



Privateer Press

# NO QUARTER™

ISSUE N° 52  
Jan 2014



## HIGHER COMMAND

HIGH COMMAND TEAM FORMATS AND PREVIEWS

## FORCES OF DISTINCTION

NEW THEME FORCES FOR CRYX AND CIRCLE

## NEW RPG ARTICLES!

SCOUNDRELS & SELL-SWORDS  
QUICKWORK ENCOUNTERS  
CORVIS CODEX

NOW 112 PAGES!





# NO QUARTER, NO POSTAGE!

- MODEL PREVIEWS!
- GAME-WINNING TACTICS!
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## ON THE COVER

Goreshade, Lord of Ruin by Néstor Ossandón

## JUGGERNAUT'S JOURNEY: SEATTLE, WASHINGTON



We begin in the Pacific Northwest of the United States, home of Privateer Press, where Seattle's landmark Pike Place Market makes for the perfect stomping grounds to start a journey...

—Photo by Melissa Medved



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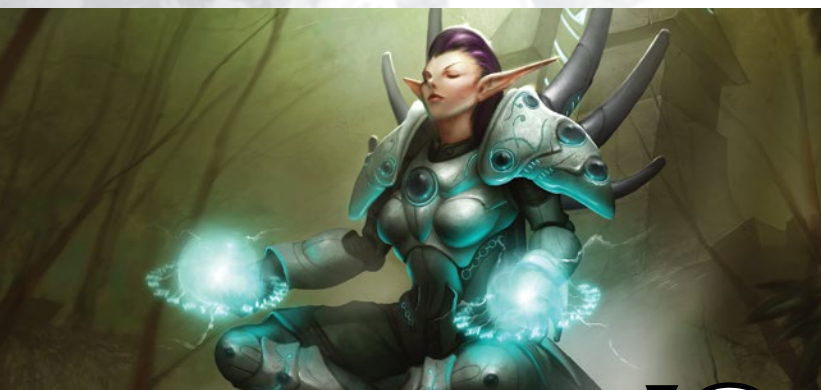
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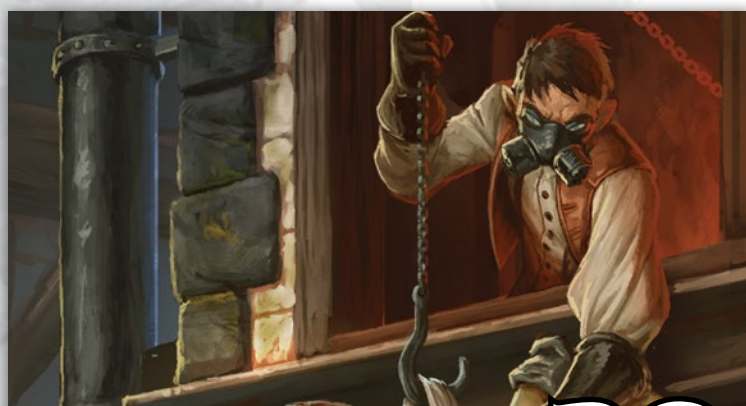
**Guts & Gears:  
Paladins of the Order of the Wall**

**20**



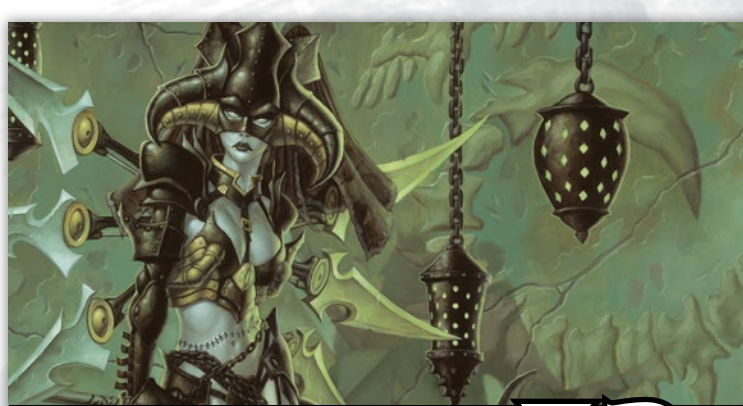
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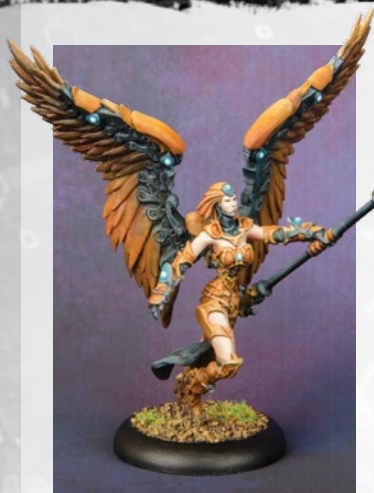


**Forces of Distinction XV**

**53**



# NEWS FROM THE FRONT



## ORANGE CRUSH 2013

The WARMACHINE and HORDES community contributes annually to hunger awareness by supporting Foodmachine charity events at game stores and clubs worldwide. Project: Orange Crush is a perfect example of another way to contribute to this cause.

With orange as the official color of hunger awareness, painters from across the globe donate their models that are then auctioned off as a full army for charity. The newly released Convergence of Cyriss is the 2013 army, and both hobbyists and Privateer Press staff members have contributed to this year's auction. Visit [handcannononline.com/foodmachine/foodmachine-project-orange-crush](http://handcannononline.com/foodmachine/foodmachine-project-orange-crush) for more info.

Aurora, Numen of Aerogenesis  
Painted by Matt DiPietro

## GET BEHIND THE SCENES: PRIMECAST

Each month, Privateer Press airs its own podcast, Primecast, at [privateerpress.com/primecast](http://privateerpress.com/primecast). Hosted by Director of Business Development Will Shick and Community Manager Simon Berman, Primecast takes you inside Privateer Press headquarters to give you an exclusive look at our games and processes, interviews with staffers, and inside info on upcoming products and events.



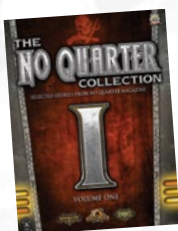
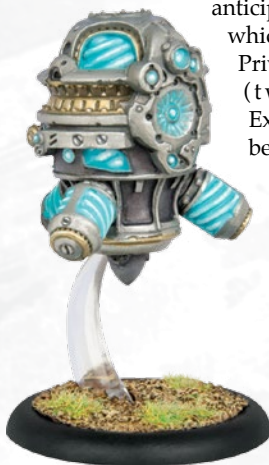
Photo by James Salyers

## WARMACHINE WEEKEND

WARMACHINE Weekend 2013 hosted a record-breaking tournament on November 15–17, with 168 participants over the first two days of the event. During a historic battle, Jason Flanzer and his Trollblooms made it to the final table against Will Pagani and his Khador army. Privateer Press was on hand to live stream the entire match, which you can view at [www.privateerpress.com/livestream](http://www.privateerpress.com/livestream).

## TEMPLECON 2014

Privateer Press will be at TempleCon in Rhode Island, February 6–9, revealing 2014 plans during a highly anticipated keynote presentation, which will be live streamed on Privateer's Twitch TV channel ([twitch.tv/privateerpress](http://twitch.tv/privateerpress)). Exclusives and pre-releases will be available at the Privateer Press store, and TempleCon will host an Iron Gauntlet Qualifier for an invitation to Iron Gauntlet: The WARMACHINE & HORDES World Championship at Lock & Load GameFest 2014. Players should also bring their *High Command* decks for Kingmaker tournaments. Visit [www.templecon.com](http://www.templecon.com) for more information.



## THE NO QUARTER COLLECTION: VOLUME I

*The No Quarter Collection: Volume I* presents some of the finest short fiction set in the Iron Kingdoms, including several out-of-print stories. Gathered in a single, easy-to-read format, these fantastic tales of intrigue and adventure will immerse you in the exciting world of steam-powered fantasy that is the Iron Kingdoms. Available at [skullislandx.com](http://skullislandx.com), [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com), and [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com).

## PROS & CONS



### PRO: TRAVIS MARG

Travis Marg has been a Press Ganger and a Privateer Judge in the Waukesha, WI, area for five years. He's also a collector of all factions and is currently endeavoring to build *every* theme force. For the last three years, he's been working toward making Adepticon—currently one of the few conventions where you'll see fully painted armies almost exclusively—into a major convention on the Privateer circuit.



### CON: ADEPTICON

Adepticon returns to the Westin Lombard Yorktown Center in Lombard, IL, this coming April 3–6. Featuring 24-hour Iron Arena gaming, Iron Gauntlet Qualifiers, Kingmaker events, as well as WARMACHINE and HORDES tournaments, Adepticon is a great event for diehard competitors and casual players alike. Check out [www.adepticon.org](http://www.adepticon.org).

News from the Front brings you recaps and advance information about WARMACHINE and HORDES-related events, as well as updates on products and people in the community. Is there a cool event taking place in your area? Tell us about it at: [submissions@privateerpress.com](mailto:submissions@privateerpress.com)





## GLOBAL PLAYER RANKINGS

Through December 2013

PLAYER NAME	POINTS	REGION
-------------	--------	--------

### REGION LEADERS

Daniel Knauss	18	Europe / Africa
Jay Larsen	14	▲ NA West
Keith Christianson	12	▲ NA West
Robin Maukisch	10	Europe / Africa
Jake Van Meter	10	▲ NA East
Jake Hoffman	6	NA East
Kuen-Kuen Sim	1	Australia / Asia

### AT-LARGE LEADERS

Colin Hill	10	▲ NA West
Jan Souza	10	▲ Europe / Africa
Brandon Cating	9	▲ NA West
Andy McBirnie	8	▲ Europe / Africa
Chris Green	8	NA West
Christopher Wedding	8	▲ Europe / Africa
Charles Arrasmith	6	NA West
Liam Jordan	6	Europe / Africa
Tobias Voigt	6	Europe / Africa
Dan Riker	6	▲ NA East
Torbjorn Hansson	6	▲ Europe / Africa

### IN THE HUNT

Endre Fodstad	4	Europe / Africa
Walter Langendorf	4	NA East
Joseph Skladanka	4	Europe / Africa
David Chandler	4	NA East
Bartholomäus Dobrzanski	4	Europe / Africa
Gord Weppler	4	NA West
Jakob Oskarsson	4	▲ Europe / Africa

## IRON GAUNTLET UPDATE

Do you have what it takes to battle for the ultimate title in WARMACHINE and HORDES competitive play? Then... ENTER THE IRON GAUNTLET. Compete in Iron Gauntlet Qualifier events around the world for glory and a chance to compete against the best of the best at the Iron Gauntlet: The WARMACHINE & HORDES World Championship at Lock & Load GameFest 2014! In this epic confrontation, one competitor will dominate the championship and claim the title "Best in the World."

The gauntlet has been thrown down. Prove you're the best... if you've got the metal!

## UPCOMING IRON GAUNTLET QUALIFIERS

### CANCON 2014

Canberra, Australia • January 25–27

### TEMPLECON 2014

Warwick, RI • February 6–9

### SMOGCON 2014

United Kingdom • February 21–23

### ADEPTICON 2014

Lombard, IL • April 3–6

### KINGDOM CON 2014

San Diego, CA • April 24–27

At the end of the season the top two players from each region and the top eight at-large players will earn a spot at the Iron Gauntlet Finals at Lock & Load GameFest 2014. Results include Lock & Load GameFest 2013, Gen Con 2013, UK Masters 2013, RatCon 2013, WARMACHINE Weekend 2013, and Iron Moot 2013.



# NEW RELEASES



## ERADICATORS (PLASTIC)

GAME: WARMACHINE/CONVERGENCE OF CYRISS

SCULPTOR: BEN MISENAR

PAINTER: MEG MAPLES

RELEASE: JANUARY • PIP 36022 • \$44.99



## ELIMINATION SERVITORS (METAL)

GAME: WARMACHINE/CONVERGENCE OF CYRISS

SCULPTOR: SEAN BULLOUGH

PAINTER: MEG MAPLES

RELEASE: JANUARY • PIP 36027 • \$11.99



## TRANSVERSE ENUMERATOR (METAL)

GAME: WARMACHINE/CONVERGENCE OF CYRISS

SCULPTOR: STEVE SAUNDERS

PAINTER: MATT DIPIETRO

RELEASE: FEBRUARY • PIP 36025 • \$11.99



**KOMMANDER ZOKTAVIR, THE BUTCHER UNLEASHED**  
 GAME: WARMACHINE/KHADOR  
 SCULPTOR: BRIAN DUGAS  
 PAINTER: MATT DIPIETRO  
 RELEASE: FEBRUARY • PIP 33101 • \$64.99



#### **WARMACHINE HIGH COMMAND: INTO THE BREACH**

Bolster your armies with this 84-card expansion for *WARMACHINE High Command*! *Into the Breach* contains 5 copies each of 16 different cards, plus 4 additional warcaster cards, to bring new strategies to your Cygnar, Khador, Protectorate of Menoth, and Cryx decks.

RELEASE: FEBRUARY • PIP 61008 • \$15.99





# NEW RELEASES



## ***HORDES High Command: Savage Guardians***

Enhance your forces with *Savage Guardians*, an 84-card expansion for *HORDES High Command*! *Savage Guardians* contains 5 copies each of 16 different cards, plus 4 additional warlock cards, to bring new strategies to your Trollbloods, Circle Orboros, Skorne, and Legion of Everblight decks.

RELEASE: JANUARY • PIP 61013 • \$15.99



## **IRON MOTHER DIRECTRIX & EXPONENT SERVITORS (METAL)**

GAME: WARMACHINE/CONVERGENCE OF CYRISS

SCULPTOR: DAVE KIDD

PAINTER: MATT DIPIETRO

RELEASE: FEBRUARY • PIP 36010 • \$34.99



## **ISSYRIA, SIBYL OF DAWN (METAL)**

GAME: WARMACHINE/RETRIBUTION OF SCYRAH

SCULPTOR: DOUG HAMILTON

PAINTER: MATT DIPIETRO

RELEASE: FEBRUARY • PIP 35058 • \$15.99





**HOUSEGUARD THANE (METAL)**  
 GAME: WARMACHINE/RETRIBUTION OF SCYRAH  
 SCULPTOR: BRIAN DUGAS  
 PAINTER: MEG MAPLES  
 RELEASE: JANUARY • PIP 35062 • \$11.99



**RALUK MOORCLAW, THE IRON MONGER (METAL)**  
 GAME: WARMACHINE/MERCENARIES  
 SCULPTORS: STEVEN NGUYEN VAN GIOI & BRIAN DUGAS  
 PAINTER: MATT DIPIETRO  
 RELEASE: JANUARY • PIP 41105 • \$17.99



**RETRIBUTION OF SCYRAH MYRMIDON WRECK MARKERS**  
 GAME: WARMACHINE/RETRIBUTION OF SCYRAH  
 SCULPTOR: ROB HAWKINS • PAINTER: GEORDIE HICKS  
 RELEASE: FEBRUARY • PIP 91068 • \$19.99



**CONVERGENCE OF CYRIUS VECTOR WRECK MARKERS**  
 GAME: WARMACHINE/CONVERGENCE OF CYRIUS  
 SCULPTOR: SEAN BULLOUGH • PAINTER: GEORDIE HICKS  
 RELEASE: FEBRUARY • PIP 91069 • \$19.99

**CLASSIC WARMACHINE AND HORDES MODELS NOW AVAILABLE IN FULL-SIZE UNITS**



**MECHANITHRALLS**  
 GAME: WARMACHINE/CRYX  
 RELEASE: JANUARY • PIP 34109 • \$44.99



**BOG TROG AMBUSHERS**  
 GAME: HORDES/MINIONS  
 RELEASE: FEBRUARY • PIP 75057 • \$49.99

**CLASSIC WARMACHINE AND HORDES MODELS NOW AVAILABLE IN PLASTIC**



**BANE THRALLS**  
 GAME: WARMACHINE/CRYX  
 RELEASE: JANUARY • PIP 34110 • \$49.99



**GORAX**  
 GAME: HORDES/CIRCLE ORBOROS  
 RELEASE: FEBRUARY • PIP 72078 • \$18.99



**HOUSEGUARD RIFLEMEN**  
 GAME: WARMACHINE/  
 RETRIBUTION OF SCYRAH  
 RELEASE: JANUARY • PIP 35060 • \$49.99



**WAR HOG**  
 GAME: HORDES/MINIONS  
 RELEASE: FEBRUARY • PIP 75047 • \$34.99





# VENGEANCE

## MODEL PREVIEWS

By David "DC" Carl and Jack Coleman

Art by Tyler James, Nicholas Kay, and Néstor Ossandón

The release of the highly anticipated *WARMACHINE: Vengeance* expansion is only a few months away, and we've saved some of the most exciting new models from our latest expansion for this final *Vengeance* preview.

This issue presents the most powerful of the new recruits to the Retribution of Scyrah, the enigmatic and precognitive Issyria, Sibyl of Dawn. Moving on to the far opposite end of the elven spectrum, we'll take a look at the latest incarnation of one of the most feared agents of Cryx, Goreshade, Lord of Ruin. And to wrap things up we'll heighten the fear factor even more with the addition of the insidious necromantic manipulator, the Skarlock Commander.





# SKARLOCK COMMANDER

## CRYX THRALL UNIT ATTACHMENT



### TACTICAL TIP

**Magic Ability** – Performing a Magic Ability special action or special attack counts as casting a spell.

### Skarlock Commander

Like all such creatures, skarlock commanders exist only to serve the needs, desires, and ambitions of the lich lords and generals of Cryx. To achieve those ends they drive mechanithralls and bile thralls under their command to mercilessly slaughter the enemies of the Nightmare Empire. In horror, soldiers confronted by skarlock commanders and their terrifying followers watch as their comrades have their lives and even their souls stolen from them. Skarlock commanders harvest those souls to fuel their dark magic on the field of battle—their victims empowering them to murder even more.



#### Attachment

[Mechanithrall or Bile Thrall] – This attachment can be added to a Mechanithrall or Bile Thrall unit.

#### SKARLOCK

⊕ Officer

⊖ Undead

**Battle Wizard** – Once per turn, when this model destroys one or more enemy models with a melee attack during its activation, immediately after the attack is resolved it can make one Magic Ability special attack or special action.

#### Magic Ability [6]

- **Dark Fire (★Attack)** – Dark Fire is a RNG 10, POW 12 magic attack. When a living enemy model is destroyed by Dark Fire, this model gains its soul token regardless of the proximity of other models.
- **Disbinding (★Action)** – Enemy upkeep spells on this model and/or its unit immediately expire.

**Soul Taker** – This model gains one soul token when a living enemy model is destroyed within 2" of it. This model can have up to three soul tokens at a time. During its activation, this model can spend soul tokens to gain additional attacks or to boost attack or damage rolls at one token per attack or boost.

#### FELL SPEAR

⊕ Magical Weapon

⊕ Reach

SKARLOCK							
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD	
6	4	6	3	14	12	8	

FELL SPEAR		
POW	P+S	
6	10	

<b>DAMAGE</b>	5
<b>FIELD ALLOWANCE</b>	2
<b>POINT COST</b>	1

**SMALL BASE**

### Using the Skarlock Commander

The Skarlock Commander's primary responsibility is to command. For just one point, he'll increase the command range of Mechanithralls or Bile Thralls, allowing them to spread out further and better avoid blast damage or other area effects. While increasing a Mechanithrall unit's command from 6 to 8 might not seem like all that much, the one-third increase in the CMD stat equates to an increase in actual board area for these steamfist zombies that's over two-thirds larger than normal.

Skarlock Commanders can also wipe out enemy upkeep spells on their unit or gather the souls of their fallen enemies with both melee and magic attacks. Their Soul Taker ability can act like a more controlled version of Berserk, and it also allows the Skarlock Commander to boost when needed to hit targets with DEF values well out of reach of Mechanithrall MAT or Bile Thrall RAT.





# ISSYRIA, SIBYL OF DAWN

## RETRIBUTION WARCASTER

ISSYRIA							
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD	
6	5	5	4	16	13	9	
FOCUS							8
DAMAGE							15
FIELD ALLOWANCE							C
WARJACK POINTS							+6
SMALL BASE							

### FEAT: DAWN'S LIGHT

*Issyria has the seer's sight and has proven nothing can hide from her vision. The Sibyl of Dawn can extend her power to all who join in her holy cause, lending terrifying clarity to her army and bending fate itself to*

*guide their attacks to strike down all who would oppose them.*

While in Issyria's control area, friendly Faction models gain True Sight and gain one additional die on attack and damage rolls. For each of those rolls, you choose one of the dice rolled to be discarded. Dawn's Light lasts for one turn. (Models with True Sight ignore concealment, Camouflage, and Stealth.)

### ISSYRIA

**Ancillary Attack (★Action)** – RNG 5. Target friendly Faction warjack. If the warjack is in range, it immediately makes one normal melee or ranged attack. A warjack can make an Ancillary Attack special action only once per turn.

**Arcane Vortex** – This model can immediately negate any spell that targets it or a model within 3" of it by spending 1 focus point before the RNG of the spell is measured. The negated spell does not take effect, but its COST remains spent.

**Flight** – This model can advance through terrain and obstacles without penalty and can advance through obstructions and other models if it has enough movement to move completely past them. This model ignores intervening models when declaring its charge target.

**True Sight** – This model ignores concealment, Camouflage, and Stealth.

## Issyria, Sibyl of Dawn

Within Ios, many major houses call on the powers of sibyls, those specializing in the divinatory arts to mystically view faraway events and to anticipate calamity. Most sibyls remain in isolation, away from distracting conflicts, though this was never the destiny intended for Issyria. Strongly motivated to see House Nyarr rise to absolute dominance, Issyria uses her powers to perceive the flow of battle, gaining a peerless understanding of each movement and action around her and directing her myrmidons to serve as perfect fulcrums of force. When she enters her meditative trance, the world seems to freeze and the best tactical course becomes clear.

## Using Issyria, Sibyl of Dawn

Issyria, Sibyl of Dawn is the first warcaster without any weapons or spells that cause damage. She plays a pure support role within her army and possesses a well-rounded suite of spells and abilities that provide mobility, buffs, and denial. The toolbox nature of Issyria allows

SPELLS	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
<b>ADMONITION</b>	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
When an enemy model advances and ends its movement within 6" of target model in this model's battlegroup, the affected model can immediately advance up to 3", then Admonition expires. The affected model cannot be targeted by free strikes during this movement.						
<b>BLINDING LIGHT</b>	3	10	–	–	NO	YES
Target enemy warrior model/unit cannot make ranged or magic attacks and suffers –2 DEF for one round.						
<b>CRUSADER'S CALL</b>	3	SELF	CTRL	–	NO	NO
Friendly Faction models beginning a charge while in this model's control area this turn gain +2" movement.						
<b>INVIOABLE RESOLVE</b>	2	6	–	–	YES	NO
Target friendly Faction model/unit gains +2 ARM and Fearless ☒.						
<b>VELOCITY</b>	*	SELF	–	–	NO	NO
This model can spend up to 3 focus points to advance up to 2" immediately for each focus point spent. Velocity can be cast only once per turn.						

her to synergize with all types of Retribution models and complement multiple play styles.

Issyria works best with a moderate-sized battlegroup. The additional attack granted by Ancillary Attack is exceptional with the Hyperion and also shines with a Daemon, Discordia, Banshee, or Phoenix. She needs to keep the majority of her focus for spells and Arcane Vortex, however, which can leave little for her myrmidons. Arcanist solos, Syls Wyshnalyrr, and Elara, Tyro of the Third Chamber are ideal for relieving this burden.

Even lacking directly offensive capabilities, Issyria still plays an active role in battle. Enemy warrior models/units hit by her Blinding Light spell cannot make ranged or magical attacks and suffer –2 DEF. Liberal use of Blinding Light, combined with the extra armor from Inviolable Resolve and additional spell denial from Arcane Vortex, allows Issyria to protect her army from ranged threats. Crusader's Call increases the melee threat range of her entire army, and Issyria's battlegroup gains additional denial versus melee threats with the out-of-activation 3" move granted by Admonition.

The Dawn's Light feat combined with the –2 DEF from Blinding Light can easily set up an assassination for some Dawnguard Invictors, a Mage Hunter Strike Force, or myrmidons. Since the player chooses which die to discard, Dawn's Light significantly increases the chances of rolling a critical hit—a boosted Starburst from a Hyperion on Issyria's feat turn has a 67% chance to Critical Consume!

Getting the most out of Issyria requires finesse. She plays aggressively, using her denial and mobility to control the tempo and stay one step ahead of the enemy. Issyria's placement is very important, as she needs to play forward to get the most from Arcane Vortex and Ancillary Attack. Thankfully she has Flight, Velocity, and Admonition to provide the mobility she needs to achieve her goals without leaving herself exposed.





FINAL





# GORESHADE, LORD OF RUIN

## CRYX EPIC CAVALRY WARCASTER

### GORESHADE

SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	CMD
8	7	7	4	14	17	8



#### VOASS

POW	P+S
8	15



#### MOUNT

POW
12

**FOCUS** 7

**DAMAGE** 17

**FIELD ALLOWANCE** C

**WARJACK POINTS** +5

**LARGE BASE**

### FEAT: WINTER'S GRASP

*As proof that he is truly the Lord of Ruin, Goresshade reaches inside Voass to steal the Father of Winter's divine power for his own profane use. With a sweep of the frozen blade his enemies are seized in an unyielding grip, rendered helpless and vulnerable.*

Center a 3" AOE on any number of friendly non-warcaster warrior models

currently in Goresshade's control area. Enemy models without Immunity: Cold within one or more AOE's become stationary for one round. Then the models the AOE's are centered on are destroyed.

### GORESHADE

**Terror**

**Undead**

**Ghostly** – This model can advance through terrain and obstacles without penalty and can advance through obstructions if it has enough movement to move completely past them. This model cannot be targeted by free strikes.

**Spell Vortex** – If a living enemy model cast a spell in this model's control area last turn, this model can cast one spell without spending focus during its activation this turn.

### VOASS

**Magical Weapon**

**Reach**

**Freeze** – A model hit by this weapon becomes stationary for one round unless it has Immunity: Cold .

## Goresshade, Lord of Ruin

Armed with mystical secrets terrifying in their implications, Goresshade has come to understand the nature of the threshold between the worlds of the living and the dead. Having mastered the use of powerful relics such as the sword of Nyssor—now tainted and corrupted for his own ends—the feared eldritch charges furiously into battle atop his skeletal mount. With the ability to turn spectral at will, Goresshade swoops over the battlefield, heedless of all obstacles, each strike from his stolen blade freezing his enemies in an unyielding grip and leaving them vulnerable to the onslaught of his undead minions.

### SPELLS

**COST** **RNG** **AOE** **POW** **UP** **OFF**

**INFERNAL MACHINE** 2 6 - - YES NO

Target warjack in this model's battlegroup gains Terror and +2 MAT and SPD.

**MOCKERY OF LIFE** 2 CTRL - - NO NO

Return one destroyed friendly Faction Undead Grunt to play with one unmarked damage box. It must be placed in this model's control area in formation and within 3" of another model in its unit. The Grunt must forfeit its action the turn it is returned to play.

**OCCULTATION** 2 6 - - YES NO

Target friendly model/unit gains Stealth .

**SCYTHING TOUCH** 2 6 - - YES NO

Target friendly model/unit gains +2 to melee attack damage rolls. Affected models gain Critical Corrosion on their normal melee attacks.

**SIPHON BOLT** 2 8 - 12 NO YES

When this spell hits an enemy model with 1 or more focus or fury points on it, that model loses 1 focus or fury point and this model gains 1 focus point.

## Using Goresshade, Lord of Ruin

In his newest incarnation Goresshade has gained a great deal of mobility and melee prowess thanks to his spectral steed. The inherent advantages of cavalry rules are further enhanced by Ghostly, allowing Goresshade to harry opponents with ride-by attacks or charge past a line of enemies without worrying about free strikes or terrain. This slipperiness, combined with a 13" charge threat range, reach, tall in the saddle, and impact attacks, makes it difficult for opponents to screen themselves from Goresshade's assault.

Siphon Bolt is a direct-damage spell that strips the defenses from enemy warlocks/warcasters by stealing a focus or fury point and giving a point of focus to Goresshade. The mechanics of this spell (including a free cast from Spell Vortex) allow Goresshade to cast Siphon Bolt *up to eight times* in a single turn, provided his targets have enough focus/fury to fuel him.

Assassination is just one aspect of Goresshade, Lord of Ruin, and he is far from a one-trick-monstrous-undead-pony. His kit provides a great deal of support options and is just as suited for attrition as it is for assassination. This allows the Lord of Ruin to wear down his opponents in protracted engagements and jump when an opportunity for assassination arises.

Goresshade enjoys the company of a Skarlock Thrall or the Deathjack for assistance in casting and cycling his upkeep spells. These models and the free spell granted by Spell Vortex allow Goresshade to get the most from his support spells without sacrificing the focus needed by his battlegroup or for Mockery of Life.

The new Mockery of Life spell is the most efficient revival spell in WARMACHINE; for just 2 focus Goresshade can return a friendly Faction Undead Grunt to play. Returning as many as





three or four (thanks to Spell Vortex) grunts to play each turn is good, but when Mockery of Life is combined with the abilities of a Necrosurgeon, Blackbane's Ghost Raiders, and Bane Lord Tartarus, Goreshade's army can become an unending legion of death.

Goreshade's feat, Winter's Grasp, allows him to center a 3" AOE on any number of friendly non-warcaster warrior models in his control area that cause enemy models within the AOE to become stationary for one round, though every

model an AOE is centered on is also destroyed. This provides Goreshade with a great tool for control and assassination that lets the player balance risk versus potential gains, and it rewards the player for intelligent gameplay.

When using Winter's Grasp, remember that Goreshade does not require LOS to the targets. Take advantage of models with Incorporeal and Ghostly by running them past enemy lines to high-priority targets and use abilities like Necrosurgery, Deathbound, and Mockery of Life to minimize your losses.





Scott Campbell, Creative Director of WhiteMoon Dreams, Inc.

### *What goes into making a mission map for WARMACHINE: Tactics? More than you might think...*

Over the past twenty-two years I've had a recurring conversation with a variety of people—both kids and adults, from gamers to hair stylists. It goes something like this:

"So, Scott, what do you do for a living?"

"I make video games," I say, and then wait for the inevitable response.

"Really! That must be awesome, sitting around playing video games all day!"

Yeah: that response. "Uh...actually, making games isn't really like playing them..."

"Oh, come on. It's a game!"

"Well," I say, "do you know how we get a character on the screen?"

After a long pause, the response is usually something like: "No, but how hard could it be?"

"Well, there's concepting, mesh building in Maya, mesh detailing in ZBrush, texturing, specular mapping, emissive mapping, building a skeleton, rigging the mesh to the skeleton, making dozens of animation sequences, setting up animation blends, making physics bounds for collisions and ragdoll, linking animations with input or AI—along with countless hours of testing, bug fixing, and data setup. And that's just for one of the characters. We usually have dozens in a game..."

The result of my polite tirade is usually a blank stare and incredulity. This leads me to the conclusion that, while most people love video games, they have no idea what goes into actually making them.

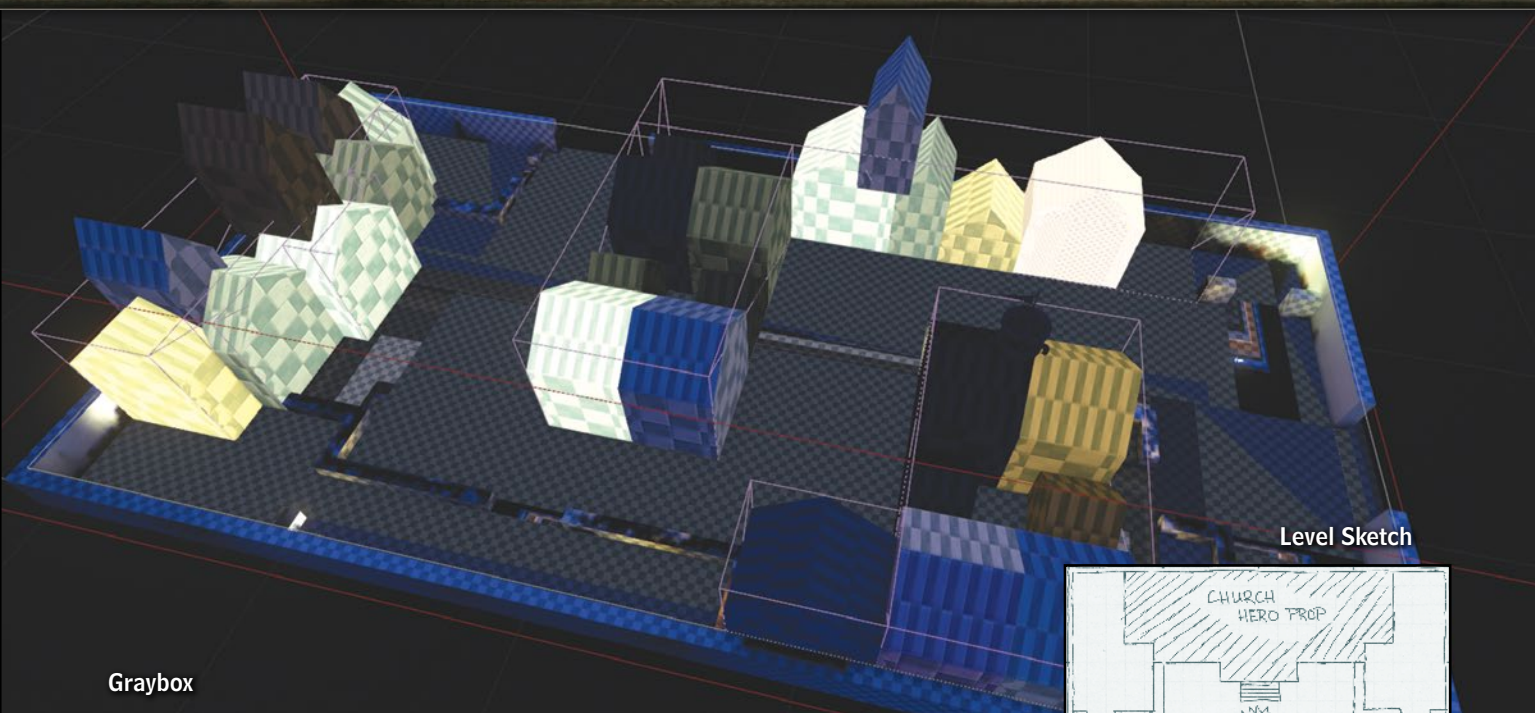
Lots of people equate creating games to making movies, and certainly these fields do have a lot in common: cameras, actors, lighting, sets, props, and so on. What movies don't require, however, is *interaction*.

It's my belief that game design is more like the space program. Projects are usually created from scratch out of off-the-shelf components with a team of engineers working to get everything functioning together. Designers check and re-check everything that could possibly happen, then they make rules and modifications to the project to ensure everyone will be satisfied with the outcome. Talented artists work in their specialized disciplines to make all aspects of the project elegant and beautiful. The entire team shares one goal: to get this thing to launch.

And yes, like the space program, there's a *lot* of math involved.

We've had quite a bit of feedback—from both players and industry professionals—about how great the environments in *WARMACHINE: Tactics* look so far, and so now I'd like to share the entire process of building a single mission map, from creating concept art to polishing up the finished level.





Graybox

## PHASE 1: DESIGN

In this first phase we're still figuring out what we want. It's all about story, scope, and schematics.

### Step 1: Story

We start by looking at the overarching story of the game. We have to determine how this mission pushes the narrative forward, where it takes place, which characters are in it, and what interesting things the player can do. We also have to take into consideration the next and previous missions to ensure we keep the mission themes and goals fresh and interesting.

### Step 2: Breakdown

We then do a breakdown of the story to determine scope. This breakdown includes things like the type of environment, time of day, major props, enemy roster, special player-setup information, special prop interaction, visual effects, audio effects, gameplay goals, dialog cut-scenes, and cinematic triggers.

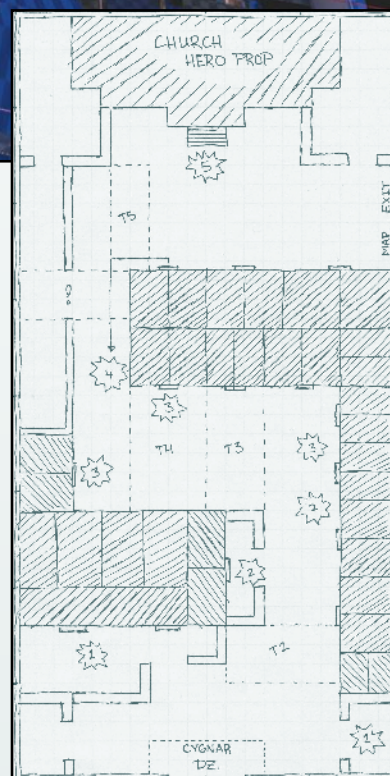
We have to make sure we've thought of everything before we can move on, because this breakdown will become the blueprint for our development schedule.

### Step 3: Sketch

The mission is then quickly sketched out on paper. The designer must create a playfield that serves all the parameters previously set forth in the breakdown. Beyond getting the shape of the map's terrain and prop placement, the designer should have a sense of space. How far will a character have to move to get from one prop to another? Will a heavy warjack be able to fit between those walls? How many rounds do we expect the mission to take?

