

DAMOCLES™



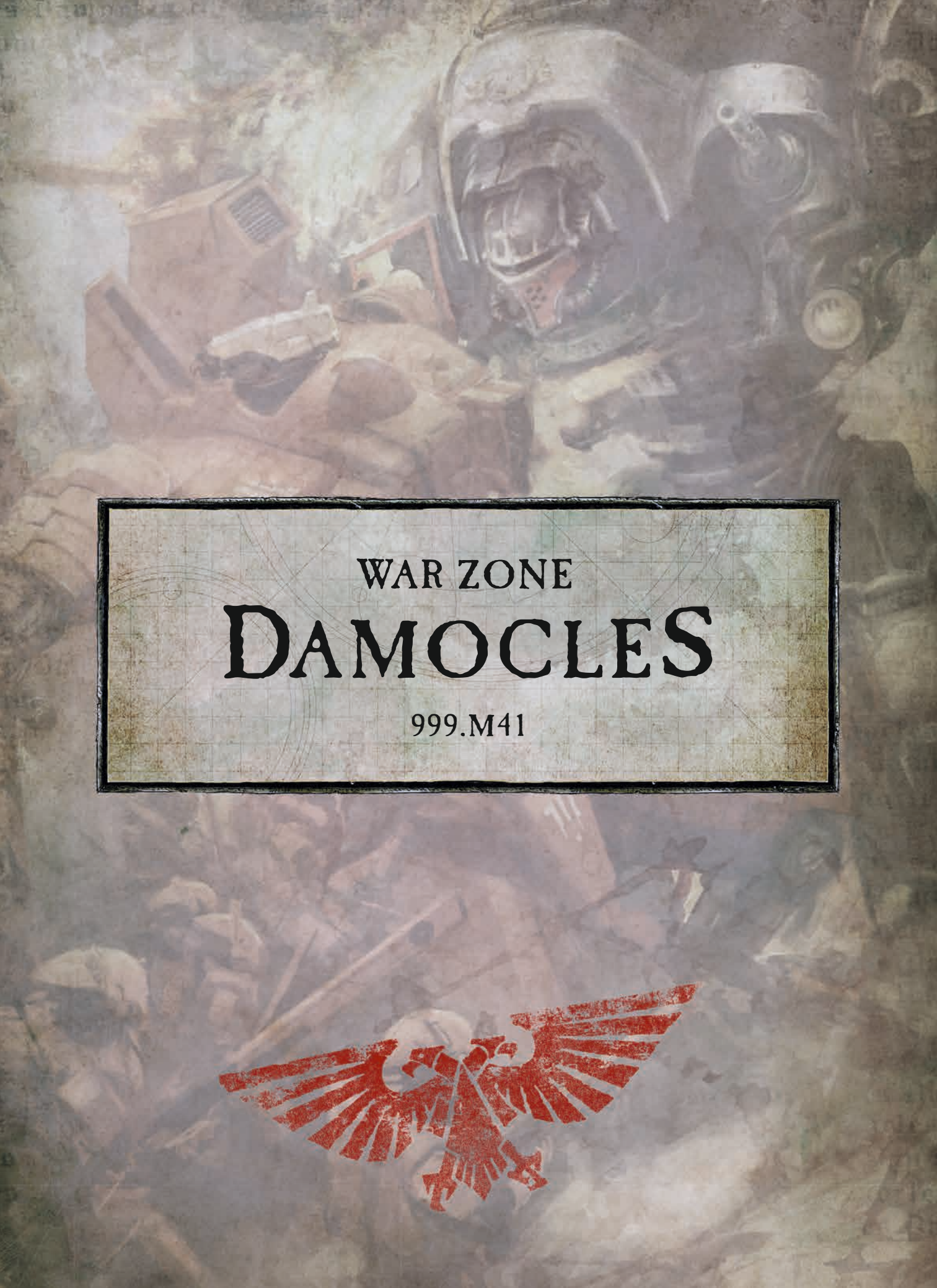
WARHAMMER
40,000

APOCALYPSE WAR ZONE





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 As such, outdated game scenarios and unit rules have been removed from this publication.

The background of the cover is a detailed, painterly illustration of a war-torn, rocky landscape. In the upper center, a large, heavily armored vehicle, possibly a tank or a heavy transport, is partially visible, its metallic surfaces showing signs of wear and battle damage. The ground is uneven and covered in rocks and debris. In the lower center, a red, stylized eagle emblem with spread wings is superimposed over the scene. The emblem has a textured, almost stencil-like appearance. The overall color palette is muted, with earthy tones of brown, tan, and grey, punctuated by the bright red of the eagle.

WAR ZONE
DAMOCLES

999.M41

CONTENTS

THE DAMOCLES GULF 5

BATTLE REPORT: THE BATTLE FOR AGRELLAN PRIME, 757999.M41 23

MINIATURES SHOWCASE 26

PRODUCED BY THE GAMES WORKSHOP DESIGN STUDIO

© Copyright Games Workshop Limited 2013. Games Workshop, the Games Workshop logo, GW, Warhammer, Warhammer 40,000, the Warhammer 40,000 logo, the Aquila logo, 40K, 40,000, Citadel, the Citadel Device, *War Zone: Damocles*, and all associated marks, logos, names, places, characters, creatures, races and race insignia, illustrations and images from the Warhammer 40,000 universe are either ®, TM and/or © Games Workshop Ltd 2000-2013 variably registered in the UK and other countries around the world. All Rights Reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publishers.

This is a work of fiction. All the characters and events portrayed in this book are fictional, and any resemblance to real people or incidents is purely coincidental. British Cataloguing-in-Publication Data. A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library. Pictures used for illustrative purposes only.

Certain Citadel products may be dangerous if used incorrectly and Games Workshop does not recommend them for use by children under the age of 16 without adult supervision. Whatever your age, be careful when using glues, bladed equipment and sprays and make sure that you read and follow the instructions on the packaging.

www.games-workshop.com

UK

Games Workshop Ltd.,
Willow Rd, Lenton,
Nottingham,
NG7 2WS

NORTHERN EUROPE

Games Workshop Ltd.,
Willow Rd, Lenton,
Nottingham,
NG7 2WS

NORTH AMERICA

Games Workshop Inc,
6211 East Holmes Road,
Memphis,
Tennessee 38141

AUSTRALIA

Games Workshop,
23 Liverpool Street,
Ingleburn,
NSW 2565







THE DAMOCLES GULF

TOTAL WAR ACROSS THE FRONTIER

For more than 250 years, the region of space near the Damocles Gulf has been a source of bitter dispute between two empires – the indomitable Imperium of Mankind and that of the vigorous alien race known as the Tau. Despite an uneasy truce developing in the wake of the Damocles Crusade, war now rages anew as the Tau begin their next phase of conquest.

A SECTOR IN FLAMES

The Imperial worlds beyond the Damocles Gulf were once again embroiled by war. Echoing their Second Sphere Expansion more than two centuries earlier, the Tau Empire surged into Imperial space on a sector-wide front. They offered mercy to worlds that welcomed the teachings of the Greater Good, but a swift death to those that opposed them. The Tau Empire was in ascendancy and nothing, it seemed, could keep them from fulfilling their destiny.

The Imperium, despite its impossibly numerous armies, was ill-prepared to deal with the suddenness and strength of the Tau invasion. Many of the Imperial forces once

stationed to defend the Damocles Gulf had been withdrawn to fight another, more pressing, threat in the form of an encroaching Tyranid hive fleet. In this manner, the Tau offensive could not have been better timed and they made swift progress deep into Imperial space. The Imperium's remaining armies were forced to retreat to their garrison worlds and fortify them as best they could. The rapidity of the Tau advance was abetted by many Imperial worlds that were sympathetic to the Tau's beliefs, the legacy of Water caste diplomats who had long been preparing the way for the Third Sphere Expansion. So successful were these ambassadors that some worlds capitulated without even firing a shot, welcoming the Tau as saviours, not invaders.





