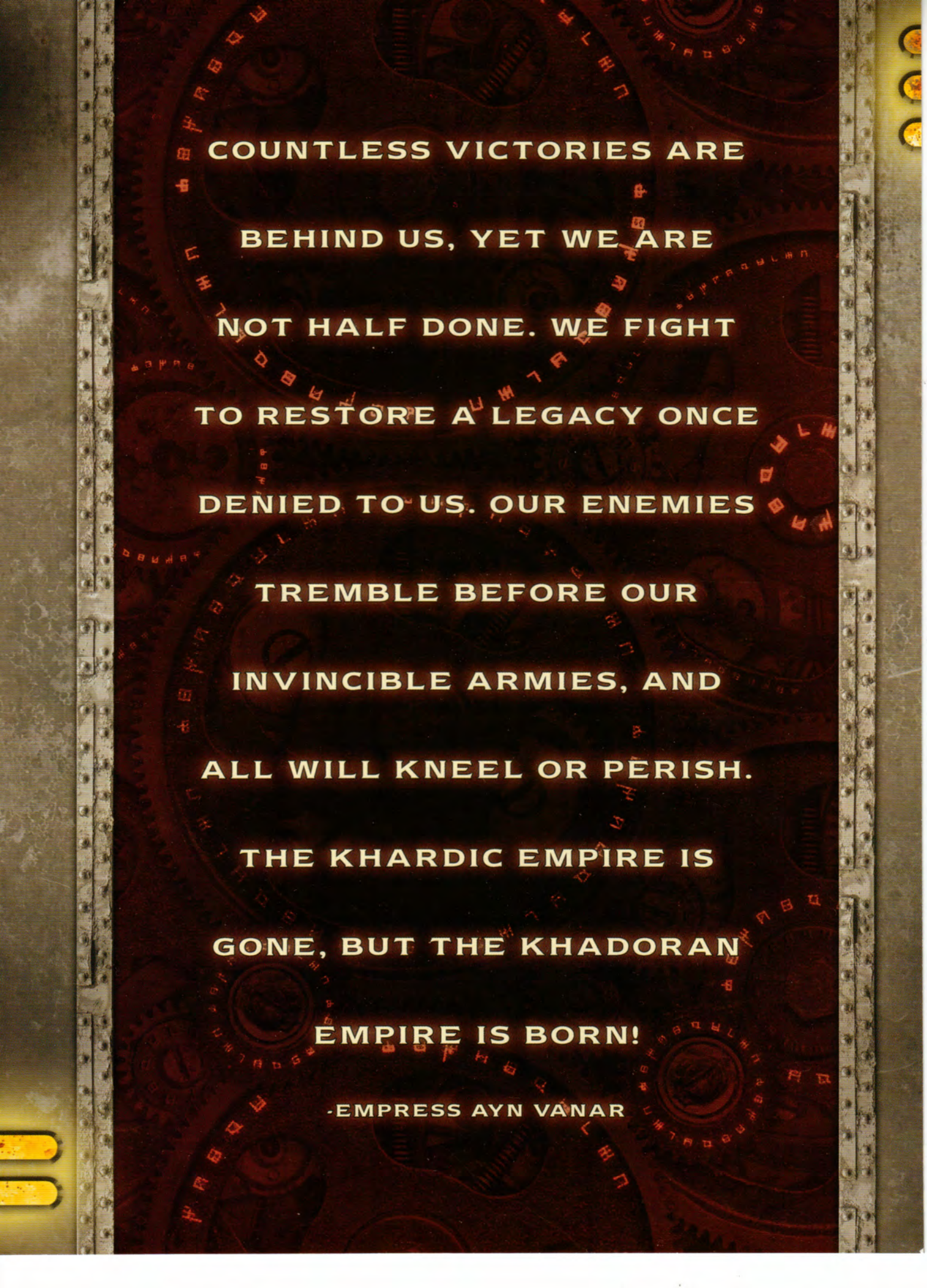
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FORCES OF

WARMACHINE®



KHADOR


COUNTLESS VICTORIES ARE
BEHIND US, YET WE ARE
NOT HALF DONE. WE FIGHT
TO RESTORE A LEGACY ONCE
DENIED TO US. OUR ENEMIES
TREMBLE BEFORE OUR
INVINCIBLE ARMIES, AND
ALL WILL KNEEL OR PERISH.
THE KHARDIC EMPIRE IS
GONE, BUT THE KHADORAN
EMPIRE IS BORN!
-EMPRESS AYN VANAR

FORCES OF

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KHADOR

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FOR THE MOTHERLAND

FACTION BACKGROUND

As unrelenting as their homeland of thick woodlands, towering mountains, and endless winters, Khadorans are known for their steely resolve in the face of hardship. These descendants of the ancient Khardic empire have never forgotten those days of glory, a time before the yoke of Orgoth dominion and the concessions of the Corvis Treaties. It is that golden era that Empress Ayn Vanar and her people hold in their hearts and seek to reestablish across western Immoren.

The massive armies of Khador personify the ideals of its people, prizing strength and resilience over all else. Equally inclined to bravery or stubborn tenacity, they are willing to outlast their enemies in a war of attrition if they cannot smash them asunder. These forces are glorious to behold as they march, with crimson standards whipping above and titanic warjacks shaking the earth with each step.

With bold attacks, Khador has recently brought Llael and the Thornwood under the banner of the Motherland, but mastering these new lands is proving as difficult as conquering them. The armies of Khador remain vigilant, determined to hold all they have gained and ready to strike at the heart of their enemies for glory, nation, and empress.

PLAYING KHADOR

Khador forces are perhaps best known for their armor and resilience. Their warjacks have higher-than-average armor and more damage boxes than any other faction in WARMACHINE. Rather than building numerous light warjacks, Khador reserves its cortexes for warjacks like the Decimator and Spriggan, massive constructs capable of withstanding all but the most determined attacks.

The strength of Khador lies not only in its mighty warjacks but in the iron resolve and brawn of its infantry as well. Heavy armor may blunt an enemy's attack, but it is the might of Khador's offense that drives enemies before this conquering army. Man-O-War soldiers stride forward to crush an enemy's front lines while a rain of Winter Guard mortar shells decimates their reserves. Legions of troops in shield walls stand ready to repel any counterattack that might survive. Khador's warcasters excel at maneuvering their warjacks into position for rapid assaults while taking the offensive output of their forces to whole new levels. March forth with the blessings of the empress and . . .

Crush All Beneath Your Iron Might!

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First printing: January 2010. Printed in China.

Forces of WARMACHINE: Khador ..... ISBN: 978-1-933362-58-8 ..... PIP 1025

Forces of WARMACHINE: Khador Hardcover ..... ISBN: 978-1-933362-59-5 ..... PIP 1026

FATE AND RESOLVE
OUTSET OF RENEWED HOSTILITIES, 608 AR

FROM BATTLEMENT TO GRAVE
NORTHERN BANKS OF THE DRAGON'S TONGUE RIVER

The stench of death lay heavy about the hillside, mingling with smoke and the scent of expended blasting powder. Mentally reconstructing the battle only required Strakhov to observe the lay of the bodies, the blasted timbers of what had once been a fortress under construction, and the shattered rubble of half-built walls. The corpses of many Khadoran soldiers lay strewn throughout the wreckage, and far fewer wearing Cygnaran colors.

Kommander Strakhov barely heard the account being given by the last survivor, a Winter Guard korporal reporting his version of events to Kapitan Nurivech. The witness' voice held an edge of panic, as if he were reliving the events he described. "It was brutal, sir. They made no demands, nor gave any opportunity for surrender. Slaughtered everyone they could see, and withdrew toward the river."

The rumbling of an approaching steam engine drew their attention to Kommander Alexander Karchev, who was approaching them with two of his officers. This arrival surprised Strakhov, as the senior warcaster had personally sent him here to investigate the Cygnaran attack.

A living warjack with over a century of battlefield experience, Karchev made even the bravest men uneasy. The ground shook under his tread, and Strakhov noticed the men standing in front of him had unconsciously taken half-steps back in alarm. The soldier being questioned was clearly uncomfortable at the close proximity now of not one but two warcasters. His voice was unsteady as he continued, "There was trenchers, long gunners, gun mages. I didn't get a count, but there was warjacks, and a warcaster. At least one. I only saw him from a distance."

"What did—" The kapitan questioning the witness cut off in mid-sentence as Strakhov held up a hand.

The warcaster stepped toward the guardsman. "Where were you posted during all this?"

The man blanched and swallowed. "On patrol, Kommander, near the mortar crews." He waved in that direction, uphill from the main fortress to a slight rise set back and with a clear view of the approach.

Strakhov nodded. "I was just there. Not one Cygnaran dead, though at least thirty of our men litter the ground. Efficient work, up close, primarily by blade. Evidence of grenade and gunfire, but they were all put down quickly. Taken by surprise." His eyes did not waver from the man's face. "Your patrol failed."

"We had no warning at all, sir!" The korporal shook his head. "They came out of the darkness. I was on the opposite side, nearer the fortress. It was over before I knew what was happening. A few men tried to run and were shot in the back."

Karchev's engine rumbled and smoke bellowed from his stacks as he barked accusingly, "Yet *you* lived. Hiding. Watching."

Strakhov glanced at the other warcaster, and the guardsman paled. "I hit the dirt when it started and then it was over, sir. I thought it might be important for someone to tell what had happened. Bear witness." His eyes were watering, and his lip trembled.

"Your witness is as useful to us as your bravery." Karchev's voice was laced with derision, and one of his massive iron fists clenched in anger. He raised his voice, "Kapitan!"

"Yes, sir!" Nurivech snapped to attention.

"Arrest this man. Charge him with dereliction of duty and cowardice."

The korporal slumped with a wordless moan of protest but was quickly hauled back to his feet and taken away by several soldiers under Nurivech. Karchev watched him go with a glower and then spoke again, this time to Strakhov. "You disapprove?"

In truth, the warcaster was more discomfited by the casual way Karchev had barked orders at one of his own officers. Despite the fact that they were the same rank, Karchev had command by dint of his unmatched years of service, but even a senior officer assuming control of his men gave Strakhov pause. He replied, "I am merely surprised to see you here. You could have waited for my report."

"I did not come for that." Karchev's expression suggested a simmering anger at those who had killed his countrymen. "I have orders. Cygnar tests our resolve and must pay the price. Until our fortifications are complete, we are vulnerable. Rather than allow them to strike at us with impunity we must force them back behind their walls." His eyes took in the surrounding wreckage. "Those who did this must be reminded of the fear of death. We chased them from the forest but let them sit too long."

Strakhov felt his pulse jump in anticipation. It had been too long since he had spilled southern blood. There was much glory to be won here. Northguard had been a powerful symbol, but Point Bourne was the northern center of the Strategic Academy and controlled the locks through which

substantial river commerce flowed. "I am at your disposal, sir. Punishing Cygnarans is my favorite avocation."

"It will take some time to assemble a substantial threat to this city, but we have been ordered to make an immediate show of force. Additionally, we need intelligence regarding the fortifications past the outer wall. What we can achieve without more men is limited, but we will do what we can. I have a plan that should make good use of your particular . . . skills. There is an opportunity to seize a Cygnaran asset of great strategic importance."

"I only hope they have guarded it with ample forces. We have a surplus of ammunition."

His attempt at humor was lost on Karchev, who simply gave him an appraising look. "The 7th Battalion is overdue. Has there been any word?"

The absence of those men was a matter Strakhov had thought Karchev might overlook, and now he hoped it would not delay the attack. "We have had no communication with them, but I expect them any time. The men with me right now are among Khador's finest. Tell me what the High Kommand wishes done, and I will ensure it comes to pass."



They delayed until almost sunset to launch their attack, with Strakhov and his men positioned toward the eastern flank while waiting for Karchev to make his move. When he did, it was awe-inspiring to behold the long line of Khadoran warjacks pour from between the trees and advance on the Cygnaran trenchworks. The Kossite irregulars and manhunters had done their work; a palpable sense of surprised alarm swept across the Point Bourne walls and outer defenses, followed by frantic activity.

Karchev led at the vanguard, surrounded by a cordon of closed Devastators that served as his shield against incoming fire. Behind the Destroyers, Juggernauts, and Marauders fanning out to either side of their advance was a solid line of imposing Man-O-War soldiers—shocktroopers at the front, backed by bombardiers and maul-wielding members of the Demolition Corps. They came under heavy shelling almost immediately, and the air filled with the roar of cannons and the endless crackle of rifles and chain guns. Most of the incoming fire deflected harmlessly off the peerless Khadoran armor.

Knowing their angle of approach should mislead the Cygnarans and disguise their ultimate purpose, Karchev ignored the fortified gate for the city's northern road and instead marched toward a seemingly random cannon tower along the main wall. This heavily armored assault force was interested only in dividing the Cygnaran forces and drawing their fire from Strakhov's much smaller force.

Unrelenting, intense cannon fire was hurled upon Karchev's battalion from the wall, tearing great holes in the ground and occasionally knocking men back with deadly impact. Strakhov saw a Man-O-War at the forward edge hit by a Defender shell that tore through his armor to exit

with a spray of gore that washed across the men behind him. Two more farther down the line were torn apart by impacts from the wall's cannons. The warjacks endured similar fire, but their Khadoran armor held through the first wave. Karchev's machines pressed on like an avalanche, carried forward by determination and momentum. The Cygnarans kept most of their warjacks behind the wall, with Defenders firing from up top, but a number of other 'jacks, including quite a few lights, were positioned among the outer trenches and bunkers. A Destroyer shell whistled through the air and squarely hit a Charger. In mid-stride, the light 'jack exploded into a flaming ball of white-hot shrapnel. Strakhov saw a Hunter that had been firing armor-piercing shells into the line obliterated with a single blow from a Juggernaut's axe. Marauders tossed aside several Grenadiers with similar ease.

STRAKHOV PRESSED A HEAVY BOOT ONTO THE TRENCHER'S CHEST, CAUSING THE MAN TO CHOKE AND WHEEZE AS SEVERAL RIBS CRACKED.

It looked as though Karchev's vanguard might reach the wall and tower in record speed, a possibility Strakhov had thought all but impossible on examining the lay of the land the day before. From farther back amid the protection of the nearest trees, Khadoran artillery fired on walls and trenches, ensuring Cygnar would suffer if they attempted a counterattack. The roar of mortars and field cannons answered Cygnar's cannons in an almost constant explosive debate, while smoke rose to blacken the air.

Kommander Strakhov had studied the detailed maps drawn by observers watching the outer fortifications, but their knowledge of the inner defenses was minimal. As his force advanced at an oblique angle, the warcaster invoked a shroud of arcane darkness to cover his men. They would seem like little more than shadows to anyone on the walls. With the attention of the Cygnaran soldiers keenly focused on Karchev's wall of steam-powered steel, the Assault Kommandos took the eastern trenches by surprise. They were already upon the first trenches by the time a sporadic and almost desperate volley of gunfire impacted their raised shields. Meanwhile, kommandos fired grenades into the confined space of the deep trench lanes to pour forth strangling gas.

Belatedly, the choking trenchers tried to obscure their positions with their own smoke grenades. The kommandos' alchemically treated masks allowed their vision to pierce through the haze, letting them open fire with brutal effectiveness upon the choking enemy soldiers. The contingent of bombardiers supporting the kommandos sent rockets behind the first trenches to explode among those positioned farther back.

Like all warcasters, Strakhov's greatest strength resided in the massive machines at his side. At his mental command, two Kodiaks and a Decimator rushed forward. The Decimator added its considerable firepower to the barrage, targeting the only Defender in the immediate vicinity, which had been firing on Karchev's left flank. The first Kodiak, nicknamed Mishka, shrugged off a single impact to its chest as it tried to close and then seized hold of the Defender to lift it from behind the sand bags and hurl it into the bunker wall. Mishka then set upon its downed prey with a ferocity worthy of the animal that was its namesake. The second Kodiak, this one with the nickname Volk, leapt over the first trench entirely and into the midst of the next line of enemy soldiers to unleash a massive blast of scalding steam. Their screams were lost amid the cacophony of rifle and cannon fire.

Strakhov had his sword in hand as he leapt into the trench ahead of his men like a stalking wolf. Where he thrust his weapon, trenchers died. He swept through the first line of Cygnarans even as his men stormed across the nearest adjacent trenches, blazing away with their carbines before closing to melee. Strakhov preferred to maximize the terror and confusion of his enemies by engaging them hand to hand. Veteran trenchers were reasonably skilled with their bayonets, but he had long practice at getting inside their reach. Caught in the narrow confines of their own trenches they were easy prey.

After slashing through every soldier in reach, Strakhov closed on the door of the nearest bunker where a hardened trencher sergeant stood his ground. The sergeant lunged at Strakhov with his bayonet-tipped rifle, and the warcaster took malicious enjoyment in knocking it aside with a backhanded slap. Even as the weapon clattered to the ground, Strakhov kicked the man's left knee and sent him sprawling to the hard-packed earth. The Cygnaran's helmet saved him from smashing his skull, but he lay gasping with the wind knocked out of him, his leg bent at an unnatural angle.

Strakhov pressed a heavy boot onto the trencher's chest, causing the man to choke and wheeze as several ribs cracked. Strakhov paused to look down the short space remaining in the trench. Directly before the metal door to the bunker, another trencher was standing with his rifle raised. His eyes were wide with fear, but he had the wits to take a bead on Strakhov and fire. The bullet deflected harmlessly off the warcaster's power field with a spray of sparks. With a bloodthirsty grin, Strakhov spoke in Cygnaran, "Come!"

He lifted his own blade in one hand and beckoned the man forward with the other. "Save your comrade." He looked down to the sergeant squirming under his boot.

The trencher grimaced in anger and gave a yell as he rushed with the bayonet. Strakhov leaned to the side to evade its thrust and struck downward against the rifle stock with his own weapon, forcing the bayonet to impale the sergeant beneath him. The trencher had only a moment to absorb the horror of what was happening before Strakhov swiped his blade across the man's throat. Strakhov drew his massive riot gun and fired it twice at the fortified bunker door, his shots perfectly shattering its hinges so that the door fell outward and clattered to the ground. Another burst of fire tore through the defenders within. Strakhov pushed his way past their bodies. Inside the bunker, just as intelligence had indicated, he found his real target.

A senior specialist was backed against the far wall with a pistol in hand. His uniform was similar to the trenchers', but he was an older man with a soft face and a noticeable paunch, and he looked distinctly out of place. The insignia on his shoulder showed crossed wrenches and gears: the symbol of a Cygnaran military engineer. Clearly terrified, he raised his pistol and fired, but the shot went wide and ricocheted off the wall. Strakhov stepped up to him and yanked the pistol out of his hands, nearly breaking his fingers. The engineer gasped in pain. Strakhov addressed him jovially, still speaking in Cygnaran. "You must be important! Today, that means you get to live."

Assault Kommando Kapitan Tukinosk entered the bunker behind Strakhov, and at the warcaster's command he took the man into custody, seizing his arms and binding them behind his back. Tukinosk asked his kommander in low tones, "Why do we need him?"

Strakhov found a case of charts and diagrams on a ledge near the back of the bunker and tossed it to the kapitan. "According to Greylord intelligence, this man is the primary architect behind Point Bourne's recently expanded defenses. With what he knows, we can save thousands of Khadoran lives. I'm sure Irusk and he will have much to discuss." The engineer gave no sign of comprehending their Khadoran words, and Strakhov offered him a smile that certainly did not reassure.

Outside the bunker his men moved forward to sweep the trenches methodically with their blazing flamethrowers. The nearest defenders had at last realized there were intruders at their back. Panic ensued in the nearest trenches as men scrambled to get out of the way of imminent death coming from both ahead and behind.

Strakhov's attention was divided as he directed his warjacks to support his men and draw some of the defensive fire. He allowed the men to slaughter with abandon for several long minutes, fulfilling the punitive secondary objective of their mission, but then he gave the signal to fall back. Their sergeants organized them and they covered one another as they went, shields raised against rifles and chain guns now firing in their direction. Those who fell were left behind.

Strakhov looked to the wall and saw Karchev had indeed accomplished a telling strike. Marauders and the Demolition Corps had opened a sizable breach and inflicted visible damage to the tower. The toppled forms of numerous Khadoran warjacks littered the base of the walls. The sun had already set, and the sky was darkening as Karchev began to pull back, still surrounded by implacable sealed Devastators. Cygnar would believe they had driven the Khadorans away, but the breach in their wall and the count of the dead would prevent them from calling this a victory. It might take them some time to notice a single engineer, however valuable, was missing rather than among the dead.

Strakhov considered it a shame they did not have the manpower to take advantage of Karchev's breach. Still, the southerners would soon realize the attacking force represented only a fraction of the Khadorans' strength. Had others joined the fight, they might have pressed hard enough to drive the Cygnarans from the north bank, even though a sizable portion of Cygnar's First Army was stationed here. In war, perception was everything, and no one was better at creating a formidable impression than Alexander Karchev. Even without that achievement, the wall would not be quickly repaired. Irusk might yet be able to exploit that weakness, particularly with whatever additional information they could gather from this specialist engineer. Strakhov had accomplished his objective.

His warjacks were battered but functionally intact, and Strakhov and his men left the forward trenches to regroup, staying below the protective sandbags until they reached open ground. Night helped their retreat, as did the fact that most of the defenders on the wall were occupied with Karchev.

Their orders were to ensure they were not pursued while reaching the forest before turning northwest to rendezvous with Karchev. As they neared the trees, Strakhov saw something large moving in the growing darkness straight ahead. He quickly strapped back on his mask and goggles. They were primarily engineered to assist with seeing through smoke, but the treated lenses also aided visibility in darkness. "Tukinosk, launch a flare," he ordered, pointing in that direction.

The kapitan withdrew a prepared tube. He slammed its base firmly into his palm, crushing the lower section and driving a spike into the ignition packets. With a sound like

a pistol shot, a glowing orb launched up at an angle and then fell slowly toward the earth, blazing brightly as it consumed itself. The stark light was like neither daylight nor moonlight and briefly threw all lines into sharp relief. Strakhov saw the distinct profile of something large and insectoid, a form moving on long legs like a spider.

"Cryx." Even as the word left Strakhov's mouth there was a sudden, horrible screech as something trailing dark smoke streaked across the space between them. The Harrower's shell exploded into the midst of the men near Strakhov with an unearthly noise and a sulfurous stench. Strakhov saw two of his men simply vanish into the pocket of absolute darkness left in the explosion's wake as if erased.

He gritted his teeth and impelled his Decimator to retaliate, guiding its fire as its tremendous short-range cannon fired once and then twice, each shell shattering into the Harrower, knocking it back and tearing tremendous gaping holes in its hull. His Kodiaks followed not far behind to finish the machine.

"Kommander!" It was a shout from Kapitan Tukinosk, who had fallen on his side with a bleeding arm, having narrowly escaped the Harrower's first blast. The kapitan was pointing to his right, where their captive was running away at full tilt. Several of the nearest kommandos had started to run after, but they were quickly losing ground. The Cygnaran engineer was moving swiftly despite having his arms tied behind him, leaping over the brush like a startled deer. Strakhov reached down to yank Tukinosk onto his feet and then began his own pursuit.

Strakhov ignored the sounds of shooting as his men fired at other creatures moving between the trees. He saw the engineer hop over a moss-covered log ahead and disappear from sight and followed with a grin, expecting to find his quarry fallen on his face just beyond. When he vaulted the rotted wood, however, he was surprised to land within the outer opening of a large, gaping cave. He could hear the sound of someone scrambling into the darkness inside. Fresh dirt and the debris of several uprooted and broken trees lay in the vicinity, proving the passage had not been there until recently. The earth was compacted by the movements of some large force, and the hole was broad enough for heavy equipment to have passed through unhindered. Strakhov stopped for a moment and shook his head. "Idiot! You were safer with us."

Kapitan Tukinosk caught up with him, along with several other kommandos who had broken off to chase the prisoner. The kapitan stared at the cave and asked, "What now, sir?"

Strakhov jerked his chin toward the opening. "We go in. That man is our mission. Let's see if we can stop the fool from getting himself killed." He spoke to the squads nearest him, "Form up in rows, four or five wide. Squad Two first, flame throwers to the front. Lieutenant Kasternoff, stay back and rally the rest of the men. Hunker down here and await my return. Avoid drawing additional attention. I will leave two of my 'jacks with you." His battlegroup had not yet caught up to them, but Strakhov sent a quick burst of mental orders. He directed the Decimator and Mishka to stay up top but instructed Volk to follow inside. He was unsure about the tunnel's stability, but if a Harrower had traversed it, a Kodiak should be able to as well.

He plunged into the tunnel followed by his men, keenly aware that his captive was getting ahead of them and barreling toward certain death. The earthen ceiling was reinforced with periodic wooden beams. It still did not look altogether sound, but clearly it had been opened with purposeful intent. As the small group moved down into the cave, it felt as though the earth swallowed them.

His men drew and lit small expandable lanterns. Strakhov had removed his mask while speaking his orders, but he soon replaced it. The air was thick, rank with an oily redolence. Muffled sounds drifted from deeper within, an undefined but metallic clanking, as of chains and hammers. There was no immediate sign of their engineer, and Strakhov wondered at the man's courage—or fear—to have blundered on in such haste in the pitch-black passage. Even as he had this thought they heard an echoing scream. Strakhov growled and shouted to the men at the fore, "Faster! Find him!"

After another twist downward, the rough cave opened into a larger passage. Even by the poor illumination of the lanterns it was clear this hall had been constructed with expert diligence. Evenly spaced beams supported an arched ceiling, and slick stones lined the walls. From beyond the range of their light there came a shuffling sound and a droning. Shapes suddenly lurched toward them from the shadows: thralls, walking corpses to which lengths of pipe and enormous steel fists had been gruesomely affixed. "Fire!" Strakhov gave the order before his men could be startled by the sudden appearance, letting their training take over where other instincts might betray them.

Streams of liquid flame leapt from the flamethrowers of the front kommandos, filling the passage with bright orange light and revealing the horde of thralls moving toward them. The fire set them alight and began to consume them like a living thing. Strakhov had his gun ready, but the space was too confined to fire through the men ahead. "Ready shields! Push into the corridor and lay down fire!" It went against their instincts to move toward the burning thralls and those pressing forward behind them, but it was necessary to bring more firepower to bear. He could sense Volk making its deliberate way through the tunnels

behind them, but he knew the fight would be over by the time the Kodiak reached their position, not to mention the difficulties of maneuvering in the tight confines of the cave.

Several mechanithralls forced their way through as the nearest kommandos reached them. Strakhov moved through to fire into the gap between his men and took out two thralls, but another followed and hammered down to crush the nearest flame thrower. The steam-powered fists ruptured the man's tank, which exploded in a roaring blast of heat and fire. The kommandos were protected by their treated armor, and several mechanithralls made it through the blaze to attack, heedless of the flames.

Gunfire joined the roar of flamethrowers as kommandos forced their way into the larger corridor to gain space to fire their carbines. Strakhov unhooked a cinder bomb from his waist and threw it forward into the center of the clustered enemy. It exploded into flame and smoke. With a few more gouts from the surviving flame throwers, the last of the enemies were neutralized. There followed only the noises of reloading as the Khadorans stood tensely, waiting to see if further horrors would emerge.

Strakhov turned to Tukinosk and saw flickering flames dying out along the man's shoulders. "What of the Cygnaran papers?" The kapitan gave a start and unslung his combat pack, which as Strakhov feared had been largely obliterated in the heat of the flamethrower explosion. Several burnt remnants of paper turned to ash as he thumbed through the contents trying to find anything salvageable.

Strakhov let loose an explosive curse and marched ahead into the larger passageway, checking the nearby dead even as he bellowed to his men, "Look for the engineer!"

