



# WHITE DWARF

ISSUE  
**453**

**TOME CELESTIAL:  
VOKMORTIAN'S  
TITHE LEGION**

**CHAZGHKULL  
THRAKA  
RETURNS**

**NEW CAMPAIGN  
RULES FOR AGE  
OF SIGMAR**

**ROHAN VERSUS  
ISENGARD  
BATTLE REPORT**

**CREATING A  
SPACE MARINE  
CHAPTER**

**AND MUCH  
MORE FOR**

**160-PAGE  
MEGA-SIZE  
ISSUE!**





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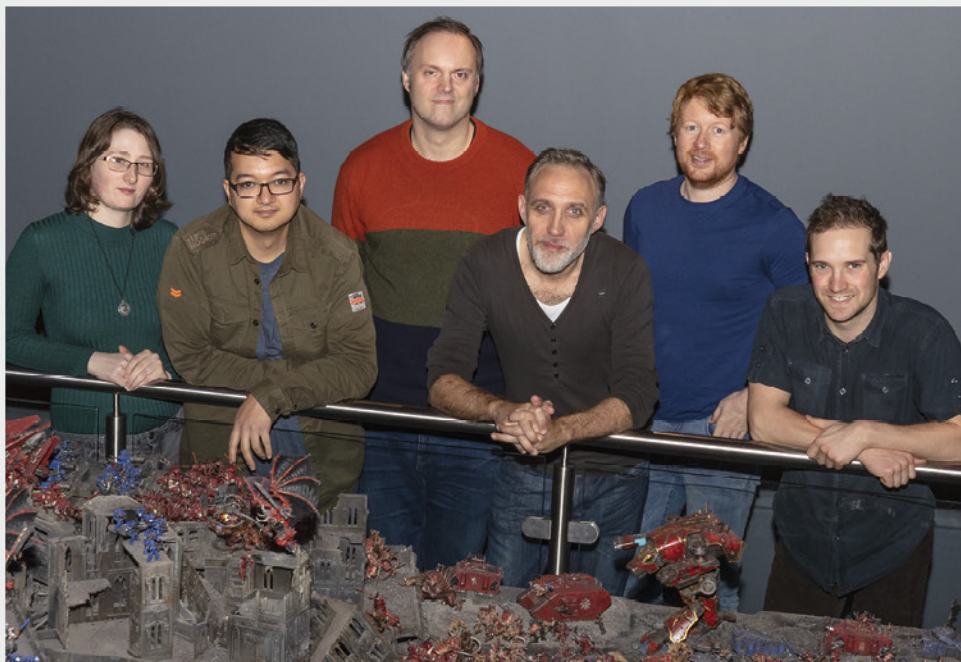
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## MEET THE WHITE DWARF TEAM

From their secret sanctum, itself hidden deep within the Warhammer Studio, the White Dwarf team works tirelessly to craft everyone's favourite Warhammer hobby magazine each month.



From left to right: Sophie Bostock (Designer), Lyle Lowery (Managing Editor), Matthew Hutson (Senior Designer), Shaun Pritchard (Reprographics), Jonathan Stapleton (Photographer) and Dan Harden (Staff Writer).

### THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS

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### EXCLUSIVE SUBSCRIBER COVERS!

If you subscribe to *White Dwarf*, you may have noticed that you have a different cover on your magazine compared to the ones found in shops. Subscriber copies feature a piece of artwork without the contents listing down the side, allowing you to appreciate the art in all its glory.

This month's cover features the Ossiarch Bonereapers battling an Ogor Mawtribe by Alex Boyd.

If you would like to subscribe to *White Dwarf*, turn to the end of the magazine for more information.



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[www.warhammer-community.com](http://www.warhammer-community.com)



# WHITE DWARF

ISSUE 453

## FOUNDING FATHERS



**T**here are a thousand Chapters of Space Marines spread across the Imperium. In this issue of *White Dwarf* and the ones that follow, you'll learn of the origins of one of those countless Chapters. I don't just mean the origins of this Chapter in the lore of the 41st Millennium, but how the Chapter came to be from a real-world perspective.

You see, I thought it would be great if there was a Chapter that could be developed and explored in *White Dwarf*. The Tome Keepers are a fully canonical Chapter, but they're *White Dwarf*'s own. Fortunately, the Warhammer 40,000 team was enthusiastically supportive of the idea, so when we formed the fledgling concepts of the Chapter, the ideas really flowed, and seeing the Chapter go from a twinkle in my eye through to conception was somewhat magical. I can't wait to see how the Tome Keepers grow, where their adventures take them and what becomes of them. And I can't wait to take that journey along with you, our readers.

Many, many Space Marines enthusiasts have created their own Chapters, and many more have always wanted to but not been ready to take the plunge. But in this issue, you'll get a behind-the-curtain look at a Chapter coming to life. As Warhammer 40,000 overboss Stu put it, while *Codex: Space Marines* has all the rules you need to create your own Chapter, there's nothing like seeing an example of it being done. It's my genuine hope that reading how we came up with the ideas for our Chapter will break down some of the barriers of creativity and make crafting your own Chapter more approachable. And if I'm honest, I hope we'll see a few Tome Keepers out in the wild, as well!

There are a thousand Chapters of Space Marines, many of them lost in the byzantine records of the Imperium. One of them can be yours! (Or help us grow the ranks of the Tome Keepers! This is your rallying call!)



# WHITE DWARF CONTENTS

## 4 CONTACT!

Four pages of letters and photographs sent in by you, our readers. Plus, two pages of Kill Teams by Lars Sammet.

## 10 WORLDS OF WARHAMMER

Phil presents forty fascinating facts about the 41st Millennium.

### WARHAMMER AGE OF SIGMAR

## 16 THE TOME CELESTIAL: VOKMORTIAN'S TITHE LEGION

New rules and background for the Tithe Legion of Vokmortian, Master of the Bone-tithe and voice of Nagash.

### WARHAMMER AGE OF SIGMAR

## 26 PAINT SPLATTER: MORTIS PRAETORIANS

Four pages of stage-by-stage painting guides for the Mortis Praetorians. Classic and Contrast for your convenience.

### WARHAMMER AGE OF SIGMAR

## 30 RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Jervis joins us this month to chat about the iterative games design process. We assume it involves rolling a D6.

### WARHAMMER AGE OF SIGMAR

## 34 THE WAR FOR HALLOST

The campaign in the Realm of Death continues this month in the Booming Scar. Includes a new map!

### WARCRY

## 44 A TALE OF FOUR WARBANDS

Four dwarfers, four warbands, four glorious campaigns into the wastelands of the Bloodwind Spoil.

### WARHAMMER 40,000

## 56 ECHOES FROM THE WARP

Robin and his rules-writing colleagues recount recent tournament adventures.

### WARHAMMER 40,000

## 60 SKYWARD

The Great Rift dominates all in these two short stories by Aaron Dembski-Bowden.

### WARHAMMER 40,000

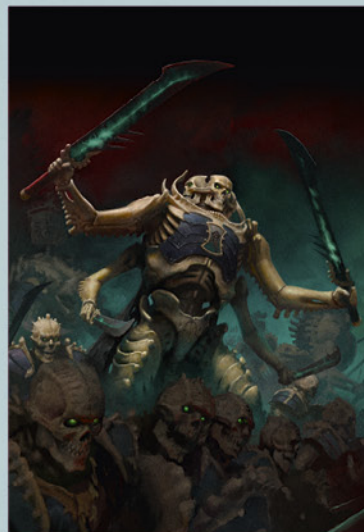
## 64 APOCRYPHA INDOMITUS

The Indomitus Crusade – the greatest and most noble of undertakings. Yet fraught with dark deeds and terrible secrets ...

### WARHAMMER 40,000

## 70 DEATHWATCH INBOUND!

New stratagems, combat doctrines and abilities for the alien-hunting elite of the Adeptus Astartes.



Cover art by Mark Holmes



Subscription cover art by Alex Boyd





## 76 CREATING A MONSTER



## 96 REALMS OF CHAOS



## 112 ROHAN SHALL BURN!



### WARHAMMER 40,000

#### 76 CREATING A MONSTER

Miniatures designer Maxime Pastourel and 'Eavy Metal painter Max Faleij talk about creating Ghazghkull Thraka.

### WARHAMMER 40,000

#### 84 FOUNDING OF A CHAPTER

The *White Dwarf* team talk about creating their own Space Marine Chapter. Ooooh!

### WARHAMMER AGE OF SIGMAR

#### 90 GOLDEN ASPIRATIONS

Golden Demon winner Neil Hollis joins us to show off his latest project.

### WARHAMMER 40,000 / AGE OF SIGMAR

#### 96 REALMS OF CHAOS: KHORNE

Blood, so much blood! And some skulls, too, in this modelling and painting article for the goriest of all the realms.

### WARHAMMER 40,000 / AGE OF SIGMAR

#### 108 PAINT SPLATTER: FRENZIED PAINTING

Four pages of painting advice for Khorne. If you don't like blood, look away now.

### THE MIDDLE-EARTH STRATEGY BATTLE GAME

#### 112 ROHAN SHALL BURN!

This month's Battle Report pitches the Uruk-hai of Isengard against a fortress of Rohan. Battering rams are involved.

### WARHAMMER UNDERWORLDS: BEASTGRAVE

#### 126 GLORY POINTS

Dave reminisces about the evolution of Warhammer Underworlds.

### WARHAMMER UNDERWORLDS: BEASTGRAVE

#### 130 THE GREAT CYCLE

The Wurmspat join the war in Beastgrave in this short story by Phil Kelly.

### WARHAMMER QUEST: BLACKSTONE FORTRESS

#### 134 XENOS HUNTER

The Deathwatch Watch Master enters the Blackstone Fortress. Alien scum beware!

### NECROMUNDA

#### 138 BACK FROM THE DEAD

Don't you just hate it when your leader dies? Well, perhaps they don't have to ...

### WARHAMMER 40,000

#### 144 FAITH & FIRE PART III

Sisters Miriya and Verity continue their hunt for Torris Vaun in this serialised novel.

#### 158 INSIDE THE STUDIO

What we've been building, painting and playing this month in the studio.



# CONTACT

Where we feature your thoughts, questions and painted miniatures. Send us your letters and pictures, and we'll print the best ones we get.



## A LONG-TIME DWARFER

I've been a member of this hobby and community for over twenty years now, and I've got the white in my beard to prove it (oddly it seems to be Ceramite White in colour). Warhammer 40,000 was in its second

incarnation when I started, and I vividly remember buying (okay, my mum buying) my first copy of *White Dwarf* magazine. I was hooked. It was issue 197, and everything inside it just grabbed my attention. The local hobby shop (which would become my first job when I was old enough) had back copies at 50% off, and I got every one I could find and every new one as it came out. I have every issue of your magazine from that point to the current day, and I can honestly say that the excitement I feel now is the same as when I first discovered *White Dwarf* all those years ago. With each page turned there is something else that impresses, interests or inspires me in the same way it did when I picked up those early issues. Thank you for the obvious dedication and care you put into this magazine that you clearly love just like I do.

P.S. Where can I get one of those Warhammer Community polo shirts like Wade is always wearing? They look cosy.

William King (no, not that one)  
Pennsylvania, USA

Hey, William – thanks for writing in, and for the kind words, too. Many of us in the team started reading *White Dwarf* at the same time as you, so it's no wonder that the tone and feel of the magazine harkens back to the nineties (albeit with fewer shell suits and bold primary colours). As coincidence would have it, our very own writer Dan also began his *White Dwarf* collection with issue 197 – a true classic. As for the polo shirts, sadly those only available to staff, but you can find plenty of other ones here:

[www.games-workshop.com/licenced-product](http://www.games-workshop.com/licenced-product)



## ONE THIN HIGHLIGHT

Hello, *White Dwarf* team!

I just want to say you guys are awesome. You have impacted my life ever since I was five, reading the magazine and obsessing over miniatures. When I got my first Space Marine, I was immediately hooked. It was like being dragged into something out of a dream.

However, I am only twelve, and I have a very limited range of paints and money. I have been working non-stop on my Dark Angels, but I've never been able to perfect my painting. I was just wondering, is there a painting technique that involves just a basecoat and a one-colour

highlight that will still look good? It would be much appreciated if I could get a reply. Thanks!

Liam Renquin  
Green Bay, Wisconsin, USA

Hmm ... a basecoat and highlight, eh? Well, first off, have you checked out the Warhammer TV YouTube channel? There are loads of Dark Angels painting guides on there, including one using Contrast paints. A coat of Dark Angels Green (who'd have thought it?) over Wraithbone spray gives you a great basecoat to work from. You could then highlight the model with Warpstone Glow. And all done with two pots of paint.

Thundrik's Profiteers  
by Laurent Lethuillier







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## WHITE DWARF IN THE WILD

Greetings, *White Dwarf* team!

I recently went on quite an unusual vacation to the Chernobyl exclusion zone. Given that I convert and play mutated Adeptus Astartes, this infamous radioactive disaster zone felt like the perfect place to bring one along with me, as well as the subscription edition of *White Dwarf* from August 2019. I believe this might be the first time that *White Dwarf* and a Warhammer miniature have visited this iconic area.

In the pictures, you can see the *White Dwarf* at the Pripyat city sign, and one of my mutated Space Marines (converted using a Seraphon Saurus head) at the abandoned Pripyat Ferris wheel.

I hope you will find these pictures interesting.

John Doe, AKA Saurus Marine  
Aalborg, Denmark

Now that is a pretty unusual choice for a vacation. You didn't feel like going to the beach this year? And yes, you're probably right, this could well be the first time *White Dwarf* has entered a radioactive exclusion zone! It looks like your mutated Saurus Marine is having a lovely time, though.



## PAINTING QUESTION: CHAOS WASTELANDS

Hi, *White Dwarf* team.

Using Texture paints, how would you paint your models' bases so that they match the Warcry boards? I'm particularly interested in replicating the green and grey side of the board shown in a lot of the pictures.

Lee Hamilton  
Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

We can help you out with that, Lee. We asked studio scenery painter James Littler how he went about it. 'I undercoated the board with Chaos Black, then used an airbrush to paint all the tiled areas Caliban Green,' says James. 'I then used Mournfang Brown to shade them before going back to the greens for further highlights. The last stage was drybrushing all the grey earth. If you're painting bases, I would recommend drybrushing the colours shown below.'



### GREEN FLOOR TILES

Undercoat: Chaos Black  
Spray

Drybrush: Caliban Green

Wash: Mournfang Brown &  
Lahmian Medium

Drybrush: Stegadon Scale  
Green

Drybrush: Kabalite Green

### GREY EARTH

Basecoat: Stormvermin Fur

Drybrush: Dawnstone

Drybrush: Administratum  
Grey

Drybrush: Deepkin Flesh

Sponge: Blood for the  
Blood God



## MODEL(S) OF THE MONTH

Our models of the month are Steelheart's Champions painted by Walter Nunziati. 'I basecoated their armour Chaos Black, then highlighted it with Dark Reaper, mixing in White Scar until it was almost pure white,' says Walter. 'I used purple to shade it and a glaze of Gryph-charger Grey to smooth the colour transitions. The metals are Ironbreaker and Retributor Armour shaded with black and brown washes.'



### I HAVEN'T HAD E-NUFFLE!

Dear *White Dwarf* team, especially Phil Kelly: After reading the June issue and your Pantheon of Gods article, I could hardly wait to get the July issue in my hands. As expected, I loved part two, but will there be a third part? I hope so, because Phil hasn't said a single word about Nuffle and Manann. Or Mathlann, as he is named now. As a big fan of Warhammer Underworlds, I'd also like to know if there will be a warband for the Idoneth Deepkin. I'm new to the game, but I love it – fast-paced but tactically challenging.

Alex (just Alex ...)  
The sunny side of the continent

Thanks for your comments and question, Alex. We passed them on to Phil and he had this to say:

**Phil:** Manann was consumed in the demise of the Warhammer World, though the aelven equivalent, Mathlann, lives on in memory form as the Eidolon of Mathlann. Nuffle never leaves his beloved Blood Bowl world, which is probably just as well given the havoc Nuffle's displeasure can wreak upon your dice!

So there you go! As for the Idoneth appearing in Warhammer Underworlds, perhaps they'll wash up in the game one day. We'll just have to wait and sea ...

Cities of Sigmar Demigryph Knights  
by Laurent Frayard







Idoneth Deepkin Akhelian King  
by Jörg Freyaldenhoven

## ASK GROMBRINDAL

I have a question for Grombrindal. Could a Genestealer infect a Space Marine and take over his mind, then make him go into secret bunkers and fortifications and steal all the strategic information? Would that work? If so, I think it would be cool.



Nick  
Perth, Australia

I've heard about these Genestealer creatures, but they don't sound that tough to me. All those arms would just get in the way. But I digress ... As it turns out, Genestealers tend to pick much easier targets than Space Marines such as weak and pitiful humans. They can then implant them with their alien DNA (whatever that is) and hypnotise them into doing their will. A Space Marine would fight back (most likely with the business end of a bolter), and his enhanced physiology would almost certainly kill off the Genestealer taint if it ever managed to get into his bloodstream.

Grombrindal

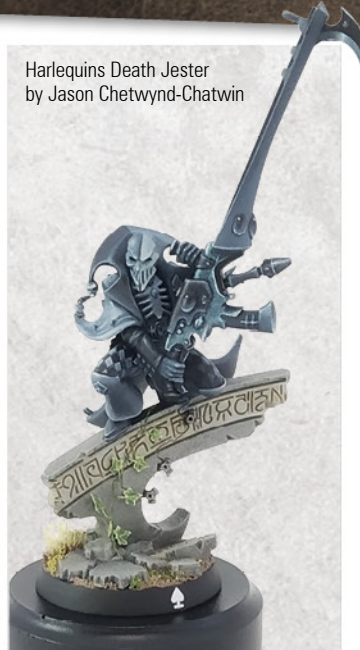


Necron Cryptek  
by Robert Adams

Blood Ravens Sergeant  
by Gavin Garza



Harlequins Death Jester  
by Jason Chetwynd-Chatwin



## TOP PHOTO TIPS

In Contact, we want to show off the very best miniatures painted by you, our readers. Of course, great miniatures also need great pictures, so we came up with a useful guide to help you out:

[www.warhammer-community.com/the-model-photo](http://www.warhammer-community.com/the-model-photo)

If you follow all the advice in that article, you really can't go far wrong. Our top tips are:

Always use a white background.

Make sure you've got good lighting.

Ensure the whole model is in focus, including the base and all its weapons.

Find the model's golden angle. If you're ever in doubt, take a look at the same model on the Games Workshop website to see how it was photographed.

## ASPIRING ACE

I'm a 'vintage' hobbyist at 51, and I've been a *White Dwarf* consumer since the earliest editions came out on slate! I'm a 40K fan, and I also love Kill Team, Warhammer Underworlds and Space Hulk. I recently bought *Aeronautica Imperialis: Wings of Vengeance* and absolutely love the game. The narrative, quality of the models and gameplay are fantastic. I'm really keen to know if there will be further expansions and other races. The game is an absolute winner!

Simon Johnson  
Belfast, Northern Ireland

Ahh, one of our longbeard readers, eh? Well, we're glad to hear that we're still entertaining you after all these years, Simon! When you say 'consuming' *White Dwarf*, though, you do mean reading it, not eating it, right?

As for *Aeronautica Imperialis*, hopefully you've already heard of the latest expansion for the game, *Skies of Fire*, which is available now. Inside, you'll find Imperial reinforcements and a new faction – the T'au. If you turn to the back of the magazine, you might even get to see some of the new models that Dan has painted. If he got them finished on time, that is ...



## IN THE SPOTLIGHT: LARS SAMMET

We get sent loads of great photos of models every month, but once in a while we receive a selection all painted by one hobbyist. This month, we look at Lars Sammet's collection.

**Lars:** I've always been interested in Warhammer 40,000 lore and I love converting models, so I started throwing bits together. I always feel the need to make my models unique in some way and I want to have models that no one else has. I have no standard approach when creating a theme for my warbands and kill teams. Mostly it's a combination of the faction rules, lore and an 'ohh, that would be cool!' moment. Sometimes it helps to create a story for a warband or even for each character. That is what I really like about skirmish games like Kill Team. Even the lowest rank in your small warband can have character. I think this offers the perfect opportunity to customize your models and add a personal note. I've also tried to find my own 'grim dark' style, using (for now) desaturated and faded tones with a few brighter colours as highlights. Here is a selection of models from my various Warhammer 40,000 warbands and kill teams.

**Right Top:** This is my Aeldari Corsairs kill team. The Spiritseer leader was converted using a Harlequin torso, Dire Avenger legs and a Spiritseer helmet. The Corsairs were made using Guardian legs and rear torsos, but cut so they fit the torsos of Shadow Warriors. I also added loincloths from the Wraithblades kit. I chose a Drukhari helmet for the Comms Specialist, while the arms and weapons on the Storm Guardians come from the Harlequins Kit.

**Right Bottom:** My Adeptus Astartes kill team comes from the Raptors Chapter. I thought their dull green armour would give them a great Spec Ops look. The camo pattern is inspired by WWII splinter camo. I even tried some freehand icons and symbols on the models. I applied a lot of weathering pigments to the bases, cloaks and armour to make them look dirty.



**Top:** This model was built to represent one of the awesome Dark Millennium Playing Cards illustrated by John Blanche. It represents the four of cogs. I used a Tau skull with added lenses and small pieces of a Sicarian Infiltrator for the head, while her torso is made from the female Van Saar model. The arms are actually made from Sicarian legs, while her robe is from a Myrmourm Banshee.







**Left:** This is the Tzeentchian Cult of the Changing Destiny. The leader is Madhezia Ra'kazor, a Rogue Psyker converted from the Blackstone Fortress model with parts taken from the Eyes of the Nine warband. K'zia is converted from a Daemonette with a Nighthaunt candlestick. Rhavon is made from a Cawdor Ganger and L'zeeha is a familiar taken from the Kairic Acolytes set.



**Middle:** My Slaanesh Cult warband are made from Drukhari, Daemonettes and Necromunda ganger models. I went for the typical black, purple, pink and white colour scheme. The leader is converted from a Primaris Reiver with an Abhorrant Ghoul King's head.



**Below:** These Voidsomen are my Elucidian Starstriders kill team. I built them with parts from the Imperial Guard, Van Saar and Neophyte Hybrid kits and painted them in a natural, saturated colour scheme. Their Rogue Trader leader is converted from a Genestealer Cults Magus with a Stormcast Sequitor head, Janus Draik's sword and a servo-skull.



# WORLDS OF WARHAMMER



## PHIL KELLY

**As the Warhammer Studio's senior background writer, Phil is almost permanently (some might say eternally) immersed in the lore of the Mortal Realms and the 41st Millennium. For this month's column, he built his own time machine, travelled into the future, made some notes in his little notebook and zoomed all the way back. What a guy.**

**H**alf a year ago, this fine magazine allowed me to publish a set of weird and interesting facts about Age of Sigmar. A series of snapshots about the Mortal Realms, when gathered together they gave an idea of what those worlds were all about. The idea was that though most people would know some of these facts, very few would know all of them. Some people would be discovering the Age of Sigmar background afresh – and perhaps be intrigued enough to dive further in. Well, in the interests of fairness, I thought it was high time we did the same for Warhammer 40,000. Here we go!

**1.** Roghrax Bloodhand, a Chaos Lord of the World Eaters and veteran of the Long War, had collected so many thousands of humanoid skulls that he sought something more exotic with which to impress his master, Khorne. When he encountered the sheer variety and size of the Tyranids on the Eastern Fringe, his head-taking rampage was renewed with great enthusiasm. Bloodhand's most recent offerings to the Skull Throne have been nearly as large as he is, and almost as frightening.

**2.** The twin planets of Vigilus and Sangua Terra, situated on either side of the Cicatrix Maledictum, each have spear-like deposits of the warp-affecting mineral known as blackstone in their crusts. These are held suspended in buried pockets of dark liquid so they always point towards one another, much as the tip of a compass always points magnetic north. If it were not for the opening of the Great Rift, this strange phenomenon may have gone eternally unnoticed. Now they form vital strategic waypoints at either end of the Nachmund Gauntlet, keeping the Imperium Sanctus and Imperium Nihilus linked.

**3.** The Kraken's Egg of Fenris – a vast, leathery piece of flesh kept in the trophy halls of the Fang – was long thought to be the remnants of an

ancient monster slain by Leman Russ. Only when it eventually hatched, disgorging dozens of tentacle-limbed Tyranids into the relic halls of the Space Wolves fortress monastery, was its true nature revealed.

**4.** There exists on the Chapter Planet of Titan a Grey Knights fortress. Within that fortress is a vault, and within that vault, a simple wooden box with a golden seal. The box contains a parchment, upon which is a script known only as the Terminus Decree. It is to be opened by the Supreme Grand Master of the Grey Knights only when all hope is lost for Humanity. Little is known of its contents, even by the masters of that arcane Chapter, other than there is a matching heraldic seal on the Golden Throne of the God-Emperor of Mankind.

**5.** The Archon Lady Aurelia Malys delivered a tremendous blow to Humanity's prosperity when the Supreme Overlord Asdrubael Vect challenged his would-be rivals to weaken the Imperium without destroying a single world. Malys took her Kabal of the Poisoned Tongue to an Imperial forge world that she had learned harboured a rare and vital relic, the Panacea, an STC blueprint that holds the secrets to undoing every plague and disease that Humanity had encountered at the time of its creation. By luring an Ork fleet to the forge world, she created such a massive distraction she was able to steal away the STC for herself over the course of a hard-fought invasion. The STC resides to this day in her trophy hall, unused.

**6.** The rebel commander Farsight takes not the counsel of the Ethereals, as the T'au race was born to do, but that of a squad of battlesuit commanders each with their own specialisations and quirks. Together they are known as the Eight. Their departure from the sacred caste hierarchy of the T'au Empire makes them outcasts and figures of hate amongst the core sept worlds, but in the Farsight Enclaves, they have proven themselves as heroes time and time again.

**7.** The kleptomaniac Ork Warboss Grizgutz made a botched warp journey at the beginning of his own Waaagh! and ended up shifting through time as a result. Emerging shortly before he set off, he sought his earlier self out and killed him so he could have a spare of his favourite gun. The resultant confusion stopped his Waaagh! in its tracks.



## Worlds of Warhammer delves into the background of the Age of Sigmar and the 41st Millennium, looking at how stories are created and legends are born. This month, Phil's back with forty new facts, this time all about the far future.

**8.** In the depths of the fabled Black Library, there is a book upon a podium bound with chains of light. It has remained inviolate and untouchable for millennia – until the opening of the Great Rift, whereupon the chains disappeared and the book fell open, revealing an addendum to the doom-laden prophecy of the Rhana Dandra. The Aeldari Harlequins claim that in this last chapter there lies a seed of hope, though as to the details, they remain silent.

**9.** The Imperium is the cruellest and most bloody regime imaginable.

**10.** Deep in the spaceborne fortress of the Dark Angels, there lies a secret: nothing less than the recumbent form of their legendary Primarch Lion El'Johnson. Unfortunately, the Primarch's nemesis – Luther, who led a swathe of the Legion into rebellion during the Horus Heresy – is no longer held within the Rock's confines as he once was. There are rumours that he has already amassed an army of the Fallen from across the galaxy, and that the numbers of these heretics are approaching planet-conquering strength.

**11.** Every member of the Emperor's Inquisition is bestowed with an Inquisitorial seal, usually held in a box of Pluvian obsidian. Should they deem it necessary, they can use the authority given unto them by this seal to issue the last great sanction of Exterminatus. With a single word given to an Imperial fleet, they can doom an entire world to destruction.

**12.** Prince Yriel of Iyanden gave his life in his craftworld's defence when the Royal Armada intercepted the Nurgle fleet of the Daemon Prince Gara'gugul'gor. Yriel impaled the creature with the Spear of Twilight even as he was clubbed to death by an iron girder. In doing so he killed the ship, for the two entities had become one, and thereby broke the back of the Chaos fleet. The prince's body was recovered and borne back to Iyanden, where he was attended to by Yvraine and given new life. The act saw the Spear of Twilight revealed in its true form as one of the fabled Croneswords – and Yriel rising like a morbid phoenix as a warrior of Ynnread, the God of the Dead.

**13.** The Savlar Chem-Dogs, famous for their contribution to the Third War for Armageddon, were recruited en masse from the criminal populace of the morally bankrupt world Savlar

under the loose understanding that whatever they stole during times of war, they could keep. This ensured that entire battalions of resourceful warriors reinforced the regiments that fought in defence against Ghazghkull's ork invasions. Their immorality, widespread stumm addiction and bad personal hygiene was easy to overlook when the scourge of the greenskin was everywhere. Since their inception as a grand regiment of the Astra Militarum, they have been allowed to fight outside the Savlar and Armageddon systems – though in truth they are entirely unrepentant and just as untrustworthy as ever.

**14.** The gravitic repulsor units of Cawl-pattern tanks are high-powered and aggressive. Vehicles equipped with such measures do not glide or fly so much as batter the ground below them with such tremendous force they are held aloft. In their wake the ground is left churned and broken, just like the corpses of those who stand against the Space Marines.

**15.** The sacred brotherhood of the Adeptus Custodes stood vigil over the Emperor's Palace – a fortress the size of a mountain range – for ten thousand years after their master fell. Such is the hidebound nature of the Imperium that they very rarely ventured further afield in its defence, even when their intervention could have changed the course of history. Only the return of the Avenging Son, the Primarch Roboute Guilliman, has ended the stagnation that had kept them from the long war against Chaos. With his blessing they have gone forth into the galaxy once more and begun the greater work of protecting the Emperor's legacy.

**16.** The Solitaires of the Harlequins walk the Path of Damnation. They alone may play the part of Slaanesh in the great masques with which the Harlequins keep the mythic cycles of the Aeldari alive. In this great martyrdom they become blessed by Cegorach and hence possessed of uncanny powers, but at the cost of their own soul. Upon death they will almost certainly be consumed by She Who Thirsts, the worst of all possible fates.

**17.** The Saim-Hann Aeldari are fiercely tribal and keep traditions that the other craftworlds think of as





barbaric. In the most heated disputes, the leaders of the Saim-Hann tribes will fight in stylised blade fights to the drawing of first blood. Whoever is victorious in this duel is considered victorious in the debate. It is a swift and effective way to settle matters that otherwise may take many long days of debate to resolve.

**18.** The Adepta Sororitas are held in awe across the Imperium for their ability to invoke actual miracles. The finest of these is not to rise again despite being riddled with bullets, to rip steel with their bare hands in order to deliver the Emperor's vengeance, nor even to blaze with a holy light that exorcises daemons – it is to light an abiding flame of faith in the hearts of those ordinary men and women who witness them.



**19.** The Ork biker Wazdakka has an impressive sense of ambition. He intends to drive his Speedwaaagh! from one side of the galaxy to the other by means of warp jumps and interstellar tunnels, a goal so inspiring it has set a flame in the minds of thousands of like-minded Mekks and Speed Freeks. With the invention of the Shokkjump Dragsta, this goal seems more feasible than ever before.

**20.** Cadia Stands.

**21.** The Space Hulk *Sin of Damnation* was the site of a disastrous boarding action that saw several squads of the 1st Company of the Blood Angels Chapter wiped out by the Genestealers lurking aboard. Many years later the Blood Angels returned accompanied by the Librarian Calistarius, fighting their way through the claustrophobic corridors to release a deadly gas that permeated through the entire colossal space hulk and killed the thousands of Tyranid vanguard organisms slumbering within.

**22.** The famed T'au commander Shadowsun, during the war upon Prefectia, matched her wits against the Raven Guard. There she brought to battle the Chapter Master, Corvin Severax, by using herself as bait – or rather by using her signature XV22 battlesuit, within which was a decoy pilot who had agreed to give her own life to buy Shadowsun a chance to strike a decapitating blow. She did not waste it. Severax was slain, and Shadow Captain Shrike promoted in his stead.

**23.** The Tyranids are known for the uncanny rate at which they adapt. Even as one wave of invading organisms is overcome, another is being grown to full strength in the hideous wombs of the bio-ships and Norn Queens that blight the

planet's orbit high above – and the next batch will be made to be resistant to whatever weaponry took down its predecessor.

**24.** The Croneswords of the Ynnari number five in total. One is possessed by Yvraine, one Prince Yriel, one the Visarch and one the Yncarne. To accrue four of these fabled weapons was the work of an odyssey that drove the Aeldari to the brink of madness and despair. The fifth remains for now out of reach, for it was snatched by the agents of Slaanesh and borne into the unreal hellscape of the Realm of Chaos.

**25.** Toward the end of the 41st Millennium, Magnus the Red engineered the downfall of the Space Wolves in person. By turning their allies against them, isolating them, invading their home world and even aggravating the flaw in their own geneseed, he managed to bring the Chapter to their knees. It was his patron's rival in the pantheon of Chaos that was to prove his undoing. Though Magnus had wards against every weapon in the Imperium's arsenal – mundane or psychic – he had not guarded against the weapons of Chaos. The Axe Morkai, wielded by Logan Grimnar, had once been just such an artefact – an axe of Khorne, no less, taken from the corpse of a Chaos champion on Armageddon. It was this axe that finally penetrated Magnus' wards and led to his retreat back to the Planet of Sorcerers. The Space Wolves have begun walking the long road to recovery.

**26.** Primaris Space Marines have coils of hyper-durable metal around each of their primary sinews. These can contract with impressive force, giving those who survive the implantation procedure strength enough to crush the skulls of their enemies into powder with their bare hands.

**27.** Since the revelations of the Horus Heresy, it is common for the Adeptus Custodes – whose ranks have remained unblemished by corruption – to keep Adeptus Astartes at least a spear's length away at all times.



**28.** The Adeptus Mechanicus were shocked and confused when a flight of Doom Scythes, crescent-shaped Necron attack craft, appeared out of nowhere in the low orbit of Mars to bomb a stretch of desert the Martian Priesthood considered entirely unremarkable. Shortly afterward, the Necrons disappeared as mysteriously as they had arrived.

**29.** The insidious Genestealer Cults of the Eastern Fringe were eventually uncovered on Ghosar Quintus, a mining world that always



delivered its industrial quotas on time and well over target. The initial Inquisitor investigating rumours of xenos infestation disappeared, as did the Deathwatch Kill Team subsequently sent to find the cause of his disappearance. Were it not for Chaplain Ortan Cassius revisiting these anomalies by leading a second Deathwatch team in person, the canker infesting Ghosar Quintus might never have been uncovered. Deep into the alien warren, Cassius found a schematic that showed dozens of other worlds had already been infected in the system. The virus had spread, and still thrives in the dark spaces of the Imperium.



**30.** The warp energy spilling out of the Great Rift has caused countless latent psykers to manifest unnatural powers, or – if they were already psychic – to overload their minds with harrowing visions. The strongest have ridden out these phenomena to become more powerful than ever before, but for each evolution there have been dozens of disasters. Because of this galaxy-wide psychic awakening the Imperium's control over its sovereign domain is more precarious than ever before.

**31.** The armada of the fourth sphere expansion of the T'au used the experimental Slipstream drive at the time of the Great Rift's opening – and were swallowed by the warp. Becalmed, they were slowly consumed by the strange creatures of Chaos within – their psychic allies first, but later the T'au themselves. Only the intervention of a mysterious god-like entity allowed them to escape by the creation of a stable wormhole within the immaterium. The traumatised T'au survivors established the Nem'yar Atoll on the other side of the Great Rift from the sept worlds. Since that time they have been viciously opposed to alliances with other alien races, who they see as at fault for bringing such a great doom upon them – but also, perhaps, for the corruption and misappropriation of their core philosophy, the T'au'va.

**32.** The Black Templars have visions of glory they believe are sent from the Emperor himself, and thereby choose the office of he who is to wield the fabled Black Sword and become the Emperor's Champion – a rank that is no mere title, but a holy calling.

**33.** Radical Inquisitors use any method they believe necessary in furtherance of their agendas. Some believe in turning their enemy against itself; this has seen more than one Ordo Malleus Inquisitor harness a Daemonhost, Ordo Hereticus agents employing heretical double agents, and Ordo Xenos Inquisitors using alien wargear – or

even harbouring aliens themselves in their warbands. This is the cause of major schisms within the Inquisition.

**34.** Shalaxi Helbane, the pre-eminent Greater Daemon of Slaanesh, hunts the most dangerous of the Dark Prince's enemies across realspace. With a synaesthetic ability to blend senses, emotions and concepts together, Helbane can taste temptation, hear echoes of doubt and perceive dreams from impossible distances. As such this assassin supreme is almost impossible to escape.

**35.** Roughly half of the successor Chapters of the Space Marines hail from the geneseed of the Ultramarines, considered most exemplary of all their kind.

**36.** There are many types of abhumans in the galaxy. The most common are Ratlings, light-fingered but excellent marksmen, and Ogryns, hulking brutes from high-gravity worlds who make up for their low intellect with incredible strength. There are also mutant Beastmen, oceanic Pelagers, willowy Longshanks, and the short but redoubtable Squats in the employ of Mankind.

**37.** Hive Fleet Tiamet has created a strange, encephalic mountain of flesh on the backwater world of Ziaphoria. It is thought to be psychically active by the Aeldari that discovered it, though as to its purpose, none truly know.

**38.** The pride-sodden bladesman Lucius the Eternal is high in Slaanesh's favour indeed. He got his sobriquet from the fact that even should an enemy prove capable enough to overcome him, provided his killer takes even an ounce of satisfaction from the deed, that nemesis will slowly transform as Lucius takes him over entirely, body and soul, armour and blade, until the killer becomes the killed.

**39.** The oldest Necron dynasties have a nightmarish agenda that, should it ever become known to the living races of the galaxy, would cause widespread panic. Yet within it is a way to defeat the Chaos gods forever.

**40.** The universe is a big place and, whatever happens, you will not be missed.

## A LITTLE EXTRA READING

What would you like to read about in Worlds of Warhammer? Let us know your thoughts and we'll pass them on to Phil!

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From the maelstrom of a sundered world the Eight Realms were born. And with their birth began a war to claim them. This issue: campaigns in Shyish, battles in the Eightpoints and a tithe of bones!







**THE TOME CELESTIAL**  
Vokmortian has come to claim the bone-tithe in this month's Tome Celestial. Find out more about Vokmortian's Tithe Legion on page 16.



**A TALE OF FOUR WARBANDS**  
Lyle, Matt, Jonathan and Dan journey into the Bloodwind Spoil in search of glory. It's A Tale of Four Warlords, Warcry style! It all begins on page 44.





# THE TOME CELESTIAL

A wave of terror heralds the coming of Vokmortian's Tithe Legion. These elite Ossiarch specialise in the accumulation of vast quantities of bone matter, whether through the forging of arcane contracts or at the edge of a Nadirite blade. Relentless and remorseless, they are a blight on all that lives.



## VOKMORTIAN'S TITHE LEGION

By Jordan Green & Jervis Johnson

**A**mongst all those forces in thrall to Nagash, the tyrannical god of the dead, one in particular has carved out a fell reputation and expansive empire alike. This force is the Ossiarch Bonereapers, the pinnacle of the Great Necromancer's sinister arts.

Unlike most undead, the Ossiarch are not raised whole from shallow graves, but instead sculpted through necromantic artifice. Their osseous forms are shaped by the Mortisan priest-caste from the remains of conquered adversaries. Their souls are composite entities crafted using the captured anima of the dead. Nagash's sorcerers have been thorough in binding these blended souls into the phylacteries mounted upon each Bonereaper's chest; concepts such as efficiency, loyalty and discipline are retained, while notions of leniency, mercy and compassion are discarded as irrelevances. All of this renders the Ossiarchs, at least in Nagash's eyes, the perfect army of conquest. They never sleep, never tire, and though they are capable of strategic brilliance, they never seek to question the orders of their masters.

Bone is the single most valuable resource in Ossiarch society. It is the fuel for their endless





conquests, a favoured sculpting material for macabre works of art, and even a form of currency traded for influence and secrets. Each Bonereaper legion is thus charged with ensuring a constant influx of bone reaches the Ossiarch empire. How they achieve this is largely left for the legions themselves to codify. The Petrifex Elite are nomads that travel the realms searching for troves of long-buried bone with which to craft the most impervious war-constructs, whereas the cursed Crematorians are often forced to make do with the charred and brittle remains of their incinerated foes.

The Ossiarch are not fools. To simply slaughter all the living they encounter and take their remains would yield an immediate bounty, but is ultimately unsustainable. Like the cold hand of death itself, the Bonereapers are chillingly patient. They consider it wiser to tend the herd of terrified mortal livestock, to extract tithes of bone from the living under their aegis, and to ensure a constant supply of raw material reaches their lands. The duty of brokering these grim deals, and ensuring they are kept, falls to the Tithe Legions – the most legendary of which is that of Vokmortian, the chief herald of Nagashizzar.



**Left:** When the Ossiarchs conquer a new territory, they erect vast fortresses made of hand-carved stone and sorcerously wrought bone. From these ominous citadels they watch over the living, marching forth when tithes need to be collected or to slay those who dare oppose them.

**Below:** Vokmortian's Tithe Legion comes face to face with the Anvils of the Heldenhammer, whose souls once resided in the Realm of Death. Though the Ossiarchs will harvest no bones from their foes, their destruction will strengthen Nagash's hold on his besieged realm. For the time being, at least ...





## THE ORDERING OF DEMISE

Tithe Legions are predominantly armies of resource-gathering and consolidation. They favour mass battalions of infantry, the better to safeguard previously won territories and the Bone-tithe Nexuses that cement Ossiarch domination over a land. The Mortek echelons, being the most humanoid Ossiarchs, are also useful for presenting at least a vaguely understandable face to those mortals who encounter the Bonereapers.

Morghasts are much prized in the Tithe Legions, both for their terrifying presence and their aptitude for chasing down those foes who would attempt to flee. Their Mortisan commanders – often found in Tithe Legions administering the intricate records of the Ossiarch empire and ensuring the bone-shaping process continues unimpeded – are surrounded by hulking Immortis Guard. The most feared creations deployed by the Tithe Legions, however, are the Gothizzar Harvesters. When unleashed as a ravaging pack, these terrifying war-constructs can easily tear through an enemy battle-line and collect the shattered remains left in their wake.

Tithe Legions are fragments of a greater Ossiarch host charged with overseeing the bone harvest. Most are ad hoc formations assembled for a particular campaign, yet some Tithe Legions operate together for extended periods of time. These are typically responsible for the custodianship of specific Bone-tithe Nexus sites, or pacifying mortal settlements within a region. Due to being essentially self-sufficient, Tithe Legions can be entrusted to operate without support for years at a time, creating fortified lands that Ossiarch armies can fall back to at need, as well as provide a ready reserve of battle-hardened Bonereapers to lend their might to particularly gruelling campaigns.

The masters of a Tithe Legion will have taken particular care to wrench knowledge of local languages from the minds of captured prisoners; their dialect will be archaic, but intelligible. Many Tithe Legions also study and consciously imitate a supplicant culture's interpretation of the death gods. Elaborate scrimshawing, implanting opulent jewels across armour or into empty eye sockets, even remaking themselves into new, more hideous forms – all of these methods will be utilised should the tithe-lieges believe it will ensure the harvest progresses more smoothly.



**'Thou hast entered this discourse believing us to be alike in dignity. You parade in gleaming plate and beneath proud banners, and believe thine glories equal to ours. But mistake not our terms. Thou art chattel to fuel our designs. Five hundred skulls before the turning of the whisper-moons. I need not tell thee the price of defiance.'**

**- Zarokles, Emissary-Liege of Nagashizzar**

## THE TITHE IMMORTAL

Without the Tithe of Bones, Ossiarch society would cease to function. The simple arithmetic of conflict would see their legions ground down through raw attrition faster than they could be manufactured were they only to reuse the bones of the battle-slain – especially considering that some foes, the storm-warriors of Sigmar, celestial Seraphon and daemons of the Dark Gods most notably, do not leave behind remains at all.

Thankfully for the Ossiarch legions, these concerns have been accounted for by their commanding Mortarch. Even in life, Orpheon Katakros had been known as 'the Undeclared', his military prowess the stuff of legend. These qualities persisted after death, and his brilliant defence of the underworld of Ossia against the armies of Nagash saw him come to the attention of the Great Necromancer. Wisely recognising Nagash's power, Katakros bargained for a new, immortal form in exchange for eternal servitude. Though the Mortarch was slain by Sigmar during the Age of Chaos, he was not destroyed; trapped in the Midnight Tomb, a Stormvault constructed on the banks of Lake Lethis, his spirit was recently freed by Lady Olynder to return to Nagashizzar and begin his conquests anew.

More so than any other being, with the possible exception of Archaon, Katakros is obsessed with conquest. He is a tactical and logistical mastermind without compare, and he understands that discipline and steady command are as potent a weapon as belligerent heroics. Yet Katakros also appreciates the value of devolution. A swathe of the Principia Necrotopia, an infamous treatise penned in considerable part by the Mortarch himself, is dedicated to extracting tribute from those communities ground beneath a conqueror's heel. Katakros knows his armies well, and he has ensured that they will never lack for raw resources.

## THE TITHE LEGION OF VOKMORTIAN

Amongst all the Tithe Legions operating throughout and beyond the Ossiarch empire, one in particular has become infamous. This is not only due to the sheer quantity of bones it has amassed, but also by the command of the one who leads it – a deathless figure who knows that dread and awe are powerful weapons in their own right. This figure is Vokmortian, chief herald of the undying, and he speaks with the voice of Nagash.

The sinister tale of Vokmortian has spread far across the underworlds. The inhabitants of Ossia speak of the Master of the Bone-tithe, the great reaper whose deeds fuel their master's undying empire. The spectral inhabitants of Stygxx whisper fearfully of Baron Skalle, a mysterious aristocrat who periodically takes up residence in the ancient castles of the land and can judge a





soul's sins with but a glance. In Hallost, dead heroes tell tales of the Cairnvalk – a monstrous vulture-king that haunts the Endless Boneyard, snatching away the remains of the fallen to add to his vile court. Even realms beyond Shyish have their legends of Vokmortian. In the Reclaimed Demesnes of Aqshy, children quiver at the legend of the Ashen Minstrel, who emerged from the heart of an emperor volcano long grown cold and stole away the finest warriors of the fierce Candescant Raiders.

A hundred legends tell of Vokmortian's identity, each with its own details of his supposed powers. It is said that he is fluent in every tongue found under and above the heavens, and that he was the first Bonereaper to be formed – crafted with splinters taken from Nagash's own body. With but the merest touch he can steal a soul from its corporeal form. From his eyes leak drifts of amethyst energy, and the severed heads mounted upon his stave – the remains of kings and warlords who sought to deny the tithe – whisper the secrets of enslaving all life. Some amongst the Soulbright aristocracy even gossip that there are many Vokmortians, each but a fragment of an ancient entity who dwells within the record halls of Nagashizzar, eternally watching the hourglasses of mortality drain.

On one thing, however, all legends agree. Vokmortian is the vessel through which the Great Necromancer's will is done. It is his duty to travel the realms and ensure the bone tithe continues to be met. Vokmortian is a master negotiator, though he favours intimidation and terror over diplomacy and compromise. Through arcane soul-binding and relentless will, he has brought countless mortal kingdoms to heel. No other Bonereaper, save Katakros himself, has the same licence for independence as Vokmortian. So long as Nagash's enemies are destroyed, he is permitted to utilise whatever methods necessary to achieve his goals. This extends to requisitioning the service of other undead. Ancient wights, vampiric nobles, petty Necromancers and even mighty lords of undeath take heed when Vokmortian – or, on occasion, the spectral echo of Nagash that leers from the herald's chest – speaks. The wisest watch their words carefully, for all that Vokmortian hears is transmitted back to his master, and Nagash has ever been a vengeful god.

Vokmortian is counted amongst the greatest lords of the Mortis Praetorians, spoken of in the same death-rattle as Patru Zandtoss and Karash, Liege-Immortis to the Mortarch himself. Only Katakros stands higher, and he has no reason to believe Vokmortian anything but loyal. Over the decades

**Above:** With their new Tyrant Kagruk Kin-eater at their head, the ogors of the Tarkan Warglutt engage the Tithe Legion of Vokmortian in the Land of Dead Heroes. The Pact of Bones between the two forces is broken and outright war is declared. Vokmortian's legions must now fight for the bone tithe that was once gifted to them willingly.



## THE VESTMENTS OF MASTERY

Over the centuries, Vokmortian has acquired many morbid artefacts. The Staff of Retribution is formed from the remains of those who sought to lay low the herald through subterfuge. It is branded with the mark of the holy Emissarian Caste. From an iron chain hang the heads of slain kings, forever wailing and bemoaning their grim fate. The parchment upon which Vokmortian inscribes his binding arcane contracts is wrought from the flayed hide of deposed Shyishan gods, the ink formed from liquified gravesand. Most prominent, however, is the stone sarcophagus within which Vokmortian is eternally bound. None quite know why this is so. Perhaps it was the resting place of the spirit who was Vokmortian in life, or perhaps it is intended to remind the herald that he too is ultimately trapped by the will of Nagash.

the Emissary of Nagashizzar has wrought all manner of horrific pacts to ensure the tithe of bones continues to flow – and, should the living attempt to resist, the elite Praetorians of Vokmortian's retinue are always ready to back up his demands with clinical violence.

### THE HALLOST CONQUEST

The Tithe Legion of Vokmortian has performed its pitiless duty far across Shyish and beyond. But in recent years one underworld in particular has attracted their dark attentions. This is Hallost, the land of Dead Heroes, and long has it been wracked by warfare of the most ferocious kind.

While mortal forces descend on Hallost in search of treasure, allies or simple power, Vokmortian's interest in the underworld is far more straightforward. Of those Shyishan nations claimed by the Bonereapers, Hallost is the only one that has not been entirely ground under their conquering boot heel, the only one to retain a sliver of independence in the face of Katakros' dominating ambitions. This cannot stand. It is likely the Mortarch would oversee its conquest himself, were the bulk of his armies not currently engaged in the conquest of the Eightpoints. In his stead, Katakros has requested Vokmortian – for even he is respectful in the presence of the High Emissary – to strip Hallost of its bones and claim it in the name of the Ossiarch Empire.

Yet Vokmortian has also come to Hallost as the embodiment of Nagash's retribution. In times past he negotiated the Pact of Bones with the Tarkan Warglutt, an ogor tribe who inhabited the Magthar Mountains. These accords stated that the Tarkan were free to devour whatever prey they wished, save their bones. But when the swaggering Tyrant Kagrak Kin-eater violently deposed his father, these ancient pacts were swiftly breached. The Bonereapers of the nearby Necropolis of Cartoch were taken aback by this sudden defiance, for they simply could not comprehend why – when Hallost has no shortage of other foodstuffs – the ogors would risk such treachery. Retreating to their fortress amidst the Endless Boneyard, the Ossiarch host regrouped and plotted vengeance against the Tarkan.

Vokmortian had much experience in dealing with oath-breakers, and upon arriving at Cartoch he proclaimed Nagash's will. The Tarkan would be shattered, the fleeing survivors testament to the cost of defying the Ossiarch Bonereapers. His armies soon departed for the Tarkan's territory. If Vokmortian took personal offence that the pact he himself had negotiated had been breached, he kept such thoughts to himself.

The Endless Boneyard soon rang to the clash of iron cleavers on Nadirite blades. Though the







Gutbusters fought fiercely, the relentless advance of the Bonereapers soon took its toll. But the Tyrant was canny; luring the Ossiarch into the Pass of Khmorak, Kagruk sought to use his heavy blackpowder cannons to crush them under a landslide. The raw determination of the Bonereapers saw them fight clear of the trap, though not swiftly enough to prevent the Tarkan escaping with a considerable portion of their forces intact. Kin-eater and Vokmortian came to blows at the height of the battle. Though the Emissary's necromantic powers saw one of Kagruk's arms wither, in return he was brutally impaled upon the ogor's glaive. Even then, Vokmortian's dreadful sorceries afflicted the Tyrant with such heart-stopping terror that Kagruk was compelled to retreat, taking the remainder of the Tarkan with him rather than finishing off the wounded Emissary. Even so, since that day Vokmortian has possessed a particular dislike for the gluttonous creatures within the herald.

Since then, the Ossiarch conquest of Hallost has continued with renewed vigour. Mortal and

immortal armies alike have been broken by the Emissary-Lieges sworn to Vokmortian. Great osseous statues of the herald flank the femur-straight roads leading to the necropolises of Cartoch, Myrmid, Nyazzar and Harmon. To the many Bone-tithe Nexuses established across Hallost, terrified mortals deliver shipments of bodily remains – either willingly or at the command of those once-heroic spirits who name Sigmar betrayer and have instead made common cause with Nagashizzar.

The strategists of the Swordthegn Conclave, those warleaders who command the mortal forces of Order in Hallost, have looked upon these deeds and reached a single, terrifying conclusion. Vokmortian seeks to turn Hallost into a fief of his Tithe Legion, a continent-wide necropolis dedicated to the processing of bone and soul. Should he claim the Realmgates to the north, particularly the Beastmaw within the Booming Scar, his armies will be bolstered by the remains of Ghurish megafauna beyond count – and, in doing so, become truly unstoppable.

