

THE HORUS HERESY®

CHILD OF NIGHT

John French



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must prove his worth or face immediate execution

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‘What are the decrees of the past, but the seeds of a future reckoning?’

– common saying in the hives of Albia, noted by Tenghost
Merrin
in *The Court of The Unspeakable King, Volume I*

‘I submit to your judgement,’ I speak the words, and bow my head before the gun.

The legionary does not move. His finger tenses upon the trigger of his bolt pistol. A single twitch and the firing pin will strike the primer. The charge will ram the warhead down the pistol barrel and out into the still air between the muzzle and my skull. An instant later its secondary charge will fire. By the time it hits my skull it will be travelling at over a thousand metres per second. An instant after it has punched into my brain, it will detonate, scattering blood, bone and shrapnel into the air.

All it takes for that fatal chain to begin is for the warrior to twitch his finger. All it takes is for him to judge me as deserving to die. His green eye lenses stare down at me – I can feel them upon the bare skin of my scalp.

I am kneeling, my cloak of rags hanging from me like sodden feathers. He is armoured, of course, though the colour of his battleplate is lost

beneath the skin of darkness. Here, nothing remains whole; everything corrodes to shadow in the end.

I was born down here, in the prison sinks beneath Albia, down here in the abyss, which is the realm of the banished and the condemned. I was raised from this night when the Great Crusade had already left the light of Sol, though only by a few decades. That makes me old compared to most, but young compared to some. The scent of destiny was thick in the air in those days. The dark ignorance of the past fled before the illumination of truth, and nothing could defy it. It was a time when the light of glory burned bright before us all. We felt it, every son of the Legions.

In truth, that light was the first light I ever knew. Perhaps it is the only light I have ever known? Now I exist here again, cradled in the blackness that bores my idle mind, hiding from my sins, and all light is lost to me once more.

I raise my head, and look up into the green slashes of light that are his eyes. 'Would you at least know who it is that you have come to kill?'

'I know who you are, Fel Zharost, dream-eater of the Eighth Legion.' The warrior's vox-grille clicks as he pauses. 'I have come for you.'

Clever. If this was not a warrior who had tracked and hounded me through the dark for nights on end, then I would say he was being humorous.

'You know my name, but that is not enough to judge a life before you take it,' I warn him. 'Trust me on this.'

'I need know nothing else of you.'

'Judgement should be blind, not ignorant.' I take a long breath and look up into the barrel of the bolt pistol and the glowing green eyes beyond. I wonder what he sees: an old man kneeling in the dirt, a ragged beard falling from a face of scars and creases? Or does he see something else? Something less... pitiful. 'You should know whom it is you punish. That was always the way.' I raise my left hand and touch it to my forehead. 'I would show you that.'

He does not move. His finger remains steady on the trigger, balanced between life and death.

'No,' he says.

I smile, but not in humour. If I am to die then it will be on my terms. After all, what are we if we abandon the truths we lived by?

‘It was not an offer,’ I say, and I show him the past.

It began in darkness, of course – in that lost age when I was a child without innocence.

I opened my eyes, and became blind.

Gunfire burst just ahead of me as I leapt towards a ledge. The flare-light boiled through my vision, burned bright, bubbling with neon smears and white splinters. I was spinning through the air, my eyes and mind churning with blinding thunder clouds. The light was fire inside my skull. I slammed into something hard and began to slide down it, my arms scrabbling at the air. A hand grabbed my arm. I felt whipcord muscle and smooth skin. I began to fight, but the light was still burning through my senses. The arm yanked me up and slammed me down onto hard metal. Breath left me, but I kicked out and tried to scramble away. An arm looped around my throat and tightened.

‘Stillness,’ the voice hissed in my ear.

I stopped moving. I recognised the voice. It is strange to think of her now, and stranger still to speak of her. Calliope – that is how I remember her. It was not her name, though. She had no name. The tongue of the night-born was a tongue of clicks, of breath sighing through closed teeth, of sounds that do not echo in still air. In that tongue there are no names. But she needs a name. She deserves a name.

