

THE HORUS HERESY

BOOK THREE



EXTERMINATION



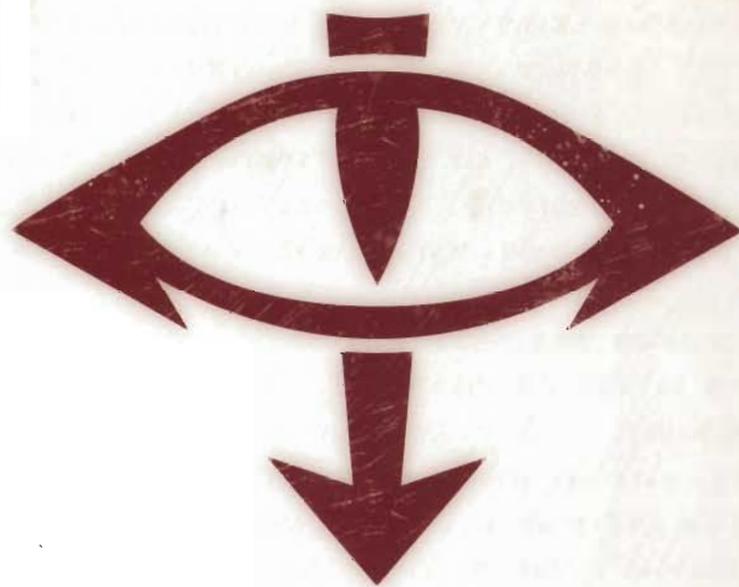
Halo Stars

Ghoul Stars



THE HORUS HERESY[®]

BOOK THREE



EXTERMINATION

BY ALAN BLYTH

A SUPPLEMENT FOR WARHAMMER 40,000

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Preface

Fire hungers. It hungers to burn, and when unleashed it knows no true master, it devours without reason or mercy, until it has consumed everything it touches. Such a fire is war.

On Isstvan V, the pride and glory of the Great Crusade had ended; its warriors had been cut down in their multitudes and smothered in the blood of shattered brotherhood. Horus, once named first among the Emperor's sons, had wielded the traitor's blade and slew those he had once led and betrayed his father. On that day, on the black sands of Isstvan V, the dream had ended, an age of Mankind had been slain on the eve of its fulfilment and the destinies of countless billions had been shifted in their course. But even as Horus raised his banners over the still hot ashes of the dead, even such a being as he could not know what would come to pass because of this day, not even he who had dared the unthinkable and heard the whispers of the nightmares beyond could see what terrors awaited a galaxy as yet slumbering in ignorance. He had been named 'Warmaster' and worn that title with pride and surety of his right to bear it, but war is fire, and fire has no true master.

So then I shall speak of the false certainties of men who believed themselves as gods, be they traitor or loyal to the Emperor's cause; men who believed that they could control what was to come, that they could bend the fire of war to their will and their purposes. Men who plotted and schemed, men who wielded vast armies and unleashed devastation undreamed of, all the time certain of their cause, of their false godhood, while truer gods than they, dark gods that had waited for this hour since we crawled from the primordial slime, laughed and capered to see our folly destroy us.

I shall tell then of how the fire of war spread from Isstvan to set the galaxy to burn, of battles born of treachery and battles born of strange mischance, of lives snuffed out in the cold void like guttering candle flames, and of unremembered martyrs who would not yield. I shall tell of victory birthed from bloody defeat and triumph turned to bitter ashes.

I saw, with eyes then young, and this is my testament. I was there when Tallarn burned and Keoptis drowned in oceans of blood. I witnessed the skies of Terra riven with lightning and shadow on the day that the Warmaster came and hell followed with him. I heard the funeral bell toll for the Emperor of Humanity and wept.

I remember.



++Galaxia Proxima++

++System Survey
input...

- ...Isstvan
- ...Phall
- ...Paramar
- ...Olympia
- ...Deliverance
- ...Inwit
- /Unknown

++Warning++

Heeding Exitiabilis
Magnitude Warp
Phenomena

Contact Lost

>1,348 Astropathic
Nodes

>2,346...

>4,453...

>6,445...

++Heeding Error...++

Halo Stars



VOYD	VOYD	
DEEP SPACE	DEEP SPACE	ALARM
AREA	TRIP	F1
GROUP	SECURE	F2
LOOP	MAP	F3



Ghoul Stars

Quai Jin

Stromhelm

Angehs

Nostramo

Honourum

Desperation

The Dominion of Storms

Memlok

Konig Secundus

Olympia

Signus Prime

The Death of Reason

Sulis

Impetus

Laeran

Constantium

The Thirteen Realms

Tigrus

Orpheus Prime

Eastern Fringe

Accatran

Prohibited Zone
[Plague cordon enforced]

Wayber

Neverlight

+Imperius Dominatus+

++circa 150.006.M31++

+++Empyrion Furibundus+++



THE ASHES OF ISSTVAN

"Ignorance is the doom of lesser men and their solace both, but Pride is the doom of the great men who arise to master them, and for them no solace can be found."

*From the Canticle of the Dead
The Apocrypha Terra*

Such records that survive from those dark times state that as the sun rose on the day following the carnage of the Dropsite Massacre, the Warmaster's Mechanicum allies came forth from their fortifications accompanied by a vast procession of heavy automata. As the day drew on, great tracked earthmovers fitted with towering ploughs cleared a space in the centre of the depression, and great mounds of the dead of both sides were piled high around its perimeter. Even as the din of battle continued to flare and die away as pockets of Loyalist survivors were uncovered and sold their lives bitterly against the victorious Traitors, and gunships patrolled skies overhead still burning with the wreckage of dead and dying ships, the work went on as if nothing could intrude upon it. A thousand-strong cohort of blank-eyed tech-thralls were driven forth to prepare the ground, and soon a vast skeletal, ironwork tower was rising from the centre of the slaughter ground, its purpose as yet unknown.

By the evening of the third day, a vast amphitheatre had been made by the Mechanicum's toil, pulverised bones and shattered ceramite, along with plasma-fused vitreous, was its foundation and its floor, and at its centre a towering, many-tiered column

had been raised over two hundred metres up into the smoke-wreathed skies. Beyond the heaped walls of the dead, the vast battlefield of the Urgall Depression had now become a scavenging ground, picked over by its victors for wargear and salvaged machines, as well as for less wholesome trophies and for less wholesome purposes. Throughout the day, the Traitors had mustered and gathered before this mighty dais, whether returning from the pursuit of surviving Loyalists, or after they'd had their fill of scavenge and in some cases after setting down the tools of torture used upon the bodies of those taken alive. Company by company, chapter by chapter, Legion by Legion, hundreds of thousands of those Legiones Astartes who had fought for the Warmaster against their kindred massed about the great iron tower. When all was ready, the outer palisade ring of corpses forming the perimeter of the spectacle was set to the torch, flames rushing outwards from a single point so that within minutes a blazing wall of fire encircled the entire scene. The grey skies were cast orange and a blizzard of ash rose up from them that would not abate for weeks to come. Here was Horus' triumph; here was his moment of victory, his acclamation.

Surrounding the tower were the Warmaster's own sons, his Legion, praetorians now for a new Emperor in waiting; a sign of divisions and preferment fresh born, but already perhaps viewed with rancour by some of those who looked on. Before the Sons of Horus, arrayed in their serried ranks, were the Legions that had cast in their lot with him: the Emperor's Children, the World Eaters and the Death Guard. With them were those more recent to the cause whose betrayal had spelled the death of their erstwhile brothers who now lay entombed

in the scorched black sand beneath their feet: the Iron Warriors, the Alpha Legion, the Word Bearers and the Night Lords—all were represented here, all but half the Legiones Astartes host.

Tier by tier, the concentric circles of the podium filled, until at length the Traitor Primarchs themselves stood before their assembled sons in glory, awaiting only the appearance of the Warmaster himself. And then Horus, lit crimson in the torch fires, appeared higher yet upon the podium's summit. As the sun finally dipped below the horizon, a massed flight of attack craft roared overhead and the war horns of the massed Traitor Titans looming in the darkness blared so loud the ground trembled and the glass surface cracked. Like a god he looked down on them, and like a demagogue he hailed them, proclaiming their glory and the glory of their victory, both but a shadow of his own. What he said on that terrible day is forbidden to this record but it cannot be doubted that many who heard those words kindled new fires of vainglory, battle-lust and dark ambition within their hearts. Although for some the words fell upon stony ground made barren already by bitterness and suspicion, by sins long fermented and now bearing forth vintage. What can be certain is that Horus, Warmaster and perpetrator of the Dropsite Massacre, promised them swift victory. The truth however would be different; the war that was coming would be gruelling and bloody beyond all human imaginings, and its outcome uncertain till the very last.

Even as the torches of victory burned on Isstvan V to anoint the bloody brow of the Warmaster, the tendrils of war reached forth from that place across the stars and the terrible conflict began to unfold. Like a wildfire or a plague the warfare would spread, to Thramas, and to Ultramar, to Signus and Morox, to Honourum and to Bale. But first the blow would fall at Phall and at Paramar, and here would come the first inklings that not all would be as the Warmaster promised or as the Warmaster planned; that the beast of war when unleashed was truly no master's slave, not even that of vaunted Horus. Here also on Isstvan V would come at last unexpected reversal of fortune for the Traitors, an escape where survival alone was a priceless victory, and one that would cast a long shadow over what was to come.

WARSHIPS OF THE GREAT CRUSADE

The conduct of the Great Crusade required vessels by the thousands, vessels that could not only carry armies and bring apocalyptic destruction to bear, but that could also endure the perilous transit of Warp space and endure the titanic forces and hardships of the Empyrean and the Deep Void both. Military vessels were needed, not only to replace losses but meet the ever expanding demands of the Expeditionary fleets, the Armada Imperialis and, on a lesser scale, the Rogue Traders and local navies. To satisfy this constant need, a bewildering variety of classes of warship were developed to fulfil an equally bewildering variety of roles. The following precis gives only the briefest summation of the hundreds of different patterns and classes wrought by the hand of the Imperium and the most common designations.

The Battleship or Battle Barge

The principal (or capital) class of warship in the Great Crusade and the mainstay of the Imperial fleets is the Battleship, with more than a thousand such mighty engines of war in operation at the height of the Imperium's expansion. They are intended to form the 'line of battle' during fleet engagements and have armaments capable of smashing continents from orbit and controlling entire star systems by force of arms. Battleships are vast constructs, ranging commonly between 8 km and 12 km long (although some far larger vessels have been constructed) and can hold tens of thousands of crew, troops and hundreds of war machines as well as swarms of smaller attack craft depending on their design. Battleships are only threatened in ordinary circumstances by others of their own kind and the direst celestial phenomena, and as such are the mainstay of both the Expeditionary fleets and the wider Armada Imperialis. Battle barges, a development of the Great Crusade, are not a single designation or class as such, but rather a term given to any variant or refit of battleship class hull modified and optimised for use by the Legiones Astartes specifically for Space Marine planetary assault and ship-to-ship boarding actions, although purpose-built ships of this role have also been constructed, particularly in the Great Crusade's later years. In common parlance, however, any capital class vessel used by the Legiones Astartes exclusively is often referred to as a battle barge regardless of the technical truth of the matter.

Noteworthy Classes: Goliath, Victory, Gloriana, Infernus, Retribution, Imperator, Tiamat (Shield Bastion), Ironclad, Warspite (Battle Barge), Dictatus, Mortis Rex.

Grand Cruiser and Galleass of War

A noteworthy but relatively uncommon type of warship, Grand Cruisers are 'pocket battleships' – something of a halfway house between a battleship and a cruiser in size and firepower. They are intended principally to be capable of operating on their own rather than as part of a larger fleet, however, and are often further specially designed either for range (which is to say duration of deployment without significant resupply or refit) or to mount a specialised weapon system which requires particular tactics to utilise. Grand cruisers can make for formidable heavy raiders and can use their range and speed to catch targets unawares, as well as being powerful flagships for small fleets of cruisers and escorts. The Galleass of War is the equivalent vessel (often much larger physically), much of whose fabric is given over to freight and transport capacity, while still maintaining formidable armaments and defence. They make for ideal support vessels for deep-range explorations into unknown regions of space and as the flagships of the most powerful Rogue Traders Militant.

Noteworthy Classes: Avenger, Dagon, Inflexible, Maelstrom, Odysseus (Galleass of War).

Cruisers

Light Cruisers and Heavy Cruisers are medium-sized warships, ranging in general terms between 4 km and 6 km in length and with an on-board complement ranging into the thousands. They are intended primarily for independent military operations such as raids, outpost assaults, deep-range patrols and search-and-destroy missions, and for use as 'workhorse' warships in larger fleets and squadrons. The difference between the two primary types of cruiser is principally found not in general size (although this may also be the case) but role and specialisation; heavy or Armoured Cruisers as they are also known, are designed to favour defence and firepower (particularly over-gunned ships for their class may be referred to as Battle Cruisers). Light cruisers sacrifice some of these elements for greatly increased speed and manoeuvrability. Both however are more than a match for any warship smaller than themselves and will be the death of any civilian ship it chooses to turn its wrath on. Just as with battle barges—but on a smaller scale—Strike Cruisers are modified designs used by the Legiones Astartes, optimised and reconfigured for planetary assault and boarding actions in primacy over other roles. No cruiser of any type can hope to match a battleship in an

open fight on equal terms, and so in any 'clash of the line' between fleets, they are used in a supporting role for their side's battleships and battle barges, their role primarily to use their speed to carry out flanking attacks, combine their firepower, and to harry and finish off wounded ships. Because of the flexibility of their hulls and their relatively smaller scale in comparison to a battleship—needing far less resources and material to construct as a mighty capital ship—cruiser-sized hulls are also used for a wide variety of rarer variants and specialised functions. As a result, minor classes such as siege monitors, attack carriers, pursuit cruisers, arvelasters, torpedo rams, claw-cruisers and shield-barques can all be found in the Armada Imperialis order of battle.

Noteworthy Classes: Armiger, Eclipse, Hades, Hellfire (Lance Cruiser), Siluria, Tetsujin, Crusade, Olympia (Strike Cruiser), Cardinal, Lunar, Bellerophon (Heavy Assault Cruiser).

Escorts

Escort is the catch-all designation for the smallest division of Warp-capable warships, seldom larger than 1 km or 2 km in length, and possessing only a fraction of the mass and raw power of a capital ship. In a 'clash of the line', the life expectancy of an escort is almost nil. The commonest escort class of the Great Crusade is the Frigate, a multipurpose armed vessel designed to largely balance firepower, defence and range. They are intended to be used both for independent operations of patrol and attack where a larger ship such as a cruiser is unwarranted, and in squadrons as outriders, guardians, piquet ships, and armed reconnaissance vessels. Other roles falling into this class include destroyers; small escorts, relatively heavily armed warships for their size, but commensurately ill-defended and with poor independent range designed either to attack larger ships and void stations in waves or expend themselves sacrificially to protect more important vessels and convoys (destroyer duty is therefore largely regarded as a death sentence), and Warp runners. This latter ship class is designed to incorporate only minimal crew, armament and life support, sacrificing their design almost entirely for speed and range of operation, being employed principally as spy vessels, blockade runners, couriers and explorers.

Noteworthy Classes: Sword, Thunderbolt (Heavy Frigate), Sceptre, Havoc, Baron, Harpy, Stalwart (Minekeeper), Cobra (Destroyer), Vigil (Siege Frigate), Spectre (Warp Runner), Thor (Ordinancer).



THE FIRES OF HERESY

"If the Great Crusade has taught us anything it is this; Mankind is the supreme predatory species in existence, and I for one am glad the Emperor's will directs such terrible gifts as we bear."

*The Remembrancer Olmar Bodlieas,
Unpublished Works*



PART IV: THE INVASION OF PARAMAR V

Being an account of the invasion and overthrow of the Paramar system by the Alpha Legion and the forces of the Warmaster in 006.M31, with particular reference to the 1st Battle of the Paramar Nexus. Data compiled from necrocortical transcripts, extant archival records and survivors' testimony.

"Battles are won by the application of superior force; wars are won by the application of superior resources."

*The Principia Belicosa of Terra,
Imperial Commentaries*

"One man of bitter temper in the hour of need is worth a thousand whose hearts falter at the thunder of the guns."

An Olympian Proverb

The Paramar system lies at the outer northern edge of the Segmentum Solar. Since the fourth decade of the Great Crusade, Paramar has stood both as a vital lynchpin of the Imperium's tangled skein of empyreal travel and a vital staging post and supply terminus for its outward expansion. Given this two-fold strategic value, and a third factor: that Paramar lies in almost direct conjunction between Isstvan and Terra—as much as such a thing can be said to apply to journeys through the Warp—it is in retrospect no surprise that its capture would feature prominently in the Warmaster's machinations. Before even the blood spilled in such great effusion in the Dropsite Massacre of Isstvan V had cooled, the Warmaster's generals viewed Paramar and the vast stockpiles of military supplies cached there with covetous eyes, and drew their plans against it. What would follow would, perhaps more so even than the nightmarish slaughter of the Dropsite Massacre before it, serve as a prelude and omen of the war to come.

PARAMAR: SYSTEM, PHARAEON AND NEXUS

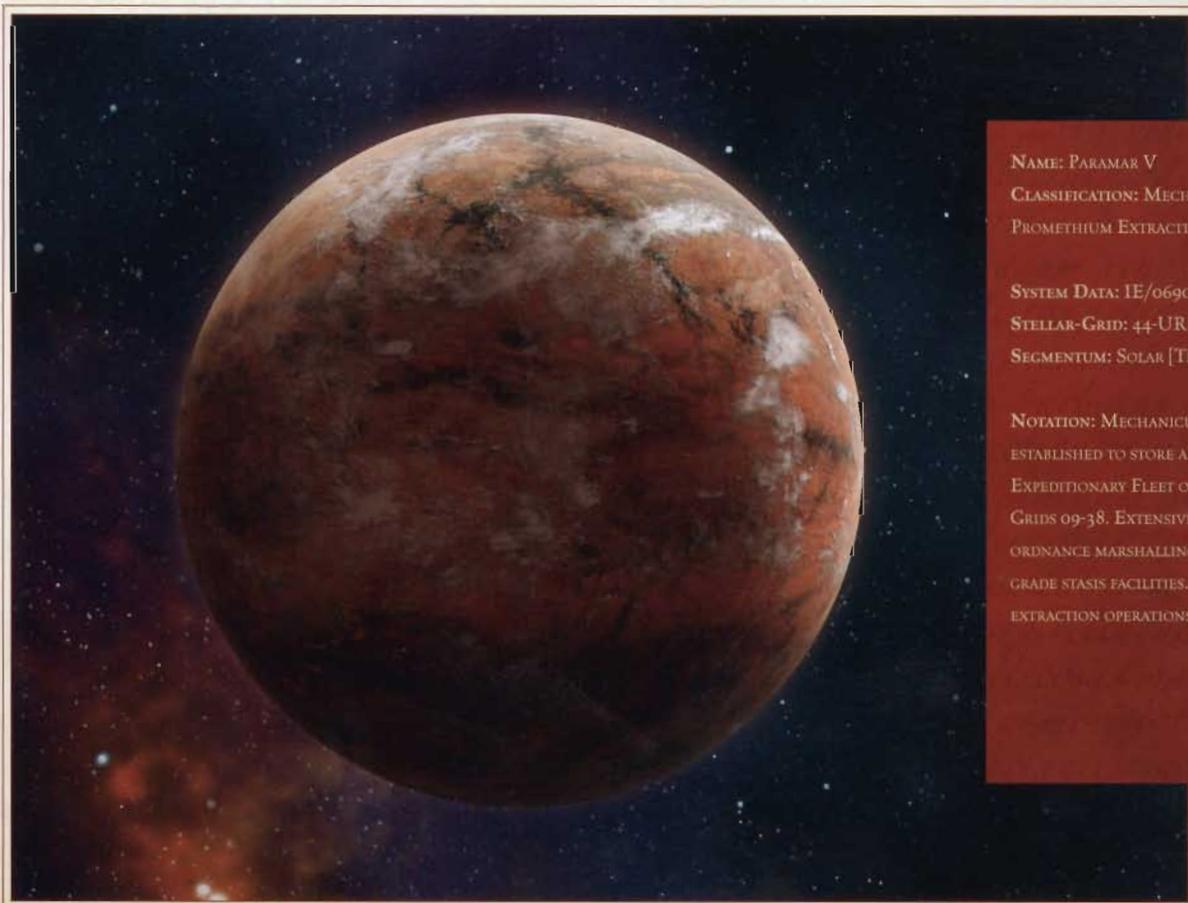
Comprising an unusual trinary star system, Paramar has the particular advantages of possessing vast (if difficult to access) mineral wealth amid its thirty-seven recorded main satellites, and being located in an unusually stable Warp-synchronous location in space. Identified and entered into the Carta Imperialis by the Rogue Trader Hel DeAniasie in 803.M30, it quickly became a way point for the Imperium's expansion. What was originally little more than a navigational marker would grow over time into first a largely automated Mechanicum outpost and finally, as the Great Crusade moved into the Segmentum Obscurus, was further developed into a major supply base and fuelling station for the Imperial Expeditionary fleets. With no native population extant, and colonisation by normal means of the system's handful of habitable and semi-habitable worlds rendered undesirable by the prevalence of intermittently hazardous conditions from the fury of Paramar's three stars, it remained a strictly military possession, rather than becoming a governed system of the Imperium in its own right. Military penal colonies were established on Paramar VIII and XIX, with subsurface prison-hives constructed for the workers, while a minor moon of the gas giant Paramar XXI was converted to a fully independent station and

fleet anchorage of the Armada Imperialis. Known as the Pharaeon of Paramar, this station importantly housed the largest Astrotelepathic Choir of the northern Segmentum Solar and formed a vital hub for communications between Terra and the Segmentum Obscurus. It was further protected by a cordon of depended gun-bastions orbiting in the near-void around the Pharaeon which carried the combined firepower of an entire naval battle group, making it all but unassailable to assault.

Of equal, if not greater, strategic value to the Great Crusade was Paramar V. An anomalous planet, whose structure has suggested to some artificial engineering in its composition sometime in the unknown and distant past, Paramar V had clearly once been a fully life-sustaining world whose topology bore clear signs of having been covered in oceans, and whose vast untapped geological reserves of hydrocarbons indicate that it once was home to a plethora of life. Reduced for millennia to an arid, radiation-swept wasteland scoured by solar winds, with a thin oxygen atmosphere breathable only with artificial aid and wildly differing temperature extremes during its slow day/night cycle, Paramar V nevertheless was a perfect choice to use as a military cache and supply base. This was principally as promethium could be refined there in vast

quantities and the dead world's extensive cave systems could be readily transformed into armoured sub-surface bunkers for secure storage of arms and munitions running into a multi-gigaton capacity.

Given into the satrapy of the Mechanicum to administer, Paramar V's investment was done with great dispatch, with overall control of the planet being centralised from a primary star port terminus near its southern polar region, designated as the Paramar Nexus. Paramar V and its facilities were later granted, in particular, as a vassal domain of the distant Forge World of Gryphonne IV by the word of the Emperor as part of the rewards made to the Forge Lords of Gryphonne for their great service and sacrifices during the Crisis of the Hungering Gyre in 891.M30. As well as serving to add greatly to the prestige and power of Gryphonne IV and its Magos—a factor known to have caused some acrimony with Mars—Paramar V's defences gained further from this union, becoming a sub-bastion and outer forge of the Legio Gryphonicus, further adding to its importance and breadth of facilities. By the outbreak of the Heresy, Paramar was a strategic locale the Warmaster could not readily choose to ignore, but one circumstance and the tide of the Great Crusade had put outside of his sphere of influence.



NAME: PARAMAR V
CLASSIFICATION: MECHANICUM RESERVE/
PROMETHIUM EXTRACTION [BARREN]

SYSTEM DATA: 1E/0690//DE/E
STELLAR GRID: 44-URR/FT-94
SEGMENTUM: SOLAR [TERMINUS]

NOTATION: MECHANICUM SOVEREIGN DOMAIN
ESTABLISHED TO STORE AND SUPPLY ONGOING
EXPEDITIONARY FLEET OPERATIONS INTO STELLAR
GRIDS 09-38. EXTENSIVE DEEP STORAGE FACILITIES,
ORDNANCE MARSHALLING AND EXO/XENO/ESO
GRADE STASIS FACILITIES. SECONDARY PROMETHIUM
EXTRACTION OPERATIONS.

THE TRAITORS' DIE IS CAST

It cannot now be known whether the plan to invade Paramar was hatched long before the attempted purging of the Traitor Legions' ranks on Isstvan III, or if it came later as a result of the Warmaster's rapidly shifting plans following the uncovering of his treachery and the resultant slaughter of the Dropsite Massacre, although the latter is more likely. It speaks to the genius in strategic planning that was one of the key factors in Horus' elevation to Warmaster that the Traitors were able to re-spin their plans for war so quickly once their ruse at Isstvan III had been exposed. Greatest of these reformulated plans was the deadly trap at Isstvan V, but allied to this were a thousand other smaller attacks, misdirections, raids and usurpations which spread like wildfire across the Imperium, throwing all into confusion and the chaos of civil war. Many of these attacks can be categorised as attempts to seize control of vital strategic assets before the Imperium realised the true danger and scope of the war that was unfolding, and the invasion of Paramar can be seen to epitomise this tactic. For the Warmaster, Paramar was a prize to be taken whole, not savaged or destroyed, and quickly, for its potential use as a stepping stone on the way to Terra was extremely valuable to his cause.

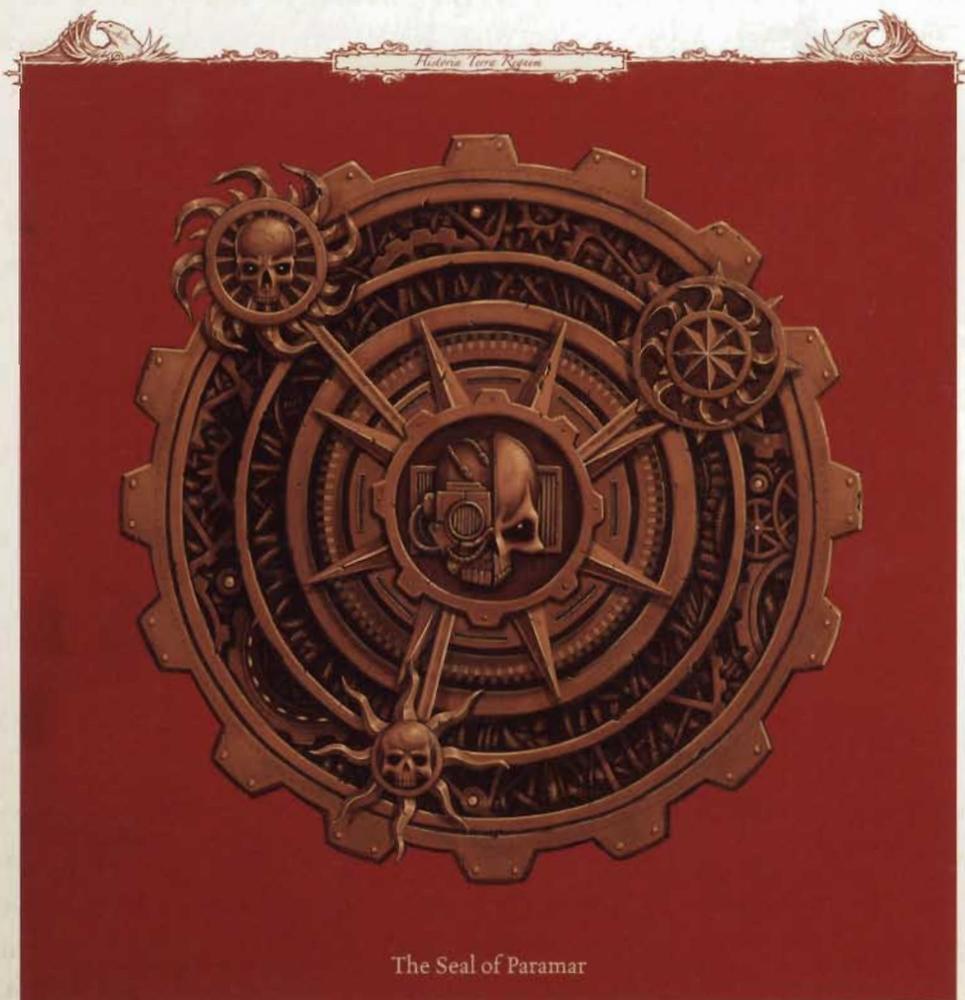
This in itself can be seen in retrospect to have posed a quandary; what forces to assign to the invasion? The need for speed and a controlled attack with potentially overwhelming force, set against the Warmaster's desire not to expend the host at his command needlessly in besieging worlds which were already heavily fortified and on the alert against attack, nor moving too quickly with his main strength against the Segmentum Solar. It should be remembered that in this time of genesis, for the great conflict to come much was uncertain and untested for both sides in the civil war, not least of all the loyalties of those who had rallied to the banners of Traitor or Loyalist, and so caution yet may have reigned paramount in Horus' mind. Paramar was a dangerous target, defended heavily by both the Armada Imperialis and the Mechanicum, and to send too minor a force would be to court disaster, while to strike with the full weight of the Traitors' power would risk committing to full scale engagement with the forces of the Segmentum Solar if matters went awry or a shock assault transformed into a protracted siege. With customary dispatch and conviction, Horus made his decision; the taking of Paramar would fall to the Alpha Legion.

The Coils of the Hydra

Of all the weapons in the Warmaster's arsenal, none were more obviously suited to the invasion of Paramar than the Alpha Legion. The task required a degree of subtlety and control that few of the Legions that had sided with Horus could readily muster, save his own Sons of Horus perhaps—certainly not Angron's savages or Curze's flock of murderers. Perhaps Fulgrim's vaunted warriors would have once fitted the bill, but already stark and terrible changes were befalling the IIIrd Legion that were rendering them quixotic and alien to what had come before. It has been suggested, also by some apocryphal sources, including testimony gathered from the supposition of others within the Traitors faction, that there was another motive for the Warmaster's selection of the Alpha Legion alone of his Space Marine forces for this task. That reason was as a demonstration of their loyalty and as an overt bleeding of their hands in his cause. It has been noted in diverse sources and conjectures that of all those who cast their lot in with the Warmaster, the motivations and fealty of Alpharius and his Legion were, from the beginning, the most uncertain and the most obscure. Although it is indicated in many extant sources from the late Great

Crusade era that Horus maintained perhaps the best relationship with the sinister and mysterious Primarch of the Alpha Legion, it was true that even here there was little true trust or fellowship between them. In short, no-one trusted the Alpha Legion, not even the Warmaster who had wielded them often as a weapon in the final campaigns of the Great Crusade and knew their uses well. It is also the case that many believe the Alpha Legion's involvement in the Dropsite Massacre to have been—if not guarded—then certainly on their own terms, and their commitment to the attack limited to victims purely of their own choosing, and seldom at risk to themselves. At Paramar, the Alpha Legion would have to prove their commitment to Horus, not simply with the blood of his enemies but, inevitably, with blood of their own.

It is not known with what grace or eagerness Alpharius and his Legion received their orders to take Paramar, but the serpent-sly Primarch no doubt well knew their import, the risks of the deadly mission and Horus' motives in selecting the Alpha Legion for the task. Even as the last Loyalist ships were fighting desperately for their survival in the wreckage-strewn void around Isstvan V and





fires still raged on the blasted dropsite below, the azure and smoke-hulled warships of the Alpha Legion began to depart the system in large numbers, leaving only a token force to bear witness to the triumph of the Warmaster in the Dropsite Massacre's aftermath. While numerous vessels departed alone on missions unknown and inscrutable, some to raise havoc on far flung worlds, others to carry discord and falsehood to far corners of the Imperium, a powerful core of warships, perhaps fully a half of the Alpha Legion's fleet made speed for Paramar. Following in their wake came a second armada of Mechanicum barques and mass-arks drawn from forces loyal to the Warmaster.

THE FALSE FLAG

Although speed was of the essence, what was to follow was not a headlong rush to attack, for that was not the Alpha Legion's way of war, but a cold, calculated campaign both intricate in its complexity and ruthless in its execution. Like jackals in the night, the Alpha Legion first surrounded their prey

and observed its movements, gauging its strengths and weaknesses. The Alpha Legion fleet had broken into realspace far into the cold darkness beyond the range of the vast trinary star system's limits, relying on their own expertise in such matters as well as the fury of the three stars of Paramar's own radiant emissions to mask their slow and silent approach. Their arrival undetected they encircled their targets with a predator's patience, finding it as expected already on a state of heightened alert. What followed was a dangerous game of brinkmanship and timing. The longer they delayed their attack, the greater the risk of discovery and the greater the risk that the news of the Dropsite Massacre — and the Alpha Legion's part in it — would reach Paramar, despite the rising warp storms and the murderous blockade and waiting ambushes the Legion had established in several nearby systems, silencing the approaches and isolating Paramar from immediate aid as much as was possible given the vagaries of the Warp. Conversely, the longer the Alpha Legion

waited, the more perfect their attack strategy could be formed, the closer their spectral warships stalked and the deeper their hidden fangs were already sinking into the system unbeknownst to its defenders, their paralysing venom already taking effect.

Swiftly, several scheduled transport ships and patrol vessels had been hijacked and suborned en route to Paramar by the Alpha Legion and used as a vector to poison the system's outer defences with its operatives and gather further detailed intelligence. Individuals, particularly on the Pharaeon of Paramar, more readily accessible than Paramar V to the Legion's Spartoī operatives, had been marked for assassination, while sabotage devices were sown in the system's defence grid in preparation for the attack. The system's prison hives were of little immediate concern, being far from the twin primary objectives of the assault, and also the easiest dealt with as time-released toxins and bacteriological contaminants were introduced into the heavily centralised water

supplies of each, ready to create havoc when triggered. An unseen chronograph counted down to the appointed hour with inexorable motion as the labyrinthine plans of the Alpha Legion converged and configured, until the sands of time ran out for Paramar and the honourable role it had played in the Great Crusade's dream of Mankind's future was crushed in the coils of the hydra.

THE BLADE FROM THE DARK

At 019-17 sidereal/local time, approximately thirty-eight days Terran standard after the Dropsite Massacre on Isstvan V, a fleet of eleven Legiones Astartes warships of the Alpha Legion broke realspace on the edge of the Paramar system in proximity to the standard ingress co-ordinates for Imperial shipping en route from Terra. The lead vessel, a Basileus class battle barge designated *Sigma-Pythonus* in the Astra Imperialis records, made direct communication with the Pharaeon of Paramar's central command, invoking the seal and orders of Rogal Dorn, Praetorian of Terra. Demanding rights under these orders of immediate and urgent resupply and aid, the Alpha Legion detachment claimed to have been swept off course by the turbulence of the Warp and separated from the punitive taskforce sent to Isstvan V, and its intent was to resume its mission at the swiftest possible dispatch. Its authority accepted, the *Sigma-Pythonus* and its escorts approached the Pharaeon of Paramar with the apparent intent to make temporary repairs at the fleet anchorage, while a single Bellerophon class heavy assault cruiser, designated *Anax-Rho* detached from the Alpha Legion fleet and proceeded to Paramar V to requisition additional supplies. No suspicion was raised and no alarms were sounded, as under the flags of brothers-in-arms against a common foe, the Alpha Legion approached their targets, their blades naked in their hands. In the dark at the edge of the light of Paramar's three suns, their brothers waited.

THE IRON PILGRIM

No plan, no matter how well formulated or executed, escapes the hand of fate in the unravelling of its design. So it was that as the *Sigma-Pythonus* and its brethren were making their final approach through the Pharaeon of Paramar's defensive corridor, under the shadow of the guns of the colossal void-bastions that surrounded it, and the *Anax-Rho* itself was within light-minutes of Paramar V, reality ripped open once more, disgorging more vessels into the void around Paramar. These vessels were not of the Alpha Legion and not part of their plan. It is not

difficult to imagine the consternation and fear of discovery within the Alpha Legion's ranks at this moment, but even as long range auspex readings approximated that these were Legiones Astartes warships, five in number, including a capital class vessel, the Alpha Legion held fast to their plan. They did not break ranks, or attempt to flee from the shadow of the firepower that surrounded them, but instead pressed on as if nothing was awry, merely issuing the standard vox-challenges that such a sudden meeting naturally called for. Pict-images from long-range ocular-scopes resolved to display the unknown ships as slab-sided hulking monstrosities of black-scarred steel, the silhouettes of the Imperial pattern hulls barely recognisable beneath layer upon layer of improvised ablative armour plating and flanks studded with fifteen metre long adamantium anti-boarding spines. The Alpha Legion's vox challenge was at last answered with something like indifference. The lead warship identified itself, the *Tyche's Lament*, flagship of the 77th Grand Battalion of the Iron Warriors Legion, and its master, Kyr Vhalen, responded that he cared not under what orders the Alpha Legion flew, only his own...

A LIGHT EXTINGUISHED

The identity of the incoming warships was entirely unexpected. Though like the Alpha Legion, the Iron Warriors and their brutal Primarch Perturabo had sided with the Warmaster at Isstvan to the ruination of those Loyalists sent to bring the Traitors to heel, no love had been lost between the two brother-Legions in the past and their presence at Paramar at this time was entirely unpredicted. Likely this unforeseen turn of events, coming at such a crucial juncture, was itself a dangerous complication for the Alpha Legion's plans. Had the Iron Warriors been sent on the same mission as they by Horus in his distrust, and then if this was the case, had they come as aid or as watchdog to see that the Warmaster's wishes were carried out? Or were they simply a rogue element to be dealt with as proved necessary? Were these five ships all, or were there more in waiting, just as the Alpha Legion waited? Ultimately, it did not matter, the plan was too far gone to be stopped; events had taken on a momentum of their own.

Like silent actors in a vast shadow play of gods and monsters against the backdrop of the cold stars, the colossal warships of blackened steel and ghostly azure moved across the void, each to their journeys' end. With equal silence, aboard the Alpha Legion's

serpent-scaled vessels, Legionaries in full battle gear and armed for war waited in utter stillness for the order to be given, and shielded capacitors, their caged lightning hidden utterly from the prying auguries of the Pharaeon which swept automatically over them blindly, waited to fire their apocalyptic weapons into sudden life. Through the cyclopean floating chain-cables of the gun bastions the Alpha Legion ships passed; their leader towards the Pharaeon itself and its escorts towards the protected fleet anchorage platforms, their progress patient and measured.

As the *Sigma-Pythonus* came to rest in her appointed position mere kilometres away from the Pharaeon of Paramar's outer docking bays, and well within the radius and protection of the battle station's bastion-fortresses, a single unescorted amaranthine-hued Thunderhawk gunship departed her cavernous launch bays and made over to the Pharaeon bearing the Alpha Legion's delegation. The figure which descended the gunship's ramp to meet the shocked deck officers and Magos who awaited it towered over them, a pale spear was held like a staff of office in its hand, its ornately worked armour glittered like a shimmering sea, the scaled cloak that coursed behind it writhing as if it had a serpentine life of its own. "Alpharius..." went the stunned whisper before him, "It is Alpharius; a Primarch is here among us!" The towering figure demanded to be taken to the master of the Pharaeon immediately, and it was obeyed. On the deck of the main control Orrey of the Pharaeon of Paramar was the silent Primarch received by the Commodore-Intendant and his command staff, and with them was the Magos-Shipmaster of the fleet anchorage and the Preceptor of Astropaths, indeed no dignitary of the Pharaeon dared decline not the honour of such a dread meeting. It was as they were kneeling in obeisance before this son of the Emperor incarnate that the first alarm-claxons began to sound across the Pharaeon. Before even the first mumbled words of surprise and apology could fall from the Commodore-Intendant's lips for the interruption, Alpharius made red ruin of them all.

The guns of the *Sigma-Pythonus* spoke, and too late the Pharaeon of Paramar discovered it had taken a clutch of vipers to its breast. In seconds the fusillade had blinded and crippled the battle station's close range defences, void shield generators were blasted, breaches punched clean through vital systems and the roar of boarding craft and the howl of teleporter shockwaves sounded

throughout the beleaguered Pharaeon. At the anchorage platforms, the other Alpha Legion warships too woke to murderous life, their batteries blazing at point blank range as Caestus assault rams and Dreadclaws spat from their launch bays into the flanks of the helpless ships of the Imperial Fleet moored nearby. Confusion reigned as control systems failed; all over the outer defence network, orders were blocked, power systems suddenly died, and targeting data was garbled so that defence batteries fired on their brothers or spent their ordnance fruitlessly into the empty void. Anarchy reigned on the Pharaeon station as menials looked to their masters only to find many of their officers dead, murdered at their posts or poisoned in their quarters. Against the azure-armoured giants that crashed now through the Pharaeon's confined corridors, what little resistance that could be rallied was hopeless and savagely crushed. In under an hour all that remained was the bloody work of suppression and takeover. As for the line of drifting gun-bastions in the near-void around

the Pharaeon, they could do little more than look on helplessly as the station and its anchorages both were systematically taken, their own primary weapons useless against the attackers in their midst, set as they were outward against attack from without not within. The Pharaeon of Paramar belonged to the Alpha Legion.

IMPASSE

Above Paramar V, however, all did not go as accordingly to plan. In geo-synchronous orbit of the Paramar Nexus, the *Tyche's Lament* and the *Anax-Rho* vied for position, each determined that the station below should receive their emissaries and meet their demands first, neither backing down. The Mechanicum, for their part, kept cold neutrality as they always did in matters between the Legionnes Astartes, and merely awaited the outcome. To the Alpha Legion's dismay, the realisation dawned that the Iron Warriors contingent knew nothing of the Dropsite Massacre or even of their Legion's siding with the Warmaster. The 77th Grand

Company, it transpired, had been operating under its own aegis for more than four decades, conducting a seemingly unending campaign of suppression of the Therikon Wastes region which they had been left to garrison against the numerous xenos species that had made the trackless nebula of the wastes their home. Vhalen, the Iron Warriors commander, had returned to Paramar for resupply as he had done many times before. He was utterly ignorant that his Legion had turned against their Emperor and would not be denied his rights now. Events, however, would not wait for the impasse between the two Legion warships to be resolved.

The Hydra Strikes

The captain of the *Anax-Rho* had waited too long. *Auspex* returns on Paramar V had begun to pick up the echo-flashes of heavy weapons fire at the Pharaeon, and the Alpha Legion's hand was forced. The *Anax-Rho* ended the argument with the *Tyche's Lament* by unleashing a spread of fusion-warheaded torpedoes at their unsuspecting rival, before



turning their attentions on the Nexus below. As atomic fire blossomed across the prow of the Iron Warriors battleship, the *Anax-Rho*'s assault bays launched a wave of heavy Kharybdis Assault Claws at the Nexus primary terminal, the barbed landing craft burning like comets as they streaked groundward. The Mechanicum outpost reacted to the fury unleashed above them with preternatural speed, but it was not fast enough; the terminal's void shield coursing to crackling life in the skies between the two, but too late to stop the meteoric descent of the assault claw wave which tore through the still-forming shields with flashes of pyrokenetic lightning as they streaked groundward, the void shields slowly sealing shut above them. The Kharybdis Assault Claws, wreathed in the flames of their descent and trailing behind them streamers of torn lightning-plasma from the half-formed void shields, slammed into the upper towers of the Terminus Panopticon, their bladed grapples smashing into hardened ferrocrete like murderous talons as they began to burn their way within.

Far above, the *Anax-Rho* pressed its attack. While its dorsal lances fired on the Iron Warriors' escorts, scattering them, its main armament was turned groundwards. Built for close range orbital assault, the *Anax-Rho*'s macro-bombardment cannon began to rain down shell after titanic shell on the still powering-up defence shields, while its torpedo bays frantically reloaded with cluster

warheads to press the onslaught further and overwhelm the Terminus by brute force now subtlety had been denied them. A second assault wave, already prepared, awaited to exploit any failing in the shield, no matter how brief—the Terminus could still be taken and Paramar V could yet fall with a single blow if this was so.

The *Tyche's Lament*, reeling and shrouded in a molten cloud of burning debris from its forequarters, began to turn under its own power. It had expected no battle, its gun ports closed and its weapon-capacitors empty when the treacherous foe had struck the mighty battleship, but even without its own shields fully powered, it had been far from defenceless. Metre upon metre of ablative armour plating added to the hulking warship by her bitter-hearted master had been splashed into jetting plasma by the fusion torpedo strikes, but the armoured core beneath it, fashioned in the forges of the Olympia shipyards, had been built to withstand worse, and that had barely been scorched. The colossal engines of the Iron Warriors battleship roared into sun-white fury and the *Tyche's Lament* leapt forward with brutal acceleration, its tortured superstructure screaming in protest at those onboard.

Extant records show that though his ship's targeting auspexes had been blinded and the bridge flamed about him, it was Warsmith Kyr Vhalen himself who threw aside his steersman and triggered the main drives at maximum power, shouting black and profane oaths aloud as the seven kilometre long warship hurtled like a burning spear at the *Anax-Rho*. Locked into firing solutions against the planet and the wounded escorts, the *Anax-Rho* could not recover itself in

the short moments that the *Tyche's Lament* devoured the distance between the two huge warships, and when its own main drives triggered to manoeuvre, it was already too late. The blunt-bladed prow of the *Tyche's Lament* struck the *Anax-Rho* amidships from directly below, shattering its void shields and smashing it aside in a storm of broken debris and venting atmosphere. The heavy assault cruiser—itsself forged to endure terrible damage had survived the devastating impact—barely, but now spun all but out of control, its own engine-thrust carrying it out of orbit in order to escape the scarred monster which was already beginning to turn again for another attack run.

The Battle of the Panopticon

Within the Panopticon far below, the Mechanicum were being torn apart. Shimmering azure-armoured Terminators smashed through one barricade and bulkhead after another, power fists crushing the life out of any of the Machine God's servants who dared resist their progress, bolter shells and plasma blasts scything down tech-thralls at their work stations as they blindly carried out their tasks heedless of the invaders, and pounding automated defence guns to shrapnel in their wake. The Alpha Legion strike force pressed on relentlessly, their goal the Panopticon Narthex chamber from which not simply the Terminus but the entire Nexus facility could be roused to war—or pacified as its controller wished.

What the invaders had found within the Terminus Panopticon's armoured walls, however, had matched nothing their intelligence or experience had led them to expect and corresponded to no known standard schematic template. They had entered instead a true demesne of the Mechanicum, intended neither for the eyes or footfall of any not sworn to the Machine God's inner mysteries. It was a labyrinth,



a machine in and of itself, intricate and complex beyond belief whose structure shifted and changed as it functioned. It was the brainchild of the master of the Paramar Terminus, the Archmagos Suyria Nihhon and it was her will that now turned to destroy the invaders. The Panopticon began to respond as a living body responds when invaded by a hostile microbe, sluggishly at first but with increasing, indefatigable force. As one the thralls of the Panopticon disconnected themselves from their machine umbilicals and began to throw themselves against the Alpha Legion attackers, heedless of their fates as they died by the hundreds, but by their deaths swarming the impregnable, Terminator armour-clad Legionaries, slowing them down and making them expend time and ammunition to deal with the onrushing horde. The walls and bulkheads also began to slide and re-arrange themselves, not randomly but with malign intent, forcing squads of Alpha Legionaries apart, or trapping them in pockets and improvised prisons which had to be rent open with chainfist and power claw. Consoles and power junctions overloaded and exploded as they came near, metallic deck plates became charged with crackling lightning, snakelike mechanical tendrils shot out to ensnare them, companionways collapsed and deadfalls opened up beneath them, plunging them down sudden shafts into the cavernous darkness below. Slowly, the Alpha Legion began to die. It is testament to the intelligence and ruthlessness of Alpharius' sons that they saw this attack for what it was and fought to counter it, linking together and seeing their path clear through the shifting maze that confronted them. Alone it was unlikely that this attack would have stopped them, but it was merely the prelude to the Mechanicum's true assault. Awoken from the darkness deep below the Panopticon, the beasts of steel rose up to meet their prey.

Castellax and Vorax Battle-automata appeared as if from nowhere amid the invaders, hidden bulkheads opening to disgorge them directly into battle, roaring binarc war-cant in the distorted voices of the damned. Servo-clawed arms with the strength to pulverise tank armour hammered down to smash their foes or seized Terminators and rent them slowly limb from limb as their motorised sinews howled in protest. Bolt cannon and plasma blasters blazed a firestorm at point blank range, and power claws slashed through ceramite, severing sparking machine limbs and toppling the hulking engines of destruction even as the dauntless

Terminators of the Alpha Legion fell before their onslaught. The attack degenerated into a score of desperate and savage melees and the Panopticon shook to the thunder of tortured metal and superhuman violence, blood and machine-fluids running in rivers through its vaulted chambers. Slowly, inexorably, the Mechanicum's Battle-automata began to gain the upper hand. A fresh engine of destruction rising up to replace each that fell while the Alpha Legion strike force, once more than two hundred Terminators strong, dwindled by the minute, though each life was bought dearly in its taking. The assault force, at first contained, was slowly being crushed.

Paramar V had also fully woken to the danger it faced, slumbering no more. In the burning skies above the two great wounded beasts — the *Anax-Rho* and the *Tyche's Lament* now circled each other, trading sporadic fire in search of a weakness, the other badly damaged Iron Warriors escort ships circling out of range of the lethal lance fire of the *Anax-Rho*, waiting for the opportunity to strike. That opportunity would never come, however, as without warning a dozen burning lances of hellish light struck up from the planet below and pierced the *Anax-Rho's* azure hull. For a fleeting moment the Alpha Legion warship became a burning star in the heavens, and then was no more. The first attack on Paramar V had been foiled, but there was little cause to celebrate either from the Mechanicum or the Iron Warriors, for their long range auguries clearly detected the burning drive-signatures of hundreds of new vessels now on a direct course for the world.

THE FURY FROM THE STARS

The full-scale invasion of Paramar V was now an inescapable fact for the Alpha Legion, roused as the planet was for war; all that now was left to be decided upon was methodology. The relentless slog of siege craft and the bloody game of attrition was an anathema to them in these circumstances, and furthermore it would only play into the defender's hands, allowing them to bring more of the planet's vast stockpiles of munitions and war machines — currently inert in storage — to bear on their attackers. The apocalyptic conflict that would likely ensue from this approach would also inevitably make the idea of taking Paramar V intact as a prize an impossibility, and such a failure the Alpha Legion would not countenance. Even at the distances which now separated the second attack wave of Alpha Legion ships and Paramar V, their

auguries and ocularis scopes could witness the Mechanicum's preparations for war turn with clockwork precision. They could see the corposant blooms of kilometre-spanning void-shields springing up to defend scores of separate facilities across the planet's surface, and could detect the thunderous heartbeat of Titan reactors striding forth from their deep forge-fanes concealed inside the mountainous mesas of the southern polar region. They had doubtless detected also the mass deployment of the Iron Warrior's 77th Grand Battalion to the Paramar Nexus, before their damaged ships had fled the system, and knew well the speed and skill with which Perturabo's sons could render this Mechanicum fortress yet more impregnable to assault.

Speed then was of the essence, and the fleet's commander, known to the extant record as the Alpha Legion Harrowmaster Armillus Dynat, ordered his closest vessels to burn their drives well beyond safe thrust tolerances in order to press his attack as fast as possible. Where the great barques of his Mechanicum allies could not keep pace with the faster Legionones Astartes strike vessels, he had his own ships grapple and drag them, acting like improvised tugs and booster rockets to overcome their vast mass. This dangerous ploy was enacted to the damage and loss of several mighty ships, but Dynat cared not for its cost. So was the gap between the Alpha Legion's second wave and its chosen prey closed with frightening speed. Their attack began without preamble, the first torpedo salvos launched even as the assault fleet was still decelerating into orbit and unleashed in continuous waves as they closed. Defence lasers were loosed from planetside in blistering arcs and counter-missiles were launched from scores of hidden silos across the surface to meet the attack.

Soon the skies above Paramar were ablaze with kaleidoscopic fire, as all but a handful of the spent ordnance was intercepted before it could even pierce the planet's stratosphere. But the barrage firestorm accomplished its purpose nevertheless; it blinded the world and its defenders to the exact disposition of the Alpha Legion's attack. The attacking fleet now closed and added the weight of its batteries and lance arrays to the onslaught. The barrage reached fever pitch and, amid the covering blaze of fire, a wing of three Alpha Legion strike frigates swept in unthinkably low and rent through the storm, plunging deep into the planet's thin atmosphere, the friction of the three-kilometre long ships' passing setting the air around them ablaze.

KEY

LOYALIST FORCES

TRAITOR FORCES



TAGHMATA
PARAMAR



LEGIONES ASTARTES
IRON WARRIORS



TAGHMATA
SATARAEL



LEGIONES ASTARTES
ALPHA LEGION



QUESTORIS
HOUSEHOLDS



LEGIO
GRYPHONICUS



QUESTORIS
HOUSEHOLDS



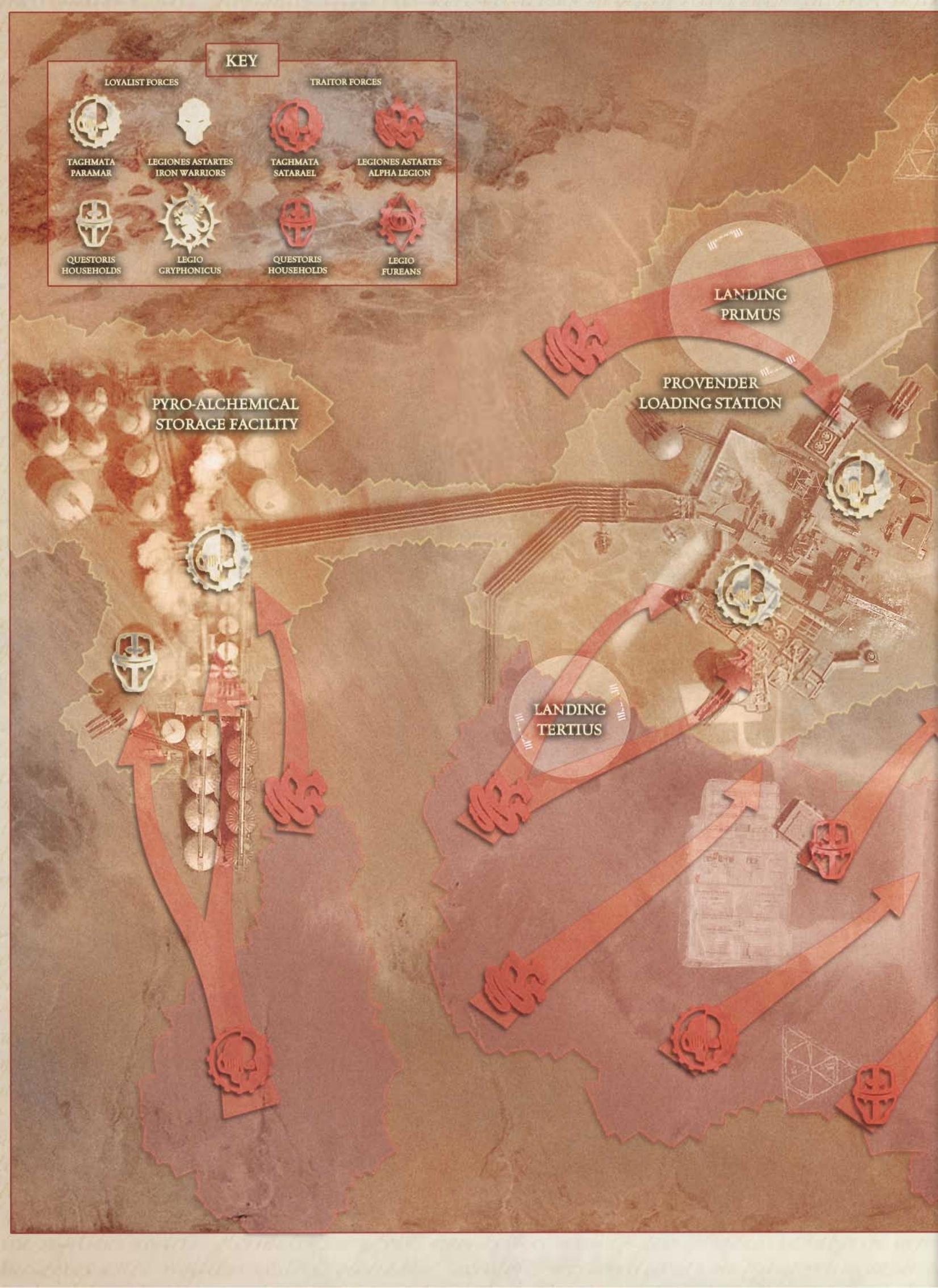
LEGIO
FUREANS

PYRO-ALCHEMICAL
STORAGE FACILITY

LANDING
PRIMUS

PROVENDER
LOADING STATION

LANDING
TERTIUS





MARLETIUM

CYBERNETICA
VAULT

TERMINUS

PANOPTICON

LANDING
SECUNDUS

SUB-SURFACE
VAULTS

+IST BATTLE OF PARAMAR+

++ PARAMAR NEXUS ASSAULT ++

++ DATE - CIRCA 673006.M31 ++

Skimming the arid ground scant hundreds of metres above, weaponry meant for the cataclysmic interplay of void combat was unleashed to torture and shatter the earth in atomic holocaust as they targeted defence laser emplacements and ground installations in a great slashing arc near the southern polar region, ripping them from the ground like the hand of a wrathful god. Defences intended to strike at targets tens of thousands of kilometres distant struggled in vain to acquire these three meteoric harbingers of death, but the torturous stress of what these warships were attempting took its own toll. The first fell from the skies even as its kin plunged on their murderous course, its weapons still firing as it came apart, its superstructure disintegrating under the hideous gravitational forces with which it fought. A second toppled backwards as it tried to break back into orbit, its engines giving out and shattered a mountain where it fell. Only one of the strike frigates escaped back through the firestorm into the void, bleeding debris and plasma from its riven hull, but they had achieved what the suicidal mission had set itself as its goal; a gap had been slashed brutally into the coverage of the planet's ground defences, a gap some forty kilometres to the south of the Paramar Nexus, and it was here that the true attack would fall.

Dynat's Gambit

Bombardment and counter-bombardment between Paramar V and the Traitor ships in orbit continued unabated, but now for the Alpha Legion it served a different purpose; it held open the way for their ground invasion. Heavy Argo class assault landers, Stormbird carriers and Thunderhawk transporters paved the way, deploying hundreds of Alpha Legion tanks onto the rocky desert soil. Following them came the gigantic shapes of the mass conveyors of the Legio Fureans, blotting out the three suns, the ground shuddering with the impact as the massive portals fell open and the Titans of the Tiger Eyes, hungry for battle, thundered forth. Behind them from the cavernous recesses of the mass conveyers streamed the beetle-

backed hovering carryalls of the Taghmata Satarael, their Battle-automata and the other arcane war machines of the Warmaster's Mechanicum hung in complex iron latticework cages beneath them.

This was to be no siege campaign but an armoured spearhead assault, and the Alpha Legion Harrowmaster was resting the chances of victory or defeat on a single throw of the dice; an all-out attack, holding back no reserves and digging no defences to fall back to if repulsed. The assault force was fully mechanised and with high preternatural speed and organisation it formed up and moved out without pause. Executing a complicated dance of destructive force and intricate interlocking movement, it rumbled and roared across the vivid red desert land.

The amber and sable Titans of the Tiger Eyes led the way, striding forward at flank speed, contemptuous of any ally who might get underfoot in their headlong charge and behind them, taking advantage of the shadow of the Titans' void shields came two vast strung-out echelons of Alpha Legion strike armour: Predators and Sicaran tanks and the deadly new Scorpius Whirlwinds. Behind these came the columns of super-heavyweights: Fellblades and Glaives for the most, chosen for their speed as well as firepower, and behind them the dispersed squadrons of Land Raiders and Spartans, in which the infantry strength of the attack was carried, a hundred tanks strong. Above flew gunships and speeders in close air support, a hazardous task given the choking air. Further back from this vast conglomeration of apocalyptic armoured might, came the sinister and strange forces of the Taghmata Satarael creating their own spider-like formation, the air around them shimmering with the distortion of a mobile power field generator mounted on a hovering Ordinatus class platform at the centre of the mass of arcane

war engines. Alongside the Taghmata came the bronze and crimson Knight walkers of House Perdaxia and the ghost-grey Knights of House Rajha, answering the deafening war sirens of the battle Titans with kindred answering cries of their own.

Rearing up a vast swath of dust behind it like an oncoming hurricane, the army of the Traitor Legion and its allies thundered towards the Paramar Nexus.

The Plain of Fire

It was the weapons of the Titans that spoke first, for they had found former brothers waiting for them. The War Griffons, the Titans of the Legio Gryphonicus, had stationed themselves in a five kilometre wide cordon across the vast ferrocrete-paved Landing Zone Secundus of the Paramar Nexus complex guarding the main approach across the open desert. With their own terrible war siren cries, they answered the bellowed challenges of the Tiger Eyes and marched forth to engage them on the open expanse, their great adamantium-shod feet shattering the ferrocrete and sending up grey plumes of dust to shroud their pale granite carapaces. Across the confined distance between the two phalanxes of Titans such a cataclysmic eruption of firepower was unleashed than had seldom been seen, even in the battles of the Great Crusade. Destructive force equal to levelling a city in a single sweep crashed and screamed as the very air between the two walls of rushing Titans was annihilated in a pulse of blinding, tortured light visible from orbit. Void shields split with shockwave thunder and collapsed, rock and stone boiled and



vaporised and ceramite armour proof against atomic fire crumbled like chalk. The Tiger Eyes Warlord *Lyakarri* simply ceased to exist, its reactor core rupturing in a hell-storm of plasma which blew the Warhound *Blood Hunger* which loped beside it into a spill of burning cinders, while the War Griffons Reaver *Southron Shield* came apart in a fury of las-blasts like a carcass on a butcher's block. These were but the first of many God-Machines to die that day.

The two lines of Titans unleashing destruction against each other on an incomprehensible scale quickly formed a no-man's-land to the fore of the Nexus complex that no man or machine could hope to cross and survive. This factor had already been taken into account by the Alpha Legion attack plan, and the echelon forces of their strike armour divided in two behind the Tiger Eyes and streamed round the hell zone the Titan battle had created at maximum speed; one striking towards the main landing and provender complex to the south-west of the Terminus, while the other took the longer elliptical route to strike at the Terminus itself from the south-east. While these striking arms raced ahead, already coming under fire from the defenders, the following columns of super-heavy tanks and mechanised infantry also bifurcated in turn, while minor detachments struck out independently for other targets of opportunity or areas of higher ground

in which to deploy support weapons. What was to follow was to be a direct and pitiless battle, that were it not overshadowed by the calamity and slaughter of the Dropsite Massacre that had occurred so soon before, it would have gone down more infamously as some of the most intense fighting in the Imperium's history to that date. The battlefield was largely open, with little or no cover to be had, and without respite the hammer of the Alpha Legion's armour struck the anvil of the Mechanicum's fortifications, bolstered greatly, particularly around the Terminus complex, by the rapidly constructed *Castellum Strongholds* of the Iron Warriors of the 77th Grand Battalion.

By the third hour of the battle the duelling Titan Legions warred on, but their numbers had been savagely reduced and much of the vast landing zones where they had fought was obscured by a pall of dense smoke and radioactive fallout from the wreckage of the God-Engines that had already fallen in battle. The Provender and supply complexes to the south-west had already fallen to the Alpha Legion, and here they had secured their swiftest and surest victory, *Armillus Dynat* himself having led the attacking spur here by extant record. Now the ruins of the complex were being used as a firebase from which to attack the Terminus itself, and Alpha Legion

headhunter squads were now scouring the area, purging it of survivors and seeking ingress to the subterranean complexes known to lie beneath. Across on the far side of the Titan battle, the attackers had suffered a major reversal of fortune however, when a large detachment of Iron Warriors super-heavy armour, supported by several talons of Dreadnoughts, had attacked from positions of concealment in underground macro-silos, effectively cutting the western attack spur in half. The Iron Warriors super-heavies, primarily Stormblades, Falchions and Typhon siege tanks, had devoted the bulk of their firepower against the lighter Alpha Legion strike armour from the rear and the result had been carnage. At the same time the Iron Warriors Dreadnought talons, reinforced by *Legio Gryphonicus* Battle-automata, had charged into the Alpha Legion super-heavies to attack them at close quarters, and while many had been destroyed in the charge before they could reach their targets, once they got amongst the lumbering war machines they wreaked havoc, attacking in hand-to-hand combat and tearing open the enemy tanks where the primary weapons of the super-heavies could not engage them.



Both sides had finally been thrown back with heavy casualties when repeated energy blasts from a squadron of Glaive super-heavies' Volkite carronades had accidentally penetrated deeply buried underground fuel lines, drowning the area in an eruption of burning promethium and for a time splitting the battle line apart.

THE NEXUS FALLS

By the fifth hour of the battle, the speed and overwhelming force of the Alpha Legion's attack had taken its toll and the battle was swinging full force in the Traitors' favour. Although the cost in tanks and Legionaries had been heavy, bastion after bastion, defence line after defence line had fallen to the invaders' onslaught and now only the Terminus remained to resist them. It had been the Siege-automata of the Taghmata Satarael, shielded by the pressing bulwark of the Patraxis Cerastus-Lancer Knights that had finally broken the Iron Warriors cordon of Castellum Strongholds that guarded it. Even with their walls shattered, the grim Legionaries of the IVth would not retreat, raining their last supplies of grenades down upon the thallax who overwhelmed their position before they at last fell back. Their Warsmith, Kyr Vhalen, his body smashed, was finally dragged from the rubble by his apothecaries still spitting his hate and invective at the foe, as the towering figures of the dozen surviving battle-worthy Titans of the Legio Fureans loomed out of the black fog of war to seal the doom of the Terminus.

What followed was the simple mathematics of force. Against the massed firepower of the Tiger Eyes Titans, the Terminus could not stand. Armillus Dynat stood impassively atop the broken wreckage of his own Legion's Fellblades and looked on in silence as the Myrmidons of the Taghmata Satarael sundered the gates of the Panopticon and exterminated everything within without mercy. But of the surviving Iron Warriors that had retreated within, their wounded master, or of the Archmagos Suyria Nihhon whose domain this had been, there was no sign found save the echoing darkness below. To the Alpha Legion, however, such things did not have real importance, for their primary objective had been achieved; the Paramar Nexus had fallen and with it Paramar V belonged to the Warmaster, its stockpiles and industry intact.

The Devil is not Mocked

When news reached Horus of the conquest of Paramar V, it came not as a report of an unalloyed victory, but as a barbed gift. Swiftly

COMBATANT FORCES – INVASION OF PARAMAR 006.M31

REF: IST BATTLE OF PARAMAR (THE BATTLE OF PARAMAR NEXUS)

(*See also references: 2nd (008.M31) and 3rd (019.M31) Battles of Paramar)

Forces of the Imperium (Loyalist) – Paramar Nexus Mechanicum

- **Taghmata Paramar** – Paramar defensive garrison – various Mechanicum retainer forces approximate strength; 1 x armoured brigade (Autokratorii), 2 x Battle-automata cohorts, 4 x interceptor squadrons (Basilikon detachment), various Auxillia and Adsecularis* units equivalent to a Deka class heavy infantry regiment (approx. 5,000 alpha through gamma grade combatants)

*Note: Owing to environmental hostility, such units were confined to prepared and shielded positions.

- **Legio Gryphonicus** – Demi-legio (3 x Primaris maniples, 2 x Venetarii maniples), 1 x Secutarii regiment, 1 x Battle-automata Cohort, 2 x Vassal Questoris Households (House Coldshroud)
- **{Command}** Castellan-Archmagos Suyria Nihhon (Taghmata), Princes-Master Chartain Baldur (Legio Gryphonicus)

Forces of the Imperium (Loyalist) – Iron Warriors

- **77th Grand Battalion and reinforcing elements (formerly of the Therikon Suppression Taskforce)**: 2,800 Legiones Astartes of the Iron Warriors (approximate), Iron Warriors Legion Khalekaorus super-heavy tank company, 1 x demi-cohort of Battle-automata of Iron Warriors Legion indenture.
- **{Command}** Warsmith (Praetor) Kyr Vhalen

Forces of the Warmaster (Traitor) – Paramar Invasion Force

- **The Alpha Legion** – Unknown strike force size, upwards of 18,000 Legiones Astartes, committed to the Paramar Nexus attack, with extensive additional heavy support elements drawn from the Legion's armourium in evidence.
- **Legio Fureans** – Sub-Legio (estimated to comprise 8-10 maniples of various classes)
- **Taghmata Satarael** – Conquest and occupation force amalgamated from Mechanicum units loyal to the Warmaster. Estimated strength: armoured demi-regiment (Autokratorii), 4 x Thallaxii Cohort Pentex, 3 x Battle-automata cohorts (Skirnavac Covenant forces), 3 x Knight Questoris Households (Houses Perdaxia and Rajha)
- **{Command}** Harrowmaster Armillus Dynat (Alpha Legion), Archmagos Inar Satarael (Taghmata), Blood Princeps Nistru (Legio Fureans)

following on the heels of the news of the Alpha Legion's success came fresh entreaties for aid and reinforcement from the Traitor Mechanicum which now garrisoned it. The Alpha Legion had departed seemingly as swiftly as they had come, but not before taking what they had wished from Paramar's stockpiles for their own. The Taghmata Satarael protested it did not have the manpower alone to hold the system, and feared both revolt by the menials of their new possession, and attacks by escaped Loyalist elements which had not yet been found, notwithstanding any threat of a Loyalist counter-attack to reclaim the system. The Warmaster then was in turn forced to divert additional forces to Paramar to hold the system, forces which he had desired to use elsewhere, as having gained this great prize he could not afford for his enemies to regain it. This fear would be proved accurate as the system would see an attempted

counter-invasion two years later and further catastrophic warfare during the dark years of the Scouring.

As a further addendum to this account, there exists an entirely unsubstantiated report of Horus' barely suppressed fury with the Alpha Legion and their Primarch following the events at Paramar. He is said to have sent Alpharius a missive demanding an explanation for his actions. By this account the Primarch of the Alpha Legion offered a response in two parts: the first open, stating that he and his Legion had done all that had been asked of them to the letter of their order; they had been ordered to take Paramar, never to garrison it. The second was said to have been encrypted in the substance of the first, and took the form of an ancient Terran proverb in a tongue long millennia dead; "Malekava Nul Ky'a Jay" or in the modern form "The Devil is not Mocked".



"Nine. Nine attack waves we threw back shattered. Nine. Ours was the last Castellum to fall on the eastern side of the Terminus, the last. I take pride in that—for all the blood and the broken bodies, for all my dead brothers— pride. 'Iron Within and Iron Without,' we were true to our words.

It was glorious and terrible; it was everything battle should be, rendered down to a razor's edge and sliced into body and mind, the most glorious battle I have yet seen. They were so like us, our equals, and yet so different, those Alpha Legion bastards, those snakes. I cut them down and there was bitter joy in it, the joy of betrayal avenged. We knew nothing of what Horus or our own thrice-damned Primarch had done then, only that our so-called brothers—those azure-armoured liars and backstabbers—had turned on us and spat on the Imperium they had sworn to defend. They were trying to take Paramar for their own, and we could not allow that, no matter the cost, no matter the odds. We were doomed, every one of us knew it, but what did that matter? We were Iron Warriors. We do not relent.

It was like a scene from some myth of a world's ending; the Titans burned before us in pyres of atomic fire, the skies howled and crackled as the void shields were hammered from above. They came out of the billowing ash and dust like spectres, fast armour racing, speeders slicing the air like blades, and they hit us so hard the walls shook. But we took it, and dealt them death back, made them bleed for every assault they tried. But they were cunning, cunning and fast, they were pinpointing our killing zones, probing for weaknesses, we could see the game, it was one we were also adept at playing. We shifted our fire patterns, they adapted. They struck a breach and we turned it into a death-trap. Over and over, we matched, they countered; it was glorious as I say, glorious and ultimately futile. Our walls could not match their firepower; no fortress will ultimately stand against a superior force, given time any wall will fall if hammered long and hard enough, such is the first truth of siege warfare. And they were good; I'll give them that, almost as good as we. They had help of course, Taghmata; Mechanicum killing machines, scores of black and crimson clad Battle-automata, blast-shielded tanks with enhanced radiation weaponry, plasma mortars, strange articulated war engines wreathed in lightning the likes of which I have never before seen in five decades in the Legion's service. If their rams touched our walls, those walls fell; ferrocrete and ceramite came apart like sand before them. Such was the fate of each Castellum we had built in turn, and into the breaches the Traitor Mechanicum made, our once so-called brothers of the XXth Legion poured and made a bloody match with us.

We were alone, the last, but we still turned them back from our walls twice through sheer weight of fire and the precision of its use, and the last time, when our guns were all but empty by counter-charge, our iron against theirs and ours proved the stronger. I lost my left hand then, burned to cinders killing a Magos with a spear that blazed like a sun, but we threw them back one last time. There were only perhaps twenty of us then, twenty living Iron Warriors amidst a hundred of our fallen, far too few to hold our shattered walls against foes born of the same arts as we were.

There was no respite, they were in amongst us, out of the smoke, we could not keep them out. One of the Alphas killed the last of my squad, punched a power blade through his gorget before he could turn. I smashed him down in repayment, but even as my hammer shattered his helm and the skull beneath I could see it was over, they were everywhere, my fortress had fallen. That's when I keyed the seismic charges we'd planted even as we had built the walls we stood behind. Not just in my Castellum you understand, but in all of them on the east side of the Terminus. It was my responsibility, I was the last.

Why? It is as I have already said, we knew from the beginning we could not stand, but it did not matter, 'Iron Within, Iron Without'. We made them pay. My survival was... unexpected, but such is the genius of Tactical Dreadnought Armour, but attaining my freedom again... that proved... difficult. I knew the surface was death, but digging downwards through the rubble to the sub-surface vaults beneath the Terminus proved arduous for even an Iron Warrior, when missing a limb, suffering major organ failure and blood loss... How long? Nineteen days, eleven hours and forty-three minutes sidereal. Or so my own counting made it."

Excerpt from the Sworn Testimony of Veteran Sergeant Titus Avvon
Warden Officer, Castellum Stronghold Epsilon-V, Paramar Terminus
77th Grand Battalion, Iron Warriors Legion



PART V: VICTORY IS VENGEANCE

*'We have no room for hope. We plan and we act.
Hope is for dreamers and poets. We have our will
and our weapons, and we shall dictate our own fate.'*

Lord Corax,
Primarch of the Legio Astartes Raven Guard

THE RAVEN GUARD'S NINETY-EIGHT DAY
WAR FOR DELIVERANCE

**An account compiled from surviving
vox/pict records, and the testimony of
those who endured its trials**

In the aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre, all was anarchy and ruin on Isttvan V. Of those Space Marine Legions that had been betrayed to their deaths, those few who had survived knew despair and horror. Confronted with treachery of such scale and the terrible killing power ranged against them, each Legion reacted according to its own nature and demeanour. The Salamanders cast themselves wholesale into the searing crucible of war though confronted by unassailable odds, the majority never to return. The Iron Hands, driven beyond reason by the inconceivable spectacle of their Primarch, the Gorgon, beheaded by his own brother, were consumed by unreasoning hate. The Raven Guard, however, were different. Guided by their own nature, the

Raven Lord's legacy carried his remaining sons not towards the fire, but away from it to the shadows. Corax had survived, and this factor above all others was to be the salvation of his Legion.

Swiftly upon divining the merciless trap enclosing around the Loyalists at the dropsite, he ordered a general extraction of his Legion as soon as he had extricated himself from direct and bloody confrontation with his brother-Primarchs turned foes: Lorgar and Curze. Here the Raven Guard's longstanding arts of war, focused upon rapid manoeuvre and hit and run, made telling difference. Protocols long practised by the Raven Guard enabled a plan for a swift, fighting withdrawal to be enacted despite the havoc that engulfed them. Battle-cant rendezvous and emergency dispersal coordinates were code-burst across the Legion's command net by Corax, using phrases and idioms dating back to the Lycaean Uprising. Corax rightly suspected

his Legion's command and control net was compromised and this fact alone would save many of his Legionaries' lives.

As his Legion began its fight out of the killing zones, Corax went to the aid of a body of his sons cut off by a mass of Word Bearers. The Raven Lord himself was an umbra-clad storm of death, his eyes blazing wells of hatred, savage and merciless in his vengeance and yet not without purpose. He had lost one lightning claw in battle against his twisted kin, the Night Haunter, but where the other lashed out, his every blow cut an enemy Legionary to ragged shreds and cast steaming viscera on to the thirsting black sands, and when he took to the sky upon his black-pinioned flight pack, it was to descend once more to scythe down scores of Traitors and to rescue pockets of Loyalists who had been cut off and surrounded, falling like lightning on their attackers and allowing them to break out of the killing ground.

The Raven Lord's defiance and rage was not unreasoning, but channelled into a single purpose—to allow time for his sons to fight their way clear of the murderous anarchy of the Urgall Depression. Squad by squad, company by company, the Raven Guard disengaged from the Traitors, Legion reconnaissance squads using the general chaos to identify extraction routes and muster points in the wastes beyond. The sable-clad Moritats of the Legion stalked the battlefield too, seeing this dark hour as their time come to fulfil their direst purpose and find bloody redemption, falling upon enemies the recon squads could not circumvent, many selling their lives dearly so that the doom of their entire Legion might be averted. Less than an hour after the Traitors' great act of betrayal commenced and the massacre began in earnest, all who would escape the Urgall Depression alive were fighting their way through the enemy's rearguards and streaming through the hills, and those who could not reach them were now doomed. All that is apart from Corax himself, who was by now surrounded by many thousands of Traitors in the sea of carnage and fire at the centre of the cauldron of battle, ever shrinking in size at the centre of the dropsite. Though Corax had slain hundreds and could have killed hundreds more given leave, even one as mighty as a Primarch would in time have been overwhelmed by the sheer weight of numbers that pressed in from all quarters.

With hordes of Traitors closing in on the now isolated Corax and a storm of fire

scything through the air, a single Raven Guard Thunderhawk gunship successfully descended from the fire-streaked skies against the odds, and blasted a landing zone nearby the Primarch. Having boarded, Corax remained at the open assault ramp, and it is said his black eyes burned as he cursed the numberless hosts even as the gunship rose once more, the backblast of its rocket engines making a pyre for the betrayed dead that had fought to the last alongside their lord.

The Thunderhawk was commanded by the Legion's Master of Descent, Strike Captain Alvarex, the officer responsible for leading the Legion's planetary landings. Unwilling to countenance the loss of his Primarch, Alvarex had ordered his command Thunderhawk to negotiate the burning skies above the dropsite, whilst evading enemy fire that had brought dozens of other vessels plummeting to the corpse-strewn ground. Though the pilot's skill, determination and luck held for long enough to reach Corax and to ensure the Primarch was embarked, they could not hold forever. Inevitably, the sheer weight of fire directed at the Thunderhawk shredded its armoured skin, tore one wing clean off and ripped its cockpit canopy wide open, slaying both pilot and co-pilot in an instant. Wrestling with the ruined controls even as the cockpit burned around him, Strike Captain Alvarex fought to arrest the stricken gunship's terminal descent, turning what would have been a catastrophic crash into a controlled landing. Though most of the crew were slain and the Strike Captain badly wounded, the Primarch survived thanks to Alvarex Maun's dedication and sacrifice, the two rejoining the Legion as the sun finally set on that great day of betrayal.

The Night of Butchery

All that remains of the first night on Isstvan V is a scattering of fragmentary accounts, many of them entirely contradictory. Some survivors later spoke of tides of Traitors surging across the hills in a berserk frenzy, howling for the blood of the survivors. Others described a deep, sonorous chanting that rolled through the valleys like thunder and stirred dread in the hearts of those still loyal to the Emperor. Still other evidence shows bands of Traitors descending on isolated Loyalists and tearing them apart in an atavistic savagery, while circling gunships loosed fire indiscriminately, little caring of who they slew so long as it was not their own. How many battles raged throughout that night cannot be known, for every Legionary fought his own bitter war for survival.

Even as the main body of the foe harried the Raven Guard from behind, others fell upon them from above as they passed along the cracked ravines. Few Legionaries had any ammunition to spare, and so most of these battles were fought with fists and combat knives. When individual Raven Guard fell, their brothers made impossibly valiant attempts to rescue them from the howling, blood-maddened foe. Those who could walk bore those who could not, the withdrawal ever teetering on the edge of being overrun. But by the time the wan light of Isstvan V's sun appeared on the horizon, barely penetrating the tortured, smoke-stained skies, the bulk of the surviving Raven Guard had broken free of their pursuers, finding sanctuary in the maze-like ravines beyond the Urgall Hills, for a brief time at least.

As the Raven Guard were fighting alongside their Primarch, those Legionaries unable to escape the noose of the Traitor armies were being systematically butchered. As the tides of war receded, the Traitors stalked the battlefield, knee deep in the shattered bodies of their erstwhile kinsmen, seeking the dying that they might deliver death. Others sought out the wounded in order to perform abominable tortures upon their already ruined flesh. Some Traitor Legions piled their own dead on to great pyres so that their deaths might be honoured as the growing flames licked the blackened skies. The World Eaters are known to have performed one of the basest acts of savagery that day by butchering the dead and dying, decapitating them, flensing the flesh from their skulls and piling these in massive ossuary-cairns. The Word Bearers, following the teachings of their damned Primarch, enacted their own victory rituals, the terrible significance of which is now all too well known to us.

As if to heap infamy upon ignominy, the Traitors began another, still worse mutilation of the fallen. Tens of thousands of corpses had their Progenoid glands—the implant that bears the Space Marines' gene-seed by which the Legions themselves are propagated—torn bloodily from them, for what fell purpose few would dare speculate.

THE HEAVENS AFLAME

Even as the Raven Guard slipped their howling pursuers, yet another torment was visited upon the war-shattered surface of Isstvan V. The flaming hulks of those Loyalist war ships caught in the Traitors' ambush now began their inexorable and fatal descent. The vox-nets shrieked as if in pain, stuttering machine code and screaming

feedback interspersed with hopeless pleas for aid. The few Techmarines and Masters of Signal left in the Raven Lord's force fought in vain to establish a two-way link with the source. Soon however, the tortured, smoke-wreathed skies were lit orange by flickering conflagrations high above the clouds and the growl of stratospheric explosions rolled over the surface like distant thunder. From horizon to horizon, the clouds churned with unimaginable energies as Loyalist and Traitor alike paused to look upwards. Then the first fragment not incinerated by the fires of re-entry speared downwards, parting the clouds and smashing into the ground with a force equal to a planetary bombardment. The resulting explosion scoured a crater a hundred metres across and sent up a mushroom cloud tens of thousands of metres into the atmosphere. Moments later, searing debris rained down and a wave front of ashen smoke smothered all. It was the first of many hundreds of impacts that would fall upon the embattled planet's surface over the coming days, weeks and months, wreaking indiscriminate destruction upon Loyalist and Traitor alike.

With the wreckage falling from orbit overwhelming the vox-net with impenetrable interference and the choking debris drastically curtailing visibility, the Raven Guard pressed ever deeper into the cracked land beyond the Urgall Hills, a vast, broken region called the Illium Rifts. By dusk on that second day, little definite had been learned of the fate of the Iron Hands and the Salamanders, and so Corax was seen to pace the outer limits of the rifts, his gaze dark, his humours swinging violently between choler and melancholy. Several times he led his chosen warriors out into the hills in search of his lost Raven Guard sons, and any others of the Loyalist force who might survive yet. Several times he returned with Raven Guard Legionaries, having come upon them in the hills.

Signs of other survivors having broken free of the massacre at the Urgall Depression were found all about, many in the form of tracks terminating in the broken corpses of once proud warriors run to ground like cornered animals. Throughout the night, still more scattered bands of Raven Guard staggered into the refuge, many wounded almost beyond the ability to fight, in body and in mind. Of all the horrors they had witnessed, of all the hurts they had withstood during the wars of the Great Crusade, here was an entirely new phenomenon. The betrayal that had split the Legiones Astartes

THE NIGHT OF ASH

By the dawn of the third day, precious little of the Isstvan system's star's light could penetrate the black clouds that had settled upon the Urgall Depression and were steadily creeping outwards in every direction. The so-called Night of Ash was initiated by the sheer destruction unleashed during the hours of the Dropsite Massacre, and intensified as towering funerary pyres belched ever-thickening columns of churning black smoke into the heavens. For long days, a fine rain of ash drifted from the skies, a rain that was, quite literally, ashes in the mouths of the Loyalists, for it was made of the incinerated remains of their fallen kin.

The miasma cloaking the skies was made denser still by the countless tonnes of particulate matter cast upwards by the impact of so much space craft wreckage. The effect was not limited to reducing visibility or stymieing the potential for close air support for the Traitor search formations—for the hulks raining down upon the surface represented a further peril far beyond their sheer ballistic potential. In amongst the wreckage were reactors, fuel cells and other components constructed using esoteric technologies often pre-dating the Imperium and ill-understood by the Mechanicum. Soon, the most hazardous materials known to Mankind were seeded throughout the atmosphere and scattered across the blasted wastes. When at last the rains came, they were tainted by radiation and poison, as well as the psychic spoor left behind by the deaths of countless Navigators and Astropaths. The rains that followed the Night of Ash proved lethal to those not of the Legiones Astartes or otherwise warded from their effects by technological or biological means. Those few survivors of the Imperial Army left behind on the surface of Isstvan V had little chance against the hateful rain, most falling prey to its horrendous effects within days.

in twain had inflicted upon them a wound no other foe had ever struck—for the first time in the experience of any present, the vaunted spirit, wrought by the hand of the Emperor himself, was stretched unto breaking point.

SURVIVAL

Under the unheeded gaze of the vigilant Raven Guard, the Traitors' intent unfurled. Ultra-heavy transport barques descended from the still-churning skies upon columns of fire, disrupting the wounded atmosphere still further. The heaviest were large enough to embark the mighty Traitor Titans, while hundreds more would ferry the bulk of the Traitor Legions' line units into orbit and away to the next phase of the Warmaster's betrayal. Far-ranging Raven Guard reconnaissance squads spied upon the vast, extinct volcanoes to the west and north of the Warmaster's fortress that were now transformed into landing zones, hundreds of thousands of Legionaries and their serfs winding across the depression to embark. Corax demanded an accounting of their numbers and the recon units reported back that the bulk of each turncoat Legion was departing, but that each appeared to be leaving behind it a core of warriors, to what ends they could not determine. The only Legion not taking its leave was the World Eaters, who ranged the hills and the wastes beyond, ever seeking to run more survivors to ground and to add more flensed skulls to the growing ossuary-

cairns. Angron, it seemed, would not depart Isstvan V until the slaughter was complete.

Ruinous Venerations

Confronted with the stark reality of the strategic situation, the Raven Guard fell back upon battle doctrines and field craft instilled within them by their Primarch during the years preceding the Lycaean Uprising. Traitor death squads, in particular those of the World Eaters, scoured the hills and the wastes in increasing numbers in their hunt for survivors of the Dropsite Massacre. In response, Corax instigated a cunningly conceived series of diversionary attacks that drew Traitor hunters away from the gorges of the Illium Rifts in which the Raven Guard had taken refuge and led them away into the mountains and deserts to the north and south of the Urgall Depression. Raven Guard squads ranged far and wide in the course of these actions, sometimes returning with more survivors, more often with fresh wounds and fell accounts of the sights they had seen. The Traitor death squads were hunting down survivors as if engaging in sport, and enacting unspeakable tortures upon the bodies of those they ran to ground.

The return of one particular force brought with it dark tidings indeed. Having ambushed and destroyed a Sons of Horus death squad, the party came upon the Traitors' prey, a triad of Legionaries from the Raven Guard's 12th

Battalion. Yet the occasion was no cause for celebration, for the erstwhile prey turned upon their would-be rescuers with unreasoning savagery. Corax's sons were taken by surprise by their brothers' act and one was slain in the ensuing confrontation. At length, the maddened Legionaries were subdued, though not without both sides suffering still more grievous wounds. Even when restrained, the maddened Legionaries strained against their bonds and spat bitter curses at their rescuers, their black eyes pits of inexplicable fury.

Soon enough, the phenomenon was repeated. A number of Legionaries who had once served in the Librarius but upon the proclamation of the Edict of Nikaea had renounced their roles as warrior-psykers and joined the line companies, approached their Primarch with their suspicions. Even without consciously engaging their psychic skills, each had detected a slow but inexorable build-up of psionic pressure. At first, they had taken the effect for a manifestation of so much violent choler unleashed in such a concentrated period and location during the Dropsite Massacre. Yet, as the days wore on, it had become increasingly apparent that something far darker and contrary to reason was occurring. The Primarch, however, was already aware of the phenomenon, though he

kept his own counsel as to the true extent of his knowledge. It was the work of the World Eaters, and represented yet another sign of just how far the Traitors had fallen.

All across the Urgall Depression and beyond, the World Eaters were raising ever taller pyramids of flensed skulls. At first they appeared random in form and function, though redolent of the death-fanes and ossuary-temples cast down on the most savage of human worlds during the Great Crusade. The act of gathering the skulls of the fallen, flensing them and piling them into vast pyramids all across the Urgall Depression and ever further into the hills was revealed as some form of rite of victory. Somehow, this rite was proving to be the source of the madness that had afflicted the rescued Raven Guard and many others who tarried overlong in the shadow of the monuments. Some manner of psychic resonance was pulsing outwards from the vile monuments, filling those it touched with anger and bloodlust.

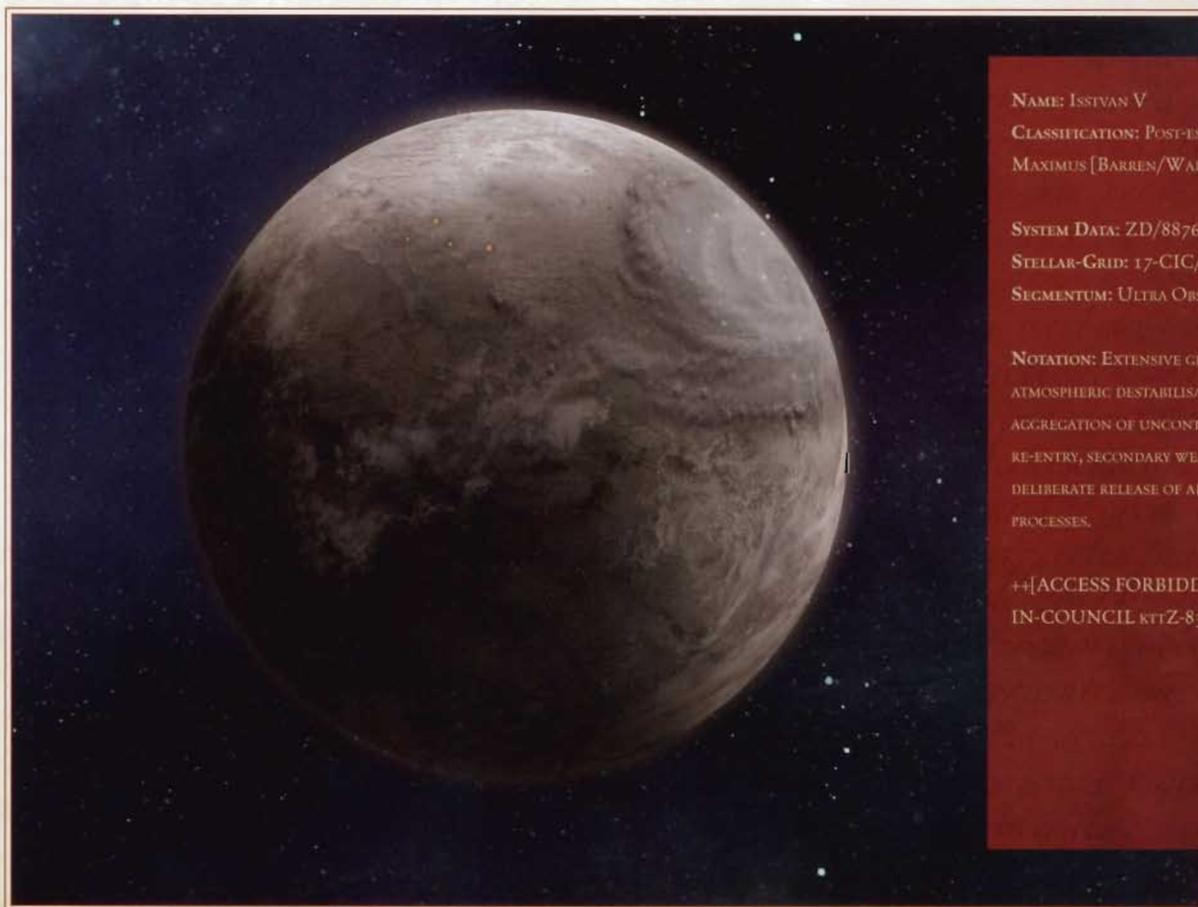
Later on, Raven Guard reconnaissance squads would witness their erstwhile allies performing savage victory rituals about the monuments, confirming to many that the sons of Angron remained at heart no more than bloodthirsty primitives. Others saw

in the rituals something far darker still, something spawned long ago in the darkness of Old Night.

It would be several years until the true nature of the phenomenon was revealed, their Primarch may have known more, the Raven Guard being blissfully ignorant of such things at that time, though even then it was obvious that some agency beyond the natural order of reality was abroad. Keeping his own counsel on the matter, the Primarch ordered a series of attacks against a small, select number of these vile structures, strike forces of chosen warriors planting melta bombs at their bases. The resulting detonations brought the targets crashing down in cleansing flames, the fell effect they exerted on the surrounding regions lessened, though it never entirely relented.

Consolidation

As the battles wore on, the Primarch reorganised his Legion, forging it anew into something resembling less the brutalised victims of the Warmaster's betrayal and more a band of warriors determined to survive, or to sell their lives dearly in the attempt. Raven Guard strike forces launched a series of cautious, yet bold attacks against Traitor death squads isolated from the greater mass of the enemy, winning numerous small but



NAME: ISSIVAN V
CLASSIFICATION: POST-ESCHATOLOGICA GRADE
MAXIMUS [BARREN/WAR ZONE]
SYSTEM DATA: ZD/8876//KHΣ
STELLAR-GRID: 17-CIC/LC-26
SEGMENTUM: ULTRA OBSCURUS
NOTATION: EXTENSIVE GEOLOGICAL AND
ATMOSPHERIC DESTABILISATION CAUSED BY
AGGREGATION OF UNCONTROLLED STARSHIP WRECKAGE
RE-ENTRY, SECONDARY WEAPONS EFFECTS AND
DELIBERATE RELEASE OF APEX STAGE ATMOS-PIHAGE
PROCESSES.
+[ACCESS FORBIDDEN UNDER ORDER-
IN-COUNCIL KTTZ-838437340]+++

++ TRAITOR LANDING FACILITIES ++

++ EXTINGUISHED VOLCANO CHAIN ++

++ LERGHAN RIDGE LINE ++

++ TOR VENCHIS ++

++ TRAITOR FORTIFICATIONS ++

++ LOYALIST RETRIBUTION FORCE DROPSITE ++

KEY



DAY 0
PRIMARY BREAKOUT
AND EXFILTRATION PHASE



DAY 1-20
INITIAL ESCAPE
AND EVASION PHASE



DAY 21-40
RETRIBUTION OPERATIONS



DAY 41-97
WITHDRAWAL PHASE



DAY 98
DELIVERANCE



SONS OF HORUS



NIGHT LORDS



IRON WARRIORS



WORD BEARERS



WORLD EATERS

++ SOUTHERN URGALL HILLS ++

++ UNCATALOGUED XENOS STRUCTURES ++

++ NORTHERN URGALL HILLS ++

++ URGALL DEPRESSION ++

++ ILLIUM RIFTS ++

++ EDGE OF GULAR
SALT PLAINS ++

+URGALL DEPRESSION+

++LEGIONES ASTARTES RAVEN GUARD++

++ESCAPE/ EVADE/RETRIBUTION/DELIVERANCE++

++ORBITAL PICT-CAPTURE/CIRCA 601.006.M31++

bitterly fought battles out in the wastes. Many of these confrontations were fought with combat knives or improvised weapons; the objective to slay the foe and carry away what supplies could be scavenged from their bodies. In time, ammunition stocks were replenished to such a degree that more overt assaults could be launched, and it was as small groups of Raven Guard pushed ever deeper into the Traitor-haunted lands about the Urgall Depression that a grim discovery indeed was made.

From a distance it appeared as if a jagged forest had sprung up along the crest of the Urgall Hills. Upon closer inspection, hundreds, even thousands of iron spikes and columns were found, driven into the black volcanic ground. Atop each was mounted the body, or body part, of a Loyalist Space Marine. Most had been executed while others lived on still, the superhuman physiology of the Legiones Astartes holding death at bay despite being eviscerated, impaled, dismembered and exsanguinated or having a hundred other, equally cruel and darkly inventive injuries inflicted upon them. It was to the eyes of the Loyalist onlookers as if some plague of insanity had spread through their former brothers; that alongside treachery as terrible as it was, something of horror and madness unlooked for and inhuman had taken root. Here was the fate that the Traitors would inflict upon every Loyalist not slain in the cauldron of the Dropsite Massacre. Here, the Raven Guard recognised, was the fate the Warmaster would visit upon all those who refused to bow before him, even should every human world drown in blood.

In the east, a force of Raven Guard scouts came upon a vast and hidden underground complex akin to the alien ruins which the Traitors had used as their dread fastness. With this discovery the Raven Guard had their sanctuary, and operations to relocate began within hours. The move could not have been more propitiously timed, for as the last of the Raven Guard moved out, the night skies far to the west filled with the fires of massed retro jets. A vast flotilla of vessels was landing in the calderas of the extinct volcanoes over the western horizon, a flotilla belonging to the Warmaster's Traitor Mechanicum allies.

RECLAMATION

If the transport barques that had delivered the Traitors from the surface of Istsvan V in the aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre were epic in scale, the Mechanicum vessels now

lowering themselves tortuously through the air were more vast still. From the cavernous holds of these gargantuan vessels marched a cohort of traitor Mechanicum tech-helots, and thousands upon thousands of servitors and tech-thralls were driven forth towards the wreckage-strewn Urgall Depression. The Warmaster's renegade Tech-Priests were beginning a reclamation operation of staggering scale, one that would grant the Warmaster an immediate advantage in supply and matériel. The entire depression was strewn with equipment of incredible military worth—even those vehicles and other items damaged beyond repair still of enormous value as salvage. The wrecks of hundreds of super-heavy tanks still smouldered there, while the toppled forms of once mighty Titans were testament to the sheer destruction unleashed in the few hours of the Dropsite Massacre. The ground was carpeted by the remains of hundreds of thousands of slain Space Marines, each of whom bore full Legiones Astartes battle plate and carried weapons and other items of equipment representing the very pinnacle of human technological achievement. Within hours, the flickering glow of plasma cutters was to be seen all across the depression as reclamation parties began their grim harvest.

The operation would continue for many weeks, pushing outwards across the depression until, at length, only the worthless detritus of war remained. Even weeks after the Dropsite Massacre, still-living bodies would be discovered in amongst the thousands of dead, the gene-enhanced physiology of the Legiones Astartes able to enter a state of suspended animation in which the body might heal from the most horrendous of wounds in time. Some Traitors, most notably elements of the Word Bearers and Emperor's Children—in whom it seemed the dark madness of nightmare had truly awakened, but whose true cause was not yet suspected by outsiders—took cruel delight when these were discovered; sometimes administering alchemical preparations to awaken them, only to torture and execute the unfortunate victims, exacting upon them what amounted to a second death. The sons of the Raven did what they could to disrupt the work of these reclamation parties, even while seeking to avoid their own capture and tortuous end. Dozens of Tech-Priest overseers fell; victim to the silenced sniper rounds of Legion Seekers determined to exact vengeance for the dark crimes witnessed through their targeting scopes, or found explosives booby-trapped to their would-be prizes of salvage. But

ultimately, such counter-attacks were mere pin pricks to the vast scavenging effort the Traitors had undertaken.

The Hunters

Around the twentieth day after the Dropsite Massacre, the Legion's fight for survival entered a new and bitter phase. By this point, the Traitors were aware that a significant force of Loyalists survived yet and had made a number of attempts to bring them to battle. Lord Corax, however, was not to be drawn into an open confrontation his forces had no chance of winning. Instead, he executed a series of strikes designed to divert and disrupt the enemy's operations and challenge their domination of the wastes surrounding the Urgall Depression.

The greater number of Traitors left behind to scour the world belonged to the World Eaters Legion, led by their savage Primarch Angron. Despite the Loyalists' actions, the World Eaters rarely split their forces, instead scouring the depression and the wastes beyond in a vast and ravaging mass, their war cries audible for many kilometres all about. The other, smaller, Traitor Legion contingents deployed differently, however, leading the Raven Guard to the conclusion that those left behind on Istsvan V were some sort of punishment detail or else represented elements of the Traitor Legion their Primarch had decided to keep apart from the bulk of their forces. This hypothesis was further evidenced as a number of these remaining Traitor contingents were revealed to be fractious and ill-disciplined, the glory and nobility of the Emperor's Great Crusade apparently forgotten to them. The Sons of Horus were often encountered in small bands of hunters, most accompanied by cyber-mastiffs able to detect the proximity of even the stealthiest of Raven Guard warriors and to track them across many kilometres. The Word Bearers by comparison followed their own agenda, their actions driven by their own unknowable ritualistic dogma and often staying clear even of their own supposed allies—perhaps because these actions would have prompted too many questions they would prefer not to answer of their 'brothers-in-arms'. The Iron Warriors contingent, smaller but well provided for in terms of heavy vehicles and war machinery, scoured the wastes in compact armoured columns, the largest three of which presented Corax with the opportunity he had been seeking.

The Raven Lord's campaign against the Iron Warriors armoured columns was to span

several weeks and heralded some of the most intense fighting prior to the very final battles on Isstvan V. Initial operations saw Raven Guard squads shadow the enemy as they scoured the hills, gathering intelligence on the Iron Warriors' strengths and weaknesses. The sons of Perturabo appeared not to be following any particular search doctrine, or at least that its officers were perhaps competing with rather than aiding each other. It was therefore a relatively simple matter for the disciplined Raven Guard to ascertain the Iron Warriors' strength and to isolate them at a time and place of their choosing. Each of the three largest columns consisted of several dozen armoured vehicles, at least half of which were transport vehicles such as Rhinos and Land Raiders carrying a substantial infantry element. The remainder were Predator battle tanks and Thunderstrike heavy artillery tanks, a class of war machine highly favoured by the Iron Warriors. Of greater concern to the Raven Guard scouts were the squadrons of Scimitar jetbikes ranging ahead of the columns in their ceaseless hunt for Loyalist survivors. On several occasions, Raven Guard scouts were spotted as they shadowed the columns and many paid the ultimate price for the knowledge they gleaned.

Eventually, the Raven Lord had gathered the information he needed and so he mustered an ambush force to the north of the Urgall Depression. His target was the smallest of the three Iron Warriors armoured columns, against which he intended to test the Traitors' capacity and will to fight. The attack was launched in the hours before sunrise, such as it was, as the Traitors prepared to move out from their laager. Surprise was total, for in their arrogance the Traitors had not anticipated facing organised Loyalists. Before the enemy could even muster a response, the first wave of Raven Guard assault squads, led by the Primarch, were in amongst the Iron Warriors' positions and slaughtering their foe with cold, precise abandon. The battle could not have lasted even an hour before the Primarch ordered his warriors to withdraw, for Traitor reinforcements were inbound and the Raven Lord's primary objective had been attained.

When Corax and his warriors withdrew, they left behind the corpses of several hundred Traitors and the guttering hulks of dozens of vehicles. Militarily, the battle paled into insignificance compared to the losses the Traitors had inflicted upon the Loyalists at the Dropsite Massacre and afterwards. In terms of morale, however, it could not have

been more important. The Raven Guard had struck a meaningful blow against the Traitors, and even if every son of Corax eventually died on the blasted surface of Isstvan V, they would do so vindicated and with honour.

History records an additional footnote to this battle. As the Raven Guard melted into the shadows, a deep, atonal dirge was heard to echo across the wastes. Corax and several of the Mor Deythan watched the rear as the main body withdrew. The sound was repeated, much closer this time, and a beam of red light stabbed through the gloomy morning mist. At the last, the Raven Guard witnessed a phalanx of walkers making for the site of the battle, their form unfamiliar but clearly the product of some esoteric discipline practised by the Warmaster's Traitor Mechanicum allies. This was the first recorded sighting of the war engines that would come to be known as the 'blind-hunters', a class of mechanical automaton possessed of a dark intelligence and a fearsome array of weaponry, and intended to hunt down every last survivor left upon the surface of Isstvan V. Their very existence and presence on the planet at that juncture was further evidence of the staggering scope and scale of the Warmaster's treachery.

The Fallen Crusader

The Raven Guard had but days to consolidate after their victory before another Iron Warriors armoured column was reported pressing eastwards across the wastes, winding its way into the twisting ravines of the Illium Rifts. Lord Corax ordered an immediate and overwhelming attack, forging the ire of his warriors into a weapon no Traitor could stand against. The Primarch mustered his assault formations and led his force out into the ravines, his expression making it clear to all he had bloodshed on his mind.

The battle that ensued took place in the abyssal darkness of the ravines and was as bitterly fought as any boarding action or hive scouring the Legion had ever undertaken. The lead squads of both sides ground into one another as they fought hand-to-hand across a frontage often as narrow as a single warrior. Soon, the deep gorges were choked with the dead and the dying of both sides, forcing Legionaries to step over the writhing forms of their brothers in the effort to engage the foe. The Primarch was ever to be found at the heart of the fight, while the jump pack-equipped units made wide outflanking manoeuvres so that the Iron Warriors were cut off, attacked from multiple

directions with no hope of retreat. The sons of Perturabo might have been traitors and turncoats, but they fought with all the determination of the Legiones Astartes, made all the more concentrated by the knowledge that they were doomed. The Iron Warriors fought without thought or expectation of quarter, their manner bitter, cold and inexorable, each Legionary having accepted the fact of his death long ago and caring not for the specifics of the time and place of its coming. The Iron Warriors gave not an inch even as their dead choked the gullies.

At length, the Traitors were reduced to a single mass concentrated into a deep crater, the Raven Guard pressing in from four separate gullies. Though less than a hundred Iron Warriors remained, they were bolstered by the presence of a dozen Dreadnoughts of varying patterns. The Raven Guard slowed their advance, knowing that to press further was to crash against the solid ring of ceramite and steel formed by the towering Iron Warriors Dreadnoughts. Visual recordings from the Raven Guards' visors show that as the tide of battle receded for the first time in hours, the surviving sons of Perturabo mustered in silence while the grim-faced Raven Guard stepped back towards the shadowed gullies. From the Loyalists' midst strode the Raven Lord, his expression unreadable but his void-black eyes fixed upon the nearest of the enemy war engines, an ancient Contemptor class Dreadnought, its power claws encrusted with the dried blood of all those it had slain since the day of betrayal. A single word passed between them, the Primarch speaking the name of the Iron Warriors veteran within the Contemptor, evidence that the two must have fought alongside one another during the Great Crusade. This curse spoken, the two squared off against one another in the manner of pit fighters preparing to fight to the death for some master lusting for blood.

The visor-recordings which show this battle were barely able to register the speed and violence of what was to happen next; the Primarch leaping high into the air and coming to land atop the Dreadnought's back in a flickering dark blur. Even as the serrated blades of the Contemptor's power claws sought in vain to grapple the Primarch, Corax used one hand to steady himself on an exhaust stack, while plunging the other through the Dreadnought's ceramite armour. In utter silence, the Raven Lord withdrew his arm to hold aloft the armoured brain case and trailing spinal column of the veteran

Iron Warriors Legionary who had been interred within the sarcophagus. A moment later, the Contemtor's systems disengaged and the once-mighty war engine collapsed, the Primarch leaping clear before it hit the ground. This was the signal to attack.

The Raven Guard leapt from the dark to fall upon the beleaguered Iron Warriors. The two forces crashed together, the Primarch engaging several more Dreadnoughts as his assault squads cut into the enemy Legionaries. Though dozens more Raven Guard warriors gave their lives to defeat the last of the enemy, not a single Iron Warriors Legionary was allowed to escape, and in truth none attempted to do so, each

fighting to the bitter end. Eventually, silence descended upon the scene, the rocky floor of the crater carpeted in the broken bodies of over a hundred Iron Warriors and not a small number of Raven Guard. In amongst the wreckage were the ruined, smoking hulks of a dozen Dreadnoughts, the remains of the once-mighty heroes interred within cast to the bloody ground by the vengeful Primarch of the Raven Guard. His contempt for the scope of their fall from grace was writ across his grim visage.

With a nod, the Raven Lord gave the order for his force to withdraw, the dead left in their wake a powerful message to the Traitors. It would not be the last of its kind.

Into the Rifts

As the shadow play of resistance and search, hard-fought ambush and flight wore on, the presence of increased numbers of Word Bearers within the Illium Rifts made it apparent that the Traitors were pushing their hunt for survivors ever further outwards, once again threatening the safety of the Legion's sanctuary. Soon, Raven Guard sentinels spied enemy units guided by baying cyber-mastiffs approaching dangerously close to their sanctuary. Steps were taken to move the Legion's wounded, as well as its meagre stores and limited command facilities ever deeper into the mighty chain of caverns deep beneath the rifts.



The further the Raven Guard pressed into the stygian darkness, the more apparent the alien nature of the tunnels became. At length, the Raven Guard took refuge in a vast hall, its floor, walls and vaulted ceiling cast from some ultra-dense compound even the most learned of their Techmarines could not identify. The material itself appeared to have a deadening effect on a wide band of electromagnetic radiation. Furthermore, the construction seemed to be exerting an influence on the psionic level too, serving to nullify or shroud psychic effects. It cannot be determined if this contributed to the Traitors' inability to locate the Loyalists' refuge using technological or psionic means, but many claim it must have done so, for the Traitors

scouring the lands above never discovered it using these methods, despite passing within metres of the entrances on several occasions.

One particular group was not searching using any subtle or esoteric method the alien-constructed refuge might be able to neutralise. The third armoured column of the Iron Warriors was forging eastwards, crushing all it encountered in its ceaseless hunt. The Traitors force was set on a course that would take it directly past a number of the hidden entrances to the refuge, and it was judged a certainty that the Iron Warriors might discover, by dogged search or blind chance, what their fellow Traitors had failed to locate by more subtle means.

Faced with the likelihood of imminent discovery, the Raven Lord mustered all available warriors and moved silently, but rapidly out into the wastes. The Iron Warriors column consisted of dozens of vehicles of numerous classes, the hulls of its Rhinos, Land Raiders and Predators bristling now with iron spikes, atop which were mounted the grisly trophies of the Traitors' hunt.

The Raven Guard committed every available warrior to the assault, sweeping in upon the Traitors with hatred welling in their hearts. The Iron Warriors responded with the implacable ferocity for which they were so well known and the combat devolved into a





bitter, gruelling contest from which only one side could emerge. While the Iron Warriors fell back upon ingrained doctrines, the Raven Guard appear to have fallen victim to a lessening in their own, well-known precision and discipline. Some even claim that, in the corpse-choked ravines of Isstvan V, with the sons of Perturabo closing upon their final redoubt, the Raven Guard reverted to a form of war that pre-dated the coming of their Primarch. For a brief moment, it was as if the XIXth Legion of old was resurgent, its long-suppressed bloody-handedness wresting control of its descendents at what might well have proved the moment of their extinction.

But that dark fate was not to be, Lord Corax spurning his warriors at the height of the battle and forging his own path through the carnage, as he is held to have done at times during the bloody years of the Lycaean Uprising. Even as his sons fought on, mired in the blood of friend and foe alike, the Raven Lord plunged into the cauldron of war alone, his black armoured form transformed into a penumbral phantom as his single lightning claw lashed out in great, thirsty sweeps. Fuelled by the power imbued within his every cell by the genius of the Emperor, the Primarch of the Raven Guard was an arc of black lightning grounding itself in the iron-clad bodies of the Traitors, his movements rendered perceivable only

by the spray of atomised blood that cast the poisoned air crimson. No being save another Primarch could hope to stand against such a force. The third and final portion of the Iron Warriors Legion left behind to scour Isstvan V of Loyalists was utterly destroyed, and while others of their kin remained in the Urgall Hills manning their fortifications, as a coherent force of aggression the sons of Perturabo were spent.

In the aftermath of the destruction of the third armoured column, the Raven Guard returned to their sanctuary in silence, none willing to speak of the atavism that had risen unbidden within each. Even as the Raven Guard marched wearily back towards their sanctuary, the harrowing-horns of the Traitor Mechanicum's blind-hunters echoed out across the cracked wastes, and black storm clouds gathered in the grey skies overhead. At the last, the clouds broke and black-tainted rain fell upon the blood-crustured surface of Isstvan V.

The Raven Lord Alone

The black rains lashing the wastes enforced a temporary cessation in hostilities, the Traitors pulling back from their grim hunt and the Raven Guard taking the opportunity to consolidate in their sanctuary. For several days, the Legion's officers reconstituted and reorganised while the apothecaries tended

to wounds long neglected in the midst of constant war. At the height of the rains, Lord Corax once again took his leave of his sons, heading out alone into the rain-blasted gullies without a word of explanation. Those Legionaries who knew their Primarch of old counselled the others to fret not, for it was well within the Raven Lord's demeanour to act alone in such circumstances, utilising his unique Emperor-gifted abilities to pass unseen where few others could.

