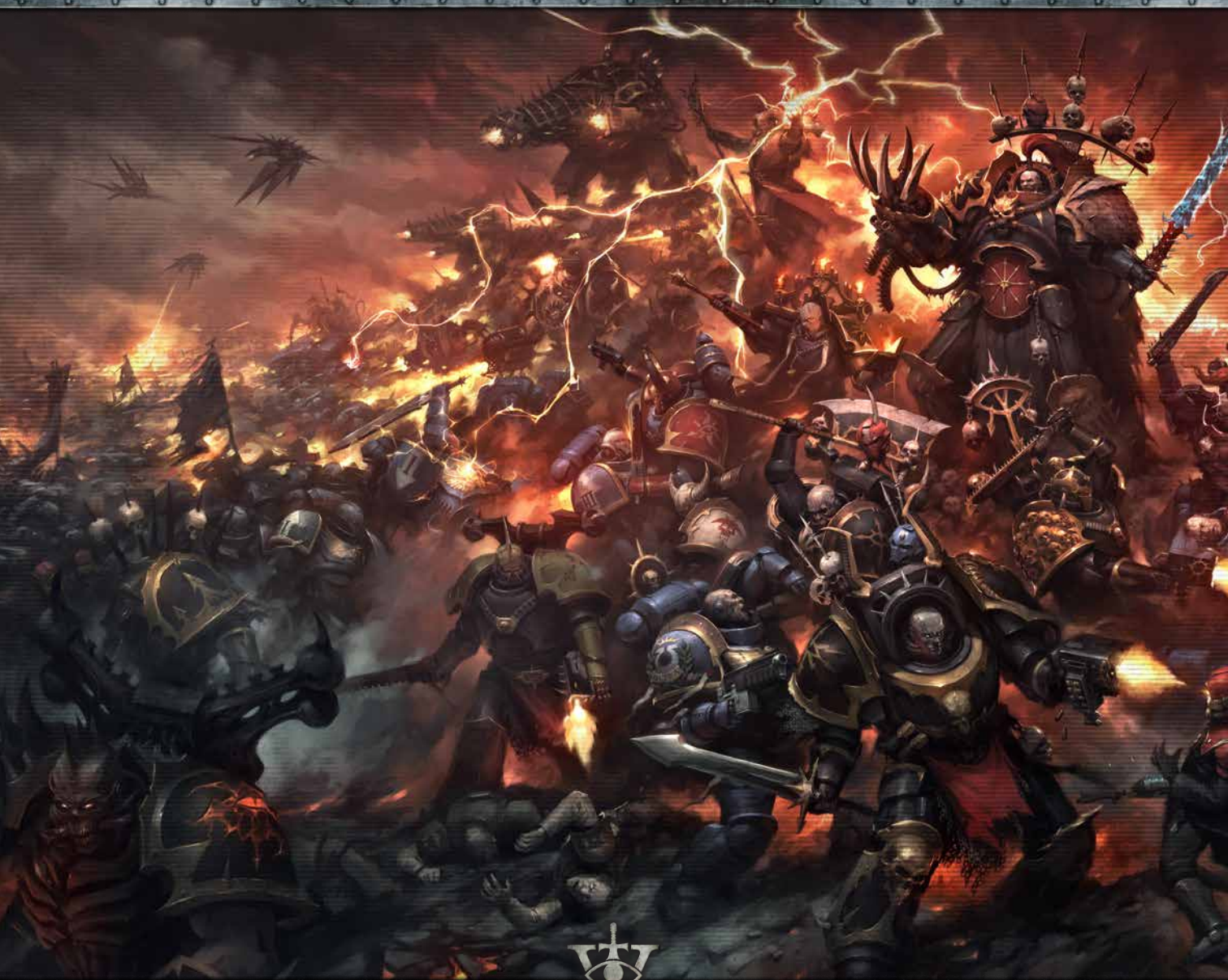




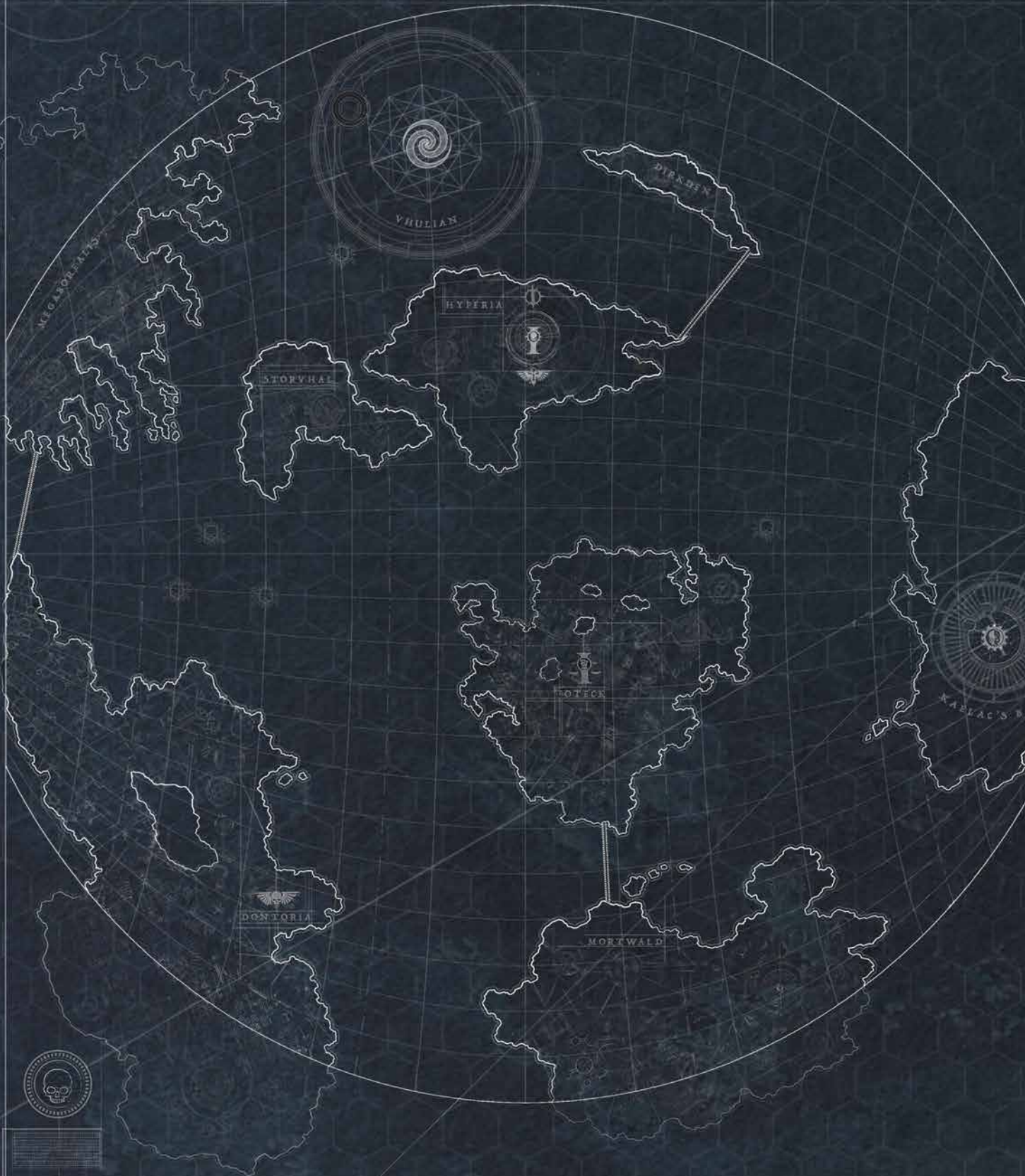
WARHAMMER

WARHAMMER 40,000



IMPERIUM NIHILUS
VIGILUS ABLAZE

PLANET	CONQUERED
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Planet U	1000-1000
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Planet W	1000-1000
Planet X	1000-1000
Planet Y	1000-1000
Planet Z	1000-1000



The Warhammer Vault exists to preserve the rich lore and background of Warhammer 40,000 and Warhammer Age of Sigmar. As such, outdated game scenarios and unit rules have been removed from this publication.



VIGILUS ABLAZE

WAR OF NIGHTMARES



CONTENTS

Global Destruction.....	4
Chaos Rising.....	6
Doom from the Skies.....	8
Battle in the Void.....	10
A Dark New Dawn.....	12
War in the Darkness.....	14
Retaking the Hoist.....	16
To Cauterise the Wound.....	18
Inside the Swirl.....	20
The Voidclaw.....	22
False Tides.....	24
The Iron Fist Closes Tight.....	26
Infernal Machines.....	28
Cults and Conquests.....	30
Vile Revelations.....	32
Of Man and Xenos.....	34
The Penumbral Pact.....	36
Distraction Tactics.....	38
Demise of a Legend.....	40
Fallen Skies.....	42
Planet in Flames.....	44
Aftermath.....	46





War Zones.....	48
Dontoria Hivespawl.....	50
Dirkden Hivespawl.....	52
Megaborealis.....	54
The Ommissian Hoist.....	56
Mortwald.....	58
Storvhal.....	60
Oteck Hivespawl.....	62
The Vhulian Swirl.....	64
Kaelac's Bane.....	66
Neo-vellum.....	68
Forces of War.....	70
Forces of Chaos.....	72
Forces of the Black Legion.....	76
Forces of the Alpha Legion.....	80
Forces of the Night Lords.....	82
Forces of the Word Bearers.....	84
Forces of the Iron Warriors.....	86
Renegade Forces.....	88
Forces of the Warp.....	92
Forces of the Imperium.....	98
The War Upon the Brink.....	106

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GLOBAL DESTRUCTION

The bitter tale of invasion, desperation and heroism that unfolded during the War of Beasts was only the beginning. There was an even greater threat to Vigilus, the Nachmund Gauntlet and the Imperium Nihilus as a whole – that of the Warmaster Abaddon, and the dread legions of Chaos that marched at his command.

The Cicatrix Maledictum forever changed the Imperium of Man, and as it tore open across the length of the galaxy, a thousand new wars began. In the Segmentum Obscurus, the populous but arid planet Vigilus became a point of crucial strategic importance. That world lay at the northern end of the Nachmund Gauntlet, one of the few stable corridors across the Great Rift. Through its haunted reaches, spacecraft could cross from the heartlands of the Imperium Sanctus to the desperate and anarchic Imperium Nihilus and back again with at least some chance of arriving at their destination intact.

Yet as the Great Rift opened it disgorged an invasion fleet of Orks that fell upon Vigilus like an avalanche. The sudden influx of greenskins triggered an insurrection of Genestealer Cultists that had long

dwelt beneath the planet's surface. Even before the Noctis Aeterna cut Vigilus off from the Astronomican, its every continent was riven by war. The name of the Vigilus System was soon on the lips of the High Lords of Terra themselves. The Lord Commander of the Imperium, the Primarch Roboute Guilliman, swore that the planet would endure, and sent the Chapter Master of the Ultramarines, Marneus Calgar, to ensure his word was true. Yet the most awful danger to the planet only revealed itself when warriors of the Black Legion were sighted amongst the planet's spires. They were the harbingers of Abaddon the Despoiler himself, who approached the beleaguered planet at the head of a crusading force mighty enough to conquer the entire system if necessary. Here, on this most vital linchpin, the forces of the Imperium were to be tested as never before.

IN THIS BOOK

This book is the second of a two-part series set in the Vigilus System. It contains an overview of the war for Vigilus thus far, from the initial Ork invasion and the subsequent Genestealer Cult uprising, to the diabolical campaign of an even more terrifying foe – the Warmaster of Chaos, Abaddon the Despoiler.

Inside you will find:

- The history of the War of Nightmares on Vigilus.
- Rules for playing an epic campaign set on Vigilus, or another planet in the Imperium Nihilus.
- Battlezone and war zone rules that represent the perilous environs of this planet.
- Datasheets, Detachments, special rules and Stratagems for the Chaos forces that took part in this great struggle.

A WORLD OF ARIDITY AND STRIFE

Vigilus was a world hostile to human life, though long ago the Imperium colonised it nonetheless. It had no oceans or seas, its only major bodies of water being immense fortified reservoirs that were jealously defended by those who possessed them. The planet was riven by earthquakes, in part due to the mining operations undertaken by the Adeptus Mechanicus controlling the industrial realm known as Megaborealis – these were so extensive they brought the planet to the brink of civil war more than once, and still the Tech-Priests would not say what it was they sought with such desperate intensity. Because of this, the planet's settlements were built wide as well as tall, the sky-scraping, mountainous hive cities joined by thousands of miles of industrial manufactorums and Sectors Mechanicus. Each hivesprawl, as they were known, supplied something vital to its fellows and imported critical resources in its turn. These artificial continents were once protected by the

planet's principal export, the Bastion-class force field, a crackling perimeter defence that was as much psy-tech as it was conventional barrier. In the early stages of the War of Beasts, when the Orks landed their colossal ships in the planet's wastes, these barriers kept them at bay. Yet when the warp storms of the Noctis Aeterna disrupted the psy-barriers, the greenskins gleefully invaded the hivesprawls, in turn spurring the Genestealer Cultists to rise from within. The Imperial counter-attacks did serious damage to the Ork scrap cities in the wastelands and purged many a nest of xenos cultists with fire, even rooting out the dreaded infections of Chaos in places. Ultimately, however, the Imperium reacted too late to save the hivesprawls from being seized in a hundred theatres of war. The Vigilus Senate was forced to concede swathes of the planet to its conquerors and instead concentrate on fighting a rearguard action in order to have any chance of saving the planet.





CHAOS RISING



'Vigilus shall not be allowed
to fall.'

- Roboute Guilliman, Lord
Commander of the Imperium,
Avenging Son and Risen
Primarch of the Ultramarines





DOOM FROM THE SKIES

The defenders of Vigilus had fought long to hold back the xenos invaders. With the Ork assault blunted and the Genestealer Cult largely contained, they had begun to think they had endured the worst. Only when the skies lit with the engine flares of a vast Chaos fleet did they realise the magnitude of their error.

The doom of Vigilus was closing in from a dozen directions at once. From the wilderness came the greenskin hordes, whooping and hollering whenever the Imperium launched an assault on their scrap cities – as not for nothing is it said that to counter-attack the Orks in strength is to kick a daggerwasp's nest. Too stubborn to give up despite the decisive strikes of the Adeptus Astartes, the greenskins charged headlong into the cities wherever they could force a hole in the defences, or hurried for sites on the horizon where smoke trailed and explosions boomed. Though close to half of the Ork invaders that had originally invaded Vigilus had been slain in violence or fire, many more had sprung from the aftermath.

The leader of the Ork war effort, a hulking brute known as Krooldakka the Speedlord Supreme, kept on the move throughout the War of Beasts, knowing that he was a primary target, but that the Imperials did not have the resources to hunt him down while the hivespraws were under attack. His hit-and-run assaults took their toll on everything from trench lines to armoured mega-convoys. After the Siege of Mortwald, many Imperial Knights swore a vow of duty to claim his head, but at the onset of the Chaos invasion none had claimed success.

From below each hivespawl came a seemingly endless infestation of Genestealer Cultists from the Cult of the Pauper Princes, boiling up

from their hidden warrens to claim city streets, dockyards and water purification plants. In scores of habitations and city plazas they were put down by the local Astra Militarum forces and their Space Marine allies, but there always seemed to be more. The false continent of Dirkden was abandoned to the insurrectionists, with Purestrain Genestealers running openly in the streets.

War raged for the reservoirs of Oteck Hivespawl, known as the Hollows, while the space elevator that supplied Megaborealis with water mined from frozen asteroids was seized by the higher echelons of the cult. Though less aggressive than the Orks, the cult fought with such cunning and careful forethought they even overcame the



Skitarii and Adepta Sororitas kill teams sent to root them out.

These two xenos races were portrayed as savage and brutish by the Imperial propaganda machine, but in truth both showed a hidden cunning that stymied Imperial efforts to rid Vigilus of their presence. Claims that victory in the War of Beasts was close at hand rang out every new dawn, but some began to detect a note of desperation under the strident calls to action.

These bestial foes were not the only scourge upon the citizens of Vigilus. The Drukhari raided from the glacier mines of the frozen south, while their Aeldari cousins sought vengeance against the upper echelons of Hyperian society. From within the ranks of the common people, the seeds of Chaos worship grew to infect healthy minds, and plague spread fast across Dontoria. Even the stars themselves seemed to bleed as the Cicatrix Maledictum yawned in the night sky, a livid

purple wound that appeared ready to swallow the planet entire.

The worst of all threats became clear only when it was almost too late to stop it – that being the approach of the Heretic Astartes. Via the report of a single survivor from a Space Marine strike force sent to the neighbouring planet of Nemendghast, word had reached Marneus Calgar that the armies of Abaddon the Despoiler were inbound, poised to tear Vigilus apart once and for all. With the Imperial prohibition forbidding the citizens from looking at the night sky in case the Cicatrix Maledictum drove them insane, the vanguard of the Chaos Space Marines found it easy enough to covertly seize the upper reaches of the hive-spires that pushed through the smog clouds. Led by Haarken Worldclaimer, known to his Raptor hosts as the Herald of the Apocalypse, this secret invasion had already conquered the high spires of Vigilus' cities by the time the senate heard of it.

On the same day that these tidings were brought to Calgar, Haarken Worldclaimer gave voice to a singular message, his words relayed from a thousand Raptor masks and hijacked vox gargoyles. The planet belonged to Abaddon, and the Warmaster would soon be there to claim it. Marneus Calgar listened well to the herald's threats, for every word was a spike of spite driven into his heart. The Lord Macragge had been acting as a strategic nexus for the Vigilus Senate at the time, but as he listened, his expression hardened to that of a pugilist more than ready to fight.



BATTLE IN THE VOID

It was Haarken Worldclaimer's gloating call that kicked the planet into a new phase of war. The Vigilus Senate vowed to intervene before the situation turned critical, and the motion was passed for a naval expedition to head the incoming doom off before it could reach the planet itself. Soon a new theatre of war opened in the void.

All eyes looked to Calgar as he gave a series of curt commands that saw his aerial assets redeployed – not to strafe ground targets, but to begin a new war above the clouds. Shaken by the news that the legendary Warmaster of Chaos was inbound, but resolving to prove equal to the task, Marneus issued a summons that saw the deadliest ships in the Imperial fleet gather above the sky-docks of Saint's Haven. His intent was to stymie the bulk of the Chaos invasion before it hit home, or to die in the attempt.

The Herald of the Apocalypse repeated his claim over and over, using his doleful message as a weapon to slash at the remaining hope and sanity of the Vigilus citizenry. Marneus Calgar

swiftly put into place an array of contingencies, tasking his pilots and close assault squads with the immediate engagement of any Chaos Space Marine or Daemon Engine that dared broadcast the fell message. It was not difficult to find them for, having hidden for weeks, the Black Legion were no longer prioritising stealth, but instead the infliction of fear. They too ached for the kill, to feel their blades puncture the ceramite battle plate of their hated foes and sink into the flesh beneath. It was a wish that was soon granted.

As his airborne warriors engaged the enemy in the pollution-choked skies of Hyperia Hivespawl, Calgar and his honour guard made to leave the planet, leaving its defence

in the capable hands of Pedro Kantor of the Crimson Fists. The Lord Macragge took a shuttle to his flagship, the *Laurels of Victory*, cut through Arch-Commodore Hentzmann's ceremonial greetings as quickly as he could without causing offence, and cast off towards the coordinates given by the Librarian Maltis, the sole survivor from the Nemendghast strike force. Out the Ultramarines fleet sailed, past the spinning wreckage of the Imperial cordon smashed to pieces by the Ork assault, past Neovellum and Omis-Prion and into the bleak and unwelcoming void towards Nemendghast.

After less than a week's travel, the auspex horizon was haunted by disturbing anomalies, chief amongst



them an ancient vessel with a dark and bloody history. Calgar's gravest suspicions were all but confirmed. Breaking the three seals of his craft's Sanctum Perjorum and consulting its forbidden data by the light of a blessed candle, Calgar checked the energy signature his steersmen had given him with the most ancient data at his disposal. Sure enough, the craft at the head of the invasion fleet was none other than the *Vengeful Spirit*, the flagship of the Arch-traitor and orchestrator of the Heresy, Primarch Horus himself. Its evil silhouette was distinguishable against the roiling tides of the Great Rift, and it filled those who had heard of it with intense foreboding.

Calgar ordered his fleet to form a double cordon, creating a layered broadside defence to intercept the Black Legion armada. The Imperial ships possessed no arcane tricks, no secret weapons from the prehistory of the Imperium or the depths of the Eye of Terror. What they had instead was a colossal amount of firepower, and the Lord

Macragge intended to use it to the full. Together with Hentzmann, he devised a dozen firing solutions and contingencies, launching hundreds of torpedoes into the void to ensure that should any ships from the Chaos fleet break away from the Imperial crosshairs, they would be met with a firestorm that would cripple them in short order.



Minutes slid by, then hours. The Chaos vessels hove in closer and closer, not changing their

heading so much as one degree. This was a statement in itself, the implication being that the Imperial fleet represented no jeopardy at all. Although they were still out of strike range, Abaddon and his lieutenants drove on at full speed as if the entire might arrayed ahead of them was nothing more than a tissue of cobwebs.

Calgar's frown of consternation deepened to a scowl. He knew Abaddon would not be so blasé, so foolish, as to charge directly into a firebase without dispersing at all. But he knew not what manner of duplicity was hidden behind the posturing of the infamous Warmaster, that genius of the Black Crusades, whose name was spoken only in whispers.

He realised the answer a moment too late when a shimmering blur appeared upon the bridge of the *Laurels of Victory*. It expanded into a blinding portal of white light, and the hellish denizens of the warp screamed out, hungry for blood.

THE BRIDGE ASSAILED

The bridge of the *Laurels of Victory* burst into hectic action as the warp portal yawned open, disgorging pale-skinned hellspawn. Leaping forth from a tide of writhing, crab-clawed androgynes came a four-armed monstrosity that headed straight for Calgar.

The Ultramarines, many of whom had faced Daemons before, laid down a storm of bolter fire that shredded the foremost invading creatures. These were not the slow and methodical plague-spawn that had defiled Ultramar, but a fast and dexterous breed that danced through the firestorm and endured grievous wounds with shrieks of ecstatic glee.

The four-armed giant bore down on Calgar as his Gauntlets of Ultramar spat mass-reactive shells into its pierced and jewel-strung torso. Lethro Ados and Nemus Adranus of his Victrix Honour Guard stood between their lord and his assailant, but their blows were met by the creature's shimmering shield, and they were knocked aside. The Daemon's great spear darted in. Calgar caught it behind the tip, holding

it an inch from his heart, but he could not stop it, for the polearm was slick with nameless fluids. The creature leaned into the blow, and the spear slid through Calgar's grip to impale him through the heart. Quick as a snake, the creature lashed out a claw and tore out Calgar's throat.

The bridge erupted into bedlam as the warriors of the Victrix Guard redoubled their attack. One by one the Daemons were fought back by the veterans of Macragge until the battle became a stalemate. When the ship's Navigator, Senioris, revealed his mystical warp eye by removing his ornate bandanna, the backlash of aetheric forces racked the bridge. The four-armed Greater Daemon that led the host fell back into the warp with a despairing wail and, as the Navigator advanced, the portal closed. Yet the damage had been done. As vox reports came from across the fleet relating similar events on all its principal warships, the dreadful truth became clear. The battle against Abaddon's fleet had been lost before it had even begun.

A DARK NEW DAWN

The Ultramarines fleet returned to the war-torn planet of Vigilus to find it in an even more desperate state than when they left. Pillars of smoke rose high from every hive and population centre – and still the worst was yet to come, for the true architects of the latest string of disasters were drawing perilously near.

The Daemon assault on the *Laurels of Victory's* bridge had left anarchy and destruction in its wake. A dozen similar strikes had ensured the inter-ship clarion array rang with agonised screams and panicked orders, interspersed with the static of the void. The lead ships of the Ultramarines fleet were reeling, dealt a crippling blow from afar by Abaddon's hellish allies. Blood swilled across the command decks of a dozen strike cruisers, and strobing images of daemonic killers plagued every ship within a hundred thousand miles.

Arch-Commodore Hentzmann, upon seeing Marneus Calgar with his throat torn out and a gaping wound in his chest, saw only one path left open to him. With the surety of a man used to the burden of command, he made his decision quickly. If they were to turn back now they could live again to fight another day – and ensure the Lord Macragge was brought back from the brink of death. The Victrix Guard, their primary duty to protect their master, nodded curtly in reinforcement of the decision.

With the remonstrations of the Ultramarines officers still yearning for a fight ringing in his ears, Arch-Commodore Hentzmann ordered a fighting retreat. One by one his fellow captains followed suit, for the *Laurels of Victory* led the fleet in spirit as well as in rank. Within the hour the entire Imperial blockade was falling back, lances and bombardment cannons blazing as they made for their muster point in the orbit of Vigilus.

Abaddon's arrogance had proved well founded, for though his fleet took significant damage, it was far

from broken, and its return fire ravaged many an Imperial craft in exchange. With the daemonic minions of his dark patrons at his beck and call, the Warmaster of Chaos had crippled the Imperial defence with a single stroke. His passage to Vigilus was all but unbarred.



Even as Hentzmann fought valiantly to buy his fleet time to recover, Marneus Calgar was hurried to the prime apothecarium of the *Laurels* by his Victrix Guard. There he was treated by a conclave of elite Apothecaries. His second heart had kicked in as soon as his primary heart had been sliced in two by the Daemon's spear, saving him from an untimely death, and his Belisarian Furnace had triggered a rush of stimulants to keep his system going. His ravaged throat was sutured, reinforced and regrown, the Apothecaries administering intense regeneration chem-baths, cyborgisation surgery and a lengthy rejuvenat treatment. Although he survived the ordeal, Calgar was not unmarked by it, and ever after spoke with a faint mechanical burr to his voice.

The return of the Imperial ships to the docks above Saint's Haven was greeted with great jubilation by the citizenry below, and in the places not still fraught with battle, there were celebrations in the streets.

Although the people were still forbidden from looking upwards lest they catch a glimpse of the Great Rift, none could mistake the sullen growl and throb of the ships' engines.

The Imperial propaganda machine went into overdrive to explain the sudden presence of the fleet, insisting that it had returned to see Vigilus liberated, rather than admitting the truth of its retreat. At the onset of the mission, the Imperial vox-broadcasts had been so insistent that Calgar's armada would meet with unalloyed success, it was natural for the populace to assume that the enemy threat – the precise nature of which had been carefully obfuscated – had indeed been defeated.

There were those amongst the populace that knew the truth, however. These included the Sons of Vannadan – latter-day scions of the demagogue who had fuelled the rise of Storvhal's Tzeentchian pyroclastic cults during the War of Beasts. These Chaos followers claimed to be able to read the future in the flames. They spread the rumour that the Imperial fleet had been forced to return to Vigilus by the true inheritors of the planet – the worshippers of ancient gods from before the reign of the Emperor. With the words of Haarken Worldclaimer still ringing in their ears, the people of Storvhal and Hyperia gave gradual credence to these rumours, until an undercurrent of fear and doubt ran beneath the claims that all was well.

The Space Marines of Calgar's expedition made their return to Vigilus not in a triumphal procession, as the Ministorium

would have had it, but as a Drop Pod invasion force. They hammered down from battle barges and strike cruisers by the dozen, contrails streaking the skies. This time they struck not at the Ork-held fringes of the hivespawls, nor at the places where the banners of the Pauper Princes flew high, but at those areas claimed by Chaos. Many of the high spires and citadels were still being besieged, despite the aerial counter-assaults launched by Calgar's strike forces before the fleet had set off. In places, the sudden return of the Space Marines was enough to tip the balance, and several spires were reclaimed. But it was slowly becoming clear that the Adeptus Astartes were too late to truly have an impact on the rest. The rot had spread too far, infecting the hives from the top down.

Calgar, by this point, had healed well from his grievous injuries. As a prime example of the Adeptus Astartes – and a Primaris at that – his ability to survive trauma was second to none. Viewing dozens of dataslates and pict-thief relays at once in order to swiftly parse the maximum amount of relevant data, he spent long hours assessing the damage that had been inflicted upon the planet. It painted a grim picture indeed.

Dirkden was lost, abandoned to the Genestealer Cultists at Lord Calgar's command. Kaelac's Bane was likewise forsaken, its glacier miners having fled from the Drukhari menace haunting the blizzards. Mortwald had held out against the Ork assaults battering its trenches, but its wealthy rejuvenat clients and privileged aristocrats had withdrawn to their fortified palaces and left the common workers to the airborne attacks of Worldclaimer's Raptor hosts. Megaborealis was being torn apart by the forces of the Omnissiah, the heretic and the xenos. The Greater Omnissian Hoist – the orbital relay that enabled frozen water to be imported from asteroids – was in

the clutches of the Pauper Princes, thus robbing Vigilus of a vital water source. Dontoria Hivespawl had been tainted by the plagues of Nurgle that had so recently infected Ultramar, and became host to a fast-spreading sickness that none could cure. Oteck's reservoirs, the site of intense war between the Pauper Princes, the Space Wolves and the Adepta Sororitas, had been proclaimed quarantine toxicus by the Deathwatch Kill Teams that had investigated their purity, and the ever-thirsting populace was being driven to the edge of madness by the shrieks of hunting Warp Talons. Storvhal, its geomantic sites tortured by the agents of the martyr Vannadan, was home to three erupting volcanoes, which were hurling billions of tons of ash into the skies to rain back down as smouldering cinders that burned the flesh. The planet was on the brink of total ruination, and the arrival of the inbound Chaos host would likely drive it over the edge.

THE WORLDCLAIMER

Abaddon's harbinger was known as the Herald of the Apocalypse for good reason. Upon arriving on Vigilus, Haarken Worldclaimer had used the thick cloud cover of the planet to his advantage, quietly and steadily conquering the spire tips of Vigilus while the defenders of the planet were concerned with the wars raging below. Once he had secured these hidden beachheads, he descended from the smog-blackened skies in glory. He slammed the Helspear into the planet's crust, and cried out that within eighty days and eighty nights, the planet would fall in the name of his dark master.



WAR IN THE DARKNESS

The coming of Chaos triggered an epidemic of fear and rage amongst the populace of Vigilus and, in places, rioting filled the streets. The reaction of many a soul, when faced with horror and near-certain doom, was to pray for divine intervention – and it was not only the Emperor that was worshipped upon that stricken planet.

The smog clouds above Vigilus parted under the bow wave of energy preceding the Chaos fleet, and the horrifying truth was revealed. The planet was under attack from precisely those forces Calgar's fleet was said to have defeated. Outbreaks of violent anger and unrest flared up in every hab-block. Some took to looting, while others went to ground, stockpiling food and water in the hope of riding out the storm.

Much of the populace of Vigilus found relief from the despair caused by the coming of Abaddon's fleet in the form of the Imperial Cult. The Adepta Sororitas and Ministorum Priests on the planet found themselves being followed around by crowds of devoted pilgrims,

ranging from ragged flagellants to organised gangs calling themselves *frateris militia*. All too often, these disciples proved as much a curse as a blessing for the Ministorum forces, for they gave little thought to strategy.

Meanwhile, many of those driven to near-madness by the ongoing war joined the side of the corrupters and despots, becoming part of the Chaos cults that flocked to greet their masters as the ships of the Heretic Astartes emerged from the pollution-choked skies. Still more sought solace underground. They embraced the fanaticism of the subterranean cults who claimed to be true native Vigilants, and in doing so, bolstered the ranks of the Pauper Princes. When

the Chaos ships arrived, the infestation welcomed a great influx almost overnight.

Abaddon had not taken the Pauper Princes into account when he had formulated his strategies of conquest, for the cult's war leaders had concealed their kin from psychic scrying as well as from mundane observation. Even as the Black Legion and their renegade allies fought to claim the hivespawls from the top down, they encountered stalwart resistance from resurgent gene-sects seething up from below. In every false continent, the Chaos invaders were beset by the scions of Grandsire Wurm, for they would not relinquish the holdings they had worked so hard to acquire.





The Chaos invasion of Vigilus saw the xenocultist stronghold of Dirkden attacked in force. The continent's fate had been given to the infamous Night Lords, as well as elements from the Renegade Chapter known as the Scourged. Their mission was to capitalise on the fear and confusion engendered by Haarken Worldclaimer's Daemon-vox broadcasts and drive the hivesprawl over the edge into an abyss of madness and violence. It was a task to which the two forces were eminently suited.

Only a small force of Night Lords were part of the invasion – at that time the majority of their notorious brotherhood was near the Eye of Terror, attacking Craftworld Ulthwé. The Night Lords leader, Ramaghan Savasdus, had made a deal with Abaddon to ensure he was given Ashenid Non-Hive as the locale of his primary attack. He had learned from his skull-masked visionary brother, Vreanus, that the capital city's large criminal population might prove excellent

recruiting grounds for a new generation of warriors – or, if that failed, hardy slaves.

Yet even Vreanus had not foreseen the extent of the xenos corruption that ran throughout Dirkden. There was something about the psychic gestalt of the Genestealer hybrids that made it difficult for him, and those like him, to sense their presence. Whether this was a deliberate obfuscation on the part of the cult's Maguses or some innate echo of the Shadow in the Warp that precedes each Tyranid hive fleet, Vreanus could not tell. Either way, it proved to be a deciding factor in the wars to come.

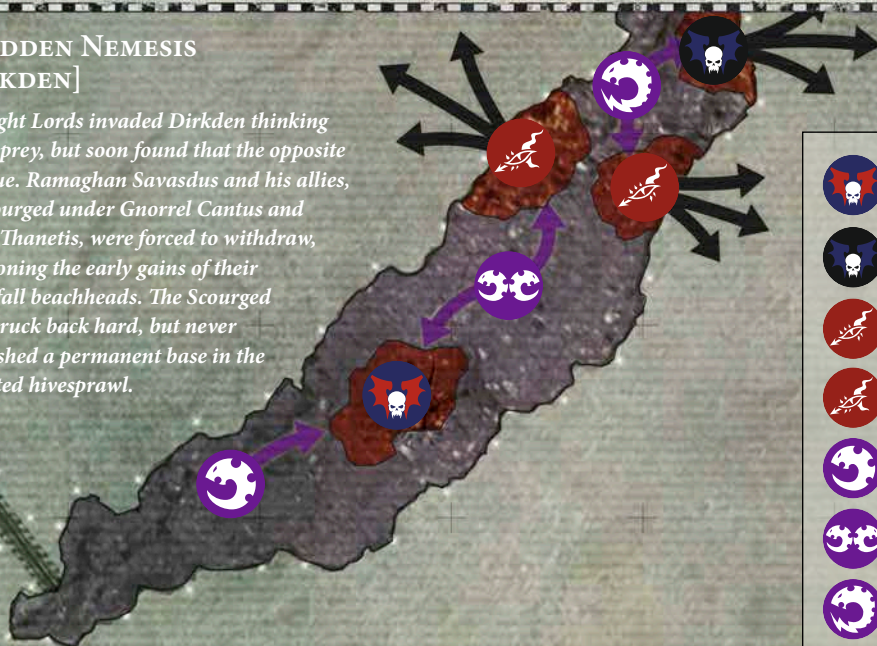
When the Night Lords made planetfall, they slaughtered their way through the streets of Dirkden, torturing those who resisted them. They battled against the criminal fraternity of the continent for several days – for the lowest sinners and recidivists were the only ones who had stayed to claim the hivesprawl. Yet that corrupt

organisation was not all it seemed – its members were being controlled from the shadows. Savasdus, Vreanus and their warband found themselves fighting for their lives as thousands of Genestealer Cult hybrids emerged from false walls and trapdoors to fight alongside the criminals of the underworld. The bolters, blades and lightning claws of the Heretic Astartes took a horrific toll, many-limbed bodies piling so high the Night Lords used them as impromptu ramparts in the open-roofed halls of Ashenid Non-Hive.

Still the cult sent in wave after wave, intending to drown the invaders in sheer numbers. The cult did not risk its Purestrain Genestealer offspring against the Night Lords; instead the Primus Hollun Desh, sent from Megaborealis to secure the cult's holdings, led several claws of Aberrants and Metamorph Hybrids. The shock assault proved enough to break the Night Lords and the Scourged alike. Dirkden remained in the hands of the Pauper Princes.

A HIDDEN NEMESIS [DIRKDEN]

The Night Lords invaded Dirkden thinking it easy prey, but soon found that the opposite was true. Ramaghan Savasdus and his allies, the Scourged under Gnorrel Cantus and Veshel Thanetis, were forced to withdraw, abandoning the early gains of their planetfall beachheads. The Scourged later struck back hard, but never established a permanent base in the infested hivesprawl.



-  NIGHT LORDS [RAMAGHAN SAVASDUS]
-  NIGHT LORDS [VREANUS]
-  THE SCOURGED [GNORREL CANTUS]
-  THE SCOURGED [VESHEL THANETIS]
-  PRIMUS HOLLUN DESH [THRONG SUBSKEIN]
-  ASHENID NON-HIVE RESURGENTS
-  CONGREGATION OF THE BIO-ELECTRIC SERPENT



RETAKING THE HOIST

The Omnisian Hoist, that vast pulley mechanism by which the Adeptus Mechanicus drew ice-clad asteroids from space in order to harvest vital aqua meteoris, had been taken by a strike force of Purestrain Genestealers. With water so scarce, the Tech-Priests launched a concerted assault to reclaim it.

The war in Megaborealis had raged out of control for some time. Though the Genestealer Cult uprising had been contained in most of the continent's districts by methodical extermination teams of Skitarii, Kataphron servitors and Space Marines, the heaviest fighting had been concentrated around the vast technological miracle that ran through the core of the Stygian Spires and then high into space above them, known as the Greater Omnisian Hoist.