As Ethereal Supreme, Aun'Va bears his own unique symbol – a stylised variation of the revered Ethereal caste emblem.

A NEW ERA OF EXPANSION

This new war against the Imperium began when, in the year 997.M41, the Tau Empire launched its Third Sphere Expansion. The revered leader of their race, the venerable Aun'Va, decreed that their strength was great enough to expand the borders of their burgeoning empire once more. Never before had the Tau wielded such military might, and the confidence of this ambitious race was at an all-time high. But their self-assurance was well justified, for the Tau Empire was as large and as powerful as it had ever been. Working as one for the greater good, the Tau Empire's entire population was placed on a total war footing. The Fire caste in its entirety prepared to set forth on great transports to distant battlefields. The Tau were further augmented by millions of alien auxiliaries that had already been subsumed into the Tau Empire, all ready to do their part in helping to expand its boundaries.

Hundreds of expeditionary forces set out in every direction from the Tau sept worlds, each explicitly tasked with the assimilation or subjugation of a chain of star systems deemed desirable by advanced scouts and long-distance surveillance drones. With all four castes working in precise harmony, and driven ever onwards by their Ethereal leaders, the Tau Empire expanded at an incredible rate. Within the first year, several potential sept worlds had already been established, wrested from Ork warlords or other xenos species and colonised within weeks of conquest.

But inevitably, it was against the Imperium of Man that the Tau were to face their greatest challenge. Indeed, Aun'Va was well aware of the threat posed by Mankind, for Imperial retaliation in the wake of the Tau Empire's Second Sphere Expansion had taught him much about the dangers of rousing this sleeping giant. The Fire caste had learned a fearful lesson by during the bloody reprisals of the

Imperium's Damocles Crusade. So it was that Aun'Va chose to personally oversee the expeditionary force that was to force a passage into Imperial territory through the narrow route spanning the Damocles Gulf.

Aun'Va would not be alone in this venture. At his side was the most brilliant military strategist of her age, Commander Shadowsun. Named as the replacement for the traitor, Farsight, Shadowsun now bore the mantle of Supreme Commander of the Tau Fire caste. Having earned much fame and renown for her actions against the greenskins during the Great War of Confederation, Shadowsun was now a famous hero of the Tau Empire and a worthy successor to her mentor, the legendary Commander Puretide.

CROSSING THE VOID

Propelled at ever greater speeds by the latest Earth caste impulse reactors, the vast armada of Aun'Va's Tau Coalition powered across the Damocles Gulf and into Imperial space. The expeditionary force met little in the way of significant opposition, even from the Imperial worlds that rejected the offers of the Water caste's ambassadors. Despite their defiance, resistant worlds soon fell prey to Shadowsun's tactical genius and the dedication of her Fire caste warriors. Vastly outgunned by the pinnacle of Tau weapons technology and overmatched by their aerial dominance, the meagre Imperial forces that defended these outlying planets offered little more than sport for Shadowsun's veterans of the Ork wars.

Spurred ever onwards by the Ethereal Supreme at their head, world after world fell to the Tau in a series of precision strikes. Time and again, Shadowsun's Rapid Insertion Forces – elite formations comprising multiple battlesuit teams – were deployed from low orbit to circumnavigate the hastily prepared defences and annihilate the foe wholesale.

The small mining world of Thelion IV was conquered in less than twelve hours by the relentless attacks of a hundred Hunter Cadres. The densely populated hive world of Jorvax fell even faster – after witnessing the arrival of the overwhelming Tau forces, planetary governor Balthius Forr called for his commanders to stand down, surrendering without a shot being fired.



ETHEREAL SUPREME AUN'VA

If members of the ruling Ethereal caste inspire devotion and a willingness to obey in those around them, Aun'Va's presence invokes a fanaticism that borders on zealotry. As Ethereal Supreme, Aun'Va is venerated above all others, and his presence is celebrated wherever he travels. By his command have the great star-faring armadas of the Tau set forth to bring the enlightenment of the Greater Good to the galaxy; by his will are their foes crushed.



COMMANDER SHADOWSUN

O'Shaserra, or Commander Shadowsun as she is known, was one of the elite disciples and personal pupils of the ailing Commander Puretide. Having risen to seniority during the Great War of Confederation, against the Orks, Commander Shadowsun now personally leads the Tau forces of the Third Sphere Expansion. Displaying an instinctive mastery of the Kauyon style of Tau warfare, Shadowsun embodies the art of the patient huntress, trapping and crushing her foes in battle countless times.



THE DAMOCLES CRUSADE, 742.M41

Towards the end of the Tau Empire's Second Sphere Expansion, a breakthrough was made when, after many failed attempts, the Air caste successfully navigated a safe route across the Damocles Gulf. The Tau immediately began colonising this ripe new source of worlds and, in doing so, made first contact with the single greatest empire in the galaxy – the Imperium of Mankind. Water caste emissaries moved to integrate themselves within the worlds on the periphery of Imperial space, negotiating trade deals and spreading the message of the Greater Good to those long oppressed beneath the yoke of Imperial rule. Despite many of these worlds remaining mistrustful of the silver-tongued aliens in their midst, other planets rebelled, openly declaring for the Tau Empire.

The Imperium's response, though slow in gathering pace, was far more brutal than the Tau could ever have predicted. Thus was the Damocles Crusade launched to purge the xenos threat – a mighty counter-attack that tore through the newly colonised Tau worlds like a juggernaut. Led by Space Marines from a dozen Chapters, the Imperial forces routed the Tau and drove them back across the Damocles Gulf. Imperial retribution followed them, its full force descending upon the sept world of Dal'yth. However, after a long and bloody campaign on the planet's surface, the Imperium's momentum was spent and they were forced to disengage and return across the Damocles Gulf to combat the approaching Tyranid Hive Fleet Behemoth.

WAR OF WORDS

Even as the conquest of the planets beyond the Damocles Gulf continued in earnest, ambassadors from the Water caste were making equally impressive gains. Their battlefield, however, was on the negotiating table, swaying the hearts and minds of disenfranchised populations and resentful planetary governors. Many of these worlds wasted no time in rejoining the Tau Empire, just as they had done during the Second Sphere Expansion.

However, as Astropathic warnings and pleas for military aid gradually began to circulate around the Imperial worlds of the sub-sector, the persuasive methods of the Water caste became increasingly ineffective. The further these emissaries of the Greater Good advanced into Imperial territory ahead of the Tau expeditionary forces, the more likely they were to be rebuffed or face persecution.

When a Tau ambassadorial ship landed on the Knight world of Voltoris, the Water caste diplomats on board duly presented themselves at the gates of Furion Peak, the towering stronghold of House Terryn. As the ruler of a knightly house, Patriarch Tybalt was honour-bound to invite the heralds in to present themselves and say their piece. He listened patiently as the alien orators spun tales of peaceful relations between species and the harmony which the Greater Good would bring to an otherwise barbaric galaxy. But Tybalt knew that, behind their silky words, the xenos ambassadors offered a simple choice – give fealty to the Tau Empire or be destroyed. The suggestion that Tybalt should betray his oaths of loyalty was an insult to his honour, and when the Tau diplomats finished speaking, Tybalt rose to his feet and vehemently denounced them for their lies, banishing them from Voltoris under pain of death. As the emissaries hastily left, the Patriarch roared a mighty oath that House Terryn would oppose the impudent xenos of the Tau Empire should they ever threaten the sovereignty of a world that belonged to the Emperor – a vow that cost the Tau dearly in the ensuing months.

STORM CLOUDS GATHER

The gravity of the Tau expansion was not lost on the Imperial commanders of the Lithesh Sector. Indeed, it was becoming increasingly evident that the xenos forces were far greater in both number and strength than they had been during their Second Sphere Expansion two centuries earlier. Slowly, inexorably, the Imperium began to gather its armies in response to the Tau threat, though it would still take time before a force large enough to counter the alien advance could be fully mustered. With the exception of a few swiftly mobilised vanguard formations, the Imperium's defenders were on their own.