History does not record where the dark-eyed Primarch walked, nor what grim sights he bore witness to during the day and night he went alone across the wastes. Fragmentary accounts compiled much later based on his conversations with the Primarch Rogal Dorn hint that Corax penetrated deep into Traitor-held territory, perhaps even treading the corpse-carpeted Urgall Depression itself. When at last the Primarch returned, he convened a council of his most trusted senior commanders and while the words that passed between them go unrecorded, the Primarch's intent remains unequivocal. The Raven Guard must survive, he ordained. Not simply to preserve the Imperium's might, although that must surely have been a consideration. Rather, while but a single Raven Guard continued to fight, no Traitor could rest without fear that justice would be visited upon him.

The Sundered Legion

Records show that in the aftermath of the long contaminated rainfall, a dense, stinging fog reeking of chemical-rich blood rose from the broken ground to blanket hundreds of square kilometres. This all-pervading taint of death, which can be said perhaps in retrospect to have some Warp taint infecting it thanks to the Word Bearers Legion's dark ministrations, took its toll on many of the Raven Guard, stretching the sanity of many ever further towards breaking point. As Legiones Astartes, not a single Space Marine would surrender to cowardice or weakness of will, yet the apocalyptic slaughter and the cumulative effect of weeks of fighting, combined with little or no rest or sustenance and the need to wreak bloody vengeance upon the heads of the Traitors caused many to descend into a twilight existence somewhere between exhaustion and rage, denial and dejection. Under such relentless pressure, even a Space Marine takes on a haggard cast, the already pale, hollow-eyed Raven Guard coming to appear as armoured vagabonds, their battle plate a haphazard amalgamation of replacement parts scavenged from the dead of any and all Legions present on Isstvan V.

At some point around the fortieth day after the Dropsite Massacre, a large force of Word Bearers, under the command of the war-leader Elexis, penetrated the ravines to the north of the Raven Guard Legion's sanctuary. Elexis had discerned that the Raven Guard his forces had encountered earlier were a part of a far larger force, and he was determined to claim their heads for himself. It is noteworthy that Elexis appears to have withheld his suspicions from other Traitor factions, in particular the World Eaters, whose Primarch Angron still scoured the far wastes in search of one or both of his lost brothers. Had he done so, there is little doubt the Traitors' assault would have been a direct and brutal one, far from the cunning infiltration from an unanticipated quarter that was in the event launched.

On this occasion, the Raven Guard did not launch an all-out attack to repel the infiltration. Instead, the Word Bearers were allowed to penetrate many kilometres into the ravines and the twisting gullies while the Raven Guard watched on from the shadows, allowing the Word Bearers to pass by as other units feigned retreat in the face of the Traitors' advance.

Eventually, the trap was set and the Raven Guard launched their ambush. At a stroke,

dozens of separate Word Bearers units were engaged, none of them able to lend aid to their brothers. The aim of the ambush was twofold: in addition to cutting down hundreds of the hated foe, the Raven Guard were able to capture several of the Traitors, though all but one were able to take their own lives before they could be subdued.

The sole remaining Traitor was brought before Lord Corax, a circle of Raven Guard forming about the base of the ancient crater where the Traitor was cast as the skies were split by unnatural lightning and the black rains came down once more. The Raven Lord brought himself to his full height, visibly casting off the shadows in which he was habitually clad and unveiling the true and terrible splendour of a Primarch roused to anger. Even the Raven Lord's loyal sons were struck dumb by primal awe, as lower tier predators are cowed into abject submission when confronted by an apex hunter. The effect on the Traitor was still more pronounced, the Word Bearer was forced downwards as if by some supernatural weight, prostrating himself upon the rain-slick rock before the sheer majesty of the Primarch. Despite his submission, the Traitor's expression burned with unquenchable hatred, a sight that would become all too familiar to us in the coming age of darkness.

None would later speak of the manner in which the Primarch and his officers questioned the Traitor, nor of the nature of the death he was afforded at the last. Soon after though, a stream of orders were disseminated through the Legion and from these certain facts have been pieced together. It was confirmed that Angron was the only Traitor Primarch who had remained on Isstvan V and that his World Eaters represented the only Legion still deployed in full strength, the remainder having left behind only limited contingents to hunt down the last remaining Loyalists. Perhaps the most vital information extracted from the Traitor was that Angron was aware that Corax lived yet, and was intent upon scouring the entire Illium Rifts in order to bring him to battle. A massive assault was being prepared, one that the Word Bearers commander Elexis had attempted to pre-empt for his own glory, and failed.

Forewarned of the imminent attack, the Raven Guard made immediate preparations to relocate once more. There were many amongst the ranks of the Raven Guard who objected to what they regarded as

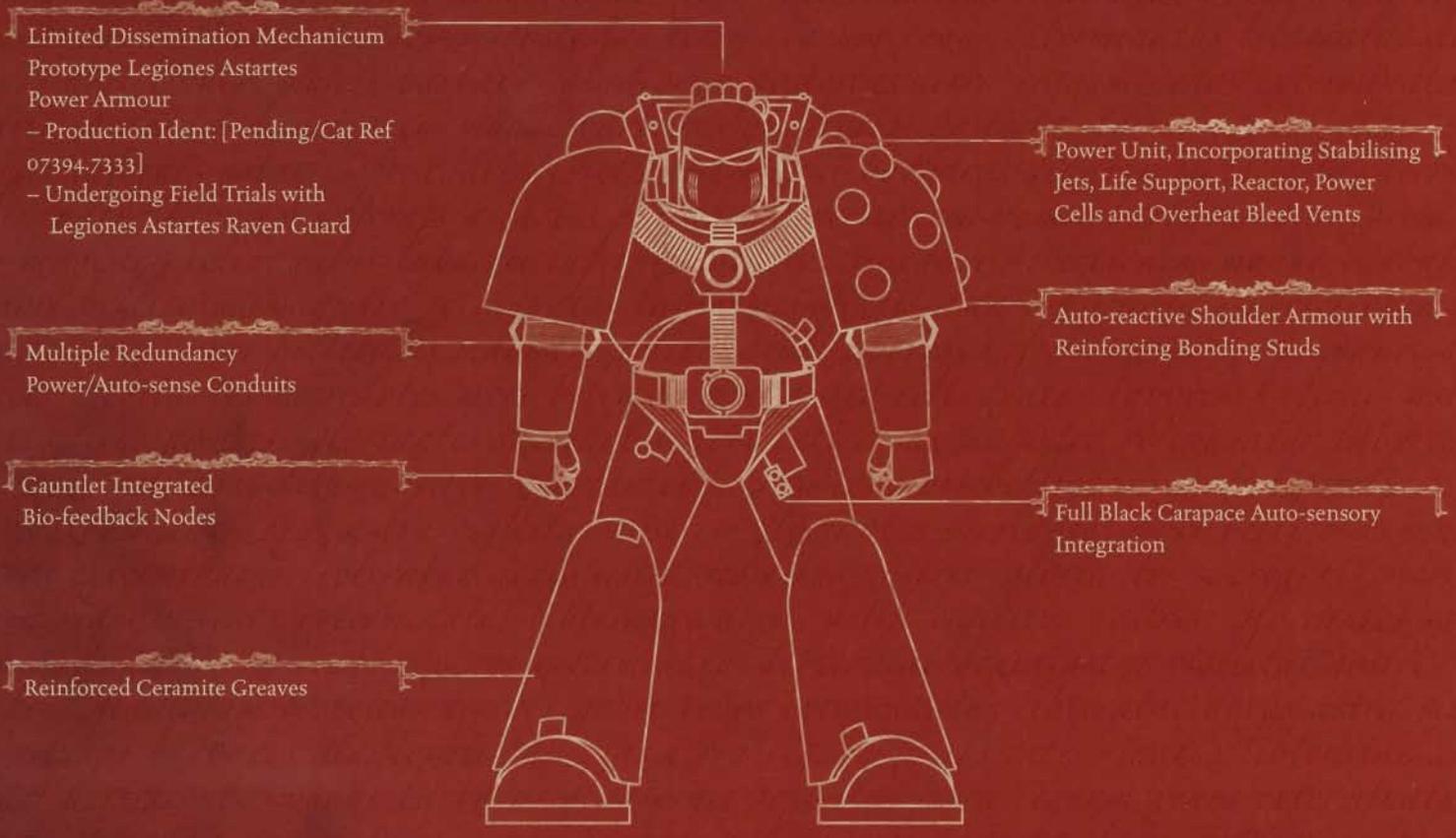
retreat. These fatalists spoke out in favour of defending the subterranean refuge, or making a bold last stand if defence was impossible. The line officers quelled such opinions the instant they were voiced, but it was inevitable that the Legion's upper echelon officers and the Primarch himself should hear of them. When this happened, the reaction was curt and uncompromising. The Raven Guard would live and die at the word of the Primarch alone. If the end was to come, it would be at a time and place of his choosing, and none other.

The evacuation of the sanctuary could not have been timed more fortuitously, for even as the Raven Guard's rearguard units cast a final glance westwards over their shoulders, they spied its demise. A cohort of blind-hunters was closing in on the hidden main entrance, the baleful dirge of their harrowing-horns blasting out across the wastes. In the wake of the fell war machines came a great mass of Legiones Astartes, the white and blue livery of the World Eaters easily visible against the grey sky and black ground. At the last, Corax himself joined the rearguard and watched silently as the land was swallowed in a mass of explosions, the savage sons of Angron setting the region aflame in their anger at having discovered their prey had escaped them yet again.

THE FINAL DAYS

In the aftermath of the evacuation of the sanctuary, the Raven Guard Legion's fight for survival and vengeance entered still another phase. Where before the Legion had been able to exert some control over their fate, albeit one that could not be maintained forever, now they were the victims of circumstance once more. The Raven Guard numbered even fewer warriors than they had in the immediate aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre, eighty days and more of continuous battle and hardship having claimed hundreds more. Many of the most severely wounded Legionaries evacuated from the sanctuary had taken their own lives so that their brethren might not be burdened by them, despite the efforts and protestations of their kin. With this a deep melancholy settled upon the Raven Guard, who had never been an ebullient kindred even at the height of victory. Individual Legionaries became sullen and withdrawn as a grim acceptance of the inevitable took hold. Though the Raven Guard Legion fought on against any and all Traitors it encountered, many fought because the only alternative was to die, not because they cleaved to any hope of eventual victory.

LEGIONES ASTARTES SEEKER WARGEAR LATE CRUSADE ERA



Limited Dissemination Mechanicum
 Prototype Legiones Astartes
 Power Armour
 – Production Ident: [Pending/Cat Ref
 07394.7333]
 – Undergoing Field Trials with
 Legiones Astartes Raven Guard

Power Unit, Incorporating Stabilising
 Jets, Life Support, Reactor, Power
 Cells and Overheat Bleed Vents

Multiple Redundancy
 Power/Auto-sense Conduits

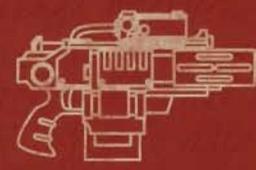
Auto-reactive Shoulder Armour with
 Reinforcing Bonding Studs

Gauntlet Integrated
 Bio-feedback Nodes

Full Black Carapace Auto-sensory
 Integration

Reinforced Ceramite Greaves

Tigris Pattern Boltgun
 – Multi-spectrum Targeter
 – Auto-sense Integration Node
 – Special Issue Ammunition Selector
 [Kraken, Scorpius & Tempest]



Tigris Pattern Combi-melta
 – Seeker Issue
 – Contingency Anti-armor/
 Fortification

Tigris Pattern Combi-plasma
 – Seeker Issue
 – Contingency Anti-heavy Infantry/
 Light Vehicle



Tigris Pattern Combi-flamer
 – Seeker Issue
 – Contingency Anti-armor/
 Fortification

Tigris Pattern Bolt Pistol
 – Standard Issue Side Arm
 – Elevated Ammunition Issue



Ryza 'Sunspite' Pattern Plasma Pistol
 – Strike Leader Individual
 Requisition

MkV-c 'Krak'
 Shaped-charge Grenade



MkXIX Lucifer Pattern
 'Melta-bomb' Thermic Charge

MkII 'Frag' Fragmentation Grenade

The fighting was continuous. The only difference was that now the Legion had no refuge other than the twisting ravines of the Illium Rifts, and it soon became apparent that there was scant chance of locating another refuge, for the World Eaters and the Mechanicum's blind-hunters were relentless in their efforts to bring the Raven Guard to battle. Though they remained one step ahead, the Raven Guard were rarely afforded the time needed to properly reconnoitre the path ahead or to formulate a strategy to counter the Traitors' incessant attacks. Try as they might, the Raven Guard could not wrest the initiative from the Traitors, a situation entirely anathema to them. Step by step, the Raven Guard were being pressed ever eastwards. Inevitably, they would eventually be driven into the trackless, inhospitable Gular Salt Plains, an uncharted land even the superhuman physiology of the Legiones Astartes could not withstand over-long.

The Beginning of the End

As these battles raged, the western skies flickered stark white as the Traitor Mechanicum incinerated the regions they had cleared of salvageable matériel. Explosion after explosion consumed the horizon and boiled away the clouds as the skies themselves burned. Grim faced, the Raven Guard could only fight on as the destruction spread ever outwards from the Urgall Depression, breaking like a wave over the Urgall Hills and spewing kilometre after kilometre across the wastes and into the Illium Rifts beyond.

For long days and nights, the Raven Guard fought on in this manner, selling their lives dearly as the wastes echoed with the sound of Angron bellowing for his brother to face him. The salt plains grew ever closer to the east as the raging fires consuming the western skies crept ever onwards. Though the Raven Guard fought with every ounce of determination and skill bred into them by the Emperor's gene-wrights, they were by now outnumbered at least ten to one and had no hope of reinforcement or resupply. With the inexorable march of the Mechanicum's land-razing firestorms, all hope of finding any other survivors or of locating any fresh source of ammunition was fled and now they were being channelled into an ever narrower field of flight by the massed firepower of the Whirlwind and Scorpius tanks the World Eaters had deployed to the flanks of their advance, bracketing all avenues of escape with withering fusillades of missile fire. Yet still, the Raven Lord did not order his Legion to

turn and face its pursuers and make the last stand all knew must surely come, and soon. The Raven Lord kept his own silent council, and none dared raise a word of objection.

Sunrise, such as it was upon the tainted, fog-shrouded surface of Isstvan V, on the ninety-eighth day after the Dropsite Massacre saw the last three thousand Legionaries of the Raven Guard mount the crest of the final rise and look down upon the endless expanse of the Gular Salt Plains. The air was thick with toxins rolling in from the crusted plains and the black contrails of whirlwind fire, the eerie howl of the tortured winds almost loud enough to drown out the bass roar of the tens of thousands of World Eaters charging across the broken land.

Now, at last, the Raven Lord ordered his sons to halt. Backs to the Gular Salt Plains, the Raven Guard would make their final stand. They had survived for ninety-eight days. They had fought with honour and determination, for no other course of action was possible. The Raven Guard had proven themselves loyal to the end, choosing survival over betraying their oaths, a choice which, we can

be sure, never once occurred to the Primarch or a single one of his sons. The Raven Guard had been forged in the searing crucible of the Lycaean Uprising, where resistance, however futile, was the only option, even in the face of utterly crushing, hopeless oppression.

As Angron's savage challenge rose above the roar of his Legionaries and the first of the Traitors' bolt shells struck amongst the Raven Guard's ranks, Corax issued what all assumed would be his final orders to the last of his proud Legion. Here the Raven Guard would stand; here the Raven Guard would die. But now fresh thunder split the skies above the last battlefield of Isstvan V, and with it came black-winged charnel birds which fell in a fire-spitting flock from the tumult above, their wrath unleashed not upon the few who remained to the Raven Guard but instead upon the World Eaters whose reckless headlong charge to finally grapple with their foe left them exposed before these birds of prey. In a storm of shot and shell was Angron denied his bloody prize. In fire had the Raven Guard been almost exterminated, and now in fire were the Raven Guard delivered from Isstvan V, the world the Warmaster had sought to make their tomb.

The Deliverance

There are some who name the deliverance of the Raven Guard a miracle. What else could it be called? How is it that Marcus Valerius, the Praefector of the Therion Cohort, an Imperial Army unit bonded to the Raven Guard, could have known of the Legion's predicament? How could a dream have summoned the Therion Cohort and the last of the Raven Guard from their home world of Deliverance to Isstvan V from across the vast reaches of space, only for them to arrive in orbit at the very moment the World Eaters were launching the final charge? When the Stormbirds and Thunderhawks descended from the blasted skies and delivered the Primarch and his last surviving sons to safety, some called it serendipity. Later on, others called it providence, even destiny. Now, there are many that call it a miracle, naming it but the first of many events that, in the coming war, would challenge our view of the universe forever.

Whatever the truth, the Raven Guard survived Isstvan V where so many others did not. Even reduced to a tenth of their strength, the Raven Guard fought on in the face of impossible odds with little or no hope of survival, their continued existence only possible because of the relentless leadership of their Primarch. Against the will of his masters, Praefector Valerius risked all to make for the Isstvan system, acting on the certain belief that the Loyalists' mission had failed and that the Raven Lord was in dire need of rescue. In order to launch his rescue attempt, Valerius had first to convince the commander of the Raven Guard left on Deliverance of its necessity, a challenge which very nearly cost the Praefector his life. Yet he prevailed, and the thousand Legionaries tasked with guarding Deliverance, as well as the Therion Cohort, made the impossibly arduous voyage across half the galaxy and more. The rescue force arrived at Isstvan at the very moment the World Eaters were sweeping down on the last of the Raven Guard survivors, its drop ships snatching them away from the very teeth of death.

That a voyage of over fifty thousand light years should result in such a timely rescue is beyond comprehension for many. There are some who claim that it could only have come about through the intervention of the Emperor himself.



PART VI: THE BATTLE OF PHALL

"We began in ignorance, fighting a war that we did not understand against weapons we had never dreamt existed. We were unready, we were vulnerable; we were weak. But in those first moments our enemies gave us strength. The strength to live, to rise from the bloody fields, to march on but not to fall: all this is ours now, and was not before."

Sigismund – Words spoken to the Templars at the First Gate to Terra

Being an account of the becalming of the Imperial Fists Retribution fleet in the Phall system, the perfidious attack by the war fleet of the Iron Warriors and the subsequent fleet engagement which took place there

The Battle of Phall is but one battle in an age of massacres and betrayals. The flame of its remembrance flutters weakly beside the flames of so many other greater acts of treachery which signposted the death of unity. What is Phall to the scale of losses at Calth or the titanic conflict at Istsvan? All of these and many others were plans hatched by Horus to corrupt, cripple and destroy those who might oppose him in a war he intended to burn bright and secure him swift victory before the full might of his foe could be roused to wakeful wrath against him. Many of these plots and ambushes succeeded, others failed, but all were intended to strike home before the Imperium realised it was in a fight for its very survival.

In this wider context, Phall was just one more bloody pearl strung around the Imperium's neck at the moment of its betrayal. With hindsight, however, can the true significance of Phall be seen. There are many reasons why this is so. Pragmatically it would have a crucial effect on warriors and warships, bleeding two mighty battle fleets of the Legiones Astartes of much of their strength at a time when either force left intact might have tipped the balance in favour of either side, and its attrition can be said to have perhaps been one coin that bought the ultimate outcome of a war that would last for years, rather than for months. It was also a moment of supreme heroism, a stark shadow thrown by the light of loyalty into the shadow of deception. It was a disaster, a lost opportunity killed by that greatest and most timeless murderer: chance. Perhaps then it is for that cruellest of reasons that Phall is remembered as a byword for sacrifice and a scar on the soul of the Imperium still.

Rogal Dorn was the first Primarch to learn of the treachery of his brother. Travelling back to Terra with the bulk of his forces, his fleet was caught by an upwelling of warp storms. Fleeing from the atrocity enacted upon Isstvan III, the *Eisenstein* was caught in the same storms, and somehow the paths of the Praetorian of Terra and the fleeing Loyalists crossed. None of those present ever spoke of the moment that Dorn learned of Horus' betrayal. Of his anger we can only guess, but his response was clear. He divided his fleet, part to remain with him to defend Terra, part to strike vengefully at Horus. Almost a third of the Legion's strength in warriors and warships were sent under the command of Fleet Master Yonnad to this end, reinforced with auxiliaries and additional hunter-killer squadrons from the Sol system's *Astra Militaris* and the Saturnyne fleet reserve. Over five hundred ships dove back into the storms under this order of battle, and set course for the Isstvan system. It was a Retribution fleet, designed to be a manifestation of justice bearing a brother's rage.

The Retribution fleet would never arrive at Isstvan. Soon after its departure, it was engulfed by the tortured Emyrean, which seemed to the astropathic auguries of Terra to convulse around the fleet and swallow it whole. Its fate was a tortured one, shorn and driven. It was torn apart by the warp storms, and its broken wreckage and surviving ships given little option for survival save to fleeing to a single calm shore, as if they were some crew of unfortunate souls swept along by a deadly cataract after a shipwreck in the tales of the ancient age of sail. That sole refuge proved to be the Phall system. Of the ships and warriors sent by Dorn, barely two-thirds survived the passage through the warp storms, with the larger *Legiones Astartes* vessels perhaps unsurprisingly faring the better, but of these many were still damaged and suffered casualties. Those warships that did survive found themselves cut off from the Emyrean, becalmed in an island of cold silence. With the Warp surrounding them, ringed by the churning fury of the unabated storms, they could not make passage out of the Phall system without certain calamity, and their surviving Astropaths could neither receive nor send messages through the storm's barrier, which did no more than reflect their own messages back at them, twisted as if in mockery. Worse still was the fact that Yonnad, one of Dorn's most trusted commanders—a strategist and leader whose record was almost without peer among his Legion—had died in the storms.

The Mantle of Command

The Imperial Fists are a Legion bound by discipline and unbending respect for oaths of honour. Yonnad was dead but in life he had anointed his lieutenant and pupil with responsibility for his command should he fall in battle. Alexis Polux was a captain of his Legion of relatively recent ascension to command rank; born of Inwit and marked for his great stature and stone-like demeanour, but one whose fame was not such that many beyond the ranks of Dorn's sons had come to know of him. Cold, calculating and direct, his decades of war had marked him to some as a worthy warrior, but within the ranks of the fleet, there were Imperial Fists whose fame and experience yet exceeded Polux's own, captains such as Tyr, Pertinax and Scallus with tallies of victory to their name that far exceeded those of the younger Polux. But Fleet Master Yonnad had seen more in the man he had chosen, and is said to have expressed to Rogal Dorn himself that Polux had the spark of genius in his understanding of warfare, a spark which had yet to kindle fully to the flame of its potential. We cannot now know what might have become of Polux had the command of the Retribution fleet not fallen to him, but as the proverb of the ancients was to have it "*Commeth the Hour; Commeth the Man*". This was to prove true in the case of Alexis Polux, and we can see now that Polux's command altered the future of his entire Legion.

Accepting mastery of the Retribution fleet, Polux's first act was to put it into a state of preparedness for attack. Reserves and supplies intended to sustain a long campaign were immediately expended to bring the surviving warships into a state of full repair and battle readiness without equivocation—a colossal feat of organisation in which Polux himself was to take the principal hand in organising. His warships he arranged into a constantly shifting sphere at the system's edge; the fleet became a fortress in the void, vigilant and constantly ready to respond to attack, and also positioned ready to cross into the Warp if a passage through the storms should clear. For days extending into months the Imperial Fists maintained their readiness, charting every gravitational tide and celestial synchronicity of the planetary system, making it a potential battlefield known to them in every detail. The Imperial Fists drilled tirelessly in every aspect of readiness from personal combat to coordination of fire between every part of the fleet, practicing manoeuvre and

stratagems against every eventuality with a thoroughness that might have shamed even a commander of the XIIIth Legion. Though repeated attempts were made to break through the storms, they all failed.

Polux's decision to put his command into such an active defensive condition, over say, conservation of strength on one hand or attempting to brave the storms regardless as soon as he was able on another—given the dire orders which they had been given and were sworn to obey—might seem strangely prescient, but such an assessment misses a number of factors both concerning the Retribution fleet's situation and the nature of the Imperial Fists themselves. When faced with uncertainty, defence is the VIIth Legion's natural response nor is inaction part of their nature. Rogal Dorn is quoted repeatedly as saying that "*If one waits for an enemy to declare their intent to attack then a gift is made to them of victory before battle has begun*". Polux's caution was also not without cause. The Phall system, though obscure, was noted in the records of the Great Crusade as being home to two inhabited planets. Phall I and II were both agri-worlds, one covered in oceans, the other with fungal forests. Their populations, although not great in number by the standards of many worlds, were nevertheless well-established, peaceful and recorded to be in steady communication with the wider Imperium, to whom they supplied regular provender.

When the Retribution fleet arrived at Phall, both worlds were found to be bare of human life, with no cause of this sudden calamity evident, nor even remains of the dead to be found. This, of course, was immediately cause for alarm and deep suspicion, and served only to further provoke caution on the part of the Imperial Fists on their unexpected arrival. In retrospect, it can be clearly seen as yet more evidence that suggests now that Phall was no random place of battle, but a place prepared or perhaps predestined by the dark powers beyond as both a trap and a place of ambush; a killing ground intended to doom a Legion. That such a thing—the manipulation of the Warp to so drive a fleet from its course, to shipwreck and bedevil it, and bring it exhausted to a single mote of cosmic space and there deposit it—was previously utterly inconceivable as reality, does not make it any less so. It was also likely true that the activity of mounting continuous defensive manoeuvre and relentless drill served a secondary purpose; it channelled the inherent restless aggression and

intemperate bile that had been raised in the hearts of the Imperial Fists since the unbelievable facts of Horus' betrayal had come to light. To the Imperial Fists, honour was above all else, and the Traitors by their very existence were now a slight to that honour that could only be expunged by blood. The chance for the Legion to do so would come from an unexpected quarter, and far more shockingly and suddenly than any realised.

Death Scream

Polux's caution was eventually vindicated when the Retribution fleet came under unexpected and deadly psychic assault. Visions of pain and ethereal screams ripped through the warships with tortuous effect. At the time it seemed to the Imperial Fists as though this event was an attack in itself, but later discoveries and the perspective of history tells us that this was not the case, but the Empyrean scream served a different purpose. Scattered through the Phall system in places of concealment were hundreds of machines, each containing a comatose Astropath. Mutilated and bonded to psy-amplifying devices of unknown origin, each psyker was woken to full horrific wakefulness when the machine

was triggered. The Astropaths' overloaded minds swept the void, scouring it for information before they perished and their death screams cut through the warp storms, as both beacon and message. Who had prepared the strange booby-trap and who received the messages sent by the murdered psykers was not known to the Imperial Fists, but one thing was put beyond doubt as the devices were analysed; someone was coming for them.

In truth it now seems likely that Phall was a trap long prepared. The scouring of the system of life, the seeding of the machine-bound psykers, even the clearing of the warp storms to allow the Retribution fleet into the system, all point to their marooning having been at the least planned for. So it was, to quote the writings of the Navis-Archonite Lyssian Haldaine, whose treatise on the Empyrean disturbances of the Horus Heresy era and their occult relationship to the Traitors' cause has since become judged as the greatest authority on these matters: *"...the Imperial Fists waited, and prepared for a battle they did not know would come, while all around them the Warp laughed, and the playing pieces of catastrophe were moved into place to seal their ending."*

THE TREACHERY OF IRON

The Iron Warriors' attack began with overwhelming force. A vanguard of a hundred ships broke from the Warp and made flank speed for the closest concentration of Loyalist vessels, firing on the Imperial Fists as soon as they came within range. The *Hammer of Terra*, a veteran of the earliest days of the Great Crusade, is remembered as the first great ship to fall, and with it the Imperial Fists took their first casualties of the war. Dozens of other, lesser ships died or were crippled in those first moments, leaving the Imperial Fists in no doubt to whose allegiance the Iron Warriors now lay. Swiftly, more and more Iron Warriors ships came from the Warp, their engines blazing, the perilously closely formed and high powered re-entry of so large an armada tearing real-space into tatters around them.

That it was the Iron Warriors who came to break the Retribution fleet now seems an obvious fact; the bad blood between the two Legions was well known and treachery had given that bitterness a killing edge. At the time though, the Iron Warriors' appearance in wrath before them was a shock that reverberated through the Retribution fleet

NAME: PHALL II

CLASSIFICATION: SUBSISTENCE/GRADE MINORIS
AGRI-WORLD [OCEAN]

SYSTEM DATA: WW/3830//1D00

STELLAR-GRID: 73-QZK/LT-87

SEGMENTUM: OBSCURUS

NOTATION: ONE OF TWO SETTLED WORLDS IN THE PHALL SYSTEM, CLASSIFIED AS AGRY-WORLDS TO SUPPLY FUTURE NEEDS OF ONGOING CRUSADE/COMPLIANCE OPERATIONS (AS YET UNREALISED).

++[NO FURTHER SURVEY ARCHIVE DATA]++



as powerfully as massed cannon fire. Cut off from all communication, the Imperial Fists knew nothing of the massacre on Istvan V, nor the treachery of four of the Legions sent to confront Horus. To the Imperial Fists of the Retribution fleet, all beyond Phall was an abyss of the unknown. This crucial point, perhaps more than any other, would have greater significance for the battle's conclusion than any other factor.

Before the attack, the Retribution fleet had formed the overall disposition of a great, shifting sphere. Constantly in movement, each ship and squadron sailed in a complex pattern relative to one another. The intention was to offer an attacker no fixed strength to attack, while allowing the Imperial Fists to reshape their response to any attacker entering the system. The Iron Warriors, for their part, behaved as they so often did; they applied overwhelming and unrelenting force to a single point. The Iron Warriors fleet came from the Warp in a wedge, its tip formed of the greatest ships of their fleet. Hundreds of escorts, gunboats and heavy-bellied assault carriers followed after. At the heart of their fleet the Primarch Perturabo himself directed the battle from the *Iron Blood*, last daughter of Olympia and his flag ship; a fifteen kilometre-long killing machine which alone had proved the death of worlds many times in campaigns passed. As allegory "As a fist punching an orrery of smoke", is how the Iron Warriors' attack at Phall has often been described and it is apt enough, the blow striking but passing through, rather than shattering, for the main.

Despite the Imperial Fists preparations, the battle may have been lost in those first moments. Had the response to the sudden and overwhelming attack been panic and confusion, mere slaughter would have been the result. Indeed, even a skilled application of formally accepted defensive naval tactics would have likely resulted in disaster as well against such an unstoppable and perfectly ordered aggressive force, albeit with a higher butcher's bill for the attacker to pay. But neither of these outcomes was to be the case. Even as the void was lit with the fires of exploding warships and the silent screams of the dying, the Imperial Fists began to respond with stone-hearted discipline, exacting co-ordination and forward planning that their attackers could not have guessed at. In places they fled before the assault, while in others they held fast under the onslaught, inviting the fire of the Iron Warriors to strip the void shields from their hulls. Many of their ships seemed to fly from the battle

"Fate, it has often been observed, is a strange thing. From ages before the coming of the Emperor, old tales and myths tell of spinners, of the thread of lives woven together by creatures who cackle in their blindness. Such tales are the smoke of our species' collective imagination, the expression of a need to see a purpose in blind chance where there is none, or perhaps put a human face to a power nightmarishly alien and uncaring. Still, when one looks back and sees the string of continuances and where they would lead, the tales of fate and its spinners seem to smile knowingly from history. So it is when one considers the chances and twists in the skein of time that led to the Battle of Phall and its final outcome."

Ra'al Su'Tekh

First Master of the Carnovora Chapter
The Voice of the Dead, Vol II

sphere in disorder before the battering iron monster that struck at them, but this was an illusion, although scores of Imperial Fists vessels died under the guns of their implacable enemy to enact Polux's strategy. Drawn on the Iron Warriors pressed their attack, but even as the full might of the Iron Warriors bore down, the Imperial Fists began to strike back at the edge of their formations. The fleeing ships and formations, once beyond their enemy's firing solutions, turned back in curving arcs, looping back in high-thrust manoeuvres that were only survivable through the excellence of their master's skill and the experience hard-won through toiled practice. Like golden and yellow-hulled darts they struck the Iron Beast's flanks, attacking the weak edges of the Iron Warriors fleet, selecting the slow and the damaged to die, striking with blazing lance barrages or spreads of torpedoes as they raced past. The Iron Warriors responded by pressing on mercilessly.

Losses on both sides of the void battle began to spiral. Macro cannon volleyed and thundered across the cold emptiness now filled with screaming fire and a kaleidoscope of hurtling wreckage. Brilliant lance-light stitched between leviathans of war, scrawling molten-red wounds in decametre-thick armoured hulls. Torpedo bays were shot empty, reloaded and fired again in frenzied pace until magazines meant to last hours of battle were spent in mere minutes. As ships closed to terminal range, hundreds of boarding actions spilled through the guts of grappling war vessels. In some cases, whole clusters of ships became locked together by boarding gantries, mauler claws and void bridges, with battle flowing back and forth across these spinning agglomerations in a wild tide, often to their mutual destruction. Bloating carrier barges flooded the fire-touched void with swarms of bombers, fighters and attack craft, but cast it to such an

apocalyptic storm of battle, such motes had little expectancy of life. As the great ships clashed, every weapon of void warfare was wielded without restraint. Proscribed devices which had rarely been deployed since the dawn of the Great Crusade were drawn on in wrath: volkite implosion-spheres, vortex warheads, nega-phospex webs and lightning-phage stained the void with their hellish light and nightmare fury. Ships died by the second. Millions of crew perished in flame, were torn into shreds of unrecognisable flesh or were smothered in the cold embrace of the void. It was the power of the Imperium—the power of the Great Crusade which had crushed a galaxy under its heel—turned on itself.

The Arithmetic of Victory

The void burned and the dead multiplied in number. But while the Imperial Fists' losses mounted, the dead of the Iron Warriors' tally grew higher. All the while the Imperial Fists shifted their attack pressing, yielding, standing to the last, and attacking in an ever changing whirlwind of controlled wrath. The Iron Warriors fleet inexorably began to fracture, the once constrained mass splintering into sub-fleets as damaged capital ships were forced to slow or break formation to attack a fleeing foe, dragging their escorts with them. This was compounded as ships simply ran out of control, drive systems bleeding fire or detonating in colossal explosions, scattering and blasting anything nearby. Slowly, inch by bloody inch, the tide was turning and the Iron Warriors had begun to spiral towards defeat.

With a Primarch at the head of the Iron Warriors, their failure may have seemed impossible, but if the Great Betrayal has taught us anything, it is that not even a Primarch is without flaw. Perhaps Perturabo did not anticipate the Imperial Fists' readiness, perhaps he was blinded by his

hate and need for vengeance, perhaps he could see a path to victory and did not care that it led through the heaped dead of his own forces, or perhaps with forces as well-matched as the Legiones Astartes were against themselves, the merest outside factor could wildly and unexpectedly turn a victory. Also, the skill of Polux is not to be underestimated, for just as there are human minds which could rival and perhaps exceed those of Space Marines, so there were a few of the Legiones Astartes whose abilities could touch, or perhaps even exceed those of their fathers. Whatever the cause—or causes—at work, the Imperial Fists seem to have felt the tide of battle shift enough to attempt to strike a blow against the Traitors that would have seemed impossible before; they would kill Perturabo himself.

Through all, Alexis Polux had managed with near preternatural ability to comprehend the hurricane of battle-data that resulted from this titanic and utterly intricate and blindingly fast conflict. Though the outcome of the battle was still by no means certain, he had seen a potential vulnerability; a gap in the defences that protected the *Iron Blood* itself had opened up. With decisive boldness, he reformed a sub-fleet under the command of Captain Armandus Tyr, with the sole task to strike directly at the Iron Warrior's flagship. Its purpose was not to break the *Iron Blood* with fire, for such a thing was not possible, but to deliver a strike force of Imperial Fists onto Perturabo's flagship at any cost. The first wave of the attack was to establish beachheads in the *Iron Blood*'s structure, and then seek out the Iron Warriors Primarch. Subsequent waves would reinforce the onslaught, press the attack and deny the Iron Warriors the ability to rally and prevent the thrust to slay the Primarch. It was a bold move, one that all involved knew would have the highest price, but they did not question the rightness of paying that cost; they had been sent by Rogal Dorn to bring retribution to the Traitors, and they would see that duty done no matter the expense. It was a valiant and audacious plan, and if it had worked who can say what fates would have spun from that moment. But even as the first wave of the attack struck the *Iron Blood*, fate cut that thread and made a different future.

The Will of Rogal Dorn

Rogal Dorn, Primarch of the Imperial Fists and, as Praetorian of Terra, responsible for the ultimate defence of the Imperium's heart, had been trying to contact the Retribution fleet ever since the black news of the Istvan

Fire and Iron: The Fleets at Phall

While it is clearly the case that both fleets engaged at Phall were nominally 'equal' in nature, both being comprised of recognised Legiones Astartes and Armada Imperialis vessels, with the war fleet of the Iron Warriors having an initial numeric advantage (perhaps as high as two to one by some estimates), this does not tell the whole story. Each and every fleet of the Great Crusade had its own idiosyncrasies of manufacture and configuration, and never more so than in the case of the fleets of the Legiones Astartes.

By the end of the Great Crusade, the temperament, access to resources and common use of each Space Marine Legion had worked significant divergence on the warships at their command. In case of point the two Legions in combat at Phall were notable in the following ways: firstly, the Iron Warriors by temperament valued durability in their warships, and configured them accordingly. This was, of course, the abiding factor needed by a warship during a planetary assault where manoeuvre as a means of defence against ground fire is all but impracticable if an assault is to be maintained. Accordingly, many of their war vessels, particularly their battle barges, were far more heavily armoured than their counterpart classes of other Legions, but also often possessed less sustained ability for acceleration and rapid manoeuvre due to their increased mass and the frame-stresses involved. This was perhaps a factor that the fortunes of war was to turn against them to their disadvantage at Phall, given Polux's unorthodox tactics. Although conversely at the later Battle of Anvillus Sollex against the Traitor fleet, this same factor was to prove the tipping point in their favour and contribute to the annihilation of the Loyalist forces there.

In the case of the fleet of the Imperial Fists, it had rightly been known before the Horus Heresy as both the strongest and also the most diverse in terms of class and pattern of all the Legiones Astartes fleets. It also had the advantage of being maintained and reinforced at the heart of the Imperium, and therefore was masterfully provided for and featured many of the most powerful patterns of weaponry and equipment available, including a stockpile of deadly vortex-warhead torpedoes directly assigned from the protected reserves on Terra and issued at the authority of the Sigillite. The disposition and complement of the Retribution fleet at Phall, selected specifically to operate at long range and at speed, with the strong strategic possibility of having to carry out hunter-killer operations to run down a fleeing enemy, was composed of many of the Imperial Fists' finest and fastest warships. This war, particularly in the case of the mid-tiers of warship, featured a proportionally higher number of fast cruiser and battle cruiser patterns compared to the Iron Warriors fleet; many of which were purpose built for void combat superiority and armed predominately with long range ship-to-ship lance batteries in preference of standard multi-purpose armaments. It is important to note, however, in consideration of these factors, that in no way were they alone or in combination enough to decide the outcome of the battle, but no doubt had an effect as the conflict unfolded.

V Dropsite Massacre had reached him. With new traitors emerging, and many Legions either crippled or out of communication, all certainties had been lost. With Mars already wracked by rebellion and war flaring at the edges of the Sol system, he knew that the seat of Imperial power could be threatened at any time. In response, Dorn desired above all else to draw all his forces back to Terra to secure it against a dark future. Choirs of Astropaths had been shouting messages into the dream-saturated substance of the Warp, but none had reached the Retribution fleet, nor had any word come from them of its own accord. Such is the nature of astrotelepathy, that one cannot predict ultimately how or when a message will reach its recipient or if it will be received at all. The Warp is a realm of whim,

of dreams and impossibility, and it works to laws that are not laws at all to mortal minds. The warp storms had indeed swallowed Dorn's orders for his sons to return to Terra, but those messages had not been lost.

Even as the battle in the Phall system reached its calamitous heights, through some strange fate or unseen design the astropathic messages from Terra broke through the veil of the storm. Such was the ferocity of their sending that it burned the minds of the Astropaths who heard them, forcing out the words of command through bloodied and broken mouths. The Imperial Fists now knew the will of their father and it could not be denied; they were ordered to return to Terra immediately. Now it was that the

ignorance of war cut deepest. Other than the order of their Primarch, the Imperial Fists knew only that Horus had turned against the Emperor, and that the Iron Warriors were part of that betrayal. Beyond those facts anything was possible, Terra might be on the brink of falling, every other Legion might have already been destroyed or turned against the Emperor. Faced with such uncertainty the Imperial Fists reacted as their nature dictated —their own adamant discipline and inviolate obedience to their oaths of fealty now condemning them— they followed their orders without question.

The order was given and the Imperial Fists fleet began to disengage from the battle. In the wake of Dorn's message a chink of calm had opened in the warp storms, and one by one the Imperial Fists ships raced for it. They broke away from the battle in stages, first the fastest ships and those who the vicissitudes of battle had let free —however temporarily— from close quarter action, then the rest as they were able, if they were able. They staggered, distracted and diverted the Iron Warriors warships as best they could, those Imperial Fists ships too damaged to flee willingly hurling themselves to their doom to stave off the enemy so their brothers could escape, but no matter what, such a course of action was always going to have a terrible price.

It did not take long for the Iron Warriors to realise what was happening and when they did they fell on the withdrawing Imperial

Fists without mercy, succumbing to a blind and savage rage. At the last, a rear guard of Imperial Fists vessels remained unmoving in the face of the Iron Warriors' onslaught. Many were the oldest and heaviest of ships, great aged warriors of the stars who had carried the forces of the Great Crusade since its earliest years. Now they stood against the tide of the enemy, fighting, selling themselves as dearly as they could before they too became fire and wreckage. The list of ships and warriors lost in that final terrible phase of the Battle of Phall is long and laden with heroism and sorrow. Barely a third of the original strength of the Retribution fleet made it to the Warp intact. The rest went to join their dead kin in the tally of the fallen. Of those who did escape, many did return to Terra. There they found the seat of Mankind not lost, but gripped by slow-burning war and uncertainty. What bitterness may have burned in their hearts at their fate and the bloody toil their obedience had cost them is not for this record to divulge. Others were scattered by the storms to make war on their own account, far from home, and would not see the light of Sol until the war had burned the soil of Terra.

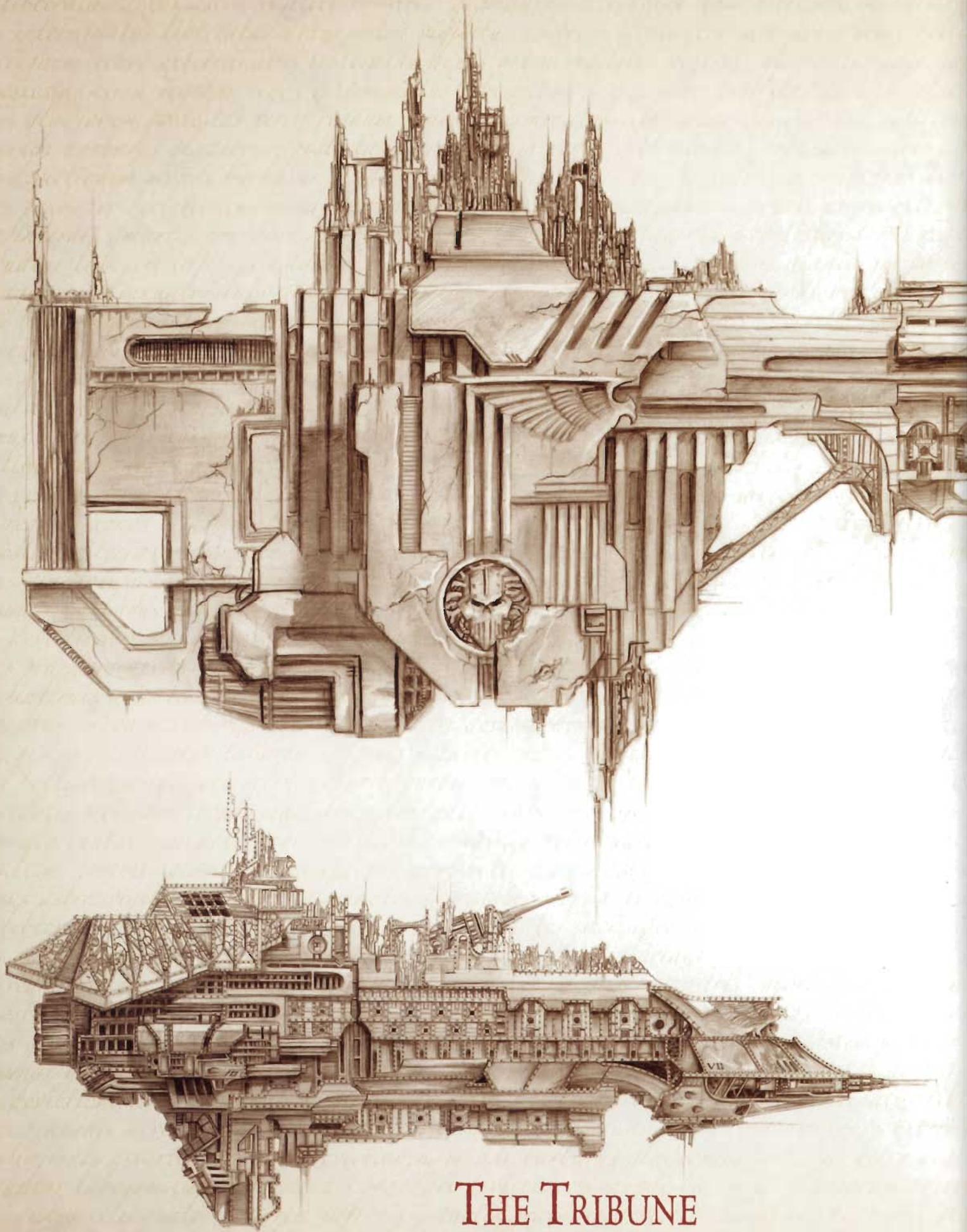
The fate of Tyr and his forlorn hope remains one that cannot be verified for certain by this record, but evidence exists that he and his warriors spent their lives in a glorious, if ultimately futile, attempt to achieve their goal and kill Perturabo. Robbed as their attack was of on-going support by the order to withdraw, whatever thread of chance it

had held of success was immediately severed. Yet it is believed that despite this, Armandus Tyr and the final spearhead of his Legionaries managed to fight their way into the very chamber of the Lord of Iron, and there they met their final doom at the hands of the Primarch himself. An effort of courage and arms that in itself ranks as highly as any of the Great Crusade.

Alexis Polux was himself to survive the Battle of Phall, having led a desperate boarding action from his own crippled flagship, the *Tribune* to take possession of the Iron Warriors warship the *Contrador* in which he and his surviving command would make their escape. Phall was not to be his last command, and his name would live on in glory and bitter vengeance throughout the War of the Heresy and the Scouring that was to follow.

So it is that we remember Phall as a defeat that cost the Imperial Fists grievously, but also a defeat that bled the Iron Warriors of warships and warriors heavily in their turn. Certainly, the decision to withdraw on receiving Rogal Dorn's order turned the course of the battle, but could it have been otherwise? The nature of the Imperial Fists makes it unlikely that they would have responded differently. This in turn opens up an intriguing and terrible possibility: that the revelation of Dorn's message arrived not by chance, but by the will of Horus or his allies, or the dark forces that ultimately made him their puppet.





THE TRIBUNE

IMPERIAL FISTS FLAGSHIP

THE IRON BLOOD

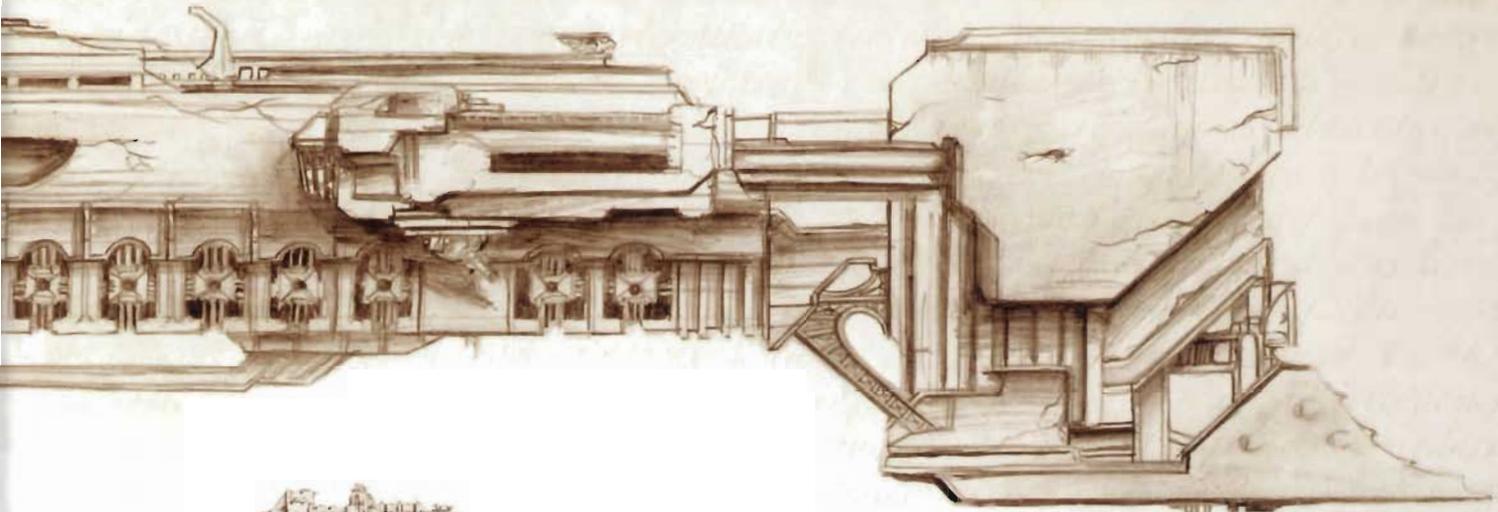
FLAGSHIP OF LORD PERTURABO, PRIMARCH OF THE IRON WARRIORS

A vessel of immense size, unbreakable strength and brute firepower, the *Iron Blood's* craggy flanks are clad in armour tens of metres thick. She is without view ports, for the war doctrine of Perturabo makes it clear that battle should be conducted by

calculation and firepower, and that viewports into the void were nothing but a vanity.

The *Iron Blood* is known as the oldest and mightiest of her class, constructed at Olympia at the order and to the exacting

specifications of Lord Perturabo himself. Her slab-like armoured flanks are blackened by the fires erupting from the carcasses of dying foes smashed asunder by brutal ramming attacks, and her spine is a mountain bristling with weapons turrets of all types.



COBRA CLASS DESTROYER

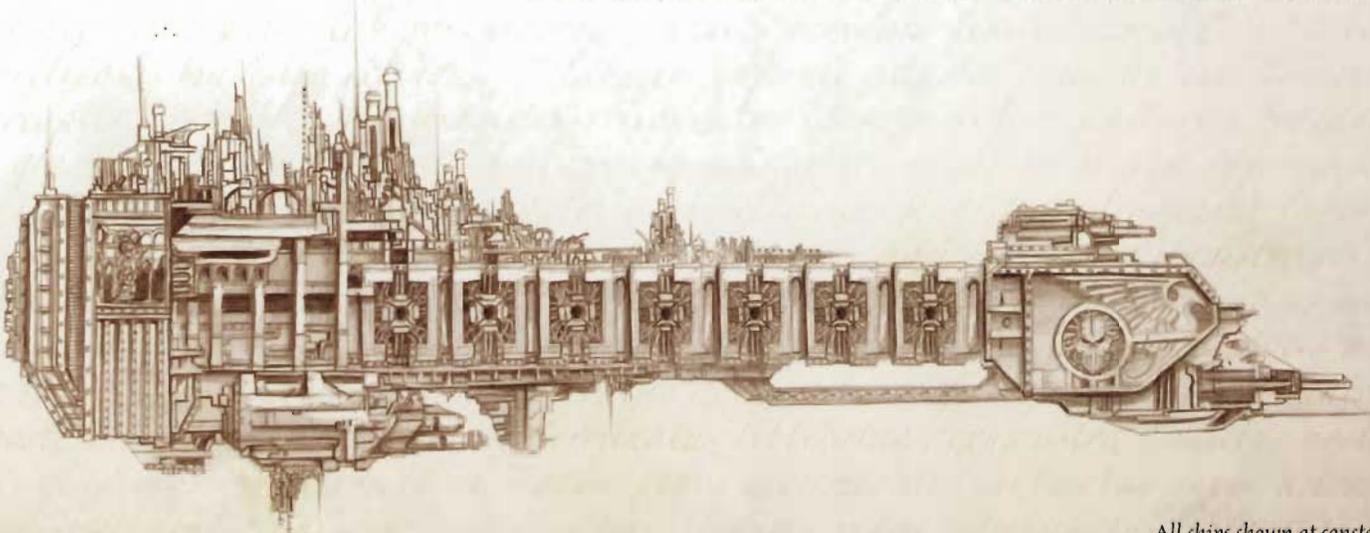
THE CONTRADOR

BATTLE BARGE OF THE IRON WARRIORS

At the Battle of Phall, the 'Legatus' class battle barge *Contrador* was commanded by the Iron Warriors war leader Erasmus Golg, who was also the commander of the Legion's 11th Company. Typical of the war ships of the Iron Warriors grand fleet, the *Contrador's*

already formidable armour and weapons were heavily enhanced over many decades of service. What she sacrificed in speed and manoeuvrability she more than gained in raw strength, as befitting the bellicose and stoic nature of the Iron Warriors themselves.

Despite her extensive modifications, the *Contrador* conformed to a pattern that was coming into use throughout the war fleets of the Legiones Astartes at the time of the Battle of Phall and which would become a familiar class of battle barge in the coming years.



All ships shown at constant scale.

THE TRIBUNE

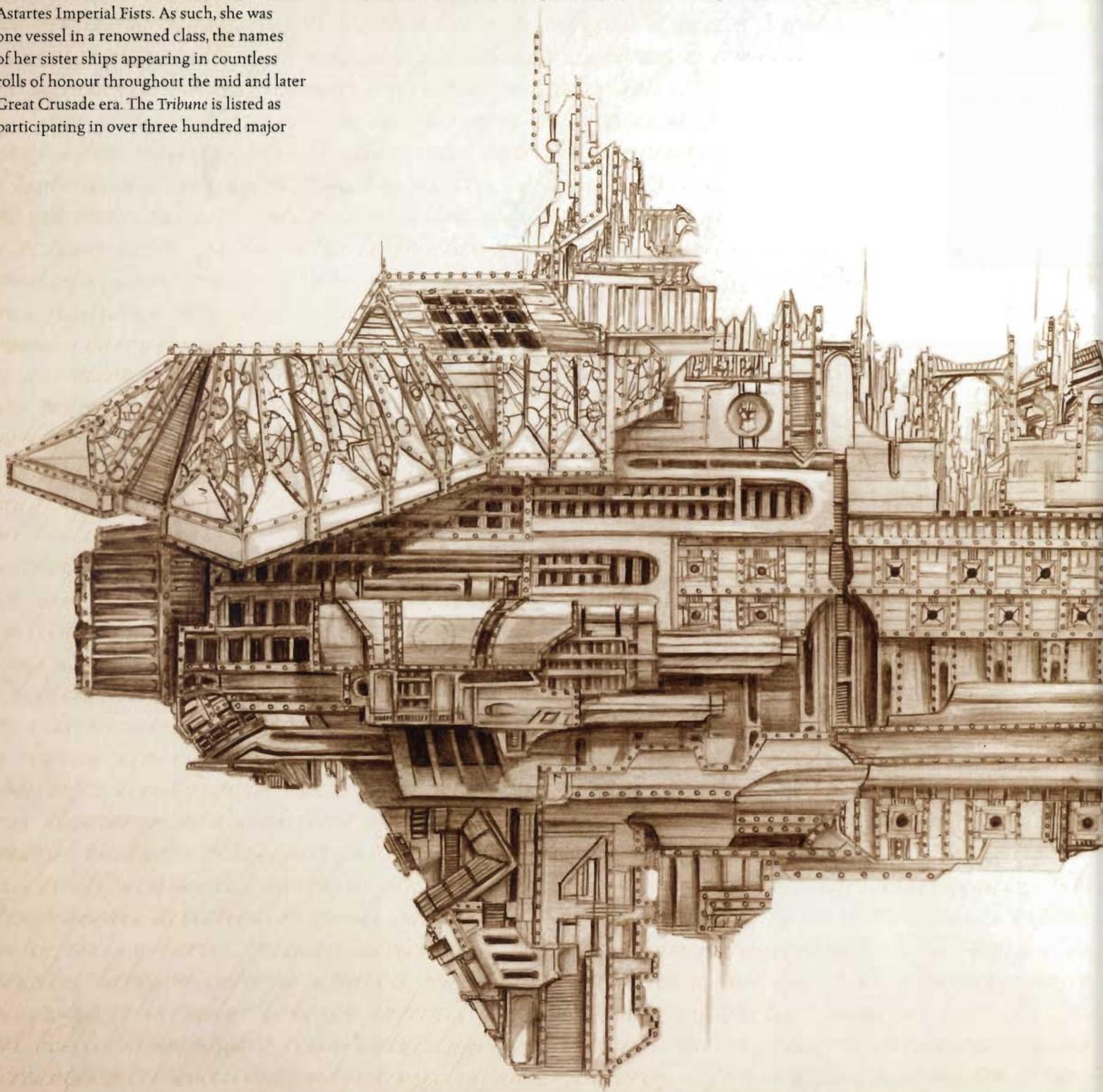
IMPERIAL FISTS FLAGSHIP AT THE BATTLE OF PHALL

The Imperial Fists modified 'Victory' class battleship *Tribune* served as the flagship of Fleetmaster Alexis Polux at the Battle of Phall. She was destroyed in action against the Iron Warriors battle barge the *Contrador* at the very climax of that devastating fleet confrontation.

The *Tribune* was a product of the ship yards of Inwit, the home world of the Legion of Astartes Imperial Fists. As such, she was one vessel in a renowned class, the names of her sister ships appearing in countless rolls of honour throughout the mid and later Great Crusade era. The *Tribune* is listed as participating in over three hundred major

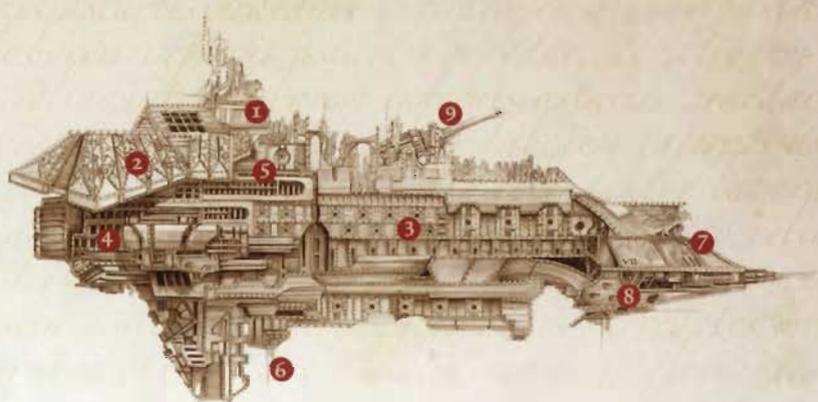
fleet engagements and countless smaller clashes throughout more than a century of war. Her pitted armoured flanks proudly bear scars earned in battle against every conceivable foe, from the tyrants of Old Night and remnant human empires denying Compliance, to the phantasmal void craft of the Eldar and the unnamed xenos horrors that lurk in the cold depths of space.

The *Tribune's* long and glorious service came to a fiery end when Fleetmaster Polux was forced into the desperate measure of sacrificing her to escape the Iron Warriors' attack at Phall with as many of his Imperial Fists and crew as possible. Drawing the mighty *Contrador* into a boarding action that saw the *Tribune* overwhelmed by the vengeful sons of Perturabo, Polux led his



own sally, hundreds of his warriors crossing over to the *Contrador* to take her intact even as the *Tribune* floundered. Even before the *Contrador* was taken, the Mechanicum engineers left on board the *Tribune* enacted the Fleetmaster's final command, overloading her plasma reactors and destroying herself, the bold defenders who remained to draw the enemy, and hundreds of Iron Warriors.

Though a terrible loss, the *Tribune's* sacrifice allowed thousands to escape that they might serve their Primarch and the Emperor another day, adding crucial numbers to the defence of Terra.



1. Navigators' Tabernacle:

Retracts into armoured core during Materium voyages.

2. 'Honourium Galaxia': Armoured stern, inset with stained armourglas panels depicting stellar cartography of galactic regions conquered by the *Tribune* and her sister ships.

3. Broadside Weapons Batteries: Massed weapons stations mount a wide range of ordnance, including macro cannon, fusion beamers and plasma launchers. Some of the *Tribune's* weapons are far less classifiable, predating the rise of the Imperium and are as yet unknown to the Machine Lore Questors of the Mechanicum.

4. Plasma Drives: Laid down at Inwit. Modified 788.M30 by Mechanicum plasma-wrights at Ryza.

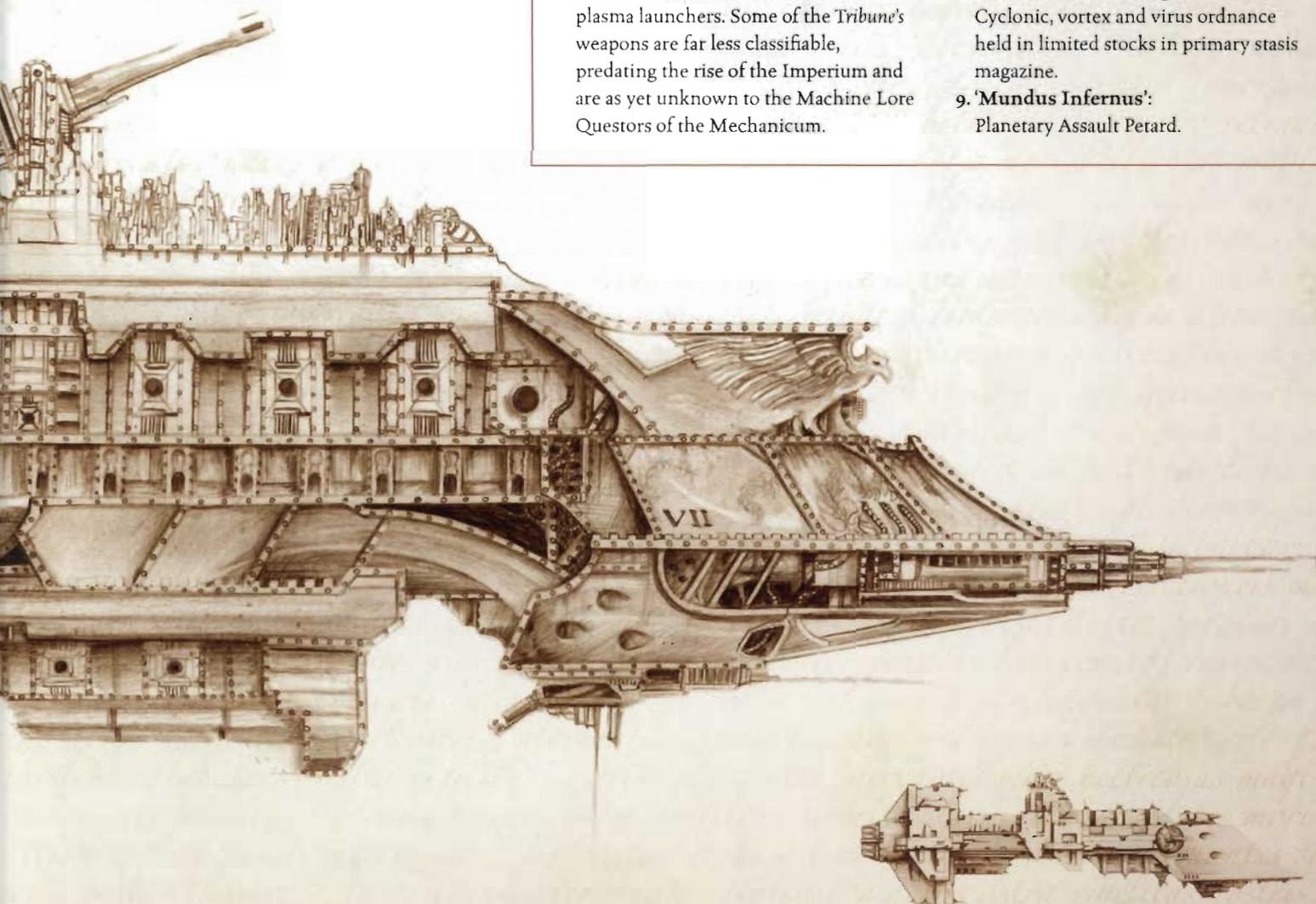
5. Legion Icon of the Imperial Fists: Cut from a single piece of onyx rendered in tribute to the Imperium by the recently Compliant Ring of Nimboth.

6. Ætheric Augur Vanes: Mind impulse-linked to Navigator Primaris.

7. Armoured Prow: Bears golden Aquila.

8. Prow Torpedo Tubes: Fire standard, short-burn and seeking ordnance. Cyclonic, vortex and virus ordnance held in limited stocks in primary stasis magazine.

9. 'Mundus Infernus': Planetary Assault Petard.



COBRA CLASS DESTROYER



THE IMPERIAL FISTS

Numeration: The VIIth Legion

Primogenitor: Rogal Dorn

Cognomen (prior): None

Observed Strategic Tendencies:

Ship-borne Assaults and Boarding Actions,
Defensive and Fortification Operations
In Extremis, Stronghold Assaults, the
Conquest and Forced Compliance of
Void-faring Civilisations

Noteworthy Domains: Inwit, Terra and
the Solar Domains

Allegiance: Fedelitas Totalis

"Do not look to us for kindness. Do not look to us for hope. We are not the kind children of this new age. We are the rocks of its foundation. If you wish hope then look to what we make. If you wish kindness then look to those who will come after us."

*Rogal Dorn, address to
the Three Hundred Magistrates of Terra*

Loyalty in a time of betrayal is not easy to measure. One cannot look at the face of an ally and know if he is a friend or an enemy. Even after Horus' treachery screamed from the death plains of Isstvan III and Isstvan V, the truth of who was a traitor and who remained loyal was far from clear. Faces of old friends might be masks of treachery and the truths of the past might be cloaks for assassins. If Horus could fall then so could any other. In this age of betrayal, one Legion stood as a pillar of loyalty amongst the seas of doubt. The Imperial Fists and their Primarch Rogal Dorn, ever true, never swerving from the toll demanded by a war of brothers, bore the weight of loyalty without breaking, but not without cost. Sacrifice without limit changes those who survive. Only now, with so much lost and so much more remade, can we see that the Imperial Fists who played their part in the Imperium's foundations, died with the Great Crusade.

If the Emperor was the father of the Legiones Astartes, then Terra was their mother. Just as the Emperor shaped his warriors with his will and intellect, so too did Terra leave her mark on the warriors raised from her soil. These marks, or scars it might be more accurate to say, often shaped a Legion's culture, values and methods of war in ways as subtle and deep as the mysteries woven into their flesh. To understand how many of the Legions became as they were, we must first understand Terra.

Soaked in blood, ignorance and atrocity, Ancient Terra in the time before the rise of the Emperor was devoid of hope and existed in a state of darkness. The only order was that of tyrants: fleeting and tainted by madness and petty ambition. The Emperor changed that—first with his hosts forged from the techno-barbarian tribes, then with his army of gene-forged Thunder Warriors, then with the creation of the Legiones Astartes. With blood and fire he tamed Terra, bringing order and enlightenment where before there had been none. It was this transformation that the VIIth Legion was made to protect.

The first battalions of the VIIth Legion were raised from across Terra. While many other Legions drew their recruits from a particular source, the flesh of the VIIth Legion came from Terra as a whole. Even in domains where other Legions had 'Rights of Tithe', the VIIth took some of the youth as initiates. Often these would be those who exhibited the greatest capacity for endurance, both in mind and body. Many were of a taciturn nature, slow to talk but quick to act. Why so many of such a wide pool of recruits should be similar is unclear. Certainly, the processes used to activate the VIIth Legion's gene-seed seem to have inflicted intense pain, and so perhaps it was a purposeful selection of stock suited to surviving such a process. It is also possible that a pattern of recruitment once formed, perpetuated until it was tradition. No matter the reason, the grim nature of those recruited into the VIIth Legion was well suited to their use.

In war the VIIth Legion was concerned with conquest. While all of the Emperor's forces fought and died to expand the Imperium, many saw only part of the greater vision. Defeat the enemy, tear down his strongholds, break his beliefs and still you would have a land that could turn against the Imperium in the future, or provide other enemies with a weakness to strike at. Victory was not enough, to conquer one had not only to defeat one's enemies, but to hold the fruits of

Iron and Stone: Rogal Dorn and Perturabo

Similarity encourages understanding, or at least some would claim so. In the case of Rogal Dorn and Perturabo, this sentiment not only falls but shatters under the weight of reality. For rarely could there be said to be two beings on the surface who more resembled each other, yet were separated by a greater chasm. Both reserved to the point of taciturn, both unyielding, both sublime artisans of war who prized indomitability and endurance; there was much that would suggest that they should see the world with one set of eyes, that perhaps they should be closer than any others. That bitterest loathing could arise between two such closely matched kin seems incredible, but it was a reality, some say from the first moment of their meeting.

The exact roots and cause of their enmity cannot be known to any save Rogal Dorn and Perturabo, but if one looks closely there appears a pattern both of behaviour and incidents which may offer a clue. Often it seems as though the pair's similarities were the cause of discord rather than understanding. Both were stubborn and more so when challenged, both spoke rarely, and brooded much behind their stone and iron masks. So it was that the silence of one would aggravate the other, the blunt honesty of one roused the other to anger, and the intractability of both ensured that once a dispute was begun neither would yield.

That there were differences between the two cannot be denied, and often these differences may have been the cause of disputes even if they were not the underlying cause. While both Rogal Dorn and Perturabo often favoured siege craft in war, they often differed in its execution. While both were pragmatic, Perturabo often displayed a brutal directness to waging war, applying overwhelming force or sustaining horrific casualties. While Dorn would never balk at paying such a price for victory, he rarely accepted large numbers of casualties except through necessity. Dorn was an undoubted idealist above all else, Perturabo a pragmatist first and foremost. On such cracked foundations the decades of the Great Crusade heaped pressures, honours, disparities and mischance, and from the result history reaped an enmity which would take both Primarchs and their Legions to the brink of destruction.

that victory. This philosophy underpinned every action of the VIIth. In attack they would pay any price in their own blood to secure victory, and once they had victory they would begin to consolidate what they had taken.

This pattern can be seen time and again in the later conquest of Ancient Terra. It was the VIIth Legion which broke the Cities of the Crystal Sea, and then raised the Fortress of the Fifth Circle from their ruins. In the ice-wrapped pinnacles of Himalazia they lost three battalions to secure the defeat of the witchery of the Wind Caller clans, but the first Imperial bastions began to rise against the cold sky within days of that victory. Across Terra the fruits of their fortress-craft gazed down on those who dwelt in the land around, a constant sign that the strength which had conquered them remained, rooted into the earth.

In the first decade of their existence, the Imperial Fists raised six hundred citadels upon the lands of the conquered. It is said that the dead of the Legion lie still in the

foundations of each, their skulls and blood mingling with the stone and mortar of their walls. With these bastions pinning the conquered land to the Imperium, order would spread amongst the people of these new domains. The old ways would change, fall or be replaced by the new, and if they did not then the looming fortresses would answer the question of what the response to rebellion would be.

The VIIth Legion were more than builders and castellans. At their root they were the most direct expression of the Emperor's design of uniting humanity; they were crusaders. Fortresses solidified conquest, and the VIIth sought conquest with a focused hunger. While fortresses and ordered domains sprang up in their wake, the VIIth Legion would never linger, but were always moving on, invading uncompliant domains and pushing the frontiers even as they reinforced what they had just taken. Massed shock assaults, using the full array of weaponry within the Legion, typified the VIIth's approach to war. Multiple battalions often took to the field enmasse, breaking



enemies with hammer blow force. On the plains of Kenneatar, the 5th Battalion of the VIIth broke the lines of the Tyrancy with an arrowhead of fifty war machines. It is said that the dust cloud thrown up in their wake blotted out the sun. In the tunnels of Galabaz, they cracked the crust above the buried city and dropped into the exposed tunnels beneath while the explosions were still echoing across the mountains. But always, in the wake of the destruction they wrought, they replaced what they had broken with something stronger.

It was from these early conquests that the VIIth Legion acquired its name. When many looked on the lands taken by the VIIth, they said that it was as if “*the hand of the Emperor had descended and gripped with an unbreakable fist!*”. The description of the service done by the VIIth Legion must have pleased the Emperor for he personally decreed that they would be known from then on as the Imperial Fists and bestowed on them the right to bear the Laurels of Victory as part of their heraldry. Dutiful and taciturn as ever, it is said that the renamed Imperial Fists accepted their honours in humble silence.

INWIT: DARKNESS AND ICE

While the character of a Legion can be seen in the flesh and blood of its recruits, it can be seen with even greater clarity in its Primarch. Though spun from the seed of humanity the Primarchs are not human, they are transcendent, holding a portion of the sublime and unknowable in their nature. All the qualities which seem strong in a warrior of a Legion exist more strongly, more deeply and with greater subtlety in a Primarch. This nature often seems to enhance and focus the qualities gifted to a Legion by their gene-seed. So it is that at the moment at which Primarch and Legion unite, there is often a point at which a Legion’s character may seem to shift. In the case of the Imperial Fists, the discovery of their Primarch, and the planet which had raised him, only strengthened the character the Imperial Fists had shown since their creation.

Inwit was, and is, a world of death and cold. Its star is old and withered, bleeding the last of its heat as cold, red light. Tidally locked against its dying star, perpetual darkness soaks one side of the planet, faded sunlight the other. Crevasse mazes, frozen mountain

ranges and plains of frost dunes cover the planet’s dark side—this is the Splintered Land, the beast-stalked wilderness which shapes the bodies and beliefs of the human population that clings to life here. Under the ice crust, thick seas flow in sluggish tides and pale and sightless creatures swim the waters, hunting by vibration and a preternatural taste for blood. Far above this desolation, great and ancient space stations and shipyards look down on the cold-shrouded world through perpetual auroras – created in a lost past, these citadels of the void have looked down on Inwit since before any records or tales can recall. Whilst on the planet, the light side of Inwit offers little more comfort than the dark, being a land of drift-crustled saline seas and sparse bare rock under the unblinking gaze of the red sun.

There is little of value on Inwit: its seas are buried or lifeless, its mountains bare of riches and its native species vicious. There is, however, one thing that this harsh world produces that led it to conquer a star cluster and endure as an island empire of order in the Age of Strife: its people. Though they are barbaric, they are far from unsophisticated.

The warriors of Inwit are raised to endure and survive. The world that bears them teaches them to never relent and that the price of weakness is death, for them and the rest of their kin. Death comes in many forms on Inwit: in the ice storms that can freeze and cover a man in seconds, at the claws of the predators that roam the Splintered Lands, and in the lapse in concentration that allows the cold to penetrate the warmth-seals of a hold. These factors make a certain kind of people: strong, grim and dedicated to the survival of the whole rather than the individual. Much of the population is nomadic, moving between the subterranean ice hives to trade in weapons, fuel and technology. Conflict between the roaming clans is common and young warriors learn how to defend against their clan's enemies as early as they learn how to endure the death touch of Inwit's merciless chill. They know how to learn, have an innate sense of an object's functional value and, most importantly, they have the strength to conquer those who possess knowledge they do not.

Long ago, before the coming of the Emperor was even a dream on night-shrouded Terra, the people of Inwit began to create their own realm in the stars. On every world they took, they assimilated, realigned

and reinforced. With each conquest their culture and learning grew, but Inwit itself remained unchanged even as it became the centre of an empire. The ice hives and clan disputes remained and while their world birthed star ships and ringed its orbits with weapon stations, its rulers kept to the old ways, the ways that had created their strength, the warlords and matriarchs who commanded armies amongst the stars still living lives little easier than their vassals. So it was, and so it is now.

It was as part of this burgeoning empire that Rogal Dorn grew to manhood, and then to rule its domains as emperor. Much of his early years remains unknown, or at least little talked about. What is known is that from the cold and darkness of Inwit the boy, named Rogal by his adopted kin, rose to lead the House of Dorn of the Ice Caste and then to the rule of the Inwit Cluster. His qualities married perfectly with those of Inwit, and he pushed their empire further than any other, ordered and trained its armies, and fashioned space craft the like of which had not been seen before. When the true Emperor was reunited with Rogal Dorn, he regained not only a lost son, but the strength of a star spanning society already forged into a tool of war.

ILLUMINATION'S CRUSADERS

Dorn was possessed of a single-minded energy tempered by a reserved and stoic nature. Many have remarked on the dour and emotionless disposition of both Primarch and Legion, but such an assessment misses much. Reserved, but terrifying in anger, Dorn was both cautious and calculating, and capable of pursuing an end with relentless energy. While he would rarely show emotion, when he did it was capable of shaking the ground or darkening the sun. During the near disastrous resurgence of the Xahelican breed in the Adonis Cluster, Dorn's cold rage is said to have held the battlements as much as the arms of those standing upon them. His admonishment of the reinforcements at Castoris is said to have echoed from the fire-touched sky to the still burning sea. "*As swift and unforgiving as the falling edge of an axe,*" is how Leman Russ is said to have described his brother.

Dorn was also capable of brooding and letting matters eat at him beneath his stone-cast demeanour. For as much as he was a warrior of absolute loyalty, he was also an idealist – the reasons why he fought were as important to him as the outcome of his efforts. During the time of the Great Crusade few ever saw this quality in Dorn; there was little cause, though we who knew him well can perhaps

NAME: INWIT

CLASSIFICATION: LEGIONES ASTARTES HOME WORLD

[HOSTILE/SUB-ZERO]

SYSTEM DATA: JFD4/9403//KKX

STELLAR-GRID: 94-QWT/PK-64

SEGMENTUM: SOLAR [TRANS/CORE]

NOTATION: SOVEREIGN AND EXCLUSIVE DOMAIN OF THE LEGIONES ASTARTES IMPERIAL FISTS

++[IMPERIAL FISTS PRIMARY RECRUITMENT

SOURCE]++

++[PRE-GREAT CRUSADE ICE HIVES – GRADE/SCALE

EXTREMIS]++

++[MIGRATORY PRE-UNIFICATION TRIBES, LEGACY

LEVEL TECH]++

++[SUBSTANTIAL PARALLEL/POST UNIFICATION

DEVELOPMENT IN LINE WITH ROLE AS LEGIONES

ASTARTES HOME WORLD]++



see hints of it in his near fatal confrontation with Konrad Curze in the Cheraut System and his brief schism with Ferrus Manus after Hannizare. It is only now, with so much lost never to be rebuilt, and blood still staining the birth of the Imperium which survives, that we can see that perhaps even in perfect loyalty there can be a flaw. At the moment that the Imperial Fists were united with Rogal Dorn, however, the shadows of Horus' treachery still waited far in the future.

Few integrations of Primarch and Legion were as swift or as complete as that between Rogal Dorn and the Imperial Fists. The ideals of the Imperium, and the purpose of the Great Crusade fitted with Dorn's outlook and drive, and the warriors of the Imperial Fists were exemplars not only of everything that he had built in the Inwit Cluster, but everything he had dreamed of for its future.

From the first moment Dorn met his gene-sons, he demanded of them everything that he would ask of himself. It is said that when he met Legion Master Mathias and veteran contingents of the Imperial Fists he said nothing, maintaining his silence even after they had knelt and pledged him fealty. Only when he had observed them in battle did he break his silence and speak to them directly. He said that they had much to do, and more to learn. To Mathias he gave a single word

of thanks for his service, and named him High Castellan of the Inwit Cluster. Such an honour was also a deep duty, for the next command he gave was to raise thirty regiments of new Imperial Fists from the Inwit systems. Without waiting or looking back, Rogal Dorn and his sons plunged back into the stars.

Over the next sixteen decades, the Imperial Fists fought on the burning edge of the Great Crusade. Relentlessly they pushed from war zone to war zone, were honoured by each of their brother Legions, and rose high in the estimation of many. In their methods of war, the ways of Inwit and the echoes of the VIIth Legion's victories combined. They drove ever on, without pause or respite. Just as on Terra they fortified and built to secure what they conquered, but just as before they did not linger to rule their conquests. While a castellan with a household of warriors might remain to maintain its defences, they did not administer, or draw up and enforce laws; they were warriors of the Imperium, not its masters, and they existed to serve in war and die for its survival.

What they did take from all the lands they conquered were recruits. The Great Crusade lived on the blood and flesh of its warriors. The further it reached and the wider its



Fortresses in the Stars

The Imperial Fists were and are makers and breakers of fortresses, but the greatest fortresses they built were amongst the stars. The Legion *Astartes* are warriors of the stars, but the Imperial Fists made the cold void their battlefield of choice. While there were great and grand fortresses on the ground both to defend and assault aplenty in the Great Crusade, the greatest sieges and defences were in fact fought in the murderous environment of space. The defence of star systems, the creation of kill zones and intersecting orbits were skills that the Imperial Fists honed to a keen edge on the grindstone of thousands of battlefronts. To them the methods of defending or taking a position, whether terrestrial or void-borne, were the same in principle even if different in application. After all what were star ships but fortresses of stone and metal broken free of gravity? It was an approach which saw them become the pre-eminent masters of high-intensity void warfare among the Space Marine Legions, and peerless in the spheres of boarding assault and close quarter ship-to-ship combat.

Of these war bastions of the stars, the greatest was the *Phalanx*. A pre-Imperial relic of vast size and unimaginable power, Rogal Dorn rebuilt the cold wreck, found orbiting Inwit, where it had drifted dead since the Dark Age of Technology, and presented it to the Emperor on their reuniting. Although ponderous and a difficult voyager in the Warp, this titanic star fortress was nevertheless a space-carried weapon whose firepower dwarfed entire attack fleets by comparison. The might of the *Phalanx* alone broke the back of dozens of xenos species during the Great Crusade, hammered worlds to burning cinders and served as an impregnable fortress against the horrors of the void. The *Phalanx* served both as the Imperial Fists' principal base of operations and a lynchpin first of the Great Crusade and later, during the terrors of the Horus Heresy, in the defence of the Sol System and Terra.

spread, the more fell in battle and the more battles there were to fight. All Legions recruit from across the galaxy, by necessity as much as for any other reason, but the Imperial Fists did so with a hungry zeal rivalled only perhaps by Lord Guilliman's Ultramarines or Lorgar's Word Bearers. While other Legions might draw heavily from a single world, the Imperial Fists drew from many.

Even as the embers were cooling, the Imperial Fists would be sifting a conquered population for suitable material to fill its ranks. Those who had to live by the force of their will, those who had been tempered by hardship and suffering; these above all were prized by the Imperial Fists. From the hunter tribe on the fire blighted world of Tiberina, they took every male child who could carry a spear. On Sevan they cleared the warrens beneath the factory-plates of tech-brat gangs and took half their number into the void. From the Nedoran ship clans they took every youth who had seen more than 10,000 ship cycles. Many of these



potential recruits would die before they ever became Space Marines, winnowed away for weakness or some other unacceptable flaw. Those who survived often formed complete companies, battalions or even regiments depending on the size of the intake. Often these formations retained the stamp of their birthworld on their character and culture. Mannerisms of speech, physical marks of allegiance and even idiosyncrasies of warfare, all might be touched by a formation's common ancestry. Over time such sub-cultures often broke down under the attrition and necessities of war, but some endured for decades.

The Favoured Sons

As the Great Crusade progressed, the Imperial Fists rose high in honour and in the favour of the Emperor. Ever dependable, they were often used to reinforce flagging campaigns, to hold crumbling fronts and break deadlocked sieges. The Emperor also frequently called on both Dorn and his sons to fight beside him, bestowing this honour on the Imperial Fists more than on

any other Legion. When the Imperial Host descended on Ophelia VII, the Emperor led the assault at the head of 100 Custodians and 10,000 Imperial Fists. Again at Askanisa, the Emperor called on not only Horus and the Luna Wolves, but Dorn and the Imperial Fists to form his vanguard in breaking the Shrouded Dynasties.

The Emperor also used Dorn to ensure war and Compliance was achieved according to his wishes and vision. Time and again, in ways large and small, the Imperial Fists acted at the direct order of the Emperor. Other Primarchs and Legions blazed a more brilliant trail or spread the Imperial Truth to more worlds, but to many the Imperial Fists were the rock on which the foundations of the Imperium were built.

High in favour and honour though they were, the Imperial Fists' status did not sit well with some of their brother-Legions. The animosity between the Imperial Fists and Iron Warriors was well known, but Perturabo and his Legion were not alone

in their resentment. Though few reached the Lord of Iron's pinnacle of spite, others did chafe at the trust placed on the Imperial Fists. Dorn's nature did not ameliorate matters. Truth speaking, blunt and uncompromising in both his ideals and their expression, his manner often aggravated his peers as much as it drew their admiration.

It was, perhaps, this quality which caused the Emperor to pass over Dorn as Warmaster when he withdrew from the Great Crusade. Horus, unlike Dorn, was a master of diplomacy and maintaining a coordinated balance between fractious forces. Where Dorn would cause conflict, Horus would unify, where Dorn would not compromise, Horus would find a way of satisfying all. But even as Horus took up the reins of the Great Crusade, Dorn was invested Praetorian of Terra. Even as Horus would push the Great Crusade on, the Imperial Fists would withdraw with the Emperor to Terra. And with that decision, the fate of the Emperor and all his sons was set.

UNIT ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE WITHIN THE LEGION

At the time of Horus' betrayal, much of the early Legion structure remained in the Imperial Fists. Ever a practical leader, Rogal Dorn most likely saw little reason to change what had been proven to work. So it was that the base components of the Legion and the system of hierarchy used were little changed from its early days. As the Great Crusade progressed, however, the Legion's particular role and developing preferences for waging war began to change this. Along with the Legion's bias for recruitment, these factors created a number of key differences at every level of the Legion.

At the squad level, the Imperial Fists showed a noted schism in their dominant unit types as time passed. Firstly of note was the

number of assault-configured units, which was very high, as were auxiliary units armed with specialised weaponry suited to the destruction of armour and fortifications. The second notable dominance was that of heavy weaponry—whether mounted on vehicles or carried by Legionaries—which was selected not only for raw power but also for its accuracy and adaptability in the field, with, for example, the multi-purpose missile launcher preferred over the arguably more indiscriminate autocannon and the precision and range of the lascannon over the shorter ranged multi-melta. The Imperial Fists were also amongst the strongest proponents of the development of Tactical Dreadnought Armour, and fielded a large number of squads equipped in all patterns of the so-called

Terminator armour. Notably, they also were amongst the first to field significant numbers of the Indomitus pattern produced by the forges of Deimos. At the time of the Great Betrayal, they alone fielded Terminators armed with prototypes of the Absinia and Iliastus pattern assault cannon, retrofitted and rescaled from the Kheres pattern which had proved such a powerful addition to the Contemptor pattern Dreadnought chassis.

Above the squad was the company, in this case a formation which could vary in size from a few squads to several hundred Imperial Fists. The strength of companies often waxed and waned as they took casualties, or were bolstered by fresh recruits. No matter their size, each company was grouped into a battalion, and two battalions when paired were often referred to as a regiment, but latterly also called a 'Crusade' or 'Household'. Larger formations comprised of multiple companies were formed as needed for a particular task or deployment, rather than as standing units.

Within the Imperial Fists, there are many formations from squad to Household whose names and deeds shone bright in the days of the Great Crusade. To list the histories of them all would demand more than this text can bear, but even such an abbreviated inspection cannot pass over the Templars.

Raised by Rogal Dorn during the first decade of his command, the Templars were the warriors charged with guarding the Temple of Oaths aboard the *Phalanx*. No fane of superstition or misguided religion, this secular Temple was dedicated to the ideals of the Great Crusade and the sacrifices it demanded. There, beneath the tattered and burned banners of defeated enemies and the statues of dead heroes, the Imperial Fists returned to renew their perpetual oaths of loyalty to their Emperor and Primarch. Each oath made by a son of Dorn was carved on the walls, floor and ceiling, etched for all eternity in black granite. Besides Dorn and the Emperor, only the Templars were permitted to enter the Temple unbidden.

Nominally the First Company of the Imperial Fists, the Templars' strength rarely fell below 1,000 warriors, and their members were drawn from veterans across the Legion. Skill at arms was not enough to earn such a responsibility; each Templar was a warrior in whom the crusader light had come to burn

SWORDS IN THE VOID: WARSHIPS OF THE IMPERIAL FISTS

The space fleets and warships of the Imperial Fists were the greatest of the age. While the *Phalanx* may be the greatest warship ever built, there were other ships, both great and small, whose renown reaches down through the annals of history even to this day.

Tribune

The *Tribune* was born in the orbital yards of Inwit in the years after the coming of the Emperor when the Inwit Techwrights built ten battle barges as tribute to the Emperor and in honour of Rogal Dorn's command of the VIIth Legion. The *Tribune* and its nine sisters were variants of the Victory class and all displayed the hand of Inwit's weapon-craft and mentality woven into their fabric. Heavily armed and armoured, it was a ship made to give and take damage in the thick of a battle line, its design and precise configuration honed by decades of the Legion's experience in void combat, and communication and command systems woven into its structure that showed the intent that the *Tribune* and its sisters would lead the Imperial Fists in their later conquests.

Halcyon

A unique battleship, the conquered Hecuban Conformity forged the *Halcyon* as a sign of penitence and tribute of fealty after the 81st Expeditionary Fleet broke their forces in the hellish Aegisine war and brought the separatist human realm into Compliance. The *Halcyon's* void shields and plasma drives held all the potency of the Hecuban's secret arts and far excelled the power of many warships of her disposition and scale. Assimilated into the Imperial Fists fleet, she served with honour for many decades as a secondary flagship. Swifter and more agile than the deadly *Phalanx*, in the Battle for Taldane she accounted for six Eldar capital ships in lone battle, and Sigismund himself accepted the surrender of the Zurcon Freeholds from the *Halcyon's* bridge.

The Three Sisters of Justice

These much honoured vessels were a trio of augmented Thunderbolt class heavy frigates created by the will of Robute Guilliman as a gift to Rogal Dorn and his Legion. Black hulled and gold prowed, they are said to have cut the void like daggers and *Lachrymae*, *Persephone* and *Ophelia* were they called. Built for speed, they were intended to deliver a large payload of torpedoes to an enemy ship or fleet and outrun any guns which might answer, but they also proved particularly adept at hunting down fleeing foes. The ship masters of the Imperial Fists put these qualities of the Three Sisters to such consistent use that they were popularly renamed the Three Sisters of Spite by the auxiliary forces who fought beside them.

IMPERIAL FISTS LEGION HERALDRY



Veteran Squad Command



Legion Icon with Numeral



Legion Icon with Vanguard Assault Badge



Legion Icon with Approved Assault Variant



Unification Wars Veteran Honour



Legion Icon with Veteran Badge



Legion Icon with Tactical Badge



Legion Command



Line Command



Veteran Honour with Legion Icon



Legion Icon with Heavy Support Badge



Informal Destroyer Variant

IMPERIAL FISTS LEGION HELM MARKINGS

At the time of the Battle of Phall, many variant helm markings were being formalised into an approved scheme. With the units of the Retribution fleet being recalled from many disparate campaigns, a range of schemes were to be seen among the Imperial Fists who fought at Phall. Displayed below are: Early Crusade Legionary, Mid Crusade Legionary, Late Crusade Heavy Support Sergeant, Veteran Sergeant, Heavy Support Legionary and Veteran Sergeant.



MANNUS ARMOURIA

These approved secondary markings indicate a Veteran Sergeant, a long-service Veteran, a Tactical Legionary and an Assault Legionary.



HONOURIUM ARMOURIA

Where made possible by the configuration of a Legionary's battle plate, additional markings may be worn, such as the twinned headsman's axes of Seneschal Rann's company and the heraldic cross worn by many Great Crusade veterans.



with undimming brightness, and zealous, remorseless and tempered by decades of war, they were exemplars of what it was to be an Imperial Fist of the Great Crusade.

Legion Command Hierarchy

Rogal Dorn was the complete master of his Legion. Every warrior under his command knew that above all else they served their Primarch, and beyond him the Emperor. All others, be they Primarchs or lords of high renown, were nothing besides the clear line of authority which descended from the Master of Mankind. Complete and total obedience was demanded by Dorn and given by each Imperial Fist from the lowest warrior to the most exalted captain.

Beneath Dorn were the senior captains of the Legion's regiments, Crusades and Households. Unlike other Primarchs, Dorn maintained no fixed inner circle of advisors or senior lieutenants. Ever the pragmatist, he is said to have once remarked to Horus that his counsellors were whoever were there to stand beside him in battle. Beneath the senior captains were the line captains and centurions who led the Legion's battalions and companies. This technically made the captains of the Legion the most senior ranks beneath the Primarch himself. In reality a second layer of authority existed above them, that of the fleet masters, siege masters, appointed theatre commanders and marshals and ultimately the First Captain.

A master of a fleet held complete authority over it for a fixed time or until a campaign was complete. Selected for their skill in void warfare in a Legion which excelled in that theatre, the fleet masters represented many of the Imperial Fists' finest strategists. Likewise, siege masters were charged with arraying and overseeing the forces engaged in a siege, and had total authority over units engaged in that action. It is a mark of the importance Rogal Dorn placed on these two methods of warfare that those who commanded in such theatres were raised to positions that could only be overruled by the Primarch himself.

Besides the Primarch, only one other position commanded unconditional authority over the Legion as a whole. The First Captain of the Imperial Fists was also always the commander of the Templars, and by tradition the finest proven warrior within the Legion. As guardian of the oaths of every Imperial Fists warrior, the First Captain held not only great authority, but commanded respect from all of his brothers.

Additional titles existed for those who commanded permanent fortresses built by the Legion. Such stewardships were concerned chiefly with the maintenance of defences and the raising of recruits, but also command in time of siege. Such duties were usually temporary, with the incumbent returning after a time to the main forces of the Great Crusade. The titles of castellan and

Legion seneschal were subtly different in both the honour and duties they bestowed, but both were of sufficient weight that their bearers retained the title even after they were returned to the rest of the Great Crusade.

War Disposition

At the time of the Issruan III atrocity, the bulk of the Imperial Fists were returning to Terra with Rogal Dorn. Though the Emperor had called all of the Imperial Fists to Terra, in practice such a total withdrawal from the Great Crusade would have been impossible. Some forces stayed on the edge of the Great Crusade to complete campaigns or individual duties. Other forces remained scattered across the Legion's fortresses and bastions, and still others had yet to rendezvous with the bulk of the Legion.

The strength of the Imperial Fists was never in its numbers. Though not small, their tally of warriors during the Great Crusade rarely rose above 100,000. At the time of their withdrawal to Terra, the Legion's records show that the Temple held the oaths of 98,356 living warriors, although such a number cannot be taken as accurate. The vagaries of Warp travel, Astropathic communication, and the volume of space across which the Great Crusade was fought means that all that can be certain is that this tally is nothing more than a plausible estimation.

Aside from the number of its Space Marines, no review of the strength of the Imperial Fists can be complete without noting the strength of their fleet. At the time of the Horus Heresy, the Imperial Fists had over 1,500 warships under their direct command, and many more bonded by oath and fealty. This naval might was the greatest of any of the Legiones Astartes, and was further enhanced by the fact that many of the ships were the largest in the Imperium. Even the Sons of Horus and the Ultramarines could not rival such strength alone.



IMPERIAL FISTS CONTEMPTOR DREADNOUGHT

JUSTICI GHUNFRIED

TERRAN HOUSEHOLD GUARD (DETACHED DUTY), IMPERIAL FISTS WARSHIP – TRIBUNE,
BATTLE OF PHALL

Justici Ghunfried was a Terran recruit of the VIIth Legion and a veteran of the earliest campaigns of the Great Crusade; amongst his numerous battle honours are listed: Ummaos, Ur Secundus and Mount Orros. He rose to the rank of veteran sergeant of one of the very first Phalanx Warder squads established, and it was in this role that he fell in glory in the battle that saw the Dead Emperors of the Onyx Manse cast down in flames. When his blasted body was recovered from the aftermath of that apocalyptic battle, life was found to linger yet and Ghunfried was interred within the armoured sarcophagus of a mighty Contemptor Dreadnought.

Justici Ghunfried is depicted on the eve of the Battle of the Phall System, equipped with the artificer-wrought breaching drill created at his behest. His Contemptor's armour bears numerous honours and sigils, including the red shield of the Legion's Terran Household Guard Chapter, and the lightning flashes that mark him as a veteran of the Terran Unification. His red helm with white stripe is an idiosyncratic reminder of the Justici's previous rank of veteran sergeant, an affectation for which he was well known and respected throughout the Legion.

IMPERIAL FISTS VIITH LEGION VETERAN

UNKNOWN LEGIONARY
1ST COMPANY, UNLISTED CRUSADE
THE CONQUEST OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

This depiction of an early Great Crusade era warrior of the VIIth Legion is based upon a sculpture rendered in stabilised unbiniium that once stood in the Hall of Tribute in the Imperial Palace on Terra. The specific markings indicate the depiction represents an actual figure and is not simply an idealised archetype. The newly-forged MkII armour bears several motifs used extensively throughout the Terran Unification Wars, and the eagle and lightning flash device on the left shoulder pauldron makes it likely the warrior was a veteran of the very first wars of Compliance fought beyond the Sol System.

Of particular note is the use of yellow heraldry on several segments of the Legionary's armour. The fact that the colouration is limited to the right arm and shoulder date the original rendition to just after the Fall of Roma and the helmet stripe, along with the arrow and laurel on the shoulder, marks the Legionary as a sergeant of a Legion Tactical squad.

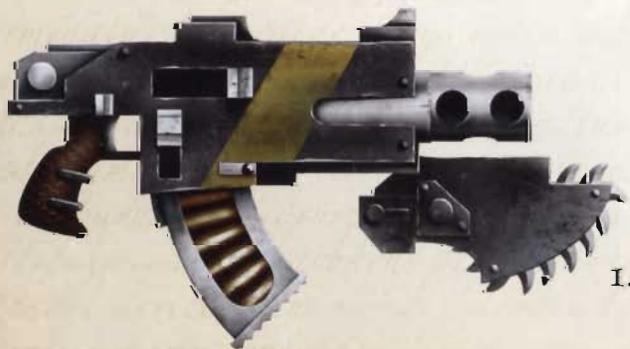
Panoply of War

1. Phobos Pattern Bolter with Chainblade

Combat Attachment: Kepler-Dorsum Forge Issue, 805.M30.

2. Combat Knife: Terran Unification Issue.

3. Krak and Frag Grenades.



IMPERIAL FISTS TACTICAL SUPPORT LEGIONARY

LEGIONARY ARNFRIED

34th SQUAD, 140th COMPANY,
IMPERIAL FISTS LEGION WARSHIP – LACEDAEMON
BATTLE OF PHALL

The 34th Squad had only recently joined the complement of the *Lacedaemon*, having been recalled along with the majority of the 140th Company from Compliance enforcement duties in the turbulent region coreward of the Hangman's Void. The new duty was welcomed as a great honour, for the *Lacedaemon* was a veteran of the first Imperial Fists expeditions of the Great Crusade. The vessel sustained grievous damage traversing the Warp to the Phall System and several dozen members of the 140th Company were lost in what might have been a catastrophic breach had not the section of the vessel they were embarked in been jettisoned.

Legionary Arnfried and his battle-brothers are known to have defended the *Lacedaemon* against several Iron Warriors boarding actions during the Battle of Phall, but further accounts of their stoic deeds go unrecorded. The *Lacedaemon* was destroyed during the Imperial Fists disengagement from the Iron Warriors fleet and it is held as extremely unlikely that Arnfried, or any warriors of the 140th Company, could possibly have survived the carnage.

The Legionary is depicted here clad in late production MkIII battle plate, the raptor and lightning bolts Unification icon worn prominently on the chest. The crossed swords symbol on his leg armour were used as an army badge by many different Imperial units undertaking Compliance enforcement operations near the Hangman's Void, and was still worn by the members of the 140th Company at the time of the Battle of Phall. The arrow on the right forearm marks him as a member of a Tactical line unit, in this case a support squad, a symbol in widespread use by the time of the Battle of Phall.



Panoply of War

1. Primus MkII Pattern Meltagun.

2. Phaestos Pattern Flamer.



1.



2.

IMPERIAL FISTS ASSAULT LEGIONARY

LEGIONARY GUNTHER

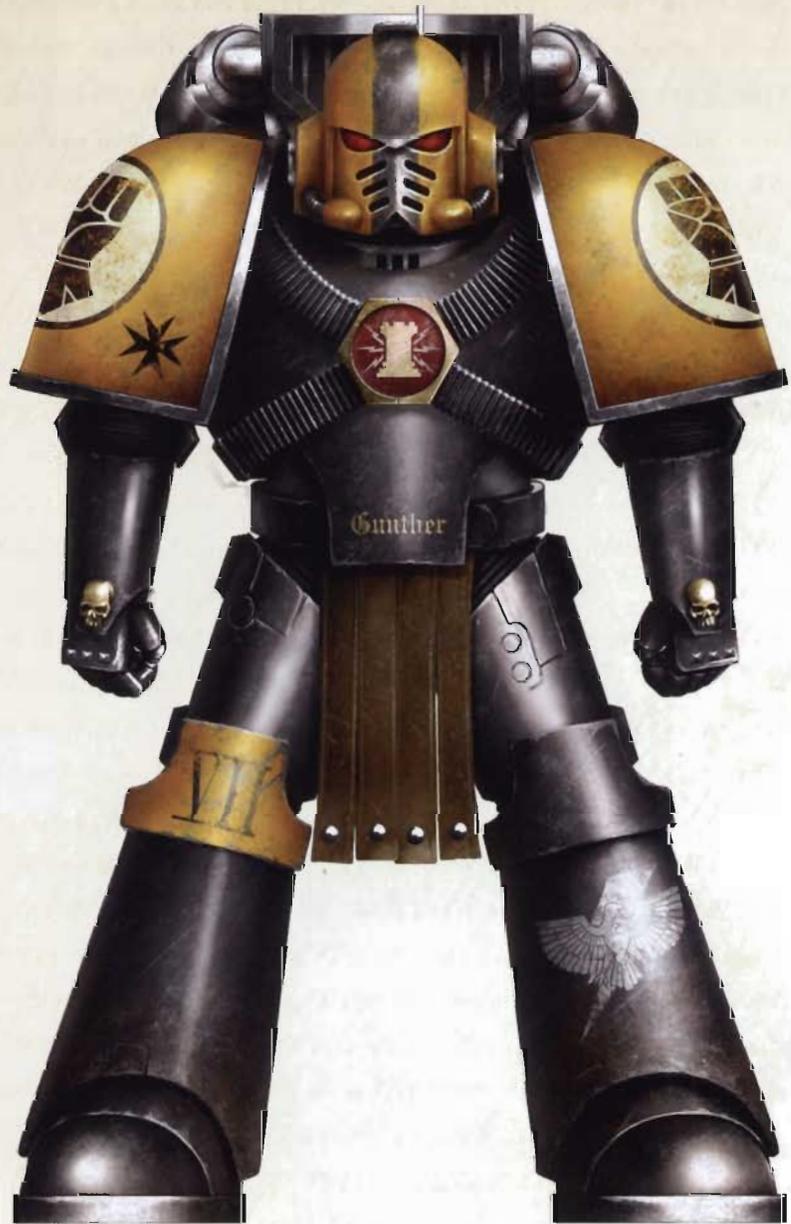
64TH SQUAD, 344TH COMPANY,
IMPERIAL FISTS WARSHIP – OATH OF STONE
BATTLE OF PHALL

The 344th Company was a veteran counter-assault formation, specialising in the active defence of fortresses. Configured as a Legion assault squad, such units were adept at sallying forth from fortifications in order to deny any attacker the initiative. When Dorn learned of the Warmaster's betrayal and gathered the Retribution fleet, Gunther's unit was hurriedly recalled from its assignment to serve on the *Oath of Stone*. When the Iron Warriors attacked, Gunther and his brothers were mustered to a void assault against the grand cruiser *Atropos*, using their jump packs to propel themselves across the void as the enemy vessel closed. Within minutes of the assault however, the *Oath of Stone* was herself destroyed, casting any of 64th Squad who had survived the explosion to the void. Nothing more is known of the *Atropos*, and so the fate of Legionary Gunther, like so many thousands of his brothers, must remain known only to providence.

Legionary Gunther is depicted wearing the predominantly black heraldry of a veteran of the catastrophe of the Howling Gyre, as well as the Great Crusade Veteran's Cross. The symbol on his chest armour marks his unit as serving in fortress defence, the lightning bolts indicating its participation in the Terran Unification War.

Panoply of War

1. Thunder Edge Pattern Chainsword.
2. Phobos Pattern Bolt Pistol.
3. Krak and Frag Grenades.



1.



2.



3.

IMPERIAL FISTS BREACHER SQUAD SERGEANT

VETERAN SERGEANT AHMAND

62ND SQUAD, 55TH COMPANY,

IMPERIAL FISTS FLAGSHIP – TRIBUNE

TAKING OF THE CONTRADOR, BATTLE OF PHALL

The bulk of the 55th Company was serving on board the *Tribune* when the Retribution fleet was formed. When, at the height of the battle, Polux ordered the seizing of the Iron Warriors vessel *Contrador*, only the 55th Company's Breacher squads were included in the counter-boarding action, the remainder remaining on the doomed *Tribune* to exact as heavy a toll on their attackers. The 62nd Squad teleported onto the *Contrador* alongside Alexis Polux himself and Ahmand was at his side throughout. Ahmand survived the Battle of Phall, though it was many long years before accounts of it were recounted to and recorded by the Order of Remembrancers.

Ahmand's shield bears the chevron of a sergeant, marked as a veteran by the central diamond, as well as the numeral of the 62nd Squad. The twinned axes symbol commonly was a battle honour for triumph in Zone Mortalis operations but was also entering use at this period as a particular badge of those who had served with the famed Imperial Fists Seneschal Rann. Ahmand's red helm also identifies him as a sergeant, and the white stripe as a veteran, while the symbol on his forearm was commonly used to identify vanguard attack squads such as Breachers.

Panoply of War

1. Mars-Proteus Pattern Glaive-Axe.
2. Tigris Pattern Bolt Pistol.
3. MkXIX Lucifer Pattern Melta Bomb.



IMPERIAL FISTS VETERAN ASSAULT TERMINATOR

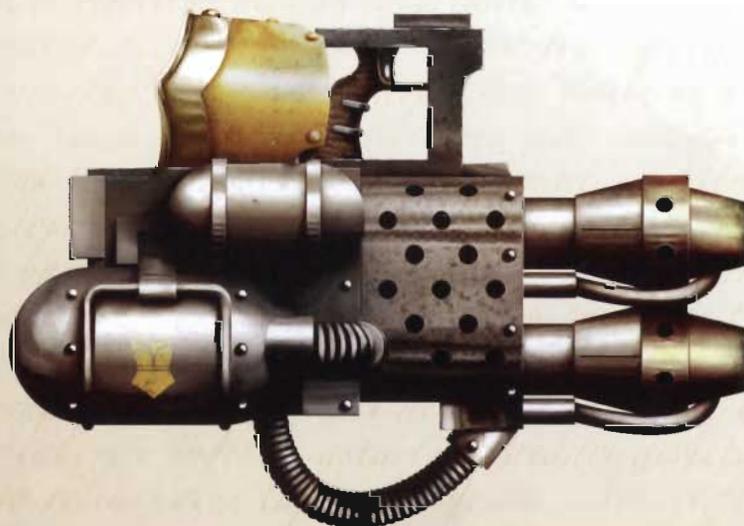
LEGIONARY BALDUR KORD
2ND ASSAULT ECHELON, 6TH COMPANY,
IMPERIAL FISTS WARSHIP – HALCYON
ASSAULT ON THE IRON BLOOD, BATTLE OF PHALL

The 2nd Assault Echelon was amongst the first units of the Imperial Fists Legion to be issued with Cataphractii Tactical Dreadnought Armour, and its members were masters in a range of heavy assault doctrines. At the Battle of Phall, all of the Legion's Tactical Dreadnought Armour equipped warriors were gathered into a single body and placed under the command of Captain Amandus Tyr, Kord's commanding officer. When Tyr led the attack against the Iron Warriors warship *Iron Blood* in a desperate mission to slay the Primarch Perturabo, the 2nd Assault Echelon went into battle at his side. Practically nothing is known of that attack, for contact was all but impossible once it was underway, meaning those brave souls counted amongst its ranks could not be recalled when the remainder of the Imperial Fists fleet disengaged from the Iron Warriors in the final stages of the Battle of Phall.

Legionary Kord is depicted here in the black and gold of his particular company heraldry. The armorial shield at his shoulder indicates Kord's membership of a senior vanguard assault formation, adorned with additional Icons of Moment. Kord was a Terran, unlike most of his peers in the 6th Company, who were born on Inwit. Unlike many other Legions however, such distinctions meant very little and were rarely discernible; Lord Dorn teaching that, as the smallest hairline crack might doom the mightiest of walls, "*division is weakness*" and therefore anathema to all that the VIIth Legion stood for.

Panoply of War

1. Phaestos Pattern Heavy Flamer.



IMPERIAL FISTS TERMINATOR

LEGIONARY FASOLT

12TH SQUAD, 4TH COMPANY,

IMPERIAL FISTS WARSHIP – BLADE OF PERDITION

BATTLE OF PHALL

Fasolt fought under his Primarch's stern gaze throughout dozens of wars of Compliance, travelling the length and breadth of the rapidly expanding Imperium aboard the *Phalanx*. When Dorn mustered the Retribution fleet, the 4th Company was serving alongside others of its Chapter under the notoriously bellicose Seneschal Rann. During the Battle of Phall, Fasolt participated in the *Blade of Perdition's* hit and run action against the Iron Warriors heavy cruiser *Sire of Sabaktes*, teleporting into the warship's central armoury and planting a melta charge that, when it detonated, set off a chain reaction and destroyed the entire vessel and its crew. By the time the survivors of 12th Squad had returned to the *Blade of Perdition*, Fleet Master Polux had issued the order to withdraw and it is characteristic of Seneschal Rann and his warriors that the *Blade* was one of the very last to obey.

Legionary Fasolt's Cataphractii Terminator armour bears the twinned axes on a red shield icon used by many units under Seneschal Rann's command, and the cross on his right forearm marks him as a veteran of his company. The fist and lightning bolts surmounted on black on the armour's left grieve indicates that Fasolt fought in a campaign led by the Emperor himself, an honour that many mark for prosperity.

Panoply of War

1. Charatran Pattern Chainaxe.

2. Phobos Pattern Combi-bolter.



IMPERIAL FISTS RETRIBUTION FLEET ATTACK CRAFT

The Imperial Fists Legion committed almost its entire fleet of warships to the prosecution of the Warmaster's traitors at the Istvan system, a naval force rivalling the grandest Expeditionary fleets of the Great Crusade. In addition to the hundreds of battleships, cruisers, destroyers and frigates of a staggering array of classes and displacements, the fleet was possessed of thousands of smaller attack craft used for a variety of roles in any battle in the cold void. At the Battle of Phall, all were pressed into service, and no effort was spared during the engagement against the Traitor Iron Warriors.

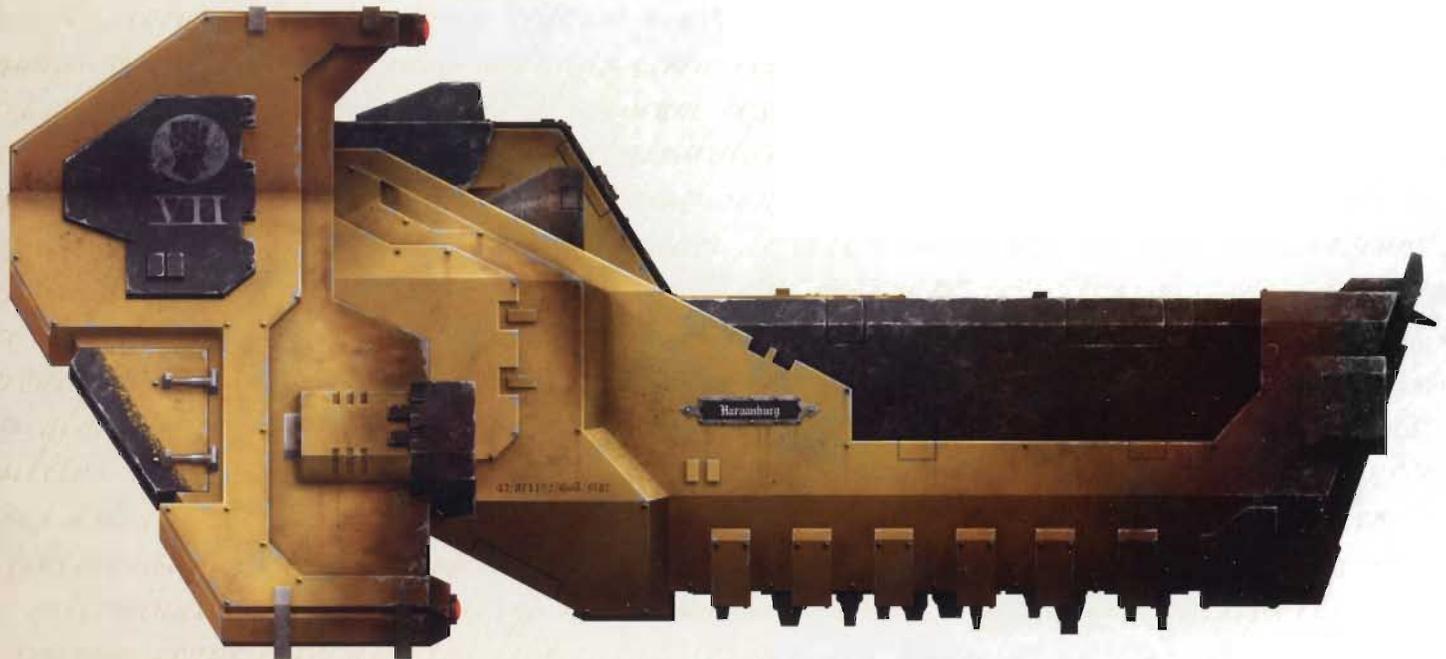
The Imperial Fists had access to a wide range of attack craft, some unique and pre-dating the Great Crusade and others wrought in their thousands in the forges

of Terra, Mars and dozens of other centres of materiel production. The Thunderhawk Gunship saw service in void combat intercepting enemy torpedoes, screening larger vessels and mounting daring attack runs against the foe's lighter escort ships. Dedicated boarding craft such as the Kharybdis and the Dreadclaw were fired across the void to burn their way through the armoured flanks of an enemy. One of the most potent craft in this class was the Caestus Assault Ram, a brutal weapon used in large numbers by the Imperial Fists Legion throughout the Great Crusade.

