THE HORUS HERESY®

VISIONS OF HERESY



BOOK ONE

'In the hour of mankind's greatest triumph, the seeds of heresy are sown.'

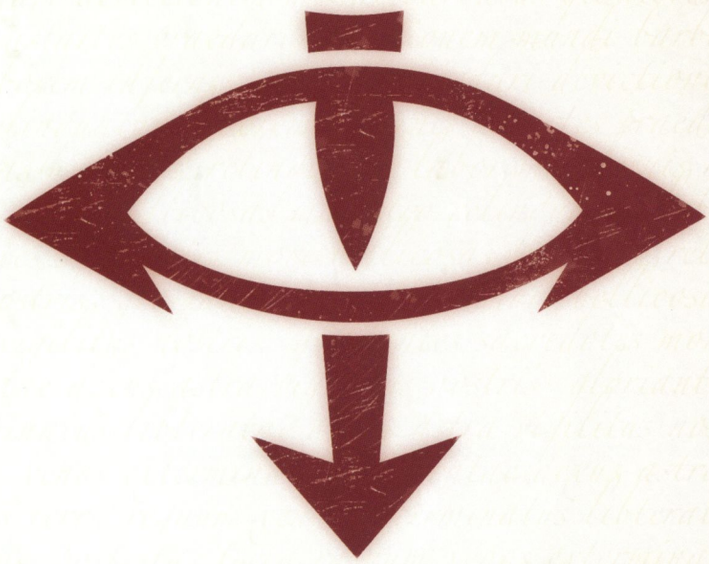


Battle for the Abyss – *Neil Roberts*

THE HORUS HERESY®

VISIONS OF HERESY

BOOK ONE



ICONIC IMAGES OF BETRAYAL AND WAR

BY ALAN MERRETT

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A Black Library Publication
Produced by Black Library

Thanks to John Blanche, Ben Douglas, Christian Dunn, Steve Horvath, Jervis Johnson, William King, Graeme Lyon, Rick Priestley, Edd Ralph, Demetris Tampakoudis, all at Games Workshop, and of course all of the wonderful artists whose work is featured in this book.

Special mention must go to all of the many people who have worked on the story over the years: writers, artists, plotters, planners, model makers, managers, editors and all the other backroom staff without whose tireless and dedicated efforts none of this would have been possible.

First published in Great Britain in 2013 by
Black Library, Games Workshop,
Willow Road, Lenton,
Nottingham,
NG7 2WS.

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British Cataloguing-in-Publication Data. A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library. Pictures used for illustrative purposes only.

Product Code: 60040181057 ISBN: 978-1-84970-491-5 Printed in China

Games Workshop website: www.games-workshop.com
Black Library website: www.blacklibrary.com
Forge World website: www.forgeworld.co.uk

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FOREWORD

The story of the Horus Heresy had its origins in a small piece of text presented in the very first Warhammer 40,000 miniatures gaming supplement that Games Workshop published, a long out of print book entitled *Chapter Approved – The Book of the Astronomican*. Published in early 1988, this snippet of text gave a tiny glimpse of what was to follow:

> *'The Horus Heresy is reckoned by many to rate as the greatest single disaster ever suffered by the Imperium. The specific details of the Heresy are known only to the Emperor, but its broader history is the stuff of popular legend. According to one version of the tale, Horus was once the most trusted servant of the Emperor. But in his heart there dwelt a hidden evil, and he became seduced by this evil, and came to nurture demons and other forces of destruction. Horus marched upon Earth with a third part of the hosts of the Imperium which he had seduced to his purpose. For seven days and seven nights the hosts battled until the Emperor caught Horus by the heel and cast him to the Eye of Terror and with him the third part of the hosts of the Imperium.'*

Later that same year Games Workshop published the miniatures game Adeptus Titanicus and the seminal Warhammer/Warhammer 40,000 supplement *Realm of Chaos: Slaves to Darkness*. Both of these featured expanded histories and background information about the Heresy, firmly establishing it as the most important and evocative story within the Warhammer 40,000 mythos. Since then the story has been embellished, added to and utilised as a wellspring of ideas – dozens of different products featuring the story have been published by Games Workshop and its subsidiaries during the intervening years.

The Horus Heresy has, quite rightly, acquired legendary status amongst Warhammer 40,000 fans, but until the publication of the *Visions* series of artbooks the story had never before been collected together as a single narrative. The four volumes plotted the entire story arc, from the ending of the Great Crusade through to the seminal final battle aboard Horus's battle-barge *Vengeful Spirit*. This new edition combines the four original volumes and also includes some brand new texts and yet more lavish illustration, drawn from the Black Library's best-selling Horus Heresy novel series.

Alan Merrett
January 2013

Timeline

Millennia	Age	Notes
1-15	Age of Terra	Humanity dominates Earth. Civilisations come and go. The Solar System is colonised. Mankind lives on Mars and the moons of Jupiter, Saturn and Neptune.
15-18	Age of Technology	Mankind begins to colonise the stars using sub-light spacecraft. At first only nearby systems can be reached and the colonies established on them must survive as independent states since they are separated from Earth by up to ten generations of travel.
18-22	Age of Technology	Invention of the warp-drive accelerates the colonising of the galaxy. Federations and Empires are founded. First aliens encountered and first Alien Wars are fought. First human psykers scientifically proven to exist. Psykers begin to appear throughout human worlds.
22-25	Age of Technology	First Navigators are born allowing human spaceships to make even longer, quicker warp-jumps. Mankind enters a golden age of enlightenment as scientific and technological progress accelerates. Human worlds unite and non-aggression pacts are secured with dozens of alien races.
25-26	Age of Strife	Terrible warp-storms interrupt interstellar travel. Sporadic at first, the storms eventually prevent any warp-jumps being made. The incidence of human mutation increases rapidly. Mankind enters a dark period of anarchy and despair.
26-30	Age of Strife	Human worlds ripped apart by civil wars, revolts, alien predation and invasion. Human psykers and other mutants dominate some worlds and these rapidly fall prey to warp-creatures. Humanity is on the brink of destruction.
30-present	Age of Imperium	Earth is conquered by the Emperor and enters an alliance with the Mechanicum of Mars. Finally, the warp storms abate and interstellar travel is possible again. The Emperor builds the Astronomican and creates the Space Marine Legions. Human worlds are reunited by the Emperor in a Great Crusade that lasts for more than two hundred years.

The Age of the Emperor



The Emperor – *Adrian Smith*

It is a time of legend.

Mighty heroes battle for the right to rule the galaxy.

The vast armies of the Emperor of Mankind have conquered the galaxy in a Great Crusade – the myriad alien races have been smashed by the Emperor's elite warriors and have retreated to their lairs to lick their wounds.

The dawn of a new age of supremacy for humanity beckons.

Gleaming citadels of marble and gold celebrate the many victories of the Emperor. Triumphs are raised on a million worlds to record the epic deeds of his most powerful and deadly warriors.

First and foremost amongst these are the primarchs. These superhumans have led the Emperor's armies of Space Marines in victory after victory. They are unstoppable and magnificent, the pinnacle of the Emperor's genetic experimentation. The Space Marines are the mightiest human warriors the galaxy has ever known. Each one is capable of besting a hundred normal men in combat. They are legion!

Organised into vast armies of tens of thousands called Legions, the Space Marines and their primarch leaders now rule the galaxy in the name of the Emperor.

Chief amongst the primarchs is Horus, the first and strongest and to the Emperor like a son. He is the Warmaster, the commander-in-chief of all the Emperor's military might, the subjugator of a thousand thousand worlds and conqueror of the galaxy. He is unmatched as a warrior, save by maybe the Emperor himself. His star is bright and his troops are devoted to him. But their trust is about to be shattered!

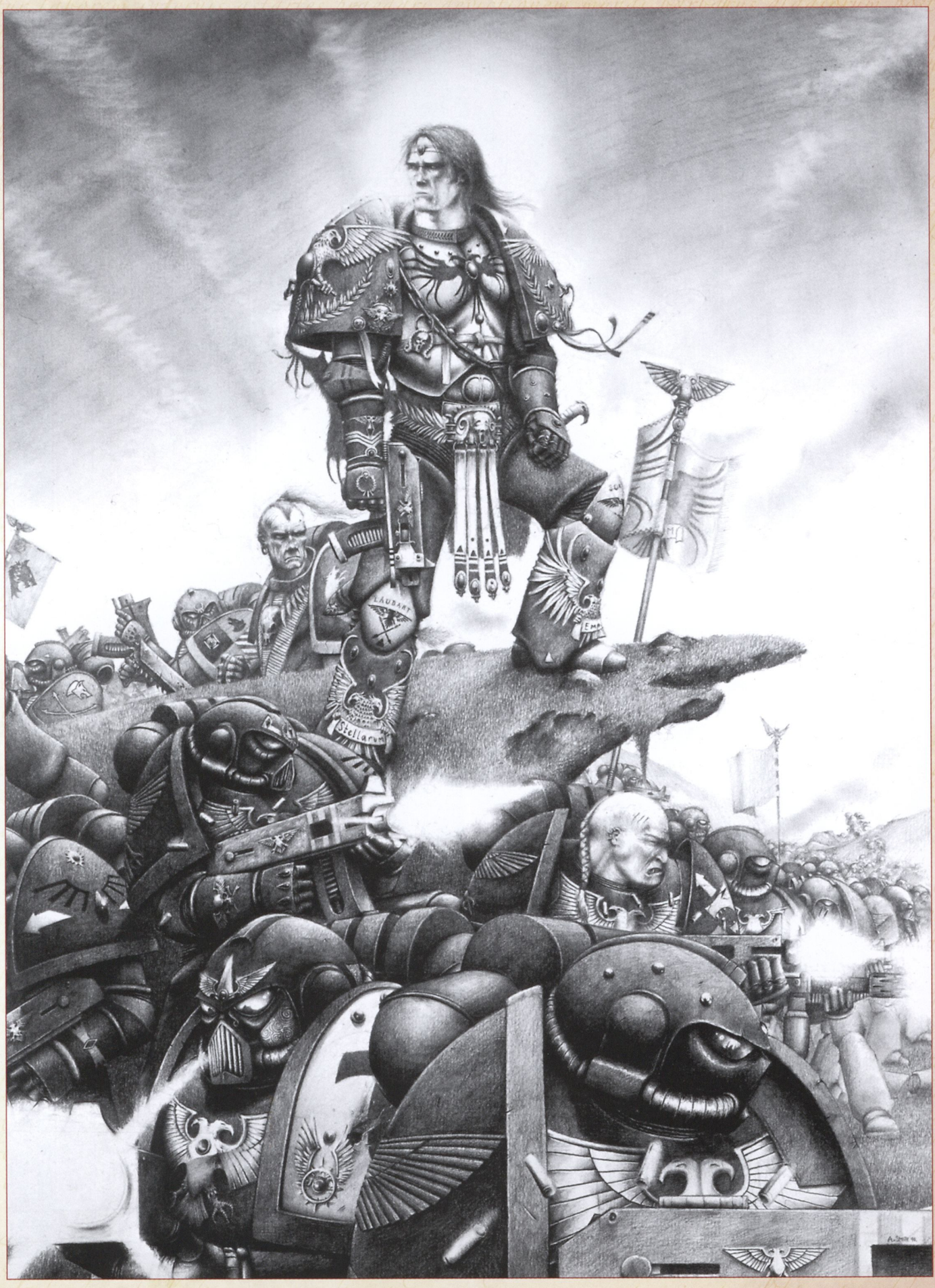
Unbeknownst to his troops or the Emperor, Horus has been corrupted by the secret powers of the warp. Chaos has whispered in his ear and Horus has listened to its guile and wickedness. Why should Horus do as the Emperor bids? Was he not the one who led the Space Marine Legions to countless victories? Does he not bear the scars of a thousand battles? Was the Emperor there to shed a tear as brave Space Marines died horrible deaths at the hands of their alien foes? No, it was Horus who fought and bled and cried! Horus who planned the wars and the victories. Horus who has earned the loyalty of the Space Marines. Horus who should be acclaimed Emperor of Mankind!

The Emperor sits on his throne on Earth and dreams of the future. He has single-handedly created the most awesome military force ever known. His genius mapped the genes and artifice of the primarchs and their Space Marine progeny. His brilliant mind conceived the Grand Plan: the marrying of the great Empires of Terra and Mars and their Great Crusade to rescue mankind from the thrall of aliens and warp-beasts. It was the Emperor who helped realise the full potential of the Navigators and enabled humanity to travel vast distances through the warp without peril. But his work is not finished and now he dreams his dreams and his vast intellect calculates the destiny of mankind. Time is against him. His precognitive powers are fading; the pressure to maintain the galaxy-wide signal of the Astronomican grows daily; the future has become clouded and dark. He is aware that others like him are aborning, but weaker than he, less able to fend off the seductive embrace of the Warp and the unknown horrors within.

It is upon these emerging psykers that the Emperor has focused his attention. Now is the time for him to order the fabrication of the Psy-Engines and Occullum Test Stations, the devices that will search out the inert psyker genes within the populace. Emerging and latent psykers can thence be trained and purified, protected from the dangers of the warp and the malignant entities therein. Mankind's destiny is a fragile thing and only the Emperor can guide it well and safely forward.

The Emperor's great armies have served their purpose. Now is the time for the Legions to be disbanded and the Space Marines set to other tasks guarding the worlds of humanity and policing the new regimes. The warrior lords that are the primarchs are to become the rulers of worlds and administrators of the Grand Plan.

Horus seeks vengeance! He wants to rid the galaxy of mankind's alien foes utterly. Not a single alien should remain alive to threaten humanity. The Legions must hunt them down and eradicate them all! The glorious armies of the Imperium should not be forced to put down their guns and swords. They must not be emasculated and converted into mere policemen and gatekeepers! The daemon argues a clever and compelling case in Horus's ear and the Emperor should beware the serpent!



Unity – Adrian Smith



The Emperor of Mankind – *John Blanche*



Imperial Palace – *John Blanche*

The Age of Strife

This terrible period of history lasted for over five thousand years. During this time, the worlds of man were isolated by searing warp storms that made interstellar travel virtually impossible. Earth was totally cut off from its colonies and allies. Across the galaxy, the human worlds fell into anarchy and war. Mankind was torn apart as local factions and empires fought for control.

As human civilisation fragmented, hundreds of alien races seized their chance to plunder unprotected worlds and enslave their populations. Planets were sacked and their peoples slaughtered. Those that survived the alien onslaught rapidly reverted to barbarism. Worse still was the threat from the warp.

The existence of warp creatures and the dangers they posed to the human mind were not fully understood. On worlds with large concentrations of psykers, these creatures were able to breach the barrier between the immaterium and realspace. Entire worlds fell prey to the indescribable horrors that burst forth. Some worlds were devoured whole and have been permanently lost in the warp.

Humanity was on the brink of annihilation. Alone and beset by internal strife, under incessant attack by aliens and facing the peril of warp incursions, the human worlds that survived were pitiable shadows of what they had once been. It would take a superhuman effort to save humanity and free it from its hellish bondage.

During the Age of Strife, the Earth was in a terrible state. Generations of war made the planet a virtual wasteland and the inhabitants a mass of degenerate, feral nomads. Insane prophets and religious demagogues led the warring tribes of Earth and the world was wracked by one religious war after another. Earth was isolated from its former empire in the stars. Only Mars was still in intermittent contact and the arcane tech-priests of the red planet were deadly foes of the mad rabbles of old Terra.

From out of this doom a powerful leader emerged. He was the Emperor and his power lay in his rationality and foresight. Few suspected him of being the mutant he was. The Emperor conquered great swathes of the Earth and instituted many social changes. Out went fear and blind faith, in came practicality and rationality. The Emperor started to experiment with genetics to stabilise the population and to recreate the race of mankind as it was before the radiation storms. The Emperor formed his War Council, comprised of his most able generals and a number of high-ranking administrators who hailed him as divine.

The Great Crusade

From the ashes of the Age of Strife there arose a mighty leader, the man who would be known only as the Emperor. His origins are unrecorded and unknown, but it was on Earth that he started to forge an empire that would unite the myriad worlds of humanity. The Emperor quickly conquered the Earth and reunited the warring factions.

From the outset, the Emperor employed the genetically modified warriors who were to become the Space Marines. These superhuman troops dominated the Unification Wars, easily defeating all their Terran opponents and forcing the tech-priests of Mars to sue for peace. They fought with righteous zeal and it was they who first referred to their mission as a crusade.

Just as the conquest of Earth was complete, a mighty cosmic event occurred. A massive shock blasted across the warp, clearing the warp storms that had raged for five thousand years.

The Solar System was the first region of space to be conquered by the Emperor and his Space Marine Legions. Alien invaders were flushed from the moons of Saturn and Jupiter and their wretched enslaved human inhabitants repatriated to Earth.

Mars had evolved a strong culture based around worship of the Machine God and was devoted to the study and construction of engines and machinery of all types. The Mechanicum of Mars, a parliament of technocrats, ruled this powerful world. The Emperor did not attack the red planet, but instead struck an alliance with the Mechanicum.

Access to the giant factories of Mars enabled the Emperor to vastly increase the power of his Legions with improved wargear. In addition, the tech-priests of Mars supplied the vast warp-engined battleships that could transport the Emperor's Legions across the galaxy and the mighty war machines known as Titans.

So it was that the Emperor led his Legions of Space Marines on a great mission to free humanity from the aliens and warp creatures that had nearly destroyed it – the Great Crusade had begun. World after world was reconquered. Alien oppressors were routed or annihilated in a series of epic wars. Worlds infected with warp creatures were cleansed with powerful virus bombs and vortex missiles in apocalyptic orbital barrages.

During the Great Crusade, the Space Marine Legions were reunited with their primarchs. Many of the planets upon which the primarchs had been raised, and which they now dominated, became the Legions' home worlds and they established permanent bases on them. From these new bases, the Legions could launch assaults on almost any enemy.

The power of the Imperium was at its zenith. Nothing could stand in the way of the Emperor and his mighty army.



Promethean Sun – *Neil Roberts*



Expeditionary Fleets

During the Great Crusade, the vast forces of the Emperor were organised into a number of different formations which became known as the Expeditionary Fleets. At first there was but one fleet – commanded by the Emperor himself – but as the Crusade spread across the galaxy more and more were launched. Trusted and powerful generals were appointed to lead these new fleets.

In order that they could be effectively supported and their movements across the galaxy tracked with some degree of accuracy, each of the Expeditionary Fleets was designated a number by the War Council. As the Great Crusade drew to a close, there were nearly 5,000 primary expeditions and more than 60,000 secondary deployment groups operating throughout the Imperium.

The composition of each of the fleets was not fixed. The various fleet groups, Imperial Army regiments, auxiliary troop formations and even Space Marine Legions that made up a fleet could come and go over time, as prevailing strategy dictated. But the designation numbers remained and, while most never held any particular significance, some became famously associated with specific primarchs or other prestigious leaders of the Imperium.

The numerical designation of an Expeditionary Fleet was also applied to worlds conquered by its forces – for example the Imperial world initially known as 63-19 was the nineteenth discovered by the 63rd Expedition. It was therefore possible for the Imperium's administrators to plot the movements of a specific fleet by the worlds it encountered, in chronological order.



The Expeditionary Fields – *Kevin Chin*



The War Council

The Great Crusade was a mammoth operation involving millions of troops and thousands of ships. Imperial armies fought campaigns across the broad sweep of the galaxy. Tens of thousands of worlds needed to be saved.

The Imperial military of this time comprised the entire force of the Space Marine Legions, thousands of auxiliary regiments drawn from the freshly reconquered worlds, gigantic war machines supplied by the Mechanicum and their forge worlds, foremost amongst these the mighty Titans of the Collegia Titanica, and a host of other smaller organisations and armed formations. The most significant of these was the Custodian Guard, the Emperor's bodyguard.

All of these were supported by a bewildering array of battleships, drop-ships and troop transports variously commanded by the Space Marine Legions, the Mechanicum and the other Imperial Commanders and leaders.

To manage the execution of the Great Crusade, the Emperor convened the War Council. This effectively became the ruling body of the Imperium during the Great Crusade – and through it the Emperor's law – was brought to hundreds of thousands of human worlds.

The Emperor sat at the head of the Council; at his right hand was Malcador. Each of the primarchs had a seat on the Council, as did the Chief Custodian. When the Emperor made his alliance with Mars, the Fabricator-General of the Mechanicum was offered a seat. Supporting the Council was a team of astropaths who provided communication between the members, since it became increasingly impractical for the group to physically assemble, given the size of the growing Imperium and the inherent difficulties of travel through the warp.



Null-Mistress – *John Blanche*

Malcador the Sigillite

During the conquest of Earth the Emperor gathered about him trusted lieutenants and gave to them tasks and duties befitting men of status. Most of these servants were drawn from the ranks of his bodyguard and Space Marine Legions.

Malcador was an exception. He was not a warrior, but a man of learning with the bearing of a priest. From the early years of the Unification Wars he was ever-present at the Emperor's side. His origins were unknown to all save perhaps the Emperor. He wore the hooded robes of a simple Terran administrator.

Malcador was appointed to run the Emperor's Palace and through it he managed the administration of newly conquered Terra. As the Crusade progressed, Malcador's power and influence grew as he became overseer of the Imperial Tithe and chief of the Imperial Adminstratum.

Blessed with unnaturally long life, there were many rumours about the true nature of this enigmatic figure. Some say he was a psyker, the first to have undergone the soul-binding ritual. Other rumours say that he was distantly related to the Emperor.



Malcador the Sigillite – *John Gravato*



The Golden Palace – *John Blanche*

Departmento Munitorum

To cope with the ever-increasing workload of managing the Expeditionary Fleets and all of their attendant logistics and communications, a new division of the Administratum was created on Terra. Its remit was the total control of all supplies to the fleets of the Great Crusade, though in time this control was extended to troop requisitions and the supply and maintenance of all munitions, transports, vessels, war machines and wargear. As it was, the Departmento Munitorum was formally dedicated just prior to the great Triumph at Ullanor.

The task facing the Departmento Munitorum was immense and it quickly grew in size to meet this challenge. Many hundreds of thousands were recruited into its myriad divisions and sub-sections from the ranks of the Terran-based Administratum. As its size increased, so did its status within the Imperium, and so too did its power and authority.

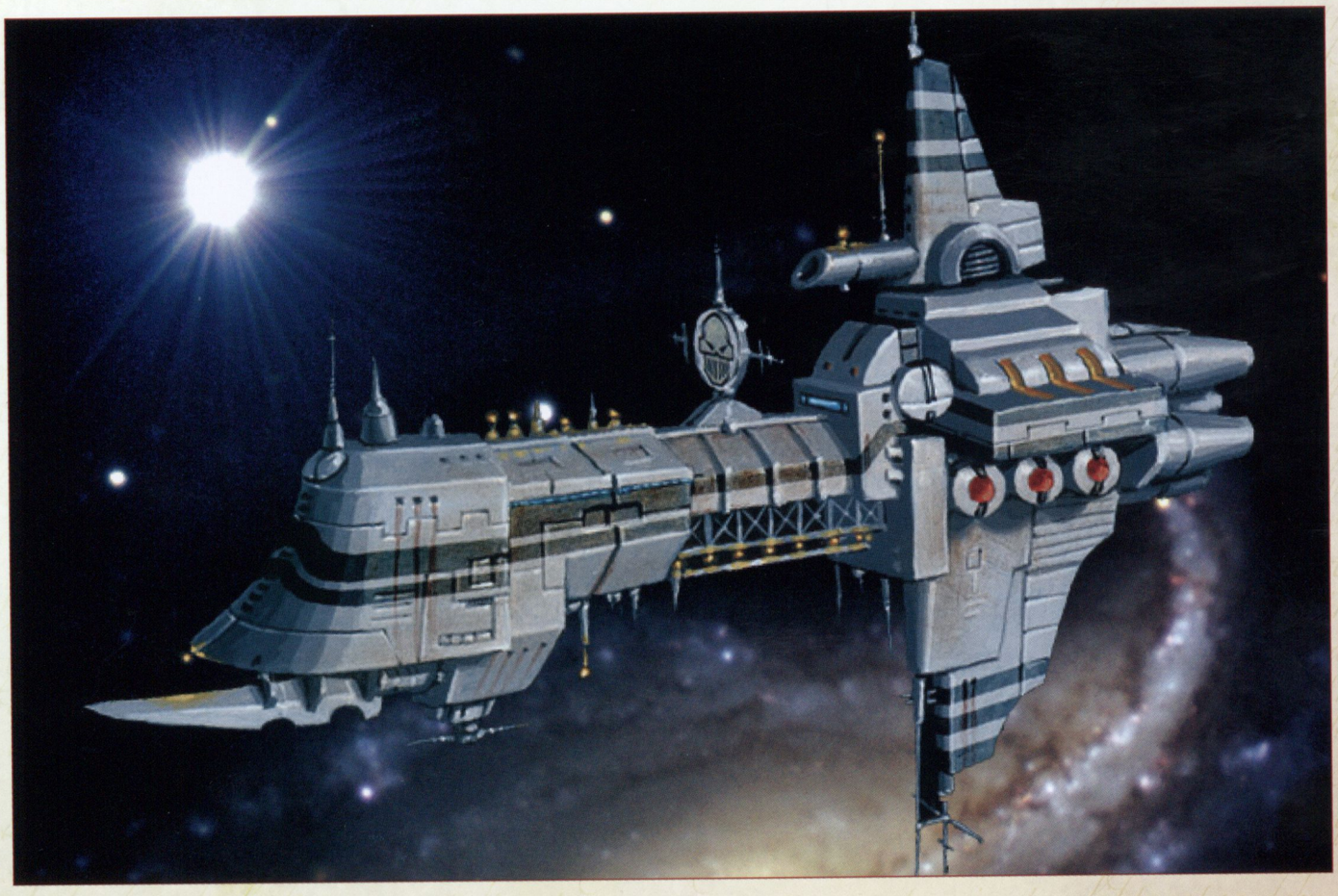
Within a few short months of its establishment, the Departmento Munitorum no longer restricted its activities to the mere task of resupply and maintenance, but also became enmeshed in the mire of politics surrounding the great fleets and their military leaders. They were tasked with ensuring adherence to central strategy within the Expeditionary Fleets and with bringing the more wayward elements of the Imperial military back in line. This led to mistrust and unrest amongst the fleets themselves, as many within the military saw this as bureaucrats trying to take over and run the war effort – a view shared by several very notable individuals who resisted the interference of the Departmento Munitorum as much as they could without directly refusing to comply.



Field Adjutant – *John Blanche*



Urslavik 12th Infantry – *Cos Koniotis*



Contrador – *David Deen*

Origin of the Space Marines

Research and development leading to the creation of the Space Marines of the Legiones Astartes began during the Age of Strife whilst Earth was isolated from the rest of the galaxy. The Emperor gathered about him a team of master scientists and constructed a secret genetics laboratory in the vast dungeons of his Terran fortress.

Within these dark vaults the first super-warriors were created. The Emperor hand-picked men from his personal bodyguard and then subjected them to surgical and psychological modification. These warriors were not only immensely strong, but also had bred into them incredible willpower. With rigorous training and appropriate mental conditioning, they became an unstoppable force whose loyalty to the Emperor was unflinching.

The early Space Marines were organised into regiments, each comprising no more than a few hundred warriors. The Emperor named each one of the twenty regiments. These names became synonymous with the power of the Emperor and struck fear into the hearts of their foes. These super-warriors formed the Emperor's army, and with it he conquered the Earth and subjugated the myriad warring factions to his will. For the first time in unrecorded millennia, the Earth was united under the rule of one man. The number of Space Marines quickly increased as the Emperor recruited men from amongst the newly conquered tribes of Earth. By the time Terra was totally under the Emperor's control, each of the Legions could muster several thousand warriors.



For the Emperor! – *Des Hanley*



Devotion – *Michael Phillippi*

The Crusader Host

The Space Marine Legions were clearly the most powerful military organisations in the Imperium, if not the galaxy. It was therefore deemed appropriate that they maintain some form of representation at the seat of Imperial power whilst the Great Crusade progressed. To this end a select group of Space Marines, drawn from the ranks of all Legions, was seconded to the Crusader Host on Terra.

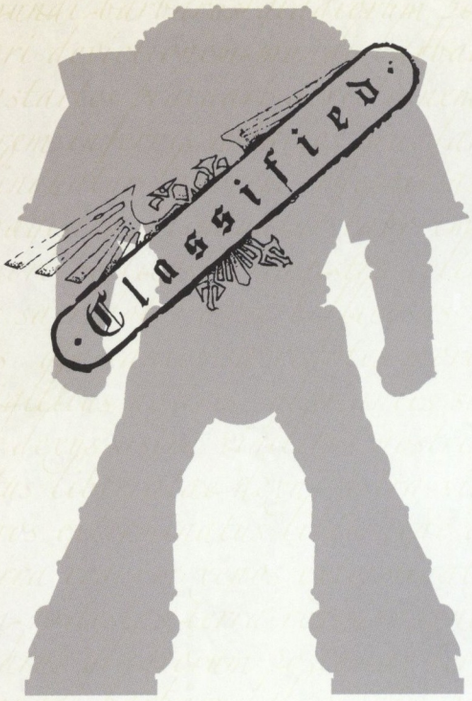
The Crusader Host was based in the Preceptory. Within its hallowed halls they kept tally of their brothers' glorious victories, mourned the dead and acted as their primarchs' proxies in the Solar System.

Legiones Astartes

The Space Marine Legions and their Primarchs



The I Legion 'Dark Angels'
Lion El'Jonson



– ERROR #CDIV –
file not found



The III Legion 'Emperor's Children'
Fulgrim



The VII Legion 'Imperial Fists'
Rogal Dorn



The VIII Legion 'Night Lords'
Konrad Curze



The IX Legion 'Blood Angels'
Sanguinius

Legiones Astartes

The Space Marine Legions and their Primarchs



The IV Legion 'Iron Warriors'
Perturabo



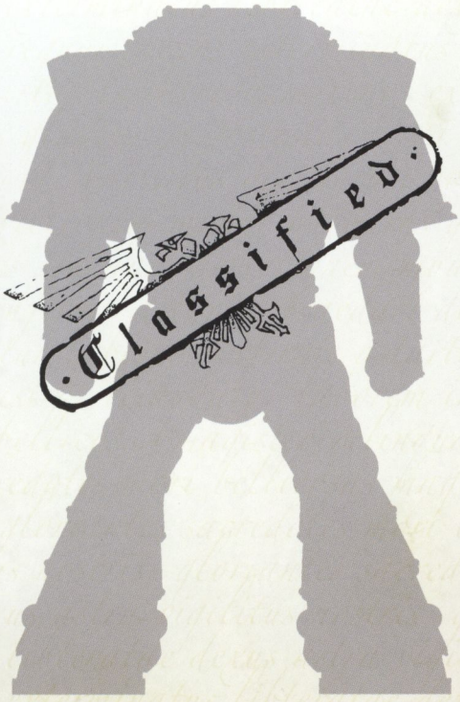
The V Legion 'White Scars'
Jaghatai Khan



The VI Legion 'Space Wolves'
Leman Russ



The X Legion 'Iron Hands'
Ferrus Manus



– CENSORED –
by Imperial decree



The XII Legion 'World Eaters'
Angron

Legiones Astartes

The Space Marine Legions and their Primarchs



The XIII Legion 'Ultramarines'
Roboute Guilliman



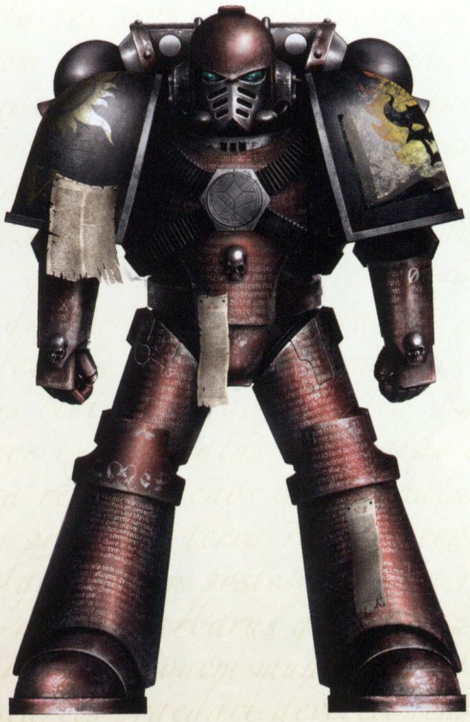
The XIV Legion 'Death Guard'
Mortarion



The XV Legion 'Thousand Sons'
Magnus the Red



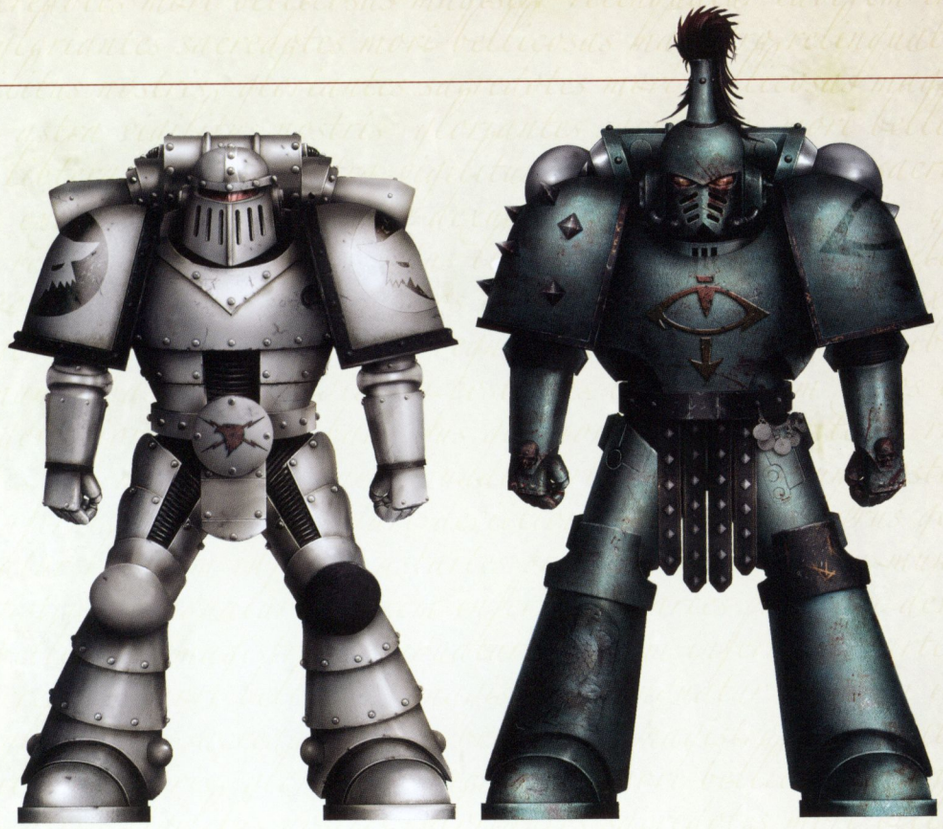
The XVII Legion 'Word Bearers'
Lorgar



[Grey livery apparently abandoned, c.006.M31 – reason unknown]

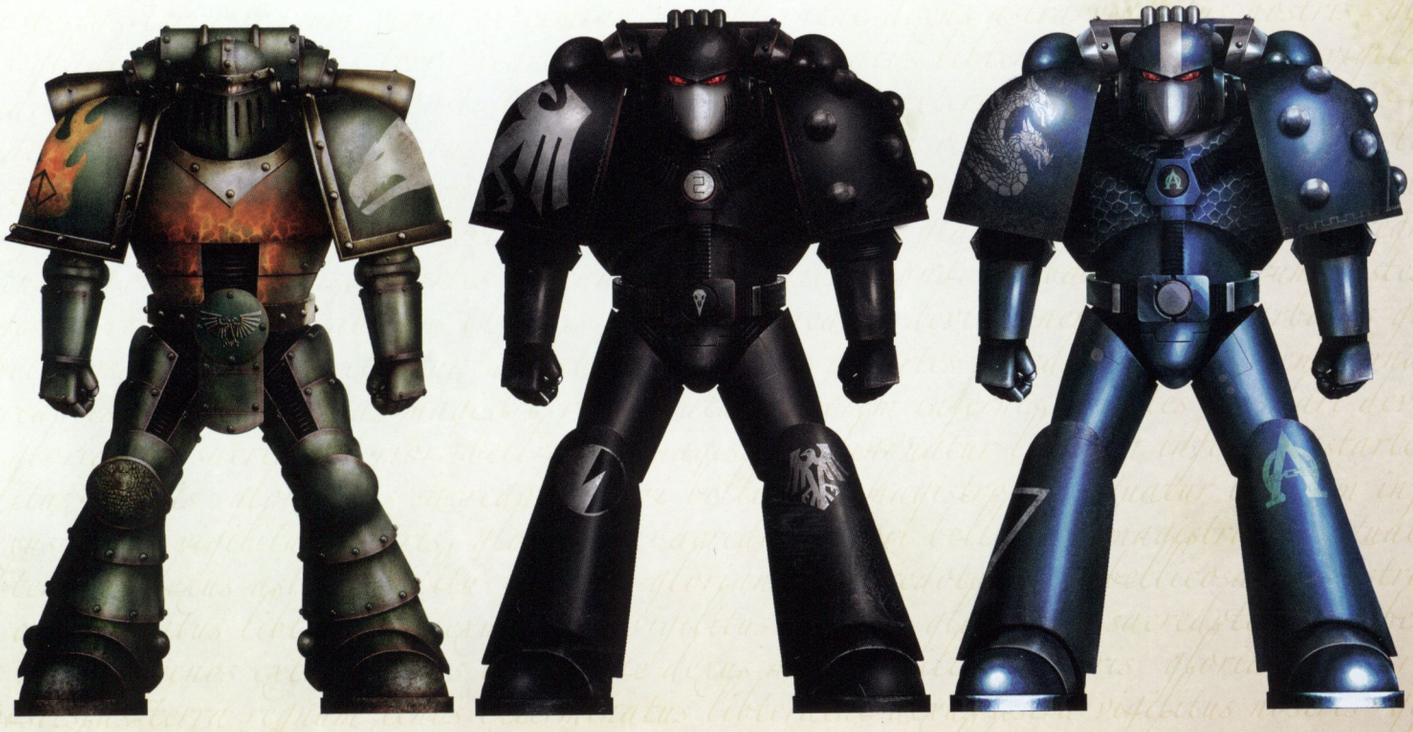
Legiones Astartes

The Space Marine Legions and their Primarchs



The XVI Legion 'Luna Wolves/Sons of Horus'
Horus

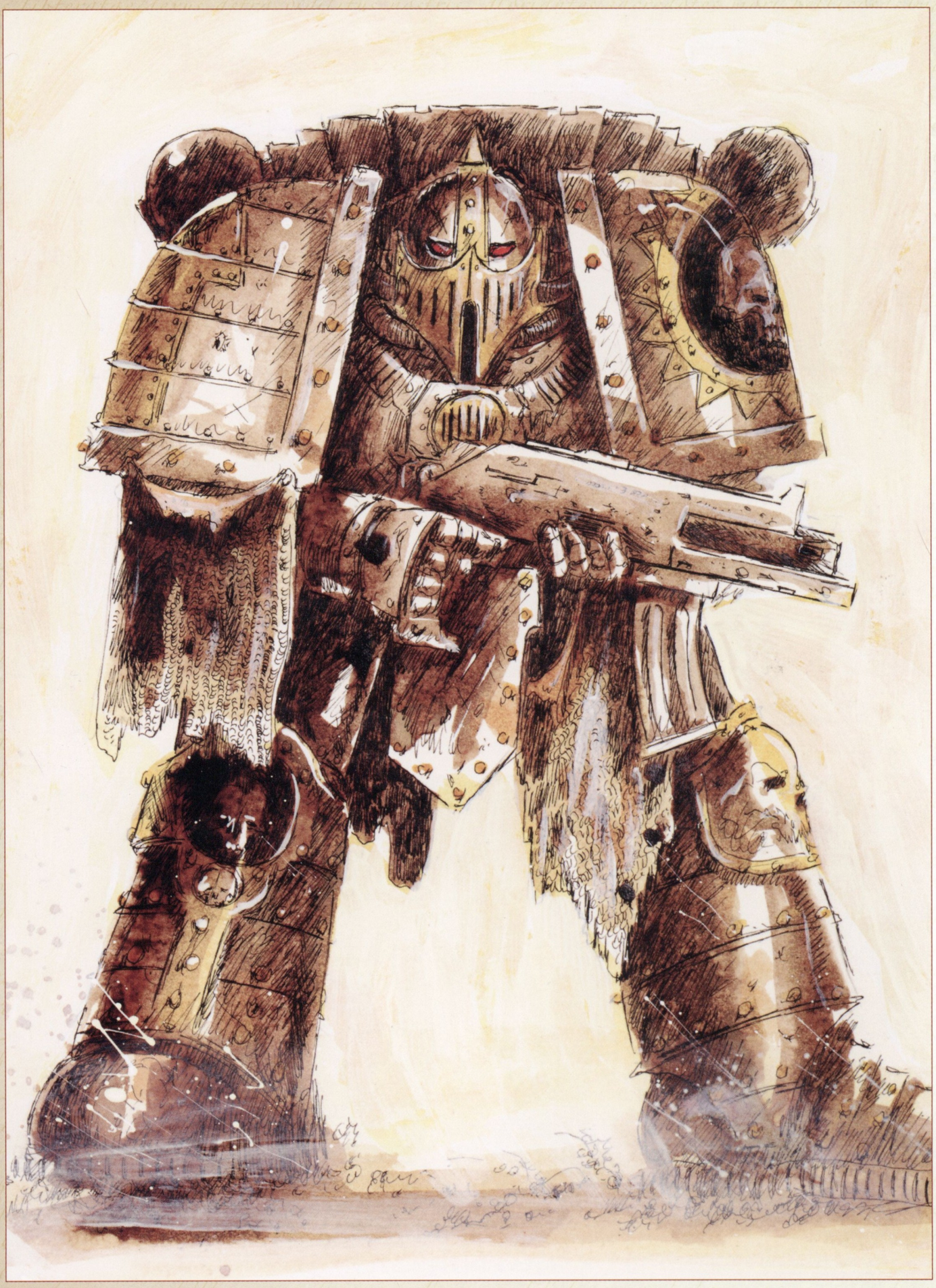
[New livery adopted to reflect renaming of the Legion, during latter stages of the Great Crusade]



