus is held to have been launched in error, is harsh indeed.

Limitations on the Power of the Inquisition

The Inquisition's remit places it above all of the Imperium's institutions, with the exception of the Senatorum Imperialis—the High Lords of Terra themselves. In theory, a single Inquisitor can denounce an entire planetary government, requisition whole armies of the Imperial Guard and hold the fate of populations in his hands. In practice, however, the reality is far more complicated.

For a start, the Inquisition moves in many different ways, according to the judgement and character of its agents. Some are brash and bombastic, others dark and threatening. Some announce their coming so as to strike terror into the hearts of the Emperor's foes, while others move about stealthily, watching from the shadows before striking. An Inquisitor would

be foolish indeed to arrive at a world suspected of imminent secession and attempt to arrest the Imperial Commander, for he may find the entire population rising in opposition. Therefore, an Inquisitor in such a position has to ensure that there are significant resources at hand to combat an uprising, and to attain them he has to gain the support of other bodies.

In practice then, Inquisitors are essentially 'peers of the Imperium.' Although many consider themselves answerable only to the High Lords of Terra and the Emperor Himself, in reality there exists a class of high-echelon Imperial servants, to which Inquisitors belong, all who wield more or less the same levels of influence. Such worthies include Imperial Governors, Imperial Guard Generals, Space Marine Chapter Masters, Rogue Traders, Lord Admirals, Adeptus Arbites Judges, and the sector-level representatives of the Administratum. Relations between these various groups are often seething with internecine rivalry and bitterness, and even within one grouping, deadly wars may be fought to gain influence and leverage. Imperial Commanders, for example, quite frequently engage in bitter and bloody territorial clashes, and the Inquisition is far from immune to internal strife.

Against such a backdrop of bloody political manoeuvring, no one institution has total power over any other, regardless of the words scratched in spidery text upon ten thousand year old charters. The powers of an Inquisitor are not, in practice, defined by the remit of the Holy Orders of the Emperor's Inquisition. They are constantly shifting in response to their position within the dark and feudal power structures within the Inquisition, as well as being subject to many outside influences. An Inquisitor that takes action against a powerful heretic, only to find out later that the individual was being sponsored by a rival may find himself the target of attack. One that declares a world purgatus without the agreement of his peers may find himself ostracised and unable to call upon the aid of his fellows in times of need. These and a million other factors serve to inhibit the powers Inquisitors can actually wield when operating in the field.

THE BEARERS OF THE SEAL

To be chosen to bear the Inquisitorial Rosette is at once the greatest of honours and the weightiest of burdens. Of the uncounted billions that constitute the multitudes of Humanity, only those marked out by the grace of the Emperor Himself are judged worthy. Common man rarely achieves more than he is born into, yet an Inquisitor rises far above the circumstance of their birth, being singled out amongst billions for a fate few can ever dream of.

Inquisitors enjoy one of the most privileged of stations in the entire galaxy, yet they are far from a master of their own fate. Their life is instead bound up in duty and responsibility. For many, the station is a curse, a cross to bear for the sake of the Emperor and the very future of Humanity. In fact, there are those within the Ordos Calixis willing to sacrifice their eternal souls for the sake of all Mankind, such as the Oblationists, who give themselves unto Chaos that they might become a weapon against it.

For many Inquisitors, life is a series of terrible revelations as more and more horrifying truths are uncovered. Upon their ascension from an Interrogator to an Inquisitor, the individual may well discover that all they thought they knew was in fact a lie. Although the shock of such a revelation is great, the individual would not have been chosen to bear the seal had he not been judged able to withstand it. Even more shockingly, this state of affairs is likely to continue throughout an Inquisitor's career, so that one after another fundamental truths are proved false. Many do eventually go mad, unable to sustain the relentless assault upon their very sanity. These must be hunted down by their peers, lest they turn renegade and seek to destroy everything for which the Inquisition stands.

Despite the fact that all Inquisitors share the same mission and bear the same burden, they are as varied in demeanour, character and appearance as the worlds from which they are drawn. Some are ascetic and withdrawn, disdaining comfort as an example to their underlings and foes of the sacrifices

Evil Empires

Those Imperial Commanders possessed (sometimes literally) of the worst excesses of arrogance and hubris may take it upon themselves to bring about not only the secession of their own fiefdoms, but to foster such thoughts in their neighbours. This is especially true in regions isolated from the Imperium at large, perhaps by vast gulfs of interstellar space or by raging warp storms. The leaders of such worlds might band together under a single, charismatic leader, and establish small, stellar empires. Such entities rarely endure for long, for any agents of the Imperium's bodies residing upon their worlds either rise up or call for aid. Some do manage to maintain a semblance of legitimacy and stability, however, the population is entirely ignorant of the fact that their worlds have cut all ties with Humanity. Some especially foolish leaders go so far as to openly pronounce themselves apart from the Imperium. These are doomed, for the Imperium launches mighty crusades to reclaim such lost territory, often accompanied, or even led, by the agents of the Holy Orders of the Emperor's Inquisition.

made by the Emperor for the sake of Humanity. Others attire themselves in regal finery, the better to cow and impress those they move amongst. Some are outwardly pious, while others might appear irreligious to the ignorant. Some Inquisitors are militaristic while others move silently in the shadows or conduct investigations from light years away. There follow some examples of the many and varied types to be found amongst the ranks of the Inquisition.

The Militant

There are those who bear the Inquisitorial Rosette who believe above all else that the only way to combat the enemies of the Imperium is to burn, blast, and scour them all wherever they may be found. Such individuals frequently extend their opinion to the wider populace, such that an entire city might be blasted from orbit simply to eradicate a mutant enclave sheltering in its sewers, or an entire orbital quay should be sent plummeting to earth because a dozen voidsmen shared the same portentous nightmare.

Militant Inquisitors tend to shoot first and ask questions later. Many do the shooting themselves, being as adept with blade and bolter as any veteran Imperial Guardsman. These tend to employ cadres of men and women with a similar demeanour, commonly packing as much firepower as a Space Marine Devastator Squad. They may have built up large cadres of Imperial Guardsmen, retaining their services for life as a permanent unit, often with its own uniform. They lead assaults on enemy strongholds from the very front, glorying in the act of slaughtering the Emperor's foes. They equip themselves with the very finest of artificer-crafted weapons, armour and other equipment. Many acquire wargear of ancient and well-established pedigree, while some employ weapons of unique, unknown, or even xenos manufacture.

Conversely, some Inquisitors of a militant mindset are akin to lord generals, studying strategic maps or pouring over logistical inventories. They take command of friendly forces, supervising missions from afar through vox-link and gun-cam. They time their assaults with lethal precision and order the deployment of their weapons, whether Death Cult Assassin or orbital bombardment, as an extension of their own body.

Some of these Inquisitors attain the highest of ranks, eventually leading not just small cadres of warrior-agents, but entire armies, even crusades. The line between general and Inquisitor may become blurred, for a time at least. Of course, it may come to pass that such an individual's erstwhile peers come to resent or disapprove of his position, and an entirely new conflict is initiated.

The Investigator

An Inquisitor must have a mind as keen as a power-stiletto, and a heart as cold as the Death Cultist who wields it. For many Inquisitors, it is in the tracking down of their foe, the sifting of evidence, and the uncovering of long-dormant secrets that their calling finds its true expression. These are the arch-investigators, individuals who can smell a dirty secret from half a sector away. From the scantest of clues, they have

the uncanny ability to hunt down the culpable, and bring the criminal to justice.

Inquisitors of an investigative nature surround themselves with Sages and Adepts. They often employ a vast network of specialists, and are gifted with the ability to draw upon the unique skills of all those in their employ, bringing together the disparate strands of an investigation and acting upon the truth as it is revealed. The appearance of such an Inquisitor is often a portent of a ruthlessly thorough process and strikes such fear into the hearts of the guilty that they often flee, revealing their guilt even before an accusation is made. The investigative Inquisitor may also rely on a number of guards, often Crusaders, for they may eschew the martial skills displayed by others of their kind. Nonetheless, even the most stooped and aged of Inquisitors has a few tricks up their sleeves, saved for the moment they must deliver the harsh judgement of the Inquisition in person—their foe at bay, with nowhere to flee.

The Machinator

The machinator is an Inquisitor who maintains the most convoluted and intricate web of contacts and agents imaginable, each of whom he controls with masterly skill as a puppeteer controlling a thousand marionettes with but a single hand. The identity of the machinator is often withheld from those he controls, his missives and instructions passed to them by encrypted, untraceable transmission conduits or delivered by way of a dead letter drop. Indeed, the machinator's agents may have well met their master face to face without ever having known of it.

The machinator is a political animal of the highest calibre. He invariably involves himself as much with the convoluted power struggles within the Inquisition as he does with the broiling heresies of the greater Imperium. In all likelihood, he has many enemies in both camps, and even his fellow Inquisitors may not have met him in person for many decades, so mindful must he be of his rivals' petty hatreds.

Such Inquisitors plot and scheme to manoeuvre their foes into positions of weakness, slowly infiltrating agents into enemy organisations. Evidence of guilt is gathered, but that is merely the opening phase in the machinator's scheme. Next, he works tirelessly to seed weaknesses in his enemy's power base, compromising systems, assassinating allies and servants and infiltrating defences.

Yet, even the machinator must take to the field when his enemies arise. Then, he gathers about him a cadre of the most trusted of his agents, those he trusts above all others not to betray him. Only when his enemy's defences are wide open does he strike, with utterly merciless precision. Key installations are destroyed, enemy servants slain. The target sees his entire power base collapse around him, and through the smoke and rubble appears the form of the machinator, Inquisitorial Rosette brandished in one hand, bolt pistol raised in the other.

There are many within the Ordos Calixis who may be described in these terms. The greatest is perhaps Inquisitor Silas Marr, who appears to many to be seated at the vast spider's web of conspiracy and power. Those who intrude upon Marr's business are often warned off, in the first instance at least, though rarely by Marr in person. Those too arrogant, or ignorant, to heed such a warning make themselves a powerful enemy. Many are the times an Inquisitor has followed a lead, only to find it leading back to some concern of Marr's, and been forced to drop the matter lest they make a foe of this powerful individual. To what ends Silas Marr intends to put his vast network none can say, or would openly speculate.

The Bombast

Inquisitors are men and women of unshakeable faith in the Emperor Deified, yet some are so consumed by their faith that they wield it as a weapon in and of itself. These firebrands often blur the line between preacher and Inquisitor, many attiring themselves in robes akin to those worn by the highest officers of the Adeptus Ministorum. The bombast is quick to anger, and even quicker to denounce. He sees heresy and sin wherever he looks, and is quick to throw those he judges guilty to the pyres of justice. Such Inquisitors recite a constant stream of holy invective, quoting passages from the holy texts and invoking the names of saints and martyrs with every breath. They are exceptionally intimidating, invoking quivering fear in the unfaithful and utter horror in the heretic.

The cadres of these types of Inquisitors often include all manner of Hierophants, exorcists and confessors. Their links to the Ecclesiarchy may, in addition, result in them being accompanied by one or more Battle Sisters of the Adepta Sororitas, potent and zealous warriors indeed, with a fearsome reputation amongst the enemies of the Imperial Faith.

Bombasts are unsubtle individuals, with a tendency to ignore the minutiae of an investigation. This often brings them into conflict with others of the Inquisition. The arrival on world of a bombastic Inquisitor might ruin years of work by a subtler agent. Yet, sometimes covert Inquisitors follow in the bombast's wake, often without his knowledge, watching to see whether any previously unknown enemies attempt to flee, or otherwise reveal their hands.

Despite a blunt approach to the calling of the Inquisitor, the bombast is amongst the boldest of all of the servants of the Holy Ordos of the Emperor's Inquisition. They have been known to face the most terrifying of enemies armed with little more than the word of the Emperor, and prevail. The deeds and words of such an individual can rally an entire population to cast off a renegade governor, or to take up arms against overwhelmingly powerful alien invasion. They often lead from the very front of the armies of the faithful, imbued with a burning faith in the God-Emperor of Mankind so fierce that it kindles similar zealousness in the hearts of all who witness it.

The Judicar

The judicar is an individual who approaches his calling in almost the exact opposite manner to the investigator. He assumes guilt, and demands evidence to the contrary. Being the prosecutor, judge, and often executioner, such individuals rarely accept any evidence placed before them that contradicts their charge.

Cursed Space

Inquisitors are empowered to go wherever they want in the prosecution of their duties. An Inquisitor might travel from one end of the Imperium to the other, and indeed beyond its borders, in the course of a long career. Yet, it has been noted by many, that the Calixis Sector attracts the agents of the Inquisition, and somehow enthralls them, almost as an insect trapped in amber. In an entire galaxy seething with conspiracy and torn apart by war, many have asked why the Calixis Sector should attract and hold the attention of so many Inquisitors, and why it has claimed the lives of countless of their number. Perhaps the answer lies in the Hereticus Tenabrae, the prophecy that foresees the extinction of Humanity, its crucible the Calixis Sector. Certainly, the Calixis Sector breeds cults and heresies at an alarming rate, and many within the Ordos Calixis believe that the dread Tyrant Star must surely be responsible. Perhaps the truth will never be known until it is too late, and the galaxy burns.

Such Inquisitors normally travel about from world to world with great ceremony, surrounding themselves with an entire travelling court of clerks, attendants, and flunkies. Upon arrival, they announce a 'court of assize,' often commandeering the most awe-inspiring of locations for their purposes. Charges against certain individuals are then posted, and the accused brought before the court. Only those of the highest rank have any hope of refuting the charges, but in all likelihood these would not have been charged in the first place. Volume after volume of case law is produced, and added to, during the trial. The judicar often ensures that the proceedings of his court are entered into the rolls of the planet's own laws, enshrining his every word into law for generations to come. Some such individuals maintain entire armies of seconded Arbitrators, imposing their own law upon those forced to suffer their visitations. When such itinerant precincts arrive upon a world, no one is immune from the smashing in of doors in the middle of the night, constant searches and the spontaneous imposition of totalitarian laws.

Entire worlds have burned at the command of such Inquisitors, and their names often live on for many centuries as the subject of cautionary tales to strike fear into the hearts of the multitudes.

The Idealist

Upon being granted the Inquisitorial Rosette, many Inquisitors are at a stage in their lives when they still harbour a faint hope that Mankind can redeem itself of its sinful ways and turn back the tide of darkness that threatens to engulf the entire galaxy. Most are soon disabused of this notion, by bitter experience or an untimely death.

Idealists often gravitate towards the various Puritan schools of thought, although in time, some find themselves travelling a very different path. Idealists seek out that in the spirit of Mankind which is worth saving, but in so doing often find themselves renouncing that which falls below their exacting standards. They embark upon personal crusades to exact vengeance upon the criminal, and often seek to rally others to their cause. Sadly, many find themselves estranged from their peers, many of whom have simply seen it all before, and cut off from aid when they need it most. Many of the older, more embittered Inquisitors of the Ordos Calixis have been observed to take great delight in watching such young firebrands come to ruin. Some may even have engineered such a situation, only to offer the hand of friendship which the individual has no choice but to accept. And then, the young idealist might find themselves in the thrall of a far more powerful master, whose philosophies and factional leanings might be entirely at odds with their own.

Despite the obvious pitfalls faced by such Inquisitors, every now and then one of their kind achieves truly great things. Some even attain sainthood, so genuinely pure and good are their intentions. In a galaxy as corrupt and barbaric as that of the 41st Millennium, the lives and deeds of such individuals are often little more than a brief spark of light amidst a looming, all encompassing, stygian night. Yet some make their stand against the forces of darkness, and make a difference, no matter how slight, in the battle for the very survival of Humanity.

FACTIONS

"He who is not a Puritan in his youth has no heart; he who is still a Puritan in his maturity has no brain."

Throughout the ten millennia since the Emperor ascended to the Golden Throne, his divine will has become the subject of the all too fallible interpretations of untold generations of mortal servants. Over centuries, differing interpretations of the Emperor's word have grown in prominence or fallen out of favour. As is common with adherents of shared philosophies, factions have formed to espouse their beliefs and members of the Inquisition are as prone to this as any other group. Such division would, in most of the Imperium's institutions, be frowned upon. But the men and women of the Inquisition are trained from the very beginning to always question, and it is this essential nature that gives them the skills and strength to achieve the tasks before them.

While membership in one of the Ordos is an indication as to which of Humanity's many and varied foes an Inquisitor concentrates upon defeating, their factional leanings are an indication as to how they go about doing so. Take for example two Inquisitors of the daemon-hunting Ordo Malleus. One might hold that Mankind can be saved from the beasts of the warp only by casting out every last vestige of the taint of the empyrean, even to the extent of denouncing those who wield psychic powers, for these too are product of the realm of Chaos. Of an entirely opposing view might be an Inquisitor who holds that the weapons and tools of Chaos must be turned against themselves, going so far as to utilise cursed artefacts such as daemon swords and tainted charms. Both belong to the same Ordo and are equally dedicated to destroying the denizens of the warp, yet they might be equally opposed to one another, each believing the other to be deluded or weak.

The staggering range of beliefs the various factions espouse have broadly polarised into two main, opposing schools of thought. It is convenient to name the first of these the Puritans, and they enforce the letter of the Lore. They hold beliefs that would be familiar to the majority of Imperial citizens from the fiery addresses of zealous preachers, and they present themselves first and foremost as the ultimate protectors of Mankind. In almost direct opposition to the Puritans are Inquisitors known as Radicals, who view their exalted position within the Imperium as license to employ methods that most Imperial institutions would view as heretical. The Radicals believe that the means they employ to achieve their goals are secondary to the achievement. In some cases this can even mean the use of Chaos-tainted knowledge and artefacts, or reprehensible methods that skirt dangerously close to outright treachery.

Factions rarely exist as formal institutions, and, in theory at least, an Inquisitor's goals are secondary to his mission as an agent of the Holy Ordos of the Emperor's Inquisition. For example, a cabal of Inquisitors espousing very different factional beliefs might operate together in the course of their duties, their common goal acting as a bond that transcends doctrinal boundaries. At other times, however, an Inquisitor prosecutes his mission entirely within the bounds of his factional leanings, his beliefs informing the methods he uses to bring the enemies of the Imperium to justice. In fact, the labelling of friend and foe is often coloured by the factional beliefs of the Inquisitor doing the labelling, a fact that leads many Inquisitors into bitter disputes with their fellows.

It is the existence of the factions that has lead to the internecine wars that have riven the Inquisition for millennia. While plenty subscribe to no doctrine other than their own conscience, others believe that this constant shadow war benefits the Inquisition enormously, providing a continuous process of internal balancing and a means by which philosophies may be weighed up, to be accepted or rejected by a manner of natural selection.

Factional beliefs tend to be passed down from master to pupil, although it is unlikely an Inquisitor of one of the more Radical schools of thought indoctrinates his Acolytes in every subtlety of his doctrine, lest the pupil be overcome by truths he cannot yet bear and denounce his own master. Some hold that it is the natural order of things that the young, idealistic, newly-ascended Inquisitor should adhere to Puritan beliefs, which are slowly proven false until he inevitably turns to those modes considered Radical. This is a profoundly pessimistic worldview, but one that has been proven true time and time again through the bitter millennia.

Even within the broad definitions of Radical and Puritan, there are many and varied splits, differences, and tenets. The following schools of thought are espoused by Inquisitors the length and breadth of the Imperium, while many more exist only in given regions. The Calixis Sector, for example, hosts a number of factions unique to the area, including the Xenos Hyrbis and Seculos Attendous.

Thorians

"The Emperor shall come again. Once more, His mortal shell shall be invigorated by His Divine Will. His great spirit can be brought back from heaven and He shall throw away the shackles of Golden Throne and step forth once to finish the Great Crusade to make the galaxy Humanity's forever."

The Puritan Thorian faction of the Inquisition takes its name from Saint Sebastian Thor. This hero, venerated across the entire Imperium, overthrew Goge Vandire, the tyrannical High Lord of Terra who plunged the Imperium into the Age of Apostasy in the 36th Millennium. The Thorians believe that Thor was divinely inspired and that he moved with the Emperor's light burning bright within him. To many Inquisitors of the day, it was obvious that Thor was imbued with a measure of the Emperor's will and charisma. They believed that it was not the first time that the Emperor had acted in such a way, citing such heroes as Saints Capilene and Josmane as previous vessels of the Emperor walking amongst his people.

The Thorians believe that the Emperor's near-death at the hands of Horus allowed him to break the final bonds between the crude matter of corporeality and ascend to assume his true nature as a deity. His spirit wonders the void, travelling as a whisper in the warp, flitting from place to place and perhaps even time. Thorian dogma holds that the Emperor has manifested his spirit through his chosen vessels many times when his people needed him, but that these bodies were able to contain only the barest fraction of his power and soon withered and died. They await the day that he shall be reborn and lead his people onwards in a second, and final, Great Crusade.

To this end, the Thorians closely study the interaction of consciousness, energy and the warp, believing that if they can manipulate these energies correctly they can channel the Emperor's spirit into a suitable vessel and effectively resurrect the Master of Mankind. There have been many attempts to create a body suitable for such an important ritual, but so far none have succeeded. Followers of the Thorian philosophies constantly scour the galaxy for beings they call Divine Avatars, individuals of such power that they may able to contain the Emperor's soul once more—or be turned to evil by the Ruinous Powers.

Although all Thorians share the same ambition of seeking out those they call 'Divine Vessels'—individuals who may one day bear the Emperor's spirit and become, for a time at least, Divine Avatars, there exists a distinct sub-faction of Thorian thought, with an opposing view to the mainstream of adherents. These believe that no human form is able, or indeed worthy, of containing the Emperor's spirit, holding that the individual would become an avatar not of the Emperor, but of some other power of the warp. They hunt down the Divine Vessels, slaying them on sight, in what they believe to be acts of mercy and necessity.

Many Thorian Inquisitors are found within the Ordo Malleus, where their greater understanding of the Immaterium grants them an insight into how the rebirth of the Emperor could be achieved. Others may be found amongst the Ordo Hereticus. There are few within the Ordo Xenos, save those

who believe the manipulation of alien psychic-engineering, such as that of the Eldar, may provide valuable insights. Inquisitors of all orders foster the growth of resurrectionist cults throughout the Imperium, as they provide useful foot-soldiers for an Inquisitor when he must raise an army to achieve his ends.

Thorian Inquisitors often recruit those with a keen eye for investigation into their cadres. Sages able to research every branch of a family tree going back millennia, and Enforcers with their talent from the hunt are both useful allies. Many also maintain links with the Adeptus Ministorum, in particular the Orders Famulous of the Adepta Sororitas, whose task it is to monitor the bloodlines of those who rule the Imperium. Oftentimes, word of a potential Divine Vessel comes through a contact in the Ecclesiarchy, in response to an upsurge in religious activity based around the words of a previously unknown figure.

Monodominants

"You ask why we must cleanse the xenos. I will tell you. The filth of the alien and the witch must be exterminated to preserve the purity of the Human race, lest we degenerate in abomination."

–Witch Hunter Tyrus at the Conclave of Vena

The Puritan Monodominants have their roots in an age now all but lost to the scholars of the 41st Millennium. In the 33rd Millennium, Inquisitor Goldo penned his seminal text *Monodomination—the Right of Man to Rule the Galaxy in the Emperor's Holy Name.* This multi-volume epic drew upon the venerable Inquisitor's vast experience of dealing with aliens and came to the conclusion that the only way that Mankind could rule would be if every alien race was exterminated, leaving humans as the sole inheritors of the galaxy. At the time it did not receive a great deal of support—its overly pessimistic view was seen as the last, bitter words of a devout, but ageing Inquisitor. It was not until Inquisitor Jeriminus of Paelutia brought the work of Goldo to light, several centuries later, that the philosophy finally found a growing body of supporters among the new breed of young, hot-headed Inquisitors.

The goal of the Monodominants is a simple one: the complete and total destruction of every alien, heretic, witch and non-believer in the galaxy. They have absolutely no tolerance for any form of aberrant behaviour and resort to drastic military solutions in order to enforce their will. No other faction of Inquisitors resorts to the use of Exterminatus so readily, destroying entire worlds in their quest for Human supremacy of the galaxy. As would be expected of such a militant group, the Monodominants are one of the few factions who are open with their beliefs, spreading xenophobia and intolerance before them, inciting whole populations to rise and purge themselves of their wickedness. Inquisitors who follow this path are ruthless and unforgiving and frequently leave untold devastation and slaughter in their wake.

Many within the Inquisition see the Monodominants as incredibly narrow-minded and frequently doing more harm than good. It is a brave Inquisitor however who openly voices such an opinion.

Monodominants tend to be bombastic, zealous individuals, and they often surround themselves with equally direct characters. Companions with a background amongst the Adeptus Arbites are often found in their cadres, as these individuals may have seen so much criminality over the course of their careers that their hearts have become hardened to the galaxy. Hierophants too are often found accompanying such Inquisitors, their fiery sermons bolstering the cadre's resolve to do that which must be done.

Amalathians

"Who are you to second-guess the will of the Emperor? His plans are for him and him alone to know. It is enough for us to know that his grand designs for the galaxy unfold as he has foreseen, and the colossal arrogance displayed by those who claim to act in his name is both dangerous and tantamount to heresy."

–Inquisitor Barzano

For those who noted their coming, the first days of the 41st Millennium were days of optimism and promise, a time of great spiritual and physical rebuilding. It was decreed that there would be a conclave held at Mount Amalath on the world of Gathalamor, where military, religious, and political dignitaries would gather to once again swear their oaths of loyalty to the Emperor. It is said that eight hundred Chapter Masters of the Adeptus Astartes journeyed from the far corners of the galaxy to join in this renewal of faith. After swearing his oath of loyalty, Lord Solar Macharius took it upon himself to launch a crusade in the Emperor's name, leading his forces into the galactic west and beginning the campaign that saw over a thousand worlds claimed for the Master of Mankind.

Within the ranks of the Inquisition there was a growing feeling that events were once again proceeding to the Emperor's plans, and that the pervading sense of doom that had spread through the Imperium during the Plague of Unbelief and the Reign of Blood was finally over. Many Inquisitors were swayed by the numerous impassioned speakers on Gathalamor, and vowed that none should threaten the strength which the Imperium was slowly regaining. This body of Inquisitors became known as Amalathians and decreed that they would forever strive to maintain order and destroy and those who would seek to destabilise the Imperium. Less concerned with the traditional heresies of witchcraft and mutation, except where they were being manipulated by their enemies, the Puritan Amalathians sought to keep infighting and politicking within Imperial organisations to a minimum, holding to the Inquisition's original mantra of strength through unity.

Throughout the Imperium, the Amalathians seek to calm volatile situations and prevent rapid change, should change even be necessary at all. They claim events are unfolding as the Emperor has foreseen and to force change in his name is a supreme arrogance. Who can truly claim to know the will of the Emperor? It is their sacred duty to protect the Imperium from those who seek to plunge it into anarchy, and to allow

the Emperor's sacred plan to unfold at its ordained time. To achieve their goals, the Amalathians must often work closely with agents from other organisations, and its members often have good relations with bodies such as the Adeptus Arbites, Orders Famulous, and the Space Marines.

Many vocal proponents of change within the Imperium accuse the Amalathians of burying their heads in the sand, trusting events to unfold as fate dictates rather than taking a proactive stance in the defence of the Imperium. However, the Amalathians know that the Emperor is infallible and to second guess his divine plan for Humanity is to know the will of a god. And what mortal would dare claim such knowledge?

Amalathians are men and women who pride themselves on being level-headed, and they often gather cadres of like-minded companions. They value the learned wisdom of the Sage as much as the tactical advice of a veteran of the Imperial Guard, and listen to each before deciding upon a course of action.

Xanthites

"Eradicate Chaos? Hah! One might as well try to eradicate one's own shadow. Do not presume to enforce a simpleton's philosophy upon the Emperor's Inquisition. Bury your head if you must, but my eyes are open yet."

–Excerpt from the sixth trial of Inquisitor Lichenstein

The principles governing the Radical Xanthite philosophy could be described as heretical in themselves, for they advocate the use of Chaos in furthering the goals of the Imperium. To know the enemy is valuable indeed, but the Xanthites believe in taking this one step further. Inquisitors from this faction use the powers of the warp whenever they can, fervently believing that although Chaos can never truly be beaten, it can be harnessed.

Xanthism was introduced to the Inquisitorial ranks long before some of the more Puritan factions had begun to coalesce, and has the support of some of the most senior and powerful members of the Inquisition. For this reason, it is highly unusual for the militant factions that oppose them to try the Xanthites for heresy, though many would dearly like to do so. The most notable exception is Master Zaranchek Xanthus himself, the founder of the faction, who attested his innocence to a jury of fellow Inquisitors before he was eventually burnt at the stake. Interestingly, one of his most talented pupils, Inquisitor Lethrai, famously withstood a six-week series of gruelling trials by his Monodominant accusers without showing a single sign of guilt.

Xanthites by no means advocate the furthering of Chaos and its dark works, but see it as a tool that is already in use by the Imperium, not yet realised to its full potential. Warp travel, Astropaths, Navigators, Space Marine Librarians, abhumans in the ranks of the Imperial forces; all these bear the mark of Chaos, but nevertheless further the goals of the God-Emperor, himself one of the most powerful psykers to ever have existed. The Xanthites cite these as example that there is no question as to whether Chaos can serve Humanity, it is just a matter of to what degree. As a result, Inquisitors of this faction often use daemon-weapons, Chaos-tainted artefacts, psyker-retainers, daemonhosts, and forbidden grimoires in their quest to understand and exploit the boundless power of the warp. Many have achieved mastery over the psychic discipline they have trained in, and it is unusual to find a Xanthite with no psychic ability whatsoever.

An interesting exception exists to the Radical/Puritan divide. The Horusians, a sub-sect of the Xanthites, wish to create a new leader for Humanity, much like the Puritan Thorians. Both factions strive for a powerful, god-like figurehead to lead the Imperium into a new age. But these extreme Radicals view the might of Horus as a wasted opportunity; believing that should the limitless power of Chaos be harnessed and bound into a great leader of man, Humanity could once more become united and crush all before it. Needless to say, even open-minded members of the Inquisition view the Horusians as dangerous in the extreme.

Xanthite Inquisitors make extensive use of psykers of all types, as well as Sages with a particular interest in the occult. They often have difficulty in recruiting those with a background in the Adeptus Ministorum, but there are noted instances when an exorcist has allied with a Xanthite, affording the Inquisitor protection from that which he would turn to his service.

Recongregators

"Look around you! We must tear down the rusty and ancient cage that we have built for ourselves and replace it with a shining tower that can once more touch the stars. Without evolution, we are shorn of our greatest strength."

–Inquisitor Laschia at the Oulan Symposium

To the Radical Recongregators, the Imperium is a waning, decaying thing, riddled with corruption, and many of its galaxy-spanning organisations are rotten to the core. Inquisitors of this faction believe that for the Imperium to return to its former glory, the shackles of the present must be broken apart. Once they lie in pieces, the Imperium can be forged anew, stronger and purer than ever before.

Bureaucracy, politicking, and stagnation are the enemies these Inquisitors aim to fight, pulling down established governments and replacing them with free-thinking radicals.

Although wary of causing too much unnecessary destruction, the Recongregators' methods have led to them sponsoring uprisings, stirring up civil unrest, sowing anarchy, causing riots, and advocating political upheaval wherever they go. Although preferring to remain anonymous and manipulate events from the shadows, the Recongregators are not above extreme action and involve themselves in covert operations should the necessity arise.

Recongregators are often found in the ranks of the Ordo Hereticus, though rather than seeking to unmask and destroy underground leaders, these Inquisitors actively aid these individuals for their own ends. They work to depose corrupt or conservative figures and replace them with those dynamic

and open-minded leaders capable of departing from the status quo. Obviously, this is in direct conflict with the Amalathian faction, which considers some Recongregators no better than demagogues. Unbeknownst to those incumbent upon their thrones, many a dynasty has been upheld by an Amalathian whilst a Recongregator works to tear it down.

Recongregators are often dark, sinister individuals, and they usually keep the company of a cadre of equally menacing characters. Many have forged links with the Death Cults, and so make extensive use of the services of Death Cult Assassins as well as those of a less than reputable background willing to do almost anything for the cause.

Istvaanians

"Would you have Mankind grow old and withered, running to fat on the fruits of remembered glory whilst its enemies tear at its frail extremities? I think not. With each trial, we become stronger. My brethren and I provide."

–Attributed to Inquisitor Vechorte

The Radical Istvaanians see Humanity's evolution as having slowed to a crawl, degenerating and growing soft. They fear that it will ultimately fall to its innumerable enemies. As a result, they spread strife, hatred, and confrontation wherever they go. They believe the Imperium becomes stronger through conflict, with only the toughest and most worthy surviving.

The Istvaanians take their name from the massacre which began the most terrible conflict to have engulfed Humanity, the Horus Heresy, initiated by the traitor Warmaster's virus bombing of Istvaan III. What most Imperial historians view as the worst disaster to ever befall the Imperium, the Istvaanians champion as the catalyst for many of its greatest accomplishments. Despite their extreme stance and drastic methods, history seems to vindicate their beliefs, as from the greatest periods of upheaval the most profound developments within the Imperium have stemmed. With an objectivity born of hindsight, they claim that the Heresy weeded out the weak-willed and traitorous from the ranks of the Adeptus Astartes, and ultimately caused the Emperor's ascension, allowing the Master of Mankind to ascend to godhood. They point to the Age of Apostasy, when the Imperium was devoured by a fever of blasphemy, as the cause of the Ecclesiarchy's reformation and the coming of Sebastian Thor. Great advances and leaps of faith are undeniably possible when Humanity is tested to its limit, and it is for this reason that the Istvaanians actively cultivate war. The modus operandi of the warmongering Istvaanians is sometimes so extreme that many of its militant components have surpassed even the uncompromising Monodominants.

Interestingly, several well-respected members of the Inquisition have recently come out in favour of the Kiniel Proposal, a motion proposed by the infamous Istvaanian Inquisitor Gastus Kiniel. The proposal seeks to enforce military service upon all members of Imperial society fit for conscription. Given the current abundance of threats to the

Imperium's future, this may well be considered by the High Lords of Terra, and has already gained considerable support within the ranks of the Inquisition. It is testament to the manipulative skills of Kiniel that he has secured the support of many Monodominant Inquisitors with the fire and passion of his xenophobic sentiments. Needless to say, this militarisation of untold billions of Imperial citizens would be a great victory for the Istvaanians, and possibly even Humanity as a whole.

The cadre of an Inquisitor espousing the Istvaanian mindset is likely to be made up of outcasts of one type or another. Mind-scrubbed assassins, veterans pushed over the edge and desperadoes with a point to prove all make ideal servants for an Inquisitor who seeks nothing less than to drag the entire Imperium in an galaxy-wide war to end all wars.

THE BALANCE OF POWER

The Imperium is a feudal society, comprising in excess of a million worlds. Each is host to its own culture and society, many having spawned a wide range of nations, peoples and identities. If the Imperium is so complex and heterogeneous, then what of the myriad institutions that provide galaxy-wide oversight? None can say how many organisations exist to service every possible function of galactic governance, although several bureaus have been established over the millennia to investigate the matter (none successfully). The relationships between these myriad and arcane institutions are tainted by centuries of jealously and competition, or made untenable by ignorance and distrust. Some of these organisations claim, and indeed exercise, jurisdiction across a wide range of responsibilities, and are nigh ubiquitous across the entire Imperium. Others have extremely narrow interests, or are limited to a sub-sector or system and therefore unknown elsewhere. As a consequence, even the simplest bureaucratic or administrative task is fraught with obstruction and inefficiency.

If this is the case between officials whose task might be no more prosaic than the tallying of grox-oil import ledgers, then what of the agents of the Inquisition, whose mission is the protection of the Imperium itself? Perhaps one would believe that such servants, burdened with their auspicious task would stand as one against the traitors, beasts and fiends that would destroy Mankind. In fact, the opposite is true. The Inquisition is riven with conflict, from heated debate between those who subscribe to the divergent schools of factional thought, to others who come to blows, so opposing are their agendas. It is not uncommon for entire cabals of Inquisitors to band together against others of their kind, unseen, internecine wars being fought in the shadows. Several times, the Inquisition has been split wide apart by outright war, countless agents laying down their lives or taking those of their brothers for a cause none outside the Inquisition could possibly comprehend.

To add to this situation, the Inquisition is, by and large, an institution of peers. Essentially, there are but two ranks: Inquisitor and Inquisitor Lord. This means that, in theory, the vast majority of Inquisitors are equal, and that some are more equal than the others. In practice of course, this is far from the case. The reality of the matter is that the Inquisition is perhaps the single most feudal, arcane, intricate and downright schizophrenic organisation in the entire Imperium. Rather than the simple, two-tier organisation purported to exist, the Inquisition is in fact an impossibly complex web of influence and intrigue. The entire organisation is compartmentalised by factions, ordos and cabals, each of which might overlap with one another one moment and be diametrically opposed the next. An individual Inquisitor might in theory be equal to any other, but in reality it is his influence and his associations that determine just how much power he wields.

This notion of a balance of power existing within the Inquisition is key to understanding just how it operates. As already established, the Inquisition's mission is of such importance that it has a nigh unlimited remit. Inquisitors can go anywhere, and detain anyone, for the good of the Imperium. Yet such power is terrible indeed, and if history has taught Mankind but a single lesson, it is that power corrupts. How then can an organisation with unlimited power of remit be expected to remain uncorrupted? The answer is to be found through constant and continuous internal conflict. By the very existence of factions, Ordos and cabals, every possible philosophy and doctrine is examined, and through debate or conflict, exposed for what it truly is. Over the millennia, untold doctrines have been posited, to be followed for a time before being denounced by an opposing school of thought. This process is regarded as purgative, ensuring that no one party ever gains undue power over the whole of the Inquisition, and that only the strongest-willed and most dedicated prosper.

The limitations this process sets in place are very real, and entirely dependent upon the power of the Inquisitor in question. An Inquisitor whose factional beliefs have made him a virtual pariah finds his resources limited, while one of a more mainstream stance finds fewer hindrances to his plans. An Inquisitor might order a purge of an entire world, but unless supported by a substantial body of his peers, may find it difficult to bring about. Some may even find themselves turning to other sources, outside of the Inquisition for aid, potentially resulting in being declared an outcast. An Inquisitor held in good standing by his fellows is able to mobilise significant resources and thereby achieve the ends of the greater part of the Inquisition. Thus the internal balance is maintained, for the good of all.

BECOMING AN INQUISITOR

As each Inquisitor is an individual, so too is it the case that no two ascend to the rank in exactly the same manner. What all have in common, however, is that they have, one way or another, come to the attention of a Throne Agent. None set out in life intending to become an Inquisitor. Indeed, the agents of the Inquisition are such figures of awe and fear, that most ordinary people dare not think on the subject overly long, lest they be found guilty of heretical thoughts. Even those brought up in such institutions as the Schola Progenium—great houses in which the orphans of Imperial servants are schooled for future service—have little or no idea what it is to become an agent of the Inquisition.

Admittance to the ranks of the Inquisition is, in essence, by invitation only. One must earn the notice of an Inquisitor,

through bold and skilful deeds. In a galaxy torn apart by war and strife, there certainly exists plenty of opportunity to test oneself to the limits and to exhibit the skills an Inquisitor might be seeking in a pupil. But it is also true that most citizens never even see an Inquisitor, let alone gain his eye, and most that do wish they had not. It is extremely rare, then, for one with the potential to serve as a Throne Agent to have the chance to prove it, making those who do eventually attain the rank exceptional individuals indeed.

When a potential servant does gain the notice of an Inquisitor, he may find himself sucked into a web of intrigue, often not even knowing the true nature of the events unfolding around him. He may be drafted into a cell of Acolytes or simply paid by an unknown benefactor to complete a 'simple mission'. The Inquisitor in question may remain a distant patron, never making direct contact with the individual, but issuing increasingly arduous tasks for him to perform.

In time, the potential agent joins a cell of established Acolytes. Even then, he may know scant details about his master, but others may serve alongside an Inquisitor directly. Having earned his master's respect throughout his period as an Acolyte, the agent may one day be summoned, and granted the rank of Interrogator.

The life of an Interrogator is one of harrowing trials. As a pupil of an Inquisitor, the Interrogator must learn all that his teacher passes on, and serve him with unstinting loyalty. Often, that loyalty is first and foremost to the master, rather than the Inquisition as a whole, but some Interrogators are schooled in a more formal sense in hidden Inquisition installations. An Interrogator's training might take many years, as a master seeks to impart an entire canon of knowledge. Other masters seek evidence that a particular state of mind has been attained, others that a single, fundamental truth has been learned. Thus, no two Interrogators serve under a master for exactly the same amount of time, and none share exactly the same amount of training, knowledge or wisdom when they are finally granted the Inquisitorial Rosette.

THE INQUISITORIAL ROSETTE

"I carry with me an Inquisitorial Seal. It is a small, unassuming object contained in a neat box of Pluvian obsidian. It is a modest thing, relatively plain, adorned with a single motif and a simple motto. Yet with this little object I can sign the death warrant of an entire world and consign a billion souls to Oblivion."

Upon their ascension to the rank, every Inquisitor is presented with an Inquisitorial Rosette. In essence, the rosette is a simple mark of rank, akin to countless others worn by the servants of the Imperium, but in reality, it is so much more.

The peoples of the Imperium are, by and large, superstitious, poorly educated and brutally downtrodden. They are taught from an early age that the Emperor is watching their every deed and knows their every thought. Whether pampered noble, underhive scum or savage feral worlder, these essential truths are ubiquitous. The Inquisitorial Rosette is incontrovertible evidence that the bearer wields ultimate authority, and they do so in the name of the Emperor.

But such conditioning is not sufficient on its own to ensure total loyalty and obedience in every individual the bearer meets. The pampered noble may attend chapel each day, yet believe the laws that bind the lower classes do not apply to them. The underhive scum may bellow oaths to the Emperor even as he lobs firebombs at an Enforcer patrol. The feral worlder might mount the severed head of an Administratum Tithe-Prefect in a fane dedicated to the mighty God-Emperor who rules from beyond the stars.

In addition to the symbolic authority of the rosette, the Inquisitor must be possessed of a palpable ability to invoke obedience. They must be stern and ruthless, radiating an air of confidence that demands absolute deference. Inquisitors are of a rare breed indeed, able to face arrogant Imperial Governors and hardened recidivists with equal resolve, the word of the Emperor upon their lips and the Inquisitorial Rosette upon their breast.

In the shadowy world of duplicity and intrigue in which the Inquisitors operate, one would expect the rosette to be an easily abused symbol of power. It might be expected that recidivist elements might try to emulate Inquisitors in order to subvert power from Imperial organisations, or that some heretics might question the veracity of a rosette, and the right of its bearer to speak in the Emperor's name. Indeed, there are those throughout history who have masqueraded as Inquisitors, and these have earned the very worst punishment the Inquisition can mete out. Yet, what is there to prove that a bearer of a rosette is in fact an Inquisitor?

The Inquisition is held in such fear and dread that very few indeed would even countenance disobeying an Inquisitor's orders. The adepts of the Imperium's many institutions scarcely dare even think of the Inquisition, lest some distant thought-thief discern their impure dalliances and retribution follow. Few adepts dare openly speak of the agents of the Holy Ordos of the Emperor's Inquisition, knowing full well that their utterances would be reported to a superior and those agents would come. When an adept is actually confronted with an Inquisitor, he is in all likelihood so fearful for his own life that he goes to any end to ensure the Inquisitor's demands are met. Even the most senior of the Imperium's officers, including Imperial Commanders and Sector Governors, invariably make every effort to facilitate an Inquisitor's needs, lest they invoke the wrath of the Emperor's most feared agents.

There are subtler ways of enforcing authority, however, for on occasion an Inquisitor wishes to identify himself as such, without antagonising the person they address. This is particularly the case when dealing with those who consider themselves the Inquisitor's equal, a peer of the Imperium. When dealing with Adeptus Astartes Chapter Masters, Rogue Traders and Lords Militant, an Inquisitor calls upon a range of methods to prove their identity. Some imprint their Inquisitorial Rosette with machine-engrams able to communicate the bearer's authority to any cogitator, activating dormant sentinel-routines in the host system and confirming the bearer's clearance. Others bear psycho-activated tattoos upon their faces that are invisible until willed to appear, symbols and runes that serve as a hieratic script known only to the most highly placed within the Imperium's upper echelons of power.

In addition to these functions of the Inquisitorial Rosette, some Inquisitors have been known to apply more ingenious adaptations, often utilising the services of highly skilled Adeptus Mechanicus artificers. Some rosettes are gene-locked, meaning they can only be handled by the owner, whose genetic identity is stored within. Should another take up the rosette, or no genetic sample be provided, the rosette may administer a dose of contact poison or even detonate a miniscule, yet devastating melta charge.

Many rosettes contain data-probes that allow the bearer access to almost any cogitation network in the Imperium. The rosette's machine-systems are capable of unlocking any network, the Inquisitor's ultra high level authority bypassing any logic-gates put in place to keep intruders out.

Despite the advantages granted by the Inquisitorial Rosette, not all Inquisitors bear it openly. When engaged upon a covert mission for example, an agent is likely to secret it in the most secure location possible, so that it may be produced only when needed most. Others openly comport themselves as Inquisitors, yet forego the wearing of the rosette, perhaps in an effort to put those they deal with at a disadvantage, and ignorant of their true intentions.

In addition to the power the rosette grants to the Inquisitor bearing it, a degree of authority is passed on to the Inquisitor's agents and companions, by way of association. One who claims authority in the name of an Inquisitor, such as an Interrogator, is said to 'Bear the Seal'. Such individuals do not literally carry their master's rosette, but few would afford them any less respect than their master, and for the very same reasons. To many, there is no difference between a Inquisitor and any of their agents, for merely invoking the power of the Inquisition is sufficient to inspire total obedience.

INQUISITORIAL CADRES

Inquisitors are truly exceptional individuals, standing alongside, often above, the most influential and powerful of the Imperium's servants. But few operate alone, for the galaxy is too perilous a warzone for a single man or woman, even one of their standing, to face without allies. While Inquisitors employ cells of Acolytes to embark upon the missions they deem below them, when they take to the field in person, they invariably do so attended by a group, or cadre of trusted individuals whose unique skills and abilities complement their own.

The number and type of allies an Inquisitor surrounds himself with depends on many factors. Perhaps the greatest factor is the mission the cadre must perform. A mission involving infiltration and fact-finding requires a different range of skills than one where combat is anticipated. Thus, some cadres are made of up warriors and assassins, while others feature tech-adepts and sages.

There are, however, some Inquisitors who, for whatever reason, have less choice in their allies. Perhaps a newly ascended Inquisitor has only a small pool of allies on which to draw, or one of a more radical bent has, by way of his viewpoint, fewer willing to aid him. Many Inquisitors favour a small, permanent group of highly trusted allies, with a balanced range of skills, while others maintain a large pool of retainers, selecting the most appropriate on a mission-by-mission basis.

Although the Inquisitor is the leader of the cadre, its members are often every bit as important to a mission's success or failure. An effective cadre is a tight-knit group, each member able to anticipate the thoughts and deeds of the others. Inquisitors rarely find themselves with a surplus of what they might consider friends amongst the Inquisition, for Inquisitors often end up in opposition to one another. However, within his cadre, he may form relationships, even friendships, not possible otherwise.

Ultimately, the cadre 'belongs' to the Inquisitor rather than to the Inquisition. His enemies are his cadre's enemies, meaning the fates of all involved are entwined for all time. Furthermore, most Inquisitors gather individuals with a similar philosophical outlook to their own. Should an Inquisitor's factional leanings cause him to be denounced by his fellows, the same fate befalls all of his allies. Thus, the cadre is bound together by a common cause. The tragedy is that many cadres fall apart if the Inquisitor loses his life in the execution of his duty, often finding themselves severed from the greater institution of the Inquisition. The fortunate are able to call upon other Inquisitors known to be allies of their erstwhile master, perhaps becoming part of a new cadre, but for others, a far darker end awaits.

THE INQUISITORIAL HOUSEHOLD

As an institution, the Inquisition employs relatively few staff, especially compared to the vast bureaucracy that is the Administratum. Instead, most of the Inquisition's endeavours are carried out by individual Inquisitors, or by groupings of such. Over time, some of these groupings become more or less formalised, establishing their own traditions and spheres of influence, and while some members move on, others join. Even where very formalised and well established bodies exists, such as the Ordos Calixis, it is important to remember that these are not controlled by some central body, but by the will of their own members.