The Caestus is possessed of the heaviest armour of any craft of its size, but even this is insufficient to protect it from the staggering forces generated when it smashes and burns its way through enemy armour

to create a breach into which its passengers can assault the innards of its target. The craft is further protected by an array of shield generators, and without its inertial dampers even the Space Marines within would be crushed by the impact.

The Imperial Fists were masters in the deployment of entire attack wings of the Caestus, utilising them according to the Legion's doctrine that void battles were in essence sieges in space fought not in two, but in three dimensions. They committed hundreds of Caestus to the Battle of Phall and though scores were lost as the void itself burned with the sheer ferocity of the battle, numerous boarding actions were successfully conducted and dozens of Iron Warriors warships were reduced to burning hulks thanks to the efforts of their crews.





Imperial Fists Caestus Assault Ram 'Haraanburg': Named after a district of the Saxonii hive-sprawl of Terran Europa from which the VIIth Legion of old once recruited, the *Haraanburg* was part of the 43rd Assault Wing. The craft was deployed from the Imperial Fists warship *Blade of Perdition* at the Battle of Phall, completing three boarding actions against enemy vessels before withdrawing along with the rearguard of the Legion's fleet.



EXEMPLARY BATTLES

The Imperial Fists' name marches relentlessly across the records of victory from the Great Crusade. In the accounting of honour there are few of their brother Legions who could claim their company in those high orders, but victory comes at a price. The blood of many thousands of Imperial Fists watered the ground from which their victories bloomed, and time and again the telling of victory is a telling of sacrifice for the sons of Rogal Dorn.

THE UNHEARD WAR

This terrible conflict was fought in the Azurite Stations of Uranus in the days before the Great Crusade broke the bounds of the Sol System. Named for the corroded blue of the inner surfaces of their hulls, the Azurite Stations were a linked crescent of void citadels. Having cast off the rule of bloody-handed princelings, madmen and prophets several centuries before the coming of the Great Crusade, the Azurites had become a community of artisans and near-space scavengers. Despite their long independence, the Azurites greeted the Emperor's envoys courteously and agreed to kneel to Imperial authority.

As with every other scrap of resource in those times, the newly Compliant Azurites were turned to fuelling the ever hungry machine of the Great Crusade. Significant numbers of their civilisation were inducted into the crews of the expanding fleet and Azurite void suits, augury scanners and shard weaponry began to flow into the hands of Great Crusade forces.

The doom of the Azurites began with an attack by the Solar Pirates. The Sol System was an even more untamed place in those dark times, and though the Emperor had the fealty of Mars and Luna, there were many other factions of lesser and greater strength who still had to bend the knee to the new order. Hundreds of petty empires and feral civilisations clung to the wreckage fields of half dead star ships and the debris-choked orbits of planets and moons, and amongst them, the Solar Pirates had risen to power as the Age of Strife broke. A loose alliance of various void borne reavers, despots and scavengers, they commanded a scattered host of ships and bases throughout the system. Many of the crimes of Old Night still had a home amongst these carrion warriors: witchery, mutation and abomination ran through their throng like rot through a corpse. Scornful of the new Imperium, but fearing its might, they circled the new-born realm like jackals at the edge of firelight, and as the bulk of the Emperor's forces were sucked into the spiralling wars for Neptune's moons, the pirate clans' hunger finally overcame their prudence.

A pack of their vessels descended on the Azurite Stations and, intent on plunder rather than conquest, the pirate ships flayed the station's defences and poured a tattered horde into its guts. The Azurites screamed into the void, calling on their new masters to aid them. Though focused elsewhere, the Imperium was not deaf to the violation of part of its newly claimed domains. In answer to the cries of the Azurites, it sent the Imperial Fists.

When they arrived, a squadron of heavily gunned system craft bored its way through the sphere of pirate ships and launched assault craft into the beleaguered station. Fifty Imperial Fists disgorged into the battle-filled passages and within twenty minutes they had broken the first wave of pirate boarders. Within an hour they had configured the station's defences and depleted garrison into a bulwark which broke three more pirate assaults. The pirate clans, sensing defeat, cut their losses and ran

back into the dark to lick their wounds. They did not flee though without one final parting act of spite.

In a last suicidal attack, a ship broke through the Imperial lines and fired three boarding torpedoes at the station. Two died in flames. One got through — damaged but still intact — and penetrated the station's skin. In the torpedo's wreckage were not bodies of warriors or a payload of exotic weapons, just a wizened man with no eyes, fingers or ears. Though badly injured, the old man had strength enough to speak one word before he died — "Silence". Only then did the Azurites who found him realise that he had no tongue.

The mysteries of the Warp, then as now, are not paths that sane men should walk, but the danger of psykers and the powers of witches had blighted humanity throughout the Age of Strife. In unifying Old Earth, every Legion had faced shamans and sorcerers whose powers defied reality. In that blackened and tattered age, a name had risen to rival that of the greatest despots, though it was no living thing. 'The Screaming' they had called it, a psy-plague which had ravaged civilisations and turned the lower Hzentian Basin to glass as it burned out the minds of lost Edioth. Thought eradicated since the first years of the Emperor's rise to power, the Screaming had returned to burn anew.

The outbreak began an hour after the tongueless man died. It started first amongst the Azurite militiamen who had found the torpedo, and as one they began to scream and scream and scream. The sound shook the station and blood began to run down the blue corroded walls. The militiamen pleaded with friends and comrades even as they burned them to ashes with their touch, and like a brush fire the psy-plague carried by the dying man's word began to spread, flowing through the echoes of their agonising screams in the Warp until, far away on Terra, the adepts of the Silent Mountain cried out in pain. Some tried to stand against it, but they failed, and were immediately purged. Only the Imperial Fists stood firm.

As the psy-plague gripped the Azurite Stations, the fifty Imperial Fists knew that they alone stood against a threat which could wound the Great Crusade itself. As one they deafened themselves, reducing their world to silence, even as lightning crackled through the station's bones. As maddened waves of people spilled through the labyrinth of tunnels, the Imperial Fists met them with walls of boarding shields and volleys of volkite fire. But even as the first wave broke, they knew that they could not hold and win. Tens of millions dwelt within the Azurite Stations, and with every echoing cry, the Screaming would be spreading and searching for a way out. That could not be allowed

to happen. All it would take would be one person, one cry across a vox heard beyond the station and the Screaming would spread. With a last coded command they ordered the warships to withdraw, renewed their oaths and went to meet their deaths.

The Imperial Fists attacked, driving forward into the heart of the station complex metre by bloody metre. The decks before their shield walls were heaped with charred and bloody flesh. Many of them fell, pulled down by human figures that had become creatures of lightning, fire and whirling darkness. Shrouded in silence they pressed on until they reached the central generator areas. Setting the reactors to overload, the handful of remaining Legionaries transmitted one final message, telling the Imperium of what they had done and why. An hour later, the reactors detonated.

Within hours of the Imperium receiving the last message from the Azurite Stations, fleets of ships and forces from the newly expanded Legions were sent to hunt down the pirates. A month later, all that existed of the Solar Pirates were gutted wrecks and corpses floating in the airless night. The Screaming was never visited on Mankind again, and it is said that when the Emperor heard of the sacrifice of the fifty Imperial Fists, he ordered the newly raised Bell of Lost Souls tolled for the first time.



THE CONSUS DRIFT

The region known as the Consus Drift was a belt of stellar debris which lay in the dark between stars close to the Sol System. Stranded far away from the warmth of suns or the life sustaining cycles of planets, it was nonetheless home to billions of humans. Travel through the realm known as the Warp is a matter of chance and luck as much as design, and every ship sent through that other realm is at prey to forces beyond the control of those who pilot them. The Warp is alive with tides, whirlpools and flats of dead calm where nothing moves. Sometimes it settles into a pattern, like a riptide formed by the shape of the sea shore. The Mirror Race is such a pattern, and ships caught in it are flung through its turbulence to emerge in the Consus Drift.

How long ago the first ship was marooned there cannot be known, but by the time of the Great Crusade, it had become a civilisation grown from lost souls. Vast strings of asteroid cities lay across the Consus Drift, connected together by tunnels made from the metal entrails of shipwrecks. Willow limbed, black eyed and pale skinned, the people of this sprawling archipelago were divided into clans which warred with one another for salvage, territory and resources. For the Drift Clans air, water and food were precious beyond price, and they

would kill without thought or question to secure them. Each clan was distinguished not by a name but by the vivid patterns painted onto their armoured void suits and tattooed upon their skin. Though every Driftborn was trained and capable of killing from the age they could wear a void suit, they were a people of discipline as much as bloodshed. Killing and war was a necessity, not a pleasure. There were vendettas, blood feuds and disputes, but the boundaries of bloodshed were defined by tradition and enforced by unquestioned custom.

The Imperium came upon the Consus Drift by accident. The 3rd Expeditionary Fleet, under the command of the Imperial Fists, was caught in the Mirror Race and thrown out into that region. As the fleet rolled in the void, damaged and confused, the Drift Clans attacked. Such a move might seem foolish; the Drift Clans had warships but few were large and most were carriers for boarding craft, or designed to lock onto an enemy and disgorge troops into its target. Beside the raw firepower and size of the Expeditionary fleet, the Drift Clans might have seemed hopelessly outgunned but this was not entirely true. The archipelago of void cities mounted weapons scavenged over thousands of years. More significantly, the Drift Clans were from child to crone schooled and blooded in the brutal arts of void warfare.

Fire rose from the Consus Drift in a torrent and ships struggling to bring systems online began to burn. The first assault waves hit the most damaged vessels and battles swarmed through the warships even as they tried to return fire. Perhaps if the Imperial forces had been weaker, or not bound to the VIIth Legion, they would have perished then, pulled down from within and butchered for their salvage, but even as the Drift Clans made progress, they met the first of the Imperial Fists and the battle changed.

The Imperial Fists counter-attacked, driving the Driftborn from their ships in a rolling wall of armour and gunfire, and once they had pushed the attackers from their vessels, they simply kept going. They launched gunships, boarding torpedoes and breaching pods into the void cities of the Consus Drift, the Imperial Fists' assault hitting their targets at the point where the entire fleet coordinated its fire to strip the weapons and shields from the largest void cities.

Battering their way into the heart of each city, the Imperial Fists stopped only when their hands held the controls of the cities' life support systems. As one the Imperial fleet stopped firing and each unit engaged in combat ceased fighting. Across every vox channel and speaker, the commander of the Imperial Fists gave the people of the



Consus Drift an ultimatum: Compliance or extermination. The Clan warriors were stunned; they had never encountered such beings before, nor seen war executed in such a manner. They surrendered.

The 3rd Expeditionary Fleet left after repairs were made, but not before the Imperial Fists had taken the youngest and strongest male warriors of each of the Drift Clans. Of those who survived initiation into the Legion, all were inducted into a single company; the 356th. Over the next century, the 356th Company's reputation for excellence in outer hull void war and ship assaults was without peer, and the clustered star heraldry and tradition of elaborate full body tattoos amongst their warriors still speaks to the traditions of the clans of the Consus Drift.

THE TWO WARS OF ARANEUS

The worlds of the Araneus Continuity were a series of planets close to the Sol System which had maintained links to one another due to a series of ancient warp gates of unknown origin. Ruled by a caste of technobility from the world of Araneus Prime at the heart of the network of warp gates, the Continuity was a kingdom of iron and hungering industry. Algal ocean worlds fed planets which had not known the natural growth of plants for thousands of generations. Mines delved deep into the crusts of dozens of planets, and the discarded orbs of scoured clean moons turned under the blankets of ash and pollution. The technobility themselves often still clung to the seats of their industrial power, living in towers which reached kilometres above the iron mountain ranges of their world-cities.

Contact between the Imperium and this pocket of humanity occurred by accident. A lost squadron of ships returning from the Gehenial Prosecution was forced from the Warp into one of the Continuity's peripheral systems. Before they could jump back into the Warp, the squadron was surrounded, boarded, and overwhelmed by cybernetically grafted warriors. The cries of the squadron's Astropath echoed through the Immaterium, and far away the Imperium heard and turned its gaze upon the worlds of the Araneus.

An envoy fleet went first, and was allowed to return bearing the Continuity's answer to the Emperor's demand of fealty. Clearly disbelieving the envoys' claims of representing an empire larger than that of the Araneus, the technobility refused to

bow to the Emperor, but instead invited him to join their empire as a tributary. For its response, the Imperium turned to the Imperial Fists.

It fell to Hashin Yonnad, Commander of the 39th Household of Inwit, to prosecute the war. Yonnad was a warrior of vast experience, a son of one of the Inwit Clusters' greatest vassal worlds before it had become part of the Imperium, and reckoned by many to be one of the Imperium's greatest strategists. Called upon many times as fleet commander and siege master, he planned meticulously then executed his plans with brutal swiftness. As he had before, Yonnad arrayed and prepared his forces with the utmost care. After months of marshalling his strength, Yonnad's fleet left its staging point at Tallarn for the last time—thousands of ships carrying over 20,000 Imperial Fists, alongside millions of troops of the Imperial Army and Mechanicum slid into the Warp.

Yonnad's entire force struck as one, overwhelming a peripheral system of the Continuity in a single day. Before the Continuity could even realise what had happened, Yonnad's forces were already moving on. He already knew of the Continuity's network of warp gates from the envoys sent to the pocket empire and saw in it a means of attack. With one warp gate taken Yonnad's forces divided, breaking into planned sub-forces and striking out using the warp gates themselves. As soon as they arrived in a new system they would attack, secure the gate and wait for long enough to fortify their holdings before jumping to the next system. The Continuity tried to respond, but every time they struck back, they would find their own gates held against them and, no matter what price in death they extracted from the Imperial forces, they paid many times that cost.

Within two months the Continuity was reduced to the single core world of Araneus Prime. Their empire cut from around them, the technobility in their iron towers looked up one night and saw the darkness stolen by the light of the Imperial fleet. They surrendered then, and the sun rose the next day on the seat of another empire brought to Compliance.

War is the interplay of chance and mischance, or so some claim. Few would have doubted that truth on the day when the first worlds of the newly Compliant Araneus Continuity died. They fell even as the Iterators descended to the planets'

surfaces and these newly Compliant citizens of the Imperium were waking to the new reality of their lives. Strange alien ships poured from the warp gates, small dark ships circling bloated behemoth craft. Who were the enemy who came with such fury and also little warning? Why did they choose to attack at that moment? Even then none knew and now we can only guess without the possibility of ever knowing. A few accounts speak of a darkness deeper than the void, of living lightning and flame-wreathed chrome. What we do know is that they came not to conquer but to destroy. Six systems burned, their stars igniting to terrible life before crumbling to cold embers.

Even as the systems fell, Imperial ships ran before the storm of destruction as heralds of its coming. With the domain he had just conquered vanishing around him, Yonnad saw that he could either defend some or lose all, and that even if they won the cost would be terrible. He chose to bear that price. Ships raced through the remaining warp gates taking his orders to those who would have to enact them. As the unknown enemy appeared in system after system, they met the Imperial Fists. The defenders knew that there was no hope of survival, but survival was not victory. As more of the enemy came, they detonated the warheads they had attached to each gate. The light from each exploding gate burned as bright as a new born sun in both the void and the Warp.

Without their gates, the unknown enemies simply vanished. Perhaps they dissolved into the void or died in the death fires of the gates themselves. Regardless, their advance halted on Araneus Prime when its gate exploded. The price paid by the Imperial Fists and their vassals had been enough—just. All but one of the systems of the Continuity died, and at the cost of thousands of Imperial Fists and billions of humans Araneus Prime survived, but barely. The death of its warp gate and the cluster of xenos craft which had penetrated the Imperial Fists' lines had changed the shape of the planet. Its surface had been riven by unnatural fire, its world-city cracked and rendered to dust and ash, from which the shattered roots of its great towers rose like broken teeth.

Looking on the charred remnants taken from the pyre, the Imperium gave it a new name, one that echoed with a world brought to the threshold of death but that still lived.

Necromunda, they named it.



THE ALPHA LEGION

Numeration: The XXth Legion

Primogenitor: Alpharius

Cognomen: (Prior) Many informal cognomen are listed for the Legion, including: The Harrowing, The Children of Eris, The Ghost Legion, The Unbroken Chain, The Strife Wrought, The Hydra, The Combine, Aleph Null, The Last Unity, Vigil, The Threefold Path, The Left Hand of Darkness, The Azure Serpent, The Amaranth Coil and simply lit. – "Legion". [732 other recognised cognomen occur in Primaris level archives]

Observed Strategic Tendencies: Surprise Assault, Sabotage, Infiltration, Insurgency and Counter-insurgency Warfare, Multi-vector Attack, Interplanetary Pursuit and Decimation Campaigns, and Deep-range Raiding Operations.

Noteworthy Domains: Unknown/Unconfirmed (see Addendum XX-XVX-Omega-V)

Allegiance: *Traitoris Perdita*

"War is life. In war and in life nothing is so precious as truth, and thus as the ancient wisdom holds: where truth walks, everywhere she should be shepherded always by a bodyguard of lies."

The Unspeakable King
Magnar Albia and Archtyrant of Panpacific
Collected Idles and Nightmares, Cantos XI
Circa M.27

"Our name is Legion, for we are many."

The Book of Malignancies
The Apocrypha Terra
Origin date unknown

There is no other Legion like the XXth. Of all the mighty forces the Imperium commanded during the Great Crusade, there were none so wound about with falsehood, supposition and paradox than they. Any attempted study of the XXth division of the gene-seed of the Legiones Astartes, a force that would eventually become known as the Alpha Legion among a myriad of other names, is therefore fraught with difficulty and contradiction, and uncovering 'truth' when applied to such a study is a vain hope. This is the case even to a record such as this, compiled with the highest of authorities and most extensive reach possible given the wreckage of the age of war which we have so recently survived.

Long before the vile treachery of Horus came into being, the XXth Legion, its formation, use and purpose was shrouded with mystery and deliberate concealment from the rest of the Imperium. This secrecy was colluded in—it is evident—by the highest circles of power; indeed, it cannot be doubted that it was by the Emperor's will. It is the supposition of this record that the secrecy that surrounded this 'outsider' Legion and its hidden purposes, would later serve to conceal a cancerous transformation at its heart which was long in its gestation. This malediction; a delight in strife, and the increasing addiction to the exercising of its own preternatural abilities for subterfuge and destruction, clearly worsened after the ascension of Horus to Warmaster, although it was unlikely responsible for this to any extent except giving the Alpha Legion licence. The Alpha Legion thus became a twisting serpentine thing of formless shadows, as dangerous and venomous as the multi-headed monster of ancient myth that in latter days became its sigil and its sign. It was a weapon neither first the Emperor nor later the Warmaster could fully control.

What follows then is a fragmentary and in parts contradictory record. More so than any other of its type, this record relies on evidence of the Legion's activities and operations as observed by covert sources, and those who have dealt with the Alpha Legion at first hand as both ally and enemy before the perfidy of Horus was to bear its bitter fruit. Such wisdom was often paid for in blood, rather than drawn from within the Legion's own ranks—as such inside testimony itself is doubly filled with lies and misdirection. This then is a secret history of the Alpha Legion and in its lies perhaps may be found the truth.

ORIGINS: THE GHOST LEGION

The pall of mystery surrounding the XXth Legion can be traced back to its creation.

The last known of the gene-seed strains used in the creation of the Legiones Astartes at the end of the Unification Wars, factors relating to the XXth were kept beyond the usual secrecy and security that the Emperor chose to surround the Space Marine project with. The XXth, along with the XVIIIth and VIth proto-Legions, were formed and established largely in separation from the rest of the Legiones Astartes, and it is generally thought created to very specific ends and purposes. What plan of the Emperor's lay behind this action cannot now be known, and even at the dawning of the Imperial Age, this was one of many secrets the Emperor kept both from the Imperial Court and many of his closest advisors, and the Primarchs themselves.

Known obliquely in some sources as the 'Trefoil', these Legions were kept veiled and distant from their brother Legiones Astartes from the beginning, breeding distrust between them that, save in the case of the XVIIth Legion—who would later become the widely renowned Salamanders Legion—would never disappear. In the case of the Alpha Legion, it would instead worsen over time. This first mystery would breed others, and questions would continue to go unanswered not simply about the XXth Legion's methods and nature, but about the use to which it was put in its earliest days.

Of the early decades of the XXth Legion on Terra and during the re-conquest of the Sol System almost nothing can be said with any accuracy whatsoever, and even the cluster of myths and rumours that would later grow to surround the Legion's activities is absent. What remains instead are a few sparse but suggestive fragments; anomalous records of unknown Legiones Astartes units carrying out targeted strikes, abductions and

assassinations, both on Terra and beyond, and reports of Space Marine units answering to no known master or Legion allegiance passing through war zones on high priority missions and under the writ of unassailable clearance codes which brooked no question. Rumour and supposition even surrounds the designation 'Alpha', which by some records is connected with the XXth proto-Legion from a very early period. This, aside from the numerous occult and arcane associations and significance that certain sources choose to derive from this fact, ties into another, more prosaic, potential association dating back to the hidden work of the Emperor's own gene-labs.

It is apparent from numerous extant sources that during their creation, each nascent proto-Legion after the Primus or Ist Legion (later the Angelis Tenebraium or Dark Angels), was raised first to active service in a staged process of testing and trials before the full active force was created through mass recruitment. Each stage of creation would result in an expansion of the gene-seed implantation on progressively larger groups of neophytes. The last of these preliminary stages was, according to sources, the 'Alpha' induction. This was in essence believed to be the first non-experimental implantation, and its purpose was to create a proto-Legion

at minimum fighting strength to be field tested in open battle. It is notable that at this stage that in the case of the [REDACTED] failed. Tellingly, there is no recorded evidence that the XXth pattern gene-seed group, although having been approved by the Emperor after its initial battle tests, was ever ordered to expand to full implantation, or received an allotted intake region for mass recruitment as the rest would do during the early years of the Great Crusade. This then effectively limited the XXth Legion to a body of around 1,000-2,000 Legionaries and effectively 'side-lined' them while their contemporaries underwent rapid expansion and deployment through the opening phases of the Great Crusade. The question then remains, why?

Almost certainly it was not a question of gene-adaption; the extant sample records place the gene-seed implantation success for the XXth pattern as being in the higher end of the recorded spectrum. The evidence would indicate it was certainly far superior to certain other developed types [the difficulties experienced by the VIth and IXth patterns being documented elsewhere]. Likewise, their battlefield performance was rated high, removing the other most obvious likelihood for considering the proto-Legion a failure. There are three outstanding theories that have been posited as to why the XXth was not apparently expanded to full Legion strength during the early Great Crusade which may each have some merit.

The first is entirely mundane —shortage of suitable manpower— the recruitment assignments of the other Legions during the period now covered most of the suitable genetic and cultural candidates of both Terra and the Sol System, and the disaster of [REDACTED] had proven the folly of attempting to recruit Legiones Astartes stock from potentially tainted sources.

The second is the suspicion that some hidden problem, or potential flaw had been discovered which prevented the proto-Legion's expansion—although this in many ways seems unlikely; for it is to suggest the Emperor was either unable or unwilling to solve such a problem and equally unwilling to ruthlessly eradicate a failed experiment as he had done before.

The third theory is that the XXth was deliberately preserved separately as an isolated unit for either scientific or military reasons; possibly to act as a strategic gene-seed reserve (or indeed a 'control group', as some have suggested, to measure gene-

distortion over time in the other Legions). This theory also posits the possibility that the XXth proto-Legion was held back to undergo some further development or conditioning unique to them that the rest of the Legiones Astartes had been excluded from by design. There remains no evidence that links this last 'Alpha' stage Legion to the Emperor's later and eternally sealed gene-craft project to create the Legio Custodes, nor indeed involvement in *Labryk Polaris* or the aborted [REDACTED] experiment which has long been the subject of dark rumour.

A War in Shadow

Once the Great Crusade was fully underway and the first of the great Expeditionary fleets had set out in earnest to bring unity to the galaxy, the XXth Legion then disappears from official history for many decades. However, some sources posit a connection between them and certain shadowed events during the Great Crusade that have never been satisfactorily explained by the official record, even to such as is known to the highest echelons of the Imperium, save the Throne of Terra itself. Some suggest that during this time the XXth, without then their Primarch, had a secret role to play in ensuring the Imperium's future. It has been apparent since the earliest days of the Great Crusade and the Emperor's great vision of a united humanity free of the shackles of torment of the nightmarish cosmos, that as well as the many enemies without, there has remained the danger of the enemy within as has been proved time and again. Evidence for this hypothesis can be seen both in the mysterious assault which scattered the Primarchs across the stars, and by the fact that the nascent Imperium was plagued with terrorist assaults, petty rebellions and the desperate plots of renegades and madmen. Some such enemies had slunk into shadowed obscurity following bitter defeats and crushing conquests during the bloody wars of Unification but yet plotted vengeance. Others, twisted by lust for power or tainted by exposure to the horrors beyond, sought to pervert the Imperial dream for their own ends.

No clearer sign that such hidden foes could strike at the heart of the Imperium occurred than the so-called 'accident' that resulted in the gene-seed crisis that was nearly to doom the IIIrd Legion—an act which many have since attributed to the actions of a secret enemy within. It was not long after this dark event in the fourth decade of the Great Crusade, that scattered and apocryphal reports of anomalous Legiones



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Astartes activity come to light. These actions were uniformly tactical-scale operations, carried out far from the front lines of the Great Crusade by small detached units, ranging between squad and company in size. The warriors who carried them out were doubtless of the Legiones Astartes by their power, abilities and wargear, but their identity remained concealed. These mysterious Legionaries carried little or no unit markings or heraldry, or in some cases bore unrecognised markings not in the official record. In some stranger instances yet, they operated under a 'false flag'; the livery of a known Legion, often amid a war zone where that impersonated Legion was operating but without that Legion's knowledge, license or command. These actions were uniformly of a covert nature: surgical strikes, assassinations, espionage, sabotage, the recovery of unknown artefacts or the abduction of important individuals or entire groups for some unknown purpose. Such strikes, carried out both at the front lines and within the Compliant worlds of the Imperium, were deadly accurate and seldom left any witnesses alive to tell directly of them.

The predations of what came to be known in certain circles as the 'Ghost Legion' were rare—at least those that came to light were few—and protests by local commanders or planetary governors against them were rebuffed or simply ignored. It was suggested by some within the Imperial High Command that the XXth Legion was at work, but as other, specialised agencies of the Imperium such as the Legio Custodes, the Sororitas Inconcessus and the Officio Assassinorum rose to power and established themselves, reports of this unknown force faded and began to enter myth, although they never entirely disappeared. If such a 'Ghost Legion' truly existed as a coherent entity, then it represents the frightening prospect of a Legiones Astartes force whose specialisation was to act in a way that was distinctly different from its peers, and to do so in secret. If this force was indeed the XXth Legion, then it may have been operating in the shadows of the Imperium for more than a century, building a web of influence and experience alien to any other Space Marine Legion and undertaking a secret war at once part of and parallel to the Great Crusade itself.

What it became, what it learned during these years remains unknown. But even if this supposition is true and not merely a convenient theory fashioned after the fact to explain what was to follow, it poses yet

another question—why was the purpose of this 'Ghost Legion' in its particular role ended? Had it simply been replaced by more specialised and newly founded powers, or had it become perhaps too unpredictable, uncontrollable or even too dangerous in its current form? Had the Great Crusade's need for a front-line battle Legion to add to its war effort proved too great to allow the XXth to remain in the shadows, or had the long-awaited recovery of its Primarch necessitated the change? Irrespective of the truth, the twisting coils of the Alpha Legion rose from the darkness and into the light of the Imperium.

UNITY AND LIES

There remains much that is contradictory in the accounts of the first open actions of the Alpha Legion as a force of the Legiones Astartes in its own right. Official accounts found in both the arcanooms of the Logistica Corpus and the more prosaic works of the Remembrancers place the Alpha Legion's appearance as an active Legion force in its own right to either the decade immediately preceding the commencement of the Farinatus Extermination or as appearing as an unexpected reinforcing power during the darkest days of the third Rangdan Genocides. This represents a discrepancy of some thirty sidereal years, but in many regards makes the Alpha Legion the last of the Legiones Astartes to be recognised as a military entity in its own right by a considerable margin, and also the last to be officially re-united with its Primarch [again accounts widely differ as to the exact timing and conditions of this occurrence, and are dealt with elsewhere in this account].

In battle this 'youngest' Legion, driven by its mysterious and taciturn Primarch, became renowned quickly for its discipline and strict and impenetrable organisation and regime, which emphasised the unity of the Legion and its wider actions over the individual in every respect. Its hallmark was a relentless application of force and a terrifying level of co-ordination between its warriors and war machines. This capacity for combined arms warfare, speed and surety of attack was matched by a mastery of the darker arts of war: of sabotage and ambush, terror tactics and assassination. Also evident was its desire for secrecy and talent for misdirection. It kept its distance from its fellow Legions, even when tasked to directly fight alongside them, and in its actions many found a sinister watchfulness, and beneath the façade, the shadow of mockery.

The XXth Legion's chosen name—the Alpha Legion (in the ancient form commonly meaning the 'first' or the 'beginning' in the glyph-pattern)—seems an almost deliberately perverse jest in the light of its late inception, as does the name by which its Primarch was generally to become known—Alpharius. Some who have studied the history of this Traitor Legion have chosen to see the adoption of this naming convention neither as irony nor deliberate contradiction of fact, but rather as a statement of ambition and intent. The Alpha may also mean 'Primary' and 'Supreme', particularly in conjunction with the ancient glyph Omega to form the pre-Dark Age of Technology sigil known as the Æternus. This sigil, which was used particularly in the earlier displays of the Legion's heraldry, carries other hidden meanings not limited to themes of unity, continuum and indestructibility. It contains within it the pre-Imperial 'sacred geometry' (Ref: Tellurian Data-Glyph patterns) of the serpent of power



and knowledge coiling around the pillars of physical reality and truth. The serpent also has, since time immemorial, been seen as a symbol of treachery, secrets, strife and lies. The ancient Terran mythic serpent of devastation that could not be slain—for when one head is cut off, two more would uncoil in its place—would provide the Legion's other great icon-type, and one which would become dominant by the time of the Horus Heresy; the symbol of the Hydra. Even then within these symbols alone could be divined layer upon layer of hidden meaning and the promise of baleful intent, ambition and destruction; so would it be with the Alpha Legion.

The Harrowing

Unlike the other Legiones Astartes in which could be discerned patterns of Terran culture and intake of recruitment, with the hand of their Primarch's direct influence or that of their founding wrought upon what had gone before, where the Alpha Legion

and their Primarch began or ended were to all intents and purposes one and the same. Their hallmarks were unity, power and the confusion that outsiders encountered in dealing with them. Right from the very beginning, even the Imperialis Logistica could not confirm even the most basic details of the Legion with any certainty, be it the Legion's primary spheres of recruitment, its livery or anything remotely approaching a true gauge of its operating strength. It was a Legion seemingly sprung whole and entire as if from nowhere, complete with tens of thousands of fully equipped Legionaries and a capable war fleet that operated with veteran skill.

Even the name under which it operated seemed in doubt, for while the name of 'Alpha Legion' gained common currency, official battle reports saw it operating under self-given titles such as the 'Unbroken Chain' or more sinister appellations such as 'The Harrowing' as it called itself in the

xenocidal campaigns of the Perfidian Gap Extermination. Likewise, many accounts occur of individual members of the Legion referring to themselves to outsiders by the name of 'Alpharius' or simply as 'One of Many', often infuriating and confounding the forces they served alongside. Whether this policy of anonymity was the result of the unusual focus the Legion placed on unity and solidarity in its ranks, or mere outright addiction to secrecy or a deliberate attempt to mask its numbers is unknown.

Other contrary accounts exist which belie this practice, however. Multiple sources of evidence exist of names originating in ancient long-thought lost dialects being used by the Legion both in communication and as personal cognomen for its members. Further, on at least one occasion, analysis of after-action reports involving a battalion of the Alpha Legion (in this case serving alongside the Klarkash Imperialis Auxillia against the Khraive at Memlock), the names and code



words used by its Legionaries were later found to exactly correlate to the population of a recidivist human world the Alpha Legion itself had previously exterminated (Ref: the Neverlight Contagion). The reason for this falsehood or the function this macabre practice served remains unknown. Such attitudes of deception—in their broadest sense at least—appear to have been tacitly accepted and tolerated by the Emperor and later by Horus as Warmaster, though to what true ends remains unclear.

In battle the Alpha Legion proved itself capable of wielding a devastating mixture of subtlety and overwhelming force, revelling in both meticulous planning and the exercising of imaginative cruelty in war. Quickly, the Alpha Legion developed an unmatched reputation among the Legiones Astartes—save perhaps by the Raven Guard—for the use of espionage, infiltration and sabotage in its strategic planning. But where the Raven Guard sought to use such tactics to achieve victory without unnecessary attrition, or spare a human population it sought to liberate, the Alpha Legion had other, darker, purposes in mind. To them, such covert tactics seemed almost a deadly game of prelude. Where it could, the Alpha Legion would spread confusion and disorder seemingly for its own sake as

well as any tactical gain it conferred, or even perhaps for the bloody spectacle of it. They maimed and bled the foe, forced them to chase phantoms and turn on each other in panic before they struck. Such tactics often brought the Alpha Legion's target to an agonised fever-pitch while simultaneously robbing them of their real strength and forcing them into such vulnerable configurations as the Alpha Legion wished. Then would come the kill. Often this final attack, or 'Harrowing', would be in the form of an assault from a hundred directions at once; a blizzard of different tactics and attack plans used against a foe either utterly unaware of the true danger or already brought to the brink of chaos. The result was almost inevitable catastrophe for the Alpha Legion's victims, as the full might of the Legion would then descend at the point of their enemy's greatest weakness, and what would follow would be, to the onlooker, more akin to murder than battle.

To their allies, the Alpha Legion represented a shifting, protean entity of uncertain identity and active deceit, coupled with undeniable military strength, unknowable goals—and to some observers—unproven loyalty—a dangerous combination and one that did not breed trust. To their enemies they were a true nightmare; a foe that could strike from any direction, a foe that seemed to thwart any stratagem and strike

at weakness no matter how well hidden. The Alpha Legion was a foe that knew neither mercy, nor honour, nor quarter, and one that seemed to delight in destruction for its own sake, and the chaos and anarchy it could inspire before the death blow.

Although its history as an active Legion was a short one compared to many—at least under its own name—it proved quickly determined to match any of its brothers in glory—or perhaps more accurately prove itself superior to them—and its tally of victories mounted with surpassing speed. The Alpha Legion, ever watchful, was far from averse from studying the strengths of their fellow Legions, and their weaknesses, and adapting the weapons and tactics of the other Legiones Astartes to their own ends. In this the Legion was not so different to the strategic observances of the Ultramarines Chapter and their master, although it is doubtful that the Lords of Ultramar would have cared much for the comparison, even before the two Legions later came to bitter bloodshed. Such zealousness to prove themselves as part of the Great Crusade at any cost, and the often over-elaborate and needlessly complex and malign way in which the Alpha Legion chose to wage war saw them quickly gain infamy more than fame. This, coupled with growing distrust due to their insular and deceptive nature, brought rivalry and acrimony between the Alpha Legion and much of the rest of the Legiones Astartes.

As time passed, the relationship between the Alpha Legion and its peers soured further. The nature of the Alpha Legion's

arts of war and their lack of adherence to the commands of other Legions placed over them in the field brought Alpharius and both Roboute Guilliman of the Ultramarines and Mortarion of the Death Guard into conflict on several separate occasions, with incidents notably occurring both in the aftermath of the Ullanor Campaign and the later Vasalius Uprisings. More pointedly Rogal Dorn and the Imperial Fists quickly grew to see the entire Alpha Legion as "... *honourless assassins, not fit to bear the Emperor's mark*", and only the direct intervention of the Emperor himself forestalled blood being spilt between the higher ranking officers of the two Legions in an affair of honour after the fall of the Fortress of Jakalla during the Avalorn Compliance.

Beyond these more famous incidents, Konrad Curze of the Night Lords is recorded in the secret transcripts of the Legio Custodes to have openly condemned the Legion as "*hiding their true sins in a shroud of lies*", while the evidence also seems to suggest that the Alpha Legion were discreetly shunned and avoided by the Thousand Sons Legion where possible, although no cause for this discord has ever come to light.

Conversely, if the Alpha Legion could be said to have had an ally or friend among the Primarchs, it was Horus himself, and a potent ally he would prove. Horus saw the Legion as a unique weapon in the Imperium's arsenal, its ambition laudable and its tactics not so very far removed from those favoured by his own Legion. Furthermore, the XXth Legion is also known to have successfully campaigned beside both the Dark Angels and the Iron Hands without incident (perhaps surprisingly) on multiple occasions before the outbreak of the war of the Horus Heresy, and also displayed a talent for successfully formulating battle plans which incorporated non-Legiones Astartes forces in its campaigns with great effect, although spending the power and lives of those who served alongside the Legion with coldly calculated efficiency. Standing also in favour of the Alpha Legion was an enviable record of success in military terms, particularly in forcing the Compliance of recalcitrant human colonies, and exposing and rooting out rebellion and treachery on recently Compliant worlds. It had also developed a reputation for hunting down and exterminating Warp-capable raiding forces, nomadic xenos threats and human renegades, at which it had also proven remarkably successful.

After his ascension to the rank of Warmaster, where he gained control over the outward campaigns of the Great Crusade, Horus increasingly gave free rein to the Alpha Legion to operate independently of other Legiones Astartes forces. The Alpha Legion during this time noticeably and swiftly expanded in size, creating the core of several Expeditionary fleets and splitting to form scores of independent deep-range raiding forces, often operating alongside Rogue Traders and reaching into the unknown void well beyond the Great Crusade's frontlines. In the final years before the outbreak of the Horus Heresy, there is fragmentary evidence to indicate that even Horus was beginning to doubt his grip on the Alpha Legion, and doubt also the veracity of his own knowledge about the XXth, its goals and who it truly served. Secret reports prepared for both the Warmaster and the Imperial Court on Terra during this period show a growing unease about the Alpha Legion, some implying that it was increasingly beyond the Imperium's ability to measure or to control. Furthermore, that perhaps some obsession or madness was taking hold of the Legion's psyche in the way it operated and made war. It has been suggested that the Alpha Legion had begun to seek out battles to fight for the challenge they offered, rather than to suit the needs of the Great Crusade, orchestrating ever more apocalyptic displays of their arcane and malevolent methods of war, even when mere conventional assault would have proved more efficient and expedient.

In time the accusation had started to become such common currency among the Terran Court and many Imperial commanders that the Alpha Legion had now become seemingly addicted to bringing low civilizations by anarchy, fire and blood that might have been brought into Compliance readily through negotiation or a limited display of force, rather than be turned into strife-torn ruins as a test of the Alpha Legion's skills. Worse, it was alleged that this need to orchestrate the elaborate destruction of their foes was no mere affectation but a pathological flaw, and one that was only worsening as the Great Crusade progressed. Such accusations the Warmaster pointedly dismissed.

As the time of Heresy drew closer, the Alpha Legion, as if in response to the growing cloud of suspicion and distrust of them in some quarters, drew further into the outer darkness at the fringes of known space, or at least appeared to. Their deceptions

multiplied, as too it appears did the names that the Legion and its agents were known under, particularly in the dark stars beyond the Imperium's borders, where many of those it came into contact with had no idea of their destroyer's true nature or allegiance until it was too late.

BEFORE THE FALL

When the Horus Heresy erupted and the atrocity at Isstvan III occurred, a large Alpha Legion strike force, comprising some 50,000 Legionaries under the direct command of their Primarch were conveniently situated to respond to Rogal Dorn's orders to attack the traitors at Isstvan V. This Alpha Legion contingent is believed to have comprised the combined forces of two separate Expeditionary fleets and their support vessels, having recently returned to the Imperium to resupply and re-arm at the Forge World of Lucius after an extended series of campaigns at the north-eastern Galactic fringe. The Alpha Legion and their Primarch had then been supposedly all but out of contact with the rest of the Great Crusade for several years, and by this fact was Rogal Dorn, Praetorian of Terra, likely assured of their loyalty and lack of involvement with whatever treacherous madness had befallen Horus and his immediate coterie. This could not however have been further from the truth as their involvement in the Dropsite Massacre was to prove—and there have even been unsubstantiated claims since that Alpharius had a hand in the planning of the Dropsite Massacre itself.

It is certain that the Alpha Legion had spread its web of infiltration, espionage and sabotage far and wide through the Imperium prior to the outbreak of hostilities, as was soon to be proved to bloody effect on a score of worlds as part of the Warmaster's opening gambit. At the hands of the Alpha Legion's talent for conspiracy and that of their agents, billions were to die and countless billions more would suffer hardship and disaster in the time to come. Even on planets that would not feel the thunderous footfall of the Legiones Astartes throughout the entire war, would the Alpha Legion's cruel plans and talent for strife wreak untold havoc. However, even as Horus unleashed the Alpha Legion to bury its fangs deep into the body of the Imperium, he neither trusted it nor its master to obey him, nor fight the war he wished them to fight once the hydra had been unchained. History would prove this distrust well founded.

THE HEAD OF THE SERPENT – THE ALPHARIUS ENIGMA

Of the many mysteries that surround the Alpha Legion, the most fundamental and key enigma is the question of their Primarch, Alpharius. Of all of the Primarchs who remained to draw blood against each other in the Horus Heresy, of Alpharius the least is known for certain. It is widely believed that on diverse occasions members of his Legion each claimed not only Alpharius' name but also his identity, even in council with allied Legions and emissaries of the Imperial Court, and later that of the Warmaster. Beyond this some have made the outlandish claim that there was more than one Primarch of the Alpha Legion, or that Alpharius was even somehow able to 'duplicate' himself physically and appear to be in more than one location simultaneously, perhaps worlds apart. Some have even attributed hidden truth to the emblem of the three-headed hydra that later came to symbolise the Legion in this regard.

Furthering this mystery and the outright deception perpetrated by Alpharius, many reliable reports of the Primarch's physical appearance differ. While he is noted on many occasions to be of similar stature and countenance of any of his Legionaries and able to pass unnoticed in their ranks, other records show him as a towering and fearful figure as were the other Primarchs, bedecked in sinisterly ornate, hydra-chased battle plate and wielding a mighty double-headed spear. Contemporary accounts record Alpharius as a masterful tactician and strategist whose skills were rated by the Imperial Stratagos as akin to the legendary abilities of Perturabo or Guilliman. His erudition was said to be astounding, but one whose great intelligence was as cool and as watchful as a viper's gaze.

He is recorded as having sought out the comradeship and council of none of his brother Primarchs save perhaps Horus, although some reports that place him also on Caliban and Terra at various times cannot be easily dismissed. He is said to have encouraged his commanders to operate with extreme independence of thought and action, and yet the Alpha Legion was known to pride itself on its unbreakable unity of purpose and will. Such are the paradoxes that abound in the wake of the shadowed figure of Alpharius,

and in this he can be said to encompass his Legion, and this is never more the case than in the mystery of his reuniting with the Imperium.

An account of the finding of Alpharius that circulated secretly between the houses and factions of the Imperial Court states that his discovery was an accident of the Luna Wolves Legion. By this, Alpharius was the leader of a confederation of human systems whose fleet of warships, no match in size or scale to Imperial vessels, managed through trickery and ambush to ingloriously lay low one of the outlying Luna Wolves battleships. Responding to this unforgivable defeat, Horus himself and his fleet gave chase, only to find themselves mired in ambush after ambush, tricked into deadly traps and chasing shadows until Horus' own flagship came under attack. In the ensuing confrontation, the Luna Wolves smashed the enemy fleet's desperate attack aside, but in the confusion a single assassin broke into the flagship, and through stealth and murder managed the impossible task of fighting his way clear to Horus' command chamber and slaughtered his bodyguards before Horus himself was forced to confront him. But Horus did not slay the attacker but recognised him instead for a brother; Alpharius. This account is a lie.

Another account torn from the mind of an Alpha Legion Centurion captured by the Legio Custodes after the Fall of Seraphina tells the story of the finding of Alpharius. It speaks of a nameless dead world at the edge of the Mandragoran Stars whose civilisation rose and was wiped out by bloody hands long before Mankind first walked on Terra. On this nameless orb, the nascent Primarch fell into the shattered ruins of a fallen city murdered long ages ago. Utterly alone, voiceless and without aid, he was forced to survive against the tortuous elements of the desolate world and the predations of the hungry ghosts of the charnel pit into which he had been consigned. His solitude was only broken after many long years by a new star falling from the heavens; a corsair ship of degenerate half-human renegades and alien mercenaries intent on plundering the dead ruins for whatever worth might remain amid the shatters. Instead they found only death at the young Primarch's hands, and Alpharius gained their weapons, their knowledge and their vessel as his

own, and with it he set out in search of he who had made him. This account is a lie.

Two other accounts, found encrypted within the pages of certain volumes of the suppressed work of memetic corrosion known as the *Transit of the Human Soul through Strife*, or the *Codex Hydra* as it is sometimes known, offer differing contentions. The first is that the lost Primarch was deposited on a thriving tech-oligarchy world known as Bar'Savor, but before his first decade of life there was done, the skies of Bar'Savor darkened as the nightmarish xenos worm-creatures known as the Slaught descended to feed. Capturing the young Primarch, a being alone strong enough to resist them, the Slaught kept Alpharius as a curiosity, twisting his mind with their horrors and enslaving him and tutoring him as a living weapon to sow strife and discord on their victim worlds before they fell upon them to feast.

It was the Emperor himself who at last liberated him, his golden battle barge ramming into the heart of the vast stone ship of the foul xenos to break it open, the Emperor's wrath like that of a vengeful god of legend in retribution for what had been done to his son. For long years after, Alpharius remained at his father's side as the Emperor undid what had been done to mar his creation. This account also offers a contradictory version of events, saying that Alpharius alone, unfinished in some way, had been spared or at least some part of him had remained behind though gravely injured when the rest of the Primarchs were scattered across the stars by unknown hands. Here, in the shadow of Terra, he grew and was nurtured alone of the Primarchs by the Emperor himself, his existence a jealously guarded secret even from those closest to the Emperor, lest the dark fates move against him. Upon his maturity he became the Emperor's own secret hand and his greatest shield, until he was at last parted from his father, his destiny to fulfil. These accounts are lies.

What then is the truth, if recorded facts suggest none of these accounts are real—and they are but a few of the phantasms that purport to be the secret truth of Alpharius' past? Perhaps, like the most potent of falsehoods, they each contain a grain of truth within them, a hint at a greater secret yet, it is for each to judge for themselves.

UNIT ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE WITHIN THE LEGION

When faced with the task of elucidating the inner workings and structure of the Alpha Legion, one is once again forced to deal head-on with paradox and contradiction, both by report and the evidence left in the dust of shattered worlds where the Legion worked its arts of war. Where one authoritative report might present the Legion's inner workings as highly stratified and cloaked in labyrinthine secrecy beyond any other, a different report, also by reputable source, might describe the Legion's inner workings as surprisingly open and egalitarian in nature, with each voice heard in council regardless of rank or station. Certain commonalities do however exist, particularly in accounts of how the Legion fought, and to some extent trained its aspirants for war.

The first of these is the emphasis the Alpha Legion placed on unity of action and intent within its ranks. Such co-ordination and faultless discipline was paramount to the rapidly shifting, responsive tactics Alpharius inculcated in his Legion, and the fluidity which characterised the Legion's deployments on the battlefield. It was repeatedly reported that from their first hours as aspirants, the would-be warriors of the Alpha Legion would train and fight together as units, rather than individual soldiers; the success of each one, and even their survival, depending on the success of the unit as a whole. The exercises and trials the Legion's aspirants were put through were said to be in their way as deadly as any of the Legiones Astartes, but required both intelligence and co-operation to overcome, so that no single aspirant might alone survive them.

A second commonality in observations of the Alpha Legion was its superlative expertise in the arts of espionage, sabotage, infiltration and assassination. The goal of which was to leave an enemy leaderless and fractured, a helpless puppet before the Legion's onslaught when it came. In counterpoint, the tactics of attrition and the forlorn hope, the bloody slog of trench warfare and static defence were things shunned by the Alpha Legion unless entirely unavoidable, and even then only ever engaged in on the Legion's own terms. When the time for all-out attack came however, it would be a lethal mistake to underestimate the Alpha Legion's abilities in open warfare, abilities which had drawn grudging praise from both the likes of Horus and Sanguinius in action.

The seamless tactical cohesion and fluid mastery of complex stratagems displayed by the Alpha Legion in the realms of infiltration and covert assault also made them masters of adaption, manoeuvre, feint and ambush in open battle. To fight the Alpha Legion's hosts of warriors and war machines in open battle was akin to fighting a single, vast and coiling entity with myriad limbs and striking fangs, but operating under a single malevolent will.

It is unclear whether the Alpha Legion ever conformed fully to the original operating strictures and organisational pattern laid out for the Space Marine Legions in the *Principia Belicosa* at the start of the Great Crusade, particularly as the Alpha Legion was formed long after the initial muster of the Legions. Outwardly though there was extensive resemblance to the basic Legion patterns, although the command structure and the organisation of the Alpha Legion can be discerned as being radically more fluid and specialised. It seems entirely possible, given the evidence available, that an individual Legionary's role and position within the division he was attached to was adapted and changed as frequently as tactical need demanded, and perhaps to some higher system of purpose whose ultimate goal remains unknown.

The Alpha Legion's companies, battalions and chapters (sometimes referred to as 'Harrows', 'Cohorts', 'Hosts' and 'Instruments' in shifting meaning) were formulated and broken down seemingly at the whim of Alpharius and the Legion's commanders. To this end unit numerations were swapped and heraldry changed and adapted, personnel and resources were reassigned or removed entirely from an order of battle, only to be later again replaced. Such organisational transits were noted not only between active deployments but also even during the course of a particular campaign. This made the Legion's strength, intentions and deployments almost impossible to gauge or track to foe and friend alike.

This shifting and deliberate formlessness may, by some reports, have extended even to a particular Legionary's identity and rank, and is echoed in reports of uncommon similarity in both the physical features and aspect sometimes displayed by the Legion. Needless to say this latter phenomenon is confusingly not constantly observed in the record either, and while some reports

speak of the Legion's members displaying a strange physical uniformity, others infer them as originating from a mixture of genotypes, while others indicate a strange, waxy and unnatural appearance to grey flesh bled of pigment, and sees them adorned with shimmering serpentine electroos. It is entirely possible that all of these reports are equally valid. Whether surgical or memetic implantation techniques, proscribed cognitive manipulation or esoteric technologies were employed to these ends remains unknown, as does just to what extent the individual Legionaries undertook such measures voluntarily—or perhaps were even aware of being subject to them at all.

At a strategic level the Alpha Legion was clearly at pains to maintain a wide spectrum of military assets and capacities, its dedication to flexibility ensuring it was as capable in armoured warfare as it was in surgical drop strikes, artillery fire support or close quarter Zone Mortalis operations. It was supported in maintaining these abilities by voracious demand for matériel, particularly supplied by Forge Worlds such as Lucius, Incaladion and Phaeton—with some of these treaties of provender brokered directly by the Warmaster, no doubt in the hope of further securing the Alpha Legion's loyalty. These arrangements do not however account for the full scope of the Alpha Legion's extensive panoply of war, particularly their known acquisition of rare and specialised wargear notionally only manufactured by the armouries of certain Legions and never released to others, or not yet issued outside of closed prototype deployments.

A case in point is the evidence of the Alpha Legion's access to a version of Corvus pattern power armour, not then in general circulation, as early as the Dropsite Massacre and the 1st Battle of Paramar. Later battlefield recovery and analysis of this 'Corvus-Alpha' armour shows it in fact to be a unique variant likely developed separately from an early prototype of unknown manufacture. This suggests that the Alpha Legion may have acquired incomplete schematics by covert means early in the project's life and chosen to develop it on their own without recourse to the Mechanicum. It has been surmised that long before the Horus Heresy was to tear the Imperium asunder, the Alpha Legion had sought to secure its own extensive facilities of manufacture and positioned numerous

hidden supply outposts and arms caches, both within Imperial space and beyond it, the full extent of which will never be known.

On a tactical level, the Alpha Legion favoured freedom of manoeuvre and portability of firepower. Its battle tactics showed particular tendencies towards specialised reconnaissance and infiltration units in opening combat operations, to be quickly followed by the rapid deployment of fast armour, close air support and mechanised infantry units as a main strike force.

Attacking from many vectors at once, as well as skilfully employing feints and ambushes, would commonly reveal a foe's weaknesses to the watching Alpha Legion commanders. They would then bring about maximum pressure against the exposed vulnerability, deploying reserves of shock troops, heavy armour and artillery as expedient to deal a shattering death blow. In order to employ these tactics, the Alpha Legion was known to have developed a number of specialised formations and units, often equipped with otherwise unknown and esoteric weapons and wargear. They were also known to form sub-divisions, referred to as 'Splinters', which operated completely in isolation to achieve a particular mission or strategic goal, without regard to the safety or survival of either themselves or other members of their own force. It was often the case that other allied forces, and even the rest of an Alpha Legion deployment in the conflict in which they operated would be entirely unaware of a Splinter's existence or mission.

The Seeker squads employed by many Legions were, according to some reports, pioneered first by the Alpha Legion to this end, and certainly such squads, along with specialised Reconnaissance squads, were common to almost all of the Legions' battle formations. These tactics were taken a stage further by the Alpha Legion in the creation of an elite unit geared specifically to rapidly inflicting targeted casualties behind enemy lines, known variously as the Headhunters or 'Effrit'—although this latter term may also have referred to the act of assassination, and the sowing of destruction and chaos behind the lines mid-battle, as well as a particular unit type. This preference for high-impact strikes carried out by small, elite infantry units is evidenced by the fact that both Destroyer squads (who suffered none of the opprobrium found in some Legions to those so assigned), as well as specialised Alpha Legion sabotage operatives are also classified as "Effrit" in some accounts and treated as a respected veteran cadre within the Legion.

Another designation, again drawn from ancient myth by the Alpha Legion, was the 'Lernaean'. This cognomen appears to have been given to the Legion's most expert shock assault troops, particularly to dedicated Terminator companies and in some instances breacher squads and Dreadnoughts. In particular, battle recordings of certain Lernaean Terminator units mark them as being equipped with advanced teleportation assault capacity and specialised heavy weaponry such as compact conversion beam weapons and phase-field generator gear. The foremost task of the Lernaean was to swiftly isolate and destroy the most powerful frontline troops and potent battlefield assets a foe possessed, and to do so in such an emphatic and bloody manner that not only was a potential threat to the Alpha Legion's attack ended, but the psychological shock of their attack would further damage enemy morale. Such was the calculated cruelty and cold brutality employed by the Lernaean, that their reputation quickly spread beyond the Alpha Legion itself. Certain records also indicate other named and specialised formations, such as the 'Rhatosthaen', 'Shayatan', 'Quaryn' and 'Echidna' whose nature, if they truly existed at all, remains mysterious. In addition, certain references are made to the 'Chrythsaor' which may have referred to the Legion's Librarius (possibly encompassing a wider intelligence gathering apparatus as well), which was suspected to have been extensive before the Council of Nikaea. Though not believed to have been present at the Council, Alpharius, at least outwardly, appears to have had his Legion abide by its ruling, a stance quickly ended during the war of the Heresy.

Of importance also when considering the particular structure and capabilities of the Alpha Legion is its use of human and augmented-human agents and paramilitaries. Whereas many Space Marine Legion forces utilised the manifold elements of the Excertus Imperialis to support their efforts in the Great Crusade, and many Expeditionary fleets utilised regiments of the Imperialis Auxillia (or Imperial Army) subservient to the Legiones Astartes in their order of battle, the Alpha Legion made particular use of detached elements specifically trained for tasks of espionage, infiltration and terrorism, and these were beholden to none save the Legion itself in fealty. Operating individually or as part of a cell network, these agents and operatives often had little knowledge of each other or in many cases of who their true masters were, but were uniformly highly trained, psycho-

conditioned for ruthlessness and fanatical loyalty, and were often subjected to surgical or biochemical augmentation to further their abilities. When encountering human worlds to be brought into Compliance, these augmented and highly adept agents (referred to as 'Sparatoi', possibly from an ancient term meaning the 'sown men' in some sources), would go ahead of the Legion and infiltrate the population, acting as spies, agitators and saboteurs. They would encourage treachery, spread disinformation and corrosive mimetic patterns, and find or take over underground rebel or terrorist groups. Their role primarily was to promote dissent and cause widespread panic and infrastructural damage, and so seek to critically weaken an enemy before the Legion itself engaged in battle. When the Alpha Legion finally showed its hand, the Sparatoi and their web of puppet-agents would provide a wave of sabotage and distraction attacks, further destabilising the enemy, often at the cost of their own lives. It is apparent that prior to the Horus Heresy, the Sparatoi network was expanded into the Imperium itself and its armed forces, becoming a cancerous presence that was only revealed as civil war erupted. Further reports of actual Legionaries similarly infiltrating civilian populations by unknown means and even the rank and file of others of the Legiones Astartes and masquerading as part of their number cannot be confirmed.

COMMAND HIERARCHY

As with so much concerning the Alpha Legion, precise definition of their command structure cannot be determined with certainty, but certain patterns can be deduced as—if not constant—then repeated enough to have been deemed important. The first of these is specialisation. In any given deployment, a chain of command was obeyed unquestioningly, but this chain of command was a fluid one, both conditional and highly decentralised in its nature. While a force would be notionally under the control of an officer such as a captain, the authority held by specialists in particular, such as siege masters or vigilators, was deferred to as a matter of course and was regarded as absolute and not to be questioned in their area of expertise.

Likewise, each unit within the Legion was expected to operate as a self-motivated and self-governing 'cell' without need of exterior command, and expected to display initiative and pursue its part in the wider battle plan under its own cognisance and in any way it judged to be expedient. Such was the emphasis on unity of action and initiative

ALPHA LEGION TACTICAL MARKINGS AND HERALDRY



Common Legion Heraldry – Power Armour Pauldron



Variant Legion Heraldry – Power Armour Pauldron



Sub-type Legion Heraldry – Tartaros Terminator Armour Pauldron



Echelon Variant Cataphractii Terminator Armour Pauldron

CLOTH AND BANNER MARKINGS

Alpha Legion warriors of all ranks have been observed wearing tabards and similar cloth garb bearing complex, impenetrable symbols and characters, and the same symbols are also seen on company, chapter and Legion banners.



BATTLE PLATE ARMOURIAL ICONS

Secondary adornments of apparent cultural or mythological significance. Number of major chain links thought to indicate rank.



DREADNOUGHT ARMOURIAL ICONS

Variant Legion icons observed in three war zones between 985.M31 and 998.M31. Trefoil-formed Hydra thought to indicate elite unit designation.



CHAPTER ICONOGRAPHY

Many icons used by the Alpha Legion appear to be drawn from ancient Terran Helac script. It is thought that the Helac gamma, omega and delta symbols shown here are commonly used as chapter identifiers, though rarely consistently. The three-headed Lernaean Hydra is shown to the right surmounting the chained alpha-omega icon. Both are common symbols within the Alpha Legion, with numerous combinations and variants adorning armour, banners and the flanks of armoured vehicles.



the Alpha Legion placed on its warriors, that the battlefield co-ordination and responsiveness to changing circumstances the Alpha Legion displayed was arguably superior to that of any other of the Legiones Astartes. The Alpha Legion's commanders seldom were observed to operate as champions or warlords in the conventional sense as might be expected of the Legiones Astartes, craving it seemed neither personal glory nor the experience of sublime clash of arms. Instead they were wont to observe a battle unfold impassively, watching the patterns of force and bloodshed it revealed, intervening only when needed by issuing orders that would tip the outcome in the Alpha Legion's favour, or by direct action, striking personally at the point of vulnerability where they would inflict the greatest damage.

In terms of honorifics and titles, the Alpha Legion seemed to have used a shifting set of terminology to convey authority and role. At times the Alpha Legion appears

to have deliberately aped the systems used by other Legions (such as the Sons of Horus and the Blood Angels) although whether this was done to incorporate a proven pattern of organisation as part of a particular strategy or as some form of mockery remains unknown. Aside from these patterns, close scrutiny of the records also reveals several distinctive additional divisions of command not shown by other Legions. One such unique title known to have been used by the Alpha Legion was that of 'Harrowmaster' or 'Jhariuk' as the leading commander given overall control of all Alpha Legion forces in a given war zone. Although their nominal rank might vary, it was the task of the Harrowmaster to keep track of encompassing the shifting events of a conflict in minute detail and shape the actions of the Legion's forces accordingly, creating and aborting battle plans and stratagems with bewildering speed. The position of Harrowmaster was known to be held as a supreme accolade by the Alpha Legion, and their infamous skill at battlefield

control was highly regarded (even as the Legion itself was often mistrusted) by the commanders and stratagos of the other Space Marine Legions. It is noteworthy that the Harrowmasters were among the few of the Legion, save its equerries, whose personal names are left to the open record, although whether these have any basis in reality or are merely guises worn by a single warrior or perhaps a series of individuals remains unknowable.

WAR DISPOSITION

Exact figures for the martial strength of the Alpha Legion at the outset of the wars of the Horus Heresy are impossible to obtain. Sources and estimates vary wildly, some making extravagant claims which may both overestimate or undervalue the Alpha Legion's manpower. Most contemporaneous accounts from around the time of the Dropsite Massacre put the Alpha Legion at between 120,000 and 130,000 Legionaries strong, placing it within the middle tier of Legion strengths. Some theorists have



posited this figure as far lower, somewhere in the 90,000 range based upon the largest concentrations of Alpha Legion forces ever seen in operation in a single theatre. With hindsight and diligent corroboration however, evidence of multiple simultaneous battle groups operating in far distant locales suggests a far higher figure than either of these estimates, well into the range of perhaps 180,000 Legionaries which, if accurate, would make it one of the most formidable Legions in sheer size alone, a factor un-guessed at by both sides of the war that was to follow.

In terms of its access to wargear and star-faring vessels, the Alpha Legion was formidably equipped. Again, true estimates are difficult to arrive at, but most pictorial and second party reports show the Alpha Legion as possessing extensive access to the most modern forms of Legiones Astartes equipment, not limited to Maximus and Tartarus pattern armour, the new Sicaran pattern battle tanks and their sub-types,



The Colour of Deceit

The question of the Alpha Legion's livery and heraldry of arms is also a matter of some contention in the study of this Traitor Legion's history. It is the case that over the centuries-long conflict of the Great Crusade, all of the grey-clad Legions that first departed Terra changed in appearance to some degree —some very dramatically so— as the consequences of the long war and campaigning took their toll, and most tellingly after they were reunited with their Primarchs. It is also the case that given that an armed force such as a Space Marine Legion numbers in the tens of thousands strong and is often scattered across the vast distances of interstellar void, true uniformity or conformity of livery and appearance is impossible, even for a Legion so stratified and structured as perhaps the Ultramarines or the Iron Warriors.

These factors, however, do not account for the wide variance displayed by the Alpha Legion, and instead it is likely more deliberate misdirection and secrecy plays its part. Various and without recourse to time period or progression, the Alpha Legion has been witnessed in liveries of pale grey, gleaming steel, veridian, dull bronze, sable, indigo, amaranth and azure blue—both in main and combination. It has been variously recorded as displaying *Principia Belicosa* standardised rank and unit signifiers, elaborate stylised reptilian iconography of unknown meaning, and the complex logos-teknika forms favoured by the Emperor-shattered Panpacific Empire on Ancient Terra. It has also gone into battle without emblems or markings of any kind; a faceless, anonymous army of killers without distinction or division in its ranks.

If any deeper meaning is held by these changes and masquerades beyond their use to confuse the enemy and confound those who would study the Legion and know its ways, one of the most outlandish and disturbing explanations is that not even the Alpha Legion itself knew its true shape and form. This theory, postulated since the Horus Heresy, contends that only Alpharius knew the true extent of his Legion and its domains, its strength and its reach, and perhaps then even he knew it only imperfectly. By this token the Alpha Legion had become unknowable; a self-sustaining, self-replicating force, a weapon that had transcended the flesh of the Legionaries that made it up and the hand that wielded it. It would be a force whose limits and extent would forever be unknown, even unto itself, and therefore ultimately unstoppable as no enemy or influence could ever hope to fully infiltrate or overcome it from within.

It was and is indeed the case, that even before the Horus Heresy, entire generations of Alpha Legion warriors could have been trained, fought and died in ignorance of their own Legion's wider operations, purposes and goals. Entire Expeditionary fleets could have operated never knowing the existence of mirror images of themselves, each believing that they were the only Alpha Legion bearing that name. The implications of such a colossal deceit are staggering, if true.

as well as extensive stocks of plasma and conversion beam weaponry and specialised munitions unknown outside the Legion. In terms of warships, the Alpha Legion was known to possess a very extensive and diverse fleet, although lacking in large numbers of heavy capital ships and planetary siege craft in comparison to most other Legions. The main strength of the Alpha Legion's fleets then was found in a plethora of different intermediate and escort vessels, with range and speed being their primary focus. The Alpha Legion was also suspected of utilising a number of captured xenos vessels, and indeed incorporating xenos technology into their warship designs—a practice

strictly forbidden without the sanction of the Mechanicum—but given the Legion's frequent activities far beyond the Imperium's borders and its hidden strengths and bases of operation, such a suspicion was impossible to prove.

As the war of the Horus Heresy raged on, the Legion demonstrated an enviable ability to replace its battlefield losses. While the war continued and many Legions saw their strength shorn away, the Alpha Legion appeared to grow stronger throughout the conflict, despite several seemingly serious defeats. Much like the hydra of myth, where one head was cut from the Legion's body, two more appeared to grow in its place.

ALPHA LEGION TERMINATOR STRIKE LEADER

UNKNOWN STRIKE LEADER

UNKNOWN SQUAD/UNKNOWN UNIT AFFILIATION

LINE ASSAULT TERMINATOR SQUAD LEADER

THE INVASION OF PARAMAR

INITIAL ORBITAL RAID ON THE PANOPTICON COMPLEX

PICT-RENDER: CONFLICT ZONE 34/13

This depiction of an Alpha Legion Terminator squad strike leader is taken from multiple fragmentary records surviving from the initial assault on the Panopticon Complex of the Paramar Terminus facility. This initial attack wave, carried out by Kharybdis Assault Claw vehicles, served to demonstrate both the speed and precision with which the Alpha Legion could operate, as well as the breadth of wargear and tactics available to them.

The attack force is believed to have comprised over a hundred Terminators, utilising at least five patterns of Terminator armour and at least three distinctive unit role types. This observed strike leader bears the older Cataphractii pattern and commanded a demi-squad in standard line assault configuration – the Cataphractii pattern, although more cumbersome than its successors, afforded better protection against the heaviest firepower. This durability no doubt enabled this unknown strike leader to endure into the third hour of the attack against this deadly Zone Mortalis, by which time the wave suffered an estimated 70% casualties before his disintegration by Myrmidon Destructors.

Panoply of War

1. Reaver Pattern Power Chainaxe.

2. Phobos Pattern Combi-melta: Note unknown syncretic iconography.





ALPHA LEGION CONTEMPTOR DREADNOUGHT

ARCHONTAS ORIGO

UNKNOWN LEGION SUB-UNIT

ISSTVAN RETRIBUTION FLEET MUSTER

Very little is known of the warrior referred to in the archives of the Logistica Corpus as the 'Archontas' of an unknown chapter of the Alpha Legion, and it is considered unlikely that 'Origo' is even a personal name. According to some extant early Great Crusade archives, at least a dozen different warriors of the old XXth Legion bore that name, every one of them falling in combat during the early or mid Crusade eras to be interred within the armoured sarcophagus of a number of different marks of Dreadnought armour, from early Furibundus to later mark Castra Ferrum. This particular Dreadnought is of the Contemptor class, the mainstay class used by the majority of the Legiones Astartes throughout the later Great Crusade era. Of particular note in this instance is the application of a subtle 'scale' motif across areas of the Dreadnought's armour, drawing on one of many mythological themes the Alpha Legion is known to favour.

Archontas Origo's Dreadnought armour is equipped with a pair of power claws with inset flamers, making him a fearsome prospect for any but the most accomplished of melee fighters. He also mounts a cyclone missile launcher, a weapon often utilised to break down the coherency of enemy formations prior to an attack, a broad category of tactic the Alpha Legion are noted as being especially adept at implementing.

XXTH LEGION VETERAN LEGIONARY

UNNAMED VETERAN LEGIONARY
UNKNOWN LEGION SUB-UNIT
CRYPTOSI PURGATION

This depiction of a warrior of the XXth Legion is compiled from a number of pict-captures committed to central archives in 927.M30. According to the records, the Legionary was part of a sub-company sized unit deployed to investigate atrocities committed in the Imperium's northern reaches by an exotic, meta-dimensional strain of xenos thought to be the species later referred to in some accounts as the 'Cryptosi'. The campaign appears not to have been committed to record, although contact with colony worlds in that region was lost soon after, seemingly as a result of Legiones Astartes activity.

The Legionary is clad in early production MkII Astartes battle plate, itself unusual as this mark was largely obsolete by 927.M30. The armour bears the older forms of iconography observed in use by the XXth throughout the early Great Crusade, later almost entirely replaced by the Hydra symbol. The meaning of the icon on the right shoulder is unknown, but may represent an amalgam of company and chapter identifiers. Other markings, rendered in what is assumed to be ancient Terran 'Helac' script can be seen, their meaning entirely unreadable.

Panoply of War

1. **Thunder Edge Chainsword:** Note the application of azure Legion colouration on hilt and furniture.
2. **Phobos Pattern Boltgun:** Note Delta symbol, possibly a squad identifier.
3. **Krak and Frag Grenades.**



1.



2.



3.

ALPHA LEGION VETERAN TACTICAL LEGIONARY

LEGIONARY 'ALPHARIUS'
SQUAD ALPHARIUS
UNIDENTIFIED CHAPTER
(POSSIBLY 'THE UNBROKEN CHAIN')
ISSTVAN V DROPSITE MASSACRE

This Legionary is depicted as he appears in sensorium core data ex-loaded from the armour of one of the few Salamanders Legionaries to escape the Isstvan V Dropsite Massacre, the Traitor's name and squad designation transmitted by his armour's amicus/inimicus transponder. This particular Legionary was witnessed operating a missile launcher in a Legion veteran tactical squad, a weapon he used to fearsome effect in the opening minutes of the betrayal when the second wave, of which the Alpha Legion were a part, opened fire on the unsuspecting units of the first wave as they regrouped. Notably, Legionary 'Alpharius' felled the Salamanders Dreadnought, Ancient Khulkran, with a krak missile fired in the opening seconds of the betrayal, which appeared to serve as a signal for his entire chapter to reveal the depths of its treachery.

The Legionary is clad in prototype Astartes battle plate, later post-designated 'MkVI', itself a mystery as at this time the only Legion listed as having any suits of this trial mark was the Raven Guard. The armour is decorated with a number of icons and markings commonly observed in use by the Alpha Legion, including the Laernean Hydra Legion icon and the older Alpha-Omega symbol of the XXth. This possibly indicated that the Legionary is a veteran of the old Legion prior to its unification with the Primarch.

Panoply of War

1. Proteus Pattern Missile Launcher.
2. Umbra Pattern Boltgun: Note 'Unbroken Chain' iconography.



1.



2.

ALPHA LEGION SEEKER

UNKNOWN LEGIONARY

UNKNOWN SQUAD/UNKNOWN UNIT AFFILIATION

WARGEAR INDICATES OPERATION

AS 'SEEKER' TACTICAL SUB-TYPE

THE INVASION OF PARAMAR

ASSAULT ON THE PARAMAR TERMINUS COMPLEX

PICT-RENDER: CONFLICT ZONE 34/71

Presented as an exemplar of the Alpha Legion line forces encountered during the Invasion of Paramar, this Legionary can be observed to be equipped with modified MkIV 'Maximus' power armour, and displaying particular livery and insignia believed in part to be indicative of the forces of the Harrowmaster Armillius Dynat (in particular the use of bronzed elements), although this cannot be accurately confirmed.

The iconography displayed can be seen as a mixture of more recent 'hydra' design utilised by the Legion and the older 'aleph-null' or 'Æternem' emblem of earlier record. The helm stripe may indicate veterancy or special deployment, while the significance of the trophy skulls remains unknown.

Panoply of War

1. Customised Power Sword Variant: Constructed with an unknown type of ceramite composite and non-standard disruption generators. They actively suppress rather than shed light and electrostatic discharge, leading to a cognomen of 'shadow' or 'spectre' blades in observed use by other forces.

2. Umbra-Ferrox Pattern Boltgun:

Standard 'Seeker' issue featuring multi-selector expanded magazine and enhanced cyber-optical sighting slaved to the auto-sensory system of the user's armour.



1.



2.

ALPHA LEGION TERMINATOR LINE OFFICER

UNIDENTIFIED LEGIONARY,
UNKNOWN FORMATION,
ISSTVAN V DROPSITE MASSACRE, UNCONFIRMED PHASE

This depiction of an unidentified Alpha Legion warrior is based on sensorium data ex-loaded from the armour systems of several Raven Guard Legionaries after their extraction from Isstvan V. By his wargear, the warrior is assumed to be an officer, most likely a squad sergeant or part of a line company's command cadre. He bears common Legion iconography on both shoulders of his Tartaros pattern Terminator armour, and the skull and lightning bolt symbol mounted on his chest armour predates the uniting of the Alpha Legion with its Primarch, suggesting the warrior is a veteran of the XXth Legion of old. The meaning of the symbol mounted on the Legionary's left leg is less clear. It incorporates a six-headed version of the common hydra motif, though this may simply be the standard three-headed version mirrored for some unknown reason. The obvious reading of the 'XX' numeral is as the Legion number of the Alpha Legion, but given the deliberate obscurity for which the Alpha Legion is well known, this cannot be taken for granted.

Panoply of War

1. Charatran Pattern Chainaxe: Note the addition of hydra motif to chainblade cowling.
2. Unknown Variant Pattern Power Maul: Line officer issue.
3. Ryza 'Hellshot' Pattern Plasma Blaster: Personal requisition. Note application of hydra head motif.



OPHION ARMoured ASSAULT HARROW

The Alpha Legion has been observed to deploy a wide range of formation types, some mandated by the architects of the Great Crusade, but many others entirely unique or novel, and being unsurpassed masters of disinformation and guile, the records of the Great Crusade cannot possibly make a full account of the scope or nature of more than a handful of these formations. Indeed, it is believed that individual units within the Legion routinely change tactical markings between and perhaps even during deployments, making it all but impossible to track them from one war zone to the next.

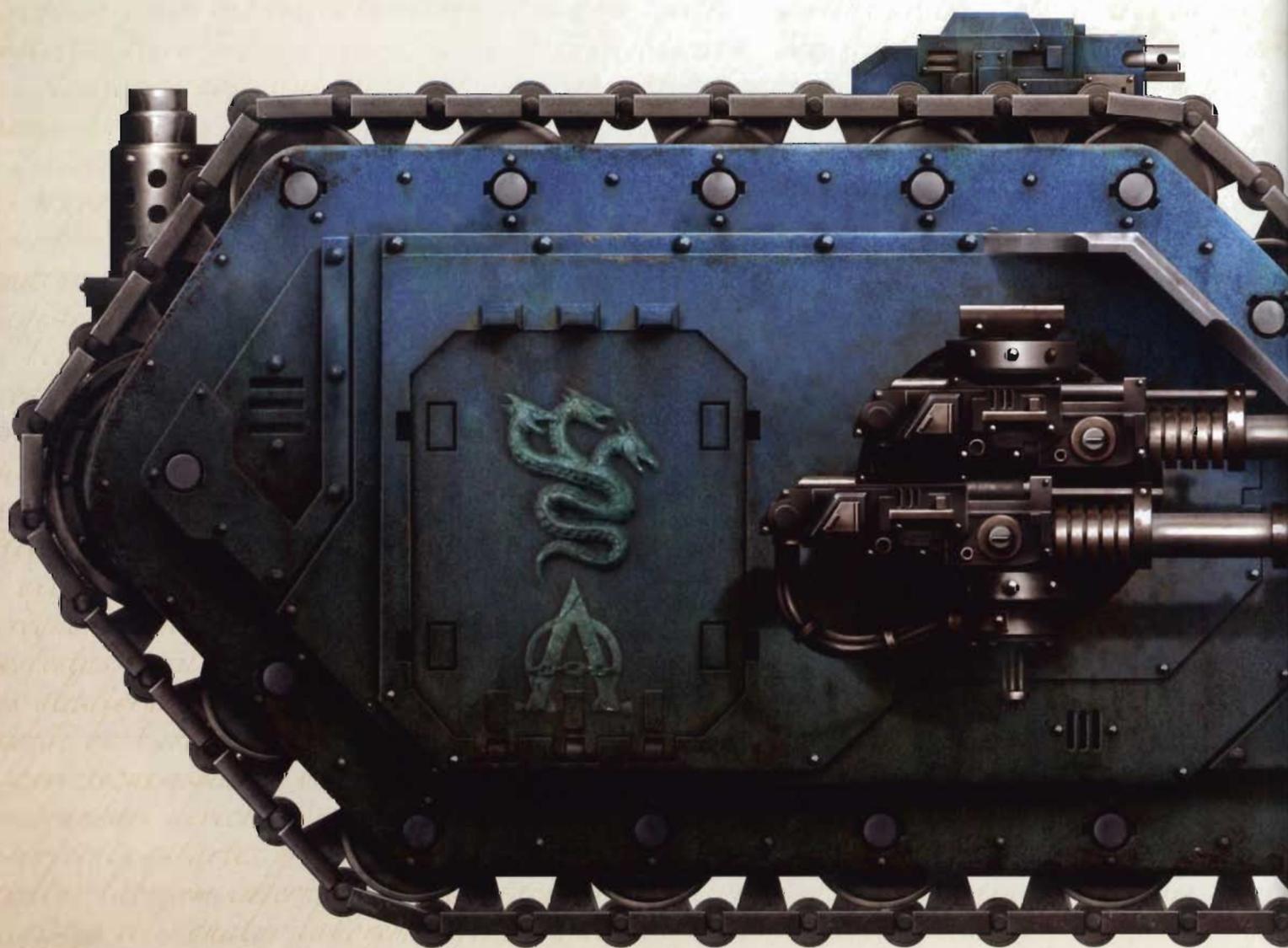
The Ophion Armoured Assault Harrow is one such unit, thought to take the form of a company mounted in heavy transports such as the Land Raider, supported by its own squadrons of battle tanks and support vehicles. Its presence was noted in the Muror

system mere hours before the deep-æther tracking station located on the planetary fragment ZK-Upsilon-12 fell silent. Later investigations determined that the Ophion Harrow had been deployed by Thunderhawk transporter to the fragment's surface, the approach of the carrier vessel masked by the twin plumes trailing behind. The tracking station was defended by a Cybernetica cohort, which deployed its Castellax and Vorax Battle-automata into the surrounding wastes the instant the attack was detected.

The resulting battle is known to posterity only by the fractured and disjointed pict-captures that survived the destruction of the Muror facility to be recovered much later. An armoured duel erupted across the airless, cratered wastes, between the armoured war engines of the Alpha Legion and the mighty Battle-automata of the Cybernetica.

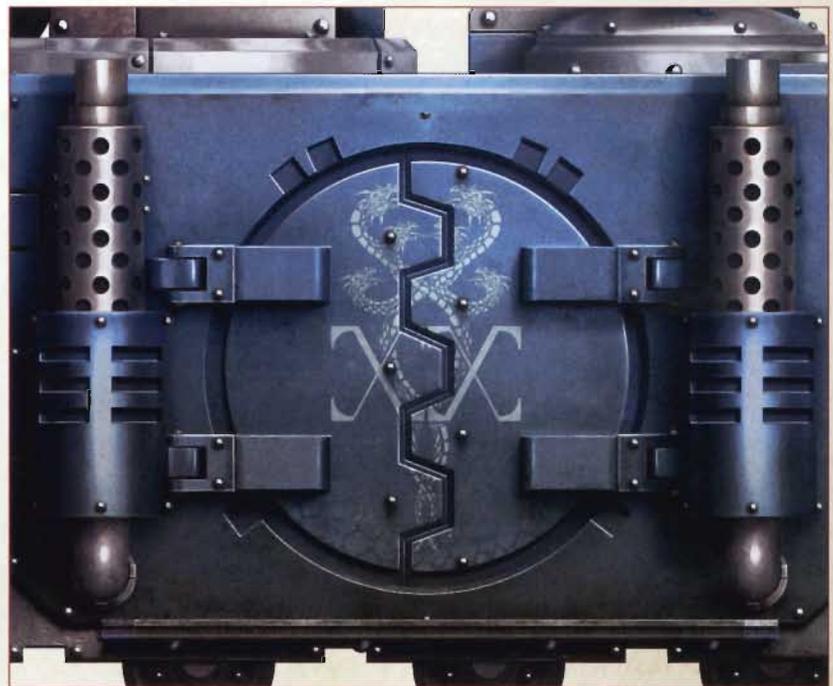
The battle raged for several hours, but came to a sudden halt when it transpired that the armoured thrust was but a means of drawing the Battle-automata away from the facility itself, which was silenced, so it is presumed, by the hand of Alpha Legion infiltrators deployed by a wide-flanking sub-unit within the formation. When the infiltrators struck, the tracking station's mighty array of deep-æther scanners fell quiescent, as did every one of the several hundred Battle-automata fighting out on the wastes.

With the destruction of the tracking station at Muror, the Legiones Astartes loyal to Terra lost the ability to track the movement of warp vessels voyaging along the vital Warp conduits linking the Istvan system with the Segmentum Solar. With the loss of such vital intelligence, the Warmaster's long march to Terra could begin in earnest.





Whirlwind Scorpius: The Ophion Armoured Assault Harrow is known to have deployed the Whirlwind Scorpius in large numbers. Its potent armour-defeating warheads were fearsomely effective against the ceramite shells of the Cybernetica Battle-automata defending the Muror facility.



Armourial Detail: The few surviving pict-captures from which accounts of the destruction of the Muror deep-æther facility are constructed depict several dozen Whirlwind Scorpius tanks, all of which displayed similar iconography to that shown here. It is notable that these markings all appear to relate to the Legion itself, and if any identify the individual vehicle or its position within the Ophion, they are evident only to those who claim themselves to be conversant in the complex and ever-shifting visual language of the Alpha Legion.

ALPHA LEGION ARMoured ECHELONS

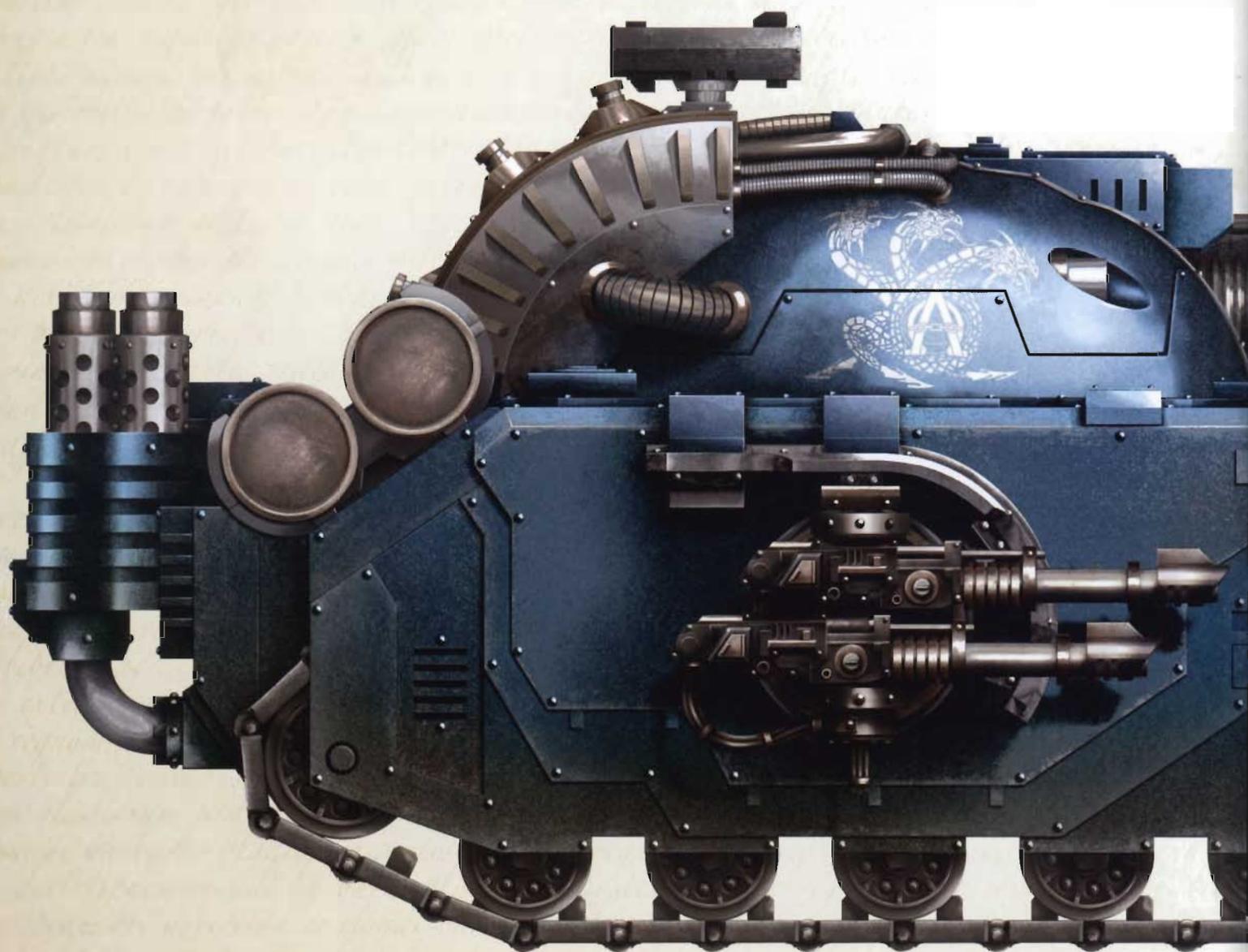
PARAMAR INVASION FORCE

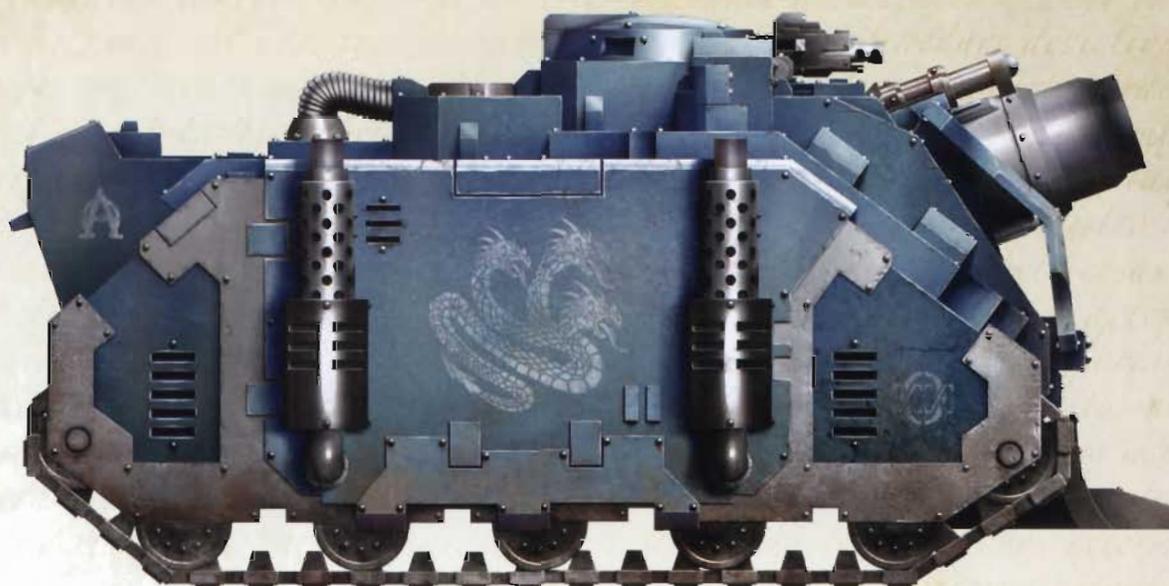
The assault tactics used by the Alpha Legion against the Paramar Terminus Complex involved the mass use of rapid-moving armoured spearhead columns, supported by mobile artillery and siege units. Often depicted in the popular conception of their Legion as a force which favoured infiltration and asymmetrical tactics over brute strength, the Alpha Legion's excellent record in the

use of armoured warfare during the Great Crusade is often overlooked, but it would be this key expertise that would carry their victory in the 1st Battle of Paramar.

The invasion force deployed an armoured contingent that was both extremely numerous and varied, but which focused chiefly on mobile rather than deploy-to-fire

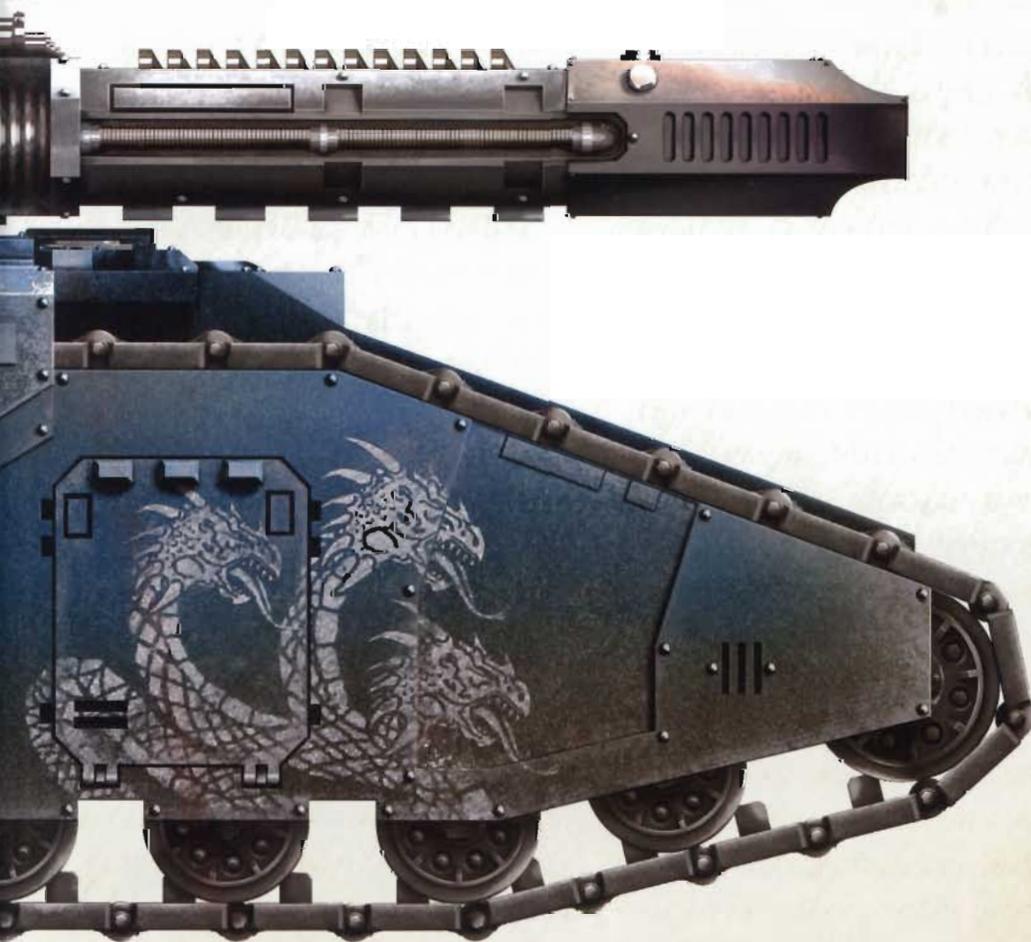
units, with particular strength ranging in various Predator and Vindicator chassis light and medium tanks and large numbers of the newer Sicaran type fast battle tanks and Sicaran Venator tank destroyers. The heavy elements of this force comprised several squadrons of Malcador tanks, supported by advanced Fellblade and Glaive super-heavy tanks.





Deimos Pattern Vindicator Tank

Rather than their conventional role as a supported, slowly advancing siege weapon, at Paramar the Alpha Legion deployed their Vindicators as direct strike weapons, moving at full speed to close to point blank range with their targets before firing. Many appear to have been expressly fitted for this purpose, lacking the cumbersome siege shields often mounted on the tanks, and carrying a 'half-load' of munitions to reduce their weight.



Legion Glaive Super-heavy Special Weapons Tank – Designation Unknown: One of the most advanced war machines in the Legiones Astartes arsenal, the Glaive is built round the powerful Volkite carronade field-effect ray weapon. During the battle these weapons would prove both a boon and a detriment to the Alpha Legion attack, providing highly effective firepower against troops protected by conventional fortifications, but also igniting under-ground storage vessels filled with promethium and munitions. This in turn triggered waves of uncontrolled explosions during the mid-battle phase, cutting off the Alpha Legion's own line of attack for a time.



EXEMPLARY BATTLES

THE HUNTING OF THE AK'HAIRETH

One of the earliest campaigns of the Alpha Legion whose date can be well-corroborated involves the xenocide of the alien form known variously as the Ak'Haireth, or 'Bone Drinkers' in the vernacular. The Ak'Haireth were a fungoid, predatory and parasitic life form whose sentience was only acquired from operating as psychically interwoven gestalt 'blooms', and whose existence was fuelled by the slow and agonisingly painful siphoning of nutrition from living animals—human bone marrow being a preferred source. Given to no technological creativity of their own, the Ak'Haireth operated at the edge of the western Segmentum Solar, inhabiting the scavenged void ships of other species and raiding isolated colonies and feral worlds unable to resist their predations.

Initially encountered in the early years of the Great Crusade, the Ak'Haireth had been subjected to extermination pogroms carried out by both the Luna Wolves and the VIIIth Legion (not then yet formally known as the Night Lords) which had been thought to have been successful. However, a cowardly species, the Ak'Haireth had been wont to flee if not cornered in battle, and over time it became apparent that some marrow-blooms of the foul xenos had hidden themselves and survived.

By 986.M30 reports of attacks against isolated outposts and shipping in the region of the stellar wastes near Olmec indicated that the Ak'Haireth were again dangerously growing in strength and number. The Alpha Legion, only a handful of years previously united with their Primarch, were assigned the order for the xenocide of the species before it could spread further. Alpharius and his Legion's solution to the problem was both calculated in its planning and ruthless in its execution. Firstly they divided much of their fleet into hunter-killer squadrons to hunt down the Ak'Haireth's infested ships across the wastes, using their own predatory instincts for ambush and evasion to identify likely places the xenos would be hiding in wait or fleeing to escape pursuit. Secondly, they analysed previous patterns of infestation and attack, and quickly reasoned that, in their terror,

some had given themselves over to the alien species' dominion, providing them with a tribute of living sacrifices. While in others, in return for being spared or perhaps for gain, the xenos had human aid in plotting their attacks, such covert corruption having protected them from the Imperium's eye for several decades until they had finally grown too many and too hungry to keep their attacks secret.

This dark communion the Alpha Legion used to their own advantage, infiltrating the conspiracy with their own agents, gathering intelligence and luring the largest concentrations of the parasitic marrow-blooms to their deaths in pre-arranged traps, slaying the rest in close boarding actions of their infested ships or by the mass-cyclonic bombardment of their concealed breeding nests. The punishment for those worlds that had aided the alien was similarly brutal, as their rulers were put to the sword for their crimes, and the colonies themselves punished by the poisoning of their water supplies or the destabilisation of their climates or seismic patterns. Many on these worlds would die, and those who survived would need both strength of will and unity to endure, virtues they had proven so sadly lacking in previously.

Inside three sidereal years, the Ak'Haireth had been once again hunted to the precipice of extinction, but again analysis indicated that some would have fled into hiding and inevitably the threat had not been ended. Ever willing to countenance solutions that others would not, Alpharius and the Apothecaries of his Legion had not been idle in preparing for this eventuality. During the three years of their relentless campaign against the Bone Drinkers, the Alpha Legion had been not content to destroy the xenos, they also desired to understand them, and to pull apart their secrets and vulnerabilities at a cellular level. In co-operation with the Magos Biologis of the Mechanicum, they created a deadly phage virus as the fruits of their vivisections.

The dark cunning of the Alpha Legion then came into play, not merely with the creation of the bio-weapon, but rather the insidious method of its deployment. It was not to be seeded across the stars or upon the dead worlds the Ak'Haireth had made their concealed homes in the hopes of their eventual return, but instead on the worlds on which they had preyed. It was the humans that peopled those worlds and the void-born who plied the stars between those planets

that were to be infected with the virus. In the human population, the malignancy rate of the virus was as little as 7%, but to the Ak'Haireth that might feed on them or the generations born of them in the centuries to come, it was irrevocably lethal. Alpharius had won ultimate victory against the xenos by poisoning their food supply—Mankind.

THE TESSTRA COMPLIANCE

The battle to force the human world of Tesstra into Compliance has been seen by many as an exemplar both of the Alpha Legion's particular strengths and ultimately its flaws. Tesstra was at that time part of a close alliance of totalitarian colonies resistant to the Imperium's authority. This alliance, known as the 'Conservation', had survived the Age of Strife through a mixture of relative good fortune and rigidly imposed eugenic control. This divided its population into highly stratified castes enslaved to their civilisation's greater needs. For the Imperium, the Conservation's worlds represented an addition to the Great Crusade's conquests; a prize that would liberate a human population of nearly eleven billion, but in order for this to be the case, the abhorrent civilisation created by the Conservation would have to be systematically dismantled. Once the Imperium's emissaries made their desires known they were fired upon and driven away, while the Conservation geared its worlds to violent defence against the Great Crusade.

The Warmaster Horus, whose own forces were at the time engaged in battle elsewhere, diverted the forces of two Expeditionary fleets, commanded by Roboute Guilliman and Alpharius respectively, to bring the Conservation to heel. The Ultramarines under their Primarch Guilliman began to immediately conduct a campaign to engage and conquer the outer worlds of the Conservation, whilst pinning down its mobile military assets in an ever constricting noose. Alpharius and his Legion did not immediately attack, but instead circled, launching probes and raids without seeming rhyme or reason. Increasingly infuriated by the Alpha Legion's lack of progress and co-operation, Roboute Guilliman is known to have openly berated Alpharius in council, demanding that the Alpha Legion learn from his own Ultramarines' method of warfare and emulate it to achieve the victory that the Great Crusade demanded of them both. Further, that if Alpharius were to place his Legion under Guilliman's full command, the Conservation could be made to fall in a matter of months. This demand Alpharius ignored.

Shortly thereafter, the Alpha Legion bypassed the Ultramarines' battle lines and attacked the inner Conservation world of Tesstra. But again these attacks, while vicious, were inconclusive, and served only to rally the planet to maximum preparedness to repel an invasion. In particular, massive armed forces, including thousands of gene-wrought Ogryn enforcers dug in around the planet's sprawling capital city of sixty million inhabitants, known as Prime. For more than a full week of sidereal time, the Alpha Legion delayed their invasion, appearing only as threatening spectres as more and more Tesstran forces were deployed to Prime's defences in preparation for the inevitable attack.

When the assault finally came, it sent the Tesstrans reeling, striking from a hundred vectors at once yet leaving whole swathes of the defensive lines untouched. While within the city they had expended such effort to cordon against an attack, the enemy was already within their walls. Key nexus points of the city's transit network and power infrastructure were destroyed in a wave of bombings and sabotage that paralysed the vast metropolis and plunged it into darkness. The panicking Tesstran commanders found their army was equally paralysed, their garrisons trapped in their fortified defence lines, unable to advance or retreat, as Alpha Legion strike forces began to appear inside the city, making red slaughter of government facilities and security stations with impunity. Frantically, the Tesstran commanders attempted to redeploy forces from those defences not under attack back to the city, but sheer anarchy now reigned as supply lines collapsed or were cut, orders were redirected or simply failed to arrive, and entire divisions were stranded trying to cross bridge networks that had been blown apart before they could reach them.

It was then that the Harrowing of Tesstra Prime truly began. Alpha Legion super-heavy armour, spearheaded by Fellblades and Typhons, smashed through the outer defences of the city in a score of places previously untouched by the attack, and through the breaches they made, thousands of Alpha Legion warriors poured in mechanised attack columns. The Tesstran soldiers, caught in bottlenecks between the shattered bridgeheads and the defences their own commanders had forced them to abandon, were ruthlessly exterminated by the implacable advance of the Legiones Astartes. Such pockets of resistance that tried to hold out were doomed to fail as neither reinforcement or resupply could reach them in time.

Within hours, what had begun at first as an attempted withdraw by the Tesstrans had become a massacre, and soon devolved into city-wide panic and anarchy. Refugee civilians and fleeing soldiers alike fled before the Alpha Legion in blind terror, crowding onto roadways and concourses blocked by burning vehicles, only to be cut down in their thousands as azure-hulled Thunderhawks and Fire Raptors swept in from the skies above, their weapon pods howling death into the mob below. The vast city burned, and it was two days before what remained of the Tesstran military and government could rally sufficient force for an attempted counter-attack, including their last reserve of augmented Ogryns—the only troops that thus far had managed even to slow the Space Marines' attack. Their plans however had been betrayed from within to Alpha Legion infiltration agents placed within the city months previously, and the Tesstran counter-attack advanced directly into the teeth of a trap already laid for them.

Beset on all sides by the Alpha Legion, the Ogryn enforcers were cut to pieces by a crossfire of deadly accurate bolter fire, their officers slain by snipers and the last of their heavy armour torn to shreds by fast moving squadrons of Sicaran tanks which slashed like razors through the last hope of the Tesstran Conservation's rule. The battle was over, but not the killing. As the Alpha Legion withdrew from Prime, their task done, they left an anarchy of riot, fire and ruin in their wake. The regime and infrastructure had collapsed, and the dead and the dying were everywhere in the streets, with pestilence and famine soon to follow. It is estimated that ninety per cent of Tesstra Prime's population, both military and civilian, would not survive the battle and its aftermath. The rest of the planet capitulated in a matter of days.

Afterwards, when Guilliman questioned Alpharius why he had not simply seized the capital before the defending armies had arrived to further fortify it, or why he did not choose to strike at the heart of its governance and take over instead of laying the city to waste, Alpharius was said to have replied "*It would have been too easy*". The fall of Tesstra Prime would be a pattern repeated elsewhere by the Alpha Legion during the campaign, much to Roboute Guilliman's disgust, claiming such tactics were a "*... mere exercise in cruelty and the wasting of the Great Crusade's time and resources*", in a formal protest to the Warmaster. The Alpha Legion would not serve again directly alongside the Ultramarines as allies in the Great Crusade.



THE IRON WARRIORS

Numeration: The IVth Legion

Primogenitor: Perturabo

Cognomen (Prior): None officially recognised. {An informal Imperial Army designation for the Legion, the 'Corpse Grinders', was suppressed and use of it was categorised as an infraction of duty by order of the Officio Provost Marshal as "*corrosive to Crusade morale*"}.

Observed Strategic Tendencies: Siege Warfare, Co-ordinated Mass-theatre Warfare, Armoured Assault, Planetary Decimation, Attrition, Retribution and Counter-insurgency Campaigns.

Noteworthy Domains: The satrapy of the Meratara Cluster, Olympia Majoris system (primary home world—Destroyed). Primus grade garrisons, keeps and bastion-holds established on at least seventy worlds, with an unknown number of additional secondary outposts and watch-stations.

Allegiance: *Traitoris Perdita*

"Cold hearts and bitter souls have the Iron Warriors. To them war is the clacking of the tallyman's measure; all the blood spilled and the lives spent, the high walls toppled and the foes cast down to them is all no more than coins added to death's coffers. The profit and loss of battle is their bread, the arithmetic of massacre is their wine, and with them it is an ashen feast they serve and yet find no pleasure in. There are many who look to the Emperor's Legions and see Mortarion's get as the ancient spectre of death come to flesh, the wiser few look upon the graveyards Perturabo's faceless sons make of worlds with such calculated efficiency and may beg to differ."

Lord Militant Pietra Veitz Gustavus (RE) Of War;
A Private Memoir of the Great Crusade Vol III,
Meditations on the Legiones Astartes

For decades the Iron Warriors Legion were the battering ram of the Great Crusade, a maul used to tear down every impregnable fortress or unassailable citadel that dared to stand in the path of the Emperor's will. The IVth Legion became a byword for punishing warfare and for mastery in siege craft, both in defence and assault. Its Primarch Perturabo was likewise known as a ruthless and effective warlord; a master strategist whose razor-edged mind could fathom the hidden weakness in any foe and exploit it with savage and decisive action—a general to whom defeat was anathema and victory worth any price paid in blood to gain it.

This lauded record masked a long simmering discord within the Legion itself however. A discord bred by ill use and by slights both real and imagined which, as time went on, was given outward sign by a marked distance and growing distrust between the Iron Warriors Legion and the Great Crusade it served. A growing bitterness festered in the hearts of its Legionaries and, most tellingly, in the heart of its increasingly paranoid and withdrawn Primarch. When the treachery of Horus was revealed at Isstvan III, the Iron Warriors were already a Legion in crisis, scattered over the stars, divided between a hundred different deployments and still reeling from a brutal act of savage suppression carried out against their own home world of Olympia, but they answered the call to punish the Traitor without hesitation. But when Perturabo, the Iron Lord of the IVth, led the bulk of his Legion to Isstvan V, it was to unleash the Iron Warriors' fury not against the Traitors but against those who had remained loyal. The poison that had long festered within the Legion's soul had at last born its bitter fruit and in the dark years that followed, billions would suffer for it.

Origins: Of Serried Ranks and Steel Banners

Founded as its brother-Legions were on Terra during the closing stages of the Unification Wars which presaged the Emperor's Great Crusade, considerable surface level detail on the origins of the IVth Legion remains. Its first muster grounds are noted to have been founded atop the wreckage of a recidivist fortress on the Auro Plateau of

Sek-Amrak. The warlike gun-tribes, blood grieves and Tek-enclaves in the surrounding area provided the Legion with much of its earliest waves of recruits as the recalcitrant region was brought fully into the fold of Terran Unification, rapidly becoming one of the most stalwart of loyalist domains. Documentary evidence attests that the IVth Legion gene-seed showed an above average adaptability and rates of implant rejection were notably low, particularly in comparison with difficulties in large scale implantation encountered with other progenoid types, which would not be ameliorated until the acquisition of the gene-labs of Luna. This advantage meant that the IVth's fighting strength was built rapidly, expanding to several fully battle-ready battalions in size while some of the other nascent Legions were still yet unable to field more than an active century. This in turn meant that the Legion was very swiftly put to active service alongside the Ist and Vth Legions.

The Legion fought first on Terra in the destruction of the final resisting elements there and then throughout the pacification of Terra's solar system. Testament to this fact can be found in surviving frescos in the Imperial Palace, according them with the battle honours of the Cydo-Tyre Orbital, the Zidec Archipelago, Ice Station Echo and Mehr Yasht. The lattermost of these names, Mehr Yasht, is perhaps the most noteworthy as it was the key battle of the punishing Venusian campaign and its citation accords "...the serried ranks and proud steel banners of the IVth Legion..." as going forth into battle under the direct command of the Emperor himself to break the back of the deadly Litho-Gholem armies of the War Witches.

It appears that the IVth Legion's early successes were accordingly rewarded with primary resupply of newer classes of weapons and war machines as they were made available from the Emperor's alliance with Mars, as well as a noteworthy short term increased intake of Terran recruits originally intended for the IIIrd Legion, swelling its numbers further to replace on-going losses accrued in battle. [The difficulties caused by the catastrophic near-loss of the IIIrd Legion's gene-seed to suspected sabotage are dealt with elsewhere]. It was by this gene-seed adaptability and proven success in battle that the IVth Legion became one of the most numerous of the Legiones Astartes during the earliest years of the Great Crusade, enabling its forces to be successfully split between several substantial early Expeditionary fleets.

Most notable of these was the 8th Expeditionary Fleet, in which it formed the key and leading element. This force conquered or reclaimed twenty-nine coreward system-clusters and annihilated several interstellar xenos realms in a protracted eleven-year campaign which played a key part in the establishment of the Imperium's control of the Segmentum Solar. All were achievements for which it was recognised and commended by the Emperor in turn. The Legion took from the 8th Expeditionary

Fleet the emblem of the Winged Bolt as its first heraldic device and displayed its battle honours with pride, carrying them as vexilla standards before the dauntless columns of its Legionaries as they advanced into shot and shell across dozens of worlds conquered by the force of the IVth Legion's arms.

As the forces of the Great Crusade went beyond the boundaries of the Segmentum Solar, pushing onwards with the Great Crusade's expansion, several sources note that the IVth Legion—which was not to be united with its Primarch until the late 840s.M30—had quickly lost any specific ties to Terra, either of culture or indeed recruit intake pattern, although as it pushed ever onwards at the forefront of expansion, its military formation remained rigidly unchanged. The IVth Legion's adherence to the organisational structures, fighting methods and panoply laid out as a pattern for the Legiones Astartes at the very beginning of the Great Crusade remained consistent, with no fresh 'stamp' of culture brought by interaction with a Primarch for many years.

As a result, its methods of warfare too went largely unaltered, regardless of circumstances or enemy, and the Legion was wont to overcome any obstacles or difficulties they faced with relentless and meticulously applied force of arms alone rather than cunning stratagem or bloody-handed heroics. These combined factors set them out as being increasingly different from many of their brother-Legions as by this period of the Great Crusade, most Space Marine Legions were now divergent from the basic Terran pattern set as the template during their first muster, regardless of whether or not they had been united with their Primarch. Unlike the IVth, their brother-Legions had, within the span of a few short decades, evolved to demonstrate recognisable and, in some cases, extreme character traits and modes of warfare of their own that erred considerably from the basic pattern, and to these the constancy and pragmatism of the IVth Legion's operations stood out in contrast.

These traits labelled them as unimaginative, mechanistic and even honourless fighters in the minds of certain other Space Marine Legions and their masters—not least of all Horus—it has been said. Conversely, to some within the Great Crusade's High Command however, these traits were positive factors, making the IVth arguably more reliable in deployment than some of the more quixotic Legions and more ready to meet commands from outside their own

Legion without complaint. Accordingly, the IVth Legion was increasingly used to fight often inglorious but vital campaigns of backbreaking attrition and drawn-out bloodshed, and they became in short a 'workhorse' Legion, relied upon both for their martial power and their reliability in following orders to the letter.

Furthermore, whereas substantially sized Legions such as those of Russ, Ferrus Manus and Horus refused to split their forces at the behest of minor—and merely human—theatre commanders, the IVth Legion did not balk at any duty to which they were lawfully tasked. They fought repeatedly in thankless sieges and protracted suppression campaigns which demanded the might of the Legiones Astartes to secure victory, but which carried little renown. They also undertook the garrisoning of worlds too dangerous for any but the Legiones Astartes to hold. The IVth had a single charted course whose direction lay in the hands of others; to follow the orders of the Great Crusade whither it was tasked to go and to fight and die as it must. From war zone to war zone the IVth Legion went without respite or fanfare, taking bleak pride in its largely thankless work. So the Legion subtly began at last to change, just as its formerly great strength in numbers was bled through attrition and brother-Legions outpaced it in glory. With the benefit of hindsight, it is perhaps possible to see that it was during these times, before even they were reunited with their Primarch, that a subtle wedge had been driven between the IVth Legion and its brother-Legions, creating a fracture that would only worsen in time.

The Price of Victory

The IVth Legion from their earliest days operated with determined and disciplined force, as solid and unyielding as the metal that they would later take as part of their name. They were known to be among the more technologically able and proficient Legions by inclination—although were overshadowed in this somewhat by the Xth during the Great Crusade's early years—and preferred to strike always from a position of overwhelming superiority where able, bringing maximum force directly to bear on a foe. As its role developed as a main-line fighting force, often shouldering the brunt of extended combat operations, the IVth Legion increasingly put great score by the formulation of pre-battle strategy in detail and the use of massive, focused bombardment as a precursor to attack: the calculation of fields of fire, the use of high-

intensity shelling, and the deployment of heavy armour and mechanised forces to spearhead attacks became the IVth Legion's stock-in-trade. In order to serve this bias, the IVth also amassed the largest dedicated artillery train of perhaps any Legion in the Great Crusade's history.

But while these tactics spoke of a cerebral, pragmatic and calculated approach to warfare, it was equally true of the Legion that once the battle had commenced, they would not relent from their attack for anything save direct order from the highest level to withdraw, even though suffering sudden reversals of fortune or unexpectedly high—even staggering—casualties. This bitter stubbornness grew over time within the Legion, and became a point almost of pride with them—they refused to fail, regardless of the cost in lives and to claw victory against any odds by sheer dint of discipline and firepower. As the Legion's victories, often unsung, were many, so was their price high.

