

CURSE OF THE WULFEN



WARHAMMER







GURSE OF THE WULFEN

THE SAGA OF THE LOST

DRAMATIS PERSONAE



DARK ANGELS

- Azrael
Supreme Grand Master of the Dark Angels
- Sammael
Grand Master of the Ravenwing
- Zaelion
Ravenwing Company Champion
- Ekrophan
Ravenwing Apothecary
- Araphil
Master of the 6th Company



SPACE WOLVES

- Logan Grimnar
Great Wolf of the Space Wolves
- Ulrik the Slayer
Wolf High Priest
- Bran Redmaw
Wolf Lord of the Bloodmaws
- Engir Krakendoom
Wolf Lord of the Seawolves
- Erik Morkai
Wolf Lord of the Sons of Morkai
- Gunnar Red Moon
Wolf Lord of the Red Moons
- Harald Deathwolf
Wolf Lord of the Deathwolves
- Bjorn Stormwolf
Wolf Lord of the Stormwolves
- Egil Iron Wolf
Wolf Lord of the Ironwolves
- Krom Dragongaze
Wolf Lord of the Drakeslayers
- Ragnar Blackmane
Wolf Lord of the Blackmanes
- Sven Bloodhowl
Wolf Lord of the Firehowlers
- Kjarl Grimblood
Wolf Lord of the Grimbloods



GREY KNIGHTS

- Arvann Stern
Brother-Captain of the 3rd Brotherhood





THE LOST BROTHERS

Ten thousand years have passed since Prospero burned. Ten millennia of war and darkness, during which time much has been forgotten, and more erased. Yet there are those who know the truth of that terrible day, when the Thousand Sons felt the Emperor's wrath for their sorcerous transgressions.

Some maintain that good intentions led the Thousand Sons down the road to damnation. Others assert that the XV Legion were Warp-touched sorcerers who deserved their fate. Whatever the truth, the sorcerers of Prospero were judged wanting by the Emperor, and their sentence was carried out by the assembled might of the Space Wolves.

Like fiery comets the Wolves of Fenris fell upon Prospero's capital city of Tizca. Drop Pods in their hundreds scarred the blue skies black with their smoking trails. The Thousand Sons wielded forbidden sorceries in their desperation, and wrought great destruction in the Space Wolves' ranks. Still, though the XV Legion fought with all their strength and guile, they could not stand before the Fenrisians' savagery.

The Space Wolves tore through one Prosperine battle line after another. At their head charged the ferocious warriors of the 13th Great Company. These were the Wulfenkind, the most feral and savage of an already ferocious Space Marine Legion. Before the roaring bolters and snarling chainswords of the 13th Company the sons of Prospero fell in their dozens, until it seemed there could be no hope for their survival.

But Leman Russ' invading Legion would be denied their final victory by the Thousand Sons' Primarch, Magnus the Red. By his fell magic did the surviving Thousand Sons escape judgement, fleeing into the Eye of Terror through a scintillating portal, and swearing vengeance upon those they had once called brother.

The Space Wolves' hunt was done. Prospero had been razed, while the strength of the Thousand Sons was broken and their remnants fled. With full-blown civil war raging throughout the Imperium, Leman Russ judged that his Legion's strength was needed elsewhere. However, not all of the Wolf King's sons withdrew. The 13th Company pursued the Thousand Sons through their portal, intent on finishing the hunt. Some claim they did this upon the orders of their Primarch. Others say that a madness took the Wulfenkind that day, and made them deaf to the Wolf King's words. Whatever the truth, the 13th Company chased their prey deep into the swirling madness of the Eye of Terror, and there they disappeared.

They have not been seen since...







CHAPTER 1

ECHOES OF DAMNATION







HORROR ON NURADES

The Warp storm that engulfed the bleak hive world of Nurades did so with terrible fury. Its onset was sudden, unheralded by dark portents or empyric disturbance. One moment, the crowded hive world span on as it always had. The next, the planet's skies lit with kaleidoscopic flame and the laws of nature went irrevocably mad.

Mutation and cannibalistic insanity ran rampant through the trillions-strong populace until the hive cities rang to the screams and gunfire of heretic rebellion. The planet's bedrock convulsed as twisted spires of bone forced their way up from below. Blazing skulls rained from the skies, and wherever they struck, tides of gibbering Daemons spilled forth to attack the beleaguered planetary defence forces. Seeing the damnation of his world looming, Nurades' Planetary Governor had his Astropaths send a desperate cry for help. It did not go unanswered.

Weeks passed, and the planet's doom seemed certain. Just when the last embers of hope were burning out, the Sea of Stars parted for the onset of the Deathwolves, the Great Company of Lord Harald Deathwolf. Space Wolves attack craft punched through the atmospheric firestorms at blistering speed, the warriors on board hungry to win glory and rescue Nurades' people from their fate. Gunships and Drop Pods plunged to the planet's surface, their blue-grey hulls emblazoned with Lord Deathwolf's Ravening Jaw heraldry. From within these craft, the Space Wolves surged forth to begin their hunt.

Mounted upon his huge Thunderwolf, Icetooth, the Wolf Lord led one lightning-fast attack after another to reclaim the tainted world. At the feet of the monolithic Hive Predomitus, the unstoppable charge of Harald's Thunderwolf Cavalry shattered the daemonic battle line and – after a savage and costly battle – saw a great cohort of blood-daemons banished back to the Warp. Amid the clanking maze of the Industrium Sub-terranean, the Deathwolves fought a hit-and-run war against the massed daemonic cavalry of the Tzeentchian Herald Slithertwyst. They emerged from this labyrinthine hell bloodied but victorious, before going on to break the siege of Hive Genos and rescue the governor himself. As weeks of hellish warfare ground by, Deathwolf remained cold and confident, his vast military experience and hunter's intuition allowing him to keep his abhorrent foes off balance.

With the warfires dying in the skies, the Deathwolves pushed into the northern polar reaches. Here, a last enclave of Daemons had claimed a string of abandoned fortifications long rumoured among the Nuradean peoples to be cursed. Fenrisians are nothing if not superstitious, but after the hellish ordeal of the preceding weeks it would take more than local legend to turn them back. They pushed cautiously forwards into this last stronghold, wary of some final Chaos trick.





STRANGE SAVIOURS

The ambush came as the Deathwolves neared the heart of the abandoned fortifications. Looming, tumbledown bastions and bunkers flared with hellish light as Daemons sprang gleefully from behind veils of illusion to attack. Grey Hunters and Blood Claws were blasted to ash where they stood as a rain of daemonic fire seared down from the battlements above. Snorting Juggernauts stampeded into the Space Wolves' midst, smashing power-armoured bodies right and left while their Bloodletter riders lashed out with smoking hellblades. Everywhere, moonlit stillness shattered into mayhem as the Deathwolves found themselves fighting on all fronts.

Despite the Space Wolves' caution, the surprise of the attack was total, and Harald Deathwolf cursed whatever unnatural trickery had confounded his senses. Still, the Space Wolves fought back hard. Raising bolters and flamers they blazed away into the enemy's midst, sending sprays of daemonic ichor flying. Harald himself led a vicious counter-charge, he and Canis Wolfborn hacking their way through a droning mass of Plaguebearers in an attempt to break free from the trap. They were swiftly driven back as more warpflame rained from on high, flung by Tzeentchian Daemons that capered across the rooftops.

The Deathwolves found themselves caught in a swiftly tightening noose, pelted from above by wave after wave of mutating fire. Fangs bared, they fought back to back, hugging what cover they could against the Tzeentchian bombardment. It was a defiant display, but Harald Deathwolf could see that, if something drastic were not done soon, his warriors would be annihilated. The Wolf Lord's scowl deepened as he gave orders for his Thunderwolf Cavalry to mass around him. They would stage a last charge, buying time for their brothers on foot to escape.

It was then that the hackles rose on Harald's neck. Massive figures were suddenly loose amongst the Daemons on the rooftops, tearing into the Horrors with astonishing savagery. Ichor rained down on the battle, replacing the devastating firestorm of moments before. The Deathwolves raised a howling battle cry, and their eyes widened in amazement as it was answered by a monstrous baying from the figures above.

Dispatching the last of their gangling prey, the massive warriors leapt from the rooftops, slamming into the Daemon horde with their clawed limbs swinging. For a brief moment, Harald Deathwolf simply gaped in shock. The figures were huge, bestial terrors spattered head to toe in Daemons' blood. But as they tore into the reeling foe and the Deathwolves rallied to the fight, there could be no mistake; the battered power armour and canine features of the newcomers marked them beyond a doubt as warriors of the Space Wolves.





BLOOD IN THE MOONLIGHT



From the moment the newcomers entered the fray, the tide of battle turned. The hulking beast-warriors moved with terrifying speed, stabbing and raking with claws, fangs and jagged punch-daggers. No Daemon could stand against their sheer animal ferocity. Buzzing Plague Drones were torn from the air even as Bloodletters and Plaguebearers were disembowelled or torn limb from limb.

Seizing their chance, the Deathwolves surged forwards with howls of fury. Axes thunked into unnatural flesh. Daemonic limbs and heads tumbled in sprays of sizzling gore. Long Fangs – at last given the space to fight on their own terms – sent murderous volleys into the collapsing lines of the enemy. At the heart of the carnage, Harald Deathwolf fought furiously to avenge his fallen packmates. Even as he hacked and hewed, dodged and blocked, the Wolf Lord's eyes were ever on the newcomers.

Torn and blasted into submission, the last of the daemonic horde fell. With their demise, a quiet descended upon the moonlit ruins. The wind sighed forlornly between crumbling structures. Grit and spent casings crunched underfoot as the Deathwolves recovered their fallen.

In the sudden calm, all eyes turned to the newcomers. The huge figures had drawn together into a pack, lurking amid the pooling shadows of a ruined bastion. Though their bestial features were obscured, their eyes reflected the moonlight and shone like chips of ice in the gloom. No Space Wolf made any move to approach. All held back in deference to their alpha.

Harald Deathwolf swung down from Icetooth's broad back, and stalked slowly towards the growling newcomers. The Wolf Lord kept his hands well away from his weapons, wishing to offer no sign of hostility. He kept his back straight and his eyes forwards, locking his stare with the unblinking gaze of the largest feral warrior. Slowly, pace by pace, Harald walked from moonlight into shadow, until he stood before the massive figures.

Even hunched, the creatures looked down upon Lord Deathwolf. Their long, powerful limbs and broad chests were barely encased in rag-tag power armour, while their faces were lupine and bestial. Around them hung an acrid reek, a mingling of Space Marine combat stimulants and animal musk. Deathwolf saw intelligence in their amber eyes, and recognised a twisted echo of his own features in those of the beasts before him. It was the faded insignia on the warriors' armour that truly made Harald's hearts beat faster. There, unmistakable even beneath a plethora of scratches and dents, was a Fenrisian symbol not seen for ten thousand years. Twisted and monstrous though they undoubtedly were, the newcomers bore the heraldry of the 13th Great Company – the Mark of the Wulfenkind.

The largest of the bestial warriors loomed over Harald for a long moment, a rumbling growl shuddering deep in the beast's chest, before he dropped heavily to one knee. The gesture signified warrior nobility, and in swift succession his hulking packmates followed his lead.

Harald Deathwolf placed one gauntleted hand upon the shoulder of the creatures' leader, urging him to stand once more. The Wolf Lord spoke then, his words pitched too softly for the warriors of his Great Company to hear. Yet none could miss the slurred, snarling response of the newcomers' pack leader.

'We... are... brother. We... are... Wulfen.'

The hollow moan of the wind filled the silence that followed. Then, Harald Deathwolf turned away and marched back to where Ietooth stood with his hackles raised and metallic fangs bared. Harald barked out orders as he went, jolting his gaping warriors into sudden motion. The Deathwolves were done with this world, announced the Wolf Lord in a tone that brooked no argument. The Daemons were banished, and the Planetary Governor was well capable of pacifying his rebellious population on his own. This new matter took precedence over anything else. These Wulfen, Harald decreed, must be brought back to the Fang without delay. If they truly were what they seemed to be, then their appearance was momentous in the extreme.

As the Space Wolves made ready for extraction from Nurades' surface, none could mistake their lord's grim mood. Nor could they misinterpret his order for an armed 'honour guard' of Grey Hunters to accompany the Wulfen at all times. It was clear to the Deathwolves that this historic moment had brought Harald Deathwolf not joy, but deep disquiet.

Dark Angels Company Master Araphil frowned. Auspex readings suggested that much had happened here, only a day or so past. Newly wrought battle scars bore this out, old walls riddled with fresh craters and scorch marks. Moreover, there was no sign of Arhad and his Scouts. Araphil's brothers were searching the Nuradean ruins, but the Company Master found the Scouts' absence disturbing.

An alarmed shout brought Araphil running. Scattered about the inside of an old bunker, the remains of the Scouts made for a grisly spectacle. They had been torn apart, armour marred with savage claw-marks. Daemons' work, surely, thought Araphil. But something felt wrong.

Amongst the body parts, he saw something twitch. A survivor. Swiftly, Araphil knelt at the fallen Scout's side and shouted for an Apothecary. The young warrior's face was waxen, his eyes closed, but he was unmistakably alive. Moreover, lying at his side with its gravitic impellers smashed, was a servo-skull whose memory-light blinked steadily. The Company Master took the small device in one hand and stood, staring into that still-blinking eye.

Behind it, he hoped, lay answers.





THE OLD WOLF'S DECREE

Mere weeks after the incredible discovery made by the Deathwolves, Chapter Master Logan Grimnar gathered his Wolf Lords within the Fang. They had made all haste in returning to their home world, and it was considered a good omen that the Sea of Stars had parted calmly before their passage. Now, Grimnar and his lieutenants took their places around the Grand Annulus to debate the return of the Wulfen.

A difficult matter lay before the Wolf Lords. What did the return of these 13th Company brothers mean, and what was to be done about it? Grimnar began by revealing that, in the wake of the discovery on Nurades, further Warp storms had been detected over Imperial worlds from Atrapan to Fimmir. The phenomena were scattered, but their distinctive empyric signatures stood out like beacons. Though his speech was limited, the Wulfen pack leader – who called himself Yngvir – had repeated over and over that more brothers were coming, and that they were borne upon the wings of the storm.

Ulrik the Slayer now spoke up. To the Wolf Priest's obvious frustration, Yngvir could articulate little about his past. But surely, asserted Ulrik with eyes alight, the appearance of the Wulfen was an omen. Russ' own return must be at hand. At this, the Hall of the Great Wolf exploded with shouting. Gunnar Red Moon demanded to see Ulrik's proof of this wild claim, even as Kjarl Grimblood warned that this omen might, in fact, be of a darker sort. Egil Iron Wolf questioned whether they even knew that these creatures were really the Wulfenkind; if so, was their bestial form some terrible perversion of the Canis Helix, or a doom that all the Space Wolves faced in time? Erik Morkai growled back that it didn't matter, so long as they could serve as suitably deadly weapons. At the same time Bran Redmaw surged to his feet in a rage, demanding to know whether Iron Wolf thought the same of his famously savage war-packs.

So it went on, tempers flaring and insults flying until finally Krom Dragongaze demanded they consult Bjorn the Fell-Handed. A tense hush fell as Ulrik revealed he had already tried to do so, but that the ancient would not awaken. Ragnar Blackmane spoke up into the silence. It did not matter, he said, whether the Wulfen were a gift or a curse. The first priority must be to gather them swiftly, before anyone else did so. Should the Inquisition, or even some of their brother Chapters encounter the returned Wulfen, uncomfortable conclusions would undoubtedly be drawn. Though this was met by snarled oaths, all knew that Blackmane was right. There was no further debate as Grimnar issued his decree. The Great Companies would voyage to the sites where the Warp storms raged. They would recover their Wulfen brothers, and would treat them as honoured Fenrisian warriors unless the truth proved them to be otherwise. In return, these returned warriors might lead the Space Wolves to their long-lost Primarch.





IRON CLAWS

Since their return to the Fang, Harald Deathwolf had quartered the Wulfen in one of the fortress' many ice-bound galleries, under guard from his own hand-picked Grey Hunters. It was while the returned warriors languished here that the respected Iron Priest Hrothgar Swordfang applied himself to girding them for the Chapter's wars.

Upon the orders of the Great Wolf, Iron Priest Swordfang moved amongst the Wulfen with his retinue of Servitors. Grimnar had decreed that Swordfang would arm and armour the Wulfen, readying them to fight alongside their brothers. Cautious at first, the Iron Priest soon became used to the feral warriors' presence. Indeed, the more time he spent around the Wulfen, the more the Iron Priest found himself filled with a restless energy that he directed into his work.

The first step was to determine what of the Wulfen's archaic wargear could be salvaged. The battle plate worn by the bestial warriors was little more than scrap. All the same, they seemed reluctant to part with the familiar

apparel. Two Servitors were dismembered by angry claw-swipes before the Wulfen were finally parted from their battered armour. It was replaced by power armour forged by Swordfang's own hand, its dimensions enlarged and systems adapted to accommodate the Wulfens' hulking frames. Once armoured, the Wulfen took quickly to their new gear, the enhanced power output lending them speed and strength in excess of anything they had known before.

The punch-daggers wielded by Yngvir and his packmates were clearly effective weapons, but it did not take an Iron Priest's practised eye to see that – with their massive, muscular frames – the Wulfen could bear larger and more potent weaponry with ease.



After overruling the objections of Harald Deathwolf's sentries, the Iron Priest began weapons trials with a will. To his surprise, Swordfang found the Wulfen initially reticent; the huge warriors handled chainswords and axes clumsily, the weapons dwarfed in their huge fists. The feral warriors abandoned such weapons when goaded to battle by the practice servitors Swordfang provided as opposition, preferring to tear the cyborgs limb from limb. Undaunted, the Iron Priest increased the size and heft of the weapons while avoiding anything overly complex. Finally, he met with gratifying success when several of the Wulfen took to the use of thunder hammers and storm shields. With their massive strength, the Wulfen were able to wield these weapons with breathtaking speed, smashing apart one combat Servitor after another.

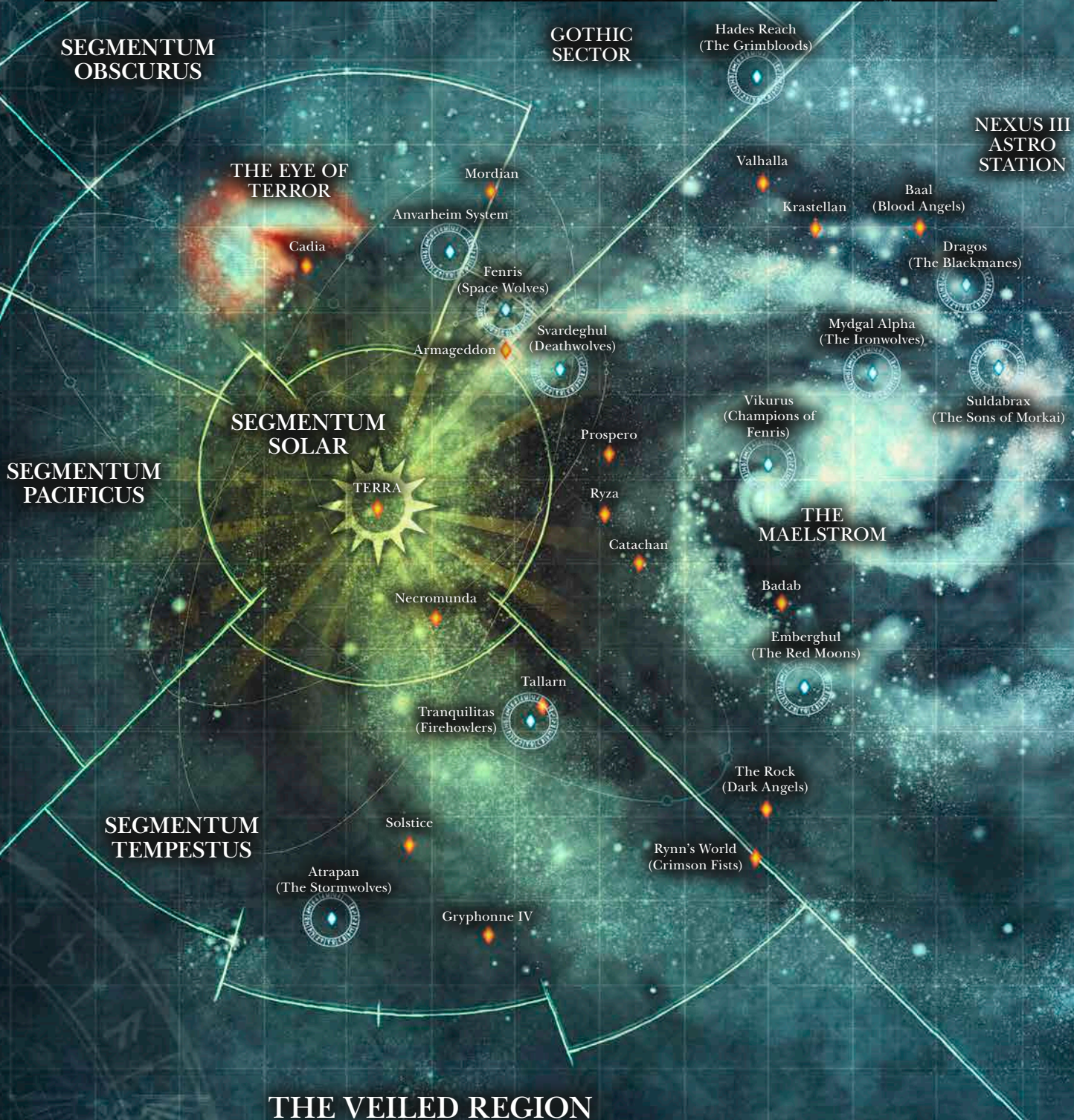
The Fang's ancient halls are decorated with relic weapons that date back through the millennia. Many have hung in situ for so long that the Fenrisians saw them as nothing

but martial decoration. It was one of these weapons that a Wulfen warrior took up on the ninth day of the trials, his claws wrapping around the haft of a great frost axe with the hesitancy of dim memory. Swordfang watched as the Wulfen hefted a weapon long thought purely ceremonial. The Iron Priest's eyes widened as the Wulfen suddenly roared and bisected a marble statue with a single thunderous swing. Once the alarmed Grey Hunters had been talked down from riddling the axe-wielder with bolt shells, Swordfang was able to fully consider this revelation. If one relic weapon had been made for Wulfen hands, perhaps there were more? Had such warriors existed in the Chapter's past, or had their eventual existence been predicted? The search that followed produced further frost weapons of prodigious size, as well as an impulse-triggered grenade module that integrated seamlessly with the Wulfen's distinctive pattern of neural activity. Giving orders for the search to continue, Swordfang hurried to furnish Grimnar with his report. The Wulfen were ready for war.



ACROSS THE SEA OF STARS

Amid wilds howls and the booming of vast Fenrisian war drums, the Space Wolves set out to sail the Sea of Stars. Each Great Company followed a different path, chasing the strange beacon-fires of the Warp storms. It was a time of grand adventure and desperate battle, during which the Space Wolves raced to recover their ancient kin from countless battlefields, saved untold Imperial citizens from daemonic horror, and wrote new sagas in the blood of their foes.



GHOUL STARS

Spartha IV
(The Seawolves)

ASTRO TELEPATHIC
DUCT

ULTIMA SEGMENTUM

Finnir
(The Bloodmaws)

TAU
EMPIRE

Macragge
(Ultramarines)

THE EASTERN FRINGE



Voyage of the Coldfang:

The Strike Cruiser *Coldfang* departs Fenris, travelling under escort to the Anvarheim System. Here it forms a rallying point; each freshly recovered pack of Wulfen is brought to the *Coldfang* for rearming and observation. Only once all the lost brothers have been recovered will the Strike Cruiser bear them back to the Fang with due ceremony.



The Giants' Cauldron:

Driving into the Warp-spawned maelstrom around the gas giant Fimmir, Bran Redmaw's Great Company make landfall upon the vapour-mining platforms that ring the planet. Hacking a path through the possessed corpses of the miners, Redmaw's warriors join the Wulfen they have been sent to find in a gloriously bloody slaughter of their foes. Only the approach of other Imperial forces compels Redmaw to abandon the fight before the infestation is fully cleansed.



Spartha IV: Engir

Krakendoom's Great Company reaches the turbulent world of Spartha IV to find their daemonic targets already banished and Eldar from Craftworld Ulthwé hunting the Wulfen amid the mesa-storms of the planet's cyclone belt. The Eldar are driven off, saving the lives of thousands of local ore miners. Despite growing misgivings, Krakendoom recovers the surviving Wulfen and departs.



Fenris: Keen to show

repentance after his mistakes on Alaric Prime, Krom Dragongaze swears a selfless oath; he and his Great Company will watch over the Fang in their brothers' absence, forgoing the glory of the hunt for the honour of the long vigil.



Dragos: Ragnar

Blackmane's Great Company fall upon the world of Dragos, battling through Daemon-haunted jungles to recover their 13th Company brethren. As each pack of Wulfen is recovered, Blackmane sends them to Anvarheim in swift warships while his forces fight on and rescue numerous Adeptus Mechanicus personnel from research stations in the jungle depths.



Hades Reach: Braving

wild solar storms and lakes of sentient fire, Kjarl Grimblood's warriors defeat a host of Daemons led by the Blue Scribes in order to rescue a handful of Wulfen brothers.



Atrapan: The situation

on this prison world is already dire when Bjorn Stormwolf's Great Company arrive. Loose amongst the inmates, the Wulfen are causing carnage. Stormwolf bellows the order to unleash his war dogs, carving through armed gangs of convicts to extract the Wulfen. During the fighting, Stormwolf descends into a state of berserk savagery that only abates when the fighting is done.



Suldabrax: While

recovering Wulfen from the ironclouds of this strange world, Erik Morkai bests a Slaaneshi Daemon Prince in single combat and saves the lives of over a billion Imperial citizens.



Emberghul: Spacial

distortion from the Warp storm engulfing Emberghul causes Gunnar Red Moon's Great Company to arrive on the world mere moments after they set out from the Fang. Aided by the prophetic powers of their Rune Priest, Skaerl Wyrdspeer, the Space Wolves are able to catch the invading Daemons in a series of crippling ambushes and snatch up the Wulfen in a matter of hours.




THE DEATHWOLVES

The Deathwolves are amongst the greatest hunters and trackers in the galaxy. Led by Harald Deathwolf – whose affinity with all lupine beasts is unrivalled – it seemed certain that if any Great Company would swiftly bring the hunt for their lost kin to a successful conclusion, it would be these warriors.


	HARALD DEATHWOLF Wolf Lord of the Deathwolves	
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CANIS WOLFBORN Harald's Champion
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	THE RIDERS OF MORKAI 6 Thunderwolf Cavalry
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	THE THUNDERCLAWS 6 Thunderwolf Cavalry
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	THE REDHOWL HUNTERS 5 Thunderwolf Cavalry
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	MORKAI'S HUNTERS 10 Grey Hunters
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THE NIGHTWOLVES		10 Grey Hunters
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	THE FELLFANGS 5 Grey Hunters
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THE STORMSTALKERS		7 Grey Hunters
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	THE DEATHHOWLS 13 Blood Claws
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THE WULFSOULS		10 Blood Claws
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	THE ICEFANGS 5 Long Fangs
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THE STORMBOWS		5 Long Fangs
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	LOKYAR'S STALKERS 10 Wolf Scouts
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THE COLDEYES		6 Wolf Scouts
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THE HUNTBROTHERS 15 Fenrisian Wolves
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THE FROSTRUNNERS 15 Fenrisian Wolves
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VEGEL SHARD Venerable Dreadnought with helfrost cannon

HALFDR BANESTAR Venerable Dreadnought with plasma cannon

MANTLE OF THE ICE TROLL KING

Ripped as a trophy from the flesh of Blaugndir, this scaled cloak is said to be enchanted. Flames slide from its surface like waves from a rocky shore, even the helfires of Chaos finding no purchase upon the mantle's frozen hide.

STORM SHIELD

Lord Deathwolf's storm shield has seen much battle, and has saved the Wolf Lord's life countless times. Enfolded in a shimmering energy field, the shield is capable of turning aside even artillery blasts and sorcerous blades.

GLACIUS

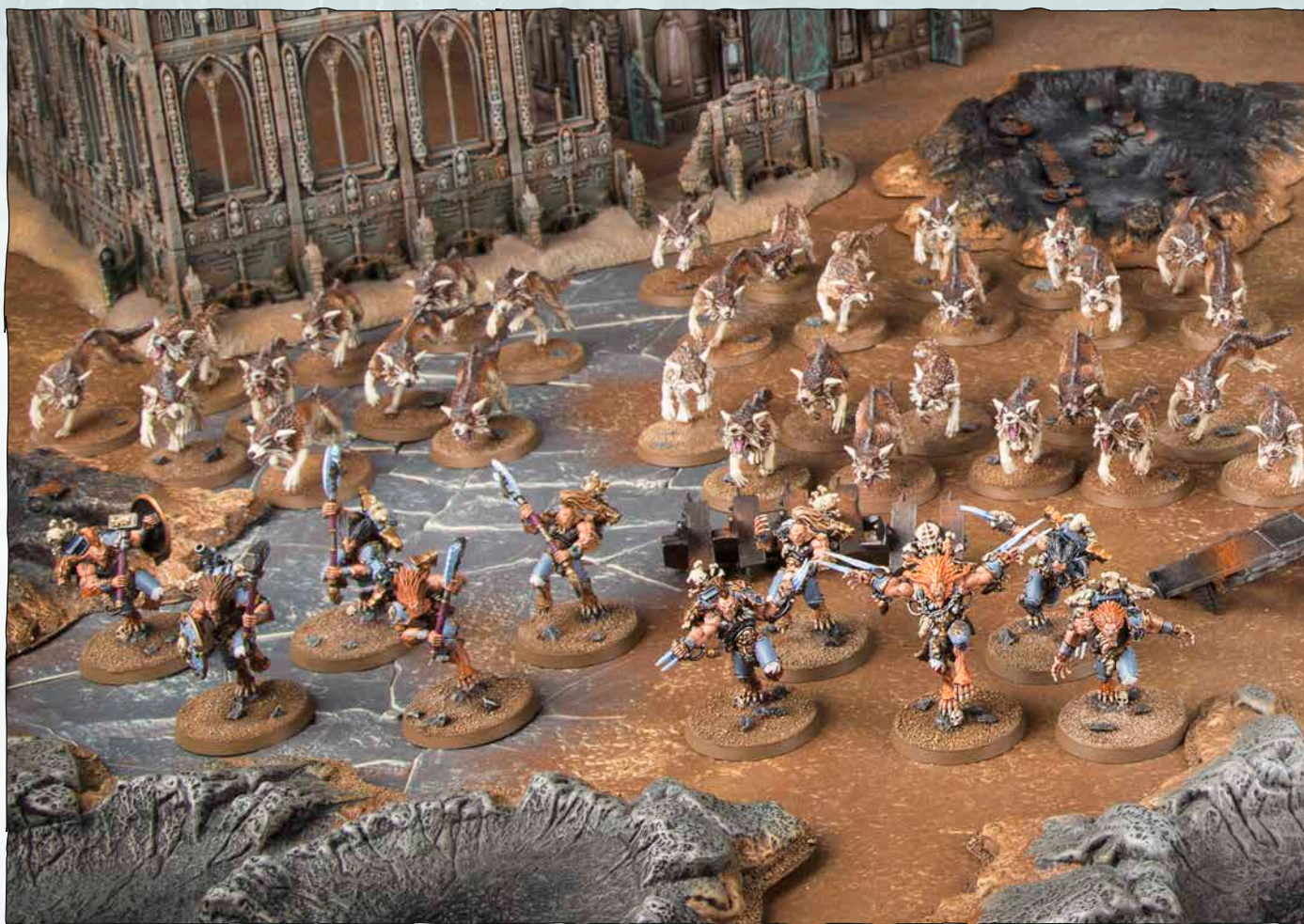
Harald Deathwolf's frost axe is a weapon of great notoriety. It was this blade that took the head of the ice troll king Blaugndir, that cut down the heretical demagogue Hateshriek, and that felled every one of the ninety-nine grief-beasts of Gallowhaunt.

ICETOOTH

This hulking Thunderwolf has been Harald Deathwolf's loyal steed through many battles. It was Icetooth who bore Harald to victory upon the blasted plains of Zslabin, and whose slavering jaws tore the life from Phaenoc the Unclean.



STRIKE FORCE WHITESTALKER



Sweeping through the void, the Deathwolves followed the storm-spoor that would lead them to their long-lost kin. Their ships surged through the Warp like a pack of wolves loping through a dark and dangerous forest. Ever at the fore was their flagship and Harald Deathwolf's personal Strike Cruiser, the *Alpha Fang*. As this swift and predatory fleet drew ever closer to the Warpstorm, the Wolf Lord assembled his hunting party from the finest warriors in his Great Company. Named Strike Force Whitestalker, this was the army that Harald would lead to war in person.

From the back of his grizzled steed, Icetooth, Harald prepared to lead this force on what promised to be a strange hunt. The quarry was not foe but friend, or so Grimnar claimed. Harald wanted to believe this, but the warning from his instincts was strong and his caution great. The Wolf Lord knew that tactical flexibility and keen hunter's instincts would be needed to first locate, and then safely extract, the Wulfen from a world crawling with daemonic entities.

The Riders of Morkai were heroes all, a band of relentless hunters whose courage and ferocity was renowned. These Thunderwolf-mounted Wolf Guard would form the core of Harald's force; they were fast and hard-hitting enough

to secure the Wulfen as soon as they were located, and to pacify them should it come to that. Wielding a mix of thunder hammers, frost axes and chainswords, this rugged band of warriors were well equipped for close quarters combat. Their hulking Thunderwolves lent the Riders of Morkai great resilience and savage strength, Wolf Guard and beasts combining to create an unstoppable force. Harald knew that he could count on these saga-sung heroes even should this hunt turn sour.

Experience would count for much upon this strange and perilous hunt. Thus, as Harald broke his Great Company into strike forces ready for the battles to come, the Wolf Lord ensured that his remaining Wolf Guard – including Canis Wolfborn – rode at the head of these hunting parties. Each force also included at least one pack of Grey Hunters. Decades of battle had tempered these warriors and cooled the impulsive fires of youth; not only would the Grey Hunters provide each force with a strategically versatile core, but their wisdom would count for much when it came to dealing with their feral quarry.