Something familiar caught Strakhov's attention as he passed the nearest thrall. He bent down to get a better look. Bits of uniform still clung to its withered and ritually inscribed flesh, although most of the fabric had been torn apart by the horrible process that had integrated it with lengths of piping and machinery. He retrieved a patch from the sleeve and held it up to one of the lanterns. It was unmistakably the emblem of his missing 7th Battalion. His mind reeled at the scope of a force required to eliminate an entire battalion without a trace. This was beyond anything they had heard reported of the Cryxian threat in the region, particularly this far south. It was vital Supreme Kommandant Irusk learned of it.

A shout from one of his lieutenants drew his attention. Strakhov shouldered his heavy gun and went in that direction. He saw several large carts piled high with corpses, scavenged bodies likely harvested to create additional Cryxian forces. Thralls had been chained to the front of these carts as beasts of burden. The corpses on the wagons wore a mix of Cygnaran and Khadoran uniforms, including several with familiar insignia.

"Any sign of the engineer?" Strakhov asked the nearest kommando.

"No sir, these corpses are all older—"

"Burn them," Strakhov commanded. "Burn them all." He threw the patch of the 7th Battalion onto the nearest stack as the flame throwers opened fire. Even as the air filled with the stench of burning flesh, from behind them came the sound of renewed carbine fire and the distinct hissing noise of vented steam. Shouts from the sergeants indicated additional mechanithralls coming from the opposite direction. Strakhov checked that his gun was loaded and turned to deal with them, his expression unyielding.

They lost additional men in that clash, although Volk caught up by the end and smashed several of the last thralls to paste. Strakhov was down to a single small squad, just under ten men. Kapitan Tukinosk urged him to return to the surface, but he shook his head and pressed on. Strakhov wanted to make some sense of this place, and to discover what had happened to the engineer. This deeper tunnel seemed old, and he wondered if it was part of some ancient underground complex the undead parasites had stolen for their use. None of their intelligence had suggested the existence of anything like this. Luring him onward was the increasingly loud metallic clanking of machinery ahead.

THE STEAM-POWERED FISTS RUPTURED THE MAN'S TANK, WHICH EXPLODED IN A ROARING BLAST OF HEAT AND FIRE.

The air had grown thicker, and even with their masks breathing had become difficult. Strakhov saw spots before his eyes and knew this atmosphere was not meant for man to breathe. Just as the passage seemed to widen, one of the forward men let out a surprised yelp as he lost his footing. His comrades seized his arms and pulled him back from the edge of an unexpected precipice. Strakhov stepped forward to see that a wide chasm lay ahead. The walkway cut without warning to the right, where a metal bridge crossed a gap down to some larger section of the cavern. The sudden feeling of open space might have been a relief after the narrow confines of the passageway if not for the clattering and clanking and an intensification of the rotting stench. Beneath the louder noises was a deepening thrum, as of some great engines.



Strakhov approached the bridge, seeking a vantage point from which to better judge the scope of the enormous chamber. His men followed with some hesitation, and Volk brought up the rear. The area was dimly lit both by hanging lanterns giving forth a sickly, green light and by the orange glow of numerous roaring fires feeding forges. The cavern was filled with a bewildering array of machinery that extended into the darkness. Strakhov saw the hulking shapes of several helljacks and bonejacks in rows, giving him a start until he realized their eyes were dark; they were powered down. Treadmills carried pieces of machinery to be offloaded by necrotechs, while thralls shambled at their bidding.

Immediately across the bridge and to the right, a bank of piping and machinery recessed into the rock occupied most of the far wall. Pistons pumped along a section of the stone bedrock that looked wet from accumulated condensation. Massive plumbing led along the machinery and into the walls. Glass portholes along the pipes showed thick brackish fluid surging in time with the clanking pistons.

Their attention went to a series of stone slabs in front of these banks of machinery, where a dozen bodies were strapped down. Strakhov grimaced as he saw they were straining against their bonds in agony: these were not corpses, but captives. Their heads were encased within sealed helmets of metal, and the skin of their naked torsos was pulled back by bloodstained clamps to reveal the musculature, ligaments, and ribs beneath. Set into the floor at the head of each slab was a complex cluster of machinery from which extended a number of articulated and jointed rods. These terminated in serrated knives, spinning saws, and hooked pincers. Working steadily, each apparatus sawed through bones, sliced into tissues, and extracted organs while its unfortunate victim writhed in pain. Isolated samples were dropped into waiting metal cylinders to be sealed and taken away by attending thralls.

Several strange creatures floated above the bloodstained floor nearby, perhaps supervising this horrific process. Vaguely humanoid, they wore black leather and carried bladed extensions attached to their backs. Flanking these bizarre creatures were a number of muscular brutes reminiscent of the mechanithralls. Strakhov noted numerous differences, though, most significantly the fact that their heads were covered in metal cowls with hoses attached to the front grills. Rather than steam-powered gloves, their arms ended in bladed instruments or saws. He had never seen anything quite like these abominations, and the entire tableau made his skin crawl.

Kapitan Tukinosk grabbed his arm and pointed, but Strakhov had already noticed that several mechanithralls had crossed the bridge ahead of them with the Cygnaran in tow. One of the floating creatures in black peered at the man, who had fallen to his knees and was shaking his head. The creature pointed a gloved hand toward a far slab, where its occupant lay limp, his body harvested. Several muscular abominations pushed this carcass off. It slumped down into

an open receiving vat connected to the machinery by a thick pipe. Black liquid sloshed over the side as it fell. The thralls dragged the resisting engineer over to the slab and began to strap him down.

"Let's move!" Strakhov did not hesitate to leap forward and run across the bridge, bringing his gun to bear. His men and Volk were only slightly behind him, and the cavern soon filled with the explosive sound of firearms. Strakhov directed his first shot into the leather-wrapped head of the floating creature that had given the order, feeling satisfaction as it exploded wetly and the body fell in a bloody heap against the machine. He took comfort in the fact that these creatures were indeed vulnerable to his bullets. The muscled drudges surged toward him as if enraged by the death of their master. He blocked one of their bladed thrusts with his sword and retaliated with a stab straight into its chest, watching blood erupt from the wound. Were these things actually alive rather than undead? He had no time to ponder this discovery as he swept about him with his blade and his men joined the fight.

Volk faltered slightly crossing the bridge as one of the reinforced struts buckled under the Kodiak's weight and the entire metal platform tipped with a grating whine. The 'jack managed to vault off the platform and onto the nearest stone ledge even as the bridge broke free. The struts and supports on the opposite side groaned with the sudden weight, holding tenuously as the metal surface of the bridge swung down to slam against the chasm on the opposite side.

Strakhov cursed under his breath. As he focused his arcane will toward the Kodiak, runes circled his hand and its head as he augmented its fighting power. It waded into the nearest thralls with abandon, but the warcaster felt little satisfaction. The bridge was gone, and the air had filled with a strange keening noise that rose and fell. It sounded suspiciously like an alarm. Strakhov cut down another of the nearest brutish enemies, this one with a saw-bladed hand, and glanced across the intervening ground to the other machinery. Several of the helljacks were now rumbling, their eyes sparking and smoke beginning to pour from their stacks, and the necrotechs had sent their thralls rushing across the chamber.

By the end of the melee, the nearest abominations were dead, but so were two more of his men. Strakhov shot the last of the leather-clad creatures just in time to prevent it from stabbing one of its wicked barbed blades through Kapitan Tukinosk's face. The veteran kommando joined his remaining men in firing their carbines into the approaching thralls. Strakhov was at last at liberty to rush to the engineer's slab and cut his bonds. The man looked up at him with wide eyes as he regained his feet. Strakhov grinned at him and spoke in rough Cygnaran, "Should have stayed with us! We are better company, yes?"

Thralls swarmed toward Volk. Strakhov turned to help deal with them and instructed the 'jack to vent its steam. Unfortunately, he had not anticipated that the scalding steam, which could cook a man alive, hardly fazed the dead. They ignored the blast to land powerful blows on the machine with their tremendous steam-augmented fists. Volk's armored upper torso could have handled those impacts, but simultaneously the undead hammered on the joints of its legs, as if imbued with some inherent ability to sense weakness. The pistons and joints connecting its right leg snapped beneath the onslaught, and it toppled to the side, letting loose steam like the groan of a wounded animal.

Strakhov and his men killed the other thralls, but this was only a temporary reprieve; more Cryxians were on the way. He looked to where the bridge had collapsed and gritted his teeth. The gap was definitely too wide to cross. He yelled to the engineer as he waved in that direction, "Any ideas?"

The Cygnaran looked around with frantic attention. He pointed to one of the larger sections of piping attached to the macabre machine. "That would reach, if we could tear it loose! It should be weak enough at the joins for your Kodiak."

Looking at the toppled machine, the kommander knew it would not be able to manage any such feat. It was almost wrecked, and the next wave of Cryxians would finish it. The best it could do was occupy the monstrosities and perhaps buy them a little more time. But then Strakhov had an idea. He reached out with his will toward his other 'jacks just at the periphery of his mental awareness. The Decimator would never make it, but perhaps Mishka, his other Kodiak, could reach him running under full boiler pressure. Kodiaks were particularly smart, with augmented cortexes, and there was a chance it could navigate the tunnels on its own. He sent it the most urgent of mental commands, trying to remember every twist and turn of that passage to relate to the machine.

More thralls toppled beneath Volk's fists, but then a loping Slayer came into view. It moved up with startling speed to seize the crippled Kodiak in its clawed grip. Strakhov and the others fired on it, but the warcaster felt a sinking apprehension as he saw the machine lift his warjack's bulk from the ground and raise it overhead. "Get to cover!" he yelled to his men closer to the machine, but they had no time to react. Eleven tons of Kodiak were hurled across the intervening yards to smash Kapitan Tukinosk and several others, sliding gruesomely through them to impact the larger macabre machinery. They died instantly, crushed under Khadoran iron.

Enraged, the last kommando rushed the machine with the bladed spike of his carbine, but it was a futile gesture that ended with him taken down by another sweep of the creature's claws. Strakhov sent several shells into the midsection of the helljack. "Damn you! Damn you all!" Not taking the time to reload, Strakhov sent his rage at Tukinosk's death forward as a massive surge of arcane power, exploding the stone beneath the Slayer in a sudden eruption of rending energies. The Slayer fell back as its metal spine cracked. At the same time, the ground around them began to shake, and several stones fell loose from the ceiling. One deflected off Strakhov's power field which otherwise might have broken his shoulder.

The engineer yelled in a panic, "Stop! You'll bring this whole place down!"

Strakhov paid him little mind, except to think that there were worse ways to go. The way the Slayer had acted made him think there might be a Cryxian warcaster nearby, though he could not yet see one. The arc node–equipped bonejacks firing up their engines at the other end of the cavern made the proposition terrible indeed. The necrotechs were now advancing toward him, with other thralls rushing ahead.

Strakhov felt a different tremor underfoot and turned to see Mishka race out of the cave opening, almost sliding over the treacherous edge before it checked its speed and moved to the far side of the bridge.

The engineer pointed and yelled, "The platform! It didn't break free. The 'jack could leverage it. It weighs enough to counterbalance."

Strakhov looked down to where the bridge surface dangled from its last struts. There was no time to spare as he instructed the Kodiak to seize hold of the metal platform and swing it awkwardly out across the divide. Mishka had to maintain its grip on the far end, but the flat surface reached just far enough to serve as an awkward ramp. "Go, go!" he yelled, pushing the engineer forward.

The Cygnaran needed no further prompting to race across. Strakhov had barely reloaded his gun before several thralls were upon him. He slashed his sword through them with economical precision as he backed away and then raised the gun to fire on the next few. Three more rushed the ramp even as he reached the other side and leapt down, but Mishka immediately released its hold on the bridge deck to send them tumbling with it into the depths.

As he ran, Strakhov vowed that he would see Tukinosk and all his men received proper honors and that their families would learn of their courage. He caught up to the engineer at the top of the nearest stairs and sent Mishka ahead of them as they rushed into the next passage.

After a dozen yards, Strakhov turned back to face the cavern opening. The warcaster summoned his will and pointed toward the nearest support beams. Runes formed around his hand as the arcane manifestation coalesced, and the earth tore itself apart in an explosion of raw power. The beams splintered and shattered, and the ceiling gave way. The engineer backed away in alarm as the earth shook, but the collapse stopped short of them.

The kommandos waiting on the surface greeted him with relief, although the reunion became grim as they realized only Strakhov and the engineer had returned. Strakhov felt thankful to have both these men and his two remaining warjacks alongside him as he heard the rumble and distant crackling of what could only be bombards and gunfire. It was now the dead of night and pitch black within the Thornwood, but they hastened toward the rest of the army. The noise of fighting seemed to be coming from roughly where Karchev's forces had positioned themselves to fire on the Cygnaran battlements.

On stepping past the edge of the trees, Strakhov stood for a moment and stared, trying to get a sense of the situation. He had presumed Cygnar had launched a nighttime counterattack, but their walls looked peaceful in the moonlight. Instead the nearby forest was crawling with Cryxians. It looked as though Karchev had ordered his men to fall back farther from the Cygnaran walls, and they were engaged in a fighting retreat. The distinct shriek of Harrower cannon fire sounded above the din. As Strakhov's men hurried forward, they saw a sea of mechanithralls and bile thralls, joined by countless helljacks and bonejacks. The situation in the Thornwood had changed in the blink of an eye.

Well aware of their diminished numbers, his kommandos fired only sporadically on the horrors visible in the trees as they moved to rejoin the rest of the army. They singled out elements on the fringes whose elimination would not draw attention. The engineer accompanied them compliantly, apparently deciding Khadorans were not such bad company after all.

At last they neared the position of the other soldiers, where men were rushing in various directions and warjacks were alternating between firing and bringing melee weapons to bear against the Cryx. A line of spectral warriors cloaked in darkness closed on Karchev's flank but were intercepted by a hulking Devastator. It opened its sealed armor with a heavy clank followed by roaring explosions as multiple grenades launched from its interior to obliterate everything in its proximity.

With the engineer trailing him, Strakhov finally caught up with Karchev and shouted over the rumbling of his warjack engine, "You are pulling back?" Despite all that had happened—or perhaps because of it—seeing the implacable Khadoran legend in a retreat was surprising. If the circumstances were not so grim, it would almost be amusing.

Karchev scowled down at him from the center of his rig. "We are repositioning. The woods are overrun with Cryxians. We will renew our efforts against Point Bourne once our lines are in order."

Strakhov nodded. "Yes, seeking higher ground is an excellent idea. I have some interesting news—and a new friend." He slapped the engineer on the shoulder, perhaps a bit harder than was necessary. The man winced and looked uneasy at Strakhov's smile.

As he set his men to assist Karchev's forces, Strakhov wondered how long it would be before they might have the opportunity to worry about the walls of Point Bourne.

JUDGING THE BLOOD OF KINGS

THE CITY OF LERYN IN NORTHEASTERN LLAEL, OCCUPIED BY THE PROTECTORATE OF MENOTH

Troubled dreams of battle's turmoil faded to an awakening of pain and confusion. Vladimir Tzepesci struggled to consciousness as if trying to surface from a deep pond before drowning. An ache in his head seemed linked to the pulse of his heart. There was a sharper pain in his wrists, and he became aware of something biting into the flesh there. He was hanging suspended from them, his head slumped on his chest. He discovered the floor was beneath his feet and he could take pressure from the shackles binding his arms to the wall by forcing himself to stand. This was only a small measure of relief.

When at last he managed to open his crusted eyes to take in his dim surroundings, it was no surprise to see he was bound in a poorly lit cell. Orange light flickered through the metal bars of the door from torches nearby. Still, as far as dungeons went it was not as bad as it could have been. It was reasonably dry, for one, and the chill was bearable. The air smelled more of rushes and incense than of human filth.

Instinctively he attempted to draw on his sorcery, to muster his power to reinvigorate himself. The shackles on his wrists seemed to light on fire. He gasped in pain, but as he stopped trying to draw on his magic both the pain and the heat faded. The sharp smell of burned hair drifted from his arms. A man's low voice spoke to his right. "The Bonds of Noresto. Do not call on unholy powers and you will not suffer."

Looking in that direction, Vladimir could see the gleam of metal, although it took a few moments in the poor light to recognize the armor of a Knight Exemplar. His gauntleted hands rested on the hilt of a sword set point-first into the stones at his feet. A helmet covered his face, but Vladimir could see the gleam of his eyes. Looking to his left he saw another knight flanking him on the other side, similarly armored.

Despite his thirst, Vladimir's throat did not crack as he spoke to the knight who had addressed him. "What is your name?"

"Orlov." His voice was cold. "Be silent and save your strength. You will need it."

Vladimir's eyes narrowed, and he could not help smiling. They had both spoken Khadoran. It was not surprising they would choose someone fluent in the language to watch him, but it was the man's accent Vladimir noticed. "You are Umbrean, yes?"

The helmet had been facing him, but now it turned away to stare straight ahead. "I am Exemplar." He would say no more.



He could find comfort in neither consciousness nor unconsciousness. Several times he sought his arcane power and was burned by the sigils inscribed into his shackles. Listening to the few brief interactions of his guards, he deduced that the Umbrean exemplar had been a senior member of a local temple in Llael who had recently joined their crusade, whereas the other exemplar, Skarholt, was from Sul.

Approaching steps sounded on the stones outside the cell, and the torchlight brightened. The cell door was swung open by a thick-bodied jailor, who bowed obsequiously to the new arrival and hastily moved out of the way. At the center of a pair of torch-bearing knights was a tall man in ornamented Menite warcaster armor wearing the gleaming mask of a scrutator. The distinct rounded armor of this man's upper torso and the curved ornamented smokestacks rising above his shoulders created an unforgettable profile, not unlike that of a pipe organ such as might be seen in a grand cathedral. This was the man responsible for Vladimir's capture and who had been the author of other unpleasantness in years past.

"Vice Scrutator Vindictus." Vladimir inclined his head slightly. "I had hoped for an audience with your hierarch, and under better circumstances. Your diplomatic procedures leave much to be desired." The hint of amusement in his tone reflected the profound sense of irony he felt as he considered his predicament.

The mask worn by a scrutator existed to remove him from humanity, and it had this effect as Vladimir stared at the cold guise of his captor. The man might have been a statue, so little did his posture or his unblinking eyes reveal his inner thoughts or emotions. Hanging from a loop at his belt was a brutal flail, and in his right hand was an ornate sword bearing the Menofix. He was the portrait of scrutator judges from ancient times, those who for countless centuries had passed sentences of torment or death. Contrasting him, Vladimir stood bereft of armor, half-clothed, and chained to the wall by bindings that made him truly helpless. Despite this, Vladimir had faced worse horrors, even confronting death itself. He was not cowed.

When the scrutator spoke after a pause, his voice was smooth and refined. He spoke Khadoran with comfortable fluency. "Seeking solace through levity is common at this stage. Some believe this fortifies the will, but it is the first crack in a man's resolve. The last gasp as hope begins to fade, soon replaced by despair."

"An enlightening dissertation," Vladimir replied dryly. He commanded, "I would speak to your master. Summon him. There is a matter of importance we should discuss."

The vice scrutator stepped closer. "Why would we allow you to speak to His Holiness? You, who sought to strike him down on the field of battle outside the very walls of this city? No. It is your good fortune that I have reason to keep you alive, or you would already be experiencing torments in Urcaen. I suggest you make good use of this time to unburden your soul. I cannot promise mercy, but you are a son of the Creator, however wayward. Perhaps, through fire and lash, we can expunge some small portion of the taint afflicting your bloodline."

Despite a resolve to stay calm, Vladimir felt rising anger. "I did not think Menite priests so lacking in honor as to lay an ambush after agreeing to parley. The Law of Envoy is as old as your Covenant."

"That law applies only to those who speak for a sovereign power. Do you claim to bring the word of your empress? I think not. She would not choose you as her emissary."

"I am a great prince of the Khadoran Empire, heir by blood of Umbrey." He spoke between gritted teeth.

Vindictus' voice became more strident and accusatory. "You are guilty of crimes beyond count. Death alone would be insufficient for the scope of your blasphemies. You dealt mortal injury to Menoth's chosen messenger. Were it not for miraculous intervention by Hierarch Voyle, she would lie dead by your hand. You have plotted to murder our hierarch, blessed be his name. Either of these crimes is worthy of excruciation and death, yet your sins do not end there. Your family has sworn blood oaths with dark powers. You have embraced sorcery and entered communion with the Wurm's proxy on Caen, the Crone of Crows."

This accusation washed over Vladimir with little impact. Similar grievances had been applied to his family for centuries, and he ignored them. "I am myself sovereign, and thus you cannot judge me. In holding me here, you violate the Law of Envoy, which is part of the True Law of Menoth. Who is the blasphemer?"

Skarholt moved with surprising speed, and there was nothing Vladimir could do to avoid the mailed fist striking his gut from the side, below his ribs. He curled forward with a grunt of pain and the same mailed fist seized his hair and pulled his head upright. Vladimir was distracted from his discomfort by a noise elsewhere in the dungeon complex, a strangely familiar sound. It was a howl created by venting steam. He felt a shudder through the walls.

Vladimir realized he could sense Drago, his Berserker. The warjack was slightly too far away for him to control it or to peer through its eyes, but Vladimir could sense it. He gained a fleeting impression that the machine was chained and caged, like he was. Drago felt its warcaster's pain and lashed out, but its bonds held.

Vindictus turned slightly at the sound. His voice sounded smug. "Yes, we have brought your familiar as well. It is interesting to me, your strange connection to this machine. It seems clear you have bound it by unholy rite or pacts. I intend to study this blasphemous bond, and then you will be executed. The cult you have inspired will not outlast you."

That the Menite would go to such lengths as to capture his warjack rather than destroy it just to indulge some curiosity seemed proof of madness. Vladimir spoke with some difficulty due to the pain in his ribs. "Drago is a machine, like the ones that serve you. Nothing more." He had been assuming Vindictus would eventually turn him over to Hierarch Severius, after some suitable term of humiliation for his own amusement. The scrutator's last words made him reconsider this likelihood.

All thought vanished as the scrutator began to ply his twisted arts, proving his preference for the searing edge of a heated blade. Vladimir sought to retreat from the pain into his own mind. He had experienced agonies enough to develop fortitude against them. Clenching his teeth, he hoped to frustrate his inquisitor with a lack of response. During the worst of these ministrations, Drago struggled against its bonds with shackled rage. The scrutator's fascination was clear, and several times an initiate entered to whisper reports of the warjack and its reactions. Eventually Vindictus seemed satisfied and left him for a time.

Vladimir's breathing took a while to steady as he surveyed the seared lacerations across his chest and stomach. Despite the fresh pain, he licked his dry lips and spoke to the exemplar to the right. "Exemplar Orlov, were you raised in Laedry?" The man did not answer, staring straight ahead. Vlad continued, "Your parents must have told you who I am. I have yet to meet an Umbrean lacking pride in his heritage."

"Be silent!" Skarholt commanded.

Vladimir paused only a moment. "Know this, Orlov. What your master says of me is untrue. I respect the Creator. I answer the call of destiny. I have vowed to unite Umbrey. Your parents must have taught you what—"

His world reeled again with an explosion of white light and pain as Skarholt's mailed fist struck his face. Vladimir could feel the blood from a gash on his cheek drip down to his chin and then onto his chest. He said no more, but looking to his right through the hair that had fallen across his face, he could see Orlov had stepped forward, looking toward his brother exemplar. The Umbrean quickly stepped back and resumed his stance, but Vladimir took note of the reaction and smiled to himself.



As promised, Vindictus returned again, with his blade and his sermonizing. "I have studied you." Vindictus paced as he spoke. "Your family has long been an interest of mine."

"Should I be flattered?" Vladimir asked. As he had tried numerous times before, he reached out with his mind toward Drago. The shackles on his wrists began to heat up again, but not as painfully. They were more sensitive to sorcery than his attempts to connect to a warjack.

Vindictus continued speaking, his voice adopting a pedantic tone. "In this era, some of my peers have forgotten the Creator's true enemy. Our struggle with the Morrowans over the souls of the faithful has distracted them from more insidious threats. Your family has allied itself to a greater darkness. Perhaps they sought power to protect their kinsmen, their legacy. Perhaps they did not comprehend they had violated Menoth's prohibitions. Once the Tzepesci line included faithful defenders of the Creator. When did they bind their destiny to the Wurm? It is not too late to sever that tie. It can begin with you."

"Rumors and folk tales," Vladimir sneered. "I would expect better from one of your stature. But I know I am powerless to prevent you from punishing me for lies attributed to my family."

"Yes. You are powerless." The scrutator raised the sword he bore in his right hand, and golden runes of power appeared in a circle around its hilt. The metal of its edges glowed with heat. Slowly and deliberately, Vindictus extended the blade and let its edge come to rest against Vladimir's neck above his right shoulder. There was a sizzling of flesh and an explosion of pain. Vladimir bit through a portion of his inner cheek, tasting coppery blood. Once again there was

an echoed reaction from elsewhere in the dungeon, and the walls shuddered as Drago expressed disapproval.

Vindictus looked in that direction again before speaking. "This warjack is a relic that betrays the taint of your blood. Its history is fascinating. It has walked alongside your kinsmen for one hundred and eighty years. I have read that the soul of one of your ancestors is enslaved inside its metal shell. Perhaps some other agency is at work. It strains against its chains like a living thing. Your ancestors kept it locked away between battles and its boiler can ignite of its own accord."

Vladimir's voice was low but intense. "You slander my ancestors. It was Drago Tzepesci who slew Ivan Vladykin the Frenzied, the necromancer who sought to rule Khador. It is the armies of the dead that should concern you. Or does Menoth approve of doing nothing while dragons plot and corpses rise—"

This time the searing blade was applied beneath his left armpit, cutting his words off as Vladimir almost bit through his tongue. The world disappeared in a haze of agony that faded slowly. He came back to consciousness soon enough and saw that the vice scrutator was listening to the words of a winded messenger. Their words were too low to be heard, until Vindictus said, "Very well. Tell His Holiness I will rejoin him at once." The messenger bowed and rushed away.

The vice scrutator turned back to him briefly. "I will grant you a short reprieve to rest and consider your sins. We will resume shortly. If you satisfy me, perhaps I will release you to the comfort of death. Meditate while I am gone on the necessity of penitence. Consider the doom awaiting you in Urcaen should you remain defiant."

When the echo of his retreating steps had faded, Vladimir spoke again to Orlov. "Your master violates your laws. I wished only to speak to your hierarch; I swear it on my blood. Vindictus holds me for his own petty satisfaction. Hierarch Severius would not approve—"

This time Vladimir did not even feel the strike but was sent immediately to black oblivion by Skarholt's wrathful blow. In his mind as the world faded around him, a machine roared and sought to reach him.

Vladimir again fought his way back up to consciousness. He felt a familiar surging in his blood. It was the gift of his ancestors, the strength to grow stronger even in the face of adversity. This power had been slumbering through the subtle pain of torture, but it reacted to the more decisive blows of the exemplar. He could feel strength in his limbs, but it was insufficient to let him pull free.

The great prince opened his eyes. He remembered Vindictus' last words and knew time was short. The vice scrutator would execute him, perhaps after indulging in another round of torture. Clearly the man hoped Vladimir would cry out or admit to whatever vile deeds the priest imagined him guilty of committing. Failing that, death would suffice.

Focusing on Drago, Vladimir gained a better impression of its confinement. For a moment he could see through the warjack's eyes. Looking up to where its chains were bolted into the wall, he saw noticeable cracks in the stone. With focused leverage, perhaps it could break free. Unfortunately he still could not apply his will toward that end.

He knew he must trust in fate, as Zevanna Agha had frequently advised him. It was not his fate to die here. There was work to be done—for Khador and for Umbrey. He must act before his strength was gone.

"You, Skarholt." His voice rasped, as it had been some time since his last draught of water. "What impairment do you suffer, to be forced to stand idle here while your brothers commit to their crusade? Is it that Vindictus doubts your piety and prefers you locked in a cell with me?"