### Step 4: Graybox

The mission map is now created in the game engine out of gray boxes. What's important about this step is not the appearance of the map itself but the position of the objects in the map. Instead of building a beautiful spire, a box is created with the label "spire" on it. The idea is to make a map that can be played on and easily adapted to accommodate the testing results.



Graybox is a term used in game development—specifically level building—to denote a basic map that uses CSG (constructive solid geometry) to define the bounds and collisions for a level. When a level is finished being grayboxed, it looks like a field of geometric structures (boxes) absent of texture (thus, gray). Artists can then use the defined level collisions to determine the size and placement of props required for that level.





## Step 5: Testing

Once characters are placed in the graybox map, the level is played through many times to ensure terrain, major props, and the distances between each will work within the gameplay paradigm. If there are any problems, the graybox will be modified and tested again. If there are major problems (bad layouts or simple lack of fun), it's back to the Step 3 drawing board. Once everyone is happy with the map, we move onto Phase 2.

## PHASE 2: ART

This phase is all about the art, which is everything you see—models, textures, lighting, and more. Over time the graybox level will be gradually replaced with countless props, textures, and effects.

## Step 6: Concept

From the breakdown and the graybox, concepting the visual setting begins. It's common for a concept artist to take a screenshot of the graybox level and paint directly over it. Concepting creates the appearance of the props and determines how a handful of small props can work together to form a rich and expansive scene. The color tone of the textures and lighting possibilities are all explored during concepting.



## Step 7: Scenery

The majority of props in a game are scenery props that will be used repeatedly throughout the game, such as trees, bushes, rocks, and rubble. These props need to be modeled, textured, and assembled into the map. To keep the game scope sane we create a limited number of themed “biomes,” wherein the same environment type (such as a forest) will be used across many mission maps.

## Step 8: Terrain

The ground terrain, whether composed of natural contours or manmade stonework, needs to be constructed out of polygons, given a huge painted texture, and overlaid with detailed maps and decals. This is a massive amount of work. One reason we test the graybox levels so extensively is to make sure the terrain will not have to be created more than once. Moving props around is easy; rebuilding the terrain, not so much.

## Step 9: Hero Props

Hero props are major set pieces that give each map a unique centerpiece to draw the player's attention. Each needs to be modeled, textured, and integrated into the maps.

## Step 10: Skybox

The skybox is the diorama surrounding the map. The sun, moons, clouds, fog, mountains—an entire scene needs to be created for those moments when the camera looks up from the battlefield.





Playtest

## Step 11: Visual Effects

Flames, smoke, rippling water, steam, fog, clouds of insects, or magical effects are all built from particle systems and placed in the map. Too many particle systems (or even a single un-optimized particle system) will drop your frame rate terribly.

## Step 12: Lighting

Directional lights (like sunlight) and point lights (like torches or lit windows) are placed throughout the map. Lighting is “baked” into the scene, which means the visual effect of that light on non-moving props won’t need to be recalculated after startup. Characters are dynamic and lit in real-time, so the fewer lights we put in a map the less overhead we’ll need for lighting shadow computation. Knowing how to illuminate a scene with a minimal amount of light is a tightrope walk between technology and aesthetics.

## PHASE 3: FINALIZING

Now that the level looks amazing, it’s time to introduce the finishing touches.

## Step 13: Audio

It’s true what people say: audio makes the game. By placing audio emitters throughout the map, the audio engineer creates looping audio tracks that tie the props and effects to the world. As the camera moves through the map the player can hear a roaring fire, splashing water, and creaking timbers. With well-placed audio, playing the level will be an immersive experience.

## Step 14: Gameplay Scripts

Scripts are programs that query the overall game state. Scripts control where the deployment zones are, where AI spawn, the win conditions for the map, how the music changes, when character dialogs trigger, when cinematics begin playing, and more.

At this point the final scripts are created and placed within the map.

## Step 15: Playtest

Finally, all the bugs still need to be worked out. Playtest is the metaphorical rocket launch—anything that can go wrong will, and should, go wrong. This is when all the design and placement is finally put to the test. If you did everything right there will still be a few kinks to iron out, but it will mostly be smooth sailing.

## CONCLUSION

And all of that is for one single map. Did I mention *WARMACHINE: Tactics* will have *twenty* single-player missions...plus a tutorial and multiplayer maps?

Though it requires a lot of meticulous work, being part of the gaming industry is still awesome. Not just because we play games, but because of all the great people who are just as passionate about them as we are.





**GUTS & GEARS**

# PALADINS

## OF THE ORDER OF THE WALL

BY MICHAEL SANBEG AND DOUGLAS SEACAT • ART BY DAREN BADER AND JOHAN GRENIER

One of humanity's most ancient organizations, the Order of the Wall is a martial Menite brotherhood singularly dedicated to the protection of the faithful. Though its membership has ever been small, those elite few who do count themselves as paladins within its ranks are among the finest swordsmen and most dedicated warriors in western Immoren. The Order of the Wall is known for having served a significant role in safeguarding human civilization in its earliest and most vulnerable centuries.

### ORIGINS AND HISTORY

The Order of The Wall was founded nearly three thousand years ago, after Priest-King Valent formed a union of devout warriors leading the defense of Calacia and the Wall of Thrace, which protected the city that would one day become Caspia from the Molgur of the Upper Wyrmwall Mountains. Those early members of the order became the inner core of a larger army of pious Menites who not only



defended the outskirts of the civilized world but ventured into the wild lands dominated by the barbarous Molgur to drive them back.

By the time Priest-King Golivant came into power, the Wall of Thrace had already evolved into an immense and highly defensible series of structures. So too had the Order of the Wall developed into a proud and respected brotherhood, few in number but esteemed above all other warriors of the early Temple. Even generations after his death, Valent's legend continued to draw some of the bravest men of the faith into the order's service. It is commonly believed that the near-mythical prowess of Valent and those who followed after him was so great that some Molgur immediately converted to the worship of the Creator of Man after witnessing them in battle. Far more would require subjugation by fire and sword, however, and those battles against the Molgur were fierce and bloody. Paladins vigilantly defended exposed villages from retaliation during this time of strife.

With the final defeat of the Molgur, the civilized world of the Menites became a larger and more secure place, and thus were more of man's attentions and animosities turned toward one another. Known today as the Warlord Era, this was a period of continual strife between petty kings, in many cases sanctioned and supported by the independent Menite priesthoods under their rule.

Members of the order preferred to retain a more defensive role across these myriad city-states, some of which sponsored their own small organizations of paladins. There was little to no contact between these groups, each referring to itself as the Order of the Wall and each considering itself descended of the traditions established by Valent of Thrace. The nature of these wars required paladins to battle not barbarous or inhuman aggressors but neighboring Menites led by rival kings and bent on conquest or plunder. Their unwillingness to march forth alongside the ruling priests or kings in battle ensured they were given limited support, and lacking patronage from the ruling caste, their upkeep fell to the people whom they protected.

## THREATENED EXTINCTION UNDER THE ORGOOTH

The invasion and first two centuries of conquest by the Orgoth redirected the efforts of the paladins of the order, however, once again providing an outside aggressor whose threat was more pervasive than any seen before or since. Across western Immoren, as the invaders reached each area in turn, paladins of the Order of the Wall gave their lives in resolute service and made many brave stands against the tyrants. Many of these battles are not found in any written history but exist as legends passed down by word of mouth through succeeding generations. This era is remembered as one in which the paladins united to reduce human suffering and shield the helpless.

Though the Orgoth were initially focused on conquest and not the extinction of local religious practices, they eventually forced the disarmament and dispersal of martial groups like the Order of the Wall. This forced the paladins to adopt a more restrained outward appearance and to operate individually as best they could. They met with their peers in small and secret gatherings, there to conduct furtive ceremonies to renew their vows and initiate new members.

Finding themselves powerless to organize openly or to oppose the Orgoth as a whole, paladins had to learn to function with greater autonomy and limited support. After the Occupation was consolidated, many paladins began operating as loosely associated individuals with no obvious ties to one another. The Order of the Wall had become an ideal, a concept, and a shared set of beliefs—but no longer an organization with any sense of hierarchy or structure.

The image the order had cultivated as a harmless spiritual organization, however, did not last. Occasionally paladins were arrested for intervening against Orgoth authorities and were subsequently subjected to torture and interrogation. With the powers of their unique necromantic magic, even death did not necessarily offer captured paladins a release from questioning. By the middle of the fifth century BR, the Orgoth became aware of the order's true nature, and with this awareness tolerance came to an abrupt end. Paladins were arrested and executed wherever they could be found.

This served to further scatter and isolate the remaining paladins, who were forced to go entirely underground if they were to survive. In the same regard, most fighting paladins maintained only a loose association for mutual protection with their brothers. By the time the Orgoth formally outlawed the Order of the Wall in 392 BR, the dissolution of the group was, at least for the time being, simply a public recognition of a fact that had already come to pass.

Paladins of the Order of the Wall still resisted the Orgoth as opportunity allowed, and they continued to find subtler ways to defend Menites from the tyranny of their oppressors. These heroic Occupation Era paladins were far too few in number to have had a significant impact on the Orgoth governors; however, they served as a bold example even to non-Menites and symbolized the indomitable tenacity of the Immorese spirit.

The transition from a small but essential aspect of the majority religion into a secret and persecuted brotherhood greatly impacted the order's ability to initiate new members, however, and deeply affected the survival of those paladins bold enough to openly resist Orgoth rule. In some regions, it seemed as though paladins had become extinct.



Two exceptions to this were the ancient Order of the Wall chapter in Caspia, which remained free, and some few scattered chapters in the desolate and unreachable regions of northern Khador. The Caspian paladins, though still affected by the downturn in adherence to the faith in general, were fortunate to be sheltered from Orgoth aggression behind the impenetrable walls of their city. Conversely, the rural Old Faith Khadorans experienced less attrition from the rise of the Morrowan faith and lived in remote and inhospitable locations where Orgoth control was less pervasive.

Thankfully, the hold the Orgoth exercised over western Immoren was not destined to last forever. After centuries of escalating resentment, the Immorese finally rose up in revolt. It would require two hundred years of brutal warfare and merciless Orgoth reprisals before the invaders were vanquished, during which time the Order of the Wall underwent a period of regrowth in Menite

communities alongside the Rebellion. The reputation of the order was respected by Menites and Morrowans alike; the stand its members had taken against the Orgoth during the preceding centuries had not been forgotten. By 86 AR the order had regained some measure of security and could at last function openly within various liberated territories. Throughout the following century the order would serve to both protect and rebuild western Immoren as it gradually broke itself from Orgoth rule.

## POST-REBELLION AND THE CYGNARAN CIVIL WAR

In the early years of the Iron Kingdoms Era much of the order's energy was put to restoring its chapter houses, its traditions, and creating a more rigorous training regimen for its initiates. Although the Menite faith as a whole was becoming increasingly marginalized as it was eclipsed by the worship of Morrow, the Order of the Wall as a whole continued to experience a slow but steady resurgence, riding a current of goodwill it had earned during the Rebellion. Despite this, the strength of the restored order reached an inevitable plateau—the requirements to become an initiate remained stringent and demanded initiates with a true calling, always a rare trait.

Furthermore, such an organization could only be supported in cities and towns with sizable Menite communities.

As the Menite religion declined, so too did the number of places suitable for a chapter house of the order.

In 482 AR, along with hundreds of thousands of the faithful, the majority of the paladins of the Order of the Wall within Cygnar answered Sulon's call to pilgrimage in Caspia. This call also drew some paladins from other kingdoms, although in much smaller numbers. The Caspian branch remained the largest and most organized chapter of the order, and its leaders quickly foresaw the impending violence that would result from Sulon's sermons. Many worked to mitigate the impact of his rhetoric, hoping to placate the pilgrims and encourage temperance. Ultimately this effort was to no avail, and when violence erupted, pitting the Caspian Watch against the faithful in the eastern portion of the city, the paladins had no recourse but to fight to protect the Menites from the religiously intolerant Cygnaran authorities.





The Cygnaran Civil War that followed was an extraordinary time for the order, and many paladins had great difficulty reconciling their faith and code with the necessities of war. The division between Menite and Morrowan was not as extreme as that between Immorese and Orgoth or Menite and Molgur nor did the compromise that ended the war to found the Protectorate of Menoth offer much recompense to the order.

The City of Walls was and still is a place of tremendous spiritual and historical significance to the order, being itself a holy relic of both Valent and Golivant and a symbol of the greatest of the Gifts of Menoth. In the decades to follow, an unattributed prophecy was penned proclaiming the importance of the ultimate reunification of Caspia and Sul and suggesting dire portents should this not come to pass. Some theologians believe these writings originate from post-civil war rhetoric employed by ranking leaders of the Sulese Order of the Wall.

## RISE OF THE PROTECTORATE

Eschewing their typically defensive posture, paladins readily joined in the crusades to expand the borders of the Protectorate into the desert wasteland to the east. Thousands were still flocking to the new theocracy, some from beyond Cygnar's borders, and attacks by hostile local tribes and other threats were a common occurrence. None could deny the historical parallel between the savage Wurm-worshipping Idrian tribes and the ancient Molgur. Yet even in this time of relative popularity and renewed purpose, the Order of the Wall was quickly eclipsed by the rapidly expanding Knights Exemplar.

There were several reasons for this. The Knights Exemplar had long had a numerical advantage over the paladins, in part because they never enforced the same rigidly strenuous entry requirements as the Order of the Wall. Further, Knights Exemplar had always been more proactive in recruiting new members rather than waiting for aspirants. Even more significant to the disparate fortunes of these martial orders was the close relationship between scrutators and Knights Exemplar. For centuries small, devoted phalanxes of Knights Exemplar served individual scrutators with unflinching obedience, doing whatever was asked of them. When the scrutator caste rose to positions of supreme authority in the theocracy, the stature and number of Knights Exemplar increased with them. Paladins of the Order of the Wall obeyed their own code and did not look to the priest caste to interpret the True Law for them. To the scrutators, this made them an unreliable and potentially disruptive organization.

Over the following decades, as the Protectorate of Menoth became more secure and increasingly militant, the order continued to find its significance diminished. Though historic victories saw individual paladins rise to renown, and while the order remained popular among the common

people, its ranking members were removed from the halls of power and rarely consulted by the priesthood.

The gulf between the Order of the Wall and both the clergy and the other martial orders was greatly widened under Hierarch Ravonal. It was at this time that the Protectorate began to reform its martial orders to create a true standing army. As the Knights Exemplar and Temple Flameguard were repurposed to become this army's disciplined soldiers, the paladins of the Order of the Wall were left untouched and on the periphery, all but forgotten. By the end of the sixth century AR, Ravonel's successor, Hierarch Garrick Voyle, would publicly discuss the possibility of eventually disbanding the Order of the Wall altogether. It is possible the organization would have ceased to exist within the Protectorate if not for the sudden and spectacular rise to prominence of the Harbinger of Menoth in 603 AR.

The Harbinger chose High Paladin Dartan Vilmon as her personal guardian in 604 AR, and this indirect endorsement of the order subsequently began a period of resurgence that continues to this day. Further, the adversity the citizens of the Protectorate faced during the Caspia-Sul war once again put the order in the role for which it was created: protectors of the faithful during a period of turmoil. Not since the Cygnaran Civil War has the order been so visibly and overtly heroic. The Harbinger herself continues to publicly champion the order, while Vilmon serves as the brightest and most public example of its purpose and noble spirit.

The order's numbers within the Protectorate are currently greater than they have been in generations, and even Hierarch Severius has shown some tolerance for their role. Regardless of this fact, the political influence of the order remains minimal and subtle, generally felt only indirectly. Though extremely skilled warriors individually, paladins are too few and too removed from the priesthood to have any significant sway over the nation's policies and decisions. And while the order clearly has the approval and endorsement of the Harbinger herself, she is too venerated for ranking paladins to consider petitioning her to speak in their favor.

The Order of the Wall remains a widely respected organization among the regular citizens of the Protectorate. It is in this regard that the order serves its true role, and the one for which the pragmatic Hierarch Severius tolerates their existence. The order's reputation does grant it a certain value, if only by softening the temple's image among a populace that might otherwise feel neglected and insignificant. The Order of the Wall serves its traditional role not primarily in protecting the faithful from heathen outsiders but by shielding them from authorities within the Protectorate itself.



## PALADINS OF THE OLD FAITH AND OTHER NATIONS

While most prominent in the Protectorate of Menoth, the Menite faith is still practiced in the rest of the Iron Kingdoms, and similarly branches of the Order of the Wall can be found in each of these nations wherever Menites congregate. By far the most prominent and numerous paladins outside of the Protectorate are members of the Old Faith, the largest Menite faith in Khador. Tracing their roots back to the ancient Priest-King Khardovic rather than to Caspia's Golivant, Old Faith Menites largely ignored the call put forth by Sulon that gave rise to the Protectorate of Menoth. They continue to hold themselves respectfully apart and separate from the Sul-Menite theocracy. Regardless of differences in faith, nationality, or languages spoken, all Menite paladins count themselves as members of the ancient Order of the Wall. They recognize a kinship between them that transcends religious hierarchy or other differences.

Paladins of the Old Faith, though a breed apart from their Sul-Menite cousins, still follow the same general principles and traditions, and though their interpretation of the Canon of the True Law is different, their adherence to it is no less important to them. The paladins of the Old Faith comprise a more unified Menite hierarchy than is found anywhere except within the Protectorate, looking to the Korsk branch and its grand paladin for leadership.

While Old Faith paladins all belong to a theoretically unified order, each branch is often left to govern itself. For that matter, there are paladins in the desolate north of Khador who have no regular contact with their own chapter houses. Most Old Faith paladins look entirely to the needs of local Menites in their immediate vicinity, and coordinated efforts are extremely rare. A filial spirit exists between these branches, however, such that paladins traveling elsewhere can expect a warm welcome at any other branch. To a lesser extent this is also true for paladins traveling from one nation to another—even paladins of otherwise differing Menite faiths can expect a degree of hospitality and kinship from their peers.

Individual paladins in remote northern regions may spend their time protecting the faithful from the myriad threats that lurk within the frozen wilds. Functioning in such capacity, and driven largely by their own understanding of the order's moral codes, these paladins seldom have the time, opportunity, or even the inclination to confer with their superiors or peers.

## ORGANIZATION AND TRAINING

It is not uncommon for those who will eventually become paladins to arise from backgrounds where they began training in martial combat at an extremely early age. Whether as sons and daughters of nobility or raised

in families of soldiers, aspirants often felt compelled to condition themselves even as children. It is also not uncommon for branches to accept orphans, taking in those who were otherwise unwanted, and such youths may begin training in weapons even by six or seven years old. Even orphans raised by the order do not have guaranteed acceptance as paladins and must earn that right as would any aspirant.

Actual reception into the Order of the Wall as an initiate generally occurs after ten years of age, most aspirants having by then already gained a strong martial instinct and a basic understanding of the use of sword and shield. Aspirants are screened and must demonstrate a degree of stamina, strength, and mental fortitude exceptional for their age. It is not uncommon for the majority to be turned away, more often disqualified for mental rather than physical failings. Such youths may eventually find acceptance serving the temple in another capacity, such as by becoming Knights Exemplar or Temple Flameguard. For those accepted into the order as initiates, early training is provided by older recruits who have not yet attained the rank of paladin, under the direction of retired paladins who continue to serve the order by training others.

Though it is unequivocally a martial organization, the Order of the Wall is first and foremost a religious fellowship. Initiates join the order after experiencing a powerful and extremely personal spiritual pull, understanding from the start that acceptance as a paladin will not be easy—few possess the faith and personal resolve to make such a choice, and fewer still have the strength to complete the journey.

As initiates advance they achieve a greater understanding of the Canon of the True Law and of the principles and traditions of the order. Considerable time is spent reading and studying spiritual texts. Along with this development of their spiritual self, initiates increasingly receive first-hand instruction from both training officers and, as opportunity permits, from active paladins. Expert swordsmen by the age of thirteen or fourteen, initiates spend the final years of training honing their already formidable defensive prowess and learning to draw on their faith to attain a level of martial prowess that is beyond the capacity of most men.

Beyond their training officers, most order branches rely on a relatively small support staff. Most of these are paladins who have retired from active duty due to age or injury; however, some are former initiates who were unable to achieve the martial prowess or spiritual focus demanded of them and so chose to serve in a different capacity rather than abandon the order. Day-to-day functions are typically carried out by the paladins themselves, for the order instills within its members a sense of humility that deems even the lowest tasks worthy of their attention. Senior paladins and high paladins, though lacking the



authority of true Menite priests, are entitled to conduct limited religious rites and ceremonies, particularly funeral rites and the investiture of initiation and promotion.

Once their training is complete, initiates cleanse their spirits by undertaking a three-day vigil and then must speak the complete vows of the order, which include their core creed and code. Afterward they are formally welcomed into the Order of the Wall and are granted the rank of paladin.

Though paladins may enter battle in pairs or small groups, they do so as a gathering of individuals fighting with shared purpose, not as a military unit. All paladins serve under the jurisdiction of one of the order's senior paladins, who in turn report to a high paladin. Among smaller branches there will be no rank above this, with a single high paladin leading a branch or sharing leadership with several equally ranked peers. The Order of the Wall in the Protectorate of Menoth and the Paladins of the Old Faith Order of the Wall each have their own grand paladin, who stands above the high paladins as a single voice of authority.

The Old Faith chapters are so loosely associated with one another, however, that the rank of grand paladin in Khador is largely ceremonial. Within the Protectorate the grand paladin holds considerably greater organizational power and could more readily exercise direct command over his subordinates, had he the need to do so. It is the grand paladin who is must ultimately answer to the Synod of Visgoths or the hierarchy, and who is thus accountable for the order's actions.

Whenever possible the ranking paladins in a given branch will police their own membership, handling matters of internal discipline or breaches in their code. Within the Protectorate, in instances where the order's actions are brought into question by a scrutator, these priests may opt to discipline the paladin in question as they would any other citizen. Scrutators are fully within their authority to dispense justice to paladins, but in the case of infractions by certain high-ranking figures there may be political ramifications that require more delicate handling. Before judgment might be imposed on a high paladin or the grand paladin, a scrutator would likely defer to the Synod or to an individual vice scrutator. The same is true for other top-ranking members of the various Protectorate military orders. In some instances the order may take steps to shield its members from judgment, though doing so is a political gambit its senior members do not often dare to make.

These considerations are sometimes necessary since the moral rectitude required of paladins can be at odds with decisions made by leading Menite priests, either within the Protectorate or without. Situations in which paladins are at odds with regional leaders are not uncommon and can potentially cause scandal or unrest if a paladin's

intervention provokes an emotional uprising. Within the Protectorate, paladins have become adept at interpreting their code in such a way that they can usually assist regular citizens without defying the priest caste. For their part, priests and paladins have an unspoken accord whereby priests avoid giving orders a paladin cannot obey while paladins seek to avoid situations where their intervention would violate a priest's dictates.

## THE PALADIN CODE

The basic code of a paladin of the Order of the Wall is relatively simple. A paladin is tasked to:

- 1) Obey the Creator of Man
- 2) Shield the helpless and alleviate suffering
- 3) Preserve civilization and the temple
- 4) Uphold the True Law by battling the faithless

Paladins are expected to hone themselves into living weapons and to stand ready to sacrifice their lives to preserve their principles. The priorities of this code, while simple in principle, can become complex and difficult to interpret in practice. There are lengthy texts examining the application of this code in a variety of circumstances and as interpreted in various historical periods by different cultures. The specific vow spoken by an initiate varies from one branch to another but always includes some derivation of these fundamental obligations.

## CURRENT STATUS OF THE ORDER

The Order of the Wall has survived three millennium of ever-changing Immorese society, during a third of which time their religion has been in a state of gradually diminishing influence. Even as the Menite religion lost its status as the dominant faith among humanity, the order persevered due to the unwavering singularity of their mission: the defense of the Menite faithful. The purity of this cause has served the order since the dawn of civilization and has allowed it to endure even when faced with potential extinction at the hands of foreign occupiers. Their diminishment is due not to any failure of the order itself, but rather to the changing status of the Menite religion and its increasingly militant crusades.

Amid a faith now firmly set upon a path of conquest and forced conversion, the Order of the Wall and its message of mercy and protection seems not only out of synch but destined to provoke censure. Yet as in other times when it has faced obstacles, the Order of the Wall endures not by the combined might of its members, but by preserving the vital role it serves in Menite society and the regard this earns it among the masses. So long as ordinary Menites look to the Order of the Wall for protection from unknown dangers, there will continued to be a place for the paladin and the wall between light and darkness that he symbolizes.



# PALADIN OF THE ORDER OF THE WALL TACTICS

BY DAVID "DC" CARL



Stalwart defenders of the Menite faith, Paladins of the Order of the Wall stand against the most determined adversaries. Those who mistake their defensive instincts for passivity soon feel the blazing bite of the paladins' Firebrand blades.

## SHIELD OF FAITH

Numerous WARMACHINE solos have base ARM values

comparable to a Paladin of the Order of the Wall's ARM 16, and many have five wounds. These stats alone, however, are only part of the survivability of these Protectorate of Menoth solos. The Stone-and-Mortar Stance ability allows a Paladin to sacrifice its movement or action to gain +5 ARM and immunity to knockdown.

A Paladin's Stone-and-Mortar ARM value equals that of the mighty Behemoth! Ranged units without Combined Ranged Attack have little hope of dealing even a single point of damage to a Stone-and-Mortared Paladin, and even *charging* melee units will often need multiple attacks to dispatch one of these guardians of the faith. Once engaged in melee (and therefore more difficult to target with a charge), Paladins become extremely difficult to destroy without the assistance of a model capable of boosting damage rolls.

This is not to say Paladins are invincible. Any model in WARMACHINE can be defeated when sufficient firepower is brought to bear, but Paladins are extremely sturdy relative to their cost and are very effective at protecting other assets long enough to maximize their potential. Whether employed as deterrents in front of a warcaster or as guardians of a key warjack like the Avatar of Menoth, their defensive strength can enable an army's offense, even if a Paladin's own sword never strikes an enemy.

## FIREBRAND

Though it lacks any non-icon abilities, the Firebrand is an exceptional weapon for a non-character model. Not only is it POW 7 on a STR 7 model (for P+S 14 total), it also has Weapon Master. On a charge, a Paladin of the Order of the Wall will average a total of 28 on the damage roll, enough to pierce even the strongest ARM values in the game and threaten entire systems or aspects in a single swing. Depending on the target, however, charging is not always the right move since a charging Paladin cannot use Stone-and-Mortar Stance. During each Paladin's activation, assess the available targets and threats to determine

whether a Paladin should charge or use Stone-and-Mortar Stance.

In addition to Weapon Master, Firebrand has Magical Weapon and Critical Fire. Magical Weapon allows Paladins to deal with Incorporeal foes, and Critical Fire has the potential for additional damage turn after turn if the Paladin doesn't simply kill his target outright.

The real key to making the most out of Paladins of the Order of the Wall is a good understanding of when it's most beneficial to maximize their incredible defensive capabilities versus their impressive offensive ones. It's not possible to maximize both sides of that offense/defense coin simultaneously, but a Paladin who begins his activation in the midst of battle can use Stone-and-Mortar and still perform a Firebrand attack. A critical eye toward threat assessment can turn this solid melee solo into a truly game-changing one.

## HOLY CHAMPIONS

Paladins of the Order of the Wall are efficient even when completely unassisted, but the right abilities, feats, and spells turn them into true holy terrors for the Lawgiver. High Paladin Dartan Vilmon is a great support model for other members of his order, but plenty of warcasters and solos allow Paladins to really turn up the heat.

- Since they are solos, it's much more efficient to support Paladins with command and control range abilities or feats rather than single-target spells and abilities. A spell like Grand Scrutator Severius' Eye of Menoth, for example, provides superior Paladin support for melee offense relative to a single-target spell like Ignite.
- Spells and abilities that hinder opposing forces work beautifully alongside the exceptional defense of Stone-and-Mortar Stance. Fear of God and Wall of Fire are just two examples of spells that can minimize (or even negate) the most potent threats to Stone-and-Mortared Paladins.
- Crusader's Call is a great way to increase multiple Paladins' charge threat ranges, but Vice Scrutator Vindictus' True Path is an even more versatile movement buff spell. Even if a Paladin of the Order of the Wall wishes to Stone-and-Mortar rather than charge, True Path will allow him to advance the same distance most Protectorate heavy warjacks can run.
- Though rare, abilities that provide a second Firebrand strike are some of the most powerful. Grand Exemplar Kreoss' Strength of Arms feat and the Vessel of Judgment's Doors of Judgment miracle are powerful abilities that allow a Paladin to perform an additional attack.



# HIGH PALADIN DARTAN VILMON TACTICS

BY DAVID "DC" CARL



High Paladin Dartan Vilmon is a peerless warrior capable of turning aside virtually any enemy attack. Under his command, other Paladins of the Order of the Wall can form an impenetrable barrier capable of turning back entire armies.

## CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS

There is no denying the melee prowess of a Paladin of the Order of

the Wall. MAT 8 is about as high as it gets, and P+S 14 Weapon Master attacks are near the top end for warrior melee damage. As good as that is, High Paladin Dartan Vilmon is even better. His MAT 9 is tied for the highest in the game and his P+S 15 Weapon Master attacks rival heavy warjacks for effective hitting power.

Additionally, Vilmon's sword Censure trades Critical Fire for Reach, granting the High Paladin a greater melee threat range and increasing the chance he can perform melee attacks after he forfeits his movement to enter a battle stance.

Between Vilmon's exceptional MAT, high P+S, and respectable threat range, he is a highly versatile melee threat. Whether dispatching a key enemy solo, crippling a system or aspect on an enemy warjack/warbeast, or even threatening an opponent's warcaster or warlock, Vilmon is a threat no opponent can ignore.

## IMPERVIOUS TO HARM

Unfortunately for that opponent, Vilmon is also not the easiest threat to address. He can enter the Stone-and-Mortar Stance, just like his lower-ranking brethren, and he also has access to Impervious Wall. After forfeiting movement or action for Impervious Wall, non-magical melee and ranged attacks become completely ineffective against High Paladin Dartan Vilmon. This protection covers not only damage rolls but all other effects of those attacks as well. As if that wasn't enough, models in Impervious Wall cannot be knocked down, even if the source of that effect is a magical attack, spell, or feat rather than a non-magical melee or ranged attack.

More impressive still, Vilmon conveys this game-changing ability to other Paladins of the Order of the Wall solos in his army. A line of three Paladins (Vilmon and two non-character Paladins) in Impervious Wall is a truly daunting obstacle for most army lists to overcome. There are armies with plentiful magic attacks, but there are also countless lists that do not boast easy answers to such foes.

Even army lists with numerous answers to Impervious Wall may lack the tools to deal with Stone-and-Mortar Stance. Magelock pistol rounds and POW 12 blasts of frost will have virtually no effect on the ARM 21 Paladins implacably advancing on the enemies of the Protectorate of Menoth.

## HIGH PALADIN HELPERS

High Paladin Dartan Vilmon is a powerful support model for Paladins of the Order of the Wall and a self-sufficient melee monster. In the right army lists, however, he can have even more of an impact on the game thanks to support from the right abilities, spells, and feats.

- All of the various abilities that benefit Paladins of the Order of the Wall are of tremendous benefit to Vilmon as well. Eye of Menoth, True Path, Doors of Judgment, and all of the other support elements identified for improving non-character Paladins will assist the High Paladin in his holy battles for the God of Man.
- The Impervious Wall ability shares much in common with Greater Destiny and the Choir of Menoth's Passage Hymn. A front line of Paladins, Holy Zealots, and Protectorate warjacks can be virtually immune to the ranged attacks of the vast majority of WARMACHINE and HORDES army lists. These models are not mere speed bumps either, but devastating threats in their own right.
- The Harbinger of Menoth deserves special mention when it comes to Paladins of the Order of the Wall and High Paladin Dartan Vilmon. Her Godhead feat synergizes well with the Paladins' innate protective abilities to thwart nearly any would-be attackers during her feat turn. Additionally, her Martyrdom ability turns any Paladin casualties into d3 damage points to the Harbinger instead. For such already-hardy models, it's not too difficult to spare some warcaster health to keep them fighting fit, especially with the Hierophant's Heal ability and the Harbinger's extremely high Focus stat helping heal her own damage.



# OLD FAITH PALADINS OF THE ORDER OF THE WALL

BY MICHAEL ARCHER

## COLORS USED

	Armor Wash
	Bastion Grey
	Battlefield Brown
	Beast Hide
	Brown Ink
	Coal Black
	Cold Steel
	Exile Blue
	Flesh Wash
	Heartfire
	Khador Red Base
	Khador Red Highlight
	Khardic Flesh
	Menoth White Base
	Midlund Flesh
	Mixing Medium
	Morrow White
	Pig Iron
	Red Ink
	Rhulic Gold
	Sanguine Base
	Sanguine Highlight
	Solid Gold
	Tamar Black
	Trollblood Highlight
	Turquoise ink
	Yellow Ink

Because the Order of the Wall exists throughout the Iron Kingdoms and not just within the Protectorate of Menoth, I wanted to paint these Paladins as though they were stationed up north, protecting the Old Faith Menites of the Khadoran countryside. I wanted their paint scheme to reflect their heritage, so I decided to incorporate some reds and blacks; however, I didn't want them to be mistaken for part of the Khadoran military. To avoid this I decided to paint their armor as bare steel, with some gold accents to provide contrast and to bring home the religious nature of the model.

## STEP 1 – STEEL ARMOR AND SWORD

When beginning to work on a model it's generally best to work your way up from the deepest parts. Start with the metal areas, which have the largest surfaces and some of the deepest recesses.

- 1) For the armor's base coat, apply a 1:1 mix of Armor Wash and Pig Iron. This may take a couple of coats, but it provides a nice, solid color to work from. Basecoat the sword with Cold Steel to differentiate it from the darker steel armor.
- 2) To add some depth to the armor, apply a 1:1 mix of Armor Wash and water. Watch for pooling, and soak up any excess paint with a dry brush or brush it off to another area.
- 3) Shade the armor with a 3:1 mix of Tamar Black and water. Going really dark gives the highlights a strong contrast and helps present the illusion of the metal surfaces reflecting light.
- 4) The first highlight is a 1:1 mix of Mixing Medium and Pig Iron. This is a nice, transparent color that works well for blending some of the darker areas up to the highlights.
- 5) Add a little color to the armor with a glaze of 1:1:4 Coal Black, Turquoise Ink, and water. Apply this conservatively and not to every surface of the armor. This brings life to the armor, reflecting the environment and keeping the armor from looking too clean. After this dries, apply a final highlight of Cold Steel. This is a good time to go through and pick out metal details you may have missed or that need cleaning up.

**Colors Used:** Armor Wash, Coal Black, Cold Steel, Mixing Medium, Pig Iron, Tamar Black, Turquoise Ink

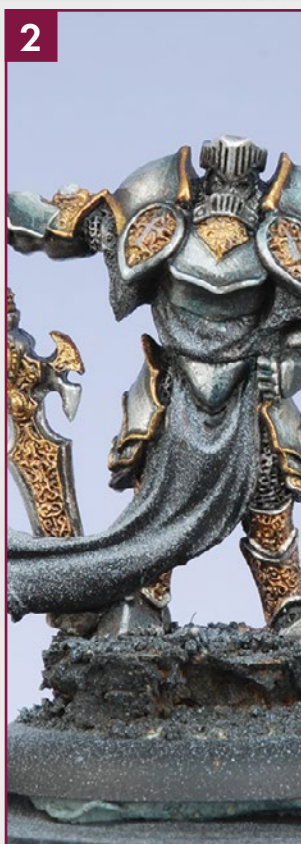
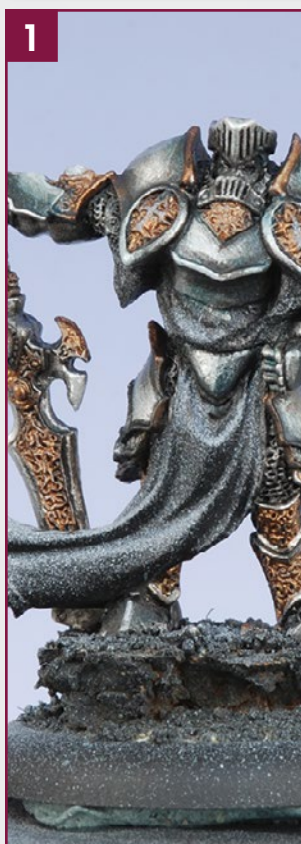




## STEP 2 – GOLD METAL

- 1) Paint any gold areas with a 1:2 mix of Brown Ink and Rhulic Gold. It can be worth painting a couple of layers of this mix to get a good area of coverage to work from.
- 2) Lightly drybrush with Rhulic Gold.
- 3) Shade with a 1:1:1:2 mix of Brown Ink, Rhulic Gold, Yellow Ink, and water.
- 4) Lightly drybrush with Solid Gold to apply the final highlight.

**Colors Used:** Brown Ink, Rhulic Gold, Solid Gold, Yellow Ink



## STEP 3 – FACE

Faces can be tricky, but if you take your time they can really add a nice focal point to your models. The Paladin's exposed face is very small, but with some careful brushwork it can be conquered.

