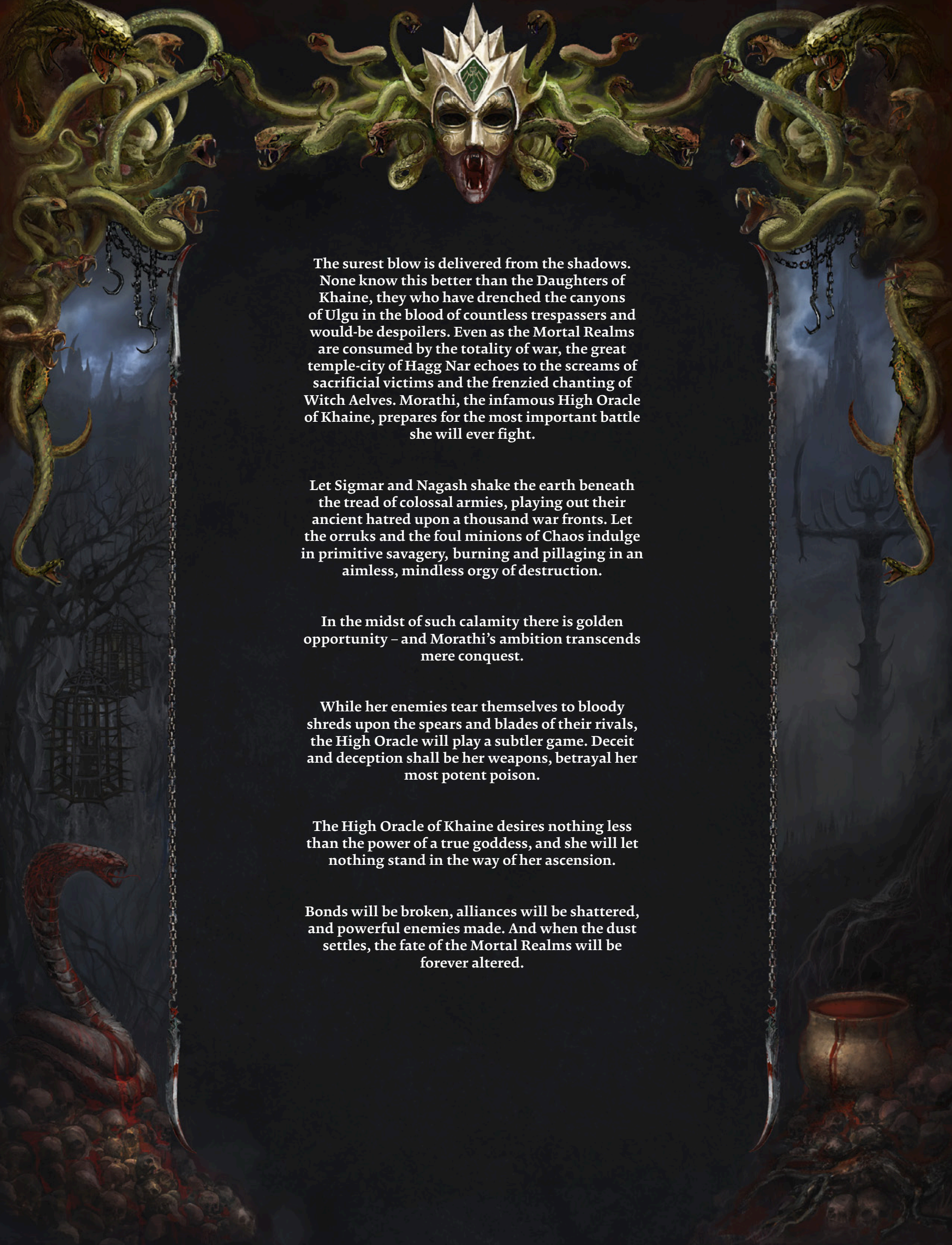
WARHAMMER
AGE OF SIGMAR

BROKEN REALMS



# MORATHI



The surest blow is delivered from the shadows. None know this better than the Daughters of Khaine, they who have drenched the canyons of Ulgu in the blood of countless trespassers and would-be despoilers. Even as the Mortal Realms are consumed by the totality of war, the great temple-city of Hagg Nar echoes to the screams of sacrificial victims and the frenzied chanting of Witch Aelves. Morathi, the infamous High Oracle of Khaine, prepares for the most important battle she will ever fight.

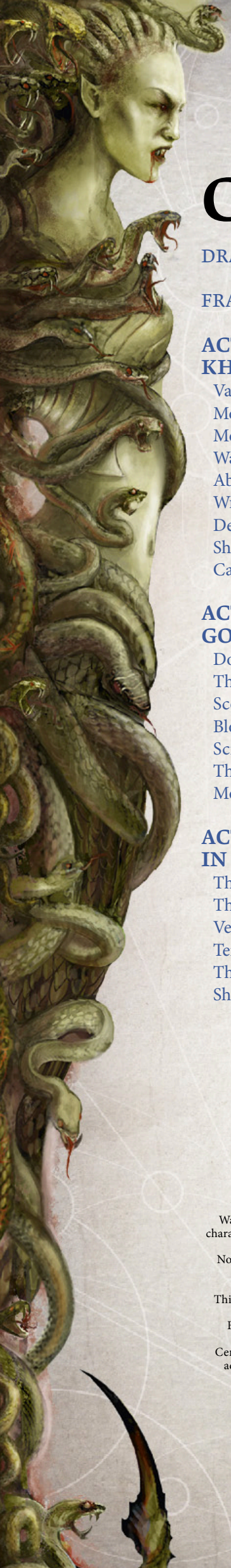
Let Sigmar and Nagash shake the earth beneath the tread of colossal armies, playing out their ancient hatred upon a thousand war fronts. Let the orruks and the foul minions of Chaos indulge in primitive savagery, burning and pillaging in an aimless, mindless orgy of destruction.

In the midst of such calamity there is golden opportunity – and Morathi's ambition transcends mere conquest.

While her enemies tear themselves to bloody shreds upon the spears and blades of their rivals, the High Oracle will play a subtler game. Deceit and deception shall be her weapons, betrayal her most potent poison.

The High Oracle of Khaine desires nothing less than the power of a true goddess, and she will let nothing stand in the way of her ascension.

Bonds will be broken, alliances will be shattered, and powerful enemies made. And when the dust settles, the fate of the Mortal Realms will be forever altered.