The XVIII Legion 'Salamanders'
Vulkan

The XIX Legion 'Raven Guard'
Corax

The XX Legion 'Alpha Legion'
Alpharius



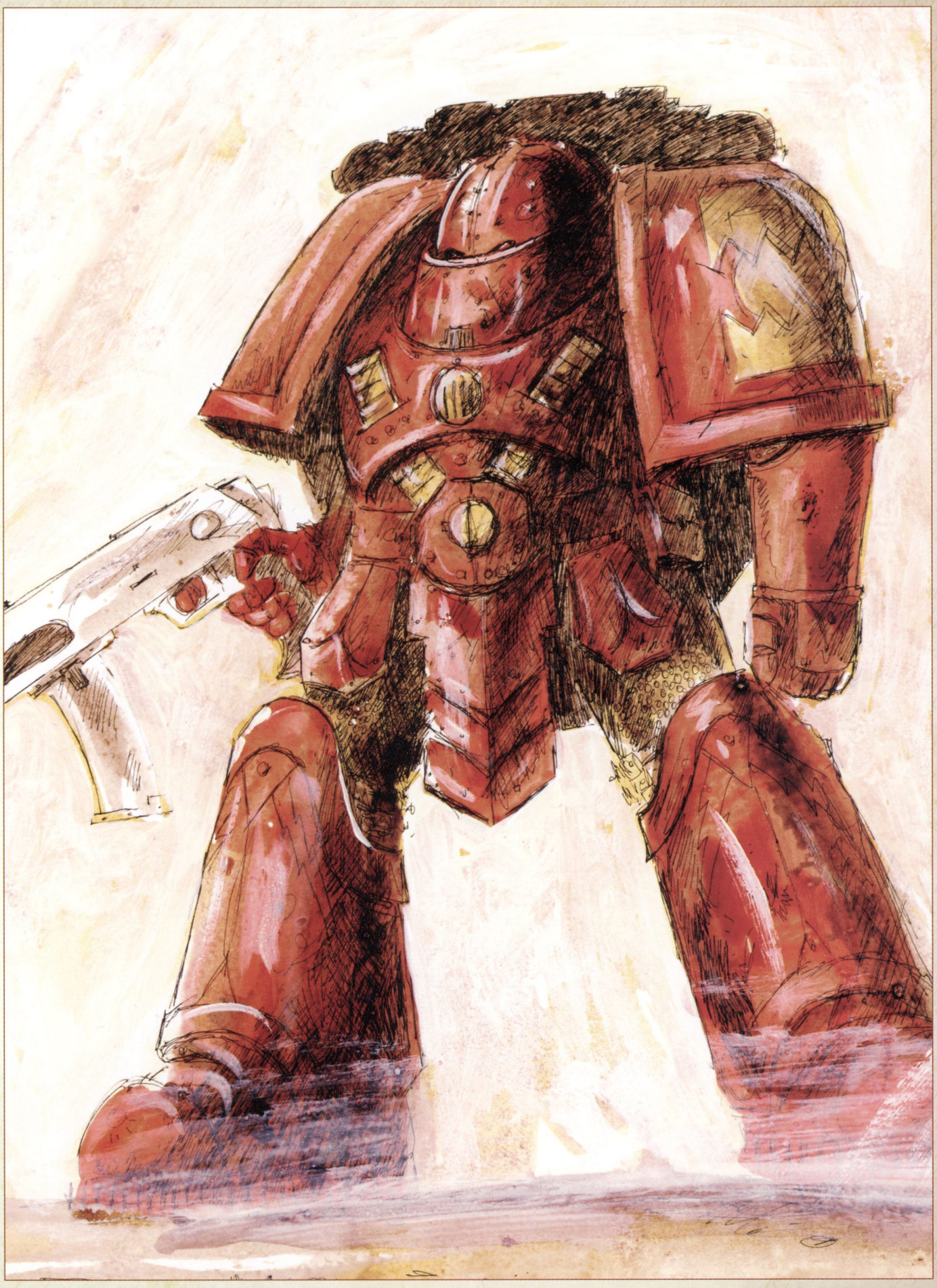
Death Guard Space Marine – *John Blanche*



Phoenix Guard Champion – *John Blanche*



Emperor's Children Space Marine – *John Blanche*



World Eaters Space Marine Veteran – *John Blanche*



Phoenix Guard – *John Blanche*



Space Marine Veteran – *John Blanche*



Cataphractii Terminator – *John Blanche*



Luna Wolves Space Marine – *John Blanche*

The Primarchs

During Earth's isolation in the Age of Strife, the Emperor was already planning ahead. In preparation for the reconquest of the galaxy, he conceived of and created the twenty primarchs. These extraordinary characters were to be his generals – great leaders who would conquer millions of worlds in his name. Each primarch would have powers and skills beyond those of any other human, possibly rivalling those of the Emperor himself.

The Emperor's ambitions for the primarchs appeared to be ruined by a cataclysmic event. A strange warp vortex snatched the still-foetal primarchs from the Emperor's laboratory and cast them across the galaxy. They were cast onto separate worlds where they matured. As the years passed they came to dominate their worlds and became powerful warriors and leaders.

During the Great Crusade the Emperor was reunited with the primarchs in turn, their superhuman skills and physiques having allowed them to rise to positions of authority within their adopted cultures.

That there is such a strong link between the primarchs and their Legions suggests that they were crucial in the invention of the Space Marines. Certainly the Space Marines share genetic material and some physical and mental traits with their primarch. So strong was this link that as the primarchs were encountered, in turn they each became the natural and obvious leader of the Legion with whom they had so much in common.

In many cases the primarch's adopted world became the new base of operations for their Legion and was known henceforth as the Legion's home world. Often the primarchs recruited their loyal followers from their home world into the ranks of their Legion.

Supposition and theory abound about the true nature of the primarchs, the most powerful of all of the Emperor's creations. Like gods they bestrode the battlefields of the Great Crusade and their names and legends would endure forever.

Some say that the primarchs were created from the Emperor's own genetic stock, each engineered to be a leader of men, a warrior and a hero, each a mighty warlord whose martial prowess was only matched by his charisma and mental prowess, each with special powers that set them apart from normal men.

Was it the Emperor's plan that they would be the ones to lead Mankind away from the powers of darkness and into a new golden age? Or were they merely a by-product of the experiments that resulted in the creation of the Space Marines?

What was the mysterious force that scattered the infant primarchs across the galaxy? The few records that exist of this event are vague and unclear. Tradition has it that it was a warp vortex – a swirling maelstrom that opens a portal or doorway between distant planets. The truth will likely never be known.



The Primarchs – *Neil Roberts*

And what of the scattering? Was it devised by the Emperor so that the primarchs might learn to live a life beyond the laboratory within which they were spawned? Was it so they might carve a destiny for themselves and prove their worth? Or were darker forces at work? Was this some devious plot by the Dark Gods to foil the Emperor's dreams and dash his hopes to save humanity? Stranger still was the theory that the primal psychic energies employed in their creation could not be contained in their foetal forms, and its release created the vortex.



The Custodian Guard

The Space Marines were not the only super-warriors created by the Emperor. The first group of genetically and psychologically modified troops he created were his own personal bodyguards – the Legio Custodes. Their duty was simply to ensure the safety of the Emperor at all times.

Stronger than Space Marines, the Custodians are fearsome warriors and have an unbreakable devotion to the Emperor. They are his most loyal and trusted servants. A detachment of the Guard always accompanies the Emperor, even when he retires to his private chambers.

During the coming years, the Custodians are also tasked with duties that now extend beyond those of guarding the Emperor's person. Small detachments of Custodians are frequently ordered to accompany the Legiones Astartes to ensure that the Emperor's will is followed.

The Custodians have access to all of the myriad types of weaponry and wargear that are used by the Space Marines, including transport and fighting vehicles. They also have access to the Emperor's personal transports and battleships so that they can always be at his side.

In addition to the Space Marines' wargear, the Custodian Guard also has access to a variety of weapons only they can use. An example is the Guardian Spear: a combination of boltgun and power axe, which is the standard armament for a Custodian Guard squad.

'These men are my bodyguards, their lives forfeit to the guarantee of my physical safety. Of their loyalty to me there shall be no question nor doubt. I, and I alone, shall have the authority to stand in judgment over them. No other commander shall they have in battle nor in service. None shall bar them from me and none shall hamper or stall their mission. So it is decreed!'

– The Emperor



Custodian – *John Blanche*



Aquila – *Sam Wood*



Neron – *Chris Dien*



Trajanar – *Hugh Jamieson*



Primarus – *Andrea Uderzo*



Valdor – Adrian Smith



Ascetum – *Adrian Smith*



Custodian Command Squad – *Adrian Smith*



Constantin Valdor – *Neil Roberts*



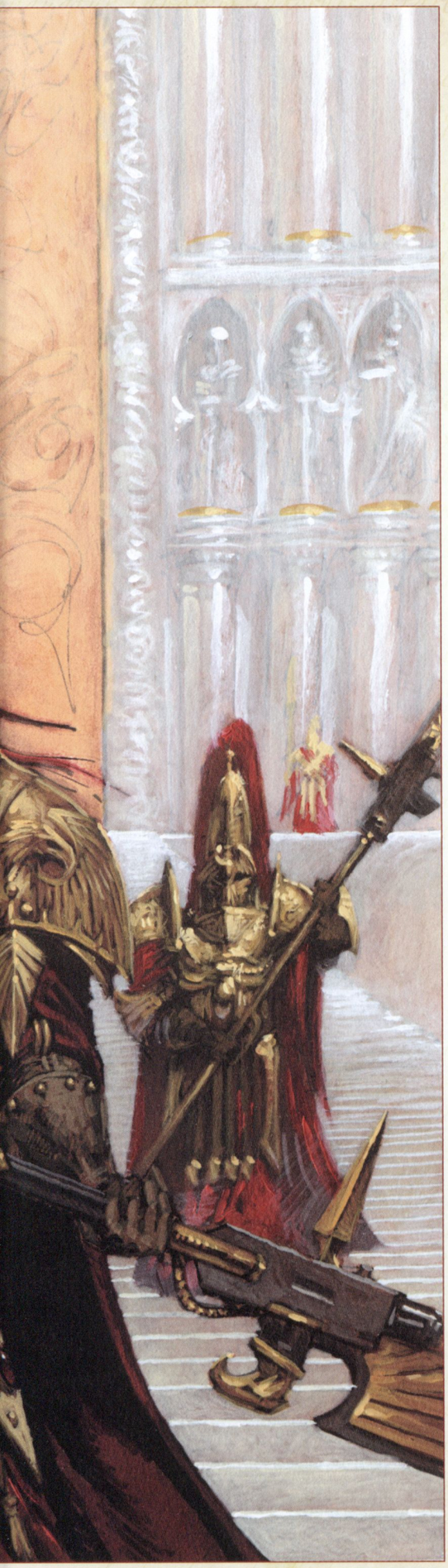
Lentum – *Sam Wood*



Ares Guard – *Sam Wood*



Agricolus – *Adrian Smith*



The Immortal Guardians

The Legio Custodes was the Emperor's personal bodyguard. They first appeared at his side during the Age of Strife, and since then have maintained a constant vigil over his person. In battle, a double-strength company always fights alongside him, and a detachment of the Guard even accompanies the Emperor when he retires to his private chambers within the Imperial Palace.

Each Custodian is an awesome warrior, stronger and more resilient than a normal human, or even a Space Marine. They are without peer in battle and have unshakeable devotion and loyalty to the person of the Emperor. Although they do not appear to have any psychic powers of their own, their willpower is such that they can resist assaults from the most powerful of psykers, save perhaps the Emperor himself.

There are reckoned to be only a thousand of these elite warriors in total, although this is highly speculative. Only the Emperor and his inner circle know their exact number. Certainly no more than a thousand have ever been seen together at any time, and then only once at the famous Battle of Gyros-Thravian, fought during the Great Crusade against the ork warlord, Gharkhul Blackfang and his vast greenskin horde.

The primarchs Horus, Rogal Dorn and Mortarion and their Legions were vastly outnumbered and close to defeat when the Emperor led an assault from his golden battle-barge. At the head of a thousand Custodians, the Emperor struck at the very heart of the ork horde, confronting Gharkhul himself. As the Emperor decapitated the giant, black-skinned ork, the Custodians laid waste to the warlord's prime warriors. It is said that within moments over a hundred thousand greenskins died and the Waaagh! was broken. Legend has it that only three Custodians fell at the battle, their names enshrined forever, engraved on the Emperor's armour.

The origins of the Custodian Guard are shrouded in myth and legend. During the Age of Strife, the Emperor came to dominate the Earth. At the forefront of his armies of conquest were the Space Marines. At some point, the Emperor conceived of and created the primarchs. It is unclear if the primarchs were created to provide the gene-seed required to produce the Space Marines, or were instead manifestations of the Emperor's experiments.

Whatever the case, the emerging primarchs were ripped from Earth by a mysterious force and scattered across the galaxy. Only later were they reunited with their kindred Space Marines to become leaders of their respective Legions. That the primarchs share genetic, physiological and psychological traits with their Space Marine Legion is indisputable.

Some say that the Custodian Guard are to the Emperor what the Space Marines are to the primarchs; that the Emperor's own genetic matrix was used in their creation and through this, their loyalty to him is assured. Others argue that the Custodians are not like the Emperor in the way that a Space Marine is like his primarch, and that some other source was used as a template for their physical and psychological form, a source that was lost during the anarchy of the Age of Strife. The truth will likely never be known.



Aquillon – *John Gravato*

Imperial Commanders

The galaxy is a big place and travel through the warp is, at best, unpredictable. Time flows strangely in the immaterium and communications are the biggest problem of the fledgling Imperium. As the Great Crusade progressed, a new class of human psyker was slowly introduced to the reconquered worlds – the astropath. Even so, messages transmitted by them through the warp are not certain to arrive at their destination, nor are they sure to be correctly interpreted if they do. There was no practical way to institute galactic-wide rule of the human worlds.

Newly conquered worlds are therefore handed to the rule of Imperial Commanders. Some of these new leaders are military men rewarded for their service by being given a planet to rule in the Emperor's name. Others are the indigenous rulers of worlds who now swear allegiance to the Emperor.

Imperial Commanders have important responsibilities. They are expected to pay tithes to the Emperor by way of supplying troops and materials. They must provide shelter and succour for his armies and fleets. They must cleanse their population of mutation, especially psykers. They are told to expect great black ships to visit them and transport their psykers to Earth. This is the Imperial Tithe.

Imperial Commanders are also charged with protecting humanity and must not harbour enemies of the Imperium. These are variously listed, but always include aliens, mutants and those that would treat with them. Daemons were not recognised at this time, but it is doubtful if any could make the distinction between a daemon, an alien or a monstrously mutated human in any case.

There is some degree of righteousness about the Great Crusade, and many reclaimed worlds are grateful to have been rescued from the anarchy they faced. Some worlds immediately venerated the Emperor. This was especially true on the many worlds that had developed myths and prophecies that spoke of their deliverance from evil by the 'Emperor of the Stars'. The hidden demagogues throughout the new Imperium were quick to fan the religious flames. The more strongly the Emperor denied his divinity, the more strident were their demands that he should embrace it.



Marshal Militant – *John Blanche*



Imperial Noble – *John Blanche*

Military Hierarchy of the Imperium

The vast organisations known as the Legiones Astartes – the Space Marine Legions – form the core of the Imperium's military might and constitute the main strength of the Emperor's armed forces. The primarchs who led these Legions were superhumans, blessed with abilities and fortitude beyond the imagination of normal men. They were the Emperor's generals, and each commanded a mighty host of warships, tanks, guns and warriors. The Warmaster was the most senior primarch, and held overall command of the Emperor's fighting forces at the outbreak of the Heresy.

There was no limit on the size of a Space Marine Legion and most of them could muster at least 100,000 combatants. The Ultramarines Legion was by far the largest, and its primarch, Roboute Guilliman, could call upon the services of over 250,000 Space Marines. New recruits were drawn from the Legion's home world, or any of a hundred feral worlds famed for the warrior prowess of their indigenous people.

The structure of a Space Marine army varied slightly from Legion to Legion, but at the core of all of them was the company of fighting men led by a captain. Companies were usually grouped into battalions, normally five companies strong and led by a lieutenant commander. Battalions were brigaded together in pairs. These were variously known as 'regiments', 'wings', 'chapters' or 'great companies'. A Space Marine with the rank of commander, or in some cases lord commander, led each of these units. Upon his promotion to Warmaster, the primarch Horus became overall commander of all the Emperor's armies and Lord of the Primarchs.

Subordinate to the Space Marines were the regiments of the Imperial Army. As the Great Crusade progressed, the need for more troops increased beyond even the capacity of the Space Marine Legions. Thus, it was decreed that each world of the Imperium was to supply men-at-arms to the command of the primarchs. Certain worlds, like the Space Marine home worlds, the forge worlds of the Mechanicum and those of the Solar System were exempt from this tithe. Even so, the decree provided the primarchs with millions of additional warriors. Although not as powerful as Space Marines, the soldiers of the Imperial Army could be stubborn fighters and their sheer numbers made them ideal for siegework, mass invasions and garrison duty.

The forge worlds of the Mechanicum were exempt from traditional tithes, but were obliged by their pact with the Emperor to supply his armies with war machines of various types. Chief amongst these were the great Titans – huge bipedal war engines crewed by tech-priests and armed with an array of devastating weaponry. Additionally, the Mechanicum supplied regiments of battle-robots and various grades of artillery, from small portable field pieces up to enormous barrage-cannons the size of a building. In battle, the Mechanicum forces reported to, and were commanded by, the primarch or his senior commanders.



Space Marine Captain – *John Blanche*



Administratum Scrivener – John Blanche

The Duality of the Space Marine Legions

The original Space Marines had all been recruited on Earth. During the Age of Strife, the ancient world of Terra was wracked with incessant warfare as the competing tribes of Earth fought for dominance. One man was to prevail in these wars, and he was to become the Emperor. His victory was in no small part due to the ranks of superhuman warriors he had created – the Space Marines.

When the Emperor launched his campaign to the stars – the Great Crusade to free humanity from its alien bondage – the twenty Legions could each muster many thousands of Space Marine warriors. Even so, their numbers were small compared to the Herculean task ahead of them. Millions of human worlds needed to be rescued and protected from the many dangers that beset them. To this end, the Emperor instructed the Legions to recruit warriors into their ranks from amongst the populations of the reconquered worlds.

The process of creating a Space Marine was not simple or quick, and potential recruits had to be exhaustively tested. The best new recruits were drawn from especially warlike cultures, men who had been raised for battle, physically strong and mentally tough. The failure rate amongst new recruits was high, and only a small percentage were successfully assimilated into the Space Marines' ranks.

When the Emperor was reunited with his primarchs, he found that each one had come to dominate the world to which he had been sent. There was great affinity between the primarchs and their adopted worlds. Most had become mighty kings, rulers of their worlds and leaders of fanatically loyal armies.

In many cases, the primarchs' armies also bore uncanny similarities to the Space Marine Legions from which they had been sundered many years previously. The warriors that comprised these armies would prove to be particularly suitable for recruitment into the ranks of the Space Marines. In the ensuing years, many tens of thousands of new Space Marines were created from these men, and many of the Legions enjoyed a massive expansion of their fighting strength because of this. For some Legions, their primarch's adopted world became their sole recruiting ground, such was the bond between them and the planet's indigenous culture or the success of the recruitment thereon. It seemed that for some of the Legions, they had found not only their primarch but also a world that they could indeed call home.

As each of the Space Marine Legions was reunited with its lost primarch, their efforts to pursue the Great Crusade increased dramatically. Under the leadership of their primarchs, the Legions became unstoppable and world after world was reclaimed from captivity. Within a few years, many of the Legions had also recruited tens of thousands of new Space Marines, created from the warrior-peoples of their new home worlds.

The integration of these huge numbers of new Space Marines into the ranks of the



Legion – Neil Roberts

Legions appeared to be a fantastic success. These warriors of the home worlds shared many characteristics with the Space Marines who had been recruited on Terra, and they made ideal recruits.

Each of the Legions established its own policy as to how these large numbers of new Space Marines would be added to their fighting complement. In some Legions, the new recruits were used to bolster the existing formations, acting as replacements and reinforcements. In other Legions, the primarchs simply added new regiments of home world Space Marines to their organisation.



The Imperial Army

As the Great Crusade progressed and more worlds needed to be liberated, the Imperium's need for more troops increased dramatically. Even the mighty armies of the Space Marine Legions could not alone complete the task at hand. It was therefore decreed that each of the liberated worlds would supply men-at-arms to bolster the war effort.

Each world was assessed and a census taken of its population. From this, the Emperor's administrators calculated the tithe that each was to pay in the form of regiments of soldiers and war materials. The numbers of regiments raised from each world varied enormously. Sparsely populated worlds would be tithed to supply only a handful of regiments each year, whilst the overcrowded hive worlds near to the galactic core would have to supply hundreds of regiments annually. This huge body of soldiers became known as the Imperial Army.

The indentured troops of the Imperial Army were assimilated into the command structure of the Space Marine Legions, and fell under the direct authority of the Space Marines. Space Marine transports would arrive at each world and carry the regiments of the Imperial Army away to fight on distant battlefields across the galaxy.

The sheer size of the Imperium, the whimsical nature of warp travel and the vast numbers of liberated worlds defeated any attempt to standardise the Imperial Army, and there was wide disparity in the wargear, drill and discipline of the various regiments.

Each of the tithed worlds supplied troops as best they could. Those from developed industrial worlds were kitted out with sturdy flak jackets and newly minted, standard issue lasguns. Soldiers from primitive worlds were fortunate if they had a pair of boots and a gun. Some worlds supplied troops that were well-drilled and organised into squads, companies and regiments. Others supplied what amounted to little more than loosely ordered mobs or warbands. Despite this, the soldiers of the Imperial Army proved their value in hundreds of campaigns and across thousands of battlefields.

To instil discipline and loyalty in the regiments of the Imperial Army, it was common practice for the primarchs to appoint special officers to the role of commissar. These veteran warriors ensured that the Imperial Army was unwavering in its duties to its Space Marine overlords.

Although not as powerful as the Space Marine units under the primarchs' command, the Imperial Army regiments were nevertheless useful additions to the expeditions' fighting strength. A Space Marine Legion sometimes had hundreds of auxiliary Imperial Army regiments fighting under its command. These troops were used to reinforce the Space Marines and were frequently deployed in sieges or mass invasions, and to garrison newly conquered planets.

The Imperial Army was rarely deployed within the home system of the regiments that comprised it. In fact, this was actively avoided by the primarchs to ensure that the soldiers' loyalties lay first and foremost with the primarch and the Space Marine Legion to which they were attached, and alongside which they fought.



Catachan 2nd Irregulars – *Wayne Reynolds*



Discipline Master – *John Blanche*



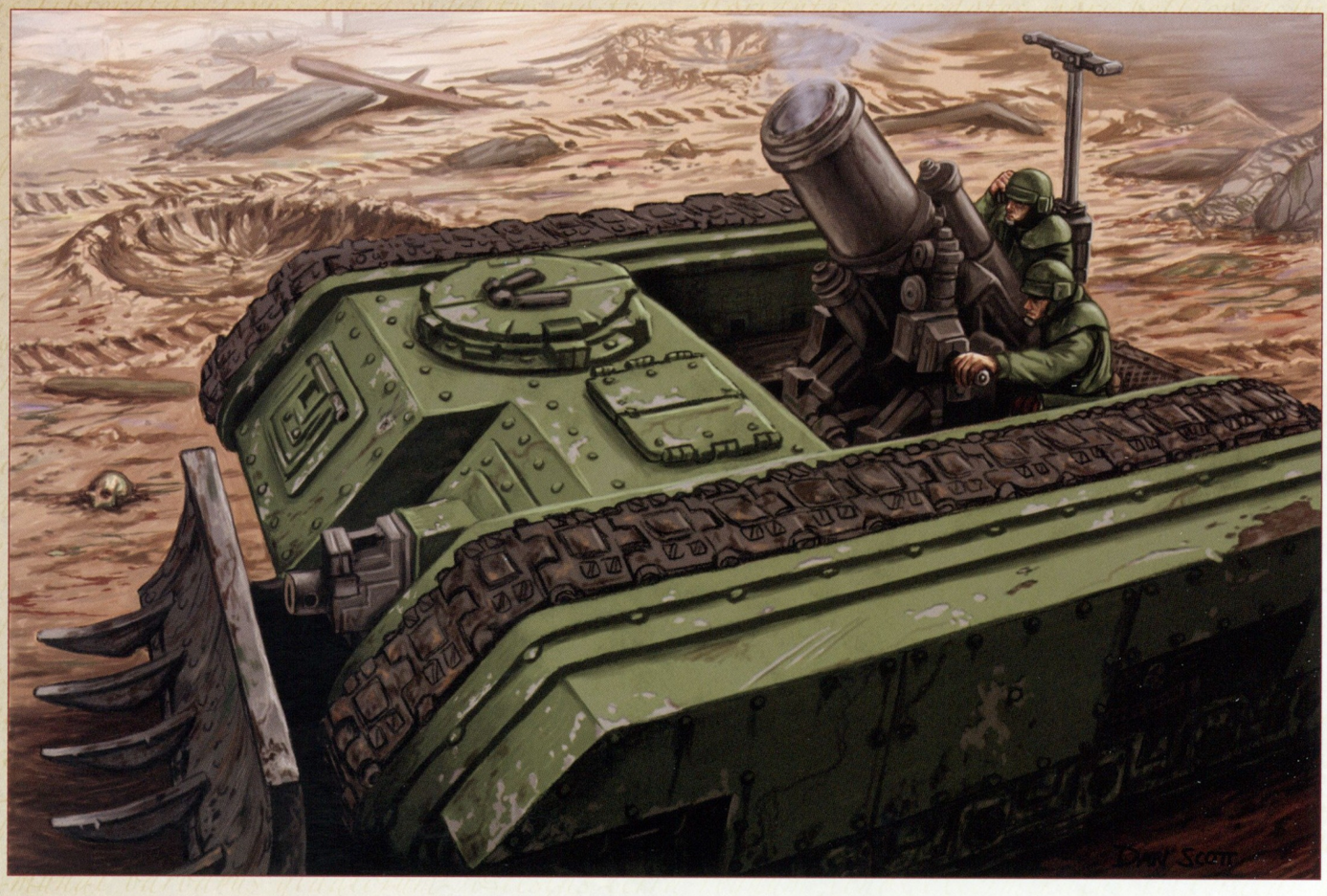
Battle Psyker – *John Blanche*



Fasadian 4th Infantry – *Andrew Hepworth*



Catachan 9th Infantry – *Eric Polak*



Gryphon – *Dan Scott*



Sallan 11th Infantry – *James Brady*



Imperial Emissary – John Blanche

The Warp

The warp is a separate or parallel dimension of energy that co-exists with the material world. Every point in space and time in the material world or true space has an analogous reference point in the complex energy pattern of the warp.

Where the material world is a place with familiar physical laws and the steady march of time, the warp is a place of anarchic, random energy. This energy swirls and oozes and is subject to eddies, currents and tides. The energy of the warp is distorted by massive shocks that reverberate through it – these are commonly referred to as warp storms. Time flows strangely in the warp, if it flows at all.

Human scientists discovered that a spacecraft could enter the warp from one point in realspace and after a few days travel leave it at another point, light-years distant from the first. By using the warp in such a way, a vessel could traverse the galaxy – journeys that at sub-light speed would take generations to complete could be accomplished in a few months.

Ships in warp space do not navigate as such, but move from one energy stream to another, cruising the flow of energy until they reach their jump point back into true space. Short trips through the warp, whilst by no means safe, can be made with a degree of reliability and precision. Longer jumps are unpredictable and very dangerous.

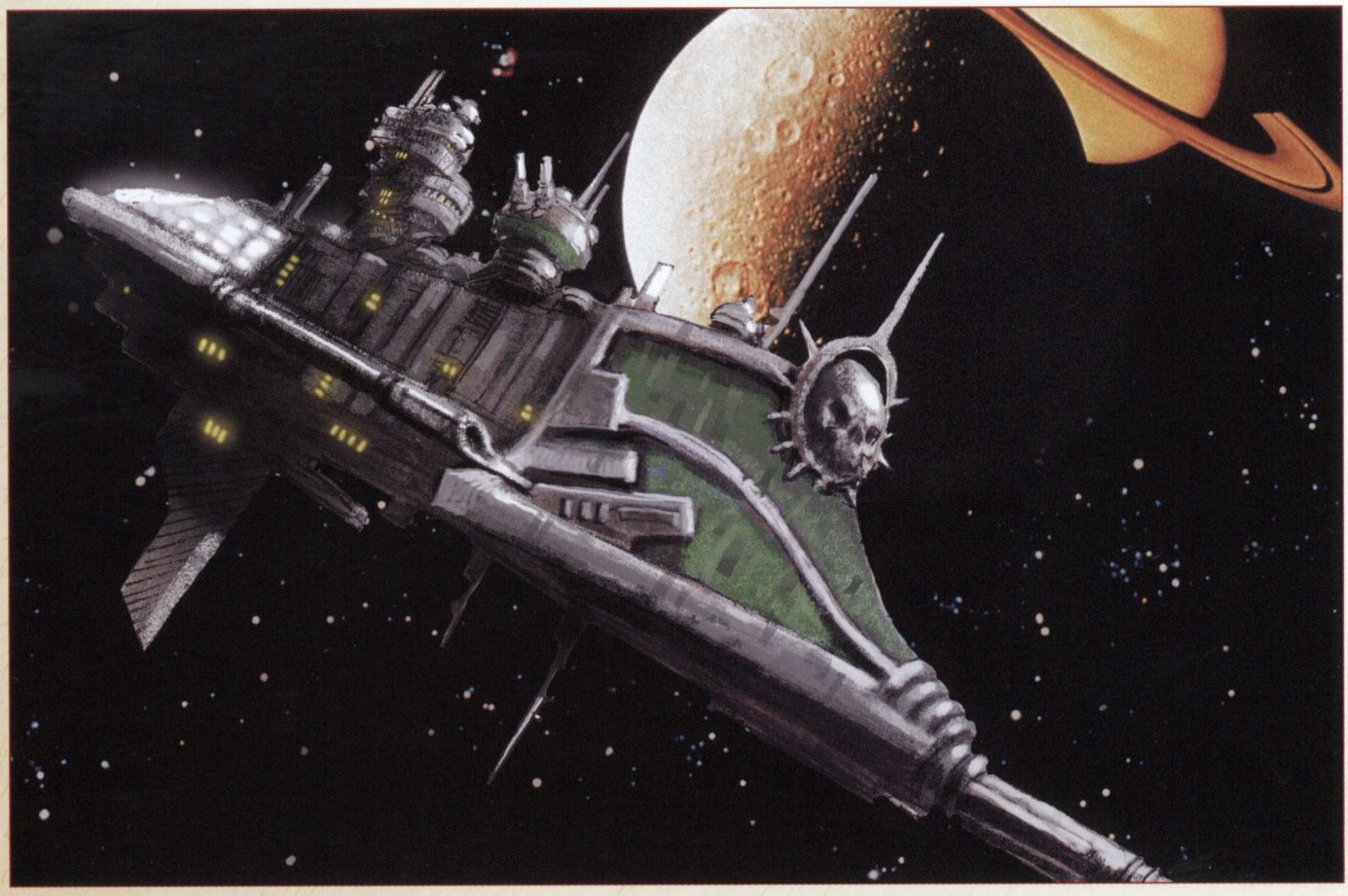
The tides of the warp move in complex and inconsistent patterns; ships attempting long journeys often end up wildly off course or are lost permanently within its complex weave. Furthermore, such vessels may suffer bizarre time shifts. It is not unknown for ships to arrive years after, or even years before, they had originally planned.

Warp storms and other disturbances within the aether can block navigation completely. Ships must simply avoid such regions, or be lost forever or destroyed by the rampant energy of the maelstrom. This means that it is impossible to reach some points in the material world through the warp. A world may be cut off for days, weeks or centuries. During the Age of Strife, massive warp storms shook the entire immaterium, preventing any interstellar navigation for the best part of five millennia.

Few, if any, humans understand the precise nature of the warp and its relationship to the material world. Countless philosophers, scientists and psykers have tried to explain it, but none have succeeded in revealing its secrets, or if they have, they have been unwilling to share such knowledge with the rest of humanity.

Psykers have a special affinity to the warp and can interpret some of its energies. These revelations most often take the form of visions and dreams. Few realise that the energy of the warp is the well from which all psykers draw their powers.

It is also widely known that the warp is home to predatory monsters collectively referred to as warp-creatures. These ravening beasts prey on the unwary psykers who commune with the warp too frequently, and on those whose warp-ships are becalmed within the energy weave.



Endurance – *Justin Norman*



Tides of the Warp – *Nuala Kinrade*

Psykers and the Warp

The Emperor is the first and greatest of all human psykers, but he is not the only person who possesses such talents. In fact, there are psychically able people in every human culture and on every world throughout the galaxy. In every generation yet more psykers are born.

Many of these people possess only minor, apparently harmless, talents such as preternatural luck with games of chance or the ability to see moments ahead in time. Such skills are, for the most part, benign but there are other, more dangerous, talents enjoyed by human psykers. The ability to move objects with the mind, to create fires, to call down lightning from the sky or to dominate other human minds are just a few of the many skills these people can use.

Psychic abilities come at a price. Some psykers are driven mad by precognitive dreams and visions. Others find their talents uncontrollable and wreak terrible damage on themselves and the people around them. Because of this, many psykers are treated as witches and executed or banished into exile.

However, there is an even greater danger to humanity than simply the talents and actions of individual psykers, although little is commonly understood of the true nature of the link between the warp and psychic talents.

Every psyker taps into the warp when they exercise their abilities. It is the source of the unnatural energy that powers their abilities. Unfortunately the warp is home to terrible creatures, unfathomable horrors who desire only to corrupt and destroy. Psykers accessing the warp through their talents inevitably attract the attention of these beasts. The greater the energy being channelled, the greater the attraction is.

Only the very strong willed are able to resist the attentions of the creatures of the warp, and even then only for a short time; only the Emperor himself appears immune. Eventually, the warp entities will be able to secure a foothold in true space, usually at the expense of the pysker's life. For a brief time the warp creature is able to survive in true space by possessing the pysker's body. Dreadful physical changes usually accompany this possession as the creature tries to mould the stolen flesh into something that parodies its form in the warp.

These vile monstrosities have only a short time before the body they possess is leeched of all of its life force. During this time, they will invariably embark on an orgy of destruction. Some creatures of the warp are more cunning and will inveigle themselves into human society, keeping secret their true nature for as long as possible. Usually they are seeking to nurture other psykers so that they can simply possess each in turn and maintain a presence in realspace.

The most powerful and dangerous of all of the denizens of the warp are the daemons of Chaos. Only a handful of people, if any, are aware of their existence. If the Emperor knows, he thinks it better to keep such dangerous knowledge to himself. He would understand that knowledge of such creatures would drive humanity to madness and anarchy.

The Chaos daemons are intelligent, cunning and malicious in the extreme. They are cruel reflections of the baser human emotions and so are expert at manipulating weak-minded psykers. They promise great power and riches, but typically any pact agreed with a daemon serves only them. Unlike the other denizens of the warp, the daemons have a greater purpose. Each is in thrall to a more powerful daemon and all daemons pay homage to one of the four Great Powers – the Chaos Gods Nurgle, Khorne, Tzeentch and Slaanesh.



Vendracon – *John Gravato*



The Children of Decay – *Adrian Smith*



Madail – *John Gravato*

The Astropaths

This special corps of interstellar communicators was created by the Emperor during the final months of the conquest of Earth. The Emperor had foreseen the need for these psykers as he contemplated the coming crusade to the stars.

For the most part the Emperor did not favour the use of psychic talents; even in the early days he was aware of the dangers they held for those using them and for humanity at large. However, he was able to identify those pyskers strong enough to withstand the temptations of the warp and so, with some prudence, certain psykers were employed in a variety of special roles.

An astropath is an astro-telepath, an individual capable of communicating with others of his kind over vast interstellar distances. This is an essential talent in a time when worlds are light years apart, and it is the only practical way for the Imperium to maintain any semblance of unity.

All astropaths undergo a special process that moulds their powers and at the same time strengthens them against psychic danger. This is called the soul-binding ritual and only the Emperor is able to perform it.

The soul-binding takes place in the Imperial Palace, where psykers are led before the Emperor one hundred at a time. Kneeling before the master of Mankind, they must endure terrible agony whilst he uses his power to reshape their minds – mingling an infinitesimal portion of his own power with theirs.

Unfortunately, the Emperor's mind is so powerful that not all of the candidates survive this ritual. Some are driven insane, and all have their personalities altered to some degree. The raw energy of the Emperor's will also has another effect; so powerful are the forces involved that many of the more delicate nerves can be damaged, especially the optic nerves. Consequently, all astropaths are blind, whilst many also lack a sense of smell, touch or hearing.



Astra Telepathica – *John Blanche*



Jubac Starsight – *Kari Christensen*



Kai Zulane – *Neil Roberts*

The Astronomican

Before expanding the Great Crusade to the stars beyond Sol, the Emperor ordered the construction of the Astronomican on Earth. Huge numbers of tech-priests were brought from Mars to oversee the project and great swathes of the Terran population were drafted to construct the towering machine-building.

At the time, the Astronomican was the single largest construct on Earth, but more amazing than this fact was that the entire device was merely a focus through which the Emperor could direct his fathomless psychic energies.

The psychic navigational beam from the Astronomican cuts through the warp, and those attuned to its unique frequencies and modulations, the Navigators, are able to use it as a point of reference when calculating journeys therein. Using this beacon they can plot a course that lasts days rather than weeks, or months rather than years.

The Emperor had realised a means by which interstellar travel was a practical proposition again.

The Astronomican shines through the warp, a beacon of energy that the Navigators can see and thence use as a guide as they chart their journeys across the galaxy. The beam is powered by the psychic energies of the Emperor himself, though few are aware of this. Despite this it is often referred to as his Divine Light or Light of the Emperor.

The Astronomican is not the sole means of navigating great distances through the warp. If he desires, the Emperor, with some effort, is able to project a signal into the Ether that Navigators or other attuned psykers can perceive.

In a similar way, the Emperor is able to shut down the Astronomican or interrupt the beam. Only a handful of individuals know that the great signal is powered by the Emperor's psychic powers. They live in fear that should he be disabled or killed, the galaxy would be plunged into a new Age of Strife.