Two bands of battle-hardened Grey Hunters would go to war at Harald's side. Both Morkai's Hunters and the Nightwolves – famed for their bloody victory on the cursed



world of Perilforge – were armed with a flexible mix of mid- to close-range firepower and an array of fearsome close combat weaponry. Whatever daemonic horrors had spilled from the Warp storm in the wake of the returned Wulfen, Harald's Grey Hunters would be equal to the task of laying them low.

Harald believed that any encounter with the newly returned Wulfen could exhibit the violent potential of a primed krak grenade if poorly handled. As such, not only did the Wolf Lord keep his coolest-headed warriors on hand, but he also made sure that only his most tempered and capable Blood Claws joined Strike Force Whitestalker. This honour went to the ferocious band of Blood Claws known as the Deathhows. Long since passed through their trials of Morkai and learning to temper ambition with wisdom, these young warriors had already begun writing sagas of their own.

Strike Force Whitestalker was supported by veteran warriors whose skills would be crucial to the successful recovery of the Wulfen. The strike force's pack of Long Fangs were known as the Icefangs, and were famed throughout the Chapter for their lethal marksmanship during the long retreat from Vadyrheim. A pack of Wolf

Scouts known as Lokyar's Stalkers completed the Strike Force's infantry complement. Their leader – Lokyar Longblade – was known as 'the Stormghost' for his near supernatural ability to exploit weather conditions and terrain to mask his approach upon his prey. These two packs would provide Harald's Wolf Claw Strike Force with strategic flexibility, allowing them to observe enemy movements, to identify key threats and to eliminate them from great range.

The hunt for the Wulfen would require razor-keen senses, and the instincts of true trackers. To supplement the already-impressive abilities of his Deathwolves, Harald ensured that great numbers of Fenrisian Wolves prowled the flanks of his strike force. These Wolfkin were relentless beasts, used to tracking their prey across hundreds of miles of frozen Fenrisian wilderness. Those Wulfen recovered from Nurades also loped into battle at Harald's side, since the Wolf Lord did not trust the 13th Company brothers enough to let them out of his sight. Harald also reasoned that the kinship of the Wulfen with his quarry would prove useful in locating them, while the ferocious strength of these feral warriors could be vital in effecting their brothers' rescue.

THE HUNT BEGINS

A grim and jagged world, the planet of Svardeghul had proved a rich source of precious ores for the Imperium. Worked for centuries by smoke-belching rig-cities, the planet's hide was gnarled and scarred, while its thin atmosphere had been rendered barely breathable. The damage wrought by the Imperium had only been worsened by the Daemons of the Warp.

Churning madness met the Deathwolves as their warships burst from the Empyrean. The localised Warp storm acting as the Deathwolves' beacon had engulfed Svardeghul, and now its energies battered at the Fenrisian ships. Void shields crackled and hull plates groaned as the Warp storm pushed billowing tendrils through into realspace. Servitors chattered madly at their stations, spooling nonsense or bursting into flames. Every ship in the fleet sustained damage as they rode out the ferocious Warp tides. Vessels and crewmen alike transmuted into ice, dust or slopping ectoplasm. Harald Deathwolf cursed as he stood on the bridge of the *Alpha Fang*, listening to the reports. Such was the import of the Space Wolves' duty that they weathered the storm regardless. The fleet would have to withstand orbit long enough to locate and extract the Wulfen from the world below.

As the Space Wolves' sensors swept Svardeghul, it rapidly became clear that rescuing their lost brothers – if they were even down there – would be a challenge. A cacophony of terrified screams and helpless pleading clogged every vox frequency, except for those that resounded to booming, inhuman chants or spine-chilling daemonic

whispers. Harald Deathwolf surmised with a heavy heart that this world was a lost cause, and its people beyond rescue. Remote auguries confirmed that every last one of Svardeghul's huge, ambulatory rig-cities was overrun by unnatural horrors. Many rigs were already blazing charnel houses, and more than one of the piston-legged mining settlements had become possessed biomechanical predators, rampaging across Svardeghul's desolate surface to prey upon their still-inanimate fellows.

Harald reasoned that there was only one way to find the proverbial icicle in the snow drift. His Great Company were trackers and hunters without compare, but could not use those skills trammelled on their ships. The only way to find the Wulfen was for the Deathwolves to deploy to Svardeghul's surface, scouring the world's habitable zones for their quarry. It would take time, but if anyone had sharp enough senses for this hunt, it was the Deathwolves.

Hunting parties of Wolf Scouts and Grey Hunters scattered to remote regions of the globe, hoping to pick up the trail of the Wulfen. Following a prickle of intuition, Harald had his strike force put down at the last known site of



the planetary capital, Rig Delta. The Space Wolves were awed by the destruction that met their eyes upon landing. The towering rig-city had strode across the planet's rocky surface upon eight immense, piston-driven legs; it was these limbs that had carried Rig Delta off a high precipice to be smashed apart upon the plains below. Wreckage and mangled corpses stretched as far as the eye could see, curdled daemonic ichor dripping and pooling amongst the remains of the city's slaughtered populace.

Even over the stench of blood, the Wulfen detected an unmistakable scent. With halting words, pack leader Yngvir reported to Lord Deathwolf that he and his brothers smelled Wulfenkind to the south, mingled with the dread brimstone stink of Daemons. The source of the windborne scent was many miles distant, but the simple fact that Harald's force had located it at all was nothing short of miraculous. They had expected this hunt to last many weeks, and hope for a successful conclusion had not been great. The Deathwolves gave praise to Russ for this omen before setting out in pursuit. But Harald remembered the strange intuition that had brought him here, and his disquiet grew.

The Space Wolves' loping strides ate up the miles as they crossed the plains beneath the weird, whirling aurorae of the Warp storm. Moaning faces and hellish sigils formed and dispersed across the upper atmosphere, but the Space Wolves ignored them. Their Wolf Scouts ranged ahead, the Wolfkin to their flanks, while the Stormwolf Gunship *Runeclaw* followed behind, the Deathwolf Blood Claws forming a flying reserve within its capacious hold.

Cresting a rocky ridge, Harald looked down upon a scene of madness. The Shatterfields had once been a rich mining site, but years of excavation had left the whole area a broken expanse of spoil-mounds, jagged ravines, and dry, cracked plains. Down amid that desolation, the Deathwolves' keen eyesight picked out the distant, hulking figures they had come to find. The Wulfen were already locked in battle with a great mass of daemonic foes. The bestial warriors were vastly outnumbered, and had retreated into an area of sharp rocks where the enemy were forced to come at them piecemeal. As flaming chariots swept overhead trailing warpflame, and Daemonettes stabbed at the Wulfen, it could not be long before the 13th Company brothers were overwhelmed.

Harald Deathwolf hesitated for a long moment atop the ridge, before at last raising his frost axe and signalling the attack. There were no howled war cries as Strike Force Whitestalker began to lope down the rocky slope, no battle shouts or oaths as they accelerated to a run, then a charge. The horde of Daemons before them was completely fixated on the Wulfen and had not yet realised that the Deathwolves were upon them. Harald and his warriors would make the Warpspawn pay for their lack of caution.

Strike Force Whitestalker ploughed into the enemy's rear ranks with the sudden ferocity of a wolf pack at the kill.

The wind whipped past Harald as he charged towards his unwary prey, but he felt no joy in this hunt. The Wolf Lord swung his frost axe savagely, hacking through a surprised Daemon and splitting it in two. Icetooth thundered on, crashing through a mass of Pink Horrors. Something about this quest sat wrong with Harald, something that had prickled at his instincts since he first heard those great brutes howling on Nurades. The Wolf Lord couldn't sink his fangs into what was truly troubling him, but it felt good to vent his formless unease as violence upon the Daemon filth.

The infernal enemy were turning now, reacting with shock and outrage at the Fenrisian newcomers interrupting their sport. The Daemons stabbed with vorpal claws and hurled wyrdfire, shrieking their wrath. Harald pressed on regardless, swinging his axe in killing arcs as he forced a path ever closer to the Wulfen.

The Deathwolf would obey Grimnar's commands to rescue these beast warriors but he would not pretend to like it, and he would not lie to himself that – for a moment up on the ridge – he hadn't considered simply turning around and leaving the Wulfen to their fate.



Pink Horrors were shredded by bolter fire, the rubbery blue simulacra that burst from their corpses cut down in turn. Trilling Slaaneshi Fiends were chopped to offal by roaring chainswords, while the Daemonettes that accompanied them fell to searing plasma fire. At the heart of the Shatterfields, the Wulfen caught scent of their saviours and raised a mighty howl, fighting all the harder with claw, fang and punch-blade. Their kin amongst the Deathwolves' ranks returned the baying call, hacking and bludgeoning a path into the Daemons' ranks in their desperation to rescue their brothers.

Taken wholly by surprise, the Daemons had seen their numbers cut in half. Such entities knew nothing of fear or panic though, instead responding with spiteful rage. A Burning Skyhost whirled above the battle, the Tzeentchian Daemons plunging down upon their foes with lethal intent. Unnatural chariots whipped over the Deathwolves' lines, their passengers hurling comets of etheric fire that blasted Grey Hunters to ash or hurled them, smouldering and mutating, through the air. Screammers swept through the Space Wolves ranks with unnatural grace, lopping off heads and slamming bone spikes through breastplates.

In response, Harald ordered *Runeclaw* into the fight. The Stormwolf Gunship swept low, its embarkation ramp whining down and allowing the Blood Claws of the Deathwolves to spill forth into the fight. The young warriors gave voice to a mighty war cry as they added their strength to the Deathwolf advance.

Harald Deathwolf led his Wolf Guard deeper into the Shatterfields with the baying Wolfkin close on their heels. The Wulfen were still fighting for their lives and, though the enemy ranks were thinning fast, they could not hold out alone. Heavy paws pounded the rocky ground and massive fangs glistened in the boreal light as the Thunderwolves charged headlong through the foe. The sheer bulk of the Thunderwolves was enough to smash lesser Daemons out of the way, Daemonettes and Horrors vanishing beneath the beasts' claws or being torn apart by the Fenrisian Wolves that loped in their wake. Bounding Tzeentchian Flamers spat forth mutagenic fires that engulfed the brave Wolf Guard Vygarr Helfmfang. The storied warrior bellowed in agony as his flesh and armour ran like wax, bone tentacles bursting through the stringy mass to impale his steed. Howling their wrath, the remaining Wolf Guard and their lord smashed into the Flamers. They chopped the fungal monsters apart with vengeful savagery, before pushing on once more.

Harald and his packmates were nearing the heart of the battle, a spear-tip driven into the heart of the prey. Seeing the Thunderwolves approaching, the Tzeentchian Herald that commanded the Daemons had loosed his most potent weapons. Clanking and hissing, a host of Soul Grinders now surrounded the Wulfen pack. The Daemon Engines roared as they swung huge iron claws and crackling blades at the 13th Company brothers. Moving with incredible speed, the Wulfen evaded each blow. Showers of shattered stone exploded from the ground as piston-powered claws





crashed down. In return, the feral warriors slashed and battered at their attackers, denting armoured limbs and ripping free great chunks of Daemon flesh.

Even as the Riders of Morkai neared the fight, one of the Soul Grinders plunged its blade through the chest of a luckless Wulfen before ripping it out sideways in a jetting explosion of gore. The remaining Wulfen went berserk, their pack leader launching himself high to slam into the torso of the Soul Grinder before hammering his punchdaggers repeatedly through its face. As the Daemon Engine reeled, the Thunderwolves crashed into the fight, Wolf Guard swinging their thunder hammers to smash the Soul Grinder's legs out from under it. The monstrous machine toppled, the Wulfen pack leader riding it to the ground before ripping its head clean off its shoulders. He rose, holding his grisly trophy high and howling in feral triumph.

Harald and his Wolf Guard fought all the harder in response to that primal sound. Fenrisian Wolf packs leapt and bounded nimbly between the Soul Grinders' stamping legs while the Space Wolves hacked and hewed. Sparks showered as frost blades and thunder hammers smashed daemoniac iron and brass. A Wolf Guard was blown from his saddle by the point blank fire of a harvester cannon, while another was crushed by a stamping metal leg. A point blank stream of acidic bile dissolved a whole pack of Fenrisian Wolves in a single, horrific blast. Another Soul Grinder was brought down and smashed to scrap, but the third swung one mighty fist and snatch Harald Deathwolf from his saddle. Pistons creaked and servos groaned as the claw

began to contract, and the Wolf Lord snarled in agony as his armour – and bones – began to fracture and crack.

Out of nowhere, one of the Wulfen lunged in to grab the claw's pincers. Roaring with the strain, the hulking warrior pulled as hard as he could until, painfully, the iron talons creaked open. Pistons buckled and ichor spurted from burst cables as the claw gave way, Harald sliding free to crash to the ground. The enraged Wulfen tore the Soul Grinder's forelimb off altogether and – spinning on his heel – hurled the huge chunk of metal straight into the Daemon Engine's face. Brimstone blood showered down amid an explosion of flesh and shattered bone, and the decapitated Soul Grinder slumped sideways.

Gasping for breath, Harald Deathwolf looked up at his bestial saviour, who grinned back at him through a mouth full of fangs. The Wolf Lord spat blood and shook his head, looking past the Wulfen to where Strike Force Whitestalker were cutting down the last of the Daemons. Vision fogged with pain, Harald registered that victory had been secured. Though the fight had been fierce the Wulfen were safe, and the Deathwolves triumphant.

**'BENEATH THE LEERING SKY GONE MAD,
UPON THE SHATTERED FIELDS,
WARPSPAWN CRUSHED IN DEATHWOLF'S JAWS,
THE LOST WERE FOUND ONCE MORE.'**

- Extract from the Saga of the Lost



THE IRONWOLVES

The Ironwolves, Great Company of Egil Iron Wolf, are renowned for their mechanical might and relentless tenacity. These were the qualities that would aid them most as they brought the hunt for their lost Wulfen kin to the blighted hive world of Mydgal Alpha.

THE IRON EYE

Lord Iron Wolf lost his right eye to fire from Ork Lootas during the Battle of Raining Fire. The lost orb was replaced with one of steel and sensors, the finely crafted augmetic allowing Egil to visually dissect his prey. None can hide their weaknesses from the Iron Eye.

THE SKULL OF DOLF

This servo-skull is the last mortal remnant of famed Wolf Guard Dolf Longmane. Lord Egil chose to immortalise this hero as a mark of honour after his courageous death boarding the Chaos Titan *Shadow of Menace*.



THE CLAWS OF WINTER

Said to be imbued with the spirits of the Fenrisian winter winds, these famed wolf claws cut to the bone as easily as an ice-storm upon the slopes of Asaheim.

THE FORGEPELT

Egil Iron Wolf's masterwork power armour was forged by his own hand. The Wolf Lord has augmented his famed Forgepelt after each of his notable victories, so that now this distinctive armour is as much a part of Lord Iron Wolf's saga as the warrior himself.

EGIL IRON WOLF
Wolf Lord of the Ironwolves



THE IRONGUARD
10 Wolf Guard

THE FORGEHAMMERS
10 Wolf Guard Terminators



THE BLACKWOLVES
5 Grey Hunters

THE STEELSOULS
10 Grey Hunters



THE ASHCLAWS
9 Grey Hunters

THE HAMMERFISTS
10 Grey Hunters



THE HOTBLOODS
14 Blood Claws



THE IRONSTARS
10 Skyclaws



THE FROSTCLAWS
5 Long Fangs



THE IRON SHIELD
5 Long Fangs



THE SNOWFANGS
5 Long Fangs



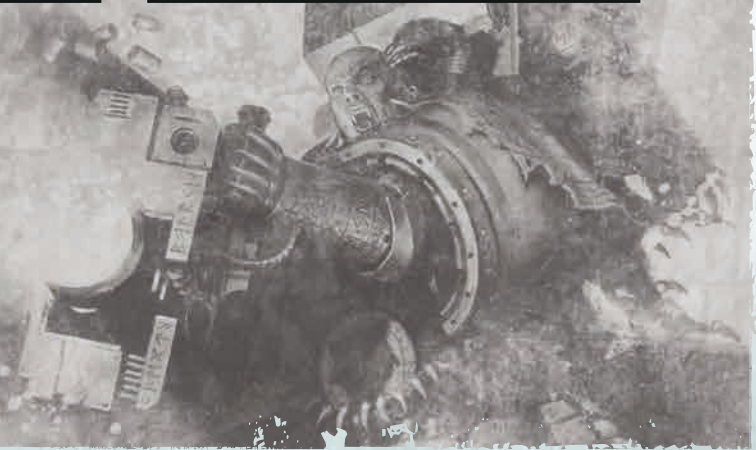
THE ICERIDERS
5 Long Fangs



THE STEELHOWLS
8 Swiftclaw Bikers,
Swiftclaw Attack Bike



THE SWIFTSTORMS
8 Swiftclaw Bikers,
Swiftclaw Attack Bike



THE IRON HUNT



Egil Iron Wolf's fleet broke Warp on the very edge of the Mydgal System, powering in towards Mydgal Alpha through the otherworldly turbulence of an empyric tempest. During Warp transit, Iron Priest Tsorvigg Helhammer had drawn upon scraps of arcane lore from the days of the Heresy, succeeding in rigging up a modified augur array. This was calibrated to detect the distinctive power signatures of 13th Company armour, and the moment the fleet translated in-system it began to provide a steadily strengthening return. Following its signal, Egil Iron Wolf split his Great Company into a trio of optimised strike forces. These would neutralise whatever threats were at large in the battlescape before converging on the location of the Wulfen. While Egil's Wolf Guard Battle Leaders oversaw the other two forces, he would command the Greatpack known as the Iron Hunt in person, accompanied by Iron Priest Helhammer and his augur device.

Egil Iron Wolf was followed into battle by his favoured champions, the Ironguard. Lord Iron Wolf looked for resilience, determination and brute strength in his Wolf Guard, and this band of warriors embodied all those qualities. With many boasting cybernetic enhancements and mechanical prostheses beneath their power armour, the Ironguard could fight on through the most grievous

of wounds. Meanwhile, their assortment of potent close combat weaponry and decades of melee combat experience made them the equal of the hardiest foes. Charging into the heart of battle from the exit ramp of their Razorback, Egil and his Ironguard were all but unstoppable.

The remainder of the Iron Wolf's Greatpack comprised a mailed fist of tanks, supported by infantry and air assets. A pair of Predator battle-tanks led this force into battle. Carrying a full load-out of lascannons to war, the Predator Annihilator *Iron Hunter* was a dedicated tank killer capable of slaying war engines far larger than itself. Meanwhile its sister *Iron Vengeance* was a Destructo-pattern Predator that packed sufficient anti-infantry firepower to mow down whole squads in a matter of seconds. Providing close-range, overwhelming fire support to these potent tanks was the Vindicator known as the *Wrath of Morkai*, a pugnacious mobile siege gun capable of blowing apart enemy war machines or flattening fortifications.

An ancient Land Raider Crusader by the name of *Ironfist* completed the formation. This roaring beast of battle boasted the thick armour and close-range punch typical of its ilk, coupled with a legendary tenacity that had seen it shrug off seemingly critical damage time and time again.



Having fought its way through such infamous armour engagements as Bokka'de and the Cataclysm Pacification, *Ironfist* had proved its worth beyond any doubt. These battle tanks, overseen by Iron Priest Helhammer, formed a Spear of Russ formation.

This powerful hunting pack of armoured engines was accompanied by the Grey Hunters known as the Blackwolves, and a pack of Long Fangs who named themselves the Frostclaws. Carried aboard a lascannon-armed Razorback, the Blackwolves were few in number but highly experienced. With chainswords revving and boltguns at the ready, these seasoned warriors were well-versed in supporting the Ironwolves' armour, warding off hostile infantry who might threaten the tanks up close or seizing vital objectives that the armour could not reach.

By comparison, the Long Fangs known as the Frostclaws had but a single task. It was their duty to speed in their Razorback to a commanding position from where they could best support their comrades. Wherever they identified a particularly pressing threat, or saw an opportunity to eliminate some vital target, the Frostclaws had autonomy to take the shot. In this way, Lord Iron Wolf trusted his veteran marksmen to dictate the shape of the

battle as best they saw fit, punching holes in the enemy lines or turning back assaults at will. From the Hives of Herus to the furious assault on Dursella, the pinpoint fire of these Long Fangs had saved the lives of Lord Iron Wolf and his packmates more than once.

'STRUGGLE IF YOU MUST, YOU DAEMON-LOVING SONS OF TROLLS. IT'LL AVAIL YOU NAUGHT. NO-ONE LIVES FOR LONG ONCE THE IRON WOLF HAS THEM IN ITS JAWS.'

- Egil Iron Wolf during the battle of the Seven Gates

Flying in support of this armoured assemblage was the Stormfang Gunship *Iron Spear*. Piloted by Vengr Iceblood – a renowned fighter ace who had downed over thirty Ork aircraft during the fighting on Alaric Prime – this attack craft certainly lived up to its name. Hurling into battle like the thrown javelin of some angry god, *Iron Spear* blasted apart ground targets and enemy aircraft alike; countless foes had been reduced to frozen statues or ice-rimed wreckage by the gunship's deadly firepower.

THE HELL BELOW

Braving the swirling energies and filthy unlight of the Warp storm, the Ironwolves moved into orbit over Mydgal Alpha. Embarking their armoured gunships, Egil Iron Wolf's warriors followed the Wulfen augur-trace down through the planet's atmosphere and straight towards the super-hive of Irkalla.

As his gunships roared down towards Irkalla's gleaming spires, Egil Iron Wolf brooded on the available information about this strange world. Below his craft seethed a thick layer of black-and-grey smoke, a churning ocean of smog and ash that blanketed the whole globe. For millennia this world had served as an industrial powerhouse, processing vast quantities of promethium for the Imperium's armies. However, some centuries ago, the chemical spoil-strata accumulated beneath the planet's crust had caught alight. Once started, the fires had been impossible to stop – they still burned beneath the surface now, belching forth a planet-wide blanket of pollutants from chasms and craters.

This catastrophe had reduced the surface to a hellish realm of flame pits and smouldering chemical rivers. Never ones to waste serviceable planets, the Administratum had simply reclassified Mydgal Alpha as a hive world and used the reclaimed factorum and refinery materials to build a single immense super-hive on the world's last viable landmass. This was Irkalla, and its creation had largely been a success. Now, however, the hive faced dangers like none it had encountered before.

Judging by the pathetically hopeful vox hails from the hive's spires, the people of Irkalla believed the Space Wolves were here to save them. The Ironwolves muttered and made gestures to ward off evil as the voices on the vox spoke of a terrible plague, swarms of biting insects and an unnatural sickness that had swept up from the underhive when the Warp storm came. The light of the sun had 'gone bad' they said, turning a jaundiced yellow and causing rust and rot to spread wherever it touched. Foul omens and portents abounded, and before the spires had shut their gates to the levels below they had received word of otherworldly beings attacking the populace en masse.

Egil Iron Wolf wasted no time. Iron Priest Helhammer reported that the augur-trace was emanating from down in the very bowels of Irkalla, and if the city was overrun by sickness there was little the Space Wolves could do to help. Perhaps the Inquisition would come to aid these people – though the Space Wolves mistrusted the Inquisition's particular brand of help – but regretfully the Ironwolves and Wulfen must be long gone by then. Ordering his followers to ignore the frantic cries of Irkalla's damned populace, Lord Iron Wolf had his three strike forces



descend into the pall of smoke below. Updated schematics showed that the hive's metal skin was ruptured and ruined at its lowest levels, mingling freely with the polluted wastelands without. It was here that the Ironwolves would gain swift access to the city.

So towering and vast was Irkalla that it took some time for the Fenrisian craft to descend to its base through the billowing smoke. Engines laboured as ash clogged intakes and turbines, while pilots were forced to fly by their instruments as visibility dropped to zero. Through the view ports of the gunships, the Space Wolves watched in silence as a ruddy hue suffused the billowing clouds, becoming more intense as they rumbled in towards their final landing points. Collision hymnals sang out and the pilots wrestled with their controls as towering, skeletal ruins loomed up out of the murk. Several gunships clipped some outflung spar of masonry or fire-blackened bridge. Fortunately, Adeptus Astartes craft were built to withstand incredible punishment, and no serious damage was sustained.

Finally, with a series of jarring thumps, the Ironwolves put down in their landing zones. Emerging from their gunships, the warriors of the Iron Hunt scowled into the firelit gloom, taking in their grim surroundings while the strike force's tanks detached from their Thunderhawk Landers. The hive had once sprawled out across this area,

but constant subsidence and the hungry attentions of the flames had caused the architecture to crumple and collapse. Chasms yawned amid the tangled bones of ancient walkways, flames billowing up from their depths. Bubbling lakes of tar-like pollutants flickered with weird-hued fires, belching fumes that would have killed an unaugmented human in moments. It was an environment as hostile as any Egil Iron Wolf had seen, yet the augur trace was coming in loud and clear now, from just a few kilometres to the west. Weapons at the ready, the Ironwolves advanced through the rust-rent skin of Irkalla and into its hellish underhive.

Egil's two flanking forces, the Cogclaws and the Steelpelt Destroyers, were the first to vox of enemy contact. Gunfire echoed distantly through the murk, mingling with the background roar of flames and the shuddering of the ground beneath the Ironwolves' treads. No sooner had these signs of battle reached them, than the Iron Hunt found trouble of their own.

The first Daemons shambled from amid the smoke in ones and twos, cyclopean eyes red-rimmed from the fumes and rancid flesh shrivelled by the heat. The Blackwolves cracked off bolter shots at these stumbling targets, felling them with precision fire. However, as the Ironwolves advanced, the terrain became denser and the packs of Daemons more numerous.





The Vindicator *Wrath of Morkai* smashed through a crumbling wall to find itself surrounded by hissing, red-skinned Bloodletters. Only by reversing hard and firing point-blank to obliterate the infernal creatures did the tank avoid being carved into scrap metal. The *Ironfist* rumbled through a shambling mass of Plaguebearers with its hurricane bolters blazing, only to become mired in sucking, tar-like ooze. The loathsome Daemons closed in around the tank, their weight forcing it further down into the swamp. The Stormfang Gunship *Iron Spear* screamed in low, its daring pilot jinking between ruined spars to blitz the Plaguebearers with heavy bolter fire. Rotten bodies exploded like sacks of offal stuffed with frag grenades, and with a mighty roar the *Ironfist* dragged itself clear of the sludge.

Egil Iron Wolf's tanks smashed through a tumbled scree of ruins and into the skeletal remains of a shrine. Billowing clouds of daemoniac flies swirled around the Space Wolf vehicles, and advancing through them came the greatest daemoniac horde yet encountered by the Ironwolves. Plaguebearers and Bloodletters pressed in upon the Ironwolves alongside buzzing Plague Drones and bounding Beasts of Nurgle. Behind them came a rumbling battery of Skull Cannons, the Daemon Engines' maws drooling fire. Obscured by the thickest mass of foul insect bodies was something huge: a Daemon Prince, blighted by the gifts of Nurgle. This hideous fiend was Mordokh the Rotted, the architect of Irkalla's miseries and a living plague upon the worlds of men. Beneath his rusted helm, the Daemon Prince's visage split into a rotten-fanged grin, and he raised his blade in challenge to the Space Wolves.

The Iron Hunt surged forwards into battle, Egil and his Ironguard charging out at their head and crashing headlong into the Daemons with blades swinging. Behind them, heavy weapons roared as the Long Fangs, Grey Hunters and battle tanks opened fire in a thunderous volley. As explosions burst amid the Daemons and ruby beams of light tore through them, Lord Iron Wolf and Iron Priest Helhammer hacked and smashed their way deeper into the enemy ranks. The Iron Priest's augur insisted that they were all but on top of the Wulfen, and the Egil's omnipresent scowl deepened at the thought he might be fighting to avenge the lost brothers, not rescue them.

Lord Iron Wolf's fears were proved false, as several packs of Wulfen burst from the shadowed ruins and fell upon the Daemons' flank. Rending and tearing, the feral warriors ripped a path of destruction through the infernal horde. Some were dragged down or run through by rusted daemoniac blades, but the impetus of the Wulfen charge was unstoppable. Letting out a mechanical howl, Lord Iron Wolf drove towards the feral warriors, Helhammer and the Ironguard fighting furiously at his back. Wolf Guard fell, blood spraying and armour sparking as the Daemons tore and hacked at them, but finally the Space Wolves and Wulfen came together at the very heart of the melee.

The Fenrisian battle line had by now been broken into scattered bands and spread across the ruined shrine. To the rear, the Long Fangs of the Frostclaws blasted away, lancing Beasts of Nurgle like fat boils and swatting Plague Drones out of the sky. Egil's two Predators and Vindicator were fighting hard, but all were damaged and on the verge

of being overwhelmed. *Iron Hunter's* lascannons punched glowing holes through a pair of Bloodcrushers, sending them crashing to the ground. Seconds later there was a monumental roar as the Skull Cannons opened fire, flaming skulls exploding across the Predator and leaving it a mangled, blazing wreck. The Blackwolves had been cut off, surrounded by more Nurgle beasts. They hacked and hewed with their chainswords, but the enemy's numbers were against them. First, one Grey Hunter was impaled and borne away into the smoke by a Plague Drone, then several more were smashed flat by frolicking Beasts of Nurgle, writhing in agony as their flesh was eaten away by acidic juices.

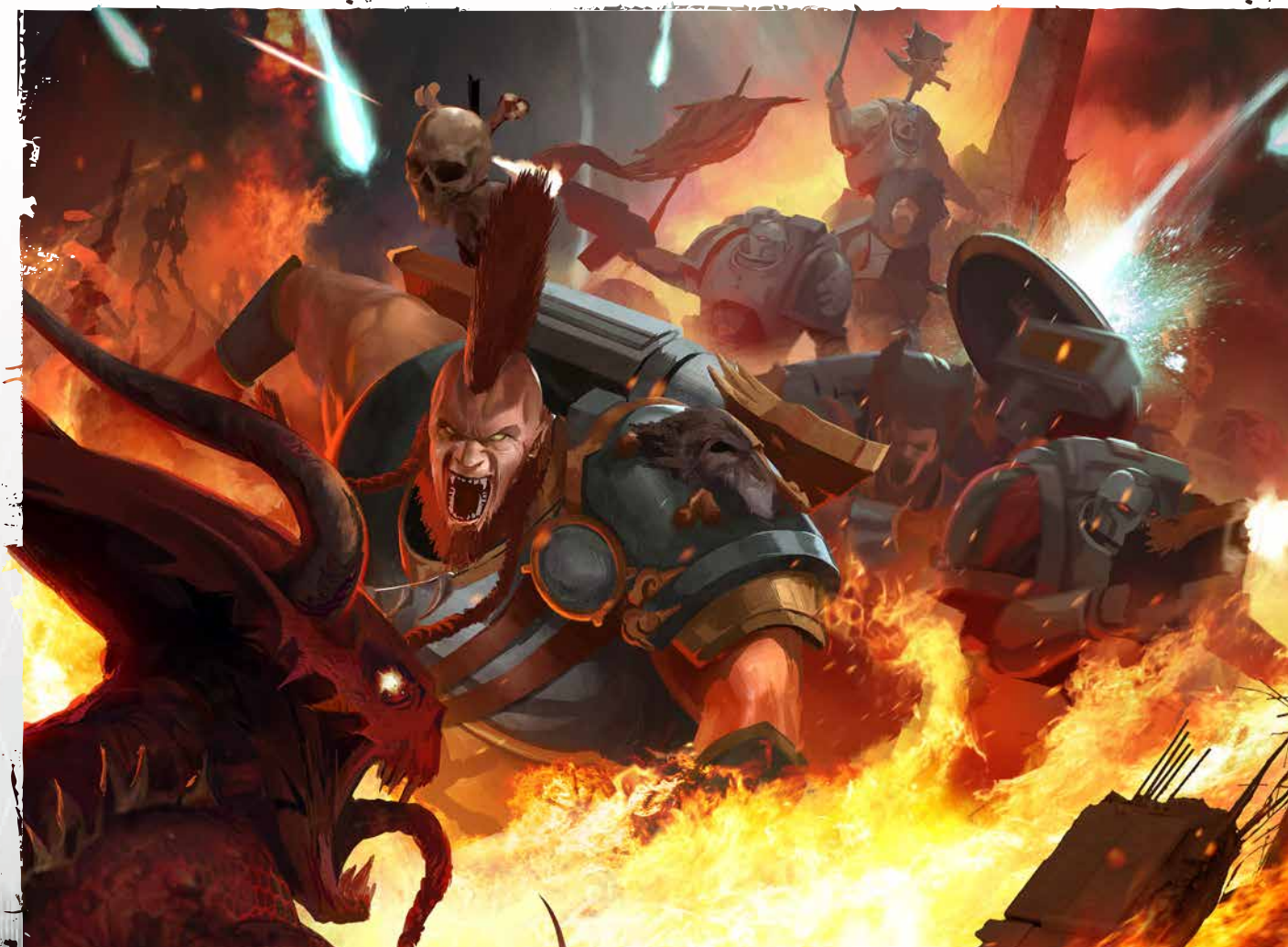
Knowing that he had completed his task, and realising his Ironwolves would be overwhelmed if they remained amidst this hell, Egil bellowed into the vox for extraction. Barely had he given the order before a shroud of buzzing insects engulfed the Wolf Lord, the Ironguard and the Wulfen. Egil cursed as bloated flies crawled across his armour and bit at his exposed flesh. He swung his wolf claws in energised arcs, each sweep crisping masses of flies out of the air and ripping through the Plaguebearers pressing in behind. Around him his warriors did the same, fighting on despite the revolting insects that were but harbingers of something far worse. Shoving effortlessly through the ranks of lesser Daemons came Mordokh the Rotted.

The Daemon Prince's first swipe ripped a Wulfen's head from its shoulders before smashing one of the Ironguard

head over heels. His second tore through two more of Egil's Wolf Guard, a rusted blade sliding from Mordokh's palm to eviscerate one warrior and punch through the skull of the other. With an inarticulate howl of rage, Egil plunged his wolf claws into the Daemon Prince's chest. Energised blades ripped through rancid flesh, and Mordokh roared as pus-wet flies spilled from the wound. The Daemon's backhand caught Iron Wolf in the face, breaking his nose and throwing him back into his men with staggering force. The Wolf Lord snarled and spat blood as Mordokh loomed over him with a slop-wet chuckle.