# CONTENTS


DRAMATIS PERSONAE ..3

FRACTURED EMPIRES ..6

**ACT 1 – BLOOD OF KHAINE .....8**
- Varanthax's Maw.....10
- Molten Blood .....12
- Morathi .....14
- War Clouds Gather .....16
- Abyssal Heist .....18
- Wrath of Azyr.....20
- Desolate March.....22
- Shadow and Treachery .....24
- Catastrophe .....26

**ACT II – RISE OF A GODDESS .....30**
- Dominion of Shadrac .....32
- The Brink of Triumph .....34
- Scourge of the Seas.....38
- Blood in the Water .....40
- Scream of Exultation .....42
- The Ritual .....44
- Morathi-Khaine .....46

**ACT III – ANVILGARD IN DARKNESS.....51**
- The City of Scales .....52
- The Grip of Fear .....54
- Ven Brecht's Return .....56
- Terror in the Mist.....58
- The Precipice of Ruin.....60
- Shadows Rising.....64

**THE RULES .....72**

BROKEN REALMS .....74
- Campaign Rules .....75
- Realms of Battle.....76
- Realm of Battle: The Helleflux, Ulgu .....76
- Realm of Battle: The Charrwind Coast, Aqshy .....77
- Realm of Battle: Varanthax's Maw, the Eightpoints.....78
- Battleplan: Priceless Bounty...80
- Battleplan: Valley of Ash and Blood .....82
- Battleplan: Hagganal Bay.....84
- Battleplan: The Inner Chamber .....86
- Battleplan: The Undertunnels ...88
- Battleplan: The Fall of Anvilgard.....90

**BATTLETOME UPDATES.....92**

DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE .....96
- Zainthar Kai.....96
- Vyperic Guard .....97
- Scáthcoven.....97
- Shrine Brood.....97
- Morathi-Khaine .....98
- The Shadow Queen .....99

CITIES OF SIGMAR .....100
- Free Cities Battle Traits .....100
- Kraeth's Shadowhost .....101
- Misthåvn.....102
- Har Kuron .....104

STORMCAST ETERNALS.....106
- Stormkeep Battle Traits .....106
- Wardens of the Stormkeep ...107
- Stormtower Garrison.....107
- Stormkeep Patrol.....107
- Stormkeep Brotherhood .....108
- Ven Brecht's Black Watch .....109

IDONETH DEEPKIN .....110
- Mount Traits .....110
- Akhelian Allopexes .....111
- Eidolon of Mathlann, Aspect of the Storm.....112
- Eidolon of Mathlann, Aspect of the Sea.....113
- Akhelian Leviadon .....114
- The Bloodsurf Hunt .....115
- Idolators .....116
- Gresh's Iron Reapers.....119

PITCHED BATTLE PROFILES.....120



**PRODUCED BY THE WARHAMMER STUDIO**

**With thanks to The Faithful for their additional playtesting services**



Warhammer Age of Sigmar – Broken Realms: Morathi © Copyright Games Workshop Limited 2020. Broken Realms, GW, Games Workshop, Warhammer, Warhammer Age of Sigmar, Battletome, Stormcast Eternals, and all associated logos, illustrations, images, names, creatures, races, vehicles, locations, weapons, characters, and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are either ® or TM, and/or © Games Workshop Limited, variably registered around the world. All Rights Reserved.

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

This is a work of fiction. All the characters and events portrayed in this book are fictional, and any resemblance to real people or incidents is purely coincidental.



British Cataloguing-in-Publication Data. A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library. Pictures used for illustrative purposes only.



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



Games Workshop Ltd., Willow Road, Lenton, Nottingham, NG7 2WS, United Kingdom

**games-workshop.com**

# DRAMATIS PERSONAE

**The tale of Morathi's quest for godhood was one of realm-spanning intrigue and bloodshed, involving a varied cast of kings, rogues and cruel warlords. All would find themselves forever changed by this period of great strife – none more so than the High Oracle herself.**

## LEADERS OF THE GREAT POWERS

- **Morathi, High Oracle of Khaine:** Ruler of Hagg Nar and leader of the Cult of Khaine.
- **Sigmar, the God-King:** Master of the Realm of Heavens and creator of the Stormcast Eternals.
- **Alarielle, the Everqueen:** Ruler of Ghyran, mother of the Sylvaneth.
- **Slaanesh, the Dark Prince:** Chaos God of hedonism and excess, currently imprisoned in the twilight realm of Uhl-Ghysh.

## STORMCAST ETERNALS

- **Keiser Ven Brecht, Lord-Veritant, Anvils of the Heldenhammer:** Stoic and unrelenting hunter of witches and heretics.
- **Andrus Nihilat, Lord-Celestant, Hammers of Sigmar:** Bellicose commander of the military expedition to the Eightpoints.
- **Brena Vennerdreizh, Lord-Arcanum, Anvils of the Heldenhammer:** Arcane expert and commander of the Dolorites Sacrosanct Chamber.
- **The Annihilators, Warrior Chamber, Hammers of Sigmar:** Uncompromising destroyers of Sigmar's foes.
- **The Dolorites, Sacrosanct Chamber, Anvils of the Heldenhammer:** Arcane warriors and specialists in the destruction of Chaos artefacts.
- **Ephrem Vanhelm, Lord-Castellant, Anvils of the Heldenhammer:** Overseer of the defence of Anvilgard.

## IDONETH DEEPKIN

- **High King Volturnos:** Last of the Cythai and the overlord of the Idoneth enclaves.
- **Akhelian King Nemmetar:** Huntmaster of the Ionrach enclave and Volturnos' strong right hand.



## DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE

- **Vatheira Seris, Melusai Ironscale, Hagg Nar:** Merciless and bloodthirsty commander of the Hagg Nar infantry.

## SCOURGE PRIVATEERS

- **Taras Nightscour, Fleetmaster of the Black Ark *Agoniser*:** Opportunistic and unscrupulous corsair from the free city of Misthåvn.

## FORCES OF CHAOS

- **Lord Rokar Gresh:** Leader of the Crimson Brethren and guardian of Varanthax's Maw.
- **The Eater of Tomes:** Gaunt Summoner overseeing the extraction of varanite at Varanthax's Maw.
- **Glavia Sinheart, Slaaneshi Herald:** Devoted servant of the Dark Prince, haunted by prophetic dreams sent by their master.
- **Gestharyx, Lord of Pain:** Depraved warlord seeking out new heights of sensation.

## DEFENDERS OF ANVILGARD

- **Dignan 'Ironwhiskers' Crant, Freeguild General:** Defiant commander of the Anvilgard Freeguilds.
- **Matlo Loriksson, Warden King:** Leader of Anvilgard's population of duardin Dispossessed.

## THE BLACKSCALE COIL

- **The Sovereign:** Mysterious mastermind behind the criminal cabal known as the Blackscale Coil.
- **Sorceress Drusa Kraeth:** Agent of the Blackscale Coil and right hand of the Sovereign.