‘I cannot see,’ I replied, my breath ragged in my throat.

‘Why did you open your eyes?’

I did not reply. In truth I did not know. Sometimes stupidity does not require a reason.

‘I should have left you where I found you. I should have cut your throat and used you as a lure for the hungry ones.’

The words were real, and if she had been any other of our siblings then she would have done it too. But she had not before, and she did not then.

‘Where is the prey?’ I asked, trembling as pain drained through me.

‘Close,’ she said, as calm as still water. ‘It does not know where we are now.’

‘How many?’

‘One, just one.’

‘What is it?’

She said nothing for a long heartbeat.

‘I do not know, but it will die before we do.’

The hunter had been waiting for us when we entered the web. It was huge, but it moved as fast as anything I had ever known. Its gun had torn the dark, and we had run, scrambling and swinging through the girders as the explosions danced behind us. I had no idea who or what it was, but I understood it. Just as we preyed upon those who fell from the world of light above, so this creature had now come for us.

But we were not used to being prey. Down there, amongst the murderers and scum of the world above, we were the hunters.

‘We wait?’ I asked. The scars left by the light were draining from my sight, hunger and anger replacing fear.

‘Yes,’ she breathed. ‘And then we track it, and take its heart.’

She was grinning, the smallest wisp of light catching the sharpened points of her teeth.

‘We take its heart,’ I echoed.

I became still. The beating of my blood slowed. I could feel rust and moisture under my skin, a patina of cracks, and the lumps of rivets.

We waited, and the blackness flowed over us. The low sounds of the caverns began to manifest: the slow creak of kilometres of compressed and tangled metal sighing as they shift, the song of subtle air currents blowing through tunnels and caverns, the tap-tap-tap of moisture falling onto rusted iron.

Those who live under the light-suns, or in the glow of a furnace, or amongst the glimmer of machines, think of the dark as absence. But darkness has texture – it has folds and heights like deep water that plunges down without end. It was said that there were once natural oceans here on Terra, and that the greatest darkness lived in the trenches far beneath their surfaces. If there is any truth to such tales, then perhaps the darkness was not drained with the seas.

Perhaps it simply flowed away into deeper places. To this place.

We both became part of that darkness. We vanished. It was not a mystery, or a power drawn from beyond. It was one very simple thing: stillness. The dark takes you when you are still. It makes you a part of it. Your body dissolves into slivers of shape, the features of your face become

like the folds of cloth in a curtain, your fingers like leaves in a forest. Some might say that such a trick is a quirk of survival, but not for us. Not for the children of the night. We learned it because of what we were born to be. We learned it as murderers.

Time stretched, defined only by the slow beat of my heart.

At last, Calliope spoke.

‘It is moving away,’ she said, her fingers dancing silently on my arm. ‘It makes for the upper levels. We should follow it.’

I did not reply, but unfolded from the ledge and jumped into the waiting blackness. I landed on a beam and ran upwards, feet and hands making no sound on the damp-slicked surface. I felt a void open before me and leapt. Cold metal met my hand for an instant, and I swung high, landed, and ran on. Calliope was just behind me. We were two pale ghosts dancing across the lightless web, silent and swift.

The hunter who was now our prey was fast, very fast. Even without seeing him, I could feel his strength shaking the web of girders as he moved. I was not thinking why he had come for us as I swung and ran after him. My only thought was that he was not one of our kind, that he had tried to kill us, and so would die. It was not anger, it was just fact.

Then the prey halted.

We slid closer, soft shadows and amongst shadows. An electric hum filled the air, scratching against my teeth. It was turning its head as if looking around, though I doubted it could see. We moved closer. Calliope swung away to approach from a different angle – you never take prey alone, or from a single direction. Still the prey did not move. Perhaps it was lost? The deep dark can do that, can swallow direction and memory and leave only madness.