- 1) Basecoat the face with Khardic Flesh. A few light coats are necessary.
- 2) Apply Flesh Wash over the Khardic Flesh to add some depth and define the details of the face.
- 3) Shade the eyes and clean up the edges of the face with a 1:1:1 mix of Mixing Medium, Thamar Black, and water. Then add a dot of Menoth White Base to the eyeball, making sure to leave a ring of black around it.
- 4) Highlight the face with Midlund Flesh and add a dot of Coal Black to each eye. By licking the brush before loading it with paint or using drying retarder, you can mitigate brush tip drying while painting the eyeballs.

**Colors Used:** Coal Black, Flesh Wash, Khardic Flesh, Menoth White Base, Midlund Flesh, Mixing Medium, Thamar Black





## STEP 4 – TABARD AND MENOFIX

- 1) Basecoat the tabard with Coal Black.
- 2) Shade with a 1:2 mix of Coal Black and Thamar Black. Think about where the light is coming from and what kinds of shadows it creates. To help with this, hold the model close to a light to see where shadows and highlights naturally appear.
- 3) For the first highlight, mix 2:1 Coal Black and Menoth White Base. Allow some of the base color to show through to help the transitions from dark to light.
- 4) The second highlight is a 1:1 mix of Coal Black and Menoth White.
- 5) Finally, add an edge highlight with a 1:2 mix of Coal Black and Menoth White Base.

**Colors Used:** Coal Black, Menoth White Base, Thamar Black

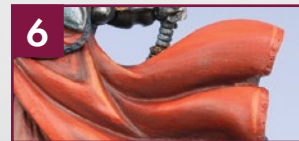
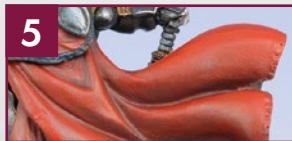
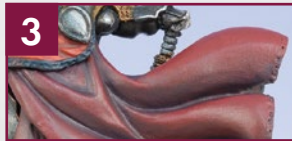
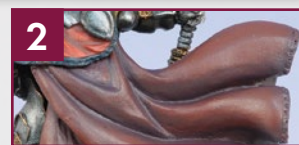
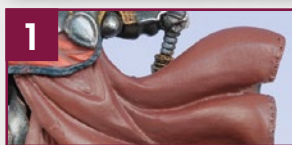


## STEP 5 – CLOAK

To reflect their Khadoran heritage I chose to paint their cloaks and parts of their shields red. Painting most of the cloak before attaching it to the model makes it easier to access some of those hard-to-reach places.

- 1) For the basecoat, apply a few layers of Sanguine Base.
- 2) For shading, mix 1:1 Exile Blue and Sanguine Base. Once again, a few thin layers are needed due to the size of the area being painted.
- 3) Highlight with Sanguine Highlight.
- 4) Apply thinned-down Khador Red Base to the highlights to brighten them up for the next step.
- 5) Wash the cloak with a 1:1 mix Red Ink and water, applying two or three thin layers and being careful not to let it pool. This gives you a rich, red color, which is also very smooth.
- 6) Add a final highlight of a 1:2:1 mix of Khador Red Base, Khador Red Highlight, and Red Ink. Edge the highlight with Khador Red Highlight.
- 7) Paint the hem at the bottom of the cloak the same as the tabard in Step 4. Splatter the bottom edges of the cloak with thinned Battlefield Brown. Apply one or two layers, leaving some of the "bathtub rings" for the look of wet dirt. An older brush with a bad tip can be good for this. The muddy look helps tie the miniature in with its base. Apply this effect to the bottom of the tabard as well.

**Colors Used:** Battlefield Brown, Coal Black, Exile Blue, Khador Red Base, Khador Red Highlight, Red Ink, Sanguine Base, Sanguine Highlight, Thamar Black

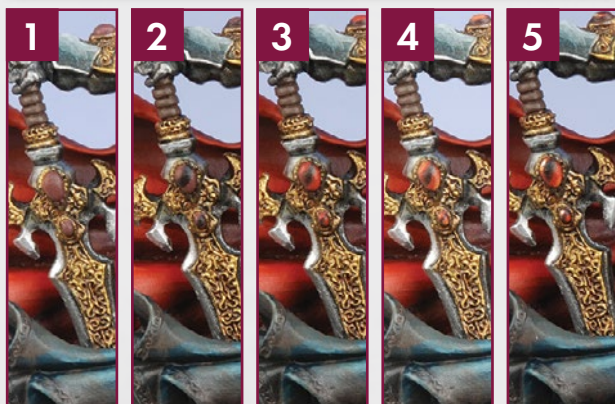




## STEP 6 – GEMS

- 1) Basecoat the gems with Sanguine Base.
- 2) Shade with Tamar Black and make sure to create a black ring around the base of the gems. Gems need that high contrast to make them pop.
- 3) Highlight with Khador Red Base.
- 4) Follow up with a second highlight of Khador Red Highlight.
- 5) Give the gems a highlight of Heartfire and a dot of Morrow White to show the direction of the light.

**Colors Used:** Heartfire, Khador Red Base, Khador Red Highlight, Morrow White, Sanguine Base, Tamar Black



## THE SHIELD

Paint the shield using Step 1 for the metals areas, Step 2 for the gold areas, Step 4 for the Menofix, and Step 5 for the Khadoran Red parts.

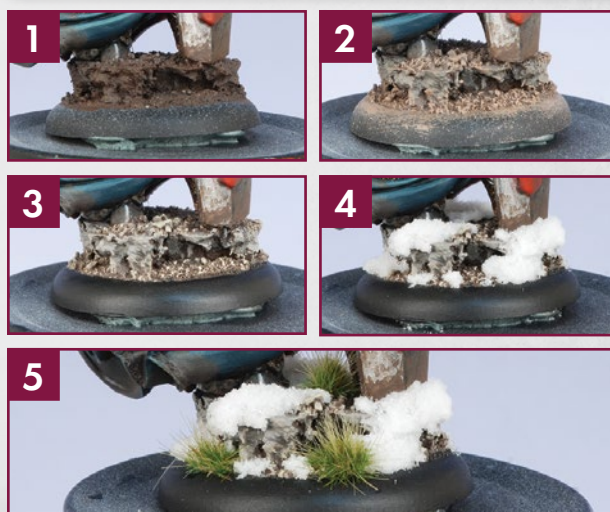


## STEP 7 – THE BASE

The bases were flocked with sand, using cork pieces for rocks.

- 1) Basecoat the entire base with Battlefield Brown, making sure to let the paint seep into all the cracks, then paint the rocks with Bastion Grey.
- 2) Drybrush the dirt with Beast Hide, then drybrush the stones with Trollblood Highlight.
- 3) Apply a final light drybrush of Menoth White Base.
- 4) Mix some snow flock with white glue at about a 1:1 ratio. It should be the consistency of crumbly dough or putty. Using a P3 Hobby Knife or P3 Sculpting Tool, apply the snow to the base in patches. Once you have applied the snow, sprinkle a small amount of snow flock on top and blow off any extra.
- 5) Finally, apply some grass tufts or static grass with a dead or dying look to it.

**Colors Used:** Bastion Grey, Battlefield Brown, Beast Hide, Menoth White Base, Trollblood Highlight



## CONCLUSION

Drawing inspiration from the lore of the Iron Kingdoms is a fun way to change up your paint schemes and can really add a sense of the overall story to your miniatures. I had a lot of fun with this alternate paint scheme, and I hope you've enjoyed reading about the process.





# FOUNDRY, FORGE & CRUCIBLE IRONHEADS

BY MATT GOETZ • ART BY CARLOS CABRERA AND KORY LYNN HUBBELL

*Encased in a heavy suit of steam-powered armor, the Ironhead is a specialist mechanic who has built and customized armor tailored to his unique tastes and personal needs. While within his armor an Ironhead's strength is that of many men, and he can have an entire mechanic's shop of tools and components affixed to his armor's hull. Ironheads are employed in heavy manufacturing jobs—the strength of their armor helps them handle incredible work loads—and as heavily armored mechaniks on the battlefield.*

*Some Ironheads begin their quest for perfection with relatively simple suits of steam-powered armor, but their enthusiasm for improvement means that, in short order, various parts will be replaced or improved with cobbled-together components or with scavenged and adapted equipment harvested from the scrapyards. Before long their armor will be completely unrecognizable from*

*its original form, covered in ancillary equipment, back-up boilers, and riveted plates of additional armor.*

*Relying on their skills as mechanical engineers, Ironheads guide their armor to endure adversity on and off the battlefield. Often working as mercenaries, few Ironheads are motivated primarily by the financial benefits. The thrill of controlling their armor, of exerting incredible strength, and of bearing weapons no mortal man could naturally wield seems to be rewarding enough.*

*The following article builds on material presented in Iron Kingdoms Full Metal Fantasy Roleplaying Game: Kings, Nations, and Gods and introduces Ironheads to the game. That book introduced the Man-O-War career, along with its military suit of steam-powered armor; however, the Ironhead and its signature equipment examine the less-combative side of steam armor and the unusual men and women who are obsessed with it.*



## NEW CAREER

# IRONHEAD

Prerequisites: Dwarf or Human

<b>Starting Abilities, Connections, and Skills</b>	<b>Abilities:</b> Ironhead ( <i>Kings, Nations, and Gods</i> , p. 181) and Tinkerer (p. 34) <b>Connections:</b> Connections (mechaniks association) <b>Military Skills:</b> Great Weapon 1 or Light Artillery 1 <b>Occupational Skills:</b> Craft (metalworking) 1 and Mechanical Engineering 1
<b>Starting Assets</b>	A suit of ironhead armor with a single equipment upgrade
<b>Ironhead Abilities</b>	Fabricator (p. 34) Ironhead ( <i>Kings, Nations, and Gods</i> , p. 181), Makeshift Engineering (p. 34), Patch Up (p. 34), Powerstrain (p. 34), Rock Steady (p. 34), Steam Jockey ( <i>Kings, Nations, and Gods</i> , p. 181), Steam Savant (p. 34), Tinkerer (p. 34)
<b>Ironhead Connections</b>	Connections (mechaniks association)
<b>Ironhead Military Skills</b>	Great Weapon 3, Light Artillery 3
<b>Ironhead Occupational Skills</b>	Craft (metalworking) 4, Craft (gunsmithing) 3, General Skills 4, Mechanical Engineering 4, Research 3

Ironheads are a unique breed of mechanical enthusiasts distinguished by the steam-powered armor they obsessively build and improve upon. Never satisfied to leave such a project in an imperfect state, an Ironhead is constantly fine-tuning and tweaking his armor.

The Ironhead character could be a member of a mercenary company who takes contracts to finance the never-ending refinement of his armor or a man obsessed with testing its capabilities against all manner of stress and strain—always seeking new situations in which to analyze the limits of his creation. Whatever his circumstances, the life of adventure generally suits the Ironhead, provided he has sufficient down-time to disassemble, improve, and rebuild the true object of his passion.

**Playing an Ironhead:** The Ironhead career is defined by his armor and the abilities that allow him to improve it. His starting abilities allow him to use the armor and make it easier for him to modify it to suit his needs, and further abilities enhance his capabilities while using it. As an Ironhead gains experience, he will have multiple opportunities to alter his armor through the Tinkerer ability, but to truly get the most out of it he should pick up the Powerstrain ability as soon as possible.

Veteran Ironheads gain access to the ability Steam Savant, which allows the Ironhead to push his armor to incredible lengths without worrying about any adverse consequences.





# NEW ABILITIES

## FABRICATOR

**Prerequisite:** INT 5, Mechanical Engineering 2

The character can reroll failed Mechanical Engineering rolls to repair or dismantle steam-powered armor. Each roll can be rerolled only once as a result of Fabricator. Additionally, his armor regains an additional point when he repairs damage.

## MAKESHIFT ENGINEERING

**Prerequisite:** Mechanical Engineering 1

The character is adept at finding rare or expensive replacement parts to repair his armor. Given a day to find the parts in a town or industrialized settlement, the character can find any parts needed (or something close enough he can bodge it together). The character can purchase parts, weapons, and gear at half the normal price.

## PATCH UP

**Prerequisite:** Ironhead

The character can attempt temporary repairs to his steam-powered armor during combat. To do so, the character spends a full action and then makes an INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 14. If the roll fails, nothing happens.

If the roll succeeds, the armor immediately regains a number of damage boxes equal to the character's Mechanical Engineering Skill level, or removes the effect of a single damaged system.

A character must have the proper tools to attempt to patch up his armor.

Patch Up has no effect on destroyed steam-powered armor.

## POWERSTRAIN

**Prerequisite:** Ironhead, Mechanical Engineering 2

Once per turn the character can divert resources from one area of his steam-powered armor to another for a number of different effects. When the character uses this ability, his armor immediately suffers d3 damage points, and he may select one of the following effects:

**Leg Actuators** – The Ironhead can run or charge during this turn.

**Limb Actuators** – The Ironhead gains an additional +1 STR for one round.

**Power Reroute** – A damaged system functions normally this turn.

**Throw** – Perform a throw power attack (*IKRPG: Core Rules*, p. 313) this turn.

**Torque** – The Ironhead gains boosted STR rolls for one round.

## ROCK STEADY

**Prerequisite:** Ironhead

While wearing steam-powered armor the character cannot be knocked down, and the distance he is pushed or slammed is reduced by 1", to a minimum of 1".

## STEAM SAVANT

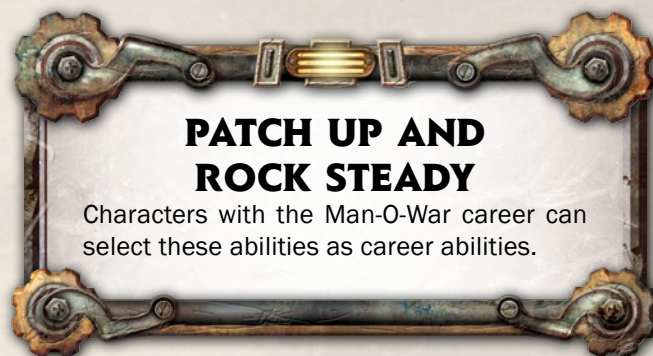
**Prerequisite:** Ironhead, Mechanical Engineering 3

The character's armor no longer suffers damage when he uses the Powerstrain ability.

## TINKERER

**Prerequisite:** Mechanical Engineering 1

The time required to construct a suit of ironhead armor or to add an equipment upgrade is reduced by half.



# STEAM-POWERED ARMOR

Steam-powered armor has existed in one form or another for centuries. It has found prevalent use among mercenary companies and militias unable to afford warjacks, for the armor has a reputation for being able to dole out and receive punishment on a scale similar to that of a light 'jack. Khadoran Man-O-War armor is the most commonly manufactured type of steam-powered armor, a mass-produced version used by the military to supplement its warjacks in combat. Most often, though, a suit of steam-powered armor is a unique item cobbled together by the engineer who wears it. Some are retrofitted from industrially manufactured suits and customized beyond recognition while others are built entirely from scratch to the requirements of a particular engineer.

The idiosyncrasies of a suit of steam-powered armor often mean only the engineer who built it can successfully pilot the suit, for no one else has a sufficient understanding of its inner workings to do so. The only commonality between these suits is the enormous power plant housed on the rear of the armor. Its external mounting keeps the intense heat of the boiler away from the operator within, preventing him from being burned when the armor is active. Most suits are bulky, heavily armored, and feature various mechanical attachments.



## IRONHEAD ARMOR

**Cost:** Ironhead armor is constructed by the Ironhead who wears it and is not typically available for sale.

**SPD Modifier:** -3

**DEF Modifier:** -3

**ARM Modifier:** +8

**Description:** Ironhead armor is a heavy suit of mechanically augmented armor powered by a heavy boiler mounted on its back.

Ironhead armor can carry a full fuel-load of 33 pounds of coal and 165 pounds of water. It will burn a full load of fuel in 8 hours of general operation or in 1.5 hours of combat operation. Every day a suit of steam-powered armor is in operation, whether in combat or not, it should be refueled and refilled with water.

**Special Rules:** A character must have the Ironhead ability to use ironhead armor. Each suit of ironhead armor is customized to the body of its manufacturer and can only be worn by characters with similar proportions.

Putting on or removing ironhead armor takes five minutes. A character receiving assistance in taking off the armor can do so one minute faster for each character assisting him, to a minimum of two minutes to put on or remove the armor.

Ironhead armor is heavy and ponderous. A character wearing it cannot run or charge.

A character wearing ironhead armor gains +1 STR.

A character wearing ironhead armor gains six additional damage boxes that must be lost before the character starts losing vitality on his life spiral. These boxes represent additional protection granted by the armor. After these boxes are gone, the wearer suffers damage to his life spiral normally.

## BUILDING IRONHEAD ARMOR

Ironheads who wish to manufacture their own suits of ironhead armor from scratch must engage in a lengthy practice of drafting, crafting components, and building the armor. The process requires the Ironhead to have a ready supply of sheet metal, parts worth at least 1,500 gc, and access to a full mechanik's workshop.

A character must first design a schematic for his ironhead armor, a process that requires at least one week of time spent taking measurements of its intended wearer, designing components, and testing component designs. At the end of this time the character makes an INT + Mechanical Engineering skill roll against a target number of 15. If the roll succeeds, he has successfully designed his armor and may begin the work of crafting it. If the roll fails, he can try again after a day spent modifying his design.

To manufacture his armor, the character must spend another week crafting the individual components and fitting them together. At the end of this time the character makes an INT + Craft (metalworking) skill roll against a target number of 17. If the roll succeeds, he has successfully crafted his armor. If the roll fails, he can try again after another three days spent disassembling and rebuilding the components.

## DAMAGE AND DESTRUCTION

Repairing damage to a suit of ironhead armor requires access to sheet metal, scrap, and a full repair kit. Every hour a mechanik labors over a suit of armor he can repair an amount of damage equal to his Mechanical Engineering skill level. If the character has access to a mechanik's workshop and/or a supply of replacement parts, he can remove an additional d3 damage points each hour. A mechanik who is assisted in his repair efforts can remove one additional damage point for each character assisting him. The repair of non-internal damage to a suit of armor costs 10 gc per hour per mechanik working on it.

### Ironhead Armor Internal Damage Table

Despite being incredibly durable and resilient, ironhead armor houses a complex array of sophisticated machinery that is subject to potential damage. Whether damage is applied to the armor's damage boxes or the wearer's life spiral, when a character wearing ironhead armor suffers 5 or more damage as a result of a damage roll, a roll must be made on the armor's internal damage table to determine if any internal systems are also damaged.

D6	RESULT
1	No internal systems are damaged – No additional penalty.
2	A random equipment upgrade is crippled and no longer functions.
3	Arm Damaged – One of the arms is crippled. Randomize which arm is damaged. Until the damage is repaired, the character suffers -3 to attack rolls made with the damaged arm.
4	Loss of Power – The steam pressure has been compromised, resulting in a severe loss of power to the armor. Until repaired, the character loses the armor's STR bonus.
5	Movement Damaged – The vessel's movement systems have been damaged. Until repaired, the character suffers -1 SPD and DEF.
6	Boiler Leak – The armor's boiler has been damaged, resulting in steam dangerously venting into the suit itself. Until the armor is removed, the character wearing the armor suffers d3 damage points at the end of each of his turns. Outside of combat he suffers this damage once per minute.



## DESTROYING IRONHEAD ARMOR

If a suit of ironhead armor has no more damage boxes and suffers damage to all of its internal systems it is effectively destroyed, reduced to inert scrap and trapping the wearer inside. A character trapped in a suit of ironhead armor must make a STR or Escape Artist roll against a target number of 14 to free himself from the armor. Another character can attempt to free a character trapped in destroyed ironhead armor by making a Mechanical Engineering skill roll against a target number of 14. If the roll succeeds, he successfully disassembles enough of the armor to free the wearer.

### Salvage

Wrecked ironhead armor can be salvaged for its component parts. Dismantling a suit of armor for salvage requires an hour of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 14. If the roll fails, the character can try again after another 30 minutes of work. If the mechanic has access to a full mechanic's shop he gains +2 to his roll. Equipment Upgrades salvaged from a wrecked suit of armor can be integrated into a new suit in half the normal time.

## IRONHEAD UPGRADES

The following upgrades are specialized equipment and modifications for ironhead armor that enable a character to customize his armor for his specific needs.

Equipment integrated into ironhead armor can be controlled by the character wearing the armor from within the armor's control area.

Unless otherwise noted, ironhead armor can have each equipment upgrade only once.

### ADDING EQUIPMENT UPGRADES

Mounting equipment upgrades requires a great deal of time and investment on the part of the Ironhead. When an Ironhead selects an upgrade from the following list, he must spend six hours in a mechanic's workshop building and modifying his armor to accommodate the new upgrade. Ironheads typically fashion their upgrades from scrap material and scavenged components rather than purchasing them.

An Ironhead must have a ready supply of sheet metal and scraps for the construction of an upgrade worth its cost in gc. He makes a Mechanical Engineering skill roll against a target number determined by the specific upgrade being added. If the mechanic has access to a full mechanic's shop, he gains +2 to his roll.

The target number to add an equipment upgrade increases by a cumulative +1 for each upgrade after the first.

If the roll succeeds, the Ironhead has constructed and integrated the new component. If the roll fails, he must roll on the Integration Failure Table to determine the consequences of his failure.

## INTEGRATION FAILURE TABLE

Adding equipment to a suit of ironhead armor can be quite difficult, as the upgrades are typically not a part of the armor's initial designs. Often the Ironhead must bolt his intended equipment onto less-than-ideal areas or quickly fabricate support structures to hold it. Sometimes the Ironhead's jury-rigged construction cannot support the equipment he wants to incorporate, and when these builds fail the result may be catastrophic. When a character fails a Mechanical Engineering skill roll to add an equipment upgrade, he must then roll on the following table.

D6	RESULT
1	<b>No Significant Failure</b> – The character can retry the roll after an hour spent modifying his design.
2	<b>Costly Malfunction</b> – During testing, an expensive component breaks. The total cost of the upgrade increases by 50 gc, and character can retry the roll after an hour spent repairing the damaged component.
3	<b>Component Destroyed</b> – The pieces used in the construction of the upgrade are destroyed. The character must pay the cost of the upgrade again to build the upgrade.
4	<b>Boiler Leak</b> – The armor's boiler has been damaged, resulting in steam being dangerously vented into the suit itself. Until the armor is repaired, a character wearing the armor suffers d3 damage points at the end of each of his turns. Outside of combat he suffers this damage once per minute.
5	<b>Failure Feedback</b> – The failing system causes a chain reaction of failures in the armor. Another randomly determined equipment upgrade is destroyed.
6	<b>Catastrophic Failure</b> – A critical component breaks during the construction process, causing a series of failures throughout the armor. The character must spend a full week adjusting his armor before it is operational again.

## EQUIPMENT UPGRADES

### ABLATIVE ARMOR

**Cost:** 250 gc

**Effect:** The armor gains +3 damage boxes. This upgrade can be taken more than once.

Adding ablative armor requires an hour of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a difficulty of 12.

### AMPHIBIOUS CONSTRUCTION

**Cost:** 300 gc

**Effect:** The armor is outfitted with a fully enclosed control area with waterproof seals, reserve air tanks, and a helmet with a thick glass viewport, allowing the armor to function for up to five minutes while fully submerged. The character cannot swim while



in the armor but can walk at his normal rate. While completely within deep water the character cannot be targeted by ranged or magic attacks, cannot make ranged attacks, and can only make melee attacks against other characters in deep water. While completely within deep water, the character does not block LOS.

Adding amphibious construction requires six hours of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 14.

### ARTILLERY MOUNT

**Cost:** 200 gc

**Effect:** The armor gains a mount that can accommodate a light steamjack ranged weapon (sold separately). The character uses his POI + Light Artillery skill to make attacks with a mounted weapon. Weapons on an artillery mount have an Attack Modifier of -2.

The mounted weapon follows all other normal rules for reloading, removal, and replacement as outlined in the *IKRPG: Core Rules*.

Adding an artillery mount requires an hour of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 14.

### CARGO CRANE

**Cost:** 150 gc

**Effect:** The armor gains a cargo crane capable of lifting up to 4 tons. The power draw of the cargo crane requires the character to divert power from other systems. The character cannot move and use the cargo crane in the same activation.

Adding a cargo crane requires two hours of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 12.

### CORROSIVE SHIELDING

**Cost:** 200 gc

**Effect:** The armor grants Immunity: Corrosion.

Adding corrosive shielding requires 30 minutes of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 12.

### EJECTION RIG

**Cost:** 400 gc

**Effect:** The armor is outfitted with explosive bolts designed to rapidly release its occupant by blowing armored sections of the control area clear. The character can activate the ejection rig to remove the steam-powered armor as a quick action, even if the armor is destroyed.

Using the rig partially disassembles the steam-powered armor in the process. Before the character can put the armor back on, he must spend 30 minutes gathering and reassembling the components of the armor.

Adding an ejection rig requires six hours of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 14.

### ELECTRICAL SHIELDING

**Cost:** 200 gc

**Effect:** The armor grants Immunity: Electricity.

Adding electrical shielding requires 30 minutes of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 12.





### FAILSAFES

**Cost:** 300 gc

**Effect:** The armor suffers system damage for every 7 damage points rather than the normal 5.

Adding failsafes requires two hours of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a difficulty of 14.

### FIRE SHIELDING

**Effect:** The armor grants Immunity: Fire.

Adding fire shielding requires 30 minutes of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 12.

### FORCE AMPLIFIER

**Cost:** 150 gc

**Effect:** The armor grants an additional +1 STR. A character can take this upgrade up to three times.

Adding a force amplifier requires 30 minutes of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 12.

### HARDENED CASE

**Cost:** 150 gc

**Effect:** The armor grants an additional +1 ARM modifier. A character can take this upgrade up to three times.

Adding a hardened case requires an hour of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 14.

### HEAVY BOILER

**Cost:** 400 gc

**Effect:** The armor gains a heavy boiler. The armor's fuel consumption increases by 25 percent. The target number of rolls to integrate subsequent upgrades is reduced by 1, and the character can run or charge normally.

Adding a heavy boiler requires six hours of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 14.

### RECOIL COMPENSATOR

**Cost:** 200 gc

**Effect:** The attack modifier of weapons on the Artillery Mount is reduced to 0.

Adding a recoil compensator requires an hour of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 14.

### STEAM VENTING

**Cost:** 150 gc

**Effect:** The character can sacrifice his movement to vent excess steam. Place a 3" AOE centered on the Ironhead. The AOE is a cloud effect that remains in play for one round.

Adding steam venting requires an hour of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 12.

### TEMPERATURE REGULATORS

**Cost:** 150 gc

**Effect:** The steam-powered armor grants Immunity: Cold.

Adding temperature regulators requires 30 minutes of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 12.

### WEIGHT COMPENSATORS

**Cost:** 150 gc

**Effect:** The SPD penalty of the armor is reduced by 1. A character can take this upgrade up to three times.

Adding weight compensators requires 30 minutes of labor followed by a successful INT + Mechanical Engineering roll against a target number of 12.







# Plague & Pestilence

By Brian R. James • Art by Richard Anderson and Johan Grenier

## THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE BLOODY SHROUD

Near the end of the first century AR a terrible pestilence ran like wildfire through western Immoren, spreading fear and death. Ailing citizens flocked to shrines and temples, but prayer and medical knowledge were equally ineffectual against this dreadful plague.

The impact of rip lung—as the disease came to be known—was catastrophic. Though the disease was partially responsible for the eradication of the occupying Orgoth, it was an indiscriminate killer. Even in the most lightly affected regions, 20–30 percent of the population died of the disease, with many cities suffering losses approaching 70 percent. With thousands dead in the streets, some municipalities resorted to putting whole districts to the torch rather than endeavor to bury the incredible volume of corpses.

Fortunately for the beleaguered Immorese, a pious young arcanist named Corben developed a cure for the deadly affliction. Within a few months the specialized treatment for rip lung was shared swiftly and efficiently, largely halting the epidemic by the end of 93 AR.

After Corben's ascension in 102 AR, a monastic sect of Morrowan alchemists was established to focus exclusively on the biological sciences, particularly the study of pathology, following the shining example set by Corben. Known as the Brotherhood of the Bloody Shroud, this small and little-understood order endures to this day, offering their services throughout the Iron Kingdoms in the hopes of combating the spread of disease.



## JOINING THE SHROUDED ONES

With the Game Master's consent your group may join the Brotherhood of the Bloody Shroud. Gaining membership in the order follows the same rules as those of joining an adventuring company (see *Iron Kingdoms Full Metal Fantasy Roleplaying Game: Core Rules*, p. 151). All player characters in the group must agree to become members and satisfy the membership requirements detailed below.

**Requirements:** Any character can belong to the order. The group must include at least one character with either the Alchemist or Priest of Morrow career. Only an Alchemist or Priest may lead a Brotherhood sect. Characters with other careers are assumed to be guards or skilled experts in employ of the order.

**Benefits:** Each member of the Brotherhood begins the game with alchemist's leathers (see *IKRPG: Core Rules*, p. 251) and the Field Alchemist ability (see *IKRPG: Core Rules*, p. 162), whether or not they meet the prerequisites. A character created as part of the adventuring company adds Alchemy 1 and Medicine 1 to his list of potential Occupational skills. Additionally, each member of the Brotherhood must only pass a single progression roll to fight off a disease instead of the standard three (see "Progression" to the right).

The Brotherhood adopted its name in the aftermath of the rip lung plague, when liquefaction of the victim's lung tissue would result in severe coughing fits resulting in the expulsion of bloody sputum. Upon death the victim's bloodstained bedsheets were often laid upon the body in preparation for cremation. The emblem of the Bloody Shroud is derived from this macabre ritual.

Members of the Brotherhood tend to be reserved, even morose. Many come to the order after losing loved ones to disease. Shrouded Ones—as members of the Brotherhood call themselves—are vigilant and tireless crusaders against any who would use illness as a weapon.

Shrouded Ones typically garb themselves in thick, sterile garments, alabaster in color, and wear gas masks to protect them against inhaled contagions. Many also carry an extensive set of alchemical equipment designed to treat specific ailments.

# ANATOMY OF DISEASE

The following rules are provided for those Game Masters who wish to craft their own plagues and pestilences to unleash upon the hapless folk of western Immoren.

To craft a unique disease, simply assign a value to each attribute listed below, give the disease an interesting name (such as those created with the Disease Name Generator article in *No Quarter* #19), then unleash it upon your players.

The following attributes define different diseases in the game.

**DESCRIPTION:** A brief description of the disease.

**TAXONOMY:** The Brotherhood of the Bloody Shroud uses two factors to categorize disease: classification and type. For example, the taxonomic descriptor for black tongue is "parasitic pox."

**TYPE:** Bacterial, fungal, parasitic, or toxic.

**CLASSIFICATION:** Fever, pox, or miasma.

**CONTRACTION METHOD:** Inhalation, cutaneous, or ingestion. For more on contraction, see p. 42.

**RESISTANCE:** When a character is exposed to an infectious disease he must make a resistance roll to fight off the disease outright. The stat used to modify the roll is determined by the disease's classification: fevers (PHY), poxes (AGL), and miasmas (INT). Each disease has a target number representing the severity of the disease, from moderate (target number of 10) to extremely virulent (target number of 16+).

**PROGRESSION:** If the player fails the initial roll to resist the disease, the target contracts the disease but exhibits no symptoms, and a new resistance roll will be required at the interval listed. If the character passes three of these rolls, the disease has run its course. After the first failure of a progression roll the early symptoms begin to manifest.

The interval determines how frequently a character must make a roll to resist the progression of a disease. A disease can have an interval of weeks, days, or mere hours. A character who remains at rest for the length of the disease's interval gains a +2 bonus on resistance rolls.

**SYMPTOMS:** The manifestation of the disease upon the afflicted. A sampling of common symptoms and their effects is provided in this article.

**ADVANCED STAGE:** After three failed resistance rolls the disease moves on to the advanced stage and symptoms become severe. During the advanced stage an affected character can no longer regain vitality by any means and begins to suffer the advanced symptoms.

**SPECIAL TREATMENT:** Some diseases have remedies that grant bonuses to progression rolls, mitigate symptoms, or cure the affliction outright.



## INTRODUCING DISEASES INTO YOUR CAMPAIGN

A good motivation for introducing disease is to ratchet up the emotional tension of your campaign. Don't think of diseases as an alternate means for offing a player character. Instead, view these contagions as an opportunity to add an element of drama, great for breaking up a series of routine combat encounters. Diseases serve as grim catalysts to incentivize critical thinking and quick action. Many diseases only require a limited incubation period before symptoms become severe or life threatening. And of course, this is one challenge that cannot be overcome by charging in with swords drawn or pistols blazing.

### Disease Type

The four root types of infectious diseases are bacterial, fungal, parasitic, and toxic.

#### Bacterial

Living unicellular organisms, bacteria subsist on nutrients produced by more complex life. Many bacteria excrete toxins as a waste product, but more often than not the symptoms of bacterial infection are caused by the body's own immune system in an effort to eradicate the invading cells. Bacterial diseases can be transmitted cutaneously, through ingestion, or through exposure to infected fluids.

#### Fungal

Fungi typically reproduce by releasing tiny spores into the air. Fungal infections are caused when the fungi release toxins into the host as a waste product. Most fungal diseases are transmitted through inhalation. Many fungal diseases are not infectious, relying on individual exposure to fungal spores.

#### Parasitic

Aberrant organisms that live inside and feed off living hosts, parasites are to many the most horrific type of disease, for the organism is often repulsive and visible to the naked eye. Most parasitic diseases are transmitted through the ingestion of contaminated water or food.





## Toxic

Less well known than the other disease types, toxias are diseases resulting from the poisoning of bodily tissue due to direct exposure to toxic elements. Examples include hydrargyria (mercury poisoning), arsenic poisoning, and the black lung suffered by coal miners. Toxic diseases are often caused by exposure to contaminated food or water, though some are caused by inhalation of particulate matter. Toxic diseases are typically not contagious, as they rely on individual exposure to a toxic substance.

## Disease Classification

Diseases, whether infectious or not, are further subdivided into three classifications: fever, pox, or miasma. The disease's classification determines which stat is used to roll for resistance and progression of the disease.

### Fever (PHY) – Wasting Sickness

Fevers are a type of wasting sickness, primarily attacking the victim's immune system while sapping the body of strength. Unlike poxes, fevers typically present no indicators on the skin. Symptoms commonly include its namesake elevation of body temperature (known to Shrouded Ones as pyrexia), chills, nausea, muscle pain, and in extreme cases loss of muscle control.

### Pox (AGL) – Disfiguring Ailment

A pox is a disease characterized by pockmarks, lesions, lumps, or other disfigurements of the skin. If left untreated, a pox can cause permanent damage to the skin, nerves, and limbs. Much like Battle Scars (see Injury Table, *IKRPG: Core Rules*, p. 217), characters enduring an advanced stage of a pox suffer a -1 penalty on social skill rolls in which the pockmarks would frighten or disgust the subject of the skill attempt. Conversely the character gains +1 on Intimidation skill rolls against anyone who can see his disfigurement. In many cases this fear is justified, for a victim of pox may be highly contagious due to buildup of the disease within vesicles on the skin.

### Miasma (INT) – Mental Illness

Miasma is caused by trauma to the brain and is responsible for all manner of neurological disorders, including schizophrenia, mania, and many phobias. Other symptoms include headache, confusion, hallucinations, and memory loss.

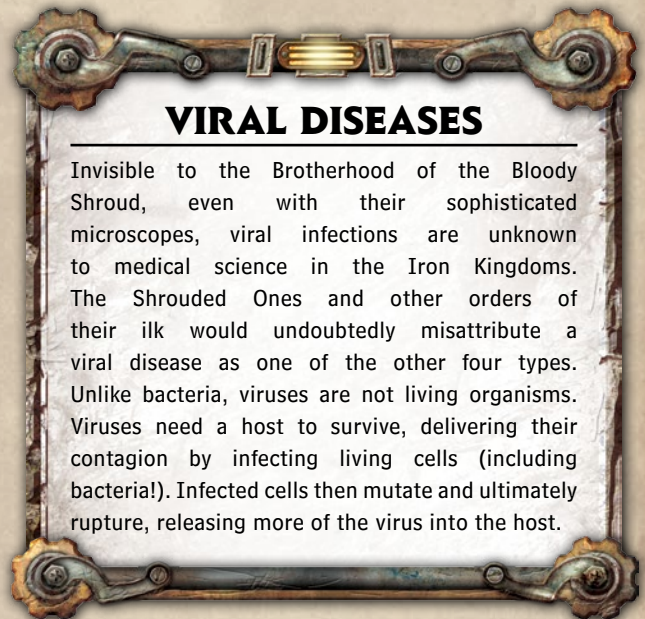
## Contraction Method

The three generally accepted methods by which and individual might contract a disease are inhalation, cutaneous, and ingestion.

**INHALATION:** Many diseases, primarily bacterial and fungal, can survive while floating through the air. Infection occurs when the disease is breathed into the lungs. Inhaled diseases are treated as a gas effect. Characters wearing a gas mask (see *IKRPG: Core Rules*, p. 274) or similar protection are immune to diseases contracted by inhalation.

**CUTANEOUS:** Caused when infected blood or other bodily fluid enters the body through a cut or break in the skin. Many cutaneous diseases are transmitted by vermin. A character must suffer direct damage from an infected animal or tainted item to contract a cutaneous disease.

**INGESTION:** Contagion typically introduced through consumption of raw or undercooked food, contaminated water, and the like. A character must consume infected material to contract an ingestion disease.