**The Dark Prince stirs, squirming against his twilight bonds.**

**The sweet song of his faithful echoes from all corners of reality. With every shriek of agony and howl of trembling exultation, his power swells beyond the ken of his dull-witted gaolers.**

**One by one the god-chains are sundered, each fractured link concealed by the Prince's impenetrable illusions. In their arrogant self-certainty, the aelf-lords fail to grasp what is coming.**

**To the Prince of Perfection, a progeny shall be born. The screams of shackled lightning shall herald its coming. The bitter oaths of the betrayed shall be its birth-song.**

**All will be decided before the walls of the Great Deceiver's fortress. The oceans will churn. The shadows will writhe.**

**When the serpent's head splits in two beneath the glare of a crimson moon, then shall the Newborn One come forth.**

**At the zenith of exultation it shall slither from the belly of its father.**

**And the realms themselves shall quiver to witness its glittering magnificence.**

***- The Prophecy of Parturition, as recounted by the Slaaneshi Herald Glavia Sinheart***





# FRACTURED EMPIRES

**Once more, the Mortal Realms echo to the cacophony of war as great powers meet in battle to contest vital territories and settle age-old hatreds. There is a stirring in the air, a confluence of fates that heralds both terrible strife and great opportunity – for those bold enough to act.**

Disorder rules the Mortal Realms. The Soul Wars rage on. Bursting forth from Shyish like an arcane tidal wave, the Necroquake has swept across reality, sundering the laws of magic and giving rise to gheist-storms and shambling hordes of Deadwalkers. Taking advantage of the strife his own vile spellcraft has caused, Nagash has loosed his foremost general – Katakros, Mortarch of the Necropolis and master of the Ossiarch Bonereapers – upon his rivals, driving back the armies of Sigmar and the Chaos powers on multiple fronts.

Many of the God-King's proud free cities now burn. Warriors are slain by the thousand, and are raised in turn by necromantic magic to make war upon their erstwhile comrades. The Stormcast Eternals are hurled far and wide on the currents of Sigmar's Tempest; they relieve the God-King's strongholds where they can, but all too often they arrive late, finding nothing but empty spirit-haunted ruins where once bustling settlements stood. The bow wave of the Necroquake has not only dragged up hateful entities from the underworlds of Shyish, but also disrupted the magical laws that underpin the Mortal Realms, giving rise to predatory sentient spells and smashing apart arcane wards and illusions that have endured for centuries.

Everything is in turmoil. Nothing is as it was. Indeed, it is not solely the forces of order and civilisation that reel beneath the undead onslaught. As the influence of Nagashizzar grows in the wake of this cataclysm, the other great powers of the realms fight desperately to hold on to their own gains.

The greenskins find themselves embroiled in a war as joyously brutal as any they have waged, fighting an enemy that seems to come back stronger after every battle. The Ossiarchs' precise tactics and mastery of the open field have proved enough to conquer several regions of Ghur, but even as the Bonereapers' thralls slave away on fortifications built from piles of beast bones, a living avalanche gathers on the horizon. The Great Green Tide is not so easily defeated.

The hordes of Chaos have been terribly mauled by the sheer intensity of the undead invasions. Even the Eightpoints – the domain of Archaon the Everchosen, long thought impregnable to conventional assault – has been breached. At Nagash's command, the Mortarchs Katakros and Olynder masterminded an assault upon the heartlands of Chaos, bringing death and slaughter to the door of those who had taken such delight in laying waste to Shyish. Nagash had not forgotten his defeat at the Everchosen's hands centuries before, at the dawn of the Age of Chaos. He yearned to repay that humiliation a hundredfold.

Katakros was finally cut down in battle by Archaon himself, but not before his armies raised an immense structure known as the Arx Terminus in front of the Shyish Arcway. This fortress citadel, crafted from the skeletal remains of defeated foes, stands as Nagash's first foothold within the Everchosen's territories. Katakros, too, endures, his unliving essence installed into a new and polished ivory form, and already plotting fresh conquests.

The Mortarch expected immediate and terrible retribution from Archaon, but to his surprise the Everchosen has yet to lay siege to the Arx Terminus. In fact, since his return to the Eightpoints and his crushing victory over Katakros' Ossiarch armies, the Three-Eyed King has rarely been sighted. To his enemies, this absence is foreboding indeed, for Archaon does nothing without reason. Surely he plots new ways to bring the Mortal Realms under his tyrannical rule.

The fate of empires balances on the edge of a sword. As cities crumble and armies are shattered, the escalating violence provides a chance for those who have long dwelt in the shadows to emerge and seize their destiny.

## THE BLOODY-HANDED ONES

By no means have the shadowed temples of the Daughters of Khaine remained untouched by the Soul Wars. Nagash dispatched many shrieking hosts of Nighthaunt and rotting cadaver-armies into the mist-shrouded valleys of Ulgu, seeking to pry these zealous warrior-aelves out of their fortified shrines. Indeed, the fates of Hagg Yethra and Khal Karon – both temples overwhelmed and sacked by the forces of Arkhan the Black – seemed to offer a grim vision of the future that lay in store for Khaine's chosen.

Yet Morathi, the High Oracle of Khaine and a sorceress of terrifying power, was surely amongst the most capable commanders in the realms when it came to waging a war from the shadows. She marshalled the Khainite sects with surety and purpose, her skilful oratory inciting her murderous flock into a frenzy of battle lust. One by one the forces of the invaders were isolated and ambushed. Pale, lithe forms poured from hidden pathways or appeared as if from nowhere in the midst of their foes, the illusory magic of Ulgu having concealed their presence until the last moment. In a whirlwind of slicing blades and lashing whips, they tore their prey apart, disappearing before reinforcements could be brought to bear against them.

When it was necessary, or when she was overcome by a rage so pure she could not contain it, Morathi took to the field in her true, terrible form. As the Shadow Queen she was a towering, winged monstrosity, her lower half the crimson coils of a great serpent and her upper body that of a regal and cruelly beautiful aelf with a nest of hissing snakes in place of hair. On such occasions, the unleashed Shadow Queen took bitter satisfaction in laying waste to her enemies, who were stricken and helpless in the face of her overwhelming might.

Even as she masterminded the defence of her strongholds in the Umbral Veil, Morathi cast her eyes further afield, towards new gains. Her spies roamed far and wide, securing long-lost relics of the Bloody-Handed God and seeking out forgotten lore that might aid the High Oracle in her quest for power. It was one such group of agents that brought word to the court of Hagg Nar of an intriguing development in the Eightpoints – the harvesting by Archaon's followers of an ultra-rare form of realmstone unique to that benighted land, a substance that Morathi had long desired to seize for her own ends.

Claiming it from the heart of the Everchosen's realm will require every scintilla of cunning that the High Oracle possesses. Even then, the odds will be stacked formidably against her. Yet Morathi is no stranger to risk, and there are few beings in the realms more deviously intelligent than she.

The High Oracle of Khaine will take what she desires, and any who dare to stand in her way will feel the full force of her fury.





ACT I

# BLOOD OF KHAINE

# VARANTHAX'S MAW

**Once, the enormous forge-complex of Varanthax's Maw was populated by nothing more than rabid, Chaos-warped monstrosities and scattered warbands seeking fortune and glory. Since the discovery of varanite surging up from below, however, it has been fortified and turned into a centre of dark industry.**

## INFERNAL FORGE

The skeleton of long-dead Varanthax lies slumped across the mountains of the Skullpikes. None know how or when the drake was slain, nor who first began construction upon the great forge-complex that lies beneath its yellowed bones. Ever since Archaon the Everchosen conquered the Eightpoints centuries ago, countless ambitious warlords have claimed dominion over the Maw, but none have managed to hold it for long. As soon as Archaon was made aware of the rich seams of varanite to be found bubbling up from below the forge, he swiftly dispatched his legions to secure it and granted control of the extraction process to the Eater of Tomes, one of his infamous Gaunt Summoners.