I slid the glass splinter blade from the bindings on my wrist. Softly, feeling my way, I crawled until I was above the prey. I took a long, silent breath – I could smell the blood upon it now. It had killed. There was something else too, a stink like hot wiring and oiled machines. I turned my head slowly, listening, feeling the metal beneath by skin tremble.

I tensed. Calliope would move first; that was our way, an understanding that we had never discussed and never needed to explain to one another. The splinter of glass was warm in my fingers.

Calliope swung out from the black, the noise of her leap almost imperceptible.

Almost.

The prey's head turned with a machine whir. Its eyes lit. Red light stabbed through the girder-web. Calliope struck the prey as it turned. Light shattered from the glass blade in her hand as she rammed it into the prey's neck. It was huge, a man made of metal and hard angles. The blade broke and the prey was still turning, blink-fast, hand snapping closed around Calliope's throat.

I jumped, my own blade held in two hands.

The prey was holding Calliope in the air. She was thrashing, clawing at its wrist. I landed on the prey's shoulders, and stabbed the glass blade down into its neck with all my weight and all my strength. The prey arched. Blood gushed up around my hands, thick and warm.

I dropped from its shoulders as it staggered.

Calliope wrenched herself from its faltering grip. The prey shuddered, its red eyes glowing like windows into a realm of blood. Calliope did not run. She still had a piece of the blade in her hand. She stabbed it up and into one of the prey's red glowing eyes. Its head snapped back, but it did not fall.

It raised its hand, and fire split the red-stained gloom.

Time stopped. Everything stopped.

In those days I did not understand my gift, or even know that it was a gift. Sometimes I would see things without needing my eyes. Sometimes I would know things without understanding how. Sometimes I would fall into dreams of gold and fire. And in that moment of frozen flame, I felt the last roaring beat of Calliope's heart, and touched the jagged ice of her killer's mind.

Panic flooded me. I could not move. All I could see was the bloody figure standing before me, the wet plates of its armour lit by the static flare of its gun.

The world snapped back, and the roar of flame and noise drowned Calliope's last breath. Then there was silence, and the slow patter of liquid on metal. I could not move. I did not want to. My skin was wet, my mouth and nose filled with the scent of gunfire. I was blind again, but somehow I could still see.

All I could think was that I was alone again, that I would now always be alone.

The figure before me lowered his weapon and turned towards me. Slowly it raised a hand and pulled its helmet off. The head beneath was broad and skinless, and looked back at me with its one remaining, utterly black eye. Blood seeped from the bloody ruin in the other socket, rolling down its cheek. He spoke then, his voice almost a whisper. I did not understand what he meant at the time.

Later, much later, I thought I did. Now I know that even then I still did not.

‘I have come for you,’ he said.

Mortinar, Seventy-First Prefect of the Saragorn Enclave, snapped upright, his heart racing, eyes wide, breath heaving through his open mouth. He turned his head, blinking at the clean light which filled the council chamber.

‘Sir?’

Hasina was looking at him. Her false-flesh face did not allow for expression, but her eyes glittered with confusion. Behind her, the rest of his aides and staff waited, shifting in nervous silence. He looked around again, still breathing hard. Carved and gilded faces looked back at him from niches in the walls, their blank eyes reflecting the lamp glow.

‘A nightmare,’ he managed. He looked down at his hand trembling at the end of his velvet sleeve. ‘Yes, just a nightmare.’ He looked up again in time to see glances pass between the gathered aides.

‘Sir...’ began Torlek, his eyes averted. The young guard captain looked uncertain, his tongue pausing on his silvered teeth. ‘You have not been asleep. You called us here to discuss the Fourth Program’s progress. You were just saying that—’

It came back to the prefect then, the rushing panic, the blare of alarms. Why were they all standing around like cattle? Why were they just staring at him?

‘How far have the attackers advanced?’ he snapped, hurrying over to his desk and triggering its hololith data display. ‘What are our casualties?’ His

eyes flicked across the cone of luminous data, searching for the status of the enclave's garrison.

Corimino, his third life-ward, broke the silence next.