**Above:** When Vokmortian arrives before the gates of a mortal city to demand tribute, he does so alongside an elite retinue of Bonereapers. His Gothizzar Harvesters are especially feared, for they reap a fearsome bone tithe from all those who stand before them.



## THE CHRONICLE OF BONE

Vokmortian is a curse upon the realms, and over the years his approach has been a portent of darkest doom. Wickedly inventive, the Emissary of Nagashizzar takes a professional satisfaction in extracting the tithe from conquered peoples – for with each bone collected, Nagash's darkly glorious necrotopia comes one step closer to fruition.

## AGE OF MYTH

### THE HARVEST BEGINS

Even as his minions help to build the first cities of the living, Nagash plots against his fellow gods. In the darkness beneath many settlements the Ossiarch take shape, waiting for the call to war. To facilitate their creation, Nagash requires a constant influx of raw bone – and so the first legends spread of a strange figure bound within a stone coffin wandering the realms, and of isolated settlements mysteriously halving in population almost overnight.

### GRAVEN JUSTICE

The city of Grymnhalt develops a cunning solution to the bone-tithe. On a certain date each year, all those imprisoned within the city's jails are to be executed, their remains left in tribute. The system works – too well. Crime falls almost to nothing, and the supply of bones swiftly trickles to naught. Desperate, the rulers of Grymnhalt begin to impose stricter laws upon their subjects, until even the most minor crimes are met with imprisonment and eventual execution. Eventually the citizens of Grymnhalt rise up, overthrowing their masters in a bloody civil war – before Vokmortian's armies arrive and slaughter them for missing their offering of bone.

## AGE OF CHAOS

### FALL OF THE UNDEFEATED

As the Age of Chaos dawns, Nagash betrays Sigmar by looking to Shyish's defences above all others. Incensed, the God-King surges into the Realm of Death, seeking the Great Necromancer. The Mortarch Katakros attempts to halt Sigmar on the shores of Lake Lethis. He fights well, but ultimately falls before the God-King. So powerful is Katakros, however, his spirit cannot entirely be destroyed. Sigmar locks Katakros' essence away in the Stormvault known as the Midnight Tomb. With the Mortarch intended to one day command them lost, the Bonereaper legions remain hidden from prying eyes – only to be awakened once more in a later age, when the energies of death spill across the realms.

## AGE OF SIGMAR

### THE BREAKING OF THE TRIBES

Freed from beneath the free city of Lethis by the armies of Lady Olynder, Katakros unleashes the Bonereapers to reforge his glorious empire. For Vokmortian, it is a chance to emerge from the shadows and cement himself as a warlord in his own right. When the tribes of Praetoris' Nightfire Spine begin massing against the Bonereapers, he wastes no time in unleashing his Dread Harbingers – a cohort of deadly Morghasts. In a single night of horror these terrifying constructs hunt down the tribal champions, bringing their severed heads back to their master. The leaderless mortals are easily slaughtered, and Vokmortian gains a new swathe of trophies to hang from his staff.

### A BOUNTIFUL HUNT

Upon arriving at Nerozzar, Vokmortian discovers that much of the necropolis has been smashed with wild abandon. Following the trail of oversized footprints through the wilds of Cadavaris, he discovers the culprits: a tribe of deathly pale gargants, commanded by a titanic chief. Knowing that even the Mortek Guard would struggle against such a foe, Vokmortian







unleashes his Deathriders and Gothizzar Harvesters. While the cavalry encircle the gargants, distracting their attention, Harvester packs hack at each of the louts individually to drag them down. The battle rages through the foothills of Cadavaris, and the gargant chief does not relent, but at last he too falls under the scything blades of the Harvesters. Their bones are used in rebuilding Nerozzar, the great gate of the necropolis crowned with the skulls of the fallen gargants.

## THE TARKAN CONQUEST

When the Tarkan Warglutt breaches the Pact of Bones, Vokmortian is dispatched to Hallost to mete out vengeance. Though he initially approaches the task with typical dispassion, repeated attempts by the treacherous Kagruk Kin-eater to slay him soon stoke Vokmortian's ire. Before long the Endless Boneyard is replete with spilt ogor blood and shattered Ossiarh remains. Though the Tarkan are eventually forced to retreat, both Kagruk and Vokmortian wound yet fail to slay their opponent, a fact that vexes both commanders to no end.

## DREAD OBLIGATION

As Vokmortian's armies conquer more of Hallost, Lord-Aquilor Thromus Gravesend of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer devises a cunning ambush for him on the outskirts of Vaddenheim. However, when the trap is

sprung, he is surprised to find the usually cautious Vokmortian heading straight for him. The Lord-Aquilor steps forth to face the herald, only to discover to his horror that he cannot land a blow. With a cruel laugh, Vokmortian reveals that an ancestor of Gravesend signed a binding arcane contract saving his own family from the tithe in exchange for swearing that none of his lineage would ever raise a blade against the emissary. Thromus is soon overcome by the potent sorceries of Vokmortian. It is only the timely reinforcement from the Sons of the Barrows, a brotherhood of elite Demigryph Riders, that prevents all the Stormcast meeting an untimely end.

## EMPIRE OF BONES

As the Bonereapers spread across Hallost, Vokmortian binds the spirits of the Nordyrie to his service, forming a truly vast undead host. Alongside the garrison of Cartoch and his own Tithe Legion, he begins to march north towards the Booming Scar. Vokmortian seeks to claim the gateway to Ghur and acquire a new source of raw material for the tithe, as well as to slay the remnants of the hated Tarkan. However, his scouts report that a vast number of orruks have also infested the area, led by a warlord known as the 'Grotkicker'. Undeterred, Vokmortian continues to lead his host north, more than willing to reinforce his armies using the bestial bones of the Ironjawz.



# WARSCROLL BATTALIONS

These warscroll battalions enable you to field unique formations of Ossiarch Bonereapers on the battlefield. Nagash will reward your loyalty.

## WARSCROLL BATTALION

### VOKMORTIAN'S TITHE LEGION



#### ORGANISATION

- 1 Vokmortian's Dread Retinue warscroll battalion
- 1-3 Mortek Shield-corps
- 1 Mortisan Trident
- 1-2 Katakrosian Deathglaives
- 1 Aegis Immortal
- 1-3 Kavalos Lances or Harvester Scythe-corps in any combination
- 1 Mortek Ballistari
- 1 Harvester Scythe-corps

This battalion can only be taken as part of an Ossiarch Bonereapers army that is from the MORTIS PRAETORIANS legion.

When the Master of the Bone-tithe deems it necessary to personally ensure the demands of the Ossiarch Empire are met, he summons to his side a truly vast army of conquest. The will of Vokmortian infuses each of these construct warriors with a relentless fervour. Accompanied by those spirits of Hallost cruelly bound to the High Emissarian's service, they mercilessly crush any who dare oppose them.

#### ABILITIES

**Unstoppable Reapers:** *In pursuit of ensuring the bone-tithe is met, Vokmortian has moulded his personal army into a powerful and flexible force capable of adapting to any situation and overcoming any foe.*

At the start of your hero phase, if your general is from this battalion and on the battlefield, you receive D3 relentless discipline points.

**Bound Nordyrie Warriors:** *Vokmortian has bound the spirits of the Nordyrie to his service, forming a truly vast undead host.*

Any number of Nighthaunt allies can be taken for an army that includes this warscroll battalion (they do not count against the limit on 1 in 4 allied units in the army, and their points cost is not counted against the number of points spent on allied units in the army).



## WARSCROLL BATTALION

### VOKMORTIAN'S DREAD RETINUE

Vokmortian is accompanied by a host of veteran Mortis Praetorians. These constructs guard the High Emissarian as he forges his contracts, and they have been destroyed and remade many times over in defence of their master.

#### ORGANISATION

- Vokmortian, Master of the Bone-tithe
- 1-3 Mortek Guard units
- 1 Necropolis Stalkers unit
- 1-2 Morghast Archai or Morghast Harbingers units in any combination

This battalion can only be taken as part of an Ossiarch Bonereapers army that is from the **MORTIS PRAETORIANS** legion.

#### ABILITIES

**Seal of Demise:** *Many a foe has been dismayed to find that one of their ancient ancestors signed a binding arcane contract with Vokmortian that protects him from harm.*

After armies are set up, but before the first battle round begins, you can pick 1 enemy **HERO** and roll a dice. On a 2+, subtract 1 from hit rolls for attacks made by that **HERO** that target Vokmortian.

**Eternal Duty:** *Those Ossiarch warriors in direct service to the Master of the Bone-tithe are not permitted to avoid their duty for long.*

At the start of your hero phase, you can pick 1 unit from this battalion within 8" of the Vokmortian from the same battalion. Return 1 slain model to that unit.

## WARSCROLL BATTALION

### HARVESTER SCYTHER-CORPS

Harvester Scythe-corps are pitiless instruments of the bone-tithe. As Kavalos Deathriders corral their prey, Gothizzar Harvesters advance with terrible inevitability, their soul-draining weapons reaping a hideous toll.

#### ORGANISATION

- 2 Kavalos Deathriders units
- 1 Gothizzar Harvester units

This battalion can only be taken as part of an Ossiarch Bonereapers army that is from the **MORTIS PRAETORIANS** legion and has Vokmortian as its general.

#### ABILITIES

**Hunters and Hounds:** *While the Gothizzar Harvesters of a Scythe-corps attack the enemy directly, the supporting Deathriders encircle the foe, distracting their attention and leaving them vulnerable to the huge war-constructs' attacks.*

Add 1 to wound rolls for attacks made by Gothizzar Harvesters from this battalion if the target unit is within 12" of a friendly Kavalos Deathriders unit from the same battalion.

UNITS	MIN	MAX	POINTS	BATTLEFIELD ROLES	NOTES
Vokmortian's Tithe Legion	-	-	110	Warscroll Battalion	
Vokmortian's Dread Retinue	-	-	130	Warscroll Battalion	
Harvester Scythe-corps	-	-	100	Warscroll Battalion	



# MORTIS PRAETORIANS

You've read all about Vokmortian's Tithe Legion and gotten all excited about painting an Ossiarch Bonereapers army of your very own. But how do you paint them? If only there was a handy guide ... Well, there is! Two, in fact. Right here. Nagash says you are most welcome.

## CLASSIC STYLE

**James:** One of the key features of the Ossiarch Bonereapers is that they are not complete skeletons – they're undead constructs made by Nagash's Mortisan Boneshapers. This gives you the opportunity to paint the model's boney areas in different colours, representing how they've been assembled out of whatever bones

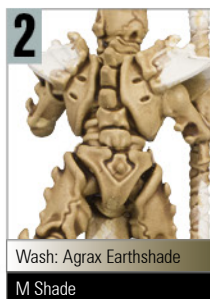
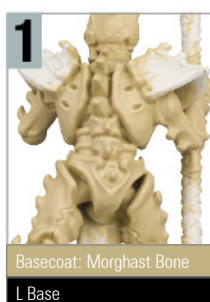
happens to be lying around. I chose to use three bone colours on this Mortek Guard. First is a light bone that would make up most of the model's body and which could be drybrushed easily. A second, darker bone on the knees and feet provide variety, and a third, greyer bone on the shield mimic metalwork.

### BATTLE READY

Using the stages to the right, James was able to get this Mortek Guard warrior to a standard that most people would be happy to play games with.



### BONE



### DARK BONE



### GREY BONE

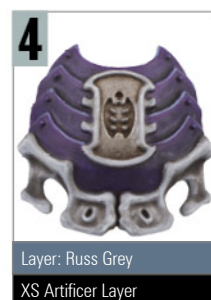
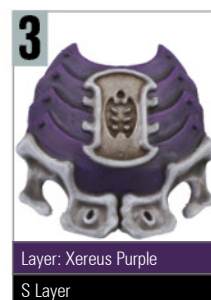
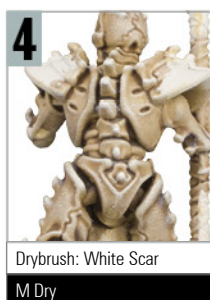
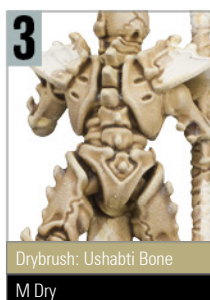


### PURPLE ARMOUR



### PARADE READY

With a couple of extra highlights to each area of the model, James took the Battle Ready Mortek Guard and made him Parade Ready.





I've found that the best way to paint Ossiarch Bonereapers – particularly Mortek Guard – is to leave the shield off during assembly, as it does cover a large portion of the model. You can then basecoat, wash and drybrush the light bone areas to completion. By this point, about seventy-five percent of the model is now painted!

## TOP TIP

There's another good reason to leave the shield off – it makes painting that part of the model easier, too. You'll notice in the stages below that the shield appears to be upside down. Well, it is – I super glued it upside down to a paperclip (I stuck the paperclip in the arm socket) to paint it. This meant that when I applied the Nuln Oil wash at stage 2, it sat in the recesses between the armour panels rather than pooling at the bottom of each panel like it would if the shield was the correct way up. I used the same technique with Contrast paints over the page.

## BASING

'I painted the model's base an arid, desert brown,' says James. 'Not only does it suit the background of the Ossiarch Bonereapers army, it also complements the overall colour scheme of the model. While much of the Bonereaper is made of bone, it's the shield that dominates the model, and the warm brown base contrasts well with its cool purple tones and teal loincloth.'



Basecoat: Stirland Mud  
Layer: Steel Legion Drab  
Drybrush: Balor Brown  
Drybrush: Screaming Skull

## TEAL LOINCLOTH



Basecoat: Incubi Darkness  
S Base



Wash: Nuln Oil  
M Shade



Layer: Kabalite Green  
S Layer



Layer: Fenrisian Grey  
XS Artificer Layer

## BLADE



Basecoat: Leadbelcher  
S Base



Wash: Coelia Greenshade  
M Shade



Layer: Ironbreaker  
S Layer



Layer: Ironbreaker  
XS Artificer Layer

## SHIELD CARTOUCHE



Basecoat: Leadbelcher  
S Base



Wash: Agrax Earthshade  
M Shade



Layer: Ironbreaker  
XS Artificer Layer



Layer: Ironbreaker  
XS Artificer Layer

## RED LEATHER



Basecoat: Khorne Red  
S Base



Wash: Nuln Oil  
M Shade



Layer: Wazdakka Red  
S Layer

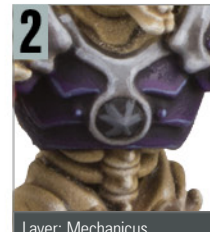


Layer: Squig Orange  
XS Artificer Layer

## VITRIFIED GRAVESAND



Basecoat: Abaddon Black  
M Layer



Layer: Mechanicus Standard Grey  
S Layer



Layer: Administratum Grey  
XS Artificer Layer



Layer: Administratum Grey  
XS Artificer Layer

## GLOWING EYES



Basecoat: Warpstone Glow  
S Layer



Layer: Moot Green  
XS Artificer Layer



Layer: Moot Green  
XS Artificer Layer



Layer: Moot Green  
XS Artificer Layer



## CONTRAST STYLE

**James:** Many of the tips I shared in the classic style of painting can be applied when using Contrast paints, too. Keep the shield separate, spray the model with Wraithbone (Grey Seer for the shield because it's predominantly made up of cooler colours) and paint all the bone areas first. This was even easier with Contrast paints, requiring only a thin coat of Skeleton Horde over the whole model. Simple!

While I drybrushed the last colour onto the bone, it's worth taking a couple of extra seconds at this stage to make another pass over the skull with your drybrush just to help add that extra level of definition. We normally spend quite a lot of time painting a model's face, but when it's bone-coloured like the rest of the model, it can just blend in. That extra drybrush highlight will make it pop just that little bit more.

### BATTLE READY

Following the stages to the right, James used Contrast paints to paint this Ossiararch Bonereaper so that he's ready for the battlefield.



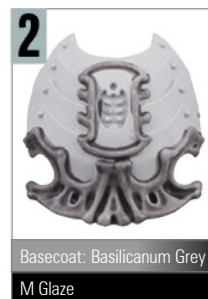
### BONE



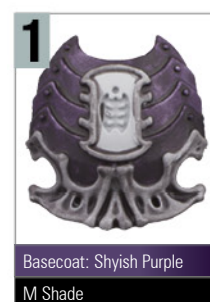
### DARK BONE



### GREY BONE

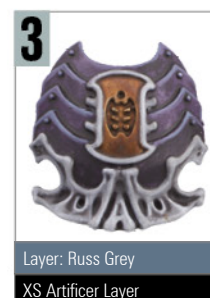
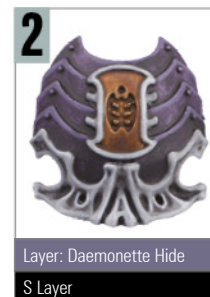
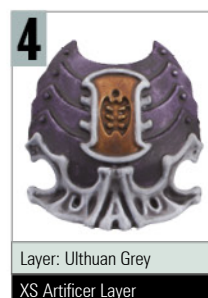
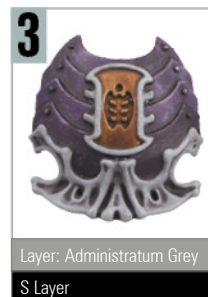
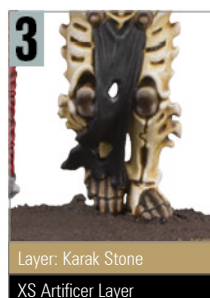
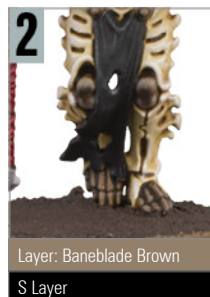


### PURPLE ARMOUR



### PARADE READY

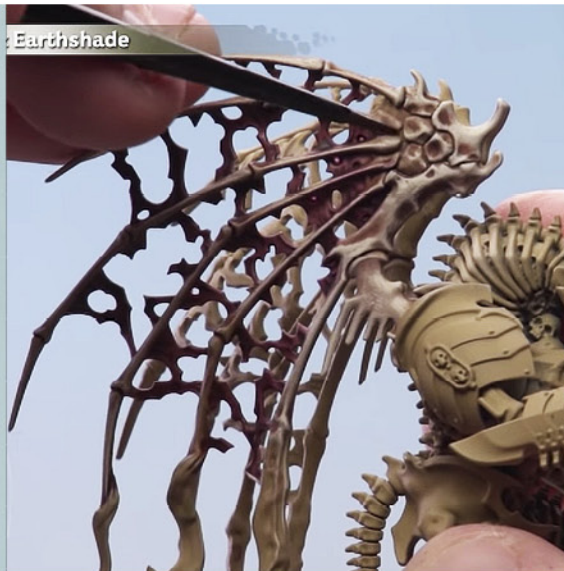
James applied highlights to each area of this Mortek Guard model to get him up to a Parade Ready standard. Bones will be reaped in Nagash's name!



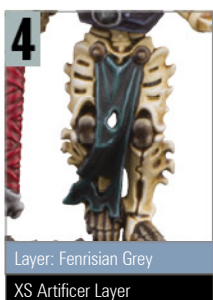
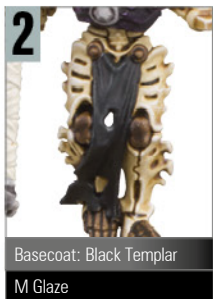
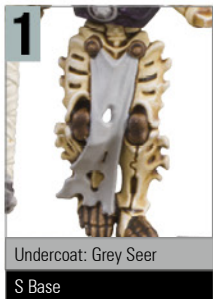


## MORE HANDY PAINTING GUIDES

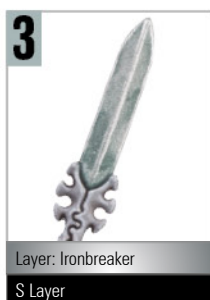
The Warhammer TV team have loads of painting guides for Nagash's undead creations, including Deathrattle Skeletons (using both classic and Contrast painting methods), Morghasts, Mortarchs and even Nagash himself. Whichever colour scheme you choose, though, make sure you've got some Wraithbone spray on hand! Head over to the Warhammer TV YouTube channel now to check out all the videos.



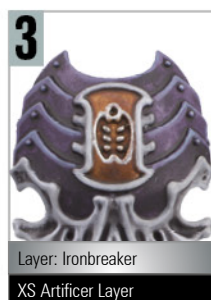
### TEAL LOINCLOTH



### BLADE



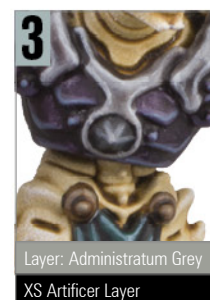
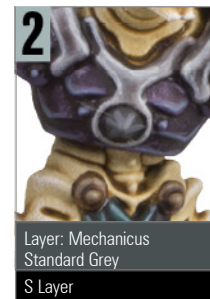
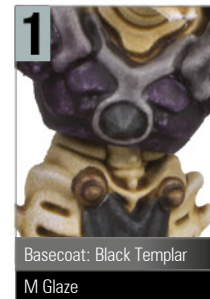
### SHIELD CARTOUCHE



### RED LEATHER



### VITRIFIED GRAVESAND



### GLOWING EYES





# RULES OF ENGAGEMENT



## JERVIS JOHNSON

Jervis has been a staple part of the Warhammer Studio for many decades, and he's been instrumental in the design of many great games during that time. But games like Warhammer aren't made overnight – they take many long years of constant development to become the wonders that they are today. Jervis is still wondering what happened to the 1990s.

*"Designers do not design great games. They usually design really bad games, and then they iterate on them until the games become great."*

– Game Design Concepts,  
Ian Schreiber

The starting point for this month's Rules of Engagement is a quote by Ian Schreiber that I came across recently. It really resonated with me, because one of the things my experience has taught me is that you never, ever, come up with a great rule, let alone a great game, right off the bat. Instead, if you're lucky you'll come up with a great idea, a diamond in the rough as it were, which you can then work on and turn into a good rule or even a great rule. This is because games design is, at its heart, an iterative process. What I mean by this is that designing a game (or a battletome or a rules supplement) is a process in which you come up with an idea, test it, refine the idea, test the new version, and so on and so on until your game (or battletome or supplement) goes off to be printed. As iteration is such a fundamental principle of game design, I thought it would be worthwhile talking about it in this month's Rules of Engagement, as it underpins so much of what we do with the way that we design our games and support them.

As an example of how the iterative game design process works, I'll take a look at the overflow rule from the Meeting Engagement rules in the *General's Handbook 2019*. Here's the published version of the rule:

## OVERFLOW

*Sometimes you will not be able to fit a model wholly within 3" of its arrival edge. When this is the case, set it up so that it overlaps the arrival edge with part of its base off the battlefield, but so that as much of its base as possible is on the battlefield. A model cannot be set up with its base overlapping an edge other than its arrival edge.*

However, the original version of the overflow rule was completely different:

## DEATH ZONE

*It is extremely dangerous to approach too closely to the enemy deployment area. Any model that is set up or finishes a move within 6" of the enemy edge of the battlefield is slain.*

The death zone rule changed into the overflow rule over the course of multiple iterations, and to understand why it changed so much, you first need to understand the purpose of the rule. In its initial form, the rule was included because Meeting Engagement is designed to be played on a small playing area (roughly the size of two Warcry boards placed side by side). The size of the playing area meant that there wasn't really room for a player's entire army to fit on the battlefield at the start of the game, so instead about a third of each player's army deploys at the start of the battle, and the remainder arrives in two waves, one at the end of the player's first turn, and one at the end of the player's second turn.



I was worried that the players might try to fill up their opponent's deployment area with their own units, making it difficult if not impossible for the succeeding waves to arrive. I came up with the death zone rule above to stop this happening, and I was quite pleased with my initial effort.

Playtesting, however, soon showed there were a couple of fundamental flaws with the death zone rule. First of all, the 6" deployment area I was using proved to be too large, with the result that the two armies were starting the battle too close together and too close to any objective markers. This was compounded by the 6" exclusion zone by each table edge that was created by the death zone rule. The overall result was a very crowded battlefield with little room for manoeuvre. Clearly a new iteration of the death zone rule was needed!

The first thing I tried was reducing the deployment areas from 6" to 3". This worked well initially, until we played some games including monsters with large bases that couldn't physically fit into the 3" deployment area. I considered saying that such models couldn't be used in Meeting Engagement battles, but I decided that



## Rules of Engagement – penned by veteran games developer Jervis Johnson – focuses on the creation, design and evolution of the rules for Warhammer age of Sigmar. Here, Jervis discusses the iterative game design process. Sounds fancy, eh?

would be overly restrictive, and instead in the end I came up with an early version of the overflow rule, which basically allowed players to set up models with their bases overlapping the edge of the battlefield. This first version of the overflow rule was more than three times longer (in terms of word count) than the final version of the rule, but over the course of a half-dozen iterations we were able to refine it down to its current much more streamlined version.

For much of the time that the overflow rule was going through its iterative development, the death zone rule remained unchanged. However, although it was far less of a problem and didn't eat into the battlefield to the same extent as it had done before, it could still result in problems during play, mainly because it created an ugly and rather confusing area of the battlefield where one player could move their models and the other could not. This created some strange situations in play, and it could mean that there were models in play that the enemy could not charge or attack because they were tucked away in the corner of the death zone.

After a number of alternative solutions were tried and discarded, we decided to try a few games without any restrictions at all. Somewhat to my surprise, this worked remarkably well in practise, really only proving to be a problem if one player's deployment area was right next to their opponent's deployment area or if a player had some form of deep strike ability that allowed them to deploy straight into their opponent's deployment zone. In both of these cases, a player could flood their opponent's deployment area with models, making it impossible for them to deploy at all.



We tackled this problem over the course of several more iterations of the rules. First of all we modified the maps for the Meeting Engagement battleplans so that no deployment areas were adjacent. Next we added a rule that said when units were set up during the battle, they had to treat any enemy deployment edges as if they were enemy models and therefore deploy more than 9" away from them. And finally, we moved the location of objectives so that they were closer

to the centre of the battlefield, to discourage players from wanting to set up units at the edge of the battlefield where they would not be able to help get control of objective markers.

As you can see, although the purpose of the rule to help mitigate the small size of the battlefield remained the same, its form evolved and changed over the course of multiple games and different iterations. Which leads me to my second quote (I love a good quote!):

*"... it takes imagination and reason to make a [game], and long days and nights."*

– Archie Cass

My second quote is from the pioneer wargame designer Archie Cass, and it is another one that resonates very strongly for me. You see, because game design is an iterative process, it isn't quick. So, the changes we had made to the death zone rule meant that finally everything worked as we wanted, but it took a lot of work to get them to that place. The original rules were tested and rewritten numerous times as we worked our way through the loop of writing, testing and evaluation again and again just to get the rule to work as intended. The same process was carried out for all of the rules in Meeting Engagement, some of which worked well right from the start, while others needed to be developed over the course of numerous test games.

However, even though the iterative design process is long-winded, it is also highly effective, and because of this we don't just use it for the rules we write, we use it for almost every aspect of the games design process. A really good example is points values. I often see people advocating for a really big change to the points value of a unit, either up or down, and more





often than not based on some form of 'points value formula'. These suggestions and formulas may well be right – we use a points value formula ourselves to generate the initial points value of a unit – but you still need to test the points out first. If you don't, you risk overshooting badly and flipping the problem so that an expensive unit is too cheap or vice versa. Because of this it's better in my experience to make several small changes, testing after each change to see if it solves the problem. Then, as you gather more and more data from more and more games, you can continue to fine-tune the points values of unit progressively over a period of time. That's why we re-examine points values every six months, but we make only minor changes after each review. By the time the next review comes round we'll have gathered enough data to know if the small change we made fixed the problem, and if it didn't, we can make another small change, and so on and so on.

Another example of the way we use iteration is what we call our 'standard wording meetings' (and you thought the life of a games designer was all playing games and drinking tea – ha!). The name comes from a document we put together several years ago now, which collected together the correct wording to use for a wide range of rules mechanics. We use it primarily when writing new warscrolls, in order to make sure that the abilities we write are always the most effective and loophole-free version of the rule we can come up with, incorporating all of the learnings

we have made about published versions of our rules. As you might expect, the exact wording of a rule is a highly iterative process, and every time we publish a new battletome, we learn a bit more about which wordings work well and which need a bit more work.



The standard wording meeting was set up to make sure that these learnings are used to polish and improve the wordings we have in the standard wording document. Each week we review one section of the document – for example, last week we reviewed the section about the descriptions that appear on the warscrolls. The following week we move onto a new section, and so on until we reach the end of the standard wording document ... and then we start again at the beginning.

Here's an example of the kind of thing we do in the standard wording meetings, based on the description for Stormcast Eternals Judicators.

**Before review:** "A unit of Judicators has any number of models, each armed with a Storm Gladius. In addition, the unit is armed with one of the following missile weapon options: Skybolt Bow; or Boltstorm Crossbow. 1 in every 5 models can replace the unit's missile weapon option with a Shockbolt Bow or a Thunderbolt Crossbow."







**After review:** “A unit of Judicators has any number of models. The unit is armed with 1 of the following weapon options: Skybolt Bow and Storm Gladius; or Boltstorm Crossbow and Storm Gladius. 1 in every 5 models can replace the unit’s weapon option with 1 of the following: Shockbolt Bow and Storm Gladius; or Thunderbolt Crossbow and Storm Gladius.”

As you can see, the effect of the rule has not been changed – both versions basically say the same thing (so there is no need for you to change your copy of *Battletome: Stormcast Eternals*!). The second version, however, conforms to a standard format we had agreed in that week’s review process to use in future. This has the aim of reducing the number of different formats that are being used in our descriptions, and of increasing clarity and reducing redundancy. Specifically, we decided that whenever we include a list of weapon options, it needs to include all of the weapons, so the storm gladius has been removed from the first sentence and added to each of the weapon options. The second sentence has had the word ‘missile’ removed, and has had the ‘one’ changed to a ‘1’. The word missile was removed because it was redundant and not needed, and we always remove redundant words if we can (rules should be as short as possible). The ‘one’ was changed to ‘1’, because ‘1’ takes less space and because digits are much easier to spot in the body of a rule and therefore less likely to be missed.

As I think you can see from all of these examples, the iterative design process never ends. It only pauses slightly when a deadline is reached and the rules we’ve been working on are sent off to be published. This gap in between the rules writers’ deadline and publication is just about the only period when you’re not actively working on a set of rules. This is simply because a game can never be absolutely perfect, as there will always be a slightly better standard wording for a rule that could be used, or a slightly more accurate points value for a unit, and so on.

And that leads to the final point of this article, which is that the iterative design is only as good as the data that can be gathered to inform it and drive it forward. Fortunately, this is something you can help with. You can do this by letting us know about rules that you feel don’t quite work as well as they could, or where the standard wording we’re using could be improved, or where a points value is slightly off.

And on that note I will finish this month’s column. If you’ve got any comments about this article, or ideas about how we can improve our rules, email me with them at [AOSFAQ@gwplc.com](mailto:AOSFAQ@gwplc.com). I read all of the emails you send in, and we use them as part of our iterative design process, which means you can become a vital part of the design team by just writing in!



# THE WAR FOR HALLOST

With each passing day, Hallost is pulled closer to oblivion in the Shyish Nadir. Yet across the continent, battles continue to rage. The second instalment of the Hallost campaign heads to the Booming Scar, with a three-player campaign map and four new battleplans.



**A**rmies of all kinds are continually drawn to the Land of Dead Heroes, crossing tumultuous seas or travelling through Realmgates in order to stake their claim before Hallost is consumed by the Shyish Nadir. Some forces come to reinforce the beleaguered denizens, others simply to sow ruin and mayhem. But regardless of why they have journeyed to the continent, all know that Hallost is a land where heroes both die and are reborn.

On every battlefield, bold champions seek to harness the spirits of Hallost to strengthen their own causes. Each stretch of fenland and frozen patch of tundra on the continent has soaked up the blood of heroes for centuries and now resonates with spectral energies. Noble

## THE REALM OF DEATH

The Realm of Death plays host to countless underworlds, each a reflection of the race or people that created them. Hallost, the Land of Dead Heroes, attracts many great warriors – both living and dead – for here they can battle each other for all eternity.



commanders commune with famed chieftains of old, learning the daring tactics that saw their tribes rise to greatness. Ambitious mystics weave enchantments that siphon the strength of the dead and funnel it into their cruel magics. Berserk warriors feed off the dying screams that echo on the wind to drive themselves into an enraged frenzy. Yet only the strongest, most devout or most cunning warlords are capable of bending the souls of the fallen dead to their will.

The champions of Nagash's undead legions march implacably forwards to harvest the souls of Hallost's inhabitants, as well as – in the case of the Ossiarch hosts that have laid claim to the continent – the bones of invaders. As the deathless armies advance, they spread the



Great Necromancer's curses across the continent, binding ever more regions to his undying will. Though inevitably these lands will be drawn in and devoured by the Shyish Nadir, Nagash knows that other gods desire the souls that he believes are his by right. At his command, ancient vampires, skeletal lords and wailing gheists flock to Hallost to claim the dead for their master – and to wreak punishment on those who would steal from the Supreme Lord of the Undead.

Towering ogors and bellicose greenskins lead their hordes to Hallost to revel in the endless mayhem. The skies glow green with Waaagh! magic as shamans call out to the spirits of the dead, rousing the spectral heroes to battle against the biggest and strongest orruk bosses. Frostlords and Tyrants drive their gluttonous warriors to the feasting halls in which the denizens of Hallost still gather, and there they glut themselves on the souls they butcher. In an effort to attract the Bad Moon's gaze through acts of daring sneakiness, Moonclan Grots skulk their way into ancient meeting sites to skewer the spirits of chieftains driven mad by the anarchic energies of the necroquake, or they seek out ancient Stormvaults filled with gleaming treasures to add to their piles of 'shiny stuff'. In the northern uplands, the Ironjaw mobs of Dakkbad Grotkicker mass, preparing to drown Hallost in a tsunami of violence.

The living have carved out some domains in Hallost, and detachments of brave Freeguild troopers patrol the barren fens and mist-wreathed villages constantly, one uneasy eye forever kept on the soul-lights that periodically fill the gloom. In their efforts to claim the underworld, the champions of Order seek to align themselves with the fallen heroes of Hallost, appealing to common cause and offering the dead a chance to add further glories to their sagas. Amidst the ashes of great funeral pyres, charismatic generals speak directly to heroes of legend, beseeching them to lend their might and wisdom. Arcane scholars find ways to ease the suffering that mighty souls feel with each shuddering aftershock of the necroquake, asking in return for a portion of spiritual energy to empower their magics. Assiduous tacticians and studious historians invoke treaties made in the Age of Myth between the living and the dead, and with words of god-wrought power they seize the souls of those chieftains who fail to answer the call to war.

The champions of the Dark Gods offer no such terms. These depraved souls seek only to despoil the land and transform the continent into a hellscape more pleasing to their patrons. Through blood-fuelled prayers the champions of

Khorne give substance to Hallost's spirits before hacking them apart and claiming their skulls as gruesome trophies. Followers of Tzeentch use their fell sorceries to mutilate the fabric of the underworld, twisting the sentience of those who dwell within it and harnessing their agonised madness. Nurgle's children spread plagues of such virulence that even the dead are afflicted, allowing the most putrid of their number to wallow in the sludge of spectral effluvia. Champions of Slaanesh revel in the suffering they inflict upon the heroes of Hallost, torturing souls that are endlessly reborn after dying or forcing spirits to gorge themselves in the feasting halls until their very essence ruptures. Meanwhile, the verminous skaven use technology, sorcery and prayer to further corrupt the energies of the necroquake, exploiting the nightmarish anarchy they create for their own selfish ends.

No part of Hallost has escaped war, but the underworld's Realmgates are of particular strategic importance. Some of them join Hallost to distant realms, whereas others provide links between different afterlives within Shyish, but all are crucial passageways through which supplies, reinforcements and entire armies can be brought. Of the Realmgates in the Land of Dead Heroes, no two are alike in appearance. The Oathsworn Gate at the centre of the continent consists of towering stone slabs standing in concentric rings, with a column of cloud in the middle that leads to Azyr, whereas the Nordyrie Realmgate is a twisted fane standing atop a bone-strewn hill. During the Age of Chaos, a number of the underworld's Realmgates were corrupted by the legions of the Dark Gods, and those who now seek to conquer Hallost make similar designs on these arcane pathways.

The northern cities of Vaddenheim and Morrsend teem with unquiet spirits, and beneath the gheist-filled streets lie treasures that have remained hidden since before the coming of Chaos. Fortresses ring the coast and guard the mountain passes, becoming strongholds for whatever army manages to seize them. Provincial temples devoted to Sigmar's pantheon are desecrated in the name of fouler deities. Sites of arcane power where settlers worked their ancient magics are used as focal points for reality-bending sorceries.

Every battle fought in Hallost shapes the fate of the underworld and the souls that dwell within it. As the Land of Dead Heroes is pulled closer towards oblivion, vast armies and mighty champions fight with ever-greater determination, conquering new territories and slaughtering all those who stand before them.



## THE BOOMING SCAR

**At the southern end of the Booming Scar – the colossal canyon that gouges through the north-west of Hallost – lies a cracked and broken land. When the forces of Chaos were driven back from Shyish it became home to vast hordes of orruks, and though this region has been conquered many times since, it still thrums with Waaagh! energy.**

In the Age of Myth, the lands lying at the mouth of the Booming Scar had been the battling grounds for those heroic spirits who had settled in Homestead. The oily marshes and fractal ravines played host to swarms of unliving beasts, whom the dead hunted and killed between their raucous feasts. On occasion, these spirits were blessed with an even greater quarry, when a living monstrosity stampeded through the Beastmaw – the skull-shaped Realmgate in the opening of the Scar that connected Hallost to the icy steppes of Ghur.

The quantity and quality of fighting around the Booming Scar would prove the doom of those souls who hunted there. When the legions of the Dark Gods were tearing across Hallost, the heroes of Homestead lured many Chaos armies to the mouth of the Booming Scar, utilising their knowledge of the unforgiving landscape to outmanoeuvre their enemies, trap them in

sinking bogs and slaughter isolated warbands. The sound of battle rumbled across the land, and through the Beastmaw to Ghur.

In the icy steppes, the greenskin warclans heard the clangour coming from the Realmgate, and in a mighty Waaagh! they surged into Hallost. The orruks butchered all in their path, cutting down the servants of the Dark Gods and hacking apart the spectral essences of the dead. The oldest and toughest orruks saw warriors they had fought long ago in Ghur, and they were delighted when they realised these warriors were reborn again each day so they could be slain over and over in an unending war.

Brutal battles raged in every direction from the Beastmaw, drenching withered forests with gore and clotting marshlands with mutilated soul-stuff. Though the heroic dead fought with unflagging vigour, their enemies kept coming in ever-greater numbers. Armies of the Blood God marched in from the east and south to revel in the unmitigated carnage, and orruks continued to pour through the Beastmaw, along with grots, ogors and lumbering gargants. The souls of Hallost withdrew into the Scar itself, falling back to the ancient redoubt known as the Scarred Fortress. There they made their stand, killing and dying before being reborn to kill again. Over the following centuries, the mouth of the Booming Scar and all the surrounding lands became





soaked with violent energy, and the skies glowed green with the power of the Waaagh!.

The hordes of Destruction have thoroughly claimed the lands around the Booming Scar, and two warlords in particular have carved out a brutal legend. The Ironsunz warclan, distinctive in their bright yellow armour, have taken much of the territory around the Riven Lands to the east of the Scar. There the broken ground echoes to the yelling and bawling of hulking orruks, brawls marching out with each dawn in search of better fights and new boyz to 'rekroot'. The overboss of the Ironsunz, Dakkbad Grotkicker, has come to Hallost looking to swell his warclan's ranks – for the heroic dead offer the best fights, and all Ironjawz have a knack for tracking down the greatest scraps. The ogors too have made their mark, particularly in the marshlands to the south of the Booming Scar. Greatest of these nomadic forces is the Tarkan Warglutt. Led by the cruel Tyrant Kagruk Kin-eater, the Tarkan have had much of their strength sapped by recent battles against the Bonereapers of Cartoch, though the deathless Ossiarch were bled in kind. Yet Kin-eater still commands a mighty tribe of Gutbusters, and they are currently migrating to the Realmgate of High Harrow in northern Hallost, killing and devouring everything in their path as they go.

When the Stormhosts were at last sent into Hallost, multiple brotherhoods came to reinforce the gheist garrison of the Scarred Fortress. The surrounding lands became locked in a bitter stalemate. From every direction came fresh armies hungry for battle, giving no quarter to their enemies. Yet in a single blast, the din of unending combat was drowned out by the first crack of the necroquake.

The shock wave of amethyst energy flooded up into the Booming Scar, resonating within the vast gorge before erupting back out again. Mortal armies were reduced to formations of dust, and the heroic spirits and Stormcasts who defended the Scarred Fortress were obliterated in a single grim swoop. In an instant, the war-torn region was transformed into a graveyard.

The necroquake also shredded the enchantments hiding the Booming Scar's ancient Stormvault. This secreted chamber held wonders from the Age of Myth beyond counting, yet its true purpose was as a cage. Inside the Stormvault, a malignant entity was housed – a deific being called the Stalagog that had grown up from deep within Shyish and pierced through the surface of Hallost. Appearing as a gargantuan stony spike, the Stalagog was formed of mighty souls that had wandered too deep into the Booming Scar, losing their way and eventually meeting a grim end in

the bottomless recesses of the canyon. With each absorbed spirit the monster grew larger, stabbing up towards Azyr.

In the aftermath of the necroquake, new armies rush to seize the lands surrounding the mouth of the Booming Scar. The Beastmaw is a pathway by which reinforcements can be brought into the Land of Dead Heroes, whereas the Scarred Fortress is the most defensible stronghold for leagues in any direction. Yet it is towards the Vault of the Stalagog that these armies have set their sights. Some wish to feed the entity within so that it may grow and impale the heavens, others wish to secure its prison for eternity – and some seek only to plunder the Stormvault of its myriad other riches.





# THE ONGOING CONQUEST OF HALLOST

Over the next few pages you will find new campaign rules, a new map and four narrative play battleplans for fighting your battles in the Booming Scar.

In the last issue of *White Dwarf*, we introduced a campaign system for playing games set in the haunted lands of Hallost. In this month's instalment, we build upon the campaign system with a new campaign map and four battleplans.

## INTRODUCING THE BOOMING SCAR

This month, the action moves north across Hallost, away from the forlorn Nordyrie (the campaign map featured in last month's issue) to the savage wildlands known as the Booming Scar. On this campaign map, up to three players can battle it out for supremacy. To the top of the map you will find three key locations. These represent the vast canyon found in the Booming Scar. The Beastmaw Realmgate stands at the mouth of the canyon, while the Scarred Fortress stands as a bastion protecting the once-secret Vault of the Stalagog.

You can find the Booming Scar campaign map on the next page.

## HALLOST BATTLEPLANS

In addition to a new campaign map, there are also four themed battleplans to use in your Hallost campaigns. To use these battleplans, roll on the table below to determine which battleplan is used for the battle.

HALLOST NARRATIVE BATTLEPLAN TABLE	
D6	Battleplan
1-2	The player with the fewest CVPs picks the battleplan to play. If players are tied on CVPs, instead roll on this table again.
3	The Seat of Power
4	Burn and Pillage
5	Endless Souls
6	The Challenger

# CAMPAIGN RULES: THE BOOMING SCAR

Spectral and Waaagh! energies drench the barren lands at the southern end of the Booming Scar, a vast canyon that is ripe for plunder. The Beastmaw Realmgate stands at the mouth of the canyon, while the Scarred Fortress stands as a bastion protecting the once-secret Vault of the Stalagog.

## Key Locations

Players gain the following benefits for holding key locations:

**Fortress:** A player who holds this location receives 1 additional command point at the start of each of their hero phases.

**Realmgate:** A player who holds this location can conquer locations that are not adjacent to any of their other

locations (the other restrictions for conquering locations still apply).

**Stormvault:** A player who holds this location can include 1 additional artefact of power when choosing their army.

## Victory Condition


**Pivotal Strongholds:** After 5 campaign rounds, the campaign ends. When the campaign ends, if one player

controls more key locations than the other players, they win the campaign. Otherwise the player with the most CVPs wins the campaign. If any players are tied for the most CVPs, play an additional campaign round and check the above victory conditions once more.

**Number of Players:** 3



## THE BOOMING SCAR

 2  1 GRAVE PRAIRIE	 1  0 PETRIFIED FOREST	 3  1 STORMVAULT	 2  0 TUNDRA	 2  0 TUNDRA
 0  1 MARSH	 1  0 PETRIFIED FOREST	 2  2 FORTRESS	 1  0 PETRIFIED FOREST	 0  1 RAVINE
 0  1 MARSH	 0  2 ROLLING CAIRNS	 1  3 REALMGATE	 0  2 ROLLING CAIRNS	 0  1 RAVINE
 0  1 MARSH	 0  1 MARSH	 2  1 GRAVE PRAIRIE	 0  1 RAVINE	 0  1 RAVINE
 1  1 FENLANDS	 0  1 MARSH	 0  1 MARSH	 1  0 PETRIFIED FOREST	 1  1 GALLOW BARRENS

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## BATTLEPLAN

# THE SEAT OF POWER

This battlefield is a meeting site upon which spectral chieftains have long gathered. Whoever holds the seat of power holds the attention of these mighty gheists, and with a rival army fast approaching, you must rush to control the deathly moot.

## THE ARMIES

In this battle, one player is the attacker and one player is the defender. The territories for the attacking and defending armies are shown on the map below.

## SET-UP

The players alternate setting up units one at a time, starting with the attacker. Units must be set up wholly within their own territory. Continue to set up units until both players have set up their armies. If one player finishes first, the opposing player sets up the rest of the units in their army, one after another.

## THE SEAT OF POWER

The centre of the battlefield is marked as the seat of power. At the start of each battle round, if a player has more models within 6" of the seat of power than their opponent, they are said to control the seat of power. If a player controls the seat of power, they can then pick one of the following oaths to be in effect for that battle round for all armies:

### OATHS

1	<b>Oath of Vengeance:</b> Add 1 to wound rolls for attacks made by a <b>HERO</b> that target an enemy <b>HERO</b> .
2	<b>Oath of Fealty:</b> Each time a wound or mortal wound is allocated to a general and not negated, the player whose army that general belongs to can pick a model from their army within 3" of that general. If they do so, the wound or mortal wound suffered by that general is negated and the model picked is slain.
3	<b>Oath of Glory:</b> Add 1 to charge rolls for all units.

## THE LESSER SEATS

There are 3 points on the battlefield that mark the lesser seats of chieftains. These are treated as objectives.

Note that the Seat of Power is not treated as an objective.

## FIRST TURN

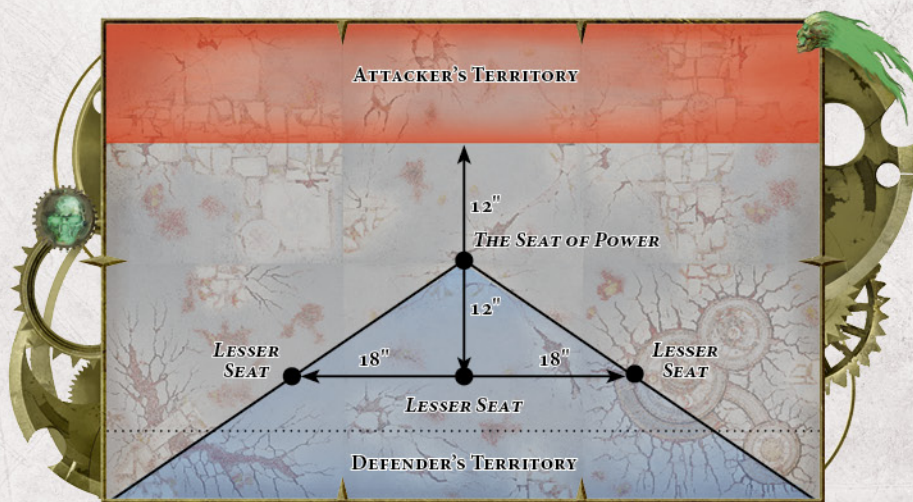
The defender takes the first turn of the first battle round.

## GLORIOUS VICTORY

The player with the most victory points at the end of the fifth battle round wins a **major victory**. If the players are tied on victory points at the end of the battle, the defender wins a **minor victory**.

## VICTORY POINTS

At the end of each battle round, the defender scores 1 victory point for each of the objectives they control. The attacker scores 3 victory points for each of the objectives they control.





## BATTLEPLAN

## BURN AND PILLAGE

The attacking force seeks not to conquer this land, but to utterly destroy it. The defender musters their warriors to guard the most valuable locations, but the enemy approaches under the cover of night, and the defenders know not from where they will strike.

## THE ARMIES

In this battle, one player is the attacker and one player is the defender. The territories for the attacking and defending armies are shown on the map below.

## SET-UP

The defender sets up their units first, wholly within their territory, and then sets up 6 objectives (see below). The attacker then sets up their units anywhere wholly within their territory.

## VALUABLE LOCATIONS

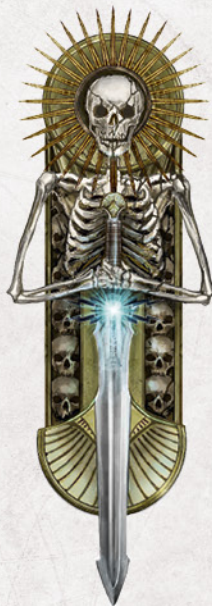
During set-up, the defender places 6 objectives anywhere on the battlefield, each more than 12" from any other objective and more than 6" from the battlefield edge.

## FIRST TURN

The attacker takes the first turn of the first battle round.

## UNDER THE DARKNESS OF NIGHT

In the first battle round, the maximum range of attacks and spells is limited to 12".

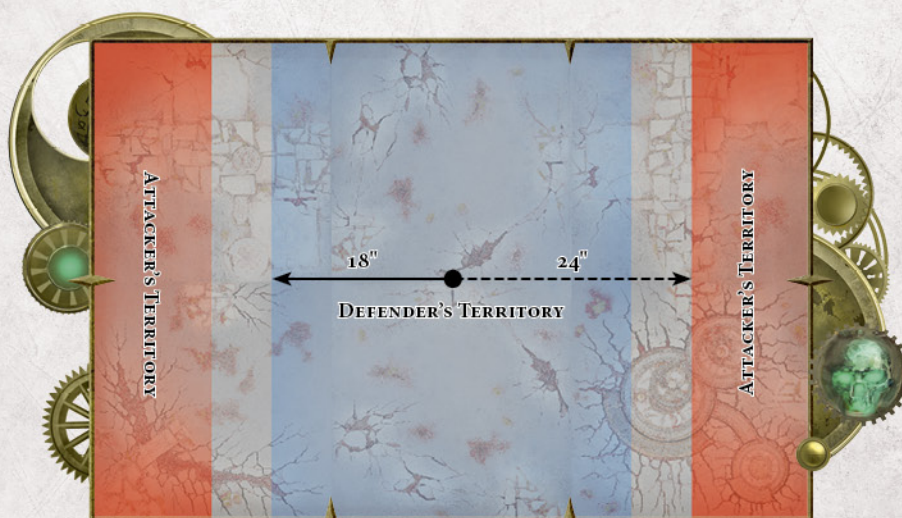


## BURNING AND PILLAGING

At the end of their turn, the attacker can burn any objective they control. If they do so, remove that objective from the battlefield. It is no longer in play. In addition, for each objective that has been burned, add 1 to battleshock tests taken by the defender.

## GLORIOUS VICTORY

If the attacker burns 4 objectives, the battle immediately ends and the attacker wins a **major victory**. Otherwise, at the end of the fifth battle round the defender wins a **major victory**.





## BATTLEPLAN ENDLESS SOULS

Infused with the deathly magics of Hallost, the attacker assails their foe with wave after wave of warriors. Even those slain are not gone for long before they rise up to bolster the ranks. For the beleaguered defenders, all they can do is stand fast and pray the enemy does not encroach too far before the night passes.



### THE ARMIES

In this battle, one player is the attacker and one player is the defender. The territories for the attacking and defending armies are shown on the map below (the defender's front-line territory and the defender's rear-line territory together count as the defender's territory).

### SET-UP

The players alternate setting up units one at a time, starting with the attacker. Units must be set up wholly within their own territory. Continue to set up units until both players have set up their armies. If one player finishes first, the opposing player sets up the rest of the units in their army, one after another.

### FIRST TURN

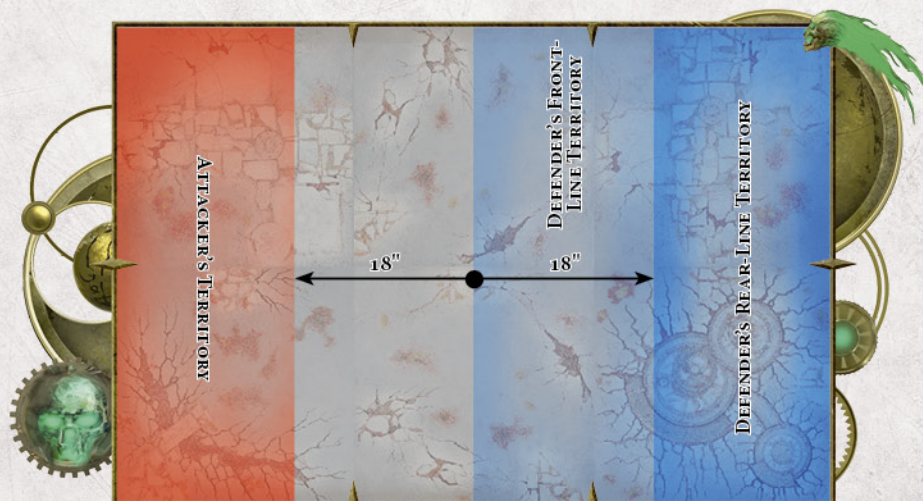
The attacker takes the first turn of the first battle round.