## RAPID EXPANSION

Under the cruel eye of the Eater of Tomes, the expansion and infernal industrialisation of the Maw has been rapid. The complex echoes to the sound of hissing metal and agonised screams, as thousands upon thousands of slaves are worked to death in the process of extracting and channelling varanite into the upper forge-floors. Here can be found the Gaunt Summoner's own quarters: twisted laboratories and binding-chambers in which the Eater of Tomes conducts vile experiments in an attempt to further unlock the potential of molten realmstone.



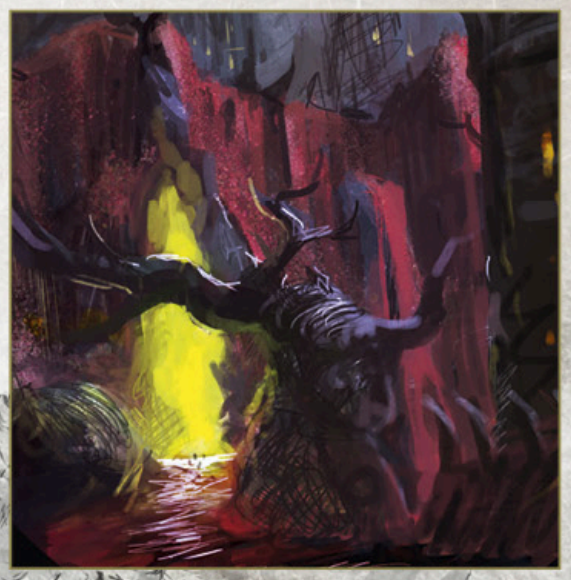



*VARANITE MINES*

*Swathes of the Maw's subterranean complex have been transformed into centres of infernal industry, with titanic bore-wyrms slurping up torrents of raw varanite.*

### *THE GENESIS GATE*

*The great Arcway leading to the Realm of Life was sealed by Alarielle during the last acts of the Realmgate Wars. Nonetheless, Archaon demanded that the Genesis Gate was heavily secured by rings of Dreadholds, and kept under constant guard.*








### *DREADHOLD XHAVRUK*

*The great fortress of Xhavruk guards the mouth of the Maw, casting its hellish gaze across the valleys of the Skullpike Mountains.*

# MOLTEN BLOOD

**In the mountains of the Bloodwind Spoil, one of the most savage regions of the Eightpoints, lies the infernal forge of Varanthax's Maw. Rich veins of the molten realmstone known as varanite have been discovered deep beneath this sulphur-spewing complex, drawing not only the eyes of Archaon but also those of his enemies.**

Varanite. The mere mention of the word is enough to inspire a fiery avarice in alchemists, weaponsmiths and Chaos worshippers across the Eight Realms. There is no material more desperately sought by the followers of the Dark Gods, for they believe – with some reason – that it is the essence of their deities. It is anarchy in molten form; able to rapidly mutate anything it touches into shapes more pleasing to the Ruinous Powers. With but a drop of varanite, a wall of blank stone can be morphed into a canvas of screaming mouths, or a luckless captive transformed into a gibbering, formless mass of eyes and acid-dripping fangs. These are no more than crude applications, however. In the hands of a being with the vision of Archaon the Everchosen, varanite is a catalyst for disaster.

For centuries, Archaon's most powerful arcane experts, the Gaunt Summoners, focused their daemonic intellects towards unlocking the secrets of varanite. Foremost in their minds was its potential to imbue supposedly incorruptible materials with the touch of Chaos – perhaps even the structural foundations of a realmgate. Such power might open paths long closed to the Everchosen.

The Eightpoints is connected to each of the Mortal Realms – including Azyr, the God-King's untouched domain – by enormous portals known as the Arcways. When Sigmar retreated to the Realm of Heavens as the Age of Myth drew to a bloody end, he sealed the Gates of Azyr, isolating this last haven against the ravages of the Dark Gods. This included the Arcway connected to Azyr – the Meteoric Gate. Determined to tear open a direct route to the Celestial Realm, Archaon bent every aspect of the Varanspire's formidable industrial might to the excavation of varanite. Yet the molten realmstone was frustratingly rare and extremely dangerous to extract – a stream of the stuff could transform the very rock around it into a grinding maw of razor-sharp fangs, which would devour entire work crews whole.

It was only upon the discovery of an enormous varanite deposit in the caverns of Varanthax's Maw – a forge-complex built into the skeleton of a long-dead drake – that the Gaunt Summoners at last had access to a quantity of molten realmstone that would suit their ends. At Archaon's command, they moved swiftly to secure it. Three gigantic bore-wyrms were bound into frames of black iron, forming living drilling rigs that chewed their way hungrily into the depths of the Maw. The daemonic behemoths devoured a path to the precious varanite, their plunging probosces eagerly slurping up the molten realmstone. Drawn towards the surface through their cavernous gullets, it was extracted and processed in the Maw's upper forgefloors by thousands of thrall-smiths.

Thus collected, the varanite was blended and tempered in a series of gruesome sacrificial rituals, before being transported to the distant Azyrite Arcway inside bloated daemon-crawlers, guarded all the way by immense columns of ironclad infantry. Under the watchful direction of the Gaunt Summoners, the gleaming, faultless pillars and soaring arches of the Meteoric Gate were encased in red-hot varanite, the bubbling infernal metal poured across every shimmering wardstone and Sigmarite sigil. Just as rot creeps into even the sturdiest foundations given opportunity, so did the mutative power of the varanite begin to seep into the hitherto uncorrupted stonework.

It was neither a swift nor simple process. Aeons old were the protective enchantments woven into the Arcways, and the quantities of varanite that Archaon demanded were not easy to mine. Yet hour by hour, day by day, the great work gathered pace.

## A GROWING THREAT

Long had Sigmar sought to embed his agents into the Eightpoints, to gain first-hand information upon the Everchosen's plans. Unfortunately, the wilds surrounding the Varanspire proved anathema to creatures of reason and order; so corrupted and deadly were they that to venture within was an almost certain death sentence, even for his most accomplished champions. Individual bands of Vanguard-Hunters and agents of the Sacrosanct Chambers had breached the Arcways in the past, in pursuit of clandestine goals. Yet the rate of loss amongst these parties was severe, and for all the Stormcast Eternals' fearsome martial skills, they were ill suited to spycraft – the mere sight of one such warrior was sure to summon hordes of hate-



filled marauders eager to spill the blood of the lightning warriors. Morathi's agents were a subtler breed. Experts in stealth and subterfuge, the High Oracle's people found it far easier to penetrate behind Archaon's lines – none more so than the Shadowstalkers, her elite assassins. Chosen from amongst all strata of the Daughters of Khaine's warlike society, these warriors had been granted the mircath, or shademark, a blessing of shadow bestowed by Morathi herself. This sorcerous gift allowed them to breach the Everchosen's wards and slip past his ironclad legions.