'My master, there are no attackers.'

'They are here!' he roared, slamming his fist into the stone top of his desk. 'Don't lie to me! Don't you dare!' Images were creeping back in to his mind, images of the enclave burning under a bruised, black sky. He strode to the window, and slammed his palm down on the shutter control. The leaves of gilt plasteel folded into the frame. 'They are—'

Sunlight, bright and clear, shone from a clear sky above the enclave's spires and domes. He stepped back, blinking in the brilliance.

It was there, all there untouched by darkness or fire. He blinked, smudges of gunfire still clinging to his memory. He turned slowly to his staff. They were all looking at him, and he could see the unease on their faces

'Is something wrong, sir?' asked Hasina, carefully.

He opened his mouth to speak.

Behind him black cloud poured across the sky like ink poured across clean paper. And from the spreading night, the fire fell. He opened his mouth, and—

He awoke, the expanding dream blinking into the real nightmare which surrounded him.

Alarms screamed. Dust tumbled from the ceiling. The metal shutters over the windows shook in their frames. Armed guards crowded the spaces by the doors. His aides were shouting at each other. A hololithic display was flickering in and out of focus above his desk. Maps, data and information fizzed through the static, telling a story that simply could not be true. Distortion wailed from the speakers embedded high in the walls. Hasina was hammering at the vox-console keys, shouting for someone in the enclave guard, demanding help, demanding a report. Her voice was raw and cracked with panic.

The vox popped suddenly, screeched and then cleared. A voice rose from the speaker horn, as clear as if it was coming from within the room.

The prefect recognised the voice. It was Tolrek. The guard captain had gone to the northern bastion an hour before.

'Sir...'

Everyone in the chamber went still and quiet.

‘S-sir...’

The prefect leaned forwards, his hands clenched into fists on the tabletop

‘Tolrek, what is the situation?’

A noise came from the vox, low at first then growing. The prefect did not recognise it for a second – then he realised that Tolrek was weeping.

‘They... they took my eyes, sir. They took my hands. They say that they will take my tongue once this is done. They say that I belong to the darkness now.’

‘Tolrek–’ the prefect began, rage blending with the terror in his blood.

‘They say that you must understand their judgement before...’ A wet sob bubbled into the silence. ‘They say... They say that they are coming for you.’

The prefect stared at the vox, his tongue still in a dry mouth. Behind him the shutters stopped rattling. ‘Who,’ he began, fighting to force authority into his voice. ‘Who are you?’

The new voice that came in answer was soft, and edged by distortion, but it seemed to fill the room.

‘We are retribution.’

The vox cut out. For a second he did not move, and then he turned slowly to the windows. The shutters clattered open, and he–

He awoke, cold flooding through him, a shout dying on his lips. He stumbled up from his chair, and his leg slammed into the corner of something hard. He yelped as the pain bit.

Pain. That meant that what he was experiencing was real, at least, and not another part of his endless nightmare.

He tried blinking, but still could not see. He reached out, feeling the polished surface of the desk which he had just walked into. The activation stud for the lights should be just–

His fingers touched upon something wet and warm.

He snapped his hand back. His heart was hammering.

Water. It must be water, he thought. He rubbed his fingers. The fluid on their tips felt sticky. He thought of the sweet wine he ordered before retiring to read the reports, and imagined how it must have spilled from

the glass when he knocked the desk. He reached out again, careful not to touch the surface. He found the activation stud, and pressed it.

The room filled with light, and screamed.

He awoke, his eyes snapping open, the scream trembling in his throat. He was lying on the floor, his back against the wall beneath the shutters. The room was dark, but an aching pulse filled the air, like the growl of an active machine. He thought that he had been dreaming, that it had just been—

The eye lenses of my helm lit up. I stood from where I had crouched beside him. The prefect tried to scream again, but vomited instead. I looked down at him, and around my head the crystal matrix of my psychic hood began to glow with a pale light.

‘Who are you?’ he choked. ‘What are you doing here?’