### WAVE AFTER WAVE

At the start of the attacker's hero phase, if any of the units from their army have been destroyed, a new unit identical to the one that was destroyed is added to their army. They set up the new unit wholly within 6" of the short battlefield edge adjacent to their territory.

### GLORIOUS VICTORY

At the end of the fifth battle round, count the number of models the attacker and the defender have in the defender's rear-line territory. Each **HERO** counts as 10 models instead of 1. If the attacker has more models, they win a **major victory**. Otherwise, check the defender's front-line territory in exactly the same manner. If the attacker has more models, they win a **minor victory**. Otherwise, the defender wins a **major victory**.





## BATTLEPLAN

# THE CHALLENGER

As the defenders draw up battle lines to meet the invading force, a lone warrior is spied advancing into the field of battle, arms stretched wide in defiance and voice bellowing. A challenge is issued for a worthy foe to stride forward so that a mighty duel can commence.

### THE ARMIES

In this battle, one player is the attacker and one player is the defender. The territories for the attacking and defending armies are shown on the map below.

### SET-UP

The attacker first nominates one of their **HEROES** to be a challenger and sets up that **HERO** in the centre of the battlefield. The attacker then declares a challenge. If the challenger is a **MONSTER** but the defender has no **HERO** that is a **MONSTER**, the defender can refuse or accept the challenge. Otherwise the challenge must be accepted. If the challenge is

accepted, the defender then sets up one of their **HEROES** 3" away from the challenger.

After that, the players alternate setting up units one at a time, starting with the attacker. Units must be set up wholly within their own territory. Continue to set up units until both players have set up their armies. If one player finishes first, the opposing player sets up the rest of the units in their army, one after another.



### FIRST TURN

The players roll off, and the winner decides who takes the first turn.

### GLORIOUS VICTORY

The player with the most victory points at the end of the fifth battle round wins a **major victory**. If the players are tied on victory points at the end of the battle, the defender wins a **minor victory**.

### VICTORY POINTS

Each time an enemy **HERO** is slain, you score a number of victory points equal to the Wounds characteristic of that **HERO**. If the enemy **HERO** slain was the challenger, or was the **HERO** set up by the defender when accepting the challenge, you score victory points equal to double the Wounds characteristic of that **HERO** instead.

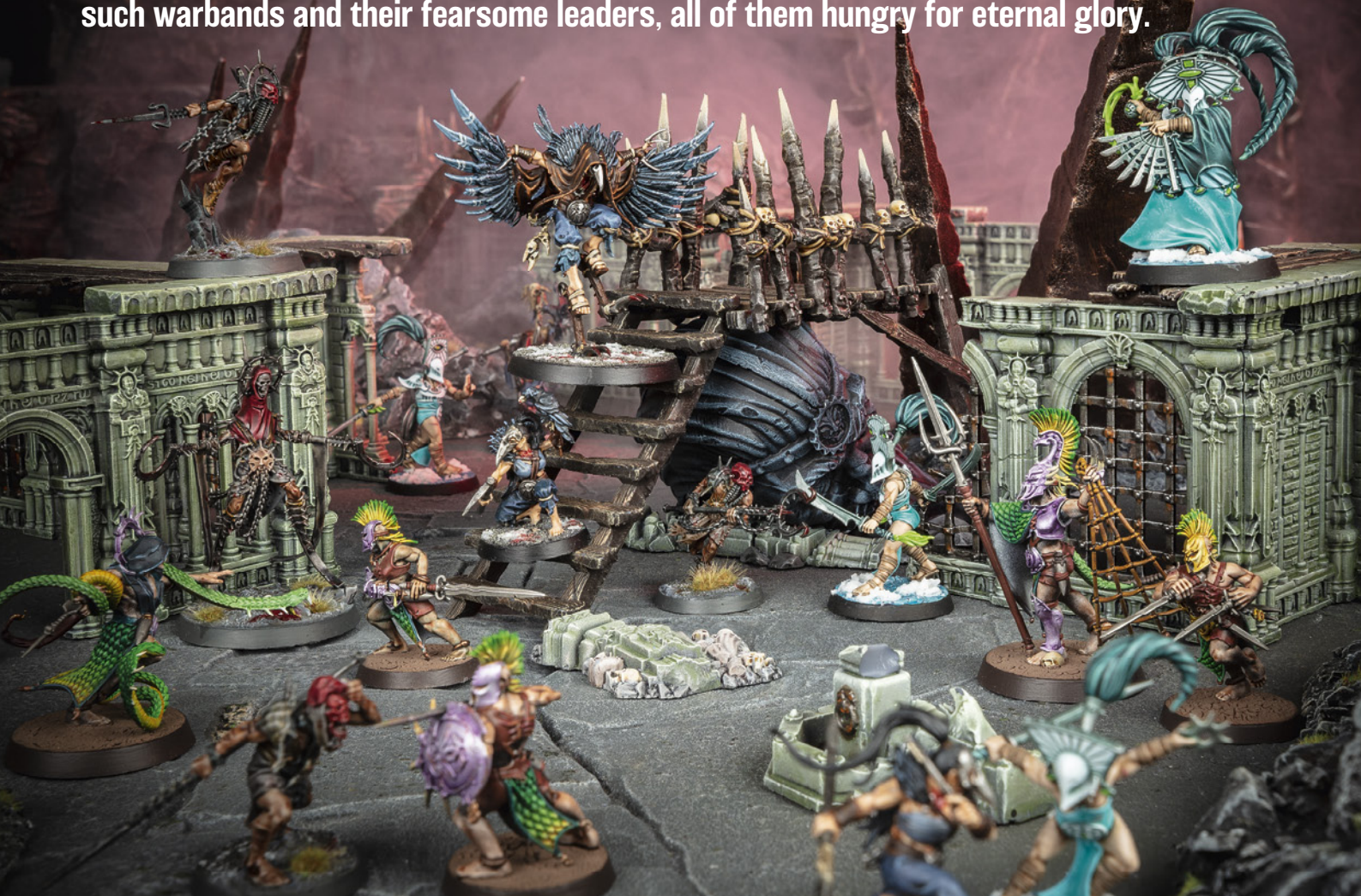
In addition, you score a number of victory points equal to the combined Wounds characteristics of friendly **HEROES** that are wholly within enemy territory at the end of the battle.





# WARBANDS OF CARNGRAD

Join us, fellow travellers, in the reaver city of Carngrad, where rival warbands battle for survival in the hope of joining Archaon's ever-growing legions. This is the tale of four such warbands and their fearsome leaders, all of them hungry for eternal glory.



**T**he Warlords of Vigilus have scattered to the four corners of the galaxy following their battles on the war-torn planet. The Stormvault Warlords have returned to their homes and families, the prize within the vault finally claimed.

*White Dwarf* is bereft of Warlords!

No, don't worry, of course it's not – because we've got a new series for *A Tale of Four Warlords*! Or should that be *A Tale of Four Warbands*? In this mini warlords series, four members of the *White Dwarf* team have packed up their bags, gathered their most loyal followers and set off for the Eightpoints to take part in their very own Warcry campaigns. Writer Dan will be playing as the Cypher Lords, photographer Jonathan as the Unmade, designer Matt as the Corvus Cabal and editor Lyle as the Splintered Fang.

## WARCRY!

Fancy starting a Warcry campaign? All you need is a warband and a Core Book, both of which are available from the Games Workshop website.

To help you out with your campaign, you can also fill in and download a free Warcry warband roster from the Warhammer Community website. Head there now to get started:

[warhammer-community.com](http://warhammer-community.com)

Having chosen their starting warbands and painted their first models, all four warlords have begun their campaigns into the Bloodwind Spoil. In this issue we take a look at the models they've painted and find out about the background stories they've devised for their warriors. We also find out how their first two battles and first convergences went. As it turns out, our aspirants to Archaon's legions have a lot to learn. They blame the dice a lot. But then dice are fickle tools of Chaos, so that's only fair.

Over the next few issues, we'll get to see the four warbands develop and grow as they progress through their respective campaigns. Will they earn the favour of the Chaos Gods and join the Everchosen, or will they become eternally damned, doomed to wander the wastes of the Bloodwind Spoil for all eternity? Well, you'll just have to keep reading to find out, won't you!



DAN HARDEN | CYPHER LORDS

## THE JADE EYE

Travelling from the highest mountains of Hysh, the Jade Eye were long ago tainted by the Changer of Ways. They seek to join Archaon's mighty legions, but first they must prove their worth to him.

**W**hite Dwarf staff writer Dan picked the Cypher Lords as his Warcry warband because he liked the idea of them somersaulting onto buildings just like he does. In his dreams, that is ...

'The Cypher Lords are the coolest warband, in my opinion,' says Dan. 'The models all have really acrobatic action poses that clearly show they're skilled dualists. They've also got a really different aesthetic to the other warbands. You get the feeling they're good guys, but if you know what to look for you can tell they've fallen to Chaos.'

'I painted my warriors in really cold, icy colours to show they hail from one of the snow-capped Hyshian mountain ranges. Perhaps they were looking for enlightenment at the top of the highest peaks and strayed a bit too close to the aether, drawing Tzeentch's attention in the Realm of Chaos. Perhaps they just read the wrong books and ended up tainted. Either way, they're now in the Bloodwind Spoil searching for answers.'

### THE JADE EYE

The symbol of the Jade Eye warband is a staring green eye surrounded by a frost-wreathed eight-pointed star. It represents the green eyes that are a common feature among the warband's members and the snowy mountain realm from which they hail. The symbol is rarely seen outside their holdings, for the Jade Eye are secretive and mysterious people.



### CHOOSING A COLOUR SCHEME

**Dan:** I like the blue tone used on the studio models, but I chose green as my spot colour instead of pink. I painted all my models over a Grey Seer basecoat, using Kislev Flesh and White Scar for the pale skin and Aethermatic Blue for the robes and tabards.



### A SPY IN THE HOUSE OF TALONS

Dan picked the Spy in the House of Talons campaign for his warband, reasoning that they're trying to worm their way into Carngrad's high society. He also chose to play his campaign in Champion Mode, just to make it difficult for himself!

**LEADER**  
**LOQUACIOUS AMARANTH**  
Thrallmaster

**INCARNADINE**  
Luminate

**CERULEAN**  
Mirrorblade with Glaive

**CELADON**  
Mirrorblade with Glaive

**AUREOLIN**  
Mirrorblade with Duelling Swords

**VIRIDIAN**  
Mindbound

**CERISE**  
Mindbound

**AOZORA**  
Mindbound





JONATHAN STAPLETON | THE UNMADE

# THE JOYOUS AMPUTATION

The Joyous Amputation are sadistic mutilators who believe that lopping off a few limbs – either those of their enemies or their own – is the quickest path to enlightenment.

Photographer Jonathan is always on the hunt for unusual-looking models to include in his photos. When he saw the Unmade, he knew exactly which warband he wanted to collect.

'The Unmade are standout models and very different to anything else we have in Age of Sigmar,' says Jonathan. 'They're pretty grim and disturbing, with missing limbs and no faces behind their masks. That's actually another benefit of the models, because I'm not that good at painting faces! Besides, the masks are scarier, which is much cooler.'

'The story behind my warband is that they're a bunch of degenerate cultists from the Realm of Death that travel to other realms in search of their lost prophet, the Flayed Prince. They believe that by placing themselves and their enemies on the flensing rack, they will be granted visions that will lead them to him. Or they might just really like inflicting pain ...'

## THE JOYOUS AMPUTATION

The symbol of the Joyous Amputation is a flensed face pulled into the shape of a crude shield. The warband uses the flayed faces of friends and family to mark out their territories, planting these grisly standards at the borders of their lands. They serve as both a warning to enemies and a welcoming sight to the warband's members.



## CHOOSING A COLOUR SCHEME

Jonathan: I used a Grey Seer undercoat for my models, then painted all the red with Flesh Tearers Red. The skin is Fyreslayer Flesh followed by Guilliman Flesh.



## PATH OF THE FLAYED PRINCE

Jonathan chose to play the Path of the Flayed Prince campaign, as he felt it was only right that his warband follow in the steps of their prophet. After his first few games, Jonathan has already started painting more fighters for his warband.

## LEADER

**SINOUS SPIDER**  
Blissful One

**WEEPING THROAT**  
Joyous One

## SLICED SMILE

Ascended One

**TONGUEPEELER**  
Ascended One

**FLAYED SPIRIT**  
Ascended One

## HAEMO

Awakened One with Flail

## SLIPPERY WOUND

Awakened One with Brutal Polearm

## STUMP

Awakened One with Brutal Polearm

## FLENSER

Awakened One with Brutal Polearm



MATT HUTSON | CORVUS CABAL

## THE PENUMBRAL HUNTERS

From the dark depths of Ulgu they came, the Penumbral Hunters. As shadows they entered Carngrad, intent on a secret mission that perhaps even they don't truly understand.



### WAR OF TALONS

Matt chose to play the War of Talons campaign, as he thought the idea of getting the warlords to fight each other, then hire him to do their dirty work, sounded like fun. He's already hunting for a Raptoryx to aid him.

**LEADER**  
**RUSA RANIS**  
Shadow Piercer

**DIS DREHST**  
Shrike Talon

**VEIG VEEL**  
Spire Stalker

**CRIN CRUL**  
Spire Stalker

**KRIS KROS**  
Cabalist with Familiar

**BRAKA BARAKA**  
Cabalist with Spear

**SHRAK SLAK**  
Cabalist

**SIV SEL**  
Cabalist with Spear

**TYEN TEEL**  
Cabalist

**M**att, our long-serving designer, was the first member of the team to pick his warband, opting for the avian-themed Corvus Cabal. It was actually their love of feathers that drew Matt's eye in the first place.

'I'm quite a fan of all things Tzeentchian, so I knew right from the start that the Corvus Cabal were for me,' says Matt. 'Though they may not know it yet, the Cabal's preoccupation with birds and shadowy dealings definitely sets them on the road to the Changer of the Ways. I also really like the Shrike Talon model – he's the coolest miniature in the Warcry range, in my opinion.'

'The background behind my warband is that they've travelled from the Realm of Shadow because they've been hired to assassinate another warband's leader. I've told Lyle that Dan's leader has hired them to kill his leader, and I've told Dan that Lyle hired them to kill his leader. Actually, we're just going to kill them both and take all their money. At least, that's the plan.'

### THE PENUMBRAL HUNTERS

Hailing from the Realm of Shadow, the Penumbral Hunters are spectral fighters who lurk in patches of darkness waiting to strike out at unwary foes. Their sigil is an indistinct, shadowy bird skull surrounded by bladed feathers. It's rumoured that their symbol only becomes distinct when seen out of the corner of one's eye.



### CHOOSING A COLOUR SCHEME

**Matt:** I painted my models in a similar scheme to 'Eavy Metal, but grubbier and with more brown on their clothing. I used Fenrisian Grey and Russ Grey for their feathers, then shaded them with Gryph-charger Grey and Black Templar.





LYLE LOWERY | SPLINTERED FANG

# THE VENOMBORN

Deadly gladiators one and all, the Venomborn walk the streets of Carngrad, issuing challenges of arena combat. Little do their foes know that their blades are tipped with deadly venom ...

**E**ditor Lyle set his sights on the Splintered Fang warband, as he liked the reptilian scales of the warband's armour as well as the little serpents that come with the kit.

'The model that first caught my eye was the Serpent Caller, who looks super-sweet!' says Lyle. 'Anyone covered in snakes is surely pretty good in the game, right? I also really like the armour and clothing worn by the Splintered Fang models, and I thought their scaled clothing would look great painted with Contrast paints.'

'This painting scheme gave me the inspiration for the background of my warband. I imagine they're obsessed with venom, and they ritualistically baptise themselves with it to purify their souls, leaving their hair bleached and stringy. They even use different venoms to etch the plates and dye the scales of their armour in vibrant purples, yellows and greens to make themselves stand out like a venomous creature warning its foes.'

## THE VENOMBORN

The Venomborn are obsessed with venom and poison in all its forms and thrive on the agony it inflicts on their foes.

Their symbol is a worn skull with a single green drop of venom on the forehead. It's rumoured that the poisons distilled by the Venomborn are so potent that a single drop is enough to kill a foe outright if it enters their bloodstream.



## CHOOSING A COLOUR SCHEME

**Lyle:** I undercoated all my models with Chaos Black, then a zenithal layer of Wraithbone. The scales are all painted with Iyanden Yellow working up to Warp Lightning, then finally Terradon Turquoise.



## VENOM OF THE GODS

Lyle picked the second of the two Splintered Fang campaigns in the core book, as it is the one most closely aligned with the background of his warband. He's already looking for new recruits to help him on his quest.

**LEADER**  
**OPHIUS PHAG'HANNAH**  
Trueblood

**JEHK SITH'USS**  
Serpent Caller

**SERPENTS!**

**LASH'YA ODOLETH**  
Venomblood with Barbed Whip

**MA'AMBA SPLITFANG**  
Venomblood with Duelling Blades

**PYTH'US ONIDAE**  
Pureblood

**OSSYUTH ULLINASH**  
Clearblood with Shield

**MA'SUTH SINNETH**  
Clearblood

**SILREN ULLINASH**  
Clearblood

**AGKIST PISCIVOR**  
Clearblood



## LET BATTLE COMMENCE!

Over the next few pages, our four warlords tell of their successes and failures on the battlefield, including their first convergence. First up is Dan and the Jade Eye.

**Dan:** I realised early on that my warband is all about speed and slicing people up fast. Sadly for me, my first battle was against an even faster warband – Jes Bickham's Corvus Cabal. It was an interesting first outing that really got me thinking about what warriors I include in my Hammer, Dagger and Shield, as I had most of them in completely the wrong places in this game. Now I always put at least one 2" range fighter in each group so that when enemy warriors charge in, I can hopefully strike back without having to move (thereby giving me two opportunities to attack). This tactic has not worked for me so far. It needs refining.

My second game was against Matt's Corvus Cabal in The Hunted, with my leader as the hunted one. Not only did I successfully protect my leader from harm, but I took out six warriors (including the Shrike Talon) in the process.

My first convergence was against Jonathan and his Unmade and used the Higher Ground victory condition. Right from the start I struggled to hurt Jonathan's Toughness 4 Ascended Ones, and it took four of my fighters to bring down the Blissful One. Four! I lost the convergence 15-18. My fighters clearly need to learn how to climb up buildings better.



The Jade Eye discover that their chakrams may be good at slicing off limbs at a distance, but sadly for them the Unmade enjoy that sort of thing. Loquacious Amaranth has to resort to punching a Joyous One to death instead.

### EBB AND FLOW

Jes and Dan's battle was Ebb and Flow, which saw them battling over three objectives that changed their value every round. Both leaders took and held objectives early on, and Dan almost secured victory when he killed Jes's Shadow Piercer with his Mirrorblades. Sadly for Dan, Jes's Shrike Talon swooped in to deny him one of the objectives in the fourth round, securing Jes a 5-4 victory.





# THE HUNTERS, HUNTED!

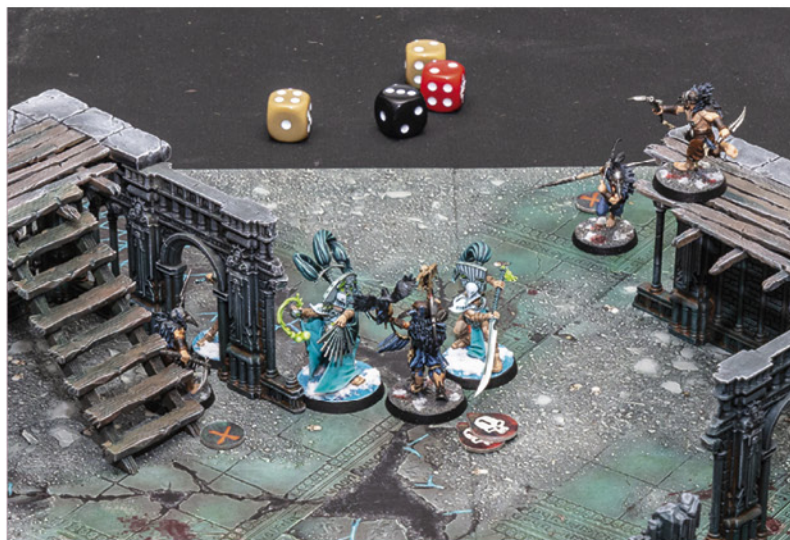
While Rusa Ranis holds off the majority of the Venomborn single-handedly, Dis Drehst and the two Spire Stalkers attempt to sneak around the back and take the treasure when the snakes aren't looking.



**Matt:** I've had mixed success in my campaign so far. My first battle was against Dan, and I really struggled to cause enough damage to his warriors before they took me out. I think I committed my warriors too early and against the wrong targets, and they ended up out of position. My Shrike Talon, Dis Drehst, was also the first to die.

Then I fought Jonathan and his Unmade. The mission was Crush, and we had to destroy each other's Daggers. The battle quickly descended into a big scrap in the middle of the board where I ended up ganging up on Jonathan's Blissful One (because if you don't, bad things will happen to you). I won the game, but the Shrike Talon was, again, the first to die ...

My convergence was against Lyle's Splintered Fang warband, and boy was it tough! I took out his Serpent Caller and Serpents early on, ensuring there were no snakes on the plain, but several members of his warband carry shields, and that made them very hard to kill. In the end, his warriors just wore down my fighters and kept them far enough away from the treasure so that I couldn't grab it and run away. I wouldn't say there was any real tactical brilliance on Lyle's part, he was just lucky! At least my Shrike Talon survived, which was a pleasant surprise.



## THE HUNTED

As you will have read earlier, Matt's first game was against Dan and his Cypher Lords. Unfortunately for Matt, his Spire Stalkers and Shrike Talon were held up, meaning that his Shadow Piercer had to deal with Dan's leader alone. The encounter did not end well, as the Thrallmaster

used his shadowy recall ability to bring a Mirrorblade into the combat, too. Matt's last bid for glory was playing the quad ability Death from Above on one of his Spire Stalkers, who leapt across two buildings and plunged his dagger towards the Thrallmaster. And missed ...



## LOSS OF LIMBS IS A SIGN OF PROGRESSION

**Jonathan:** My first battle – Drawn and Quartered – was against Lyle and his Splintered Fang, and it involved taking and holding four objectives. I took several of them early on, but Lyle was able to swarm one of the objectives with snakes and steal it from me. I was fighting a losing battle from that point. But I did learn something – Awakened Ones are awful fighters! However, they do have long ranges, so now the Ascended Ones go in first, with the Awakened Ones backing them up with their polearms.

My game against Matt (see below right) was also a crushing defeat. Things were going poorly. My third game

was more successful, as I stopped Dan completing his convergence. I scored a couple of kills early on, which gave me the advantage, but if the game had continued, Dan would almost certainly have wiped out my warband.

My own convergence was against ex-White Dwarf photographer Martyn Lyon and his Iron Golem. The Screams in the Dark convergence says I have to kill all the fighters in either Martyn's Hammer, Shield or Dagger. I ended up fighting just two warriors, but one was the ogor. My Blissful One caused 22 wounds on it, but it wasn't enough to kill him. So I failed my convergence, too!



### HOPES CRUSHED

When Jonathan and Matt met in their first game, Jonathan went all in on the assault in an attempt to destroy the warriors in Matt's Dagger. However, he cunningly kept the warriors in his own Dagger well hidden so that Matt couldn't reach them. But he didn't count on the speed of the Shrike Talon and Spire Stalkers, who snuck up behind his Awakened Ones and used the Grisly Trophy ability to increase their attacks and, indeed, claim some grisly trophies!



Martyn watches on in amusement as Jonathan tries to hunt down victims for his gang. The Joyous Amputation succeed in cornering one Iron Golem, but the ogor remains steadfastly and stubbornly alive.





# SLIPPERY CUSTOMERS



**Lyle:** My first warcry battle against Jonathan was a really bloody affair (see right) that saw me triumph over the Unmade, but just barely.

My second game was as an adversary in Matt's convergence. I knew he'd be concentrating on the treasure markers, so I defended them as best I could, whittling down his weaker fighters so that he wouldn't have enough fighters to carry the treasure away. It was victory through attrition. It was in this game that I really learned the value of the Poisoned Weapon ability – always wounding on 3s is really powerful. And my leader's Ensnaring Net ability is very reliable for stopping a powerful fighter. If you want an enemy fighter dead, the Splintered fang are great at it!

My third battle was my convergence, which I played against Dan. The mission – A Potent Blend – is very similar to Matt's convergence, and we drew the Bloodwind twist again, so I thought I was in a pretty good position to do well in this game. I extracted one of the treasures with Ma'amba Splitfang and another two with my leader and Pureblood. But then things went wrong! Dan's warriors started somersaulting off buildings and killing the warriors with the treasure. In the end, I didn't even have four fighters left to carry it all. A sad day indeed!



## SO ... MUCH ... BLOOD!


















Lyle and Jonathan played their first game against each other in what turned out to be a pretty ferocious battle. They drew the Dark Omens twist, which meant they had to draw two new twists. They drew Bloodwind and Grudge Match, which meant their fighters could potentially gain +2 Strength!


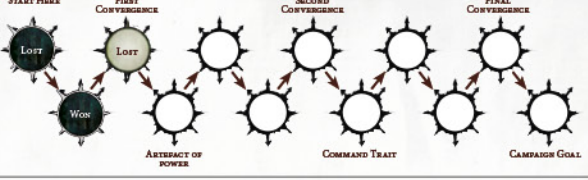








By the end of the third round, the two players were on five victory points each, which meant they had to continue. By this point, though, Lyle had taken four of Jonathan's fighters out of action, making it virtually impossible to retake the objectives. As it turns out, it *was* impossible.


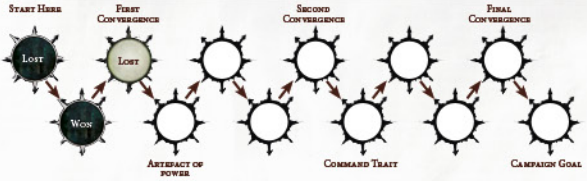





























# A TALE OF FOUR WARBANDS

And so our four warbands have made it to their first convergence. But none were successful in their attempts! Join us next month to find out what new trials await them.

THE VENOMBORN		LYLE	
CAMPAIGN QUEST	GLORY POINTS	DOMINATED TERRITORY	
VENOM OF THE GODS	7		
CAMPAIGN PROGRESS TRACKER			
START HERE	FIRST CONVERGENCE	SECOND CONVERGENCE	FINAL CONVERGENCE
			
			
	ARTIFACT OF POWER	COMMAND TRAIT	CAMPAIGN GOAL
LEADER / FAVOURED WARRIOR			
LEADER / FAVOURED WARRIOR NAME	DESTINY LEVELS		ARTEFACTS
OBVIOUS PEACEMAKER			
COMMAND TRAIT			
FIGHTERS			
FIGHTER NAME	FIGHTER TYPE	ARTEFACTS	DESTINY LEVELS
ISUK SUTU'US	SERPANT CALLER		
SERPENTH	SERPENTS		
LASH'YA ODOLETH	VENOMBLOOD WITH BARBED WHIP	GODBEAST IDOL	
MALMBA SWIFTWIND	VENOMBLOOD WITH DUELLING BLADES		
PYTH'US ONEDAS	PUREBLOOD		
OSWUTH ULLINASH	CLEARBLOOD WITH SHIELD	DEAD	
MALWTH SINKETH	CLEARBLOOD		
SILREN ULLINASH	CLEARBLOOD		
AGIST PECCOR	CLEARBLOOD		

PENUMBRAL HUNTERS		MATT	
CAMPAIGN QUEST	GLORY POINTS	DOMINATED TERRITORY	
WAR OF TALONS	9		
CAMPAIGN PROGRESS TRACKER			
			
LEADER / FAVOURED WARRIOR			
LEADER / FAVOURED WARRIOR NAME	DESTINY LEVELS		ARTEFACTS
RUSA RABIS			
COMMAND TRAIT			
FIGHTERS			
FIGHTER NAME	FIGHTER TYPE	ARTEFACTS	DESTINY LEVELS
DIE DREHIT	SNIKE TALON		
VING VEEL	SNIKE STALKER		
CRIN CHUL	SNIKE STALKER		
KRIS KROS	CABALIST WITH FAMILIAR		
BRAGA BARAKA	CABALIST WITH SPEAR		
TYEN TEEL	CABALIST		
SERAK SLAK	CABALIST		
SIV SEL	CABALIST WITH SPEAR		

THE JADE EYE		DAN		
CAMPAIGN QUEST		GLORY POINTS	DOMINATED TERRITORY	
A SPY IN THE HOUSE OF TALONS		7		
CAMPAIGN PROGRESS TRACKER				
<div><div>START HERE</div><div>FIRST CONVERGENCE</div><div>SECOND CONVERGENCE</div><div>FINAL CONVERGENCE</div><div>ARTIFACT OF POWER</div><div>COMMAND TRAIT</div><div>CAMPAIGN GOAL</div></div> 				
LEADER / FAVOURED WARRIOR				
LEADER / FAVOURED WARRIOR NAME	DESTINY LEVELS		ARTEFACTS	
LOQUACIOUS AMARANTH				
COMMAND TRAIT				
FIGHTERS				
FIGHTER NAME	FIGHTER TYPE	ARTEFACTS	DESTINY LEVELS	
INCARNADISE	LUMINATE	JAR OF CHAMONIC GLOWFLIES		
CEKULIAN	MIRROREBLADE WITH GLAIVE	SWIFTWIND DUST		
CHLADOR	MIRROREBLADE WITH GLAIVE			
AUSOLEN	MIRROREBLADE WITH DUELLING SWORDS			
VERIDIAN	MINDBOUND			
CEKEE	MINDBOUND			
AKORA	MINDBOUND			

THE JOYOUS AMPUTATION		JONATHAN	
CAMPAIGN QUEST		GLORY POINTS	DOMINATED TERRITORY
PATH OF THE FLAYED PRINCE		6	
CAMPAIGN PROGRESS TRACKER			
START HERE	FIRST CONVERGENCE	SECOND CONVERGENCE	FINAL CONVERGENCE
			
			
	ARTIFACT OF POWER	COMMAND TRAIT	CAMPAIGN GOAL
LEADER / FAVOURED WARRIOR			
LEADER / FAVOURED WARRIOR NAME	DESTINY LEVELS		ARTEFACTS
SINVOUS SPIDER			IRONOAK SEED
COMMAND TRAIT			
FIGHTERS			
FIGHTER NAME	FIGHTER TYPE	ARTEFACTS	DESTINY LEVELS
WEEPING THROAT	JOYOUS ONE		 
SLEED-SHILE	ASCENDED ONE		
TONGUEPEELER	ASCENDED ONE		
FLAYED SPIRIT	ASCENDED ONE		
HARMO	AWAKENED ONE WITH FLAIL		
STUMP	AWAKENED ONE WITH BRUTAL POLAR M		
FLURRIE	AWAKENED ONE WITH BRUTAL POLAR M		
SLEPPY WOUND	AWAKENED ONE WITH BRUTAL POLAR M		



# WARHAMMER 40,000

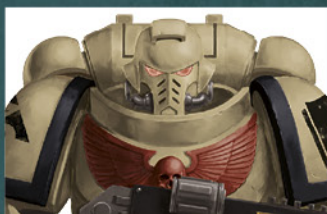
In the grim darkness of the far future, there is only war! And this month there's also a pair of short stories, designers' notes, news from the Indomitus Crusade and we create our own Space Marines Chapter.







**CREATING A MONSTER**  
Waaagh! Ghazghkull is back and bigger than ever. Turn to [page 76](#) for design notes and painting information on this iconic alien menace.



**THE TOME KEEPERS**  
The White Dwarf team are creating their very own Space Marines Chapter! The saga begins on [page 84](#). Join us to find out more about the Tome Keepers!





# ECHOES FROM THE WARP



## ROBIN CRUDDACE

**In this month's Echoes from the Warp, Robin Cruddace rallies the Warhammer 40,000 rules writing team to recount their heroic deeds, or at least to let us know how they fared during a recent team tournament. Together they stood united against all foes, from monstrous xenos to foul traitors, and though certainly bloodied, did they emerge victorious?**

**W**arhammer World hosts a huge number of events every year, and each member of the Warhammer 40,000 rules writing team – that's James Gallagher, Elliot Hamer, Duncan Waugh and me – attends a handful of these in any one year. One event caught our eye as being a bit different, however – a team tournament. The basic idea is that you enter as a team of four, each person fielding a 1,750 point army. As the Warhammer 40,000 rules writing team has four members, we decided to test our mettle, as it were. There were further restrictions in the team tournament about not taking exactly the same army, but we sidestepped that by virtue of taking four different factions. Otherwise it was a

straightforward matched play tournament using the missions from the latest edition of Chapter Approved, with one notable twist: pairings.

Before each tournament round, the two opposing teams had to 'pair off'. This essentially was a process whereby the teams would decide who would be playing against whom. It worked a little something like this: team A nominates one of their players and declares what army they have. Team B nominates two members of their team to take on the challenger, again, declaring what armies they have. The challenger then chooses one of those opponents to play against, and that's the first pairing done. The other team then does the same, and so on, until everyone has an opponent to play against. It was a really interesting system, and while not unique to the event, it is one I had not personally experienced before. Ultimately, while I'm sure lots of clever mind games and tactics were employed elsewhere, for us, it essentially helped to ensure that we didn't have any terrible matchups and also that we got to play different armies. All we had left to do was nominate a team captain (we bestowed that honour on Elliot), recite the litanies of battle and prepare for combat. Let's see how everyone fared.



## ELLIOT HAMER

Elliot used to work in the Warhammer World events team, so he's no stranger to tournaments. He joined the studio at the same time as Duncan, the two of them forming the rules-writing duo Waugh-Hamer.

I decided to take the almighty Adeptus Custodes to the event! They were backed up by some particularly zealous Astra Militarum to give me some numbers on the table and cheer on the Custodes as they marched to war. My goal for the weekend was to have some good fun playing games with my colleagues – the first time we had done so outside of playtesting future material. Here are a couple of war stories.

The event saw my first game in a tournament against Genestealer Cults. Turn 1, my units spread out in a search pattern, peeking under rocks and into dumpsters looking for something to fight. When the cult did arrive, it was a wall of muscle carrying picks, hammers and road signs that put a sizable dent in my units – darn those Abergants! The mission involved scoring victory points with Characters, so the Astra Militarum were given the task of distraction while my Characters made a 'tactical withdrawal'. At this point, mayhem ensued. A Shield-Captain with one wound remaining fought a Hive Tyrant allied to the cults and slew it, the Hive Tyrant lashing out with death throes and slaying my Shield-Captain in return! In the last turn of the game, a Kelermorph needed

to shoot and destroy my other Shield-Captain – otherwise he would heroically intervene and turn him into purple paste. Whoever killed the other won the game. The Kelermorph drew his three revolvers and gunned down his target, claiming a mighty kill for the cult! Overall it was a game of gasps, groans and gobsnacks, the closest game of Warhammer 40,000 I've ever had.

A game against the T'au was the epitome of grim dark. It was a hard-fought victory in which the Bell of Lost Souls would toll for many noble warriors that fell in battle, but a victory is a victory in the eyes of the Imperium. I was totally outgunned, and T'au Overwatch meant charging them was a terrifying proposition, so I focused on the mission. My units locked down the objectives under fire from the enemy and dealt very little damage in return. At the end of the game, I had destroyed around 300 points of units, while the T'au had destroyed around 1500. Nonetheless, the victory points were 29-12 in favour of the Imperium, and the age-old maxim rang true – always play the mission. I came away with two wins and three losses overall. It was a great weekend, and I can't wait for the next one.



Echoes from the Warp is a regular column about the rules, tactics and ongoing development of Warhammer 40,000 hosted by games developer Robin Cruddace. In this issue's instalment, Robin and the Warhammer 40,000 rules writers talk about playing in a team tournament.



#### ROBIN CRUDDACE

As the senior rules writer of the Warhammer 40,000 team, a great weight of responsibility sits on Robin's shoulders – to perform well in the tournament, of course! But how did he fare with his Howling Griffons?

For the tournament, I decided that my Howling Griffons were going to march to war once more, this time using the new *Codex: Space Marines* and *Codex: Supplement: Ultramarines*. Knowing that the missions we would be using were those from Chapter Approved, which focus heavily on securing objective markers, I took a force with plenty of Troops choices to maximise the number of units I had with Objective Secured. I had five challenging games, with plenty of standout moments. Slaughtering nearly sixty Fire Warriors in the first turn of my first game was beyond my wildest hopes. Unfortunately, the two Riptides and the Broadside team left standing were more than capable of wreaking vengeance, and they destroyed my army over the next few turns with merciless efficiency. In my second game I gunned down none other than Marneus Calgar in a storm of assault cannon fire, and during another game my Contemptor Dreadnought pulled the leg off a Heirodule and used it to inflict a massive 15 wounds on the beast in a single fight. During my final game, my Warlord, Brother-Captain Trogan, fought in an epic duel with a World Eaters Warlord over two battle rounds. He emerged bloodied but victorious (before being gunned down by a

Hellforged Leviathan Dreadnought, but heroes rarely live long in the 41st Millennium).

The moment of the tournament for me, without a shadow of a doubt, was when my opponent's Deathwatch Kill Team killed one of my Tactical Squads in a hail of storm bolter fire, only for the plasma cannon-armed warrior to be inspired by his Company Banner and take aim with his trusted weapon one last time. Setting power to max, he pulled the trigger and destroyed my opponent's prized allied Knight Castellan. Truly that Son of Mancora died a hero's death. His name shall not be forgotten. I think that's one of the big take-aways for me from the event, actually: never take a Space Marine army to war without an Ancient in tow. I also have a newfound respect for the Transhuman Physiology and Duty Eternal Stratagems, which hands-down kept me in one particular game during which I got charged by two Tyranid bio-titans and a flying Hive Tyrant before I'd even had my first turn! All in all, I had a tonne of fun at the team tournament against five great opponents in some very closely fought battles. At the end of the weekend, I had chalked up a respectable – and exactly average – result of two wins, two losses and one draw.

Robin's Howling Griffons have appeared on many tournament and campaign battlefields over the years. His red and yellow colour scheme always attracts a lots of attention. Normally from enemy fire ...







## JAMES GALLAGHER

James chose to take his Chaos Knights to the tournament – a force he originally painted for A Tale of Four Warlords last year. He was the only heretic player amongst the four members of the team.

I had originally intended to bring an Imperial army to stay on theme with the rest of the team, but after a busy month, I decided to take the easy route and bring my Chaos Knights out to play. Even then, I still needed to paint two of Forge World's lovely War Dog Moirax to complete my 1,750-point force. My plan was to field two Detachments, one with a Knight Despoiler and the two Moirax, which could put out an unholy amount of firepower. These are fast enough to control backfield objectives, while the other Detachment, consisting of my Knight Tyrant and two more War Dogs, would advance up the field and threaten the enemy, tie up crucial units and generally cause carnage.

In game one, I volunteered to take one for the team, and I suffered a decisive loss up against a very shooty Iron Hands force. But after this, my army started to come into its own. The second game saw the noble scions of House Lucaris facing off against an army of Blood Angels supported by an Imperial Knight Detachment featuring a very imposing Cerastus Knight-Atrapos. Having written the datasheet for this monstrosity, I knew if I let it get close, it could really put the hurt on my war engines. It seems like events such as these always provide ample opportunities for us, in the spirit of every great horror film, to be destroyed by our own creations. With several speedy Blood Angels units rushing at me, I had to really think hard

about which targets to prioritise. Luckily a series of fortunate rolls to see if the game ended ensured my battered survivors snatch victory in battle round 7!

Another win in the third game on Sunday morning saw my Knight Tyrant rampage its way through the heart of an Adeptus Mechanicus army, destroying with impunity everything that came into range of its thundercoil harpoon. I have a real soft spot for this weapon, and I genuinely get upset if my Knight Tyrant doesn't get a chance to use it at least once in a game, if only for the look on my opponent's face when I explain it has a Damage characteristic of 10!

In my fourth game, I faced another serious challenge in the form of a Gargantuan Squiggoth packed full of Flash Gitz in the Cut off the Head mission. A battery of Mek Gunz and shokk attack gun-wielding Meks destroyed my bigger knights while my focus was on the rampaging Squiggoth, and it was only a plucky charge from my last War Dog that saw her slay both Big Meks in the same Fight phase that enabled me to scrape a draw in a very entertaining game.

In the last game, I managed to squeeze another win against a very resilient Salamanders force, which gave me three wins, one draw and one loss over the course of the weekend. Not a bad showing from the 'noble' scions of House Lucaris.

James' Chaos Knights, as featured in the Warlords of Vigilus final Battle Report. James had added two new Chaos Knights to his force since then. Apparently this many guns wasn't quite enough firepower.







## DUNCAN WAUGH

Duncan joined the Warhammer 40,000 team a year ago. His first project was *Psychic Awakening: Faith & Fury*, and he's been working on psychic shenanigans ever since. Perhaps that's why he chose to field Grey Knights.

Of late I have been experimenting with various Grey Knight builds, and for the event I decided to try putting a mono-faction list through its paces in order to see how well the divinations of the Prognosticators would perform without the aid of their Imperial brothers. One thing Grey Knights can struggle with is putting sufficient bodies on the table to effectively control enough objective markers. As such, rather than attempt to compete in what was already an uphill battle, I decided (perhaps unwisely), to sack off The Four Pillars mission as an automatic loss, and instead concentrate on using my offensive output to try and keep objective markers clear in the other missions.

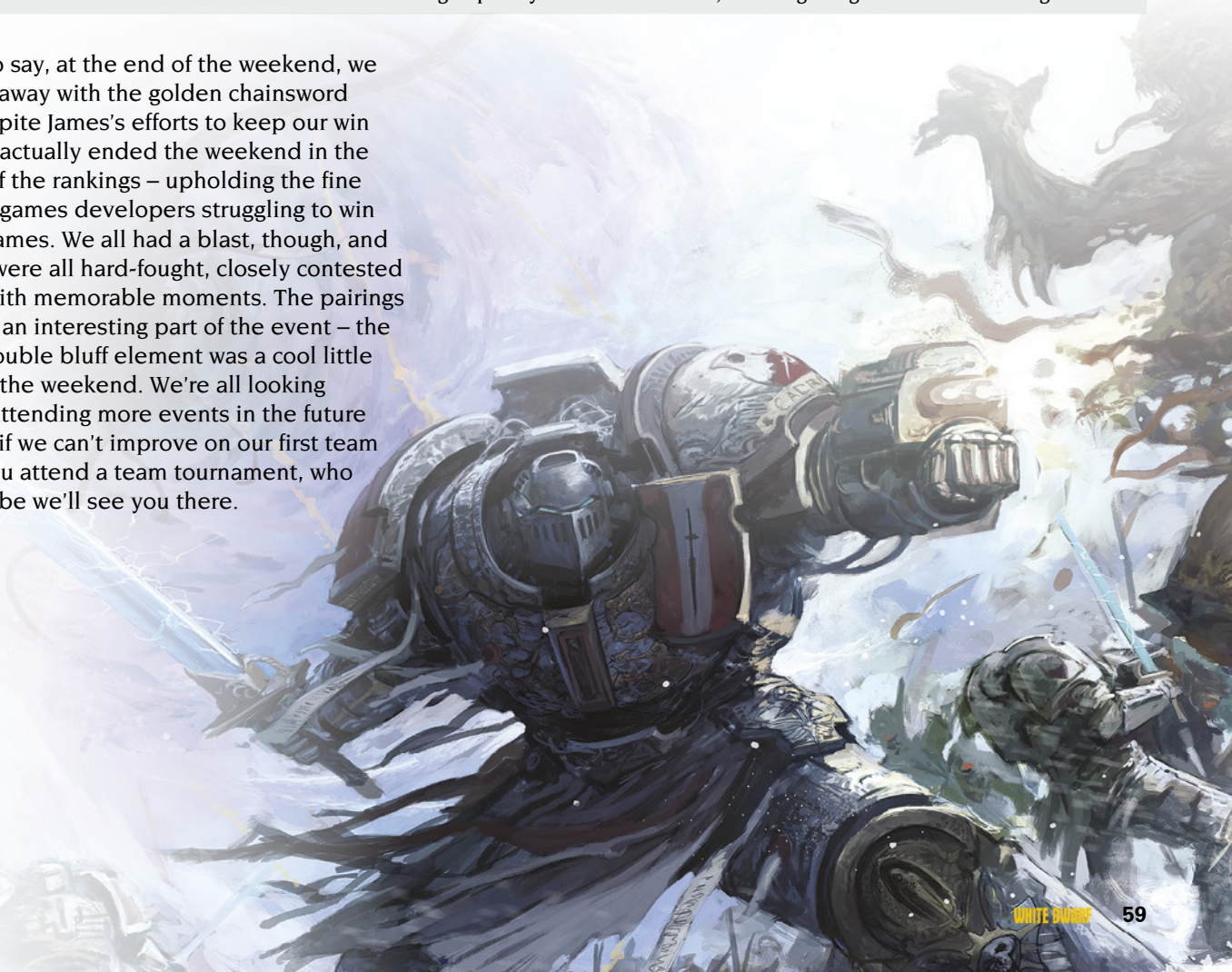
The list I took went heavy on Purifying Flame, featuring a large number of Purifier Squads, along with Castellan Crowe and an Ancient with the Banner of Refining Flame. All of these units have the potential to put out a lot of mortal wounds but are held back by their short range. This was remedied with a Brother-Captain and complemented by several Razorbacks armed with assault cannons for horde clearing. Finally, a Grand Master Dreadknight contingent was added for melee-based armour cracking.

Sadly, despite the Grey Knights' incredible gifts of foresight, in the first turn of the first game their leader somehow forgot to properly account for the fact that Razorbacks have an unerring capacity to

explode at the worst possible moments. Putting aside the obviously poorly maintained motor pool, there were some great games over the weekend. Of particular note was one game against Magnus' degenerate changelings at the end of the first day, with psychic powers flying back and forth across the table for the duration. And a matchup against the true might of Gork (or Mork – only a heretic would be able to tell the difference), with my opponent nobly choosing to end my Warlord's existence in the most Orky of ways, with a Stompa's mega-choppa to the face.

As for my win/loss record, while I would love to disclose the full details, the Inquisition would look poorly upon any kind of indiscretion that might make the Imperium look weak before its enemies (I'm sure you can guess how it went). In retrospect, the list failed to do enough to counter the traditional weaknesses of the Grey Knights: a lack of bodies and not enough anti-armour, as so much of its effectiveness was based around getting in close with comparably fragile elements. If I were to run the army again, I would drop the Purifiers down to the cheaper Strike Squads, which would also remove the necessity for the Brother-Captain. I'd instead slip in one or two detachments of the Loyal 32 (so called because it contains 32 Imperial Guardsmen) for Command Points and objective control, and perhaps add a lascannon and missile launcher-armed Venerable Dreadnought (with Astral Aim) for long-ranged armour hunting.

Needless to say, at the end of the weekend, we didn't walk away with the golden chainsword trophy. Despite James's efforts to keep our win rate up, we actually ended the weekend in the lower half of the rankings – upholding the fine tradition of games developers struggling to win their own games. We all had a blast, though, and the games were all hard-fought, closely contested and filled with memorable moments. The pairings system was an interesting part of the event – the bluff and double bluff element was a cool little addition to the weekend. We're all looking forward to attending more events in the future and seeing if we can't improve on our first team outing. If you attend a team tournament, who knows, maybe we'll see you there.





# SKYWARD



**A terrible wound splits the galaxy in two, the power of the warp spilling forth to taint the minds of those who witness it. Some give in to its siren call, while others seek to destroy it once and for all, as you'll soon discover in these short stories by Aaron Dembski-Bowden.**

## THE TELLER OF TALES

'Don't look up,' she said to him.

That's what they all said these days. The words walked the line between madness and sincerity, too new to be tradition, too insane to be law. And yet ...

'You hear me?' Her words were distorted by her helm's vocaliser grille, even as she snarled them into his ear. 'Don't. Look. Up. You get one warning.'

'Just one warning?' he said, looking back over his shoulder at her.

Kanner couldn't see her face; her helmet stole any hope of that. He could see his reflection in the silver lenses over her eyes as her faceplate dipped in a nod.

'Then why,' Kanner asked those cold eye lenses, 'did you just warn me twice?'

He gave her his best smile, which amounted to a dirty crescent of discoloured teeth. She responded to his question – or maybe to the grinning slit in his filthy face – by shoving him in the back, keeping him moving. The magnacles around his wrists clanked with the jangling tune of penal harmony.

'I could shoot you here,' she pointed out. 'You think anyone would miss you?'

Kanner faked a gasp. 'So much for Imperial justice, eh?'

She shoved him forward again. He stumbled this time, suddenly finding himself with a faceful of wall, his cheek squashed hard against the cold iron of the arched tunnel.

'That hurts,' he said through mashed lips.

'Poor lad,' the Enforcer replied. He could hear the smile in her crackling voice. It sounded like a pretty nasty smile. 'You can't tell, but I'm crying for you, Kanner. Really I am.'

There were people nearby. Gangers, scummers, workers, nobodies. They watched and whispered and left him to his fate. Their useless chatter dissolved into a melange of wordlessness. Kanner breathed in the smoky exhaust of a nearby track-truck's fumes while the Enforcer's squad vox

clicked, spilling out the staccato crackle of other voices. His magnacles softly clanked their metallic melody, a treble overlaying the static-laden vocals. The truck's engine thrummed, a growling undercurrent bass to the jagged voices.

All these sounds went right through him. He felt his hair begin to prickle. His fingertips started to sting.

'None of that, witch,' the Enforcer grunted.

'I wasn't doing anything.'

'You were murmuring. Chanting.'

*Was I? I don't ...*

'I said stop that,' she snapped. The Enforcer had a fistful of his hair and used it to draw his head back, slamming his face into the wall a second time. Harder now. 'Listen to me, deviant. If I see you losing control, this ends with a shotgun slug in the back of your head.'

He breathed slowly, ignoring the music of the mundane all around him, forcing his heart to slow down.

'What about my trial?' he mumbled into the cold metal of the wall.

'Judge, jury ...' the Enforcer replied, resting the muzzle of her shotgun at the nape of his neck, '... and executioner.' The words had the weight of rote, tried and tested.

'Officer—' he started to say.

'Save it, witch. Remember, when we cross between habitation towers – don't look up.'

'That's my third warning,' Kanner said with a sick smile. 'You said I'd only get one.'

She stepped smartly back and drove the butt of her shotgun into the back of his skull. He felt the dull thud of it against the back of his head, and he felt it even more as his face rebounded from the wall. The pain was fire-bright and sickly sudden, and his smirking promises of dignity slipped away in that moment of animal instinct.



He tried the truth instead, seeing as cocky resistance had earned him nothing but blood trickling from his mouth like hot slime.

'I'm just a storyteller,' he promised the Enforcer. 'I discern the Emperor's tarot. I read fortunes. I didn't do anything wrong.'

Her answer was to haul him to his feet (*When did I fall over...?*) and shove him along the walkway. The crowd dispersed as he shambled along at gunpoint. Several more Enforcers joined the first. They manhandled him with the same gentleness.



Ahead was the skybridge between buildings, where they'd be briefly under the open sky. Wind-warnings showed green on nearby pylons: safe, safe, safe. The commutegates were open. Foot traffic was in flow, though it was slowly breaking apart with the presence of the Enforcer squad dragging their newest prisoner through the packs of commuters. No one wanted to be near Kanner, for obvious reasons.

'What is it you think I did?' he asked his captors at one point. 'I'm *accredited*,' he added. 'Tested and sanctioned. My abilities aren't dangerous.'

The first Enforcer spoke, her voice low and weary with disbelief. His protests were nothing she hadn't heard however many times before.

'If you didn't do anything wrong, why are you covered in the blood of the man you killed?'

Kanner looked down. He hadn't killed anyone. The blood on his clothes was ...

'I ... I didn't ... I don't remember ...'

The wind was nothing but a breeze, warmed by seasonal heat, and it tugged softly at his hair as he walked onto the skybridge. The next tower was fifty metres away. Another squad of Enforcers waited, keeping the foot traffic in line.

'I never killed anyone,' he insisted, sounding more afraid than defiant this time.