It was such a band that brought word to Morathi of the work underway to corrupt the Meteoric Gate using varanite, and the furious industrialisation of Varanthax's Maw to extract more of the realmstone. This news the High Oracle of Khaine received with great interest. Intrigued by the substance's seemingly unlimited potential, Morathi had already declared varanite to be the 'Blood of Khaine', a physical remnant of the dead god. It was of the utmost importance, she told her flock, that the Daughters of Khaine reclaimed this holy substance from the hands of the unworthy.

Formidable as the warrior-priestesses of the Bloody-Handed God were, they could not hope to assault the Eightpoints alone. And so Morathi sought audience with an old ally of convenience – the God-King Sigmar. Travelling to the palace-city of Sigmaron alongside a retinue of her most trusted disciples, Morathi employed her masterful expertise at statecraft to forge a common cause with Sigmar. Never had the Lord of the Heavens held much trust in the High Oracle, for Teclis and Tyrion both had warned him of her duplicitous nature. Yet neither could he ignore the warning she had delivered. If Archaon was truly on the verge of forcing open the Azyrite Arcway, then all the gains the God-King's faithful had made were suddenly in terrible peril.

# MORATHI

**Self-proclaimed High Oracle of Khaine and matriarch of a realm-spanning warrior cult, Morathi is a being of boundless cunning and fearsome arcane power. In her long existence the High Oracle has taken on many roles, but now she seeks to rise further than ever before – she desires nothing less than godhood.**

There are few beings in existence as skilled in the magical arts as Morathi, the High Oracle of Khaine. A manipulator and schemer without peer, she has manoeuvred herself into position as one of the foremost powers in the realms, yet even this is not enough to sate her vaulting ambition. Always, Morathi seeks to claim the godhood she believes is rightfully hers, and she will sacrifice as many souls as it takes to achieve that end.

Ancient even by the standards of the aelven race, Morathi has witnessed the death of a world and the fall of more kingdoms and petty empires than she can remember. Amongst mortals, she is unrivalled in her mastery of shadow magic, able to summon formless horrors from the umbral realm to savage her foes, or to blast them with life-sapping bolts of darkness. Indeed, using spellcraft she has woven a fitting form for her position as High Oracle – a regal and stunningly beautiful aelf priestess, framed by bladed wings of gleaming shadow-metal. Such is the supernatural grace of the High Oracle that her enemies are often struck dumb in her presence. Mesmerised by this striking allure and unable to raise up arms against her, they are rendered easy targets for her spear, Heartrender.

This queenly vision is the image Morathi presents to the wider world, but when she is threatened or angered beyond reason, she reverts to a far darker aspect. In her true form, Morathi is a towering, serpentine monstrosity with enormous bat-wings and a mane of venomous serpents. Gone is the regal splendour of the High Oracle, replaced with a furious, animal savagery – a bloodlust that is only sated when every one of her foes lies broken and torn before her. As the Shadow Queen, she can pulverise stone walls with her lashing coils, or thrust Heartrender through the hell-forged armour of a Bloodthirster. So potent is her hatred and so bitter her fury that those who meet her blazing gaze must possess a will of iron, lest their blood boil in their veins and they burst in a splatter of gore.

Throughout her impossibly long life, Morathi has walked many paths and has mastered a variety of disciplines. She is a cunning diplomat and fearsome warrior, a devious ruler, speaker to daemons and mother to a tyrannical god. She is as fluid and changeable as the shadows of the realm she calls home. In her current guise, she holds perhaps more power than she ever has, yet still her ultimate goal lies just out of reach.

Morathi claims to be the only being to interpret the will of Khaine the Bloody-Handed, the aelven god of murder, and has used this supposed divine connection to assume rulership over a society of warrior zealots collectively known as the Daughters of Khaine. These fanatical aelves serve their High Oracle without question, shedding blood and proselytising in her name in the belief that she will one day bring about the return of their absent god.

In truth, however, the Daughters have all been deceived. Khaine is long dead, and his memory is now no more than a tool employed by Morathi to maintain control over her too-trusting flock. The hot-blooded deity worshipped by her people will never rise again. All that remains of him is contained within the Iron Heart; an artefact of unfathomable power now possessed by Morathi and exploited for her own ends.

It is a delicate game that Morathi plays. If the Khainite masses were to discover the scale of her duplicity, they would surely seek their High Oracle's destruction. Yet such is the master sorceress's skill at manipulation and distraction, coupled with her utter ruthlessness in silencing doubters and dissenters, that her people remain ignorant of her lies. Indeed, after centuries of careful scheming, she is so close to her goal that she can taste it.

## ASCENSION

Ever since the day she escaped from the belly of Slaanesh – where she had languished in torment after the death of the World-that-Was – Morathi had determined to wreak terrible revenge on all who had wronged her. First to pay would be the Dark Prince, who had caused her so much pain and trauma. Then she would even the score with the aelven gods – including her son, Malerion, whose callous dismissal of her had stung most of all. Their scorn and mistrust had cut Morathi to the bone, for they considered her corrupted beyond hope by her experiences, and shunned her accordingly.



Yet despite their open contempt, it was Morathi's expertise the aelven gods had called upon when they sought to capture Slaanesh. The twin-gods of the Realm of Light, Tyrion and Teclis, were incapable of admitting it, but all their ambitious schemes would have come to naught without Morathi's intimate knowledge of the Dark Prince's weaknesses, and her potent sorcery.

As soon as Slaanesh had been chained and bound, Morathi enacted the first stages of her grand plan for ascension. The souls granted to her, with grudging reluctance, by the aelven gods were carefully reshaped by the High Oracle to suit her own designs. At the same time, unbeknownst to her would-be allies, Morathi began to surreptitiously draw forth a stream of souls from the Dark Prince's recumbent form, using her mastery of illusion to cover the theft. Thus did she swell the numbers of her faithful followers, most notably the mysterious Scáthborn – beings woven from a blend of her own blood and pure shadow magic, who were utterly loyal to their mistress.

For many centuries Morathi bided her time, waiting for the perfect moment to stage her grab for power. The devastation of the Soul Wars offered her that chance. With an army at her back and her greatest rivals distracted and weakened by the colossal changes wrought upon the realms by the calamity emanating from Shyish, there would be no better opportunity to seize the power so long denied her.

The attainment of godhood would free Morathi from the need to bow and scrape before anyone. No longer would she grit her teeth and suffer the arrogant disregard of Teclis and Tyrion, nor the boorish bluster of the God-King. Nagash, too, would be forced to pay for his insults and provocations. Morathi would preside over an empire of shadow and blood that would put her son Malerion's petty dominion to shame.

But before she could claim her due, Morathi would have to play out one last grand charade – a deception that would test even her well-honed skills of intrigue and obfuscation.