In the main, Inquisitors rely not on large groups of functionaries and staff to carry out their mission, but upon their own devices. Although groups like the Ordos Calixis do maintain significant numbers of support staff, most Inquisitors look to their own tried and trusted allies to accomplish any given task. While plenty of Inquisitors work alone and unencumbered, others gather their own personal 'households'.

Throughout his career, an Inquisitor is likely to amass a great wealth of personal assets. There is little they cannot requisition by dint of their position, from side arms to star ships. Wealth is a petty triviality to an Inquisitor, and currency irrelevant to them; others handle such things on their behalf. Given the nature of the factional infighting that besets the Inquisition, much of an Inquisitor's assets are kept secret, sometimes even from his closest allies, lest they become a target for his rivals.

It is common for Inquisitors operating in a defined locality to establish permanent holdings, bases of operation to which they can return for rest and recuperation. While most maintain a residence in one of the Inquisitorial fortresses, such as the Tricorn Palace on Scintilla, few would rely on the security of such places should they come into conflict with a rival. Instead, an Inquisitor employs a network of agents to purchase for him what facilities he feels he needs, from run down hive shanties to the most luxurious of spire-manses. Such holdings may be attended by a permanent staff, often unaware of the true nature of their duties. Many safe houses are maintained for decades or even centuries at a time, attended by several generations of house-serfs, only to be used once, when most needed as a place of refuge. Then, the safe house may be forgotten, its existence compromised, its security and secrecy never to be relied upon again.

Some Inquisitors maintain stockpiles of weaponry and other equipment, some held in gene-locked stasis vaults, others buried out the wilderness. Should the Inquisitor come into possession of tainted artefacts such as daemon weapons or xenos-tech, he may decide to secret them away, far from the judgemental eyes of his peers, lest they be used as evidence for some imagined heresy.

In addition to such holdings, many Inquisitors maintain an entire household of staff and retainers. Those of a more martial standing may amass a small, private army of troopers drawn from the ranks of the Imperial Guard and other arms of

the Imperium's sprawling military machine. An Inquisitor who requisitions the services of an Imperial Guard Storm Trooper platoon is unlikely to feel any compulsion to return the troops to their former command when his immediate need for them has passed. Many hold on to such warriors, marshalled for future deployment. Such forces may in time develop their own traditions and histories, and wear with pride the heraldry of their master. The Inquisitor's untold powers allow the force to be equipped with such weapons and wargear as would be unobtainable to a conventional line unit, making them the envy of their former colleagues when their paths occasionally cross.

THE ORDOS

The Imperium is beset by a multitude of foes, from the rebellious general hiding in plain sight, to the unseen horror lurking in the interstellar void. Rogue psykers, heretics, mutants, aliens and the creatures of the warp all work towards the downfall of Mankind in one way or another. The dogmatic Imperium generally classifies each of these myriad enemies into one of three broad categorises: the enemy within, the enemy without, and the enemy beyond. Over the millennia, three major groupings have emerged within the Inquisition, each with a special interest in combating one of these foes. These are the three major Ordos.

The Ordos can be thought of as specialised wings within the Inquisition, made up of individuals with experience and expertise in combating a specific threat to the Imperium. While the Ordos differ in their implementation and organisation from one region of the Imperium to the next, in the Calixis Sector they are not as formalised as the great institutions of the Adeptus Terra. Instead, they form an inner circle within the convoluted structure of the Ordos Calixis. They maintain their own dogma, work towards their own agendas, and guard their hard won knowledge jealously.

Every Inquisitor in the Calixis Sector is a member of one Ordo or another. It is important to understand that membership of one Ordo does not preclude an Inquisitor's involvement in matters pertaining to another Ordo. There is no formal demarcation, and Inquisitors investigate and act where they want. While an Inquisitor might be a member of the Daemon-hunting Ordo Malleus for example, he still persecutes the xenos and the mutant with equal fervour. Membership of an Ordo indicates a special affinity for the combating of a particular range of enemies, but it in no way limits the Inquisitor's duties. Indeed, many Inquisitors would argue that to delineate and compartmentalise the foes of Mankind would be a tragic error, for all too often the lines between foes blur. A plague of mutation might originate from an alien infestation for example, or a rise in the number of psykers born within a population might prove the vanguard of an imminent warp incursion.

The degree to which an Inquisitor devotes his duties to combating the foe associated with his Ordo varies, not least upon the general situation in the region. Many Inquisitors at large in the Calixis Sector, for example, find themselves beset by so many enemies they find their attentions split evenly across them all. Others, in particular the more experienced Inquisitors, find themselves increasingly drawn towards the combating of a specific foe, their investigations and unique understanding simply leading them in that direction.

Membership of a particular Ordo grants access to what resources and assets its members are willing to share. Much comes in the form of secret knowledge, hidden away by the Ordos members and guarded jealously. Because a member of an Ordo has unprecedented and privileged access to such knowledge, it is considered an act of treachery to leave one Ordo and join another. Although the members of the Inquisitor's new Ordo may welcome their new peer, members of the old Ordo may never trust him again, and much of the knowledge to which he had access is closed off to him for all time. Having changed their allegiances several times, there are some Inquisitors who find themselves apart from the system of Ordos entirely, distrusted and stigmatised by their erstwhile peers.

Some Inquisitors bear certain trappings that, to the initiated at least, speak loudly of their affiliation. An Inquisitor serving the Ordo Malleus might call himself 'Daemonhunter', and adorn his golden armour with purity seals bearing holy texts of abjuration against the things of the warp. Inquisitors of the Ordo Hereticus might appear as much officers of the Imperial Faith as members of the Inquisition. The alien hunting Ordo Xenos Inquisitors might go about their mission wearing an armoured enviro-suit, lest even the microscopic taint of the xenos touch them. Plenty more Inquisitors, however, bear no outward sign of membership in any particular Ordo, preferring instead to keep their enemies ignorant as to their true identity.

Aside from the three major Ordos, there exist still more. Most are largely unknown, even to other members of the Inquisition. Many are little more than cabals of Inquisitors allied against a common threat, while others are in essence specialised sub-Ordos. One group, sometimes called the Ordo Sicarius, keeps a watchful eye upon the agents of the Officio Assassinorum, lest a repeat of the devastating Wars of Vindication ever come about. Some members of the Ordo Hereticus view this secretive group as pretentious rivals, given their own remit of combating the 'enemy within'. Other, nigh unknown Ordos might interest themselves in matters so esoteric or specialised they are entirely unknown to their fellows.

The Ordo Hereticus

"A heretic may see the truth and seek redemption. He may be forgiven his past and be absolved in death. A Traitor can never be forgiven. A Traitor can never find peace in this world or the next. There is nothing as wretched or as hated in all the world as a Traitor."

The Ordo Hereticus is the scourge of the traitor, the witch, the mutant and the heretic. The interests of its members are aligned towards the combating of threats broadly classified as arising from within the great bulk of Humanity; the so-called 'enemy within'. Such threats might arise from rebellious planetary governors or the treacherous genome of a mutant population, from emerging psykers or intolerable spiritual doctrine. Some

Ordo Hereticus Inquisitors watch over the organs of the Imperium itself, taking it upon themselves to conduct purges of departments they consider wasteful, while others monitor entire planetary populations for signs of genetic deviation. With the Ordo's particular interest in psykers, its members are often dubbed 'Witch Hunters', a term that serves to strike fear into the superstitious peoples of the Imperium whenever it is heard.

Many Inquisitors of the Ordo Hereticus maintain close links with the Adeptus Ministorum. Despite the fact that its implementation varies enormously from one world to the next, the Ecclesiarchy provides a machinery of control over the masses of Humanity. Preachers harangue the faithful, demanding they confess their sins and those of their neighbours. They demand their congregations be ever vigilant for the signs of mutation, for it is taught that such outward signs of impurity are a reflection of a deeper, spiritual sickness afflicting the soul. With the right connections, a Witch Hunter can instigate a purge amongst a suspect population, scouring it of the unclean before the taint can take too great a hold. Of course, some Inquisitors of the Ordo Hereticus consider themselves far above the laws of the Ecclesiarchy, and decide to conduct purges within the ranks of the church itself. Such events have, in the past, caused bitter conflicts between the two mighty arms, in which entire planetary populations have burned.

The most Puritan of Ordo Hereticus Inquisitors are often Monodominants; zealous, intolerant individuals who see damnation and sin wherever they look. These Witch Hunters are commonly itinerant, moving from one world to the next, instigating purges and mass trials that often condemn millions. Some announce their arrival in a system, striking fear into the hearts of the population and flushing out multitudes of the guilty. Others move silently amongst the peoples, watching from the dark shadows, all the while gathering the evidence that damns uncounted heretics to the pyres. Still more assume a false identity, perhaps that of an official of the Adeptus Terra or the Adeptus Ministorum, only to reveal themselves as an Inquisitor at the last.

As with all of the Ordos, the Ordo Hereticus has its fair share of Radicals. There are plenty of Witch Hunters who subscribe to the dogma of the Recongregators, sewing the seeds of rebellion wherever they go in order to smash apart that which must be rebuilt. To this end, they infiltrate all manner of organisations, from proscribed cults to planetary militia. Illegal sects are encouraged to rise up against the mainstream church, and mutinous garrisons are persuaded to deny the authority of their masters. Sometimes the Inquisitor and his agents bring about such acts by covert means, perhaps tampering with communiqués or bribing key individuals. At other times, they establish themselves as figures of authority, posing as a demagogue or a rogue general in order to lead the organisation into damnation. Once the deed is done, the Imperium wreaks its vengeance, and the destructive cause of the Recongregators is furthered.

The Ordo Hereticus is as subject to factional in fighting as any other of the Inquisition's Ordos, much of the conflict revolving around the inherent contradiction in doctrine regarding psykers. The preachers entreat their flocks to cast out the psyker and many cultures believe them to be tainted by the warp and inherently evil. Yet, Imperial Governors are required to gather those who display psychic talent that they may be offered up to the Black Ships of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica. While the Imperial Creed preaches hate and intolerance towards the psyker, the Imperium would not function without Astropaths and many other types of psyker. It is convenient for the Ecclesiarchy to reduce the matter to such black and white terms, so that even the most ignorant of sky-clad feral worlders knows to be ever watchful for the witch in their midst. In theory at least, the peoples of more 'civilised' worlds are capable of perceiving the difference between the dangerous psyker newly come into their uncontrollable powers, and one who has journeyed to ancient Terra to be soul-bound with the Emperor. Yet, there are those within every level of the Imperium's mighty machine who stoke the fires of hatred to their own ends, abhorring the psyker, resenting that Mankind must suffer their continued existence. Even within the Inquisition, where many agents are highly skilled practitioners of the psyker's arts, there are those who harbour such beliefs, making conflict between Inquisitors of the Ordo Hereticus far from uncommon.

While many Inquisitors of the Ordo Hereticus move unseen amongst the mass of Humanity, others make themselves very visible indeed. These are the subjects of many fearful tales, and their very names can strike terror into the hearts of entire planetary populations. By announcing their presence, these individuals often inspire a wave of devotion and piety to sweep across a formally lax world, with mutation and heresy being confessed in unprecedented numbers. Some Witch Hunters convene months-long hearings, in which the guilty are purged from the ranks of the innocent. At the end of these hearings, untold thousands may be burned in the mass pyres to which they are condemned for their crimes. It is not unknown for a world's population to be decimated by such hearings, and for subsequent tithes to fall short. Of course, allowing such a thing is a crime in itself, for which the Imperial Governor, and therefore the people, are held responsible.

The Ordo Hereticus maintains links with the Adepta Sororitas, the militant arm of the Adeptus Ministorum. The Sisters of Battle are often found at the very forefront of the war against the traitor and the heretic, and as such often make common cause with the more Puritan Witch Hunters. In times of need, the Ordo Hereticus petitions the Ecclesiarchy for the services of a Mission of Battle Sisters. They could, of course, simply demand the use of the Sisters of Battle, but few Inquisitors would risk spoiling the relationship between their own order and the Ecclesiarchy. The Sisters of Battle are known for their utter piety and their intolerance of the foes of Humanity, making them ideal for assaults against mutant strongholds and proscribed cults. They are armed and equipped with the finest weapons and armour the Adeptus Ministorum can provide. Their signature weapon is the flamer, with which they scour the darkest of places of the taint of the heretic, bringing the blinding light of the Emperor into the most benighted of corners. Accompanied by a Mission of Battle Sisters, a Witch Hunter can bring the judgement of the Emperor to the most terrible of Humanity's foes.

The Ordo Xenos

"Mankind has never been alone amongst the stars. There have ever been the other races of the universe. It is neither in Man's nature to share his worlds with the aliens nor in theirs to share with Man. And so there has always been conflict and war. An unending series of wars. Wars of annihilation. Wars of genocide. The alien races are an abomination. We must fight them to their last breath; no quarter asked, none given. Even the places of the alien must be abhorred and shunned. Any trace of their being must be erased from the landscape lest its foul taint blight us."

–Inquisitor Grunwald, Ordo Xenos

The Inquisitors of the Ordo Xenos are dedicated to the defeat of the alien threat; the enemy without. The Imperium is a loose, scattered realm, its million and more worlds spread across three quarters of a galaxy that encompasses hundreds of billions of stars. How many of those stars harbour worlds on which alien life exists is beyond the ken of even of the greatest minds of the Inquisition, but in short, the answer is probably 'too many'. While many such life forms are primitive or relatively harmless, uncounted numbers are overtly hostile to Humanity, denying Mankind's manifest right to dominion over the entire galaxy. The eradication of such threats is the sworn duty of the so-called 'Alien Hunters' of the Ordo Xenos.

Although the Imperial Creed teaches that the Human form, being modelled after that of the Emperor is in every respect perfect, and the alien form therefore to be abhorred, attitudes towards aliens vary across the Imperium. On some worlds, the slightest word of intelligent alien life causes mass riots or panic, while on others, alien traders are tolerated. This is dependent on the world in question's relative situation. Planets out on the fringes may deal with the Imperium but once a generation, and must by necessity sometimes trade with non-human neighbours. Some cultures, particularly those with little regard to the laws of the Imperium, mix freely with aliens, and in some backwater regions there exist mongrel underworlds of whatever flotsam and jetsam the galaxy spits out.

The Ordo Chronos

Classified

Even amongst the ranks of the most learned of Ordo Calixis Inquisitors, few have ever heard the name of the Ordo Chronos, and still fewer have any inkling as to its mission. It is thought that the Ordo came into being as a result of the study of the effects of warp travel and the passage of time. It is common knowledge amongst void farers that occasionally a vessel arrives at its destination much, much later than its Navigator intended, the crew experiencing the passage of mere months for example, while in the material plane many centuries passed. Such events are the subject of many dreadful tales, but are accepted as one of the risks of warp travel. Far less common, however, are those occasions when a vessel has become embroiled in a warp phenomena that has resulted in it being expelled from warp space at a point in time before it actually set out. Though extremely rare, this is the subject of nightmare for superstitious void-farers the Imperium over.

The Ordo Chronos, so it is believed, was established in the Jericho Reach in order to combat any temporal anomalies that might arise from these, and similar events. Its members became concerned that travellers appearing in their past might somehow alter the proper flow of events, potentially interfering with the fate of Mankind and the intentions of the Emperor. Over several centuries, the Ordo Chronus investigated instances thought to be related to all manner of temporal phenomena, their work expanding beyond the original warp-related events to others, perhaps of a deliberate nature.

And then, the Ordo Chronos simply disappeared. None know how many members the Ordo had, but it appears that in a single moment, every Inquisitor linked to it vanished or went into hiding. Whispered tales have appeared over the centuries, some hinting at the involvement of renegade factions within the Adeptus Mechanicus and pursuit of certain technologies long forbidden to that ancient brotherhood. How and why the Ordo Chronos vanished, and if its members may one-day return, remain the subject of legend amongst those few who know they ever existed. Some, it is said, await that day, eternally vigilant against the doom such an event might presage for the future of Humanity itself.

Aliens take many forms, from the alluring to the hideous, and therefore present a range of different threats. Some appear disturbingly similar to Mankind, such as the enigmatic Eldar, and as such often present an insidious threat to Humanity, particularly where the interests of the two races overlap. Many worlds tolerate the presence of the Eldar at their borders, a degree of interaction occurring. The Eldar are a capricious species however, and have been known to lay claim to a world long held by the Imperium, demanding a population vacates its world or be exterminated. Even worlds populated by Mankind since before the Age of Imperium have been targeted, and bitter wars between Man and Eldar fought for their possession.

Other aliens are crude and brutal, such as the barbarous Orks. Though sentient, the Orks could hardly be called intelligent, for they appear entirely enslaved to the notion of war and destruction. Perhaps uniquely amongst self-aware species, the Orks have no fear whatsoever of death, and embark upon the most dangerous and destructive of acts with reckless abandon. There can be no reasoning with an Ork invasion, though many desperate planetary governments have tried to do so. Some have succeeded in bribing the warlord of an Ork host, for a time at least, supplying arms and equipment so that the invasion might take some other path. Most simply find their weapons turned against them.

Other aliens are so different from Humanity as to be considered little more than animals by the xenos biologers of the Imperium. The Tyranids for example are a nigh limitless mass of slavering beasts, yet it is generally accepted by those Inquisitors with experience in fighting the race that they are possessed of some manner of guiding, gestalt intelligence. Individually, most Tyranid creatures have no more intelligence or self-determination than a mono-task servitor, yet in large numbers they utilise highly complex strategies.

Less easily classified is a wide range of species that exist as parasites in one form or another. Many void-farers across the Calixis Sector and beyond tell tales of a species often called 'Flukes' or, appropriately, 'Brain Worms', which slowly rewrite the genetic identity of infected host creatures and thus reproduce in the most hideous manner imaginable. Others would enslave Mankind, making of their prey a sort of worker class over which they would rule.

Still more aliens are so exotic in form as to be nigh impossible to classify. Some appear based on materials other than carbon, such as the silica-based 'Stylites' encountered across several worlds beyond the Periphery sub-sector of the Calixis Sector. The bestiaries of the Ordo Xenos make reference to a host of even more extreme life forms, including some that exist as gaseous clouds, and even one described as an energy being that derives its sustenance from the essence of suns.

There are many types of Inquisitor serving the Ordo Xenos, but they often fall into one of two broad camps: those that take a defensive stand against the alien, and those that take a more offensive role. The former moves amongst Mankind, ever watchful for the sign of the alien, while the latter goes out into the interstellar depths, seeking the lair of the xenos, there to destroy it before it does the same to Humanity.

Those Alien Hunters that move amongst Mankind are adept at discerning the taint of the alien. Through years of experience, they can detect outsider patterns of behaviour amongst an infected populace. They can tell the difference between a human-made relic of pre-Imperium times and one crafted by the hand, claw or tentacle of an alien. Furthermore, they know the risks Mankind faces in dealing with many species, from parasitical genetic manipulation to planet-wide enslavement or slaughter. As with other types of Inquisitors, these individuals may conduct overt purges of populations they consider compromised, or they might move amongst them unseen. Ultimately, the result is the same; a tainted population is doomed, whether at the hand of the Inquisition or the xenos.

Ordo Xenos Inquisitors of a more militant mindset take the fight directly to the alien. They lead expeditions to worlds suspected of harbouring alien life to determine the degree of threat presented by whatever life forms they discover. Should the Alien Hunter discover a limited threat, they may place sentinel-beacons in orbit around the world, transmitting a warning to any vessels that come near. Some worlds are declared 'perditus', trespass upon their surface forbidden on pain of death lest life forms be inadvertently transported back to one of the Imperium's worlds. Some alien life forms are found to be so vile or dangerous that the Inquisitor bearing witness to their existence may determine that they must be eradicated. In such cases, the ultimate sanction of Exterminatus may be invoked, or, if the world itself is thought valuable enough, the Imperial Guard or Space Marines are mobilised to cleanse it of the alien taint.

As previously stated, the Imperium is stretched across the greater part of the entire galaxy, and so alien worlds, systems and even empires are to be found not only at the fringes, but also in the so-called 'Wilderness Zones' that separate one sector from the next. Thus, even a world far from the Halo Zones might have a planet ruled by a vile alien race for a neighbour, and be forced to constantly defend itself from attack. It is often the Inquisitors of the Ordo Xenos who rally the local forces against such enemies, mustering punitive strikes or leading crusades to purge the human space of the impure alien.

The Puritan/Radical divide exists within the Ordo Xenos as it does in the rest of the Inquisition. Puritan Alien Hunters are generally those who would destroy every last vestige of alien life in the galaxy, sometimes extending their hatred beyond sentient life to include even life forms with no more than an animal level of intelligence. These individuals believe that Mankind is possessed of a manifest destiny to rule the stars, and that any life form not derived of the ancient crucible of Sacred Terra is anathema. Such doctrine is broadly in line with that promulgated by the Adeptus Ministorum, so the Puritan Alien Hunter has little difficulty in whipping a population up into a rabid frenzy of anti-xenos hatred should it prove necessary. The reality on the edges of Human controlled space is often far more complicated however, particularly if a world has scant contact with the Imperium at large. Convincing the peoples of a world to turn against the aliens with whom they have been trading foodstuffs or raw materials for generations might prove difficult in such instances, for obvious reasons.

Many Ordo Xenos Inquisitors are quite open in their dealings with some alien races. Only the most Puritan Alien Hunter would consider it a great sin to make common cause with such species as the Eldar for example, and the annals of the Imperium contain many records of Human and Eldar forces

fighting together against such foes as the Orks or Tyranids. More divisive however is the use of alien mercenaries, such as the barbaric and flesh-devouring Kroot. Many Imperial Governors, faced with an immediate emergency, have turned to alien mercenaries for aid, knowing that a response from the Imperium might arrive too late. In such instances, it is not uncommon for an Inquisitor of the Ordo Malleus to instigate hearings and trials, and to test soldiers exposed to the aliens for signs of corruption. In most instances, the matter may pass with relatively few consequences, but should the Inquisitor in question be of a particularly Puritan mindset, entire regiments might be purged and the planetary government deposed as punishment.

Taking matters still further, there are the Radical members of the Ordo Xenos. These might openly associate with all manner of aliens, some even going so far as to include them amongst their cadres. Depending on the nature of the alien in question, the response of fellow Inquisitors might be severe indeed. In late 977.M41 for instance, one Inquisitor Forstav attended a conclave in the Tricorn Palace, attended by a bodyguard of three-dozen Kroot Mercenaries. The response from Forstav's fellow Inquisitors when he entered the great hall flanked by his savage companions was mixed, but a sizeable number of Puritans denounced him on the spot. Bloodshed followed, and a number of the denouncers were slain. Unfortunately for Inquisitor Forstav, his Kroot bodyguards set to devouring the flesh of those they had slain, as is their species' habit, a sight that proved too much for even the most liberal of Inquisitors attending the Conclave. Forstav was forced to fight his way out of the Tricorn Palace, a feat which, amazingly, he succeeded in, making it out, severely wounded, with a dozen of his bodyguard at his side. Inquisitor Forstav is thought to be at large somewhere in the Malfian Sub, and a number of Inquisitors present that day are said to be seeking him still.

The Ordo Xenos maintains links with an ancient institution known as the Deathwatch. This group consists of individual Space Marines seconded from their chapters to serve in one of the secret Watch Fortresses strategically located across the Imperium. From the Watch Fortresses, small, highly skilled Kill-Teams undertake vital and secret missions at the behest of the Inquisition, against a myriad of threats to Humanity. The Deathwatch operates under a series of pacts and oaths with the chapters that provide Battle Brothers to its ranks, and the deeds of these bold warriors earn their chapters much honour and renown. To be selected to serve for a time in the Deathwatch is one of the greatest accolades a Space Marine can receive, and one of the most dangerous undertakings he can make.

"Aliens are scum, they must be eradicated from our worlds, purged from the galaxy, destroyed wherever they appear. However, on occasion they can prove a useful tool…"

–Inquisitor Taarn

The Ordo Malleus

"I shall not counsel you against fear of the daemon: the Emperor knows you have none. But even psycannon and daemonhammer cannot carry the day against such a foe, for what use is the bolter shell against disease, terror and madness?

No, it is faith! Faith is our impenetrable shield and when faced with such belief the daemon becomes weak. Faith is our fiery sword and with it we burn out the diabolic cancer of Chaos wherever it is found."

–Attributed to Lord Inquisitor Hephaestos Grudd

The Inquisitors of the Ordo Malleus are sworn to defend the very soul of Mankind, concentrating on the defeat of those enemies of Humanity that dwell in the warp; the so-called 'enemy beyond'. Knowledge of such beings is strictly prohibited, but every strand of the Imperial Faith admonishes its adherents against that which would devour the human soul, whether they are known as daemons, evil spirits or any of a million other manifestations. In fact, most preachers are just as ignorant as their flocks. Only the Daemonhunters of the Ordo Malleus know the terrible truth about the fiends that lurk just beyond the thin skein that separates reality from the Empyrean, and they dedicate their very souls to their utter destruction.

The Inquisitors of the Ordo Malleus delve into secrets so terrible their very sanity is threatened. They learn the secret names of the Daemon, thus gaining power over them, and research the myriad blasphemous ways in which such vile abominations might be called into, and expelled from, the material plane. Such an arduous focus is of utmost importance, for should one Daemon be allowed to manifest, entire legions are want to follow. In no time at all, a full-scale Daemonic incursion is unleashed, entire populations possessed or slain, and in short order, whole planets lost.

The Daemonhunters of the Ordo Malleus concern themselves with the prevention of such manifestations, and with combating them should they somehow come about. As such, a great deal of their duties revolve around the persecution of those who would sell their souls to the Ruinous Powers—the so-called Gods of Chaos. The malign beings that lurk in the warp promise those insane enough to seek them out nigh unlimited power. The soul of Man is ever covetous of that which it cannot have, and service to the Ruinous Powers appears to offer a quick route to all the power a man can dream of. Although some do attain such power, the vast majority pay a terrible price for their folly as their soul becomes the eternal plaything of the beasts of the warp.

The Calixis Sector, indeed the entire Imperium, is infested by all manner of cults and sects devoted to the worship of the Chaos Gods. As such, the Imperium stands upon the precipice of damnation, for were these cults allowed to practice their vile sorceries, then the warp would spew forth upon a million worlds and the soul of Man would be drowned in the sea of Chaos. The Daemonhunters of the Ordo Malleus strive to uncover these cults wherever they may operate, and destroy them utterly lest their activities bring about the end.

While the vast majority of Ordo Malleus Inquisitors are utterly devoted the destruction of the Daemonic in all its forms, and could therefore be said to adhere to the Puritan mindset, the Ordo does harbour its share of Radicals. Mostly conforming to the Xanthite philosophy, these are individuals who believe that Chaos can be turned against itself. They utilise artefacts created by the servants of the Ruinous Powers, some even wielding Daemon-weapons as likely to devour the soul of the bearer as to shed the blood of his foe. Some Ordo Malleus Inquisitors even go so far as to practice the sorceries of their enemies, creating blasphemous Daemonhosts for example—human vessels deliberately possessed by the essence of a Daemon—that they might bind it to their service against its kind.

The Ordo Malleus, certainly within the Ordos Calixis, is perhaps the Ordo most riven by internal strife. The bitterness with which the opposing factions face one another is terrible to behold. Even when a confrontation between a Puritan and a Radical Daemonhunter does not end in violence, the hatred between the two camps is a palpable thing. Words exchanged in the relative security of a conclave are remembered, and often repaid in blood many years later.

The Ordo Malleus has at its disposal one of the most powerful of military arms in the entire Imperium. The Grey Knights Chapter of the Adeptus Astartes is a unique force devoted entirely to the combating of the Daemonic and answerable exclusively to the Ordo Malleus. The Grey Knights are the mightiest of all Space Marines, each a model of such purity that of all the arms of the Imperium, it can truly be said that none of its brethren have ever been turned to the service of Chaos. Beyond even this remarkable fact, each Grey Knight is a master of the martial and the psychic arts, able to combat the Daemon in the physical and the spiritual realms at once. The Grey Knights Chapter is based on the moon of Titan, its Chapter Fortress forbidden ground to all but the most privileged and trusted of individuals. From this fortress, and perhaps others hidden across the Imperium, the Grey Knights travel, at the behest of the Ordo Malleus, aboard the fastest vessels the Adeptus Mechanicus can provide, to combat Daemonic incursions wherever they might be found. Without the noble, self-sacrificing deeds of the Grey Knights, it is probable that uncounted worlds would have been lost to the powers of the warp, and the souls of trillions enslaved by the ravening things of the Empyrean.

INTERACTION

The servants of the Holy Ordos of the Emperor's Inquisition are empowered to demand of the Imperium's myriad institutions whatever they deem necessary in the persecution of their duties. Furthermore, none are held to be beyond their authority, save perhaps the High Lords of Terra themselves. In practice however, each Inquisitor pursues his mission according to a unique combination of circumstances, much of which places a practical limit on the extent of his remit even though none exists in theory.

Furthermore, Inquisitors interact with one another in a range of different ways across the Imperium. In some regions, Inquisitors act almost entirely alone, rarely if ever associating with others of their kind. In other areas, Inquisitors band together into coherent, formalised institutions that over time develop their own traditions and infrastructures. Over the millennia, untold numbers of these institutions have come into being and eventually fallen, for ultimately, the power of the Inquisition resides not in monolithic power structures, but in the individual Inquisitors and the powers vested in them. The Calixis Sector is home to such an institution: the Ordos Calixis. This alliance of Inquisitors has coalesced around the sector, and a number of key individuals, over the last millennia or so, and provides a visible presence in a region seething with all manner of heresies and strife. Despite the looming presence of the Ordos Calixis, the individual worlds and many of the institutions of the sector are still sovereign entities therefore part of the vastly convoluted feudal system of the Imperium.

There follows some details of how an Inquisitor might interact with each of the major institutions to be found in the Calixis Sector.

Planetary Governors

Regardless of the political system by which a world is administered, there exists a single individual who holds the post of Imperial Commander, or Planetary Governor. Most of the worlds of the Imperium are entirely independent, at least so long as tithes are forthcoming, but others are the domains of such bodies as the Adeptus Mechanicus, the Officio Munitorum or even the Space Marines of the Adeptus Astartes. Even so, there is an official who holds such a rank—a Magos Prime in the case of the Adeptus Mechanicus, a Supreme Prefect in the case of the Administratum, or the Chapter Master or designated regent in the case of the Space Marines. The exact title varies from world to world, but the principle is more or less universal.

When acting overtly on any of the Imperium's worlds, it is common for an Inquisitor to go straight the top—to the world's Imperial Commander. Should the Inquisitor have need of the world's resources, most cut out the middle men and make their requests—or demands—directly of the individual who holds ultimate power on the world.

Depending on their demeanour, an Inquisitor might approach an Imperial Governor as a peer, with appropriate ceremony. He might hold court, laying out requirements and pacifying the governor's ego with honeyed words and shows of respect. Regardless of the words he uses in such instances, no Inquisitor considers himself anything other than above the Imperial Commander, and such players are amongst the most dangerous and effective of the Inquisition's operatives. Other Inquisitors make no such compromises, riding roughshod over local sensitivities and demanding in no uncertain terms what they require.

The vast majority of Imperial Commanders comply with an Inquisitor's demands without hesitation, for even if their people are ignorant of much of the greater Imperium, they are fully aware that they are just one world amongst multitudes and ultimately owe their power to the Adeptus Terra. Some governors might feel wounded by an Inquisitor's methods, resenting a blunt reminder of the limitations of their own powers. It is still a very foolish Imperial Commander indeed who presents any objection to an Inquisitor's demands.

It is when the Imperial Commander has something to hide that things get interesting. In such an instance, the Inquisitor is most likely testing the governor, knowing full well that he has something to hide and perhaps seeking to force his hand. In so doing, an especially bold Inquisitor might unveil a rebellion that would otherwise have taken many months of investigation to bring about; the Imperial Commander revealing his treachery for all to see.

The Imperial Guard

The vast armies of the Imperial Guard are drawn from the finest of the planetary regimental tithes, in which one tenth of a world's military forces are rendered up to the Imperium whenever it is demanded of them. Some worlds go generations without such a tithing being demanded, while others are drained almost dry by constant demands for troops, often depending on the world's location relative to any ongoing wars. Units pass out of the authority of whatever military institutions produced them, and become part of the vast organisation that is the Imperial Guard. Planetary militias are reformed into Imperial Guard regiments, and often locally manufactured arms and equipment are replaced with mass produced models provided by the Officio Munitorum. New regiments are then shipped out to take part in an ongoing campaign, or sometimes despatched to garrison worlds, to provide a strategic reserve while they await their final deployments.

But not all of these regiments reach the wars for which they were raised to fight. Some are instead intercepted by an Inquisitor, requisitioned for service against quite a different foe than they were intended to fight. Depending on the mission and its duration, a single squad or platoon might be detached to serve the Inquisitor, or it might be an entire company, or sometimes the entire regiment.

As with their dealings with Imperial Commanders, different Inquisitors deal with such matters according to their own character. Some simply arrive at an army's high command and inform the Chief of Staff of their requirements, leaving it to the officers to deliver the requisite units. Others take entirely the opposite approach and go straight to the unit itself and informing them of their new assignment.

Again, it would be a very foolish Chief of Staff that refused an Inquisitor whatever he demanded. It has been known for particularly officious staff officers to insist the Inquisitor go through the 'proper' logistical channels, demanding reams of paperwork be completed. Such junior officers are usually dealt with by a nearby Commissar before they cause undue offence.

Once a unit has been requisitioned, the Officio Munitorum's involvement in the matter is not necessarily at an end. If the unit is to be detached for some time, a supply chain and source of replacements for battle casualties may need to be put in place. Few Inquisitors require the services of such units for long enough for this to be a major concern however, and those that survive their missions are normally returned to the Imperial Guard at some point in the future, more or less intact.

One side effect of the nature of the enemies that the Inquisition must often face is the need to contain reports about the specifics of their work. What this means is that many Imperial Guard troops who survive contact with their foe may find themselves purged as a result, lest any hint of corruption remain to be passed on. This is particularly the case when units serving the Ordo Malleus have faced the Daemonic servants of the Ruinous Powers. At the conclusion of a mission, the Inquisition is not above bombing its own troops from orbit, a fate many would consider a mercy, considering what the troopers might have witnessed. Other units are fortunate enough to be mind-wiped, although this is an intensive process normally reserved for skilled troops that the Inquisitor intends to keep in their service and make use of again.

It is not unheard of for an Inquisitor to requisition the services of an entire Imperial Guard regiment, and for the unit to be slowly whittled down over the course of its engagements. What started out as a 5,000-strong force might, within months, be reduced to a dozen or so grizzled veterans, able to withstand the very worst the Imperium's foes can throw their way. Sometimes, a single, scarred Guardsman standing at the side of an Inquisitor is the last survivor of an entire regiment, long since become a trusted servant, or indeed, an Acolyte in the service of the Inquisition.

At times, an Inquisitor has cause to doubt the loyalty of an Imperial Guard unit, or its leader. In the vastness of the Imperium, it is entirely possible for entire regiments, even armies, to simply disappear from the orders of battle, through duplicity or error, or for them to fail to respond to orders issued from many light years away. An Inquisitor who discovers a mutinous or outright renegade Imperial Guard unit inevitably calls upon the services of other Imperial Guard regiments to deal with the outcast. Some Inquisitors make a point of using troops raised from the same world as the renegades to bring them to justice, taking advantage of the zealous desire to atone for the sins of their erstwhile fellows.

The Imperial Navy

Inquisitors are less likely to make demands of the Imperial Navy than they are of the Imperial Guard, but nonetheless, there are certain circumstances where this might come about.

The most obvious instance is transport. The Imperium is a vast realm, and travel between planets, even those in the same star system, is far from common. Should an Inquisitor require transport at short notice, they may find it necessary to requisition the services of the Imperial Navy. In most cases, the vessel in question is likely to be one of the smallest of classes, such as a frigate, for the larger capital vessels are dependent upon so many supporting arms that they are rarely able to respond to a request in sufficient time. A small escort vessel might be made ready to make way within an hour of the Inquisitor demanding its services, while a battleship could take many days to make ready and get underway.

An Inquisitor may not requisition the services of an Imperial Navy vessel on the basis of mere convenience. They might also require the presence that even the smallest of vessels can bring to bear on the worlds of the Imperium. Even a frigate is equipped with substantial firepower, and is able to bring it into play against any target on the surface of a world. Such back-up is extremely useful for an Inquisitorial cadre on the ground.

As with the Imperial Guard, sometimes a secondment becomes a permanent arrangement. This might be the case with Inquisitors whose investigations take them to many different planets. The Inquisitors of the Ordos Calixis rarely need to requisition Imperial Navy vessels on such a basis, for the region has reasonably well developed trade routes, served by a multitude of shipping concerns, on which an Inquisitor can rely for transport. However, there are those Inquisitors who prefer to maintain a certain independence, and these, much to the chagrin of Battlefleet Calixis, utilise vessels and crews once of that body.

Imperial Navy commanders are far less likely to renounce their oaths than their 'mud-wallower' fellows of the Imperial Guard. This is not a sign of greater loyalty, more one of circumstance, for while Imperial Navy vessels are capable of sustained independent operations, they must eventually put in for refuelling and maintenance, and in doing so utilise the services of not just the Imperial Navy but the Adeptus Mechanicus and many other arms. Unless a renegade crew can locate an illegal facility, or can maintain a façade of loyalty out amongst worlds that know no better, they eventually run out of options. Despite this, some vessels and their crews do turn renegade, joining the fleets of corsairs and privateers. Such cases are normally dealt with by the Imperial Navy, but often the Inquisition becomes involved in the hunt, and then the renegades are doomed indeed.

The Adeptus Ministorum

The Ecclesiarchy is a relatively new institution of the Imperium, having been formed out of the disastrous events of the Age of Apostasy. Before that time, the Imperial Creed was entirely fragmented into multitudinous denominations, each vying for supremacy and often accusing the others of all manner of heresies. After the reformation that followed the Age of Apostasy, the Ecclesiarchy was formed, with a centralised power structure intended to ensure that no repeat of the preceding events was possible. While the Imperial Creed still exists in as many forms as it ever did, there is at least a power structure in place, to which the billions of priests are answerable.

Relations between the Inquisition and the Adeptus Ministorum can vary enormously. The Ecclesiarchy is jealous of its roles as shepherd of Mankind's soul and temporal representative of the deified Emperor. The Inquisition, of course, regards itself as the ultimate arbiter and judge, and also answerable only to the Emperor. Needless to say, there exists great potential for the two institutions to come to blows. A great deal of mutual distrust often exists between Inquisitors and the officials of the Ecclesiarchy, a state made worse when the Inquisitor holds anything other than an overtly Puritan outlook. It is perhaps unsurprising that it is the more Puritan of Inquisitors who maintain links with Adeptus Ministorum, particularly those of the Ordo Hereticus.

As previously mentioned, the Inquisition often has need of the Battle Sisters of the Adepta Sororitas, but there are other allies that are often of use to the Inquisitor, provided they can

demonstrate a suitably Puritan mindset. Arco-Flagellants are a case in point. Arco-Flagellation is a punishment reserved for the most vile of blasphemers. The condemned is surgically altered in the manner of a servitor, and his mind and spirit are subjected to a ritual cleansing that entirely destroys the personality and reduces the subject to a raving maniac, desiring only to atone for his sins in the uncontrolled frenzy of battle against the Ecclesiarchy's foes. An even more potent example of the same process is to be found in the Penitent Engine, a purity-seal adorned monstrosity as large as a Space Marine Dreadnought, powered by the raving guilt of a condemned sinner. The Ecclesiarchy creates such constructs by way of punishment of the guilty, setting them loose against their foes. The Inquisition values such machines too, for they are incapable of feeling fear and are entirely expendable.

Those Inquisitors with a particularly positive relationship with the Adeptus Ministorum may be fortunate enough to find an ally, in the form of a Hierophant. These pious and experienced officers of the Imperial Creed often walk their own path, following the call of their faith wherever it may take them. Frequently, it takes them into the service of the Inquisition, where they are able to combat the enemies of the faith at the very front line of the war for the soul of Humanity.

The Adeptus Astartes

The Space Marine Chapters of the Adeptus Astartes are entirely autonomous bodies, answerable, in theory at least, to none other than themselves in the defence of the Imperium. Despite their independence, the Space Marine Chapters still rely on many other bodies of the Imperium for their continued existence, and over the millennia have developed pacts with many more. Not least amongst these are individual agents of the Inquisition.

According to their remit, an Inquisitor has the authority to requisition the services of a Space Marine Chapter in the furtherance of a mission. In practice, however, no such power exists, making the Space Marines one of the few bodies an Inquisitor is genuinely courteous to when seeking aid. Should an Inquisitor find himself up against a threat so serious he requires the aid of the Space Marines, he approaches the Chapter Master, or his representative and attempts to negotiate for their services. Sometimes a Chapter Master agrees immediately, dispatching the requested brethren with all urgency. At other times, however, a Chapter Master might flatly refuse to aid the Inquisitor, and feel no compulsion to explain his reasons for doing so. Short of mobilising censure against the recalcitrant chapter, a very rare occurrence indeed, there is little an Inquisitor can do to compel a Space Marine chapter to aid them should they decide not to.

Despite this potentially fractious relationship, some Inquisitors have developed close ties with particular Space Marine chapters. Others have, of course, made enemies of chapters. Many positive alliances have been formalised over the centuries, so that a given chapter pledges to lend aid to a given Inquisitor should they call. In some rare cases, such undertakings have remained in place long after the Inquisitor's death, the commitment passing to an Acolyte ascended to the rank of Inquisitor. Such relationships lend an Inquisitor enormous influence both within and without the ranks of the Inquisition, and are much coveted when they come about. Quite apart from the obvious benefits in fighting the enemies of Mankind, few rivals within the Inquisition would dare come to blows over factional differences knowing that the target of their ire is backed up by the Space Marines of the Adeptus Astartes.

Although most relationships between Inquisitors and the Adeptus Astartes remain more or less neutral, there have been occasions when an agent of the Inquisition has taken it upon themselves to conduct an investigation into the affairs of a given Space Marine chapter. The most likely reason for this to come about is the perception of genetic impurity on the part of a particularly Puritan Inquisitor, often of the Ordo Hereticus. Other reasons an Inquisitor might look into a Space Marine chapter might revolve around questions of loyalty—chapters are not subject to the chain of command of the Imperium's military forces, and may withhold aid should they decide to.

Any Inquisitor who decides to meddle in the affairs of the Adeptus Astartes is taking a great risk, for very few chapters welcome visitors into their Fortress Monasteries, let alone ones who question the chapter's loyalties. Those who speak out against the Space Marines may find themselves cut off from aid when they most need it, and those who openly condemn them are likely to bring about a war they cannot possibly win, and find themselves bereft of allies within the Inquisition willing to join them in their stand.

The Adeptus Arbites

The Adeptus Arbites exist to maintain the laws and codes of the Imperium. The organisation maintains facilities on every world with a sizeable population, from which the Arbitrators sally forth to impose order and bring justice to the guilty. It is the responsibility of the local Imperial Commander to maintain a body of so-called 'Enforcers' to impose local laws—the Arbitrators are present to impose those laws that apply across the entire domains of Man, and they are above all local authority.

This being the case, the Adeptus Arbites have much in common with the Inquisition, and the bodies often find themselves allied against a common foe. All too often, an Arbitrator's investigations into localised criminal activities turns up links to far more terrible deeds. Many Inquisitors maintain contacts and agents within the ranks of the Adeptus Arbites, who intercept reports that might indicate matters in which the Inquisitor should take an interest. On many occasions an Inquisitor has turned up, seemingly out of the blue, to aid an Adeptus Arbites task force against foes the Arbitrators had little chance of defeating alone.

Inquisitors quite often requisition the services of the Adeptus Arbites. The Arbitrators are highly professional and devoted servants of the Imperium, and so make ideal allies against the foes of Mankind. Furthermore, the Arbitrators are often gifted with local knowledge the Inquisitor can rarely hope to match, and are able to track down key local figures, from potential allies to outright enemies.

The Adeptus Arbites maintain substantial, grimly imposing fortress-precincts on the worlds they occupy. These fortresses are armed and armoured to a very high level indeed, and often form a bulwark against rebellious uprisings. As each fortress-precinct has its own Astropath, the Arbitrators are often able to send word to the Imperium of an uprising that might have engulfed the world's government entirely. All too often, an Adeptus Arbites fortress-precinct has proven the last redoubt against anarchy, the few hundred Arbitrators within holding out with grim determination until aid can arrive from off-world. Often, a single Inquisitor and their cadre might be the sole reply to the call for help, but with Inquisitors being the uniquely puissant individuals they are, that might be all that is required to put down the rebellion. Following such incidents it is not uncommon for one or more Arbitrators to become permanent members of an Inquisitor's cadre, and the precinct authorities rarely object, considering it an Arbitrator's duty to aid the Inquisition. Indeed, following the fall of Precinct Omega–14 on the world of Baraspine following a localised uprising against what criminal elements referred to as 'arbitrary brutality', Inquisitor Vallax recruited every one of the seventy Arbitrators who survived. This elite cadre then took the Emperor's Law to every world in the Adrantis Sub, punishing ruthlessly countless thousands of criminals.

While the Inquisition is likely to find a ready ally in the Adeptus Arbites, it is extremely rare indeed for the two organisations to find themselves coming to blows. Arbitrators and Judges are nigh-incorruptible, and always serve many light years away from their own home world so that they never become embroiled in local politics. This is not to say that no Arbitrator has ever turned from the Emperor's Light of course, and those few that have fallen have inevitably fallen the furthest. Such was the case when Marshall Gorr of the frontier world of Kudrun one day pronounced that the entire population was guilty of concealing seditious thoughts, and attempted to round up 100,000 citizens. Needless to say, the people revolted, and Gorr was murdered at the hands of an outraged mob. After the event, an Inquisitorial investigation determined that Gorr had come into psychic powers, perhaps those of the telepath, late in his life, and had lost his sanity.

The Adeptus Astra Telepathica

The Adeptus Astra Telepathica is responsible for the operation of the fearful Black Ships. These vast, ancient vessels ply the space lanes on decades-long circuits of the Imperium, gathering at each planet they visit all of the psykers born to that world. These are interred in soul-shielded holds, and eventually brought to Terra, there to be judged worthy of a life in service to the Imperium, or a death in communion with the Emperor. Plenty never even make it to Terra, being judged by their keepers as too dangerous to live a minute more, even in the bleak holds of the Black Ships.

Due to their mission, there is a fair amount of interaction between the Adeptus Astra Telepathica and the members of the Ordo Hereticus. One of the few obligations of Imperial Commanders is that they conduct regular psyker-purges and render up those they find when the Black Ships arrive. The Adeptus Astra Telepathica employs all manner of arcane enumerations in order to predict the number of psykers the population of any given world is likely to spawn in a single generation, and the quantity grows each year. So, when a world's offering comes up short of this prediction, the Adeptus Astra Telepathica has cause for concern. If the Adepts' fears are great enough, they call upon the Inquisition to investigate matters.

The consequences of a world failing to hand over its psyker population are too terrible to comprehend, and so it is not uncommon for the Adeptus to supply the Inquisitor with specialised Imperial Psykers, should they be needed, in order to combat the threat. Psy-cults are pernicious enemies indeed, able to dominate entire segments of a population. Other groups trade in psyker-slaves, drugging the poor unfortunates and subjecting them to all manner of ritualised trauma in order to ride the wave of thrilling madness they radiate. Others, such as criminal figures, seek to use the psykers' talents to their own ends. Ultimately however, such misdeeds always lead to disaster. An enslaved psyker escapes and wreaks revenge against all within a dozen miles; the cult delves too deeply into forbidden knowledge and mass possession and daemonic incursion ensue; the unbound pysker looses control of their powers and death and insanity are unleashed. Only the greatest of Witch Hunters can hope to prevail against such foes, and even they request the aid of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica in combating their foes.

In addition to such aid being provided, Inquisitors, in common with every branch of the Imperium, rely upon the services of Astropaths for communications across the void. These adepts are provided to the many arms of the Imperium by the Adeptus Astra Telepathica, and pledged to the service of the organisation they serve. In the case of the Inquisition, many Inquisitors prefer to maintain the permanent services of a trusted Astropath, that their communications might remain secure and uncorrupted by the actions of their rivals and enemies.