At that moment the smoke-filled air came alive with roaring light and noise. At Egil's bellowed order, the Ironwolves' gunships loosed blizzing fire into the Daemon horde. A screaming salvo of lascannon fire tore through Mordokh's rotted form, blasting the monstrous entity into a buzzing storm of flies. Heavy bolter fire mowed down masses of the enemy, driving the rest back from the beleaguered Space Wolves. The Daemons were forced back into the smoke and flame around the shrine's edge, buying precious moments for the surviving Ironwolves to scramble aboard their extraction craft.

The cost had been steep. The Ironwolves had suffered heavy casualties before their ships had moved in to rescue them. However, the mission was a success, and as the Thunderhawks and Stormwolves turned their prows skyward and roared away through the smoke, the rescued Wulfen were safe within their armoured holds.



SHADOWS AND SECRETS

When the Astropaths of Nurades cried out in anguish, the Space Wolves had not been the only ones to heed their call. The Dark Angels, too, had heard the Astropaths' message. For them, it held an altogether different significance, and an alarming warning.

The Dark Angels are a Chapter with many secrets. The Sons of the Lion are compelled to hide many things from the eyes of the wider Imperium. Such was the nature of the cache of irredeemably tainted blades known as the Seven Shadows. Such relics could not be concealed upon the Rock for fear of the corruption they might spread, yet the Knights of Caliban themselves had once wielded these swords. The Chapter could not just cast them aside. The Dark Angels had instead buried the Seven Shadows in warded vaults that only a Company Master's seal could open, deep below the polar ruins of backwater Nurades.

Over time, Dark Angels agents had seeded into local folklore the notion that those ruins were cursed. This, coupled with an annually rotated guard detail of five Scouts, had been enough to keep hidden those despised treasures. However, the moment the astropathic choir upon the Rock detected Nurades' distress call, it was clear that action must be taken. A daemonic incursion would draw the eye of the Inquisition. The risk could not be run that the cache might be found. Responding swiftly, Company Master Araphil and a Lion's Blade Strike Force made haste to Nurades, but had arrived too late to save Arhad's squad.

The Dark Angels did not leave empty-handed, however. The tainted blades had been recovered without incident, and were now locked in adamantine caskets ready to be borne away to some other dark corner of the galaxy. The Company Master had also recovered a survivor, who was immediately transferred to the Apothecarion. Recovered from amongst the polar ruins, the young Scout had been identified as Brother Dolutas. A trio of deep rents ran across his chest, made by long claws that had raked clean through his armour to the flesh beneath. As yet, the Scout had not surfaced from his healing coma.

If the wounded survivor could tell the Dark Angels little, the servo-skull recovered by Araphil and his brothers was more forthcoming. After being repaired as best it could by one of the Rock's skilled Techmarines, the macabre device was presented before a closed council of the Dark Angels' greatest leaders. Seated around a huge stone table in an arched and shadowy chamber, Chapter Master Azrael and his closest brothers watched stony-faced as the servo-skull played the patchy pict-feed that remained upon its memory coil. Though it was but a few moments of footage, the masters of the Inner Circle watched it again and again.



They committed its every detail to memory and analysed it for the slightest nuance or fragment of information that might otherwise be missed.

The pict-feed was silent, hazed with grainy static. It showed Sergeant Arhad and his brothers crouched within the Nuradean bunker where their bodies had been found. As the pict-feed flickered, it showed the Scouts rising to blast away through the bunker's vision slits, before ducking back into cover. Strange, flickering lights could be seen outside the structure. The pict fuzzed and warped each time those fires blazed; Ezekiel, Grand Master of Librarians, explained that this distortion was almost certainly empyric in nature, a sure sign of daemonic activity at the Scouts' location.

It was then that the pict-feed took a disturbing turn. The image lurched, as though the skull had spun suddenly upon its impellers, and then tumbled as something knocked it savagely from the air. As the servo-skull rolled to a stop, its cracked lens continued to record. The legs of the Dark Angel Scouts were still visible, braced in firing positions.

The flare of boltgun fire lit the image, before a large, fast-moving shadow raced across the shot. Blood flew, spattering across the bunker walls, and a Scout's severed head thumped into view before bouncing away. Again

that massive figure flickered across the image, and it was to this moment that the Inner Circle returned over and again. They had to be sure. They could not act upon an assumption.

After several hours the assembled Dark Angels were beyond any reasonable doubt, but the import of the revelation sat heavily upon them. Slowed down to a creeping framerate and digitally scrubbed for clarity, the figure could just be seen as something huge and bestial, bearing some semblance of a Space Marine's distinctive build. Closer inspection revealed an insignia upon the figure's shoulder – blurred by movement and half hidden by blood-spray – picked out for one crucial second in the flare from a boltgun's muzzle. It was a Fenrisian wolf's head, displayed upon a scratched and faded field of gunmetal grey. The gathered masters eyed one another from beneath their heavy cowls, silent stares loaded with significance.

Something terrible had occurred upon Nurades, and it seemed that the Wolves of Fenris were involved. The Dark Angels must not act without more information. Their antipathy with the Sons of Russ was well documented, but they would not – could not – suspect them of such a deed without further proof. So decreed Azrael, and so began the Dark Angels' hunt for the truth.

Sammael, Grand Master of the Ravenwing, marched across the Hall of Hidden Wisdom with Apothecary Ekrophan at his side. The footfalls of the two Ravenwing warriors echoed off the marble flagstones of the vast space, and away to its cavernous ceiling high above. They were fully armed and armoured, ready for a battle yet to be fought. But what sort of battle, wondered Sammael, and against whom? These were strange days indeed, and matters only seemed to be getting more unsettling by the hour.

'And you say he has still not been found?'

The Apothecary shook his head in answer.

'No, my lord. Scout Dolutas disappeared within hours of him being brought to the Apothecarion. I performed his initial inspection myself, and found nothing amiss besides the obvious. It is most perplexing.'

Sammael raised one eyebrow and shot the Apothecary a stern glance.

'I would say that is understating the matter, brother. A wounded warrior simply vanishes. None see him leave. No-one has seen him since. How is such a thing possible? Did he remove himself, and if so, why? These are questions that will not stand to be left unanswered, no?'

The Apothecary nodded.

'As you say, my lord. The search continues, and let us hope that by the time we return from Tranquilitus our absentee will have been located.'

Sammael gave no answer as he and his Apothecary strode beneath the Martyr's Arch and emerged into the din and industry of one of the Rock's many embarkation decks. As was custom, both Ravenwing warriors brushed their fingertips across the stone of the arch as they passed through it, asking for the Primarch's blessings for the mission to come.

Sammael paused and surveyed the activity upon the cavernous deck. At one end of the vast, stone-carved chamber the open void beckoned, its deadly vacuum

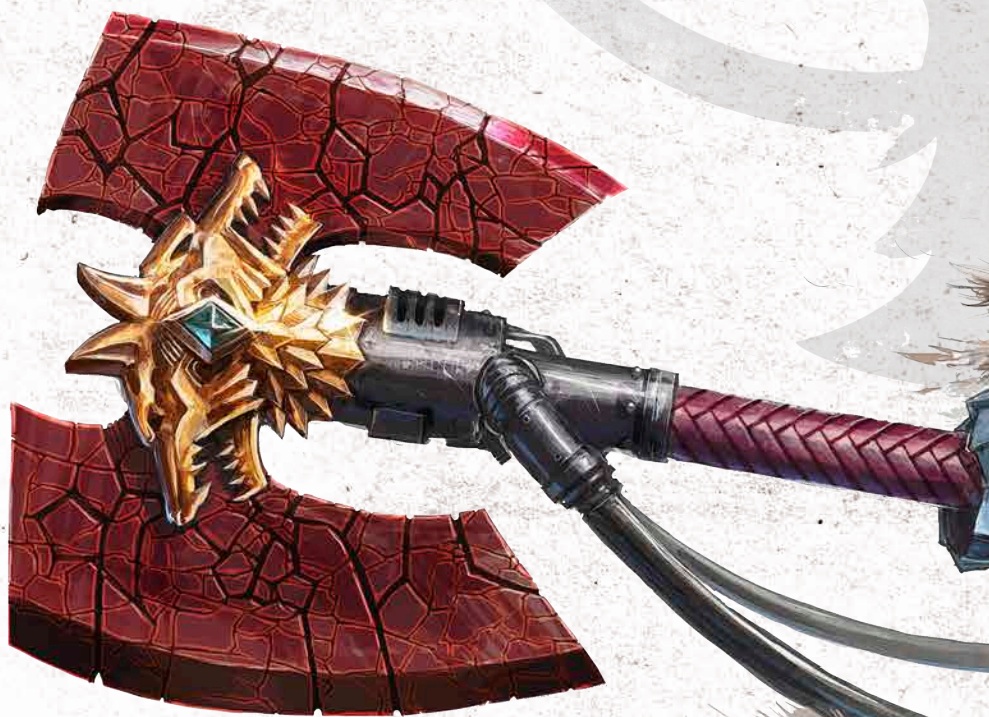
held at bay by ancient force fields. Before this yawning maw, the warriors of the Ravenwing were mounting their armoured steeds and moving to embark upon the Thunderhawks that would carry them to their Strike Cruiser. Sammael felt quiet pride as he watched his brothers taking their oaths of moment. The feeling was quickly swallowed again by his disquiet.

The report had come from one of the Rock's chief Astropaths; another Warp storm had broken over the haunted world of Tranquilitus. Its empyric signature had perfectly matched that which had engulfed Nurades. Moreover, astropathic intercepts revealed that a company-level force of Space Wolves were en route to that world, a deployment fit to arouse suspicion by its very size and haste. Whatever it was the wolves sought on Tranquilitus, Supreme Grand Master Azrael had tasked the Ravenwing with recovering it first, and Sammael was determined not to fail in his duty.

Yet, despite his conviction, Sammael could not shake off a sense of impending doom.

CHAPTER 2

HARBINGERS OF DOOM





GRIM REVELATIONS

In the wake of Nurades, mysterious Warp storms had broken out across the length and breadth of the Imperium. Though strewn sparsely across the vastness of the galaxy, the strange phenomena touched every segmentum. Others besides the Space Wolves had taken note of their emergence, and were even now moving to investigate.

Titan. The silent sentinel. Home of the Daemon-hunting brotherhoods of the Grey Knights, and secret guardian of Terra herself. From behind the armoured walls and towering bastions of their citadel, the Grey Knights kept vigil for the threat of Chaos. From here, too, they coordinated their secret war against the Ruinous Powers, and despatched their warrior brotherhoods to strike down the Daemon wherever it raised its head.

The Grey Knights possessed their own well-honed means to monitor infernal activities across the Imperium. This was the Augurium, a chamber atop the Silver Pinnacle within which the brothers known as Prognosticators sifted the strands of prophecy from the surfaces of crystalline mirrors. The Citadel of Titan contained other ancient secrets and strange machineries, and it was one such device – the Speculum Infernus – that stirred to life precisely as the first of the strange Warp storms roared into being around Nurades. As further storms emerged, the device roused to full wakefulness. Archaic machineries hissed and turned. Delicately worked brass spheres whirled around one another on silvered armatures, crackling haloes of light leaping between them. Golden gargoyles long thought decorative opened their mouths and vomited forth reams

of data-parchment crowded with dense, arcane sigils. The vast Speculum Infernus shuddered and steamed, watched with awe by the indentured data-savants of the Grey Knights.

The warriors of Titan were quick to decipher the device's warning, and their eyes widened in shock at its import. In spooling sigils and upon glowing holopicters, the engine showed the pattern formed by the strange Warp storms. It also predicted those that had not yet manifested. The Prognosticators were summoned to ascertain the strange engine's holy provenance by every means at their disposal. Confident that the speculum's warning was no daemonic ruse, the Grey Knights wasted no time in acting upon it.

An unprecedented number of brotherhoods set forth from Titan, mobilising aboard mighty silver-flanked warships and determined to banish the Daemons that spilled from the newborn storms. The templars of Titan soon found the currents of the Warp turned savagely against them. Raging surges battered the Grey Knights' ships from the moment they left, the Immaterium lashing out with malice. It could not be a coincidence. The Strike Cruiser *Glorious Light* was swallowed by the Warp's tides after its Navigator died





screaming. The Rapid Strike Vessel *Sanctified Wrath* was overrun in a nightmarish bloodbath when its Geller fields inexplicably failed. Several other craft were forced from the Warp, performing emergency translations that left them stranded while repairs were performed, and battles were fought to eradicate the foul beings infesting their decks.

Against all adversity the Grey Knights pressed on. Guided by the *Speculum Infernus* and drawing upon their psychic fortitude, several brotherhoods reached their destinations and were soon at war with the daemonic foe. On Hades' Reach, the 4th Brotherhood teleported into a hurricane of living flame, there to do battle with a trio of rampaging Bloodthirsters and their minions. For two days and two nights, the Grey Knights battled their monstrous enemies while the ever-shifting fire-lakes swirled around them. Eventually, Brother-Captain Grud and his warriors were victorious, banishing the fiends despite heavy losses.

On Fimnir the massed tanks of the 1st Brotherhood rolled into battle, crashing through the structures of the gas giant's mining platforms with their tracks churning. Daemons poured from every direction to oppose them, Soul Grinders ripping into blessed hulls with their iron claws while Bloodletters and Daemonettes duelled with Grey Knights amid the dark of the void. Brother-Captain Pelenas personally slew the Great Unclean One Bol'Groblort, driving his silvered blade into the abomination's bloated heart. Nothing survived the wrath of Pelenas' warriors, not Daemons, not mining platforms nor the plague-ravaged and reanimated remains of the planet's worker clans. All were rendered equal as ash.

So it continued, the Grey Knights purging Emberghul and even Nurades with holy fire. Yet everywhere they went, they found trace energy signatures, psychic echoes and the signs of battle. Others had been to each of these worlds before the Grey Knights. Others had battled the Daemons and, for whatever reason, had been forced to leave before the fighting was done.

Brother-Captain Stern at last came to Mydgal Alpha, arriving mere days after the Ironwolves had departed. Finding Irkalla Hive utterly ridden with daemonic plagues, Stern led a teleport strike into the depths of the Irkallan underhive. He hoped to banish whatever arch-Daemon had wrought this horror.

Though it had left its psychic spoor smeared across every surface, the Daemon Prince Mordokh was long gone. What Stern found instead was more disturbing still. Lying in the rotting foulness of a week-old battlefield, half-buried beneath the foetid remains of hundreds of fallen Daemons, was a strange, bestial corpse. The creature's flesh was putrid, its form distorted by some kind of mutant gigantism. Still the insignia on its pitted armour was unmistakable.

Declaring Mydgal Alpha to be *Perditum Extremis*, Stern returned to his ship and ordered his Astropaths to determine – by whatever means, no matter how horrific or costly – the current whereabouts of Logan Grimnar.

Brother-Captain Stern would have words with the Great Wolf, and he would have answers...

THE MISTS OF TRANQUILITUS

Hot on their lost brothers' trail, Sven Bloodhowl's Firehowlers broke from the Emyrean directly above the ghostly world of Tranquilitus. The Warp storm that had led his Great Company here had all but dispersed, but other dangers waited upon the haunted world...

Rumbling back into realspace above Tranquilitus, the Firehowlers' fleet came straight to combat readiness. Reports suggested this was a strange and dangerous world, a thin spot in reality where some dark and terrible sentence ruled. It was a ghost planet of empty settlements, whose inhabitants had vanished amid Tranquilitus' ever-present mists. Wolf Lord Sven Bloodhowl was taking no chances with such a place.

As the Space Wolves ships swept in towards the planet, a sizeable craft hove into view through the tatters of the dying Warp storm. Helm-serfs quickly identified her as a Dark Angels Strike Cruiser, the *Silent Oath*. Moments later the master vox-bondsman reported contact. The *Oath's* captain warned that Dark Angels forces were currently deployed upon Tranquilitus and conducting a sensitive operation. The Space Wolves' presence was neither welcome nor required.

Snorting with derision, Lord Bloodhowl sent a brief and inventively offensive response. He then ordered Strike Force Sagablade to mobilise for battle. Sven was here to complete his quest. He had scented a chance to add to the

sagas tattooed upon his skin; in his own words he would be damned to the seven hells if he was going to let El'Jonson's sour-faced chant-mumblers beat him to the prize.

Knowing they were hopelessly outgunned, the Dark Angels withdrew their ship, though not before issuing an ominous final warning to turn back. At the same time, the Space Wolves detected a brief burst of vox traffic flickering between the *Silent Oath* and its forces on the planet below. Tranquilitus was difficult to scry with any degree of accuracy, the world's mists throwing off strange, half-read lifesigns. Lord Bloodhowl thus elected to deploy close to the coordinates of the vox-burst. The Dark Angels wouldn't have dropped at random, he reasoned; if they were closing on the Wulfen then the Firehowlers needed to act fast.

Marching towards the embarkation decks, Lord Bloodhowl gave the order that only he and the handpicked packs of Strike Force Sagablade would deploy. This would be a dropship-borne mission – no Drop Pods, and nothing slower than a jump pack on the ground. Speed was of the essence, and Sven wanted his force ready and able to be extracted once their brothers had been recovered.



Minutes later, a pair of Fenrisian Thunderhawks dropped through the mists towards Tranquillitus' surface. They put down upon damp greensward, the mists swirling away in their downdraft to reveal gnarled trees and a lake with a surface like black glass. As the Space Wolves stormed down their assault ramps and the Thunderhawks roared back into the skies, the fog rolled in. Soon, visibility was down to a matter of yards, while the cloying, unnatural vapours muffled auspex and even the acute senses of the Sons of Russ. Sven's normally ebullient Skyclaws were quiet and vigilant. They perceived something unnatural about this place, a nebulous feeling of being watched and hunted that would have reduced any but a Space Marine to terrorised paralysis.

In the Space Wolves, it only heightened their combat instincts. Skyclaws, Swiftclaws, Land Speeders, and Sven's jump-packing Wolf Guard – the Bloodguard – made every effort to stay together amid the fog. They pressed on with all speed, following their auspexes through stands of shadow-drowned trees, over rocky hills and through abandoned ghost towns. Always the mist drifted around them, full of half-glimpsed movement and that oppressive sense of being watched.

All was still, until the sounds of gunfire and howling burst through the tattered clouds up ahead.

Sven Bloodhowl fired his jump pack, rocketing through the mist towards the sounds of battle. Around him, the air was filled with the half-seen shapes of his warriors, bounding high upon trails of flame. The Wolf Lord braced as treetops rushed up to meet him, and he crashed down through the canopy into the gloom beneath.

Sven's boots slammed down upon muddy loam a split second before a hissing Daemon lunged between the trees. Instinctively, the Wolf Lord brought up his revving chainsword to parry, hewing the Daemonette's claw from its arm in a spray of ichor. The thing shrielled with agonised bliss, but only for a second before Sven's axe struck off its head.

Another shape loomed, but Lord Bloodhowl pulled his blow at the last moment, splitting a tree in half rather than the Dark Angel whose bike skidded to a stop before him.

'You were told to leave, wolf,' boomed the Dark Angel through his vox grill. 'You should have done so.'

Sven Bloodhowl laughed in the warrior's face, his jump pack roaring as it hurled him back into the sky again.

'Make me!' he bellowed, hurtling away over the treetops.



The distant howls reached out to the Space Wolves on some instinctive level. The Firehowlers knew that it was the Wulfen who called, and they raised a howl of their own as they surged forwards as one. Amid the dense fog, the Space Wolves advance quickly fragmented. As they pressed forwards through rocky valleys and straggling woodland, the Firehowlers now faced constant daemonic attack. Slobbering Beasts of Nurgle burst from the trees to crush and flail. Daemons of Tzeentch lit the mists with iridescent flame, their weird cackles of glee echoing from everywhere at once. The Space Wolves hacked and slew with furious strength, tearing apart each impediment to their progress.

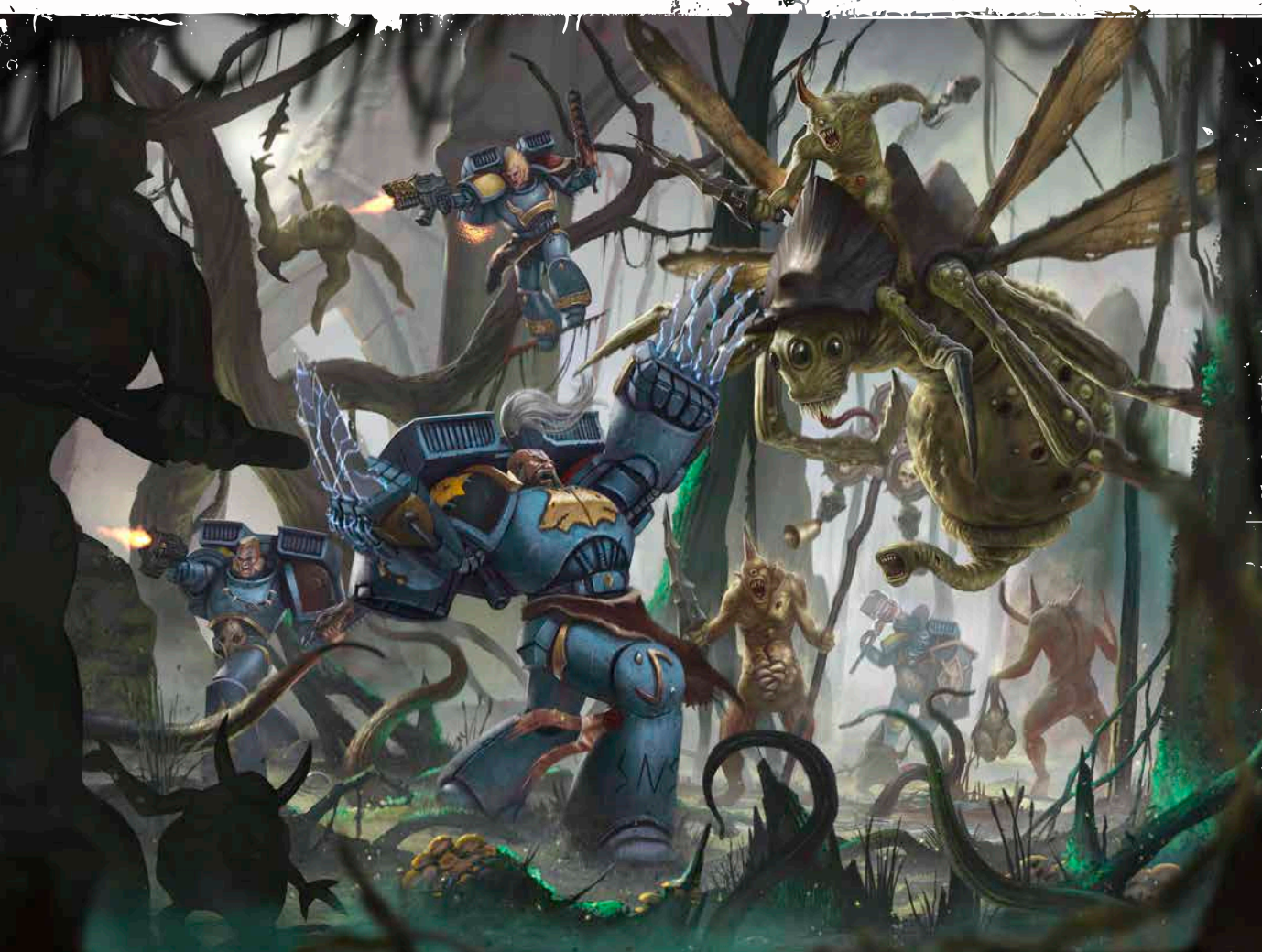
Dark Angels, too, began to appear from the mists. Squadrons of Ravenwing Bikers hurtled across the Space Wolves' line of advance. The Dark Angels were locked in a running battle with the roving Daemon packs, but their fire whistled perilously close to the Fenrisian warriors. Skyclaws cursed as a Ravenwing Darkshroud whispered low overhead, veiling them in disorienting shadow.

The Firehowlers pressed ahead, the ground sloping slowly downhill beneath their churning tyres and pounding boots. Sven led the charge, bounding down the slope in long leaps and hacking apart Daemons wherever he landed. The Wolf Lord's next leap brought him down amongst a rocky outcropping, within sight of his Wolf Guard. As he touched down, a pair of Land Speeders streaked overhead. Just shadows in the murk, it was impossible to see whose craft they were. The flame-spewing Daemon chariots that

harried them were visible enough though. One of the Space Marine craft tumbled from the sky, flipping into the mist to explode with a dull thud some way distant. Sven Bloodhowl could only snarl, gesturing to his Wolf Guard to follow as he leapt on.

Far out on the Space Wolves' right flank, the Swiftclaw Bikers known as Bloodhowl's Riders hurtled down a high-sided ravine with insane bravado, fighting a running battle with a Grand Cavalcade of Slaanesh. The Space Wolves weaved between the spinning blades of the Slaaneshi chariots, deftly lobbing krak grenades into their workings. A series of explosions echoed along the defile as the chariots came apart in showers of glinting shrapnel, cutting scores of daemonic Seekers to ribbons. Into the mayhem slammed Ravenwing Black Knights, leaping their bikes down from the lip of the ravine and barging into their Swiftclaw rivals. No blades were drawn nor shots fired, but within moments the Space Wolves were skidding and rolling to a halt, bruised and cursing. The Dark Angels roared on, shredding the last of the Seekers with gunfire as they went.

The cry of the Wulfen rose again, and Sven Bloodhowl fought all the harder as he realised how close they were. Seeing the Bloodguard and the Skyclaws of the Stormbringers fighting close at hand, Sven decided it was time to go for glory. Barking out a string of orders, the tattooed Wolf Lord formed his warriors up and led another hurtling leap into the mists.





As the Firehowlers flew, a huge black shape shot low overhead. The Space Wolves had a fleeting impression of dark, forward-swept wings and flaring ramjets, then the aircraft was gone. Sven and his warriors hurtled across ground that had turned flat and muddy, giving chase to what must surely have been a Dark Angels attack craft.

As though at some unspoken command, the mists suddenly parted. Sven and his followers saw before them two packs of Wulfen. The feral warriors were rampaging along the shores of another lake, savaging a horde of Daemonettes and Horrors that scrambled over one another to attack them. Sven felt the blood surge in his veins and charged with his warriors at his heels. Before the Firehowlers could reach the fight, however, the Dark Angels struck.

The dark shape swept overhead once more, now revealed as a Ravenwing Dark Talon. Sven bellowed in outrage as a bulky object plunged from the craft's underbelly, slamming down amid the Wulfen. But instead of blowing the bestial warriors apart, the bomb's detonation projected a rippling stasis field that unfolded like the petals of some strange glass flower.

One moment, the Wulfen were raging beasts; the next, they were still as statues, the surviving Daemons recoiling from the temporal blast.

Engines screamed as Grand Master Sammael streaked in across the lake on his jetbike, *Corvex*, flying at the head of a squadron of Ravenwing Land Speeders. A wake of spray

fanned up behind the hurtling skimmers as they swept in for their attack run. The Dark Angels let fly, a storm of plasma and armour-piercing shells ripping through the Daemons on the lakeshore and tearing them apart.

Sven Bloodhowl skidded to a halt just short of the blast-riddled remains of the Daemons, his warriors drawing in around him. Sammael and his craft shot overhead before looping back around, coming in to hover before the assembled Space Wolves with prow weapons levelled.

Looking down his nose at the tattooed, blood-spattered Space Wolves, Sammael demanded that they account for their presence there, and hand over their mutants so that the Dark Angels could deliver them to the Inquisition. Sven Bloodhowl spat on the floor in response. This was Space Wolves business, he snarled, and the Dark Angels were in his way.

Voice soft but icy cold, Sammael warned that the Space Wolves risked censure just harbouring such heretical travesties. They should not make matters worse by making him use force against them.

Space Wolves and Dark Angels rested fingers carefully on triggers and glanced at their leaders. Sven Bloodhowl stared insolently down the barrel of Sammael's plasma cannon, gripping his axe tight.

Then, screaming and gibbering, a huge wave of Daemons swept out of the mists with blades raised and eyes aflame.

FROM THE DAEMONS' JAWS

As the Daemons swept in along the shores of the lake, utter bedlam broke out. Space Marines who had been teetering on the brink of battle with each other now turned their guns outwards and blazed away at the onrushing threat. The mists poured in, closing over everything like a shroud, and in that moment Sven Bloodhowl seized his chance.

Bolts of warfire tore from the mists, exploding against the stasis field. Its energies buckled under the bombardment of illogical energies, before collapsing like a popped bubble. As a sudden chorus of angry howls rolled over the battle, it was clear to all that the Wulfen were loose. That primal sound drove all rational thought from Lord Bloodhowl's mind, and he hungered to sink his fangs into warm flesh.

With difficulty, he wrestled the urge down. The Dark Angels had formed a battle line to meet the Daemons pouring along the shore. Now was the Firehowlers' chance, and upon Sven's bellowed orders they rushed to seize the Wulfen. With no time for subtlety, Skyclaws and Wolf Guard barged through the fight to where the Wulfen were ripping apart their daemonic foes. Two to a Wulfen, the Space Wolves grabbed their huge kin beneath the arms and used their jump packs to leap away into the mists. The beasts struggled, until they grasped their brothers' intent.

The Space Wolves raced swiftly uphill. As they went, Sven activated his armour's teleport homer and ordered Strike Force Sagablade to converge on his position. Ahead, another hideous swarm of Daemons hove into view, turning Skyclaws to mutated slop with blasts of warpflame. In response the Space Wolves turned aside, powering up a steep scree slope. The roar of engines signalled the arrival

of the Swiftclaws and Land Speeders. The bikes fell into formation with Sven and his warriors, while the speeders looped back and forth overhead, heavy flamers roasting the Daemon cavalry that sprinted up the hill in pursuit.

The steep climb ended suddenly on a rocky plateau with a sheer drop. The Firehowlers did not slow, hurtling towards the cliff edge at suicidal speeds. Behind them the Daemons howled and shrieked; before them the drop grew closer by the second.

With a sudden roar of powerful engines, the Firehowlers' Thunderhawks rose into view, coming up the cliff face with assault ramps yawning wide. In response, the Space Wolves whooped with exhilaration and launched themselves off into space. For a moment they soared through the tattered mists, death behind them and below. Then the Firehowlers were slamming through the open hatchways of their gunships, bikes skidding to a halt and jump troops running to a crashing stop against the bulkheads within the Thunderhawks' holds. With them came the Wulfen, borne to safety in the arms of their kin.

Sven Bloodhowl's boots were the last to leave the soil of Tranquilitus, the Wolf Lord landing amid his packmates even as his craft fired their jets and made for orbit.

Sammael cursed vehemently as a slight of buzzing Plague Drones burst from the mist. Plasma fire burned into the vile things, turning them to blackened ash, but not before a plague sword had lopped the head from another of his Black Knights. Now the rearguard was just Sammael, his Command Squad, and three other warriors, drawn up on their matt black bikes.

The Daemons' attacks had grown more sporadic after the Space Wolves made their escape. Many of the creatures had disappeared into the mists as though their work was already done, leaving nothing but their mocking laughter to haunt the frustrated sons of the Lion.

Nearly all the Ravenwing had by now made it safely aboard their craft. Sammael's rearguard were fending off those scattered entities still roaming the mists. Regardless, losses had been completely unacceptable. Worse, the wolves had escaped.

As though reading his thoughts, Zaelion, his Company Champion, shook his helmed head in disgust.

'We should not have let them flee, lord. Our aircraft could have...'

'Could have what, Zaelion? Shot down Thunderhawks? Slaughtered Space Marines? No, that is a dark road down which we of all Chapters should not tread.'

'Then what do we do, my lord?' asked Apothecary Ekrophan, his tone loaded with repugnance. 'You saw those... things. They were nearly as hideous as the Daemons themselves!'

'You forget yourself, brother,' replied Sammael. 'Sup not upon questions lest ye choke upon a lie.'

Even as he quoted the old maxim, Sammael shuddered inwardly. Those things had indeed been mutants, undeniably the ones that had slain

Arhad's men. They belonged in an Inquisitorial cell, at the very least.

'Whatever the provenance of the mutant filth,' snarled Champion Zaelion, 'I know what the wolves themselves are. Cowards. They fled the fight and left us here to die on this daemon-haunted hell hole.'

Sammael paused as his vox crackled, confirming the last of the vehicles were loaded. Dark shapes were stirring amidst the mist once again, but Sammael would lose no more warriors this day.

'Brothers, we depart.'

Sammael's warriors remained impassive as they turned their armoured steeds towards the Thunderhawks behind them, but the Master of the Ravenwing felt anger burning within him. The wolves had crossed a line. They teetered on the brink of heresy, and refused to explain their deeds. Sammael knew he must report all to the Inner Circle, and that the events here would not go unpunished.







THE FIREHOWLERS

Favouring fast, aggressive tactics, the Firehowlers are amongst the finest shock troops in the Space Wolves' ranks. These wild warriors tattoo their bodies with scenes from their personal sagas, though none can compete with the intricate tapestry of heroism that covers the skin of their Wolf Lord, Sven Bloodhowl.

SVEN BLOODHOWL
 Wolf Lord of the Firehowlers,
 with jump pack, frost axe and chainsword

THE OATHBOUND
 5 Wolf Guard
 with jump packs



THE BLOODGUARD
 5 Wolf Guard with jump packs:
 Olaf Blackstone, Uuntir Wolfskull,
 Istun Firestorm, Kregga Longtooth,
 Torvind Morkai



THE FIREWYRMS
 8 Wolf Guard
 with jump packs



THE BLACKFANGS
 10 Grey Hunters



THE THUNDERCLAWS
 10 Grey Hunters



THE STONECLAWS
 10 Grey Hunters



THE FIRESTONES
 10 Skyclaws



THE STORMBRINGERS
 10 Skyclaws



THE DRAKEBANES
 14 Skyclaws



THE FIREKIN
 10 Bloodclaws



BLOODHOWL'S RIDERS
 7 Swiftclaw Bikers,
 Swiftclaw Attack Bike



THE FLAMETONGUES
 10 Swiftclaw Bikers,
 Swiftclaw Attack Bike



THE STORMGHOSTS
 7 Swiftclaw Bikers,
 Swiftclaw Attack Bike




THE EMBERFANGS
 5 Long Fangs



THE FIREMAAWS
 5 Long Fangs




THE STONESHIELDS
 5 Long Fangs



BLOODHOWL'S RAVENS
 2 Land Speeders

THE IRONCLAWS
 3 Land Speeders



LONGBOUND

Sven Bloodhowl's expertly crafted jump pack is known as Longbound. The Wolf Lord has had this priceless artefact overcharged to ensure maximum speed and lift, claiming that he is borne into battle upon the burning breath of the Firehowler itself.