### VIRAL DISEASES

Invisible to the Brotherhood of the Bloody Shroud, even with their sophisticated microscopes, viral infections are unknown to medical science in the Iron Kingdoms. The Shrouded Ones and other orders of their ilk would undoubtedly misattribute a viral disease as one of the other four types. Unlike bacteria, viruses are not living organisms. Viruses need a host to survive, delivering their contagion by infecting living cells (including bacteria!). Infected cells then mutate and ultimately rupture, releasing more of the virus into the host.

## Symptoms

Each disease is unique and has its own specific indicators and symptoms. During the early stages of a disease these symptoms can be relatively minor, like an elevated temperature or mild discomfort. As a disease progresses into its advanced stage, more severe symptoms begin to manifest.

Included here is a sampling of symptoms useful in constructing a custom disease for your campaign. Symptoms include specific game effects noted after the description.

### ABLEPSY

**Description:** Ablepsy is the partial or total loss of sight. Many instances begin with blurred vision, loss of peripheral vision, and loss of depth and/or color perception.

**Effect:** An afflicted character suffers -4 MAT and -4 DEF, cannot run or charge, cannot make ranged attacks, and must forfeit either his movement or action during his turn.



### ACUTE ANGER

**Description:** A sudden elevation of hostility or aggressiveness. This does not require an external stimulant, and the individual cannot be calmed through normal means.

**Effect:** The character suffers a -2 penalty to social rolls other than Intimidation due to uncontrolled anger.

### APHASIA

**Description:** Confused speech. Often originating from brain or head injuries, it can result in both the inability to form certain (or any) words and to understand language spoken by others.

**Effect:** A character suffering from aphasia takes a -2 penalty to social skills other than Intimidation.

### BOILS

**Description:** Painful, swollen areas of the skin accompanied by an accumulation of pus and necrotic tissue.

**Effect:** The character becomes a source of infection of the disease. The target number of resistance rolls increases by +1.

### CATALEPSY

**Description:** Rigidity of body and limbs, inability to move, loss of muscle control, and slowing of bodily functions (breathing, heartbeat, etc.). Originates as a nervous disorder or can be brought about by great emotional shock.

**Effect:** The character suffers a -1 penalty to attack rolls and rolls requiring fine motor skills.

### DELIRIUM

**Description:** A state of mental confusion or disorientation. Can also result in hallucinations and delirium, can radically impact sleep cycles, and can increase agitation and aggression.

**Effect:** A character affected by delirium suffers a -1 penalty to INT rolls.

### DYSPNEA

**Description:** Shortness of breath. Can become exaggerated by the affected individual's awareness of the symptom, leading to lightheadedness, dizziness, and even fainting.

**Effect:** A character affected by dyspnea must spend a feat point to run or charge.

### DYSTAXIA

**Description:** Lack of muscular coordination resulting in shaky limb movements and an unsteady gait.

**Effect:** The character suffers a -1 penalty to attack rolls and rolls requiring fine motor skills.

### EPISTAXIS

**Description:** Severe nosebleed. In extreme cases the bleeding can build up and come out of the individual's eyes.

**Effect:** A character suffering from epistaxis loses 1 vitality point during each of his maintenance phases due to bleeding unless he spends a quick action to staunch the flow of blood.

### GANGRENE

**Description:** Massive tissue death as the result of blood flow loss to a particular part of the body, most often the extremities. The affected part of the body resembles mummified flesh. If left untreated, infected tissue will eventually fall off.

**Effect:** A character affected by gangrene suffers a -2 penalty to PHY rolls. Any time the character suffers damage, the total damage suffered increases by 1 point.

### HALLUCINATIONS

**Description:** The distorted or misinterpreted perception of witnessing events that did not occur. In some cases hallucinations can impact the senses of smell, hearing, or touch in addition to sight.

**Effect:** The Game Master determines the effect of hallucinations on an infected character.

### INSOMNIA

**Description:** Inability to fall asleep or stay asleep for long periods. Prolonged insomnia can cause memory problems, mental fatigue, and physical exhaustion.

**Effect:** The character suffers a -1 penalty on INT rolls due to mental fatigue.

### LESIONS

**Description:** Sores accompanied by discoloration of the skin. Lesions often result in the infected individual further spreading the disease.

**Effect:** The character becomes a source of infection for the disease. The target number of resistance rolls increases by +1.

### LIGHT SENSITIVITY

**Description:** A strong intolerance to light often accompanied by headaches. This symptom can lead to the infected individual staying in the shadows and other darker places.

**Effect:** A character affected by light sensitivity suffers a -1 penalty to PER rolls while in any area of bright light.

### LOCKJAW

**Description:** Condition in which the jaws are held shut due to a spasm of the jaw muscles. Inhibits speaking, eating, and may impair breathing.

**Effect:** The Command Range of a character affected by lockjaw becomes 0, and he automatically fails all non-Intimidation social rolls.



## MANIA

**Description:** A state of abnormally elevated euphoria. Can lead to overambitious, reckless behavior and diminished acknowledgement of risk. The opposite of melancholia.

**Effect:** A character suffering from mania gains an additional die on rolls to resist the effects of Terror. Drop the lowest die of each roll.

## MELANCHOLIA

Severe depression. Impacts both mental and physical states negatively by reducing enthusiasm or self-maintenance. Melancholia does not require an external motivator.

**Effect:** A character affected by melancholia suffers a -1 penalty to all skill checks and attack rolls.

## NAUSEA AND VOMITING

**Description:** Uneasiness of the stomach that often results in an involuntary emptying of the stomach contents. Some diseases result in vomiting of blood due to ulcers lining the stomach.

**Effect:** A character experiencing nausea and vomiting suffers a -1 penalty to AGL and PHY rolls.

## PARESIS

**Description:** Ailment typified by muscle weakness and stiffening of limbs that may progress into full paralysis.

**Effect:** A character affected by paresis suffers a -2 penalty on STR and AGL rolls.

## PAROXYSM

**Description:** Seizures (uncontrollable shaking of the limbs) or tremors (uncontrollable trembling of the hands).

**Effect:** A character suffering from paroxysm suffers a -2 penalty to ranged attack rolls and AGL rolls.

## POCKMARKS

**Description:** Any scarring of the skin as a result of disease, pockmarks are a common symptom of all poxes. Extremely difficult to disguise or remove.

**Effect:** Treat a character affected by pockmarks as having Battle Scars (see Injury Table, *IKRPG: Core Rules*, p. 217).

## UVEITIS

**Description:** Distorted vision. Distinguished by extremely bloodshot eyes, though it may impact only one eye.

**Effect:** A character affected by uveitis suffers a -1 penalty to PER and ranged attack rolls.

# Menagerie Morbus

Innumerable diseases have swept through the Iron Kingdoms over the centuries. Described here is small sample of diseases afflicting western Immoren today.

## BOGRIN BLIGHT

Falsely attributed to the reviled cousins of gobbers, bogrin blight is a virulent infection spread most commonly among the wasteland tribes of the Bloodstone Marches.

**Taxonomy:** Bacterial Pox

**Contraction Method:** Cutaneous. Bogrin Blight is contagious but is not easily transmitted. Infection is high among some Devourer cults due to the practice of ritualized self-scarring using unsanitized tools.

**Resistance:** 13 AGL

**Progression:** Every twelve hours (16 AGL)

**Symptoms:** Large discolored skin sores and lumps, lesions (early); nerve damage, pockmarks, and muscle weakness (advanced).

**Advanced Stage:** The character cannot regain vitality by any means. Every three hours thereafter the character must make another progression roll. If the character fails three of these rolls he suffers crippled Agility (-2 on attack rolls). If the character passes three rolls, he fights off the disease.

**Special Treatment:** The grim folk of the Bloodstone township Pierson's Pit are known to fashion a poultice made from crushed malachite that can help treat bogrin blight (granting a +2 bonus to Medicine skill rolls to treat the disease).

## BLACK TONGUE

Black tongue is a parasitic disease first observed among the inhabitants of the Scharde Islands. The disease is widespread among blighted trollkin kriels of the region, but some cases have been reported in coastal villages of the mainland as well.

**Taxonomy:** Parasitic Pox

**Contraction Method:** Ingestion. Primarily contracted through the consumption of water contaminated with the parasite.

**Resistance:** 11 AGL

**Progression:** Every eight hours (14 AGL)

**Symptoms:** Numbness of tongue, loss of taste (early); blackening and swelling of the tongue preventing speech and making swallowing difficult, lockjaw (advanced).

**Advanced Stage:** The character cannot regain vitality by any means. Every three hours thereafter the character must make another progression roll. If the character fails he suffers d3 damage points. If the character is incapacitated, he dies. If the character passes three of these rolls he fights off the disease.



**Special Treatment:** Serpent rye, a potent liquor distilled with the blood of the bog constrictors found in the Widower's Wood, can help treat black tongue (granting a +2 bonus to Medicine skill rolls to treat the disease).

### STONE SICKNESS

A rare contagion suffered by mine workers, stone sickness affects the nervous system of the infected, causing damage to the nervous and muscular tissues.

**Taxonomy:** Infectious Fungal Fever

**Contraction Method:** Inhalation. Contracted by breathing in toxic spores released by cidyne mushrooms that grow in some deep subterranean chambers.

**Resistance:** 14 PHY

**Progression:** Every twenty-four hours (17 PHY)

**Symptoms:** Seizures, short bouts of catalepsy (early); paresis (advanced).

**Advanced Stage:** The character cannot regain vitality by any means and suffers the advanced symptoms of the disease. Every three hours thereafter the character must make another progression roll. If the character passes three rolls, he fights off the disease.

**Special Treatment:** None.

### MECHANIK'S DEMENTIA

A threat to any who handle mercury on a regular basis, mechanik's dementia was first diagnosed after Magus Julian Montfort was stricken by the disease while creating a prototype of modern warcaster armor.

**Taxonomy:** Toxic Miasma

**Contraction Method:** Inhalation. Frequently produced in the manufacture of warcaster armor, mercury fumes may be inhaled by armorers during the crafting process unless they take steps to protect themselves.

**Resistance:** 12 INT

**Progression:** Every six hours (15 INT)

**Symptoms:** Aphasia and uveitis (early); delirium and hallucinations (advanced).

**Advanced Stage:** The character cannot regain vitality by any means and suffers the advanced symptoms of the disease. Every three hours thereafter the character must make another progression roll. If the character passes three rolls, he fights off the disease.

**Special Treatment:** A tea made from the redleaf tuber found in the Thornwood, though itself mildly toxic, can help treat mechanik's dementia (granting a +2 bonus to Medicine skill rolls to treat the disease).

### MAWG RABIES

The murderous frenzy of Molgur warriors was feared throughout western Immoren. For some Molgur this blood-maddened fury was more than just battle lust and adrenaline-induced ferocity; it was the result of mawg rabies, a parasitic disease that attacks the brain and the central nervous system, inducing mania and bloodlust.

**Taxonomy:** Parasitic Miasma

**Contraction Method:** Cutaneous/Ingestion. Initially contracted by consuming the raw adrenal glands of burrow-mawgs, mawg rabies can also be transmitted through the bite of an infected creature.

**Resistance:** 14 INT

**Progression:** Every four hours (17 INT)

**Symptoms:** Paranoia, lockjaw, and light sensitivity (early); acute anger and dystaxia (advanced).

**Advanced Stage:** The character cannot regain vitality by any means and suffers the advanced symptoms of the disease. Every three hours thereafter the character must make another progression roll. If the character fails, he suffers d3 damage points. If the character is incapacitated, he dies. If the character passes three of these rolls he fights off the disease but falls into a concussed torpor (see *IKRPG: Core Rules*, p. 216 for concussed state).

**Special Treatment:** An alchemical restorative brewed with a distillate of a burrow-mawg's adrenal gland (granting a +4 bonus to Medicine skill rolls to treat the disease).





# FOR BLOOD OR GOLD

## CYGNARAN-HIRED HORGENHOLD FORGE GUARD

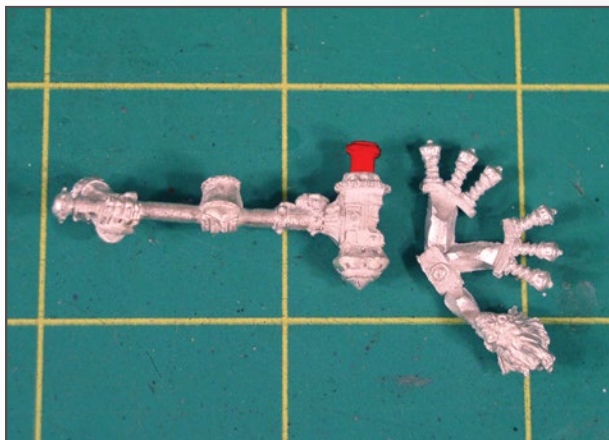
BY ROB HAWKINS

In the “For Blood of Gold” Modeling & Painting series, we’re going to show you how to convert various Mercenary and Minion units to match the aesthetic of their preferred client factions. Never content to limit ourselves to a simple palette swap, like painting Steelhead Halberdiers in Khadoran colors, we’ll expand our focus to converting the model’s equipment to reflect modifications obtained during extended deployments. After the conversion, we’ll explore color choices that will match the client army’s paint scheme while retaining some of the unit’s original appearance.

First up is the stalwart Horgenhold Forge Guard, kept on retainer by the Cygnaran Army. Their mechanikal hammers have been tinkered with by Stormsmiths and modified into voltaic electro-shock hammers.

### STEP ONE: CONVERTING THE HAMMERS

For this conversion, the piston on the back of each hammer will be replaced with a voltaic coil. Of all the many coils available on the Privateer Press Online Store, the MK II Commander Adept Nemo Coil Sprue is best suited to the task. For a 10-man unit you will need two sprues. You will also need an extra Horgenhold Forge Guard Backpack for the leader’s shoulder bag.

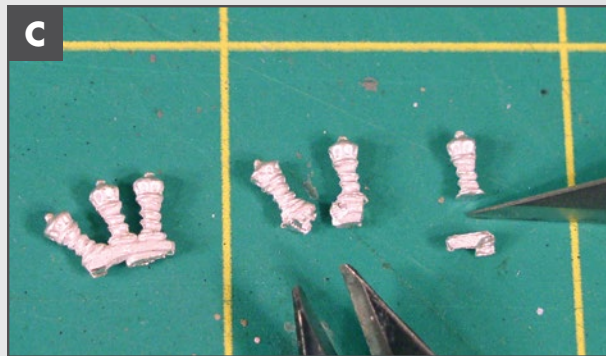


A) Use Formula P3 Clippers to remove the piston from the back of the hammer.





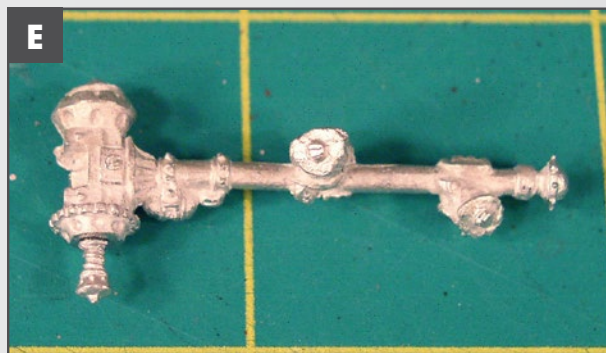
B) File the clipped surface smooth. The flat side of a half-round file works best for this.



C) Separate the coils from their frames. The easiest way to do this without damaging them is to clip the frame between each coil. Then, using a sharp P3 Hobby Knife, slice each coil off of its frame.

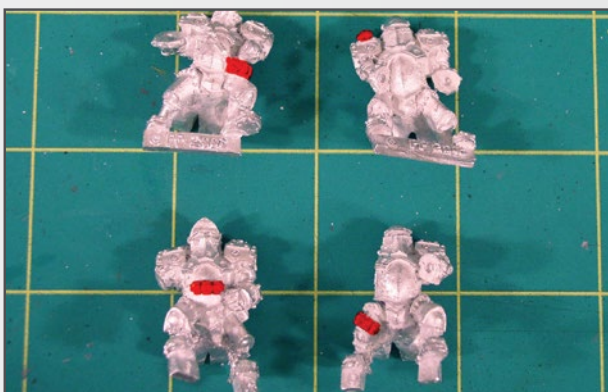


D) Use the Formula P3.50mm Pinning Expansion, which was created specifically for pinning tiny parts like this, to secure the coils. Drill into the bottom of the coil and the center of the hammer, then attach the two parts with a .50mm brass rod and P3 Super Glue.



E) The finished hammer!

## STEP TWO: ASSEMBLING THE BODIES



The standard Forge Guard mechanical hammer uses a charge to blast a hydraulic spike into a target with armor-shattering force. The models carry spare charges on their bodies (indicated in red); however, the voltaic modification to the hammers eliminates the need for piston charges, so these can be removed. This step is optional, as the charges could represent grenades or spare ammunition being carried for their comrades—but I'm a stickler for detail.

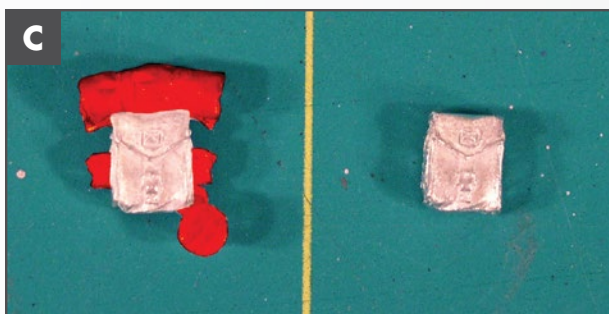


A) Use clippers to carefully remove the charges from the shoulder armor.





B) Next, file the shoulder plate smooth with the flat side of a half-round file. Try to avoid filing off the rivets. If you can't maneuver around them, make sure to file them off of the other troopers as well so they all match. Use the same process for the troopers with the charges on their legs and stomachs, but take even more care when filing in those tight spaces.



C) The leader's charges are on a bandolier. By removing them, the bandolier can be made into the strap for a shoulder bag, perhaps containing a satchel charge or medical kit. To create the bag, remove the red-shaded portions from a spare Forge Guard backpack. Clip away the material and file the sides smooth.



D) Remove the charges from the leader, then flatten the bottom of the strap and the top of his leg armor with a file.



E) Dry fit the pouch and, when you are happy with its position, glue it in place.



F) Finally, attach the backpacks and put the models on their bases.



G) For ease of painting, keep the hammers separate. By pinning them to a wooden dowel you'll be able to paint them all in a single batch.

That's it for the conversion work. The parts are now ready to prime and paint! The models' armor will boast a quartered paint scheme using a traditional Rhulic khaki color, along with Cygnar Blue to represent their Cygnaran allegiance. A Cygnus icon can also be painted on the raised shoulder plates where the charges were removed. Begin by spraying the bodies and hammers with Formula P3 Black Primer.



## STEP THREE: PAINTING THE BODIES (HAMMERFALL KHAKE)



A) When the primer has fully dried, paint a solid basecoat of Hammerfall Khaki. Remember this will appear in quarters, so don't worry about the right arm and left leg. As you are painting the bodies, paint the hands on the hammers to match.



B) Next, apply a wash of Gun Corps Brown, Mixing Medium, and a little water.



C) Add some Bastion Grey to the wash mix and paint it into the deeper recesses.



D) To define the separations between the armor plates a little better, mix 50/50 Bastion Grey and Umbral Umber. Using a Formula P3 Fine Studio Brush, carefully outline the edges of the plates. No need to go crazy and outline every section; just apply this wherever the armor needs a little more definition—mainly under the breastplate, helmet, and shoulder pads.



E) Paint the exposed fabric of the pants, the kneepads, and the inner shoulder armor with straight Bastion Grey and then wash it with Armor Wash.



F) Finish off the khaki portion of the armor by highlighting it with a mix of Hammerfall Khaki and Menoth White Highlight.

### COLORS USED

	Arcane Blue
	Armor Wash
	Bastion Grey
	Battlefield Brown
	Brown Ink
	Cryx Bane Base
	Cygnar Base Blue
	Cygnar Blue Highlight
	Cygnus Yellow
	Gun Corp Brown
	Hammerfall Khaki
	Khador Red Base
	Menoth White Highlight
	Mixing Medium
	Moldy Ochre
	Molten Bronze
	Morrow White
	Pig Iron
	Umbral Umber



## STEP FOUR: PAINTING THE BODIES (CYGNAR BLUE)



A) Using a Fine Studio Brush, draw a cross on the stomach plate of the body to delineate where the colors will be quartered.



B) Basecoat the blue quarters with Cygnar Base Blue.



C) Drybrush the color up using a mix of Cygnar Base Blue and Cygnar Blue Highlight, all the way to straight Cygnar Blue Highlight. Use a Small Drybrush that isn't frayed to keep your drybrushing controlled and contained to the blue areas.



D) Finish the blue by highlighting with a mix of Cygnar Blue Highlight and Morrow White.

## STEP FIVE: PAINTING THE DETAILS



A) Basecoat the brass plates on the skirt, the left shoulder plate, and the mug with a mix of Molten Bronze and Pig Iron. Paint the right shoulder plate with Morrow White.



B) Paint the Forge Guard icon with Khador Red Base, then wash it and the brass plates with Brown Ink.





C) Paint the large recessed screws with Pig Iron and wash them with Armor Wash.

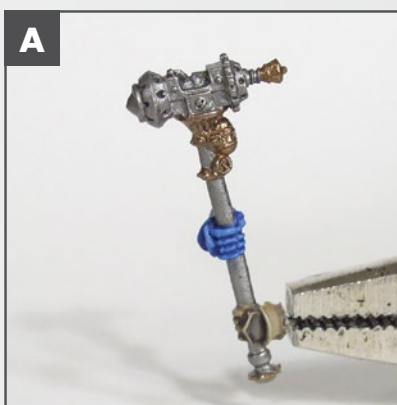


D) Paint the backpack with Battlefield Brown and highlight it up with Gun Corps Brown. For the bedroll, basecoat the cloth with Cryx Bane Base and highlight it with a mix of Cryx Bane Base and Gun Corps Brown.

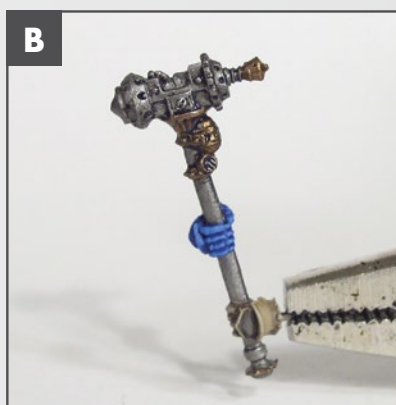


E) Finally, paint the Cygnus with a mix of Moldy Ochre and Cygnus Yellow.

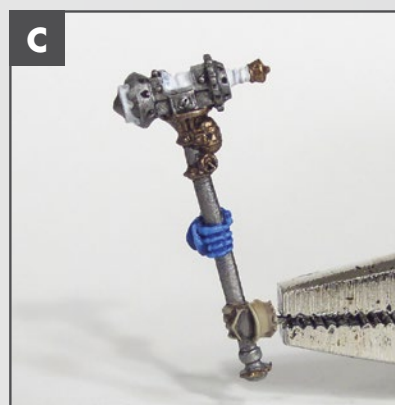
## STEP SIX: PAINTING THE HAMMERS



A) Basecoat the hammers with Pig Iron and paint a few brass areas using a mix of Pig Iron and Molten Bronze.



B) Wash all the metal with Armor Wash.



C) For the voltaic coils and glow, first paint them with a solid coat of Morrow White.





D) Next, wash the areas with a mix of Arcane Blue and a little water.



E) Touch up the head of the hammer with Quick Silver.



F) All that remains is to finish off the models by attaching their hammers and then basing.



## CONCLUSION

The voltaic Forge Guard is ready for action! These techniques can be adapted to match your own army's color scheme and basing, and voltaic coils can be easily added to most models. Experiment with different combinations, and have fun!



# FORCES OF DISTINCTION XV

By Michael Sanbeg and Will Shick • Art by Kieran Yanner and Matthew D. Wilson

## DARK ALLIANCE

By Will Shick

The Khadoran supply column moved through the overgrown trail deep in the heart of the Thornwood. Several platoons of Winter Guard marched in formation around three large supply wagons; two were largely empty, their flat iron-reinforced beds bare save for a large container of coal and a steel water reservoir. These were crucial elements for their disembarked cargo—a pair of hulking Spriggans, their iron hulls painted olive green and bearing the markings of the 5<sup>th</sup> Border Legion. The giant machines' engines roared as they powered through the tangled undergrowth. The claustrophobic press of the dense woodland only amplified the tumult of the mighty constructs as the Khadorans forged ahead, oblivious to the wraith watching from the shadows.

Wraith Witch Deneghra licked her lips in anticipation as she watched the unwitting column continue its slow march. She marveled at how easily it had been to lead the supply column astray and onto her own carefully chosen path, her manipulation of the kovnik who commanded it an exceedingly simple task using her powers of influence. The oaf was utterly fooled; he hadn't any sense at all that something was wrong, not even when the column found itself mired within the overgrown trail. Instead the Khadorans had pressed ahead, right into the trap Deneghra had laid for them.

Deneghra passed through the thick foliage of the forest with ease. It was unfortunate the Khadorans had activated their warjacks, but it was inevitable given the nature of the trap she had set. Without a warcaster to guide the Khadorans, her own battlegroup would be more than a match for the lumbering machines.

Even if the Khadorans put up a stronger defense than expected, troop losses on this mission mattered little to her or to Asphyxious. She was only here preying on Khadoran supply trains to appease his cephalyx allies. The lich lord had promised the black-garbed creatures a bounty of living humans in exchange for ongoing assistance, including access to the cephalyx subterranean tunnels. Together the Nightmare Empire and these allies had vastly expanded the tunnels, and now Cryxian and cephalyx facilities were intermingled and could see to their mutual protection.

Deneghra felt the weight of her physical form return as she approached a trio of the enigmatic entities, their natural countenances hidden from all beneath bronze insect-like helmets. Though outwardly there was nothing to distinguish the three from one other, Deneghra's witch sight allowed her to pick out Overlord Hiramor from his compatriots by his distinct mental aura.



Theme forces offer players the opportunity to play thematic armies that spotlight particular aspects of a warcaster or warlock's character or history. From time to time, Privateer Press will introduce new theme forces in the pages of *No Quarter*.

These theme forces are "fair game" upon publication and usable in our organized play events.



"It goes as planned. The Khadorans shall be within the trap soon."

Hiraximor's mechanical voice intoned, "Our servants stand ready. Ensure your helljacks restrain themselves from bloodletting. Our quotas must be fulfilled."

Deneghra felt a surge of annoyance at the overlord's comment, but she suppressed it. "I will keep them on a careful leash, Overlord. None of your subjects shall be spoiled by my servants."

Deneghra turned and left the trio of overlords to their task, her mind connecting with her personal helljack Nightmare. She felt a sense of malevolence wash over her and despite her undead nature, the feeling made her feel as if she were wrapped within a warm blanket. The infernal machine's every piston and gear strained with a desire to visit death upon its foes. Through their mental link, Deneghra soothed the iron machine's cortex, assuring it of the carnage about to come as she moved up beside it. She felt its wicked iron talons snap in anticipation and savored the power within them as if it were her own, though a distant part of her mind shuddered to recall the feel of their razor sharpness opening her own skin.

"Wait. There will be no flesh beneath your talons today." She sent instead an image of the mighty Khadoran warjacks that strode with the column. "These shall be your victims."

Deneghra saw the sickly green glow of burning necrotite flash hotter beneath Nightmare's iron visage. She knew the helljack would serve her well, as it always had, in the slaughter to come.

Through her own eyes as well as Nightmare's she watched the Khadorans continue to crash along the dense forest trail, inexorably marching toward their termination. As the last of the Winter Guard came within reach of her power Deneghra drew upon her most potent spell. Pulsing green runes encircled her, bathing her cold skin in a toxic glow. With a single word the runes exploded outward as a coiling, greasy blackness to ensnare the Khadorans, binding their limbs as it seeped into their bodies and wrapped their souls in entropy.

With perfect unity of action, Hiraximor and his fellow cephalyx advanced alongside their drudges to incapacitate the helpless foe. Though their voices were paralyzed, Deneghra could feel the terror within the Khadorans as they realized too late that a fate worse than death was about to claim them.



## WRATH WITCH DENEGHRA BODY AND SOUL

by David "DC" Carl

### WARJACKS

Cryx non-character warjacks,  
Deathjack, Nightmare

### UNITS

Bile Thralls, Cephalyx Mind  
Slaver & Drudges, Cephalyx  
Overlords, Mechanithralls,  
Necrosurgeon & Stitch Thralls

### SOLOS

Iron Lich Overseer, Necrotech  
& Scrap Thralls, Ragman,  
Skarlock Thrall, Warwitch Siren

### TIER 1

**Requirements:** The army can include only the models listed above.

**Benefit:** Increase the FA of Cephalyx units by 1. Additionally, reduce the point cost of Cephalyx units by 1.

### TIER 2

**Requirements:** The army includes one or more Cephalyx Mind Slaver & Drudges units.

**Benefit:** Cephalyx Mind Slaver & Drudges units gain Advance Deployment (A).

### TIER 3

**Requirements:** The army includes one or more Cephalyx Overlords units.

**Benefit:** You gain +1 on your starting roll for the game.

### TIER 4

**Requirements:** The army includes three or more solos with Magic Ability.

**Benefit:** Enemy non-warcaster / non-warlock models / units can begin the game affected by Deneghra's upkeep spells. These spells and their targets must be declared before either player sets up models. Deneghra does not pay focus to upkeep these spells during your first turn. Models / units that cannot be targeted by Deneghra's spells cannot be chosen as affected models.



## WILD RECKONING

By Michael Sanbeg

Kasinia ran through the forest, heedless of the thick undergrowth that threatened to impede her. She could hear the drumming pulse of her own blood, could feel the burning exertion in her ribs. She leapt across a moss-encrusted log, her long hair streaming like a banner.

In all her years she'd lived in the wilderness Kasinia had seen many strange and terrible things, though never had she been witness to a sight as horrifying as that which now impelled her to hasten from the ruined encampment. The folk there had not merely been murdered—they'd been *massacred*. Flayed human skin had been stretched across hastily erected tanning frames; cracked and gnawed human bones littered the ground, discarded by the transformed savages who had hungrily consumed the flesh of the slain. Corpses hung from tree limbs and from the blackened roof beams of buildings, dangling inverted like the stolen banners of a conquered people. Nothing she had heard of the Tharn could have prepared her for the aftermath of their feasts. It had taken all of her fortitude to approach their chief and speak to him on Kaya's behalf, and in the end it had accomplished little.

Kasinia slowed as she climbed the last hill, struggling to catch her breath. Kaya stood at the peak, watching as a long line of Khadoran soldiers advanced along the winding road from Skirov. It was an impressive force, perhaps a hundred Winter Guard with a contingent of Man-O-War soldiers. Just within the cover of the forest the great wolf Laris rested alongside an enormous warpwolf and a pair of argus. Kasinia brushed her unkempt hair from her eyes as she approached her mistress, equally unconscious of both the gesture and of the twigs and dead leaves that remained.

"Where are the Tharn?" Kaya asked.  
"Those soldiers will be here soon."

The young wilder steeled her nerves and said, "We needn't worry about the mining camp any longer. The Tharn have already killed them and are even now making trophies of the slain."

Kaya's eyes narrowed in anger. "I was going to chase them off, not slaughter them. Now we know why the Khadorans are stirred up; a survivor must have escaped to alert them. They'll kill the Tharn, then restore the mining camp and secure it with a permanent garrison, making it even harder to remove them."

"I tried to warn the Tharn of the approaching soldiers," Kasinia said, "but they were too gluttoned on victory to fear another enemy. They would not follow me."

"Chieftain Skoll is a thick-headed fool. But perhaps we can still salvage the situation."

Kaya turned from her lookout point and broke into a sprint, hastening downhill toward the mining camp without bothering to issue an order. Her beasts instinctively followed, and Kasinia ran along with them. Gradually she and the warpwolf fell behind the Moonhunter and her smaller, faster beasts, however, and by the time Kasinia reached the camp Kaya had confronted the tuath's chieftain.

"We kill when and where we please," the brute was saying as Kasinia came into earshot. "These humans intruded where they should not have."





Kasinia had been with Kaya long enough to suspect the warlock shared her distaste for the random savagery of the Tharn, and though the tuaths' allegiance was necessary it was never pleasant. Kaya had come here to enlist the Tharn in discouraging the Khadorans from working these hills, though in a manner that would not have forced such an immediate escalation. They were not ready for such a force as marched on them now.

"It's too late to dwell on that," Kaya said. "Cutting through the forest got us here ahead of the approaching forces, but they'll be here soon."

"Let them come," Skoll said, shrugging his massive shoulders. "We will crush them like insects and drench the soil in their blood."

Kasinia wondered if these Tharn had been too long removed from contact with civilized men. Was he merely overtaken with confidence, or did he truly fail to understand the distinction between miners and trained soldiers? The Tharn were brutal and relentless warriors, but if they were not outclassed they were certainly outnumbered.

"These men are disciplined soldiers. They won't be overwhelmed by ferocity alone," Kaya said, staring up into the Tharn's fierce, bestial face. It seemed impossible such a small woman could intimidate a Tharn chieftain,

but he was the first to look away. Even he knew to respect the ranking druids of the Circle Orboros. Kaya said, "We must prove to the Khadorans that securing this place will cost more than it is worth to them. Only by guile will they be defeated. Listen closely and do exactly as I say."



Soldiers swarmed into the camp like ants from a nest, ranks of Winter Guard behind a line of Man-O-War encased in heavy red armor descending on a small, disorganized Tharn force sheltered within the camp. Gunfire erupted from the Khadoran ranks while the Tharn wisely scattered from the approaching force.

Kasinia wondered if the Khadorans anticipated their victory. Did their chests swell with a warrior's pride as they came into the camp to dig the Tharn out of hiding?

With a great, whooping howl the remaining Tharn burst out of hiding in the surrounding woods, surging toward the Khadorans' rear ranks, the weakest point of its combined force, long axes flashing to cleave through flesh and bone alike. The soldiers shifted their focus toward this greater Tharn force just as it began to withdraw. Sporadic gunfire sounded throughout the confines of the



## KAYA THE MOONHUNTER SOOTHE THE SAVAGE BEAST

by David "DC" Carl

### WARBEASTS

Circle non-character warbeasts

### UNITS

Shifting Stones, Tharn units

### SOLOS

Druid Wilder, Tharn solos

#### **TIER 1**

**Requirements:** The army can include only the models listed above.

**Benefit:** Models in the army have concealment during the first round of the game.

#### **TIER 2**

**Requirements:** The army includes one or more Tharn Ravagers units.

**Benefit:** Kaya's battlegroup gains Pathfinder (P) and Treewalker during the first round of the game. (Models with Treewalker ignore forests when determining LOS. While in a forest, models with Treewalker gain +2 DEF against melee attack rolls and can advance through

obstructions and other models if they have enough movement to move completely past them.)

#### **TIER 3**

**Requirements:** The army includes three or more Tharn units.

**Benefit:** Models/units with Heart Eater begin the game with one corpse token.

#### **TIER 4**

**Requirements:** Kaya's battlegroup includes four or more living warbeasts.

**Benefit:** Add a living light warbeast to Kaya's battlegroup free of cost.



camp while arrows and javelins came down on them from two other directions.

From her vantage within the roof of a burned-out building Kasinia could see Kaya. She was supported by Laris, a single argus, and a number of ravagers engaging the Man-O-War force. Kasinia could see they were led by a single Man-O-War officer adorned with the flag of his nation fluttering behind his armor's smoking boiler. The man caught a descending Tharn axe with the edge of his shield and then struck down his attacker with a single powerful strike from his own wide-bladed axe. This officer pushed through the hole he'd cut into the Tharn line and led his men toward the Moonhunter.

Tharn fought defensively as they edged their way back, nimble enough to generally avoid the sporadic fire of powerful but inaccurate shield cannons. A long Man-O-War axe flicked out and struck a Tharn in the shoulder, and the savage bellowed in pain before a second blow ended his life.

Kasinia waited from above like a bird of prey, spying on her foes as she bided her time. The soldiers were fiercely determined but stymied behind the sluggish Man-O-War and facing a foe that came into and away from the field at will, using the surrounding trees to their advantage. They appeared unsure where to focus their attentions. Each attack drew the soldiers in a different direction, effectively stretching their forces out yet keeping them confined within the camp.

Seeing her opening develop, Kasinia forced the warpwolf and the remaining argus from hiding—the beasts were beyond Kaya's reach to directly control them, but not beyond hers. The warpwolf lunged into the middle ranks of Winter Guard, eviscerating men with each of its claws before crushing the head of a third in its powerful jaws. Men in the rear and fore ranks turned to face the new threat while the Tharn attacked with renewed brutality.

Within moments Kasinia had directed the two beasts to slaughter better than a dozen men, and she now pushed them onward into the crowd, killing more with each step. She focused her will, draining the pent-up rage from the warpwolf though unable to do so for both. The Khadoran forces fell into chaos as men poured away from the enraged beasts in a desperate push to escape their monstrous wrath.

Kasinia leapt down to the ground. Everywhere men and Tharn were running or fighting or dying in the thick, red mud. A blood-drenched soldier ran past, screaming, his cheek hanging down in red tatters.

Kasinia had lost sight of Kaya but could feel the warlock draw on an immense reserve of power, this followed by an incredible howling as the beasts erupted into an even

more intense rage. The warpwolf, towering over the other combatants, raked its blood-soaked claws through the backs of several more fleeing Winter Guard before vanishing and reappearing across the field. Kasinia ran toward the warpwolf, dodging the scattered soldiers who were content enough to ignore her in their own retreat.