Another reason for the relatively close ties between the two organisations is that a large number of Inquisitors are gifted of psychic powers, and therefore were trained in their use by the adepts of the Telepathica. In fact, such Inquisitors owe their very lives to such adepts, for they might have been judged undeserving of life or too weak to control their powers, or else consigned to the Adeptus Astronomican. It is not uncommon for Inquisitors to serve on board the Black Ships themselves, witnessing first hand the methods the Adeptus uses to suppress and control its charges. Arriving at a world, the Inquisitor is able to lend his aid in the gathering of the cull, to ensure that no psykers are withheld, and to make sure the Emperor receives his due.

The Adeptus Mechanicus

The servants of the Machine God exist as a nigh autonomous class within the multitude of the Emperor's servants. They consider themselves outside of many of the laws that govern most of Humanity, and they openly deny many of the teachings of the Ecclesiarchy. Despite that this vast, ancient and highly secretive organisation appears to so openly reject the mores of the Imperium, it is ubiquitous. The reason for this is that the

Imperium simply could not function without the Priesthood of Mars—all of Mankind's accomplishments would crumble and fall within a generation were the Tech-Priests to not maintain them. Without them, no space ship would ply the void, no army march to war, no raw material be refined and nothing more than a stone hovel be constructed.

The Adeptus Mechanicus can at times prove a divisive organisation, for its members care little for the sensitivities of others. They engage in a faith entirely alien to the followers of the Imperial Creed, speak in a language that bears little resemblance to High Gothic or any of planetary dialect, and appear outlandish, even by the diverse standards of a culture as heterogeneous as the Imperium. Furthermore, the tenets of the Tech-Priests' faith revolve around communion with and adoration of the machine, a concept many God-Emperor-fearing people find deeply unsettling, or outright abhorrent.

The mission of the Adepts of the Omnissiah is the Quest for Knowledge, the gathering of all of the wisdom lost during the distant Age of Strife. The Tech-Priests know that Mankind has forgotten far more of technology than remains intact, and so fight a constant battle to maintain the machines on which so much of Humanity relies. Yet, this is a losing battle, for with each generation understanding gives way to superstition, and the inexorable descent in to barbarity the servants of the Machine God strive to avert continues. In their quest to avert this descent, the Tech-Priests delve into long-sealed repositories of lost technology, unearth god-machines long buried beneath the ashes of forgotten battlefields, and decode the ciphers of reality itself. There are plenty within the Inquisition, as well as other institutions, that believe the Adeptus Mechanicus walks a fine line between duty and damnation, and take it upon themselves to combat a threat they perceive to be as terrible as any posed by alien or daemon.

There are uncounted records of confrontation between Inquisitors and members of the Adeptus Mechanicus. To date, such battles have largely been confined to small skirmishes fought between bitter rivals, and have rarely flared up into open conflict between larger numbers of either organisation. Indeed, the Inquisition relies upon the services of the Adeptus Mechanicus as much as any other organisation, and so great pains are often taken to ensure personal conflict between individual Inquisitors and Tech-Priests does not escalate into something more damaging. Despite this, many within the Inquisition resent the attitudes of the Adeptus Mechanicus, while many Tech-Priests begrudge interference from the Inquisition.

There are times when an Inquisitor is forced to request the aid of the Adeptus Mechanicus, perhaps in the investigation of a matter so specialised only a Tech-Priest has the requisite knowledge and skills. At other times, the Inquisitor may have need of the considerable military forces of the Adeptus Mechanicus, perhaps in the form of the mighty Titan Legions. An individual Inquisitor approaching the Adeptus Mechanicus might have little chance of gaining such aid, but with the help of an individual, may find that doors are opened. For this, and other reasons, many Inquisitors foster mutually beneficial alliances with Tech-Priests with whom they have worked in the past, often employing them on their staff. Few within the Adeptus Mechanicus consider themselves oath bound to such an Inquisitor, for their loyalty ultimately lies with the Omnissiah. Nonetheless, such an alliance can prove highly agreeable to both parties when the mission of the Inquisition and of the Adeptus Mechanicus converge.

The Administratum

The Administratum is by far the single largest organ of the Adeptus Terra. Untold billions of scribes, factors, bureaucrats and clerks manage the business of the Imperium at every level, upon every world. The Administratum has an interest in every aspect of the running of the Imperium, from the collection of tithes to the proper distribution resources. Therefore, it is only to be expected that an Inquisitor crosses paths with any one of these functionaries in the course of his duties.

The main resource the Administratum controls, and which the Inquisition often requires access to, is information. It is said that nothing occurs in the Imperium that is not at some point recorded by an Administratum scribe, catalogued, filed, copied in quadruplet, processed in one of the organisation's vast data-mills and, perhaps many centuries later, archived. Each phase in this process might take months, even years to accomplish, dependent upon the perceived relevance of the information. Unfortunately, the individuals that determine the relevance do so entirely according to their own set of values, often more concerned with the niceties of data-retrieval systems than with any external consideration. Thus, an incorrectly phrased request for military aid might be returned to its sender to be completed again, while that sender's entire world falls to alien invasion in the meantime.

Despite the staggering inefficiencies of the Administratum, the Inquisition does have great use of its resources. The key to a successful investigation involving the Administratum is to bypass or cut through as much of the red tape as possible. This is supposedly what the Inquisitorial Rosette is intended to facilitate, although many officious scribes treat it more as an annoyance than the Sword of Damocles it truly represents should they stand in the way of the bearer's duties. Once they have access to the vast reservoirs of data the Administratum maintains, an Inquisitor can filter through millennia of information in the search for patterns indicating the actions of their enemies. Few Inquisitors have the ability or indeed the inclination to undertake such searches themselves however, and most utilise the skills of Sages to mine the data for the information they require.

As with most other organisations, the Inquisition has had cause to investigate various bodies within the Administratum. At times, entire divisions have been accused of inefficiency on such a vast scale that an Inquisitor has decided to execute many thousands of bureaucrats for their crimes against Humanity. At other times, the activities of a given bureau or department have become corrupted, concealing treachery and criminality. Corruption for personal gain, such as the diverting of resources to a local black market is perhaps the least of concerns, for the extent of the Administratum's control can lead to entire worlds being lost to the Imperium, falling instead into the hands of its enemies without a single shot being fired.

Corporate Concerns

Aside from the megalithic institutions of the Imperium, there exist uncounted private concerns, from independent merchants to sector-wide industrial combines. The methods in which such concerns are administered are as varied as the ways in which planets are governed, ranging from sole ownership to mutual investment. The largest of these concerns might come to be noticed by the Inquisition, either as a source of aid, or, if most unfortunate, as the target of an investigation.

The fact that Inquisitors have little regard for personal wealth or the true value of financial transactions means that rendering aid to an Inquisitor can quite literally spell the end of a mercantile concern. Assets are stripped, personnel requisitioned and resources drained by the simple act of the Inquisitor displaying their Rosette. Yet, to deny such aid is to declare oneself a traitor, and to invite immediate and painful retribution.

Only the most supremely confident or stupid merchant would hinder an Inquisitor in their duties. Many have tried to deny an Inquisitor the use of a freighter for example, and lost far more than wealth in the process. Others have shown discretion in the face of an Inquisitor's demands, and withheld complaint, yet harboured a bitter grudge for many years to come. The most powerful of these merchants might come to oppose the workings of specific Inquisitors, out of spite or pride, and in so doing become their enemy.

The Underworld

The Ecclesiarchy preaches that the Imperium is beset by sin and criminality, the souls of Man balanced precariously over a seething ocean of damnation. On many worlds this is not an exaggeration. The worlds of the Imperium are ruled with such crushing, totalitarian ruthlessness that many turn to a shadowy underworld in an effort to numb the pain of their existence. The underworld welcomes such lost souls with open arms, providing succour of every possible flavour to those willing to pay the price.

Inquisitors care very little for the activities of such recidivists, except where they become something more than petty lawlessness. On whole, such matters are for the Enforcers to deal with, or should they transcend planetary authority, the Adeptus Arbites become involved. All too often, however, a criminal organisation has found itself, knowingly or through ignorance, stepping over an invisible line and drawing the attentions of an Inquisitor. Perhaps an enterprise that started out smuggling luxury items to the idle rich turns out to be a front for a trade in proscribed alien relics. A simply slave ring might find itself providing not forced labour but sacrificial offerings to the Ruinous Powers. As such, many Inquisitors maintain extensive contacts on the fringes of society and beyond, individuals of dubious character willing to pass along certain snippets of information to a master they may not even know, for a suitable price. Thus, the activities of the underworld are monitored from afar, lest something far more damaging than criminality emerge.

There are times when an Inquisitor finds himself forced to make alliances with certain individuals amongst the criminal underworld. In general, very few Puritan Inquisitors would allow such a situation to come about, although even they have been known to make common cause against a sufficiently dangerous foe, given no alternative. Inquisitors of a more Radical persuasion might actively seek out allies amongst the criminal fraternity, becoming increasingly enamoured of the dark shadows in which such individuals exist, far from the scrutiny of fellow Inquisitors.

Inquisition Protocol

The Imperium spans over a million worlds across the entire galaxy, encompassing untold numbers of cultures, beliefs, and traditions. Even the mighty Inquisition is affected by the sheer size of the Imperium it protects, and the protocol for Inquisition operations varies from Segmentum to Segmentum. For example, in many sectors, an Interrogator is only raised to the rank of Inquisitor with the consent of three other Inquisitors, and Inquisitor Lords are raised only upon being nominated by another of their number and confirmed by two more Lord Inquisitors.

Games Mastery

The Inquisitor and His Cadre

•

Threats and Challenges

•

Running a Campaign

Chapter VIII: Game Mastery

"I hear the footfalls that echo down the corridor that was never taken. I see the light through the door that was never opened, and I smell the scent of flowers that never bloomed. I taste each of the possibilities of the boundless universe and my mouth is filled with blood. There is no future, and the past is a lie."

–the Burnt Seer, Iocanthos 561.M41

This chapter is about what the Game Master can do to make this game work, and how to do it. It is about making the setting of **Dark Heresy** live in the minds of the players; it is about creating adventures of thrilling excitement, and above all it is about making sure that everyone who sits down in a group to play **Dark Heresy** has fun.

Ascension takes **Dark Heresy** into a wider, more dangerous setting; one that has ever greater possibilities for enjoyment but also possesses a strong set of challenges to Game Mastering. How are the group of players at your table going to work together to make sure that the game is enjoyed by all? How are you going to get the most from the new types of play and threats that this book introduces into your game? What kind of long term game do you want to run? This chapter addresses each of these challenges in turn and offers you advice on how to get the most from the time you spend running ascended games of **Dark Heresy**.

The Inquisitor and His Cadre

"I am minded to raise you to the position that you have craved and dreamt of for so long. I am, though, reticent. My friend, you are the finest apprentice I have ever tutored and there is no one I would trust more between here and the Golden Throne. Because of this I am loathe to place the burden of our high office on you: Its glitter is a lie and its rewards no more than the dry ash of a funeral pyre"

–Inquisitor Whitlock to Inquisitor Cydan before Cydan was raised to the rank

This section is intended to help you in preparing a group of players that are going to be playing **Dark Heresy** at the new ascended level presented in this book. While the characters created using this book are more personally powerful than those at the acolyte level, they are also in a different circumstance than acolytes: A group of ascended characters is referred to as "the Cadre." In the game, the Cadre

consists of one or more Inquisitors and their most trusted and experienced agents. Each member of the Cadre is a talented individual, each with their own specialisation, and each of whom has a close bond with the Inquisitor they serve. The Inquisitor also serves as the Cadre's built in leader. The Cadre also has authoritative power that can have a far reaching effect on events—in the form of Influence. This group structure has a number of challenging aspects that can reduce the amount of enjoyment people are having in your game. The best way of making sure that both you and your players have fun is to be aware of the potential issues involved in running an ascended game of **Dark Heresy**, and to address them with your players as a group before any play takes place.

Talk to your players about the type of game they are going to play, and get them to talk about it with each other.

This chapter addresses some of the most common problems that can hamper an ascended group, and gives some advice on how they can be avoided.

Bearing the Seal

The Inquisition may offer its servants a number of means by which they may be identified. Most often this is in the form of the Rosette, a stylised symbol of the Inquisitional "I" accompanied by a skull. An Inquisitor may entrust his Acolytes and Throne Agents with a smaller rosette or similar "seal of the Inquisition" with which they may prove their authority should it come into question. Other than the Rosette, some rarer forms of this authority may take the form of a heraldic ring, an electoo, a letter of authority, or an illuminated scroll. Whatever its shape, the seal of the Inquisition demands respect, and only the most obstinate or single-minded would dare to ignore such. When an Acolyte or Throne Agent presents the rosette, it is a message saying "This individual is on the business of an Inquisitor. Stand in their way at your peril." Thus do the servants speak with their master's voice to do the business of the Inquisition.

POWER AND THE INQUISITOR

In an Inquisitorial Cadre, the inquisitor (or senior inquisitor if more than one is present) is the person in charge; the other characters work for him, and their power and influence flows from the inquisitor. In most ascended games of **Dark Heresy**, the inquisitor is a character that is controlled by a player. This means that, on the face of it, one person at the gaming table has power over all the other characters, is in charge of the direction of the Cadre, and by extension the choices followed by the characters within adventures. In some groups this situation causes no, or very few, problems. In other groups this arrangement can have a negative effect on the enjoyment of the players not playing the inquisitor, the player playing the inquisitor, the Game Master, or in fact any combination of people involved in the game. Conversely, having the power of an inquisitor reside in a player-character can lead to a very dynamic, player driven game in which all those involved become highly involved and everyone has a lot of fun.

But I Trust No One…

It is easy for players with experience of **Dark Heresy**, and knowledge of the background of the 41st Millennium, to fall into an idea of how the Inquisitor relates to his Cadre that is based on them treating the other player characters not as trusted servants and comrades, but as disposable chattels. While this is a paradigm that does exist within the Inquisition, it is not one that fits with an enjoyable roleplaying experience. The inquisitor is in charge, but even if a member of the Cadre is the worst scum in the universe, the inquisitor has reason to value them as a close companion in his holy work, and as a valuable asset into which considerable effort has already been invested and is not to be squandered foolishly.

While some NPC inquisitors trust no one, have no close confidants, and make bonds of friendship with no one, the Inquisitor that is part of a Cadre in a game of **Dark Heresy** is not such an inquisitor. The Inquisitor character in the group has a Cadre of other characters that he works closely with. Those playing the characters that make up the rest of the Cadre are playing characters that have a relationship beyond mere service with the Inquisitor. They are, to an extent, valued by the Inquisitor and have a relationship of respect and trust that goes beyond being issued commands and obeying them. This is a fact worth being clear about before anyone rolls the dice, and it is vital that as a GM you discuss this fact with your group of players. The best way to ensure that all players come to the gaming table with the correct idea is to explain this to them, and explain that if one of them is going to be playing the Inquisitor, it is best if he is the type of Inquisitor who has close and trusted servants. This is the premise that informs much of the rest of advice in this chapter.

If the players do not wish to play this type of Cadre, consider having the players take ascended characters and keeping the inquisitor as a NPC in the same way as in a normal game of **Dark Heresy**. An NPC can be as untrusting and uncaring of the player characters as you like while avoiding creating an awkward dynamic between players.

The Burden of Being an Inquisitor

One of the most difficult issues with having the Inquisitor as a PC is that it is easy for the person playing the Inquisitor to not enjoy themselves. This might seem implausible; after all, the Inquisitor is the one with the power, the one who is in the lead, the one who all the other characters work for. There seems to be no way that anyone could fail to enjoy playing the Inquisitor. All of the things that make an Inquisitor a great character to play can make it a very difficult character to enjoy playing. Other players can expect the person playing the Inquisitor to make the decisions, and have insight into what is going on in the game. If the Inquisitor player makes a decision that has negative results for the group as a whole he can get the blame for this and eventually not want to make decisions in case they are 'wrong' for the group. The other

players can also have expectations of how an Inquisitor would behave, and if the way that the Inquisitor is being played does not match this expectation, it can disrupt the feeling of the group. An Inquisitor is also a particular type of character: he is competent, driven, and committed to his role. Such a focused character can be very different from more freewheeling, less serious characters that a player may enjoy.

If enough of the circumstances outlined above occur in your game, you may find the Inquisitor player starts to feel isolated, restricted by what other players want the Inquisitor to be, and under pressure to make the right choices all the time. The following sections give you some suggestions of how to make sure that these problems do not occur in your game. The most important thing you must do as a Game Master is to make sure that the person who is going to be playing the Inquisitor knows what they are getting into, and is clear that they want play such a character.

Group Direction

Does the fact that, in the game, the Inquisitor is in charge mean that the player that is playing the Inquisitor is also in charge? This is an important question for you to consider before running ascended games of **Dark Heresy**. It is a question of who sets the direction of the Cadre within the game. The fact is that the character of the Inquisitor is undoubtedly in charge, in the game world. It is also a fact, however, that unless you are running a very unusual group, the person playing the Inquisitor is not, in reality, a highly experienced investigator, leader, master of politics and warrior all rolled into one. They are also, in the real world, one of a group of players who they are quite definitely not in charge of. In other words, the in-game and out-of-game situations are poles apart, but the impact of decisions made by the Inquisitor's player are not just restricted to the world of the game.

While the most intuitive answer is to say that the person who is playing the Inquisitor is in charge, there are other ways of setting up the power structure within the group. The ones that are touched on here include: making use of out of character decisions by the group, and the Game Master giving the Inquisitor player open advice on what is possible and expected within the game. Ultimately the answer to the original question is up to you, but it is vital that you consider not only the needs of the **Dark Heresy** setting, but the needs of you and your players for an arrangement that is enjoyable and comfortable for all.

Making Decisions

How important decisions are made is the central issue of how playing an Inquisitorial Cadre either succeeds or fails. Decisions in this context are not those made about whether the Death Cultist should take her matched power blades or power sabre, but are those concerning what the Cadre is going to do. For example a Cadre may have information that the servants of a renegade Inquisitor have infiltrated the Arbites on Landunder with the aim of freeing a heretic held in the Arbitrator oubliette on that world. Is the Cadre going to charge in and conduct an aggressive purge of the Arbites, or are they going to infiltrate the Arbites and see if they can learn more of the renegade's intentions? This is a decision that effects the direction of the game. It must be clear for everyone who has the final call on this type of decision. In the game world, of course, the Inquisitor would make such a decision or deliberately delegate it to a servant because of their expertise. In the real would of the gaming group, however, simply defaulting to having the Inquisitor player make this decision has risks. First it takes away the involvement of the other players in the direction of the game they are playing in. Secondly it places a lot of pressure on the Inquisitor player to make a good decision.

Example of Lost Group Direction

Inquisitor Augustus and his Cadre of three trusted companions were trying to unravel a wide ranging conspiracy by the heretical Temple Tendency. They had traced a connection between a known member of the Temple Tendency and a shrine complex on Maccabeus Quintus. The person playing Inquisitor Augustus decided to pursue this lead to Maccabeus Quintus; a decision which was uncontroversial because the group as a whole was of the same mind. When they reached Maccabeus Quintus, an undertone of discontent began to permeate the group.

The person playing Inquisitor Augustus decided to not use Inquisitorial authority, but to infiltrate the shrine complex and see what could be discovered. The Cadre's previous attempts to act covertly had ended badly and the other players were not happy that they were going to try it again. They wanted to try the kick in the door approach; going in with full authority, sealing the complex and committing a full cleansing of all within. However, the person playing Inquisitor Augustus felt that even though the other players had different ideas, their characters would never question their master, and an Inquisitor would never reverse his decision. From that point on the group lost cohesion and the campaign game lost the crucial buy in of all involved and petered out.

The cause of this real life example of broken group direction was that each member of the group, especially the Inquisitor player, was reaching their decisions in a way that did not allow for all to be satisfied. There was also no agreed upon way for crucial decisions that affected the entire group to be made.

Using Out of Character Consensus

A very satisfying alternative to having decisions rest with the Inquisitor's player is to have all players discuss decisions that affect the direction of the game, then make a collective decision on what course of action the Cadre should take. If there are several differing views amongst the players, get them to take a vote, with the Inquisitor's player having the tie-breaking vote in the case of a deadlock. This discussion, and decision, should be made out of character with the players discussing the situation as players rather than as characters. Once the decision has been made out of character, the group consensus then becomes the in game decision of the Inquisitor. The only potential downside of this method is that it removes some of the Inquisitor's decisions from his player's control.

Example of Out of Character Consensus

A group of three characters, consisting of Inquisitor Malifica and his two companions Paulos, a hardened killer, and a clever duellist noble called Harn, are on St Astrid's Fall trying to discover the source of a psy-plague unleashed amongst the dreg population of the blighted planet. They have discovered that an underworld boss, called Vorn, had a connection with each of the locations that the psy-plague was unleashed. However, they also know there is a person at large in the Wreck Expanses who may be the creator of the psy-plague. The direction that the Cadre takes at this moment, and how they want to take their next steps is resolved by the players discussing their options out of character.

Harn's player says that he thinks that it is a best to go after Vorn in a raid, as he his itching to get his character into some direct combat. Paulos's player would like to go for a raid as well, but more importantly he thinks that Malifica's Cadre has so far proven to have a very direct and brutal approach to problems, and thinks it would be more in keeping with this established style to requisition some help and go in to get Vorn guns blazing. Inquisitor Malifca's player was thinking of pursuing investigations in the Wreck Expanse, and trying to find the plague's creator, but as the group agreed to make collective decisions, he agrees to raid Vorn's hideout.

The in character rationalisation for the decision is that the unforgiving Inquisitor Malifica has decided that the fastest way to resolve the investigation is to bring all those who might harbour information to the question. Thus, he orders his Cadre to make preparations to raid the known location of the recidivist underworld boss called Vorn.

Character Knowledge

An Inquisitor with a Cadre is a leader of men and a hardened warrior in the battle against the darkness. He has mastered great and terrible arts and has skills beyond those of the common man. The player of an Inquisitor is almost certainly not, in realty, the same type of person as the character he is playing. Of course the whole point of role-playing is for a player to take on the mantel of a character who is very different from himself. However, in the case of the Inquisitor, his in character decisions effect not just himself but the group as a whole, and have to be seen in that light. The player of an Inquisitor, for example, might not know how to set up a covert intelligence operation but the character they are playing certainly does (their character sheet has Shadow Craft Mastery written on it after all).

You, as a Game Master, have to make allowances for the fact that an Inquisitor, by definition, knows what they are doing. If a character has the relevant skills to understand how to do something, but the player has not the first clue, give him some ideas of what you would consider reasonable. Help him make good informed choices that support the character he is playing. In particular, give him some indications of what a skilled and knowledgeable professional would do when making decisions that would affect the group as a whole. In doing this you are not removing player choice, but simply helping the players simulate the reasonable response of their characters to the challenges they face.

For example, Inquisitor Barrabas is a master of covert operations. The character is built with skills and talents specifically so that he can effectively run his investigations and actions without having to make it known who they are. It is decided that Barrabas and his Cadre are going to go undercover within the Imperial Guard forces on Tranch. The Inquisitor player is currently thinking that they should just grab a transport, purloin some military gear, and turn up saying they are reinforcements. Given Barrabas' mastery of covert operations, the GM suggests that he might also consider creating a set of false military identities using his influence with the Departmento Munitorum. If members of the Cadre could procure the relevant identities, equipment, and authenticated orders, that would allow them to infiltrate the command ranks as advisors, or the front line units as replacements. Based on this information, the player controlling Barrabas and the rest of the group can make their decisions knowing that they are not just blundering into disaster but are acting as highly trained professionals would.

HOW THE CADRE FUNCTIONS

An Inquisitor's Cadre is a group of experts who have all been brought together by the Inquisitor for a single purpose: to aide him in his efforts to protect humanity from the manifold threats that it faces. The Cadre is the Inquisitor's closest comrades and servants and each has been selected because of skills and abilities that are of use to the Inquisitor. This is the in game rationale behind an Inquisitor's Cadre, but without careful guidance by the GM, the reality of playing a member of such a group can be somewhat disappointing. This section is about deciding how the Cadre functions, both in the game setting and as a group of characters being played by a people that want the experience to be as much fun as possible.

Talk About It

The best way to avoid many of the pitfalls that can beset a Cadre of ascended characters is to get your players together and talk about their characters, the group, and how they all work together. It is best to have this discussion with all the players present before play begins and preferably before ascended characters are created. Whether the characters involved are freshly created for ascended level play, or characters that have progressed to this stage from being acolytes, it should be no different: make time for everyone to talk about the Cadre.

This type of discussion should focus on the type of Inquisitor who leads the Cadre, what his relationship is with its members is and how they work together as a group. If you run your game in regular sessions, put aside a full session for this discussion along with character creation, or progression to ascended status. If your gaming sessions take a different form, try to put aside at least two hours. This might seem an overly lavish amount of time, but it is worth it. Suggested areas of discussion, and how you might approach them, follow.

The Nature of the Inquisitor

The nature of the Inquisitor is of key importance to a Cadre and the type of characters it contains. For example a secretive Inquisitor who prefers to work in the shadows would be ill suited to a Cadre of bombastic warriors whose first reaction to any situation is to pour on the burning promethium. Ask the player who is going to be taking on the role of the Inquisitor to talk about how he sees the Inquisitor character. Other players should be encouraged to ask questions about the Inquisitor, his character, motivation and relationship with the rest of the Cadre. You may also find it useful to give the Inquisitor's player the following questions in advance to help him prepare. If none of the players cover these questions you should ask them.

- How does the Inquisitor prefer to conduct operations?
- How does the Inquisitor treat his Cadre?
- Why does the Inquisitor trust the members of his Cadre?
- How does the Inquisitor treat those outside his Cadre?

If the Inquisitor's player is open to it, a useful addition to this discussion can be encouraging the other players to make suggestions about the nature of the Inquisitor and for the player taking on that role to take on those ideas that appeal to him.

What I Am to You?

Once it is clear what type of Inquisitor has formed the Cadre, it is time to work out what the relationship is between the other characters and the Inquisitor. This process is intended to give all the players points to guide them as they start to play as part of a Cadre that has been handpicked by the Inquisitor PC. One of the best ways to do this is to give the players some time to think and then to answer the following two questions:

- What does character do as part of the Cadre?
- What is the most important part of the character's relationship with the Inquisitor?

Both of these questions should be answered in as short, and evocative a phrase as possible. For example, a player might say of their character that they 'kill by the will of the Emperor and my Master", and that to the Inquisitor "I am an unpleasant necessity." Get the players to write down what is said and make sure you take notes. Once everyone has had their say, summarise what has been agreed to by going through the key points of the nature of the Inquisitor and what each of the members of the Cadre do and what they are to the Inquisitor.

Example of Cadre Creation

Four players have decided to play an ascended game of **Dark Heresy**. *John says that he would like to play the Inquisitor, the other players have no problem with John taking on this role. The GM schedules an evening session for creating the ascended characters and deciding how the Cadre functions. Having talked with the GM, John comes to the session prepared and has thought about the kind of Inquisitor his character is. His character is Inquisitor Barrabas, a newly raised Inquisitor who prefers to operate covertly wherever possible. Barrabas treats his Cadre with friendly respect born of long years of working closely with them all as a fellow acolyte. He frequently consults with his Cadre to formulate his plans, particularly in areas where they have specialist knowledge. He trusts his close Cadre members because most were fellow servants of his old master; he has worked with them for decades. Barrabas is naturally suspicious, and though he generally deals diplomatically with those outside of his immediate circle of confidants, he never truly trusts anyone until he is given good reason.*

The other players are going to be ascending their characters to an Interrogator, a Desperado and a Primaris Psyker. Having considered what John has said about the Inquisitor, each player in turn says what their character does as part of the Cadre, and what is the most important part of their relationship with Inquisitor Barrabas. Paul, who is playing Interrogator Flavius Norn, says that his character is the 'infiltrator spy' of the Cadre and that to Barrabas he is a 'temperamental apprentice.' Ed, who is playing Gregorious the Desperado, says that his character is 'the Cadre's access into the secrets of the underworld,' and that to Barrabas he is 'an indulged friend.' Kate, who is playing Zamura, the Primaris Psyker, says that she is 'the Inquisitor's bodyguard' and 'trusted above all.'

A Fragment of the Past

It can be very useful to get the players to agree on how they ideally work together before you start throwing situations at them. By doing this, they get an idea of what their operational role is within the Cadre; be it information gatherer, muscle, or wielder of subtle influence. You may choose to simply ask the players how their characters work together, but an effective and fun alternative is to cooperatively create a description of an operation they successfully undertook together. If you like, give them a title or theme to work with such as "The Purging of the House of Xaidis," and maybe some general details such as it concerned a cult of Slaanesh. Then go from player to player asking them for a detail of how the operation went. If the player stalls, give him a leading question that contains some invented detail such as "how did you discover that the enforcers were corrupt?" This gives him something to latch onto. This kind of thing can enjoyably go on and on, but try and keep it to no more than a quarter of an hour. If it is not reaching a natural end, bring it to a close by asking the Inquisitor player to say how the operation was finally concluded.

This is free form group story creation, and while it can be a lot of fun on its own, it is used in this context to give the players examples of what their characters do and provide a prompt that they can use to understand how their character fits into the Cadre before playt begins in earnest. This technique can be useful to help experienced players and beginners alike make the mental switch to the type of play required by Ascension.

Threats and Challenges

"There is no better measure of a man than the quality of his enemies."

—attributed to Inquisitor Marr

The threats and challenges faced by ascended level characters are great and terrible. Just as the characters have grown, so have the power of their enemies and the consequences of failure. Placing challenges of character and consequence before the players is a key duty that you, as a Game Master, has. This section aims to help you by looking at the kinds of threats that you can use, and how to use them to create the most enjoyment for the players. Remember that just because the player characters have become vastly more powerful, it does not mean that they are immune to mortal threats, or can stride through all challenges. It simply means that these mighty individuals must be faced with challenges that test them to the utmost. The characters may be masters of combat, but how can you kill a sector spanning conspiracy of thousands of unknown people with a single sword? Those enemies that the characters are likely to face and fear are powerful and cunning foes who strike with as much might and subtly as the characters themselves. In an ascended game of **Dark Heresy**, the characters are no longer fighting battles, they are conducting a war.

There is no satisfaction without toil

Much of the enjoyment to be had from **Dark Heresy** comes from the idea that the pleasure experienced by players when their characters succeed is most profound when that success is hard won. This principle is the key to most of the suggestions given in this section.

A character has to have used their skills, risked failure, and suffered setbacks and losses before succeeding. The possibility of failure must also be real and understood by the players. If they do not think they can fail, then there is very little satisfaction and pleasure to be gained from succeeding. Failure should also have consequences, which should vary according to the circumstance and degree of failure. For example, a player whose character is facing a deadly opponent in combat should know that there is a possibility of his character dying. That is not to say that you should seek character deaths, or make it as hard for them as possible, but you should allow their success or failure, survival or demise, to rest within their power. If you are always letting them avoid negative consequences, players have a tendency to be unexcited by their successes; after all, it was always going to go their way.

Setbacks

Consequences do not need to be as unforgiving as 'succeed or face total failure.' Often, the best consequence of failure is something that sets characters back in what they are trying to achieve. Succeeding after having faced setbacks is often much more enjoyable a role-playing experience for most than an easy success. These kinds of setbacks are good consequences. They do not remove the possibility of the characters succeeding, but make that success move further away and a catastrophic consequence move closer.

For example: A character is trying to gain access to a guarded cell block by using a false identity and lying. If the character fails their skill test, it does not mean that the guard raises the alarm. Rather it means that the guard is going to get additional confirmation on the character's identity. The character is going to have to do some fast talking to distract or dissuade the guard from this course of action. If they fail again, they suffer a further setback that puts them under more pressure and moves closer the ultimate consequence of the guard drawing his weapon and hitting the alarm. The character might still gain entry to the cell block by deceiving the guard, but they now have an additional obstacle to overcome.

Steps Towards Disaster

When you are considering what the consequences of a character's failure should be, it is a good idea to try and keep in mind what the character is trying to achieve, and what ultimate consequence is of it going as wrong as it can. This

is the potential disaster that befalls the characters if they fail enough and do not recover. The best role-play experiences come not from jumping to the disastrous consequence from a single failure, but by letting failures become steps towards that disaster. This allows the characters to make their position better or worse by succeeding or by further failure. It allows them to come up with plans on the fly, take desperate actions, and perhaps pull off an amazing comeback from the brink of disaster.

For example, consider a character trying to get into the cell block with a false identity. He is trying to get into a guarded cell block. If things go as badly as possible, the character's deception is going to fall apart, and he is going to be caught in a secure facility with guards carrying a lot of weaponry. This is the disaster state that lurks as the character's ultimate consequence of failure. When he first fails to successfully convince the guard, the guard gets suspicious and the disaster state edges closer. The character tries to dissuade the guard from checking his identity further by using intimidation. This also fails. Now the guard is getting very suspicious, and so the character decides to cut his losses and knock the guard out with a toxin injector. The character fails to get close enough to use the injector before the guard notices. They struggle, the guard breaking free to slam his palm down on the general alarm button. Bulkheads start slamming closed, and the sound of running armoured feet echoes towards the character; now he has to fight for his life.

THERE IS ALWAYS A BIGGER FISH

It is a theme of **Dark Heresy**, (and the universe of Warhammer 40,000 in general), that no matter how powerful an individual or group, there is always something or someone that is more powerful than they are. This theme is worth bearing in mind when setting challenges for characters in an ascended game of **Dark Heresy**. There can be a temptation to say that an enemy should be only as powerful as the characters. Try to avoid this temptation and be honest with the powers of the characters' rivals and enemies: if the enemy is terrifyingly powerful than that is how powerful they should be. It is also worth making sure that you occasionally expose the characters to something much more terrible than they are. This can be as simple as having their attempt to manipulate an organisation crushed by an inquisitor lord, or letting a daemonhost off the leash for a single round of combat. Of course you must be careful in using such powerful challenges; in general the goal should be to escape or minimise the impact of coming up against such powerful threats. You are not aiming to annihilate or belittle the power of the Cadre, just to remind them that in the 41st Millennium there is always something bigger and more terrible than they are.

THE IMMEDIATE THREAT

An immediate threat is something that is present in the same place as the characters and has a direct effect on them. A massive plasma charge counting down through a detonation sequence in the same building as the characters, or meeting a pack of cannibal hive dregs unexpectedly while investigating a missing noble are examples of immediate threats. These kinds of threats are the basic building blocks of action within games of **Dark Heresy**. An immediate threat contains the possibility of the characters being harmed or killed. To overcome the threat, the characters usually have to fight or flee, and their personal skill with weapons and ability to avoid being damaged is crucial. Most games of **Dark Heresy** include a lot of immediate threats and ascended games are no different. What is different, however, is that the characters themselves are much more personally powerful, and are more than a match for opponents that would crush an acolyte cell. Added to this is the fact that an Inquisitorial Cadre can call upon formidable allies by using Influence. This means that they can be expected to shrug off most immediate threats if you, as the GM, do not confront them with immediate threats that take the powers of ascended characters into account.

Cunning Opponents

The most obvious way to make immediate threats remain challenging for an ascended group of characters is to make their opponents more resilient and more capable of doing damage. This is a perfectly legitimate way of maintaining the level of challenge, but rather than just making opponents bigger and harder hitting, make some of them intelligent, competent and well trained. Make the enemy cunning. For example, a Logician murder cell that is trying to kill the characters might wait for them to be engaged with a much weaker enemy. They might get as close as possible before launching their attack on the distracted characters. An arch heretic is likely to have several escape plans that, should he be attacked, he uses rather than stand and fight. If they have time, cunning opponents plan ahead based on their knowledge and abilities rather than just charging in. Consider again a Logician murder cell; it is likely to be made of no more than a handful of competent killers who are superbly equipped. They are unlikely to want to meet an Inquisitorial Cadre head on, but instead plan to isolate the members of the Cadre using weapons like blind grenades and stun grenades. Having isolated the Cadre members, they gang up on them—trying to take out each one quickly and move on to the next before the others can react.

Going on the Offensive

Enemies in an ascended game can and should be used to bring the fight to the Cadre. Rival inquisitors, powerful sector spanning cults, and conspiracies within the great organisations of the Imperium, are all capable of going on the offensive against an Inquisitorial Cadre. Rather than waiting for the characters to come and get them, or simply reacting to counter their actions, the Cadre's enemies can mount their own operations. These types of immediate threats have the most impact if they occur in areas that the characters (and players) have become attached to and feel safe in, such as their base of operations, the ship they use for transport, or the bastion of a trusted ally. The aim of this type of threat is not

to kill the characters. In fact, it is important that they have an opportunity to fight back and overcome the attack (see the There is No Satisfaction Without Toil section on page 187 in this chapter). Rather, these offensive plays by enemies put the characters into the position of being on the defensive and having to react. They also make the battle between the Cadre and the enemy personal; the players really want to take down an enemy that has come after them.

Example of a Cunning Enemy Going on the Offensive

The Game Master decides to begin a new adventure arc for his players with a bang. He is going to bring the plot right to the characters' doorstep. The enemies are the Logicians, who have decided to take Inquisitor Barrabas, who they erroneously believe has information on a repository of heretical gene-tech lore called the 'Archive of Artemisia', captive. In fact, Barrabas has never even heard of the Archive of Artemisa. The twist is that the Logician information is wrong and has been secretly fed to them by a radical inquisitor who wishes to have Barrabas out of the way. The Logicians have sent a team of three Ashen Tear Assassins and a renegade tech adept to capture Barrabas alive. The Logicians know, again through the treachery of Barrabas's radical enemy, that he and his Cadre are in residence in a small, archaic tower on the edge of one of Maccabeus Quintus' shrine complexes.

The GM decides that being trained, technologically enhanced assassins led by a renegade tech adept, the Logicians are going to disable the tower's security measures (with the possibility of this going wrong and the alarm going off). The Ashen Tear Assassins with thermographic augmentation then infiltrate into the building, locate the Inquisitor and wait hidden and silent. The renegade tech adept has set up remotely detonated charges on the power supplies and communications to the tower. Once the assassins are in place, he detonates the charges, plunging the tower into darkness. At this moment, each of the assassins detonates hallucinogen and smoke grenades, filling the air within with thick smoke and mind-bending toxins. They then converge on the Inquisitor and attempt to disable him with web pistols and paralysing toxins from their MIU needle pistols.

THE CONSPIRATORIAL THREAT

The conspiratorial threat is one that happens at a distance from the characters, out of their direct sight and ability to personally affect. Someone systematically murdering the Cadre's allies across the sector or trying to damage their ability to influence the Ecclesiarchy within the sector are conspiratorial threats. Whereas immediate threats demand the characters attention 'right now,' conspiratorial threats can burn slowly, growing in strength and danger if not confronted. To overcome a conspiratorial threat, the characters usually have to spend time discovering who, or what is moving against them and then move to destroy the source of the threat. This process usually involves the extensive use of Influence, as well as direct interaction and prevailing over a number of immediate threats. Because of this, a conspiratorial threat often takes much longer to overcome than an immediate threat. Unsurprisingly, conspiratorial threats commonly form the basis of a campaign arc (though it is fun to keep one running in the background while a separate campaign arc is being run: for more details see the Ascended Campaigns section on pages 191–194 of this chapter). These conspiratorial threats are key to what makes an ascended game of **Dark Heresy** different; the characters are people who have the ability to effect and influence at a distance, and so are their enemies.

Potential Enemies

If you are in need of suitable individuals or organisations to use as the source of a conspiratorial threat, here are some suggestions from other **Dark Heresy** sources:

Coriolanus Vestra (**Disciples of the Dark Gods** page 194)**:** A former missionary who operates as a form of facilitator between diabolic cults across the Calixis Sector. A conspiratorial threat with Vestra at its heart could use many different cults as its tools and would likely involve the use of sorcery and murder.

Achimedes Noxt (**Creatures Anathema** pages 7 to 8)**:** A unique and powerful mutant who is a figure of legend and fear in the underworld. Noxt could form a conspiracy which aims to destroy the Cadre's influence on a particular planet where it conflicts with his own plans.

House Krin (**Dark Heresy**: Rulebook pages 312 to 313)**:** House Krin is a noble family of immense wealth who bankrolls much of the commerce within the Calixis Sector. As an enemy, House Krin is capable of cutting away the Cadre's political influence within the sector, bribing their allies, and hiring mercenaries and specialists of the highest quality.

The Temple Tendency (**Disciples of the Dark Gods** pages 31 to 39)**:** The Temple Tendency is a heretical cult that wishes to sweep away the Ecclesiarchy and its influence. They are highly secretive, but have infiltrated the highest circles of power within the sector. A conspiratorial threat initiated by the Temple Tendency is likely to be subtle and work in the form of whispers and disinformation that undermine the Cadre's influence, or even puts them in direct conflict with other powerful organisations.

Enemies of Consequence

Central to creating a conspiratorial threat for your game is the idea that some of the characters' enemies have a significant ability to effect things far beyond their immediate presence. Such an enemy may be another Inquisitor, a corrupt planetary governor, a cult which has adherents in the highest circles of power, or a master criminal who is held in fear by the entire underworld. The first step to creating a conspiratorial threat for your players is to decide who is behind that threat. Once you have decided on a suitable enemy, you should consider

how that enemy is capable of moving against the Cadre. Are they likely to favour violence, espionage, political warfare or some other means? Also decide why this enemy is going to conspire against the Cadre, and what they hope to achieve by doing so. Is it to prevent discovery? Is it revenge, or because the Cadre has something the enemy wants? Finally, you must decide what the enemy is going to do.

Ruin and Death

A conspiratorial threat normally aims to harm the characters' influence, their allies, and their holdings. In attacking these parts of the characters' power, a conspiratorial threat does more than just kill the characters, it tries to destroy their ability to operate. Two ways these aims may be accomplished are by the enemy attacking allies and servants of the Cadre out of their sight, and by using influence to turn their allies against them and so shut off their ability to use their influence in turn.

Attacking Out of Sight

This is essentially killing, kidnapping, or maiming the allies, associates, or vassals of the characters off-screen. For example, you may decide that the enemy is going to use mercenary assassins to kill the Cadre's acolyte network, or you may decide to simply have a key ally within the Arbites vanish overnight. When attacking the characters' network of power and influence, it is usually best to do it progressively as it gives the players the chance to react and be drawn into finding out what is going on and stopping it. Gradually picking off the characters' contacts and allies also creates an atmosphere or fear and paranoia amongst the players.

Turning Allies to Enemies

As opposed to physically attacking the acolytes, a conspiratorial threat can also attempt to turn others against the characters. For example, they may be framed as being responsible for an atrocity that they did not commit, thus turning friends within the Inquisition into enemies. You can use the influence related talents that the characters possess as a guide to potential targets. If they have a Good Reputation relating to the Ecclesiarchy, an enemy might attack this part of the characters' influence by bribing key figures in the Ecclesiarchy to start poisoning their reputation. Of course this type of attack on influence might also be combined with the murder of the characters' close allies within the Ecclesiarchy.

Example of a Conspiratorial Threat

A hidden enemy of Inquisitor Barrabas' within the Ordos Calixis has decided that, after the failed attempt by the Logicians to kidnap him, the best way to deal with him is to discredit him and cripple his influence within the Holy Ordos. The hidden enemy has considerable influence and a number of agents at his direct control. Above all the enemy wishes to weaken Barabbas' political strength so that he can be removed from play more easily, and so decides to use others as his weapons. He knows that Barabbas has an extensive acolyte network that gathers much of his intelligence and allows him to act at a distance. He also knows that Barabbas is well respected as a conciliator within the Holy Ordos. The enemy uses intermediaries to engage the Sons of Dispater to track down any known cells of Barabbas' acolytes, torturing them for information on other acolytes in Barabbas' service, and then continuing the pattern until the network is completely removed. The enemy also sends one of his personal Cadre, a sorcerous assassin, to murder a respected savant in the service in the Tricorn Palace on Scintilla. Barabbas is implicated in the murder and his reputation within the Ordos Calixis is reduced to tatters. With his acolytes dying and no where to turn, the hidden enemy then waits until Barabbas is either denounced and killed by other inquisitors or weak enough to make direct assassination easy.

Running a Campaign

"We are fighting a war, the beginning of which none can remember and the end of which none of us shall ever see. It is a war without boundaries, without rules or principle, a war that must be fought without conscience, without remorse, and without limit. There is no reward for victory, only a price for failure."

—Address by Inquisitor Herrod to the forces of the IX Expeditionary Force prior to deployment onto Colony Cluster Phosphor, believed to have been overrun by the Vile Savants

A campaign is a long running roleplaying game featuring the same characters and plots, both of which develop over time. While **Dark Heresy** can be played as a short run of games or as a one-off, it is in a campaign that it is most enjoyable. Watching characters change, fall to temptation, or change in unexpected ways while pursuing star-spanning conspiracies is what makes **Dark Heresy** come alive more than anything else. While this is true for all games of **Dark Heresy**, it is doubly so for ascended games. The scope of power available to ascended characters, the use of influence, and the possibilities offered by playing as a peer of the Imperium can only be fully realised over a campaign. Much of what goes into running an enjoyable ascended campaign, in terms of establishing the Cadre and using threats that take advantage of the scope offered in an ascended game, is covered in the previous sections of this chapter. This section focuses on the basic framework that underlies an ascended campaign.

The Campaign Focus

Dark Heresy: Ascension offers expanded horizons of play for characters in addition to personally tracking down heretics and battling daemons. The characters can now use influence to affect events without being personally present, can enter into the eternal game of politics within both the Inquisition and the Calixis Sector as a whole, and can choose the object of their attention in the never ending war against the hungering darkness. These factors mean that as a Game Master, you need to consider what type of play the players enjoy most, and therefore what should be the primary focus of your campaign. Do the players want to embrace the possibilities of politics and intrigue that an ascended game of **Dark Heresy** offers, or do they want to spend most of their time in epic personal battles with the enemies of mankind? Depending on what the players enjoy most, an ascended campaign is likely to have one of two foci: the politics and use of power involved in serving the Inquisition at a high level, or the direct battle against the forces of ruin. Most players have a preference one way or another, but many also want to have elements of both in the game they are playing. Each of these two foci requires a slightly different set of elements to be included in a campaign, and these differences are covered in the following sections.

Politics and Power

In campaigns focusing on the political use of power within the Inquisition, the characters are likely to spend time interacting with other members of the Inquisition and using influence to find out information, or to manipulate individuals and organisations to particular ends. The key features of this type of campaign are an extensive use of influence, the use of reoccurring NPCs and a large amount of time spent in PC to NPC interactions. The subtext of this type of campaign is all about power; not martial power but the ability to influence the course of events. It is, in essence, a war waged with information, threats, espionage, and loyalty. While this type of campaign inevitably includes combat, it is usually as a consequence of the greater political manoeuvrings or power struggles that are occurring. For example, an attempt to assassinate the characters might be an attempt to stop them from inferring in a complex play for dominance within the inner circle of Sector Governor Marius Hax. The assassination happens because of the political and conspiratorial wheels that are turning. In this type of campaign, the establishment of different factions with a common interest is vital.

Factions

If you are running a campaign focusing on politics and power, it is important to create factions which have power and influence, and which the players enjoy interacting with. These factions are not necessarily the factions of Puritanism

or Radicalism within the Inquisition, but are simply groups with power and a common goal.

When you are beginning a politically focused campaign, it is a good idea to keep the number of factions involved small, at least initially. A simple guideline would be to have a least one faction broadly in accord with the players, one in direct opposition and one which has an ambiguous disposition.

Make sure that each faction has one thing that it is trying to achieve. It might be the raising of a particular individual to be the next Lord Sector, the discovery of a particular hidden truth, or the waging of a particular crusade. All of the aims of the different factions should also overlap in at least one way: this is the point of conflict and the thing that is driving the campaign.

Create at least one fully realised NPC that is associated with each faction. These NPCs are the human face of the faction, and they give you a tool for the characters to encounter the faction in the flesh. Players tend to find it easier to remember a character rather than the idea of a faction, and using NPCs to focus their attention makes it much more likely that they will remember details about that faction.

Example of a Power and Politics Campaign Set Up

In setting up the campaign for Inquisitor Barabbas and his Cadre, three factions were created. All have Lord Sector Marius Hax as their common point of interest, thus this is the primary theme of the campaign.