The knight left his position to stand in front of Vladimir, glowering. "You do not learn, heretic." He struck another blow to Vladimir's face. The warcaster spit blood onto the floor by his armored foot.

Orlov interjected to his brother, "He seeks to taunt you. Just ignore him." There was an edge to his voice that Vladimir took as an encouraging sign.

Skarholt turned to the other exemplar and barked, "Exemplar Orlov, you stand relieved!" Orlov seemed to hesitate.

"That's an order! I will handle things here." It was clear Skarholt was the senior of the two, and the Umbrean knight turned away, his posture tense. He called to the turnkey, who scrambled to obey and let him loose. The cell door clanged shut again behind him.

Skarholt had continued to stare with murderous focus on the prisoner, his fists clenched. Now he slapped Vladimir's face with his metal palm, prompting spots to spin in front of the great prince's eyes. "Perhaps you would like to apologize for your words, heretic, while you can still speak."

Vladimir stared at him for a moment before letting loose a bemused chuckle. "Perhaps you are an idiot as well as faithless. I had greater respect for your order before meeting you, Skarholt. Do you even know the True Law, or is that no longer required for—"

The fist smashed down again, nearly breaking Vladimir's jaw, but once more his blood felt afire. It was as if all the fatigue and aches of tortured flesh were suddenly erased. He felt alert, vigorous, almost giddy. Still the shackles on his wrists bound him, and he could feel their heat rising. "Yes, violence is the best resort for the lack wit. I want to hear you recite the Litany of Righteous Vengeance in ancient Caspian. Shall I start the passage, to refresh your memory?"

"Blasphemer!" What little remained of Skarholt's composure had broken. The blows began to rain down, and Vladimir almost laughed as he felt ribs shatter beneath the mailed gloves. He sensed movement behind Skarholt and looked up to see Orlov watching his beating from the passage, one hand clenched on the nearest bar. The exemplar met Vladimir's eyes briefly through the slits in his helmet and then looked away, toward the hooks on the wall where several rings of keys dangled. He seized one of these and stalked out of Vladimir's sight down the hallway. Vladimir had thought perhaps he would intervene but decided he had misread the man.

As another punishing blow came down, Vladimir realized he no longer felt any pain. His heart beat in his ears like a drum and his veins were filled with liquid fire. It was the might of kings, his birthright, yet the shackles still held and burned him. His body could not endure much more. He had hoped his strength would let him break these chains, but the Menite blessings upon them were powerful indeed. He began to conclude that this desperate plan had been ill-conceived.

A sudden strange noise penetrated both the delirious haze of the savage beating and the force in his blood that was screaming at him to lift his sword and fight for triumph. It was again the noise of venting steam, but the timbre was different, and the walls shook from some great force. Heavy thuds of steel on stone were followed by alarmed screams. Even Skarholt was not oblivious to it. He stepped back from Vladimir with bloodied gauntlets and looked out toward the hall. He yelled to the turnkey, "What's happening out there?"

The timid older man shook his head and replied in a quavering voice, "That thing's gone insane!"

Now Vladimir could feel Drago rushing down the halls toward him, knocking knights aside as its machine mind surged with rage. The dungeon echoed with a sound like a railroad engine at full steam as Drago tore through and came into sight, pulling up just before Vladimir's cell door with such force that its sliding stop tore apart the stones beneath its feet. Vladimir could not help laughing as Skarholt took a step back in alarm.

The exemplar drew his relic blade even as Drago took the prison cell door in both hands and ripped it off its hinges. The warjack hurled the twisted and ruined bars aside. Skarholt rushed the machine and landed a single strike deep into its shoulder armor before Drago reached forward and seized him. As its metal hand squeezed, Vladimir heard bones pop like kindling, and then the 'jack dropped the wreckage that had been the man's body and armor to the stones.

Exemplar Orlov came into view behind Drago. The machine turned on him, but Vladimir held it in check. The exemplar seemed dazed as he walked past Skarholt's corpse. With one hand he pulled off his helmet and let it fall heavily to the floor. His face was stricken with grief and guilt. Drago's engine rumbled and it shifted as if to lunge, but Vladimir willed it instead to free him and ignore the other man.

THE DUNGEON ECHOED WITH A SOUND LIKE A RAILROAD ENGINE AT FULL STEAM AS DRAGO TORE THROUGH AND CAME INTO SIGHT.

Drago pushed its way through the cell's entrance, widening it significantly. The room filled with smoke as it seized the damnable chains restraining his power and snapped them loose. Vladimir staggered and coughed, then steadied himself on one of Drago's forearm plates. He then bade the machine move aside. Orlov slumped against a near wall. Vladimir knew anything he could say would only increase the knight's suffering. All he could do was lower his head in silent thanks as he escaped captivity.

Vladimir still felt vigorous from the fire of his ancestors, but he knew it would not last, not unless he entered battle. A pain had begun in his chest, and it would get worse. From deeper in the dungeon they could hear shouting and the sounds of people gathering.

He was not sure how he would break free of the lower dungeon chambers while evading the entire Northern Crusade above him in Leryn, but he was confident he would find a way. He had a notion regarding the sewers and a decrepit-looking cistern he had observed when he had been dragged into the depths. With Drago to assist him, anything was possible.

MILITARY OF THE KHADORAN EMPIRE
LOYALTY, STRENGTH, AND CONQUEST

The Khadoran Empire is the inheritor of an ancient legacy of proud warriors. Its people are rugged and hardy men and women united and inspired by the ambition of their empress. The enthusiasm for battle and the esteem afforded soldiers, combined with mandatory service, has enabled Khador to mobilize a substantial portion of its population. With ongoing efforts to modernize the military and optimize its industrial capacity, Khador stands as one of the great powers of western Immoren. Victories in the last several years, including the invasion and occupation of Llael and pushing Cygnaran defenders from the Thornwood, has increased the fear and respect the Khadoran Army inspires across western Immoren.

The Khadoran military has recently made tremendous strides in modernization through the development of longer-ranged artillery and more advanced warjacks as well as leveraging the military genius and organizational skills of singular leaders like Supreme Kommandant Gurvaldt Irusk. The invasion of Llael proved to be a boon for the army by bringing many vital supplies and technological developments to Khador. Seizing and plundering the holdings of the Order of the Golden Crucible brought extensive alchemical stockpiles such as vital blasting powder and other useful weapons into the hands of the Motherland's armies. The entirety of Llaelese industry is at their disposal, focused primarily in Laedry and the former capital, Merywyn. By seizing such assets, Khador has also deprived her longtime enemy, Cygnar, of their oldest ally and inspired in many Khadorans the belief that nothing can stop their road to further conquest. Since that time advances have unfortunately been more difficult and slow, but the fighting spirit of the soldiers remains undiminished.

MANY PRINCES, ONE THRONE

The modernization of the Khadoran military required several large ideological shifts. While this is true to a degree for all the modern military powers of the Iron Kingdoms, Khador has arguably surmounted the largest internal barriers and overcome the longest and most entrenched traditions. Cygnar, Ord, Llael, and later the Protectorate of Menoth had the luxury of inventing themselves as new nations, but Khadoran laws and military doctrine were deeply rooted in the legacy of the ancient Khardic Empire. In recent years Empress Ayn Vanar has brought singular unity to Khador, but this has not always been the case. Indeed, the almost universal support and acclaim Empress Vanar has won is a notable departure from all but her most recent predecessors. Until the time of the Vanars, Khador's military was largely stagnant, as the kingdom's rulers lacked the vision and the will to adapt to the changing needs of warfare.

Before the Orgoth, in the centuries when the old Khardic Empire united the northern tribes by sword, lance, and fire, these harsh lands were divided into a variety of territories

THE KHADORAN NAVY

There is no question that the Khadoran Navy lacks the same esteem in the minds of both the nation's citizens and its rulers as enjoyed by the Khadoran Army. Throughout its history, the navy has been less prominent than the army, received sparse praise, and generally been poorly funded. Nonetheless, the High Kommand is well aware of the strength at sea possessed by its southern rival, Cygnar, and by the sometimes pernicious "neutral" nation of Ord. Cryx has also periodically threatened Khadoran shores, although until recently the Nightmare Empire seemed to be content to raid closer to their own waters.

Khador boasts several significant port cities—most notably Port Vladovar, Skrovenberg, and Ohk—and must preserve its waters and shipping trade. This is the role of its navy, whose single fleet has recently received a fresh infusion of support and funding. While the army remains the clear priority of the empress and her kayazy supporters, the navy of the Motherland is stronger today than at any point in its history.

Port Vladovar is the home port of the Khadoran Navy, and the nation's pride was threatened in 606 AR when this vital city was subjected to an unexpected attack by Cryxian vessels, including elements of the Black Fleet and ghostly revenant-filled ships such as the notorious *Atramentous*. Although the Cryxian forces were eventually driven off, they inflicted severe damage on both the city and the fleet. Fleet Admiral Pahvel Nahimov took his own life shortly after this disgrace and was replaced by Jasek Donekev, the current head of Khador's navy.

Donekev has managed to garner considerable support for the navy in the wake of the Port Vladovar disaster, including the funds to build a number of mighty ironhulls. The navy hopes eventually to employ their maritime might for a coastal invasion against southern rivals but is presently focused on defensive maneuvers to maintain the safety and integrity of their port cities and shipping lanes. Under Donekev's bold leadership the fleet has increasingly tested the resolve of both Ordic and Cygnaran fleets by pushing further into southern waters. This has led to occasional small-scale engagements, which Donekev considers essential in preparing his officers for the more extensive battles he is certain will arise in the months ahead.

KHADORAN MILITARY STRUCTURE

EMPRESS AYN VANAR

KHADORAN HIGH KOMMAND
3 ARMIES, 1 FLEET
SOLDIERS: 601,000
PREMIER MHIKOL HORSCZE

1st Army Supreme Kommandant Ivon Krasnovich, Count	2nd Army Supreme Kommandant Alex Gorchakoff, Count	3rd Army Supreme Kommandant Menshik Sergevich, Count

Certain great princes serve directly as military officers.

GREAT PRINCES (18)
Rulers of the Volozkya

KHADORAN SECURITY
Great Vizier Simonyev Blaustavya

VASSALS AND LIEGEMEN

SUPREME KOMMANDANT GURVALDT IRUSK

1ST ARMY "THE ANVIL"
Llael Occupation, Northern Thornwood
Soldiers: 162,000
Kommandant Mikhail Ivdanovich, Count

2ND ARMY "THE HAMMER"
Offensives v. Cygnar, Southern Thornwood
Soldiers: 288,000
Kommandant Boris Makarov, Count

3RD ARMY "THE FORGE"
Border Legions, Training Reserves
Soldiers: 151,000
Kommandant Karl Szvette, Great Prince of Dorognia

KHADORAN FLEET
Port Vladovar
Fleet Admiral Jasek Donekev, Viscount

GREYLORDS PRIKAZ
Koldun Fedor Rachlavsky

The Prikaz is a secret chancellery for investigating domestic threats.

GREYLORDS COVENANT
High Obavnik Arbiter Vasily Dmitirilosk

1ST DIVISION
Northern Thornwood
Soldiers: 92,000
3 Kommands
Kommandant Yegoruv Ilyevich, Viscount

2ND DIVISION
Llaelese Occupation
Soldiers: 70,000
3 Kommands
Kommandant Voroshilov Klimovich, Viscount

3RD DIVISION
Southwestern Thornwood Patrols
Soldiers: 135,000
Kommandant Jhrom Holcheski, Great Prince of Rustoknia

4TH DIVISION
Southeastern Thornwood Patrols
Soldiers: 153,000
3 Kommands
Kommandant Servei Marvor, Great Prince of Borstoi

5TH DIVISION
1st-5th Border Legions
Soldiers: 62,000
3 Kommands
Kommandant Konstan Zhukovy, Count

6TH DIVISION
Training and Reserves
Soldiers: 89,000
3 Kommands
Kommandant Grezko Antonovich, Viscount

6TH KOMMAND
Dragon's Tongue Assault Legions
Soldiers: 48,000
3 Legions

8TH KOMMAND
Supply and Fortress Preservation
Soldiers: 45,000
3 legions

9TH KOMMAND
Dragon's Tongue Assault Legions
Soldiers: 42,000

Each kommand is lead by a kommander.

21ST STANDING LEGION
Infantry
Soldiers: 15,500
6 Battalions

23RD STANDING LEGION
Infantry
Soldiers: 14,500
6 Battalions

4TH ASSAULT LEGION
Heavy Armor
Soldiers: 12,000

Each legion is led by a lieutenant kommander or a kovnik.

22ND ASSAULT BATTALION
Iron Fangs
Soldiers: 2,700
6 Kompanies

24TH ASSAULT BATTALION
Iron Fangs
Soldiers: 2,600
6 Kompanies

27TH ASSAULT BATTALION
Iron Fangs, Man-O-War
Soldiers: 1,900
6 Kompanies

28TH ASSAULT BATTALION
Assault Kommandos, Man-O-War, Winter Guard
Soldiers: 3,000
7 Kompanies

29TH ASSAULT BATTALION
Iron Fangs, Man-O-War, Uhlans
Soldiers: 1,800

Each battalion is led by a kovnik.
Each kompany is led by a kapitan.
Each force is led by a lieutenant.

83RD IRON FANG PIKEMAN KOMPANY
Soldiers: 520
6 Forces

90TH IRON FANG PIKEMAN KOMPANY
Soldiers: 500
6 Forces

31ST MAN-O-WAR KOMPANY
Soldiers: 210
6 Forces

33RD MAN-O-WAR KOMPANY
Soldiers: 210
6 Forces

12TH IRON FANG UHLAN KOMPANY
Cavalry: 180

15TH IRON FANG UHLAN KOMPANY
Cavalry: 180
6 Forces

1ST FORCE
Iron Fang Uhlans, Man-O-War Drakhuns
Soldiers: 31
6 Units

2ND FORCE
Iron Fang Uhlans
Soldiers: 30
6 Units

3RD FORCE
Iron Fang Uhlans
Soldiers: 30
6 Units

4TH FORCE
Iron Fang Uhlans
Soldiers: 30
6 Units

6TH FORCE
Iron Fang Uhlans
Soldiers: 30
6 Units

7TH FORCE
Iron Fang Uhlans
Soldiers: 29
6 Units

called *volozkya*. The volozkya once counted themselves as sovereign kingdoms in their own right and only reluctantly bowed to their Khardic conquerors. Even after the powerful lords governing these regions surrendered their authority, they clung to claims of special status and royal blood. Once these rulers were called kings, but by the final years of the Khardic Empire they were referred to as "great princès," a title chosen to demonstrate their vassalage to the Khardic emperor or empress. This tradition was renewed after the Corvis Treaties when Khador was established as a new nation, with the great princes restored as the highest nobility but subordinate to the sovereign.

After long centuries of Orgoth occupation, Khador's ruling elite who rose to prominence alongside other Immorese leaders of the rebellion had to confront a legacy of cultural disruption and uncertainty. Commoner and noble alike were eager to embrace any symbols hearkening to the past glories of the Khardic Empire. Unfortunately, records detailing the governance of the old empire were incomplete and in disarray. One area that remained muddied was the exact process by which the lineage of Khardic sovereigns had been verified and approved in the empire. Old laws stated that the Khardic Empire's sovereign must descend from the ruling families of the volozkya, but otherwise these stipulations were vague.

It was uncertain whether all the "royal" bloodlines were equally valid or if more stringent requirements existed to limit the lineage to fewer—or even only one—of these esteemed families. There were those who insisted only original Khardic volozkya qualified, not later-subjugated tribes like the Umbreans, the Skirov, and the Kossites. Also unknown was whether the great princes as a collective had any legal authority to endorse the coronation. This uncertainty prompted innumerable feuds and decades of strife, starting almost immediately after the founding of Khador.

The Umbrean Great Prince Vladin Tzepesci seized power and became the ruling monarch of Khador in 209 AR, just seven years after the Corvis Treaties. Scholars in his employ claimed the Tzepesci bloodline to be the strongest and most closely connected to the last Khardic emperors, who were described as "horselords born of the soil of the eastern plains," and who preferred to rule from the eastern capital of Old Korska rather than from Korsk in the west. Others disputed this interpretation of historical texts and emphasized an earlier era when the Tzepescis had divided Umbrey from the empire, sparking the Horselord Wars. The opposition was unable to organize in sufficient strength to stand against Vladin, and the most vocal dissenting nobles were assassinated. The Tzepesci line clung tenaciously to rulership for the next sixty years, passing the crown through three inheritors, but their rule remained contested. The decades under the ruler of Vladin, Geza, and Levash Tzepesci were torn by internal strife.

The greatest of these rulers was Levash Tzepesci, who held Khador in his iron fist for over thirty years, from 236–272 AR. Called "Levash The Tormentor," he hoped to unite Khador by instigating war with the southern nations. His plan was to crush the lesser armies of his neighbors quickly by employing the unyielding power of the newly built Khadoran colossals. Although his wars against Llael and Ord were initially successful, his plans for expansion faltered after Cygnar joined the war, bringing their own colossals. The Colossal Wars from 250–257 AR were ultimately an expensive failure for Khador, which was left both humiliated and bankrupt in its defeat. The harsh terms at the end of this war forced Levash to agree to dismantle not only his towering colossals but also the factories in Korsk that had produced them. This was a blow to Khadoran pride and military strength and left the nation at a disadvantage for several decades. Khador would not return to Tzepesci rule.

Levash had a reputation for tyranny and mistreated his highest vassals as well as the wider populace. His wars required punishing taxes and forced conscription. Whatever his actual failings, they were continually exaggerated by competing great princes who hoped to destroy the Tzepesci dynasty and seat new blood on the throne. By the end of Levash's long reign, his family was universally despised. Levash evaded many assassination attempts to die of old age, a fact his enemies insisted was evidence of sinister pacts. From this point forward the Tzepesci bloodline was linked to rumors of sorcery, dark cults, and unseemly conspiracies, although its members remained popular romantic figures to the Umbreans in the east.

Dmitry Dopatevik ousted the Tzepesci heirs in 272 AR and was the first to assume the title of king. King Dmitry took measures to institute more formal laws to define the monarchy in Khador as distinct from, if connected to, the sovereigns of the old empire. Despite these efforts, after his reign the families of the great princes—particularly those in the populous middle and southern territories—continued to squabble over succession claims. The names of the families controlling the volozkya changed over time, but each insisted they could trace their roots back to one or another of the old Khardic emperors. It was not until centuries later, after the horrors unleashed by necromancer-king Ivan Vladykin the Frenzied, that a stable dynasty took control of the Khadoran throne. After leading the forces that defeated the necromancer in a coup in 459 AR, Mikhail Vanar reluctantly accepted the crown. Khador soon began to see significant advances and reforms, a process that culminated in the ascension of Queen Ayn Vanar to the throne.

While the effectiveness of each Vanar ruler after Mikhail is debatable, the common perception across Khador is that the Vanars ushered in an era of success and prosperity to their nation. The Vanar mystique is so pervasive and powerful that the difficulties faced by the first members of this dynasty have been largely forgotten. Indeed, the one interruption of the Vanar dynasty is considered proof of their divine right to rule. It was during the reign of the Menite King Ruslan Vygor from 499–511 AR that Cygnar defeated Khador during the First Thornwood War. This setback reinforced to many Khadorans the ill-omened passing of the crown to a non-Vanar sovereign.

The most famous and widely adored of the Vanars was King Ivad, who became known as the "People's King" when he abolished the serfdom in 546 AR. It was he who popularized the notion that Khador would rise again as a great empire, inheriting the strength and honor of the old. His granddaughter Ayn Vanar would be the one to eventually see this dream become a reality, building on the efforts set forth by her grandfather and later by Regent Simonyev Blaustavya, who held the throne until her majority. She cemented her popularity in 606 AR, after successfully conquering Llael, by crowning herself empress of the Khadoran Empire.

Regardless of the popularity of the Vanar dynasty, the great princes of the volozkya remain powerful Khadoran nobles, each wielding considerable influence in the capital. Their role in the government has changed over the centuries, but they still possess special liberties and are treated akin to lesser royalty. Among the rights the great princes maintain is the prerogative to gather liegemen and equip them for war. Many of them have voluntarily abandoned this privilege to concede their vassals to the sovereign and the High Kommand, encouraging them to serve as officers in the Khadoran Army. Others have preserved their martial traditions as a matter of family pride.

The Khadoran sovereign has traditionally bestowed upon these great nobles military honors and ranks befitting their station. A number of the great princes and their highest vassals are currently kommandants and kommanders in the Khadoran Army, even if most rarely participate directly in military actions. Several hold these ranks in name only and allow handpicked subordinates to lead the soldiers under their command.

Despite the general accord brought by these measures, the empress is well aware that a sufficiently ambitious great prince could threaten the unity of the Khadoran people. Only those peerless nobles would be able to make a convincing claim to her throne. The Tzepesci line in particular has long been a rival of the Vanars and never fully trusted. Umbrean nobles have repeatedly proven their loyalty to the Great Princes Tzepesci before their rightful sovereign. There are many nobles in the capital that believe the Tzepescis have never abandoned the dream of sitting the throne.

Over the years rival great princes and other political advisors urged both Regent Simonyev Blaustavya and Empress Ayn to strip the Tzepescis of their authority and to pass the volozkya to other hands. Despite pressure, this drastic measure was never approved; such a decree could stir up popular support for the Tzepesci family in the east, where they retain considerable clout and are held in almost legendary esteem. The situation has been complicated in the recent decades since the current Tzepesci great prince, Vladimir, manifested warcaster talent and devoted his life to fighting alongside the Khadoran Army as well as providing invaluable mentoring to promising warcasters. Despite these apparent good works, the question of Tzepesci loyalty returned to the fore after the successful capture of Llael, which united the lands once called Umbrey. Several eastern great princes have meanwhile allied beneath the Tzepesci banner, and awareness of renewed Umbrean sentiment is prompting considerable unease in Korsk.

Closer to the war front, Vladimir Tzepesci has been earning quite a different reputation among those who have fought alongside him. They call him the Dark Champion and know he has performed acts of singular heroism and risked his life time and again against the enemies of Khador. They have seen him suffer to save their lives. Even his adversaries would not dare to question his courage, though they may harbor doubts regarding his long-term goals.

Alongside the sovereign and the great princes, another force has arisen in recent decades to play a significant role in the nation's political schemes: the kayazy. This class of wealthy commoners, or "merchant princes," has a long history but increased significantly in both power and prominence after King Ivad abolished serfdom. It includes any influential men of wealth—both those with legitimate business dealings and those who control criminal enterprises—particularly those in Korsk. Their wealth has been essential to fund a number of vital industrial endeavors valued by the crown and the army, and this in turn gives them political power.

The kayazy resent the influence of the great princes and other nobles in Khador and have worked to elevate their own positions while reducing that of individuals they see as relics of a bygone age. This class-based tension has only increased as the strain of war has placed a considerable burden on the kayazy, and they intend to reap the benefits. Empress Ayn Vanar has proven quite adept at maneuvering both groups to her advantage, sometimes pitting one against the other. She has reason more often than not to side with the kayazy against the families, which after all might otherwise threaten her rule.



REFORMING THE MILITARY

Khadoran pride in their military prowess has sometimes stood in the way of innovation and progress. After the founding of Khador in the Corvis Treaties, the army was far from a cohesive and internally consistent force. Instead, the nation relied upon a dozen loosely affiliated and allied militias that had been created on remnants of forces involved in the Orgoth Rebellion. Each was well led and consisted of loyal and competent citizen soldiers but operated almost autonomously and without a clear chain of command. Most of these groups were headed by officers claiming noble blood—often through one of the great princes—leaders directly appointed by the sovereign, or descendants of significant heroes of the Rebellion. Theoretically all fought toward the same end: the protection of Khador and its interests. But in many cases, the needs of individual high-ranking leaders dictated a specific group's willingness to deploy for conflicts and the enthusiasm with which its soldiers entered battle. As later military historians would remark, the army was held hostage by games of politics.

Soldiers in this post–Corvis Treaties era were divided loosely into three categories, a conceptual division that remains deeply ingrained in Khadoran military history and doctrine. First were the conscripted masses, poorly trained and cheaply outfitted but capable of being called to duty in large numbers. Second was a core of dedicated and professional soldiers who had committed to a life in the military. And third was the elite of the elite, represented by the heavy cavalry whose presence had long been considered necessary for any hope of military success.

Even before the most recent military reforms, Khador did not dismiss the fighting caliber of even its conscripted levies, which they insisted were better than the standard fighting men of any of the lesser, southern nations. The Khards once boasted that even the most untrained northern farmer was the equal of two or three southern soldiers, an attitude that carried forward into the era after the Corvis Treaties. Nonetheless, the army acknowledged that the national treasury could not afford to outfit the bulk of its poorly trained troops with its best weapons or armor, and thus the conscripts had to make do with minimal support. They were intended to provide the raw manpower required to overwhelm the enemy and were often flung into battle with very little direction or even expectation of survival.

The second major category of soldier was the professional and dedicated infantry, sometimes liegemen and bannermen of various nobles. Some professional soldiers were originally conscripts who stayed in the military after their obligatory service ended, having discovered an aptitude for battle or leadership qualities deserving of a permanent post. These highly valuable soldiers were far less numerous but formed the backbone of the army, able to be relied upon in circumstances where conscripts could not. The oldest surviving example of this class of soldier are the Iron Fangs, pikemen organized from previous disparate armored pikemen traditions by King Ioann Graznata in 398 AR. Graznata authorized the creation of the Iron Fangs to see if men on foot could be trained to stand against and defeat enemy warjacks, drawing on techniques once applied to bring down oversized prey like wild bears. Their successes allowed them to gain recognition and prompted

the army to increase their number in time, until they became the army's most numerous and respected heavy infantry. It was from these professional soldiers that Khador's first legions were formed, and the term carries with it a certain inherent degree of prestige and esteem. Legions were the first large, cohesive groups of similarly equipped soldiers with an officer who was acknowledged by the crown.

Aside from examples like Graznata's Iron Fangs, the training, outfitting, and equipage of soldiers in this class remained among the most highly varied in the early Khadoran Army, with myriad traditions having arisen in different regions. The quality of arms and armament was highly dependent on the funds afforded by whichever nobles or wealthy patron supported their efforts. Given other economic pressures, it was not at all uncommon for such professional soldiers to give up their service to the army occasionally to seek better pay as mercenaries abroad, depriving the army of their valuable skills unless specifically called upon. This was particularly prevalent in the remote border regions.

The third and most highly respected category of soldiers was the cavalry. Even after the advent and widespread use of warjacks, cavalry remained a mainstay of the Khadoran Army as part of an unbroken tradition from before recorded history. Mounted warriors typically originated among Khador's large aristocracy and were joined by the sons of wealthy kayazy who could afford to outfit themselves as was necessary for riding heavy horse.

Historically, the prestige of cavalry in Khador was linked to the weight of armor and the quality of weaponry fielded, with the ancient uhlan drakhuns at the pinnacle. These lancers embodied the might of imperishable steel astride their hulking Karpathan destriers, horses bred for strength and stamina. Drakhuns were capable of running roughshod over lesser soldiers with impunity. That tradition has been passed along to modern military descendants like the Iron Fang Uhlans and the steam-powered Man-O-War Drakhuns. Khador has found uses for lighter cavalry as messengers, for harassment, and in reconnaissance, but these horsemen have never commanded the same esteem as heavy cavalry.

The Khadoran sovereign was traditionally given liberal freedom to levy conscripts, but raising a sufficient force of professional infantry and cavalry required the cooperation of the great princes, the lesser nobility, and also at times the wealthy kayazy. This placed inherent constraints on the throne when assembling soldiers for war, requiring the application of political pressure to ensure compliance. The Khadoran treasury in the 200s and 300s was rarely in a position to support large armies beyond conscripts without aid, and this also prevented Khador from relying much on mercenary support. Funds were instead allocated first toward the construction of Khador's colossals and later toward subsequent warjack chassis production.