The Pauper Princes had taken the lower levels of the Hoist during the War of Beasts. Their invasion plans had been so thorough that their covert agents, who had infiltrated the Stygian workforce, had been able to extract the access codes for a hundred different vault doors. The upper levels, which were kept to a higher level of sanctification, proved far more difficult to seize. The alarm had already been raised by the unblinking servo-skulls that had first uncovered the xenocultist incursion, so the vital areas of the Stygian Spires were guarded by clades of Kastelan Robots programmed to hammer phosphor bullets into anything without a noospheric aura. However, a claw of Purestrain Genestealers had been able to bypass the Adeptus Mechanicus defences by worming their way up through water pipes to seize the upper levels of the Hoist. Within days, the primary source of Megaborealis' water had been cut off. A plan that had been generations in the making had finally been put into deadly effect.

At the tail end of the War of Beasts, the battle for the Hoist rose to new levels when the Iron Hands, masters of the armoured assault, made

a methodical and precise attack on those holdings the Adeptus Mechanicus had designated lost to the xenos menace. Before they could make much headway, however, the presence of the Space Marines drew the attention of nearby Ork forces, who battered their way through the hivespawl to join the fight. Within a matter of hours, the Space Marines found themselves battling two species of xenos at once. Without the adept calculations and compartmentalised war doctrines of their leader, Clan Captain Galkraan, they would have been swiftly overcome.



The Pauper Princes took advantage of the reprieve, rallying in the lower levels of the Stygian Spires. Then the Iron Hands strike cruiser *Darkspear* levelled a punitive barrage on coordinates relayed from Galkraan, reducing tracts of the Stygian Spires claimed by the Genestealer Cultists to blackened, smoking rubble. The way cleared, the Kastelan Robots and their Cult-Mechanicus keepers began methodically working their way through the lower levels, guns blazing.

Meanwhile, Skitarii macroclades were despatched to take back the

upper levels from the Purestrain Genestealers that had seized their sovereign domain. The Skitarii counter-attack hit home with impressive force. Unit after unit burst up from disused transit capillaries that led into the sanctified control centre, routes that had intentionally been left hidden by the warriors of the Omnisiah as contingencies should the main entry points be lost.

In a matter of moments, the Genestealers in the Hoist's control hub found that the tables had been turned. Dozens of xenos beasts were gunned down by the radium carbines and galvanic rifles of the Adeptus Mechanicus infantry. They fought with the fury of righteous zealots, so incensed were they at seeing their holy machinery profaned by xenos claws.

Acting on instinct, the Genestealers clambered up the walls like skittering spiders and ripped away the auto-lumens that bathed the control room in a pallid glow. Darkness descended as the lights were extinguished one by one, and with it came a horror from the void.

Emerging from the largest of the water pipelines came the original Patriarch of the Vigilus infestation, Grandsire Wurm. The xenos mastermind slashed his monstrous talons through the Skitarii with such force their bodies came apart in sprays of blood and sparking wire. Under his psychic control, the Genestealers and Metamorph Hybrids that fought alongside him sealed the vertical transit capillaries with deft twists of the circular wheel-locks. In doing so, they cut off the Skitarii reinforcements still climbing up those shafts to join the fight.

Eyes alight with an evil intelligence, the Patriarch hammered its gnarled fist into a glowing red icon on the primary control panel. The armoured shutters that were designed to seal the room off from the outside world began to descend, the plasteel plates sliding slowly into place with a series of loud metallic *thunks*.

However, before the control centre could be fully locked down, lances of neutron laser fire burst into the chamber, each a spear of blinding light in the gloom. Grandsire Wurm was caught by one of the beams, which blasted two of his muscular limbs from his torso. His brood of Purestrain Genestealers fared even worse; caught in a deadly crossfire, they were annihilated around him.

The vertical Skitarii assault had been a distraction tactic, and it had worked even better than expected. Anticipating that the Genestealers would be more than a match at close quarters, the Stygian Tech-Priests had sent their Onager Dunecrawlers up the outside of the hive-spire. With the metallic plates that guarded their giant talon-like legs humming with electromagnetic fields, they had been able to cling to the hive's metal skin and stalk slowly up its near-vertical slopes right to the top. The surprise assault had come not a moment too soon. Much to the relief of the Tech-Priests overseeing it, the Dunecrawler assault proved so effective that it cleansed the Hoist's upper levels of xenos taint altogether.



The symbol of the Pauper Princes was emblazoned on over three hundred captured Imperial battle tanks – whether wrought in iron or spray-marked in industrial paint, it indicated a deadly betrayal of the Astra Militarum. Even so, during the War of Nightmares, those same tanks fought hard against the Chaos scourge.



TO CAUTERISE THE WOUND

In Hyperia, the Imperial response to the Chaos invasion of the hive-spires was swift and focused. When ever more reports came in detailing a heretic presence on the other false continents, it became clear that wider and more drastic measures were needed to deal with the encroaching darkness.

Word of each new assault reached Saint's Haven via armed couriers, skylflare semaphore and intel cylinders from the moon of Neo-vellum, and the leaders of the Adeptus Astartes drew up overlapping response plans. Though they had made many tactical gains in the spires of Hyperia and further afield, the grand strategy had to be revised, over and over, as it became clear that Abaddon had brought a dark alliance of Renegade Chapters and Traitor Legions to bear against Vigilus. Even as the Space Marine lords pored over charts and dataslates of enemy dispositions, ten-thousand-year-old traitors who had devoted their immortal lifespans to the conquest of the Imperium stalked the hivespawls with bolters roaring death.

Though there were many at the Vigilus Senate who had only heard the names of the forces attacking the planet as whispered legends – if that – to Marneus Calgar they rang like a litany of disaster from his worst nightmares. Here the ancient enemies of the Imperium were writ large. The Black Legion were present to some degree in all of the false continents, their midnight-black armour emblazoned with that most dreaded of sigils, the Eye of Horus. They were not alone, for Abaddon had marshalled an assembly of traitors like no other.

The Word Bearers, their crimson armour covered in the unholy script of Lorgar, were attacking the armoured spire-convents of Hyperia with zealous fanaticism.

Their foot soldiers advanced in massed phalanxes with their bolters laying down overlapping fields of fire, Havoc heavy weapons specialists blasting away at the Repulsor and Exorcist tanks sent to intercept them.

The Iron Warriors made drop assaults from vast, heavily armoured warships that hung in low orbit, the principal site of their aggression the well-defended trench networks of Mortwald. Masters in the art of siege warfare, they brought pinpoint lascannon fire against the bastion networks and Fortresses of Redemption that had held back the greenskin invaders for so many years. One by one these defences cracked, for the Iron Warriors struck with terrible



speed and strength. The Imperial Fists made haste to the front lines to hurl them back, but they could not be everywhere at once, and the feints and charges of massed Chaos Cultists kept them pinned amongst the trenches while the true strength of the traitors hit home elsewhere.

The Night Lords descended upon Dirkden, the Scourged alongside them. Though he hoped that they would be assailed by the Genestealer Cultists that had engineered the false continent's downfall, Calgar knew the vile scions of Konrad Curze would not be defeated so easily, and even if hurled back would be likely to refocus their assault on the Hyperia-Dirkden Fortwall and move into the regions south of Saint's Haven.

The Lenkutz Chain, including the false islands of Tzardonica and Luthvren Isle, was overrun by a strange machine-parasitism, and anarchy was brought to the streets by Abaddon's Arch-Lord Discordant, Vex Machinator. The water purification plants there were rendered hopelessly corrupt by the aura of raw Chaos he carried with him, which unleashed havoc upon man and machine alike.

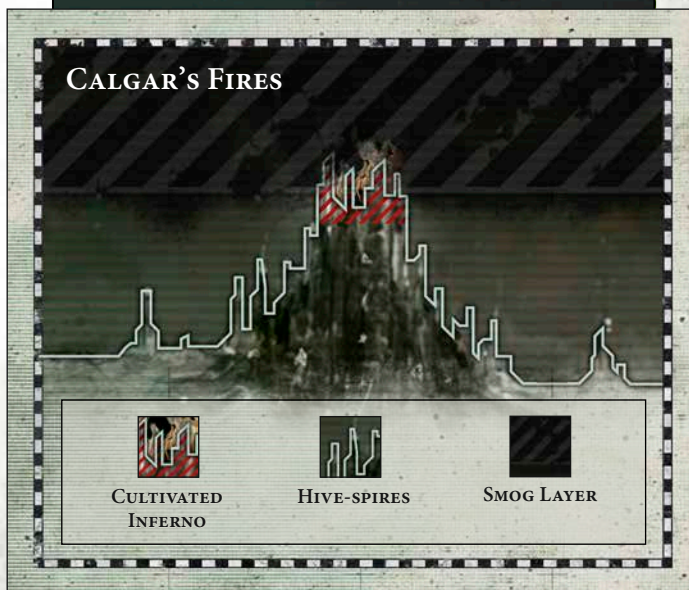
Dontoria was in the grips of an epidemic. Plasteel shanty structures rotted in every hab-block, devoured by a rapacious rust-curse even as the flesh of the humans within blackened and turned to foul slurry. Giant, bulging blisters appeared on the citizens of Grodholev Subspawl, often in patterns that mirrored the Great Rift. When the blisters burst they spilled out tiny, writhing creatures, Daemon maggots that grew swiftly into waddling Glitchlings whose aura infected machines as well as flesh.

Supernatural plague was an enemy that the Space Marines knew they could not fight. With heavy heart, Calgar considered the fact that Dontoria too was all but lost.

CALGAR'S FIRES

Calgar was left little choice but to take extreme action, for the assault of Abaddon and his allies was as devastating as it was swift. Yet having so recently conceded Dirkden to the Pauper Princes, he balked at the idea of giving up territory to the Chaos assault. The matter was discussed with vehement passion in the Vigilus Senate, but at first no one could agree on a course.

In the end, it was Lucienne Agamemnus IX, the Planetary Governor, who helped make Calgar's mind up for him. The upper levels of many hive-spires, taken over by the forces of Chaos, had been lost. She suggested that a deal be struck with the Adeptus Mechanicus, and their industrial machinery brought to bear to cause a seismic disruption of immense magnitude. Using Tectonic Fragdrills and bore-hives, they could topple the highest edifices across Vigilus. Calgar was not convinced. Not only would the tumbling buildings crash down to crush thousands of citizens, and the fissures opening up in each hivespawl damn tens of thousands more, the effect upon morale would be crippling. Furthermore, Lucienne had stood in direct opposition to the works of the Adeptus Mechanicus for decades, and a reversal of policy would be seen as a sign of desperation. In response, Lucienne instead proposed a systematic program of arson, starting at the throat of each of the largest hive-spires. The fires raging upward would cleanse the traitors from the tips of each stronghold without the Imperial forces having to commit another bullet. Calgar agreed, albeit with a heavy heart. He ordered it done, and Ministorum-sanctioned Adepta Sororitas fire teams moved to enact his orders within the hour. The conflagrations known collectively as Calgar's Fires were set in every hive to pierce the smog-cloud layer, and one by one, the spires of Vigilus burned.



INSIDE THE SWIRL

'There are truths upon Vigilus that have remained hidden for aeons. So closely guarded are they, so deeply buried, that the planet's people have no idea they even existed in the first place. Their hiding places have become blind spots, areas forgotten by all except the cautionary legends of grand-mamzels and the last of the Vigilant seers. Yet in those secret places can be found the salvation of the planet – or, if it falls into the wrong hands, its damnation.'

- Valle de Geer, Elder Seer of the Burning Wheel

The secret within the Vhulian Swirl was to affect the War of Nightmares in the most profound of ways. What had long been ignored suddenly became the focus of a new military campaign.

The giant dust storm to the east of Hyperia Hivesprawl was avoided by almost all on Vigilus – even the greenskins and the cultists of the Pauper Princes gave it a wide berth. Those whose curiosity had driven them close to its boundaries had found the ferocity of the weather system a deadly barrier, and those who lived to tell of it proved a further disincentive for any future would-be explorers. The whipping, high-velocity winds that howled in a great circle around the eye of the storm carried with them billions of tons of particulate matter – grains of sand, flinders of rust, and splinters of rock – that could shred the skin from a man

in a matter of seconds. The storm raged on decade after decade, as ceaseless as the Jovian Red Spot in the Sol System. The Swirl was a region so hostile to life, so terrible in its anger, that only those with protective equipment, like Adeptus Astartes battle plate, had any chance of making it through to the eye of the storm beyond. But there were some who had braved the journey, and thereby found the secrets that lay deep within.

When the Space Marines arrived during the second phase of the War of Beasts, the Aquilarian Council, Vigilus' governing body at that time, had insisted that



to study the Vhulian Swirl was a waste of resources. Though it birthed smaller storms that span out across the wastes like the cells of some vile canker budding from the parent mass, the planet's leaders were convinced it was not worth investigating, as every attempt thus far had ended in failure.

The Dark Angels ventured to explore it nonetheless, for they had reasons of their own to search the most remote regions of the planet. At first they had travelled in rugged transports, driving in a sidelong chevron formation so one vehicle could provide cover for the next. When the transports had choked and died, their gears and pistons fouled by sand, the Space Marines had sent forth strike teams on armoured bikes, high-powered vehicles with a profile low enough to slip through the relentless winds. On these they made it further still, but not far enough.



The bikes too were fouled by the swirling particulate and ultimately brought to a halt, their machine spirits screaming in anger when their throttles were gunned to no avail. Vowing to reclaim their metal steeds before the end, the Space Marines had then advanced on foot, fighting with every dogged step to reach the Swirl's heart. But they were not to find it. The area covered by the Vhulian Swirl was vast, and with visibility so poor and the storm's electromagnetic interference playing havoc with their sensors, they were forced to concede defeat and return to the wider war. Yet it pained them to do so, for they sensed that something of great import was concealed within that terrible storm – and they were right.

For millennia, the Swirl had hidden an ancient stronghold of dark rock. Known by the nameless masons that had built it as the Citadel Vigilant, it had been claimed long ago by a warband of the Fallen. Those ancient traitors of the First Legion had been conducting investigations into the nature of Vigilus for centuries, and using the planet as a staging post for their own agendas. The remote and hostile locale, twinned with the psychic shielding provided by the Fallen Librarian Osandus, had made it extremely difficult for anyone to uncover the secret at the heart of the Swirl.

Abaddon was the exception. The Despoiler had signed a blood-marked pact with the Fallen leader centuries ago, and using this parchment his Sorcerers were able to track the psychic signature to Vigilus, like bloodhounds on the scent of their prey. After Abaddon had helped the Fallen escape a force of Dark Angels in the Pandorax war zone, Osandus had sworn fealty to the Despoiler. The Warmaster had suspected that the allegiance of the Fallen Librarian would be useful in the future, and the events upon Vigilus were to prove him right. The time to call in the debt was now.

VHULIAN SWIRL

Anomalous weather system in perpetuity <declared In Nominis Abhorrens by the Aquilarian Council>. Divinatos level aptus non, Subtithe level aptus non. Clearance zone of official cartographicus border at least 3.2 leagues. Satellite etching from Neo-vellum inconclusive due to omnipresent dust storm coverage.

Thought for the day: Leave Well Enough Alone.

THE VOIDCLAW

At the spine of the Citadel Vigilant was an ancient weapon known as the Voidclaw, a device of incredible power. Its Fallen guardians had a dire use in mind for it – but the Despoiler had plans of his own.

VOIDCLAW

Macro-Artefact (carbon signature indicative of Dark Age of Technology). Similarities to Hadronite large-scale graviton array (cf. Noctis Labyrinth). Generates anomaly comparable to micro-analogue of collapsed star. Atomic density of yield unknown.

Upon reaching the planet's orbit, Abaddon's flagship, the *Vengeful Spirit*, took up a geosynchronous position above Storvhal, the vast ship revolving about its axis to level a punishing broadside at any Imperial craft that came too close. So mighty was the Gloriana-class battleship that it smashed aside all challengers with no more effort than an Ogryn swatting a gadfly. Though the Imperial Navy mounted an initial foray against it, cleared by the Chapter Masters who identified its hated silhouette, the giant warship inflicted such terrible losses they were forced to withdraw. Ultimately, the admiralty reasoned it better not to provoke the vast relic ship, for it only attacked when approached, and otherwise hung over Storvhal, seemingly inert.

Abaddon, on the other hand, was far from inactive. He had formulated an approach to the Citadel Vigilant that bypassed the swirling tempest entirely. With the sorcerous teleportarium arrays of the *Vengeful Spirit* focused onto the psychic spoor of Osandus, the Warmaster and his hand-picked Terminators – the Bringers of Despair – descended in a strike force no more than fifty strong. They appeared outside the gates of the Citadel Vigilant in a blaze of dark splendour, and called for an audience with those inside. For a long and tense minute, they had no reply. Abaddon had already started stalking forward, Drach'nyen raised in his great gauntlet, when the upper drawbridge clanked down and a hooded figure emerged.



The parley that followed was not the exchange of old friends, nor even old allies. It was fraught and terse, with the gun barrels of a hundred Fallen pointing down from the ramparts. The Black Legion showed not a moment's hesitation, nor a twitch of their guns, not even when the artillery emplacements and macro-cannons of the Citadel Vigilant tracked slowly towards them. Although all were on high alert, their guns remained silent.

Instead, a war of words began. It was a battle that Abaddon was well equipped to fight, for the Despoiler had brokered deals with the lords of Renegade Chapters and the Daemon Primarchs of the Traitor Legions. Some amongst the Black Legion claimed he had even spoken with the Ruinous Powers themselves, and maintained his sanity – or most of it – in the process.

It was for control of the Voidclaw that Abaddon bargained. The weapon at the heart of the citadel

was like no other. It did not fire projectiles, but instead forced a breach in the fabric of space-time itself, focusing a beam of crushing energy upon a single point to open a gravitic anomaly smaller than a pearl. Though tiny, this singularity could bypass all known types of force field. The potential devastation that could be unleashed was incredible. The gravity of that anomaly was so strong it could draw all matter around it into its ravening nothingness, a fierce void from which nothing and no one could escape.



To the Fallen, the Voidclaw was a weapon to be unleashed upon their bitterest enemies – provided they could lure them into the right place at the right time, for the spire-like device was intended to engage warships, not armies. To Abaddon, however, it was a tool with which he could reshape the Nachmund Gauntlet.

The Despoiler outlined a plan to Osandus whereby the titanic weapon would be fired not at an enemy target, but at the area of space equidistant between Vigilus and its moon, Neo-vellum. Though small, the resultant gravitic anomaly would have a profound effect on both worlds, drawing countless tons of loose matter high into their orbits.

Vigilus, its status as a functioning sentinel world already precarious, would be plunged into an era where even gravity was turned against it. More than that, the Voidclaw's fell effects would alter the Nachmund Gauntlet beyond recovery.

THE MAD VENDETTA OF OSANDUS

The Fallen Librarian, Osandus, was at first reluctant to allow Abaddon access to the Voidclaw, as that extraordinary invention was intended to be his secret weapon against the Dark Angels. This was a device so powerful that even when dormant it caused an anomalous weather system to whirl around it. It was so ancient and strange that Osandus did not fully understand it, though he had made psychic communion with its spirit, and had reached a rapport with the malevolent weapon-sentience.

The Librarian's plan had been to gather an army of the Fallen so large that his former kin, the Dark Angels, had no choice but to investigate in force. Osandus allowed them to learn of the gathering through the deliberate confessions of Fallen captives, warriors who had willingly sacrificed themselves to further the wider strategy. Thus, the Librarian ensured that the correct information was revealed at the right time, luring the First Legion's remnants to Vigilus – in all probability upon the space-going fortress monastery known as the Rock. Once that

great warship entered orbit, the Voidclaw would be unleashed. The Librarian intended to coax the Rock into committing to an orbital bombardment, trusting that the ancient force fields around the citadel would protect his warriors as he returned fire with the Voidclaw. Should the device open a singularity within the Rock, it would crush the space-going fortress from the inside out. Yet Abaddon's plan for the destruction of the Nachmund Gauntlet was so compelling in its vision and scope that Osandus came to see its virtue – to strike back at the Imperium as a whole would be an even sweeter prize.

With the chanting of sacraments and the shattering of ancient wards, the Voidclaw was brought to shuddering, crackling life. Dust whirled into a high spiral, the ground shuddering as the entire citadel was rocked to its foundations. The air itself screamed as the Voidclaw went to work, and a tiny singularity was torn in the fabric of realspace high above the planet.



FALSE TIDES

When unleashed, the Voidclaw had a horribly deleterious effect on Vigilus. Just as a moon affects the waters of the world below, the gravitic anomaly pulled everything upon Vigilus towards it, destroying a great deal in the process. The disruption it caused spiralled quickly to the level of a global catastrophe.

The terrifyingly strong lure of the Voidclaw's gravitic singularity – known thenceforth as the Vhulian Anomaly – had countless consequences for the Imperial war effort. The effects were so dire that the Vigilus Senate was flooded with intel from across the world, and the streets of Saint's Haven thronged with messengers and petitioners from every active front. Subsidiary war rooms were opened in chambers throughout the Governor's palace, each one a triage and solution centre for a separate theatre of battle. Yet even with Marneus Calgar's prodigious strategic acumen coordinating them, the Imperial commanders found themselves unable to

categorise the ever-changing face of the War of Nightmares, let alone reverse its course. By the time one disaster had been reported, two more had begun to unfold.

The first to feel the anomaly's baleful pull were the fleets that hung in orbit around Vigilus. In the hours before the Voidclaw's thrumming engines had activated, the admirals of the Imperial fleets had watched in confusion as the Chaos ships had changed course, taking up new positions that appeared to have no strategic value. It was Arch-Commodore Vensatoria that first noticed that they were all facing away from the Vhulian Swirl, but she could not guess why.

Only when the gravitic singularity opened did the Imperial admirals realise that the change of orientation was for good reason. The Chaos ships had shifted to points where they could counteract the effect of the anomaly with their engines. The same could not be said for the Imperial fleet. Outrider ships, tugs and cutters that were near the gravity well of the singularity found themselves veering off course to crash into the leviathan ships they were supposed to be escorting.

Planetside, strings of explosions erupted as all manner of hell broke loose. The Vhulian Swirl stretched up into a vast spiralling

THE DRAINING

Water too was drawn by the false tides of the gravitic anomaly. The theft of this priceless resource was as much a part of Abaddon's plan as any other consequence, for though his power-armoured Legions could survive with next to no liquid intake, the lack of it would cripple the Astra Militarum and further undermine the planet's morale.

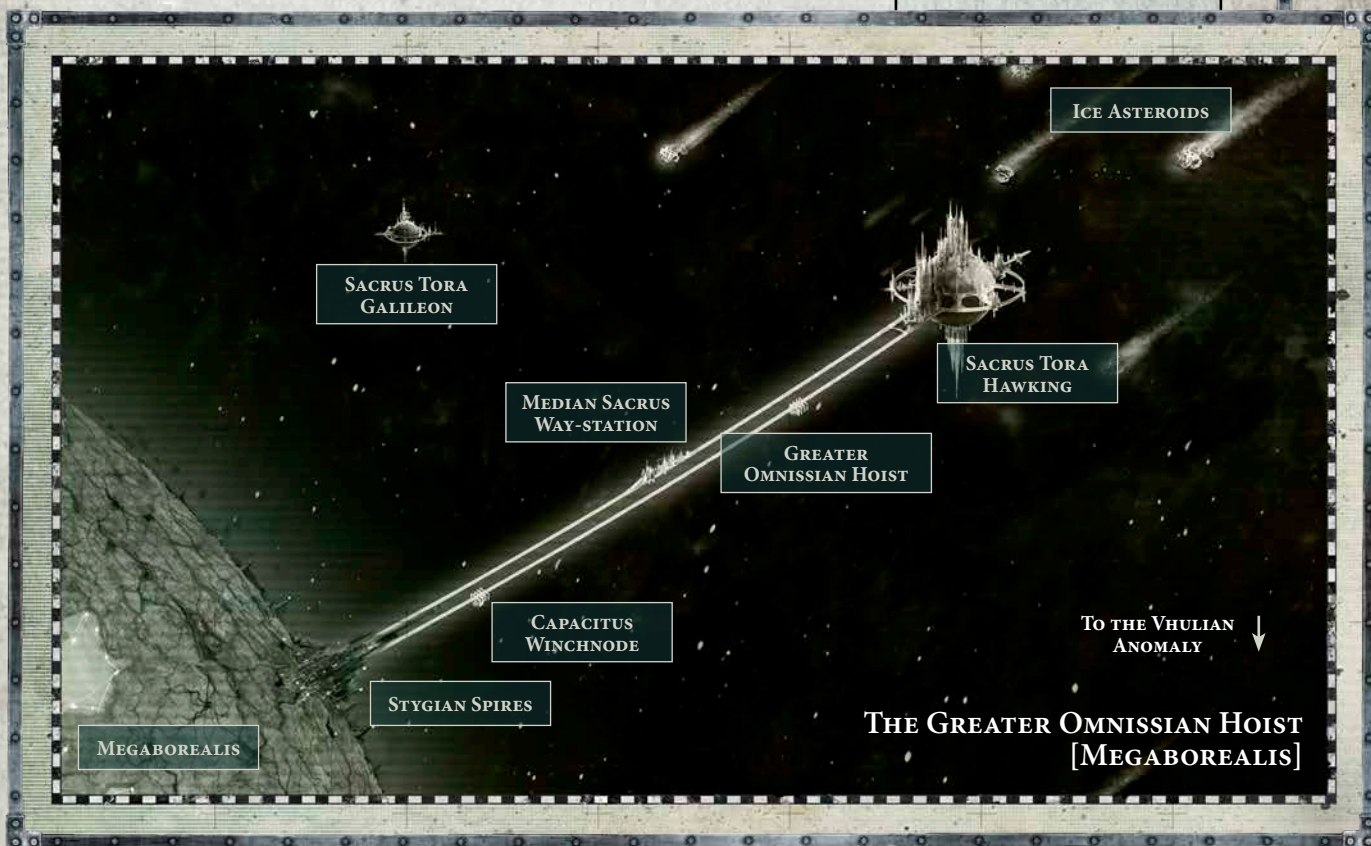
Combined with the uneasy pulling feeling that every citizen now had in the pit of their stomach, the phenomenon would bring the hivespawls to the point of total societal collapse.

At first, only trickles of water escaped the reservoirs and sumps on the planet's surface. Then these turned to streams and tributaries of the precious liquid that snaked their way from every hivespawl and into the arid wastes, still bound by Vigilus' mass but lured by the anomaly's pull. Much of the water was lost, absorbed by the porous landscape. But where the source of each outlet was significant – as was the case with the giant reservoirs that dotted across the planet's surface – a glittering river wound its way towards the Vhulian Swirl. In some places, new and shallow seas formed and flowed across the desert.

The movement of the water was all but impossible to stop. Hundreds of thousands of dehydrated citizens staggered and struggled with one another as they used tureens, tankards, ration tins, and even cupped hands to scoop up as much of the aqueous bounty as they could.

Initially, these citizens did so with a sense of triumph and wild hope. That most precious resource, usually guarded fiercely by the rich and influential, now seemed free to anyone who could harness it. Slowly it dawned on them that the water was painfully finite, and that time was short. Scuffles broke out over every newly formed rivulet, fist fights turning to knife duels, then even to gun battles in the streets. Wherever water flowed on towards the Swirl, behind it came thirsting masses of wide-eyed unfortunates.

The Imperium's grip on Vigilus, already drastically undermined by the serial invasions that had battered its surface, had been compromised once again. With the military echelons forced to prioritise their own water supply, a deadly drought amongst the populace seemed inevitable.



cone towards the anomaly, a gigantic talon of dust that could be seen halfway across the planet. Anything small not tied or bolted down was drawn towards that great storm by the force of the anomaly that hungered above it. In Hurrikane Rekk, the closest Ork scrap city, every loose nut and screw began to roll in the same direction, heading out of the city in streams of metal – much to the bafflement of Ragzakka's Meks and the delight of those Grots enterprising enough to chase them down for profit.

As the planet's tectonic plates shivered and buckled, the spires of Megaborealis, Hyperia, Dirkden and Storvhal tumbled and fell. Thousands of lives were lost with each collapse, burning rubble cascading through the streets. Meanwhile, the Greater Ommissian Hoist warped and snapped as the Sacrus Tora Hawking space station to which it was connected was drawn towards the vortex.

Neo-vellum was also affected, though the alteration of its course was invisible to the eye. The acid swamps that blighted its surface slid and bubbled as they were caught in the anomaly's pull. The bridges and transit-ways that had linked each scriptorium were eaten away by the rising caustic lakes, and they too fell, toppling into the vitriolic muck to be dissolved.

In the depths of space, the nebulas of cosmic dust that swirled at the edge of the Vigilus System closed in, imperceptibly at first, but then at great pace as they were drawn towards the Vhulian Anomaly. Above Vigilus, the light of Astravigila became dimmer with every passing day, masking the planet below in gloom, and worsening Imperial morale still further. With one act of parley, by calling in a singular debt, Abaddon had struck a blow against the Vigilus System that would be almost impossible to counter.

'This is a war that cannot be won! What good are even a score of Space Marine Chapters if all they can do is claim victory over the desiccated corpse of a once-great world? We shall all be dead by the time they slay the monsters that come from the spires! How can we feed ourselves, our children, if even the water that we crave is being drained by dark magic? All is lost! We can but look to our own survival in the last few days of this apocalypse! Death to those who would hinder us!'

- Lemuas nach Sodheim, Civic Leader and Almsman of the Twenty-Headed Hydra

THE SECRET OF THE SPEARS

The Adeptus Mechanicus of Stygies VIII had been mining spears of blackstone from beneath the planet's surface and storing the mysterious substance in heavily defended silos. Unwittingly, in doing so, they played directly into the Warmaster's hands. Abaddon also had designs on the strange deposits of blackstone in the planet's crust, and had been prepared to gouge it out with slave gangs if necessary. Yet with bore-hive and Tectonic Fragdrill, the Adeptus Mechanicus had done much of the work for him.

Noctilith stone had a peculiar property that, to those who understood the nature of the cosmos, made it more valuable than any other resource in the galaxy. Blackstone was warp-resonant, and could be charged either to attract or repel empyric power. The spear-like deposits in Vigilus' crust had been polarised to repel warp energy by some ancient xenos technology. It was these that were holding back the Great Rift around Vigilus – and indeed, by creating a channel of anti-Chaotic force between the Imperium Nihilus and the Imperium Sanctus, forming the Nachmund Gauntlet itself. Though none save perhaps Fabricator Vosch suspected it, the planet of Sangua Terra had the exact same spears of blackstone in its crust, held in a strange black suspension that meant they always pointed towards Vigilus. The anti-empyric field that thrummed between these spears kept the Nachmund Gauntlet open. Should Abaddon destroy that esoteric resource, the warp storms around the Nachmund Gauntlet would close in, and the corridor of safe passage would be subsumed completely.

THE IRON FIST CLOSES TIGHT

Vigilus was being choked by the forces Abaddon had unleashed upon it. What had once been a world at war was now becoming a living hell – but it was not only the Imperial forces that were under pressure.

While the gravitic curse Abaddon had levelled against the planet Vigilus was bending the laws of physics to the cause of anarchy and disruption, the doomsday creeds his invading forces spread everywhere they went – along with the strange warp-summoning structures his allies were building across the planet – were having much the same effect.

The Word Bearers, that most devout of Traitor Legions, were given the task of summoning the energies of the Cicatrix Maledictum to the planet using arcane edifices known as Noctilith Crowns. The Death Guard were charged with spreading their plagues across Dontoria with renewed vigour, while the Night Lords were fighting hard in Dirkdén, and the Iron Warriors were engaged with their old foes, the Imperial Fists, for control of Mortwald.

However, the Chaos forces did not go unopposed. The Imperials, though reeling, were not yet defeated. Denied their eyries and spire-tips by the controlled infernos known as Calgar's Fires, the Chaos invaders had taken the war into the cities and the parched wastes beyond. Some of the Traitor Legions, the World Eaters foremost amongst them, were content to slaughter and destroy – as the defenders of the Giants, a series of massive crenulated plateaus in northern Oteck, found to their cost. Others, such as the Alpha Legion, engaged in a devastating array of covert actions, while the more devout Legions pursued a war of indoctrination into the cults of

dark worship. Now was the time for all-out war, and neither traitor nor renegade shirked from their duty to cause as much carnage and madness as possible.

Rather than trying to take on all of his foes at once, Calgar and the leaders of the Vigilus Senate made use of their local knowledge to wage a campaign of misdirection and entrapment. Though the confusion, rioting and panicking in the cityscapes precluded any cogent military plan there, out in the wastes, the relatively open landscape was a canvas upon which Calgar could work a strategic masterpiece.



By manipulating the demeanours of their foes, the Imperial forces would drive one enemy into another, thus, ideally, obliterating both. It was a tactic inspired in part by Kryptman's Gambit – a strategy only to be used in the direst of circumstances. Yet it was effective.

Amongst the Space Marine forces that had fought during the War of Beasts, there were many who had learned first-hand of the reckless attitude of the Orks, and knew enough of the madcap, velocity-obsessed mentality of the

Speedwaaagh! to roughly predict its movements. Conversely, the Orks had learned afresh that a foe clad in power armour would always give a good fight and, to the greenskins, one Space Marine was much the same as another, no matter what sigils it wore or what cause it fought for.

Armed with this knowledge, Calgar and his fellow Chapter Masters ordered their forces to mount a series of fighting retreats. Enacted with impressive precision, they led the battle-hungry World Eaters, Crimson Slaughter and Red Corsairs out of the cities and into the wastes. This frequently meant leading the foe through relatively open terrain, and in doing so the Imperials suffered heavy losses – not just from Ork gunners in the cities taking opportunistic shots at these easy targets, but from Chaos invaders who had taken up positions in the higher storeys of the hivespawls to level firepower

against Ork and Imperial alike. Yet this was a price worth paying, for the action opened a new front that would absorb a great deal of the Chaos attack's focus.

The Orks of the Speedwaaagh!, their eyes drawn to the explosions and trails of fire in the distance, made haste for the devastating clashes between loyalist and traitor that were now erupting in the wastes. Fully anticipating the tide of vehicles they would summon with the spectacle of open war, the loyalists withdrew swiftly and in good order, extracting via Thunderhawk Gunship and bulk lander while the jeers and bellowed challenges of their traitorous cousins rang in their ears.

The Chaos forces, not having as much in the way of aerial assets, were not able to evacuate in time from the kill zones into which they had been lured. They were quickly set upon by the Orks of

the Speedwaaagh!, who relished the fresh challenge of these new opponents. The first handful of greenskin vehicles were gunned down and cut apart by the Chaos troops as they turned their fury upon the advancing Speedwaaagh!. But close behind the first Ork vehicles came a score, then a hundred more. The Heretic Astartes could not hope to stop them all.

In the space of a few scant hours, the smoke pillars reaching high over the wastes had drawn thousands more roaring, belching, bullet-spitting vehicles to the open war zones. Even the World Eaters found themselves hard pressed, for the Orks were emboldened by speed and numerical superiority to such an extent that they could not be broken. So it was that the xenos bane that had torn Vigilus asunder during the War of Beasts proved to be an effective defence in its own right for the beleaguered Imperial forces.



INFERNAL MACHINES

Megaborealis' foremost blackstone cache – Silo XV of Thunder Sump – was protected by a vast refractor field. In order to destroy the substance within, Abaddon would have to deactivate this aegis. The Warmaster of Chaos sent in a vanguard of Daemon Engines, but they met resistance of a different kind.

Though they did not truly understand the nature of their hoard, the Tech-Priests of Megaborealis jealously protected the spear-like blackstone deposits they had unearthed from Vigilus' crust. The enigma of their construction, and the strange filigree of channels and holes that ran through them, hinted that they may have been fashioned by an alien race. They were an intoxicating source of potential knowledge.

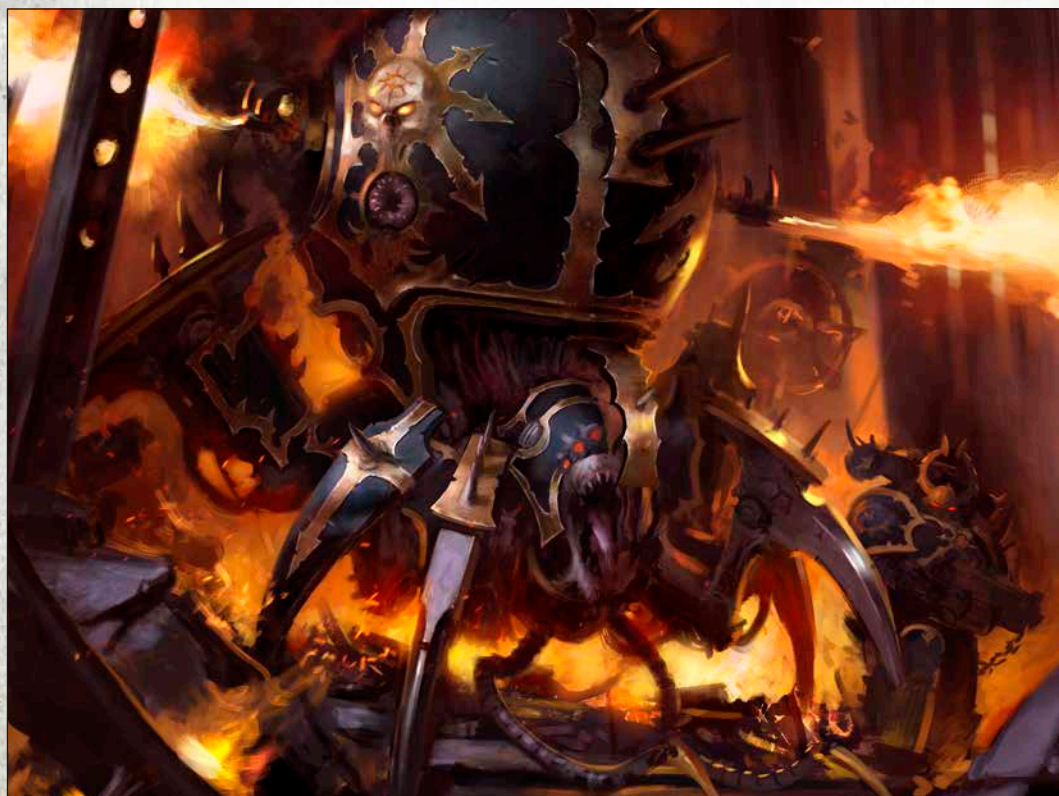
Almost as soon as the first shipments of blackstone had been transported to safety from the deep mining shafts, Silo XV of Thunder Sump had been fortified as a permanent vault for their storage.