The Enforcer sergeant said ... something, but he didn't hear her reply. Not really. He heard her speak, but her words were nothing, devoid of meaning. They became a song of syllables, joining the footsteps of those around him, joining the whisper of the wind against his clothes and through the railings of the skybridge, joining the scuffing rhythm of the Enforcers' flak armour, joining the drumbeat of his heart and the bass of his breathing, joining the song, the song, the song—

And in that song? A voice, beautiful and loving and beckoning. *Look up. Look up. Look up.*

Kanner lifted his bloodstained face into the breeze. The Enforcers shouted and drew weapons and did other things that melted flawlessly into the music. Things that Kanner couldn't follow, so lost was he in the silent Song.

Poison soaked the sky. He knew that. He knew the law, not to risk letting your eyes fall upon the nameless energies that had drowned the heavens for over a decade. But the Song was fading, and he knew — he knew — he was dead the second he could no longer hear its harmony.

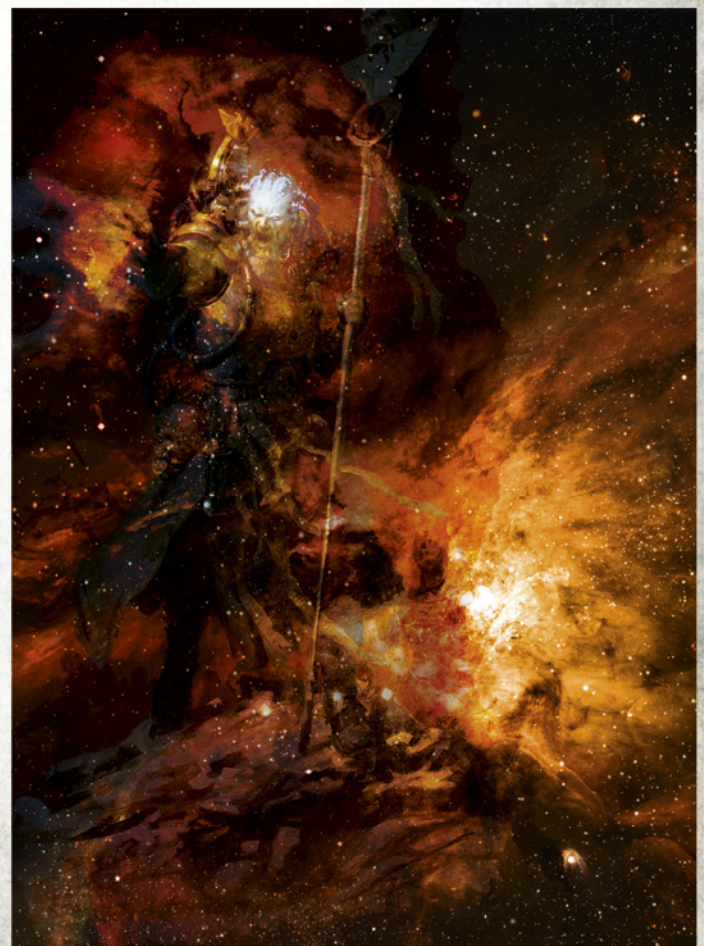
He looked up.

He stared at the polluted stars. At the Rift in space bringing migraine light to the whole world.

At once, the Song became a Scream. What was left of Kanner's body came apart in a storm of Enforcer gunfire. What was left of his soul became fuel for an unholy birth.

What was left of the Enforcers was found several minutes later, and by then, the creature that had ripped itself from the psyker's flesh and feasted upon its host's attackers was long gone.

Just one incident, in one city, on one world in the Imperium Nihilus.





## THE GOD'S SON

They call him a god, a fraud, a demigod, and a liar. They call him a genius born of divinity, and they call him an abomination ripped from the pages of blighted history.

Warlord. Warrior. General.

Lord Commander.

Dead man walking.

No one calls him by his name in this tainted age. He has no equals, no betters, and stands beneath no higher authority. He is at once the ultimate symbol of hope for his father's Imperium and the rancid avatar of everything the empire has lost.

Guilliman, Lord of Ultramar, Thirteenth and Last Primarch, Regent of Terra, stares at the tides of oblivion seething in the void. He gazes at nothing less than the blade that has severed the galaxy in twain. The Cicatrix Maledictum. The Great Rift. Its energies, fickle and foul, lash against the oculus viewscreen as the Emperor's last loyal son bears silent witness from the command deck of his warship.



He'd given a speech at the outset of his crusade. An exhortation of fire and defiance, of rage and loyalty and pride. He hears it still, the echoes of those bold words, as

he gazes into the wound in reality that heralds the death of half the Imperium.

'To the Space Marine Chapters bloodied and besieged in the Dark Imperium, we bring reinforcement. To the Chapters lost in valiant duty or driven to destruction, we offer rebirth. To the enemies of my father's empire, we bring death ...



'With these words, I, Roboute Guilliman, son of the Emperor of Mankind, declare the Indomitus Crusade! Traitors, mutants, daemons! Pay heed to the coming of my armies and the ruin we promise your miserable kind!

'This galaxy ... is *ours*.'

Ah, how those words already taste like ash on his tongue.

Everything was different, yes, that much was obvious. Millennia had passed since he truly lived, before this impure second life brought on by strange fate and alien sorcery. Of course everything had changed.

But everything was still changing, and that was worse by far.

Reports flood in of Black Ships heaving with flesh, unable to harvest the vast new tides of psychically awakened





souls. Of fleets falling silent. Of worlds going dark. Cities, continents, planets overrun with shrieking entities clawing their way from the warp. Always worse closest to the Great Rift, but no world is immune, no matter how far out. The luckiest worlds have seen a rise in psychic phenomena and catastrophic destabilisations of warp trade routes, enduring starvation riots, uprisings and rebellions. The unluckiest worlds are, by now, naught but hellscape, home to the Lost and the Damned.

The Imperium is haemorrhaging. Soon it will die, as half of it has already died. No longer is it enough to fight and hold onto the empire's crumbling remains. The only hope, razor-thin as it is, is to *attack*.

Guilliman knows this better than anyone.

One of his sons comes to him. *Are they my sons? My nephews? Great-grandchildren?* Whatever the truth, it's one of the descendants that yet claims a link to his lineage. How many generations of warriors have stood against the encroaching darkness during these ten thousand years of war and drawn strength from the gene-seed of the Thirteenth Primarch? Even for one such as he, the numbers are beyond reckoning.

The warrior, an officer in the Genesis Chapter, salutes with the sign of the Aquila, gauntlets banging against his breastplate. He informs his ancestral gene-lord that all is in readiness. The fleet awaits its master's command.

Guilliman will never admit this, but he sometimes struggles to immediately understand what his descendants

are saying. Language shifts over time, evolving and devolving. What he once knew as Imperial Gothic has mutated over ten millennia and a million worlds, and the myriad tongues his officers speak in his presence sound precious little like the ancient root language.

He nods in reply to the red-armoured warrior, turning back to stare at the smear of star-eating hatred splashed across reality. A storm of infinite wrath. No description of the galaxy-spanning warp rift can be too pathetically poetic. The horrors of the human underworld wait within – at least when they're patient enough not to be vomited out of their own accord.



The battlegroup waits at anchor not far from what various auspices and void-scryers have promised is a relatively safe passage through the Great Rift. But what an intriguing word *relatively* is.

Still, what choice is there?

Guilliman raises a hand. Around him, across the bridge of the flagship, several hundred souls stand tense. The engines of his warship, several kilometres distant from where he stands, nevertheless send faint tremors through the deck.

He cuts the air with his bare hand, giving the signal.

'Take us in.'





# APOCRYPHA INDOMITUS

The vastness of Imperial space has always been littered with mysteries, eerie tales and supernatural occurrences. The Indomitus Crusade has generated more than its fair share of such strange phenomena, not to mention its own dark secrets it carried into the void.



**T**he Indomitus Crusade Fleets set out to drive back the darkness that threatened to engulf Mankind's stellar realm. Battle group upon battle group bore forth the light of hope during Humanity's darkest hour, to banish xenos abominations and the unnatural horrors of the warp and so restore sanity and stability to the Imperium Sanctus. To do battle with such malign forces was to invite their hostile attentions, however. The servants of Chaos were swift to turn their twisted witchery against the battle groups that made up each Crusade Fleet. More than this, though, Humanity brought its own superstitions and shadowed mysteries with them into the stars – the Era Indomitus was a time of dark sorcery, inexplicable miracles and hushed conspiracies that originated from amongst the ranks of the pious and the heretical alike.

What was the truth, for example, behind the whispers concerning the Silent Seventh? There was much muttered speculation regarding the nature, the mustering point and the mission of Fleet Septimus, but concrete information was virtually nil. The Fleet's fundamental nature remained a strange blank amidst the otherwise overwhelmingly exhaustive data-harvest of the Officio Logisticarum. Its hand in the mysterious disappearances amongst the ranks of every arm of the Imperial military spawned fearful conjecture. If Crusade Command possessed answers to the questions surrounding Fleet Septimus, they remained as silent as the Seventh themselves.

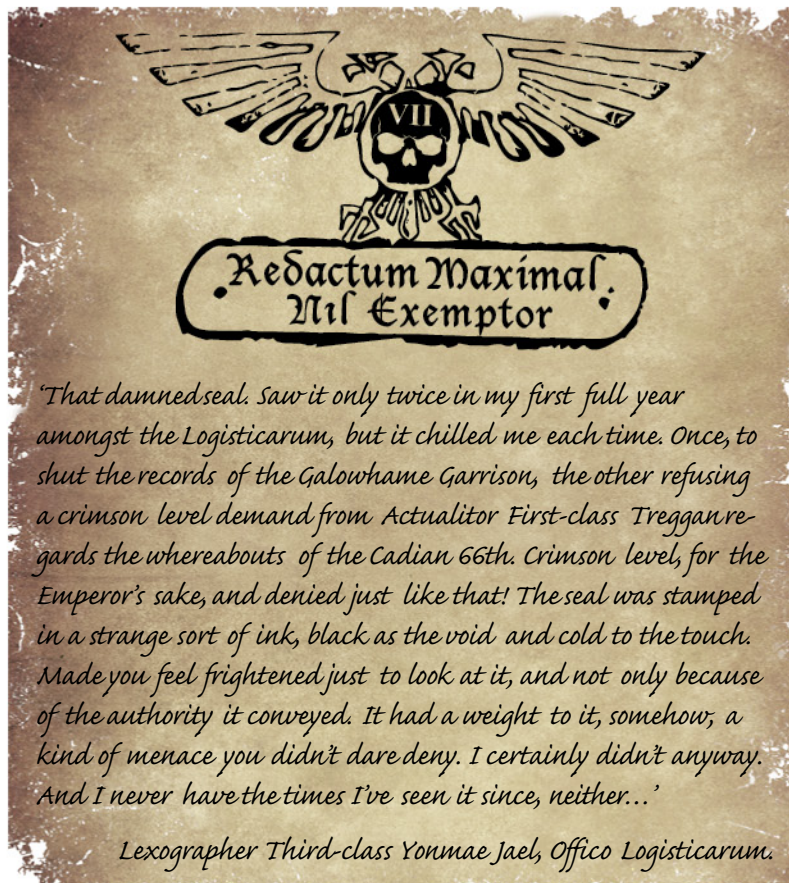
Talk of Fleetmaster Prasorius and his 'cursed' Fleet Quintus was more strident and widespread. As one stroke of ill fortune after another dogged Quintus' muster, deployment



and early campaigns, it became harder and harder to dispel the gathering superstitions both about and within the fleet's battle groups. Even capital punishments could not stay the claims that Fleet Quintus laboured under some strange curse, for its battle groups acted as magnets for strange occurrences, dreadful chance and apparently simple campaigns transformed into gruelling meat grinders.

Fleet Secundus, meanwhile, faced many of the most harrowing conflicts during the Indomitus Crusade's early stages. Its battle groups had been committed to a headlong offensive towards the Eye of Terror, and – facing warp-spawned horrors and ever-increasing resistance – their route soon became known as the Road of Martyrs. Faith is a crop best watered with blood, and as Fleet Secundus fought tooth and nail to advance, its ranks became rife with fanaticism, zealotry and tales of the unearthly and the miraculous.

Unnatural manifestations, dark secrets and eerie mysteries were not restricted to these three fleets alone. As they pressed ever further out into a galaxy warped by the opening of the Great Rift, countless battle groups throughout the fleets reported unsettling phenomena, strange omens and haunting tales.



FLEET SECUNDUS MUSTER,  
VIGIL-VI DEEP-VOID ANCHORAGE,  
ANCHOR-STATION 142,  
MASS TRANSPORTER 'RADIANCE OF THE THRONE',  
DECK OCTAVUS-DECIMA,  
CABIN 66-4,  
TEMPUS INDOMITUS SECUNDUS 078,  
LORD COMMISSAR LAREHNCE CHENKYN //  
ATTCH: MORDIAN 84TH REGIMENT



General Geinst,

Your silence regarding the recent disappearances is unacceptable. I intend to act upon these events, which I consider nothing short of incitement to desertion, and I expect your support in this. I have made allowances, as per your express request when last I raised my concerns. However, forbearance is the libation of sin, and I find my flask has run dry. I tell you this not as a threat, but as a courtesy towards a soldier who has earned my respect. I have already set matters in motion to orchestrate a purge of deleterious elements intruding upon this fleet's organisational hierarchy.

It was bad enough when Captain Brenner vanished from her quarters on TIS-042. On whose authority was the captain reassigned? A vellum scroll pinned to Brenner's door and bearing the seal of Septimus is neither explanation nor justification. The regiment was denuded of its most decorated officer, and the whispers following her departure were damaging to morale. Just as harmful was the subsequent vanishment on TIS-061 of the 446th Deltic Drakes. You know as well as I that this fleet faces a hard road, perhaps the hardest. What greater trials could Fleet Septimus be massing forces to face? I do not blame our soldiery for disbelieving such rumours. They assume instead that our key assets are being stripped, so as to be reassigned where the cause is less hopeless. Understanding and mercy rarely share the same trench, of course, and so I have been forced to enact a series of executions amongst our own ranks so as to quell any dissention. These deaths, too, can be laid at Fleet Septimus' door.

And now, am I to stand by yet again, two days before we at last depart? Am I to turn my cheek upon discovering that our own 1st and 2nd Companies have been rerouted in transit and will no longer be rejoining the ranks? I am not to question their whereabouts, their mission, the authority that has ratified the removal of this regiment's most veteran warriors?

No, General, Fleet Septimus can keep their onyx servo-skulls and their mysterious seal of secrecy, for I will have no part of it. This is Fleet Secundus, not Fleet Septimus, and if they believe that they can intimidate Lord Commissar Chenkyn into silence then they are grievously mistaken.



Navis Imperialis // Battlefleet  
Solar // 9th Flotilla <  
Indomitus Crusade Fleet Quartus //  
Battle Group Cerastus<  
Incident Log:: 23562-tu-7<  
Clearance Level: Auric<

## OFFICIO LOGISTICARUM

Clearance Code: \*\*\*\*\*//\*\*\*\*

Audio Verification: CONFIRMED

++ Logged in - 14:33.43 UTC ++



[sub-ref: Logistical\_Support 885.23/Quintus.  
Vid capture: XXXXXXXXXX]

> Tempus Indomitus Quartus-Cerastus 149  
> Battle Group Cerastus Taskforce III engages in orbital drop invasion of Ork-held world Ref: Tragyar.  
> During pivotal stage of drop operation, unexpected hostile xenos fleet elements exit warp space, move to engage Taskforce III. Heavy casualties projected.  
> Xenos ships interdicted by unidentified Victory Class Battleship and heavily damaged. Disruption to xenos offensive allows Task Force III elements to respond and secure victory.  
> No point of translation or subsequent departure identified for said Victory Class Battleship. Unresponsive to hails. Psykers in operational locale report 'hearing' strains of Imperial hymnals 'as though from afar'.

<< Zone NB45169814 >>

<< Zone FN24501734 >>

> Tempus Indomitus Quartus-Cerastus 116  
> Victory Class Battleship Blade of Judgement believed lost with all hands while performing empyric crash translation during Battle of Karseyn Strait [sub-ref file Rho-583-K]



<<ALL REDACTIONS PERFORMED UPON THE ORDER OF THE EMPEROR'S MOST HOLY INQUISITION>>

<< Entry 246 - Text Concludes >>



<< Zone BS50974534 >>

> Surviving Task Force II combatants report **REDACTED** and Imperial soldiery described as **REDACTED** ghostly **REDACTED**. Survivors confirmed as witnesses relocated to **REDACTED**.

<< Zone NS42903019 >>

> Tempus Indomitus Quartus-Cerastus 215  
> Battle Group Cerastus Task Force II besieged aboard void station Agrippus by Vordori Flayers. Deathwatch interdiction requested/dispatched. Projected response time outside optimal envelope.  
> Deathwatch Strike Cruiser Pyre Imperius arrives at void station Agrippus, reports Vordori bladeships burning, several destroyed. Notes unidentified Victory Class Battleship docked with void station, but after-action reports by Adeptus Astartes confirm said ship 'vanishes without trace' as Pyre Imperius executes final approach on station.  
> Deathwatch craft captures fragmentary data on Victory Class Battleship by employing hardened Adeptus Astartes auspicators prior to its vanishment // visual silhouette and partial signifier beacon return suggest Battleship is Blade of Judgement. Reports anomalous attached warp signature suggestive of **REDACTED**.

<< Zone ZK34760814 >>

> Tempus Indomitus Quartus-Cerastus 182  
> Battle Group Cerastus Task Force VI engaged by superior heretic numbers over Bauhax. Astropathic distress call unsuccessful due to malefic interference.  
> 33 minutes into engagement, unidentified Victory Class Battleship reported breaking heretic line. Eliminates heretic capital ship Colossus Nox, turns engagement in Imperial favour.  
> No point of translation or subsequent departure identified for said Victory Class Battleship. Pict capture corrupted. Unresponsive to hails. Repetition of psychic hymnal phenomena, reports include 'faint wails and screams'.

'Brothers, we are called upon once again to purge the unclean and the unnatural from the Emperor's sacred realm! Recite the seventh Inviction of Repugnance, bless thrice your blades in the God Emperor's holy sight, and let us drive these warp-spawn back to the nether-hel whence they have crawled!'  
- Black Templars Castellan Grastmund before the Vortex Incident **RECORDS SUPPRESSED**



*This account being a list of the superstitious and heretical practices and disapproved divergences of belief observed amongst the ignorant and unfaithful masses of Crusade Fleet Quintus, upon whom the light of the divine God Emperor shines but weakly and through whose ranks we of the Faith seek to ply the excoriating fires of necessary enlightenment in His name.*

*'Ave Imperator Regnum Eternus.*

*Semper Magnificatum Veritas.'*

*Confessor Rufeus Kleng.*

*Upon the troop ship Shadows' Foe it has become common to 'strike the ninth'; wherein crew and passengers alike pause upon the advent of every ninth hour long enough to rap their knuckles nine times upon some part of their ship's inner hull, bulkheads or the like. It is the belief of those undertaking this ritual that in so doing they draw the favourable attention of the Divine God Emperor and, with the collected clangour of their blows, chase away the malign spirits of the warp. It goes without saying that this ignorant fabrication must be dispelled posthaste, and proper hourly abasements and devotions be restored in its place.*

*Amidst the ranks of the Parbassa 14th Armoured, a belief has arisen that no tank may go to battle but that first its youngest crew member lets their own blood, and with it writes the name of the Immortal Emperor of Mankind thrice upon their vehicle's turret, the better to 'dispel the curse of Quintus'. Though blood-rites in His name are not, in themselves, forbidden, no priest leads these rituals nor sees to their proper piety. Furthermore, the practice smacks of heathen idolatry. Following punitive lashes, it is recommended that each tank instead be fitted with an autotryptych, the better to focus the proper devotions of the Parbassan soldiery.*

*It has been observed that the scouting platoons of the Rhadian 4th have taken to firing their first round in each engagement into the air 'to offer the Emperor his due'. That the Rhadian regiments have suffered terribly and in deeply unfortunate circumstances is not in question, but that is no excuse for this frankly idiotic behaviour, which must be stamped out without delay! Any pious warrior of the Emperor knows that to waste ammunition is a grievous sin, to add to which the volley of skyward fire has proven a welcome note of warning to the Rhadians' enemies in several engagements. In the case of heavier weaponry it has even proven hazardous to the Rhadians themselves!*

*The wearing of 'Eye of the Emperor' pendants has proliferated throughout the ranks of Task Force XI. While it is, of course, permitted to bear tokens and talismans of the Emperor's divine favour, and it is only proper that Imperial soldiery seek to win his approbation in all things, it is troubling to me that these pendants must be fashioned from fragments of stone taken from Imperial tombs, shrines and places of faith. Quite aside from the fact that properly consecrated Imperial icons can already be purchased by these warriors from approved Ecclesiarchal sources, this practice has led to a spree of aggravated damage to sites of religious significance across....*



...swear by the Khan's own blade I thought we were fighting our last battle. The traitors had fallen into our ambush like a flock of daggerbirds stampeding into a tribal fire-ring, but we could not have predicted the [REDACTED] they would summon to their aid. They broke our noose, turned our snare back upon us. Now it was we who fought outnumbered, surrounded, unable to disengage and strike afresh as the Great Khan taught. Then the spirits of the storm came upon them in all their fury, and they took the form of Space Marines in void-black armour that danced with flames and clattered with bones. They poured fire into the [REDACTED] and every shot barked hollow as though I heard them from afar. The spirits tore a gap in the enemy's lines, and through it we surged without a backward glance. What they were I cannot say, but...'

- Sergeant Jarghul, White Scars 6th Company, Fleet Tertius Battle Group Faustus



# SOLDIERS OF THE IMPERIUM!



**MUTATION OF THE BODY OR THE MIND IS A SURE SIGN OF SIN!  
HARBOURING A MUTANT IS AN ACT OF HERESY!  
IF IN DOUBT, SINGLE THEM OUT!**

**REPORT A MUTANT TODAY AND EARN  
DOUBLE RATIONS FOR YOUR ENTIRE PLATOON!**



# DEATHWATCH INBOUND!

The Deathwatch are the alien-hunting veterans of the Adeptus Astartes. Skilled in the art of tracking, fighting and exterminating xenos threats, they are engaged in a never-ending war to protect the Imperium from the many races that would see it destroyed.



**T**he ranks of the Deathwatch Chapter of Space Marines are filled with some of the finest alien hunters in the galaxy. Seconded from their parent Chapter for an indefinite period of time, these Space Marines are tasked with seeking out alien warlords, armies and invasions and exterminating them before they can become a threat to the security of the Imperium of Mankind.

Their duty is not an easy one, for the galaxy is a big place forever under attack by the likes of Orks, Drukhari, Necrons and T'au, and the Deathwatch are few in number. But what they lack in manpower, they more than make up for with their superhuman physiology and decades (if not centuries) of training and knowledge. Armed with the best wargear the Imperium's artificers can manufacture, the Deathwatch take on everything the galaxy can throw at them, and they prevail.

## START COLLECTING!

Start Collecting! Deathwatch is the ideal way to begin a new Deathwatch army. It includes Watch Captain Artemis, ten Deathwatch Space Marines, a Venerable Dreadnought and a Deathwatch upgrade frame.

## START COLLECTING!

### DEATHWATCH



12 STARTING MINIFIGURES

## HONOUR YOUR WARGEAR

Over the next few pages, you'll find a host of new rules for fielding a Deathwatch army that brings them in line with the abilities found in the new *Codex: Space Marines*. These rules include Bolter Discipline and Shock Assault, making your Deathwatch Marines even more devastating at range and in combat (as if they needed it!). They now also have access to the Devastator, Tactical and Assault combat doctrines so you can maximise that increased firepower when the enemy are at range and boost your combat potential when they stray too close.

You'll also find fourteen new stratagems, new wargear options for Intercessor Sergeants and Litanies of Battle for your Deathwatch Chaplains, bringing them in line with the new rules for *Codex: Space Marines*. We feel sorry for all the aliens out there. They're in for a rough time.



# ADDITIONAL DEATHWATCH RULES

Presented here is a new ability for Deathwatch miniatures known as Angels of Death. This ability grants this Chapter of Adeptus Astartes additional rules to represent their elite method of waging war. All Deathwatch units in *Codex: Deathwatch*, and the Repulsor Executioner datasheet found in the Space Marines Summer Update, gain the Angels of Death ability:

## ANGELS OF DEATH

*The Adeptus Astartes are amongst the finest warriors in the Imperium.*

This unit has the following abilities: And They Shall Know No Fear, Bolter Discipline, Shock Assault and Combat Doctrines.

**DESIGNER'S NOTE:** *With the addition of the Angels of Death ability, some Deathwatch units will gain some or all of the abilities below twice. Such units gain no additional benefit from this.*

## AND THEY SHALL KNOW NO FEAR

*The Space Marines of the Adeptus Astartes stand unafraid before the greatest terrors of the galaxy.*

When a Morale test is taken for this unit, you can re-roll the dice.

## BOLTER DISCIPLINE

*To a Space Marine, the boltgun is far more than a weapon – it is an instrument of Mankind's divinity, the bringer of death to his foes, whose howling blast is a prayer to the gods of battle.*

Instead of following the normal rules for Rapid Fire weapons, models in this unit firing Rapid Fire bolt weapons make double the number of attacks if any of the following apply:

- The firing model's target is within half the weapon's maximum range.

- The firing model is INFANTRY and every model in its unit remained stationary in your previous Movement phase.
- The firing model is a TERMINATOR, BIKER, or DREADNOUGHT.

For the purposes of this ability, a Rapid Fire bolt weapon is any bolt weapon with the Rapid Fire type. A bolt weapon is a guardian spear or any weapon whose profile includes the word 'bolt' (boltgun, bolt rifle, storm bolter, combi-bolter, hurricane bolter, etc.). Rules that apply to bolt weapons also apply to the boltgun profile of combi-weapons (including Hellfire Extremis) and Relics that replace bolt weapons.

## SHOCK ASSAULT

*The Adeptus Astartes are elite shock troops who strike with the fury of a thunderbolt. Few opponents can withstand this onslaught.*

If this unit makes a charge move, is charged or performs a Heroic Intervention, add 1 to the Attacks characteristic of models in this unit until the end of the turn.





## COMBAT DOCTRINES

Models in this unit gain a bonus depending on which combat doctrine is active for your army (see below). If you have a Battle-forged army, units only benefit from this bonus if every unit from your army has this ability (excluding **SERVITOR** and **UNALIGNED** units). With the exception of Special Issue Ammunition (see Codex: Deathwatch), and unless otherwise specified, this bonus is not cumulative with any other rules that improve the Armour Penetration characteristic of a weapon.

At the start of the battle, the Devastator Doctrine is active. A combat doctrine remains active for the duration of the battle, though you can change which combat doctrine is active once at the start of each battle round after the first, as follows:

- If the Devastator Doctrine was active during the previous battle round, you can change it so that the Tactical Doctrine is now active.
- If the Tactical Doctrine was active during the previous battle round, you can change it so that the Assault Doctrine is now active.

## DEVASTATOR DOCTRINE

The Armour Penetration characteristic of Heavy and Grenade weapons this model is equipped with is improved by 1 whilst this combat doctrine is active. For example, AP 0 becomes AP -1.

## TACTICAL DOCTRINE

The Armour Penetration characteristic of Rapid Fire and Assault weapons this model is equipped with is improved by 1 whilst this combat doctrine is active. For example, AP 0 becomes AP -1.

## ASSAULT DOCTRINE

The Armour Penetration characteristic of Pistol and melee weapons this model is equipped with is improved by 1 whilst this combat doctrine is active. For example, AP 0 becomes AP -1.

## WARGEAR OPTIONS

Replace the third bullet point of the wargear options of the Deathwatch Intercessors datasheet with the following:

- The Intercessor Sergeant can be equipped with one of the following instead of 1 bolt rifle, 1 auto bolt rifle or 1 stalker bolt rifle: 1 chainsword; 1 hand flamer; 1 power fist; 1 power sword. A model can only be equipped with 1 chainsword.
- If the Intercessor Sergeant is not equipped with 1 chainsword, it can additionally be equipped with one of the following: 1 chainsword; 1 power fist; 1 power sword; 1 thunder hammer.





## STRATAGEMS

If your army is Battle-forged and includes any Deathwatch Detachments (excluding Auxiliary Support Detachments), you have access to the Stratagems shown here, and can spend Command Points to activate them. These reflect the unique strategies used by the Deathwatch on the battlefield.

1CP

### DUTY ETERNAL

#### *Deathwatch Stratagem*

*Having tasted death before, the pilot of a Dreadnought is determined to do his duty to the very end.*

Use this Stratagem when a DEATHWATCH DREADNOUGHT model from your army is chosen as a target for an attack. Until the end of the phase, when resolving an attack made against that model, halve the damage inflicted (rounding up).

1CP

### BIG GUNS NEVER TIRE

#### *Deathwatch Stratagem*

*None can withstand the Deathwatch's armoured wrath.*

Use this Stratagem in your Shooting phase, when a DEATHWATCH VEHICLE unit from your army is chosen to shoot with. Until the end of that phase, that unit does not suffer the penalty for moving and firing Heavy weapons.

2CP

### BOLTSTORM

#### *Deathwatch Stratagem*

*Switching shot selectors to full auto, the Deathwatch unleash a short-lived but inescapable hail of fire.*

Use this Stratagem at the start of your Shooting phase. Select one DEATHWATCH INTERCESSORS unit from your army. Until the end of that phase, auto bolt rifles that models in that unit are equipped with gain the following ability: 'When resolving an attack made with this weapon against a target that is within half range, do not make a hit roll: it automatically scores a hit.'

2CP

### VENGEANCE OF THE MACHINE SPIRIT

#### *Deathwatch Stratagem*

*Vengeful machine spirits can wreak havoc on the enemy in their death throes, even as their systems fail.*

Use this Stratagem when a DEATHWATCH LAND RAIDER model or DEATHWATCH REPULSOR model from your army is destroyed. That model can either automatically explode (do not roll a D6), shoot with one of its ranged weapons as if it were your Shooting phase, or make one attack with one of its melee weapons as if it were the Fight phase (use the top row of that model's damage table when shooting with that ranged weapon or resolving that attack with a melee weapon).

2CP

### RAPID FIRE

#### *Deathwatch Stratagem*

*The combination of superhuman reflexes and rigid bolter-drills enable Deathwatch Intercessors to produce a devastating rate of fire.*

Use this Stratagem at the start of your Shooting phase. Select one DEATHWATCH INTERCESSORS unit from your army. Until the end of that phase, bolt rifles that models in that unit are equipped with have a Type characteristic of Rapid Fire 2.

1CP

### STEADY ADVANCE

#### *Deathwatch Stratagem*

*A measured advance allows Deathwatch squads to unleash a steady stream of bolter fire.*

Use this Stratagem in your Shooting phase, when a DEATHWATCH INFANTRY unit from your army is chosen to shoot with. Until the end of that phase, for the purposes of the Bolter Discipline ability, that unit is treated as if it had remained stationary in your previous Movement phase.

3CP

### TARGET SIGHTED

#### *Deathwatch Stratagem*

*With pinpoint accuracy, Intercessors pick out key enemy leaders, striking weak spots with deadly volleys of fire.*

Use this Stratagem at the start of your Shooting phase. Select one DEATHWATCH INTERCESSORS unit from your army. Until the end of that phase, stalker bolt rifles that models in that unit are equipped with gain the following ability: 'This weapon can target a CHARACTER unit even if it is not the closest enemy unit. When resolving an attack made with this weapon, a wound roll of 6+ inflicts 1 mortal wound on the target in addition to any other damage.'

1CP

### GENE-WROUGHT MIGHT

#### *Deathwatch Stratagem*

*Through inhuman strength, Primaris Deathwatch deliver blows that inflict terrifying damage.*

Use this Stratagem in the Fight phase, when a DEATHWATCH PRIMARIS INFANTRY unit from your army is chosen to fight with. Until the end of that phase, when resolving an attack made with a melee weapon by a model in that unit, an unmodified hit roll of 6 automatically scores a hit and successfully wounds the target (do not make a wound roll).



1CP

## HERO OF THE CHAPTER

*Deathwatch Stratagem*

*Each member of the Deathwatch is a champion, a post-human demigod standing between Mankind and the darkness.*

Use this Stratagem before the battle, after nominating your Warlord. Select one DEATHWATCH CHARACTER model from your army that is not your Warlord and determine one Warlord Trait for it; it is regarded as your Warlord for the purposes of that Warlord Trait. Each Warlord Trait in your army must be unique (if randomly generated, re-roll duplicate results). You can only use this Stratagem once per battle.

1CP

## HAMMER OF WRATH

*Deathwatch Stratagem*

*By launching themselves directly into the enemy ranks upon the flaming jets of their jump packs, Space Marines can crash home into combat with bone-breaking force.*

Use this Stratagem when a JUMP PACK unit from your army finishes a charge move. For each model in that unit, you can select one enemy unit within 1" of that model and roll one D6; on a 5+ that enemy unit suffers 1 mortal wound.

2CP

## TRANSHUMAN PHYSIOLOGY

*Deathwatch Stratagem*

*Space Marines have reserves of willpower that allow them to fight through even the most grievous of wounds.*

Use this Stratagem when a DEATHWATCH unit from your army that is not a VEHICLE is chosen as a target for an attack. Until the end of the phase, when resolving an attack made against that unit, an unmodified wound roll of 1-3 always fails, irrespective of any abilities that the weapon or the model making that attack may have.

1CP

## ADAPTIVE STRATEGY

*Deathwatch Stratagem*

*The Deathwatch will adapt to the flow of battle, adjusting their combat tactics to best their foe.*

Use this Stratagem at the start of the battle round if there are any DEATHWATCH CHARACTER models from your army on the battlefield, before you change which combat doctrine is active. If the Assault Doctrine is currently active, you can change it so that the Tactical Doctrine is now active. Alternatively, if the Tactical Doctrine is currently active, you can change it so that the Devastator Doctrine is now active. You can only use this Stratagem once per battle.

1CP

## HUNTER-SLAYER MISSILE

*Deathwatch Stratagem*

*Hunter-slayer missiles are machine spirit-guided warheads that track and eliminate priority targets.*

Use this Stratagem at the start of your Shooting phase. Select one Deathwatch Intercessors

Use this Stratagem in your Shooting phase. Select one DEATHWATCH REPULSOR model from your army to launch a hunter-slayer missile, then select one enemy VEHICLE unit or MONSTER unit within 48" of that model that is not within 1" of any units from your army. Roll one D6; if the result is equal to or greater than that model's Ballistic Skill, that unit suffers D3 mortal wounds. Each DEATHWATCH REPULSOR model can only be selected for this Stratagem once per battle.

1CP

## VETERAN FURY

*Deathwatch Stratagem*

*When the fighting is at its fiercest, the Terminator-armoured warriors of the Deathwatch truly show their quality.*

Use this Stratagem in any phase. Select one DEATHWATCH TERMINATOR unit from your army. Until the end of that phase, when resolving an attack made by a model in that unit, add 1 to the hit roll.





# LITANIES OF BATTLE

Replace the **Litanies of Hate** ability on the datasheets of all **CHAPLAIN** units in *Codex: Deathwatch* with the following:

**Priest:** This model knows the Litany of Hate and one litany from the Litanies of Battle (see below). At the start of the battle round, this model can recite one litany it knows that has not already been recited by a friendly model that battle round. Roll one D6; on a 3+ the recited litany is inspiring and takes effect until the end of that battle round.

**Litany of Hate:** If this litany is inspiring, you can re-roll hit rolls for attacks made with melee weapons by models in friendly **DEATHWATCH** units whilst their unit is within 6" of this model.

Before the battle, generate the litanies for **DEATHWATCH CHAPLAIN** models that know litanies from the Litanies of Battle using the table below. You can either roll one D6 to generate each litany randomly (re-rolling duplicate results), or you can select which litanies the model knows.

## 1 LITANY OF FAITH

*The Chaplain exhorts his charges to steel themselves against even the most dangerous weapons the enemy can bring to bear.*

If this litany is inspiring, then when a model in a friendly **DEATHWATCH** unit within 6" of this model would lose a wound as a result of a mortal wound, roll one D6; on a 5+ that wound is not lost.

## 2 CATECHISM OF FIRE

*The Chaplain calls upon his brothers to unleash a relentless storm of close-range firepower.*

If this litany is inspiring, select one friendly **DEATHWATCH** unit within 6" of this model. When resolving an attack made with a ranged weapon by a model in that unit against the closest visible enemy unit to that model, add 1 to the wound roll.

## 3 EXHORTATION OF RAGE

*The Chaplain bellows his fury at the enemy, his brothers surging forwards to strike them down.*

If this litany is inspiring, select one friendly **DEATHWATCH** unit within 6" of this model. When resolving an attack made with a melee weapon by a model in that unit, on an unmodified hit roll of 6 you can make one additional attack against the same unit using the same weapon. This additional attack cannot generate another attack.

## 4 MANTRA OF STRENGTH

*The Chaplain focuses his mind on the purity of the blood that runs through his veins, bestowed upon him by his Primarch.*

If this litany is inspiring, add 1 to this model's Attacks and Strength characteristics and add 1 to the Damage characteristic of melee weapons this model is equipped with.

## 5 RECITATION OF FOCUS

*The Chaplain recites creeds that focus the minds of his brothers to ensure their shots strike true.*

If this litany is inspiring, select one friendly **DEATHWATCH** unit within 6" of this model. When resolving an attack made with a ranged weapon by a model in that unit, add 1 to the hit roll.

## 6 CANTICLE OF HATE

*Bellowing his hatred of the foe, the Chaplain leads his brothers in the wholesale destruction of the enemy.*

If this litany is inspiring, add 2 to charge rolls made for friendly **DEATHWATCH** units whilst they are within 6" of this model. In addition, when a friendly **DEATHWATCH** unit makes a pile-in or consolidate move within 6" of this model, models in that unit can move up to an additional 3". This is not cumulative with any other ability that adds to a unit's charge roll or increases the distance it can pile in or consolidate.



# CREATING A MONSTER

Ork Warlord Ghazghkull Thraka is the most infamous alien in the galaxy, and his Waaagh! has devastated vast swathes of the Imperium. Now the Beast of Armageddon has returned, bigger and more deadly than ever before. His creators join us to tell us all about him.



**We is gonna stomp da universe flat and kill anyfink that fights back. We're da Orks, and we was made ta fight and win! - Ghazghkull Thraka**



**B**ack in the heady days of 1991, somewhere in the depths of the Games Workshop Design Studio, a villain was born. Brutal beyond mortal comprehension, this alien warlord ravaged worlds, slew mighty heroes and threatened the very security of the Imperium of Man. His name became synonymous with colossal destruction and galactic terror, his legacy seared into the minds of those who read about him. That alien menace was the Ork known as Ghazghkull Mag Uruk Thraka, the Beast of Armageddon and self-proclaimed Prophet of the Waaagh!

Since those early days, Ghazghkull has been reinvented several times, most recently in the model you see to the left. Miniatures designer Maxime Pastourel sculpted this new rendition of the iconic villain, while Max Faleij from the 'Eavy Metal team had the honour of painting him. The two worked closely over the course of the project, with Max suggesting design options to Maxime, and Maxime offering painting suggestions to Max in return. Now they've joined forces once again to tell us about the creation of Ghazghkull Thraka.

**Maxime:** As any miniatures designer will tell you, designing a new character model takes a lot of hard work. But redesigning a classic – especially one who is such a recognisable character – is

particularly daunting. Brian Nelson's sculpt for the previous Ghazghkull is stunning, so there was no way I was going to create a new version of the galaxy's most iconic Ork without chatting to him about the project first. Brian sketched out a few very rough ideas, and, to begin with, I didn't quite understand what I was looking at! Brian was proposing something huge and far more anatomical compared to the mega-armoured Orks we were used to. There were a couple of reasons for this. First, the Ork range is now packed with huge walker models from the Deff Dread and Killa Kans right up to the Gorkanaut and Stompa. The existing Ghazghkull model just looked a bit small compared to them – he needed to be bigger! The problem was – as Brian pointed out – making a suit of mega armour bigger would just make Ghazghkull look like a cross between a Deff Dread and a Gorkanaut. He would look like he was piloting a suit rather than wearing it. That's why his shape needed a redesign, too.

The first step was establishing Ghazghkull's new size. Following his near-fatal encounter with Ragnar Blackmane and his rebuilding on Dok Grotsnik's surgery table, he's now bigger and more dangerous than ever before – he's comparable in size to a Redeptor Dreadnought! In the background, the most powerful Orks are the



## MAXIME PASTOUREL & MAX FALEIJ

Maxime is renowned for his work on the Death Guard range, but he's also a big fan of Orks, having designed kits such as the Ork Mek Gunz a few years ago. Max, meanwhile, has painted plenty of Orks in his time as part of the 'Eavy Metal team, but Ghazghkull may well be his biggest project to date.



## PROPHET OF DA WAAAGH!

There have been three past incarnations of Ghazghkull Thraka. The first was a conversion by Mike McVey that appeared in *White Dwarf* 134 from February 1991. The model was made from the Space Ork Goff Boss model with the addition of a back banner. The first production miniature of Ghazghkull came out in August 1992 following the release of the Battle for Armageddon

board game. Designed by Kev Adams, this version of the infamous Warboss came out alongside his arch-enemy Commissar Yarrick, designed by Jes Goodwin. The third incarnation of Ghazghkull, now wearing a massive suit of mega armour, was sculpted by Brian Nelson in August 2000. All three influenced the design of the new kit.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Ghazghkull's story first appeared in *White Dwarf* 134 from February 1991. In those days, Warhammer 40,000 characters were randomly generated, and Ghazghkull was created for a warband article by none other than arch overfiend Andy Chambers. One of the abilities Andy generated for Ghazghkull was a cranial rebuild with latent psychic powers. His bionic bonce is still around to this very day.



biggest, so it's only right that Ghazghkull is now the most massive Ork around. The aesthetics of the armour are also different on this new version of the model. Where the previous Ghazghkull's mega armour was square and angular, his new suit has a more organic, rounded look – it's more like an extension of his anatomy, following the lines of his musculature. The feet are more defined with claws similar to those on the Gorkanaut, his gun has been upgraded to have four barrels and his power claw has become more sophisticated. He's even got a huge power plant on his back that features a crank handle, adding that little element of humour to the model.

But for all the changes, there are a lot of features on Ghazghkull that have been carried over from his previous incarnation and even the model before that. The bull skull is still there, but now the horns have been replaced by the exhausts of Ghazghkull's armour. The same glyphs hang from the exhaust pipes that used to hang from the skull's horns. In fact, pretty much all the glyphs that were on Brian's model can be found on the new version of Ghazghkull. The power cables for his weapons (complete with exposed wiring) are still there, looping upwards just like the ones on

the previous model – they're an iconic part of Ghazghkull's silhouette. The tusks on either side of his head are also there, as are the shoulder-mounted grenade launchers, the string of teef round his neck and, of course, the massive bucket jaw and half-bionic head. He's even missing the same teef. There is a gold cap on one of his teef now, though, which is a nod to the 1992 model. If you're an Ork aficionado, you'll also notice that the little skull trinkets that hung from the first model's shoulder pads are back, though Ghazghkull is now big enough that they can be actual skulls.

**Max:** It's tough paying homage to a character while adding in new elements, both in terms of miniatures design and painting. You want the model to look fresh and new while still being recognisable as Ghazghkull. It's a tricky balancing act. So while Maxime really pushed the design of the new miniature, my goal was to take the painting up to the next level. I looked back at previous versions of Ghazghkull and the artwork of him and noted down all the common factors – the elements that make him who he is. The Ghazghkull zeitgeist! Like all Goff Orks, black features heavily in his colour scheme, which I knew would need to be addressed as he's almost

## INSPIRATIONAL ARTWORK

**Max:** Ghazghkull has been illustrated many times over the years, and the artwork for him proved hugely inspirational when coming up with colour schemes. For example, the glyphs hanging from his horns are always red, as are the teef on his jaw, so they would definitely be staying the same. Several pieces of art featured

yellow stikkbomb launchers on his shoulders, which I felt added an appealing new spot colour to the model. There were also some great pieces like the one on the right that made Ghazghkull look like he was illuminated from below. This inspired Maxime to sculpt lights inside his jaw so you can recreate the effect on the model.





entirely encased in black armour. Then there are the skulls, the black-and-white checks and the red glyphs.

His most obvious feature, though, is his armoured jaw plate, which is basically an Ork status symbol – it's like peacocking for greenskins! The red teef first appeared on the cover of *Codex: Armageddon*, and they were developed further in later years with the addition of the black-and-white checks. I wanted to replicate those visual elements on the new model, particularly the upward pointing teef, which draw your eye towards Ghazghkull's head – the focal point of the model. I painted the teef deliberately brighter than the other red areas on the model, too, so that they're the dominant red area, with other darker reds on the loincloth, power cables, glyphs and power claw surrounding them. I took the same approach with the checks. The ones on Ghazghkull's jaw are really bright (probably freshly painted by grot underlings), while those on his shoulder and klaw are more faded and weathered due to battle damage. The black armour was a trickier part of the miniature to tackle, but fortunately Maxime had already come up with some interesting solutions while designing the miniature.

## THE REINCARNATION OF MAKARI

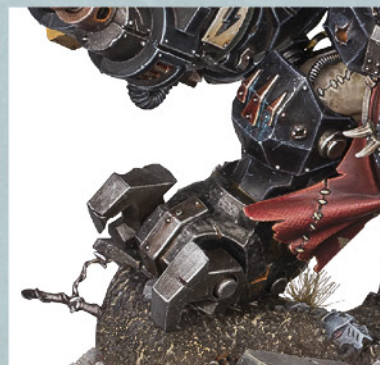
**Maxime:** Makari is one of my favourite greenskin characters and it's been great reintroducing him to Warhammer 40,000. His new incarnation may or may not be the same grot as the original, but he deliberately shares a lot of the same design cues – he wears a horned helmet with fur trim and carries a tiny knife with a tassel on the pommel. He also carries Ghazghkull's personal icon. The main change was bringing Makari more in line with how grots look now compared to those in the nineties. He certainly looks more vicious, and perhaps a little chubby, too. Being Ghazghkull's banner bearer is a privileged position in Ork society.



## POST DESTRUCTION GHAZGHKULL

**Maxime:** There are two poses for Ghazghkull in this kit: the aggressive, stomping forward version you've already seen, and this version, which I describe as poster-boy Ghazghkull. They are assembled in exactly the same way apart from two pieces that change the direction his head is facing. Otherwise, his pose is

controlled by how he's orientated on his base, either leaning forward and to his right or standing more stoic and looking to his left. The goal was to give hobbyists two ways to construct this iconic character. He can be combative and dynamic or in more of a post-violence victory stance as shown here.



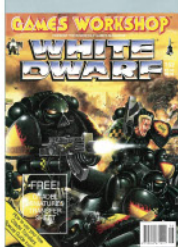
Ghazghkull's base is cleverly designed so that his feet can be placed in two ways. He can have his left foot raised on the concrete pillar and his right foot on the concrete block, or his right foot raised on the metal deck plating (1) and his left foot flat on the ground.

Another feature of the kit is the smoke plumes (2) and spent ammo casings for Mork's roar. The ejected bullet jackets show that Ghazghkull is blasting a volley of hot lead into his foes, while the smoking barrels suggest that he's just finished firing his guns and is now looking for something to krump instead.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The August 1992 issue of *White Dwarf* featured new background for Ghazghkull, including details of his first invasion of the Imperial world of Armageddon. This issue was marked the first appearance of the diminutive banner bearer Makari and Ghazghkull's arch nemesis, Commissar Yarrick. All three received new miniatures and rules for using them in games of Warhammer 40,000.



**Maxime:** Texture plays a key role in the design of our miniatures. Not only does it create areas of visual interest, it also helps painters differentiate between the materials being worn or carried by a character. A woollen cape can be painted differently to armour, for example, to show that one material is soft and the other is hard, or one is matt and the other is shiny. The majority of Ghazghkull would be covered in armoured panels and huge mechanical parts, so I looked for ways to differentiate between the materials that his Meks had used to create it. I experimented with sculpting different metal textures, including flat, cast, hammered, machined and corroded metal, then passed the prototype designs on to Max so that he could paint them and see which textures worked best on what areas.

**Max:** You can add a lot of depth and believability to a miniature with texture, and we wanted to give painters lots of unique surfaces to work with on Ghazghkull. The textures that Maxime added to the armour help give every part of the model its own story. You really get the impression that Ghazghkull puts his power klaw into an angle grinder to keep it nice and sharp, and that his armoured boots have been crudely sand-cast. I

further emphasised these textures by using lots of different metal and black mixes to give each area its own associated colour. His feet are a darker, rougher pig iron, while his power klaw has a shinier, more machined look about it. I did the same with the black armour. The plates around his shoulders have a hint of purple in them, while some of the panels (most notably his left elbow, left knee and his gun casing) are slightly green in tone. It's really subtle, and at a distance you're unlikely to notice, but when you get the model right in front of you, these little nuances really help to break up all the black.

**Maxime:** The model's designed so that you can paint it in sub-assemblies, too. I always try to design complex centrepiece kits so that they can be painted in parts. I find it enhances the 3D feeling of the model when you can look over it and see all the deep detail that's been lovingly painted. And Ghazghkull's got plenty of it. The goal was to make him a real painter's dream, with loads of features to lavish your time over, but also plenty of flat, open panels for you to apply checks, dags, glyphs and all manner of other Orky symbols. He's a centrepiece kit you'll definitely want to spend your time on!

### MARK OF THE BEAST

**Max:** Early on in the design process, Makari was going to carry a cloth banner, just like the original model. However, after a bit of discussion, we decided that a cloth banner just wasn't very Orky. Orks don't sew or draw – they use cutting torches and metal to make their art! In *Codex: Deathwatch* it's mentioned that

Ghazghkull's personal glyph was carved into the chests of several dead Space Marines, so we thought it would be interesting to explore what that could look like and integrate it into the new model. I came up with a few concept designs, then Maxime sculpted them into the glyph that Makari carries into battle.

The horned skull glyph of the Goffs (1) was the starting point for Ghazghkull's new icon. Max made the horns bigger (2-3) to show Ghazghkull's importance and added a jaw to indicate that he's a boss (4).

Max's final glyph silhouette (5) separates the teeth (now coloured red) and emphasises the glyph's right eye, which represents Ghazghkull's bionic eye. Around the glyph are all of his status icons (6-11), which were taken from Makari's original banner.

Ghazghkull's glyph fully rendered by Max (12).





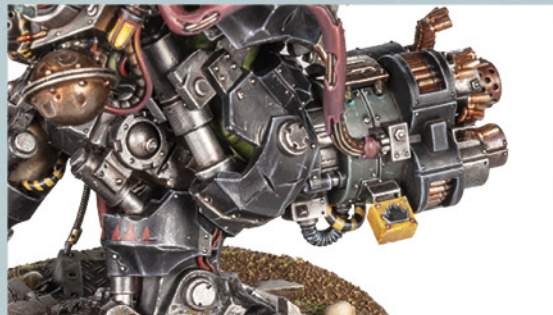
Ghazghkull is such an immense kit with so many wonderful details that it's a challenge to feature them all in just a few pages. But we'll certainly give it a go!



1



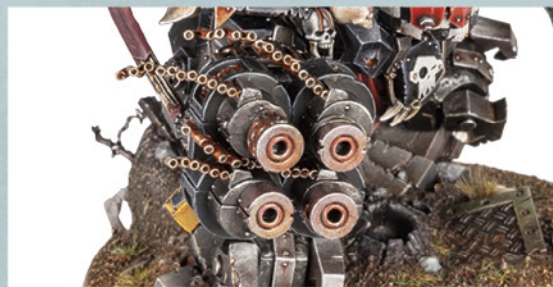
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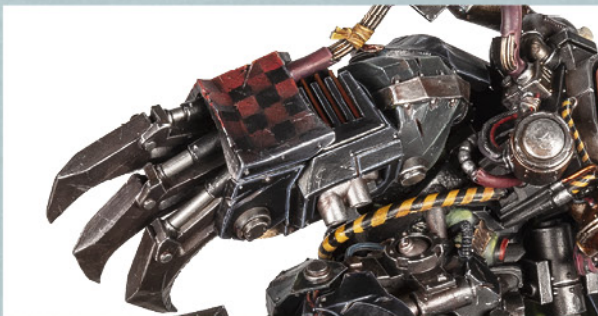
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4



5



6



7



8



9



10

Ghazghkull's new suit of mega armour features a colossal power plant (1). The rolled metal exhausts are similar to those on Ork bikes and buggies, while the copper-coloured power node at the bottom right is similar to those found on kustom mega blastas. Note the little yellow light on the right for ... well, who knows?

A pair of stikkbomb launchers are nestled beneath the bull skull (2). Max painted tiny dags on them to show the level of attention Ghazghkull's underlings lavish on his wargear.

The lights inside the jaw (3) are the perfect place to try out object source lighting.

Mork's roar requires its own power pack (4), which Max painted yellow to show it's full of energy. The gun comes with optional streams of bullet casings (5).

Max painted a faded check pattern into the back of Gork's klaw (6), which is powered by many hydraulic pistons. The klaw also features teef nailed into the palm (7) to make sure that it's extra rippy.

The feet of Ghazghkull's armour (8) are made from sand-cast metal. This one is raised up on fallen Imperial masonry (9).

A Space Wolves helmet lies in the dirt at Ghazghkull's feet (10). Here you can also see the freehand texture Max painted onto Ghazghkull's loincloth.