FROSTCLAW

It is boasted amongst the ranks of the Firehowlers that no armour forged can stop the edge of this frost axe. Certainly, none of Lord Bloodhowl's many opponents has yet lived to disprove this claim.

FIREFANG

The whirring teeth of this weapon are made from tempered obstinite mined from below the mighty volcano from which Sven's Great Company take their name. When spun up to speed, these crystal teeth glow with the fiery wrath of the volcano itself.

THE SKIN OF THE BEAST

Once, the north fjords of Asaheim were menaced by a Fenrisian Stonebear so large that a Land Raider would have been lost in the behemoth's shadow. It was Sven Bloodhowl who struck down this near-mythic monster, and the Wolf Lord still proudly wears a segment of its pelt as a trophy of that saga-sung victory.

STRIKE FORCE SAGABLADE



At the head of Strike Force Sagablade stands Sven Bloodhowl himself. Unusually for a Wolf Lord – or for any Space Wolf that has lived long enough to be promoted – Sven fought for a full decade as a Skyclaw. Though he now commands an entire Great Company, the Wolf Lord still favours fighting with a jump pack, relishing the speed and power it grants him in battle. Sven prefers to fight up close, choosing to wield his chainsword, Firefang, and a massive frost axe that he names Frostclaw. In battle, Sven Bloodhowl is a whirlwind of destruction against which no foe can stand and live.

Sven's Wolf Guard – the Bloodguard – are an aggressive band of close quarters experts, well acquainted with fighting by jump pack and powerful enough to tear the heart from any army. Whether Olaf Blackstone with his crackling wolf claws, Istun Firestorm with his massive thunder hammer, or the plasma pistol and power fist of old Kregga Longtooth, each of the Bloodguard is a master of their chosen weapons. They are a boisterous brotherhood, exchanging oaths and banter as battle rages around them.

By comparison, the battle-brothers of the strike force's two Skyclaw packs are young and hotheaded. Known as the

Firestones and the Stormbringers, these young warriors are so reckless that they cannot be trusted with any duty other than headlong assault. Among the Firehowlers this is seen less as a mark of dishonour than a sign of greatness to come. Lord Bloodhowl views these boisterous young warriors with wry amusement, and insists that belonging to such a pack is more rite of passage than true punishment.

Sven's Skyclaws fight ferociously, always competing to impress their lord and earn their first tattoos. Attrition is high among these packs, for they rarely give a thought to the dangers they face. This fact troubles neither Bloodhowl nor his followers; life on Fenris is hard, and all are well used to the idea that the strong survive while the weak feed the crows.

Supporting Strike Force Sagablade on the ground come the pack of Swiftclaw Bikers known as Bloodhowl's Riders. The Swiftclaws provide a highly mobile and extremely resilient fire base to support the strike force on the hunt. It was these courageous young warriors who held the line at the apocalyptic Battle of Trollswatch, and it was they too who rode down and shot to death the Tyranid Lictor known as the Bloodlinker on Haedorn II. The Swiftclaws are well equipped to bring down even the biggest game



thanks to the multi-melta of their attendant Attack Bike. They are often deployed by Sven Bloodhowl in a supporting role, serving with great effect as hunters of the enemy's battle tanks.

Additional support for the strike force is supplied by its only true vehicles, the twinned Land Speeders known as *Bloodhowl's Ravens*. Multi-purpose attack craft boasting exceptional speed and firepower, these two armoured skimmers prey upon tanks with their bulky multi-meltas, or immolate enemy infantry with their heavy flamers. Their Grey Hunter crews are experienced enough to spot threats wherever they arise, and have kept their more audacious comrades alive many times.

During the battle on Tranquilitus, Strike Force Sagablade gained the allegiance of the Wulfen who would come to be known as the Flameclaws. Sven Bloodhowl earned their pack leader's loyalty by rescuing his warriors from the Dark Angels and Daemons, and the savage strength and bestial speed of the Wulfen impressed Sven in turn. The Wulfen were a powerful ally in the Firehowlers' ranks, their aggressive temperament and penchant for close quarters brutality perfectly complementing the fighting style of their adoptive Great Company.

The warrior stood atop a wall of ice, behind battlements thick with a rime of shimmering frost. Silver-blue light gleamed from the hexagrammic flanks of the fortress, whose highest spires rose impossibly into the clouds of light swirling above. The towers, too, were crafted from glacial ice, and as the light fell through it the fortress shimmered with translucent hues of blue, turquoise, sea green and cold rose.

The lone warrior knew every inch of the mighty edifice upon whose battlements he stood. He knew its winding, empty corridors, its old secrets and glowing runic wards. This was an eternal place, and it was one that he must defend.

They were coming again. Grim-faced, the warrior rolled his huge shoulders and rose to his full, towering height. In one hand he carried a gleaming triple-blade of ice, and as the first of the awful creatures burst from the snowstorm and clawed its way up the wall, the warrior readied this weapon. Trailing ethereal flames, the things scrambled over the battlements, and with a mighty howl the warrior smashed them back into the void. More were coming though. It didn't matter, thought the warrior as he hacked and hewed. This was his home, his place to defend, and he would not let it fall.

THE SLAUGHTERED CITY

As the Stormwolf's assault ramp whined down, fiery light spilled into its interior. Along with several others, the craft had braved the flame-wracked skies of Vikurus in order to land in the shrine city of Absolom. They bore the Champions of Fenris into battle, and followed the scryings of Njal Stormcaller, who had divined that the Wulfen were even now embattled somewhere in this sacred city. To maximise their chances of quickly locating their kin, the champions had broken into small warrior-bands. Some landed upon the outstretched marble hands that served as landing pads for the city's vast statue-habs. Others dropped among the tangled buildings of the Tombplex or the arcing processions of the Serenitum. Grimnar's Stormwolves had put down at the centre of the Grand Assemblis, a broad, statue-dotted square between towering cathedrums.

Bloodletters filled the blood-soaked plaza, hacking apart desperate bands of militiamen. Corpses were heaped everywhere, many aflame or writhing with unnatural putrescence. Meanwhile the immense pict-screens that overlooked the square – previously used for the addresses of the Cardinalty – broadcast a constant, screaming bombardment of horrific images and sanity-warping noise. The once-holy place was defiled beyond all hope of redemption.

With a mighty bellow of rage, Logan Grimnar led the charge into the square. His chariot *Stormrider* swept into battle, and behind it came the Great Wolf's elite – the Kingsguard. Squads of Wolf Guard Terminators strode into the gore that swilled across the square, their storm bolters roaring as they opened fire into the Daemon packs. Mighty Dreadnoughts pounded forwards, lumbering into the fight behind the snarling, stomping terror that was Murderfang. At the head of this assemblage came some of the Chapter's greatest heroes, Njal Stormcaller conjuring the wrath of the tempest as Ulrik the Slayer charged with a howl of fury.

The fight was brief and brutal, hissing Bloodletters hacking and stabbing before being blown apart or smashed to the bloody ground. Soon, the only living things in the square were the Champions of Fenris, and a last few Absolom militia who stared in awe. Ignoring the screams from the pict-screens, Grimnar looked to Murderfang. Grimnar had risked bringing the bestial Dreadnought on this crucial mission, for he believed that Murderfang would share some kin-bond with the beings they sought. The Wulfen Dreadnought prowled back and forth, daemon gore dripping from his claws as he scented the air. Then, eyes lighting with feral recognition, the Dreadnought turned and pounded away towards a vast scrimshaw arch on the south side of the Assemblis. Trusting the senses of their cursed brother to lead them to their Wulfen kin, the Champions of Fenris followed.









ON SILVER WINGS

In the skies over Absolom, a trio of silver craft screamed through clouds of flame. The wards on each Stormraven's hull hurled back the unnatural fires, leaving those inside unharmed as they scoured the dying city for their quarry. The Grey Knights had come to Vikurus, Brother-Captain Stern leading his warriors on the hunt for Logan Grimnar.

Standing in the cockpit of the lead gunship, Stern watched the elaborate spirit-augur set into the craft's instrument panel. The device churned with activity, reading surges of Warp energy from every quarter. Like islands amid the storm, the bright souls of the Space Wolves stood out across Absolom amid hordes of daemonic foes. Stern had eyes for only one rune on the display – that of Grimnar himself.

As they approached the Great Wolf's position, Stern had his pilots bank down through the teetering spires of the shrine city. Soaring between madly tolling bell towers and rooftops crowded with gargoyle-servitors, the Grey Knights saw the full horror of the Virkurian incursion. Small bands of Battle Sisters fought back to back on teetering arch-bridges or spiralled stairways, hammering bolt shots into onrushing tides of Daemons until they were overwhelmed. Vast clouds of daemon-flies billowed from the shattered windows of cathedrums, their drone drowning out the screams of the damned souls within. Ill-fated Ministorum priests – their robes ablaze with mutating fire – hurled themselves to their deaths rather than be seized by the abominations that had defiled their places of sanctuary. Here and there the Champions of Fenris were glimpsed; on the Ophidium Central, Grey Hunters and Long Fangs fired upon an advancing Forgehost of Soul Grinders, while on the Plaza of Peace, the Daemons of Nurgle were blasted to sludge and ash by the psychic fury of a Wyrdstorm Brotherhood.

Gravely assessing the pandemonium below, Stern knew that Vikurus was beyond help. This world's damnation could not be stopped. Only the mission mattered.

Banking hard, the three Stormravens hurtled into the man-made canyon of the Cathedrum Processional. Behind them, a host of airborne Tzeentchian Daemons rose from the mayhem. Their riders hurled blasts of warpflame that transmuted the rearmost gunship to lead and sent it plunging down to explode upon the processional below.

Turrets swivelled and assault cannons screamed as they span up to speed. As the gunships hurtled up the street between looming cathedrums, they spat sawing lines of fire at their infernal pursuers. Burning Chariots rained down as wreckage upon the corpse-choked street below. The remainder of the Daemons peeled off, whipping away in search of easier prey and leaving the Grey Knights to bear down upon their target. It loomed ahead now, the towering Dome of Penitents rising to dominate the skyline. Screaming in towards its roof with weapons hot, the Stormravens did not slow...



THE CHAMPIONS OF FENRIS

The Champions of Fenris are the very best of their heroic Chapter. These daring and selfless warriors are renowned as saviours of the helpless and slayers of great evil, even in the folklore of worlds that have never known a Space Marine's tread. Tales of their incredible deeds are told across the Imperium, but all fall short of the Champions' true glory.

THE AXE MORKAI

The Axe Morkai has tasted the blood of tyrant and murderer alike. It has hacked the heads from demagogues, and split the rotten hearts of renegades. It is a weapon fit for a hero, and there are few more worthy of that title than Logan Grimnar.

FELLCLAW'S SKULL

The gilded skull of the monstrous wolf Fellclaw has long been Logan Grimnar's totem. Just a glimpse of this feral trophy fills Grimnar's followers with fresh resolve, and rumours abound that it brings good fortune to all who set eyes upon it.



BELT OF RUSS

Every Wolf Lord wears one of these ancient devices; concealed within its intricate links is a potent force field that protects its wearer from harm.

AVALANCHE PATTERN STORM BOLTER

The drumming fire of this lethal weapon has brought death to aliens, mutants and heretics. Expertly maintained and perfectly calibrated, Grimnar's storm bolter is a breathtaking example of the Iron Priest's craft.

GREAT WOLF LOGAN GRIMNAR
High King of Fenris, riding *Stormrider*



ULSTVAN MORKAISON
Wolf Priest in
Terminator Armour

WOLF GUARD
ARJAC ROCKFIST
Grimnar's Champion

NJAL STORMCALLER
High Rune Priest of the
Space Wolves



THE WINTERFANGS
5 Wolf Guard Terminators
led by Kraeger Firebreath

TORFIN DAGGERFIST
Wolf Guard Battle Leader



DAGGERFIST'S VOID CLAWS
4 Wolf Guard Terminators
led by Alrik Doom-Seeker



JORN'S GIANT KILLERS
5 Wolf Guard Terminators



WULFTONGUE'S SHIELDBROTHERS
5 Wolf Guard Terminators
led by Volkbad Wulf Tongue



IRONFANG'S CLAWS OF GRIMNAR
5 Wolf Guard Terminators
led by Ranulf Ironfang



HORGOTH'S ALLSLAYERS
10 Wolf Guard



TORMUND'S ICEWALKERS
8 Grey Hunters



SHADOWSTALKER'S
SNOWDEVILS
9 Grey Hunters



GREPNIR'S FIREFANGS
10 Grey Hunters



WULFSONS OF LORKIR
7 Grey Hunters



KJARL'S SLAYERS
8 Grey Hunters



VADDR'S SAGASUNG
10 Grey Hunters



JARN'S UNBLOODED
15 Blood Claws



FJYR'S STORMBRINGERS
10 Blood Claws



ALRIK'S REAVERS
10 Blood Claws



SKARNEL'S YOUNGBLOODS
13 Blood Claws



ULNAR'S SKYBROTHERS
10 Skyclaws



ORLOF'S THUNDERSTORM
5 Long Fangs



HAAKON'S WYRMSLAYERS
5 Long Fangs



FENRYD'S FELLEYED
5 Long Fangs



SVENAR'S
BLIZZARDWALKERS
5 Wolf Scouts



THE FROZEN
SHADOW
5 Wolf Scouts



NORGIR'S
TROLLKILLERS
5 Wolf Scouts



JORUND'S
FARSTRIDERS
5 Wolf Scouts



LENOLD
WULFSON
Lone Wolf



THE GREY
WALKER
Lone Wolf



BRAN
DYRCLAW
Lone Wolf



WYRDFANG THE
WANDERER
Lone Wolf

HAARGEN DEATHBANE
Venerable Dreadnought
with multi-melta

SVENDAR IRONARM
Venerable Dreadnought
with Fenrisian great axe and blizzard shield

THE KINGSGUARD



Whether fighting perfidious Eldar beneath the cold light of alien stars, doing battle with vile renegades in the depths of twisted warships, or slaying the mightiest Tyranid beasts, the Champions of Fenris never fail and never falter. They are the exemplars of their warrior brotherhood, the packs that every other Space Wolf longs to join, and they are held to the highest standards by their master, Logan Grimnar.

When the Champions set forth on their quest for the Wulfen, Lord Grimnar led them proudly into the stars with hope in his heart. Grimnar brought with him his greatest advisors and most heroic companions, such renowned figures as Njal Stormcaller, Ulrik the Slayer, the Wolf Priest Ulstvan Morkaison, and the hulking champion Arjac Rockfist.

Upon making planetfall on the doomed world of Vikurus, it was these saga-sung heroes who led the Kingsguard into battle. It was an honour to do so, for few warriors in the galaxy could match the might of the massed Wolf Guard who made up their ranks. The combat specialists of Daggerfist's Voidclaws, the hammer-wielding brawlers of Wulfetongue's Shieldbrothers, the deadly marksmen of the Winterfangs, the renowned Horgoth's Allslayers, and

the Claws of Grimnar who had fought so hard and so well on Alaric Prime; all were living legends of battles beyond count, masters in the art of war and utterly loyal to the Great Wolf. The combined strength of these warriors was enough to change the tides of war, conquer worlds, and crush the most terrible foes. On Vikurus they would be tested to their limits.

Fighting alongside the warrior packs of the Kingsguard were some of the greatest war engines and warriors of the Space Wolves' armoury. A pair of Land Raiders provided this fighting force with exceptionally heavy armoured support. The ancient engine of destruction known as *Morkai's Howl* could trace its history back to the bloody days of the Scouring, when it had roared out to do battle with the traitor engines of the fleeing renegade Legions. Since those days, *Morkai's Howl* had ended the evils of traitors beyond count, and the Space Wolves did not doubt that it would slaughter many more before it met its end.

Every bit as glorious was the Land Raider Redeemer known as *Fire of Fenris*; this pugnacious fighting vehicle was renowned among the Chapter's Iron Priests for its hot-tempered machine spirit, and had before been known to charge headlong into battle regardless of its crew's



commands. However, the Redeemer had never failed in its duty, delivering the Kingsguard into the heart of the foe and burning the enemies of the Allfather from Baddervacht to Grace's Fall.

Marching in support of this glorious assemblage were the Ancients of the Fang. Venerable brothers all, these Dreadnoughts fought with multi-meltas, great axes and hellfrost cannons. Their counsel, too, was invaluable to Grimnar, and for every battle the Dreadnoughts won by brute force, they carried another with their millennial wisdom.

The same could not be said of the frothing lunatic known as Murderfang. This cursed brother had been brought to battle by the express request of Njal Stormcaller himself. The Rune Priest had sensed a deep bond between the Dreadnought and the Wulfen, insisting that Murderfang would be instrumental in leading the Champions of Fenris to their 13th Company kin. All the same, Grimnar ensured that the Stormfang Gunship *Drakesbane* would accompany his Kingsguard's advance; so powerful was Murderfang's rage that he might need to be subdued should he run out of enemies to tear apart.

As Murderfang barrelled down processions and across bridge-ways, the Champions of Fenris followed close behind. The Stormwolf *Drakesbane* streaked low overhead, transforming Daemons into crackling ice-sculptures with every pass. Up ahead, Grimnar could see a vast marble dome, limned by the fires in the sky. Silhouetted atop was a towering daemoniac form.

'Bloodthirster,' he growled over the vox.

Ulrik the Slayer gave a mirthless chuckle, the sound like someone crushing gravel. 'Aye lad – that ugly trollson will die beneath our axes soon enough.'

Ahead, a mass of Plaguebearers filled the street, and the Champions of Fenris howled as they followed Murderfang into the putrid horde.

'Oh it'll die old one, the sagas will tell of that,' said Grimnar as Stormrider smashed Daemons aside in gory sprays. 'But before it does, it'll give us back our lost kin.' With that, the Champions of Fenris were through, and following Murderfang towards the towering dome.

BATTLE FOR THE DOME

Led by the bellowing Murderfang, the Champions of Fenris charged between the towering golden doors of the Dome of Penitents, and straight into a monstrous horde of Daemons. From high up in the Celestium Galleries came a chorus of chilling howls as the Wulfen welcomed their kin to the fight.

Murderfang was wreaking havoc. The moment the howl of the Wulfen echoed down from the golden balconies, the Dreadnought went berserk. Every sweep of his claws sent torn flesh and spraying ichor into the air, and the massed Daemons gave way before him like ice before a ram ship's prow. Still, the Warpspawn filled the floor-space of the Dome of Penitents in their thousands.

Once, this had been a great auditorium meant for gathering and worship; shrines to the Primarchs were raised around the dome's circumference, while at its centre a vast golden effigy of the Emperor lifted high a gleaming blade the height of a Reaver Titan to touch the ceiling far above. That domed span was painted with glorious frescoes of swirling stars and winged cherubim, and beneath it hung the great galleries and railed walkways across which the Wulfen were now hunting Daemons.

The dome swarmed with the terrors of the Warp, and the corpses of militiamen, Sororitas and priests filled it in carrion mounds. In scant seconds, the Daemons broke over the Champions in an unholy tide. Grumbling Plaguebearers and jabbering Nurglings lumbered to the

attack, abandoning the filth-sigils they had been smearing upon the dome's flagstone floor. They met the Kingsguard with stabbing blades and gnashing teeth, dragging down several of Wulf tongue's Shieldbrothers and Horgoth's Allslayers. Bloodletters and Bloodcrushers charged across the charnel pit, weathering blitzing fire from the Fenrisians before launching into the fight. Svendar Ironarm staggered as a Juggernaut slammed into him, ripping through bonded ceramite and sending a limb – great axe and all – crashing to the floor in a shower of sparks.

Seeing the Dreadnought's plight, Njal Stormcaller sent arcing bolts of lightning into the Khornate ranks. Daemons spasmed as their eyes burst and their unnatural flesh caught fire. The rest of the Ancients of the Fang pressed on, the ground shaking with their fury.

From across the dome came a series of booms as Khornate Skull Cannons spat forth their macabre ammunition. Detonations bloomed across the hull of the *Fire of Fenris* as the tank surged forwards. The damage only seemed to enrage the belligerent vehicle, which engulfed a swathe of Daemons in promethium death.



The Wulfen bounded into battle, heedless of the perilous drop as they leapt between the platforms of the Celestium Galleries. Fungoid Flamers and leering Tzeentchian Horrors were their prey and – though one Wulfen after another was sent plummeting towards the ground aflame – they tore through the Daemons until iridescent ichor fell like rain.

Amidst the mayhem, Logan Grimnar made for the Bloodthirster at the horde's heart. When the Space Wolves had first entered the dome, the mighty Daemon lord had been aloft, vast wings bearing it between the galleries as it chased down the Wulfen. However, the Champions' arrival had seized the greater Daemon's attention and down it had swept, wings spread wide and blazing with hellfire.

The vast terror landed before Logan Grimnar, bellowing a wordless challenge at the Great Wolf. Contemptuously, the Daemon swung its massive axe, swatting one of Horgoth's Allslayers a hundred feet through the air to bounce hard off the statue of the Emperor. The warrior crashed to the floor, vanishing beneath the trampling feet of the battling armies.

In response, Grimnar leapt from the running board of his chariot and charged at the blood-soaked Khornate Daemon. Other enemies surged to meet the Great Wolf, but were hurled back by the Claws of Grimnar and the hammer-swings of Arjac Rockfist. This would be a fight

for the sagas: Logan Grimnar battling a bellowing Bloodthirster of Khorne. To fight such an abomination could well be the death of the Great Wolf, but he would not shy from so great a challenge nor leave his packmates to fight in his stead.

As Grimnar charged, the Bloodthirster sent its barbed lash snaking out to ensnare his legs. The Great Wolf sidestepped the lightning-fast blow, swinging his axe in a whistling arc. Such a strike would have cleaved apart a Dreadnought, but it was blocked with a thunderous clang by the Bloodthirster's blade.

Grimnar span away, avoiding his foe's savage backswing, and raked the towering Daemon's chest with storm bolter fire. The Bloodthirster snarled as the shots cracked its breastplate, before driving Grimnar back with a series of lightning-fast blows that left blood running from a half dozen wounds. Engulfed in the vast black shadow of the Daemon's wings, Logan raised his axe ready for the next onslaught.

At that very moment a great section of the ceiling exploded inward, tumbling down with an almighty crash upon the battle below.





Masonry rained down, smashing through the Celestium Galleries and tearing away the gantries. Howling madly, the Wulfen leapt from gallery to platform to statue, riding the wreckage down to the ground below. Most of them survived.

Two silver-hulled Stormravens descended through the shattered dome. The Gunships' engines screamed as they shot low over the battle, before swooping in to land.

The Bloodthirster spared the craft a furious glare, recognising those who had banished it in ages past. Wounded but determined, Grimnar seized his chance. With a roar, the Great Wolf swung the Axe Morkai and lopped off the Bloodthirster's whip-arm. A mortal enemy would have died there and then. The Bloodthirster barely flinched.

Grimnar and the Daemon exchanged a furious flurry of blows, axe blades clanging like a blacksmith's forge. Shrugging off a mighty blow, the towering Bloodthirster raised one cloven hoof and kicked Grimnar in the chest, cracking ceramite and breaking the black carapace beneath. The Daemon roared in triumph as Grimnar's guard collapsed, but as its axe arced down to deliver the killing strike it was met by a crackling blade.

The Great Wolf glanced to his left, eyes narrowing as he saw the silver-armoured Terminators who had cut a path to his side.

'What...?'

Grimnar's instincts howled a warning, and he dove aside as the Bloodthirster struck. Its axe shattered flagstones where the Great Wolf had stood. The blade swept out again, felling a trio of Paladins with a single swing. In response, the leader of the Grey Knights stepped in, forcing the Bloodthirster back with mighty swings of his sanctified blade.

'Lord Grimnar,' shouted the swordsman over the din of battle, 'I am Stern of the Grey Knights. I demand your immediate surrender!' Ignoring the agony of his injuries, Grimnar surged back to his feet with a scream of servos, barging one of the Grey Knights aside and hammering his axe straight into the Bloodthirster's breastplate. Ichor gouted forth, and the Daemon's knees finally buckled.

'You pious butchers aren't welcome here,' growled Grimnar, wrenching the Axe Morkai from his foe's chest with a sucking squelch. 'This is our saga,' Grimnar's next swing took the Bloodthirster's other arm. 'Our fight,' the Axe Morkai struck off the Daemon's head. 'Our business.'

As the Daemon's corpse fell sideways, the Great Wolf turned angrily to face Stern, face spattered with blood, dripping axe clutched in one fist.

'I speak with the Emperor's voice, Grimnar. And I accuse your Chapter of harbouring mutants. I further believe that your warriors have invested a number of Incurion war zones, then departed from them at great cost to the Imperium.'

Grimnar scowled at Stern, volunteering nothing.

'So you do not deny these things?' Continued Stern. 'I confess, Great Wolf, I had heard much of the Space Wolves, but I did not believe you to be cowards who ran from wars unfinished.' Grimnar growled low in his throat, stepping forwards so his cracked breastplate clanged against Stern's.

'Careful, Daemon hunter. You go too far.'

A long moment of tension crackled between the two warriors. Grimnar turned away first, his duty to his Space Wolves overriding his dislike of the newcomers. He nodded with satisfaction as he saw that, though their fight had been near as desperate as his own, his Champions of Fenris had done themselves proud.

The daemonic horde within the dome had been annihilated, though the cost in lives had been steep. The majority of the Wulfen had been recovered alive, and now banded together behind a solid wall of Kingsguard. As the massive figure of Arjac Rockfist loomed at his shoulder, Grimnar shook off his Champion's offer of assistance. He would not show weakness before the Grey Knights no matter how severe his injuries, and so stood, swaying but unaided as he addressed Stern.

'You had accusations to make, Brother-Captain?'

The Grey Knight frowned at the bestial Wulfen, panting and snarling with the battle's exertion. They were clustered around the armoured form of Murderfang, the huge Dreadnought quiet for once as it shared some kind of unspoken communion with the feral warriors.

'Those creatures,' began Stern, his Grey Knights moving to stand behind him. 'They are mutants, yes?'

'They are kin,' replied Grimnar, his voice cold as a Fenrisian winter. 'There is no taint in them. It's... complicated.'

'No, Lord Grimnar, it is extremely simple,' replied the Grey Knight. 'These things came from the Warp, and only my brothers and I are fit to judge if these *kin* of yours are corrupt. They must be handed over to us immediately, as must any others you have recovered. We will see to it that they reach Titan safely.' Grimnar watched Stern's face carefully for a moment, his expression unreadable. Then the Great Wolf gave a coughing, pain-racked laugh.

'Stern, I'm sure you think you're being very reassuring, but there's as much chance of you taking the Wulfen as of me giving my crown to a blubber-seal. I'd see our brothers dead before I handed them over to be cut apart and studied.'

Stern nodded slowly, taking in the army of Space Wolves that now surrounded his small band.

'Forcing your cooperation at this juncture would prove costly.'

The Great Wolf shook his head to scattered chuckles from the Kingsguard. 'Oh, we wouldn't lose that many men, Brother-Captain.'

'Still,' said Stern, ignoring the insult, 'I would have thought, considering the current situation around Fenris, you would want all the friends you could get, Great Wolf.'

An angry murmur ran through the Space Wolves at this, and Grimnar's expression grew thunderous.

'What *situation*?'





UNWELCOME TRUTHS

Stern paused at Grimnar's question, scrutinizing the Great Wolf's rugged features as though seeking to catch him in some falsehood. After a long moment, Stern began to speak, his words carrying to all the Space Wolves in the dome. As they listened, their faces curled into dangerous scowls.

The Grey Knights saw much, said Stern. Thanks to their powers of prognostication and astropathic interception, no secret was beyond them. So it was that Stern's Astropaths had caught fragments of an urgent communiqué meant for Grimnar's own. The Great Wolf bristled, but before he could speak Stern pressed on. The Grey Knight's tone was damning as he announced that, while the wolves chased mutants to the far reaches of the Imperium, the Fenris System itself had come under daemonic attack.

A dangerous silence greeted these words. In the distance, the sounds of battle rumbled on. Eventually, Logan Grimnar spoke. If this news were true, he said, then the Wolves of Fenris would be recalled at once and woe betide those who had loosed such devilry. However, if this was some ruse by Stern to cut the quest for the Wulfen short then no force in the galaxy would save him from the Space Wolves' vengeance.

Unmoved, Stern established a vox link with his shipboard Astropaths and ordered the fragmented message passed on to Grimnar's own. The communiqué had been hurled forth in great desperation, explained Stern. It had been jumbled and shattered by malevolent interference; only the skill of the Grey Knights' Astropaths had seen the missive recovered even in part.

As the seconds passed, the Space Wolves muttered amongst themselves and cast black looks at the Grey Knights who stood ramrod straight in their midst. Finally, Grimnar listened intently to his vox transponder before turning to face Stern. The message had been confirmed; its etheric signature was definitely that of the Fang's astropathic choir, while its portents and symbols were dire indeed. Stiffly, the Great Wolf thanked Stern for bringing him this warning, and asked that the matter of the Wulfen be set aside until Fenris' safety could be assured. All Space Wolf forces would be recalled to the home system's defence at once.

Stern agreed, and offered his aid. Grimnar growled an assent, and was turning away when Stern's parting words stopped him dead in his tracks. The Space Wolves must beware, warned the Brother-Captain, for something greater and darker was at work here than had yet been revealed. He knew this, because the Warp storms that the Space Wolves chased had not appeared at random. Rather, their placement formed a vast sigil, one that only appeared in the Grey Knights' oldest lore and that had not been seen for ten millennia.

From Spartha IV to Atrapan, from Fimmir to Hades' Reach, the Warp storms writ large an ancient symbol of vengeance last used by the sorcerers of Prospero – the Thousand Sons.

Ragnar Blackmane swung Frostfang in a savage arc, sawing clean through the neck of a Daemonette. Around Ragnar, the jungles of Dragos were alive with motion. Daemons poured from everywhere, wriggling like maggots between the densely packed tree-trunks to hack apart or impale the Space Wolves. Though beset on all sides, Ragnar's warriors had recovered several packs of Wulfen from amid this arboreal hell, and the returned brothers now fought at Blackmane's side. Their howling echoed over the mad clangour of battle, each fresh chorus fuelling the Space Wolves' battle frenzy.

Ragnar caught another Daemonette by the throat as it lunged at him, hefting the squirming creature into the air and snapping its spine with a brutal twist. One of the Wulfen lunged past him, hammering its frost claws through the chest of a Slaaneshi Fiend before ripping the Daemon bodily in two. Ichor rained down on Ragnar, and the young Wolf Lord snarled his approval.

Ragnar's eyes darted left and right, hunting for more prey to kill. He felt fire surging through his veins, and within his soul the blackmane wolf growled as it hadn't done in years. His hearts thundered with adrenaline, and his breath came in a savage pant. Part of Blackmane knew that something was amiss, a sane voice whispering that the bestial power saturating his body was wrong. But the larger part of him exulted in the feeling, hungering for the thrill of the hunt and the hot blood of the kill.

Ragnar shook his head, coming back to himself as he realised that whispering voice was actually the crackle of the vox.

'Say again...' he panted through gritted fangs, forcing his mind to calm.

'Astropathic communiqué Lord Blackmane,' came the huscarl's voice again, voxing down from the Strike Cruiser high above. 'It is from the Great Wolf, my lord. He says we are to withdraw immediately and return to...'

'Impossible!' snarled Blackmane, cutting angrily across the man's words. The beast in him raged at the thought of retreat. 'We are still fighting! There are still... hnnng... so many here to hunt!'

'My lord,' the serf's tone was half apologetic, half afraid. 'The order comes from Lord Grimnar himself. He says that Fenris is under attack.'

The words were like a blast of chill Fenrisian wind on Ragnar's skin, and he forced down the beast inside with a furious effort.

'Russ' bones... Understood. Pulling back now.' Ragnar switched vox frequencies, eliciting a chorus of angry howls from his warriors as he relayed the order to prepare for extraction.

Ragnar Blackmane shook his head with dismay as he and his surviving warriors began a fighting retreat. Fenris. The Wulfen. Something here was very, very wrong.



THE CURSE

By the time the Great Wolf's fleet reached their rally point in the Anvarheim System, the recalled Great Companies of several other Wolf Lords had already arrived. With those forces, the Wulfen amongst them, Grimnar intended to make straight for the Fenris System. It swiftly became apparent, however, that matters would not be so simple.

The moment Lord Grimnar's ships entered the Anvarheim System, it was clear something was amiss. Aboard his flagship, *Allfather's Honour*, Grimnar listened to a barrage of incoming vox-chatter. Alarming and contradictory reports overlaid one another, and the Great Wolf shared a grim look with Ulrik the Slayer.

Clustered near the third moon of Maedebrax, the warships of Harald Deathwolf, Egil Iron Wolf and Sven Bloodhowl's Great Companies waited in loose formation for the coming of their King. In their midst was the honour-ship *Coldfang*, sitting apart from its brothers like a leper amidst a crowd. It was from this craft that many of the urgent vox hails came, though the Wolf Lords also clamoured for their Great Wolf's attention.

Grimnar opened a vox-channel to all three of his lieutenants, as well as to Battle Leader Hjalvard aboard the *Coldfang*. Conscious of Stern's Battle Barge sitting in mute judgement off his port bow, Grimnar ensured the exchange was as heavily encrypted as it could be. He then angrily demanded that his brothers take a hold of themselves and explain exactly what was going on.

The truth was even more alarming than Lord Grimnar feared. Since the quest began, the *Coldfang* had waited in the Anvarheim System, its role to gather and re-arm the rescued Wulfen for their triumphal return to Fenris. Several Wolf Lords had sent back swift warships with Wulfen packs aboard, pressing on in search of more lost kin even as these first returnees were received aboard the *Coldfang*. To begin with, everything had gone to plan, the Iron Priests successfully equipping the 13th Company brothers with Hrothgar Swordfang's newly adapted armour and weapons.