The silo was protected not only by stout fortress walls and a permanent garrison, but also by a large domed force field. This was no Bastion shield network, but an even more precious relic – a macro-grade refractor field. It generated a barrier that could turn energy, be it kinetic, thermal, nuclear or otherwise, into harmless flashes of light.

Abaddon had yet to release the wrecking ball of his Daemon Engine hosts, and by that time they were straining at the leash. The Brazen Beasts, worshippers of the Blood God, were known for their preponderance of possessed engines of war, and their fondness for launching several spearhead assaults at once. They had reached

the planet not in a flotilla of ships, but in one massive, twisted spacecraft – the *Cerberite*. That space-borne colossus had once been their Chapter's battle barge, but had languished so long in the Eye of Terror it was itself now more like a hideous, colossal, half-living Daemon Engine.

The mutated battle barge came in dangerously low to push through Silo XV's macro-grade refractor field, flames licking around its underside as that ancient protective shield fought against the *Cerberite's* sheer mass. Fire was of little import to a machine forged in the hellscape of the warp, and Heldrakes peeled off from eyrie-like nests of ribbed cables.



Vast gargoyle mouths yawned open at the ship's fore, the klaxon roars of scrapcode so intimidating that machine spirits in a thousand barriers and vault-seals quailed and yielded their locks in terror. From the ship's flanks uncoiled clanking, ridged pseudopods made of linked metal plates that stretched down to anchor the ship to the spires of Megaborealis. Down from the steep ramps came entire hosts of Daemon Engines, their numbers such that they pushed through the defences of the Tech-Priests that hammered fire into their ranks.



When they attacked, they did so as a vast claw gouging at the Adeptus Mechanicus lines, each spear-tip led by a towering titan of war. The speed of their attack was as much a weapon as their strength, for though Megaborealis still had countless clades of defenders active, they not could bring enough assets to bear in time to stop the shock assault. The Brazen Beasts had amassed no fewer than three Lords of Skulls, demi-humanoid monstrosities that ground through whole congregations of Electro-Priests with skull-embossed tracks. Packs of Forgefiends thundered alongside them like giant hounds accompanying some godly hunter, using their vast metal claws to bat aside the Kataphron Breachers that drove forward to intercept them with crackling blasts of energy. As a concentric circle of Kastelan Robots formed up around Silo XV, many-legged Venomcrawlers scuttled towards them, their bulbous

abdomens emanating strange aetheric forces as they pounced on the towering automatons and stabbed at them with piston-driven legs. The Adeptus Mechanicus, having armoured their stronghold against all conventional attacks, had discounted one aspect of the Chaos assault – sheer daemonic savagery.

The coming of the *Cerberite* had also caused other forces to rush to the site of the battle. Over the latter phases of the War of Beasts, Megaborealis had been occupied by greenskins as well as Chaos worshippers, and they were eager for a fresh challenge. The Ork Warboss Krooldakka, having circumvented the still-burning wastelands of the Seeping Delta to investigate the 'glowy fing' that was Silo XV's refractor field under bombardment, drove his foremost Blitz Brigade through a hail of Skitarii firepower to get to the mine workings of western Megaborealis. A fleet of massive flatbed Trukks carrying the giant metal creations of Big Tanka smashed through the pitted sprawl of Thunder Sump and bullied their way into the silo districts beyond. The armoured assault ploughed through the Chaos Cultists and renegades that formed the body of the Brazen Beasts army without a moment's hesitation.

Though he lost dozens of Battlewagons to the heavy firepower of cannon-armed Daemon Engines on the way, Krooldakka was not to be stopped. With boxy Ork vehicles and Chaos war machines exploding all around him, he bellowed a mighty Waaagh! that drove his Speed Freek followers into a frenzy. The vehicular rampage ground a path to the commanders of the enemy force through sheer bloody-mindedness. When a Maulerfiend stormed into Krooldakka's path, he climbed atop his wagon's cab, ripped the head from the metal beast with his power klaw, and then, as the fiend flailed in its death throes, spat down its neck. The Speedwaaagh! ploughed onwards.

THE HARD FALL

With Krooldakka's flatbed megatrucks unloading their Deff Dread and Gorkanaut cargo, the battle at Thunder Sump swiftly turned into an engine war. Fatbellied walkers traded bullets by the thousand with the white-hot projectiles that were churned out from the hades autocannons of Heldrakes and Forgefiends. The vanguard creatures of the Brazen Beasts, who by this time had ripped their way through the Kastelan Robots guarding Silo XV and set about destroying the refractor field generators, were too focused on their task to turn back. The Ork Warlord was deft enough to evade the reach of the Lords of Skulls, darting from one wreck to another and even using the slab-like side of a broken Onager Dunecrawler as a shield as he closed with the Brazen Beasts' commanders. The Warpsmith Ghorba Daemonbind, the creator of many of the vanguard beasts, found himself assailed by the bleeding, roaring Ork leader – and met his end at Krooldakka's claw. It was only when the twisted Chaos Knights that formed Daemonbind's shock troops finally broke the Adeptus Mechanicus defenders with a massed charge and destroyed the silo's refractor field that Daemonbind had his revenge from beyond the grave.

With the silo laid open and its field dispersed, the Despoiler's mighty flagship – the *Vengeful Spirit* – gave voice to its thunderous displeasure once more. This time the bombardment of cyclonic torpedoes hit home with planet-shattering force, obliterating Silo XV, the blackstone inside it, the Brazen Beasts vanguard, the Speedlord Krooldakka and everything else within a mile-wide radius.

CULTS AND CONQUESTS

The bow waves of fear that rippled out from each new disaster to affect Vigilus had alarming secondary effects. Many citizens sought the solace of greater powers other than the Emperor, joining cults that promised sanctuary in this most tumultuous of times. All too often, they were rewarded with damnation.

The influx of the common people that swelled the cults on Vigilus promised a new phase of war. Mania was matched against savagery, wide-eyed desperation against callous hate. Everywhere a new and sorry tale was unfolding, and Mortwald was no exception.

The coming of the Chaos fleet and the War of Nightmares that ensued pushed the aristocracy of Mortwald into a state of near panic. When the baleful effects of the Voidclaw made the continent's plight all the more dire, extreme measures were taken by the ruling aristocracy. Its defenders had spent a great deal of their resources in repelling the Orks from the Deinos Trench Network and the Tzeller

Line. Despite being bolstered by the Imperial Fists, several of their successor Chapters and Imperial Knights from not only Dharrovar but also Voltoris, the defenders had achieved little more than an uneasy stalemate. Meanwhile, they had lost ground to the uprising of the Pauper Princes that had blighted the southernmost regions.

The reaction of Lord Deinos Agamemnus and his fellow aristocrats was to stockpile all the food and water they could muster in the inner keeps and citadels of Mortwald's richest districts. This was perhaps understandable from a survivalist mindset. But the continent's rulers took their acquisitive mores to inhuman

extremes, donning high-tech Spyrer warsuits and hunting the representatives of Mortwald's poorer classes whenever they petitioned for a fairer spread of resources.

The stockpiling continued until the aristocrats holed up in Immortalis Spirehive had more food than they could eat in a hundred lifetimes. They also had enough water to wash it down twice over, despite the effects of the Vhulian Anomaly draining many of their open water reservoirs. Their endless wealth and connections with the aqua magnates of the planet were a powerful combination. Cults of luxury and youthful immortality came into being, focused



THE NOCTILITH CROWNS

The ring-like structures of blackstone known as Noctilith Crowns brought a loathsome new energy to the war effort. The crowns had been constructed on Nemendghast, perfected en route to Vigilus in the guts of Abaddon's forge ships, and raised on the sentinel planet by work gangs of indentured Chaos slaves. Where the Black Legion's Masters of Possession determined there was a site of geomantic significance, the crowns were aligned to the exacting specifications of Abaddon's ritualists, and driven into the surface of the planet with long steel spikes.

Wherever the Noctilith Crowns were planted, the minds of Chaos psykers flared with a frisson of forbidden power. Those who had any form of psychic sensitivity found strange new phenomena manifesting around them when they approached these sites. Even slaves and cultists without a flicker of psychic potential were assailed by searing visions.

The Noctilith Crowns were designed to bring the raw forces of the warp to the planet. They had been created from deposits of noctilith stone harnessed by the Black Legion over the course of their dark crusades from the Eye of Terror, imbued with Chaos

energy, and distributed across the galaxy. This too was part of the Despoiler's greater plan.

Over the course of the Gothic War, the Warmaster of Chaos had learned that blackstone could be polarised either to attract the energies of Chaos, or to repel it. That knowledge had informed his grand strategy ever since. Where there were deposits of blackstone polarised to repel Chaos energy, Abaddon would do everything in his power to destroy them. Where there was blackstone that could be polarised to attract Chaos energy, he would seize it and turn it to his advantage. By chiselling into the stone blasphemous phrases and runes in the dark tongue, a Sorcerer could align its aura with the dimensional bleed of the warp.

Channelling these unpredictable energies using a Noctilith Crown could lead to a tremendous psychic backlash. In places upon Vigilus, more power than any mortal could possibly use flooded into the minds of those supplicants that sought to harness the Crown's supernatural aura. This too served the greater cause, for where a psychic disaster struck, the raw stuff of Chaos was soon to follow.

around the rejuvenat clinics that Mortwald's rulers now sought only to use for themselves. The consequences were dire indeed. Not only did the outlandish selfishness of the Mortwald elite trigger a wave of rioting that destabilised any regions still in Imperial hands, but in plumbing the depths of decadence they brought the perverted scions of Slaanesh to their door.

The Flawless Host, renegades so obsessed with their own excellence they were convinced they could do no wrong, were infamous even amongst their own kind. Having caught the scent of excess upon the aether, they made for Mortwald's richest sites. They used the still-valid access idents carried by their craft to bypass the layered defences and visit the most beautiful of Mortwald's buildings unhindered, licking their lips in anticipation of the feasts to come.

The glut of violence that followed was so disgusting in its obscenity it defies description. The rulers of Mortwald had been found guilty for the crime of imperfection – not for their excessive hoarding and sickeningly callous natures, but for not going far enough. The Flawless Host were glad to show Lord Deinos and his peers the meaning of true excess, summoning Daemonettes to aid them whenever a household guard regiment or rival cult moved against them. Each proud Mortwald spire soon burned from within, its rotten heart exposed for all to see.

The outskirts of Mortwald – and the western parts of Oteck Hivespawl that were also starved of resources – fared little better. The people of these regions had felt the injustice and greed of their 'superiors' most keenly. Whipped into a frenzy of indignation by the cult leaders that had inveigled their way into the

continents' outskirts, they mounted a gory revolution that saw the people turn against their rulers and take their heads. Soon enough, these mobs turned into blood cults – and from there into worshippers of the Dark Gods. Shorn of reason, convinced that their absent rulers were the true evil and that their only hope lay in defection, they followed the Chaos Space Marines into battle whenever the traitors launched a new assault.



PLAGUE IN HYPERIA

Though the sanctified Ecclesiarchal regions of Hyperia were once known as the domain of the hale and the sane, the coming of Chaos changed that forever. The fear sown through its people by the widely broadcast ultimatums of Haarken Worldclaimer introduced a seed of doubt that was soon to be fed and watered by that most difficult of dangers to fight – rampant plague.

It was the Death Guard of the Dolorous Strain, led to battle by Gurloch Thrax, that first split off from the Dontoria invaders and made it to Hyperia. There they operated from inside the same rusted water-crawler they had used to bypass the city's defences, venturing out to spread disease and despair every night. Ultimately, it was not the Imperial defenders of Hyperia that challenged them, but the Thousand Sons heading north from Kaelac's Bane – yet by the time the Dolorous Strain were neutralised, plague was already running rampant across the Dubchec Crevasse region.

VILE REVELATIONS

The Death Guard that had first infected Dontoria had gone to ground, working in the shadows to spread disease. At the onset of the War of Nightmares, they boiled out of their hiding places to renew their attack.

The Death Guard of Dontoria's Pravdus Subsprawl region, led by the methodical and ever-careful Plague Surgeon Zoculusus, had sown the seeds of conquest by introducing the Gellerpox to the planet. Though the quarantine methods of the Adeptus Astartes and their Militarum Tempestus allies had slowed the servants of Nurgle, the search parties sent after them had been put down, and the firebomb tactics designed to scour the tunnels of their presence had claimed no more than a half dozen of their number. The cordon, although largely effective against man-sized targets, could not hold back the Sludge-Grubs, Glitchlings and Eyestinger Swarms that were birthed from the Gellerpox, and so the plague spread further and further afield, until Dontoria was as much the province of Nurgle as it was of the Imperium.

The role of the Death Guard was much greater than purely infecting the sentinel planet – their mission was to spread a star-spanning contagion across the entire sector

and through the Nachmund Gauntlet, using Vigilus as a staging post. From Dontoria's principal spaceport, Litmus Dock, they sent freighters full of infected mutants further into space, some of them reaching the Vigilus Mandeville Point, despite the best efforts of the Rogue Trader du Languille to stop them. Over the course of the second and third stages of the War of Beasts, these plague vessels made translation into the warp and reached fresh war zones to infect.

Years later, when the hordes of Chaos invaded Vigilus, three of those scab-hulled freighters returned from their mission to bolster the armies of their infected brethren. They were so caked with filth and feculence they looked more like slowly descending meteors than spacecraft as they bellied down at Litmus Dock once more. They landed uncontested, for the spaceport was now firmly in the hands of the Death Guard. There they opened their voidlocks to disgorge groaning mutants of every size and description.



THE PURGE OF DONTORIA

Dontoria was soon contested once more, but this time the conflict was caused by a schism in the Chaos ranks. The Purge, a powerful band of renegades and followers of Nurgle, had made planetfall in eastern Dontoria – and found it utterly repulsive. The Heretic Astartes of this strange brotherhood believed in the destruction of all forms of life, for since their fall to the Ruinous Powers they saw all living things as either corrupt, or potential vessels for corruption. They believed that only by extinguishing all life in the galaxy could a new order rise, and that the quickest way to achieve this was with poison and pandemic.

This philosophy had begun with the noble desire to eradicate all evil, but when the weakness of man, the fallibility of mortals and the inevitability of entropy made itself evident everywhere they went, those who would become known as the Purge judged Humanity to be irredeemable. That stance only became more absolute as they saw flora, fauna and even the land itself as a potential source of evil. All life was inherently flawed, and had to be extinguished no matter the cost.

Those of the Purge that took this extremist stance did not foresee that they would come into conflict with other worshippers of Nurgle by killing every living thing they came across. But many

of the Plague God's followers wanted to propagate life, no matter how foul. For the Death Guard, Dontoria ought to be a dark, fecund paradise, not a scorched and lifeless wasteland.

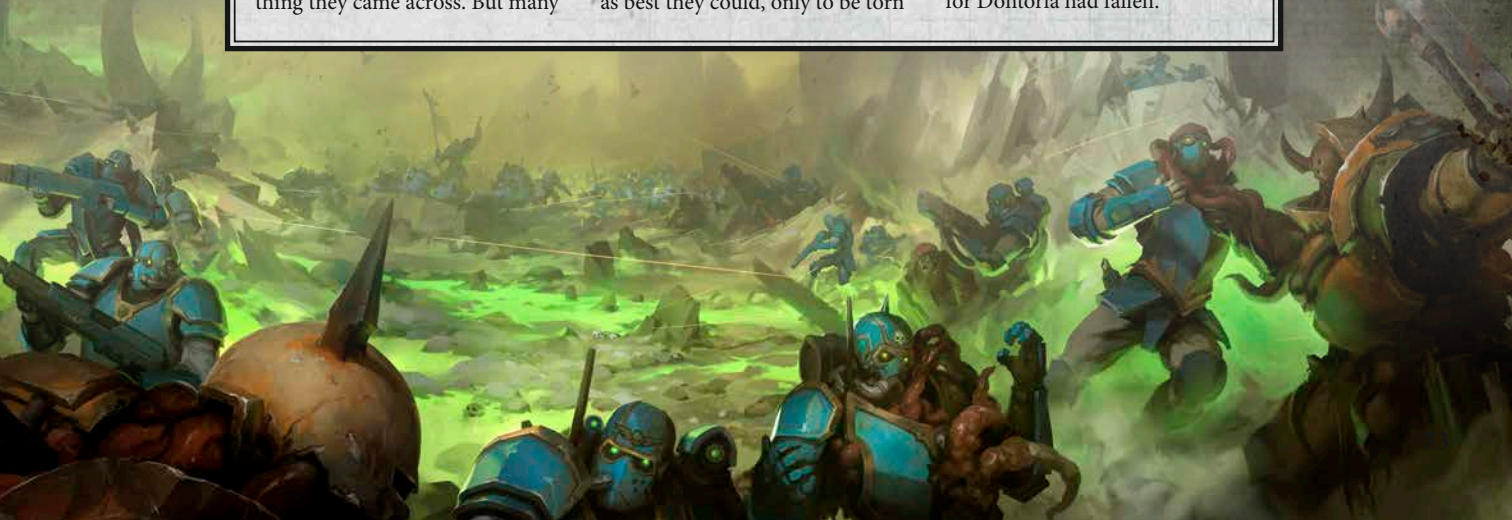
The Purge made landfall at the Great Choke, seeing its rampant pollution and smoke-belching industrial centres as the ideal epicentre for a wide-scale attack. They set to work slaughtering citizens and Gellerpox Infected alike, hurling the corpses of the slain into the furnaces of the Great Choke's manufactorums alongside noxious concoctions of their own making. The greasy black soot that billowed from the chimneys was thick, cloying, and far too toxic to breathe. Entire districts of the Tzimitria Subsprawl were swathed in this foul miasma, and tens of thousands suffocated in the space of a few days – even the plants and insect life withered and died. The Purge looked upon their works and saw them to be right and true.

Over the course of the next few months, the Purge continued their heretical works, capturing entire districts and turning their furnaces to the purpose of extreme pollution. The air in eastern Dontoria became near impossible to breathe; those with lungs already ravaged by the poor air quality of the Big Fug died in droves. The hardier citizens fled as best they could, only to be torn

apart by the Gellerpox Mutants that roamed the streets.

What had once been a teeming metropolis, so full of life, quickly turned into a blackened, soot-stained wasteland, with many of its districts populated by little more than skeletons. The Death Guard, who had worked hard to sow the seeds of Nurgle's ever-growing garden across the western hivespawl, looked upon their neighbours in eastern Dontoria with distaste, then resentment, and finally – when the Gellerpox itself began to die out – with open hatred. They put aside their joyous slaughter of the Imperial military and went to war against the Purge, besieging their industrial citadels with a will that even the Iron Warriors assailing Mortwald were said to have respected.

Bitter infighting ravaged the scions of Nurgle, but it was the citizens of Dontoria that paid the highest price. Chaos had taken the hivespawl on every level, from the fleets battling above it to the plague-ravaged populace, to the microbes mutating and dying in the charnel battlefields below – and the conflict showed no sign of abating. None amongst the Death Guard or the Purge were able to truly claim victory, for they were locked in a bitter stalemate that not even Calgar sought to disrupt. Abaddon, watching from afar, was content, for Dontoria had fallen.



OF MAN AND XENOS

Time was running out for Vigilus. Even the most close-minded and intractable soul could see the planet was on the brink of destruction. The warlords of the Imperium, with their forces committed to a man and all reinforcements cut off by the Great Rift, had no option but to take drastic measures to survive.

In every war zone across Vigilus the situation was dire. Much of the planet was ablaze, thick black smog choking the air and making breathing difficult for anyone venturing above ground level. Water had all but run out, with the vast majority of the citizenry having access to perhaps a thimbleful at dawn and another at dusk. Were it not for Lucienne Agamemnus' inspired solution of tying its distribution to clocking in at day's beginning and clocking out at day's end, the infrastructure of the planet would have collapsed altogether. To travel from one region to another was to invite being preyed upon by speeding Ork hunters or shrieking Heldrakes, and with the calculations of Neo-vellum's Datasaint thrown askew by the Vhulian Anomaly, long-range communication had become next to impossible.

The forces of Chaos, invading in such number they could not be held back, were crushing Imperial defences and xenos-claimed territories alike. Spires were toppling every hour as the planet's tectonic plates, tortured by the Vhulian Anomaly, fought against one another to grind closer to that cursed singularity. Perhaps worse still, reports were sent from Neo-vellum's surviving relay stations that the perimeter of the Great Rift was expanding, like a roiling thunderhead creeping over the horizon and into ominous proximity. When reports from the admiralty of the embattled Imperial fleet in orbit around the planet were collated and parsed, it appeared certain that the Cicatrix Maledictum was encroaching upon Vigilus. Some even claimed to see leering faces in the depths of the malevolent phenomenon.

Over this period, several senior Astropaths reported visions of a pitiless clawed hand crushing a throat – interpreted by them as the narrow passage of the Nachmund Gauntlet being closed by an influx of Chaos energy. Abaddon's plan to bring Chaos in every form and fashion to Vigilus was working, and at a frightening pace.



Many drastic courses of action were considered by the members of the Imperial war council. There were those upon the Vigilus Senate who advocated for quarantine measures up to and including Exterminatus, the wholesale eradication of all life upon the planet. But Vigilus was a linchpin of the entire sector, and the Nachmund Gauntlet could not be yielded without abandoning countless light years of the Imperium Nihilus. The Primarch Guilliman himself had stated that Vigilus would not fall, and the Ultramarines there would rather fight to the last bolt than concede victory and make a liar of their primogenitor. After long hours of circular arguments and impassioned debates, it was the precedent set by Roboute Guilliman that showed the way, inspiring

Calgar to an act of diplomacy that made his fellow Chapter Masters uneasy in the extreme.

The forces of the Pauper Princes and Krooldakka's Speedwaaagh! had taken a significant toll on the Chaos invaders; the troop dispositions and after-action reports trickling in to the war rooms of Saint's Haven painted a picture of battles unfolding where not a single Imperial asset had been assigned. Yet wherever the xenos won a victory, they turned their guns on the Imperial troops soon after. There were tales circulating of Ork mercenaries offering their services to the Astra Militarum in exchange for the tanks of their armoured companies – and even dataslate reports, requested personally by Pedro Kantor of the Crimson Fists, of one commander who took them up on their offer. The misguided Commander Nerrogh van Thrynn had won back the outskirts of the Magentine Veils using a combined force of Astra Militarum armour and belligerent Ork mercenaries, but earned himself a death sentence at the muzzle of a Commissar's bolt pistol in the process.

The senate's view was that a lasting alliance with the savage enemies the Imperial forces had battled against during the War of Beasts was out of the question. The greenskins were too unpredictable and bloodthirsty to count on when a foe as dangerous as the Heretic Astartes was at the door. As for the self-proclaimed true inheritors of the planet, the Pauper Princes, it was unanimously agreed those xenotainted hybrids were so repugnant that they could only ever be greeted with flame and fury. But the fact remained that the Imperium was

fighting a losing battle. Though more manpower was undoubtedly en route from the wider Imperium – for even under the tyranny of the Great Rift, Mankind's armies were all but inexhaustible – the chances of it arriving in time to make a difference were dwindling with every passing night.

Of the perfidious Aeldari, none spoke. The possibility of a pact hung in the air, for Roboute Guilliman had forged an alliance with that ancient xenos race in living memory, from the very heart of Macragge. But to truck with the alien was to invite disaster, this every officer in every war room knew, and some had witnessed first-hand. Even now the wild-eyed xenos were using their sleek jetbikes and grav-tanks to mount speeding raids upon Hyperia. Calgar's own Extremis Guard had paid the price for attempting to deal with the vengeful Aeldari of Saim-Hann, losing three honoured veterans before Lieutenant Eothrus and his brothers had driven them off. The blood of the fallen Macraggians still stained the marble flagstones less than a hundred yards from the central debating circle where the war council was taking place.

Emotions roiled in Calgar's chest. With every new account of disaster that reached him, he felt forced to set aside his doubts. On the second night after the onset of the Vhulian Anomaly, Calgar marched out of the senate, his Victrix Guard by his side, and the remonstrations of intractable senate members ringing in his ears. Rendezvousing with elements of the 1st Company, the Lord Macragge made his way to the main bridge crossing the Ring of Nothingness. There the Aeldari forces were still waging war upon the Tempestus Scions and their Adepta Sororitas allies, for the warriors of Saim-Hann had a score to settle with the Imperium. During the War of Beasts, their leader, Autarch Rhyloor, had been slain. His death had been sanctioned

by the Aquilarian Council, who recognised no difference between the Asuryani of the craftworlds and the vicious Drukhari raiders that had long tormented the people of Vigilus. This murderous act the warriors of Saim-Hann would see avenged a hundred times over, and for them the matter would not be settled until every human associated with the death of the Autarch lay dead.

Upon locating the Aeldari, Calgar joined the fight – firing to kill only when necessary, and instead attempting to bring the xenos to bay, to pin them down, to suppress and surround those who might otherwise escape on arrow-swift craft from the next phase of his plan.

At a critical moment during a brief lull in the fighting, the Lord Macragge called for parley. Calgar's gambit would likely have come to nought, had this Saim-Hann force been led by any other than the visionary Farseer Keltoc. He was the former advisor of Spiritseer Qelanism, whose brother's death had triggered Hyperia's cycle of blood vengeance in the first place. Yet as much as he also longed to avenge that crime, he had another agenda. A ceasefire was called, and the stage set for a historic confluence of interests.





THE PENUMBRAL PACT

The prospect of a deal between the Ultramarines and the Asuryani was unthinkable to many. Had it not been for the alliance Primarch Guilliman had once secured with the ambassador Yvraine, such a truce would have been considered all but impossible. Yet Calgar's daring and complex plan was put into motion.

Farseer Keltoc had scried the course of Vigilus' future, and had found dire hints of the effects it would have upon the wider galaxy. With the empire of Mankind fully divided, Abaddon would claim the Imperium Nihilus for his own, and the Great Enemy of the Aeldari race would reap the rewards. That Keltoc would not allow. Though ostensibly a member of Clan Moirec's war party, he had come to the planet seeking another way.

When Calgar's stentorian tones echoed around the cracked marble walls of Saint's Haven, he was not greeted with gunfire as Lieutenant Eothrus had been before him.

Instead, Farseer Keltoc held up a hand, sending a psychic pulse to his warriors instructing them to hold their fire and listen to the Space Marine leader.

The Chapter Master spoke eloquently of Macragge, of the dire threats facing the Imperium, of the Black Legion – and of a priestess of the Aeldari God of the Dead. That last topic caused even the most truculent Saim-Hann Wild Riders to lower their blades. For a time, the battle between man and xenos was waged with words – and then, as the sun set over the burning spires in the distance, it was not waged at all. The rapport the Chapter Master

reached with the Farseer that day led to the two forces uniting in their hatred of the common enemy, and their alliance lit the dark fate of the planet Vigilus with a flickering flame of hope.

The Aeldari of Saim-Hann were not known for their forgiving nature. Precisely how Calgar won their allegiance he never disclosed, and the actual exchange between Keltoc and Calgar was never made a matter of Imperial record, despite Guilliman's insistence that historians accompany all Ultramarines missions. In fact, the records of the interchange between Calgar and the Aeldari Farseer were

A DEADLY CARGO

The first stage of Calgar's master plan involved the acquisition of all six of Deinos Agamemnus' personal Deathstrike missiles. These had been collected with painstaking care by the Vigilant historium enthusiast over the last century and a half, and were safely kept in a gene-locked hangar vault. Lord Deinos had boasted on numerous occasions that two of his Deathstrike devices were fitted with much-feared Vortex warheads, and that should he so choose, he could rip apart a rival hive in a matter of hours, consigning the survivors to a living hell as they were dragged screaming into the empyrean.

Calgar drafted a large and ornate parchment bearing the words of the Primarch Guilliman himself, and the vow that Vigilus would not fall. To this he added his own addenda, then signed with his full array of titles in his function as Regent of Ultramar, Heir Apparent of the Tetrarchy, and Chapter Master of the Ultramarines. He flew to Mortwald through blood-red skies in the Thunderhawk Gunship *Eagle's Fury* to land with as much pomp and circumstance as he could muster. Lord Deinos, at that point taking refuge from the horrors that the Flawless Host had visited upon him and his fellows, was coaxed

from his Proteus-class bunker by an appeal to his pride; after all, to have the Chapter Master of the Ultramarines request an audience would bolster his status immeasurably. Calgar presented the Primarch's Writ to Deinos Agamemnus, and formally requested he turn over all six of the Deathstrikes for use in the war effort.

Lord Deinos refused point blank. The gigantic missiles were not for firing, he said, but for display, and he had gone to great pains to keep them in mint condition. He would invoke every legal barrier and bureaucratic mechanism he could find to ensure the requisition fell flat.

At this, Calgar's temper snapped. He grabbed Lord Deinos by the arm and lifted him high. Ignoring the sound of breaking bones and noxious smell of fear that emanated from the fool's gold-braided pantaloons, he asked again through gritted teeth. This time, Lord Deinos acquiesced, opening the gene-locked vaults and handing over the contents to Marneus Calgar. Within a matter of hours the vault was empty, and the Deathstrike missiles were sequestered in the holds of rugged transport craft.

immediately expunged, never to be entered into any official account of the War of Nightmares. Even now the Ultramarines cannot speak of what was said between the two leaders as they talked beneath the massive triumphal arch to the west of the Statue of the Great Templar. Only the Victrix Guard heard the details of the bargain that Calgar struck there, and they were sworn to secrecy. Yet three things about that fateful parley are known. The first is that the Farseer Keltoc and his senior chieftains accompanied Calgar back to the Governor's palace that day. The second is that, from that moment on, the doors of the Vigilus Senate were barred and guarded by two members of the Victrix Guard, who had orders to let none pass. The third is that those members of the Aquilarian Council who had presided on the day of Autarch Rhyloor's death were never seen by anyone again, Lucienne Agamemnus and Proctor Commander Venedar amongst them.

Considering the matter of honour settled, the vengeful Aeldari of Clan Moirec joined the Imperium in hurling back the Chaos invasion. Not only that, but they lent to the war effort a very special vessel – *Vaul's Ghost*, a near-invisible stealth ship that had plagued the Imperial shipping lanes around Saim-Hann for decades. It was Calgar's intention to use the Aeldari stealth vessel to intercept the *Vengeful Spirit* in orbit high above Sturvhal, and by using himself as bait, ensure the Warmaster of Chaos had his eyes fixed elsewhere. Calgar's plan was to strike at that which Abaddon held dearest. The Warmaster of Chaos had already demonstrated a callous disregard for his Heretic Astartes brethren and utter contempt for the chattel that fought alongside them; that much could be seen in Dontoria, Megaborealis and Sturvhal. But there was one war asset he held dear, aside from those he carried on his person – and this was Calgar's target.

Should the Lord Macragge's plan unfold as intended, the ends would justify the means. Should it fail, the planet itself would be forfeit – as would be the Nachmund Gauntlet, and almost certainly Calgar's life.

When the other Chapter Masters heard of what the Ultramarines intended, they took the news with disbelief at first, but then with a grudging acquiescence. It was known to both the Crimson Fists and Necropolis Hawks that the Aeldari had no love for the Great Enemy, for they had seen the two foes clash before. It would be a fine day for the Imperium if two of their oldest foes could neutralise each other in one fell blow.

'You talk of disaster, and I know well why you might. A hundred battles, a billion corpses, with more joining the carrion pile with each passing second. There is panic, cowardice, and nightmarish desperation in every hab-block – and fuel is being poured on the fire wherever you look. Yet this planet is still defended by the Imperium's finest. We hold the keys to its survival. I assure you, we will be equal to the task, no matter what sacrifice it takes.'

- Marneus Calgar, Chapter Master of the Ultramarines





DISTRACTION TACTICS

As the Chapter Masters of the Vigilus Senate made preparations for their counter-attack, a strike with which they intended to cripple Abaddon's defences, the Aeldari were fighting a war of their own. Scores of lightning-swift warriors rushed to enact Farseer Keltoc's scheme of subterfuge and misdirection.

The Wild Rider armies of Saim-Hann, the curving silhouettes of their craft graceful and glorious even under the darksome skies, raced across the wastelands of Vigilus at extreme velocity. Beyond the spires and towers of Hyperia, they made the perfect bait for the Ork Speedwaaagh!. Being bright red and travelling at breakneck pace, they caught the eye of every Speed Freek in the vicinity, and soon had the Ork racers on their tail, the greenskins' crude but effective guns spitting bullets in great streams.

Dozens of Wild Rider clans took part in Farseer Keltoc's great initiative, a process he likened to the Aeldari myth known as the Goading

of the Yggh-Bulls. The Saim-Hann Asuryani purposefully slowed down whenever they outdistanced the Ork vehicle columns; after all, an Aeldari jetbike is far swifter than even the most souped-up Ork hot rod with its afterburners blazing. Only the Shokkjump Dragstas of Mekstop City – built in a frenzy of copycat creativity after the warp-kut incident at the Hyperia-Dirkden Fortwall – were able to get the better of the Saim-Hann riders. At Glaive Point, the Ork speedster known as Da Red Bullit teleported ahead of the foremost Aeldari vehicles – a unit of Warlocks with bright trailing pennants known as the Seven Snakes – and punched them from the sky in a storm

of corkscrewing rockets and plasma rounds.

But for the most part, the Wild Riders led the Orks a merry dance across the wastelands of Vigilus. When the greenskins were all but frantic with the desire to wreak havoc, the Aeldari led them straight into the teeth of the Chaos Space Marines who were establishing strongpoints across the planet. Just as the bullets began to fly and a dangerous crossfire threatened, the daring Saim-Hann riders turned their craft to a vertical heading, speeding up into the safety of the clouds – or into the electrical storms summoned by Farseer Keltoc for precisely that





purpose. In their wake, they left the greenskins and the Heretic Astartes fighting a sudden battle that none had anticipated, but from which neither side would back down. The crowning glory of Keltoc's tactics unfolded when his Wave Serpents, their shields crackling at maximum yield to blunt the thunderous Ork firepower raining down around them, led seven full Blitz Brigades in a headlong charge towards the super-heavy assets and Traitor Titans of the Legio Decapitorem.

With the battle-maddened Orks to the rear and the stoic Imperial defenders to the fore, the Chaos forces found themselves broken in a score of war zones. It was a development that could not be ignored, and it drew the focus of a hundred warlords eager to earn Abaddon's favour. Only Keltoc, Calgar and the Imperial Navy attaché to the Ultramarines Command knew that the battle for New Vitae Docks was the only critical clash at that time. The

Mortwald aerial base was sending every Valkyrie and bulk lander that it could scramble into low orbit, despite being under heavy siege from the Iron Warriors. Though the vast majority of the craft had nothing of note in their cargo bays, six of them contained the Deathstrike missiles that Calgar had prised from the wretched grip of Grand Castellan Deinos – and amongst them, the two Vortex warheads with which the Chapter Master intended to deal Abaddon a deadly blow.



In the orbital battle between the outmatched Imperial fleet and the far larger Chaos armada, a grander tale was unfolding. The tattered remnants of the Imperial Navy made a concerted attack on the Chaos fleet, darting in wherever

there was a blind spot like a pack of killer cetaceans harassing a pod of vast armoured leviathans. They paid a heavy price, losing a good eighty per cent of their number to the relentless, overlapping broadsides of Abaddon's fleet, and yet their foray did enough damage in return to seem credible as a last-ditch assault. Those pilots, crewmen and voidsmen-at-arms that gave their lives for Calgar's great initiative died unsung, but their contribution to the war effort was as great as any soldier or general fighting planetside to keep the wolves from the door.

Ultimately, however, there was only one ship that mattered. *Vaul's Ghost* rendezvoused with the vessels transporting the Deathstrike payload as they safely reached orbit, and transferred the Mortwald munitions into its own cargo hold. Then it made its heading the *Vengeful Spirit*, and with it went the hopes of the Vigilus Senate and their strange Aeldari allies.

DEMISE OF A LEGEND

A confrontation that had long seemed inevitable was drawing near. Marneus Calgar's plan was to challenge the Warmaster directly, knowing that Abaddon would not refuse the chance to deal such a symbolic blow to Imperial morale. It was a high-risk ploy, but Lord Calgar was convinced it was worth it.

The battle for Saint's Haven was the stuff of sagas and triumphal monuments. Its tale resonates throughout the history of the Imperium, for it was a clash not just of blades and armour, but of ideologies – and even, some have said, of the gods themselves.