With memories of the overwhelming victories won at the outset of the Damocles Crusade fresh in their minds, the Imperium's commanders grossly underestimated the Tau. Their arrogance only served to leave the Emperor's armies further at the mercy of Shadowsun's finely honed military strategies. It was only when the first wave of

Imperial reinforcements arrived that the Tau were forced to adapt the tactics that, thus far, had proven so efficient. So were the Imperium's embattled defenders bolstered at the last by the White Scars 3rd Company, the Catachan II 'Green Vipers', and Patriarch Tybalt at the head of five household detachments of his Knights.

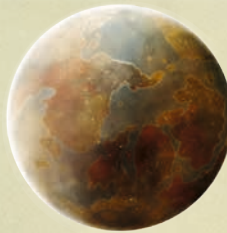
GATEWAY TO THE SYSTEM

The northernmost region beyond the Damocles Gulf was now fully under Tau control, and a number of new sept worlds were already being established in key systems. Further to the galactic west lay the mineral-rich Dovar System – the primary objective of Aun'Va's expeditionary force.

With the Imperium's defenders having retreated to their most heavily defended worlds, protocols of engagement would normally have called for the Tau expeditionary force to circumnavigate the populous hive world of Agrellan and concentrate on the more vulnerable planets beyond. However, the Dovar System's proximity to an impassable region of the Damocles Gulf meant that it was

all but impossible for the Tau armada to gain access to it without passing through Agrellan's orbit. The hive world had to fall.

To prepare for the unavoidable assault on Agrellan, Commander Shadowsun cunningly distracted the other nearby human worlds to keep their defenders occupied. Hunter Cadres fought hit and run skirmishes supported by huge numbers of specialist Drone-net VX1-0 formations. This shrewd use of expendable drones freed Shadowsun to muster the better part of her forces to attack Agrellan.



AGRELLAN

*Designate: Hive world
Population: est. 16.7 billion
Pop. Centres: 12 hive cities
Tithe Grade: Exactis Prima*



PATRIARCH TYBALT

Hailing from the Knight world of Voltoris, Tybalt is a Noble of great renown. As the Patriarch of House Terryn, Tybalt has led his fellow Knights to war for more than a century. Despite the aggressive, warlike tendencies for which the Knights of House Terryn are famed, Tybalt fights with a cool head and an iron will. Even in his twilight years, Tybalt is a true master of war and a terror to his foes.

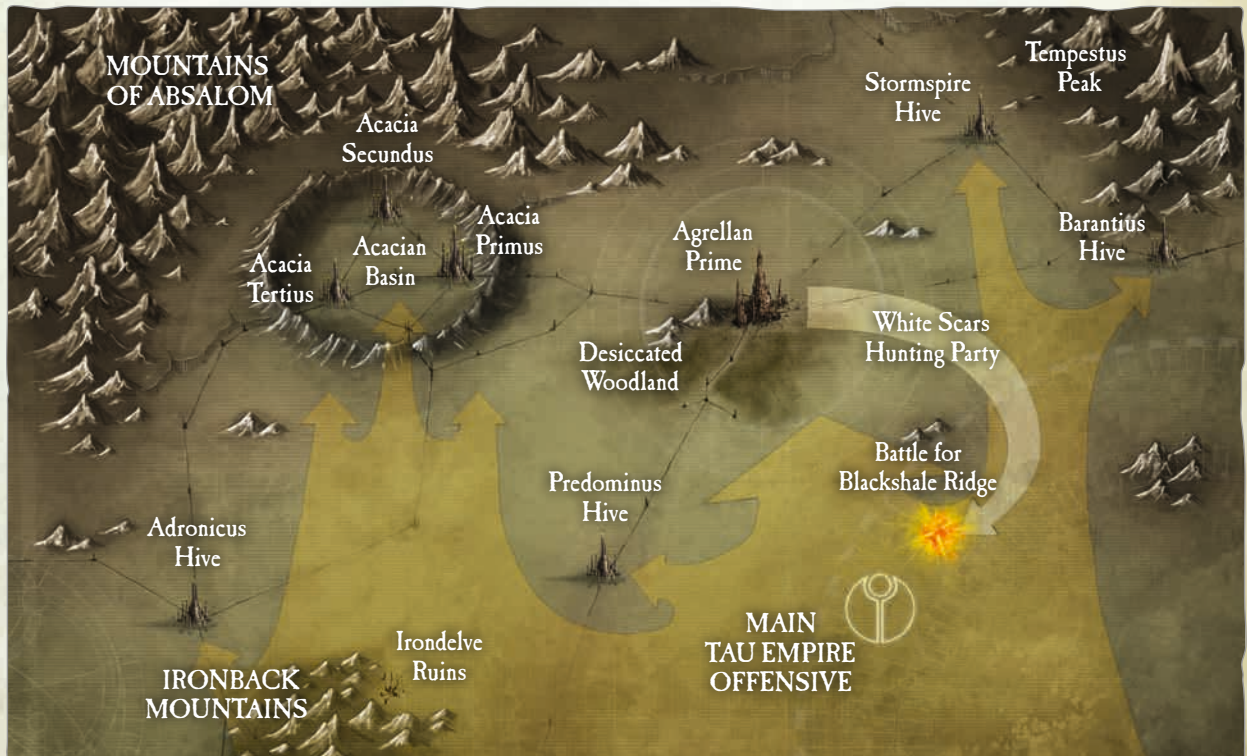




TIMELY ARRIVAL

As Shadowsun's armada powered towards Agrellan, huge rents were torn in the fabric of reality as a handful of Imperial Navy vessels burst from the Warp. With the Tau having revealed their next target, the Imperium's reinforcements were able to use the superior speed of their Warp drives to get the jump on the Tau fleet. A ferocious space battle ensued and, though the small Imperial flotilla was hugely overmatched and soon forced to disengage, three vessels were able to slip away in the confusion and deliver their valuable cargo to the planet's surface. So did the White Scars, Catachans and Imperial Knights arrive on Agrellan just in time to face the Tau planetary assault.

Agrellan's orbital defences, though formidable, could not withstand the might of the Tau fleet. In a few hours, their guns had been silenced by wave after wave of sleek xenos fighters, and Agrellan lay open to attack. But the planet's surface represented an entirely different challenge to the Tau expeditionary force. Each hive city was defended by towering ferrocrete walls, bristling with colossal guns that covered carefully prepared killing zones. Beyond these mighty bulwarks lay entire fields of gravity mines designed to channel enemies into deadly crossfires. Even the planet itself was capable of killing the unwary. A virus bomb had long ago permanently scarred its surface in an Inquisition-sanctioned Exterminatus following a daemonic incursion that even the Ordo Malleus could not contain. However, in the aftermath of the virus bomb's deployment, a unique element in Agrellan's atmosphere reacted unexpectedly with the fallout from the attack, creating an environment so toxic that it became incredibly hazardous to live outside



of the rebuilt hive cities and their air reclaimators. To make matters worse, the veil between reality and the Warp remained incredibly thin in the aftermath of the daemonic attack; mutated flora and the taint of Chaos commonplace were beyond the sanctuary of the walls. Such a history of violence had led the inhabitants of Agrellan to heavily fortify their hive cities, and the Inquisition has remained vigilant should the Daemons ever return.



Commander Shadowsun's personal symbol was to identify the cadres of the Mu'gulath Bay Expeditionary Force.

SHADOWSUN ASCENDANT

Into this crucible of hostility swept the Tau, their fearless Commander the first to set foot on Agrellan's surface. Shadowsun, ever the patient huntress, sought to test her enemies rather than waste the lives of her brave warriors in a bloody assault on the imposing defences. Orbital scans had revealed the presence of a small force of the Imperium's deadly Space Marines, alongside a number of Imperial Knights, against which the Fire caste had not yet been tested. Shadowsun wanted to study this formidable new foe in battle and, if the opportunity presented itself, destroy them before launching her main offensive on Agrellan.