More Wulfen continued to be ferried back from far-flung war zones, and as their numbers grew something strange began to occur on the Strike Cruiser. The Wulfen became ever more restive – so much so that their alpha pack leaders struggled to control them. Numerous servitors, and even a handful of crew bondsmen, had been injured or killed by Wulfen lashing out at random. At the same time, the Grey Hunters tasked with watching over the Wulfen became ever more quarrelsome and aggressive. Tempers flared, curses were hurled, and bloody fist fights broke out on the decks of the ship.



By the time the rallying call came, and the three Wolf Lords brought their own recovered Wulfen to join the throng, matters were deteriorating rapidly. Outright anarchy threatened.

Hjalvard snarled that a madness had descended upon the *Coldfang*. Every Fenrisian knew that the mark of the Wulfen could seize a battle-brother in the heat of battle, could even transform him in extreme cases. On the *Coldfang*, it seemed as though the mark's symptoms were manifesting in every warrior aboard. Several had succumbed altogether, their bodies and minds devolving until they were indistinguishable from the 13th Company. For now, the ship's frightened huscarl crew, unaffected by the mutation, were still in control. But for how long?

Voice strained, Harald Deathwolf reminded his brothers that his instincts had warned of something terrible all along. What if this behaviour was not restricted to the warriors aboard the *Coldfang*? Already, the other Wolf Lords were reporting instances of unruly behaviour and increased aggression among packs on their own craft. Fights had broken out between packmates. Blood had been spilled. These Wulfen were not a boon, Harald warned.

They were a curse.

At Harald's words, Logan Grimnar's grip tightened on the arm of his command throne.

'While we travelled, the Stormcaller subjected our kin to every test he knows, Deathwolf,' Grimnar bit out. 'I insisted on it. There is no Chaos taint here. None!'

'Perhaps not,' rumbled Egil Iron Wolf, 'but there is something amiss. Some sickness perhaps? My optic augurs read biochemical hyperactivity in my warriors. Their blood stirs...'

Grimnar looked to Ulrik again, where the Wolf Priest stood beside his throne. The Slayer's face was rigid as graven granite, and Grimnar knew that his old mentor still believed the Wulfen to be the Primarch's heralds. There would be no clear counsel from that quarter.

Grimnar shook his head angrily. He would not believe that their kin were cursed. Something was at work here, but it must be some outside influence, the mischief of a foe to be slain.

'We make Warp for Fenris at once,' Grimnar decreed, his tone brooking no argument. 'And upon our arrival, the Wulfen will fight at our side. The Space Wolves will defend our home world, and we will do so together!'



CHAPTER 3

JUDGEMENT





ARCHITECT OF WOE

The Fenris System seethed with horror. Tendrils of madness coiled from the dark of the void, the raw energies of the Warp tearing at the Space Wolves' domain. Daemons beyond count spilled forth from crackling rents to fall upon vassal militia detachments and Space Wolves defence forces. It was a catastrophe of appalling scale.

As the ships of Logan Grimnar's fleet crashed back out of Warp space and into the Fenris System after long weeks of violent transit, vox and auspex alike came alive with tales of terror. On Valdrmani, Svellgard, Frostheim and Midgardia – every moon and planet but Fenris itself – the Ruinous Powers had struck with gleeful fury. Logan Grimnar was not fool enough to believe the timing of this invasion was coincidental, but for now there was no time for anything but the desperate fight to save the Fenris System from damnation. Only once that war was won would the culprit be hunted down and made to pay in blood.

The truths Grimnar desired were closer than he knew. As the Space Wolves ships appeared on the outskirts of the Fenris System, the mastermind of their miseries marked their arrival. Looming over a blood-spattered augur screen on Frostheim, Lord Vydus Skayle of the Alpha Legion watched intently as the runes denoting the Space Wolves vessels flickered into being. The Chaos Lord showed no reaction as the Fenrisian craft began to power in-system, and deployed their forces in defence of their beset worlds.

When he was sure that no further signifier runes were going to appear, Lord Skayle left the augur and strode across the command chamber of Morkai's Keep. He walked to the cracked and blackened armaglass of the chamber's observation window, stepping over the decomposing corpses of slain Space Wolves. No effort had been made to clear away the aftermath of the Alpha Legion's attack on this fortress; the dead still lay where they had fallen, rotting amid heaps of spent shell casings and scorched craters.

Lord Skayle stared out over the defence lines that spread around the base of the fortress. Down there, his

legionnaires were readying themselves for the onslaught to come. Bastion emplacements were being coaxed back to life, autoloading chattering as the guns guzzled ammunition. Chaos Space Marines herded shivering Cultists through the thigh-deep snow, forcing them into position behind armoured barricades. Daemon Engines prowled, the snow melting before their furnace heat.

The Alpha Legion also had the aid of the Dark Gods. Just as Warp rifts had opened upon the other worlds of the Fenris System, here a breach had torn open atop the glacier to disgorge the Daemons of Khorne and Tzeentch. Skayle knew better than to trust the entities' claims that they were his servants, but they would fight for him when the time came, and that was enough.

Morkai's Keep stood atop a glacial mesa that loomed over the frozen wastes of Frostheim. The Alpha Legion had banished the fortress' alarm spirits and rendered them inert during their attack, but even so there would be no way the Space Wolves could sneak up on Skayle's forces. Not that the wolves would be inclined towards subtlety upon discovering what he had done to their home system. They would be coming for the Alpha Legion with fangs bared.

In truth it didn't matter. The Alpha Legion had completed their task. The great ritual was done, and nothing could stop it now. The Warp rifts blossoming across the Fenris System would multiply, vomiting forth the unnatural energies of the Empyrean. A tide of Daemons would drown the Space Wolves' worlds, and even as they strove to protect their domain, the Fenrisians would damn themselves beyond redemption. So it had been prophesied. So the Despoiler had decreed.

Turning away from the armaglass, Skayle walked across the chamber and stepped into the fortress' grav-lift. He would bask in the energies of the ritual before battle.

As the lift rumbled downward, Skayle again wondered whose will he was truly doing. It was the Despoiler that had sent him, all those years before. Abaddon had provided the ritual, and assured the Alpha Legionnaire that the Space Wolves would not contest his arrival.

Sure enough, the Alpha Legion's veiled warship had met with no resistance as it took position over Frostheim. Even on the surface, the renegades had met with only a token force. The Chaos Lord's lips

split in a fanged smirk as he remembered the slaughter they had wrought upon the meagre Space Wolves garrison left to defend this place.

Skayle was of the Alpha Legion; duplicity was in his blood. And he knew the turning of plans within plans when he saw it. From what Skayle's Sorcerers had been able to fathom, the Space Wolves had been chasing Warp storms. Why, was less clear. Abaddon the Despoiler was capable of great things, Skayle thought to himself, but conjuring dozens of Warp storms across half the galaxy just to draw the wolves away? No.

No matter, thought Skayle as the lift doors opened and empyric energies

washed over him. He would have the truth of it, and he would have his reward.

The chamber stretched out before the Chaos Lord. The former armoury had been transformed into a temple to the Dark Gods. Sigils were daubed in blood upon every surface, glowing with a hellish jade light. Bodies were strewn around the room. Sorcerers and sacrifices alike had been burned alive by the energies they had unleashed. This was the Ritual of Abomination, the rite that would transform the Fenris System into a vast Warp rift, and it was Skayle – not Abaddon – who had unleashed it. Now he just had to live long enough to claim his prize.



Midgardia: The continent-spanning fungus jungles of Midgardia played host to the vile servants of Nurgle, while the planet's subterranean cities seethed with daemonic invaders.



Valdrmani: The Wolf Moon had initially been untouched by hostilities. As the Space Wolves relief fleet arrived, however, a clarion call of distress rang out from its astropathic relay station of Longhowl.



Fenris: No enemy assailed Fenris at this time. The Drakeslayers prowled the battlements of the Fang, sure that this could not remain the case for long.



Frostheim: On snowbound Frostheim, the great fortress of Morkai's Keep had fallen to a surprise attack by the Alpha Legion, whose subsequent ritual had plunged the rest of the Fenris system into madness.



Svellgard: The turbulent ocean moon of Svellgard churned with daemonic activity. Its volcanic islands were overrun, and its crucial defences infested with nightmarish terrors.



The Adventurers Return: Sweeping in from beyond their home system's outer beacons, Logan Grimnar's relief fleet struck. They divided their strengths between the worlds and moons of the Fenris system, furiously determined to slaughter the Chaos forces to the last.

KEY



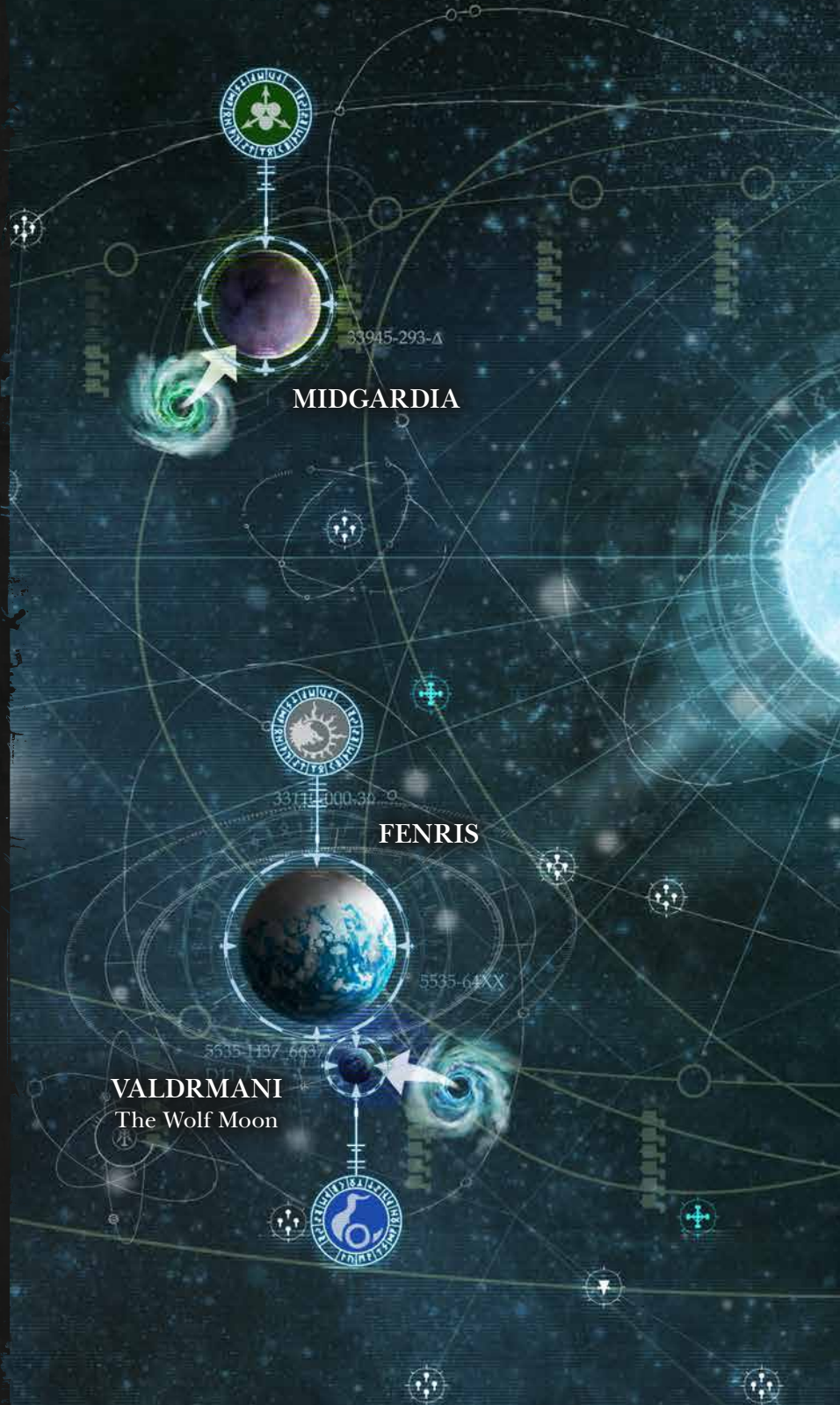
Defence Station



Minefield



Star Fortress





As yet, the Great Company of Ragnar Blackmane had not reached the Fenris System, but was instead racing through the Warp to the aid of their brothers.



Harald Deathwolf's Great Company made straight for Frostheim. They were determined to deal with whatever threat had silenced the garrison of Morkai's Keep and reclaim the fortress for the Great Wolf.



With their preponderance of armoured fighting vehicles and transports, the Ironwolves were deployed to the surface of Midgardia. There they would brave the corrupted jungles and bring the fight to the foe.



To the Firehowlers fell the duty of recapturing the mighty network of orbital defences that dotted the islands of Svellgard. Here their manoeuvrability and speed would count for much.



Lord Redmaw had claimed to be hours away, yet time in the Warp is fickle, and the Space Wolves could not wait for his arrival before launching their assault.



Possessed of a cold and terrible wrath the like of which even his Wolf Guard had never seen before, Logan Grimnar led his Great Company into battle beneath the surface of Midgardia. He would purge the caverns of Daemons or die in the attempt.





LOOSING THE WOLVES

As the Space Wolves' warships powered in-system, Grimnar divided his forces between Svellgard, Frostheim and populous Midgardia, while grudgingly requesting the aid of the Grey Knights in securing Valdrmani. Even asking these outsiders for help was not so contentious as his next order. The Wulfen were divided into Murderpacks and ferried from the *Coldfang* to augment each Great Company.

Those Wolf Lords who protested were shouted down by the furious Grimnar; the Space Wolves needed every warrior to defend their home. The Great Wolf would not allow the trickery of some unseen foe to deny them the aid of the Wulfen at this crucial moment. That, he asserted, was surely what their foes intended. The Space Wolves owed it to their returned brothers not to cast them aside. It was a thin straw to grasp at, but enough to secure the grudging compliance of his Wolf Lords.

Svellgard, Frostheim's turbulent oceanic moon, was the first world to feel Fenrisian retribution. It came in the form of Sven Bloodhowl and his Firehowlers.

Svellgard was the site of the main Fenrisian System defence network. Known as the Claws of the World Wolf, this string of missile silos dotted the chains of volcanic islands that rose from Svellgard's seas, and its sky-scraping missiles posed a threat to any warship navigating the Fenris System. The control hub for this network – a fortified nexus named the World Wolf's Lair – was located on the largest southern island. It was upon this site that the Firehowlers descended in force, determined to reclaim control of this crucial asset.

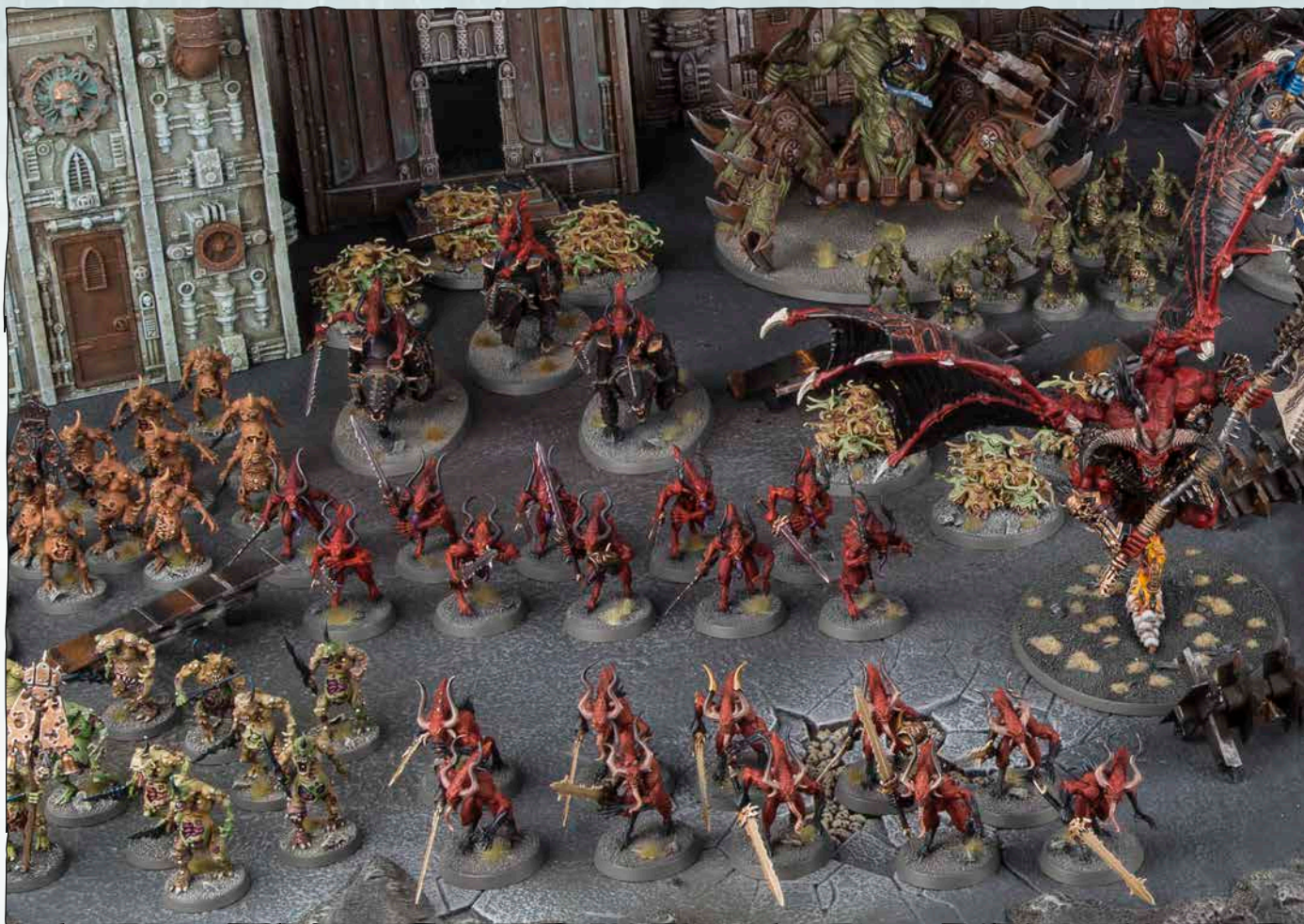
As Sven Bloodhowl charged down the assault ramp of his Stormwolf, his augmented senses took in the battlefield at a glance. Having come down on the rocky ridge overlooking the World Wolf's Lair, his warriors were pouring from their drop craft, eyes wild and chainswords revving. Below them the fortified compound seethed with Daemons, the vile beings who spilled from every bunker and strongpoint in their eagerness to attack the skyborne intruders. To one flank of the compound, the ocean frothed madly, a sick luminescence shining in its depths. To the other, the island's volcano reared towards the sky.

Lord Bloodhowl knew that the compound must be retaken with all haste. The Claws of the World Wolf could be vital to reclaiming the Fenris System. A concerted attack was needed, yet the moment the Firehowlers barrelled from their craft they launched themselves down the slope in ragged packs. The howls of the Wulfen rose over their headlong charge, the feral warriors loping amidst their brothers with thunder hammers and great frost axes raised. Sven's Great Company howled in answer. Jetting forwards at their head, the Wolf Lord bayed as loud and as wildly as any, an animal rage burning in his eyes as he smashed into the daemonic horde.





THE SVELLGARD INCURSION



At the moment Lord Skayle's Sorcerers completed their great Ritual of Abomination, rents had opened in reality beneath the oceans of Svellgard. Rippling Warp portals had shuddered into existence, radiating the mad light of unreality through the ocean depths. Even as millions of gallons of water thundered through these portals and into the Warp, so a daemonic IncurSION had forced its way into Svellgard's seas.

Daemons in their millions had shimmered through the darkness of Svellgard's deep oceans, the crushing pressure an irrelevance to such unnatural fiends. The seabed had swirled up in clouds as clawed feet and cloven hooves churned it, Daemon packs advancing through veils of Warp-lit sediment. Strange fires had flared amid the darkness, Screamers of Tzeentch undulating through the water like abyssal beasts while Skull Cannons rumbled impossibly across the ocean floor. En masse, this terrible horde had surged through the frozen deeps, making unerringly for the islands on which the Space Wolves defence silos were located.

The greatest horde of the Svellgard IncurSION had burst from the churning waters and straight into battle with the shocked garrison of the World Wolf's Lair. Leading

the charge had come a terrifying force of destruction, a Bloodthirster of Insensate Rage. This was Vor'hakk, the Annihilator of Xarn, the Wound that Splits the World. An ancient and terrible being, Vor'hakk was fury distilled into its purest form, a near-mindless destroyer against whom no mortal man had stood and lived. His wing beats were dark thunder fit to drive foes mad with fear. His axe was a thirsting horror of daemonforged steel that had sundered mighty fortress gates and split heroes like bloody firewood. The Bloodthirster's roar could shatter bones with its wrathful force, and the very ground blackened and scorched beneath its cloven-hoofed tread.

Even alone, Vor'hakk would have been a monstrous foe, yet in his wake came the rest of his hellish host. At their heart was a rampaging Murderhorde of Khornate Daemons, led into battle by the infamous Khornate Herald Raksh'as Sundersword. This bloodthirsty Daemon warrior broke the lines of Slaanesh's Wanton Jaunt during the War of Seven Chimes, and severed the head of the enormous Warboss Golg on Muraxia. Though limited as a strategist, the Herald was a lethal combatant and a decisive leader, both qualities he would need in order to keep up with Vor'hakk's rampage.



Raksh'as commanded not only the Bloodletter packs and trampling daemonic cavalry of his Murderhorde, but also a rumbling battery of hellish cannons known as the Crimson Destroyers. This trio of snarling Daemon Engines were notorious for their maddened flesh-hunger, an urge so strong that they would often forgo their duties as artillery in order to charge into battle. The Herald that oversaw them, Ka'Shan'kha, shared this base savagery. Little more than a feral beast, Ka'Shan'kha had been given his post as a punishment for disobedience in battle. Scornful of the very concept of supporting fire, he was content to leave matters of command to Raksh'as, instead urging his Skull Throne into battle as fast as it could go. The taste of mortal flesh was this Herald's only desire, the salt tang of blood his only true pleasure. The violence with which he and his cannons went about their slaughter was the stuff of dark legend.

The remainder of the Svellgard Incursion comprised the Daemons of Nurgle and Tzeentch. Masses of foul beings had burst through the Warp portals in Vor'hakk's wake, and they meant to cause as much slaughter as they could in the name of their own patron deities.

Lumbering ponderously from the ocean with salt water sluicing from their rotted bodies, the Tallyband known as

the Rustlungs had prepared to spread Nurgle's blessings across Svellgard. Their droning count drifted before them, mingled with the gleeful squeals of the Nurglings on which they glumly trod. At their head came the Herald Verdig'rus, whose touch spread corrosion like a plague.

Over the heads of the Incursion swept the Burning Chariots and Tzeentchian Screemers of the Conflagral Swarm. This Burning Skyhost streaked into battle leaving a trail of mutating warpflame in its wake, the strange fires transforming living flesh to glass or slime, flowers or healing flame with random caprice.

Providing the Incursion with a frightening volume of long-ranged firepower were the Soul Grinders of the Clattering Crescendo. This Forgehost stamped their clawed limbs and bellowed to the skies as the Space Wolves dropped from on high to do battle; it had been days since the last of the lair's garrison vassals had fled to the deepest tunnels beneath the island, and ever since the Soul Grinders had been forced to prey on their own for sport. Now, at last, a real foe presented itself once again, and the Daemon Engines meant to reap every mortal soul they could.



Space Wolves and Daemons hurled themselves into the fight with no thought for tactics or restraint. It was as though a madness had seized the Firehowlers, their Swiftclaws and Skyclaws leaving their battle-brothers in their wake as they charged wildly down the ridge. A bestial savagery surged through their packs and saw them claw and bite at their foes, bludgeoning with gun butts and hacking madly with blades. Lord Bloodhowl fought in their midst, his expression as feral and savage as any of them.

The Daemons of the Svellgard Incursion responded to this reckless attack with glee. They spilled from every bunker door and shattered bulkhead, raising a wordless war cry. For days they had been hunting the last of the lair's garrison or fighting sullenly amongst themselves. Now, here came a true foe to corrupt and defeat, and the Daemons would not waste their chance.

Launching himself skyward from the fortifications of the World Wolf's Lair, the Bloodthirster Vor'hakk flapped heavily into the air. The Daemon threw back his bestial head and gave vent to a mighty bellow, a roar that was matched by the volcano that towered over the battlefield. Molten brass and screaming skulls rained down upon the scene, spat from the mountain's maw, and through this rain of destruction the Bloodthirster charged.

Vor'hakk, the Annihilator of Xarn, hit the Space Wolf vanguard like a battering ram. Slamming down amongst them, the Bloodthirster swatted a Land Speeder from the air with his axe. His second swing split three Skyclaws

in half, soaking the ground with their blood. Bellowing, Vor'hakk kicked a Wolf Guard pack leader in the chest and sent him tumbling away, before cutting his axe up under another Skyclaw's chin and smashing him a hundred feet into the air. Blood rained down upon Vor'hakk as the Bloodthirster ploughed on deeper into the fight.

Taking their master's lead, the rest of the daemonic incursion hurled themselves at their foes. While the brass-shod Daemons of Khorne charged straight up the centre, Verdig'rus' Tallyband and the infernal servants of Tzeentch moved to engulf the Fenrisians' flanks. The fight that followed was savage and desperate.

For several saga-worthy minutes, those elements of the Firehowlers that had charged recklessly ahead were forced to fend for themselves against impossible odds. Axes thumped into daemonflesh. Power armour was rent and sundered. Bike engines roared and the cries of dying Skyclaws filled the air. Then, finally, the rest of the Great Company reached the edge of the fortifications.

The Daemons were so intent on overwhelming the Space Wolves, they didn't realise the danger until the main bulk of the Firehowlers crashed into them. Some of these Space Wolves had been driven just as blood-mad as their faster kin, a few even loping into the fight as fully transformed Wulfen. However, many Grey Hunters and Long Fangs had managed to keep their heads. These warriors now advanced into point-blank range and opened fire upon the encircling daemonic forces. A Soul Grinder that had



just dismembered several Swiftclaws was struck in the side by a Vindicator shell and blown to gory scrap. Heavy bolter rounds thumped into the sky, sawing lines of fire criss-crossing as they punched Screamer and Burning Chariots out of the air. The Daemons were caught in the open and shredded by roaring gunfire, or driven back into the compound in disarray.

Though their flanks were collapsing, Vor'hakk and his Khornate Daemons were still wreaking havoc in the centre. Sven Bloodhowl was locked in battle with a hissing Khornate Herald, fighting furiously just to hold the Daemon at bay. He could do nothing to intervene as the Bloodthirster smashed its way through his battle-brothers, making corpses of heroes with every swing of its axe.

Then, with a mighty chorus of howls, the Wulfen Murderpack struck. Having circled their prey through the madness of battle, they came at the Bloodthirster from every angle, returned 13th Company and newly turned Firehowler Wulfen fighting as one. Stormfrag auto-launchers drummed, stitching Vor'hakk's monstrous form with explosions in the moment before the Wulfen sprang.

The Bloodthirster caught one Wulfen mid-leap, his axe-swing smashing the warrior back and over the roof of a bunker. At the same time a thunder hammer cracked into the Bloodthirster's jaw, and a frost axe hacked through his right wing, all but severing it in a spray of ichor. More blows rang from Vor'hakk's armour or stabbed through his iron-hard flesh, and the Bloodthirster bellowed in fury.

Another swing of the Bloodthirster's huge axe hacked two more Wulfen apart, before a blow from the weapon's pommel hammered another into the ground hard enough to leave behind a gore-smeared crater. Howling with incandescent rage, a Wulfen pack leader lunged inside the Bloodthirster's guard and buried both frost claws into its breastplate. In return, Vor'hakk smashed the pack leader aside, leaving the claws snapped off and protruding from his chest. Seizing his moment, another Wulfen swung his thunder hammer with the force of a Fenrisian avalanche and drove the icy blades straight through Vor'hakk's black heart.

The Bloodthirster's axe hit the ground with a clang like a tolling bell, moments before its owner toppled backwards with black blood jetting from his chest. As the Khornate Daemons reeled in dismay, Sven Bloodhowl seized his chance and struck the head off the Herald he was fighting. The Wolf Lord stepped back, panting with exertion as he surveyed the battlefield with eyes from which the madness had fled.

Many of his Wulfen were slain, and dozens of Space Wolves besides. Their bodies lay between great mounds of twitching daemoniac dead that even now rotted away to nothingness. Sven's Grey Hunters and Long Fangs were purging the last of the foe from the compound, driving them back into the sea with their gunfire.

The World Wolf's Lair was secure, but the cost of victory had been steep indeed.

THE FIERCE-EYE'S OATH

Bound by his oath to defend the Fang, Wolf Lord Krom Dragongaze had been forced to look on, powerless, as madness engulfed Fenris' sister worlds. Another Wolf Lord might have discarded their oath in favour of action, but the Fierce-eye still remembered his failures on Alaric Prime. He would never trade duty for self-aggrandisement again.

From the moment the Fenris System came under attack, the Fang's vox galleries and astropathic choir were driven to a frenzy of activity. Every day brought fresh tales of disaster. Every day brought demands from Krom's warriors to take the fight to the foe, but Lord Dragongaze held his post despite his rage at the destruction being wrought. On Krom's orders the Fang's astropaths hurled messages into the void until their minds bled, calling the wolves home.

After days of waiting, everything happened at once. Even as Grimnar's warfleet broke Warp on the edge of the Fenris System, an urgent message crackled through Krom's vox. Bjorn the Fell-Handed had woken at last.

Leaving orders with his Wolf Guard to appraise Grimnar of the strategic situation, Krom rushed down into

the depths of the Fang. Stepping from the grav-lift into the shadowed catacombs, Dragongaze found a group of Iron Priests and Wolf Priests already gathered around Bjorn's sarcophagus. The ancient Dreadnought stirred at the Fierce-eye's approach, chains rattling around him and vox grill rumbling to life.

In strained tones, the Dreadnought revealed the secrets of his slumber. So ancient and powerful was Bjorn's spirit that, while he slept, he had stood vigil from atop the hexagrammic ramparts of the Fang's echo in the Warp. It was from this vantage point that Bjorn had spied Daemons gathering in the beyond, and from here that he had fought them off since before even the first Wulfen were returned. Even now, part of his spirit still battled within the Empyrean, but he had broken away to deliver a vital warning.

Bjorn had, that very hour, felled a mighty Daemon that scaled the ward-wall with blade in hand. Even with Bjorn's boot upon its neck, the Daemon had choked out a mocking laugh. It had crowed that the silver templars were walking into a trap upon the Wolf Moon, and that their deaths would seal the Space Wolves' doom. Bjorn knew as well as any that Daemons lie, but he had felt the truth of this terrible utterance. And so he had risked a partial awakening to bring his warning to whomever could heed it. Krom must go, Bjorn urged; he must make all haste to Valdrmani, and there he must prevent whatever catastrophe was about to occur.





THE BATTLE OF MORKAI'S KEEP

As the Firehowlers fell in fury upon Svellgard, the warships of the Deathwolves rumbled into orbit over Frostheim. Here the renegade forces of the Alpha Legion had seized control of Morkai's Keep, putting the fortress' Space Wolves garrison to the sword. It was a cruel insult that could not go unpunished.

Harald Deathwolf snarled as the *Alpha Fang's* auspex confirmed Chaos Space Marine vox traffic upon the world below. Such traitors held a special place of loathing in the Wolf Lord's heart. The enemy signals emanated from Morkai's Keep, hunched atop its glacial perch on Frostheim's equator.

The Deathwolves had encountered only one enemy warship in high orbit, and the craft had plunged into the Warp at their approach. Better yet, sensor auguries confirmed that the keep's defences were without power, though they did read trace empyric emanations from deep within the glacier.

A current of feral excitement ran through the Wolf Guard gathered in Lord Deathwolf's strategium. Evidently, the traitors had exorcised the machine spirits of the keep's defences when they attacked, leaving its fearsome Icarus batteries and sentry guns lifeless and inert. It seemed as though the renegades had underestimated the speed and severity of the Space Wolves' response. The Deathwolves would punish them for their presumption. They would savage the foe while his throat was bared, then discover

whether these strange Warp readings had anything to do with the madness engulfing the Fenris System. Harald's Wolf Guard roared their assent, the normally taciturn hunters boisterous and aggressive as they made for the embarkation decks.

The Deathwolves' plan was simple. Morkai's Keep was a mighty fortress, located within concentric rings of static defences. It possessed excellent fire lines that would allow its garrison to slaughter foes approaching on foot. Instead, Harald's warriors would attack from above, exploiting the absence of the keep's otherwise lethal flak screen to mount a full aerial assault. It would be swift and bloody.

The truth of that assertion came as the Space Wolves' attack craft roared down through Frostheim's atmosphere. As the first Drop Pods plummeted into range, warning hymnals rang out from their alarm speakers. Seconds later, explosions stitched the air as the supposedly inert air defences of the keep roared to sudden life. First one pod then another exploded with horrific force, their blazing wreckage shedding burning corpses as they span away into the frozen wastes below.





Throughout the Space Wolves assault force, messages of alarm flashed back and forth. Through the sorcerous aid of their Tzeentchian Daemon allies, the Alpha Legion had masked the energy signatures of the fully operational defences. They had laid their trap, and the Deathwolves had dived straight into it. Committed to their attack run, the waves of Fenrisian gunships screaming down behind the Drop Pods now found themselves plunging into a cauldron of flak and mutagenic warpflame. Armaglass windscreens cracked and exploded inwards as shots marched across them. Armoured hulls were torn open or melted away, the crafts' passengers clinging desperately to bulkheads and restraints as they tried to avoid the terrible plummet to their deaths. The Space Wolves' craft opened fire in return, but the Drop Pods below hampered their accuracy. Explosions blossomed around Morkai's Keep as missiles and laser blasts stabbed downward, but the damage was nowhere near enough.

Worse was to come as a flight of Alpha Legion Heldrakes burst from concealed caves in the glacier's flanks. Swooping through the snow and hail with predatory shrieks, the Daemon Engines hurtled into the descending craft to rip and tear. Several of the draconic craft were blasted from the sky by the determined efforts of Stormfang Gunships, but the rest tore through the Deathwolves with horrific effect. Hades autocannons riddled Stormwolves with holes. Brass talons eviscerated adamantium hulls, sending flaming craft tumbling down to explode amid the keep's defences.