Calgar had put into place a battle plan that had such a slim chance of success that even his closest warriors and advisors had balked at it. Yet there was little other choice. The planet was in turmoil. Even where the Imperial leaders had been able to turn the warmongering of the xenos invaders to their advantage, they had bought but a minor reprieve – or precipitated a

situation where one foe was dealt with, only for another to rise to prominence. By the best estimates of the Neo-vellum vitae-scryer gestalts, the planet's population had been halved, and then halved again. But Calgar would not countenance the extreme solution of Exterminatus. He was challenged by Raquilon Zandtus, Chapter Master of the Necropolis Hawks, whose approach to diplomatic matters was to quote the long tracts of the Codex Astartes that reinforced his chosen points. Calgar countered that his own plans were already in motion, and that the Primarch himself had stated Vigilus would not fall. He would not see that maxim turned into a lie.

Marneus walked out from the Vigilus senatorium and climbed the high steps of the Governor's palace. His footsteps left crimson smears on the marble slabs, for even here there had been recent bloodshed. He reached the Eyrie of Reflection – the highest level of Saint's Haven that was not ablaze – and there marshalled the Victrix and Extremis Guards into a living fortress. The deep azure of their battle plate glowed orange in the flames of the spires above. His words conveyed by vox-skull servitors to the laud hailer networks of the Ecclesiarchy, he issued his decree. It was a challenge to Abaddon himself – face him in single combat. To the victor would go the planet itself.



The Warmaster heard news of Calgar's rash gambit soon enough, for Haarken Worldclaimer and his Raptor host still haunted the upper levels of Hyperia, and made haste to convey the message to their master. As Calgar's words were relayed, Abaddon smiled, his long canine teeth glinting red in the twilight. In one hand Abaddon wielded Drach'nyen, a Daemon sword of pure murderous intent that could eat the souls of those it struck, and on the other he wore the Talon of Horus, that same baleful device that had claimed the life of the Primarch Sanguinius so long ago. What chance did a mortal warrior, barely a few centuries old, have against such ancient evil?

The Citadel Vigilant was a structure replete with ancient technologies, for its construction dated back to the early Imperium. The Fallen knew well what power lay in such artefacts. Amongst them was a fully functioning teleportarium, coaxed into life by Osandus and his technomantic allies. It was this asset that Abaddon used to strike directly at Calgar, his elite Terminators and their Daemon-possessed thralls alongside him.

Chapter Master Calgar stood in the open atop the palace of Saint's Haven, no longer protected by the sryer-baffles and enigma circuits that had until now shielded him from swift assassination while he commanded the war effort from the Vigilus Senate. Abaddon appeared in a blaze of actinic light, already striding forward to meet the loyalist Space Marine in combat as the flash of lightning that heralded his arrival faded. His Bringers of Despair teleported with him, appearing in a crackling dome of force with their combi-bolters laying down a hail of explosive bolts.

The Ultramarines had been expecting such an assault, having seen a similar tactic on their flagship. They took a single step backwards, then charged as one,

shield bashing the nearest Chaos Terminators away from their master in order to press the attack. Their counter-assault was devastatingly effective. By the time they were driven back by Abaddon's Chosen, twelve millennia-old traitors lay dead and bleeding on the ivory stairs. But the Ultramarines had lost eight of their own number in the process. Worse, Abaddon had closed in on their Chapter Master.



The burning spires above the duellists lit the sky red-black, the clouds of smoke forming strange and unsettling shapes as Warmaster and Chapter Master duelled to the death. Calgar dodged and fainted, giving ground behind fallen statuary and dropping to rise once more. The Armour of Heraclius gave him greater movement and reaction speeds than any warsuit he had worn before. By hammering out bolt rounds from the Gauntlets of Ultramar, he kept his foe from bringing the deadly sword Drach'nyen to bear. The Reivers, Suppressors and Scouts watching through their gunsights knew that the Chapter Master was deliberately holding back, though none took a shot. With every second that the two combatants spent testing the other, watching and learning so as to find the perfect moment to strike, Calgar's plan grew closer to fruition. To force Abaddon to retreat now would risk ruining everything.

Incensed, Abaddon let loose with his combi-bolter, explosive ammunition thundering from the Talon of Horus to envelop Calgar in a storm of flame. One of the flagstones gave way under the Chapter Master's weight, and for a moment he was thrown off-balance. Suddenly Abaddon was there, body to body, his Talon of Horus ripping away one of Calgar's priceless gauntlets to expose a forearm splintered and shorn of skin. Balling his injured fist, the Lord Macragge punched his assailant in the face hard enough to crack his jaw. The follow-up blow, a thunderous uppercut from Calgar's remaining power fist, lifted Abaddon clean from his feet and cracked his breastplate.

The Warmaster's face contorted with anger. The air screamed around him, tendrils of daemonic effluvia licking like flames from his blade. In came Drach'nyen; Calgar made to block with his gauntlet, but the sword cut right through it, severing two of Calgar's fingers in the process. The blow rent apart the armour behind it, slashing open the Chapter Master's primary and secondary hearts in a single blow.

Just as Calgar fell to the ground, Haarken Worldclaimer called to Abaddon across a codified vox link. The *Vengeful Spirit* was critically wounded, and seconds away from destruction. It was effecting an emergency warp translation, and they had only moments before it vanished from the Vigilus System altogether.

'Warmaster. The Spirit has been stricken amidships. The weak fool at its helm has ordered flight into the warp, likely using the attack to claim our flagship for himself. We must return, or risk losing it forever!'
- Haarken Worldclaimer

FALLEN SKIES

The short but bloody duel in the spires of Saint's Haven had reached its deadly conclusion, and Calgar lay defeated. But all was not as it seemed. A succession of vital sacrifices had been made in good faith by devoted servants of the Emperor, and their consequences were finally becoming clear.

The Daemon sword Drach'nyen screamed in denial as Abaddon turned away from his fallen victim. Motioning the Bringers of Despair to gather around him, he sent forward a horde of Daemon-possessed monstrosities to cover his departure. He had achieved that which he had come to do, he had lain low his ancient rival, and now another duty beckoned – for the *Vengeful Spirit* Abaddon prized above even the Blackstone Fortresses he had claimed over the course of his Black Crusades. If it translated at speed into the roiling tides of the warp without him, there was every chance it would be forever divorced from its rightful commander and inheritor.

Dark flames formed a hexagrammatic symbol around Abaddon and his bodyguard, then a blinding red light enveloped the masters of the Black Legion, and they disappeared. There was a sulphurous stink of dark magic, lingering in the air like ozone after a storm, and he was gone.

The Possessed fiends the Warmaster left behind moved towards Calgar, stalking like scavengers approaching the corpse of a great beast. Amid the detritus of the battle the Lord Macragge lay cold as stone upon the flags, his skin white as alabaster. The Chapter Master's hearts were pierced through, and dark blood drizzled from the great

fissure split in his armour. Worse still, the Possessed were able to punch a hole in the defences of the Victrix Guard, one fell creature tearing its way through to stand above him, claws raised.

Any normal Space Marine would have died then and there. Yet within the Lord Macragge's mighty breast, his Belisarian Furnace triggered. That miraculous organ pumped restorative stimulants into his system, giving him one last burst of energy before death claimed him completely. It was the inner strength of the Adeptus Astartes and the arcanoscience of Belisarius Cawl matched against the hellish powers of the Chaos Gods.



Calgar got to one knee as the Greater Possessed loomed over him, then stood up fast. His remaining Gauntlet of Ultramar, although damaged, was still functioning. He batted the creature away with a backhand blow, then levelled a punishing salvo of explosive bullets that ripped it apart, the device still cycling as it clicked empty. Then the mighty warrior fell back once more, blood running from his wounds.

The Victrix Guard and the remnants of the Extremis Guard rushed around him to form a shield, their bolters thudding death into the last of the Possessed. Down from the skies came the Stormraven Gunship *Hope's Blade*, its frontal hatches yawning to allow a pair of veteran Apothecaries to jump down to the flags. They sprinted over to Calgar and brought their nartheciums to bear upon him, filling his ravaged system with stabilising elixirs and life-giving suspensions of blessed vitae. Calgar, his face contorted

in a rictus of agony, stood tall. He saluted his men, told them to take the fight to the traitors in the streets, and then finally allowed himself to be escorted into the emergency med-suite that awaited him within the Stormraven.

Calgar survived that fell day, his secondary heart salvaged by the secret arts of the apothecarium even though his primary heart was cloven through. He was not seen on the front line of the battlefield from that point on, but continued to command the armies of the Imperium from the heart of the Vigilus Senate. Though he was diminished in stature by the grievous wounds he had suffered, his mind was as strong and sharp as ever. The Lord Macragge had denied Abaddon his prize, not through sheer force of arms, but through courage and honour. Yet Vigilus was still fighting a losing battle – not for victory, but for survival.

THE SLOW BLEED

With the Black Legion's elite teleporting back to their flagship and the colossal Gloriana-class vessel making transition into the warp, the shape of the war for Vigilus changed radically. The Imperial Navy, emboldened by the disappearance of the enemy's most powerful asset, drove through the gaping hole in the Chaos cordon to level broadsides at a fleet still reeling from the empyric bow wave of the *Spirit's* emergency translation. Word spread to the Chaos armies planetside that Abaddon had begun a withdrawal, and soon the Chaos troops began to look to their own self-preservation. After all, the planet was all but destroyed – and there was plenty more of the Imperium left to bring down in flames.

HEROES OF THE VOID

The attack on the *Vengeful Spirit* had been exceptionally costly for the Imperial Navy. So many assets had hastened to the Vigilus war zone that the nearby worlds of Neo-vellum, Omis-Prion, Geotrope XII and Falsehood had been entirely denuded of warship support. In the case of Omis-Prion, lately assailed by the ancient xenos threat of the Necrons, the planet had been brought to the brink of catastrophe. Yet High Command judged the sacrifice worthwhile.

Assets diverted to Vigilus reinforced the battered Navy there. Though a few score ships shored up the holes in Calgar's tattered cordon around the planet's equator – now stretched painfully thin – the majority renewed the assault upon the *Vengeful Spirit* over the course of a three-day void battle. Not one of them was able to deal the ship a telling blow, for it seemed every torpedo was intercepted, every lance blast turned aside by some mystical force field. In return, the vast fortress had brought its guns to bear in a series of devastating broadsides that had blasted scores of craft into nothing more than clouds of spiralling scrap metal.

Included amongst the *Vengeful Spirit's* defences was a coven of Sorcerers that cried the echoes of the warp for threats, and warned the vast battleship's command crew in time to intercept them. Even they were not powerful enough to foresee the nature of the threat posed by *Vaul's Ghost*, however, for the Aeldari craft was equipped with complex psychic baffles as well as hologrammatic stealth technology. By the time the Sorcerers were able to determine the source of the attack, it was too late.

Vaul's Ghost crashed into the side of the *Vengeful Spirit* at great speed, all six of the Deathstrike missiles in its hold detonating in a chain explosion. The blast ripped a gaping hole in the battleship's flank, and the Vortex warheads combined to create a whirling maelstrom that began eating away at the vessel. Too large to come about, the ship was slowly being ripped apart by the hole in realspace that Calgar's grand strategy had engendered. Klaxons blared as the ship prepared for an emergency translation into the warp. Eliminating the threat of the *Vengeful Spirit* was a vital blow that changed the course of the war entire.

A CITADEL BESIEGED

When the Vhulian Swirl was finally dissipated by the gravitational anomaly high above, the Citadel Vigilant was unmasked. The Dark Angels sped towards it first, for they had been waiting for just such an opportunity. A mounted force of White Scars began riding towards their position, intending to reinforce their fellow Adeptus Astartes – while also hoping to uncover the reasons why the Dark Angels had abandoned them during the War of Beasts. However, they were struck by a stasis weapon en route, becoming trapped in a field of frozen time. Though the White Scars never found out the truth, that stasis anomaly had been created by a squadron of Dark Talons, the specialist jailor-ships of the Ravenwing. As such, when the attack on the citadel took place, it was only the Dark Angels that were present.

Despite the disorienting pull of the Vhulian Anomaly, the Dark Angels attacked with stubborn ferocity, pouring in more and more troops until they broke open the walls of the citadel and took the fight to the heretics garrisoned within. Though none aside from the Sons of the Lion know for sure, it is thought they sustained severe losses in the process, for the Dark Angels departed Vigilus as soon as the siege was concluded. The details of the assault have been scoured from Imperial records.

When the White Scars reached the site, not a single soul – nor even a corpse – was found within the citadel's walls. Yet the Voidclaw had been disabled. Its core, along with the most vital parts of its machinery, were missing – and high above it, the Vhulian Anomaly had dwindled away to nothing.

PLANET IN FLAMES

Though the Warmaster himself had withdrawn from the battle, his legions rampaged across the planet still, sowing anarchy wherever they went. The fate of Vigilus remained dire.

With the departure of Abaddon and the elite elements of the Black Legion, a sense of relief could be felt all across Hyperia Hivespawl, as if a choking gauntlet had been removed from the throat of the Imperial war effort. Without their overlord to unite them, the Heretic Astartes war parties fought in an uncoordinated fashion, and this was quickly exploited by the Space Marines. In places, the disparate armies of traitors and renegades fell to utter disorder, battling each other for the spoils of war and fighting to scavenge intact power armour from fallen heretic and loyalist alike.

The battle for Megaborealis continued to rage. The Adeptus Mechanicus had plenty of reserves in store, which they had accumulated when a civil war between the dynasties of Stygies VIII and the Agamemnus clan had seemed inevitable. They had enough water, promethium and raw manpower to fight on against Genestealer Cultist and Chaos invader alike. Whenever the Skitarii Legions wavered, their Tech-Priest masters would instil in them an iron resolve using remote data-tethers, and they would fight on. The priests of Stygies VIII had spent centuries unearthing the xenos-crafted wonders of the planet, and they had no intention of abandoning their treasures.

However, when the World Eaters joined the fray, the Skitarii were outmatched, and even the Kataphron Breachers and Kastelan Robots found that their firepower could not drive the foe back. Only when Fabricator Vosch made a formal alliance with the Iron Hands, yielding great swathes of information about Megaborealis

and the forces defending it, did the Imperium turn what had been a slaughter into a decisive counter-attack. The Skitarii's superior numbers and the Iron Hands' calculated strategies allowed the joint Imperial force to divide and compartmentalise the enemy, foiling them one after another with sacrificial feints, delaying tactics and overlapping withdrawals – then hammering them from afar with artillery strikes until there was not a single heretic left standing.



On the western reaches of Megaborealis, Silo XV had been ravaged, much of its blackstone reserves blasted to flinders by the bombardments of the Black Legion. But the Adeptus Mechanicus had secreted several minor caches of blackstone all over the planet that the Chaos Space Marines never found, and there was still a great deal of the strange mineral known as noctilith buried in Vigilus' crust. The planet's astonishing ability to hold open a channel of reality between the blackstone spears in its crust and those of Sangua Terra, its twin world on the other side of the Cicatrix Maledictum, had been diminished, but not destroyed.





AFTERMATH

Apocalypse had come to Vigilus, and yet still the Imperials would not relinquish it. It mattered little to the lords of war that fought over it how many billions of lives were lost; to them, such concerns were the province of lesser men. History may yet absolve them, given the underlying truths of Vigilus' existence.

Though Hyperia was still contested, the hivespawls of Oteck and Dirkden were officially considered lost, the only battles still raging those of salvage and retreat.

Dontoria was quarantined in its entirety. In the far south, Kaelac's Bane had grown colder and more hostile than ever before.

In their war for territory against the Thousand Sons, the Drukhari had utilised stolen terraforming technology to summon blizzards, conjure swathes of permafrost and form endless snowdrifts to confound their enemies. The xenos raiders had subsequently gathered hundreds of thousands of slaves from the rioting districts of Dirkden, Oteck, and even southern Mortwald, for the defences of those regions had collapsed. The Drukhari transported their

captives back to Commorragh, no small amount of Adeptus Astartes amongst them – including several squads of Necropolis Hawks rendered insensate by an eldritch weapon of the Haemonculi.

The Asuryani too chose to withdraw. With the deaths of much of the Aquilarian Council – including the Hyperian branch of the Agamemnus Dynasty, their advisors, and the Tempestus Scions who had enacted their wishes – the Aeldari considered the blood debt to Saim-Hann settled. The loss of *Vaul's Ghost* would be mourned, for that exemplary ship could not easily be replaced, but to Farseer Keltoc, the sacrifice had been worthwhile. Dealing such a decisive blow to the Warmaster of Chaos was worth a hundred such vessels and more.

What became of Krooldakka's Speedwaaagh!, none could say. In the planet's cityscapes, the forces of the Orks were all but spent. Having dashed themselves against the defences of the Imperium and then taken the fight to the Chaos invaders with just as much gusto, they had suffered horrendous losses.

The wastelands, however, were still infested by the greenskin menace, and long dust trails scarred the orbital pict-captures taken by Neovellum's surviving augur stations. Their enthusiasm for war was unabated, and they continued to be drawn to the attritional conflicts that typified the last stages of the War of Nightmares. With rumours that two-thirds of the scrap cities were still fully operative, the Orks continued to present a very real



threat to those that would venture across the wastes.

Worse still, word had spread to Ork hordes across the galaxy that Vigilus was the site of a really good war. From systems all across the Nachmund Sub-sector, Ork fleets set their course for that embattled world, hoping to join the fun before it was too late.

The Pauper Princes fought tooth and nail for their hard-won holdings. First- and second-generation hybrids fought alongside Purestrain Genestealers and even Grandsire Wurm himself to hurl back the Chaos invaders, winning bloody victories in some theatres of war even as their followers were pitilessly put down in others. They still infested Dirkden from top to bottom, but ultimately their uprising had been premature, and over the course of the War of Nightmares their long-planned conquest was left in tatters. The xenos cultists looked to the skies every hour, hoping for a sign of their Tyranid deliverers, come from

the void to claim the planet for their rightful bounty. But they saw only Chaos, their eyes drawn inexorably from the darkness of empty space to the oppressive horror of the Great Rift.

The Imperium's foes had slaughtered one another to the point that it seemed the united Imperial forces would be able to endure the storm that had battered the planet for so long. Its propaganda machine ground slowly back into action, claiming each new victory – whether a minor skirmish or the collapse of an entire front – as a critical turning point in the planet's fortunes.

The Preachers and Commissars of the Imperial war effort talked of hope amid the terror, as one Chaos force after another withdrew. They spoke of a victory all but won, and of how it was always darkest before the dawn. Even though the choking soot in the air and the raging wildfires on every horizon told a different story, the long journey towards recovery had begun.

Though the Imperial presence upon Vigilus had been reduced to little more than a shattered collection of traumatised survivors, the planet itself endured. The Nachmund Gauntlet, though it had been narrowed by the destruction of much of the planet's blackstone, was still intact, and a corridor of realspace still existed between the Imperium Sanctus and the Imperium Nihilus.

When the remnants of Neo-vellum's Lunar Choir re-established a psychic connection across the rift, there was great rejoicing. The planet had not been cut off from the light of Holy Terra, and the grace of the Emperor was still upon it. Only when the lords of Neo-vellum received clear visions from the other side of the Great Rift did they feel a shadow of trepidation settle upon their hearts. The messages spoke of a monstrous evil, first seen during a battle for the stars themselves. It could destroy a world purely with the power of its blazing lance. That lance was covered in blood from a holy crucible.

The meaning of the vision was scrutinised by a dozen senior Astropaths. The 'battle for the stars themselves' was the Gothic War, a Black Crusade so violent that suns died in its wake. The 'blood from a holy crucible' spoke of Sangua Terra, whose name translated from High Gothic to 'the Blood of Earth', the crucible in which the human race itself was born. And the lance, ready to destroy a world – that lance was no less a weapon than that wielded by Abaddon's former flagship. That fell craft's name was spoken in hushed tones, its import clutching at the heart with a cold claw of dread.

The Planet Killer.



WAR ZONES

The landscape of Vigilus changed drastically following its initial invasion, riven by widespread quakes and scorched by wildfires. The machinations of Abaddon were to break the planet completely.

Vigilus was once the domain of several Imperial institutions, all held in a precarious balance by the Pact of Fire and Steel. The Adeptus Mechanicus had sovereign rule over Megaborealis, while the Ecclesiarchy had the majority of its presence in Hyperia Hivesprawl. Dontoria, Oteck and Dirkden were ruled over by the seconds of the Agamemnus Dynasty, each keen to feather his or her own nest at the expense of their peers. Mortwald, the planet's breadbasket and home of the famed rejuvenat clinics that brought the planet so much wealth, was ruled over by Deinos Agamemnus, brother of the Planetary Governor, Lucienne.

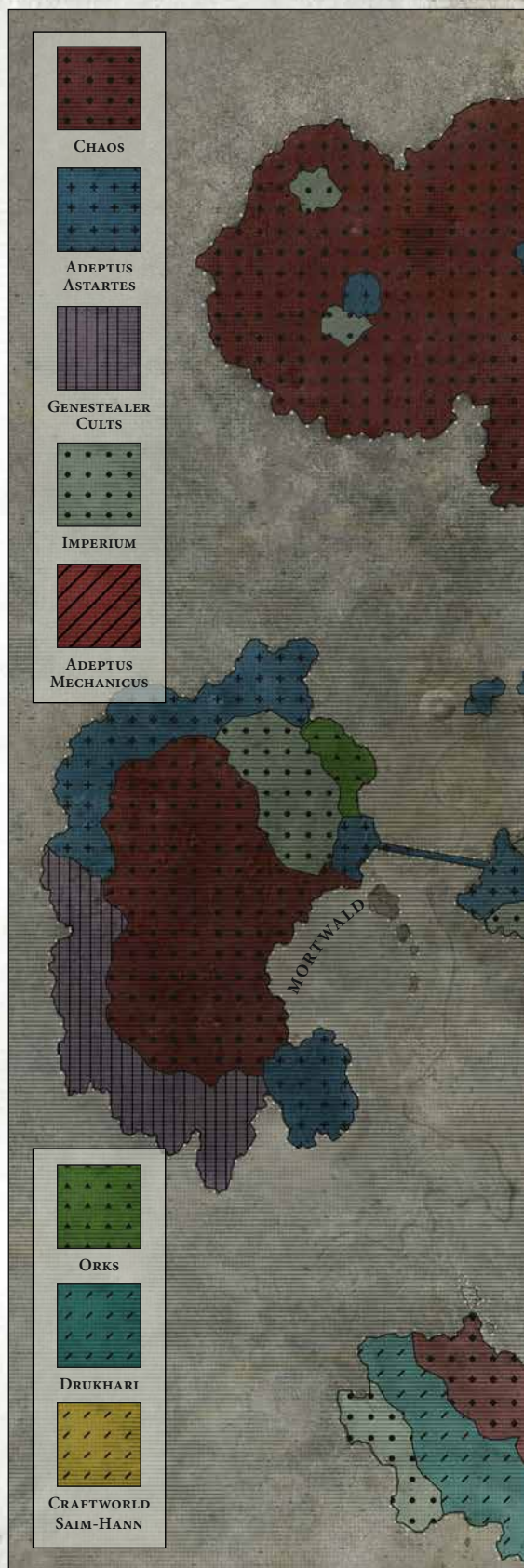
The planet's false continents, already more interested in looking to their own fortunes than presenting a united front, became even more isolated over the course of the War of Beasts. Some fought losing battles, others doggedly hung on to their independence by defending their most critical locales, but all were assailed by the xenos threat to some extent. The planet hung in limbo – even when the Imperial defenders were reinforced by the Adeptus Astartes and the alien usurpers hurled back on a score of fronts, there was nowhere on the planet that could be called free of xenos presence. The land masses burned, and the skies, already thick with pollutants, turned black with the choking chemicals of industrial zones aflame.

Into this hellish twilight of war came Abaddon's invasion. Once more the false continents burned, and this time, the lines between attacker and defender blurred more than ever before. Many gave up

hope entirely as word of the Chaos incursion spread throughout the populace, joining redemptionist cults and even offering themselves to the Chaos forces in the hope of buying their own survival. Many were accepted, or at least allowed to live, by the traitors and renegades that stormed through their homesteads – only to be expended as cannon fodder when the Imperial troops launched their counter-attacks.

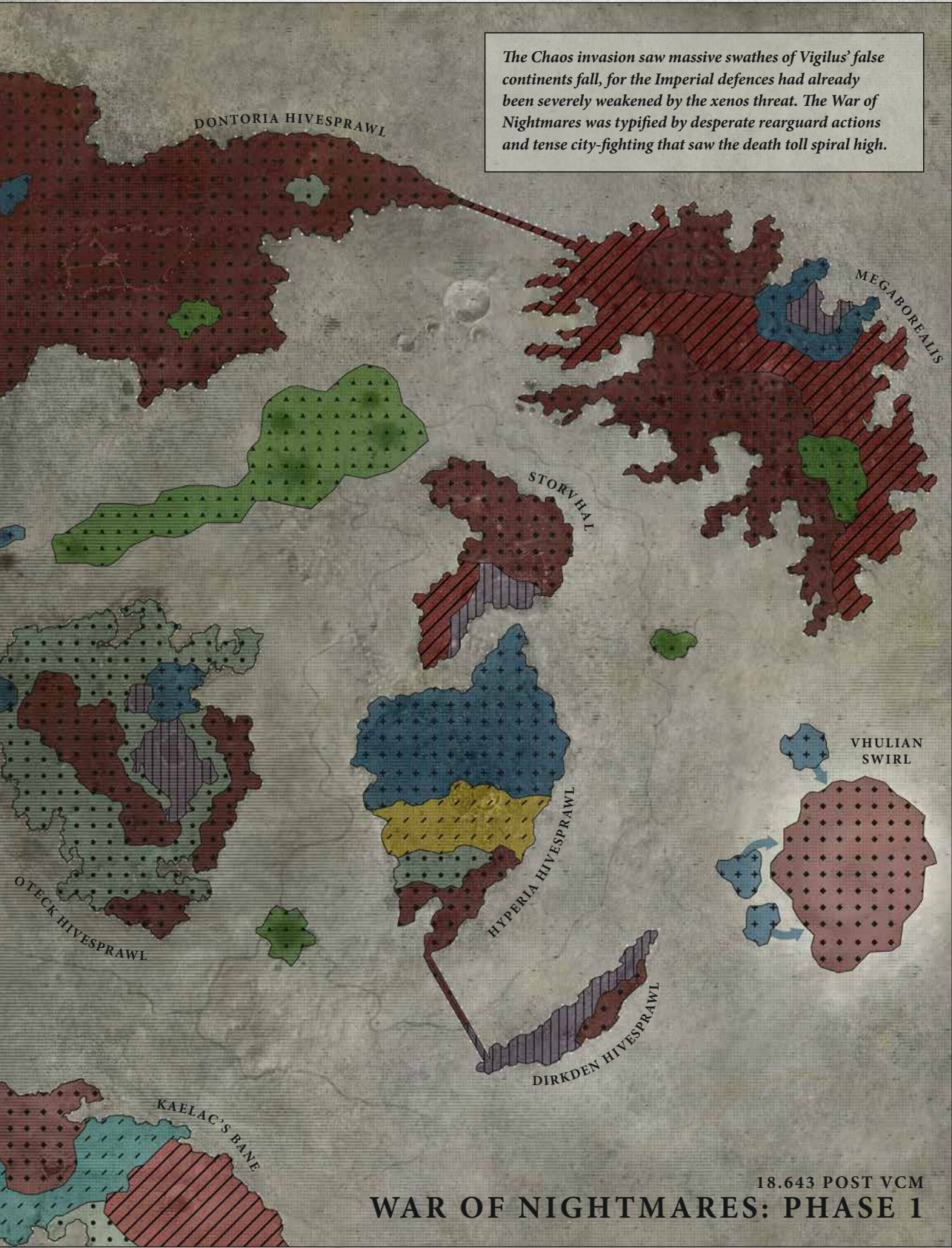
When Abaddon seized the Voidclaw in the citadel at the heart of the Vhulian Swirl – and used it to open a pinpoint singularity between Vigilus and Neo-vellum – he altered the landscape of the planet beyond recognition. Cascades of rubble, wrecked vehicles, and anything that was not secured to a solid installation rolled through the streets towards the wastelands above which the gravitational anomaly had opened. More importantly, the waters of Vigilus trickled towards the site, harnessed by this new force to ensure the populace had virtually no drinking water. An epidemic of thirst spread across the planet, adding further fuel to the panic caused by the tectonic disruption beneath the already tortured surface of the planet. The Chaos Space Marines revelled amongst the carnage – deliberately spilling slicks of promethium that, when ignited, crept across the wastelands as lakes of fire – while their ships high above toppled burning hive-spires into the cities below with sustained heavy barrages.

The planet was consumed by terror and anarchy, and there was little chance of its salvation.





The Chaos invasion saw massive swathes of Vigilus' false continents fall, for the Imperial defences had already been severely weakened by the xenos threat. The War of Nightmares was typified by desperate rearguard actions and tense city-fighting that saw the death toll spiral high.



18.643 POST VCM
WAR OF NIGHTMARES: PHASE 1





DONTORIA HIVESPRAWL

Once the most populous of all Vigilus' hivespraws, Dontoria was ravaged by disease and torn by constant battle. From the opening phases of the War of Beasts, its people, too poverty-stricken or oppressed to flee, died by the million.

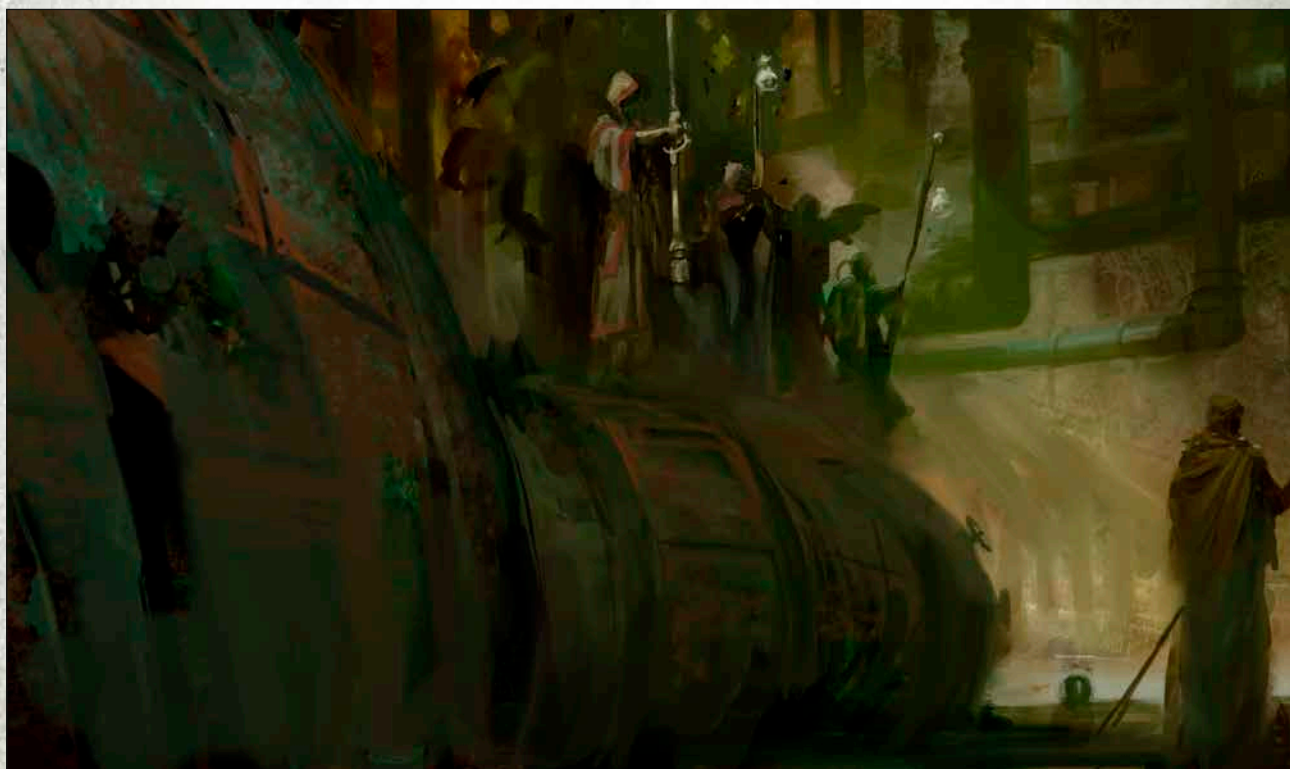
Dontoria Hivespawl once teemed with human life. Not only had this false continent expanded so much over the last few centuries it almost encroached on Mortwald and Megaborealis, it had also spread into the wastelands beyond. Before the War of Beasts, Dontoria had been considered one of the three most vital components of Vigilus' infrastructure, its endless amount of manpower a vital boon in the planet's defence. Over the course of the War of Nightmares, that same population density became a bane. The plagues unleashed upon that metropolis – amongst them the much-reviled Gellerpox – spread from one district to another, and with horrible swiftness due to the citizenry being so densely packed. The Ultramarines knew well the

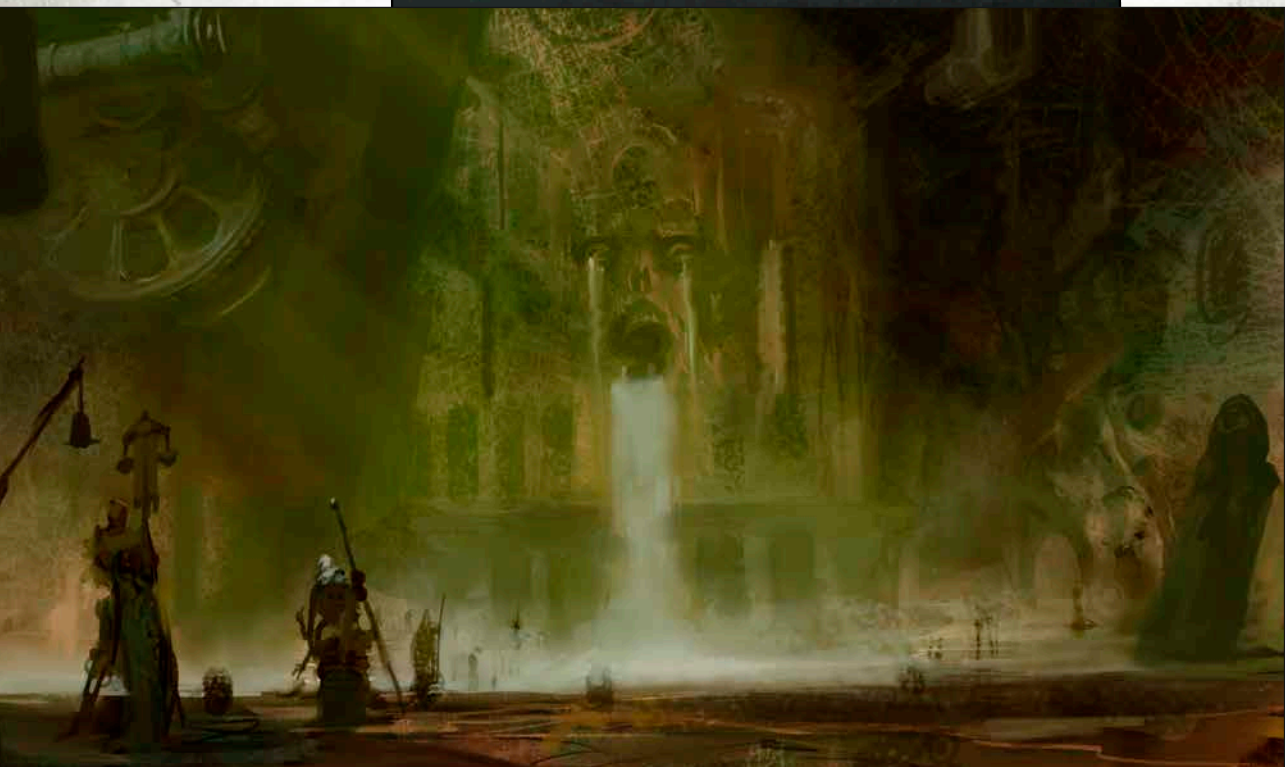
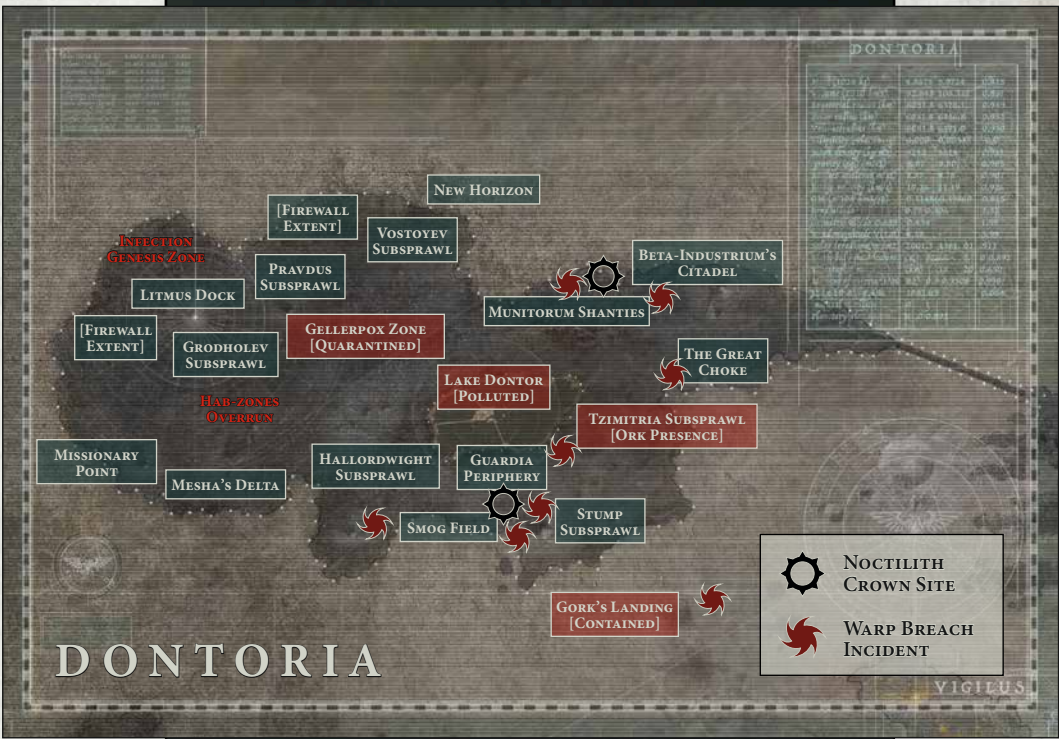
dangers that the scions of Nurgle posed to a planet's populace, having faced them before. Together with the Necropolis Hawks, the Iron Hands and the Crimson Fists, they quarantined the heart of Dontoria. Yet despite the efforts of the Imperium to maintain the cordon, in the space of a few weeks dozens of active war fronts fell to deadly sickness.