KHADORAN ARMY HONORS AND AWARDS



Shield of Khardovic — Awarded for unflinching service and obedience in a time of war, the Shield of Khardovic is required for any officer who seeks to gain promotion above the rank of kapitan.



Anvil of Conquest — This medal is awarded to a soldier who has played a key role in a major victory and recognizes the infliction of brutal casualties upon the enemy. Each recipient must have accounted for more confirmed kills than any soldier in his unit. It is particularly prized among Widowmakers.



Star of the Motherland — A highly valued and prestigious honor, this rarely awarded medal is given to a soldier who has continued to battle an enemy even in the face of almost certain defeat. This award is always bestowed directly by the High Kommand at a ceremony presided over by one of the supreme kommandants.



Sabers of Service — Each of the sabers on this medal represents a decade of service, and therefore the medal is bestowed only upon those who have maintained an exceptional service record for at least twenty years in the Khadoran Army.



Order of Vanar — The highest medal currently awarded in the Khadoran Army, the Order of Vanar is bestowed directly by the empress. It is usually accompanied by the granting of the title of viscount or posadnik along with bestowal of lands or similar holdings.

These circumstances not only kept Khador's army behind the times but also contributed to the instability of the throne until the establishment of the Vanar dynasty. It was King Mikhail Vanar who instituted the first major reforms to the Khadoran Army. King Mikhail had been a warrior and soldier for most of his life, and he considered improving the army his highest priority. While plagued by a festering illness that would eventually lead to his demise in 468 AR, he began the work that would eventually lead to the Khadoran Army as it is known today. His establishment of the High Kommand ensured his work would not end with his death.

It was under King Mikhail in 460 AR that the Winter Guard was established to give greater cohesiveness and structure

KHADORAN MECHANIKS ASSEMBLY



Based out of the Rigevna Complex in Korsk, since its inception in 393 AR the Khadoran Mechaniks Assembly (KMA) has been a crucial partner of the Khadoran military. The mechaniks of this august organization are the undisputed mechanika experts for the nation, responsible for all the common Khadoran warjack designs and the development of Man-O-War armor. They have recently expanded their operations to create a sizable secondary foundry in Merywyn, and other occupied cities may eventually add additional production capacity.

The most famous of the nation's engineering masters, Grand Vizier Simonyev Blaustavya, began his rise to power among this brotherhood. Before he was grand vizier or regent, he was the director of munitions research at the Rigevna Complex. Not only has Simonyev innovated several significant military improvements, but he has also ensured this organization and its facilities remain well supported by the treasury and thus capable of continuing to produce a sufficient quantity of warjacks, Man-O-War armor, and other mechanikal weapons to maintain the strength of the Khadoran Army.

Innovation and engineering improvements are important to the KMA, but their primary focus is on production efficiency and the long-term stability of their warjack chassis. The Rigevna Complex has maintained a cohesive vision that is reflected in their 'jack chassis and Man-O-War designs. While the High Kommand has tasked them to evolve their machines steadily to suit the ever-changing needs of war, these engineers believe that the best solution is usually a simple one. The Khadoran aesthetic is deeply ingrained and includes such elements as thick armor to toughen a machine, redundant systems to prevent easy crippling, and engines powerful enough to deliver tremendous raw force. When it comes to munitions, these designers prefer delivering a heavy payload even if it means sacrificing pinpoint accuracy.

Accordingly, technological innovations are not necessarily the strong suit of the KMA, although occasional sparks of genius emerge from their tight-knit and insular brotherhood. By and large they are more interested in incremental improvements over radical redesign. They have a distrust of intricate but delicate components and complicated assemblies, which they consider to be the greatest flaws of the Cygnaran engineering approach.

to the Khadoran system of widespread conscription and to provide a true standing army of sufficient size for Khador's needs. Making a significant step toward modernity, Mikhail invested in firearms for the Winter Guard, choosing short-range blunderbusses that were cheap but brutally efficient nonetheless. This was not an initially popular decision, as it required levying heavy taxes to fund an expansion of Khador's alchemical industries, but it enabled the army to move away from its feudal roots at last.

King Mikhail established a clear rank hierarchy, eliminating redundant and regional military ranks in favor of a universal system covering every corner of Khador. Additional measures included approving the development of the Juggernaut warjacks and eventually the first generation of Destroyers, warjacks that are now considered exemplary of the modern Khadoran approach to war. Mikhail saw the first Juggernaut produced in 465 AR and heralded as a triumph of Khadoran engineering, but the Destroyer was not finished to production standard until 480 AR, after his death. The modern variants of these warjacks were refined after the First Thornwood War, but their basic function and iconic appearance are a legacy of King Mikhail. While this king was unable to accomplish all his goals before his illness consumed him, he had taken vital steps to begin establishing a cohesive Khadoran Army independent of the political vagaries of great princes and the court.

The Vanars are credited with the majority of the modernization of the Khadoran Army, and for good reason. However, some responsibility also rests with the single sovereign who interrupted their dynasty, King Ruslan Vygor. The Thornwood War of 510–511 had a major impact on modern military thinking and led to a reexamination of Khadoran tactics. The great cost and bloodshed of this war would result in not only the improvement of both the Juggernaut and Destroyer chassis but also a reevaluation of what would be necessary to fight on equal and eventually superior footing to other modern armies. Analysis of the battles in this war later occupied a number of preeminent military thinkers, including Rurik Zerkova, Gurvaldt Irusk, and others who would pave the way for the modern tactics endorsed by the High Kommand.

While King Vygor is blamed for the loss of the First Thornwood War, he is credited with the daring and unprecedented stratagem of sending the bulk of Khador's heavy cavalry against Llael's border as a gambit to lure Cygnar's army. This tactic convinced Cygnar's king his ally was about to be invaded and nearly allowed Khador to march its main force through the Thornwood uncontested. Unfortunately, the ruse was discovered in time to allow Cygnar to perform a desperate forced march to intercede. The successful battles leading up to the eventual defeat

THE DRUZHINA AND THE KHADORAN MILITARY ACADEMY

The Khadoran Military Academy is the largest center for Winter Guard training in Khador. It is a sprawling complex of barracks, mustering fields, obstacle courses, and austere training buildings located outside of the city of Volningrad. Many thousands of Winter Guard recruits go through basic training here. They must endure grueling exercises in every environment, learning not just how to handle weapons and to obey orders but also how to deal with varied terrain and weather. The name of the academy is somewhat of a misnomer, as there is very little education in a formal sense, and the Khadoran Military Academy bears little resemblance to such places as Cygnar's Strategic Academy. That distinction is held by the Druzhina.



The Druzhina in Korsk is considerably more prestigious and represents the first step toward a prominent military career. The Druzhina is the forge for Khador's finest officers, and it is here that a soldier who was once a conscript can become a professional officer versed in both advanced tactics and the methodology for leading others in battle. Entrance to the Druzhina is merit-based for most Khadoran citizens, although those of sufficient noble standing or who are wealthy enough to pay a substantial fee to cover boarding and training are accepted automatically. Even for those born of privilege, graduation is a difficult task. Those who pass muster are offered an officer commission on graduation and begin their rise within the military elite.

Most Khadoran warcasters are also expected to train at the Druzhina if they have not already passed its courses during earlier military training. The Druzhina has limited courses available specifically relating to warcaster skills and functions, but it provides each of these individuals the instruction required to lead subordinates successfully. Given the high starting rank of even young warcasters, they are held to the absolute highest standard during this process, and repeating courses is not uncommon even when they earn marks that might be considered acceptable for other cadets.

Training at the Druzhina is counted as a considerable expense by the Khadoran treasury and brings with it certain obligations. Those who graduate the Druzhina are pressured into staying in the military as their life's profession, and early retirement is severely frowned upon. The High Kommand goes to great lengths to discourage the practice and offers regular pay-grade incentives to those who remain in service. In a time of war, such as the present, the High Kommand is empowered to reactivate any former officer and enforce a resumption of duties.

at the Battle of the Tongue offered a challenge to the Khadoran maxim that no sizable engagement could be won without heavy cavalry. Nobles considering themselves the descendants of the horselords did not embrace this conclusion, but it served as a significant dividing line between old and modern approaches to military strategy.

King Ivad Vanar, who ruled from 545–572 AR, carried forward the work of his predecessors to further modernize the military, laying a foundation for Regent Simonyev Blaustavya and the current Empress Ayn Vanar, the king's granddaughter. During the reign of these three rulers Khador has placed an ever-increasing importance on engineering and mechanikal advances, including investing in significant improvements to new Khadoran warjack chassis and improving the power and portability of Khadoran field ordnance.

While Man-O-War steam-powered armor entered mass production in 474 AR, Simonyev Blaustavya personally implemented substantial engineering improvements a century later and helped bring these heavily armored, mechanikally augmented infantry to their current position at the fore of Khadoran assault forces. The diversification and broad implementation of Man-O-War armor enabled the army to overcome the numerical disadvantage of its warjacks, prompted by a general scarcity of the materials needed for high-grade warjack cortex construction. With their implacable resolve and their use of impenetrable armor and overwhelming force, Man-O-War troops are a perfect example of a practical application of Khadoran military philosophy. Blaustavya had considerable influence in reinforcing the importance of mechanikal innovation and improvements for the military, bringing the Khadoran Mechaniks Assembly to its highest prestige.

While the existence of the High Kommand with its body of senior military officers has certainly provided a degree of continuity and efficiency to the Khadoran Army, many would argue that the greatest innovations in Khadoran military thought have arisen not from this body, but from the mind of one exceptional man. Supreme Kommandant Gurvaldt Irusk, once a protégé of the present premiere, Mhikol Horscze, is credited with almost single-handedly redefining Khadoran military thinking.

IRUSK'S ADVANCE ASSAULT FORCE
4TH ASSAULT LEGION, 9TH KOMMAND, 3RD DIVISION, 2ND ARMY



LEADERSHIP

- Kommandant Gurvaldt Irusk, warcaster (not permanently attached)
- Kommander Dahlrif Strasvite
- Lt. Kommanders Jortekt Aleshko and Ladimir Rostazar
- Kovniks Borjavich, Gnorosk, Krasposin, Krinevich, Kutzov, Malkovich, Sandvich, and Zarestova

ASSETS

- 7,500 Iron Fang Pikemen
- 2,150 Winter Guard
- 900 Man-O-War (Shocktroopers & Demolition Corps)
- 775 Assault Kommandos
- 650 Iron Fang Uhlans
- 20 Man-O-War Drakhuns
- 80 Heavy Warjacks

"Walls Ahead, Rubble Behind"

The 4th Assault Legion has a reputation as the favored heavy armor force of Supreme Kommandant Gurvaldt Irusk, and it is relied upon when he needs to devastate fortified enemy positions or hit overrun Cygnaran lines. They perfectly embody the offensive battlefield principles of the Hammer, Khador's 2nd Army. The 4th Legion is expected to move rapidly, hit hard, and roll straight over unprepared enemies.

Irusk personally led this legion in early battles at the river crossing of Riversmet during the invasion of Llael, and they also took part in the initial attacks in the protracted and bloody siege of Merywyn. The 4th Assault Legion was one of the first forces pulled from the siege to swing south and lead a daring attack against the entrenched forces at Northguard. Forces from the 4th Division at Ravensgard joined them soon thereafter, and it quickly grew into one of the most intense engagements in the war.

Though the Khadoran attack did not succeed in toppling Northguard at that time, doing so was not their true agenda. Rather, they were employed to threaten Cygnar and divide the southern nation's attention. This worked exactly as planned, forcing Cygnar to withdraw from the defense of Merywyn and fight to preserve its northern stronghold. The fall of the capital soon followed, along with the eventual surrender of Llael's ruling nobles. It is estimated that Cygnar suffered its highest casualties of the war to date in these later battles defending their border. The 4th Assault Legion accounted for a large portion of those kills and is credited by the High Kommand with the second-highest count of warjack kills in the Khadoran Army—exceeded only by the Fifth Border Legion.

Months of patrolling eastern Llael gave this legion time to receive an infusion of fresh recruits and regain their strength. Soon they were called upon once again to prove their merit. Irusk employed the 4th in both of the major assaults on Northguard that would eventually lead to its fall. It was members of this legion's Demolition Corps that ultimately broke through Northguard's walls to seize the main fortress interior in this historic victory.

The 4th Assault Legion is considered primarily an Iron Fang legion, but it includes a number of other elements. Fighting alongside its Iron Fang pikemen and uhlans is a strong complement of Man-O-War troops, including demolition corpsmen, shocktroopers, bombardiers, and several highly trained drakhuns. Recently Assault Kommandos have been integrated into the legion, and it is also supported by a number of veteran Winter Guard kompanies, including mortar and field gun fire support.

Most of Irusk's greatest innovations have greater tactical than strategic value, but he has done much to shape the general composition of the army and the way it is employed against Khador's enemies. It is by his pressure that the Winter Guard have begun to improve their weaponry. He has also revolutionized gunnery science and has had a direct hand in developing Khadoran artillery. The conquest of Llael also brought the Order of the Golden Crucible and the majority of its holdings under the control of the empire. This has allowed the implementation of relatively accurate rockets among the Winter Guard. Both the invasion of Llael and the fall of Northguard, which led to the capture of the Thornwood Forest, are proof of Irusk's visionary leadership and the undisputed effectiveness of his methods.

ARMY RANK AND FILE

Military enlistment is compulsory in Khador, and a single tour of duty is required of all men with the exception of those with extreme physical disfigurement, generally starting at age fifteen. The standard length of compulsory service is five years, although this time period can be adjusted depending on a variety of factors. Wealthy kayazy or those deemed necessary for "essential duties" to Khador can exert pressure to obtain a reduction in service, down to the minimum of two years. After this service is fulfilled citizens are allowed to return to their lives and resume whatever trade or craft they practiced or were apprenticing before enlistment. For the first several months of enlistment, men and women undergo constant drills and training focused on discipline, stamina, and necessary fighting skills in order to perform with competence in the Winter Guard.

Certain classes of citizens are exempted from joining the Winter Guard but are still expected to undergo military training and to stand ready to serve if called upon. This is most notable with the vassals and heirs of the great princes, the most powerful ruling families of Khador. These families have their own martial traditions, although members often join one of the more prestigious branches of the army, such as the Iron Fang Uhlans. Each great prince is expected to equip and train his closest vassals and members of his household. This training is far more extensive and rigorous than that employed by the Winter Guard, but some would accuse the princes of archaic techniques that ignore modern combat doctrines to focus on battle by horseback and dueling with blade or axe. Members of these families that choose to join the army are guaranteed officer commissions, and this is a popular career choice among various noble sons and daughters.

As the Khadoran Army marches to war, every citizen of the nation is called to play his part. The army is eager to take advantage of the specialized skills of its far-flung and even rustic kinsmen such as the reclusive Kossites of the northwest. These men and women have sometimes been aloof from the affairs of the capital, but they remain patriotic and are often willing to travel hundreds of miles from Scarsfell Forest to bring their skills to the front. Their familiarity with difficult terrain has proven invaluable as Khador continues its operations against Cygnar through the densely forested Thornwood. The Kossites are sometimes subject to similar prejudices as Umbreans, and both groups find advancement in the ranks particularly difficult. It is rare for an Umbrean or Kossite to be promoted past the lower ranks, and only a select few occupy positions of real authority.

KHADOR'S THREE ARMIES

Khadoran forces are divided into three armies. Each is overseen by one of the three supreme kommandants who are part of the High Kommand under the premier. These supreme kommandants focus on long-term strategy, personnel, and logistics and remain at the capital except in unusual circumstances. The system has traditionally served to keep the Khadoran Army functioning smoothly and prevent top-level miscommunications.

In 607 AR, before the second and ultimately successful attack on Northguard, Empress Ayn Vanar promoted Gurvaldt Irusk to become the fourth supreme kommandant. This was deemed necessary as Khador pushed its soldiers deeper into former enemy territory and these armies had to divide their resources between occupation forces, border protection, and ever-ready assault legions. While the supreme kommandants in the capital remained responsible for the oversight and direction of their individual armies, Gurvaldt Irusk's proximity to the front lines places him in a unique position to coordinate their combined actions and to create fighting elements drawn from any of the three armies to achieve the High Kommand's goals. Having a single voice of authority has proven to be essential in recent months as Khador's armies operate at a great distance from the capital.

There are many senior officers who are uneasy about having a supreme kommandant set apart from the High Kommand and argue it critically compromises the authority of that body for him to be able to preempt their orders. Empress Vanar maintains that the High Kommand exists primarily to provide advice to the sovereign and to formulate top-level strategy, not to serve as leadership to the men and women fighting hundreds of miles away in the field, a task better suited to Irusk. Along with the empress, Premier Horscze has given Irusk his full support, and so this arrangement is not likely to change.

The current Khadoran military doctrine departs from tradition and is most concisely explained in the military tome

THE HIGH KOMMAND



One of the strengths of the Khadoran Army is its centralized leadership, embodied in the Khadoran High Kommand, an influential council serving the empress by overseeing the entire Khadoran military, both army and navy. The High Kommand invites participation from all retired officers ranked kommander or higher in the army and kapitan or higher in the navy. Khador considers these men and women an invaluable resource, for they draw on decades of experience to analyze and evaluate future strategies. Most of these retired officers serve solely as advisors with no actual field authority. The exceptions are the three supreme kommandants in charge of strategy for each of Khador's armies and the premier. Barring intervention by the empress, orders from Premier Mhikol Horscze are absolute.

As important to the High Kommand as its battle-seasoned veteran officers is the extensive hive of clerks and supply officers maintaining vital military correspondence and an ever-increasing vault of army records. Any large army requires an adequate bureaucracy to support its activities, and the Khadoran Army is no exception. An extremely high volume of traffic passes through the High Kommand on a daily basis, including a constant stream of incoming requests and outgoing orders. The military payroll is one of the most important tasks handled by this bureaucratic staff, as the ranking officers know quite well that it requires more than simply patriotism and loyalty to motivate its soldiers. A large number of Khadoran soldiers defer a significant portion of their wages to their families. The bureaucratic infrastructure allows the Motherland's fighting men and women to feel confident that those they have left behind are secure.

The needs of expanding conquered territory and theaters of operations have necessitated a large secondary office to be staffed in Merywyn. This hub is under the supervision of Kommandant Mikhail Ivdanovich, who leads the 1st Army in the field. There has been talk in the empress' court that the entire High Kommand should consider relocating to Merywyn in order to reduce delays in communication. The officers of this body have been reluctant to consider any such proposal, which has in turn led to criticism that they are becoming lazy and fat in the capital. The counter argument to this proposal is the fact that the High Kommand is expected to advise the empress, a task that would be difficult from four hundred miles away.

Irusk on Conquest, which outlines the concepts of the Anvil, Hammer, and Forge. Khador's 1st Army is the Anvil, the 2nd Army is the Hammer, and the 3rd Army is the Forge. The Anvil creates a fixed position that is impossible to besiege and assail, the Hammer strikes wherever it is needed, and the Forge protects the heartland and trains capable soldiers. The Winter Guard is the backbone of all three armies. A number of highly specialized services make up for the shortcomings of these conscripted fighters, including powerful heavy infantry like Man-O-War soldiers, the Iron Fangs, the Assault Kommandos, skilled cavalry, and specialized sniper and reconnaissance forces such as the Widowmakers.

As a rule, warcasters are almost never permanently attached to a specific kompany, division, or even army. Their strategic importance is too vital to be limited in this regard, and they are freely reassigned by the High Kommand as required. There are exceptions, and it is often the case that a particular warcaster serves for a set period of time with a given battalion, forming close ties with its officers. In some cases the warcaster may be given liberty to reallocate key personnel in order to retain them during a reassignment. Unusually high ranking warcaster officers may have greater responsibilities and duties requiring the oversight of far larger forces than the ones immediately on hand.

New battles yield new opportunities to examine old methods, and even Irusk has adapted his methodology in light of new challenges while taming the Thornwood and pressing Khador's advantages against the southern foe. In the most recent phase of fighting the three armies have been working more closely together than before, more regularly operating outside of their assigned operational regions. Supreme Kommandant Irusk sees this as consistent with the core of the Anvil, Hammer, and Forge doctrine, as each was never intended to exist without the others.

Irusk has also changed the methodology of the army's occupation forces. The premier considers it a high priority to reduce the number of soldiers tied up in rear areas and involved with policing conquered populations. Accordingly the number of Khadoran soldiers stationed in Llael has been reduced considerably. Many of these soldiers have been moved south to protect supply lines through the Thornwood Forest or to help maintain pressure against Cygnar along the Dragon's Tongue River.

Certain officers believe it is too early for these measures, as several large Llaelese cities have yet to be quelled and still suffer from internal dissent. Others point to the fact that the Protectorate of Menoth, a hostile theocracy with designs on Khador's more pious citizens, recently seized control of Leryn, a major Llaelese city that had previously been occupied by the Khadoran Army. There are no specific plans

to pacify the regions of eastern Llael remaining outside of Khadoran control. So long as Khador controls Merywyn, Laedry, and the majority of productive Llaelese mines, the High Kommand feels it is unnecessary to commit greater resources to this area. This attitude is not shared by everyone in the military, particularly front-line kommanders, who see the loss of Leryn as significant. Even with the military successfully plundering a large volume of useful supplies from the former headquarters of the Order of the Golden Crucible in the city, its alchemical production capacity and other industrial assets will be sorely missed. However, many of the technological advancements that were pioneered by the OGC and were jealously guarded secrets have been discovered by the Greylords and handed over to the KMA for integration into ongoing wartime development. Furthermore, a number of senior OGC alchemists and their staff were forcibly relocated to the Khadoran interior where they oversee production of blasting powder.

The Thornwood has opened up its own share of problems, far more than was anticipated before the fall of Northguard. The wilderness region is sparsely inhabited, with challenging terrain and a lack of adequate roads. Supply lines through the forest have come under almost constant attack. These attacks have been unpredictable and difficult to identify, let alone prevent. Cryx is believed to be responsible for much of this difficulty, but there is also evidence of persistent Cygnaran interference as well as brutal attacks by less organized savages who seem to have maintained a tenuous hold on certain regions of the forest.

Almost immediately after pushing Cygnar's army out of this region, Khador began constructing fortifications to defend its new acquisitions. This included an ambitious chain of fortresses along the Dragon's Tongue River along with supply forts and road construction passing through the forest. Despite an aggressive allocation of manpower, these efforts have been costlier than expected, and construction has proceeded at a snail's pace. The aggressive schedule initially put forth by the High Kommand has proven to be completely infeasible.

Even in the face of these setbacks, the Khadoran Army remains resolute as it seeks to restore Khador's territories the glory once achieved under the Khardic Empire, and to preserve its new borders from hostile neighbors. The three armies work together to ensure that any who oppose the will of the empress will be humbled. Conscription has served to maintain the strength of the army, bringing in new recruits to replace those lost in battle, and Khador's industrial strength has ensured that these soldiers and the warjacks who fight alongside them are properly equipped to wage war.

It is Supreme Kommandant Irusk's goal to make each individual element of the army so strong and self-sufficient that it can prosper and win victories even when isolated from the rest. To those who worry about the supply lines in the Thornwood, he insists that his forces can hold their own against Cygnar with or without external support. This boast will certainly be tested in upcoming months.



THE 1ST ARMY - THE ANVIL

The Anvil, or 1st Army, is called upon for protracted engagements and has been trained and conditioned for stamina. In theory, the Anvil is sent forward to engage and tie up enemy forces across large territories, positioning them for the Hammer to strike at with full strength from the flank. The Anvil's tactics are designed to maximize resiliency by constantly cycling between active and reserve forces and taking the time to recover from casualties. Its officers consider themselves the Khadoran military's foremost experts on conducting extended sieges. It also serves as an active reserve where veteran soldiers can be rotated off the front line to recuperate while remaining close to the battlefield.

This is the army that has been relied upon before all others to hold conquered territory and to assimilate them into the empire. Although it played a major offensive role in the conquest of Llael, the 1st Army has since been battling resistance elements and quashing insurrection. None of these soldiers take the occupation of Llael for granted, as they have had to endure many unexpected ambushes and sometimes surprisingly well organized attacks from rebel forces. This is a role to which the 1st was not particularly well suited, although its officers have learned many hard lessons in the last several years and have begun to make headway in pacifying Llael.

Increasingly Llaelese cities have become productive sources of ancillary Khadoran industry, a fact that the 1st Army views with no small measure of pride. While most Llaelese citizens still refer to themselves as such, there is less resistance in cities like Merywyn and Laedry to the idea that their efforts are strengthening the Khadoran Empire. As most livelihoods have been preserved and daily life is largely unchanged, these citizens have begun to accept that life is not so different under Khadoran control as when Llael was an independent kingdom. Despite these encouraging signs, the recent drastic reduction in the number of soldiers allocated to garrison Llael is a concern to the officers of the 2nd Division, led by Kommandant Voroshilov Klimovich.



There is reason to expect that the withdrawal of Khadoran troops may encourage eastern rebels to renew their attacks. Added to this have been hostile actions by other powers, including the Protectorate of Menoth, as well as recent unexpected and inexplicable attacks by Iosan soldiers. The possibility of additional clashes with the Protectorate of Menoth seems inevitable, as that nation's Northern Crusade has turned the fortified city of Leryn into its new base of operations. A major confrontation between the Northern Crusade and the 2nd Division is considered almost a foregone conclusion, an eventuality that its soldiers have been training for tirelessly.

After the fall of Northguard, a significant portion of the occupying battalions was sent south to take up positions in the northern Thornwood. Maintaining Khadoran interests in the area has fallen primarily to the 1st Division of the 1st Army, led by Kommandant Yegoruv Ilyevich. This has necessitated a significant shift in tactics, as this division was previously patrolling southern Llael, a relatively open and pastoral region. Operations in the Thornwood are complicated by a number of factors, including inadequate or erroneous maps, a general lack of cleared land for barracks, and constant ambushes along Khadoran supply lines. Morale in this division has plummeted, although the recent establishment of several sizable and fortified supply bases has helped to provide a better sense of security for these battalions.

The 1st Army is nominally commanded by Supreme Kommandant Ivon Krasnovich from the High Kommand, but its operational direction is left in the hands of Kommandant Mikhail Ivdanovich, who controls the army from Merywyn. Kommandant Ivdanovich is a humble and quiet officer with an engineering background who has achieved a strong reputation and who has the faith and support of his men. Ivdanovich was credited by Gurvaldt Irusk as being instrumental in the swift and successful invasion of Llael, as his oversight of the army's supply lines during the rapid invasion were critical. Despite recent problems in the Thornwood, it is generally believed that if any man can tame that forest to ensure Khadoran ammunition and food reaches soldiers on the front line, it would be Ivdanovich. He has also gained some measure of popularity even among Merywyn's local population for successfully restoring industry and commerce to that city as well as repairing most of the damage inflicted during the lengthy siege. This included the restoration of sites of historical significance, which the locals have taken as a sign of mutual respect.



THE 2ND ARMY - THE HAMMER

The Hammer, or 2nd Army, focuses on crushing offensives and therefore includes the largest number of assault legions, warjacks, and heavy armor infantry, although each legion still relies heavily on basic infantry battalions of Winter Guard. During the invasion of Llael it was the Hammer that initiated lightning attacks against Redwall Fortress, Elsinberg, and Laedry. It is this army that has been at the forefront of all major operations against Cygnar, including numerous attacks along the old northern border and, more recently, toppling Northguard and subsequently pushing Cygnaran forces back to the Dragon's Tongue River. For these reasons, this is currently the most esteemed of Khador's armed forces.