The Lucid Concern: *A group of Recongregators (see page 90 in the Recongregators Section, Chapter III: The Factions, in* **The Radical's Handbook** *for more details), who wish to remove Sector Governor Marius Hax from power because he is stifling the possibility of change. The key representative NPC for this faction is the aged, but monstrously powerful psyker, Inquisitor Fabius Torn. As Barabbas is a convinced Amalathian, the Lucid Concern is in direct opposition to the Cadre.*

The Temple Tendency: *A cult bent on the re-establishing of a heretical version of the Imperial Creed. The Temple Tendency has successfully infiltrated the inner circle of Marius Hax and manipulated him to achieve some of their own ends (see page 37 of* **Disciples of the Dark Gods** *for more details). The key NPC for the Temple Tendency is Lord Verence, a close associate of Hax who appears to be an epicurean degenerate. The cult is utterly heretical but does not wish for the removal of Hax, and so is ambiguous in terms of its opposition or alignment with Barabbas' Cadre.*

The Istvaanian Watchers: *Followers of a radical philosophy within the Inquisition who have protected Lord Hax at the same time as manipulating him so that he will rise as a warmonger (see The Madness of Marius Hax on page 83 in the Istvaanian Section, Chapter III: The Factions, in* **The Radical's Handbook** *for more details). The key NPC for the Istvaanian Watchers is the beautiful and charismatic Inquisitor Cydan. The Istvaanian Watchers want to keep Hax in place and so, while their reasons differ, their position is broadly in accordance with Barabbas' Cadre.*

Battling the Forces of Ruin

In campaigns focusing on the characters personally confronting and destroying adversaries, the PCs are likely to spend their time preparing for direct conflict, tracking down enemies and then attempting to kill them. The key features of this type of campaign are usually a lot of combat encounters and threats that require the personal intervention of the characters. This type of campaign is all about the personal skill of the characters and solving problems in a direct manner. While this type of campaign may include elements of political manoeuvring, or wider events, this is normally as a way of driving forward events that result in a good fight. In this type of campaign, the use of varied adversaries and situations of conflict is key to its success, and the advice on immediate threats given above applies.

CAMPAIGN TYPES

There are many ways of constructing and then running a long-term campaign. Outlined here are three of the most common ways to structure a campaign. Ultimately, most long running campaigns include elements of all of these methods to greater or lesser degrees, as well as a few others. All may be used to structure a campaign focusing on power or politics or battling the forces of ruin directly. Each of the campaign types has its own strengths and traps for the unwary, and which methods you chose depends both on what your players

enjoy and how you prefer to do things. The intent of these outlines is simply to help you decide what type of campaign you wish to run and to give you some advice on how to use each one successfully.

The Sandbox Campaign

A sandbox campaign usually takes the form of a physical setting that the characters can explore, taking an interest in what they choose, and pursuing plot hooks built into the environment by the GM. In **Dark Heresy**, the Calixis Sector as a whole can be used as a (very large) sandbox setting for a campaign, or you may wish to take a particular part of it to be the basis of your campaign

Sandbox campaigns can be amongst the most enjoyable campaigns for players because they are driven by the players' choices with the setting responding to what they choose to do. The players are the ones exploring and pushing events forward. A potential problem for a sandbox campaign is that, being dependant on the players for direction, it can lose momentum if they loose interest in what is going on or get tired of having to push things forward themselves.

Know your setting: Having a setting that you know is vital to a successful sandbox campaign. You need to know what is going on where and why, because the players may choose to go anywhere and look into anything. NPCs in particular are worth particular consideration, as nothing undermines the good aspects of this type of campaign like not being able to produce a good name for the scholar that the characters have suddenly taken an interest in. It is well worth creating a few good NPCs that can be dropped in almost anywhere so that you are always ready.

Have things that are going on: There should be something interesting for the characters to become involved in no matter where they go. 'Heresy lurks in every shadow' is a sentiment that you should take to heart in a sandbox campaign. While it can mean a lot of preparation, there should be some horror or conspiracy no matter where the players go. It is advisable to have one or two plot hooks prepared that can be used in almost any location just in case the players choose to push the characters somewhere you did not expect.

Improvise: The nature of the sandbox campaign means that the characters can go almost anywhere and pay an interest in whatever they choose. This can mean that your careful preparation can be in ruins in a second, and thus requires you to improvise on the spot. If you do not enjoy improvising without preparation, you can reduce its effect by having material prepared that can be quickly adapted to the circumstances.

The Turning Wheel Campaign

A turning wheel campaign is one in which you create a set of events that are being propelled forwards independently of the players, which they can become a part of, and attempt to change the eventual outcome of. The idea is that events are being driven by a plot, and that the scope of events is large enough that it feels like a massive event with many consequences both now and in the future. A conspiracy by the Logicians to discover an ancient weapon system and test it on the core worlds of Calixis might be the basis of a turning wheel campaign.

This type of campaign is similar to the sandbox campaign in that it creates a set of circumstances that the characters can become involved in to a greater or lesser degree depending on their choices. The difference is that the wheel that is turning at the heart of the campaign is doing so independent of the characters; they can affect it by their choices, but if they do not, it keeps on turning to its conclusion. The advantage of this type of campaign is that players feel that the characters are part of big and significant events and that they are making a difference to what is happening. On the other hand, if the players are not drawn into events, they can quickly loose interest in pursuing the plot further.

Know what is going on: The plot at the heart of the campaign drives everything else, and so you must know what it is; its nature, the principle actors, what stage the plot is at, and how it is responding to current circumstances of the campaign's events and the PC's actions. If you loose track of what stage events are at, and what that means for the characters, you are in trouble.

Involve players by showing them part of the picture: When beginning a turning wheel campaign, the easiest way to get the players involved is to have them caught up in events that are not necessarily centred on them, but are a consequence of the wheels that are turning.

Keep things happening even when the characters are not there: Keep in mind what the effects of unfolding events are going to be on other people and locations within the campaign setting. If the drive of the central plot would result in an atrocity on a world far distant from the characters, decide what occurred and tell the characters about it. This creates a sense of a grand scale of events and can also be used to create an impetus for the characters to act. This is particularly important if there is a consequence to a choice that the players made. For example, if they decided not to follow a lead to a particular hive city and that hive city was subsequently destroyed, it shows them that their choices have an impact on what is occurring.

Ascension and Experience Points

The threats and challenges that Throne Agents must face in the course of their duties are much greater than those often encountered by Acolytes. Therefore, the rewards should match the risk! For a **Dark Heresy** campaign that uses the rules and Ascended Careers from this book, the Game Master should increase the amount of experience points he awards at the end of each session. Typically, a campaign featuring the Ascension rules should award between 500-750 experience points per session.

The Nemesis Campaign

A nemesis campaign is one that is based on a conflict between the characters and a particular individual or group. It is, in essence, a war in which the players and their Nemesis are striving to destroy one another, and in which other circumstances and events are either the setting for the conflict or the consequence of it. For example, a renegade inquisitor and his servants bent on revenge against the characters might be the basis for a nemesis campaign.

The strength of a nemesis campaign is that it has a clear focus: defeating the characters' nemesis. It can, however, become boring for the players, who can become tired of the campaign always being about stopping the latest plot of the same arch-heretic. There is advice on creating and using a nemesis for the characters in **Disciples of the Dark Gods**, pages 188 to 189 in Chapter VI: The Hunted.

Make sure that the players care: A nemesis campaign is only enjoyable to play or run if the players care about the characters defeating their nemesis. It can be worth running a few adventures and picking an adversary that the players enjoyed and turning him into their nemesis. Alternatively, if you want to create a nemesis from scratch, make it his first act to hurt the characters or something they care about to make them want to pursue the character.

Bring the fight to the characters: A nemesis should pursue the conflict against the characters with the same ingenuity and loathing that the characters do in turn. The campaign should feature times in which both the characters and the nemesis have the initiative over the other.

Keep the final confrontation in the distance: Ultimately a nemesis campaign ends with a grand confrontation in which one side (hopefully the characters) triumphs over the other. However, this final confrontation has to be kept at a distance from current events; otherwise it can lead to a very short campaign. The easiest and most effective way to extend the time before the final confrontation at the end of the campaign is to make use of minions and servants who fight the war of enmity against the characters on their master's behalf. Then, once the moment is right, the characters can meet their nemesis face to face to decide the fate of worlds.

IX

Ascended Adversaries

- New Traits and Talents
- Ordo Hereticus Adversaries
- Ordo Malleus Adversaries
- Ordo Xenos Adversaries

Chapter IX: Ascended Adversaries

"Now, you face a somewhat better class of heretic."

–Inquisitor Felroth Gelt

Once a Throne Agent has been inducted into the ranks of the Inquisition as one of its trusted members, he is expected to take on a broader range of responsibilities. No longer is he one small part of a broader investigation. Now, a Throne Agent (or cadre comprised of several Agents) is expected to take the helm of those investigations and see them through to their end. The power and responsibility is placed in their hands, to hunt down the vilest examples of the heretic, mutant, alien, and daemon. They are given the means, and the authority, to bring the full extent of Imperial justice to bear in their duties.

Of course, this works both ways. As the Throne Agents grow in power and authority, so too do their adversaries become more cunning, more resourceful, and far more deadly. The Inquisition, after all, does not waste its best on narco-bosses, twists, and the odd possession by unclean spirits. These new foes cannot be beaten with brute force alone, though that will undoubtedly be necessary. They are intelligent opponents, and in order to succeed, a Throne Agent has to outthink as well as outfight his opponent.

The following pages detail some of the Calixis Sector's most dangerous threats, both from within and without. More than a simple stat-block, each is a named adversary with a background, motivations, and goals. Also included are the adversary's minions and allies, favoured tactics, and unique abilities. Each of the adversaries is designed to be a campaign's final challenge, the mastermind the Throne Agents find in the centre of their investigation. If the Throne Agents are victorious, they could deal a blow for the safety and security of the entire Calixis Sector. However, if they fail, whole worlds could burn.

Using this chapter

Though the adversaries presented here have names, stories, and motivations, they can just as easily be adapted to fit any number of other situations created by a GM. Simply by taking the rules and discarding the rest, then adding your own details, these adversaries can be easily modified to fit with your own personal plotline. For example, take the honourable but tragically misguided Governor Malaki Vess. Add Forbidden Lore: Daemonology and the Warp +10, the Sorcerer and Master Sorcerer Talents, and perhaps a Dark Pact (the perfect way for him to have learned his dark powers), and suddenly the Governor's motives and future plans take on a very different, and far more sinister, cast.

In short, you should not find these Adversaries constraining, but instead use them as an example to create your own memorable arch-villains.

All Adversaries have had their strength bonus (plus any other bonuses) included in the profiles for applicable weaponry and equipment. It is also important to note that NPC's are not necessarily bound to follow the same strictures for their profiles as player characters.

New Traits and Talents

As has already been stated, the adversaries contained within are a cut above your average opponent. To better enhance their abilities, one new Trait and one new Talent that have been introduced previously in other **Dark Heresy** products have been re-introduced here.

Touched by the Fates (Talent)

Prerequisites: Non-player Characters only (they must have free will) and may not applied to Daemons and other non-living creatures.

The NPC has a number of Fate Points equal to half his Willpower Bonus (rounding up). He may use these Fate Points in exactly the same way as Player Characters and may even 'burn' a Fate Point to survive death and destruction at the GM's discretion. The NPC also benefits from the rules for Righteous Fury.

Improved Natural Weapons (Trait)

This creature's attacks are powerful enough to crush plasteel or punch through armour. The creature gains all the benefits of the Natural Weapons Trait, except that its attacks do not count as Primitive.

Undying (Trait)

This creature has a strange and ill-understood physiology. It cannot be harmed by diseases, poisons, or toxic effects. It has no need to breathe and can survive unaided in a vacuum.

Ordo Hereticus Adversaries

The following NPC's are perfect for adversaries themed for the Ordo Hereticus. Below you will find entries for heretics, witches, and worse.

THE BURNING PRINCESS

Little is known about the rogue alpha-level psyker referred to in Conclave records as "The Burning Princess," except that she is highly dangerous and the doom of far too many Imperial citizens—and agents of the Holy Ordos.

The files the Tricorn keeps on her are both extensive, and frustratingly vague. The Inquisition knows that she is an extremely powerful pryokine, and is a dangerously strong telepath as well. Although the Scholastica Psykana classifies her as a 'low level alpha' psyker (especially in comparison to some far more dangerous examples the Inquisition and Imperium have had to deal with), she is still extremely dangerous.

The Inquisition also knows full well of her crimes. She has worked with the pirate vessel *Storm Walker*, is believed to be responsible for the devastating holocaust of fire that consumed the Cathedral Mount on Acreage (slaying the senior clergy of the planet along with more than ten thousand pilgrims, worshippers, and local citizens), and has aided in several notable uprisings and heretical rebellions within the sector. She is also directly responsible for the death of Witch Hunter Fhendahl and his kill-team on Dusk, when they attempted to apprehend her.

However, little else is known about her. Savants of several notable Inquisitors have searched the deepest info-tombs in the Tricorn to little avail. All they have discovered is charred records of a young child named "Lottie," who manifested powerful abilities before her tenth birthday. The records indicate a Witch Hunter team was sent to apprehend her for the Black Ships, but the parchments recording the results of that action are destroyed. Researchers cannot even discover which planet she is from.

The Inquisition has declared her Hereticus Extremis, and ordered her termination. However, since the fate of the last team sent to kill her, the Conclave has had no success in this matter.

Playing The Burning Princess

There are two likely reasons a team of Throne Agents could come into contact with Lottie. The first is that they are sent as a kill-team to prosecute and eliminate her. In this case, the team's problem is two-fold. The first is finding her amongst the vastness of the Calixis Sector. They may have to infiltrate or interrogate their way through several heretical organisations just to find her. Once they do, the problem becomes one of killing her. If the Throne Agents are smart, they requisition (or otherwise acquire) powerful anti-psyker weaponry and have a brilliant plan. The only up-side is that Lottie does not seem to travel with a retinue or bodyguards. She prefers a solitary existence, which could prove to be her biggest weakness.

The other possibility is that the Throne Agents encounter her in the process of another investigation entirely. Lottie does not appear to lead uprisings or instigate rebellions. Rather, she seems to prefer to work as a mercenary, hiring out her considerable skills to others. In this case, the Throne Agents may not be equipped or prepared to deal with her, and she may prove to be merely a distraction leading the Throne Agents away from the true mastermind behind whatever diabolical plot they are investigating.

The Burning Princess Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	35	28	32	35	40	37	(14) 75	26

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 30

Mastered Skills: Warp Lore Mastery.

Skills: Awareness +20, Common Lore (Imperium, Underworld), Dodge +10, Forbidden Lore (Cults, Mutants, Psykers, Warp) +10, Intimidate +10 Search, Scrutiny.

Paragon Talents: Heightened Reactions, Melee Weapon Expertise, Mental Aegis, Pistol Expertise.

Talents: Corpus Conversion, Dark Soul, Disturbing Voice, Favoured by the Warp, Fearless, Hatred (Ecclesiarchy, Black Ships, Inquisition), Jaded, Psy Rating 14, Touched by the Fates (4).

Influence Talents: Peer (Underworld, Mutants, Heretics), Good Reputation (Underworld, Heretics), Enemy (Ecclesiarchy, Black Ships, Inquisition).

Weapons: Laspistol (30m, S/–/–; 1d10+2 E; Clip 30, Reload Full, Reliable)
Armour: Armoured Greatcoat (Torso 4, Arms 2, Legs 2)
Equipment: Refractor Field, 2 laspistol charge packs, corrupted tarot deck, micro-bead, photo-visor, respirator.
Alpha-level psyker: Lottie knows all minor psychic powers, all major Pyrokinetic powers, Compel, Dominate, Mind Scan, Psychic Shriek, Telepathy, all three abilities of the Primaris Power Burning Apocalypse, and the first and second level abilities of the Primaris Power Psychokinesis. Lottie' Psy Rating is 14, and possesses the Unnatural Willpower (x2) Trait.
Unbound Rogue: Lottie may use any of her powers at a Fettered, Unfettered, or Push level. When using her powers at a Push level, she automatically gains a bonus to her total Power Roll equal to the amount of one level of overbleed for that power, and adds an additional +20 to both her Psychic Phenomena roll and any resulting Perils of the Warp roll.
Warp-tainted Destiny: After being forced to roll on the Perils of the Warp Table, Lottie may spend a Fate Point to avoid suffering any ill affects from the result. If the result would affect others or the environment around her, the effects still apply to to everyone but her. This includes being possessed or consumed by the warp.

EVERSOR ASSASSIN

The Officio Assassinorum maintains several Temples of assassins, each specialising in a different art of dealing death. The Vindicare Temple, for example, specialises in more traditional assassinations, such as the sudden shock of an unseen sniper's bullet. On the other hand, the shape-shifting agents of the Callidus Temple train in infiltrating the organisations of the enemy, disrupting their tactics and guiding them to ruin, before decapitating their leadership with an unexpected strike. However, even amongst them, the Eversor Temple stands apart.

There is nothing subtle or secretive about an Eversor Assassin. In fact, they often represent the antithesis of how an assassin normally operates. Each Eversor is a highly trained, mind-wiped killing machine, trained to kill as quickly and brutally as possible. The assassins themselves have been mind-programmed to the point where there is nothing human left in them; they are simply berserker killers. They must be stowed in cryo-tubes between missions, because they are just as likely to slay allies as enemies.

Eversors are used in shock attacks, dispatched to rip the heart out of cults or heretical organisations and leave nothing but terror in their wake. Though they have the ability of great stealth, they do not eliminate their targets with any subtlety. With power-sword, neuro-gauntlet, Executor pistol, combat drugs, and melta-bombs, they dispatch their targets in the most horrific and destructive way possible. Even if they are slain, their bodies explode in a wash of bio-toxins and acids, eliminating everyone nearby.

Though Eversor Assassins are normally used against the Imperium's enemies, certain members of the Inquisition have dispatched them against their fellows whom they suspect have gone rogue. The Eversor is perfect for such dark deeds; it is as unquestioning in its orders as it is frighteningly competent.

Eversor Assassin Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
70	70	(8) 45	(8) 45	58	30	52	50	01

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 24
Mastered Skills: Athletics Mastery, Driving Mastery, Fieldcraft Mastery, Observation Mastery, Stealth Mastery, Tech Lore Mastery.
Skills: Lip Reading, Pilot (flyers), Security.
Paragon Talents: Basic Weapon Expertise, Berserker, Blade Dancer, Death Blow, Heavy Weapon Expertise, Heightened Reactions, Indomitable Fortitude, Melee Weapon Expertise, Pistol Expertise, Storm of Blows, Thrown Weapon Expertise, Unassailable Grace.
Talents: Crack Shot, Gunslinger, Temple Assassin†, Two Weapon Wielder (Ballistic).
†Temple Assassin (see page 91). The Eversor possesses the Temple Assassin Ascended Trait.
Traits: Fear 2, From Beyond, Unnatural Strength (x2), Unnatural Toughness (x2).
Armour: Best craftsmanship synskin bodyglove (AP 3, All) with integrated infa-red goggles, micro-bead, rebreather, and respirator system.
Weapons: Neuro-Gauntlet (1d10+10 R; Pen 8, Toxic, Tearing), Power Sword (1d10+15 E; Pen 6, Balanced, Power Field), Executor Pistol (Pistol; either 30m S/2/–, d10+5 X, Pen 4, Clip 8, Rld Full, Tearing or 30m, S/–/–, 1d10 R, Pen 0, Clip 6, Rld Full, Accurate, Toxic), 3x Melta-bombs (6d10 E, Pen 12, Blast (2), Fire††).

††Anyone damaged by a melta-bomb must make an Agility Test or be set on fire.

Equipment: 3 reloads for Executor Pistol (includes both ammo types), Cerebral Plug, Sentinel Array, Magnoculars, personal medikit, Pict-Recorder, Vox-caster

Combat Drugs: The Eversor has autorig injectors filled with potent combat drugs designed to boost his performance. These injectors use minute amounts of extremely potent drugs (meaning he does not run out of drugs unless cut off from supplies for months). At the beginning of each of his Combat turns, the Eversor may benefit from one of the following effects:

- **Hyper-metobolics:** The Eversor may perform two full Actions during his turn. Only one of these may be a Combat Action.
- **Berserker-Slaught:** The Eversor must perform the Charge Action. When he does this he gains 1d5 additional attacks during the turn he charges. All attacks benefit from the Charge bonus. In addition, he gains the Brutal Charge Trait, granting all attacks made during that round +3 damage.
- **Auto-coagulants:** The Eversor gains Regeneration 4 during this turn.
- **Shock-stims:** The Eversor ignores all penalties from Fatigue, Critical effects, or being heavily wounded during this turn.

In addition, if the Eversor is ever killed, his body explodes. Treat this as a weapon dealing 2d10+5 E damage, with Blast (5) and the Toxic quality. The Blast is centered on the Eversor's last position before he died.

GOVERNOR MALAKI VESS

Imperial Governor Malaki Vess oversees Zweihan's World, a minor hive world located in the Malfian Sub-sector. A cool and temperate planet, much of Zweihan's World's surface is covered in water, resulting in a rather damp planetary climate. The planet is circled by several long, mountainous and almost serpentine continents, which are straddled by four hive cities near the equator. Zweihan's World's most notable feature is not on the planet, but around it: a vast ring system made up of the shattered remains of what used to be a large moon. Now the rock rings are mined, bringing the planet impressive mineral wealth.

As the Imperial ruler of the planet, Vess has overseen Zweihan's World's development for most of the last century. An intelligent, empathetic, and charismatic man and ruler, he has ruled his planet well, and as a result his subjects are prosperous and content. It is no wonder that Vess is respected, even adored, by his subjects.

However, trouble looms for Vess. The Adeptus Administratum has recently determined that Zweihan's World is not properly exploiting the vast mineral deposits found in its planetary rings. As a result, the planet's Tithe is set to increase to exploitive levels.

Vess knows what this means; Zweihan's World will become a blasted, strip-mined, and polluted wasteland where the unlucky inhabitants scrabble for simple survival. He cannot stand to see this happen, and thus, plots rebellion.

Governor Malaki Vess Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
47	36	33	36	41	46	32	53	60

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 25
Influence: 52
Mastered Skills: Commerce Mastery, Decadent Mastery, Charismatic Mastery.
Skills: Awareness (Per), Common Lore (Imperium, Imperial Guard, Imperial Navy, Administratum, Arbites, Trade, War) +10 (Int), Drive (Ground, Hover Vehicle) (Ag), Inquiry +10 (Fel), Literacy (Int), Logic +10 (Int), Navigation (Surface) (Int), Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy, Judgement, Tactica Imperialis) +10 (Int), Scrutiny (Per), Tech Use (Int).
Paragon Talents: Conditioned Intellect, Heroic Leadership, Melee Weapon Expertise, Storm of Blows.
Talents: Decadence, Good Reputation (Enforcers, Hivers, Middle Class, PDF, Planet (Zweihan's World),Workers) Nerves of Steel, Two Weapon Wielder (Ballistic), Peer (Adeptus Arbites, Administratum, Enforcers, Government, Hivers, Middle Class, Nobility, PDF, Planet (Zweihan's World), Workers) Pistol Training (Bolt, Las, Plasma, SP), Shadowlord, Touched By the Fates (3 Fate Points), Voice of the Masses, Worthy of the Calixian Elite.
Traits: For Glory and the Governor!†, Tactical Mind.††
Armour: Enforcer Light Carapace (Body, Arms, Legs, 5).
Weapons: Ryza-pattern plasma pistol (Pistol; 30m, S/2/—,

1d10+6 E, Pen 6, Clip 10, Rld 3 Full, Overheat), Power Sword (Melee; 1d10+8 E, Pen 6, Balanced, Power Field).
Gear: Dress uniform (Best quality clothing), personal micro-vox, best-quality bionic eye, best quality refractor field.
†**For Glory and the Governor!** Governor Vess is beloved by his soldiers, who gladly follow him into any situation, and give their lives to protect him. At the beginning of his turn, Vess may spend a Fate Point to grant all of his allies participating in the Combat the ability to inflict Righteous Fury until the end of his next turn.
††**Tactical Mind:** Vess has a sound grasp of unit tactics. As a half action, he may make a **Challenging (+0) Command Test**. For every degree of success, one of his allies may immediately make a Move Half Action. They still take a full action on their next turn.

Running Malaki Vess

Governor Vess provides a GM with a unique adversary. Vess is not a Chaos-worshipper or xenos, nor is he really a heretic. In fact, many players may find his character and motives sympathetic and even commendable. Thus, when they learn of his plot, the choice over how to stop him (or even if they should stop him) is likely that much more difficult. However, if he isn't stopped, his entire world will burn. The Imperium must brutally stamp on rebellion, and this may be the only way for the players to avert a sub-sector war.

Of course, there's nothing simple about stopping him, either. Vess's plans are secret, but the scale of preparations for any rebelling planet is impossible to hide. The first order of business is to discover the plot. Arms shipments, mobilisations of the Planetary Defence Forces, even the quiet elimination of local Arbites, all are signs of the approaching storm. Once the players have put the pieces together, they have to figure out what to do about it.

As an individual, Vess is not incredibly dangerous. His power comes from Zweihan's World's populace and PDF, who are utterly devoted to him. Should the players attack Vess directly, they find themselves up against an army. Vess does not wish to confront them personally, instead allowing hundreds (or thousands) of regular troops led by his elite forces to deal with them.

Unless the players have a personal army, they have to use their wits to get to Vess. Even then, he should always be accompanied by a substantial bodyguard of his elite Defenders. In battle, the Defenders push to get between their master and danger, while he directs their actions from behind.

Zweihan's World PDF

To represent the Zweihan's World PDF, use the Enforcer from page 339 in the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook with the following changes:
Additional Skills: Common Lore (War) (Int) and Dodge (Ag).
Additional Talents: Basic Weapon Training (Las), Pistol Training (Las), and Nerves of Steel.
Replacement Gear: Guard Flak Armour (All 4), lasgun (100m; S/3/-; 1d10+3 E, Pen 0; Clip 60; Rld Full; Reliable), knife (1m; 1d5+3 R; Primitive), 3 spare clips, micro-bead, lamp pack, respirator.

Zweihan's World Defenders

To represent the Zweihan's World Defenders, use the Enforcer from page 339 in the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook, using the above changes as well as the following additions.
Characteristics: Increase WS by +10, BS by +10, Strength by +5, and Willpower by +5.
Additional Wounds: 4.
Additional Skills: Common Lore (War) (Int), Dodge (Ag), Interrogation (WP), and Scrutiny +10 (Per).
Additional Talents: Basic Weapon Training (Las), Pistol Training (Las), Jaded, Nerves of Steel, and Quick Draw.
Replacement Gear: Storm Trooper Carapace Armour (page 143), hellgun (page 138), laspistols (30m; S/-/-; 1d10+2 E; Pen 0; Clip 15; Rld Full; Reliable), mono-knives (1m; 1d5+4 R; Pen 2), backpack ammo pack, 2 Frag Grenades (3XSB; 2d10 X; Pen 0; Blast 4).

MAGOS VATHEK

Magos Vathek is a rogue heretek the Adeptus Mechanicus would dearly love to see put down, although they have been singularly unforthcoming to the agents of the Inquisition as to exactly who he was before he rebelled against Mars' (and the Imperium's) authority. It is believed he was an Explorator attached to the fleets of Arch-magos Thule, and that something in the depths of space drove him insane. Now he is hunted equally by the Inquisition and the Machine Cult.

Vathek's goals are well known to the Inquisition (though no less dire for that). He is obsessed with the manipulation of dark technologies to perfect a means of preserving life within previously dead tissue. To this end, he has exhaustively researched and uncovered countless banned and heretical technologies. Some are far older than the Imperium, while others are even xenos in origin. In addition, thousands of Imperial citizens have died in his vile experiments, or even worse, been prolonged in some horrific 'unlife.' To the Inquisition, Vathek is a highly dangerous threat to the Imperium who must be eliminated at all costs, and they are willing to pursue him to the darkest corners of the Calixis Sector. This zeal in hunting him is only exceeded by the Mechanicus, who constantly have dozens of kill-teams pursuing him.

Running Vathek

Magos Vathek is an archetypical mad scientist, an insane genius willing to sacrifice everything to learn his secrets. Therefore, he is most likely to be found in locations where he may work undisturbed, such as backwater planets without substantial Imperial presence, or the darkest depths of a hive world. Vathek is also extremely solitary, and is unlikely to join forces with local recidivist or criminal elements. Simply put, he has no interest in their goals or motivations, and they have nothing to provide him, save further subjects for his experiments.

This does not mean, however, that Vathek is alone or vulnerable in his laboratories. As a former tech-magos, he is likely to set up a wide variety of security systems ranging from las-trips to proximity mines, and have a veritable army of servitors (or reanimated corpses) he can throw at his enemies.

Magos Vathek Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	50	40	(10) 55	21	(10) 58	32	60	17

Movement: 2/4/6/12 **Wounds:** 36
Influence: 45
Mastered Skills: Common Lore Mastery, Cryptological Mastery, Driving Mastery, Forbidden Lore Mastery, Linguistic Mastery, Piloting Mastery, Scholastic Mastery, Tech Lore Mastery, Warp Lore Mastery.
Skills: Interrogation+20, Intimidate+20, Security+10.

Paragon Talents: Basic Weapons Expertise, Call of Iron, Conditioned Intellect, Exemplar of Metal, Gravitic Levitation, Indomitable Fortitude, Machine Spirit Empathy, Melee Weapon Expertise, Mental Aegis, Pistol Training Expertise, Purity of the Machine, Voice of the Omnissiah.
Talents: Puppet Master†, Heavy Weapon Training (Flame, Las, SP), Light Sleeper, Master Chirurgeon, Spider-limbed††, Swift Attack, Touched by the Fates (3), Two Weapon Wielder (Ballistic), Two Weapon Wielder (Melee).
Influence Talents: Enemy (Mechanicus, Arbites, Inquisition), Peer (the Insane).
Traits: Auto-stabilised, Armour Plating, Fear 2, From Beyond, Machine (5), Mechanicus Implants, Regeneration 4, Unnatural Toughness (x2).
Armour: 7 All (includes Machine 5 and Armour Plating).
Weapons: Scalpel-claws (counts as power blades: 1d10+7 E; Pen 6, Power Field), Ripper Autopistol (Pistol; 25m, 1/-/6, 1d10+2, Pen 3, Clip 50, Reload 2Full, Twin-linked, Tearing, Toxic).
Equipment: Good craftsmanship auger array implants, Good craftsmanship cybernetic vision and hearing (also counts as a telescopic sight, Good craftsmanship photo visor, and internal micro-bead), Good craftsmanship cortex implants, servo-arm, ballistic mechadendrite, plasma-cutter mechadendrite, medicae mechadendrite, 2x utility mechadendrites, good craftsmanship mind-impulse unit, sacrosan wave generator.
†**Puppet Master:** Vathek is always personally accompanied by 1d10+10 servitors, equally divided between Combat

Servitors (**Dark Heresy** Rulebook page 338), Gun Servitors (**Dark Heresy** Rulebook page 340), and heavy repair servitors (**Dark Heresy** Rulebook page 341). These servitors are under Vathek's direct control and fight to the death to protect him. Whenever Vathek is targeted by a ranged attack, as a Reaction he may make a **Challenging (+0) Intelligence Test**. If he succeeds, one servitor of his choosing within three metres of him moves between him and the attacker (as long as there are no obstructions in the way). Treat the servitor as being hit instead (by all hits originating from the attack).

††**Spider Limbed:** Each Round, Vathek may spend his Reaction to make one attack with each of his mechadendrites. When he does this, any mechadendrite with a shooting attack may fire out of any combat Vathek is involved in at no penalty.

Sarcosan Wave Generator: Vathek has installed this strange and blasphemous techno-arcana directly into his torso. It emits a strange aura (and generates a strange and unnerving moaning sound) that keeps his necrotic tissue in some ghastly parody of unlife. The Sarcosan Wave Generator grants Vathek the From Beyond, Fear 2, Regeneration 4, and Unnatural Toughness (x2) Traits (all included in his profile). In addition, once per Round, Vathek may spend one Fate point to reanimate a number of destroyed servitors or other corpses equal to his Willpower bonus within 20 metres of him. Those unlucky enough to be reanimated by his necrotic power return to life as shambling, twisted parodies of their former selves. Anyone reanimated by Vathek comes (or remains) under his complete control, regains all lost Wounds, and retains any weapons or equipment he had when he died. These remain reanimated for the duration of the combat. Any single individual may only be reanimated in this way once.

ZASHLUN, SHROUD MISTRESS OF THE PALE THRONG

In the Imperium, the mutant is something to be shunned and abhorred. The most militant and Puritan factions of Imperial doctrine demand mutants be slain on sight. More merciful Imperial agents merely push for their enslavement as a second class work force, so they can excise the sin of their twisted bodies by labour to the God-Emperor. Some mutants are not properly grateful for this chance for absolution, however, and when they rise up against their masters, the resulting rebellions are some of the most brutal and violent wars in the Imperium.

Zashlun is a product of one of those uprisings: the wars on the hive world of Tranch. The vast mutant labour force on that world was inspired to rebellion by a secret cabal of mutants known as the Shroud Masters. These leaders organised the oppressed mutants into a terrifying force of rebellion known as the Pale Throng. Zashlun was little more than a child-labourer in Tranch's Soot Warrens when the rebellion began, but she joined the rebellion wholeheartedly. She quickly rose through the ranks, and was newly inducted into the Pale Throng when the war began to go against them.

Despite ever-mounting losses, the Imperium poured more men and materials into suppressing the rebellion, drowning the Pale Throng in an inexhaustible tide of war. At the same time, agents of the Inquisition used cats-paws and double agents to divide the Shroud Masters and convince them to tear themselves apart in vicious infighting. Few of the Shroud Masters survived the resulting bloodbath, but Zashlun was one of them, escaping off-planet in a transport commandeered by her loyal followers.

In the time since then, Zashlun's hatred of humanity and her zeal to help her oppressed brethren has only increased. She has travelled the many worlds in the Calixis Sector, sowing rebellion and discord amongst the mutant underclass. She dreams of a time where the humans of the Calixis Sector are put to the pyre that her kind has suffered for too long, and mutants rule triumphant in their place.

Playing Zashlun

Zashlun's primary goal is to recreate the Tranch Rebellion on one of the Calixis Sector's primary worlds, such as Malfi, Solomon, or even Scintilla. The Tranch Rebellion left her home world a gutted shell, and she wants to see that happen to the Imperium's seats of power beyond all else.

Zashlun's tactics rely on the mutant under-classes of the worlds she subverts, therefore she usually operates on hive worlds (where mutants exist in great numbers). With her powerful oration and stirring rhetoric, she can usually convince a sizeable portion of the mutant population to follow her. Once she has their support, she begins training cells of activists, saboteurs, and fighters. For practice, she authorises small attacks against enforcer stations, minor officials, or public spaces. Once her cadres are trained, she begins her rebellion with overwhelming assaults on prominent Imperial targets, Arbites precinct houses, Ecclesiarchy cathedrals, PDF barracks, and the hive spires of Imperial nobility. These attacks are as widespread as possible, to prevent her opposition from concentrating their defence. Her hope is that if she completely overwhelms her enemies quickly, she can consolidate her own defences before the Imperium mobilises. Thus, the first 24 hours of her rebellion are the most crucial, and easiest for her enemies to disrupt.

Zashlun's love for her fellow mutants is only matched by her hatred of humanity, and she does all in her power to protect her brethren. This can prove to be her undoing, however, as canny Throne Agents may attack the mutant population directly in order to lure her into a trap. When Zashlun fights, she is always accompanied by several bodyguards (2d5 Twist Hulks armed with chain-axes; see page 60 in **Disciples of the Dark Gods**). She is unafraid of throwing herself into the fray, but attempts to stay alive if at all possible, even retreating if things look dire.

Zashlun's experiences on Tranch have given her a healthy fear and respect of the Inquisition. If she learns Throne Agents are looking for her before she begins her rebellion, she is perfectly willing to cease her work and vanish, travelling to another world to begin anew.

Zashlun Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
41	45	48	37	(8) 49	52	47	61	55

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds**: 35
Influence: 31
Mastered Skills: Athletic Mastery, Charismatic Mastery, Common Lore Mastery, Investigation Mastery, Observation Mastery, Shadow Craft Mastery, Stealth Mastery.
Other Skills: Chem-Use +10, Cyphers (Pale Throng), Demolition +10, Drive (Ground Vehicle), Evaluate, Forbidden Lore (Cults, Mutants, Psykers) +20, Medicae, Pilot (Civilian Craft), Secret Tongue (Pale Throng, Twist), Survival+20.
Paragon Talents: Blade Dancer, Heroic Leadership, Heightened Reactions, Mental Aegis, Melee Weapon Expertise, Pistol Expertise, Soul of Stone, Thrown Weapon Expertise, Transcendent Hate, Unarmed Ascendant Mastery
Talents: Catfall, Hip Shooting, Sprint, Sure Strike, Swift Attack, Two Weapon Wielder (Melee), Two Weapon Wielder (Ballistic), Touched by the Fates (3).
Traits: Fear 1, Improved Natural Weapons, Mistress of the Pale Throng††, Unnatural Agility (x2), Mutations (see below).
Weapons: Improved Natural Weapons (Writhing tentacles: 1d10+4 I, Pen 0, Tearing, Toxic†), Chainsword (1d10+6 R, Pen 2, Balanced, Tearing), Ripper Autopistol (Pistol; 25m, S/-/6, 1d10+2, Pen 3, Clip 50, Reload 2Full, Twin-linked, Tearing, Toxic) or Hand Flamer (Pistol; 10m, S/-/-; 1d10+4 E; Pen 2; Clip 2; Rld 2Full, Flame).
†See Tentacled Horror, below
Mutations: Zashlun's body is extensively mutated, gaining the following benefits:
Tentacled Horror: Zashlun's left arm is a mass of writhing, tentacles covered in barbed, venomous suckers. Zashlun gains the Improved Natural Weapons Trait, and when she uses a Full Attack Action to make two attacks with her natural weapons (as per the Swift Attack Talent), she doubles that to make four attacks instead. (If she uses Swift Attack with any other weapons, she makes two attacks as normal.) Zashlun may give any of her natural weapon attacks the Toxic quality at will.
Sickeningly Agile: Zashlun's body (particularly her left arm) is sickeningly malleable, and her reactions are far faster than any normal person. Zashlun gains Unnatural Agility (x2), and has a +20 bonus to Climb, Grapple, and Swim Tests.
††**Mistress of the Pale Throng:** Zashlun's role as a Shroud Mistress grants her power and authority in the mutant underworld, to the point where her very word is law. Her inspiring rhetoric can whip her followers into a horrifying frenzy, to the point where nothing can stand against them. When Zashlun uses her Transcendent Hate Paragon Talent to grant her Hatred to her followers, she may also spend one Fate Point. If she does so, until the end of her following turn, all those benefiting from her Hatred (including Zashlun herself) add +2 to melee damage rolls and ignore any negative penalties to their characteristics (such as penalties from fatigue or critical damage).

Ripper Autopistol

The Ripper is a weapon outlawed by Arbities edict on several worlds, in spite of (or more likely because of) its popularity with the criminal underclass. Also known as the 'poor-man's storm bolter,' it is actually two autopistol's attached to the wearer's wrist, belt-fed to a small ammo pack worn on the hip or back. The rounds for a Ripper Autopistol are specially designed to ape the shells of the holy bolter. Each has an armour-piercing tip, frangiable body, and core of toxic gel. They are hard to purchase, but the agonizing deaths they cause make them popular amongst criminal figures.

Wrist-mounted: A person wielding a Ripper Autopistol still has both hands free.

Ordo Malleus Adversaries

Daemons and other creatures of the warp are the main foes of the Ordo Malleus. Below, you will find entries for adversaries that are a challenge for the most experienced Throne Agent.

Herald of Khorne

The Blood God counts servants beyond numbers in his ranks—hordes of bloodletters, flesh-hounds, juggernauts, and many more fight eternal war in his name, against whoever stands in their path. All of Khorne's servants are dangerous as only daemons can be. However, infinitely more menacing than the creatures that make up the faceless ranks of the Skull Lord's army, are those he chooses to lead it.

These Heralds of Khorne are emissaries of slaughter and death. They are terrible to behold in battle, and truly there are few mortals that can best their martial prowess. Only Khorne's dread Bloodthirsters are more deadly. However, Heralds are more than just a deadly opponent. They are icons of Khorne made animate, and on the field of battle their presence spurs their fellow Daemons to ever-greater acts of bloodshed.

Heralds of Khorne appear as larger versions of their lesser bloodletter kin, clad in smoking bronze armour and wielding gigantic hell-blades. The most powerful amongst them have been known to tame the infamous and frenzied juggernaughts and ride them into battle like psychotic steeds.

Unlike the lower daemons, Heralds are also allowed a certain freedom of action, though none would consider it true free-will. Nevertheless, they organise the Blood God's lesser minions, and are often seen leading contingents of daemons into battle, even directing assaults if a Bloodthirster is not present. This, of course, does not stop them from being at the forefront of every charge, always eager to spill more blood in their master's name.

Herald of Khorne Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
65	11	(10) 59	(8) 45	40	37	53	50	18

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 30
Skills: Command+20 (Fel), Awareness + 10 (Per), Psyniscience +10 (Per), Search, Speak Language (any) (Int).
Paragon Talents: Berserker, Melee Weapon Expertise, Storm of Blows.
Talents: Lightning Reflexes.
Traits: Brutal Charge, Daemonic (TB 8), Daemonic Presence (Emissary for the Skull Throne)†, Dark Sight, Fear 3, From Beyond, Improved Natural Weapons (Teeth and Claws), Servant of Slaughter††, Unnatural Strength (x2), Warp Instability.
†**Emissary for the Skull Throne:** Unless the GM determines otherwise, a Herald of Khorne is always accompanied by 2d10 lesser Khornate daemons, such as bloodletters. All Khornate daemons who can see the Herald of Khorne gain the Blademaster Talent and Brutal Charge Trait, if they do not already have them.
††**Servant of Slaughter:** The Herald of Khorne cannot appear in any location that does not already have a substantial daemonic presence and is the sight of considerable bloodshed. In addition, all Critical Effects involving gore or blood (such as requiring an Agility Test not to fall over) do not apply to creatures of Khorne.
Armour: Smouldering Brass Armour (Arms 7, Body 7, Legs 7).
Weapons: Great hell-axe (2d10+12 R; Pen 3, Unwieldy) or two hell-swords (1d10+10 R; Pen 2; Balanced), Teeth and Claws (1d10+10 R; Pen 0).

MARABAS, LORD OF CHANGE

Deep within the oldest vaults of the Tricorn, ancient tomes can be found that chronicle the Inquisition's first forays into what would eventually be known as the Calixis Sector. The records speak of watchful eyes that kept the Crusade pure of faith and purpose, and desperate battles against dire foes. Amongst those records, there is one book in particular that tells of the Inquisition's battles against the dark being known as Marabas, Lord of Change.

The book records that Marabas was a greater Daemon of Tzeentch, the Chaos god of plots, schemes, and mutation. For reasons unknown, Marabas schemed and fought against the Crusade, inspiring heathen worlds to resistance and pacified worlds to rebellion across the sector. Its cults and agents caused widespread death and destruction, and the Inquisition tracked and fought it on a dozen worlds. Marabas was eventually slain on Malfi, when the Daemonhunter Zaalin selflessly rammed the hive-spire it occupied with her gun-cutter. In the wake of the devastation, those surviving from Zaalin's band invoked the rites of banishment, exiling Marabas to the warp for 1,000 years and a day.

Over time, the Inquisition has forgotten its battles against the Daemon, and its attention has drifted to other concerns. The same cannot be said, however, for Marabas. During its centuries of exile, the Daemon has nursed a great grudge against those it sees responsible for its fate; the Calixian Conclave. Now, however, the time of its banishment is ended, and Marabas prepares to bathe the Calixis Sector in blood and fire once more.

Schemes of Revenge

The minds and thoughts of Daemons are not to be understood by mortal men, but Marabas is consumed with a goal that most could comprehend; revenge. It desires vengeance, and since those who banished it are long dead, it will only be sated by tearing down the Calixian Conclave entirely.

Though this may seem an impossible goal, Marabas approaches it with the care and malicious dedication of one who knows it has all eternity to see its dreams become reality. The children of Tzeentch are schemers and tricksters by nature, and Marabas moves forward with its goals by sowing the seeds of a thousand fragmented and seemingly contradictory plots and schemes. Only it can see the distant end result, and the collapse of its enemies.

Marabas, Lord of Change Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
54	72	(12) 63	(21) 72	54	(27) 99	45	(16) 81	45

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 180
Influence: 81

Mastered Skills: Commerce Mastery, Common Lore Mastery, Cryptological Mastery, Charismatic Mastery, Forbidden Lore Mastery, Linguistic Mastery, Scholastic Mastery, Warp Lore Mastery.

Skills: Awareness (Per), Deceive (Fel) +20, Dodge (Ag), Scrutiny (Per) +20, Search (Per).

Paragon Talents: Conditioned Intellect.

Talents: Blademaster, Combat Master, Hatred (Inquisition), Lightning Attack, Resistance (Psychic Powers), Swift Attack, Strong Minded.

Traits: Daemonic (TB 21)†, Daemonic Presence††, Dark Sight, Fear 4, Flyer 10, From Beyond, Improved Natural Weapons (Claws and Beak), Unnatural Strength (x2), Unnatural Intelligence (x3), Unnatural Willpower (x2), Warp Instability.

†Marabas receives a x3 bonus from the Daemonic Talent.

††**Daemonic Presence:** All those within 25 metres of Marabas feel they are mere playthings at the whim of powers far beyond them. All characters take a –20 to Willpower Tests in the area. In addition, the first time they enter this zone, they must make an **Ordinary (+10) Toughness Test** or suffer one permanent random minor mutation (see page 334 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook).

Weapons: Claws and beak (1d10+12 R, Tearing), Staff of the Fatewalker (2d10+14 I, Tearing, Warp Weapon)

Master of Plotters: The Daemons of Tzeentch are crafted from schemes, lies, and plots, and the Changers of Ways are the greatest plotters of all. No matter the circumstances it is confronted in, Marabas is always ready to turn the tables on its attackers. Once per combat, he may instantly summon a number of lesser Daemons of Tzeentch (Horrors, Flamers, or any other unnamed Daemon dedicated to Tzeentch) equal to its Intelligence Bonus.

Supreme Sorcerer: Marabas knows all Lesser, Greater, and Ascended Psychic Powers (with the exception of the Witchesbane and Daemonsbane powers) and all Lesser or Greater Arcana of Sorcery, and may use them as if it had a Psy Rating of 9. If it rolls any results of 9, instead of rolling on the Psychic Phenomena table, it immediately gains one additional level of overbleed if applicable (only one additional level, no matter how many 9s it rolls).

In addition to these Powers, Marabas also may use the Psychic Power Bolt of Change (see sidebar).

Spawn of Fate: Tzeentch is known as the Architect of Fate, and is said to see the future doom of all things. Marabas does not have access to Fate Points. However, whenever anyone in Combat with it spends a Fate Point, during Marabas's next Turn,

Playing Marabas

At its heart, Marabas is the quintessential criminal mastermind, an evil overlord whose malign influence can be seen behind any number of unrelated plots. It delights in manipulating its enemies, and using unwitting cats-paws and pawns to do its dirty work. Therefore, GMs should not introduce Marabas as the villain immediately. It works much better as a hidden nemesis, and it should be some time (and several adventures) before the players should suspect its existence.

Marabas is a Daemon of Tzeentch, and thus prefers to work through cults and followers dedicated to that god. Organisations such as the Menagerie (see **Disciples of the Dark Gods**) are ideal. In addition, Marabas's schemes are so convoluted and complex as to be almost incomprehensible, so it is perfectly reasonable for it to be the hidden 'puppet master' behind a plot that has nothing to do with its goal of destroying the Calixian Inquisition.

As players defeat cults and other organisations, the GM should have them discover evidence of an unknown power that is manipulating them behind the scenes. Also, given Marabas's hatred of the Inquisition, it gleefully sends its lackeys to attack the Throne Agents directly, rather than running and hiding. This behaviour, especially if from a cult the players might have otherwise disregarded, can also hint that something bigger is going on.

Even when the players discover the presence of Marabas, they have to do a lot of digging to find out what exactly it is. If they are bold enough to decide to confront the Daemon directly, it is most fitting that the final confrontation take place in the oldest and most forgotten hive-sectors on Malfi (though it could happen anywhere). There they'll find Marabas, summoned into existence by its most loyal cultists, and guarded by followers both human and daemonic.