The seeming paradox of pronounced reliance on rationality and intellect set against infrequent but telling episodes of bloody-minded stubbornness in the Legion's behaviour was never more apparent than during the liberation of the war-torn Forge World of Incaladion in a gruelling campaign lasting between 842.M30 and 843.M30. Although victory was at last achieved, the war would see the near annihilation of the 8th Expeditionary Fleet's frontline forces in what was arguably a needlessly costly fashion.

In the aftermath, several critical voices in the Imperial Court and among the Primarchs opined that defeat had been deliberately courted by the IVth Legion in order to prove that they alone could do what was asked of them, no matter the odds. During this battle, the Legion refused to withdraw from the field after an initial assault unravelled spectacularly in the face of unprecedented and unexpected enemy counter-attack; they fought on regardless, adhering to a battle plan already in tatters. Nearly 29,000 of their number fell in the single engagement before enemy forces were worn down by bloody attrition, including many of the Legion's most veteran units, making the battle one of the most costly of its age.

What remained of the IVth after Incaladion was a Legion no longer in favour and without a Primarch yet to speak for it. By the end of that decade, it is perhaps accurate to say that the IVth Legion's star had waned

greatly as others rose. Incaladion had cast a pall over the IVth's early successes and seen many of their most senior commanders slain, as well as the wholesale slaughter of over two million Imperial Army soldiers under their command. While once the IVth had been amongst the most numerous of the Space Marines Legions, constant warfare and attrition had eroded their numbers — not dangerously to their existence, as the IVth's gene-seed continued to prove of the highest quality as far as ease of implantation went— but at least to the point where several others had since eclipsed them in size and range, while certain other Legions, most notably the Luna Wolves and Dark Angels, outshone them in the glory and in the majesty of their conquests. It was to this IVth Legion, damaged, disabused and without a clear direction of its own, that their Primarch came.

The Lord of Iron

Such evidence that remains of the recovery of Perturabo and his installation in the forces of the Great Crusade indicates that the process occurred swiftly, and with immediate acceptance on Perturabo's part, in marked contrast to several other Primarchs. It is likely that the tyrant Dammekos was more than willing to bring Olympia into the Imperium's fold, as its satrap, and the

price of voluntarily releasing Perturabo from his service was but a small due to pay. Perturabo for his part, it is believed, had already reasoned out his true nature, at least in abstract, as an artificial post-human being, and indeed expected his creator to one day be revealed to him, even though the particulars no doubt remained a mystery until the Emperor himself appeared in orbit with his fleet.

It was remarked upon at the time of his early reception in a number of sources, just what a ravenous mind the new-found Primarch possessed. While all of the Emperor's post-human sons displayed an intellect and capacity to absorb and adapt to new knowledge that surpassed that of an unmodified human, Perturabo's capacity for learning was truly incredible, and it swiftly came to be said that of all the Emperor's sons, he was the most gifted in terms of raw scientific and technical intelligence. Much of this sagacity was turned inwards however, and Perturabo was from the outset a distant, calculating mastermind who cared little for the society of others, nor readily deigned to explain his actions or intentions to those around him, even to his fellow Primarchs upon meeting them, who he was cold and guarded against to the point of bristling indifference. To the Emperor such foibles

mattered little, and in Perturabo he found a new weapon for the arsenal of the Great Crusade; a warlord and general whose savage might was only eclipsed by his razor-keen intellect. To Perturabo each battle and each campaign was no more than a problem to be objectified, deconstructed and overcome, and it would not be long before the first of Mankind's foes would feel the terrible power of this murderous mind at work.

After a brief period in the Emperor's company fighting alongside him and consuming knowledge of the Great Crusade, its history, war machinery and operations, Perturabo was handed the command of the IVth Legion which bore his gene-seed, and the transition of authority to him was swift and absolute. At the time, around 35,000 Legiones Astartes of the IVth Legion had been mustered to create his independent command, with perhaps half that number again scattered across the conquered domains of the Imperium in smaller independent garrisons and detachments bound to their watches and their duties. Having instituted a full review of the IVth Legion's war record, doctrines and practices and having compared those with the other Legions, Perturabo found his sons wanting and acted accordingly. His punishment was decimation.

NAME: OLYMPIA

CLASSIFICATION: LEGIONES ASTARTES HOME WORLD
[TEMPERATE/MOUNTAINOUS]

SYSTEM DATA: ZQ/9936//VYB

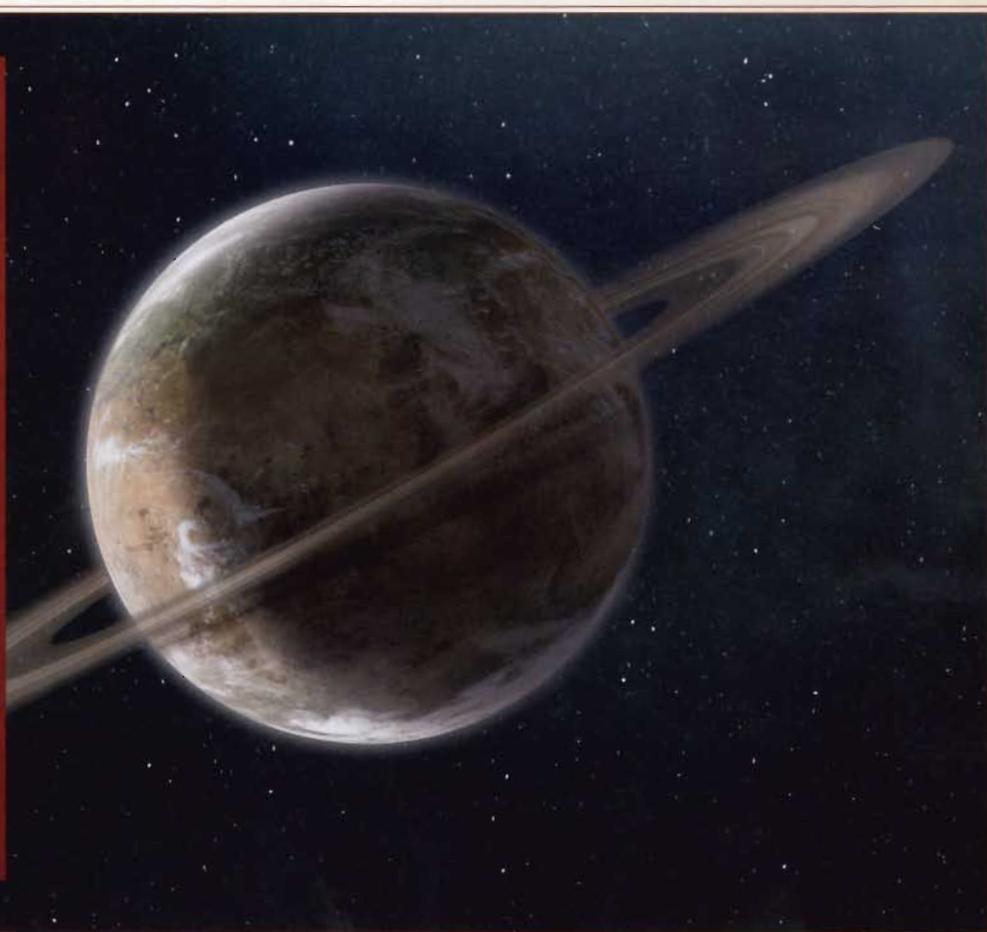
STELLAR-GRID: 23-HDF/ID-83

SEGMENTUM: ULTIMA [CENTRALIS]

NOTATION: POST CIVIL WAR PACIFICATION/
PURGATION ONGOING.

++[FIEFDOM OF THE IRON WARRIORS LEGION]++

++[CURRENT STATUS UNKNOWN]++



THE HAMMER OF OLYMPIA

The world to which the Primarch of the IVth Legion fell, when he and his brothers were scattered across the galaxy, was Olympia. An ancient human-colonised planet in the marches of the Ultima Segmentum on the opposing side of the galactic core from Terra, this was one of a number of worlds in a region heavily settled, it is believed, in the latter Dark Age of Technology. Having survived the Age of Strife largely intact, scientific lore and industry on Olympia had regressed to a fractured but largely pre-atomic industrial level, but there remained stagnant as a sophisticated feudal culture had developed.

Although relatively rich in organics and with a plethora of lithic mineral forms, much of its fissile materials and easily available conductive metals had been strip-mined in antiquity and removed off-world, serving to enforce a bar on Olympia's progression technologically. Further complicating matters was the almost unbroken mountainous terrain which dominated Olympia's land masses and made large scale urbanisation and agriculture impossible. These unique conditions bred an equally singular culture which evolved into a diverse patchwork of hundreds of independent city-states and client satrapies. These dominated and fought endlessly over the most verdant mountain valleys, sizable plateaus and richest vales in a shifting web of power and warfare. A secular, opportunistic culture, given to the pursuit of wealth, security and dominance, the Olympian arts of war evolved towards a sublime mastery of fortress building, siege craft and stone masonry.

On Olympia, power was the ability to not only take resources but to defend them. The mountainous terrain, abundance of high quality stone and the artisanship to put it to use made the fashioning of elaborate keeps to guard vital passes and citadels to defend stockpiles of wealth and foodstuffs essential. These artificer-wrought defences were of murderous cunning and impregnable strength, and soon came to be the hallmark and measure of the greatest of the city-states and their rulers; the twelve most powerful of which were dubbed by ancient tradition the 'Tyrants of Olympia'.

Warfare in this fractious realm was a complex game of cunning political subterfuge and assassination mixed with all-

out assault. Olympia's incessant wars were fought between often mercenary armies of professional sellsword grenadiers and storm-gunners, and sieges were carried out by steel-plated creeper-tanks, clanking steam mortars and hulking scout airships held aloft by volatile gasses. The warlords who commanded Olympia's battles owed such loyalty as they possessed to the purses of the wealthiest of the Tyrants, individuals whose rule was carried by right of possession, bribery, preferment, statecraft and fear. It was to the court of one of these Tyrants, Dammekos of the city-state of Lochos, that the young Perturabo was brought.

The full details of this early period in Perturabo's life remain somewhat mysterious, with the only extant accounts given to Imperial Iterators years later, and were distrusted even then as coloured by Olympia's endemic intrigues. The most reliable information points to Perturabo as having been recovered from the rocky wilds outside the city-states by the Tyrant's guards. They had been pursuing tales of a strange and wondrous boy wandering between outlying minor settlements and outcast communities—the boy plying his way both as a fighter for hire and as an artisan of phenomenal talent despite his great youth, staying in no one place for any length of time before moving on.

Tales of the boy had reached the court of Lochos and Dammekos, a shrewd and cunning ruler, and he had been intrigued enough to despatch his retainers to find if any truth was in them and if so, how indeed they could be turned to his advantage. On seeing the strange boy in the flesh, Dammekos put him to the test; witnessing his ability to defeat warriors twice his size and many times his age in combat on the one hand, and the boy's ability to solve any puzzle put to him by the Tyrant's own scholars on the other, Dammekos was intrigued enough to offer the boy a place in his court. Between the boy and the Tyrant a bargain was struck; fealty, loyalty and service on the boy's part and on that of the Tyrant, patronage and protection, and access to the finest military training and scholarship the Tyrant's resources could confer upon him.

Later accounts differ of what came after. Many paint the boy as a prodigy of staggering and indeed inhuman ability, who spent his life in an unending regime of military training and devouring whatever

learning and lore was set before him, or that he could dig out himself to study. Others mark veiled references to a cold distance in the rapidly-growing boy, a refusal to engage in the complex social interplay of the court—although he demonstrably understood it well enough—and a rejection of any affection offered to him by members of the Tyrant's house and family into which he was later adopted under the laws and customs of the Olympian nobility. There were those at the court even then who feared the watchful, unnaturally strong, unnaturally clever child, and some that may have even plotted his death. But what became of these early enemies and their schemes is now lost to history, save for the fact of their failure as the boy grew and prospered in the Tyrant's court, every year increasing in intellect and physical power.

Upon his age of majority, the foundling boy took a name for himself to be known as in adult life, but against custom he chose not to honour the family into which he had been taken by assuming one of the names of its venerated history as was expected. Instead he chose an ancient name that he had long favoured, a name that some claimed had been found in a forgotten text from before the fall of humanity—a text written in a language only the boy in his precocious ability had succeeded in translating; Perturabo.

What true meaning it held, he did not divulge. To war the young Perturabo now set himself, and in this he had much to work on. Dammekos was a powerful Tyrant, but he and his realm were beset by rivals and bitter vendettas on all sides and having given an oath unbreakable, Dammekos' enemies were now Perturabo's. Granted first minor commands, the young Primarch ascended the ranks of his adopted house's armies at a frightening rate. Victory after victory followed under his command and his legend grew, as did the mercenaries and war-artisans flocking to the banner of Dammekos in their lust for success and plunder. But more than mere success in battle did Perturabo bring to Lochos, and even from the beginning was his genius noted not simply for war, but also invention. Having absorbed with superhuman clarity the breadth and depth of Olympia's science and artisanship, he soon surpassed it on every level and from his chambers a constant stream of blueprints and discoveries sprung, encompassing

everything from revolutionary new machines, to treatises on architecture and production methods, and even groundbreaking works on medicine and astronomy. But it was first and foremost by his advances in warfare that Perturabo's dark fame was bred and his legend as the 'Hammer of Olympia' was born. New weapons, munitions and hitherto unimagined siege engines were all birthed at Perturabo's hand and, in a brief span of years, it was they and Perturabo's own generalship, now as Warlord to the Tyrant Dammekos, that made Lochos the most powerful and feared domain on Olympia, with a hundred others underneath its heel, and countless more cowed into defacto submission to its rulers.

Perturabo's score upon score of military victories bought no peace to Lochos however, only dominance, and the growing threat of an enemy within; the assassin's blade and the poisoner's kiss. It is believed that a great many attempts were carried out upon the life of Lochos' 'Lord of Iron' during this time, both by subjugated Tyrants reasoning —and rightly— that without Perturabo, Lochos' supremacy would crumble, and by those who to Perturabo's face called him family and friend, but who secretly held him in terror and jealous hatred. The Primarch, now full grown, towered over them all both in stature and intellect, but cared little for the baubles and trappings of power, and nothing at all for the falsehood of court. Aloof, prideful and justly wary of friend and enemy alike, Perturabo is depicted in the evidence of the time increasingly as a particularly bloody-handed warlord even by the standards of his world, to whom mercy was an alien concept, and who would meet any insult with murderous violence. The steel executioner's mask and the ancient 'Kaveatkos' heraldry warning death to the transgressor were Perturabo's signs and seals, and promised savage punishment in repayment of failure by those beneath him, just as it promised death to his enemies.

It is of note that despite the fact that should he have wished it, Perturabo could have overthrown his 'master' Dammekos and displaced him as Tyrant, he did not do so. The Primarch it seems, would not break his word or his bargain willingly, and Dammekos, for all his vainglory and corruption was careful never to give him cause or excuse to do so. It is thought perhaps that true to his oath, Perturabo

would have let the ageing Dammekos die a natural death if he remained unprovoked, hastened by the Tyrant's own licentious excesses, before taking Lochos and then all of Olympia as his own in time.

What he would have made of his world then can only be guessed at, for it was not to be, as a new star had been seen in the heavens — the Emperor had come for his lost son.

THE BRETHREN OF THE IRON WARRIORS

There existed in the ranks of the Iron Warriors, a series of long-standing warrior societies that existed outside of the Legion's military order and command structure, and which were seldom become known to outsiders. By some accounts these were so firmly entrenched they resisted the outside and corrosive influence of Horus' Warrior Lodges, and by other accounts became the vector of the Legion's corruption.

The Dodekatheon: The Brethren of Stone

The oldest, most numerous and influential of the warrior societies of the IVth Legion, the Brethren of Stone was an order of masons and strategists whose origins predated the Legion's connection to Perturabo and Olympia. Originating first as a tactical symposium in the style of the Warcaste Metisraad culture of Terra, it focused on siege craft as well as the field of military architecture. Upon Perturabo's re-joining with the Legion, the Primarch massively expanded the organisation, renaming it as the Dodekatheon after the cultural and political traditions of Olympia. The Olympian Dodekatheon was a cyclical gathering of the twelve greatest Tyrant households of Olympia for the purposes of resolving disputes and forging allegiances. It also featured extensive wargames and tournaments between the households present, and the muster of artisans and warriors, who would show off their skills either to the glory of their patrons or in the hopes of employment.

The Legion's Dodekatheon took on these trappings, becoming over time a venue of contest and exchange for its foremost warriors, officers, builders and strategists — met without rank and on an equal footing — to test their mettle and further their learning. It was where its members fought and re-fought bloodless wars in simulation, unveiled new designs, poured over battle reports and military intelligence, and vied

for position and the respect of their peers and their Primarch. Although Perturabo enforced rigid discipline in his Legion and would countenance no disruption due to vendetta, the Dodekatheon served as a 'safety valve' for the Legion's internal rivalries as much as an academy of war. In theory the Dodekatheon was open to all Iron Warriors, but in practice only those who had distinguished themselves in some way attended, others did not, rather than risk the disfavour of their Primarch.

The Apolakron: The Brethren of Steel

Formed as a smaller shadow organisation which operated in many ways as a division of the larger Dodekatheon, the Apolakron's particular focus was on the machine-craft of Battle-automata, both in their construction and maintenance, and their employment in war. It existed in an uneasy alliance with the Mechanicum, save those Tech-Priests who had long-served the Iron Warriors directly, and was viewed with particular suspicion by elements of the Legio Cybernetica, who saw it not as a kindred group, but rather a rival to their monopoly on the arcane knowledge they held.

The Kheledakos: The Brethren of Cold

Owing its origins to the aftermath of the Legion's early campaigns under Perturabo, the Kheledakos, although led and commanded by Legiones Astartes, also encompassed the senior officers and Mechanicum magos, engineers and shipwrights who maintained and crewed the Legion's warships. Its base of operations was the *Black Citadel*, Olympia's principal and most heavily fortified orbital shipyard, and void warfare and the construction and design of warships and assault craft were its obsession.

The Lyssatra: The Brethren of Thunder

The most obscure and cult-like of the Legion's warrior societies was the Lyssatra, known as the Brethren of Thunder or most disparagingly in the Legion as the 'burned men'. It was something of a pariah group whose members contained some of the Legion's more unhinged and war-brutalised gun-crafters, weapon smiths and ordnancers. Their obsession was creating destruction and devastation, far beyond what even the rest of the Legion generally considered sane or practicable, and were darkly rumoured to have had truck with strange occult ideology and xeno-tech in secret long before the outbreak of the Horus Heresy.

For the Legion's failings all would suffer, all were guilty. As the edict of decimation would state, "War is unequivocal, uncaring, unforgiving and blind. Blind also will be the selection of those who will pay the blood price for the greater failure of your record". One in ten of the Legion, determined by lottery, was put to death without honour, a deed carried out by each Legionary's own comrades with their bare hands. At this bloody edict some within the Imperial Court protested, believing that the Emperor had given absolute power of a Space Marine Legion to a madman, while others, more guarded in their criticism, opined only that command had been given too soon to the Primarch—unused as he was to the ways of the Imperium. Loudest of these critics was Roboute Guilliman, Primarch of the Ultramarines, who bridled at the ignominy of the deaths to which valiant Legiones Astartes—warriors alongside which his own Legion had often fought—had been thus consigned. It was a spur of discord between the two Primarchs that, though later eclipsed by other rancours and feuds among the Emperor's sons, would be one that neither would ever forget. All such criticism the Emperor silenced.

To those who survived the Legion's self-decimation, the lesson was plain: such was to be the rule of Perturabo, ruthless and unforgiving, and without favour or preferment. Death would be the price of failure in Perturabo's service and war was to him a binary equation. Their sin was not that they had failed in the Great Crusade's service—for by no measure had this been the case, but instead that they had not reached their full potential. It was not enough for Perturabo that they were merely superior, their fault lay in that among the Legions they were not already supreme.

Perturabo demanded that his Legion would be a peerless engine of war, and he immediately set about fashioning it into the weapon he desired it to be, a weapon whose edge he would first test against the rest of the Meratara Cluster at whose edge the Olympia Majoris star system sat. There he first overthrew the vaunted 'Black Judges' and claimed their once-held domain for the Imperium, before purging the xenos Ecto-Saurids of Verikhonia and subjugating the renegade Knight-fiefdom of Lyxos, completing his conquest of the cluster. In this last conflict, Perturabo's Legion ended by force a schism that had lasted for millennia back into the Age of Strife between the fragmented empire and its former masters in the Mechanicum, winning the Legion much favour with the Lords of Mars.

This period was for the IVth Legion a winnowing; a time of trials and testing at their Primarch's hand. With calculated forethought and savage experiment Perturabo remade the Legion in his own image—an image not echoing the Olympian or Terran ideal—but one fashioned purely from his own bleak and unflinchingly ruthless psyche. At the end of the Meratara Cluster campaign, the IVth Legion of old was no more, and the Iron Warriors had been forged from blood and fire in their place.

By the time Perturabo returned again to Olympia with his renamed force, the machinery of his plans was well into effect. In alliance with the Mechanicum, new orbital shipyards and foundries burned with frenetic activity, many had been torn from dead orbits around conquered stars, dragged to Olympia and refitted and expanded to his Legion's purpose. The worlds of the Meratara Cluster too now paid their tribute of flesh and blood to the Lord of Iron to feed his Legion's hunger for fresh warriors, weapons and munitions. All was by Perturabo's hand

and design. In the crucible of war, the Iron Warriors had undergone its reshaping, and the changes that had occurred can, in many ways, be seen to have amplified what was already present in the IVth Legion rather than changing it beyond recognition; where once the Legion had been ruthless in its willingness to accept losses in return for victory, now it was utterly driven to the point where such considerations were as far beneath it as mortal fear. War had become a deadly equation which the Iron Warriors were supremely suited to solve; a relentless, unyielding engine of war, a beast of steel and fire which swept worlds clean and devoured whole armies.

At the head of a newly constituted force, the 125th Expeditionary Fleet, into which Perturabo drew the bulk of his Legion's strength, the Primarch had command of a force which quickly became the battering ram of the Great Crusade. As they fought alongside each of their fellow Legions in turn, they gained an unmatched reputation for brutal efficiency in battle, mastery of armoured warfare and as artillerists without peer among the Legions. It was said of the Iron Warriors that there was no fortress built by the hand of humanity or that of the xenos that they could not smash down, no stronghold they could not storm and no army they could not drown in its own blood through shot and shell.

The wedge that had been hammered between the Iron Warriors and the other Legions, however, was only driven home further as time passed, and resentment, pride and paranoia gathered in the hearts of many within the Legion. By his grim methods and savage example Perturabo had awoken in his warriors a reflection of his own dark soul, and within them his own suspicion, malevolent distrust and callous indifference to life grew alongside the ruthless determination, cold intellect and strength he wished to unlock there. It is then not perhaps unsurprising, given the Legion's predilection for open

battle, its employment in siege assault—the most dangerous and unpredictable of all forms of line warfare—and its willingness at every level from its Primarch downwards to accept attrition as the price of victory, that the Iron Warriors are estimated in many sources to have suffered the highest overall rates of casualties taken over time of any of the Legions of the Great Crusade. It is also similarly a testament to them and the cold and cruel genius of their Primarch, that such losses were routinely absorbed by the Legion without serious lasting depreciation of the Iron Warriors' strategic fighting power and that high casualties rarely resulted in defeat for the Legion. However, despite their genetically enhanced resilience to mental trauma and psycho-indoctrination, it is believed that such a continuous exposure to loss and destruction worked a slow and bitter corrosion on the Legion's psyche.

Perturabo and his Legion sought no friends or allies amongst those they served with, save perhaps the agents of the Mechanicum who aided them in the pursuit of ever more powerful and efficient means of waging war. In their fellow Legions they saw weaknesses bred by self-deceit, lack of discipline, false mysticism and vanity, and they also saw insults and slights by them, both real and imagined. Even many factions of the Mechanicum, to whom Perturabo's technological intellect was a wonder, did not trust him or his Legion fully, dangerously self-sufficient and adept as they were, and ignorant of the Omnissiah's faith. To the forces of the Excertus Imperialis—the hosts of the Imperial Army and its auxiliaries—the Iron Warriors' repute was a dark one indeed. More than any other Legion, the Iron Warriors were seen as not only willing to use the lives of human auxiliaries as a strategic resource, but as deliberate expenditure; as cannon fodder to deplete an enemy's fire power, in sacrificial waves by the thousand to bring out a foe from their defences, or simply to gauge an enemy's strength by observing how fast they could annihilate them.

Such repeated incidents only served to further taint the Legion's name and earn them the hated epithet the 'Corpse Grinders' among the common soldiery of the Great Crusade. Open mutiny, put down with predictably thorough slaughter, grew increasingly frequent in war zones where Excertus Auxillia forces were under Iron Warriors' command until, by the Warmaster's edict, a standing order was effected to ensure that the bulk of such

The Hollow Crown

More so than many of those who turned traitor and sided with Horus, the motivations and path of damnation pursued by the Iron Warriors remains perhaps the most unknown and uncertain, save perhaps that of the history of the Alpha Legion around who little but lies circle. Once faultlessly loyal, they did not bend but seemed to outsiders instead to suddenly and inexplicably shatter in their allegiance. Many who view the matter with enough dispassion see, rightly or wrongly, a Legion eroded by too much horror, too much attrition and death in the service of a cause to which they went unheralded and unthanked. They see a Primarch and his sons who were slowly laid low with suspicion, malcontent and a growing madness. But there remains scant evidence of wholesale corruption of the body or the insidious hand of the Ruinous Powers at work among them, let alone any actual traffic with dark forces before the cataclysm of galactic civil war engulfed the Imperium. For others the answer is more simply that there grew in the Legion a savage, jealous arrogance born of nothing more than base bloodlust and malcontent which led the Iron Warriors down the path to their ruin.

There have been some who have contended that the Iron Warriors' fatal flaw was instead a lack of faith at a fundamental level; that they did not truly believe in the cause of the Great Crusade or the Emperor that they served, or that they themselves were anything more than machines built to kill. It might then be viewed that ultimately they were undone by the very pragmatism and logic that had made them such ruthless and effective soldiers, but left them ill-equipped to fight an enemy as existential as doubt and moral terror. If this is true then for Perturabo, his Primarch's mantle became nothing but a licence for slaughter without a higher purpose; his conquests empty and victories hollow. It has been further contended that this was what ultimately deranged and destroyed them from within, leaving nothing but empty vessels to be filled with the uncaring savagery and the mirror of the horrors they had borne.

troops given to the Iron Warriors command were to be either indentured criminals or enslaved non-Compliants to ameliorate the corrosive effect on wider morale. By the last decades of the Great Crusade, rivalries as well as often mutual simmering disdain, such as the antipathy between the Iron Warriors and Raven Guard Legion brought on by friction during the Icessunder War, and an increasingly bitter rivalry between the Iron Warriors and the Imperial Fists, characterised the Iron Warriors' relationship with its fellow Legions. Indeed, even where the Iron Warriors and their Primarch fought successfully alongside their fellow Legions, such as in the critical war against Waaagh! Mashogg, their part was often treated with indifference or guarded disdain by the Legion's contemporaries.

In this latter incident for example, although before Perturabo and the Iron Warriors' arrival in the war zone, Overdog Mashogg's vast orbital fortifications had previously repulsed attack after attack from both the Space Wolves and the White Scars. Perturabo, whose plan succeeded at last in breaking the line and allowing for the Orks slaughter is recorded in the contemporary chronicles of his brother-Legions only as a nameless 'comrade-in-arms'.

This growing schism, perhaps more obvious in hindsight than it would have appeared at the time, was further exacerbated after the appointment of Horus as Warmaster. This major re-alignment in the deployment of the Great Crusade saw the renewal and issuing of a string of directives and disposition orders, some from Terra and others from the Warmaster. These orders continued to bleed the Iron Warriors Legion and scatter a good part of its strength across a myriad splinter Expeditionary fleets, thankless sieges and garrison postings in the most dangerous, forlorn and isolated corners of the ever-widening Imperium.

Meanwhile Perturabo's own 125th Expeditionary Fleet was driven into the teeth of deadly foe after deadly foe, neither asking for, nor being sent reinforcements or additional resources, save for those it could itself generate and acquire. Perturabo, bitter but iron in his word, complied. Such events in retrospect only served to ferment and amplify the resentment and discord within the Legion and split it from the Imperium it served, and increasingly to derange its warriors in the face of some of the worst horrors the Great Crusade would ever face. Indeed, such may have been the Warmaster's plan.

UNIT ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE WITHIN THE LEGION

Within the Iron Warriors Legion, Perturabo's word was law. To him there was never any difference between Terran and Olympian; all were his Iron Warriors, grist for the bloody mill of war. Although for many decades the IVth Legion had been rigidly dogmatic in its adherence to the patterns set out for the nascent Legion at the start of the Great Crusade, Perturabo's intervention was to write significant and far-ranging changes upon his Legion, but not one that by any means changed it beyond all recognition from what had gone before.

This was a process that was swift and thorough as well as entirely done to the Primarch's exacting planning. While informed by the sophisticated martial culture of Olympia in which Perturabo had been a part of, it also had its origins in Perturabo's rapacious learning in the time he spent at the Emperor's side and on Terra itself. Here he is known to have devoured much of humanity's known martial traditions and histories, transforming that learning with his own inherent genius and predilections into what would become the template for the Iron Warriors.

The resulting principal strategic building block of the Iron Warriors Legion was the Grand Battalion. This formation, although roughly analogous in organisation and role to the 'chapter' as envisioned in the *Principia Belicosa* with 1,000 Space Marine Legionaries as its notional strength, also incorporated a very substantial portion of standing armour, artillery and logistical support elements, far beyond that found in other Legions at the same level. Furthermore, allowing for the higher than standard rate of attrition in the Iron Warriors Legion, particularly among initiates in the first years of their service, recruitment and reinforcement into a Grand Battalion in a war zone was continuous, which caused the strength of any given Grand Battalion to fluctuate widely. This was particularly the case in more extreme circumstances where severely depleted Grand Battalions were simply folded into other active units. Documentary evidence exists of particular Grand Battalions operating with as little as 500 Legionaries and as many as 4,000 in extreme cases.

Organisation below the strategic level was highly stratified, but just as equally and pragmatically varied by the demands of the particular operations and deployments,

with common divisions rated as Cohorts or Grand Companies (heavily mechanised and reinforced units comprising three to five line companies of Legionaries and their attendant human auxiliary troops, Mechanicum detachments and integrated support structures). Below this were the Line Companies and Armour Centuries, comprising roughly 100 Legionaries or 20-50 armour units, down through sections and individual squads. Whilst across the Legion's Grand Battalions were seeded elements of the Tyranthikos — the 'Dominators' — a veteran core of line breakers and assaulters who had each survived a score of desperate and bloody sieges to receive the name, and were the foremost proponents of Terminator armour within the Legion.

At every level the Iron Warriors Legion was formidably provisioned in arms and wargear, from several thousand operational suits of Tactical Dreadnought Armour to munitions reserves estimated to exceed that of several other Legions combined. The technical aptitude of each Iron Warrior was also formidable, furthering the functionality and customisation of their personal panoply of war. In a customarily practical approach, the Legion made extensive use of both specialised systems (such as dedicated sections equipped with portable lascannon for anti-armoured warfare and MkIII power armour for siege assault units) and patterns selected foremost for reliability and ease of repair for mass deployment and reserve supply on protracted campaigns. Merely aesthetic damage to wargear was deemed irrelevant, and while a Grand Battalion's muster might see rank upon rank of glittering steel presented for their Warsmith's inspection, a war zone's privations would see the Iron Warriors' armour increasingly blooded, burned and battered over its duration, attended to only to restore functionality until victory was achieved.

Of singular note within the Legion was the range, number and diversity of the armoured vehicle and artillery support assets fielded by the Iron Warriors. These were known to include the full breadth of general patterns and designs operated across the Imperium by the Legiones Astartes, with tactical emphasis placed on heavy units such as the Land Raider and super-heavy war machines such as the Typhon, Stormblade and Mastodon. Additionally, the employment of very large numbers of 'lesser' classes

such as the Rhino, Basilisk and Predator was also common. These the Legion largely considered disposable in practice, owing to their capacity to replace these patterns with ease thanks to the manufacture permanently geared to their production in the Legion's service. In addition, the Iron Warriors were known to operate large numbers of more unusual variant tanks and specialised war machines such as the Cerberus, Scorpios and Thunderstrike tanks. This bias and capacity of construction, alongside the integration of armoured and artillery formations at every level of the Legion meant that the Iron Warriors had the largest armoured reserve and ordnance capacity of any of the Legions of the Great Crusade.

A particular example of this was a specialised formation within the Legion known as the Stor-Bezashk. In a Legion renowned for the power of its ordnance and its consummate skills in siege warfare, the Stor-Bezashk were the masters of destruction, tasked with the maintenance, construction and use of the deadly siege weapons and singular relics of destruction in the Legion's armoury. The siegemasters of the Stor-Bezashk had command of weapons and war engines unseen outside of the ranks of the Mechanicum's Ordo Reductor and direct battlefield command of the Legion's extensive stockpiles of atomic shells, phosphex reserves and rare gravitic munitions, and power of life and death over those Legionaries assigned (often as punishment) to the Destroyer cadres under the siegemasters' control. The Stor-Bezashk served both as a specialised siege breaking force in its own right and, broken into its component parts, as specialised reinforcements for the Legion's Grand Battalions in the field.

Perturabo's ideal for the Iron Warriors can therefore be seen as that of an integrated, disciplined and unstoppable aggressive force. It was one that mastered warfare both in attack as well as defence, but if any single factor could be said to typify the Iron Warriors, it was their calculated savagery. Their bombardments were murderous works of art, precisely configured applications of firepower designed to overwhelm and to shatter. Their assaults were faultlessly choreographed exercises in armoured tactics and manoeuvre, supported by remorseless infantry advances that did not falter, regardless of the fire and fury with which



IRON WARRIORS CONTEMPTOR DREADNOUGHT

ANCIENT VHAKIS

7TH ASSAULT COHORT, 23RD GRAND BATTALION

SCOURING OF THE URGALL HILLS, AFTERMATH, ISSTVAN V DROPSITE MASSACRE

Ancient Vhakis was born heir to one of the many warlords of Olympia, his father forced to bend knee to the Primarch Perturabo. When the Imperium came to Olympia and Perturabo took his place amongst his true-father's Primarch sons, Vhakis was judged worthy of joining the IVth Legion and underwent the arduous transformation into a Space Marine of the Legiones Astartes. He served for seven decades before falling whilst leading the final assault on the Aethereal Bastion, his stoic devotion to duty and his unquestioning loyalty to Perturabo earning him internment within the armoured sarcophagus of a mighty Contemptor Dreadnought.

Vhakis utilised his favoured weapon—a rare and highly valued heavy conversion beamer—to deadly effect upon the black sands of the Urgall Depression. He is believed to have slain scores of Loyalist Astartes during the three hours of the Dropsite Massacre, primarily the sons of the Gorgon. Much later, he committed himself with cruel single-mindedness to the hunt for the elusive Raven Guard before he fell in battle alongside a dozen other Iron Warriors Dreadnoughts deep in the Illium Rifts.





they were met. When at last, after the storm of firepower and the crushing assault of the tanks, matters came to the bloody press of hand-to-hand combat were the darkest tempers of the Iron Warriors shown in a hateful ferocity the match of the wrath of Angron's near-berserk World Eaters or the dolorous blade-work of the Lion's Dark Angels. But even this last extreme of violence could be checked as abruptly as the throwing of a switch; such was the inhuman discipline that Perturabo both instilled and enforced on pain of death from his Legion.

It is clear that Perturabo saw his Legion not as a collective of individual members but as a cohesive and unified whole. An army whose task was to overwhelm their foes by the most efficient and direct methods possible, destroy that enemy's ability to resist and, where needed, to exterminate them utterly. Glory and honour belonged to the Legion as a whole, not to its rank and file or its individual warriors. More perhaps than any Primarch save Angron, it has been said that no Primarch saw his own Legionaries with so little regard as Perturabo, to him they were a resource to be spent to achieve victory, a resource which did have undeniable value, but a resource to be expended never-the-less.

This thinking was reflected in the structure of the Iron Warriors Legion itself, which was stratified and operated in such a way as to absorb loss and create identity at a strategic, rather than tactical level. The Legion itself was both a pioneer and proponent of the accelerated recruitment and creation of the Legiones Astartes, and an Iron Warriors Space Marine Legionary could expect to serve in a myriad of different units and roles, and under a number of different commands. Iron Warriors Legionaries were deployed and re-assigned purely on the basis of pragmatic considerations and tactical expediency in marked difference to the more ritualised formations of many other Legions. Promotion and advancement in the Legion's ranks were a matter in the first part of survival, and in the second of specialisation should a Legionary display particular talents and aptitudes. Mere martial ability was not enough to measure a Legionary's fitness to serve, and each Iron Warrior was required to be an artisan of metal, machine and stone just as they were a line fighter, close-quarter killer and artilleryist. In this their Primarch's gene-seed was evidenced and as well as technological aptitude, many Iron Warriors displayed extraordinary skill at rapid data-analysis, comprehension and abstract reasoning, and were likewise psychologically

marked by a tendency towards suspicion, distrust and viciousness of temper, even among their own.

While honorifics and commendations in general meant little to the Iron Warriors at an individual level, technological skill and the ability to wage warfare in the manner to which Perturabo favoured was recognised and rewarded. This was most evident in the rank of Warsmith within the Legion. In Perturabo's Legion, the title of Warsmith grew to largely replace that of praetor and lord commander, and it carried with it much of the role of a traditional Olympian warlord as well as an embodiment of the Iron Warriors' strategic doctrines. A Warsmith was —as perhaps the title implies— required to fashion and mould a battlefield to their will, not simply to excel at fighting or indeed leading those who fought. They were expected to have a complete mastery of logistics, siege craft, ordnance and the cerebral comprehension of war; from planning campaigns of planetary conquest to the rapid calculation of tactical fire zones in a shattered urban ruin. Unlike those of the lower ranks who fought at their command, a Warsmith was an individual in whose hands a battle rested, and the success or failure of the forces under their command was theirs to carry, to the good or ill of their own fate— Perturabo being renowned as unforgiving of failure.

This system made the Warsmiths a grim, self-possessed, often paranoid and highly independent class of savant-warlords within the Legion, it winnowed the weak and the ill-fortuned from their number and left those who remained as the most adept, ruthless and intelligent the Iron Warriors Legion had to offer. The ranks of the Warsmiths, which fluctuated in number and seniority between them, was not clearly defined, leading to rivalries and feuds between them. The majority of Warsmiths commanded Grand Battalions of their own, making up the core of the Legion's strategic command structure, while others had command of specific strategic formations such as the Stor-Bezashk, important garrison posts and splinter Expeditionary fleets, or held satrapies of armoury worlds and other detached commands.

Three Warsmiths, granted particular favour by Perturabo, were exalted to a further rank, that of Triarch. These formed the Trident, who nominally served as their Primarch's council of advisors, but more commonly served to convey his will and direct orders

to those below them. Such proximity to the Legion's increasingly dark-hearted master, particularly in later years, is reputed to have held dangers of its own.

WAR DISPOSITION

For the Iron Warriors Legion, the Horus Heresy came as the culmination of a series of reversals and fell tragedies that had, in recent years, stalked the Legion and by their effect both deranged and twisted its psyche. Foremost of these had been the rebellion of Olympia, the seat of the Legion's domain in the Meratara Cluster and founding world of their Primarch Perturabo. With Dammekos, the long-lived Tyrant of Lochos and Satrap of Olympia finally dead, the tangled and viperous politics of Olympia had once more developed into infighting and vendetta. The violence and division flared up more bitterly than ever before because of the changes the Imperium had wrought on the world



and the discontent bred by generations of the planet's finest youth having been culled for the Legion, never to return. The shocking news of the rebellion struck at the heart of the Legion and its master, and could not have come at a worse time. For over a year, the Iron Warriors Legion had been involved in the almost single-handed suppression of a major infestation of the noisome xenofom known as 'Hrudd' (or the 'Temporaferox' as they are referred to in certain records) across several worlds of the Sak'trada Deeps. All such actions in the history of the Great Crusade have proved costly both in terms of lives and the sanity of those who must fight such nightmares, and this was to prove no exception.

Forced to contend with the violent disruptions in the fabric of time, storms of solar flares and tectonic instability attendant on these incomprehensible entities, as well

as the malign technology wielded by the creatures themselves, the Iron Warriors Legion is estimated to have lost more than a fifth of its then active strength in a campaign located far from the border of the Imperium and what to many seemed a doomed and purposeless expedition under —what appeared at least— to be direct orders from Terra. Following on the heels of the recent savage casualties they had suffered in the Great Crusade's service, the rebellion on Olympia was a wound that could not be borne.

Leaving a sacrificial force in his wake to finish the fight against the alien horrors at any and all costs, Perturabo brought his Legion home in murderous wrath. Olympia burned, mountain citadels were cast down and whole cities of the Iron Warriors' own kin were put to the sword. With a bitter rage that bordered on madness, it was Perturabo

who shattered with his own hands the defences of Lochos he himself had raised in a former age. To their own blood and kith he and his Iron Warriors had shown no mercy, and in the aftermath millions were left dead, and Olympia and its planetary system brutally enslaved. Amid the ruins of once-fair Olympia, it is said by some that Perturabo and his Legion finally knew despair at what they had unleashed, and horror and guilt at what they had become. But by others it is said that the Legion's last shreds of self-deceit fled them and the Iron Warriors and their Primarch saw the truth of their souls for the first time, and embraced darkness. It was to many in the Imperium a shocking crime of self-destruction, but it was one to which the authority of the Warmaster gave licence and the veneer of justice.

In the wake of this tragedy, the Legion retreated further into a private world of



bleak violence and bitter paranoia. It brutally oppressed the worlds it garrisoned with renewed savagery and unleashed genocidal force upon the first hint of open rebellion, with many of its commanders growing ever more unhinged and isolated from the Imperium they served.

At the time of the outbreak of the Horus Heresy, the Iron Warriors Legion is estimated to have had an active strength of between 150,000 and 180,000 Legiones Astartes, along with a very substantial war fleet of over a hundred Capital class vessels. More accurate assessment than this is, however, impossible given the considerable portion of sub-deployments and garrisons that were maintained by the Legion scattered

across the Imperium and its increasingly isolationist tendencies in the years before the war. It is believed that the Legion had further accelerated its indoctrination and recruiting program, as well as local shipbuilding at Olympia in the lead-up to the rebellion, and so the lower division of these estimates may indeed be erroneous.

Further to this the Legion, according to evidence uncovered later, appears to have increased its ties to certain factions of the Mechanicum and the Legio Cybernetica in particular during this period, and is believed to have begun to shelter some renegade or outcast elements of the Machine Cult under Perturabo's protection. It is also known to have raised up from the ashes of Olympia a

fanatically loyal and highly trained human auxiliary force, the Thorakata, as a tool of oppression and client army in its own right, to serve the Legion. These measures can now be seen as the beginning of the bloody Empire of Iron, centred on damned Olympia, that was to take root in the years that followed of rebellion and civil war.

So it was that, rotting from within with loathing and bitter spite, the iron façade the Legion presented to the Imperium hid the extent of how rapidly and how deeply it had descended into homicidal madness; until at last it was called on to help in the punishment of the rebellious Warmaster on Isstvan V, and the dark truth was revealed.

Historia Terra Restem

IRON WARRIORS LEGION TACTICAL MARKINGS



Grand Company Command
Personal Heraldry



Legion Command



Tactical Line Unit with
Legion Icon & Numeral



Tactical with
Legion Numeral



Heavy Support
Unit Chevron



Heavy Support
Chevron Variant



Destroyer - Approved
Subtype with Legion Numeral



Destroyer Variant -
Undesignated



Legion Elites
Sergeant Heraldry



Legion Elites
Line Variant



Legion Fast Attack
Approved Sub-type



Legion Fast Attack -
Approved Variant

Like most of the Legiones Astartes, the Iron Warriors employed a wide range of symbols, icons and heraldry, much of it derived from the earliest precepts of the *Dictorum Armourial*, some from the cultural idioms of the world on which their Primarch was discovered and still more evolved as the Legion developed its own unique identity. The Iron Warriors are notable for their characteristic focus on brutally functional icons devoid of superfluous embellishment and a relative lack of individualisation or personal ornamentation, traits very much in line with the personality of their Primarch.



Veteran Sergeant -
Standardised

IRON WARRIORS LEGION TERMINATOR

LEGIONARY KHORIUS REX
3RD GRAND COMPANY,
7TH GRAND BATTALION
PURSUIT PHASE, AFTERMATH,
ISSTVAN V DROPSITE MASSACRE

A veteran of the Tyranthikos — informally known as the 'Dominators' — Legionary Khorius Rex trod a hundred worlds and more in the service of the Great Crusade. Once an ideologue, for Rex the Imperial Truth was long rendered down to but a kernel of cold, hard fact; the galaxy is no place for the weak and only those prepared to endure any hardship have any right to prevail. This moment of utmost clarity came when the 7th Grand Battalion was recalled to Olympia and bore witness to the rebellion that had gripped the Legion's home world. In the bloodshed that followed, the man Khorius Rex had once been died forever, to be reborn and recast into a warrior whose heart was as cold and as hard as the ceramite skin of his Tactical Dreadnought Armour.

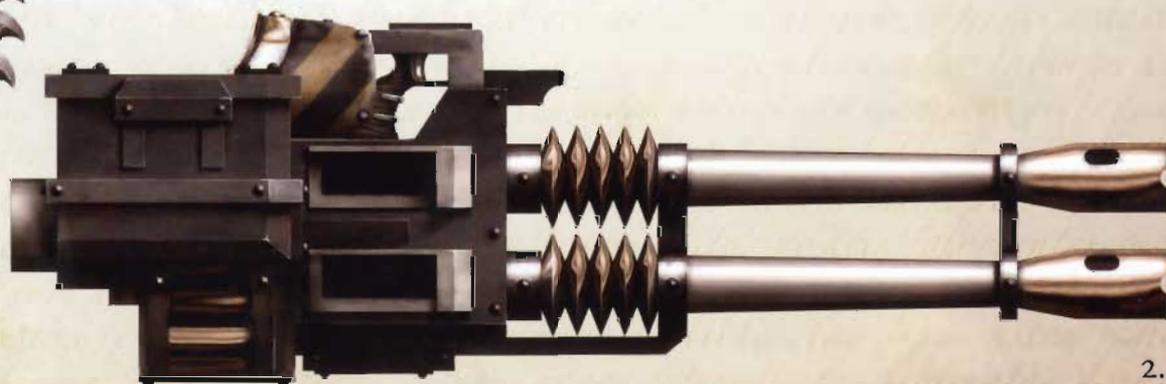
Khorius Rex is depicted here as he appeared throughout the Iron Warriors Legion's extermination operations in the aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre. Like many his master considered lacking or unstable, he was abandoned on Isstvan V when the bulk of the Legion was pulled out to pursue the Warmaster's war against the Imperium. As far as records indicate, he chose to remain, and his final fate is unrecorded.

Panoply of War

1. Charatran Pattern Chainaxe.
2. Cthon Pattern Reaper Autocannon.



I.



2.

IVTH LEGION VETERAN LEGIONARY

UNNAMED TERRAN VETERAN LEGIONARY

UNKNOWN LEGION SUB-UNIT

SOL UNIFICATION, PACIFICATION OF THE KUIPER BELT

THIRD QUADRANT

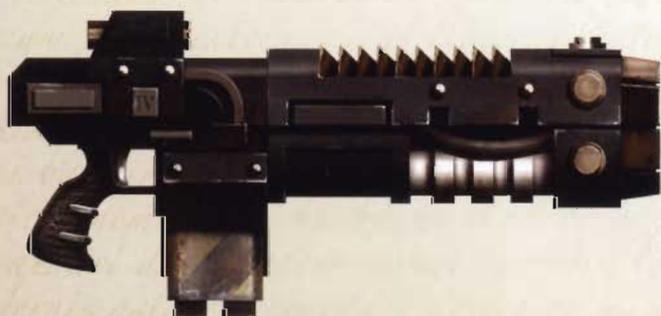
This Legionary is depicted at the outset of the IVth Legion's campaign to pacify the numerous void-faring inhabitants of the Kuiper Belt, the remainder of the Sol System having been brought into Compliance throughout the long and bloody Unification Wars. The bulk of this campaign was fought against small, but unyielding groups of non-Compliant humans whose existence amidst the cold hulks and blasted dwarf planets over countless generations had stripped them of all sanity and reason. Militarist annals relate how this hard-fought campaign was the crucible of the IVth Legion's early void-fighting battle doctrines, from boarding and counter-boarding tactics to planetary decimation protocols.

This Legionary is equipped with MkII Astartes power armour, which at this stage in history had not yet been dubbed 'Crusade' armour. He bears the heraldry of a veteran of the Terran Unification, the lightning bolts surmounting the head of a bird of prey indicating he fought in the ranks of the glorious hosts of the Emperor himself. The meaning of the icon displayed on his right shoulder is lost to history, its use discontinued when the Primarch Perturabo took command of the IVth Legion.

Panoply of War

1. Mars-Omega Pattern Volkite Caliver.

2. Phobos Pattern Bolt Pistol.



I.



2.

IRON WARRIORS TACTICAL SUPPORT LEGIONARY

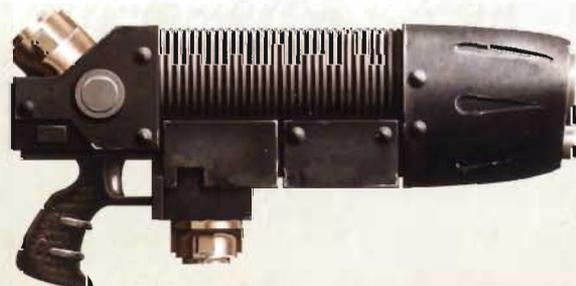
LEGIONARY DIONOR
3RD GRAND BATTALION,
5TH GRAND COMPANY
PURSUIT PHASE, AFTERMATH,
ISSIVAN V DROPSITE MASSACRE

Legionary Dionor was a Terran and a veteran of the IVth Legion's numerous campaigns, attaining the rank of captain. Dionor was assigned to the command of the 5th Grand Company of the 3rd Grand Battalion, a formation that had been judged wanting and suffered greatly during the Primarch's decimation of the Legion, and Dionor was punished by demotion to the ranks. Dionor's Grand Company was held in reserve during the Dropsite Massacre, only being committed to action in the aftermath. When the bulk of the Legion was withdrawn, much of the 3rd was left behind in continued punishment for their Primarch's ill-favour.

Legionary Dionor is known to have taken command of his squad at some point in the early stages of the scouring of the Urgall Depression. It is likely that Dionor forcibly took command of his squad from its previous squad sergeant, exerting his formidable will upon his fellows before focusing on the hunt for the Raven Guard. Dionor's ultimate fate remains unknown, but there has been some evidence he rejoined his Legion and was once more elevated to command rank.

Panoply of War

1. Ryza 'Thunderbolt' Pattern Plasma Gun:
Tactical support squad issue.
2. Tigris Pattern Boltgun.



1.



2.

IRON WARRIORS HEAVY SUPPORT LEGIONARY

LEGIONARY ZHINNON

77th GRAND BATTALION,
5th COUNTER-ARMOUR WING, 30th SQUAD

PARAMAR

Legionary Zhinnon was recruited into the IVth Legion in 849.M30, the very same year that Lord Perturabo took control. Though untested in battle at that time, Zhinnon's native martial bearing saved him from being swept up in Perturabo's purge of the IVth Legion. Zhinnon saw extensive service throughout the five decades of the Great Crusade preceding the Triumph at Ullanor, and at the time of the Warmaster's great betrayal was serving under Warsmith Vhalen in the 77th Grand Battalion, and is known to be one of the few Loyalist survivors of the 1st Battle of Paramar.

Legionary Zhinnon wears early production MkIV Astartes power armour, the left knee plate displaying the Iron Warriors' characteristic black and yellow chevrons. In addition to the Legion iconography on his left shoulder and chest plate, he displays the triple chevron of a heavy support unit on his right shoulder, and wears variant tactical markings on his right knee plate, marking his assignment to the 30th Heavy Support squad of the 5th Sub-unit (in this case a company-sized counter-armour group) of his Grand Battalion.

Panoply of War

1. Sol Militaris Pattern Lascannon.
2. Tigris Pattern Bolt Pistol: Heavy support squad standard issue sidearm.



1.



2.

IRON WARRIORS BREACHER LEGIONARY

UNKNOWN LEGIONARY

UNIDENTIFIED LEGION BREACHER SQUAD

DEFENCE OF THE CONTRADOR,

BATTLE OF THE PHALL SYSTEM

The depiction of this unknown Legionary has been compiled from pict-captures ex-loaded from the power armour sensorium cores of several Imperial Fists Breacher Legionaries. When the Imperial Fists instigated boarding operations against the Iron Warriors battle-barge *Contrador*, several of the spearhead assault groups found themselves opposed by Iron Warriors Breacher squads serving in the role of counter-breach defence units. The ensuing battles between these two rival groups were bitter and hard fought, both sides equipped and trained for the murderous close range fury of combat in the guts of a warship. This unknown Legionary is confirmed to have fallen in battle launching a counter-charge against Imperial Fists boarders consolidating their possession of Ventral Launch Bay Delta 23, his blasted form being cast to the void when the bay's vacuum shield failed.

The Legionary wears special issue 'void hardened' MkIII Astartes power armour, enabling him to fight in and survive the cold of the void as well as companionways alight with plasma fire or bathed in hard radiation. He carries a MkIIk boarding shield with integrated auto-sense coupling, capable of surviving the heaviest of defensive fire as he closes on his foe.

Panoply of War

1. 'Thunder Edge' Pattern Chainsword.

2. Mars Pattern Lascutter: Bulkhead breaching device.

3. Umbra Pattern Bolt Pistol: Close defence/ melee sidearm.

4. Lucifer Pattern Melta Bomb: Materiel/ systems demolition.



1.



2.



3.



4.

ARMOURED PURGATION GROUP 'TRADOR'

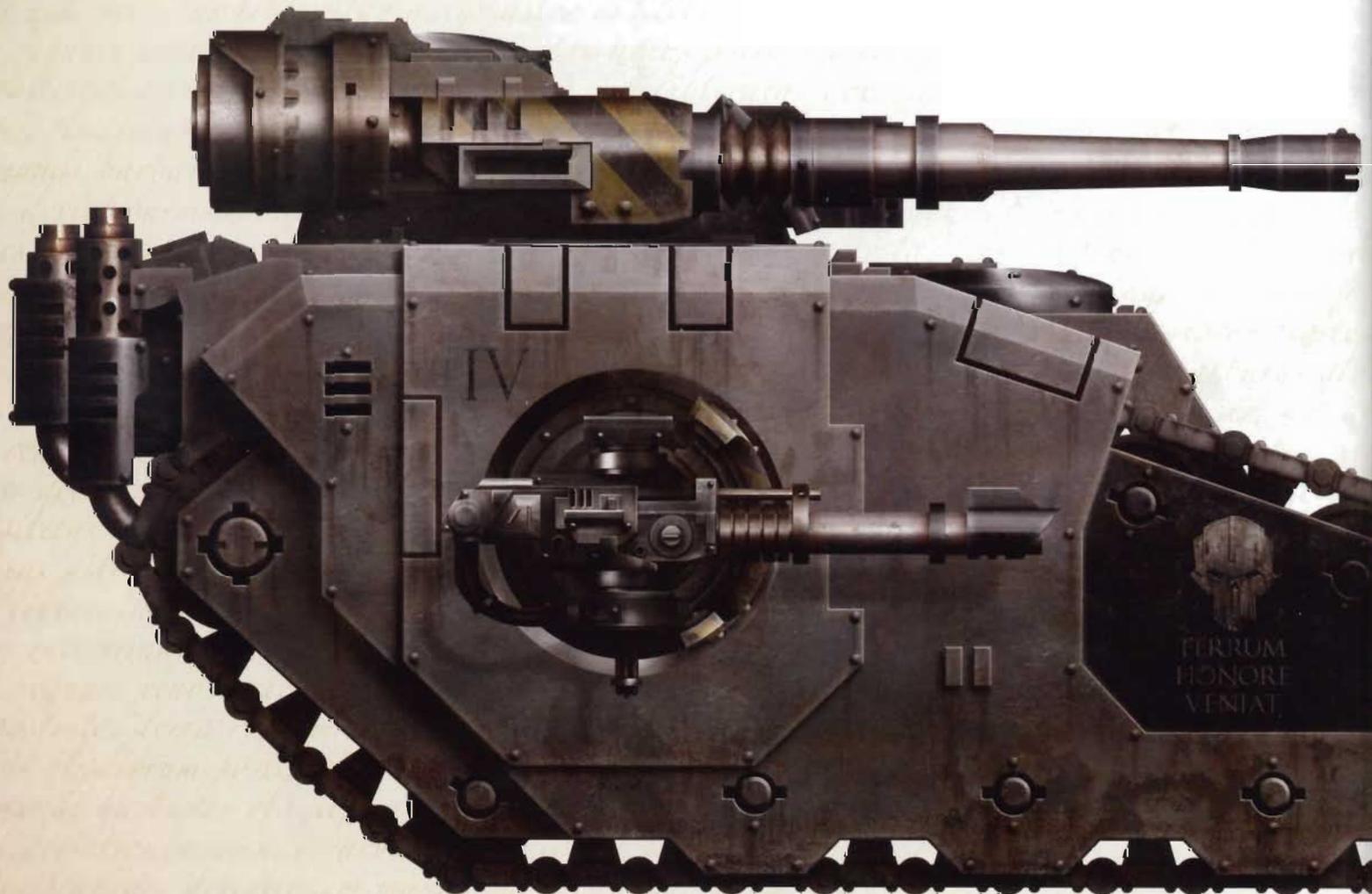
The Iron Warriors deployed the bulk of the Legion's armoured units to Isstvan V, many of them transported en masse in gargantuan heavy drop conveyors. At the moment of the second wave's betrayal, massed formations of tanks of all classes charged forth from the Iron Warriors' rapidly deployed drop fortifications, in many cases rolling straight over the stunned Loyalists and crushing their bodies into the black ground before a shot could be fired in response. One of the very first Iron Warriors armoured units to surge forth and begin the slaughter was the 23rd Armoured Company, its rapid attack squadrons led by the cold-hearted commander Zhigo Trador. So fiercely did Commander Trador press the assault on the Loyalists at the Dropsite

Massacre, the 23rd Armoured Company suffered overwhelming losses, effectively ceasing to exist as a chapter-level formation by the close of the operation.

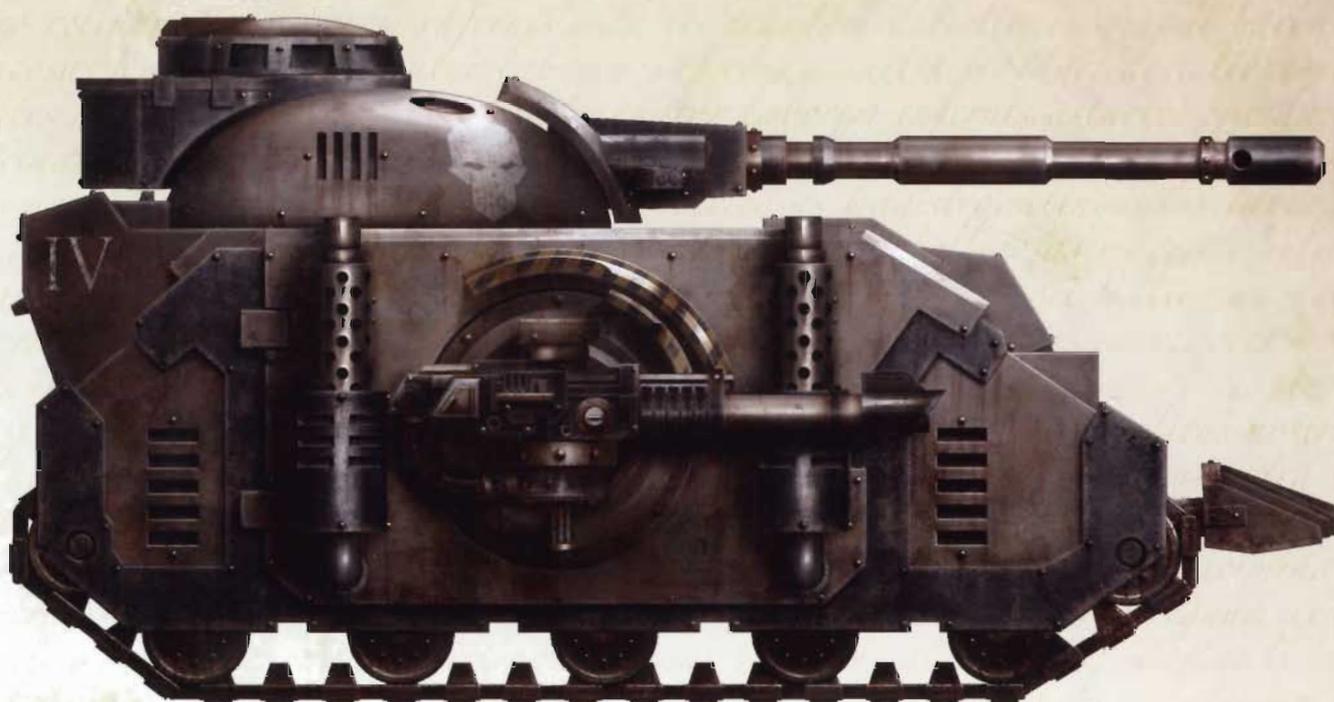
It is said that the Primarch's displeasure at Trador's self-imposed losses was so great, the commander was fortunate indeed to come away with his life. Instead of execution, Commander Trador was in effect exiled from the Legion, along with several hundred other officers and Legionaries who had earned Perturabo's censure. Trador was ordered to gather what remained of his armoured units and to take them out into the Urgall Wastes in pursuit of Loyalist survivors. It is doubtful if any arrangements to reunite these forces with the parent Legion were ever made and

many historian-savants hold the belief that Perturabo had no expectation or desire to see them return.

The ad-hoc formation known as 'Armoured Purgation Group Trador' led the pursuit and extermination phases of the Dropsite Massacre aftermath and is thought to have accounted for several thousand Loyalist deaths. Trador's campaign of bitter slaughter came to an abrupt end when the force was ambushed by Raven Guard survivors in the depths of the Illium Rifts. The ultimate fate of Commander Trador himself is unknown, but it is certain that the last tank of the 23rd Armoured Company burned at the hands of the vengeful warriors of Lord Corax.



Sicaran Battle Tank: The Sicaran had only recently been introduced to the armoured forces of the *Légiones Astartes* at the time of the Isstvan battles and the Iron Warriors had procured more than their fair share. This particular vehicle was used by Commander Trador throughout the pursuit of Loyalist forces in the aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre, its superior speed, range and integrated sensor systems making it ideal for hunting down and eliminating the scattered remnants of the Retribution force.



Predator Destructor: The Iron Warriors fielded large numbers of battle tanks of all classes, but the Predator Destructor was by far the most numerous. In the Extermination phase of the Istvan V operation, scores of Predators scoured the Uragall Wastes for survivors, sometimes operating in massive armoured columns, at other times serving as scouts and outriders for more ponderous vehicles such as the Thunderstrike assault tank.



The Unbreakable Litany of the Iron Warriors: This vehicle bears one of the many dictums of the Iron Warrior's Primarch Perturabo upon its armoured flank. In this case, the phrase translates as 'From Honour, Iron', a key verse from the 'Unbreakable Litany' by which the Iron Warriors fight.

IRON WARRIORS KHALEKAORUS SUPER-HEAVY TANK COMPANY

1st BATTLE OF PARAMAR, PARAMAR TERMINUS WAR ZONE

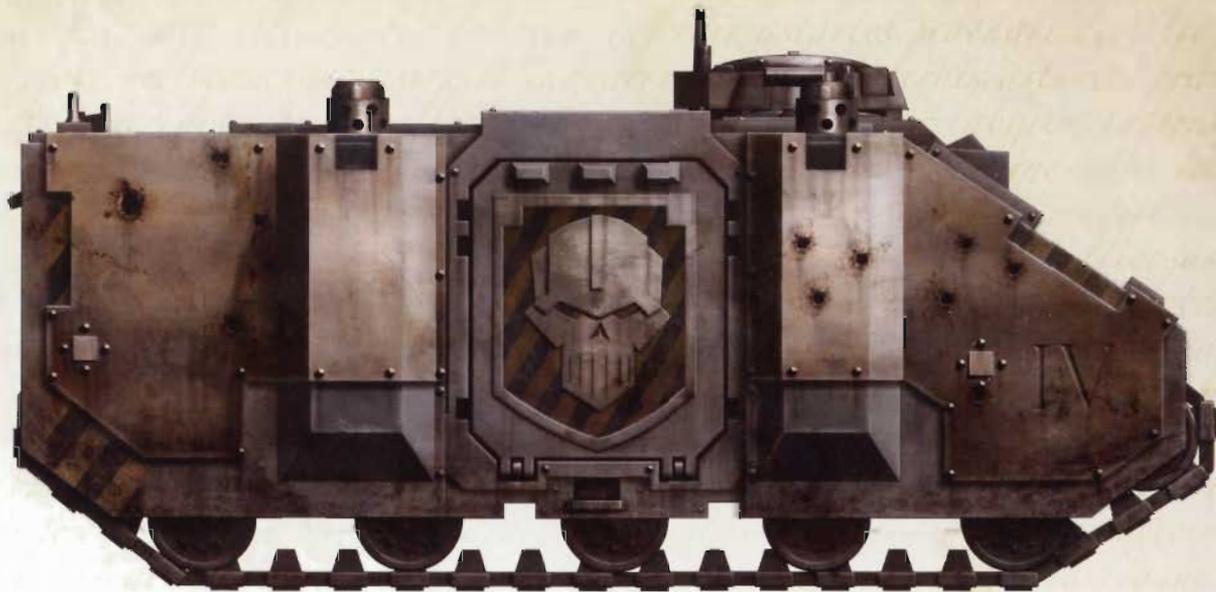
One of a number of independent specialised armoured formations which were part of the Iron Warriors Legion order of battle, but not directly part of the institutions of its Grand Battalion structure, the Khalekaorus were comprised of a nominal strength of thirty super-heavy battle tanks, alongside a number of lighter tank and fire support squadrons, and a demi-company of dedicated Legionary infantry.

The Khalekaorus, named for a mythical beast of Olympian myth, were on permanent

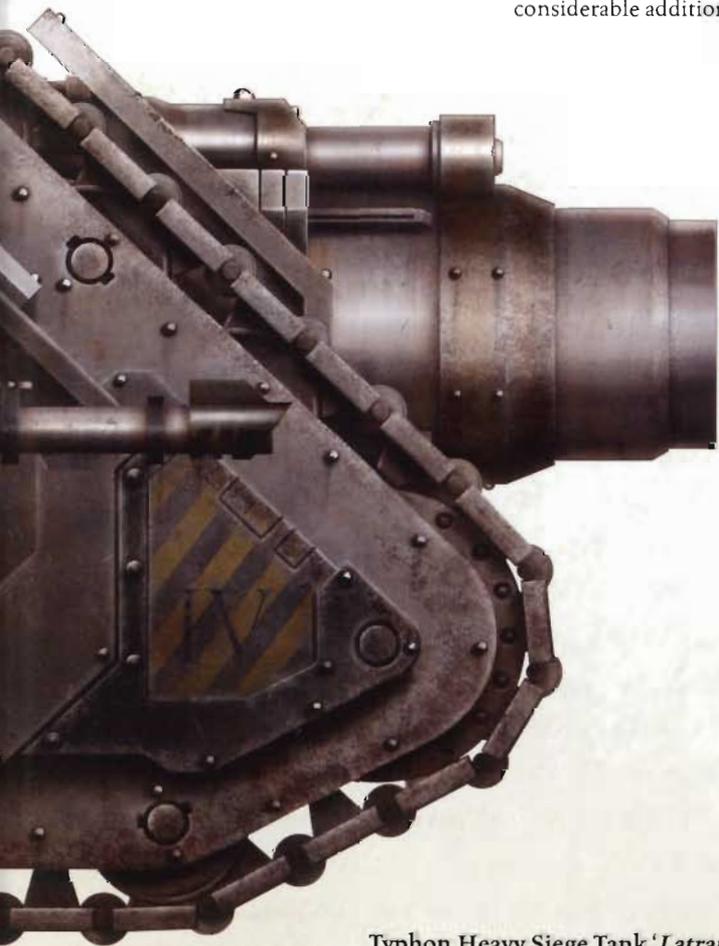
detachment to the 77th Grand Battalion as part of the ongoing operations of the Therikon Suppression Taskforce with roughly half their operational strength based upon the 77th's flagship, the *Tyche's Lament*, and therefore present at Paramar during the Alpha Legion's surprise attack. Many of the Khalekaorus' war machines were of older and second-line patterns, as alongside the rest of the taskforce they had been left for several decades as a self-reliant battle group, with periodic replenishment at the Paramar Nexus their sole means of

acquiring fresh vehicles and munitions to replace losses incurred against the denizens of the Therikon Wastes, particularly in heavy combat against the mutant Ork strains and unclassified void-phasmids which haunted the area. The force which fought at Paramar was destroyed completely in combat, however the remainder of the Khalekaorus and the 77th Grand Battalion, who by chance had remained on station in the Therikon Wastes, would fight on bitterly for the rest of the great conflict that was evolving to avenge their fallen.





Mars pattern Rhino Armoured Transport 77/235: One of the less common patterns of the ubiquitous Rhinos used by the Legiones Astartes of this period, with the Deimos pattern considered to have superior environmental and secondary systems, the Mars pattern was nevertheless a perfectly serviceable and particularly easy to reproduce design. This example was attached as a support vehicle to the Khalekaorus infantry support units and possesses considerable additional ablative armour plating over the norm.



Typhon Heavy Siege Tank 'Latrathus': Named in honour of one of the early Khalekaorus commanders slain in battle, this was one of five Typhon pattern war machines which fought as part of the Iron Warriors deployment at Paramar. Known informally by the Legion as 'spine-breakers' owing to the massive recoil generated by the main gun if fired on the move, the Typhon was particularly suited to the Iron Warriors' preferred mode of warfare and its design was attributed in part to their Primarch Perturabo.



EXEMPLARY BATTLE

THE FALL OF THE BLACK JUDGES

The first major engagement of the IVth Legion under the direct command of their Primarch was the attack against a foe who would sorely test the Legion's mettle and open the campaign to bring the Meratara Cluster into Imperial Compliance. Taking his newly constituted Expeditionary fleet, Perturabo drove straight for the heart of the cluster and the hostile power he knew resided there.

On Olympia the enemy Perturabo sought had been little more than legend, but the last time their shadow had fallen on that world, their coming had led to the slaughter and enslavement of tens of thousands before their demanded tribute was paid. They were the self-styled 'Black Judges'—self-appointed arbiters of human purity, life and death.

Twisted and withered creatures that had once been human in ages past, they had extended their lifespans into millennia with the help of technology as ancient as it was dark. Now their shrivelled and time-ravaged bodies were encased in mechanised war machines controlled by cybernetic implants. In order to live they required regular infusions of fresh human genetic material acquired by an agonisingly fatal extraction process, and from their base upon a barren, ravine-hollowed moon known as the 'Rock of Judgement', they held sway over a dozen nearby human-inhabited worlds through terror, offering a devil's bargain of protection from xenos assault in return for a tribute of the young and healthy. The IVth Legion, reeling from its punishment at its new master's hands, was shamed into a desperate desire to prove itself to its Primarch, and it was to be the Black Judges that were to suffer its pent-up hatred and wrath.

The orbital assault on the Rock of Judgement was a direct and brutal affair. Well defended by defence laser batteries and swarms of drone-fighter craft and the Black Judges' own Warp-capable battleships, it had withstood marauders and vengeful enemies for millennia, but against the fury of the IVth Legion it could not prevail. Smashing through the blockade line of warships heedless of the losses they incurred, with a score of Legion strike cruisers and a dozen battle barges burned from stem-to-stern, the Legion grappled their foe at close quarters, launching crippling boarding actions and barrages of melta-warhead torpedoes at point-blank range. With the line broken, the Legion fleet pushed through, using the armoured prows of their largest capital ships and the bulwark void shields of siege frigates to weather the storm of ground fire and force a landing.

Although their arcane technology carried with it much of the strength of Mankind's mastery over the stars before the Age of Strife, the Black Judges were few in number, even accounting for the tens of thousands of sable-robed Accusators and functionaries gene-bred to serve them, and so relied heavily upon static defences and automated sentry guns for protection. Spearheaded by Land Raider phalanxes and Shadowword companies, the IVth Legion surged forward, methodically eliminating all resistance in a storm of energy blasts, while behind them came wave after wave of mobile siege guns and artillery whose pulverising shellfire shattered and brought down mountain-faces, burying the gun-bastions below in choking rubble.

Such was the apocalyptic firepower of this rolling advance that it obliterated the Black Judges' vaunted defences metre by metre, erasing them from existence.

It was when the Space Marines smashed their way into the lightless inner sanctums of the Night Courts at the heart of the towering citadels of obsidian that the bitterest fighting took place. Swept by batteries of lethal neutron rays and assailed by suicidal mobs of Accusators armed with powered chain-hammers able to split even Legiones Astartes plate the casualties mounted, but the Legion did not falter. Once the fanatics had been slaughtered, the leading elements of the assault wave forced their way bloodily on through abyssal chambers of nightmarish surgical theatres and abhorrent instruments of the 'justice' these debased oppressors enacted, to their final confrontation with the Black Judges themselves.

Sustained by their dark sciences, each of the Black Judges' armoured life support frames were all but imperious to bolter fire, while their razor scourges and ray cannon made each the equal of a Legiones Astartes Dreadnought in firepower—and there were hundreds of them. Against these mechanoid killers the warriors of the IVth Legion would not give ground, although the Legionaries themselves fell in droves, cut into bloody

hunks of meat or incinerated in the molten coffins of their power armour.

The darkness soon became a storm of muzzle flash and thunder, pierced by the screams of the dying and the high-pitched screeching of diseased minds that had lived far beyond human sanity for centuries. As the battle raged on, the Legionaries took to using mounds of their own dead as cover from the sweeping hellish rays, and rallied again and again to charge the blackly glittering judgement engines, braving the Black Judges' murderous fury to plant Krak grenades or discharge point-blank melta blasts to bring their enemies down. For an age, the battle hovered on a knife edge; in the confines of the vaults and corridors, the Black Judges had the advantage, and for every one of them that fell, a dozen or more Legiones Astartes also fell to pay the price. It was then that Perturabo struck.

Having observed the unfolding battle, his superhuman intellect had discerned patterns and vulnerability amid the chaos and din of war, and had calculated the precise point at which to attack to the greatest effect. The Primarch himself struck the ranks of the Black Judges like a thunderbolt, throwing them into disarray. Like a vengeful god he ploughed into the heart of them, blasting and burning them, ripping their machine-

frames apart and tearing out the withered bodies from within with his own gauntleted hands. As the Black Judges reeled in shock and sought to realign their counter-attack against this new and terrible threat, the gears of Perturabo's plan turned and the elite heavy weapons support units of the IVth Legion, already known by the informal title of the 'Havocs', advanced in precisely co-ordinated attack patterns that predicted their foes' response with preternatural accuracy. Isolating and blindsiding the Black Judges, the Havocs advanced implacably and ended their baleful rule, pronouncing sentence of their own with crossfire storms of autocannon shells and plasma bolts.

By Perturabo's design the enemy was crushed without mercy and their domains were stripped of every valuable resource and technology; wreckage and weapons flowed to Olympia and the Black Judges' long guarded secrets fell also to the newly renamed Iron Warriors and their master, who shared them with the Mechanicum in return for their aid. With the world stripped of its resources, the orbital shipyards of the Rock of Judgment, themselves relics of the lost human age, were finally set in orbit afresh around Olympia and set to work fashioning a new generation of warships under Perturabo's seal.





THE RAVEN GUARD

Numeration: The XIXth Legion

Primogenitor: Corvus Corax, aka the Raven Lord

Cognomen (Prior): None Recognised (early Great Crusade era – Pale Nomads, Dust Clad (informal))

Observed Strategic Tendencies:

Rapid Deployment Operations, Strategic Interdiction Operations, Reconnaissance in Force, Guerrilla Actions, Low-collateral Damage Imperative Compliance Operations

Noteworthy Domains: Deliverance (formerly Lycaeus)/Kiavahr and associated system realm. Former Terran central Asiatic Dustfields tithes renounced 998.M30.

Allegiance: Fedelitas Constantus

"The First Axiom of Victory is to be other than where the enemy desires you to be.

The First Axiom of Stealth is to be other than where the enemy believes you to be.

The First Axiom of Freedom is that justice without force is powerless; force without justice is tyranny."

Corvus Corax, Axioms of the Legiones Astartes Raven Guard

Named for a Terran avian seen by many cultures as the herald of fate and messenger of death, the Raven Guard have served the Emperor faithfully throughout the glories of the Unification and the Great Crusade.

From its earliest days, the warriors of the XIXth Legion were known as cunning and patient hunters, adept at biding their time until the moment to strike was at hand. When the Legion was united with its Primarch – Corvus Corax, the Raven Lord, the Deliverer, theirs was a form of warfare exemplifying speed, stealth and precision which was codified into their doctrine, and under the ivory-skinned, shadow-eyed and sable-haired Primarch, the XIXth carved its name in the annals of the Great Crusade.

As the tragic histories of our age recount, however, the Legion's glories were to be scattered upon the black sands of Istvan V, and the Imperium almost shorn of one of its greatest champions.

ORIGINS: THE HIDDEN HAND OF THE EMPEROR

Looking back upon the calamitous age through which Mankind has endured, few can claim to know but a fraction of the Emperor's vision for the galaxy. Some hold that each of the great Legions was created with a specific role in mind, and certainly this assertion is born out in the deeds and demeanour of many. The Imperial Fists were in so many ways the Emperor's loyal praetorians and champions, while the Ultramarines were his dutiful, resplendent hosts. To the XIXth Legion would fall the role of the Emperor's hidden hand, vengeful sentinels against recidivism and harrowers of those who would sooner flee than bend knee before their new master.

Drawing on the demeanour of the techno-savages from which it recruited, the proto-Legion quickly demonstrated its skill at reconnaissance and target identification, and its ability to transition from inscrutable watchfulness to rapid attack in the blink of an eye. Its Legionaries waged war by infiltrating into position, studying their enemy and, when the time was right, striking from the least anticipated quarter and slaying the foe outright in a bloody, yet brief assault.

Confronted with the coming of the Emperor, some of the enemies of Unification foolishly decided to stand and fight, to deny his manifest destiny, that was until such a moment that the XIXth revealed themselves. The gun already raised to the target's temple without him ever seeing his would-be assassin's approach, most enemies capitulated. Never given to wanton cruelty, the Emperor's emissaries would avail the target of his impending doom and offer him the choice—kneel or die. Most chose to serve but many refused, and so the XIXth would be unleashed. Emerging from the shadows, they would attack without warning, their methods enabling them to engage with foes far more numerous than themselves. Bereft of leadership, most enemy armies fell apart in short order. When they did not, the XIXth withdrew back into the shadows, but not in retreat. Rather, they attacked again from yet another quarter, bleeding their enemy dry and denying him any chance to counter-attack, regroup or take the initiative.

How many battles were won in this manner throughout the last years of the Unification Wars cannot be known for certain, for so often the XIXth Legion's hand remained hidden even after the battle was won. Only much later, after the Legion was united

with its Primarch, would it come forth into the light, but even then the Raven Guard shunned laurels and rarely courted adulation.

The similarities between the Raven Guard known to the later histories of the Great Crusade and the XIXth Legion before its unification with Corax are clear, but much of the tale remains untold. It is known that the Emperor recruited the first Legionaries of the XIXth from a number of Old Earth's regions, the majority drawn from the Xeric tribes of the Asiatic Dustfields. These savage yet technologically adept warrior peoples made constant war upon one another and against the neighbouring and much larger Yndonesic Bloc with relentless fury, battling ceaselessly for possession of scant natural resources. Once brought to heel by the Emperor and his Thunder Warriors, the tribes were forced to render up their firstborn sons to the Emperor's gene-forges, and upon their ascension to the nascent Legiones Astartes, these same sons were then used to ensure and enforce the continued Compliance of their fractious kin. The Xeric warriors proved well-suited to the Emperor's vision, though some observed their propensity for cruelty when ordered to attack as well as a disdainful attitude to those they considered weak. The culture of the Xeric peoples demanded that a vanquished enemy be watched over with a cold all-seeing eye and any hint of recidivism crushed utterly lest the subjugated rise up in strength against the victor. The XIXth inherited this mindset and when coupled with the heritage of the Legiones Astartes, it became one of its most distinctive characteristics.

One of the earliest Unification campaigns in which the XIXth participated was the conquest of the central Asiatic region, much of which was ruled by the tyrant Kalagann of Ursh. Few detailed accounts survive, but it is known that the XIXth played their part in it in a manner that

would serve as an operational template until the time it was united with its Primarch. After an initial phase in which key targets and weak elements in the armies of Ursh were identified, the XIXth insinuated itself throughout the region, small battle groups taking up positions from which to strike when the order was given. When the attack came, it was rapid, overwhelming and conducted with cold, ruthless efficiency. Kalagann's warlords were struck down and the XIXth herded their defeated armies into a vast prison camp at the heart of the blasted central Asiatic region. It is said that Kalagann employed all manner of psyker-wrought weapons during that campaign and that the nascent XIXth bore the brunt of many of the worst. Certainly, many veterans of that age were touched by a darkness from which they never recovered, some going on to sacrifice their lives in battle in suicidal charges while others became the solitary forerunners of the Legion Moritats.

Having earned itself many battle honours during the Unification of Old Earth, the XIXth was committed to operations within the Sol System. When the Emperor's hosts encountered the xenos presence holding sway over many of the void settlements of the Jovian range, the XIXth was tasked with scouring the moon of Lysithea. If records of previous battles are incomplete, those relating to this one are near non-existent. Whatever occurred on that tiny satellite, the xenos were annihilated and victory



claimed, but only at the cost of the settlers' lives as well as large numbers of the XIXth's own. Many of the veterans of the Scouring of Lysithea were recalled from service by the masters of the Emperor's gene-forges, never to be returned to their Legion. What horrors they endured, or perhaps enacted, cannot even be guessed at, and certainly no similar instance of Legionaries being withdrawn from service in such a manner is recorded. For decades, many of those who had served in this battle bore upon their armour the ancient Jovian rune, surmounted by the numeral X as a reminder of their victory and their loss. Today, the symbol is only ever seen adorning the metal skin of the Raven Guard's Dreadnoughts, amongst their number Shade-Captain Vholtari, who was instrumental in the defeat of the xenos plaguing the Jovian Range. It was due to the injuries he sustained in that final battle that he was interred within the armoured sarcophagus of a mighty Furibundus class Dreadnought, and served for many more decades before his true death upon the killing grounds before Gate Forty-Two.

In the Shadow of Wolves

The XIXth Legion was created in the latter stages of the Unification Wars, but it would be almost two centuries before it was united with its Primarch. Conversely, the Luna Wolves Legion was united with its sire — Horus — very early on. It was not unusual

in those early campaigns for the XIXth to fight alongside the Luna Wolves, he who would one day bear the mantle of Warmaster coming to value the skills of the sons of the Dustfields immensely, and the two Legions served well together, their natures complementary. When the Luna Wolves launched their sudden and overwhelming assaults, the XIXth were already in position, blocking off lines of retreat and cutting down any foe who attempted to escape. Those few able to break through the lines were hunted down relentlessly and captives were rounded up to be watched over by the brooding Legionaries until declared Compliant. Its warriors' capacity to switch from cold, impassive scrutiny to swift, brutal action soon made the Legion the subject of dread amongst those who would deny unity.

When Horus led his Legion in the opening campaigns of the Great Crusade, he often requested that the XIXth serve alongside his Luna Wolves. In those earliest days, many worlds rejected enlightenment and refused Compliance, and so the blade of the XIXth was there to strike, descending unseen almost before ordered to do so. Others accepted their place in the new galactic order with grace and wisdom, and so the blade was withdrawn, its presence not even noted.

In time, Horus came to value the XIXth greatly. While the ranks of the Luna Wolves

swelled with recruits from Cthonia, the XIXth remained comparatively small. Some observed that Horus treated the XIXth more like a chapter of his own Legion than one with its own identity and destiny to forge. While the Luna Wolves developed their own culture, a product of its early Terran heritage meshed with the savage gang culture of Cthonia, the XIXth remained close to their Terran roots, their demeanour not deviating far from that of the savage Xeric tribes. Their armour remained grey, although many Legionaries were observed to apply war paint made of Asiatic dust to their faces on the eve of a battle. This, among other factors, gave rise to the Luna Wolves bestowing several titles upon the XIXth, the most common of which were the 'Pale Nomads' and the 'Dust Clad'.

Aside from their tribal markings, the appearance of the XIXth was notable in other ways. Under the effects of the XIXth's gene-seed, some found their skin growing unnaturally pale while in a few their already dark hair turned black as midnight. In a small number, their eyes turned entirely black, lending them a fearsome aspect that suited their inscrutable, watchful mien. Only later, with the coming of the Legion's Primarch, would the full import of these features become known and take hold fully throughout its warriors.

NAME: DELIVERANCE

CLASSIFICATION: LEGIONES ASTARTES HOME WORLD

[AIRLESS/BARREN/MINERAL DEPOSITS]

SYSTEM DATA: QW/9333//L/A

STELLAR GRID: 24-KQ-9830/00

SEGMENTUM: TEMPESTUS/FAR MARCHES

NOTATION: PRIMARY SATELLITE OF KLAVAHK

++[SURFACE FACILITIES PROTECTED FROM NEAR

VACUUM BY FORCE DOMES]++

++[EXTENSIVE SUBTERRANEAN MINERAL

EXTRACTION]++

++[LIBERATED FORCED LABOUR MINE EXTENSIVELY

FORTIFIED BY LEGIONES ASTARTES

RAVEN GUARD]++



THE COMING OF THE RAVEN

When the nascent Primarchs were scattered across the galaxy, Corax materialised in a lightless chamber far beneath the surface of a barren moon called Lycaeus. Above the cavern was a mighty glacier, and the Primarch might never have been discovered at all were it not for the arrival of a team of Lycaean miners pursuing a mineral seam. To some, the appearance of the miners within minutes of the young Corax attaining consciousness speaks of greater powers at work. Whatever the truth, the Primarch was taken in by the slaves and hidden from the mine's cruel overseers.

As with many of the Primarchs, Corax matured in a preternaturally short span of time, the phenomenon serving to confirm the slaves' belief that he represented a great gift to their people. It was they who named him, using their word for 'saviour' or 'deliverer' in anticipation of future deeds. Created with a wealth of knowledge already imprinted into his mind, the young Primarch nonetheless had much to learn from his protectors. Many of the prisoners were radicals condemned for holding views contrary to the interests of the guilds that ruled Kiavahr, the planet about which Lycaeus orbited, notions of justice and human dignity that had no place in their brutal regime. Corax swore to his protectors that he would liberate them from their cruel existence. Fortunately for Corax and the Imperium at large, the young Primarch's mentors counselled caution against overt signs of defiance or precipitous quests for vengeance. From these brave, wise men and women, he learned to bide his time and to observe his foes, to use his superhuman, gen-hanced faculties to plan far ahead towards the day he would lead the uprising and overthrow the hated slave lords of Lycaeus.

It was during this time that Corax came to learn something of the abilities he had been invested with. Moving from one hiding place to the next, constantly one step ahead of the cold-hearted and bloody-handed wardens, he was never discovered. Even when directly in the line of sight of an enemy, by willing an observer not to see him, he somehow avoided detection. At length, Corax could utilise this uncanny

ability to go where no other slave in the prison could go, moving about unseen beneath the hard gaze of the guards. There were limits to this ability, as Corax discovered to his cost; auspexes and other artificial methods of detection remained able to see him. It appeared to be the mind of the observer that was somehow tricked into disregarding the Primarch's presence should he will it.

As Corax reached his majority so the rule of the guilds drew to an end, though the overseers would not know of it until it was too late to avert their doom. Corax led a masterfully conceived campaign that bled the prison authorities dry, taking small cells of freedom fighters on a range of missions, some to steal weapons, others ammunition, still more to sabotage key systems so that they would fail at the moment of his choosing. Eventually, that moment came and Corax led the uprising that would cast off the shackles of centuries of oppression. In a necessarily bloody battle, Corax and his fellow freedom fighters took the prison. The bloodshed was great, for not all of the slave-prisoners had been imprisoned for their radical ideals; many were convicted killers and worse, the Primarch forced by necessity to utilise their fighting abilities and overlook their previous crimes, on condition they never repeat them after their bondage was cast off.

In yet another convergence of great events, it was in the immediate aftermath of the liberation of the prison moon Lycaeus and the opening salvos of the atomic bombardment of Kiavahr that the Emperor arrived to reclaim his lost son. Unlike events surrounding so many other such meetings however, the Emperor came alone, and the next day left alone. While it is known that the Master of Mankind and the XIXth Primarch spoke for long hours, what passed between them remains a matter of conjecture. With the benefit of hindsight, some have claimed that the Emperor spoke to Corax of things men, even some other Primarchs, were not yet ready to hear; of the truth of those powers that seethe within the Warp and the darkness soon to come. Certainly, it appears that when the full horror of the

Warmaster's treachery unfolded there were elements Corax seemed to have been forewarned of, though he only ever passed such knowledge on to his forces as and when they needed and were ready to assimilate it. Whatever the truth, one thing is known to have passed between father and son that night. The Emperor would leave Corax to complete his mission and to defeat the guilds of Kiavahr. Only later would he be ready to assume command of his Legion. It was as if in leaving Corax to liberate Kiavahr on his own, the Emperor was ensuring the Primarch learned and assimilated the most vital lesson of war. The Emperor departed, leaving his son to complete his task using only those weapons he had to hand. Those weapons turned out to be a stockpile of atomic barrages and mining charges the masters of Kiavahr had secreted on Lycaeus, believing them safe from the multitudes they ruled over. In their hubris the guilds never imagined that the slave-miners might one day cast off their shackles and claim those weapons as their own.

Even as the guilds sought to launch a counter-attack against the massively outnumbered freedom fighters, Corax knew the terrible order he must give. Using the steep gravity well that tethered Kiavahr and its moon, the Primarch committed to a full scale bombardment of the vast manufactory cities below. Even as the atomic fires blossomed on the face of Kiavahr, Corax demonstrated that by slaying thousands, millions would be saved. This, some would later claim, was the lesson the Emperor meant Corax to learn, and one that would temper his nature against the numerous challenges few but the Primarchs of the Legiones Astartes can fully comprehend.

Their greatest cities decimated, the guilds had no option but to capitulate. Kiavahr was liberated and Lycaeus renamed Deliverance. The Primarch had confronted that most terrible lesson of war – oft times, the innocent must suffer for the sake of all. It was a truth the Emperor knew well, and one that humanity as a whole would experience on an unprecedented scale within but a century.

UNDER THE RAVEN'S BANNER

By the time the Raven Lord took command of his Legion, the Great Crusade was over a century old. Corax was quick to impose the style of war he had perfected on Lycaeus over that which had come to define the XIXth, melding stealth and guile with vigilance and swiftness. It was during these early years that much of the native demeanour of the old XIXth, in particular the more cold blooded ways of the Xeric tribes was purged. The Legion had so often served in oppression, repression and occupation forces that Corax saw in some of the Terrans something akin to the slavers of Lycaeus. Several of the Legion's highest ranking officers were displaced or reassigned to non-command roles, including Lord Arkhas Fal, who had commanded the XIXth for three decades before the coming of the Raven Lord.

Under the Primarch's guidance, distilled into a series of battle-mantras, the Raven Guard developed their skills to preternatural levels. Corax is even known to have bested Roboute Guilliman in his brother-Primarch's notoriously testing strategio-simulacra, making use of several unconventional troop types his brother-Primarch had never before faced, including the forerunners of the

Moritat. Corax only bested his brother three times in this manner, and once the master of the Ultramarines heeded the lesson and adjusted his tactics, the Raven Lord would never beat him again.

During its restructuring, the Legion commissioned several innovations from the forges of Mars, all of them cunningly wrought to further its mastery of the arts of stealth and speed. As the Thunderhawk Gunship entered widespread service, the Raven Guard secured for themselves a variant known as the Shadowhawk, sporting all manner of technologies that made it invisible to all but the most sensitive of augurs. In addition, the Legion gained access to the Whispercutter, an open airframe flyer constructed about a gravitic impellor and capable of dropping ten Legionaries into a war zone in utter silence and with practically no chance of detection. Such technology was created not by the Martian Mechanicum nor any of the Forge Worlds, but by those master artificers of Kiavahr who formerly served the guilds. Utilising strands of machine canon unknown to the mainstream of the Mechanicum, the guild artificers created all manner of systems at the behest of the Raven Guard and in time the Legion's Techmarines

were inducted into these mysteries, although it has been speculated that the Kiavahrans might have been declared outcast by the jealous lords of Mars, were it not for the patronage of so august a body as the Legiones Astartes and the Primarch Corax.

The Battle of Gate Forty-Two

It was the need to conduct war in a more conventional manner that led to one of the greatest setbacks in the Legion's history, and one that would foreshadow the terrible events at Isstvan V only a few years later.

Soon after Horus was declared Warmaster, the Raven Guard were recalled from operations along the coreward edge of the Ghouls Stars and ordered to take their place in the line alongside several other Legions under the Warmaster's direct command. The Akum-Sothos Cluster had been brought to Compliance by the Luna Wolves in the opening years of the Great Crusade, but its people had fallen to a form of mass-psychosis and violently rejected unity with Terra. This unheralded secession was later determined to have been caused by xenos parasites which matured within the eye sockets of their hosts, in this case the unfortunate population of the cluster. As they matured, the parasites gained rudimentary control over their hosts and formed what amounted to a wholly alien, gestalt consciousness focused on a cabal of primary hosts dubbed the 'Un sighted Kings'. The newly ascended Warmaster refused to see the cluster of worlds he himself had brought to Compliance slip from the Imperium's grip and so he vowed an Oath of Moment to reclaim its worlds no matter the cost.

Horus had formulated a plan to cast down the Un sighted Kings in a lightning war that would purge the afflicted population while retaining the cluster's highly developed infrastructure for future re-population. Furthermore, a rapid victory would demonstrate to Horus' brother-Primarchs that the Emperor had been correct to elevate him to so high a rank. The Warmaster's plan called for the bulk of four Legions—the Luna Wolves, Space Wolves, Iron Warriors and Raven Guard—to converge on the heavily fortified lair of the Un sighted Kings before a final, overwhelming assault was launched.

Having brought the outer worlds of the cluster to heel in a matter of weeks, the Warmaster called a council of his brother-Primarchs, one part of his plan calling for the Raven Guard to make a frontal assault

Historia Legioe

THE SCOURING OF THE SCALLAND SECTOR

A two year engagement through a sector of space claimed by the remnants of the broken Eldar race, the Scalland Campaign was to serve as the original field test for the first thousand sets of prototype armour that would later come to be designated as MkVI; though at the time it bore the provisional designation MkV. Small numbers of the MkV armour had already been submitted to the Iron Warriors and Salamanders Legions, and both had expressed reservations about the lack of heavy plating when compared to earlier marks, pushing for the MkV to be revised for a heavy assault role. It was deemed that a mass combat trial was required to determine the effectiveness of the original design before potentially abandoning it. Internal politics within the various Legion commands saw this honour bestowed upon the Raven Guard, depleted in number after the bloody fighting in the Akum-Sothos Cluster. Speculation at the time suggests that a faction amongst the Primarchs and Legion commanders, led by Perturabo, intended this assignment to an under-strength Legion to be the death-knell of the MkVI armour, leading to its replacement by a sturdier design.

If this was so then the plan was to backfire spectacularly, for the Raven Guard performed admirably in the verdant Eldar seed worlds of the Scalland Sector, utilising the advanced auto-senses and agility of the new armour to hound the Eldar in a series of strike-and-fade attacks that decimated their already battered military forces. Such was the success of the fighting in the sector, which eventually saw the expulsion of the Eldar and the Imperium claim its rich worlds, that not only was the MkVI armour approved for final development, but the majority of the improvements suggested by the Raven Guard were adopted. The new armour, later dubbed 'Corvus' armour in honour of the Raven Guard, was placed into full scale production only a few months before the outbreak of Horus' rebellion against the Emperor, re-designated as MkVI to account for the inclusion of the many stop-gap field modifications and repairs into the Legiones Astartes order of battle.



directly into the guns of the defenders of Gate Forty-Two. Corax argued against what he denounced as a waste of resources and a needless squandering of his warriors' lives, countering with a strategy of his own. The Raven Lord proposed that his Legion should draw off enemy forces in a series of feints, allowing the three other Legions to overwhelm what defenders remained at the walls with comparative ease.

In answer, Perturabo accused Corax of seeking to avoid battle, a crime verging on dereliction for a Primarch of the Legiones Astartes. The two very nearly came to blows, with only the intervention of Lemar Russ staying bloodshed. The Wolf King counselled Corax to heed the words of the Primarch who the Emperor had set above his brothers. Russ urged Corax to smother his bitterness, but not to extinguish it, and from that guttering flame kindle the fire to carry the battle through. Taking his leave of the council, Corax mustered the Raven Guard before Gate Forty-Two. Knowing their particular demeanour would carry them forward, Corax assigned many of his Terran-dominated companies to the van, in particular those

whose captains appeared the most willing to play their part in the Warmaster's plan.

The assault that followed was hailed as the Legion's darkest hour, a grim honour that, tragically, would be displaced just a few years later at Isstvan V. At the height of the battle, the assault companies decimated and the attack faltering in the face of overwhelming fire, Corax himself led the forlorn hope, his battle cry firing the Legion to such efforts that the breach was carried and Gate Forty-Two taken. The honour of slaying the Unsighted Kings was claimed by Horus as Warmaster and at the moment of their execution, the xenos' hold over the population was dispelled. The Akum-Sothos Cluster was delivered and the Warmaster's prize was reclaimed. The cost was terrible however, for not only had countless millions of hosts been crippled in mind and body, but thousands of Raven Guard, the bulk of them Terran-born, had given their lives before the shattered walls.

Though the Battle of Gate Forty-Two was counted a victory by (and indeed for) the Warmaster, its effects were far reaching.

The Legion's numbers were sorely depleted, leaving only 80,000 Legionaries under the Primarch's command and making it the smallest of the Legiones Astartes. Corax removed himself and his Legion from his brother's command, swearing bitterly never to serve alongside the Warmaster again.

One last consequence of the Battle of Gate Forty-Two lingers still. In its aftermath, those line officers who, before the coming of the Primarch, had served for so long under Horus' command were gone, and so the Warmaster was able to exert little in the way of influence over the Raven Lord's Legion. Many of these Terrans had been inducted into the warrior lodges, and with their deaths these unseen bodies all but vanished from the Raven Guard. It has been claimed by his detractors that in assigning the Terran-born Legionaries to the assault wave that would suffer the greatest losses, Corax did his Legion a service, consolidating his power and paving the way for a future more in line with his own vision. As a result, the Legion was largely spared the wave of insurrection that was transmitted through so many of the Legions by the hidden auspices of the lodges.

DELIVERANCE AND KIAVAHR

The home world of the Raven Guard Legion is the barren moon now known as Deliverance, itself the largest satellite of the world of Kiavahr. Ruled throughout Old Night by ruthless and entrenched guilds that controlled every aspect of Kiavahr's society, the surface of that world was long ago scoured to blasted wastes by centuries, probably millennia of industrial exploitation. It was inevitable that the ruthlessly oppressed worker population would rebel against such treatment, and so those who spoke out against the guilds were dispatched to a prison facility on the world's largest moon, called at that time Lycaeus, to live out what remained of their lives in forced labour. Soon after the establishment of the prison moon, a wealth of mineral deposits was discovered beneath its surface and so the prisoners became slaves, their every effort devoted to feeding the industries of the world they had been exiled from and furthering the staggering wealth of its ruling elite. It was into the midst of the ruthlessly oppressed and maltreated slave caste of Lycaeus that Corvus Corax came, and it was by his hand that the guilds were cast down. Rallying the slaves against the guilds, Corax first liberated the moon of Lycaeus and soon after brought the guilds to their knees by unleashing upon them a portion of the atomic arsenal stored on the moon's surface.

Soon after the liberation of the prison moon, Kiavahr assumed Compliance and the moon of Lycaeus was renamed Deliverance in honour of its liberation under Corax's leadership. The central

mountain keep of the prison, named the Raven's Spire, became the headquarters of the Legiones Astartes Raven Guard. Its rocky outer skin was clad in battleship grade armour and its craggy flanks mounted with sufficient firepower to bring down an enemy war fleet.

As the Great Crusade ground ever onwards, Kiavahr assumed its position in the Emperor's Imperium of worlds. While its output was not equal to that of a fully-fledged Forge World of the Mechanicum, with the aid of the Tech-Priests of Mars, its forges and manufactories produced and exported vast quantities of matériel as well as a number of the more specialised machines and weapons required by the Raven Guard Legion. The guild artificers attempted to retain their closest secrets from the Mechanicum with some small measure of success, and clung on to their independence from Mars. Having remained self-sufficient throughout the lonely dark ages, Kiavahr remained unwilling to cede its secrets to outsiders, the only authority it recognised that of the Raven Guard. Of all of the Mechanicum's subsidiary domains, Kiavahr maintained relations with only one – Gryphonne IV. The terms of this relationship remain unclear, but because the Legio Gryphonicus fought alongside the Raven Guard throughout several of its larger scale campaigns, it can be assumed that some manner of reciprocal pact was, and perhaps still, remains in place.



UNIT ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE WITHIN THE LEGION

The XIXth Legion was founded according to the Emperor's far reaching vision for the armies of humanity laid down in the strictures of the *Officio Militaris*. The Legion was divided into chapters, chapters into battalions, battalions into companies and companies into squads. Most Legionaries considered themselves members of a given company rather than a chapter, the company being the preferred level for most independent operations. From its earliest formation, the Legion's officers devolved command responsibility towards the lower echelons, allowing sub-commanders to take the initiative and make tactical decisions according to immediate needs without interference from higher up the chain of command. This mindset was a direct result of the practises of the Xeric tribes, who conducted their wars against far more numerous foes and were therefore well practised in a wide spectrum of unconventional tactics. Individual units tended towards the smaller end of the scales set down by the architects of the Emperor's armies, but each was a tightly-knit band of warriors trained and equipped to operate on their own for extended periods. They were well able to live off of the land, taking what few resources they needed from their environment or when opportunity or necessity dictated, from defeated enemies.

As the Legion expanded, its ranks were swelled with the full panoply of war machines created for the *Legiones Astartes*. While its sub units remained relatively compact, the XIXth integrated numerous other formations into its structure, allowing it to take its place in the hosts of the Great Crusade and to confront the countless enemies of Mankind that would deny the Emperor's manifest destiny to rule the stars. While retaining its expertise in stealth and infiltration, the XIXth integrated formations of battle tanks, super-heavy war machines, artillery, assault vehicles and fleet assets, mastering each with the skill engineered into them by the genius of the Emperor. Nonetheless, the XIXth favoured a style of war that focused on rapid strike, outflanking, mobility and, where possible and desirable, stealth.

In terms of specialised units, there were certain formations the XIXth favoured over others. The Legion is noted in several accounts as fielding more Legion Reconnaissance squads than many others,

every Legionary being cross-trained to fulfil his usual role, as well as that of the recon units. Indeed, the line between Tactical squad and Reconnaissance squad seems to have become blurred, the two often operating using similar tactics and even specialised equipment.

From its earliest days, the Legion employed more Moritats than did many others. The individuals assigned to this duty were often those considered extreme in their methods even by the cold-blooded Xeric and they were often used—willingly—to undertake missions from which they were not expected to return. It is likely that the Raven Guard engaged in far more assassination and sabotage operations than is widely known to the Order of Remembrancers. Invariably, the increasing numbers of remembrancers accompanying the Expeditionary fleets were only allowed to bear witness to the Legion's victories after they had been won, the imagists, historators and poets denied the opportunity to record the Raven Guard as they waged war on the Imperium's foes.

In the aftermath of the Council of Nikaea, which history does not record Corax attending, the Raven Guard obeyed the command to renounce the employment of psykers and to disband its Librarius. Most of the Legion's Librarians were reassigned to the line companies to serve in conventional roles, although some may have served in the Seeker squads or as Vigilators or Moritats. Whether or not these individuals obeyed the Decree of Nikaea when operating independently on missions not committed to any archive must remain unknown and it is likely that most were slain upon the bloody battleground of the Urgall Depression.

LEGION COMMAND HIERARCHY

Upon assuming command of his Legion, Corvus Corax took steps to codify the methods of warfare he had employed against the slaver-lords of Lycaeus into a series of tactical and strategic maxims by which the Raven Guard would operate. In the main, these doctrines meshed well with those the XIXth had already been operating under throughout the Great Crusade, easing

THE DELIVERERS

Even in the days before the coming of Corvus Corax, the XIXth Legion was renowned for its skill at fast strikes and hit-and-run raids. As with many Legions, this skill quickly became ingrained into the nascent Legion as they came to be employed more and more in these roles, eschewing the massed battles and attritional warfare favoured by other Legions. As well as moulding the tactics of the XIXth Legion, this tendency also affected the Legion's armoury, which swiftly found itself biased towards light attack vehicles and those marks of armour that favoured agility and stealth over bulkier plating.

The earliest marks of Terminator armour were no exception. Despite the favour shown to the Tactical Dreadnought Armour project by Horus himself, who acted as patron to the XIXth Legion in the absence of their Primarch, many of the warriors of the XIXth were ill-disposed towards the slow and bulky Cataphractii suits. Some did adopt their use, mainly those chapters who had long served in the shadow of the Luna Wolves siege and heavy assault companies, becoming adept at close range shock assault from both aerial transport and teleport deployment.

The Legionaries of the XIXth Legion came to refer to these detachments as Deliverers, both for the carnage they brought to the enemy and for their tendency to be deployed when the daring assaults favoured by the XIXth Legion floundered and threatened to fail. Horus himself is known to have honoured the Deliverers attached to the Pale Nomads Chapter for the ferocity of their counter-attack at the Siege of Novas-Praxim, including them as part of his personal entourage until the Raven Lord claimed command of his Legion.

In the wake of Corvus Corax's return, the Deliverers were rarely called upon by the Primarch. Most were assigned to distant Crusade fleets and those who remained at Corax's side became the avatars of his carefully controlled anger, loosed when an enemy proved itself worthy only of utter destruction.

A SHATTERED LEGION

In the aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre, the number of Raven Guard Legionaries under the direct command of Corax numbered no more than 4,000. These grim survivors were mostly those raised into the ranks of the Legiones Astartes from the warriors of Deliverance, those who had fought through the hell of Isstvan V and those who had come to rescue them. In addition to these Space Marines, there were several chapters of the Raven Guard attached to distant Crusade fleets and various small garrison units scattered throughout the Imperium, mainly Terran warriors of the old XIXth Legion who would take months to return to bolster the Legion.

As the Raven Lord had no intention of retiring from the fight against the arch-Traitor, he re-organised the tattered remnants of his Legion in an attempt to keep them combat capable at a strategic level. Unable to maintain the standard chapter division of the old Legion days, he instead chose to separate his surviving warriors into divisions marked by their combat specialisation. The assembled tactical companies were named the Talons, assault companies became the Falcons, and light vehicle squadrons and air support were renamed the Hawks. In the campaigns to come this structure proved to be highly flexible, playing to the Raven Guard's innate strengths and allowing them to quickly redistribute their firepower and tactical capabilities to meet the threat of much larger enemy formations, though for many of their contemporaries it would no doubt have proven impractical.

that particular aspect of the Primarch's assumption of command. It is notable that as soon as he was able, Corax ensured that most of his senior commanders were drawn from Deliverance. Indeed, several of the Primarch's closest advisors had served alongside him as young freedom fighters during the Lycaean Uprising, having later undergone the implantation and conditioning process to turn them into warriors of the Legiones Astartes. After the costly Battle of Gate Forty-Two, the numbers swung in favour of those born of Deliverance still further, with only a handful of Terrans still serving in positions of high command.

The Primarch maintained a comparatively loose chain of command, and was known to value candid and honest counsel from his officers. His bearing made it clear he did not expect to be treated in the manner many of his brother-Primarchs demanded as their birthright. When he was their leader during the slave uprising on Lycaeus, Corax's peers insisted he was watched over by a bodyguard lest the overlords or some other rogue element attempt to assassinate him. While he resented this, Corax allowed it, as much for his followers' peace of mind as for his own safety. Having joined his Legion, the bodyguard followed, being formed into an honour guard known informally as the Shadow Wardens. It was said that they were ever present, though often unseen when their Primarch went to war, and that none could avoid their gaze. Indeed, only one individual was ever able to do so, and that

was Corax himself, giving rise to the wry saying that Corax was able to slip his own shadow should he choose to do so.

Perhaps more than any other Primarch, the Raven Lord frequently operated alone, or otherwise led very small bands of handpicked warriors who, of all his sons, possessed skills comparable to his own—the Mor Dretha or Shadowmasters. This predilection must at least in part derive from his time as a freedom fighter, where circumstances dictated small cells of rebels were often more effective than larger numbers. It was not unusual for Corax to himself conduct extensive reconnaissance prior to a battle, while most Primarchs would leave such tasks to their warriors. Corax is also known to have led small forces on deep infiltrations far behind enemy lines, striking directly at the heart of an enemy force, leaving his line officers to conduct the overall operation. Frequently, the actions of the main force were in fact a ploy to draw the enemy's attentions away from the Primarch's own mission, allowing him to strike the final blow and win the battle.

WAR DISPOSITION

At the time of the Isstvan III atrocity, the Raven Guard Legion was committed almost in its entirety to ongoing operations in the Thetos-Groton binary star system. When at last prevailing conditions in the Warp made it possible for Lord Dorn on Terra to contact his brother-Primarch by way of astro-telepathy and inform him of the dire

events unfolding in the Isstvan system, Corax ordered his fleet to make way at once. Not all of the Legion departed for the Isstvan system however, the Primarch determining that a portion must return to Deliverance in order to guard it against counter-attack. None of the senior commanders wished to be absent when the Traitors were brought to justice, and so lots were drawn to decide who would return. Thus, around 1,000 Legionaries alongside their Imperial Army allies of the Therion Cohort, departed for Deliverance, leaving a little under 80,000 to confront the Warmaster Horus and his allies at Isstvan V.

As with most of the Legions, there were other elements detached to serve elsewhere. A small number, mostly Terrans of the Legion of old, had been assigned to serve beyond the fringes of the Imperium, some in independent 'nomad predation' fleets, others attached to various Rogue Traders Militant or other so-called 'lone wolves'. One of these fleets was in fact commanded by the Legion's former commanding officer – Shade Lord Arkhas Fal – on the direct order of the Primarch when Corax took over the Raven Guard. What became of the Shadow Lord, his fleet and the other elements may never be known, and the fact that Corax appears to have made no effort to recall them suggests they were considered a body apart from the bulk of the Legion.

When the Raven Guard committed to the Isstvan V drop, they did so in numbers approaching their full strength, with all assets, both surface and space borne, in attendance. The events of the Battle of Gate Forty-Two had left the Raven Guard as the smallest of the Legions, but they would be operating alongside six of their brother Legions, or so they had every reason to believe. The truth, as described elsewhere in this account, was otherwise. The Raven Guard were to lose tens of thousands of Legionaries during the betrayal that was the Isstvan V Dropsite Massacre, and by the end of the ninety-eight days that followed, could muster but a fraction of their former strength. Leaving aside the unknown numbers operating alone in the outer darkness, the Raven Guard must now number barely 4,000, including those despatched to garrison Deliverance.

For the first time in their glorious history, the Raven Guard were truly laid low. What the future would hold for the Legion would be a time of trial and misfortune.

RAVEN GUARD LEGION TACTICAL MARKINGS



Tactical Line Unit Icon



Tactical with Legion Icon



Reconnaissance with Legion Numeral



Assault Vanguard



Destroyer Designation



Support Unit



Special Unit Designation



Legion Elites with Legion Numeral



Veteran Honour Personal Variant



High Command with Legion Icon



Command Variant



Command Variant Personal Heraldry



Tactical Line Unit Variant



Line Command



Legion Reconnaissance



Veteran with Legion Numeral

RAVEN GUARD HELM MARKINGS

Helm markings are used to facilitate the quick identification of key individuals in the chain of command during the anarchy of war. They serve as a vital back-up should more sophisticated power armour systems be rendered inoperative by battle damage.



Veteran Sergeant



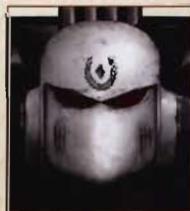
Talon Leader



Section Leader



Veteran



Captain



Vehicle Crew

XIXTH LEGION TACTICAL LEGIONARY

UNKNOWN LEGIONARY

7TH BATTALION

PRE-JOVIAN CAMPAIGN

This image has been compiled from a pict-capture of a Legionary of the Unification-era XIXth Legion as he appeared immediately before the conquest of the Jovian Range. Records do not indicate if this unnamed Legionary took part in the costly Battle of Lysithea, which saw the Emperor's forces wrest control of the tenth moon of Jupiter from the domination of its vile xenos overlords, or if he fought alongside warriors of a brother-Legion.