The death toll climbed by the second.

Harald Deathwolf snarled as he kicked open the buckled ramp of his gunship. The slab of metal crashed down, admitting an instant hail of bullets that pinged and clanged off his power armour. With a bellow of fury, the Wolf Lord charged down the ramp and into the frostbitten mob of Cultists before him. A mighty sweep of his frost axe sent heads tumbling and innards spilling, vivid red against the white of the snow.

Behind their lord, Harald's Wolf Guard were scrambling from their mangled craft, leading their mounts out into the cold daylight. The Wolf Lord sprang up onto the roof of his crashed gunship, trying to find a vantage point from which to gauge the shape of the battle. He spat at what he saw.

Forced out of formation and heavily damaged, the Deathwolves' airborne transports had scattered across the top of the glacier. Packs of Space Wolves were spilling from gunships and Drop Pods all around Morkai's Keep, blazing away at the surrounding foe. They were isolated, mired amid Firestorm Redoubts and Vengeance batteries, and taking punishing fire from bands of Cultists, Daemons and Alpha Legion all around. Over the mayhem drifted the howl of the Wulfen, stirring that same animal hunger that had led the Deathwolves into this mess.

'If I live through this, Grimnar, you and I are having words,' muttered Harald to himself, before vaulting back down onto Icetooth's broad back. He would unite his warriors and push for the keep, or die in the attempt.

SKAYLE'S DAGGERFANGS



A sizeable warband of Alpha Legion stood against the Deathwolves at Morkai's Keep. Though their numbers were no match for a Great Company in a straight fight, the Daggerfangs' ambush had evened the odds. Now, with the advantage of the keep's defences on their side, the Alpha Legionnaires struck their reeling foes hard.

At their head strode Lord Vykus Skayle, a Chaos Lord of the Alpha Legion and a true believer in the Ruinous Powers. Skayle was an arch-manipulator and master of intrigue, traits common within those of his legion. Less typical was Skayle's quiet but intense faith in the Chaos Gods, a zealous streak lacking in many of the Chaos Lord's peers. The gods had blessed Skayle for his devotion, bestowing him with unnatural strength and speed that allowed him to strike like an enraged viper. Coupled with his daemonic blade, this made the Chaos Lord a swift and deadly killer at close quarters. Determined to annihilate the superior force that had fallen upon his strongpoint, Skayle darted through the snows with supernatural swiftness, lopping off Space Wolf heads before vanishing once more into the maelstrom of war.

Lord Skayle did not fight alone. Following his winding path through the scattered Deathwolves came Skayle's Chosen,

a band of veteran warriors who had fought the Imperium for many hundreds of years. Wielding crackling power weapons and archaic bolt pistols, the Chosen took a terrible toll upon their foes. They flowed like water around one another, centuries of shared combat experience allowing them to predict their comrades' every move. Like the heads of the hydra, Skayle's Chosen fought not as individuals but as a single, terrible beast, striking from every direction at once with lethal force.

While their leader and his elite went about their bloody work, the Alpha Legionnaires of Skayle's force were causing carnage of their own. Squads of Chaos Space Marines such as Atraphaeus' Venomslayers and the Shadowkin had been afforded ample time to prepare their positions. Now these armour-clad killers winnowed the Deathwolves' superior numbers, pouring bolter fire into packs of Grey Hunters and Blood Claws as the bloodied Fenrisians pulled themselves free of their wrecked craft. Chaos Space Marines surged up from behind rockcrete barricades to hurl Krak grenades into toppled Drop Pods, or charged into combat to lock blades with their Fenrisian foes. Power armoured figures wrestled amid crimson snows, smashing in faceplates with mailed fists and stabbing with venomous combat knives.



Not all the defenders of Morkai's Keep were genetically enhanced giants. Many unaugmented humans fought there too, shivering with cold and fear amid the swirling snow and thundering gunfire. These Cultists belonged to the Brotherhood of the Serpent's Eye, a sect who worshipped the Alpha Legion as demigods. They would gladly give their lives for the traitors' cause, and the Alpha Legion would gladly spend them.

Skayle's deadliest weapons were a mass of horrific Daemon Engines known collectively as the Dread Beasts. Bartered from the Warpsmiths of the Eye at great cost in souls and plunder, these terrible iron monsters wrought havoc amongst the Deathwolves as they strove to fight their way free of the kill-boxes in which they were trapped.

Stalking through the carnage atop the glacier was a Khornate Murderhorde known as the Scarblades, and a sorcerous Warpflame Host, the Burning Paradox. In furtherance of their own inscrutable ends, the Ruinous Powers had sent these warbands to fight alongside Skayle's forces, though the daemons cared little for their mortal leader and sought only to cause as much wanton carnage as they could.

Kjarl hauled himself from his Drop Pod, falling into the melted snow around the wreck. Smoke billowed. Guns boomed and roared. To Kjarl's senses, all was dulled by the pounding of blood in his ears and the baying of the Wulfen.

The beast warriors were nearby, a whole Murderpack of them tearing through the front of a Firestorm Redoubt to hack and claw at the Chaos Space Marines within. Kjarl watched with wide eyes, fighting down the savage hunger flaring in his breast. Pain shot through him as the Wulfen howled again, and something else – a sensation he had not felt since his Trial of Morkai. Fire raced through his blood. For a moment, the Grey Hunter knew a surge of horror as he felt his body shudder and twist. Then, as his muscles bulged within his armour and his fangs stretched longer in his jaws, the beast rose up in Kjarl and drowned all rational thought.

When the Wulfen howled again, Kjarl howled with them. The Space Wolf took three sprinting steps and launched himself through the breach in the redoubt's wall, crashing down atop a hated traitor. His new pack bayed their approval, welcoming him into their midst as he tore his struggling prey to pieces.

All around Morkai's Keep, battle raged. The Deathwolves fought furiously to drive back their ambushers and – with the howls of the Wulfen filling them with savage vigour – they were beginning to build momentum. So potent was the influence of the Wulfen that some Deathwolves had given in to it entirely, devolving into savage beasts before the horrified eyes of their packmates. The brutality of the tangled, point-blank battle was such that neither side noticed a small band of warriors clamber over the northern lip of the glacier.

The Stormwolf carrying the Wolf Scouts known as Feingar's Coldeyes was clipped by flak early in the battle. Damaged and belching smoke, it overshot the fortress and slammed down on an ice shelf jutting from the glacier's flank. Unperturbed, the veteran scouts on board had simply shouldered their gear and scaled the ice cliff. Now, disaster became good fortune as they prepared to assault the keep from an apparently unreachable and lightly defended quarter.

Led by their pack leader, Feingar, the Wolf Scouts ran through the snow, crouched low with their guns held to their chests. With every step, the looming wall of the keep drew closer. From away across the glacier they heard the thunder of guns and the bellowing roars of Daemon Engines. Distant explosions shook the ground and sent shockwaves shuddering through the pall of smoke that drifted over the battlefield. But here, in this neglected blind spot, the Wolf Scouts advanced unimpeded. They scrambled uphill through an ice-cut drainage channel, their yellow eyes fixed upon the keep that loomed above them.

Hauling themselves over the lip of the channel, the Wolf Scouts made a last dash across open snow before skidding into cover at the base of the keep's north wall. The fortress loomed above them, fire pouring from its gun emplacements and vision slits to shred any Space Wolves that drew near.

With swift gestures, Feingar ordered his pack to stand back and stand ready. Flashing his fangs, the veteran warrior detached a melta bomb from his belt, slammed it against the fortress wall and hit the arming rune. Moments later, the bomb seared a breach in the wall of Morkai's Keep and the Wolf Scouts surged inside.

The first the Alpha Legion knew of the infiltration was when a blaze of boltgun fire blitzed the keep's command chamber. Two Chaos Space Marines and a handful of Cultists fell to that initial salvo. The rest dived for cover behind cogitator banks and consoles, returning fire at the Coldeyes. Even as the battle raged beyond the armaglass of the observation window, the command chamber played host to its own ferocious gun battle.

Leaning from behind a console, Feingar vaporised a Chaos Marine's head with his plasma pistol. Another Alpha Legionnaire rattled off a volley of bolter fire, blasting craters in Feingar's cover before being punched off his feet by shots from a pair of Wolf Scouts. Seizing his opening, Feingar vaulted his smouldering cover and dashed to the primary control lectern. It was from this blink-lit console that the keep's door locks and external defences were controlled, and the Wolf Scout knew from his briefings that its destruction would leave Morkai's Keep wide open.

Feingar had never been one for technology, mistrusting the Iron Priests and all their strange secrets. In the field of blowing things up, however, none had ever had cause to question his prowess. Ignoring a fusillade of autogun fire that rattled around him, Feingar liberally festooned the lectern with his remaining krak grenades and melta bombs, before taking a running dive into cover behind the biggest console he could see.

The explosion that followed was sufficient to blow the chamber's armaglass out in a jagged blizzard, and raise a grin on Feingar's grizzled features for the first time that day.

Lord Skayle fought furiously against the Space Wolves that surrounded him. His armour was rent and slick with his blood, but still the Chaos Lord fought like a serpent. He hacked the head from one victim, impaled another, then wove aside from a power fist swing before lopping off its wielder's arm.

As the last of the Chaos Lord's foes fell, a sudden absence of sound registered upon his senses. Skayle cursed as he realised the Vengeance Weapon Battery at his back had fallen silent. Worse, the vox quickly revealed that it was not just this emplacement that had shut down.

'They've taken the command chamber!'

'The doors won't close. The guns are down! The wolves are storming the keep!'

'Flak's gone. We're losing ground. By the Dark Gods...'

The battle was lost, and it was time to leave. Lord Skayle swore again as he tried and failed to establish a vox-link with his cruiser. The next moment, a huge shape surged from the smoke and smashed him from his feet.

The Alpha Legion lord rolled with the blow, coming up with blade raised and three massive, bleeding gouges torn across his midriff. Skayle had no time to think before his foe was on him again. Wounded, the Chaos Lord's unnatural speed deserted him. He managed to stab

his blade into the shoulder of the huge wolf that crashed into him, but in return the beast hammered him onto his back with a crunch of breaking bone. Skayle's blade skittered from his grasp, and he found himself staring up, past the snarling muzzle of a giant wolf, into the ice-blue eyes of Harald Deathwolf.

'Time to pay, traitor,' rumbled the Wolf Lord, raising his frost axe high.

'The ritual is complete, lapdog,' hissed the Chaos Lord bitterly. 'Killing me won't change anything.'

'Maybe not,' replied Harald with a mirthless grin, 'But it'll make me feel better.' With that, the axe sliced down, and Vydus Skayle went to join his gods.



HORROR ON MIDGARDIA

Of all the worlds in the Fenris System, the poisoned greenhouse of Midgardia was the most populous. It was also the most challenging environment in which to wage war, necessitating Logan Grimnar's deployment of not only his own Champions of Fenris, but also the armoured might of the Ironwolves.

Midgardia was a world well defended from conventional attack. An ancient nova cannon watched the planet's skies, while the Magma Gates – a network of towering hive-fortresses – guarded the main entrance to Midgardia's network of subterranean settlements. Even the planet's environment was a deterrent to attack; the surface was a toxic hell of spores, created by the vast fungal trees that made up its strange jungles. Underground, the lava-lit caverns in which the Midgardian people made their cities were connected by winding tunnels and treacherous, easily defensible hanging walkways.

The foe that now assailed Midgardia was anything but conventional. As the ritual of convergence was completed, Warp portals had yawned wide both above and below Midgardia's surface, vomiting out tides of gibbering hellspawn. This enemy had no space ships to shoot down. They did not fear to breathe the toxic spores of the surface, for they did not breathe at all. By tearing their way through the meniscus of reality they bypassed many of the underground strongpoints that would have held normal invaders back for weeks. By the time the Space Wolves rushed to Midgardia's defence, the world was all but lost.

Filled with a vengeful fury, Logan Grimnar devised an attack plan as aggressive as it was ambitious. He divided his forces into two massively oversized strike forces; Strike Force Fenris – consisting of the bulk of the Ironwolves, along with the armoured elements of Grimnar's own Great Company – struck from the skies against the Daemons that besieged the Magma Gates. Aided by thunderous orbital bombardments, this strike force drove the infernal foe back. They rallied the surviving Midgardian defence force regiments, swept the hives' shielded ramparts clear of Daemons, and drove Spear of Russ formations out from the Magma Gates until nothing daemonic remained standing within twenty miles.

Strike Force Morkai – comprising Grimnar, his Kingsguard, all of Egil Iron Wolf's Terminators and both Great Companies' Wulfen – teleported directly into the caverns and tunnels beneath the Magma Gates. This unnatural method of deployment drove the Wulfen wild, and saw their Murderpacks rampage furiously through the scattered Daemons that infested the tunnels beneath the Midgardian hives. Ichor ran in rivers as the Wolf Guard joined the battle, more than one succumbing to the Wulfen





curse in the process. Though many great sagas were cut tragically short by daemonic blades, the slaughter was total. Within hours, Strike Force Morkai held the gates to the underworld.

Waiting only for planetary defence regiments to descend into the depths and join him, Logan Grimnar ordered the advance. His forces and those above would form twinned cordons that would advance outwards from their starting positions and purge all before them with fire and blade. The two forces – armoured tanks and transports on the surface, Terminators and Wulfen below – would keep pace with one another using vox-exchange and by tracking teleport homing beacons. Midgardian forces would move up behind them, plugging gaps and holding conquered terrain as needed. The Daemons would be systematically purged from both subterranean and surface war zones, with none escaping the Fenrisians' wrath.

On the surface, the spore-mists were so thick that only sealed armoured vehicles could safely advance. As it crunched and ground through the bloated purple foliage, Strike Force Fenris discovered that the powers of Chaos had already wrought horrific changes here. The Space Wolves found the fungus trees growing obscenely bloated, like boils about to burst. Rot spread dark fingers across the trees' quivering trunks, and a thick mucal sludge wept from them to form nauseating, sticky swamps. The stench from these pus-bogs was so foul that it penetrated even the hulls of the Ironwolves' tanks, while the muck itself clogged tracks and bogged the vehicles down.

It was as Strike Force Fenris foundered in this foul terrain that the Daemons of Nurgle struck. Plague Drones buzzed down from on high while beasts and Plaguebearers rose up from the milk-white, foetid swamps. The slime-dripping Daemons closed in around the Space Wolves tanks. Swathes of the foul beings were hammered back into the muck by heavy bolters and lascannons, or shattered by Iron Priests' helfrost pistols. Still more and more Daemons arose, tearing tanks open with their unholy strength.

Worse was to come as the Space Wolves disembarked to defend their tanks. To their horror, they found the jungle's spores eating through eye-lenses and armour seals, and into the flesh beneath. Even as they battled the groaning Daemon hordes, the warriors of Strike Force Fenris could feel their flesh rotting and sloughing away. Soon the advance had stalled altogether, the Space Wolves fighting just to hold their ground.

In the underworld, Strike Force Morkai were having problems of their own.

**'MIDST BLIGHTED AIR, WITH MUCK BEFOUL'D,
THE IRON WOLF FOUGHT THE DAEMON,
THO' FLESH DID ROT AND ARMOUR RUST,
NE'ER BACKWARD STEP WAS TAKEN.'**

-Extract from the Saga of the Lost

The squads of Strike Force Morkai made good progress at first. The Daemon packs that roamed the underworld were scattered and disorganised, more of a murderous rabble than an organised army. Amid the hot, claustrophobic confines of the tunnels that connected each hanging settlement, the individual might of the Terminators and Wulfen counted for much. The psychic lightning of Grimnar's Rune Priests and the devastating weaponry of his Iron Priests scoured whole caverns clear of taint in minutes.

The further the subterranean forces pushed outward, the more thinly spread they became. When the surface forces stalled under heavy attack, Strike Force Morkai advanced without surface support. In doing so, they exposed themselves to attack from Daemons filtering down through tunnels and vents from the surface. Entire elements of the strike force were soon surrounded, caught to the fore by the Daemons of Tzeentch and Slaanesh, and to the rear by the rotting Tallybands of Nurgle. The Space Wolves fought like heroes from the first sagas. Heavy flamers roared, filling Daemon-choked corridors with cleansing flame. Wulfen howled madly as they launched themselves into battle, talons and axes ripping unnatural flesh while their stormfrag auto-launchers thumped out volleys of grenades.

For all their heroics, the Space Wolves' subterranean advance had slowed to a crawl and their casualties were appalling. The only exception was the force led by Logan Grimnar and Ulrik the Slayer, whose combined fury and zeal had seen them push ahead into Settlement 529 – known locally as Deepspark.

Typical of Midgardian settlements, Deepspark was a township built upon metal walkways and platforms, suspended from the rocky ceiling high above. Far below, lava bubbled and steamed lazily, its hungry glow lighting the cavern like some scene of hell.

It was as the Space Wolves reached the middle of this deserted settlement that Warp portals split the air around its edge. Screaming and gibbering, a host of Daemons surged towards the Fenrisians. Looming at their heart came the architects of this sudden ambush, a quartet of towering Daemon Princes – an Infernal Tetrad. Had Egil Iron Wolf been present, he would have recognised the foul Mordokh from the depths of Irkalla. Advancing alongside this flyblown horror came Arkh'gar Worldslayer of Khorne, Tzen'char of Tzeentch – known by countless cults as the Living Labyrinth – and Malyg'nyl Needletongue, a lithe-limbed and lurid prince of murder.

The power of the Tetrad radiated through Deepspark like a physical force, but Grimnar refused to be cowed. Roaring in challenge, the Great Wolf ordered the charge.

The two forces crashed together with incredible fury. Khornate cannons boomed, showering Grimnar's forces with blazing bone. Thunder hammers slammed into daemonic flesh, blasting hellish horrors apart with loud booms. Storm bolters thundered. Daemon Princes roared, and hacked, and smashed. Terminator plate crumpled. Blood sprayed. Soon, the very platforms on which Deepspark sat were shuddering with the violence of the battle.



Ulrik snarled and swung his crozius, tearing away a Daemon's face. He could see the monstrous Daemon Princes, battling the Wulfen that surrounded them. The Daemons had been bloodied, but were causing carnage in return. Ulrik hated them all the more for it. These Wulfen were the blessed of Russ, the bringers of the Primarch's gifts and heralds of his return. To see them laid low by Warp-filth disgusted Ulrik more than he could say. He swung his crozius once again, swatting a Daemonalette from the back of its freakish steed.

'Blasphemies! Warpspawn! Back to the pit with you, scum!'

Ulrik's crozius swung again, smashing a flame-thing aside with killing force. Suddenly, Grimnar was before him, noble features twisted in an animal snarl. Ulrik was pleased to see even Grimnar touched by the Primarch's blessings. Those who said 'curse' were fools. Russ would never have left his sons a legacy of harm.

Whatever thought came next disintegrated as a massive taloned fist connected

with the side of Ulrik's head. The world tumbled, and suddenly the slayer was on his back, ears ringing and blood in his mouth.

Ulrik watched blearily as the Infernal Tetrad waded into the Space Wolves. Hurting a Wulfen through a hab-hut, the Nurgle-blessed Daemon Prince vomited a great cloud of flies that filled the air with their mindless buzz.

Ulrik saw the Khornate Daemon Prince ram its blade through the chest of a Wolf Guard Terminator, before ripping the sword upwards to bisect the warrior in a shower of blood.

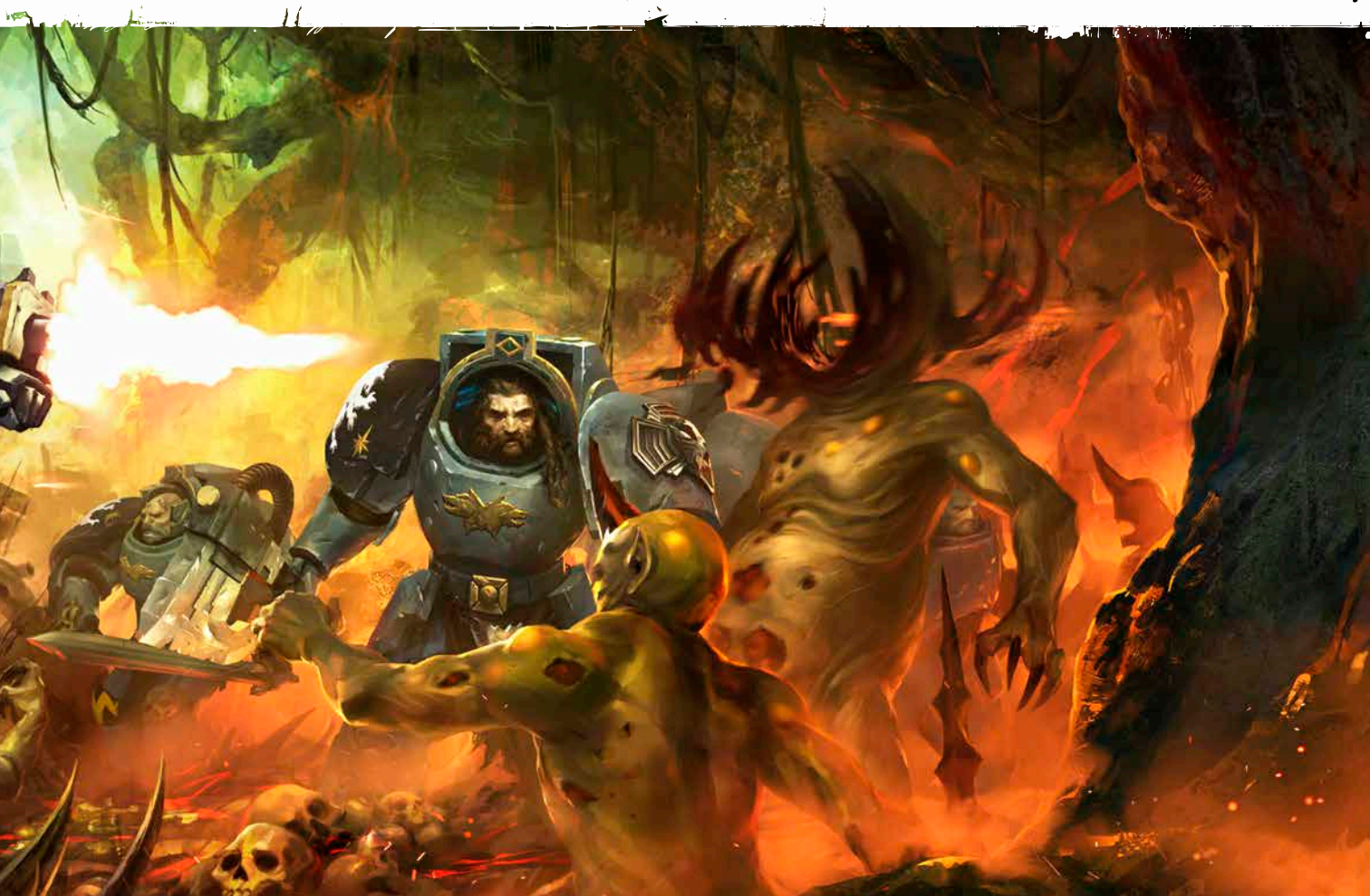
Another of the towering fiends – this one bearing the Mark of Tzeentch upon its unnatural flesh – flickered through the fight like a jumping pict-reel, blasting bolts of mutating fire into the Space Wolves that surrounded it. Behind this sorcerous abomination the Slaaneshi Daemon Prince danced and whirled, lopping off heads and plucking out eyes with monstrous grace. The fiend's dance was suddenly and violently interrupted as the Axe Morkai hurtled through the air, whipping end over

end to bury itself in the Daemon Prince's leering face.

Charging in and ripping his blade free from the staggering monster's skull, Logan Grimnar turned in time to block a hammering blow from the Khornate Daemon Prince. Reading the blade-style of Khorne Berzerker as clear as words on parchment, Grimnar cut under Arkh'gar's titanic swing to spill the fiend's molten blood.

Ulrik's shout of encouragement was drowned out as the Tzeentchian Daemon Prince threw back its head and screeched a deafening string of impossible words. As suddenly as they had appeared, the Daemons vanished, leaving in their wake a thunderous rumble.

Ulrik's eyes widened with horror as he watched cracks race through the cavern walls. Pummelled and torn by the force of the Warp, the cavern of Deepspark began to shake itself apart. Ulrik had just time to see Grimnar lunge protectively over the prone form of a nearby Wulfen before a thundering storm of rock and stone crashed down, and everything went dark.



CHILDREN OF THE TETRAD



Even a single Daemon Prince is an incredibly dangerous foe, an immortal demigod of misrule through whom the energies of his chosen patron howl like a gale. Four of these beings fighting as one is more terrifying still, a pantheon of horrors against whom only the mightiest heroes can stand. So it was with the dark overlords of Midgardia, each Daemon Prince bringing the blessings of their own terrible deity and fusing them into an unstoppable whole.

First amongst this grim gathering was Mordokh the Rotted, the same foetid fiend that had overseen the damnation of the Irkalla super-hive. Alongside physical boons of great strength and resilience, Nurgle had gifted Mordokh with a soul of rot and rust. The foul being could retch up the crawling, buzzing horrors that spawned from his putrid spirit, and could extrude rusted blades through his flesh with which to fight. Mordokh had paid for these gifts with his natural sight; instead of looking through his own, long-rotted orbs of putrid jelly, Mordokh now saw through the eyes of his myriad flies.

The next member of the Infernal Tetrad was Arkh'gar Worldslayer, who had once been a Berzerker lord of the World Eaters Traitor Legion. Little more than a huge,

living weapon, Arkh'gar existed only to shed as much blood for Khorne as he could. He fought with a speed and brute strength that few could match, and had single-handedly slaughtered the entire population of Edrigal Quintus to earn his title.

Subtler by far was the dread being known as Tzen'char, the Living Labyrinth. A whisperer of twisted truths and arch-manipulator of fate, it was said by his worshippers that Tzen'char's physical aspect was but one reflection of his true being. They claimed that Tzen'char was not one Daemon but many, an entity of impossible contradictions whose living echoes were all identical yet subtly different. From this did the Daemon's name derive, for though every passageway of a labyrinth may look alike, every single twist and turn leads to a different fate. Whether even one of these facsimiles was the true Tzen'char was a mystery, but all possessed his supernatural swiftness and sorcerous might.

The final entity of the Infernal Tetrad was Malyg'nyl Needletongue, the Slaaneshi Perverter of Vardos III. This vile being exuded an aura of sinful wickedness so strong that few could resist its pull – even the purest and most faithful would be driven to indulge in their



darkest fantasies, attacking friend and foe alike in their sudden madness. Through this deviant mayhem the Daemon Prince danced, his every movement graceful and sublimely lethal as he gloried in the damnation of countless souls.

The Infernal Tetrad were mighty Daemon lords all, and thus the daemonic incursion they led was accordingly vast. At its core were the massed Tallybands and Rotswarms of Nurgle, those festering hordes that beset the tanks of Strike Force Fenris in Midgardia's jungles. The greatest Tallyband among their rancid ranks was known as the Infested. Led by the grotesquely flatulent Herald Phugulus, this gathering of Daemons was itself partially formed from parasitic fungus. The sores and buboes on their bodies resembled fatted puffballs, and every stinking expulsion of gas from their bodies carried with it a cloud of noxious daemonspores. It was these seeds of destruction that had transformed Midgardia's jungles into a deadly biological weapon, and the Infested were rightly proud of having brought such a magnificent cutting of Nurgle's Garden into realspace.

Hordes of other Daemons swilled across the surface of Midgardia, or rampaged through its subterranean

settlements in search of souls. Typical of these hordes were daemonic formations such as the Warpflame Host known as the Ashtwisters, the Grand Cavalcade of the Hedonistarii, and the Gorethunder Battery known as the Burning Storm.

Each hideous daemonic warband followed its own patron among the Infernal Tetrad, enacting their will upon this world. The Horrors and Flamers of the Ashtwisters spread mutation and corruption among countless defence troopers during the early stages of the invasion, leaving them alive to corrupt more of their kin and plant the seeds of future fates across the planet.

The Hedonistarii sought to goad and torture their mortal quarry, inflicting the very greatest agonies upon those they hunted before finally killing them with exquisite slowness. The pain these vile huntresses extracted flowed in currents upon the ether, empowering Malyg'nyl Needle tongue with every heady draft he inhaled.

The Skull Cannons of the Burning Storm were charged by their master with wanton destruction. It was the task of these terrible engines to shed the blood of the foe by the gallon and add it to his endless tithe.



THE DAEMONS' SNARE

Brother-Captain Stern ducked, warpflame roaring over his head. Scowling, the Grey Knight reached out and chanted a rite of banishment to hurl a swathe of fungoid Flamers back into the Emyprean.

Daemons of Tzeentch and Slaanesh flowed across the marble floor in a seemingly endless tide. Stern stood as one of a tight circle of Grey Knights battle-brothers, fighting to hold back wave upon wave of the foe. Already the Grey Knights had hacked, blasted and banished what felt like hundreds, and still the Daemons came. Worse, Stern knew that this was but a diversion, a spending of footsoldiers meant to pin the Grey Knights in place. The greatest danger was from the roiling build-up of psychic energy that shivered the air around them. Every Grey Knight could sense it, even without the psy-trackers in their armour, for to those with the Gift it was akin to a rumbling volcano about to erupt.

Fighting on with mechanical efficiency, Stern mentally reviewed the events that had brought them to this. From orbit, Valdrmani – the Wolf Moon – had been revealed as a barren ball of crags and blood-red sand, bereft of atmosphere and lashed by radiation flares from the Fenrisian star. In these hellish environs the Space Wolves had established the dome-plex of Longhowl, fortified and shielded against the planet's hostile conditions. It was from here that an astropathic relay hurled messages from the Fang out into the void.

It had been from here, too, that the distress call had come. It was evident now that a heathen Cultist – a puppet of the Alpha Legion impersonating a Fenrisian huscarl – must have sent it. Such was the cunning and veracity of the message that it had been enough to lure the Grey Knights in.

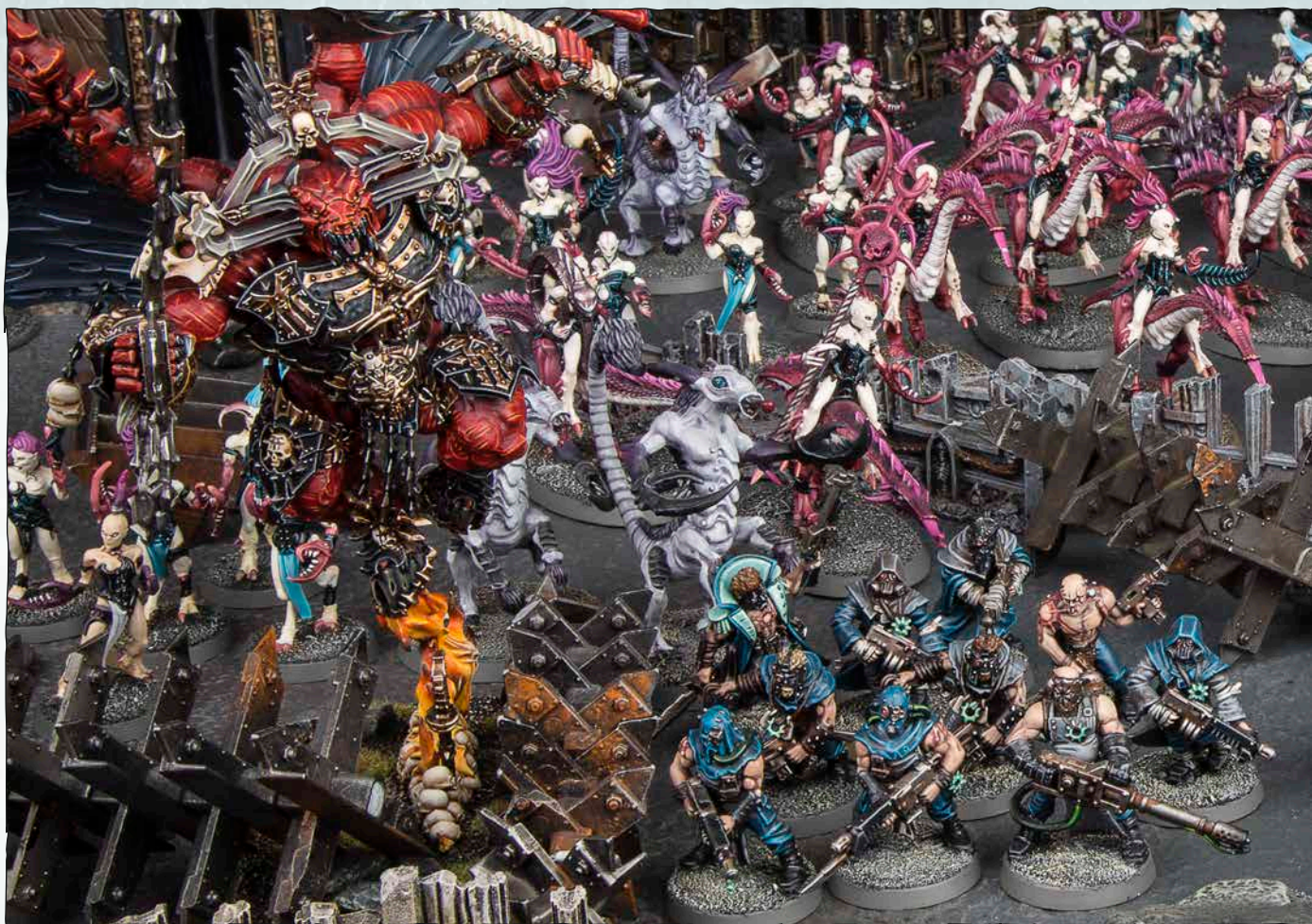
Only when the Stormravens of Stern's force were plunging groundwards did the city's nova cannon awaken, blitzing columns of ruby fire into the heavens. Caught by the sudden ambush fire, the Grey Knights' Battle Barge was torn in two. By the time the ship's gun decks awoke, it was far too late.