‘You know what I am.’

His eyes darted across the midnight plates of my armour, the thunderbolt and eagle wing markings, the numerals etched onto the bronze solar disk upon my breastplate. I leaned on my staff, both hands resting upon the crystal-cored iron. Recognition and fear form in his mind even as part of his brain tries to deny it.

‘I have done nothing,’ he stammers. ‘I serve the Emperor. I am true to the Unity of Te—’

‘The gene-warrens, prefect. The Wet Vaults, the millions spliced together as flesh and bone – the First Program, and the Second, and the Third. The city beneath this city which swallowed all those who fell outside acceptable ranges of variation. The smell that meant that you decided to dissolve the cast-offs rather than burn them.’

He began to weep, tears rolling from the corners of his eyes. I watch him for a few seconds, and then I speak again.

‘We are not here to determine innocence or guilt. That time is past. We are not here for justice, or to save the millions that you have tainted. We are here to reward you. We are the consequence of your actions. We are its hand, and its kindly edge. And...’

I bent down, the joints of my armour whirring, and touched the trembling man’s face.

‘...we have come for you.’

He shook, trembling with terror and defiance. ‘Your judgement is atrocity. That is not justice, it is hypocrisy!’

‘But we are not creatures made to live those ideals, only to bring them into being.’

For a moment he simply hugged his arms close around himself. He was nothing to look at: a thin man, his age hidden but not banished, wrapped in velvet and silk, weeping in the dark. A stale reek rose from his huddled form. He had soiled himself several hours earlier, in his feverish nightmare state.

‘Everything I saw before, everything I dreamed...’

‘It was only a dream.’ He looked up at me, and his pupils showed that desperate spark of hope that mortals can yet summon even in the bleakest of moments.

‘But that does not mean that it was not real. You have dreamed those moments twenty times already, and you will dream them again.’ I run the finger of my gauntlet across his tear-dampened upper lip. ‘This is the eighth time we have talked, and the eighth time you have wept these tears. It will not be the last.’

‘You...’ he stammers. ‘You are waiting for me to ask for forgiveness?’

‘No. You have already asked for that eight times.’

He began to laugh then. He was still laughing as I dragged him back into the wheel of nightmares.

‘What is your judgement?’

My voice rolled through the vast space. The throne room was silent and bare. The gloom which filled its vaulted space felt lifeless, like an absence left by something intangible. I kept my gaze steady on those ghost-pale features, and the black eyes watching me from the foot of the empty throne. I did not kneel – authority was one thing, respect was another. The pale face twitched, the lips twisting into the mockery of a smile.

‘My judgement?’ He paused, and tapped one finger upon the haft of his chain-glaive. ‘My judgement is that if I have to spend any more time in your company then I might be tempted to do something you would regret.’

Sevatar stepped from the throne's dais to the floor. His movements, even in armour, were like those of a cat. I did not move. Out of habit I made to lean on my staff, but like the hood which had once circled my skull, it was gone. Their absence felt as though I had lost a limb, like a part of me had been stripped away.

That, of course, was precisely the point, and the reason why I stood in a deserted throne room with the First Captain of our thrice-humbled Legion.

'The edict from the Council of Nikaea cannot be ignored,' I said. 'You are the most senior commander of the Legion while the primarch—'

'While our father-in-darkness is being schooled again by his brothers.' Sevatar turned away, rolling a shoulder absentmindedly. 'Yes, I suppose I am.'

'There must be a judgement upon the Librarius.' I paused, the next words I must speak catching in my throat. 'And upon me.'

Sevatar glanced back at me, the shark's smile on his lips echoed in his dark eyes.

'I could always cut your throat?' He turned to look at me, cocking his head and raising an eyebrow. 'Yes. That could solve several problems.'

I let out a slow breath between my teeth. To say that there was little brotherly affection between us would be to call the sun a candle.