Although Supreme Kommandant Irusk is in command of all three of Khador's armies, he is most strongly associated with the 2nd, and in particular with the 4th Assault Legion of the 3rd Division. These soldiers have fought under Irusk longer than any others and frequently serve as his vanguard. This and other assault legions specialize in making swift and decisive attacks, seeking to penetrate and destroy fortifications outright rather than to besiege them. Such tactics are not always appropriate, but Irusk has carved the various elements of this army into a diverse set of finely sharpened tools, each with its proper application.

Because of its role at the forefront of Khadoran assaults, it is no surprise that the 2nd Army has suffered the highest casualties and includes the greatest degree of turnover for both officers and enlisted men. This army suffered during the first assault on Northguard, and even its subsequent victory came at a high cost. Fresh recruits are constantly flowing into the various depleted kompanies and battalions, and Irusk has implemented a highly successful methodology for ensuring new recruits are placed with seasoned veterans to learn their deadly trade. The Hammer has increased substantially in size in recent months, both from freshly conscripted Winter Guard and by reallocating veterans who were once part of other forces.

Presently stationed within the Thornwood, the 2nd Army is in a precarious situation due to the lack of an established support infrastructure. It has been positioning itself to stand as a counter to Cygnaran forces on the other side of the Dragon's Tongue River, but practical considerations have made this difficult to implement. Construction of fortresses has been proceeding as quickly as possible, but none of these structures is yet completed, and supply lines remain uneven. The enemy has the advantage of major cities such as Point Bourne and Corvis to support its own forces, putting the Hammer at a distinct disadvantage. Much of the 2nd Army has been making do with woefully inadequate facilities and sporadic resupply. The men are hungry, they sleep in leaking tents, and they lack sufficient ammunition for the blunderbusses and rifles they wield.

Fewer soldiers man each of the unfinished fortresses than is considered acceptable, inviting Cygnaran reprisals. The army has had a difficult time patrolling the forest, and thus interpenetration of its lines by Cygnaran rangers has been unavoidable. As a result, the 2nd Army has been unable to react quickly to Cygnaran raids or launch operations against enemy positions. Overcoming these hardships is the chief concern of the army's command, upon whom there is considerable pressure to swiftly remedy the situation. For the moment the 2nd Army relies upon the efforts of its exceptional warcasters to make up for the difference in manpower between the forces, drawing on the expertise of individuals like Forward Kommander Kratikoff, Kommander Karchev, and Kommander Strakhov.

The 2nd Army is the purview of Supreme Kommandant Alex Gorchakoff at the High Kommand, but his influence on the army is almost inconsequential due to the proximity and active involvement of Supreme Kommandant Gurvaldt Irusk. Rumor suggests considerable tension between Irusk and Gorchakoff, as the former has accused the latter of insufficient efforts to expedite delivery of materials for fortress construction. Irusk has a far better working relationship with Kommandant Boris Makarov, the field commander of the army. Makarov is a huge man with unapologetically enormous appetites, a seasoned former Iron Fang who remained away from his army in the capital for some years until the birth of his son. Liberated from a fear of dying without a male heir, he rejoined the Hammer with renewed enthusiasm and seems determined now to face death fighting side by side with Gurvaldt Irusk.

Perhaps because of the fighting reputation of this army, both its divisions are nominally led by great princes who have been bestowed the rank of kommandant by Empress Vanar. Kommandant and Great Prince Jhrom Holcheski leads the 3rd Division, stationed in the southwestern Thornwood to confront Point Bourne. Kommandant and Great Prince Servei Marvor leads the 4th Division, stationed in the southeastern Thornwood as a counter to Corvis. While having these great princes attached affords these divisions a certain level of prestige and pride, the actual presence of these men is rare. Their political station has kept them more often in the capital or governing their respective volozkya in Khador. The commanding officers consider this for the best, as in the past the elevated political rank of these nobles has caused confusion in the chain of command. In their absence, details of managing the divisions are left to several capable kommanders who have solid rapports with both Makarov and Irusk.



THE 3RD ARMY - THE FORGE

The 3rd Army is responsible for training and arming new conscripts as well as maintaining garrisons in Khadoran cities. The five border legions spread along the length of Khador's perimeter fall under the 3rd Army's purview. There are numerous training facilities under this banner, but the city of Volningrad is the only center where the entire city is dedicated to military preparedness.

The presence of the Border Legions in the 3rd Army makes it structurally very different from the other armies. The 3rd has the dubious distinction of boasting the largest separation between its far-flung personnel, as there are soldiers wearing 3rd Army unit markings as far northwest as Uldenfrost and also as far south as the Dragon's Tongue River, more than six hundred miles away.

Garrison duty in Khador's interior is considered the easiest and least dangerous of posts in the Khadoran Army. These posts bestow little prestige or honor yet are highly desired by those with strong ties to family, such as young fathers. Recent years, however, have seen a number of unexpected threats to the Khadoran interior, making the defense of Khador's cities both more vital and more dangerous than before. One of the most dreaded threats is the horror of rampant dragonspawn and their blighted minions. The High Kommand through the Greylords Covenant still lacks for adequate intelligence on this menace. Only a few northern and eastern towns have been plagued by these creatures, but rumors of the bloodshed that ensued has spread throughout the empire.

Other sporadic internal threats include attacks by other hostile factions, including trollkin kriels, particularly in the northwest, or groups led by the enigmatic blackclad druids. These attacks are primarily limited to remote regions but remain a factor the High Kommand must consider when allocating its garrison forces. In addition to protecting its citizens, the 3rd Army must preserve vital industries like Khador's logging and mining companies.

One rumor the High Kommand and the Prikaz Chancellery have gone to great lengths to quash is that hostile elements from the elven nation of Ios have recently struck inside Khador's interior. The basis for the rumor is an alleged attack by Iosan military forces against a Greylords Covenant underground base near Fort Brunzig. Exactly why this base would have been targeted and how the Iosans could have managed to penetrate so deeply inside the border have not been explained. Most officers dismiss this rumored incident as a fabrication designed to incite panic and doubt.

Kommandant Konstan Zhukovy, who commands the 5th Division and thus all the border legions, is the man held responsible for the safety of the Khadoran interior and the integrity of its borders. This has historically been a relatively safe responsibility, as no foreign power has ever successfully invaded Khadoran soil. Nonetheless, recent turmoil has challenged this division as never before.

The 3rd Army is under the supervision of Supreme Kommandant Menshik Sergevich at the High Kommand, with field command being held by Great Prince and Kommandant Karl Szvette. The larger 6th Division, which is held responsible for training and reserves, is commanded by Kommandant Grezko Antonovich. The actual involvement of Great Prince Szvette is limited, as he leaves most matters to the discretion of Zhukovy and Antonovich. The higher officers of the 3rd have focused primarily on the training and supply side of the reserves, along with the proper allocation of their home garrisons. Historically, the kommanders of each of the border legions have been given more autonomy than any other legions in the Khadoran Army.

The most active soldiers in the 3rd Army are those serving in the First and Fifth Border Legions. Until the fall of Northguard, the First Border Legion was headquartered in Ravensgard. Most First Border Legion kompanies have marched alongside the 2nd Army deeper into the Thornwood to integrate their operations with Irusk's other assets near Corvis.

The much-esteemed Fifth Border Legion has earned its fame since the First Thornwood War as a fighting force that has never given up the battle against Cygnar, even in times of apparent peace. They have recently been sent south to maintain their aggressive stance against this traditional enemy and stand ready for the call to war in the western Thornwood, near Point Bourne.

The Second, Third, and Fourth Border Legions are considerably smaller and less distinguished than either the First or the Fifth. They are assigned to watch the less active borders with Rhul, Ord's eastern border, and Ord's northern border, respectively. These legions are sometimes utilized to bolster interior garrisons. The Third has a somewhat ominous reputation, as it is rumored to be affiliated with Zevanna Agha, the Old Witch. This legion has come to greater prominence in recent years due to its efforts to battle the internal threats plaguing Khadoran towns in the remote regions. The presence of Third Border Legion forces in unexpected places has become synonymous with disaster, but they are still welcomed by citizens eager for any army support against hostile wilderness elements.

111TH INFANTRY BATTALION, "THE UNBREAKABLE 111TH"

1ST BORDER LEGION, 13TH KOMMAND, 5TH DIVISION, 3RD ARMY



"Fighting to the Last Man"

There are certain combat groups in the Khadoran Army held to a higher standard and considered emblematic of the entire service. The "Unbreakable 111th" Infantry Battalion is one of those groups. It is the first choice for every Winter Guard who finishes training at the Khadoran Military Academy in Volningrad. The fact that the battalion has a high casualty rate is not seen as a problem to fresh recruits but as proof that the 111th is guaranteed to see battle.

The 111th Infantry is an essential part of the First Border Legion and provides a backbone of veteran infantry support to one mobile and three mixed battalions that make up the rest of the legion. Along with the legendary Fifth, it is the only other border force regularly involved in ongoing fighting. For most of its history the 111th has been stationed at the fortress of Ravensgard, where its soldiers battled against their Cygnaran counterparts at Northguard.

The roots of the 111th begin in the founding of Ravensgard, completed in 268 AR after the Colossal War and greatly expanded after Northguard was erected in 326. The soldiers of the 111th were not yet called Winter Guard in those times, but they displayed the same insignia that has since come to be utilized and adapted by many Winter Guard battalions and kompanies. Their motto "Fighting to the Last Man" was adapted after the battalion was twice nearly annihilated and yet still refused to rout. One of these famous battles came during the Thornwood War of 511 AR when the 111th fought to intercept reinforcements that would have been sent against their kinsmen trapped against the Dragon's Tongue River. The 111th Infantry held down a Cygnaran force sent from Northguard to cut off the retreating Khadorans. Khadoran scholars speculate that without the sacrifice of the 111th, this force would have intercepted the Fifth Border Legion and prevented them from earning their fame in the following decades.

Adding to the prestige of the 111th Infantry is the reputation of its current commanding kovnik, Jozef Grigorovich. Like most veteran Winter Guards, Grigorovich has served in many units and forces, but he came to the 111th Infantry in 593 AR as a kapitan and has since refused to budge even when offered promotion elsewhere. He took over the battalion as kovnik in 598 AR and quickly earned the love and admiration of his men. After Grigorovich proved his worth in grim fighting around Ravensgard in 605 AR, Supreme Kommandant Alex Gorchakoff of the 2nd Army offered him a promotion to full kommander, hoping to make use of his services elsewhere. Grigorovich flatly refused. He said he aspired to nothing more than continued fighting in the trenches alongside his men.

The 111th was directly involved in the recent attacks against Northguard, sending forces to confront the deeply entrenched Cygnaran infantry in their convoluted network of perimeter defenses. The indomitable battalion once again endured heavy casualties but succeeded in maintaining pressure on the defenders while Supreme Kommandant Irusk's assault legions advanced on the central fortress. Since the fall of Northguard the 111th has followed the rest of the First Border Legion to march south from Ravensgard for the first time in decades. They are stationed among Second Army battalions northwest of Corvis, where they are enduring extremely difficult conditions without complaint.

LEADERSHIP

- Kovnik Jozef Grigorovich
- Kapitans Afonos, Fodorevich, Gizaevna, Loshkavich, Lugislav, Petrovivich, Toloskvi, and Yurchenko

ASSETS

- 2,000 Winter Guard Infantry
- 500 Winter Guard Riflemen
- 300 Assault Kommandos
- 60 Rocketeers
- 10 Field Gun Crews
- 30 Mortar Crews
- 4 Destroyers, 1 Devastator

KHADOR THEME FORCES



KOMMANDER SORSCHA
MECHANIZED INFANTRY

WARJACKS
Khador non-character warjacks, Beast 09

UNITS
Battle Mechaniks, Widowmakers, Winter Guard units

SOLOS
Widowmaker Marksmen, Winter Guard solos

TIER 1
Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: Up to one heavy warjack gains Advance Move for each Battle Mechanik unit in the army. (Before the start of the game but after both players have deployed, a model with Advance Move can make a full advance.)

TIER 2
Requirements: The army includes three or more Winter Guard units.

Benefit: Add Kovnik Jozef Grigorovich to the army free of cost.

TIER 3
Requirements: Sorscha's battlegroup includes Beast 09.

Benefit: You gain +1 on your starting roll for the game.

TIER 4
Requirements: The army includes three or more warjacks.

Benefit: Your deployment is extended 2" forward.



FORWARD KOMMANDER SORSCHA
5TH BORDER LEGION

WARJACKS
Khador non-character warjacks, Beast 09

UNITS
Battle Mechaniks, Widowmakers, Man-O-War units, Winter Guard units

SOLOS
Manhunters, Widowmaker Marksmen, Man-O-War solos, Winter Guard solos

TIER 1
Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: Reduce the point cost of Kodiak warjacks by 1.

TIER 2
Requirements: The army includes two or more Winter Guard Infantry units.

Benefit: For every two units in the army, place one 4" AOE forest anywhere completely within 20" of the back edge of Sorscha's deployment zone after terrain has been placed but before either player deploys his army. Forests cannot be placed within 3" of another terrain feature.

TIER 3
Requirements: The army includes two or more Man-O-War units.

Benefit: Man-O-War units gain Advance Move. (Before the start of the game but after both players have deployed, a model with Advance Move can make a full advance.)

TIER 4
Requirements: The army includes two or more Kodiaks.

Benefit: Models/units in the army gain Pathfinder during your first turn of the game.



ORSUS ZOKTAVIR, THE BUTCHER OF KHARDOV

HEART OF DARKNESS

WARJACKS
Khador non-character warjacks

UNITS
Kossite Woodsmen, Widowmakers, Man-O-War units, Winter Guard Infantry

SOLOS
Manhunters, War Dog, Widowmaker Marksmen, Yuri the Axe, Man-O-War solos

TIER 1

Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: The FA of Manhunter solos increases by +1 for every unit included. Reduce the point cost of Man-O-War Shocktroopers by 1.

TIER 2

Requirements: The army includes two or more Man-O-War units.

Benefit: Man-O-War units gain +2 SPD during your first turn of the game.

TIER 3

Requirements: The army includes four or more solos.

Benefit: You can redeploy solos in the army after both players have deployed but before the first player's first turn. The redeployed models must be placed on the table in a location they could have been deployed initially.

TIER 4

Requirements: The Butcher's battlegroup includes three or more warjacks without ranged weapons.

Benefit: Warjacks in the Butcher's battlegroup without ranged weapons gain Advance Deployment.



KOMMANDER ORSUS ZOKTAVIR

MAD DOGS OF WAR

WARJACKS
Khador non-character warjacks

UNITS
Doom Reavers

SOLOS
Manhunters, War Dog, Fenris, Yuri the Axe, Doom Reaver solos

TIER 1

Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: Doom Reaver units and Doom Reaver unit attachments become FA U. (A unit can still have only one unit attachment.)

TIER 2

Requirements: The army includes three or more Doom Reaver units.

Benefit: Reduce the point cost of each Doom Reaver unit by 1.

TIER 3

Requirements: The army includes Fenris.

Benefit: You gain +1 on the starting roll of the game.

TIER 4

Requirements: Zoktavir's battlegroup includes two or more warjacks.

Benefit: Zoktavir's base FOCUS at the start of the game and during your first turn is automatically 7. Do not roll for Arcane Dementia.



VLADIMIR TZEPESCI, THE DARK PRINCE
WAR HOST

WARJACKS
Khador non-character warjacks, Drago

UNITS
Battle Mechaniks, Greylord units, Iron Fang units

SOLOS
War Dog, Greylord solos

TIER 1
Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: Reduce the point cost of each Berserker warjack by 1. Additionally, the FA of Koldun Lord solos increases by +1 for each Greylord Ternion unit in the army.

TIER 2
Requirements: The army includes two or more Iron Fang Pikeman units.

Benefit: Iron Fang Pikeman units gain +2 SPD during your first turn of the game.

TIER 3
Requirements: The army includes three or more Koldun Lord solos.

Benefit: Greylord models/units gain Stealth during the first round of the game.

TIER 4
Requirements: The only warjacks in Vladimir's battlegroup are Berserkers and/or Drago.

Benefit: Warjacks in Vladimir's battlegroup gain Advance Deployment.



VLADIMIR TZEPESCI, THE DARK CHAMPION
BLOOD OF HEROES

WARJACKS
Khador non-character warjacks, Drago

UNITS
Kossite Woodsmen, Widowmakers, Iron Fang units

SOLOS
War Dog, Iron Fang solos

TIER 1
Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: Iron Fang Uhlan units become FA 2. Additionally, reduce the point cost of each Iron Fang Uhlan unit by 1.

TIER 2
Requirements: The army includes the Great Bears of the Gallowswood.

Benefit: The Great Bears of Gallowswood gain Advance Deploy.

TIER 3
Requirements: Vladimir's battlegroup includes Drago.

Benefit: Friendly models/units can begin the game affected by Vladimir's upkeep spells. These spells and their targets must be declared before either player sets up models. Vladimir does not pay focus to upkeep these spells during your first turn.

TIER 4
Requirements: The army includes Uhlan Kovnik Markov and one or more Iron Fang Uhlan units.

Benefit: Your deployment is extended 2" forward.



KOMMANDANT IRUSK
ADVANCE ASSAULT FORCE

WARJACKS
Khador non-character warjacks, Behemoth

UNITS
Assault Kommandos, Battle Mechaniks, Iron Fang units, Man-O-War units

SOLOS
War Dog, Iron Fang solos, Man-O-War solos

TIER 1
Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: Reduce the point cost of each Devastator and Spriggan warjack by 1.

TIER 2
Requirements: The army includes two or more Iron Fang Pikeman units.

Benefit: You gain +1 on the starting roll of the game.

TIER 3
Requirements: The army includes two or more Man-O-War units.

Benefit: Man-O-War units gain Advance Move. (Before the start of the game but after both players have deployed, a model with Advance Move can make a full advance.)

TIER 4
Requirements: The army includes two or more warjacks.

Benefit: Your deployment is extended 2" forward.



SUPREME KOMMANDANT IRUSK
THE ART OF WAR

WARJACKS
Khador non-character warjacks, Behemoth

UNITS
Battle Mechaniks, Widowmakers, Kayazy units, Winter Guard units

SOLOS
Widowmaker Marksmen, Kayazy solos, Winter Guard solos

TIER 1
Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: Kayazy Assassin units become FA U. Additionally, the FA of Winter Guard Mortar or Winter Guard Field Gun units increases by +1 for every Winter Guard Infantry or Winter Guard Rifle Corps unit included.

TIER 2
Requirements: The army includes two or more Winter Guard Infantry units.

Benefit: Add a unit attachment to one Winter Guard Infantry unit free of cost. This unit attachment ignores FA restrictions.

TIER 3
Requirements: The army includes two or more Kayazy Assassin units.

Benefit: Kayazy models/units gain Advance Move. (Before the start of the game but after both players have deployed, a model with Advance Move can make a full advance.)

TIER 4
Requirements: Irusk's battlegroup includes the Behemoth.

Benefit: Each warjack in Irusk's battlegroup is automatically allocated 1 focus point at the start of your first Control Phase. This focus is in addition to any points Irusk allocates.



KARCHEV THE TERRIBLE
IRON CURTAIN

WARJACKS
Khador non-character warjacks, Behemoth

UNITS
Battle Mechaniks, Greylord units, Man-O-War units

SOLOS
Greylord solos, Man-O-War solos

TIER 1
Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: Greylord Ternion units become FA U. Additionally, the FA of Koldun Lord solos is increased by +1 for each Greylord unit included in the army.

TIER 2
Requirements: The army also includes two or more Man-O-War units.

Benefit: Man-O-War units gain Advance Move. (Before the start of the game but after both players have deployed, a model with Advance Move can make a full advance.)

TIER 3
Requirements: The army includes one or more Greylord Ternion units.

Benefit: For each Greylord Ternion unit, place up to one 3" AOE cloud effects in play after terrain has been placed but before either player deploys his army. AOEs must be placed within 20" of the back edge of Karchev's deployment zone and remain in play for one round. They cannot be placed within 3" of a terrain feature. These cloud effects leave play after the first round of the game.

TIER 4
Requirements: Karchev's battlegroup includes three or more warjacks.

Benefit: Reduce the point cost of each warjack in Karchev's battlegroup by 1.



ZEVANNA AGHA, THE OLD WITCH OF KHADOR
THE INVISIBLE ARMY

WARJACKS
Khador non-character warjacks

UNITS
Battle Mechaniks, Greylord Ternions, Kossite Woodsmen, Widowmakers

SOLOS
Manhunters, Widowmaker Marksmen, Yuri the Axe

TIER 1
Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: Models/units in the army gain Stealth during the first round of the game.

TIER 2
Requirements: The army includes two Kossite Woodsmen units.

Benefit: Add Yuri the Axe to the army free of cost.

TIER 3
Requirements: The army includes two or more Greylord Ternion units.

Benefit: Friendly models/units can begin the game affected by the Old Witch's upkeep spells. These spells and their targets must be declared before either player sets up models. The Old Witch does not pay focus to upkeep these spells during your first turn.

TIER 4
Requirements: The Old Witch's battlegroup includes two or more heavy warjacks.

Benefit: Models/units in the army gain Pathfinder during your first turn of the game. For each heavy warjack in the Old Witch's battlegroup, place one 4" AOE forest anywhere completely within 20" of the back edge of her deployment zone after terrain has been placed but before either player deploys his army. Forests cannot be placed within 3" of another terrain feature.



KOLDUN KOMMANDER ALEKSANDRA ZERKOVA

WOLVES OF WINTER

WARJACKS
Khador non-character warjacks

UNITS
Battle Mechaniks, Doom Reavers, Greylord units

SOLOS
Manhunters, Fenris, Doom Reaver solos, Greylord solos

TIER 1

Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: Greylord Ternion units and Koldun Lord solos become FA U.

TIER 2

Requirements: The army includes two or more Doom Reaver units.

Benefit: Add a unit attachment to one Doom Reaver unit free of cost. This unit attachment ignores FA restrictions.

TIER 3

Requirements: The army includes two or more Koldun Lord solos.

Benefit: Koldun Lord solos and the warjacks they 'jack marshal gain Advance Deployment.

TIER 4

Requirements: Zerkova's battlegroup includes three or more warjacks.

Benefit: Models in Zerkova's battlegroup gain +2 SPD during your first turn of the game.



KOMMANDER STRAKHOV

BLACK OPERATIONS

WARJACKS
Khador non-character warjacks

UNITS
Assault Kommandos, Kayazy Assassins, Kossite Woodsmen, Widowmakers

SOLOS
Manhunters, War Dog, Widowmaker Marksmen

TIER 1

Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: Assault Kommando units become FA U. Assault Kommando units gain Advance Deployment.

TIER 2

Requirements: The army includes two or more Assault Kommando units.

Benefit: For each Assault Kommando unit, place one trench template anywhere completely within 20" of the back edge of Strakhov's deployment zone after terrain has been placed but before either player deploys his army. Trench templates cannot be placed within 3" of another terrain feature but can be placed within 3" of each other.

TIER 3

Requirements: The army includes four or more units.

Benefit: Add one Manhunter or Widowmaker Marksman solo free of cost. This solo ignores FA restrictions.

TIER 4

Requirements: Strakhov's battlegroup includes two or more warjacks.

Benefit: Friendly models/units can begin the game affected by Strakhov's upkeep spells. These spells and their targets must be declared before either player sets up models. Strakhov does not pay focus to upkeep these spells during your first turn.

WARCASTERS OF KHADOR

The Khadoran military has become more regimented by modern reforms, but enormous liberty is provided to those rare few who manifest the mental ability to control warjacks. Provided they are loyal to the Motherland, such individuals are singled out, advanced rapidly through the ranks, and given authority over large numbers of soldiers and warjacks. Both Supreme Kommandant Gervaldt Irusk and Forward Kommander Sorscha Kratikoff are examples of warcasters who have earned special prominence within the military hierarchy, and each is a living legend among the rank-and-file. A darker example of the empress' liberty is the Butcher of Khardov. Even his own soldiers consider him a brutal madman, yet he holds the honored rank of kommander.

Empress Vanar and her predecessors have demonstrated a willingness to adapt to the needs of these men and women and even indulge them. This includes virtual immunity to criminal prosecution as well as tremendous leeway conducting missions against the enemy. Though warcasters are technically obligated to obey High Kommand dictates, they tend to operate outside the chain of command. To a warcaster, the military hierarchy and infrastructure exists only to provide reinforcements and maintain supply lines that provide the tools for war. As long as their warjacks arrive where and when they are needed, warcasters do not bother with the trivial tasks that occupy other officers.

The High Kommand is eager to foster more warcasters, but they have yet to find a reliable means to identify those with this potential. For centuries this has meant that despite its raw engineering excellence, Khador has lagged behind its rival Cygnar in arcane prowess. The last hundred years have brought the two nations closer than ever before to parity in wartime capability, but the High Kommand sees fewer men and women with warcasting talent than their southern adversary. This makes it doubly important to locate such individuals, preserve them, and hone them into weapons.

It was expected that expanding the scope and size of the Greylords Covenant—the premiere fellowship of wizardry and arcane research in Khador—would uncover more warcasters, but this has had limited success. Most warcasters continue to emerge seemingly at random from the ranks of the military, their sorcerous powers revealed by the stress of combat. Scholars in Khador insist certain family lines possess higher potential, and each manifestation of power is documented and examined. The Tzepesci line has been noted for many powerful sorcerers over the centuries, and while the Umbrean heritage is considered a black mark to some, others lament that the current Tzepesci great prince has not yet produced heirs.

The Greylords Covenant oversees the initial training of those not yet versed in arcane theory, and then the apprentice is assigned to a senior warcaster for mentoring. Of those warcasters who are Greylords, few advance beyond the rank of magziev, as their duties require them to focus on military matters over the arcane. The demands of Khador's imperial mandate prevent most warcasters from pursuing the esoteric research, field studies, and political maneuvering required for advancement to the highest ranks within the Covenant.

GREYLORDS COVENANT RANKS

Only warcasters directly affiliated with the Covenant are afforded arcane ranks, which recognize their aptitude and power as arcanists. Due to the wide scope of their responsibilities and the fact that warcasters are preferred on the battlefield, it is rare for these individuals to rise above the rank of magziev. This rank conveys authority only with regard to other members of the Covenant. For this reason, a warcaster's military rank is a far more significant measure of actual authority.



UCHENIK | RASTOVIK | MAGZIEV | KOLDUN | KOLDUN LORD | OBAVNIK | HIGH OBAVNIK ARBITER



KOMMANDER SORSCHA KRATIKOFF

There are exceptions, as illustrated by Koldun Kommander Aleksandra Zerkova, a warcaster who has carved a distinct niche within this fellowship. Some warcasters may also choose to pursue such advancement after retirement from active duty instead of serving on the High Kommand's general staff.

Recognized warcasters who have completed Druzhina training are usually promoted to kommander and provided the authority to operate independently, command a large number of soldiers, and requisition expensive machinery.

Some warcasters remain outside the military structure; as both Great Prince Tzepesci and the crone Zevanna Agha exemplify. These warcasters are obeyed like ranked kommanders and are given similar liberties with the empire's supply lines, a fact that does not sit well with some military officers. Such dissenters are wise to swallow their opinions as long as the empress endorses the arrangement.

KOMMANDANT IRUSK
KHADOR WARCASTER

"Know the land as you know yourself, strike without hesitation, and be prepared to offset any tactical disadvantage with overwhelming numbers. The ultimate purpose of war is victory at any cost."

—*Kommandant Gurvaldt Irusk,* Irusk on Conquest

IRUSK						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
6	6	7	6	15	15	10

SWORD CANNON			
RNG	ROF	AOE	POW
10	2	–	13

ONSLAUGHT	
POW	P+S
6	12

FOCUS	7
DAMAGE	17
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
WARJACK POINTS	+6
SMALL BASE	

FEAT: UNDYING LOYALTY

Irusk's reputation as a fearless and loyal kommandant has earned him the eternal respect and devotion of the entire Khadoran military. Troops will follow this national hero and esteemed military mind into battle without hesitation. His inspiring words bolster his forces with a courage that defies fear, injury, and even death.