The Legionary's MkII 'Crusade' power armour, however, bears several symbols which do provide clues to his identity. The skull and lightning bolt icon on his left knee armour in particular marks him as a veteran of the Terran Unification War. It is known that some of the 7th Battalion survivors of the Battle of Lysithea were assigned to duties with a so-called 'Nomad Predation' fleet dispatched with sealed orders into the outer darkness around the time that the XIXth Legion was united with its Primarch. If this Legionary survived the Jovian Campaign, he may have been assigned to such an expedition.

Panoply of War

1. **Mars-Proteus Pattern Power Axe:** Records suggest that this class of weapon was commonly gifted to squad leaders to mark acts of valour, a tradition harking back to the culture of the Xeric tribes which fell out of favour after the Primarch took control of the XIXth Legion.
2. **Phobos Pattern Boltgun:** Note bird of prey heraldry, prefiguring the coming of the Raven Lord.



I.



2.

RAVEN GUARD ASSAULT LEGIONARY

LEGIONARY GHELT

SQUAD LYSO, ASSAULT COMPANY

4TH BATTALION, 5TH CHAPTER

AFTERMATH, ISSTVAN V DROPSITE MASSACRE – DAY 4

Legionary Ghelt was a veteran of two decades service to the Raven Guard and marked for ascension to the position of squad sergeant at the time of the Isstvan V operation. That ascension came far quicker than anticipated, as his immediate superior, Sergeant Lyso, fell in battle during the Dropsite Massacre, slain by the abominations known as the Gal Vorbak of the Traitor Word Bearers Legion. Ghelt took command of what remained of his squad and led his brother Legionaries in the breakout from the Urgall Depression, commanding them until he himself fell in glory around Day 28.

Legionary Ghelt wears late production MkIV 'Maximus' power armour with the XIXth Legion numeral prominently displayed on the chest and the assault identifier on the right knee. Also note artificer-applied surface etching. The white applied to his shoulder, forearm and gauntlet plates was an informal practice amongst veteran assault squads which became much more common after the Legion's return to Deliverance.

Panoply of War

1. 'Thunder Edge' Pattern Chainsword: Decorated with Raven Guard Legion icon.
2. Tigris Pattern Bolt Pistol: Note 'Corvus Calvariam' Veteran's Honour.
3. Melta Bomb, Krak Grenade and Fragmentation Grenade: Standard Legion assault squad issue.



I.



2.



3.

RAVEN GUARD VETERAN SERGEANT

SERGEANT KHALEN
SQUAD KHALEN, RECON COMPANY
2ND CHAPTER

AFTERMATH, ISSTVAN V DROPSITE MASSACRE – DAY 7
Legionary Khalen is depicted here as he deployed to the surface of Isstvan V and records indicate that he survived the ninety-eight days aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre. He wears pre-production, trial power armour issued to him during the Scalland Campaign, which was still undergoing trials with veteran Raven Guard units at that time. The armour is known to have served Sergeant Khalen well, its shielded power-routing systems especially suited to recon operations and its multiple redundancies allowing several key components to be replaced as they sustained heavy damage. Khalen's accounts of the armour's performance contributed to several later improvements being included in the final MkVI 'Corvus' armour battle plate.

Sergeant Khalen's power armour bears the Raven Guard Legion's icon, as well as the lightning flash symbol identifying him as serving in a Legion reconnaissance squad – the white faceplate is thought to be an informal identifier for a squad sergeant. The numeral on his chest plate is that of the 2nd Chapter, and in addition to this he bears the Corvus Calvariam Veteran's Honour.

Panoply of War

1. Umbra Pattern Boltgun.

2. Ryza 'Sunspite' Pattern Plasma Pistol:
Individual issue to veteran status line officers.



RAVEN GUARD RECONNAISSANCE LEGIONARY

LEGIONARY SALLAHN

SQUAD NUMAS, 31ST SHADOW COMPANY

AFTERMATH, ISTVAN V DROPSITE MASSACRE – DAY 51

Legionary Sallahn's reconnaissance squad began the Istvan V operation serving in the 31st 'Shadow Company'—a formation directly under Legion Command instead of serving in the line. The 31st suffered such heavy losses at the height of the Dropsite Massacre that when the breakout order was issued, Squad Numas was one of only a handful of units capable of responding. Legionary Sallahn was instrumental in identifying viable extraction vectors and communicating these back to what remained of Legion Command, covering the Legion's withdrawal throughout and saving the lives of hundreds of his brother Legionaries. Much later, Squad Numas would receive the praise of Corax himself for the pivotal role it played in the Legion's survival through that darkest hour.

Legionary Sallahn's MkIV recon-modified power armour is depicted here with its cameoline field disengaged, the surface taking on a flat, ash-grey finish in its passive state. When activated, the armour's surface mirrors ambient lighting conditions, allowing its wearer to blend into their surroundings.

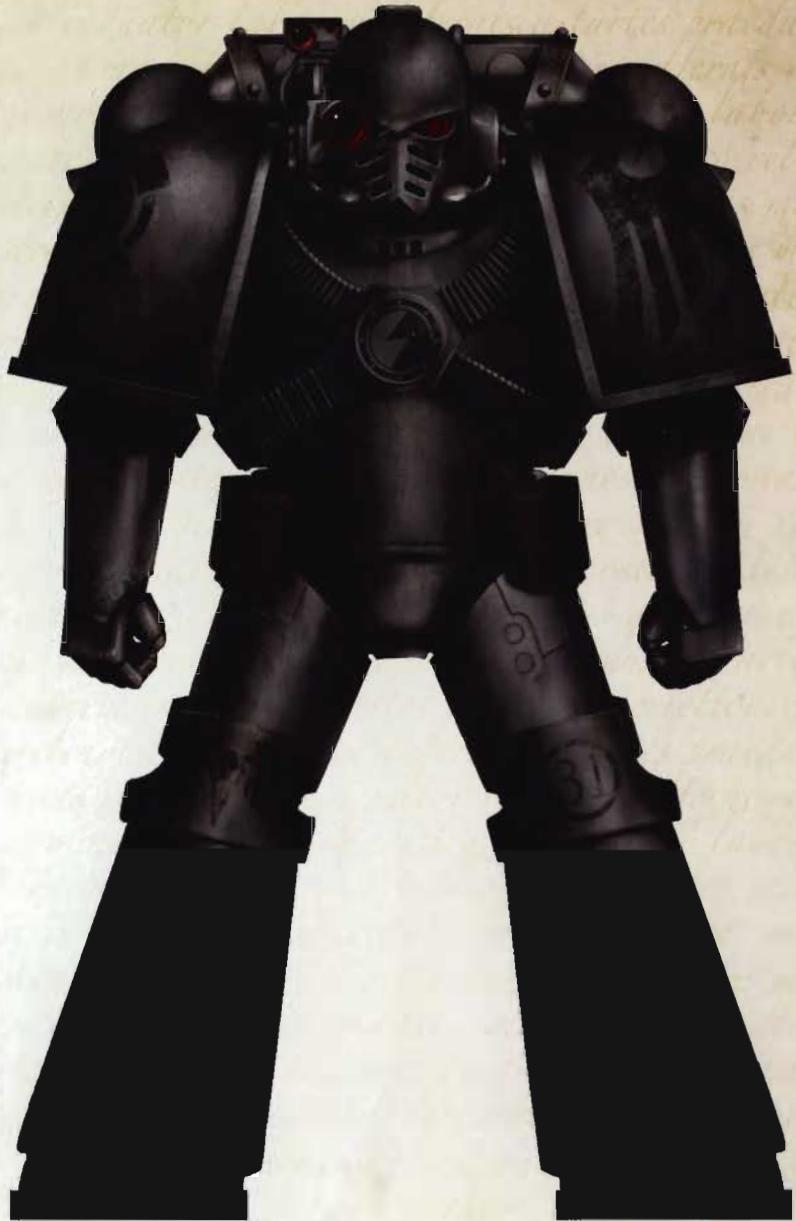
Note helm-mounted sensor and communications array. Also note subdued Legion and tactical markings, and winged raven skull icon indicating the 31st Shadow Company's direct attachment to higher echelon Legion Command.

Panoply of War

1. Tigris-Exitus Pattern Modified Boltgun:

Master Armourer-modified, issued to majority of reconnaissance squads in 31st Shadow Company.

2. Deliverance Pattern Shotgun: Alternative issue to approximately one in five recon units designated to operational security role.



1.



2.

RAVEN GUARD LEGION TERMINATOR SERGEANT

TERMINATOR SERGEANT HEKLAN
SQUAD HEKLAN, ASSAULT COMPANY
1ST BATTALION, 5TH CHAPTER

AFTERMATH, ISSTVAN V DROPSITE MASSACRE – DAY 78

Sergeant Heklan's squad fought with honour throughout the Legion's operations on Isstvan V and is noted to have fought alongside the Lord Primarch himself on several occasions, in particular during all three major engagements with the forces of the Iron Warriors Legion attempting to hunt the Raven Guard across the Urgall Wastes. Sergeant Heklan fell in glory the very day the Legion was delivered from Isstvan V, he and his warriors willingly selling their lives at enormous cost to the World Eaters as the Traitors closed in upon the Raven Guard's final position at the edge of the Gular Salt Plains.

Sergeant Heklan's Cataphractii armour is adorned with a mass of subtle motifs derived from the decorative arts of the Lycaean slave-miners, a constant reminder to the bearer and his peers of the Legion's roots. On his right shoulder he bears the symbol of an elite Legion formation, on the left the numeral of the 5th Chapter, surrounded by a sergeant's laurel of command.

Panoply of War

1. Artificer-wrought Power Sword.

2. Tigris Pattern Combi-melta.



1.



2.



ANCIENT KRAHZEN

17th CHAPTER

AFTERMATH, ISSTVAN V DROPSITE MASSACRE – DAY 3

Ancient Krahzen was once a Legion Moritat in the 3rd Battalion of the 4th Chapter, and well known for his particularly dark demeanour and callousness in battle. He was laid low by a hideous xenos horror while scouring a space hulk threatening systems along the coreward marches of the Segmentum Solar, and subsequently interred within the armoured sarcophagus of a Contemptor Dreadnought. Though no longer able to pursue the mission of a Legion Moritat, Krahzen adapted to his new existence well, and instead of lone assassinations, Krahzen soon led savage frontal assaults, seeking out and striking down the mightiest of enemies.

Ancient Krahzen survived the murderous violence of the Dropsite Massacre, leading a combined force of the remnants of several dozen different companies north-eastward, smashing aside countless enemy formations before linking up with the Primarch on Day 3. He then led countless attacks throughout the Raven Guard's ninety-eight days on Istvan V, but he was not to be counted amongst the ranks of those liberated on the final day. Instead, he gave his life in battle against a Sons of Horus Legion death squad so that his brother Legionaries might fight on and, ultimately, endure.

RAVEN GUARD ARMOURED FORCES

Though best known for the skills of its warriors in rapid assault, reconnaissance and infiltration protocols, the Raven Guard Legion possessed and utilised the full range of engines of war produced for the Legiones Astartes by the genius of the Mechanicum. The Raven Guard maintained entire battalions of heavy armour of all types, the Legion Armoury and Fleet Reserve held hundreds more, and individual companies were assigned individual war engines as and when required.

The Raven Guard Legion deployed every heavy armour formation it could muster to Istvan V, committing the majority to a wide flanking manoeuvre launched along the base of the Lerghan Ridge against Sons of Horus units guarding the extreme left flank of the Traitors' lines. Entire wings of Javelin Attack

Speeders and Skyhunter Jetbike squads roamed ahead of the slower moving tank companies, isolating enemy positions and harrying them mercilessly until the heavier units arrived to grind them into dust. When the Night Lords, Iron Warriors, Alpha Legion and Word Bearers revealed their treachery upon the Urgall Depression, most of these formations were cut off from the bulk of the Legion and ambushed by Night Lords units as they attempted to fight their way back to their Primarch's side.

Very few of the Raven Guard's heavier armoured formations were able to withdraw from the Dropsite Massacre, although those that did played a vital role in holding back the enemies' pursuit in its immediate aftermath. Later on, all but the lightest formations were disbanded and their crews

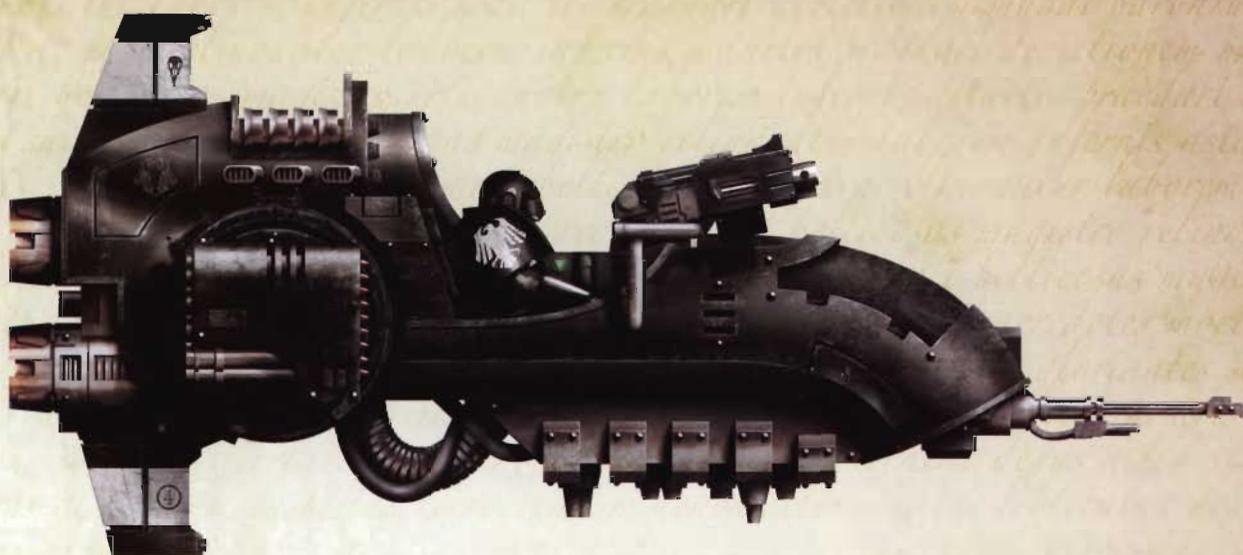
re-assigned to fight on as infantry, the survival of every last Legionary deemed of far more importance to the future of the Legion than maintaining its vehicles.

Long after the Istvan V Dropsite Massacre, it would be discovered that the Traitors recovered a large number of the vehicles left upon the black sands of the Urgall Depression and turned them against their erstwhile masters. Many also appear to have been crippled by Mechanicum war machines using ultra-high yield neutron weaponry so that, while the crews were slain by radiation deadly even to a superhuman Space Marine, the war engines themselves remained intact. Were it needed, this provides further evidence of the dark genius and far-reaching stratagems of the Warmaster.

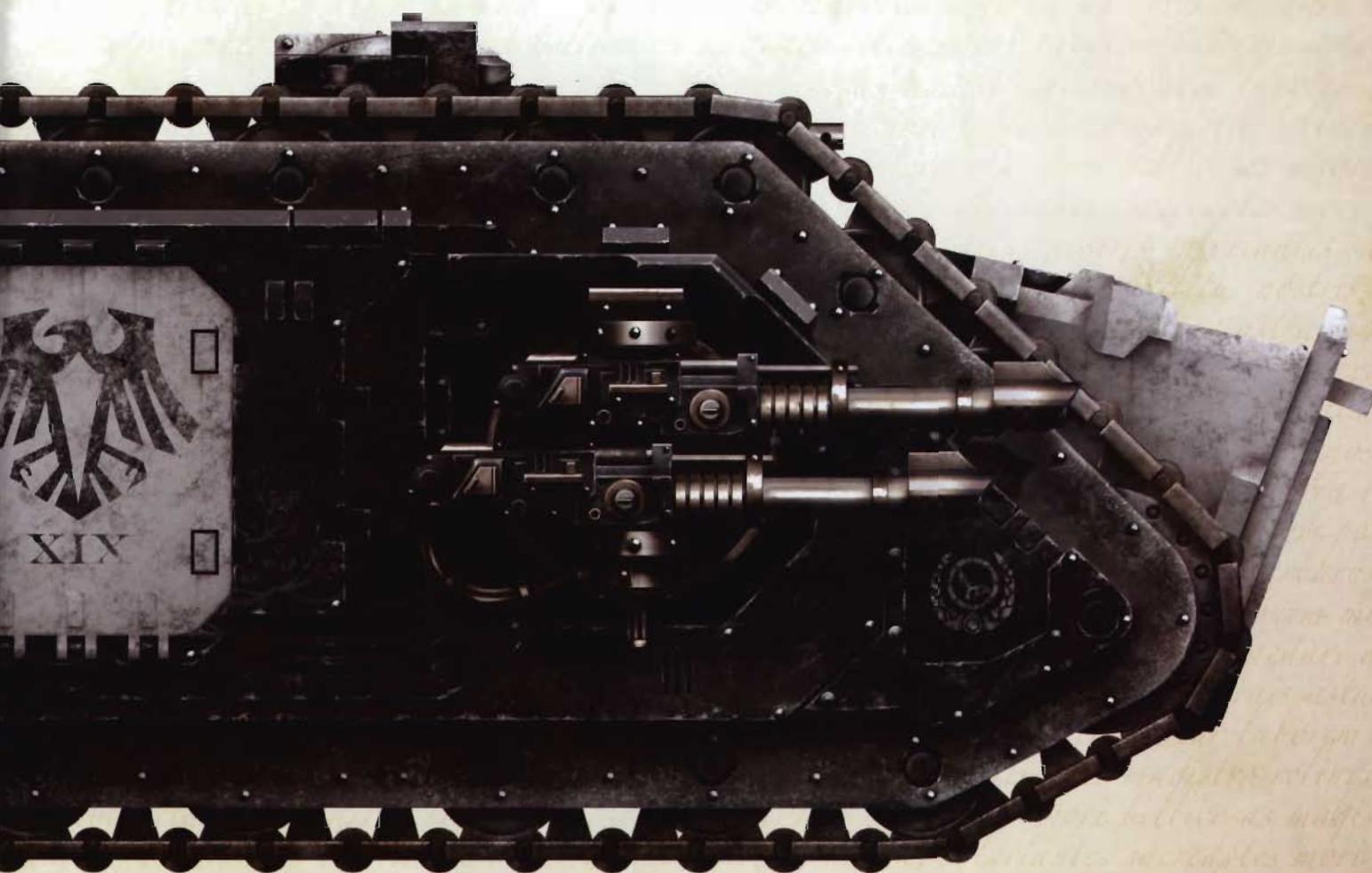


The laurel wreath icon is commonly employed by the Raven Guard and other Legiones Astartes to denote an upper echelon command unit. In this instance, the marking indicates the vehicle is the personal transport of a battalion commander.





Javelin Attack Speeder: The Raven Guard value reconnaissance and the dissemination of battlefield intelligence very highly, and so even the heaviest armoured formation was often accompanied by swift-moving outrider units such as this Javelin Attack Speeder. Such units also served in the roles of close defence and target identification.



Legion Spartan Assault Tank 'Valravn': This vehicle was deployed to the Isstvan V drop operation with the Legion's 48th Heavy Company, an armoured vanguard assault unit whose infantry were extensively equipped with Tactical Dreadnought Armour. The Valravn was lost assaulting Sons of Horus positions on the Warmaster's extreme left flank, but would later reappear having been salvaged by the Traitor Night Lords.

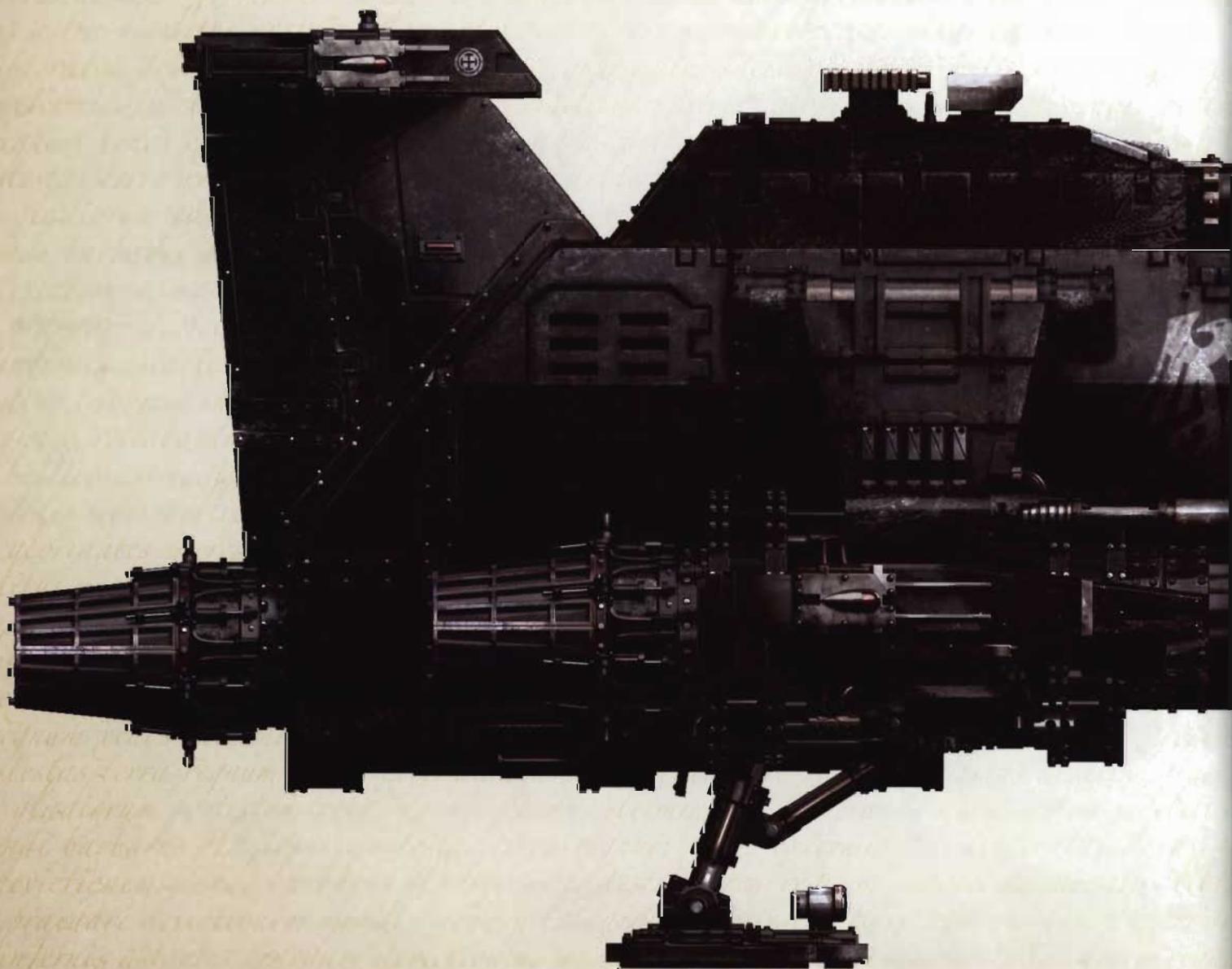
WINGS OF THE RAVEN

The Legiones Astartes Raven Guard make extensive use of a wide range of atmospheric, orbital and void-capable craft, from the heavily armed Fire Raptor gunship to the mighty Stormbird dropship. Many are equipped with unique stealth systems produced by the guilds of Kiavahr, allowing them to penetrate deep into enemy controlled territory in order to deploy Raven Guard strike forces and to provide fire support once their passengers are on the ground.

The bulk of the Legion's orbital strike craft were committed to the assault against the Warmaster's rebels, many making repeated runs from ground to orbit as they ferried

thousands of Legionaries to the surface. It is testament to the thoroughness of the Warmaster's treachery that when the second wave of the Loyalist retribution force turned upon the Raven Guard, Salamanders and Iron Warriors of the first wave, the majority of the Legion's Thunderhawks and Stormbirds were on the ground in the process of disembarking warriors and thus at their most vulnerable. When the Iron Warriors opened fire on the landing zones with their super-heavy artillery, the devastation was total – barely a handful of Thunderhawks and Storm Eagles, and not a single Stormbird, escaped the all-encompassing conflagration.

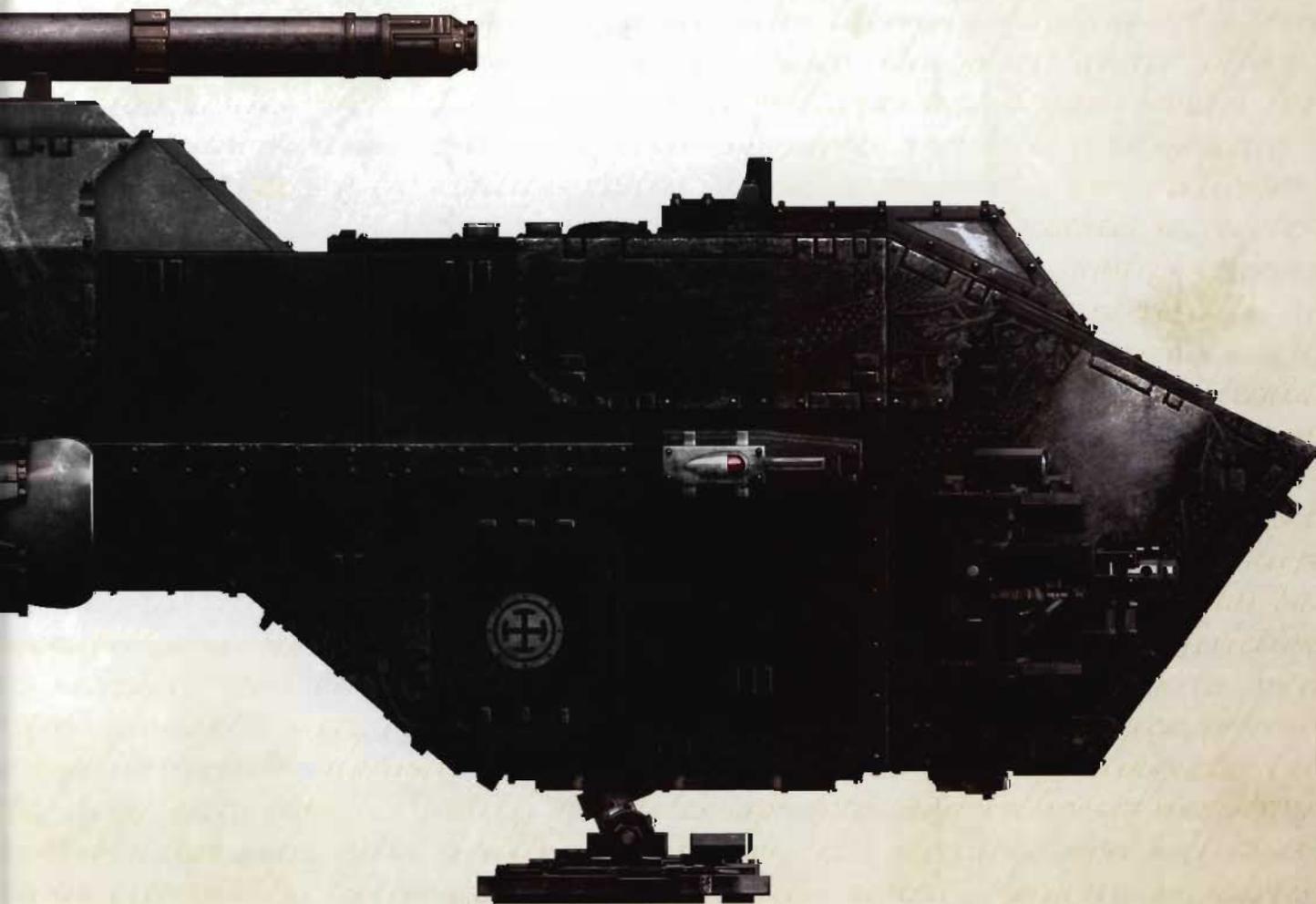
When at last the Raven Guard serving directly under the command of Lord Corax were extracted from Isstvan V, it was the Legion's handful of surviving Thunderhawks and Stormbirds that bore them away from certain death at the edge of the Gular Salt Plains. It was thanks to the skill and courage of the crews of Commander Branne Nev's rescue force that the Primarch and the last few thousand of his sons lived to fight on against the treachery of the Warmaster and the fallen Legiones Astartes.



Thunderhawk Gunship 'Umbra Secundus': This Thunderhawk Gunship is depicted ready for planetfall on Isstvan V. *Umbra Secundus* was assigned to transport three veteran tactical squads of the Raven Guard's 3rd Company, as indicated by the cross marking on its tail and flank hatch. The craft was later commandeered by the Raven Guard's Master of Descent Alvarex Maun and used to extract the Primarch himself before succumbing to massive damage from Traitor ground fire.



Scimitar Pattern Jetbike: This Scimitar served in the Raven Guard's 13th Company and survived the Dropsite Massacre. It was assigned to the ad-hoc formation known as the Hawks, alongside several dozen other rapid attack units, and was only abandoned when the Raven Guard finally took their leave of Isstvan V.





EXEMPLARY BATTLES

Despite a tally of victories and battle honours that is the equal of any of the more storied Legions, there remain few records of the Raven Guard Legion's campaigns. This fault does not lie with the chroniclers of the Great Crusade, but with the nature of the Legion itself and the manner in which it was used during its earliest days.

Unlike most Legions, the Raven Guard saw over a century of war before being united with their Primarch; during this time they fought at the behest of Horus Lupercal, treated almost as a specialised detachment of the Luna Wolves instead of a separate Legion. A shadowed blade alongside the sledgehammer of the Luna Wolves, one essential to many of the victories later claimed by the Luna Wolves and that often went unremarked by the Order of Remembrancers and the Great Crusade's official histories. Such was the Legion's nature, both before and after the return of Corvus Corax, content to work in the shadows of other Legions, their battles unseen and unremarked on, but telling in the shape of history.

Hell's Anvil

The Battle of Hell's Anvil was typical of many of the Legion's early engagements, a savage legend that Corax would later seek to repress, and one that exemplifies both the similarities in tactics and the difference in character of the warriors that made up the XIXth Legion and later the Raven Guard.

Hell's Anvil was the name given by Imperial stratagos to a massive fortress situated on the planet of Baratrum, a world whose once human population survived deep below the desolate surface in vast factory-warrens, kept alive by proscribed technology and rampant techno-heresy. For almost five years the massed regiments of the Imperial Army had fought a futile battle to destroy the overseers of the planet, who had long since surrendered their humanity, and capture the world's prodigious mineral wealth for the nascent Imperium. Few gains had been made, as even when assault units of the Imperial Army were able to breach the smaller factory warrens with immense tunnelling machines, churning hordes of mechanically augmented, sightless human-drones were unleashed, sealing the breaches in their fortresses with the bodies of their dead. Thousands of lives had been lost and the Imperial Army was unable to secure any foothold in the sunken metropoli of Baratrum.

The arrival of a fleet bearing three full chapters of the XIXth Legion, under overall command of Arkhas Fal, then master of the XIXth Legion and bearing the title Shade Lord, and accompanied by a sizable contingent of Luna Wolves, changed the nature of the campaign. As neither Legion maintained an extensive arsenal of siege weapons, and any attempt to seize the subterranean factory-warrens by storm was doomed to failure, an alternative strategy was developed by Shade Captain Nerat Kirine of the XIXth Legion's Ashen Claw Chapter; one that serves as a potent exemplar of the early XIXth Legion's brutally efficient style of warfare.

Disregarding the possibility of collateral damage to the planet's subterranean population, the taskforce's strike cruisers began a concussive bombardment directly above the previously unassailable sub-surface fortifications of Hell's Anvil. The massive tectonic force of the bombardment shook the very planet to its core, causing severe damage to many of the underground cities, and through brute force unearthing the walls of Hell's Anvil and leaving a huge canyon of steaming mud and toxic fumes before them.

Into this tormented and unstable landscape Shade Lord Fal ordered three regiments of Thorosian Voltigeurs, a unit attached to the Imperial Army detachment that had so far failed in its efforts to assault the fortress. They took up defensive positions as best they could amidst the destruction and near constant thick, debris-laden rain. As the Imperial Army regiments readied themselves, the frenzied worker-drones of Hell's Anvil poured forth at the command of their Baratron Overseers. In the blinding rain of mud and blistering steam, the Thorosian soldiers attempted to hold back the tide of mindless once-human drones, whose mechanical augmentations, though intended for construction work, proved remarkably adept when turned to the task of slaughter. With casualties quickly mounting and the wounded fortress of Hell's Anvil still spewing forth its berserk defenders, the Thorosian command relayed desperate requests for aid to the XIXth Legion. Silence, however, met all of their requests.

As the Thorosian regiments spent their lives in a frantic battle in the mud-slick trough of the man-made ravine, the massed line companies of the XIXth Legion and their Luna Wolves allies, as well as the head-hunter companies of the Ashen Claw Chapter, took up position along the crests of the unstable rift. Waiting until Hell's Anvil had emptied itself of defenders, which seethed in the blood-sodden mud around the tattered remnants of the Imperial Army regiments, their praetors gave the signal to advance. As the marshalled ranks of the Luna Wolves and the XIXth Legion advanced down the ravine's side, firing their boltguns in thunderous volley into the mob of Baratron worker-drones savaging the Thorosians, the warriors of the Ashen Claws descended into the bowels of Hell's Anvil.

With the main force closing the jaws of the Legiones Astartes' trap around the majority of Hell's Anvil's defence force, the Ashen Claws were able to blast and hack a path into the fortresses' interior. There, within the twisting, labyrinthine passages of Hell's Anvil, the warriors of the XIXth Legion fought a hit-and-run war against the hulking Overseers, their shrivelled human forms encased in layers of crude augmetics built up over the centuries, each bristling with built-in weaponry, and those packs of worker-drones that still lurked within the fortresses' near endless passageways. Constantly on the move, bypassing the Overseers' prepared strong points and striking from the shadows without warning, before fading back into the

black, barely lit tunnels, the Ashen Claws left part-mechanical corpses and broken fortifications in their wake. With this strategy of mobile, harrowing strikes Shade Captain Kirine sought to wear down his enemy's strength as he led the search for the fortresses' core, the ultimate target of the assault.

After hours of fighting in the disorienting maze of tunnels, the XIXth Legion finally discovered Hell's Anvil's titanic plasma reactors, many kilometres below the surface. Within those cavernous chambers, the Ashen Claws were confronted by the oldest and largest of the Baratron Overseers, monstrous amalgamations of metal and flesh that had existed in the dark beneath the fortress for nearly a millennia. Striking with sudden ferocity, using their jetpacks to engage their immense once-human foes, Shade Captain Kirine and his bodyguard held the Overseers at bay while melta charges were planted amongst the reactor's delicate containment fields, before retreating as suddenly as they had struck, back into the upper levels to detonate the charges.

The explosion of the buried reactors shook the valley formed by the orbital bombardment anew, sending avalanches of boiling mud spilling across the landscape and causing further casualties amongst those Thorosian Voltigeurs who had survived the battle. On the surface the warriors of the XIXth under Shade Lord Arkhas Fal had put those drones trapped in the rift to the sword, taking only light casualties with the enemy drawn out of position, and greeted the surviving Ashen Claws with solemn salutes as they emerged from the ruined fortress, a stark contrast to the Luna Wolves warriors' raucous celebrations. The destruction of Hell's Anvil saw the swift collapse of the Baratron resistance, and despite the damage the various factory-warrens had sustained, the envoys of the Mechanicum were able to restart production with only a minor delay, feeding the Imperium's expansion and continued conquest.

The Thorosian regiments bore the brunt of the assault's bloody cost. Of over 10,000 soldiers committed to the battle less than a tenth survived, whereas the XIXth Legion and Luna Wolves had suffered only a few hundred casualties between them, mostly among the Ashen Claws. This cost, though high, was less than might have been expected from a drawn-out siege and the battle was lauded as a mighty victory for the advancing Great Crusade. It also established the

reputation of the XIXth Legion as harbingers of death for those units of the Imperial Army assigned to their support, for their daring decapitation strikes often left support units in the path of destruction with little hope of rescue. This remnant of their heritage as slave-masters and raiders in the dust plains of Old Earth did not find favour with the Raven Lord when he joined with the XIXth Legion, and this practice was only forgotten, both within and without the Legion, after long years of campaigning under Corvus' guidance.

The Compliance of Indra-sûl

With the discovery of Kiavahr came the long expected union of the XIXth Legion and their Primarch, and the beginning of a subtle change to the Legion's character and reputation. Under the guidance of their Primarch, the infamy and body of gruesome traditions that had gathered about the Terran XIXth was slowly suppressed, replaced by the doctrines Corax had developed since leaving Deliverance. Taking place almost fifty years after the Primarch had resumed command of his Legion, Corax's prosecution of the Indra-sûl Campaign is typical of many of the conquests undertaken by the Raven Guard, and displays how the melding of Deliverance-born insurgents and the brutal raiders of Terra's Asiatic Dustfields melded to produce the Raven Guard.

The last years of the Great Crusade saw the majority of the Raven Guard assigned to Expeditionary fleets in the far galactic north, pressing the Great Crusade's expansion past the reaches of the Segmentum Obscurus and into the dim stars of the galaxy's northern fringe. Orbiting one such star, a cold red orb that had long since passed its prime, the Raven Guard discovered Indra-sûl. Once the planet must have served as a mighty explorable port for the fleets of the Dark Age of Technology, but now it was reduced to a wasteland, with only one sign of its past glory remaining – a glittering spire of silver many kilometres thick that reached from the ground to the void above, terminating in a series of branch-like docking tendrils that blanketed the sky of one hemisphere. Within this great structure the Raven Guard found the last survivors of Indra-sûl, and the creatures who now ruled them.

In the dark years of the Age of Strife, the Khrave had come to Indra-sûl. How they had enslaved the population of that once mighty world will likely never be known, but the empty cities of Indra-sûl spoke of many centuries of systematic harvesting to slake

the hunger of these xenos nightmares. Upon learning of this, Corax could no more allow the people of Indra-sûl to suffer under xenos tyranny than he could have left the people of Deliverance in bondage to the guilds of Kiavahr. Dismissing suggestions from some Terran-born captains, who felt introducing a nerve-phage gas into the facility and then claiming it once both human slaves and xenos masters were both dead was the most effective solution, he laid plans for the salvation of Indra-sûl.

With no sure knowledge of the number of Khrave that might lurk within the silver spire of Indra-sûl, Corax refused to commit either his own Legionaries, or the soldiers of the Therion Cohort to the war of attrition intended to retake the spire level by level. Instead, the Raven Lord personally led a force of less than 2,000 Legionaries, selected from the ranks of the Raven Guard's reconnaissance and infiltration companies, into the structure.

Approaching from the air in several squadrons of modified Shadowhawk and Darkwing gunships, the Space Marines boarded the spire at its mid-point, splitting into several dozen combat commands, each tasked with seeking out the lairs of their xenos foe and equipped with a teleport beacon array. Within the twisting passageways and vaulted chambers, the sons of Deliverance were confronted with a vision of the past. In each of the capacious silver-walled compartments that the Raven Guard breached they found the survivors of the human population of Indra-sûl, wretched and malformed, packed into the chambers in their hundreds like cattle. Some detachments also encountered lone Khrave, towering monstrosities gorged on centuries of captive bounty, impossibly strong and wielding foul warp-glamours. Only with much slaughter were they able to slay such creatures, Raven Guard both of Terra and Deliverance instinctively falling into the doctrines of guerrilla warfare—strike and fade—mounting ferocious attacks one moment and then falling back into the twisting corridors, leaving their foe dazed and confused until it was finally slain.

Hours passed in the unwavering artificial light of the spire and the Raven Guard, directed by Corax, fought an unceasing guerrilla war, always on the move with hearts hardened to the pitiful cries of the captive humans, striking at those Khrave they found before fading back into the maze of corridors. Only as the red sun of Indra-sûl fell below

the horizon, did Corax discover the first of the Khrave's hibernation vaults and there, amidst the decaying drifts of past feasts, found hundreds of dormant Khrave, each an equal to those bloated monsters they had paid such a high cost to eliminate before.

With the Khrave horde beginning to stir, the Raven Guard retreated, with Corax and a demi-company of those who had fought at his side on Deliverance taking the near suicidal duty of rearguard whilst the remaining Raven Guard accompanying him raced to deploy their teleport beacon array. Hard pressed at the vault's entrance, the Raven Lord struggled to hold back the waking Khrave as his companions fell one by one, lashed by psychic barbs and the crushing strength of the Khraves' taloned fists, all but overwhelmed by sheer numbers as more and more of the xenos woke from their slumber. Despite the slaughter, the Raven Guard held their ground, fighting to their last breath with only the desire to slay their foes until death claimed them, shielding their brethren to the rear as they worked.

Finally, after nearly an hour of non-stop fighting, a flash of light announced the arrival of the Deliverers, a company of Terran-born Raven Guard clad in Terminator armour, grim in aspect and wielding an array of fearsome weapons not usually favoured by the subtle tactics of the XIXth Legion. The Deliverers' massed firepower pushed the Khrave back into the vault and the Terran Legionaries advanced, unleashing thousands of rounds of mass reactive death into the wall of aliens before them, the ferocity of the Terran Raven Guard finishing what the stoic determination of their brethren from Deliverance had begun. Forcing their way into the vault chamber through brutal application of ordnance, paying little heed to the damage they caused, the Deliverers unleashed a torrent of burning promethium upon the Khrave, scouring their nest clean with fire.

Within a few hours the Raven Guard discovered dozens of other such vaults, each falling to furious teleport assaults, though many Legionaries fell to the Khrave during the fighting. With the dormant Khrave reduced to cinders, the remainder of the Legion docked with the spire, securing it section by section and sweeping away the last of the Khrave left within. The Therion Cohort was tasked with freeing the thousands of captives that remained within the spire's uncounted chambers, providing

such succour as they could to those who had been held captive for generations by the alien Khrave. Now secured as a base for the Great Crusade's push into the Ghouls Stars, Indra-sûl was given into the custody of the Mechanicum, and the Raven Guard made preparations for their next conquest. It is said though, that before he left that benighted place, Corvus Corax spent many hours wandering the spire recalling the tribulations of his youth and the sacrifices of his new sons in dark humour.

Unknown to the Raven Guard, the Iterators and other Imperial servants following on the heels of the XIXth Legion's advance would later condemn the survivors to a living death as servitor labourers, seeing them as corrupted in both mind and body. It is perhaps fortunate that the Raven Lord never discovered this prior to the outbreak of the fighting on Isstvan V, for his reputation leaves little doubt over the response that would likely have followed.

The Carinae Retribution

The conquest of the Carinae Sodality remains a black mark on the record of the Raven Guard, a campaign whose details, long suppressed by factions within the Officio Militaris, show the Raven Guard as directly responsible for the campaign's delay and the excessive casualties recorded by Imperial Army units assigned to the fighting.

Having arrived in the Carinae System with a force of almost 30,000 Legionaries and twice that number of soldiers of the Imperial Army, the task force made swift progress with the conquest of the 'Thousand Moons of Carinae'. The Thousand Moons were in fact immense void-cities that circled the otherwise planet-less primary, remnants of a power long lost to Mankind whose isolationist inhabitants were ill disposed to bend the knee to the Emperor. Though each of these void-cities was an immense fortress, protected by constellations of servitor controlled kill-sats and batteries of graviton pulse cannon, they initially proved no match for the precise assaults of the Raven Guard. Directed by the keen tactical acumen of Corvus Corax, the Raven Guard turned the Carinae's greatest strength into a fatal weakness, for though the void-cities were many and their defences strong, each fought a solitary war, separate from aid and unable to support the defence of their fellows.

Rather than attempt a grand campaign, besieging the entire system at once or challenging the combined fleets of the

Carinae Sodality for void-supremacy in the system, the Raven Guard used mobility and stealth to strike against a single moon at a time. Against the focussed firepower of the Raven Guard's strike cadres any individual moon had little chance of victory, and could only delay what seemed like an inevitable victory for the Imperial forces.

The air of optimism surrounding the offensive came to an end with the siege of the void-city designated Zenith-312. With Raven Guard strike teams seizing key facilities in furious close quarters battles, and Deliverer Terminator assault barges approaching the now abandoned docking rings, the cities' Arch-Comptroller unleashed a terrible weapon from the Age of Strife, long held in stasis in the depths of the city – an anima-phage of terrible potency that rendered men into creatures of rage and hunger, bereft of all reason and memory. Sealed within their sable battle plate the Raven Guard suffered little ill-effect, but the ordinary citizens of Zenith-312 and the soldiers of the Imperial Army were reduced to a frothing, mindless horde that numbered in the tens of thousands. Immediately, the Raven Guard found themselves under assault from all sides by the clawing mass of stricken humanity. Within minutes many had exhausted their supplies of ammunition and had to hack a path onwards with combat blades and gore-slick chainswords. In the hours that followed, the Raven Guard were forced to slaughter the maddened population of Zenith-312 and the men who had stood as their allies for so long, granting them the mercy of death as the Legion swept the void-city clean.

In the aftermath of the fighting, it was discovered that the Arch-Comptroller Agarth had used the massacre of his own people to shroud the escape of his personal shuttle, carrying a cadre of loyal servants and Zenith-Guard. This news is said to have incensed Lord Corax and many of the usually stoic Raven Guard, recalling the brutal methods of the Kivahran overlords who had once held Deliverance in their thrall, and the Raven Lord swore to bring the Arch-Comptroller to account for his actions. The Raven Guard abandoned the prosecution of Carinae's conquest, and focussed all of its efforts into locating the escaped Arch-Comptroller. Through the efforts of ebon-hulled scout cruisers and daring raids by Raven Guard reconnaissance squads, the object of their wrath was tracked to a remote outpost drifting in the outer reaches of the star's corona. Deep within the armoured station, its

SHADOW KILLERS

Amongst the Raven Guard and the XIXth Legion that preceded them, there was a tendency amongst combat veterans placed in situations of extreme stress to forsake all pretence of self-preservation, fighting with a terrifying silent determination and the sole aim of causing as many casualties and as much destruction as possible before succumbing to their foe. This strange blood-soaked ennui, that drove many amongst the Raven Guard to sacrifice themselves in battle, was known among the Terran XIXth Legion as becoming 'Ash Blind', while the Raven Guard of Deliverance knew it as the 'Sable Brand', a condition heralded by the darkening of the entire eye to black. Those warriors who survived their suicidal furies sometimes recovered, their brethren never mentioning the incident in a typically Raven Guard display of reticence, but more often were evermore plagued in combat by the urge to slay until death took them, paying no heed to tactical plans.

The XIXth Legion, in the days before Corax's return, made little attempt to organise the Ash Blind on the battlefield, relying on the flexible nature of their tactical doctrines to make the maximum use of their suicidal urges when they took hold. The Raven Lord turned this aberrant effect of his gene-seed into a valuable weapon in his tactical arsenal, forming those afflicted by the Sable Brand into units of Shadow Killers and employing them as shock assault troops and assassins. It was the employment of such troops that allowed Corax to best his brother Guilliman in several simulated battles, an unexpected tactic that the lord of the Ultramarines was quick to adopt into the Legion's Astartes order of battle, creating the Moritat as it is known today amongst the Legion's Astartes.

hull glowing red as complex thermal vanes struggled to disperse the corona's heat, the Arch-Comptroller believed himself safe from Corax's vengeance, protected by his haven's battalion of heavily armed Zenith-Guard and the sun's deadly radiation.

With the Raven Guard's larger troop transports unable to pass through the corona to reach the station, the Legion turned to its numerous Moritat kill cadres. Ever a Legion known for its grim and solitary nature, the Raven Guard suffered from a peculiar predilection towards the Moritat's role as assassin and bringer of vengeance, and numbered many such warriors amongst its ranks. Near thirty of these ominous killers were assembled aboard the assault cruiser *Tenebrous*, embarked upon specially modified assault torpedoes and charged with bringing vengeance to Arch-Comptroller Agarth.

Passing through the corona at speed, only a few of the torpedoes launched succumbed to the intense heat, their metal skin melting like wax as their shielding failed, whilst those that remained slammed into the hull of the unnamed station to release their grim cargo. The Moritats quickly moved to the offensive, slaughtering Zenith-Guard platoons sent to investigate the hull breaches and, dispersing across the station, their progress was marked by the staccato echo of gunfire and the screams of the dying. The Moritat killers spared no one as they secured their objectives, slaughtering Zenith-

Guard, crewmen and those of Zenith-312's dignitaries who had fled with Agarth without mercy, and in under an hour had disabled the enginarium, augurs and primary shielding of the station, leaving a bloody trail of corpses in their wake. Making no attempt to reach the Arch-Comptroller as his haven floundered and began to fall into the sun, the surviving eighteen Moritat stormed the hangar bay where most of the station's surviving defenders had fled, bolt pistols blazing, and destroyed all the remaining transports save one, which they used in their evacuation to the *Tenebrous*.

It is said that the station took over four hours to fully break up as the sun's fiery embrace blistered and seared through the hull plating, and that Corvus Corax stood and listened for all four as Arch-Comptroller Agarth raged, blustered and finally pleaded over open vox channels, only leaving when the station's molten collapse cut off his final screams. The Raven Guard had avenged those sacrificed by the tyrant of Zenith-312, but in doing so had granted the remainder of Carinae's defenders time to consolidate their defence and without their support the Imperial Army and Crusade fleet assets had suffered badly as they had attempted to hold the line. The Carinae Campaign, which should have been swift and painless for the expanding Imperium, would rumble on for almost another seven months and would cost many thousands of lives as the price for the XIXth Legion's need for retribution.



LEGIO FUREANS

Title: The Legio Fureans Ordo Titanicus

Militaris Grade: Secundus

Patent: Pre-Unification, Incaladine Mechanicum

Warden Domain: Incaladion (Forge World)

Cognomen: The Tiger Eyes

Allied War Houses: None known

Allegiance: Traitoris Perdita

A Titan Legion with a well-earned reputation for ferocity and unpredictability, the Legio Fureans nevertheless amassed a war record of the highest distinction in the battles of the Great Crusade. It was this triumphant history and many martial plaudits that caused the more disquieting rumours that surrounded the Legio and its practises to be overlooked and ignored. Many of these unpursued reports pointed to occult and shamanistic beliefs held by the Legio's members which, if accurately portrayed, would be contrary to both the Imperial Truth and the orthodoxy of the Machine Cult of Mars. With the clarity of hindsight, it can now be judged just what corruption such hidden rites and twisted mores left the Legio Fureans open to, and what darkness had always festered in its heart.

The Legio Fureans owed its genesis and its destiny to the Forge World of Incaladion and the unceasing cycle of war, strife and invasion that had wracked it before it was liberated by the forces of the Great Crusade. Founded by a Mechanicum Sleeper-Ark during the Age of Strife on a world rich with an abundance of rare mineral resources as well as the necessary organic compounds for sustaining a biosphere, Incaladion ought to have offered a perfect locale to found a Forge World, but the same stable Warp-currents that had succeeded in carrying the Mechanicum to the world were, as time progressed, to bring a host of less welcome voyagers. Records of its founding centuries remain fragmentary, but it seems certain that alongside the vast works of macro-construction and geo-forming the

Mechanicum colonists undertook, conflict and battle against a host of invaders were nearly constant. As a result the Incaladine Mechanicum, separated by vast distance from Mars, evolved into a distinctive and highly warlike faction, and one that was seldom united as individual forge-fanes often had to look to their own defence and survival unaided. Waves of xenos invasion spurred unusual avenues of technological development and the creation of vast fortified citadels which dominated and defended the richest mineral seams and algae-rich seas, while hidden forge-fanes were sunk kilometres beneath the planet's crust. The Incaladine also adapted to the need to acquire additional human stock by raiding the feral populations of nearby inhabited worlds, whose inclusion brought echoes of barbarous and macabre cultures that began to infect the increasingly schismatic Machine Cult propagated by the Incaladine Mechanicum.

Throughout this long and savage history, the Legio Fureans formed the principal military force of Incaladion's ruling Archmagos, the Preceptor-General and the avatar of her will. No resource was spared in the Titan Legion's maintenance, and where possible due to lulls in the fighting, the expansion of its fighting strength. Their more common cognomen the 'Tiger Eyes' also stems from this early period as a corruption of the name given to them by the feral tribes of the nearby world of Humardu, to whom the Titans truly were divine and terrible beings come to reap a sacrifice of the young and the strong to serve in the palaces of the gods.

Unlike some garrisoning Titan Legions before the Great Crusade, the Legio Fureans did not stand vigil for long years between battles, or serve as enforcers for petty empires of the Machine God's servants, but rather fought an unceasing war against a host of foes. For centuries the Legio Fureans unleashed their wrath against invading hordes of Ork marauders and the spiteful raids of Yldari corsairs, scavenging Tarellian war-packs and the colossal viscid horrors of meteor-brought Carnoplasm infestations

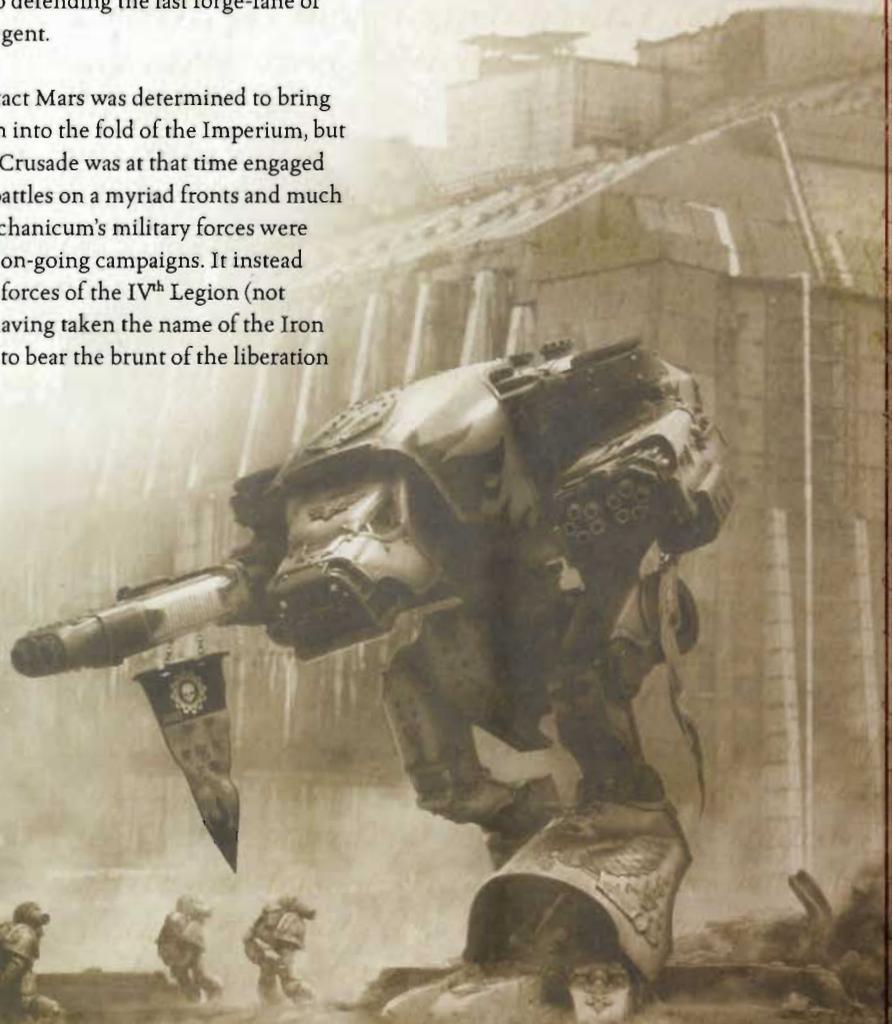
from the Abyssal Reefs. Such ceaseless conflicts took their toll however, both on Incaladion itself and the Legio Fureans who defended it.

Around fifty years before the Great Crusade would finally reach Incaladion, after a particularly brutal series of incursions and raids, the Taghmata Ommissium —the feudal order upon which the defence and military hierarchy of a Forge World of the Mechanicum is based— finally broke down. In the ensuing strife the Preceptor-General of Incaladion was assassinated and the Forge World split into warring or isolationist factions, bereft of central control or co-ordination, laying it open to invasion and the devastation which followed. By the time the Great Crusade's advance elements reached Incaladion it was a global battleground, disported by a dozen different armies; Mechanicum, renegade and xenos unleashing atomic fire and yet more savage weapons upon each other. During this time, overwhelmed and vastly outnumbered, the Tiger Eyes refused to retreat or retrench, and shattered its blade on foes uncounted until it became only a shadow of its former might, reduced to defending the last forge-fane of its dead regent.

After contact Mars was determined to bring Incaladion into the fold of the Imperium, but the Great Crusade was at that time engaged in major battles on a myriad fronts and much of the Mechanicum's military forces were tied up in on-going campaigns. It instead fell to the forces of the IVth Legion (not then yet having taken the name of the Iron Warriors) to bear the brunt of the liberation

campaign, with such supporting elements of the Legio Mortis and Martian Skitarii and Secutarii forces as could be spared to aid it. The resulting campaign was to prove the bloodiest in the IVth Legion's history to that point, but after two years of gruelling warfare Incaladion joined the Imperium.

In the aftermath, the lost forges and fortress-citadels were quickly reclaimed and repaired by the now ruling Imperium-backed Mechanicum faction. Warship squadrons, now permanently based in the Incaladion system, gave the Forge World respite from attack for the first time and the vast mineral wealth and production capacity of the planet was quickly put into action to fuel the ever-expanding Great Crusade. Oaths of loyalty and debts of blood to the liberators were affirmed, although in this Mars and the Legio Mortis were judged by the Incaladine Mechanicum to be their saviours, rather than the IVth Legion who had expended so many lives in the war. As a key part of repaying this debt, the Legio Fureans was quickly



reconstituted and rearmed, with the deep Titan-forges beneath the planet's surface put to continuous operation to fuel a second birth for the Titan Legion. Travelling beyond Incaladion, the Legio Fureans pursued conflict with an aggressive fervour and tempo of battle seldom matched by any other Titan Legion of the period, splitting their forces into demi-legios and strike groups operating alongside numerous Expeditionary fleets and extermination forces.

Throughout this period, aside from an abiding alliance with the Legio Mortis, they cultivated neither friendship nor overt feud with the rest of the Collegia Titanica, many of which came to regard them nevertheless as unpredictable and primitivistic. Feeding into this reputation, the Tiger Eyes were well-reputed for their disdain of sustained bombardments or other 'stand-off tactics',

preferring instead mobile, close range fire-fights, melee combat, rapid flanking attacks and, when confronting superior forces, hit-and-run tactics carried out at the very limits of the reactor capacity of their Titans to maintain. It is said that some Tiger Eyes princeps were willing to disengage or reduce their void shields in order to gain extra speed to employ these tactics; something that would be a complete anathema to the standard practices of the Collegia Titanica.

One demonstration of this willingness to do battle in any theatre by the Legio Fureans was that they allowed even single Titans and their support groups to be split from their central command and attached for periods of solo deployment, an action that many Titan Legions would simply not have countenanced. This wide-ranging deployment pattern and the generations

of warfare on Incaladion made the Legio Fureans one of the most battle-hardened and adaptable of the Titan Legions and contributed to their enviable reputation. However, willingness to do battle, even against staggering odds, and willingness to follow orders from outside the Mechanicum or indeed to follow ordained strategies, proved not to be one and the same as far as the Tiger Eyes were concerned, as many theatre-commanders found to their dismay. Rumours also ran rife of strange pre- and post-battle rituals conducted by their Titan princeps and their crews—like some macabre mixture of Omnissian machine-rites and the savage totemic rituals of a feral animal cult. But given the invaluable battlefield work of the Tiger Eyes and the rank unfamiliarity of most observers with the inner workings of the Mechanicum, many such rumours were dismissed or deliberately ignored.



When the wars of the Horus Heresy broke out, it was revealed immediately that the Legio Fureans had sided with the Warmaster, as did both the Fabricator-General of Mars and the Legio Mortis. It is clear in hindsight in fact that the Legio knew of the planned treachery beforehand and were a key and willing part of the Warmaster's early battle plans and deployments from the start, such as the dispatch of a demi-legio of the Tiger Eyes to the Paramar assault force before blood had yet been spilt on Isstvan V. Quickly too would the darker rites of the Legio blossom into the twisted arcana of what would become known as the Dark Mechanicum in later years. Incaladion conversely, through declaring for the Traitors' cause fell quickly into a bloody civil war of its own, the absence of the Legio having stripped its new Preceptor-General's principal agency of overmatching power against his rivals.

MATÉRIEL STRENGTH

Divisio Militaris records extant for the latter years of the Great Crusade rated the Legio Fureans as a fully operational Titan Legion of the second rank. The Legio was rated with an estimated 110-140 God-Machines in active service at the time of the outbreak of the Horus Heresy. However, this may have underestimated the number of Titans in service with the Legio, which may have ranked as high as 170 of various classes and types. The principal strength of the Tiger Eyes was split between two divergent classes: the Mars pattern Warlord and the Mars pattern Warhound, both of which, given sufficient time and resource, the Titan-forges of Incaladion were capable of independently producing. The Titan engines of the Legio Fureans, perhaps because of the unique arts of the Magos of Incaladion, were always regarded as possessing strangely bestial

machine-spirits, alien from those of other Legios, but still within the sanctified rites of the Mechanicum. During the later Great Crusade, mid-range Battle Titans such as the Reaver and Carnivore were added in small numbers to expand the Legio's order of battle and strategic reach while it was also known to favour the use of an idiosyncratic light-intermediate sub-pattern developed locally on Incaladion known as the Reviler. This pattern was designed to operate principally as a mobile Inferno cannon platform and replaced the use of the heavier Knight classes in the Legion's core of retainers.

In terms of the heaviest Titan units, it is not believed the Legio Fureans possessed any Emperor class Titans or their analogues, although it did utilise at least five adapted 'Deathbringer' Warlords, which served as the Legio's heaviest assault units.





The Mars Pattern Reaver class Battle Titan
"Leyaka Rakis"

WAR MANIPLE DEVASTRA IX

TRAITORIS PERDITA LEGIO FUREANS

ADVANCE ON STATION TERTIUS, BATTLE OF PARAMAR V



Leyaka Varr



Banner of Princeps Majoris Anjana



Khava



Rahu



Kill banner of Reaver class Battle Titan
'Leyaka Varr', melta cannon
(Moderatus Karali ++deceased++)

War Maniple Devastra IX was the first unit of the Legio Fureans to be equipped with Reaver class Battle Titans, the princeps of the Leyaka Rakis and Leyaka Varr pioneering a range of unique manoeuvres that made novel use of the class's characteristics. These tactics were of particular use against the Loyalists on Paramar V, the two princeps and their crews accounting for three confirmed Battle Titan kills between them.



LEGIO GRYPHONICUS

Title: The Legio Gryphonicus Ordo Titanicus

Militaris Grade: Primus

Patent: Pre-Imperial, Martian Mechanicum

Warden Domains: Gryphonne IV (Forge World), the Gryphonne Octad, Paramar, Silusis Lex, Yana VI.

Cognomen: The War Griffons

Allied War Houses: Coldshroud, Fvaber & Cadmus

Allegiance: Fedelitas Constantus

Regarded by many as one of the greatest of all Titan Legions and an exemplar of its kind, the Legio Gryphonicus or 'War Griffons' to give them their more common appellation, was to suffer a trial by fire during the dark days of the Horus Heresy and remain true to their oaths to the Imperium and unwavering in battle against the Traitors.

Gryphonne IV, the world of the Legio's founding, was known to have been a seat of technological might according to ancient myths predating the Age of Strife, and so formed one of the earliest attempts of the Martian Mechanicum to reach out into the darkness during the Age of Strife. While many such missions resulted in failure, doomed before the Emperor's intervention in the creation of the Navis Nobilite, and many of the Mechanicum Arks

were sundered or lost without trace, the expedition to Gryphonne IV met with great success. This was likely a process of conquest over what local inhabitants remained rather than colonisation on the Mechanicum's part, although the truth of this matter has long since been sealed and forgotten by the Imperium.

What is known is that after the founding of the Forge World of Gryphonne IV it quickly established itself as a power in its own right, expanding to dominate a pocket empire of eight nearby star systems which came to be known as the Gryphonne Octad. Over the centuries that followed, the Mechanicum domain prospered and managed to maintain communication, albeit infrequent and fragmented, with distant Mars. Swearing its domains and arms to the service of the

Great Crusade, Gryphonne marched to war at the Emperor's call, and would see its Titan Legion, one of the largest and most ably equipped outside Mars, see immediate action on many battlefronts. Having extensive experience and proven tactical doctrines in fighting alongside the infantry forces of the Gryphonne Octad, the Legio Gryphonicus quickly gained a reputation for skill in close support of ground troops, and so was much in demand for assignment to the various Expeditionary fleets. The Legio however was loath to split its forces unduly on deployment, and instead served generally as an independent heavy contingent, assigned to various war zones as strategic needs demanded it. This in turn led to the Legio Gryphonicus amassing battle honours alongside the Dark Angels, Imperial Fists and Death Guard Legiones Astartes at various times, and their inclusion in the order of battle for some of the most famous and vital campaigns of the Great Crusade, such as the Rangdan Genocide and the Ullanor Campaign.

The martial culture of the War Griffons was one of fierce pride and honour. They valued discipline and skill amongst their Titan crew highly, and each Princeps and Moderati strove to add glory to their own name and that of their bloodline and Legio, much in the manner of their kin in the Knight Houses. Each Titan of the Legio Gryphonicus in consequence became noted as being a visual testament to the war engine's own history of war, as well as the distinctions and battle honours earned by its crew. So it was that when the War Griffons went striding to war, thunderous sirens howling and bedecked in heraldic banners proclaiming their might, it was taken as a sign to rejoice by the Imperialis Auxillia, who held the Legio's arrival as an avatar of victory or salvation in the midst of battle.

This lust for glory and individual achievement within the Legio's ranks did, however, lead to legendary rivalries among its Princeps, and highly structured mechanisms were imposed for resolving such affairs of honour through duelling, a tradition which was held in abeyance however during open battle. Such martial temper also led for some of its commanders — particularly those assigned to God-Engines such as the Warhounds already noted for their aggressive animus — to develop reputations for impetuosity in battle, and refusal to retreat even when faced with the most overwhelming odds. Key also to their character was a fanatical

loyalty to the Emperor and the ideals of the Imperium, beyond that even to their ties to the Mechanicum. It was this loyalty that was to count them among the Warmaster's foes without question when he turned traitor.

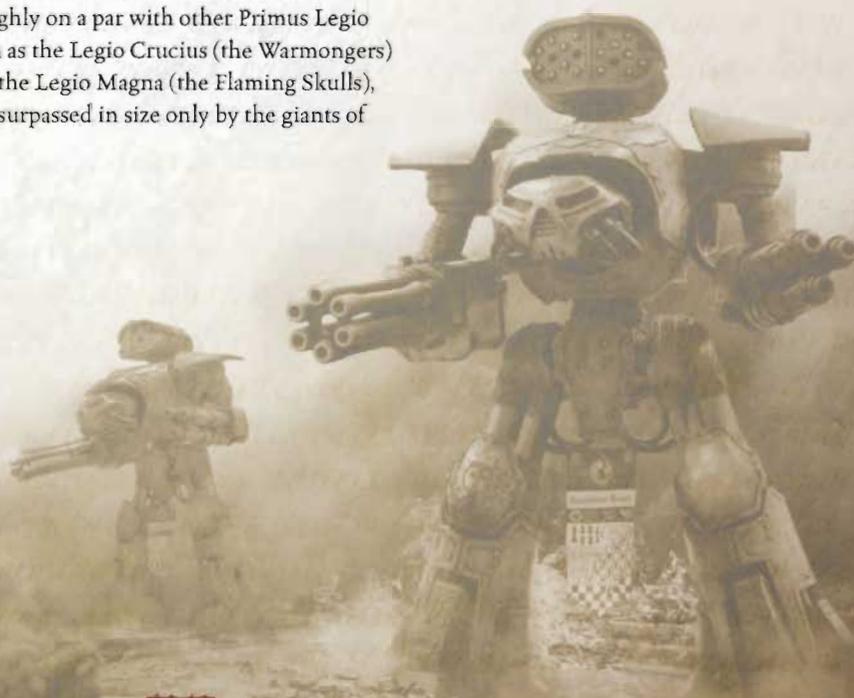
As the Great Crusade progressed into its later phases, the success of the Legio Gryphonicus on campaign, in conjunction with its size, led to it being assigned feudal rights as garrison-warders of a number of Mechanicum outposts and stations dispersed across the Imperium. This served to both extend the Legio Gryphonicus' range and striking distance from its home base on Gryphonne IV (with which it always retained close ties) and finally to splinter its fighting force into several sub-groups rather than the 'sledgehammer' concentration of might it had been used to operating as. It remains unclear in retrospect whether this was a mere happenstance of fate or perhaps whether it was part of the Warmaster's overall plan to scatter major forces he could not directly control prior to his revolt. Regardless of this, when the Horus Heresy bloodily erupted, this powerful Titan Legion was a scattered force and unable to respond as a coherent force against the rebellion. The tides of war would ensure that it would be the dark years of the Scouring before the surviving Titans of the Legio Gryphonicus would gather together again upon their ancient mustering grounds at the Plain of Achemados on the Forge World of their founding.

Matériel Strength

As a Primus grade Titan Legion, the War Griffons were one of the most powerful military formations in the Legio Titanicus, and therefore the Great Crusade itself. Roughly on a par with other Primus Legio such as the Legio Crucius (the Warmongers) and the Legio Magna (the Flaming Skulls), and surpassed in size only by the giants of

the Legio Mortis (the Death's Heads) and the Legio Destructor (the Beasts of Steel). The Legio Gryphonicus' operational strength at the time of the Horus Heresy's outbreak is attested to stand at 176 God-Engines of various classes and patterns, with roughly half of these being of the Reaver type battle Titan. The remainder being split roughly between various Scout patterns and larger Warlord pattern battle Titans, as well as several of the most powerful Nemesis and Imperator types.

The War Griffons Auxillia was also noted for its size and power, comprising six dedicated Legio Cybernetica cohorts and four battalions of specialised Skitarii support regiments. These regiments were noted for the use of standard formation STC pattern armour and vehicles rather than the more specialised and unique war machines commonly favoured by tech-guard militia forces—this unusual feature of panoply being accounted for by direct supply of these battalions from Gryphonne IV's mass-manufactura, and also by the traditions of the Gryphonne Octad's defence forces. The Legio Gryphonicus also possessed a noteworthy and unusually high number of Titan-Barques and Mass-Conveyors operating under its own fealty and allegiance. This substantial fleet rendered it largely independent of operation when the need arose, as would serve it well during the war of the Heresy, enabling a degree of vital mobility and speed of action so it could both survive and engage the foe on its own terms.





The Mars Pattern Reaver class Battle Titan
"Dominatus Revok"

WAR MANIPLE "HERALD IMPERATOR"

THE DIVISIO MILITARIS OF THE LEGIO ATARUS
 COLLEGIA TITANICUS
 DEPLOYED TO THE DEFENCE OF PARAMAR V



Paladin Argentus



Victory banner and personal standard of Princeps Seniores of the Paladin Argentus



Gladius Lucida



Celaritas Rex



Kill banner of the Dominatus Revok

War maniple "Herald Emperor" was stationed at the Paramar Nexus landing fields at the time of the 1st Battle of Paramar. The Titans had all undergone extensive repairs following damage sustained in battle against apex-grade xenos entities in the Golgothan Wastes, and the maniple had only been declared fit for active service mere days before the Alpha Legion attack. All were to fall in glory against the Traitor Tiger Eyes, the names of Titans, Princeps and Moderati alike carved into the brazen Wall of Honour on their distant home Forge World.



THE VICTORY IS VENGEANCE CAMPAIGN & BLOOD IN THE VOID EXPANSION

The following section enables players to re-fight two of the key conflicts described in this book on their tabletop battlefields. The first recreates the Raven Guard Legion's bloody ninety-eight day battle for survival and retribution on the blasted surface of Isstvan V. The second is an expansion for the Zone Mortalis rules found in *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*, focusing on star ship boarding actions such as those fought between the Imperial Fists Legion and the Iron Warriors Legion during the Battle of Phall.

THE VICTORY IS VENGEANCE CAMPAIGN

VICTORY IS VENGEANCE

The blood-darkened dust fields of the Urgall Depression are littered with the bodies of those who would not bend the knee to Horus. In the void above Isstvan V, his fleets have driven off or destroyed all Imperial spacecraft, those that could not escape burn in decaying orbits, raining debris down upon the survivors. For those Loyalists who remain on Isstvan V there can be no escape, no heroic stand against the arch-Traitor – for Horus has departed to take his war to the Imperium at large, leaving behind a horde of his followers to hound the survivors of the Dropsite Massacre to an ignominious and forgotten death. For those abandoned on Isstvan V, the only victory they can claim is in vengeance extracted from those they once called brother, in blood and death.

HOW THE VICTORY IS VENGEANCE CAMPAIGN WORKS

The Victory is Vengeance campaign is played between two sides, one representing the Traitor forces unleashed by Horus to hunt down and exterminate any survivors of the Dropsite Massacre, and the other those scattered bands of Loyalists desperately trying to survive and harry their betrayers. Each game played awards the winning side a number of Campaign points, which are applied to the overall Campaign score during each Interval – adding to it in the case of Loyalist victories, while Traitor victories reduce it.

The Loyalists must reach a set Campaign goal before the campaign reaches an appointed end in order to claim victory; if they cannot, then the followers of Horus are victorious.

This campaign structure is intended to mirror the desperate struggles of the outnumbered and outmatched survivors of the Loyalist Legions. Isolated by their enemies, they know that it is only a matter of time before they are crushed underfoot. With no hope of escape, their only victory is to inflict such hurt upon the foe that their eventual death is a hollow victory for the Traitors. The Campaign points acquired by the players represent this; marking vital supplies lost, munitions destroyed and personnel badly needed by the Warmaster as he prosecutes his rebellion on the vast battlefields of the Imperium. Each successful strike by the Loyalists trapped on Isstvan V is another wrinkle in Horus' immaculate plans. That is their vengeance and their victory.

Survivors & Exterminators

Note that throughout this section we refer to 'Survivors' and 'Exterminators'. These two terms are used to indicate the two sides involved in the conflict, without implying that one side or the other must be represented by any particular faction from the established Horus Heresy background. Should your campaign represent an alternative version of the Horus Heresy, where the Traitors lost the battle at the Dropsite Massacre, the Traitors would then become the Survivors – or you might use the rules here in an entirely different setting, using any forces appropriate to your campaign as the Survivors or Exterminators.

PLAYING THE VICTORY IS VENGEANCE CAMPAIGN

The Victory is Vengeance campaign is essentially a series of games played up to a pre-set date, with the two sides attempting to either increase or decrease the total

Campaign points in order to win. As Campaign points are gained or lost, certain Iconic missions will become available, allowing one side or the other to consolidate an advantage or to stage a comeback from near certain defeat, as well as charting the story of the fighting in the aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre.

Each game won will affect the overall Campaign score, Exterminators victories will reduce it and Survivors victories will increase it. In order to simplify the running of the campaign, the Campaign score is updated only at a set 'Interval', gathering together all the Campaign points won or lost by all players since the last Interval, updating the score as appropriate, and checking for a Survivors victory.

The Victory is Vengeance campaign is won or lost under two circumstances. If the Survivors reach a set Campaign score (see Winning the Campaign) then they claim victory immediately, ending the campaign. However, if the campaign reaches its end date without this Campaign score having been reached, the traitorous Exterminators are victorious.

Intervals and Campaign Duration

Before beginning a Victory is Vengeance campaign, the Campaign organiser should decide upon the campaign's duration and an appropriate Interval. The Campaign duration is the total time over which games may be played, and once it has been reached, the campaign ends – depending on the group's preferences, the duration could be anything from a single afternoon to a period of months. Select a duration which fits the commitment and availability of all the players involved, allowing the opportunity for each to play a decent number of games.

The Interval is a point at which the total Campaign points gained since the last Interval is totalled and applied to the Campaign score, showing the progress of the two sides towards their overall goal. As a basic standard, the campaign's duration should be divided into six Intervals at appropriate points, with the overall Campaign score totalled by the organiser at each Interval by adding the scores accumulated by all players up to that point.

The Interval used can easily be varied in order to accommodate the style and

Historical Accuracy

The Imperium's history records that only certain Legions fought in the black wastes of Isstvan V, while others were mired in far distant war zones, unaware of the struggles of their brothers. Before beginning your campaign, it may be wise to decide upon how strictly you wish to enforce such restrictions on the Strike Forces assembled by players in the campaign. These rules are presented with the assumption that only the Legions described as having been involved in the fighting on Isstvan V are present in the players' forces, although it makes no assumptions on their loyalties, allowing players to incorporate Loyalist Iron Warriors or Traitor Raven Guard in their forces as desired.

As an alternative to the established events, you may wish to play through an alternative version of the events at the Dropsite Massacre – perhaps based upon the results of your own Dropsite Massacre campaign as detailed in *The Horus Heresy Book Two – Massacre*. You might even wish to use these rules to represent entirely different stories from the Horus Heresy and beyond. Such an effort will likely require an amount of modification that is outside the scope of these rules, but may provide a worthwhile alternative for some groups.



frequency of play that a gaming group prefers. For example, in smaller campaigns where there are only a few players, it may be easiest to simply total the Campaign score after each game is played (effectively setting the Interval to one game). While in larger clubs that meet regularly for a single evening, setting the Interval to at the end of each meeting of the club may be more applicable, or for groups composed of players who meet irregularly at each other's homes, it may be easier to set the Interval for the Friday of each week until the end of the campaign.

Remember that the Interval is intended to allow games to be played without the need to constantly update the overall Campaign score, which would be impractical if playing games as part of a large group or in disparate locations, and keeps bookkeeping to a minimum. Even with this in mind a single person, whether one of the players or not, should be appointed to update the Campaign score at each Interval and circulate the result around the players involved in the campaign.

Campaign Points

These are acquired by defeating another player in any of the Victory is Vengeance missions, although some will grant a higher reward in Campaign points than others.

Campaign points acquired by Survivors Strike Forces are applied to the Campaign score as a positive modifier at each Interval and Campaign points acquired by Exterminators Strike Forces are applied as negative modifiers.

Winning the Campaign

The Campaign score begins at zero, and can become a negative value due to the effect of Exterminators Strike Forces victories. In order to claim victory in the campaign, the Survivors Strike Forces must raise the Campaign score to a value equal to or greater than the total number of players multiplied by three. Once the Campaign score reaches this value, the campaign ends at that Interval as a Survivors victory. If the Campaign duration plays out without that value being reached, the campaign ends as an Exterminators victory.

For example, if four people are playing a Victory is Vengeance campaign, and have set the Campaign duration as one month, the campaign will end either when the Survivors win by raising the Campaign score to +12 (3 x 4 [the number of players]). If the end of the month arrives and the required Campaign score has not been reached, it is an Exterminators victory.

The Tactical Strike Ruleset

Unlike previous Horus Heresy campaigns, the Victory is Vengeance campaign utilises the Tactical Strike rules for the majority of its games to represent the fast-paced strikes that constituted the majority of the fighting in the Uragall Wastes. The Tactical Strike rules allow players to build varied and highly adaptable Strike Forces from the Space Marine Legion Crusade Army list, including a single hero who will accumulate both tactical skills as well as battle scars during the fighting. Details of the Tactical Strike rules as well as how to assemble a Strike Force can be found later in this section.

While it is possible to play the campaign using the standard Warhammer 40,000 rules instead of the Tactical Strike rules, many of the missions used during the campaign are specifically designed to work with the Tactical Strike rules and should be replaced by the Eternal War missions in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

Mission Selection

As well as determining overall victory in the campaign, the Campaign score also determines which missions are available to the players as the balance of power shifts between the two embittered factions.

When arranging a game, the players that are involved should note the current Campaign score and select one of the missions available at the current score, as shown in each mission description (see page 178 for further details).

Playing Missions

Once a mission appropriate to the current Campaign score has been selected, players must then select troops to use as their Strike Force for that game (see the Strike Force rules on page 169) and complete the mission using the rules presented in the Victory is Vengeance Missions section.

Adapting the Campaign

At its most basic, the Victory is Vengeance campaign can be played with as few as two players, each with a Strike Force assembled using the Tactical Strike rules. The campaign can also easily accommodate much larger groups by varying the Interval, Campaign duration and the Campaign score required to win to allow all players to play an appropriate number of games.

The campaign can also be conducted over the course of a single extended play session – setting the Interval to a single game (thus calculating a new Campaign score after each game), and the Campaign duration to match the end of your group's available gaming time. In fact, the compact nature of a Strike Force and the fast paced game play encouraged by the Tactical Strike rules encourages this kind of rapid fire play. In smaller campaigns, it may be useful to reduce the Campaign score required to win.

It is equally possible to play the campaign over the course of a month or longer by simply increasing the Interval and setting an appropriate Campaign duration for the scale of play your group desires. A longer campaign will obviously require a greater level of commitment from the players, and may require more resources in the form of scenery or other gaming aids depending on the size of the group involved. Larger campaigns can also be played across a number of smaller groups, with all the separate groups' results collected at each Interval and modifying the combined Campaign score appropriately.

With larger groups, it will be beneficial to appoint one player to gather and record the Campaign points totals at each Interval, and to oversee the accumulation and expenditure of Supply points in an impartial manner, especially if members of your gaming group are unable to meet up all at the same time. Campaigns played on such a grand scale require more effort and commitment from players, but are justly memorable gaming events.

Once the mission has been completed, players should make a note of any Campaign points gained for their side. When the next Interval occurs, as set by the Campaign organiser, the number of Campaign points recorded is totalled for each side, and the Exterminators total applied as a negative modifier to the Survivors total. The resulting number is added (or subtracted if negative) to the current Campaign score. After each Interval, all players should erase any Campaign points recorded and begin a new total in the run-up to the next Interval. This also helps to ease bookkeeping.

For example, four people are playing a Victory is Vengeance campaign, and at the last Interval the Campaign score was +5. Having reached a new Interval, the players total each side's score, with the Exterminators having accrued 6 Campaign points and the Survivors only 2 Campaign points. Subtracting the Exterminators' total from the Survivors' results in a value of -4, which is applied to the overall Campaign score and sets it at +1 until the next Interval is reached.



STRIKE FORCES

Each player will be representing either the scattered forces of the loyal Legions, hereafter referred to as a Survivors Strike Force, or the merciless bloodhounds of Horus and his allies, known as the Exterminators Strike Force.

STRIKE FORCE STRUCTURE

Heroes, Leaders and Troops

The focus of the campaign is on commando-style raids, head-hunter missions and precise strikes against key enemy targets made by units assembled from those Space Marines still on Istitvan V; those who either cannot escape the planet or who have been assigned to the grim clean-up operation by their Primarchs and left behind. As such, it requires a slightly different approach than a standard Warhammer 40,000 campaign as instead of selecting an army to a set points value before each game using the Force Organisation chart, each player involved in the campaign has a selection of character models that they will use in each game. These characters represent those Space Marines who have taken it upon themselves to lead their Legion through these dark times, and are a permanent addition to the player's forces for the campaign, gaining in tactical acumen and battle scars as the fighting progresses. In addition to these leaders and heroes, the players will also field a selection of individual Space Marines, rather than full squads, chosen from the Legiones Astartes army list to represent the scattered forces assembled by their heroes for each individual mission.

Resources

To represent the scarce resources and lack of a structured supply chain and support arm, players will also need to keep track of several other values as they progress through the Victory is Vengeance campaign. Each Strike Force is rated according to the availability of three Resources to its members. These Resources are Ammunition, Armour and

Personnel, and are rated in five categories, from Abundant to Non-existent.

Each category in each Resource offers either a penalty or benefit to a Strike Force, and over the course of the campaign a Strike Force's grade in each will likely fluctuate wildly. Supply points gained by playing games will allow them to be raised to higher grades, and after each game, Supply points will need to be spent in order to maintain the level at which a Strike Force's Resources currently stand – or they will drop to the next lowest level. Over the course of any Victory is Vengeance campaign, management of these Resources will be a key part in the success of any Strike Force.

Supply Points

A Strike Force's pool of Supply points represents valuable battlefield salvage, hard-won intelligence on enemy movements and hidden supply caches, as well as contacts with other divisions of friendly troops engaged in their own battles. A Strike Force's Supply point pool begins the campaign at zero. Supply points have several uses in the Victory is Vengeance campaign:

- They are used to maintain or increase a Strike Force's grade in a given Resource (ie, Ammunition, Armour or Personnel).
- They can be used to purchase new wargear inbetween games for Heroes and Leaders, using the unit profile they were originally bought from.
- They can be used to buy additional Leaders for a Strike Force, purchasing them in exactly the same fashion as when creating a Strike Force (see page 170), but paid for using a number of Supply points equal to their points cost.
- They can be used to gain additional points when purchasing troops before a mission. In this case, any number of Supply points can be discarded to buy troops of an equal value for one mission only.

The Action Point Pool

This represents the combined tactical acumen and accumulated intelligence on enemy tactics and strategies of the Strike Force's commander. When a Strike Force is created, this pool begins at a level of 3, representing the ability of the Hero who gathers its members together, and before each mission every Leader included in the Strike Force will add an additional +2 Action points to the pool. In addition, a Hero will add Action points to the pool whenever the Hero accomplishes a set feat, as noted by his Role. Action points are spent during play to gain bonuses to a wide range of dice rolls and tests (see page 170).

Resources Explained

Armour: This resource represents the Strike Force's supply of spare parts, maintenance equipment and available power for recharging the complex systems of a suit of power armour – as well as the specialist knowledge required to undertake repairs and maintain such technology. Without these supplies, the Strike Force's armour will eventually degrade in functionality as servo-motors become clogged with the coarse dust of Istitvan V, or sensorium augurs and vox systems fail due to damage – limiting their ability to manoeuvre and coordinate operations.

Ammunition: This resource represents both stockpiles of shells and power-packs, vital tools in prosecuting any campaign, and also maintenance and repair tools for the complex weapons of war used during the Great Crusade. Without either, a Strike Force's weapons will soon run dry or malfunction on the battlefield.

Personnel: With the ranks of the Loyalists decimated during the Dropsite Massacre, and Horus redirecting his manpower to other, more vital conflicts, both sides find themselves in dire need of trained warriors. In many cases this Resource also represents the difficulty in organising those Legionnaires who are available, with the Survivors hunted and hounded across the wastes in disparate bands and the Exterminators likewise scattered across the surface of Istitvan V hunting down their foes.

CREATING A STRIKE FORCE

In the Victory is Vengeance campaign, a Strike Force can represent either a rag-tag group of Survivors, assembled from those weary Legionnaires who managed to escape the Dropsite Massacre, or a group of traitorous Exterminators assembled from those Legionnaires left behind on Isstvan V by their masters to hunt down any surviving Loyalists. One thing both groups have in common is that these small groups feature an ever-changing cast of warriors as their ranks shift, are crippled by injury or as new fighters become available, and that at their heart are a few individuals with the courage and determination to see the campaign through to its end, and bend their comrades to their will.

Heroes and Leaders

The first step in assembling a Strike Force is to select up to three models to lead the Strike Force. To do so you simply select up to three non-Unique models from the Legiones Astartes army list, or any Legion's supplementary list, up to a total value of 150 points.

A model selected to lead the Strike Force must have the Character type, and may include unit Sergeants and models with the Independent Character special rule (see page 171). Once you have selected up to three models, designate one as the principal character, the Hero (that model gains Lessons of War, Consequences of Failure and Battle Leader, see page 175), and the others as Leaders (gaining the Tactical Insights and Battle Leader special rules, see page 177).

All models may take any wargear listed in their Legion or unit army list entry for the usual points cost. All models not already assigned a Legion specific version of the Legiones Astartes special rule should be assigned one (or at least identified as being from a specific Legion if no rule exists for a given Legion). Note that it is perfectly acceptable to include representatives of multiple Legions within a single Strike Force, this may even include members of Legions that historically were opposed to the side a Strike Force is representing. For example, a Survivors (Loyalists) Strike Force might include a Raven Guard Legion Champion, an Iron Hands Apothecary and a Death Guard Destroyer Sergeant, the latter representing one of the few surviving Loyalist members of his Legion, perhaps rescued from Isstvan III, or horrified by the scale of the betrayal on the fields of the Urgall Depression. Such inclusions are subject to all the rules noted on the Age of Darkness Allies matrix.

Heroes are a permanent addition to your Strike Force and will accumulate experience and skill (in the form of Action points) as the campaign progresses, and when removed as casualties during a game, they will return in later games bearing the scars of their injuries. Leaders are also important members of a Strike Force, the Hero's trusted lieutenants – however once killed, they are gone forever and must be replaced by other fighters.

As a mark of their importance (and to make games more fun!), it is highly recommended that players name their Heroes and Leaders prior to beginning play.



If there are any points left over after the Hero and Leaders have been selected, then divide the total number of leftover points by two (rounding down the result) and add this to your Strike Force's starting Supply points total (see page 172 for further information on Supply points).

In addition to selecting your Heroes and their wargear, a Strike Force's Hero should also be assigned a single Role from the Strike Force Hero Roles list opposite.

Each of these Roles describes how a given Hero acquires Action points during play. These Action points can be spent on Heroes and Leaders during a game in order to gain bonuses to rolls, or to re-roll failed rolls, and after a game to improve attributes.

Rank and File

Before playing any missions, each player will also be able to spend a number of points dictated by their Personnel Resource (see page 172) on other models to complete their

STRIKE FORCE HERO ROLES

Role	Goals
Paragon	Gain 1 Action point at the end of each of the controlling player's Movement phases for each friendly unit which can draw line of sight to the Hero and in which all the models are further from the enemy than this Hero (including his own unit as long as he is the closest model in the unit to the enemy).
Slayer	Gain 1 Action point for each enemy model removed as a casualty due to an attack made by this Hero (this includes any models removed as part of a sweeping advance made by this Hero or his unit).
Strategist	Gain 2 Action points whenever this Hero or another friendly model or unit uses this Hero's Leadership value to pass a Morale check or Pinning test whilst within 6" of him (see the Battle Leader special rule).
Marksman	Gain 1 Action point for each successful To Hit roll made for a Shooting attack.
Martyr	Gain 1 Action point for each hit inflicted on this Hero. In addition, if this Hero is removed as a casualty, gain an additional 3 Action points.
Duellist	Gain 1 Action point for each wound inflicted by this Hero when fighting in close combat (but not including any enemy models removed as part of a sweeping advance).



Strike Force. This represents the warriors that the Strike Force's leaders have brought together in order to accomplish their current objective and may well vary during missions.

Unlike Heroes and Leaders, these troops do not gain in experience or equipment over the course of the campaign, and once removed as casualties, or at the end of any given mission, are gone for good.

These troops may be selected from any unit entry in the Legiones Astartes army list or any Legion's supplementary list, with no restriction on the number of Force Organisations choices made. Non super-heavy vehicles may be chosen, but no model with the Character sub-type or Independent Character special rule may be taken.

When selecting troops, you do not have to select complete units (and for the most part cannot, due to the restriction on models with the Character sub-type). It is perfectly acceptable to select a single model from

a given unit, and models may select any appropriate options listed in their unit entry. Note that restrictions in units where options may only be taken if the unit is composed of a certain number of models are not lifted due to the ability to select individual models.

Dedicated Transports: These may be selected as individual models, do not need to be attached to a given squad, and may transport any friendly unit during play.

In play, each model selected will be treated as an individual unit, though the option for them to temporarily form ad-hoc units of more than one model is included later in the Tactical Strike rules.

A player can spend any number of their Strike Force's Supply points in order to gain an equal number of additional points to spend on troops models for a given mission. Supply points spent in such a manner are a one-off bonus and apply only to a single mission and Strike Force.

Points Costs for Individual Space Marines

When spending points on troops for a Strike Force, use the cost for adding additional models to an existing unit – or in the case of units that do not have this option, divide the total points cost by the number of models in the unit to find a cost 'per model'. In all cases, Sergeants bought as Leaders cost 10 points more than a standard member of the squad.

Some models in the Legiones Astartes Crusade Army list have the Chosen special rule, allowing them to 'count as' Characters. Players may choose whether to treat such models as if they had the Character type, purchasing them as Leaders, Heroes or Troops as desired.

This system will allow you to purchase troops as individual models from the Legiones Astartes Crusade Army list and any addendums or appendix produced for it. Whilst not perfectly balanced, it is clear and relatively simple – allowing the focus to be on fun games rather than exacting balance.

SUPPLY AND RESOURCES

Players will also need to record the running total of Supply points they have accrued and their Resource grade in all three separate categories: Armour, Ammunition and Personnel.

The Supply point pool begins at zero and more points are gained by playing missions, though some Strike Forces may begin play with a small number of Supply points if they have leftover points after buying their Heroes. Supply points may be used to increase a Strike Force's grade in a single Resource, purchase additional troops for a single mission, and for buying new wargear for Heroes.

Resources are the relative levels of supply the Strike Force maintains in the three listed categories, and can vary between five grades, from Non-existent to Abundant. Each grade can apply a benefit or penalty onto all the models of the Strike Force depending on the Resource. A Strike Force lacking in Armour will be plagued by malfunctioning power armour and have its mobility impaired, while one with Abundant Ammunition will

be able to expend its stocks in a profligate manner, increasing its overall firepower, and fluctuations in Personnel will determine the number and type of units a Strike Force has access to during battle.

All Survivors Strike Forces start with:

- **Ammunition & Armour:** Lacking
- **Personnel:** Plentiful

All Exterminators Strike Forces start with:

- **All three Resources:** Plentiful

After each mission, a Strike Force must pay a set number of Supply points based on the current level of a given Resource. If they cannot pay this upkeep cost, the Resources are reduced by one grade. A Strike Force may choose to pay the cost for a higher grade in any given Resource, upgrading their current Resource level to the new higher grade. This may not increase any Resource by more than one grade at a time after any given mission.

For example, a Survivors Strike Force has just completed its latest mission, and currently has a grade of Lacking in all three resources. Having just played a mission, the Strike Force must now pay

a total of 15 Supply points to maintain its current Resource grades (5 points per Resource, each at the Lacking grade). If it does not pay the 5 Supply points cost for any given Resource, it will drop to the Scarce grade immediately.

The Strike Force could also, instead of paying 5 Supply points to maintain any one of its Resources at the Lacking grade, choose to instead pay 10 Supply points for any of the three Resources and increase its grade to Plentiful.

Difficulty and the Victory is Vengeance Campaign

Players wanting an additional level of difficulty can choose to vary the starting grades in any of the given Resources for all Strike Forces of a set side.

For example, having the Survivors start the game with a grade of Scarce in all three Resources will significantly change the initial difficulty level for the Survivors players – evoking a truly apocalyptic feel to the campaign for those brave enough to attempt it.

RESOURCE GRADE TABLE

Grade	Upkeep	Ammo Roll	Personnel	Armour
Abundant	15 Supply points	2+ on a D6	350 points	All models in the Strike Force may re-roll any dice used in a Difficult Terrain test, Initiative tests or Charge rolls.
Plentiful	10 Supply points	3+ on a D6	300 points	No effect.
Lacking	5 Supply points	4+ on a D6	275 points	Models roll an additional D6 for all Run moves, Difficult Terrain tests and Charge moves, and discard the highest rolled dice.
Scarce	1 Supply point	5+ on a D6	250 points	No model in the Strike Force may Run, turbo-boost or perform sweeping advances. They must roll an additional D6 for all Difficult Terrain tests and Charge moves, and discard the highest rolled dice.
Non-existent	0 Supply points	6+ on a D6	200 points	No model may Run, turbo-boost, perform sweeping advances or make Overwatch attacks. They roll an additional D6 for all Difficult Terrain tests or Charge moves, discarding the highest rolled dice, and all models suffer a -1 penalty to Initiative.

TACTICAL STRIKE WARFARE IN THE HORUS HERESY

The Victory is Vengeance campaign uses the Warhammer 40,000 rules, just as standard Age of Darkness games do. It also has some modifications to the basic rules in order to allow players to represent the scale and intensity of the actions fought. When playing either a linked campaign (such as the Victory is Vengeance campaign presented in this section) or a stand-alone game, players should use the following amendments to the standard Warhammer 40,000 rules.

TACTICAL STRIKE SPECIAL RULES

This section lists the various additional rules or modifications to the standard Warhammer 40,000 rules used by the Tactical Strike ruleset. Unless specifically mentioned here, all other rules remain as written in either the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook or the *Forge World Horus Heresy* books.

Strike Force

When playing games using the Tactical Strike ruleset, each model on the battlefield, whether classed as a Hero, Leader or Trooper, is considered a separate unit unto itself, with a starting unit size of one, unless organised as part of an Ad-hoc unit.

Ad-hoc Units

All models included as part of a Strike Force begin the game as separate units. When deployed onto the table, the controlling player may designate groups of models as Ad-hoc units. An Ad-hoc unit may only contain models of the same type (as follows), may not

include more than 10 models, and follows all of the established rules for units as noted in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook. Models that are designated to be part of an Ad-hoc unit may not leave it, or join another unit during the game unless they have the Hero or Leader special rules and do so using the same rules as models with the Independent Character special rule leaving or joining normal units.

Splitting & Merging Ad-hoc Units: When a model with the Leader or Hero special rule leaves an Ad-hoc unit, the controlling player may choose to split that unit, with any number of models leaving the original Ad-hoc unit with the Leader or Hero and forming a new Ad-hoc unit. Models leaving units alongside a Hero or Leader must obey all of the rules stated in the Independent Character special rules for leaving units. In addition, a model with the Hero or Leader special rule that is part of an Ad-hoc unit may merge that unit with another friendly Ad-hoc unit to form a single larger unit, as long as the new unit does not exceed a unit size of 10 models. This is treated as though all of the models in the unit were Independent Characters joining the second unit. Ad-hoc units may not be merged and split in the same turn.

Ad-hoc Unit Composition: Note that whilst units may contain models originally from different unit entries and with different sub-types, it may not contain models with completely different unit types. For example, an Ad-hoc unit may contain a mixture of

Space Marine Legionaries (Infantry), Legion Terminators (Infantry with the Bulky rule) and Space Marine Assault Legionaries (Infantry (Jump Pack)), but may not contain a mixture of Space Marine Legionaries (Infantry) and Space Marine Outriders (Bike).

When an Ad-hoc unit contains models of different sub-types, for example, models of the Infantry and Infantry (Jump Pack) types, then only the rules of the base type are used, and all additional rules of the sub-type may not be used while they are part of the Ad-hoc unit. In the previous example, this would mean that the models with Infantry (Jump Pack) would not be able to use any of the Jump Pack sub-type rules whilst a part of the unit, and would be treated as Infantry models whilst a part of it (note that they would still be individually subject to the Bulky rule).

Eye of the Storm

When playing games using the Tactical Strike ruleset, the standard Morale rules for when to test for Morale do not apply. A given unit takes Morale checks and Pinning tests under the following conditions only (unless specified by another special rule):

Pinning tests

- At the end of a Shooting phase, before taking any Morale checks, in which an enemy unit inflicts hits using weapons with the Pinning special rule, or wounds (whether saved or not) with any other weapons, the unit takes a single Pinning test, with a -1 modifier to their Leadership value for each additional enemy unit that has inflicted a potential Pinning test on the unit.



Morale checks

- At the end of a Shooting phase in which an enemy unit has inflicted unsaved wounds upon the unit and is not Pinned, the unit takes a Morale check, with a -1 modifier to their Leadership value for each additional enemy unit that has inflicted a potential Morale check on the unit.
- At the end of any Assault phase in which the unit has lost a close combat (usually from suffering more wounds than they inflicted), it must pass a Morale check to hold its ground. If it fails, it must Fall Back. Units taking this Morale check suffer a -1 Leadership modifier for each wound their side lost the combat by.

Reaction Fire

During the fast paced manoeuvring and sudden violence of a tactical strike, a split second reaction can mean the difference between life and death, as enemies appear from all sides and a warrior's best weapon is a keen instinct and swift hand. As such, any unit not already engaged in close combat and not Falling Back may attempt a Reaction Fire attack at a unit that has declared a Charge against them instead of making a normal Overwatch attack. Reaction Fire attacks are subject to the following restrictions:

- Only Pistol, Assault and Rapid Fire weapons may be used for Reaction Fire attacks. Heavy weapons may be used only if the firer has the Relentless special rule. Note that weapons in the unit making a Reaction Fire attack which are incapable of

performing Reaction Fire may still make normal Overwatch Snap Shot attacks, if they are eligible, alongside the rest of the unit's Reaction Fire. Pinned units may not make Reaction Fire attacks.

- Blast weapons may not be used to make Reaction Fire attacks.
- Template weapons may be used during Reaction Fire attacks. If the Reaction Fire test is successful (as follows), rather than placing the template, D3 hits are inflicted on the charging unit by each template weapon fired by the unit.
- Only a single Reaction Fire attack may be made in any game turn, and it must target the first unit to declare a successful Charge against the target in that game turn.
- A Reaction Fire attempt, and any resulting attacks, are made after a Charge is declared, but before any charging models are moved. Both hits that cause Pinning tests and wounds resulting in Morale checks may cause an assault to fail.

Making a Reaction Fire Attack: A

Reaction Fire attack is carried out exactly like an Overwatch attack, except that the unit in question must roll equal to or under its majority Initiative value on a D6. If successful, it may fire its weapons at the assaulting enemy with their full Ballistic Skill value. If the test is unsuccessful, the unit may still make a normal Overwatch attack (i.e., Snap Shots at BS 1) instead. A unit may not use the Counter-attack special rule if it has used Reaction Fire in the same phase.

Integrated Support

Any transport vehicle included in a game using the Tactical Strike ruleset may transport a number of Infantry models, from any number of different friendly Ad-hoc units, equal to its Transport capacity. This includes vehicles designated as Dedicated Transports, which lose this designation when used in a game of Tactical Strike.

If a part of any Ad-hoc unit is embarked on a transport vehicle, then all of it must be – it cannot be spread over several vehicles. If, for any reason, the entirety of a unit cannot embark on the same transport then the models embarked on the Transport vehicle form a new Ad-hoc unit separate from those models outside of the vehicle.

During the Movement phase, any number of units composed of Infantry models (as long as the total number of models currently embarked does not exceed its Transport capacity) may choose to either embark or disembark, either before the vehicle has moved or after the vehicle has finished moving. It is permissible for some units to disembark or embark before the vehicle moves and some after it has finished moving in any combination as long as its Transport capacity is never exceeded. In any case, the vehicle may not Tank Shock or Ram on a turn that any unit disembarks from it, nor move further than 6" on a turn in which any unit has disembarked from it.

Up Close and Personal

In the shockingly personal scale of war at which tactical strikes take place, there is little time or need for the indulgence of drawn-out duels and personal combat. There is nowhere for the coward to hide from the reprisal of a rival in such an engagement, and only the skill and loyalty of his companions can save him from any one-sided battles that may erupt.

As such the Challenge rules (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook) are not used in Tactical Strike games. No Challenges may be issued by any model and neither the Moral Support, Glorious Intervention or Look Out, Sir special rules may be used during close combat.

In addition, when resolving a close combat, the following modifications to the basic rules apply:

The Pinning Special Rule

In games using the Tactical Strike rules, the Pinning special rule is amended to read as follows:

Pinning

If a non-vehicle unit suffers one or more hits from a weapon with the Pinning special rule, it must take a Leadership test at the end of the phase. This is called a Pinning test. Remember that a target unit will only take a single Pinning test at the end of the Shooting phase, but that each additional enemy unit that inflicts a Pinning test upon it will make it harder for the target unit to succeed.

If the unit fails the test, it is Pinned and must immediately Go to Ground. If the Pinning test was caused by successful hits inflicted by enemy models then the unit will not benefit from the cover save provided by going to ground. If a unit has already gone to ground, no further Pinning tests are taken.

If the special rules of a unit specify that the unit can never be Pinned, the unit automatically passes Pinning tests. Such units may still voluntarily Go to Ground if they wish.

- A model is only engaged in combat when in base contact with one or more enemy models during its Initiative step.
- Wounds inflicted during close combat may only be allocated to enemy models in base contact with one or more friendly models that are engaged in the same combat.
- Any Consolidation moves made are limited to D3", rather than the usual D6".

Broken Edicts

In the wake of Horus' betrayal, and the sundering of his oath to the Emperor and the Imperium, many amongst the Legions who had forsworn the use of their psychic abilities once again began to walk the path of the psyker. Those pledged to Horus were no longer bound by the Emperor's judgement at Nikaea, and those who remained loyal knew that in those dark days every weapon available to them would be needed to preserve the Imperium.

In games of Tactical Strike, only models designated as Heroes or Leaders may make use of the Psyker rule, and must expend Action points instead of Warp Charges to activate powers and effects (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook). A unit with the Brotherhood of Psykers/Sorcerers special rule may only activate Psychic powers or effects if a Leader or Hero has joined the unit (thus allowing for the expenditure of Action points).

Out of Ammo

All ranged weapons (that is weapons with a range greater than 1' and without the Melee type) are considered to have the Out of Ammo special rule in addition to all other rules indicated by their type and profile. The Out of Ammo special rule is as follows:

Out of Ammo: If a unit makes a Shooting attack and its roll includes at least one result of a natural 1, then it must pass an Ammo test or be affected by the Out of Ammo special rule. The unit only takes a single Ammo test, no matter how many 1s are rolled. To take an Ammo test, roll a D6 after all attacks have been resolved. This roll must now hit a set target number dictated by the model's Strike Force's Ammunition Resource level (with 4+ as a standard target) as shown on the Resource chart on page 172.

While Out of Ammo, a unit may only make Snap Shots, and may not make Reaction Fire attacks until the end of the controlling player's next Shooting phase. They may still benefit from the effects of Assault or Defensive grenades, but may not make shooting attacks with any kind of grenade.

A vehicle which is called upon to make an Ammo test makes the test in the same fashion as an infantry unit, and is affected in the same way by the Out of Ammo special rule if it fails. However, it may still activate smoke launchers or fire any Missile or Bomb type weapons that have the One Use special rule.

Heroes and Leaders

A model designated as a Hero gains the Lessons of War, Battle Leader (see the Leader section on page 177) and the Consequences of Failure special rules:

Lessons of War

A model with this special rule can gain and use Action points. This special rule will often be associated with a certain Role, representing the character of the Hero in question and offering an additional way for a Hero to acquire Action points. This will often be expressed as follows: Hero (Marksman), the text in brackets will indicate the Role chosen for that Hero. Roles will often be specific to a given campaign, and in the case of the Victory is Vengeance campaign, a list of appropriate Roles can be found in the Strike Force creation section.

Action Points: A model with Lessons of War will acquire Action points for accomplishing set actions during games – these will be defined by a Hero's Role and the scenario's special rules in which a model with this special rule is being used. These points are added to a single pool of Action points, which is carried over from mission to mission, and these points are gained in the following ways:

- The actions of a Hero model, based on its Role and the mission played.
- Action points gained at the start of a mission from the Leader special rule.
- Any Action points carried over from the last mission in which the Strike Force participated.

The Action point pool is a permanent resource for a Strike Force. Once points are added to it, they remain there until spent, regardless of whether a given Leader or Hero is removed as a casualty and the total at the end of any mission will be carried over into the next.

Once acquired, Action points can be permanently discarded to grant bonuses to any friendly model designated as a Hero or Leader and any Ad-hoc unit they are a part of. The various bonuses available are listed below:

- When making any dice roll, check or test for a Hero, a Leader or a model in a unit that includes a Hero or a Leader, the player may spend 1 Action point to re-roll the result. For tests or checks that require multiple dice (such as Morale checks) re-roll all the dice involved, but for To Hit, To Wound or Armour saves, the player must spend 1 Action point for each dice they wish to re-roll. Any modifiers applied to the initial roll are retained for the re-roll, but note that any roll may only ever be re-rolled once!
- A single Action point may be spent to grant a model with the Leader or Hero special rule, and any unit they are a part of, one of the following special rules for the remainder of the current player turn: Adamantium Will, Eternal Warrior, Fearless or Fleet.

- When instructed by the rules for Psychic powers to spend a Warp Charge to activate a power or effect, the controlling player must instead spend a number of Action points equal to the cost in Warp Charges. If they do not have enough Action points then the Psychic power or effect may not be used regardless of Mastery Levels or Warp Charges.
- At the end of any scenario in which a model designated as a Hero is not removed as a casualty, spend 10 Action points to permanently increase its WS, BS, S, T, I or Wounds by +1 (any given stat may only ever be improved once through the use of this special rule), or to remove any one Consequence from the Hero.

Consequences of Failure

A model with the Consequences of Failure special rule that is removed as a casualty during a game, including if removed from the table by falling back off the board, is deemed to have suffered a lasting hurt of some kind – whether it is an injury taken in combat, a seed of doubt sown in his skills of command or the end of his reputation for courage. This may be but a temporary setback, swiftly overcome, or a sudden and dangerous shift in the Hero's fortune.

The controlling player of the fallen Hero must determine the consequences of his failure once the game is concluded. First he should consult the Consequences table and either randomly select or choose any one entry which applies to him from this point onwards for the rest of the campaign.

CONSEQUENCES TABLE

D6	Consequence
1	<p>Shaken: <i>Amidst the utter destruction on the scale unleashed during the dark hours of the Dropsite Massacre and the desperate battles that followed, many amongst the Legions found their conviction shaken and future in doubt.</i></p> <p>A model with this Consequence and any unit he has joined rolls an additional D6 for all Leadership tests and Morale checks, keeping the highest two. If selected again for a Hero already possessing the Shaken Consequence, this penalty now applies to all friendly units within 6" of this model.</p>
2	<p>Marked: <i>With the outbreak of the Horus Heresy, old grudges and personal rivalries amongst one-time allies took a dark turn; many such grievances becoming bitter enmity as rivals met as enemies on the field of battle.</i></p> <p>All enemy Heroes gain the Preferred Enemy (This Hero) special rule in any scenario where a Hero with this Consequence is fielded. If selected again for a Hero that already has this Consequence, then enemy Heroes also gain the Hatred (This Hero) special rule as well.</p>
3	<p>Bloodied: <i>Many Legionnaires fighting in the Urgall Wastes in the wake of the Dropsite Massacre carried lingering wounds. Few could spare the time for anything but the most rudimentary medical treatment as the fighting raged on.</i></p> <p>A model with this Consequence and any squad he joins may only move 4" in the Movement phase, may not Run, Jump or Thrust and suffers a -2 penalty to Charge and Difficult Terrain rolls. If selected again for a Hero that already has this Consequence, then he counts all open terrain as difficult terrain, and all difficult terrain as dangerous terrain.</p>
4	<p>Dishonoured: <i>As painful as any physical wound was the loss of trust amongst brothers, and in the wake of Horus' betrayal, even the slightest misstep in command could result in simmering discontent among previously stalwart allies.</i></p> <p>A Hero with this Consequence may not join units and friendly units may not declare a Charge into a combat he is a part of. If selected again for a Hero that already has this Consequence, then friendly units within 6" may no longer use this model's Leadership value to take Morale checks, Pinning tests or Ammo tests.</p>
5	<p>Maimed: <i>The Hero has suffered a terrible wound, the loss of a limb or massive internal trauma. Such wounds would normally be repaired with augmetic work, but in the chaos following the Dropsite Massacre, many were forced to fight on as best they could.</i></p> <p>A Hero with this Consequence who is fighting in close combat during the Assault phase, must re-roll any one of his successful rolls To Hit. If selected again for a Hero that already has this Consequence, then he must re-roll all successful hits when fighting in close combat.</p>
6	<p>Blinded: <i>Head injuries or extreme damage to armour sensorium systems were commonplace among many combatants on Istvan V, fighting those who knew best how to cripple them. Little time was spared for repairs or even essential medical treatment as the fighting raged on in the Urgall Wastes.</i></p> <p>A Hero with this Consequence must re-roll all successful shooting To Hit rolls made at a range greater than 12". If selected again for a Hero that already has this Consequence, then he must re-roll all successful shooting To Hit rolls.</p>

In addition, the controlling player may also randomly select or choose one entry from the Redemption & Atonement table. This presents an optional objective for the Hero to accomplish in the next game. If the Hero can accomplish the objective listed in the chosen entry, then he may remove the most recently acquired Consequence once the game has been concluded.

Leader

Models designated as Leaders gain the Tactical Insights and Battle Leader special rules.

Tactical Insights: Models with the Tactical Insights special rule add 2 Action points to the Action point pool at the start of each mission. These may be spent during the game as noted under the Lessons of War special rule. However, Leaders do not earn additional Action points during play.

Battle Leader: In addition, the Battle Leader special rule allows any model that is both within 6" of a friendly model with the special rule and has line of sight to that model, to use the Battle Leader's Leadership value instead of its own for any Morale checks or Pinning tests that occur outside of the Assault phase.

REDEMPTION & ATONEMENT TABLE

D6 Redemption and Atonement

- 1 **Return to Glory:** *The only way to restore the hero's vigour and reputation is for him to lead the way in the next attack.*
The Hero's Redemption is considered successful if he ends the next game in the enemy's deployment zone and spends no more than one turn in his own deployment zone or in reserve.
- 2 **Martial Dominance:** *By demonstrating his prowess as a fighter, the hero may once again regain the confidence and respect he has lost.*
The Hero's Redemption is considered successful if he causes more models to be removed as casualties in close combat than any other Hero (friendly or enemy) in the next game.
- 3 **Unfaltering Resolve:** *To restore the spirit of his men and his own flagging will to fight, the hero must show he can endure any trial.*
The Hero's Redemption is considered successful if he, and any unit he is part of, passes more Morale checks or Pinning tests during the next game than any other Hero present (friendly or enemy). This Consequence may not be taken by a Hero with the Fearless special rule, and the affected Hero may not join units of Fearless models during the game, or purposefully acquire the Fearless special rule by any other means – if he does so, then his Redemption is considered to have failed.
- 4 **Unfailing Skill:** *Only a display proving his legendary marksmanship skills have not deserted him will restore this hero's confidence.*
The Hero's Redemption is considered successful if he causes more models to be removed as casualties with shooting attacks than any other Hero (friendly or enemy) in the next game.
- 5 **Bloody Revenge:** *Only by the blood of those who brought him low can this hero's injuries be salvaged.*
The Hero's Redemption is considered successful if any enemy Hero that was present in the game in which he received his last Consequence is removed as a casualty in the next game and he inflicts at least one unsaved wound on them.
- 6 **Act of Faith:** *In these grim times the hero turns to a higher power — be it the Emperor or a darker patron — to restore his flagging spirit.*
Having dedicated his success to a higher power, the Hero's Redemption is considered successful if in the next game his Strike Force is victorious and scores at least half again as many Victory points as the enemy.