That once-mighty starship now rained down as fiery wreckage upon Valdrmani's surface. The Grey Knights had blasted their way into the fortified city only to discover not hapless Imperial citizens, but seething hordes of Daemons, and shrieking Cultists clad in the colours of the Alpha Legion. And then there was the psychic build-up, an increasing empyric reaction that was swiftly reaching critical mass. Stern could sense that, when it peaked, the subsequent explosion would annihilate the city and the Grey Knights with it. Doubtless that was the point. What he could not determine was this; was it all some devious ruse of the Ruinous Powers to make the Space Wolves look culpable for the Grey Knights' deaths? Or was he witnessing the first act of open betrayal by a Great Wolf driven mad by the corruption of Chaos?





TALONS OF TZEENTCH



The trap on Valdrmani – indeed, the entire invasion of the Fenris System – had been orchestrated by a cabal of Tzeentchian champions, two of whom were present on the Wolf Moon in person.

The first of these was mortal, a Dark Apostle of the Alpha Legion named Hekastis Nul. When the Ritual of Abomination spewed Daemons across Valdrmani, Nul used the resultant mayhem to infiltrate Longhowl. On Skayle's orders, Nul had led Cultists of the Brotherhood of the Serpent's Eye to seize the city's astropathic choristrium. There, the Dark Apostle imprisoned the astropathic choir. When, days later, the Grey Knights moved into orbit above Valdrmani, Nul and his followers began their own ritual.

Cultists had rushed to Longhowl's command sanctum, sending out a false distress cry and manning gunnery lecterns. In the choristrium, daemonsblood had been daubed in a great sigil across the metal floor. As the vile mark was completed, the captive Astropaths cried out in agony. The symbol glowed as it leeched the Astropaths' minds, draining their energies in an ever-increasing flood. The horrified psykers jerked and twitched, flesh bubbling and minds melting as Nul's sigil drank in their powers to create an almighty psychic resonator.

Meanwhile, the Dark Apostle and his servants looked on with the gleaming eyes of fanatics. The cursed blast, when it came, would kill them all, but it would also damn the Space Wolves in the eyes of the Imperium. Channelling the stolen powers of the astropathic choir and lent the flavour of truth by the soul-stuff of the Grey Knights, the resonant blast wave would project twisted visions into the minds of Astropaths far and wide: a Fenrisian nova cannon firing on the Grey Knights' Battle Barge; the monstrous mutants in the Space Wolves' midst and the Great Wolf's misguided determination to protect them; the spectacular detonation of Longhowl slaying Stern and his brothers wholesale. By the time the wave of resonance receded, visions and portents of the Grey Knights' death at the hands of the Space Wolves would have reached half the Imperium, and the Fenrisians' vilification would be assured.

While Hekastis Nul went about his grisly work, the daemoniac incursion of Tzen'char the Living Labyrinth wrought havoc throughout Longhowl. Another echo of the same infernal being that fought on Midgardia, the Daemon Prince knew his role here well. The mortals would sacrifice themselves to see Tzeentch's will done. Meanwhile, Tzen'char and his Daemon hosts fought to hold the Grey Knights in the jaws of the trap.



A host of unnatural warriors fought for Tzen'char, though none were privy to his plan. Greatest of these was a monstrous Wrath of Khorne Bloodthirster named Agva'hax. This destroyer tore through Longhowl's garrison with unstoppable fury, but his true purpose on Vald'rmani was to claim for Khorne the life of Brother-Captain Stern.

Hundreds of daemonic footsoldiers crowded the corridors and domes of Longhowl, and it was these entities that hurled themselves against Stern's battle-brothers. The Warpflame Host known as Xa'kjilis' Betwisters hurled mutating fire at their silver-armoured foes. A Burning Skyhost wheeled and cackled around the dome's high ceiling, the Burning Chariots and many-eyed Screammers slinging bolts of energy or darting down to slice with blades and spikes. Daemons of Slaanesh, too, poured towards the Grey Knights from corridors and antechambers; the lascivious hellmaidens of Shlas'qyl's Flayertroupe danced into battle alongside the hurtling chariots and loping Seekers of the Beauteous Death. Swift and deadly, these daemons wove around Nemesis blades to stab and tear with vicious claws, singing their lilting, nerve-shredding dirge all the while.

The Winterbite was a Nova-class frigate, a sleek, fast warship that had borne Krom Dragongaze and his personal elite – the Fierce-eye's Finest – from the Fang's space docks with commendable haste. A canny tactician, the Winterbite's captain brought his craft in through the drifting wreckage of the Grey Knight Battle Barge, using the shattered remains to screen his ship from the deadly cannons lurking below.

As the strategic situation became clear, Krom's worst fears were confirmed. The Battle Barge had been destroyed by a sudden, massive volley of nova cannon fire. Whatever the rising psychic signature from the surface meant, he couldn't imagine it portended anything good. There had been no time for Krom to speak to the Great Wolf, but he could easily surmise that the Grey Knights must have come for the Wulfen. If Stern's men were wiped out in a trap now, Krom could well imagine how the remaining Grey Knights might react. It seemed the Daemon's warning rang true. That in itself gave the Wolf Lord a sudden feeling of disquiet, but he quickly cast it aside.

'Captain,' growled Krom urgently, 'keep your craft concealed, and ready the Stormwolves. I need to get down there. Now!'

BRETHREN IMPERIALIS



Bloodthirster!' roared Stern, pointing his blade in warning. A second later, the vast Daemon smashed its way into the dome through the southern bulkhead.

The Daemon made straight for the Brother-Captain, swooping over the heads of the daemonic horde to crash down in their ranks. Bellowing, the Bloodthirster smashed Daemonettes and Horrors aside before sending its bloodflail rattling out.

Shoulder-to-shoulder with his brothers, striving to hold back the tides of Daemons before him, Stern could not avoid the blow. The brazen hammer slammed straight into his chest, denting silvered armour and cracking the black carapace beneath. It was a testament to Stern's incredible fortitude that, though he staggered, he did not fall. Still, blood

dribbled from between his lips, and his breath came in wheezing gasps as he levelled his storm bolter and fired back.

The Daemon snorted a laugh, ignoring the bolt shells impacting against its iron-hard skin. It whipped its bloodflail above its head, preparing to lash it outwards once again, and Stern gritted his teeth for the blow to come.

It was at that moment that a loud Fenrisian shout burst from his vox relay.

'Grey Knights! Incoming! Brace!'

Without conscious thought, Stern maglocked his boots to the metal decking and prepared for a blast. In the next second the entire west wall of the dome exploded inward, missiles and lasblasts annihilating the rad-proof crystalglass in blooms of searing flame.

Immediately, the scream of escaping atmosphere filled the dome. Though the Grey Knights were locked in place, the Daemons had no such protection against the vacuum. Stern watched in amazement as, wailing and howling, his foes went tumbling away across the atrium, sucked out of the gaping rent to plunge hundreds of feet to the red sands below. The Bloodthirster was the last to be taken, wings beating furiously against the suction of the void. Yet out it went, slamming bloodily against the jagged plasteel of the breach before spinning away with a muffled howl of fury.

Stern – his helm locked in place against vacuum – watched wordlessly as a trio of Space Wolves craft hovered into position outside the breach, and his saviours leapt from their open ramps into the atrium with weapons drawn.



As the last of the atmosphere leeches from the atrium dome, the Space Wolves and Grey Knights wasted no time in making for the north bulkhead, beyond which a transit corridor stretched away to the choristrium. A swift blow from a power fist persuaded the bulkhead's override panel to activate, sending the metal door grinding up into the ceiling. The Imperial warriors ducked through, heads lowered against the atmosphere howling out past them, before manually dragging the bulkhead back down. As the door's pneumo-bolts locked and air pressure equalised, Krom and Stern pulled off their battle helmets.

Krom Dragongaze had with him his Fierce-eye's Finest, a retinue of favoured warriors drawn from all ranks of the Drakeslayers. First amongst this warband of heroes were the Fierce-eye's Wolf Guard, a proud and ferocious pack of veteran warriors led by the redoubtable Beoric Winterfang. These warriors had fought alongside their fiery-tempered lord during the darkest hours of the war against the Red Waaagh!, and neither xenos nor Daemon gave them pause.

Next came Hengist Ironaxe's Grey Hunters. Well equipped for firefights and close-quarters combat alike, Ironaxe's pack were renowned for their unflappable calm

and near-insane courage, qualities that had seen them prevail in more than one seemingly impossible situation. Chafing for combat, and eyeing the Grey Knights fiercely, were Egil Redfist's Blood Claws. This hot-headed band of freshly blooded Drakeslayers were typical of their ilk, all bravado and bloody-minded desire for glory.

By comparison, the surviving warriors of Stern's force made for a small and solemn band. Alongside the Brother-Captain himself, there were but ten others left from a force of more than twice that number.

Despite the ichor that splattered their armour, the warriors of Strike Squad Daradus seemed to glow with a holy radiance that drove back the creeping shadows of this Daemon-infested place. The battle-brothers of Terminator Squad Varvox stood ready for battle, their brows drawn thunderously down and their Nemesis weapons crackling with energy.

The two bands of warriors watched each other carefully, weapons gripped tight. Then Krom barked a humourless laugh and introduced himself and his men. He would accept the Grey Knights' thanks later, the Wolf Lord growled; for now, they had work to do.

BY BOLTER AND BLADE

Brother-Captain Stern knew Dragongaze was right. The energies flowing from the astropathic choristrium were reaching their peak, exerting a throbbing pressure within his mind that felt ready to burst. He had to make a choice, right away – either to trust these newly arrived Space Wolves, or to strike them down as traitors.

The moment stretched long, Stern staring at Krom as if seeking to divine the thoughts behind the Wolf Lord's eye. Finally, the Grey Knight held out one mailed hand in greeting. Krom gripped it fiercely, and both heroes' warriors relaxed their grip upon their weapons.

They had to move, stated Stern without preamble. Whatever the Daemons were doing, it was almost done. Krom nodded, and the two warriors led their followers at a run down the long, gallery-windowed corridor. A piercing whine carried on the air, rising in volume and setting the Space Marines' teeth on edge. Spectral fire flickered along the walls, while the doors of the choristrium churned with screaming faces that pressed out from beneath their golden surface. The Space Wolves forked signs to ward off witchcraft, Stern noting the gestures without comment.

Krom went to shoulder-charge the writhing portal, but Stern motioned him back. Raising one hand and splaying his fingers, the Brother-Captain began to chant the Thirteen Verses of Negation, his brothers swiftly joining him. Their words crashed forth as hammers of holy sound, the syllables forming into glowing notes that coalesced into a blazing orb. Suddenly, Stern stabbed his fingers

forwards, the gesture hurling the blast of psychic might down the corridor and blasting the doors apart in a shower of smoking shrapnel.

Krom growled appreciatively at the raw destruction, before throwing back his head and loosing a feral howl. His warriors joined the wordless war cry, before charging headlong into the blinding jade light spilling through the blasted doorway.

Stern and his battle-brothers followed. The choristrium was a spacious ironcrystal dome, whose tiered cradles gave the Astropaths an unobstructed view of the portent-filled starfield above. The energies of Chaos had transformed the chamber into a scene ripped straight from some ecclesiarchical vision of hell.

The Astropaths still reclined in place but their bodies had melted like wax, becoming screaming lumps of meat-tallow fused horrifically with the cradles that held them. From the eye sockets of each, roaring torrents of jade power poured into a vile sigil that dominated the chamber's metal floor. The glyph pulsed with Warp energies, searing out like a sun on the brink of supernova.

The Imperial warriors had barely a moment to register the glowing glyph, the mutilated Astropaths, and the gibbering soulghosts that whirled around the dome's ectoplasm-smear'd ceiling. The next second, a furious hail of firepower rained down upon them.

'Cullists,' snapped Stern over the vox. 'In cover behind the cradles.'

'Petty little men,' scoffed Krom in return. 'Drakeslayers! Put them down!'

A howling gale of gunfire erupted at the Wolf Lord's command, Krom and his battle-brothers blitzing the tiered astropathic galleries with fire. Jets of flame consumed tormented Astropaths and screaming Cullists alike. Ripping volleys of bolt shells detonated flesh and sent blood jetting all the way up to the crystal ceiling.

As the Astropaths burned or burst asunder, the energies flowing into the hellish sigil stuttered. Green light strobed wildly through the chamber, and hairline cracks shivered through the choristrium's

crystal dome as overpressure battered its structural integrity.

'Commendable vehemence,' commented Stern with approval. 'Lord Krom, keep them busy. My warriors and I will finish this. Brothers! The Rite of Nullification!'

Waves of wild energy were cascading from the sigil now, the metal decking glowing and bubbling all around it. The Grey Knights advanced like men walking into a gale, buffeted by malefic energies. As they bellowed their ritual chant, the sigil's light wavered and dimmed.

In response, a booming voice echoed across the chamber. Recognising words from the ancient and abhorred Scrolls of Magnus, Stern snapped his gaze up to see a cruel-faced Dark Apostle. The demagogue emerged from amid the sigil's searing energies, biting out the last words of his infernal incantation.

The next second, a psycho-kinetic shock wave exploded amidst the Grey Knights. With their energies focussed upon nullifying the daemonic glyph, they

had nothing left with which to defend themselves against this sudden attack and were hurled from their feet.

Stern pushed himself upright in time to parry the thunderous overhead swing of the Apostle's mace. The force of the attack staggered him, as did the next three crashing blows. The Apostle battered through Stern's guard like a madman, crashing his weapon down on the Grey Knight's shoulder hard enough to break bone.

With a furious roar, Stern rallied and swung his Nemesis sword double-handed, swatting the Apostle's mace from his hands. Reversing his grip, Stern drove the point of his weapon deep into his foe's chest and out of his back.

The Apostle dropped to his knees, but even as blood bubbled between his lips the priest forced out an agonised laugh.

'Very... good. You make your carrion god... proud. But now... a real god comes! Kneel before the majesty of... Tzen'char!'



The Space Wolves' firepower had all but annihilated Cultists and Astropaths alike, but as Stern ripped his blade from the body of the Dark Apostle, the light of the sigil redoubled in strength. A screaming, sawing note filled the dome, and as it swelled a wave of Daemons burst from the radiant glow. At their head came the Tzeentchian Daemon Prince Tzen'char, the sorcerous abomination blasting three Paladins to ash in a heartbeat. In his wake came leaping Flamers and Horrors, their warfire licking out to turn half of Redfist's Blood Claws to screaming glass.

With bellows of fury, Krom Dragongaze and his warriors hurled themselves at this new threat. Chainswords roared as they carved daemonic flesh. Bolt pistols boomed, blasting sulphurous gore into the air. Krom was a dervish of destruction, every sweep of his axe cutting down another foe. The tide grew by the second, more and more empyric creatures surging from amid the sigil's glare.

That light had now become blinding, a physical force that thickened the air like treacle. Stern hacked at the Daemons surrounding him. Amongst them he could see islands of silver and grey, his battle-brothers fighting furiously to survive. It was not enough; the Imperial warriors could slay a thousand Daemons, but they would still be annihilated by the sigil's blast.

Brother-Captain Stern knew what he must do. Ripping free from the claws and tentacles that scabbled at his armour, Stern whirled his blade in a wide arc to clear a space. Dropping his shoulder and blazing away with his storm

bolter, the Grey Knight barged through the Daemons until he stood just feet from the howling, pulsing sigil. With a whispered prayer to the Emperor, Stern raised his blade high and plunged into the light.

Across the chamber, Tzen'char swatted a Grey Hunter aside and beat his mighty wings, making to leap after Stern. Instead, he crashed to the ground as a howling figure slammed into him from behind. Grinning, Krom came up shooting. Shrugging off the pummelling shells, Tzen'char rose with a shriek and drove his massive sword through Dragongaze's shoulder. The Daemon Prince gathered his sorcerous might to finish this mortal prey, but snarled as an amplified prayer boomed from within the sigil's glare.

Every Daemon in the choristrium threw back their heads and screamed as one. One moment, the sigil was bomb and gateway both. The next, its energies were turned in upon themselves by Stern's rite, a wave of banishing force thundering through the chamber. Krom watched in awe as the energies of the Warp were turned against the Daemons, sweeping them wholesale from Valdrmani.

Sudden quiet descended as the Daemons vanished and the light of the sigil guttered and died. In its place, blade driven into the symbol's heart, armour scorched and seared, Stern rose slowly to his feet. Wisps of smoke curled from the Grey Knight as he offered Krom a nod of thanks. Blood welling from his shoulder, Dragongaze returned the gesture. The trap had been defeated. The Daemons had been driven back. There was yet hope.





WAR ZONE FENRIS

The fate of the Fenris System balanced upon a knife's edge. Svellgard's orbital defences were back under the Space Wolves' control, but the planet's islands and oceans seethed with Daemons. Morkai's Keep had been retaken only at great cost, and the energies of the ritual enacted there were still tearing open new Warp rifts throughout the system. Of the situation on Valdrmani, little was known save that the Grey Knights' Battle Barge had been destroyed while still in orbit.

News from the Midgardian front was dire, the Space Wolves' attack foundering and all contact lost with the Great Wolf himself. Worst of all, across the Fenrisian war zone, the curse of the Wulfen waxed strong. Even the most veteran warriors strove desperately to restrain the animal rage that threatened to master them, while many of their younger packmates had already devolved into ravaging beasts. The Space Wolves had no idea whether they were gripped by a viral phage, a soul sickness, a genetic legacy or some curse of the unworthy. None could escape the fact that their Chapter faced a battle not only for its home system, but for its very soul.

It was into this cauldron of mayhem and strife that the Dark Angels fleet emerged. Augur alarms blared and vox-blurts raced back and forth among the Great Companies' fleets, multiple contact runes flashing into being on auspex screens. Imperial ships by the dozen tore from the Warp, shedding skeins of tendrillous madness as they raised void shields and brought lances and turrets online. Within the vox galleries of the Fang, bond-serfs and wolf-headed Servitors listed off signifier codes as their augur sweeps detected them.

Dark Angels. Ultramarines. Iron Hands. A dozen Chapters besides. Knightly houses and Astra Militarum mass transporters. A stir passed through the observers as an enormous and distinctive signature appeared amid this mighty assemblage. The Rock itself, floating citadel of the Lion's sons, had entered Fenrisian space and was even now powering in towards the embattled worlds.

As the news filtered down to the embattled Wolf Lords, alarm warred with relief in the hearts of each. It was a rare Fenrisian who would acknowledge the need for help, but there could be no denying that reinforcements were sorely needed. However, the Space Wolves had striven to keep the matter of the Wulfen from Imperial eyes until it could be understood and resolved. Now, with Daemons infesting their worlds and whole packs of warriors struggling to fight off the Wulfen curse, even the most obtuse Space Wolves could see that the wider Imperium might judge them harshly.

As they fought on, the Space Wolves kept one eye on the heavens, waiting with trepidation to see whether this crusade fleet came as saviours or executioners.

They would not have to wait long.



As they broke into separate spearheads and bore down upon each world of the Fenris System, the crusade craft made little contact with the Space Wolves. Even as the Rock itself rumbled steadily closer to Fenris, their responses remained sombre and by rote. The Dark Angels had come to excise the taint of the Daemon. What they did, they did for the good of their brothers, no matter the cost. Soon enough, concern turned to outright alarm. The corridors of the Fang echoed to booming voices and the thrum of titanic generators as shields were raised and firing solutions cogitated. These were precautions only, the Space Wolves told each other. Surely none would doubt that they remained loyal servants of the Allfather.

Such doubts had become all too possible for the Dark Angels. The deaths of Arhad's Scouts on Nurades had been but the first step along a dark path of accumulating evidence and growing alarm. Next had come Sammael's return from Tranquilitus. The Ravenwing Grand Master maintained a stony veneer before his subordinates, but in closed session with the Inner Circle he had been deeply troubled. Sammael had seen the Space Wolves turn their backs on brother Space Marines, placing the survival of aberrant mutants above Sammael's own battle-brothers. The cost in Ravenwing lives had been steep, but the damage done to the Space Wolves' reputation was more severe still. Surely, argued Sammael, the Sons of Russ must have been led astray by some daemonic trickery.

Worse news followed when the Rock's master Astropath, Asconditus, brought his lords a string of deeply troubling communiqués. Wolf-like mutants had been reported in

multiple star-systems, he revealed, spilling from Warp rifts with hordes of Daemons close behind. On each occasion the Space Wolves had arrived shortly afterwards to gather the beasts and carry them away. The Astropath lamented that no effort had been made by these strike forces to protect Imperial citizens; in some cases they had even brought those same worthy servants of the Emperor to harm. The whispers on the Warp suggested the Grey Knights had even become involved, hunting down Logan Grimnar for reasons of their own.

This last terrible hint of Warp-spawned connivance was enough to convince Supreme Grand Master Azrael and his brothers that they must take direct action. A long-standing rivalry existed between the Space Wolves and the Dark Angels – a siblings' quarrel that had its roots in the time when Russ and El'Jonson themselves made war in the Emperor's name. While the Inner Circle told themselves this had no effect on their decision, in truth not a one of them could help a certain feeling of vindication at that moment. The Space Wolves – always reckless and wilful – had now charged headlong into the gravest peril. Now it was up to the Dark Angels to save their wayward brothers, even should the cost prove woefully steep.

Exerting his full authority, Azrael declared a crusade. The Space Wolves would not be allowed to fall into damnation. The word of a Chapter Master bore great weight, while the evidence assembled was enough to rouse the fears of all true defenders of the Imperium. So it was that, by the time the Dark Angels arrived in the Fenris System, they sailed at the head of a mighty fleet.



Voxman Mendaxis stood, solemn and silent, swathed in the shadows of a communications pit on the cavernous bridge of the Rock. Around him, Servitors chattered and rune-banks flashed. Parchment spooled, data from the warships that even now entered orbit above the worlds of Fenris.

Menials gathered up the scrolls by the armful, but Mendaxis stood dignified amongst the scramble. It was the hooded seneschal's role to wait upon the word of the demigod enthroned high above. After all, Supreme Grand Master Azrael was dealing with a difficult situation; it would not do for his orders to be in any way... miscommunicated.

Mendaxis stifled a giggle, checking that the menials hadn't noticed. No, they were still bustling about their business. Stupid, dead-eyed cattle. But then, most humans were just that; pompous, petty, narrow-minded and governed by their fears. It was no wonder that one such as he could lead them by the nose.

The vox seneschal adjusted his robes, working a crick out of his neck while

being careful not to stretch his flesh unnaturally far. So limited, he thought irritably. Still, they were easy enough to wear, as Mendaxis had proven over the past weeks. Or was it Brother Dolutas, tragic casualty of Wulfen attack and absentee from the Dark Angels' apothecarion? Or perhaps Master Astropath Asconditus, twister of missives and voice of counsel?

Another giggle threatened to surface and Mendaxis clamped down on the feeling. He had worked hard to bring things to this point, and though he was just another cog in a vast machine, Mendaxis knew he was a crucial one. He had done his master's bidding, and had done it well. Yet some tasks remained before him, and they were the most crucial of all.

Sobering, the thing wearing Mendaxis' flesh listened intently to the words being exchanged high up on the throne dais. He didn't need his vox headset to hear Azrael and his aides, but the pretence was all.

'Matters are worse than we thought, my lord. Our Librarians report a system-wide reality breach.'

That was the voice of Asmodai, Master Interrogator-Chaplain.

'And the wolves?' The deep, solemn voice that replied belonged to Azrael himself.

'In terrible peril, my lord, as we feared. Vox intercept suggests these beast-mutants are not merely under the Space Wolves' protection. Their own battle-brothers are... becoming them.'

There was a long pause before Azrael spoke again. When he did, his voice was the cold of drawn steel in winter.

'We have no choice then. Give the order to open fire. Pain before redemption.'

'Pain before redemption,' agreed Asmodai, passing on his lord's command.

Across the Fenris System, lances flared and bombardment cannons lit with silent fire as the crusade fleet rained shots down upon the worlds below.

Lurking in the shadows of his communications pit, the Changeling pictured the carnage, and smiled.



CHAPTER 4

HEROES OF THE SAGA



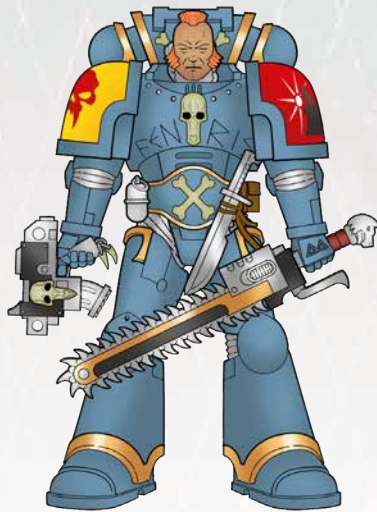


THE DEATHWOLVES

The Deathwolves are keen of sense and feral of aspect, the very embodiment of the fierce nobility for which the Fenrisians are renowned.

Many of the Deathwolves wear tribal fetishes, or the pelts of mighty hunting beasts. It is a belief amongst these warriors that the spirits of such creatures remain tied to their mortal remains, and imbue the wearer with their essence and power.

Harald Deathwolf surrounds himself with a great number of cool-headed veteran warriors who have the patience to stalk their quarry. So it is that many grey manes of hair and snowy beards can be seen amongst the Deathwolves' ranks.



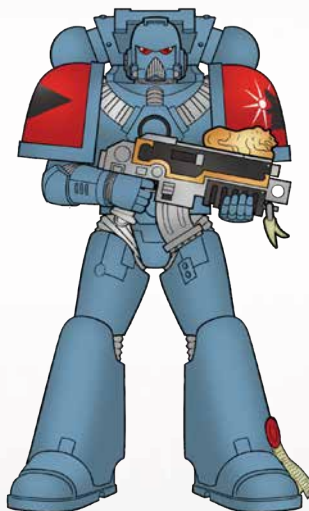
Blood Claw Uller Vansson of the Wulfsouls pack. Vansson carries a vicious skinning knife at his belt.



Blood Claw Svengar the Red of the Deathhows pack, whose chainsword bears the skull of the Ghostwolf.



Wolf Scout Vost Ironfang of the Coldeyes pack. Vost's imager lens can peer through the thickest snowstorm.



Torfinn the Silent, Grey Hunter of the Nightwolves pack. The charm on his boltgun is for luck on the hunt.



Grey Hunter Olav Twopelts of the Fellfangs pack. He is festooned with hunt trophies.



The left hand shoulder guard is the pack marking of Harald Deathwolf, the design symbolising the wolf's jaws yawning wide for the kill. On the right is Harald's chosen emblem for his Great Company, the Ravening Jaw. This sigil symbolises the Wofltime, when Morkai will devour the sun and plunge all into darkness.



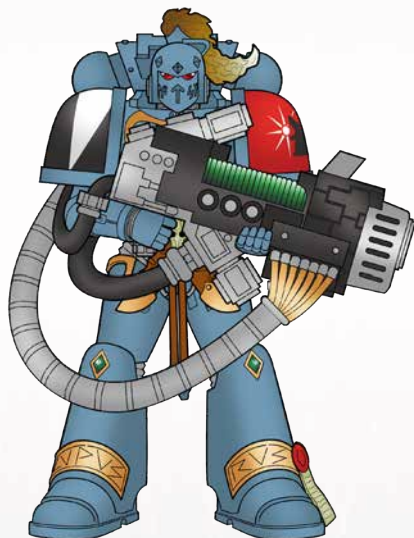
Gunnar Felsmite, Wolf Guard and member of the famed Thunderwolf Cavalry pack the Riders of Morkai.



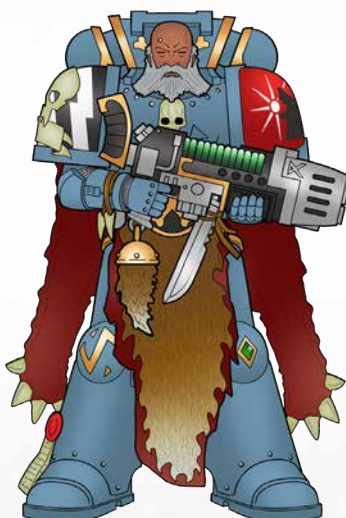
Wulfen Pack Leader Ynvir, he who first met Harald Deathwolf. Note the adopted wolf fang jags on his knee.



The banner of the Deathwolves Great Company, which bears the Ravening Jaw rampant.



Arnulf Deadeye of the Icefangs pack. The rune markings on his greaves honour his Primarch.



Hrolf Snowbeard, Long Fang Ancient of the pack known as the Stormbows. His snow bear cloak is a century old.



Vygar
Helmfang



Ranulf
the Black



Fior
Frostmane



Nils
Ironclaw



Gunnar
Felsmite



Denr
Longblade

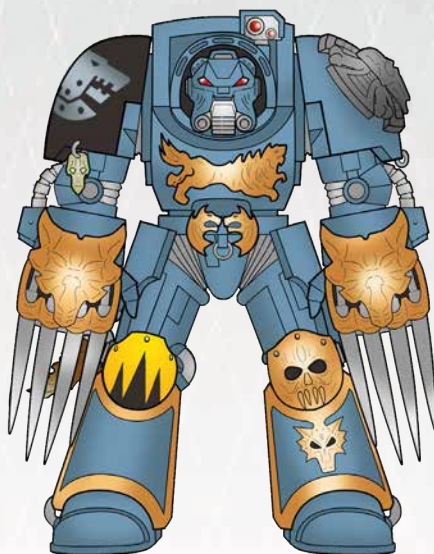
The personalised pack markings of Harald Deathwolf's favoured Wolf Guard Thunderwolf Cavalry, the Riders of Morkai. Each symbolises the fangs of the wolf, in some cases augmented by personal honour badges.



THE IRONWOLVES

The appearance of any Great Company is heavily influenced by its Wolf Lord's personal preferences. The Ironwolves are a good example of this, their master's affinity for the mechanical reflected in the prominent metallic hues upon much of their wargear.

The jagged lines of their pack markings further show this bond, for to the Ironwolves they represent the inescapable jaws of the great mechanical beast who stands as their Great Company's symbol.



Voldr Bladefist, Wolf Guard Terminator of the Forgehammers. His lightning claws are ornately crafted.



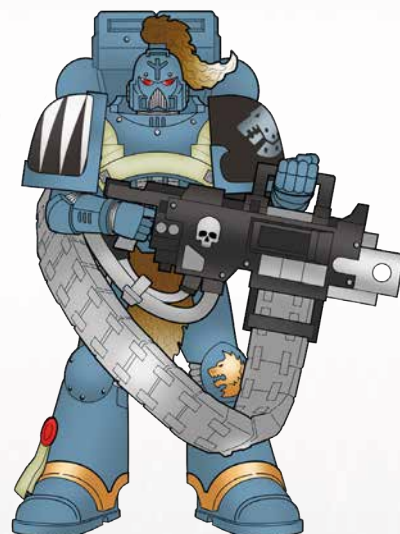
Skyclaw Heimdal Vicejaw of the Ironstars pack. His brass-skull pommel was forged by his own hand.



The Ironwolves' Great Company banner shows the Ironwolf on the red and black of the Adeptus Mechanicus.



Mjorl Wyrdpelt, Grey Hunter of the Steelsouls. His accuracy with a boltgun is famous among his pack.



Long Fang Nokdr Iceclaw of the Snowfangs pack. His pack's marking aptly reflects its name.



Olaf Ironhide



Bjorn Bloodfist



Orven Highfell



Conran Wulfhide

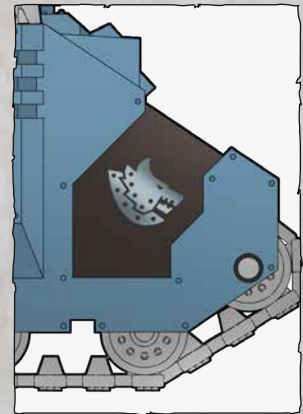
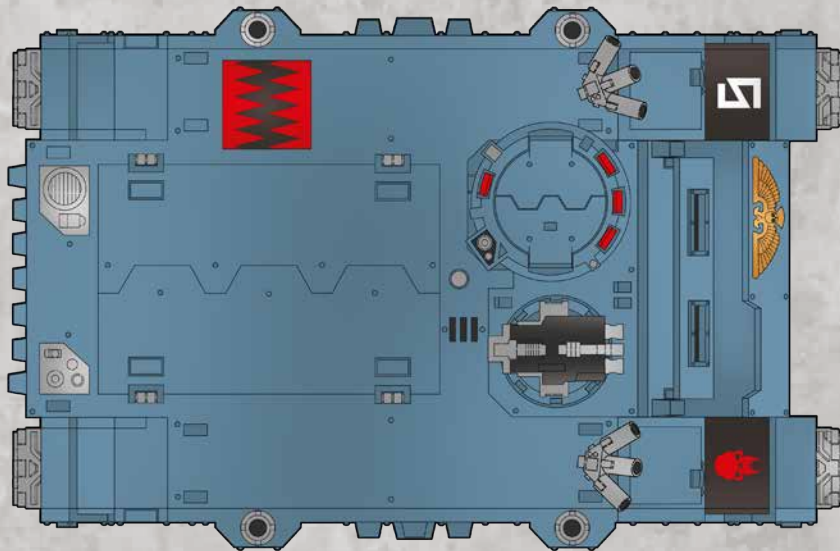


Borgen 'Fire-eye'

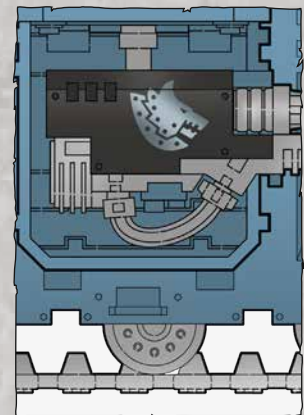
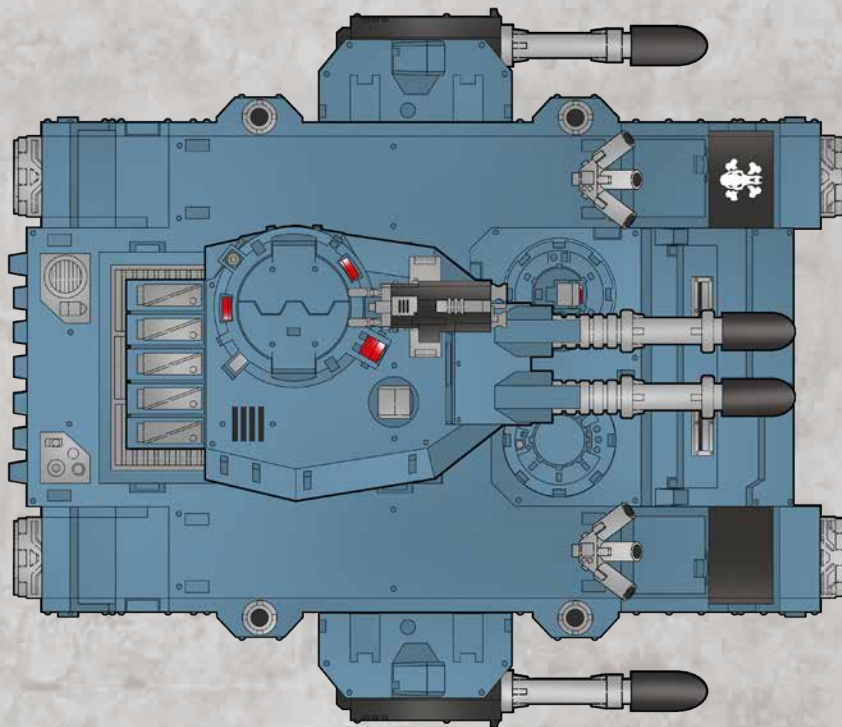


Moln Stormbrow

The Ironguard are Egil Iron Wolf's bodyguard, and are known as the cogs around which the Wolf Lord's plans revolve. Many battle-honours are reflected in their pack markings, for they have fought long and heroically at Egil's side.