Bolt of Change

The greatest Daemons of Tzeentch can strike down their enemies with a bolt of pure chaos, causing their flesh to writhe with mutation.
Threshold: 27
Sustained: No
Range: 45 metres
This is a psychic shooting attack. Any target hit by a Bolt of Change must make a **Very Hard (–30) Willpower Test** or suffer one permanent, random mutation (see page 334 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook). If the target fails its Willpower Test by five or more degrees, it dissolves into a mewling Chaos Spawn and counts as slain.

Overbleed: For every 9 points by which Marabas exceeds the threshold, he may attack one additional target with a Bolt of Change.

it may gain the same benefit as that individual. (For example, if an individual spent a Fate Point to regain 1d10 wounds, Marabas may do the same during its next Turn.) Marabas must do this during its next Turn or not at all. If multiple individuals spend Fate Points during a single Round, Marabas must select one benefit to duplicate. Marabas may not duplicate the benefits from acts of Pure Faith or similar abilities.

However, when an individual is forced to permanently burn a Fate Point in Marabas's presence, Marabas immediately suffers 2d10 wounds ignoring Toughness.

Ordo Xenos Adversaries

The Ordo Xenos deals with hostile alien species that often see the Imperium as prey—or worse, foolish pawns in some mysterious gambit.

DIRE AVENGER EXARCH

When the ancient Eldar race walks the path to war, they are led by their Aspect Warriors. These peerless combatants each embody a different aspect of Khaine, the Eldar god of war. The most common Aspect Warriors are the Dire Avengers: consummate soldiers, noble fighters, and merciless foes. The Dire Avengers are adaptable as well, equally able to serve as elite special-operations units or the backbone of an entire Eldar warhost.

The Eldar who lead the Aspect Warriors are known as Exarchs. As each Aspect Warrior is an exemplar of a certain style of combat, so is an Exarch the pinnacle of the Aspect Warriors he leads. The Dire Avenger Exarchs are no exception. They are trained to be peerless leaders as well as exemplary soldiers, able to lead their troops in honed battle tactics, and effortlessly decimate their foes. Dire Avengers are able to read and adapt to the ebb and flow of battle, but it is their Exarch who shapes it to his liking.

The Dire Avenger Exarch is better equipped than his fellows. His armour, though no less flexible and lightweight, is able to absorb more damage, and his weapons are more impressive as well. Some Exarchs carry one or two Avenger Shuriken catapults, others bear arcane devices able to protect their entire unit, while some even carry the fabled Diresword.

Dire Avenger Exarch Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
60	60	32	33	52 (10)	44	42	49	41

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 20
Mastered Skills: Athletic Mastery.
Skills: Command (Fel) +20, Demolition (Int), Drive (Military Vehicles) (Ag), Forbidden Lore (Xenos) (Int), Medicae (int), Pilot (Military Craft) (Ag), Scholastic Lore (Legend) (Int), Scrutiny (Per), Search (Per), Silent Move +10 (Ag).
Paragon Talents: Gunfighter Saint, Blade Dancer, Heroic Leadership, Unassailable Grace.
Talents: Catfall, Deflect Shot, Double Team, Exotic Weapon Training (Avenger Shuriken Catapult, Shuriken Pistol), Foresight, Heightened Senses (Sight, Sound), Leap Up, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive, Power), Rapid Reaction, Sprint.
Traits: Unnatural Agility (x2).
Armour: Gem-studded aspect armour (AP 7).†
Weapons: Avenger Shuriken Catapult (80m; S/3/10, 1d10+4 R; Pen 4, Clip 30, Reload Full; Reliable, Tearing) and one of the

Diresword

The diresword is both a weapon and a symbol of the rank and authority of a Dire Avenger Exarch. These wraithbone swords have a small spirit-stone embedded near in the blade near the hilt. When the weapon strikes an enemy, the stone sears their mind as the blade cuts their flesh.

When the diresword deals damage to an opponent, that opponent must make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** or take an additional 2d10 wounds, ignoring armour or Toughness. This weapon is always Best Quality, granting a +10 bonus to the weilder's Weapon Skill and +1 damage (already included in the weapon's profile). This weapon is immune to the effects of Power Fields.

Shimmershield

The eldar shimmershield is a small, innocuous wraithbone device worn on the arm. Used by Exarchs of the eldar Dire Avengers, this device is able to project a shimmering shield around both the individual wearing it, and any nearby, protecting them from both projectile weapons and psychic attacks.

The shimmershield works in the same manner as a Field (see page 144) with several exceptions. The first is that due to the astonishing craftsmanship of the eldar, it does not overload. The field is projected over a circular area with a five metre radius, and provides its field save to everyone within it. The field only provides protection against shooting attacks and damage dealing psychic attacks originating outside the field. The Shimmershield has a protection rating of 30 and weighs 1.7 kg.

following: Additional Avenger Shuriken Catapult††, Powersword (1d10+8 E; Pen 5, Balanced, Powerfield) and Shimmershield (See above and page 210), or Diresword (see above and page 210).

Bladestorm and Defend: During combat, the Dire Avenger Exarch may perform the following tactics as a Free Action. Each tactic benefits the Dire Avenger Exarch plus a number of Dire Avenger allies equal to twice his Intelligence Bonus. Each tactic may only be performed once per combat.

- **Bladestorm:** Sensing weakness, the Dire Avenger Exarch orders his troops to disregard their usual calm reserve, and pour a hail of shuriken on their enemies. Until the beginning of the Dire Avenger Exarch's next turn, any affected Dire Avengers firing their shuriken catapults or shuriken pistols on semi-automatic or full automatic who roll a successful Ballistic Skill Test add an additional two successes onto the total.
- **Defend:** The Dire Avenger Exarch orders his troops to counter an enemy charge with swift, harassing strikes in close combat. Until the beginning of the Dire Avenger Exarch's next turn, anyone who wants to attack an affected Dire Avenger in close combat suffers a –25 penalty to their Weapon Skill.

†Dire Avenger Exarchs do not suffer penalties to Concealment and Silent Move when wearing their armour.

††Dire Avenger Exarchs may fire a Shuriken Catapult one-handed and only suffer a –10 penalty to their Ballistic Skill Tests.

SLAUGTH INTENDANT RECUSANT

The Imperial worlds that border the edge of the Hazeroth Abyss tell stories of the "worm that walks," a nightmare that comes from the depths of the Abyss to slay the living and feast on the corpses of the dead. It is often dismissed as a myth by those in power, but the Inquisition knows differently. They know that the legends speak of a vile xenos race known as the Slaugth, carrion eaters who prize the recently dead flesh of intelligent beings above all other sustenance. They particularly delight in consuming cranial matter, from which they derive an almost narcotic—and quite addictive—pleasure.

With the abundance of humanity in the Calixis Sector, they have rapidly become the Slaugth's chosen prey. However, for their own unfathomable reasons, the Slaugth prefer to use infiltration and human cats-paws to hunt them. Theirs is an inscrutable and incomprehensible plan, completely mysterious to those few within the Holy Ordos who know of them. It is, however, a plan that the Slaugth have adhered to without fail or dissent from their ranks, until now.

Intendant Recusant was a leader amongst the Slaugth, and for decades was in charge of certain portions of the Amaranthine Syndicate. However, Recusant has developed a taste for the narcotic pleasures of necrotic cranial matter. Over time that taste became an addiction, then an obsession. The Slaugth's racial hubris has never considered restraint a virtue, and now Recusant finds himself driven by his hungers. That selfsame hubris will not allow him to admit that his cold, vast, and alien intellect—a hallmark of his species—has become tainted with his fixation. Now, he has broken from his dark masters, taking a small cadre of warrior constructs and Slaugh infiltrators with him, as well as a splinter group of the Amaranthine Syndicate. These luckless humans do not know

The Slaugth and the Amaranthine Syndicate

The Slaugth are an impossibly ancient race, who have likely lived in the Calixis Sector long before the arrival of mankind. They have been most active around the Hazeroth Abyss, a section of cursed space and dead stars near the edge of the sector, and control the human Amaranthine Syndicate to fulfill their bidding. However, their true home world is unknown, and may not be within the abyss.

The Slaugth are large creatures, and appear to be made up of millions of writhing maggots that assume the rough 3 metre tall humanoid shape. They can manipulate their forms, as well as those of their bio-construct vassals. They are extremely intelligent, exceptionally resilient, and utterly evil.

A more detailed description of the Slaugth's gradual take-over of the Amaranthine Syndicate, as well as some of their terrible plans for the Calixis Sector, can be found in **Disciples of the Dark Gods**.

that they have broken from the Syndicate as a whole, or that their master is a renegade. In their ignorance, they are loyal.

Nightmare Tactics

Recusant's plans are short-term and self-centred. He is continuing the raids and terror tactics the Slaugth employ against isolated human outposts and starships. However, his actions are driving deeper into Imperial space, and his masters are not pleased at the actions of this 'loose cannon.'

The Throne Agents may come across Recusant and his minions in several ways. They may have been assigned to investigate a trail of dead, drifting starships and deserted outposts, and come across Recusant as the hunters (although they may not realise the danger of the 'game' they have tracked!). In this situation, an interesting twist might occur. If Recusant's masters learn of the Throne Agents' activities, they may covertly aid them through the main Amaranthine Syndicate—providing them information as to Recusant's possible future targets or even some small details about his true danger. The Slaugth won't divulge their identity, of course, nor will they give up any information that could hurt them later. However, they would be pleased to see a problem like Recusant eliminated without their direct involvement.

Alternatively, the Throne Agents may be present on an outpost or starship when it is attacked by Recusant's forces, and be forced to fight for their very survival.

In either case, Recusant's forces use terror tactics in their attacks, deadly hit-and-fades to lure and bait the opposition while fraying their nerves and exhausting them before moving into the kill. Deadly ambushes that leave none alive, 'disappearances' in areas thought safe, and cutting astropathic or vox communications with the outside are all proven tactics that Recusant will employ.

To defeat Recusant, the Throne Agents will have one advantage. Recusant's innate hubris, coupled with the addiction that clouds his judgement, means he is not an adversary to lead from the rear. Should the Throne Agents be able to confront him, he will be more than willing to engage in direct combat. Should he be slain, his small renegade faction will quickly splinter and disperse, the remaining Slaugth scattering and vanishing and the Warrior Vassals unable to operate independently and going into uncontrolled berserk frenzies. The humans under his control will either flee and hide, or be easy prey for the Inquisition.

To represent the Slaugth's human mercenaries, use the Kill Squad Trooper and the Bounty Hunter, found on page 341 and 336 in the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook. For the Slaugth's constructs, use the Warrior Vassal on page 209.

Slaugth Intendant Recusant Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
40	50	(10) 50	(12) 61	51	(14) 70	45	77	40

Movement: 5/10/15/30 **Wounds:** 43
Influence: 25
Mastered Skills: Commerce Mastery, Investigation Mastery, Stealth Mastery.
Skills: Chem-Use (Int) +10, Climb (Ag), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int) +10, Deceive (Fel), Dodge (Ag), Forbidden Lore (Xenos) (Int) +10, Logic (Int) +10, Medicae (Int), Tech Use (Int) +10.
Paragon Talents: Conditioned Intellect, Death Blow, Heightened Reactions, Storm of Blows.
Talents: Leap Up, Lightning Reflexes, Rapid Reaction, Weapon Training (Exotic).
Traits: Dark Sight, Fear Rating 3 (Horrifying), From Beyond, Strange Physiology, Regeneration (recovering 2d5 Wounds), Unnatural Intelligence (x2), Unnatural Strength (x2), Unnatural Toughness (x2), Touched by the Fates (4), Undying.
Elasticity: The Slaugth can flatten their bodies down or stretch them out to over three times their normal length, increasing their reach and providing a +20 bonus on Grapple and Climb Tests).
Necrotic: Anyone inflicting a Critical Hit on a Slaugth in close combat has a 25% chance of being splashed with the creature's necrotic fluids, inflicting 1d10 R Toxic Damage. This can be Dodged, but not Parried.

Cranial Addiction: The Slaugth can absorb a victim's memories through consuming cranial matter. Recusant's severe addiction for the substance has made this process much easier for him. When Recusant eats cranial matter less than two weeks old (and not completely decomposed), he may make a **Challenging (+0) Intelligence Test**. Success means he can access the majority of the victim's memories.

Hubristic Weakness: If Intendant Recusant is killed, all Slaugth Warrior Vassals and other Slaugth constructs must make an **Ordinary (+10) Intelligence Test** at the beginning of each round. If they fail, they do nothing for that round. All human allies must immediately make a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test** or flee.

Armour: Shroud Armour (All 5).

Weapons: Necrotic grasp (1d10+11 R, Tearing, Toxic), Necrotic Lance (see below and page 210).

Gear: Strange incomprehensible xenos technology.

SLAUGTH WARRIOR VASSAL CONSTRUCT

One of the reasons the Slaugth have avoided engaging the Imperium openly is they are far outnumbered by humanity. A single human is no more a match for a Slaugth than an insect is a bull grox, but the grox can still be devoured by a swarm of Blood Locusts. Thus, the Slaugth are well aware that should they provoke open warfare, they will be rapidly defeated.

In order to correct this imbalance of forces, and prepare for the day when they have to attack the Calixis Sector openly, the Slaugth have looked to their strengths. They have a keen and terrible grasp of biological sciences, and instead of training an army, they have decided simply to grow one.

The Slaugth commonly use biomechanical construct creatures to serve them as labourers, guards, and spies. All appear horrifyingly repulsive to humanity, but the warrior vassals stand apart in that regard. Their shapes can vary, but most are ovoid masses of pallid, fungal flesh shot through with purple veins and metal lattices. Locomotion is provided through three skeletal, spider-like legs, and their upper torso stretches into a thick, stumpy tube, capped with a mass of tendrils surrounding a radial, fang-filled mouth. The tendrils are surprisingly strong, and can stretch into sharp bone-blades at a whim, but the vassal is also quite capable of using the frighteningly advanced weapons of the Slaugth. Embedded within it is a device capable of generating terrible necrotising beams that can disintegrate a man in seconds.

Necrotic Beam

Little is known about this brutal weapon carried by Slaugth shock-constructs, except they project raking beams of energy capable of turning their victims to clouds of drifting dust.

Disintegrate: Any victim suffering Critical Damage from this weapon is blasted into a cloud of dust and vapour and completely destroyed.

Diffuse Fire: When fired on Full Auto, the weapon does 1d10+5 damage.

Necrotic Lance

The weapon of a Slaugth Intendent, this weapon appears to be a long-bladed spear made entirely of swirling strands of bilious green energy. At the wielder's command, it can project its energy into a searing beam capable of blowing apart battle-tanks.

The lance has a profile as a melee weapon and ranged weapon, and may be used as either. It may only be used in one manner each turn, however.

Disintegrate: Any victim suffering Critical Damage from this weapon is blasted into a cloud of dust and vapour and completely destroyed.

Shroud Armour

Resembling nothing so much as ragged robes, this armour creates a strange projection affect that clouds the eyes of those watching, allowing the wearer to disappear in plain sight.

Anyone wearing Shroud Armour gains a +20 to their Concealment Tests. In addition, during any round they are not in combat, the wearer can make a **Challenging (+0) Concealment Test** to turn invisible (this does not protect against being detected by motion-sensors, heat-trackers, or psychic powers). The wearer will remain invisible until he attacks or physically interacts with another. Shroud Armour provides 5 APs to all locations and weighs 5kg.

The Strange and Unhallowed Weapons of the Enemy

Just as a Throne Agent is expected to know his enemy, he is also expected to know his enemy's weapons. Though the Imperial Creed preaches that it is a sin to admire or use the tools of the enemy, it is a Throne Agent's duty to understand their workings. Of course, some Throne Agents take that to mean they should utilise these weapons, arguing that they are able to withstand their corrupting influence.

These items have Availability ratings. However, a GM should never make obtaining one a simple matter. Most are vile xenos-tech, and the rest the providence of mutants and heretics. Many Inquisitors would consider even possessing one a crime.

Name	Type	Range	RoF	Damage	Pen	Clip	Reload	Special	Weight	Availability
Ranged Weapons										
Necrotic Beam	Heavy	80m	–/2/8	1d10+10 E	4	—	—	Diffuse Fire, Disintigrate	20kg	Unique
Necrotic Lance (Ranged)	Heavy	100m	S/–/–	2d10+10 E	8	—	—	Disintigrate, Reliable	15kg	Unique
Ripper Autopistol	Pistol	25m	S/–/6	1d10+2 I	3	50	2Full	Twin-Linked, Tearing, Toxic	3kg	Extremely Rare
Melee Weapons										
Diresword	Melee (1 handed)	—	—	1d10+3	6	—	—	Balanced	4kg	Near Unique
Necrotic Lance (Melee)	Melee (2 Handed)	—	—	2d10+2	8	—	—	Disintigrate, Power Field, Unbalanced	—	—
Armour										
Shroud Armour	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5kg	Unique
Fields										
Shimmershield	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5kg	Near Unique

Warrior vassals are not particularly intelligent, although they do have a basic grasp of tactics coupled with a complete disregard for their own well-being. They usually operate in teams of three to five. When they locate a threat, their favoured tactic is for one or two of their number to charge headlong into the foe. While their opponents are focused on taking it down, its fellows rake the melee with a fusillade of necrotic blasts, uncaring of whom they hit. Should they encounter a threat far greater than they can handle, the entire cadre attacks, while one slips away to warn their masters.

Slaugth Warrior Vassal Construct Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
44	35	(8) 48	53	30	11	46	44	02

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 25

Skills: Awareness (Per) + 20, Dodge (Ag), Intimidate (S) +20, Search (Per) +20.

Talents: Heavy Weapon Training (Exotic), Frenzy, Lightning Attack.

Traits: Auto-Stabilised, Fear 1 (Disturbing), From Beyond, Regeneration, Size (Hulking), Sonar Sense, Strange Physiology, Improved Natural Weapons (Bone-blades), Undying, Unnatural Strength (x2).

Discorperation: If destroyed, these constructs melt away to bubbling necrotic ooze and stinking gas within a few seconds, leaving nothing behind.

Armour: Reinforced endo-plates: All 6.

Weapons: Bone-blades (1d10+8 R; Pen 3), Necrotic Beam (see page 209).

Gear: Strange xeno-tech devices of unknown purposes.

X

The Red Wake

GM's Resources

•

Dramatis Personae

•

A Feast Among Vipers

•

The Feast of Welcome

•

Death at High Mass

•

Ceremony of Investiture

•

Cause and Consequence

•

Going After Ensor

Chapter X: The Red Wake

"Trust No One"

–Inquisitorial Maxim

Red Wake is a short adventure of intrigue and mystery for Ascension-level **Dark Heresy** characters. It is set against a backdrop of bloody power-politics and assassination during the investiture of a Ministorum priest to the head of an important religious office on the troubled world of Malfi. As plots and political manoeuvrings turn to open murder, the player-characters find themselves in the midst of a powder keg waiting to explode; a powder keg to which somebody is very deliberately trying to touch a match.

THE SETTING

The setting of Red Wake is the 'Aleph Ha' Harrum,' an ancient and important temple complex on the southern continental mass of the teaming hive world of Malfi, capital world of the Malfian sub-sector. The player-characters come to the Aleph as honoured guests along with representatives of the great and the powerful of the Malfian sub to bear witness to the investiture of a new Archimandrite (Cleric-governor) of the Aleph. However, dark forces surround the ceremony and murder and conspiracy await them. The ceremony itself is a confluence of numerous different intrigues and power-plays between factions of the Ecclesiarchy, as well as between the Church, the treacherous Malfian nobility, and the avarice of mercantile powers of the Commercia. Beyond these conspiracies, a plot of a darker hue, perpetrated by the servants of Chaos, is about to unfold and drench the ceremony in suspicion and death. The Throne Agents have many secrets and hidden agendas to discover. As dark events unfold, their own actions in the matter may have considerable implications for the future of the Calixis sector and the fate of countless lives on Malfi.

GM'S BRIEFING

This adventure is intended, in principle, both to showcase the kind of themes and adversaries that Ascension level **Dark Heresy** is all about, and for the players and GM to try out and get a handle on much of what has been previously presented in this book. It's also intended for the GM to use as a springboard for his own plots and campaigns going forward. As such, before running Red Wake for the players, the GM is encouraged to consider where the campaign is going and what kinds of allies, enemies, plots and intrigues he wants the Throne Agents to encounter down the line, and how they might be reasonably foreshadowed or even introduced here alongside the events already taking place. For example, if you want to introduce a rival

Inquisitorial faction or noble family, have their agents present at the Investiture for the Throne Agents to encounter. If your plan is to have the Throne Agents investigate strange goings on in the future on a particular world, have the rumours connected with this first surface in the gossip here, and so on. The set-up of Red Wake is also such that is a great place for the Throne Agents to pick up contacts, add to their information network, wield influence and generally meet useful NPCs in a relatively neutral environment without it seeming an overly artificial experience, particularly in the adventure's opening stages.

One major difference about holding Inquisitorial rank over being an acolyte is that the Holy Ordos is expecting the Throne Agents to seek out and confront danger to the Imperium and conduct investigations into suspicious and portentous matters on their own initiative and under their own responsibility. Red Wake, with its cast of nobles, clerics, warriors, mystics, and merchants drawn from across the Calixis Sector, is a perfect setting for the GM to present the Throne Agents with an array of hints, rumours, hooks and leads, unrelated to the adventure, for them to pursue later.

SYNOPSIS OF THE ADVENTURE

The adventure is broken up into three parts. Each part, though it may contain a number of different scenes and last varied times in terms of game play, is grouped together by the prevailing nature and events it contains.

Part I: A Feast Among Vipers

The Cadre is invited to attend the investiture of the new Archimandrite of the Aleph. They attend a ceremonial reception and feast and observe and take part in the treacherous undercurrents of political manoeuvrings, courtly intrigue, and bitter hatreds present.

Part II: Death at High Mass

The Cadre is present at the High Mass of Ordination, where the Archimandrite to be is suddenly assassinated before he can take up his office. They may bear witness or try to rein in the panic and bitter recriminations that follow in this tragedy's aftermath. As what was a celebration becomes a wake for the dead, dark rumours abound and infighting breaks out between the factions present. The Cadre may swiftly attempt to get to the bottom of the murder and hope to head off the threat of further strife, or try to stage-manage who is blamed and why as they wish.

If the Cadre successfully pursues the evidence of how the assassination took place, they are drawn down into the catacombs of the Aleph and a confrontation with the treacherous priest Deacon Ensor. They may also learn that he was merely a puppet of a wider conspiracy.

The Cadre

This adventure is intended for a group of Ascension-level **Dark Heresy** characters, at least one of which should hold the position of Inquisitor. The others are highly skilled and respected agents of the Holy Ordos, operating under their own authority rather than on a particular mission from another Inquisitor. In order to make a distinction here between other agents of the Inquisition present at the investiture, the player-character group is referred to as a Cadre during the text of this adventure. This term is also a valid one 'in-game,' as an NPC might well ask a PC if he, "is part of the Inquisitor's cadre?" and so on.

Part III: Cause and Consequence

Depending on how matters have been resolved by the Cadre (if they have been resolved at all), the affair is blown open to wider public knowledge on Malfi and the blame falls where it will. If thwarted in his desire to spread disorder and conflict between Ecclesiarchy and Malfi's nobility, the concealed cultist Sydom seeks to turn the Vigil for the Dead Archimandrite into a bloodbath through a hellish incursion by the Warp, causing as much slaughter as possible to cast fear into the hearts of Malfi's faithful.

LORDS OF THE IMPERIUM

One of the key themes in Red Wake is that it has been, in part, designed to allow the Throne Agents to explore the lines and division of power within the Imperium from the inside. The player-characters, at Ascension level, have power both directly and indirectly. They have the right, as agents of the Holy Ordos, to conduct investigations, requisition aid, and of course to be judge, jury and executioner so far as the purview of the Inquisition extends. They are, in short, lords of the Imperium. Their power however, does not exist in a vacuum, nor is it limitless or unrivalled. Much like the Inquisition itself, they are part of a wider system of authority, control and influence. Other agencies not only have their own agendas, but in some circumstances the power to circumvent or override the Cadre's.

In the political situation that lies at the heart of Red Wake, the Cadre is not simply present as agents of the Inquisition. They are its representatives, and must comport themselves and consider their actions accordingly or face the consequences. When they speak, it is with the voice of the Holy Ordos; when they make judgements and pass out sentences, it is with all the power and majesty of the Imperial Inquisition that they do so. However, this also has the consequence that if they are wrong, that authority is diminished. If they fail, they do so not only in the sight of their enemies, but also the powerful, and worse yet the Holy Ordos itself. Ultimately the Throne Agents should remember that they are no longer Acolytes. They are no longer servants of a particular Inquisitor or Inquisitorial faction who can 'take the flak' for what goes wrong, collateral damage they cause, and which enemies they make during the course of a mission. It is they who must answer for their actions, to both their allies, enemies, and to the far less forgiving judgement of the wider Conclave of the Holy Ordos itself.

Intrigues, Lies and Taking Sides

Red Wake is an adventure of mystery and intrigue. As such, is it open-ended with no set outcome. While events take place in a certain order, depending on how the plans and plots of the NPCs take their course—in particular the plot to murder the newly appointed Archimandrite—it is up to the players just how much they intervene and how to change or foil the events they are caught up in.

Just how the Throne Agents react to the unfolding situation is their decision to make, and Red Wake is not an adventure which has been designed to have a single 'right' solution for them to find. Although, as with most mystery scenarios, some approaches to pursuing certain leads are more effective than others. Indeed, the wrong question in the wrong ear, or the overt display of force to the wrong faction, can and should have very unpleasant consequences. A 'kick in the door' approach is likely to completely miss the presence of the Cadre's true enemies, who then can put traps and ambushes in place to exterminate such unsubtle foes at leisure. The adventure is not merely one focused around social interaction, however, and bloody danger and the treat of violence lurks close at hand. A mixture of both combative, as well as more cerebral and socially skilled Throne Agents, are recommended, with each having more than a fair chance to shine as events progress.

A good intrigue based storyline is marked by the fact that there are a number of things going on under the surface all at once, and that the different characters and factions involved have often conflicting goals and plans under way. The key to this is in thoroughly knowing the nature, goals and motivations of the key NPCs involved. In order to help the GM out, an extensive and detailed Dramatis Personae section (see page 219) has been included for Red Wake which should be read and understood thoroughly by the GM before the adventure is run. The GM is also, of course, invited to add to and take from the adventure's cast of characters as he sees fit, to make it his own.

Adventures like this one can demand more from the GM than a simple string of combat encounters. Because they offer the players a very great degree of freedom of action, this means that the players can go down no end of unexpected avenues that can't be fully anticipated. This means that, as a GM, you are required to think on your feet, add extra characters and information as needed to help the adventure along. As a GM, you'll also need to keep a clear idea of what's going on in the game in your head. This means both what the player-characters and the NPCs are up to at any given point, and how close their plans are to fruition.

A Dark Truth of GMing

Running and writing intrigue and mystery based adventures requires work, planning and effort, but it can also be highly rewarding, and a fantastically enjoyable creative challenge. If you are the sort of person who thinks this is fun and enjoys GMing in-and-of itself, then the more you put into running this kind of adventure, the more both you and your players get out of it. If on the other hand, keeping the motivations of a dozen different NPCs in your head at once, and playing out their different interactions one after the other with the players fills you with dread, perhaps running this kind of adventure is not for you.

GM Hints and Things to Remember

- Be firm but fair with the players. Don't dismiss their ideas out of hand, and don't be afraid to be helpful when responding to questions about what their characters might know or infer from their surroundings.
- Don't be afraid to have NPCs act or react adversely and violently if the player-character's actions make this the logical outcome.
- Reward quick thinking and good ideas on the players' part. Grant them additional clues, information, and assistance as warranted.
- Familiarise yourself with the NPCs, their roles and motivations. From this, you'll know how they react to the unexpected, so you can add to things as you go along without the risk of messing up your own plot!
- If a particular clue or piece of information is vital to the adventure continuing, make sure the player-characters get it.† Never let the adventure stonewall just because they haven't asked a specific 'right' question or failed a dice roll.
- NPCs can and do lie, but only with cause.
- Solving the mystery/defeating the villain/saving the world is a task for player characters. Allies and NPCs can help, but ultimately the game is about the players, not the window dressing.
- As always, keep a handy notebook to record names and the like as you go along, or to record what the player-characters have learned so far, as this can prove invaluable.

†This is not to say you can't make them work for it through conflict and interaction.

In Red Wake, the Throne Agents find themselves in contention with factions within the Ecclesiarchy, the sector nobility and the Commercia, as well as others from the Inquisition itself. How the Cadre chooses to handle their relationships and conflicts with these factions helps or hinders them in finding out what intrigues are afoot. How they treat the powerful individuals they encounter, and what side they take, may also make long-term allies or enemies for the future, or perhaps ensure they do not live to see another day.

High Politics and Other Bloody Games

Red Wake is very much about Imperial power politics and the fault lines and conflicts the Imperium's ruling classes are divided by. It focuses particularly on the rivalry between the Imperial church, the Ministorum and the power of the Imperial nobles who rule much of day-to-day life in the Imperium. The setting of this adventure on Malfi is no accident. Malfi is the capital world of an entire sub-sector, and arguably after Scintilla itself, the second most powerful world in terms of economic might and influence in the entire Calixis Sector. What happens there matters. Malfi is also an ancient world with many secrets, a history more darkly tangled and bloody than most, and a notoriously powerful and vengeful aristocracy whose murderous reputation and reach goes far beyond the planet itself.

This is the world into which the Cadre is thrust, and it is a world in which they must either sink or swim. Depending on the previous campaign that has led up to this point, and the GM's taste in adventure design, power-politics and high intrigue may already be no stranger to the players. If not, however, this might be the occasion for something of a gear-shift in play style, something that (hopefully) Ascension has helped prepare the players and GM for. The player-characters are required to interact with the NPCs they meet, and should keep the consequences of their dealings, and the nature and desires of those they interact with, in mind. They should also be ready for a sudden switch to danger and frantic violence, for around the powerful, peril always lurks. In the game of empires, you win or you die.

GM Resources

The following contains a selection of useful information for the GM about the adventure, including the main elements of the adventure's plot.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTORS

Although covered in considerably more detail in the Dramatis Personae on page 219, the following are, in short form, the principle NPCs and their factions present in this adventure:

The Ecclesiarchy

Prelate Llorens Zan: An up-and-coming senior clergyman of Malfi, and the next Archimandrite of the Aleph.
Deacon Ensor: The cleric 'manager' of the day-to-day operations of the Aleph, secretly a fallen priest who has arranged the assassination of his new master.
The Venerable Cal: A powerful and ancient Cardinal of the Ministorum, come to Malfi to approve the new Archimandrite and pursue his own political ends.
Legatine-Sister Vespaisia: An officer of the Adepta Sororitas, here as head of the Venerable Cal's bodyguard detachment.
Preacher Azed Husk: A puritan firebrand of growing power from Malfi's Scav-zones, invited to the investiture at Cal's bidding, much to the disquiet of others.
Arch-Confessor Eutalus: A representative of the rival and locally distrusted Tarsine Church of Scintilla, and failed candidate for the role of Archimandrite.

The Noble Houses

Lord-Regent Fafnir Belasco: A hugely powerful and dangerous noble. It is through his backing that Zan has been made Archimandrite, much to the enmity of his house's political rivals.
The Honourable Hector Maken: A young foppish noble of Malfi's ruling noble faction. His very attendance is something of an insult to those assembled owing to his personal lack of importance within his house; a house that holds the Belasco as bitter enemies.
Siridar-Baroness Carmilla Noventu: An impoverished, bitter and scornful noblewoman whose house is dependant on the clergy of the Aleph to retain what little wealth it still possesses. Her House has had a blood feud with the Belasco for generations.

The Commercia

Master Rothber Sydom: A representative of the trans-sector trading combine, the Skealen-Har Hegemony, here to gain favour with the Belasco and the new Archimandrite. He is, in fact, a warp-twisted Rogue Psyker belonging to the nightmarish Chaos cult known as the Menagerie and the architect of the murderous conspiracy about to unfold.
Lady Cheska Duquesne (Inquisitor Heleyna Nephren): A representative of a sector merchant company, the Martaxus Combine, Lady Cheska appears as the noble-blooded delegation for her void-born masters. She is secretly an Inquisitor named Heleyna Nephren, and Istvaanian with her own agenda here to observe the changeover of power.

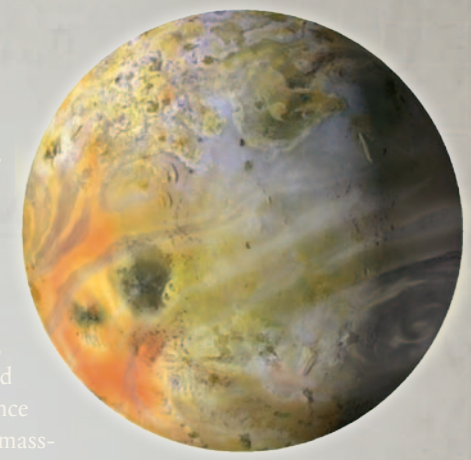
Outsiders

Inquisitor-Castellan Thoth: Mistress of the Holy Ordos offices on Malfi, who requests the Cadre take up the assignment.
The Cadre of Player-Characters

SYDOM'S CONSPIRACY

At the heart of the sinister events unfolding at the investiture is Rothber Sydom's murder conspiracy. Sydom is a senior agent of the Menagerie, a horrific Chaos cult devoted to the twisting corruption of body and mind, which is secretly spreading its power throughout the Malfian sub-sector. The Menageries' flesh-seers have foreseen a resurgent and strengthened Malfian church as a potential thorn in their side, and so wish to stop this possibility before it can be realised by killing Zan before he can take up the reins of power. In carrying out the murder publically, but still concealing their hand in the matter, the Menagerie hopes to further sow discord within the nobility present by fanning the fires of suspicion and blame, and perhaps even throw them into open conflict. Even more importantly to the Chaos cult, the killing weakens the faith of the church by demonstrating that both they and the God-Emperor cannot even protect their own at the heart of the Imperial Creed's worship.

Planetary Datafax: Malfi



Population: Estimated 22 Billion
Tithe Grade: Exactus Extremis
Special Notation: Regional Capital, Malfian Sub-Sector, Calixis Sector, (Malfi II)
Geography/Demography: Hot/Temperate, abiding planetary climate is semitropical with a high degree of precipitation and storm activity. The planet's central super-continual mass, which dominates 70% of its surface, was formerly jungle/rain forest zones ranging to an arid desert equatorial belt, with relatively small polar oceans. The natural landscape, however, has now largely been overwhelmed with diffuse laterally spread hive city urbanisation and industrial development (see subtype reference 'Solar Hive'), giving way to 'scav zones' in arid desert regions. This single mass-hive structure is accessed through extensive 'Arteria' road and transit networks and is politically further subdivided into 1,243 administrative dominions under control of the Malfian nobility.
Governmental Type: Indigenous Hive Oligarchy (League of Patented Nobility, registering seventeen divisions of rank and title, composed of approximately three to four hundred recognised noble houses at any given time.)
Planetary Governor: Currently the Matriarch Eminence Glydus. The Malfian Matriarch/Patriarch is, by the Articles of Compliance put into effect by Warmaster Angevin, elected for a life term as Malfian Planetary Governor and Imperial Commander of the Malfian system with secondary authority over the system worlds of Gallowglass (Malfi V-c) and Borusa (Malfi VIII). The candidate for the role is brought forward by acclaim of the League.
Adept Presence: Strong/Extensive; all major Adeptus Terra are represented, tasked to duties centred on Malfi itself as a prominent hive world, and as the administrational nexus of the Malfian sub-sector. Notable inclusions feature full Astropathic Choir (sub-sector relay), extensive Imperial Guard mustering grounds/Departmento Munitorum storage depots, Battlefleet Calixis orbital station, and self-governing sub-sector Administratum citadel enclave.
Military: The Legion of Civil Protection (local PDF, low/poor), private armies held by the noble houses (large, elite and well equipped but widely scattered and under independent command). Also Malfi holds considerable numbers of mercenaries and bounty hunters which make Malfi their home (cross ref: Free Companies/Malfian Bloodsworn). Additionally highly violent indigenous culture and extensive nomadic criminal population in Malfi's 'scav-zones' make for excellent Imperial Guard recruits when tithed.
Trade/Economy/Addendum: Malfi is home to the Calixis sector's second-largest hive based economy after Scintilla, (although Scintilla's output is considerably higher.) It is also the sub-sector production capital and primary exporter for finished goods, metalwork, manufactured materials and arms, as well as a major transhipping port with links across the Calixis sector and beyond. Malfi is a mass-importer of raw materials (particularly metallic ores) and food, and is incapable of feeding more than an estimated 20% of its population without imports from nearby agri-worlds such as Gallowglass.

See page 325 of **Dark Heresy** for further information on Malfi.

To this end, Sydom has further corrupted the heart and clouded the mind of the bitter Deacon Ensor, who neither knows nor suspects Sydom's true nature. Ensor has arranged the events of the assassination via remote control, using a pre-engineered blackout and a murder-chipped cherubim servitor to kill the Archimandrite at the height of the high mass.

If Ensor goes undiscovered and the blame falls on another, or the factions present break out into bloody strife, Sydom retires into the shadows, his task complete, to silently gloat at the anarchy and death he has caused. However, if Ensor is discovered, or strong leadership and intervention from the Cadre control and calm the situation, or if he feels an investigation is getting close to discovering his involvement, he may take more direct action by seeking to kill the Cadre members or scapegoating further killings. If he is thwarted completely, the GM also has the option of having Sydom deliver a bloody and terrible retribution at Zan's requiem (see Sydom's Last Dance on page 245).

THE NOBLE HOUSES OF MALFI

Politics on Malfi are a deadly game, even compared to the intrigues present at the Lucid Court on Scintilla or the murderous inter-clan warfare of Magnagorsk on Fenksworld. None can match the noble houses of Malfi for their predations, labyrinthine plots and natural flare for betrayal and savage revenge. Outsiders who enter this stage of lies and villainy quite often find themselves swimming with sharks like bloody bait. Even those who might be considered practiced dissemblers and agents of fortune on other worlds are often proved rank amateurs compared to even minor players of the Malfian power-politic. This tendency towards deception, seeking advantage, patronage, and bitter feuding is a cornerstone of the Malfian culture and psyche. It is present at all levels; from the nomadic scum of the scav-zones and the workers on the manufactory floors to the halls of the temples and

dusty corridors of Administratum counting houses. It reaches its zenith amid the ranks of the noble houses. There are hundreds of such houses, some predating even the Angevin Crusade in their antiquity, while others are fresh born, and granted title by the office of the Matriarch or Patriarch of the day. That individual is elected from the heads of the noble houses to hold the office of planetary governor.

So it is that fresh blood replaces the old, and as some houses lose their grip on power or die away entirely, there are always hungry new claimants waiting in the wings to take advantage of any sign of weakness. As such, mere title or even wealth is no guarantee of power or protection on Malfi as it might be elsewhere on more stable or staid worlds. Only strength, guile, and the ruthlessness to use it provide such security. Perhaps because of this, the Malfian aristocracy nurses its grievances endlessly and respects none not of their number. They pay due obedience only to the High Adeptus Terra of the Imperium and the Lords of Mars, which they acknowledge as a greater power; and to the Holy Ordos in particular, as superior players of the game. They see the 'nobility' of other worlds as vane and worthless things, lumping them in with other 'peddlers and malcontents.' In particular, they hold their greatest scorn for those who originate in the sector capital of Scintilla. All of Malfi hold a grudge against that world that goes pack to the birth of Calixis.

The Enemy of My Enemy…

Because of the constantly shifting web of intrigue and power that holds Malfi together, alliances are formed and broken easily between the noble houses and other powerful groups. Each great house maintains a legion of spies, analysts and paid informants just to try to keep track of this treacherous sea of power and patronage. It is said, and not without reason, that every Malfian lies and that every Malfian would betray even their own kin for the right price. The trick lies in knowing what that price is, and making a better offer than your competitors.

The Rules of Vendetta

As many outsiders learn to their cost, on Malfi, the only rule is that there are no rules. There are, however, certain accepted ways that vendettas, contests and feuds are conducted. Certain lines of action, if crossed, guarantee escalation to greater heights of violence and destruction, up to and including what, on other worlds, might be considered open civil war. As it is, in the normal scheme of things, most houses contest each other by proxy; acting through intermediaries to settle scores against each others positions, territories and agents. They deliver calculated insults at court or at state gatherings, and even use sponsored scav-gangs in the wastes to fight bloody battles against others sponsored by their rivals, or as muscle to raid Arteria routes and trade shipments.

While tens of thousands may die yearly to such 'diversions,' they matter little in the grand scheme of things. True blood feuds only erupt over the killing of those of noble blood and their closest agents. When such a spiral of murder and counter murder at the highest echelon begins, there is very little that can stop it until one side is laid low. All the great houses maintain numerous specialised agents and deadly weapons in case of such vendettas. During such, no target is off limits to attack, and age, gender or rank is not a guarantee of safety. It is not surprising that every Malfian noble is trained to be well-versed in the arts of violence and secrecy from a young age, and duelling among the nobles of Malfi is commonplace. Outsiders drawn into such battles had best remember that, to most Malfian nobles, the concept of the 'fair fight' is the most appalling kind of idiocy.

The Position of The Ministorum on Malfi

The current lamentable position of the Ecclesiarchy on Malfi is central to the plot of this adventure. It is well known to the Inquisition, and as such should be made known to the player-characters before the adventure begins. While faith in the Imperial Creed is widely regarded as strong on Malfi—particularly among the common masses of the hive workers who make up the bulk of the planet's population (but notably less so in other classes)—the Imperium's church is rightly perceived by many as divided and weak. Although Malfi holds no fewer than three Cardinal's seats in the Synod Calixis (a number exceeded only by Scintilla's five), no single churchman holds genuine sway over the Malfian clergy, and the Ministorum's clerics are heavily factionalised. Matters are worsened by the fact that the local Ecclesiarchy receives little support or backing from the Malfian nobility. A great many of them seek to circumvent its stranglehold by funding and maintaining their own House chaplains (often drawn from minor branches of their own bloodlines and illegitimate children), trained and ordained off-world, sometimes as far afield as Maccabeus Quintus or even the Scarus sector. These chaplainries serve the spiritual needs of the noble houses while chiefly remaining loyal to them before any other master save the Imperial Creed, not the local Ministorum.

The reasons for this schism between the noble houses that rule Malfi and Malfi's own duly composed Ministorum authorities dates back to the dark days of Malfi's 'Reign of Terror.' This began in 428.M41† with the ascendancy of House Koba to undisputed rule. During this period, the Malfian Ecclesiarchy succumbed to Koba's power, becoming little more than their puppet. Its clergy often became spies within the noble houses to which they were assigned, and the church turned a blind eye to the Koba's tyranny and bloodletting. This has never been forgiven or forgotten by the nobility, to this day. What little unity or moral authority the Malfian church retained was shattered during the nightmarish events of the infamous 'Bloody Solstice' in 499.M41† when the birth of the Pilgrims of Hayte cult tore Malfi apart. The high clergy's initial response to the spiralling crisis was scattered and erratic. Its upper echelons were thrown into panic by such a direct and terrifying assault on their lives. Others were destroyed from within by the cult's agents. Many prelates and abbots shut themselves away, even from each other, and attempted vainly to turn their temples into fortresses against the onslaught. They were publically powerless to stop the Pilgrims from going about their bloody work. These acts were seen, by both the nobility and the masses, as cowardice and betrayal.

In the many years since then, the Malfian Church and the sub-sector Ecclesiarchy have fought a slow uphill battle to regain its rightful place on Malfi. After many holy missions and the zeal of countless priests, it has largely succeeded with Malfi's people, but not those with who rule them. The Malfian church remains largely disunited, and an invisible barrier persists between it and Malfi's noble houses.

†See **Disciples of the Dark Gods** for more information on Malfi's Reign of Terror and the Pilgrims of Hayte.

THE TEMPLE ALEPH

The great temple complex where the adventure is set is the 'Aleph Ha-Harrum.' Its name in the old Malfian Tongue literally translates into Low Gothic as "The place of deliverance." It is known more formally as the 'High Altar of Emperor's Deliverance,' and most commonly simply as the Aleph. The temple complex was raised up to mark the sight where the old masters of Malfi formally seceded overlordship of their world to the Angevin Crusade during the founding of the Calixis sector. In the millennia since then, it has grown up to be one of the most famous and significant religious site in the Malfian sub-sector; a place of pilgrimage and a centre of the worship of the Imperial Creed in this part of the Calixis sector.

Traditionally separate from the intrigues and vicissitudes of Malfi's fractious politics (at least as much as such a place can be), the Aleph has long been a independent power of its own right within the Ecclesiarchy of Malfi, and the voice of its governor, the Archimandrite-Aleph, is heard and respected by the faithful across this world. Unfortunately, this independence proved costly during the dark days of House Koba's Reign of Terror, when a number of Archimandrites met untimely ends for refusing to submit, and many of the associated rights and estates the temple possessed where slowly stripped away. Conversely, because of this, the Aleph has been spared a great deal of the bad blood and poor reputation the Ministorum on Malfi gained during those times, although its is still a shadow of its former self. This fact is what has made the Temple Aleph a favoured site, and the election of a new Archimandrite after the last died of extreme old age is a prime opportunity for the efforts of the subsector church (in the person of the cardinal, the Venerable Cal) to attempt to build a growing power base on Malfi again.

The Physical Structure of the Temple Aleph

The temple complex is a vast, sprawling edifice that has grown to entirely enshroud the rocky plateau on which it was long ago founded. It is composed of tens of kilometres of passageways, templeum, chapels, pilgrim refectories, hospices and support facilities, many of which of which are now shut up, dusty, and out of use. Now a staff of nearly a thousand clergy and lay servants remain to tend to their services and look after a trickle of pilgrims in the hundreds, where once five times that number tended to the spiritual and corporeal needs of tens of thousands of holy seekers a day.

The portion of the Aleph in which Red Wake is set is the High Altar, the uppermost and grandest temple in the complex. Here, in the high days before the Terror, the great of Malfi would come on feast days to pray before gilded images of the God-Emperor. This cathedral of stone and stained glass, along with its attendant guest chambers and great halls, has been much restored of late in preparation for its new master. The Aleph itself has received fresh funding from the sub-sector church, and in the case of the Archimandrite to be, the backing of House Belasco as well. Bored deep into the rocky plateau beneath the High Altar are the Aleph's catacombs. Here, countless legends of dead clerics, great and small, are interred. Additionally, the Generatora and automated control systems for the complex are securely housed there.

The Investiture of a New Archimandrite

The affair of the investiture has several distinct components lasting a considerable amount of time and is governed largely by Malfian ecumenical tradition.

The first (of which the various external attendees, including the Throne Agents, have not been a part), is a period of intensive fasting, religious observations and symbolic cleansing by the clergy of the Aleph, done in order to pave the way for the new Archimandrite. This period, covering a little more than a Malfian lunar month, has taken place prior to the events described here.

The second is a grand ceremonial reception for those guests, both of the clergy and the laity, who have been invited to attend the investiture, called the Feast of Welcome. Subject to Malfian tradition, this event takes the form of a promenade court where the guests are each presented formally to the future archimandrite. This leads into a banquet of celebration whose courses are interspersed with choral song, blessings and silent Mummer's play-scenes of religious and historical significance. In theory, the guest list of this ceremonial reception is limited to those nobles and priests with some direct connection either the Aleph or the Archimandrite to be. In practice however, and this time is no exception, the guest list tends to be contrived more of those seeking to curry favour, those to whom the Archimandrite is politically indebted, and those, friend or foe, who are simply too important to risk insulting by not inviting them. The Holy Ordos of the Inquisition falls into this last category, hence the Throne Agents' involvement.

The third part is a High Mass of Ordination, the formal church ceremony at which the Archimandrite is duly installed before the glory of the God-Emperor of mankind with all due grandeur and worship. This takes place at the High Altar of the Aleph, for the assembled dignitaries to bear witness and the whole clergy of the Aleph and do homage to their new master.

The investiture itself over, the dignitaries remain for a second feast of thanksgiving while the new Archimandrite's image is presented, and his sermon recounted, in public masses of rejoicing held in templum great and small across Malfi.