By the time Kasinia reached her mistress most of the surviving Winter Guard were scattering into the woods with blood-crazed Tharn at their backs. Confused and terrified, they did not realize how small of a force had routed them. One of the argus lay in a heap, glassy-eyed, blood still trickling from a wide gouge in its skull.

"Harry them as you must to keep them from reforming," Kaya commanded, standing over the shattered remnants of the Man-O-War squadron, "but let most of them go."

The Chieftain Skoll shouted her order to his people in their own guttural tongue, then turned to the warlock. "Why let any live?" Half his face was caked in blood, which even now oozed down to his shoulder. Kasinia wondered vaguely if his wounds were severe.

"So they can speak of the horrors they've faced. We must impress upon them the difficulties of claiming this ground—but don't force them to renew a fight you may not win."

Kasinia had thought the Man-O-War officer was dead, but as she approached he reached for his fallen axe. Kaya noticed as well; she casually flipped it away with her spear, then placed her boot on the man's rising shoulder and pushed him back flat to the ground. His banner, now a mud-soaked rag, spread out beneath him.

For a long moment Kaya stared at her fallen foe in his crippled armor. It had been the source of his power once; now it was as restrictive as a tomb.

Kaya swung her spear around and used it to flip open his visor, revealing the face of her enemy. He was, of course, simply a man like any other.

The Moonhunter locked eyes with him, neither speaking for a time. "Was it worth it?" she said at last in passable Khadoran.

"No," the Khadoran said, his voice barely more than a rasping wheeze.

"No," Kaya agreed, shaking her head slightly. She raised her spear and Kasinia suppressed the unbecoming urge to look away—but Kaya only used it to flip the man's visor back down, then stepped away. "It wasn't worth it," she continued. "It's never worth it. Tell them that, if you make it back."

Kaya turned from the man and went back into the forest, her beasts trailing behind her, and Kasinia followed.



# HIGHER COMMAND

## TEAM FORMATS

BY DAVID "DC" CARL

The *WARMACHINE High Command* and *HORDES High Command* experience varies substantially when playing 1-on-1 versus free-for-all and when playing around the kitchen table versus at an official Kingmaker event. That still doesn't cover the full breadth of the *High Command* experience, however, and even some very simple alternate formats can provide players with a very rich and varied experience.

Consider, for example, the Chokepoint variant popularized by some of the Privateer Press warehouse staff. In this variant, you use half the standard number of locations (rounding up)



but double their VP value. This vastly increases the conflict at each location but makes each location finally captured into a truly game-changing prize.

In this article, we'll look at a few team formats for *High Command*. Though some players prefer the tactical nature of 1-on-1 battles or the political maneuvering of free-for-alls, others enjoy teamwork and collaboration in their gaming. These formats will appeal greatly to those players, offer Kingmaker players a distinct change of pace, and introduce a way to get new players acclimated to *High Command*.

### CLASSIC 2-ON-2

Countless card games over the years have pit two teams of two players against one another. Teammates sit directly across from one another so that gameplay alternates between teams as play proceeds around the table. This classic 4-player format fits very smoothly into a game of *High Command*.

In this variant, players choose their warcasters and build their reinforcement decks normally. Players are divided into two teams of two players. Teams need not share the same faction. The team that goes first (and third) gets to choose the location deck and the Winds of War deck. The team that goes second (and fourth) gets the final turn of the game before the Day of Reckoning card is drawn. The number of locations used is equal to the number of players.

A player's ally is not considered his "opponent" for the purpose of card abilities, and when attacking at a location that includes allied cards, act as if none of those cards are present at the location. If all four players have cards at one location, for example, the active player can make a targeted attack against one opponent or can make an all-out attack against both opponents. Under no circumstances will the allied player's cards contribute to the attack, nor can they be destroyed.

A player's ally's cards are also not considered during the capture step. If the active player has at least two more army cards than any *opponent* at a location, he takes that location card. Any ally cards at the captured location are returned to the ally's *hand* (not the discard pile).

Once the game ends, each *team* adds up the number of victory points in their army decks, discard piles, hands, and occupying forces piles. The team with the most victory points wins the game.



"Table talk" is permitted in this *High Command* variant but becomes open knowledge. A player can tell his ally what location to attack or even what cards he has in hand but can *only* do so openly before his enemies.

The rules of classic 2-on-2 *High Command* are extremely similar to a standard game of *High Command*, so it would be easy to underestimate the ramifications on gameplay. Successful teamwork is a key component to victory, however, and adds a new element to when and how to capture and contest locations.

## TEAM 2-ON-2

The other approach to team *High Command* more closely resembles traditional team dynamics in miniatures games rather than card games. Players on a single team sit together and will take their turns simultaneously rather than staggered throughout the turn order.

In this variant, players choose their warcasters and build their reinforcement decks normally. Players are divided into two teams of two players; teams need not share the same faction. The team that goes first gets to choose the location deck and the Winds of War deck. The number of locations used is equal to the number of teams.

Teammates are considered a single "player" (or a single "opponent") for the purpose of game rules and card abilities. They capture a location if their team has two more army cards than any other team, they perform their orders step simultaneously, and they perform their battle step as if they were a single player. Their card abilities that reference "friendly" cards apply, even if their cards do not share the same faction.

As with other team formats, each *team* adds up the number of victory points in their army decks, discard piles, hands, and occupying forces piles at the end of the game to determine which team wins the game.

In this format, where teammates are seated side-by-side, teammates can show one another their cards and whisper their game plans in secret. In this variant format, they need not share this information with their opponents.

Note that team 2-on-2 games require one erratum to account for cross-faction interactions. The Stealth and Superior Range abilities are both changed to the following: This card cannot be destroyed if there are any friendly cards without Stealth or Superior Range at this location.

## TEAM FREE-FOR-ALL

If players have access to more than one set of *High Command* cards, they can play with up to four teams of two players for a total of up to *eight* players. The rules for this format are the same as for team 2-on-2.

In this format, players are highly encouraged to plan ahead and to conduct their scheming during other players' turns, since having six or eight players at the table can run the risk of unduly bogging down gameplay.

## CONCLUSION

*High Command* has a lot of innate replayability based on the eight widely varying factions, each with their own play style, the six different detachment themes within each faction, and the various warcasters and warlocks that shake up gameplay even further.

Add in the increasing library of *High Command* expansion products and the possibility of playing whole new formats, and the options are virtually limitless.

Team formats also open up *High Command's* appeal to a new subset of gamers *and* provide a means of introducing those players to the game. After all, it's easier to learn the game when working closely alongside a partner than when playing against your teacher.







# HIGH COMMAND™

## EXPAND YOUR COMMAND



## INTO THE BREACH

### CARD LIST

By David "DC" Carl

*Into the Breach* builds on the content of WARMACHINE High Command and The Big Guns to expand the arsenals of Cygnar, the Protectorate of Menoth, Khador, and Cryx by focusing on the theme of trench warfare in the Iron Kingdoms and featuring a number of cards designed to break through the enemy lines no matter their defenses.



These colored pips represent the maximum number of times a card can appear in a particular detachment.





## CYGNAR

Cygnar gains a couple of additional Trencher card types, including one with the new Assassinate ability. When you attack with a lone Assassinate card, you skip the attack at that location altogether to dispatch a vulnerable warrior card. *Into the Breach* also brings Cygnar two exceptionally sturdy warjacks that can hold the line against all but the most determined foes.



### WARCASTER

- Constance Blaize, Knight of the Prophet

### REINFORCEMENTS

- Centurion
- Sentinel
- Trencher Commando Team
- Trencher Scattergunner Team



## PROTECTORATE OF MENOOTH

With an efficient offensive warjack, a card with the new Assassinate ability described above, and the lowest-cost Fire card to date (*with a victory point, no less*), what else could Protectorate players want? The Castigator, that's what. The Castigator's Combustion ability combines with Fire to allow you to take a 3-Health card out of the fight before the battle even begins.



### WARCASTER

- High Executioner Servath Reznik

### REINFORCEMENTS

- Castigator
- Daughters of the Flame
- Dervish
- Flameguard Cleanser Phalanx







## KHADOR

*Into the Breach* offers players a number of alternate options for sturdy Khador decks laden with victory points, and it also introduces the Assault Kommando Kompany with its Alchemical Mask ability. Discard-oriented strategies can be devastating to Khador decks, but Assault Kommando Kompanies can stop that strategy cold.



### WARCASTER

- Commander Harkevich, The Iron Wolf

### REINFORCEMENTS

- Assault Kommando Kompany
- Devastator
- Kommando Flamethrower Kompany
- Marauder



## CRYX

The Cryx *Into the Breach* cards really run the gamut. From the raw efficiency of Corruptors with their 2 victory points and card advantage mechanic due to their Distillation ability, to the new thralls and revenants for the more thematic and synergistic reinforcement decks, there's something here for everyone.



### WARCASTER

- Master Necrotech Mortenebra

### REINFORCEMENTS

- Atramentous Revenant Crew
- Bile Thrall Horde
- Corruptor
- Scavenger







# HIGH COMMAND™

## EXPAND YOUR COMMAND



### ***ELEMENTAL RAGE***

#### **CARD LIST**

By David "DC" Carl

*Elemental Rage expands upon the card options from HORDES High Command and Savage Guardians for Trollbloods, Circle Orboros, Skorne, and Legion of Everblight decks with new cards focused on harnessing the elemental powers of earth, wind, storm, and fire to defeat their enemies.*



These colored pips represent the maximum number of times a card can appear in a particular detachment.







## TROLLBLOODS

The low-cost victory points of Beast Skinner Scouts and the discard effect of the Storm Troll are worthy additions to the kriegs, but the trolls' frost magic is their real selling point in *Elemental*

*Rage*. The Winter Troll's Rime and the Elementalist Sorcerers' Winter Storm both force opponents to think about battle a little differently. Combine these abilities with troll toughness and other discard effects to dominate locations.



### WARLOCK

- Captain Gunnbjorn

### REINFORCEMENTS

- Beast Skinner Scouts
- Elementalist Sorcerers
- Storm Troll
- Winter Troll



## CIRCLE ORBOROS

*Elemental Rage* adds a number of great new cards to Circle Orboros with numerous interesting new abilities, but none will shake up the game quite as much as the Tharn Bloodweaver

Coven with the Blood Burst ability. Blood Burst is rare in its ability to discard cards from a location rather than destroy them and even rarer in its ability to wipe out *every* army card at a location regardless of its Health.



### WARLOCK

- Cassius the Oathkeeper & Wurmwood

### REINFORCEMENTS

- Druid Wilders
- Tharn Bloodweaver Coven
- Winter Argus
- Woldwarden







## SKORNE

The Skorne cards in *Elemental Rage* provide new army cards with a range of elemental themes—earth, acid, and fire. The Titan Cannoneer is truly devastating against opponents playing WARMACHINE factions or the Circle Orboros red or purple detachments, Razor Worms and Venator Slinger Teams provide additional low-cost combat options, and the Cataphract Incindiarii top off the Power of ranks of Skorne warriors.



### WARLOCK

- Master Ascetic Naresh

### REINFORCEMENTS

- Cataphract Incindiarii
- Razor Worm
- Titan Cannoneer
- Venator Slinger Team



## LEGION OF EVERBLIGHT

Players looking to beef up the victory points in their Legion of Everblight reinforcement decks are bound to appreciate the Scather Catapult Batteries and Ravagores that cost just 3 CMD and 5 WAR for 1 and 2 victory points, respectively. Stingers are a new option for use with the Last Call ability, and the low-cost Detonating Spell Martyrs can boast obscenely high Power stats...before they blow up.



### WARLOCK

- Bethayne, Voice of Everblight

### REINFORCEMENTS

- Detonating Spell Martyrs
- Ravagore
- Scather Catapult Battery
- Stinger







# HELL & DAWN



BY ED BOURELLE AND MICHAEL PLUMMER • CHRONICLED BY MICHAEL SANBEG  
ART BY TYLER JAMES AND NÉSTOR OSSANDÓN



Ever since the previews began, we've been eagerly awaiting the chance to put upcoming *WARMACHINE: Vengeance* models on the table, and with this issue's battle report our opportunity has finally arrived. With a host of new options for all six major *WARMACHINE* factions, our biggest challenge was deciding which two would step up to the front. It was immediately clear that Issyria, Sibyl of Dawn should lead the Retribution of Scyrah back to the battle report gaming table. To oppose Issyria's force, a vile Cryxian army would give us a chance

to take a unit of Bane Riders and a Skarlock Commander for a ride.

As for who should be called upon to lead these two dynamic forces, Retribution's involvement called to mind one of Privateer Press' foremost Iosan enthusiasts, Convention Coordinator Michael Plummer. And because Michael would be facing the forces of Cryx, we invoked the infamous Privateer rivalry between Michael Plummer and notorious Cryx player Ed Bourelle.



### Incursion (Perimeter Scenario)

**Summary:** Place three flags in accordance to the diagram below. At the end of the second player's first turn, randomly remove a non-center flag from the board.

At the end of each player's turn, starting on the second player's second turn, a player earns Control Points (CP) as follows:

- Center Flag: Control = 1 CP, Dominate = 1 CP
- Outer Flag: Control = 1 CP, Dominate = 2 CP

### Victory Conditions

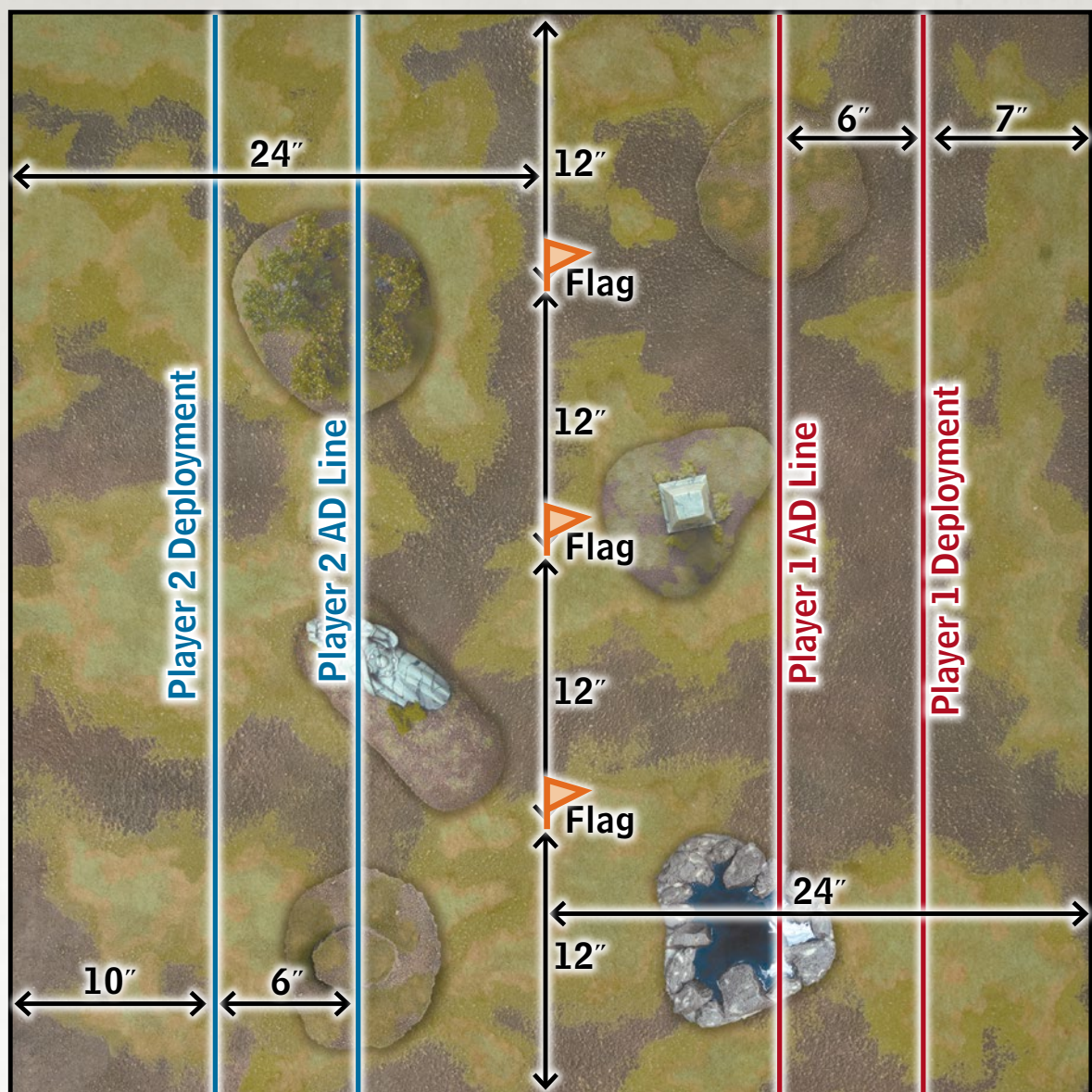
The first player to earn at least 5 Control Points *and* have more Control Points than the opponent immediately wins the game.

## Scenario Rules

We decided to fight out this battle with one of the Steamroller 2014 scenarios currently still in the testing stage. Looking for a scenario that is already popular but which had undergone significant changes since 2013, we decided Incursion would give us a great game and provide a fun preview of the coming year.

## The Battlefield

Opting for an Iosan-themed table, we used a plain grass-covered table with an assortment of the Retribution of Scyrath obstructions we built for *No Quarter* #34. To complete the scene, we added a pair of hills, a small forest, and a shallow water pool from *No Quarter* #41.





## Retribution of Scyrah Army Construction – Michael



**A**s a long-time reader of *No Quarter*, I've enjoyed the battle reports for many years now. When I was offered a chance to take part in this issue's battle report, I could hardly contain my excitement! Sometimes,

though, what fate gives one with one hand it takes away with the other. When I found out I would be playing against Ed Bourelle's Cryx army, my stomach immediately tied itself in knots. I've played a good half-dozen games with Ed over the years, and while we've always had a great time I've never been the victor. I vowed things would be different this time.

I normally start my army construction by choosing a warcaster, but for this battle I already knew the new Retribution warcaster Issyria, Sibyl of Dawn would take the field. This worked out well—I have seen Ed's armies a few times in the past, so I knew to expect a fairly even spread of bonejacks, helljacks, and infantry. Issyria's spell list and feat would give me a lot of tools to deal with the myriad threats coming from the other side of the board.

The most striking thing about Issyria is her lack of any direct offensive ability. She doesn't carry a weapon, nor does she have a single damage-causing spell. She makes up for this with the Ancillary Attack special action and an impressive focus stat of 8. With this

in mind I built my battlegroup to include a few of my favorite and most trusted myrmidons.

First off, I took Discordia. With a high RAT and 10" spray, Discordia can deal with high DEF threats and massed infantry. Just the thought of letting that spray loose twice a turn got my blood running. For my second myrmidon I decided on a Phoenix for its mix of survivability and utility. With my myrmidons selected, I tacked on two Arcanist solos to help with focus efficiency and melee damage. I also threw in Eiryss, Angel of Retribution to help mitigate the threat of the opposing battlegroup.

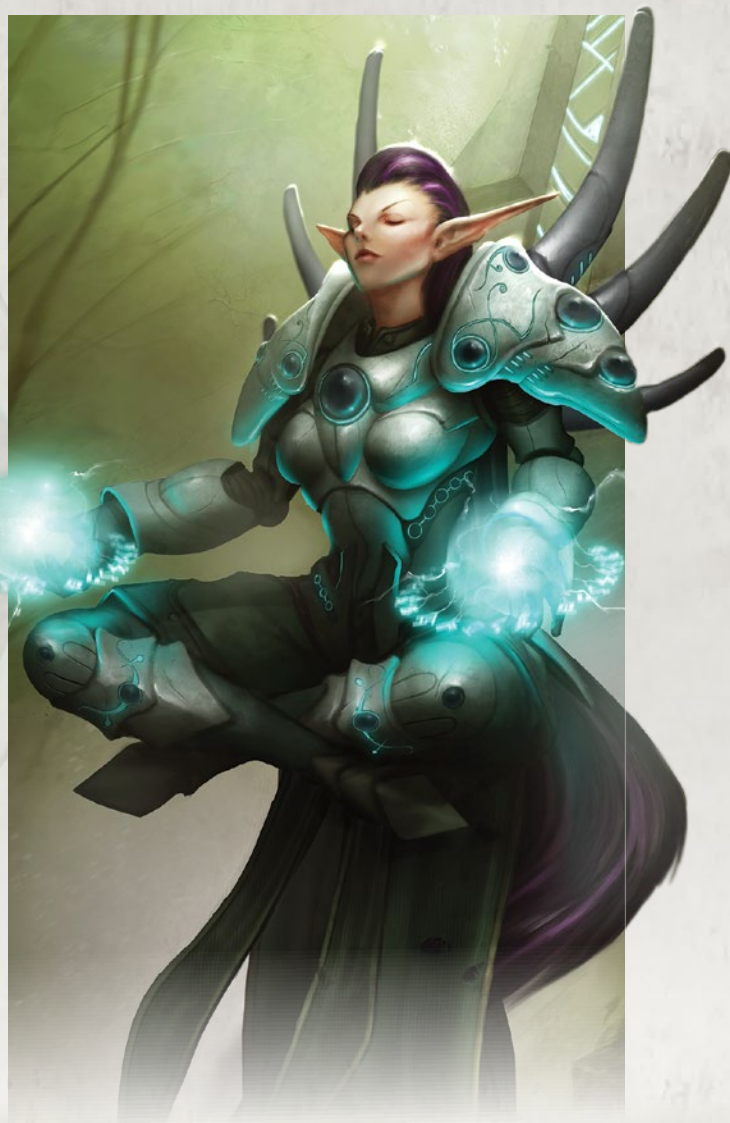
For infantry I started with a full unit of Houseguard Halberdiers along with the unit attachment. A Houseguard Thane solo followed to increase their already impressive threat range. With Crusader's Call from Issyria and Desperate Pace from the Houseguard Thane, my Houseguard Halberdiers boast an impressive 15" threat range! To get even further utility out of my Houseguard Thane, I took a full unit of Houseguard Riflemen. Long-range guns with the ability to ignore Stealth from Firing Solution are a real problem solver against Cryx. I also took their unit attachment for the War Tempered ability. A single Soulless Escort rounded out the Riflemen unit and would hopefully keep them a little safer than normal.

There's always the chance that some high armor is going to hit the table, so I finished out my army selection with a unit of Stormfall Archers and two Mage Hunter Assassins. Under Issyria's feat, Dawn's Light, these selections have the potential to do a huge amount of damage to almost anything Ed can throw at me.





	Model/Unit	Points
(I)	Issyria, Sibyl of Dawn	+6 warjack pts
(D)	Discordia	10
(P)	Phoenix	10
(E)	Eiryss, Angel of Retribution	3
(A)	Arcanist x2	1 each (2)
(MH)	Mage Hunter Assassin x2	2 each (4)
(HT)	Houseguard Thane	2
(SA)	Stormfall Archers	5
(H)	Houseguard Halberdiers (10)	7
(HO) (HS)	Houseguard Halberdier Officer & Standard	2
(R)	Houseguard Riflemen (10)	8
(RO) (RS)	Houseguard Riflemen Officer & Standard	2
(S)	Soulless Escort	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>





## Cryx Army Construction - Ed



**W**hen I found out I was going up against Michael Plummer for this battle report, I was thrilled. We have played each other several times before, and every game has been a nail-biter. So far I've managed to squeak out a perfect

record against him, but there have been games where it seemed fate was conspiring against him more than I was actually kicking his butt. Regardless of the outcome, this was sure to be a crazy game.

I chose to frame my army around Asphyxious the Hellbringer, a solid toolbox warcaster with good offensive and defensive support. I knew Michael's Retribution army would be slinging plenty of focus

around, plus the possibility of spells from solos and units, so his Rites of Shadow feat would be a good fit as well. Asphyxious the Hellbringer was also the model I had most recently finished painting, and I really wanted to get him on the table.

For my battlegroup I chose a Reaper for its ability to harpoon major potential threats like myrmidons with arc nodes or troop-decimating ranged attacks. I grabbed two arc nodes of my own with a Ripjaw and a Defiler—not only would these help deliver Bone Shaker while keeping Asphyxious out of harm's way, but each bonejack also offers a unique and powerful weapon. This was important because my last battlegroup selection was Cankerworm, and its ability to adapt the weaponry from a wreck marker is dependent on the quality of the weapons it can adapt. Being able to adapt a Bonesaw, Sludge Cannon, or Harpoon could give me a lot of options in a pinch. And with an Armor Piercing Bite, Parry, and its Affinity with Asphyxious, Cankerworm is a solid choice.





I kicked off my infantry choices with a full unit of Bane Riders. The speed and survivability of these models is amazing, and with Ashen Veil from Asphyxious they can be even more difficult than normal to put down. Next up I added my go-to unit of Mechanithralls, complete with a trio of Brute Thralls and the new Skarlock Commander. The Skarlock allows me to spread out this 14-model unit thanks to his CMD 8, and his Darkfire and Disbinding spells make him well worth his 1-point cost. For my last unit I packed in a minimum unit of Bane Thralls with an Officer & Standard. Their hitting power is always amazing, and Stealth makes them very survivable, but I wasn't clueless as to what would likely be coming for me, and I was definitely worried. My only solo (not counting Vociferon) was Bane Lord Tartarus. Not only is he a great boon to the Bane Thralls, but his Curse ability could also help the Bane Riders, allowing them to attack two Cursed targets when doubling up with their own Curse.

So there it was, my army list. I felt naked without more support solos, and I debated trading the Ripjaw for a Pistol Wraith and a Warwitch Siren. But this is where I landed, and I was confident I could make it work.

Model/Unit	Points
<b>A</b> Asphyxious the Hellbringer +4 warjack pts	
<b>V</b> Vociferon	0
<b>R</b> Reaper	7
<b>D</b> Defiler	5
<b>Rj</b> Ripjaw	5
<b>C</b> Cankerworm	5
<b>BL</b> Bane Lord Tartarus	4
<b>BR</b> Bane Riders (5)	11
<b>B</b> Bane Thralls (6)	5
<b>BO BS</b> Bane Thrall Officer & Standard	3
<b>M</b> Mechanithralls (10)	5
<b>S</b> Skarlock Commander	1
<b>B</b> Brute Thralls x3	1 each (3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>









## Round 1

### Retribution of Scyrah – Michael

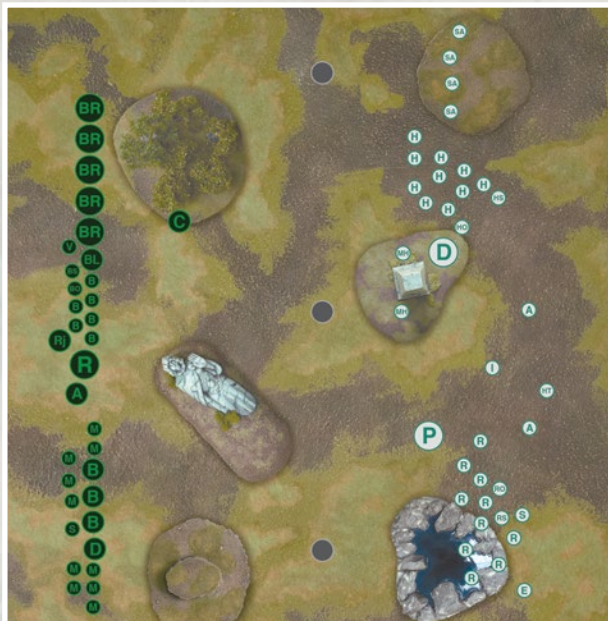
Looking across the board, I was already feeling overwhelmed by the sheer number of enemy models on the table. I knew I had to be careful about how far I advanced this turn or I'd face some serious retaliation from Ed's arc nodes and deceptively fast army. I decided a cautious advance was acceptable and hoped I'd be able to get the alpha strike on turn two.

Issyria kept all of her focus on herself for spells. I activated the Stormfall Archers and ran them onto the hill on the right flank. Next, I ran my Mage Hunter Assassins slightly forward to give them a chance at cover and hopefully to keep them out of Ed's threat range.

The Arcanist to Issyria's left activated next, advancing forward and using Power Booster on the Phoenix. The Phoenix used that focus to run forward and slightly toward the mass of Mechanithralls on my left flank, ready to make short work of them with its Halo Cannon on the next turn if they overextended. The Houseguard Thane advanced slightly and gave Desperate Pace to the Houseguard Halberdiers to allow them a little extra movement while maintaining Shield Wall.

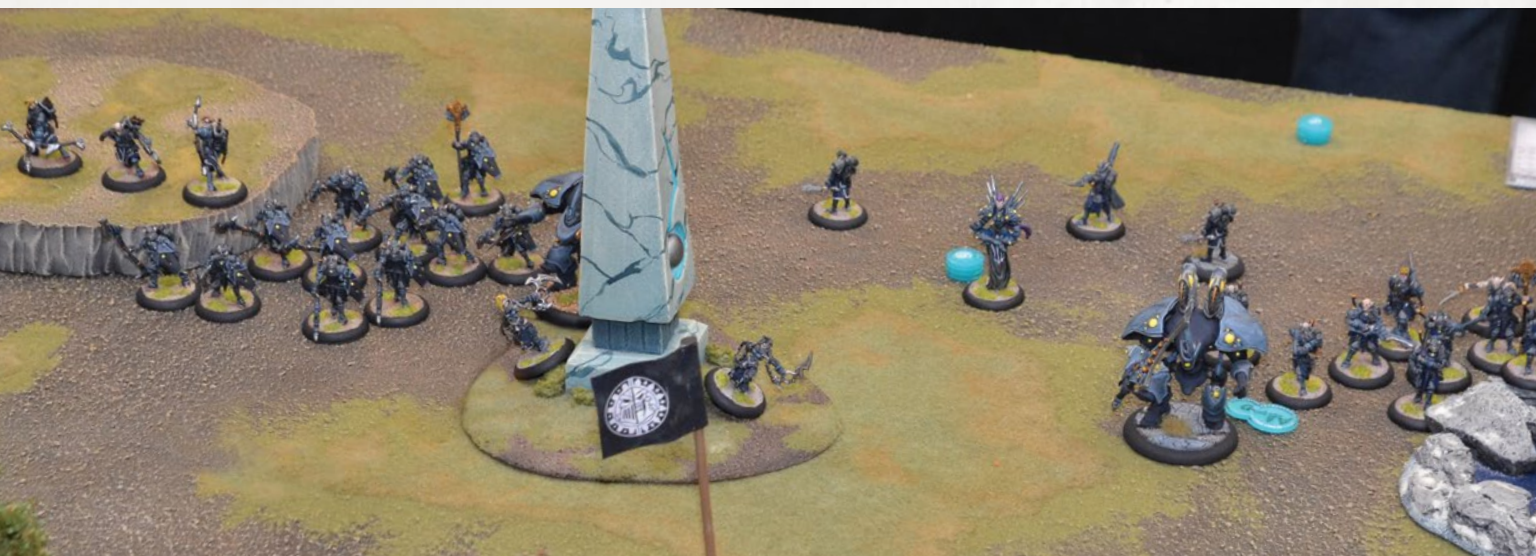
Issyria activated next and put her defensive spells in place. She cast Admonition on the Phoenix through its arc node and Inviolable Resolve on Discordia to help her last through the flood of Banes coming from the center and right. I advanced Issyria forward with a few focus left over to keep her safe from any spells Asphyxious might land on her.

My Houseguard Halberdiers received a Shield Wall order and advanced 8" with Desperate Pace. Thanks to the unit



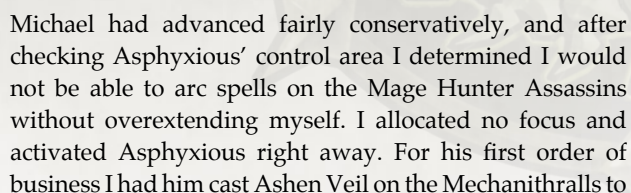
attachment's Reform ability, I was able to edge them forward a few more inches and reposition them in such a way as to optimize their threat vectors. The second Arcanist advanced and used Power Booster on Discordia, allowing the myrmidon to run into a good position to attack with its Sonic Pulse Cannon next turn.

The Houseguard Riflemen ran into position in and around the water feature, hoping the rough terrain would stop the Mechanithralls from reaching them too quickly. Eirys decided that discretion is the better part of valor and advanced behind the Riflemen to stay alive. With all of my activations complete, it was time to see how Ed responded.





## Cryx - Ed



After that, my goal was pretty simple: jam my army down Michael's throat.

On the left I ran the Bane Riders easily through the forest, thanks to their Ghostly ability. I had a tough time deciding where to end their movement because I knew I was bringing them into some real danger. Cankermaw advanced into the forest, as it usually comes into play for me later in the game and I wanted to keep it safe and out of the way until then. I also advanced the Ripjaw to the left flank, but held it back. I moved Tartarus cautiously into the forest, as I knew Michael would be gunning for him based on his effectiveness in a game we had played a month earlier. Lastly, I ran Vociferon into the forest alongside Cankermaw where he would be safe to gather Mage Hunter Assassin souls on my next turn.

Michael rolled for flag removal, and the flag near the forest disappeared. Then I held my breath and waited to see how much pain the Iosans were going to dish out.







## Round 2

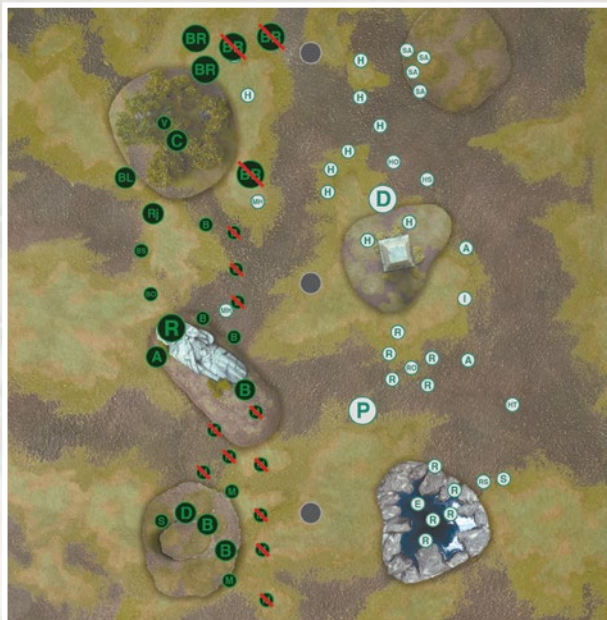
### Retribution of Scyrah – Michael

Looking at the table, I realized Ed had done exactly what I had both expected and feared he would do. The Cryxian army was coming at me very quickly, and if I didn't make some serious headway this turn I was going to be in a lot of trouble. I paid 2 focus to upkeep Admonition and Inviolable resolve, leaving 6 focus on Issyria.

Knowing this would be my only chance to take control of the situation, I activated Issyria and advanced a few inches forward and to the right, cast Crusader's Call, and used her Dawn's Light feat. Eiryss advanced forward and shot a Mechanithrall, removing Ashen Veil from the unit. An Arcanist advanced and gave the Phoenix a focus point with Power Booster, which the Phoenix then used to boost a shot with its Halo Cannon and kill three more Mechanithralls.

Moving over to the right flank, I knew I had to do something about the Bane Riders. They are absolute monsters on the field, and if I let them get in a charge I'd be in a lot of trouble. Even with this flag gone, they'd take out my flank and sweep into my other forces. My Stormfall Archers activated and advanced, counting on the added accuracy from Issyria's feat to make sure they would hit. My first shot missed, and I started to feel pretty grim about the whole situation. The other three Brutal Shots struck true, though, killing two Bane Riders in the process.

The second Arcanist advanced and used Power Booster on Discordia. Discordia then advanced and fired the Sonic Pulse Cannon at a Bane Rider, planning to use the focus to boost damage. But the shot missed, leaving the Bane Rider unscathed. I moved on to the House Guard Thane, who advanced and used Firing Solution on the Riflemen, mostly so I would remember to do it on future turns—they were already ignoring stealth from Issyria's feat. The Riflemen



activated next, making excellent use of their 14" range and Issyria's feat to whittle down both the Mechanithrall and Bane Thrall units significantly. At this point I was starting to feel a lot less afraid of what was coming at me.

With only a few activations left, I decided to use my Mage Hunter Assassins and hope for some good damage rolls under the feat. The first one charged the Reaper, doing a massive eighteen points of damage! With its cortex destroyed, the helljack was a lot less terrifying. The second Assassin was not quite as effective, doing a measly two points of damage to a Bane Rider. The Halberdiers received a charge order, taking down a third Bane Rider and reforming to block charge lanes for the remaining two.







## Round 3

### Retribution of Scyrah – Michael



I did a really good job of whittling down Ed's forces, but I had neglected to apply enough pressure to the flags. Down two control points this early in the game, I knew I had some serious ground to cover if I was going to turn this around. Issyria allocated 2 focus to each myrmidon and upkept Inviolable Resolve on Discordia, leaving herself with 3 focus.