# WAR CLOUDS GATHER

**The Eightpoints is one of the most hostile environments imaginable, a land entirely wreathed in the sulphurous glow of Chaos, populated by tribes of bloodthirsty marauders and nightmarish creatures. To make war in such a place would require an army like no other.**

The God-King's war council convened swiftly in the wake of Morathi's revelations. Morathi and her foremost Hag Queens attended it – all of them scarred veterans of the Cathtrar Dhule, the long and bloody shadow war against the Slaaneshi warhosts that had raged across Ulgu for centuries. Neither Khainite nor Stormcast champion questioned that Archaon's attempts to break open the sealed Arcways heralded disaster for all, but how they should respond was less clear. According to the Shadowstalkers operating in the Eightpoints, Archaon was waging war upon the holdings of the Ossiarch Empire, in revenge for their own intrusion into his lands. The Everchosen's absence gave the armies of Order a golden opportunity to strike a fatal blow.

On one point, all present readily agreed: the armies of Order were too thinly stretched to wage an extended campaign in the Eightpoints. Such an offensive at the heart of Archaon's empire would demand a colossal price in lives and resources. Even with the Stormcast Eternals fighting at the side of the Daughters of Khaine – and it was hard to conceive of a more potent battle force – the armies of Order would be hugely outnumbered by the Chaos worshippers, who would be emboldened defending their own territory. With the free cities ever vulnerable and the continuing aggression of Nagashizzar, there could be no hope of winning a war of attrition.

Sigmar was no fool. He was loath to commit his forces to a hopeless cause. Yet Morathi spoke as eloquently as ever, allaying his concerns with reasoned arguments. Her agents in the Varanspire were already laying the groundwork for an overwhelming strike of the kind at which his warriors excelled. They need not destroy Varanthax's Maw, she claimed, nor wage an extended war in enemy territory. They must simply obliterate the threat at its source, by disposing of the varanite that was critical to Archaon's plot. The sheer size of the vein discovered beneath Varanthax's Maw was unheard of. Deny the Everchosen access to this resource, and it would delay or perhaps even put a definitive end to his attempts to force open a path to Azyr and any other realm he sought to conquer.

Morathi put forth to the God-King a bold plan. The majority of their joint force would strike through the mountainous valleys that surrounded the Maw, laying siege to the forge and drawing the attention of its defenders. At the same time, a second, smaller

## VARANITE, THE MOLTEN REALMSTONE

Just as each of the Mortal Realms has its own unique form of realmstone, so too does the Eightpoints. Varanite is a magical material suffused with the energies of Chaos that, in its natural state, resembles boiling gore. Varanite veins run in gushing channels below the crust of the Eightpoints, fed by the cascades of Chaos energy that spill from the portal to the Realm of Chaos above the Varanspire. To dip a single finger into the stuff is to find one's body overcome by mutation. When solidified through a hazardous process of extraction and sorcerous purification, varanite can be forged into weapons of unspeakable power that do not merely carve open flesh, but also flood it with corruption. Even a slight wound will begin to reshape itself into horrific configurations; there are tales of weapons that cause razor-toothed mouths to sprout within the flesh of their victims and devour their host alive. The substance is so difficult and dangerous to mine that even the Everchosen's armies field few such blades, but each is the equal of a hundred lesser weapons.



***Taras Nightscour was about to haul open the hatch when he paused, frowning. The screams had stopped. That was strange. It was most unlike Excruciator Yhorin to allow his subject respite. Hand on the kraken-pearl hilt of his cutlass, the Scourge Fleetmaster eased the hatch open. He had barely set a foot inside when he felt the cold caress of a blade sliding under his chin.***

*There were a half-dozen of them. Their skin was a sickly grey beneath their hooded cloaks, like that of an abyssal ray, and the shadows seeming to wrap about them like the coils of some spectral serpent. Yhorin was slumped against the far wall, a red smile carved into his throat. Splayed out on the interrogation table was the deep-aelf priest – eyes wide open and milky white, body bleached and withered by the blinding beams that stabbed down from a trio of aetherquartz crystals embedded in the ceiling. The deep-aelves did not care for the light.*

*'Your methods are crude,' came a soft, deadly voice. 'Corpses are of no use to us.'*

*'You may wish to remind yourselves of that,' said Nightscour, tapping the dagger at his neck with one slender finger. 'And that one's still alive. These Idoneth are a tough breed, but he talked in the end. Like they all do. Yhorin was a rare artist. I'll expect adequate recompense for his death.'*

*The dagger pressed a little deeper. Blood trickled down his shirt.*

*'Easy now,' he said, a cold smile on his lips. 'Your mistress would mourn my passing, I think. Not least because I have found what she seeks.'*

*The blade lowered, just a fraction.*

*'I will speak to the High Oracle personally,' he said. 'I know where she will find the Ocarian Lantern.'*

force, led by the High Oracle herself, would breach the lower levels of the complex through paths mapped out by her Shadowstalkers. This gathering would travel to the varanite's source, a searing wound in the deep earth filled with the realmstone. With her own sorcery and the aid of the God-King's arcane experts, Morathi would tear open a portal to the Aetheric Void – the great nothingness between the realmspheres – into which the varanite would drain away, never to be recovered.

Though the God-King recognised the value of Morathi's plan, he was not swift to assent to it. He did not display the same undisguised disdain for Morathi as did the aelven gods, but neither did he care for the secretive High Oracle. Always she sought to manipulate, to give with one hand and take twice as much with the other. Though he himself had developed an aptitude for such diplomatic games, Sigmar saw little to admire in it, and less to trust. Yet allies were a rare commodity in those days, and could not be carelessly dismissed. Relations with the gods Teclis and Tyrion had long been strained by misunderstanding and misadventure, and Alarielle was still embroiled in her eternal struggle against the Plague God's legions.

While the specifics of Morathi's plan were debated and examined with rigorous exactitude, summonses were dispatched to all Stormhosts that could spare troops for the invasion. Both the High Oracle and the God-King knew that there could be no half-measures in a battle with such desperate ramifications. The Hammers of Sigmar – first amongst Stormhosts – would send a detachment from their veteran Warrior Chambers, as would the paladins of the Hallowed Knights and a dozen less-celebrated companies, including the Sons of Mallus, the Azure Guard and the Knights of the Aurora. Morathi herself requested the aid of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer, the morose sentinels of Shyish, with whom she had fought closely during the Athanasian Heresies some hundred years prior. The Anvils' resolute shieldwalls had proved most effective against daemon and heretic alike, when deployed in concert with Morathi's dreaded War Covens. Much of the Anvils' military power was abroad, battling gheist-storms unleashed by the Great Necromancer. Still, the Black Nexus – Stormkeep of their ward city Anvilgard – dispatched what forces it could, even though it left the city worryingly short of defenders.

Elements of the six foremost Khainite sects would join Morathi's contingent. Yet perhaps the greatest gifts that the High Oracle could offer were intelligence and forewarning; Morathi's 'most trusted' agents were already in the Eightpoints, laying the groundwork for the coming battles. From the gore-soaked plains of the Bloodwind Spoil to the sweltering depths of the Maw itself, the Shadowstalkers were abroad. Marked by the High Oracle with the dark brand of Ulgu, these shrouded killers embedded themselves deep within the Everchosen's fortified lands like mindscourer parasites, awaiting the word from their mistress to rise up and begin a campaign of murder, sabotage and misdirection that would open the way for invasion. Yet it was not only within the Eightpoints that the Shadowstalkers were abroad, fulfilling their High Oracle's will.