Dramatis Personae

"The foolish believe their friends, while the wise pay heed to their enemies."

–Malfian Proverb

The following section details the most important individuals at the investiture of the Archimandrite. In addition, each has their own followers, attendants, underlings, and in some cases servitors and bodyguards who are not detailed here. These entries are very detailed, as this is a situation with complex social dynamics, rivalries, alliances and outright hatreds between parties. Each entry is listed with a description of the individual, and sub-headings for each wider faction they belong to, their motivations and desires specifically as regards to the investiture, and what allies and enemies they have present.

The level of detail given to these NPCs and the factions to which they belong is also designed to enable them to be used again in later adventures by the GM. In addition, if the GM feels there are just too many NPCs involved, he can choose to have several 'take a back seat' or be removed altogether if he wishes. However, cutting down the list of NPCs also cuts down the list of suspects available to the players when events at the investiture take a sinister turn.

Prelate Llorens Zan

Zan is the Archimandrite in waiting whose investiture the player-characters have been invited to. He is a middle-aged, well proportioned man of aristocratic bearing and easy charm, whose native intelligence and force of personality has seen him rapidly ascend the ranks of the Ministorum. Zan is an up-and-coming Imperial cleric with distant blood ties to the House of Belasco, and this infamous house's political clout and resources have had more than a little to do with his appointment as Archimandrite over his rivals. Zan's faith in the Imperial Creed is real; in this sense he is not a false priest. However, he also believes firmly that the Ministorum should have greater power over the Imperium's daily life, commerce and politics, and that its high priests should be lauded and ennobled as just rewards for their service and leadership. Zan's hopes for his career as Archimandrite are to see a dawning renaissance of power and influence for the Malfian church, with him at its head and a cardinal's rank before long.

Faction (Malfian Church): Zan represents the Malfian Ministorum establishment outside of the private chaplains of the nobility. He has a considerable number of under-priests, legates and junior clerics in his service, and carries the majority of the Aleph's clergy and lay-servants with him. Zan's church is a worldly one, hungry for temporal power as well as spiritual dominance, and the aggrandisement of its clergy.

Motivation: Zan sees the investiture as his moment of triumph, and he intends to be magnanimous in victory to those that have supported him, and politely gloat over those he has defeated. He is not one to rest on his laurels, however, and seeks to strengthen his relationship to House Belasco and the Venerable Cal. If presented with agents of the Holy Ordos, he is gracious but strong, fully aware of the extent of his own power.

(Special) Fate: Zan is fated never to attain the high rank he has sought so long after, and is assassinated in the adventure's second part.

Allies: Zan is the leader of a sizable body of the Malfian Ministorum. His principle ally outside the church is the powerful House Belasco, who have backed his bid to become the Archimandrite with both coin and the use of their widespread intelligence-gathering network. Nominally at least, the wider sector-establishment clergy are on his side as well, as he and the clergy that follow him represent the doctrinal status quo of the Ministorum and favour the expansion of the church's influence on Malfi. This being said, the Venerable Cal has nothing but distaste for him as an individual, thinking him too worldly by half, but a necessary evil for the Malfian church.

Enemies: Both Husk's puritans and Eutalus's Tarsites regard Zan and his faction as rivals for dominance of the Malfian clergy, with Husk personally viewing Zan as a dangerous idolater and heretic. Little does Zan know, that far removed from the intrigues of the church, he has been targeted for death by a dark conspiracy that will take his life.

Deacon Ensor

Ensor is an elderly and dusty cleric who has served several masters as deacon of the Aleph. This role has him overseeing the day-to-day management of the temple complex, but allows him no power whatsoever beyond its walls, and little respect from those clergymen not directly under his authority. His manner is cold and formal, and in appearance there's something of the old vulture in Ensor; his face is narrow and pale and his small and deep-set eyes miss little. Ensor's heavy gilded staff of office is rarely out of his hand, and the rapping sound as it hits the flagstones and signals Ensor's approach is the terror of his underlings. He has a reputation as a grim, humourless taskmaster with no interest or thought beyond his duty.

However, Ensor has another, hidden nature: bitter at his lot, vindictive and vengeful. An outside agency, in the form of the Menagerie cult, has fanned the flames of Ensor's grievance and turned him into an ally in the murderous plot which is now about to hatch. Ensor himself, however, believes that he is serving a private vendetta to get rid of a man he himself despises for an unknown political enemy of Zan's.

Faction (Malfian Church): Ensor's reputation is that he serves the Aleph first and foremost and the Ministorum second. Outwardly he is loyal to the Malfian church faction now in control of the temple complex and its domains. His true allegiance, however, is to his own bitter heart.

Motivation: Ensor is entirely complicit in the assassination of Zan, and arranged for it to happen, a fact he does his best to conceal at all costs. Once directly threatened, he does not hesitate to act with extreme prejudice to defend his secrets, and if exposed dies on the pyre. He is, however, no fighter himself, and seeks to act through intermediaries and agents if at all possible.

Allies: Ensor is part of the conspiracy to assassinate Zan, although to call Sydom an ally is overstating the case, as Sydom sees Ensor as nothing more than a sacrificial pawn. Ensor does, however, have several utterly loyal underlings and is in possession of the master-control cantus for the Aleph's servitor systems and machine-spirit controlled defences.

Enemies: Ensor has no overt personal enemies at the gathering. Husk's party mistrusts him as part of Zan's faction and Eutalus's faction considers him an empty vessel operated by Zan almost by remote control. The other factions and power groups present consider him no more than part of the fixtures and fittings of the place. Should his role in the conspiracy come to light, all turn their hands against him.

Legatine-Sister Vespaisia

Vespaisia is a senior Sister of Battle who has been assigned as the commander of an honour guard detachment of ten battle sisters from the Order of the Bloody Rose on the nearby world of Gallowglass. Her task is both to represent her perceptory at the ceremony and to protect the life of the Venerable Cal during his sojourn on Malfi; a task that she or any of her sisterhood would gladly die to perform. She is a tough, no-nonsense woman who has fought far afield in the service of her order. She served on the frontlines of the Margin Crusade to the dim galactic North of the Calixis sector before taking up her position a little more than a year ago on Gallowglass.

She is brisk and formal in manner, has little time for political niceties or the manoeuvrings of courtly or church politics, and reveres Cal almost as a living saint.

Faction (Periphery Church): Vespaisia has great respect for the Holy Ordos, but at all times defers to her personal faith and Cal's word as her highest authority. She sees the other churchman present as her natural allies and will readily fight to defend them. However, if any are proved false or heretical in her eyes, she will not hesitate to destroy them, regardless of any political or personal consequences.

The squad of battle sisters present in the Aleph obey Vespaisia without question.

Motivation: Vespaisia holds herself aloof from the early intrigues at the investiture, and then serves to enact her duty and protects Cal at all costs.

Allies: Vespaisia is firmly allied to Cal's party, and is by nature well inclined to the player-characters as representatives of the Holy Ordos.

Enemies: Vespaisia has no outright enemies at the start of the adventure's events, but turns mercilessly on anyone that displays overt heresy or threat. She is, however, coldly polite to the members of the nobility and Commercia present as she has an inherent distrust of their motives.

The Venerable Cal

The Cardinal Cal Sutai Arran, known for some decades now as the Venerable Cal, is one of the most influential members of the Ecclesiarchy in the Malfian Sub-sector. Quite aside from his high clerical rank, Cal is a profoundly respected spiritual leader, moral authority and stalwart defender of the faith. His three-century vocation in the Ministorum has seen him fight in the front lines of Imperial Crusade, instigate and lead a purge of the church's ranks that saw a thousand pyres lit on Sepheris Secundus, and become one of the undisputed leaders of the Ecclesiarchy faction known informally as the 'Periphery Church.'

An immensely old and withered man, Cal is kept alive by a combination of arcane technology, indomitable spirit and as he says, "because the God-Emperor has work for me yet." Although crippled in body, his fierce intellect and zeal remains, and he commands the fanatical loyalty of millions of the faithful.

Faction (Periphery Church): Although the Imperial Ecclesiarchy is, at least in theory, a single organisation operating under layers of unifying tradition and faith and following clearly defined lines authority, it is no less subject to divisions of doctrine, politics and power-mongering than any other of the Imperium's edifices of state and civilisation. The Ministorum of the Malfian sub-sector has long been dominated by a faction known as the Periphery Church, a loose alliance of minor synods and orders set up in part to maintain their independence, within the bounds of Ministorum law, from the influence of the doctrinally divergent 'Drusians' of Maccabeus Quintus, and the brutally wielded political power of the church on Tarsus at the sector's capital.

Motivation: Cal sees the investiture of the new Archimandrite of the Aleph both of spiritual importance to the Imperial faith, and as a political opportunity to increase the strength and power of the church on Malfi; something he sees as his divinely ordained duty to bring about and a long standing failing in the God-Emperor's eyes. As such, he has taken the unusual step of a pilgrimage from his own basilica on Alactra to Malfi for the ceremony in order to bring the weight of his presence to the proceedings.

In order to achieve these goals, he sees any tool as worthy of use, save any tainted by heresy or the unclean. As such, Cal has supported Zan's appointment, although he has no regard for the man personally, as he sees him as a strong leader when strength is needed. He is even willing to countenance bringing the Emperor's forgiveness to the House of Belasco for their past misdeeds and affiliations, so long as they acknowledge the Ministorum's primacy and rights on Malfi—something no other noble houses have done. One wild card element Cal has brought into play is the puritan firebrand Azed Husk. The puritan and his growing following has come to Cal's attention from afar. The venerable cleric wants to gauge Husk for himself to see if he and his followers could prove useful to the church, where force may be needed to defend the Ministorum's position on Malfi in days to come.

Allies: Cal commands the unquestioning allegiance and instant obedience of much of the Malfian clergy and millions of the faithful on Malfi and beyond.

Enemies: The only true enemy Cal has at the proceedings is the one he is unaware of: Rothber Sydom. Although Cal is not Sydom's true target, if the Rogue Psyker and cultist sees the opportunity to harm or kill so venerated a servant of the hated Emperor, he takes it. Eutalus, as the cat's-paw of the Tarsine church is also against Cal politically, but Eutalus's stark terror of Cal is sufficient to prevent the mere thought of acting against him from crossing the cleric's mind.

Master Rothber Sydom

A living poison within the gathering, a monster hiding in plain sight, Rothber Sydom is a nightmarishly powerful Rogue Psyker and servant of the twisted and feared Chaos cult known as the Menagerie. Creatures of lies and guises, the Menagerie's corrupt servants are deeply imbedded on Malfi, and the cult's baleful influence is steadily growing. Masquerading as a merchant's factor of the Skaelen-Har Hegemony (see page 214 of **Dark Heresy** for more information on this group) come to make due reverence to the new Archimandrite, Sydom is here to shepherd the execution of his cult's plan to ensure the new Archimandrite dies before he can take up office. This act is designed to further weaken the Malfian church, sow distrust and discord among the nobility, and lead to quite delightfully damaging threads pulled in fate's weave.

Sydom's lies are faultless, and his persona as a slightly overwhelmed, utterly earnest, and somewhat dull merchant is entirely convincing. Beneath this, ravening madness crawls. Most dangerous of all, Sydom is subtle and only reveals his true nature when he holds the advantage or if cornered.

Faction (Skaelen-Har Hegemony/The Menagerie Cult): Sydom and those servants with him are members of the sector-wide Commercia agency, the Skaelen-Har Hegemony. Despite Sydom's declarations, they make little attempt to open negotiations with anyone and largely keep themselves to themselves. Just how an 'unknown' like Sydom has gained a place at the investiture is not a matter that holds up to much scrutiny. Rather, it just seems to have 'happened.' Sydom's true allegiance lies with the baleful Warp-cult known as the Menagerie, devoted to Chaos as mutator of flesh and soul. More information on the menagerie cult can be found on page 152 of **Disciples of the Dark Gods**.

Motivation: Sydom is here to ensure his pawn, the fallen priest Deacon Ensor, kills the Archimandrite, and if discovered, some other juicy target is blamed for the deed—the better to spread discord and damage. Beyond this, Sydom is one of the Menagerie first and foremost; a being of tangled lies, false shapes and shifting horror, a twisted sculptor of flesh and mind, devoted to the screaming dissolution of humanity into the seething embrace of Chaos.

Allies: None, although Ensor is his puppet in the murder conspiracy. Given his powers, he can consume and twist others to his will.

Enemies: If discovered, all present are Sydom's implacable enemies. Even his pawn Ensor would rather kill himself that knowingly serve Chaos. Unfortunately his master's true allegiance remains unknown to him.

Preacher Azed Husk

The proverbial 'odd man out' at this gathering, Husk is the charismatic, and some would say unhinged, leader of a rising puritanical faction based in the lower echelons of the Ministorum on Malfi. Captured and enslaved as a child by outlaw arteria road-gangs, Husk's path to the God-Emperor has been a hard one to say the least. He proudly carries the scars of his youth and early adulthood to the troops in the frontlines of the Tranch War as a volunteer preacher. Husk fears nothing and cares little for the power of the Ministorum authorities or the viperous intrigues of the nobility, and even less for the avarice of the Commercia. Instead he serves a higher calling to his god before all other concerns.

Husk's presence at the investiture is as much a surprise to him as it might be to others, attending by personal invitation of the Venerable Cal—for whom Husk has the deepest respect.

Faction (Malfian Puritans): In the last decade, Husk has risen rapidly as the head of a growing popular faction with the lower ranks of the Malfian Ministorum. To be more precise, those clergy on Malfi without any ties to either the great temples or the patronage of the nobility left to tend to the spiritual wellbeing of the Malfian Hives' downtrodden and powerless masses. Husk's puritans, although by no means as wild or destructive as the Red Redemption, are nevertheless unforgiving hardliners, dedicated aesthetes, and merciless when confronted with heresy and abomination. Their talk of the redistribution of wealth among the faithful from the faithless and the casting down of the sinful from on high has made them many enemies, and Husk has already survived several assassination attempts.

Motivation: Husk is here at the behest of Cal, at what he believes is a nest of faithless idolaters, false priests, and heretics in the raiment of supposedly noble men. His fervour and faith do not blind him to the political realties of the situation he and his few attendants find themselves in, and his actions at the investiture are tempered by cold determination and iron will. If confronted by weakness and vacillation in the face of danger or panic he steps to the fore and seeks to take charge, to punish the heretic and purge the unclean.

Allies: Husk has no true allies at the gathering, save for a few scattered priests and functionaries of the Aleph who hold him in secret awe and would rally to him with zeal if called to his banner. However, thanks to Cal's authority and intervention, Husk is accorded the respect due to any senior clergymen, although he possesses no formal rank to this effect.

Enemies: Those senior clerics of the Malfian clergy, and the nobles present at the investiture who know who Husk is and what he represents, view him something like a rapid dog better put down than allowed to live. He is certainly not fit to be present at this event as a guest, although none can naysay Cal in the matter.

Lord-Regent Fafnir Belasco

Fafnir Belasco is regarded, and not without cause, as one of the most dangerous men in the Calixis sector. As one of the three Lords Regent that control the infamous Belasco noble house, he has the wealth, contacts, weapons and will to reach out and destroy just about any single individual in the sector, from a lord governor to the lowliest pilgrim, should he be willing to expend the effort and bear the consequences of discovery.

In appearance, Fafnir Belasco is an imposing man of indeterminate age, with a strong aquiline profile and hawkish amber eyes. Frighteningly cunning and utterly ruthless by nature, he can be charming when he wishes and respects intelligence in others and little else. He favours severely cut but immaculately made clothing in deep reds and blacks, and proudly carries the serpent emblem of his house on his signet ring and walking cane.

Fafnir's personal presence here is at the behest of the Venerable Cal, much to the Belasco's surprise. The powerful cleric is seeking a thaw in relations with the infamous house

to the benefit of the church's standing on Malfi. Instead of blocking the noble house's hand in the choice of the new Archimandrite of the Aleph, Cal has tacitly approved it by extending a personal invitation to the investiture to meet with him. This is a political development that the Belasco have taken very seriously by sending such a senior member of the bloodline as Fafnir.

Faction (House Belasco): The house of Belasco is an ancient, powerful and thoroughly vicious noble house, with a reputation for bloody intrigues, betrayals and infamy that have made them a byword on Malfi and far beyond. Thanks to the current state of play in Malfian politics, their hand in the direct rulership of the Malfi itself is at something of a low, with an alliance of rival houses, lead by the Maken, conspiring to keep them from the reins of government. The Belasco's vast wealth, off-world influence and extensive spy and assassination networks still make them a force to be feared.

Motivation: Fafnir Belasco's motivations for being here in person are twofold. The first is to see a machination of his come to fruition, namely the investiture of an ally of his as Archimandrite. The second is the unexpected chance to privately meet with the Venerable Cal, and sound out the old cleric's wishes to the potential benefit of his house. Also, a little gloating over the House of Maken is a pleasure thrown in for good measure. When Zan is murdered he takes this extremely poorly, viewing it as both a personal attack and a break with the accepted Malfian practices of vendetta (see page 217), and stops at nothing to see those involved pay.

Allies: The House of Belasco has a strong stake in the investiture ceremony as one of the principle backers (outside

the church) of Zan in his successful bid to acquire the role of Archimandrite. Zan and those around him are duly grateful for the service (and can readily guess at the price of remembering their debt). He has few other allies present, but a strong contingent of bodyguards as well as covert agents and spies in many camps.

Enemies: The House of Belasco is roundly despised by numerous attending parties, and at best distrusted by the rest. Of those attendees the greatest hatred for the Belasco is held by the House of Maken, the House of Novantu and the preacher Azed Husk's puritans.

The Honourable Hector Maken

Hector Maken is a foppish, foolish, elderly man, bedecked in jewellery and ostentatiously overdressed, even for a Malfian nobleman. His thin, almost wasted frame is concealed under layers of samite, lace and exotic xenos-skins, while gilded cherubim gather the train of his three metre long cloak as he walks. Maken is a bleary-eyed, bored gossip with a penchant for taking pinches of Night Dust snuff from a tiny wraithbone box at odd moments.

The House of Maken has been blindsided and outmanoeuvred here, with the new Archimandrite chosen in part by the will of their great rivals, the House of Belasco. As a result, Hector Maken's presence at the investiture is a calculated insult on behalf on his house. Because he is a man of almost no importance to the Maken blood, this scorns the importance of the investiture and those in attendance; a fact that he doesn't particularly care one way or the other about.

Faction (House Maken): House Maken is currently one of the most powerful noble houses on Malfi. It maintains a stranglehold on considerable areas of the world's hive-complexes and industries, as well as ties by blood and marriage to the house of the Matriarch, who is Malfi's current planetary governor, and a number of other influential groups.

Motivation: Hector Maken's only personal goal at the investiture is to get through what he sees as the whole tedious business with the minimum of fuss and effort on his part, although he follows such decorum because to behave otherwise would be beneath his station. He cares nothing for the political dimensions of what's going on at the investiture, has no position on the Ecclesiarchy other than finding them a tiresome bore, and while he gives lip service to his House's enmity for the Belasco, he bears no personal hatred for them; it's simply too much effort.

Allies: House Maken has no firm allies at the investiture, with Hector relying instead on his house's power and prestige, as well as the formalities to be observed, to keep him safe. There are those present who would very much like to ally themselves to house Maken, particularly the agents of the Martaxus Combine and, on the surface at least, Sydom. Fortunately for his safety, Maken is attended by numerous servants, factors, and bodyguards, including two Whiteclaws, the bejewelled cyber-felids for which his house is infamous.

Enemies: The Maken party have considerable political enemies present, and their invitation to the investiture has been a matter of due respect and form, rather than desire to honour them. None of the church factions have any love for them, blaming them in part for the ongoing schism between the Malfian nobility and the church authorities. The house of Belasco has long held a series of blood feuds and vendettas against them.

Siridar-Baroness Carmilla Noventu

Carmilla Noventu is a shrill, strident woman, long past her prime; a mistress of a fading Malfian noble house with delusions of grandeur and the personal viciousness of a rabid sabre-wolf. The estates and contracts that the Noventu still have to generate their wealth and maintain their position are tied inextricably to the Malfian clergy. Carmilla has come to the investiture to show due deference to the new Archimandrite on whose good favour she and her house now depend.

Faction (House Noventu): The Noventu are a relatively minor Malfian noble house, but an old one whose name still carries some respect with the aristocracy, if little real power. Formerly a major player in the planet's politics, they were all but crushed during Malfi's Reign of Terror, and have never recovered anything but a dim shadow of their former influence and authority.

Motivation: Carmilla Noventu's prime motivation is the prosperity and survival of her house, and she is nothing but flattering and obsequious with any senior member of the Malfian clergy she encounters. She views the presence of Fafnir Belasco at the investiture with horror, and sadly has completely failed to realise what it portends.

Allies: The Noventu have no true allies in the gathering, but are held in good regard by the Malfian church, thanks to mutually beneficial and long standing dealings between them.

Enemies: Carmilla Noventu is scornful of the Commercia, having a noble's distain for anyone beneath her station, particularly "jumped-up peddlers." Her real enmity however is reserved for House Belasco, with whom her house has a long and bitter history. She commonly refers to them as "The Child Killers," thanks to an ancient and long-nursed familial grudge. Although the Belasco are far too strong for her house to directly contest or even risk overt and public insult to, as soon as anything should go array at the investiture (which of course it does), she attempts to point the finger of blame at "that butcher house." She does this by spreading rumour, and by any other means she can think of, regardless of the truth or any evidence to the contrary.

Arch-Confessor Eutalus

Eutalus is an urbane, scholarly looking man of middle years who carries his authority easily and speaks in the sonorous and measured tones of a skilled and practiced orator. Despite the underlying hostility of the other Ministorum clergy present at the investiture towards him—a hostility hidden behind layers of formal manners and respectfulness—the arch-confessor's smile and indulgent, fatherly manner never falter. Behind his eyes, however, his ruthless mind is continuously plotting his advancement and marking each insult for later vengeance. Eutalus was the candidate put up by the Tarsine Synod for the position of Archimandrite, but as a native born Scintillan he had no chance of victory in the Malfian Ecumenical Synod that awarded the position to Zan. Now, much to his secret anger, he must play the part of the supplicant at the investiture.

Faction (Tarsine Church): Eutalus is a representative of the Tarsine Synod, the most powerful Ecclesiarchical authority within the Calixis sector. While it notionally has overriding authority on all members of the Ministorum in the sector, it does not hold much sway, either spiritually or in terms of direct authority, within the Malfian-sub for historical reasons.

Motivation: It is the desire of the Tarsine Synod to extend their control over the Malfian church, a game it has been playing with varied degrees of success for centuries. At this moment, that control is at a low ebb, and Eutalus has been tasked with changing this fact. His personal greed and ambition lead him to do this by any means necessary. Eutalus has a psychopathic personality, albeit a very self-disciplined one, and secretly views anyone he cannot directly control as either an obstacle to be overcome and dominated, or an object of fear to be avoided.

Allies: While treated with polite deference and formal respect by the Malfian clergy, who should be his natural allies, there is neither warmth nor genuine friendship between them. The various nobles and Commercia interests treat him with as much respect as he is due by his church rank, but no more. All Eutalus can rely on are his own coterie of underclergy and a few personal bodyguards.

Enemies: Other than the sub-surface enmity that the Malfian clergy have for him, Eutalus has no enemies in the gathering, save the ones his personal flaws may create. His position at the gathering makes him a perfect scapegoat for the conspiracy once the hunt for the murderer begins (see part III).

Lady Cheska Duquesne (Inquisitor Heleyna Nephren)

Openly, the Lady Cheska Duquesne is a flighty, gorgeous, sumptuously attired and somewhat indolent scion of one of the controlling families of the Martaxus Combine, one of the Commercia trading companies. The Combine is a notable transhipping and trade outfit, based out of Vaxanide, that has scattered holdings throughout the Mafian-sub and a considerable mercantile fleet. Lady Cheska is here as something of a pretty figurehead; a minor noblewoman to act as a public face for a less well-bred Combine delegation here to do business in the shadow of the investiture. The Combine is hoping to curry favour with House Belasco and the newly appointed Archimandrite, particularly in the matter of lucrative pilgrimage contracts that bring the faithful to bask in the reverent glory of the newly restored and ascendant Temple Aleph.

However, Lady Cheska is not what she seems. While the Martaxus Combine is very real, as are the motives of its agents as represented above, the real Cheska was secretly liquidated several years ago for her involvement in an Erisine pleasure cult on Kalf. The woman now masquerading as Cheska is Inquisitor Helena Nephren of the Ordo Hereticus. Nephren is operating incognito, and several of her foppish hangers on are actually her trusted Acolytes. Only the higher echelons of the Combine know who Nephren really is, their compliance assured by threat and blackmail.

When Nephren snaps out of her persona as the irreverent Cheska, the difference in her manner is startling. She becomes iron straight, extremely still and measured in manner, while her eyes burn with an almost feverish intensity. Nephren is here on her own business under her own authority. While in private, she happily admits who she is to others of the Holy Ordos if challenged, though she will not do so publicly. Nephren has come to the investiture simply to observe the others present and establish her false persona for later use. She is an avowed Istvaanian in outlook and is devoted to strengthening the Imperium through promoting strife and conflict so that only the strong remain. (See page 78 of The Radical's Handbook for more detailed description of this radical philosophy.)

Faction (Martaxus Combine/Holy Ordos): The Martaxus Combine is at the investiture to pay their respect to the Malfian church and thereby gain their favour in future dealings. Nephren, on the other hand, charts her own course.

Motivation: While Nephren is not the author of the initial murder plot to kill Zan, she sees it as an opportunity to take direct action to further her personal agenda to ensure that the 'strongest' candidate to replace Zan comes to the fore. As matters unfold at the Aleph, she observes the 'players on the stage' rather than intervening to solve matters, and may choose to add fuel to the fire (See part II).

Allies: The Martaxus have no firm allies present, although they are hoping to forge relationships with Zan and several of the minor players present to their future advantage. Nephren has no allies other than (at least theoretically) the player-characters as members of the Holy Ordos.

Enemies: Much as the Martaxus have no firm friends at the investiture, they have no sworn enemies either. Husk's party is instinctively ill-disposed towards them, as they are part of the Commercia in general. If Nephren's true identity becomes known, the murder conspiracy might see her as an overt threat to be destroyed as quickly as possible. Other factions, though grieved by her deceit, take no action against her, unless directly threatened, due to her inquisitorial rank.

Faces in the Crowd

Although the Dramatis Personae contains the major NPCs present at the investiture, the guest list is somewhat wider than that, both in terms of attendees and their hangers on. If the GM wishes, he can add in numerous additional 'named' NPCs to the mix as events warrant, either in response to the player-character's actions, to use as ciphers for particular clues and information or simply because he wants a few more bodies hitting the floor for added drama and tension.

Here is a selection of extra names and roles you may wish to flesh out:

Abbot Weil: An elderly cleric from a failing and bankrupt mission in the sinks of the nearby scav wastes. World-weary and desperate to please, he has come in the hopes of gaining alms and support from the Aleph so his order might survive. The presence of Azed Husk here fills him with dread as he has heard stories of the merciless killings Husk's followers have carried out against those they brand 'sinners.'

Sister Celesta Karris: A sister of the Diaologus based in the League Dominion, she has come on behalf of the Order of the Quill to record the proceedings. She knows a great deal of the genealogy of the Malfian nobility, their feuds, and the factions of the church present.

Prior Addermar: Another failed candidate for the Archimandrite's position, Addermar is a good-natured glutton from a senior local priory with no head for power politics and

a secret joy that he didn't succeed in the race. He knows much of the goings on behind the scenes of the Synod and is too loose tongued when he's been drinking.

Sira Rabbas Jenet: A disowned scion of a minor house, Jenet is little more than an overdressed young thug with a pox-marked face and penchant for sadism and excess. Kept on Hector Maken's leash because Hector finds his ugliness amusing, only Maken's shadow has kept Jenet from meeting a justly deserved bloody end, so far at least. The investiture, however, is filled with people who won't care who his friends are, a fact that does not filter through to his obscura-addled brain until too late.

Lord Jaspar Craythorne: An elderly hidebound and formal Noble from a middling Malfian House, his people have distant blood ties to the Belasco and their holdings are local to the Aleph. He makes a far easier target than Fafnir for anyone wanting to make a bloody point to the Belasco.

Countess Lillith Rev: The young, beautiful and savagely ambitious head of a newly ennobled minor Malfian house lacking great alliances. She has managed an invite to the investiture through intrigues of her own and happily contemplates anything in return for a firm alliance with a powerful faction—be they church, noble, or even a member of the Holy Ordos.

Master Hull Morac: A Pardonner (a seller of religious relics, blessings and indulgencies) from a local trade combine that scratches out its living dependent on the good will of the Aleph and the local nobility. Out of his league and depth amid the investiture, and with a mortal fear of Chernium, he has had the misfortune of seeing Deacon Ensor behaving strangely prior to the ceremony, and may die for his knowledge.

Vice Chancellor Jaqele Sleer: A representative of the powerful sector-wide mercantile organisation, the DeVayne Incorporation (see page 314 of **Dark Heresy**), Sleer is an attractive, shrewd, and imperious women and clearly an outsider by her austere dress. Personally more than a little aggrieved to be relegated to the status of 'the Commercia'—as all off-world nobility are on Malfi—she is bearing the insult with dignity for the most part. She has had extensive dealings with the Skaelen-Har in the past, and has many misgivings about Rothber Sydom and his party, who just don't 'seem right.'

Colonel Tokar Bale: A one-eyed, grizzled soldier, Bale is a former officer in the Imperial Guard (17th Tranch Volunteers) and now the mercenary commander of his own private army, Bale's Free Company. An honourable and pious man, despite being a professional killer of repute, Bale has come to the investiture for the benefit of the redemption of his scarred soul. However, he is not averse to taking work on the side while he's here. Bale's small group of equerries and attendants are all combat veterans.

Daynath: An attractive showgirl and skilled dancer, part of a travelling troupe engaged to entertain the guests at the Feast of Welcome with a look in her eyes far older than her years. Daynath is quick-witted, intelligent, and sensibly frightened of her surroundings and those that inhabit them.

Part I: A Feast Among Vipers

"A blade in the back is a wiser investment than a coin in a man's hand."

–Malfian Proverb

The adventure opens with the Cadre delegated to attend the impending investiture of Llorens Zan as the new Archimandrite of the Temple Aleph by the Conclave Office of the inquisition on Malfi. This section of the adventure is largely focused around setting the scene and social interaction with the NPCs at the Aleph. The GM should take care to familiarise himself thoroughly with the Dramatis Personae section and the information resources from the adventure's introduction as this part of the adventure leans heavily on them.

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED….

As matters begin, the Cadre find themselves housed at the Conclave Calixis office on Malfi, an austere granite spike, known as the Watching Spire, thrusting up high into the sky above the habitation ledges of Malfi's administrative centre, the League Domain.

How their presence here is integrated into an ongoing campaign is left up to the GM's judgement, but it is recommended that they still be new to their independence as operators. Perhaps the inquisitor has been completing his accession in the Malfian archive, confirming his access codes and setting up a set of personal chambers to use as a base of operations. (Much of the Watching Spire is made up by such chambers, inactive and secure while their many masters are not present).

During their stay, the Cadre is approached by Malfi's Inquisitor-Castellan; a dark-robed, spry old woman known as Matron Thoth (more properly Inquisitor Elia Thoth), to deal with a political matter that has come up that demands the presence of one with inquisitorial rank openly and in person. The matter is the diplomatic requirement for the formal attendance of a rosette-bearer of the Holy Ordos at the ceremonies of the ordination of the new Archimandrite-Aleph. The ordination in question is to take place at the temple complex of the High Altar of the Emperor's Deliverance elsewhere on Malfi in three day's time. As Inquisitor-Castellan of the Spire, the formal invitation was handed to Thoth's office, and it is for her to request their assistance.

Matters of Protocol

Attending as the appointed representatives of the Inquisition to what is, in essence, a courtly event imposes some restrictions on the Cadre in terms of how they behave and how they carry themselves, at least while civility is being maintained. The dictates of Holy Ordos tradition and Malfian etiquette together indicate the following:

While present at formal occasions any Inquisitor is expected to wear the icon of the Inquisition or a rosette prominently (those of noble houses, mercantile factions and even the church are doing likewise for their own party). Other Cadre members are not.

Sidearms and other single-handed personal weapons that are be kept in a holster or scabbard may be worn, but they should be symbolically tied with silken cord to prevent quick use. No heavier weapons should be carried and blood should not be shed on the sacred ground of the Aleph's chapels and templum. To do so would be a gross breach of etiquette, a sin in the eyes of the God-Emperor, and just cause for vendetta.

Duelling is permissible between those of equal or similar rank. Willingness to give satisfaction is shown by the open wearing of a weapon at the right hip, and heads of house by tradition may be served by a champion if they so wish. All fights are either to the death or to bloody submission, and those demonstrating cowardice during a duel are traditionally killed by their own seconds. In duelling, the agents of the inquisition are treated by the nobility as of their own rank, although other consequences may obviously apply after the outcome.

The correct mode of address for a Malfian noble of title is 'My Lord <name>' or 'My Lady <name>,' while important persons without title (including off-worlders with titles of their own that the Malfians don't recognise) are addressed as 'master' or 'mistress' by those wishing to do them honour. Members of the Clergy and Adeptus Terra are traditionally addressed by their organisational rank.

If queried about her authority in the matter, Thoth frostily points out that the few other Inquisitors she knows of on Malfi are all otherwise occupied with pressing business that cannot and should not be interrupted. It is well within her role to request the assistance of one newly raised to rank to aid her, and they might very well 'wish to demonstrate to the Holy Ordos that they are capable of performing such duties that are the burdens of that weighty rank.' Thoth herself has not left the spire in over fifty years, and has no intention of derelicting her duty by doing so now.

Should they accept this duty, the adventure can progress. Thoth informs them that transport, servants and suitable formal attire will be provided if needed. Additionally, a savant knowledgeable in matters of Malfian protocol is supplied if needed, as well as a basic tasked servitor drone from the Spire's store for each member of the Cadre to handle their baggage.

WHAT THE HOLY ORDOS KNOWS

If questioned directly, Matron Thoth reveals that the Inquisition's presence was likely requested to show due respect and deference but no more; to do otherwise would likely arouse suspicion in itself. Often such requests are ignored, but in this case the appointment of a new Archimandrite may indicate the beginning of a political resurgence by the Malfian Ministorum. The information the Inquisition has points to several important and rival factions being present on Malfi, and is worth observing for this if no other reason.

The Cadre has access to the Spire's unsealed archives should they wish to use them, and they may wish to further question Thoth as well. The GM should use the information provided in the introductory chapter and in particular The Investiture of a New Archimandrite on page 218 and The Position of the Ministorum on Malfi on page 217 to provide the Cadre with further basic information about the Aleph, the role of the Archimandrite and Malfi's vicious nobility and troubled history in general. The Holy Ordos, however, knows nothing of the soon-to-unfold conspiracy, and has no extensive details on those attending other than the high clergy involved, the unusual presence of an important off-world cardinal in attendance, and the fact that representatives of various houses of the high nobility and other noteworthy souls are also present.

If the Cadre wonders or questions this relative paucity of recent information, they may make inquires of their own, using any relevant investigation Skills. Ultimately, this reveals that over the last few years, diverse and unrelated matters on Malfi have steadily needed the Inquisition's direct attention in an increasing fashion. At the moment, somewhere between five and seven Inquisitors—in addition to the Spire's usual rotating assignment of four Inquisitors-Locum, their cadres and acolytes—all are actively involved in investigations or purgation pogroms on Malfi, and the Spire's human spy network and other assets are currently stretched thin. As a result the matter of the Aleph received a low priority.

WHAT THE HOLY ORDOS WANTS TO KNOW

The Cadre may have their own ideas about what they should be looking out for based on what they have learned, but through Thoth the following areas of interest can be related:

- The nature, leanings and political disposition of the new Archimandrite, Llorens Zan.
- The truth behind the presence of The Venerable Cal at the proceedings and his future intentions.
- The implications of the ordination for the Aleph and the Ministorum on Malfi,
- General intelligence that may be learned from the proceedings about the various nobles house present, their alliances, rivalries and plans.
- Whether any outside agency is exercising undue leverage or influence on the Ministorum or the appointment of the new archimandrite.

THE BURNING PARADE

On the day before the archimandrite's ordination, the guests officially gather at the Aleph. For the Cadre, this means a three hour guncutter journey from the Spire by sub-orbital arc approach, after which they spend a further half hour circling the Aleph's airspace under the watchful tracking guns of the complex's air defences as other craft stack and descend to be received. Attempting to jump this queue results in repeated hurried warnings from the complex, followed by lethal weapons fire; there are too many important people in attendance with deadly enemies for anything else to be the case. As it is, as Inquisitorial representatives the Cadre is accorded the highest status, and others have to wait for them in turn. During the wait, more profitable information can be gained from observing their fellow attendee's vessels circling with them. There are dozens of craft in evidence, ranging from ornate and stylised ornithopters that more resemble sculptural works of art than vehicles, to bulky re-entry scorched interface shuttles, to jaggedly-armed guncutters (not unlike their own), to darting, swept-winged atmospheric flyers built for murderous speed.

When the Cadre comes in to land, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

> *'The guncutter's ramp descends and you are greeted by a wall of scorching hot air, carrying with it the stench of ash and burning meat. Before you is spread a great promenade of white stone, flanked on either side by five-metre tall statues of saints and holy men easily recognisable from a thousand recited prayers of the Imperium's past. Before each statue, a figure naked but for a ragged shift, kneels; their faces covered by hoods of crimson cloth and their flesh tattooed with bloody scripture. In their hands, each holds aloft a great metal brazier filled with hot coals and burning parchment, the hot metal crisping and blistering the skin of their hands and arms. From between their ranks, a party of Ministorum clerics in robes of black and deep emerald appears, swinging thurafirs of smoking sickly incense and accompanied by winged Cherubim singing hymns to the God-Emperor from brazen mouth-grills. The lead priest calls you and bids you welcome saying: "Honoured servants of Him of Terra, swift hand of His judgment, watchers of the dark, measurers of sin, we bid you welcome and are most glad. Accompany us now within and do homage to the Golden Throne and His servant, the Archimandrite to be, on this most joyous of days!"*

The priests and cherubim fall in line around the Cadre and the lead priest does not speak again unless spoken to directly on the ten minute walk between row after row of slowly-scorching penitents. Some of them put down their burdens at the cleric's indication and fall shuffling and staggering into line behind them, some weeping with joy, others simply weeping.

Here and there on the journey, it can be seen that some have failed in their task and charred corpses dot the winding processional route to the High Altar. If these are pointed out, the clerics respond, "Happy are those who die for their repentance willingly, for they shall see the face of the Emperor in the hereafter." The penitents are all volunteers to endure corporal modification as part of this auspicious festival for the betterment of their souls, and the braziers contain written prayers as offerings.

The macabre and smoky journey terminates in a wide and ornate flight of marble stairs big enough for a regiment to walk down, leading to a massive Aquila-topped arched doorway big enough for a scout titan to walk through without stooping. The clerics direct them within, where they are expected, and return to escort another party to the ceremony.

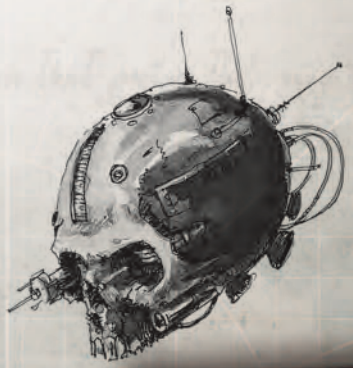
The High Lectern

Within the great archway, and in marked contrast to the austere and savage display of faith in the outer complex, everything within the entrance hall is a bustle of scurrying figures in a score of different uniforms and liveries, shouting words and noises. The hall is a space several hundred metres across and hung with votive banners from a ceiling so high its extremity is hidden in darkness. Shortly after they enter, a Cherubim with glittering glass-lens eyes drops down from the darkness above them and ushers them to a towering steel lectern at the centre of the hall. As they pass, the crowd of figures falls silent and parts, some slowly, others hurriedly seeking to conceal their faces as they do so. The audible whisper "Throne Agents!" passes through the crowd.

Seated high above them at the lectern, surrounded by flitting Cherubim and attended by scurrying cowled and sickly-looking underpriests, is Deacon Ensor (see Dramatis Personae, page 219), managing and approving the flow of attendees and their servants. The GM should play out the encounter with Ensor as much as they see fit, communicating his cold and dusty persona and authority at the Aleph. After establishing their credentials and numbers, Ensor outlines the proceedings of the Ordination. He issues each with a votive medal which contains a ward-accessor which allows them access to the right areas of the temple and their private chambers, before tasking one of the pale underpriests with guiding them there.

The Votive Medal

The votive medal, specially struck for the occasion, is a small golden disk depicting the image of one of the ancient sword-kings of Malfi kneeling and laying a gun on the ground before an Aquila haloed in the rays of a sun. The medal is backed by black and emerald coloured ribbons and very close inspection reveals a manufacturer's stamp of the House Belasco fabricators on the reverse.



The Guest Chambers

The Cadre has been assigned a suite of guest chambers in the labyrinthine maze of passageways and rooms within the upper temple complex. The rooms are far from palatial or luxurious but are extensive, featuring a dozen different chambers and living facilities accessed from a tiled central hall, fronted with a re-enforced steel door to which only they and the servants of the Aleph have access. As with much of the Aleph's architecture, the chambers are high-ceilinged and sheer walled, fashioned with dressed granite blocks. Their only decoration takes the form of gas-flame burning wall lamps and the odd faded triptych depicting the penalties of sin in lurid crimson or the Emperor's liberation of mankind in muted gold.

The Cadre is free to do what they want for the next several hours before the Feast of Welcome begins. This may include taking stock, setting up equipment, sweeping for surveillance devices (there are none), spying out some of the other suites of chambers nearby and on other levels (which are rapidly filling up with guests,) or exploring the massive complex of chapels, archives, cells and the like which make up the Aleph. The place is a bustle of activity between the continuous round of religious services and observances marking the occasion, catering to the new arrivals and preparing for the feast. The fruits and results of the Cadre's efforts in this period are left up to the GM.

Security in the Aleph

At some point during this adventure, members of the Cadre are going to want to sneak around places where they shouldn't be and poke around in the affairs of the other guests and the Aleph itself. The temple complex's security systems are largely passive, based on ward accessors to provide entry to different areas of the complex (the clergy themselves carry such signal devices imbedded in signet rings, the lay-servants and servitors on bracelets, with Ensor's being the master control). The temple's interior doors are steel, requiring considerable force to budge or break down, and the locks have base difficulty of **Difficult (–10)** to bypass, increasing in the most sensitive areas. The complex's few Security areas are watched by pairs of monotasked Combat Servitors (see page 338 of Dark Heresy) programmed to use lethal force on anyone trying to break their cordon. These combat servitors are controlled by orders from the Aleph's defensive tabernacle (see page 243) and can be only be overridden by the ward accessors of the Aleph's most senior clerics.

The Feast of Welcome

The Feast of Welcome is signalled by the tolling of a great bell which echoes throughout the High Altar complex, conveyed down airshafts and along corridors, mournfully ringing for a full quarter hour. The feast itself begins at dusk and takes place in a great domed hall, off which numerous side passages and small chambers radiate. The attendees are the great and the powerful and their immediate companions, as well as prominent visiting clerics—some two hundred or so guests in all. All of the characters listed in this adventure's Dramatis Personae on page 219 are present, and the Cadre has opportunity to meet and interact with them all to some degree, depending on events and how they handle matters. Also see The Investiture of a New Archimandrite on page 217 for more information on the ceremony and the feast's place in it.

The Festivities

The feast itself breaks down into several distinct stages as follows, although the timeline of the event itself is flexible. These are as follows:

The guests gather in the hall's outer receiving rooms and await the formal announcement to enter within.

A promenade is made into the great hall. Each party is formally greeted at the door by the soon-to-be Archimandrite **Llorens Zan**, attended by several clerics and **Deacon Ensor** who introduces each guest in turn. Zan greets each party with the ritual phrase, "I am but an unworthy servant." The promenade's order is; **The Venerable Cal**, then **Fafnir Belasco**, followed by other representatives of the high nobility, in whose number the Cadre is included, followed by the minor nobility, the clergy and finally the Commercia and others.

The individual guest parties are seated on couches around low tables (on Malfi formal dinners are taken reclining), circling the open space at the centre of the hall. At its head sits the vacant archimandrite's throne, either side of which austere stone bench-tables have been provided for the guest clergy to sit. The closer to the throne the guest party's table is, the higher their perceived status.

There is a brief service of prayer lead by The Venerable Cal thanking the God-Emperor for his benefice and protection and calling on him to watch over and judge all present.

The feast then begins. Short courses of food and wine are served continuously every twenty or so minutes for the next five hours, the clergy ritually abstaining for the most part. Once the feast in is full swing, a series of entertainments are laid on in the central area of the hall, beginning with an allegorical play depicting the moral lessons of the Angevin Crusade. The guests are not expected to sit still, but to mingle between tables making their introductions and to wander through the various side chambers as the mood takes them. The side chambers are taken up with a mixture of other activities; historical plays, religious choral song, ritualised armed combat, and silent prayer, as well as containing areas for private discourse and ablutions. For an outsider, this strange mix of opulent excess and austerity, informality and structure, sacred and profane, should be quite jarring, but it is simply how things are done on Malfi.

The great bell tolls again for Malfi's midnight hour some six hours after the festivities begin and the guests and attendees slowly filter out. The feast is over.

The Great Hall

The structure of the great hall itself is a smaller copy (although it still easily swallows the several hundred guests and servants present) of a similar hall in the great maze-like central palace of government. It is domed and circular, with a high row of wide windows around its circumference showing a vast panorama of the twilight hive city spreading out around the plateau on which the Aleph sits. On this occasion, a brooding and dark storm front dominates the skies to the south-west. The inner ceiling and surrounding walls are all richly adorned with gilt work and elaborate frescos, much of which has been recently restored. These scenes depict the wars and space battles of the Angevin Crusade. Depending on their previous adventures, the Throne Agents might spot a few images that provoke a disturbing memory or two, such as Saint Drusus casting down Tsyiak Crowfather on Iocanthos, and the golden spider of the Haarlock dynasty blazoned across subjugated worlds.

The hall is lit by dancing gas-flames projected from iron mantled lamp staves, and the air heavy with incense and perfumed smoke. Waxen-skinned Cherubim watch from high sconces and lamp rails. The seemingly unending courses are ferried in by a mixture of servitor drones and lay-servants of the temple in dark green livery, professionally blind, deaf and mute to anything but the task at hand. The services of the various entertainers (other than those with Ministorum connections) have been purchased with house Belasco coin from the surrounding hive domains. They are, for the most, part eager to please and on their very best behaviour. Under their veneer of glamour, they are quite terrified of the company they have found themselves performing for.

Events and Encounters at the Feast

This part of the adventure is intended to play out in a free-form manner, with the Cadre and its members interacting with the events and characters surrounding them in whatever manner, and to whatever depth, they desire. Do they keep to themselves and merely observe? Do they break up and mingle with the guests? Stay clear of the nobility and focus on the clergy? Play up their authority or have some of their part hide their allegiance, better to illicit some answers? Or do they even have some of their number slip away from the feast and conduct some breaking and entering? They have the floor, and as senior agents of the Inquisition, it's up to the Throne Agents to determine their goals and how to attain them.

In order to aid them in running this section, the GM can lean heavily on the information provided in the Dramatis Personae to provide action and secrets to uncover, but aside from the Cadre's formal introduction to Llorens Zan nothing is set in stone. Should the action begin to flag (its quite possible that presented with no clear direction, the Throne Agents might be at of a bit of a loss for what to do at first), the following outlines some encounter ideas for the Feast.

All NPCs named in the text in bold can be found in the Dramatis Personae section on page 219.