The Navis Nobilite

The Navigators are an ancient strain of human. They have lived amongst humans since the days before even the Age of Strife. It is not known how the Navigators first came into existence, though some suspect the hand of the Emperor. Navigators are a special form of human variation or mutant. They must intermarry to breed true and each one is a member of a large interrelated family or House.

Navigators bear a special gene that allows them to see through the warp and hence guide a vessel as it attempts to plot a course in that otherworldly dimension. A human ship without a Navigator to guide it would be quickly lost in the maelstrom of currents, never to return. Even so, their natural ability only enables them to chart relatively short journeys through the warp with any degree of certainty.

However, Navigators are attuned to the special frequencies and modulations of the Astronomican. Navigators can perceive the beam across huge tracts of warpspace. This 'fixed point' allows them to calculate journeys in the warp with much greater accuracy and so enable them to guide vessels on much longer journeys than they would otherwise be able to.



Reaper's Scythe – *Justin Norman*

Sanctioned Psykers

As the Great Crusade unfolded there were psykers, in addition to the astropaths and the Navigators, who were deemed strong enough to be allowed to operate freely within the Imperium. Great black ships had been ordered to visit each human world and return to earth with their cargo of psykers. Stringent testing ensured that the weak-willed or insane psykers could be isolated and dealt with. These were generally lobotomised and set to work as menials.

The more stable and strong-willed of the psykers were then apportioned to various Imperial organisations. The majority were sent to the Emperor's Palace to undergo the soul-binding ritual that would render them into astropaths. Others were enlisted by the Space Marine Legions to be trained in their new Librarius departments. Some psykers found themselves in the employ of other, more secret, Imperial organisations.

The Black Ships

The newly conquered worlds of humanity were told to expect the arrival of black ships to carry away their psykers. This was the most important commitment the Imperial Commanders had to the Imperial Tithe.

The Black Ships were operated by the Adeptus Astra Telepathica, the Imperial organisation that tested psykers. The vast majority of pyskers who were transported back to Terra were destined to undergo the soul-binding ritual. The lucky few that survived this would be enlisted in the corps of astropaths.

Amongst the crews of the Black Ships were the mysterious warrior-investigators known as the Sisters of Silence. The Sisters were recruited from the ranks of the Untouchables – rare human variants who are psychic blanks. The Untouchables are anathema to psykers, who find it difficult to be close to them. Their presence disrupts psychic abilities and they are apparently immune to telepathy and the like. The Sisters are able to identify hidden psykers and have the means to fight and contain them if necessary.



Cistar – *Andrea Uderzo*



Navigator – *Paul Dainton*

The Sisters of Silence

The Sisters of Silence were perhaps the most mysterious of all of the Emperor's servants. Each had sworn an oath of silence as a mark of fealty to the Emperor and to their mission. Although few in number, the Sisters commanded great respect within the Imperium and most servants of the Emperor regarded them with some awe. Few would willingly stand in their way or interfere with their activities.

The Sisters were warrior-investigators, tasked with the seeking and apprehension of untrained psykers. As such, they formed a department within the Astral Telepathy Division, the Imperial organisation whose responsibilities included the processing of all psychic humans. The Division operated the Black Ships, huge transport vessels that travelled to the myriad worlds of the Imperium to collect psykers and carry them back to Terra. It was on Terra that such humans were tested and their eventual fate decided. Many of these underwent the soul-binding ritual, and were then recruited into the ranks of the astropaths who comprised the majority of the Astral Telepathy Division. Each of the Black Ships had a small contingent of the Silent Sisterhood aboard.

The Silent Sisterhood was unusual within the Astral Telepathy Division in that its members were all non-psychic; in fact they are all Untouchables. These are strange and very rare variants of normal humans who are psychic blanks. Such individuals are bearers of the pariah gene, and are immune to psychic assault and telepathy. The mere presence of an Untouchable can disrupt psychic abilities. Psykers find Untouchables intolerable to be near and become visibly uncomfortable in their company; very close proximity or intimate contact can even cause great pain to them. This made the Sisters ideal for the role of identifying psykers secretly hiding within normal human populations, or discovering those innocently unaware of their own abilities.

The Sisters of Silence, although human, were well-trained warriors, which allied to their natural anti-psyker abilities made them dangerous opponents for any malcontent or rogue psykers they might encounter. They were equipped with a variety of weaponry and devices specifically designed to aid the nullification and capture of psykers. The Sisters were authorised to kill or destroy any psykers they deemed too dangerous to capture and send back to Terra for testing.



White Tigers Prosecutor Squad – *Dan Wheaton*



Null-Maiden – *John Blanche*



Winter Hawks Prosecutor Squad – *John Blanche*



Iron Lynx Prosecutor Squad – *Sam Wood*



Frost Lynx Seeker Squad – *David Hudnut*



Fire Hawks Prosecutor Squad – *Steve Belledin*



White Falcons Vigilator Squad – *John Blanche*



Ice Serpents Witchseeker Squad – *Chris Dien*



Null-Maiden – John Blanche



Amendera Kendel – Hugh Jamieson



White Asps Support Squad – Ralph Horsley



Melaena Verdath – *Sam Wood*



Null-Maiden – *John Blanche*



Winter Crows Vigilator Squad – *Dan Wheaton*



Jenetia Krole – *Sam Wood*



Ice Leopards Witchseeker Squad – *John Blanche*



The Lady's Grace – *Chris Dien*



Raven's Claw Assault Squad – *Sam Wood*

The Mechanicum of Mars

For thousands of years, the planet of Mars has been ruled by the strange caste of tech-priests known as the Mechanicum or the Cult Mechanicus, worshippers of the mysterious Machine God. This religious sect rose to dominance on Mars during the early centuries of the Age of Strife. The entire planet became devoted to the study and manufacture of machines of every conceivable type and function.

When the warp storms flared and mankind began its dreadful period of isolation, the Mechanicum had been crippled, Mars suffering the same fate as the other worlds of humanity. The red planet was sundered from its colonies, its thrall Navigators no longer able to chart a safe course through the warp. That Mars did not devolve into anarchy and chaos is testament to the will of the tech-priests and their stoic determination to put faith in their Machine God.

During the Age of Strife, the Mechanicum were able to send ships to the other planets in the solar system. They concentrated their attentions on Earth, ancient seat of humanity's power. They knew the world harboured many secrets and that the warring barbarians of Terra would be unable to glean these and use them for themselves.

So it was that the tech-priests became bitter foes of the technologically suspicious Terran tribes. For centuries the Mechanicum sought to plunder the Earth of its machine secrets and steal what technologies they could.

They were also fixated with understanding what fate had befallen the galaxy. To this end they periodically dispatched great vessels into the warp in hope that some clues would be found. These were the Explorator Fleets of Mars. Over the centuries, thousands of such expeditions left Mars. Many founded new colonies that were to become the forge worlds, while others were simply lost for all time.

When the Emperor rose to power on Earth, the tech-priests of Mars recognised a kindred spirit. The Emperor was to them a man of science who valued the machine and technological advancement. As word filtered back to Mars, some tech-priests even began to equate the Emperor with their own Machine God in fulfilment of ancient prophecies.

The Emperor forged an alliance with the Mechanicum. In return for supplying materials for his armies and building a mighty warfleet for his crusade to the stars, the Emperor promised to protect the tech-priests and respect the sovereignty of their forge worlds. Furthermore, the Emperor gave to the service of the Mechanicum six of the Houses of the Navigators, to replace their long dead thrall Navigators, so that their ships might once again travel safely through the warp.

The Mechanicum appointed an ambassador to Terra – the Fabricator-General. The Emperor respectfully offered him a seat on the War Council.



Xi-Nu 73 – *Chris Dien*



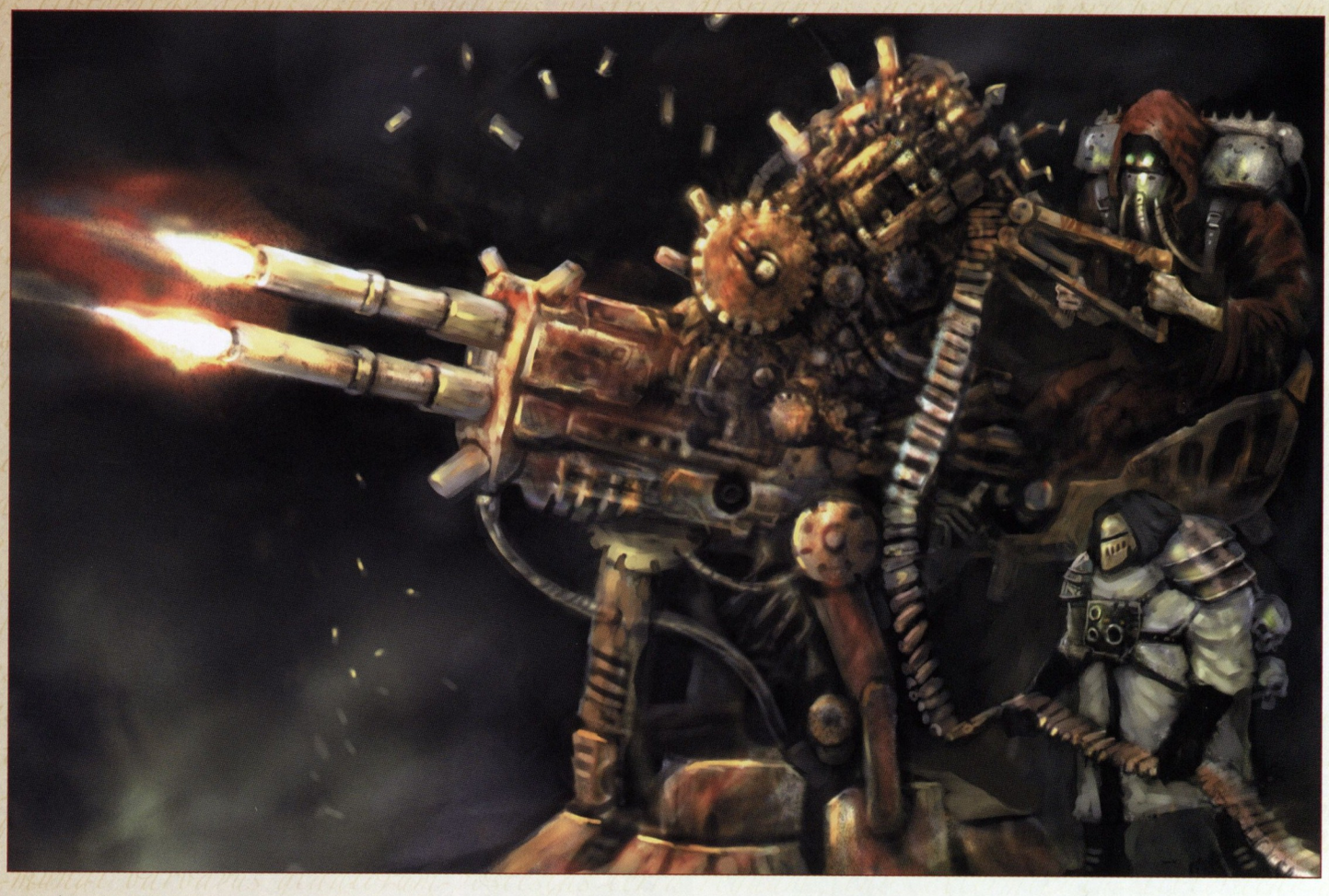
Fabricator General Kelbor-Hal – Des Hanley



Alpha-Rho 25 – John Gravato



Sibilans – Franz Vohwinkel



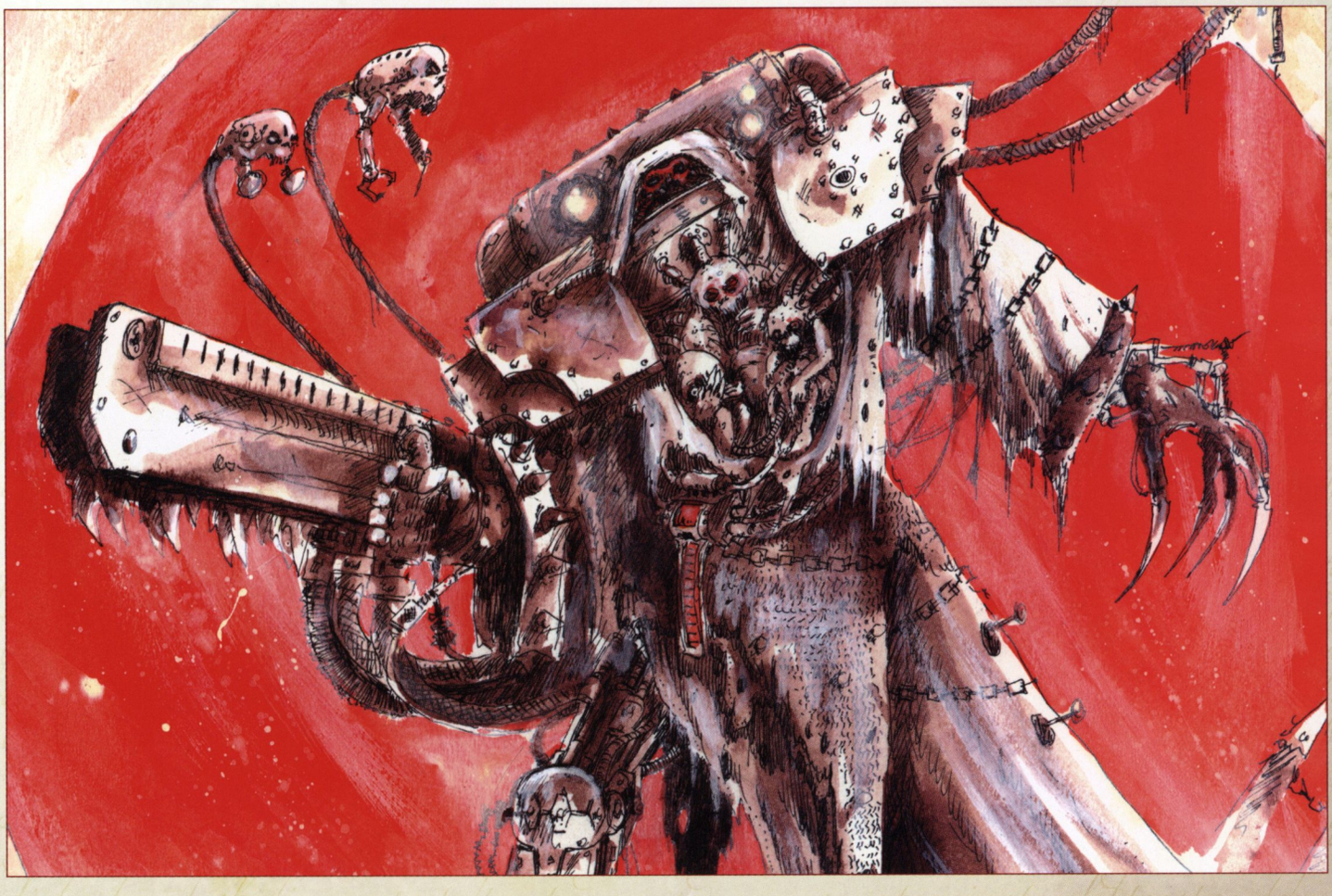
Zeta-Phi 07 – *Kari Christensen*



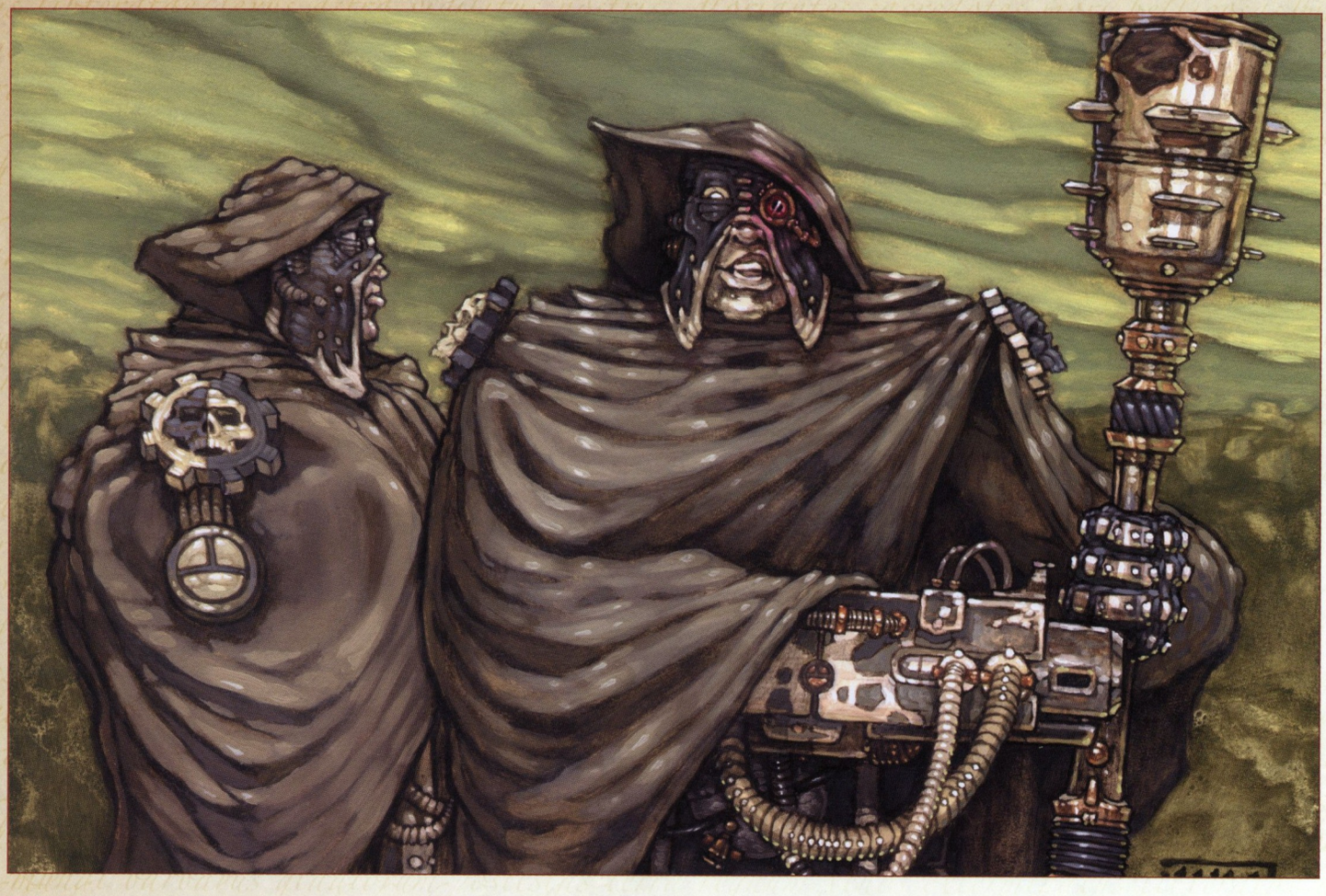
Ambassador Melgator – *Kari Christensen*



Epsilon-Rho 32 – *Anne Stokes*



Dark Mechanicum – *John Blanche*



Alpha-Zeta 54 – *Chuck Lukacs*



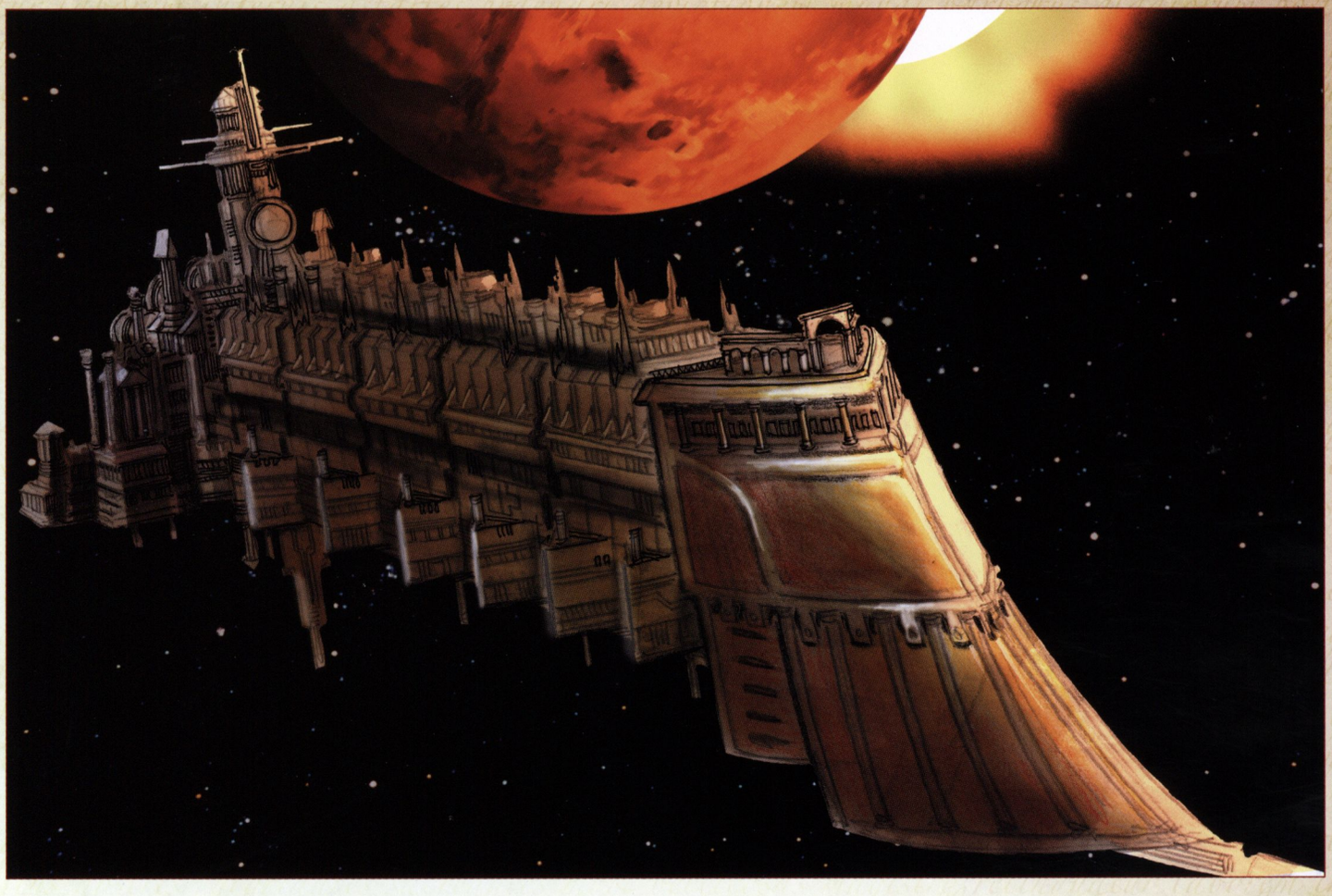
Urtzi Malevolus – *Hugh Jamieson*



Koriel Zeth – *John Blanche*



Martian Emissary – *John Blanche*



Aratan – *Justin Norman*



Rho-Mu 31 – *Paul Herbert*

The Emperor Honours Horus

After a series of glorious victories in the Great Crusade, the Emperor decided it was time for him to return to Earth and set in motion the next stage of his great plan to save humanity. He had every confidence that his sons, the primarchs, could complete the military campaigns. They had proved themselves time and again, and soon the galaxy would be utterly cleansed of the alien and other threats to the worlds of mankind.

Horus was his greatest champion, and the Emperor bestowed upon him the title of Warmaster, ceding to him control of all of the Imperium's military forces. The other primarchs were instructed to follow Horus and finish their mission. There was some disquiet that the Emperor had decided to no longer fight alongside them, but the Emperor was adamant. It was time, he said, for them to show him what great leaders they were, time for them to take the lead in the battle to save humanity!

The Emperor spoke to Horus:

'You are like a son to me, and together we have all but conquered the galaxy. Now the time has come for me to retire to Terra. My work as a soldier is done and now passes to you, for I have great tasks to perform in my earthly sanctorum. I name you Warmaster, and from this day forth all of my armies and generals shall take orders from you as if the words came from mine own mouth.

'But words of caution I have for you, for your brother primarchs are strong of will, of thought and of action. Do not seek to change them, but use their particular strengths well. You have much work to do, for there are still many worlds to liberate, many peoples to rescue. My trust is with you. Hail Horus! Hail the Warmaster!'

Upon declaring Horus the Warmaster and leader of all of his armies, the Emperor returned to Earth and his great Palace. The Emperor had much work to do, the exact nature of which he was unwilling to discuss with Horus or any of his generals. He drew to him certain advisors, chief among them Malcador and the Fabricator-General of Mars, and retired to the private vaults of his fortress.

Horus, meanwhile, set about his new duties. He immediately began to contact the other primarchs and make plans for the resolution of the Great Crusade. Many of them were dismayed that the Emperor would no longer be fighting at their side. Angron was particularly bitter, as he counted this as the second time the Emperor had failed him. Horus spoke to each primarch in turn. They felt that the Emperor had turned his back on them. Horus promised he would never let them down.



False Gods – *Phil Sibbering*



The Council of Terra

Upon his retreat to Earth, the Emperor called to his side Malcador and the Fabricator-General. He issued them with new commands. No longer were they to support the military campaigns; these were now safely in the hands of his primarchs and the new Warmaster, Horus. The Emperor needed time and all of his focus on his next great project.

To this end, the Emperor convened the first Council of Terra. Unlike the War Council, of which Horus was now leader, the Council of Terra would attend to the matters of state and the establishment and maintenance of Imperial Law across the myriad worlds of the Imperium. In particular, the Council of Terra was to administrate the Imperial Tithe. Under its auspices would fall all the civil government of the Imperium.

Malcador, the Emperor's most trusted advisor, was named as First Lord of the Council and would lead it in the Emperor's absence. The Fabricator-General, Chief Custodian Constantin Valdor and the leaders of the astropath and administrative divisions of the Imperium were also appointed to the Council.

Having established the new governing body of the Imperium, the Emperor took refuge in his vast laboratories and workshops beneath the Imperial Palace. He began work in earnest on his new project. This was the construction of great psychic-engines – only the Emperor knew the exact design and purpose of these strange machines; even his closest aides and those technicians who worked alongside him could only guess at their true function.

Whilst the Emperor was locked away in his subterranean factories, trouble was brewing. The primarchs were appalled at news of the formation of the Council of Terra. The Emperor's staunchest followers felt they had been let down by the Emperor. Why had they not been consulted and why did they not have seats on this ruling body? The less stable primarchs were outraged. Was this not a betrayal of all the wars they had fought and won in his name? Were their victories to count for nothing? It seemed that the Emperor was willing to turn his back on his generals, and give power to petty administrators and a sycophantic adept of Mars.



Hands of the Emperor – *Sam Wood*



Malcador the Regent

Malcador the Sigillite was concerned. For many months the Emperor had been locked away in his great dungeons, working on his secret project. Every day more requests came from him for men and materials. The mighty work on which the Emperor laboured night and day had been given the highest priority and Malcador had orders that none should disturb or impede this great endeavour. The vast resources of ancient Terra were increasingly directed towards supplying the Imperial vaults and the constant demands coming from within.

Malcador did not relish his job as regent, and every day seemed to bring forth new difficulties. The Space Marine primarchs openly resented his authority, constantly questioning his right to command them, and refused to maintain contact with him. The Mechanicum of Mars was restless, sending daily demands to be admitted to the Emperor's presence. Even the lowly clerks and administrators of Terra appeared to need to have orders repeated to them before carrying them out.

Despite all of these distractions, it had become clear to Malcador that a genuine crisis was building. Warp storms were hampering interstellar communications and the Astronomican was weakening. Entire regions of the Imperium were cut off from Terra. The Warmaster Horus had not been in direct contact with him for weeks, and Malcador had found it impossible to ascertain the whereabouts and wellbeing of most of the other Space Marine Legions. It felt to Malcador as if the Imperium was at its weakest point for many years, and would be easy prey for a determined enemy.

Many of the other primarchs were overdue in their reports to Terra. Jaghatai Khan and the White Scars had not been heard from since the appointment of Horus as Warmaster. Only garbled and incomplete messages had been received from Perturabo at Olympia.

Thankfully, there was a contingent of Space Marines still present in the Solar System – Word Bearers, though their primarch Lorgar was away on some mission with the rest of his Legion. Malcador was at least satisfied that ancient Terra was safe from any immediate threat.

Malcador resolved to deal with the difficulties of the Astronomican and made that his most urgent priority. If he could re-establish contact with Horus and the other primarchs, then surely they would rally to the Emperor's cause and the current crisis could be averted.



Benediction of the Emperor – *Carl Frank*



Jaghatai Khan – *John Blanche*

Horus the Doubter

Horus felt slighted when the Emperor retreated to Earth to meddle in his laboratories and dungeons. As worthy as the honour of being named Warmaster was, it was nothing compared to the sense of loss Horus felt as his spiritual father abandoned him. He had done his best since then to carry on the fight and lead the glorious Crusade. But many Space Marines had died and not once had the Emperor cared enough to honour them with his presence.

The other primarchs argued amongst themselves. They begrudged Horus his new rank and frequently questioned his decisions. Some simply ignored his commands or twisted his orders to their own purposes. He quickly learned to trust only a few of his brother-primarchs, those who would follow without question and those he could easily manipulate. Damn the Emperor for leaving him to sort out this mess!

As news filtered from Earth of the Emperor's latest pronouncements, Horus became ever more estranged from the man he saw as his father. More and more, he thought only of his mission to complete the conquest of the galaxy and bring even more glory to his Legions.



Horus's Pact – *Des Hanley*



Horus – John Blanche

Horus falls at Davin

The Warmaster joined his Legion, now named the Sons of Horus, on the moon of Davin. The Legion had some ties to the warrior-society of Davin, and it was at the request of the Davinite priests that the moon had been targeted. Cleansing the moon of its plague-worshipping cultists was a simple task for the Legion, but Horus was felled by an assassin's blade.

The wound festered and the medical experts of his Legion were unable to treat him. Horus was close to death. In desperation, Horus's Legion enlisted the help of the Davinites.

Horus was treated by a Davinite sect. He was carried into the Temple of the Serpent Lodge a dying man and emerged some days later apparently cured and bursting with energy. No one knows what rites were performed to save him.

So it was that the seed of heresy was planted in the heart of the Emperor's greatest champion and within some of the most powerful military forces in the galaxy.

The Davinite Lodges

The planet of Davin was once blessed with a progressive and civilised culture. Its isolation during the Age of Strife brought anarchy. The civilisation quickly descended into barbarism, the peoples of Davin becoming savage feral tribes.

Davin was now ruled by the warrior lodges. These semi-religious societies were focused around the veneration of various beasts. Each lodge was named after their beast: Lodge of the Bear, Lodge of the Hawk, Lodge of the Serpent, Lodge of the Crow and Lodge of the Hound, to name but a few. Dark priest-like monks led the lodges and performed the arcane rights of the sects.

To understand how such a planet could be tolerated by the more civilised cultures of the Imperium was to realise that Davin was but one of many hundreds of thousands of human worlds spread across the galaxy. And it would have remained completely unremarkable and unknown had not Horus the Warmaster been treated there.



Tsi Rekh – *Steve Belledin*



Priests of Thoros – *John Gravato*



Kenrich – *Kari Christensen*



Davinite Lodge Warrior – *John Blanche*



Davinite Lodge Priest – *John Blanche*

The Anathame

The anathames were extraordinary weapons, created by an alien race known as the kinebrach at the height of their interstellar culture. Appearing as simple blades, they were crafted using now-forbidden and mostly forgotten techniques and technologies – they were said to be the ultimate bane of an opponent, and once drawn in battle they became utterly inimical to the chosen target.

During the latter days of the Great Crusade the 63rd Expedition, led by none other than Horus himself, was engaged in diplomatic talks with a human civilisation known as 'the interex', negotiating their assimilation into the Imperium. At some point during the proceedings, one of these terrible weapons was stolen from the interex. The resulting war eventually brought about the complete and utter destruction of both the interex and the kinebrach.

Who stole the anathame is still officially a mystery, but it was rumoured that Erebus, the First Chaplain of the Word Bearers Legion who had accompanied the 63rd Expedition, had been responsible for the theft. Indeed, after Horus's rebellion began to gather pace, he made a gift of a cursed blade to the Emperor's Children, knowing that it would likely appeal to the primarch Fulgrim's vanity and love of exotic weaponry.

Furthermore, it was just such a blade that had wounded Horus on the moon of Davin. Whether this blade was indeed the same one is a matter of pure speculation, but it is unlikely that Erebus would have surrendered such a powerful weapon to Fulgrim without first sampling its power for himself.



Apothecary Fabius – *Sam Wood*



Fulgrim, the Phoenician – *John Blanche*



Emperor's Lament – *John Gravato*

Chaos the Deceiver

Horus had listened to the Dark Gods of Chaos and made his pact with them. He would deliver to them the Emperor and they would give him the galaxy. It was a simple bargain and one that made sense to Horus. Humanity was under dire threat from the daemons of the warp, though few recognised the danger. If the Emperor knew, he seemed to ignore the threat.

The Dark Gods had whispered in his ear. 'We desire only the Emperor. His psychic might is destroying our realm. Even now he retires to his dungeon to work his selfish plot. He cares not for you or your warriors. He will put weak men above you. If the Emperor were to be sacrificed to us then we would have no interest in your worlds. You would be a just and rightful ruler of the galaxy. We give you the gift of mankind to do with as you will.'

Horus knew full well that the Emperor was the most powerful psyker that had ever lived, or would ever live. The Warmaster also knew that such powers were drawn from the warp. Wasn't it obvious that the gods of Chaos were right and that the Emperor was the problem, and had been the problem all along? Horus knew he must challenge the Emperor.

Horus the Betrayer

After his sojourn on Davin, the Warmaster was a changed man. Deep in the Temple of the Serpent, Chaos had whispered in his ear. Weakened by the physical trauma of his wounds, Horus's will was shattered and he listened to the seductive promises of the Dark Gods and made his evil pact with them.

Horus had been terribly wounded. As his body was healed, his mind was in turmoil. Why was the Emperor not with him in his hour of greatest need? Whilst his life was in the balance, why did the Emperor not rush to his side as he had done in the old days? Why did he ignore all they had achieved? Why did he favour the fops and clerks of Terra? Why should Horus now do as the Emperor bid? Was he not the one who had led the Space Marine Legions to countless victories? Did he not bear the scars of a thousand battles? Was the Emperor there to shed a tear as brave Space Marines died horrible deaths at the hands of their alien foes? No, it was Horus who had fought and bled and cried! Horus was the one who had planned the wars and the victories. It was Horus who had rightfully earned the loyalty of the Space Marines. Horus who should be acclaimed Lord of Mankind! The rightful Master of Humanity!

The Ruinous Powers had made their bargain clear to Horus. 'Deliver us the Emperor and we shall give you the galaxy!'



Horus Heresy – D*aarken*

Horus the Conspirator

The Warmaster drew to him those primarchs he could trust the most. He met with them each in turn, and corrupted them.

Angron of the World Eaters raged against the Emperor, his synaptic implants buzzing with fury. Twice he felt the Emperor had betrayed him. The other primarchs, those he saw as the Emperor's favourites, had treated him with contempt for the extremes he used to ensure his victories. He was a seething mass of resentment, and so was the easiest primarch for Horus to turn – he simply promised Angron blood!

Mortarion of the Death Guard was harder to persuade, but Horus was persistent and wore him down. A new age was dawning, he argued – an age undreamed of, with the primarchs at the head of it. They would rule with might and justice. Horus would need him, need his strength. The Emperor was weak and exhausted. It was the natural order of things that he be replaced.

Fulgrim of the Emperor's Children was closest to Horus. Throughout the Great Crusade they had fought side by side. This was the most bitter corruption: all that was good in Fulgrim – his honour, his quest for perfection, his love for the Emperor – was twisted by Horus into something dirty and cruel. Fulgrim was shattered, a broken man, all his dreams made dust. Horus promised to restore his honour and make his dreams live again.

The Warmaster had corrupted his three closest comrades, persuading them to fight alongside him in the coming struggle against the Emperor who had betrayed them. What hand the Dark Gods of Chaos had in their corruption is unknown, but they had chosen their own path and it led inexorably towards a doom they could not possibly have foreseen.

Angron, Mortarion and Fulgrim returned to their Legions and began to spread their heresy. Slowly, they secretly sowed corruption through the ranks using the warrior lodges recently adopted from the Sons of Horus. Most of their Space Marines were easy enough to turn – their loyalty lay with their primarch, their father and mentor. They would fight and die for him.

However, some amongst their Legions would not be so easily swayed. These were the warriors for whom the Emperor was like a god, many of them men of Earth, the original recruits into the ranks of the Legions. Their loyalty to the Emperor pre-dated that to their primarch. Careful not to reveal their hand, the primarchs noted which of their men they could not trust. These Space Marines were earmarked for a dark fate.



Butcher's Nails – *Neil Roberts*



Horus Plans Ahead

Having corrupted those closest to him, the Warmaster now turned his attentions to the other primarchs and their Legions.

He ordered the primarchs Lion El'Jonson, Sanguinius and the redoubtable Roboute Guilliman to muster their Legions in preparation for a series of campaigns in the far-flung reaches of the galaxy. Perceiving no obvious reason to doubt the Warmaster's motives, the three primarchs set about planning their missions and transporting their Legions. So it was that three of the most staunchly loyal Legions, the Dark Angels, the Blood Angels and the Ultramarines, were sent by Horus to regions far from Earth and from the Isstvan System.

The Warmaster sought to minimise the threat to his plans from the other Space Marine Legions. He was sure of the loyalty of his own Legion, the Sons of Horus, and he had the Death Guard, World Eaters and Emperor's Children being attended to by Angron, Mortarion and Fulgrim. They assured him of their loyalty.

The Word Bearers, Alpha Legion, Raven Guard, Salamanders and Iron Hands were actively involved in various campaigns across the Imperium; their time would come. The White Scars and the Night Lords were unaccounted for, and the Imperial Fists were too close to the Emperor for Horus to chance contacting them without raising suspicion.

This left Magnus the Red's Thousand Sons, the Iron Warriors of Perturabo and Leman Russ's Space Wolves, all of whom were currently headquartered on or near their respective home worlds.



Horus Rising – Neil Roberts


XIV

The Heresy Spreads

Horus the Warmaster, having secured the loyalty of four Legions of Space Marines, now hoped to draw more forces into his web of deceit. He contacted Perturabo of the Iron Warriors Legion. Perturabo had a fearsome reputation for war and destruction, but was a petty, jealous primarch. The warrior lodges within his Legion had already started to agitate for Horus. Horus informed the primarch of rebellion fomenting on the Iron Warriors home world of Olympia. Perturabo was determined to take decisive action and win the favour of the Warmaster. He began the Siege of Olympia.

Horus despatched agents to other Legions and began the process of winning to his side various Imperial commanders and forge masters. The latter held positions of authority on the forge worlds of the Mechanicum. They also controlled the fearsome Titan Legions of the Collegia Titanica. With these powerful machines on his side, Horus considered that he might even be able to force the Emperor to submit without more bloodshed.



Triumph – *Neil Roberts*



Forrix – *Alex Boyd*



Gignere, Reaver Titan – *Wayne England*



Deathshroud – *Adrian Smith*



Kullar-Hal – *David Hudnut*



Serghar Targost – *Ralph Horsley*



Odovocar – *Karl Richardson*



Khârn – *Wayne England*



Dark Mechanicum Tech-priest – *Daarken*

Isstvan III



Galaxy in Flames – *Neil Roberts*

Isstvan Rendezvous

Horus arranged to meet with the primarchs Angron of the World Eaters, Mortarion of the Death Guard and Fulgrim of the Emperor's Children at the Isstvan System. The third world of the system was in revolt and the Warmaster had declared his intention to quell the rebellion and bring the instigators to justice.