In order to draw out and expose the Knights, Shadowsun's formations probed the defences of hive cities across the planet's surface, stretching the Imperial forces to their limit. So effective were Shadowsun's hit and run tactics that, had it not been for the herculean efforts of the White Scars, it is certain that the three hive cities of the Acacian Basin would have fallen in spite of their great walls.

In response, and in order to deny the White Scars their swiftest means of transportation, Shadowsun ordered Tau Air Superiority Wings to hunt the White Scars Thunderhawk Gunships whenever they took to the skies. Only the noble sacrifice of their accompanying Stormtalon squadrons kept any of the invaluable Thunderhawks operational. With the

Imperial forces woefully out-matched in the air, the White Scars commander, Kor'sarro Khan, was forced to deploy half his company's transports as an Armoured Vanguard to act as a mobile reserve.

Meanwhile, Shadowsun positioned the majority of her heaviest weaponry around the capital hive, Agrellan Prime, using a Kauyon ploy to draw the Imperial Knights stationed there out into the open. Such tempting bait was too much for Patriarch Tybalt and the Knights of House Terryn, and they duly sallied forth to engage their foe. However, the moment they left the city walls, the Knights were targeted by carefully concealed Hammerhead Interdiction and Ranged Support Cadres. Scores of hyper-velocity railgun shots slammed home. The Tau were, as yet, unaware of the effectiveness of the Knights' ion shields, and only one succumbed to the fusillade. Within moments, the Knights were in amongst the Tau armour with devastating effect. Only the personal intervention of Shadowsun at the head of her Firststrike Assault Hunter Cadre forced the Knights to withdraw.



KOR'SARRO KHAN

In addition to his rank as Captain of the White Scars 3rd Company, Kor'sarro Khan bears the honorific of the Master of the Hunt, a title unique to the White Scars Chapter. As such, the Khan is honour-bound to hunt down those that have wronged his battle-brothers, seeking to claim their heads as trophies in bloody recompense for their transgressions. As yet, no such enemy has escaped the fatal stroke of Kor'sarro Khan's blade, Moonfang.



With the White Scars' home world of Chogoris under heavy attack by the Red Corsairs, Kor'sarro Khan showed unswerving dedication to duty by answering the call for aid and leading his 3rd Company to Agrellan. They would prove to be a constant thorn in the side of the Tau invaders.





SHADOW CAPTAIN SHRIKE

It is said that, of all the Raven Guard, it is Shadow Captain Shrike that best exemplifies the tenets of the Chapter's Primarch, Corax. With a mastery of the hit and run attack that rivals even the Tau Empire's Commander Shadowsun, Shrike excels in leading the 3rd Company in brutal campaigns of guerrilla warfare. Shrike's Raven Guard appear as if from nowhere to deliver death to their foes before melting back into the shadows once more.

THE HUNT BEGINS

As the White Scars' Master of the Hunt, Kor'sarro Khan had hunted and slain many powerful enemy warlords, returning to Chogoris with their heads amid great ceremony. In undertaking these quests, Khan had become well versed in reading the tactics employed by his enemies in order to identify the presence of such a quarry. In Commander Shadowsun, he soon recognised a worthy foe – more specifically, a foe whose death would greatly undermine the Tau forces fighting on Agrellan. So did Khan swear a great oath to see her slain.

'Surround yourself with the greatest warriors at your command, or cower in the deepest and darkest hole you can find. It matters not. I shall take your head for the Great Khan and for the Emperor.'

- KOR'SARRO KHAN

Leaving the defence of Agrellan to a war council led by Patriarch Tybalt and the Catachan Colonel Straken, Khan led a bike-mounted demi-company to track down the Tau commander. As they roared off to wage war behind enemy lines, an Optimised Stealth Group doing advanced reconnaissance brought word of this change of tactics directly to Shadowsun.

Forewarned against the threat posed by the White Scars that hunted her, Shadowsun reacted with her typical composure and tactical pragmatism. Rather than seeking refuge from her pursuers, she planned to use the dogged determination of the Space Marines – a trait which they had frequently displayed during the bitter fighting of the Damocles Crusade – against them.

Though the White Scars caused great harm to the Tau infrastructure with their lightning raids, more often than not, they were unwittingly drawn towards battlefields of Shadowsun's choosing. In the Battle for Blackshale Ridge, Shadowsun even offered herself as bait to provoke the White Scars into springing a trap. Surrounded on all sides and taking heavy fire, Kor'sarro



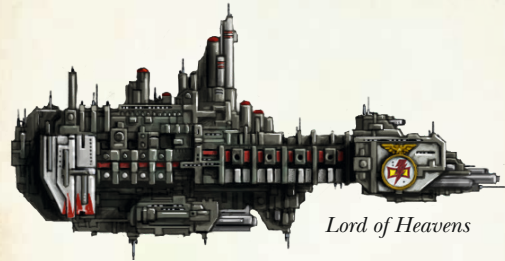
Khan and his fellow White Scars would have been cut off and annihilated were it not for the timely arrival of a Land Speeder Stormbringer Squadron which was able to punch an escape route through the encircling Tau army.

Far from sitting idle and waiting for the White Scars to make their next move, Shadowsun had been working with Aun'Va, preparing to unleash her boldest action yet of the Third Sphere Expansion. In order to prevent the war on Agrellan from descending into a grinding stalemate, she intended to marshall her forces and launch a carefully orchestrated, simultaneous attack against every hive city on the planet. To combat the Imperial Knights, the attack on Agrellan Prime would be spearheaded by the latest breakthrough in Earth caste technology – the XV104 Riptide battlesuit. If Shadowsun's ambitious stratagem worked, Agrellan would fall in a single day...

COMETH THE RAVENS

As the White Scars gathered at a hidden munitions cache, a lone figure emerged from the darkness. It was Shadow Captain Shrike of the Raven Guard, and he delivered a message to the alerted White Scars from his Chapter Master, Corvin Severax. The White Scars were to return to the capital and prepare to retreat off-world. A powerful Imperial fleet, including the Raven Guard Battle Barge, *Wings of Deliverance*, stood ready to aid in the evacuation. Agrellan could no longer be held against the Tau.

IMPERIAL EVACUATION FLEET



Lord of Heavens

Vessels of Note:

- *Wings of Deliverance*, Raven Guard Battle Barge
- *Stormshadow*, Raven Guard Strike Cruiser
- *Lord of Heavens*, White Scars Strike Cruiser
- *Star of Terra*, Emperor class battleship
- *Iron Virtue*, Dauntless class cruiser

Battlefleet Damocles:

- 5 x Battleships
- 19 x Cruisers
- 13 x Escort Squadrons

Fleet Assets:

- 4 x Front Line Battle Groups
- 2 x Rear Echelon Battle Groups
- 1 x Independent Strike Group

A SHADOW IN THE DARK

The flickering firelight caused the shadows of the fur-clad warriors gathered around Kor'sarro Khan to dance across the circle of bikes surrounding them. Their powerful machines faced outwards in every direction, ready for the White Scars to mount up and disperse at a moment's notice. The Khan's warriors listened in attentive silence as he prepared to issue instructions to his war council for the next stage of the hunt.

'Our quarry is cunning, and not to be underestimated,' he began. 'The xenos bitch has had the better of us once, but will not do so again. At sunrise, we will—'

Kor'sarro's voice broke off as a faint silhouette began to take shape amid the darkness. As one, every White Scar aimed his bolter at the ebon figure's head. The stranger did not flinch.

'In the name of the Great Khan, identify yourself!' roared Jebe, Kor'sarro's Company Champion, as he unsheathed his sword.

'Stand down, brothers,' ordered the Khan, gesturing to his men to lower their weapons. 'I know him.'

Kor'sarro Khan was aware of only one person in the entire galaxy that could infiltrate a Space Marine camp undetected. The Khan's warriors obeyed his command without question, though the scornful sneer he wore did little to ease the tension.

Without a word, the newcomer reached up and unclasped his helm to reveal a narrow, pallid face beneath a veil of lank, black hair. It was Shadow Captain Shrike.