While in Irusk's control area, friendly Faction warrior models/units gain Fearless, Tough, and +2 to melee and ranged attack rolls and cannot be knocked down. When a friendly Faction warrior model makes a Tough roll of 4, 5, or 6 while in Irusk's control area, that model heals 1 damage point. Undying Loyalty lasts for one round.

IRUSK

Assault – As part of a charge, after moving but before making its charge attack, this model can make one ranged attack targeting the model charged unless they were in melee with each other at the start of this model's activation. When resolving an Assault ranged attack, the attacking model does not suffer the target in melee penalty. If the target is not in melee range after moving, this model can make the Assault ranged attack before its activation ends.

Quick Work – When this model destroys one or more enemy models with a melee attack during its combat action, immediately after that attack is resolved this model can make one normal ranged attack. Attacks gained from Quick Work do not count against a weapon's ROF.

ONSLAUGHT

Magical Weapon

SPELLS	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
AIRBURST	3	CTRL	3	8	NO	YES
Target any model in this model's control area, ignoring LOS. When resolving Airburst, ignore cover, concealment, elevation, and Stealth. Models hit suffer a POW 8 blast damage roll.						
BATTLE LUST	3	6	–	–	NO	NO
Target friendly Faction warrior model/unit gains Fearless and gains an additional die on melee damage rolls for one round.						
GRIND	3	10	–	14	NO	YES
When a warjack is hit by Grind, it suffers 1 damage point to its first available Movement system box.						
INHOSPITABLE GROUND	3	SELF	CTRL	–	NO	NO
While in this model's control area, enemy models treat open terrain as rough terrain. Inhospitable Ground lasts for one round.						
IRON FLESH	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target friendly warrior model/unit gains +3 DEF but suffers –1 SPD.						
SUPERIORITY	3	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target friendly Faction warjack gains +2 SPD, MAT, and DEF and cannot be knocked down.						

TACTICAL TIPS

UNDYING LOYALTY – A disabled model that heals damage is no longer disabled.

ASSAULT – The assaulting model ignores the target in melee penalty even if is not in melee range of its charge target after moving.

QUICK WORK – This model cannot make the additional attack if it is still in melee.

Kommandant Gurvaldt Irusk was born to make war. As the chief military advisor to Empress Ayn Vanar XI, he is the foremost architect of the Khadoran wars of expansion. He is well loved by his men and renowned throughout the Motherland, to the common soldier regarded nigh unto a god.

Irusk's meteoric rise to power is the product of sheer determination, devotion, and strategic brilliance. He was born to a prominent military family and trained in the arts of warfare since birth. His mother died when he was young, leaving his father to raise him. The retired old soldier imbued his son with his knowledge of battle, his martial skill, and his ruthless persistence. Irusk spent his childhood studying the fundamentals of Khadoran military doctrine laid down by geniuses such as Vikenti Baromitzk and Rurik Zerkova. He joined the Winter Guard at the age of twelve and was already an accomplished soldier when his superiors realized his arcane potential a few years later.

Once he was sent to the Druzhina academy in Korsk for warcaster training, Irusk's military career was inexorable. His instinctive grasp of tactics saw weaknesses where others did not, his commanding presence rallied and organized troops to press the attack, and his innate magical capabilities enabled him to exploit every situation to its utmost. An officer at nineteen, he became a vested warcaster by twenty-one and reached a staff position in the Khadoran High Kommand by twenty-five. Victory followed victory as he probed the defenses of Khador's neighbors to the east and south.

From battle magic to combined arms, Irusk mastered every aspect of the modern battlefield. His treatise on tactical warfare, *Irusk on Conquest: How to Fully Subjugate Your Enemy,* has become required reading at military academies throughout the Iron Kingdoms. His accomplishments have inspired a generation of Khadoran officers and made his name known throughout western Immoren.

As he rose to even greater prominence, he left in his wake a growing number of admirers, enemies, and grieving families. Moving up through the High Kommand, Irusk has become the empress' chief advisor on military matters. In this capacity, he has begun to realize his personal dream: building a new Khadoran military, modernizing and enhancing it to conform to his vision.

The invasion of Llael cemented Irusk's reputation as one of the greatest military minds in history. He began the campaign with a series of lightning attacks on western cities of Llael in the heart of winter. Traditionally, the campaigning season in the Iron Kingdoms began no earlier than the first thaw of springtime, and the early assaults caught Llael's army entirely by surprise. Furthermore, Irusk's attack on Llaedry was the first real-world test of his experimental strategy of annihilation. Enjoying a profound degree of operational mobility, Irusk flawlessly coordinated his artillery, heavy infantry, and cavalry to deliver decisive blows to the enemy time and time again. The Winter Guard soldiers who attacked in the wake of his catastrophic barrages encountered little resistance. The siege was over with such speed and brutality that some parts of Llael surrendered without firing a shot. The other military commanders of the Iron Kingdoms took note of the fall of Laedry, and it is now considered one of the most important military actions in history. Both the speed of its conquest and Irusk's successful emphasis on combined arms and modern artillery made it a landmark in warfare. It was a victory that can be attributed directly to Irusk's brilliance.



Attentive to a fault, Irusk is an unrelenting perfectionist whose icy demeanor promotes an air of authority. Selfless in the service of the empress and the Motherland, he is utterly incorruptible. He despises the ignorance and the political machinations of lesser men and negotiates the Khadoran court like a raging bull, yet he has the subtle pragmatism to cultivate friendships and alliances with the most powerful factions of the kayazy—the very men who control the purse strings of the empire. With their patronage, Irusk stands ready to redraw the old maps and lead his legions to boundless victory.

SUPREME KOMMANDANT IRUSK

KHADOR EPIC WARCASTER

A general must act decisively in battle. He who stands on the defensive does not conduct war but only endures it.

—Supreme Kommandant Irusk

IRUSK						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
6	6	7	6	15	15	10

HAND CANNON			
RNG	ROF	AOE	POW
12	1	–	12

ENDGAME	
POW	P+S
7	13

FOCUS	7
DAMAGE	17
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
WARJACK POINTS	+5
SMALL BASE	

FEAT: DESPERATE GROUND

In his lifetime of innovating tactics on countless battlefields Supreme Kommandant Irusk has learned how to wrest the initiative from his enemies and turn untenable ground into an advantage. He strikes at the crucial hour and raises the Khadoran standard as he leads his army through any obstacles to seize victory.

Friendly Faction models currently in Irusk's control area ignore cloud effects and forests when determining LOS and gain Pathfinder. Affected models currently knocked down immediately stand up. Enemy models/units beginning their activations in Irusk's control area suffer –2 SPD and cannot give or receive orders. Desperate Ground lasts for one round.

IRUSK

Martial Discipline – Friendly living Faction warrior models with small or medium bases can ignore friendly Faction warrior models in this model's command range when determining LOS and can advance through friendly Faction warrior models in this model's command range if they have enough movement to move completely past them.

Total Obedience – While in this model's command range, friendly living non-warcaster Faction warrior models gain Tough.

Warjack Bond – One non-character warjack in Irusk's battlegroup begins the game bonded to him. The warjack gains +2 DEF and cannot be knocked down.

ENDGAME

Magical Weapon

SPELLS	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
AIRBURST	3	CTRL	3	8	NO	YES

Target any model in this model's control area, ignoring LOS. When resolving Airburst, ignore cover, concealment, elevation, and Stealth. Models hit suffer a POW 8 blast damage roll.

ARTIFICE OF DEVIATION	3	CTRL	5	–	NO	NO

Place a 5" AOE anywhere completely in this model's control area. While in the AOE, friendly models gain Pathfinder and can advance through obstructions and other models if they have enough movement to move completely past them. Enemy models treat the AOE as rough terrain. Artifice of Deviation lasts for one round.

BATTLE LUST	3	6	–	–	NO	NO

Target friendly Faction warrior model/unit gains Fearless and gains an additional die on melee damage rolls for one round.

ENERGIZER	*	SELF	CTRL	–	NO	NO

This model spends up to 3 focus points to cast Energizer. Models in its battlegroup that are currently in its control area can immediately advance up to 1" for each focus point spent. Energizer can be cast only once per turn.

FIRE FOR EFFECT	3	6	–	–	YES	NO

Boost the attack and damage rolls of target friendly Faction model's first ranged attack each activation.

TACTICAL SUPREMACY	2	6	–	–	YES	NO

Target friendly model/unit can advance up to 3" after all models have ended their activations on your turn.

TACTICAL TIPS

Desperate Ground – Because this feat affects SPD, affected models cannot charge.

Total Obedience – Remember, this model is within its own command range.

One man has stood for decades at the forefront of the Khadoran Army as perhaps the greatest military genius of his age and an example all soldiers strive to emulate. The High Kommand has named Gurvaldt Irusk "the empire's perfect officer." His accomplishments impress warriors of all creeds and nations. He exercises absolute control over men in the chaos of battle and the uncertainties of war. For all this, however, his promotion to supreme kommandant came on the heels of defeat and cemented his resolve to redeem himself in the eyes of his sovereign.

Irusk's successes have never satisfied him. He remains critical of any plan and constantly seeks to perfect his approach to war, yet even this habit of frank self-appraisal did not prepare him for the scathing words of his empress after his initial failure to capture Northguard. Her indictment shamed him more than he had ever felt in his lengthy military career. During a short leave at his neglected family home he realized it was her accusation of wasting the lives of his soldiers that troubled him most. As an officer, he had learned to measure lives as a resource. He had reduced his countrymen to abstract quantities of force and valued them too little.

Uncertain how best to reclaim his honor, Gurvaldt Irusk considered falling on his sword, an act still considered a brave death for a disgraced solider. He found a well-worn cavalry saber among the neglected relics of his father's military career, and it brought to mind forgotten lessons from his gruff sire. A summons from the empress forestalled Irusk's hand. The last thing he expected was that she would promote him to the rank of supreme kommandant. All through the ceremony, her eyes bored into his with a message that required no words. His promotion was a challenge, as the empress would accept nothing less than total victory.

Before his march back to Ravensgard, Irusk took up his father's sword. He had the mechaniks at the Rigevnya



Complex set the fine blade into a worthy mechanikal housing. Irusk wields this weapon as a reminder of his family honor and his promise to deliver a victory to his empress.

On his return, he gathered his men to where he stood illuminated atop the inner ramparts and told them of the battle to come. The ringing tones of his voice echoed from the sky and quickened the blood in the veins of every listener. A ripple of revitalized enthusiasm spread through the army like an explosive shockwave.

When Irusk marched on Northguard for the second time, he did so with the finest army ever assembled by the Khadoran Empire. He led this army with the precision of an artisan. In a single day the greatest Cygnaran fortress in the north fell, and with it, the Thornwood. Irusk personally raised the Khadoran flag in Northguard, an act that cemented his reputation as the greatest military commander alive.

When entering battle, Irusk imagines the assets in his forces moving in absolute precision, like thousands of interlocking gears. He knows even his achievement at Northguard is not enough for his empress. Until the enemies of the empire lay broken and submit, the supreme kommandant must push forward and attain victory after victory, whatever the obstacles in his path.

KARCHEV THE TERRIBLE
KHADOR WARCASTER

I have already given one life to my country. The Motherland has granted me a second, and before I pass on to Urcaen I will use it to send many more before me.

—Karchev the Terrible

KARCHEV						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
4	12	7	5	12	19	8

FISSURE				
	RNG	ROF	AOE	POW
R	SP 10	1	–	12

OPEN FIST		
	POW	P+S
L	3	15

SUNDER		
	POW	P+S
R	7	19

DAMAGE					
1	2	3	4	5	6
	L			R	
L	L	M	B	R	R
	M	M	B	B	

FOCUS	5
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
WARJACK POINTS	+5
LARGE BASE	

FEAT: TOTAL WAR

It is impossible to determine where the man ends and the machine begins. With absolute control over every movement of his battlegroup, Karchev guides his warjacks as a singular mechanical organism of unrestrained destruction.

Models in Karchev's battlegroup currently in his control area gain Pathfinder and can charge or make power attacks without spending focus. At the start of their activations, affected models can turn to face any direction before their normal movement. Total War lasts for one turn.

KARCHEV

Arcantrik Turbine – At the start of this model's activation, it gains either +2" movement and Pathfinder for one turn or 1 focus point.

Man in the Machine – Karchev is a living model, but he is neither a warjack nor a warrior model. He has a damage grid and suffers damage like a warjack. Karchev can make slam, trample, throw, headlock/weapon lock, and push power attacks without spending focus. Karchev cannot make throws or headlock/weapon locks while his Open Fist is crippled. Effects modifying the amount of damage to or the manner in which damage is applied to a warjack also apply to him. The B boxes of Karchev's damage grid represent his Body system. Friendly Faction models with the Repair skill can attempt to repair Karchev like a warjack but cannot repair his Body system. When Karchev spends focus points to heal damage, he can heal damage only to his Body system. If another model heals Karchev through a means other than repair, damage can be removed only from his Body system. While his Body system is crippled, he cannot allocate focus. Karchev is affected by deep water like a warrior model. Apply damage he suffers from deep water only to his Body system.

FISSURE

Knockdown – When a model is hit by an attack with this weapon, it is knocked down.

OPEN FIST

Open Fist

SUNDER

Magical Weapon

Reach

SPELLS	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
ERUPTION	3	8	3	14	NO	YES

Models hit suffer a POW 14 fire damage roll. The AOE is a cloud effect that remains in play for one round. Models entering or ending their activation in the AOE suffer an unboostable POW 14 fire damage roll.

GROUND ZERO	3	SELF	5	13	NO	NO

Center a 5" AOE on this model. Each other model in the AOE is hit and suffers a POW 13 damage roll. Each enemy model damaged by Ground Zero is pushed d6" directly away from this model in the order you choose.

SIDEARMS	2	SELF	CTRL	–	YES	NO

While in this model's control area and B2B with one or more models in this model's battlegroup, models in this model's battlegroup cannot be knocked down and gain +1 DEF for each other model in the battlegroup with which they are B2B.

TOW	2	SELF	–	–	YES	NO

If during its normal movement this model advances within 2" of a friendly warjack, at the end of that movement you can place the warjack B2B with it, completely within its back arc. Up to three warjacks can be placed by Tow each time this model ends its normal movement.

UNEARTHLY RAGE	3	SELF	CTRL	–	NO	NO

While in this model's control area, this model and warjacks in its battlegroup gain boosted melee attack and melee damage rolls, and their melee weapons gain Magical Weapon. Unearthly Rage lasts for one turn.

HEIGHT/WEIGHT: 13' / 12 TONS

ARMAMENT: SUNDER (RIGHT ARM)

FUEL LOAD/BURN USAGE: 529 LBS / 6 HRS GENERAL, 1.5 HRS COMBAT

INITIAL SERVICE DATE: 571 AR (CURRENT CHASSIS DESIGN)

CORTEX MANUFACTURER: NONE

ORIG. CHASSIS DESIGN: KHADORAN MECHANIKS ASSEMBLY

TACTICAL TIPS

ARCANTRIK TURBINE – A model can have more focus points than its FOCUS as a result of Arcantrik Turbine. Apply movement bonuses only during a model's activation.

MAN IN THE MACHINE – Unspent focus points on Karchev add to his ARM normally. Karchev can run and charge without spending focus.

GROUND ZERO – Roll separately for each model pushed.

TOW – Wreck markers are not considered warjacks and therefore cannot be placed by Tow.

For over a century Kommander Alexander Karchev has crushed the enemies of his beloved nation. After enduring the worst horrors of war, Karchev chose a tortured existence encased within the shell of a warjack rather than accept the peace of death. His sheer brutality and astounding control over warjacks make him among the most feared of Khadoran warcasters.

Karchev was already a respected Greylord magziev and decorated warcaster past forty winters when the Thornwood War broke out in 511 AR, and he led a large battlegroup on the Khadoran left flank during the Battle of the Tongue. On the heels of the retreating Cygnarans, he pushed into

an ambush that decimated his forces. Although he was gravely wounded he knew he could not wait for the arrival of reinforcements. He instead drove forward to assault the enemy warcaster, Colonel Drake Cathmore. The ensuing duel destroyed Karchev's body even as it killed his foe.

Despite his horrific wounds, Karchev refused to die. Desperately he clung to life until he was discovered on the field and returned to the Motherland, where his life was mechanikally sustained. Though he survived, his shattered limbs could not be saved.

Others in this position would have faded into obscurity, but this highly decorated war hero confronted the High Kommand and demanded a machine body be built to let him fight again. A decade later he was presented with an iron monstrosity built around a modified Berserker chassis that combined the life-sustaining machinery he needed with the shell of a warjack. This new body gave Karchev the mobility for which he longed. Over his long years of service, he has taken to the field in numerous mechanikal forms. Some were retired as new innovations replaced old, and others were left devastated on the battlefield.

The High Kommand views Karchev as a national treasure. He is a brilliant arcanist and officer with more than a century of battlefield experience. Karchev has access to a depth of military history unparalleled by any outside the immortal generals of Cryx. The High Kommand listens when Kommander Karchev speaks. Indeed, Supreme Kommandant Irusk personally chose the kommander to accompany him in the final assault on the Cygnaran fortress of Northguard, where he cut down General Hagan Cathmore, a descendant of Drake Cathmore.

Despite the agony inflicted by the very machines keeping him alive, the venerable warcaster has cut a broken and bloody path across western Immoren. Spending the majority of his life entombed within the hull of a warjack has given Karchev a special affinity for his machines. They serve him more like a pack of hunting wolves than mindless machines.



OLD WITCH OF KHADOR & SCRAPJACK

KHADOR WARCASTER & CHARACTER LIGHT WARJACK

She's the shadow of winter, The claw of the night
A bloody lament, And dead kings' plight

—Khardic folk rhyme, early 2nd century AR

OLD WITCH						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
5	7	6	3	15	14	8

IRON CLAWS x2	
POW	P+S
6	13

FOCUS	7
DAMAGE	16
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
WARJACK POINTS	+3
SMALL BASE	

FEAT: FIELD OF TALONS

More ancient than Khador itself, the Old Witch commands a connection to the land that allows her to force submission even from the trees and stones. At her word the earth spews forth metal barbs to snare and rip at her enemies like the deadly black talons of a terrible predator.

While in the Old Witch's control area, enemy models cannot run, charge, or make special attacks. Enemy models that advance and end their movement in the Old Witch's control area immediately suffer an unboostable POW 14 damage roll. Field of Talons lasts for one round.

OLD WITCH

Pathfinder

Terror

Augury – This model and warjacks in its battlegroup ignore cloud effects and forests when determining LOS.

Cull Soul – This model gains one soul token for each living enemy model destroyed within 2" of it. When this model replenishes its focus during your next Control Phase, replace each soul token on it with 1 focus point.

Great Power – During your Control Phase, this model can upkeep one spell without spending focus or fury.

Prowl – This model gains Stealth while within terrain that provides concealment, the AOE of a spell that provides concealment, or the AOE of a cloud effect.

IRON CLAWS

Magical Weapon

SPELLS	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
AVATAR OF SLAUGHTER	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target this model or Scrapjack. The affected model gains +2 to melee attack rolls. When it destroys an enemy warrior model with a melee attack during its activation, after the attack is resolved the affected model can advance up to 1" and make an additional melee attack.						
GALLOWS	3	10	–	13	NO	YES
When an enemy model is hit by this attack, it can be pushed d6" directly toward Gallows' point of origin.						
IRON FLESH	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target friendly warrior model/unit gains +3 DEF but suffers –1 SPD.						
MURDER OF CROWS	3	CTRL	5	*	YES	NO
Place a 5" AOE cloud effect anywhere completely in this model's control area. Any model that is not part of this model's battlegroup that enters or ends its activation in the AOE suffers an unboostable POW 8 damage roll.						
UNSEEN PATH	2	CTRL	–	–	NO	NO
Unseen Path can be cast only while Scrapjack is in this model's control area. When Unseen Path is cast, immediately place this model within 2" of Scrapjack or place Scrapjack within 2" of this model. A model cannot advance this turn after being placed by Unseen Path.						
WEALD SECRETS	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target friendly model/unit gains Camouflage and Pathfinder. (A model with Camouflage gains an additional +2 DEF when benefiting from concealment or cover.)						

TACTICAL TIPS

Field of Talons – Models that cannot make special attacks cannot make power attacks. Models that do not advance do not suffer this damage. Remember, changing facing is considered movement.

Cull Soul – A model can have more focus points than its FOC as a result of Cull Soul.

Gallows – This means the model is moved before it suffers damage.

Murder of Crows – This is not an offensive spell, and no damage is dealt when the AOE is placed.

Weald Secrets – If a model ignores concealment or cover, it also ignores concealment or cover's Camouflage bonus.

Khador's primal forests stretch across lands soaked in memory and blood, and the stories of peasants hold truths from time immemorial. Such tales speak of a wizened hag primeval and terrible. She has advised chieftains, kings, and princes and influenced the decisions that have shaped Khador for millennia. Though all too often folk tales and superstitions are dismissed, peasants from the Khardic Sea to Old Umbrey know the Old Witch has watched them for countless generations.

Though her origins are long lost, tales of the Old Witch still circulate by firesides across Khador. The oldest stories are retellings of Molgur legends describing a hunched and wizened creature of shadow—a thing of slaughter that drank deeply the blood of the fallen and feasted upon the flesh of men. Legends from the time of Khardovic describe an ugly, old woman of untold power counseling the priest-king and his council. Sometimes this advice cost those who took it their lives, but always it served to advance the priest-king's cause. The Old Witch appears in hundreds of later stories demonstrating her subtle guidance of the northern peoples of western Immoren, leaving a trail of lore that covers nearly three thousand years.

She appears in folktales from Hellspass to the Khardic Sea, always giving and taking capriciously. Kossite myths describe her saving entire villages from starvation in exchange for the clan leader's first male child. Khardic tales speak of foolish men crossing her and vanishing. Only their skins were ever found, strung up at crossroads as a warning with her mark etched into them. Some of the oldest

Skirovite folk tales speak of the time when Menoth himself walked the world and found the Old Witch in her cave waiting for him.

She is known by many names, but the most common is Zevanna Agha, the Old Witch of Khador. Few tales describe her in detail, but most agree she appears as a decrepit, hunchbacked woman of ancient years supported by a walking staff and bearing a writhing sack on her twisted shoulders. Her fingers end in sharp metal talons. It was not until after the formation of the Iron Kingdoms that legends first mentioned her companion, a primitive steamjack cobbled together by her own hand. Built at the infancy of warjack development from parts of wrecks left on various battlefields, the Scrapjack is a mechanikal beast of burden that serves the witch faithfully. It bears an old arcane relay scavenged from the ruins of the First Thornwood War.

Her occult powers are primal and ancient in nature, but the Old Witch has had no trouble adapting to the mechanika of modern warfare. She commands warjacks with the same arcane prowess that draws the crows of the forest to serve her and the iron teeth of the earth to gnash her enemies.

(continued on next page)



Though her deeds have often served to protect the Khadoran people, no scholar doubts the Old Witch walks Immoren for her own purposes. According to legend, she counseled the Khardic warlords to seek conquest, promising them aid "from the ancient source of their blood" and that their enemies would die "with breath still on their lips." Though to this day the majority of Khadoran sages attribute the great plague that swept the Kossite and Skirov peoples to Khardovic's spirit, a few scholars point to the Old Witch herself. She appears frequently in the tales of the Khardic wars of expansion offering advice, reading omens, and apparently working enchantments not drawn from the power of prayer 1,500 years before the Gift. Yet she has also appeared in the legends of the Umbreans, Skirov, and Kossites, supporting one chieftain or horselord over another. The exact extent to which she has manipulated the various northern peoples is a contested mystery.

One legend states that Sveynod Skelvoro declared himself the first Emperor of Khard at her behest and that she has appeared to every Khadoran monarch since. The tale claims she hammered the gold and iron from the weapons of slain chieftains into the first crown of Khador and adorned it with red jewels, powerful enchantments, and human blood. Proof exists that she openly opposed the Orgoth in Khardic lands, killing them wherever she found them and washing her talons in their blood to deny power to their dark gods. Rancorous, vicious, and cruel she may be, but she aided the Khardic resistance of the Orgoth, guiding Khador and its people toward some vision of greatness known only to her.



Height/Weight: 13′ / Unknown

Armament: Twin Mechanikal Talons (right and left legs), Arcantrik Relay

Fuel Load/Burn Usage: Unknown

Initial Service Date: Unknown

Cortex Manufacturer: Unknown

Orig. Chassis Design: Zevanna Agha

The recently published journals of Exarch Voltor Drydestiev, lifelong confidant of King Ivad Vanar, describe the witch's continuing influence. Mere days after Ivad assumed the throne, an ugly old woman came uninvited to him in his garden. The new king and the witch spoke at great length. When pressed, King Ivad would reveal only that he had been in the presence of something ancient and that the safety of the Motherland would be ensured for generations to come.

No one knows the full extent of Ivad's bargain, but secret orders were passed down to his generals ensuring their cooperation with the witch. Though men have witnessed the Old Witch crossing the vast expanses of Khador for centuries, she has been seen increasingly often in the modern era, often accompanied by soldiers and warjacks. By the command of the empress herself, Zevanna Agha has the right to requisition men and material when and where she requires with no explanation or accountability. It is an uncomfortable arrangement for those involved, as no one can claim to know the crone's mind.

That the Old Witch has powerful allies amongst the Khadoran military and aristocracy is undeniable. The Greylords Covenant bows to her superior skill, heeds her advice without fail, and provides her with their arcane abilities whenever she requires them. She now frequently leads Khadoran troops in battle to slaughter her enemies with the same wicked zeal she displays in the oldest legends. The Third Border Legion has come to be her favored source of troops, and the officers of that legion have been ordered by the High Kommand to heed her enigmatic demands.

The men and women of the Winter Guard speak of her in hushed voices, knowing she can appear at any time and beckon them to accompany her with a gesture of her wicked claws. Those chosen to follow her find themselves fighting vicious battles in remote places for obscure reasons, sometimes against unfamiliar horrors. Although the Old Witch has opposed every group that would stand in the way of Khador's destiny, she seems to have a special hatred for the blackclad druids of the Circle Orboros. She has struck down some of the strongest among their leaders and seized lands they thought to be their dominion but which she counted a part of the Motherland.

She has long meddled in the lives of Khador's noble bloodlines, and the Tzepesci lineage in particular has drawn her attention. For centuries her careful ministrations have guided their wars, lives, marriages, and children culminating in their current heir, Prince Vladimir Tzepesci. He is the last of his line, and a heavy doom was laid upon him at birth. The Old Witch waited until he nearly sacrificed his life in a valiant battle against Cryx to reveal his destiny to him and has since watched and smiled as fate has tightened its grasp on him. It seems impossible that such a cruel and cunning creature could care for a mortal, making it more likely she sees him as no more than a weapon of singular potency.

Far more active now than at any time since the Orgoth occupation, the Old Witch has moved beyond the shadows of history to directly intervene in the affairs of the Motherland. The world now knows the truth by which generations of Khadoran peasants have lived. The Motherland has a spirit, a face, and a form: a wicked crone with iron claws.

SCRAPJACK

Arc Node

Pathfinder

Companion [Old Witch] – This model is included in any army that includes the Old Witch. If the Old Witch is destroyed or removed from play, remove this model from play. This model is part of the Old Witch's battlegroup.

Prowl – This model gains Stealth while within terrain that provides concealment, the AOE of a spell that provides concealment, or the AOE of a cloud effect.

Warjack Bond [Old Witch] – This model is bonded to the Old Witch. When the Old Witch is damaged by an enemy attack, this model gains +2 SPD and +2 to attack and damage rolls for one round.



MECHANIKAL TALONS

Reach

KOMMANDER SORSCHA

KHADOR WARCASTER

She is a perfect example of what a woman should be: pale as the ice that blankets us, beautiful but distant as the starry sky, yet deadly as a winter storm.