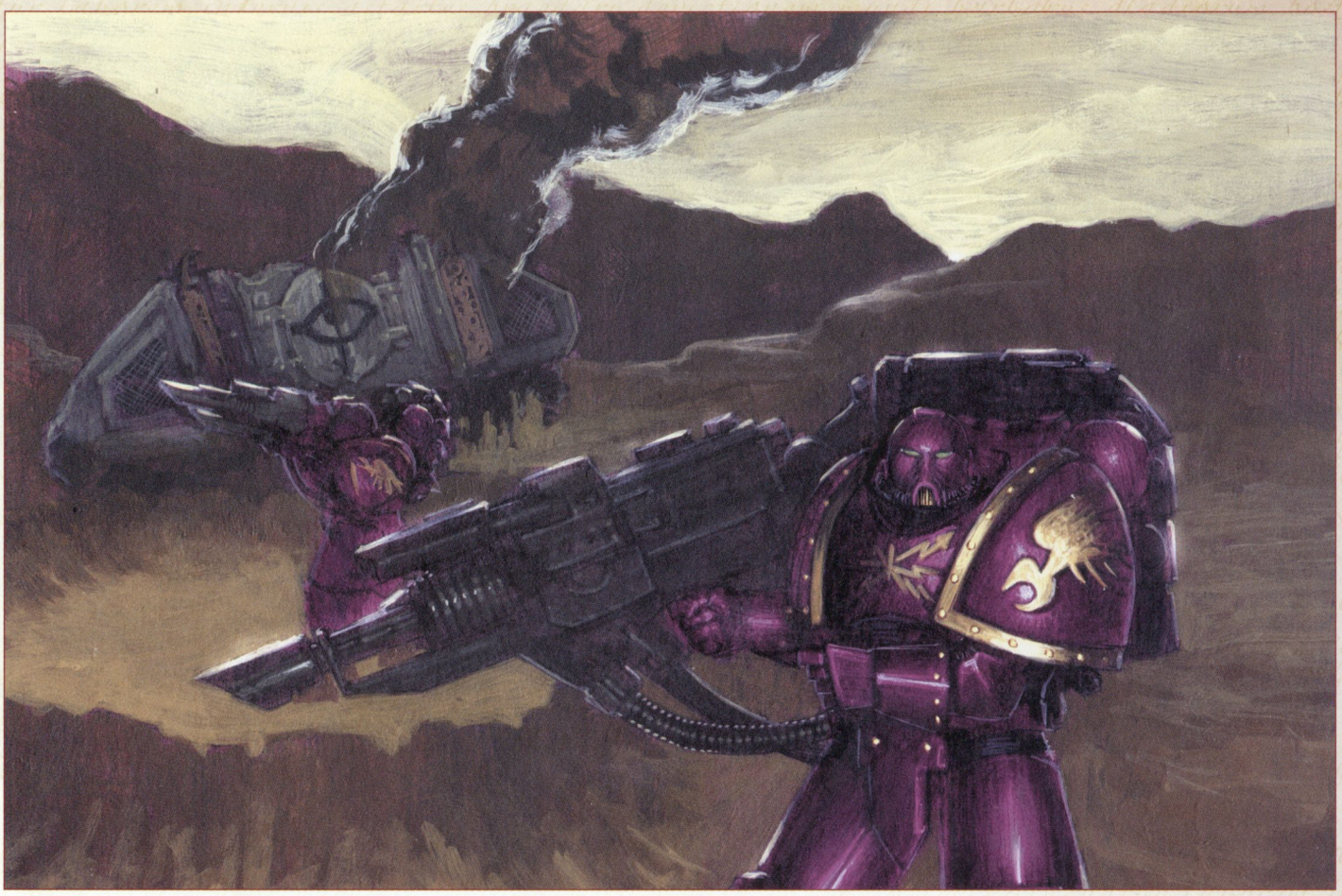
A massive war fleet gathered above the planet of Isstvan III as elements of four Space Marine Legions began to arrive. Fulgrim was delayed but some of his Emperor's Children did make the rendezvous. Horus's task force therefore consisted of the majority of his own Legion, the Sons of Horus, plus significant portions of the Death Guard, World Eaters and Emperor's Children Legions. With three primarchs in attendance this constituted one of the largest concentrations of military force seen since the battle for the Pargor Hith System during the Great Crusade.

They met on Horus's flagship, the battle-barge *Vengeful Spirit*, to discuss the coming storm. Angron and Mortarion reported on the status of their respective Legions. They assured Horus that the majority of their Space Marines had been inducted into the warrior lodges and could now be trusted to follow him when he declared himself to be the rightful Emperor.

However, both of the primarchs had identified elements of their Legions whose loyalty to the Emperor was unshakeable. These loyal Space Marines would pose a great threat to Horus's conspiracy if they were not dealt with. Lord Commander Eidolon, speaking in Fulgrim's absence, confirmed that the same was true of sections of the Emperor's Children. Horus revealed to his co-conspirators his shocking plan to rid their Legions of these dissident factions.



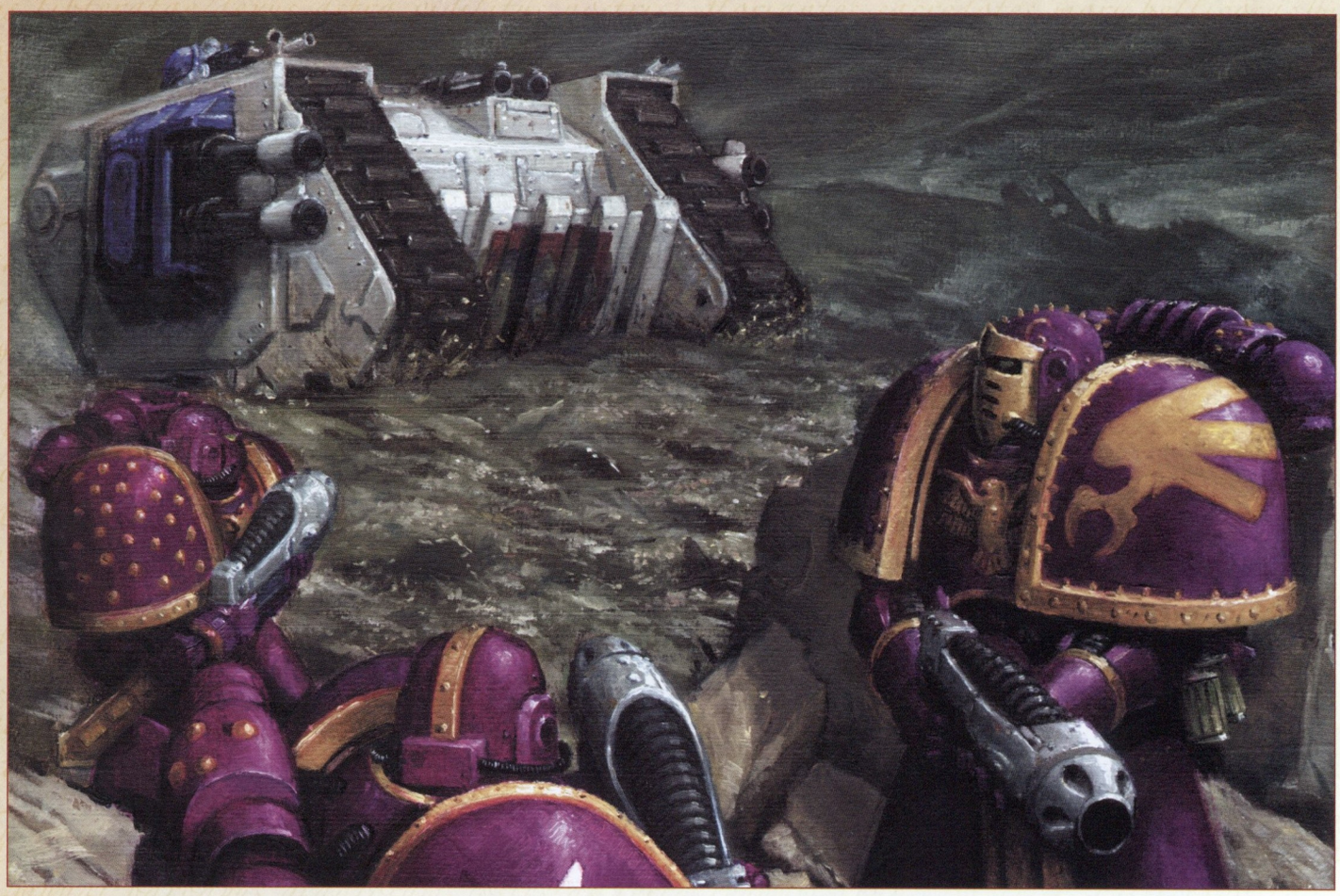
Angron, Primarch of the World Eaters – *Wayne England*



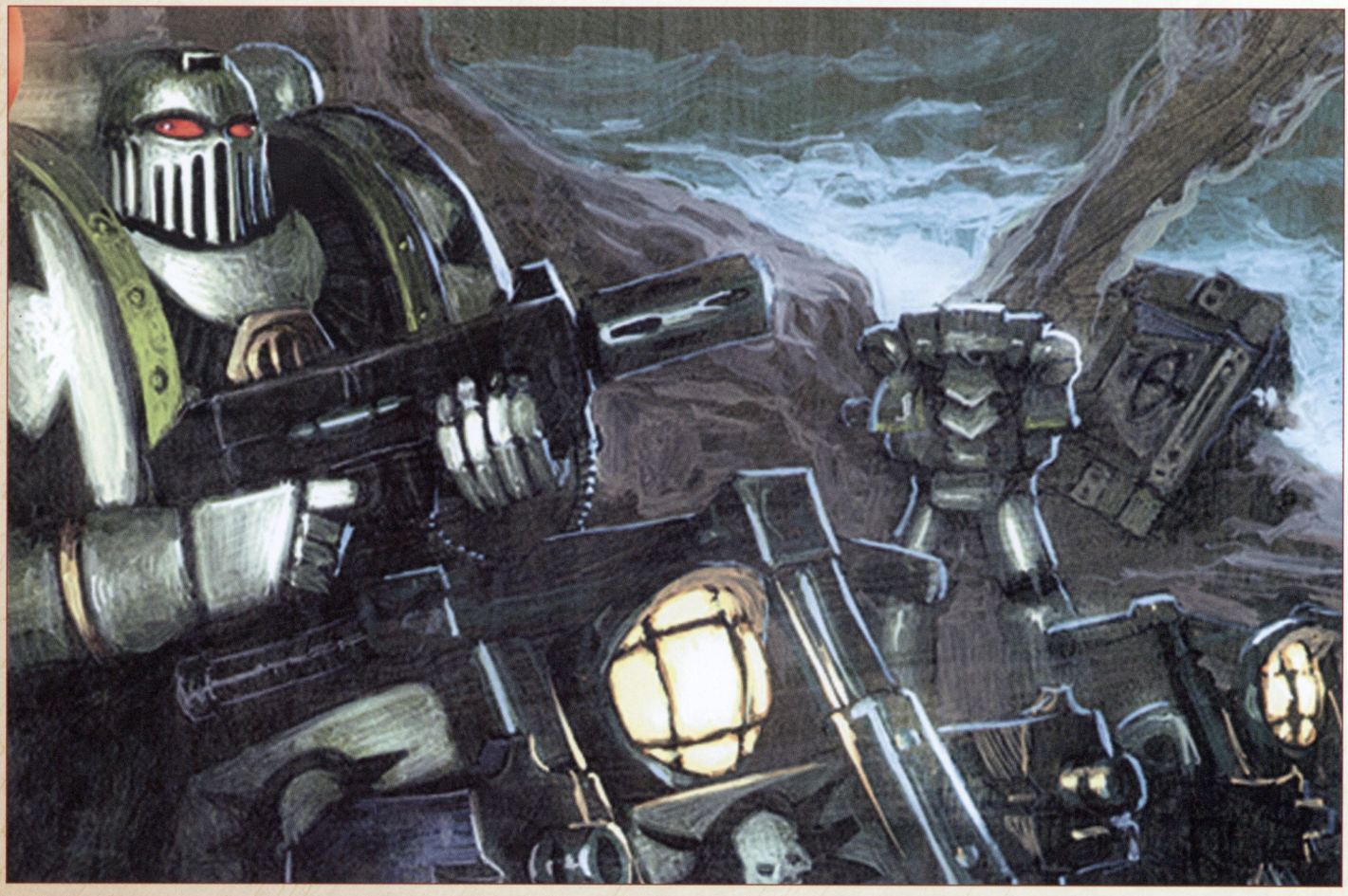
Katheron – *Steve Belledin*



Chaggrat – *Dan Wheaton*



Caphen – *Steve Belledin*



Rorrorg – *Paul Carrick*



Chondon – Des Hanley



Mycaelis – Al Eremin

The Death of a World

The planet of Isstvan III was in revolt and had declared its independence from the Imperium. The Imperial commander, Vardus Praal, was suspected of secretly being a mutant, possibly a dangerous psyker. Horus had orders to quell the rebellion and bring Praal to Earth for judgement. This provided Horus with the perfect opportunity to rid himself of those Space Marines whose loyalties he was not sure of. Horus, Angron, Mortarion and Eidolon met in council and decided which of their formations they could trust and which they could not. Orders were passed to the officers of the World Eaters, Death Guard and Emperor's Children Legions and the assault of Isstvan III began. Those sections of the Legions whose loyalty to Horus could not be guaranteed by their leaders were commanded to prepare for an assault on the planet beneath.

The first wave of attacks on the rebel planet by the Space Marines of the three Legions was devastating. Within hours the rebels were in utter disarray. Tens of thousands of the planetary defence forces had been crushed in a series of hammer-blow assaults. The Space Marines were jubilant; the Emperor's law would be quickly reinstated and the miscreant rebels brought to justice.

Just as victory seemed assured, disaster struck the Space Marine forces on the surface. All communications with the orbiting fleet ceased and the encircling battleships began to bombard the planet. Deadly virus bombs rained down – they were devised to cleanse planets of all life, and so it was on Isstvan III. The six billion inhabitants of the planet had no chance of survival.

Isstvan III had become a dead planet.

Horus the Warmaster had at last declared his hand and openly defied the Emperor. Ordered to quell a rebellion on Isstvan III and reinstate law and order, he had instead ordered an orbital bombardment that had utterly annihilated the population. He had also planned that the virus bombs would destroy the host of Space Marines he could not trust to fight for him in the coming struggle with the Emperor.

However, the Warmaster's plans were upset. Some loyalist Space Marines remained onboard the orbiting ships. Among them was Captain Garro of the Death Guard, a Terran, one of the original recruits to the XIV Legion. As soon as the bombardment began, Garro instinctively withdrew from the conflict. Captain Tarvitz of the Emperor's Children had a similar reaction. The loyalists were immediately attacked and slaughtered by their traitorous brethren. A few escaped aboard the commandeered frigate *Eisenstein*, led by Garro, whilst Tarvitz seized a Thunderhawk and made for the planet below.

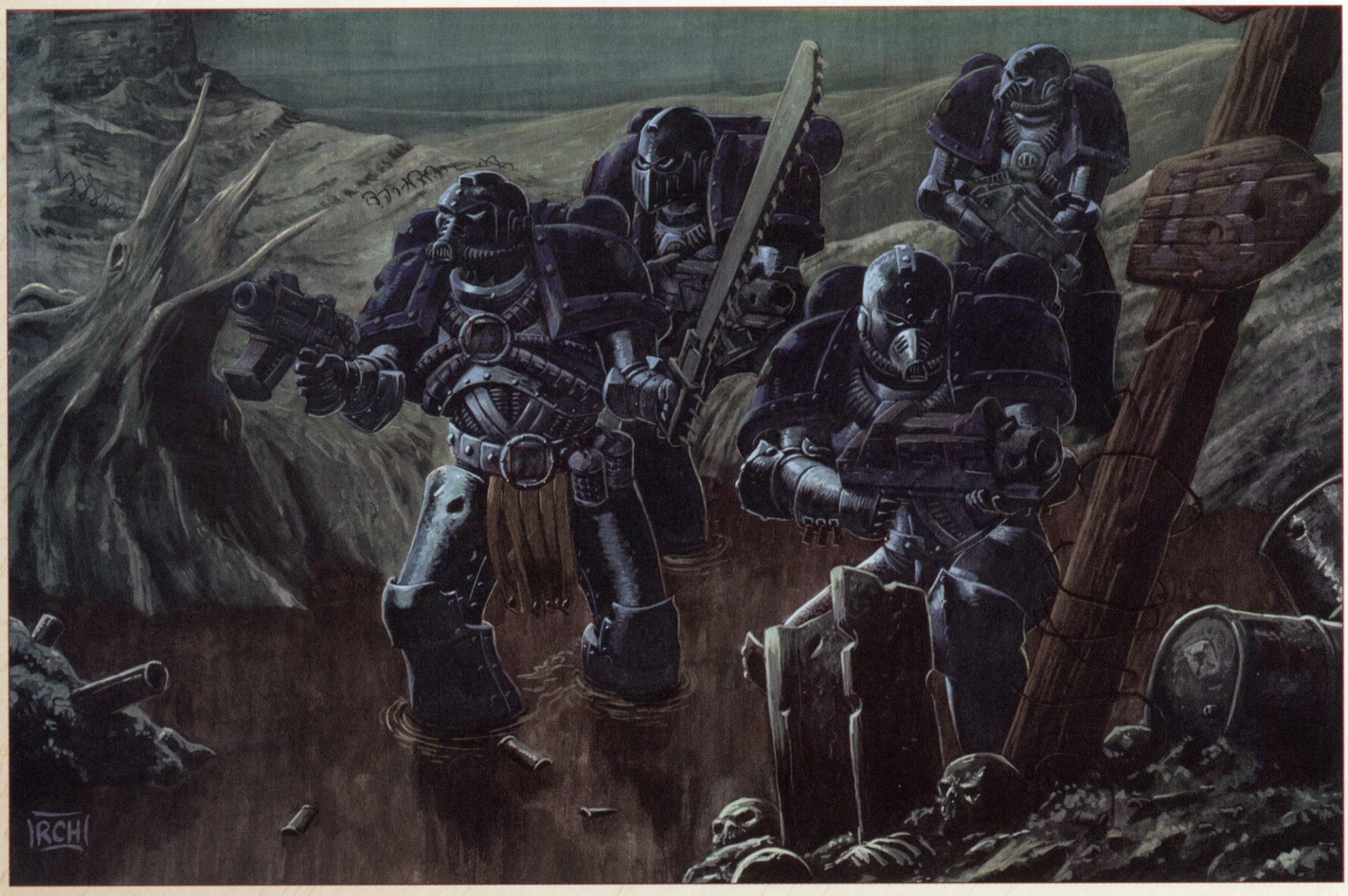
On the planet's surface had been over one hundred companies of Space Marines drawn from the Sons of Horus, Emperor's Children, Death Guard and World Eaters Legions. Of these, fully two-thirds miraculously survived the bombardment, thanks to the warning they received.



Purity of Will – *Eric Ren*



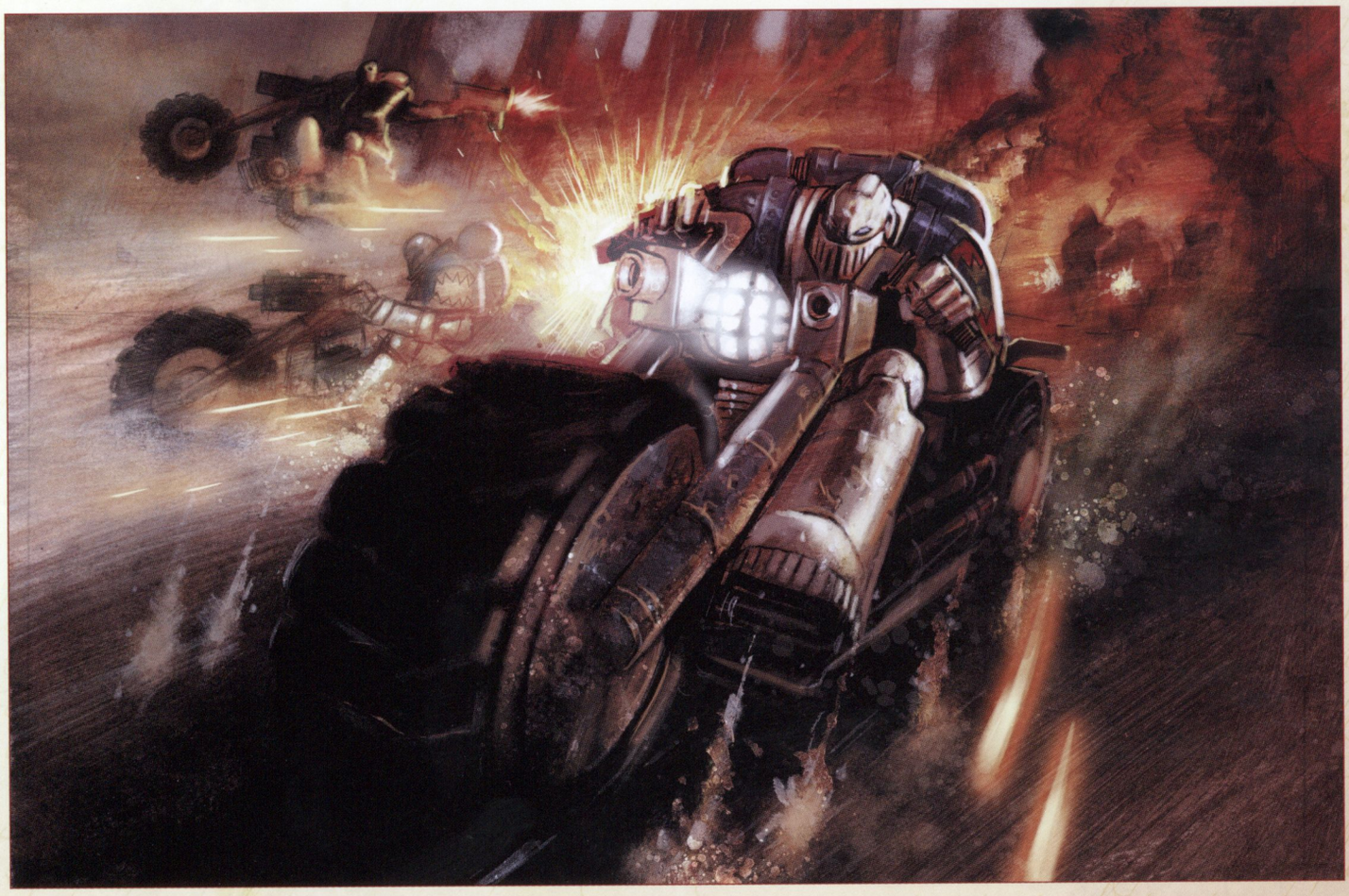
Dawn's Fire – Al Eremin



Darkhe – Ralph Horsley



Gladiator Drop Pod Group 27 – *Anne Stokes*



Krast – *John Gravato*

Betrayal

It was immediately apparent to the orbiting Horus and his co-conspirators that the virus bombs had failed to destroy the loyalist Space Marines on Isstvan III. As the firestorm abated, communications channels crackled into life. Frantic signals blared out from vox-units and comms-relays. Never in the history of the Legions had there been such a terrible act of betrayal. The Space Marines on Isstvan III were incensed beyond reason.

That they had been betrayed by their own primarchs simply added to their fury. They demanded blood!

Whilst Horus was trying to work out what to do next, Angron, headstrong as ever, took it upon himself to launch a new attack on the planet. The World Eaters primarch made planetfall at the head of fifty companies of Space Marines. Horus was furious but had little option but to back up Angron's rash move. The Sons of Horus, and remaining Emperor's Children and Death Guard units, were ordered to their gunships and drop pods.

The conflict on Isstvan III was the first battle in the history of the Imperium when Space Marines of the same Legion fought on opposite sides. Former comrades and brothers-in-arms became bitter foes. Betrayal and treachery abounded. On the devastated planet, it was kill or be killed. No quarter was asked and none offered.

On one side stood Horus the Warmaster, self-declared True Master of Humanity. With him were the corrupted primarchs: Angron of the World Eaters and Mortarion of the Death Guard. The best part of their three Legions and a host from the Emperor's Children Legion were at their command. Against them stood the remnants of the Isstvan III first wave, Space Marines still loyal to the Emperor who had been most sorely betrayed. Chief among the loyalists was Captain Tarvitz of the Emperor's Children. He was determined to take his vengeance on the traitors.



Angron, Lord of the Red Sands – *Sam Lamont*



Kaesoron – *Franz Vohwinkel*



Bakhart – *Dan Scott*



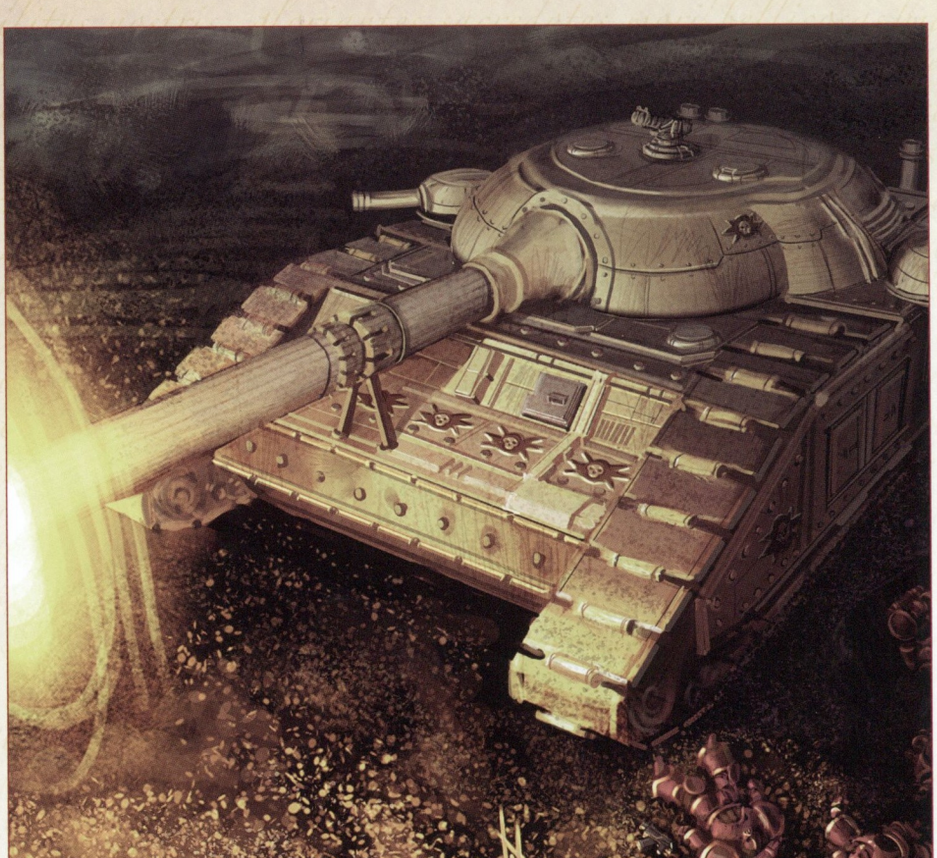
Charosion – *Chris Trevas*

War on Isstvan III

On the devastated planet of Isstvan III warriors of the Death Guard, World Eaters and Emperor's Children Legions, Space Marines still loyal to the Emperor, found themselves betrayed by the basest act of treachery. After quelling a revolt on the planet's surface, they had been first subjected to a nightmare orbital barrage and had then been attacked by Space Marines of their own Legions, traitors declaring for Horus and claiming him as the True Emperor!

As the battle between the Space Marines raged across the ruined landscape of Isstvan III, more evidence of Horus's perfidy was revealed as the loyalists encountered strange newcomers. Amongst these were black-robed cyborgs using macabre weapons and sporting fell runes on their clothing. It was clear to some that Horus had won to his side servants of the Mechanicum of Mars. The implications of this were clear to the loyal Space Marines. If Horus had control of the Mechanicum, then he would be able to call upon the services of the mighty Collegia Titanica and their gargantuan Titan war machines. Furthermore, if Mars were allied with the Warmaster, it would provide him with the perfect launching point for an attack on Terra and the Imperial Palace itself.

As the war continued, the Warmaster also committed some of his Imperial Army regiments to the fray. These units were indentured warriors recruited through the Imperial Tithe and had sworn allegiance to their Space Marine overlords. Unaware of the broader implications of Horus's treachery, the Imperial Army simply followed orders and did as commanded by their superiors. Amongst Horus's troops were also bands of ferocious cultists from the planet Davin. These barbarians openly chanted the names of their dark gods and displayed the foul runes of Chaos. At the fore were sinister sorcerers – the dark priests of Davin.



Mordant – *David Hudnut*



Skane – *Al Eremin*



Rylanor – Des Hanley



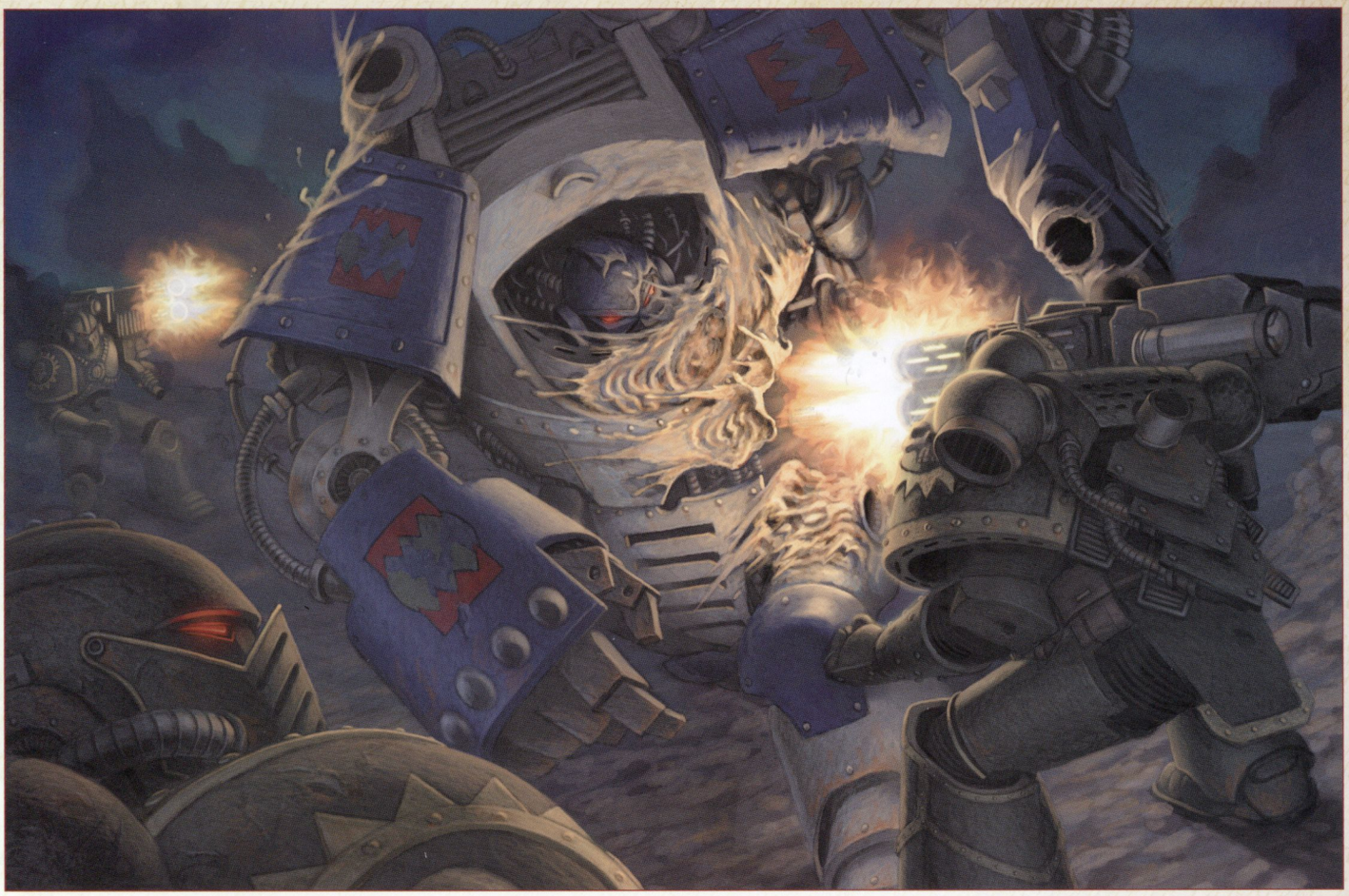
Phordal – Mark Gibbons



Eitholchin – *David Hudnut*



Strike and Fade – *Andrew Hepworth*



Karhkul – *Eric Polak*



Khatek – *Dan Scott*

Flight of the Eisenstein

As the traitorous forces of Horus launched their orbital barrage on the loyal Space Marines on Isstvan III, Captain Garro of the Death Guard seized the frigate *Eisenstein*. Garro was a staunch loyalist, a Terran who had fought countless battles alongside the Emperor during the Great Crusade. The unfolding events at Isstvan III were hard for him to fathom. His instinct led him to abandon his post, and with seventy fellow loyalists he was determined to flee the Isstvan System and make for Earth.

Garro's lightly armed cruiser was no match for the powerful battleships of Horus's blockading fleet, and it took many hits as it sped past their massive gun batteries. The crippled ship limped away from Isstvan III. It was severely damaged, all the astropaths aboard had perished in the fire-fight and its lone Navigator was mortally wounded. The ship was incapable of interstellar communication and had little chance of successfully traversing the immaterium.

All Garro could hope for was that the *Eisenstein* could escape from Isstvan III and somehow find a way to get to Earth to warn the Emperor of Horus's treachery. There was no way that the damaged vessel could outrun the pursuing traitors in realspace; Garro would have to risk the warp. He gave the command and, with a huge lurch, the ship made the jump into that dark and terrible place. The warp was restless. Great storms were brewing in the aether. The Navigator was unable to chart a safe course, and knew that if they stayed in the warp they could be lost for all time.

Garro ordered the vessel to jump back into realpace. The loyal Space Marine had no idea where or when the emergency warp-jump had taken them. As the ship exited the warp, the Navigator collapsed, finally succumbing to his wounds. The warp engines were dangerously unstable and could have exploded at any time, destroying the ship or, worse still, casting it back into the warp to be lost for all time.

The *Eisenstein* was damaged beyond repair, its superstructure dangerously close to collapse, and they had been cast adrift in an unknown region of space. They had escaped, but for Garro's loyal comrades, it seemed that all hope had now abandoned them and there was naught they could do but pray for a miracle. Garro had other ideas, and ordered the warp engines to be set for self-destruct and then ejected from the listing ship. He reasoned that the exploding engines would act as a beacon in the warp, attracting any nearby ships. Hopefully they would be friendly!

It was then that fate intervened in the form of Rogal Dorn, primarch of the Imperial Fists Legion, who came upon the broken ship. Dorn and his fleet had been becalmed nearby by the growing storms of the immaterium. The exploding warp engines of the *Eisenstein* had flared in the warp and the Imperial Fists Navigators had been able to pinpoint their position.

Garro presented himself to Dorn and told him of the events at Isstvan III. The primarch was predictably dismayed; he and his Legion were staunch loyalists. Dorn had held Horus in high esteem. He admired him greatly and had never thought to question his motives. This cowardly act of betrayal could have no justification. Dorn made two resolutions. The first was to order the greater portion of his fleet to Isstvan III to break the siege and relieve the loyalists fighting there, and the second was to personally escort Garro to the Emperor. Despite the increasing turbulence of the warp, the Imperial Fists fleet embarked to Isstvan III and Rogal Dorn made his way to Earth with Captain Garro and his loyal crew.



Nathaniel Garro – *John Gravato*



The Flight of the Eisenstein – *Neil Roberts*

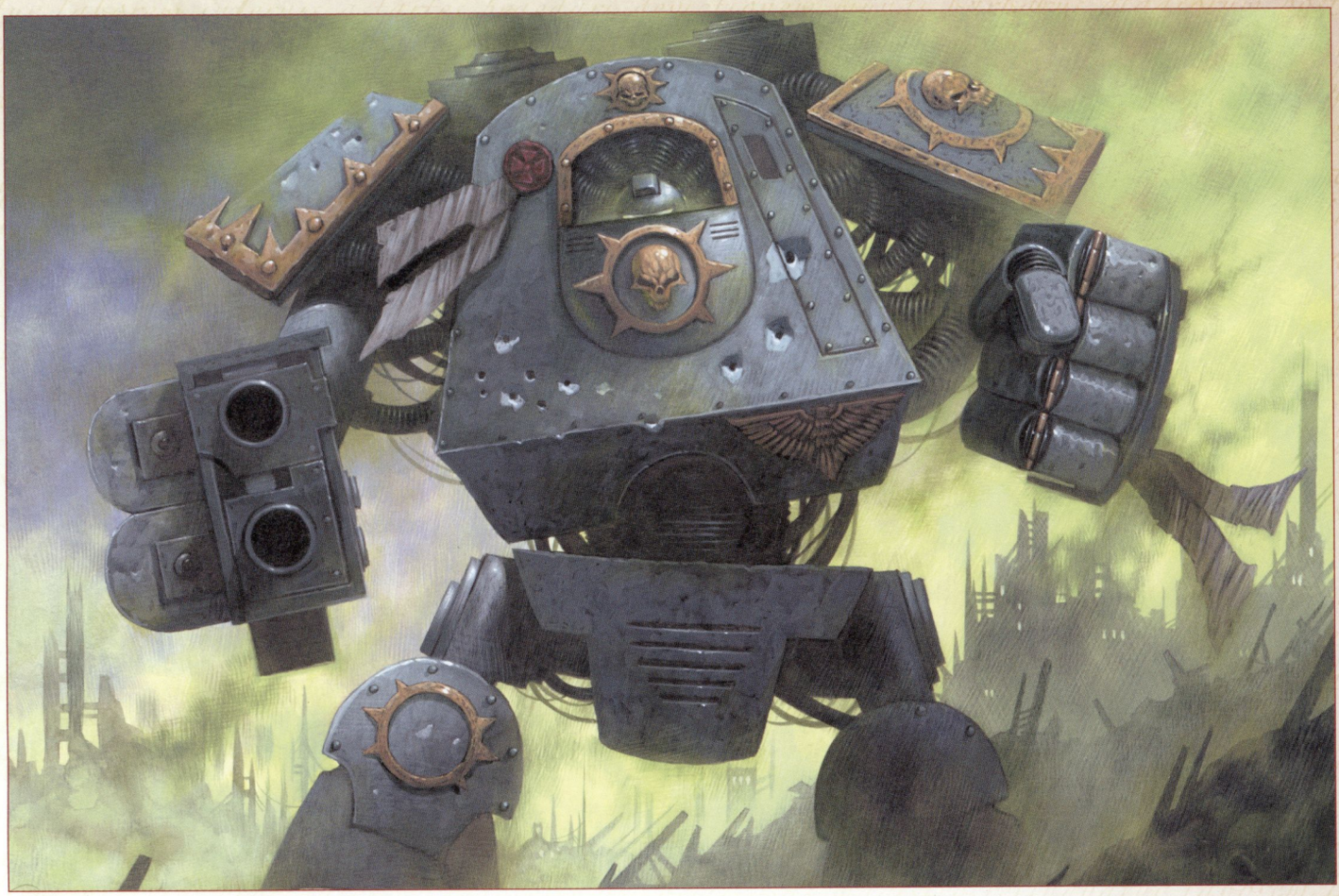




Quemondil – *Ed Cox*



Joradan – *Hugh Jamieson*



Kargul – *Wayne England*



Mahrke – *James Ryman*

On the Surface

Captain Saul Tarvitz, last loyal officer of the Emperor's Children Legion, surveyed the grim tableau before him. He stood amidst the ruins of a once magnificent city. Its name had died with those who had built and lived within its fabulous palaces and marbled halls. Now it was little more than a heap of rubble. Here and there, skeletal remnants of the city's largest buildings stood proud of the surrounding devastation. Tarvitz had climbed one such outcrop to attempt an overview of the area and assess the tactical situation.

From his vantage point, Tarvitz could see only death and destruction. There was barely anything left of the city that could be called architecture – as far as he could see, there was only ruin. Death littered the rubble; every kind of corpse it was possible to imagine lay there on the cracked and broken stones. Old, rotted corpses that had not even had the courtesy of a burial ritual lay next to the fresh corpses of recently felled Space Marines and traitor soldiers. It was a grim sight.