## PAINTING CHAZGHKULL

Maxime and Max have talked about the design of the new Ghazghkull Thraka, but how do you go about painting such a beast? Max has a few words of wisdom.

### DID YOU KNOW?

In August 2000, Ghazghkull Thraka returned to the pages of *White Dwarf* once again. Accompanying him was a background section about the Third War for Armageddon and a retrospective on his history written by none other than our long-serving designer Matt Hutson. Yep, sometimes he's allowed to type stuff, too.



**Max:** When a special character is released, we find that hobbyists often like to paint their model the same colours as the 'Eavy Metal version. After all, Marneus Calgar always wears blue, Commander Farsight wears red and Ghazghkull wears a whole lot of black! So we thought it would be useful to supply you with a breakdown of the main colours (including all the various mixes) that I used so that you can paint Ghazghkull the same way if you so desire.

Interestingly for me, Ghazghkull was the first live project on which I used Contrast paints. We'd been testing them out in 'Eavy Metal for some time, but he's the first model I painted that's made it out into the real world. For the most part I used the Contrast paints to shade the metalwork, applying them as pin shades and thin glazes to achieve different tones and effects over the textures that Maxime had added to the design. I also mixed some of them into other colours such as the red to tint them. The pigments are so strong in the Contrast paints that they're ideal for subtly altering the hues of other

paints. I found that if you're using Contrast paints in this way, then it's best to dilute them with water rather than Contrast Medium. This changes the properties of the paint, making it thinner and more translucent – perfect for controlled glazes. A lot of the more coppery metal areas were achieved by painting Gore-grunta Fur and Wyldwood over the metalwork to stain it.

As Maxime mentioned earlier, texture was a key factor in the design of Ghazghkull, and it soon became a key factor in the painting of him, too. The loincloth and insulated cables, for example, are painted using almost exactly the same colours, but they're clearly made of different materials – the cloth is likely to be some kind of hessian sacking, while the pipes are made of rubber. Both have a similar tone, but I applied different textures to them during the later stages of painting to help differentiate between the two materials. The rubber is more shiny with sharper reflective highlights around the edges, while the hessian has a cross-hatched texture applied to it to make it look like a thick-weaved, matt material.

### PAINTING TIPS

Try painting the skulls hanging from Ghazghkull's armour in different colours to show that they are different ages.

If you're struggling to get the gradient on the horns, take a look at the Warhammer TV YouTube channel – there are several great videos for painting horns on there.

Paint Ghazghkull in sub-assemblies to make it easier to get to certain parts. His arms, legs, shoulder, head and jaw can all be kept separate for ease of painting.

Thin Mournfang Brown down with water until it is a milky consistency. Carefully paint it into recesses to represent old rust. Several thin layers create a richer effect.

Try out colours such as Kabalite Green, Sotek Green and Nihilakh Oxide to create verdigris on copper areas.

### BLACK ARMOUR

Base: Abaddon Black	
Highlight: Naggaroth Night	Abaddon Black 1:1
Highlight: Naggaroth Night	Abaddon Black 1:1:1
Highlight: Celestra Grey	
Highlight: Corax White	

### PIG IRON

Undercoat: Iron warriors	Abaddon Black 1:1
Shade: Nuln Oil	
Highlight: Stormhost Silver	
Shade: Nuln Oil	
Glaze for weathering: Rhinox Hide	
Glaze for weathering: Mournfang Brown	

### RED TEEF

Base: Evil Sunz Scarlet	Mephiston Red 1:1
Shade: Mephiston Red	Rhinox Hide 2:1
Deep Shade: Rhinox Hide	
Highlight: Evil Sunz Scarlet	
Highlight: Evil Sunz Scarlet	Phalanx Yellow 1:1
Highlight: Phalanx Yellow	Corax White 1:1

### MACHINED METAL

Base: Leadbelcher	Warplock Bronze 2:1
Shade: Wyldwood	
Highlight: Leadbelcher	
Highlight: Stormhost Silver	
Glaze for weathering: Rhinox Hide	
Glaze for weathering: Mournfang Brown	
Glaze for weathering: Kabalite Green	

### GREEN ARMOUR

Base: Castellán Green	Dark Reaper 1:2
Shade: Abaddon Black	Incubi Darkness 1:1
Highlight: Castellán Green	Dark Reaper 1:1:1
Highlight: Castellán Green	Celestra Grey 1:2
Highlight: Celestra Grey	
Highlight: Corax White	



### ORK SKIN

Base: Elysian Green	Waaagh! Flesh 2:1
Shade: Waaagh! Flesh	
Deep Shade: Caliban Green	Rhinox Hide 2:1
Highlight: Elysian Green	
Highlight: Skarsnik Green	Averland Sunset 4:1
Highlight: Krieg Khaki	
Highlight: Krieg Khaki	Corax White 1:1

### RED DETAILS

Base: Khorne Red	Doombull Brown 1:1
Shade: Khorne Red	Abaddon Black 1:1
Highlight: Evil Sunz Scarlet	Word Bearers Red 1:1
Highlight: Evil Sunz Scarlet	Word Bearers Red 1:1:1
Highlight: Ungor Flesh	
Glaze: Khorne Red	
Highlight: Ungor Flesh	





BLACK ARMOUR

RED TEEF

RED DETAILS

MACHINED METAL

GREEN ARMOUR

RED DETAILS

PIG IRON

GREEN ARMOUR

MACHINED METAL

RED DETAILS

RED DETAILS

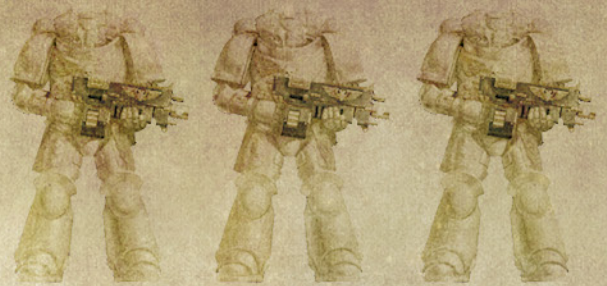
BLACK ARMOUR

PIG IRON



# FOUNDING OF A CHAPTER

According to Imperial records, there exist one thousand Space Marine Chapters, each numbering one thousand Space Marines - a million battle-brothers in all. Here, the White Dwarf team take their first steps in creating their own Chapter. Lyle explains all.





**L**yle: One of the first things I wanted to do when I stepped in as editor of *White Dwarf* was create a new Chapter of Space Marines. There were several reasons I wanted to do this. I wanted it to serve as a mascot Chapter for *White Dwarf* and also be a lens through which we could look at the wider Warhammer 40,000 universe. I wanted it to be a canonical Chapter that could be explored and developed through *White Dwarf*, and I thought it would be great content for the magazine, both in terms of giving a behind-the-curtain look at how a project like this comes together and as a guide that will hopefully encourage and inspire our readers to create their own Chapters. After all, while *Codex: Space Marines* gives you all the tools you need to create your own Chapter, there's no substitute for seeing it done by example.

Step one was to pitch the idea to the rest of the studio. Everyone was in favour of the project, so the *White Dwarf* team went to work. We started the founding process by brainstorming some overarching ideas about what we wanted our Chapter to be. At this stage, we focused on core background concepts and colour schemes. We wanted this Chapter to be connected to *White Dwarf* in

some meaningful way. From this desire were born two diverging ideas, which would ultimately become two different Chapter candidates.

The first idea was the 'starfaring protectors', a fleet-based Chapter that maintains its base of operations in a space station that orbits a white dwarf star of some strategic importance. The Chapter is the protector of that star system. In other words, its warriors are the guardians of the white dwarf and explorers of the setting. Just like the *White Dwarf* team. The second idea was a Chapter of historians and chroniclers, a concept that aligned with the production of this very magazine. Ultimately, many of these ideas would converge into our final Chapter concept.

After we agreed on some broad concepts, the *White Dwarf* team met with the Warhammer 40,000 studio writers to discuss our ideas and make sure they fit within the canon. Happily, the writers were also enthusiastic about our project, and everyone was excited to see this Chapter become realised. They gave us some advice and told us some top secret stuff to steer clear of, and once we took that in, we had their blessing to proceed. Below you'll find out how we got on in our quest.

## THE STARFARING PROTECTORS

The primary idea for this Chapter was that its warriors would be the guardians of a strategically significant white dwarf star and the crusading explorers of the cosmos. We thought this was a thematically strong link to the magazine's heritage and mission. After all, in a manner of speaking, we – the *White Dwarf* team – are ourselves guardians of *White Dwarf* and explorers of our settings. The fleet-based, crusading nature of the Chapter would also give it the literary license to have adventures all over the galaxy.

### COLOURS

With such a strong connection to a star, we focused on celestial colour schemes. Purple with cream shoulder pads quickly became a frontrunner, as did dark blue armour with white shoulder pads. These colours were selected because they evoked space and starlight.

### CHAPTER NAME

Again playing with the star theme, we considered Chapter names with a thematic prefix. We wanted to call these Space Marines Celestial, Astral or Stellar ... somethings. We

thought that the white dwarf itself might have a name or be part of a constellation, in which case the Chapter name could take that on. For example, if the star were Sirius, we might call these Astartes Celestial Hounds or Astral Hounds. As a placeholder, we took to calling them the Astral Hounds.

### THE THING AROUND THE STAR

This first Chapter idea really overtly tied into the white dwarf concept. We came up with a lot of cool ideas for why this particular white dwarf star was so important to the Chapter. One of the ideas that got kicked around at this point was that the Chapter's Fortress Monastery could be some sort of Dyson sphere around the white dwarf. Another was that the star has an archaic piece of xenos mining technology tethered to it. This might be an ancient Blackstone forge or mine or some sort. Perhaps the Adeptus Mechanicus were studying it or trying to weaponise it. Or maybe the tethered structure acts as a beacon that could be used for navigation, even as the light of the Astronomican dims. Or maybe its strange technology keeps the Great Rift itself at bay.







## INSPIRATION!

One of the big inspirations for us designing our own Chapter came from the 'Create your own Chapter' feature from the October 2017 issue of the magazine. Background writer Phil Kelly wrote a load of useful tips and advice for aspiring Chapter creators, which you can read over the page. Perhaps you, like us, will decide to found your own Chapter, too.

**Below:** Our designers set to work colouring in a couple of Space Marine line drawings to see what our proposed colour schemes could look like.

## THE HISTORIANS AND CHRONICLERS

The second idea for the new Chapter revolved around the Chapter's warriors being archivists, scribes and librarians. They would come from a tradition of historians and chroniclers. This concept tied into the identity of *White Dwarf* because, in many ways, that is the role of the magazine to the Warhammer hobby.

### COLOURS

The colour concepts for this Chapter sprang from the theme of history books, so an armour colour of parchment-white with inky black trim emerged, along with a secondary idea of parchment-white with red trim, with the red representing history written in blood.

### CHAPTER NAME

We only ever had one name for this iteration of the Chapter: the Tome Keepers. It just stuck.

### BOOK WORMS

The core idea for this Chapter is that they're historians and chroniclers. From this central tenet, the ideas really started flowing. We asked ourselves why this would be a part of their culture and heritage. We imagined that their home world is an inhospitable one, such that the lives of its people are brutal and short. Thus, to preserve their history and culture,

they became obsessed with recording every facet of life in great tomes for future generations to read and further maintain. They wouldn't have the benefits of elders teaching younger generations through oral tradition or apprenticeship. Nor would they have long-lived leaders to serve as models of good governance. Their dedication to producing detailed history books ensures a continuity and order to their society that would otherwise be impossible. This Chapter would inherit these traditions, and consequently, they would be compelled by history, knowledge and truth.

These traditions would also enable the Chapter to function as a lens through which we could critically view the Imperium. This was something that became a more important aspect of the Chapter as its creation went on. The 41st Millennium is a truly horrific place and time, and the Imperium is no exception. But that aspect of the lore is often overlooked, as we all fall victim to the 'Imperial propaganda' that glorifies the heroes of the Imperium. The reality is that life in the Imperium is terrible for the overwhelming majority of its citizens, and the hands of the rest are dirty with horrible, even if necessary, deeds. That was an aspect of the Imperium we wanted to shine more light on with this Chapter.

## THE PROSPECTIVE CHAPTERS



The Astrakhan Hounds



The Tome Keepers



## BEHIND THE SCENES

At the same time we were working on our new Chapter, the Warhammer 40,000 team were beginning a project to catalogue the names, colours and iconography of every known Space Marine Chapter. The timing was perfect, then, to make sure our prospective Chapters – Astral Hounds and Tome Keepers – were included in the canonical list.

It wasn't long after, though, that we settled on the Tome Keepers. We loved what we'd come up with for their background so far, but there were aspects of the Astral Hounds that we kept, too. The thematic link to the white dwarf star, for example, became part of the background for the Tome Keepers. That gave us an explanation for our home world's harsh conditions. Its inhabitants would have brutal, short lives because of the penetrating radiation of the star, perhaps amplified by whatever mysterious and ancient construct was tethered to it. We're still working on developing the background of the Tome Keepers as I write this article. Watch this space!

One of the most important aspects of the new Chapter, and one we haven't discussed yet, was the colour scheme. We wanted a scheme that was identifiable and stood out from the crowd, but we also wanted a scheme that would be relatively quick and easy to pull off. After all, we'd be painting a lot of them. That meant that ideally, we'd have a scheme with the main colour available as a Citadel Spray, or otherwise easy to achieve. Not completely satisfied yet with the colour schemes we had come up with (dark blue and white or purple and black for the Astral Hounds, or bone and black for the Tome Keepers), we added a final additional test scheme of grey and orange. I liked this final set of colours, but we decided to keep the bone and black for their strong visual appeal and thematic significance.

## COLOUR TESTING



### TOME KEEPERS VERSION 1

I used a Wraithbone undercoat for the Tome Keepers so that I could paint their parchment-coloured armour with Skeleton Horde. The gun was painted with a couple of layers of Black Templar.



### TOME KEEPERS VERSION 2

This version of the Tome Keepers uses the same armour colours, but the chest eagle is painted gold. We did this to test using the chest device as the company colour.



### ASTRAL HOUNDS

I sprayed the Astral Hound Chaos Black, then basecoated him with Xereus Purple. I followed that with a wash of Nuln Oil, then highlights of Genestealer Purple and Dechala Lilac. The shoulder pads are Screaming Skull.

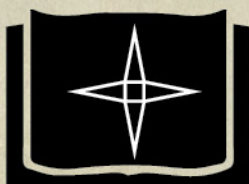


### UNKNOWN CHAPTER

I used Mechanicus Standard Grey as a basecoat for this tester, followed by a wash of Nuln Oil, then highlights of Administratum Grey and Ulthuan Grey. The shoulder trims are Troll Slayer Orange and Fire Dragon Bright.

## ICONOGRAPHY

With the Tome Keepers chosen as our Chapter, our designers started coming up with ideas for the Chapter symbol. We began with an open book and worked from there, changing the shape a few times to get something that would could be made into a transfer or painted by hand. A star was added to the centre of the book to represent the white dwarf star.



This was the original book image designed by the studio.



We filled in the star, since the lines were too small for scale.



We decided that Sergeants could feature skulls on their tomes.



We revised the book shape to make it more recognisable.



When we tested the design with transfer paper, the lines were too thin. So we emboldened the lines and made the skull and star symbols as big as possible.





## FOUNDING YOUR OWN CHAPTER

**Now you know how we came up with the background for our Chapter. Why not try it for yourself? Here's some things to think about, along with tips we learned along the way.**

When devising your own Chapter, you can flesh it out as little or as much as you want. For many people, coming up with a Chapter name and a colour scheme is enough. But the more you develop the ideas for your Chapter, the more rewarding and interesting your creation will be.

Back in the October 2017 issue of *White Dwarf*, background writer Phil Kelly came up with a load of useful tips and advice for creating a Space Marine Chapter. I've included them below, along with a few thoughts of my own, to help you get your creative juices flowing.

### CHAPTER NAME

Keep it short and punchy. It can involve colours, weapons, knightly references, storm references or heraldic titles. Some Chapters have one-word names, like the Exorcists, while others feature an adjective and a noun such as the White Scars or the Brazen Skulls. Some are a little longer – the Knights of the Raven or the Angels of Absolution (the somethings of something Chapters).

**Things to think about:** What is the significance of your Chapter name? Does it relate to its parent Chapter, home world, heritage, combat style or driving motivation?

### CHAPTER SYMBOL

The Chapter symbol is as important as the Chapter name and should reflect it. The Minotaurs, for example, have the head of a Minotaur as their Chapter symbol, while the Crimson Fists have – you guessed it – a crimson fist. It's worth looking online at different heraldry or, even better, looking at what transfers you can use before you decide on your Chapter symbol (and name), as painting the same icon over and over might get a little tricky.

### PRIMOGENITOR

Being a Successor Chapter, whose gene-seed does your Chapter share? Which Primarch is their forefather, and how does this affect them? This should tell you a whole tonne about their character. The descendents of Rogal Dorn are likely to have a different temperament and outlook to those of Ferrus Manus, for example.

**Things to think about:** What connection does the Successor Chapter have to the parent Chapter? Do they have a similar combat style (or use the same rules in the game)?

### ORIGINS

Which founding was their inception? Are they a long-standing Chapter with a history going back

thousands of years or are they part of the newly formed Ultima Founding? If so, has Guilliman tasked them with a special duty?

### COLOUR SCHEME

Try a few out using the template on the next page! Once you've found a colour scheme you're happy with, try it on a test model. It's worth considering at this point how your colour scheme will look when applied to a larger model such as a tank or a flyer and if you'll enjoy painting a whole army that way. Remember, if you decided to mix any of your paints, you'll have to mix them for every model in your army. Our advice: stick to the colours as they come in the pots – it's much easier!

**Things to think about:** What do the colours relate to? Are they related to the Chapter's theme, parent Chapter or home world? Do your chosen colours look good on the battlefield?

### UNIT MARKINGS (COMPANIES, SQUADS AND CHARACTERS)

Think about how your companies and squads will be denoted. Get this figured out early if you can, as you don't want to paint the armour of your models and find out the colour you've picked for your Company markings – traditionally the shoulder trim or knee pads – clashes. You'll probably have a spare helmet or shoulder pad in your bits box that you can try it out on. Helmet rank markings should also be considered. Ultramarines Sergeants wear red helmets as dictated by the Codex Astartes, but red may not work with your colour scheme. It may be that your Sergeants wear black helmets.

**Things to think about:** *Codex: Space Marines* is a good starting point for reference and ideas. You should consider the markings for Battleline (Tactical), Close Support (Assault), Fire Support (Devastator), Veteran (Veteran) and Command (HQ) and how these will appear on your models. While there's no harm in a little deviation from the Codex (the Blood Angels use different-coloured helmets to designate different battlefield roles, for example), your Chapter's markings should always echo the standard laid down in the Codex Astartes where possible.

### HOME WORLD

Consider the type of planet they call home – is it a death world, a hive world or a feudal world? Where is it located? Its location will indicate what types of enemies it might frequently encounter, how well supported it is by the Imperium at large and how well explored its region of space is. What type of people do they recruit – are they savages, gangers or rad-waste nomads? What is their



fortress monastery like? Do they even have one, or are they fleet-based? All these elements can inform the background of your Chapter.

## COMBAT DOCTRINE

The Raven Guard favour stealth. The Imperial Fists are masters of fortifications and defence. The Flesh Tearers excel at close combat. What style of combat is the trademark of your Chapter? Identifying this will help you select your Chapter Tactics as well as the compositions for your army lists. Does your Chapter (or even your company within the Chapter) favour a lot of tanks? Does it prefer bombastic assaults, carefully planned campaigns or stealth tactics? Does it have an extensive Librarius or harbour many ancient relics? Your collection should inform this.

## BELIEFS

Is your Chapter Codex-adherent, or do the beliefs of their home world and Chapter Master colour

their take on the 41st Millennium? What makes them unique and interesting?

## WORDS

Motto. House words. Mantra. Battlecry. A good phrase for can be a powerful way to establish an identity. Whether faithful, vengeful or unrelenting, this is a great insight into your Chapter's character.

## IDIOSYNCRASIES

What behavioural quirks make your Chapter unique? Is there anything unusual about their dialect or speech patterns? Fleshing out details like these breathes life into your Chapter.

## THE LAST WORD

We hope this inside look into the early stages of the creation of the Tome Keepers has proven inspiring for you all. If you're ready to found your own Chapter, feel free to photocopy the template below and get colouring in. Happy founding!

## COMING SOON

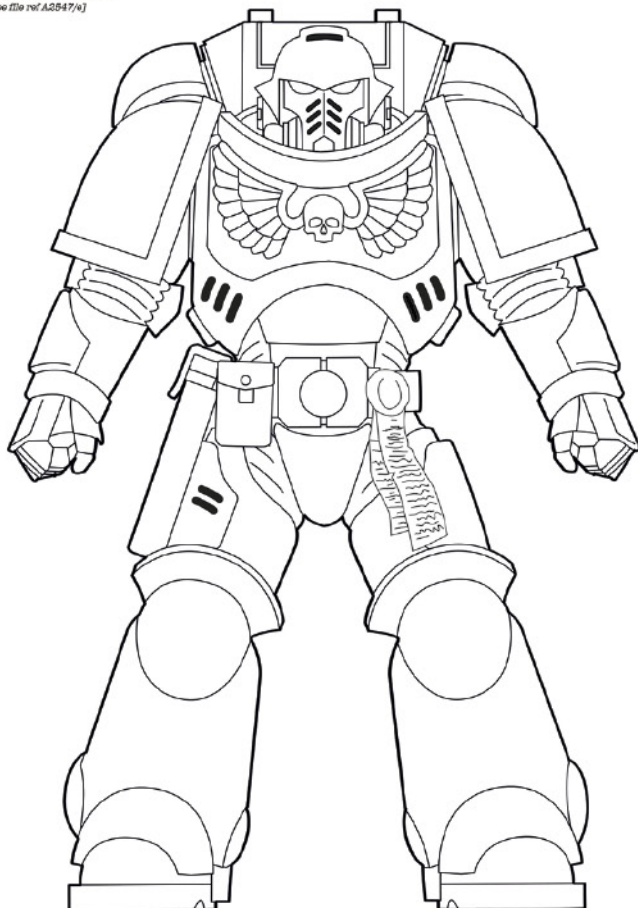
Next month, we'll be fleshing out some of the background for our Chapter, including our ideas on 'the thing around the star', the short lives of our home world's inhabitants and the origins of the Chapter. We might even have a few Tome Keepers models to show off if we can get them painted in time!

## CREATE YOUR OWN CHAPTER

Below you will find an outline for a Primaris Space Marine that you can photocopy and colour in yourself. Alternatively, if you prefer dataslates and high technology to quill and ink, head over to the Warhammer Community site and search for: 'New Warhammer 40,000: The Ultima Founding'. There you

will find a free digital download for the same template. When colouring in, it's worth considering how the colours you're using match up to those in the Citadel paint range. If you can use similar colours, you'll have a much easier time when it comes to painting your first test model.

MX K TACTICUS ARMOUR  
(see file ref. A254774)



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## ADEPTUS ASTARTES MARKINGS & HERALDRY

(1.) CHAPTER NAME .....

(2.) CHAPTER MOTTO [if known] .....

(3.) CHAPTER / SUCCESSOR TACTICS .....

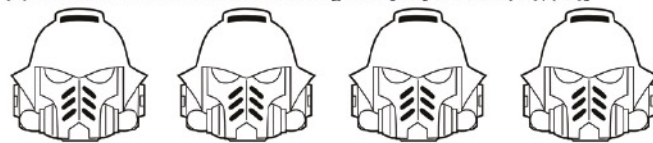
(4a.) CHAPTER SYMBOL

(4b.) PRIMARY WEAPON CONFIGURATION



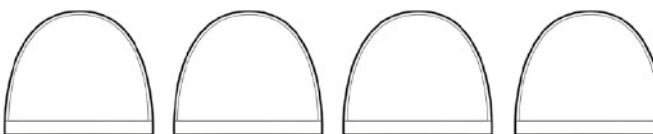
GAWI-PATTERN BOLT RIFLE  
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(5.) ALTERNATIVE HELMET CONFIGURATION [please specify in section (5a.)/(5d.)]



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(7.) NOTES [please use additional sheets (form A116/b) if necessary]

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<<<FOR MUNITORUM USE ONLY>>>

Thought for the Day: Be strong in your ignorance.



MUNITORUM REF A116/



# GOLDEN ASPIRATIONS

Golden Demon is the most prestigious Warhammer painting competition in the world, with countless painters from across the globe taking part. Here, we chat to Slayer Sword winner Neil Hollis about entering Golden Demon USA 2020.



**A**t the time of writing this article, Christmas 2019 is just around the corner. However, for you lot out there in the real world, it's now April and Golden Demon USA 2020 has just taken place at AdeptiCon in Schaumburg, Illinois. One of the entrants to the competition is Neil Hollis, who painting aficionados will know has won several Golden Demons at recent UK events. In fact, all the models in the montage above were painted by Neil, including his Slayer Sword-winning rendition of the Iron Warriors Primarch Perturabo. But what's all this got to do with Golden Demon USA, we hear you cry. Well ...

Towards the end of last year, Neil got in contact with us and said he was planning on painting the Stormcast Eternals character Berek the Indomitable for Golden Demon USA. He also offered us stage-by-stage pictures of his work along with insights into how he went about planning and painting his entry. How could we possibly refuse? Over the next few pages, you'll get an insight into how Neil went about creating his entry, see in-progress shots of his work and get a closer look at a couple of his previous award-winning entries. You never know, maybe it will inspire you to enter the next Golden Demon painting competition.



## BEREK THE INDOMITABLE

Berek the Indomitable is a Stormcast Eternals Liberator from the Hammers of Sigmar Stormhost. A seriously heroic-looking character, it's no wonder that Neil wanted to paint him for Golden Demon.



### NEIL HOLLIS

Neil's been painting Warhammer miniatures for years and loves entering Golden Demon. At the time of writing he's won nine Golden Demon awards and one Slayer Sword.

**Neil:** The idea for this article came about a few months ago while planning my trip to AdeptiCon 2020. I've always wanted to take part in an international Golden Demon competition, and the return of Golden Demon USA seemed like the perfect opportunity.

As is always the case when entering Golden Demon, the first thing I needed to do was pick a model to paint. That was relatively easy because I'd already set my eyes on Berek the Indomitable. In my opinion, he's the coolest Stormcast Eternal model around. I love his pose, standing over the smashed-up torso of an orruk, his hammer planted firmly on the back of its neck. He's stoic

and heroic, and he was just waiting to be painted! One of the other reasons I love the model is that I knew I wouldn't need to do much with it in terms of conversion work. Sometimes I see a model and think I'd like to swap its head or weapons or even change its pose entirely, but Berek is pretty much perfect. I filled in a few spots of battle damage on his armour, but otherwise he's built straight out of the box. I could get straight on with the painting.

It was then that I thought, 'I should share the experience of painting my entry with *White Dwarf* – they might be interested in something like this'. As it turns out, they were, and that's exactly what the rest of this article is all about.





## SETTING THE SCENE

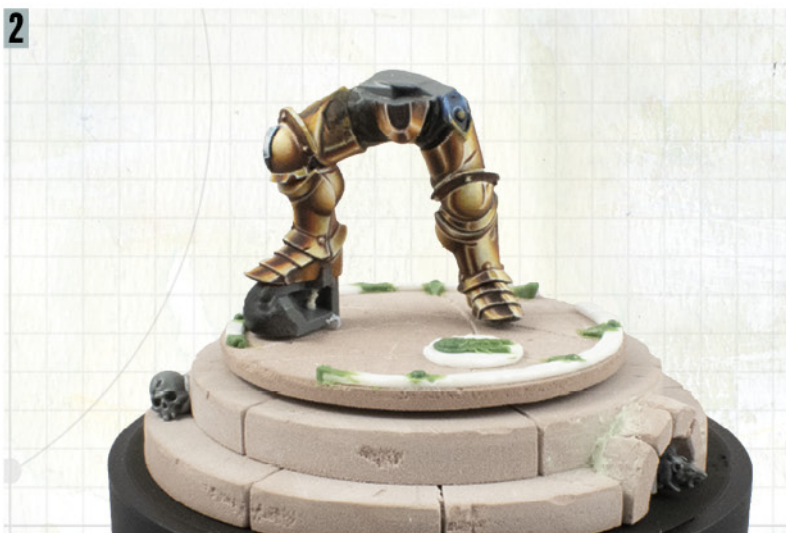
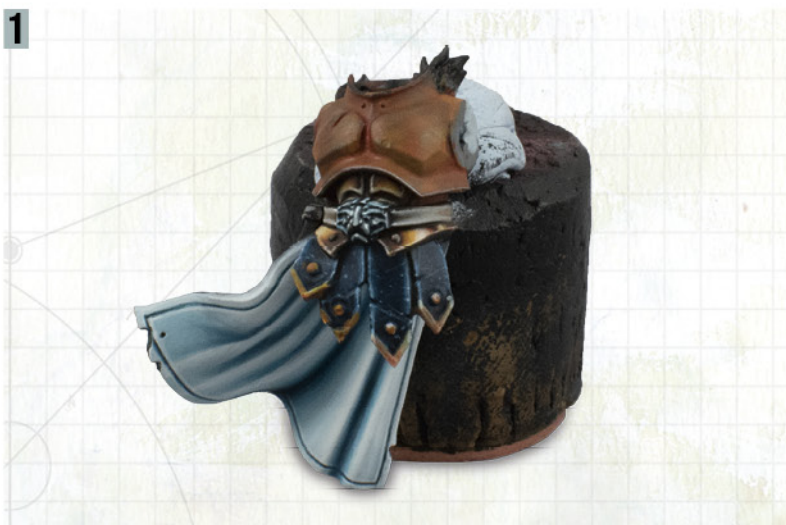
Once I'd decided what model to enter, the next stage was thinking about the display base and coming up with a story for the piece. The display base is a great way to create a scene for an entry and ground it in the universe that it's from. For Berek, I decided that a stepped dais would be the best approach, as it would help draw your eye up from the black plinth towards the model. A lot of people go for natural bases with rocks, earth, grass and trees all over them, but personally I find those kinds of bases too busy. While they may look great, they can run the risk of being more attention-grabbing than the miniature, which is never the point of a scenic base. They're there to complement the model, not outshine it. So that's why I went for simple, clean steps. I spent a bit of time researching Age of Sigmar architecture to get the aesthetics right, then set about carving it into shape. The design on the top step was inspired by the Sigmarite Dais kit, which features metal banding around the edge and a complex, curving pattern on the top with intersecting planets.



## PICKING THE COLOUR SCHEME

Once I was happy with the composition of the piece, I set about coming up with a colour scheme – in this case the classic gold and blue of the Hammers of Sigmar. I like the look of non-metallic metals – that's very much my chosen style for Golden Demon – so I knew that was how I would paint his armour. Normally I paint small areas of non-metallics such as shoulder trims on Space Marines. But this model is almost entirely clad in reflective gold armour, and plotting out the reflection points would be much harder, so I found a picture of Berek online, stuck it in Photoshop and coloured it in to figure out where I wanted the light and dark points to go. Doing this on a two dimensional picture is far easier than on a three dimensional model. Reference pictures of people wearing medieval armour helped a lot at this stage.

My process when painting is to undercoat my miniatures with Chaos Black, then paint in all the mid-tones to get a feel for the colour balance across the model (1). Then I jump straight up to the brightest colours and sketch out where I think the highlights will sit. That gives me a rough idea of the colour range I want to work in. I then paint between the mid-tone and the highlight, slowly blending through the colours to get the transition right, before reapplying the final highlight colours as they inevitably lose a bit of their lustre during the process. I then repeat the process with the shading, applying a deep shade and working up to the mid-tone. I pretty much always start with the legs (2) and work my way up the model.





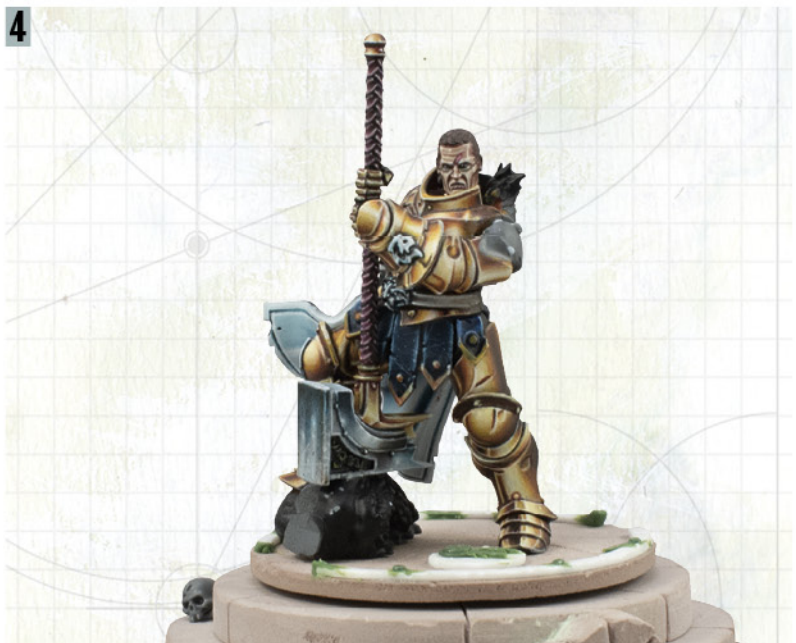
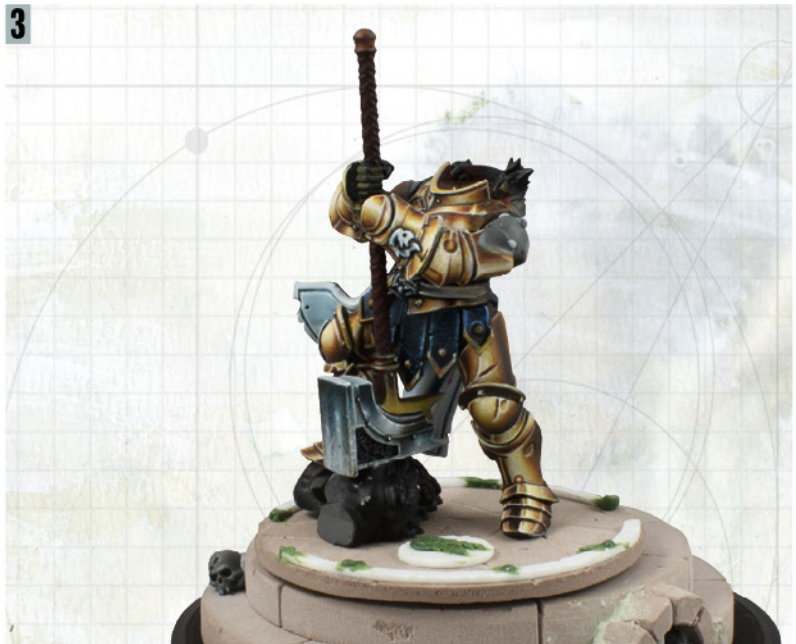
### THE GOLD

I don't tend to write down my paint colours when I'm working, I just grab whatever paints are closest for the job! But for those that are interested (and from what I can remember ...) I used Abaddon Black and Doombull Brown for the shading, Dorn Yellow and White Scar for the top highlights and a random ochre colour for the mid-tone. Something like Tau Light Ochre would do the trick. I then started adding in a few glazes. I used oranges around the colour transitions to help blend them together a little better and Incubi Darkness in some of the darker areas around the legs to show where the orruk's skin colour was being reflected in the armour (3).

Even with my 2D plan, working out where the light points would hit the model was pretty tricky. Stormcast Eternals wear a lot of curved armour, sometimes with curved panels meeting other curved panels going in a different direction. In fact, there are very few straight panels on them at all! Areas like the gauntlets and greaves in particular pick up reflections in weird and unexpected ways. Rather than working in straight lines as I would normally do with non-metallic metals, I found myself working in oval shapes, creating haloes of light around a light spot (such as on the model's calves), then transitioning out to the darker areas (4). Sharp edges, such as those on the feet, were much easier to work with, as I could paint one side up to the edge getting brighter, apply a sharp reflection point on the highest edge, then create a shaded area immediately next to it on the other side. I've found the hardest part is balancing the amount of shading and highlighting you do. Too much shading and the gold will just look black and not like gold at all. Too much highlighting and it will turn a pastel yellow.

### THE BLUE

I've painted a lot of blue models over the years, including several for Golden Demon, so I was right at home with the blue armour and robes (5). Both use a similar colour palette of Kantor Blue highlighted up to Blue Horror. I initially went right up to White Scar, but when I sat back and looked at the highlights, they were far too pastel, so I applied several very thin glazes of Kantor Blue to tone them back down again before re-highlighting with Blue Horror. I also added purple into the recesses of Berek's robes to give them a little extra depth, to smooth the transition of the shading, and to help provide contrast between the soft cloth and the reflective armour. I also added a freehand twin-tailed comet to the corner of the cloak to provide a little extra interest. It's worth noting that extra details won't win you a Golden Demon – you need to have a beautifully painted model first – but they might make the difference between a finalist pin and a trophy.





## THE SILVER

I painted the hammer in a similar way to the gold, but when I looked back at it, it didn't look right at all. With the gold there's a transition of black to gold to white, but with the silver it was just black, grey and white – it was a flat monochrome. That's when I added in a few extra colours. I glazed in turquoises and browns to show where other colours were reflecting off the silver and even some greens at the top of the hammer head where it sat next to the orruk's green skin (6). They really helped invigorate it and give it some presence. But there was another touch I wanted to add. Berek's hammer has been whacked into countless things, so it felt only right to cover it in little freehand dings and scratches. I think roughing it up a bit really brought the hammer head to life and made it a focal part of the model.

## CONSIDERING CONTRAST

Contrast is an important part of miniatures painting, and I feel that non-metallic metals look better the more contrast you put into them. I will often go from black in the deepest recesses right up to pure white on the highlights to enhance the light/dark contrast. In my opinion, having a lot of contrast on a model is rarely a bad thing, but if you have very little contrast, your model may not get noticed at competitions like Golden Demon.

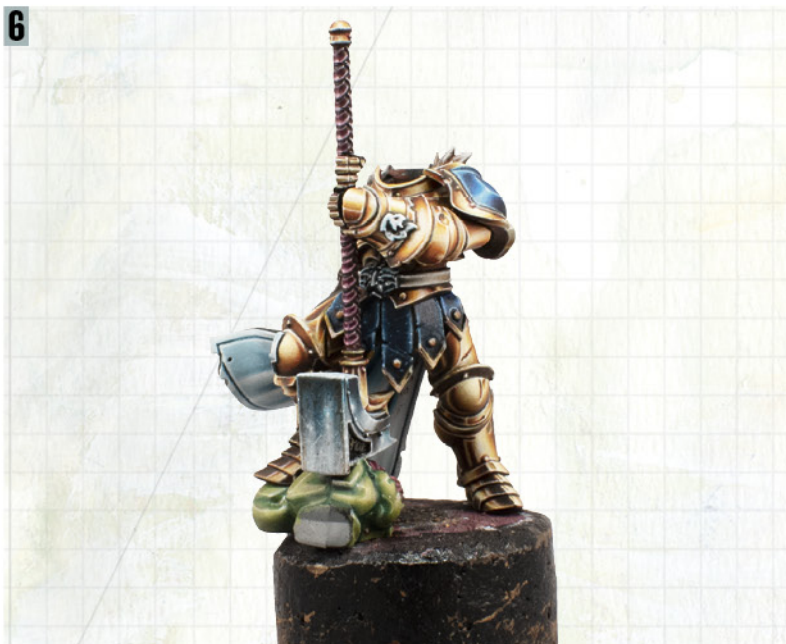
The contrast between armour and skin is another area I focused on with Berek. The metal is hard and reflective, the skin – on both Berek and his deceased foe – is much softer and more matt. Personally I find skin much harder to paint than armour, as I often put in too many highlights and over-define it. So I spent quite a bit of time chatting to other painters, getting advice on how to approach it. Fellow painter Matt Kennedy gave me some great advice on painting the orruk's skin. I sent him pictures as I went along, and he gave me constructive feedback on what I could do better. I shaded the orruk's skin with blue tones to provide a subtle visual link to the blue armour panels on Berek, while the orruk's skin is highlighted with yellow to link it to Berek's gold armour (7). It's little touches like this that help unite the colour palette across the model. Berek also features a hint of blue beneath his eyes to link him to the model's spot colour.

## THE EASTER EGG

There's a hidden extra on my entry – a flickering green light in the base (8) that can be seen through the sewer grating. It's not going to help me win a trophy on its own, but perhaps once my painting had caught the judges' eyes it will be the icing on the cake. Fingers crossed!

*You can see all the winning entries from AdeptiCon 2020 at [golden-demon.com](http://golden-demon.com). If only we had the power of foresight to see if Neil will be among them!*

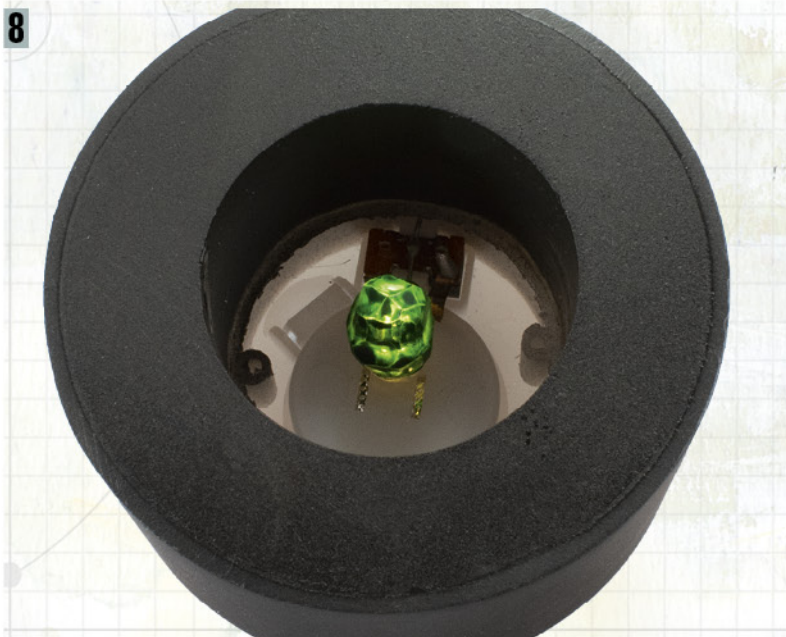
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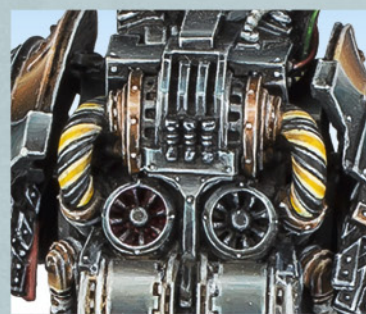
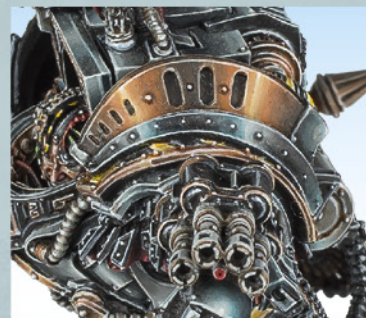
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## GOLDEN DEMON SHOWCASE

Neil has won nine Golden Demons over the last few years and even bagged a Slayer Sword at Golden Demon: Horus Heresy in 2017. Here are a couple of our favourite entries by him.



Neil's crowning glory so far at Golden Demon is Perturabo, which won him the Slayer Sword at the Horus Heresy event in 2017 (1). As you can see, Neil's painted the Primarch in his trademark non-metallic metals, using both silver and copper on the model.

Neil chose copper rather than gold for the armour trim (2) so that it wouldn't clash with the yellow chevrons that sit next to it. To contrast with the warm copper, Neil glazed the silver armour with cool blue tones.

Like many competition painters, Neil painted Perturabo in individual components. This enabled him to reach all the tricky parts of the model like the targeters underneath Perturabo's guns (3). The downside to painting the model this way was that Neil had to try and achieve a consistent light source for all the reflection points while the model was still in pieces – not an easy task by any means!

Not content with one type of non-metallic silver, Neil painted Perturabo's ammo hoppers (4) a slightly different colour to show they're made of a different material.

Neil's Tech-Priest and Thallax (5) won gold in the Unbound category at the same event in 2017. Once again, both characters in the diorama are painted with non-metallic metals, this time accented with a red spot colour. You can also see the amount of work that Neil puts into the bases of his dioramas to create a story for his models. This one represents a fallen column in the city of Tizca.





# THE REALM OF KHORNE

Realms of Chaos is a series exploring how you can build and paint your Chaos models to show what realm they come from. In this second instalment, we're travelling to the goriest of all the Chaos domains - the Realm of Khorne, the Blood God.



**F**rom gore-red sky to ashen earth, the Realm of Khorne is a hellish landscape of eternal fire, spilt blood and shattered bone. It is a place of rage and violence made manifest, the land heaving and boiling with the uncontrollable fury of the infernal god that resides at its heart. Plains of jagged rocks shred the flesh of those who pass, their surfaces stained crimson with the viscera of aeons. Rivers of lava scorch the ground black so that no life can thrive there, and blood rains down constantly from storm-wracked skies. Plains of bones stretch as far as the eye can see, all meat and marrow devoured by flesh-hungry cannibals. And above all loom the brass citadels, gargantuan fortresses of igneous rock and brazen metal – the domains of mighty warlords and daemons. Carnage and bloodshed dominate the Blood God's realm, which exists both in the warp of the 41st Millennium and on the edge of reality in the Mortal Realms.

## THE SKULL RUNE

The mark of Khorne is a stylised skull, with eye sockets, nasal cavity and upper row of teeth. It is often worn as a brass trinket or icon, which is normally forged by the bearer. More commonly it is simply cut into or branded onto the skin of a follower, leaving permanent, obvious scars.



## BRINGERS OF BLOODSHED

The followers of Khorne are warriors without exception, their muscular bodies criss-crossed with the scars of countless battles. Indeed, scarification and self-mutilation are common traits amongst Khorne's host, his frenzied children more than willing to mutilate their own bodies to appease their wrathful lord. Khorne rarely rewards such dedication, but when he does, his gifts of mutation are invariably violent in nature, ranging from barbed claws, boney growths and fangs to scorpion tails and leathery, blood-slick wings. Most servants of Khorne wear armour fashioned from brass or iron, the metal tarnished with the blood of their victims, the skulls of fallen foes hanging from their belts. While much of this armour is fairly simple in design, many choose to wear ornate helms wrought with the sigil of Khorne, their face masks moulded to resemble leering hound heads and bestial visages.



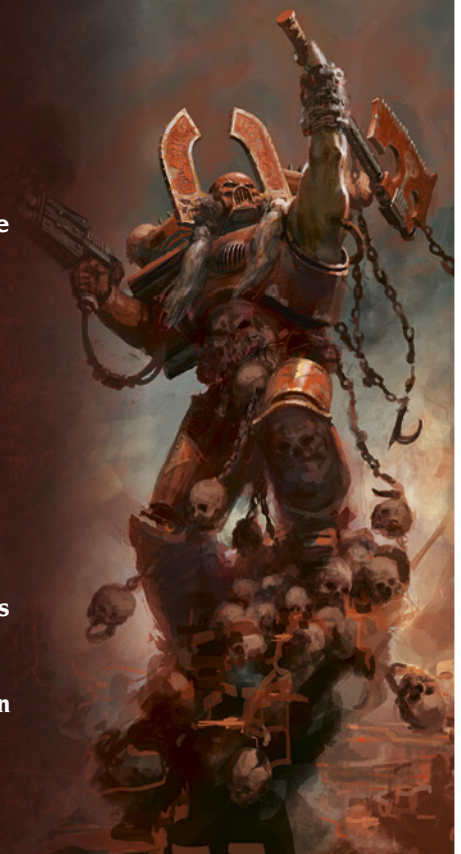
## CREATING A LEGION OF SLAUGHTER

So what would an army dedicated to Khorne look like? Aside from obvious kits such as Blood Warriors and Khorne Berzerkers, perhaps you could build an army of Khornogors led to battle by a blood-crazed Doombull (a Bloodthirster's axe would make for a perfect conversion). Maybe you could paint an army of skaven that have been infected by bloodlust or a Slaves to Darkness army all wearing the brass armour of Khorne. The same rules could be applied for the armies of the 41st Millennium; how about a Chapter of renegade Space Marines fallen to the Blood God, or traitor Guardsmen like the Blood Pact or Sons of Sek? It could be that your army hasn't turned to Khorne, but it is fighting in a land where people have. Imagine a T'au army with lava bases covered in skulls, or a Stormcast Eternals force splattered with the blood of unholy foes.

As we all know, there are infinite ways to build and paint your models. We hope this article will provide you with some useful inspiration for how to create an army of Khorne. If you have an idea you would like to share with us, send us some pictures of your own creations to: [team@whitedwarf.co.uk](mailto:team@whitedwarf.co.uk)

## WARRIORS OF THE BLOOD GOD

Khârn the Betrayer (page 83 of *Codex: Chaos Space Marines*) is a great example of what a servant of Khorne can look like. Their armour is stained the colour of blood and covered with brass spikes and blades. They wear helmets fashioned in the shape of skulls, or sport bladed vanes like the horns of Khorne's Daemons. Their bulging muscles wield toothed blades that rend and tear their victims into gore and splintered bone. The skulls of worthy foes adorn their weapons and wargear. Vignettes like this, found in many Warhammer books, are a great source of inspiration for your colour schemes and conversions.



## THE COLOURS OF KHORNE

The traditional colours of Khorne are red, black, brass and bone, and these colours can be seen in the lands conquered by Khorne's many armies. Yet these colours take on many hues, from dark crimsons through to fiery oranges and deep midnight blacks to dusty greys. The colours of Khorne give you plenty of opportunities for experimentation.





## PAINTING AND CONVERTING YOUR ARMIES – WARHAMMER AGE OF SIGMAR

The colours of violence and viscera appeal most to the Blood God, but fire and brimstone are equally appreciated. Here are a few ideas for how you can paint and convert your Age of Sigmar models.

Blood, brass and bone are the traditional colours of Khorne's legions, but that doesn't mean you can't sneak in a few other colours here and there. Brass looks great when weathered with verdigris, for example, while bones and skulls could be painted in many different hues to show they came from different enemies (check out this issue's Ossiarch Bonereapers Paint Splatter). Skin tones are also an interesting prospect. You could paint your warriors with

pale skin and black armour, or dark skin and red armour, or any combination in between. As you'll see over the page, daemons can be any colour you like. Perhaps they're taking on a greenish hue because they're fighting in Ghyran. Then again, maybe you collect Sylvaneth and you've painted their leaves red to show how Khorne has tainted their lands. Perhaps your Fyreslayers have (gasp!) allied themselves to the Blood God's armies ...

### A REALM OF POSSIBILITIES

These Bloodletters have all taken on the hues of the realms they are fighting in. The first has a golden blade to show it is fighting in Chamon. The second has darker skin to show it is from Ulgu. The third has the sepulchral black skin of Shyish, while the fourth has been set on fire by the flames of Aqshy.



### POWERFUL CONTRAST

Blood doesn't show up well on dark skin or armour, so try painting your models with paler tones to help the red show up. This version of Targor by Maxime Pastourel is a great example of contrast between cool and warm colours.



### SLAVE TO DARKNESS

Slaves to darkness can be followers of Khorne, too. Adding in the occasional red panel to their colour scheme (or perhaps a red shield or topknot) is a great way to show that they've answered the call of the Blood God.



### SKULLS FOR THE SKULL THRONE!

This Blood Warrior from the Flayed Tribe wears bone-coloured armour, making him really stand out from the crowd. Blood for the Blood God has been used to cover his armour in smeared gore.



### KHORNGOR

This Bestigor from the Eighthorn Skullfray has dedicated itself to Khorne. Its armour is rust red and covered with metal chips to make it look battered and well-used – perfect for a blood-crazed monster.





## CITIES OF SIGMAR STEAM TANK BY ANT SALIBA

Ant's Steam Tank hails from Greywater Fastness – a prominent engineering city in Ghyran. The city guild sent the tank to aid an ally, but found the land wholly corrupted by Khorne, with sharp metal blades covered in blood and brass skulls piling up around the battlefield. The skulls are painted with layers of Warlock Bronze, Iron Warrior, then Rune Fang Steel.



## BLOODMASTER BY SAM PEARSON

Sam used a mushroom from the Shattered Dominion Large Base Detail Kit on his Bloodmaster's base to show that it's very definitely an Age of Sigmar model. He painted the daemon's armour black to match the armour worn by the mortals in his army.



## CHAOS WARSHRINE BY LARBI BENYOUNES

This is Larbi's second Chaos Warshrine (the first was dedicated to Nurgle). It features a giant icon of Khorne taken from the Judgements of Khorne set. Larbi used the base from the same judgement on the base of this model to create a rocky pool filled with blood. Other converted parts include the trio of Flesh Hounds tethered to the shrine by a blood leash (made from wire covered in PVA glue) and a new magister in the form of an Exalted Deathbringer. Larbi mostly used Contrast paints for this model, including Gore-grunta Fur and Flesh Tearing Red on the daemons' and beasts' skin.