Dontoria's major source of water, Lake Dontor, was claimed by the Genestealer Cult during the War of Beasts. Over the course of the War of Nightmares it was polluted by the agents of Nurgle to such an extent that even the most hardened xenocultist metabolism could not process it. Bereft of drinkable water, and afraid of contracting a

lethal plague, the citizens that made their livelihoods on the fringes of Dontoria fled into the wastes, taking their chances with the Ork menace instead. In an effort to protect the quarantine, Space Marine kill teams eliminated many such interlopers, lest they carry sickness to the other hivespraws.

Eventually, however, the Space Marines were redeployed to other war zones, for they were deemed too valuable to waste on garrison duties. Dontoria was left in the hands of their Astra Militarum allies. This proved a costly mistake, for ultimately the continent fell entirely to plague – a foe that the firepower of the Imperial Guard could not defeat. Dontoria was thus abandoned by the Imperium.





Their sudden attack even threatened the sanctum of Grandsire Wurm, who at the time was deep in the Subskein Caveways, feasting in a ritual intended to empower him further. The assault was pitiless and sudden, the renegades slaughtering a great many hybrids of the first and second generations as well as whole broods of Purestrain Genestealers. If it had not been for the Pauper Princes' eagerness to martyr themselves, hurling their bodies in front of their beloved leaders whenever a gun was aimed towards them, the ruling elite of the Dirkden gene-sect might have been crippled at a stroke.

As it was, the cultists counter-attacked with seething fury, their numbers such that the Scourged found themselves pushed back. The visionary renegades had prescience enough to sense each ambush before it came, however – using their supernatural ability to perceive lies, they could see through every façade and misdirection, and it was this that kept them alive.

Their uncanny ability also allowed them to see the great lie at the heart of the Genestealer Cult. The Chapter Master of the Scourged, Gallus Herodicus, sent a psychic message to his lieutenants, enabling them to uncover that deadly deception and, in doing so, turn it into a weapon.

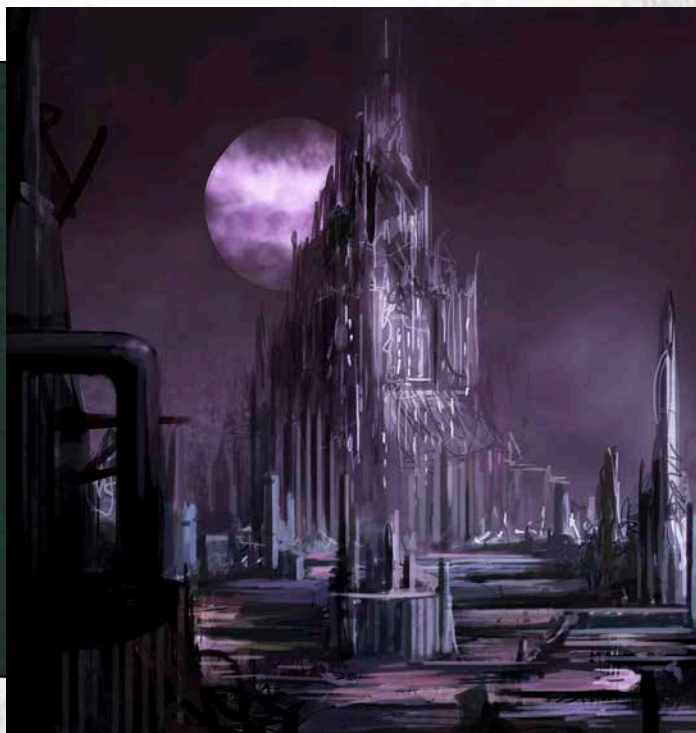
High above the Patriarch's genesis pool, where a great many cultists were gathered, an image flickered – a mirage conjured by the foremost Sorcerers in Herodicus' warband. It showed what would be the final fate of the Pauper Princes. The sky was filled with grotesque bio-ships, and the ground teemed with the blade-limbed xenos beasts known as Tyranids, who set about massacring human and Ork alike with terrifying efficiency. The Pauper Princes cried out in glee, faces beaming in rapture at the vision. Then, in the mirage, the Tyranids turned on their loyal worshippers, exhibiting the same savagery with which they had cut down the Imperial citizenry before them.

The Pauper Princes in the chamber watched as their future selves were disembodied, then messily devoured. The Scourged believed that, when faced with the truth of their existence, the cult would self-destruct, and utter bedlam would break out. But the devotion of the Pauper Princes was bone deep, and not easily shaken. The cry went up – 'Lies!' – until the roof of the cavern shook and dust trickled down from above. Confronted by a horrible reality, the hybrids of Dirkden burrowed further into their delusion, their strange faith strengthened all the more by this challenge to it.

The Scourged were attacked with renewed ferocity, and a full half of their number slain by claw, bullet and talon. They did at least cause such disarray that Savasdus and his Night Lords were able to evade the throng attacking them and make a bid for freedom. Despite appearing dilapidated, the false continent was effectively a fortress, and far harder to break than any had imagined.

REPORT 129NN6GAMMA1
ASHENID NON-
HIVE

Construction abandoned
820 previo. Evidence
of clandestine
structures and
unauthorised levels,
pipeways, sluices
found on levels OA,1
to 131A,1. Adeptus
Arbites class nonquam
sub-terra. Caution
advised in persecution
of sites known for
population density.



MEGABOREALIS

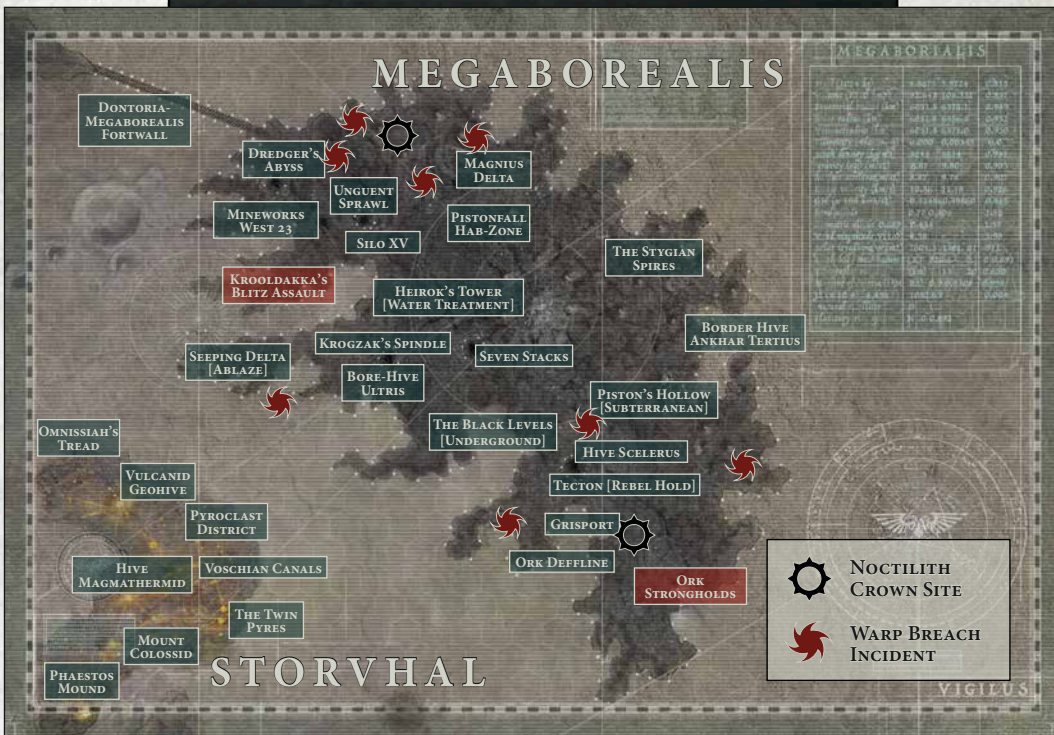
Megaborealis was the sovereign domain of the Adeptus Mechanicus, whose industry beneath the planet's crust had revealed a vital secret. Assailed during the War of Beasts by the Genestealer Cultists seeded there, the hivesprawl also became a primary focus of Abaddon's invasion during the War of Nightmares.

From the ravaged lands of Megaborealis, the Tech-Priests of Stygies VIII had delved deep beneath the surface of Vigilus. What they sought had been long hidden – of the Priesthood of Mars, perhaps only Belisarius Cawl knew its true nature. Yet it was vital to the future of the planet, and the continued existence of the Nachmund Gauntlet itself. Every towering bore-hive, every abyssal mine or delver-crevice, was listed in the Neo-vellum datastacks as producing a variety of conventional minerals, but in truth they were all turned to the extraction of the same substance. For beneath Vigilus' crust were deposits of the arcane mineral noctilith, also known as blackstone by the Skitarii that safeguarded it.

The planet's crust was pitted with dozens of sphere-like hollows that were filled with suspensions of black liquid. These spheres appeared like bubbles in the planet's strata, and if there was a pattern to their dispersal, none could discern it. Within these, strange blackstone deposits floated, each shaped like a javelin or needle, always pointing in the same direction no matter the planet's position around Astravigila. The Tech-Priests observed that these needles always faced down the throat of the Nachmund Gauntlet, but it was Fabricator Vosch who concluded that the blackstone in fact created the gauntlet by projecting a long range contra-empyric field. The richest nodes could be found under Bore-hives Ultris and Scelerus, and

Mineworks West 23. When the rest of the hivesprawl was burning in the fires of war, assailed by Ork invaders, Genestealer Cultists and the daemonic machineries of the Brazen Beasts, the Tech-Priests ignored Calgar's order to withdraw from these vital zones. Even the Stygian Spires, site of the space elevator that provided Megaborealis precious water, were considered of secondary importance by comparison. To the Adeptus Mechanicus, discovering the secret of the blackstone was more important than life itself. Were it not for their layered defences and single-minded devotion to their cause, Abaddon would likely have torn their bounty from the planet within the first few days of his invasion.





THE OMNISSIAN HOIST

The Greater Omniastian Hoist was linked to the Stygian Spires, largest of all Megaborealis' bore-hives. Its lowest reaches were the sites of fierce fighting between the Adeptus Mechanicus and the Pauper Princes – and even when that had been concluded, a new war front opened in the space station high above.

The taking of the Greater Omniastian Hoist in 9.972 post by the Pauper Princes had been a strategic master stroke. Even as the main body of their cult was taking punishment from the Iron Hands sent to relieve the Stygian Spires, the Purestrain Genestealers had conquered the Hoist's control centre. Before that level was subsequently liberated by an Onager Dunecrawler counter-assault, some of the xenos creatures had ridden the vast pulleys out of the construction and into space, towards the mining station of Sacrus Tora Hawking.

The first phase of the War of Nightmares saw a brief space battle between the up-gunned ships of the Magma Hounds Renegade Chapter and the cannon servitors of Sacrus Tora Hawking. Though the space station had an arsenal of lance batteries and torpedoes, it took a heavy bombardment from the Magma Hounds and their allies. As a static target, it was easy prey for the swift-moving craft in the Heretic Astartes armada, and while its defenders fought bravely, they were ultimately overcome by the volume of firepower sent their way.

The Magma Hounds could almost certainly have completed their mission to destroy Sacrus Tora Hawking with an orbital bombardment, but instead they launched boarding torpedoes, sent on a vertical assault vector into the uppermost surfaces of the space station. Each cylinder cut through the station's outer hull with its melta array, slamming its clamps through the resultant hole and disgorging a dozen power-armoured killers into the corridors beyond. They sought one thing – the blood of the foe.

The servitors and mining personnel aboard the station fought hard against the renegades, but were soon outmatched. Only when the blood-hungry Magma Hounds reached the upper terminus of the space elevator did they find heavy resistance – not from the Skitarii or worker clades that ensured the ice-locked asteroids reached the planet below, but from the Genestealers that had infected them.

In the close confines of the space station, the renegades suddenly found it was they who were fighting a losing battle. Around every corner and behind every automat door panel lurked another xenos monstrosity hungry for the kill. Realising they had strayed into a fight they could not win, the Chaos Space Marines detonated a clutch of melta charges and breached the

space station's hull, the equalising pressure blowing them and their alien nemeses out into the darkness of space.

Though many of them were later recovered, the Magma Hounds never reached the surface of Vigilus during the War of Nightmares. Neither did the last asteroids that Sacrus Tora Hawking had captured for processing upon Megaborealis far below. When the Vhulian Anomaly's gravitational pull buckled and twisted the Hoist's skeletal superstructure – ultimately wrecking its carbon fibre winch apparatus – another of the planet's principal sources of water was cut off completely. For everyone but the water magnates selling aqua to the highest bidders in the hivespawls below, it was a dire turn of events indeed.







MORTWALD

Following the invasion of the Speedwaaagh!, Mortwald was hammered by relentless waves of attacks by the barbarous greenskin hordes. At the time of Abaddon's invasion it was still holding out, though the extreme measures taken by its rulers attracted a new kind of predator that conquered from within.

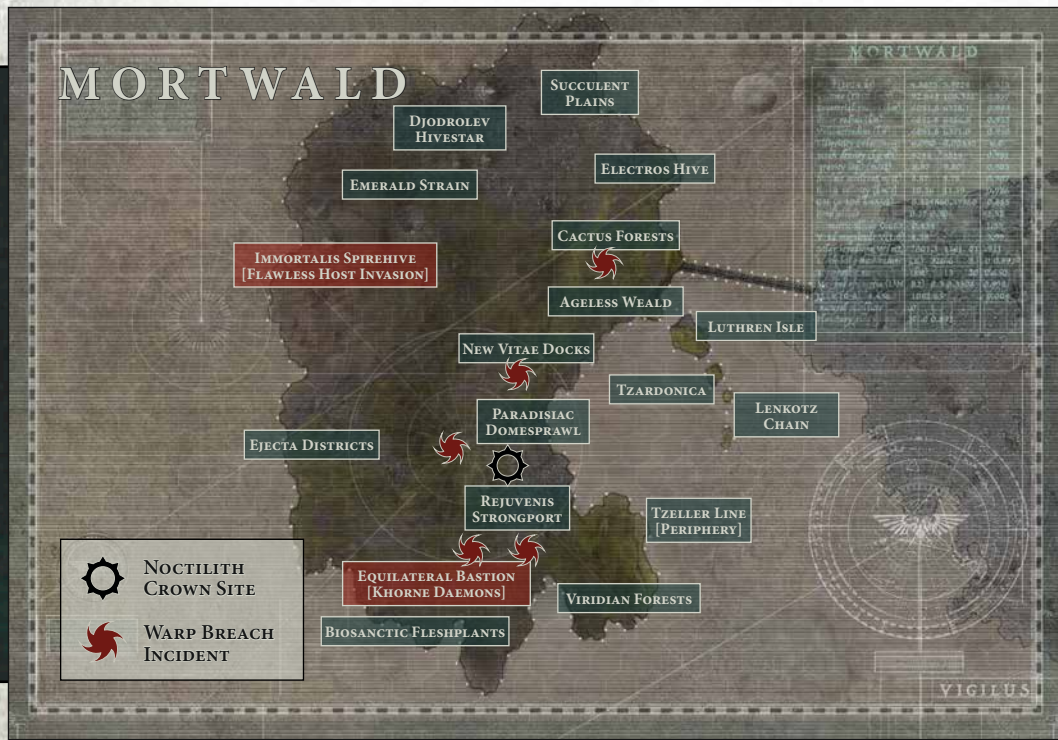
The verdant land of Mortwald formed the principal source of food for the planet Vigilus, its sprawling irrigation networks dotted with thousands of cactus farms and forests of succulents that could thrive even in the arid atmosphere. That alone made it vital indeed, especially when combined with its extensive underground hydroponics suites. The continent's reputation for grandeur, however, came from the rejuvenat clinics of Ageless Weald, Immortalis Spirehive and Rejuvenis Strongport.

The upmarket medicae facilities of the rejuvenat clinics provided anti-thanatotic and youth-giving phoenix treatments to those visitors rich enough to extend their lifespans a few decades – for

an astronomically high price, of course. Together, these sites supplied the false continent with a near limitless supply of wealth, ensuring that the ruling elite could live in the luxury to which they had long ago become accustomed. It was that same opulence that would bring about the downfall of Mortwald's most well-defended fortresses and citadels.

The coming of the Chaos fleet, and the War of Nightmares that ensued, pushed the aristocracy of Mortwald from their habitual complacency into a state of near panic. The false continent's defenders had committed almost all of their resources against the Orks attacking the Deinos Trench Network and the Tzeller Line. Despite being

bolstered by the Imperial Fists, several of their successor Chapters, and contingents of Imperial Knights from Dharrovar and Voltoris, the Imperial forces had achieved little more than an uneasy stalemate. Meanwhile, in southern Mortwald, the Imperium had lost ground to an uprising of the Pauper Princes that had gradually conquered the Biosanctic Fleshplants during the War of Beasts. Deinos Agamemnus and his fellows had sent elite Astra Militarum regiments stationed in that province to combat them. So it was that when the Iron Warriors made planetfall to the east of the Deinos Trench Line at the onset of the Chaos invasion, the defenders of Mortwald had very little in the way of military resources with which to stop them.



It was at that point that the Renegade Chapter known as the Flawless Host breached Mortwald's richest areas, taking sadistic pleasure in the ease with which they were able to overcome the household guard of each aristocratic dynasty. A slew of atrocities was to follow as the Flawless Host punished the rulers of Mortwald for the crime of being imperfect. At much the same time, the Iron Warriors launched a devastating assault on the trench lines that had held so long against the Ork menace of the Western Scrap City Cluster. Mortwald teetered on the brink of disaster.

It was the Black Legion that finally pushed the false continent into a state of cataclysm. They had sent the Flawless Host to Mortwald not merely to indulge their taste for luxury, but also to shut down the automated defences that protected the war zone. The Flawless Host, having only relatively recently turned renegade from the Imperium, still utilised

many of the same craft with which they had waged war in the name of the Emperor. Though these ships were now gilded, bejewelled and painted in an eye-watering array of hues, they still possessed the Adeptus Astartes' identifications that allowed them to bypass the cogitators of the automated defence networks. Approaching the most well-defended areas of Mortwald, the Flawless Host systematically destroyed every anti-air asset that these spires could bring to bear against an aerial assault.

Upon receiving word that the false continent's defence batteries were taken care of, the Black Legion descended upon Mortwald by the thousand. The Terminator lord Thorosgar Bear-fist bypassed the Deinos Trench Network and the Imperial Fist line entirely, launching a devastating attack on the defenders of Electros Hive and Djodrolev Hivestar. Zhune Tzang, a skilled Master of Possession who had enjoyed Abaddon's favour for several months, pushed his own

assault into the Emerald Strain, while sending a contingent of Slaaneshi Daemons to invade Electros Hive alongside Bear-fist. The Black Legion commanders had picked the sites of their assaults well, for there were countless miles of civilian territory between them and the Space Marines that defended the outskirts. By the time the Necropolis Hawks and Imperial Fists had closed in, the streets of Mortwald were running with blood.



REPORT 191AS6BETIC8

MORTWALD

Coordinates: 181W-232E-112S-882N

Area: 92380232.1 hectarids

Population: 19.7 billion

Climate: Equatorial

Governance: Dynastic (secundus)

Trench networks compromised as of 1.823 post. 32% defence network ceded to xenos invaders (cf. Tzeller Line, Viridian Forests, Biosancti Fleshplants). Rejuvenat industry ceased ad infinitum (pending emergency requisition by citizenry platinum level and above). As of 14.782 post evidence of +++REDUCTIO INQUISITORIA MAJORIS+++ across Deinos Trench Network. Evidence of +++REDUCTIO INQUISITORIA+++ in upper spires of Electros Hive, Djodrolev Hivestar, New Vitae Docks, Immortalis Spirehive.

REPORT 23EXTR6H2
STORVHAL

Voschian Canal network active as of 872 previo. From that date supply of vital energy to all hivespraws near constant. Evidence of pyroclastic cults active throughout War of Beasts Exoneratus as per order of Fabricator Vosch, Planetary Governor Agamemnus. Later reclassified as condemnatus by order of Chapter Master Marneus Calgar of the Vigilus Senate. Mount Colossid, Hive Magmathermid, Hekatoria Volcano, Vulcanid Geohive listed as In Daemoniad Nihilos.

STORVHAL

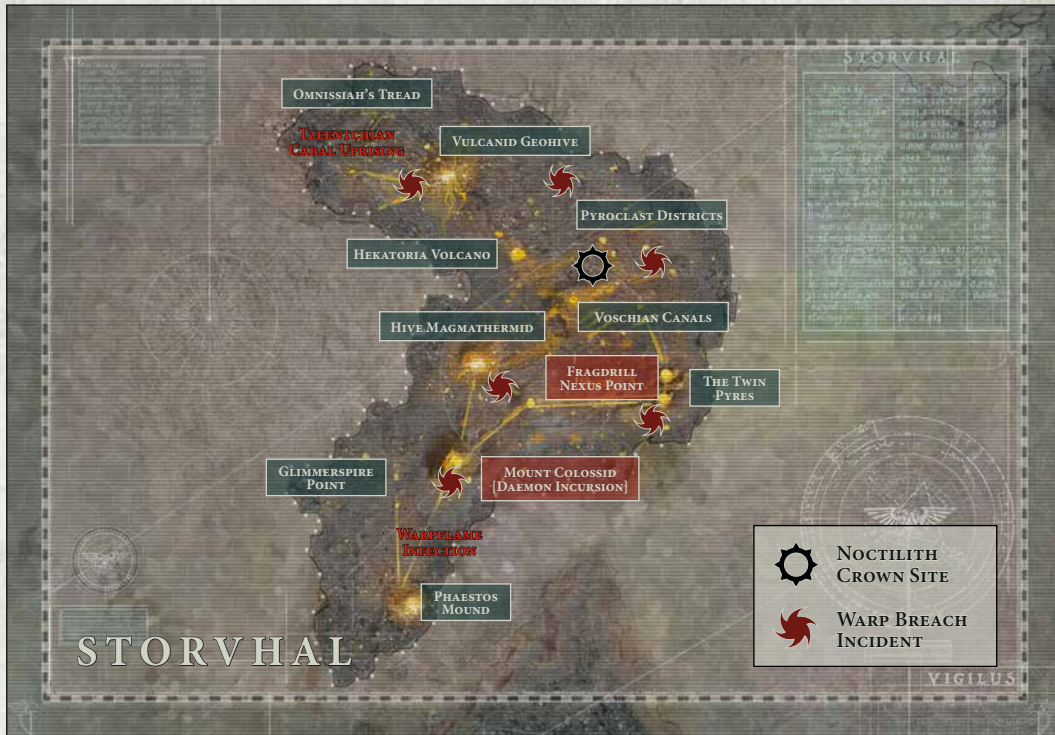
Shimmering on the horizon of Hyperia could be seen Storvhal, a land of volcanoes and energy farms. As the War of Nightmares got underway, its calderas began erupting with warp-infused firestorms.

The volcanic continent of Storvhal once provided an endless stream of energy to the continents of Vigilus. Its geothermic farms, built to harness even the most violent eruption and turn it into raw power, were known for their searing temperatures and diligent, burn-scarred workers. But amongst extreme environments grow extreme viewpoints and strange creeds. The fact that so many workers met their end in a bubbling vat or river of lava lent credence to those who believed that Storvhal had a spirit of its own, and that it fed on human sacrifice. With each geo-spasm that racked the false continent's fault lines and set off a chain of eruptions or overflows, more lives were claimed, and the superstitious notion reinforced over again.

In the third stage of the War of Beasts, the claims that there were fire-devils frolicking in the flames were put down to hallucinations brought on by the Great Rift. It was almost impossible not to glimpse the celestial phenomenon of the Cicatrix Maledictum, especially at night, and there was copious evidence it could affect the sanity of those who witnessed it.

Only when Haarken Worldclaimer's message boomed down from the ash clouds above Storvhal did the idea that there might be some truth to the sightings of magical beasts existing in the fires gain any real traction. Within hours, the word that had only ever been whispered amongst the workers or scratched on the inside of basement walls was being spoken out loud - 'diabolus'.





Storvhal was host to many pyroclastic cults that met in secret when their Tech-Priest overlords were elsewhere. They all worshipped fire in one form or another, whether as an incarnation of the Ommissiah's wrath, a bringer of calm at the end of a hard day's work, or as a means to read their future. Some of these cults were corrupted by Chaos. The largest, known as the Sons of Vannadan, after its founder who had given his life in battle against a strike force of Aeldari, was famous for the prophetic insights it gleaned from the fire-sprites dancing upon Mount Colossid. Only when Abaddon's fleet entered low orbit did the cult reveal its true colours, rising up against the Skitarii that sought to suppress it. Even as they were under heavy fire from the Adeptus Mechanicus, the most psychically gifted of their worshippers completed a great ritual of fire and blood on the top of Phaestos Mound. They opened a warp gate – a split in reality that looked much like the Great Rift in microcosm – and conjured a host of Tzeentchian

Daemons that spilled down the flanks of the peak. The psykers, rejoicing that their faith in the Dark Gods had been rewarded, saw dozens of Chaos Cultist uprisings flock to their banner. With the energies of the Great Rift running wild, Phaestos Mound, Ommissiah's Tread and even Mount Colossid began erupting with multicoloured flame and bolts of kaleidoscopic lightning, instead of the cherry-red lifeblood of the planet.

If it were not for the quick decisions and callous efficiency of Fabricator Vosch, the false continent would likely have been consumed by empyric energies. There were dozens of Tectonic Fragdrills across Storvhal; many had fallen into the hands of the Genestealer Cultists, but many more were still under Skitarii control. Vosch ordered them to be activated as one, and even sent targeted binharic overrides to enrage the machine spirits of those under enemy control. Many of these drills were positioned over geomantic nexus points. Instead of being carefully

activated to bleed the earth of magma, as they did whenever the volcanoes of Storvhal were on the verge of a critical eruption, they now burrowed into the planet's crust in a destructive frenzy. With every Fragdrill gnawing into the earth as one, the boiling undercurrents of magma flowed in great measure, filling the Voschian Canal network to maximum capacity and sending huge pulses of energy down the macrofibres and cables that connected Storvhal to the hivespraws. The volcanoes boiled over, the rage of tortured tectonic plates spilling from their fiery throats. In a matter of hours the Daemons and cultists that had claimed the uppermost calderas of the volcanoes were crushed by tons of ash and pumice, or consumed by pyroclastic energies. Even the massing Daemons of Tzeentch were sent shrieking back to the warp. Hundreds of thousands of workers and Skitarii died along with them, and the industry of Storvhal was crippled – but for Vosch, it was a price well worth paying to deny the forces of Chaos.



OTECK HIVESPAWL

The central hivespawl of Oteck was once a thriving example of an Imperial metropolis. After the opening of the Great Rift, it was torn asunder, its hab-blocks the site of constant battle between the agents of the Imperium, invading Orks, usurping Genestealer Cultists, and the Chaos onslaught.

The vast urban nation of Oteck Hivespawl once had a great deal of influence over Vigilus. It harboured the five great reservoirs of Greigan, Mysandren, Ostaveer, Trevig and Agamemnus, known collectively as the Hollows. With the sentinel world being so arid, Oteck's resources were always in high demand. Water was not Oteck's only bounty, either – it also housed a treasure trove of data, pertaining to every aspect of the planet and its neighbours in the Vigilus System, in the Turingsbane Databives. There was a persistent rumour that insights into the fabled Standard Template Constructs were hidden within the depths of those labyrinthine vaults. The Adeptus Mechanicus had long sought full access to that bounty of data,

despite having signed the Pact of Fire and Steel that forbade them unaccompanied access to its secrets.

Because of its rich resources, Oteck had a disproportionately high concentration of the Adeptus Arbitres – the judges, juries and executioners of Imperial society. Their law enforcement and precinct networks were further bolstered by the Adepta Sororitas assigned from Hyperia in the east. Together with the Space Wolves of Haldor Icepelt, it was the Sisters of Battle that bore the brunt of the intense fighting around Greigan Hollow. The Deathwatch, specialists in the art of hunting xenos, quarantined the Hollows after they were found to be tainted by the Genestealer Cultists that skulked in the dank tunnels

beneath the fortified reservoirs, but many citizens drank from them nonetheless, risking a bullet for just one draught of precious water whenever the garrison's backs were turned.

When Abaddon used the eldritch technologies of the Voidclaw to open a tiny singularity at one of Vigilus' Legrance points – a zone equidistant between planet and moon – he disturbed the gravity of the world so much so that its water supplies were irrevocably drawn towards the Vhulian Swirl. The Hollows were drained in a single week, the water crawling up the walls of the reservoirs to flow towards the great dust wastes beyond the hivespawl like glittering snakes on some strange

Report V345/sigma/0

OTECK

Coordinates: 181W-232E-112S-882N

Area: 63783410.9 hectarids

Population: 22.8 billion

Climate: Sub-Equatorial

Governance: Dynastic (tertius)

(cf. War of Nightmares) Hollows Greigan, Mysandren, Agamemnus, Ostaveer, Trevig declared condemnatus as per Ordo Xenos allied directive 887.Genecurs'd (cf. Deathwatch). Secondary insurgency ref. Pauper Princes 59% eradicated. Alpha Legion presence detected (cf. multiple instances of <REDACTIO EXTREMIS> presence signifiers in Siltid River region, Hive Zontanus, Ellerophosus Hivebelt). Mortwald-Oteck Fortwall compromised, Tzardonica and Lenkotz Chain aqua farm processors at 12% optimum. Assets under review. Likelihood of total loss of control at 82% (current estimate) and climbing.

migration. Oteck's people, who also felt that tug so strongly it was a fight not to let themselves be pulled eastward, fought each other to scoop up the water from the rivulets that spread through the streets, filling canteens, tureens, and empty promethium barrels with as much aqua as they could salvage. The Militarum garrison, at a loss, could not stop the water making its slithering voyage towards the swirl, and so remained at their posts. Even with the stuff of life just waiting to be claimed in the streets, and cultist uprisings blossoming all over the hivespawl, they knew better than to abandon their duty – for the Commissars did not look kindly on such things. The citizens all but tore themselves apart over the departing resource, clawing at one another tooth and nail to claim the water for themselves.

With the eyes of Oteck's law enforcement elsewhere, the Tech-Priests of Megaborealis and Storvhal redoubled their efforts to claim the Turingsbane Datahives

for themselves. Thankfully for the Imperial war effort, they were successful – for what the Tech-Priests found down there in the dataslate tunnels was potent enough to change the face of the ravaged planet once and for all. Through diligent cross-referencing and acts of painstaking archeolexicography, the Tech-Priests of Stygies VIII unearthed ancient records of the Citadel Vigilant – and, more pertinently, construction dataslates for the doomsday device known as the Voidclaw.

In their research on the Citadel Vigilant, the Tech-Priests found iconographical links to the original incarnation of the First Legion. Fabricator Vosch himself sent a carefully encrypted message to the Techmarines of the Dark Angels, keeping his information purely technical so as to avoid any questions as to its origins or ownership. In doing so, he gave the Dark Angels the keys they needed to bypass the Voidclaw's defences – and, if needed, to destroy it.

'ALL THAT TIME, WE FOUGHT TO PROTECT THE AQUEOUS RESERVOIRS AT THE HEART OF OTECK HIVESPAWL. WE SOUGHT TO CONTROL THE HOLLOWES, DESPITE THE FACT THEIR BOUNTY WAS ALREADY POISONED BEYOND RECOVERY. YET THE TRUE TREASURE OF THAT GREAT METROPOLIS WAS BURIED FAR DEEPER – A BOUNTY OF INFORMATION FROM THE EARLY DAYS OF THE IMPERIUM, UNDILUTED AND GLORIOUS. IT WAS THE FONT OF KNOWLEDGE FROM WHICH WE SUPPED THE DEEPEST, AND IN DOING SO, SALVAGED THAT WHICH WAS SO NEARLY LOST FOREVER.'

- Excerpt from the journal of Meta-Geologue Xanthran Tarendos (latter volume, War of Nightmares)



21.119 POST – A WORLD CROWNED BY CHAOS

The Noctilith Crowns were perfected by Abaddon and his original Master of Summoning, the Darkling Liege Narcus Tharanda. Though single devices had been used to blight a dozen worlds before Abaddon's alliance reached Vigilus, the crowns were first deployed en masse when Abaddon set foot upon Vigilus and deemed it the right time to make use of his hard-won resource. Each was painstakingly carved with runes in the Dark Tongue of Chaos, bathed in the blood of hundreds of sacrificial victims, anointed with the oily residue of scores of rendered-down psykers and installed in great iron housings before being bulk-lifted down to the planet's surface and sunk deep into Vigilus' crust.

21.226 POST – THE EMPYRIC CURSE

The Noctilith Crowns, aligned so as to channel the empyric force of the Great Rift as the planet turned, established a continent-spanning network of psychic amplifiers that thrummed with Chaotic energy. Wherever they resonated the strongest, the visions and nightmares that had troubled the people of Vigilus began to manifest in reality as warp-gheists, ethereal horrors that plagued the citizenry for a hundred miles around each site. The anarchy that resulted only added fuel to the fires that looked set to consume the planet entirely.

THE VHULIAN SWIRL

At the heart of the Vhulian Swirl was a secret of such power it changed the face of Vigilus forever, summoning a gravitic anomaly high above the dust storm that wreaked utter havoc on the war below.

A massive, swirling dust vortex so vast it birthed lesser storms to ravage the wilderness around it, the Vhulian Swirl was always something of an enigma to the populace of Vigilus. All citizens at least knew to stay well away from that ever-whirling tempest – not that the average person had the liberty to be able to stray far from their allotted task and hab-block – for it was a potent presence in Vigilant folklore, treated more as a baleful creature than a simple storm. To approach it was to run the risk of having one's skin – and the flesh beneath – stripped away by the fierce abrasion of hurtling particulate. It was rumoured, although few could confirm it, that the lands about were littered with bones – the scattered remnants of those too stupid or fatally curious to stay away. Even those Orks that

braved its outskirts, careening around the perimeter as part of the Speedwaaagh's daredevil races, learned to avoid the giant ochre-black walls of dust that formed the Swirl proper.

At the beginning of the War of Nightmares, none on the Vigilus Senate truly knew what caused the Swirl's existence. Very few of their warriors had ventured inside its reaches to find out, and even fewer had returned. Some called the Swirl a natural phenomenon, but that could not have been further from the truth.

Over the course of the war for Vigilus, the Swirl's secret was finally revealed. At the heart of that great storm stood the Citadel Vigilant, a monument built as much from the fabled mineral noctilith as it was



A WOLF AT THE DOOR

In the early stages of the War of Nightmares, Wolf Lord Krom Dragongaze's Great Company arrived in force above Vigilus. The Fenrisian battle barges smashed a path through the outer ring of Ork scrap-hulks, but the Fierce-eye was drawn to the largest greenskin vessel in range, the immense rokkit kroozza marked *Worldsmasha*.

Seeking to announce his presence on the embattled world with a fitting act of glory, the Wolf Lord and his Rimeguard teleported aboard the ship. The Space Wolves cut a bloody path through the Ork Meks that controlled the *Worldsmasha's* immense rokkit arrays, and the Wolf Guard Wulfrik Stormsmite placed melta bombs on key points along the kroozza's sprawling ammunition yards, while Dragongaze sought out and beheaded the Big Mek captain with a swing of his frost axe.

The Space Wolves exfiltrated moments before a chain reaction demolished the upper decks of the *Worldsmasha*, sending it into a spiralling death dive

into the wastes of Vigilus near the Vhulian Swirl. The doomed ship struck like a cyclonic warhead, destroying several warbands of Ork Speed Freaks and a number of the greenskins' crude scrap-forts on the outskirts of Hurrikane Rekk. Lord Dragongaze considered this a fitting spectacle with which to herald his arrival on Vigilus.

Upon reporting to the Vigilus Senate, Wolf Lord Krom immediately clashed with Lord Marneus Calgar, who was then organising the defence of Vigilus from his command centre within the Aquilarian Palace. The Chapter Master vetoed the Fierce-eye's demand for an aggressive assault upon the remains of Hurrikane Rekk, for the Wolf Lord was keen to finish what he had started, and claim a significant victory for his Great Company in the process. The heated argument between the two Space Marines grew bitter, but was averted when news arrived of an Ork incursion into the temple districts of Hyperia. The Fierce-eye set off at once to defeat this new threat – much to Calgar's relief.

obsidian and hypersteel. The lack of weathering upon its slick black walls implied that the monstrous keep had been built in recent years, but in truth it had been constructed long before Humanity had quested out into the stars on the Emperor's Great Crusade. There was said to be something alien about its appearance, and the peculiar spire atop it – which housed a weapon with the potential to cause cataclysmic destruction – shimmered with energies that hurt the eye.