'So we meet again, Raven Guard,' the Khan growled. 'What brings your kind here? Have you come to spill xenos blood or skulk in the shadows and leave the fighting to real warriors?'

'My "kind" have been engaging the enemy in covert operations for ten days,' stated Shrike. 'Did you not wonder how you managed to escape the ambush at Blackshale Ridge against such odds?'

The Khan's eyes narrowed at this, but Shrike continued before the White Scar could respond. 'I bring orders from my master, Corvin Severax. This world is lost. The xenos forces arrayed against us are too great and my Scouts report that the Tau are massing for a final assault.'

The realisation of what Shrike was about to say hit the Khan like a sledgehammer. 'You wish to us retreat? Craven!'

'Severax has assumed full command of Imperial forces in this sector and has called for the evacuation of all military assets and personnel on Agrellan – including you, brother. Given our... history, he thought it prudent you heard this from me. He knew these orders would not be to your taste. You are to accompany me back to Agrellan Prime for immediate extraction.'

'Then he was wise to send you and no other, lest I gut them for their cowardice,' growled Khan. 'But if these are indeed my orders, then I will do my duty, even though it stains my honour. White Scars! We ride! See you in Agrellan or hell, brother!'

'Hell awaits us all at Agrellan Prime,' Shrike muttered grimly.



CORVIN SEVERAX

As the Chapter Master of the Raven Guard, Corvin Severax's honorific, the Lord of Shadows, is well founded. Seldom is the enigmatic commander seen – even by the Space Marines of his own Chapter – yet his authority is absolute. Despite his covert style of leadership, Severax fights as a consummate predator in battle. The Lord of Shadows strikes with the speed and ferocity of a thunderbolt, his form a blur of motion as he carves his foes to bloody ruin without hesitation or remorse before disappearing into the shadows once more.

THE FALL OF AGRELLAN

It was well indeed for the Imperium that Corvin Severax had such a shrewd tactical mind. Had he not acted so swiftly and decisively to organise a full-scale evacuation, the planet-wide Tau assault would have decimated the Imperium's fighting strength in the Lithesh Sector.

When the Tau attack came, it was so sudden and brutally efficient that many hive cities fell within the first few hours of the mass assault. The defences of every hive city had been meticulously analysed by orbital scans and advanced reconnaissance teams. The weaknesses of each of these strongholds had been discovered, and the appropriate cadres deployed to ensure their total destruction. Shadowsun developed a different plan of attack for each hive city, ensuring that if any defensive strategy proved effective, it would not work against Tau forces elsewhere.

In Gorvus Hive, the Hydra batteries that protected the city from aerial assault were eliminated by Optimised Stealth Groups. Within the hour, the defences had been bombed to rubble by wave after wave of Paradox Squadrons. Meanwhile, in Imortis Hive, ten Ranged Support Cadres



The Knights of House Terryn proudly bear their highly decorative heraldry for all to see.

concentrated their railgun fire to level a section of the outer wall. Hunter Cadres by the dozen poured out of their Devilfish transports to storm the breach, and soon the hive city's streets ran red with the blood of the slain.

At the forefront of each and every assault strode the new XV104 Riptides. Wherever these mighty battlesuits engaged the beleaguered Imperial defenders, they slaughtered them and shattered their bulwarks. Only the Imperial Knights seemed able to withstand them on the battlefield, and even then, five Knights were felled by Riptide Wings during the Battle for Agrellan Prime.



THE BATTLE FOR AGRELLAN PRIME

The battle for the capital hive saw the greatest concentration of both Imperial and Tau forces engage in the heaviest fighting of the war. It was here that Commander Shadowsun led her Firststrike Assault Cadre into the fray, urged on in person by Aun'Va and his Ethereal Council. Inspired by the legends in their midst, the Fire caste fought all the harder.

The defenders of Agrellan Prime had been bolstered overnight by the newly arrived Raven Guard 6th Company and the Cadian 724th 'Wardens', under Colonel Jericho Voss. Corvin Severax himself directed the hive city's defences, determined to see them hold long enough for Shrike and the White Scars to fight their way back into the city for extraction.

There were moments of incredible skill and heroism on both sides. During the course of the battle, the marksmanship of Magogg's Ratling Rifles accounted for no less than thirty Crisis battlesuits. Meanwhile, the famous Tau Hammerhead commander, Longstrike, reaped a fearful tally of battle tanks before the city gates, and crippled a pair of Imperial Knights.



A SECRET REVEALED

During the opening months of the Third Sphere Expansion, a mysterious ship named travelled with the expeditionary fleet of Aun'Va and Commander Shadowsun. This ship played no part in any of the diplomatic or offensive actions of the expeditionary fleet, and its cargo remaining classified to all but the Ethereals and the highest ranking officers of the Fire caste.

All this was to change as Commander Shadowsun prepared for the conquest of Agrellan. In the hours before Agrellan fell, the secret was finally revealed when a contingent of giant prototype battlesuits, named XV104 Riptides, was transported to the planet's surface to lead the assault.



THE PATH OF THE FREEBLADE KNIGHT

One of the great enigmas of the Imperial Knights is the Freeblade Knight phenomenon. Each of these nameless warriors once belonged to one of the knightly houses of the Imperium, yet as a result of some grave incident or personal tragedy, has left his former life behind. A Freeblade Knight renounces any claim to birthright or title until such time as he has redeemed his past discretions or death claims him.

Freeblade Knights traditionally take on a pseudonym and lead a solitary or mercenary existence. The Obsidian Knight that fought on Agrellan was one such Freeblade, though it remains unclear if he was indeed the same Knight who battled so ferociously against the Tau during the Damocles Crusade, or if another fights in his name.



A FIGHTING WITHDRAWAL

Beyond the southern walls of the capital, Straken's Catachan Jungle Fighters engaged in savage ambush and counter-ambush against Kroot Hunting Packs amid the desiccated woodlands beyond the hive walls. It was here that Shrike led the White Scars on their route towards the city. The arrival of the Space Marines and a pair of Hellstorm Squadrons from the hive city soon saw the Kroot mercenaries defeated. Having forged a clear path through the Tau lines, the Imperial forces retreated back towards the relative safety of the city.

Just when it seemed that the Space Marines and Catachans would make it back to Agrellan Prime, Shadowsun sprung her trap. A simultaneous pincer assault comprising four Counterstrike Cadres and Shadowsun's own Firststrike Assault Cadre slammed into both flanks of the Imperial column. Despite a ferocious counter-attack from the White Scars and Raven Guard driving the first wave of Tau attackers back, the arrival of a Riptide Wing turned the tide back against them. Shadowsun darted between the desperate fire fights, picking off the Imperial transports with methodical efficiency. It was at that moment, just when all appeared lost, that Corvin Severax played his trump card.

The explosive arrival of this new combatant was evidenced when a vast chainblade burst from the chest of a Riptide, before tearing the battlesuit apart in a welter of sparks. The Obsidian Knight had entered the fray. Acutely aware of the specialist skills of this fabled Knight, Severax had sought out the relentless Tau-killer and transported him to Agrellan. The violence that ensued proved the Chapter Master wise, for the Obsidian Knight slaughtered the Tau forces with terrible purpose.



Symbol of the Catachan II 'Green Vipers'

COMMANDER SHADOWSUN'S FIRSTSTRIKE ASSAULT CADRE AT THE BATTLE OF AGRELLAN PRIME

- Shadowsun and Command Team [Crisis Bodyguard Team]
- Fire Warrior Teams with Devilfish x 6
- Fire Warrior Teams x 6
- Pathfinder Teams with Devilfish x 2
- XV25 Stealth Teams x 2
- XV104 Riptide x 2
- XV8 Crisis Team x 2
- Hammerhead Gunship x 3
- Sky Ray Gunship x 3
- Razorshark Strike Fighter x 4



Inspired by this veritable engine of death, the embattled Space Marines redoubled their efforts and hurled the Tau back.