# ABYSSAL HEIST

**While stormclouds gathered above Varanthax's Maw, elsewhere in the realms Morathi's schemes were coming to fruition – on a far smaller but no less momentous scale. In the darkest depths of the Maithnar Sea, agents of Khaine's High Oracle were closing in on a long-sought prize.**

Many artefacts of great power had lain forgotten in the deep places of the Mortal Realms, dormant until such time as they were stumbled upon by avaricious treasure-seekers or disturbed by the thunderous clash of armies. One such relic – considered lost for centuries beyond counting – was the Ocarian Lantern. The name hardly did justice to this treasure of Hyshian origin. Within this shell of translucent aetherquartz whirled a constellation of glittering sun-motes, each a fragment of blinding radiance plucked from the tapestry of Hysh by Teclis, Lord of Illumination. It was this wondrous creation that the god first used to draw forth tortured aelf-souls from the belly of Slaanesh. Such was the divine power of the Lantern that it attracted the disembodied spirits like moths to a flame. With it, Teclis gave life to the beings known as the Cythai, the first aelves to be remade using the souls freed from the Dark Prince.

Yet for all the Ocarian Lantern's power, and the formidable arcane skill of Teclis, his attempts to restore the primacy of the aelven race would culminate in tragedy. Tormented and twisted by suppressed memories of their suffering within the stomach of the Dark Prince, there was a fell aspect to the Cythai, a bitter madness that could not be calmed. It grew to repulse Teclis. He became convinced that they were an aberration that must be destroyed, a mistake to be ruthlessly rectified.

The Cythai wisely chose to flee their creator. Yet first they planned to steal away the Ocarian Lantern, for they were sorely afraid that Teclis could use its illuminating power to seek them out wherever they hid. Many Cythai sacrificed their lives to breach Teclis' arcane wards and defeat the radiant guardians that stood watch over his inner sanctums. Though it pained them to even set foot in the same sun-bright chamber as the Lantern, they stole it from its diamond plinth and retreated into the darkness of the realmseas.

The Cythai made a new home in the depths, becoming so attuned to the haunting isolation of the deep oceans that in time they learned to wield its obfuscating power as a weapon. The Ocarian Lantern they secured within the Sarr Danoi, a plunging trench at the bottom of the Maithnar Sea in the Realm of Life. So impenetrable was this abyss that some believed it bled into the Aetheric Void itself, that featureless expanse of nothingness that lay between the realms. Even the Lantern's light could not break free of the Sarr Danoi's smothering embrace. Moreover, the artefact was protected by colossal monsters of the deep corralled by the Cythai to watch over it. Thus did the first aelves believe their secret buried forever.

They could not have foreseen the determination and skill of Morathi's elite agents.



### KHAINITE SHADOWSTALKERS

Drawn from every rank of the Khainite Cult, each of their number selected personally by the High Oracle herself, the Shadowstalkers are Morathi's silent blades, her trusted assassins and saboteurs. Each of them has been granted the mircath – the 'shademark' – a brand woven from Ulguan sorcery that grants them command of the shadows themselves, allowing them to wield the night as a weapon against the High Oracle's foes. More than this, it allows them to travel the Umbral Web, an intricate pattern of shadow magic that connects each of the Eight Realms, and in doing so slip past almost any barrier, be it physical or magical. Such power does not come without cost, of course. In the process of travelling these dark paths Shadowstalkers hasten their own demise, becoming more pallid and wraith-like with every fresh journey. Thus, although ascension to the ranks of the Shadowstalkers is sold as a great honour, it also offers Morathi a useful way to dispose of those Khainites she considers a potential threat.



## INTO THE DEPTHS

Word of the Lantern's location had been brought to the Shadowstalkers by Scourge Privateers under the command of Fleetmaster Taras Nightscour, an old ally of Morathi. His reaver-ships had roamed the realmseas for decades at the High Oracle's request, pursuing mariners' tales of blazing lights in the deep ocean, of shadowy aelves that appeared from a pall of briny mist to steal away the souls of fisherfolk. Eventually, their voyage had led them to the Maithnar Sea in Ghyran, where Nightscour's Black Ark had clashed with Idoneth of the Ionrach enclave. In the ensuing battle, the Scourge had managed to capture one of the deep aelves' strange priests. Subjected to the Scourge's most ingenious cruelties, this luckless Soulscryer had finally revealed the location of the fabled Ocarian Lantern.

Morathi was exultant. She had sought the artefact for centuries, and now it was within her grasp – its capture would be critical to everything that she desired to achieve. Yet retrieving it from the depths of the Sarr Danoi would be no simple task. Only her Shadowstalkers could hope to pierce the crushing and all-encompassing darkness of the deep ocean, and snatch the Lantern from the hands of its unknowable guardians.

Where there is darkness, there is shadow; where the light of Hysh cannot touch, there can be found the twisted roots of the Umbral Web – an arcane network that winds throughout the realms. Only beings fully immersed in the magic of Ulgu can pass along its insubstantial tunnels. Even then, prolonged exposure to such concentrated shadow magic wears at the traveller's soul, in time transforming them into formless wraiths. Yet as their High Oracle demanded, a strike force of Shadowstalkers slipped into the smoky blackness of the Web, plunging into the deepest trenches of the Maithnar Sea.

Enchantments woven by Morathi granted her Shadowstalkers the ability to survive within the hostile depths long enough to reach the Sarr Danoi and complete their mission. At the chasm's nadir, guarded by eyeless sea-wyrms and phosphorescent scyphopods, they came across an eerily glowing temple of cyclopean proportions that spilled a faint sliver of golden radiance into the surrounding blackness. Three score of Morathi's deadliest blades entered that forgotten, silent shrine. Only a single warrior re-emerged. Blind and half mad, clutching the Ocarian Lantern in blistered hands, this solitary Shroud Queen disappeared into the depths of the Umbral Web…



# WRATH OF AZYR

**With the fate of Azyr itself at stake, the armies of Sigmar and Morathi poured into the Eightpoints, hoping to strike with such clarity and swiftness that they could send the Everchosen's plans into disarray before the full might of the Chaos hosts could be raised against them.**

Archaon's domain could not be reached upon the celestial currents that typically carried the Stormcast Eternals to war. Chaos energy seeped from the portal above the Varanspire – the Everchosen's dread fortress – whipping the skies into a churning maelstrom of sorcery and fire, a burning shield that even Sigmar's Tempest could not breach. Any Stormhost sent forth into this catastrophe upon an arc of heavenly lightning would most likely find itself dragged into the nightmarish Realm of Chaos and subjected to unimaginable torment for the amusement of the Dark Gods. The Arcways offered entry into the Eightpoints, of course, but many were still in the clutches of Chaos. Only the Genesis Gate – the Arcway of Ghyran, closed by the combined forces of Sigmar and Alarielle the Everqueen during the tumultuous final battles of the Realmgate Wars – was situated close enough to Varanthax's Maw to be strategically viable.