The Citadel Vigilant had long been the stronghold for a coven of warrior mystics that, thousands of years ago, forsook the Adeptus Astartes in search of deeper truths. They were known as the Fallen. Protected by the strange temporal aegis of that place from the vagaries of time, they sought to unlock the secrets of the citadel – and the minerals in the planet's crust beneath – but were never truly able to confirm their suspicions that noctilith was tied to the power of the Dark Gods.

Some amongst the Fallen of the Citadel Vigilant believed they could drive out the taint of corruption from the souls of the afflicted by chaining the victim to a slab of noctilith, charged to repel the energies of Chaos, for a year and a day. Others claimed that the planet was vital to the future of the Imperium, and that they had been called there to act as guardians for the final day of reckoning.



The Despoiler, knowing full well the promise of the blackstone deposits in the citadel, made planetfall under the auspice of parley, and

even alliance. Such was his personal charisma and the lure of his carefully considered words that the Fallen joined his side voluntarily – for they saw in Abaddon a chance to sever their brothers in the Dark Angels from the holy light of Terra forever more, and in doing so, force them to embrace the bleak truths they had hidden for so long.

The activation of the Voidclaw saw the Vhulian Swirl turn from a massive whirling cyclone to a sucking vortex that drew up millions of tons of sand and detritus with every passing moment. Only the Citadel Vigilant itself remained unaffected, protected as it was by a force field of unprecedented size and strength that defied Imperial classification – but which made the structure as immune to the great tempest as a mountain is to a light shower. During the war, battle was to rage under that great aegis, the combatants giving everything they had to settle a millennia-old grudge – and in doing so, determine whether the planet was to survive, or to be consumed.



KAELAC'S BANE

Kaelac's Bane was typified by blizzards, ice predators and sub-zero temperatures that could freeze a man's eyes shut. During the War of Beasts, it was abandoned by the quarrymen that had mined it for water, and since then formed a base of operations for warriors who cared not for mortal concerns like temperature.

Kaelac's Bane was once thought of as the salvation of the planet, for in its glaciers and ice wastes were countless tonnes of water waiting to be thawed and purified for the consumption of the populace – but that endless promise was claimed only by the rich. Once its vast macrocraters had been properly treated to work as quarries, and a freight infrastructure put in place to carry that bounty – mined in vast cuboid structures – to those who could pay the right price, the icy realm provided water only to the upper echelons of Vigilus. That privilege was to change over the course of the War of Beasts, and again with the coming of Chaos.

Deep in the western reaches of the icy wilderness was an area

designated Quarantine Cryofernus by the Imperial authorities, for those who strayed within its perimeter did not come back out. For a while it was believed that the cause was the giant ice mantises that hunted in the blizzards. These predatory creatures were lethal indeed, and caused a great many deaths amongst the Skitarii and cybernetic quarrymen that hewed their aqueous fortune from the glaciers. But it was in truth the Drukhari – pitiless Aeldari raiders that preyed on isolated groups and took them back to the twisted city of Commorragh – that were responsible for the most losses. At the heart of the Quarantine Cryofernus was a webway portal, elegant and slender in the fashion of Aeldari architecture. When

activated by one with the correct arcane knowledge, it opened a shimmering gateway that led to the labyrinth dimension, allowing raiders to cross vast gulfs of space to reach Vigilus undetected.

It was not only the Drukhari that knew of this portal's existence. The Thousand Sons, that Traitor Legion whose tragic fall from grace rendered them armoured spirits led by inhuman Sorcerers, had delved deep into the mysteries of the webway. Though they possessed only a fraction of the Aeldari's mastery, they had found a route to Vigilus, their progress guided by their strange god Tzeentch.

As Abaddon's invasion got underway, the Thousand Sons

Report 10134t6/betic9*9

KAELAC'S BANE

ARCTIC ANOMALY – CARNELIAN ALERT

<COORDINATES/DIMENSIONS

CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW>

Population: 4.1 million

Climate: Arctic

Governance: Industrial

(Adeptus Mechanicus)

Non-standard polar region climate, provenance inconclusive (cf. Kaelac Mining Consortium, Stygies VIII aqua reclamation). Quarantine Cryofernus declared and extant (Coordinates: 176W-198E-12S-98N). Evidence

of xenos infestation (Aeldari subcategory 3.2 betic) – mining operations to proceed within acceptable parameters where 95% or greater level of automation is viable. Enforced diaspora for all other site assets (Glacia Betus Macroquarry, Kaelac's Bane Geoscraying Installation, Heliostrike Impact Crater, Glacia Omicroid Macroquarry). First phase War of Nightmares evidence of continent expansion and severe temperature drop.

Evacuation figure projection estimates operation complete with only 68% total losses.



began to emerge from the webway portal by the hundred. The off-white tundra of the Dearthland Permafrost was compacted by the crump of power-armoured feet marching in unison, as the unfeeling automatons strode through the Ice Mantis Drifts, their inferno bolters ripping apart any indigenous predators foolish enough to approach. The Drukhari had long seen Kaelac's Bane as their rightful territory, and the webway gate was a vital means of bringing reinforcements to Vigilus that they were not prepared to sacrifice. As such, they engaged the Thousand Sons in a series of hit-and-run strikes. They rode the blizzards, screaming out of the white nothingness to slice and stab at the Rubricae and their sorcerous masters. Yet these battles did not go well for them, for what is crippling pain to one whose mortal remains are little more than dust sealed in a suit of armour?

Only when the Drukhari retreated to the Quixotine Loop did they

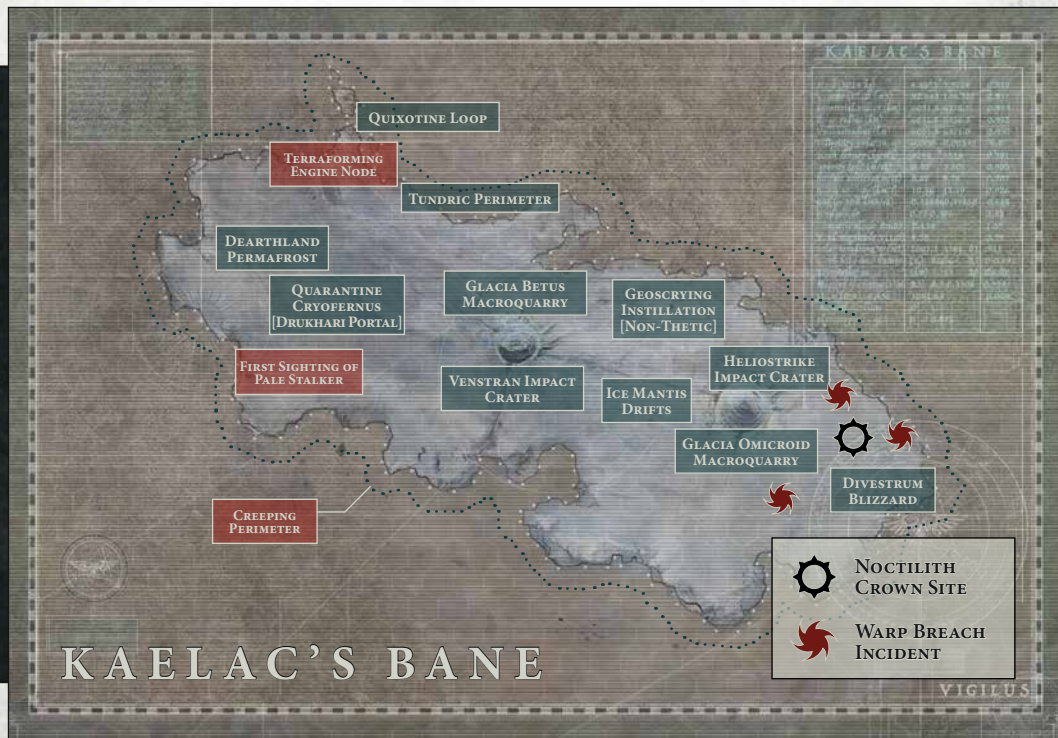
find the key to their nemeses' defeat. Those strange islands of ice, seemingly featureless yet guarded by an array of force fields and moats disproportionate to their military value, hid a strange secret. The Drukhari, able to bypass the protective barriers with a subsidiary webway portal, found a complex mechanism the size of a hab-block that their foremost mind, Archon Khaeva the Inscrutable, concluded was a primitive but effective terraforming node. Within a few hours, the Archon had revived the machine and turned it to its most extreme setting.

The Drukhari did not know it, but the ancient device had been the invention of Kaelac himself, the first explorer to attempt to mine the continent for water. It had been his demise, for its terraforming technology had proved all too effective, the pioneer freezing to death in the glacial wilderness.

For the Drukhari, however, it worked with startling efficacy. The

terraforming engines chugged and chuntered as they worked their way back to full capacity and, gradually at first, then with startling speed, the arctic wilderness of Kaelac's Bane began to grow colder still. Its borders expanded, fingers of ice forming across the wastelands in thin sheets.

In the heartlands of Kaelac's Bane, the temperature dropped so severely that the blizzards formed thick snowdrifts, then hard prisons of ice. This master stroke proved far more effective against the Thousand Sons than any number of toxins or artfully delivered sword cuts, for the silent phalanxes of Rubricae that had taken control of the icy continent found themselves slowing to a crawl, stopping altogether, then becoming completely inert – frozen in place and, in some cases, trapped in a swiftly forming glacier. The Sorcerers of the Thousand Sons were forced to abandon their retinues and, hunted by gleeful Drukhari raiding parties, flee back through the webway portal.





NEO-VELLUM

Vigilus' moon was given over to communications, from the physical despatching of message tubes to the sending and receiving of astropathic communiques. It was infested by Genestealer Cultists over the course of the War of Beasts, and later wrenched out of its orbit by the Vhulian Anomaly, causing utter havoc.

Neo-vellum was once an exemplary facility dedicated to the arts of the scriptorum and the quill-servitor. A world of gas storms and acid swamps dotted with armoured, hermetically sealed population centres, it formed the information hub for Vigilus. Its vantage point in the celestial vault gave it independence, and allowed the satellite a degree of omniscience over the activities on the planet below. Unfortunately, over the course of the War of Nightmares, the old saying 'Neo-vellum sees all' was to be proven decidedly false.

Neo-vellum's information engine, an immense thing of cogs, pneumatic tubes and orreries, could despatch a message tube to a given site on the planet below with a

relatively high degree of accuracy. Yet when the Great Rift opened the skies, its calculations went badly awry, and the psyker choir of Neo-vellum's massive torus-shaped Choralium was plagued with horrible episodes of insanity.

To make matters worse, during the War of Beasts, the Pauper Princes sent two Purestrain Genestealers to the Administratum moon. Hiding amongst the toiling masses, each brood established its own gene-sect, while the scribes of Neo-vellum, taking solace in their scrollwork, were blind to the corruption unfolding in their midst. A strike clade of Skitarii requisitioned by Inquisitor Garalas of the Ordo Xenos purged many of the life forms, but many more escaped.

The gradual doom the cultists represented was superseded when the gravitic anomaly opened by the Voidclaw pulled the planet from its orbit. The acid swamps boiled, the emerald gas storms intensified, and the bouts of madness grew more frequent as the world was drawn ever closer to the tiny singularity that was the Vhulian Anomaly. Even for the most cybernetically augmented of the planet's workers, the sense of impending doom could be felt deep in every gut. Dire whispers led to panic, and then – despite the heavy-handed oppression of the scriptorum masters – to open rioting, with the surviving Genestealer Cultists adding to the furore. The scriptorums of Neo-vellum were soon aflame.

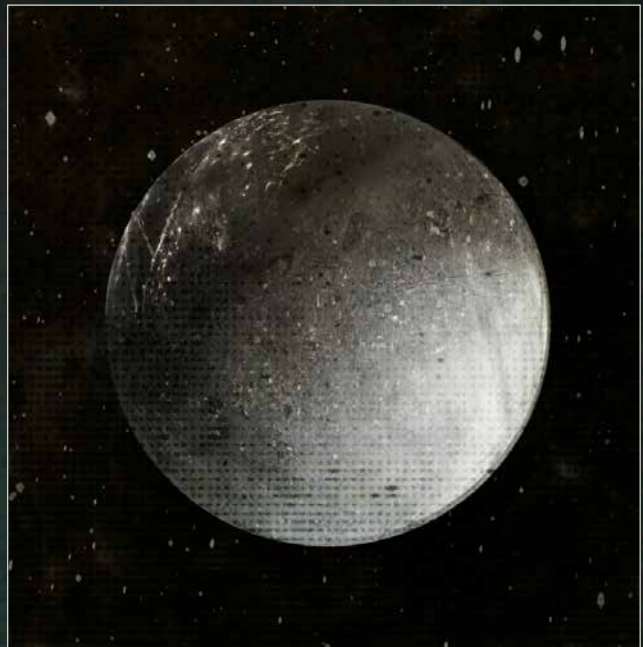
Report 943056/alphic0

NEO-VELLUM

ROGUE PLANETOID — VERMILION ALERT

Coordinates: High Orbit
Area: Lambda-class planetoid
Population: 17.2 billion
Climate: Toxicity level 23%
Governance: Administratum (cf. Adeptus Mechanicus presence escalating after Ordo Xenos purge.)

Administratum facility (platinum level) compromised by known xenos infestation. Subsequent purge incomplete. Orbital trajectory altered to spiral course converging on Vhulian Anomaly. Point of total destruction estimated as 40.333 post.







FORGES OF WAR



'I claimed this planet the moment I set eyes upon it. Vigilus is doomed, and the fools who toil in its defence are dead men.'

- *Abaddon the Despoiler,*
Warmaster of Chaos





FORCES OF CHAOS

The Chaos hosts that invaded Vigilus were disparate, and struck at every hivespawl and island in a different fashion. Each Traitor Legion and Renegade Chapter had its own agenda, its own enemies it yearned to destroy. The only unifying factor was the ruthless efficiency with which they went about their murderous work.

In theory, with the looming presence and grand strategy of the Warmaster to unite them, the forces of Chaos should have proved greater than the sum of their parts. But where the Imperial armies were tightly marshalled and guided by a council of respected war leaders, the twisted scions of the Dark Gods were largely left to their own devices.

Abaddon had greater designs than acting as a disciplinarian to keep his unruly seconds in line – that would have been such a Sisyphean task that even to attempt it would have precluded any personal ambition or long-term plan. Instead, the Warmaster used his forces as agents of disruption, anarchy and despair, allowing them to spread the fires of war as they wished.

Ultimately, Abaddon considered the front-line engagements, executions and intricacies of the Long War to be distractions. His works, and those of the Daemon Primarchs, had torn Imperial space in half. He fully intended to make good on the promise of damnation he had written across the skies of the galaxy – and to do so, he would need to bathe Vigilus in such intense madness that its defenders had to fight on all fronts, at all times. Only then could he pursue his greater agenda without fear of a coherent counter-attack.

A DIABOLICAL STRATEGY

The planet's inherent ability to repel Chaos had made its secrets irresistible to the Adeptus Mechanicus, just as it had made it a priority target for the forces of the Dark Gods, who sought to destroy it. It was a cruel truth that for all their painstaking analysis, the Tech-Priests of Stygies had less insight into the noctilith substance than the Chaos warlords under Abaddon the Despoiler. Perhaps if the lords of Megaborealis had better cooperated with the Priesthood of Mars – and Archmagos Dominus Cawl in particular – they may have made better use of the bounty they had mined so fastidiously.



HERETIC ASTARTES

The armies that flocked to Abaddon's banner were beyond counting. Many hailed from the Eye of Terror, and had fought alongside the Warmaster's elite forces for time immemorial. Others were allies of opportunity, marshalled from nearby Nemendghast or Hearthlack – or even summoned from the depths of the Great Rift with promises of glories to come. Ultimately, all that mattered to Abaddon was that the planet be set ablaze.

BLACK LEGION

The Bringers of Despair	1 warband (elite corps)
The Hounds of Abaddon	1 warband (elite corps)
Lord Kadros' Champions	5 warbands
Drakkoth's Destroyers	4 warbands
The Skull-eaters	4 warbands (Khorne)
The Bringers of Decay	1 warband (Nurgle)
The Crimson Hurrricane	2 warbands (heavy cavalry)
Thaskor's Chosen	2 warbands (Tzeentch)
Sons of the Cyclops	1 warband (Tzeentch)
Heralds of the Inevitable End	2 warbands (armoured)
The Sixth Rapture	2 warbands (Slaanesh)
The Ironspines	1 warband (heavy Obliterator presence)
The Oathed	3 warbands (Nurgle-tithe)
The Unworthy Inheritors	2 Chaos cults
The Warmaster's Blades	1 Chaos cult

DEATH GUARD

Apostles of Contagion	7 warbands (cf. schism)
Carriion Hounds	2 warbands
The Rotworm Brotherhood	7 warbands
Bringers of Putrid Salvation	3 warbands (opportunist)
Seventh-day Morbidians	4 warbands
Selminster's Curse	5 warbands
Dolorous Strain	1 kill team
Gellerpox Hordes	4 pox-mobs

WORLD EATERS

Dhorngar's Goredrinkers	3 warbands
Crushers of Bone	12 warbands
Pistonhand's Daemoniforge	1 warband

THOUSAND SONS

Xenash Capensis' Rubric Phalanx	2 warbands
The Fractal Blades	1 kill team
Masters of Magnus' Will	1 warband
The Scions of the Great Architect	1 warband

IRON WARRIORS

Anathrax Warhost	2 warbands
The Pitiless	3 warbands
The Hammers Relentless	2 warbands
Siege-masters Olympian	1 warband

ALPHA LEGION

Sons of Deception	2 warbands (infiltrators)
20th Alpharians	1 warband
The Armoured Serpents	1 warband (armoured)

WORD BEARERS

Holy Sons of Lorgar	3 warbands
The Runic Blazon	2 warbands
The Devout Horde	1 worshipper host

NIGHT LORDS

Blades of Savasdu	3 warbands
Bleak Claw	1 warband
Vreanus' Killers	1 warband

FLAWLESS HOST

Lashdrum Monarchs	2 warbands
Villsid Skinsmen	1 warband
The Luscious Few	1 warband

CRIMSON SLAUGHTER

Jackalan Echoes	3 warbands
Umidia's Call	1 doppelgänger warband
The Spectral Curse	1 warband (armoured)

THE PURGE

Nihilant Banes	2 warbands (cf. schism)
Eradicator Corps	2 warbands (cf. schism)

THE SCOURGED

Seers of Alltome	3 warbands
Gilded Manifestans	2 warbands
Excorias Elite	1 warband (sorcerer)

BRAZEN BEASTS

Daemonbind's Onslaught	13 Daemon Engine packs
The Triad of Gore	3 Lords of Skulls
Drakes of the Savage Roost	5 Heldrake fear squadrons
The Cerberite	1 Daemon-possessed battle barge

HERETICUS MILITARUM

The Machnorian VI 'Sighted'	1 regiment
The Vostokh 13th Heavy Infantry	1 regiment
The Pallisane 'Idolators'	3 regiments
Jenen Ironclads	4 regiments
Feresk Truthsayers	3 regiments
Antivigil Bloodcorps	2 regiments

TRAITOR LEGIO TITANICUS

Death's Heads	CLASSIFIED
Fire Masters	CLASSIFIED
Legio Vulcanum II	CLASSIFIED
Legio Decapitorem	CLASSIFIED

THE GRAND FLEET OF THE DESPOILER

The Vengeful Spirit	12 battleships
	19 heavy cruisers
	est. 34 cruiser squadrons
	est. 84 escort squadrons

++CONTINUED IN FILE IMP.VIG/CHV1/1-19

Participants in second and third stages of Vigilus conflict codified 'War of Nightmares' codified in auxiliary dataslate Imp.Vig/Ons3/11-128.



The blackstone taken from the planet's crust had been charged by some arcane force to have an anti-empyric resonance, a fact that the sorcerous cabals advising Abaddon had learned from afar using scrying rituals and daemonic bargains. As to how this worked, none amongst either camp knew. Fabricator Vosch of Megaborealis had theorised it was xenos hands that had fashioned the stuff into strange spear-like shapes and aligned it in the fluid-filled bubbles of the deep geological strata, for he had heard of no such phenomenon on any other world catalogued by his peers. Those who had examined those linear mineral deposits closely had found evidence of mechanical processes so advanced no human artisan could have replicated them. The blackstone was rife with channels and holes that wound with labyrinthine complexity, each so regular it was as if they had been machined by some technological marvel. The micro-servitors sent into the holes to examine the maze of passages did not come out again.

The Adeptus Mechanicus did not allow their lack of understanding to hinder their progress in sequestering the material – for that was not their way. When Abaddon learned from Haarken Worldclaimer that the Tech-Priests had gathered the material and stored it in their most well-defended silos, he laughed long and loud, for unwittingly they had done much of the work for him. The planet's bounty was no longer buried deep in its crust – the excavation of the blackstone, something that Abaddon had feared may have taken several decades and hundreds of thousands of slaves to achieve, had already been done for him.

The Despoiler had learned the value of blackstone long ago, in the distant past of his kingship – indeed, many of his Black Crusades had revolved around its destruction. Whenever Abaddon located

noctilith structures that had been charged to hold back the forces of Chaos, he spared no effort to shatter them, for in doing so he severely weakened the metaphysical barrier between realspace and the warp. He had achieved this feat on a string of worlds across the Imperium. The Eldritch Needles of Nemesis Tessaera, the Gates of the Kromarch's Citadel, the Black Obelisks of Monarchive – even the mysterious pylons of Cadia had been toppled when Abaddon had thrown every weapon at his disposal into the planet's destruction.



There was a pattern to these invasions. From a certain vantage point, they linked up to form a jagged diagonal line across the galaxy – the line that had split open and given rise to the Great Rift. The sentinel world of Vigilus lay on that same galactic fault line, and it was the priority of the forces of Chaos to destroy it. On Vigilus, Abaddon's plan was to obliterate the structures that protected the planet in order to expand the Great Rift, and to close one of the very few channels that allowed passage across its roiling mass.

Over the course of the Gothic War, the Warmaster's Sorcerers had found a way to turn blackstone from its natural state of neutral resonance – where it neither attracted nor repelled Chaos – to an alignment where it harnessed and stored the energies of the warp.

This technique required costly and dangerous rituals involving human sacrifice, percussive arrhythmical impacts and the inscription of dark runes upon the blackstone's surface. The cost in lives of these sorcerous processes was gladly paid by the Black Legion. Their ultimate agenda was to ensure the galaxy drowned in a rising tide of Chaos, and if the Nachmund Gauntlet were to be closed forever, the Imperium Nihilus would be brought a great deal closer to that dark fate.

With war raging across Vigilus, there was no time for Abaddon's Sorcerers to recover the deposits the Adeptus Mechanicus had unearthed – let alone perform the rituals that would turn them to the cause of Chaos – so he opted to destroy the precious resource instead, an act that would still devastate the Imperium. He ordered his shock troops – in the form of entire armies of Daemon Engines – to assault the blackstone silos in order to disable the force fields that protected them. Then, with that aegis down, his warships levelled an orbital bombardment to blast the blackstone into flinders of rock so small and so scattered they could no longer hold back the Great Rift with their metaphysical power.

Even as Vigilus was assailed, the other half of Abaddon's dual strike was unfolding in the reaches of the Imperium Sanctus. He believed that whatever ancient order had placed the blackstone spears within Vigilus' crust had deliberately created the Nachmund Gauntlet, and that similar – if not identical – deposits would be found in the earth of a twin planet on the other side of that channel. That planet was Sangua Terra. By taking war to these sites, and by destroying the blackstone spears that kept them sacrosanct, he would collapse the Nachmund Gauntlet entire. This was Abaddon's true intent – and upon Vigilus and Sangua Terra alike, every other slaughter, massacre and betrayal was merely a distraction.



DESCENT OF THE CERBERITE [MEGABOREALIS]



-  BRAZEN BEASTS ASSAULT
-  DESCENT OF THE CERBERITE
-  LORD OF SKULLS
-  HELDRAKE FEAR SQUADRON
-  SOULFORGED PACKS
-  ADEPTUS MECHANICUS DEFENDERS
-  BLITZ BRIGADE ASSAULT ROUTE
-  SPEEDBOSS KROOLDAKKA

The Cerberite entered the stratosphere and descended to loom over Silo XV in a great blaze of flame; had it not been essentially a vast Daemon Engine, it would likely have been destroyed. As it was, the massive spacecraft acted as a flying fortress, its jointed drawbridges unfurling to allow bio-mechanical monsters to sally forth and assail the Adeptus Mechanicus troops below. Were it not for the arrival of Speedboss Krooldakka to the fray, the Brazen Beasts would have achieved their goal swiftly – in the end, the destruction of Silo XV and its precious hoard of noctilith came from above.



FORCES OF THE BLACK LEGION

The Black Legionnaires fought as a series of warbands, each centred around a charismatic leader figure. In turn, these dark champions formed a greater host that answered to Abaddon himself. Their attacks were so swift and vicious that few outside the Vigilus Senate had time to consider the strategy uniting them.

Long millennia as the master of the Black Crusades had taught Abaddon that the legions of Chaos were not fine instruments to be wielded as a surgeon wields the knife. Not even the Black Legion, his own brethren, whom he had brought back from the brink of disaster and slowly built

into a force that could threaten the galaxy entire, could fully be trusted to obey his will when their thirst for carnage took hold. These forces were wrecking balls, sledgehammers, and jagged blades aimed at the throat. But what they lacked in subtlety, they more than made up for in the destruction they

brought down upon their foes. As such, where the actions of his forces led to resources being wasted or misused, or schisms between allies developing, the Warmaster reacted with little more than a curled lip. Only the direst infractions did he punish, and even then through an intermediary.



The Black Legion wear a stylised Eye of Horus surrounded by the eight-pointed star of Chaos.



The Eye of Horus is a symbol so aligned with Chaos it sometimes takes on a gruesome life of its own.



The onyx armour of the Black Legion sends a stark message – framed in gold, it speaks of a dark majesty that has kept the Imperium on the verge of utter dissolution since the first Warmaster's heresy.

BLEAK EXECUTIONERS

Those that worked against Abaddon or deliberately flouted his rule were visited by his enforcers. These came in the form of the Bringers of Despair, his veteran Terminator bodyguard, and Ghordar Bann, a Master of Executions who had risen high in the Warmaster's favour on the killing fields of the tundra planet Truska. When Abaddon commanded that one of his lesser warlords be killed, it was often the axe of Ghordar Bann that took the head; the snowdrifts of Asavensus had been stained with the lifeblood of three such champions marked for death. The tally he claimed amongst the officer cadres of the Truskan Snowhounds was five times that number, his axe parting heads from necks with expert precision.

Each of the headsman's attacks on Vigilus was brief and terrifying. Teleporting from the sorcerous octagrams aboard the *Vengeful*

Spirit, Ghordar and a band of the Bringers of Despair would arrive in a flash of dark light before their mark. The Terminators would instantly blast away the guardians of the intended victim with combibolter and reaper autocannon, while Ghordar strode forward, axe raised. There was no escaping such a fate once it had been set. Ghordar Bann had ripped out his own eye in a lengthy and painful Chaos ritual, exchanging it in a daemonic bargain for limited warp-sight. By covering his remaining eye, he could see his intended quarry across time and space as a flicker of red light – and he could hunt the offender out no matter how well concealed they thought themselves to be. When Bann's inescapable axe descended, a head would roll, and Abaddon's reign of fear would be strengthened all the more.

Bann was sent against many Imperial captains and commanders over the course of the War of

Nightmares, though Marneus Calgar was not one of them. Calgar was a formidable opponent, and Abaddon did not intend to throw away the life of his promising champion on such an errand. More than that, he intended to claim the head of the Lord Macragge himself, and finally settle their ancient rivalry. That resolution was to lead to a climactic duel, and ultimately, decide the fate of the planet.



THE ARCH-LORD DISCORDANT

There were hundreds of war leaders in the Warmaster's inner circles, each with his own priorities and ambitions. Amongst them there was one who, above all others, sought to disrupt, divide and destroy all semblance of ordered thought. He was the Arch-Lord Discordant known in the Black Legion as Vex Machinator. It was his particular ability to bring Chaos to the foe that made him the heir to Abaddon's throne.

None knew the true name of Vex Machinator; much like a Daemon, he kept it secret so that none could have true power over him. Instead he was named for his practices. To everyone he encountered he brought strife, regardless of their allegiance – even to approach him was to feel vexation, confusion and dismay. He was like a living embodiment of Chaos, feeding on the bitter division he sowed amongst friends and foes alike, and in his

machinations he was as much a parasite as the giant scuttling Helstalker he rode to war. Nothing was immune to his corrupting aura; even machine spirits turned rogue in his presence, shrieking in scrapcode as their host engines and cogitators spat cascades of blood-red sparks. Aside from Abaddon himself, it was difficult to find an agent of Chaos that was more roundly hated.

As the Arch-Lord Discordant rode to war, hard-won alliances collapsed around him in suspicion and paranoia. Orders went unheard or unheeded, and tightly bound battle plans unravelled into discord. The warriors of Chaos were vicious and self-centred enough to fight on as individuals; indeed, for the World Eaters he fought alongside at Luthvren Isle, that was already their way of life. But those who thrived on discipline quickly came unstuck. When Vex Machinator led a charge of Juggernaut-riding Bloodletters and hulking Daemon

Engines at the Tzimitria Breach, the Cadians that stood against them could not focus their fire as they had been trained, and in their desperation fired at will. They wounded dozens of the foe, but spread their fire too thinly, and failed to put any of them down. They paid for that mistake with their lives, trampled into the arid wastes by brass-shod hooves.

Behind the battle lines, Machinator's Chaotic aura unbound those who would unite against Abaddon. A conspiracy to dethrone the Warmaster, painstakingly drawn up by the treasonous Daemon Prince Shamha Ygra-Thrysh, ended with the war leaders turning against one another shortly after Vex Machinator joined their ranks as a double agent. Not one of the conspirators survived the ensuing arguments. The Arch-Lord Discordant rode out of the fray alone, covered in gore, and even higher in the Warmaster's favour.

Hereticus Extremis Profile 1.A

ABADDON THE DESPOILER

Warmaster-class Nemesis (Segmentum Obscurus, Segmentum Solar, Ultima Segmentum)

Heretic Astartes Grade Alpha-Alpha-Onus

cf. Ezekyle Abaddon <record incomplete>, First Captain Luna Wolves (XVI Legion, First Founding), Sons of Horus (Heresy Designatus), Black Legion. Discrepancy Alert 53% causal — see Genetor Majoris Anzion's Disparate Individual Hypothesis, Biomagus Suprema Tharazenth's Cloneson Treatise, Torquemada's Median Tracts.

nb. — Archival request 92% likelihood of fatal overload to non-Terragrade system due to density of war record assimilation

cf. Planet Killer (Armageddon Gun)

cf. Bringers of Despair (elite traitoris)

cf. Fortress of Spite (Rebo System)

Opus Record Archives include key terms:

Warmaster, Arch-Heretic, Dark Pilgrimage, Lord Ravager, Lord Deceiver, Lord Corruptor, Lord Purgator, Mournival, Flayerplague

Opus Record Archives include key locales:

Maeleum, Tower of Silence, Floating Cities of Melphia, Uralan, Cadia, Cadian Gate, Nemesis Tessera, Belis Corona, Gerstahl, St. Josmane's Hope, El'Phanor, Elysia, Tarinth, Jyrro, Mackan, Teekus, Rithcarn, Cancephalus, Antecanis, Monarchive, Helica Sector, Thracian Primaris, Medusa, Relorria, Arx, Mordian, Hydraphur, Parenxes, Pandorax, Lukitar

<RECORDS INCOMPLETE>

Thought for the Day: Damnation to All Who Turn from the Emperor's Light.

THE CULTS OF DESTRUCTION

During the war for Vigilus, the Belis Corona Warbeasts were set upon the fortress networks of Hyperia. Giant, lumbering cyborgs each possessed of a driving obsession for a particular form of killing, these grotesque warriors were famously unruly, but they had learned to fear Abaddon's displeasure. The hulking Mutilator known as the King of Swords had once defied Abaddon — until he had been cut in two with a single blow from Drach'nyen. Since then the Warbeasts had recognised the master of the Black Legion as their rightful leader.

The Cults of Destruction took great pleasure in profaning the holy ground of Hyperia with their presence. So redolent with Chaos were these creatures that their footsteps left steaming, discoloured marks on the sacred stones. When the Obliterators at the fore opened fire with their profusion of cannons and heavy weapons, even the statue-braced bulwarks that guarded the Ring of Nothingness were torn down, the garrisons on their ramparts tumbling with them. Counter-attacks launched by the Adepta Sororitas kept the Obliterators pinned, and where their Exorcist missile tanks were brought to bear, even felled them. But each time the Sisters of Battle closed within range to bring their holy trinity of bolter, melta and flamer to bear, the Mutilators that thudded alongside their gun-cyborg brethren would break into a lumbering run to hit the Imperial lines with battering-ram force. Again and again the Sisters gave ground, for to match that living wall of blades was to go to a premature grave. It was only when the Cult of Destruction was goaded out onto Phanatos Bridge that the Adepta Sororitas were able to deal a lasting blow, collapsing the causeway with carefully placed munitions and sending a dozen of the fleshmetal monstrosities tumbling into the darkness below.

-  TANKA'S BAD GARGANTS
-  DA TEEFSPITTA NOBZ (GORKANAUTS & MORKANAUTS)
-  KILLBOSS WREKKFIST'S STOMPA MOB
-  OGROKK BITESPIDER'S SNAKEBITE STAMPEDE
-  RICHGIT DRUKK'R'S MEK CREWS
-  BIG RIGG'S TANKA CRAWLAZ
-  KROOLDAKKA'S DA OIL GUZZLAS
-  DEATH'S HEADS TITAN LEGION
-  FIRE MASTERS TITAN LEGION
-  LEGIO VULCANUM II

The Chaos Titan Legions that were brought to Vigilus in order to shatter Imperial control once and for all found themselves embroiled in a vast engine war with the Stompas, Gargants and other war effigies of the Western Scrap City Cluster. Both sides took heavy losses.



BATTLE OF THE GIANTS

The scrap cities of the Orks were at first all but ignored by the Black Legion's invasion. Only when the Speedlord Supreme, Krooldakka, took the fight to the Brazen Beasts in Megaborealis did Abaddon divert resources to make a punitive strike. He knew in his black heart that the Orks were simply too bellicose a threat to be ignored, and that they respected only brute strength. Luckily, that was something the Black Legion and their allies possessed in great measure.

The Chaos forces that had invaded Vigilus boasted not only Heretic Astartes, but also the Titan Legions of Imperial legend. The hivespraws of Oteck, Dontoria and Megaborealis had proven so riddled with tunnels, mines and underhives that a god-machine could easily collapse an entire section of road with its weight, so they did not stray far into the cities. Instead, the Titan

Legions bombarded the sites from afar with their long-range cannons.

After Krooldakka's attack, these metal giants turned from their assigned sprawls and marched out into the wastes to do battle with the greenskin horde's Stompas, Gorkanauts, Morkanauts and Gargants. At Tanka Spill, Drogzot's Crater and Fort Dakka a war of metal monstrosities broke out, the battle raging amongst the looted hulks of the Freeblade Imperial Knights that had made their ill-fated assault during the War of Beasts. This time the Orks were outmatched, for the skill, savagery and raw firepower of the Chaos Titans that faced them saw three greenskin war effigies torn apart for every god-machine they brought down. Even at close range the Chaos Titans excelled, ripping the Ork machines asunder with coiling tentacles and long-taloned claws that punched, thrust and gouged at the heads of their adversaries.

The battle dragged on for days, for what the Orks lacked in quality they made up for in quantity and aggression alike.



The clash was immensely costly for both sides, but prevented the Orks from gaining the momentum they needed to launch a full Waaagh!. In this it allowed the main body of the Black Legion invaders to concentrate on tearing apart the Imperium's armies.



FORCES OF THE ALPHA LEGION

The Alpha Legion warbands on Vigilus were provided with an open mandate by Abaddon: wreak whatever havoc they pleased, provided it destabilised the Imperial military infrastructure. This was a war that perfectly suited the clandestine compulsions of this most devious and divisive of Traitor Legions.

To date, Imperial historians have been unable to accurately assess the number of Alpha Legionnaires that operated on Vigilus. There is no way of determining the true damage they caused, for many records pertaining to the heretics' operations were mysteriously corrupted or erased.

Others were actively booby-trapped, data-gheists savaging the autosavants tasked with these records' recovery. It has been surmised, however, that the Alpha Legion was behind a string of uprisings by cells of Chaos Cultists throughout Hyperia. Elements of the Cadian 92nd and

the 187th 'Fanebreakers' suffered heavy casualties during a guerrilla offensive by fanatical heretic elements. Fragmentary reports persist of half-seen giants in blue-green power armour who supported the cultist onslaught, but not a single loyalist eyewitness survived to corroborate these tales.



The many-headed hydra of the Alpha Legion represents their fluid and duplicitous way of war.



The omnibetical symbols for 'alpha' and 'omega' are intertwined in some Alpha Legion iconography.



The symbol of the hydra speaks of a force that can never be defeated by traditional means.



The sea-green of the Alpha Legion is sometimes adorned with hydra designs and scale patterns. A common tactic is to mark out new recruits as if they were squad leaders, duping the enemy's snipers in the heat of battle.

CATASTROPHE AT HUB K-876

The Trinity Hives that towered over Hyperia Hivesprawl were crucial distribution centres for the aqua sanctus that sustained its populace. Efforts by elements within the Adeptus Ministorum had seen that precious resource continue to flow down to workers labouring in Hyperia's munitions manufacturums. Aqua sanctus was the divine fuel powering the workforce, who in turn fed the holy armaments of the Imperial defenders; such was the rationale of the charitable mission known as the Benevolent Hand. This collection of Ministorum Priests, frateris militia and Battle Sisters from the Order of Our Martyred Lady worked tirelessly – often in perilous conditions and with no official logistical support – to supply those who would otherwise have been ignored by self-interested Munitorum clerks.