At the last, the Knights of House Terryn were able to fight their way through to relieve the retreating Imperial host. There, the Knight Paladins stood sentinel, bombarding the Tau with their rapid-fire battle cannons as the Catachans and Space Marines reached the hive city at last. The Knights suffered for their brave rearguard action, the Tau Broadships, Hammerheads and Riptide battlesuits making them pay dearly. Only when the first of the Imperial transports were launched did Patriarch Tybalt grudgingly lead his few remaining Knights back towards the awaiting Imperial drop ships. With that final act, the Imperium withdrew from Agrellan, leaving the planet in Tau hands.

Shadowsun's planet-wide assault had proved to be a tactical masterstroke. In a single day, the Imperial forces had been humbled and every hive city had been taken. Within hours of the Imperial fleet breaking orbit, work had already begun to settle this newest Tau sept world, which would be named Mu'gulath Bay.

THE OBSIDIAN KNIGHT

During the Damocles Crusade, the deeds of a lone Freeblade Knight became legend amongst the Imperial soldiery. The Knight's origins were unknown and his refusal to speak only deepened the myth behind the man. Even the title by which he became known was little more than an epithet based on the grim hue of his Knight Paladin suit.

The only fact about the Obsidian Knight that was truly beyond question was his talent for killing the warriors of the Tau Empire. The exact nature of the terrible events that transpired to bring about the Knight's burning hatred of the xenos race can only be imagined. Whatever his reasons, the Obsidian Knight fought at the forefront of every major Imperial assault, and slew the Tau in their hundreds.

VOLTORIS

The lush Knight world of Voltoris lies to the galactic west of the turbulent region of space known as the Damocles Gulf. Vast oceans span the planet's surface, the emerald hue of the water a by-product of a unique microscopic algae that reacts with the light of the planet's twin suns. The landmass of Voltoris comprises three tropical continents, each dominated by abundant tropic jungles teeming with diverse fauna.

Many of the creatures native to Voltoris are harmless, but there are three predatory beasts that even the Knights of House Terryn must be wary of: the monstrous, bat-winged vendell; the multi-limbed amphibians known as kroktars; and the howlers – nocturnal bipeds that use sonar to hunt their prey.

THE IMPERIUM REGROUPS

After the defeat at Agrellan, Corvin Severax held a council of war aboard his flagship, *Wings of Deliverance*. It was here that Patriarch Tybalt made a solemn gesture of sacrifice, offering up his own home world as a favourable battleground on which they could fight the Tau. After many long discussions, all were in agreement that the Imperial fleet would withdraw to nearby Voltoris. If the Tau could be drawn into attacking this verdant Knight world, it could be defended more effectively than any other planet in the sector. The key to this strategy was the fact that the planet's only populated area was centred around the mighty stronghold of House Terryn, Furion Peak. If the Tau were to conquer Voltoris, they would have to attack the fortress directly. The Imperial forces could thus muster their strength in a single location.

The galactic location of Voltoris had kept the planet largely isolated from the many wars fought over the millennia by the Imperium and the Knights of the planet's ruling house. But in 980999.M41, that was all about to change.

DEATH COMES TO VOLTORIS

In the wake of her stunning victory at Agrellan, Shadowsun led her Tau expeditionary fleet onwards to fresh conquests without delay, adhering to the sage axiom of her late mentor, Commander Puretide. The Dovar System now lay open to the Tau, and Shadowsun's forces swept through the planets of the region in swift succession.

'Follow up a victory by striking quickly, and you will win another.'

- COMMANDER PURETIDE

Yet Shadowsun had her doubts. Ever in the back of her mind was what had become of the Imperial forces that had eluded her at Agrellan. Though he knew she would never admit it, Aun'Va could sense Shadowsun's frustration and determined to ease her state of mind. So did the Ethereal Supreme grant Shadowsun sanction to leave and hunt down her quarry whilst the rest of the expeditionary fleet consolidated their conquest of the Dovar System. Not only would their destruction shatter Imperial





VOLTORIS

Designate: Knight world
Population: unknown
Pop. Centres: 1 Stronghold,
Furion Peak
Tithe Grade: Decuma Particular

resistance in the sector, but Aun'Va was confident that after fulfilling her quest, Shadowsun would return to him more hungry than ever to expand the Tau Empire and strike deeper into the heart of the Imperium.

Setting forth with fully half of the Tau Coalition's military strength behind her, Shadowsun wasted no time in tracking the whereabouts of the Imperial host, sending out surveillance drones in their thousands to seek her prey. It wasn't long before she had discovered their location, for Voltoris was close and the Imperial forces stationed there had made no effort to conceal their presence. Shadowsun gave the order to head for Voltoris without hesitation.

When the Tau fleet arrived at Voltoris, Shadowsun was surprised to find the planet's orbit was not held against them. Despite system-wide scans revealing that an Imperial fleet was indeed present nearby, it soon became apparent that it had no intention of engaging the much larger Tau armada. Cautious of the danger, but fully confident in the superior strength and number of ships under her command, Shadowsun chose to press on with the attack on Voltoris. A few hours later, the Tau fleet was in position and ready to commence the invasion of the Knight world.

A TRAP IS SET

Corvin Severax had ordered the Imperial fleet to retreat before the Tau armada, feigning weakness. He needed to ensure that Voltoris was a suitably irresistible target to the pursuing Tau, who now had the perfect opportunity to seek revenge on the Knights that had so vehemently rebuked their ambassadors and caused so much harm on Agrellan.

House Terryn would not stand alone. Their stronghold of Furion Peak stood proud atop a rocky plateau that pierced the jungle canopy, and it was there that the Imperium would make its stand. With great effort, the White Scars Stormseer, Sudabeh, had concealed the main fighting strength of the Raven Guard beneath a shadowy psychic mist. Meanwhile, the Catachans were carefully ensconced within the dense jungle surrounding Furion Peak. Even the dangerous predators that stalked amongst them held no fear for those born and raised on Catachan. The duty of bait went to the brave shock troopers of the Cadian 724th, yet even they were heavily dug in before the great gates of Furion Peak. Within the stronghold itself waited the sharpest jaws of the trap – Khan's 3rd Company and the full fighting strength of House Terryn's Knights.

MONT'KA – THE KILLING BLOW

Shadowsun had carefully reviewed the force disposition arrayed against her on the planet's surface. All of the Imperium's strength was concentrated in one location, around a solitary fortress. She was, however, well aware that the enemy formations that were visible to the armada's orbital scanners could not represent all of the Imperial forces that had escaped Agrellan. This meant any reserves were either stationed inside the enemy stronghold itself, or remained aboard their fleeing ships and planned to leave the planet to its fate. To Shadowsun's well-honed instincts, such a situation called for Mont'ka – the killing blow. She would launch a lightning assault to crush the exposed enemy with overwhelming force. Counterstrike Cadres and Rapid Insertion Forces would form a hard-hitting reserve, ready to react to any fresh enemy threats yet to be revealed. If she could conquer an entire Imperial hive world in a single day, what hope did one enemy fortress have?

For the first time in her illustrious career, Shadowsun was sorely mistaken. Blinded by her determination to eliminate those that had previously eluded her, Shadowsun had fallen for the same strategy that had won her victories beyond counting. Lured into launching an all-out attack on the Imperial battle line, Shadowsun realised too late the sheer size and strength of the Imperial army lying in wait.





THE ZEIST CAMPAIGN

The Third Sphere Expansion heralded a new age of conquest and development for the Tau Empire, mirrored by its people's belief in their manifest superiority. The success of each expeditionary fleet that undertook this great expansion was far from assured, however. Even as the armada of Aun'Va and Commander Shadowsun continued to gain momentum in the Lithesh Sector, in other regions of space Tau expeditionary fleets encountered much stiffer opposition from Imperial forces. In some areas, the Tau were even driven back, losing many of the planets and sept worlds that they had so recently claimed in the name of the Greater Good.