—Lieutenant Yurik Belavdon of the 12th Iron Fang Uhlan Kompany

SORSCHA						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
6	6	6	5	16	14	9

HAND CANNON			
RNG	ROF	AOE	POW
12	1	–	12

FROSTFANG	
POW	P+S
7	13

FOCUS	6
DAMAGE	17
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
WARJACK POINTS	+5
SMALL BASE	

FEAT: ICY GAZE

Wherever Kommander Sorscha treads, winter follows. The celebrated Khadoran warcaster manipulates extreme cold through sorcery, storing up her power to unleash a massive blanket of ice that freezes her enemies in their tracks.

Enemy models without Immunity: Cold currently in Sorscha's control area and LOS become stationary for one round.

SORSCHA

Immunity: Cold

FROSTFANG

Magical Weapon

Reach

Critical Freeze – On a critical hit, the model hit becomes stationary for one round unless it has Immunity: Cold.

SPELLS	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
BOUNDLESS CHARGE	2	6	–	–	NO	NO
During its activation, target friendly model can charge without spending focus or being forced and gains +2" movement and Pathfinder when it charges. Boundless Charge lasts for one turn.						
FOG OF WAR	3	SELF	CTRL	–	YES	NO
Models gain concealment while in this model's control area.						
FREEZING GRIP	4	8	–	–	NO	YES
Target model/unit without Immunity: Cold becomes stationary for one round.						
RAZOR WIND	2	10	–	12	NO	YES
A blade of wind slices through the target model.						
TEMPEST	4	8	4	12	NO	YES
Models hit by Tempest are knocked down and suffer a POW 12 damage roll.						
WIND RUSH	2	SELF	–	–	NO	NO
This model can immediately make a full advance and gains +2 DEF for one round. Wind Rush can be cast only once per turn.						

TACTICAL TIPS

TEMPEST – This means every model in the AOE is knocked down, friendly and enemy alike.

When a teary-eyed Sorscha Kratikoff looked into her father's face at the age of thirteen winters and asked to be a soldier like him, he just smiled, patted the black hair on her head, and strode out the door to join his unit. Later that month her mother received word of the massacre at Boarsgate. Sorscha's father lay among the dead, killed by Orsus Zoktavir, the Butcher of Khardov. Two years later, Sorscha lied about her age and joined the Winter Guard. She fought against all odds and excelled as a soldier, surviving the rigors and mayhem of war fueled by the image of her father's bloody end.

Sorscha served in three consecutive tours of duty with the prestigious border garrisons at Ravensgard and participated in frequent bloody conflicts with Llaelese mercenaries and her Cygnaran counterparts. She demonstrated considerable natural tactical prowess and was chosen for officer training at the Druzhina in Korsk before returning to her men as a lieutenant. She advanced quickly through the ranks to kapitan and kovnik. A warcaster named Torisevich valued her opinion above his other officers' and picked her to serve as an aide. Perhaps some part of her felt an affinity with armored machines even before she demonstrated her gift for warcasting. Sorscha had already shown hints of inborn sorcery but had kept them to herself, for she had been raised in a rural border area where such powers prompted superstition and dread.

Her true potential surfaced during a conflict near the Ordic border when Torisevich was slain in an ambush and his 'jacks suddenly fell dormant. In desperation, Sorscha charged unescorted into the combat. She cut men down like stalks of grain, but her troops were demolished and she found herself far outnumbered. One foe sliced her thigh and she fell. Suddenly, the world froze. Everything around her, including her enemies, stood encased in a layer of ice and frost. Leaning against one of the nearby Juggernauts, she found herself able to reach within its mind. She reactivated its cortex by mimicking the arcane sequence her untrained vision had perceived from her kommander. Sent forth at her bidding, this warjack charged into the nearby enemies.

Days later Sorscha Kratikoff stood before her queen in Korsk. Her new talents were quickly put to the test, and she began to learn to control her sorcery and warcaster ability from the enigmatic and gifted Umbrean prince, Vladimir Tzepesci. In her year of study with the nobleman, she fell in love. She saw in him ancient nobility, a sense of profound duty, and devotion to the memory of his ancestors. They had a brief romance before duty called her away to service at the height of their passion. Since their parting she seems to have become more embittered and pours her strength into the tasks at hand. Those who see her now would never suspect any ardor lingering beneath her iron discipline and unfaltering dedication to Khador.

Only the infrequent presence of Dark Prince Vladimir can thaw her soul, if but for a moment. "Fiery rage and icy hatred!" she was once heard to say. "These things a good soldier makes, not warmth and comfort." Despite these words, there are those who believe her fate is tied to Tzepesci by a cord that will not be easily broken.



FORWARD KOMMANDER SORSCHA KRATIKOFF

KHADOR EPIC WARCASTER

Kommander Kratikoff is the ideal soldier. She is tireless, tenacious, and unrelenting, willing to execute any order without question.

—Kommandant Gurvaldt Irusk

SORSCHA						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
6	6	7	5	16	15	8

QUAD-IRON			
RNG	ROF	AOE	POW
10	1	–	10

FROSTFANG	
POW	P+S
7	13

FOCUS	6
DAMAGE	17
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
WARJACK POINTS	+6
SMALL BASE	

FEAT: WINTER'S CHILL

Summoning the icy fury within her soul, Forward Kommander Sorscha unleashes the elements upon her enemies. The deadly rime with which she covers them freezes both steel and flesh.

Damage to enemy models without Immunity: Cold currently in Sorscha's control area that exceeds ARM is doubled this turn.

SORSCHA

Immunity: Cold

Desperate Pace [Winter Guard] (★Action) – RNG CMD. Target Friendly Winter Guard unit. If the Winter Guard unit is in range, it gains +2" movement during its activation this turn.

Elite Cadre [Winter Guard] – Friendly Winter Guard models gain Combined Arms. (When a model with Combined Arms misses an attack roll when making a combined ranged attack, it can reroll that attack roll. Each attack roll can be rerolled only once as a result of Combined Arms.)

Warjack Bond – One non-character warjack in Sorscha's battlegroup begins the game bonded to her. The warjack gains Immunity: Cold. When an enemy model ends its activation within 2" of the bonded warjack, the enemy model becomes stationary for one round unless that model has Immunity: Cold.

QUAD-IRON

Multi-Fire (★Attack) – Make an attack with this weapon. On a hit, after resolving the attack this model can immediately make one additional attack with this weapon targeting the last model hit or another model within 2" of the last model hit, ignoring ROF. This model can make up to four attacks during its activation as a result of Multi-Fire.

FROSTFANG

Magical Weapon

Reach

Critical Freeze – On a critical hit, the model hit becomes stationary for one round unless it has Immunity: Cold.

SPELLS	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
BOUNDLESS CHARGE	2	6	–	–	NO	NO
During its activation, target friendly model can charge without spending focus or being forced and gains +2" movement and Pathfinder when it charges. Boundless Charge lasts for one turn.						
CYCLONE	2	SELF	–	–	NO	NO
This model immediately makes a full advance. It cannot be targeted by free strikes during this movement. At the end of this movement, this model can make one melee attack against each model in its LOS that is in its melee range. Cyclone can be cast only once per turn.						
FREEZING GRIP	4	8	–	–	NO	YES
Target model/unit becomes stationary for one round unless it has Immunity: Cold.						
IRON FLESH	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target friendly warrior model/unit gains +3 DEF but suffers –1 SPD.						
RAZOR WIND	2	10	–	12	NO	YES
A blade of wind slices through the target model.						
SHATTER STORM	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
When target friendly Faction model/unit directly hits and boxes an enemy model with a ranged or melee attack, center a 3" AOE on the boxed model, then remove that model from play. Models in the AOE are hit and suffer an unboostable POW 8 blast damage roll.						

TACTICAL TIPS

Multi-Fire – Multi-Fire ignores ROF but does not ignore RNG. Additional attacks against targets beyond this weapon's range will automatically miss.

Shatter Storm – The boxed model does not provide a soul or corpse token

Sorscha learned to live with loss at a young age. When her father died, she resolved herself to feel nothing and hid her pain behind service. When she witnessed Winter Guard comrades killed and maimed, she placed all her grief behind her icy exterior. Slowly she grew numb to the suffering around her, feeling little when her own troops died or when innocents stumbled into the path of war.

Throughout her career, Sorscha moved among officers descended from nobility. Their arrogance and entitlement chafed her peasant upbringing, driving her feelings even deeper. Only Vladimir Tzepesci—a great prince—gave her the honest and open words of a man without pretense. To her surprise, she found in him the only man to open her heart since the death of her father. Vladimir's enemies among the kayazy were quick to take advantage of such vulnerability, spreading rumors of improper conduct and even whispers of treason between the two lovers.

The Llaelese occupation brought suffering and loss on an unimagined scale, and not just to the people "liberated" by the armies of Khador. At the height of the war, Vladimir vanished, an apparent victim of Cryx. Duty alone kept Sorscha from riding out to find him. Soon the kayazy began questioning his competence, his habits, and even his loyalty to the Motherland as if his past accomplishments meant nothing. An intense fire burned within Sorscha's icy heart, and she yearned to hunt down the cowards who spread these lies and hang them by their entrails.

Promoted to the rank of forward kommander, she was assigned a cadre of handpicked Winter Guard and ordered to shed southern blood. Sorscha and her battalion tore into those who opposed the Khadoran Empire. Compelled by her duty as much as her need to give way to the violence

in her heart, her fury was that of some goddess of frost and death.

When Vladimir returned, he came to her before any other. The hope she had thought crushed by his death returned in the short time they spent together, but this reunion was brief. Kommandant Irusk called Sorscha back to duty in eastern Llael. By the time she next had leave, Vladimir had been summoned to war, and soon after, Sorscha was recalled to Ravensgard. She quickly concluded that the High Kommand wished to separate them. As the months of constant battle passed, Sorscha's thoughts darkened. Now she channels her frustrations into combat, where she fights like a woman possessed.

These were the thoughts shading her mind as she watched Cygnaran knights surround the grievously wounded Butcher of Khardov after his failed attack on the city of Fellig. She had been sent by Irusk to check on Kommander Zoktavir's status, but she decided such an end was only proper for the man who had murdered her father. She turned her back, leaving the warcaster to his presumed death. Sorscha feels no remorse but has begun to worry she may one day pay for her quiet act of revenge—particularly after hearing that Zoktavir managed to survive.

Sorscha's patriotism still drives her, but it is increasingly eclipsed by the darkness growing in her heart. She does not care why the Motherland asks her to fight, only that she can find a few moments of peace in the clarity of action.



KOMMANDER STRAKHOV

KHADOR WARCASTER

I require men of will and conscience who can kill without feeling or judgment. Without judgment there is no obstacle to action.

—Kommander Strakhov

STRAKHOV						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
6	7	7	6	15	16	9

CINDER BOMB			
RNG	ROF	AOE	POW
6	1	3	14

RIOT GUN			
RNG	ROF	AOE	POW
10	1	–	12

TRENCH SWORD	
POW	P+S
6	13

FOCUS	6
DAMAGE	17
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
WARJACK POINTS	+6
SMALL BASE	

FEAT: IRON FIST

Kommander Strakhov is famous for his unrelenting and aggressive advances. He can manifest his will as a tide of raw arcane force that drives both man and machine past their normal limits before he commits them to the final charge across the battlefield to hammer into the enemy like a fist of iron.

Friendly Faction models that charge or slam power attack an enemy model while that model is in Strakhov's control area gain +4" movement and Pathfinder. Warjacks in Strakhov's battlegroup can charge and slam power attack an enemy model while the enemy model is in Strakhov's control area without spending focus. Iron Fist lasts for one turn.

STRAKHOV

Immunity: Corrosion

Immunity: Fire

Pathfinder

Alchemical Mask – This model ignores gas effects. When determining LOS or resolving attacks, this model ignores cloud effects.

Elite Cadre [Assault Kommandos] – Friendly Assault Kommando models gain Pathfinder.

Sprint – At the end of this model's activation, if it destroyed one or more enemy models with melee attacks this activation it can make a full advance.

CINDER BOMB

Damage Type: Fire

Cumbersome – If this model attacks with this weapon during its activation, it cannot attack with another ranged weapon that activation. If this model attacked with another ranged weapon this activation, it cannot attack with this weapon.

Smoke – This weapon's AOE is a cloud effect that remains in play for one round.

RIOT GUN

Rapid Fire [d3] – When you decide to make initial attacks with this weapon at the beginning of this model's combat action, roll a d3. The total rolled is the number of initial attacks this model can make with this weapon during the combat action, ignoring ROF.

TRENCH SWORD

Magical Weapon

Brutal Charge – This model gains +2 to charge attack damage rolls with this weapon.

SPELLS	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
BATTERING RAM	2	6	–	12	NO	YES
When an enemy model is hit by Battering Ram, it can be pushed 3" directly away from the spell's point of origin.						
OCCULTATION	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target friendly model / unit gains Stealth.						
OVERRUN	2	6	–	–	NO	NO
When target model in this model's battlegroup destroys one or more enemy models with an attack, immediately after the attack is resolved one model in this model's battlegroup that is in its control area can make a full advance, then Overrun expires. Overrun can be cast only once per turn and lasts for one turn.						
RIFT	3	8	4	13	NO	YES
The AOE is rough terrain and remains in play for one round.						
SENTRY	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
When an enemy model advances and ends its movement in the LOS of a target friendly Faction model, the affected model can immediately make one normal ranged attack, then Sentry expires.						
SUPERIORITY	3	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target friendly Faction warjack gains +2 SPD, MAT, and DEF and cannot be knocked down.						

TACTICAL TIPS

Iron Fist – Apply movement bonuses only during a model's activation.

Few soldiers are as hated and feared by the Motherland's enemies as Kommander Oleg Strakhov. This is the man the High Kommand turns to for the execution of its most dangerous missions, for if he cannot succeed the task is impossible. Strakhov is a consummate soldier and lives to test himself to the limits. The combination of his ruthlessness and tactical genius has earned him notoriety among Khador's enemies.

Strakhov has served Khador for nearly two decades, but the details of his service were largely unknown except to a select few within the High Kommand until the invasion of Llael, where his reputation could no longer be contained. Strakhov spent the opening weeks of the invasion systematically eradicating Llael's most competent commanders and warcasters. One of his more significant accomplishments was the elimination of Archduke Alreg Vladirov and the archduke's entire command in a well-orchestrated ambush. The Umbrean was a lord general of Llael's army and a master tactician, and his disappearance early in the war delivered a major blow to Llaelese forces. His fate was unknown until years later when Llaelese Resistance operatives found his signet ring among the remains in a mass grave outside Leryn.

Strakhov's final operation of the Llaelese War culminated in the destruction of several major munitions depots within the walls of Merywyn hours before the capital fell. After infiltrating the city with his battlegroup, he detonated several major

ammunition depots as Kommandant Irusk began his final assault, throwing the defenders into chaos, inflicting a heavy toll on civilians, and paving the way for Khador's victory.

As the invasion of Llael moved from war to occupation, Kommandant Irusk returned to the modernization of the Khadoran army with Strakhov's wartime accomplishments at the fore of his thoughts. He called upon the kommander, recuperating from wounds sustained in Merywyn, for advice as he outlined what would be the foundation for the new Assault Kommandos. Irusk then appointed Strakhov to train the Kommando officer corps and forge them in his image.

Throughout 605 AR, Strakhov personally led the Assault Kommandos in countless battles against Cygnaran forces occupying the trenches surrounding Northguard. There he tested his men in the flames and ash of war, inflicting untold casualties on the Trenchers opposing him. The Assault Kommandos were instrumental in overrunning Cygnar's forward positions at the onset of Irusk's final attack on Northguard.

Despite the respect Irusk has for the kommander, Strakhov occasionally raises his ire. On more than one occasion, Strakhov has devised and executed dangerous and high-profile operations against the enemy without waiting for approval from the High Kommand. Only the overwhelming success of these missions has kept Irusk from formally reprimanding him.

Strakhov prefers to rely on his physical superiority, but his potent arcane abilities have been refined for the shock assaults in which he excels. Strakhov and his 'jacks launch brutal strikes against enemy positions, hurling themselves into the midst of trenches and pillboxes to slaughter the enemy before they can react. With each engagement, Strakhov changes the face of warfare in the Iron Kingdoms to match his vision of bloody excellence.



VLADIMIR TZEPESCI, THE DARK PRINCE

KHADOR WARCASTER

Not long will any Tzepesci sit upon the throne, yet their blood nourishes the soil of the land. When the last perishes, so too shall a darkness descend without dawn, and a winter come where ash falls like snow.

—The Tzepesci Prophecy, spoken to King Vladin Tzepesci in 210 AR

VLADIMIR						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
6	6	7	5	15	16	9

SKIRMISHER	
POW	P+S
7	13

RUIN	
POW	P+S
4	10

FOCUS	7
DAMAGE	18
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
WARJACK POINTS	+5
SMALL BASE	

FEAT: FORCED MARCH

The strategic and tactical prowess of the Dark Prince of Umbrey is legendary throughout the Motherland as well as any land he has touched. Vladimir carefully conserves the power of his warjacks to expend it in one great battlefield maneuver.

Warjacks in Vladimir's battlegroup beginning their activations in his control area double their base SPD and can run or charge without spending focus. Forced March lasts for one turn.

VLADIMIR

Parry – This model cannot be targeted by free strikes.

SKIRMISHER

Magical Weapon

Blood Boon – Once per activation, immediately after resolving an attack in which it destroyed a living enemy model with this weapon, this model can cast a spell with COST 3 or less without spending focus.

RUIN

Magical Weapon

SPELLS	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
BLOOD OF KINGS	4	SELF	–	–	NO	NO
Vladimir gains +3 SPD, STR, MAT, DEF, and ARM for one round.						
BOUNDLESS CHARGE	2	6	–	–	NO	NO
During its activation, target friendly model can charge without spending focus or being forced and gains +2" movement and Pathfinder when it charges. Boundless Charge lasts for one turn.						
RAZOR WIND	2	10	–	12	NO	YES
A blade of wind slices through the target model.						
SIGNS & PORTENTS	4	SELF	CTRL	–	NO	NO
While in this model's control area, friendly Faction models gain an additional die on attack and damage rolls. Discard the lowest die in each roll. Signs & Portents lasts for one turn.						
WIND WALL	3	SELF	–	–	NO	NO
This model cannot make ranged attacks, and non-magical ranged attacks targeting it automatically miss. While completely within 3" of this model, models cannot make ranged attacks and non-magical ranged attacks targeting them automatically miss. Wind Wall lasts for one round.						

Even in times of old before the Iron Kingdoms, when certain lands in Khador were the provinces of barbaric tribes, among those who rode to battle were some possessed of rugged honor who united their people with a clarity of vision. Chieftains ruled these hordes, and horselords ruled the chieftains. Of noble stock, horselords ruled for generations with oppressive strength, calculated cruelty, and a will to organize the chaos of the world. The Tzepesci, one of the strongest families to rule the provinces of Old Umbrey, are among the last of the great families. Indeed, a millennia ago the Tzepesci were the governors of Old Korska before it fell into ruin, and they even controlled the throne of Khador for a time. Though reduced in influence, the Tzepesci name still resonates with Khador's eastern people.

Vladimir Tzepesci is the Great Prince of Korskovny Volozkya, one of the eighteen great houses that govern Khador, yet he represents much more. The ruling families of Umbresk and southern Gorzytska owe his family fealty from old oaths set in bone and blood. The influence he wields in this region is enough to stir uneasy rumors in the capital. He is a living relic of past glories and bloody deeds, and his noble bearing is testimony of an ancient lineage. A prophecy delivered to the Tzepesci kings of old tells of a great doom to befall Khador when the Tzepesci line comes to an end. Those who know of this legend call Vladimir Tzepesci the Dark Prince. So powerful is the blood in his veins that men shy from his gaze. He is a man of few words, accustomed to being heard when he speaks.

As some are born to capture strength and beauty with paints or to write great works of poetry, Vladimir was born to make war. He has waged many campaigns in the service of his nation as a brilliant tactician as well as a potent warcaster. A swordsman with few equals, he brings swift death to all who dare cross blades with him. Worthy opponents are treated to longer duels, but most enemies are dispatched with little consideration.

Vladimir takes great pride in wearing the ancient plate of his forefathers. Although it has seen some sorcerous repair over the centuries, it is the same suit of crimson mail his ancestor, Prince Buruvan Tzepesci, wore in battle against the Orgoth.

Vladimir has trained other warcasters, and it is no great secret that he became intimately acquainted with the promising young Sorscha Kratikoff during her mentoring. Little is known of the affair other than it ended quite abruptly and left Sorscha distinctively changed. There is some speculation that she was rebuffed due to her lowly heritage, but those who know Vladimir cannot credit such a motive and believe the situation may have been more complicated than it appeared. Whatever the case, he seems determined to stay true to the legacy of his forefathers, who were always strong and faithful in their duties even at the

expense of their own happiness. There are those who call such notions—and his adherence to ancient tradition—exercises in vanity, but for Vladimir Tzepesci it is part of a code that defines him and connects him to his past.

Though Vladimir is respected for his great accomplishments, not all who meet him love him. It is whispered in secret among the courts that the time of the Tzepesci has passed, and Vladimir is but an unpleasant reminder of a vanished era. These conspirators anticipate the day when the Dark Prince falls and the vast treasures of the Tzepesci family are annexed into the vaults of the Khadoran Treasury.



VLADIMIR TZEPESCI, THE DARK CHAMPION

KHADOR EPIC WARCASTER

Rest, my sweet prince, for once you awaken there will be no respite for your noble bones, only bloody war and the iron claws of fate . . .

—Whispers of the Old Witch of Khador

VLADIMIR						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
6	6	7	5	15	16	9

DOMINION	
POW	P+S
8	14

FOCUS	7
DAMAGE	18
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
WARJACK POINTS	+5
SMALL BASE	

FEAT: BLOOD LEGACY

As the descendant of ancient kings, Vladimir shares a profound connection to his homeland and its citizens. Those sons and daughters of Khador carry the blood of conquerors and heroes in their veins, and in times of great need Vladimir may call upon its ancestral power to manifest in his people.

Choose d3 + 3 friendly Faction non-character warrior models currently in Vladimir's control area. Those models gain +3 SPD, STR, MAT, RAT, DEF, ARM, and CMD for one round.

VLADIMIR

Blood Trials – When this model suffers 1 or more damage points from an enemy attack, it gains one blood token. During your next Control Phase, after this model replenishes its focus but before it allocates focus, replace each blood token with 1 focus point.

Defensive Strike – Once per turn, when an enemy model advances into and ends its movement in this model's melee range, this model can immediately make one normal melee attack against it.

Might of Kings – When Vladimir is first damaged, he gains +1 SPD, STR, DEF, and CMD for the rest of the game. If he is reduced to 10 or fewer unmarked damage boxes, this bonus increases to +2 for the rest of the game. If he is reduced to 5 or fewer, this bonus increases to +3 for the rest of the game. These benefits remain even if Vladimir heals. If a friendly model damages him with an attack, Vladimir loses Might of Kings for the rest of the game.

DOMINION

Magical Weapon

Reach

Balefire – Gain an additional damage die on this weapon's damage rolls against undead models.

SPELLS	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
ASSAIL	3	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target friendly Faction warjack can charge or make slam or trample power attacks without spending focus. The warjack gains +2" movement when it charges or makes a slam or trample power attack. Models slammed by the warjack are moved +2".						
HAND OF FATE	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target friendly Faction model/unit gains an additional die on attack and damage rolls. Discard the low die in each roll.						
MARTIAL PARAGON	2	SELF	–	–	YES	NO
This model gains an additional die on melee attack rolls and cannot be targeted by free strikes.						
RAZOR WIND	2	10	–	12	NO	YES
A blade of wind slices through the target model.						
TRANSFERENCE	2	SELF	CTRL	–	YES	NO
While in this model's control area, friendly Faction non-warcaster warrior models can spend 1 focus point on this model to boost a melee attack or melee damage roll during their activations.						
WIND BLAST	2	CTRL	5	–	NO	NO
Place a 5" AOE anywhere completely in this model's control area. Cloud effects overlapping the AOE expire. Models suffer –3 RAT while within the AOE. The AOE remains in play for one round.						

TACTICAL TIPS

ASSAIL – Apply movement bonuses only during a model's activation.

Within Vladimir Tzepesci flows the blood of kings. All his life the prospect of doom has haunted him. At every step it has dogged him, a specter lurking just beyond the edge of his vision. Skulking behind every battle and behind every enemy, it has served as a constant reminder of his past and his future. His blood is as potent as that of Khardovic and as powerful as the soul of Khador itself.

In the final days of the invasion of Llael, Vladimir nearly gave his life battling the minions of Cryx. The Old Witch of Khador sought the prince and found him dying in the Thornwood as a result of his courage. The ancient hag took him up and bore him to her earthen lair. Beneath the rumbles of passing battles and the murmurs of kayazy hounds seeking to claim his lands and title, the dark prince lay in a feverish slumber. Days passed into weeks, and weeks became months. Throughout the Motherland Vladimir was presumed dead, for no sign of him had been discovered since his battle against the Cryxians. Within the witch's caverns, however, his body grew stronger, and he dreamed.

As the sole remaining member of his line, Vladimir is as dear to the Old Witch as a child is to his grandmother. She saw to his wounds and spoke secrets in his ears as he slept. Guided by her prophetic whispers, Vladimir saw terrible visions of the future and his role in them. There was no place in these dreams for weakness, and Vladimir tore himself from his torpor. When he awoke he found himself whole, his body restored and his spirit strong. The prince toiled tirelessly in the Old Witch's dimly lit caverns and merged his shattered weapons into a single blade, the great sword Dominion.

Vladimir returned to the world with his destiny revealed to him and his purpose renewed, and the Old Witch's imparted doom tightened around him. Raising his army, he ventured again into the Thornwood to play out his part in the prophecy. There, in the benighted ruins of the

Temple of Garrodh, Vladimir struck down the Harbinger of Menoth, denying Lich Lord Asphyxious his bid at godhood. In the hard-fought retreat, the prince met with his beloved Sorscha and saw hope rekindled in her eyes. He allowed himself a brief interlude with her, but soon his destiny called once more.

As the rightful heir to the throne of Umbrey, a nation under the control of Khador for centuries, Vladimir feels increasingly conflicting duties. He struggles to honor both his loyalty to Empress Vanar and the Umbrean blood he shares with his people. Now, Vladimir is prepared to seize his destiny as the empress and the Old Witch watch carefully.



KOLDUN KOMMANDER ALEKSANDRA ZERKOVA

KHADOR GREYLORD WARCASTER

I thought I had known cold, until I looked into Zerkova's eyes.

—Great Prince Vladimir Tzepesci

ZERKOVA						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
6	5	6	5	15	15	9

ROD OF WHISPERS			
RNG	ROF	AOE	POW
8	1	–	13

QUIETUS	
POW	P+S
6	11

FOCUS	7
DAMAGE	16
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
WARJACK POINTS	+6
SMALL BASE	

FEAT: HOWLING WIND

With a call Aleksandra Zerkova summons a tornado of icy-cold wind that howls in answer to her. The shrieking vortex moves like a living creature as it pushes against Zerkova's enemies, drowning out their voices and making concentration all but impossible.

Enemy models beginning their activations in Zerkova's control area lose their initial ranged attacks and cannot run, charge, make special attacks, give or receive orders, or make special actions. Howling Wind lasts for one round.

ZERKOVA

Immunity: Cold

Pathfinder

Arcane Artifacts – When this model casts a spell, you can choose one of the following abilities. Each ability can be used once per activation and expires after the spell is cast.

- **Focus Sphere –** Reduce the COST of the spell by 1.
- **Ghost Stone –** This model's front arc extends to 360°, it ignores LOS when targeting models in its control area, and it ignores Stealth.
- **Lens of Tarvodh –** The spell gains +3 RNG.