Rumours Abounding

Given the Maflians' innate culture of intrigue, scandal-mongering, deceit, and politicking, combined with the nature of the guests at the feast, there are a myriad of rumours flowing like the wine, and some even may hold a grain of truth. The GM is encouraged to add to and tailor such rumours to the listener, or to who is asked the questions. Here is a selection to get you started:

- "I hear the new Archimandrite's quite the politician. Had he been born further up his line he might have made something of their house. Still his family's loss is the Ecclesiarchy's gain, eh?"
- "I'd never thought to see Fafnir Belasco in the flesh, nor wanted to; they say he's had the eyes plucked from strangers he caught an ill look from. Keeps 'em in a jar in his study, 'tis true on my regent's life! It is by the serpent house's will this is all done, mark my words."
- "Hector Maken's a known wastrel and debauchee, the worst of his lot and nothing more to his family than a troublesome burden they have to keep cleaning up after, and they send him here? Such an insult, to the Aleph, Archimandrite, and the whole Ministorum to boot."
- "See those off-worlders and petty throne-grubbing traders? It's pathetic, begging and snuffling around like curs it the hopes that they'll be treated favourably when this place gets back in full operation again. Pilgrim transit contracts, votive artefacts, tithe exemptions, it's all just money to them, Emperor burn their souls."
- "The Tarsine church is not happy. Their candidate Eutalus was soundly defeated in the Synod in favour of Zan my preacher tells me. With old Cal bringing his weight behind matters, there's nothing the Scintillans can do that wouldn't cause a worse rift than there is now. No good can come of the sector Ministorum so divided I say. Still, Eutalus seems to be bearing his loss well enough doesn't he?"

Satisfaction Guaranteed

Not long after the feast gets into full swing, a darkly attired man of aristocratic bearing naming himself Sira Grey, approaches a combative-looking Cadre member (not the actual inquisitor though) and either seeks to claim satisfaction for some perceived insult, or indeed to provoke him into calling for a duel. This is done coldly and clinically as the man is a professional killer, a sometime Malfian Bloodsworn (see **The Inquisitor's Handbook** page 66) of sufficiently noble pedigree to make calling out others of such standing in a duel possible.

He has been engaged to fight one of the cadre members in a formal duel to the blood, submission, or death, either with pistols or in the true Malfian style with blades. If the cadre member is disinclined to fight, he needs not, but he is publicly shamed and scorned by the assembled attendees, his act of perceived cowardice remembered.

The duel, if agreed to, is a hastily arranged formal affair and judged as just another entertainment by the crowd. Carried out on one of the temple complex's roof terraces, it is frowned upon by the clerics but tolerated under protest (indeed it is not likely to be the only such duel this night, as duelling is to the Malfian nobility as natural an act as oppressing those beneath them.) A small crowd of interested parties gathers, and Fafnir Belasco, as most senior noble among them in peerage, is asked to oversee the duel and personally congratulates the victor.

Duellists use their own weapons. If pistols are chosen, non-autofire bullet or las weapons are allowed, nothing heavier. If blades are chosen, then a single-handed edged weapon of any type is permitted. No other weapons are allowed on the person of the fighters, no armour heavier than a body glove may be worn, nor are fields or Psyker tricks allowed. No one may aid either fighter by any means on pain of death.

The fight begins with the two fighters back to back with their weapons holstered. They then walk measured paces away from each other (five in the case of blades, twenty in the case of pistols), after which they turn and begin on a signal given by the master of ceremonies. Deviation from this procedure is death for the infractor. The fight continues until either one of the fighters is killed or incapacitated, or they offer loud submission of surrender, which may be done only after their blood has been shed by their opponent (this is called Blood Submission).

Sira Grey uses the Bounty Hunter profile on page 336 of the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook.

Investigation into Grey after the fight (any success of a **Challenging (+0) Skill Test** using any investigative, or interaction, or mastered skill) leads back to him having been seen in the company of Lady Cheska Duquesne, who is secretly a fellow inquisitor, Heleyna Nephren. If confronted, she reveals her true identity in private, and merely expresses her wish to test the Cadre and add to their mystique, "So these nasty little spiders will take you seriously." She points out that if she had wanted one of them killed, she would have sent one of her own agents rather than an indifferently skilled hireling. She then sounds out the Cadre's position here and seeks to give away as little as possible herself, although with a knowledge of the Ordos (any character succeeding at a Forbidden Lore (Ordos) or Forbidden Lore Mastery Test), they detect she espouses the Istvaanian philosophy, and can draw their own conclusions.

The Attention of the Cardinal

Either through seeking him out themselves, or by personal invitation carried by no less than a fully armoured Battle Sister, the Cadre comes to an audience with the Venerable Cal. After the feast is formally under way, Cal and his attendants withdraw to a nearby chapel to hold their own court to the spoken strains of readings from the Codex Imperialis and works of Imperial scripture.

Also present are Legatine-Sister Vespaisia on watch with her Battle Sisters. At various times throughout the evening, many other important NPCs arrive to pay their respects to Cal, most notably Azed Husk who, while on his best behaviour, is clearly far from comfortable at the feast. If challenged for his opinions by either Cal or the cadre, Husk denounces the whole proceedings as, "Wanton impiety, worthy of the worst debauches of the Reign of Terror." He concedes the need for it only to Cal's superior judgement under sufferance, and espouses his own puritanical interpretation of the Imperial Creed as Malfi's "way out of darkness and into the Emperor's light."

Cal wishes to speak to the Cadre's inquisitor directly (and anyone in the party who perks his interest) in order to sound out the Holy Ordos' views on the new Archimandrite, the Malfian church and other related matters. Cal is surprisingly sharp and direct and freely admits to having contrived much of what is now happening in order to rebuild the power of the Malfian church, a project which he sees as his sacred duty. He has little personal love for many of those present, but sees this as a fact of no importance. He sees the Inquisition, an organisation with whom he has shed his own blood in the past, as worthy allies in this divine mission.

If the Cadre leaves a favourable impression on Cal and Vespaisia (or Husk), they may prove of invaluable assistance in the adventure's second and third parts, whereas if they create a rift between them and the Cadre, they may make for subtle and potent enemies.

The Nervous Pardoner

Note: This encounter serves to seed the clue of Ensor's direct control over the temple's servitors.

Seated alone at a table at the more prestigious end of the Comercia's allotment, there is a middle-aged merchant in somewhat threadbare finery, heavily decorated with wax-sealed parchment scrolls, religious medals and faith ribbons marking him as a pardoner; a seller of religious indulgencies and artefacts to the faithful. This highly nervous man, his watery eyes flickering often skyward, is Master Hull Morac, whose family business has been tied to the Aleph for generations. If the Cadre approach this man, he is only too inclined to talk in order to take his mind off his fears. Morac has a genuine phobia of servitors in general, and cherubim in particular (which can be a problem in such lofty company), and although his presence here at the Aleph to which he owes his livelihood is vital, it is to him something of a torture for just this reason.

If called upon to name his fear, he somewhat shamefully admits to his fears, particular of the "dead-eyed fluttering things, watching and thieving and who knows what?" and happily recounts many apocryphal and bloody stories of rogue servitors and the like to justify his fears. If the Throne Agent's interactions with him are particularly successful (three or more degrees of success using an Interaction Skill Test, or simply exceptionally good role-playing) he admits that his terror has recently been aggravated when he took a wrong turn on his way to his rooms about an hour ago and nearly walked into Deacon Ensor in the dark, with two temple cherubim latched onto his shoulders, "like corpse-white leeches," which gave him a considerable fright. He gives the opinion that, "Old Ensor looked about ready to do me murder, but I apologised and was quickly gone the way I'd came. I suppose I'd cause to give him a fright as much as he me in the dark passageway. But he has not been settled in his mind since."

What Morec does not know was that he accidentally intercepted Ensor delivering two kill-rigged cherubim to the positions at the High Altar for the next day's ceremonies, a fact that may cost him his life.

The Unwilling Entertainer

Somewhere towards the lower status part of the great hall, the Throne Agents may witness a loud altercation between an overdressed and somewhat wasted noble and an underdressed young female dancer. The young woman, part of a travelling company who have recently been performing a slightly risqué dance based on supposedly accurate depiction of the 'feral cultures of the Malfian domains,' is named Daynath. She has had the temerity to resist the advances to the leering Sira Rabbas Jenet. Jenet attempts to bodily drag her away in full public view and brutally strikes her bloody when she further resists.

At this point, one or more members of the Cadre has the chance to intervene either on purely moral grounds, chivalry, or the outright blasphemy of this sort of thing happening in the God-Emperor's temple. If they don't, then another NPC—either Azed Husk, Lord Jaspar Craythorne or Colonel Tokar Bale—does, all for very different reasons. The Cadre or one of its members may also choose to back up the intervening NPC, making for an excellent introduction.

If challenged by anyone whose authority or identity he doesn't immediately recognise, Jenet reacts violently, drawing first and letting loose a string of insults more than sufficient grounds on Malfi for violence. In his heart Jenet is a coward, fleeing or backing down if hurt or sufficiently intimidated, muttering about later revenge. Killing him or publicly humiliating him has no direct repercussions given the public provocation Jenet will have offered to his 'betters' (not to mention the Cadre's authority and status), but does make an immediate enemy of Hector Maken.

Saved from an unpleasant fate, Daynath seeks to retreat back below stairs as soon as she is able (and disguise herself to avoid recognition), but is grateful enough to answer any questions the Cadre has if they have helped her—as long as the conversation isn't too public.

She knows many of the rumours that are floating about the place, and a surprising amount about the power-plays behind the scenes. She also know just who it was she has rebuffed and why. If questioned about the entertainers like herself, she freely admits to them having been paid by the coin of House Belasco agents. She also speaks of how the performers have been put up to lodge and prepare in the lower levels of the High Altar building, an area that has filled her with dread. If set at ease (a successful **Routine (+10) Charm or Charismatic Mastery Skill Test**), she volunteers other useful facts. She knows that a number of the performers have suffered thefts and some have disappeared between rehearsals.

Daynath also doesn't like the complex's Cherubim which are, "always watching you with their dead eyes." Nor does she like the masked mummers who are housed near her own troupe, who never speak and, "Give me the shivers, and I've played a Viper's Ball before!" She sees all these things merely as aspects of the Aleph itself and the dangers of brushing shoulders with the powerful.

The Preachers in their Cups

Tucked discreetly away at one end of the middle tiers of tables is a cluster of couches with several invited clerics not of the Aleph or affiliated with any great faction. The two most prominent among them are Abbot Weil and Prior Addermar, the former morosely staring into a half empty cup of water and the latter well onto his third carafe of strong wine, more than a little loud and merry, with the scattered remains of several demolished meals spread around him.

Both are, in their own way, troves of information about the Ecclesiarchical underpinnings of the election of the Archimandrite and the political manoeuvrings in the wider church surrounding it and what they may portend. Although both respect the authority of the Holy Ordos, they open up most easily to another cleric, or to one who already knows something of the Ministorum and its workings in the cadre. The best way to loosen Addermar's tongue is to keep him plied with drink and get him to talk about himself and his failed candidacy for the role of Archimandrite. In Weil's case, it is to work on his desperation at getting anything out of these proceedings and the future leadership of the Malfian church for his own impoverished order and troubled flock. Hints or genuine promises of financial or political aid, no matter how vague, illicit an almost feverish co-operation from Abbot Weil, and in particular get him to open up about his worries for the future of the Malfian church with the involvement of House Belasco, and his fears after seeing Azed Husk present at the gathering.

Out of His Element?

Intruding on the Cadre's company, under a case of mistaken identity, is Master Rothber Sydom. The merchant approaches one of the Cadre and introduces himself believing them to be another named character of the GM's choice. Once this mistake is pointed out, Sydom ventures that, "Unfortunately, I fear one of the other 'noble' guests has played a trick on me. I crave your forgiveness, I am a stranger to this world and find this feast stranger yet. Is there any service of manners I could perform for you to make amends for my transgression?"

These are, of course, all lies. Sydom is a servant of dark powers, and could not resist meeting with the Cadre (the servants of the enemy) in the flesh and sizing them up for himself. He appears entirely believable and normal, and if the Throne Agent's suspect his motive they should not suspect his true identity or mission as he gives them no cause to do so. Sydom carries on a natural conversation if the opportunity presents itself, spinning his tale of service and pursued opportunities on behalf of the Skaelen-Har Hegemony. If asked, he offers guarded, well-informed opinions on the proceedings, ultimately venturing that he is perhaps a little out of his depths among so many powerful lords and ladies, before disappearing again into the crowd in search of the supposed real subject of his attentions.

The Lady is Overcome

When passing a cluster of couches amid the circle of mid-ranking noble women, an older lady is getting increasingly shrill, when suddenly she is overcome and must be lead away at the direction of a younger, ravishingly beautiful noblewomen. Cadre members who pass a **Challenging (+0) sight-based Awareness Test** may well notice the younger women having slipped poison from a ring into the older woman's goblet while handing it to her, just before she is taken ill. Of this pair, the senior is Siridar-Baroness Carmilla Noventu, a bitter and scornful old matron. The younger is Countess Lillith Rev, a bright-eyed and predatory would-be player in the game of power, far more deadly than she might appear.

If challenged directly on her actions, Rev is delighted rather than shamed, responding coyly and amusingly noting that she clearly has to work on her skills at misdirection, saying "The old harpy will be fine. No more than a headache in the morning and no more than she deserves for being such a bore! Really, I was growing very tired of her braying voice as was everybody else. I merely had the wherewithal to do something about it."

Rev is a keen observer of the goings on, and has taken a particular interest in the resurgent feud between House Belasco and House Maken brewing in the air over the investiture of the Archimandrite, seeming to take delight in the onrushing conflict. She actually takes a frisson of delight in being 'under the gun' of the Holy Ordos, particularly if her questioner is attractive and overtly dangerous, and gleefully swaps secret for secret if the opportunity arises. She ventures, "Oh there will be blood. The Maken have allowed themselves to be outmanoeuvred here and compounded the error in sending Hector. Insult added to injury, they'll have to assert dominance soon or the ongoing loss of face will be humiliating for them in the League."

The Traders' Lament

Later in the evening, somewhat perturbed and frustrated at the turn of events, the vicious intriguing and casual insults, and unable to get much traction on the Malfian nobles, several more powerful members of the off world Commercia interests gather in a open air courtyard on the terraces on the complex roof near the dome of the Great Hall. Rid of the company of clerics and nobles, the Commercia takes the opportunity to lament their lot, try and do a little business, and indulge in a few manoeuvres of their own. Present are individuals such as Lady Cheska Duquesne, Master Hull Morac, and Vice Chancellor Jaqele Sleer, as well as any others the GM deems appropriate.

This encounter is an opportunity for the Cadre to get an outsider's perspective on the goings on (other than their own), and of course meet Cheska, a woman who is far from whom she appears, face-to-face in her public guise. Depending on how this is handled, the traders either clam up (if the Inquisition's authority is pressed), or are more forthcoming if given chance to vent a little.

The Commercia's position is that the whole matter has been sown up in advance by the House of Belasco, who is bankrolling the whole investiture and have backed Zan's

candidacy, and it is Fafnir Belasco who has final say on any contracts or finical opportunities the resurgent temple Aleph presents. The more stoic of them see attending this kind of event as a perilous and unavoidable price of doing business on, "this venomous, hot ball of bloodstained rock," and why no outsider ever really prospers here. Sleer, if inclined to talk, is the only one with the courage to offer the opinion that, "A resurgent Aleph is good for the Ministorum regardless of how it comes about. Cal's presence here is simply to remind Zan who his true master is and show Belasco that there are limits even to his power."

The Mummer's Tale

Cadre members wandering the dimly lit outer rooms and corridors of the temple complex given over to the feast, find increasing dark nooks and crannies filled with all manner of furtive and sinister activity. In one old stone chamber that appears in a greater state of disrepair than the others, its frescos soot stained if scorched by a fire, they find a very macabre play being silently performed. Before an almost mesmerised crowd of revellers who have been stopped as if in their tracks, an ancient and often forbidden tale from Malfi's past is being presented in graphic detail and total silence. The story is of the rise and fall of House Koba, and of the daughter of Hate and the Twisted Son.

Those with the knowledge to understand this stories significance (those with Scholastic Mastery, or Scholastic Lore (Legend)) realise that the performance of this play is incongruous at best and might even been considered heretical or blasphemous by some. The play lasts for some time, and if approached afterwards, the mummers reveal themselves unable to answer any questions, not one of them possessing a tongue with which to speak.

The mummers are in fact cultists of the Menagerie, servants of Sydom bought here as part of his back up plan should Ensor fail to insight conflict.

Ensor himself, his cowl hood up and his cloak about him to hide his identity, is present in the audience for a time, and may be detected by a sharp-eyed cadre member (passing a **Challenging (+0) sight-based Awareness Test**). If he is questioned about this he says he was merely curious, as the mummers had a reputation for being quite striking in their performance. If asked about their origin, he claims that the Belasco provided them, just as they did for most of the laity performers for the feast. This is a lie; he has in fact smuggled them in at Sydom's order and housed them with the other performers. He is here because he does not know just who they really are, and was curious to see them in the flesh.

Part II: Death at High Mass

"You Scintillans have no idea of how to conduct vendetta, pah! A man wrongs you; you take his life, what of it? A dead man cannot suffer—but alive, powerless in your grasp? Ah, then he can suffer; hounded, hunted, his world murdered around him piece by bloody piece, shorn of hope, shorn of dignity, his family stolen away and lost to unknown terrors, friendless and helpless, begging to die! That, my friend, is vendetta. That is what, on Malfi, we call revenge…well it's a start anyway."

–Count Landoth Mol, Malfian Emissary to the Lucid Court

The second part of the adventure represents a serious change of pace from the first, as events rapidly take a tragic and unforeseen turn and begin to spiral out of control. It begins with the actual ceremony of investiture for the new Archimandrite, at which Zan is killed before he can fully take up his new mantle of office, and focuses on the discord that follows and what part the player-characters choose to take in it.

Events after the assassination of Zan have been deliberately left open-ended for the Cadre to interact with as freely as they wish, and much of what follows is a framework and set of resources for the GM to follow to enable the players to take their own path.

The Sights and Sounds of the Temple

The High Altar of the temple of the Aleph is its spiritual heart. It is a large, vaulted space roughly cruciform in shape. The high altar itself is a raised hexagonal dais at the very centre of the building's space. The right, left and lower bars of the 'cross' are given over to ornate tiers of stepped wooden seating pews and stalls, each able to easily seat three or four hundred, while the upper part of the building is given over to reliquaries, side altars, statuary and a great musical organ known in local parlance as the Seraph's Voice. The walls are dark, heavy, carved stone and soar high above to a domed roof of wrought-ironwork and stained glass that provides the temple's only natural light. The air is heavy with incense. This conveys an impression something like standing at the bottom of a great misted ravine to a member of the congregation, with the only clear light falling directly down onto the dais below. The temple altar's dark recesses are lit by thousands of votive candles glowing dimly, and by brazier-bearing servo-skulls circling overhead during services, each made from the mortal remains of faithful clerics long dead.

The Ceremony of Investiture

After the Feast of Welcome the night before, the GM should allow the player-characters to pursue any leads or further courses of action they have settled upon the following day before shifting the events of the adventure toward the ceremony itself. As honoured guests of the first order, the Cadre and many of the other guests they encountered the previous night take up their places as celebrants at the temple of the high altar. They are given seating on the left side of the altar dais with the other representatives of the Adeptus Terra and off-worlders (see Player Handout I on page 251), while the local potentates sit on the right side, and the clergy in the main lower sections.

As events take their course, the cadre and the rest of the congregation undergo a service of mass, sung in High Gothic, mixed with lengthy sermons that last a little over three hours in the dimly lit and echoing temple. An experience of the kind that leaves those either not rapt adherents or well used to it feeling somewhat distracted and out of themselves. As dusk approaches, a storm breaks in the skies beyond the temple's dome, the boiling dark clouds torn with flashes of lighting, the distant rumbling of thunder a deep counterpoint to the choral chanting and the echoing notes of the Seraph's Voice. The ceremonies are reaching their most crucial stage as Zan is to be ordained as the Aleph's new archimandrite.

Read aloud or paraphrase the following;

'The ceremony has reached its height and the soaring notes of the Seraph's Voice dies awake, leaving only the hush of the congregation and the deep rumble of the storm outside the great walls. Zan stands at the centre of the high altar dais as, off to one side, the hunched form of the Venerable Cal begins to intone the Emperor's blessing on his servants through a brass vox amplifier. Deacon Ensor steps forward at the bow to hand the new archimandrite the sacred Aquila gorget that signifies his rank, as the congregation watches on in silence. Ensor steps away and blessed cherubim sweep down to anoint Zan's head with sacred oil and affix purity seals to his rich raiment. He cannot conceal the triumph on his features.

The thunder rolls overhead, and the lightning flashes, casting harshly coloured pulses of light through the stained glass. The thunder roars overhead, its booming report ending unexpectedly in a louder, harsher crash. High above, the air is rent with the sound of tortured glass shattering. A great wind of shocking forces drives down into the temple, bringing with it a glittering rain of blade-like glass shards, slicing earthward like a wrathful judgement from the heavens. A second later the brazier-bearing servo skulls topple from the air and the temple's candles are snuffed out as if by a great hand sweeping across them. The temple is plunged into a abyssal chaos of agonised screams and panicked, angry cries.'

Darkness, Panic and Murder Most Foul

Anarchy reigns within the Aleph, the sudden storm winds have seemingly put out the lights and extinguished the candles. Murderous shards of razor sharp glass from the shattered dome have rained down and killed and maimed more than a dozen of those closest to the High Altar. Confusion and terror have broken out among the congregation. Worse yet, in the midst of this tragedy, Llorens Zan, the new archimandrite of the temple Aleph as been cruelly and quickly murdered.

But that discovery yet awaits. First, the Cadre must deal with the darkness and panic in the temple itself. In this situation the Throne Agent's broad choices are: to immediately act to attempt to restore order, or at least discover what has happened; to vacillate and do nothing; or to deliberately withdraw and look to their own safety. While this happens, the winds and thunder continue to roar around the temple space, the brazier servo skulls struggle back into the air slowly (although a few isolated draperies may now be aflame thanks to their blundering, causing yet more panic), and within a minute or so, the shout goes up, "He is slain! Zan is slain! The Archimandrite is murdered!" sparking a renewed wave of hysteria from the Aleph's assembled clergy.

If the Cadre chooses to act, they can attempt to calm things down by any number of means (such as the use of the Command Skill, or relevant Interaction or Mastered Skill), which may, depending on their success, quickly restore order. If nothing else, they prevent open armed conflict from breaking out. Substantial success at this point also helps stamp their authority on the onlookers and if the characters gain three or more degrees of success on the skill test, then any later questioning done of NPCs who were bystanders at the ceremony and who are not inherently hostile to them are at a reduced difficulty of one level, if this authority is appropriately called on.

If the Cadre does nothing but stand around as panicked as the rest, things rapidly run out of control. First, inherent Malfian paranoia ensures that weapons are rapidly drawn among those who have them, bodyguards rush to get their noble charges out of harms way, trampling on everybody else and clashing with each other to get things done. Just how much trouble this causes, from cracked heads to spilled blood and even gunplay, is up to the GM. As soon as the shout goes up that Zan is dead, hysteria and rage vie for dominance among the assembled clergy of the Aleph, threatening a full scale stampede, some to the exits and some to Zan's prostrate corpse. Serious trouble is eventually stymied by the restoration of light and the boltgun-wielding presence of Cal's Adepta Sororitas bodyguard. The Battle Sisters swiftly surround the dais and mercilessly kill anyone who contradicts their command for order. If the Cadre do not take charge at this point, then the Venerable Cal does.

Should the Cadre wish to withdraw, they may do so, but getting free of the panicked crowd requires force, and may spark serious conflict if, for example, they collide with Maken's fleeing party. On exiting the temple they should also encounter Sororitas reinforcements coming the other way, and deal with this as they may.

The Former, Future Archimandrite

Off to the side of the Dias lies the sprawled body of Llorens Zan. Beside him, a wide crimson spray has splashed across the marble to mark his fate. His throat has been cut laterally from ear-to-ear by a single deeply slashing incision that has plunged in deep enough to sever his windpipe and cut a groove into his spinal column. The look on the dead cleric's face is one of outraged surprise. Around him are several fragments of broken dome glass, some drenched in blood.

THE BREAKING STORM

The Archimandrite-elect of the temple Aleph has been assassinated in the centre of a crowded ceremonial mass. This is not only a terrible crime, but an affront to the honour of the Malfian elite and a direct challenge to the power and status of the Imperial Ecclesiarchy itself.

As matters in the High Altar settle down (one way or another) and the great temple is cleared of all those not in authority, the wake of this event is already beginning to spread beyond its walls, and the stacked dominoes of cause and effect are starting to topple one after the other. How the Cadre responds to this is entirely in their hands. They may seek to investigate the crime or hunt down the perpetrator in any manner they see fit, or they may stand back and do nothing. It is up to them to decide; theirs is the rank, independence and the responsibility of the Inquisitor and his close Cadre and no shadowy figure is there to give them orders.

In the Aftermath

In the aftermath of the attack, left in the temple are the Venerable Cal and his attendants, Vespiasia and her Battle Sisters, Deacon Ensor and a few of his under-priests, and most likely the Cadre.

If the Cadre do not do so, Cal calls on his authority as Cardinal and formally announces that he is taking command of the Aleph for this period of emergency and orders Ensor to enact a lock-down of the whole temple complex until the matter has been resolved.

The Venerable Cal will also declare, under his full authority as Cardinal, that the occurrence is to be treated, and named publically, as a tragic accident, until proof can me made to him otherwise. The potential for panic and the spiritual damage to the faithful that might otherwise ensue far outweighs any other concern in his opinion. Within the Aleph, however, it is largely a pointless endeavour as the sprawling and partly disused complex cannot be effectively sealed, and rumours are already spreading like wild fire.

If the Cadre's Inquisitor lays claim to investigating the death of Zan, Cal agrees and offers the full cooperation of the Ministorum, so long as the proper rites and the authority of the church over matters Ecclesiastical is not interfered with or challenged.

How the Cadre wishes to proceed now is up to them. If they choose to investigate, there are several clues as to what actually happened (see Conducting an Investigation on page 238). To start with, no one in the temple is exactly be sure if a murder has taken place at all (or whose voice proclaimed it so in the panic), nor indeed the exact nature of the sudden events that have transpired.

GM Cal's Authority

As a full ranking Cardinal of the Ministorum, Cal has a great deal of authority, both in spiritual terms over the faithful and in practical terms of political power, wealth and even direct forces he can call upon. While he has no authority to directly command any member of the Holy Ordos or to impede their work, at least 'on paper,' his voice is heard and heeded at the highest levels of the Malfian sub-sector and countless fanatics would die at his word. It is a very foolish Inquisitor that seeks to bully or contradict him, and it would have to be a powerful and certain one that would take him on as an adversary on any stage.

Similarly, Cal does not countenance or tolerate any call to bring in any armed 'reinforcements' of any kind for the Cadre; the Aleph is under Ecclesiastical authority and so it must remain. Cadres and Inquisitors who force this issue find that their actions have severe consequences as well as practical difficulties. Any attempt to ride roughshod over the Church is likely blocked either by Inquisitor Nephren (largely for her own amusement, and because she wants to see the Cadre sink or swim) or by Inquisitor-Castellan Thoth, who refuses to risk the Holy Ordos's relationship with the sub-sector Ministorum on a 'pissing contest' as she bluntly puts it, without direct evidence of the direst heresy or warp taint within their ranks. In other words, it's up to the Cadre to prove they can do their jobs.

GM The Perils of Freedom

One potential, although unlikely 'danger' for an open-ended adventure set up like Red Wake is inactivity by the players; without clear direction or impetus, without a clear enemy to go after, the players do nothing, or simply vacillate, effectively stalling the game. There are a number of methods the GM can employ to get over this. One is to appeal directly to the players' tastes; if they like combat, introduce plot-linked combat encounters, or if they like to empathise with an NPC to get them engaged, then bring one to the fore in a sympathetic light and so on. The GM may also have NPCs directly appeal to the Cadre to get involved, or even mock them about their inactivity (Inquisitor Nephren is a ready made foil for this.)

Another thing to consider in particular reference to Red Wake is the consequences of non-involvement. Without intervention, the violence at the Aleph steadily worsens and spreads beyond its walls.

Cal's Response and Motivation

The Venerable Cal, into whose hands authority at the Aleph now comes to rest, sees this tragedy, murder or not, as a crisis for the Malfian church that he has no intention of seeing spiral out of control. From the death onwards, he is interested primarily in damage control in regards the Ecclesiarchy and its interests, and most particularly the potential damage to the faith of the Malfians in their church to guard and defend its own, let alone the faithful. His priority then, is in establishing order and succession for the Aleph over the precise details of what befell Zan. If a case for murder is proved, he wishes to see the wrath of the Ecclesiarchy suitably visited on the culprit and prefers this be done in a public display. Fortunately, by its nature Zan's death creates an emergency which allows Cal as senior cardinal to appoint a new Archimandrite of his own choosing by dictate rather than recourse to calling a Synod. This might erroneously create suspicion of Cal himself in the eyes of some, perhaps even the Cadre.

The Proclamation of Mourning

Within an hour of the tragedy, Cal assumes full control of the clergy of the Aleph, citing his authority in extremis as cardinal by Ministorum Canon Law, backed by the non-too subtle force of Legatine-Sister Vespasia and her troops. As soon as it seems apparent that no sudden onslaught is forthcoming, he orders the cleaning up and temporary repair of the temple of the high altar as soon as can be practically arranged (something that Ensor is more than happy to comply with in the hopes of getting rid of any lingering evidence). He then issues a proclamation of mourning, which refers to Zan's 'tragic accident' and declares that he will lay in state in the High Altar for three days of vigil by the clergy, after which a requiem will be held, (a service which the investiture guests are pointedly invited to attend). There he will announce and ordain the next Archimandrite.

Conducting an Investigation

Investigating Zan's death opens an immediate can of worms for the cadre. First, if they haven't already worked it out, further questioning of the attendees at the investiture reveals that there are dozens of individuals present with a potential motive to do the Cleric harm. Second, those present are less interested in the truth than in blaming who they would 'prefer' to be guilty of the crime, in some cases using the death as an excuse to freshly renew old vendettas or seize fresh opportunities to curry favour and advantage. Some factions with a keen eye for the art of vendetta might even secretly express admiration (in a very abstract way) for whoever has had the sheer audacity to pull off such a killing at so public an event, and express a professional interest in how the assassination was managed!

Once the Cadre determines that Ensor is their target and seeks him out in the depths of the Aleph, the GM should progress matters to the adventure's final part, Cause and Consequence.

It's a Test of Nerve Really...

With Zan's death 'officially' a tragic accident, the guests and clergy at the Aleph have been trapped by Cal's proclamation into staying until Zan's requiem far more effectively than any direct order, even from the Inquisition, could possibly have done. To leave now would be tremendous loss of face, an act for which the only public explanation could be guilt, complicity or worse; cowardice and fear. Unfortunately, Zan's death brings a number of vendettas to the boil (as was planned) and very soon, the bodies are going to start piling up unless some power (i.e. the Cadre if they choose to do so) intervenes. The GM can have who succeeds and comes out on top and who fails and breaks, affect upcoming campaigns as he wishes.

As well as a physical chain of clues they can follow (see The Trail of Evidence on page 241), the following represents what important NPCs know or at least think following Zan's death:

Lord-Regent Fafnir Belasco

Belasco is coldly and utterly enraged. He has seen his own candidate for Archimandrite killed before his eyes and events shift to take from him every power and advantage he hoped to gain. In short, he has been thwarted, and Fafnir Belasco is not the kind of man to let such an insult go unanswered. He has not, however, lived so long by being easily manipulated. Already nagging in his mind is that for the Maken to have done such a thing is almost too easy an answer. So, before the full force of his wrath is brought to bear, he would know the truth and is already dispatching his own agents, both open and covert to investigate the matter. This will not, of course, prevent him from allowing those who would gain his favour to attack the Maken and their allies, nor from sending his own agents to do murder in reprisal should any of his party be attacked, but he stays his full and apocalyptic wrath until he is sure of his target.

If the Cadre treat openly and as honestly with Belasco, they find him a coldly civil, if sinister presence on the stage, and willing, unless badly provoked, to hold his forces back if sufficiently persuaded. He responds poorly to threats however. How the Cadre treats him either makes him an appallingly dangerous enemy or if not an ally, certainly a very powerful man who might owe them a favour down the line.

The Honourable Hector Maken

Maken is outraged, and loudly is talking at volume about the matter to anyone of sufficient rank. He is outraged that such appalling ugliness should be visited in his presence, outraged that his house should be slandered, outraged that he must further remain here, and outraged at the Ministorum for allowing it to happen. If questioned directly, he is outraged at that too. He even ventures that Fafnir Belasco has contrived

the whole thing as an excuse to, "Pursue his ghastly murderous nature against the honourable and blameless Maken." Hector is, of course, a fool, and if he weren't such a fool he would be more given to fear. Those around him are, however, and seek to step up his security further and meet any attack with counter-attack rather than show weakness. Spearheading any such attacks is the vicious Sira Rabbas Jenet, one of Hector Maken's more loutish hangers on, already hungry for blood.

Arch-Confessor Eutalus

Eutalus is afraid that, as the Tarsine emissary and Zan's rival, he is a natural target for blame in regards to the death of the archimandrite-elect. His natural paranoia on this matter is in overdrive and he retreats to a "private vigil of prayer," shut up in his chambers behind his bodyguards until the requiem, and getting to him is difficult. If confronted he seems half-mad; torn between fear of blame, fear that he too is targeted for death, and fear of what his attachment to this bloody fiasco means in the eyes of his masters on distant Scintilla.

Lady Cheska Duquesne (Inquisitor Heleyna Nephren)

To Nephren, events at the Ordination of the Archimandrite have proved far more interesting than she anticipated. It is now her position to stand back and observe the pot come to boil, and if she must, turn up the heat until it does so. While no part whatsoever in the murder conspiracy, she sees this as a fascinating and unusually apt opportunity for both the Malfian nobility and Ecclesiarchy to be strengthened through the winnowing out of the weak through controlled attrition. If the cadre is already aware of who she really is, they may approach her for aid or council (or even to accuse her) and in private she happily affirms her opinion on events and utter disinterest in the investigation which she is sure "they have in hand." Only if Sydom's true nature is revealed does she act directly. Istvaanian or not, the servants of the arch-enemy are to be struck down wherever they are to be found in her personal creed.

Everyone Else

In general terms, the majority of the nobility immediately believes that Zan was murdered, and the most logical suspect in their minds is House Maken, thanks to their long standing vendetta. Depending on their own faction, they are likely either loudly protesting Maken's guilt or innocence, or if they are beholden to neither party, sensibly keeping their council silent on the matter, at least in public. Each long for a part of Malfi's feuding and viperous culture, they expect blood and soon, and it is unlikely that they will be disappointed.

For those of the Commercia present, the death and what is to come is likely to form something of an ongoing series of shocks, particularly for those not from Malfi. Their relative ignorance of just how bad things can get, just how quickly, might prove the undoing of several individuals. Those with enough wit and knowledge understand that if they leave, the loss of face involved for their organisations will prove disastrous to their commercial interests on Malfi, making them 'fair game' for any to treat dishonourably and the subject of untenable scorn and derision. Like it or not, they are caught up in the game for keeps.

The clergy, for their part, are in equal mixture of fear for the future and fear for their own lives. For the clerics of the Aleph, and the periphery church in particular, not experienced in Malfi's power politics, many suspect that devilry is afoot, that dark forces are on the move once more on Malfi, despite no evidence to back this up. Ironically enough they are correct.

What Really Happened

The somewhat complex plot that Ensor has enacted on behalf of the deceiver Sydom is as follows: At the moment of Zan's formal receiving of the regalia of his office, Ensor stepped back away from the dais into the partial shelter of a looming statue and activated a signal device in time with a peel of thunder. At this signal, an explosive charge placed on the dome supports fired, blowing a section of it inward and raining down debris. At the same time, the signal triggered a specially kill-rigged Cherubim among those anointing Zan. In the confusion, the Cherubim attacked him from behind with a concealed mono-blade in its arm, and slit Zan's throat before scattering with its startled fellows.

The result was intended to look, at first glance, as if the falling glass killed Zan. This explanation, however, simply does not stand up to close scrutiny. Obvious flaws in this plan were unfortunately clouded in Ensor's mind by Sydom's dark arts. Ensor is, for Sydom, no more than a pawn; a catalyst for the disorder he hopes to cause. Sydom fully expects the bitter old cleric to be caught in the fullness of time, and intends for the exposed conspiracy to lead to a scapegoat of his choice.

The Unfortunate Ensor

Now that Ensor's task is complete, the sorcerous fog that Sydom has placed over his mind begins to thin rapidly and both the enormity of what he has done and the danger he is now in dawns upon him in earnest, as does Sydom's utter indifference to his fate. Ensor does whatever he can to protect himself from suspicion, up to and including attempted covert murder by remote control thanks to his mastery of the Aleph's servitors. He attempts to destroy or damage records and scapegoat or bribe underlings, although he is likely to make something of a ham-fisted job of any of these. If he feels the noose tightening, he retreats to the catacombs beneath the Aleph and attempts to stand off his fate, while he can, in the hidden defence Tabernacle (see The Tabernacle on page 243).

Blood Will Have Blood

There are three days between the assassination of Zan at the High Altar and his requiem; three days in which the bodies start to fall, one way or the other. The questions being: is the Cadre ahead of this development, do they head off the worst, or are they powerless bystanders?

- **Stage 1—Insult:** The first covert murder or attack (arson attempts, beatings, kidnappings etc. are all possible) is likely to be conducted by an ally (or would be ally) of either the Maken or the Belasco against a peripheral member of the other's party; either a servant, agent, or a Commercia member.
- **Stage 2—Injury:** If the cycle of attack and counter attack is allowed to escalate, murders by steel, forced duels and poisons break out with increasing frequency and rapidly escalating targets of choice. More prominent Commercia representatives and minor nobles may be targets (Sleer, Craythorne and Noventu are all viable targets here) and potential witnesses murdered out of hand.
- **Stage 3—Blood Feud:** If the killings are not stopped by this point, and several prominent figures have been slain, the laws of vendetta break down. Either Hector Maken will inadvisably order an attempt on Fafnir Belasco's life by his hirelings, which is very unlikely to succeed, or Belasco will have a plasma grenade, built into a surgically tampered with and brainwashed concubine, smuggled into Maken's chambers—which likely will. If either of these occurs, Sydom has won to some degree, regardless of whatever now occurs, as Malfi is heading for a new hot war of vendetta.

There are a number of ways the Cadre can curb the violence. The three most likely are detailed here, although a mixture of these (and others devised by the Throne Agents) may be just as effective.

First and most immediately effective, is to gain the co-operation of Maken and Belasco directly; get them to hold off their own dogs a while. This requires a subtle degree of diplomacy, veiled threat, and the Cadre putting their own lives on the line along with their word. At best, however, this buys the Cadre some breathing room, as there are actors at work beyond the two factions such as Ensor and Sydom.

The second is to enforce peace the hard way, by violently intervening in any attempted murder or attack and making an example of the perpetrators with the full weight of the Holy Ordos behind the judgement. This is likely to contain the violence somewhat, but not stop it entirely. Possible allies in this might include Colonel Tokar Bale and his attendants. While few in number, all are combat veterans worth several times their number and more importantly for hire. A more covert but highly useful ally can be found in Lilith Rev. Although from a minor house, she has excellent intelligence assets and is eager to please, and can aid the cadre in intercepting attacks and pointing out likely targets.

The third option is to provide a solution to the death of Zan, preferably by delivering up proof of Ensor's guilt and knowledge of what he did to the two noble factions, which also curbs the violence as long as the cycle of attack and retribution have not escalated too far. If sufficient blood has been spilled by this point (the end of stage two or three reached), then the cause no longer matters. Unless handled carefully, this also may cause the Cadre problems with the Ministorum and the venerable Cal, who sees painting the matter as a schism within the church more damaging than a 'mere' noble vendetta.

The Malfian Way & Stopping it

At least in the beginning, as the violence starts to escalate, the cadre is likely surprised that a little death and mayhem is accepted as par for the course, not only by the nobles themselves but also by the Malfian clergy at the Aleph. These clerics, unless their members are caught in the crossfire or their scared places invaded or damaged, are content to let the nobles get on with scorning, slighting, assaulting, and even killing each other for honour and vendetta, It is simply "The Malfian way."

There are two individuals, however, within the Aleph that are far from satisfied with seeing this Malfian way continue and have the manpower (or womanpower) to do something about it if called on: Legatine-Sister Vespasia and Preacher Azed Husk. Both view this mayhem within the God-Emperor's house as blasphemy to be snuffed out, whatever local custom and tradition has to say about it. Vespasia's battle sisters are outnumbered, and she has them guarding the Venerable Cal, but if his agreement can be reached, some of them might be re-assigned to peacekeeping duties patrolling the corridors of the Aleph and assisting the Cadre. Husk is a different and more dangerous tiger to catch by the tail. In the outer complex beyond, he has nearly a hundred sworn zealots among the crowds, his 'pilgrims of grace' as he calls them, lacking only in arms and authority to intervene. Keeping Husk's fanatics from getting too 'enthusiastic' might prove a problem in itself unless he is handled carefully, and he may well make demands in return for his aid either from the Holy Ordos or from the Venerable Cal.

Istvaanian Interference

Depending on how vicious the GM is feeling, Inquisitor Nephren may choose to interfere directly. Nephren has access to her own cadre, and is a competent fighter in her own right. She can be used to rack up a body count until persuaded to

back off. She may also be used to aid the Throne Agents should the GM wish, intervening at a crucial moment on their side in a combat, or if Sydom springs his final surprise.

Ensor's Gambit

As soon as he can disentangle himself from the investigation and make suitable obeisance to the Venerable Cal after he assumed ecclesiastical authority over the Aleph, Ensor seeks to duck out of sight and keeps to the catacombs of the complex as much as possible, abandoning his usual chambers and using the various servitors as his eyes. As the violence begins to escalate, he uses the cover it provides to try and hide his tracks, destroying evidence and witnesses to his crimes.

In particular, he uses Cherubim to kill the Pardoner, Hull Morec, as a potential witness to his guilt (see The Nervous Pardoner on page 232). Morec is torn to pieces in his rooms along with his adept-scribe. Cadre members looking into his death find it strange, as Morec belonged to neither noble faction, and if they have previously encountered him, they may remember his story, or learn it second hand by questioning others. In addition, a **Difficult (-10) Medicae Test** reveals that the type of blade used to kill Zan also killed the pardoner.

Malice in the Dark

Watching the whole bloody affair from the sidelines is Rothber Sydom, the true architect of these events. Sydom takes no further hand while the bloodshed is brewing, and if approached is more than happy to lend the Cadre any help he can. If Ensor is apprehended, his plan is to disappear from view, taking on another identity and leaving evidence to blame another—Arch-Confessor Eutalus. Sydom hopes to drive a further wedge into the heart of the Ministorum.

If his plan does not go as he wishes, Sydom takes other measures. This may be because the Cadre is successful in halting or curtailing the level of discord, because the Cadre suspects Ensor is being played for a dupe and the goal of the plot is the creation of strife and mayhem for its own sake, or because they simply don't believe the 'neat' answer provided for them. Although extremely patient, if robbed of his sport, he attempts to unleash a final avalanche of slaughter.

Sydom has a number of sleeper agents in the gathering. Shape-shifting daemon-get that came to the Aleph in the guise of silent mummers, these cultists are soul bound with powerful Sadu'sen Daemons (see page 246). He sends these in secret to provoke more violence and reprisal. If thwarted in his plans to spread discord, he mounts a final attack (See Sydom's Last Dance on page 245).

The Trail of Evidence

Aside from opinion, blame and conjecture, the following lists the actual physical evidence the Cadre can look into in brief. The GM should feel free to expand on this as needs be.

The Body: Zan's throat has been cut with enough force to almost severe his neck, killing him in seconds. Detailed examination by anyone skilled enough (any character with the Medicae or Inquiry skill, or relevant Mastered Skill) reveals that this was done with a single slashing cut most likely from behind with a mono-edged blade. Based on the angle and damage inflicted, it is simply not possible for the falling glass to have done this.

The Shattered Dome: Should the Cadre get close enough to shattered dome frame (the Aleph's stores can furnish a grav-lifter platform if one is requested), a character with the right knowledge of demolitions or explosives (any character with the Demolition skill, Tech-Use or Tech Lore Mastery) ascertains that a small series of explosive charges were affixed to the frame and likely detonated by signal. The placing of the charges was also somewhat less than optimal, and had it been better the whole dome would have come down, not simply the one section. These should be the questions about the signal: who timed and activated it, and who placed the charges so high up and when?

Witnesses: Given the deliberately manufactured confusion and distraction surrounding the murder—the storm, the explosion, the darkness and the falling glass—everybody in the hall, a number which runs to the hundreds and includes the cadre themselves, saw everything and nothing. Many saw Zan stagger and the Cherubim around him panic, some may even claim to have seen the instant the cleric's blood arced across the temple, but no-one has the definitive answer.

Access: Before the ceremony, the temple was under preparation and inhabited almost continuously for weeks of religious services. Literally thousands of celebrants, pilgrims and clergy have passed through its doors, not to mention various servants and servitors.

Motive & Opportunity: In most murder-scenarios a process of elimination by motive and opportunity weeds out false suspects. Alas, for the Cadre, that is just not the case here and now. There are literally dozens of factions— church, noble and even Commercia—who could have had Zan killed, and thanks to the employment of professional spies and assassins habitually by most, they had the tools to do so had they wished. However close scrutiny of the events likely points to an 'inside job' as the most likely and efficient way of accomplishing Zan's death.

The Tell-Tale Feather: If the player-characters need an extra nudge in the right direction during the course of their investigations, it can be furnished simply by the placing of physical evidence such as a Cherubim-feather, vat grown and re-enforced with brass. Such a feather could be found tangled in Zan's clothing or in the blood on the altar, or even up in the rafters of the roof frame near an unexploded charge.

But What of the Storm? If considered, a hint that something far darker than mere political murder is going on. Storms, while common at this time of year, cannot be guaranteed or timed, and yet this one seems to have been vital to the murder plot. How was this managed? The answer, although far from obvious at this stage, is the sorcery of the Menagerie Cult.

Part III: Cause and Consequence

"Everything you have been told is a lie."

—Inquistorial Maxim

This last part of the adventure focuses on resolving the murder plot that killed Zan, and exposing the guilty parties. The exact outcome of this hunt for the truth, how much the Cadre discovers, and how they deal with those discoveries is up to them.

GOING AFTER ENSOR

Sooner or later the evidence of Zan's murder, if looked into, points to Deacon Ensor; as it is, in fact, meant to. The following facts might serve to damn him, although most are in truth circumstantial.

Ensor organised and orchestrated the ceremony of investiture. Only he had full knowledge of where and when to trigger the signal, as well as mastery of the temple needed to set up the explosive charges.

Witnesses may have seen him move away from the dais just before the explosion blew out the dome.

Ensor has been passed over for promotion in the church many times, and although he was the senior cleric at the Aleph, he was not even considered by the Synod; a fact he was known to have formally protested over.

Evidence points to Zan's murder being carried out by a Cherubim. As head deacon, Ensor has full access to, and control of, the temple Aleph's servitors. Data-logs pertaining to the servitors have since been tampered with. Ensor has easy access to do this.

The pardoner, Hull Morec, saw Ensor behaving oddly with two Cherubim and has now been brutally murdered.

It is, however, Ensor's fear of discovery that proves his final undoing, and should raise suspicions about him, As soon as any investigation come close to him, he retreats into the catacombs and does not surface again, marking his guilt.

INTO THE CATACOMBS

The catacombs beneath the temple are dark and labyrinth, seemingly endless corridors and ossuaries, storehouses, generatora, air ducts and disused chambers sinking deep into the rocky plateau on which the temple Aleph sits. Should the cadre venture there, their likely destination is the defence tabernacle, an armoured chamber from where the Aleph's automated defences and servitors can be controlled remotely. For the Cadre, getting to this location requires a guide and likely some extra manpower to aid them. Just how difficult this journey is, is left up to the GM.

Fortunately for the Cadre though, Ensor does not have complete control of the system, and if they go to the Venerable Cal with their suspicions, he can use the archimandrite's master-control ring to paralyse the servitor system, stripping Ensor of much of his protection. Cal also sends Vespasia and the ring with the Cadre should they descend after Ensor, enabling the bypass of numerous security doors and defence systems.

The Tabernacle

The tabernacle is a large, bunker-like control chamber accessed through an armoured security door (See Player Handout 2 on Page 252). If the master-override has been used, Ensor is defended by his weapon of last resort; a trio of arco-flagellants woken from long, forgotten status tombs deep beneath the tabernacle of the Aleph and slaved to his spoken command. If the GM wishes to have the Arco-Flagellants enter combat, he can find their profile on page 39 of **Disciples of the Dark Gods**.