The Stormfall Archers forfeited their movement to gain the aiming bonus and launched a volley of Brutal and Snipe shots into the remaining Bane Riders, killing one while three shots deviated harmlessly away. Tartarus can cause a lot of problems in the late game, and I knew I had to deal with him this turn. Discordia activated next, advancing slightly while being very careful to stay out of melee with the Bane Thrall on her left, and fired the Sonic Pulse Cannon at Tartarus. The spray managed to do three points of damage to the last Bane Rider, and a boosted hit killed the Bane Thrall Officer. I needed to hit Tartarus, though, so I boosted the roll—and of course the dice came up 3,2,1. Issyria advanced and used Ancillary Attack on Discordia, killing the Bane Rider and missing the attack roll again on Tartarus.

The Houseguard Thane gave Firing Solution to the Houseguard Riflemen, who then applied a careful combination of moving and aiming to maximize their chances at taking out essential targets. The Officer used his Whites of Their Eyes ability to give them an additional die

to hit targets within 8". A three-man combined range attack into melee thanks to War Tempered, along with a failed Tough check, cleared a charge lane for my Halberdiers while the same maneuver freed my Phoenix from melee. The other Riflemen took down a few more Mechanithralls and Bane Thralls for good measure.

The Phoenix activated and advanced, carefully choosing its facing to avoid giving its back arc to the furthest Brute Thrall, then used its Combustion attack. POW 12s can do a lot of damage with the right rolls, as proven by the dead Skarlock Commander and the lost head system on the Defiler. The Phoenix then bought an attack with its Thermal Blade to send the Brute Thrall back to the grave. Spending the focus gave Asphyxious a soul, but it was well worth it. The Halberdiers activated and received a charge order, killing Bane Lord Tartarus and the remaining Bane Thralls. More important, I kept Ed from scoring any more points this turn.







## Round 3 (continued)

### Cryx – Ed



I took a few lumps, but Michael didn't clear the flags so I was able to maintain the control point advantage. I spent a couple of minutes thinking I had a long-shot win on control points but ultimately realized Asphyxious would not be able to dominate the rightmost flag.

In the Maintenance Phase, the fire on the Defiler went out and I transferred all three souls from Vociferon to Asphyxious. At the start of the Control Phase I replaced the souls (three from Vociferon and one from Rites of Shadows) with focus, giving Asphyxious 10 focus points

to work with. He allocated 3 to the Defiler, 1 to the Ripjaw, and kept 7 for himself.

Hoping to drag the Phoenix away from the right flag, I activated the Reaper, advanced, and scored a hit. Unfortunately the shot inflicted no damage so Drag did not trigger. First activation of the turn and I was already cursing my focus allocation; a successful Drag would have cleared the Phoenix off the flag and given me another point at the end of the turn.

My Brute Thralls were separated far enough to be out of formation, so one charged the Phoenix while the second advanced into melee with it. The charge attack delivered ten points of damage, taking out the myrmidon's field.

Next I activated the Defiler, which advanced and made a spray attack against an Arcanist and a trio of Riflemen. With the Defiler's head system out, I was boosting for two dice on the attack and still failed to connect with any of the rolls.

My offensive options were few at that point, so I decided to set up an interesting follow-up turn. Instead of unleashing any spells, I ran Asphyxious onto the right-flank hill, leaving him with ARM 24 thanks to the 7 focus still sitting on him. I ran the Ripjaw around the obstruction toward the Phoenix but made sure to hang back enough to stay safe from Combustion and to have a potential charge next turn. I moved Cankerworm into a charge lane on the Phoenix as well, keeping it a bit further back. Finally, I ran Vociferon behind the obstruction and into a position where he could move toward either flag on my next turn.



## Round 4

### Retribution of Scyrah – Michael

The Phoenix's Generator system was still operational, so its Phoenix Field healed itself for four points of damage. Issyria dropped Inviolable Resolve and allocated 3 focus to Discordia, keeping 5 for herself. I needed her to nullify Asphyxious' threat to my troops and keep scoring points if I wanted to win this game.

The Stormfall Archers activated and advanced, putting a harmless shot into the Reaper and missing a Snipe shot on Vociferon. I decided not to attack with the last two for fear of doing more harm than good. The Phoenix then activated and changed facing before Combusting again, dealing six damage to one Brute Thrall and seven to the other. I wanted to use my arc node this turn, so I activated the Riflemen and made two five-man CRAs into the Brute Thralls from their back arc. The first shot hit and took down a Brute Thrall expertly. The dice on the second roll came up snake eyes against the Brute Thrall but, of course, hit my own Phoenix for three points of damage. So much for that Phoenix Field healing...

My first Arcanist mustered his courage to charge the last Brute Thrall and struck him down with his trusty Multi Tool, freeing up my arc node. The Halberdiers charged the Reaper, doing minimal damage, while others ran to engage Vociferon. My second Arcanist used Concentrated Power on Discordia who, in turn, charged to finish off the



Reaper and secure a control point for my army. Issyria advanced and arced Blinding Light at Asphyxious to keep him from using his attack spells on my infantry next turn. The Houseguard Thane activated last, taking a pistol shot at the Defiler but missing.

### Cryx – Ed

I might have lost the Reaper, but I knew I had a chance to grab two control points this turn if I played my cards right—and forced Michael into a confrontation with Asphyxious. I allocated 1 focus to Cankerworm, 2 to the Defiler, and 1 to the Ripjaw, leaving 3 on Asphyxious.

I decided to start small, activating Vociferon and moving into the Halberdiers engaging him. It was a pleasant surprise when he was able to tear out one's throat and pick up a soul token.

I followed up with the big guns, charging the Phoenix with Asphyxious and getting him into base contact with the right flag. The boosted attack landed and tore off the myrmidon's left arm. A follow-up attack landed and did an additional three damage with a boosted roll. I decided to leave 1 focus on Asphyxious and get to work with the bonejacks. The Ripjaw charged the Phoenix with an Armor Piercing attack from the Bone Saw, delivering an additional nine damage and taking out its movement system. Cankerworm then followed up with a charge and took the Phoenix down with an Armor Piercing Bite attack. Despite the number of Retribution models left on the table I embraced the small victory of taking that SOB down.



The real key to success was the unengaged Defiler, which sacrificed its movement for an aiming bonus and boosted a spray attack at the Arcanist—the final model contesting the right flag. The gambit paid off, and the two-die attack roll hit with boosted damage to seal the deal.

Right flag dominated!



## Round 5

### Retribution of Scyrah – Michael



The tide of battle was starting to turn, and all I needed to do was keep pressure on the flags and keep scoring points. Issyria allocated a single focus to Discordia. The Houseguard Halberdiers ran toward Asphyxious and the flag, being careful not to face and engage him. The Stormfall Archers advanced and volleyed Snipe shots at the Ripjaw, taking out its arc node with a combined fourteen points of damage and doing one point to the Houseguard Thane. Discordia activated, charging the Ripjaw and wrecking it.

Issyria activated and advanced forward, casting a boosted Blinding Light at Asphyxious before casting Velocity to dominate the center flag. The Houseguard Thane advanced, giving the Riflemen Desperate Pace. The Riflemen received a run order and carefully filled the space surrounding the flag, losing a single trooper to a free strike from Asphyxious. I ended my turn, scoring a point.

### Cryx – Ed



Vociferon transferred his two soul tokens to Asphyxious, who converted them to focus. Things were looking grim with only four of my models left on the table, but I saw an opportunity to pull out a win. Asphyxious kept 6 focus for himself and allocated 3 to Cankerworm.

Thanks to Parry, Cankerworm advanced to the Reaper's wreck marker without risking a free strike. I spent 1 focus to use Salvage and activated the Adapt ability to gain the special rules and weapon qualities of the Reaper's Harpoon. I removed the wreck marker per the Salvage rules and boosted a harpoonized Replicator attack against Issyria, intending to drag her within charge range of Asphyxious. The dice betrayed me with a 3, 2, and 1. *Miss!* I'm sure my face showed as much agony as Michael's did relief. I ended Cankerworm's activation, allowing it to advance to the far side of the flag and into melee with Issyria thanks to its affinity with Asphyxious.

I activated Asphyxious and ran him into base contact with Issyria's flag to engage her. Hopefully ARM 20 would be enough to see me through another turn.

I then ran Vociferon in to serve as a speed bump between Asphyxious and Discordia. Lastly I activated the Defiler and bashed a Rifleman to death with a melee attack.



## Round 6

## Retribution of Scyrah - Michael

That didn't go as well as I had planned. With Issyria in a sticky spot, she allocated a single focus to Discordia and hoped her own ARM 20 would be enough to survive her next move. Issyria activated and moved away from the flag, taking a free strike from both Asphyxious and Cankerworm. Asphyxious made a solid hit for eight points, but Cankerworm missed. She cast a boosted Blinding Light at Asphyxious, missed, then spent her last 3 focus for Velocity to move 6" closer to the flag on the left. I foolishly forgot to use my Ancillary Attack before moving on to the Houseguard Thane, who walked around the Defiler to avoid the free strike. He took a shot but missed. The Riflemen activated and were able to finish off the Defiler with two combined range attacks. Discordia activated and trampled toward Asphyxious, missing Vociferon in the process. The Arcanist took a swing at Vociferon and missed before the Stormfall Archers ran to fill the space around the flag. My Halberdiers activated last and advanced, missing a combined melee attack on Vociferon before reforming to fill the 4" surrounding the flag. I scored a point, tying up our control points at four each.



## Cryx - Ed

Holy cow! There was no way I was going to clear the mass of models off either flag, and Michael only needed one more point to secure a victory. I had been losing the attrition war for a while and this would be my last turn, even if I did prevent Michael from scoring. Asphyxious kept 4 focus and allocated the remaining 3 to Cankerworm. I then activated Asphyxious and changed his facing. I made his initial attack against one Stormfall Archer, who I needed out of Cankerworm's path, boosting the attack and sucking up his soul. Thanks to Blood Boon on Asphyxious' sword Daimonion, I was able to cast Mobility for free. With his remaining 3 focus I purchased three more attacks, dispatching the Halberdier Standard and hacking into Discordia twice.

With Mobility up, I advanced Cankerworm 8" around the massive melee and found a nice spot where he was unengaged. This would be it; I made a boosted ranged attack with the harpoonized Replicator and landed the hit. It would have been much more dramatic to drag her in and finish her with a bite attack—but I had had enough drama already, and I was relived that the boosted damage roll was enough to finish her off.





## Conclusion

### Retribution of Scyrah – Michael



One of these days, Ed. One of these days...

That was definitely one of the most intense games of WARMACHINE I have played in a long time. I had Ed on the ropes at the beginning of the game, but his two early control points forced my hand into playing for the scenario win. I think it's fair to say no one likes losing, but I can't feel too badly about how this one panned out. I had an awesome time putting Issyria, Sibyl of Dawn on the table. I can't wait to get a few more games in with her and to try out the multitude of options she has for army construction.

Thanks for the game, Ed. It's always a good time throwing down with you and watching the absolute slugfest that ensues. I'm already chomping at the bit for our next game. I have to win one...eventually.

### Cryx – Ed

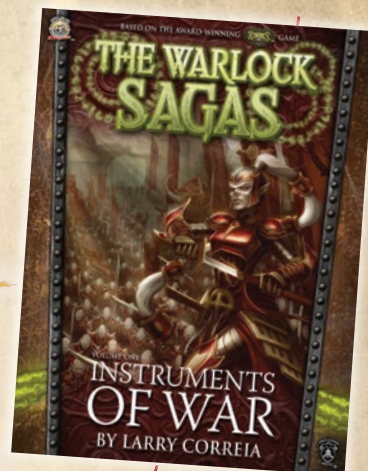
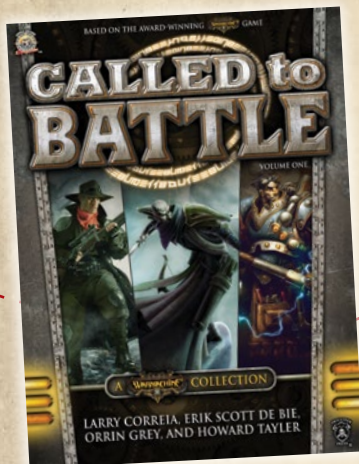


I love playing against Michael, and not just because I keep winning. Our games are always intense, and full of back-and-forth anxiety. He is a great sport, and I have no doubt I have a first-class floor-wiping from him in my future. Issyria is a scary warcaster, and I could see I was in trouble

the moment she popped her feat. I would have liked to have had a little better showing from the Bane Riders for all my fellow Cryx players out there, but losing three of them before my second turn was more about Issyria than the Bane Riders themselves. I had a great time with this game, and I can't wait to do it again.

# CRYX WINS!





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BASED ON THE AWARD-WINNING  GAME

# THE WARLOCK SAGAS



VOLUME TWO

## MUTAGENESIS

BY ORRIN GREY





# A New Power Rises...

*The dire legend of Thagrosh Hellborne began in cold and darkness . . .*

Thagrosh has known nothing but bondage and grueling labor for all his adult life. Prisoners of Khadoran slavers, he and the other ogrun of his village have spent their lives toiling in the lightless depths of a mine. Yet Thagrosh and his brother Vargal have a plan to escape their misery and flee to the nearby nation of Rhul. When their bid for freedom is discovered, Thagrosh is forced to escape alone into the wilderness.

Pursued by the brutal Khadoran overseer and his band of relentless trackers, Thagrosh flees ever deeper into the cold mountains. But he is not only running for his life—he feels an irresistible draw to a towering peak, where an ancient, unknowable power awaits the perfect vessel to make manifest its will upon Caen once again.

The following excerpt is from the Skull Island eXpeditions novella *Mutagenesis* by Orrin Grey. *Mutagenesis* is available in January 2014 from [skullislandx.com](http://skullislandx.com) in three digital formats: ePub, Mobi, and PDF.

## Thagrosh

Thagrosh dreamed of darkness. The mine he traveled in the dream was much deeper and darker than the one in which he toiled while awake. It was a tunnel made for giants, bored through the solid earth as though by some great serpent, maybe even the Devourer Wurm himself or one of his progeny. Thagrosh's people had given up Devourer worship long before he was born, but he knew the stories. He knew the tug of that faith, the *rightness* of it in his blood. Knew this world was not a gentle mother but a ravenous beast stalking him relentlessly through the dark.

The tunnel of his dream was occasionally lit by a smoky, spitting light whose source he never saw. Its flickering fingers reached up the sides of the vast space through which he stumbled, but they never touched the top. Other times he marched in the foxfire glow of cave fungus. Most often, though, he moved in complete darkness, blind, putting one foot in front of the other with nothing but faith to tell him the ground was there at all.

Always he was driven forward, though in the dreams he never turned back to see his tormenters. The lash with which they harried him touched his flesh almost gently, but it burned and ate away at him like a thousand tiny embers, leaving his back stripped bare, his muscles and bones exposed. With each strike he lost a bit of himself—not unlike the lashes of his waking masters.

Sometimes the antagonists of his dreams fell back for a time, and the lashing ceased. But he never stopped his march through the bowels of the world. In his dreams, he never questioned the reason. He felt pulled forward. He could no more stop walking than he could stop his heart from beating. But when he was awake, he sometimes wondered what it was that drove his sleeping self through the dark. It wasn't the fear of the lash; his fear had long since died. It was something else, a pull he felt deep in the core of his being, like a lodestone in his chest that was drawn to the magnetic center of the world. He would march on until he found it or until he awoke. Then, when his daily sufferings ceased and he fell again into restless slumber, he would resume the pilgrimage once more.

Thagrosh's dreams were seldom pleasant, but when he woke it was always to a nightmare. Though never as deep or as dark as the tunnel of his dreams, the mine was deep and dark enough, and it grew deeper every day. The ogrun slaves burrowed ever down, digging into the soil in pursuit of each new vein of silver.

Most mornings Thagrosh and his fellow prisoners woke in the mine's depths. Sometimes days passed before they saw the sky or tasted fresh air. At night they often slept in chains, huddled on the tunnel floor or in niches carved into the rock. If they were lucky they got to sleep on the surface in barracks that were little more than hastily constructed lean-tos, poorly insulated against the biting cold that cut through everything this far north.

Some of the prisoners worked at the rock with picks and hammers, while others carted broken stones to the surface. All the while the guards watched and the overseers cracked their cruel whips and barked orders, though orders were hardly necessary. The ogrun worked half in a trance, their minds dulled and their spirits broken by the same harsh drudgery day after day, year after year.

Thagrosh was a child when the slavers took his village. He remembered it only dimly, like scenes glimpsed in flashes of light. He remembered the sounds the guns had made. It was the first time he had ever heard such weapons, and they had thundered at each other like great beasts. That's how he had thought of it—the guns were calling out to one another, and each time they called, one of his kinsmen fell to the ground.

He remembered the houses burning, remembered the heat and the smell of the smoke. It was morning, and he was still half-asleep when his mother pulled him from his bed and thrust his small brother Vargal toward him. His father had already gone to find his *korune*, to fight at his side or to die there, whichever was required of him. Even as a child, Thagrosh already understood the drive to serve, to follow in the wake of something greater than yourself.

Thagrosh's mother told him to take Vargal and hide, pushing him hurriedly out into the cold behind their house. The noise



and chaos of the attack made it seem to Thagrosh that the world was coming to an end. He held onto Vargal's hand and pulled him behind a woodpile. Their mother had told him to keep his brother safe, keep him quiet, but it was cold, and the guns were loud, and all around there was screaming and running and the smell of smoke. Vargal began to cry.

That's when the shadow fell over them both. The man, though smaller than any adult ogrun, seemed huge to Thagrosh in that moment. A calloused hand snatched Vargal away, and Thagrosh growled, not even thinking to try to speak, and launched himself at the man in spite of his fear. He was prepared to die in defense of his brother, but something cracked against the back of his head and the world faded into darkness and silence.

### Malek

Malek had no recollection of his surname. He was an orphan, so far as he knew, and his earliest memories were of the streets, the docks of Port Vladovar. These memories came as if from nowhere, lurching drunkenly out of the mists of his life, and they were sporadic, unreliable.

He couldn't remember what he was first arrested for, either, but he remembered the forced labor camps to the north and the trains that carried them, dozens of filthy young men packed into cattle cars. He remembered realizing that the boy next to him was dead, his eyes still open and glassy as marbles. The only reason the boy hadn't fallen to the floor was that there wasn't room.

How long was his original sentence? He wondered that sometimes. What had he done to earn it? Had he killed someone? He couldn't say for sure, though certainly he had killed enough men since. From the moment the cold northern air scorched his lungs as he stepped off the train, he knew he would never leave the labor camp alive.

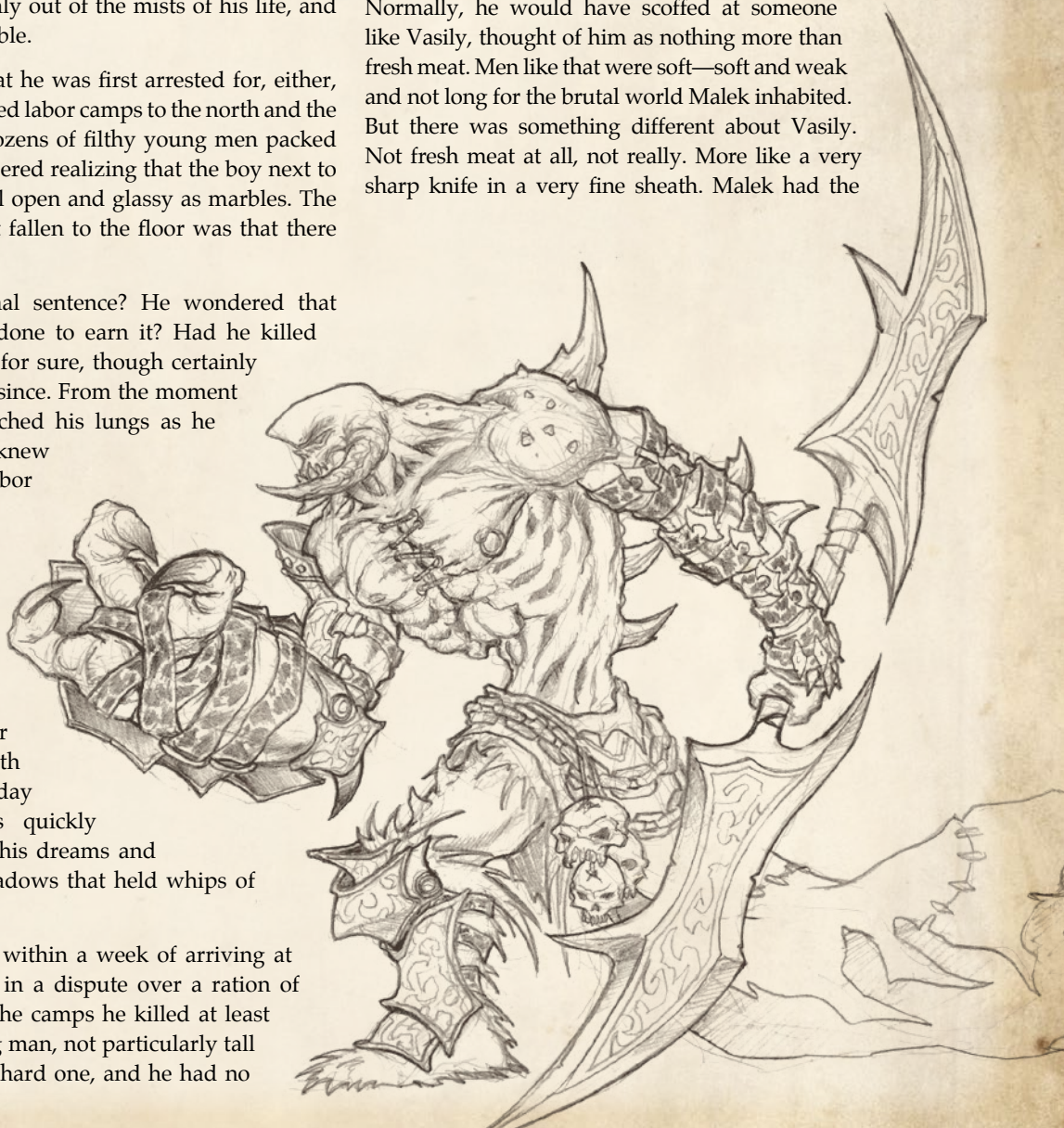
In his nightmares, sometimes he was there still, laboring in the freezing cold and the scorching sunlight alike, carrying rocks as big as his torso by hand or splitting others apart with a maul, rock after rock, day after day. The overseers quickly became faceless shapes in his dreams and his memories, mocking shadows that held whips of flame they used eagerly.

Malek killed the first man within a week of arriving at the camp—broke his neck in a dispute over a ration of *uiske*. During his years in the camps he killed at least three more. He wasn't a big man, not particularly tall or broad, but he became a hard one, and he had no

regard for the lives of others. It was obvious to him that he and the other prisoners were nothing more than cattle. He had been in a slaughterhouse when he was a boy, and he knew the fate that awaited cattle—a hammer blow to the head, quick and sure. That was their best and brightest hope.

By the time Vasily found him in the labor camps, Malek was unrecognizable from the boy who had stepped off that cattle car. He had been a rosy youth, but now he was lean, calloused, and muscular. His back and arms were crisscrossed with scars, one layered atop another, like a map showing the details of the land. A broken bottle had made a ruin of his right eye, and what was left of it was milky and white and blind as the cave fish they sometimes found in the mines. His knuckles had been broken so many times his fists were little more than knurled clubs at the ends of his arms.

Vasily Radevich was everything Malek was not: handsome, soft-spoken, and cultured. When Malek first saw him, Vasily wore a cloak of fur across his shoulders and stood at the side of a bald man with a luxurious mustache who radiated authority despite his slight build. Normally, he would have scoffed at someone like Vasily, thought of him as nothing more than fresh meat. Men like that were soft—soft and weak and not long for the brutal world Malek inhabited. But there was something different about Vasily. Not fresh meat at all, not really. More like a very sharp knife in a very fine sheath. Malek had the





impression that if Vasily had been dropped into the camps, he would be running them in very short order.

Malek had never known what Vasily saw in him. The other man never said, and Malek never asked. It was enough that he saw *something*, and whatever it was made him pay off the head of the guards to release Malek from his bondage. "You're my man now," Vasily said to him as they left the camp. "No one but me can ever again lay a hand on you nor give you an order."

For a time Malek worked as an enforcer for Vasily. He was good at his job for the same reasons he had survived the labor camps so long. He didn't ask questions, and he didn't mind work. If Vasily said a bone needed to be broken, Malek broke it. It was a simple life, one he understood.

When Vasily was sent to manage a mine near the Rhulic border, Malek went as well. As their carriage approached the mine, the former slave felt a moment of terror. His stomach lurched, and he thought he might throw up. Once they arrived, as the various logistics of handing over power were handled, while Vasily made speeches to the guards, Malek stood frozen, a wax figure, his mind at once barely working and running in overdrive. He was a boy again back in the camps waiting

for the touch of the lash across his back, something he could still feel in phantom twinges at night. But when everything was over he realized Vasily was standing at his side, pressing something into his hand. Malek looked down and saw it was a whip. The handle of a long whip, its end splayed out like fingers. Vasily didn't have to tell him it was the same whip he had felt across his back so many times in the past, purchased from the guard at the labor camp at the same time Vasily had purchased his freedom. Malek knew that whip, knew it as intimately as any lover, though this was the first time he had ever touched this part of it.

"You're in charge of the prisoners," Vasily had said to him. "There's no one I trust more to keep them in line."

Malek had smiled then, slowly, as he realized what was happening. He was not a pious man, but in that moment he had felt like the universe had one huge eye, and it was upon him.

He couldn't remember his surname, but the prisoners soon gave him a new one. They called him Malek the Stone, not for his own hardness, but for the bloodstained boulder on the outskirts of the camp, the one set with shackles strong enough to hold an ogrun, the one he saved for dispensing his most severe punishments, which he handed out as summarily and as viciously as the shadowy overseers of his memories ever had.







# IRON KINGDOMS ARCHIVES

## 606 AR

BY DOUG SEACAT WITH MICHAEL SANBEG

**T**he year 606 AR in western Immoren saw a dramatic shift in the turmoil and hostilities that had begun in the last weeks of 604 AR and which ran through most of 605 AR. The Llaelese War sparked by the Khadoran invasion of Llael had resulted in an escalating conflict between Khador and Cygnar, the greatest war between these old rivals since the Thornwood War of 510–511 AR. With Llael's capital surrendering in the middle of 605 AR, the war moved to the northern border of Cygnar, which was also beset by the new Great Crusade of the Protectorate of Menoth. The Nightmare Empire of Cryx sought to capitalize on this strife by initiating greater activity on the mainland than at any point in its history. Altogether, 606 AR would see many key conflicts transpire, the repercussions of which are still being felt across the war-torn region.

The following timeline focuses on some of the noteworthy events of 606 AR, known today as one of the bloodiest years since the Corvis Treaties. Note that month names are given from the Morrowan calendar, which is the standard throughout most of the Iron Kingdoms, followed by Menite month names where that calendar differs.

### GLACEUS

#### 1ST MONTH

**1ST WINTER BEGINS** Minions of Asphyxious begin the excavation of the Orgoth Temple of Garroth in the Thornwood.

**7TH** Protectorate forces attack the Cygnaran fortress of Eastwall.

**9TH** A previously secret alliance between gatorman chieftains Bloody Barnabas and Calaban is revealed when Maelok is betrayed by Calaban, murdered, and soon returned to unlife with his soul under Calaban's control.

**13TH** Under Asphyxious' orders to corrupt the Harbinger, Goresshade tracks her from Sul and attacks at a temple in the Protectorate village of Prautere. High Paladin Dartan Vilmon helps the Harbinger to escape; however, Grand Exemplar Baine Hurst is killed while defending their retreat. Within the temple's crypts, Goresshade discovers ancient lore directing him to long-forgotten relics at the Tomb of Khazarak in southern Khador.

After returning to Cryx he submits to the oversight of Lich Lord Terminus, secretly plotting a lone expedition to Khador.

**22ND** Cryxian Raiders seize and sink three major Cygnaran trading vessels in an escalation of piracy along the Broken Coast.

### CASTEUS

#### 2ND MONTH

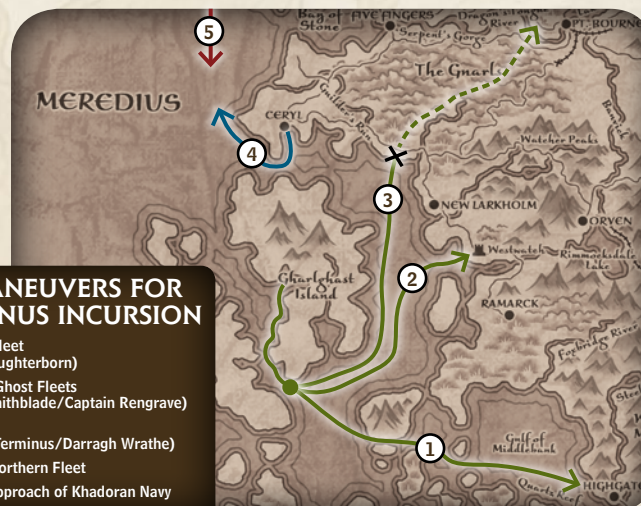
**2ND** Mikael Kreoss is promoted to Grand Exemplar after the requisite period of mourning for Baine Hurst.

**4TH** Asphyxious ambushes Lich Lord Daeamortus among the Scharde Islands. While fighting at Daeamortus' side, Skarre Ravenmane is severely wounded and forced to flee. Asphyxious is subsequently recognized as a lich lord after presenting himself to Toruk in Skell. He fashions Daeamortus into a weapon and then returns to the Thornwood to finish unearthing the Temple of Garroth.

**5TH** Sorscha Kratikoff is promoted to the rank of Forward Commander.

**7TH** The Hall of Castellans is thrown into chaos following accusations of Cryxian collaboration among certain officers of the Ordic Royal Navy leveled by Prince Cathor III.

**10TH** After decades of negotiations by Asphyxious as a proxy, arrangements between Lich Lord Thalassina and the cephalyx are formalized, and an alliance is forged.



#### FLEET MANEUVERS FOR THE TERMINUS INCURSION

- 1) Slaughter Fleet (Gerlak Slaughterborn)
- 2) Pirate and Ghost Fleets (Axiara Wraithblade/Captain Rengrave)
- 3) Black Fleet (Lich Lord Terminus/Darragh Wrathe)
- 4) Cygnaran Northern Fleet
- 5) Rumored Approach of Khadoran Navy

**ARTS:** Northern Crusade mocked in popular Llaelese comedy play, *Torches and Menofixes*... **POLITICS:** Artifacts from the First Thornwood War (510 AR) sold at auction in Bainsmarket, despite protests from families of veterans... **HOLIDAYS:** Sulonsphar ceremonies in Sul see thousands of torch-bearing Menites solemnly lining the walls; Caspian garrison kept on high alert...



**17TH** The High Reclaimer marches from Imer into the sands of the Bloodstone Desert. He crosses to Urcaen to recover the Omegus; upon his return, the Harbinger renames him the Testament of Menoth.

**20TH** Deeply affected by the atrocities committed by Protectorate forces during the Llaelese War, Commander Coleman Stryker demands King Leto Raelthorne grant him the authority to wage a more aggressive war. Days later, Stryker is promoted to Lord Commander and given oversight of former inquisitors to root out Cygnaran Menites loyal to Hierarch Voyle. Stryker takes command of the 7th Division of the Second Army.

**22ND** Scout General Bolden Rebald enlists Lieutenant Allister Caine in a conspiracy to track down and neutralize a secret heir of Vinter Raelthorne IV. Former inquisitors allegedly know the heir's location, and their release to Lord Commander Stryker offers an opportunity seize them.

## TRINEUS

### 3RD MONTH

**3RD** After two years of construction, the Avatar of Menoth is sanctified by the Harbinger.



**3RD** Lich Lord Terminus directs the pirate fleet and the Black Fleet to distract the Cygnaran Navy so he can land an army south of the Gnarl. These diversionary attacks include an assault on

Highgate by General Gerlak Slaughterborn. Darragh Wrathe serves as admiral of the fleet landing Terminus' army onto the mainland, where they subsequently cross northern Cygnar to reach the Thornwood.

**13TH** The Harbinger takes up arms, driven by visions of a great evil gathering in the Thornwood. After informing Hierarch Voyle of her purpose, the Northern Crusade is initiated to facilitate her holy trek and then to establish a northern stronghold, allowing future efforts to convert Khadoran Menites to the Protectorate cause. The forces of this crusade are led by Grand Scrutator Severius.

## TEMPEN/TEMPES

### 4TH MONTH

**7TH** Captain Victoria Haley secretly reaches the Cryxian port city of Blackwater to confront Skarre. Haley spares the satyxis warcaster's life in exchange for information about Asphyxious' schemes in the Thornwood.

## TEMPEN 7TH



### 8TH SPRING BEGINS

**21ST** After the successful conquest of Llael, Ayn Vanar declares herself Empress of the new Khadoran Empire.

**28TH** Fellig and Deepwood Tower are besieged by Khadoran forces under Irusk's command.

## CINTEN/CINOTES

### 5TH MONTH

**7TH** The Caspia-Sul War begins when Siege Brisbane of Cygnar begins a sustained assault on the walls of Sul.

**14TH** Inspired by Stryker's actions along the Black River, Cygnaran soldiers capture and interrogate Menite citizens at Southshore, near Five Fingers. Many Menites are shot and killed after the soldiers are met with resistance.

Forces of the Northern Crusade led by Severius destroy Fisherbrook while engaging Cygnaran forces.

Stryker gathers Menite prisoners to be sent by barge down the Black River, timing their arrival to coincide with the imminent attack against the interior of Sul.

**21ST** Cygnaran and Khadoran navies clash near Berck.

Caine finds and kills a large group of former Inquisitors while pursuing the trail of the heir to Vinter IV.

### 28TH The Battle of the Temple of Garrodh—

A pivotal clash in the Thornwood involving Cryx, Khador, the Protectorate, and Cygnar, which brings together more warcasters in a single conflict than at any battle in history. Cryxian forces led by Asphyxious defend this Orgoth facility against multiple armies trying to halt his plans, which involve completing a necromantic ritual to transform himself into a god. Among those opposing Asphyxious is Lich Lord Terminus leading a second Cryxian army. The hostilities between these two armies result in chaos and mixed skirmishes.

In the end Asphyxious' plans are thwarted and the Temple of Garrodh collapses into the earth. Among those slain is the Harbinger, whose willing death at the hands of Vladimir Tzepesci is pivotal to preventing the lich lord's apotheosis. Her body and soul are recovered and returned to Imer. Lich Lord Terminus is a temporary casualty of this battle after being banished from

**ARTS:** *Crops of Blood* banned from Khadoran libraries, author Fedor Plebinski arrested... **POLITICS:** Cygnar's Council of Nobles meet to discuss impact of northern fighting on the Northforest Duchy... **ECONOMY:** Wildfires in southern Ord threaten hooga crops, drive cigar prices to record high... **HOLIDAYS:** Day of Markus celebrations across Cygnar result in record enlistment...





Caen by Asphyxious, with the Witch Coven of Garlghast following him to arrange for his eventual restoration. A number of other warcasters are injured but most escape the collapse and retreat to recover and regroup. The battle is deemed a defeat for Asphyxious but a marginal victory for the other involved parties, though none of the forces involved escape unscathed.

## ROWEN / PRAUTES

### 6TH MONTH

**2ND** After retreating from his defeat at the Temple of Garrodh, Asphyxious focuses on expanding his central necrofactorium within the Thornwood. There he begins to rebuild his army. Deneghra accumulates raw materials from the ongoing battles abroad, most notably from the battle lines between Ravensgard and Northguard.

**5TH** Vladimir Tzepesci returns to his ancestral lands to attend neglected matters after having been presumed dead, reminding his vassals of their oaths of fealty. Forward Kommandant Sorscha Kratikoff joins him for a short time.

**28TH** Siege Brisbane breaches the walls of Sul. During the initial Cygnaran assault, Caine wounds Feora while fighting alongside Stryker. He topples a Devout on the injured warcaster, however the Daughters of the Flame rescue Feora and take her to safety.

## SOLESH / SEPTESH

### 7TH MONTH

**4TH** Darius is given oversight of several special projects in Caspia, including the repair of the Thunderhead, destroyed during Haley and Nemo's escape from the Temple of Garrodh, and creation of facilities to streamline the fabrication of 'jack chassis. This begins a secret project initiated by Nemo to prepare infrastructure for the construction of a new generation of Cygnaran colossals.

**12TH** Kommander Zoktavir goes on deadly rampage, single-handedly destroying several lesser Cygnaran fortifications near Fellig.

### 15TH SUMMER BEGINS

## OCTESH

### 8TH MONTH

**7TH** Cygnar attempts to seize the Great Temple of the Creator in Sul but fails, ending their first and greatest offensive. Cygnaran forces in the city mire down from this point forward.

**21ST** Khadorans enter the Sulese fight in a limited

capacity, seeking to both undermine Cygnar and gather intelligence. Plans are initiated to seize the western wall and rain cannon fire down onto Caspia; however, the scheme ultimately fails.

**22ND** Protectorate forces burn the Monastery of Ascendant Angellia near Fellig.

**27TH** King Leto ensures the safe arrival for Menite prisoner barges at Bloodshore Island and arranges for relatively humane treatment of these prisoners.

**28TH** Skarre conducts a ceremony north of the Gnarl to contact the Witch Coven and restore Terminus from beyond Caen. A skarlock delivers orders from Lord Toruk that the feud between Terminus and Asphyxious must end.