### BLOOD DAEMON BY CALUM MCPHERSON

Calum converted an Eidolon of Mathlann into a Daemon Prince. His idea was that the Idoneth harvested too many tainted souls and accidentally summoned a corrupted Eidolon into existence that has now become possessed by a Daemon of Khorne. Calum swapped the model's normal hands and weapons for Bloodletters hands, specifically those from the Bloodcrushers kit so that he could get the impressive standard. He also added a pair of Crypt Flyer wings to the model's back and replaced the shoulder pads with skulls. Even more skulls and plenty of blood were added to the base.



### BLOOD WARRIORS BY MARK BEDFORD

Mark converted some Chaos Warriors using spare weapons, heads and shields from the Blood Warriors and Mighty Skullcrushers kits. He stippled their weapons and bases with Blood for the Blood God, and their cloaks with Typhus Corrosion to represent dirt.





## THE COLDBLOODS BY MAXIME PASTOUREL

Maxime has a sizeable Khorne army that includes mortals, daemons, beastmen and skaven. The story behind his army is that they've been fighting skeletons in the frozen wastelands of Shyish, which is why they have such a cool, desaturated colour scheme and icy, snow-covered bases. Maxime did use red as a spot colour on armour, weapons and cloth, though, just to remind us that his warriors do worship the Blood God. He has a running motif across his army, too – a spiked halo that represents the fabled Collars of Khorne. The ones on his Blood Warriors are converted out of their gorefists (their heads come from Wracks, in case you were wondering), while the haloes on larger models such as his Juggernaut Lord and Stormfiends come from the Chaos Warshrine.



Maxime's general is converted from a Mighty Skullcrusher with the upper torso and right arm from Korghos Khul. The model's head is taken from a Drukhar Wrack, while the brass halo comes from the Chaos Warshrine. Note also the two smaller Juggernaut heads that have sprouted from the Lord's mount. These come from the Khorne Lord of Skulls and are a homage to Karanak, the Hound of Vengeance.





## PAINTING AND CONVERTING YOUR ARMIES – WARHAMMER 40,000

Khorne's influence on the armies of the 41st Millennium is just as pronounced as on those of the Mortal Realms, giving you loads of great opportunities to create some suitably gory paint jobs.

The colours of the 41st Millennium tend to be more muted than those of the Mortal Realms, taking on darker tones of red, brass and bone. However, Khorne's Daemons appear in many different hues, and his followers can wear any colours you like – cultists don't suddenly all take to wearing red clothing, and Renegade Space Marines may retain the colours of their former Chapter (for a while at least). You could quite easily create a warband of Khorne

Daemonkin who wear grey armour and smear it in the blood of their enemies. Perhaps bone-coloured Bloodletters would be an interesting prospect, their hands and feet drenched in fresh gore. Obsidian, malachite, amethyst and tiger's-eye blades (look up gemstones online for other great colours) would contrast well with red armour, as would unusual-coloured alien blood. The T'au do have blue blood, right? That will show up lovely!

### THE MANY SHADES OF BLOOD

Not all Bloodletters are bright red in colour. Some have blackened skin, perhaps as a sign that they have displeased Khorne. Others burn with internal fire as

though the power of the warp is trying to burst through their skin. Even their weapons take on different hues depending on the wielder's mood or Daemonic cohort.



### CORPSE GRINDERS

Corpse Grinders wear red-tinged brass armour. This one was painted using Warplock Bronze and Hashut Copper followed by washes of Reikland Fleshshade, Carroburg Crimson and Drakenhof Nightshade.



### BRAZEN BEASTS

Red armour with deep black or brown shading contrasts extremely well with bright gold trim that's been highlighted with silver. The black weapons have silver battle damage instead of highlights.



### THE WRATH

This warband of Berzerkers wears bone-coloured helms in imitation of the blades carried by the Bloodletters that fight alongside them. The bright colour helps draw the eye to the focal point of the model.

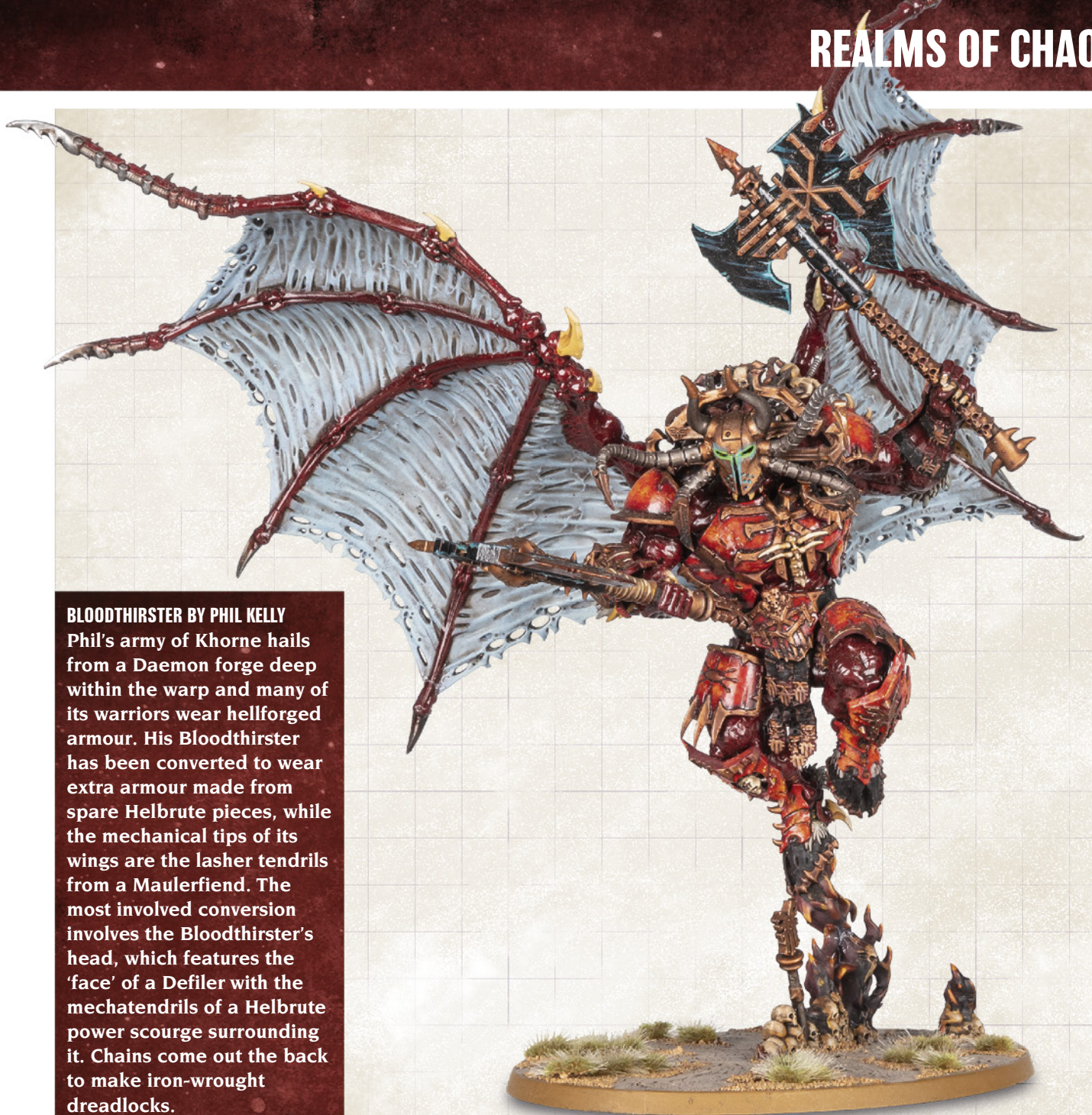


### BLOOD DISCIPLES

The Blood Disciples accidentally fell to the worship of Khorne and still retain the black armour of their former Chapter. Red has been used as a spot colour across the model, which complements the gold trim.







## BLOODTHIRSTER BY PHIL KELLY

Phil's army of Khorne hails from a Daemon forge deep within the warp and many of its warriors wear hellforged armour. His Bloodthirster has been converted to wear extra armour made from spare Helbrute pieces, while the mechanical tips of its wings are the lasher tendrils from a Maulerfiend. The most involved conversion involves the Bloodthirster's head, which features the 'face' of a Defiler with the mechatendrils of a Helbrute power scourge surrounding it. Chains come out the back to make iron-wrought dreadlocks.

## WORLD EATERS BY WADE PRYCE

Wade's Terminators have been converted using all manner of Chaos axes, plus icons of Khorne, skulls and Daemon horns. The unit leader's head comes from the Chaos Warriors Regiment box, while his banner was taken from the Tactical Squad kit and suitably battle damaged.





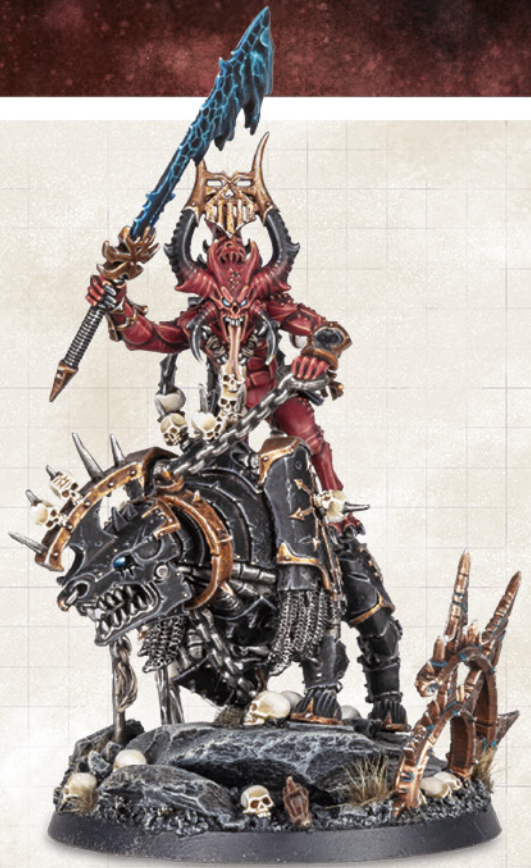
### TERMINATOR LORD OF KHORNE BY WADE PRYCE

Wade converted his commander using the head of a Chaos Warrior and an Ork choppa for his chain-glaive.



### SKULLMASTER BY JAY GOLDFINCH

Jay converted a Skullmaster for his army using the Rendmaster from the top of the Blood Throne and mounting it on a Juggernaut. He used spare bits of Chaos spikes and stars to adorn the base around the slate, plus copious numbers of skulls. The flaming blade (converted using modelling putty) is painted a cool blue to contrast with the Skullmaster's fiery red skin.



### SKULLSWORN KILL TEAM BY NICK BAYTON

Nick converted his kill team out of Blood Warriors with Chaos Space Marine backpacks and Chaos Space Marine weapons. Their bare arms and lighter armour were inspired by some of the original Khorne Berzerker

models, some of whom went into battle without shoes on! The leader of the unit is a Slaughterpriest with a Blood Warriors head, Chaos backpack and an Ultramarines helmet hanging from his chain.





## THE IRONGHAST COHORT BY JAY GOLDFINCH

Jay's Daemon army is backed up by a large number of Daemon Engines that hail from the Ironghast Foundry, a vast planet-sized factorum run by a conclave of Warpsmiths. Jay painted all of his Bloodletters in traditional reds, starting with Khorne Red and working up to Cadian Fleshtone to give their skin a warm, fiery appearance. He painted their hellblades a deep blue to contrast with the red skin and covered their bases in skulls to provide a light contrast to the otherwise black and grey bases. All of his Daemon Engines also have red skin, while their armour is painted a neutral black.



The leader of Jay's infantry cohorts is a Bloodmaster from Forge World. To give this already-huge Bloodletter even more presence, Jay built a base for it out of slate with some skulls on spikes chucked in for good measure. He painted the model's hellblade Abaddon Black, then highlighted it with Caledor Sky, Temple Guard Blue and Blue Horror.





## BASING YOUR ARMIES

Bases are an important part of any Warhammer miniature. Not only do they keep your models standing, they also help to tie them to the worlds they fight over. Here are a few Khorne-flavoured examples.

Khorne cares not from whence the blood flows, only that it does. The realms that his legions fight over are invariably littered with the remains of those who stood against his servants, the earth forever stained with the viscera of battle. It's in these places that the barriers between the real world and the Realm of Khorne become dangerously

thin, the Blood God's influence spilling out to taint the land. Brass icons and spikes grow out of the ground. The earth splits to reveal fiery hellscape. Rivers of blood flow beneath mountains of skulls. This can all be represented on the bases of your models with just a little imagination. Here are some examples to whet your appetites.

### FIRE AND BRIMSTONE



1 Find some large pieces of slate and glue them to your base with Super Glue. Just make sure you check that ...



2 ... there's enough space for a model to stand on them. You don't want Khorne's servants falling in the lava!



3 After undercoating the base Chaos Black, drybrush the rocks Eshin Grey, Dawnstone and Administratum Grey.



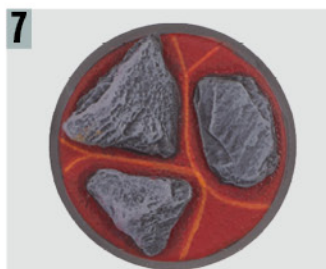
4 Paint the lava with Mephiston Red. Be careful not to get any red paint on the rocks.



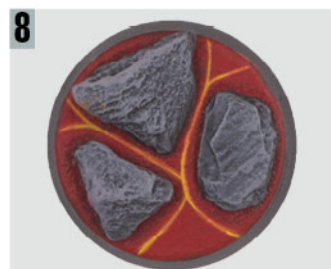
5 Apply a wash of Nuln Oil around the base of the rocks to shade the lava where it sits closest to them.



6 Tidy up any wash marks with Mephiston Red, then paint in lines of Evil Sunz Scarlet.

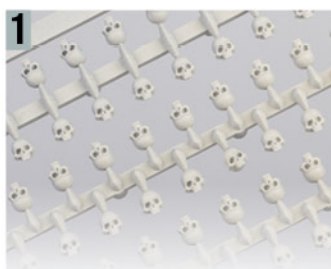


7 Paint a thinner line of Troll Slayer Orange along the centre of each Evil Sunz Scarlet line.



8 Paint an even thinner line of Fire Dragon Bright inside that line, followed by a dot of Yriel Yellow at the intersection points.

### PLAINS OF SKULLS



1 Undercoat all the skulls on the Skulls frame with either Grey Seer or Wraithbone spray.



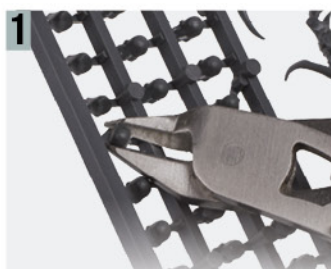
2 Apply a layer of Skeleton Horde to the skulls. Use other Contrast paints such as Snakebite Leather for variety.



3 Paint a base as usual. This one was painted using Martian Ironcrust and drybrushed with Kindlefame.



4 Stick a load of skulls to it with Super Glue. Drybrush the tops of the skulls with Screaming Skull.



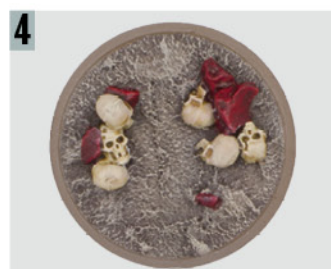
1 With the skulls still on the frame, carefully cut the backs off some of them with a pair of Fine Detail Cutters.



2 Glue the skulls to the base along with a few small pieces of slate. Once the glue is dry, spray the base with Wraithbone.



3 Paint the base in your chosen colours. We chose brown earth and painted the stones with Flesh Tearers Red.



4 Apply a layer of Skeleton Horde to the skulls, then drybrush them with Screaming Skull to finish them off.



## CITIES OF BLOOD



1 Spray a Shattered Dominion base with Mechanicus Standard Grey, then apply a wash of Agrax Earthshade.



2 Drybrush the base with Dawnstone and Administratum Grey. Pick out the broken mosaic with Thunderhawk Blue.



3 Paint the river of blood with Blood for the Blood God. Apply two layers to make it look nice and deep.



4 Tidy up the base rim with your chosen colour. We used Abaddon Black, as it won't clash with the red or grey.



1 Build a ruined city base using spare parts from Sector Imperialis and Mechanicus sets.



2 Spray the whole base in a colour of your choice. We picked Zandri Dust, as it will contrast well with red.



3 Paint your base. We used Leadbelcher and Agrax Earthshade followed by a few bone-coloured drybrushes.



4 Cover it in blood! We added rivulets of Blood for the Blood God to the base, plus a bloody hand print.

## TAINTED GROUND



1 We took one of the lethal hex tiles from Warhammer Underworlds: Beastgrave and stuck it to a 60mm round. We left the plumes of fire off, though.



2 A rummage through our bits box revealed some interesting spiky bits that we could use on the base to fill the holes where the plumes normally go.



3 We tested the base to make sure the intended model would fit on it. A couple of rocky outcrops were in the way, so we cut them off with a pair of cutters.



4 Then we filled the holes with spikes and skulls, making sure that the Helbrute's feet could still fit in the gaps we'd made for them.



5 We undercoated the whole base with Chaos Black spray, but feel free to pick a lighter colour to match your own bases.



6 The rocks were drybrushed with several shades of grey. The earth was basecoated with Rhino Hide and drybrushed with Mournfang Brown.



7 The skulls were layered with Baneblade Brown, then they and the earth were drybrushed Screaming Skull. The skulls were then re-layered with Screaming Skull.



8 The skulls were washed with Agrax Earthshade mixed with Lahmian Medium. The metal was painted Leadbelcher then washed with Nuln Oil.



9 Then we covered it all in blood! Blood for the Blood God! Skulls for the Skull Throne! And a new base for our gore-hungry Helbrute.



# FRENZIED PAINTING

Following on from *Realms of Chaos: Khorne*, our painter James came up with a stage-by-stage painting guide for a Bloodreaver. Here he combines Contrast paints with classic colours to create a blood-drenched warrior. If you're not into gore, look away now!

**James:** For this guide I painted Targor from Garrek's Reavers, as the model features loads of different textures, from flesh and hair to metal, leather and cloth. Rather than paint him wearing traditional red armour, I painted him wearing bone, just like the Flayed Tribe Blood Warrior shown on page 57 of *Battletoome: Blades of Khorne*. The

advantage of using such a light colour for the armour is that blood effects show up more clearly on it, as you will see over the page when I break out the Technical paints.

I used Wraithbone spray as the undercoat for Targor. It's a great undercoat for bone armour and perfect for skin, too.

## BATTLE READY

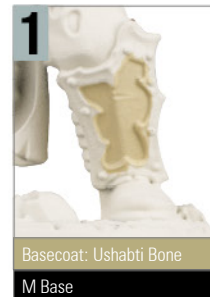
Using the stages to the right, James was able to get Targor to a standard that most people would be happy to play games with.



## TAINTED FLESH



## BONE ARMOUR

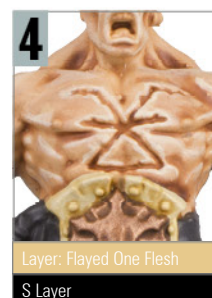


## FORGED STEEL



## PARADE READY

With a couple of extra highlights to each area of the model, James took the Battle Ready Bloodreaver and made him Parade Ready. Skulls for the Skull Throne!





It also has a warmer tone than Grey Seer, which suits the overall warm colour palette associated with Khorne's warriors. To provide contrast to the warmer tones, I painted some of the cloth on the model (like his loincloth and the wrappings around his legs and topknot) a pale blue-grey. As you'll see later, some of these areas do get splattered in blood!

## TOP TIP

Paint larger areas like the skin, armour and trousers first to establish the predominant colour scheme for your model. You can then choose an appropriate spot colour to suit the palette you've chosen. On this model I could have used red as a spot colour, for example, but it might have clashed with the blood I wanted to splatter all over it. Green would have looked too much like Christmas colours. Spot colours may not take up much space on your model, but they're an important element to get right!

## MORE GORY PAINTING GUIDES

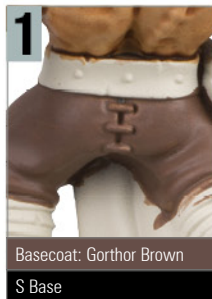
Not enough blood for you? Well there are plenty of Khorne painting guides over on our Warhammer TV YouTube channel. With a quick search we found painting videos for Blood Warriors, Bloodreavers, Bloodletters, Bloodthirsters, Skullreapers, Khorne Berzerkers and many more besides (most of them with blood or skulls in the name). Head there now and check out what we have to offer.



### BRASS



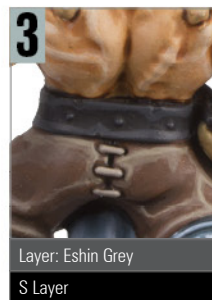
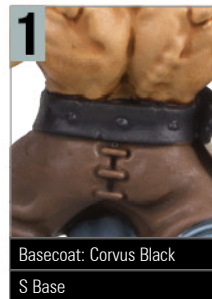
### BROWN TROUSERS



### CLOTH



### LEATHER BELT



### STITCHING



### WHITE HAIR





# BLOOD FOR THE BLOOD GOD!

Nothing shows dedication to Khorne quite like spilt blood, and there are several really simple ways to achieve this effect using Technical and Contrast paints. James shares a few of his favourite tips.

**James:** There are a couple of important considerations when it comes to painting blood. Firstly, is it wet or dry? Secondly, how did it get there?

## WET BLOOD

When painting wet blood, the best paint to use is Blood for the Blood God. It's transparent, like real blood, so any colour beneath it will show through. It's also glossy, giving the blood that freshly spilled look. If I want it to look really visceral, I apply a darker red first as shown below.

## DRY BLOOD

For dry blood, Word Bearers Red and Flesh Tearers Red Contrast paints are perfect for the job. Again, they are

transparent, but they dry matt rather than glossy, giving the blood an old, crusty look. This effect looks great on cloth, representing years of built-up gore, and it works well on skin, too, showing where warriors have drenched their hands in blood and let it dry.

## HOW DID IT GET THERE?

Is the blood splattered onto your warriors, or have they been drenched in it? Perhaps the blood is their own, seeping from open wounds. How the blood got on to your warriors will affect how you apply the paint to your models. Below are a few examples of how you can add blood effects to your miniatures, including splatter, cuts, bloodied cloth and dried blood.

### BLOOD SPLATTER

Everyone loves a bit of blood splatter on a sword or axe. Here's how I go about achieving that effect on my models.



Cover your model (and the surrounding area) with a piece of kitchen paper so that only the area you want to cover in blood is exposed.



Dip the tip of a S Dry brush in Blood for the Blood God, then wipe a bit of the paint off. Next, bend the bristles back towards you using a texture spreader.



Aim the brush at the area you want to cover in blood and pull the spreader completely back, releasing the bent-back bristles. Repeat until suitably gory.

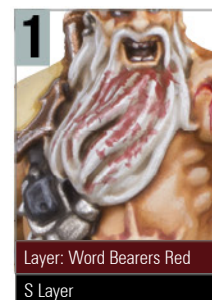
### FRESH CUTS



### BLOODY CLOTH



### BLOODY HAIR



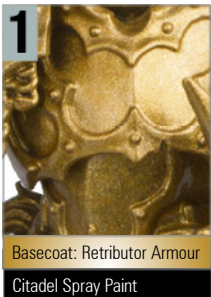
### BLOODY HAND





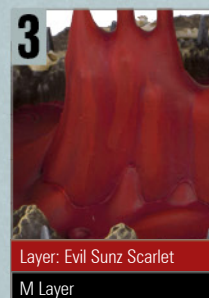
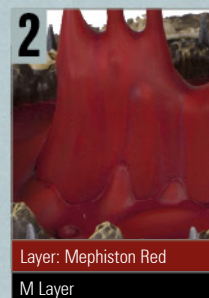
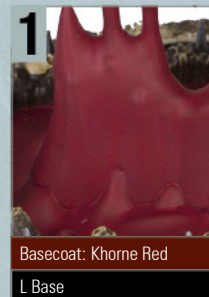
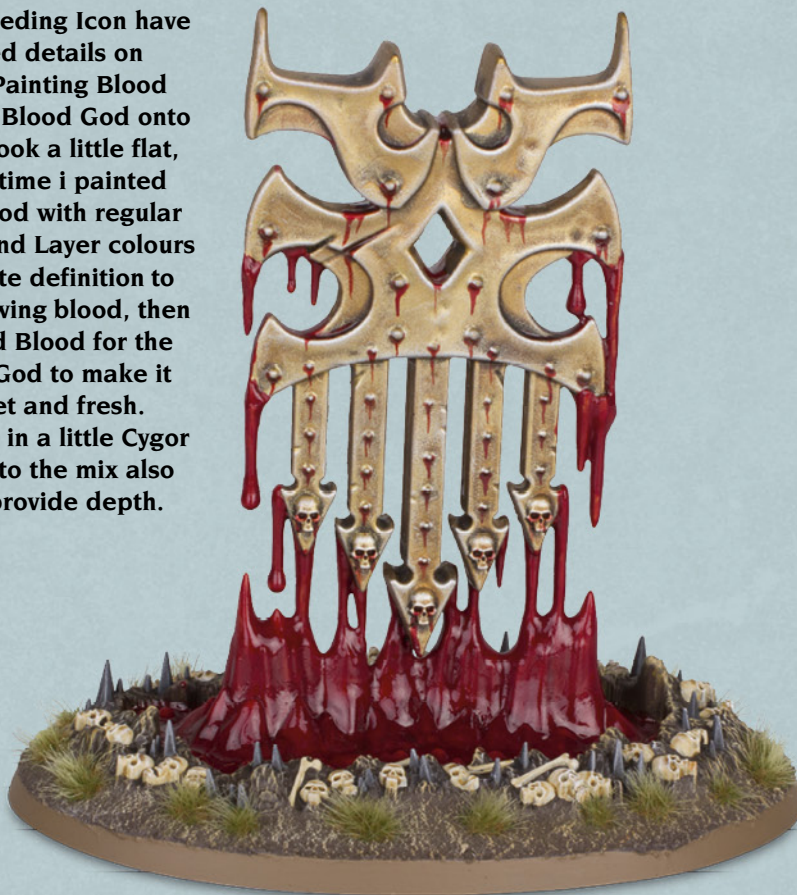
## GLOSSY ARMOUR

Blood for the Blood God can also be used to create glossy red armour. I actually saw this trick used on the Avatar of Khaine from the Cauldron of Blood and thought it looked great, so I tried it on a Blood Warrior. The gold basecoat, followed by the deep wash of Agrax Earthshade and the drybrushed highlight, creates loads of contrast on the model. Because Blood for the Blood God is pretty translucent, all these shades and highlights show through, giving you real depth to the glossy red armour. With this technique you'll have an army painted in no time!



## SCULPTED BLOOD

Some models such as the Bleeding Icon have sculpted details on them. Painting Blood for the Blood God onto it can look a little flat, so this time I painted the blood with regular Base and Layer colours to create definition to the flowing blood, then applied Blood for the Blood God to make it look wet and fresh. Adding in a little Cygor Brown to the mix also helps provide depth.





# ROHAN SHALL BURN!

In this month's battle report, the forces of Rohan must defend one of their strongholds from the relentless assault of Saruman's armies. Can Théoden lead the Rohirrim to victory, or will Rohan fall to the onslaught of the Uruk-hai and Dunlendings?



**T**hroughout the long and war-torn history of Middle-earth, there have been countless sieges of cities and fortifications as armies seek to reduce the kingdoms of their foes to naught but piles of smouldering rubble. Realms such as Gondor, Arnor and Rohan have all been forced to endure brutal sieges from enemy legions over the years – with varying degrees of success.

Siege games are a different type of battle for the Middle-earth Strategy Battle Game, and the recent *War in Rohan* supplement added a host of new rules to make your own siege games all the more exciting. It also added the Grand Siege scenario that you can play using any forces in Middle-earth. This is perfect for representing famous sieges such as Helm's Deep, or even creating your own 'what if?' scenarios using any of the factions throughout Middle-earth's history.

## SIEGE GAMES

The siege rules found within the *Middle-earth Strategy Battle Game* rules manual give but a taste of what a siege game can be like, providing rules for moving around a fortress and equipment such as siege ladders and battering rams. *War in Rohan* includes loads more rules for added excitement, such as destroying doors and gates as well as various equipment that both attackers and defenders can use!

It is this siege scenario from *War in Rohan* that the Middle-earth team's own Rob Alderman and Jay Clare will be using to determine the fate of the Kingdom of Rohan, creating their own 'what if?' scenario in which the legions of Saruman have assailed a Rohan stronghold.

Saruman has created legions of fighting Uruk-hai and rallied together the Dunlendings who harbour a deep hatred for the Rohirrim after their ancestors were driven from the lands of Rohan centuries ago. With the full strength of Isengard gathered to him, and Rohan made weak by his influence, the fallen Istari Saruman has unleashed his forces upon Rohan in an effort to conquer this kingdom of Men.

So, without further ado, it's over to Rob and Jay to throw down on the tabletop – and the fate of Rohan is in the balance!



## THE GRAND SIEGE

**C**ontained within their fortress, the defenders must fend off the impending siege from their foes, who are intent on claiming the fortress for their own.

### SCENARIO OUTLINE

The Defenders must defend the fortress at all costs, whilst the Attackers seek to claim it.

### THE ARMIES

Both players roll a D6 to decide who is the Attacker and Defender, with the player who rolls lower being the Defender. Players then choose their forces, as described on page 130 of the *Middle-earth Strategy Battle Game* rules manual.

The Attacker gains an additional 25% of the points value of the Defender's force to add to their own. So if the Defender has a total of 1,000 points, the Attacker may have up to 1,250 points.

Both the Attacker and Defender may purchase items from the Attacker Equipment and Defender Equipment lists respectively.

### LAYOUT

The fortress will run the length of the board 12" from a board edge. The gate of the fortress is in the centre of the walls, and there may be a selection of towers along the length of the walls.

### STARTING POSITIONS

The Defender deploys their forces anywhere atop or behind the walls of the fortress. The Attacker then deploys their force within 12" of the board edge opposite to the fortress.

### INITIAL PRIORITY

Both players roll a D6. The player with the highest score has Priority in the first turn.

### OBJECTIVES

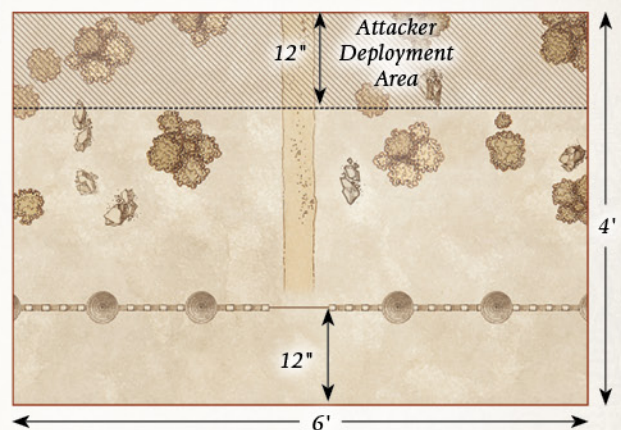
The game lasts until the end of a turn in which one force has completed its objective. The Attackers win if they can get 12 or more models within the fortress at the end of any turn. The Defenders win if they can reduce the Attackers to 25% of their starting number at the end of any turn.

*The Grand Siege doesn't use Victory Points to determine a winner. Instead, the game continues until one force has completed their objective. The Defenders win if the Attackers are reduced to 25% of their starting numbers, whilst the Attackers win if 12 or more models are over the walls or through the gate at the end of any turn.*

### SPECIAL RULES

**The Gates** – If needed, the Defenders can open the gates of the fortress to charge out. The Defender may choose to open the gates at the start of any Move phase. From this point on, the gates will be opened, allowing models to move through them for the remainder of the game. This cannot be done if the gates have already been destroyed.

**The Walls** – The walls of the fortress are vertical and all but impossible to climb. Models may not climb up the walls without use of a Siege Ladder or Siege Tower. Models that can climb any surface, such as those with the Swift Movement special rule, cannot climb the walls – they must use an alternative way of entering the fortress.



*However, there is one final twist to this scenario. As it takes far more warriors to attack a fortress than to defend it, the Attacking player may spend 25% more points than the Defending player when putting together their forces. So if the Defender has 800 points, the Attacker will have 1,000 points!*

**Jay:** Growing up, I remember taking part in quite a few siege games during campaigns of the Strategy Battle Game. They were always the ideal way to finish off a map-based campaign where the final battle was to see if one side could conquer the other's capital.

Yet, in all the siege games I have played, I have never once played as the Defender. I have always been the Attacker. I even had to play one game where I assaulted a fortress with nothing but the White Council, and I even somehow managed to secure victory!

With that in mind, I was keen to play as the Rohirrim in this Battle Report (something I think Rob was rather glad about!) to experience what it was like to play as the Defender.

My game plan is simple: deal as much damage as I can at range and then use my often-superior Fight value to prevent Rob's army from getting onto the walls. I just need to hope that the stronghold's gate will hold.

**Rob:** Siege games have been a staple of my Middle-earth gaming over the years, and what better time to get a siege game going than in the wake of the recently launched *War in Rohan*? The supplement has expanded siege rules for the Middle-earth Strategy Battle Game, adding in a slew of new rules to get your teeth into.

Like Jay, I've almost always played as the Attacker as, historically, I have always leaned more towards the Evil side, and this tends to go hand in hand with the role of besieger.

With a mixture of relatively low-cost foot troops in the form of Dunlending Warriors, as well as slightly more reliable troops in the form of Dunlending Huscarls and Uruk-hai, my plan is to form a solid wall that will, hopefully, not receive too many casualties from Jay's pesky archers before my army reaches the walls.

I've also brought a battering ram in the hope of bashing down the gates to allow my forces to flood the stronghold and claim victory.



**ROB ALDERMAN & JAY CLARE**

When they are not busy writing rules or wrangling Hobbits, Rob and Jay spend most of their time discussing who is better – Good or Evil? With this month's battle report they can put that argument to bed – at least for a few days!



## DEFENDERS OF ROHAN

**Jay:** I wanted to build a force that I felt would represent what might have happened had Saruman's forces assaulted the likes of Edoras. As the King of Rohan, it is down to Théoden to lead the Rohirrim in defence of their stronghold, and Gamling, Déorwine and Elfhelm will stand beside their king in battle, no matter what faces them.

The key to victory will be if I can prevent the Uruk-hai and Dunlendings from climbing onto the walls. The best way to prevent this will be to have some high Fight value, high Defence warriors defending the ramparts. This is where the Rohan Royal Guard will be the most useful.

The rest of my force is then filled with Warriors of Rohan to give me some fairly decent numbers and as many bows and throwing spears as I can gather to hurl towards the enemy. I've even added Haleth and Aldor!



## BESIEGERS FROM ISENGARD

**Rob:** I decided that I wanted to base my army around the horde of Dunlendings and the Uruk-hai from the newly created pits of Isengard that Tolkien refers to as marauding their way through the Westfold of Rohan, burning rick, cot and tree.

With that in mind, I needed a mixture of fighting and scouting Uruk-hai being led by a selection of Uruk-hai Captains throughout the army.

The core of the force is made up of Dunlendings. I gathered plenty of Warriors and Huscarls, with Gorûlf Ironskin and Frída Tallspear, all led by the mighty Thrydan Wolfsbane.

I also made sure to have an even spread of Siege Ladders throughout the army as well as a Battering Ram, which I will have to ensure remains safe whilst it trudges purposefully towards Jay's gate.





# BATTLE REPORT



## ROHAN

### Heroes

**Théoden, King of Rohan** 85  
- leader  
- Heavy armour and shield

**Gamling, Captain of Rohan** 105  
- Royal Standard of Rohan

**Déorwine, Chief of the King's Knights** 75

**Elfhelm, Captain of Rohan** 65

**Haleth, son of Háma** 30

**Aldor, Rohan Archer** 20

### Warriors

12 Warriors of Rohan with shield 84

12 Warriors of Rohan with shield and throwing spears 108

12 Warriors of Rohan with bow 84

12 Rohan Royal Guard with throwing spears 144



**TOTAL MODELS:** 54

**TOTAL:** 800



## ISENGARD

### Heroes

**Thrydan Wolfsbane** 85  
- leader

**Gorulf Ironskin** 70

**Frída Tallspear** 65

**Uruk-hai Captain with shield** 65

**Uruk-hai Captain with shield** 65

**Uruk-hai Captain with shield** 65

### Warriors

20 Dunlending Warriors with shield 160

4 Dunlending Warriors with two-handed axe 32

12 Dunlending Huscarls 132

10 Uruk-hai Warriors with shield 100

6 Uruk-hai Warriors with pike 60

7 Uruk-hai Scouts 56

### Siege Equipment

6 Siege Ladders 30

Battering Ram 15

**TOTAL MODELS:** 65

**TOTAL:** 1,000



## THE MARCH TO WAR (TURNS ONE, TWO, THREE AND FOUR)

As the forces of Rohan and Isengard were deployed on the battlefield, Rob and Jay put their respective plans in place for how they would achieve victory. The battle was about to begin!

### HEROIC MARCH

The Isengard forces need to reach the walls of the stronghold quickly and without taking too many casualties. In order to achieve this, Rob declared a number of Heroic Marches over successive turns, increasing his models' Move value by 3" and closing the gap as quickly as he could.

**T**he first few turns of the game progressed fairly quickly as, naturally, Jay had no intention of sending those defending the stronghold to face Rob's army head-on.

The Isengard force had 200 extra points, after all, and the Rohirrim would be walking into a massacre if they left the safety of the stronghold!

Instead, Jay chose to utilise his superior firepower and unleashed a steady volley of arrows upon the Uruk-hai and Dunlendings (hurling plenty of throwing spears too when they were in range). Over the first few turns, Jay managed to kill a fair few Dunlendings as they quickly closed the gap.

Yet Rob was unfazed by the hail of arrows that rained down upon his army. In fact, he knew full well that he would be losing a handful of Uruk-hai and Dunlendings as his army marched to war, and these losses were deemed acceptable.

By the time that the Isengard army had reached the walls, six Dunlendings, five Uruk-hai Scouts and one fighting Uruk-hai had been killed. However, Rob's forces were now at the base of the stronghold and could raise their Siege Ladders unimpeded. Jay was beginning to fear that his army may not have killed enough at range, for the real battle was about to begin.

In *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*™, we see Aldor accidentally loose the first arrow at the Battle of Helm's Deep, drawing first blood. The same happened in this game, as on the first turn, Aldor shot first and slew a Dunlending armed with a two-handed axe (1). This wouldn't be the only kill that Aldor would claim during the battle – rather, it would prove to be the first of many. Aldor's special rule allows him to re-roll failed To Hit and To Wound rolls when shooting. Though he only has a 5+ Shoot value, this makes him slightly more accurate than a Warrior of Rohan!





2



3



With his army reaching the walls of the Rohan stronghold largely unscathed, Rob decided to raise the ladders (2). As Jay had won Priority, and therefore moved first, Rob was able to raise the ladders unimpeded and without the Rohirrim being able to move to push them back down.

As it would be far harder to fight through Jay's Heroes, Rob decided to position the Siege Ladders so that he would only have to kill a single warrior in order to move onto the walls (3). With Rob positioning the ladders where the defence was weakest, Jay would need to hope that all his Heroes would pull their weight in combat. Failure to do so could spell disaster!





## WEATHERING THE STORM (TURNS FIVE, SIX AND SEVEN)

With the Isengard forces now outside the gates, the siege itself would begin. Uruk-hai and Dunlendings have begun scaling the siege ladders as the Rohirrim try to fend them off.

### CLIMBING HEROES

Whilst it may seem logical to send the warriors up the ladders first, it makes more sense to have the Heroes lead the way. With a higher Fight value and more Attacks, they are more likely to kill their foe and move onto the walls, leaving room for the warriors the following turn.

**W**ith Rob winning Priority on turn five, he was able to charge the Uruk-hai and Dunlendings up the ladders and into combat with those defending the walls. If they could slay those they were fighting, then they would take their place on the walls.

Unfortunately for Rob, the Rohirrim were able to fend off their attackers, killing one and even managing to push one of them from his ladder. Having been forced back, Rob decided that a change of tactics was due, and so on turn six he sent an Uruk-hai Captain up one ladder to force his way onto the walls.

Now that he was in the fight, the Uruk-hai Captain declared a Heroic Combat. Not only was he able to slay the warrior he was facing, but he also managed to move onto the walls and then kill a Royal Guard as well.

With this tactic proving successful, and with some of his warriors struggling to gain a foothold on other parts of the walls, Rob sent Gorûlf Ironskin up another ladder the following turn and once more declared a Heroic Combat. With a Strength of 5 and 3 Attacks, Gorûlf easily slew his foe and then moved on to kill another Royal Guard, carving open a path to the King of Rohan.

Having seen the difficulty that his warriors were having killing the Rohirrim so they could move onto the walls, Rob decided that his Heroes should lead from the front (1). Not only would it be far more likely that the Uruk-hai Captains would slay those they were fighting, but they would also be able to cut a hole for the rest of the fighting Uruk-hai to make it onto the walls. This would potentially prevent the Rohirrim from pushing the ladders down in an attempt to stem the tide of Uruk-hai.





2



**‘Knock! Knock!’ – Rob**

Though getting models onto the walls would help Rob move closer to his goal of getting 12 models into the stronghold, the process would take quite a long time at the rate things were going. It would be quicker to go through the gates if he could breach them **(2)**.

Having taken a Battering Ram to solve this very dilemma, Rob began bashing the door as soon as he moved into base contact with it. Though turns four, five and six proved fruitless, Rob’s persistence paid off, and on turn seven, the splintering of wood could be heard as the gates took a wound. Jay knew they wouldn’t be able to take another hit like that!

Having successfully fought his way onto the walls and slain all those around him, Gorûlf Ironskin had managed to cut his way through to Théoden **(3)**. The King of Rohan was about to be thrust into a fight for his life against a ruthless killer!



3



## THE GATE IS BREACHED (TURNS EIGHT AND NINE)

With one final surge of strength, the Uruk-hai smash through the gates of the Rohan stronghold. The Rohirrim must now fight to prevent the Uruk-hai from entering their home.

### A PACKED RAMPART

There is not much space atop the walls of the Rohan Stronghold, and often models that lose a fight will find themselves unable to back away. If this happens, then models will have the choice of being trapped or being pushed from the walls and suffering falling damage.

**T**urn eight saw Rob once more win Priority. However, he elected not to charge Gorûlf into Théoden as Jay had expected. Instead, Gorûlf charged the final Warrior of Rohan upon that area of the walls, whilst a Dunlending Warrior charged Théoden.

Elsewhere upon the walls, Elfhelm led those around him to fight back against the Uruk-hai Captain and his followers that had made it onto the walls, whilst Gamling left the walls in order to aid those by the gates. It was not a moment too soon, as at the end of turn eight the Uruk-hai smashed through the gates.

On the ninth turn, Jay won Priority and charged Théoden straight into Gorûlf. However, Rob's positioning of Gorûlf had meant that if Théoden charged then he would also have to contend with anyone else that charged up the ladder.

Without hesitation, and sensing an opportunity to slay Théoden, Rob moved Thrydan Wolfsbane up the ladder and into combat with the King of Rohan. In the ensuing fight, Théoden was unable to drive back his attackers and was left at their mercy. The two Dunlending Heroes proved too much for Théoden, dealing a total of four wounds between them – the king was dead!

Having won Priority on turn eight, Rob chose to have Gorûlf charge the Warrior of Rohan rather than Théoden (1). By killing the Rohirrim, Rob made sure that his models could not be trapped on both sides. The Dunlending Warrior was used to keep Théoden busy, at least for the turn it took for the king to slay him!

With the gate breached, the Rohirrim not on the walls prepared to face whatever came through the gates (2). If they were unable to stem the oncoming tide of Uruk-hai and Dunlendings, then victory would go to Isengard.

With the Rohan ranks running thin, Elfhelm showed his true quality when it was needed most, winning the Duel roll against the Uruk-hai Captain and slaying him where he stood (3).







## DEATH OF THE KING

Engaged in combat with both Thrydan Wolfsbane and Gorulf Ironskin, Théoden decides to declare a Heroic Strike to increase his Fight value. In response, Thrydan also declares a Heroic Strike of his own whilst Gorulf declares a free Heroic Defence; if Rob's side should lose the fight, then Gorulf will be very hard to kill.

Unfortunately for Jay, Théoden rolls a 3 for his Heroic Strike, putting him at Fight 8, whilst Thrydan rolls a 5, making him Fight 10. With the higher Fight value, the Dunlending Heroes easily win the Fight. With 5 Attacks between them, and Thrydan's Mighty Blow special rule doubling any wounds caused by him, Théoden suffered a total of 4 wounds, killing him instantly!



## A DESPERATE DEFENCE (TURNS TEN, ELEVEN, TWELVE AND THIRTEEN)

With Théoden having fallen at the hands of the Dunlending leaders, the Rohirrim must rally to force the armies of Isengard from their lands and ensure their king's death was not in vain.

### OVER THE WALLS

As the turns rolled on, Rob began getting closer to that magic 12th model that he needed over the walls. However, as he needed to finish a turn with 12 models, Jay kept trying to shoot any that he could to ensure that Rob couldn't reach his target quickly.

Once again winning Priority, Jay charged Déorwine headlong into both Thrydan and Gorûlf at the start of turn ten in order to avenge Théoden. Jay's plan was to have Déorwine win the fight, wound Thrydan Wolfsbane, and hopefully push him from the ladder to the ground below.

The ensuing combat went as well for Déorwine as it had gone for his fallen liege. With both Déorwine and Thrydan declaring a Heroic Strike, the Chief of the King's Knights was not able to increase his Fight value by enough to win, so he was swiftly cut down by Gorûlf.

But the Rohirrim were not defeated yet. During the tenth turn, Jay's army had been able to kill enough of the Isengard force to break them – hope had been rekindled!

With his force now Broken, Rob would need to begin taking Courage tests for the Dunlendings in his force. Although Frída and Gorûlf passed without any issue, Thrydan was forced to spend both of his Will points in order to prevent himself from fleeing. The following turns saw Rob trying to get as many of his force onto the walls, whilst Jay desperately began shooting any of Rob's models within the stronghold as he could!

In order to avenge the king he had sworn to protect, Déorwine charged straight into Thrydan and Gorûlf (1). However, Déorwine's noble intentions saw him meet the same end as Théoden, as Gorûlf made short work of the Chief of the King's Knights.

With Jay unable to prevent any more of Rob's force from climbing the walls, he had to utilise bows and throwing spears to whittle them down. Out of sheer desperation, Jay was able to kill enough models with shooting to ensure Rob didn't have enough models within the stronghold at the end of the turn. Gamling and the Royal Guard were still trying to stop the tide of Uruk-hai from overwhelming them (2).





1



2



**'Two who can throw spears.  
One hit. Dead! That keeps  
me in the game!' - Jay**



## THE FINAL PUSH (TURNS FOURTEEN AND FIFTEEN)

Although he nearly had enough models inside the stronghold, Rob's numbers were running thin. If the Rohirrim can band together for one final stand, they may yet win the day ...

Knowing full well that the easiest way for Rob to get models into the stronghold was via the gates, Jay placed Gamling in the middle of the entrance (1). If Rob wanted to get through the gates, he would have to go through Gamling to do so. Gamling played his role so well that he actually defended the gates for a whole four turns without ever losing a fight!

Though the Uruk-hai Captain had managed to fight his way into the stronghold, he was quickly surrounded by Haleth and as many Rohan Royal Guard as Jay could spare (2). Thanks to Haleth's 'Fight to the Last' special rule, the Royal Guard gained +1 Fight value, making them able to equal the Uruk-hai Captain's Fight value of 5. This led to the Rohirrim beating the Captain in combat before slaying him and somewhat relieving the pressure on Jay's force.

**W**ith both forces now Broken, and both close to victory, every kill was of the utmost importance. Having spent the past few turns forcing back the Uruk-hai from the gates, Gamling once more charged into the fray to prevent any more of the Isengard forces from entering the stronghold.

On one side of the stronghold, the Dunlendings had managed to storm the walls and all but wiped the Rohirrim from the ramparts. However, Elfhelm and his followers had stood firm and forced the Uruk-hai back.

Going into the final turn, Rob managed to get 12 models into the stronghold, but was only a single model away from being reduced to 25%. If Jay could slay just one model within the walls then he would be victorious. All of the archers and throwing spears failed to find their mark, and so it came down to Elfhelm against a single Uruk-hai. Although he won the fight, Elfhelm was unable to slay his foe – victory to Isengard!



### BRAVE NO MORE

Seeing his allies dying all around him, Haleth ended up failing his Courage test on the final turn and fleeing. Had he stayed, then he may have been able to lead the last Royal Guard into combat and get that all-important final kill.





## THE WESTFOLD WILL BURN!

With the battle over, the forces of the White Hand have laid claim to the Rohan stronghold and slain King Théoden. It is a dark day for Middle-earth indeed!

**‘Victory for the White Wizard and death to the Forgoil! Though it was by the skin of my teeth in the end!’ - Rob**

**‘I was so close to victory after a very tough game. If only Elfhelm had killed that last Uruk-hai ...’ - Jay**

**Rob:** Talk about a close game, that literally came down to the very last dice roll! I hadn't even realised that I was almost reduced to 25% until Jay pointed it out before the final fight, and when he won the Duel roll my heart skipped a beat. Fortunately, the dice gods were with me, and Jay was unable to kill that last Uruk-hai he needed in order to win the game.

I thoroughly enjoy playing siege games in Middle-earth. They have such a different tactical feel to them than almost any other battle you can face. Although it felt as though I was getting peppered with arrows at the start of the game, it was important to remember that I still had 200 points more than Jay, and that, even after taking those casualties, I had more points and more models than he did.

If we were to play again, though, I would probably get my Heroes straight up the ladders. They were excellent at getting on the walls!

### THE SWING OF VICTORY

In the Strategy Battle Game, the ebb and flow of battle constantly swings back and forth between players, and it can often seem like a player is winning, then losing, then winning again in a rather short space of time. There was plenty of this in this battle report.



**Jay:** What a game that was! Even though I was forced to endure the bitter taste of defeat, I enjoyed every second of that game. It was so close in the end, too, especially as I thought I was done for as soon as Théoden was slain. It just goes to show that in the Middle-earth Strategy Battle Game you are never quite defeated until the very end.

Having been one of my best fighters all game – killing an Uruk-hai Captain and multiple fighting Uruk-hai – it was a bit of twisted irony that it was Elfhelm who failed to kill the Uruk-hai and therefore cost me the game. The dice gods can be fickle after all.

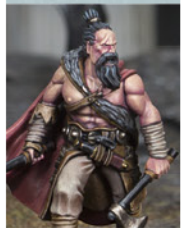
In hindsight, I should have taken some extra defences for my force atop the walls. The likes of rock piles and boiling oil could well have gotten me those last few kills that would have won me the game. But alas, we live and learn. Next time though. Next time ...

On the left Jay celebrates winning the all-important Duel roll with Elfhelm against the Uruk-hai. On the right is Rob's reaction seconds later when Jay doesn't roll the 5+ he needed on two dice to get the kill, and with it win the game. As you can see, Rob was gracious in his victory.



### MODEL OF THE MATCH

**Rob:** Without a doubt it has to be Gorúlf Ironskin. The Dunlending Chief slew Théoden and Déorwine, and he carved through a whole host of Rohirrim. In fact, I don't think Gorúlf lost a single fight across the course of the entire game!



### MODEL OF THE MATCH

**Jay:** For me, Gamling proved to be invaluable. Had he not held the gateway for four turns in a row, then the game would have been over far sooner than it was. Gamling defending the gate almost saw me clinch victory. Almost ...





# GLORY POINTS



## DAVE SANDERS

Dave is the senior games developer in the Boxed Games Studio and the lead rules writer for Warhammer Underworlds – a game he's worked on for over three years. Recently, though, Dave's been a little misty eyed. He says he's reminiscing about the journey Warhammer Underworlds has come on. We think he just missed the afternoon cake trolley coming round.

**W**arhammer Underworlds has been in the world for close to three years now, and it has changed considerably in that time while keeping true to its fast-paced, competitive and brutal self. I thought it would be interesting to look back at how the game has evolved over the years, identifying some key developments and the impetus behind them.

## BLAZING A TRAIL

I think a good place to start is to be completely up front about this: when we embarked upon Warhammer Underworlds, we were trying to make

a game unlike any we'd made before, with a frankly quite untested designer, and we did not get everything right first time.

This was not for want of trying. We went through several major iterations of the game that would be Warhammer Underworlds: Shadespire before settling upon a system that we thought delivered the best competitive skirmish experience in the shortest amount of time possible. We then playtested that system through hundreds of games, identifying issues with mechanics and balance that we improved through an iterative process until we were really very happy with the result.

When Warhammer Underworlds: Shadespire hit the shelves, we were delighted with the reception but somewhat abashed to find out what we'd missed! As FAQs began to come in, and we began to gather data from the first real Warhammer Underworlds tournaments, we learned a lot about the game that did not work the way we wanted it to, and we started to look at ways to fix that.