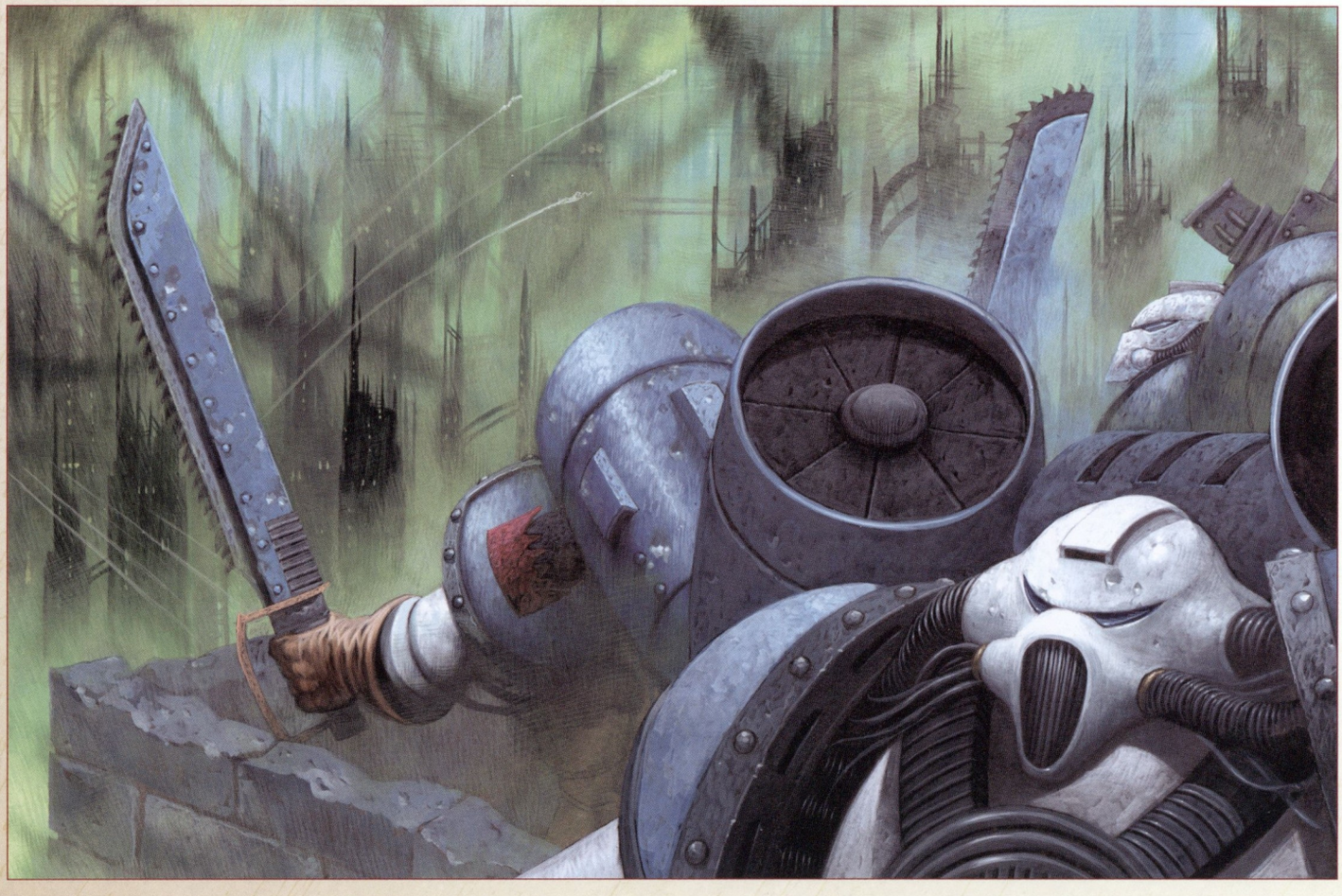
Tarvitz drew breath as he stared out across the ruin, his brow knotted in concentration as he strained to see or hear any enemy activity. There was none. He was suspicious nonetheless. For the last few months he had never known the enemy to relent in their attacks. The fighting had been constant, the death continual. He led a small band of no more than a hundred Space Marines – the last loyal survivors of the Death Guard, World Eaters and Emperor's Children Legions, warriors whose loyalty to the Emperor had made them deadly adversaries to the traitors of Horus. Space Marines who had been most foully betrayed by their former comrades.

They had been sent to the surface of Isstvan III to quell a revolt amongst the populace. It had been an attack in force – thousands of Space Marines landing in drop pods and gunships – and it had overwhelmed the rebels with minimal effort. An easy enough task for warriors as skilful and powerful as the Space Marines. For a brief moment, the victors celebrated their triumph. Then came the act that defined all that followed. Instead of laurels for their victory, the orbiting fleet sent death down onto the loyal Space Marines. Thousands upon thousands of virus bombs were launched at the planet. The planet's population of six billion people were virtually annihilated in that one action. Only a last second warning and their superhuman resilience had saved the Space Marines on the surface from sharing their fate.

After the orbital strike came the assault by the traitors. As the smoke and fire of the virus bombs dispersed, the loyalists saw the drop pods falling to the planet's surface. As these landed they disgorged their deadly cargo of raging World Eaters Space Marines led by the fearsome primarch Angron. The loyal Space Marines were dismayed by the appearance of Angron's warriors, who attacked without pause, paying no heed to any past allegiance or kinship. In their wake came the other traitors: the Emperor's Children, the Death Guard and the Sons of Horus. Although deeply shocked by this turn of events, the loyalists gathered their forces and fought back against the treacherous onslaught.

For long months, the war on Isstvan III had raged between the betrayed loyalist Space Marines and Horus's traitors. At the beginning, the two sides were evenly matched, but as time passed the traitors' strength had grown and that of the loyalists had waned. Horus had sent new troops to the planet: more Space Marines, tithed Imperial Army regiments and war machines of the Mechanicum, including mighty Titans. Increasingly, the loyalists found themselves outnumbered and outgunned and had been forced to retreat into smaller, isolated groups.

Reduced to hit-and-run counterattacks and small-scale skirmishes, the lack of loyalist



Karst – *Wayne England*

warriors had prevented any major efforts to strike back at the traitors who were content to isolate the loyalists and overwhelm their pockets of resistance one by one. As time wore on, the loyalists were reduced to a fraction of their original fighting strength.

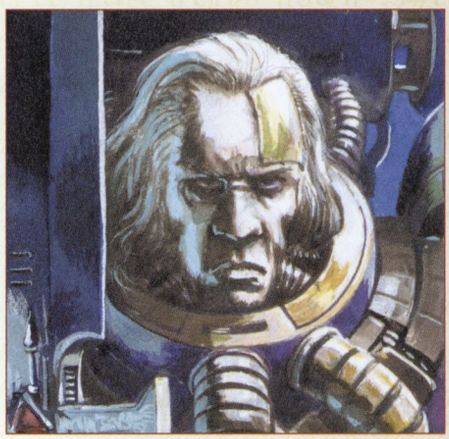
The loyalists had decided to make their last stand in the heart of the ruined city. Here the traitor hordes would not be able to make their advantage in numbers tell. The loyalists had dug in and they commanded strong defensive positions around what had been the city's central administrative sector. Even so, the fighting over the last weeks had been fierce and the loyalist force had suffered many casualties. Now Tarvitz – the most senior of the surviving loyalists – had but a hundred Space Marines at his command, barely a company. It seemed as if these men would soon be overwhelmed and annihilated.

Then things had changed. At first it was the withdrawal of the traitor Space Marine troops. Without warning they had quit the battle, leaving behind the indentured troops of the Imperial Army and the Titans of the Mechanicum to continue the fighting. The defenders were puzzled by this move because the opposing Space Marines had been the most serious threat to them, despite the power of the Titans and the huge numbers of traitor Imperial soldiers.

The defending loyalists then fought with renewed vigour, perhaps sensing an opportunity to break out of their self-imposed blockade. But their numbers were too small and their ranks too thinly spread for this to tell. The mood of the loyalists had darkened as they began to realise that not only were they most likely to die, but they would also be denied the chance to wreak vengeance on those who had so vilely betrayed them – their former brothers-in-arms, brothers-in-spirit, brothers-in-blood, the traitor Space Marines who followed Horus.

And then the attacking traitor army had suddenly retreated. One moment it was pressing forward, almost suicidal in its assaults against the dug-in loyalists, and then it was gone. From his lofty viewpoint, Tarvitz had watched the enemy streaming away in all directions. The retreat was orderly, but hasty, and before long the traitors had disappeared from view.

An eerie calm settled over Isstvan III and this worried Tarvitz even more than the relentless attacks by the traitors had done. He was deeply suspicious of the traitors' retreat. Horus must have some new evil to unleash upon us, he thought. His mind ran through a host of imagined scenarios, desperately trying to work out which it was that he and his men should prepare for. He cast his thoughts back to the beginning and suddenly realised what was about to befall them. As he began to warn his troops, the first missiles of the orbital bombardment tore down through the clouds above to strike the ruined city. Within seconds, the entire region had become a churning, roiling miasma of explosions, heat and fire. It would be a miracle if any of the loyalists could survive this onslaught.



Saul Tarvitz – *David Gallagher*



Galaxy in Flames – *Neil Roberts*



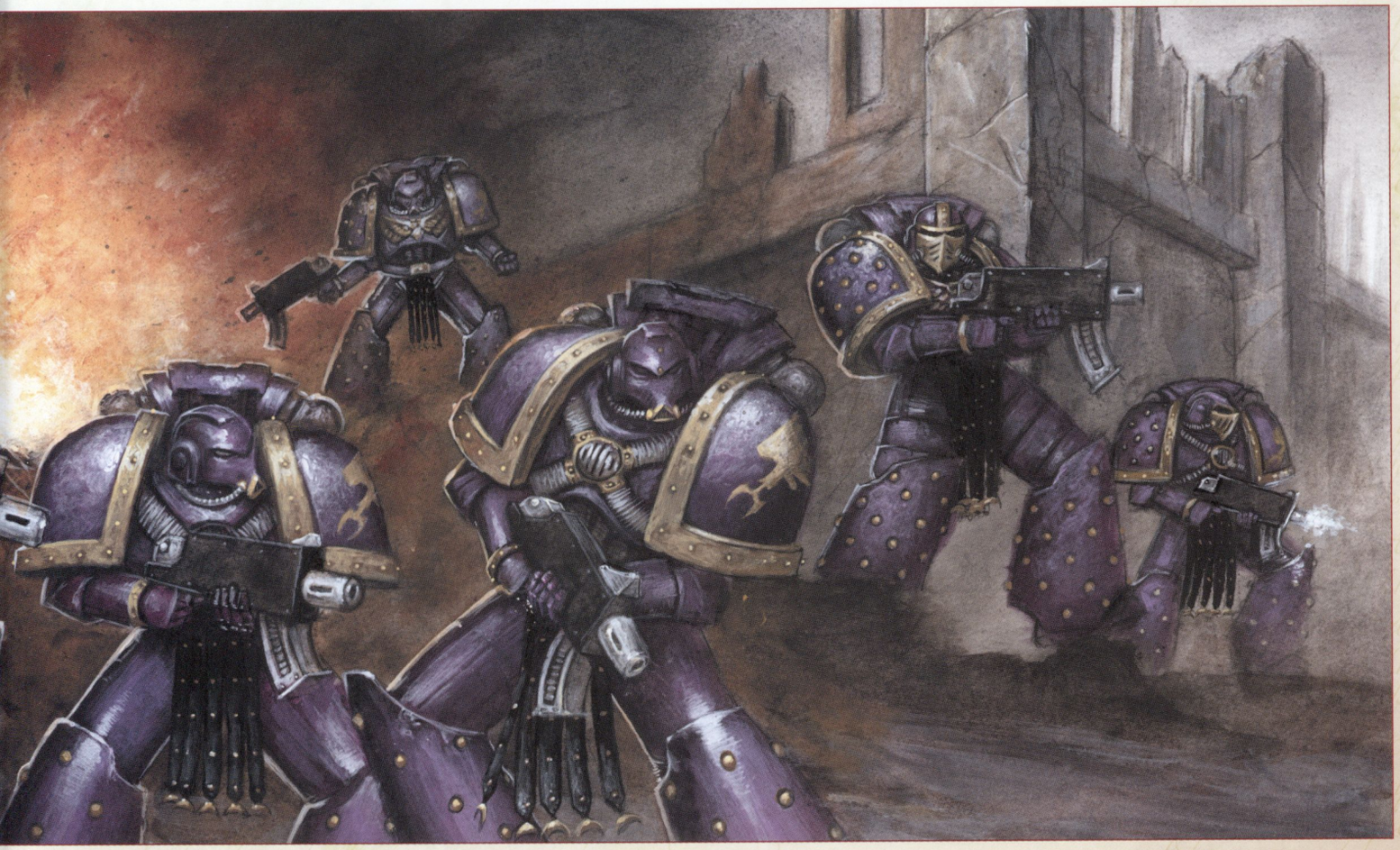
Sorruk – *James Brady*



Saeverin – *Ben Peck*



Valoc – Paul Herbert





Typhon – *Eric Polak*



Battle's Glory – *Steve Belledin*



Tantaeron – *David Hudnut*



Morturg – *Chris Trevas*

Horus meets Fulgrim at Isstvan

Horus the Warmaster stood on the bridge of the *Vengeful Spirit*, his great battle-barge and command centre. The planet of Isstvan III loomed large in the viewport, flashes of light dancing across its blackened atmosphere, the only sign to Horus that a violent battle was taking place on the planet below.

Fulgrim, primarch of the Emperor's Children, entered the vaulted chamber. Horus turned to face the fabulously armoured warrior and fixed him with a steely glare. The Warmaster's visage was grim, his mood black. Fulgrim was clearly unsettled.

'My lord, I have returned to you. How goes the battle?'

'Time for that later. Where have you been? Why has it taken so long for you to return? Your mission was a simple one. I was expecting you to be here days ago. Are the Iron Hands with us? Give me your report.'

'There were some difficulties. Things did not go as we had planned. Manus was intractable, irrational. The situation became… messy. Suffice to say, the mission failed. He will not join with us. He is a powerful and determined warrior. I was fortunate to escape unharmed.'

'Escape? You dolt! Is Ferrus Manus still alive?'

'Yes, but his fleet is crippled and his Legion far from Earth. He cannot be a threat to us.'

'That remains to be seen. I was a fool to give you this task. I had thought that your past friendship with Manus would aid you in turning him to our cause. It has only stopped you from disposing of him. Instead of an ally you have delivered to me a most dangerous enemy. You must hope this error can be corrected, Fulgrim, or my wrath will be terrible indeed!'

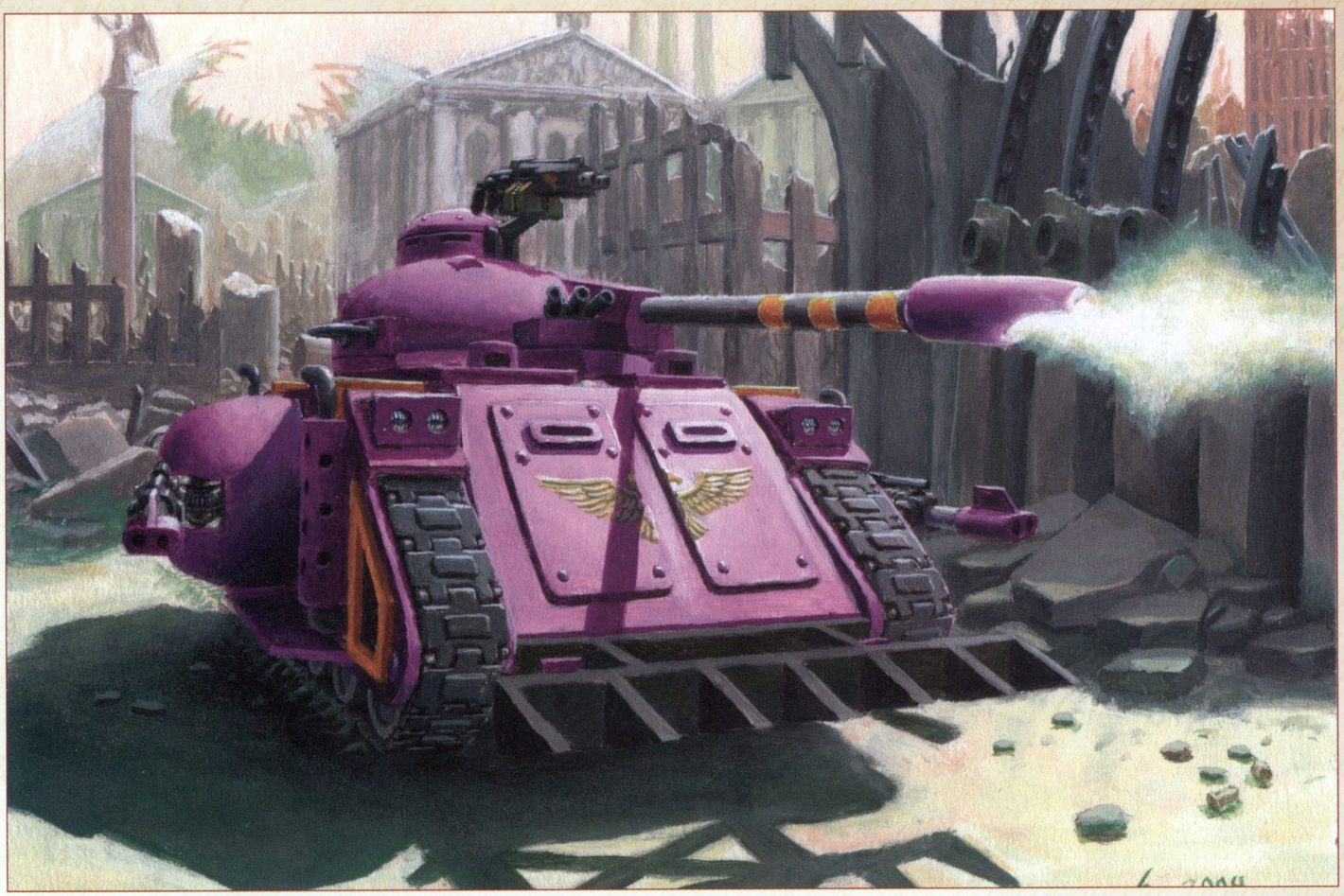
'Sire, when next Manus and I meet, only one of us shall survive to tell of it. This I promise to you!'



Drask – *Eric Polak*



Guorzlat – *Paul Herbert*



Agnomen – *Eric Ren*



Eudicius – *Torstein Nordstrand*

A Disturbance in the Warp

Horus had powerful allies. As he launched his attack on the planet of Isstvan III, the daemons of the warp stirred. The Warmaster had desired them to remain hidden. He did not want his pact with them to be known by the Emperor and his sycophants, least of all the other primarchs. This could upset his plans. He instead made them aid him in more subtle ways.

The Ruinous Powers were restless. They could sense weakness in the enemy; the Emperor was distracted, his voice rarely touching their realm. Now was the time to strike him down, they argued. If they were given the chance to confront him then Horus could win his throne easily. But Horus resisted their calls. Better, he thought, to bide his time and strike when ready, at the hour of his own choosing.

But the daemons would not be still. Like beasts in a cage, they paced back and forth across the weirdness of the warp. As their agitation grew, the warp began to boil and wrought storms.

In the wake of their distress, the energy weave of the warp was wracked with shocks and maelstroms. Great storms appeared in the aether. This served Horus well, for he knew that the warp storms would disrupt his enemy's communications. The Emperor's astropaths would be muted, his Navigators blinded and his great fleets crippled.



Orbital Bombardment – *Jon Hodgson*



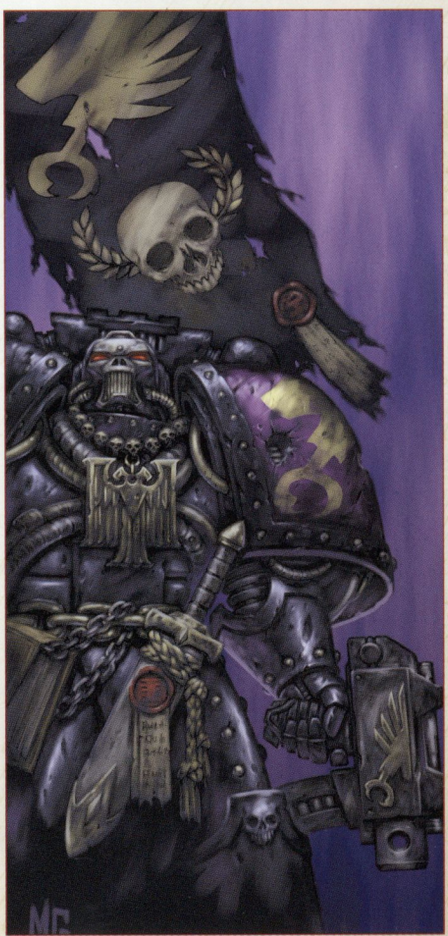
Light Hammer – *Eric Ren*



Lucius – *Sam Wood*



Ignatius Grulgor – *David Gallagher*



Charmosian – *Mark Gibbons*

Aboard the Vengeful Spirit

Maloghurst the Twisted, Horus's equerry, had an audience with the Warmaster. They met in Horus's private chambers aboard the *Vengeful Spirit*. The Warmaster voiced his concerns:

'The battle on Isstvan III was unforeseen and is causing us unnecessary delay. We are in great danger of losing the advantage of surprise over the Emperor and his sycophants. Despite the best efforts of our allies in the warp, heralds of warning are even now making their way to Terra. We may only have days left to us before the Emperor realises he has been betrayed. If we cannot finish this, and soon, he will strike back.'

'We fear that the Emperor already knows. This much we have gleaned from our daemonic allies,' Maloghurst replied.

Horus then addressed a group of his most senior warriors.

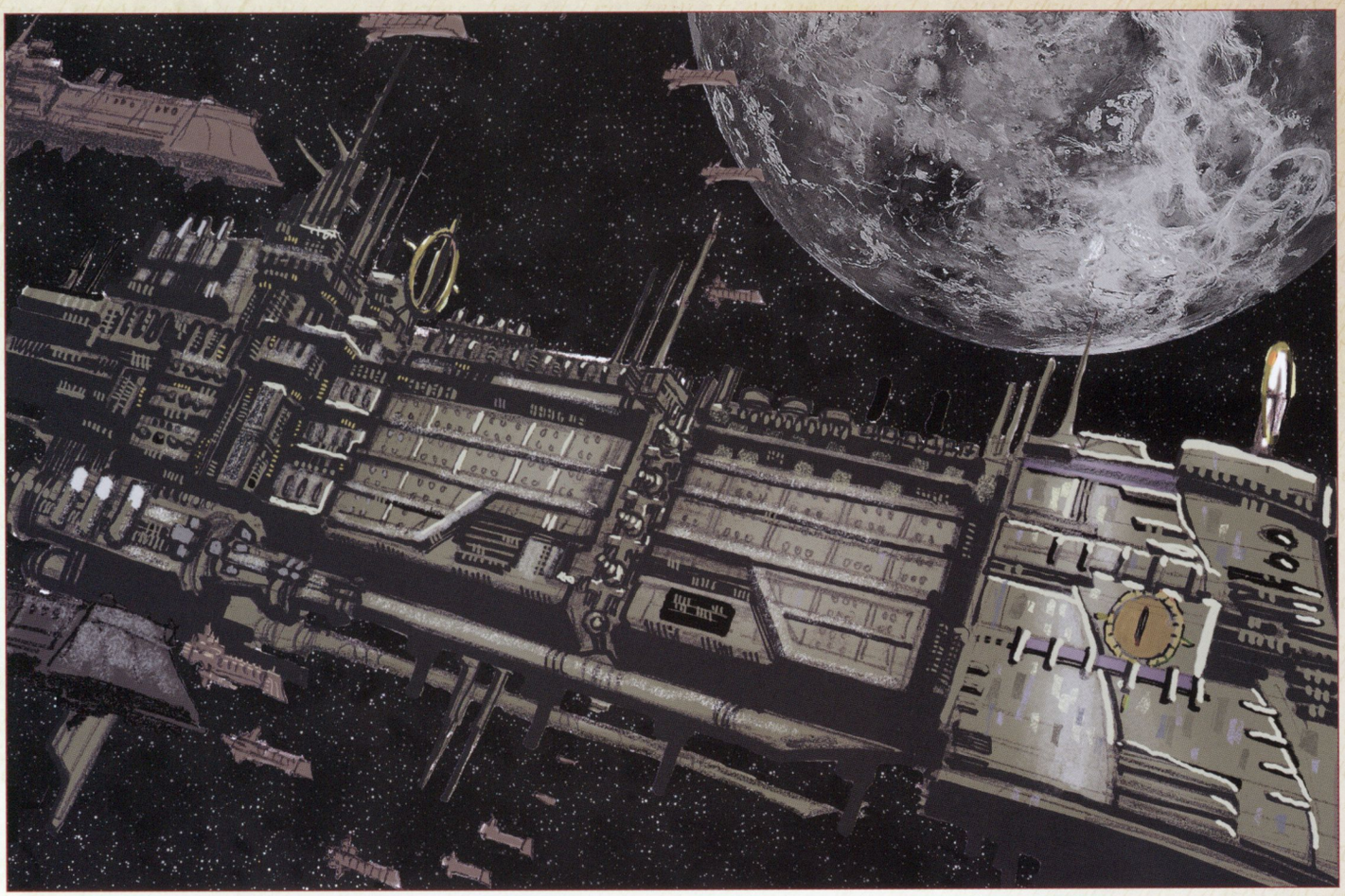
'If the Emperor makes a move against us, he will rely upon those primarchs and Legions who he trusts. Foremost amongst those are the deadly triumvirate of Guilliman, Sanguinius and El'Jonson. These three will be dealt with, and will present no particular threat to us for a time. Russ is headstrong and undisciplined – he will keep his Legion occupied in a fruitless battle against the Thousand Sons for some while. Dorn is a different proposition. We must avoid confronting him if at all possible. The Khan is out of our reach, but I fear him not and believe he will ultimately side with us.

'Of the rest, it is clear now who is with us and who will remain loyal to the Emperor. This knowledge is ours alone; the Emperor's ignorance of these loyalties will be his undoing. No more efforts are to be made to convert the loyalists. I will not have another Ferrus Manus debacle. Is that clear?'

The assembled primarchs, chieftains and dark priests nodded their assent.



Subversive Tactics – Dan Wheaton



Vengeful Spirit – *Justin Norman*



Khaggort – *John Wigley*



Ezekyle Abaddon – *Paul Dainton*

Prospero



A Thousand Sons – *Neil Roberts*

The Red Sorcerers of Prospero

Magnus the Red was an imposing figure: a red cyclops-giant. He was a very powerful psyker, probably the most powerful psyker of all the primarchs. Furthermore, he had been raised on Prospero – this unusual human world was a paradise planet that embraced the psychic mutations that had engulfed its population. Instead of becoming outcasts, the psykers of Prospero became its leaders. Magnus had risen to the position of the planet's pre-eminent sorcerer and leader of the ruling council.

Upon meeting Magnus, the Emperor had cautioned him about the dangers of sorcery and the nature of the warp. The Emperor realised that Magnus was very powerful. Possibly feeling that it was more dangerous for the young primarch to remain ignorant of the secrets of the warp than it was for him to know them, the Emperor showed him the truth.

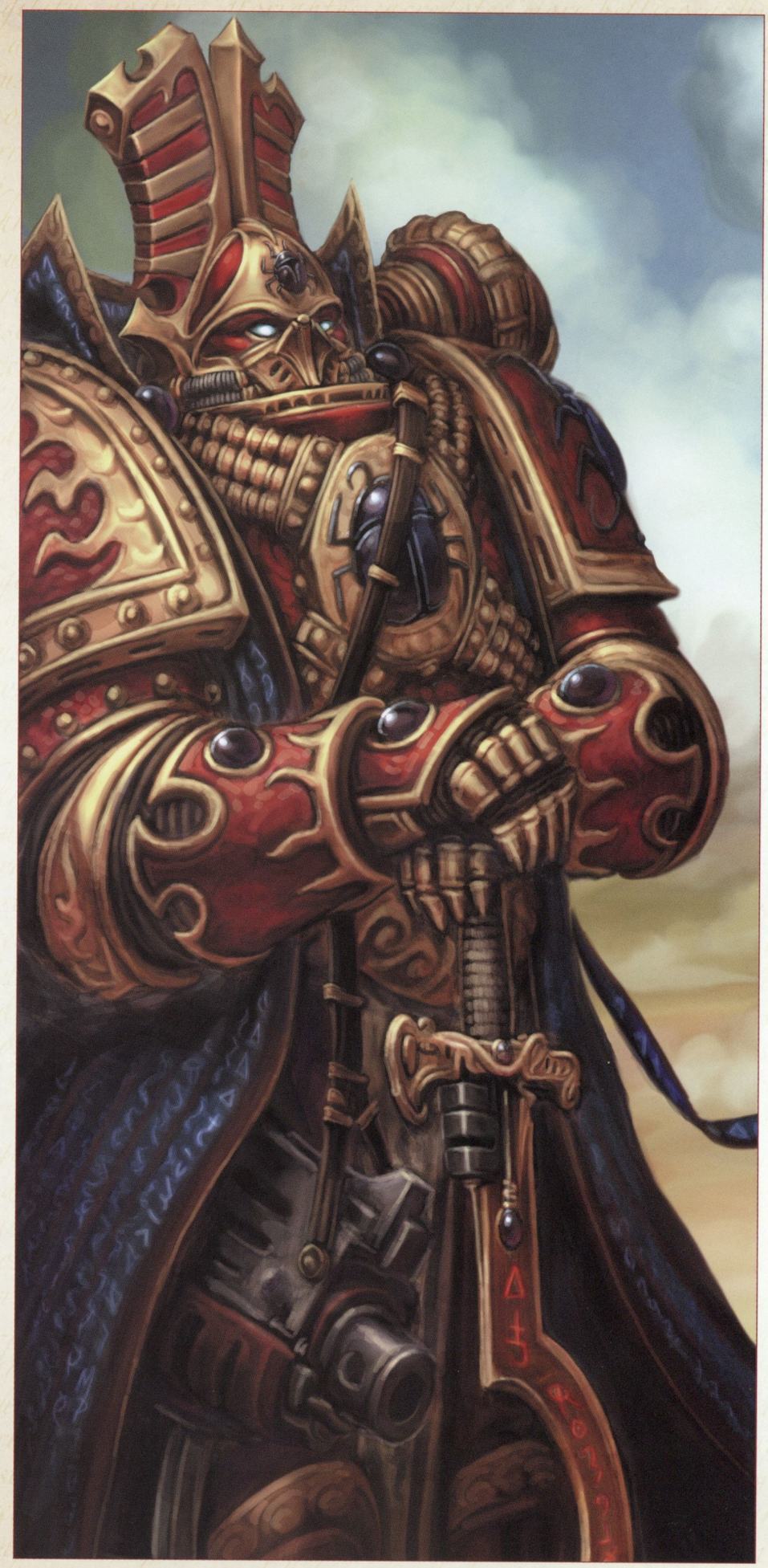
Magnus feigned shock and horror at what the Emperor revealed to him. He immediately agreed to renounce sorcery and to re-educate the people of Prospero. But Magnus secretly dismissed the Emperor's warnings. He had already peered into the warp with his one great eye and was obsessed with the power and beauty it promised him.

The Thousand Sons

Magnus had been united with his Thousand Sons, the Space Marine Legion who bore his genes. The Legion adopted Prospero as its new home world and many of Magnus's followers on the planet were recruited into their ranks.

Despite the Emperor's warning, the primarch was obsessed with the warp and the study of sorcery. The Legion of the Thousand Sons had been plagued with psychic mutancy in the years leading to their unification with Magnus. When they did meet, Magnus was able to offer a solution to them. He secretly taught them the ways of the sorcerers of Prospero, to embrace their psychic talents as a gift rather than suffer them as a curse. The Thousand Sons had become a secret cabal of warlocks.

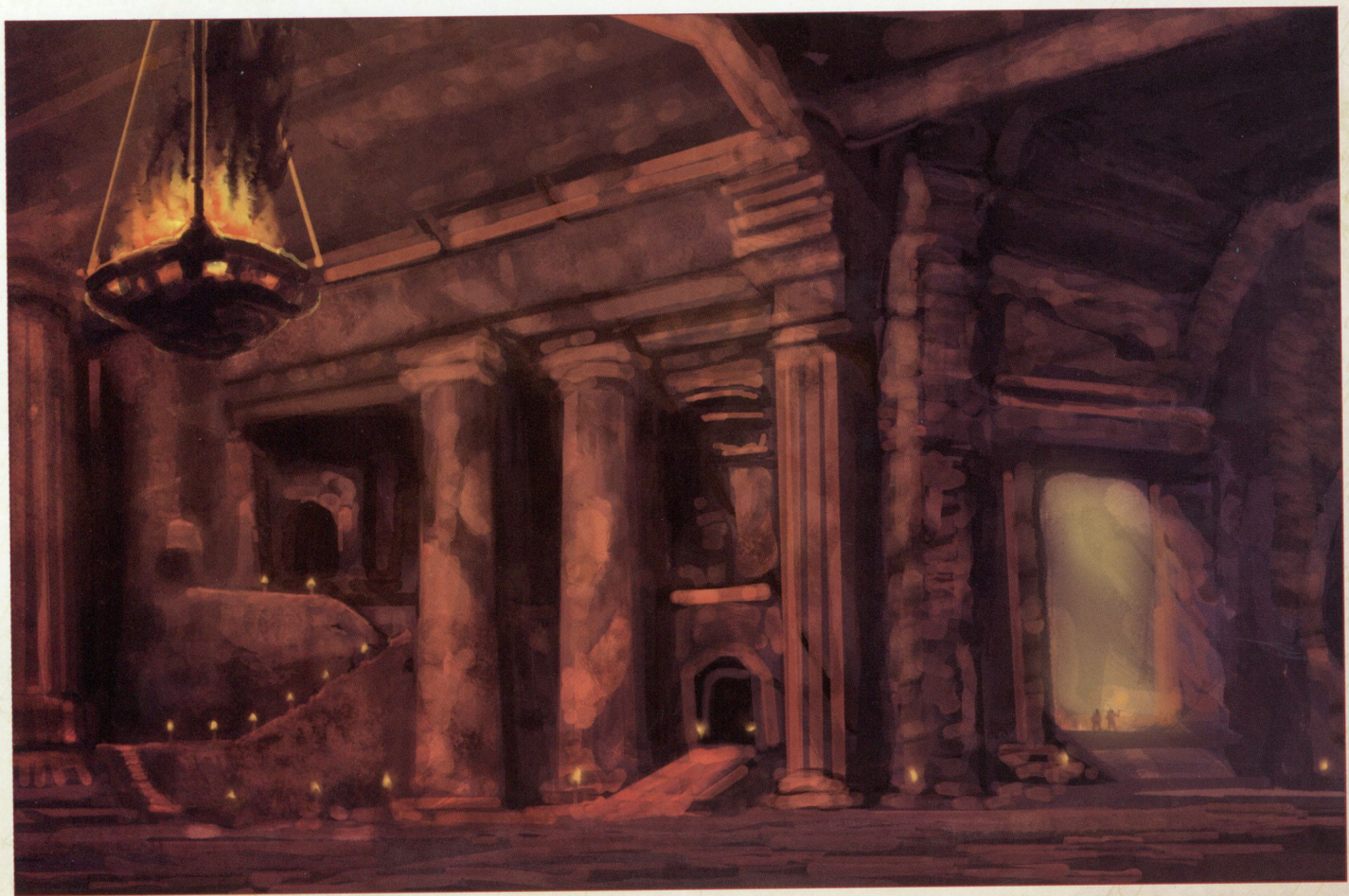
The Thousand Sons fought bravely during the Great Crusade and few could doubt their achievements. However, some of the other primarchs could never bring themselves to fully trust Magnus and his Thousand Sons. Leman Russ regarded Magnus as sly and devious, Mortarion openly accused the cyclops of dabbling in sorcery and Corax twice refused to field his Raven Guard Legion alongside the Thousand Sons.



Phosis T'kar – *Michael Phillippi*



Rehahti – *Michael Phillippi*



Catacombs of Tizca – *Rick Sardinha*

Space Marine Librarians

Magnus the Red, primarch of the Thousand Sons Legion, was instrumental in the development of the Space Marine Librarians. Some of the primarchs had long wanted to exploit the powers of psychically talented Space Marines. In some Legions, psychic mutation was relatively common and it was felt that there must be ways for such individuals to continue to be of use to their Legion without presenting any danger.

Magnus and a number of other primarchs created a program of training and development for psykers that supplemented the traditional process of creating a Space Marine. The Emperor sanctioned these first experiments with psychic Space Marines as a means of controlling the spontaneous outbreaks of psychic mutation within the ranks of certain Legions. Then the Emperor had been asked to approve the recruitment of psykers into some of the other Legions. The Librarians had been loyal and effective warriors, and the Emperor appeared to accept their presence on the field of battle.

The Librarians had become a powerful addition to the ranks of the Space Marine Legions.

The Librarian Crisis

As the Great Crusade progressed, most of the Space Marine Legions had established Librarius departments. The Librarians proved themselves as worthy as any other Space Marines in battle after battle.

However, the primarchs argued amongst themselves and with the Emperor about the Librarians. Some desired to extend their Librarius departments and recruit even more pyskers whilst other primarchs were vehemently against the entire notion of the Librarians. Leman Russ argued that they were simply warlocks by any other name. Mortarion accused Magnus the Red of sorcery.

The Emperor was planning to retreat to Earth and continue his great work in the seclusion of his Palace vaults. Perhaps he was concerned about the Librarians and the dangers they would present when he was no longer fighting alongside them. Certainly he was dismayed at the accusation against Magnus. Before he departed for Earth, he summoned the War Council to session on the planet of Nikaea.



Hathor Maat – *Carl Frank*



Prospero – John Blanche

The Council of Nikaea

On the planet of Nikaea, the Emperor had summoned the War Council to resolve the Librarian crisis and for Magnus to face charges of sorcery. The Emperor was enthroned on a high dais and looked down upon the primarchs and other dignitaries assembled in the ancient amphitheatre.

Each in turn made their representation to the Emperor. Some primarchs spoke against Magnus, others spoke in his defence. Mortarion repeated his charge that Magnus was employing sorcery. Magnus told of the great deeds achieved by the Librarians and pointed at the astropaths around them as evidence of the Imperium's absolute reliance on psykers. He refuted the charge of sorcery. 'If I am guilty of anything, it is the simple pursuit of knowledge,' he said.

The Emperor made his ruling. Beyond the exceptions of the Navigators and astropaths, he was adamant that the Legions not employ psykers. Even the hint of sorcery had become dangerous and unacceptable. He commanded that the primarchs close their Librarius departments forthwith and ordered that the primarchs themselves not indulge their undoubted psychic talents. The Emperor said it was not clear whether Magnus had been using sorcery, but that he should immediately cease employing psychic powers.

The Council of Nikaea had been the Trial of Magnus the Red. He was accused of sorcery and of introducing sorcerous practices to the Space Marine Legions through the institution of the Librarius.

The wrath of the Emperor was barely contained as he pronounced judgement on Magnus. Although there was no substantive evidence that Magnus has been communing with the Dark Powers of the warp, the Emperor was enraged. He had trusted Magnus to do as he had asked him years before when they had first met. Then the Emperor had shared with Magnus secrets of the warp to which only they were privy. Now Magnus appeared to have ignored the Emperor's warnings and was at the very least dabbling in the black arts of sorcery.

Magnus was ordered to return to Prospero and reorganise his Legion, to disband the Legion's Librarius and to re-deploy the Librarians to the battle companies. The Emperor censured his use of psychics and dismissed Magnus with a final threat. 'If you treat with the warp, Magnus, I shall visit destruction upon you, and your Legion's name will be struck from the Imperial records for all time.'



The Emperor's Light – *Dan Wheaton*



Ahzek Ahriman – Alex Boyd

The Chaplain Edict

After the Council of Nikaea, the Space Marine Legions had been instructed to abolish their Librarius divisions. The Emperor decreed that henceforth no Legion was to employ psykers in battle, nor were they to continue their studies into the mysteries of psychic talents. Those Legions who had Librarians – psychically empowered Space Marines – were instructed to reassign them to standard fighting units and to forbid the use of their abilities.

First Lord of Terra, Malcador the Sigillite, leader of the Council of Terra, was not satisfied that all of the Legions would follow the Emperor's edict. He knew that many of the primarchs placed great value on their Librarians and the powers they could unleash on the battlefield. For some of the Legions, the deployment of psykers had become central to their strategies and tactics.

He resolved to find a way to ensure these Legions obeyed the Emperor and observed the psyker ban. His thoughts turned to Lorgar and the Word Bearers Legion.