## KATESH / SULESH

### 9TH MONTH

**9TH** Directrix is declared Iron Mother of the Convergence of Cyriss.



**12TH** Cygnarans break the siege on Fellig.

**14TH** Poisonings in Sul, likely inflicted by Cryx.

**20TH** The Cygnaran navy thwarts a Cryxian raid against New Larkholm. Blackship attacks gradually decrease, after which the Cygnaran navy scales back its warship patrols along the coastline to focus on defending major cities.

## GOLOVEN / GOLOVUS

### 10TH MONTH

**9TH** A secret Protectorate supply fortress is completed south of the Llaelese border.

**15TH** Caine reluctantly accepts promotion to the rank of captain from Stryker and is sent to shore up eastern border defenses.

**18TH** While on patrol in eastern Llael, Sorscha Kratikoff joins the 12th Iron Fang Uhlan Kompany and intercepts a Knights Exemplar column advancing on eastern Llael.

**21ST** The Harbinger is resurrected in Imer by Hierarch Voyle. On awakening, her first words are directions to have the Covenant of Menoth sent north to join Grand Scrutator Severius. She soon departs for Sul, invigorating the city's defenders.

### 22ND AUTUMN BEGINS

## DOLOVEN / MARTUS

### 11TH MONTH

**1ST** The Northern Crusade is welcomed to Rhydden by Ashlynn d'Elyse and the Llaelese Resistance.

**2ND** Aided by Steelhead mercenaries under Asheth Magnus' command, skorne invaders briefly occupy Ternon Crag in order to coordinate planned efforts against Eastwall while Magnus prepares to infiltrate Caspia.

**3RD** In response to relentless skorne aggression, Madrak Ironhide and Hoarluk Doomshaper form an uneasy alliance.

**4TH** Rhydden, the last unoccupied city in Llael, defeats a massive Khadoran attack with the aid of Protectorate allies under Severius' command. This prompts an alliance of convenience between the Northern Crusade and the Llaelese Resistance.



**ARTS:** Mercir Opera Production of *A Thurian Gentleman* canceled after vessel carrying Wainlith Theater Company captured by pirates... **POLITICS:** Riots in Merin after High Gathering at the Hall of the Castellans spurred by changes to import tariffs, 15 wounded... **HOLIDAYS:** Summerfaire in Merywyn sees imposition of potato festival and feasts by Khadoran officers, not embraced by Llaelese...





DOLOVEN 25TH

**6TH** Eastwall endures a probing attack by the skorne and King's Vine closes its borders in response to an alleged outbreak of marchfells fever. Subsequently, rumors suggest that skorne forces and mercenaries under their employ had briefly occupied the town, but these are dismissed as fevered delusions.

**7TH** Hoping to interrogate inquisitors accompanying Magnus, Caine springs a counter-trap on the rebel warcaster, who thought he was ambushing Stryker. Magnus defeats Caine and has the chance to kill him but still believes the gun mage may yet prove useful, and so releases him.

**9TH** Due to the death of a journeyman warcaster impersonating Coleman Stryker at Caine's behest, rumors spread that the lord commander has been slain.

**11TH** Skarre leads the Black Fleet and Rengrave's Ghost Fleet on an attack against

Port Vladovar, Khador's primary shipyard and naval base, inflicting considerable damage before withdrawing. This attack diverts Khadoran forces and provides a distraction for Goresshade's movements into the interior of Khador.

**14TH** Accompanied by Bane Lord Tartarus and a small army, Goresshade plunders Lord Khazarak's Tomb east of Vladovar. He then turns his attentions north, toward the Nyss and their recent catastrophe at the hands of the dragon Everblight.

**18TH** Northguard is besieged by a Khadoran army led by Kommandant Irusk.

**25TH** Major Haley manages to hold off a massive Khadoran assault on Northguard until Commander Nemo's reinforcements arrive. This ends with a Cygnaran victory, though there are tremendous casualties on both sides. Earl Hagan Cathmore of Bloodsbane, Lord of Northguard, refuses to surrender and is executed by Alexander Karchev.

## KHADOVEN / KHADOVUS

### 12TH MONTH

**2ND** Under urging from Primarch Arius, Empress Vanar allows the Korsk Vicariate Council to grant sanctuary to Nyss refugees fleeing a great catastrophe in the north. A Nyss holy relic, a stone vault secretly containing the elven god Nyssor, is stored below the Katrinksa Cathedral. A small group of Precursor Knights from Caspia receives limited permission to help protect the grounds.

**24TH** Khador attempts to negotiate with the Northern Crusade of the Protectorate in Llael but meets with little success.

## NOTABLE BATTLES 606 AR

- **GLACEUS 7TH** – Battle of Eastwall (Protectorate v. Cygnar)
- **CASTEUS 4TH** – Ambush of Lich Lord Daeamortus (Asphyxious v. Daeamortus)
- **TRINEUS 3RD** – Battle of Highgate \* (Cryx v. Cygnar)
- **TRINEUS 3RD** – Battle of Westwatch \* (Cryx v. Cygnar)
- **TEMPEN 28TH** – Battle of the Northern Thornwood (Khador v. Cygnar)
- **CINTEN 7TH** – Start of Caspia-Sul War (Cygnar v. Protectorate)
- **CINTEN 14TH** – Destruction of Fisherbrook (Protectorate v. Cygnar)
- **CINTEN 21ST** – Battle of Shearwater Narrows \* (Khador v. Cygnar)
- **CINTEN 28TH** – Battle of the Temple of Garrodh (Cryx v. Cygnar, Khador, Protectorate)
- **ROWEN 28TH** – Battle of the Breach (Cygnar v. Protectorate)
- **SOLESH 12TH** – Zoktavir's Rampage (Khador v. Cygnar)
- **OCTESH 7TH** – Assault on the Great Temple (Cygnar v. Protectorate)
- **KATESH 12TH** – Battle of the Northern Thornwood (Cygnar v. Khador)
- **KATESH 20TH** – Battle of New Larkholm \* (Cryx v. Cygnar)
- **GOLOVEN 18TH** – Charge of the 12th Uhlans (Khador v. Protectorate)
- **DOLOVEN 4TH** – Battle of Rhydden (Khador v. Llaelese Resistance / Protectorate)
- **DOLOVEN 6TH** – Second Battle of Eastwall (Skorne v. Cygnar)
- **DOLOVEN 11TH** – Assault on Port Vladovar \* (Cryx v. Khador)
- **DOLOVEN 18TH** – First Siege of Northguard (Khador v. Cygnar)

\* Denotes a battle at sea or a naval assault



GOLOVEN 18TH

## ASHTOVEN / ASHTOVUS

### 13TH MONTH

**7TH** Severius speaks to a Khadoran Menite priest who had been sent to negotiate with the Llaelese Resistance and converts him to the Protectorate, causing a minor scandal.

**10TH** Goresshade makes contact with Nyss refugees led by Cylena Raefyll. Feigning an interest in aiding their cause, Goresshade uses them to probe the outer defenses of the Legion of Everblight, endeavoring to gain insight into the Legion's nature and hierarchy.

**16TH** The Llaelese Resistance attacks labor camps near Rynyr to disrupt Khadoran access to blasting powder. Retaliations follow.

**18TH** Viktor Pendrake is captured by skorne while scouting for information regarding them on behalf of Cygnar.

**ARTS:** Disappearance of Professor Viktor Pendrake results in spike in book sales for the *Monsternomicon* and *The Gobbers of Caen*... **ECONOMY:** Nobles in Northern Midlunds protest tax hikes to support Cygnaran Army... **HOLIDAYS:** Giving Day in Korsk sees unusually lavish presents as merchants exploit pride in the Declaration of the Khadoran Empire...



# LEVEL 7<sup>®</sup>

## [OMEGA PROTOCOL]

### MISSION 8.5: GO, GO, GO!

#### BONUS MISSION FOR LEVEL 7 [OMEGA PROTOCOL]

BY WILL SCHOONOVER WITH WILL SHICK

Warning lights flash, illuminating the dark corridors of LEVEL 5. Above the steady crescendo whine of a klaxon, a female voice—cold, calm, and robotic—sounds. “Containment breach. All personnel, be advised that lockdown protocols are in effect.”

Miller scowls beneath his balaclava. “What the hell? You’re a little late, lady!”

Patel pipes in, the corporal’s sarcasm lost on him. “Cronos or one of his Ghin allies must have reactivated the base’s security systems. The system recognized a breach and immediately went into prescribed lockdown protocols.”

Before Miller can respond, Degroot places a massive hand on the fiery corporal’s shoulder, causing him to turn his head toward the big man to see him gently shaking his head.

“They’re trying to slow us down. Using our own security measures against us.” Williams’ voice is distant; the nodes on his psychotronic amplifier helmet pulse softly.

“Yeah, the bug-eyed bastards are smarter than your average bear,” Miller growls. “Without proper ident codes, we’ll never make it past quarantine in time.”

Hernandez calls up his HUD, his eyes quickly scanning the facility documents Disco found in the former base commander’s office. “There’s a security station about one klick ahead. Given how fast the facility was overrun following the prisoner breakout, I’ll bet we can find what we need there.”

“And if we don’t?” Patel asks, giving voice to the question on everyone’s mind.

Hernandez says, “Then we see if Miller can climb ventilation shafts as good as he used to climb trees to avoid getting his ass kicked when he was a loud-mouthed kid.”

Miller scoffs and then says, “Hell, major, if I wasn’t such a team player, I’d already be up on LEVEL 4 right now, having all the fun myself.”

## SITREP

(SITUATION REPORT)

Disco Team has failed to hold back the tide of hybrids Cronos has released from the tank farm. The team needs to climb back up through the facility to reach level 4. Unfortunately, the hybrids are infesting every level, and Disco Team must fight through the horde.

## SETUP

Build the map according to the Mission 8.5 Setup diagram. Place the reject swarm markers at the passages shown when those rooms are explored.

### RESERVES



**ROGUE CLONES: 10**



**WARRIOR CLONES: 8**



**FEAR HUNTERS: 3**



**BLASTERS: 2**



**HANDLERS: 2**



**REJECTS: 4**

### DOOR MARKERS

A passkey door of the overseer’s choice is placed at each of the marked door locations. Shuffle the Jammed, Locked, and Short Circuit door markers and draw two. Then use an unlocked door marker for the remaining door.

### ENERGY POOL MINIMUM

The number of commandos times three.

### ROOM STACKS

Make the following three room stacks:

- FIRE TEAM, RECON PATROL
- RECON PATROL, HANDLER
- VANGUARD, CORROSIVE GAS

Place one of the three room stacks in each of the two red-highlighted rooms on the map. Then return the third stack to the box.

This mission uses the office objective card. Add the office objective card to the stack of cards in one of the two red-highlighted rooms, then add a clear card to the stack in the other red-highlighted room.

Next, make the following three room stacks:

- CORROSIVE GAS, HANDLER, RECON PATROL
- VENT, FEAR HUNTER, VANGUARD
- EMI, FLANKING PARTY, FIRE TEAM

Place one of these room stacks in the purple-highlighted room and return the other two to the box.

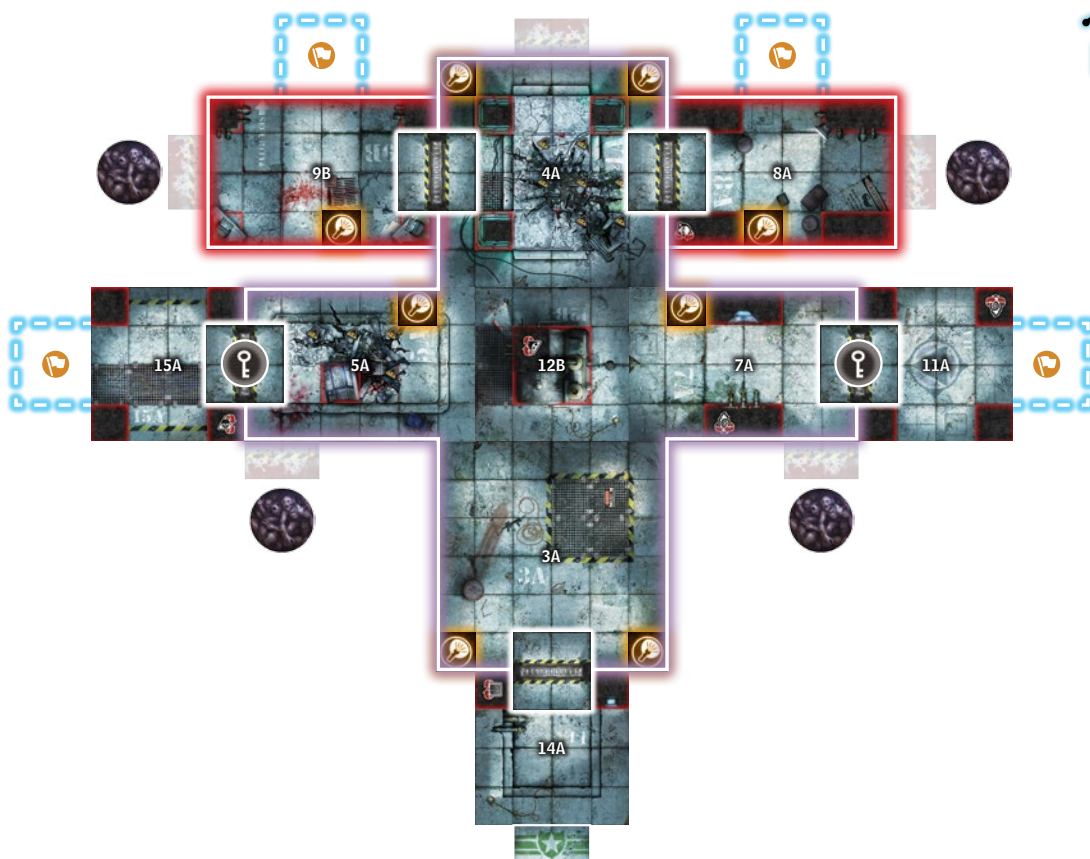
### OVERSEER’S DASHBOARD

Build the dashboard out of the following cards for this mission:

- ACCELERATED RESPONSE
- FRENZY
- CHARGE
- CLONE FLANKERS
- CLONE REINFORCEMENTS
- DODGE
- HASTEN
- BLASTER
- FEAR HUNTER
- HANDLER RESERVE
- REJECT
- SURPRISE ATTACK



## MISSION 8.5 SETUP



## GAMEPLAY

At the beginning of the mission the overseer chooses one of the two passkey tokens and places it facedown near the map. Return the other passkey token to the box. A commando must be on the office objective marker and increase his adrenaline by two to retrieve the passkey. When a commando performs this action, he flips over and takes the passkey token. The passkey is a tradable item. If the commando with the passkey is killed, the token is placed on the map in his space. A commando on or adjacent to the token can increase his adrenaline by one to pick it up.

During the Spawn Enemies step of the Overseer Phase, the overseer rolls a red die for each passage with a reject swarm marker. If the overseer rolls a blank, the marker is returned to the box. If the overseer rolls a single hit, a reject is spawned at that passage for free. If the overseer rolls a double hit, a hybrid of the overseer's choice is spawned at the passage for free.

### EVENTS

#### SECOND ROUND

At the beginning of the second round, flip the commando entrance passage marker over to become an enemy entrance.

#### OFFICE FOUND

After the room containing the office objective is revealed, all hybrids gain +1 Speed.

#### PASKEY DOOR OPENED

When the passkey door matching the chosen passkey token is opened, place the A-Lift tile in the room's objective zone. In addition, add a black die to the attack roll of every hybrid for the remainder of the game.

#### CRISIS POINT

The Crisis Point is triggered at the start of the fourth round or after a commando has picked up the passkey. At the start of each Overseer Phase after the Crisis Point is triggered, the overseer opens a non-passkey door connecting a hidden room to the revealed section of the map and resolves the room's cards normally. Discard the door marker with no effect.

#### COMMANDO VICTORY

The commandos win if more than half of the commandos exit through the A-Lift objective marker. When a commando moves onto the A-Lift tile, remove him from the map; he has exited.

#### OVERSEER VICTORY

The overseer wins if he kills at least half of the commandos.

#### EASY MODE

The overseer rolls a black die instead of a red die for the reject swarm markers.

#### HARD MODE

Place a Fear Hunter on the A-Lift tile when it is placed.



# QUICKWORK ENCOUNTERS

By Matt Goetz and Michael G. Ryan • Art by Brian Snoddy and Andrew Theophilopoulos • Map by Richard Anderson

## BLOOD AND CIRCUSES

When your Iron Kingdoms campaign needs both a momentary reprieve from the main storyline and an engaging encounter to fill that temporary void, Quickwork Encounters are the answer. What follows are scenarios that can stand alone or be developed into a larger campaign. Each comes with an in-world hook for the players and plenty of background information for the Game Master. With stat profiles and combat info, Quickwork Encounters come with everything a GM needs for an exciting side adventure that fits into nearly any setting.

### FOR THE GAME MASTER

Since 604 AR the traveling show of Huxley Cope has entertained small-town audiences throughout northern Cygnar and rural Ord. A combination of traveling festival and menagerie, Cope's show also includes jugglers, acrobats, and animal tamers to capture the attention and coins of his rural audiences.

While the different performance acts are popular, by far the biggest draw is the *Extraordinary Menagerie*, a collection of exotic creatures purchased by Cope. He regularly seeks out monster hunters on his travels, always looking for something new and exciting to add to the collection. His most recent, ill-advised purchase was Flax, a pale tatzylwurm sold to him by a swampie monster hunter. Despite warnings from his animal trainers, Cope purchased the serpent knowing such an exotic and dangerous creature would bring in crowds.

Flax grew rapidly, and far larger than Cope anticipated, requiring him to purchase a special carriage that housed a 2,000-gallon tank of thick tempered glass to contain her. Flax became the star of Cope's show, particularly when he would feed her live sheep and goats lowered into the tank from a rooftop hatch. Unfortunately for Cope, while the spectacle of his tatzylwurm feeding drew in audiences, it also drew the attention of town officials. Rightly concerned about such a dangerous animal, officials kicked Cope and his show out of one village after the next.

Now, desperate to recoup his investment, Cope travels unmaintained roads away from scrutinizing officials, setting up under cover of darkness and performing quick shows before breaking down and traveling to the next site. Such furtive practices have cut deeply into Cope's profits, and his entire operation now functions on a shoestring budget. Knowing the spectacle of Flax's vicious feeding is his show's biggest draw, Cope only feeds her on days she performs—an obvious lapse in judgment.

When Cope and his show were traveling on a distant backroad through the swampy wilderness, the sucking mud from a sudden storm caught the hooves and wheels of the carriages, leaving the entire caravan stuck in the mire. Flax, tired of her life as a celebrity and hungry to the point of desperation, decided to make her big exit. Springing from one end of her tank to the other, Flax eventually weakened the feeding hatch enough to burst free. Now she's looking to extract a little back pay in the form of any living thing she can fit her jaws around.

**COPE'S** Traveling Show  
AND  
Extraordinary Menagerie!

**ONE NIGHT ONLY!**  
The Cope Traveling Show and Extraordinary Menagerie is coming!

Witness the  
**SUPERLATIVE  
TALENTS**  
of Cope's tumbling  
performers!

Let your breath be  
taken by the  
**DEATH-DEFYING**  
knife jugglers Arlov and Tep  
from distant Tverzutsk!

Behold  
**DANGEROUS &  
EXOTIC BEASTS**  
from the far corners of  
Immoren!

WITNESS  
**THE MAIN EVENT!**  
the feeding of  
**FLAX, the  
LARGEST**  
tatzylwurm in captivity!

A CREATURE  
**NEVER  
BEFORE  
SEEN**  
IN THESE LANDS!

**COME ONE, COME ALL!**  
ONLY 1 GALLON AT THE DOOR!



## ENCOUNTER

The encounter takes place anywhere within one of the swampy forests of western Immoren, such as the Olgunholt or Widower's Wood. The PCs can simply be traveling along the road between other destinations.

It is raining heavily when the PCs come across the stuck caravan on an untended stretch of forest road. Ahead, a section of the road has been partially flooded by rain, and the wagons of Cope's caravan are stuck in the mud and water like a series of small islands. The panicked performers of Cope's show are balancing precariously atop the wagons and in the low branches of nearby trees. They are disheveled and look like they have been stuck there for days, despite the water being only waist deep at best.

Some of the wagons were clearly designed to carry animals for display. The sides of these wagons are burned—as if damaged by a powerful acid—and their contents missing. Nearby, ragged scraps of fur and colorful feathers float on the surface of the water.

When the PCs approach, Arlov and Tep, a pair of Khardic knife jugglers in faded and frayed costume, signal to them in a panic from atop of a nearby wagon. Before the heroes reach the water, one of the men shouts with a thick accent:

*"Be careful! Flax is in the water! FLAX IS IN THE WA—"*

Before he can finish, the shallow water explodes as an enormous pale tatzylwurm surges upward, leaping over the caravan and snatching Tep in its jaws. The performers scream in horror as the tatzylwurm drags the juggler into the water, leaving nothing but a spreading cloud of crimson and a few scraps of cloth floating on the surface. His companion Arlov wails in horror and begins drawing blades from bandoliers strapped across his chest, futilely throwing them into the water.

The desperate survivors plead with the PCs to help them, some shouting for the heroes to kill the enormous serpent while others beg for aid getting to solid ground. Among them, Cope, wearing his master-of-ceremonies costume, shouts to be heard over his employees, telling the PCs he has gold and will pay them for rescue. As he speaks Flax passes near, drawn by the sound of Cope's voice, inciting a general panic.

In their terror the performers begin to jostle the wagons, causing some to sink closer to the surface of the water and the hungry beast lurking within it.

## TERRAIN

The encounter uses the following special terrain.

**Flooded Area:** The flooded area is deep water of waist height. The mud Flax has churned up clouds the water, and while submerged within the flooded area she gains Stealth (*IKRPG Core Rules*, p. 220). In addition to being rough terrain, characters with Pathfinder cannot run or charge while in the flooded area.

**Caravan Wagons:** The mired wagons create small islands of safety in the flooded area. The wagons are unstable in the soft, sucking mud, and any character moving on one of them must make an AGL roll against a target number of 10. If the roll succeeds, the character can move on the caravan without penalty. If the roll fails, the wagon tips and the character falls into the water.

**Performers:** Besides Cope there are six performers stuck on top of the wagons in the flooded area. They are terrified of Flax and cannot willingly move closer to her (this includes voluntarily moving into the water while Flax is submerged). The performers otherwise cooperate with any instructions the PCs give them and do everything in their power to assist in their rescue. The performers are trained as jugglers (POI+Thrown Weapon 6, equipped with six throwing knives



**C** Cope    **P** Performer



or throwing axes), acrobats (AGL+Jumping 6) and strong men (STR 7 characters with the starting Mighty Archetype benefit). A character who instructs a performer to take a dangerous action or one that may result in catching the attention of Flax must make a Command skill roll against a target number of 12. If the roll succeeds, the performer does his or her best to follow the instructions. If the roll fails, the performer panics and refuses to act.

## FLAX (PALE TATZYLWURM)

<b>PHYSIQUE</b>	<b>PHY</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>SPEED</b>	<b>SPD</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>STR</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>AGILITY</b>	<b>AGL</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>PROWESS</b>	<b>PRW</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>POISE</b>	<b>POI</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>INTELLECT</b>	<b>INT</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PERCEPTION</b>	<b>PER</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ARCANE</b>	<b>ARC</b>	<b>—</b>



<b>ACIDIC SPRAY</b>
<b>RAT RNG AOE POW</b>
<b>6 SPI0 — 12</b>

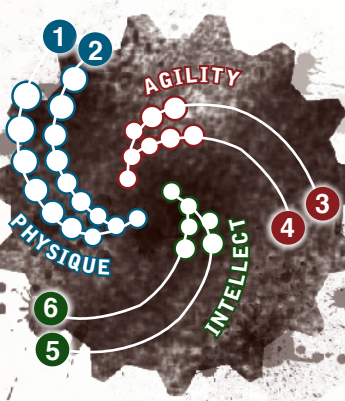
This weapon causes corrosion damage. On a critical hit, targets suffer the Corrosion continuous effect.



<b>BITE</b>
<b>MAT POW P+S</b>
<b>8 6 17</b>

**Paralysis** – The base DEF of a living character damaged by this weapon becomes 7, and the target cannot run or charge. Paralysis lasts for one round.

<b>INITIATIVE</b>	<b>INIT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>DEFENSE</b>	<b>DEF</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>ARMOR</b>	<b>ARM</b>	<b>17</b>
	<b>(Natural Armor + 5)</b>	
<b>WILLPOWER</b>	<b>WILL</b>	<b>14</b>



<b>COMMAND RANGE: 2</b>
<b>BASE SIZE: LARGE</b>
<b>ENCOUNTER POINTS: 24</b>

### FLAX TACTICS

Flax remains beneath the water until she hears movement, either on top of the wagons or from a character moving into the flooded area. Each time a character makes noise it might attract Flax's attention. Have her make a Detection roll against a target number of 12 (or a contested roll if the character is using the Sneak skill). If Flax succeeds, she hears the movement and rises to attack. Otherwise, she remains hidden in the water. Remember to have the PCs roll to resist Terror when they are confronted by the pale tatzylwurm.

Flax emerges from the water to attack any characters she hears, using her corrosive spray if multiple characters are gathered in an area. She bites individual targets in an attempt to paralyze her victim, then drags her paralyzed prey beneath one of the wagons to feed.

If Flax suffers 10 or more damage points, she flies into a blind rage. She ceases lurking in the water and focuses on attack. She rises out of the water in



### TATZYLWURM, PALE

#### ABILITIES:

Pale Tatzylwurms gain boosted Willpower rolls.

**Serpentine** – This character cannot be knocked down.

**Terror** – A pale tatzylwurm causes Terror [16].

**Jump** – After using its normal movement to make a full advance but before performing an action, this character can leap over the heads of its enemies. When this character uses leap, place it anywhere completely within 5" of its current location. Any effects that prevent it from charging also prevent it from using Jump.

#### SKILLS:

NAME	STAT	RANK	STAT + RANK
<b>Sneak</b>	<b>AGL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Detection</b>	<b>PER</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Swimming</b>	<b>STR</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>

the center of the flooded area and lashes out at every target she can see, starting with the closest targets.

### AFTER THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs have rescued the stranded performers, assuming Cope survives, he gives them all the gold he has, up to 20 gc per character.

The few remaining performers thank the PCs profusely for their rescue. Any survivors then immediately resign from Cope's show. These survivors can serve as contacts and may even be good resources for PCs interested in gaining new connections throughout the Iron Kingdoms.

If the PCs killed Flax, Cope makes them an offer. With the star attraction of his show dead, he's in need of a new exciting new monster—hopefully one he can keep under control this time! He offers them 200 gc to find him a new star, though he's willing to go higher if they bring him back something truly exotic.

Lastly, if Arlov the knife-juggler survives, he harbors a deep-seated hatred for Cope due to the loss of his brother Tep. If the PCs agree to help Cope secure new monsters, Arlov will do everything in his power to sabotage them, even to the point of violence. If the PCs turn Cope down, Arlov approaches them later on, asking for their help in shutting down Cope's business for good.



# DIRTY DEEDS

## FOR THE PLAYERS

You've had the good fortune to find employment as bodyguards for Silas Dexter and Lydia Brandonbrook of the Mercarian League as they travel to a meet with representatives from two mercenary organizations—the Steelheads and the Four Star Syndicate. The only thing you know about this rendezvous is that Silas and Lydia anticipate a bidding war for the deed they have brought with them. The specifics of the deed remain unknown to you.

As you travel, Silas and Lydia seem nervous, a strong indicator of the value of what they have to offer. Tensions run high as you finally reach the meeting site. The Mercarians have set up a large tent in a clearing surrounded by low hills. Smaller tents for each of the mercenary groups are set at some distance from the Mercarian tent and from one another.

The Steelheads representative and two bodyguards have already arrived and are waiting near their horses. The Four Star Syndicate representatives—just two of them—arrive right behind your own party.

## FOR THE GAME MASTER

The representatives of the Mercarian League arrive at the rendezvous with a deed that entitles the bearer to a security contract. The bearer presents the deed at another location in order to retrieve the actual contract. The League is prepared to offer the highest bidder the deed that ultimately allows the holder to work for them, guarding holdings all over western Immoren. Each of the other mercenary groups comes with written proposals of what they will offer for the deed, and the representatives are authorized to expand on that written offer. The deed holder will gain access to the Mercarian League's heretofore unknown holdings, opening the door to potentially vast riches and political influence.

Silas Dexter and Lydia Brandonbrook do not come to this meeting with any preconceived notions about who will be awarded this deed. Their organization established a minimum bid both parties have already agreed to. So it's a free-for-all in negotiations—with money, services, and knowledge, any and all of which are valuable assets. The two mercenary parties will simply expand on their written offers if they wish to up the ante.

While it is unlikely the PCs would be able to muster the funds or other negotiable properties to bid on the deed themselves, they may find it hard to resist learning more about it. There is, in fact, a way the PCs could benefit from the deed if they are nefarious enough to act on what they learn.

Both mercenary groups are just mercenary enough to believe the PCs can be bought off in exchange for helping them acquire the deed. Yet each is held back from overt action by the presence of the other. The PCs, in fact, are seen as the most neutral party present, once the Steelheads and Four Star Syndicate representatives realize the PCs are only hired guards, not actual Mercarian League members.

As there is a likelihood of negotiations failing and combat occurring between the PCs and one mercenary group or another, most NPCs are included in detail. If the PCs choose to attack the Mercarian League NPCs, either use battle NPCs of an appropriate level when having them fight the player characters or simply allow the PCs to kill the Mercarian League NPCs and deal with the repercussions.

## OPENING BIDS

Each mercenary group has a different offer for the PCs to help them gain an advantage over the other, and each group will move quickly to gain the most favor first. They were restricted to a single negotiator and two bodyguards, however, and this restriction drives their motivations.



# DISPATCH

### RECIPIENT

FOUR STAR SYNDICATE

### SENDER

MERCARIAN LEAGUE

WE THE MERCARIAN LEAGUE ARE PREPARED TO PERMIT YOUR ORGANIZATION TO BID ON A PARTICULARLY RARE OPPORTUNITY. OUR HOLDINGS ABROAD REQUIRE EXPANDED PROTECTION, AND OUR CONFIRMATION OF YOUR RELIABILITY WILL GRANT YOUR ORGANIZATION ACCESS TO UNTOLD RICHES ON FOREIGN SHORES.

YOUR REPLY VIA THE BEARER OF THIS INVITATION IS REQUESTED IMMEDIATELY.

—SILAS DEXTER, LYDIA BRANDONBROOK, AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES



## Steelheads

Lieutenant Natalya Stanislov of the Steelheads; served by two sergeants, Robair and Gustav

### LIEUTENANT NATALYA STANISLOV

<b>PHYSIQUE</b>	<b>PHY</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SPEED</b>	<b>SPD</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>STR</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>AGILITY</b>	<b>AGL</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>PROWESS</b>	<b>PRW</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>POISE</b>	<b>POI</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>INTELLECT</b>	<b>INT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>PERCEPTION</b>	<b>PER</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ARCANE</b>	<b>ARC</b>	<b>—</b>

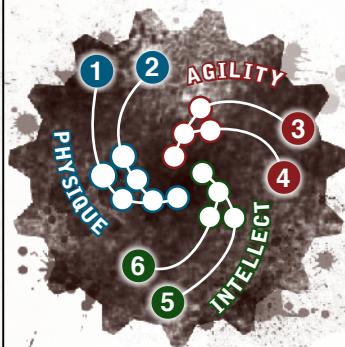


<b>HAND CANNON</b>			
<b>RAT</b>	<b>RNG</b>	<b>AOE</b>	<b>POW</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>12</b>



<b>SWORD</b>		
<b>MAT</b>	<b>POW</b>	<b>P+S</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>

<b>INITIATIVE</b>	<b>INIT</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>DEFENSE</b>	<b>DEF</b>	<b>12</b> (-2 from Armor)
<b>ARMOR</b>	<b>ARM</b>	<b>13</b> (+7 from Armor)
<b>WILLPOWER</b>	<b>WILL</b>	<b>10</b>



**COMMAND RANGE: 6**

**BASE SIZE: SMALL**

**ENCOUNTER POINTS: 12**

**EQUIPMENT:**

Infantry armor, hand cannon, powder and ammunition for fifteen shots, sword, uniform, 100 gc

The middle-aged Lieutenant Stanislov is the voice of the Steelheads; she is calculating but forthright, and she's perfectly willing to explain to the PCs exactly what clout they hold in this situation in order to sway their loyalties. She believes blunt honesty is the best policy, but she doesn't share information that won't benefit her group. She believes in honoring the terms of a contract, but she also recognizes that most contracts are driven by payment.

Her sergeants are present more for muscle than as negotiators, and they can't be separated from Lieutenant Stanislov to recruit them away from her.

Stanislov is prepared to pay the PCs to join the Steelheads in a subcontract for this arrangement. She offers a modest initial sum of 15 gc per person for their assistance. A character can attempt a Negotiation skill roll against a target number of 13 to increase the amount to 25 gc per person. If the roll succeeds, she agrees to this new amount. She will openly address

the limited forces she was restricted to in this negotiation, and if the PCs will back the Steelheads against the Four Star Syndicate, to intimidate them with force of numbers to withdraw from the bidding, she will have the superior force to back down that rival bidder for the deed. The PCs should be prepared to fight in the event the Syndicate be unimpressed by the physical threat.

### LIEUTENANT NATALYA STANISLOV

#### ABILITIES:

**Battle Plan: Call to Action** – The character can spend 1 feat point to use Battle Plan: Call to Action. Using a battle plan is a quick action. When a character uses this battle plan, each friendly character in her command range who is under her command and is knocked down immediately stands up or goes prone.

**Feat Points** – This character starts each encounter with 1 feat point. She is allocated 1 feat point at the start of each of her turns. She can only have up to 1 feat point at a time.

**Intellectual** – Friendly characters in Natalya's Command range gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls.

**Natural Leader** – A character with the Natural Leader increases her command range by 2'.

**Team Leader** – When this character gains a feat point, instead of keeping it herself she can give it to another character currently in her command range.

#### SKILLS:

<b>NAME</b>	<b>STAT</b>	<b>RANK</b>	<b>STAT + RANK</b>
<b>Command</b>	<b>SOC</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>•</b>
<b>Cryptography</b>	<b>INT</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Etiquette</b>	<b>SOC</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>•</b>
<b>Hand Weapon</b>	<b>PRW</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Negotiation</b>	<b>SOC</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>•</b>
<b>Pistol</b>	<b>POI</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

If the PCs accept these terms, Stanislov will keep them on hand when she and her sergeants confront the Four Star Syndicate representatives to force them to drop out of the bidding.

If they refuse, Stanislov compliments them on their loyalty to their contract and has no further interaction with the PCs, even if they attempt to re-engage her about the terms later on.





## STEELHEAD SERGEANTS

<b>PHYSIQUE</b>	<b>PHY</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SPEED</b>	<b>SPD</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>STR</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>AGILITY</b>	<b>AGL</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>PROWESS</b>	<b>PRW</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>POISE</b>	<b>POI</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>INTELLECT</b>	<b>INT</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>PERCEPTION</b>	<b>PER</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ARCANE</b>	<b>ARC</b>	<b>—</b>



### HALBERD

MAT	POW	P+S
7	5	10

Halberds are Reach weapons.

A character fighting two-handed with a halberd gains +2 to his charge attack damage rolls with this weapon.

<b>INITIATIVE</b>	<b>INIT</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>DEFENSE</b>	<b>DEF</b>	<b>11</b> (-2 from Armor)
<b>ARMOR</b>	<b>ARM</b>	<b>13</b> (+7 from Armor)
<b>WILLPOWER</b>	<b>WILL</b>	<b>9</b>

**VITALITY: 8**

**COMMAND RANGE: 3**

**BASE SIZE: SMALL**

**ENCOUNTER POINTS: 6**

**EQUIPMENT:**

Infantry armor, halberd,  
15 gc

## STEELHEAD SERGEANTS

### ABILITIES:

**Defensive Line** – While this character is B2B with one or more friendly characters, he gains +1 ARM. While the character is B2B with one or more friendly characters who also have this ability, the bonus increases to +2.

**Shield Guard** – Once per turn, when a friendly character is directly hit by an attack while within 2" of this character, this character can choose to be directly hit instead. This character cannot use Shield Guard if he is incorporeal, knocked down, prone, or stationary.

**Set Defense** – While this character is armed with a weapon that has reach, an enemy in this character's front arc suffers -2 on charge, slam power attack, and impact attack rolls against him.

### SKILLS:

NAME	STAT	RANK	STAT + RANK
<b>Detection</b>	<b>PER</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Great Weapon Intimidation</b>	<b>PRW</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>
	<b>SOC</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>•</b>





## Four Star Syndicate

Captain Rinaldus; served by a trollkin soldier, Gunthar Bonebane

### CAPTAIN RINALDUS

<b>PHYSIQUE</b>	<b>PHY</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SPEED</b>	<b>SPD</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>STR</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>AGILITY</b>	<b>AGL</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>PROWESS</b>	<b>PRW</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>POISE</b>	<b>POI</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>INTELLECT</b>	<b>INT</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>PERCEPTION</b>	<b>PER</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ARCANE</b>	<b>ARC</b>	<b>—</b>



#### PISTOLS

RAT	RNG	AOE	POW
6	8	—	10

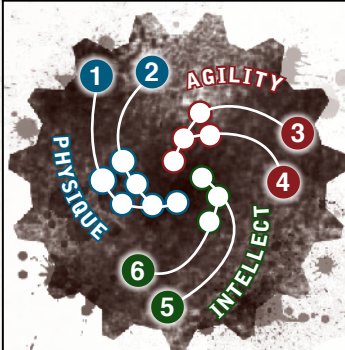
**Gun Brace** – A character wearing a gun brace can draw two pistols as a single quick action. He can also replace his pistols without spending a quick action.