VICTORY IS VENGEANCE CAMPAIGN MISSIONS

Playing the Victory is Vengeance Campaign Missions

The following framework is used within the Victory is Vengeance campaign to represent the brutal series of assaults made by the survivors of the Dropsite Massacre and those Horus sent to exterminate them, attacks driven as much by spite as by tactical considerations.

All of the missions follow the same structure, as detailed on page 179, with the differing aims of the forces involved represented

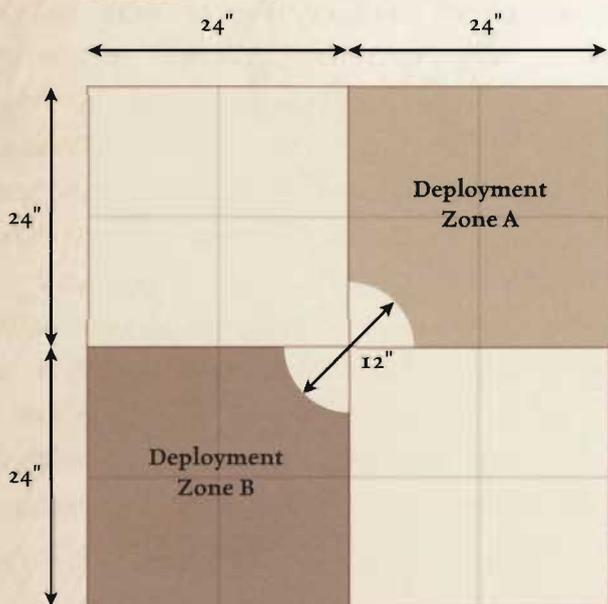
by a set of modular game objectives which are slotted into this set Mission structure. Whenever a Victory is Vengeance mission is played, simply select a Mission objective and use the indicated deployment map alongside the generic Mission structure.

Note that all of the missions presented here use the Tactical Strike rules, and are not intended for use in a standard game of Warhammer 40,000 – although with some alteration they can be used within the standard rules.

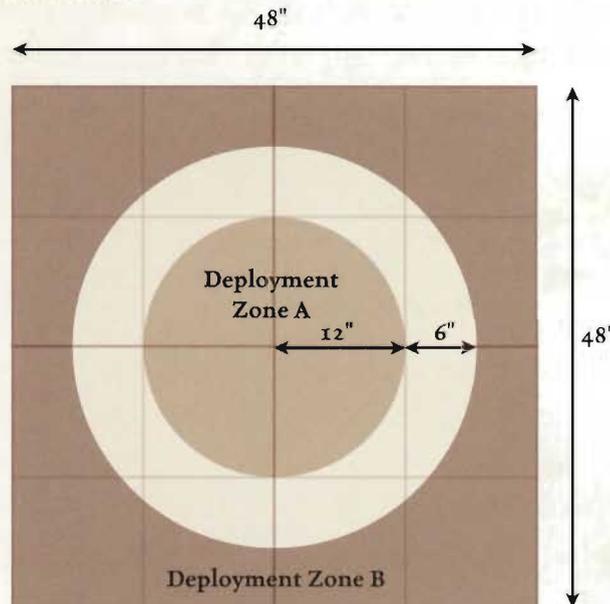
In addition, many of these missions assume that games played will pit a Survivors Strike Force against an Exterminators Strike Force. If, for whatever reason, this is not the case then the players involved should designate one side to stand in for the Exterminators, and one side to represent the Survivors.

**When using the Encirclement deployment map below, both sides may move Reserves on from any table edge, and flee towards the nearest table edge.*

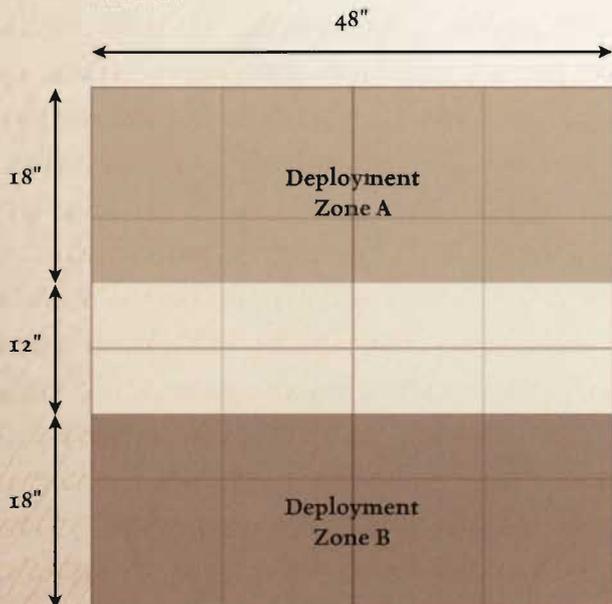
ENGAGEMENT



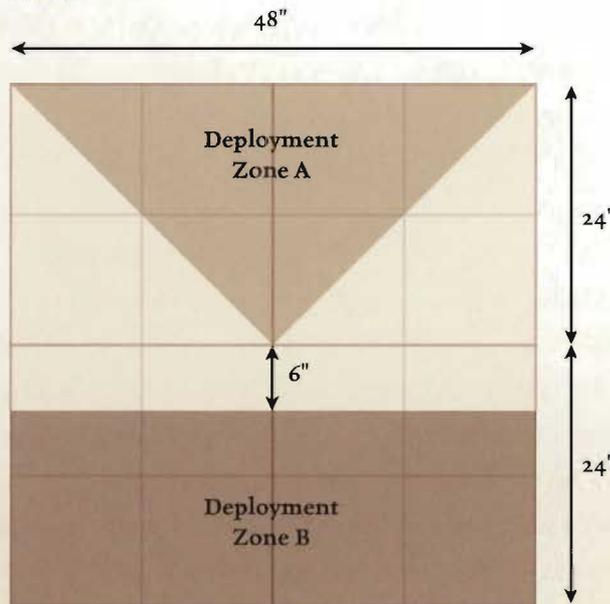
ENCIRCLEMENT*



STAND-OFF



STRIKE



VICTORY IS VENGEANCE: MISSION STRUCTURE

The following Mission structure applies to all Victory is Vengeance campaign missions, save where specific Mission objectives overrule them.

Determine an Objective

Using the options and guidelines provided as follows, the players should select, or randomly determine, an objective for the game about to be played.

Select a Strike Force

Once the objective has been agreed upon by both players, each should select their Strike Force. This is done using the number of points allowed by their Personnel Resource Grade (plus any Supply points spent to increase the points allowance) which enables them to select the troops models available to them for this game.

Table Set-up: The Battlefields of Isstvan V

The Victory is Vengeance missions should be played on a 4' x 4' table, with scenery set up according to the guidelines found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook. During the chaotic fighting that followed the Dropsite Massacre, battles were fought in a multitude of locations, but in the dusty plains and rocky outcrops of the Isstvan V wastes rock formations, hills, destroyed vehicles and ruined outposts are the most appropriate terrain pieces.

Deployment

Unless specified otherwise by the Mission objective, the players should roll off to see which of them deploys first – with the player who wins the roll selecting one of the two listed deployment zones to deploy their Strike Force in first, and their opponent taking the remaining one, deploying their Strike Force there second. Unless otherwise noted, either player may choose to place any number of their models into reserve rather than deploying them onto the battlefield.

The First Turn

Unless specified otherwise by the Mission objective, the player who set up their Strike Force first takes the first turn. However, their opponent can spend 1 Action point to attempt to Seize the Initiative, as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

Ending the Game: Operational Deadlines

Many of the battles fought during the ninety-eight days after the Dropsite Massacre, were often as short as they were brutal. The survivors knew they had little time before

the followers of Horus replied en-masse to their attacks and the Traitors had to act swiftly before the Loyalists simply vanished into the wastes again. As such, rather than playing a Victory is Vengeance mission for a given number of turns, both players should decide on a time limit for the game beforehand. Around 30-45 minutes should be perfect, and begins once the first turn has started and, once elapsed, signals the end of the game. Once the time limit is reached, the players should finish the current game turn and decide who has won as per the usual rules of the mission.

NEW MISSION SPECIAL RULES

The following special rules see use in several of the missions presented in this section and are listed here for ease of reference:

Tactical Reserves

When rolling for Reserves in a Victory is Vengeance mission, roll separately for each model that is in reserve. Models in reserve may not form Ad-hoc units, but models that move onto the table in the same turn may form an Ad-hoc unit at the end of the Movement phase if they finish their movement within 2" of each other and meet all other requirements (see the rules for Ad-hoc units). In addition, any models that succeed in arriving from reserve may enter play on a Transport vehicle which also enters play from reserve in the same turn, up to the limit of the vehicle's Transport capacity, forming an Ad-hoc unit. Only Flying vehicles may Deep Strike in any Victory is Vengeance mission, unless otherwise noted by the mission's objective.

Among the Horde

Whenever an Exterminators model that is neither a Leader nor a Hero is removed from the table in a mission using this special rule, it is immediately placed in reserve and may re-enter the table as normal.

Overwhelming Force

The Exterminators player may double the number of points he has available to select the troops for his Strike Force from in a game using this special rule.

VICTORY IS VENGEANCE: MISSION OBJECTIVES

Objectives in the

Victory is Vengeance Campaign

Mission objectives in the Victory is Vengeance campaign are divided into two tiers: Standard objectives and Iconic objectives. Standard objectives may be played at any point in the campaign, representing

the most common types of engagement that occurred during the fighting on Isstvan V, whilst Iconic objectives may only be selected when the Campaign score is at a certain level and represent the rarest of battles fought during the ninety-eight days the Raven Guard Legion spent on Isstvan V – the battles that set the course of the entire campaign for good or for ill.

STANDARD OBJECTIVES

When choosing to use Standard objectives in a Victory is Vengeance game, the players should first roll on or select an entry from the Deployment Layout table on page 180 to determine deployment zones for the game, and then roll for or select one or more objectives from the Standard Objectives table, assigning each to either one or both players (note that each player must have at least one objective assigned to them).

The winner of a game using one or more Standard objectives will gain 1 Campaign point, the loser none. Each individual objective will list the Supply points gained when using it – Supply points gains in games with multiple objectives assigned to a single player are cumulative.

All Standard missions use the following mission special rules: Tactical Reserves and Night Fighting.

Supply Raid

With both sides short on critical resources, many commanders resorted to staging attacks on enemy marshalling points and hidden caches to take what they needed by force.

If this objective is assigned to either or both players then at the start of the game, before any models are deployed, the players should alternate placing D3+1 objective markers anywhere onto the table that is at least 12" away from any other objective marker.

Players who have been assigned this objective score 3 Victory points for each objective marker they control at the end of the game. Use the rules for controlling objectives listed in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook, noting that in games of Tactical Strike all Ad-hoc units count as scoring and denial units.

At the end of the game, each player assigned this objective gains D3 x 10 Supply points for each objective marker under their control.

Murder Raid

Such was the hatred each side felt for their erstwhile brothers, that many an attack served no strategic purpose other than to inflict pain, death and humiliation upon the foe.

A player, or players, assigned this objective scores 1 Victory point for each enemy model removed as a casualty during the game. At the end of the game, each player assigned this objective also gains 2 Supply points for each enemy model that has been removed from play as a casualty.

Hounds & Hunters

Outnumbered and alone, the survivors of the Dropsite Massacre were often forced to fight past and escape their hunters.

A Survivors player assigned this objective scores 1 Victory point for each friendly model that is in the enemy's deployment zone at the end of the game and is not fleeing. An Exterminators player assigned this objective scores 1 Victory point for each Survivors model removed as a casualty during the game. At the end of the game, each player assigned this objective also gains 2 Supply points for each enemy model that has been removed from play as a casualty.

Headhunters

In the aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre and Horus' open declaration of war on the Imperium he had helped to create, only the most stalwart leaders could hold their brethren to their duties – such men were prime targets for their enemies.

A player, or players, assigned this objective score 5 Victory points for each enemy Hero removed as a casualty during the game, and

3 Victory points for each enemy Leader removed as a casualty during the game. At the end of the game, each player assigned this objective also gains 20 Supply points for each enemy Hero removed from play as a casualty, and 10 Supply points for each enemy Leader removed from play as a casualty.

Wiped Out

In all games using the Standard objectives, whenever a Strike Force has no friendly models on the table at the end of any turn the game ends immediately, and victory and game rewards are decided using the objectives chosen for that game.

ICONIC OBJECTIVES

When choosing to use an Iconic objective in a Victory is Vengeance game, the players should first check which of the Iconic objectives are available at the current Campaign score, and then select one from amongst those listed. The Iconic objective will list the deployment zone used for the game along with the objectives set for each player – as well as the rewards gained by both the winner and loser.

For example, if in a Victory is Vengeance campaign, the overall Campaign score is 4 and there are six players involved, then the Campaign score is considered to be positive and less than the total number of players involved, thus allowing the use of the Strike and Fade Iconic objective in games – but not the Skull Cairns Iconic objective, which requires a positive Campaign score higher than the number of players involved. If the Campaign score later shifts to -8 and six players remain involved in the campaign, the Campaign score is considered to be a negative value that is greater than the number of players involved. This

would disallow the use of both the Fade and Strike and Skull Cairn objectives (both of which require a positive Campaign score), but allow the use of the Honouring the Dead and Overwhelming Force objectives.

Honouring the Dead

[May only be played when the Campaign score is a negative value]

With Horus' extermination forces closing in on them, the few remaining Loyalist warriors are forced to turn to desperate measures to acquire munitions and supplies to continue their struggle – looting the corpse-strewn battlefields of the Istvan V dropsite itself.

Honouring the Dead uses the Engagement deployment map. The Exterminators player selects their deployment zone and deploys first, placing no more than half of the total number of models in their Strike Force onto the table and placing the rest into reserve. The Survivors player uses the other deployment zone, deploying their entire Strike Force second. After all models are deployed, the players should alternate placing four objective markers (two each), each representing the dead left in the Dropsite Massacre's wake, anywhere onto the table that is at least 12" away from any other objective marker and outside of any deployment zone (including the space at the centre of the table). The Exterminators player takes the first turn.

Victory Conditions: Victory in this mission is determined by the number of Victory points acquired by each player, with the player with the higher total at the game's end being deemed the winner. At the end of the game, both players score D3 Victory points for each objective marker they control. In addition, both players also receive D3 x 10 Supply points for each objective they control at the end of the game.

This objective uses the following special rules: Tactical Reserves, Night Fighting and Among the Horde.

The Skull Cairns

[May only be played when the Campaign score is a positive value greater than the number of players involved in the campaign]

Built by the most depraved of those Space Marines who had sworn themselves to Horus, the Skull Cairns were the perfect target for Loyalist forces seeking to destroy the morale of those who hunted them.

One Game – Multiple Objectives?

When using multiple objectives in a single game, it is up to the players to decide if each of them has a different objective, or if all objectives apply to both players (where appropriate, it is even possible to have each player be assigned an objective that is kept secret from his opponent until the end of the game when Victory points are totalled!). To determine the winner in a game with multiple objectives, simply compare the total number of Victory points scored by each player from all the objectives that apply to them. The player with the highest total is deemed the winner. The winner gains Campaign points at the game's end for all objectives assigned to them.

Deployment Layout table

D6	Result
1	Encirclement
2-3	Engagement
4-5	Stand-off
6	Strike

Standard Objective table

D6	Result
1	Headhunters
2-3	Murder Raid
4-5	Supply Raid
6	Hounds & Hunters

The Skull Cairns uses the Encirclement deployment map, with the Exterminators player taking deployment zone A, and the Survivors player taking deployment zone B. Before deployment, a single terrain feature representing the Skull Cairn should be placed at the centre of the table – this terrain piece should be at least 6" in diameter and counts as impassable terrain. The Survivors player sets up their entire Strike Force first, followed by the Exterminators player. The Survivors player takes the first turn.

Victory Conditions: Victory in this mission is determined by the number of Victory points acquired by each player, with the player with the highest total at the game's end being deemed the winner. The Exterminators player scores 1 Victory point for each enemy model removed from play as a casualty. The Survivors player scores 1 Victory point for each wound inflicted on the Skull Cairn (as follows). Both players also gain 2 Supply points for each casualty suffered by the opposing player in the game.

This objective uses the following special rules: Tactical Reserves, Night Fighting and the Skull Cairn.

The Skull Cairn: This has a Toughness of 6 and an invulnerable save of 4+, reflecting the difficulty of damaging the shifting mass of collected bones. It cannot be destroyed and wounds inflicted on it are recorded for purposes of Victory points only. The Exterminators player can spend an Action point at any time to invoke the Eldritch Gloom effect until the end of the current Game turn.

Eldritch Gloom: While the Eldritch Gloom rule is in play, any attacks either made by or targeting units within 12" of the Skull Cairn are made using the Night Fighting rules.

Overwhelming Force
[May only be played when the Campaign score is a negative value greater than the number of players involved in the campaign]

Many who chose to resist Horus found only doom at the hands of the vast horde that prowled the wastes of Istvan V. Their only victory was the toll in death these bands of hunters paid to claim their lives.

Overwhelming Force uses the Encirclement deployment map, with the Survivors player taking deployment zone A, and the Exterminators player taking deployment zone B. The Survivors player deploys first and takes the first turn – they may not place any models in reserve, any models which cannot be deployed on the map are not used in this mission.

Victory Conditions: In order to win this mission, the Exterminators player must wipe out their opponent's army before the game's time limit is reached (see the Operational Deadline rule on page 179). If any Survivors models are still in play and not fleeing at the end of the game, the Survivors player is the winner.

Note: The Exterminators player cannot lose the game due to having no units in play at the end of a turn.

If the Exterminators player wins, they gain 2 Campaign points, if the Survivors player wins they gain 6 Campaign points – the losing player gains zero Campaign points. The winning player also gains 2 Supply points for each casualty suffered by the opposing player during the game.

This objective uses the following special rules: Tactical Reserves, Night Fighting, Overwhelming Force and Among the Horde.

Strike and Fade
[May only be played when the Campaign score is a positive value]

Seeking to inflict as much damage on the foe as possible, the more organised Loyalist forces targeted isolated Traitor armoured columns, attempting to destroy the few armoured vehicles left on the surface of Istvan V.

Strike and Fade uses the Strike deployment map, with the Survivors player taking deployment zone A and the Exterminators

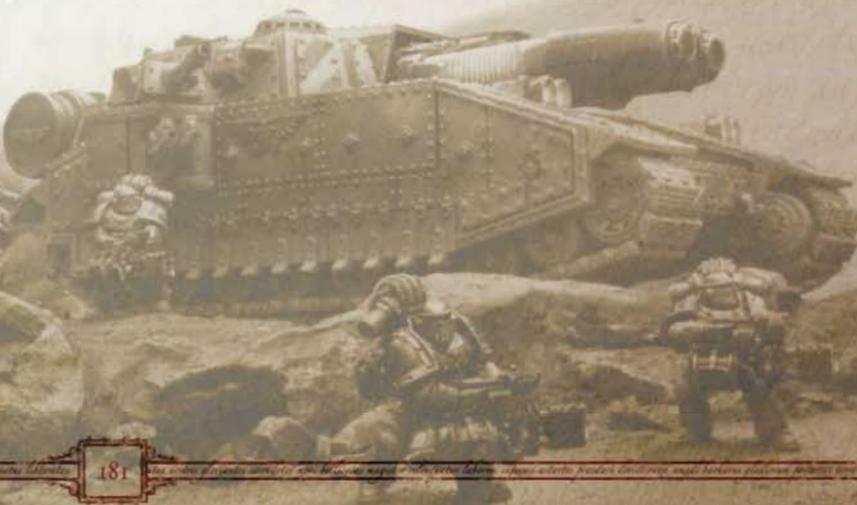
player deployment zone B. Before deploying any troops, the Exterminators player should select one of the following options (these models are added to their Strike Force for this game, and do not cost any points. They may move and fight normally during the game, but may not leave the table for any reason):

- 3 Rhinos (equipped with any of the available options, as long as they are represented on the model).
- 1 Land Raider Phobos (may not take any of the options available to it).
- 1 Land Raider Proteus with Explorator Augury Web (may not take any other options available to it).

These vehicles are deployed by the Exterminators player anywhere in their deployment zone that is at least 6" away from any board edge. Once this is done, the Survivors player deploys their entire Strike Force into their own deployment zone, after which the Exterminators player deploys their Strike Force within their own deployment zone as normal. The Survivors player takes the first turn.

Victory Conditions: Victory in this game is determined by the number of Victory points scored by the players, with the player scoring the highest being deemed the victor. Both players score 1 Victory point for each enemy model removed as a casualty, the Survivors player also scores 5 Victory points for each enemy Rhino destroyed and 10 Victory points for each enemy Land Raider destroyed. At the end of the game, the Exterminators player gains D3 x 10 Supply points for each friendly Rhino or Land Raider on the table with at least 1 Hull Point left, the Survivors player gains D3 x 10 Supply points for each enemy Rhino or Land Raider destroyed during the game.

This objective uses the following special rules: Tactical Reserves and Night Fighting.



LEGENDARY MISSION: DELIVERANCE

To those who survived the terrible carnage wrought at the Dropsite Massacre, it seemed that all that remained for them to do was to make as fitting an end as they could to lives long spent in the service of the Emperor and Mankind. Many died, some fighting valiant actions of defiance and others brought to ignominious and forgotten ends. However, for those of the Raven Guard Legion who still fought alongside their grim Primarch Corax, history had reserved a different fate.

This mission, unlike the others presented in this section, is intended for use with the standard Warhammer 40,000 rules, and allows players to fight through Corax's dramatic departure from the killing fields of Isstvan V. It can be played both as a one-off game or as the grand finale to a Victory is Vengeance campaign.

The Armies

When playing this mission with two players as a stand-alone game, the armies used should be at least 3,000 points strong and should include the Primarchs Corax and Angron. This mission is also ideally suited for use as a

multi-player game, with two teams organised from the available players: one of Traitors and the other Loyalists. In addition, if the game is serving as the finale to a Victory is Vengeance campaign then the players should each include the Hero and Leader models from their Strike Forces at no additional cost (a Hero will count as an army's compulsory HQ choice and potentially as a Warlord, and no additional HQ choices need to be bought if a player does not wish to). Any Heroes will gain the Independent Character special rule if they do not already have it.

Armies should be selected as described in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook, except where the Shattered Legions special rule modifies this (see page 183).

The Battlefield

This game uses the deployment map shown opposite, and it is recommended that it is played on at least a 6' x 4' table (if using a larger table remember to adjust the sizes of the deployment zones as appropriate). Terrain should be set up using the guidelines

found in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook. When deploying terrain, preference should be given to rocky ridges, hills and destroyed vehicles. Historically, the Raven Guard made their last stand on the flank of a great mountain, overlooking a valley swarming with Angron's children and with a wide desolate salt flat to their rear.

Deployment

The Traitors forces deploy first, using the deployment zone shown, and the Loyalists forces deploy second in their own deployment zone. Any models on either side that cannot be deployed within the appropriate zones must be placed into reserve, but neither player may choose to place all of their units in reserve.

First Turn

The Traitors player takes the first turn, unless his opponent can Seize the Initiative.

Game Length

The game ends either according to the Emergency Extraction special rule (as



follows) or at the end of any turn on which the Loyalist player has no models left on the table. Note that the Traitors player cannot lose the game due to having no models on the table, and will simply wait until more enter from reserve (see the Uncounted Foes special rule that follows).

Victory Conditions

Victory in this mission is decided by Victory points. The player with the highest total at the end of the game is deemed the winner.

Players score Victory points under the following conditions:

The Traitors

- Score 1 Victory point for each Loyalists unit completely destroyed or forced to flee off of the table.
- Score an additional Victory point for each Loyalists unit entirely destroyed in close combat (including units removed due to sweeping advances).
- Score an additional Victory point whenever a Character model representing an enemy Leader or Hero from a Victory is Vengeance campaign is removed as a casualty.
- Score 3 Victory points if Corax is removed as a casualty – this increases to 5 Victory points if Corax is killed while engaged in a Challenge with Angron.

The Loyalists

- Score 1 Victory point for each Traitors unit completely destroyed or forced to flee off of the table.
- Score an additional Victory point whenever a Character model representing an enemy Leader or Hero from a Victory is Vengeance campaign is removed as a casualty.
- Score 1 Victory point for each friendly unit in the Extraction Zone at the end of the game.
- Score 3 Victory points if Angron is removed as a casualty – this increases to 5 Victory points if Angron is killed while engaged in a Challenge with Corax.

Note: If you are playing this mission with a different cast of Primarchs then modify the Victory points gained for killing the enemy Primarch to target the appropriate Loyalist and Traitor Primarchs, but be sure that all players are aware of the change beforehand!

Mission Special Rules

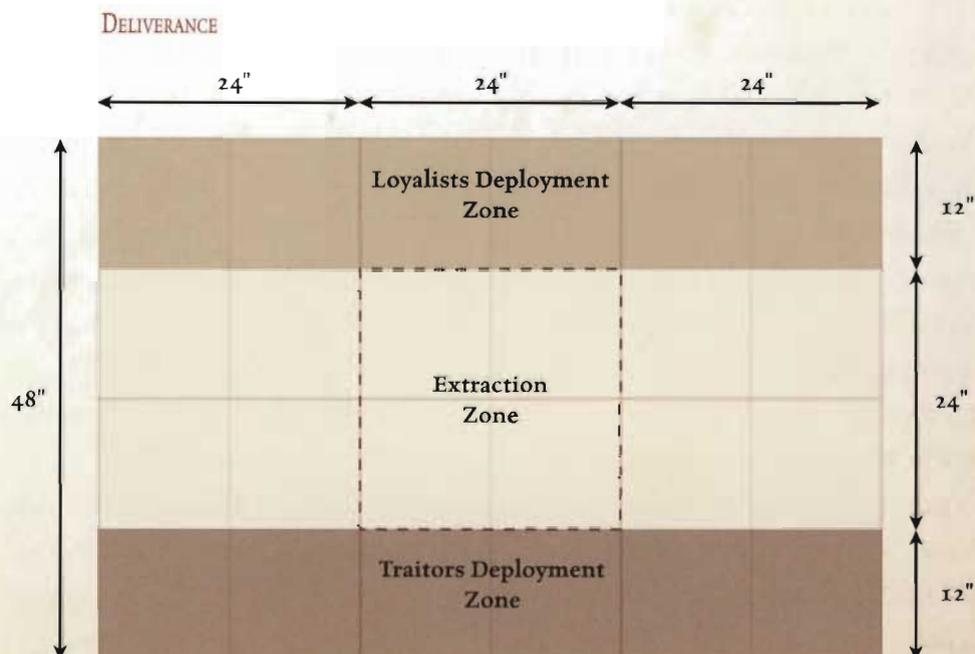
Reserves, Shattered Legions, Emergency Extraction and Uncounted Foes.

Shattered Legions: Those Loyalist Space Marines present at the Raven Guard's last stand were the finest warriors of the Legion, veterans of one of the most infamous battles in the history of the Imperium.

When selecting their army, the Loyalists player may take any number of Heavy Support, Elites, Fast Attack or Troops choices, and is not required to take two compulsory Troops choices.

Emergency Extraction: Starting at the beginning of the Loyalists player's Turn 2, the Loyalists player should roll a D6. If they rolls equal to or lower than the current game turn number, the Emergency Extraction begins. Once the Extraction has begun, the Traitors player secretly rolls a D3 and secretly records the result, then once a number of Game Turns equal to the number rolled have elapsed, the game ends. In addition, at the start of each of their turns after the Extraction begins, the Loyalists player may target D3 Traitors units within the Extraction Zone and inflict D6+1 Str 8 AP 3 hits on each as orbital weapons and newly arrived air assets bombard the area.

Uncounted Foes: During this game, when any Traitors unit is entirely destroyed or flees off the table, an identical unit to the one destroyed is immediately placed into the Traitors player's Ongoing Reserves and may be brought into play again as normal. Models bought as HQ or Lords of War choices may not benefit from this special rule and once slain are gone for good.



BLOOD IN THE VOID EXPANSION

RULES FOR FIGHTING DEADLY BOARDING ASSAULTS MISSIONS DURING THE HORUS HERESY

This section presents rules for fighting some of the most savage and desperate ship-to-ship boarding assaults of the Horus Heresy. Boarding actions between star vessels are truly deadly affairs, vicious and swift close-quarter duels in the most treacherous and dangerous environments imaginable. In short, the kind of conflict the Space Marines were created for!

The vessels of the 31st Millennium range in size and role from interplanetary cargo scows to mighty battleships with crews numbering in the thousands serving as the flagships of the Imperium's far-ranging Expeditionary fleets. Larger still are Mechanicum mass conveyers tens of kilometres in length, and unfathomably ancient drifting space hulks that dwarf even these. In the case of these larger vessels, regardless of whether they are an engine of war or a colony ark, their sheer size grants them weaknesses to be exploited, just as their immense bulk makes them difficult to destroy by more conventional means. For these mighty ships, damage to specific systems can be as fatal to them as poison injected into a living heart. The best way of doing this is often by breaching the hull of an enemy vessel and assaulting it with troops – if they are victorious then the ship may be crippled, captured intact or even destroyed from within.

Only the most skilled and able warriors are selected to undertake boarding assaults and attrition among them is always high, as is the glory gained should they succeed. The shipboard defenders who repel a boarding assault must fight with all the courage and ferocity they can muster if they are to save their vessel. For the loser death is certain, as aboard a star vessel surrounded by the infinite darkness of the cold and silent void, there is nowhere to retreat or run to.

The missions that follow draw on the Zone Mortalis special rules and stratagems as described in *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*. The scenarios as well as the Buried Alive! Catastrophic Damage table and many of the stratagems presented in *Betrayal* focus on the types of battles that might have taken place in the ruined hives and beneath the war-ravaged crust of Istvan III as the surface above was subjected to the ravaging life-eater virus. The rules that follow focus on boarding actions such as those fought between the Imperial Fists and the Iron Warriors during the Battle of Phall. As such, several elements of the Zone Mortalis rules from *Betrayal* are replaced with new ones presented later.

As with the core Zone Mortalis rules, this expansion has been prepared with Forge World's Realm of Battle Zone Mortalis

Complex terrain in mind, which is perfect for representing the narrow confines and twists and turns of the interior of a mighty warship, but of course such battles can be fought using other forms of tabletop terrain. One option is to pack Cities of Death buildings, bastions, bunkers and the like so close together that the gaps in between form corridors and chambers. Furthermore, it is entirely possible to fight battles on the outer surface of the vessel, requiring a very different kind of terrain set-up entirely (see Shipboard Battlefields on page 185).

Fighting a Zone Mortalis Boarding Assault

Instead of the Zone Mortalis Assault and Encounter missions presented in *Betrayal*, the Zone Mortalis Boarding Assault missions detailed on the following pages are used. Zone Mortalis Boarding Assault missions have an Attacker and a Defender, but not a Combatant. Which player takes which side should be decided before play begins. This may be done by mutual agreement or by rolling off and the winner picking which they will be.

Because Zone Mortalis actions are fought in quite dense terrain, and without the assistance of transport vehicles to get around, a smaller gaming area can often improve the experience of play. As such it is recommended that a 4' x 4' area is used for games of 1,000 points a side or less (which will offer an exciting battle lasting an hour or two), or a 2' x 2' for around 500 points a side. Larger tables are best used as part of team games.

Force Selection

The Zone Mortalis force selection restrictions given on page 169 of *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal* apply to boarding assaults.

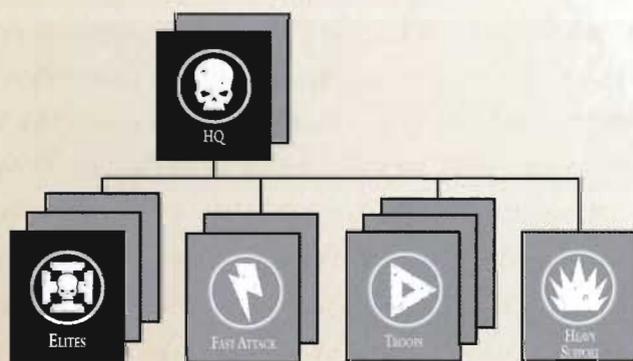
Warlords

In addition to the core Zone Mortalis rules regarding the use of Warlords, players may choose to make use of the Warlord Traits shown on page 185. These are split between the Defender and Attacker.

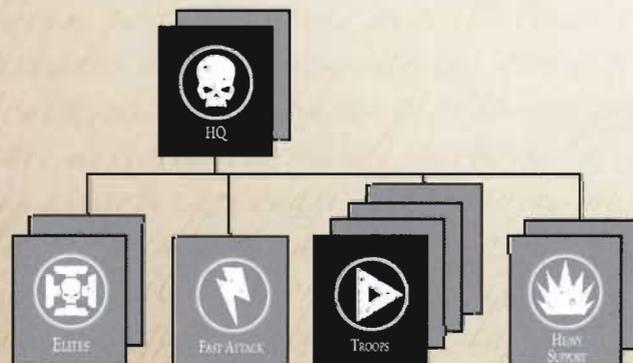
BULKHEAD DOORS

All of the rules for bulkhead doors and airlocks presented on page 170 of *Betrayal* apply, including those for locking, unlocking and destroying them.

Attacker



Defender



ZONE MORTALIS BOARDING ASSAULTS

SPECIAL RULES

The following Zone Mortalis rules presented in *Betrayal* apply when fighting a boarding assault mission:

Deadly Ground, Terrain Effects by Unit Types (in addition to which, models on a 60mm base passing through a small (2" wide) Zone Mortalis bulkhead door count the opening as dangerous terrain), Objectives in Zone Mortalis Games, No Barrage Weapons (in addition to which, Mole Mortars may not be used), Reserves and Deep Striking, Firestorm & Shrapnel, Nowhere to Hide, Blind Panic and Reaction Fire.

ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL SPECIAL RULES

The following optional special rules (see page 173 of *Betrayal*) may also be used in a Zone Mortalis Boarding Assault: Attrition, Enemy Unknown, Cold Void & Poisoned Air.

Instead of using the 'Buried Alive' Catastrophic Damage table presented on page 173 of *Betrayal*, the 'Blood in the Void' table on page 186 is used instead. This table presents a range of possible results unique to the deadly setting of combat onboard a warship.

Catastrophic Damage – Blood in the Void!

Most boarding actions take place against the backdrop of a fierce void battle in which immensely destructive forces quite beyond the combatants' control are unleashed that may even destroy the very ship through which they are fighting. Even when the boarded ship is not taking direct hits in the battle, the effects of prior damage can cause secondary explosions to rip through its hull or the vessel itself may be caught in a crossfire or ride through the blast waves of dying ships and lethally spinning debris.

These effects are represented in the game by the Blood in the Void Catastrophic Damage table. When the Catastrophic Damage special rule is in effect, in every turn after the first, each player should roll a D6 each at the beginning of the turn. Add the scores together and apply the results on the Blood in the Void chart on the next page. In addition, if any ordnance weapon has been used on the preceding turn, add +1 to the total.

Note that this special rule brings a hugely unpredictable (and enjoyably dangerous) element to your games, and should be treated as such.

Defenders Warlord Traits

D6	Result
1	Command Access: At the beginning of the Movement phase, a single bulkhead door in the Warlord's line of sight may be opened or closed. The Warlord may not be engaged in an assault when this Trait is used.
2	Ship-wide Alert: So long as the Warlord is already in play at the start of the turn, the Defender may add +1 to the result of all Reserves rolls.
3	Dominus Lux, Dominus Nox: When the Warlord is occupying a Zone Mortalis tile section, that entire section may be subject to the Night Fighting special rule if the controlling player wishes. Conversely, if the Night Fighting special rule is already in play, it may be reversed in that tile only. The use of this ability is declared at the beginning of the controlling player's turn.
4	Masters of all they Survey: The Warlord and their unit have the Move Through Cover special rule.
5	Grav Repellor Access: At the beginning of the game turn, the controlling player may declare that the entire Zone Mortalis tile section on which the Warlord is placed counts as difficult terrain. If it is already difficult terrain, it becomes dangerous terrain as well.
6	Purge Order: Once per game, so long as the Warlord is in play, instead of rolling as normal on the Catastrophic Damage – Blood in the Void table on page 186, the controlling player may declare that the Depressurisation result applies to a section of their choice.

Attackers Warlord Traits

D6	Result
1	Tip of the Spear: The Warlord counts as a scoring unit.
2	Ferocious Assault: Any enemy who makes a Reaction Fire test when charged by the Warlord and their unit must roll two D6 and discard the highest result.
3	Master of Ordnance: If the Warlord is in play, when a roll is made on the Catastrophic Damage – Blood in the Void table, the controlling player may add +1 or subtract -1 from the result.
4	Teleport Assault Veteran: When entering play by Deep Strike, the Warlord and their unit do not roll to Scatter.
5	Steady Presence: The Warlord and their unit are immune to the effects of the Blind Panic special rule.
6	Sixth Sense: The Warlord and their unit may avoid any damage effect caused by a Catastrophic Damage result by passing an Initiative test. If the test is failed, determine the damage as described.

SHIPBOARD BATTLEFIELDS

In Boarding Assault games, the terrain and unique nature of the battlefield is of particular importance. The area of conflict represents the internal spaces and decks of a mighty star vessel rather than ground terrain, but what this means in practice can vary immensely depending on what part of the ship is being fought over.

The majority of Boarding Assault missions are fought along the cramped companionways of the vessel's interior, best represented using the Forge World Zone Mortalis tiles. The availability of these tiles has made it possible to create thematic rules appropriate to the terrain and setting, but players using terrain of their own creation may find they need to alter the rules given to take their own scenery into account. Note that where the rules refer to a Zone Mortalis

tile, they are referencing a 12" x 12" section. Where players are using terrain of their own devising, simply divide the table into a grid to determine the area in question.

Other battles might be fought across far more open areas, such as cargo bays, launch decks, reactor chambers or even the lush arboretums carried on some colony arks. In these cases, a mix of Zone Mortalis tiles and more conventional terrain can be used, or in the case of a shipboard arboretum, areas of vegetation mixed in with the void ship terrain. In such cases, most of the rules presented here still apply, but players may have to adapt them to the specifics of their terrain.

Outer Hull

The expanse of a gigantic ship's outer hull can itself form a battlefield, and some of the

Catastrophic Damage Table – Blood in the Void

Roll	Result
2-5	Stable: Although the hull cracks and moans and the distant thunder of explosions can be heard, the effect is not strong enough to play a part in the battle this turn.
6-7	Power Surge: The ship's energy systems go into violent spasm, blowing out lighting arrays and either plunging the area into darkness or flooding it with a blaze of blinding sparks. If this result is rolled, then the Night Fighting rules are in effect this turn. If they were already in effect, they no longer apply this turn. Additionally, if they are being used, bulkhead and airlock doors may either open or shut on their own on a D6 roll of 5+ (roll once separately for each one).
8-9	Hull Quake: The ship's hull bucks and shakes, and gravity fluctuates wildly. All clear terrain is counted as difficult terrain for this turn, and already existing difficult terrain is counted as both difficult terrain and dangerous terrain for this turn.
10	Wildfire: A series of secondary explosions brackets the area of the battle as conduits erupt into flames and areas of the deck plating collapse or are blown in. The players roll off and the winner may place D6+1 Large Blast (5") templates anywhere on the table. Each explosion scatters 3D6" from the target point. Any model caught under a template suffers a Str 5 AP 5 Pinning attack.
11	Depressurisation: The players roll off and the winner indicates an area of the board entirely bounded by walls and/or door sections. Any doors in this area immediately close if they were open and the area becomes subject to the Cold Void special rule for the remainder of the game. Should any door bounding the area be opened or destroyed, the effect extends to the adjacent area as far as the next set of walls and doors, which themselves automatically shut. Needless to say, players will have to use common sense to define the exact extent of any areas that become subject to this special rule.
12	Structural Collapse!: The hull screams and shudders before part of it catastrophically fails and breaks apart, either blasting out air and debris into the beyond or shattering around the unfortunate combatants. The players roll off and the winner indicates a single Zone Mortalis board section of their choice. All models with a Toughness value in the affected area suffer an immediate Strength 4 Rending hit, and models with an Armour value (including special terrain, and so on) suffer a glancing hit on a 4+. In addition, the Depressurisation effect described in the previous result comes into play.

most desperate and bloody boarding actions are fought simply to force a breach in a ship's armoured flanks. In boarding actions of this kind, the outer surface of a ship forms the battlefield you are playing on, with attackers seeking either to force airlocks open or damage vital structures on the hull's surface.

Terrain on an outer hull table should be sparse, covering no more than a quarter of the table's area in total and should be made up of large regular structures and objects, along with antenna, gun towers and other forms of machinery representing the ship's systems. Obviously, no natural terrain or anything 'loose' to the ground should be used.

The Hungry Stars: When fighting on a ship's outer hull, the Cold Void special rules are always in effect. In addition, any blast attack that causes a Pinning test has a chance to send its victim spinning helplessly into the void! Instead of causing a Pinning test, any model caught in the blast who survives must pass a Strength test or be removed as a casualty (a roll of a 6 is always counted as a failure). Jump infantry may re-roll this test if it is failed.

Jump infantry move according to their usual rules, but when moving over 6" in the Movement phase must test for dangerous terrain. Models who fail the test are lost to the void and removed from the table.

REPEL BOARDERS! – CONDUCTING A HIT & RUN ATTACK AGAINST AN ENEMY VESSEL

A 'Hit & Run' attack is a crucial tactic used in ship-to-ship combat and involves one or more boarding parties forcing access to the target ship, fighting their way through the companionways with the aim of destroying key systems. Boarding an enemy vessel with the aim of destroying, crippling or capturing it is a gruelling task and one that will exact a high price in blood from both attacker and defender over a number of savage battles.

From the initial breaching attack to the ship master's final stand on the bridge, many different types of battle are possible. Furthermore, several games can be linked together, allowing players to determine the fate of the ship and of the courageous boarders. These linked battles can be thought of as a short but bitterly fought 'node-' or mini-campaign that can easily be played over the course of a single day or weekend, depending on the number and size of games the players wish to engage in.

Playing a Hit & Run mini-campaign

To play through a Hit & Run attack, the players should decide or randomly determine who will be the Attacker and who will be the Defender, and agree how many games they wish to play, based on the size of the target vessel on page 187. The vessel's size determines how many battles must be fought to capture it or destroy it, and which Mission Goals are used in each mission being played.

Victory earns the winning player a single 'Boarding point', used to track the overall damage done to the target warship and its defenders. Once the indicated Wrecking Missions are all played, both sides compare the Boarding points they have earned to determine their position in the final Salvation mission.

If the Attacking side is in the lead before this final mission, the vessel is in flames and doomed to a fiery death in the void, and the boarders are attempting to return to their assault boats or teleportation points and away to safety, secure in the knowledge of their victory.

If the Defending side is ahead in points going into the final game, the boarders have been repelled and the vengeful defenders are chasing them down through the bloodied companionways.

This system ensures that the results of each mission feed into the last game, but that the ultimate victor of the Hit & Run attack is not determined until the end of that mission. Even once the ship's death or survival is known, only once the Salvation mission is played are the players able to determine the ultimate fate of their resolute defenders or bold attackers, giving a satisfying range of results to the series of games. This gives four ultimate end results – the attackers might win a pyrrhic victory by destroying the ship but then perish along with it. The boarders



might destroy the ship and escape to safety. The attacker might be repelled and the ship saved but nonetheless escape to fight another day, or the boarders might be fought off before being hunted down and slaughtered.

All or Nothing

The 'All or Nothing' option is provided to add an additional level of tension to the boarding operation and should only be used

at the instigation of the Attacking player with the agreement of the Defending player. If chosen, the attackers mount an assault via the ship's outer skin, the aim being to cut through its armour and gain direct access to an especially vital area without the need to fight through kilometres of companionways and then all the way out again. Success means the attackers destroy the vessel and extract without further loss. Failure means

the certain death of the attackers as they are repelled, cast out into the cold void.

If this option is used, the special mission on page 193 is played. The winner of this special All or Nothing mission is the winner of the whole series of games, with no further games being played. Fortune favours the bold!

HIT & RUN AGAINST AN ESCORT FRIGATE

When conducting a hit & run against an escort-sized warship, three Boarding Assault missions are played:

- **Mission 1:** Void Strike
- **Mission 2:** Wrecking Mission (roll a D6 for the Mission Goal)

D6	Result
1-2	Drives
3	Augur Arrays
4	Weapons Batteries
5	Life Sustainers
6	Ship's Bridge
- **Mission 3:** Salvation

HIT & RUN AGAINST A CRUISER

When conducting a hit & run against a cruiser-sized warship, five Boarding Assault missions are played:

- **Mission 1:** Void Strike
- **Mission 2:** Wrecking Mission (Mission Goal: Drives)
- **Mission 3:** Wrecking Mission (roll a D6 for the Mission Goal)

D6	Result
1-2	Augur Arrays
3-4	Weapons Batteries
5-6	Life Sustainers
- **Mission 4:** Wrecking Mission (Mission Goal: Ship's Bridge)
- **Mission 5:** Salvation

HIT & RUN AGAINST A BATTLESHIP

When conducting a hit & run against a mighty battleship or warship, seven Boarding Assault missions are played:

- **Mission 1:** Void Strike
- **Mission 2:** Wrecking Mission (Mission Goal: Drives)
- **Mission 3:** Wrecking Mission (Mission Goal: Augur Arrays)
- **Mission 4:** Wrecking Mission (Mission Goal: Weapons Batteries)
- **Mission 5:** Wrecking Mission (Mission Goal: Life Sustainers)
- **Mission 6:** Wrecking Mission (Mission Goal: Ship's Bridge)
- **Mission 7:** Salvation

ZONE MORTALIS BOARDING ASSAULT MISSION – VOID STRIKE

The Void Strike mission represents the most perilous phase of a boarding assault for the attacker – the attempt to establish a foothold on the enemy vessel from which to press forward towards its most vital areas.

Table Set-up

The interior of the vessel is a tangled labyrinth of passageways and chambers, and should be represented appropriately. If you are using Forge World's Zone Mortalis Complex terrain boards, then they may be laid out in an agreed fashion or, alternatively, the players may take turns placing boards so that they take up the playing area, making sure that each table edge has at least one clear entry/exit point per player.

Ending the Game

The game has a variable game length as per a Standard mission (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Wipe Out!

Regardless of any other condition, if at the end of the game your enemy has no units left on the table then you are victorious!

Deployment

Before the game begins, both sides should divide their forces into two roughly equal forces based on their number of units. They must then decide which of these two forces is to be their spearhead and which of these two forces is to be their reserve. This arrangement represents the spearhead of an attacking force working its way through the vessel, and the defenders rallying to meet them.

The gaming table is then divided into four bands as shown on the diagram opposite. The Attacking player chooses either deployment zone 1 or deployment zone 4 as their deployment zone. Before they deploy their force, the Attacking player may swap around

the Zone Mortalis tiles in this zone should they wish, representing them choosing a target area for their breaching operation. The Attacking player then deploys their spearhead force anywhere in the deployment zone they have chosen.

The other player then rolls a D6. On a roll of a 4+, they may choose any of the three remaining areas in which to deploy their spearhead, otherwise they must deploy their spearhead in the deployment zone on the opposite table edge to that chosen by their opponent.

When the Attacking side's reserves become available, they enter play from the Attacker's table edge. The Defending side's reserves arrive from any other table edge.

First Turn

The Attacker has the first turn, unless the Defender can Seize the Initiative.



MISSION GOALS

The Attacker is attempting to gain a foothold on the target vessel, while the Defender must stop them doing so.

Primary Objective

At the end of the game, each player receives 1 Victory point for each enemy unit that has been completely destroyed. Units that are falling back at the end of the game and units that are not on the board at the end of the game count as destroyed for the purposes of this mission. Remember that Independent Characters are individual units and award Victory points if they are destroyed.

In addition, each side gains a Victory point for each of its scoring units that ends the game entirely within the opposing side's deployment zone and is not falling back. At the end of the game, whoever has the highest score is the winner.

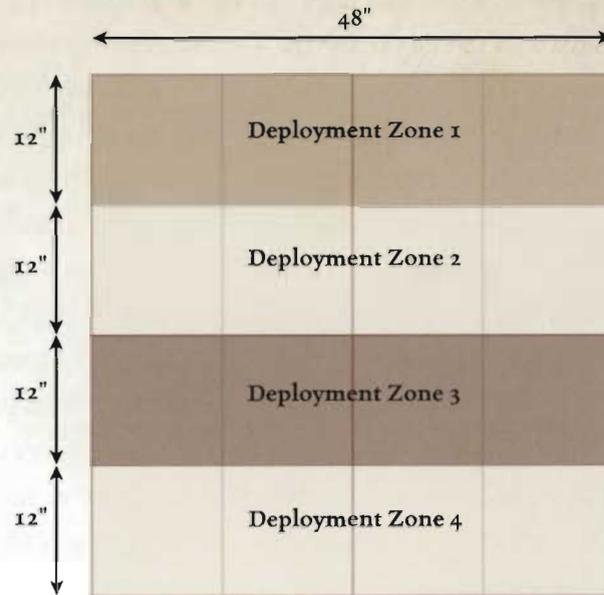
Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord and *First Blood* (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Mission Special Rules

Zone Mortalis special rules and Reserves.

VOID STRIKE



ZONE MORTALIS BOARDING ASSAULT MISSION – WRECKING MISSION

The Wrecking Mission represents an attack on one of several vital target areas, ranging from the warship's massive plasma drives to its command deck. The larger the ship, the more of these systems the attackers will have to cripple in order to bring about the death of the vessel.

Table Set-up

The interior of the vessel is a tangled labyrinth of passageways and chambers, and should be represented appropriately. If you are using Forge World's Zone Mortalis Complex terrain boards, then they may be laid out in an agreed fashion or, alternatively, the players may take turns placing boards so that they take up the playing area, making sure that each table edge has at least one clear entry/exit point per player.

Objectives

Depending on the Mission Goal, differing types of objectives may be used. These take several different forms as described. Because the Attackers cannot be certain of destroying them properly from a distance, these objectives count as having a 4+ invulnerable save against any shooting attack or blast damage they suffer, and cannot be harmed by events on the Catastrophic Damage – Blood in the Void table. When the Mission Goal calls for objectives to be destroyed, they have an Armour value of 11 and will be destroyed by any successful glancing hit scored against them.

Scoring Units

In the Zone Mortalis Boarding Assault mission, units drawn from either the Troops or Elites allowance count as scoring units where this is called for by the mission. A unit may only ever claim one objective at a time.

Ending the Game

The game has a variable game length as per a Standard mission (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Wipe Out!

Regardless of any other condition, if at the end of the game your enemy has no units left on the table then you are victorious!

Deployment

Before the game begins, both sides should divide their forces into two roughly equal forces based on their number of units. They must then decide which of these two forces is to be their spearhead and which of these two forces is to be their reserve. This arrangement represents the spearhead of an attacking force working its way through the vessel, and the defenders rallying to meet them.

The gaming table is then divided into quarters, and both players roll off to choose a deployment zone. The winner then picks which is to be their deployment zone and deploys their spearhead force anywhere in this area, but not within 6" of the centre of the board.

The other player then rolls a D6. On a roll of a 4+, they may choose any of the remaining areas in which to deploy their spearhead, otherwise they must deploy their spearhead in the area opposite that of their opponent.

Reserves arrive normally, entering the board from any table edge in their player's deployment zone.

First Turn

The player or side which deployed first has the first turn unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative.

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

Zone Mortalis special rules and Reserves.

SELECTING A MISSION GOAL

Before the game begins, determine the Mission Goal. If a series of games are being fought as described previously, the goal will be determined already, but if the game is being played as a one-off, the players can either agree between them which Mission Goal is being used, or roll on the following chart. This goal constitutes the mission's primary objective and determines its victory conditions.

D6 Result

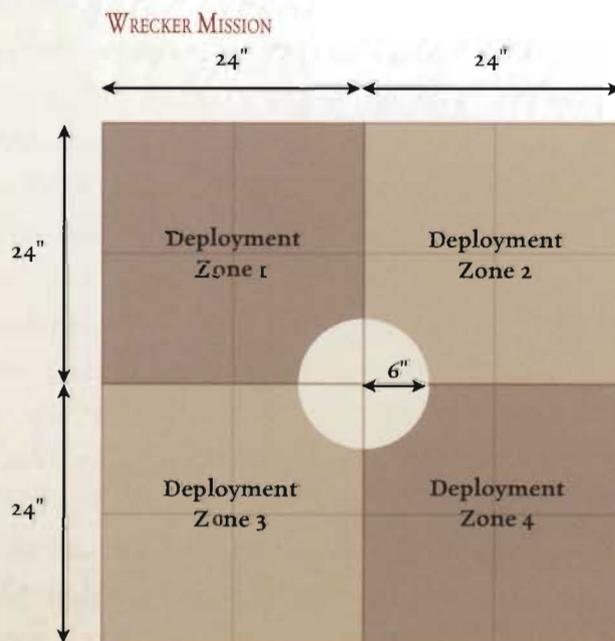
- | | |
|-----|-------------------|
| 1-2 | Drives |
| 3 | Augur Arrays |
| 4 | Weapons Batteries |
| 5 | Life Sustainers |
| 6 | Ship's Bridge |

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord (with the exception of the 'Ship's Bridge' Mission Goal) and *First Blood* (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Mission Goals

The aim of the attackers in this mission is to cripple or destroy one of the target vessel's vital systems or locations. Victory conditions and other special rules in play vary depending on which Mission Goal is in use.



Drives

A warship's drives are a prime target for any boarding assault mission, the attackers seeking to cripple the enemy vessel beyond any hope of escape.

The Attacker's goal is to destroy a number of vital drive components and thus bring the warship's mighty engines to a shuddering halt. The Defender identifies D3+2 Zone Mortalis board sections, and within each places a single objective marker representing a vital command terminal, plasma valve or power conduit. These markers should be placed as close to the centre of the board section, or one of its sub-chambers if appropriate, as possible. They may not be placed in impassable terrain or in such a way as to block a corridor or access point.

Cascade Failure: When an objective marker is destroyed, roll a D6. On a 6, it explodes with the same effect as rolling a 6 on the Vehicle Damage table. Furthermore, roll a D6 for the next closest objective marker. On a 6, that objective marker explodes too. Keep rolling for each objective marker in this way, until one does not explode or no more remain.

Primary Objective: At the end of the game, the Attackers gain 1 Victory point for each objective destroyed, and the Defenders gain 1 Victory point for each objective still on the table. The side with the most Victory points is the victor.

Augur Arrays

Without its myriad banks of auspexes, a warship is utterly helpless and likely to fall prey to any of a million different hazards, from solar flares to enemy attack. The central nodes of this massive network are high priority targets for boarders.

The Attacker's goal is to destroy a vital terminal bank used to relay critical sensor data to the bridge and other parts of the warship. The Defender identifies D3+2 arched wall sections on a single Zone Mortalis board section – these are the objectives and represent sensor command stations, bulkhead-mounted pict-slates and other similar systems.

Augur Ex-load: Infantry units with at least one model in contact with an objective have the Night Vision, Sniper and Split Fire special rules, so long as no enemy models are in contact with the same objective. Note that a unit may only count as being in contact with a single sensor bank at a time, and so the

player should declare which is in use if the unit is touching more than one.

Primary Objective: At the end of the game, the Attackers gain 1 Victory point for each objective destroyed, and the Defenders gain 1 Victory point for each objective still on the table. The side with the most Victory points is the winner.

Weapons Batteries

Even crippled and blinded, a warship might inflict enormous damage on any enemy vessel that draws too close. By silencing the vessel's mighty broadside batteries, the attackers' own ships may close to surround their quarry.

The Attacker's goal is to sabotage a vital component of the vessel's central arming mechanism so that the tank-sized macro-shells fired by the broadside batteries cannot be transferred from the ship's magazines to the turrets. The Defender identifies a single Zone Mortalis board section and on this indicates a square consisting of four deck plates (a total area of 4" x 4"). This square represents an ammunition lift platform, and is the Attacker's objective for this mission.

Explosive Cargo: Should the ammunition platform be destroyed, an additional D6 is rolled for all subsequent rolls on the Catastrophic Damage – Blood in the Void table, the lowest of the three results being ignored.

Primary Objective: At the end of the game, the Attackers win if the objective has been destroyed, and the Defenders win if the objective has not been destroyed.

Life Sustainers

Through a drastic tactic that will inevitably preclude the capturing of the target vessel intact, an attacker who wishes simply to destroy it no matter the cost might attempt to render a vessel's chambers and companionways inhospitable to all but the most hardy of combatants.

The Attacker's goal is to wreck vital components in the warship's environmental systems. The Defender places D6+2 objective markers on the table. These markers represent gas conduits, pressure seals and rad-sinks, without which the area will soon become inhospitable. The markers may be placed anywhere on the table other than within 6" of a table edge or 12" of another marker. They also may not be placed in impassable terrain.

Containment Failure: When an objective is destroyed, place a flamer (tear-drop shaped) template with the narrow end in contact with it and determine the template's alignment by rolling a Scatter dice. Roll a D6 for the attack's Strength and another D6 for its AP value. All units under the template take hits and damage as if hit by a template weapon attack, as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

Primary Objective: At the end of the game, the Attackers gain 1 Victory point for each objective destroyed, and the Defenders gain 1 Victory point for each objective still on the table. The side with the most Victory points is the winner.

Ship's Bridge

The ultimate prize of any boarding action is command of the vessel itself, a feat that may only be achieved by the storming of the command deck. The bridge is often the scene of the bloody climax of a boarding action as the captain and the senior officers sell their lives dearly in the final defence of the vessel.

The Attacker's goal is to kill the Defender's Warlord, who for the purposes and duration of the boarding action is considered to be the vessel's master and commander. The Defending player identifies a single Zone Mortalis board section as the command deck, and at the centre of this places a piece of terrain to represent the captain's command throne (if no such piece is available, simply indicate a 2" x 2" section of decking).

Command Throne: While the Defenders side's Warlord is on or in base contact with the command throne, that model has the Fearless and Counter-attack special rules, as do all friendly models on the command deck section of the Zone Mortalis board.

Primary Objective: At the end of the game, if the Defenders side's Warlord has been slain, the Attacker earns D6 Victory points. If the Warlord is not slain, the Defender earns D6 Victory points. In addition, each side earns an additional Victory point for each of its scoring units entirely within the command deck board section and not falling back. The side with the most Victory points is the winner.

ZONE MORTALIS BOARDING ASSAULT MISSION – SALVATION

This mission represents the attackers' desperate withdrawal from the target vessel. It may be that the boarders have succeeded in their mission to cripple the enemy warship and must now withdraw to their assault boats or teleportation points even as the ship tears itself apart around them. Conversely, it is entirely possible that the boarding action has met with failure having been repelled or perhaps recalled by the parent vessel, necessitating a hasty retreat as the ship's vengeful crew close in from every quarter.

Table Set-up

The interior of the vessel is a tangled labyrinth of passageways and chambers, and should be represented appropriately. If you are using Forge World's Zone Mortalis Complex terrain boards, then they may be laid out in an agreed fashion or, alternatively, the players may take turns placing boards so that they take up the playing area, making sure that each table edge has at least one clear entry/exit point per player.

Ending the Game

The game has a variable game length as per a Standard mission (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Wipe Out!

Regardless of any other condition, if at the end of the game your enemy has no units left on the table then you are victorious!

Deployment

The Defending side only is divided into two roughly equal groups, based on number of units. The Defending player then decides which of these two forces is to be their spearhead and which is to be their reserve. This represents the defenders sending out search parties to hunt down the boarders and calling in other parties as they close in on their prey.

The gaming table is divided into quarters, and both players roll off to choose a quarter. The Attacking side deploys their entire force within 6" of the table edge of that quarter. The Defender then places their spearhead force anywhere on the table that is not within 12" of an Attacker.

Reserves arrive normally, each unit entering the board from any table edge the controlling player wishes.

First Turn

The Attacker has the first turn, unless the other player can Seize the Initiative.

MISSION GOALS

The Attacker's goal in this mission is to outrun or break through their pursuers and reach an area from which they may escape back to their own vessel. The Defender's goal is simpler still – to run the boarders down and slay them without mercy!

Primary Objective

At the end of the game, the Attacker gains 1 Victory point for every one of its own units that has moved off the table edge opposite its own table edge. The Defender earns 1 Victory point for every one of the Attacker's units that remain on the table at the end of the game.

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord and *First Blood* (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Mission Special Rules

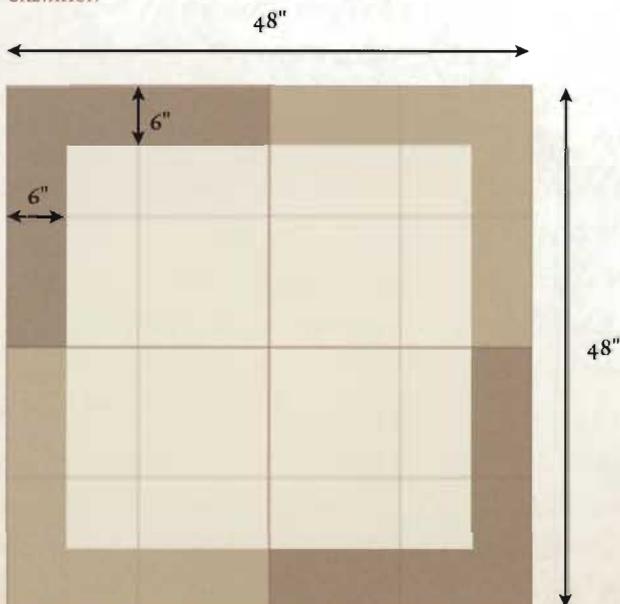
Zone Mortalis special rules and Reserves.

DEATH OF A BEHEMOTH

If this mission is being fought as the final game in a Hit & Run series of games and the Attacker has the most Boarding points, the ship is in flames and already breaking apart as it spews debris, plasma and voidsmen out into space. When rolling on the Catastrophic Damage – Blood in the Void table, add the Game Turn number to the result.

In addition, all Infantry models in the side with the highest number of Boarding points go into this mission with the Fleet and Fearless special rules.

SALVATION



ZONE MORTALIS BOARDING ASSAULT MISSION – KILLING BLOW

This mission represents a desperate gamble on the part of the attackers. Instead of launching a boarding mission against the target vessel's more easily accessible launch bays or loading decks, they attack the outer, armoured skin in an attempt to cut through and strike directly into the vessel's undefended and most vulnerable systems. A successful killing blow can conclude a hit and run attack before the defenders have even mustered to repel the boarders. If the attackers fail, they are doomed to a cold death as the void claims them.

Table Set-up

This mission is played on a 4' x 4' table, but does not use Zone Mortalis terrain. Instead, the table should be set up to represent the outer surface of the target voidship. No more than a quarter of the total surface area should be taken up by terrain, and this should be appropriate to the setting – sensor vanes, armoured crenulations, observation domes and the likes are all entirely acceptable, but no loose items or 'natural' features should be used.

The Armies

Both sides are chosen as normal for a Zone Mortalis Boarding Assault mission, and because the normal Zone Mortalis rules are not in play, armies that are in the range of 1,000-1,500 points are perfectly appropriate

if desired. The Defender may, if they wish, make use of a single Fortification choice in addition to their primary detachment, taking any enclosed Fortification type available (especially an Imperial Bastion, a Firestorm Redoubt, a Vengeance Battery, etc). These represent close defence turrets mounted on the exterior of the warship.

Zone Mortalis Stratagems are used in this mission, but rolls are not made on the Catastrophic Damage – Blood in the Void table.

Ending the Game

The game has a variable game length as per a Standard mission (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Wipe Out!

Regardless of any other condition, if at the end of the game your enemy has no units left on the table then you are victorious!

Deployment

An objective marker representing the point at which the attackers are attempting to cut their way through the ship's armour or force their way into a vulnerable access point should be placed in the centre of the table. The Attacker then deploys their entire army within 18" of the objective.

The Defender places any Fortifications chosen anywhere on the table outside of 18" of the centre point. These may not be occupied however and their weapons are always fired in the Automated Fire mode. The remainder of the Defender's army enters play from reserve. When available, each unit enters play from a randomly determined table edge (roll a Scatter dice for each arriving unit, the arrow indicating which table edge is used).

First Turn

The Attacker has the first turn, unless the other player can Seize the Initiative.

MISSION GOALS

The Attacker's goal is brutally simple – they must hold the objective in order to destroy the vulnerable, unguarded systems below. The Defender must stop them at all costs.

Primary Objective

The side who controls the objective when the game ends wins the battle.

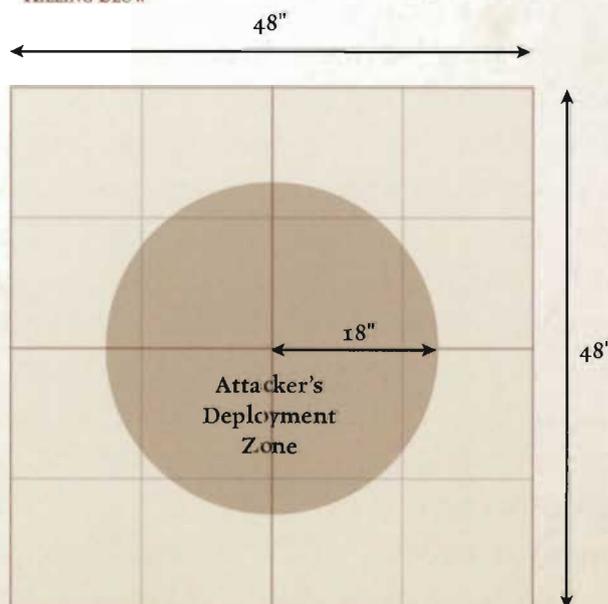
Secondary Objectives

None.

Mission Special Rules

Reserves (Defender only), Cold Void and Hungry Stars.

KILLING BLOW



ZONE MORTALIS BOARDING ASSAULT STRATAGEMS

The following Zone Mortalis Stratagems from *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal* are usable in a Boarding Assault mission: Tunnel Access, Breacher Charges, Spearhead Sentry Gun, Flanking Counter Assault, Lascutter, Sustained Assault, Fire Wasp, Defensive Strongpoint, Barricades and Traps.

In addition, the Zone Mortalis Boarding Assault Stratagems that follow may be used.

GENERAL STRATAGEM

Void Hardened Armour [Gear] [1 SP]

Choose a single unit in your force of any type. This unit is equipped with specialised additional armour and life support systems and now counts as being Void Hardened (see the Cold Void mission special rules from *Betrayal*).

This stratagem may be taken multiple times.

ATTACKER'S STRATAGEMS

Shock and Awe [Tactic] [1 SP]

The assault force calls in a thunderous barrage of ship-to-ship fire, cluster grenades or even teleporter charges in an attempt to disorient and throw the defenders off-guard. However, such attacks are seldom as precise as the attacker would like.

This stratagem may be declared and used at the start of any of the Attacker's turns in the Movement phase. The Attacker rolls a D6 for every Defending unit in play and not engaged in an assault. On a 4+, the target takes a Pinning test. The Defender now does the same for Attacker units not engaged in an assault, and they suffer a Pinning test on a 6.

Phase Field Generator [Gear] [2 SP]

Shown on Model

Choose a single Infantry model other than an Independent Character. This model is now equipped with a Phase Field Generator. This can be modelled as a back pack-mounted system, and does not preclude the model from using other weapons. Once per game, the model and their squad (including any Independent Characters that have joined it) may move through a closed bulkhead door or through a single Zone Mortalis wall section. This counts as dangerous terrain, representing the phase field flickering out of sync and trapping a warrior within the stuff of the bulkhead, and so any model that fails its Dangerous Terrain test is slain outright.

Devastation Drone [Unit] [2 SP]

Devastation drones are mobile demolition bombs armed with implosion charges designed to inflict maximum damage within a highly confined area (and thus reduce the risk to the voidship they are used on). They are compact, man-sized and quite sturdily constructed in order to resist enemy fire until they have reached their target zone. Many are often mounted on heavy track units to keep them mobile, although the best have anti-grav plates instead. The Devastation Drone is a single model with the following profile, and is deployed in addition to the player's spearhead forces.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Drone	2	-	3	5	1	1	-	10	4+

Unit Composition

- 1 Devastation Drone

Unit Type

- Infantry (20mm base)

Wargear

- Implosion Charge
- Void Hardened Armour

Special Rules

- Fearless
- Move Through Cover

Implosion Charge: The Devastation Drone may be detonated at any point in one of its controlling player's Shooting phases. Place the Large Blast (5") template over the centre of the Drone. Everything caught by the blast suffers a Str 8 AP 3 hit and the Devastator Drone, along with any removable terrain models (including bulkhead doors), is removed from play. The Drone may be detonated even if it is engaged in an assault at the time.

If the Devastation Drone suffers a wound, the Attacker should roll a D6. On the roll of a 1, the Drone detonates where it is as per the Implosion Charge rules just described. On a 2+ the Drone is removed normally.

DEFENDER'S STRATAGEMS

Security Airlocks and Bulkhead Doors [Tactic] [2 SP]

After deployment but before the roll for the first turn, the Defender indicates up to $D3+1$ bulkhead doors anywhere on the table. These doors are controlled by the Defending player, as per the rules for bulkhead doors on page 170 of *Betrayal*.

This stratagem may be taken multiple times.

Murder Servitor Auto-clade [Unit] [2 SP]

Declared when Deployed

The warship is equipped with chambers within which are sealed small numbers of skull-faced Murder Servitors, their hands replaced with grafted-on billhooks, spikes, axes and other equally crude but effective weapons. At the captain's command, every chamber is unsealed and the Murder Servitors are activated, tearing forth in a savage tide to scour the ship of boarders.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Murder Servitor	5	1	5	3	1	3	3	8	-

Unit Composition

- 3 Murder Servitors

Unit Type

- Infantry

Wargear

- Close combat weapon (Rending)

Special Rules

- Fearless
- Failsafe Mindlock

Failsafe Mindlock: Unless it has been joined by an Independent Character, an unengaged Murder Servitor Auto-clade that does not have line of sight to an enemy model must roll a D6 at the start of its turn. On a 4+, there is no effect. On a 1-3, the unit (and any attached Independent Characters) may not move, shoot or charge until their next turn.

Voidsmen Gang [Unit] [1 SP]

The defender is forced to press the voidship's crew into the defence of the vessel. Equipped with armoured void suits and emergency weapons, these crewmen are often far from the best trained soldiers, but will be well motivated, as nothing but death or slavery awaits them should their vessel be taken.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Voidsmen	2	2	3	3	1	3	1	7	5+

Unit Composition

- 6 Voidsmen

Unit Type

- Infantry

Wargear

- Close combat weapon
- Shotgun or laspistol
- Void Hardened Armour

ZONE MORTALIS LEGENDARY BOARDING ASSAULT MISSION – THE TAKING OF THE CONTRADOR

This 'Legendary' Boarding Assault represents a specific battle of the Horus Heresy – the taking of the Iron Warriors warship *Contrador* by a force of Imperial Fists led by their commander in the Phall system, Alexis Polux. This action took place at the climax of that devastating battle and saw Polux slay the Iron Warriors warleader, Golg, before taking over the *Contrador* and using it to escape the slaughter of the Phall system as his own vessel, the *Tribune*, burned.

This Legendary Mission can be played as a one-off game, but could also form part of a Hit & Run series of games as detailed on page 186. In this instance, this mission is best played instead of the final Wrecking Mission game, and victory should rest upon it with no closing Salvation mission being played.

In the Battle of Phall, the boarding of the *Contrador* was carried out by numerous Imperial Fists strike forces all attacking at once, with Polux's assault on the bridge being just one of many simultaneous attacks, albeit by far the most important. This being the case, the Imperial Fists player should only take Alexis Polux (whose rules are presented on page 271) and the Iron Warriors player should only take Erasmus Golg (as described on page 254) for this final mission of the Hit & Run series.

The Armies

The Imperial Fists force takes on the role of the Attacker in this mission and has 1,000 points available to it, with the usual restrictions imposed on the Attacker in a Zone Mortalis Boarding Assault mission (see page 184).

The Iron Warriors take on the role of the Defender and have 800 points available to them, with the usual restrictions imposed on the Defender in a Zone Mortalis Boarding Assault mission (see page 184).

Two Stratagem points are available to each side. Note that the Iron Warriors side does not have to pay any points for the defences described in the Table Set-up instructions.

Table Set-up

The Imperial Fists have teleported directly onto the command deck of the *Contrador*, and so the terrain should be set up to represent this, using Zone Mortalis tile sections on a 4' x 4' table. The Iron Warriors deployment zone is shown on the map below, and this area, representing the bridge, should be as open as possible while the rest of the table is as densely covered as possible, representing the numerous companionways leading to the ship's bridge.

Ending the Game

The game has a variable game length as per a Standard mission (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Wipe Out!

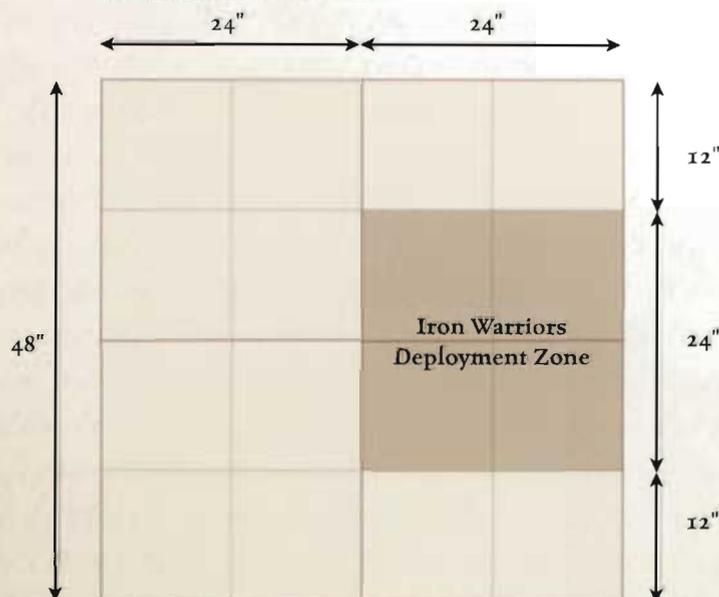
Regardless of any other condition, if at the end of the game your enemy has no units left on the table then you are victorious!

Deployment

The Iron Warriors player splits their force into a spearhead and a reserve, as per the normal rules as described in the Void Strike mission on page 188. The spearhead must contain the Iron Warriors Warlord, Golg. The spearhead is deployed in the Iron Warriors deployment zone, while the remainder stays in reserve until available. When their reserves become available, they move on from any table edge the Iron Warriors player wishes.

The Iron Warriors player may place up to 12" worth of defensive positions (use the rules for Aegis Defence Lines – see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook) or barricades (see the Barricades Zone Mortalis Stratagem on page 181 of *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*) anywhere in their deployment zone.

THE TAKING OF THE CONTRADOR





The Imperial Fists split their force into a spearhead and a reserve. The spearhead is deployed anywhere on the table outside of the Iron Warriors deployment zone and not within 12" of an enemy model, and all of its units must have at least one model within 12" of Alexis Polux (or its Warlord if a variation of this mission is being played). The other half of the Imperial Fists force is held in reserve, and enters play via Deep Strike if they are able (representing further waves of teleporting attackers) or by moving on from the table edge opposite the Iron Warriors deployment zone.

First Turn

The Iron Warriors player has the first turn – the Imperial Fists player may not attempt to Seize the Initiative.

MISSION GOALS

The Mission Goal of the Imperial Fists is a desperate one indeed, for they know their own vessel, the *Tribune*, is lost and victory is the only option. At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory points wins the game. If both sides have the same number of Victory points, the side with the most scoring units in the Iron Warriors deployment zone is the winner. If both have the same number even then, the game is a draw, both sides damned to burn along with their vessels.

Primary Objective

At the end of the game, every scoring unit in the Iron Warriors deployment zone is worth 1 Victory point to their side. In addition, at the end of the game, each player also receives

1 Victory point for each enemy unit that has been completely destroyed. Units that are falling back at the end of the game, and units that are not on the board at the end of the game, count as destroyed for the purposes of this mission.

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord and *First Blood* (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Mission Special Rules

Zone Mortalis special rules and Reserves.



THE TAGHMATA OMNISSIAH

A MECHANICUM ARMY LIST FOR BATTLES IN THE AGE OF DARKNESS

This section details the Taghmata Omnissiah for use as a main army list in your Horus Heresy games. Future Forge World products and releases will add to and combine with the rules and units presented here.

THE TAGHMATA OMNISSIAH

At the time of the outbreak of the Horus Heresy, the Taghmata Omnisiah was the principal type of operational military force of the trans-Martian Mechanicum and also the most numerous. To those outside the arcane secrets and strange mysteries of the Mechanicum, the Taghmata was a difficult thing to grasp, seeming at once a purely descriptive term applied to a bewildering tapestry of Magos, machine-works and indentured manpower, and also a rigid and labyrinthine hierarchical structure, the equal of any in the Imperium's armed forces in complexity. Its name, however, translated from the lingua-technis into the Terran-Gothic of the Imperial Court betrays its fundamental nature; Taghmata Omnisiah being related then as *'That which is divinely ordered for war'* – being the military reflection of a Forge World's essentially feudal power structure mustered for battle.

Alongside the elite Skitarii regiments, whose allegiance and command was owed ultimately to Mars, and the Collegia Titanica which comprised the planet-shattering Titan Legions, both of which organisations operated separate military traditions of their own, the Taghmata formed the great trinity, the *'Triad-Magna'*, of the Mechanicum's power during the Great Crusade. Besides these three there stood the 'lesser' independent and allied divisions of the Mechanicum such as the Knight Houses, the Ordo Reductor, the Explorators and the Legio Cybernetica, among others. Each was a great power in its own right, but all were dwarfed both in scale and reach by the great three.

The Feudal Order

Although Mars itself was a highly singular and unique entity in military terms, much as Terra itself was to the other worlds of the Imperium, each Forge World in the days of the Great Crusade was an independent power; a kingdom in its own right. While each owed fealty to the Lords of the Red Planet, in some cases these bonds were as absolute as satrapies, while in others the ties to the Mechanicum's seat of power were weaker, often simply through distance, and in the most extreme cases this fealty became questionable at best, and rivalry and the threat of rebellion against central control or internecine conflict distinctly possible. By this web of fealty, bound more by common doctrine, culture and mutually shared obsession rather than by principle, loyalty or duty was the shadow empire within the Imperium that was the Mechanicum before the Horus Heresy formed.

The proof of this hidden disunity was given unequivocal form during the Horus Heresy when, just as the Imperium was riven by the treachery of the Warmaster, so was the Mechanicum, already rife with internal discord and disharmony, all too readily riven alongside it, turning on itself as well as siding unequally for the warring parties of Traitor or Loyalist, with Forge Worlds and domains siding along long-held fealties and feudal obligations as much as they did for Emperor or Warmaster. It was of this complex feudal structure, both on the macro-scale which encompassed whole Forge Worlds and alliances of Forge Worlds, and on the local scale of orders, colleges, fanes and forge cities, that the Taghmata system was a direct reflection.



The Structure of the Taghmata

Each Forge World of this age was itself a patchwork web of complex loyalties, made up of independent and semi-independent domains, both in terms of physical infrastructure and territory and, perhaps more importantly, of knowledge, craft and sacred rite. So it was that each Forge World was not merely a powerhouse of industrial production vital to the wider Imperium which it provided for, but also an empire of secrets unto itself. While nomenclature and structure was hardly uniform between them, the masters of these empires were its Magos and Archmagos —its 'Leamed Ones'— each were lords both temporal and spiritual whose power was that of life and death in their own domains.

Each specialised in a particular facet of the Machine Cult's lore or commanded a sizable measure of their world's infrastructure as their portion, and by this right took their place in the synod that provided the Forge World with its governance and control. Each Magos commanded their own resources and military might, armies of retainers and cohorts of war machines outfitted and formed by their master's will and in accordance with their master's specialisation and proclivity. These were the Taghma, the building blocks from which the Taghmata were formed. When a Forge World's master, the Fabricator Archmagos-Intendant or Archmagos Archimandrite under whose rule the synod served, called a Taghmata into being, it was the sworn duty of each Magos to provide such troops and assets as was demanded of them, and through them such lesser Tech-Priests and adepts, sub-cults

and esoteric orders who owed fealty and vassalage to the High Magos were called on, and so on throughout the patterns of seniority and allegiance that criss-crossed the Forge World.

In many cases such calls to arms reached far beyond a Forge World and its star system to distant outposts, Expeditionary fleets and client worlds tied together by patronage or ancient treaty or pacts of allegiance. From its number the synod would choose several of its own, well versed in the arts of destruction, or with proven battlefield experience, to operate as the Taghmata's command structure. Such commands were much sought after by many Magos, both for the power and prestige they would bring, and for the potential for acquisition of new knowledge and reward they offered.

In practise a Taghmata could be of greatly varying size, disposition and scope, the nature of which was often determined by the role it was called on to serve. Before galactic civil war was to rock the Imperium, the Taghmata was primarily mustered as a purely defensive measure, commonly when a Forge World came under direct attack. On Forge Worlds such as Tigrus and Phaeton which came under frequent assault owing to the proximity of hostile xenos forces, this led to powerful and highly experienced Taghmata formations which effectively became standing armies, while others such as the isolated Stygies might go for decades without external threat, and so when needed Taghmata protocols were required to be enacted afresh. Smaller Taghmata elements would also be raised and formed during the Great Crusade to arm and equip Explorator expeditions, to garrison outposts in hostile or hazardous regions of the void. They were also formed more rarely to provide armed diplomatic escorts or deputations to the Expeditionary fleets and Rogue Trader Militant fleets. The latter two needs, however, were primarily the province of the specialist military commands of the Mechanicum not loyal to any single Forge World: the Titan Legions, the Ordo Reductor, the Legio Cybernetica and the Skitarii of Mars.

The Cataclysm

During the cataclysm of the Horus Heresy, the Taghmata was called upon on every Forge World and outpost as war and the threat of attack was constant. Soon, the Mechanicum was engaged in a battle for survival both against outside enemies and against rival factions of their own kind, and what had been an organisation of defence became just as frequently a means of attack, whether to claim vital resources, expand a sphere of influence or simply to annihilate an enemy. As the bloody struggle worsened, many Forge Worlds fought to the death to preserve their sovereignty from invasion by former allies, while others took an active and aggressive hand in the unfolding war, their Taghmata fighting alongside Loyalist or Traitor, or simply for their own ends. So it was that Mechanicum slew Mechanicum, Mechanicum slew Legiones Astartes and Legiones Astartes slew Mechanicum. In desperate battle were dark sciences and ancient secrets better left undisturbed turned to, either in vain hope of ensuring survival, or by wakened ambition and lust for power, and the nightmarish terrors of the Age of Strife were unleashed once more.





"When Deimos and Phobos are at apogee and perigee, there thou shalt see the face of the Ommissiah. Clad in a body of gold, and wreathed in the firmament of the storm, the Lord of all Machines will stand in the midst of his people, and shall reign over all the dominion of Man. Great shall be the glory of his presence, that the sun shall hide his face in shame. For verily I say unto you that he shall be the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the master of flesh and the forger of metal. He shall be a light that shineth in darkness and a banisher of ignorance."

The Coming of the Ommissiah, exloaded by Pico della Moravec, Primus of the Brotherhood of Singularitarianism

USING THE TAGHMATA OMMISSIAH ARMY LIST

The Taghmata Ommissiah is a core Mechanicum army list for the Horus Heresy, representing the feudal-military might of the Imperium's Forge Worlds and may be used as both primary and allied detachments – see the Choosing your Army section of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook for more information about selecting forces. The rules presented there for primary detachments, Dedicated Transports, special characters, etc, apply to forces chosen for this army, which may be used both with the system found there as well as those for Zone Mortalis and Age of Darkness battles.

In terms of Faction and Alliance levels, the Taghmata Ommissiah uses the 'Mechanicum' band of the Allies in the Age of Darkness table found on page 185 of *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*.

Legio Cybernetica: The Legio Cybernetica army list found in *The Horus Heresy Book Two – Massacre* is considered a separate army which may ally with the Taghmata as Sworn Brothers. Note that the Vorax class Battle-automata Maniple (Fast Attack), and Thanatar class Siege-automata Maniple (Heavy Support) detailed in the Taghmata Ommissiah army list may also be selected as part of the Legio Cybernetica army list.

ADDITIONAL UNITS

As well as the army list presented here, the following additional previously published units can be used as part of the Taghmata army:

HQ

- Magos Reductor Calleb Decima (*The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*, page 277)

Fast Attack

- Crusade Fleet Support Wing (*The Horus Heresy Book Two – Massacre*, page 276)
- Tarantula Sentry Gun Battery (*The Horus Heresy Book Two – Massacre*, page 196)

Heavy Support

- Mechanicum Land Raider (*The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*, page 271)

Lords of War

- Warhound Scout Titan (*The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*, page 273)
- Reaver Battle Titan (*The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*, page 274)
- Minotaur Artillery Tank (*Imperial Armour: Apocalypse*, page 31)
- Falchion Super-heavy Tank (see page 241).

MECHANICUM WARLORD TRAITS

When generating their Warlord Traits, a Legio Cybernetica or Taghmata Ommissiah Warlord may either roll on one of the Warlord Traits tables in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook, or instead roll on the following table:

WARLORD TRAITS TABLE

- | D6 | Warlord Trait |
|----|---|
| 1 | Master of Mechanisms
<i>The Magos is a true artificer, and the war engines and automata at his command are a testament to his powers.</i>
Select one unit of Monstrous Creatures or a single vehicle squadron with at least one Armour value of 12 or higher in the same detachment as the Warlord. That unit gains the It Will Not Die special rule. |
| 2 | Perfected Targeting
<i>The preternatural augmented mind of the Magos can predict the precisely optimal targeting resolution to sow destruction amid the foe.</i>
While your Warlord is alive, select a single weapon either they are carrying or that is on a unit within 6" of them in the Shooting phase with the Heavy type. That weapon counts as being twin-linked for this turn. |
| 3 | Predictive Augury
<i>The Magos may respond with lightning-swiftness to enemy attack.</i>
The Warlord, and any unit they have joined, hit on a 5 or 6 when firing Overwatch. |
| 4 | The Death of Flesh
<i>The Magos has made a particular study of the weaknesses of flesh. They and the units under their command have therefore become expert in exploiting pain and suffering to achieve tactical objectives.</i>
All units within the detachment have the Preferred Enemy (Infantry – all types) while within 3" of an objective. |
| 5 | Dread Rites
<i>The Magos carries with them secret knowledge of the Dark Age of Technology, and has seen and done things no unaltered mind can do and remain sane.</i>
The Warlord, and any unit they join, both cause Fear and are immune to its effects, and have the Adamantium Will special rule. |
| 6 | Battlefield Analysis
<i>The Magos has studied the precise topography of the battlefield and calculated the optimum avenues of assault.</i>
At the start of the game after deployment but before the battle begins, nominate a single piece of terrain in the enemy's deployment zone. The cover save provided by this terrain is lowered (ie, made worse) by -1 (5+ becoming 6+, and so on). |



"We are all but a weapon in the right hand of the Emperor."

Exhortationes Principis
Titannorum, Divisio Militaris

THE BELICOSA POTENTIS OMNISSIAH

BEING AN EXEMPLARY ILLUSTRATION OF THE MILITARY-FEUDAL ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE
DEPICTED IN ABSTRACT OF A TRANS-MARTIAN FORGE WORLD, AS RENDERED BY THE OFFICE
OF THE PRINCIPIA MILITARIS OF THE GREAT CRUSADE

THE ORDO REDUCTOR

Mendicant order of Tech-Priests devoted to the arts of siege craft, demolition and mass destruction

The Ordo Reductor is essentially nomadic, gravitating to areas of intense warfare, but maintains links to major Forge Worlds for resupply and support

THE PREFECTURE MAGISTERIUM

Doctrinal covenant of the Machine Cult charged with preserving dogma and the persecution of techno-heresy. Magisterium Cohorts and hunter-killer clones are maintained on all Forge Worlds under the authority of the Archmagos Intendant

THE BASILIKON ASTRA

The division of the Machine God's servants tasked with the construction, use and operation of void craft and interstellar vessels. This order's divisions by their nature control the outer reaches of a Forge World's systems and so stand apart from the planetary synods, but are still tied to them by dependence and ancient tradition

THE LEGIO TITANICUS

The division of the Titan Legions, the princeps and moderatii of the Legio Titanicus are charged with the baleful right and onerous duty of mastering and maintaining the God-Machines that are the avatars of the Ommissiah's destructive wrath

The manifold Titan Legions are spread through the Ommissiah's domains as their shield and their strength, as well as operating as the hammer of the Great Crusade

The Legio Titanicus form an ancient military society existing in parallel with the Mechanicum priesthood, including their own support structure, domains and military retainers (Scutarii)

THE SKITARIUS

Ancient standing armies of elite cybernetically and genetically engineered troops, originating on Mars and principally loyal to the office of the Fabricator General

The Skitarii, also known as the Mechanicum Protectors, are not members of the priesthood, but follow their own unique martial traditions and sub-cult of the Ommissiah

Skitarii regiments maintain entirely separate structures of organisation and tactical deployment outside of the Taghmata and are assigned at the behest of the Lords of Mars

THE KNIGHT HOUSES OF THE QUESTORIS FAMILIA

The ruling noble houses of the Knight Worlds form their own unique culture and traditions which have become closely linked with the Mechanicum over time. Households often serve alongside the Titan Legions and the Taghmata as vassal warriors or allied forces, responding to ancient pacts of mutual support in times of war

THE AUTOKRATOR

Ground Armour
Pioneer Forces
Mobile Artillery Units
Tech Guard Regiments

BONDED CYBERNETICA

Battle-automata
Siege-automata
Bonded Tech-Priest Convenants

MACROTECHNIA

Enginseer Convenants
Tech-thrall Combat Units
Macro-Machina
Ordinatus Locum
Technographica Determininus

ARCHMAGOS INTENDANT
(Planetary Governor)

Fealty to more powerful
Forge Worlds and
ultimately Mars

Ranked as Imperial Commander, with full executive, temporal and spiritual power over their domains, with notional fealty only to Mars and the Emperor

Note that various alternative nomenclatures are used on different Forge Worlds (e.g., Hierophant Technis [Ryza], Gnostarch [Antioch Majoris], Fabricator Potentate [Tigrus], Vox-Omnis [Incaladion], Revered-Comptroller [Phaeton Prime])

THE HOLY SYNOD OF THE LORDS MAGOS

(Ruling Feudal-Clerical Oligarchy of the Forge World)

Each member of the synod is a magnate and sub-ruler of their own domain or forge-fane, as well as a high ranking priest of the Machine Cult, tied to the larger web of the Forge World through a complex network of alliances, preference, arcane technological speciality and religious rank

(Notional Synod seniority by title in order of power)

The Archmandriture [Chamber Cardinal]

The Archmagos
The Magos Majoris
The Magos Ordinary

THE TAGHMATA OMNISSIAH

Being a military protocol enacted in times of war or to create detached military formations varying in size from sub-division to macro battle group, constructed by predetermined configurations of retainer troops, Tech-Priests, war engines and support systems, placed under the command of a number of Magos of the Synod and commanded by Magos/Archmagos designated 'Prime'

Notable divisions of techno-arcana among the Synod commonly include:

- Hesphestari
- Provender
- Explorator
- Genetor
- Logis
- Vulpaxis
- Metallurgicus
- Lictanex
- Dominus
- Cordantor
- Mhalagra
- Alchemys
- Myrmidex
- Lachrimallus

(See attached sub file 7628n//22 for additional notations...)

THE LEGIO CYBERNETICA

Sacred order devolved into cohorts charged with the construction and use of Battle-automata, existing both as fully independent structures and sub-factions owing either pacts of mutual support or alliance with the Synods of major Forge Worlds.

THE MAGOS MILITANT/SECUTARIUS

Lower ranked Magos as well as assigned Tech-Priests and prelates of militant sub-cults of the Mechanicum utilised by the Taghmata as a field command and control cadre. Each will commonly possess their own acolytes, retainer forces and sub-units owing them direct fealty

PRINCIPAL TACTICAL DIVISIONS OF THE TAGHMATA

MUNITORIA LOGIS

Provender of Munitions and Wargear,
Servitor and Drone Cohorts
assigned to Taghmata service
Signatus Avox
Lexmechanicus Auditorii

LACYRAEMARA

Indentured Labour Units
Adsecularis Modified Troops
Bio-alchem Cadres
Tech-Priest Lacyraemarta Covenants
Cyber-hybrid Carnivora

**ASSOCIATED ORDERS
& SUB-CULTS MILITANT**

(Composition will vary greatly depending on the Taghmata's disposition, role and the tendencies and alliances of the governing Forge World)
Myrmidon Cult, etc
Corpuscarii Cult, etc
Explorator Forces, etc

TAGHMATA OMNISSIAH WARGEAR & SPECIAL RULES

Anbaric Claw

The Anbaric claw is a defensive system mounted on war machinery utilised by the Mechanicum Taghmata Ommissiah. Using a battery of electro-chem capacitors to generate a massive pulse shock of electromagnetic force through a vehicle's hull, the Anbaric claw is able to electrocute and incinerate nearby living creatures as well as disrupt and burn out enemy machinery.

- A vehicle may trigger its Anbaric claw in any turn in which it is being attacked in the Assault phase, and at any point when it is either being rammed by another vehicle or is ramming an enemy vehicle itself, with the limitation that the Anbaric claw can only be used once per player turn.
- When the claw is triggered, it automatically strikes all units within 1" of the carrying vehicle's main hull, whether friend or foe (although models being transported inside vehicles are unaffected). If triggered during a Ram, it affects any other vehicles the carrier contacts, to the facing where contact takes place.
- The Anbaric claw inflicts D6 hits on any unit it strikes. If being used in the Assault phase, the Anbaric claw's effects are worked out at Initiative 10. If being used while a Ram is being conducted, its effects are simultaneous with working out damage caused by ramming.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Anbaric claw	-	5	4	Melee, Rending

Blessed Autosimulacra

Many Mechanicum war machines are fitted with extensive automatic repair systems. These range from self-healing alloys sourced from irreplaceable relic-stockpiles, to on-board servitor-simulacrum which go to work tirelessly should their charge be damaged to shore up hull breaches and re-route severed fuel and circuit lines while chanting rites of revivification.

- If the vehicle has suffered Hull Point damage, at the end of the controlling player's turn roll a D6. On a result of a 6, one lost Hull Point is restored.

Corposant Stave

A battle stave fitted with powerful shock charge generators, this weapon's origins lay with the secretive and seldom seen Corpuscari sub-cult of the Mechanicum. It is also often seen in the hands of the militant adepts of the Prefecture Magisterium, as it is particularly useful in laying low renegade machines and Heretek priests alike.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Corposant stave	-	User +1	4	Melee, Two-handed, Concussive, Haywire*

*For each successful hit against a target vehicle in close combat, roll once on the Haywire table (see the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook) instead of rolling for armour penetration normally.

Cybernetica Cortex

Comprising a synthetic 'brain' of sorts of the most advanced Battle-automata, a Cybernetica cortex consists of an armoured casing containing a complex bio-plastic mass which extrudes nerve-like grey tendrils into the body of the robotic frame into which it is housed, invigorating it with strange false-life. Far beyond a simple cogitator in capacity, it is neither truly alive nor sapient like the dread and inhuman 'Silica Animus' feared of old. Instead, it is akin to a primal web of bellicose instinct, guided not by self-awareness and reason, but by a programmed framework of encoded behaviour, comprising simple and exacting instructions and commands. The result is a superior, self-guided weapon; a machine-predator that will actively and instinctively pursue its foes as well as act with a degree of tactical sense and self-preservation beyond anything a servitor is capable of, but without the dangers of revolt and the development of blasphemous intelligence—or so the Legio Cybernetica claim.

Special Rules: Models with a Cybernetica cortex have the Programmed Behaviour, Fearless, Cybernetic Resilience and Adamantium Will special rules.

Programmed Behaviour: Unless within 12" of a friendly model equipped with a Cortex Controller, the following restrictions are placed on the unit's use in the game. These restrictions do not apply if the chosen model is already locked in an assault:

- **Methodical:** The Battle-automata may not make sweeping advances or Run moves.
- **Target Priority:** If enemy models are within 12" and within line of sight during their Shooting phase, the Battle-automata Maniple must fire all its weapons against the closest enemy unit it is able to harm. If this is not the case, they are free to select targets as normal.
- **Onslaught:** If enemy units are within 12" during their Assault phase, the Battle-automata must attempt to charge the closest enemy unit if able. Note that the Battle-automata may still only charge the same unit it fired at if it fired in the Shooting phase. If consolidating after combat, they must do so towards the nearest enemy model if one is present within 12".
- **Fire Protocols:** A model with this rule may fire up to three of its weapons once each in the Shooting phase – this must be against the same target.

Cybernetic Resilience: Models with this special rule straddle an existence between machine creature and synthetic life, making them both resilient to the particular frailties of the organic, but also partly subject to the vulnerabilities of the pure machine.

- Successful wounds scored by attacks with the Poisoned or Fleshbane special rules must be re-rolled against this model.
- In addition to any other effects they cause, attacks with the Haywire special rule will cause an additional wound on a D6 result of a 6 against the model. Roll for this wound separately, saves may be taken as normal.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Cyber-ocularis	2	3	2	3	1	4	1	9	3+

Unit Composition: 1 Cyber-ocularis

Unit Type: Jet Pack Infantry

Special Rules: Stealth, Fearless, Warning Relay, Augur-sweep

Wargear: Twin-linked laspistol

Warning Relay: A Cyber-ocularis confers the Interceptor special rule to all friendly models within the same detachment within 3".

Augur-sweep: Enemy units within 12" reduce their cover saves by 1 when fired at by units from the same detachment as the Cyber-ocularis.

Cyber-ocularis

A form of task-dedicated servo-automata designed foremost to be an extension of its master's senses on the wider battlefield, the Cyber-ocularis is more robustly constructed than a standard cyber-familiar, often resembling an artificial raptor or strange deathly hybrid creature of corpse and machine.

- Cyber-ocularis are treated as individual units on the tabletop (except where listed below), and have their own profile and equipment, but are never scoring or contesting units, can never join or be joined by other models, and do not block line of sight.
- During deployment, Cyber-ocularis must be deployed at the same time as the model who purchased them as part of their wargear, and within 6" of them at the start of the game (or held within the same transport vehicle).
- Cyber-ocularis may be carried inside a transport vehicle with their master, but not otherwise, and do not count as separate units for this purpose.

Cortex Controller

This control and signalling device uses data-djinn to command Battle-automata fitted with Cybernetica cortex systems, allowing the wielder to witness the battlefield through the automata's own senses as well as monitor their status and exact precise control over their actions. Only the most highly experienced and specifically augmented adepts of the Mechanicum and the Forge Lords of the Legiones Astartes can hope to fathom the use of these fractious devices and successfully interpret the storm of data streaming from their un-living minions.

- The presence of a Cortex Controller within 12" of part of a unit of friendly models with the Programmed Behaviour special rule at the start of any phase means that special rule is negated for that phase and their controlling player is free to use them as any other unit.

Reactor Blast

Most Battle-automata are powered by compact reactor cores which pulse like living hearts within them, pumping the electrically charged vitae fluids from their cortex around their frames and affording them the ability to self-repair and react more in the manner of living creatures than inert machines. Should these reactors be breached at last, they can detonate, consuming the Battle-automata's remains in a fiery explosion.

- When a Battle-automata loses its last wound, roll a D6. On the result of a 6, the Battle-automata explodes, inflicting a Str 4 AP - hit on all models within D6".

Atomantic Shielding

Certain Battle-automata designs feature particularly powerful atomantic reactor cores designed to energise defensive field generators built into the Battle-automata's exterior armour plating, as well as power its combat systems.

- A model with Atomantic shielding has a 5+ invulnerable save against shooting attacks and explosions, and a 6+ invulnerable save against attacks suffered in close combat. In addition, if the Battle-automata suffers a Reactor Blast explosion, add +1" to the radius of the blast caused.

Mechanicum Protectiva

This term covers a variety of energy field and defensive shield projectors devised by the Magos of the Mechanicum to protect themselves both on the battlefield and from assassination by their rivals. For this reason, the frequency and modulation of each device is a closely guarded secret.

- A model equipped with a Mechanicum Protectiva gains a 4+ invulnerable save.

Enhanced Targeting Array

Certain Battle-automata are fitted with additional slaved cogitators and sub-incunabula machine-spirits devoted to relentlessly tracking and targeting any and all potential threats in range.

- A model with this upgrade has its Ballistic Skill increased by +1 and the cover saves of enemy targets are reduced by -1.

Cyber-familiar

This is a term that encompasses a variety of semi-autonomous devices such as servo-skulls, mek-spiders and other smaller drone units and lesser haemonculites tied into the direct neural control of their operator. These minion-drones are an extension of their master's will and provide them with a host of additional senses and capabilities.

- A Cyber-familiar adds +1 to its owning model's invulnerable save (to a maximum of 3+) or an invulnerable save of 6+ if they do not already possess one.
- They allow their owning model to re-roll failed characteristic tests other than Leadership tests and failed Dangerous Terrain tests.

The Cyber-familiar may be either modelled as part of the character equipped with them, or on separate bases and kept in coherency. However, they are discounted as models, have no separate profile, make no attacks, need not be transported, etc, and are simply moved out of the way in combat or if they interfere with the game.

Flare Shield

Another of the Mechanicum's specialised systems that only their high adepts truly understand, a flare shield is a directional electromagnetic flux field generator rumoured by some to be a product of the Dark Age of Technology from a source best left forgotten. Flare shields lack anything like the defensive power of a Titan's void shields, but are able to deflect and disperse glancing or diffuse impacts and shrapnel, and can reduce the power of more focused strikes with great reliability.

- A flare shield operates against shooting attacks that strike the vehicle's front arc. It reduces the strength of attacks by weapons with the Template or Blast type by -2, and other shooting attacks' Strength by -1.
- A flare shield has no effect on close combat attacks or attacks inflicted with the Destroyer rule.

Battle-automata Power Blades

Fitted to the primary weapon-limbs of some Battle-automata, these sabre-like bladed weapons use molecular disruption fields super-charged with power from the Battle-automata's core. They are a close combat weapon with the following profile:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Power blades	-	User	2	Melee, Rending

Infravisor

This simple visor allows its user to access a wide range of spectrums. So equipped, they can see better in low-light conditions than a normal human could see in optimal daylight. A model equipped with an infravisor has the Night Vision special rule. However, a unit that contains one or more models with an infravisor counts as Initiative 1 when taking Blind tests.

Lightning Gun

This aptly named weapon takes the form of a baroquely designed carbine connected to a micro-reactor core. It fires an ionizing las-beam, down which a powerful phased discharge of electromagnetic force is unleashed, and is equally effective at slaughtering the living and overloading machine targets.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Lightning gun	18"	7	5	Heavy 1, Shred, Rending

Shock Chargers

Used to augment the combat power of Legio Cybernetica Battle-automata, these amplify the force of the Battle-automata's blows with powerful electrostatic discharges which detonate like thunderclaps when striking their target.

- A model equipped with shock chargers gains the Concussive special rule added to all of their close combat attacks regardless of type (including Hammer of Wrath, Smash, etc).

Irradiation Projectors

'Irad' or 'Rad' projectors are potent anti-personnel weapons and relics of the Dark Age of Technology used exclusively by the militant forces of the Mechanicum. They commonly comprise a bulky generator unit terminating in a dish-like projector that unleashes a powerful blast of deadly cross-spectrum radiations. Victims caught in the blast of such a weapon suffer an appalling death as they are boiled alive from within – their tissues blasted apart on a cellular level. Thick barriers of solid matter between the beam and the target provide some protection from this effect, though victims who survive the initial blast will often die later of extreme radioactive contamination.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Lucifex	6"	2	5	Pistol, Flesh Bane, Rad-phage
Rad/Irad-cleanser	Template	2	5	Assault 1, Fleshbane, Rad-phage
Irradiation engine	Template	4	3	Heavy 1, Fleshbane, Rad-phage, Torrent

Servo-arm

This is a heavy industrial claw-limb and manipulator array often directly spliced into a Techmarine's or Magos Adept's nervous system. As well as making for a powerful tool, they can also be wielded in battle as a clumsy but savagely powerful weapon.

- A model with the Battlesmith special rule may add +1 to their Repair roll result if they are also equipped with a servo-arm.
- A model equipped with a servo-arm may make an additional single attack per turn as well as any they would normally be eligible to make. This is done using the weapon profile shown below:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Servo-arm	-	8	2	Melee, Unwieldy

Machinator Array

A machinator array is a complex and intricate system of manipulators, augmetic body replacements, inbuilt tools, sensors and energy arc-projectors utilised by the most able Magos of the Machine Cult. Each array is unique to the Magos who bears it implanted into their flesh and cerebral cortex, and they depend upon them more than their own weak flesh.

- A machinator array adds +1 to its user's Toughness characteristic and provides the Night Vision special rule. It also incorporates a flamer and an inferno pistol, and the user can either opt to fire both of these weapons in the Shooting phase, or one of them and another ranged weapon the model is carrying.
- A model with the Battlesmith special rule may add +2 to their Repair roll result if they are also equipped with a machinator array.
- A model equipped with a machinator array may make two additional attacks per turn in close combat as well as any they would normally be eligible to make. This is done using the weapon profile shown below:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Machinator array	-	+1	2	Melee, Unwieldy, Shred, Armourbane

Mechanicum Bolter Weaponry

The Mechanicum utilise a variety of bolter weaponry which, while operating on similar principles to the standardised weapons of the Legiones Astartes, are often more sophisticated and difficult to maintain. Such weapons include the Maxim; a relatively compact, short-chambered rotary boltgun capable of a high rate of fire, and the Mauler pattern bolt cannon, a fearsomely baroque and bulky automatic cannon using substantially larger and denser shells than a standard heavy bolter.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Maxim bolter	12"	4	5	Assault 3
Mauler bolt cannon	24"	6	3	Heavy 3, Pinning

Photon Thruster Weapons

The arcane secrets of these deadly but unstable beam weapons are jealously guarded by the adepts who hold them, leading some to believe the technology is xenos in origin. When fired they unleash howling, needle-thin beams of utter blackness able to pierce the densest matter, slashing and slicing armoured men and machinery apart like razors, leaving pulsing waves of darkness in their wake. The exotic power sources of these unearthly weapons are extremely unstable, and catastrophic failure can lead to its firer being consumed by raging black flames until only dust remains.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Photon gauntlet	12"	5	2	Assault 2, Blind, Gets Hot
Photon thruster	48"	6	2	Heavy 2, Lance, Blind, Gets Hot
Darkfire cannon	60"	7	2	Heavy 2, Lance, Blind, Gets Hot

Graviton Imploder

The gravity manipulation weapons of the early Great Crusade had their origins —like much of the Mechanicum's arsenal— in the largely lost and ill-understood arts of bygone ages. The technology involved, while extremely powerful, was likely not meant to be weaponry at all, and was regardless extremely difficult to replicate and demand for it always outstripped supply. A solution to this was sought of the oft-besieged Forge World of Tigrus which produced a substitute in the shape of the graviton imploder (or more simply 'tank-crusher' as it was less formally known by the Imperialis Auxillia of the region). This used a concentrated beam to create a collapsing grav-field to bring down kinetic force proportionally to the density and mass of the material it struck, proving bloodily effective particularly against heavily armoured foes. Crude and power-hungry, the design was deemed blasphemy by some Magos as a perversion of ancient patterns, although its unique capabilities would prove invaluable in the wars of the Heresy. Its design would also provide the genesis of future weaponry to replace more arcane patterns which could no longer be made in the cataclysmic war's aftermath.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Graviton Imploder	18"	*	2	Salvo 2/4, Concussive, Graviton

***Graviton:** The roll needed To Wound when firing this weapon is equal to the usual armour save of the target, to a minimum of 6+. When resolving a hit against a vehicle, roll a D6 for each hit rather than for armour penetration as normal. On each result of a 6, the target suffers an Immobilised result and loses a single Hull Point. This weapon has no effect on buildings.

The Paragon of Metal

While each Battle-automata of the Legio Cybernetica is in itself a creation of a near lost age of human power, its form and function a miracle of technological artifice and the product of arcane secrets without number, there remains among them war machines whose powers and capabilities are far beyond their peers. Whether somehow blessed by the Omnissiah's hand, the product of a single magos' unmatched genius or the darker influence of the forbidden, a Paragon of Metal is a near-unstoppable engine of war, albeit a machine perhaps not to be trusted, even by its master.

- A Paragon of Metal is not subject to the Programmed Behaviour special rule and has the It Will Not Die and Rampage special rules.
- A Paragon of Metal may never count as a scoring unit regardless of the mission being played.
- In the case of a failed Cybertheurgy attempt, always apply the Malifica result on the Cybertheurgy Mishap table, rather than rolling randomly.

Abeyant

Considered in part as a symbol of status as well as a functional tool by many high-ranking Magos of the Mechanicum, an Abeyant is a name given to a general class of hovering conveyances into which the rider's augmetics and life support systems are directly connected through bionic linkage, so that the machine-vehicle becomes an extension of their own body. Many of the higher-ranking Dominus of the Legio Cybernetica and the Ordo Reductor prefer to take to the battlefield mounted on specially outfitted Abeyants. Often taking the form of either a stylised throne, armoured travel disk or an enclosing scarab-like framework, their principal advantages are that their mag-suspensor fields allow the most war-torn battlefield to be traversed with ease, and their armoured life support chassis greatly improves their user's survivability.

- A model mounted on an Abeyant gains +1 Wound, and the Move Through Cover, Very Bulky, Hardened Armour and It Will Not Die special rules.

Lorica Thallax

A divergent form of power armour technology developed by the Ordo Reductor of the Mechanicum for their Thallax Centuries, the Lorica Thallax, unlike its Space Marine counterparts, is permanently surgically bonded to the body of the wearer. It uses linked mechanical armatures to replace the primary limbs, and a compact reactor core to generate power for the Thallax's weaponry. The armour is fused directly to the spinal column and nervous system of the Thallax and marks them both as warriors of the Mechanicum and serves as a symbol of their servitude.

- Lorica Thallax armour provides a 4+ armour save and Feel No Pain (6+). However, a model equipped with this armour may not make sweeping advances.



"The beast of metal endures longer than the flesh of men. Those that tend the beast of metal must labour long to learn its ways, for a single beast must suffer the mastership of many men until ready to shed its last vorpal coils."

Introit to Runic Mechanics

CYBERTHEURGY

The Magos Dominus of the Legio Cybernetica are privy to many ancient secrets from the Dark Age of Technology, a time when the un-living phalanxes of Mankind's artificial creations shattered forgotten alien empires to carve humanity's first empire from the stars, the most secret of these lores is Cybertheurgy. Such is the nature of the dark arcana of Cybertheurgy, however, that it is not without its risks, as what is awakened may slip the leash of its master's control with disastrous consequences.

A model with Cybertheurgy may use a single power in the Shooting phase instead of making a shooting attack, and may not do so if engaged in an assault or falling back. One power effect may be selected from the list that follows each time Cybertheurgy is used and, unless specified in the power, a single friendly model with the Cybernetica Cortex special rule within 12" must be selected as the target of the power's effect. Unless noted, the effect lasts for a full game turn. Place a suitable marker next to the affected model for the duration of the power to indicate its effect.

Using Cybertheurgy: In order to successfully use the power, the Cybertheurgist must take a Leadership test. Depending on the power, a bonus or penalty may be imposed on the Leadership value of the model making the test (note that this is applied always to the characteristic value being tested, not the dice result). If the test is passed, the power takes effect. If the test is failed, the power does not take effect. If the test is failed and a result of a 12 (a double '6') is rolled, the power has both failed and gone awry. Roll immediately on the Cybertheurgy Mishap table (see page 211).



THE POWERS OF CYBERTHEURGY

Note: In the following powers, a model referred to as the 'chosen' model, is the model that has been given a cybernetica cortex as part of its wargear.