Whilst the Emperor worked his secret labours in the Palace Vaults, Malcador the Sigillite issued a new edict through the Council of Terra in the name of the Emperor. This was the Order of Observance, more commonly known as the Chaplain Edict, and its inspiration was the Word Bearers Legion.

The Word Bearers primarch, Lorgar, had been raised on the cult world of Colchis. In time, Lorgar had become its martial and spiritual leader. His first meeting with the Emperor was believed to be a fulfilment of an ancient prophecy, an event that reinforced the religious fervour of the people of Colchis, and Lorgar himself. On becoming primarch, Lorgar had introduced officer-clerics to his Legion. These warrior-priests were named Chaplains, and their role was to minister to the needs of the Space Marines and ensure that their faith in the Emperor was strong.

Inspired by this, Malcador ordered the other Space Marine primarchs to appoint Chaplains who would ensure the spiritual wellbeing of their Legion and enforce the psyker ban. These officers were to be picked from those Space Marines who were the most steadfast in their duties, and who had demonstrated the strongest loyalty to their primarch and to the Emperor.

Most of the primarchs loyally followed the edict and began to appoint officers to the rank and duties of Chaplain. Some did not. Lorgar was quietly amused by the irony of the new edict – his Legion had already secretly fallen to Chaos.

Given the vagaries of communication across the vastness of the galaxy, it would not have



Berus – *Paul Carrick*



Xavier – *James Ryman*

seemed unusual or suspicious to Malcador that not all of the primarchs had voiced their consent to the edict immediately. It was also certain that some of the primarchs behaved duplicitously, and while they assured him they were doing as the Emperor had ordered, they were not. In time, their dishonesty became clear.

Magnus Retreats to Prospero

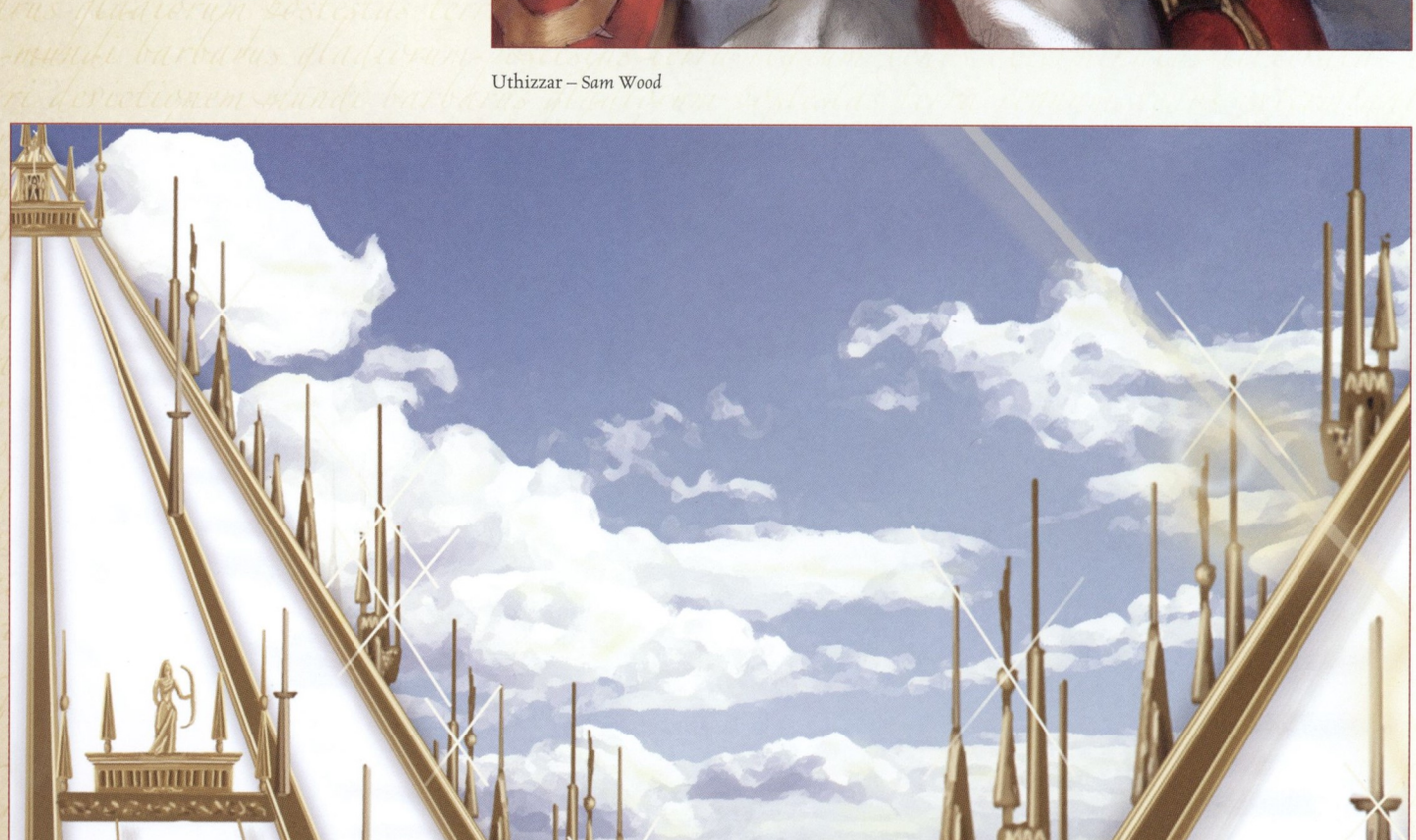
Magnus had retreated to his home world – the paradise planet of Prospero. He was bitterly disappointed at the outcome of the Council of Nikaea. The Emperor had made his ruling, and through it his feelings, clear. Magnus was to stop all sorcery and psychic activity on pain of death. Furthermore, the development of Space Marine Librarians was halted and the Librarius departments ordered to be disbanded.

Magnus raged against the Emperor and his ruling. He had no intention of giving up the power and the glory the warp had offered to him. He would continue to study the warp and work his spells. He met with his senior Librarians and they agreed to continue their sorcery in secret.

None can say when Magnus was tainted by the warp, but his actions suggest that his corruption was well progressed by the time of the Council of Nikaea. It is probable that his senior officers and Librarians were also corrupt at this point. Magnus had no problems persuading his Legion to collude with his plan to secretly continue their study of the warp.



Uthizzar – *Sam Wood*



Silver Spires – *Jen Page*



Magnus the Red – *John Blanche*



Magnus, the Crimson King – *John Blanche*

Magnus's Precognition

Magnus had put his faith in sorcery and the dark powers of the warp. The Emperor had censured him for such activity and warned him that he would have no hesitation in destroying Magnus were he to disobey his commands.

The Warmaster Horus was being treated on the feral planet of Davin. Unbeknownst to anyone else, the Warmaster was being seduced by the Ruinous Powers and would soon challenge the Emperor. Except that Magnus knew. Peering into the warp with his one good eye, the Red Sorcerer had seen the Warmaster make his pact with Chaos and he saw much more besides. Much of what Magnus saw was madness and turmoil, but he also saw events that could only be the future. His dream foretold of the epic events that were yet to unfold, of Horus's betrayal, of the primarchs who would die, of those who would betray the Emperor and of those who would defend him. Of his own fate, the dream was silent.

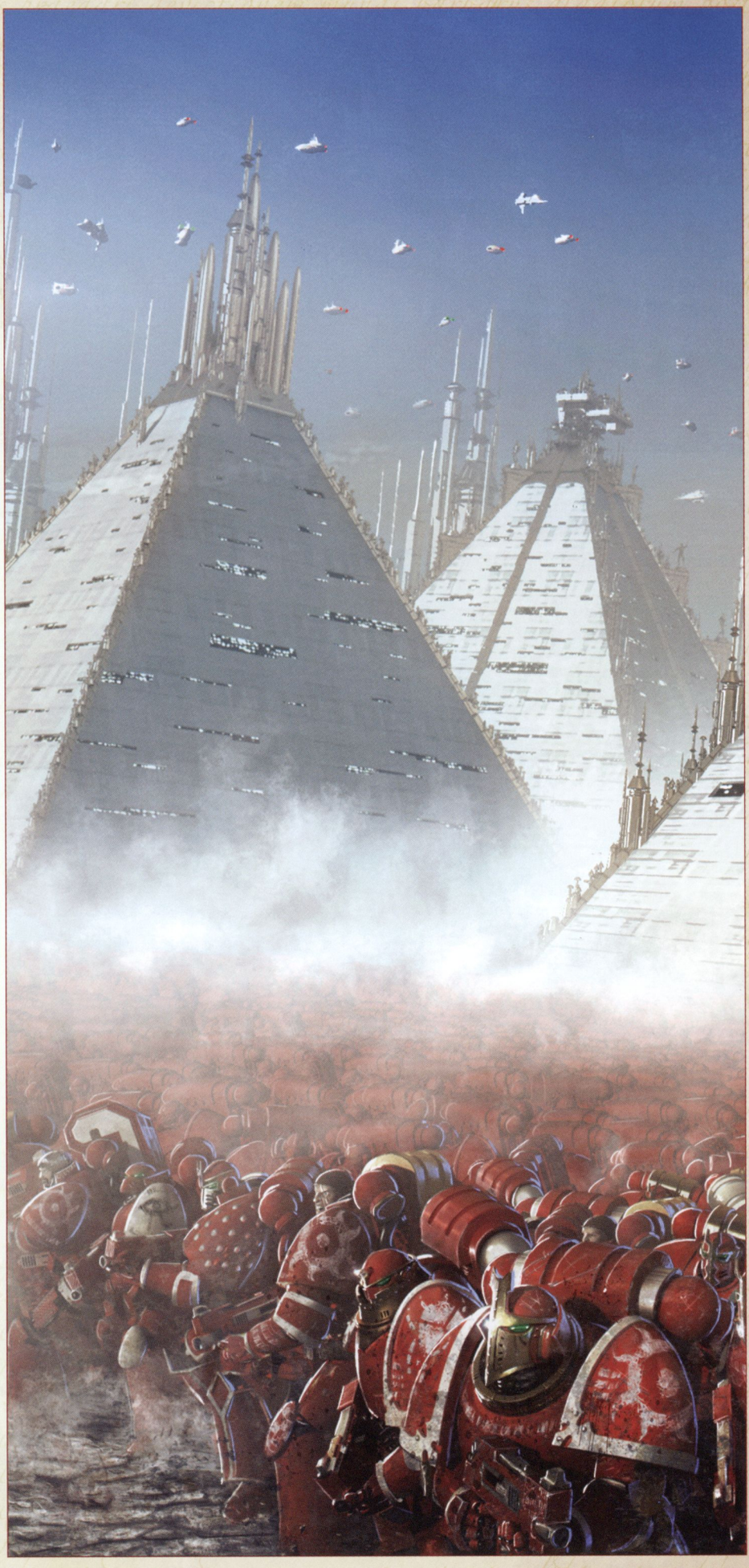
The vision disturbed Magnus and he gathered about him his secret cabal of Thousand Sons sorcerers to discuss its meaning and implications. After some deliberation, they resolved to contact the Emperor and warn him of Horus's betrayal. They decided against the use of their astropaths to send the message to the Emperor – they desired a quicker, surer method of communication: they would send the warning by daemonic spell!

Magnus's Warning

Magnus the Red, primarch of the Thousand Sons Legion and secretly a sorcerer in commune with the dark powers of the warp, had a terrible vision. The vision revealed to Magnus the betrayal of Horus and the coming civil war. Magnus and his sorcerous cabal had decided to contact the Emperor and warn him of Horus's heresy by use of a powerful spell.

No one is sure why Magnus took the decision to warn the Emperor in the fashion he chose. It was certain that the Emperor would recognise the taint of Chaos in his message and would have no option but to prosecute him. The Legion would be expunged and Magnus and the other sorcerers put to death. Perhaps Magnus thought that the Emperor would be distracted by the betrayal of Horus. Maybe Magnus wanted to set the Emperor and Horus at each others' throats. Perhaps he hoped the Emperor would destroy Horus and that he, Magnus, could claim leadership of the Heresy. Or perhaps he had other motives that can only be guessed at.

In any case, the cabal of the Thousand Sons joined with Magnus to cast a mighty spell. This potent conjuration flew across time and space. Breaching the protective wards and hexes around the Imperial palace the spell lanced into the brain of the Emperor, instantly filling him with the knowledge of Magnus's dark vision and details of Horus's impending betrayal.



The XV Legion – *Neil Roberts*

The Emperor Reacts to the Warning of Magnus

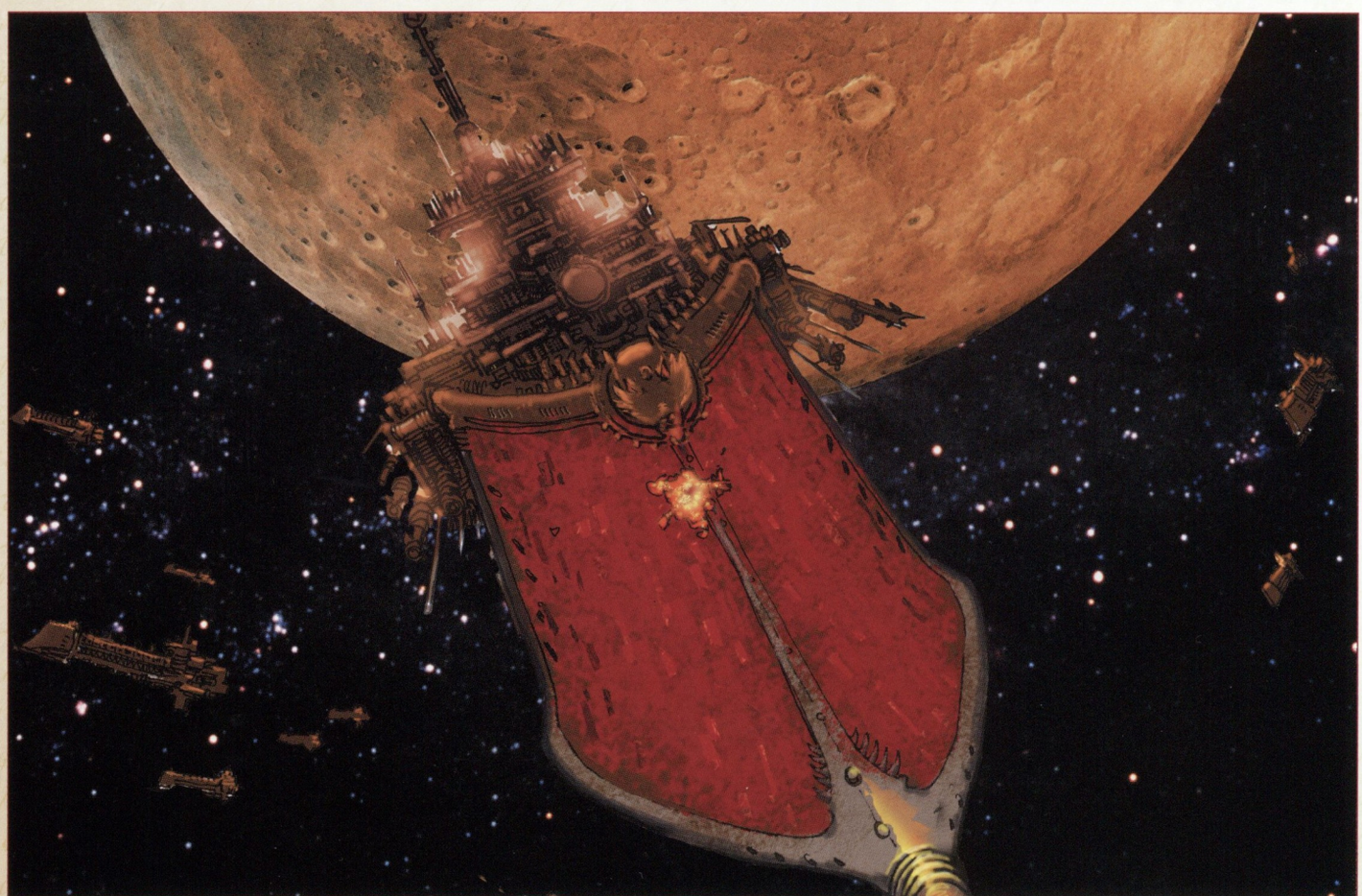
The psychic defences of the Emperor's Palace on Terra had been breached by a daemonic conjuration of unprecedented power. Magnus the Red and his cabal of secret sorcerers had cast a spell to warn the Emperor of the impending betrayal of the Warmaster Horus, a betrayal the primarch had foreseen in a dark precognitive vision.

No one knows what reaction Magnus expected to receive to his warning. If he thought that the Emperor would be pleased with him, he sorely misjudged him. The Emperor flew into a terrible rage, appearing to ignore the content of Magnus's message. He was consumed with anger that Magnus should so flagrantly have disobeyed his orders to renounce sorcery and psychic teachings.

The Emperor called to his side the primarch Leman Russ of the Space Wolves. Russ and Magnus were old rivals and there was some bitterness between them. The Emperor commanded Russ to move on Prospero and prosecute the rebel primarch. His orders were clear: Magnus and his Thousand Sons were consorting with the warp, in direct contradiction of personal instruction from the Emperor. Magnus was to be brought back to Terra to face judgement!



Garan – *Paul Jeacock*



Ragnarok – *Justin Norman*



Leman Russ – *John Blanche*



Cleanse and Burn – *Wayne England*

Space Wolves

The Space Wolves Legion was known across the galaxy for its martial exploits. Of all of the Space Marines, the Space Wolves were most like their primarch in character. Uncouth, undisciplined and barbaric by comparison to the other Legions, they were nonetheless a powerful force of arms, admired by their allies, feared by their foes.

Leman Russ was never one for following rules; as long as his Space Marines were prepared to fight and die for him, he was satisfied. He knew his troops had superb battlefield instincts and he trusted them to achieve their objectives without being burdened with a host of what he regarded as petty regulations. Because of this, the organisation and structure of the Space Wolves was quite different from that of the other Legions.

The Space Wolves Legion was organised into thirteen Great Companies, each one a sizeable army numbering many thousands of warriors. The Great Companies were more akin to barbarian warbands than to formal military organisations, each led by a mighty Wolf Lord.



Bjorn – *Adrian Smith*



Sigfasti – *Adrian Smith*

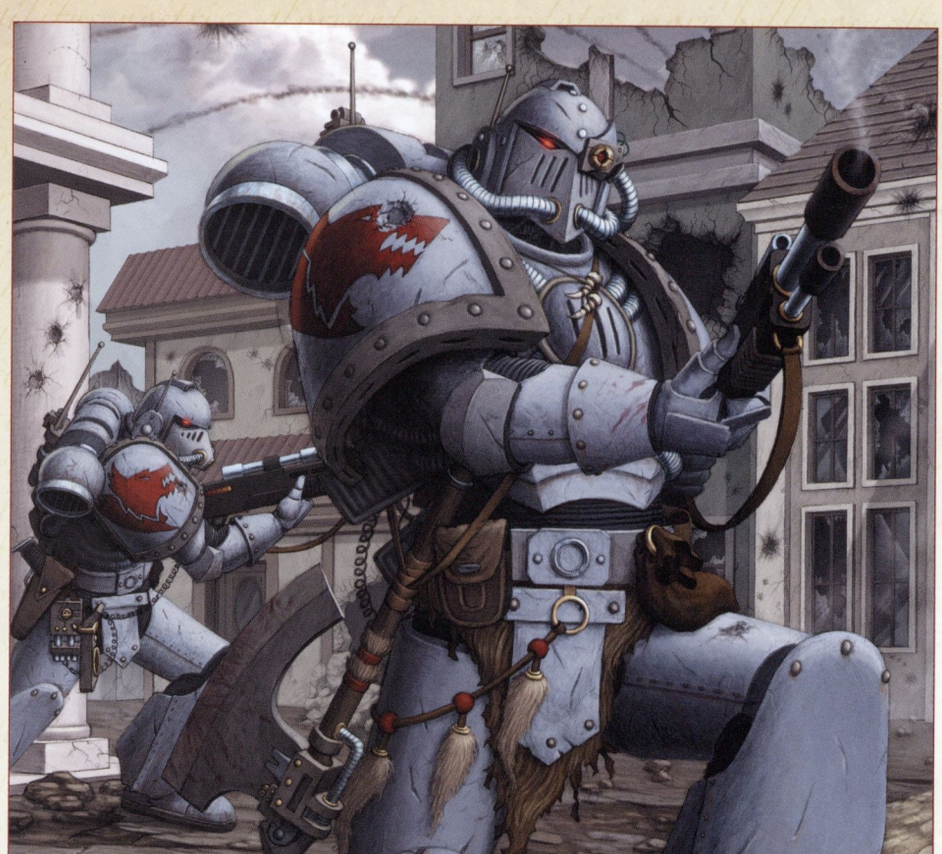


Kolbyr – *Karl Kopinski*

Curse of the Wulfen

The Space Wolves Legion was a close-knit brotherhood and there was a great deal of respect and comradeship between the Space Marines from Terra and the warriors of Fenris. Although the latter troops were organised into their own distinct squads, known as Fenris Bloods and Fenris Hunters, they also led some of the squads of Terran Space Wolves (the Hunter, Claw and Long Fang squads). The officer corps and the elite Wolf Guard were drawn from the ranks of both Terrans and Fenrisians.

Both Terran and Fenrisian Space Wolves could succumb to the curse of the Wulfen. This condition was usually diagnosed during the process of surgically and psychologically modifying a normal man to become a Space Marine, but it could also strike later in a Space Wolf's life. The curse was akin to lycanthropy – the smitten warrior would become savage and beastlike in behaviour, unable to quell the rage inside. The Wulfen were remarkably hirsute, even by Space Wolves standards, and their canine teeth grew into large dagger-like fangs. All of the Wulfen were assigned to the 13th Great Company and fought together in feral groups known as Wulfen Packs.



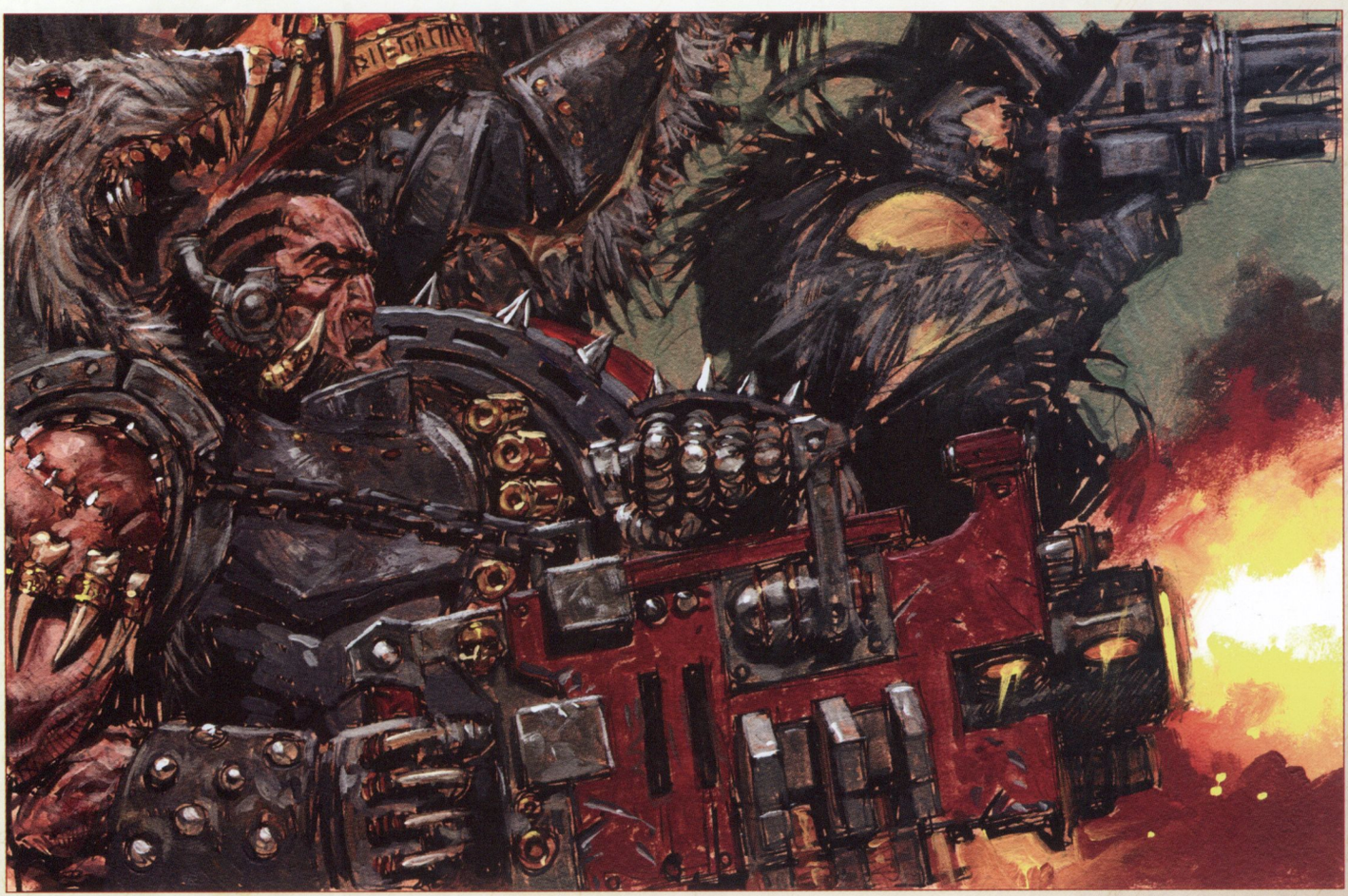
Space Wolves Recon Squad – *Eric Polak*



Leiknir – *Adrian Smith*



Tammikk – Adrian Smith



Olfun – Adrian Smith

The Razing of Prospero

The Space Wolves opened the Battle of Prospero with an orbital barrage. The beautiful planet was quickly reduced to rubble, the manicured gardens and glass temples shattered beyond recognition. At a signal from Russ, the Space Wolves launched the first of their assaults.

The Thousand Sons had revealed themselves to be a coven of witches, and the Emperor authorised Leman Russ to exact summary justice on them for their heresy. The Space Wolves were aided by a detachment of the Emperor's own bodyguard, the Legio Custodes, and by the Silent Sisterhood. The latter were Untouchables, carriers of the pariah gene, psychic blanks who were immune to psychic assault and anathema to the sorcerers of Prospero.

The Space Marines and Custodian Guard had the task of defeating Magnus's Legion on the field of battle and arresting the malcontent primarch. The Sisters of Silence had to apprehend and detain any and all surviving psykers for transportation back to Earth. There they would be judged, with due sentence served upon them.

Hundreds of battles raged across the planet as the Space Wolves and Custodian Guard launched attack after attack against the defending Thousand Sons. The once magnificent paradise world of Prospero was reduced to smouldering rubble by the ferocity of Leman Russ's warriors. To their credit, the Thousand Sons reacted quickly to the surprise assault, and their defence was well-organised and determined. They countered the loyalist firepower with deadly psychic spells, unleashing the dark fury of the warp upon their loyalist aggressors. Victory was no easy task for either side to achieve.



Prospero Burns – *Neil Roberts*





Sobek – *Chris Trevas*



Amsu – *Neil Hodgson*



Pa-Siamun – *Chris Trevas*



Apophis – Des Hanley





Silver Osprey Vigilator Squad – *Sam Wood*



Ornulfr – *Adrian Smith*



Thorbrand – *Paul Dainton*



Mjollnir – *Franz Vohwinkel*



The Varangi – *Adrian Smith*



Jorlund – *Carl Frank*



Dómárr Gonnarrsson – *Adrian Smith*



Tizca in Flames – *Jen Page*



Leman Russ, the Wolf King – *John Blanche*



Seek and Destroy – *Ralph Horsley*



Prahopte – *Dan Wheaton*



Jortan – *John Wigley*



Myskia – *Adrian Smith*



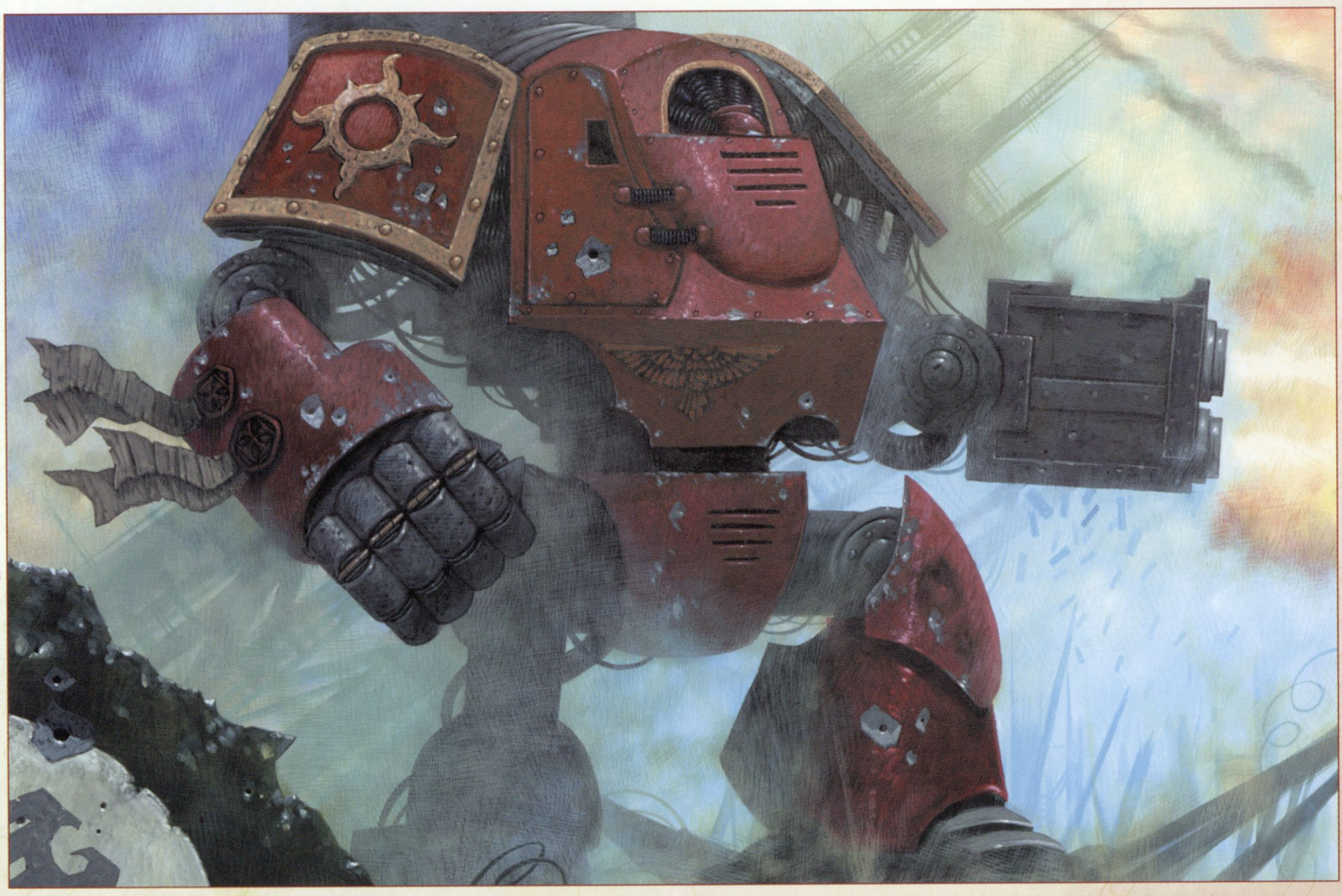
Jafari – *Neil Hodgson*



Tolbek – *Chris Trevas*



Amunis – Karl Kopinski



Seraphis – Wayne England



Aesir – Franz Vohwinkel



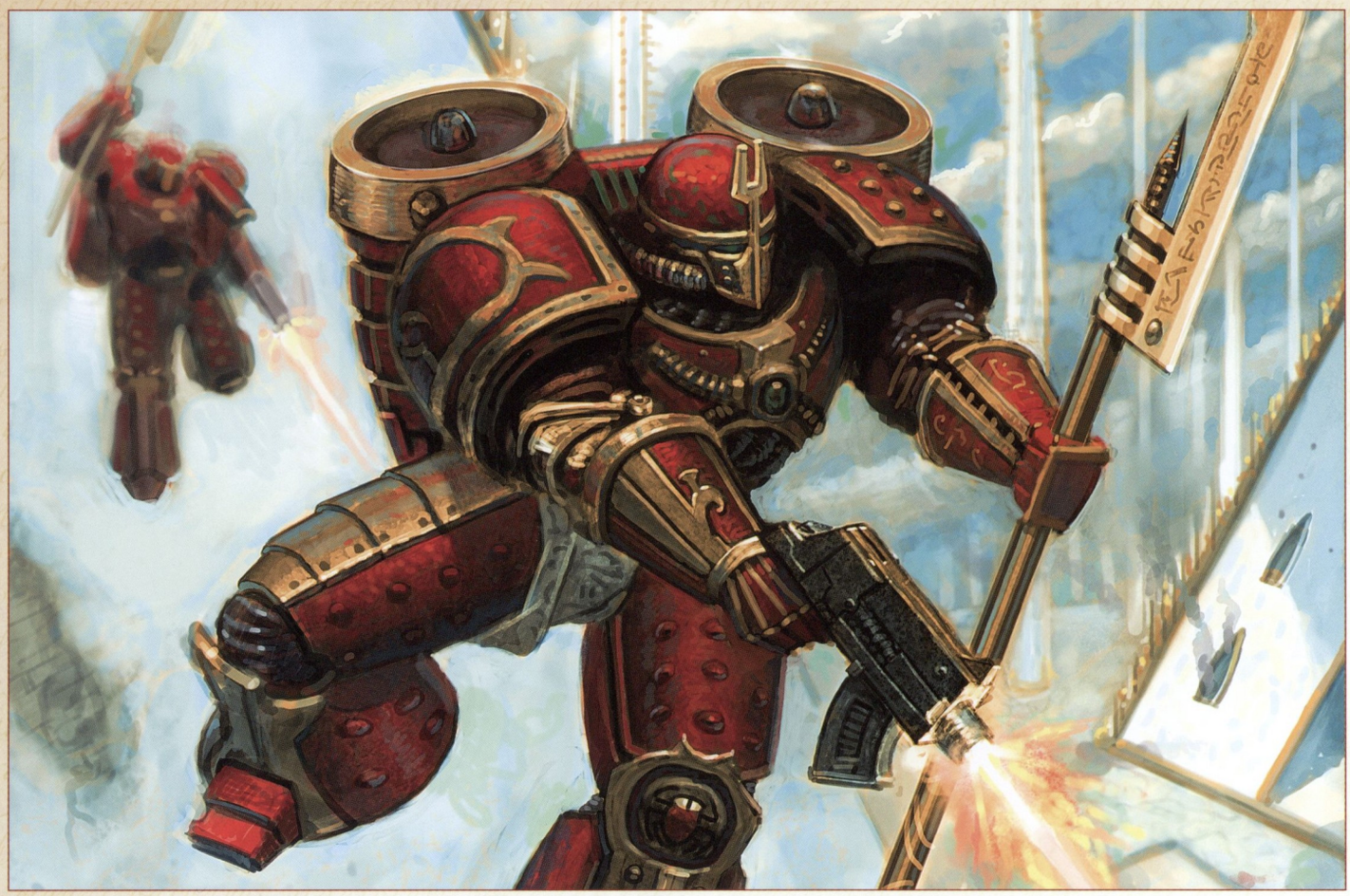
Khalid – Ralph Horsley



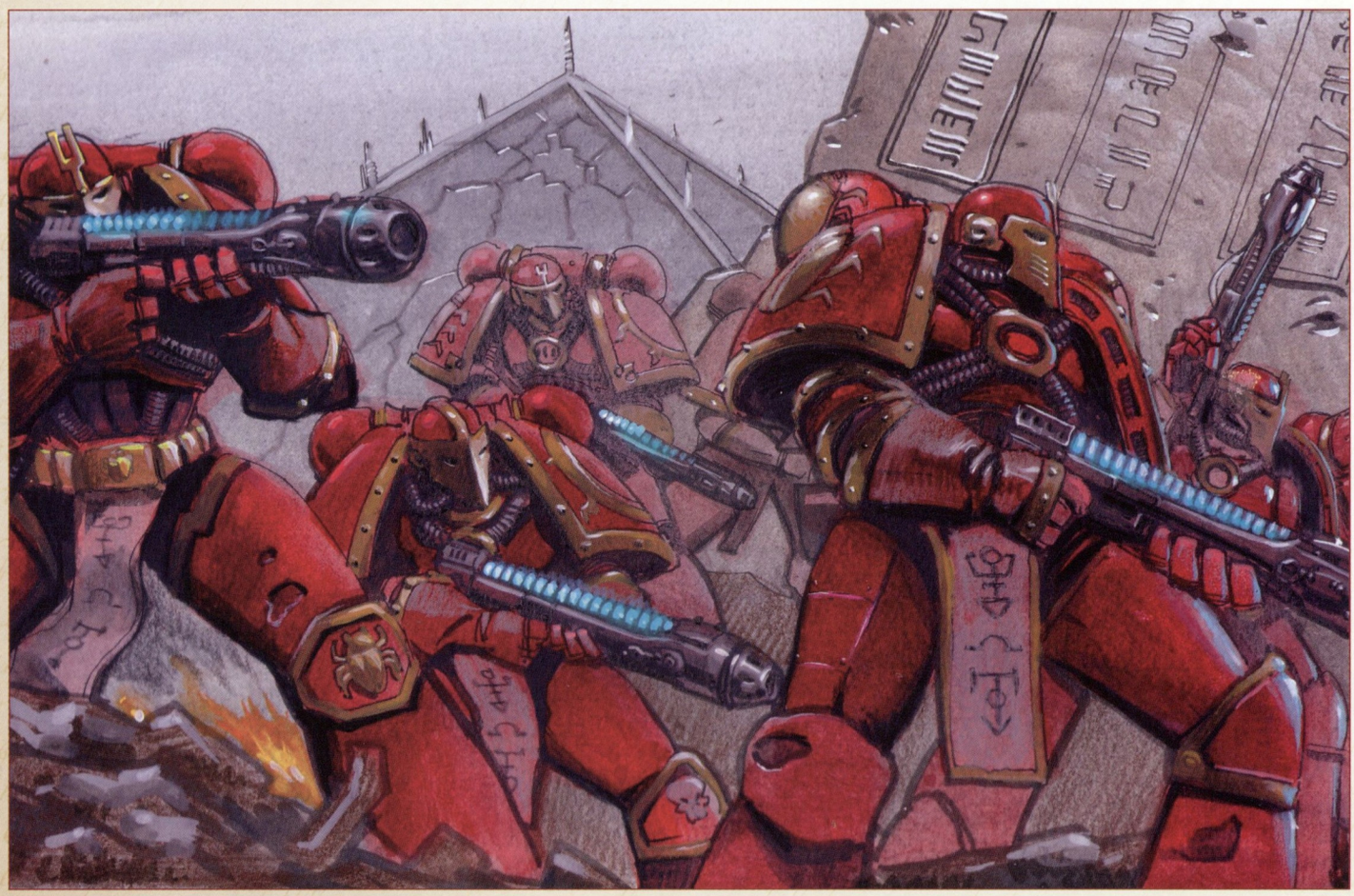
Karsso Tolk – *Torstein Nordstrand*



T'kar's Cabal – *Michael Phillippi*



Besenmut – *Torstein Nordstrand*



Nebmaetre – *Justin Norman*



Ahriman's Bodyguard – *Alex Boyd*



Qaa – *John Gravato*

Isstvan V



Raven's Flight – *Neil Roberts*

Horus at Isstvan V

After the dreadful battle for Isstvan III, the Warmaster Horus established a new headquarters on the fifth planet of the Isstvan System. He had a plan to destroy the last remaining loyal Legions still in his way, a plan that was to be fulfilled on this barren, lifeless orb. This would remove the final obstacle standing between him and the Imperial Throne of Terra and dominion over all the worlds of the Imperium. He was sure he would soon be crowned Emperor.

Horus had conceived of the plan even before the events on Isstvan III had started. He knew full well that the Emperor would seek to crush any rebellion long before it could threaten Terra itself. The attack on the third planet of the Isstvan System had been intended to goad the Emperor into attacking him. Horus had prepared for this. It was why he had instructed certain primarchs to keep their alignment secret. Whatever forces the Emperor could send against him would include among their number many who had committed themselves to the Warmaster.