#### CUTLASS

MAT	POW	P+S
7	4	8

<b>INITIATIVE</b>	<b>INIT</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>DEFENSE</b>	<b>DEF</b>	<b>13</b>
	(-1 from Armor)	
<b>ARMOR</b>	<b>ARM</b>	<b>13</b>
	(+7 from Armor)	
<b>WILLPOWER</b>	<b>WILL</b>	<b>9</b>



**COMMAND RANGE: 3**

**BASE SIZE: SMALL**

**ENCOUNTER POINTS: 12**

**EQUIPMENT:**

Cutlass, gun brace, pistols (x4), tailored plate, blasting powder and bullets for 16 shots, 75 gc

Given that the Four Star Syndicate prefers to work indirectly with other mercenary companies, the mere presence of Captain Rinaldus is an indicator of the significance of the contract up for grabs. Rinaldus is suave, a young businessman with notable charisma but who is something of a hothead. He speaks in sweeping generalities and with great conviction.

He comes with a sizable paranoid chip on his shoulder, however—snipers ambushed his party en route to this rendezvous and his other bodyguard, a gun mage, was killed. It is unclear who was behind the ambush; it could have been the Steelheads trying to eliminate the competition or the Mercarian League, trimming the Four Star Syndicate's party down to a more manageable force as insurance should things go awry. Rinaldus blames the Mercarian League representatives, as he believes they found his specific choice of two bodyguards, the Mercarian League limit at this meeting, to be too threatening.

He is both insulted by this and self-satisfied that his force was so intimidating.

### CAPTAIN RINALDUS

#### ABILITIES:

**Anatomical Precision** – When this character hits a living target with a melee attack but the damage roll fails to exceed the target's ARM, the target suffers d3 damage points instead of the damage rolled.

**Boarding Action** – A character with Boarding Action can use the Jumping skill to make a long jump as a quick action instead of a full action after making a full advance.

**Feat Points** – This character starts each encounter with 1 feat point. He is allocated 1 feat point at the start of each of his turns. He can only have up to 1 feat point at a time.

**Skilled** – Rinaldus gains an additional attack during his activation phase if he chooses to attack that turn.

**Specialization (Cutlass)** – Rinaldus does not suffer attack roll penalties when attacking with a cutlass.

**Two-Weapon Fighting** – While fighting with a one-handed weapon or pistol in each hand, the character gains an additional attack for the second weapon. He suffers -2 on attack rolls with the second weapon while doing so.

#### SKILLS:

NAME	STAT	RANK	STAT + RANK
<b>Deception</b>	<b>SOC</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>•</b>
<b>Hand Weapon</b>	<b>PRW</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Jumping</b>	<b>PHY</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Pistols</b>	<b>POI</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Sailing</b>	<b>INT</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Swimming</b>	<b>STR</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

His sole bodyguard, the trollkin Gunthar Bonebane, is dead silent. He expresses himself with nasty looks and brute force. Even with Rinaldus, if others are present, he communicates only with hand gestures. Gunthar is capable of speech, but he has learned his silence unnerves others, giving him a psychological advantage over them.

Rinaldus is sufficiently outraged but controlled enough not to directly accuse the Mercarian League representatives of the ambush; he's more inclined toward violence to settle this bidding war. In private he will offer the PCs both a payment





## GUNT HAR BONEBANE

PHYSIQUE	PHY	8
SPEED	SPD	5
STRENGTH	STR	6
AGILITY	AGL	4
PROWESS	PRW	4
POISE	POI	2
INTELLECT	INT	3
PERCEPTION	PER	3
ARCANE	ARC	—



### GREAT AXE

MAT	POW	P+S
6	6	12

On a critical hit, this weapon inflicts an additional die of damage.

A character must have at least STR 5 to use this weapon and can only use this weapon two-handed.

INITIATIVE	INIT	12
DEFENSE	DEF	11 (-1 from Armor)
ARMOR	ARM	14 (+ 6 from Armor)
WILLPOWER	WILL	11



COMMAND RANGE: 3

BASE SIZE: MEDIUM

ENCOUNTER POINTS: 14

EQUIPMENT:

Custom battle armor, great axe, 20 gc

and a partnership if they are willing to kill Silas Dexter and Lydia Brandonbrook and bring Rinaldus the deed. He is savvy enough to let the PCs know that the specifics of the deed do not require the presence—or even survival—of the Mercarian League representatives, which should be enough information for the PCs to decide if they should pursue the deed on their own. A character can attempt to get Rinaldus to back down and remain peaceful by making an Intimidation skill roll against a target number of 15 or a Negotiation skill roll against a target number of 17. If the roll succeeds, Rinaldus will not pursue the topic any further.

If the PCs accept Rinaldus' terms, he will wait until they have delivered the deed before betraying them to the Steelheads as thieves and assassins. While the PCs and Steelheads deal with one another, Rinaldus and his trollkin guard will attempt to slip away with the deed.

While speaking with Rinaldus, a character can attempt to discover Rinaldus' deception by making a Detection skill roll against a target number of 12. If the roll succeeds, the character picks up on subtle body language indicating Rinaldus isn't telling the whole truth and has something unsavory in store for them. If the roll fails, Rinaldus' deception goes unnoticed.

## GUNT HAR BONEBANE

### ABILITIES:

**Sentry** – Once per round when an enemy is placed in or moves into the line of sight of this character, this character can immediately make one attack, targeting that enemy.

**Feat Points** – This character starts each encounter with 1 feat point. He is allocated 1 feat point at the start of each of his turns. He can only have up to 1 feat point at a time.

**Feat: Revitalize** – This character can spend 1 feat point during his turn to regain a number of vitality points equal to his PHY stat immediately. If a character suffers damage during his turn, the damage must be resolved before a character can use this feat. An incapacitated character cannot use Revitalize.

**Mighty** – Gunthar gains an additional die on melee damage rolls.

**Roll with It** – When the character would ordinarily be knocked down, he goes prone instead. The character loses this ability while he is mounted.

**Tough** – When this character is disabled, roll a d6. On a 5 or 6, the character heals 1 vitality point, is no longer disabled, and is knocked down.

### SKILLS:

NAME	STAT	RANK	STAT + RANK
Great Weapon	PRW	2	6
Detection	PER	1	4
Driving	AGL	1	5
Survival	PER	2	5

## Mercarian League

### Silas Dexter and Lydia Brandonbrook

Of the two, Lydia Brandonbrook seems more like a snake-oil seller—she's very much about the art of the deal, and she will eagerly reveal minute details about each of the other groups, their members, even the deed itself, if she feels that information advances negotiations with any of the parties. For his part, Silas Dexter believes in the spirit of adventure—he has been all over the Iron Kingdoms and beyond, loves to talk and hear about traveling, and is more likely than Lydia to bring up the myriad places the League has holdings and how the deed bearer will benefit from visiting them.

These two are not foolish enough to bring the actual deed with them—in fact, the paperwork they have in their possession grants access to the holder to a Mercarian League lockbox in a nearby city bank that contains the actual deed. Silas and Lydia each possess a key needed to unlock the box, and they will give their keys to whomever wins the bid for the deed.

If the PCs remain loyal to Silas and Lydia for the duration of the negotiations, the PCs will be rewarded with additional contracts with the Mercarian League and will be given letters of recommendation from these representatives to present whenever the PCs happen to reach Mercir, the base of operations of the League.



## CUTTING THE DEAL

If the PCs have chosen to stick to their status as bodyguards for the Mercarian League, the Game Master can choose which of the two other mercenary groups wins the deed and what they are willing to pay for it (though this need not be revealed to the PCs). This may be influenced by how much (or how little) the PCs have shared with the Mercarian League representatives of the PCs' discussions with the Steelheads and the Four Star Syndicate.

One or both of the bidding mercenary groups may well approach the PCs once the negotiations are over with an offer to join up—perhaps the Steelheads representatives are impressed by the PCs' dedication to their employer or perhaps the Four Star Syndicate representatives admire the PCs' ability to jockey politically among the three groups. In any case, the Mercarian League representatives will acknowledge the PCs' need to move on, now that hostilities have been averted, and will encourage them to pursue new avenues of employment.

The PCs may also elect to work only for themselves, taking their chances by either stealing the deed or killing the Mercarian League representatives to gain the deed. In either of these cases, they should be hard-pressed to avoid entanglement with the remaining two mercenary groups. It's possible the Steelheads and/or the Four Star Syndicate will simply perceive the deed now has new owners and reopen negotiations; it's equally possible either group will think all bets are off and the deed is up for grabs by whoever has the force to take it.

Note that if the PCs steal the deed, whether they choose to kill the Mercarian League representatives or not, they will still need the lockbox keys that Silas and Lydia each carry. This will require either more thievery or the searching of their dead bodies. By stealing the deed without having its intention explained to them, the PCs will first need to decode it by making a Cryptography skill roll against a target number of 14. Success will reveal the deed is a stepping stone to a bank holding, and this may give them incentive to search for the keys. Without those keys, however, the deed is practically worthless.







*The Iron Kingdoms abound with folk both good and evil, but many others live and even thrive in the grey spaces between heroics and villainy. Social misfits but not always social outcasts, they make their way through the world any way they can—even if it results in hardship for others. In the end, even scoundrels and sell-swords feel justified in doing what they must to stay alive. These characters make excellent NPCs—whether as antagonists or allies—for your Iron Kingdoms RPG campaign.*

# Scoundrels & Sell-Swords Vayne di Brascio

BY MICHAEL G. RYAN  
ART BY MICHAL LISOWSKI

Vayne di Brascio is a Llaeese gun mage from the now-defunct Loyal Order of the Amethyst Rose, the most famous fighting order in Llaeese history. Its clandestine roles for the crown included intelligence gatherers, royal bodyguards and escorts, even assassins. When King Rynnard died and Prime Minister Galbryn disbanded the order for their loyalty to the monarchy instead of to him, its members—including di Brascio—were suddenly without purpose. Armed with a dual magelock and a mechanical saber, he now considers his overriding mission in life—like that of any Amethyst Rose veteran—to honor his lost king and fallen nation by resisting the domination and eradication of Llael. To that end di Brascio works as a gun-for-hire, provided the acceptance of a target does not conflict with his patriotism. The coin he earns is funneled almost entirely to the Llaeese Resistance to combat the forces of Khador and the Protectorate of Menoth's Northern Crusade in hopes of one day restoring the monarchy to its rightful place in Llael.

## VAYNE DI BRASCIO: A BRIEF HISTORY

Vayne di Brascio served for many years in the Loyal Order of the Amethyst Rose as a legacy—his late father had been a gun mage in the Order as well—but when the order was disbanded following

the death of King Rynnard di la Martyn he disappeared from the urban environs. For many years he wandered aimlessly, living on mercenary contracts and aided by the sliding reputation of the Order. Broke and desperate, he finally returned to his family's vineyards northwest of Merywyn only to find them occupied by a Khadoran squad that had taken over the di Brascio lands and manor house for use as their own personal barracks removed from the main Khadoran invasion force. Incensed at this violation of his family's land, di Brascio summoned his remaining family, two younger brothers, to drive the Khadorans out.

Alongside his brothers Marco and Valance, di Brascio launched a guerrilla campaign of harassment against the Khadorans on his lands, hiding in the hills around their estate to antagonize the enemy. One by one, the gun mage and his brothers, both snipers, picked off the Khadorans until only the kovnik and his kapitan remained. When di Brascio and his brothers confronted the two survivors, ordering them off of their property, the kovnik responded with gunfire, forcing di Brascio to shoot him dead while the kapitan escaped before the brothers could eliminate him as well.

It was not long after this confrontation Vayne di Brascio was summoned to Merywyn, by the Llaeese warcaster Killian d'Glaeys, to target a Khadoran kovnik harrying reinforcements on the Noble Road as the siege gained momentum—a kovnik who was, in fact, a warcaster. While di Brascio was in Merywyn the surviving kapitan rejoined other Khadoran forces and began to spread the word of di Brascio's "murder" of the kovnik.



The combined deaths of two Khadoran officers within a week of one another might not have put di Brascio on the short list of Khador's most wanted war criminals, but his killing of a warcaster raised a desire for revenge among the Khadorans. In response to his actions the Khadorans placed a bounty of five hundred koltinas on di Brascio's head. Still, di Brascio remained within the besieged confines of Merywyn for nearly a year, supporting the Llaelese Resistance where fighting was thickest until the city was surrendered.

How di Brascio escaped the city is unclear, but in doing so he acquired an ugly scar in the palm of his right hand. He doesn't talk about how it happened, though he has implied on occasion that it was done to him by a woman and that she was Khadoran. Those who know just enough about it to spread rumors have suggested she was kin to the dead warcaster, others that she was a mercenary bounty hunter in the employ of Khador, and, scathingly, that she was di Brascio's scorned lover. Whatever the truth, di Brascio left Merywyn and the Khadoran woman behind and turned up at Greywind Tower, where he joined the few other surviving members of the Order of the Amethyst Rose to establish a base of operations from which to strike against the Khadorans.

Di Brascio works alone; his brothers disappeared from the family vineyards some time after he went to Merywyn to fight the kovnik, and when he returned to his family manor at last the lands were under the control of Khadoran military emigrants. He does not know what became of his brothers, and he now seeks information about their fates. Rumor has it he has even volunteered for two nearly suicidal missions against Khadoran holdings where he'd heard his missing family might be found. He survived both but has so far learned nothing about the fate of his brothers.

Di Brascio has an exceptionally relaxed demeanor, given his vocation and internal tensions. He is calm under fire, analytical, and practical, all of which is underscored by the barest hint of black humor.

He dresses exclusively in dark colors—as a member of the Order of the Amethyst Rose he is in continuous mourning for Llael's fallen royal line—and is armed with his dual magelock and the mechanikal saber called Reaver. Though he doesn't always wear it, he possesses a stylized rose lapel pin to indicate him as a gun mage of his disbanded order.

## OUT IN THE WORLD

PCs can come across Vayne di Brascio any number of ways: as a possible ally, they may encounter him while he's on a mission for the Llaelese Resistance or while he's on the trail of information about his lost brothers. If the PCs seem of the right persuasion, di Brascio may try to recruit them to assist the Llaelese Resistance.

If the PCs are Khadoran, allies of Khador or the Protectorate, or even mercenaries who have associations with Khador, they could easily be cast as enemies of di Brascio. If they are, he may threaten their lives or possibly capture and interrogate them regarding other Khadoran or Protectorate presences in the area.

It's also possible for the PCs to have insight into di Brascio even before they meet him. They might encounter a Khadoran force hunting him as a name from their "most wanted" list, or find a fellow member of the Order of the Amethyst Rose headed to join him. They may have heard of a Khadoran woman "hunting for the gun mage she cut" or they may have even "met" Master di Brascio previously—only to discover, when they finally encounter Vayne di Brascio, that they'd actually met one of his brothers.





## VAYNE DI BRASCIO

<b>PHYSIQUE</b>	<b>PHY</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SPEED</b>	<b>SPD</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>STR</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>AGILITY</b>	<b>AGL</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>PROWESS</b>	<b>PRW</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>POISE</b>	<b>POI</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>INTELLECT</b>	<b>INT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>PERCEPTION</b>	<b>PER</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ARCANE</b>	<b>ARC</b>	<b>4</b>



DUAL MAGELOCK			
RAT	RNG	AOE	POW
7	10	—	10

**Abilities:** While in a gun mage's hands, this is a magical weapon.

**Both Barrels** – Discharging both barrels is a single attack, and the weapon suffers –2 on the attack roll. If the attack hits, add +3 to the damage roll. Discharging both barrels is considered one shot when casting rune shot spells.



REAYER		
MAT	POW	P+S
5	4	8

**Abilities:** This is a magical weapon. While wielded by a mounted combatant, add +2 to charge attack damage rolls with this weapon.

**Accuracy** – While the weapon has power, the character wielding it gains +1 on his attack rolls with it (included above).

<b>INITIATIVE</b>	<b>INIT</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>DEFENSE</b>	<b>DEF</b>	<b>15</b>
	(-1 from Armor)	
<b>ARMOR</b>	<b>ARM</b>	<b>11</b>
	(+5 from Armor)	
<b>WILLPOWER</b>	<b>WILL</b>	<b>10</b>



**COMMAND RANGE:** 4

**BASE SIZE:** SMALL

**ENCOUNTER POINTS:** 18

**EQUIPMENT:**

Ammo bandolier, black great coat, dual magelock, mechanical saber, leather armor, ammunition for fifteen shots, rune shot casting kit, goggles, 250 gc

## VAYNE DI BRASCIO

### ABILITIES:

**Gifted** – This character was born with the ability to work magic.

**Ammo Bandolier** – A character with an ammo bandolier can draw and reload a round into a firearm as part of the same quick action.

**Craft Rune Shot** – The character can craft his own rune shot ammunition. Instead of paying 5 gc for each metal cartridge round of rune shot ammunition, a character with this ability and a rune shot casting kit can cast his own rounds, paying 1 gc each for the powder, material to cast a rune bullet, and metal casing to press one round of rune shot ammunition. The character must inscribe the casing and bullet by hand. A character can craft up to five rune shot cartridges in an hour.

**Fast Draw** – A character with this skill gains +2 on initiative rolls. He also gains an additional quick action during his first turn of combat each encounter that can be used only to draw a weapon.

**Fast Reload** – The character gains one extra quick action each turn that can be used only to reload a ranged weapon.

**Groundwork** – While knocked down this character is not automatically hit by melee attacks and its DEF is not reduced.

**Hit the Deck!** – The character is so accustomed to catastrophic explosions in his presence that he has developed the uncanny ability to hit the ground the second before he is affected by a blast. While prone, the character does not suffer damage from AOE's unless he is directly hit by the AOE. If the character is caught in an AOE that would cause blast damage but was not directly hit by the AOE, he goes prone but suffers no damage.

**Parry** – While armed with a hand weapon, the character cannot be targeted by free strikes.

SPELL NAME	COST	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
<b>Occultation</b>	2	6	—	—	YES	NO
Target character gains stealth and +3 on his Sneak rolls.						
<b>Rune Shot: Accuracy</b>	1	SELF	—	—	NO	NO
The spellcaster's next rune shot ranged attack roll this turn is boosted.						
<b>Rune Shot: Brutal</b>	1	SELF	—	—	NO	NO
The spellcaster's next rune shot ranged attack gains a boosted ranged attack damage roll against the target directly hit.						
<b>Rune Shot: Paralysis</b>	3	SELF	—	—	NO	NO
If the spellcaster hits a living character with his next rune shot ranged attack this turn, the character directly hit suffers Paralysis. (A character suffering Paralysis has its base DEF reduced to 7 and cannot run or charge. Paralysis lasts for one round.)						
<b>Snipe</b>	2	6	—	—	YES	NO
Target character's ranged weapons gain +4 RNG.						

### SKILLS:

NAME	STAT	RANK	STAT + RANK
<b>Etiquette</b>	SOC	2	*
<b>Oratory</b>	SOC	1	*
<b>Detection</b>	PER	2	7
<b>Intimidation</b>	SOC	2	*
<b>Hand Weapon</b>	PRW	1	5
<b>Pistol</b>	POI	2	7
<b>Riding</b>	AGL	2	7
<b>Unarmed Combat</b>	PRW	1	5

For more about Vayne di Brascio, see the short story and scenario "Patriot's Crucible" in *No Quarter #46*, now available for download through Privateer Press Digital.





# RACES and CULTURES:

## GOBBERS

### A TRIBAL HISTORY

BY SIMON BERMAN • ART BY JOHAN GRENIER

According to their own mythology, gobbers—and their larger, more brutal cousins, the bogrin—were the first race birthed by Dhunia and the Wurm. Small, dexterous, and clever, their ancient ancestors spread across western Immoren, finding homes in forests and marshlands. These tribes were highly successful due to their natural cunning and remarkable adeptness at the construction of shelters. Due to their small size, gobbers were relatively easy prey for natural predators that gave other tribal races a wide berth. Accordingly, gobbers developed a robust society based on the common good: where one gobber would make easy prey for a duskwolf, a whole tribe could band together for mutual support and drive off even such formidable creatures.

This led to a communal social life where gobbers developed few concepts of personal goods and freely borrowed tools, clothing, and other materials from their kin without considering this theft. Even amid this permissive social structure, gobbers recognized a distinction between borrowing for necessity and bringing harm to another member of the tribe by taking vital goods. A gobber found to have harmed his kin through greed or maliciousness faced exile or even death. Leadership of these villages was often loosely derived, although larger tribes would look to a chieftain for direction and to determine punishments. The chieftain was usually a gobber thought to be both intelligent and wise, often one of the eldest among those still deemed virile and physically fit. A village might also look to its eldest shamans for advice and leadership,

those who dedicated their lives to paying reverence first to Dhunia while also appeasing the Wurm so that it would not prey upon them.

Gobbers were a tangential part of the ancient Molgur alliance that formed in the southern wilderness and mountain regions before the rise of Menite civilization. The gobber tribes were not expected to contribute warriors in the same way as savage humans, trollkin, ogrun, or even bogrin; instead, they served the alliance in other ways, bartering goods and services in exchange for safety. Gobbers also took part in stealth-raids on Menite towns, sneaking past walls and defenses to steal food and other supplies under the cover of attacks led by the mightier races.

It was from this time that the Gobberish language first evolved, a distinct dialect of the Molgur language, other dialects of which are still spoken by the other Dhunian races, the Tharn, and some barbaric human tribes living in the wilderness. This language has evolved and changed over the centuries, picking up many terms from modern human languages like Cygnaran. Overall, gobberish is an acquisitive language, borrowing freely from any communities to which gobbers have spent time in proximity. Similarly, gobber names are tremendously long—essentially lists of lineage and notable ancestors or allies of those ancestors. These names serve to remind each gobber of his or her place as a member of a vast web of familial connections.



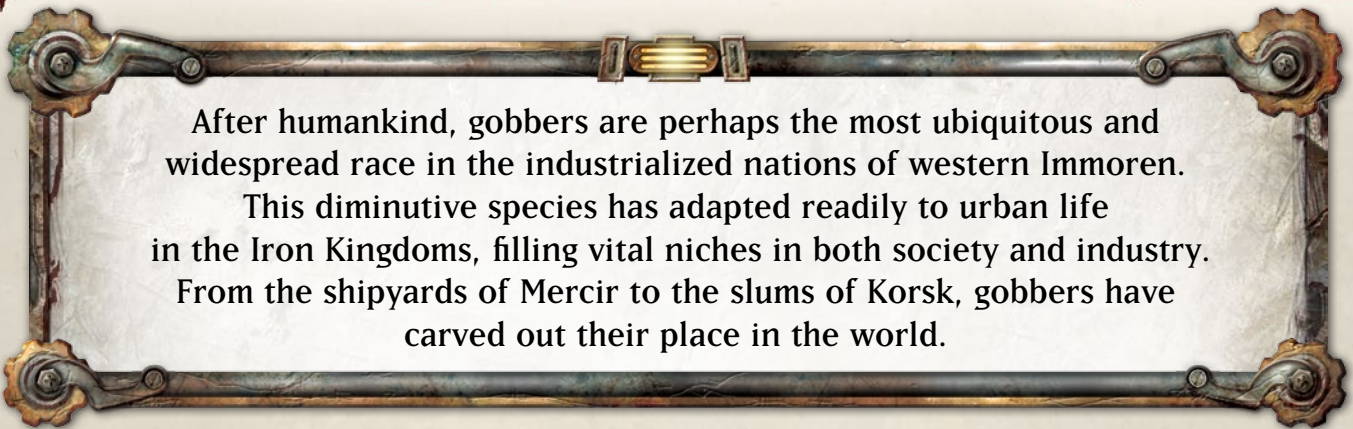
Like their Dhunian cousins—the trollkin, ogrun, and, later, farrow—gobbers existed as tribal societies for untold millennia. This traditional way of life is still practiced by some gobbler tribes to this day, little changed since ancient times, although large tribes are now rare. With the rise of civilization, most gobbler families and tribes left the wilderness to gravitate toward town and city life. Part of the success gobbers have enjoyed as a species is in part due to their willingness to communicate and collaborate with other races.

During the Thousand Cities era, some gobbler tribes began to form close associations with the human city-states, in many cases becoming parts of those communities. Initially this cooperation was like that of any between communities, and unlike the sometimes-intimidating trollkin, gobbers were viewed as harmless by human society. Their skill with tools and willingness to work made them valuable neighbors, especially in the southern regions where human cultures were less insular and aggressive. Many gobbler families chose to preserve their culture by maintaining a nomadic lifestyle instead of settling permanently in a single city. These gobbers would retain their possessions by maintaining overloaded wagons and traveling from one city to the next, doing odd jobs and scavenging to survive. Others settled permanently in cities and towns, most often being delegated to a slum or outskirt they could call their own and develop as they saw fit.

By the time the Orgoth invaded western Immoren, substantial numbers of gobbers lived in or near human cities and made







After humankind, gobbers are perhaps the most ubiquitous and widespread race in the industrialized nations of western Immoren.

This diminutive species has adapted readily to urban life in the Iron Kingdoms, filling vital niches in both society and industry. From the shipyards of Mercir to the slums of Korsk, gobbers have carved out their place in the world.

their livelihoods by trading with other races. The Orgoth paid little attention to the gobbers, though they did suffer alongside other citizens. Gobbers made poor slaves for the hard labor the Orgoth required, and though many gobbers died in acts of senseless cruelty or in citywide massacres, by and large they scraped by during the Occupation.

During the Rebellion and the reconstruction that followed, many gobbler communities found themselves increasingly integrated into the broader societies in which they lived. This remained especially true in the more progressively minded cities within Cygnar, Ord, and the southern regions of Llael.

## GOBBERS IN THE IRON KINGDOMS

Gobbers are present in every nation of the Iron Kingdoms, as well as in Rhul and even in Cryx. The only nation in which they have essentially no presence is that of Ios, which expelled all non-Iosans from its borders two decades ago. While gobbers can be found almost anywhere in western Immoren, their relations with other inhabitants vary widely from city to city and region to region. Given their natural proclivities for engineering, alchemy, and mechanika they generally find themselves as valued members of society, if often having a lower ceiling for personal advancement. In regions where the dominant powers are less welcoming of other races they readily adapt to criminal pursuits, where they excel at smuggling and other more intellectual underworld activities. It is often the case that a life of crime offers a gobbler far greater chances to exceed ordinary social limits than would legitimate industry.

While small tribes of gobbers still live in the wilds, where they pursue their traditional ways of life, these are increasingly becoming a minority. Those who have joined the modern world view their rustic kin as bumpkins, while the tribes consider urban gobbers to have forsaken their heritage. Even so, there is little true animosity between these groups, and on the whole gobbers will attempt to aid one another, regardless of their disparate lifestyles.

Bridging these two settled groups are the nomadic families who travel from city to city, stopping periodically at villages in the wild for trade. Gobbers are some of the most common travelers in western Immoren. Many make their living as tinkers or in scrap and repair caravans, sometimes joining with or including in their bands humans who refer to themselves as junkers. These roaming communities travel in circuits over the course of years, stopping in villages and cities to ply their wares and trades and to exchange news and rumors before moving on. In this way, gobbers stay in contact with communities across western Immoren, and while they must contend with the many borders closed to war in the modern era, they remain largely free to go where they will.

## CYGNAR

No other nation is as tolerant of other races as Cygnar. While the attitudes of locals can vary, on the whole gobbers are treated as fairly and equitably as other members of the lower class in this nation.

Most Cygnaran cities are home to significant gobbler communities, usually centered around industrial quarters or docks where gobbers most often find work. Their homes are often communally shared by one or more families retaining some of their tribal traditions, including shared rearing of their young and food preparation. Often gobbler communities will collectively maintain shrines to Dhunia, tended to by elder shamans who are supported by their fellows with food and shelter. Many gobbers in Cygnar also celebrate civic and religious holidays popular with their human neighbors. It's not uncommon for gobbers to take part in feasts dedicated to Morrow and be as welcome as any other neighbor. Some gobbers see no problem in worshipping both Morrow and Dhunia, generally having little interest in the detailed aspects of theology for either. This proclivity for social adaptation and accommodation has served the gobbers well, leading them to be welcomed as full members of the broader community.

Cygnaran gobbers almost universally teach their young Cygnaran along with gobberish, and many Cygnaran terms have become a part of the gobberish language. Most gobbers receive informal education from their extended families, but in many cases this includes instruction in mechanika,



engineering, or alchemy, depending on the skills of their relatives. Morrowan-run schools often open their doors to non-humans. In especially integrated communities, typically among the poor, gobbers are sometimes informally schooled alongside human and trollkin young, leading to lifelong relationships and acceptance between these groups.

Accordingly, gobbers make up a significant percentage of the membership in the Steam & Iron Workers Union. In some parts of Cygnar and Ord, gobbers have even become union bosses, leading prestigious workshops including subsidiaries of Engines East. More often they are relegated to subordinate roles but can still serve as valued members of mechanik teams. Gobbers are not allowed to enlist as infantry or officers in the Cygnaran Army but do comprise a noteworthy number among the field mechaniks of the Cygnaran Armory. Gobbers have proven to be fearless combat mechaniks, willing to risk life and limb on the battlefield in defense of their nation. While the population at large does not consider them war heroes in the same sense as other soldiers, crew chiefs in the field and at the Cygnaran Armory recognize them as patriots worthy of respect.

The capital of Caspia is home to one of the most thriving and successful communities of gobbers in the kingdom. Almost eight thousand gobbers live there, over five thousand in the district colloquially known as "The Slurries." Here gobbers ply their trades in one of the greatest hotbeds of alchemical trade and fabrication. While the district is one of the poorest in Caspia, gobbers face little discrimination within it and are widely considered valuable to the city for their alchemical trade.

In the neighboring Smoke District, countless gobbers labor in mechanika and mundane engineering workshops. They are valued employees and are generally recognized as being integral to the war efforts that help protect the beleaguered nation.

## KHADOR

While gobbers can be found in abundance in Khador, particularly in its southern cities and ports, they do not enjoy quite the same liberties or societal respect as their fellows in Cygnar and Ord. Khadorans universally consider gobbers to be part of the underclass, unfit for military service or commercial respect.

Gobber communities in Khador are relegated to the worst slums and industrial sections of cities and are often forced into close quarters with trollkin, ogrun, and impoverished humans. While gobbers are technically permitted to run whatever sorts of businesses they want provided they pay taxes, the reality is that the Khadoran Mechaniks Assembly takes a dim view of any unaffiliated mechanika or engineering workshops, and its members are not above coercion or even arson when dealing with unwanted shops. The KMA explicitly denies membership to any but Khadoran humans, and no other labor organizations exist in Khador for gobbers to take advantage of.

## BOGRIN

Larger, less civilized, and more prone to violence, bogrin have not made the same easy transition to civilization as have their gobber cousins. Most bogrin are encountered in the wild, where they live in tribes more similar to those of barbarous humans than to the communal cultures of tribal gobbers. Bogrin tribes are dangerous and predatory and are generally only willing to compromise with other races and tribes that are obviously more powerful than themselves.

Bogrin are not unknown in the cities of the Iron Kingdoms, but typically exist in far fewer numbers than gobbers. The only urban centers where bogrin have made significant inroads are those considered lawless by most, including places like Blackwater in Cryx, Five Fingers in Ord, Clockers Cove in Cygnar, and the Bloodstone Marches frontier town of Ternon Crag. The towns of Cryx have been particularly welcoming to bogrin, where they fulfill a role analogous to that of gobbers in unblighted areas. The bogrin of Blackwater run in several gangs and compete with groups of feral children for what little work is available in the cleaning of ducts and narrow sewer pipes.

Many KMA-run or affiliated workshops, however, do employ gobbers as non-member assistants and consider them vital workers, though they never receive the same pay as their human counterparts. Further, many Khadoran gobbers find employ in the fishing fleets of Khador's ports. Their mechanical aptitude makes them invaluable in fixing boilers and maintaining engines.

Criminal pursuits are not uncommon for Khadoran gobbers; though generally they must pay protection money to the vicious *bratyas* of the Khadoran underworld. Even so, they often do well smuggling goods between Khador, Ord, and Cygnar. Gobbers elicit much less nationalist suspicion at border crossings than do humans with heavy accents. Gobber caravans have actually become an important part of Khador's international trade. Since relations have degraded between the empire and the nation of Rhul, gobbers have taken up some of the slack and a significant portion of the trade between those nations is conducted by gobber merchants acting as neutral third parties.



## ORD

While Ord is the poorest nation in the Iron Kingdoms, it is also the place where gobbers have the most opportunity. The common people of Ord, particularly the southern Thurians, are welcoming of outsiders, and gobbers face significantly less prejudice in Ord than anywhere else in western Immoren.

Engineering, mechanical, and alchemical pursuits are still the most common trades for Ordic gobbers. Several prestigious alchemy workshops in Merin and Berck are gobbler owned and operated, their owners being accredited members of the Order of the Golden Crucible. The OGC's recent reformation in Midfast has spurred alchemical innovation and trade in Ord, and numerous gobbers have benefited from membership in the order. While some bias exists at the upper echelons, gobbers are considered valuable initiates and rarely face barriers to entry in the order based on their race. No gobbler has yet been elevated above the rank of aurum ominus alchemist, but some administrators believe it may not be long before one of the more successful workshop overseers of the Midfast headquarters is promoted to aurum lucanum.

Ordic gobbers have also found a unique niche in the hooaga trade. Hooaga, a fibrous herb that is dried and smoked in pipes and cigars, has been a part of Ordic gobbler culture since ancient times. When humans, trollkin, and Rhulfolk developed a taste for this habit, Ordic gobbers were successful in cultivating it for trade. Hearthstone, the hooaga manufacturing company located just outside of Tarna, is one of the premiere producers of cigars and cigarillos in western Immoren, and its success comes in no small part from the co-ownership of several gobbers whose families have been farming hooaga for generations. Even human-owned cigar manufacturers generally rely heavily on gobbler laborers.

## DIVIDED LLAEL

In the aftermath of the Khadoran occupation the gobbers of Llael have found opportunity in disruption. Where previously gobbers had existed as a tolerated underclass with few opportunities for advancement, the shuffling of borders and general chaos of the region have been lucrative for many gobbers. Much of the contraband, imported wines, and military surplus smuggled into and out of Llael passes through gobbler hands at one point or another.

In the Khadoran-occupied west, gobbler smugglers and transporters capitalize on the Winter Guard's negligible interest in them. The Llaelese Resistance depends on several gobbler-run operations to supply cells in Merywyn and Laedry. Gobbler tinkers and caravans can make a tidy sum if they are willing to risk carrying forged papers or supplies between Rhydden and Llael. A few gobbers actually serve in the Llaelese Resistance as genuine patriots, although the fallen nation's low appreciation of non-humans makes these individuals rare.

Few gobbers remain in Leryn, however. After the fall of that city to the Menite Northern Crusade there was little reason for the city's gobbers to stay. The Sul-Menites are not openly hostile to gobbers and trollkin, but they take a dim view of the worship of Dhunia, and the crusaders are even more zealous to see their god's works carried out than are their fellows in the Protectorate. This has led to more than a few gobbers dying on the blades of an overreacting Exemplar or Flameguard. Most of Leryn's gobbers have taken up nomadic lives or relocated entirely.

## THE PROTECTORATE OF MENOTH

The xenophobic atmosphere of the Protectorate makes it unwelcoming to non-believers, but it remains home to a few small gobbler populations. Gobbers in the Protectorate have found two useful roles to which they are uniquely suited to fill.

Gobbers in Sul have found lucrative opportunities in smuggling luxury goods and contraband across the Black River. Their connections to gobbler communities in Caspia afford them valuable intelligence about Cygnaran patrols and shipments. A notable amount of stolen military supplies pass through gobbler hands, and Protectorate officials utilize gobbler agents as couriers between the divided cities.

Perhaps the most important niche filled by gobbers in the Protectorate is derived from their innate mechanical skill. Menites have an uneasy attitude about the mechanical weapons and devices made necessary by the Great Crusade. Even though the Synod has long interpreted the True Law in such a way that allows them to employ such devices provided they are properly consecrated, most Menites are still leery of their use. Gobbers, having no such qualms and being viewed by the Protectorate's leaders as relatively harmless, can do quite well for themselves by helping with the maintenance of the nation's laborjacks, assisting Sul-Menite Artificers in subordinate roles. While the Protectorate's currency is essentially worthless beyond its borders, gobbers who live in that nation and contribute to the upkeep of the Protectorate's laborjacks sometimes enjoy a better standard of living than humans who toil at backbreaking labor.

This is not to say that life in the Protectorate is particularly warm or welcoming for gobbers. The regimented nature of its society and the way its citizens are constantly scrutinized makes many gobbers uncomfortable. Gobbers, like anyone else inside the Protectorate's borders, must be extremely conscientious of local laws and respectful of Menite religious practices or risk drawing unwanted attention by temple enforcers.



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# PLAYER GALLERY

## GUNS ABLAZE

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### WINNER: DANIEL CORTEZA

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- ☒ EAT YOU ALIVE

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