If the override has not been used, the Cadre must first bypass the security doors (this is a **Hard (–20) Extended Skill Test** using the Security Skill or Shadow Craft Mastery requiring two successful Tests). The Arco-flagellants are bolstered by three Cherubim, one of which is the kill-rigged

assassin that slew Zan. A sufficient quantity of additional gun and combat servitors give the Cadre and their allies a very serious challenge. In any case, Ensor seeks to hide, whimpering, behind a console during the fight, while he orders the servitors to attack without mercy.

Apprehending Ensor Alive

If taken alive, Ensor shows himself to be a broken man, a far cry from the ramrod and stony figure he cut a few short days ago. He begs for the Emperor's mercy, and willingly tells the cadre anything he can, giving up Sydom as his contact, the details of the crime and even the strange mummers, although characters knowledgeable in such matters (any character with Forbidden Lore (Psykers or Warp) or Forbidden Lore Mastery) realise that there is a lingering warp-taint effecting his memories and judgement.

If questioned as to his motives, he reveals deep-seated bitterness about being continually passed over for higher office, a paranoid suspicion of the distain and scorn others held him in, and his opinions of the other candidates are twisted caricatures of their natures. It is unclear just how much of this was Ensor's true feelings and just how much has been worked on and amplified by darker arts.

With Ensor apprehended and the murder of Zan solved, the final stages of this bloody affair play out based on what the PCs have done to reach this point. It is now up the to Cadre to determine Ensor's fate and whether they administer judgement themselves in public or private, or whether they deliver the wayward cleric up to the Venerable Cal or even to Fafnir Belasco. Each decision has its own political considerations and potential consequences.

If Ensor is Killed

If Ensor is killed without being questioned, then many of his secrets die with him. In particular, he will not be able to tell the Cadre the full narrative of just how the assassination was carried out or his own clouded motivations for doing so. However, painstaking and detailed examination of witnesses to Ensor's movements over the last few days, and of data concerning the logistics of the investiture ceremony and its guest list, can confirm that he was 'missing' or out of contact from his usual duties for extended periods.

This should be a **Ordinary (+10) Extended Skill Test** using Tech-Use, or Tech Lore Mastery. One test may be taken every ten minutes and a total of three successful tests are required. It may also reveal that the Sydom party was present on no legitimate business or guest list, save at Ensor's contrivance.

Pursuing Sydom

No sooner does the Cadre descend into the catacombs after Ensor, than Sydom seeks to disappear. Sydom's own agencies, principally psychic scrying, bribed spies, and the mind-controlled are keeping tabs on the Cadre for just this purpose. He leaves behind chambers deliberately left to appear if they were vacated in a hurry, with the planted evidence of one of Ensor's minor underpriests dead and stuffed into a closet (to cement his link to Ensor.) Any thorough search of the room reveals what appears to be an overlooked clue; a scuffed data-crystal that has been apparently kicked under the bed in the haste of Sydom's departure. The crystal is heavily encrypted and requires deciphering either by one of the Cadre (a **Difficult (–10) Extended Skill Test** using Ciphers Scholastic Lore (Cryptology) or Cryptological Mastery, requiring four successful tests) or by despatching it by courier to Inquisitor Thoth whose savants can break it with relatively little effort. On it are a great number of future transport times, shipping manifests and secret access codes, all concerning off-world shipping and pilgrimage traffic with the info-stamp of the Hive Tarsus central registry on Scintilla (and by extension perhaps Arch-Confessor Eutalus). This represent scores of potential escape routes off of Malfi, any of which could be pursued by an escaping assassin. It is also very unlikely that the Cadre can investigate all of them, although the GM should certainly not stop them from trying.

The truth of the matter is that the Tarsine church is not involved; this information is simply a plant to further cast suspicion on them and the Cadre would be wise to treat this 'accidentally' left evidence with reservations.

Where is he now? Although the evidence points towards Sydom having fled when the hunt came too close, nothing can be further from the truth. In reality, Sydom has used his sorcerous powers to slay a minor player in the adventure and assume his identity. The GM should select a single, minor, 'named' NPC the Cadre has already had contact with for Sydom to have murdered and assumed the identity of. (Note: this should not be any of the principle named characters; they are simply too closely protected, and too difficult to impersonate successfully.) From this point on, Sydom tries to stick close to observe the conclusion of matters and intervene if he feels his plan has been thwarted.

The Real Murderer Was….!

It is quite possible for deft and insightful player-characters to have worked out Sydom's involvement (or at least that there is something very wrong with him) sooner rather than later, or indeed to be very covert in tackling Ensor and blindsiding the cultist's plans. Rather than this 'breaking' the game, the GM should reward this perspicacity and also allow the Cadre to confront Sydom on their own terms with the odds stacked in their favour. The GM should remember, however, that even on his own, Sydom is a very dangerous opponent as they no doubt soon learn.

Potential Outcomes

Depending on what the Cadre discovers and how they act, there are several outcomes to this adventure, all of which have their own consequences for the GM to consider.

Ensor is discovered as the culprit, but the violence has gone too far to stop: This constitutes at best a partial success for the Cadre. The guilty party is purged, but the seeds of civil war have been sown on Malfi.

Ensor is discovered as the culprit, and the violence has been curtailed before it gets out of control: A potentially major success for the Cadre, the guilty has been punished and the Imperium's order has been maintained.

Sydom is exposed as an agent of the Ruinous Powers: A victory in itself, which justifies all other outcomes. The rooting out of such powerful dark influences in the body politic is the very reason the Inquisition is vital for the security of the Imperium. The Cadre has proved their worth.

Sydom is believed to be no more than a political agent: Whether they know it or not, the Cadre has failed at the Inquisition's first duty, with potentially bloody consequences for all of Malfi.

CEREMONIES OF MOURNING AND GUILT

With the conspiracy laid open to some degree, the Cadre is asked to present their findings to the Venerable Cal and the other principle NPCs involved. Exactly how this is received depends both on who has thus-far survived and their attitudes depending on what has transpired before this point, as well as the actions and oratory of the Cadre, and their overall success in this adventure should be judged on it in part. This is, after all, a key part of the Inquisition's role; not simply executing the heretic but maintaining order and the fabric of the Imperium itself but being seen to do so when it matters.

If they succeed in convincing the principle parties of the truth as they see it, then the matter is settled (as far as the official records go at least). The feuding dies away almost immediately, and all parties are invited, "in a sprit of mourning and peaceful reconciliation," to a requiem mass for the late Zan after which, "all may depart and go their way in safety." If Sydom is exposed or destroyed, this is an end to the matter. If he lives something far worse may yet come to pass (see Sydom's Last Dance on page 245).

Too Much Blood

If the disturbances progressed to the third level as illustrated in Blood Will Have Blood on page 240, other than the church, no one cares for the truth. The factions use the gathering merely as neutral ground on which to hurl abuses and threats at each other—and even at the Cadre if the members contradict their entrenched hatreds—or seek to twist the cadre's findings to their own ends. The trump card at this point is Sydom. If the Cadre can somehow prove he was no mere agent or assassin, but instead a servant of the Ruinous Powers, this gives even the House of Maken and Belasco pause for thought, as neither likes being played for a fool, especially by the Dark Gods.

Pinning the Blame

If Sydom's true nature has not been revealed, then who is to blame? It is for the cadre to say based on their own findings in the matter and their own suspicions.

If they do seek to pin the blame on a great house or church faction, or even simply cast the shadow of suspected guilt, then in the wider world of the GM's campaign, this should have its own ramifications and consequences which is left to the GM to determine. It is likely that regardless of what these are, the Cadre makes themselves a dire enemy by doing so.

Sydom's Victory?

If Sydom has not been exposed for what he really is, one of two outcomes is now likely. The first is that ripples of anarchy and feud are already starting to spread beyond the Aleph's walls and everything that the Menagerie has plotted has come to pass. Two great houses are at each other's throats and more soon follow, igniting a fire that will burn for years and weaken Malfi's stability further. Additionally, the Imperial church on Malfi has been further weakened and laid open to damaging rumour and disrespect, corrosive influences which will aid the flourishing cult in the future. As an added bonus, the Inquisition has been outwitted.

In this case there is no more Sydom need do, he may walk away in his stolen face, his task complete. The GM may, however, wish him to carry out one last act of barbarity or occult terror just to let the Cadre know (particularly after the matter has been 'resolved') that they have been played for fools. If not, the GM should leave this secret to slumber perhaps until later adventures down the line, where the consequences of their past actions may sow a bitter crop for the Cadre.

REWARDS

The Red Wake is a challenging adventure, and for its successful completion, the GM should award between 500-750 xp per game session (depending on the actions of the Throne Agents). Particular sharp thinking, bloody heroics, or cunning plans should also be rewarded with further xp bonuses in the region of 100–200 xp. In addition, the same amount of bonus xp should be awarded to the entire group if the culprit was identified early on, and again if an all-out war was prevented.

MATTERS OF CHURCH AND STATE

The events at the Aleph have long-term consequences no matter what their conclusion; consequences that the player-characters are, in a large part, responsible for. Many of the noble houses and commercial interests caught in the wake of the assassination of Prelate Zan may have been badly weakened, or even desolated. Others emerged having proven their power and willingness to defend themselves. Every one of them, in some respect, has the Cadre to thank or despise because of it. The Mafian Ministorum has been weakened or perhaps goaded into wakening its strength, and there is still the question of just who will be the next Archimandrite of the Aleph in the wake of Zan's death, a matter that, given recent troubles, is deemed even more important than before for the sector's religious elite to determine.

If the death of Prelate Llorens Zan and the conspiracy and discord at the Aleph are a stone hurled into dark waters, the ripples caused by its impact are still travelling, and for the Ministorum, Malfi, the Holy Ordos and the Cadre, their future effects have yet to be revealed.

Optional: Sydom's Last Dance

If the Cadre has been successful in halting the slide into feud and disorder and thwarted Sydom's plot, and the GM wishes a more brutal conclusion, then Sydom's simmering insanity and Warp-spawned malice will not let the matter be. He seeks one final act of desperate bloodletting to settle the matter.

The Cadre and a much reduced congregation are invited to a requiem service for the late Llorens Zan, which, unless he has been exposed or stopped, may be attacked by Sydom and his dark agents. If this is the case, the GM should create a sense of foreboding before the ceremony at the High Altar, as well as grim remembrance and sombre reflection, noting the hooded mourning garb of the clergy and the threadbare attendance from the nobility and the Commercia. Notably, neither Inquisitor Nephren, Hector Maken nor Fafnir Belasco (should they live) attend, already having departed.

Sydom wastes no time before attacking once the ceremony is under way. There is no stage-managed drama, gloating declarations or rants about the supremacy of Chaos, only blood and death. Seeded through the congregation are a half a dozen of his half-human agents, the silent mummers now disguised as churchmen who commit ritual suicide on cue, disembowelling themselves with their bare hands to unleash the evil within them. Sadu'sen Daemons (see NPCs & Antagonists section) set about the congregation at random, killing and bringing forth more horrors from beyond. Sydom is on hand in his stolen identity to use the confusion to take out his real targets. First on his list is the Venerable Cal, followed by Cadre themselves for thwarting him. His truth revealed, Sydom is on a rampage, killing and revelling in destruction and unless he is stopped, he drives out or butchers everyone in the temple of the High Altar before despoiling and desecrating it. Only his death will stop this from happening.

GM: Running the Attack

Sydom's attack should be portrayed as an anarchic, bloody mess, filled with screaming and panicked bystanders, gouting sprays of gore, blasts of midnight-black flame and chaotic gunfire from all sides. It is not necessary to represent this battle in precise detail, only the Cadre's part in it, and the crux of the matter is tackling and defeating Sydom himself before he can lay waste to the place, a task only the Cadre is likely to be capable of achieving.

Antagonists & NPCs

The following presents some useful NPCs and antagonists for use with the Red Wake adventure. For the sake of space, page references have been given to descriptions in the text with more on their individual characters.

The situation at the Aleph also involves a very great number of individuals, be they attendees, bystanders, servants or priest, the majority of which the Cadre are unlikely to encounter in a particularly personal way and can be ably presented by some of the standard NPCs listed in the **Dark Heresy** Rulebook, with some minor alterations by the GM.

Attendees can be represented by the Dissolute Noble (page 339), the Merchant Magnate (page 242) and the Recidivist (page 343), while if you have the adventure book **Tattered Fates** you can use the additional noble NPCs and their servants shown there to add some more variety.

The priesthood can be represented by the Ministorum Preacher (page 342).

Servants, bodyguards, and staff can be represented by the Citizen (page 338), Scribe (page 343), Entertainer (page 339), and Enforcer (page 339) while particularly skilled bodyguards by the Bounty Hunter (page 336).

Again, it is important to note that NPC Profiles are not necessarily bound by the same rules as for player characters.

The Clergy and their Servants

Prelate Llorens Zan

Prelate Llorens Zan Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
23	30	25	30	29	40	40	37	39

Movement: 2/4/8/16 **Wounds:** 13
Skills: Awareness (Per), Charm (Fel) +20, Common Lore (Administratum, Imperium, Imperial Creed) (Int) +10, Evaluate (Int), Forbidden Lore (Cults, Heresy) (Int), Literacy (Int) +10, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int), Scholastic Lore (Archaic, Imperial Creed, Malfian History, Heraldry, Legend, Philosophy) (Int) +10, Trade (Copyist, Author) (Int).
Talents: Peer (Malfian Ministorum).
Armour: Concealed xeno-mesh vest (Body 4).
Weapons: None.
Gear: High quality Ecclesiarchy robes, antique pocket chron and jeweled chain, familial signet rig, personal vox, devotional relics.

Deacon Ensor

Deacon Ensor Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
35	20	33	40	30	32	38	40	22

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 13
Skills: Awareness (Per), Charm (Fel), Common Lore (Imperial Creed, Tech, Imperium) (Int) +10, Deceive (Fel) +10, Intimidate (S) +10, Literacy (Int) +10, Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed, Malfian History) (Int) +10, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int).
Talents: Air of Authority, Fearless, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive, Chain).
Weapons: None. If confronted in the tabernacle he will have armed himself with a chainglave (2d5 +5 R; Pen 2; Tearing, Unwieldy).
Gear: Heavy hooded robes, various keys, accessors and devotional items.
Ensorcelled: Ensor has been ensnared in the Menageries' web, and the truth buried deep within him, any attempt to probe his mind psychically will prove extremely difficult (+30 bonus for him to resist).

Arch-Confessor Eutalus

Arch-Confessor Eutalus Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
22	26	30	30	34	43	38	38	41

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 12
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Barter (Fel) +10, Charm (Fel) +10, Ciphers (Chancellery Court, T arsine Church, Scintillan Court) (Int) +10, Command (Fel) +10, Common Lore (Imperial Creed, Imperium, Administratum) (Int) +20, Deceive (Fel) +10, Evaluate (Int) +10, Literacy (Int) +10, Logic (Int), Scrutiny (Per) +10, Scholastic law (Imperial Creed, Ecclesiarchy, Judgement) (Int) +10, Security (Ag), Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int), Trade (Church Jurist/Confessor) (Int) +10.
Talents: Air of Authority, Jaded, Master Orator, Paranoia, Peer (Ecclesiarchy, Scintillan Nobility), Pistol Training (Las).
Armour: Rosarius.
Weapons: Concealed compact laspistol (15m; S/–/–; 1d10+1 E; Pen 0; Clip 15; Rld Full; Reliable).
Gear: Ecclesiarchy robes, Staff of Office, prayer book, familial signet ring, ward acessor (Ministorum, Tarsine church), letters of patent and dispatch, encrypted long-range vox, personal reliquary, auto-quill, hip flask of fine amasec.

The Venerable Cal

Venerable Cal Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
05	22	30	12	12	49	39	(8) 40	40

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 11
Skills: Awareness (Per), Charm (Fel), Ciphers (Malfian Church) (Int), Common Lore (, Imperium, Imperial Creed,) (Int), Command (Fel) +10, Concealment (Ag), Disguise (Fel) +10, Deceive (Fel) +10, Forbidden Lore (Heresy, Cults) (Int), Intimidate (S) +10, Interrogation (WP), Literacy (Int) +10, Scholastic Lore (Imperial Creed) (Int) +20, Secret Tongue (Ecclesiarchy) (Int) +20, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int).
Traits: Unnatural Willpower (x2), additionally his support chair grants him the Autosanguine Talent and full life support functions.
Talents: Heroic leadership, Concealed Cavity, Hatred (Heretics), Light Sleeper, Master Orator, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Paranoia, Peer (Ecclesiarchy), Resistance (Fear), Unshakable Faith, True Faith, Purge the Unclean.
Armour: Cal's support chair grants him 5 AP to his legs and against all attacks from the rear. In addition in contains a Rosarius (see page 145).
Weapons: The support chair contains a concealed MIU-linked Malleus psycannon (120m; S/–/5; 2d10+5 X; Pen 5; Clip 40; Rld 3 Full, Tearing, Reliable, Sanctified).
Gear: Votive items, personal prayer book, psy-jammer.

Legatine Sister Vespasia

Legatine Sister Vespasia Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
51	48	40	45	38	35	30	48	28

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 22
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Climb (S), Common Lore (Imperium, Imperial Creed, War) (Int) +10, Command (Fel) +20, Forbidden Lore (Heresy, Mutants), Interrogation (WP), Intimidate (S), Literacy (Int), Medicae (Int), Performer (singer) (Fel), Speak Language (Low Gothic, High Gothic) (Int), Search (Per), Scrutiny (Per).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (Bolt, Las, SP), Blademaster, Hatred (Heretics, Daemons), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive, Chain, Shock, Power), Iron Discipline, Nerves of Steel, Pistol Training (Bolt, Las, SP), Resistance (Fear), Unshakeable Faith. Touched by the Fates (2 Fate Points), Pure Faith†, Wrath of the Righteous.
†*See The Inquisitor's Handbook for more information regarding this.*
Armour: Adepta Sororitas light power armour (AP 7 all locations)
Weapons: Godwyn-De'az bolter (90m; S/2/–; 1d10+5 X; Pen 4; Clip 20; Rld Full, Tearing), mono-blade (1d5+5 R; Pen 2), power sword (1d10+8 E; Pen 6; Balanced, Power Field).
Gear: Micro-bead vox, respirator, photo-visor, two spare bolt clips, one clip of blessed bolt gun ammo.

Adepta Sororitas Honour Guard

Adepta Sororitas Honour Guard Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
38	45	40	45	36	30	35	40	18

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 15
Skills: Awareness (Per), Climb (S), Common Lore (Imperium, Imperial Creed, War) (Int), Interrogation (WP), Intimidate (S), Literacy (Int), Medicae (Int), Performer (singer) (Fel), Speak Language (Low Gothic, High Gothic) (Int), Search (Per), Scrutiny (Per).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (Bolt, Las, SP), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive, Chain, Shock), Nerves of Steel, Pistol Training (Bolt, Las, SP), Resistance (Fear), Unshakeable Faith.
Armour: Adepta Sororitas light power armour (AP 7 all locations)
Weapons: Godwyn-De'az bolter (90m; S/2/–; 1d10+5 X; Pen 4; Clip 20; Rld Full, Tearing), mono-blade (1d5+5 R; Pen 2).
Gear: Micro-bead vox, respirator, photo-visor, three spare bolt clips.

Murderous Cherubim

Murderous Cherubim Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
30	10	16	20	30	18	27	30	10

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 5
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Concealment (Ag) +10, Silent Move (Ag) +10,
Talents: Weapon Training (Primitive), Talented (Concealment)
Traits: Dark Sight, Flyer 5, From Beyond, Machine (1), Programmed Instinct, Size (scrawny)
Armour (machine): 1 All locations
Weapons: Retractable mono-blade (1d5+1 R; Pen 2).
Gear: none

THE NOBLE HOUSES

Lord-Regent Fafnir Belasco

A hugely powerful and dangerous noble, it is through his backing that Zan has been made Archimandrite, much to the enmity of his house's political rivals.

Lord-Regent Fafnir Belasco Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
37	43	33	40	38	60	51	45	37

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 17
Mastered **Skills:** Commerce Mastery (Int), Common Lore Mastery, Cryptographic Mastery, Scholastic Mastery
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Blather (Fel), Carouse (T), Charm (Fel), Command (Fel) +10, Deceive (Fel) +20, Dodge (Ag), Forbidden Lore (Heresy, Cults, Xenos) (Int), Gamble (Int) +10, Literacy (Int) +10, Scrutiny (Per) +10, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic, Archaic Malfian, Void cant) (Int) +10.
Traits: Unnatural Willpower (x2), Touched by the Fates (3 Fate Points).
Talents: Autosanguine, Exotic Weapon Training (Needle Pistol), Fearless, Jaded, Melee Weapon Training (Power, Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, SP, Bolt).
Armour: Xeno-mesh woven coat (Arms 4, Body 4, Legs 3)
Weapons: Personally designed needle pistol (25m; S/–/–; 1d10+2 R; Pen 4; Clip 8; Rld Full, Accurate, Toxic), Khayer-Addin duelling laspistol (30m; S/—/—; 1d10+4 E; Pen 4; Clip 1; Reload Full; Accurate, Tearing), Serpentine Power Blade (1d0+4 E; Pen 6; Power Field).
Gear: Extremely fine clothes and understated jewellery, good bionic respiratory system, ward acessor (Master-House Belasco, League of Nobility), personal encrypted vox, Lathe Pattern null box, 3 spare charges for his dueling-las.

House Belasco Armsmen

House Belasco Armsmen Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
38	42	45	40	35	28	35	35	26

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 12
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, (Int), Carouse (T) +10, Common Lore (Imperium, Tech,) (Int), Deceive (Fel), Dodge (Ag), Gamble (Int), Interrogation (WP), Intimidation (S) +10, Inquiry (Int), Literacy (Int), Speak Language (Low Gothic) (Int), Tech-Use (Int), Trade (Bodyguard) (Int), Scrutiny (Per) +10, Survival (Int).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (SP, Las, Bolt), Disarm, Jaded, Melee Weapon Training (Primitive, Power, Chain), Pistol Training (SP, Las, Bolt, Plasma), Nerves of Steel.
Armour: Carapace and mesh (Head 4, Arms 3, Body 5, Legs 4).
Weapons: Bolt pistol (30m; S/2/–; 1d10+5 X; Pen 4; Clip 12; Rld Full), chainsword (1d10+6† R; Pen 2;, Tearing).
†*Includes Strength Bonus.*
Gear: Respirator, photo-visor, personal encrypted vox bead, three spare bolt clips.

The Honourable Hector Maken

The Honourable Hector Maken Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
14	20	30	30	30	28	22	37	31

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 10
Skills: Blather (Fel), Carouse (T) +20, Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Deceive (Fel) +10, Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int), Charm (Fel), Deceive (Fel) +10, Gamble (Int), Literacy (Int), Scholastic Lore (Heraldry, Imperium, Malfian History) (Int), Sleight of Hand (Ag).
Talents: Jaded.
Weapons: None.
Gear: Foppish clothes and ostentatious jewellery, ward acessor (House Maken, League of Nobility), personal encrypted vox, remote control for whiteclaws (concealed as wrist band).

Sira Rabbas Jenet

Sira Rabbas Jenet Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
45	45	35	40	41	27	22	40	25

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 15
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Concealment (Ag), Dodge (Ag), Drive (Ground Vehicle) (Ag), Gambling (Int), Inquiry (Fel), Interrogation (WP), Intimidate (S) +10, Security (Ag), Shadowing (Ag), Silent Move (Ag), Scholastic Lore (Heraldry) (Int), Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic, Tracking (Int).
Talents: Basic Weapon Training (Las, SP), Disarm, Hip Shooting, Iron Jaw, Jaded, Melee Weapon Training (Chain, Primitive, Shock), Nerves of Steel, Pistol Training (Bolt, Las, SP, Plasma).
Armour: Decorative light carapace and mesh (Arms 3, Body 5, Legs 2).
Weapons: Compact plasma pistol (15m; 1d10+5 E; S/–/–; Pen 6; Clip 6; Rld 4 Full; Recharge, Overheats), power sword (1d10+8 E; Pen 6; Balanced, Power Field).
Gear: Fine quality clothing, livery sash, ward acessor (lesser, House Maken), 50 Thrones, personal encrypted vox, hip flask of Quaddis Sorrowful Vintage.

Whiteclaws

Two of these bejewelled cyber-felids guard Maken's private chambers and escort him to public occasions where possible.

Whiteclaws Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
40	10	50	50	38	20	40	30	10

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 20
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Concealment (Ag), Silent Move (Ag) +20, Tracking (Int) +20
Talents: Fearless, Weapon Training (Primitive), Talented (Concealment).
Traits: Dark Sight, Quadruped, Brutal Charge, Machine (4), Armour Plated.
Armour (machine): 6 All locations.
Weapons: Void-kraken ivory fangs (2d5+7 R; Pen 3, Tearing).
Gear: Implanted vox-signal systems, photo-visor, filter plugs and drug-injector with three doses of Frenzon and two of Stimm (remotely controlled).

THE COMMERCIA

Lady Cheska Duquesne (Inquisitor Heleyna Nephren)

Lady Cheska Duquesne Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
50	48	32	37	34	51	48	57	41

Movement: 3/6/9/18; **Wounds:** 17
Influence: 42
Mastered Skills: Forbidden Lore Mastery, Investigation Mastery
Skills: Awareness (Per) +10, Common Lore (Imperium, Administratum) (Int) +20, Common Lore (Ecclesiarchy, Imperial Creed) (Int) +10, Ciphers (Acolyte, Inquisition, Nephren, Adeptus Arbites, Pale Throng) (Int) +10, Common Lore (Adeptus Arbites, Underworld) (Int), Ciphers (Occult) (Int), Literacy (Int) +20, Scholastic Lore (Bureaucracy, Judgement) (Int) +10, Scholastic Lore (Archaic, Philosophy, Occult) (Int), Secret Tongue (Acolyte, Nephren, Volg-Utter, Horned Darkness), Speak Language (High Gothic, Low Gothic) (Int) +20, Trade (Merchant) (Int) +10.
Traits: Conviction is Strength, The Indomitable Will of the Inquisition
Talents: Armour of Contempt, Basic Weapon Training (Bolt, Las, SP), Conditioned Intellect, Dark Soul, Fearless, Hatred (Daemons, Psykers), Revolutionary, Touched by the Fates (2 Fate Points).
Armour: Concealed bodyglove with Hexagramtic wards (Body 3, Arms 1, Legs 1), Refractor Field generator concealed in neckpiece (usually deactivated until needed)
Weapons: Digital Needler (10m; S/—/—; 1d10 R; Pen 2; Clip 3; Reload-special; Accurate, Toxic), Digital Flamer (5m; S/—/—; 1d10+4 E; Pen 3; Clip 1; Reload special; Flame), Lathe-forged stiletto (1d5+4† R, Pen 4; Balanced, +10 to WS Tests). Has access to almost any weapon if needed.
† *Includes Strength Bonus.*
Gear: Opulent garb, data-slate, Inquisitorial Rosette (concealed), ward accessor ring (Commercia), 2 pinches of Night Dust, implanted psy-jammer, injector with two doses of De-Tox and two of Stimm.

Commercia Representative

(suitable for Vice Chancellor Jaqele Sleer and others)

Commercia Representative Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
25	30	35	35	30	33	40	35	40

Movement: 3/6/9/18 **Wounds:** 12
Skills: Awareness (Per), Barter (Fel) +10, Charm (Fel) +10, (T), Common Lore (Imperium) (Int), Common Lore (Trade, Sub-Sector, Malfi) (Int), Command (Fel), Evaluate (Int) +10, Carouse (T), Deceive (Fel) +10, Intimidate (S), Speak Language (Low Gothic, High Gothic, Trade Cant) (Int). Literacy (Int), Security (Ag), Scrutiny (Per) +10
Talents: Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (Las, SP), Basic Weapon Training (Las, SP)
Armour: Concealed Mesh Vest (Body 4)
Weapons: Compact laspistol (15, S/—/—; 1d10+1 E; Shots 15; Reload Full; Reliable), mono sword (1d10+3 R; Pen 2, Balanced)
Gear: Fine clothes bearing livery markings, personal encrypted vox, seal of merchant or noble family, data-slate, 3d10 thrones.

THE POWERS OF RUIN

Master Rothber Sydom

Rothber Sydom Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
55	38	40	51	42	38	42	(9) 38	50

Movement: 4/8/12/24 **Wounds:** 37
Mastered **Skills:** Forbidden Lore Mastery, Observation Mastery
Skills: Blather (Fel), Carouse (T), Ciphers (Occult, Commercia) (Int), Common Lore (Imperium, Imperial Creed, Commercia) (Int), Command (fell) +10, Deceive (Fel) +20, Intimidate (S) +10, Invocation (WP) +10, Performer (Fel) +10, Psyniscience (Per) +20, Secret Tongue (Menagerie) (Int) +10, Speak Language (Low Gothic, High Gothic, Void Cant) (Int), Trade (Merchant, Slaver, Seer) (Int).
Talents: Favored of the Warp, Foresight, Lightning Reflexes, Sorcerer, Master Sorcerer (Psy 4), Sublime Arts, Touched By the Fates (3 Fate Points), Melee Weapon Training (Primitive), Pistol Training (SP), Resistance (Psychic, Poisons, Disease)
Traits: Dark Pact, From Beyond, Unnatural Toughness (x3), Unnatural Willpower (x3).
Special Traits
Beyond Flesh: By passing a **Challenging (+0) Willpower Test**, Sydom may use either the Mask of Flesh Arcana or duplicate (at will) the effects of any single physical mutation from the Minor or Major Mutations listed in **Dark Heresy**. This ability is a Full Action to employ and entails no Power Roll or risk of failure. This effect will last until he chooses to dismiss it or take another form.
Warping Touch: Sydom's touch is imbued with the twisting power of the warp. He can sculpt flesh as if it was wet clay and rip through the strongest metal like brushing away a cobweb. The crudest use of this power can make him a terrifyingly effective combatant, his bare hands literally digging though his enemies' bodies like wet sand.
Mastery of the Fates: Favoured by the twisting skeins of destiny, Sydom perceives the tangled webs of possibilities and the surface of what humans call reality for the frail and mutable thing it truly is. A master of the Menagerie may re-roll a single failed Test or Damage dice per Round and may use the equivalent of the Psychic Power Soul Sight at will as an innate ability.
Dark Rituals: Sydom knows many dark and nightmarish rituals, and has the **Sorcery**† Talent.
Minor Arcana: Touch of Madness (13), Whisper of the Warp (13), Weaken Veil (11), White Noise (10), Revelation of Truth (13), Sense Presence (7), Space Slip (13), Time fade (15).
Major Arcana: Compel (21), Flesh Like Iron (20), Hellish Blast (22), Mind Scan (25), Personal Augury (16), Time Distortion (20) plus others as the GM decides.
†*See Disciples of the Dark Gods for more details*
Armour: None
Weapons: Warping touch (2d10+4†† R; Warp Weapon),
†† *Includes Strength Bonus.*
Gear: Decent quality merchant's clothing, assorted data-slates, minor seal, auto-quill.

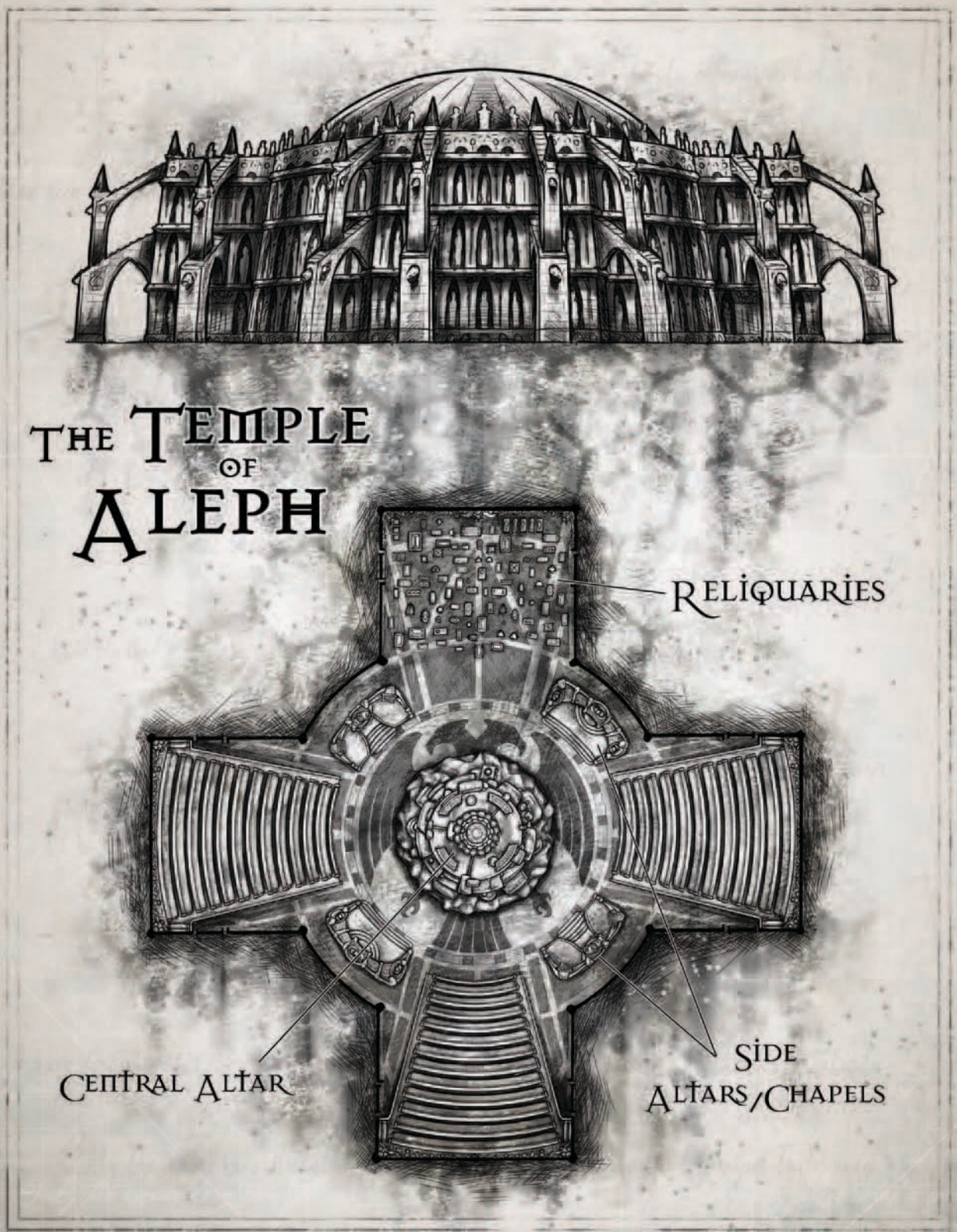
Sadu'sen Daemons

These creatures are daemonic shapeshifters whose true form is that of a smoking column of rippling incandescent flesh filled with baleful glowing eyes and fire-dripping fanged maws. When in human guise, they appear strangely still and speak only reluctantly, but otherwise appear 'normal.'

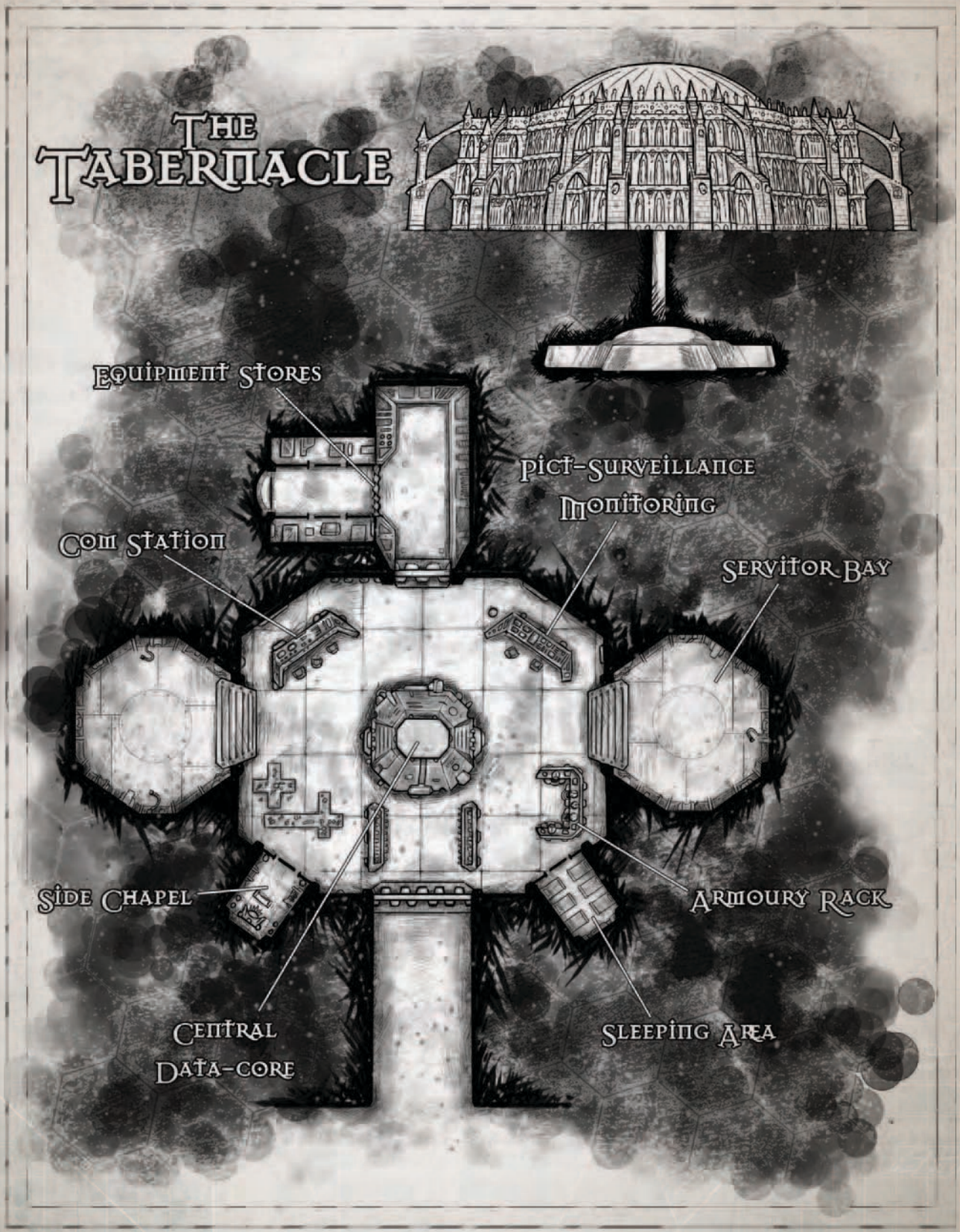
Sadu'sen Daemon Profile								
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Per	WP	Fel
40	40	35	(6) 35	30	29	29	40	20

Movement: 3/6/9/– **Wounds:** 15
Skills: Awareness (Per), Psyniscience (WP) +10, Deceive (Fel) +10, -plus as victim last devoured. (In the case of Sydom's Sadu'sen at the Aleph Carouse (T), Charm (Fel), Common Lore (Imperium), Speak Language (low Gothic), Acrobatics (Ag), Performer (Mime) (Fel)
Talents: None
Traits: Daemonic (TB 6), Fear 2‡ , Flyer 5, From Beyond, Incorporeal†‡, Warp Instability‡
‡*True form only*
Special:
Daemonic Presence: When in its true form, all living creatures take a –10 penalty to Willpower Tests.
False Form: The Sadu'sen may assume the physical shape and voice of the last human they have physically devoured and will also retain their memories and basic skills (no advanced skills). If physically injured they must pass a Challenging (+0) Willpower test or transform into their true selves. Sadu'sen may be detected for what they are in the same way that a possessing sprit can be.
Phase: Sadu'sen may become incorporeal at will (during which the daemon grows pale and seems to flicker). When incorporeal both consecrated barriers and energy fields designed to hold back the warp (such as a starship's Gellar Field) block the passage the Sadu'sen and they are vulnerable to psychically charged or Holy attacks and powers. While incorporeal, these entities may still attack through the use of their Ætheric fire.
Weapons: Ætheric fire (20m; –/2/–; 1d10+1 E; Pen 5; Unlimited), flaming maws (1d10+3 R; Tearing, Warp Weapon)
Gear: None or as carried in human form

PLAYER HANDOUT I: MAP OF THE TEMPLE OF ALEPH



PLAYER HANDOUT II: MAP OF THE TABERNACLE



Character Name _____ Player Name _____

Home World _____ Quirk _____

Background Package _____ Transition Package _____

Career Path _____ Ascended Career Path _____ Rank _____

Divination _____ Ordo (and/or Faction) _____

Description _____

CHARACTERISTICS

Weapon Skill (WS)	Ballistic Skill (BS)	Strength (S)	Toughness (T)	Agility (Ag)	Intelligence (Int)	Perception (Per)	Will Power (WP)	Fellowship (Fel)
Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances
o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o

SKILLS

	Basic	Trained	+10%	+20%
Acrobatics (Ag)	o	o	o	o
Awareness (Per)	n	o	o	o
Barter (Fel)	n	o	o	o
Blather (Fel)	o	o	o	o
Carouse (T)	n	o	o	o
Charm (Fel)	n	o	o	o
Chem-Use (Int)	o	o	o	o
Ciphers (Int)†	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
Climb (S)	n	o	o	o
Command (Fel)	n	o	o	o
Common Lore (Int)†	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
Concealment (Ag)	n	o	o	o
Contortionist (Ag)	n	o	o	o
Deceive (Fel)	n	o	o	o
Demolition (Int)	o	o	o	o
Disguise (Fel)	n	o	o	o
Dodge (Ag)	n	o	o	o
Drive (Ag)†	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o

	Basic	Trained	+10%	+20%
Evaluate	n	o	o	o
Forbidden Lore (Int)†	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
Gamble (Int)	n	o	o	o
Inquiry (Fel)	n	o	o	o
Interrogation (WP)	o	o	o	o
Intimidate (S)	n	o	o	o
Invocation (WP)	o	o	o	o
Lip Reading (Per)	o	o	o	o
Literacy (Int)	o	o	o	o
Logic (Int)	n	o	o	o
Medicae (Int)	o	o	o	o
Navigation (Int)†	o	o	o	o
Performer (Fel)†	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
Pilot (Ag)†	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
Psyniscience (Per)	o	o	o	o
Scholasic Lore (Int)†	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o

	Basic	Trained	+10%	+20%
_____	o	o	o	o
Scrutiny (Per)	n	o	o	o
Search (Per)	n	o	o	o
Secret Tongue (Int)†	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
Security (Ag)	o	o	o	o
Shadowing (Ag)	o	o	o	o
Silent Move (Ag)	n	o	o	o
Sleight of Hand (Ag)	o	o	o	o
Speak Lagnuage (Int)†	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
Survival (Int)	o	o	o	o
Swim (S)	n	o	o	o
Tech-Use (Int)	o	o	o	o
Tracking (Int)	o	o	o	o
Trade (Int)†	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o
Wrangling (Int)	o	o	o	o
_____	o	o	o	o

MASTERED SKILLS

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

INFLUENCE

Starting _____

Current _____

Modifiers _____

Organizations and Notes _____

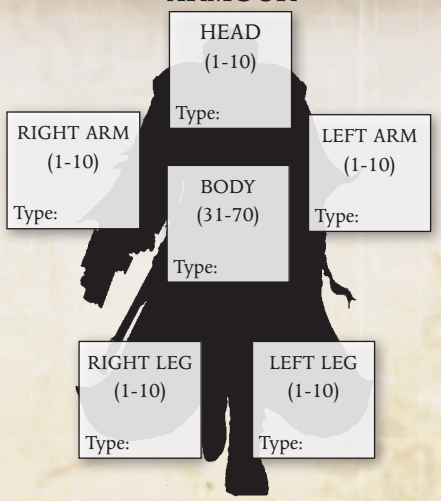
_____

MOVEMENT

Half Action _____ Full Action _____

Charge _____ Run _____

ARMOUR



WOUNDS

Total _____

Current _____

Critical Damage _____

Fatigue _____

FATE POINTS

Total _____

Current _____

INSANITY

Current Points _____

Degree of Madness _____

Disorders _____

CORRUPTION

Current Points _____

Degree of Corruption _____

Malignancies _____

†denotes Skill Group

Permission granted to photocopy for personal use. © Games Workshop Ltd 2010. Character sheet also available for download at www.FantasyFlightGames.com

CHARACTERISTICS

Weapon Skill (WS)	Ballistic Skill (BS)	Strength (S)	Toughness (T)	Agility (Ag)	Intelligence (Int)	Perception (Per)	Will Power (WP)	Fellowship (Fel)
Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances	Characteristic Advances
o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o	o o o o o o

MISSILE WEAPONS

NAME			
CLASS	DAMAGE	TYPE	PEN
RANGE	ROF	CLIP	RLD
SPECIAL RULES			

MELEE WEAPONS

NAME			
CLASS	DAMAGE	TYPE	PEN
RANGE	ROF	CLIP	RLD
SPECIAL RULES			

MISSILE WEAPONS

NAME			
CLASS	DAMAGE	TYPE	PEN
RANGE	ROF	CLIP	RLD
SPECIAL RULES			

MELEE WEAPONS

NAME			
CLASS	DAMAGE	TYPE	PEN
RANGE	ROF	CLIP	RLD
SPECIAL RULES			

MISSILE WEAPONS

NAME			
CLASS	DAMAGE	TYPE	PEN
RANGE	ROF	CLIP	RLD
SPECIAL RULES			

MELEE WEAPONS

NAME			
CLASS	DAMAGE	TYPE	PEN
RANGE	ROF	CLIP	RLD
SPECIAL RULES			

TALENTS AND TRAITS

PARAGON TALENTS

EXPERIENCE

XP to Spend_____ Total XP Spent_____

GEAR

MUTATIONS

WEALTH

Permission granted to photocopy for personal use. © Games Workshop Ltd 2010. Character sheet also available for download at www.FantasyFlightGames.com

PSYCHIC POWERS

Psy Rating_____ Psychic Discipline_____

Power_____
Threshold_____ Focus Time_____
Sustained_____ Range_____
Description_____
_____
_____

Power_____
Threshold_____ Focus Time_____
Sustained_____ Range_____
Description_____
_____
_____

Power_____
Threshold_____ Focus Time_____
Sustained_____ Range_____
Description_____
_____
_____

Power_____
Threshold_____ Focus Time_____
Sustained_____ Range_____
Description_____
_____
_____

Power_____
Threshold_____ Focus Time_____
Sustained_____ Range_____
Description_____
_____
_____

Power_____
Threshold_____ Focus Time_____
Sustained_____ Range_____
Description_____
_____
_____

Power_____
Threshold_____ Focus Time_____
Sustained_____ Range_____
Description_____
_____
_____

Power_____
Threshold_____ Focus Time_____
Sustained_____ Range_____
Description_____
_____
_____

Power_____
Threshold_____ Focus Time_____
Sustained_____ Range_____
Description_____
_____
_____

Power_____
Threshold_____ Focus Time_____
Sustained_____ Range_____
Description_____
_____
_____

Permission granted to photocopy for personal use. © Games Workshop Ltd 2010. Character sheet also available for download at www.FantasyFlightGames.com

Dark Heresy™
Ascension™

IT IS TIME TO ASCEND TO A HIGHER PURPOSE!

Take your rightful place amongst the ranks of the Holy Inquisition itself—no longer are you a pawn, but one who can change the very nature of the contest.

Advanced character generation, including transition packages to take your Dark Heresy characters from Acolytes to Throne Agents—and even the position of Inquisitor. Eleven other Ascended Careers include Sage, Storm Trooper and Vindicare Assassin.

New Ascended Psychic Powers, plus a section on ascended adversaries, from Greater Daemons to renegade Imperial Governors.

Systems of influence and reputation for a different scale of wealth and power in the Imperium, plus Paragon Talents and Mastered Skills to enhance your character's abilities.

This book takes your Dark Heresy campaign to greater heights of power, responsibility, and peril in the grim darkness of the far future.

Suitable for players of all levels.
A copy of the Dark Heresy Core Rulebook is needed to use this supplement.

716DEC09

Ascension DH11
ISBN: 978-1-58994-711-5

9 781589 947115 54995

Games Workshop®

www.FantasyFlightGames.com