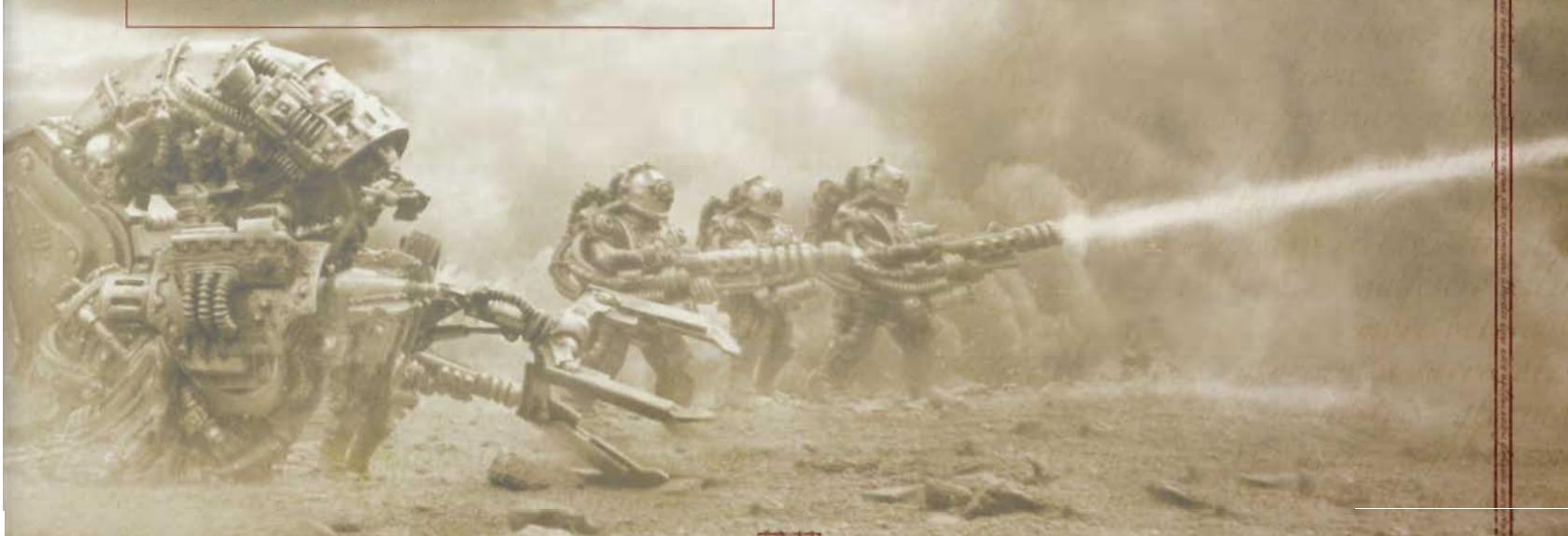
- **Rite of Celerity** **Modifier: +1**
The chosen model gains +2 to its Initiative value for the duration of the effect.
- **Rite of Eternity**..... **Modifier: None**
The chosen model gains the It Will Not Die special rule for the duration of the effect.
- **Rite of Fury**..... **Modifier: -1**
The chosen model gains +D3 attacks for the duration of the effect.
- **Rite of Destruction**..... **Modifier: -2**
The chosen model may fire twice with its shooting weapons against a single target unit this turn. However, if this power is successful, the affected chosen model may not use its ranged weapons in the following turn.
- **Rite of Dread Castigation** **Modifier: -2**
Unlike the other listed powers, this ability may only be used against an enemy chosen model in range and represents a form of attack rather than augmentation. Both sides roll a D6 and add the Leadership value of the Cybertheurgist in the case of the Attacking player, and the enemy chosen model in the case of the Defending player. The enemy chosen model suffers a wound with no armour save or cover save for each point that the Attacker's total exceeds that of the Defender's.
- **Rite of Immolation**..... **Modifier: -3**
By overcoming the safety protocols and self-preservation systems of the chosen model's reactor core, the Cybertheurgist forces the chosen model to catastrophically self-destruct. If the power is used successfully, the model is destroyed, immediately removed from play and replaced by a Large Blast (5") marker. All models under the marker suffer a hit with a Strength value equivalent to the chosen model's Toughness and an AP value equal to the chosen model's armour save.

Should a failed attempt at Rite of Immolation result in a Cybertheurgy Mishap, the Malifica result occurs automatically and there is no need to roll on the table.

CYBERTHEURGY MISHAP TABLE

Should the chosen model be the subject of a Cybertheurgy Mishap, roll on the following table and immediately apply the result to the targeted model.

D6	Effect
1-3	Signal Corruption: The chosen model may only fire Snap Shots and fights with WS 1 in assaults for the next game turn.
4-5	Corrosive Paradox: The chosen model suffers a wound with no armour saves or cover saves possible.
6	Malifica: The machine-spirit rebels and the war engine gains spiteful self-awareness. The chosen model is now destroyed for the purpose of Victory points if used and is no longer part of the controlling player's force. If part of a unit, the chosen model is split from that unit and placed out of coherency with it. The chosen model is still used in the previously controlling player's turn, but will from now on move towards and shoot at the closest unit each turn and then assault that same unit if able. Both sides may now target the chosen model if they desire.





LEGIO GRYPHONICUS CASTELLAX CLASS BATTLE-AUTOMATA

OMEGA PI SEVEN
CYBERNETICA DETACHMENT
PARAMAR V

Omega Pi Seven was one of around a hundred Battle-automata ceded by the Legio Cybernetica to fight in the ranks of the Legio Gryphonicus in return for reciprocal aid, furthering their own interests. It was assigned to the secondary demi-maniple of nine automatas tasked with the defence of Sector 23, in particular the valuable promethium conduits leading from the extraction sinks in that region. Omega Pi Seven's ultimate fate following the Traitor assault on Paramar V remains unlisted in the archives of the Legio Cybernetica, as do those of the two Tech-Priests assigned as the maniple's overseers.

Being fully bonded to the Legio Gryphonicus, Omega Pi Seven bears the colours and heraldry of the militant forces of the Forge World of Gryphonne IV, including the heraldry of the Titan units it is supporting. Omega Pi Seven carries a standard armament for its class, which its overseers could reconfigure given notice should tactical conditions make it necessary.

Note the votive seals applied by Cybernetica attendants in pursuance of the particulars of the Machine Cult.



TAGHMATA SATARAEL CASTELLAX CLASS BATTLE-AUTOMATA

EREU-VOSTRIS-3445-JUN
TERMINUS ASSAULT FORCE
PARAMAR V

Taken from pict-capture evidence from the 1st Battle of Paramar, the Battle-automata carries the distinctive heraldry and colours of the Taghmata Satarael's IVth Cybernetica Cohort. Incorporated as part of the Battle-automata's markings are unique tech-glyph forms associated with Incaladion, the machine's Forge World of origin, and the saurian skull and comet icon of the Archmagos Inar Satarael blazoned as its over-master. Also of note is the upper-marked crescent moon above its cohort designation, evidencing the previous campaign honour of the IVth Cohort with the Sons of Horus Legion in their prior incarnation as the Luna Wolves.



MAGOS PRIME

95 POINTS + COST OF HIGH TECHNO-ARCANA

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Magos Prime	3	4	4	4	2	3	2	9	3+
Archmagos Prime	4	5	4	5	3	3	2	10	2+

HQ

The Magos Prime is the commander of the Taghmata Ommissiah; a high adept of the Machine Cult armed and girded for war with the finest armaments and defences their arcane arts can provide. They are chosen from their peers to lead in battle. In most cases this will not merely mean the carrying of sophisticated weaponry, but effectively a physical transformation and they may elect to exchange or add to their augmetics with devices and exoskeletal armoured frames better suited to war than to artifice. In the most extreme cases the Magos will choose to have what remains of their organics re-housed in a purpose built body more reminiscent in use and function to a Legiones Astartes Dreadnought than mere environmental and battlefield armour.

Each Magos is a unique individual, possessed of their own mastery of the higher arts of the Machine Cult, their own unique resources and secrets, meaning that no two Magos Prime are truly alike. Each is as formidable in their own way as the superhuman Legiones Astartes, and their inhuman intelligence and power spawned of arcane science is not to be underestimated.

Unit Composition

- 1 Magos Prime

Unit Type

- Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Power weapon
- Volkite Serpenta
- Mechanicum Protectiva

Special Rules

- Independent Character
- Stubborn
- Battlesmith
- The Orders of High Techno-Arcana

The Orders of High Techno-Arcana

The Magos Prime/Archmagos Prime must take one of the following Orders of High Techno-Arcana at the cost listed. Only one selection may be made per Magos Prime/Archmagos Prime. If your force contains more than one selection from this unit entry, then each must possess a different Order of High Techno-Arcana from this list:

- Archimandrite (Archmagos Prime only).....+35 points
- Malagra+30 points
- Myrmidax.....+25 points
- Ordinator.....+35 points
- Lachrimallus.....+25 points
- Macrotek+20 points

Options

- The Magos Prime may take any of the following options:
 - Augury scanner+5 points
 - Cyber-familiar.....+15 points
 - Melta bombs.....+5 points
 - Infravisor.....+5 points
 - Rad grenades.....+10 points
 - Cortex controller.....+15 points
 - Up to four Cyber-ocularis+15 points each
- The Magos Prime may exchange either their Volkite Serpenta and/ or power weapon each for one of the following options:
 - Archaeotech pistol.....+5 points
 - Photon gauntlet.....+5 points
 - Plasma pistol.....+5 points
 - Lucifex.....+5 points
 - Maxim bolter.....+5 points
 - Power fist.....+5 points
 - Corposant stave+5 points
 - Chainfist+10 points
 - Paragon blade (Archmagos Prime only).....+15 points
- The Magos Prime may take one of the following options:
 - Servo-arm.....+10 points
 - Machinator array.....+25 points
 - Jet pack.....+20 points
 - Conversion beamer.....+25 points
 - Graviton imploder.....+25 points
 - Rad/irad-cleanser+20 points
 - Photon thruster+30 points
- The Magos Prime may take one of the following additional weapon options (a Magos Prime with the Myrmidax Order of High Techno-Arcana may take up to two selections from the list instead):
 - Rotor cannon+10 points
 - Meltagun.....+15 points
 - Graviton gun+15 points
 - Phased plasma-fusil.....+20 points
- The Magos Prime may be mounted on an Abeyant+25 points
- The Magos Prime may upgrade a single weapon to be:
 - Master-crafted.....+5 points

Archmagos Prime: A single Magos Prime in the army may be upgraded to an Archmagos Prime for +35 points. The Archmagos Prime uses the profile as listed and has access to all the other Magos Prime options. They also gain the Relentless special rule.

- An Archmagos Prime may take a Djinn-skein for +25 points if they are the army's Warlord.

Archimandrite: At the pinnacle of the Mechanicum's Forge Worlds' intricate webs of power and fealty sit the Archimandrite class; they who have risen above all to supreme power. In their hands are entrusted the secrets of the lost Dark Age of Technology, its treasures and its secret sins. At their will does the vast power of a Forge World march to war; whether it be under the banner of the Emperor or the Warmaster, they are rulers in their own right.

- **Master Fabricator:** All Mechanicum vehicles in the same detachment as the Archimandrite gain the It Will Not Die special rule. Note this replaces the Blessed Autosimulacra special rule where present.
- **Unmatched Resources:** An army with an Archimandrite as its Warlord may add +1 to its Reserve rolls.

Malagra: The sinister Malagra are the Magos-warlords of the Prefecture Magisterium, charged with enforcing the doctrine of the Omnissiah and the execution of the Heretek and the transgressor.

- **Special Rules:** A Malagra has the Preferred Enemy (Characters) and the Monster Hunter special rules.
- **Mech-assassin:** The Malagra's WS and Attacks values are both increased by +1.

Myrmidax: The Myrmidax are the lords of the Myrmidon sub-cult, savants of firepower and master weapon-smiths. Few Magos are more feared by their own kind, or as lethal on the battlefield.

- **Special Rules:** A Myrmidax gains the Fusillade Attack, Hatred (Everything), Relentless and Lumbering Advance rules (see page 220).
- **Deathly Aim:** The Myrmidax inflicts Precision Shots on a 5+ rather than a roll of 6.

Ordinator: Masters of the arts of destruction on the macro-scale, the Ordinators are Magos of the Autokrator and the lords of the Ordinatus and Reductor. They are breakers and shatterers; the master artilleryists and demolitionists. They are the Mechanicum's un-makers of cities and fortresses, they are the power of the Machine God's war-forges made manifest.

- **Special Rules:** An Ordinator has the Tank Hunters and Wrecker special rules applied to all of their attacks.
- **Bombardment:** Once per game, in the Shooting phase and in lieu of firing a weapon, they may call in a Bombardment attack against the enemy.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Bombardment	Unlimited	8	3	Ordnance D3, Large Blast (5"), Pinning

Lachrimallus: Held in little regard by their fellow Magos as peddlers in flesh and blood, the Lachrimallus serve yet a vital purpose on any Forge World. They are the work masters, the overseers, the 'lords of cursed tears' at whose electro-whip the multitudes are driven to labour.

- **Special Restriction:** If a primary detachment contains a Lachrimallus then it must also have at least one Adseularis Covenant unit as part of the same detachment.
- **Special Rules:** The Lachrimallus has the Feel No Pain (5+) special rule.
- **Ruthless Assault:** Whenever an Adseularis Covenant in the same detachment as the Lachrimallus is destroyed, roll a D6. On a roll of 5+, an identical unit to the one just destroyed becomes part of the controlling player's On-going Reserves. This replacement unit costs the controlling player no additional points.

Macrotek: Often the most numerous of the classes of Magos who govern the Forge Worlds, the Macrotek are venerated fame and forge masters, the tech-wrights of the great macro-furnaces that power the endless cycle of production, and at whose ministrations the vast engines of industry and war thunder.

- **High Engineer:** The Magos may re-roll failed Battlesmith rolls. In addition, Engineer Tech-Priest Auxillia units may be taken as Troops choices for a detachment containing at least one Macrotek.
- **Reinforced Defences:** A detachment containing at least one Macrotek may take one more Fortification than it would normally be allowed unless the mission being played prohibits their use.

Djinn-skein (Warlord only)

An Archmagos Prime operating as a battlefield commander is not simply a general whose orders are carried out, but the governing will of the Taghmata; a spider at the centre of a web of data-djinn and stolen perceptions from across the battlefield who enables them to make tactical predictions based on inhumanly swift calculation and accuracy. In order to use the abilities of the Djinn-skein, the Archmagos Prime must be present on the table and not currently taking part in an assault. The Djinn-skein provides the following abilities:

- At the beginning of their Shooting phase, the Archmagos Prime may nominate a single unit which is a part of their primary detachment (including themselves) within 6" of them or any Cyber-ocularis purchased as part of their wargear to benefit for +1 BS.
- Deep Striking units which are part of their primary detachment choosing to arrive within 6" of the Archmagos Prime do not scatter.
- Barrage weapons in the same detachment may use the Archmagos Prime and any Cyber-ocularis purchased as part of their wargear to draw a line of sight from for their attacks. Note that direction of fire, range, etc, is still drawn from the firing weapon.



HQ

One of the most infamous Militant Archmagos of the Great Crusade, there were those, even within the Mechanicum who labelled Satarael mad, but none that would gainsay his effectiveness in battle. His record began on the often-besieged and horror-ravaged Forge World of Incaladion, decades before the Great Crusade reached the Mechanicum outpost and brought it into the Imperium's fold and the Imperium's protection. An adept within one of the sentinel forge-fanes which took the brunt of outsider attacks, he was from the start a warrior Tech-Priest, his arts focused entirely in the creation of engines of war and their command on the battlefield.

In fighting off one savage attack after another he rose in power and status among his kind, finally gaining a seat on Incaladion's ruling synod of Magos before disaster overreached him. In desperate battle against the unspeakable and thankfully rare xeno-form known as the Carnoplasm, his flesh was liquefied and drunk from his body, leaving no more than a shattered and broken cluster of augmetics and a few scraps of brain and cerebrospinal tissue, and yet by some dark miracle of the Omnissiah, he lived on, his consciousness remaining in a tortured pattern locked within his body's damaged cogitator units.

CONT...

ARCHMAGOS INAR SATARAEL

285 POINTS

MASTER OF THE TAGHMATA SATARAEL, SYNOD-PERSECUTOR OF INCALADION, THE GRIEF OF ZOROASTRIS, THE FLESHLESS LORD

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Archmagos Satarael	3	5	5	6	4	4	3	10	3+

Unit Composition

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type

- Monstrous Creature (Character)

Wargear

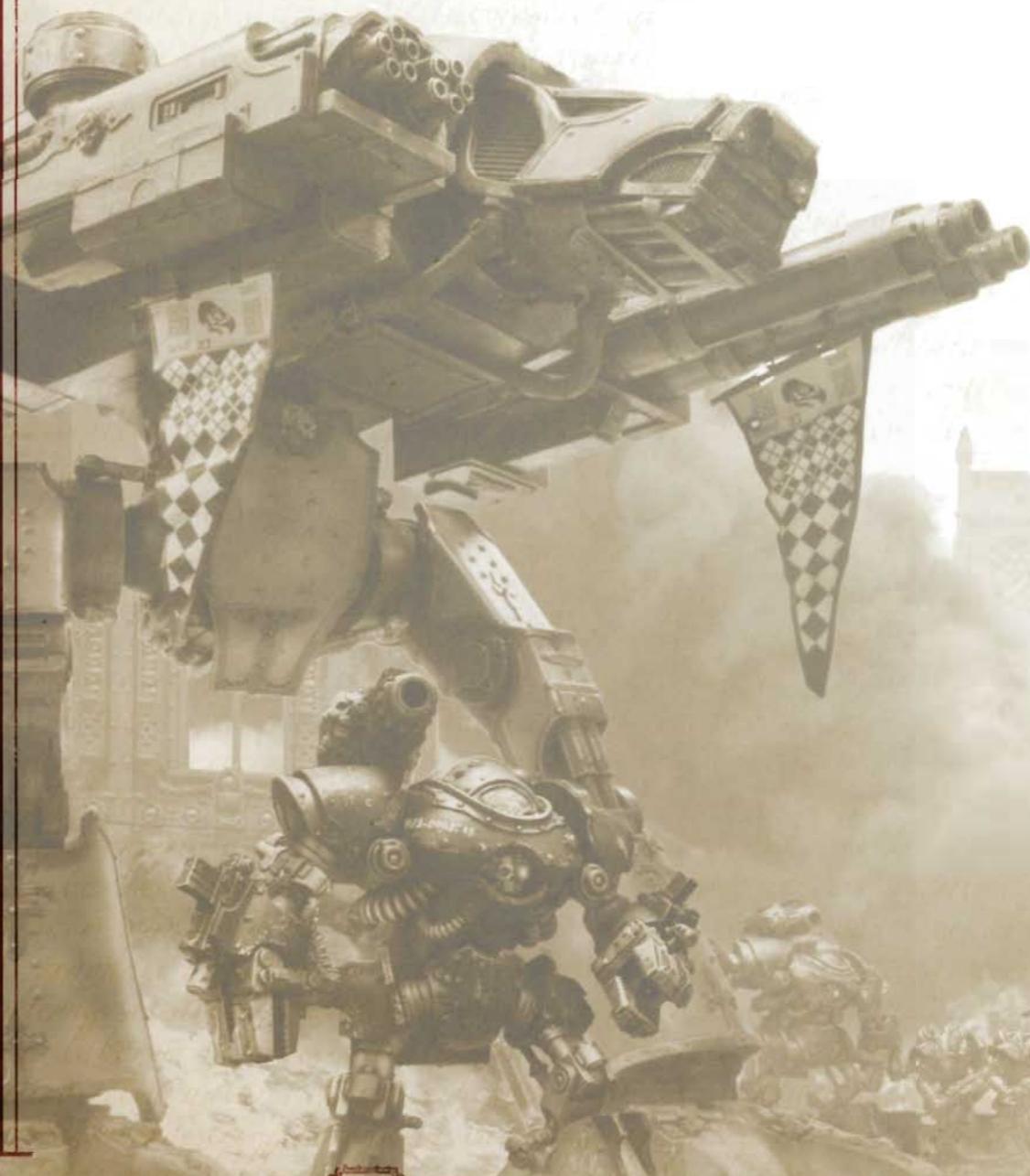
- Power axe
- Servo-arm
- Graviton imploder
- Twin-linked maxim bolter
- Repulsion shield
- Djinn-skein
- Cortex controller
- Haemonculite Cyber-corpus

Special Rules

- Stubborn
- Fear
- Battlesmith
- The Order of High Techno-Arcana (Archimandrite)
- Emergency Teleport Protocol
- Warlord (If Archmagos Inar Satarael is your army's Warlord, he has the Implacable Advance trait rather than rolling randomly)

Options

- Archmagos Satarael may take:
 - Up to four Cyber-ocularis +15 points each



Repulsion Shield

An arcane relic of ancient defence field technology, a repulsion shield is designed to deflect and possibly reflect weapons fire, particularly that of high energy weapons and heavy projectiles. Designed perhaps to operate on vehicles, Satarael has nevertheless modified it to protect his personal cyber-corpus in battle, although slaved to a relatively compact reactor core, it may not be operating at its peak potential in doing so.

The repulsion shield works only against shooting attacks of Strength 6 or higher which do not have either the Blast or Template rules. Its effects take place after any hits are scored against Satarael by such weapons, but before rolls To Wound are made. Roll a D6 for each hit inflicted. On a roll of 4 or 5, the shot is completely negated. On a roll of a 6, the shot is reflected back on the firing unit, striking it automatically (rolls To Wound, Cover saves and Armour save, etc, may be taken as normal). The repulsion shield has no effect on Destroyer attacks.

Haemonculite Cyber-corpus

In battle, the crucible containing what little remains of Satarael's augmented organic components and life support mechanisms is placed in a hulking robotic monstrosity with its own slaved sub-servitors and thrall familiars known as a Cyber-corpus, which acts literally as a body for him to wear as if it were his own.

The effects of this Cyber-corpus are represented in his characteristics profile and the wargear with which he is listed (most of which is actually incorporated as a part of it), and in addition it provides him with the Feel No Pain (5+) and Extremely Bulky special rules. Note that although Satarael is otherwise a character, he may not be joined by other models to form a unit or join another unit himself. He may, however, be transported alongside other units inside Mechanicum vehicles so long as there is room.

Emergency Teleport Protocol

Satarael is obsessed with his own survival and ultimate immortality, and has fitted his Cyber-corpus with a short range emergency teleportation system. This is powerful enough only to displace the crucible containing his mortal remains rather than the hulking Cyber-corpus itself, which self-destructs to prevent it falling into enemy hands.

Should Satarael lose his last Wound at any point during the game, roll a D6. On a result of 3+, the emergency teleport system engages successfully. In this case the opposing player gains no Victory points for destroying Satarael (including for Slay the Warlord, etc) where this is a factor in the mission. In addition, roll for an explosion as if he were a destroyed vehicle which had suffered an Explodes! result on the Vehicle Damage table.

Warlord: Implacable Advance

All friendly units chosen from the Taghmata Ommissiah roll an additional D6 and keep the two lowest dice when making Morale checks while within 12" of Archmagos Inar Satarael.



...CONT

With agonising slowness, that consciousness acted through slaved-servitors to rebuild his damaged organics using stolen and synthesised biomass to restore his cerebral cortex and grant him a range of new and powerful artificial bodies to wear as the need arose. Inar Satarael was reborn, but it was whispered no longer remotely sane, a malevolent savant-warrior obsessed with power and immortality, a thing viewed as both sacred and feared by his brethren of Incaladion.

When the Great Crusade came, the rulers of Incaladion were more than happy to grant Satarael his own independent command and join his Taghmata to that of the Imperium's forces in gratitude for the Imperium's protection and the boons of reunification with Mars. The Taghmata Satarael served with brutal distinction for decades alongside the Expeditionary fleets, and when civil war broke out they sided with Horus, their patron of long standing.

MAGOS DOMINUS

65 POINTS



HQ

The Magos Dominus is a master of the arts of the Legio Cybernetica, a sect of the priesthood of Mars granted the dread right to create and control the cortex-automata built for war and based upon the terrible secrets of the Dark Age of Technology. Such strange and threatening powers are not without price, and by doctrinal tradition such individuals forgo an easy route to power within the Mechanicum, so dangerous do their fellows consider the secrets they wield. Instead Magos Dominus and their acolytes form but one of the many factions and sects within the Mechanicum, divided both by technological specialisation as well as rivalry and ancient feud.

Those found within the ranks of the Taghmata serve a vital role but are seldom the most powerful of their kind, who can instead be found in the command of the Legio Cybernetica. Instead they serve the Magos Prime either under terms of personal fealty or in fulfilment of binding pacts of mutual support between their Legio Cybernetica cohort and the Archimandrite who stands as the power behind the Taghmata.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Magos Dominus	3	4	4	4	2	3	2	9	3+

Unit Composition

- 1 Magos Dominus

Unit Type

- Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Power weapon
- Laspistol
- Cortex controller
- Refractor field

Special Rules

- Stubborn
- Battlesmith
- Cybertheurgy

Options

- The Magos Dominus may take any of the following options:
 - Augury scanner +5 points
 - Cyber-familiar +15 points
 - Melta bombs +5 points
 - Infravisor +5 points
- The Magos Dominus may exchange their laspistol for one of the following options:
 - Bolt pistol +1 point
 - Volkite Serpenta +5 points
 - Archaeotech pistol +10 points
 - Photon gauntlet +10 points
 - Plasma pistol +10 points
- The Magos Dominus may take one of the following options:
 - Servo-arm +10 points
 - Machinator array +25 points
 - Conversion beamer +25 points
 - Rad/Irad-cleanser +20 points
- The Magos Dominus may be mounted on an Abeyant +25 points
- The Magos Prime may upgrade a single weapon to be:
 - Master-crafted +5 points



TECH-PRIEST AUXILLIA

65 POINTS



ELITES

Operating in a support role, Covenants and Maniples of Tech-Priest Adepts and lesser Magos also form a key part of the Taghmata Ommissiah. Of those whose firepower and expertise is called to the Taghmata by feudal obligation, Enginseers are perhaps the most common.

These often accompany their masters and the mighty war machines they administer onto the battlefield, enabling the Taghmata to make field repairs, assuage fevered machine-spirits and perform the required micro-calibrations to arms and systems to ensure the holy engines of battle perform to their optimal efficiency.

Less common are representatives of militant orders such as the Reductor; siege warfare specialists whose arts are used to either lay low fortifications or defend them as they are called on by their masters, and the Lacyraemarta whose arts are those of flesh-craft and alchemy, who drive on mercilessly the half-living tech-thralls employed by the Taghmata as expendable troops, driving them to inhuman levels of resilience and function in the short term at the expense of the ruin of their subject's bodies.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Adept	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	8	3+
Magos Auxillia	3	4	3	4	1	3	2	9	3+
Servo-automata	3	3	4	5	1	1	1	6	5+

Unit Composition

- Adept
- 4 Servo-automata

Unit Type

- Adept: Infantry (Character)
- Servo-automata: Infantry

Wargear (Adept)

- Power armour
- Laspistol
- Power axe

Wargear (Servo-automata)

- Close combat weapon

Special Rules (Adept)

- Battlesmith
- Techno-Arcana
- Stubborn (Magos only)

Special Rules

(Servo-automata)

- Cybernetica

Dedicated Transport

- A Tech-Priest Auxillia squad may take a Triaros Armoured Conveyor as a Dedicated Transport for +135 points.

Options

- The squad may include:
 - Up to one additional Adept+20 points
 - Up to four additional Servo-automata..... +5 points each
- A single Adept in the unit may be upgraded to a:
 - Magos Auxillia+20 points (they may still select Adept options as normal and are treated as Adepts for the purposes of the Techno-Arcana special rule).
- Any Adept may take any of the following:
 - Nuncio-vox+10 points
 - Augury scanner +5 points
 - Volkite charger+10 points
 - Cortex controller+15 points
 - Graviton gun+15 points
- Any Adept may take melta bombs..... +5 points each
- Any Adept may take a Cyber-familiar..... +5 points each
- Any Servo-automata may take one of the following:
 - Las-lock.....+1 point
 - Servo-arm..... +5 points
 - Flamer +5 points
 - Maxim bolter..... +5 points
 - Rotor cannon+10 points
 - Heavy bolter.....+15 points
 - Multi-melta.....+15 points

Techno-Arcana

Each Tech-Priest Auxillia must choose one of the following Techno-Arcana which applies to the unit, providing it with additional special rules and wargear at no additional cost unless noted:

- **Enginseer:** Adepts gain the Battlesmith special rule and are each equipped with a servo-arm. Servo-automata in the unit gain the Servo-automata Support special rule.
- **Lacyraemarta:** Adepts in the unit have the Feel No Pain (5+) special rule which they confer to the Servo-automata in the unit while they are alive. Friendly Adsecularis units within 6" of the unit gain +1 to their Feel No Pain rolls while their Adepts are alive.
- **Reductor:** Adepts are equipped with servo-arms, and all models in the squad have the Tank Hunters and Wrecker special rules. Adepts may exchange their servo-arms for either a conversion beamer or graviton imploder for +25 points each.

Cybernetica

If the Servo-automata are no longer accompanied by an Adept or Magos Auxillia, they must take a Pinning test at the start of each Movement phase unless they are already engaged in combat (in which case they fight on normally).

Servo-automata Support

For each additional servo-armed Servo-automata in the unit, an Enginseer gains +1 to their Battlesmith rolls (note, however, that a roll of '1' will still fail regardless of this bonus).



ELITES

The hulking, heavily augmented Myrmidon Secutors are ordained priests of the Cult Mechanicus in their own right, but are a breed apart from their fellow Tech-Priests and Magos. Their sole concentration is the art of destruction and the embodiment of that power within their own vastly augmented bodies, in which little organic remains. The Myrmidons form their own sub-sects within the Mechanicum and to them war is a matter of cold logic and murderous equation.

Before the Horus Heresy, the Myrmidons kept no single master long, but instead were drawn to battle as a vulture was drawn to carrion, seeking fresh challenges to defeat and the revelations of the Omnissiah unveiled to them in the mysteries of shot and shell. As the war of the Horus Heresy set the galaxy to burn, the Myrmidon faction grew to both increased importance and increased numbers on both sides of the warring divide; their invaluable arts and expertise forming a cornerstone of many newly formed and expanded Taghmata, but to whom their loyalty truly lay, remained often in question.

MYRMIDON SECUTORS

120 POINTS + COST OF WEAPONS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Myrmidon Secutor	4	5	4	5	2	2	2	9	3+
Myrmidon Lord	4	5	4	5	2	2	3	10	3+

Unit Composition

- 2 Myrmidon Secutors
- 1 Myrmidon Lord

Unit Type

- Myrmidon Secutors: Infantry
- Myrmidon Lord: Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Two weapon options (see Options)
- Power axe
- Frag and krak grenades
- Refractor field
- Infravisor

Special Rules

- Fusillade Attack
- Stubborn
- Bulky
- Relentless
- Lumbering Advance

Dedicated Transport

- A Myrmidon Secutors unit may take a Triaros Armoured Conveyor as a Dedicated Transport for +135 points.

Options

- The squad may include:
 - Up to seven additional Myrmidon Secutors+35 points each
- Each Myrmidon Secutor and Myrmidon Lord must choose any two of the weapon options listed here. The same option may be chosen twice if desired – weapons so chosen do not count as twin-linked. All such options should be shown on the model.
 - Maxim bolter.....+10 points each
 - Volkite charger+10 points each
 - Graviton gun+15 points each
 - Irad-cleanser.....+20 points each
 - Phased plasma-fusil.....+20 points each

Fusillade Attack

A model with this special rule may fire two ranged weapons in the Shooting phase, so long as they are both fired at the same target.

Lumbering Advance

A model with this special rule may not make Run moves or sweeping advances.



ADSECULARIS COVENANT

35 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Tech-thrall	2	2	4	3	1	2	1	7	5+

Unit Type

- Infantry

Unit Composition

- 10 Tech-thralls

Wargear

- Flak armour
- Las-lock
- Close combat weapon

Special Rules

- Feel No Pain (6+)

Options

- The squad can include:
 - Up to an additional 10 Tech-thralls..... +3 points each
- The entire squad may exchange their las-locks for:
 - Mitralocks..... Free
 - Heavy chainblades+20 points
- The entire squad may be given any of the following upgrades:
 - Frag grenades +5 points
 - The Rite of Pure Thought.....+15 points
 - Induction chargers (if equipped with las-locks)+15 points
 - Carapace armour+20 points
 - Revenant Alchemy+25 points

The Rite of Pure Thought

A squad with this upgrade has undergone massive cranial surgery to destroy the emotional and instinctual response centres of the brain. The unit gains the Fearless special rule, but can no longer make sweeping advances or fire Overwatch.

Las-lock

A somewhat archaic alternative to the mass-produced lascarbines favoured by many regiments and war hosts of the Imperial Army, las-locks are shoulder arms whose designs favour stopping power over rate of fire or range. Mitralocks are a compact, multi-chambered variant of the las-lock, designed to discharge a simultaneous volley of las-pulses in a fan of effect at short range akin to a shotgun blast.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Las-lock	18"	4	6	Assault 1
Mitralock	8"	4	6	Assault 1, Shred

Induction Chargers

Some Taghmata Magos increase the firepower of the las-locks and Mitralocks they arm their Adsecularis with by using bulky induction charger batteries for extended rapid firing. The long-term toxic contamination from such devices is judged an acceptable side effect for this augmented firepower. Las-locks and Mitralocks fitted with induction chargers are Assault 2 weapons.

Revenant Alchemy

Certain Forge Worlds, particularly those far from the direct oversight of Mars, were commonly held to contain elements which practiced the forbidden arts of the Dark Age of Technology. Rumours of the use of the forbidden Sarcosa Wave and Black Alchemy were rare before the war of the Heresy, but as anarchy and bloodshed erupted on a galactic scale, some Taghmata on both sides of the divide of Traitor and Loyalist were accused of fielding tech-thralls animated from the battlefield dead using such terrible and prohibited knowledge.

An Adsecularis Covenant with Revenant Alchemy has the Hatred, Feel No Pain (5+) and Slow and Purposeful special rules.

TROOPS

Tech-thralls are created by the Mechanicum through basic augmetics and cranial surgery as the need for them arises. They are not servitors, which use often formerly human biological matter as a component system, but rather can be considered cyborgs as consciousness and memory is not extinguished before they are reprocessed into their new forms, merely mutilated and overridden. The conversion process commonly awaits the laity of a Forge World's population should it prove failing or commit some transgression against their masters, for few other criminal punishments exist in the Omnissiah's domains.

Tech-thralls serve many purposes, but principally that of a flexible pool of expendable labour in the Forge Worlds, but in time of war, this same fate befalls many to create a quickly produced and ultimately expendable military resource known as the Adsecularis. In these cases, the organic human bodies of the tech-thralls, already altered to lift heavy loads, function in hostile environments and obey the orders of their masters until death, are fitted with basic weapons systems and bodily protection. On the battlefield they serve as expendable troops, unskilled but relentless and indefatigable; an army of the alive-yet-dead, puppeted by the Magos who command them.

THALLAX COHORT

135 POINTS

TROOPS

The hulking, heavily augmented cyborg shock-troops originating within the Ordo Reductor faction of the Mechanicum, the Thallax differ from the Martian Skitarii regiments both in their purpose and the unique degree of their augmetics. The Lorica Thallax which encases their major organs, nervous system and cerebrum also replaces the skeleton and limbs entirely with armoured mechanical systems powered by an internal reactor core.

The agony of this process, along with the replacement of the usual human sensory apparatus, proves so traumatic as to require the surgical excision of the pain centres and emotions. The Thallax however retains a degree of independent human thought; this individuality and self-determination is greater by far than that enjoyed by tech-thralls, whose cranial-surgery implants are often crude at best, damaging as much as they control.

Many variants of the flexible and powerful Thallax have been brought into being by the artificers of the mendicant Ordo Reductor, a number of which found their way to the outer Forge Worlds of the Imperium where they were seized upon as potent war machines which, while lacking the power of true Battle-automata, were more practical to produce in larger numbers.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Thallax	3	4	5	5	3	2	2	8	4+

Unit Composition

- 3 Thallax

Unit Type

- Jet Pack Infantry

Wargear

- Lorica Thallax
- Lightning gun
- Close combat weapon
- Frag grenades

Special Rules

- Bulky
- Stubborn
- Djinn-sight

Dedicated Transport

- A Thallax Cohort unit may take a Triaros Armoured Conveyor as a Dedicated Transport for +135 points.

Options

- The squad may include:
 - Up to an additional six Thallax +40 points each
- The entire squad may have:
 - Melta bombs +5 points per model
- Any Thallax may exchange their close combat weapon for a:
 - Heavy chainblade +5 points
- The Cohort may be upgraded with one of the following augment upgrades:
 - Icarian +25 points for the unit
 - Destructor +25 points for the unit
 - Empryrite +25 points for the unit
- One in three Thallax in the unit may replace their lightning gun for one of the following weapons:
 - Multi-laser +5 points
 - Phase plasma-fusil +10 points
 - Irad-cleanser +10 points
 - Multi-melta +15 points
 - Photon thruster +25 points

Djinn-sight

The sinister blank-faced helmets of the Thallaxii conceal an array of inhuman sensory apparatus through which they experience the battlefield as a raging storm of electromagnetic turmoil, blood-heat and seismic percussion. However, for the organic brain to handle this hurricane of data, it must be surgically mutilated, removing the mere human senses such as sight and hearing.

The Djinn-sight means that a Thallax reduces the benefits of any cover save its opponent has by -2 (a 4+ becoming a 6, a 5+ being ignored entirely, and so on). Additionally, Infiltrators may not be set up within 24" of Thallax units, regardless of line of sight.

Thallax Augments

Certain Thallaxii are further implanted with augmetic systems to better suit them to a particular mode of warfare by their masters in the Ordo Reductor of the Mechanicum. A Thallax Cohort may only possess a single augment upgrade:

- **Icarian:** If stationary that turn, the Cohort may, if wished, count as having the Skyfire special rule for all its ranged weapons that turn. Units of Thallax with this augment count as a Heavy Support choice instead of a Troops choice for the army.
- **Destructor:** The unit gains the Tank Hunters special rule.
- **Empryrite:** The unit now utilises the Deep Strike special rule via implanted teleportation units (this is a factor in certain game types such as Zone Mortalis), and also gains the Void Hardened special rule.

CASTELLAX CLASS BATTLE-AUTOMATA MANIPLE

85 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Castellax	3	4	6	7	4	3	2	7	3+

Unit Composition

- 1 Castellax class Battle-automata

Unit Type

- Monstrous Creature

Wargear

- Mauler pattern bolt cannon
- Two boltguns
- Shock chargers
- Atomantic shielding

Special Rules

- Cybernetica Cortex
- Reactor Blast
- Rage
- Support Unit

Options

- The Maniple may include:
 - Up to four additional Castellax class Battle-automata+85 points each
- Any Battle-automata Maniple may be given any of the following options – all Battle-automata in the Maniple must have the same upgrade:
 - Searchlight.....+1 point each
 - Infravisor.....+5 points each
 - Frag grenades.....+5 points each
 - Enhanced targeting array.....+15 points each
- Any Castellax class Battle-automata may exchange its Mauler pattern bolt cannon for one of the following:
 - Darkfire cannon+20 points
 - Multi-melta..... Free
- Any Castellax class Battle-automata may exchange one or both of its bolters for:
 - Flamers.....+5 points each
- Any Castellax class Battle-automata may exchange its shock chargers for one of the following options:
 - Two Battle-automata power blades.....+10 points per Castellax
 - Siege Wrecker.....+20 points per Castellax*

*A model equipped with a Siege Wrecker loses one of its boltguns.

Special Option

- A single Maniple comprised solely of a single Battle-automata (of any type) in the detachment may be given:
 - Paragon of Metal special rule.....+35 points

Support Unit

This unit type may not be chosen as a Compulsory Troops choice for the army.

TROOPS

The most common Castellax-type Battle-automata in service, the Castellax is a general battle unit developed during the Great Crusade from its ancient forbear. Primarily intended for siege work and shock assaults, it is a terrifying humanoid machine thrice the height of a man, with a notoriously aggressive and responsive machine-spirit, and an enviable reputation on the battlefield. Its armoured endoskeleton is proof against small arms fire and highly resistant to damage thanks to its durable design and the presence of the same atomantic shielding technology that features on the Legiones Astartes Contemptor class Dreadnought.

The Castellax class was a mainstay both of the Legio Cybernetica and the elite defensive formations of many Forge Worlds, who relied on its formidable power for their protection. Some in the Imperial hierarchy saw the steady increase in the number of these war machines as a sleeping threat to the supremacy of the Imperium should the Mechanicum ever default on its treaty of mutual support with the Emperor. History was to take a different course, and in a few short years thousands of these war engines would be broken on the wheel of war, and the Castellax was never to be seen again in such numbers.



TRIAROS ARMoured CONVEYER

135 POINTS

DEDICATED TRANSPORT

The Triaros is the primary armoured battlefield transport of the Mechanicum Taghmata during the era of the Great Crusade and the Horus Heresy. Eschewing the more commonplace STC designs, it relies on a number of unique technologies held as arcana by the Magos Autokrator and never divulged for wider Imperial use, even by the Legiones Astartes.

Designed for use in hostile environments, it incorporates multiple galvanic traction drives and its defences are comprised not merely of brute armour, but layered techno-cant wardings and interlocking energy shields, particularly around its seemingly exposed control dais, as well as independently animated weapons servitors.

Its capacious storage bay can be hermetically sealed if needed, allowing the Triaros to be used in hard vacuum and on the surfaces of lifeless worlds. Its internal bay is outfitted with numerous specialised couplings for the recharging, cold-sleep storage and the servicing of tech-thralls and light automata as needed. Its most remarkable feature, however, is a powerful reactor-fed shock ram mounted to its fore, which can be used to shatter and incinerate anything it contacts.

Armour

BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
4	14	12	12	4

Unit Composition

- 1 Triaros Armoured Conveyer

Unit Type

- Vehicle (Tank, Transport)

Wargear

- One twin-linked Mauler bolt cannon
- Flare shield
- Shock ram
- Searchlight
- Two Volkite Sentinels

Special Rules

- Galvanic Traction Drive

Transport Capacity

- The Triaros Armoured Conveyer can transport 20 models

Fire Points

- None

Access Points

- Two access hatches, one on each side of the hull

Options

- The vehicle may take any of the following options:
 - Extra armour +5 points
 - Up to two hunter-killer missiles +5 points each
 - Smoke launchers..... +5 points
 - Blessed Autosimulacra +5 points

Galvanic Traction Drive

The vehicle must re-roll failed Dangerous Terrain tests.

Volkite Sentinels

Slaved weapons systems controlled independently by their own servitor-brain, Volkite Sentinels are defensive weapons found on a number of larger Mechanicum war engines, most commonly the Triaros Armoured Conveyer.

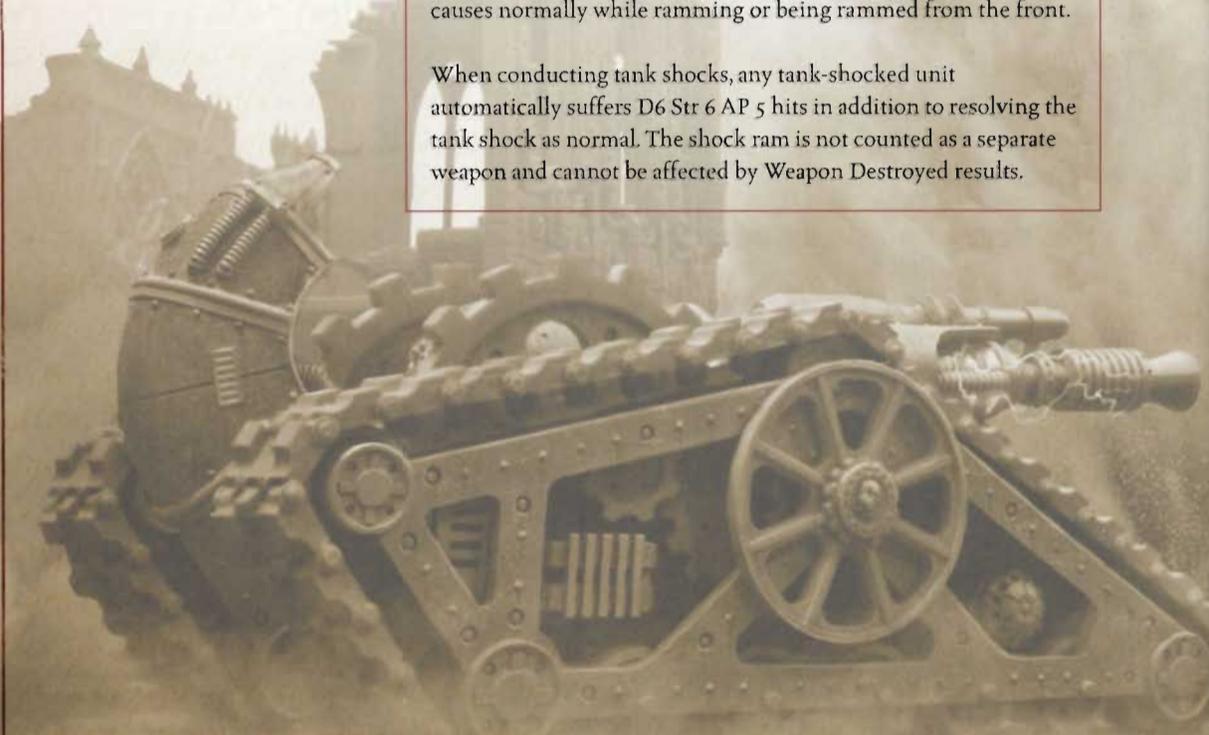
Each Volkite Sentinel is a pintle-mounted Volkite charger which can be fired in addition to any other weapons the vehicle is carrying without penalty and may target units separately from the vehicle's main armaments.

Shock Ram

The Triaros is equipped with a massive frontal ram incorporating powerful anbaric projectors and disruption field technology akin to that used in power weapons, which it uses to destroy anything it comes into contact with.

When conducting a Ram or being rammed, the Triaros counts its Front Armour as having an Armour value of 15 and, in addition, rolls once on the Haywire table in addition to any damage it causes normally while ramming or being rammed from the front.

When conducting tank shocks, any tank-shocked unit automatically suffers D6 Str 6 AP 5 hits in addition to resolving the tank shock as normal. The shock ram is not counted as a separate weapon and cannot be affected by Weapon Destroyed results.



URSARAX COHORT

155 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ursarax	4	3	5	5	3	2	2	8	4+

Unit Composition

- 3 Ursarax

Unit Type

- Jump Infantry

Wargear

- Lorica Thallax
- Two lightning claws
- Volkite Incinerator
- Frag grenades

Special Rules

- Bulky
- Stubborn
- Feel No Pain (5+)

Options

- The squad may include:
 - Up to an additional six Ursarax +45 points each
- Any Ursarax may exchange their lightning claws for:
 - Power fists +10 points per model

Volkite Incinerator

A powerful purpose-designed Volkite ray weapon is mounted in the chest-unit of each Ursarax, allowing it to both attack its victims at range with a lethal Volkite beam and also more unorthodoxly by grabbing its foe within its claws and drawing them in to suffer the full brunt of this discharge at point blank range. This confined ray blast is particularly devastating in its power and is able to render even heavily armoured warriors to cinders in mere moments.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Volkite incinerator (Beam)	10"	5	5	Assault 2, Deflagrate
(Blast)	-	6	2	Melee, Instant Death, Prisoned*

Prisoned:* The Blast attack may only be used in close combat against models with the Infantry, Jump Infantry or Jet Pack Infantry types. In doing so the model makes only a single attack (regardless of any other factors).

FAST ATTACK

A development of the later Great Crusade, the Ursarax tech-thralls were first designed by the Explorator Magos Enabrin Falkan as a heavy, rapid-moving close combat unit for use by the notoriously independent Magos' forces. Using a fusion of existing technologies sacred to the Mechanicum, materials and patterns taken from the Thallax of the Ordo Reductor (much to their displeasure) and the fruits of Falkan's own discoveries are formidable, even monstrous, killing engines.

Like the Thallax, they are thralls rather than servitors, selected from suitable human candidates for conversion, so their living components retain a consciousness and dim recollection of their former humanity providing them with superior tactical abilities and the instincts to kill. Neural anaesthesia is automatically administered for the successful fulfilment of their orders, providing them with relief, albeit temporarily, from their tortured existences. After Falkan's mysterious disappearance his warring acolytes dispersed to many different masters, taking the secret of the Ursarax's creation with them.





FAST ATTACK

Vorax are hunter-killer units, Battle-automata created from the ancient and revered Crusader template pattern said to date back to the Dark Age of Technology and which may be found on every major Forge World in the Imperium.

Created on pre-Imperial Mars to fulfil the roles both of search and destroy weapon and exterminator of rogue machines and mutant vermin, their Cybernetica cortex engrams are known to be particularly predatory and vicious examples of their kind. Such are the bestial instincts that sleep within their blast-steel and ceramite bodies in fact that numerous cut-outs and override cantos are hard-wired into their control programing to prevent these tireless hunting machines from devolving into becoming like the renegades they prey upon in the shadows of the great forge-fanes on Mars.

At times they are also despatched by their masters to conduct a cull of surplus population during a time of famine or plague, their hunts only ending and their guns falling silent abruptly when some unknown tally of slaughter has been reached. It is little wonder then that the Vorax are held in superstitious dread by the human indentured labourers of the Mechanicum's far-flung domains and by the neophyte adepts of the Omnissiah's priesthood alike.

VORAX CLASS BATTLE-AUTOMATA MANIPLE

75 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Vorax	3	4	6	6	3	4	2	7	4+

Unit Composition

- 1 Vorax Class Battle-automata

Unit Type

- Monstrous Creature

Wargear

- Lightning gun
- Two rotor cannon
- Battle-automata power blades
- Infravisor

Special Rules

- Cybernetica Cortex
- Fleet
- Scout

Options

- The Maniple may include:
 - Up to four additional Vorax class Battle-automata....+75 points each
- Any Battle-automata Maniple may be given any of the following options – all Battle-automata in the Maniple must have the same upgrade:
 - Searchlight.....+1 point each
 - Frag grenades.....+5 points each
 - Enhanced targeting array.....+15 points each
- Any Vorax class Battle-automata may exchange its lightning gun for:
 - Irad-cleanser.....+10 points

Special Option

- A single Maniple comprised solely of a single Battle-automata (of any type) in the detachment may be given:
 - Paragon of Metal special rule+35 points



THANATAR CLASS SIEGE-AUTOMATA MANIPLE

240 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Thanatar	3	4	8	8	4	2	2	8	2+

Unit Composition

- 1 Thanatar class
Siege-automata

Unit Type

- Monstrous Creature

Wargear

- Twin-linked mauler bolt cannon
- Infravisor
- Atomantic shielding

Special Rules

- Cybernetica Cortex
- Reactor Blast
- Lumbering Advance

Options

- The Maniple may include:
 - Up to four additional Thanatar class
Siege-automata +240 points each
- Any Siege-automata Maniple may be given any of the following options – all Siege-automata in the Maniple must have the same upgrade:
 - Searchlight..... +1 point each
 - Enhanced Targeting Array..... +15 points each

Special Option

- A single Maniple comprised solely of a single Battle-automata/ Siege-automata (of any type) in the detachment may be given:
 - Paragon of Metal special rule +35 points

Hellex Plasma Mortar

Shunning the crude shells favoured by most siege guns, the Hellex plasma mortar fires high density charges of burning plasma in programmed trajectory arcs timed to detonate over their targets. These airbursts create rolling waves of incinerating energy which engulf the surrounding area, burning through anything they encounter.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Hellex plasma mortar (Stationary)	12"-48"	8	2	Ordnance 1, Barrage, Large Blast (5"), Plasma Wave
(Fired on the move)	12"-24"	8	2	Ordnance 1, Barrage, Large Blast (5"), Plasma Wave

The weapon has two profiles; one is used if a Thanatar has moved during this turn and the other if it has remained stationary.

Plasma Wave: Successful cover saves against this weapon must be re-rolled.

HEAVY SUPPORT

The Thanatar is a heavy Siege-automata, designed as a mobile artillery platform rather than a general battle unit. It is armed with a Hellex pattern plasma mortar, a terrifying weapon able to launch dense spheres of blazing plasma on arcing trajectories over defensive barriers and into the heart of enemy fortifications, incinerating anything in their blast radius with a liquid tide of sun-hot fire.

The Thanatar's frame, built to accommodate the huge weapon and the power systems and fuel reserves required to supply it, is considerably larger than even the hulking Castellax. Its frame is also heavily reinforced, both to withstand the stresses of firing its principal weapon and protect it from incoming attacks. This factor, alongside the use of an atomantic shielding array, make Thanatars notoriously durable. Such is their resilience that Thanatars are beyond the ability of most small arms, no matter how advanced, to harm.

Unlike many of the Battle-automata produced to add the Mechanicum's power to that of the Great Crusade, the origins and lineage of the Thanatar's pattern remain uncertain, save perhaps for the fact that its armament is known to be the product of the Forge World of Ryza, which remains the only locale where the Hellex pattern weaponry is produced.

KRIOS BATTLE TANK SQUADRON

125 POINTS



HEAVY SUPPORT

A pattern originating on Mars whose genesis is lost to the earliest days of the Mechanicum, the Krios uses numerous arcane integrated systems well outside the purview of most STC construction facilities to build or maintain, so despite its age and proven record in the Mechanicum's arsenals, it has never seen service outside the Taghmata and Skitarius. Comparable in many ways in function and tactical role to the Predator tank more widely used by Imperial forces, it lacks a flexible turret mount for its main armament, but makes up for this disadvantage with its greater speed and manoeuvrability.

In marked contrast to more conventional armoured vehicles, its durability is provided by interlocking defensive energy fields, (and in some cases potent flare shield generators) rather than physical armour, lending it a deceptively skeletal appearance. Unsurprisingly, given its long service history, many armament patterns and hull variants of the Krios exist but the most common mount a variety of heavy energy weapons unique to the Mechanicum, such as the lightning cannon and pulsar-fusil.

Armour

	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Krios	4	13	12	10	3
Krios Venator	4	13	12	10	3

Unit Composition

- 1 Krios Battle Tank

Unit Type

- Vehicle (Tank, Fast)

Wargear

- Lightning cannon
- Searchlight
- Flare shield
- Blessed Autosimulacra

Special Rules

- Galvanic Traction Drive

Options

- The squadron may take:
 - Up to two additional Krios Battle tanks..... +125 points each
- Any Krios Battle Tank in the squadron may be upgraded to a:
 - Krios Venator Tank Destroyer, exchanging its lightning cannon for a pulsar-fusil +25 points
- Any vehicle may take any of the following options:
 - Extra armour +5 points
 - Hunter-killer missile +5 points
 - Smoke launchers..... +5 points
 - Anbaric claw..... +15 points
 - Up to two Volkite sentinels..... +15 points each

Galvanic Traction Drive

The vehicle must re-roll failed Dangerous Terrain tests.

Lightning Cannon

The Krios commonly mounts a lightning cannon as its main armament. This configuration takes advantage of the tank's powerful on-board reactor's vast capacity to create a laser-path guided electromagnetic beam, able to vaporise flesh and rupture heavy armour with sustained blasts. Through relatively short ranged, its advantage over conventional weapons is that its reactor-fed firepower has the capacity to fire at full effect for extended periods, far eclipsing the number of physical shells a normal tank would be able to carry.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Lightning cannon	48"	7	3	Heavy 1, Rending, Shred, Large Blast (5")

Pulsar-fusil

This common variant of the Krios adapts the tank into a purpose-designed tank destroyer by replacing the lightning cannon with a pulsar-fusil to create the Krios Venator. This ancient and complex weapons system is a relic of the Dark Age of Technology whose secrets are jealously guarded by those who possess them. It is a multi-chambered particle beam cannon designed to fire volleys of destructive energy bolts which detonate explosively upon hitting their target, hammering armoured vehicles to pieces with repeated strikes.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Pulsar-fusil	36"	9	2	Ordnance 4, Pinning

MYRMIDON DESTROYERS

120 POINTS + COST OF WEAPONS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Myrmidon Destructor	4	5	4	5	2	2	2	9	3+
Myrmidon Lord	4	5	4	5	2	2	3	10	3+

Unit Composition

- 2 Myrmidon Destroyers
- 1 Myrmidon Lord

Unit Type

- Myrmidon Destroyers: Infantry
- Myrmidon Lord: Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- One heavy weapon option (see Options)
- Power fist
- Frag and Krak grenades
- Refractor field
- Infravisor

Special Rules

- Preferred Enemy (Everything!)
- Stubborn
- Bulky
- Relentless
- Lumbering Advance

Dedicated Transport

- A Myrmidon Destructor squad may take a Triaros Armoured Conveyor as a Dedicated Transport for +135 points.

Options

- The squad may include:
 - Up to seven additional Myrmidons+35 points each
- Each Myrmidon Destructor and Myrmidon Lord must choose one of the weapon options listed here:
 - Volkite culverin+25 points
 - Photon thruster cannon+35 points
 - Irradiation engine+35 points
 - Conversion beamer+35 points
 - Graviton imploder+35 points

Lumbering Advance

A model with this special rule may not make Run moves or sweeping advances.



HEAVY SUPPORT

A sub-faction of the Myrmidon sect of the cult of the Machine God, the Myrmidon Destroyers craft their augmetics to carry the heaviest of weapons, often only rendered portable owing to their reinforced endoskeletons and implanted power systems. These augmentations enable them to maintain a furious barrage on the battlefield and to do so with a precision and skill unequalled. They specialise particularly in the destruction of enemy armoured and fortified emplacements, and wield all manner of esoteric and arcane weapons, *against* which conventional defences offer little protection.

As with the rest of their Myrmidon brethren, the Destroyers became an increasingly important faction on many Forge Worlds on both sides of the divide of the civil war during the Horus Heresy, particularly on those Forge Worlds which became isolated and forced to rely on their own defences, and on those, such as the worlds of the Anvillus system, where war was all but constant and planets changed hands back and forth in repeated tides of bloodshed. Here the Ur-Nomus faction, which advocated the complete armed secession from either side in the war had the feared Myrmidon Destructor Lord Ymiros Cyrovile, as their leader.



LORDS OF WAR

Knight-class walkers are true relics of a human history lost now to allegory and myth. These unique machines and the mind-impulse systems that control them predate the arts and arcana of the Mechanicum by a considerable measure, and to the priests of the Omnissiah they are things of sacred mystery and beauty.

True wonders of the Dark Age of Technology they are beyond the realms of all but the most learned Magos to fully understand, but due to the presence of priceless STC manufacturing units devoted to their construction on the ancient colony worlds of the Knight Households, these phenomenally powerful machines may still be replicated and maintained. Although nearly all Knight Worlds and Knight Households, known formally as the Questoris Familia have ties of fealty to the Mechanicum by dint of ancient pacts and treaties. Their feudal dynasties retain high degrees of political and military independence but suffer viperous intrigues and savage rivalries of their own.

The most common patterns of Knights utilised during the Great Crusade share the same basic pattern save for armament, and are known at this time as the Knight Paladin and the Knight Errant. Towering war engines, they are burnished and caparisoned in heraldic livery, and only a Titan could hope to overmatch one in single combat.

	WS	BS	S	Armour			I	A	HP
				Front	Side	Rear			
Knight Errant	4	4	10	13	12	12	4	3	6
Knight Paladin	4	4	10	13	12	12	4	3	6

Unit Composition

- 1 Knight Errant or Knight Paladin

Options

- None

Unit Type

- Vehicle (Super-heavy Walker)

Wargear (Knight Errant)

- Thermal cannon
- Heavy stubber
- Reaper chainsword
- Ion shield

Wargear (Knight Paladin)

- Rapid fire battle cannon
- Two heavy stubbers
- Reaper chainsword
- Ion shield

Special Rules

- None

Ion Shield

When an Imperial Knight is deployed, and subsequently at the start of each of the opposing side's Shooting phases, the Imperial Knight's controlling player side's Shooting phases, the Imperial Knight's controlling player must declare which facing each Imperial Knight's ion shield is covering. The choices are: front, left side, right side or rear.

The Knight has a 4+ invulnerable save against all hits on that facing until the start of your opponent's next Shooting phase. Ion shields are repositioned before any attacks are carried out in the Shooting phase and may not be used to make saving throws against close combat attacks.

Imperial Knight Class Weapons

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Rapid fire battle cannon	72"	6	3	Ordnance 3, Large Blast (5")
Thermal cannon	36"	9	1	Heavy 1, Melta, Large Blast (5")
Heavy stubber	36"	4	6	Heavy 3
Reaper chainsword	-	D	2	Melee



MECHANICUM CERASTUS KNIGHT-LANCER

400 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	Armour			I	A	HP
				Front	Side	Rear			
Cerastus Knight-Lancer	4	4	10	13	12	12	4	4	6

Unit Composition

- 1 Cerastus Knight-Lancer

Options

- None

Unit Type

- Vehicle (Super-heavy Walker)

Wargear

- Cerastus shock lance
- Ion gauntlet shield

Special Rules

- Flank Speed

Flank Speed

If the Cerastus Knight-Lancer opts to make a Run move rather than firing a weapon in the Shooting phase, it may move 3D6".

Cerastus Shock Lance

The shock lance mounted on the Cerastus is a magneto-hydraulic power spear of prodigious size, whose disruption field may also be projected as a powerful electromagnetic plasma blast over short ranges. The weapon has two profiles, one of which is used in close combat, the other can be used in the Shooting phase:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Shock lance (Melee)	-	D	2	Melee, Swift Strike
Shock lance (Blast)	18"	7	2	Heavy 6, Concussive

Swift Strike: The weapon gains a +1 bonus to Initiative on any turn it charges into close combat.

Ion Gauntlet Shield

The ion gauntlet shield generator mounted in the Cerastus' right gauntlet assembly is more concentrated than the directional ion shield mounted on the Knight Paladin, but lacks its tactical flexibility. The ion gauntlet shield is used just as a standard ion shield is (see page 230), but may not offer protection to the Cerastus Knight-Lancer's rear. However, the ion gauntlet shield also provides a 5+ invulnerable save against attacks in close combat and forces close combat attacks by other Super-heavy Walkers and Gargantuan Monstrous creatures to suffer a -1 to hit.

LORDS OF WAR

One of the more uncommon but also most highly valued Knight-class walkers fielded by the Questoris Familia, the Cerastus Knight-Lancer is a first strike weapon, attuned to rapid assault tactics and lethal outflanking charges against a foe. It is justly renowned for its speed and its power, as well as for the temperamental and restive nature of the machine-spirits which dwell as anima within its colossal frame.

Because of this reputation, the most impetuous and glory-hungry of the Knight Households are driven to bond with these war machines, their own souls a match for the fury caged within their mounts. The greatest of these pairings will go on to create martial legends among their lineage, while for those whose temper cannot fully master that of their Knight-engine or whose own lust for glory might see valour outweigh caution on the battlefield, their triumphs are likely to blaze brightly, if briefly, in the chronicles of their Households.



SPACE MARINE LEGION CRUSADE ARMY LIST ADDITIONS AND UPDATES

The following section details additional rules and units for playing games of Warhammer 40,000 set against the background of the dark and terrible wars of the Horus Heresy, and is intended to be used in conjunction with the army list provided in *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*.



"We shall be the fire by which our foes are rendered unto ashes. Their flesh shall wither where they stand such that they can stand no more. Their eyes shall be made sightless, such that they shall see not their doom even as it descends upon them. Even their tongues shall shrivel in their mouths, so that none shall hear their pleas for mercy or deliverance."

Lieutenant-Commander Zachar, 14th Company of the Word Bearers Chapter 'The Broken Scythe'

ADDITIONAL SPECIAL RULES FOR HERESY-ERA GAMING

Legiones Astartes

The Space Marines of the Emperor's Legions are genetically engineered, psycho-indoctrinated warriors with superhuman abilities, and minds and souls tempered for war. In addition, each individual Legion has its own idiosyncrasies and character—the product of their gene-seed and unique warrior culture.

- Units with this special rule may always attempt to regroup normally regardless of casualties.
- Units will also have additional special rules and abilities specific to their Legion.

A Space Marine may only have one such 'named' rule, eg, Legiones Astartes (Sons of Horus). Space Marine units from a different Legion may only be included using the Allies rules (see page 112 of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook) in conjunction with the Allies in the Age of Darkness chart found in *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*, page 185.

Battlesmith

Those versed in the secret arts and teachings of the Mechanicum, whether Techmarine, Forge Lord or Magos, have the skill and ability to reconstruct and effect field repairs to war machinery in the very heat of battle.

If a Battlesmith is in base contact with, or embarked upon, one or more damaged vehicles during the Shooting phase, they can attempt to repair one of them instead of firing a weapon. Roll a D6. If the result is 5 or more, you may do one of the following:

- Restore a lost Hull Point.
- Repair a Weapon Destroyed result.
- Repair an Immobilised result to the attendant vehicle.

If a Weapon Destroyed result is repaired, that weapon can be fired in the following Shooting phase. The Battlesmith cannot use this ability if they have gone to ground or are falling back.

Models with the Battlesmith special rule who also possess a Cortex Controller may instead of the above restore a single lost wound to a Battle-automata as a use of this ability.

Cortex Controller

Any Forge Lord in a Space Marine Legion Crusade army may take a Cortex Controller in addition to their usual options for +15 points (see page 207). If at least one model so equipped is present in the army then either a single Castellax class Battle-automata unit (see page 223) or a single Thallax Cohort without Augment upgrades (see page 222) may be taken as a Heavy Support choice for that force.

Primarch

Genetically engineered creations whose powers and abilities shame even those of the enhanced warriors they lead, the Primarchs, although few in number, bestride the battlefields of the Great Crusade and the dark age of the Horus Heresy like demi-gods, and no mortal force can stand against them. Any model with the Primarch special rule is automatically the army's Warlord and does not roll randomly for Warlord Traits (these will have been included in their own unique abilities). Unless fighting in a game of *Warhammer 40,000: Apocalypse*, no force may ever include more than a single Primarch.

Primarch also incorporates the effects of a number of other special rules. These are the following:

- Independent Character
- Eternal Warrior
- Fear
- Adamantium Will
- Fleet
- Fearless
- It will Not Die
- Master of the Legion (see *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*, page 189)

ANVILLUS PATTERN DREADCLAW DROP POD

100 POINTS

Armour

	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Dreadclaw	-	12	12	12	3

Unit Composition

- 1 Dreadclaw

Unit Type

- Vehicle (Hover, Flyer)

Wargear

- Frag assault launchers

Special Rules

- Assault Vehicle
- Deep Strike
- Drop Pod Assault
- Heat Blast

Transport Capacity

- The Dreadclaw has a transport capacity of 10 or can be used to transport a single Dreadnought.

Access Points

- One access hatch beneath the hull. In practice, passengers can disembark at ground level within 2" of the hull.

Drop Pod Assault

A Dreadclaw, and any unit it transports, must always be held in reserve and always enters play using the Deep Strike rules, and counts as a Drop Pod for the wider use of the Drop Pod Assault rule for the army. At the beginning of the controlling player's first player turn, they must choose half of their Drop Pod units (rounding up) to make a Drop Pod Assault. These units arrive on their controlling player's first player turn. The arrival of the remaining Drop Pods in the player's force is rolled for as usual for the mission. A unit that Deep Strikes via Drop Pod may not assault in the turn it arrives. In the case of the Dreadclaw, unlike other Drop Pods it is not immobile, however, after it has landed, it is treated as a Flyer with Hover mode (which starts off as hovering after it has arrived via Deep Strike).

Heat Blast

Certain boarding Assault Claws and Drop Pods are fitted with cyclic thermal jets and melta cutters designed to burn their way into the armoured hulls of ships. The Legiones Astartes quickly learned they could also use these systems as a limited form of offensive weaponry, dispersing their blasts to incinerate anything nearby on landing, or in the more extreme cases, even scorch a swathe across the battlefield using dangerous low-level flying attacks.

When a model with this rule arrives via Deep Strike, or later when operating as a skimmer in Hover mode, it may if its controlling player wishes inflict a Heat Blast attack. If it does so, then models it is transporting may not disembark or embark on the turn this attack is used.

Heat Blast (Deep Strike): Immediately after the model deploys using the Deep Strike rule, measure a radius of 3"+D3" horizontally outwards from its main hull (do not count any landing struts, etc). All models caught in the blast suffer a Str 6 AP 5 hit with no cover saves. Vehicles are struck on their weakest Armour value. This is counted as a flamer-based attack.

Heat Blast (Fire Sweep): If the controlling player wishes, any unit the model passes directly over (i.e., falls directly under its hull during its Movement phase) suffers D6 Str 5 AP 5 hits with no cover saves. Vehicles are struck on their weakest Armour value. This is counted as a flamer-based attack. Hits from this attack are distributed across a unit as the player suffering the attack wishes. Roll a D6 each time this attack is inflicted. On a result of a 1, the Drop Pod itself suffers a penetrating hit.

Anvillus Pattern Dreadclaw Drop Pods may be purchased individually as a stand-alone Fast Attack choice for a Space Marine Legion Crusade army and as Dedicated Transports for any Terminator armour-equipped unit of five models or less, including Terminator armour-equipped Command squads. In the case of the Orbital Assault Rite of War (see page 189 of The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal), they may be used as Dedicated Transports for Contemptor Dreadnoughts as well as the previous provisions being in effect.



FAST ATTACK

The Anvillus Pattern Dreadclaw Drop Pod was initially designed to insert Legion Space Marine boarding forces onto enemy void-craft in the midst of battle. As such they have a minimal profile and a heavily armoured hull designed to survive fire from smaller ship-based close defence weaponry, while a series of melta cutters allow it to slice through a ship's outer hull and deliver its cargo into the heart of a vessel.

Unlike some earlier boarding craft, which were incapable of returning their cargo to friendly ships, the Dreadclaw is also fully capable of operating as an independent dropship. Indeed, many Legions favour using the Dreadclaw in this role instead of the more common Storm Eagle, dropping from the sky like a flaming comet and employing the craft's thermal jets and melta cutters to scorch the landing zone clean before disembarking the assault troops contained within. Though lacking in any subtlety or elegance, this tactic is undeniably effective, and many crews have developed a dark notoriety for their skill at reckless low altitude strafing runs, leaving great swathes of the enemy's lines aflame with each pass.

LEGION KHARYBDIS ASSAULT CLAW

260 POINTS

HEAVY SUPPORT

Employed by many Legions as their primary ship-to-ship assault craft, the Kharybdis is a monstrous drop pod capable of carrying large assault forces through the void and mounting significant firepower to blast a path through defending small craft. The arrival of a flight of these ominous craft, boarding hooks extended as they approach their target, signals the end for the crew of any vessel that dares oppose the Legiones Astartes.

As a fully operational dropship, Kharybdis assault claws also serve as surface-to-orbit transports, a role that allows them to use the firepower of their storm launchers and melta cutters to scour clean their chosen landing zone before disembarking their deadly cargo into the midst of the enemy's shattered formation. Nor do these craft serve solely as infantry transports, many more aggressive commanders employ the Kharybdis as an effective tank hunter, ramming enemy armour in daring low-altitude attack runs, clamping hold with the Kharybdis' hook-claws and burning through even the thickest ceramite plating with melta cutters designed to breach the hulls of starships.

Armour

	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Kharybdis Assault Claw	4	12	12	12	5

Unit Composition

- 1 Kharybdis Assault Claw

Unit Type

- Vehicle (Flyer, Transport, Hover)

Wargear

- Five Kharybdis storm launchers
- Melta-ram
- Frag assault launchers

Special Rules

- Assault Vehicle
- Drop Pod Assault
- Inertial Guidance System
- Independent Machine Spirits
- Heat Blast

Transport Capacity

- The Kharybdis has a Transport capacity of 20 models, or can be used to transport a single Dreadnought of any type or a unit of Rapier Carrier teams.

Access Points

- One access hatch beneath the hull. In practice, passengers can disembark at ground level, measuring their disembarkation from the ground level of the main hull.



Drop Pod Assault

A Kharybdis, and any unit it transports, must always be held in reserve and always enters play using the Deep Strike rules, and counts as a Drop Pod for the wider use of the Drop Pod Assault rule for the army. At the beginning of the controlling player's first player turn, they must choose half of their Drop Pod units (rounding up) to make a Drop Pod Assault. These units arrive on their controlling player's first player turn. The arrival of the remaining Drop Pods in the player's force is rolled for as usual for the mission. A unit who Deep Strikes via Drop Pod may not assault in the turn it arrives. In the case of the Kharybdis, unlike other Drop Pods it is not immobile, however, after it has landed it is treated as a Flyer with Hover mode (which starts off as hovering after it has arrived via Deep Strike).

Inertial Guidance System

Should a Kharybdis scatter on top of impassable terrain or another model, then reduce the scatter distance by the minimum required to avoid the obstacle if desired.

Independent Machine Spirits

Kharybdis may target different enemy units with each of their weapons.

Heat Blast

Certain boarding Assault Claws and Drop Pods are fitted with cyclic thermal jets and melta cutters designed to burn their way into the armoured hulls of ships. The Legiones Astartes quickly learned they could also use these systems as a limited form of offence weaponry, dispersing their blasts to incinerate anything nearby on landing, or in the more extreme cases, even scorch a swathe across the battlefield using dangerous low-level flying attacks.

When a model with this rule arrives via Deep Strike, or later when operating as a skimmer in Hover mode, it may if its controlling player wishes inflict a Heat Blast attack. If it does so, then models it is transporting may not disembark or embark on the turn this attack is used.

Heat Blast (Deep Strike): Immediately after the model lands, measure a radius of $3" + D_3$ horizontally outwards from its main hull (do not count any landing struts, etc). All models caught in the blast suffer a Str 6 AP 5 hit with no cover saves. Vehicles are struck on their weakest Armour value. This is counted as a flamer-based attack.

Heat Blast (Fire Sweep): If the controlling player wishes, any unit the model passes directly over (i.e., falls directly under its hull during its Movement phase) suffers D6 Str 5 AP 5 hits with no cover saves. Vehicles are struck on their weakest Armour value. This is counted as a flamer-based attack. Hits from this attack are distributed across a unit as the player suffering the attack wishes. Roll a D6 each time this attack is inflicted. On a result of a 1, the Drop Pod itself suffers a penetrating hit.

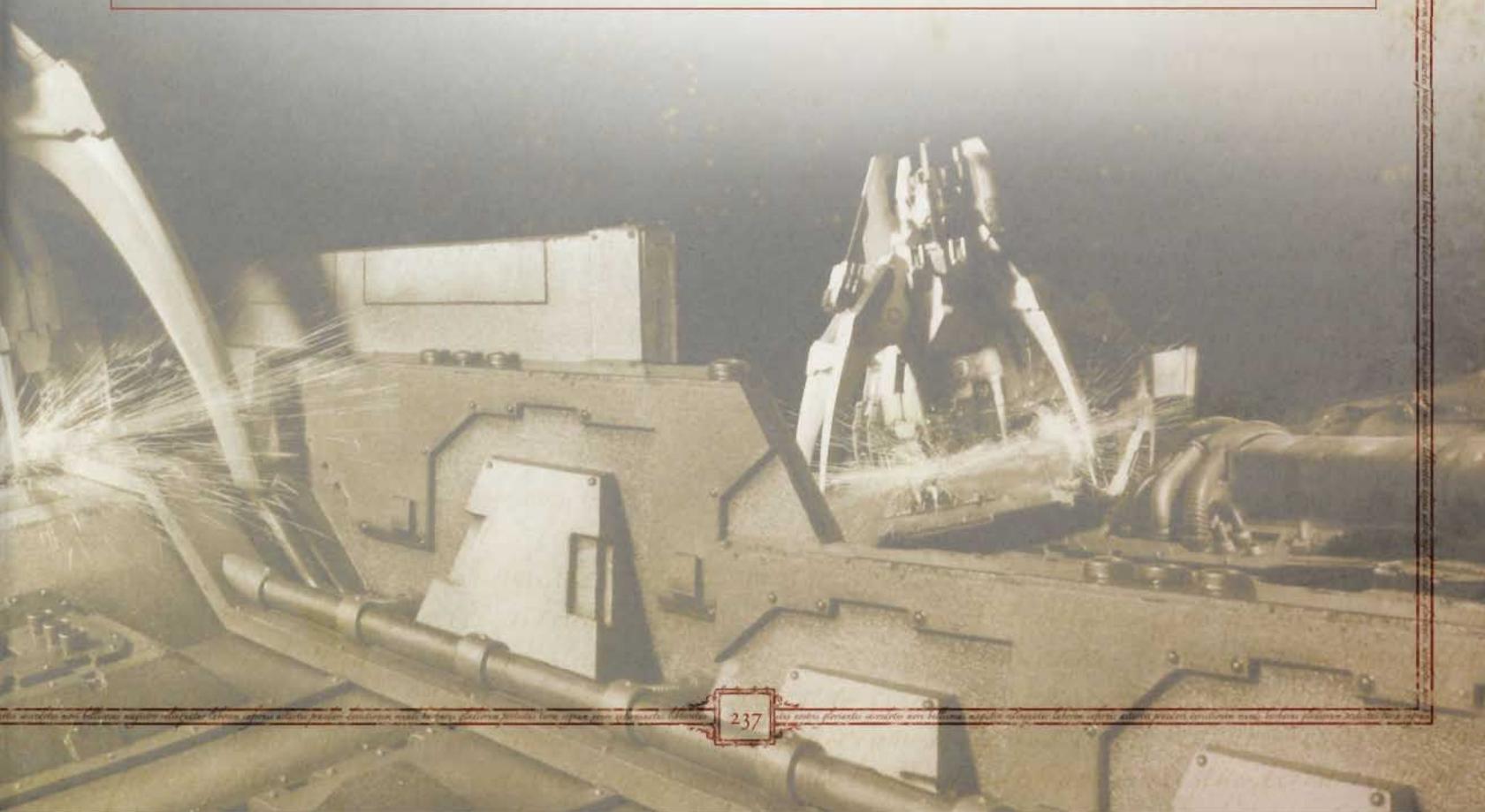
Melta-ram

Although a Flyer, the Kharybdis may conduct Ram attacks as if it were a Tank while using Hover mode. It may not, however, Ram other Flyers or make such an attack on any turn in which it arrives from reserve. It also may not conduct a Ram on any turn on which it embarks or disembarks models or uses its Heat Blast attack.

Kharybdis Storm Launcher

These rapid firing missile launchers are designed to provide the Kharybdis with some measure of striking power as it closes with its target and to clear landing zones around the Kharybdis, throwing nearby resistance into disarray as the warriors on board disembark. To this end, the launcher fires clusters of fragmentation and anti-armour warheads, with each launcher controlled independently by on-board augury-arrays.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Kharybdis storm launcher	24"	6	5	Heavy 2, Pinning, Twin-linked



LEGION FIRE RAPTOR GUNSHIP

200 POINTS

HEAVY SUPPORT

A variant of the Storm Eagle, the Fire Raptor gunship was created with the aim of providing overwhelming aerial firepower to Legiones Astartes assault forces. These relentless craft can reduce any attacking force to ruin in a devastating rain of bolt shells and high explosive rockets, and are in use amongst virtually every one of the Legions.

In addition to twin nose-mounted Avenger bolt cannon and an array of rockets or missiles, the Fire Raptor replaces the capacious transport bay of the Storm Eagle with ammunition and targeting cogitators for two independent ball-turrets. Each of these sophisticated turrets is equipped with a gyroscopic array and crewed by a dedicated Space Marine gunner, allowing each to strike separate targets with pinpoint precision even while the gunship moves at flank speed.

The Fire Raptor first gained renown during the many campaigns against the Orks that infest many of the systems now claimed by the Emperor. The ferocious firepower of these craft proved pivotal in many engagements against the overwhelming numbers of Orks encountered on many worlds, reducing wave after wave of Ork warriors to bloody ruin.

Armour

	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Fire Raptor	4	12	12	12	4

Unit Composition

- 1 Fire Raptor Gunship

Unit Type

- Vehicle (Flyer, Hover)

Wargear

- One hull-mounted twin-linked avenger bolt cannon
- Two turret-mounted quad heavy bolters
- Four wing-mounted tempest rockets
- Machine Spirit
- Extra Armour

Special Rules

- Deep Strike
- Strafing Run
- Independent Turret Fire

Access Points

- None

Options

- A Fire Raptor may exchange its quad heavy bolters for:
 - Reaper autocannon battery.....+10 points
- A Fire Raptor may take any of the following upgrades:
 - Armoured ceramite.....+20 points
 - Searchlight.....+1 point
- A Fire Raptor may exchange its four tempest rockets for:
 - Four hellstrike missiles.....+20 points

Independent Turret Fire

The Fire Raptor is equipped with two waist-mounted rapid tracking turrets capable of fully independent operation. So long as the Fire Raptor is eligible to fire a weapon in the Shooting phase, each waist turret may fire at a target of its own and its weapons do not count towards the number of weapons the Gunship may fire each turn.

Fire Raptor Weapons

The Fire Raptor Gunship carries vast firepower for a vehicle of its size. Mounting heavy anti-personnel and anti-materiel weaponry, the Fire Raptor forgoes the Storm Eagle's transport capacity for a reinforced airframe and substantial ammunition capacity to feed the hunger of its guns.

	Range	Str	AP	Special
Tempest rockets	60"	6	4	Heavy 1, Sunder, One Shot
Avenger bolt cannon	36"	6	3	Heavy 7
Quad heavy bolter	36"	5	4	Heavy 6, Twin-linked
Reaper autocannon battery	36"	7	4	Heavy 4, Twin-linked



ACHILLES-ALPHA PATTERN LAND RAIDER

300 POINTS

Armour

BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Achilles-Alpha	4	14	14	14

Unit Composition

- 1 Achilles-Alpha pattern Land Raider

Unit Type

- Vehicle (Tank)

Wargear

- One hull-mounted quad mortar with frag and shatter shells
- Two sponson-mounted twin-linked Volkite culverins
- Searchlight
- Smoke launcher
- Extra Armour
- Machine Spirit

Special Rules

- Enhanced Ferromantic Rites
- Galvanic Traction Drive

Transport Capacity

- The Achilles-Alpha has a transport capacity of six models.

Fire Points

- None

Access Points

- One access hatch on each side of the hull.

Enhanced Ferromantic Rites

The hull of the Achilles-Alpha has been specially constructed to resist even the most determined assault and is almost preternaturally resilient. As a result, the Achilles-Alpha Land Raider is not subject to the particular effects of the Lance and Melta special rules by attacks made against it. In addition, it reduces the effects of all rolls on the Vehicle Damage chart caused by Penetrating hits (other than by Destroyer weapons) by -1. Note that this reduction is applied to any AP value that would first add to this roll rather than the final result where this is appropriate. So, for example, an AP 1 attack which would usually gain a +2 modifier to the damage roll, instead would only gain a +1, etc.

Galvanic Traction Drive

The Achilles-Alpha must re-roll failed Dangerous Terrain tests.

Quad Mortar

The quad mortar carries two types of shells on-board and may select which to use each time the weapon fires.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Quad mortar (Frag)	12"-60"	5	5	Heavy 4, Barrage, Blast (3"), Shell Shock
(Shatter)	36"	8	3	Heavy 4, Sunder

HEAVY SUPPORT

The Achilles-Alpha pattern Land Raider is the most durable vehicle currently in service with the Legiones Astartes. These vehicles shrug off weapon strikes that would cripple even such titanic weapons of war as the mighty Fellblade, and are proof against even the most toxic environment. The weaponry of these vehicles is no less impressive, each being armed with a quad mortar tooled with exacting precision and capable of launching shatter shells as well as the more common frag shells. Those Legions that maintain Achilles-Alpha pattern Land Raiders utilise them as the spearpoint of any assault under fire, trusting the vehicle's near-impregnable armour and punishing weapons array to break any defensive position.

Each Achilles-Alpha is assembled under the direct oversight of a Forge World's Macro-tek Magos, and is the result of months of painstaking labour, and so costly are they to produce that no Legion fields more than a handful of such vehicles. The more common Achilles pattern Land Raider is derived from the design of these mighty engines of war – a lesser copy that can be reproduced with the expenditure of fewer resources, but possesses only a fraction of the original's might.



SICARAN VENATOR TANK DESTROYER

190 POINTS

HEAVY SUPPORT

The Sicaran Venator is a variant of the Sicaran battle tank which saw extensive use in the opening battles of the Horus Heresy. The Sicaran Venator replaced the turret-mounted accelerator cannon of the Sicaran with a powerful neutron laser. When coupled with the Sicaran Venator's ferocious speed, the neutron laser is an ideal anti-tank weapon, slicing apart armoured hulls with casual ease and blasting internal compartments and crew with atomic fire.

Conceived in the fires of war, the Sicaran Venator is the result of all the knowledge gleaned from the unnumbered battles of the Great Crusade. Its advanced neutron laser is specially designed to provide the Legiones Astartes with superior firepower, enabling it to destroy any and all xenos threats that might be encountered by the expanding armies of the nascent Imperium.

At the time Horus began his rebellion on the black fields of Isstvan V, the Sicaran Venator had only just entered full production and only limited numbers had been inducted into the various Legions. Despite the relative rarity of these vehicles, their combination of durability, speed and firepower ensured that they proved pivotal in a number of battles, surviving where lesser Predator or Vindicator tanks did not.

Armour

	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Sicaran Venator	4	13	12	12	3

Unit Composition

- 1 Sicaran Venator

Unit Type

- Vehicle (Tank, Fast)

Wargear

- Searchlight
- Smoke launcher
- Pintle-mounted heavy bolter
- Hull-mounted neutron beam laser
- Extra Armour

Special Rules

- Dangerous Reactor Core

Options

- The vehicle may take any of the following options:
 - Hunter-killer missile+10 points
 - Dozer blade+5 points
 - Auxiliary Drive+10 points
 - Armoured Ceramite+20 points
- The Sicaran Venator may take one of the following sets of two sponson weapons:
 - Heavy bolters+20 points
 - Lascannon+40 points

Neutron Beam Laser

One of the most powerful weapons mounted on any Imperial vehicle of its class, the Hadyxis pattern neutron beam laser was a more compact and sophisticated variant of the arcane neutron laser array found mounted on the far larger Cerberus Heavy Tank Destroyer. While lacking the sheer damage output of the Cerberus' system, its shorter-focused, densely collimated beam at last dealt with the risks of dangerous feedback that had plagued that weapons system. This advance was only made possible by the Archmagos Jun Hadyxis of Phaeton in the closing decade of the Great Crusade, and along with the life of the savant-genius that created it, the secret of the weapon's construction would be lost in the bitter years of war to follow.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Neutron beam laser	36"	10	1	Ordinance 2, Concussive, Shock Pulse

Shock Pulse: Any vehicle (including super-heavy vehicles) that suffers a Penetrating hit from a weapon with this rule may only fire Snap Shots on the following game turn.

Dangerous Reactor Core

The powerful reactor containment vessels needed to power the Sicaran Venator's primary weapon confer considerable risk of catastrophic explosion should the tank's armour be severely breached. If an enemy unit inflicts a Penetrating hit on the Sicaran Venator, then they may re-roll results of a 1 on the Vehicle Damage table against it. In addition, should it suffer an Explodes! result, add +D3" to the explosion's radius.

LEGION FALCHION SUPER-HEAVY TANK DESTROYER

505 POINTS

Armour

	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Falchion	3	14	13	12	12

Unit Composition

- 1 Falchion

Unit Type

- Super-heavy Vehicle

Wargear

- Searchlight
- Smoke launcher
- One twin-linked hull-mounted Volcano cannon
- Two sponson-mounted quad-lascannon

Options

- The vehicle may take any of the following options:
 - Hunter-killer missile+10 points
 - Auxiliary Drive+10 points
 - Armoured Ceramite+25 points
- The Falchion may take one of the following pintle-mounted weapons:
 - Twin-linked bolter+5 points
 - Combi-weapon+10 points
 - Heavy flamer+15 points
 - Havoc launcher+15 points
 - Heavy bolter+15 points
 - Multi-melta+20 points
- The Falchion may be upgraded to take a:
 - Space Marine Legion Crew+15 points

Volcano Cannon

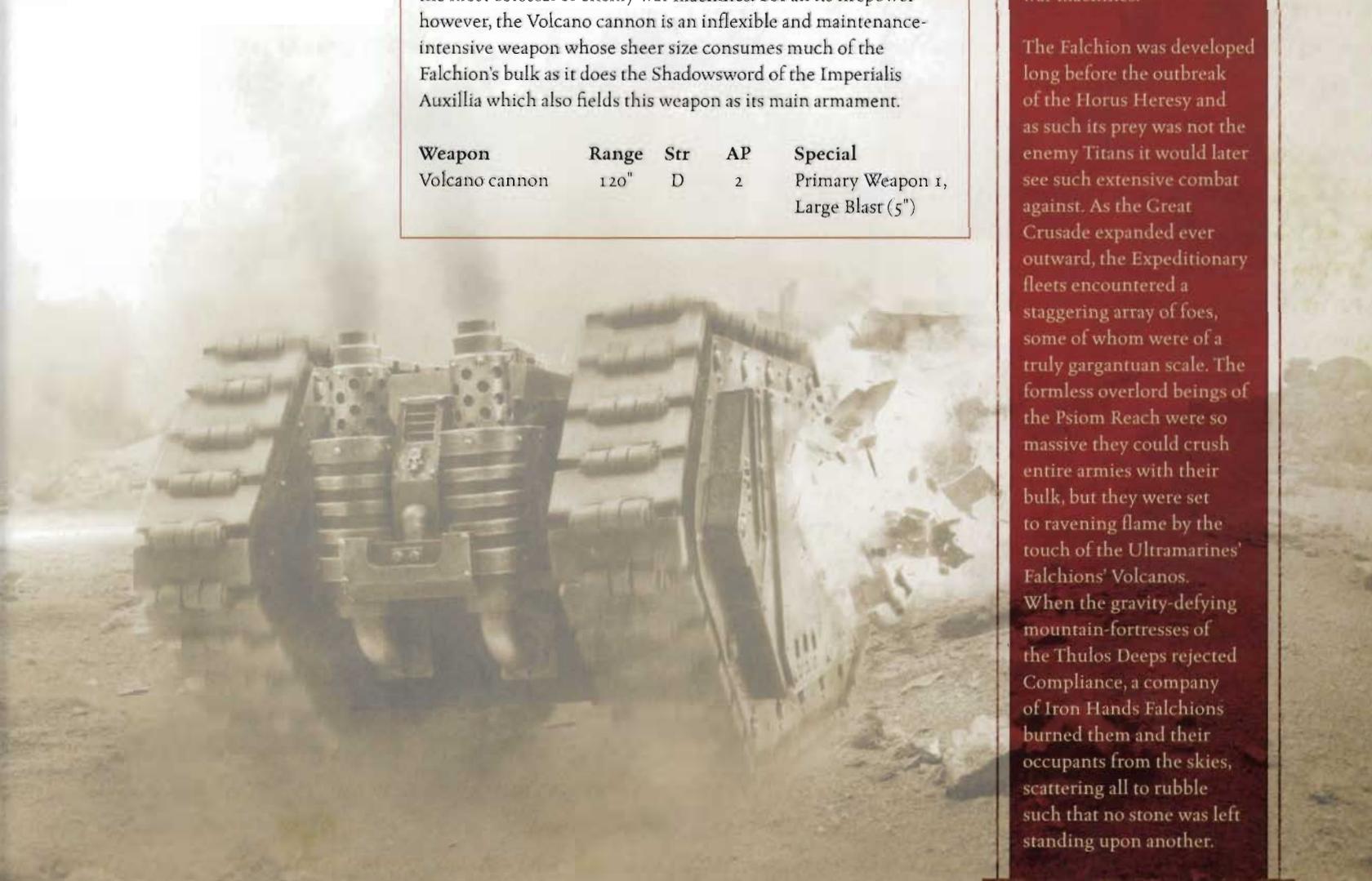
The Volcano cannon (so named, it is generally thought, given its tendency to turn rock and stone into spraying magma where it strikes) is an apocalyptically powerful laser weapon designed to level the most reinforced fortification and deal fatal blows to the most colossal of enemy war machines. For all its firepower however, the Volcano cannon is an inflexible and maintenance-intensive weapon whose sheer size consumes much of the Falchion's bulk as it does the Shadowsword of the Imperialis Auxillia which also fields this weapon as its main armament.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Volcano cannon	120"	D	2	Primary Weapon 1, Large Blast (5")

LORDS OF WAR

The Falchion utilises a potent weapon combining technologies used in the Fellblade and the Shadowsword super-heavy tank. The Falchion's twin-mounted Volcano cannon is one of the most powerful vehicle-mounted, anti-tank weapons in the Imperium's arsenal and it requires such an investment in resources to construct just a single example that its use is limited to the Legiones Astartes. Even then, the Falchion is so rare that most Legions maintain but a handful, reserved for use against the largest of enemy war machines.

The Falchion was developed long before the outbreak of the Horus Heresy and as such its prey was not the enemy Titans it would later see such extensive combat against. As the Great Crusade expanded ever outward, the Expeditionary fleets encountered a staggering array of foes, some of whom were of a truly gargantuan scale. The formless overlord beings of the Psiom Reach were so massive they could crush entire armies with their bulk, but they were set to ravening flame by the touch of the Ultramarines' Falchions' Volcanos. When the gravity-defying mountain-fortresses of the Thulos Deeps rejected Compliance, a company of Iron Hands Falchions burned them and their occupants from the skies, scattering all to rubble such that no stone was left standing upon another.



LEGION STORMBLADE SUPER-HEAVY TANK

455 POINTS

LORDS OF WAR

The Legion Stormblade is a variant of the Imperial Army super-heavy tank constructed on the Forge World of Lucius and equipped with a mighty plasma blastgun. This weapon occupies a tactical niche between the much heavier turbolaser destructor carried on the Shadowword and similar, but lighter weapons carried on smaller vehicles. The plasma blastgun is simpler to maintain and supply than the turbolaser, giving the tank an extended operational range and its Space Marine crew are a lot more resistant to the heat and radiation generated by its enormous reactor array than the crews of Imperial Army Stormblades.

The majority of Legions maintain a stock of Stormblades amongst their super-heavy tank formations, though some only utilise them as Legion reserves and do not commit them to the line as a matter of course. The Iron Warriors and the Iron Hands have both been known to utilise armoured vanguards comprising Stormblades, often flanked by Predators and, more recently, Sicarans.

Armour

	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Legion Stormblade	3	14	13	12	9

Unit Composition

- 1 Stormblade

Unit Type

- Super-heavy Vehicle

Wargear

- Plasma blastgun
- Searchlight
- Smoke launchers
- Hull-mounted heavy bolter

Options

- A Stormblade may take:
 - Up to two pairs of side sponsons, each with one lascannon and one twin-linked heavy bolter+50 points per pair
- A Stormblade may replace any of its sponsons' twin-linked heavy bolters with:
 - Twin-linked heavy flammers..... Free
- A Stormblade may take any of the following:
 - Hunter-killer missile+10 points
 - Armoured Ceramite+25 points
- A Stormblade may take one of the following pintle-mounted weapons:
 - Twin-linked bolter.....+5 points
 - Combi-weapon+10 points
 - Heavy flamer+15 points
 - Havoc launcher+15 points
 - Heavy bolter.....+15 points
 - Multi-melta.....+20 points
- A Stormblade may be upgraded to a Command tank+25 points
- A Stormblade may be upgraded to take:
 - Space Marine Legion Crew+15 points

Plasma blastgun

The majority of plasma blastguns utilised on Legion Stormblades are wrought upon the Forge World of Ryza, a sovereign Mechanicum domain whose lords are known as the undisputed masters of this particular strand of machine lore. When the weapon fires, a roiling, barely contained bolt of raw plasma as bright as a sun is unleashed. All but the strongest of armour is reduced to slag by such an attack and it can defeat even Titan grade void shields with relative ease.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Plasma blastgun (Rapid)	72"	8	2	Primary Weapon 2, Massive Blast (7")
(Overload)	96"	10	2	Primary Weapon 1, Apocalyptic Blast (10")

Space Marine Legion Crew

A Stormblade upgraded to have Space Marine Legion Crew increases its Ballistic Skill to BS 4.

Command Tank

If the vehicle is upgraded to a Command tank, all allied units within 24" of the Stormblade may re-roll failed Morale checks.

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FORTIFICATION

Consisting of a system of interlocking modular fortifications, the Castellum Stronghold is a Space Marine tactical fortification intended for front line use. Deployed from orbit by landing craft, it can be swiftly configured and assembled even under heavy fire. The individual components are deployed in drop cradles clad in ablative armour, the remnants of which are jettisoned at the moment the sections are landed, revealing a fully operational stronghold. Such is the skill of the Legiones Astartes that in battle conditions this might take as little as 30 minutes, while the most adept at such operations, in particular the Iron Warriors and the Imperial Fists Legions, take great pride in reducing this timeframe even further.

Castellum Strongholds are generally deployed for short lived but high intensity operations where the Space Marines must establish a heavily fortified base in highly contested war zones. In such conditions it can serve as a firebase, artillery redoubt, defensive strongpoint, or platform from which they can launch immediate offensive actions. It is not an unknown tactic for a Castellum Stronghold to be dropped deep behind enemy lines during an on-going battle, sowing confusion and forcing a foe to turn back on themselves to stop their deployments from being destroyed from within.

Composition

- 1 Castellum Stronghold consisting of a main Bunker and three Bunker Annexes.

Terrain type

- Multiple-part building with Battlements. This comprises a single Space Marine Castellum Stronghold Realm of Battle tile. The Stronghold consists of an open Deck Area, a main Tacticus Bunker (Large Building, Armour value 14) and three Bunker Annexes (Medium Buildings, Armour value 14).

Wargear

- None

Special Rules

- Shielded Gate Barriers
- Defensive Structure

Access Points & Fire Points

- As per model

Options

The Tacticus Bunker and each of the Bunker Annexes may be equipped with the following emplaced weapons. Emplaced weapons may be used by units within their bunker at that unit's BS value, otherwise they use the Automated Fire rules and are utilised by the Castellum's controlling player. These emplacements may not be targeted separately and are considered destroyed when their Bunker is.

- The Tacticus Bunker has two mounting points and so may take two weapons choices, while the Bunker Annexes have one mounting point and so may take a single weapon choice each of the following:
 - Twin-linked heavy bolter+10 points each
 - Twin-linked heavy flamer+10 points each
 - Twin-linked lascannon.....+20 points each
 - Multi-melta & searchlight+10 points each
 - Hyperios missile launcher+30 points each
 - Whirlwind launcher+35 points each
 - Icarus lascannon+35 points each
 - Quad gun.....+50 points each
- The following options may only be taken by the mounts on the Tacticus Bunker in addition to those previously listed:
 - Hyperios command platform[†]+20 points each
 - Battle cannon turret.....+50 points each
 - Icarus quad lascannon+75 points each
- In addition, the Tacticus Bunker may be further equipped with any of the following options:
 - Comms relay+20 points
 - Hostile signal jammer+20 points



Shielded Gate Barriers

The main entrances of the Castellum Stronghold are covered not by plascrete and adamantium, but crackling barriers of energy that can be raised or lowered at the will of the fortification's controller.

At the start of each of the controlling player's turns, they may declare whether the gate barriers (see the diagram on page 247) are each raised or lowered – consider them to be raised by default at the start of the game.

- Raised barriers are treated as impassable terrain to the height of the adjoining walls, but do not block line of sight. Wounds inflicted by shooting attacks that pass through a raised shield gate barrier benefit from a 3+ invulnerable save.
- Should the Castellum's Tacticus Bunker be destroyed, the barriers collapse and cannot be raised again.

Defensive Structure

The Castellum Stronghold is a paragon of the military architect's craft, utilising technologies and materials beyond that of mute stone and steel.

The following rules and conditions apply:

- The Battlements of the Castellum Stronghold confer a 4+ cover save for units on top of them.
- Units that Go to Ground anywhere on the Castellum Stronghold tile gain +2 to their cover saves rather than +1.
- The Bunkers of the Castellum Stronghold have a 5+ invulnerable save against shooting attacks directed against them and units within them.

Comms Relay

While the Tacticus Bunker is intact and occupied by a friendly unit, the controlling player's Reserve rolls may be re-rolled.

Hostile Signal Jammer

While the Tacticus Bunker is intact and occupied by a friendly unit, roll a D6 for any enemy unit attempting to Deep Strike either onto the Castellum Stronghold tile or within 12" of its edges. On a result of 4+, the unit suffers a Deep Strike Mishap automatically.

Special Stronghold Mounted Weaponry

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Icarus lascannon	96"	9	2	Heavy 1, Interceptor, Skyfire
Quad gun	48"	7	4	Heavy 4, Interceptor, Skyfire, Twin-linked
Icarus quad lascannon	96"	9	2	Heavy 2, Interceptor, Skyfire, Twin-linked
Hyperios missile launcher	48"	8	3	Heavy 1, Skyfire, Interceptor, Heat Seeker*

*Heat Seeker: A weapon with this special rule can re-roll all failed To Hit rolls against Flyers and Fast Skimmers.

Hyperios Command Platform (Castellum Stronghold)

As long as the Hyperios Command Platform is functioning, all Hyperios missile launchers, quad guns, icarus lascannon and quad icarus lascannon mounted on the Castellum Stronghold resolve any automated fire at BS 3.

In addition, while the command platform is in play, any of the Stronghold's emplaced weapons with the Skyfire special rule may target Flyers and Fast Skimmers in preference to closer models when shooting using the Automated Fire special rule.





+++ LEGIONES ASTARTES HEAVY
LINE/PLANETARY ASSAULT
FORTIFICATION+++

++ MECHANICUM/APOTHEOSIS
ASTARTES++

++ PRODUCTION IDENT: [MkXXIII]
'CASTELLUM'++

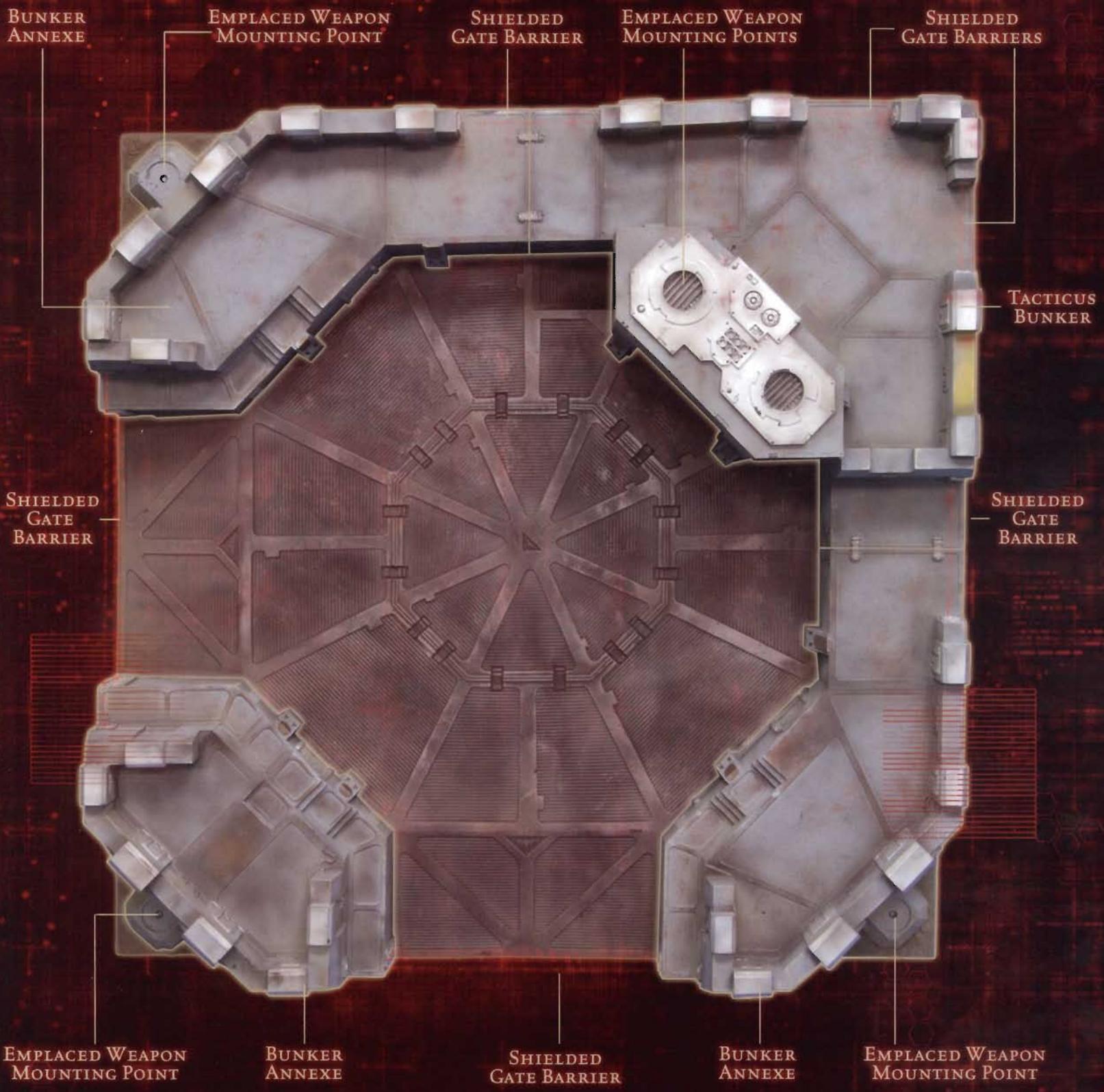
++ MULTIPLE CONFIGURATION++

++ LEGION/FLEET GRADE ISSUE/
DEPLOYMENT++

++ MID/LATE GREAT CRUSADE
FABRICATION LIMITED TO
'ASCENDII' GRADE FOUNDRIES AND
CENTRALISED LEGION FORGES++

++ DEPLOYED PATTERNS 1Q/2XX/4K++





+CASTELLUM STRONGHOLD+

++LEGIONES ASTARTES FORTIFICATION++

++LOGISTICA MILITARUM, ORDINATI MANDATE Z22K.3974++



SPACE MARINE LEGION ARMY LIST APPENDIX

The following section provides additional rules, characters, Primarchs and other special units designed to allow players to customise the Space Marine Legion Crusade Army list found in *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal* to more specifically represent the four Legions described in this book: the Raven Guard, the Iron Warriors, the Alpha Legion and the Imperial Fists. Future volumes in this series will further expand the coverage of these and others of the Legiones Astartes.

CRUSADE ARMY LIST APPENDIX IX: THE IRON WARRIORS

LEGIONES ASTARTES (IRON WARRIORS)

The Space Marines of the Emperor's Legions are genetically engineered, psycho-indoctrinated warriors with superhuman abilities and minds and souls tempered for war. In addition, each individual Legion has its own idiosyncrasies and character—the product of their gene-seed and unique warrior culture.

The Iron Warriors are the grim-faced, cold-hearted masters of the science of war, the exemplars of strength and discipline turned exclusively to the systematic destruction of an enemy. The Legion is commanded by its Lord Primarch as an extension of his own mind and body, the will of each Legionary utterly sublimated to his conception of victory. More so than in any other Legion, the life of each warrior is secondary to his duty, as much a resource to be expended in the relentless calculus of war as bolt shell or lascannon charge. Guided by such doctrines, the Iron Warriors are amongst the most relentless and dogged siege warriors in the ranks of the Legiones Astartes and countless fortresses have been reduced to ashes under their guns throughout the Great Crusade.

All models and units with this special rule are subject to the following provisions:

- **Legiones Astartes:** Units with this special rule may always attempt to regroup at their normal Leadership value, regardless of casualties.
- **Wrack & Ruin:** The Iron Warriors specialise in storm assaults against fortified positions under heavy fire, and are all but impossible to stop once committed to the attack. Needless to say, their mastery of destructive siege craft is all but unrivalled.
 - Models with the Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors) special rule do not suffer Morale checks from shooting attacks and may re-roll failed Pinning tests.
 - All grenade and melta bomb attacks by models with the Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors) special rule have the Wrecker special rule in addition to any other rules for the weapon type being used.
- **The Bitter End:** In games which would normally have a random game length, the Iron Warriors player's opponent can opt to play to six full turns instead of the roll to end the game being made.

"Victory is not an abstract concept, it is the equation that sits at the heart of strategy. Victory is the will to expend lives and munitions in attack, overmatching the defenders' reserves of manpower and ordnance. As long as my Iron Warriors are willing to pay any price in pursuit of victory, we shall never be defeated."

Perturabo, Master of the Iron Warriors



LEGION SPECIFIC UNITS

In addition to those found in the Crusade Army list, the Iron Warriors Legion has particular access to two additional unit types: Tyrant Siege Terminator Squads (which are an Elites choice on the Force Organisation chart) and Iron Havoc Support Squads (which are a Heavy Support choice on the Force Organisation chart). In addition, it has a specific option for its Praetors which is unavailable to other Legions; the Warsmith.

Warsmith

A single Praetor with the Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors) special rule in a detachment may be made a Warsmith. Warsmiths have the Stubborn special rule and must be the army's Warlord unless their Primarch is present, but are worth an additional Victory point to the enemy if slain in any mission where Victory points are being used. When acting as an army's Warlord, they are given the Shatter Defences special rule in place of their usual Warlord Trait. A Warsmith may not be equipped with a Jump Pack, Space Marine Bike or Space Marine Jetbike, but may be given a servo-arm in addition to their normal wargear as well as the Battlesmith special rule for an additional +35 points.

Shatter Defences: After deployment but before Scout moves and Infiltrators are placed, nominate one piece of terrain within the opponent's deployment zone (this cannot be something purchased as part of their army). The cover save provided by the targeted terrain is reduced by -1 (5+ becoming 6+, and so on). A particular piece of terrain may only be 'shattered' once.

LEGION SPECIFIC WARGEAR

The Iron Warriors Legion has access to the following items of special wargear:

Shrapnel Bolts

These modified heavy bolter rounds are available as an option for all units in the army equipped with heavy bolters/twin-linked heavy bolters or quad heavy bolters. This option costs no points but must be noted in the army list, and if applied to a unit they must be given to all eligible weapons of the listed types in that unit. These weapons gain the Pinning special rule, but their AP value is changed to 5.

Cortex Controller

Any Iron Warriors Warsmith, Forge Lord or Techmarine can be given a cortex controller for +15 points (see page 207).

IRON WARRIORS UNIQUE RITE OF WAR: THE HAMMER OF OLYMPIA

Masters of siege warfare and attrition assault tactics, the Iron Warriors favour the use of murderous firepower as their principal agency of war, and are renowned for their use of heavy armour and fortifications, spurning vainglorious ideals of personal combat and valour for the brutal determination to achieve victory by any means necessary. This culminated in tactical formations such as that which became known as the Hammer of Olympia; designed to carry out an unyielding close range attack and shatter the strongest enemy defence line under a weight of armoured warriors and a hurricane of fire.

Effects

- **Hail of Fire:** Models with the Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors) special rule that are part of a force using this Rite of War may declare an assault after firing rapid fire weapons, so long as they have not also made a Fury of the Legion attack, but counts as making a disordered charge if doing so. Note that the unit may still only assault the same unit they have fired at.
- **Sheathed in Steel:** All vehicles with the Tank and Walker types chosen as part of this formation gain the Extra Armour option at no additional cost.
- **Siege Engineers:** A primary detachment using this Rite of War may take an additional Heavy Support choice on their Force Organisation chart.

Limitations

- Detachments using this Rite of War must take either a Warsmith or Siege Breaker as its Compulsory HQ choice.
- Detachments using this Rite of War must take more Heavy Support choices than Fast Attack choices from the Force Organisation chart for the mission type they are using. So, for example, if the force contains three Heavy Support choices, it can only contain up to two Fast Attack choices.
- Detachments using this Rite of War must take an additional Compulsory Troops choice as part of their Force Organisation chart.
- Detachments using this Rite of War may not take allied Space Marine Legion detachments.

Kaldorax Aleph Subjugation,

902.M30

118th & 3rd Grand Battalions assigned.

65% casualties suffered, non-Compliant forces crushed, complete victory.

Third Temporaferrox Extermination,

933.M31

33rd Grand Battalion assigned.

78% casualties suffered, all xenos life forms destroyed, losses acceptable.

Pacification of the Saryinc Compact,

962.M30

282nd Grand Battalion assigned.

32% casualties suffered, rebellious garrison forces reduced to 30% effective strength, Battalion command censured for lack of zeal.

The Burning of the Pharun Drift,

981.M30

3rd, 14th & 72nd Grand Battalions assigned.

Overall 42% casualties, 3rd Grand Battalion suffered 80% casualties, all target worlds depopulated, losses acceptable.

Excerpts from the *Carta Praelium*, the war journals of the Iron Warriors Legion, as annotated by the Iron Lord – Perturabo

TYRANT SIEGE TERMINATOR SQUAD

295 POINTS

ELITES

Tyrant Siege Terminators are the vanguard of any Iron Warriors siege breaker formation. Clad in thick Cataphractii plate and spitting a relentless hail of high explosive missiles from their carapace-mounted cyclone missile launchers, these implacable warriors are fortress-breakers of unparalleled skill. The bleak spectacle of these warriors wading through storms of lasfire and shell, stoically smashing apart any obstacle before them with chainfist and krak blast, became synonymous with Perturabo's wrath unleashed.