It is unclear whether the Benevolent Hand were infiltrated by Alpha Legion operatives,

or were simply fed misinformation to propel them into damnation. A sudden shift in activities indicates the point at which Ministorum volunteers grew suspicious of the source of the aqua sanctus coming into Hivespire Magentine. It can be inferred from recovered fragments of communiqués that the Benevolent Hand became convinced that, as a result of heretic sabotage, the water they were distributing bore a corrupting taint. After their warnings to the Munitorum fell upon deaf ears, the Benevolent Hand acted directly. They distributed weapons amongst their flock, attempting to halt and forcibly inspect a large shipment of water coming through Hub K-876 from outside Hyperia. Instead of heretical saboteurs, however, the Benevolent Hand found themselves faced by several platoons of Cadian 92nd heavy infantry who – thanks to a now untraceable tip-off – were expecting malicious interference from

disguised heretical elements attempting to corrupt the water supply. Post-action analysis shows that the first shot, which turned a tense stand-off into a slaughter, was fired not by a representative of either Imperial faction, but by a concealed third party with a bolt-calibre sniper weapon concealed in the gantries above Hub K-876. This sparked a brutal firefight that saw the Benevolent Hand annihilated, the Cadian platoons savaged and the entire aqua sanctus shipment ruined. At a stroke, the water supply to the Magentine munitions workers was cut off, triggering an estimated twenty-four per cent drop in material output over the following weeks. Furthermore, it cannot be a coincidence that those same Cadian platoons, weakened by the Catastrophe at Hub K-876, proved unable to hold back a string of raids upon Hivespire Magentine by unidentified Heretic Astartes kill teams in the days that followed.





FORCES OF THE NIGHT LORDS

Masters of psychological warfare, the Night Lords had done a great deal to destabilise the planet in the third phase of the War of Beasts. When they indulged in open battle, however, they found themselves matched against a foe like no other – and brought to the brink of disgrace.

The Night Lords upon Vigilus were few, for the greater portion of their Legion was involved in an escalating war with the Asuryani, but they made a heavy impact nonetheless. The heretics initially invaded Dirkden Hivespawl, hoping for easy prey, but soon found xenos in the shadows.

The Night Lords had taken that tumbled, crime-ridden sprawl as a perfect environment for their particular brand of warfare, and perhaps even a recruiting ground for new blood, for the Sons of Curze had long filled their ranks with hardened criminals. Their Raptor hosts gleefully hung the

corpses of their prey from the half-finished spires of Ashenid Non-Hive as their strike forces prowled the lower levels. They took note of those gangs and criminal overlords that put up a good fight and spared those that showed the most promise. The enterprise was profitable at first, as well as being



The winged skull symbol of the Night Lords has struck fear into the Imperium's worlds for millennia.



In some warbands, a winged skull on a field of crimson denotes a Night Lords war visionary.



The laughing skull device is often worn by Night Lords who specialise in stealth attacks.



The battle plate of the Night Lords is adorned with grotesque imagery intended to strike fear into the foe. Some members of this Legion even have tendrils of wild energy crackling across their power armour.

gratifying in terms of raw violence and terror – the Night Lords captured many slaves and selected no few criminal prodigies to bolster their own ranks.

Then the indigenous Genestealer Cult that had lurked beneath Dirkden's surface for generations rose up against the Night Lords invaders. Though the cultists had expended a vast proportion of their strength overtaking the hivespawl continent, they infested every stratum of Dirkdenite society, and had multiplied exponentially in the darkness. No matter how many the Heretic Astartes killed there seemed always to be more. They proved far better armed and more tenacious than the Imperial troops that the Night Lords had encountered in the skeletal convoys fleeing the hivespawl, and they carried heavy industrial weaponry and exhibited strange xenomutations as lethal as any chainsword.



For a time, the Night Lords slew every breed of hybrid that dared challenge them, but even they were not indefatigable. Eventually, the hunters found that they had become the hunted. Purestrain Genestealers burst out from smuggling cavities within false walls, Goliath Rockgrinders drove recklessly into the flanks of Rhino transport convoys, and street-level Brood Brother weapons teams took pot shots at the Raptors haunting the unfinished spires.

Each strike ended in a vicious melee as the Heretic Astartes fought back-to-back to slay their assailants with chainswords and lightning-wreathed claws, but whenever the cultists were outmatched they melted away into the shadows as if at some unseen signal. Ultimately, the Night Lords were forced to concede the continent, making off with what gains they could secure.

The heretics chose their targets with greater care on the eastern borders of Hyperia, waging a hit-and-run war against a foe they knew how to fight from long experience – the Adeptus Astartes. Engaging the Dark Angels of the 4th Company, they launched a series of smaller skirmishes, but did so with a far greater degree of fury – for their pride had been besmirched by the events in Dirkden, and their bitter ire mingled with aeons-old hatred.

This was a war for survival, for, after their failure in Dirkden, the Night Lords could not report back to Abaddon without news of victory in the wider war. The losses they had sustained in Dirkden were almost untenable, the raw recruits they had picked out from the populace were a long way from becoming true Space Marines, and the spoils of war had been few and far between. So the Night Lords fought with cunning and stealth instead of the dark predatory glee with which they had begun their campaign. Their kill teams struck hard from the blackest alleyways wherever the Dark Angels gathered, taking down one or two warriors before staging a fighting retreat and repeating the tactic elsewhere.

It was an effective mode of warfare, and it won the Night Lords a string of minor, but significant, victories. Only when the airborne elements of the Ravenwing tracked down and killed Varrus Hekatos, the Chaos Lord coordinating the ambushing strikes, did the Dark Angels manage to fight the Night Lords on their own terms.

SURVIVAL OF THE CRUELLEST

It was towards the end of the War of Nightmares that Praxis Empyrealus rose to power amongst the ranks of the Night Lords. The skull-masked Master of Possession had been Varrus Hekatos' advisor for years, but the two generally exhibited a cold and seething hatred for one another. Though few amongst the Night Lords knew it, it was Praxis who had set the fires in the formerly quiet Venderan Maze – Hekatos' base of operations. The leaping flames alerted the Ravenwing to the commander's presence and, after a costly skirmish where Land Speeders duelled with jump pack-equipped Night Lords in the tightly packed streets, both Hekatos and the Ravenwing Lieutenant Pinyus lay dead.

Praxis Empyrealus wasted no time. Summoning a flock of iridescent sky rays and several packs of warpfire-hurling Flamers, he corralled the Land Speeders of the Ravenwing by setting the skies afire. Then, taking an impossible risk by physically touching the Noctilith Crown he had raised at the heart of the Maze, Praxis Empyrealus blasted the agile craft from the sky with a storm of livid purple lightning. When elements from the 3rd and 4th Companies of the Dark Angels closed in, they were met by overlapping fields of bolter fire – the Night Lords had learned every nook and crevice of their lair well. Five Dark Angels died for every Night Lord that fell that day, a ratio that pleased Abaddon enough to overlook the disastrous attack upon Dirkden. The Night Lords withdrew from the front lines after that victory – though they maintained a presence throughout the rest of the war.



FORCES OF THE WORD BEARERS

Upon making planetfall, the Word Bearers applied every bit of their dark cunning and single-minded commitment to the execution of the Warmaster's grand plan. While the Black Legion were destroying the material keeping the Great Rift at bay, the Word Bearers were raising structures to attract it.

Abaddon tasked the Word Bearers with a vital part of his strategy – to seed the planet with the ring-like structures known as Noctilith Crowns. The Despoiler's grudging respect for the Word Bearers, and their commitment to the downfall of the Imperium, was made clear when he took the leaders of

that Legion into his confidence. Amongst them were the nine Chaos Lords and Dark Apostles known as the Coven Triplicatus. On his rune-circled artificer decks, Abaddon showed them dozens of Noctilith Crowns, and explained the reasons behind their creation. It was a plan of such impressive ambition and

devotion that the Coven Triplicatus knelt before him, offering their maces and accursed croziuses to him as knights would offer their swords to their liege.

It was no easy feat to raise the Noctilith Crowns; even to touch the great toroidal constructions was



The burning, infernal head is the symbol of the Word Bearers. Many variations were seen upon Vigilus.



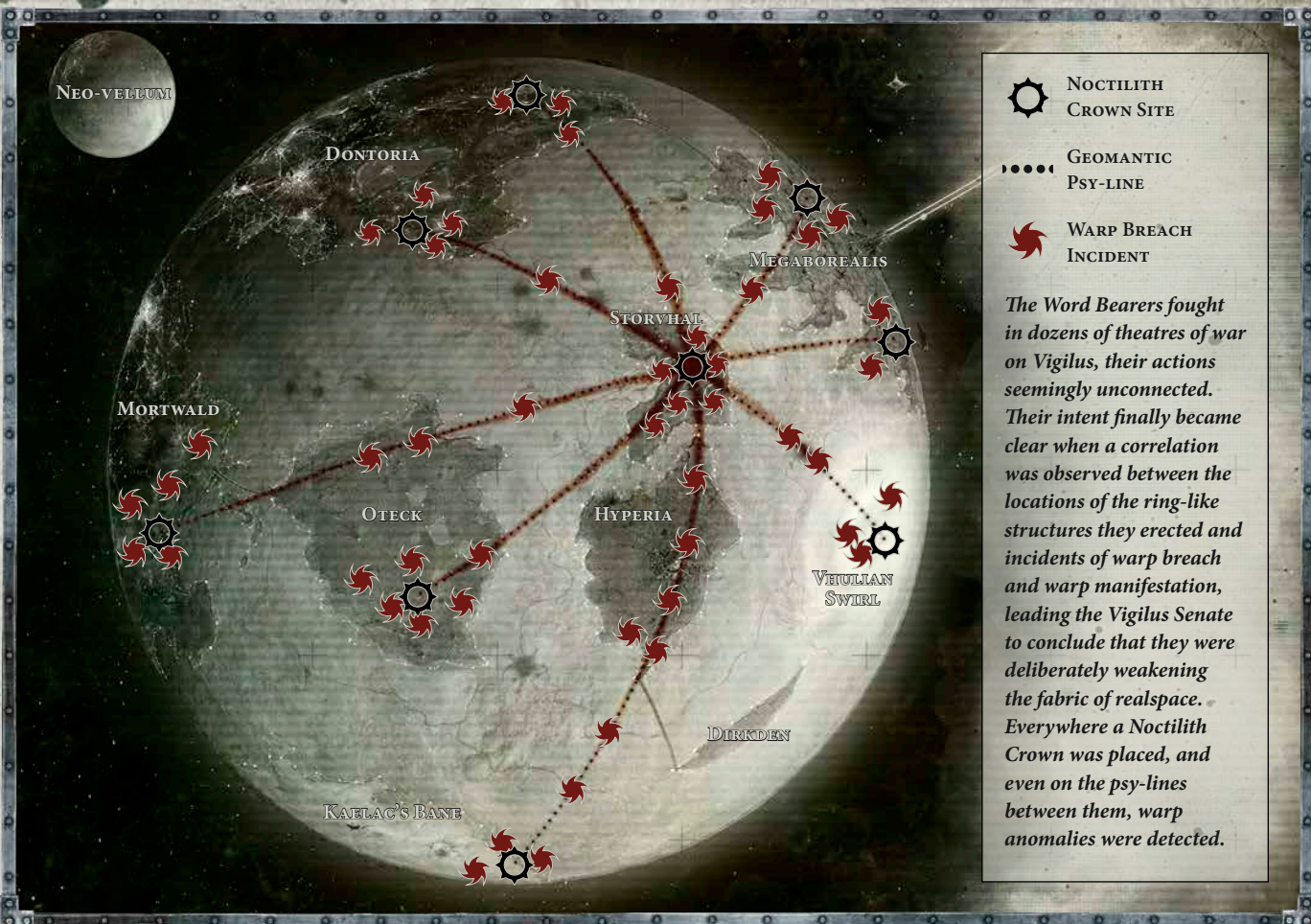
The Bringers of Enlightenment, a warband under Deshamentus, raised many Noctilith Crowns.



The tomes depicted on the armour of the Word Bearers are symbolic of their blasphemous knowledge.



The deep crimson of the Word Bearers' armour is bracketed with frameworks of burnished gunmetal. Sometimes their armour is adorned in Colchisian script, each string of dark runes an excerpt from the unholy Book of Lorgar.



The Word Bearers fought in dozens of theatres of war on Vigilus, their actions seemingly unconnected. Their intent finally became clear when a correlation was observed between the locations of the ring-like structures they erected and incidents of warp breach and warp manifestation, leading the Vigilus Senate to conclude that they were deliberately weakening the fabric of realspace. Everywhere a Noctilith Crown was placed, and even on the psy-lines between them, warp anomalies were detected.

to risk death by psychic overload. But like their Primarch Lorgar before them, the war leaders of the Word Bearers are consummate demagogues, dark preachers and charismatic leaders, and they have never been short of cultist devotees ready to give their lives to a cause. By raising slave gangs, each several hundred strong, the Word Bearers hauled the Chaos-attracting structures into place and had them hammered into the planet's crust. Thousands perished, but it was a sacrifice the Word Bearers made without a second thought. Those slaves whose latent supernatural ability blossomed into full psychic manifestation were dragged away and psycho-conditioned by the Legion's Sorcerers and Masters of Possession. The most stable of these vassal psykers were given prominent Imperial targets that they were to get close to before the implanted conditioning of their masters spurred their tortured minds into a devastating psychic overload.

Others were chained together and put under great duress until their communal agony caused them to rip themselves apart with wild psychic energy, and in doing so, form a gate through which the daemonic allies of the Word Bearers could enter realspace. Wherever such a site came to be, another Noctilith Crown was raised, attracting yet more Daemons to the planet's surface. It was a shockingly effective tactic, and with the Word Bearers fighting as a well-coordinated strike force in each site's defence, it provided a major source of reinforcements for Abaddon's war effort.

Only three of the numerous Noctilith Crowns that Abaddon had entrusted to the Word Bearers remained on the *Vengeful Spirit's* artificer decks at the time of its emergency translation into the empyrean. Had they too been raised, it is quite possible the entire planet would have been swallowed by the warp.

'Let that pompous fool Abaddon think we do his bidding. It matters not. For all his vision, for all his might, he is still but a mortal, and one who has refused the ultimate blessing of the Ruinous Powers. No indeed, anointed ones – here we do the work of the Dark Gods, bringing devastation unto the universe that all might see the glory of the Primordial Truth. When the long night descends upon this planet, all will know the true glory of Chaos.'

- Epistle of the Fated Speaker Deshamentus, Bringer of Enlightenment and Butcher of the Ellerophosus Hivebelt

FORCES OF THE IRON WARRIORS

The Iron Warriors wage war with a cold and bitter hatred. On Vigilus, each callous strike was well planned and driven home with the expertise of a master artisan. They broke apart the most heavily defended of the planet's integral sites at Mortwald, allowing the wider forces of Chaos to flood inside.

The Warsmith Kharrack began his campaign upon Vigilus by remotely scrying the fortifications of the Imperial defences. He and his fellow Warsmiths took extensive images from low orbit and amassed data through the use of corrupted servo-skulls released onto the planet below. By the time

Haarken Worldclaimer's challenge rang out, the Iron Warriors were well prepared; thousands of pict-captures had already been relayed back to the bridge of their flagship, the *Portcullis*. However, upon sighting the vibrant heraldic yellow of their long-term enemies – the Imperial Fists – the Iron Warriors

altered their intended campaign. Though their invasion was designed to assail multiple fronts, the better to crack the defences of the planet wide open, it soon turned into a singular assault upon the defences of Mortwald's eastern edge. The stage was set for a clash that would see no quarter asked nor given.



The armoured skull symbol of the Iron Warriors is often a harbinger of a mechanised assault.



The black skull, worn over a field of gunmetal, can denote a specialist close-combat slaughter-team.



The white skull often denotes the masters of heavy firepower.



But for industrial markings that speak of danger, the gunmetal armour of the Iron Warriors is largely unadorned. This is a sign of the pragmatic and efficient style of warfare practiced by the Sons of Perturabo.

THE SHATTERING OF THE SHIELDS

Though the Warmaster of Chaos charged the Iron Warriors with the destruction of Vigilus' defence networks, they greeted the order with indifference, even scorn. The prosecution of sieges was their art, and they would practice it no matter the greater plan. Their first act was to attack an unremarkable fringe of each hivespawl, aiming for those areas that were too poor or strategically insignificant to be well defended. Their Warpsmiths then polluted the Bastion force field networks that ran around them with a potent machine plague. Were it not for the semi-psyhic nature of the Bastion fields, the plague would have struggled against the inbuilt fail-safes installed by the Adeptus Mechanicus, but there was a hostile sentience to the scrapcode entity that was introduced. With the force fields already glitching and damaged due to the coming of the Great Rift, the machine plague thrived – indeed, it multiplied – by feasting on the empyric

component of each node. By leaping through psycho-electric fields from one generator to another, it spread with horrible rapidity. By the second stage of the War of Nightmares, a full two-thirds of the force field generators were functionally useless.

The Imperial defenders were disastrously unprepared for this new development. On the outskirts of Mortwald, those armies that had left the trenches, relying on the Bastion networks to guard their flanks, found out the hard way that the shield generators had been compromised. Lord Deinos' suspicions as to their efficacy had been confirmed, yet even his traditional defences were found wanting. The Iron Warriors, using their preferred vector of mechanised assault, drove home a series of attacks that blitzed through the trench networks with humbling ease. Scores of Iron Warriors kill teams had been despatched to Megaborealis early in the war, their aim to secure the

mighty Tectonic Fragdrills there. These were brought to the trenches whenever a bunker network proved unbreachable, and used to create localised earthquakes that cracked fissures through shell-strewn ground and fortification alike. Into every split in the Imperial defence, the Iron Warriors pushed home another wedge attack that widened hairline breaches into yawning gaps. A fierce, grinding war began between the Space Marines of Dorn's heritage and the traitors of Perturabo's ancient order – in sheer violence, savagery and obstinate refusal to yield, it was reminiscent of the legendary Iron Cage. Ultimately, Captain Fane's loyalist forces, having been battered by the Orks of the Western Scrap City Cluster and then attacked head-on by their most hated nemeses, had not the manpower to hold the line. The Imperial Fists were forced to withdraw to Hyperia, conceding Mortwald to the Iron Warriors and the Flawless Host.





RENEGADE FORCES

The Heretic Astartes upon Vigilus numbered in the tens of thousands. Given the fact they were the equal of the Space Marines they once called brothers, that was more than enough to conquer a planet. Much of that number was made up of renegades, each turncoat Chapter a vicious bane in its own right.

The Space Marines that fell to Chaos after the tumultuous time of the Horus Heresy are amongst the most cunning of the Heretic Astartes, and in the business of war each is worth a hundred mortal men. Some are veterans of the unending battle against the False Emperor and his works, heretics that have spent long and blood-soaked centuries tearing down the empire they once strove to protect. Others are more recent converts to the causes of the Dark Gods, their hatred of the Imperium burning bright as they rejoice in the breaking of the bonds that once trammelled every aspect of their existence.

These Renegade Chapters were considered a powerful asset in the warhosts of the Black Crusades, and to the people of Vigilus – and its Astra Militarum defenders – they were feared just as much as their traitor predecessors.

Each Renegade Chapter brought with it its own unique strategic specialities, Chaotic boons and potent materiel – and to underestimate them was to invite a painful death.

Twelve Renegade Chapters fought as part of the Vigilus invasion, each sworn to Abaddon's cause. Whether through notions of fealty,

common cause, or opportunism, each of them took the fight to the hivesprawns with abandon. For the most part, they did so with lightning raids and swift strikes, the doctrines they had practised as loyalist Chapters. Now they brought the very skills imparted to them by the Imperium to bear against their former comrades.



The Red Corsairs are expert raiders. Operating out of the Maelstrom, these piratical killers were the bane of Imperial shipping routes.



The Scourged were cursed by Tzeentch to hear the falsehoods of all Mankind – a trait that leads to madness as often as it does a strange kind of insight.



THE FLAWLESS HOST

The Flawless Host saw the self-important nobility of Mortwald much as a snake sees a warren of mice. They descended from their magnificent starships to parade amongst the preening aristocrats of that false continent, at first arriving with all the pomp of some neighbouring monarchy sent to dispense largesse. As soon as the first shot was fired upon them, they turned into furies, screeching their hatred as they slaughtered household guards and elite *Militarum Tempestus* escorts by the hundred. When the Iron Warriors finally drove their Imperial Fists nemeses from the trench lines and took control of the hives, they found only corpses in the richest zones. At the heart of each such region they encountered the Flawless Host, availing themselves of Mortwald's finest rejuvenat clinics in an attempt to regain what they saw as the pinnacle of human beauty.

THE BRAZEN BEASTS

The Daemonkin hosts of the Brazen Beasts were instrumental in the destruction of Megaborealis' silo districts. After the refractor field that protected Silo XV had been brought down, Abaddon's punitive bombardment slew the majority of the Brazen Beasts within a three-mile radius. Only those with Daemon taint in their blood rode out the firestorm, the Chaos-touched renegades howling praise to the Blood God as the ash of mortals billowed past them. Khorne cares not from whence the blood flows, and he was pleased with the callous slaughter. The Warmaster subsequently sent a vast horde of Bloodletters to reinforce the Brazen Beasts, who then went on to conquer a significant portion of Megaborealis. The Herald Skulltaker led them, along with a slew of Daemon Engines, in a hunt for the heads of the hivesprawl's Tech-Priests.

THE PURGE

The Purge, devotees of Nurgle in his destroyer aspect, afflicted Dontoria Hivesprawl. They despised life in all its forms, and there the planet's overpopulation was by far the most pronounced. It was an obvious target for their morbid obsession with death and destruction – though in time, the Purge intended to spread their conquests across the planet entire.

In their relentless and efficient killing sprees, the Purge used every weapon and trick they could conceive of – fast-spreading epidemics, airborne poisons, wholesale demolition, and even arson. Provided the populace was slaughtered – and along with them, every other creature, from their grox breeding stock to the bloodlice that infested their bunks – the Purge considered their duty fulfilled. To them, every form of life was hopelessly corrupt.



The warriors of the Purge once swore to defeat Chaos no matter the cost, but in exterminating every living thing to prevent its corruption, they too serve the Dark Gods.

The Flawless Host wear lurid colours and commit acts of unbridled excess at will, for they believe they can do no wrong. Their destructive fits of pique are legendary.

Spreading across eastern Dantorica into the west, the Purge came into conflict with Death Guard elements whose philosophy concerning Nurgle meant they embraced the great cycle of life, death and rebirth. Where one wanted to slay all life, the other wished to propagate it – albeit in its most repugnant form. A religious schism of sorts saw the two opposed forces all but neutralise one another, but the civil conflict was cold comfort to the Vigilus Senate; by that point, Dantorica was already lost.

RED CORSAIRS

The Red Corsairs, firm allies of Abaddon since he found common cause with their master Huron Blackheart, were the scourge of the planet's shipping lanes and spaceports. Arguably the best steersmen in the entire Chaos invasion force, they swiftly moved to establish void superiority above all the major hivespawls, stymieing the Imperial reinforcements that

might otherwise have bolstered their kindred planetside.

Wherever Imperial forces were sent by the Vigilus Senate to reclaim the spaceports that had fallen into the hands of the Red Corsairs, the renegades would at first fight from on high, unleashing bombardments and making strafing runs as their Heldrakes clawed rival craft out of the skies. Only when they were certain of victory did the Red Corsairs jump out of their drop craft to join the fray and finish off the survivors.



It is said the Red Corsairs fought with a fury and determination that made even the White Scars reconsider their assaults upon the spaceports. The renegades' given duty was to ensure the planet was kept under lockdown, and that no unauthorised ships could make passage in or out. Though they had not the numbers to cover every spaceport, as raiders beyond compare, they were well qualified to fulfil this task.

Only a few spacecraft slipped the cordon of the Red Corsairs over the course of the War of Nightmares, such was its efficacy. Critically, one of the craft to avoid their clutches was the vessel known as *Vaul's Ghost*, the ship that carried the deadly payload of Deathstrike missiles to Abaddon's flagship the *Vengeful Spirit*, with destructive consequences. Were it not for this singular failing, the war for Vigilus would likely have been a total victory for the forces of Chaos.



THE SCOURGED

The Renegade Chapter known as the Scourged have a particular connection with Vigilus, for they hail from the neighbouring death world of Falsehood, where squalls of acid rain are as common as the dawn. They are renegades like no other, for they have the uncanny ability to hear lies whenever they are spoken. Just as a good and faithful statement has the ring of truth about it, a lie can be perceived as hollow by one who knows the signs. On Falsehood, it became common practice to guard against falsity, for the planet itself had been founded on a deception concerning its viability as a home world, and its people had grown to despise untruths ever since. It is a tragic irony – of the type much beloved of the Dark Gods – that the Scourged now have no choice but to hear every foul utterance spoken by Mankind.

Once, long ago, the Scourged were a Chapter of noble Space Marines known as

the Seekers of Truth. They did everything in their power to live up to that name. But all too often they were despatched on crusades to kill the innocent alongside the guilty, and that rankled their sensibilities – no more so than with their Chapter Master, Gallus Herodicus.

In a moment of weakness, Herodicus prayed at length to somehow be granted the power to discern the guiltless from the damned, to know truth from deceit, and hear the lies of men for what they were. His wish was granted, but not by the Emperor. It pleased the Architect of Fate to give every member of the Chapter a gift. From that day on, they heard all the lies spoken across the galaxy, a constant surruration of perfidy that robbed them of clear thought. Though they heard those spoken near them loudest of all – and hence were often able to pick out the true agendas of their enemies amongst the background noise of

Mankind's duplicity – they were plagued by so much mental pollution they gradually lost their minds. By turning to Tzeentch's worship in the hope it would lessen their burden, the Scourged became a far deadlier threat to the innocent than they ever were before – and a merciless bane to those who spin lies as a way of life.

During the War of Nightmares, the Scourged descended upon Dirkden in a devastating aerial assault, dropping in to carefully chosen beachheads around the safe houses of the criminal dynasties. They attacked the lairs and subterranean nodes of the Genestealer Cult in a synchronous assault, for the lies and deceptions perpetuated by the cult to keep those strongholds safe made them glow with the energy of falsehood. Their attack did irreparable damage to the xenos war effort but, in the end, the cultists proved too many, and the victory too was proved false.

MORTWALD'S CURSE [MORTWALD]

IMMORTALIS SPIREHIVE

EMERALD STRAIN

ELECTROS HIVE

DJODROLEV HIVESTAR

DEINOS TRENCH NETWORK

The Flawless Host invaded the high spires of Mortwald, using elite clearance data-ident codes from the time before they turned traitor to bypass the continent's auto-defences. Together with a coordinated Black Legion assault, they caused untold havoc.

	THE FLAWLESS HOST		NECROPOLIS HAWKS
	BLACK LEGION [THOROSGAR BEAR-FIST]		IMPERIAL FISTS
	BLACK LEGION [ZHUNE TZANG]		VIGILUS CITIZEN ENCLAVE
	ASTRA MILITARUM		CULT OF THE PAUPER PRINCES



FORCES OF THE WARP

Over the course of the War of Beasts, the psychic maladies that plagued Vigilus rarely gave rise to daemonic manifestation. That changed as the Chaos invasion took hold, however, and the frequency of these occurrences increased dramatically over the course of the War of Nightmares.

Upon Vigilus, the talons of the Dark Gods had gouged deep. Each Noctilith Crown hammered into its crust increased the amount of empyric energy saturating the planet; to the witch-sighted Astropaths of Neo-vellum, these structures burned brighter than any blazing spire or urban firestorm. Once the blackstone reserves of Megaborealis were shattered, it was as if a dam had broken, and the trickle of daemonic manifestations became a flood. Here was the true legacy of the Great Rift – not just panic and terror, but also another dimension breaching realspace in a catastrophic cascade of warp energy.

Dontoria's slow descent into a plague-racked hellscape had been engineered from below the city

streets since the early stages of the War of Beasts. The Death Guard, content to play the long game, had infected half the populace with a hideous cornucopia of diseases. Fiercest amongst them were Nurgle's Rot and the Gellerpox, supernatural plagues that led to Nurglings and Mutoid Vermin infesting the alleyways and undersumps of the quarantine zones. The privation, drought and hunger inflicted upon the populace, worsened by the Vhulian Anomaly, turned once-teeming hab-zones into landscapes of flyblown corpses.

DAEMONS OF NURGLE

When two Noctilith Crowns were raised in Dontoria, a massive influx of plague Daemons poured through the weakened fabric of realspace to infect the hivespawl. They were

led by the entity known as Rotigus Rainfather. An endless deluge of filthy rainwater hammered out of the skies as that obese monstrosity lumbered through the streets, chortling as the arid ground greedily absorbed the flood until it became more marsh than desert. Millions of Dontoria's remaining citizens, half-mad with thirst after having their water supplies dwindle to nothing, drank of that foul water – and in doing so, damned themselves. The Astra Militarum, the Munitorum, even the more human elements of the Pauper Princes partook of the gushing fluids that poured from the pregnant skies. Everyone that let that water pass their lips spent their last few days riddled with grey flux, tsepsis and goitre-plague; some even found themselves expelling



GENESTEALER CULT
ELEMENTS



GENESTEALER CULT
LINE OF RETREAT



VOLCANIC
ERUPTION



DAEMONS OF
TZEENTCH



ADEPTUS MECHANICUS
STYGIES VIII

The eruptions of Storvhval, triggered by the last ditch tactics of Fabricator Vosch, trapped the Daemon tides that had spilled from its three largest volcanoes. With the immense tonnage of fiery rock on one side and the Stygies VIII forces on the other, the Daemons were eradicated – and much of the Adeptus Mechanicus forces shortly after.

THE STORVHAL PYROCLASM [STORVHAL]



DAEMONS OF CHAOS

The manifestations of Daemons that blighted the War of Nightmares were not confined to its third phase, but escalated dramatically once the Noctlioth Crowns had been placed on sites of geomantic import by the Black Legion and the Word Bearers. Around those sites, the malefic energies gathered by the runic devices lent great strength to the daemonic forces fighting nearby.

KHORNATE WAR LEGIONS

The Cruel Blades.....	6 warbands (infantry)
Harnak's Gauntlet.....	2 warbands
The Feet of Khorne's Ire.....	5 warbands (cavalry)
The Steeltalons.....	8 warbands
The Red Doom.....	3 warbands (estimate)
The Scarlet Manifestation.....	8 warbands
The Brazen Shield.....	2 warbands
Ulxor's Thunder.....	1 warband (Skull Cannons)
The Furnace-maws.....	1 warband (Skull Cannons)

SLAANESHI HOSTS OF EXCESS

Vishy's Last Cavalcade.....	6 warbands (chariots)
Slathslaver's Merciless Sistren.....	13 warbands
Gluggatach's Obesons.....	3 warbands (immobile)
Helmynch's Psyrens.....	8 warbands (psyker-heavy)

TZEENTCHIAN WARP CABALS

The Ritual Scorch.....	9 warbands (pyrotechnic)
The Flickering Fires.....	3 warbands
Twisten Helicas.....	6 warbands (Glossolian)
The Capering Choir.....	8 warbands
Brimstone Purgers.....	3 warbands (toxic air)
Verenastia's Gifted.....	2 warbands (psykers)

NURGLESQUE PLAGUE HORDES

Olghott's Gifted.....	2 warbands
The Sepsikh Choir.....	7 warbands
The Mortwald Tallymen.....	7 warbands (arboreal)
The Bilegut Guard.....	4 warbands (armoured)
The Vomitous Deluge.....	7 warbands (floodborne)
The Hallowed.....	11 warbands
Foulgyre's Pretties.....	3 warbands (Nurgling-heavy)

CULTS OF SUMMONATION

Proven incidence of deliberate alliance with Daemons and subsequent warp/realspace breach recorded

The Faithwrought.....	pyroclastic cult
The Sons of Vannadan.....	pyroclastic cult
The Clarion Daemonic.....	demagogue cult (unaligned)
The Rhetormentors.....	demagogue cult (unaligned)
The Eightfold Blessed.....	Khornate cult
The Cadian 666th 'Purified'.....	Khornate cult
The Tattered Veil.....	Nurglesque cult
Sons of the Silver King.....	Slaaneshi cult
Children of the Blessed Light.....	Tzeentchian cult
The Touched.....	Tzeentchian cult

TITHE OF THE SOUL FORGES

The Dark Bargain.....	Soul Grinder pack
Rust Incarnate.....	Soul Grinder pack
The Stalker on the Horizon.....	Greater Brass Scorpion

INFERNUS-CLASS GOD-MACHINES

End of Hope.....	Banelord Titan
Nullifact Malignus.....	Traitor Warlord Titan
Desecrator.....	Traitor Warlord Titan
Diabolus Rex.....	Traitor Reaver Titan
Helclaw.....	Traitor Reaver Titan
God of Hate.....	Traitor Reaver Titan
Stormstalker.....	Traitor Warhound Titan
Phantom Abominus.....	Traitor Warhound Titan
Preytaker.....	Traitor Warhound Titan
Fleshripper.....	Traitor Warhound Titan

++CONTINUED IN FILE IMP.VIG/PGS2/1-12

ALL DIABOLUS-CLASS FILES CLASSIFIED BY ORDER OF THE ORDO MALLEUS

*Mindwipe Protocol auto-activated for Unknown Biomark Ident
Vigilus conflict codified 'War of Nightmares' codified in auxiliary
dataslate Imp.Vig/PG2w3/121-125.*

stomach-grown Nurglings in a vomitous mockery of birth.

By that time the Death Guard and the Purge had begun their self-destructive war for control of the damned false continent; the bloated cadavers of Dontoria outnumbered the living ten times over, and plague Daemons of all kinds capered freely through the sprawl.

DAEMONS OF TZEENTCH

The magma farms of Storvhal had played host to the phenomenon dubbed the Flickering Fires, beings that danced in the flames, since the first phase of the War of Beasts – or so its workers claimed. At first, their overlords and Tech-Priest handlers had put these fanciful tales down to the superstition of heat-addled minds – perhaps to avoid any Inquisitorial scrutiny – so the rumours went unchecked. However, the sudden manifestation of lurid-coloured Daemons, which appeared at around the time of

Silo XV's destruction, proved the workers right.

The volcanoes of each geothermic farm began to overflow, but this was no natural eruption – a kaleidoscopic cascade of warpfire spilled flame-spewing Daemons down the flanks of each mountain. For a while, Skitarii, servitor and slave fought bravely to hold them back, levelling firepower from the Voschian Canals. Then the defenders found their lines attacked from behind by the pyroclastic cults that had long been gaining power in Storvhal. The mortal servants of the Capering Choir cried out in supplication to the feathered Lords of Change soaring in the thermals high above, while the Twisten Helicas rode the lava flow into the Voschian Canal Network, gibbering in foul tongues. As unharmed by the refined magma as sump-swimmers in an underwater river, they headed out into the client continents that were fuelled by Storvhal's exported energy, there

to cause untold havoc amongst the populace.

The Tech-Priests sanctioned protocols for Geothermis Extremis, using their Fragdrill networks to puncture Storvhal's tectonic plates in such a way that the carefully marshalled volcanic currents were goaded into a full-scale eruption. This time it was magma that boiled from the cupolas of each active volcano – not burning away the Daemons so much as burying them under billions of tons of glowing rock-sludge. It was a devastating counterstrike, but one that crippled Vigilus' expertly managed supply of energy forever.

In the hivespawls furthest from Storvhal, the autocandles and lumens began to go out, and Mankind's most ancient fear rose to the surface across a landscape lit only by the Great Rift. With the demise of Storvhal's industry, Vigilus was consigned to the darkest night of all.

DAEMONS OF KHORNE

The Daemons that assailed Vigilus were attracted by the hot and stinking winds of war, and none more so than the Daemons of Khorne. Some were invited by ritual, others raised from rivers of spilt blood. On Mortwald, they were summoned by anger itself.

Upon the southern outskirts of that once-prosperous false continent, the downtrodden workers of the hab-zones had endured countless generations of hardship in the name of their uncaring aristocratic masters. They worked without complaint amongst the cactus farms and forests of thorned succulents, though their limbs ached and their skin was scarred head-to-toe by poison-festered barb mark, for they knew it was their duty to provide the vegetation so difficult to grow elsewhere on the arid planet to the people of the hivespraws. When the aristocracy of Mortwald sequestered that

hard-won bounty for themselves, the people of southern Mortwald felt a bone-deep anger that grew fiercer with every day they went hungry. Fiery rhetoric turned to looting, then to riots in the streets. Three days after the Great Tithe, the local Adeptus Arbites – drafted into the fight against the Orks plaguing the eastern trench lines – sent a comms-tube to the Vigilus Senate announcing that they had lost control. At the time, they had no idea how true that was – that region was shortly thereafter to become the site of a full-blown daemonic manifestation.

When the people of Mortwald hammered their fists bloody on the doors of the Equilateral Bastion, stronghold of the Mortwald elite, their rage was goaded to blinding fury by the words of their leaders. Amongst them was a group of Dark Disciples that secretly served a demagogue known as Vodt Redtooth. Only when the

riot turned to a stampede, which became a massacre, did Redtooth bring his dagger-shaped craft in from low orbit. Making landfall south of the Deinos Trench Network with his retinue of Khorne Berzerkers, he bade his pilot blast apart the great gates that led to the upper levels of the bastion. Dozens died as rubble tumbled down, but the rest of the citizens raced into the breach in their thousands, howling for blood. Pillaging their way through the citadel, throttling and thrashing and beating their former masters to death, the furious mob fell upon those that had taken from them for so long. In places, their oppressors were ripped bodily apart.