This duplicity would give the rebels an unbeatable advantage in the ensuing battle. The Warmaster reasoned that any troops loyal to the Emperor would be physically and spiritually broken by the sudden emergence of so many enemies.

The Trap is Set

The warp storms raging across the immaterium were the consequence of a massive upsurge in daemonic activity within the Realm of Chaos. The daemons of Chaos wanted to break out of their domain and invade that of mankind. In their frustration and anger, they churned the currents of the warp.

Horus used this to his advantage. The storms disrupted both travel and communication through the warp for any who could not influence or control the daemons. Whilst the warp storms raged, the loyal astropaths and Navigators of the Imperium could not easily carry out their duties. This interference had crippled the loyalist efforts to understand what was happening across the galaxy, let alone do anything about it. It had enabled Horus to isolate the most powerful and loyal Legions in remote corners of the Imperium and it had allowed him to operate without hindrance in the Isstvan System.

Now Horus wanted the daemons of Chaos to relent, to quieten their rage and let some regions of tranquility settle over the warp. This was because he now desired the Emperor to attack him so that his trap could be sprung. The Warmaster drew to his side the corrupt dark priests of Davin and explained his intentions. The powers of Chaos were sure to cooperate, they assured him.

Horus Gathers his Lieutenants

Horus called together his most trusted lieutenants for a final briefing on the battle that was to come.

'As I speak to you, the false Emperor has dispatched his forces to attack us. We face the most awesome concentration of military might the galaxy has ever seen. Fully seven Space Marine Legions are heading towards us from Terra. The Emperor and his weakling supporters believe they will triumph over us, that his army will crush us and that we shall be destroyed or cowed into meek surrender. He is wrong!

'This is not the time nor place of our defeat, it is instead our time and place of victory. I, Horus, greatest of the primarchs, have outwitted him. I have orchestrated the whole affair. It is I who persuaded the powers of the warp to allow the Emperor's task force to navigate its way to Isstvan. And it is I who planned the composition of his army. More than half of the Legions he sends to confront us are in fact our staunchest allies.

'The Emperor's loyalists are heading to their doom!'

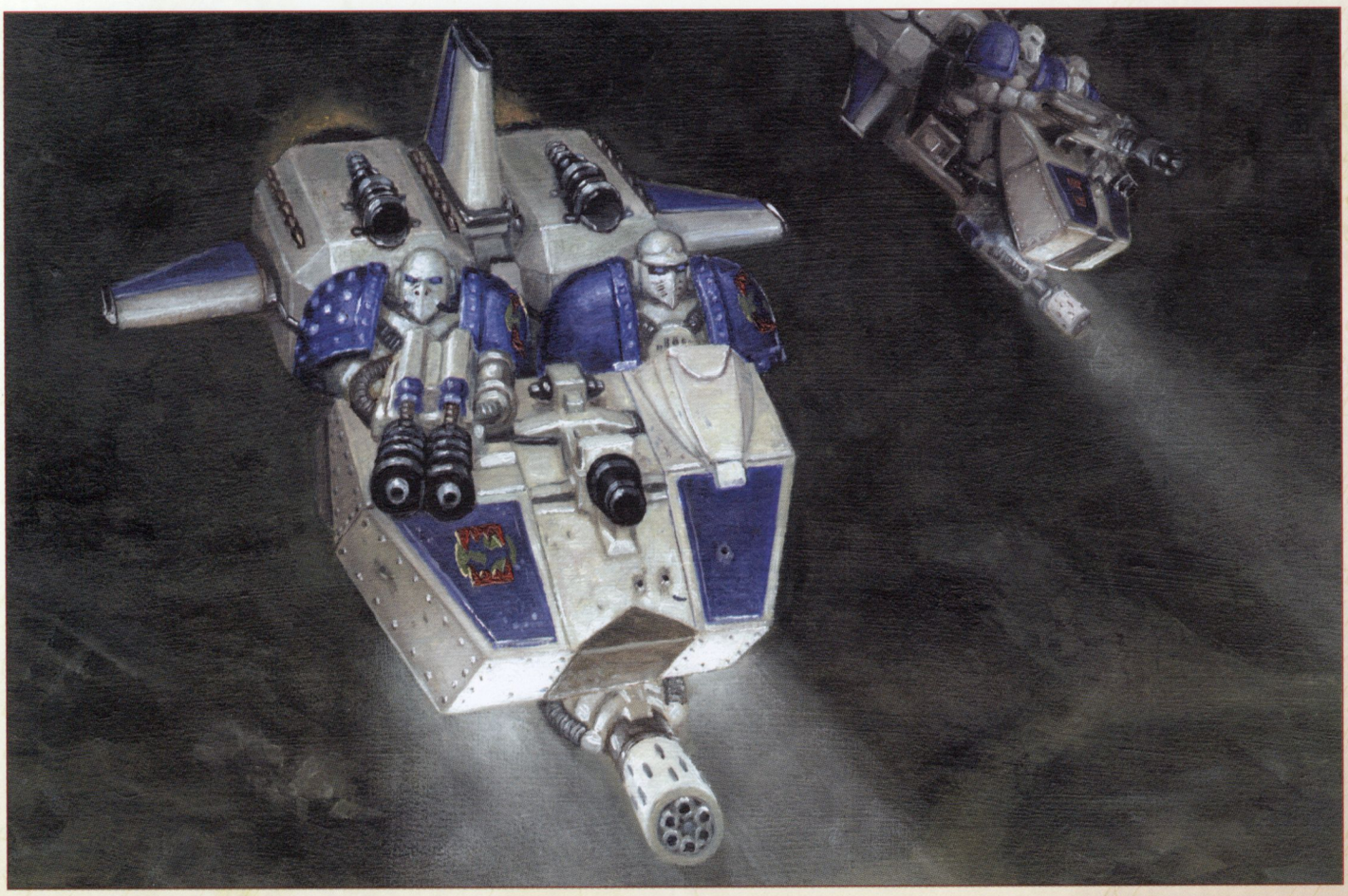
'All hail the Warmaster! Horus! Horus!' cried the assembled warriors.



Fulgerion – *Steve Belledin*



Haldon-Tai – *Michael Phillippi*



Wroath – *Steve Belledin*



Dasturkh – *James Brady*



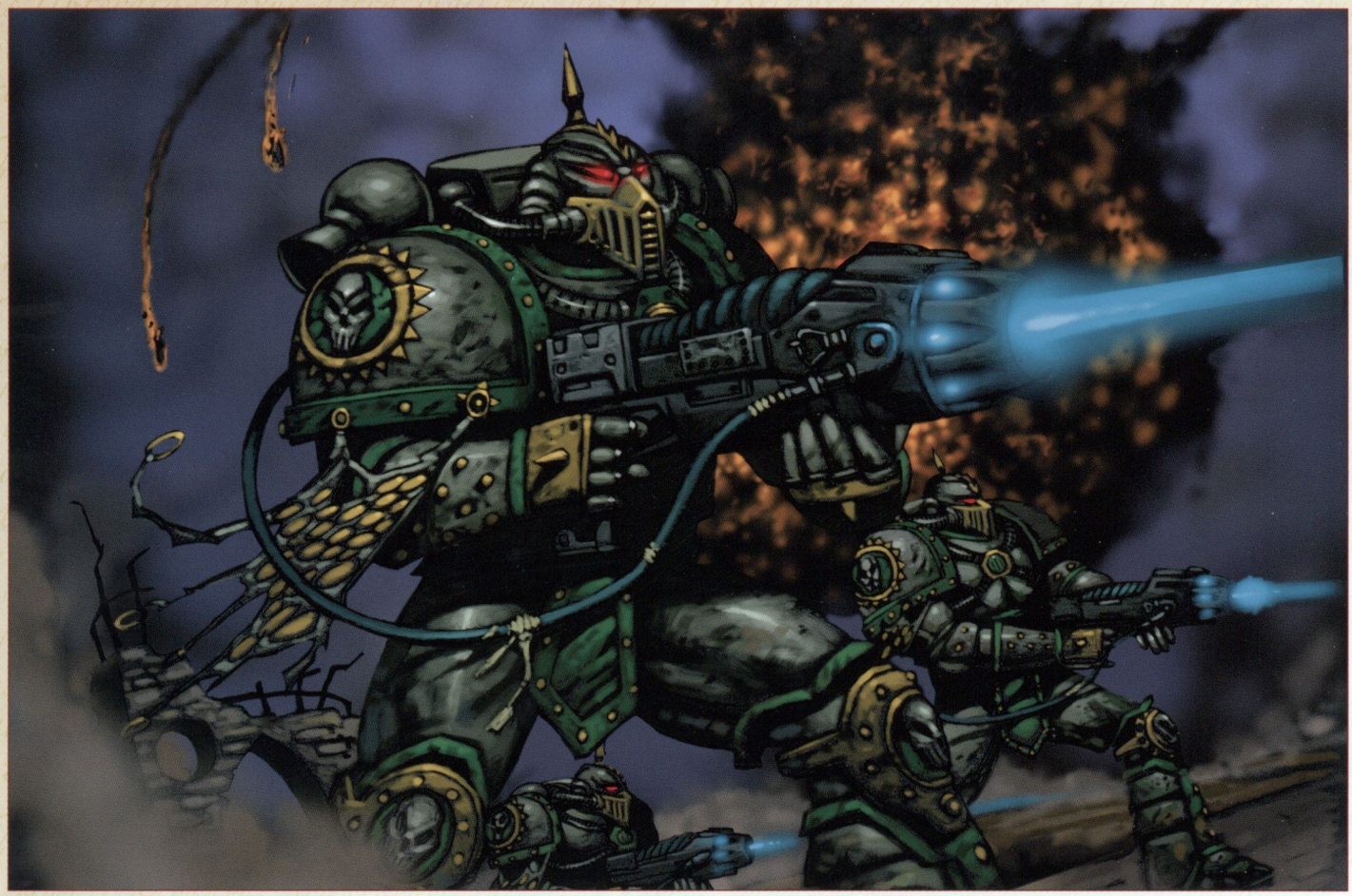
Justicar's Sword – *Dan Scott*



Wronde – *Carl Frank*



Gragin – *Justin Norman*



Darkhogat – *David Millgate*



The Iron Column – *Franz Vohwinkel*



Fleiste – *Des Hanley*



Lachost – *Wayne England*



Asceton – *Franz Vohwinkel*



Gurtur-Fol – *Kenson Low*



Abakhol – *Sam Wood*



Geldurk – *Paul Herbert*

The Legions Muster at the Isstvan System

Rogal Dorn, acting on the Emperor's behalf, had ordered seven Space Marine Legions to the Isstvan System. Their mission was to attack the arch-traitor Horus and destroy his rebellion against the Imperium. The task force had been placed under the command of Ferrus Manus, primarch of the Iron Hands Legion.

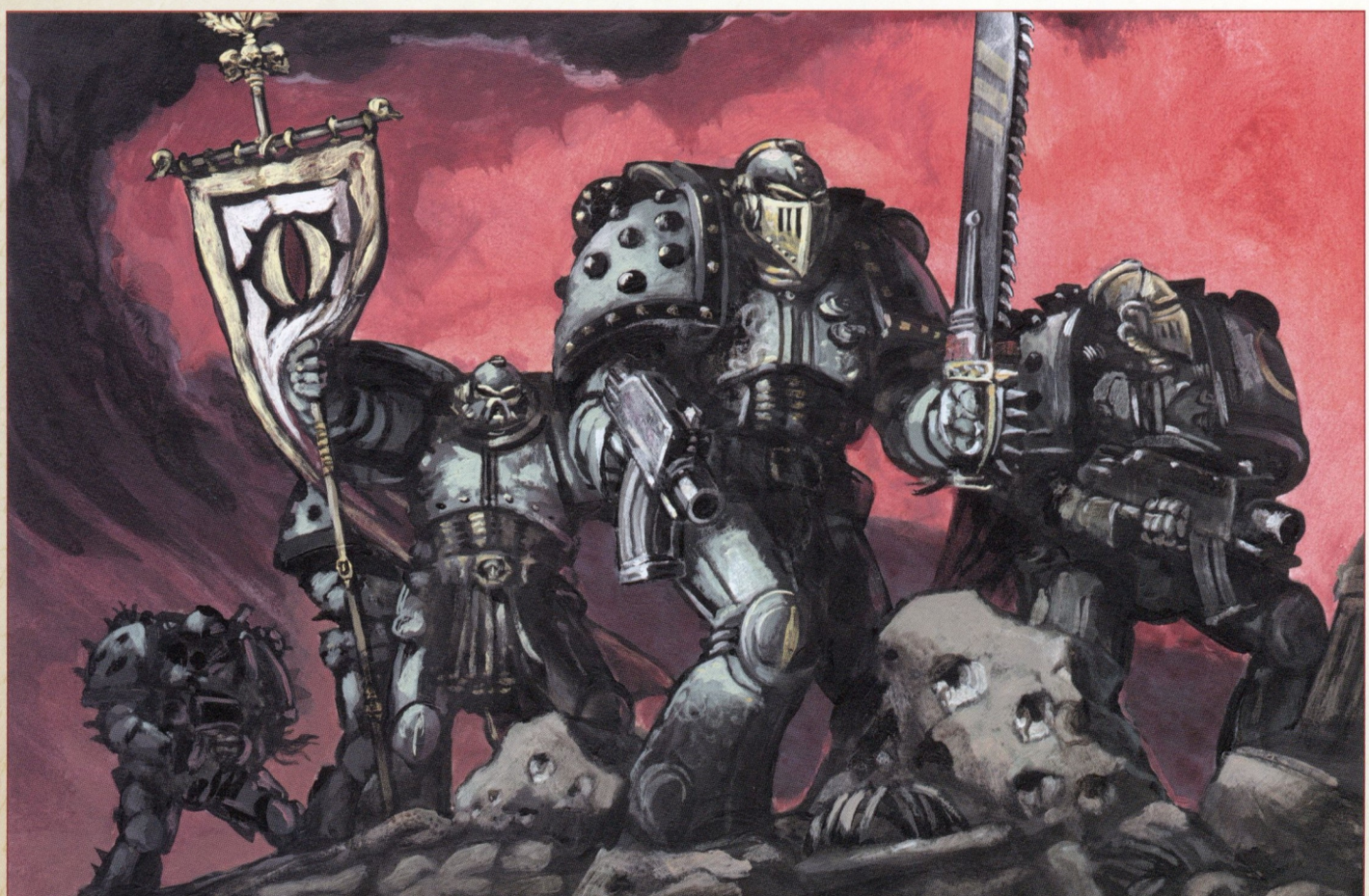
Ferrus had sped to the Isstvan System in his fastest ships with his Legion's veteran companies. He was desperate to fight the traitors. Months previously, he had been confronted by Fulgrim, primarch of the Emperor's Children Legion. The two primarchs had been close friends, and Ferrus was dismayed and angered by Fulgrim's attempt to get him to betray his oath of loyalty to the Emperor and side with Horus. A bloody fight had ensued as the two argued. Enraged by Fulgrim's treachery, Ferrus had ordered his Space Marines to detain the errant primarch and his bodyguard. The Emperor's Children fought back and both sides suffered severe casualties before the traitor was able to escape.

In the long weeks since the confrontation, Ferrus had been unable to contact the Emperor with the hideous revelation of the betrayal of Horus and Fulgrim as he and his Legion were becalmed by warp storms. When he was finally able to communicate with Terra, he learned the full extent of the betrayal. This served only to fan the flames of Ferrus's anger. On receiving the orders to attack Horus from Rogal Dorn, he immediately set course for Isstvan.

Ferrus Manus impatiently paced back and forth across the bridge of his sleek command ship. He had arrived at the Isstvan System with ten companies of his finest veterans. The rest of the Iron Hands were following in the Legion's slower vessels. Ferrus did not expect them to arrive in time to participate in the initial assault. This did not concern him overly, as he was assured of the services of the full complement of five other Legions and a huge contingent of the Word Bearers. The Salamanders and Raven Guard Legions had already reached the rendezvous point in their large warfleets and their primarchs, Vulkan and Corax respectively, were waiting for the order to move on the fifth planet.

Ferrus pressed his chief astropath for news on the whereabouts of the rest of his command. The waiting was interminable; he was desperate to move quickly. Not only was the fate of the Imperium in his hands, but he also had a personal score to settle with the vile Fulgrim.

Finally, he got the news he wanted to hear. The remaining four fleets were only hours away and would break their warp-jump close to the fifth planet. Ferrus let out a cry of relief. At last he could seek his revenge on Fulgrim and crush the rebellion.



Vaddon – *Kenson Low*



Konenos – *Neil Roberts*



Bargotal – *Franz Vohwinkel*



Malbon – *Franz Vohwinkel*



Fortronus – *James Ryman*



Cohors Nasicae – *Sam Wood*



Wrathe – *Sam Wood*

Ferrus Orders the Attack

Ferrus spoke with Vulkan and Corax.

'Loyal primarchs, the hour of our destiny has arrived. Our comrades are but a short time away. The Legions of Perturabo, Night Haunter and Alpharius, and the warriors of Lorgar, will be with us soon; they are mere hours behind us.

'I have decided that the honour of drawing first blood in this battle falls to us. Your Legions and my stalwart veterans will lead the assault. Our astropaths and diviners have identified the enemy's position and deduced the optimal attack pattern and landing zones. We go for full planetary assault configuration. Logic-engines should be transmitting the dropsite details to you as I speak. My veteran companies will take the vanguard. Corax, your Legion is to secure the right flank and centre. Vulkan, you have the left wing. As soon as we land, we make for the target points identified on the tactical hologrids marked as references Gamma twelve to twenty-four and Theta seven, eight and nine.

'I have instructed the others to make planetfall as soon as they break warp. They are to secure the dropsite and reinforce our assault. Hologrids Omega and Righteous contain details of their deployments.

'The traitors are not expecting this attack and we have the advantage of surprise. The Emperor damn us if we waste it!'



Ferrus Manus, the Gorgon – *John Blanche*



Cortan – *Torstein Nordstrand*



Gallovax – *Chris Dien*

The Loyalist Assault of Isstvan V

Ferrus Manus launched his attack against the traitorous forces of Horus the Warmaster headquartered on the planet of Isstvan V. Ferrus had with him his entire brigade of Iron Hands veterans, and the Salamanders and Raven Guard Space Marine Legions of Vulkan and Corax.

The forces of Horus were encamped along the northern edge of one of the planet's largest deserts, the Urgall Depression. This landscape was a featureless plain of black sands and scattered scrub, rising gently to low hills upon which the traitors were deployed.

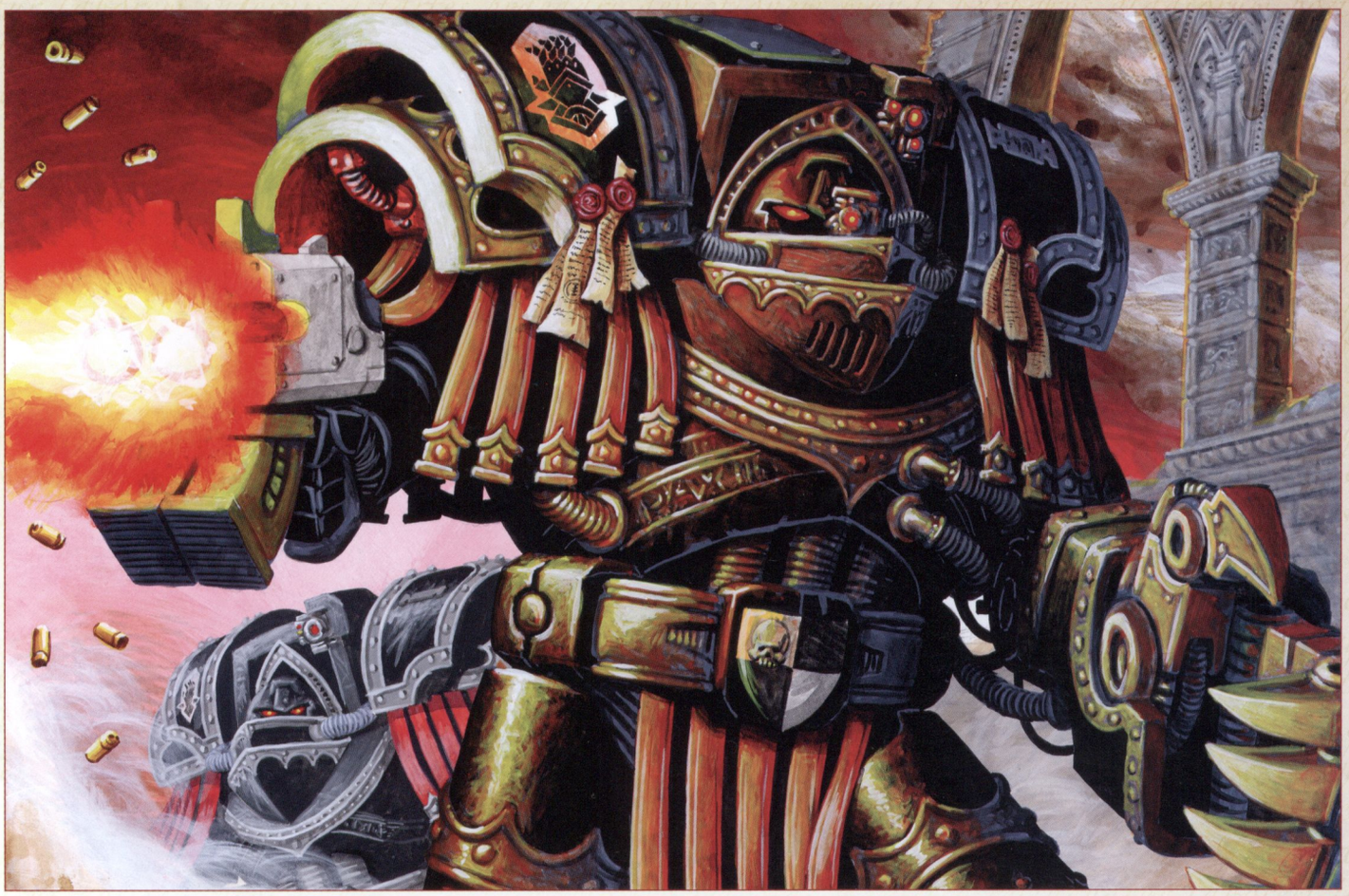
As the command to attack was broadcast from Ferrus's flagship, the sky above the Urgall blackened as ten thousand drop pods rained down onto the planet from the loyalist fleet in orbit. Huge explosions ripped through the traitor lines as the orbiting fleet unleashed a torrent of fire from its massive guns, bomb bays and missile launchers. As each drop pod landed, it disgorged its cargo of Space Marines, who immediately began assaulting the traitors. Following in the wake of the drop pods, hundreds of drop-ships and landers carrying heavier equipment and large war machines began their urgent descent to the planet's surface. Within minutes, the entire loyalist force under Ferrus had made planetfall. Then the battle began in earnest.



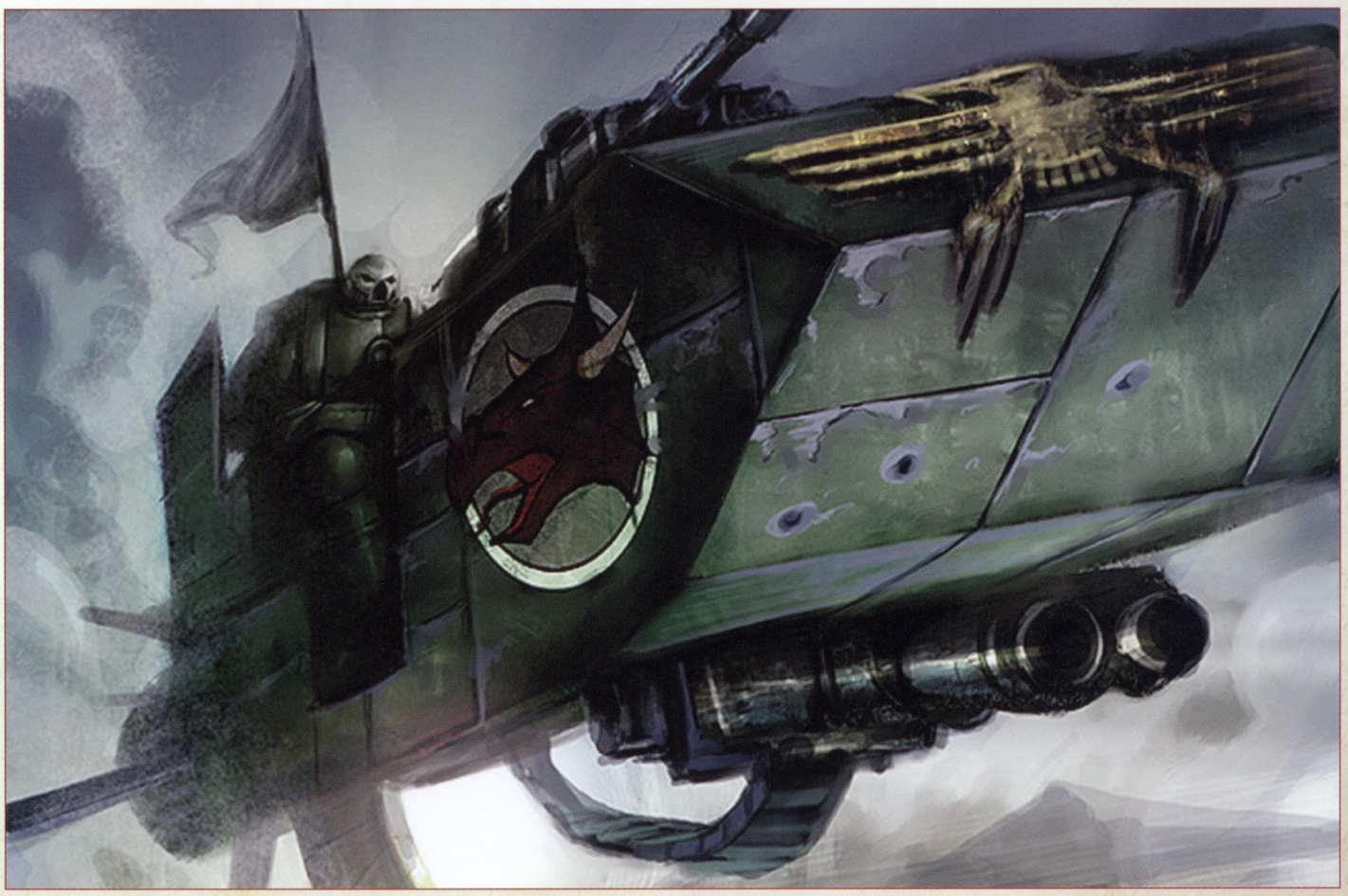
Harmokan – *Torstein Nordstrand*



Arendi – *John Gravato*



Avernii – *Andrea Uderzo*



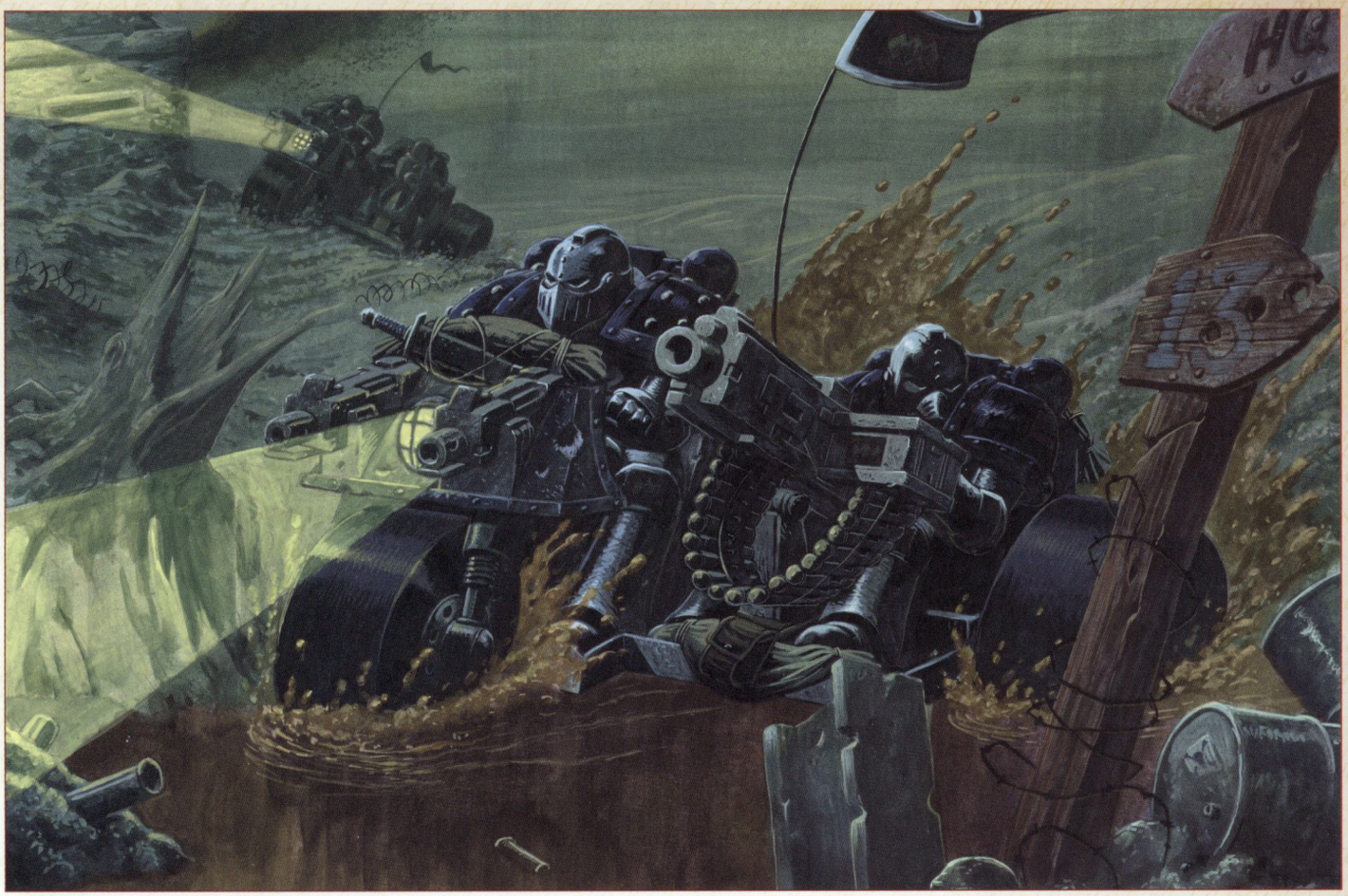
Arkan – *John Gravato*



Rad-Urzon – *Torstein Nordstrand*



Blade of Fury – *Franz Vohwinkel*



Tyche – *Ralph Horsley*



Rethaerin – *James Brady*

Planetfall

Ferrus Manus and his personal retinue were amongst the first of the loyalist forces to make planetfall. His drop pod crashed down into the heart of the traitor encampment. The defenders fought back, but the ferocity of the loyalist assault threatened to sweep them from the hilltops they occupied. Ferrus and his veterans quickly established a position, as did the Legions of Corax and Vulkan. The plan was to strike hard and fast, to overwhelm the traitors and drive them from the hills. Within an hour or two, the remaining four Legions of the task force made planetfall to the rear to reinforce the assault and mop up any lingering resistance.

The fighting was bloody as Space Marine fought Space Marine. Despite their differing loyalties, the two sides were well matched. The loyalists, though outnumbered by Horus's forces, had the advantage of surprise and initiative. For a while, it seemed that Ferrus's plan would work, as his troops began to make inroads into the enemy lines. The traitors were being slowly but surely driven from their defensive positions as the loyalists consolidated their advance with a series of hit-and-run attacks right across the battlezone.

The carnage was terrible, on a scale never seen before, but the forces of Ferrus Manus were winning. The Emperor's loyal warriors took heart when the first landing craft of the follow-up Legions broke through the cloud cover and appeared above the Urgall Dropsite.



Trador – *Franz Vohwinkel*



Halmech – *Torstein Nordstrand*



Firestorm – Al *Eremin*



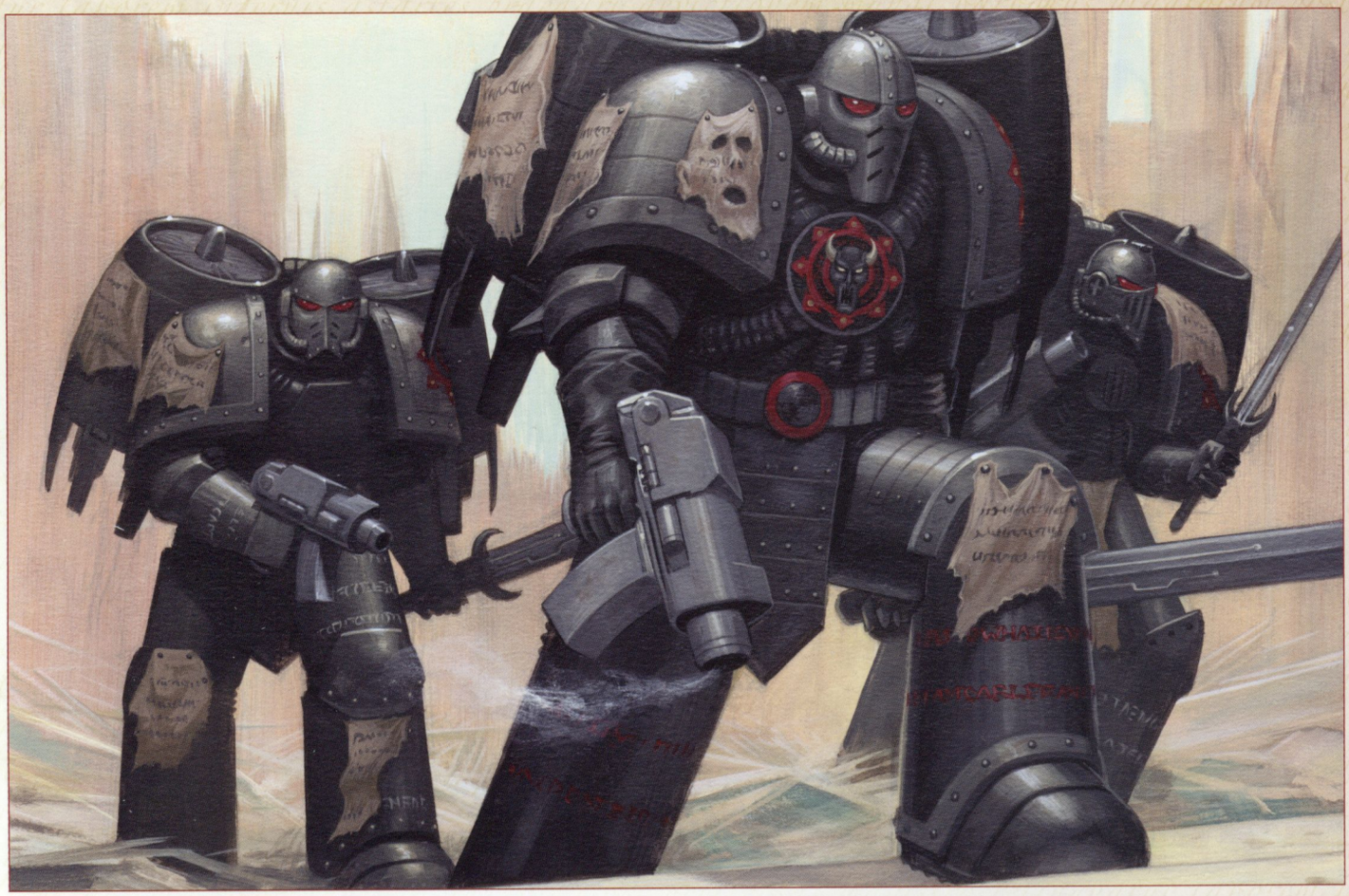
Telcantor – *Torstein Nordstrand*



Thellion – *John Gravato*



Grogor – *Steve Boulter*



Rongar – *Carl Frank*



Gauste – *Franz Vohwinkel*

Horus Orders his Mock Retreat

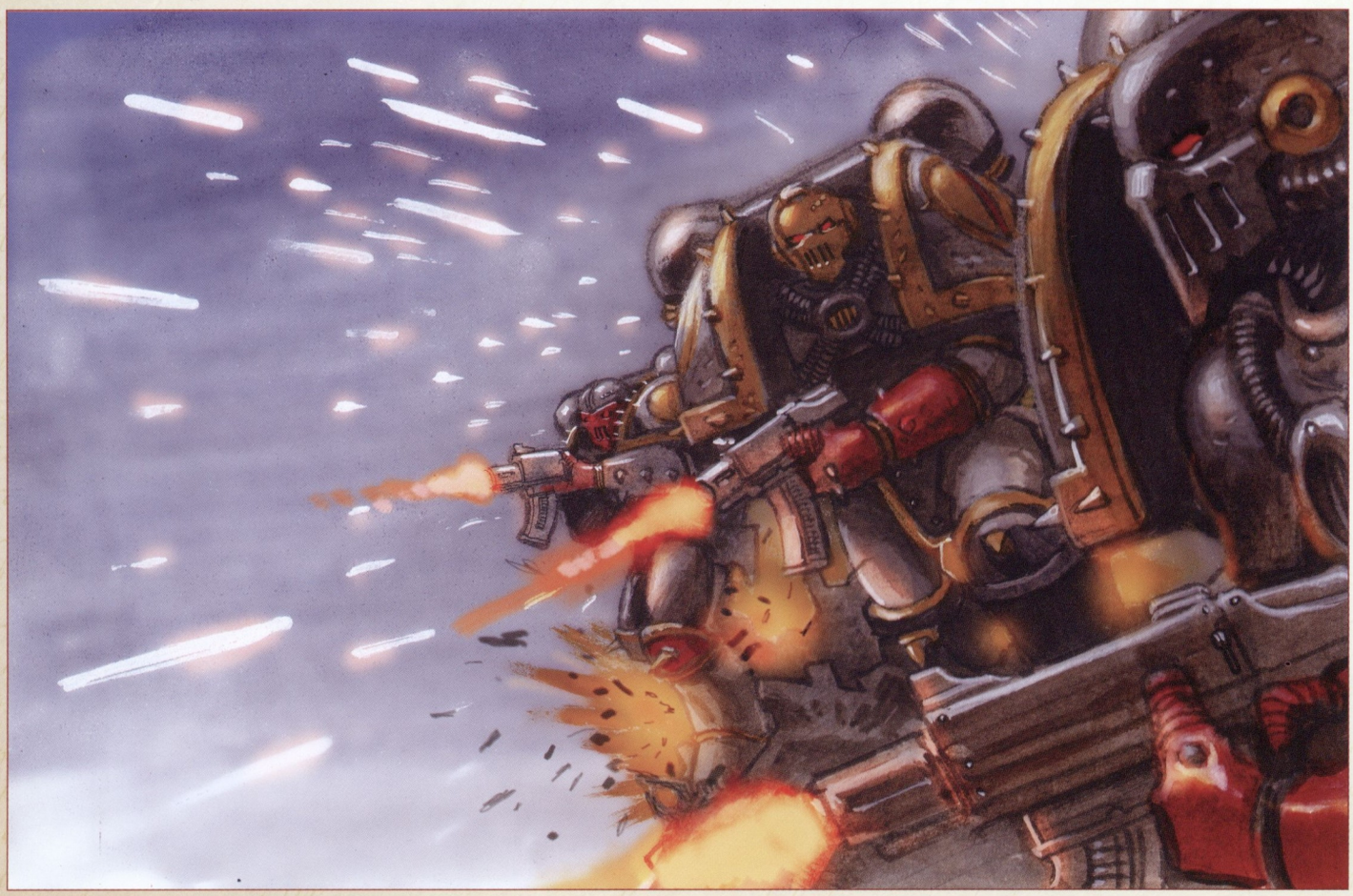
The battle for Isstvan V raged across the low hills along the northern edge of the Urgall Depression. The attacking loyalist Legions under the command of Ferrus Manus had seemingly surprised the forces of the arch-traitor Horus and his fellow conspirators, and were now fighting against the very heart of their entrenched positions. Many thousands of Space Marines had been killed and still the battle went on. Both sides were suffering tremendous casualties; the carnage was appalling. Horus smiled. If he cared about the losses his own Legions were taking, he showed no sign of it; his devious plan was about to come to fruition.