The most notable of these setbacks for the Tau took place in the Zeist Sector. In a highly successful campaign led by Captain Sicarius of the Ultramarines 2nd Company, the Imperium deflected the Tau advance. Supported by elements from more than nine other Space Marine Chapters and many Imperial Guard regiments, the Ultramarines reclaimed those Imperial worlds that had been lost.

Meanwhile, the Ultramarines 3rd Company liberated the Lagan System from the Tau Empire in a string of decisive engagements. Their victory, however, was something of a pyrrhic one, for even as they won back these worlds, several key planets in the neighbouring Dolmac System capitulated to Water caste ambassadors.

KAUYON – THE PATIENT HUNTER

The Tau cadres swept towards Furion Peak, preparing to smash the Imperial army aside with a single crushing blow. Shadowsun led from the front, embodying the tip of the spear that would deliver the killing blow.

A series of distant illuminations was all the warning the first wave of Tau cadres received before explosions suddenly blossomed amidst their lines. The heavy ordnance blasted apart armour, flesh and bone with equal impunity. Carefully concealed Direct Support Batteries had been dug into the flanks of the stronghold's foothills, and they proceeded to bombard the onrushing Tau with increasing ferocity as they drew nearer. As soon as the first shells crashed down, the Catachans swarmed forth from the jungle thickets and began to pour fire into the flanks of the Tau advance.

The disciplined Tau Fire Warriors reacted swiftly to these multiple new threats, rallying around their mighty Riptides and returning fire. Seemingly impervious to the seismic explosions erupting in their midst, the battlesuits laid down salvos of missiles in an attempt to blunt the Imperial counter-attack. Entire platoons of Guardsmen were torn apart by the lines of death stitched by heavy burst cannons.

But the Raven Guard have ever been masters of the ambush, and they knew their craft well. They had anticipated such a response from the Tau – indeed, they had counted on it. The artillery batteries began to refocus their aim, targeting their bombardments to land behind the main body of the Tau invasion force to cut off any lines of retreat. Moments later, shadowy figures began to emerge from within what the Tau had mistaken for thick morning mists. The Raven Guard had entered the fray, seemingly assailing the Tau from every direction. They swiftly surrounded pockets of Tau resistance, cutting them down before disappearing back into the mists once more. Amongst them strode Furion Peak's Counter-strike Command, each Space Marine an indomitable champion of Humanity. Without fear or hesitation, they sought out the deadly Riptide battlesuits and, with blade, claw and psychic energies, they struck them down.

Shadowsun was caught in the thick of the fighting when the Space Marine commanders joined the attack. Even though her race's knowledge of psykers was limited, she had encountered the gue'la witches before and was well aware of the threat they posed. Activating her XV22 battlesuit's cloaking device, she blended into the mists and darted her way through the press towards the Stormseer. Scant heartbeats later, Sudabeh was consumed by the superheated fury of Shadowsun's fusion blasters, and with his demise, the ghostly psychic mist that had shrouded much of the battlefield began to dissipate. As the air cleared, the full gravity of Shadowsun's predicament was revealed. She looked on in horror at the sight of yet more Imperial reinforcements. Pouring forth from the gaping maw of Furion Peak's majestic gate came the White Scars, engines roaring as they sped forth to encircle the Tau army. Behind them marched the full might of House Terryn – over thirty

Imperial Knights with Patriarch Tybalt and the Obsidian Knight at their head. The Cadian 724th emerged from their dugouts to lend their weight to the big Imperial push, each company supported by a Steel Phalanx Tank Squadron.

Shadowsun knew that victory against such odds was nigh impossible, but resolved that she would try to save as many of her kin as possible. She relayed urgent instructions to her reserve cadres that were inbound aboard a wave of Mantas; rather than take the fight to the enemy below, they were to focus on driving them back from a number of key locations and buy the Tau ground forces time to retreat. In the meantime, she gave the order to fall back and regroup.

Shadowsun turned her attention back to the battle just in time to save her life. Having carved his way through the press, Kor'sarro Khan was almost upon her, his oath to slay the Tau Commander not forgotten. Were it not for the intervention of her loyal bodyguards, the Khan

would undoubtedly have taken Shadowsun's head. As it was, the sacrifice of her kin enabled her to overcharge her battlesuit's shields just in time to divert the White Scar's blow. So did the Tau Commander cheat death; Kor'sarro Khan's blade carved a furrow across her chest instead of severing her head. Shadowsun's reprieve came with the timely arrival of a Rapid Insertion Force dropping from above to rescue their sorely wounded commander. Khan was driven back by the overwhelming firepower of the elite Crisis battlesuit teams before he could finish his prey.

THE DAMOCLES WAR CONTINUES...

Despite the arrival of Tau reinforcements, it was too late for them to turn the tide. The Imperial ambush had been so swift that the Tau forces were assailed on every front within minutes of setting foot of Voltoris. When word spread of the near-fatal injuries sustained by their Supreme Commander, the resolve of the Fire caste broke. With their leader cast down and lacking the iron discipline of the Adeptus Astartes, the Tau suffered appalling casualties as they retreated from Furion Peak. The Imperial Knights and Space Marines gave merciless chase and only the formidable firepower of the Tau Mantas and Paradox Squadrons prevented a total massacre.

Many Tau gave their lives to ensure that Shadowsun was safely extracted from the war zone – a sacrifice she has not forgotten and has sworn to avenge. The Tau armada returned to rejoin Aun'Va's expeditionary fleet, humbled by their disastrous defeat. Having learned much from her failure, Shadowsun swore before Aun'Va to redouble her efforts and now leads the Tau onwards with renewed zeal.



In an attempt to restore morale in the wake of the fall of Agrellan, the Departamento Munitorum issued the Imperial Guard regiments and other military divisions that took part in the conflict with a special campaign badge in honour of their courage and sacrifice.







THE BATTLE FOR AGRELLAN PRIME, 757999.M41

Agrellan's capital hive stands as a last bastion of resistance against the invading Tau armies. The remaining forces of the Imperium gather to hold the gates of the city open long enough for their allies to make it back in time to evacuate.

The defences of hive cities across Agrellan, once thought to be all but unassailable, were found wanting against the ingenious tactics employed by the Tau's leader, Commander Shadowsun. Only at Agrellan Prime did the Imperium's forces offer significant resistance to the seemingly unstoppable Tau onslaught. Even as the fighting continued to rage outside the capital's walls, the other hive cities were reduced to little more than blood-soaked memorials to the brave soldiers that died defending them.

The Tau assault on Agrellan Prime had already tested the resolve of the Imperial defenders to its limit. The fighting raged with ever-increasing intensity as additional forces from both sides continued to converge on the fiercely contested war zone. The military leaders of the Tau and Imperium clashed in a battle of wits as their armies engaged in bitter conflict on the front line. Yet the Imperial forces knew that they could not hold out forever. The defenders fought to buy time to allow an emergency evacuation from the planet, even as contingents of White Scars and Catachans fought their way back towards the embattled hive city to join them. It was before the gates of the city that the outcome of the war on Agrellan would be decided – there, the mightiest forces of each race were gathered and would face one another in open battle for the first time.

Commander Shadowsun's strategic genius had led to the subjugation of every hive city on Agrellan in a simultaneous, planet-wide assault. She knew, however, that Agrellan Prime would be a much tougher nut to crack, defended as it was by both Imperial Knights and Space Marines. She therefore decided to lead the assault personally, where she would be able to react according to how the battle unfolded. Fighting

alongside her to inspire the brave warriors of the Tau's military caste was none other than the Ethereal Supreme, Aun'Va. Braving the formidable Imperial guns, Aun'Va and his council of attendant Ethereals followed the frontline formations, urging them to greater acts of courage and determination. Inspired by the spiritual leader of their race and commanded by the greatest military strategist of their empire, the massed ranks of the Fire caste were feeling justifiably confident as they prepared to launch their attack.