Recruited from amongst the most battle-hardened Iron Warriors, Tyrant Siege Terminators are expected to brave the most ferocious enemy fire without regard for their own survival – even more so than others of their grim brotherhood they understand the mathematics of war, and are ever ready to sacrifice in blood to secure victory. Most often found among the ranks of the Stor-Bezashk, the elite siege masters of the IVth Legion, and deployed to other Grand Battalions as needed to support siege and assault actions, Tyrant Siege Terminators were often at the forefront of the most cataclysmic battles of the Great Crusade.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Tyrant Terminator	4	4	4	4	1	4	2	8	2+
Tyrant Siege Master	4	4	4	4	1	4	2	9	2+

Unit Composition

- 4 Tyrant Terminators
- 1 Tyrant Siege Master

Unit Type

- Tyrant Terminators: Infantry
- Tyrant Siege Master: Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Cataphractii pattern Terminator armour
- Cyclone missile launcher
- Power fist
- Combi-bolter
- Omni-scope (Siege Master only)

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors)
- Wrecker (applied to all their attacks, regardless of the weapon used)

Dedicated Transport

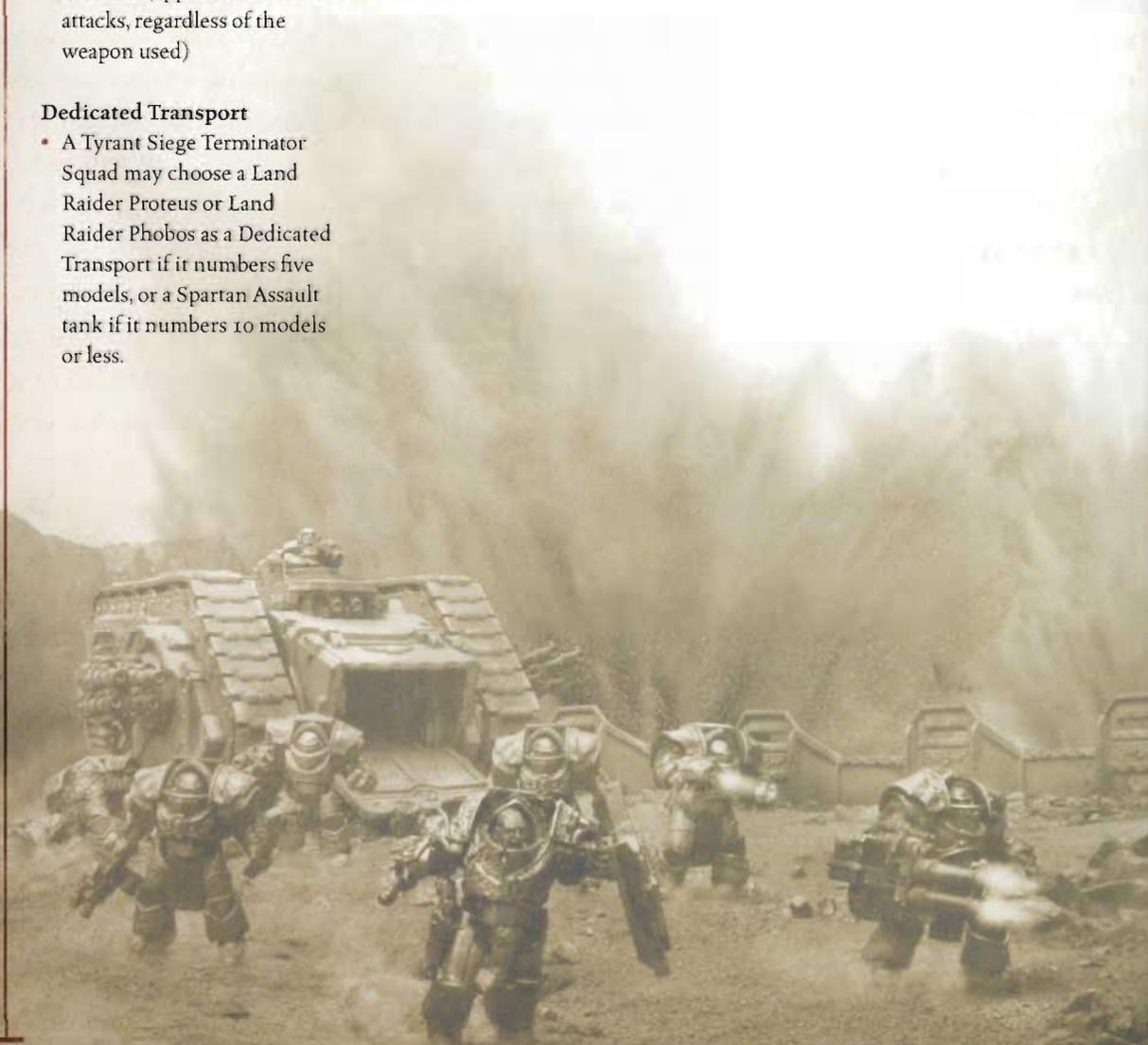
- A Tyrant Siege Terminator Squad may choose a Land Raider Proteus or Land Raider Phobos as a Dedicated Transport if it numbers five models, or a Spartan Assault tank if it numbers 10 models or less.

Options

- The Tyrant Siege Terminator Squad may include:
 - Up to an additional 5 Tyrant Terminators.....+50 points each
- Any model in the unit may upgrade their power fist to a:
 - Chainfist +5 points each
- The Siege Master may exchange their combi-bolter for a:
 - Combi-weapon +5 points

Omni-scope

A sophisticated cogitator-slaved optical scanner integrated into the modified Terminator armour of the squad's Siege Master, the omni-scope provides the model which carries it with the Night Vision and Split Fire special rules.



IRON HAVOC SUPPORT SQUAD

185 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Iron Havoc	4	4	4	4	1	4	1	8	3+
Iron Havoc Sergeant	4	4	4	4	1	4	2	9	3+

Unit Composition

- 4 Iron Havocs
- 1 Iron Havoc Sergeant

Unit Type

- Iron Havoc: Infantry
- Iron Havoc Sergeant: Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Power armour
- Heavy bolter with shrapnel bolts
- Bolt pistol
- Frag & krak grenades

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors)
- Hardened Armour
- Tank Hunters
- Deadly Aim

Dedicated Transport

- As long as it numbers no more than 10 models, the squad may choose a Rhino as a Dedicated Transport. Note that if an army contains a character that has one of the Rites of War special rules (see page 189 of *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*), other Dedicated Transport options may be available for the squad.

Options

- The Iron Havoc Support Squad may take:
 - Up to 5 additional Iron Havocs +25 points each
- Any model in the squad may exchange their heavy bolter with shrapnel bolts for one of the following weapons:
 - Autocannon Free
 - Missile launcher (with frag, krak & flak missiles) +5 points each
 - Lascannon +15 points each
- The squad's Sergeant may take any of the following options:
 - Exchange their heavy bolter and shrapnel bolts for a nuncio-vox and power weapon +5 points
 - Exchange their heavy bolter and shrapnel bolts for a nuncio-vox and power fist +10 points
 - Artificer armour +10 points
 - Augury scanner +5 points
 - Melta bombs +5 points

Deadly Aim

A unit fired at by a model with this special rule has its cover saves worsened by -1 against their attacks (eg, a 5+ cover save becoming a 6+ and so on).

HEAVY SUPPORT

Amongst most of the Legiones Astartes, it is the principal role of heavy support squads to saturate an area or target enemy armour with heavy ordnance obliterating an enemy through sheer weight of fire. The Iron Havocs of the IVth Legion, however, are an elite formation who have elevated these tactics almost to an art. These warriors are amongst the finest marksman of the Iron Warriors, placing both shell and explosive blast with exacting precision as they advance alongside the Legion's assault cadres.

Iron Havocs are often attached to the leading elements of any assault, where their pinpoint accuracy allows them to scour clean fortifications and strongpoints of enemy infantry with murderous efficiency, clearing a path for the Iron Warriors infantry to sweep aside any survivors.



ERASMUS GOLG

CAPTAIN OF THE IRON WARRIORS 11TH GRAND COMPANY, "THE PITILESS" MASTER OF THE CONTRADOR

175 POINTS



HQ

Since he stood over the corpses of his brother Iron Warriors, whom he and his fellows had slain with their bare hands in punishment for the weakness Perturabo had seen within his new Legion after the Edict of Decimation, Erasmus Golg had striven to epitomise the ruthless efficiency Perturabo sought in his warriors. Embracing the heartless drive for victory at any cost in a manner that even his fellow Iron Warriors found extreme, Golg was a brutal commander, whose only punishment for failure was death.

Despite his dedication, Golg never ascended to the inner circle of the Iron Warriors leadership. Deemed flawed, but useful by his Primarch, Golg was summoned when the Lord of Iron wished to make an example of an enemy through direct and unsubtle assault. Golg's bloodthirsty determination and drive more than compensating for his lack of strategic nuance in such operations.

Assigned command of the starship *Contrador* and the 11th Grand Company, Golg was ever at the forefront of any battle that his Grand Company was involved in, leading his massed Terminator forces in the heat of battle.

Unit Composition

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type

- Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Cataphractii Terminator armour
- Chainfist
- Combi-melta
- Nuncio-vox

Special Rules

- Independent Character
- Harsh Taskmaster
- Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors)
- Brutal Charge
- Terminator Attack
- Master of the Legion
- Warlord

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Erasmus Golg	6	5	4	4	3	5	3	9	2+

Harsh Taskmaster

Golg is infamous for the brutal regime he imposes on the Legionaries under his command; winnowing out those he considers weak and brutalising the rest into killers whose remorselessness in battle is renowned even among their fellow Iron Warriors, and who know that to disappoint their commander is to invite certain death. While Golg is on the table, all units with the Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors) special rule in his army may use his Leadership value rather than their own when making Morale checks.

Brutal Charge

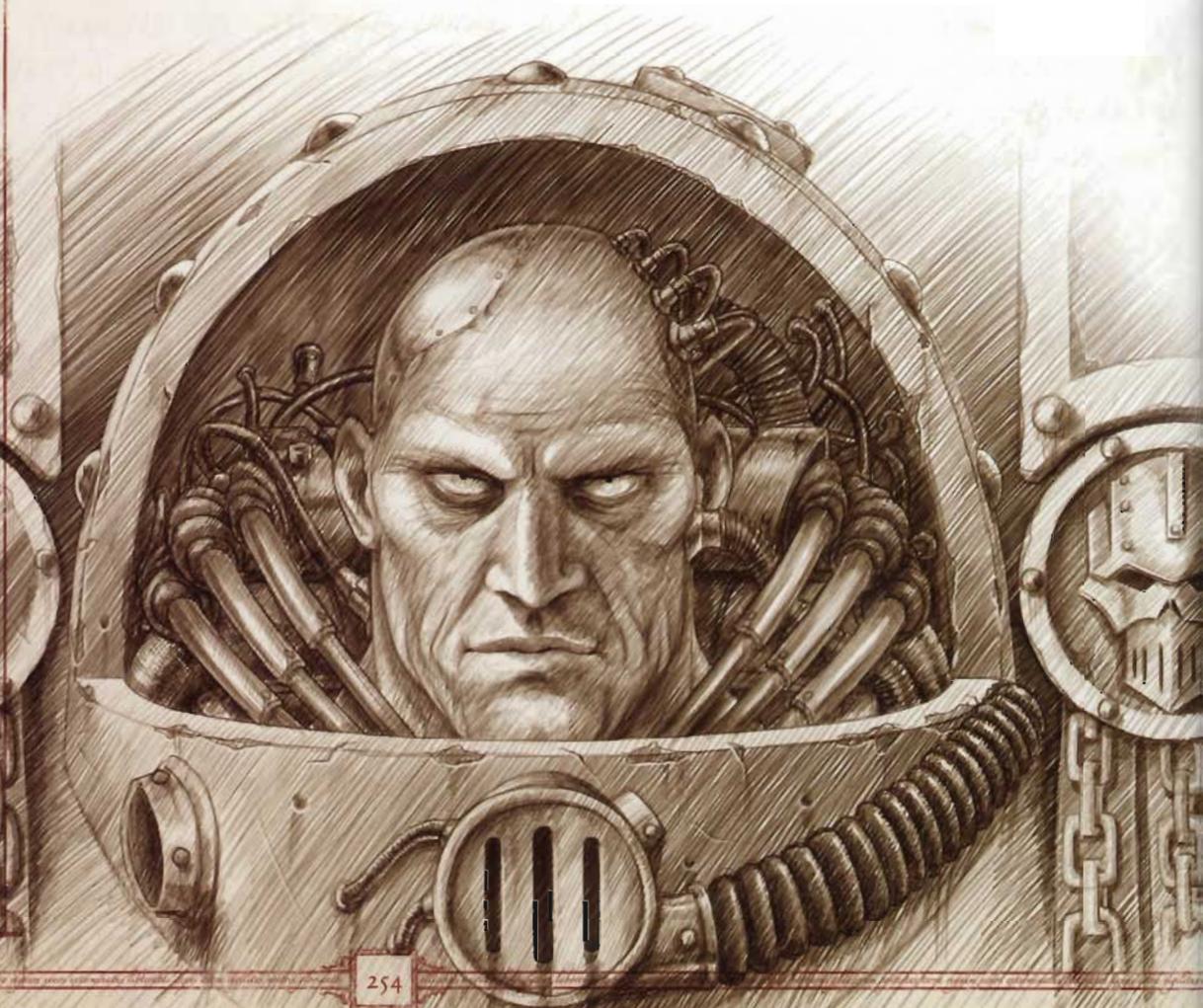
Golg and any Terminator armour-equipped models in any unit he joins gain the Hammer of Wrath special rule.

Terminator Attack

Legion Terminator squads may be taken as a Troops choice in an army with Erasmus Golg as its Warlord.

Warlord

If Golg is your army's Warlord, he does not roll on the Warlord Traits table, but instead receives the Bloody-handed trait (see page 187 of *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*).



KYR VHALEN

WARSMITH OF THE IRON WARRIORS 77TH GRAND BATTALION, THE SHATTERBLADE, MASTER OF THE TYCHE'S LAMENT

195 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Kyr Vhalen	6	5	4	4	4	5	4	10	2+

Unit Composition

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type

- Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Artificer armour
- Relic blade
- Volkite charger
- Frag & Krak grenades
- Melta bombs
- Servo-arm
- Iron halo
- Cortex controller

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors)
- Independent Character
- Feel No Pain (6+)
- Warsmith
- Master of the Legion
- Shatter Assault
- Master of Fortifications
- Jealous Command
- Warlord (If Vhalen is your army's Warlord, he has the Battle Logistician trait rather than rolling randomly)

Shatter Assault

Once per game, Vhalen may declare the use of this ability when he or a unit he has joined is first assaulted in that turn. For the duration of this Assault phase, all units which charge him or the unit he has joined are forced to make Disordered Charges and may not benefit from Hammer of Wrath attacks.

Master of Fortifications

At the start of the game, Vhalen's controlling player may nominate a single Fortification choice they have included in their army. When rolling for Cover Save rolls provided by this fortification, results of a '1' may be re-rolled or its Armour value is increased by +1 (to a maximum of 15). The controlling player decides which of these effects apply.

Jealous Command

If Kyr Vhalen is chosen as part of the army, he must be a part of its primary detachment and he must be the army's Warlord unless Perturabo is also present.

Warlord: Battle Logistician

Thanks to a masterful control over munitions and forward planning, the Warlord may declare a single unit of any type that begins the game deployed on the table. While it remains in their own deployment zone, this unit may re-roll all To Hit rolls of '1' with shooting attacks. This ability cannot be used, however, for weapons with the Gets Hot rule.



HQ

Like many of those caught up in the cataclysm of the Horus Heresy who were to earn fame or infamy during its dark passages of history, Kyr Vhalen's was a name of relative obscurity before the civil war was to thrust upon him the mantle of greatness. He was neither Olympian nor Terran by birth, having been recruited as an adolescent from the formerly xeno-enclaved world of Meru at the edge of the Yetzirah Abyss. Initiated into the 77th Grand Battalion, he fought his way up through its ranks by dint of excellence and sheer bloody will to survive, gaining the epithet of 'Shatterblade' after fighting through a nine hour battle with the broken remains of a Xenarch sabre impaled through his chest.

By the time the 77th had been deployed as part of the Therikon Suppression Taskforce, Vhalen had become its 2nd Captain, and over eleven years of gruelling war ascended to its command. The 77th, like a number of Iron Warriors detachments dispersed across the Imperium and all but forgotten, had become almost completely self-sustaining by the end of the Great Crusade, and when the Horus Heresy came, he and his forces were utterly ignorant of their Legion's betrayal. At Paramar, he and his Legionaries would take bitter pride in their stubborn loyalty to the Great Crusade as brother turned against brother.



LORDS OF WAR

"From Iron cometh strength;
from strength cometh will; from
will cometh faith; and from
faith cometh honour."

The Unbreakable Litany
of the Iron Warriors

THE PRIMARCH PERTURABO

MASTER OF THE IRON WARRIORS, THE LORD OF IRON, THE BREAKER, THE HAMMER OF OLYMPIA

455 POINTS

Weaned on war and intrigue in the strife-ridden courts of Olympia, Perturabo was a grim warrior and a master of technological arcana who wielded logic and the mathematics of warfare as keenly as he did a blade. To his brothers, the Lord of Iron was taciturn to the point of insult, preferring to harbour his thoughts against need and ever wary of treachery, even amongst his kin. Few would call him friend, but none could fault his ability to deconstruct any campaign and plot the most direct course to victory regardless of the cost and despite the strain put upon his loyalty during the long years of the Great Crusade. His word was as unbreakable as iron.

Unlike his brothers, many of whom embraced the Emperor's Great Crusade with near fanatical zeal, Perturabo saw it simply as a task that his sworn duty to the Emperor compelled him to pursue. His conquests were numerous, and the Iron Warriors brought many worlds into the Imperium of Man, but he left behind him shattered realms brought to the brink of extinction by his brutal, if effective, strategies.

Perturabo arrived at Istvan V in the wake of the bloody pacification of Olympia, a campaign that many would later claim tipped Perturabo and his Legion over the edge of madness and fully into the abyss of betrayal, and his actions there will echo forever in the history of the Imperium. In the wake of the Dropsite Massacre, Perturabo abandoned the blasted carcass of Istvan V, carrying his fallen brother's hammer as a token of his new allegiance to the traitor Horus.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Perturabo	8	6	7	6	6	5	4	10	2+

Unit Composition

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type

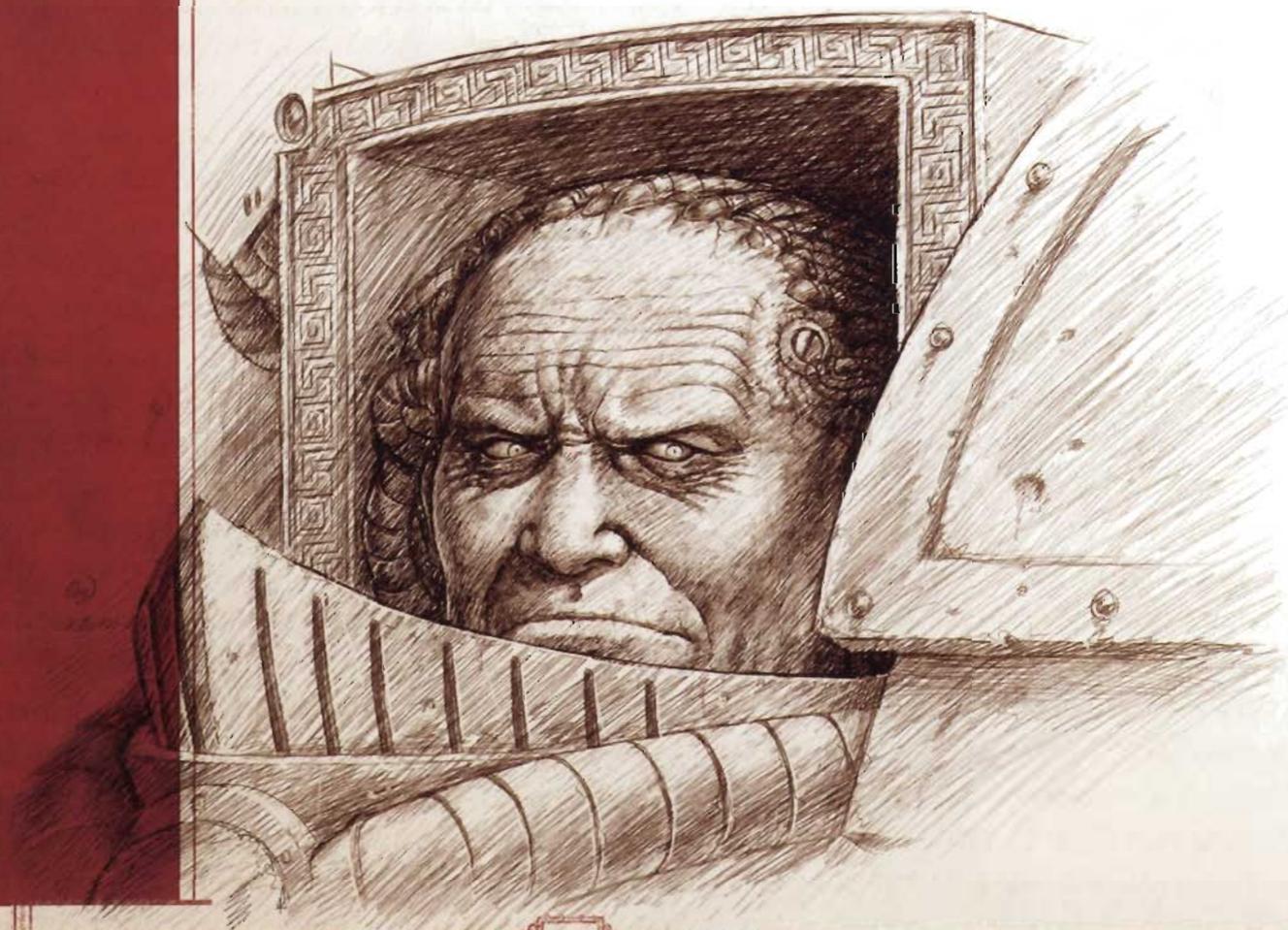
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- The Logos
- Frag grenades

Special Rules

- Primarch (Independent Character, Eternal Warrior, Fear, Adamantium Will, Fleet, Fearless, It Will Not Die, Master of the Legion)
- Sire of the Iron Warriors
- Relentless Strategist
- Precision Bombardment
- Very Bulky



SPECIAL RULES

Sire of the Iron Warriors

All of Perturabo's attacks have the Wrecker and Tank Hunters special rule. In addition, all models with the Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors) special rule in the same army as Perturabo gain the Stubborn special rule while he is on the table.

Relentless Strategist

All models in the same army as Perturabo gain Furious Charge while in an enemy's deployment zone. An army with Perturabo as its Warlord may, if wished, begin rolling for Reserves from the first turn of the game (rather than the second).

Precision Bombardment

Perturabo could direct artillery strikes with preternatural precision, whether from orbit or the many heavy guns behind the lines. Unless engaged in combat or held in reserve, Perturabo may call down a single precision bombardment attack in the Shooting phase once per game – this does not count as him firing a weapon. This attack has the following profile. Line of sight for this attack may be drawn from his model or any friendly model equipped with a nuncio-vox or cortex controller.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Precision Bombardment	Unlimited	9	2	Ordnance D3, Barrage, Large Blast (5"), Twin-linked

The Logos

Perturabo's panoply of war was a unique and highly customised suit of Terminator armour of his own design known as the 'Logos'. As well as providing a phenomenal level of defence against outside attack, the armour contained sophisticated command and control systems which linked him cybernetically to every facet of the forces under his disposal and a shifting array of weapons and secondary systems created by his own vast intellect.

The Logos provides the following abilities and attacks:

- A 2+ armour save and 3+ invulnerable save.
- Close combat attacks using Perturabo's profile and an AP value of 2.
- Immunity to the Concussive and Blind special rules.
- The armour incorporates the following items of wargear:
 - Teleport homer
 - Cortex controller
 - Nuncio-vox
 - Cognis signum
- Perturabo and all Terminator units (of any type) with the Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors) special rule in the army gain Deep Strike.
- A wrist cannon – this provides a shooting attack with the following profile:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Wrist cannon	24"	6	3	Assault 3, Twin-linked, Rending

AFTER ISSTVAN

After the death of Ferrus Manus on Isstvan V, Perturabo received the gift of the hammer Forgebreaker from Horus to seal the compact between them. Perturabo further modified the weapon for his own use and its profile for when he wields it is listed here. Equipping Perturabo with Forgebreaker costs an additional +35 points.

Forgebreaker

Fashioned by Fulgrim for the slain Ferrus Manus, this exquisitely wrought thunder hammer was gifted to Perturabo and brutally adapted to his own hand.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Forgebreaker	-	X2	1	Melee, Concussive, Strikedown, Unwieldy, Blind

Dedicated Transport: The Tormentor

Perturabo may take the *Tormentor* as a Dedicated Transport in any game of 3,000 points or more. The *Tormentor* is a Legion Shadowword (see *Warhammer 40,000: Apocalypse*), which also has a Transport capacity of 15 models and one access point to the rear. The *Tormentor* has the Command Tank upgrade and a single Titan void shield. *Tormentor* costs 500 points and does not take up a Lords of War choice.



"The wise commander utilises his enemy's weakness even more than he utilises his own strength."

Introit to the Principia Belicosa

CRUSADE ARMY LIST APPENDIX X: THE ALPHA LEGION

LEGIONES ASTARTES (ALPHA LEGION)

The Space Marines of the Emperor's Legions are genetically engineered, psycho-indoctrinated warriors with superhuman abilities and minds and souls tempered for war. In addition, each individual Legion has its own idiosyncrasies and character—the product of their gene-seed and unique warrior culture.

Of all of the Legiones Astartes, the least is known for certain of the Alpha Legion. The annals of the Great Crusade make mention of the Legion, but invariably each entry contradicts some other. All that is known is that the warriors of the Alpha Legion are the unsurpassed masters of misdirection and guile. Most foes have no inkling they are even fighting before the Alpha Legion's masterful stratagems cause their defences to collapse beneath them, torn apart from within so that when the final overwhelming attack finally comes, the enemy's defeat is total.

All models and units with this special rule are subject to the following provisions:

- **Legiones Astartes:** Units with this special rule may always attempt to regroup at their normal Leadership value, regardless of casualties.
- **Mutable Tactics:** An Alpha Legion army must pick one of the following special rules at the point where Warlord Traits have been selected for the game. This rule then applies to all of the units in the detachment with the Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) special rule for the duration of this game:
 - Scout
 - Infiltrate
 - Tank Hunters
 - Counter-attack
 - Move Through Cover
 - Adamantium Will
- **Martial Hubris:** In any mission where secondary objectives are being used, and an Alpha Legion army is your army's primary detachment, if the Alpha Legion army has suffered more units destroyed than their enemy at the end of the game, then their enemy gains +1 Victory point.

LEGION SPECIFIC UNITS

In addition to those found in the Crusade Army list, the Alpha Legion has particular access to additional unit types: Headhunter Kill Teams (which are a Fast Attack choice on the Force Organisation chart) and Lernaean Terminator Squads (which are an Elites choice on the Force Organisation chart). The Alpha Legion also has access to a unique Consul type; the Saboteur.

Saboteur+35 points

The Saboteur specialises in covert infiltration, assassination and sabotage, arts usually considered beneath the Legiones Astartes but at which the Alpha Legion has always excelled. Saboteurs make their presence known on the battlefield by the destruction they wreak, often in the opening moments of a major engagement, striking against enemy command structures, vital units or defences, leaving the foe reeling before the Alpha Legion's onslaught.

Wargear

- A Saboteur carries melta bombs and cameleoline.

Special Rules

- **Lone Killer:** A Saboteur cannot be chosen to fulfil a compulsory HQ choice and may not join other units.
- **Special Deployment:** A Saboteur must begin the game in Reserve and does not count towards the maximum number of reserve units in the army. They are deployed via the Reserve rules and have Outflank.
- **Sabotage:** At the moment the Saboteur enters play, a special Sabotage attack is inflicted on the enemy. The controlling player selects a single enemy unit or fortification on the table. This may include independent characters which may be selected as targets if not part of a unit, and if units are inside transports, then they may not be targeted directly, only their transport. The sabotaged unit suffers either D6 Str 6 AP 4 hits if it has a Toughness value, or a single automatic penetrating hit. Cover saves may not be taken against this attack.
- Saboteurs may not be equipped with Terminator armour, Jetbikes, Space Marine Bikes, power fists, thunder hammers or boarding shields.

ALPHA LEGION UNIQUE RITE OF WAR: THE COILS OF THE HYDRA

The deceit and subterfuge for which the Alpha Legion was famed was a means to an end; the end more often than not placing their foes at a disadvantage on the battlefield, leaving them vulnerable to sudden surprise attack by rapid moving strike forces whose goal was nothing short of wholesale slaughter.

Effects

- **Subterfuge:** An Alpha Legion force whose primary detachment is using this Rite of War adds +1 to determine who goes first or may re-roll to Seize the Initiative where allowed by the mission.
- **Signal Corruption:** Enemy Reserves rolls are at a -1 penalty.
- **The Rewards of Treason:** An Alpha Legion force whose primary detachment is using this Rite of War may select a single Legion specific unit normally allowed only to another Space Marine Legion (note this does not include independent characters or unique units) as an Elites choice on their Force Organisation chart. This unit has the equipment and special rules that they would normally, however they have the Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) special rule where this is relevant, not the Legiones Astartes special rule of their parent Legion.

Limitations

- Detachments using this Rite of War must take an additional compulsory Troops choice in addition to that usually required on their Force Organisation chart.
- Infantry squads that do not have either a Dedicated Transport or the ability to Infiltrate or Deep Strike may not be chosen as part of the force.
- With the exception of the Vigilator type, detachments using this Rite of War may only take a single Consul as part of their HQ choices.
- The army may not take a Fortification or other Space Marine Legion allied detachment.

LEGION SPECIFIC WARGEAR

The Alpha Legion has access to the following items of special wargear:

Power Daggers

Any character model with Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) may take a power dagger in addition to their normal options for +5 points. This is a close combat weapon with the following profile:

	Range	Str	AP	Type
Power dagger	-	As User	-1 3	Specialist Weapon, Rending

Venom Spheres

This upgrade exchanges the more commonplace frag grenades employed by the Space Marines for advanced variants which contain toxin-impregnated crystalline splinters that have been darkly claimed to be based on xenos technology.

- This option may be chosen by any frag grenade-equipped Praetor, Centurion or Consul, Techmarine or Apothecary with the Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) special rule for +5 points each, replacing the model's frag grenades, or by Veteran Tactical, Seeker and Destroyer squads for +25 points per squad.
- Venom spheres are assault grenades that grant their bearer the Hammer of Wrath special rule.

Venom Sphere Harness

The venom sphere harness is a One Shot weapon, and when it is fired, the firing Terminator and any squad they have joined count as having Assault grenades and the Hammer of Wrath special rule in the Assault phase of that turn:

	Range	Str	AP	Type
Venom sphere harness	8"	3	-	Assault 2, Blast (3"), One Shot

Banestrike Bolter Rounds (Special Ammunition Type)

These mysterious variant bolt shells, believed to have been designed in secret within the armouries of the Alpha Legion long before the outbreak of the Horus Heresy, had it seems a sole purpose; to breach the ceramite power armour of Space Marines. Used openly for the first time at the Dropsite Massacre on Istvan V, their dense explosive cores and firing stresses reduced their range and swiftly degraded the firing weapon, but their effect against the betrayed Legions was devastating. Fortunately for the Loyalists, supplies of these difficult to manufacture munitions rounds were limited, and only the Alpha Legion and the Sons of Horus were able to field them in substantial numbers beyond that incident of brutal treachery.

Banestrike bolter rounds used in bolters have the following profile:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
(Boltgun)	18"	4	5	Rapid Fire, Banestrike
(Combi-bolter)	18"	4	5	Rapid Fire, Banestrike, Twin-linked
(Heavy bolter)	36"	5	4	Heavy 3, Banestrike

Banestrike: When rolling To Wound, results of a 6 with this weapon are at AP 3.

Legion Seeker Squads with the Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) special rule may exchange their Scorpios special issue ammunition with Banestrike ammunition at no additional cost. Legion Veteran Tactical Squads and Legion Terminator Squads with the Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) special rule may also take Banestrike bolter rounds for +20 points per squad.

Independent characters with the Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) special rule may upgrade either a boltgun or combi-bolter they are carrying to use exclusively Banestrike ammunition for +5 points.

HEADHUNTER KILL TEAMS

(ALPHA LEGION ONLY)

175 POINTS

FAST ATTACK

The histories of the Great Crusade record that it was the Alpha Legion that conceived of the deployment of Legion Seeker squads, a unit configuration that spread to other Legions as the Great Crusade expanded outwards. The Legion did not halt at Seeker squads however, and has since fielded a further refinement of the concept in the form of Headhunter Kill Teams. These supremely skilled infiltrators specialise in creating conditions of all-consuming chaos among the enemy's ranks, sowing confusion by eliminating key officers, positions and assets. In doing so, the Headhunters bring about a tipping point in a battle or an entire campaign, the fulcrum upon which the fate of worlds is balanced.

Headhunter Kill Teams are made up of the most skilled infiltrators and assassins in the Alpha Legion, and fielded at the direct command of a senior commander. They have access to some of the most prized wargear their Legion can provide, including special ammunition conceived specifically to penetrate armour up to and including Legiones Astartes battle plate. In the ranks of a Legion already renowned for its ability to infiltrate, misdirect and assassinate, the Headhunter Kill Teams are nigh unsurpassed and were their deeds known beyond their Legion, they would be feared the galaxy over.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Headhunter	4	5	4	4	1	4	1	8	3+
Headhunter Prime	4	5	4	4	1	4	2	9	3+

Unit Composition

- 4 Headhunters
- 1 Headhunter Prime

Unit Type

- Headhunter: Infantry
- Headhunter Prime: Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Power armour
- Bolt pistol
- Boltgun with banestrike ammunition
- Power dagger
- Krak grenades
- Venom spheres

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion)
- Preferred Enemy (Infantry)
- Infiltrate

Dedicated Transport

- A Headhunter Kill Team may choose a Legion Rhino or Dreadclaw Drop Pod as a Dedicated Transport. If either of these options are chosen, the squad may no longer infiltrate.

Options

- The Headhunter Kill Team may take:
 - Up to 5 additional Headhunters +25 points each
- Any model in the Kill Team may upgrade their boltgun with banestrike ammunition to a:
 - Combi-bolter with banestrike ammunition +5 points each
- One model in the Kill Team may exchange their boltgun with banestrike ammunition for a:
 - Heavy bolter with suspensor web and banestrike ammunition +10 points
- The Headhunter Prime may exchange their bolt pistol for one of the following:
 - Plasma pistol +15 points each
 - Inferno pistol +15 points each
 - Power fist +15 points each
- The Headhunter Prime may exchange their power dagger for one of the following:
 - Power weapon +10 points
 - Power fist +15 points
- The Headhunter Prime may also take any of the following:
 - Melta bombs +5 points
 - Artificer armour +10 points



LERNAEAN TERMINATOR SQUAD

(ALPHA LEGION ONLY)

225 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Lernaean Terminator	5	4	4	4	1	4	2	8	2+
Harrower	5	4	4	4	1	4	3	9	2+

Unit Composition

- 4 Lernaean Terminators
- 1 Harrower

Unit Type

- Lernaean Terminators: Infantry
- Harrower: Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Cataphractii Terminator Armour
- Power axe
- Volkite charger

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion)
- Stubborn
- Implacable Advance

Dedicated Transport

- A Lernaean Terminator Squad may choose a Land Raider Proteus or Phobos or a Dreadclaw Drop Pod as a Dedicated Transport if they number five models, or a Spartan Assault tank if they number 10 models or less.

Options

- A Lernaean Terminator Squad may take:
 - Up to 5 additional Lernaean Terminators+40 points each
- Any model in the Lernaean Terminator squad may exchange their power axes for one of the following weapons options:
 - Power fist.....+5 points each
 - Chainfist+10 points each
- For every five models in the squad, one Lernaean Terminator may exchange their Volkite charger for one of the following options:
 - Plasma blaster.....+15 points
 - Heavy flamer+10 points
 - Conversion beamer+25 points
- The Harrower may also have the following upgrades:
 - Venom sphere harness+10 points
 - Master-crafted weapon+10 points

Implacable Advance

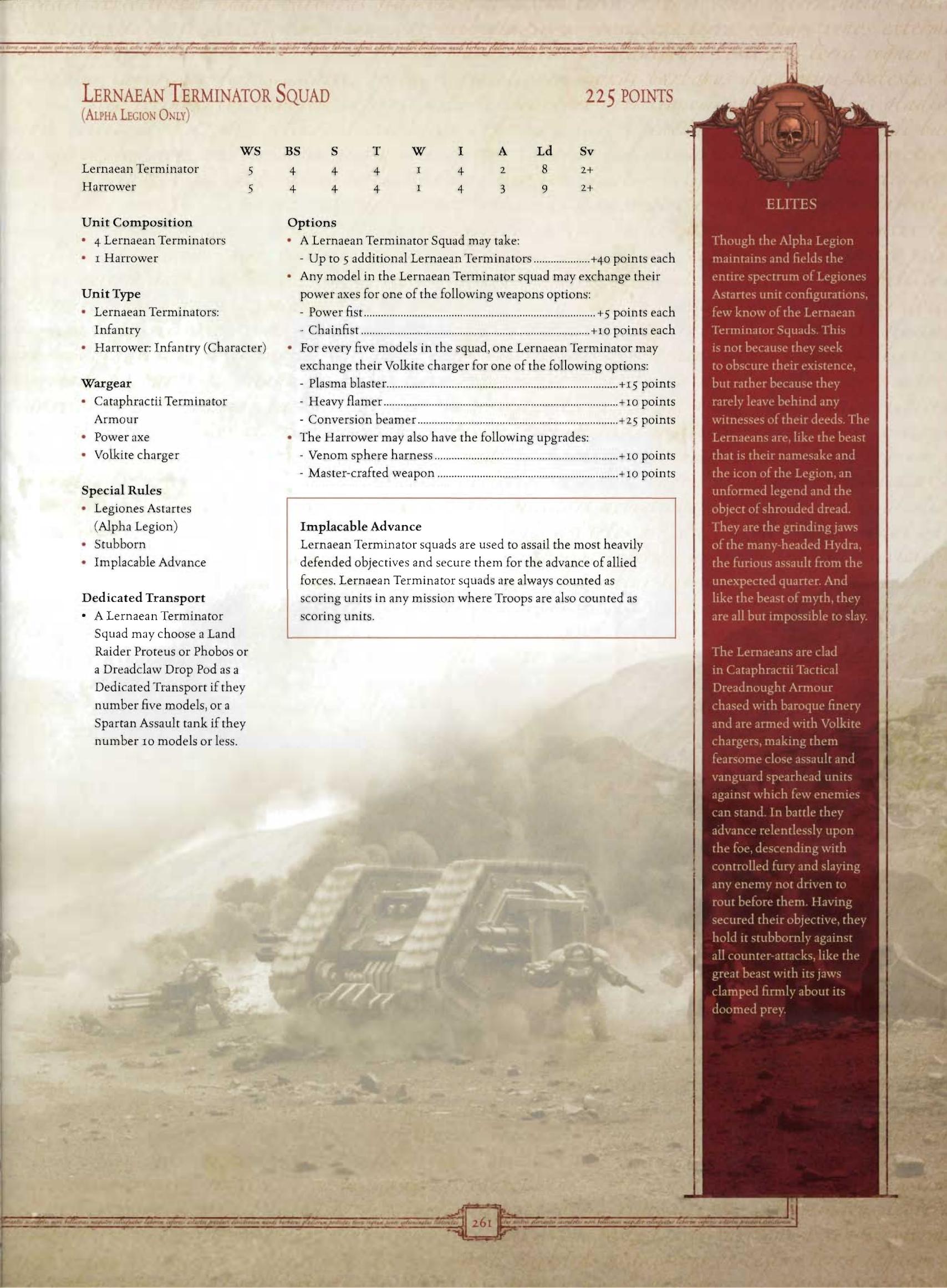
Lernaean Terminator squads are used to assail the most heavily defended objectives and secure them for the advance of allied forces. Lernaean Terminator squads are always counted as scoring units in any mission where Troops are also counted as scoring units.



ELITES

Though the Alpha Legion maintains and fields the entire spectrum of Legiones Astartes unit configurations, few know of the Lernaean Terminator Squads. This is not because they seek to obscure their existence, but rather because they rarely leave behind any witnesses of their deeds. The Lernaean Terminator Squads are, like the beast that is their namesake and the icon of the Legion, an unformed legend and the object of shrouded dread. They are the grinding jaws of the many-headed Hydra, the furious assault from the unexpected quarter. And like the beast of myth, they are all but impossible to slay.

The Lernaean Terminator Squad is clad in Cataphractii Tactical Dreadnought Armour and are armed with Volkite chargers, making them fearsome close assault and vanguard spearhead units against which few enemies can stand. In battle they advance relentlessly upon the foe, descending with controlled fury and slaying any enemy not driven to rout before them. Having secured their objective, they hold it stubbornly against all counter-attacks, like the great beast with its jaws clamped firmly about its doomed prey.



ARMILLUS DYNAT

HARROWMASTER OF THE ALPHA LEGION, GRIEFBRINGER, INSTAR-NINE

200 POINTS



HQ

As with much of his mysterious Legion, little can be said for certain about the origins or character of the Alpha Legion commander known as Armillus Dynat (whose name itself may be an artificial construction using mimetic factors from several different dead Terran dialects meaning approximately "The fallen prince/false prophet who destroys with power").

Pictorial reference for this officer is only available thanks to the recordings of Ultramarines-attached Remembrancers present at the Palcine War Council, where Dynat is recorded as having infamously sparred with Marius Gage over the conduct of the war after the Ultramarines' repulsed attack during the Battle of Asarna Bay.

He is known to be a formidable strategist with a penchant for unorthodox and highly intricate attack plans often designed to pull apart and maim enemy formations before a killing blow is delivered, and a master of integrated fast-armour and close air-support tactics. Armillus Dynat is thought to have been a theatre commander during the notorious Tesstra Campaign and the mastermind behind the Oannessi Genocide. His name quickly became infamous during the Horus Heresy as a feared strike commander, beginning with the invasion of Paramar.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Armillus Dynat	6	5	4	4	4	5	3	10	2+

Unit Composition

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type

- Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Artificer armour
- Krak grenades
- Venom spheres
- Iron halo
- Thunder hammer
- Power sword
- Phosphex bomb
- Cognis signum

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion)
- Independent Character
- Master of the Legion
- The Harrowing
- Weapon Mastery
- Jealous Command
- Warlord (If Armillus Dynat is your army's Warlord, he has the Hammerstrike Assault trait rather than rolling randomly)

The Harrowing

Armillus Dynat is a master of the bloody killing blow delivered to a wounded and encircled foe. Like the solution to a murderous puzzle, he is viciously adept at determining and enacting through his Legion the precise pattern of attack to exploit confusion and panic to their maximum effect, tipping a wavering enemy over the edge into the abyss of death.

While in the enemy deployment zone, all units with the Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) special rule, as well as Alpha Legion Dreadnoughts in the same detachment as Armillus Dynat, may re-roll their Sweeping Advance rolls and add +1 to any results they inflict on the Vehicle Damage table.

Weapon Mastery

Armillus Dynat has two close combat weapons and may wield them simultaneously, splitting his attacks between them in close combat as desired.

Jealous Command

If Armillus Dynat is chosen as part of the army, he must be a part of a primary detachment and he must be the army's Warlord unless Alpharius is also present.

Warlord: Hammerstrike Assault

One chosen infantry unit in the same primary detachment as the Warlord gains the Deep Strike rule if it did not already possess it, and may re-roll the Deep Strike Scatter dice on the turn it arrives.



EXODUS

THE ASSASSIN

115 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Exodus	5	6	4	4	3	5	2	9	3+

Unit Composition

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type

- Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Power armour
- Krak grenades
- Venom spheres
- Melta bombs
- Power dagger
- Bolt pistol
- The Instrument
- Cameleoline

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion)
- Independent Character
- Infiltrate
- Move Through Cover
- Scout
- Lone Killer
- Assassin's Shot
- Acute Senses
- It Will Not Die

Lone Killer

Exodus may not be taken as a compulsory HQ choice, only as an optional HQ choice. He may not be the army's Warlord, and may not join other units except Legion Reconnaissance squads or Alpha Legion Headhunter Kill Teams.

Assassin's Shot

On any To Hit roll of 4+ for a shooting attack, Exodus' controlling player may choose which model in an enemy unit is hit rather than following the usual procedure for assigning hits and saves, so long as the chosen model is within line of sight.

The Instrument

Exodus carries a unique sniper rifle of unknown design and provenance, which seemingly uses a mixture of advanced bolter weaponry and gravitic accelerator technology. The weapon has two fire modes and therefore two profiles. Pick which profile is used every time the weapon is fired:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Rapid shot	36"	5	4	Salvo 2/4, Rending
Execution shot	36"	6	3	Heavy 1, Rending, Lethal, Ignores Cover

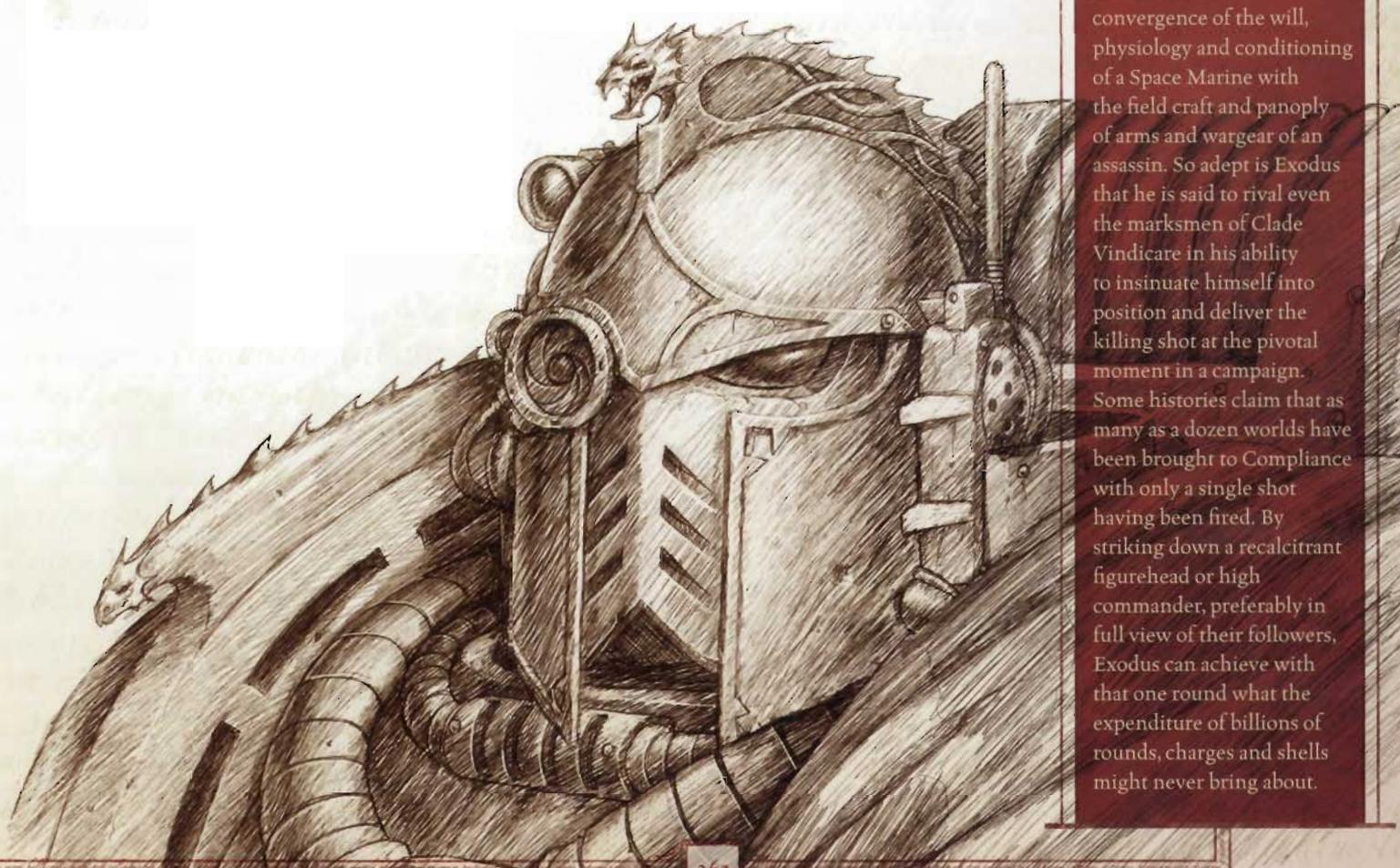
Lethal: This attack inflicts two wounds per unsaved wounding hit, rather than one.



HQ

None can say whether Exodus is a single individual or one of several supremely skilled assassins operating at the behest of the uppermost echelons of the Alpha Legion. Certainly the name, or coded identifier 'Exodus', has appeared in multiple vox-chains and order logs in many different war zones, sometimes contemporaneously. This in itself is unlikely to be accidental given the Alpha Legion's mastery of deception in all its forms.

Whatever the truth, the Space Marine known as Exodus must rank amongst the most skilled killers outside of the Assassin Clades of the Officio Assassinorum. His skill-at-arms is born of the convergence of the will, physiology and conditioning of a Space Marine with the field craft and panoply of arms and wargear of an assassin. So adept is Exodus that he is said to rival even the marksmen of Clade Vindicare in his ability to insinuate himself into position and deliver the killing shot at the pivotal moment in a campaign. Some histories claim that as many as a dozen worlds have been brought to Compliance with only a single shot having been fired. By striking down a recalcitrant figurehead or high commander, preferably in full view of their followers, Exodus can achieve with that one round what the expenditure of billions of rounds, charges and shells might never bring about.



LORDS OF WAR

"Men will die for the truth, but death alone does not make a thing true."

The truth does not cease to exist because it goes unheeded."

The Book of Censure

ALPHARIUS

PRIMARCH OF THE ALPHA LEGION, THE ALEPH NULL, THE HYDRA, THE THREEFOLD SERPENT, THE FINAL CONFIGURATION

415 POINTS

Of all the Primarchs of the Legiones Astartes, Alpharius is without doubt the most steeped in mystery, legend, contradiction and deliberate falsification. Some even claim that the Alpha Legion has more than one Primarch, though it is entirely possible that this belief is itself but a part of an elaborate misdirection on the part of Alpharius, intended to further his Legion's goals.

The Primarch of the Alpha Legion shrouds himself in mystery, often moving unseen even amongst the ranks of his own Legion. However, when the time comes to cast off the cloak of misdirection, Alpharius is as awe-inspiring a being as any of the Primarchs of the Legiones Astartes. Clad in armour forged in the manner of some terrifying beast of ancient Terran myth and armed with a fearsome panoply of weapons of unknown provenance, Alpharius bestrides the battlefield like a figure from legend. Like the hydra he and his Legion take as their symbol, in battle Alpharius fights by repeated attacks from multiple and unexpected quarters. None can predict where or how the Primarch will strike, what weapons he will bring to bear or which of his many different forces will fight at his side. In many cases, the enemy are not even aware they are fighting until the very moment battle is joined, at which point they are already doomed to total and utter defeat at the hands of this most cunning, devious and duplicitous of all the Primarchs of the Legiones Astartes.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Alpharius	7	7	6	6	6	6	5	10	2+

Unit Composition

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type

- Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- The Pythian Scales
- Venom spheres
- Master-crafted plasma blaster
- The Pale Spear
- Nuncio-vox
- Cognis signum
- Cameleoline

Special Rules

- Primarch (Independent Character, Eternal Warrior, Fear, Adamantium Will, Fleet, Fearless, It Will Not Die, Master of the Legion)
- Sire of the Alpha Legion
- One of Many
- Insidious Mastermind
- Bulky



SPECIAL RULES

Sire of the Alpha Legion

Alpharius has the Preferred Enemy (Everything), Counter-attack, Move Through Cover, Scout and Crusader special rules, and these only apply when his presence has been revealed (see the One of Many special rule below). All models with the Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) special rule in the same army as Alpharius gain the Preferred Enemy (Everything) special rule while he is on the table and has been revealed.

One of Many

Rather than deploying Alpharius or placing him in reserve as normal, his controlling player may opt to deploy him covertly using this special rule:

- After both sides have deployed but before the game begins, Alpharius' controlling player should secretly note down on a piece of paper which of their eligible units the Primarch has concealed himself within, and then place this note to one side until it is called for.
- Eligible units for use in conjunction with this special rule are any units with both the Infantry type and Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) special rule from the army's primary detachment.
- At the start of any of Alpharius' controlling player's turns from the second turn onward, they may choose to reveal the Primarch by showing the contents of the note.
- Alpharius' model immediately replaces a single rank and file model (i.e., not a character or independent character) from the unit and may act as normal from that point. The model he replaces is lost. This may be done if the chosen unit is inside a transport or building without impediment so long as there is sufficient transport capacity within for him.
- Should the unit that Alpharius appears in be falling back, it immediately rallies regardless of any other rules or effects to the contrary.
- If the chosen unit has been destroyed by any means or Alpharius' model cannot be placed on the table for some reason (such as limitations of space, transport capacity, or the unit is not on the table), then Alpharius is instead placed in On-going Reserves.
- If turn five is reached with the Primarch still in concealment, Alpharius is revealed automatically.

Insidious Mastermind

Alpharius is perhaps the most devious commander in the Imperium, with a labyrinthine mind able to both predict the actions of others with uncanny precision and manipulate his foes into unwittingly doing as he wishes, often sealing their own doom in the process. So long as Alpharius is the army's Warlord, the following is in effect:

- Alpharius' side may Seize the Initiative on a D6 roll of 4+ where this is a factor in the mission being played.
- Units in the army's primary detachment arriving via Outflank may add +D3" to their movement on the turn of their arrival.
- From the second game turn onward, should the enemy player roll to successfully bring on a unit via reserve, and the Alpha Legion contingent of Alpharius' army also has a unit of the same exact unit entry type held in reserve, Alpharius' player may opt to roll a D6. On a 4+ the Alpha Legion reserve unit immediately enters play this turn instead of the enemy unit (which remains in reserve).
- Alpha Legion units that enter play using this rule may still outflank and gain the movement bonus from this rule, and such units may be targeted by enemy units using the Interceptor special rule when they enter play.

The Pythian Scales

Although frequently recorded as entering battle in the semblance of a regular member of his Legion, Alpharius — or perhaps an individual carrying that name — is also known to have led his Legion to war armoured in sinister and baroque reptilian-styled armour whose stature left no doubts in the mind of onlookers that a bloody-handed Primarch had entered the fray. This armour, faceless and fashioned after the shadowed mythic age of Ancient Terra was known as the Pythian Scales, and could turn blade, energy blast and alchemical attack with equal ease. The Pythian Scales provide Alpharius with a 2+ armour save and a 4+ invulnerable save. In addition, it provides immunity to both the Poison and Fleshbane special rules.

The Pale Spear

This was one of a number of strange and esoteric weapons associated with the Primarch and rumoured to be a strange xenos artefact whose forging predated even the rise of the Eldar. This double-bladed spear flickered seemingly out of phase with the material universe when wielded, emitting an eerie and otherworldly howling, and was able to pierce any physical defence it encountered without impediment, ripping them apart at a molecular level. Against living matter, it inflicted hideously gaping bloodless wounds as the flesh where it struck dissolved into oily smoke.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
The Pale Spear	-	User	1	Melee, Armourbane, Instant Death, Two-handed



"Simple slaughter is no foundation for lasting conquest. Once the blade's red duty is complete, the true work of conquest begins with the raising of new strongholds, leaving the Imperium's stamp upon its new domain."

Seneschal Athis Marro
of the Imperial Fists

CRUSADE ARMY LIST APPENDIX XI: THE IMPERIAL FISTS

LEGIONES ASTARTES (IMPERIAL FISTS)

The Space Marines of the Emperor's Legions are genetically engineered, psycho-indoctrinated warriors with superhuman abilities and minds and souls tempered for war. In addition, each individual Legion has its own idiosyncrasies and character—the product of their gene-seed and unique warrior culture.

The Legionaries of the VIIth are known as the stoic praetorians of Terra, the embodiment of all that the Great Crusade stands for. They are loyal, disciplined and methodical, and masters of both the attack and the defence. As the Imperium expands ever outwards, so the crusaders of the Imperial Fists are to be found at the very leading edge of Compliance. Then, in the wake of victory, the Imperial Fists construct mighty fortresses that are as much garrisons against recidivism as they are beacons of Unification, the noblest of exemplars of the highest ideals and aspirations of Humanity.

All models and units with this special rule are subject to the following provisions:

- **Legiones Astartes:** Units with this special rule may always attempt to regroup at their normal Leadership value, regardless of casualties.
- **Disciplined Fire:** Units with this special rule may add +1 to their BS when using boltguns, bolt pistols, heavy bolters and quad heavy bolters, and when firing the bolter component of a combi-weapon. Heavy Support squads with this rule also gain the Tank Hunters special rule.
- **Blood and Honour:** Imperial Fists characters must issue a challenge in combat if they are able (their controlling player choosing which character makes the challenge where more than one character is involved in a particular combat). When fighting in Challenges, models with the Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists) special rule must re-roll failed To Hit rolls.
- **Unshakable Defence:** Models with the Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists) special rule are Stubborn when claiming cover/fighting from fortifications and barricades.
- **The Bitter End:** In missions which would normally have a random game length, the Imperial Fists player's opponent can opt to play to six full turns instead of the roll to end the game being made.

LEGION SPECIFIC UNITS

In addition to those found in the Crusade Army list, the Imperial Fists Legion has particular access to two additional unit types: Templar Brethren Squads (which are an Elites choice on the Force Organisation chart) and Phalanx Warder Squads (which are a Fast Attack choice on the Force Organisation chart).

IMPERIAL FISTS UNIQUE RITE OF WAR: THE STONE GAUNTLET

The Imperial Fists were a capable Legion in any theatre of warfare, their temperament and training meant they favoured a style of warfare that combined phenomenally resilient interlocking defence with calculated bursts of relentless aggression. Key to this and its distinction over the practices of many other Legions was that it combined in lock-step the strengths of each Legionary as a whole. One such tactical example of this was an infantry formation known as the Stone Gauntlet, which turned the mass of the Legion's Breachers and Warders into a grinding, implacable battering ram of force.

Effects

- Phalanx Warder Squads may be taken as Troops choices for a detachment using this Rite of war.
- **Resolve of Stone:** Any model in the detachment with the Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists) special rule equipped with either a boarding shield or storm shield who is in unit coherency with at least two other models who also fit these criteria gains a +1 bonus to their Toughness. This bonus may not be claimed if the unit the model is part of has made either a Run move, a Charge move or a Sweeping Advance move in the current player turn.
- **Shield Charge:** Any model in the detachment with the Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists) special rule equipped with either a boarding shield or storm shield who is in unit coherency with at least two other models who also fit these criteria gains the Hammer of Wrath special rule.

Limitations

- Compulsory Troops choices for a detachment using this Rite of War must be made up of Legion Breacher squads.
- Detachments using this Rite of War may not deploy models using the Deep Strike rule (and units which must deploy by this method therefore cannot be chosen as part of the detachment).
- Detachments using this Rite of War cannot make more Elites and Fast Attack choices in total than they have Troop choices in the detachment so, for example, a detachment with three Troops choices could take three choices made up of Fast Attack, Elites, or a combination of the two).
- With the exception of the Legion Champion type, detachments using this Rite of War may only take a single Consul as part of their HQ selections.

LEGION SPECIFIC WARGEAR

Well-provided for by its proximity to the Imperium's centre of power on Terra and directed by Rogal Dorn's own wisdom and authority, the Imperial Fists Legion was able to manifest a number of its own weapons and designs custom-built to its purposes and favoured styles of warfare. The Imperial Fists Legion has access to the following items of special wargear:

Prototype Wargear: Vigil Pattern Storm Shield

Alongside the Salamanders Legion, who possessed their own prototype which relied upon superior construction materials, the Imperial Fists Legion was the first to utilise one of the enhanced storm shield designs. The Vigil pattern featured a uniquely potent field generator far exceeding that found elsewhere. The first of these had entered service with the Legion after the Ullanor Campaign, but difficulties in production meant that only a few hundred had entered full service at the outset of the wars of the Horus Heresy. Once full inter-Legion conflict was underway, Rogal Dorn ordered resources to be spared in the creation of more such protective devices for the use of his Terminator units, knowing them to be invaluable against the deadliest foes his Imperial Fists had ever faced; other Space Marines.

Vigil pattern storm shields afford their bearers a 3+ invulnerable save, but their bearers may never claim an additional attack for being armed with two close combat weapons. Any Legion Terminator or Terminator armour-equipped independent character with the Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists) special rule may exchange their combi-bolter for a Vigil pattern storm shield for +15 points if equipped with standard Terminator armour or for +10 points if equipped with Cataphractii Terminator armour.

Solarite Power Gauntlet

These augmented power fists are greatly favoured by the officers of the Imperial Fists Legion. Crafted in imitation of the ancient relics of Terra, their nigh-indestructible casings are fashioned in weapon forges fed from the fires of the *Phalanx's* vast plasma core, and so serve as a spiritual link to their Primarch as well as embodying their Legion's heraldic icon in the shape of a powerful weapon.

Any independent character with the Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists) special rule that is eligible to take a thunder hammer may take a Solarite power gauntlet instead for the same points cost.

A Solarite power gauntlet is a close combat weapon with the following profile:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Solarite power gauntlet	-	x2	1	Melee, Master-crafted, Unwieldy

Teleportation Transponder

Any Imperial Fists Legion Terminator squad or Imperial Fists Legion Command squad equipped with Terminator armour may have the Deep Strike rule for +15 points for the squad. Any Imperial Fists independent character in Terminator armour may have Deep Strike for +10 points per model.

Prototype Weapon: Iliastus Pattern Assault Cannon

A prototype weapon system designed as a more compact and portable variant of the highly successful Kheres pattern, it was, as can be divined by its pattern designation, first developed on the Iliastus Satellite in the Sol system by the Dyzanique techno-esoteric cult. This was a secretive organisation whose fealty to the Emperor predated his alliance with Mars. The assault cannon, under field testing with the VIIth and IXth Legions before the outbreak of the war of the Heresy, evidenced formidable firepower, but was still prone to catastrophic failure under rare conditions of heavy use.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Iliastus assault cannon	24"	6	4	Heavy 4, Rending, Malfunction

Malfunction: When rolling To Hit with the weapon, if three or more results of '1' are rolled then the assault cannon malfunctions and may not be used again in the game. Make a note on your army list or otherwise mark that this is the case. Legion Terminator squads with either the Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists) or Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule may exchange any heavy flamers in the squad for an Iliastus pattern assault cannon for +5 points each.



"I have served alongside the Legiones Astartes before, but these Imperial Fists are a breed apart. They seek no praise and all the honours and badges of glory move them not at all – but when the dark presses close and the claws of the unknown reach for the throat of our armies, there are no other warriors I would choose to stand beside me, for they fight like the titans of legend!"

Agastan Kanto, First Sword of the Antikaan Regiments

TEMPLAR BRETHREN

175 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Templar Brethren	5	4	4	4	1	4	2	8	2+
Chapter Champion	5	4	4	4	2	4	2	9	2+

ELITES

Guardians of the Temple of Oaths aboard the great fortress-ship the *Phalanx*, the Templars are the VIIth Legion's elite, warriors of unequalled zeal. Relentless determination and matchless skill are the hallmarks of this deadly company, whose punishing training regime and strict recruitment protocol ensures that only the finest Imperial Fists bear their proud heraldry.

Though their duty binds them to the Temple of Oaths, these dauntless warriors are found wherever the *Imperial Fists* carry the Emperor's crusade to unify Mankind. They bear the best wargear that the armouries of the Legion can provide: ancient archaeotech, the newest creations of the Mechanicum and more common marks of weapon forged with exacting precision. At the leading edge of battle, these warriors inspire their brothers with their unyielding courage and the blood-red path they carve through the foes of Mankind.

Unit Composition

- 4 Templar Brethren
- 1 Chapter Champion

Unit Type

- Templar Brethren: Infantry
- Chapter Champion: Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Artificer armour
- Power sword
- Bolt pistol
- Frag & Krak grenades

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists)
- Furious Charge

Dedicated Transport

- A Templar Brethren squad may choose a Legion Rhino, Land Raider Proteus or Land Raider Phobos as a Dedicated Transport.

Options

- The Templar Brethren squad may take:
 - Up to 5 additional Templar Brethren+25 points each
- Any model in the squad may be given a:
 - Combat shield+5 points each
- Up to two Templar Brethren may exchange their bolt pistols for:
 - Plasma pistols+15 points each
- One Templar Brethren may take a:
 - Nuncio-vox+10 points
- One Templar Brethren may carry a:
 - Legion vexilla+10 points
- The entire squad may take melta bombs+25 points
- The Chapter Champion may exchange their power sword for one of the following options:
 - Power axe or power maul Free
 - Power fist+5 points
 - Solarite power gauntlet+10 points
 - Thunder hammer+10 points
- The Chapter Champion may exchange their bolt pistol for one of the following options:
 - Plasma pistol+15 points
 - Archaeotech pistol+20 points
- The Chapter Champion may upgrade one of their weapons to become:
 - Master-crafted+10 points



PHALANX WARDER SQUAD

255 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Phalanx Warder	4	4	4	4	1	4	1	8	3+
Veteran Sergeant	4	4	4	4	1	4	2	9	3+

Unit Composition

- 9 Phalanx Warders
- 1 Veteran Sergeant

Unit Type

- Phalanx Warder: Infantry
- Veteran Sergeant: Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Power armour
- Boltgun
- Bolt pistol
- Boarding shield
- Frag & Krak grenades

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists)
- Shield Wall
- Hardened Armour

Dedicated Transport

- A Phalanx Warder squad may choose a Land Raider Proteus or Land Raider Phobos if they number 10 models or if 10 models or more, a Spartan Assault Tank as a Dedicated Transport.

Options

- The Phalanx Warder squad may take:
 - Up to 10 additional Phalanx Warders.....+15 points each
- Any model may replace their boltgun with a:
 - Power axe.....+10 points each
- For every five models in the unit, one Phalanx Warder may replace their boltgun with one of the following weapons:
 - Combi-weapon+5 points each
 - Flamer+5 points each
 - One breaching charge.....+10 points each
 - Melta gun.....+15 points each
 - Plasma gun.....+15 points each
 - Thunder hammer.....+20 points each
- One Phalanx Warder may be upgraded to carry a:
 - Nuncio-vox.....+10 points
- One Phalanx Warder may be upgraded to carry a:
 - Legion vexilla.....+15 points
- The Veteran Sergeant may exchange their bolt pistol or their boltgun for one of the following:
 - Power weapon (any type).....+10 points
 - Power fist.....+15 points
 - Plasma pistol.....+15 points
 - Thunder hammer.....+20 points
- The Veteran Sergeant may take any of the following options:
 - Upgrade to artificer armour.....+10 points
 - Melta bombs.....+5 points

Shield Wall

Phalanx Warders are renowned for their close order discipline and defensive tactics, shielding their comrades from harm in the press of melee with selfless bravery. If an unengaged unit with this special rule has at least five models remaining, it gains a bonus of +1 Initiative in any turn in which the unit has been charged by the enemy. Friendly models and characters joining this squad also benefit from this special rule so long as at least five models with the Shield Wall special rule still survive.

FAST ATTACK

Selected from amongst the ranks of the Imperial Fists Breacher squads, the Phalanx Warders are a reinforced company assigned to the defence of the Imperial Fists flagship, the *Phalanx*. Armed with a variety of deadly close range weaponry, and guarded by a formidable Legiones Astartes boarding shield, the Phalanx Warders present a wall of ceramite to any aggressor that defies any assault, and counter-attack with grim determination once the attack is blunted.

Even among the ranks of the Imperial Fists, the Warders are renowned for the stark regime under which they train and serve, eschewing any duty save their training, the protection of the *Phalanx* or the prosecution of war on the foes of Mankind. The Warders display few battle honours and practise no vainglorious rituals to mark achievement, holding the honour of continuing their service as the only mark of distinction they require.

Warder detachments are often seconded to other companies of the Imperial Fists, honing their skills and lending their might to that of their brothers on battlefields across the galaxy. Most often they serve aboard one of the VIIth Legion's warships, both as an unbreakable last line of defence against enemy boarders and as the hammer blow of any Imperial boarding assault.



HQ

Sigismund was a name that echoed through the Great Crusade even before the darkness of the Horus Heresy made him the stuff of legends. Born on Terra and raised to the Legiones Astartes as the Great Crusade was at its height, he ascended in rank and renown thanks to a simple fact: he was a warrior of unparalleled lethality and ability. Beneath the Primarchs there has perhaps never been a more skilled warrior in combat.

Across the battlefields of hundreds of worlds and the duelling floors of every Legion, he was never defeated. The fire of the crusader always burned brightly in him and if one warrior could embody the Great Crusade's spirit of noble conquest it was Sigismund. Those who faced him in the circle of blades, or stood beside him in battle, speak of a fury shackled by an iron will and an inherent genius for dealing death that bordered on the supernatural. It was this skill and fire that brought Sigismund to command the Templars of the First Company, and the most exalted position in the Imperial Fists beneath Rogal Dorn himself.

SIGISMUND

FIRST CAPTAIN OF THE IMPERIAL FISTS, MARTIAL CHAMPION OF ROGAL DORN, KINGSBANE, THE MASTER OF TEMPLARS

230 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Sigismund	7	4	4	4	4	5	4	10	2+

Unit Composition

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type

- Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Artificer armour
- Frag & krak grenades
- Iron halo
- The Black Sword
- Master-crafted bolt pistol

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists)
- Independent Character
- Master of the Legion
- Eternal Warrior
- Fearless
- Adamantium Will
- Dolorous Fighter
- Death's Champion
- Warlord (If Sigismund is your army's Warlord, he has the Slayer of Kings trait rather than rolling randomly)

Death's Champion

A sombre and deadly warrior, both indefatigable and remorseless in the fray, Sigismund is to onlookers less a mortal warrior but rather some unstoppable agency of the dark fates. This led none other than the Primarch Sanguinius to remark of him that he seemed "...less my brother Dorn's champion, and more Death's himself...". Sigismund and any unit he joins with the Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists) special rule gains +1 Initiative when they charge and may re-roll both failed charge distances and Sweeping Advance rolls.

If Sigismund is present in a detachment, then that detachment may take Templar Brethren squads as Troops choices.

Dolorous Fighter

Sigismund's skill is legendary, even among the trans-human warriors of the Legiones Astartes, and none can match his instinctive talent for dealing death and finding the merest chink in his enemy's guard to exploit to their undoing. Sigismund must always issue and/or accept Challenges where possible. Note that this takes precedence over the usual rules for the Legion. When fighting in a Challenge, Sigismund's attacks have the Instant Death special rule and successful invulnerable saves taken against his attacks must be re-rolled.

The Black Sword

A paragon blade of unknown provenance which takes the shape of an ancient two-handed blade of lustreless black metal, it is able to cut through stone and metal without effort or mar to the blade. In the hands of a warrior such as Sigismund, the Black Sword is deadly beyond belief, and alien warlords and mighty warriors without number have fallen before it.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
The Black Sword	-	+2	2	Melee, Two-handed

Warlord: Slayer of Kings

If Sigismund is the army's Warlord then should he slay the enemy Warlord in a Challenge, his controlling player gains +1 Victory point and all models in Sigismund's army add +1 to their Combat Resolution score in assaults for the rest of the battle.

ALEXIS POLUX

CAPTAIN OF THE 405TH COMPANY OF THE IMPERIAL FISTS, MASTER OF THE RETRIBUTION FLEET, THE CRIMSON FIST

165 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Alexis Polux	6	4	5	4	3	5	3	10	3+

Unit Composition

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type

- Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Void hardened power armour
- Frag & krak grenades
- Iron halo
- Master-crafted power fist
- Vigil pattern storm shield
- Combi-melta

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists)
- Independent Character
- Master of the Legion
- Void Commander
- Hammer Blow
- Warlord (If Alexis Polux is your army's Warlord, he has the Master Tactician trait rather than rolling randomly)

Void Commander

Alexis Polux was a highly skilled commander and a formidable tactician, particularly in the fields of void-borne combat and Zone Mortalis operations. Polux and any unit he has joined may opt to pass or fail any Morale checks or Pinning tests they are required to make. In addition, one Infantry type unit with the Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists) special rule in an army containing Alexis Polux may gain the Deep Strike special rule (noted as being via Teleportation where this is a factor in the type of game being played).

Hammer Blow

Such was Polux's strength and focus of will, even for one of the Legiones Astartes, that he was able to deliver a single crushing blow with his power fist as easily as one of his brothers might have swung a sword. At the start of any Assault phase, Polux's controlling player may opt to lower his Attacks characteristic to 1, but in doing so then ignores the Unwieldy special rule for his power fist for that phase. Note that this would still mean he received two attacks on the charge.

Warlord: Master Tactician

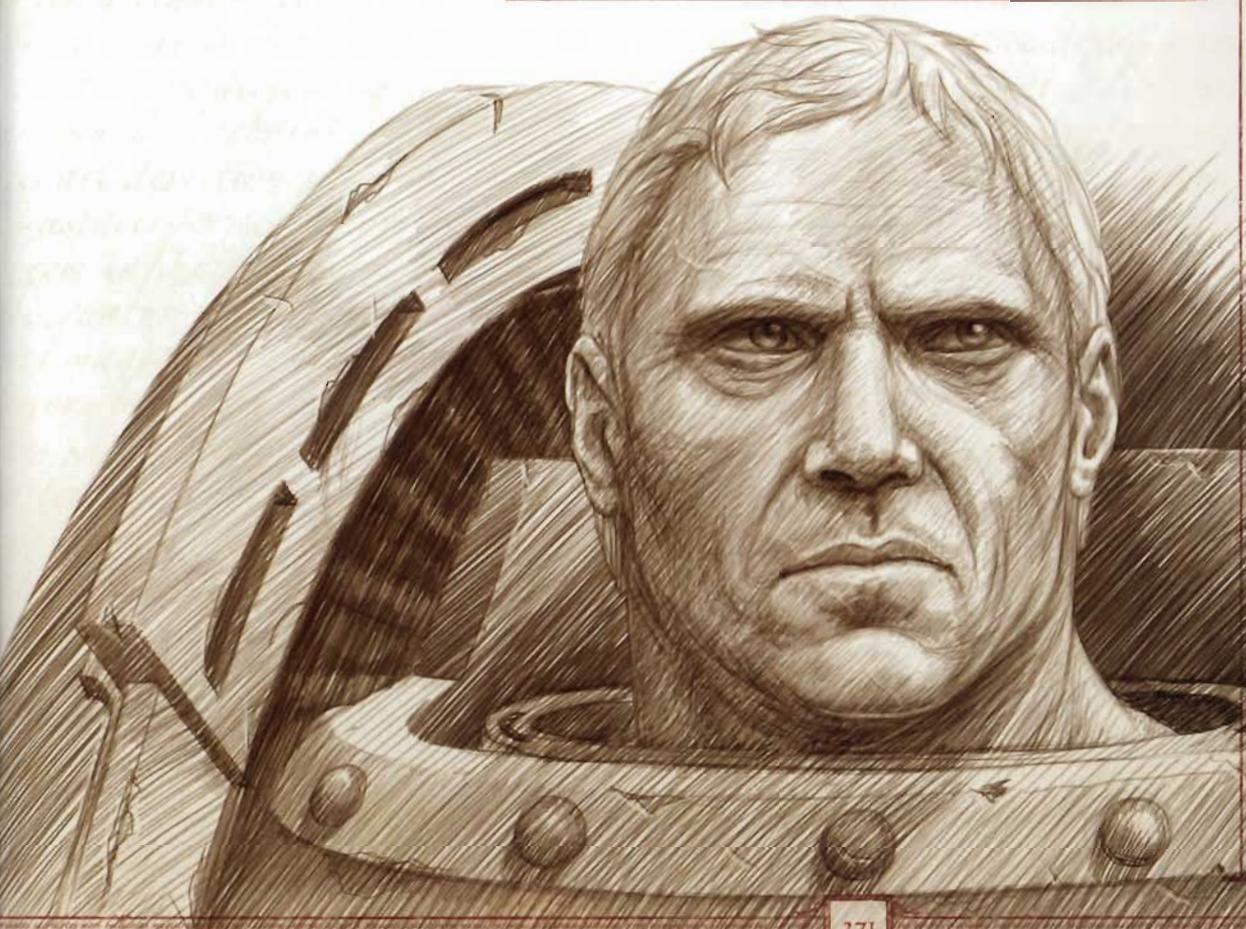
After both sides are deployed but before which side gets the first turn is determined, the Warlord's side may redeploy one of their units within the limitations of the mission being played. This may place a unit that had been deployed normally into reserve, or bring a unit out of reserve.



HQ

Captain of the 405th Company of the Imperial Fists Legion, Polux was a warrior of unique promise both elevated to greatness and condemned to bear great sorrow by the events of the Horus Heresy. A tactical genius with a talent for void warfare, he was the protégée of the Legion's greatest fleet masters, although before the dark betrayal of the Warmaster yet to reach his full potential. Inwit born, he was a physical giant even among his brothers of the Legion, and of a character as if cast in stone, emotionless and unyielding, whose reputation before the Battle of Phall rested as much on his strength in the bloody melee of close quarters combat as in command.

When Rogal Dorn sent his Retribution fleet to Istvan, Polux would likely still have had many years of proving ahead of him before he attained high command, but cruel chance and the death of his mentors saw such command thrust upon him, and with it the fate of much of his Legion lay in his hands.



LORDS OF WAR

'Doubt is the greatest weakness. It can shatter the strongest of walls without a single shot being fired, and fell the mightiest of champions before even a sword is drawn.'

Rogal Dorn,
Primarch of the Imperial Fists

ROGAL DORN

385 POINTS

PRIMARCH OF THE IMPERIAL FISTS, THE VIGILANT, THE BLADE OF THE EMPEROR, PRETORIAN OF TERRA, THE UNYIELDING ONE

A being of thunderous zeal and stone made manifest, is how many described the Primarch of the VIIth Legion. The zeal was the fire of a son who believed in his father's dream for the Imperium without reservation and without question. To Rogal Dorn there was no higher purpose to the existence of the Legiones Astartes than the unification of Mankind, and the illumination of the Imperium's ideals. This idealism drove Dorn and his Legion ever onwards, never compromising, never stinting in any aspect of duty. The stone in his soul was his ability to bear whatever his father needed of him, an unyielding nature, which made him both a master of defence in war, and an indomitable fighter on the attack. If the Primarchs were the Emperor's nature split like white light through a prism's rays, as many scholars of the Imperial Court suggested, then from such a point of view, Rogal Dorn was the Emperor's implacable disciple in the pursuit of the cause given flesh; a being without compromise and in who loyalty and duty was as integral as blood and breath.

It was perhaps for this reason, that even before the betrayal of Horus, the Emperor named Dorn Praetorian of Terra, and drew him to his side far away from the Warmaster and his newly forged command. To some among his brother-Primarchs this served only to distance him and his Legion further from them, and those among them who had seen the sins of hubris and obstinacy in Dorn's undoubted stubbornness and pride, saw this aggrandisement as a further cause for discord and disquiet.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Rogal Dorn	8	5	6	6	6	5	4	10	2+

Unit Composition

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type

- Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- The Auric Armour
- Storm's Teeth
- The Voice of Terra
- Teleport homer
- Frag grenades

Special Rules

- Primarch (Independent Character, Eternal Warrior, Fear, Adamantium Will, Fleet, Fearless, It Will Not Die, Master of the Legion)
- Sire of the Imperial Fists
- Sundering Blow
- Unshakable Defence
- Bulky



Sire of the Imperial Fists

Rogal Dorn and any unit he joins have the Crusader and Furious Charge special rules. All models with the Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists) special rule in the same army as Rogal Dorn may use his Leadership value rather than their own for the purposes of Morale checks and Pinning tests while he is in play. Both Rogal Dorn and any model with the Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists) special rule add +D3 to their Assault result to determine who wins in an assault while his model is in play.

Phalanx Breacher squads and Legion Terminator squads may be taken as Troops choices for an Imperial Fists primary detachment with Rogal Dorn as its Warlord.

Sundering Blow

At the cost of halving his number of attacks (rounded down after any bonus attacks for Rampage, etc, have been rolled for), Rogal Dorn's controlling player may opt to increase the Strength of his attacks by +2 and grant the attacks the Instant Death special rule.

Unshakable Defence

If Rogal Dorn is the army's Warlord, then after deployment but before the game begins the controlling player may select up to three fortifications and/or pieces of terrain sufficient to provide a cover save. Cover save rolls of '1' and Pinning tests taken by models protected by these terrain features or fortifications may be re-rolled.

The Auric Armour

Fashioned, it is said, from the same auric-adamantium alloy as the Emperor's own warplate, the Auric Armour provides Rogal Dorn with a 2+ armour save and a 4+ invulnerable save. In addition, no attack may wound Rogal Dorn on better than a 3+ regardless of its Strength or special rules. Note that Destroyer weapons attacks are unaffected.

Storm's Teeth

This colossal chainblade, too weighty for any but a Primarch to wield, is said to have been crafted by the weaponsmiths of Inwit before the coming of the Emperor. Its razored teeth can shred metal, stone and flesh with ease and while the Primarch of the Imperial Fists Legion has many arms at his disposal, some relics of far greater power, it is this blade which has served him faithfully for so long he favours most.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Storm's Teeth	-	User	2	Melee, Shred, Rampage, Unwieldy

The Voice of Terra

Presented to Rogal Dorn by the Custodian Guard to honour the Primarch's appointment as Praetorian of Terra, this tactical bolter follows the pattern of the Legio Custodes' own weaponry, albeit redesigned for the hand and might of a Primarch to wield.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
The Voice of Terra	24"	5	4	Salvo 3/5, Rending

THE ÆTOS DIOS

Following several attempts on Rogal Dorn's life following the outbreak of the Horus Heresy, the Magos Telluria constructed for him a heavily customised personal gunship to convey him both in battle and to shield him as he conducted missions in respect of the defences of Terra. This can be represented as a unique Thunderhawk Gunship equipped with a turbo laser, which differs from the standard profile in that it possesses a single Titan void shield, the It Will Not Die special rule and an invulnerable save of 4+ against any Missile type weapon used against it.

The *Ætos Dios* costs 600 points and may be taken as a Dedicated Transport for Rogal Dorn in any game of 3,000 points a side or more. It does not take up a Lords of War choice where this is relevant.

CRUSADE ARMY LIST APPENDIX XII: THE RAVEN GUARD

LEGIONES ASTARTES (RAVEN GUARD)

The Space Marines of the Emperor's Legions are genetically engineered, psycho-indoctrinated warriors with superhuman abilities and minds and souls tempered for war. In addition, each individual Legion has its own idiosyncrasies and character—the product of their gene-seed and unique warrior culture.

The Raven Guard are equal parts light and dark – quick to exact justice and retribution upon the tyrant and the oppressor by striking from the shadows with lightning speed and shocking strength. The annals of the Great Crusade tell relatively few tales of the numerous great deeds the Legion has enacted, for it has ever shunned the glare of adulation. Though the master of the full spectrum of war, the Raven Guard Legion favours the tactics of patience, guile and subtlety. It is adept at reconnaissance and infiltration, of identifying its foe's weakest point and then rapidly striking at that point with precisely applied force.

All models and units with this special rule are subject to the following provisions:

- **Legiones Astartes:** Units with this special rule may always attempt to regroup at their normal Leadership value, regardless of casualties.
- **By Wing & Talon:** Corax strove to forge his Legion into a highly adaptable rapid strike force, in which each component had its own unique role to play in sealing its enemy's fate, and was trained and equipped accordingly. In order to reflect this, each model with Legiones Astartes (Raven Guard) gains a further special rule(s) depending on its type:
 - **Infantry (except models with Terminator armour of any type):** Infiltrate and Fleet
 - **Jump Infantry, Bikes and Jetbikes, Infantry in Terminator Armour:** Furious Assault
- **Flesh over Steel:** A Raven Guard detachment may not have more units in total with the Vehicle (Tank) type than it does with the Legiones Astartes (Raven Guard) special rule. Note that because of this, certain Rites of War may be unavailable to Raven Guard armies.

"Those who claim to walk in the light have no right to do so until they have mastered the darkness within themselves."

The Gates of Oblivion



LEGION SPECIFIC UNITS

In addition to those found in the Crusade Army list, the Raven Guard Legion has particular access to additional unit types: Mor Deythan Strike Squads (which are an Elites choice on the Force Organisation chart) and Dark Fury Assault Squads (which are a Fast Attack choice on the Force Organisation chart).

LEGION SPECIFIC WARGEAR

The Raven Guard Legion has access to the following items of Legion specific wargear:

The Raven's Talons

These unique and jealously guarded variants of lightning claws, each a work of art in its own right, were both synonymous with the Raven Guard Legion and often bestowed as a mark of honour among them. Any Raven Guard model with lightning claws may upgrade them to Raven's Talons for +10 points (both singularly and for a pair), gaining them both the Master-crafted and the Rending special rules.

Infravisor

Any character in a Raven Guard army may be given an infravisor as an option for +5 points. This grants the model the Night Vision special rule. However, the model and any unit they have joined count as having an Initiative of 1 when taking Blind tests.

Cameleoline

Any Raven Guard independent character may be given the Cameleoline upgrade for +5 points, gaining the Stealth special rule. However, if this option is chosen, they may not also be equipped with Terminator armour, a Jump Pack, a Space Marine Bike or a Space Marine Jetbike.

RAVEN GUARD UNIQUE RITE OF WAR: DECAPITATION STRIKE

Although the Raven Guard Legion possessed (as any Space Marine Legion did) the manpower, will and matériel such as heavy weapons and tanks to fight wars of brutal onslaught and bloody attrition, they found it to be both needlessly wasteful and primitive to do so. Strategically, where possible, they favoured the clinical effectiveness of the decapitation strike. Launched either with complete surprise, or against a foe lured in by a raiding force set up as bait, this was a highly organised and precisely targeted attack, whose murderous and unforgiving force was contained and directed with precision, like the predatory strike of a raptor at its prey.

Effects

- **For Whom the Bell Tolls:** All Legiones Astartes (Raven Guard) units in a force using this Rite of War gains the Preferred Enemy (Independent Characters) special rule.
- **Predatory Strike:** So long as the force using this Rite of War forms the army's primary detachment, the controlling player may re-roll the dice to see who goes first/deploys first if this is part of the mission being played.
- **Fury from Above:** Tactical Squads, Veteran Tactical Squads, Tactical Support Squads, Seeker Squads and Heavy Support Squads may choose Legion Drop Pods as Dedicated Transports in detachments using this Rite of War, so long as their number does not exceed the Legion Drop Pod's transport capacity. In addition, Deathstorm Drop Pods may be chosen as Elites rather than Heavy Support choices by a force using this Rite of War.

Limitations

- Detachments using this Rite of War may only take a single Heavy Support choice as part of their Force Organisation chart.
- Detachments using this Rite of War may only take a single Consul as part of their HQ choice.
- Detachments using this Rite of War may not take Fortifications or allied Space Marine Legion detachments.



*"We strike from the darkness,
but we are not of the night.
Though born in darkness, we
seek only the light."*

*Corvus Corax,
Primarch of the Raven Guard*

MOR DEYTHAN STRIKE SQUAD

(RAVEN GUARD LEGION ONLY)

125 POINTS

ELITES

Informally known as the 'Shadow Masters', the Mor Deythan are a small cadre of infiltration squads within a Legion already well known for its nigh unsurpassed skill in such tactics. They are, however, far more than specialists in the arts of stealth, for each warrior is a veteran of the Lycaen Uprising who fought at the side of Corax himself. When the Emperor arrived on Lycaeus and the Raven Lord learned the truth of his creation, some rebels sought to remain at his side. The strongest of the young freedom fighters were judged worthy of ascension to the ranks of the XIXth Legion, providing a constant reminder of the Primarch's roots.

At the beginning of the Heresy, the Mor Deythan are few in number, having fought countless campaigns over eight decades at their master's side and they rarely admit new recruits into their ranks. Most who remain are grizzled veterans, supremely confident in their abilities. They are adept at moving silent and unseen through the shadows and attacking as and where they will. They utilise a range of weapons and specialised equipment, but there are some that whisper that the Mor Deythan are possessed of a portion of the preternatural skills of their gene-father the Primarch Corax, his ability to walk unseen even in full view of the foe somehow passed on through the unknowable processes of gene-seed implantation.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Mor Deythan	4	5	4	4	1	4	1	8	3+
Mor Deythan Shade	4	5	4	4	1	4	2	9	3+

Unit Composition

- 4 Mor Deythan
- 1 Mor Deythan Shade

Unit Type

- Mor Deythan: Infantry
- Mor Deythan Shade: Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Power armour
- Bolt pistol
- Chainsword or combat blade
- Frag & krak grenades
- Shroud bombs

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Raven Guard)
- Scout
- Stealth
- Fatal Strike

Dedicated Transport

- A Mor Deythan Strike Squad may choose a Legion Rhino or a Darkwing Storm Eagle as a Dedicated Transport.

Options

- The Mor Deythan Strike Squad may take:
 - Up to 5 additional Mor Deythan.....+20 points each
- Each model in the squad must take one of the following:
 - Legiones Astartes shotgun.....+2 points each
 - Sniper rifle.....+5 points each
 - Combi-weapon.....+7 points each
- Rather than taking a mandatory option from the previous list, one in every three models in the squad may take one of the following instead (this may include the Shade):
 - Volkite charger.....+7 points each
 - Flamer.....+10 points each
 - Meltagun.....+15 points each
 - Plasma gun.....+15 points each
 - Plasma pistol.....+15 points each
 - Missile launcher with suspensor web and frag & krak missiles.....+15 points each
- The Mor Deythan Shade may also take any of the following:
 - Melta bombs.....+5 points
 - Artificer armour.....+10 points

Fatal Strike

Once per game, a Mor Deythan Strike Squad may execute a fatal strike attack against a chosen target, utilising the precise timing of their attack to exploit their foe's weakness, coupled with specialised munitions to seal their enemy's fate. The Mor Deythan Strike Squad's controlling player declares the Fatal Strike at the start of one of the squad's Shooting phases. For the duration of that phase, the squad's shooting attacks have both the Twin-linked and Rending special rules, in addition to any other effects their weapons might have. In the case of sniper rifles, during the Fatal Strike they will rend on a 5+ rather than a 6 as would normally be the case.



DARK FURY ASSAULT SQUAD

(RAVEN GUARD LEGION ONLY)

175 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Dark Fury	4	4	4	4	I	4	2	8	3+
Chooser of the Slain	5	4	4	4	I	4	2	9	2+

Unit Composition

- 4 Dark Furies
- 1 Chooser of the Slain

Unit Type

- Dark Furies: Jump Infantry
- Chooser of the Slain: Jump Infantry (Character)

Wargear (Dark Furies)

- Power armour
- Pair of lightning claws
- Frag & krak grenades

Wargear (Chooser of the Slain)

- Artificer armour
- Pair of Raven's Talons
- Frag & krak grenades

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Raven Guard)
- Sudden Strike
- Fateful Descent

Options

- The Dark Fury Assault squad may take:
 - Up to 5 additional Dark Furies +30 points each
 - The Chooser of the Slain may take melta bombs +5 points

Sudden Strike

Models with this special rule gain a +1 Initiative bonus on any phase in which they charge.

Fateful Descent

Models with this special rule have a cover save of 5+ on the turn they arrive via Deep Strike.

FAST ATTACK

The Dark Fury Assault squads are utilised by the Raven Guard to conduct focused decapitation strikes upon specific, pre-designated enemy leaders against the backdrop of the carnage of battle. Far from subtle assassins striking unseen from the shadows, the Dark Fury descend into the very midst of the battlefield. Their squad leaders, known as the Choosers of the Slain for good reason, engage the target while the warriors cut down any retainers who dare attempt to intervene. The result of a successful decapitation strike is utter confusion in the ranks of the foe, and the complete breakdown of the enemy's chain of command.

Dark Fury Assault squads are equipped with vicious lightning claws fashioned after those carried by their Primarch Corvus Corax, and the Choosers of the Slain are issued artificer-wrought arms and armour that make them still more fearsome adversaries.

The squads are often deployed from the holds of specialised transport vessels such as Darkwing pattern Storm Eagle Gunships or the open frame Whispercutters, leaping from great heights to descend upon the silenced retro thrusters of their jump packs directly onto the heads of their unsuspecting target.



RAVEN GUARD DARKWING PATTERN STORM EAGLE GUNSHIP 275 POINTS

{RAVEN GUARD ONLY}

FAST ATTACK

Kiavahr is host to a caste of tech-adepts who yet refuse to cede the full extent of their machine lore to the Mechanicum, citing the higher sovereignty of the Legiones Astartes. The outbreak of the Heresy has made it unlikely the matter will be settled in the short term, and so they supply their Raven Guard lords with specialised war machines while refusing to acknowledge higher authority.

The bulk of the Kiavahrans' secrets relate to advanced field technologies predating Old Night. Such technologies have a range of applications, but the most efficacious to the Raven Guard are those that can increase further the stealth characteristics of their war machines, in particular, armour and vehicles.

The Darkwing pattern Storm Eagle is fitted with a range of highly prized and barely understood systems, from its rad-shrouded armour to its quantum field repellors. These additional systems require a higher degree of maintenance and some interior space is sacrificed to make room for them, meaning the vessel has a slightly reduced troop-carrying capacity. Given that the Darkwing pattern is often utilised to insert small units of elite warriors deep into enemy held territory, this is no great loss and so each chapter within the Legion maintains a stock of these highly prized gunships.

Armour

BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
4	12	12	12	4

Unit Composition

- 1 Darkwing pattern Storm Eagle Gunship

Unit Type

- Vehicle (Flyer, Transport, Hover)

Access Points

- The Darkwing pattern Storm Eagle has four access points: one on both sides and ramps at the front and rear

Wargear

- One hull-mounted twin-linked heavy bolter
- One hull-mounted Vengeance launcher with Eclipse missiles
- Two wing-mounted twin-linked lascannon
- Machine Spirit

Special Rules

- Deep Strike
- Assault Vehicle
- Stealth
- Outflank

Transport Capacity

- The Darkwing pattern Storm Eagle Gunship has a transport capacity of 16 models.

Options

- A Darkwing pattern Storm Eagle may take any of the following:
 - Armoured ceramite+20 points
 - Searchlight.....+1 point
 - Extra armour+10 points

Eclipse Missiles

Rather than outright destruction, 'Eclipse' pattern missiles are designed primarily to sow confusion and break up enemy defences in preparation for the Raven Guard Legion's lethal strike, their warheads combining concussion charges with clouds of dense, clinging chemical smoke.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Eclipse missiles	48"	4	5	Heavy 2, Blind, Large Blast (5"), Concussive

Darkwing pattern Storm Eagle Gunships are a Fast Attack choice for a Raven Guard Space Marine Legion Crusade army, and in addition can be taken as Dedicated Transports for Raven Guard Veteran Tactical squads and Legion Terminator squads whose number does not exceed the Darkwing's transport capacity.



STRIKE CAPTAIN ALVAREX MAUN

MASTER OF DESCENT, NIGHTFALL ONE

140 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Strike Captain Alvarez	5	5	4	4	3	4	3	10	2+

Unit Composition

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type

- Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Artificer armour
- Power sword
- Bolt pistol
- Nightfall pattern strato-vox
- Frag & Krak grenades

Special Rules

- Independent Character
- Legiones Astartes (Raven Guard)
- Master of the Legion
- Warlord
- The Bleeding Edge

Dedicated Transport

- Strike Captain Alvarez may take a Legion Drop Pod, Storm Eagle or Darkwing pattern Storm Eagle as a Dedicated Transport option.

Warlord Trait

- **Co-ordinated Planetstrike:** If Strike Captain Alvarez is the army's Warlord then flyers and Drop Pods (including Dreadnought Drop Pods and Deathstorm Drop Pods) in the same army may re-roll failed Reserves rolls.

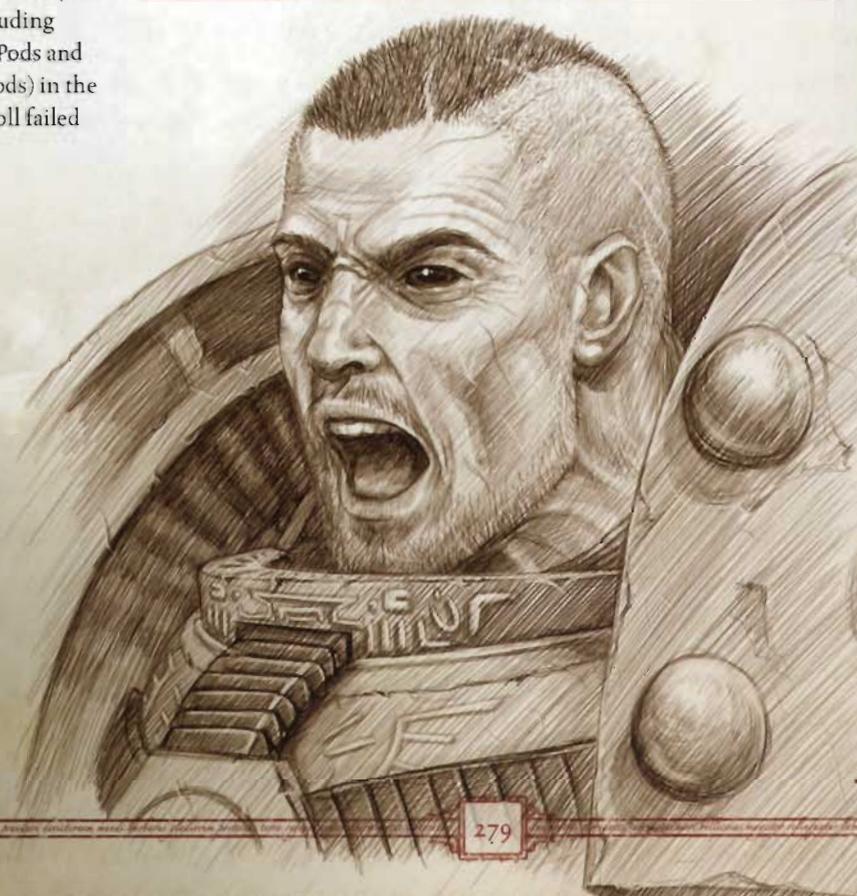
The Bleeding Edge

Strike Captain Alvarez is his Legion's primary drop assault commander, second only to his Primarch. If Captain Alvarez is to enter play embarked upon a vehicle that deploys via Deep Strike, then no Reserves roll is made for this vehicle. Instead, it must come on the first time the controlling player rolls for Reserves. If Alvarez is deployed at the beginning of the game, the controlling player may re-roll the Seize the Initiative roll where this is applicable to the mission being played.

Nightfall Pattern Strato-vox

The Strike Captain's strato-vox is a high-powered, cogitator assisted command interface used to facilitate the co-ordination of a massed planetstrike operation. Even as he leads the initial waves of the assault, Alvarez is able to track the deployment of countless drop ships, rendered as rapidly scrolling data projected across his vision by his strato-vox's systems.

If one of the controlling player's units wishes to arrive on the battlefield via Deep Strike and chooses to do so within 18" of Strike Captain Alvarez, then it will not scatter. Furthermore, models with the Legiones Astartes (Raven Guard) special rule deploying from deep striking vehicles brought into play in this way gain the Counter-attack special rule on the turn they arrive. When barrage weapons are being used by the controlling player, line of sight may be drawn from Alvarez as well as the firing model itself (range is still drawn from the firing model, etc). Note that Captain Alvarez must already be on the table (and not embarked on a vehicle) at the start of the turn for the Nightfall pattern strato-vox to be used.



HQ

As Master of Descent, Strike Captain Alvarez Maun commanded his Legion's planetstrike operations. Alvarez, however, performed his duties from the front line, descending from orbit with the first wave of drop ships and leading the action to secure the dropzone in person. The Istvan V drop operation was to prove the most ambitious and demanding of the Strike Captain's service. With scant notice from his Primarch, he formulated a planetstrike mission involving almost every one of the Legion's units and formations. Leading from the front, Alvarez made the drop in his personal command Thunderhawk, co-ordinating the landing of hundreds of drop pods and gunships even as he leant his formidable martial prowess to the attack itself.

When Lord Corax ordered the Raven Guard to break out of the Urgall Depression, Strike Captain Alvarez responded instantly, ordering his Thunderhawk to descend through the torrent of fire and to extract his Primarch. One wing shot away, the pilot killed and the hull disintegrating around him, Alvarez took the controls, determined that even should he himself die he would save his Primarch. The gunship was too badly damaged to reach orbit, but Alvarez brought it down in a controlled crash landing, saving the life of the Raven Lord even though five of the crew were slain and he himself was badly injured.

MORITAT-PRIME KAEDES NEX

155 POINTS

THE RAVEN'S HUNTSMAN, 'BLOOD-CROW', ATTACHED TO THE 14TH INTERDICTION COMPANY OF THE RAVEN GUARD



HQ

A dark figure of gruesome repute amongst the tightly-knit survivors of Deliverance, Kaedes is seen as an ill-omen by his brothers. On Kiavahr in his youth he was known as the Blood Crow, an infamous murderer condemned to rot on the moon-prison. There he remained, until Corvus Corax offered him freedom and a pardon if he fought alongside the other rebels and limited his targets to those chosen by his new master.

After enduring a painful late transformation to a Space Marine, it was only by the continued favour shown to him by Corax that he remained within the ranks of the Raven Guard, with few of his brothers willing to tolerate his macabre obsession with the hunt. Yet, in the grim shadow-wars fought by the Raven Guard in furtherance of the Emperor's grand plan, his murder-honed skills were employed with grim regularity.

When the Raven Guard came to Isstvan V, Kaedes came with them, vanishing into the wastes to stalk the Traitors on his own terms. Nothing is recorded of his role in either the retreat from the massacre or the days that followed, and some maintain that not all of the Traitor craft to later leave Isstvan V carried only the followers of Horus, that Kaedes continued his private war in the shadows of the Horus Heresy.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Kaedes Nex	5	6	4	4	2	6	3	9	3+

Unit Composition

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type

- Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Power armour
- Two Fulcrum hand cannon
- Frag & Krak grenades
- Refractor field
- Shroud bombs
- Melta bombs
- Cameleoline

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Raven Guard)
- Counter-attack
- Ill-omened
- Relentless Stalker
- The Raven's Vengeance
- Gunfighter
- Independent Character
- Chain Fire

Relentless Stalker

During deployment, select one enemy Elites or HQ choice as Kaedes Nex's chosen prey. Instead of deploying normally, Kaedes Nex may be deployed after all other units and infiltrators have been set up and may be placed anywhere within 18" of his chosen prey as long as he remains out of sight of all enemy units, gaining the Shrouded rule for the first game turn of play.

The Raven's Vengeance

When in combat with a unit chosen as his prey (see Relentless Stalker), Kaedes Nex gains the Zealot special rule. If the unit is destroyed as the result of a combat in which Kaedes Nex is involved, or during a Shooting phase in which he inflicted one or more wounds on the unit, an additional Victory point is scored for the Raven Guard in games in which Victory points are used.

Ill-omened

Kaedes Nex may not be selected as an army's compulsory HQ choice, and may not be selected as the army's Warlord, even if he has the highest Leadership value. He may not join units of any kind during either deployment or during play.

Gunfighter

So skilled is Kaedes in the use of pistols as weapons of murder, that he may use his pair of Fulcrum hand cannon in close combat, using the Strength, AP and special rules listed on its standard profile instead of those listed in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook. Note that Kaedes does claim the +1 attack bonus for using two Fulcrum hand cannon in close combat.

Fulcrum Hand Cannon

These ornate weapons are artefacts of the Tech Guilds of Kiavahr, looted from one of the many armouries overrun during the rebellion. As with much Guild tech, these weapons are primitive by the standards of the Mechanicum, but brutally effective nonetheless, using electrically charged rounds of massive size to pulverise their targets. Stunning any who survive the impact, the Fulcrum is a lethal weapon in the hands of a skilled marksman.

	Range	Str	AP	Type
Fulcrum hand cannon	18"	4	4	Pistol, Rending, Concussive



CORVUS CORAX

MASTER OF THE RAVEN GUARD, THE LIBERATOR, CHOOSER OF THE SLAIN, THE SHADOWED LORD

450 POINTS

LORDS OF WAR

"Swear with me now, my children, to follow me wherever this road leads. Swear to show no mercy to the Traitors. Swear to slay them with hatred in your heart. Swear to excise this cancer that Horus has nourished in the heart of the Imperium. Swear to bring again the Imperial Truth to the galaxy. Swear that we will never fail again!"

Lord Corax, to the surviving Raven Guard as they exited the Isstvan system

Lord Corax presents a striking countenance, at least when he wishes to be seen. His skin is alabaster white and his shoulder length hair as black as the feathers of his namesake, the raven. Most remarkable and unsettling are his eyes, which are entirely black shards of solid shadow. His sable armour is edged with fine, golden filigree and upon his back is mounted a jet pack formed into a pair of articulated pinions that he wields as a murderous, bloody-edged cutting weapon. Like most of the Primarchs, Corax is blessed of an extensive armoury of artificer-wrought weapons but those he most often bears to war are a pair of metre-long lightning claws and a coiled whip at his belt. The latter is carried as a reminder of the cruelty enacted upon the people of Lycaeus by the tyrannical guilds of Kiavahr and with it countless enemies of Unity have been laid low. Though few even amongst his sons know of it, Corax is blessed with the ability to pass unnoticed should he will it, this preternatural ability allowing him to slip from the perception of his enemies even when standing in plain view.

In battle, the Raven Lord wields his Legion as he did his rebel cells before the Emperor came to Kiavahr. He is the master of stealth, rapid strikes and decapitations. He is cunning and subtle, commanding his units with precision and guile, but all of this is guided by an uncompromising sense of justice and hope for the future of Humanity.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Corax	7	6	6	6	6	7	6	10	2+

Unit Composition

- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type

- Jump Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- The Sable Armour
- The Panoply of the Raven Lord
- Frag grenades
- Shroud bombs
- The Korvidine Pinions
- Two Archaeotech pistols

Special Rules

- Primarch (Independent Character, Eternal Warrior, Fear, Adamantium Will, Fleet, Fearless, It Will Not Die, Master of the Legion)
- Sire of the Raven Lord
- The Shadowed Lord
- Hit & Run
- Bulky



SPECIAL RULES

Sire of the Raven Guard

Corax gains +1 Initiative and +1 Strength on any turn in which he charges. All models with the Legiones Astartes (Raven Guard) special rule in the same army as Corax gain the Acute Senses special rule, and while he is on the table do not have to roll to determine their maximum Run distance – instead this is always 6”.

The Shadowed Lord

Unless part of a unit, if Corax is not the closest target to the firing unit or the firing unit is either a Psyker or a Daemon of some kind, or another Primarch, only Snap Shots may be taken against him. At the beginning of any of Corax's controlling player's turns, Corax may be removed from play and placed in On-going Reserves; he may even be withdrawn from close combat in this manner, but only if his Initiative is higher than that of his opponent's.

The Sable Armour

Fashioned for the master of the Raven Guard by the Emperor's own artificers, this suit of highly sophisticated power armour not only offers the Primarch defence against outside attack, it also masks his sensor signature and can be used to disrupt enemy sensors and transmissions in his immediate vicinity. The Sable Armour provides a 2+ armour save and a 5+ invulnerable save. In addition, any enemy unit deep striking within 12” of Corax will suffer a Deep Strike Mishap on any roll of a double on their Deep Strike Scatter roll. Enemy teleport homers and location beacons (and any similar items of wargear) do not function within this radius.

The Panoply of the Raven Lord

Corax carries a number of personal weapons of formidable power with which he makes for a frighteningly deadly opponent in personal combat. These include artificer lightning talons able to shred the heaviest armour with ease, and an energized whip—a symbol of the overthrow of the tyrannical powers that once held him captive—with which he can lash out or ensnare with blinding speed. In combat, this combination of arms is counted as a single weapon with the following profile:

	Range	Str	AP	Type
Panoply of the Raven Lord	None	User	2	Melee, Shred, Blind, Fighting Style, Two-handed

Fighting Style: At the beginning of each Assault phase, Corax's controlling player may choose one of the following special rules to apply to his attacks, based upon the weapons and fighting style he is employing:

- **Death Strike:** All To Wound rolls of 5+ by Corax's close combat attacks wound their target regardless of its Toughness and any rolls to damage vehicles gain an extra +3 to their Armour penetration rolls.
- **Scourge:** Corax gains D3 extra attacks.
- **Shadow-walk:** Corax imposes a -1 penalty on the To Hit rolls of every enemy model which attacks him in an assault until the beginning of Corax's controlling player's next Assault phase.

The Korvidine Pinions

Corax's flight pack is a miracle from the Dark Age of Technology modified to suit the Primarch's own exacting needs. The Korvidine Pinions grant him the unit type Jump Pack Infantry and, in addition, he may always make Hammer of Wrath attacks when making assaults regardless of any other factors, such as Hammer of Wrath attacks causing D3 hits at Str 5 AP 3. When deploying via Deep Strike, the Scatter dice may be re-rolled if Corax's controlling player wishes and should he suffer a Mishap, then the Delayed result automatically applies instead of a random roll. When making a Jump Pack move, Corax may make a Vector Strike attack just as if he were a Swooping Flying Monstrous Creature.

Deadly Prey: Dropsite Massacre and the Victory is Vengeance Campaign special option

In the aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre, Corax was wounded and his wargear badly damaged, but he still would prove a most deadly prey to those who attempted to hunt him and his band of survivors across the blasted face of Istvan V. Corax in this incarnation has only 5 Wounds and 5 Attacks as standard, his armour saves are degraded to 3+/5+ and he loses the Korvidine Pinions and his Archaeotech pistols. He carries a salvaged heavy bolter (which is treated as being Assault 3 in this case) and gains the Hatred (Iron Warriors, Sons of Horus, Night Lords, Alpha Legion, Emperor's Children, Death Guard and World Eaters), Infiltrate and Scout special rules. This version of Corax costs 350 points.



IRON WARRIORS LEGION CASTELLAX CLASS BATTLE-AUTOMATA

LAMBDA THREE SIX

CYBERNETICA DETACHMENT

LEGION RESERVE, URGALL DEPRESSION CORDON, ISSTVAN V DROPSITE MASSACRE

The Iron Warriors Legion maintained a large number of Battle-automata, bonded to servitude by ancient ties of debt and honour with the Legio Cybernetica. The majority of those deployed to the second wave of the Isstvan V drop operation were assigned to the Legion Reserve and mustered within the massive fortifications deployed from orbit.

The presence of the Battle-automata was only fully revealed once the act of betrayal was itself complete. Several hundred Castellax and other classes of automata were deployed to block the escape of any Loyalists who survived the slaughter and attempted to break through the Traitors' lines into the Urgall Hills beyond.

Being permanently bonded to service with the Iron Warriors, Lambda Three Six bears the functional heraldry of that Legion. In common with standard Iron Warriors schemes, several elements of the automata's form have had distinctive yellow and black chevrons applied and the shoulder displays a simple asset identifier, its exact meaning known only to the Iron Warriors. Note also the presence of the skull and cog icon of the Cult Mechanicus, indicating the machine's origins. The text applied to the right forearm cowling is assumed to represent a votive extract from the vast and impenetrable lore of the adepts of the Cult of Mars.

AFTERWORD

In the aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre —one of the pivotal battles of the Horus Heresy and amongst the most significant of the entire Warhammer 40,000 mythos— three entire Legions were devastated. The Primarch Ferrus Manus, father of the Iron Hands Legion, was dead and many of his sons had descended into grief and madness. The Salamanders were consumed in the cauldron of war, their Primarch Vulkan disappeared into a furnace of war that burned as fiercely as any sun. Only much later would it be learned that Corax, the Primarch of the Raven Guard, lived still, within him burning the otherwise extinguished flame of Mankind's hope that the Traitors' betrayal might be punished and the shattering of three entire Legions avenged.

Tragically, the betrayal unleashed at the Isstvan system is far from contained. The fleets of the Iron Warriors and the Imperial Fists clash in the Phall system, hundreds of warships burning as thousands of Legionaries throw themselves wholesale into the fires of war. At Paramar, the taint spreads still further as the Alpha Legion reveal their formerly hidden hand, dragging the Lords of the Mechanicum into the rapidly spreading war.

The fires of treachery have consumed the Isstvan system and now rush outwards into the Imperium, and none can say when, or indeed if, they can be extinguished.

The Horus Heresy Book Three – Extermination is the third book in Forge World's Isstvan trilogy, itself but the opening of a series that will take us all the way to the Siege of Terra. The die is well and truly cast and the Warmaster's ambitions are revealed. Even as the Imperium reels, the Warmaster is already setting in motion the next stage of his grand scheme to cast down the rule of Terra and, ultimately, to take his father's throne for his own.

In addition to expanding the collections of Legiones Astartes players, this book introduces an entirely new army to the tabletop – the Mechanicum. This force, and indeed their later incarnation – the Adeptus Mechanicus, has been a part of the Warhammer 40,000 canon for decades, but has to date had only a limited presence on the tabletop. Now, for the first time, they have an entire army list all their own. At the time of writing, a stunning range of Mechanicum miniatures is taking shape and we very much look forward to seeing painted armies of Battle-automata, Myrmidons, Tech-thralls and all the myriad forces of the Mechanicum taking to the tabletop in all their glory in the years to come.

The publication of *The Horus Heresy Book Two - Massacre* proved highly popular with those already enjoying the experience of playing games of Warhammer 40,000 set against the backdrop of the Horus Heresy. Its release also spurred still more Warhammer 40,000 enthusiasts to take their first steps into the setting, something we all hope to see continue with the publication of *Extermination*. The next book in the Horus Heresy series will see the betrayal spread further still and introduce even more new allies and enemies not yet described in the books so far.

Whether Loyalist or Traitor, we welcome one and all to join us as this grand adventure continues.

The Forge World Studio

A Forge World supplement for



The Horus Heresy Book Three – Extermination is a supplement for Warhammer 40,000 dealing with war and battle in the dark age of the Horus Heresy, when the fledgling Imperium of Mankind was torn apart by bloody civil war and treachery. This book, lavishly illustrated in full colour, contains extensive background information on the desperate battles fought in the bloody wake of the Isstvan V Dropsite Massacre. Also detailed are the histories of four of the Legions embroiled in the Dropsite Massacre as well as other battles taking place at the same time: the Raven Guard, Iron Warriors, Alpha Legion and Imperial Fists, and an extensive campaign system that allows you to play out a number of the conflicts described, from the blasted wastes of Isstvan V to the hungry void of the Phall system in your own exciting tabletop battles. This book presents a complete army list for the Mechanicum, including rules for a range of fearsome new Battle-automata and mighty war machines. It also features additional entries for the Space Marine Legion Crusade Army list presented in *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*, from game rules for the Primarchs of the four newly described Legions to super-heavy vehicles and special characters featured in the story.



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