**Glory Points is our column all about Warhammer Underworlds: Beastgrave. Curated by games developer Dave Sanders, it delves into the development of the game, plus rules, tactics and gameplay. Here, Dave looks back at the evolution of this wonderful game.**

## **CONFUSION**

The first thing we did was publish an FAQ document to clear up confusion (not the card) about how certain cards worked. This has been updated on a regular basis and has developed into two documents: the Designer's Commentary and Errata. One of the most important things for the rules of a competitive game is to eliminate ambiguity, so that each player's understanding of how a rule works is the same, and these documents are one way that we can ensure that is the case.

The other way is to improve our rules writing. In Warhammer Underworlds: Nightvault, and then again in Warhammer Underworlds: Beastgrave, we have taken the lessons that we've learned from your experiences, questions and feedback, and we've used those to improve both the rules in the core set and in the cards and warbands that follow. While each season of Warhammer Underworlds brings with it new surprises, for the most part I believe that the game is in a better place than it has ever been.

This is very much an ongoing process, however, and you can be assured that the lessons we are learning during Warhammer Underworlds: Beastgrave will be put to good use!

## **HELPFUL WHISPERS**

Two clear examples I can give of player feedback that led to significant changes in the game relate to roll-offs and setting up the battlefield.

Players who have been with us from the start will remember how roll-offs originally worked in Warhammer Underworlds: players simply counted the number of 🌀 rolled. While very simple, this method frequently led to ties, and often multiple ties in a row, creating a frustrating distraction from the game. Feedback from players was very clear on this: we'd got this wrong, so roll-offs were one of the first things we fixed through our original errata, establishing the system that we use to this day.

The second example is the roll-off to establish who chooses the first game board when setting up the battlefield. Originally, the loser of the roll-off chose a board and set it up first. However, this would sometimes leave the person who 'won' the roll-off feeling cheated, especially if their decks were focused on holding objectives. People really didn't like going into the roll-off

hoping to 'lose', which was something I heard at a number of events I attended. As a result, from Warhammer Underworlds: Beastgrave, the winner of the roll-off chooses which player picks a game board first.

## **CHAMPIONS ALL**

We didn't just learn about rules that were causing confusion or frustration – we also learned about cards that were considerably more powerful than others, or simply too powerful for the game (I'm looking at you, Great Concussion). While we were very unwilling to tell players that they couldn't use these cards, they were having an impact on how much fun it was to play Warhammer Underworlds competitively, and that was something that we had to fix.

Our solution was to implement a Banned and Restricted list. This did two things: it removed from competitive play cards that were proving to be detrimental to the game, and it restricted the use of other cards by limiting the number of cards from a curated list that you could include in your decks. These changes only affected competitive play, so we didn't stop people using these cards entirely, and they remained a part of the game.

The impact this had on competitive play was immediate, however – we quickly saw more balanced games and much more variety in deck lists, both things that were great for players and the game system as a whole. These lists are still updated, although we now refer to Banned cards as Forsaken cards, and we've reduced the number of restricted cards that you can take in your decks (from the original 5 down to 3).

## **GATHERED MOMENTUM**

The release of Warhammer Underworlds: Beastgrave also saw the introduction of 'cycling' – with a whole set's worth of new universal cards and game boards on their way, we thought it was the right time to cycle out the universal cards and game boards from Shadespire. This only affects the Championship and Alliance formats – that is, those formats that are used for most Warhammer Underworlds organised play events.

We did this for a few reasons: to keep the card pool manageable for people when crafting their decks, to ensure that players new to the game don't have a mountain to climb in terms of searching out cards that are no longer available



and to ensure that organised play for Warhammer Underworlds is ever-changing and exciting for every player. With cycling in place, each season of Warhammer Underworlds will feel completely unique. You'll have new mechanics, new deck archetypes and new tricks and tactics with the release of each new set of universal cards.

### BALANCE OF POWER

We've also developed the balance of the game in terms of the cards that each warband can use. When writing Shadestpire, we created a lot of universal cards that were more powerful than the cards available to specific warbands. This led to a lot of competitive decks looking quite similar, as many of the best cards were available to all warbands.

While balanced, this wasn't very interesting, so in Nightvault, and again in Beastgrave, we looked to ensure that there were warband-specific cards that did things that universal cards didn't. Essentially, warband cards will often now be more powerful than universal cards. This has helped define each warband more clearly and has led to a lot more variety in the decks used.

In Beastgrave, we've gone a step further in terms of the warband-specific cards, making sure that each warband released in this season has 32 cards specific to them that complement their play style – a full objective deck and a full power deck – that you can use straight out of the box. These decks are great for learning about the character of a new warband and for learning how they play in the game as well.

### SUPERIOR TACTICIAN(S)

We've been helped immeasurably in our efforts to balance the game by our playtesters. We have always had playtesters within Games Workshop – a dedicated team who play and playtest regularly – but with the release of Warhammer Underworlds: Shadestpire we were able to recruit a few of the top players in the game to help us keep everything shipshape and to ensure that we're not writing anything that would be a detriment to the game. As time has gone on, we've recruited a few more as our understanding of how much support we need has developed.

These players are working tirelessly, through version after version and iteration after iteration, to help make sure that we're making the best game we can. Warhammer Underworlds simply wouldn't be the game it is today without them! If you play Warhammer Underworlds in any form, you've felt the benefits of their efforts, and any issues that remain are the responsibility of Games Workshop, not our playtesters.

### MAGICAL STORM

Of course, we haven't just been tinkering with the system as time has gone on. We've been looking for ways to develop the game, and we had an amazing opportunity to do just that with the introduction of Nightvault.

The miniatures we used for Warhammer Underworlds: Shadestpire had not been made with that game in mind. Instead, we recognised the potential in these miniatures for a new game system, and we developed it from there. In contrast, the miniatures for Warhammer Underworlds: Nightvault were designed specifically for Warhammer Underworlds, and that gave us the chance to ask for a few wizards. After all, Age of Sigmar is a fantastical setting with a rich and varied magical heritage, so the inclusion of spell-slinging fighters felt like a no-brainer.

Magic gave us the chance to introduce a whole new set of rules – new cards, new dice and new mechanics that let us really explore the power, danger and inconsistency of tapping into the arcane in the Mortal Realms. Wizards, casting rolls and backlash all added new elements to the game. The power step took on another dimension, and with this, the rules for Warhammer Underworlds felt more complete.

### UNEXPECTED PERIL

Another development was made that would make the battlefield itself far more important, and that was the introduction of lethal hexes. Movement and positioning are key to success in Warhammer Underworlds, and the addition of hexes that could deal damage to your fighters doubled down on this.

However, our first attempt at introducing lethal hexes met with mixed success – the only way to ensure that there were any lethal hexes on the battlefield was to choose a game board that had one or more lethal hexes on it to be your territory. This meant choosing to place a hazard near your own fighters, which often wasn't very appealing to players. As Nightvault developed, players found ways to make lethal hexes work for them, but we knew that we weren't happy with the rules as they were.

Then along came Beastgrave. A setting in the Realm of Beasts where everything is hunting everything else gave us a great opportunity to revisit lethal hexes. The idea of a living mountain that is actively trying to consume mighty heroes led to the development of feature tokens – reversible objective tokens with lethal hexes on the other side – so that any key part of the battlefield could become lethal without warning.





1



2



3

Alongside this came the idea of setting up a lethal hex at the start of the battlefield. As soon as we started playtesting this, we knew we were onto something, as it added a whole new peril to setting your fighters up at the start of the game, and it meant lethal hexes were a feature of every game.

All this means that in Warhammer Underworlds: Beastgrave the battlefield is a shifting, dangerous place, where stable footing can disintegrate in seconds and where a single misstep can be lethal. What better place for a fight to the death?

## VERTIGO

Sometimes, the impetus behind a new mechanic can come from the strangest places.

This was certainly the case with the Scatter mechanic, which was introduced in the Warhammer Underworlds: Nightvault set. Although it was presented in the core rules, and has found use in a number of cards in both Nightvault and Beastgrave, this mechanic was actually originally developed for none other than Snirk Sourtongue.

Grot Fanatics have traditionally been more than a little bit unpredictable, and we wanted to represent this randomness in the game rather than give players a 'reliable' Fanatic. This led us to try a number of different ways to get Snirk's destructive whirling into the game. We realised that what we wanted was a way to randomise direction, which led to the idea of the Scatter token. However, it took us a number of tries to write a version of the Scatter rules that was easy to understand and gave us the 'right' amount of randomness. Since then, we've found it a great mechanic for creating cards that appeal to players who like to embrace chaos (with a small 'c')!

## COUNTER(CHARGE)

Another change that has opened up a lot of design space is the introduction of generic counters. Added in Warhammer Underworlds: Beastgrave, counters are used to track effects which can be turned on or off, be charged up or 'saved'. They're a very simple, visible reminder of the state of the game, making it possible to have fighter abilities like Grashrak's ritual (1) and upgrades like Hungry Realmstone (2), and I think we've only scratched the surface of what we might be able to do with counter-related rules.

Similarly, the introduction of keywords in Beastgrave, and particularly the signature Hunter and Quarry keywords, gives us more design space for cards interacting with one another (3). Keywords help us to write cards that are clear and concise, and I expect them to be a feature in Warhammer Underworlds from now on.

Changes like these were not made because of any feedback we received, but because we want to keep pushing at the boundaries of the game, working out what is possible and exciting and bringing that to you, the players. This is something that we'll keep doing in the future, so you can expect unexpected developments in Warhammer Underworlds for many years to come!

## END PHASE

That's it for this article on how we have developed and continue to develop Warhammer Underworlds. I hope it has provided you with some interesting insights into what we've done and why. Warhammer Underworlds is a game that is changing all the time, and we care passionately about making it the best experience it can be for all of our players.

## TELL US YOUR THOUGHTS

As ever, do write in if you have any suggestions or something that you'd like to read about. You can contact me by email at:

[whunderworlds@gwplc.com](mailto:whunderworlds@gwplc.com)

or by sending a letter to Dave Sanders, Books and Box Games, Games Workshop, Willow Road, Nottingham, NG7 2WS.

I may not be able to reply directly, but you might see your suggestion or question in a column in a future issue.



# THE GREAT CYCLE

**Delivered by a colossal plague maggot to the Living Mountain, the Rotbringer coven known as the Wurmspat begin their quest to end the Katophrane Curse. Yet there's a new adversary in Beastgrave, as they'll soon find out in this short story by Phil Kelly.**

**T**he lurching, peristaltic motion of the immense worm's insides was nauseating, like being trapped inside some rancid, living intestine. Being digested was never going to be a fun affair, thought Fecula, wincing a little as a splatter of digestive acid rained down on her saggy cheek. Still, she had been through worse. Perhaps that was not so for her companions, nor for her retching familiar, Clothilde.

Her two hulking bodyguards, Sepsimus and Ghulgoch, kept stoically silent, but she could feel the unease and discomfort radiating off them even with the intestinal walls squashing them into single file. Little Clothilde mewled in protest, trying to stay dry as the giant maggot lurched and farted its way along with idiot momentum. The grinding of its mandibles grew louder as it hammered its way through solid rock.

On top of the unimaginably foul stink of the creature's insides, Fecula and her companions had to contend with the soupy slop of her cauldron swilling around their ankles. Swallowed along with its owner, the cauldron's contents were enough to make the eyes water and the throat sting. Even the great maggot-like worm had about reached its limit. Fecula could feel it beginning to retch with the telltale rhythm of one who was about to lose the contents of their guts in a fountain of intestinal protest.

The creature's translucent skin had turned darker in the last few hours, as it had burrowed into the mountainside of what could only have been Beastgrave. Vast mandibles chewed through aeons-old stone and acidic drool ate away at strata older than the first cities. Nothing could

stop the march of entropy, thought Fecula. Why did so many seek to fight it, rather than letting the flow of energy bear them towards the truth? At least Ghulgoch and Sepsimus had the sense to pick their battles.

There was a bubbling rumble, and the three-flanged maw of the worm ripped open. Fecula's world turned liquid as it regurgitated the Rotbringer coven in a heaving, simmering tide of vomit, sending her and her companions splashing and floundering into some ancient, rough-hewn passageway.

The plague-mistress had been expecting it, and she skidded out more or less upright. She got to her feet, brushing sheets of maggot puke from her dress as the worm wriggled backwards, heading down the tunnel it had bored mere moments ago. To her immense relief Clothilde was rubbing against her legs, glad to be free. She cast a glance backward; Ghulgoch and Sepsimus were getting to their feet behind her in a clatter of rusted armour, both grumbling and muttering to themselves.

'Not much honour in that,' said Sepsimus.

'You and your honour, boy,' said Fecula, combing chunks of vomit from her hair with her fingers. 'Slave to the notion when it pleases you, and only then. Our fine conveyance back there was sent by the Grandfather himself. We are favoured beyond measure.'

'So where are we then?' grated Ghulgoch, tapping the edge of his axe on a fluid-slick wall of amber. 'Looks like a cave network.'





'Not just some tawdry cave, laddio,' came Fecula's reply. 'We are in the guts of the mountain they call Beastgrave. A hunter's nirvana, strewn with treasures for the taking.'

'Smaller than I thought it would be, and too clean by half,' said Ghulgoch, running a crack-nailed finger along the shimmering amber of the wall. Behind it was the time-flayed skeleton of some snarling monstrosity.

'A sealed grave is an awful thing,' added Sepsimus.

'Precisely why we're here,' said Fecula, approaching the skeleton and peering at it with interest. 'Grandfather's sent us to bring all the goodness of his rotten heart to these long-abandoned halls, and set free the Great Cycle once more. This place has languished in stasis, and to hear the guts tell of it, it's getting worse.' The bog witch put her hand on the wall and chanted a song taught to her by her grandmother, and to her grandmother before that.

Slowly, unmistakably, she felt the amber become sticky under her fingers. She chanted some more, until it became runny, then so malleable she could make a blade of her hand and push her fingertips inside. The cloying, sickly resin grew warm as she sunk her arm up to the elbow, discolouring with lines of rot all around her hands. She laid her fingertips on the skull of the beast inside the amber and changed the timbre of her chant, turning it from a song of sludge to one of new life. The thing had been given some semblance of undeath by the cosmic quake rippling out from Shyish, and it would be keen for any excuse to get back in the fight.

'Poor beastie,' said Fecula. 'Not even allowed to rot. Ghulgoch, would you lend what is left of your hand?'

The Butcher stepped forward, resting his rusted yet razor-sharp axe against the wall, and flexed his gauntlets. 'Skin or no, they work just fine.'

Fecula crooned again, the syllables causing clotted blood to well in her throat. She swallowed it, unwilling to let the spell's side effects disrupt her flow. The skeletal beast inside the wall of amber twitched. She grinned in triumph as its empty sockets locked onto her gaze, and it reached a skeletal claw through the sticky fluid towards her.

Ghulgoch was ready, grabbing the thing's arm and yanking it forward so hard it came half out of the wall in a sluicing cascade of amber liquid. The Rotbringer's other hand brought his axe down on its skull, cleaving its cranium in two and sending vertebrae and ribs clattering down in a shower of fragments.

'Well enough done,' said Fecula, watching in approval as the bones began to rot before her eyes. She picked up some of the longer ones and hooked them over the jutting, tooth-like ridges of the walls at regular intervals. Some of the tunnel's surface had odd glassy areas more akin to polished mirrors than hardened amber, and she made sure to smear some filth on those too. 'There,' she said. 'That's brightened the place up a bit.'

Clothilde mewled, paced down the corridor a few metres, and looked back at Fecula expectantly. 'Yes, yes,' said Fecula, shambling forward and motioning for her friends to follow her. 'I know. Dinner time.' She flared her nostrils and took a deep breath as she ventured further into the mountain, savouring the residual scent of the greatwurm's innards and the mouldering bone of the amber-beast whilst searching beyond that for a clue as to where to go next. There was an earthy, mildewy scent to the air, stale and subterranean, the tang of limestone and amber mixed with the ammoniac notes of urine and nightsoil. Underneath it was the rich, coppery bouquet of spilt blood.

Recently spilt, at that.



Fecula pulled a face, her swollen features twisting as she caught sight of another silvery vein of glassy material that had spread across the far side of the cavern. In the worst affected places, it was as if the walls had become entirely transparent – and amongst these, fragments of reflection seemed to move of their own accord.

'What is it, do you think?' said Sepsimus. 'This place seems infected.'

'There's a wrongness here,' said Fecula. 'And not the good kind. A plague of timelessness. Nothing ripe. Just death, and the breaking of death.'

'She's at it again, Sepsimus,' said Ghulgoch. 'More witch talk.'

'Believe it or not, I think I know what she means. This melding between states. It's like being near a Realmgate. One magic bleeding into another. One place afflicted by another.'

'Clever words,' said Fecula. 'You would do well to pay attention like him, Ghulgoch – you might learn something.'

'At least I learned to use two blades at once,' said Ghulgoch. 'And proper weapons, too, not some boring pig-sticker.'

'You want stuck again, pig?' said Sepsimus. 'Because I can oblige.'

Fecula slammed the butt of her stave on the cracked honeycomb of the chamber. 'Cease, you two.' She sniffed



again. The scent of blood was even thicker, here. 'We've got guests.'

Up ahead, a shadow flickered on the wall. Small, with wide triangular ears that flattened against the head as the owner caught their scent.

'Grotlings,' said Sepsimus. 'How disappointing. I was hoping for a fight.'



Hrothgorn the hunter forced his massive, broad-shouldered bulk through a tunnel made for a creature two-thirds his size. He had become used to pushing forward through the shafts in time with the strange, heartbeat-like echoes of the mountain's gut, so as to not make too much noise, but that didn't mean he had to like it. It made him feel like he was the prey rather than the predator; it made him hungry, and angry. This place was supposed to be a hunter's paradise, but there had been slim pickings thus far.

His mood worsened when he saw some of the strange glassy material that had become so common in the lower caves. He grimaced as he caught sight of his own reflection in the amber sheen. It left him with a strange feeling, like he'd seen the same thing in the same place once before. Like his own reflection was watching him, judging him somehow. Ready to take over.

'They're up here, boss,' said Bushwakka, motioning frantically down the passageway. That stretch of the wall was covered in serrated ranks of teeth, like the skin of a shark. He pushed on, following the little greenskin as he scampered onwards. Though the wall-teeth tugged at Hrothgorn's clothing and made tiny rips wherever he squeezed his shoulders through, they did not draw blood.

The Gnoblar had not been so fortunate. They had already bled a fair bit, scratched or caught by the grasping, ever-hungry teeth of Beastgrave itself. Quiv was almost trembling, the tips of the harpoons he carried drawing little circles in the air; as a prey creature, such fear was only to be expected. Luggit and Thwak were too busy

trying to out-fierce each other, as usual, but under their parchment-thin bravado they too felt the fear of the place.

Hrothgorn was used to the smell of Gnoblar and had learned to push it aside when on the hunt. Rank, stringy, and unfulfilling, Gnoblar flesh was not good meat. Even Thrafnir had no taste for it, and that was saying something. Hrothgorn had seen the sabretusk eat a corpse-centipede whole just two days ago, gobbling it down foot by wriggling foot.

Something foul was up ahead, with a scent like an open grave.

'Look sharp,' said Hrothgorn under his breath. 'They're here.' He rested his trap launcher on a stalagmite and breathed out, steadying his aim at the corridor opposite as he waved for Bushwakka to get to one side. The Gnoblar nodded eagerly, and placed his own mantrap with a clang.

'For Maw's sake,' rumbled Hrothgorn. 'Give us away, why don't ya.'

The shadows dancing on the far walls halted for a moment. The wan amber light of Beastgrave's tunnels gave enough light for Hrothgorn to make out a bulky silhouette across the way. He heard some whispered chanting, and a piercing, rank smell filled his nostrils. Gagging, he looked down to see the leather of his shoulder-cloak withering and rotting, turning to some manner of bubbling mush that writhed with unnatural growths and questing maggots. He shrugged it off with a shiver of revulsion, stamping on it for good measure.

'Come out and try that again, hagwitch,' he said. 'See wot happens.'

*Wait a minute, he thought. How did he—*

There was a guttural roar from up ahead. Two obese warriors clad in rotting metal stomped around the corner. They were huge, almost as big as Hrothgorn, and they stank so bad he could taste it. One clashed his axes together, the other waved a rusted spear. He'd seen that before, somewhere, he was sure of it. The one at the back, though, she was the leader; a large female cradling some manner of feline in the crook of her arm. Hrothgorn craned his neck to get a view of her. A robed female, straggly of hair and with a face the colour of a toad's belly. She was trouble, of that he was certain. The brains of the operation, most like.

Unlike her friends.

The first of the two lumbering warriors stepped right in Bushwakka's optimistically-placed trap. It closed on his leg with a loud snap. The Gnoblar's shriek of triumph died away as the brute ploughed on past without slowing, every other step making a loud clang. No simple animal snare was going to stop these ones.

'Larf this off then,' said Hrothgorn, pulling his trap launcher's trigger. With a loud *sproing* the steel-toothed



device shot forward, catching the hulking warrior in the shoulder as his charge gathered momentum. The trap triggered, its wide metal jaws biting deep into the meat of the target's torso. There was not so much as a yelp from the victim. Gritting his teeth, Hrothgorn gave the chain a hard yank. The plague warrior was strong, but not as strong as a rhinox, and Hrothgorn knew just how to unbalance a bulky target. First the haul, then the stab.

It didn't work. His foe rode the momentum and came in hard, axes raised. Hrothgorn grimaced, his inflamed gums stinging on contact with the open air. Here came the first blow, a butcher's shot right for the neck. Hrothgorn punched the axe to one side, and it thunked into the stock of his crossbow. The other axe came for his groin. A sharp kick, and it too was deflected. Hrothgorn rammed the trap launcher against his enemy's chest. Maw, but he was strong for a human. Suddenly the two were pressed close. The stench of the fiend's rotting flesh clogged up Hrothgorn's nose something fierce. Then the second armoured warrior came in from the side, spear levelled. The hunter hunted, thought Hrothgorn.

Luggit and Thwak emerged from behind a tall amber honeycomb, one atop the other's shoulders in a precarious balancing act. The spearman saw them at the last moment and kicked Luggit in the face, sending both of the Gnoblars sprawling. Thrafnir leapt over them, jaws closing not on the warrior, but his spear. Hrothgorn chuckled darkly; the frost sabre had sense enough to know not to bite a plague victim, but to disarm him instead. The warrior yanked the spear back hard, sending Thrafnir rolling away with nothing but splinters in his maw to show for it.

Then the axeman headbutted Hrothgorn hard in the throat, bringing his focus right back to his own fight. Reeling, the ogor's hand closed on the hilt of his hunting knife instinctively, and he buried it right in his adversary's gut. His enemy gave not a scream of pain, but a low gurgle of amusement. 'Ouch,' he said. 'Such pretty pain.'

Hrothgorn glimpsed his reflection in one of the glassier tunnel sections, recognising his own expression of anger and frustration. He had a sudden sense that he had been here before. The axe was about to come up and over...

And sure enough, in it came. Hrothgorn wrenched his knife out and stabbed its point into the axe haft, pushing it



aside. 'This one fights well!' called out his foe, his voice thick with some horrendous fluid. 'For an ogor.'

'Noted,' said the bedraggled female at the back of the cavern. She waved a twisted, knobbled staff in his direction and muttered a curse, blood spilling from her rubbery lips as her voice rose to a crescendo. 'Join the Great Cycle, and be free!'

Hrothgorn felt a sudden sickness boil up within him. It was as if every muscle had turned to wet clay all at once. The butcher's second axe sank into his knee, and he roared in pain. Nearby, Thrafnir leapt again, but at the same instant the witch's little cat-thing jumped at the hunting beast's face with a hiss. The spearman whipped his weapon around, and the frost sabre was spitted on the same spear it had attempted to tear away moments before.

'You'll pay for that!' shouted Hrothgorn. He dropped his crossbow and, with a burst of anger-fuelled strength, wrenched his mantrap free from the warrior's shoulder in a welter of unclean fluids. He hauled it up and – even as he felt his blubbery, stinking assailant's axe sink deep in his gut – let it close again with a dull clang over his foe's neck. This time, the axeman cried out.

'Felt that one, didn't ya,' Hrothgorn chuckled. His voice sounded choked with phlegm. He felt old all of a sudden, unnaturally so. He sunk in on himself, dwindling until the light of hunger in his gut had gone out entirely.

'Wot's happened,' he managed, as his vision began to fade. He saw mirrors at the edge of his vision, and reflections shattering over and over.

'Got you this time, oaf,' hissed the axeman, raising his blade for the killing blow. 'I'll see you when the Great Cycle comes around once again.'

'You wot?' said Hrothgorn, bloody spittle spilling down his chin. They weren't much good as last words. He saw his reflection in the wall as the axe descended, leering back at him as if eager to eat his soul.

*This place was no paradise, he thought before he died. He knew in his gut that there would be no respite. In fact this place was about as far from paradise as it was possible to get.*





# XENOS HUNTER

Precipice is a lawless place where humans and aliens regularly join forces to explore the depths of the Blackstone Fortress. Such alliances are nothing short of unthinkable to most loyal Imperial servants, particularly alien hunters such as the Deathwatch Watch Master.



**T**he Deathwatch Chapter of Space Marines was first established during the traumatic events of the War of the Beast in M32 to safeguard the Imperium from the threat of alien invasion. Watch Fortresses were set up across the galaxy, and battle-brothers were drawn from virtually every Space Marine Chapter to garrison them.

Each fortress is commanded by a Watch Master, a veteran warrior with many centuries of battlefield experience and alien-hunting knowledge. Their superhuman physiology makes them a formidable warrior in their own right, but their specialist wargear turns them into a veritable avatar of destruction. Clad in an ornate suit of power armour and armed with a formidable guardian spear, there are few enemies that can stand before the indomitable might of one of these deadly xenos hunters.

## WATCH MASTER

If you fancy playing this army of one mission, you're going to need a Watch Master! The Deathwatch Watch Master, available from the Games Workshop website, is the perfect kit. He even comes with a key-holding servo-skull for unlocking tricky fortress doors.



## EVER VIGILANT

Over the next few pages, you'll find rules for using a Deathwatch Watch Master in your games of Blackstone Fortress. Like other high-calibre characters such as the Eversor Assassin and the Harlequins Solitaire, the Watch Master is a solo-play character and fights entirely alone. This may seem like a daunting prospect, but as you'll soon see, he's more than up to the task!

The Watch Master is unique in that you don't get to roll four activation dice for him each round. No, you get to roll six! This means the Watch Master can thunder into a room, fire off a few rounds of specialist ammunition from the bolter integrated into his guardian spear, chop up any survivors, then smash his way out the other end of the room with all the alien-hating prejudice you'd expect from one of the galaxy's foremost warriors. Let the purge of xenos begin!



# AN ARMY OF ONE

**Blackstone Fortress** is a game that can be played as both a single player and multiplayer experience. Whether one explorer takes control over an entire group and leads them to victory, or a group of friends decide to tackle the challenge of the fortress as a team, there are pitfalls and challenges aplenty for all.

But what if a single hero took to the field of battle who was powerful enough to handle the threats of the Blackstone Fortress alone? A warrior so mighty that not even a Chaos Space Marine or an entire group of Negavolt Cultists was enough to give them pause?

Well here it is: a 'what if' scenario in which we present a potent warrior who is quite capable of completing an expedition by themselves, and with activation dice to spare. To set up an expedition using this fell-handed explorer, use the rules for setting up a one-off expedition, with the following changes.

**Stage 2:** When setting up a one-off expedition, during stage 2, you can pick the Deathwatch Watch Master as an explorer. If you do, no other explorers can be picked. This means that only one player can be an explorer in this expedition, and one other player can be the hostile player.

**Stage 3:** Note that some exploration cards require more than one explorer. If one of these is drawn during the expedition, draw a different challenge from the remaining challenge exploration cards instead.

**Stage 4:** Pick an unused explorer initiative card to represent the Deathwatch Watch Master.

**Stage 5:** Do not set up any spacecraft.

**Stage 12:** The leader reads the following:

'The denizens of the Blackstone Fortress shift uncomfortably in their lairs. Feral Ur-Ghuls pause suddenly to sniff the air as they travel through the shadows, their predator's instinct recognising an apex threat. Even the deranged minions of Mallex whisper amongst themselves of a fresh terror that hunts them, one that will not rest until they have all been eliminated. Even as such rumours are brutally put down, in the distance, panicked screams and terrified howls begin to echo down the corridors ...'

## HARDLY A CHALLENGE:

When making event rolls, use the following table instead of the one in the Combat booklet.

SOLO PLAY EVENT TABLE	
ROLL	EVENT
1	<b>Bring It Down!:</b> Make one attack with every hostile that has line of sight to an explorer. If a hostile does not have line of sight to an explorer, they make one Move action towards the nearest explorer.
2-3	<b>Unfulfilled Destiny:</b> Do not make a destiny roll at the start of the next turn.
4-6	<b>Wave after Wave:</b> If possible, every hostile that has been slain during the combat encounter is returned to the battlefield as reinforcements (pg 13 of the Combat booklet).
7-10	<b>Dangerous Conditions:</b> Draw two encounter cards. Any twists on those cards apply for the rest of the combat. If neither encounter card has a twist, repeat this process until at least one encounter card that has a twist on it has been drawn.
11-14	<b>Deadly Escape:</b> The leader replaces the portal furthest from the explorer with a maglev transport escape chamber. If more than one portal is equally far from the explorer, the leader can pick which one to replace. If this event has already been rolled, or if an explorer has made a Summon (4+) action, treat this result as a 'Bring it Down!' result instead.
15-17	<b>Inspiration:</b> The explorer receives 1 inspiration point.
18-19	<b>No Limits to My Slaughter:</b> The explorer can make one Move action and then one weapon action.
20	<b>Lucky Find:</b> The explorer can draw one discovery card.







# DEATHWATCH WATCH MASTER

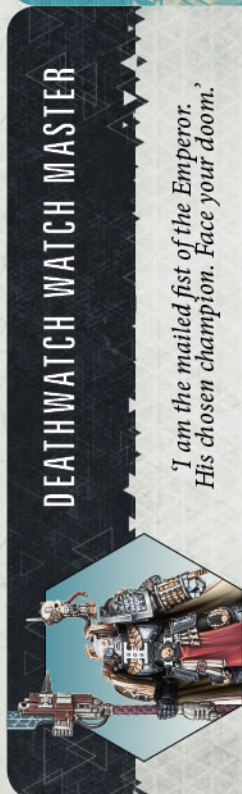
Watch Masters are the foremost xenos hunters in the galaxy. They are counted as heroes even amongst the highest echelons of the Adeptus Astartes, for these men have tested their mettle against a hundred species of aliens and emerged triumphant. They have such intense charisma and ability that within the Deathwatch their every word is law. Their mission is to ensure the survival of the human race, and it not one they take lightly. No less a body than the High Lords of Terra has been known to seek their counsel – for in the business of laying low the alien, the Watch Masters are without equal.

Though they theoretically return to their original Chapter once their duties are discharged, Watch Masters usually prove so vital that they are never allowed to leave their post. Often, Watch Masters shoulder their duties alone, seeking the solace of pure thought in long periods of solitude. Yet their actions send ripples throughout history, almost always for the betterment of the Imperium.

The Watch Masters hold a position of such trust and authority that they have access even to the archives of the Inquisition. Even merciless Lord Inquisitors treat these men with a degree of deference, for of all the Imperium's defenders, the Ordo Xenos know best how grave a burden the Watch Masters bear. On a strategic level, the Watch Masters work ceaselessly to outwit and outmanoeuvre the warlords of the alien races, to stymie invasions before they occur, to bring ascendant dynasties to their knees and to wipe out parasitic species that would otherwise infest great swathes of Imperial space. It speaks to their quality that they can actually achieve such goals in practice. Knowledge is power, after all, and they use it well.

When the Watch Masters take the field, their centuries of experience are focused to a deadly point, a weapon specifically made for the task of slaying xenos bioforms. Wisdom is far from their only tool. They go to war girded in the finest Imperial war-tech, the artefacts they bear so precious they would make a Technomagos weep oily tears of envy. Just as the hero of an ancient people was once given the keys to his city, the Watch Master is given the key to Humanity's domain: the clavis, a wrist-worn repository of machine spirits from the Dark Age of Technology that can open any door, and in theory, take control of any Imperial machine. Watch Masters are clad in precious masterpieces of the artificer's art, each a formidable and ornate suit of armour. They carry the fabled guardian spear, symbolic of their role of sentinel, and the same weapon borne by the Emperor's personal warrior elite, the Custodian Guard, though modified to fire the signature shells of the Deathwatch. When a Watch Master joins the fight on the front line, he cuts down his foes with a cold precision that leaves monsters and tyrants slain in his wake.





**DEATHWATCH WATCH MASTER**  
(INSPIRED)

*'I am the mailed fist of the Emperor.  
His chosen champion. Face your doom.'*

Move: 2    Defence:    Agility:    Vitality:

**Shock Assault:** Increase the Move value from 2 to 4 if an activation dice with a score of 4+ is spent.

**WEAPON ACTIONS**

Weapon	Range		
	1	2-3	4+
Guardian Spear (melee) (1+)			N/A
Guardian Spear (shooting) (1+) <sup>1</sup>	N/A		

<sup>1</sup> **Bone Shrapnel:** When a hostile is slain by this weapon action, roll the Blackstone dice for each hostile that was adjacent to or in the same hex as the slain hostile. On a 18+, that hostile suffers 1 wound.

**SPECIAL RULES**

**Special Issue Ammunition:** Each time the Watch Master takes the Guardian Spear (shooting) (1+) weapon action, you can choose one of the following effects to apply to that weapon action:

- Hellfire Shells:** Successes in this attack roll are treated as critical successes.
- Kraken Shells:** Ignore cover for this attack.
- Vengeance Rounds:** The Blackstone dice cannot be rolled to prevent wounds or grievous wounds caused by this weapon action (for example, the Rogue Psyker's Psychic Shield ability).


**Transhuman Physiology:** When the Watch Master activates, turn 1 grievous wound counter to its wound side. You can re-roll vitality rolls for the Watch Master.

**Juggernaut:** When the Watch Master takes a Move (1+) action, he does not have to halt the move when he enters a hex adjacent to a hostile that is visible to him.

**Iron Halo:** You can re-roll one action dice in defence rolls for the Watch Master.

**SECRET AGENDA**

During an expedition, a hostile group that contained any Ur-Ghuls or Spindle Drones has no models on the battlefield.



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(INSPIRED)

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# BACK FROM THE DEAD

Death got you down? Has your Leader, Champion or favourite gang member caught a bolt round to the skull, a chainsaw to the neck or fallen from an extreme height? Are they in dire need of technological, alien or supernatural intervention? Well, if so, then read on ...



**L**ife is cheap on Necromunda, and death is always waiting just around the corner – usually with a renderizer in its meaty fists. But occasionally, dead isn't dead, and when a ganger buys it, sometimes, just sometimes, they come back. For whatever reason, be it unfinished business, alien tech or warp sorcery, the ganger has clawed their way out of the grave and returned to their gang. Of course, no one comes back from the beyond without paying the price, and no one comes back quite the same as before.

## RESURRECTION PROTOCOLS INITIATED

Resurrection Packages are a set of optional campaign rules for Arbitrators to introduce into their campaigns should they wish. They give players an opportunity to bring valued fighters back from the dead and return them to the ranks of their gang – but at a cost. They're a way to give

## THE BOOK OF RUIN

Continue your underhive campaign with the Book of Ruin. Inside you'll find rules for Chaos and Genestealer cults, new trading posts, more Arbitrator tools for running campaigns and eighteen new scenarios.



fighters a second chance – especially if they have died ignominiously, perhaps even in their first battle. Resurrection Packages are also great storytelling tools for the Arbitrator, and with a little bit of work, entire campaigns can be built around them.

Over the next few pages, you'll find eight Resurrection Packages to pick from (kind of like holiday packages, but with less sun, sea and sand and more dubious pacts). Will you choose the technological wonder that is the Archeo-rebirth package? Perhaps you'd prefer a Xenos-resurrection? Maybe your leader had a pact with a darker power and has come back to life possessed by a Daemon. You could even roll randomly to see what pact you receive, or the campaign Arbitrator could pick it for you as part of an ongoing story for your gang. Just remember, though – you only live twice ...



## NECROMUNDA RESURRECTION PACKAGES

Resurrection Packages are a tool for the Arbitrator and can be used whenever a fighter is killed (i.e. they roll a Memorable Death result on the Lasting Injuries table, or die because of an untreated Critical Injury). As a general rule, Resurrection Packages should be reserved for important fighters, like gang Leaders and Champions. After all, why bring a Juve back from the dead? There's always plenty more where they came from! When the chosen Leader or Champion dies, the player can ask the Arbitrator if they can use a Resurrection Package, or the Arbitrator can offer the player a chance to bring them back. Either the Arbitrator or player then chooses what kind of resurrection has taken place, and its effects are applied to the fighter. In all cases, the fighter is then restored to life and returned to the player's gang roster ready for the next battle, just as if they had rolled an Out Cold result on the Lasting Injury table.

Unless the Arbitrator has a particular kind of campaign in mind, it is recommended that each player only ever have one fighter with a Resurrection Package at a time, and fighters only use the option once. If one player in the campaign has access to Resurrection Packages, then all players can use them.

Coming back from the dead, of course, is not without its consequences, and each Resurrection Package includes three special rules: the Benefits, the Price, and the End Game.

### BENEFITS

Returning to a gang resurrected by alien technology, warp energy or the neuron plague has its benefits. While the fighter might be changed in some irrevocable way, it does mean they are probably tougher, more frightening or gifted with new and potent abilities. Each Resurrection Package bestows upon the fighter one or more Benefits, and they will be listed in this section.

### PRICE

Returning from the grave always comes at a cost. The fighter might owe a powerful organisation a debt that can only be repaid with blood, or perhaps their body is no longer their own, its flesh slowly being consumed by ancient archeotech or warp entities. Each Resurrection Package comes with a Price that must be paid, and this will be listed in this section.

### END GAME

Resurrection is, at best, a temporary method of staving off the cold embrace of death. A fighter who comes back from the dead does so for a reason, and it is a reason that cannot be ignored. Whether it is getting revenge on their killer, spreading a zombie virus or sacrificing captives to the Dark Gods, each Resurrection Package has its own End Game, and this will be listed in this section.





## ARCHEO-REBIRTH

*There are secrets that are best left in the past, secrets of iron and the turning wheel that belong to a long-past Dark Age. Once there were machines that could ape the thoughts of man, devices that could unravel matter and even halt the rotation of life into death. Such secrets exist now in only the most shunned scraps of techno-mythos. But down in the depths of Necromunda, where the past still dreams in the underworld, it is said that the machine spectres of bio-ferrum infusion, nerve tendril merger and Sarcosan wave generators can still be found.*

**Benefits:** A living piece of abominable technology has affixed itself to the fighter's body, burrowing mecha-tendrils deep inside their flesh. If the wearer suffers a Lasting Injury result of Humiliated, Head Injury, Eye Injury, Hand Injury, Hobbled, Spinal Injury or Enfeebled, they count the result as Out Cold instead. Each time the fighter avoids a Lasting Injury in this way, make a note of it.

**Price:** Whatever dark technology is keeping the fighter alive has also burrowed its way into their brain. Whenever the fighter activates, they must roll a D6. If the result is equal to or less than the total number of times they have avoided a Lasting Injury (see Benefits) they gain the Insane Condition.

**End Game:** Eventually the fighter will become more machine than human. If the fighter has ever avoided 6 Lasting Injuries since taking this Resurrection Package (see Benefits), they vanish into the underhive never to be seen again, and the player must remove them from their gang roster.

## A DEBT OF BLOOD

*There are few things that create loyalty like the gift of unexpected life. The moment when souls believe they will plunge into the abyss but then find themselves still hanging by a thread is a moment that the powerful can use to create servants who will be loyal for the rest of their lives. For some it is a gunshot that they thought would end their lives but instead saw their killers dead at the hands of an angel with a smile and an offer. No matter what, a debt of blood is a path back to a life lived still at the end of a string.*

**Benefits:** When this Resurrection Package is chosen, the Arbitrator or the player must choose a Criminal, Guild or Noble ally. The fighter's gang immediately enters into an alliance with the chosen faction, forsaking all other allies. While the resurrected fighter is alive, the gang will always be allied to the chosen faction. In addition, extra fighters gained from the allies (i.e. Guild representatives or Criminal allies, etc.) ignore the Band Apart rules, and so count as part of the fighter's gang, can gain experience (using the gang's skill tables for skill advances) and suffer Lasting Injuries.

**Price:** The fighter's gang must change their alignment to match that of their new allies (i.e. if they were a Law Abiding gang and a Criminal alliance was made, they must become an Outlaw gang). In addition, the fighter's gang can never voluntarily Test the Alliance with their new allies.

**End Game:** The cost levied by the allies is always a hefty one. After each battle the fighter's gang wins, the fighter must either hand themselves over to their allies, or give up a gang member (not including hired guns or fighters gained through their allies). The chosen fighter is removed from the gang roster. This continues until the fighter surrenders to their allies.



## DAEMONIC POSSESSION

*Beyond the veil of reality, Daemons swim in the great ocean of emotion and nightmare that is the warp. Ever hungry for souls and the promise of reality, they seek for ways into the world of the living. Drawn to the living like insects to a candle flame, the Daemon can use the moment of death to slide into a body, consuming the last shreds of soul as it does, like a hatchling feeding on the yoke of its egg. Such a possession cannot last, for the Daemon's grip on dead flesh is weak, but while it does last, they may walk in the realm of the living and sate their hunger for suffering and death.*

**Benefits:** There is a supernatural horror that emanates from the fighter, infecting all around them. The fighter gains the Fearsome skill if they do not have it, and enemy fighters must pass a Cool check to target them with ranged weapons. In addition, they gain the Unsanctioned Psyker special rule and may generate a random psychic power from the Helot Chaos Cult psychic powers list.

**Price:** The Daemon within the fighter demands souls if it is to get stronger. During the post-battle sequence of every battle (whether the fighter was part of the player's crew or not) they will lose a point of Toughness, unless they performed a Coup de Grace action during the battle or the player sacrifices one of their other fighters (a sacrificed fighter is killed just as if they had rolled a Memorable Death result on the Lasting Injury table). If the fighter's Toughness ever reaches 0, they are dead for good.

**End Game:** Once the Daemon has consumed its fill, it will no longer need the fighter, breaking free of the weak mortal vessel. Each time the fighter takes a soul (i.e. performs a Coup de Grace action or a friendly fighter is sacrificed) make a note. In the post-battle sequence, before deciding whether or not to sacrifice a friendly fighter (see Price) roll 2D6. If the result is equal to or lower than the number of souls the fighter has consumed, they are immediately killed as the Daemon breaks free.

## DARK PACT

*There are things that listen to the dreams and fears of mortals, things that live beyond the shadow line that separates reality from that which lies beyond. Some call these things gods, others call them Daemons. In the depths of Hive Primus there are those that whisper of the Seven Pale Spinners, the Burning Ones, the Lord of Skin and Sinew and the Horned Darkness. No matter their name, or why mortals call to them, there is one truth to them: they listen. And should a lost soul desire to live beyond their allotted span, the Daemons and gods can grant that last wish ... for a price.*

**Benefits:** The fighter may perform a Dark Ritual during the post-battle sequence, just as if they were part of a Helot Chaos Cult gang. If the fighter is already part of a Helot Chaos Cult gang then they may add 2 to the dice roll when performing Dark Rituals. In addition, they gain the Unsanctioned Psyker special rule and may generate a random psychic power from the Helot Chaos Cult psychic powers list.

**Price:** The fighter's gang cannot sell Captives to the Guild, and must instead sacrifice them to the Dark Gods, just as if they were a Helot Chaos Cult. If they are already part of a Helot Chaos Cult then this rule has no effects. In addition, the dark reputation of the fighter has gotten around, and the gang immediately become Outlaws.

**End Game:** It is the will of the Dark Gods to bestow terrible gifts upon their servant. Once the fighter's gang has sacrificed three Captives to the Ruinous Powers, the fighter is transformed into a Chaos Spawn, and may be retained by the gang, whether or not the gang is a Helot Chaos Cult.



## CANNIBAL CORPSE

*The dead do not rest easy in the underhives of Necromunda. Zombie plagues have spread and multiplied. From the Widow Walkers of Hive Primus and Hive Quartus and the Rattle Shrouds of the wastes to the Pox Walkers that have all but overwhelmed Hive Mortis, all are hungering undead driven to spread their curse to others. Such fate is only to be feared, but a few desperate fighters might even seek to taint the flesh of a dying comrade so that they may walk again.*

**Benefits:** The fighter cannot be pinned, ignores Flesh Wounds and automatically passes any Cool checks they are required to take. In addition, while weapons with the Blaze trait can set them on fire, whilst subject to the Blaze condition, the fighter may act normally during their activation, rather than acting as described by the Blaze trait.

**Price:** The fighter can only ever perform a single action in each of their activations, suffers a -4 hit with all weapons that do not have the Melee or Versatile trait, and must perform the Charge or Coup de Grace actions if able. They also cannot perform Group Activations with fighters who are not also zombies (see End Game).

**End Game:** The fighter is inexorably driven to create more zombies. After each battle, one randomly determined fighter in the player's gang becomes a zombie (see Price). Once a fighter is a zombie, they cannot be deleted from the gang roster during the post-battle sequence. Once every fighter in the gang is a zombie, it is disbanded, as they wander off into the underhive looking for fresh meat ...

## REVENANT

*Revenge is a power that can deny the dead the peace of the grave. Driven by immortal hate, the revenant is a figure who lives again to perform one deed alone: to pull those that wronged them into death with them.*

**Benefits:** When this Resurrection Package is chosen, make a note of the enemy fighter responsible for the resurrected fighter's death. If the fighter wasn't killed by an enemy fighter (i.e. they fell to their death, etc.), then choose the Leader of the enemy gang the resurrected fighter was facing when they died. Whenever the resurrected fighter faces this chosen enemy, they may re-roll failed hit and wound rolls, as well as the Injury dice, when making attacks against them.

**Price:** The fighter must try to kill their killer. Each time their gang doesn't face the enemy's gang in a battle (whether or not the chosen enemy is part of their opponent's crew), they must roll a D6. On a 4+ they lose a point of Strength. If they are reduced to 0 Strength, they die and are removed from the gang roster.

**End Game:** If the fighter ever kills their enemy (rolls a Memorable Death result on the Lasting Injury table or sends them to the Doc and they are not saved), then the fighter retires and is removed the gang roster. If their enemy is killed by someone else, or retires, they must choose a new fighter from the enemy fighter's gang – this new fighter becomes their chosen enemy.



## XENOS-RESURRECTION

*There are creatures who walked the stars when Mankind was less than a dream in the eye of ancient gods. To such beings, death is a puzzle long solved and a gift that now tempts humanity. From the Halo Devices brought from Calixis and Mandragora to the flesh mastery of the Drukhari Haemonculi and the metallic Solar Worms found in the black sands of dead worlds, there are ways back from death open to those who are willing to leave their humanity behind.*

**Benefits:** The fighter is not entirely human anymore. Each time the fighter suffers a Lasting Injury, the fighter counts the effect as Out Cold unless a Memorable Death or a Critical Injury was generated. When the fighter avoids a Lasting Injury in this way, however, the player must make a note.

**Price:** Each time the fighter avoids a Lasting Injury, they permanently become more alien. All effects are cumulative. If they have survived 1 Lasting Injury, they cannot use or benefit from the Leading by Example rule. If they have survived 2 Lasting Injuries, they cannot make or take part in Group Activations. If they have survived 3 Lasting Injuries, they cannot be the target of friendly Gang Tactics. Finally, if they have survived 4 or more Lasting Injuries, then friendly fighters may never voluntarily be deployed or move within 3" of the fighter.

**End Game:** Eventually the fighter's humanity is consumed by the alien within, and they become something else entirely. Once the fighter has survived 4 or more Lasting Injuries since taking the Resurrection Package, each time they suffer a new Lasting Injury they must roll 2D6. If the result of the dice roll is equal to or lower than the current number of Lasting Injuries they have survived, they immediately transform into a Beast's Lair (or creature chosen by the Arbitrator) and will always attack the nearest fighters (friend or foe) on their activation (or move towards the nearest fighter if they are a creature). After the battle, permanently remove the fighter from the gang roster.

## SKIN-DEEP DOPPELGANGER

*The faces of the dead are masks that can be worn by the living. Remorphic aliens, witch-bred assassins, neuro-mimic cultists and other shape-changers may take the death of an individual as an opportunity to slip into the space left by the departed, wearing their face and life like a set of clothes while they pursue their own ends.*

**Benefits:** The fighter is not quite the same. When they are resurrected, the fighter may alter any skill advances they have received – effectively gaining back any spent experience points on skills and spending them again on new skills. When choosing skills, including their starting skill for being a Leader or Champion, they may choose from any skill category and not just those available to their gang.

**Price:** Other members of the gang are a little unnerved by the Doppelganger. The fighter cannot make or participate in Group Activations, nor can they use or benefit from the Leading by Example rule.

**End Game:** The fighter is following their own secret agenda. At the end of each battle the fighter takes part in, roll 3D6. If a double is rolled, the fighter disappears for a battle (effectively going into Recovery), while if a triple is rolled they vanish entirely and are removed from the gang's roster.





# FAITH & FIRE

BY JAMES SWALLOW

Celestian Miriya and Hospitaller Verity begin their investigation into the disappearance of the rogue psyker Torris Vaun. But the ruling elite of Neva begin to throw up unexpected barriers in their path, including the recreation of the battle of Kodiak Prime. Part III of IX.

## CHAPTER FIVE

The Imperial Church was an engine fuelled by devotion, a machine lubricated by the blood of its faithful, and across a hundred thousand stars, the temples and spires of the God-Emperor's spirit cast long shadows. As each planet and populace was distinctive, so their society took the worship of the Lord of Mankind and made it their own. On feral planets like Miral, the primitive natives saw Him as a great animal stalking the stygian depths of their forests; the forge world Telemachus revered Him as the Great Blacksmith, the Moulder of All Things; and the people of Limnus Epsilon believed He lived in their sun, breathing radiance down upon them. The church had learned in the days of the Great Crusade that enforcing its will on worlds by eradicating their belief systems and starting from scratch was a lengthy and troublesome process. Instead, the Ecclesiarchy worked by coercion and change, turning native religions to face Holy Terra and showing them the great truth of the universe – that all gods were the God-Emperor of Man in one guise or another.

On a world such as Neva, where dogma and creed were irreversibly threaded through every single aspect of its civilisation, wars had been fought over single verses in holy tracts, over the smallest points in the reading of prayers. Barons and city-lords had put each other to the sword when interpretations of credo boiled into violent discord. On such a planet, where every man, woman and child prayed to Terra in fear of their immortal souls, there was friction and dangerous strife over the meaning and the matter of the church's word.

To end such disharmony, Neva required a miracle; and by the grace of the God-Emperor, it received one. The people called it the Blessing of the Wound.



Lord LaHayn did not speak or gesture for the crowds to become silent. He merely watched and waited, his aspect neutral and his hands clasped behind his back.

The tall hololithic ghost projection glittered beneath him, hovering over the stage sets mounted in the amphitheatre's dirt arena. He allowed his visage to turn gently this way and that, the image's eyes scanning the people with a cool, unwavering stare. LaHayn had long ago mastered the ability to address a crowd and have each person in it think that it was only they to whom he was speaking.

When they were quiet, he gave them a shallow bow. 'Sons and daughters of Neva. We are blessed.' The priest-lord felt thousands of gazes upon him, thousands of breaths held in tight throats. 'The path toward a better tomorrow stretches out before us, toward a future that is golden and eternal; but our journey together must cross a wilderness of hardship and struggle.' He bowed his head. 'Each year we gather here and ask for the Blessing, and we are granted it. Why? Because we are humanity! Because we are the children of the God-Emperor, the most supreme men that ever drew breath! Through His servants, we know Him and we know His words. We understand what is expected of us. Our duties, to be strong, to never weaken, to purge the xenos, the mutant, the heretic from our ranks.' The priest looked up again. 'We know that the price of all things is not gold, not uranium, not diamonds. It is *faith unfailing*. And that price is paid with blood.'



When Saint Celestine's warfleet had appeared in Neva's orbit to herald the passing of the warp storm that had isolated the system, the churches across the planet were filled to bursting; lives were lost in some places when chapels, overflowing with worshippers, collapsed under their own weight. According to some records from that time, the living saint herself made planetfall at the Discus Rock some miles from Noroc – although log-tapes from the warrior's flagship never fully corroborated this incident, leading some historians on other worlds to doubt the words of the Nevan priests.



But true or not, the saint's passage under Neva's sun changed the planet forever. The monks living in the monastery that stood at Discus now guarded the spot; ringed with brass electro-fences there was a shallow imprint in the flat stone, allegedly marking the place where Celestine's golden boot first touched the surface of Neva. The very richest and most favoured of the planet's noble castes were allowed to kneel there and kiss the mark. Some would ritually cut themselves and offer a few drops of blood to the footprint, if they were highborn enough.