I kept my gaze steady on his face. Those who did not know us always said that Night Lords from the under-realms of Terra and the spoil heap of Nostramo are much alike – true, pale skin and eyes polished black by night marked us all, but to the few who looked further we were altogether different creatures. The black sinks bred a flatness to our features. Our eyes are more sensitive to sunlight even than theirs. We rarely blink. Our skin is naturally hairless, our teeth sharp without the need to file them. There were few enough of us left in the Legion by then, an ill-favoured and withering remnant. I wish that I could say that those of us who remained were an island of slowly fading nobility, but that would have been a lie.

There were few who saw the difference between what we had been and what we had become. Even those who had once served judgement were now servants to terror. Sometimes I wondered if there ever was a difference.

'The decree...' I began carefully.

‘You really hate us, don’t you? All of us who came after, who came from a different kind of night.’

I said nothing, and the First Captain’s corpse grin spread wider. ‘Oh, I am not judging your hatred. I share it. It just hurts me less.’

‘Sevatarion...’

I paused, and forced control into my voice. A little of my anger bled into the air between us as a sparkle of frost. Strangely, he had gone very, very still.

‘Jago Sevatarion, you will give me what I demand of you.’

The words melted the mockery of humour from his face. He crossed the room in a flash of lightning battleplate and servos. The deactivated chain-glaive struck me in the chest before I could even raise my hands.

I fell, but his hand caught my throat and pulled me in close. When his voice came, it was a hissing whisper.

‘If you are so desperate for judgement, then here is mine – I cast you out. You are no longer of the Eighth, if you ever were. I stain your hands red. I condemn you to death, should we ever meet again. You are outcast. You are nothing.’ He shoved me away, and I hit the floor with a clatter of ceramite on stone. He stood, his face still, shadows pooling in his eye sockets. ‘Does that satisfy?’

I rose. I was not shocked, or broken. I was angry. I could taste blood on my tongue. The rage twisted and burned brighter even as I tried to restrain it.

But I was not angry at his judgement. No, this anger was nothing so small in scope.

‘And the rest of the Librarius?’

‘I do not care,’ he spat, and turned to walk back towards our primarch’s throne.

‘It was about something once, Sevatarion,’ I called, my voice brittle with rage. He looked over his shoulder, his smile back in place. ‘We were more than this once. It was all for a reason.’

‘Spare me from the guardians of nostalgia,’ he said with roll of his eyes.

It happened then, before the thought could form in my conscious mind, before I was even aware that I had lost control. Green flames spread up the walls. Sevatar was turning, chain-blade roaring to life as the wave of force struck and slammed him into the throne. Between the flicker-pulse of

flame and shadow, my hand was at his throat, the fingers closing around the neck seal and the flesh beneath.

‘You murdered us,’ I snarled.

My teeth were bared, and lightning crawled across my scalp. The teeth of the chain-glaive were still spinning, but my mind was wrapped around his limbs, squeezing, crushing. I had no thought for what I was doing, or of the decree which forbade it.

‘You are killing our Legion.’ I slammed his head into the iron of the throne with only a twitch of thought. Servos whined as he fought against me. ‘You and your poisoned world are—’

Flash. Jagged un-light. Brain-fire. Agony.

I staggered back, blood pouring from my mouth, splattering down my armour and onto my bare, empty hands. Truly marked by blood, now, was the only thought I could manage as my head whirled with sights and memories that were not my own.

Sevatar did not rise to follow me. He was sitting on the primarch’s throne, breathing hard, his eyes fixed on the empty space where I thought I had seized him.

‘Go,’ he rasped.

‘Sevatarion—’ I began, gulping air through clotting blood.

‘Get out of my sight!’

I regarded him carefully for a few heartbeats, then turned and left the throne room.

I look up again at my shadowy executioner. Frost has spread over his armour. He has shared my past for an eye-blink of time, but in that instant I have shown him every moment of my life – from the day that the Legion came to me, to the steps that led me back into the darkness below Terra’s crust. To the only home I ever knew.

I allow him to recover, and then I speak.

‘I knew you would come. Judgement comes for us all in the end, cousin.’