'At the first sign from our secret allies, you are all to draw back your troops,' he commanded his fellow traitor primarchs. 'It must appear as if we are cowed by the appearance of fresh enemies. This will convince the Iron Hands primarch to overstretch his forces. The fool Manus does not realise that we will soon have him caught in a deadly vice from which there will be no escape for him or his Emperor-loving followers.

'Once our allies have secured the dropsite for us, we can counter his puny assault with our full strength. Mark my words well, Angron, Mortarion and Fulgrim, your Legions will sate themselves fully before this day is done. Our victory here will pave the way to the Throne of Terra and then the galaxy!'



Agapito – *John Cadice*



Imaldhorn – *Justin Norman*



Corvus Corax – *John Blanche*

The Fury of Ferrus

Ferrus Manus fought with righteous anger. He was surrounded by his most experienced warriors, hand-picked veterans of the Iron Hands Legion. Against them were arrayed the traitors of Fulgrim's Emperor's Children Legion. No quarter was asked or given as the opposing Space Marines fought to the death. Blood and gore drenched the combatants as bolter shells blasted through the ceramite casings of power armour, and chainswords severed arms, legs and heads. The loyalist Iron Hands, bolstered by the presence of their primarch, were slowly winning the fight.

Ferrus was determined to win. He had been frustrated beyond measure by the events that had led him to this place. His previous encounter with Fulgrim and the traitor's attempt to turn him, the months he and his Legion had been stranded on the far side of the Imperium, unable to contact or be contacted by the Emperor, the passion with which the traitor Space Marines had fought back against his attack; all had conspired to fill him with rage and set his heart upon a quest for vengeance. The object of his most fervent ire was Fulgrim. The primarch of the Emperor's Children Legion had once been his greatest ally and friend. Ferrus was appalled that Fulgrim, of all those he knew, was the one who had tried to turn him traitor. Fulgrim must pay for his treachery, thought Ferrus.

The battle for the dropsite raged on. Ferrus of the Iron Hands had led three Legions of Space Marines in an audacious assault against the traitor Legions of Horus on the fifth planet of the Isstvan System. Thousands of Space Marines had died in the bloody battle that ensued; thousands more were dying still as the fighting continued.

The loyalists had driven a wedge deep into the enemy position. At the fore was the awesome figure of Ferrus, cleaving, hacking, shooting the traitors before him, all the while barking out orders to his troops. For Ferrus this was not only a battle, this was vengeance, revenge for perfidy most foul. This was his time to punish the miscreant followers of Horus and especially to mete out justice to the despicable Fulgrim. Ferrus looked for a sign that he could set aside his duty of command and seek a duel with Fulgrim. He yearned to confront the viperous primarch and settle once and for all the enmity that they now had between them.

Ferrus did not have to wait long for his sign. In the distance behind them, the loyalists could see the first landing craft of the Night Lords Legion breaking through the cloud cover above the dropsite of the Urgall Depression. Four more loyal Legions were about to enter the battle, they thought. Within minutes, craft from the other Legions had been identified. The Iron Warriors, the Alpha Legion and the Word Bearers had joined the Night Lords. The dropsite has been secured, thought Ferrus. Now, at last, I can exact my revenge upon Fulgrim.

As the drop-ships and landing craft of the Night Lords, Iron Warriors, Alpha Legion and Word Bearers set down on the planet's surface, the traitor forces seemed to lose heart for the fight. They began to pull back from their emplacements and bunkers. The traitor primarchs Angron, Fulgrim and Mortarion could clearly be seen ordering their troops to abandon the hills. For Ferrus and his fellow loyalists, Corax and Vulkan, this was a clear sign that they were winning and that the end was near.

Ferrus voxed a message to his compatriots.

'The enemy is beaten. Look how they run from us. Now we push on! Let none escape our vengeance!'

Corax and Vulkan were hesitant. Their Legions had fought tenaciously and well.



Comech – *Andrea Uderzo*

But their casualties were not light. Both primarchs thought it better to consolidate their current positions and let the other unblooded Legions continue the fight whilst they regrouped.

'Lord Manus, let our fine allies earn some honours in this battle. We have fared well, but are nonetheless bloodied and battered. None could say we have not acquitted ourselves with glory this day. Let us take a moment to catch our breath and bind our wounds before we once again dive headlong into such a terrible battle.'

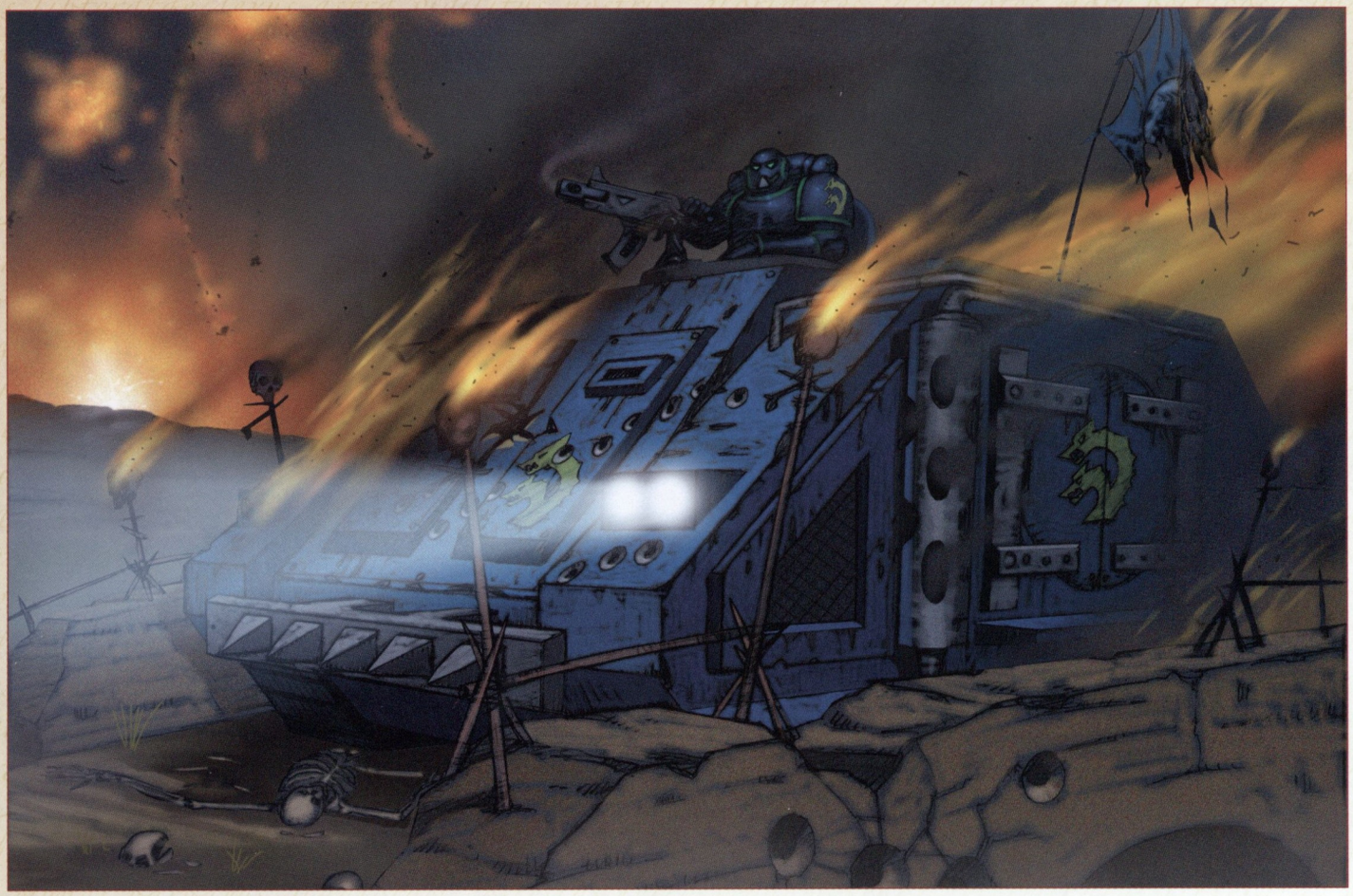
But Ferrus was not to be dissuaded from his fury. He gathered about him his Iron Hands warriors and thrust deep into the mass of enemies before him, his eyes fixed only upon the gloriously garbed figure of Fulgrim. Let the others rest and lick their wounds, he thought, I will not let any other have the satisfaction of settling affairs with that fiend.



Horus's Pride – *David Millgate*



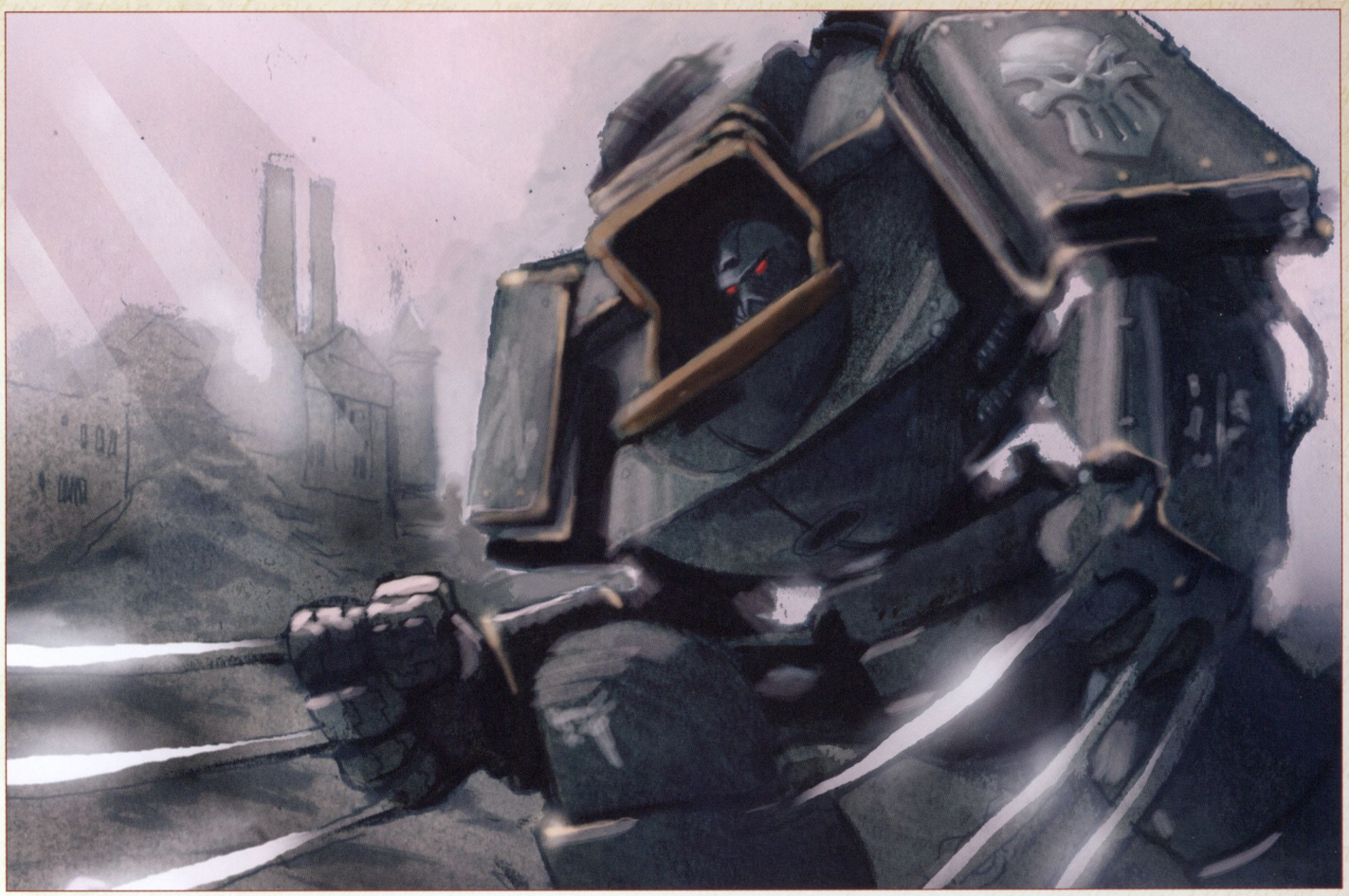
Gabriel Santar – *John Gravato*



Honorius – *David Millgate*



Racharus – *Chris Dien*



Promodon – *Justin Norman*



Kon-Drayur – *Franz Vohwinkel*

Ferrus Confronts Fulgrim

Amidst the carnage of the Urgall Hills, two great primarchs faced each other: the gore-splattered Ferrus Manus of the Iron Hands Legion and the fantastically bedecked lord of the Emperor's Children, Fulgrim.

'At last we meet again, foulheart. Long months have I waited for this. You, who I once called friend, have betrayed our Emperor and you have betrayed me. This is the moment of reckoning. I will deal bloody vengeance upon your head, Fulgrim, even as your traitorous cohorts are put to the sword by the Emperor's loyal sons.'

'You are a fool, Ferrus. I came to you because of our friendship, not despite it. The universe is changing, the old order upset and a new dawn approaching. I offered you the chance to be part of the new order and you threw it back at me. I cannot give you a second opportunity to join us. The Emperor is a spent force. Even now he distracts himself on some trivia while his kingdom is in flames. Horus is his rightful heir. It is the Emperor who has betrayed us all.'

'I expected no less from you than these treasonous lies. How can you not see the truth? Horus is mad. Mad for power. Look at the death all around us. This cannot be justified. I am the Emperor's loyal servant, and through me his will and his vengeance will be done. You shall all hang from the Gate of Traitors for your acts of sedition!'

'No, Ferrus, it is you who is undone. Look you now to the north. See there the strength we have to counter your piffling attack. And look you now to the south. The Legions you see there are not loyal to the Emperor, they are all of them to Horus sworn!'

'You have stumbled into a trap, my old friend,' said Fulgrim spitefully. 'The allies you expected to be at your back are instead sworn against you. Instead of glorious victory, you have earned only dismal defeat and certain death. I give you one last chance to throw down your arms. Submit to me here. For the sake of friendship past I shall plead your case with Horus, though he commands your death.'

Ferrus was stunned by the revelation that the four Legions supposedly supporting his attack against the traitors were themselves aligned with the heretic Horus. With mounting horror, he realised that there could be no escape for him or for the other loyalists.

'You have long since lost the right to call me friend, viper! I shall not submit to you or any of your kith. Death holds no fear for me, only dishonour! The Emperor's loyal warriors will not surrender, now or ever. You will have to kill every one of us to claim victory.'

'Then so be it. I am sorry it has come to this.'

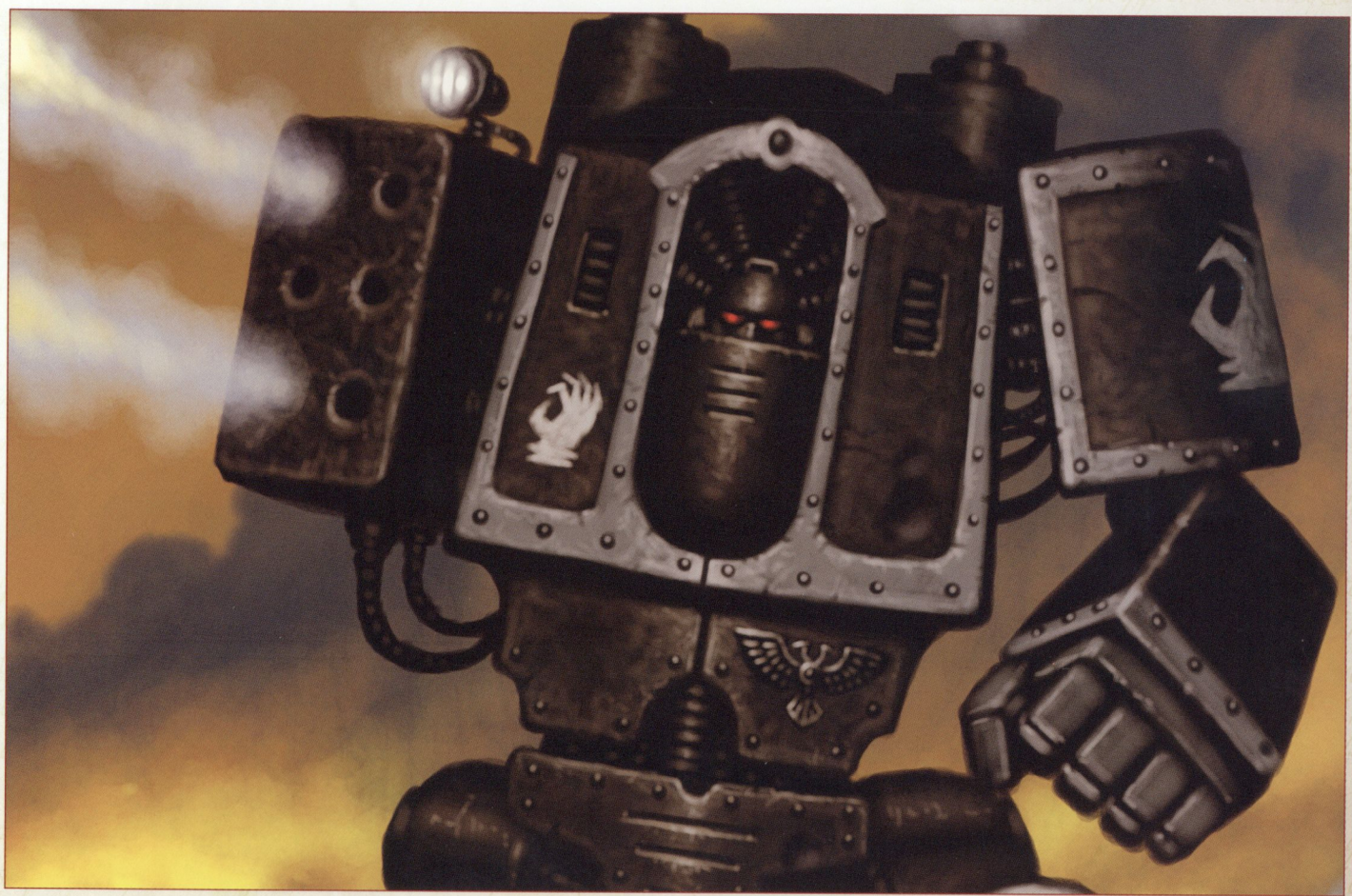
At this, the two primarchs leapt at each other. This was a fight from which only one of them would walk away.



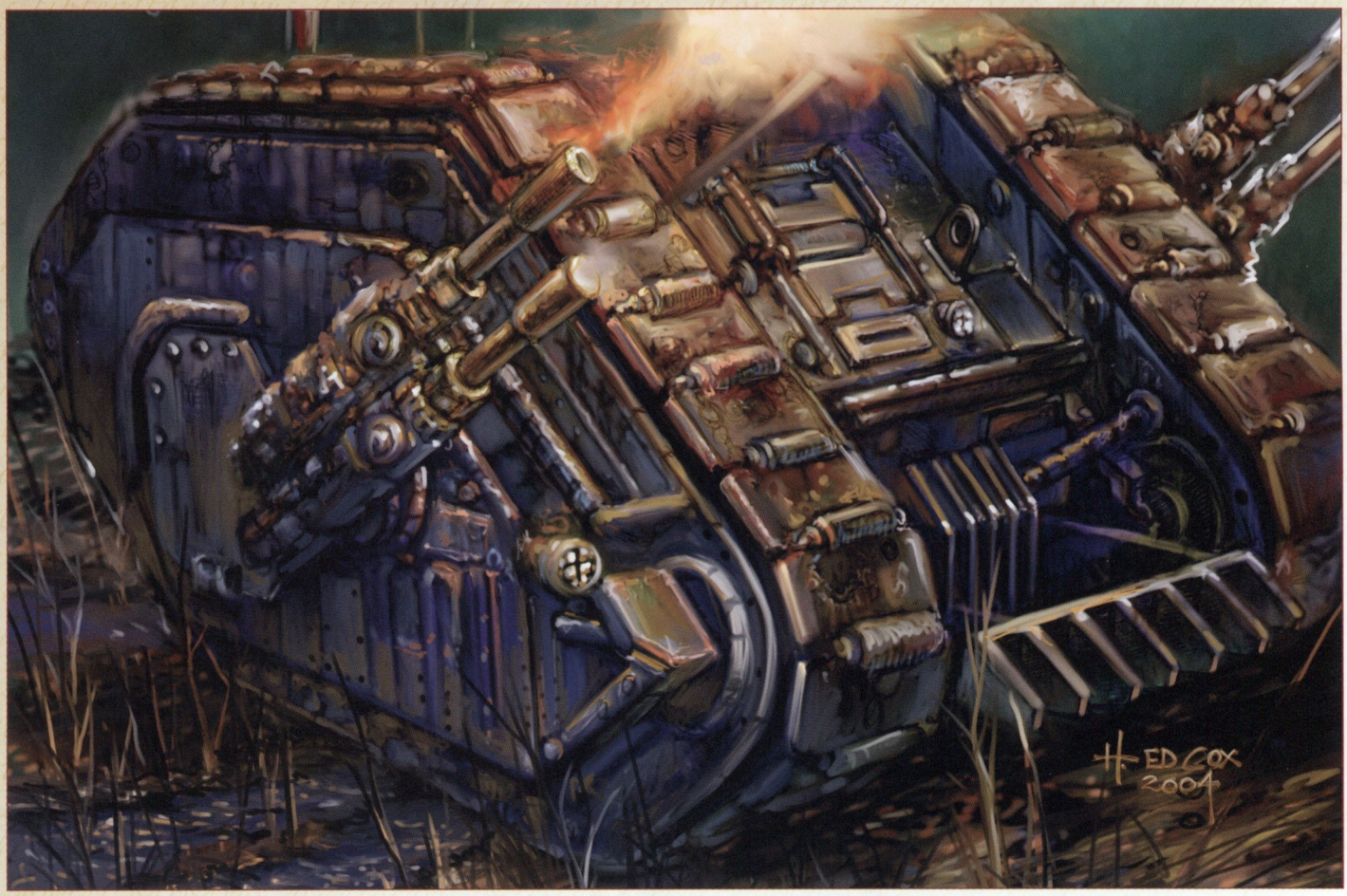
Fulgrim and Ferrus – Neil Roberts



Hammer of Justice – *Dan Wheaton*



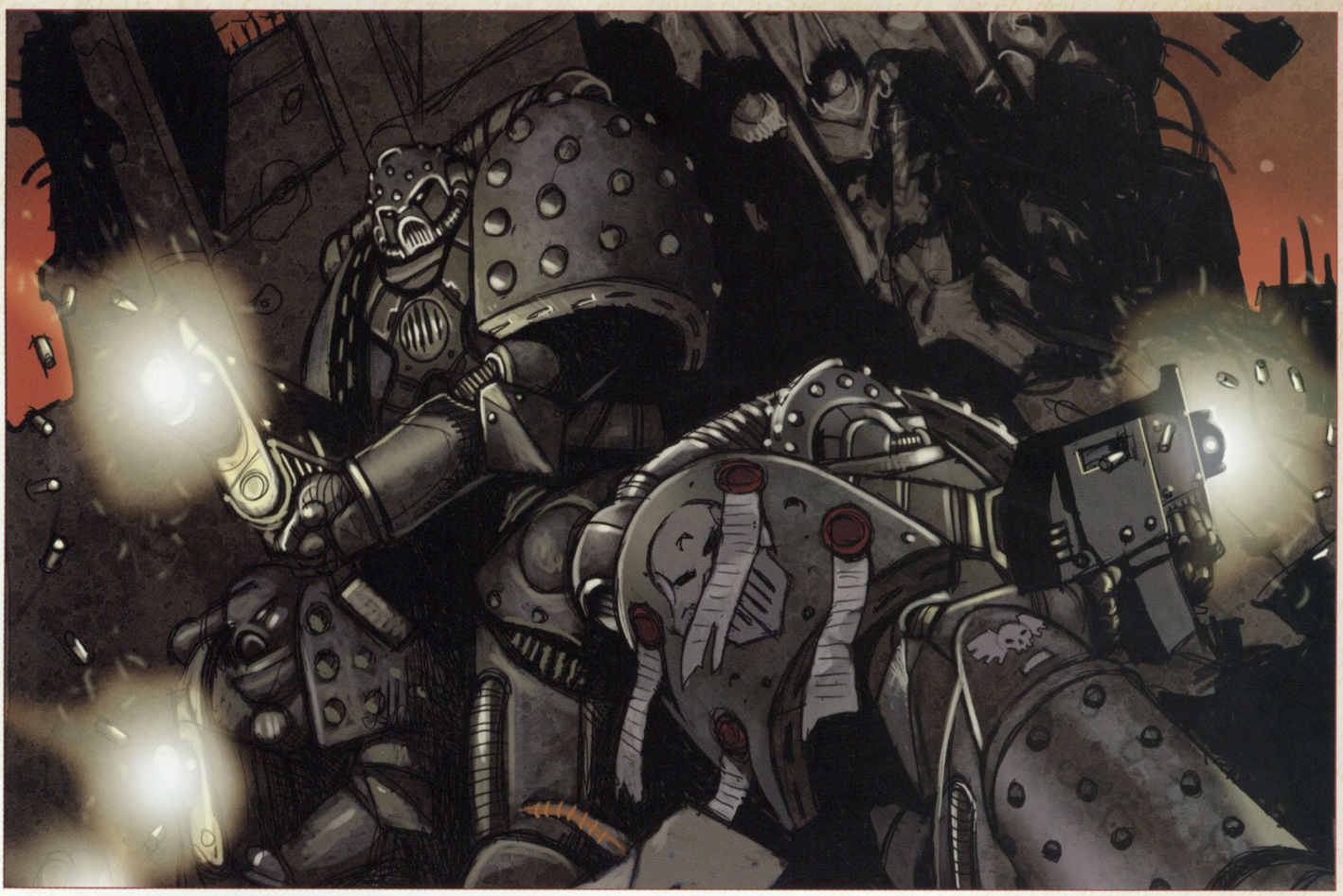
Brantar – *Chris Dien*



Pa-Gurbod – *Ed Cox*



Cyriarus – *James Ryman*



Dradenor – *Tiernen Trevallion*



Grav-Attack – *Eric Ren*

The Dropsite Massacre

The veteran companies of the Iron Hands Legion fought gallantly beside their mighty primarch, Ferrus Manus, but they were hopelessly outnumbered by the sudden appearance of the full strength of Horus's traitor Legions. In moments, the Iron Hands were swamped by foes too numerous to count. World Eaters, Death Guard, Emperor's Children and Sons of Horus Space Marines poured over the Urgall Hills. The loyal Space Marines struggled to maintain any semblance of order and cohesion as they desperately tried to hold off the onslaught. At the very heart of their resistance, Ferrus Manus was locked in bitter hand-to-hand combat with the traitor primarch Fulgrim. Whatever the odds, the stout-hearted Iron Hands would not desert their beloved primarch.

Meanwhile, the Salamanders and Raven Guard Legions were falling back to the dropsite to regroup and rendezvous with the four Legions – the Word Bearers, Iron Warriors, Alpha Legion and Night Lords – that had landed there. Vulkan and Corax, the Legions' respective primarchs, were still unaware that their erstwhile allies were in fact sworn to Horus. This soon became apparent to them as the four new Legions began firing on them. The loyal Legions were caught between two traitor armies as the Iron Hands veterans failed to hold off the counterattack launched by Horus from the northern hills.

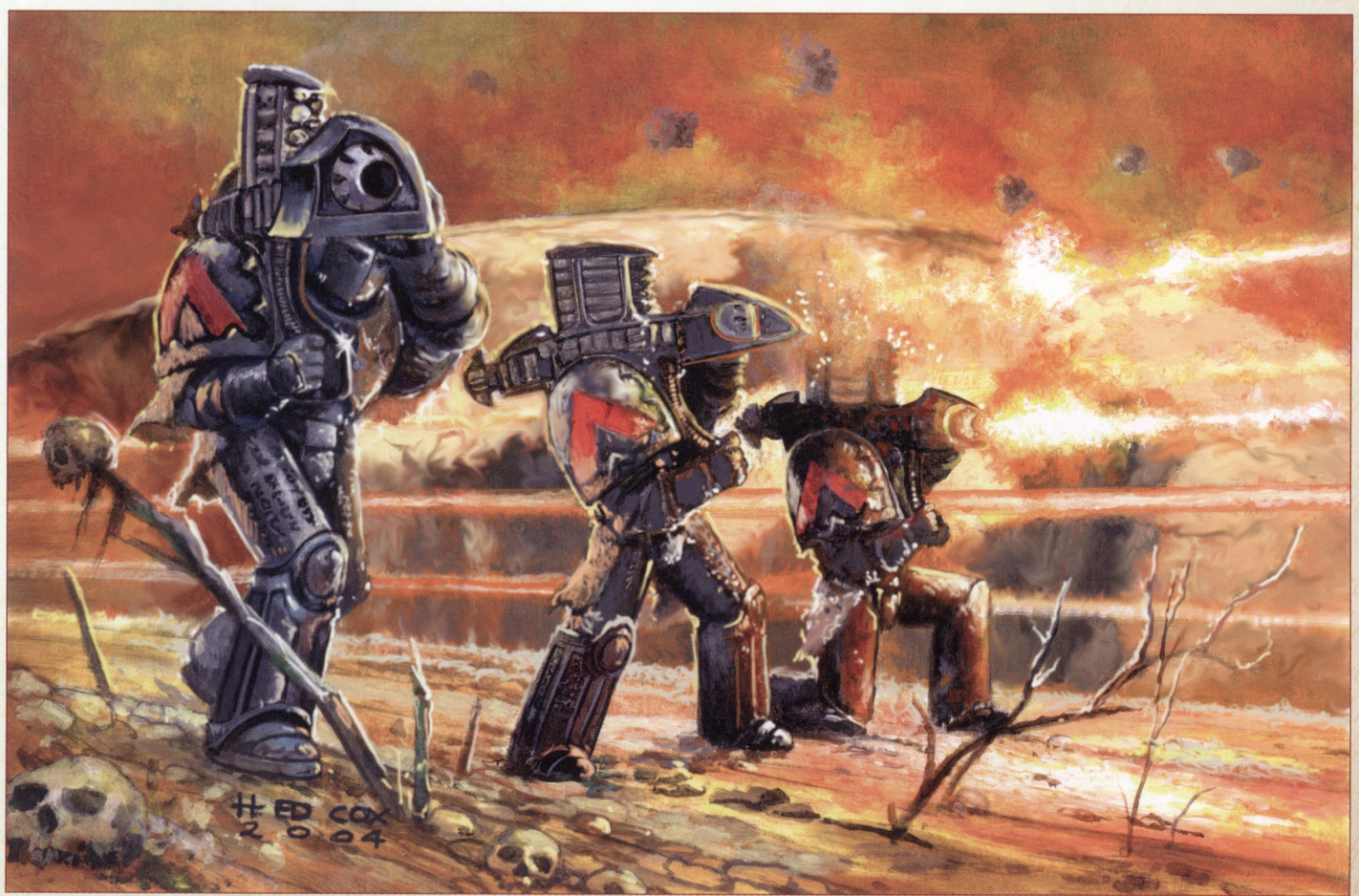
The Salamanders and Raven Guard were massively outnumbered. Lesser troops would simply have given up in the face of such overwhelming opposition, but the warriors of Vulkan and Corax were Space Marines, and so they fought. Even so, it was a massacre!



Frontal Assault – *James Brady*



Ares's Fury – *Dan Wheaton*



Van Kordal – *Ed Cox*



Vulkan Lives – Neil Roberts





Decimius – *James Brady*



Tourbadon – *Ed Cox*



The Iron Hands Betrayed – *Neil Roberts*

Fulgrim and the Warmaster

The Warmaster met with Fulgrim.

'You requested a private audience with me, Fulgrim. What have you to report?'

'My esteemed lord and master of Isstvan, I have brought you a trophy.'

At this, the primarch held up the severed head of Ferrus Manus. He casually tossed the grisly object at the feet of Horus.

'So you have fulfilled your oath to me. Good. But I fail to see why this presentation required so private a meeting. All of my captains should share in this triumph.'

'With the greatest respect, mighty Horus, I am afraid that Fulgrim did not entirely fulfil his oath to you. He did strike down his old friend and comrade, but he could not find the strength within himself to complete the task. I did it for him!'

'You… You are not Fulgrim? Who are you? Are you some kind of spy or assassin? Should I call my guard, or do you think you can best me? Do not think me weak like Ferrus… I can break you like a straw!'

'Perhaps this is true, but I have no desire to test either you or myself in such a wasteful and fruitless trial of combat. Nor do you have need to call your guardsmen. I am here to pledge myself to your cause. Who am I? It should be clear to one so powerful as you that I am a creature of the warp – a humble servant of the great power that is Slaanesh. I have claimed this mortal shell as my own – and I must say how pleasing it is to me. The sensations are quite unique, though; I shall no doubt have to make some adjustments to it in time.'

'What has happened to Fulgrim?' Horus asked of the daemon now inhabiting the body of his primarch underling.

'Fear not; he is safe, quite safe. He and I have a long history and I wouldn't wish him any lasting ill. You see, I have been his conscience for many years – quietly talking to him through the long nights: advising him, comforting him, cajoling him, pleading with him, steering his course of actions. I was the voice that persuaded him to take your side in this conflict of mortals – yes, you have me to thank for his dutiful obedience. But at the end he was weak, too weak to deal the deathblow to his old friend. In his pain he cried out to me for help. I could not but help him; after all we have been so close for so long, he is like a brother to me. Of course I could not help him as a voice, so we made a little pact. I would have his body, do that which he could not, and he would have eternal peace. A shame, but there you have it.'

'Is he dead? Answer me, damn you! Answer me!'

'No, he is not dead. He is here inside me, utterly aware of all that transpires. His cries of anguish are a great comfort to me. He and I have much to talk about. He is not really happy, I suppose, but I am unwilling to let him fade away. I enjoy our discussions too much. I don't suppose I will ever tire of them.'

Horus was appalled at this. But he said nothing. The daemon-Fulgrim had pledged its allegiance to him and it was patently a powerful entity. Best to keep it as an ally, he thought; and he certainly could not do without the Emperor's Children Legion at this juncture. However, Horus resolved to destroy the daemon and rescue Fulgrim from his torment when the time was apt. Horus and the daemon-Fulgrim agreed to keep its true nature to themselves. The daemon had no particular desire to reveal itself, and Horus was convinced that such a revelation would create many problems for him at this time.



Chemoscion – *Thomas Manning*



Fulgrim – *Sam Wood*



Vengeance – *John Gravato*



Antonin – *James Ryman*

Horus's Heresy

In the wake of the Dropsite Massacre, Horus convened a summit of his most senior officers to outline his plans for the forthcoming war. With him were the primarchs Mortarion, Fulgrim, Angron, Lorgar, Night Haunter, Perturabo and Alpharius; as well as the rebellious Fabricator-General Kelbor-Hal and various high-ranking Sons of Horus officers.

'We have achieved much, but there is still more for us to do. Our victory here will count for little if we do not press onwards. Now is the time for us to take the war to the Emperor himself. We are to make preparations for an invasion of Terra and an assault upon the Imperial Palace. This will be no easy task.'

The assembled warriors cheered as one. 'Aye! Victory for Horus! Death to the Emperor! Death to the Emperor!'

Horus outlined his plans. 'Night Haunter is to take his Legion to the planet of Tsagualsa within the Eastern Fringes. From this base he is to strike at the Imperial strongholds of Heroldar and Thramas. These two systems present a clear danger to our operation. If not dealt with they could provide the enemy with an opportunity to outflank us. Thramas, in particular, needs to be neutralised as the system contains a number of forge worlds which remain loyal to the Emperor. I have also received reports that the Dark Angels have been sighted in the sector. If these reports are true, you will have more than enough to worry about, Curze.'

Night Haunter winced at Horus's use of his near-forgotten former name, but nodded his understanding of the duty he had been given.

Horus addressed the traitor primarch Alpharius of the Alpha Legion.

'Alpharius. You have a vital duty to perform for me. Despite our glorious victory on the plains of Isstvan V, our enemy can yet call upon the services of a number of powerful Legions. I am sure that Lorgar's Word Bearers can keep Guilliman and his Ultramarines busy at Ultramar for some time to come, but I am concerned about those Legions rather closer to Terra. The White Scars have been operating in the Chondax System, close to Prospero where we know the Space Wolves have been active.

'The White Scars are almost at full strength and so represent a danger to us. We do not know what condition the Space Wolves are in after their attack on Prospero, but we must assume that they also could present a very real threat. Certainly, the two Legions together would be a grim alliance indeed.

'You must seek out and engage the White Scars Legion of Jaghatai Khan and the Space Wolves Legion of Leman Russ, and prevent them from joining forces.'

Horus turned his attention to the primarch Perturabo of the Iron Warriors.

'Master of Olympia, there is a large force of Imperial Fists making headway for the Isstvan System. Rogal Dorn despatched these troops to reinforce the Imperials on the third planet. Our allies within the warp have been able to delay their transit for many months – long enough that they can never complete their original mission, nor have they been able to participate in the battle here on Isstvan V. Now they must be dealt with. We cannot allow such a strong complement of Space Marines to infiltrate our space. They could seriously disrupt preparations for the attack on Terra.

'You must take your Legion to the Phall System where Dorn's loyalists are regrouping and smash them! Do not seek to fight a protracted battle against them. Cripple their fleet and eliminate their ability to manoeuvre! In the aftermath of our victory there, I will have need of your special skills – once we take Terra, the Palace fortifications will need to be repaired and bolstered lest any remaining Imperials try to win back what they will surely soon lose.'



The Bastion Wall – *John Gravato*



Ambush – Neil Roberts



Outflank – Chris Trevas

'The die is cast and I am set upon a course from which there is no turning. This is a frightful gamble that could result in my utter oblivion, or in the most fantastic triumph. But the Gods are with me, and I am sure that at my journey's end I will have usurped the throne of Terra and, for the sake of the human race, deposed the Emperor and taken his place as the one true Lord of the Galaxy.

'Some call me "traitor" and "heretic", but it is my destiny to rule the stars in the name of humanity. Am I not the greatest of the primarchs? The Emperor's first and most favoured son? Am I not therefore his chosen one? It is my right to rule, by natural law of succession, and by right of arms earned on a thousand battlefields. The mighty hosts of the Imperium call to me for leadership. The other primarchs and their Legions look to me for guidance. Only the Emperor stands between me and the throne of Terra. The time has come for me to seize that throne, and seize it I shall, for it is not my fate only that hangs in the balance.

'The lords of the warp have shown me a glimpse of the future fate of the Imperium if the Emperor is left to tinker with forces he cannot master. This future is a rotten place. Death and dishonour are the only medals the warriors of mankind can win in that dark time. It is a galaxy without hope for the sons of man. Foul aliens hold dominion over our worlds. The power of our glorious armies lay shattered by their numberless hordes, our peoples merely livestock decimated to sate their vile hungers. In this dark future, the ragged human masses do not have the strength to challenge their overlords, to fight against the terrors the universe has yet to unleash upon them. They meekly cower in their primitive hovels and pray to an uncaring god, a carrion lord, a master of despair. He will be an Emperor who does not hear their cries, who does not feel their pain, who does not sense their fears.

'Yes, the Emperor of Mankind will forsake his people. He will turn his back to them to win his place amongst the Gods. The Emperor cares only for himself. He is obsessed with his own power and glory. He has deceived his sons and followers. We have no place in his grand scheme. He has been biding his time, waiting for the opportunity to spurn us and ascend to godhood. Whilst we have fought war after war for him, he has been secretly building his power in the warp. The creatures of the warp are innocent pawns in his deadly game. They have assured me they have no interest in our affairs. They do not oppose him for nought. To them he is a hurricane, a whirlwind, a cosmic storm of destruction that threatens to rip them asunder. He has wounded them and they fight back as a wounded lion cornered in a cave. The great powers of the warp seek only respite from the Emperor's predations, and they have bargained with me to achieve that goal. I shall give them his head, and in return I will receive the galaxy to do with as I will.

'I am the saviour of the future. I am the one who will bring lasting glory to mankind. Only I can offer genuine hope to the masses of a future free from pain and servitude, free from death and dishonour.

'I am Horus. I am the Warmaster. I am the future Master of Mankind.'



Horus's Anger – David Hudnut