Saint Celestine, the Hieromartyr of the Palatine Crusade, was second only to the Emperor in the number of Nevan chapels dedicated to her name. Her face adorned coins, icons and devotional artworks; and in every one, the man who had come to be known as Ivar of the Wound attended her at her feet.



The priest gathered in the people with his open arms. 'I am humbled by the magnificent example that you, my congregation, have set. The workers and artisans among you who toil and ask not for acclaim, but accept the honour of our noble Governor Emmel. The soldiers and warriors who burn with cold fire and unyielding resolve, never flinching before the threat of the heretical and unmutual. The pastors and clerics who hold the very soul of our people in their hands, shielding it from the lies of the treacherous and disloyal. You seek reward in service alone.' He made the sign of the aquila once more. 'I am forever in awe of you.' After a long moment, he spoke again; but now the warmth in his voice was bleeding out, changing to something cold and hard. 'The greatest pride of the Nevan people is order; and yet there are those among us who seek only chaos and destruction. As a chirurgeon might sever a limb to excise a lethal cancer, we must do the same. Our society offers so much to those who follow the rule of law, and yet these criminals want only discord and anarchy. To be pious is to be strong and never yield to such offenders! Remember! The stalwart will inherit tomorrow; the weak will be buried today. We must protect our children and our nation from the malignancy of rebellion. In Ivar's name, they must know the cost. They must know it!'



Ivar's story was famous to every Nevan, taught in crèches and re-told to them again and again throughout their lives. There were books of his life, heavy with garish illustrations and few words for the simple-minded and the young, or dense with layers of

interpretation for the thinker; each year the church had the public vox networks produce a lavish vidy-drama biography; he was celebrated in song and his patrician profile adorned murals across the planet.

An ordinary soldier in Noroc's city guard, Ivar had witnessed first-hand the arrival of Celestine in those turbulent days, and when the shadow of her starship quieted the assassin-wars and dismissed the warp storm, he was so moved by the event that he gathered a legion of warriors and followed the saint on her War of Faith. He called it a payment in return for Celestine's rescue of his homeworld, and so in the months that ensued Ivar and his men pledged themselves as militia in the service of the Adepta Sororitas. Ivar's soldiers fought with the passion of true zealots, their numbers thinning through attrition until at last only Ivar himself was still alive.

Finally, on the battlefields of the Kodiak Cluster where Celestine's force had engaged an eldar conclave, the living saint was drawn into close combat with an alien warlord. Ivar, attempting to prove his devotion, tried and failed to strangle the warlord with his bare hands, and instead found himself taken as a human shield by the xenos creature. Confronting Celestine, the alien believed that she would never willingly kill a member of her own species in cold blood; but Ivar called out for the saint to sacrifice him in order to destroy the eldar commander. Celestine plunged the burning tip of her Ardent Blade through Ivar's chest, running him through and cleaving the heart of the alien behind him; but when the sword was withdrawn, by some miracle Ivar still lived.



'Zeal. Purity. Duty. The pillars of the church are the platform on which we stand, unbreakable and unending. We look to the future that only we can achieve. As Ivar showed us, history does not long entrust the care of freedom to the weak or the timid.' LaHayn gently returned to the smooth, careful cadence of his earlier words. 'Each of you shares in the greatest glory of them all – you are the truly virtuous. We, who are ruthless to those who oppose our vision, masters of those we defeat, unflinching in the face of adversity. I pity all those who are not born beneath our skies; for they will never know the touch of righteousness as we do.' The crowd roared their approval, and LaHayn gave them a fatherly smile. 'The path we have chosen is not an easy one. Struggle is the parent of all things and true virtue lies in bloodshed. But we will not tire, we will not falter, we will not fail. In the blood of our children comes the price we must pay. Blood alone moves the



wheels of history, and we will be resolute, we will fear no sacrifice, and surmount every difficulty to win our just destiny! Redemption is within your grasp; the Emperor rewards His children who show courage and fidelity, just as He rejects those without it!’ The amphitheatre exploded with sound, cheers peeling off the walls and booming across the city in waves of sound. Across Noroc and across the planet, the priest-lord’s sermon reached the ears of Neva’s faithful and they loved him for it.



The sword cut in Ivar’s chest never healed. In honour of his great courage, Saint Celestine released him from his obligation to her and bid him to return to Neva, there to serve the will of the God-Emperor among his people. From that day until the end of his life, Ivar’s holy wound never closed, and despite the constant agony it brought him, he wore it as a badge of honour. It was said that those anointed with a drop of blood from Ivar’s cut were blessed, and the bandages with which he wrapped it were held to this day as sacred relics. Ivar rose to the rank of lord deacon and founded the construction of the great Lunar Cathedral; his legacy of willing sacrifice, penitence, bloodshed and pain became the foundations on which the Nevan sect of the Imperial Church stood – and with his guidance, the Blessing of the Wound took its place as the most important religious ceremony in the planet’s calendar.



Miriya and Verity stood at the lip of the gallery’s fluted balcony, watching the riot of activity at the edges of the arena. LaHayn’s hololithic image bowed and faded into the evening, a great cry rising from the audience as it went. Below, figures in all kinds of gaudy costumes were streaming out of hidden gates, forming up into ragged skirmish lines or gadding about in peculiar, directionless dances. Just beneath the level of the observation galleries, there were catwalks and gantries made of thin steel, painted in neutral shades so as not to stand out beneath the floodlamps. The Celestian and the Hospitaller could see people in grey coveralls working feverishly at cables and pulleys, making parts of the wooden sets below shift and move in time to the building hum of choral chants.

Verity blinked at the figures in the ampitheatre. ‘Those are... They are just children!’

Miriya followed her gaze toward a group of youngsters and her brow furrowed. They were clad in crude

approximations of Adepta Sororitas wargear, but made from simple cloth and cardboard instead of ceramite and flexsteel. One of the teenagers stumbled, clutching at her head to hold where wig of straw-like white hair mimicked the traditional cut of the Battle Sisters.

‘I... I saw those youths in the street, when I was travelling to the convent! Is this some sort of game?’

Miriya gave a nod. ‘The Games of Penance, as they are known. A reconstruction of great events from Saint Celestine’s Wars of Faith. I have never seen them myself...’

‘Look, there,’ Verity pointed, ‘Do you see those players on the stage? What are they supposed to be?’

‘Eldar,’ Miriya observed, recognising the rudimentary capes and plumes adorning the fake armour of the actors. ‘They are playing at the battle for Kodiak Prime, or something like it.’ She failed to keep a grimace from her face. The whole performance was a caricature, a ridiculous spectacle that might have been comic if she had not found it so offensive. Miriya had faced the xenos in battle, and the eldar she had fought were terrifying, deadly killers full of powerful grace and unstoppable speed – these moronic mimics in the ampitheatre were blundering jesters in comparison, exaggerated and simplistic parodies of the real thing.

The crowd did not share her low opinion, however. The locals were chanting and whooping, spinning celebratory banners over their heads or letting off small screamer fireworks. Over the loud hailer in the stadium the opening bars of the Palatine March issued forth, and the two sides in the imitation battle rushed at one another, screaming incoherent war cries.

‘This is a mockery,’ growled Miriya.

‘It is... disturbing,’ admitted Verity, ‘but not to the Nevans. This is their way of honouring the living saint.’

The Battle Sister’s rejoinder was silenced as a clatter of gunfire rose up from the ampitheatre. Miriya gauntleted hands tensed automatically at the sound of a hundred ballistic stubbers going off in ragged procession. All of the participants in the ersatz skirmish were firing on one another; but where she had expected them to knock each other down with paint shells and powder rounds, there was the flat crackle of bullets.

‘They are using live weapons...’ As the Sister Superior watched, one of the youths dressed as a Sororitas



inexpertly discharged a salvo of shots into a boy on stubby stilts, the heavy rounds ripping through the wood and cloth imitations of eldar armour. Blood was already pooling on the arena's sands where figures from both sides had been cut down.

'Holy Terra!' gasped Verity, her hand flying to her mouth in shock.

Close by, one of the merchantmen from the cathedral clapped and let out a guffaw. 'What a magnificent effort this year! This Blessing will be one for the ages!'

Miriya rounded on him. 'They're killing each other!'

The portly man's expression shattered under the Battle Sister's leaden stare. 'But... But of course they are. That's how it is done...' He forced a smile. 'Ah, of course. Forgive me! You must both be off-worlders, yes? You are both new to Neva and the festival?'

'What kind of blessing demands you force your people to kill one another?' challenged Miriya.

'F-force?' said the merchant. 'No one is forced, honoured Sister!' He fumbled in the folds of his robes and recovered a fold of long papers from a hidden pocket. 'The participants in the reconstruction are all willing... Well, except for a few irredeemables from the reformatory and some asylum inmates.' One of the papers was a dark crimson, and he peeled it from the pack to wave it at her. 'Every citizen who received one of these dockets in the clerical lottery knows they are obligated to take part in the great re-enactment! We are all more than ready to do our part in penance!'

Miriya snatched the red paper from him. 'Then tell me, sir, why are you here and not down there?' She jerked a thumb at the melee below them.

The merchant's face coloured. 'I... I was happy to present the church with a substantial forfeit donation in my stead!'

'You bought your way out with coin? How lucky for you that your coffers are deep enough!' she sneered. 'If only others were so fortunate!'

'Now see here!' the noble retorted, attempting to maintain a level of superiority. 'Those who endure the Blessing are praised and rewarded! Our finest surgeons attend them in the aftermath, and those whose fortitude is lesser are buried with honours!'

Barely able to contain her anger, Miriya turned away, her hand dropping unconsciously to the grip of her holstered plasma pistol. The sound and fury of the confrontation set her teeth on edge, triggering old, ingrained battle instincts.

'Celestine! *Celestine!*' The cry came from one of the merchant's retinue, and the name was picked up and repeated by the crowd.

From a hidden hatch in the walls of the cathedral, a winged figure in gold emerged to fly over the amphitheatre, swooping like a bird of prey.



Verity watched the girl garbed as the living saint race over the blood-stained sands, a fat set of pulley-wheels in the small of her back connected by glassy cables to a rig on the suspended catwalks. The grey-suited workers pulled at levers and tugged spindles to work her like a puppet, and in turn her wings of paper feathers fluttered and snapped through the air. A heavy brass halo hung about her head, decorated with yellowish biolumines, and secured to one hand by tethers she had an oversized replica of the Celestine's blessed weapon, the Ardent Blade. A dispenser tucked under her waist spat out a stream of paper slips, each one printed with a devotional message and a tithe voucher. People in the crowds tussled and snatched at the air trying to pull them from the night winds.

The psuedo-saint fell low and her sword clipped the heads and torsos of a dozen men in eldar costume. The blade was just for show and too blunt to sever a limb; those it struck were concussed or reeled away with broken bones.

Verity watched, and she felt queasy. It was not that she was frail or unused to the sight of spilt blood, but the malicious theatre with which this spectacle was unfolding made her uncomfortable. On the moons where she served in the wards of the hospices, there had been stories of the things done in the Emperor's name on Neva – but there were always such stories on the outer worlds, and Sister Verity was never one to place too much credence in rumour and insinuation. She wished now that she had paid greater mind. The wanton disregard for human life at play here jarred with the very core of Verity's vow to the Order of Serenity and her life's work as a Sister Hospitaller. The oath she had sworn the day she entered the Sisterhood returned to her; *first, do no harm to the Emperor's subjects. Take pain from those who revere Him, inflict it only on those who stand against His Light.*



'This is a harsh universe,' she heard the merchant remark to one of his cronies. 'It is not by chance that our church and our festival reflect the truth of that. After all, if no blood were shed this day, in what possible way could we hope to show the Emperor our devotion?'

A flurry of motion drew her eye. On the gantry a few metres below, the men in grey were panicking. Aged, overworked metal snapped with a percussive crash and cables whipped free, slashing one man across the chest and throwing another over the catwalk's rail and down to his death. The girl playing Celestine was suddenly jerked out of her pattern of flight and reeled upward like a hooked fish. The sword dangled from her fingers and in horror, Verity saw where the glass cables looped about her head and neck. If the crowds in the stands understood or even cared what had happened, the Hospitaller had no idea; but she saw clear as day the face of the costumed girl in abject terror as she started to choke.

Sister Verity reacted without conscious thought, and vaulted over the edge of the balcony. Boots scraping on stone, she slipped down the sheer face of the cathedral and landed on the catwalk. She was running to the trapped girl before she was even aware of Miriya calling after her.



The merchant and his troupe of perfumed dandies actually broke out in laughter when the Hospitaller jumped, and it took much of Miriya's self-control not to toss one of them after her. Shooting them an iron-hard glare, she followed the woman down to the gantry, shouting her name; but Verity did not seem to hear her, intent instead on the luckless girl caught up in the wires beneath the catwalk.

The workers who had not been struck insensate or dead by the broken cables were of little use, and she forced them aside. The catwalk squealed and complained beneath her every footfall, flecks of dust trickling off ancient joints. The shattered pulley mechanism lowed like a dying animal, and Miriya's hand shot out to grab a support as the decking began to tilt. The framework was rife with rust and decay.

'Verity! We are not safe here!'

The Hospitaller was already pulling the girl up. She was ashen-faced as she worked to unwind the cabling from the youth's pale, bruised neck. 'I think she may still live...'

In reply, the catwalk let out a shriek of buckling steel and listed sharply. All at once, the costumed girl fell away from Verity's grip and Miriya bounded forward to snag the Sister Hospitaller before she went along with her. Their hands met, the Battle Sister clutching a handful of Verity's robes; and then the gantry broke apart.

It was centuries old, and maintained as well as it could have been; but artisans and technicians were not the most favoured of castes on Neva and even in the ampitheatre of the Lunar Cathedral, there were never enough skilled hands to service all of the church's machinery. Steel and bodies fell from the air and crashed into the wood and fibre of the false eldar domes, straight into the middle of the arena.



Galatea's knuckles turned white where she gripped the stone balustrade. 'In Katherine's name, what is she doing?'

At her side, Sister Reiko peered through a small monocular. 'An accident, Canoness? I do not think this was intentional—'

'Now, this is an interesting development!' Governor Emmel's words cut off Reiko's speech as he approached, his retinue trailing behind him and the lord deacon at his side. 'My dear Canoness, if your Battle Sister wished to take part in the games, she had only to ask!'

'Governor, I fear that a mistake has been made,' Galatea spoke quickly, 'perhaps if you would consider a pause in the proceedings?'

Emmel made a face. 'Ah, that would not be prudent. The rules of the fête are quite clear on these matters. The re-enactment must be played out to its conclusion without interruption. There would be much discord if I tried to halt it.'

'Perhaps even a riot,' ventured Dean Venik.

The governor cupped his ear. 'Listen, Canoness. Do you hear? The people are enraptured! They must think this is some surprise performance in lieu of the witch they were promised!'

'Perhaps not a mistake after all,' added LaHayn, 'The God-Emperor moves in mysterious ways.'

Emmel nodded and clapped his hands. 'Oh, yes, yes! You may be right!' His eyes sparkled with the idea of it.



'I wonder, an actual Sister of Battle on the field? What a game that will be!'

'With respect, governor, Sister Miriya may be injured, and she was not alone! Sister Verity is merely a Hospitaller, not a combatant!' Galatea's words were intense.

LaHayn accepted this with a dismissive nod. 'I am sure the Emperor will extend to her the protection her vocation merits.'



Miriya hauled herself out of the ruins of the wooden set and winced in pain; her right arm was dislocated. Gritting her teeth, she gripped her right wrist with her left hand and yanked. A sickening snap and a moment of sharp agony resonated through the Battle Sister's frame; she shook off the pain and coughed out metallic spittle.

A groan drew her to where Verity lay. The Hospitaller was uninjured but dazed, and Miriya pulled her unsteadily to her feet.

'The... the girl...' began Verity, but she fell silent when the other woman pointed a gloved finger at the wreckage. The teenager dressed as Celestine had broken the Hospitaller's fall and rested there in an untidy heap. Sightless, dull eyes looked up into the night sky. Swallowing a sob, Verity knelt and closed the dead girl's eyelids, whispering a verse of funerary rites over her body.

The roaring of the audience crashed around them, loud as ocean breakers on a storm-tossed shore. In among the players fighting the mock battle, several of the imitation eldar had been startled by the sudden cacophony of metal that had dropped from the air, and they milled about, unsure of themselves. This close to them, Miriya could see that the weapons they bore were actually common projectile rifles and shotguns disguised to resemble the alien shuriken projectors. The Battle Sister knew the look in their eyes all too well; she had seen it before on the faces of heretic vassals and slave-troopers, on cultists whipped into frenzy by their demagogues.

'Stay close to me,' she hissed to Verity. 'They're going to fire on us.'

The Hospitaller shook her head. 'But why?'

Miriya ignored her and advanced, stepping off the pile

of wreckage and holding up one hand, palm flat in a warding gesture. 'We have no part in your games,' she said aloud, in a clear, level voice, 'Stand aside.'

The costumed men were all dressed in the same warped outfits, so it was unclear if there were any ranks or hierarchy among them. They shot nervous glances at the women and at each other. Miriya saw a path she could take, up and behind the wreckage of the stage to where the gates in the arena walls would lead to safety.

'Don't run,' she whispered. 'If we run, they'll attack.'

'They're just ordinary people,' insisted Verity, 'they're not really xenos!'

Miriya made eye contact with one of the alien-attired men, catching sight of his gaze through the triangular slits in his plumed helmet. 'That doesn't matter.'

She saw the thought forming in his mind before the man was even aware of it, her hand tearing away the peace-bond ribbon wrapped around her pistol holster. A dozen camouflaged weapons came about to bear on them and Miriya shoved Verity out of the firing line, her gun clearing its leather as shot and shell spat into the air.

'Death to the humans!' The call exploded from the lips of the false eldar, and the crowd watching them roared once again.

Automatic training borne from decades of hard, unswerving service in the name of the Emperor took over; Miriya's gun barked, the ear-splitting shriek of superheated plasma bolts drowning out the dull rattle of lead shot. It became a rout, every trigger-pull marking a critical hit, no single charge from the energy pistol wasted as the costumed men screamed and died. Paper and cloth in garish oranges and greens were stained with dark arterial crimson. Helmets made out of softwood splintered and broke.

The Battle Sister heard the pellets clattering off her power armour, as ineffectual as hailstones against the black ceramite sheath. A chance ricochet nicked a line of stinging pain across her cheek and she ignored it, turning and firing again in a single fluid motion.

When all the assailants lay dead or bleeding their last into the dust, Miriya closed her eyes and prayed for silence; but she was denied it, the air about her filled to overflowing with the deafening adulation of the congregation.



Verity grabbed at her arm and turned her about. The Hospitaller was furious. 'You didn't need to kill them!' she shouted, her voice barely audible above the crowd, 'Why did you do that?'

The other players in the reconstruction were gathering to them, pathetic remnants in their tattered and bloody costumes. Some dragged injured comrades with them, other limped and showed wounds that were wet and ragged. Miriya shook off Verity's grip with an angry snarl and jerked her chin at the penitents. 'Help them.'

The Hospitaller left her there and took to ripping bandages from torn robes. Miriya surveyed the dead arranged around her, Verity's question ringing in her mind. What madness was this, that these people would force her to end their lives, all in the name of a brutal game? There were other ways to show devotion to the Golden Throne that did not require such a wasteful sacrifice. Was life valued so little on Neva?

The vox speakers struck up again with a fresh barrage of song, beginning with a stern rendition of the grand hymnal from Enoch's Castigations. Miriya cast her gaze upward, searching the dark sky for some sign, some explanation. Her thoughts were a churn of confusion, a state that was unacceptable for a Sister of Battle. Her skin crawled, and she found that all she wanted at this moment was to purify herself with a purgatory oil and take prayer in the convent's chapel. *What cursed luck has brought me to this madhouse?* she asked herself.

A handful of bright dots crossed the night above the amphitheatre, moving with purpose and great speed toward the towering Lunar Cathedral. Just as it had moments before when she locked gazes with the gunmen, Miriya's honed combat sense rang a warning in her mind. 'Aircraft,' she said aloud, 'in an attack formation.'

As if they had been waiting for her to voice her thoughts, the flyers suddenly split apart and swept away in pairs toward different points of the compass. The closest duo dipped low and came into the nimbus of the floating lamp-blimps; they were coleopters, vessels with a ring-shaped fuselage enclosing a large spinning fan that kept them airborne. The unmistakable shapes of boxy weapons pods hung on stubby winglets.

No alarm cry would have warned the people in the crowds, and they watched the flyers with disbelief, perhaps believing them to be yet another surprise addition to the Games of Penance. But in the next second panic and terror rose up in a wave as fountains of firebombs spat from the coleopters and fell in orange

trails toward the stadium. Everywhere they landed, great balls of black smoke and yellow flame bloomed, immolating hundreds. The aircraft wove through the mayhem they seeded, strafing the panicked people, while above them another lone ship dropped out of sight on the Tier of Greatest Piety. Whoever these killers were, they were landing men on the upper levels of the church tower.

Lasers lanced out of the observation galleries, questing after the darting ships and missing; Miriya assumed the shots were being fired by the gun servitors she had seen serving the nobles earlier. She swore a gutter oath recalled from her childhood. How in Terra's name had such a thing been allowed to happen? Were the planetary defence forces stationed in Noroc so lax that any terrorist could idle into the city's airspace unchallenged?

Unbidden, another, darker thought rose to the surface of her mind. Was this also some other part of Neva's dogma of atonement and suffering, a random attack thrown at the innocent as some kind of penance? She shook the idea away and sprinted toward the arena's edge, where elevator cages would carry her back up to the galleries of the cathedral.

Verity came after her. 'Where are you going?'

'To fight a real enemy!' she retorted. 'You may join me, if you can stomach it!'

## CHAPTER SIX

The men of the Noroc city watch would later report that the terrorist coleopters had come from the south and the west, flying in the nap of the earth along valleys or over the scudding white tops of shallow waves. Too low to the ground for detection by conventional sensors, hulls daubed with black paint and running lights blinded, the aircraft threaded into the air over Noroc and went about their business. In the throes of the festival, where sacramental wines were flowing freely and hymns were blotting out the sound of everything else, there were not many eyes turned from their devotions to maintain watchfulness. In the days that followed, the Adeptus Arbites would have its hands full, in both matters of arrest and punishment as well as purging its own officers guilty of inattention.

A good percentage of the men in the flyers had been to Noroc; some had even been born there. All of them were chosen because they knew the city well enough to wound it. Torris Vaun had gathered them all in the hold



of a chilly, echoing transport barge as they crossed the coastal waters, goading them into readiness. Some of these men brought their own codes and morals to the fight, with big talk of striking against the moneyed theocrats in the name of the people; but most of them, like Vaun himself, were in the game for the fire and the havoc. They wanted anarchy for the sport of it, because they thrived on it.

The rockets dropped from the coleopters were stolen from Imperial Guard regiments, elderly area denial munitions pilfered from bunkers where they waited for rebellions and uprisings that never came; until now. The warheads broke open in bright plumes that made miniature daybreaks wherever they struck; and where people did not die from smoke and flame, they smothered each other in panic.



The air inside the Lunar Cathedral was hot with terror. Many of the nobles had fled to the lower levels to find their carriages and draymen destroyed by explosion and firestorm, and they milled about and became frantic, some of them starting small scuffles amongst one another as their frustrations boiled over. On the higher levels, in the vaulted space of the chapel proper and the galleries that ranged above it, barons and upper echelon priests took to gathering in small, terrified packs with their gun servitors surrounding them, bleakly waiting for invasion, destruction or salvation.

The flyer that approached the Tier of the Greatest Piety executed a running touch-and-go, its wheels barely kissing the careworn granite for ten seconds before it took off again, thrusting away to enter a wide, lazy orbit of the conical tower. It left behind a squad of rag-tag men with no single uniform or look to them. All that united these killers was a callous, predatory anticipation, that and the automatic loyalty they showed to their leader.

Vaun dropped a pair of battered night vision goggles from his eyes and pointed with both hands. 'Get in there, and make some trouble.'

The men obeyed with harsh laughter and ready violence.

Rink jogged to keep up with him. 'We gonna kill them here, then?'

'Patience,' replied the other man, 'it's a nice evening. We'll see how things play out, eh?'

The big thug's eyes glittered. 'I wanna do the priest.'

Vaun shot him a hard look. 'Oh no. That one's for me. I owe him.' The criminal's hand strayed to an old, hateful scar beneath his right ear. 'But don't worry, I've got something in mind for you.'



The rattling cage was little more than a basket of steel mesh, but it clambered doggedly up the stone wall of the cathedral, cogged teeth picking their way along past oval service hatches cast from fans of brassy leaves. Oil and sparks spat at them as the elevator slowed and halted, presenting them to the observation level. Miriya came through the hatch leading with her pistol, and Verity was close behind, virtually throwing herself out of the lift. The clattering machine seemed to have unnerved the Hospitaller – and after the accident with the falling catwalk, it was perhaps no surprise that she was newly afraid of Neva's ill-maintained mechanisms.

There were bodies. Mostly they were servitors, and by the pattern of the kill shots they had been targeted by weapons aimed from a moving platform beyond the balconies. Miriya recognised the distinctive wound patterns of shells from Navy-issue heavy bolters; the bodyguards had died under the guns of the coleopter as it strafed the tower with random cascades of fire. With a degree of delicacy that seemed out of place among the carnage, Verity stepped lightly over the bodies of a few aristocrats, giving each a murmured prayer verse.

The Celestian saw one of the perfumed women they had crossed earlier in the evening; her only bouquet now was the copper of spilt blood. 'Sister, how many times have you given last rites?' The question came from nowhere.

Verity gave her an odd look. 'There was once a time when I kept a count. I decided to stop when the number brought me to tears.'

'Take comfort then that those you attended are at the Emperor's side now.'

The Hospitaller gestured to the dead servitors. 'But not all.'

'No,' agreed Miriya, 'not all.'

From the inner halls of the gallery at the back of the platform a figure approached, a sharp-edged shadow where the dying glow of broken biolumines struck it. 'Stand and be recognised!' called a voice.



Miriya returned a nod. 'Sister Isabel, is that you?'

Isabel emerged into the flickering light cast from the fires down in the amphitheatre, throwing the screaming crowds a cursory look. 'Sister Superior, it's good to see you're still with us! The Canoness bid me to scout this tier for any fresh threats, but these cloisters are like a maze...'

'Where are the other Battle Sisters?'

'Below in the chapel. It is pandemonium in there. The cathedral has been compromised. Invaders are abroad.'

'I saw their aircraft land,' agreed Miriya. 'Not a large ship. Less than ten men, I'd warrant.'

'Very likely, but we have barely that number of able fighters here-' A crashing salvo of bolt fire from the floors below them cut into Isabel's words and her eyes went wide.

The Sister Superior spoke into the vox pickup on her armour's neck ring. 'This is Sister Miriya, report! Who is firing?'

'He's here!' Galatea snarled in her ear bead speaker. 'Vaun! Warp curse him, the witch is here!'



Across the mosaic floor of the chapel the fleeing, shrieking nobles fled back and forth, clouding Galatea's line of sight and that of every other Battle Sister in the chamber. Fallen braziers knocked askew in the panic had set light to tapestries as old as the city itself, filling the vaulted chamber with thick, choking smoke. The Canoness wished that she had ordered her women to bring their helmets; the optical matrix of Sabbat-pattern Sororitas headgear had a full-spectrum capacity that would render the darkest clouds transparent. But then, they had not expected to face a terrorist attack on this, the most sacred of Neva's holidays, and by the order of the High Ecclesiarch they had only been allowed to carry token weapons into the house of the God-Emperor.

She glimpsed Vaun and his killers as they moved and fired; they had no need to pick their targets, discharging streams of stubber rounds into silk-clad torsos, firing without aiming. Behind her, the floating illuminator that dominated the centre of the chapel took a shot in the heart and exploded, showering her with glass fragments and curls of hot brass.

'The governor!' she snapped. 'Where is he?' It did not occur to her to ask after the Ecclesiarch; Lord LaHayn was more able to defend himself than the fragile politician ever could be. Years in service to the church had taught LaHayn how to fight against the enemies of order. But Emmel... He was another case entirely. Born of Neva's best noble stock, he fancied himself a man of action but the reality was far less flattering. He was a peacock among peacocks, as much as he played at being a hawk, and certainly no match for a killer of Torris Vaun's calibre.

Sister Portia was close by, clearing a fouled cartridge in her bolter. The ritual cloth of ceremony that chapel law required she wrap about her gun had tangled in the mechanism, stopping her from shooting back at the attackers. 'I last saw the governor in the company of Baron Sherring, a moment before the firing started.'

Galatea's adjutant, Sister Reiko, nodded. 'Aye. The baron and his retinue were making for the east terrace.' She was armed only with an ornate dress sword, and chafed at being pinned down by the terrorist weapons, unable to return fire.

The Canoness saw motion as some of Vaun's men dug themselves in behind the ranks of heavy oaken pews. The psyker himself was disappearing into a side corridor. 'He must be stopped! Miriya, do you hear me? Vaun is on the loose inside the tower! He may be moving toward the upper tiers!'

As if it were drawn by the sound of her voice, gunfire came her way, clipping at the ancient mosaics in the floor near Galatea's feet.



'Quickly, quickly!' snapped Emmel, his hands darting around the folds of his brocade coat. His spindly fingers clutched at a small, fat orb of gold inlaid with ruby studs; the device was a holdout needler pistol from the defunct workshops of the Isher Studio, an antique that dated back to the thirty-ninth millennium. Passed down during the generations, the governor had only killed with it once in his life, when he had accidentally shot a playmate at the age of eleven. The sense of the object in his hand made clear the understanding of how dangerous his situation was. He barked out more commands to a duo of his elite guardsmen and they in turn shoved forward past Baron Sherring's gaggle of lackeys, pushing through the people blocking the corridor.

'Please, governor,' said Sherring, an arch lilt to his voice,



'my flyer is just a little further. It will be my honour to convey you away from this fracas.'

'Yes, yes, hurry up!' Privately, Emmel was already entertaining the idea of leaving the ambitious baron on the landing terrace and taking his aircraft to flee to the safety of the impregnable Governmental Citadel. Unless the men sowing chaos throughout Noroc had stoneburners, he would be totally protected there.

'Such luck,' piped one of Sherring's friends, 'such good grace that you thought to bring an aeronef with you, my dear Holt.'

'Indeed,' said the baron. 'Lucky.'

The clanking servitor leading them through the warren of passageways turned a corner and scraped to a juddering halt that sent everyone behind it scattering. There was scarce illumination in these narrow cloisters, but the governor's eyesight was keen enough to see the liquid arc of something thick and oily spurt from the machine-slave's neck. A sound like a sack of wet meal being torn open accompanied it; the servitor gave a peculiar ululating wail and sank to its knees.

'Back!' called Emmel's guardsman. 'Get back, sir!'

New shapes emerged around the corner, jamming the corridor with blades and guns. At their head was the witch.

'Good evening, gentlefolk,' he grinned. 'Ivar's blessing be on you all. I am afraid your flight has been cancelled. An accident with fire has occurred.'

'Kill him!' Emmel shouted, somewhat redundantly as his men were already firing.

There was a horrible moment when the air about Torris Vaun's body bowed and lensed like heat haze, and fizzing spurts of molten lead spat away from him. Vaun raised a hand in a blasé wave and the two guardsmen began to twitch and scream. Emmel had personally chosen these two from the ranks of his private sentry force for their devotion and fortitude, but that counted for nothing as he watched them die on their feet. Heat radiated from them, along with the burnt-skin smell of overcooked meat. Thin plumes of fatty smoke streamed from their nostrils and mouths, while the decorative festival ribbons in their hair and beards caught fire in puffs of ignition. Swelling with internal combustion, the guards dropped to the stone floor, burning from the inside out.

Some of Sherring's retinue fled, and they were burned down by the men who followed Vaun. The baron and his closest companion stumbled backward, bumping into the horror-struck governor. Emmel was jerked from his shock and fumbled with the orb-gun. It had been so long, he couldn't remember how to use it.

Vaun came closer. 'You don't dare harm me!' Emmel bleated. 'I am a supreme agent of the Emperor's—'

The psyker killed Sherring's pale-faced friend with a needle of yellow flame, the psi-discharge punching the body away down the corridor. He seemed to relish it.

There was a big man at Vaun's back and he nodded at the baron with a strange little grin on his face. 'What about this one?'

Sherring blinked and his mouth worked in silence. Vaun leaned in close to the baron and gave him a look over, as if the noble was a helot on the auction block for purchase. He brought up the still-flaming tips of his fingers and touched them to Sherring's sweaty cheek. The wet skin sizzled and the baron bit back a cry of anger and pain.

'Just a small fish,' Vaun smirked; then with a sudden savage rush, he clubbed Sherring about the head and left him sprawled on the floor.

The big man took the inert holdout gun from Emmel's fingers and tossed it away. 'I am very rich,' said the governor. 'I'll can pay you a lot of money.'

Vaun nodded. 'I don't doubt it.' He nodded to the other man. 'Rink, take his lordship up to the tier and wait. Raise Ignis on the vox and tell him we're going to pull out. I want the other ships departing in the next ten minutes.'

'And you?'

He glanced back over his shoulder. 'I've come all this way. I can't leave without paying my respect to the lord deacon.'

Emmel tried to resist the big man's iron grip. 'I will not go with you!'

In reply, Rink gave him a careless shove and the governor slammed into the stone wall. He stumbled, dazed and bleeding.





LaHayn propelled himself up to the chapel's pulpit. Smoke hung in thick drifts at head height, masking the disorder spreading around the chamber. The priest-lord drew in a deep breath of tainted air and roared into the vox set into the golden angel on the podium's crest.

'Do not have fear! Heed me, my friends! Discord is what these brutes want from us, do not give them their desire!' Some of the speakers secreted in gargoyles on the walls were still functioning, and they carried his words about the chapel like low thunder. 'Rally to the altar here, let the noble guardsmen and the steadfast Sisters of Battle be our shield and sword!'

The aristocrats were a fickle lot, but every one of them had been attending LaHayn's weekly sermons here for years, and his words of command were enough to break through their terror and be acted upon. He ignored the grimace that Canoness Galatea shot at him, and from the corner of his eye he saw the Battle Sister snap out orders to the handful of surviving bodyguards, gun servitors and her own Sororitas warriors. A desultory rattle of bolt fire echoed through the chapel from the far nave, lost behind the grey fumes. The attackers had broken off for the moment, probably regrouping.

'All we need do is keep faith and hold, my friends!' he told the congregation. 'Even as I speak, detachments of Adeptus Arbites and Imperial Guard are on their way here to rescue you.' In fact, Lord LaHayn had no way of knowing if that were true or not – but the Lunar Cathedral represented the greatest concentration of Nevan nobility on the planet, and he expected – he *demand*ed – nothing less than full might of the military to be turned to the matter of their protection.

Beneath his pulpit, the nervous barony and titled aristocrats clustered in his shadow, around the wrecked tables where earlier there had been piles of the finest foods and rarest liquors. Some of the fountains still frothed and bubbled with heady, pungent wines.

'They're coming,' LaHayn caught Galatea's words at the edge of his hearing. 'Stay alert!'

'Have faith in the Golden Throne!' shouted LaHayn. 'The Emperor protects!' From the depths of the smoke, the priest saw shapes moving, and a voice he had hoped never to hear again came with them, mocking and insolent.

'The Emperor protects?' said Vaun, 'Not here, He doesn't. Not *tonight*.'

Rink threw Emmel to the floor and placed a large booted foot upon his neck. 'You try to run, and I'm gonna break you, ponce.' The governor whimpered something but Rink didn't care to listen. He raised a small vox transmitter to his lips. 'Ig? Ig, you little firebug, are you hearing me?' He glanced around the Tier of the Greatest Piety, at the dead servitors and smashed machinery. All about the bowl-shaped terrace were glowing threads of smoke from the cathedral below.

After a couple of seconds there came a reply, laden with the crackle of interference. 'Bit busy as the moment. Wait. Wait.' On the night air Rink's ears caught the distant concussion of something very large and very flammable combusting, somewhere in the heart of the city. Over the static-choked channel Ignis gave a wordless sigh of rapture. 'Better. What is it?'

'Playtime is over. Vaun wants us to start heading home.'

'Aw. So soon? I was just warming up.'

Rink sniffed. 'You know what he said. Main event's still to come.'

'Yeah,' Ignis didn't sound happy. 'I'm doing it. We lost one 'copter over the jackyards but that's all. I'll pass word. Hold tight, Rink. I'm coming to you.'

'Don't make me wait.' He flicked off the device and dropped it in a pocket.

Emmel sniffed and tried to move. 'Please, listen to me. Let me speak a language you will understand. Money.'

Rink showed crooked teeth. 'Oh aye. Go on then.'

'I can pay you...'

'How much? A thousand in gold? Ten thousand? Million?'

'Yes!' The governor squirmed.

'Got it on you?' Rink bent low and spoke to Emmel's face. 'Right now?'

'Uh. Well, no, but...'

'Outta luck, then.'

'I do not want to die!' wailed the nobleman.

'And I don't want to be poor,' smirked Rink. 'You can see the nuisance of it.'





'Even gold will turn black in hands as corrupted as yours!'

Rink spun at the shouted words, grasping for his gun. 'Aw, warpsht!'



Miriya stepped slowly across the terrace, her plasma pistol aimed at the big man. From the corner of her eye she saw Isabel doing the same. Verity hung back in the archway, trying to keep out of sight. 'Listen to me,' said the Celestian, 'you are bound by law to stand down and surrender Governor Emmel. Release him or die.'

'And then what? You'll let me go on my way, like, with a kiss on the cheek?' He dragged Emmel to his feet, using the man like a human shield. 'No, you get lost, doxy, else I ventilate this runt!'

'This is your last chance,' said Isabel. 'Your one opportunity to accept the Emperor's light or die in its shadow.'

Rink's face creased with anger. 'What? What does that mean, eh? Ruttin' churchies, I hate ya! But you can't beat Rink now, can ya? Can ya?' With a roar, he threw Emmel at the edge of the tier and fired at Isabel with his laser. Miriya vaulted into a dive, rolling hard on one shoulder. She was dimly aware of her Battle Sister trading fire with the thug, but her attention was on Emmel, sliding across blood-slick stone toward a drop that would smash him against the amphitheatre floor far below. Her gun discarded in her headlong flight, she fell upon the governor as he slipped over the edge and caught a handful of his heavy coat in her hands.

Emmel's jacket ripped; but it held enough to keep him hanging there, suspended hundreds of metres above the burning stadium. The muscles in her arms bunching, Miriya dragged him back up. The effort of it dazed her, and she cast around.

Isabel had fallen against a dead servitor; she seemed injured. Miriya could not see Verity anywhere... and the big man...

She rolled on to her back as fresh wreathes of smoke coiled over the terrace, and the criminal was there, leering over her.

He fell on her with a bone-crushing impact, slamming her against the inside of her ceramite armour. Miriya's teeth rattled in her head and she tasted copper in her mouth.

A grinning face, breath stinking of tabac, pressed into hers. She struggled against him; he was twice her size and all of it was hard, packed muscle. The sheer weight of the man was enough to force the breath from her lungs.

'Give Rink a kiss, little Sister,' he hissed, licking her cheek. 'Come on. Kiss kiss.'

Her punches to his ribs and groin brought grunts of pain but nothing more. Rink's eyes narrowed and he surrounded her throat with thick hands big enough to crush her skull between them. She could not pant or gasp; he was going to kill her with her own silence. Miriya tried to dislodge his hands without success.

'Heh,' he smirked, 'no sermons for me now, eh?'

Rink bent forward to lick her again, and with the last of her effort, the Celestian butted him in the nose. She felt the big man's bone crack and blood spurt, but it seemed to do little more than annoy him. Rink's grip tightened still further and the colour drained from Miriya's vision. Everything changed to a gauzy, charcoal sketch, becoming grey and distorted.

A woolly, indistinct noise like the bark of a dog reached her ears, and then Rink rolled off her. It took a long moment for Miriya to realise that there was sticky, wet matter coating her face and torso. She sat up and unceremoniously used her robes to mop the thick offal away. The Battle Sister shook off her daze and realised that Rink, lying there on the tier next to her, was without his head.

Verity emerged from the haze with Isabel's bolter in her hands, vapour coiling from the barrel. The gun seemed very wrong in her grip, the shape of it there almost obscene against the virginal white of the Hospitaller's garb.

'Is he...?'

'Dead?' Miriya got to her feet with a wince. 'I should think so.' She staggered a little and Verity put the gun aside to steady her. 'Where is Sister Isabel?'

'Wounded.' Verity did not look away from the headless man.

'Is this the first time you have taken a life, Sister?'

'I...' Her eyes were glassy and hollow, her gaze locked on the corpse. 'I have given the Emperor's Peace to those who need it many times... But never... I have never...'



'Never killed with a weapon in your hand, in the heat of battle?' Miriya coughed and spat. 'Fortunate for me then that you show some aptitude for it. A little to the left and that shot would have found me, not him.' With gentle force, the Celestian guided her away to where Governor Emmel lay on the stonework.

On more familiar ground, Verity became efficient and quick of hand, using an auspex-like device to divine the man's well being, touching him to feel a pulse. She frowned. 'We cannot take him from this place, Sister. He has internal injuries that will worsen if we move him.'

We can't leave him here, it's not safe.'

'You should summon a rescue flyer to recover him, take him to a hospice. Unless a surgeon sees to him, he could perish.' The Hospitaller nodded in the direction of the cathedral. 'Go for help. I will remain here. I can keep him stable.'

Dragging her injured leg as she walked, a pale-faced Isabel approached them. 'She is right, Sister Superior. The psyker witch is still loose in the tower. While we tarry here, his every breath is an affront to the God-Emperor.'

'Can you fight?' said Miriya, eyeing her.

'Need you ask?' Isabel glanced at the bloody laser wound on a thigh. 'A mere flea bite. It appears worse than it is.'

'Then what of you?' Sister Miriya turned back to Verity. 'You won't catch Vaun unawares like his lummo here. You can't engage him.'

The Hospitaller gave her a defiant look. 'Then be quick, and I will have no need to.'

Miriya accepted that with a nod, and then recovered the dead thug's lasgun. 'Take this,' she said, handing it to Verity. 'Use it if you must.'

'But you said I would not be able to fight Vaun.'

The Celestian shook her head. 'There are only two charges left in the weapon. If Vaun comes, I would suggest you use them to grant the Emperor's Peace to the good governor here and yourself.' She gathered up her fallen plasma pistol and walked away. 'It is a better fate than letting that beast lay open your mind.'

The witch melted out of the mist choking the chapel with bubbles of burning air dancing about his fingers. He tossed streamers of fire at the aristocrats and swept them around, using them as a Repentia Mistress would a neural whip. Wherever the flames touched skin or cloth, people were instantly flashed into screeching torches, and behind Vaun came his men, spreading further the touch of witchfire.

'Here they come!' Galatea snapped, 'All guns to bear!' She led the Sisters in a quick subvocalised litany, each of them murmuring prayers of blessing to their firearms.

Portia brought up her bolter and Reiko – who had liberated a clumsy ornamental rifle from a dead honour guard – did as she ordered, but the gun servitors and the other men at arms fell apart in a rout. The servitors, too slow of brain to react with anything other than brute reflex, marched into Vaun's firecasts and burnt to death standing up. Internal ammunition magazines cooked off in wailing cracks of sound as limbs and torsos were shattered. The bodyguards and sentries lost their nerve when they were confronted by a psyker of Vaun's deadly prowess, breaking ranks and making themselves perfect targets for his men.

Fire-streaks buzzed past Galatea's head like hoverflies, humming and slow in the melee. The Battle Sisters had come with little to replenish their weapons, and where Vaun's killers fired for effect, the Canoness and her fighters paced their shots. Each had to be certain death for the target; they could not afford to spend more than one precious bolt shell on each attacker.

Vaun's flame-whips guttered out and the psyker dropped low, masking himself and minimising his target silhouette. An eerie glow cast about from the witchkin's eyes; Galatea had seen the like before on those kissed by Chaos or touched by the sign of the mutant.

'By Katherine's heart, what is he doing?' Portia hesitated, trying and failing to get a good firing angle on the crouching man.

From behind her where the liquor fountains gurgled and frothed, Galatea heard the squeal of building pressure and a rush of hot bubbles. Suddenly she understood. 'Get down! Get down!' she shouted, throwing herself into Portia and Reiko.

Vaun released a 'Ha!' of effort and threw a spear of psionic force into the wine drums. Superheated by his mindfire, the volatile alcohols combusted and shattered





their wood and iron kegs. With a whoop of air, the atomised liquids turned a pocket of atmosphere into an inferno. A miniature tidal wave of burning Nevan whiskey and foaming spice wine threw itself across the cowering nobles. The searing flood boiled them red and screaming, the agony of it so fierce that some of the merchants died instantly from the touch.



LaHayn clung to the pulpit as it rocked and sank into the burning tide around it. Before him, striding across the flaming pool without a hint of discomfort, Vaun met his eyes and gave the priest a theatrically contrite bow of the head.

'Forgive me, father, for I have sinned.' The last word was drawn out and sibilant, turning into a harsh smile. 'Hello, Viktor. I'm willing to bet that this isn't how you had imagined things would go when we met again.' With a callous kick, he shoved a wailing noblewoman out of his path. 'It's time for you to reap the whirlwind, old man.'

'You will regret your arrogance, creature!' spat the priest. 'I will see to it!'

Vaun snorted. 'You?' He opened his arms. 'Look around, Viktor. The wastrels you surrounded yourself with are dead or dying. Even your precious Sororitas lie defeated by me.' He pointed at the spot where Galatea and the other women lay wounded and unmoving. 'Meet your end with some decorum, dear teacher. If you ask me nicely, I may even let you spout off some prayers first to your precious god.'

'You dare not speak the name of the Lord of Man!' LaHayn's rage rolled across his aspect in a dark thunderhead. 'Pirate! Petty thief and brigand! Your tiny mind lacks even the smallest inkling of my unity with Him!' The ecclesiarch stabbed an accusing finger at the psyker. 'You could have been great, Torris! You could have known glory the likes of which have not been seen in ten thousand years! But now you are fit only for exploitation, to die remembered only as an anarchist and criminal!'

Vaun let out a laugh. 'And who will kill me, you decrepit fool?' He drew back his hands and cupped the air between them. The molecules of smoke and haze he held there flickered and condensed, catching fire. 'This ridiculous monument of yours will be your funeral pyre

– and once you are ashes I'll plunder your dirty little secrets for myself!'

He was close enough now, reasoned the priest. Close enough to be certain. 'I think not, child,' said LaHayn, and from his voluminous sleeves he produced an ornamental box that ended in a finely tooled argentium muzzle. He squeezed the device and it shrieked, projecting a mid-calibre bolt shell at the witch's chest. The recoil from the weapon was so strong it almost broke the priest's wrist; but the gun was just the means to deliver the shell to the target. The bolt itself was not the typical carbide-fusion matrix bullet that issued forth from countless Astartes and Sororitas weapons – the very matter of the round was impregnated with psionic energy, culled from the minds of dying heretics. Each molecule of it reeked with mental anguish, pain and psychic terror imprinted on the shell down to the atomic level. These munitions were very rare, but Lord Viktor LaHayn had taken a long time to build up the position he now held, and along the way many such items had come into his possession.

The psycannon bolt struck Torris Vaun in the chest, tearing through the heat-wards that had turned the lesser shots of other men, and spent its massive kinetic energy punching through the flexsteel armour of his battle vest. The impact threw him back into the puddles of burning liquor, ripples of contained psy-force licking around him, fading. He coughed hard and brought up a mist of blood.

'Fool,' growled the priest. 'Did you think I would go about unprepared when I knew that you were on the loose?' He holstered the spent weapon, massaging his throbbing wrist. 'Now I will have the prisoner I promised for this day.' LaHayn glanced down as Miriya and Isabel entered the chamber, guns questing for a target. 'What perfect timing,' he remarked. 'Here, sisters. Here is your witch, ready for the cages—'

A whooshing jet of fire erupted from where Vaun had fallen, pushing the criminal back to his feet. Curls of heat enveloped him and he bared his teeth, chewing on new pain. 'Well played, Viktor,' spat the psyker. 'But I'm not beaten just yet.'

LaHayn's world went red as the pulpit burst into flames about him.

**Continued next month**



# INSIDE THE STUDIO

**A**s you read these words some time in Spring 2020, the Warhammer Studio is wrapping things up for Christmas 2019. But as busy as everyone is, that doesn't mean they haven't had time to play some games and paint some miniatures. The dwarfers have been embroiled in their first Warcry campaign and are already painting new miniatures for their warbands. Several members of the team are also building and painting models for the *White Dwarf* Space Marines Chapter – the Tome Keepers (more on that next issue). The majority of the studio (including Matt, Sophie, Jonathan and Lyle), however, are midway through a Warhammer 40,000 army-painting challenge. Hopefully we'll find some space in an upcoming issue to show off what everyone's been up to!



## THE GOLDEN GROGGS

These gold-clad Ironjawz were painted by Pete McMullins so that he could use them in games of Warcry. His Megaboss, Grogg, loves fighting Stormcast Eternals and, it's rumoured, wants to become one. He's now forged himself a suit of armour out of scavenged sigmarite, and his boyz have done the same. Pete painted them using Retributor Armour, a wash of Reikland Fleshshade, then a layer of Auric (or should that be orruk?) Armour Gold.



## BLOOD AND GLORY

Studio editor Jon Flindall attended a Blood and Glory tournament in Derby last year with his Cities of Sigmar force from Tempest's Eye. He painted the whole army, including a host of Demi-gryph Knights, in just four weeks using Contrast paints. Nice work, Jon!





As we come to the end of the magazine, we take a look at the games people have been playing and the models they've been painting in the studio over the past month. This issue: Planes, trumpets, griffons, golden orruks and a trio of Wraithlords. Bosh!

### THE T'AU EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

Matt, Lyle and Jonathan have all been painting aircraft for Aeronautica Imperialis, but so far Dan hasn't got involved. Until now, that is! Following the release of Skies of Fire, Dan got his little blue hands on some of the new T'au aircraft. These three Barracudas are the first ones he's painted. He

equipped them all with rail guns 'because they're clearly the best gun' and painted them in the purple and blue colour scheme of his D'yanoi Sept T'au army for Warhammer 40,000. He's already planning to paint some larger aircraft. But what could they be ...?



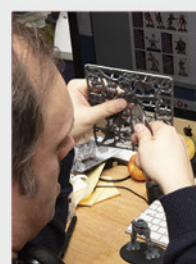
### THE SOUL WARS CONTINUE

This Lord-Celestant and Knight-Heraldor were painted by Louis Aguilar for his Stormcast Eternals army. The colour scheme was inspired by the cover art on the *Soul Wars* novel. The armour is painted Leadbelcher, then washed with Nuln Oil and highlighted Stormhost Silver. The gold is painted with Retributor Armour, Reikland Fleshshade and Sigmarite.



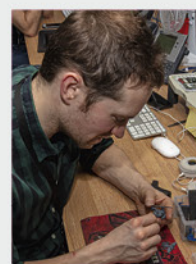
## WHAT'S GOING ON?

The team behind *White Dwarf* are always engaged in hobby activities behind the scenes. Here's what some of them have been up to recently.



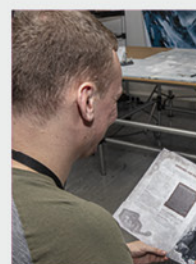
#### MATT

Surprise surprise, Matt's been building Titans again. But this one's different – it's got a massive cannon sticking out of its back! Could it be the fabled Warbringer Nemesis Titan perhaps?



#### DAN

Dan's desk is covered in sprues, as he's converting four characters for the team's Space Marine Chapter. He's currently trying to figure out how to get a book on a banner pole.



#### JOEY ALCOCK

Photographer Joey has been organising a Necromunda campaign for all the photographers. As the campaign arbitrator, it falls to him to lay down the law. With his Enforcers!



#### SOPHIE

Sophie has been taking part in the Warhammer 40,000 army-painting challenge. She's already painted some Space Wolves, and now she's working on Adeptus Custodes.



#### ALEX

Remember Alex from A Tale of Four Warlords? Well, after a year painting Nurgle, she's now working on a Tyranid army for the studio challenge. We guess she likes the gross bug types.



### A TRIUMVIRATE OF GHOST WARRIORS

To round off the issue, the final page is dominated by a trio of Craftworld Wraithlords painted by studio artist Thomas Elliott. A long-time 'bad guy' player, Thomas decided to change his ways and join the forces of good (well, goodish) and collect Aeldari. The Wraithlord has always been one of his favourite models, mainly because of the kit's conversion opportunities and the open spaces onto which he can paint impressive freehand designs.

The star of the trio is clearly the Wraithseer, which Thomas painted black to contrast with the bright orange of his other two Wraithlords. The Wraithseer's scythe is converted out of weapons parts including a bright lance, while its shield is made from a Wraithknight's groin plate and a Wave Serpent's force field generator vanes. The distort cannon on its shoulder is from a Support Weapon platform. All the knotwork and the skull mask on its carapace were hand-painted by Thomas.



NEXT MONTH  
**WAAAGH! DA GOFFS!**

NEXT ISSUE  
ON SALE 15  
MAY



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