As the streets ran red with blood, the veil between reality and the warp thinned to the point that it all but disappeared. In a burst of crimson light, the daemonic servants of Khorne stampeded through the shimmering portal



that manifested there, the imposing figure of the head-hunting Daemon Skulltaker at the fore. They paid no mind to the station of those they killed during the ensuing slaughter; scar-skinned agri-peasants lay dying upon the corpses of the most well-dressed men on Vigilus. The south of Mortwald had fallen to the Daemons of Khorne, just as its trench lines fell to the forces of the Iron Warriors, and its inner sanctums to the Flawless Host. Though not one of these Chaos forces had coordinated with another, together they were able to destroy the most heavily defended area of Vigilus outside of Hyperia Hivespawl.

Megaborealis was also to feel the wrath of Khorne, for where the Daemon Engines of the Brazen Beasts rampaged through the streets, they left a trail of carnage that could be seen in the warp as well as in realspace. The *Cerberite*, that vast semi-sentient spacecraft

with which the renegades had made planetfall upon Vigilus, roared with bloodlust as it felt its Daemon Engine children carve their way across the industrial landscape. From within its roiling guts came horned Bloodletter riders mounted on brazen Juggernauts, thundering down the unfurled ramps of the Daemon barge just as Maulerfiends and Venomcrawlers had done before.

Beating great leathery wings as they manifested fully in realspace, eight of Khorne's mighty Bloodthirsters flew above them, swooping down to hack apart the clades of Onager Duncrawlers that were stabbing the beams of their neutron lasers towards the great craft. When Fabricator Vosch of Megaborealis saw a noospheric relay of the Greater Daemons hacking apart the Warhound Titans sent to reinforce the Adeptus Mechanicus forces, he immediately engaged consolidation protocols, abandoning the entire

silos district and putting into place a procedure for his own evacuation. To him it was a binary calculation devoid of emotion, but to those that knew the minds of the Tech-Priests of Megaborealis, it was as close to a declaration of utter defeat as his brotherhood ever made.





DAEMONS OF SLAANESH

Wherever an act of dedication or exploration crosses over into dangerous intensity, the gaze of a Slaaneshi Daemon is sure to be drawn. On Vigilus, where the population had been riddled with madness for decades, the Daemons of Slaanesh found their own kinds of paradise amongst the war-torn landscapes.

The forces of Slaanesh were seen in a great many war zones across Vigilus, for each hivespawl had its own version of excess. In Hyperia, this revolved around gilded splendour, the pride of corrupt leaders seeing them spend the planet's tithes on their own self-aggrandisement. In Mortwald, it was greed, for the aristocracy there had revelled in gluttony and feasting after sequestering the food of an entire continent. In Oteck Hivespawl, the populace tried desperately to save the water reserves that were being drained by the Vhulian Anomaly, leading to the hoarding of aqua receptacles and the raising of water magnates

to the status of kings. In places, several aqua-besotted urban tribes died not of thirst, but of drinking too much tainted water for their bodies to process – and in doing so, opening the way for daemonic manifestation.

At first, where the veil grew thin, these manifestations would start with a shimmer in the air – bruised purple, fulsome peach, sickly pink and all the colours of flesh swirling into one. Through that portal would step a handmaiden of Slaanesh, then another, then an entire court of Daemonettes, singing, screaming and keening in ecstasy as they cavorted amongst the stunned citizens that had summoned them – whether knowingly or not.

Next would come a Herald, tall and statuesque, a muse of dark desires whose presence hypnotised every soul who saw her with the possibilities of unbound excess. With a sharp clack of the claws, she would give the signal for the killing to begin, and the simmering threat of conflict would boil over into a tide of unbridled savagery.

Those Daemons of excess that lived for the thrill of the chase found Vigilus much to their liking. In the cities, they pursued their prey through the streets upon sinuous, arrow-swift steeds and elegantly sculpted chariots, slashing at the backs of those who fled their sport. In Hyperia, the Vigilant Guard sent beyond the Ring of Nothingness to stop the Daemons rampaging around the capital gunned down a few of the leading charioteers, but were nowhere near fast enough to neutralise the force entire. The vanguard of the Daemon cavalry leapt straight over the Astra Militarum front line, then darted unhindered through the barricades with the ease of bladefish slipping through a coral reef. Trilling with glee, they assassinated officers and Commissars alike. When the main body of the cavalcade hit home, its sickle-wheeled chariots ploughed through the ordered ranks of the Astra Militarum like auto-threshers through a field of scrubgrass. Blood flew in high arcs, glittering in the light of the Great Rift – a darkly beautiful sight that brought the Greater Daemon Leiwauquasca to

THE PALE STALKER

In the frosted wilderness of Kaelac's Bane, the ascendant Drukharis were to meet a disturbing foe indeed – an avatar of their most feared nemesis, the creature that had once assailed the *Laurels of Victory*. During the war for Vigilus, the Dark Eldar clashed many times with the Rubricae of the Thousand Sons, both Aeldari and Heretic Astartes seeking to use the webway portal concealed on that continent as their base of operations. The Drukharis had the greater claim, for they had used the webway long before the Imperium had ventured forth into the stars – they saw the Thousand Sons as parasites that needed to be slain. But in the Rubricae and their sorcerer masters, they found an intractable foe that was all but immune to their poisons and agony-inducing weapons. The Drukharis were finally able to defeat the Rubricae

by using an ancient terraforming engine they discovered, which lowered the temperature of Kaelac's Bane so severely that its blizzards and snowdrifts froze the slow-moving automatons in place. But the Sorcerers, many of whom rode the skies on daemonic discs that whispered secrets in strange, guttural voices, remained active. Shorn of their footsoldiers, they withdrew from the war zone entirely – but not before enacting a summoning ritual as a parting gift to their Aeldari rivals. That dark spell brought forth not a greater Daemon of Tzeentch but one of Slaanesh – and an extremely powerful one at that.

The Pale Stalker of Kaelac's Bane was a huntress of inhuman skill and patience. Some thirty feet in height, she was strong enough to pierce a darting Raider skiff

with her spear and dash it to pieces upon the icy rock, and she could remain unseen at will, her milk-white skin blending perfectly with the blizzards. She hunted down the Drukharis skimming across the ice continent as an eagle hunts crows, devouring the bodies of the slain by distending her jaws so she could swallow them whole. The many-limbed Daemon queen took to wearing the clawed limbs of any ice mantis beasts foolish enough to attack her, lending her an even stranger and more formidable silhouette. Within three weeks of the Pale Stalker's manifestation, the Drukharis had lost a full third of their number. The remainder were so petrified at the threat of this nigh-invisible stalker they made one last foray into the hivespawls, captured as many victims as they could, and withdrew from Vigilus entirely.

the fray. It is a matter of record that the Keeper of Secrets' rampage covered a full half of the Van Gollick Macrohighway before the statuesque Daemon was finally brought down by the concerted efforts of Temperance Blaise and her fellow Canonesses.



In the wastelands outside the hivespawls, the artful chase enjoyed by the Daemons turned into a savage running battle as the mounted warbands of Slaanesh clashed with the Speed Freeks that had claimed the wilderness for their own. The Orks were at first bewildered by this new foe,

and goggled in amazement at the slender beasts that were able to keep pace with their hot rods and up-gunned wagons. Then the faces of the Daemons split with wicked smiles, and they darted in to slash and stab at the drivers of the vehicles, which then careened away to crash and burn in the desolate dunes.

Word spread of these Daemon huntresses as fast as the Orks could get their vehicles from one camp to another, and the next time the Slaaneshi riders attacked, they were greeted with a storm of solid shot. A new race began in the wilderness, for an excess of raw speed nourishes the Daemons of the Dark Prince as much as any other kind, and Orks are not ones to turn away from a challenge. Though no formal Imperial records exist of these clashes, rumours and tales of pale cavaliers battling rugged greenskin vehicles circulated throughout the War of Nightmares.

'It is said by the masters of the Ordo Malleus that should even a single Daemon find a way through the gatehouse, the castle is already damned. Vigilus, once a mighty fortress whose every entrance was barred with physical might, faith and arcane technology, is now a broken and ruined shell, its portals left all but unguarded.'

- Inquisitor Thanst Rendars-Mao, Ordo Malleus, Astravigila Delegation





FORCES OF THE IMPERIUM

The Imperium's military machine had been battered and broken down in the first phase of the War of Beasts, only to be shored up and brought back to thunderous, belligerent life by the arrival of the Adeptus Astartes. Over the War of Nightmares, they too were to find themselves sorely pressed.

The War of Beasts had seen Vigilus drained of much of its strength. The uprising of the Pauper Princes, prematurely triggered by the Ork invasion, had a particularly devastating effect on the planet's supply lines and infrastructure, for it bypassed every layer of defence by striking from within.

With the wastelands controlled by the Orks and so many hidden victories already won by the time the Genestealer Cultists engaged the Imperium, the armed forces that sought to hurl the xenos back – be they Astra Militarum, Adepta Sororitas or Adeptus Astartes – found they were on unstable ground.

The coming of the Chaos threat looked to be the grievous blow that would take the planet to its death, for Abaddon's three-stage invasion threatened to tip

the destabilised planet into utter disaster. Some of Vigilus' strategos posited the theory that the xenos invasions had been sent by the Warmaster to deliberately exhaust the resources of the Imperium's war machine. To a man, these unfortunates were hung by the neck until dead, for they had committed the crime of Doomsaying in the Face of Catastrophe. Such hated foes as the greenskin and the xenocultist were terrifying enough without word spreading that they ultimately served the unspeakable powers of the Heretic Astartes.

Yet perhaps there was a kernel of truth to these claims. The opening of the Great Rift was a crux point in history; even the most blinkered fool could not deny that. It was from that warp storm's depths that the Orkoid invasion had emerged to threaten Vigilus. Those amongst the Emperor's Holy Inquisition that made a study of the Warmaster had noted that many of the systems targeted by his Black Crusades had since been swallowed by the Cicatrix Maledictum, including the Cadian Gate itself – surely it was no coincidence that he now sought to conquer a sentinel world guarding the Nachmund Gauntlet.

**'The Great Rift
promised us doom, and by
the Emperor, it delivered.
Some said the planet was
lost as soon as the heretic
fleet appeared in the sky.
But they are weak-spirited
fools, and deserve death.'**

*- Vanguard Operative
Dain Fellerus, Kill Team
Ebony Gladius*



IMPERIUM VIGILANT

Though the vast majority of the Imperial defenders that fought in the War of Beasts still existed in some form to fight back the subsequent Chaos invasion, some were wiped out entirely before they could be reinforced. Others were reduced to tatters, clinging tenaciously to those gains they had made against their xenos foes only to be brought to the brink of annihilation by the Warmaster's incursions.

HYPERIAN GUARDIANS

Ultramarines	7 demi-companies (impromptu)
White Consuls	3 companies
Black Templars	1 demi-company
Praetors of Orpheus	2 companies
Silver Skulls	1 demi-company (prognostic)
Genesis Chapter	1 company (PERDITAS)
Hawk Lords	1 company
Howling Griffons	2 companies
Novamarines	1 company
Void Tridents	1 company
Castellans of the Rift	1 company
Space Wolves (Krom Dragongaze)	1 Great Company
Vigilant Guard	15 regiments
Vigilant Creedsmen	4 regiments
Dragoons Demonstratus	2 echelons
Vyacine Adepts	EXPURGATOS
Adamant Rifles	2 regiments
Dagmar Guard	1 regiment (PERDITAS)
Golohastus XIIth 'Decapitators'	1 demi-regiment
Black Torus Scouts	1 company
Dharan Bloodfists	2 regiments
Anark Zeta Abhuman Auxilla	1 detachment
Kanak Skull-takers	REMNANTS
Cthonol Nineguards	2 regiments
Miasman Redcows	2 regiments

ADEPTA SORORITAS

Order of the Last Prioress	11 preceptories
Order of the Bloody Rose	4 preceptories
Order of the Ebon Chalice	2 preceptories
Order of the Argent Shroud	2 preceptories
Order of Our Martyred Lady	1 preceptory

OTECK COMBINED DEFENCE GROUP

Space Wolves (Icepelt/Sabrewulf)	1 strike force
Mortifactors	1 company, 1 demi-company
Ultramarines	1 strike force (Primaris)
Vigilant Guard	EXPURGATOS
Vigilant Creedsmen	4 regiments
Utica Pikemen River Guard	2 regiments
Palladion Rifles	EXPURGATOS
Tallarn Raiders	2 cavalier regiments
Miasman Redcows	3 regiments
Hydroplant Water Hounds	2 castellanries
Vastadt I Expedrines	2 sabot groups
Gharti Volunteers	EXPURGATOS
Tekarn Iron Men	1 iron phalanx
Vresh Grenadiers	EXPURGATOS
Anark Zeta Bullgryn Auxilla	2 brute regiments

ADEPTA SORORITAS

Order of the Last Prioress	2 preceptories
Order of the Argent Shroud	1 preceptory

DIRKDEN REARGUARD

Crimson Fists	3 companies
Vigilant Underhivers	EXPURGATOS

KAELAC'S BANE TASK FORCE

+++WITHDRAWN IN EXTREMIS+++

++CONTINUED IN FILE IMPVIG/PGS4/14-29

Participants in second and third stages of Vigilus conflict codified 'War of Nightmares' listed in auxiliary dataslate Imp.Vig/PGs3/30-90.
Adeptus Mechanicus participants listed in Imp.Vig/AMech4/12-45.

DONTORIAN QUARANTINE CORPS

Iron Hands	4 clan companies
Brazen Claws	3 companies
Necropolis Hawks	3 companies
Silvered Blades	2 companies
Vigilant Guard	4 regiments
Vigilant Creedsmen	EXPURGATOS
Mordian Iron Guard	1 regiment (PERDITAS)
Gantor Rough Riders	3 cavalier regiments
Indigan Praefects	2 regiments
Ezelti Lancers (8th)	3 echelons
Oceanan Rad Waste Troopers	EXPURGATOS

MORTWALD SAVIOUR DETAIL

Imperial Fists	1 demi-company
Mortifactors	1 company
Fire Lords	1 company (PERDITAS)
Necropolis Hawks	3 companies
Cadian Shock Troops	EXPURGATOS
Catachan Jungle Fighters	EXPURGATOS
Vigilant Guard	REMNANTS
Vigilant Creedsmen	EXPURGATOS
Ventrillian Nobles	1 regiment

VIGILUS ARMoured ELEMENTS

Sondoran Gearheads	PERDITAS
Cadian Heavy Armoured	3 armoured regiments
Ustenoran Gundogs	EXPURGATOS
Kharbys Iron Cavalry	2 armoured regiments

OFFICIO ASSASSINORUM

Imperial Assassins	6 operatives
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The Praetors of Orpheus adhere to every facet of Guilliman's revised Codex. They operate as a well-calibrated engine of war.



The Brazen Claws, stoic successors of the Iron Hands, use mechanised warfare and value remorseless assault above all else.



The Howling Griffons are an Ultramarines successor Chapter known for their acts of valour and extreme dedication to duty.



Whatever the truth of the matter, the coming of the Chaos invasion saw the situation on Vigilus grow even more dire for the Imperial forces stationed there. Every new day, the Vigilus Senate rang with raised voices and bellowed oaths as its delegates were forced to make ever more desperate decisions. Their forces were stretched thin, and though they gave everything they had to save the planet, the War of Nightmares fast became an exercise in callous expediency.

Nonetheless, the Imperium, as stubborn and dogged as ever, refused to yield. Urban conflicts raged across every sector of every hivespawl, the new war against the heretic often blending into the ongoing conflict with the xenos.

The vast majority of the Space Marine Chapters present on Vigilus were assigned to the wider battle-group known as the Hyperian Guardians, for Hyperia was the principal site of governance and

strategy, and it could not fall. From there, the Imperium's elite forces met the Chaos assault head-on, pouring ever more resources and manpower into the meat grinder of the wider war.



DIRKDEN

The continent that fell furthest to these manifold threats was the sprawling urban eyesore of Dirkden. This region had been a hive of crime and corruption ever since the disastrous breakdown of relationships between its ruling dynasties and the Aquilarian Council over the Hyperia-Dirkden Fortwall. The false continent was then infiltrated by the Pauper

Princes from Megaborealis in the north, and there the xenos had thrived. The Astra Militarum of the Dirkden Reclamation Group and their Crimson Fist allies evacuated vast swathes of its populace to Hyperia, but they could not save them all, especially when it became clear that many of their own regiments had recruited gene-tainted xenocultists into their number.

During the War of Nightmares, the battles between the Night Lords, the Scourged and the Pauper Princes saw much of the continent's central mass consumed in flames, vindicating Calgar's decision to evacuate. Only the Dirkden Rearguard was left behind to cover the Imperial withdrawal, for that hivespawl was surely lost.

DONTORIA

Dontoria was next to be struck from the Vigilus Senate's list of viable war zones. Over the course of the War of Nightmares, the plagues introduced



The Imperial Fists are paragons of discipline and the stalwart refusal to yield. Expert siege-masters, they excel at the defence of Imperial installations of all kinds.



The Iron Hands are known for their strict, methodical approach to war, their belief that the flesh is weak, and their propensity to use cybernetics and heavy war assets.



there by the Death Guard reached epidemic proportions, and the formal quarantine was extended from the area around Litmus Dock to encompass the entire hivesprawl. As the populace grew ever more desperate, the Dontorian Quarantine Corps – a combination of Space Marine and Astra Militarum elements – stopped fighting with the intention of saving the citizenry, and instead imposed martial law to ensure they could not escape. It was a devastating blow to the people of Vigilus. A great many of the Vigilant Guard hailed from the Big Fug, as Dontoria was colloquially known, and the quarantine effectively doomed their people to death by a panoply of supernatural diseases, or the merciless scouring of the Purge.

All shipping routes around the hivesprawl were closed down, and all convoys leaving the hivesprawl were hunted and neutralised – if not by the Imperial Navy fighter pilots seeking to maintain the integrity

of the quarantine zone, then by the Ork Speed Freaks of the wastelands. The Ultramarines, including Calgar himself, had fought against the scions of the Plague God before, and although these actions seemed extreme, they knew there could be no other choice.

MORTWALD

Mortwald fell soon after Dontoria, assailed from within as well as without by the Chaos menace. The Cadian Shock Troops and Ventrillian Nobles stationed at the Deinos Trench Network and the Tzeller Line fought with honour and composure, earning accolades from the Imperial Fists, Mortifactors and Fire Lords they fought alongside. The sparse but powerful forces of the Catachan Jungle Fighters, very much at home in the hydroponic jungles and fields of poisonous cacti, fought the Ork Kommandos that penetrated the trench networks to a standstill, and the Vigilant Creedsmen burned the spoor of the xenos

from the rejuvenat districts with commendable thoroughness.

For a while, Mortwald held. Yet as the upper echelons retreated into seclusion and the abandoned citizens turned to the most diabolical of patrons in order to seek revenge for their mistreatment, the scourge of Chaos began to take hold. The four-pronged assault – the Flawless Host on the citadels and palaces, the Black Legion upon sites of strategic import, the Daemons of Khorne fighting alongside revolutionaries in the streets, and the Iron Warriors siege-masters punching through the eastern trench lines – proved too much for even the Imperial Fists to counter. Captain Fane himself sent the missive to Marneus Calgar that the false continent was lost.



The Space Wolves of Ragnar Blackmane's Great Company are known for their ferocious aerial assaults, usually launched from Drop Pod or Stormwolf gunship.



The Crimson Fists rose from the flames of a long war against the Orks to fight on Vigilus. They have a great many Primaris reinforcements in their ranks.



OTECK

During the War of Nightmares, the skies high above Oteck were criss-crossed by the contrails of warring aircraft as the Combined Defence Group fought hard to retake control of the hivesprawl's vital reservoirs. On the ground, the Adepta Sororitas continued to hunt the xenocultists of the Genestealer Cult. Though the focus of the wider war had shifted upon the Warmaster's arrival – and though the Sisters of Battle stationed on Vigilus fought on every front against a staggering variety of foes – the majority of their orders still battled to defend their home territories against the alien threat.

Towards the end of the war, Oteck Hivesprawl had become all but unrecognisable. The triggering of explosives beneath Greigan Hollow had exposed a honeycomb of tunnels – passageways that the Pauper Princes knew well, for their miners and excavation teams had

created them. The Adepta Sororitas ventured into that underground warren and fought to contain the worst sites, with the Orders of the Last Prioress and the Argent Shroud working in concert to extend incineration protocols across any zones they deemed irrevocably lost. The deeper they ventured inside Oteck's maze-like undercity, however, the more the scale of their task became clear.

The tunnels extended not just beneath Oteck, but out into the wastelands towards Dirkden and Hyperia. When the lumen-lit underworks of the city gave way to innumerable crude shafts dug from the bare rock of the planet's under-strata, the Sisters of Battle uncovered the true extent of the xenos infestation. They were faced with tens of thousands of miles of labyrinthine tunnels that led from one false continent to another, and as they investigated them with torch and bolter, they found many of

them were infested with monstrous aberrations. To purge them clean would take years. With the Chaos scourge raining hell down on the cityscape above, that was time they did not have.

The matter was brought to Temperance Blaise, of the Order of Our Martyred Lady. At first she flew into a rage – but then, as dawn broke, she conceded that Oteck was irredeemable, and recommended the mustering of all Adepta Sororitas forces for a last stand at Hyperia.

THE WASTES

The wastes between the hivesprawls belonged almost wholly to the Orks, for the warlords and Big Meks of the Speedwaaagh! valued the vast tracts of land between the hivesprawls precisely because they were so desolate. Though they had little in the way of resources except those they had recycled from their own invasion craft, the Orks



defended their chosen territory with every bullet they could muster, and fought like enraged bulls in defence of the scrap cities that still blighted the horizon. Despite this threat, the Adepta Sororitas braved these wildernesses to ensure their convoys and mercy missions crossed them safely.

The Order of the Ebon Chalice was to make an invaluable contribution to the war effort when they painstakingly assembled a map of locations where the Orks typically gathered, and the routes their Speedwaaagh! races took around the planet. Once this was distributed via the Orders Dialogus, it proved an indispensable aid for those escorting water convoys and refugee columns from the lost hivesprawns to the nearest zone still in Imperial hands. However, when word spread amongst the greenskins that to approach a column guarded by the Adepta Sororitas was to initiate a fierce and lethal battle, the belligerent xenos went out of their way to hunt the wastes for Imperial convoys that were under the protection of the Sisters of Battle.



The Orks were not the only threat faced by the Adepta Sororitas in their missions of mercy, for over the course of the War of Nightmares, the wastes were raided by Drukhari war parties, xenocultist outriders, giant terrestine molerats and wild grox herds. After the Word Bearers of Abaddon's invasion force had planted the dread structures known as Noctilith Crowns across the planet's surface, these wastes were also haunted by living tempests of empyric energy – supernatural phenomena known to the Adepta Sororitas as warp-gheists – and even Daemon manifestations. Not one part of Vigilus could be called safe.

The Order of the Bloody Rose, though created some 2,500 years after the founding of the Adepta Sororitas, have distinguished themselves in a thousand war zones. They are known for the ferocity of their assaults against the ranks of the heretic and the mutant.



The Order of the Ebon Chalice was the first of the Orders Militant. Its symbol, a flaming grail, represents the burning, white-hot knowledge imparted from the Emperor himself to their founder, Alicia Dominica.



The Sisters of the Order of the Argent Shroud are taciturn and laconic, preferring to let their actions speak on their behalf. They take their symbol from the silvery impression of a death mask left on the funerary shroud of their founder, Saint Silvana.



'With the holy trinity of bolter, flamer and melta we shall blast, burn and annihilate every last traitor on this planet. The omniscient Emperor watches over us, even under these troubled skies. He gives us strength to forge the glorious destiny of Mankind, and with his grace we cannot fail.'

- Sister Superior Verita Gondari, Order of the Ebon Chalice



KAELAC'S BANE

During the War of Nightmares, Kaelac's Bane was forsaken entirely by the Imperial war effort, its armed forces withdrawn to support the vital stronghold of Hyperia while it still stood. The Void Tridents and Castellans of the Rift had fought hard against the Speed Freeks operating out of Mekstop City, working in concert to ensure the glacier quarrymen and their Skitarii overseers could escape from the Drukhari menace of the ice continent and reach safety. Thanks to the valour of these Primaris Chapters, many of the ice-carrying convoys made it to the nearest points of Oteck, Mortwald and Hyperia, continents in as much need of water as they were of manpower.

The pure ice water they carried with them was soon distributed amongst the populace – but not in the manner they had anticipated. Upon reaching civilisation, many of the convoys came under attack

from well-organised bands of cut-throat xenocultists and strike forces sent out by the crime lords of the Oteck and Mortwald underworlds. They were opposed by the local Astra Militarum of the Vigilant Guard, the Vigilant Creedsmen and the Utica Pikemen River Guard, but with hostile elements appearing all around them, the Imperial forces were soon overwhelmed. So it was that the aqua gladius the Primaris Chapters had given so much to protect ended up wetting the throats of criminals, madmen and xenos hybrids instead of the citizens and soldiers for which it had been intended.

HYPERIA

The Imperium had yielded one fiercely contested war zone after another as the War of Nightmares ground on, but in doing so, had managed to consolidate its resources at Hyperia. While that once-glorious hivespawl was still under Imperial control, there was something to fight for, and that

war zone was reinforced time and time again at the behest of the Ministorum and the Vigilus Senate alike.

Saint's Haven had withstood punitive Aeldari attacks and Ork assaults throughout the phases of both wars. Its defences included forces from the Ultramarines and eleven other Adeptus Astartes Chapters – including the Black Templars, the Howling Griffons, the Silver Skulls and the Space Wolves of Krom Dragongaze. The hivespawl was the keep at the heart of the Vigilus fortress; though the ramparts had tumbled, its inner sanctum did not fall. Towards the end of the War of Nightmares, the planet's defenders mustered there to make their last stand.



The Dark Angels, known as the First, also have a sinister sobriquet – the Unforgiven. Few indeed know of their secret mission, for outwardly they are duty incarnate.



The White Scars, descendants of the free-willed Primarch Jaghatai Khan, are experts in the art of mounted warfare. They rejoice in the thrill of battle.

A GLIMMER IN THE HEAVENS

When the legendary Gloriana-class battleship, the *Vengeful Spirit*, made its emergency warp translation, it did so with haste rather than safety as its priority. In doing so, it escaped the vortex that was gnawing at its flank, the violent maelstrom that had been created by the detonation of the Deathstrike missiles delivered by *Vaul's Ghost*. Amid the storm of energy with which the vast spacecraft slipped from realspace into the hell dimension of the warp, the vortex was diffused. The *Spirit* would live on to blight the Imperium with the Warmaster still at its helm.

Unfortunately for the Chaos fleet gathered around that vast spaceship, the warp breach brought about by the emergency translation – aggravated by the detonation of the Vortex warheads – spilled out a tremendous amount of raw empyric energy. It consumed several dozen Heretic Astartes warships in quick succession before blending into the Great Rift – for after the

destruction of Silo XV and the raising of the Noctilith Crowns, that vast warp storm had encroached upon Vigilus to the point that it threatened every fleet.

In forcing his adversary to turn tail, Calgar had not only robbed the Chaos fleet of its most prized asset, but torn out its heart. He had turned the same energies that had blighted Vigilus against those who sought to amplify them, and sent almost a third of the Chaos fleet screaming into the hellscape of the warp. No small number of Imperial craft were caught in the sucking riptide of that emergency translation; amongst a dozen lesser craft and inbound torpedoes, the *Duke Aareloph* and the *Haraju Monarch* were both snatched away, never to be heard of again. The Vigilus Senate considered the sacrifice more than worthwhile.

As the warp breach faded into the greater mass of the Cicatrix Maledictum, the Imperial Navy redoubled its assault – and,

over time, found itself reinforced by ships Calgar had sent out on reconnaissance missions during his initial approach to Vigilus. The battle swung from a last-ditch defence to a long-ranged stalemate, and then, as more Imperial craft joined the fray, a gradual climb towards victory.

By this point, word was reaching the Chaos troops upon Vigilus that their armada was stricken – the Lord Macragge made sure of it. Rigged up to a vox array in the foremost apothecarium of Saint's Haven, Calgar spoke loudly and with great conviction of the inevitable victory of the Imperial troops. That broadcast was relayed through the Ministorum's own laud hailer systems, which were spread far and wide to carry Pontifex Galluck's sermons to the faithful in every hivesprawl. All those who doubted Calgar's assertions had but to look up at the night sky, where a swirling blue-green vortex was surrounded by the pinpricks of light that had once been the Chaos fleet.



The Black Templars are highly unusual in the Adeptus Astartes, for they have a religious faith in the Emperor. They harbour hatred for all witches and mutants.

The Silver Skulls place great stock in omens and prognostications, valuing superstition as others do logic. They fight their wars with an uncanny prescience.



THE WAR UPON THE BRINK

The destruction of the planet Vigilus was all but complete, yet still the Imperium would not yield. Though anarchy reigned in every hivespawl – even Hyperia – Saint's Haven still stood, and with the breaking of the Chaos armada, a slow trickle of reinforcements began to reach the planet. It was not over yet.

Calgar's widely broadcast speeches reached millions of the citizens that had panicked, gone to ground or turned from the light of the Emperor over the course of the War of Nightmares. They were being addressed directly by Marneus Calgar, the son of the Primarch himself, a figure who had become so legendary over the course of the war that even the shanty tribes had heard tell of his name. This great warrior was exhorting them to fight back, to keep strong in their faith and to ensure that, though Vigilus was sorely wounded, it would not pass into the darkness forever.

At first the message was ignored, for the people of Vigilus had been

so traumatised, had seen so much killing, that mere words could not light the flame of defiance in their chests. But here and there, new troops began to join the fight. These were Imperial forces that had been withdrawn from war zones the Vigilus Senate had conceded as lost. From Kaelac's Bane came the Void Tridents and the Castellans of the Rift; from Mortwald came the battle-scarred remnants of Captain Fane's command; and from Oteck came not only a massive influx of Sisters of Battle, but Haldor Icepelt and the heroic Brand Sabrewulf, last of his strike force to survive the xenos insurrections of that troubled spawl. Cadian Shock Troops and Ventrillian Nobles

rubbed shoulders with Munitorum Preacher militia; Mortifactors joined forces with Ogryn Auxilla; and Ultramarines fought alongside native Vigilant Guardsmen.

When the first of the Ministorum ships sent to reinforce Vigilus emerged from the Nachmund Gauntlet and made planetfall, the tiny seed of hope sown by these reinforcements began to bear fruit. With the Vhulian Anomaly banished as a result of the Dark Angels' strike at the Citadel Vigilant, and with the Chaos fleet in disarray, it was possible to send spacecraft to Vigilus' orbit once more – and from there, to make landing at Hyperia.

THE WHEELS OF JUSTICE TURN SLOWLY

The warships of the Ecclesiarchy were not the only ones to make planetfall after the breaking of the Chaos fleet. In the first stage of the War of Beasts, Lucienne Agamemnus had sent an astrotelepathic petition to Terra requesting a specific kind of aid, the message travelling via Neo-vellum and through the Nachmund Gauntlet. The missive had been received by the Adeptus Astra Telepathica, and – after it had been put through a decade of systemic procedures, and been lost entirely for a while – by chance it found its way to the High Lords of Terra. The Governor's request was granted, though she was long dead by the time the results manifested.

The decision of the High Lords resulted in a small raptor-like craft being diverted on its return journey from the Cadian Gate towards Vigilus. Within its cockpit was a trio of Imperial Assassins, and within the stasis chambers of its hold, three more. It is a testament to the strategic value of Vigilus

that such a high number of operatives had been spared by the Officio Assassinorum. The three within the stasis chambers of the hold were from the Eversor Temple; they were deployed via Drop Pod to the heartlands of the Ork Western Scrap City Cluster. Within a single week of making planetfall, their combined kill tally included six Ork warlords, fifteen Big Meks, and the destruction of the Great Gargant, *Gorkzilla*.

While the Eversors had been sent to strike at the greenskins, their fellows had been deployed against the Genestealer Cultists. No less than twenty-two of the Pauper Princes' war leaders were taken down by the trio of Callidus Assassins known as the Daughters of Meh'Lindi. These infiltrators had disguised themselves as latter-generation Genestealer Hybrids to get as close as possible to the heart of the cult.

The crowning glory of their covert mission saw the Patriarch Grandsire Wurm slain by

phase blade, though none of the Assassins escaped alive. They did not realise that there was more than one Patriarch upon Vigilus – for the planet was populous enough to support several independent gene-sects – and that the latter incarnation of Grandsire Wurm would rise amongst the planet's xenocultists as a saviour reborn.

The Assassins completely ignored the Chaos presence upon Vigilus, for the request from the Governor had been sent before the War of Nightmares had begun, and hence the heretics lay outside of their mission parameters. But their lethal ministrations destabilised, if not halted, the invasions of the xenos species that had battered the Imperial defences for so long. In doing so, they bought the Imperial forces a reprieve in which they could focus on hurling back the renegades and traitors that still stalked the streets. It was another step on the path to victory, and Calgar was glad of it.

More and more Ecclesiarchy ships arrived, summoned by the fervent pleas of Slyne Galluck and the terse demands of Temperance Blaise, and each disgorged another battalion of Sisters of Battle. Block by city block, hab by filthy hab, the Adepta Sororitas began to purge the taint of Chaos and the lingering stench of the xenos invader from the hivesprawl of Hyperia. Calgar adapted his speeches to incorporate the latest intel with each day, weaving inspirational tales designed to resonate with the mentality of a populace that was slowly beginning to believe Vigilus could be saved. Every new dawn, more citizens came out of hiding to sign up to fight alongside the Sisters of Battle; they came first in dribs and drabs, then in mobs, then in crowds, until the frateris militia numbered almost as many as the Adepta Sororitas themselves.

A scattering of warships made it across the Nachmund Gauntlet,

for though that great channel had narrowed, and was more dangerous to cross than ever, it had not disappeared entirely. The ships brought a few hundred reinforcements each; a paltry number in the grand scheme of things, and though the propaganda broadcasts made much of their arrival, they contributed little but a boost in morale. For a time, it seemed that only Hyperia could truly be saved. Yet as more Imperial ships began to reach the capital, the troops under Calgar started to push outwards rather than simply to shore up defences. The long road to recovery had begun, but whether that was a fool's errand or a realistic goal, none could say.

Vigilus could not be forsaken, could not be subject to Exterminatus as Imperial doctrine would have it. As Calgar had maintained over and over again, this was a planet the Imperium could not afford to lose. A few still clung to the hope

that the crippled world of Vigilus could one day be counted as a functional node in the Imperium once more, but it was not clear whether the Lord Macragge was truly amongst them. Many of the senate saw a darker fate unfolding, though they dared not speak of it openly. Ominous possibilities hung in the air, unvoiced, but powerful nonetheless. The war for the sentinel planet could well become a hungering void into which the forces of Mankind would pour more and more resources, without ever truly defeating the enemies they had faced there.





MEGADREALIS

VIGILUS

1. Vigilus	4.807 8.914	0.815
2. Vigilus	7.847 10.422	0.881
3. Vigilus	10.814 13.181	0.947
4. Vigilus	13.781 16.042	1.013
5. Vigilus	16.748 18.903	1.079
6. Vigilus	19.715 21.764	1.145
7. Vigilus	22.682 24.625	1.211
8. Vigilus	25.649 27.486	1.277
9. Vigilus	28.616 30.347	1.343
10. Vigilus	31.583 33.208	1.409
11. Vigilus	34.550 36.069	1.475
12. Vigilus	37.517 38.930	1.541
13. Vigilus	40.484 41.791	1.607
14. Vigilus	43.451 44.652	1.673
15. Vigilus	46.418 47.513	1.739
16. Vigilus	49.385 50.374	1.805
17. Vigilus	52.352 53.235	1.871
18. Vigilus	55.319 56.096	1.937
19. Vigilus	58.286 58.957	2.003
20. Vigilus	61.253 61.818	2.069
21. Vigilus	64.220 64.679	2.135
22. Vigilus	67.187 67.540	2.201
23. Vigilus	70.154 70.401	2.267
24. Vigilus	73.121 73.262	2.333
25. Vigilus	76.088 76.123	2.399
26. Vigilus	79.055 78.984	2.465
27. Vigilus	82.022 81.845	2.531
28. Vigilus	84.989 84.706	2.597
29. Vigilus	87.956 87.567	2.663
30. Vigilus	90.923 90.428	2.729
31. Vigilus	93.890 93.289	2.795
32. Vigilus	96.857 96.150	2.861
33. Vigilus	99.824 99.011	2.927
34. Vigilus	102.791 101.872	2.993
35. Vigilus	105.758 104.733	3.059
36. Vigilus	108.725 107.594	3.125
37. Vigilus	111.692 110.455	3.191
38. Vigilus	114.659 113.316	3.257
39. Vigilus	117.626 116.177	3.323
40. Vigilus	120.593 119.038	3.389
41. Vigilus	123.560 121.899	3.455
42. Vigilus	126.527 124.760	3.521
43. Vigilus	129.494 127.621	3.587
44. Vigilus	132.461 130.482	3.653
45. Vigilus	135.428 133.343	3.719
46. Vigilus	138.395 136.204	3.785
47. Vigilus	141.362 139.065	3.851
48. Vigilus	144.329 141.926	3.917
49. Vigilus	147.296 144.787	3.983
50. Vigilus	150.263 147.648	4.049

MORTWALD

DONTORIA