Orgoth Seal – When a model targets this model with an offensive spell, the spell suffers –3 RNG. If a model directly hits this model with an offensive spell, after the attack is resolved the attacking model suffers d6 damage points.

ROD OF WHISPERS

Magical Weapon

QUIETUS

Magical Weapon

Mechanikal Seizure – When a warjack is hit by this weapon it becomes stationary for one round.

SPELLS	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
BANISHING WARD	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
Enemy upkeep spells on target friendly model / unit expire. Affected models cannot be targeted by enemy spells or animi.						
FORCE BLAST	3	CTRL	*	–	NO	NO
Target a model in this model's battlegroup in its control area. Enemy models currently within 2" of the target model are pushed 4" directly away from it in the order you choose.						
ICY GRIP	2	8	–	–	YES	YES
Target enemy warrior model / unit without Immunity: Cold suffers –2 DEF and cannot run or make special attacks.						
INFLUENCE	1	10	–	–	NO	YES
Take control of target enemy non-warcaster, non-warlock warrior model. The model immediately makes one normal melee attack, then Influence expires.						
RAZOR WIND	2	10	–	12	NO	YES
A blade of wind slices through the target model.						
TWISTER	2	10	3	10	NO	YES
The AOE is a cloud effect that remains in play for one round.						
WATCHER	3	SELF	–	–	YES	NO
When an enemy model advances and ends its movement within 6" of this model, choose a warjack in this model's battlegroup that is in its control area. That warjack can immediately make a full advance and then can make one normal melee or ranged attack targeting the enemy model. The attack and damage rolls against that model are boosted. After the attack is resolved, Watcher expires.						

TACTICAL TIPS

HOWLING WIND – Note that losing an attack does not modify the number of times a ranged weapon can fire (ROF). If a model has a way to make additional attacks (such as a warjack spending focus), it can still fire.

GHOST STONE – This does not modify the spell's RNG. It just allows the spell to ignore LOS against some models.

For years the Greylords Covenant has plundered crypts and forgotten tombs for ancient secrets and weapons to employ in the name of the Motherland. Aleksandra Zerkova is among the most ambitious and ruthless of these occult researchers. With an unrelenting thirst for knowledge and a willingness to destroy any who stand in her way, Zerkova has become a living repository of unholy lore.

The Zerkova name strikes envy and fear in the ears of northerners and southerners alike. This long line of distinguished officers noted for service to the crown includes kommanders and kommandants who contributed to the strategic legacy taught at the Druzhina, Khador's premiere officer academy. It was a Zerkova who led the attacks against Ord during the Second Expansion War, and that kingdom remembers them as sadistic villains. Some Khadorans, however, associate the Zerkovas with a darker legacy and an obsession with lost secrets and dubious roads to power. For the last four generations in particular, an interest in occult studies has gone hand-in-hand with their patriotic zeal.

Aleksandra's father set her to the mastery of dead languages, and her childhood passed amid the dusty tomes of their ancestral library, inculcated in esoteric lore. The ways of magic came naturally to her and expanded with extensive study. After induction to the Greylords Covenant, Aleksandra demonstrated the beginnings of a lifelong interest in ancient civilizations and their mysteries, particularly those of the Orgoth and ancient Morrdh. She eventually broadened her studies to include investigating



ancient Calacia and the cursed people of Acrennia and searching amid ruins predating the Khardic Empire. High Obavnik Arbiter Dmitrilosk granted her authorization to travel abroad unsupervised in search of weapons for the Motherland, and she has spent over a decade venturing into ruins like those of Uld Vroggen and descending deep into the uncovered Orgoth chambers within the mines of Khardov. As a result of her explorations she has amassed a collection of items of significant power from across western Immoren, several of Orgoth origin.

Her activities have not been limited to occult investigation. During the "Night of Howling Wolves" preceding the siege of Merywyn, Aleksandra led a strike force against the city's lodge of the Fraternal Order of Wizardry. She obliterated those arrogant wizards with such thorough efficiency that the means by which they vanished remains a mystery. This only enhanced her frightful reputation among her peers.

Already given to secrecy and obfuscation, her reclusiveness has become even more extreme in recent months. Although the Prikaz Chancellery has gone to great lengths to conceal specifics, it is known that her stronghold was one of the first targets of the Retribution of Scyrah when they ventured from Ios. Only the most highly ranked among the Covenant are aware that Aleksandra is, in fact, in possession of the slumbering elven god Nyssor. Her efforts to pry the secrets of the god from his frozen encasement have yielded little so far, but the Greylords have high hopes for what Zerkova may learn.

Zerkova employs soldiers and warjacks with equal abandon, and most who come to know her deem her heartless and cruel. Those who serve her never doubt her willingness to go to any length to enforce discipline and loyalty. Aleksandra's voice commands respect in the halls of power, and her colleagues see her as a woman of destiny. Whether the legacy of that destiny is one of triumph or ruin remains to be seen.

ORSUS ZOKTAVIR, THE BUTCHER OF KHARDOV

KHADOR WARCASTER

Zoktavir is a force of nature as wild as Khador itself. Some say his manners and methods are crude and shortsighted, but I ask you, would you deny that he is the personification of victory at any cost? Has he ever failed us?

—Queen Ayn Vanar XI

BUTCHER						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
5	8	9	5	14	18	7

BLUNDERBUSS			
RNG	ROF	AOE	POW
8	1	–	12

LOLA	
POW	P+S
8	16

FOCUS	6
DAMAGE	20
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
WARJACK POINTS	+6
MEDIUM BASE	

FEAT: BLOOD FRENZY

The Butcher's rage runs deep. It is the well from which he draws his power and the drive to lead his forces into battle. When the Butcher relinquishes what little control he has over this infectious fury, all who march by his side—man and machine alike—succumb to its bloodlust.

While in the Butcher's control area, friendly Faction models gain an additional die on attack damage rolls this turn.

BUTCHER

Terror

LOLA

Magical Weapon

Reach

Weapon Master

SPELLS	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
FURY	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target friendly model/unit gains +3 to melee damage rolls but suffers –1 DEF.						
IRON FLESH	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target friendly warrior model/unit gains +3 DEF but suffers –1 SPD.						
FULL THROTTLE	3	SELF	CTRL	–	NO	NO
Warjacks in this model's battlegroup beginning their activations in its control area can run, charge, or make slam or trample power attacks without spending focus that activation. While in this model's control area, models in its battlegroup gain boosted melee attack rolls. Full Throttle lasts for one turn.						
OBLITERATION	4	10	4	15	NO	YES
The force of this attack blasts apart the earth itself.						

The varied cultures of Khador's vast lands are proud of their fighting spirit, and Orsus Zoktavir embodies elements of each of these proud lines. Although his parentage is uncertain, each of the peoples of Khador have at times claimed him as their own. Seven and a half feet tall and over half as wide, he is a massive man who manifested natural arcane skills early in life.

Orsus' past is wrapped in mystery; none seem to know of his life before he appeared in Korsk with two old warjacks in tow, demanding to be enlisted in the army. He was sent to the Orgoth fortress turned industrial city named Khardov, which would become his only home. Before long he was given his first command and dispatched to patrol the southern border alongside the 5th Border Legion.

He gained notoriety during these patrols in 587 AR when a village just north of Boarsgate Keep announced its withdrawal from Khador to join with Ord. Orsus took it upon himself to crush the "traitorous rebellion." When a waiting contingent of militiamen tried to parley, Orsus howled and charged. What followed was carnage. Halfway through the slaughter the militiamen surrendered, but Orsus kept cutting them down. His accompanying soldiers tried to restrain him, but in a wild rage he turned on his own men and with his massive axe rent every living man to pieces. His fury was boundless. Moments later, a total of eighty-eight warriors were simply dismembered parts strewn about the village square. Those who witnessed the aftermath told of blood so thick in the muddy streets that rats leapt from one body to the next to avoid drowning. The event became known as the Boarsgate Massacre.

Word spread quickly, earning Orsus the title "Butcher of Khardov." The news ultimately reached the ears of the newly crowned Queen Ayn Vanar. The pragmatic young queen absolved the warrior of blame, openly condoning his behavior as the reaction of any true patriot. Most of her kommanders guessed at the queen's true intent. In parading a new weapon against internal dissent, she instilled fear that to speak or act against her could result in a visit from the Butcher. Her maneuver had the desired effect and instantly stifled all speculation of whether the young queen would be a strong monarch.

The Butcher remains both an embodiment of Ayn Vanar's strength and a potent symbol of the consequence of treachery. Younger warcasters view him with disdain and do not comprehend the leniency he has been afforded by the High Kommand. More traditional warcasters like Vladimir Tzepesci see him as nothing more than a weapon.

Orsus Zoktavir wields his axe Lola—rumored to be named after a love whose loss fuels his rage—with singular fury. He wears a modified suit of steam-powered armor that was shaped from the hull of a warjack to suit his frame by loyal battle mechaniks once in his service. In its protective casing, the Butcher is a force of destruction, a one-man wrecking crew. Soldiers across western Immoren cannot forget the vision of the axe-wielding giant from their nightmares, a man become a living personification of warfare and bloodshed.



KOMMANDER ORSUS ZOKTAVIR

KHADOR EPIC WARCASTER

The man is now utterly insane. What will happen when there is no enemy left to send him against? Let us pray that day never comes.

—Kommandant Gurvaldt Irusk in a letter to Supreme Kommandant Boris Makarov

ZOKTAVIR						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
5	8	9	5	14	18	7

BLUNDERBUSS			
RNG	ROF	AOE	POW
8	1	–	12

LOLA	
POW	P+S
8	16

FOCUS	*
DAMAGE	20
FIELD ALLOWANCE	C
WARJACK POINTS	+6
MEDIUM BASE	

FEAT: FEEL THE HATE

When Kommander Zoktavir enters battle, madness becomes infectious, and his berserk rage sweeps those at his side into his maelstrom of hate.

Zoktavir gains one rage token each time an enemy model is destroyed in his control area. After all friendly models have completed their activations, no more tokens can be gained and Zoktavir can give up to three rage tokens to any friendly non-warcaster Faction model in his control area. Then remove any rage tokens remaining on Zoktavir. A model can spend one rage token once to make a full advance followed by one normal melee attack. Rage tokens can also be spent to make normal melee attacks or to boost melee attack or melee damage rolls at one token per attack or boost. Remove unspent rage tokens from play at the end of the turn.

ZOKTAVIR

Terror

Arcane Dementia – For each round, Zoktavir's base FOCUS is d6 + 1, rolled at the beginning of the game and at the beginning of each of your Control Phases before this model replenishes its focus. If he destroyed three or more enemy models with melee attacks since the beginning of your previous turn, do not roll to determine his base FOCUS; it is automatically 7. Zoktavir's control area is always 12".

Circular Vision – This model's front arc extends to 360°.

Conferred Rage – Warjacks in this model's battlegroup beginning their activations in its control area can charge or make power attacks without spending focus. When this model destroys one or more enemy models during its activation, warjacks in its battlegroup beginning their activations in its control area gain +2 SPD and MAT for one turn.

Homicidal Maniac – When this model makes a normal melee attack during its activation, it makes one melee attack against each model in its LOS and melee range. If there are no enemy models in this model's melee range after resolving a normal melee attack in which it destroyed one or more, it can advance up to 1".

LOLA

Magical Weapon

Reach

Weapon Master

SPELLS	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
BOUNDLESS CHARGE	2	6	–	–	NO	NO
During its activation, target friendly model can charge without spending focus or being forced and gains +2" movement and Pathfinder when it charges. Boundless Charge lasts for one turn.						
ELIMINATOR	3	8	3	13	NO	YES
Immediately after this attack is resolved, this model can advance up to 2" for each enemy model destroyed by the attack.						
FURY	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target friendly model / unit gains +3 to melee damage rolls but suffers –1 DEF.						
RAVAGER	2	6	–	–	NO	NO
Target model in this model's battlegroup gains Berserk for one turn. While affected by Ravager, a model cannot make Chain Attacks. (When a model with Berserk destroys one or more models with a melee attack during its combat action, immediately after the attack is resolved it must make one additional melee attack against another model in its melee range.)						

TACTICAL TIPS

ARCANE DEMENTIA – Zoktavir's control area cannot be modified.

HOMICIDAL MANIAC – These attacks are not optional.

Constant battles against the enemies of the Motherland have deepened the madness of Orsus Zoktavir and brought forth dark echoes from the depths of his being. The only soldiers who feel an affinity with him are the Doom Reavers, for they recognize in him the same force that whispers to them and urges them to slaughter. Even those who once endorsed unleashing Orsus as a weapon against their enemies have begun to doubt the wisdom of that course.

The invasion of Llael seemed Kommandant Zoktavir's finest hour. He hurled himself against Redwall Fortress like a force of nature. It had been the strongest point of resistance, the greatest garrison of the Llaelese Army supported by a massive contingent of Cygnaran soldiers. The stones of Redwall fell to the Demolition Corps, and it was Orsus Zoktavir who was first through the breech. He swept through enemies as his warjacks emulated his berserk frenzy, tearing through any obstacle in their path. Howling Doom Reavers followed behind as Llael's strongest border fortress echoed with the screams of the dying.

Some speculate that Kommandant Irusk hoped the Butcher would perish in the attack and take the most uncontrollable of his followers with him. If that was indeed the goal, it failed utterly. As the conquest continued, Kommandant Irusk faced a difficult conundrum. They were in Llael to annex land and resources, not to wipe out its inhabitants. Orsus was mindful of these orders in the calm light of day, yet when the battle madness came upon him, there was no stopping him.

When Khador turned its attention to the Cygnaran border after the surrender of Merywyn, Orsus Zoktavir was ordered to stand down. It was a mistake. The days of inactivity picked at his brain and brought back memories he had long striven to forget. It was a slow torture that ate through his already-tenuous self-control. In response, Orsus was sent southwest, thrown into battle, and allowed to engage his appetites where they could bring little harm to the Motherland. When he was given more specific orders, his objectives were often extremely hazardous, and he rarely returned unwounded.

In the final stages of the Khadoran conquest of the Thornwood, Orsus' bloodlust reached new heights, and he led an unauthorized suicidal attack on the well-fortified Cygnaran fortress-city of Fellig. Not even his prodigious fury and strength were sufficient to the task. When he failed to return, some members of the High Kommand breathed a sigh of relief.

Months later, Orsus walked out of the wilderness and returned to his barracks as if he had never vanished. Whatever transpired during those lost months remains unexplained: Zoktavir has not spoken of the events surrounding his disappearance even when ordered by Irusk himself. What is evident, though, is that his rage has not dimmed. Even his arcane powers are affected by his inner demons; they surge up and then simmer low like the memories haunting him. Incapable of restraint and never at peace, Orsus Zoktavir is at home only amid the chaos of war.



WARJACKS OF KHADOR

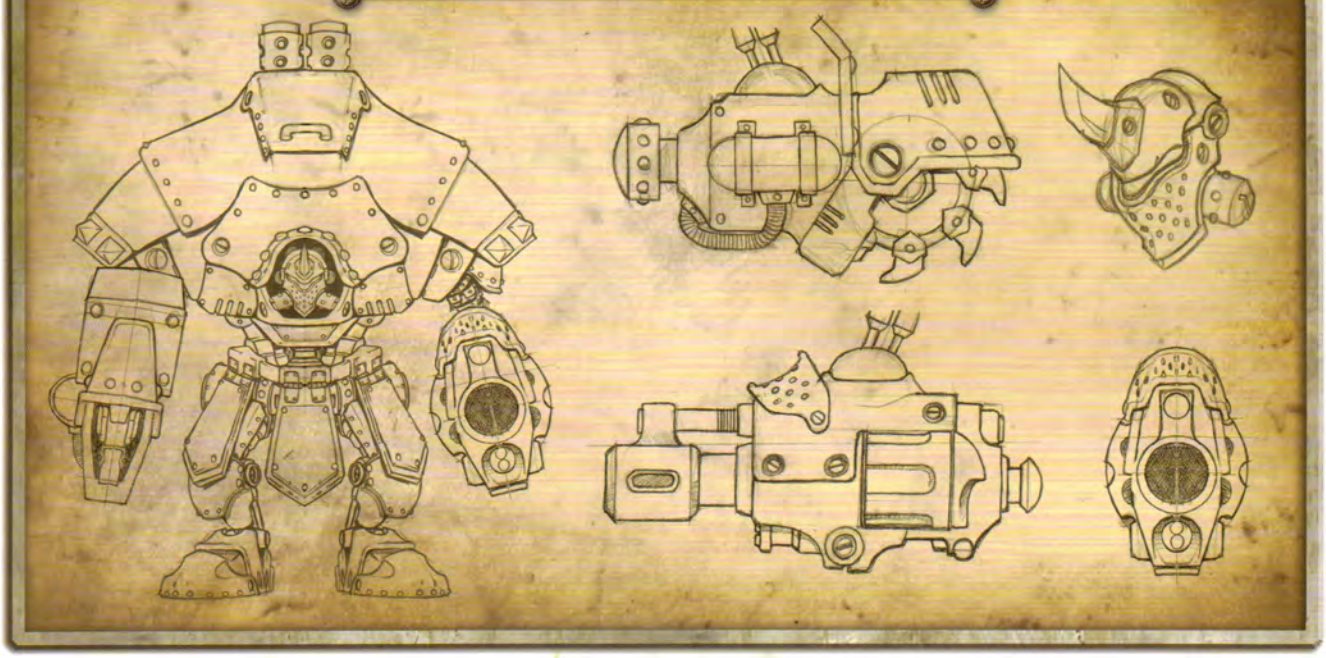
Warjacks are massive machines not easily transported from place to place, though the expansion of railways facilitates this a great deal. Khador has proven particularly quick to lay new track, across the Motherland as well as through newly conquered territories. Stout wagons hauled by oxen or hardy draft horses take warjacks where the rail cannot, and if necessary the metal giants can travel under their own power, although doing so consumes prodigious amounts of coal and water.

Ongoing war has forced the construction of new firebases—forward positions at key points where ample supplies of coal, water, food, ammunition, and weapons are placed for resupply. As the front lines have shifted with the vicissitudes of war, more of these bases have been built to allow warcasters and warjacks to strike wherever they are needed. Some firebases become permanent fortifications as they expand into true command posts. A number of these are under construction along the Dragon's Tongue River to balance similar, if more entrenched, Cygnaran bases. Impromptu roads and resupply points stretch all the way from the war front, through recently occupied territories, to connect ultimately with centers of production and industry deep within the Khadoran interior.

Khador's newly invigorated infrastructure and military reforms have not had a significant impact on its approach to warjack design. Even with the captured resources of Llael and the Thornwood, the northern nation still lacks the precious metals necessary for the fabrication of warjack cortexes in large quantities. Because of this scarcity, the Khadoran Mechaniks Assembly's ruling body, the Mekaniburo, continues to allocate most of its resources to the creation of the medium-grade cortexes intended for heavily armored and highly survivable warjacks.

Other nations have created more maneuverable and reactive light warjacks to fill a variety of battlefield roles, but Khador addresses those needs differently. The empire's heavy warjacks are often capable of carrying out multiple battle functions, and their durable chassis allow them to be equipped with staggeringly powerful weapons. To compensate for the large number of enemy light warjacks fielded by enemies like Cygnar and Cryx, Khador has responded with steam-powered Man-O-War troops, which can serve a similar purpose while being easier to deploy in volume. The use of heavily armored Man-O-War infantry has allowed Khador to operate on equal tactical footing, making up for machinery with manpower.

DECIMATOR CONCEPTUAL DESIGNS





KHADORAN WARJACK SERVICE MARKERS

Warjacks that have served in notable battles are often decorated with service markers to denote their length and regions of service. The warjacks do not notice such distinction, but the honors inspire confidence in the men fighting alongside them.



SIEGE OF MERYWYN

Some would say the new Khadoran Empire was born the day Merywyn fell and surrendered to Khador, and this marker distinguishes the warjacks that fought during the lengthy and difficult battle that crushed the spirit of the Llaelese rulers. Soldiers playing important roles in this fight wear a service medal of similar design.



ASSAULT AT REDWALL

The attack on Redwall Fortress was the most crucial of the initial assaults during the Llaelese invasion, for it was the strongest western bastion of Llaelese and Cygnaran armed forces. Warjacks with this marker were hurled against the fortress alongside Kommander Orsus Zoktavir.

BERSERKER
KHADOR HEAVY WARJACK

Respectfully, Kommandant, I must submit that even Zoktavir has questioned the Berserkers' stability. Need there be more evidence they are too dangerous to remain in service?

—Excerpt from a report to Kommandant Gurvaldt Irusk

BERSERKER						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
4	11	5	3	11	18	—

WAR AXE (L)		
	POW	P+S
	5	16

WAR AXE (R)		
	POW	P+S
	5	16



FIELD ALLOWANCE	U
POINT COST	6
LARGE BASE	

BERSERKER

Aggressive – This model can run or charge without spending focus or being forced.

Unstable – At the end of any activation in which this model spent 1 or more focus points, roll a d6. If the roll is equal to or less than the number of focus points spent, this model explodes and models within 3" of it suffer an unboostable POW 14 blast damage roll. Remove this model from play.

WAR AXE

Chain Attack: Brutality – If this model hits the same model with both its initial attacks with this weapon, after resolving the attacks it can immediately make one head-butt power attack against that model.

HEIGHT/WEIGHT: 10'11" / 8.4 TONS

ARMAMENT: TWIN WAR AXES (LEFT AND RIGHT ARMS)

FUEL LOAD/BURN USAGE: 715 LBS / 5 HRS GENERAL, 55 MINS COMBAT

INITIAL SERVICE DATE: 430 AR

CORTEX MANUFACTURER: GREYLORDS COVENANT

ORIG. CHASSIS DESIGN: KHADORAN MECHANIKS ASSEMBLY

TACTICAL TIPS

UNSTABLE – Do not replace this model with a wreck marker.

CHAIN ATTACK: BRUTALITY – A model with a crippled weapon system cannot use it to make chain attacks or special attacks, including power attacks.

CORTEX SYSTEM – Due to extreme age and cortex decay, a Berserker has only two boxes in its Cortex system.

There is something uniquely terrifying about the Berserker. The oldest of Khadoran warjacks still in service, it is also among the oldest relied upon by any modern nation. Some proudly view this fact as proof of both the genius of Khadoran engineering and the timelessness of their weapons of war.

Berserker cortexes have become unstable in the years since their first manufacture well over a century ago, and the 'jacks are prone to charge without orders when near the frenzy of combat. The bloodthirsty manner with which they slaughter enemy infantry has long been legendary. Worse yet, their cortex alloys and the alchemical mixtures in which their cortexes bathe have become critically compromised by decay and are prone to massive concussive overload if stimulated with too much arcane energy.

Those who know their merits make excellent use of these brutal machines. Armed with a pair of immense axes, Berserkers are ruthless in close combat, and their volatile cortexes and propensity for violence become assets when facing their iron and steel counterparts from other nations. A Khadoran general with one in his army views it as a rampaging force of destruction to be unleashed at the right moment and expended in battle.



DECIMATOR
KHADOR HEAVY WARJACK

Subtlety is a word for strategy; brutality, for tactics. Even the most complex battle plans eventually require the application of brute force. This is where the Decimator excels.
—Kommandant Gurvaldt Irusk

Height/Weight: 11'7" / 9.8 tons
Armament: Dozer (left arm), Rip Saw (right arm)
Fuel Load/Burn Usage: 783 lbs / 4 hrs general, 45 mins combat
Initial Service Date: 587 AR
Cortex Manufacturer: Greylords Covenant
Orig. Chassis Design: Khadoran Mechaniks Assembly

TACTICAL TIPS

Beat Back – The attacking model can advance even if the enemy model is destroyed by the attack.

As the Khadoran Empire has expanded its borders and come up against the toughest defenses of its enemies, it has needed increasingly powerful tools to sow destruction. Enter the Decimator, which Khador engineered to annihilate well-armored targets with powerful direct fire. The 'jack's thunderous cannon smashes its victims to the ground before it closes and tears them to unrecognizable scrap with its mighty saw.

DOZER

Beat Back – Immediately after a normal attack with this weapon is resolved during this model's combat action, the enemy model hit can be pushed 1" directly away from the attacking model. After the enemy model is pushed, the attacking model can advance up to 1".

RIP SAW

Sustained Attack – During this model's activation, when it makes an attack with this weapon against the last model hit by the weapon this activation, the attack automatically hits.

DECIMATOR						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
4	12	6	4	10	20	–

DOZER (L)			
RNG	ROF	AOE	POW
10	2	–	15

RIP SAW (R)	
POW	P+S
6	18

DAMAGE					
1	2	3	4	5	6
	L			R	
L	L	M	C	R	R
	M	M	C	C	

FIELD ALLOWANCE	U
POINT COST	9
LARGE BASE	

The heart of the Decimator's dozer repeating cannon is a revolving chamber housing the weapon's oversized ammunition. The impact of one of these massive slugs smashes its unfortunate target backward—if not annihilating it outright—and punches a hole in the enemy line. In close combat, the Decimator relies on its massive rip saw, a wicked weapon capable of shredding anything in its path. The 'jack has been used extensively in recent years to assault the most impregnable fortifications of Khador's enemies, where it deals staggering punishment to their heaviest defenders.



DESTROYER
KHADOR HEAVY WARJACK

Let the Cygnaran dogs hide in their trenches. Our Destroyers will flush them out like frightened hares and chop them into stew meat!

—Harisc Vokmir, Khadoran Mechaniks Assembly

DESTROYER						
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
4	12	6	4	10	20	—

BOMBARD			
RNG	ROF	AOE	POW
14	1	3	14

EXECUTIONER AXE	
POW	P+S
5	17

DAMAGE

1	2	3	4	5	6
	L			R	
L	L	M	C	R	R
	M	M	C	C	

FIELD ALLOWANCE	U
POINT COST	9
LARGE BASE	

BOMBARD

Arcing Fire – When attacking with this weapon, this model can ignore intervening models except those within 1" of the target.

EXECUTIONER AXE

Critical Amputation – On a critical hit, warjack arms and weapon systems that suffer damage from this attack are crippled.

HEIGHT/WEIGHT: 11'7" / 9.5 TONS

ARMAMENT: BOMBARD (LEFT ARM), EXECUTIONER AXE (RIGHT ARM)

FUEL LOAD/BURN USAGE: 815 LBS / 4 HRS GENERAL, 50 MINS COMBAT

INITIAL SERVICE DATE: 537 AR (ORIGINAL CHASSIS 480 AR)

CORTEX MANUFACTURER: GREYLORDS COVENANT

ORIG. CHASSIS DESIGN: KHADORAN MECHANIKS ASSEMBLY

TACTICAL TIPS

CRITICAL AMPUTATION – After marking regular damage, mark their remaining system boxes as well.

Compared to that of other nations, technological advancement of warjacks in Khador has been slow—mostly because the country's mechaniks build their warjacks to last. A prime example is the Destroyer, which has served in various iterations as the premier Khadoran siege-assault warjack for almost a hundred years, gaining particular fame in the First Thornwood War. The whistling of its shells arcing overhead is a prelude to destruction, heralding the thunderous blasts that tear apart everything in the target vicinity.

The Destroyer's current design has not changed in nearly 70 years, but the series goes back as far as 480 AR. Even with antiquated armament, those impressive early 'jacks shelled Cygnaran fortifications from across the Dragon's Tongue River. Improvements to the bombard cannon in 537 AR cemented the Destroyer as the centerpiece of Khadoran war engineering.

Though most famous for its role in delivering a punishing bombardment, the Destroyer is no less formidable when engaged in close combat. Its designers did not skimp on armor: its iron-plated chassis is as heavy as the Juggernaut's and provides formidable protection. One mighty stroke from a Destroyer can shear entire limbs from an enemy warjack.