All transport vehicles within the Ironwolves bear certain key insignia upon their armoured hulls. The front right bulkhead of this Rhino displays the Great Company marking of the Ironwolves, while the pack marking of its passengers, the Grey Hunters of the Steelsouls, is shown upon the topside of its hull.



On Space Wolf battle tanks, the markings of the crew are displayed upon the hull, as shown by the wolf-skull and crossbones on the front left bulkhead of this Predator. The Great Company symbol is shown wherever the crew choose; in this case, it has been used to honour the lascannon that scored the killing shot against the Beast of Magvadendra.



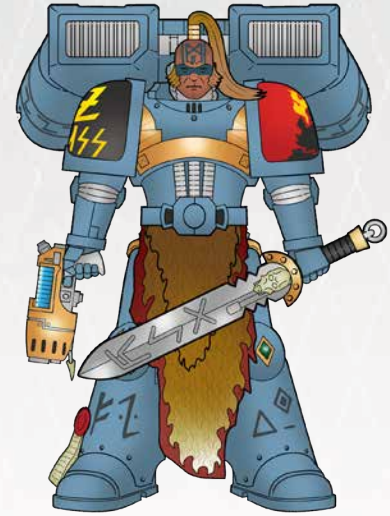
THE FIREHOWLERS

A strong tribal aesthetic runs through the Firehowlers Great Company, one that is derived from their Wolf Lord. Just as Sven Bloodhowl bears his honour markings as tattoos upon his flesh, so too do his warriors. From bands of colour to elaborate knotwork patterns and images of enemies slain, these designs serve to make the Firehowlers look especially fearsome in battle – an impression they have no trouble living up to.

The wargear of Bloodhowl's Great Company appears particularly tribal and ferocious; bright, fierce colours are set against animistic totems and the pelts of beasts slain by the warriors who wear them.



Wolf Guard Olaf Blackstone, whose breastplate bears a representation of Morkai.



Torvind Morkai of the Wolf Guard, upon whose greaves are engraved Fenrisian runes of good fortune.



Blood Claw Orin Redfang of the Firekin pack. The gold wolf's head on his knee honours his many kills.



Skyclaw Ernil Wrathfang of the Stormbringers pack. The skull of the mighty wolf Gauvold adorns his blade.



Jarlulf Firefist, Skyclaw of the Firestones pack. His tattoos show that he has slain many traitors.



Istun Firestorm



Uuntir Wolfskull



Olaf Blackstone

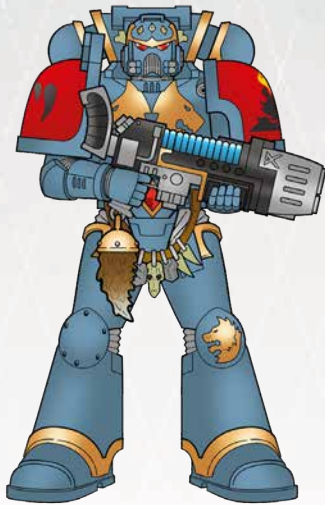


Kregga Longtooth



Torvind Morkai

The Bloodguard are Sven Bloodhowl's personal Wolf Guard, a hand-picked band of ferocious heroes whose pack markings are as direct and feral as the warriors who bear them. Their battle sagas are so long and complex that they are inscribed not just upon their skin, but on their armour too.



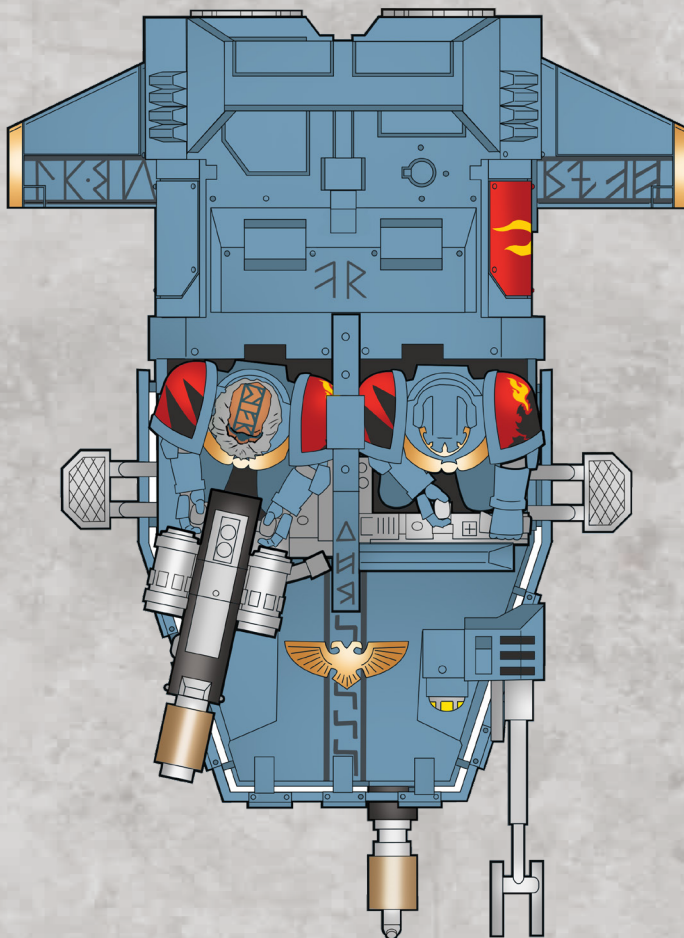
Grey Hunter Dolph Felwinter of the Blackfangs. His pack marking shows the Fire Breather's scorched fangs.



Long Fang Yngfor Stormsson of the Firemaws pack. The purity seal on his leg bears his wyrdscribe.



Vaddr Coldsoul, Long Fang of the Emberfangs. His helm is decorated with runes of protection.



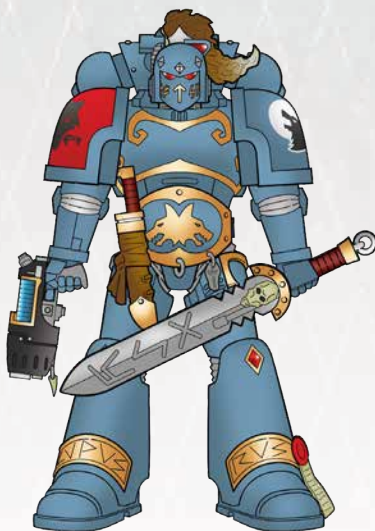
The crew of this Land Speeder, one of Bloodhowl's Ravens, bear a pack marking that symbolises the roaring flames of the Fire Breather. Their craft is marked with numerous runic designs that honour its machine spirit, celebrating worthy kills and giving thanks for the times that its armoured hull has deflected the attacks of the enemy.



THE CHAMPIONS OF FENRIS

As befits the warriors of the Great Wolf, the Champions of Fenris are the most regal and glorious of all the Great Companies. Their warrior finery, gleaming with gold, silver and bronze, outshines even the mythic treasure hordes of the Fenrisian dwarrovolken. Their weapons and armour are finely crafted, adorned with runic designs and golden skulls.

The Champions of Fenris are heroes worthy of every last honour they bear, masterful warriors who destroy the enemies of Mankind wherever they are found. They fittingly add numerous kill markings, warrior trophies and victory totems to their wargear, proudly displaying their sagas for all to see.



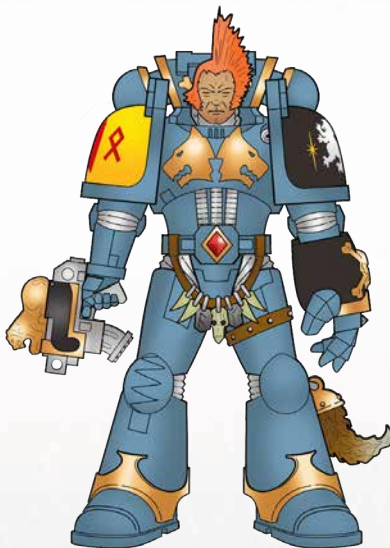
Grey Hunter Leif Ragnarsson of Shadowstalker's Snowdevils. Note the honour runes on his blade.



Mjorl Redclaw, Grey Hunter of the Wolfsons of Lorkir. His back totem symbolises victory over a great beast.



Vengar Halfmad, Blood Claw of Jarn's Unblooded. He wears trophy pelts to attract spirits of glory.



Blood Claw Jorgen Firecrest of Alrik's Reavers. His power fist honours the Great Wolf with every kill.



Long Fang Lorvar Thunderhand of Haakon's Wyrmslayers. The skull on his weapon symbolises great courage.



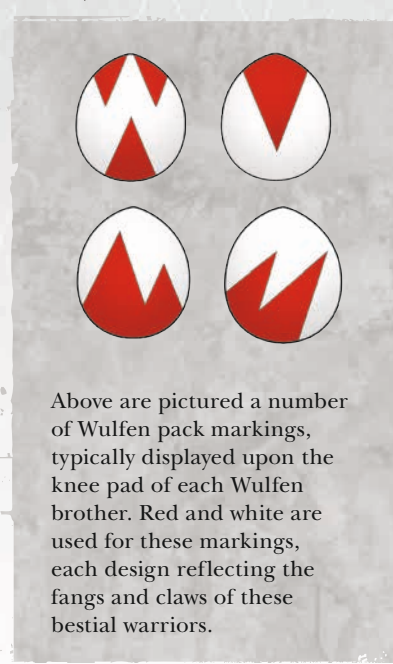
The shoulder guard on the left bears Logan Grimnar's original symbol, the Night Runner. After his elevation to the position of Great Wolf, Grimnar and many of his warriors adopted the sigil of the Wolf That Stalks Between Stars in honour of this promotion. This design is shown on the right hand shoulder guard, set upon the Great Wolf's black background.



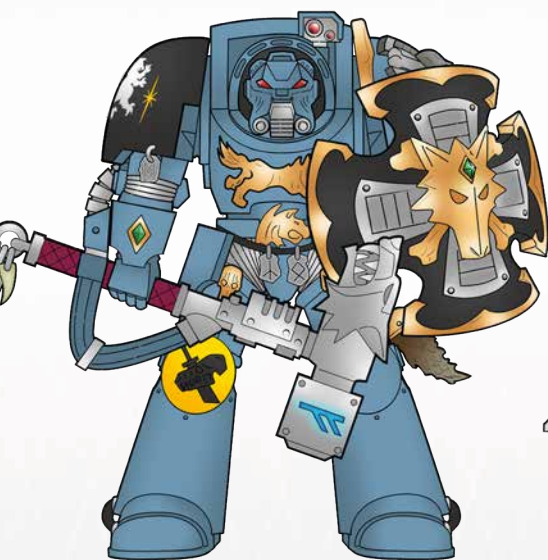
Gnjarl, Wulfen brother attached to the Champions of Fenris. He wears a variety of feral warrior trophies.



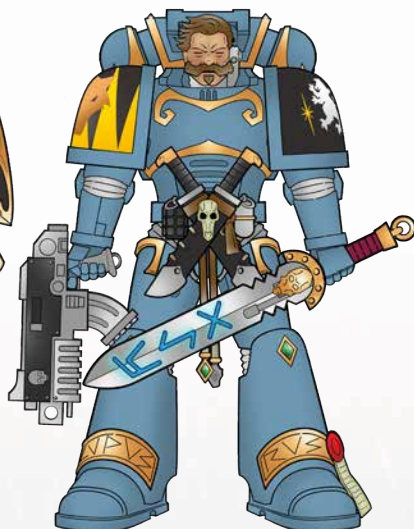
Vrokka, Wulfen brother attached to the Champions of Fenris. His storm shield bears runes of honour.



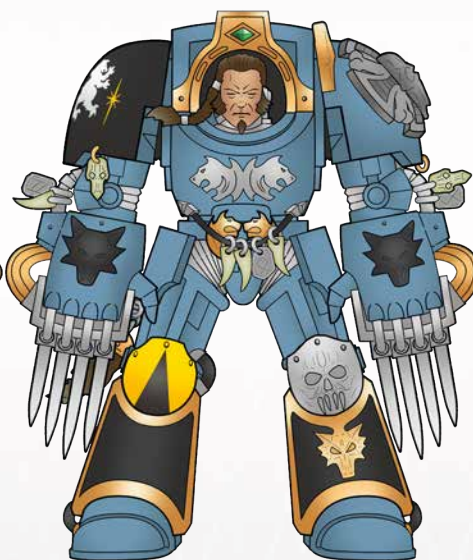
Above are pictured a number of Wulfen pack markings, typically displayed upon the knee pad of each Wulfen brother. Red and white are used for these markings, each design reflecting the fangs and claws of these bestial warriors.



Wolf Guard Terminator Groka Helmsmiter of the pack known as Wulf tongue's Shieldbrothers.



Horgoth Swiftfang, Pack Leader of the Allslayers. The runes on his blade are a blessing of speed.



Hagrik Wyrdfang, Wolf Guard Terminator of Daggerfist's Voidclaws. The black wolves symbolise death.

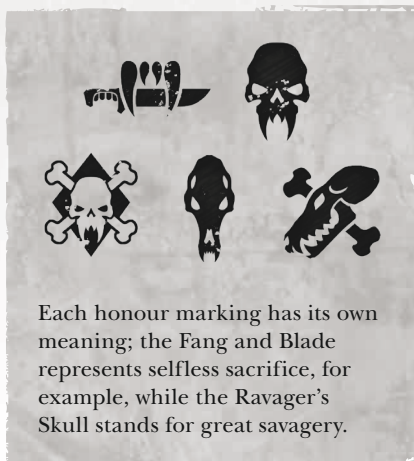
Each of Logan Grimnar's Wolf Guard, known collectively as the Kingsguard, bear their own individual pack marking that speaks of their glory and warrior prowess. Great names such as Torfin Daggerfist, Runstun Wolfbrother and Bensson Ironjaw are saga-sung throughout the Chapter, and their markings carry great weight.



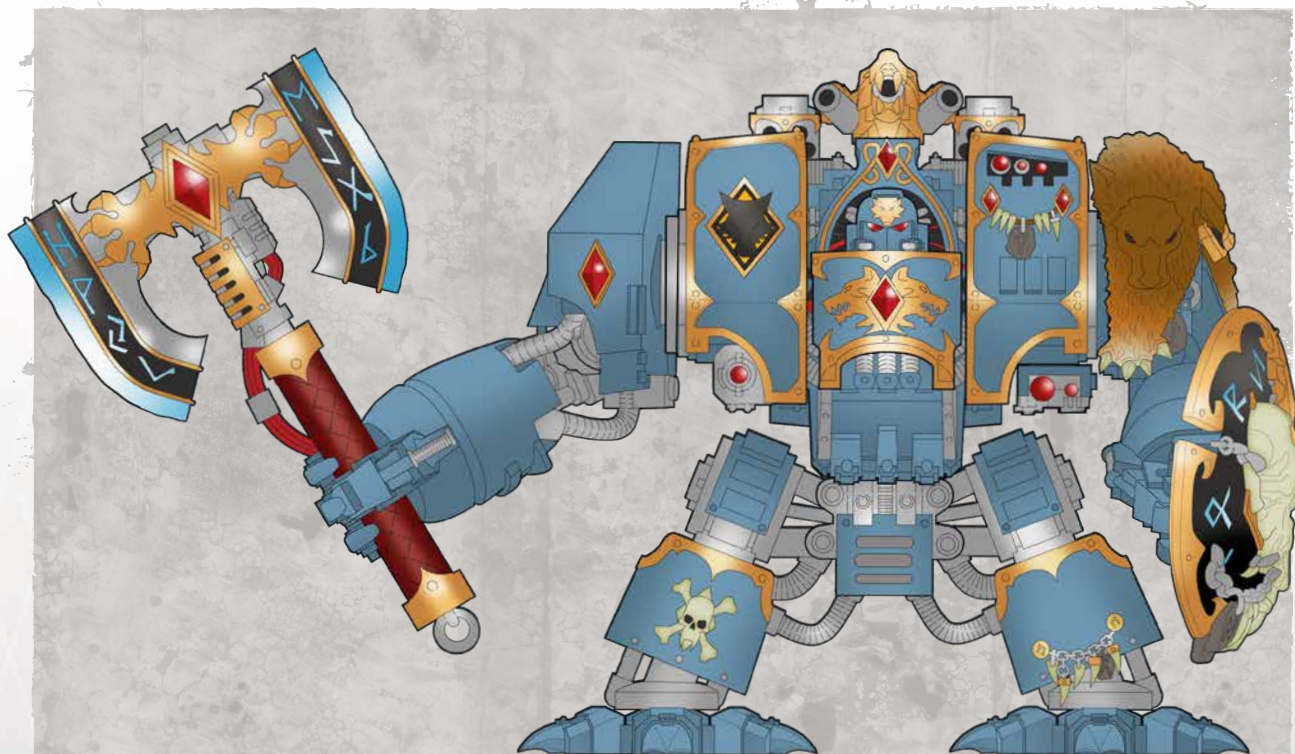
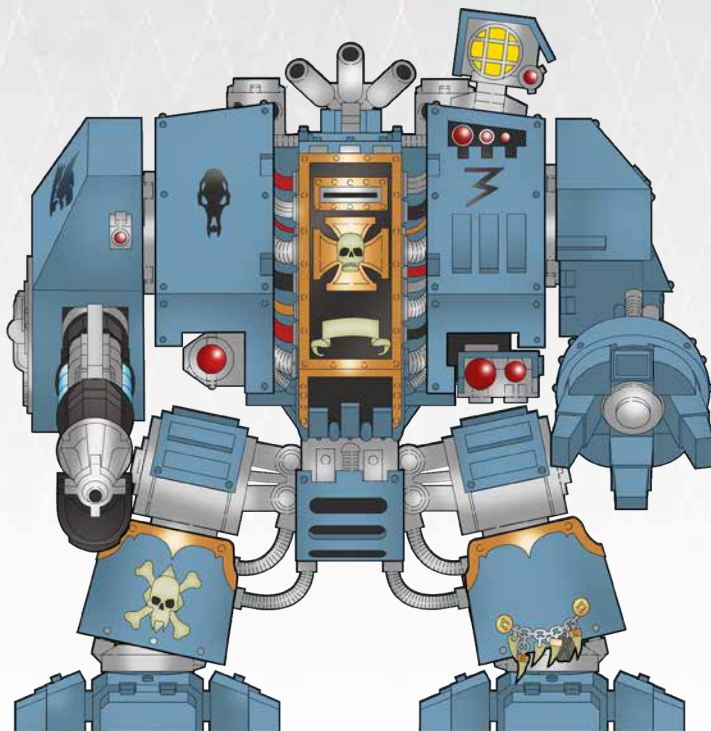


THE CHAMPIONS OF FENRIS

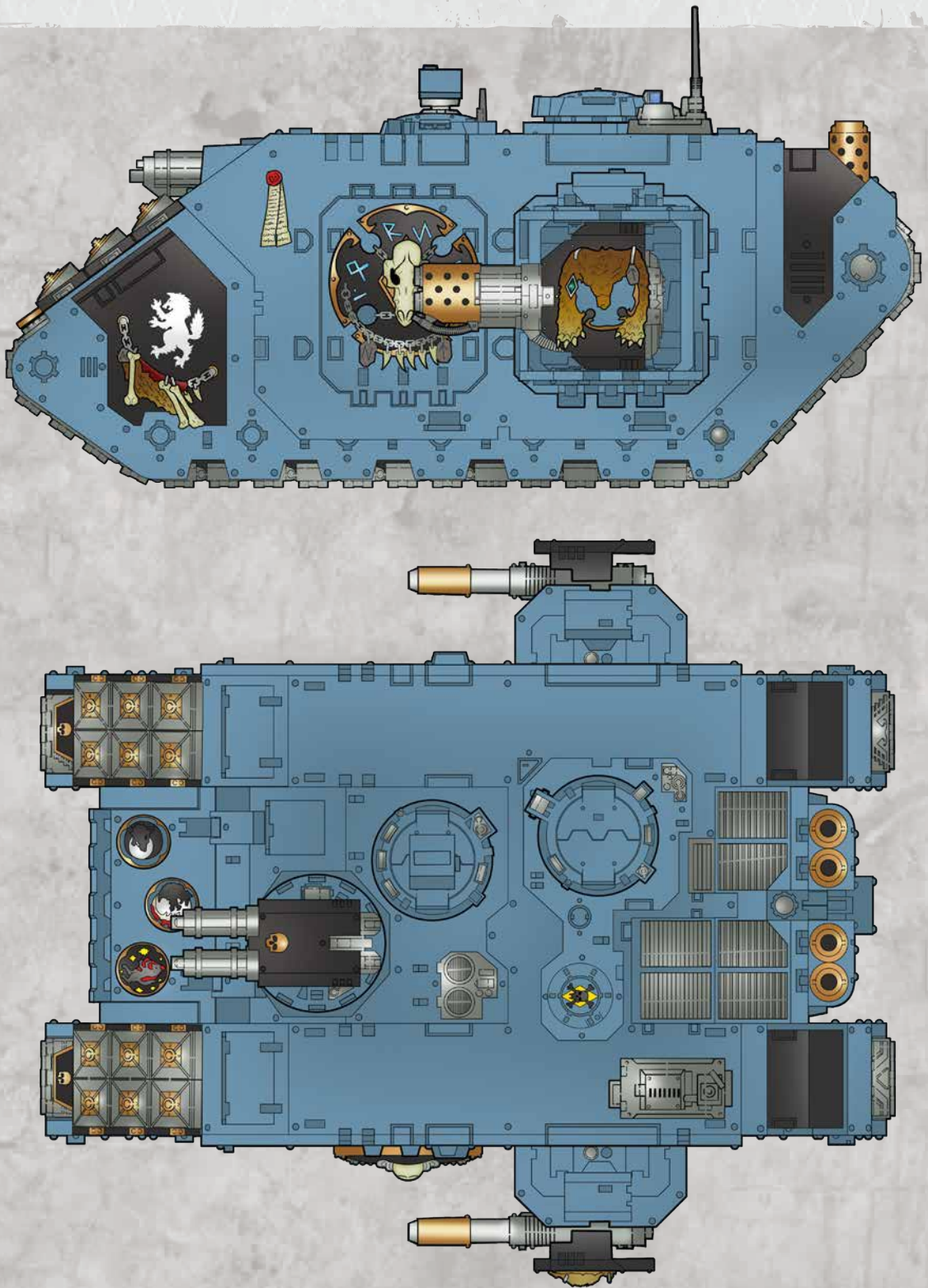
Unusually for a Space Marine Chapter, the Space Wolves Dreadnoughts are all attached to one Great Company – that of the Great Wolf. Recognised collectively as the Ancients of the Fang, these revered warriors have their sarcophagi decorated with numerous honour markings that speak of their glory.



Each honour marking has its own meaning; the Fang and Blade represents selfless sacrifice, for example, while the Ravager's Skull stands for great savagery.



Morkir the Indomitable, Venerable Dreadnought of the Company of the Great Wolf. The black wolf on a gold emblem upon Morkir's sarcophagus shows that he has slain over one hundred worthy foes, while the pelt upon his left shoulder symbolises long kinship with the Kingsguard. The runes upon his axe blade are Fenrisian curses against the foe.

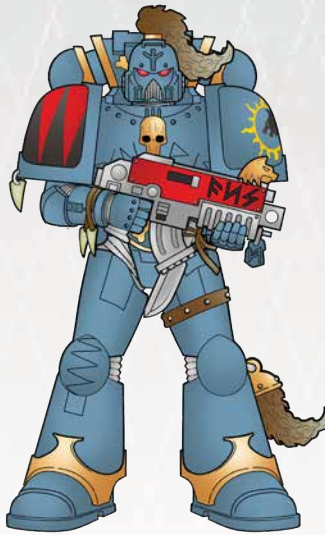


Land Raider Redeemer *Fire of Fenris*. The marking of Logan Grimnar's Great Company can be seen picked out upon a black background on the tank's front left bulkhead. Multiple shields adorn the Land Raider's hull, each one a ritual totem symbolising mighty victories from Aarnheim to the Sevenfold City.



THE DRAKESLAYERS

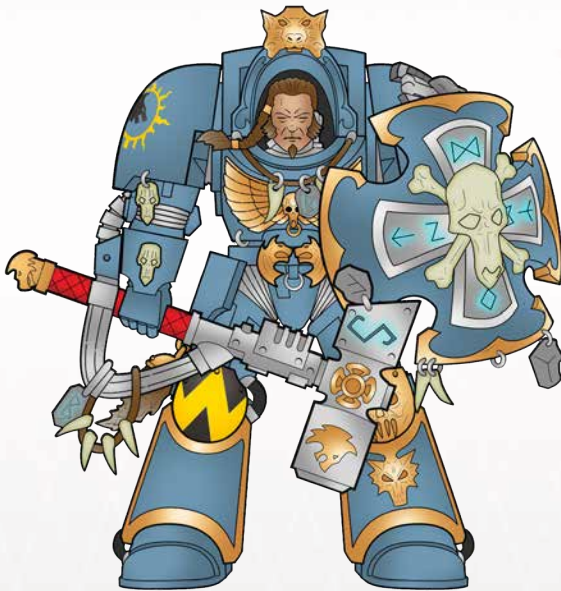
The Drakeslayers are the Great Company of the infamous Wolf Lord Krom Dragongaze. Following their master's lead, these warriors are fiercely competitive, both toward their fellows and the warriors of the other Great Companies. As such, many of the runic designs and honour markings that adorn their armour symbolise times when they have bested their brothers. From scoring the greatest number of kills in a pack, to beating the warriors of another Great Company to the killing blow, each is a mark of hard-earned superiority. As a counterpoint to such bravado, all of the warriors who fought upon Alaric Prime bear some mark of contrition upon their armour or weapons.



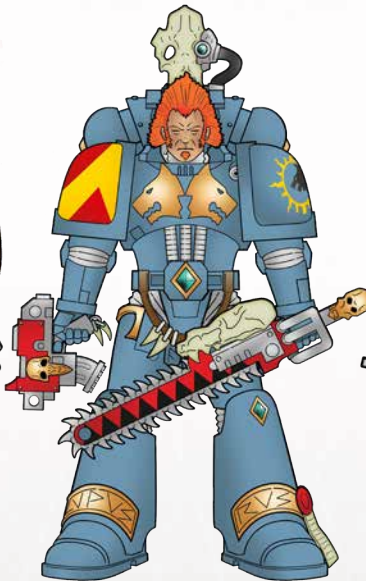
Grey Hunter Molric Fireblood of the Longstalkers pack. The runes on his bolter bespeak superior accuracy.



Beoric Winterfang, first amongst Krom's Wolf Guard. Each link in his chain represents a lost brother.



Dvordin Ironblood, Wolf Guard Terminator of the Fierce-eye's Guard. His hammer glows with honour runes.



Movir the Brash, Blood Claw in Egil Redfist's pack. The skull on his back symbolises his watchful hunt.

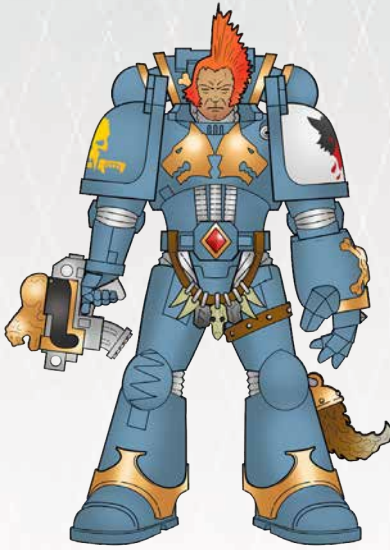


Erik Darkmane, Wolf Guard Terminator of the Fierce-eye's Guard. His red fist signifies a blood debt.



The sigil of Krom Dragongaze is the Sun Wolf, the only beast said to have a hope of meeting the Wolf Lord's furious gaze. It is a badge with mixed associations; Krom's Great Company are not well loved due to their overly competitive streak, but equally, their aid in battle can turn even the grimmest odds to victory.

COMPANIES OF FENRIS



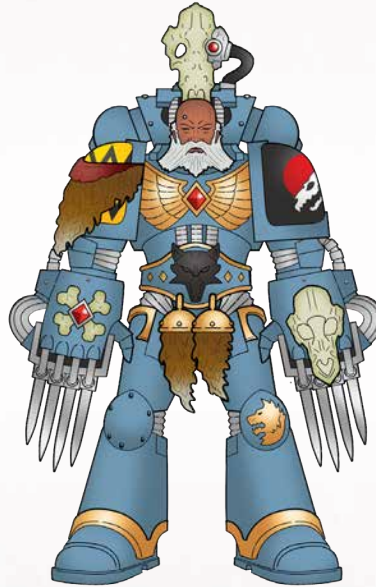
Dolf Halfcrest, Wolf Guard from Bran Redmaw's Great Company. Each fang at his belt was taken from a Fenrisian wolf that he killed unarmed and alone in the wilds.



Hrothgar Stormrunner, Blood Claw of Engir Krakendoom's Great Company. The black wolf on his belt signifies the fell gaze of Morkai.



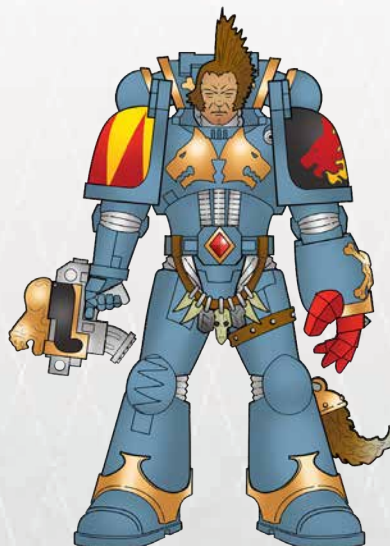
Hagrik Goldwulf, Grey Hunter from Erik Morkai's Great Company. The golden wolf's head on his bolter is said to be enchanted, lending every shot the fierce bite of the World Wolf itself.



Bjarl the Elder, Wolf Guard from Gunnar Red Moon's Great Company. The skull on his left wolf claw signifies all the foes he has already slain, while the crossed bones on his right stand for those he has yet to kill.



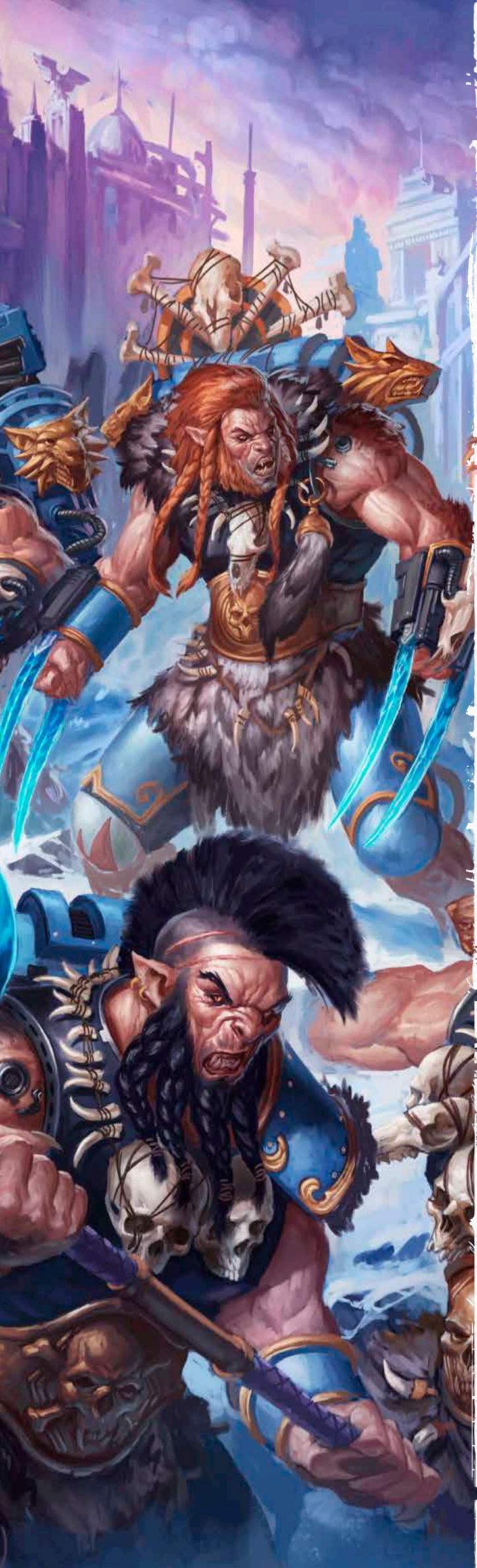
Jarnul the Wrathful, Grey Hunter from Ragnar Blackmane's Great Company. He earned each rune engraved on his helm and blade in a successful Drop Pod assault.



Hengar the Young, Blood Claw from Kjarl Grimblood's Great Company. He has painted one digit of his power fist red for the blood of every ten worthy foes he has slain with its crushing grip.







Midst blighted air,
with muck befoul'd,
The Iron Wolf fought
the Daemon,
Tho' flesh did rot and
armour rust,
He'er backward step
was taken.