Despite the illustrious presence of the two luminaries in their midst, another factor was to prove equally crucial to the success of the Tau attack. The assault on Agrellan Prime would be spearheaded by a contingent of new XV104 'Riptide' battlesuits – towering, heavy-class prototypes with weapon systems powered by newly-developed nova reactors. Despite the many long years of rigorous testing during the development of the Riptide battlesuits, they had never been field tested until this moment. Piloted by the most experienced Crisis battlesuit shas'vres, each rigorously trained in the use of the Riptide, the attack on Agrellan Prime promised to be an exciting proving ground for the giant new battlesuits.

Yet even with all their latest weapons technology, victory for the Tau at Agrellan Prime was far from certain. Two companies of Raven Guard Space Marines manned the defences alongside the full might of the Cadian 724th Regiment. Also standing guard were all of the remaining Knights of House Terryn that had travelled to Agrellan and were still combat ready. Each of these powerful fighting machines would likely prove a challenge for even the immense new battlesuits.

The final obstacle facing Shadowsun's forces were the heavy defences of Agrellan Prime itself. The bitter war against the Daemons that almost led to the destruction of Agrellan had taught those rebuilding their shattered cities to ensure that their mighty walls would never again be breached should the Daemons return. Even to reach the walls, the Tau would face heavy bombardments from cannon emplacements and gun platforms, before circumnavigating the tight, solidly built defence lines.

As reports continued to arrive confirming that, all across Agrellan, hive city after hive city was falling to the Tau forces in accordance with her plan, Commander Shadowsun gave the command to attack the capital. Regardless of the outcome, the Battle for Agrellan Prime was certain to be the bloodiest and hardest fought of the entire war.



AGRELLAN PRIME

Singularly the largest and most impressive of the hive cities scattered across the arid deserts of the planet, Agrellan Prime is an incredible feat of structural engineering and a testament to those who built it. Its highest spire rises more than five kilometres above its outer walls, and from this vantage point, the barren landscape can be viewed as far as the curvature of the planet allows.

AGRELLAN DEFIANT

The Baneblade, Iron Defiance, played a crucial role in the opening stages of the battle. Again and again its mighty Baneblade cannon roared, each devastating payload blasting huge rents amid the disciplined ranks of the Tau Fire Warriors. Ultimately, however, the Iron Defiance was to meet its end when Longstrike, a Hammerhead ace, lanced a railgun shot straight through the mighty war machine's hull with clinical precision.



THE



CHARGE OF THE WHITE SCARS

The White Scars fearlessly ploughed into the heart of the Tau army, cutting the xenos forces down with blazing bolter fire and revelling in the chance to engage them in bloody melee.

THE BATTLE FOR AGRELLAN PRIME

AGRELLAN, 757.999.M41



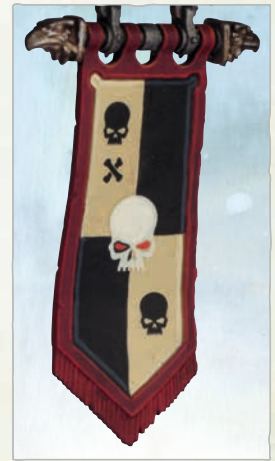


SHADOWSUN ATTACKS

Bravely interposing herself between the Raven Guard and their White Scars allies, Commander Shadowsun arrived just in time to prevent the returning Imperial forces from reaching the hive city. Though her heroic Firststrike Assault Hunter Cadre suffered heavy losses, the White Scars were forced to find another route through the swirling maelstrom to reach their goal.

The Raven Guard immediately changed tactics to counter this new threat, emerging from their defensive positions to take the fight to Shadowsun directly, two of their revered Dreadnoughts and a nearby company of Imperial Guardsmen in support.





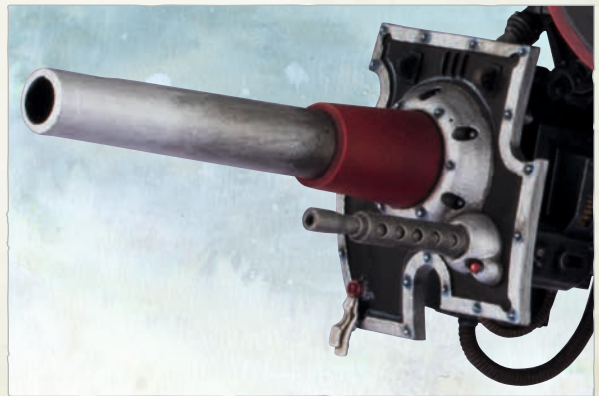
The warriors of the Tau Fire caste soon learned to fear the wrath of the Obsidian Knight.



Personal heraldry



Devotional scroll



Many Tau were slain by the Freeblade's thunderous battle cannon fire.



Cadian Colonel Jericho Voss



Cadian vox operator



Autocannon fire from Sentinels tore ragged holes in the Tau lines, their armour no proof against such fury.



The Catachans immolated many Kroot with their heavy flammers.



Catachan Colonel 'Iron Hand' Straken



Catachan Officer



Cadian lascannon teams targeted Tau Crisis battlesuit teams with merciless efficiency.



A Catachan Leman Russ Eradicator blazed a fiery trail towards the hive city.



Catachan II regimental standard



Shadow Captain Shrike of the Raven Guard helped the White Scars force a path to the city.



Captain Kor'sarro Khan of the White Scars fought with all the fury of his Primarch.



The Raven Guard 3rd Company Banner fluttered atop the walls of Agvellan Prime.



An elite team of Raven Guard Vanguard Veterans served as a powerful bodyguard around Shadow Captain Shrike.



Stormseer Sudabeh of the White Scars



White Scars Tactical Marines took a fearful toll of Tau lives.



Attack Bikes formed the spear tip of the White Scars' push towards Agvellan Prime.



White Scars Biker



Shadowsun, Supreme Commander of the Fire caste, led the Tau assault on Agrellan Prime personally.



The Tau Hammerhead ace, Longstrike, felled two Imperial Knights with his precision fire.



Fire Warriors formed the front line of the assault on the hive city.



Pathfinder with pulse carbine



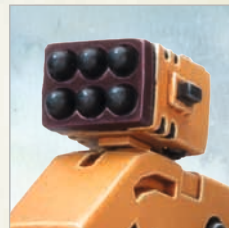
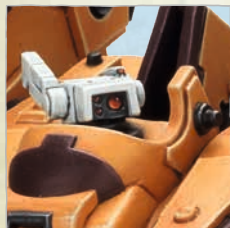
Stealth Teams launched ambushes within the city walls.



The Tau utilised Grav-inhibitor Drones to disrupt the White Scars.

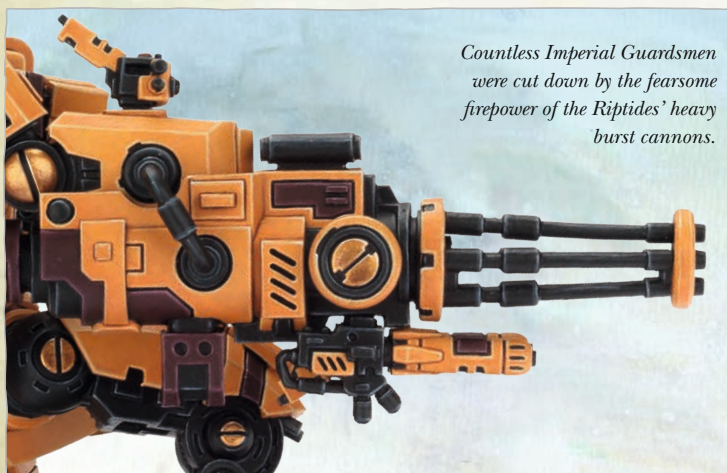


Ethereal Supreme Aun Va led the Ethereal Council.



Prototype XV104 Riptide battlesuits were unleashed for the first time in the assault on Agrellan Prime.

Each Riptide battlesuit bore a wide variety of support systems to further its destructive capabilities.



Countless Imperial Guardsmen were cut down by the fearsome firepower of the Riptides' heavy burst cannons.