I let out a breath, and draw another. It will be my last, of that I am sure. It tastes of damp and blood, of a world that has never known the light of day. For a moment I wonder which sin has brought my end. Was it Nikaea,

and the fact that I walked free still using my gifts? Was it the blood that flows in my veins, my Legion's conduct finally fallen beyond the last limits of Imperial tolerance? Or has the new age finally come, the age in which mankind no longer needed monsters and heroes?

I dismiss the notion. The reason does not matter, only the consequence.

'I will ask one thing more from you, though,' I say to the warrior standing over me. 'I would see the light of the sun one last time.'

I reach into his mind then. Until now it has been my thoughts and memories projecting into the space of his thoughts. Now I take his measure and see through his eyes. I see Sol hanging in the void, and the scattered light of countless stars beyond. Even after these last waning years spent down in the darkness, is still as beautiful and terrible as I remember.

And then I see why he has come for me.

I see betrayal, and broken oaths, and the deaths of sons at the hands of their fathers. I see what the vision of Imperial Truth and light has now become.

I let go of his mind. He shudders, and his finger tightens upon the trigger.

Can this be true? Can this really be what the galaxy has come to? And there in the darkness, at the core of everything I was and everything I became, is the answer, laughing at me through sharpened teeth.

The Space Marine, armoured plainly in grey, stares at me for a long moment, then lowers his pistol. 'I am not here to judge you, Fel Zharost. That right belongs to another.'

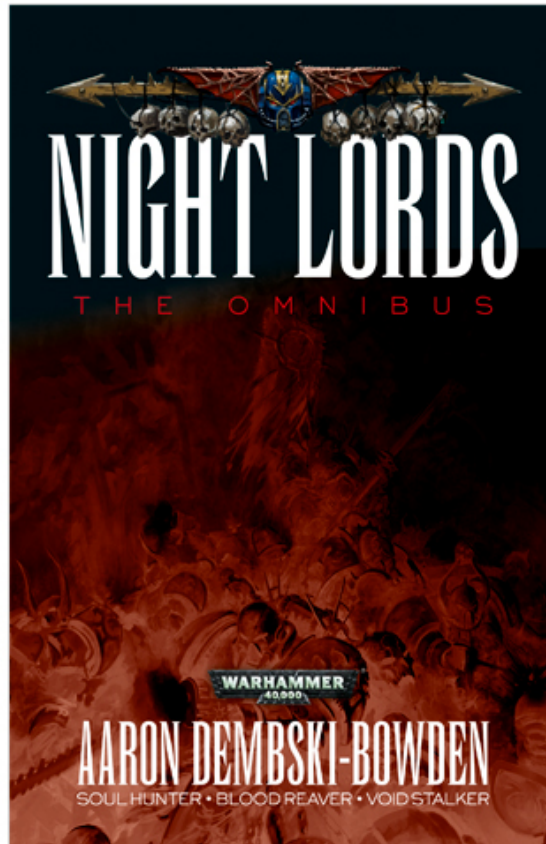
I nod. I know now why he has come for me, and what awaits me after this moment. I have seen it in his thoughts, like a final jest.

'Rise,' he says.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John French has written several Horus Heresy stories including the novellas *Tallarn: Executioner* and *The Crimson Fist*, and the audio dramas *Templar* and *Warmaster*. He is the author of the Ahriman series, which includes the novels *Ahriman: Exile* and *Ahriman: Sorcerer*, plus short stories including ‘The Dead Oracle’ and ‘Hand of Dust’. Additionally for the Warhammer 40,000 universe he has written the Space Marine Battles novella *Fateweaver*, plus a number of short stories. He lives and works in Nottingham, UK.

Driven by their hatred of the False Emperor, the Night Lords stalk the shadows of the galaxy, eternally seeking revenge for the death of their primarch. An omnibus edition collecting Aaron Dembski-Bowden's three novels *Soul Hunter*, *Blood Reaver* and *Void Stalker*.



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