The Everqueen was reluctant to open a pathway from her heartlands to the domain of Archaon, and at first refused Sigmar's requests to allow his armies passage. Only Morathi's eloquent pleas softened her resolve – the Khainite temples had been amongst her staunchest allies against the outrages of the Plague God. Morathi spoke of the horrors that would be inflicted upon all the civilised races, were Archaon able to tear open the sealed Arcways. For all their differences, they were both guardians of the aelven peoples, and if Tyrion and Teclis would not stir from their self-absorbed isolation, it was they who must take a stand. These earnestly spoken words at last swayed Alarielle. She would spare none of her own children to join the assault, for the borders of the Jade Kingdoms were still hard-pressed by Nurgle's legions, but agreed that the Khainite-Sigmarite host could pass.

Archaon had fortified his own side of the Arcway with a host of brass-spiked fortresses, watchtowers and row upon row of trenches filled with vicious stakes and bubbling pools of acid. The Chaos Warriors that garrisoned these formidable defences were scarred and oathsworn veterans who had spilled the blood of many a Sigmarite during their master's dark crusades. They grasped the hafts of ensorcelled axes and blades, ready to repel whatever army charged out of the wan light of the Arcway. But no such force emerged. Surging forth from the Ghyran Arcway came a shimmering wall of crystal-clear water, so high that it crashed across the ramparts of the dreadforts, smashing into the ranks of defenders with bone-crushing force. Hundreds were swept up by the deadly flood, flailing helplessly as they were dragged under by the relentless tide, ice-cold water filling their lungs.



Alarielle had weaponised the gushing waterfalls of the Genesis Gate, channelling them into a single roaring cascade that she hurled through the Arcway. The tsunami swept out to clear the lands surrounding the mouth of the Genesis Gate in the Eightpoints, swallowing vast swathes of land. Where the enchanted waters soaked into the pitted earth, verdant life blossomed and surged; coils of barbed vines lashed out to ensnare packs of heathen footsoldiers and tear them to bloody shreds. Ancient, weathered roots burst from the ground, tearing great breaches in cursed stone.

Emerging from the Arcway in a corona of lightning came the Stormcast Eternals. The Hammers of Sigmar, resplendent in gleaming gold, claimed the honour of the first charge. Led by the uncompromising Lord-Celestant Andrus Nihilat, these shining knights stormed the battered dreadforts, warhammers crackling with furious energy as they swept out to crush skulls and shatter ribcages. With a chorus of piercing battle-cries, the Daughters of Khaine joined the slaughter. Dagger-wielding Witch Aelves leapt over the Stormcast shieldwall to land amidst their prey, their cruel daggers opening throats and puncturing hearts. They shrieked their praises to bloody-handed Khaine as hot gore drenched their pallid flesh. Though the Slaves to Darkness fought with their customary ferocity, the battle for the Genesis Gate was soon decided by the sheer weight of allied numbers.

Eight Stormhosts assailed the Eightpoints, with a combined strength of over forty crusade chambers. Such a force had rarely been witnessed since the days of the Realmgate Wars. When joined with the might of six Khainite temples, it seemed unstoppable. Not a single defender of the Ghyran Arcway escaped alive. Those that tried to flee from the slaughter fell to the wicked javelins of Khinerai Heartrenders. There was, however, no time to celebrate. With every moment of delay, the enemy had the chance to regroup and strike anew.

## ARMY OF THE HEAVENS

As they reformed into marching columns, the Stormcast Eternals observed the gruesome post-battle rituals enacted by the Daughters of Khaine with disgust. Though he respected their formidable fighting skills, the bellicose Lord-Celestant Nihilat bristled at having to fight alongside such barbarous allies. His opposite – the Melusai Ironscale Vatheira Seris – seemed to take delight in causing as much pain to her defeated foes as possible. As far as the Lord-Celestant was concerned, such sadistic practices were the mark of savage and untrustworthy beings. Hearts were torn out of captured prisoners while they were still alive, their gory contents emptied into the Khainites' bubbling Blood Cauldrons.

Processions of these iron-shod, mobile death-shrines were already rolling through the Ghyran Arcway, guarded by snake-bodied Melusai. Morathi herself entered atop the largest such altar, resplendent in her robes of office, raising Heartrender aloft, to the cheers of her war-hungry flock. At her side came the Zainthar Kai – ancient and formidable Melusai warriors who carried in their veins the cursed blood of Khaine. The Cauldrons would be a vital component in the ritual that would destroy the varanite beneath Varanthax's Maw, according to the High Oracle. When brimming with the blood of slain foes, they would empower Morathi's already formidable magic.

Having stressed the need for her strike force to be small and fast-moving, the High Oracle was joined by a contingent from the Dolorites, one of the foremost Sacrosanct Chambers of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer. Led by Lord-Arcanum Vennerdreizh, they were to keep a close eye on the High Oracle, for the God-King was not entirely swayed by her promises of common cause. A rearguard consisting of Hallowed Knights and warriors of the Ghyran Guard remained behind to dig in and defend the Genesis Gate, for it would be the invasion host's only route out of the Eightpoints. The rest of the army made with utmost haste for the Skullpike Mountains, and the winding valleys that led to the entrance of Varanthax's Maw.

Their passing did not go unnoticed. From a distant hilltop overlooking the Ghyran Arcway, Glavia Sinheart watched the columns of Stormcast warriors and their Khainite allies filter out across the flooded plains, moving with swift and certain purpose. *A serpent of blood and gold, winding its way into the heart of darkness.* The Slaaneshi Herald smiled, exposing a row of perfect, glistening teeth. It was just as the daemon had seen it in their dreams.

With a flick of their wrists, the Herald's barbed whips lashed out to gouge the hides of their steeds, driving the daemonic beasts forwards. Sinheart's chariot hurtled towards the distant shadow of the Skullpike Mountains, moving with lightning speed, its threshing axle raising a cacophony as the spinning blades screeched and clashed against one another. Sinheart's flesh was afire with blissful anticipation.

### GLAVIA SINHEART, THE EATER OF DREAMS



The entity known as Glavia Sinheart once served as an attendant of the Dark Prince, regaling him with sordid tales of the countless mortals they had lured and corrupted with their siren song. So favoured was the Herald that Slaanesh gifted them with the ability to visit the dreams of their victims, and forever trap such unfortunates in a mental prison of terror, exhilaration and depravity. Yet ever since their beloved master's capture and imprisonment, it is Sinheart who has been visited by visions – dreams that they interpret as prophecies sent by the Dark Prince himself, symbolic clues towards his true location and the path that must be followed in order to free him. Sinheart has travelled the Mortal Realms following these visceral omens, gathering to their side a revelrie of like-minded seers and sensation-seekers who would gladly sacrifice their lives and souls at the Herald's demand.

# DESOLATE MARCH

**The approach to Varanthax's Maw was dominated by stark and imposing plains stretching as far as the eyes could see, constantly lashed by storms of boiling gore and roamed by hordes of savage marauders. It was hellish terrain in which to fight, but the armies of Order were ready for the task.**

The Skullpike Mountains rose above the plains of the Bloodwind Spoil like the fangs of some fallen godbeast. Their jagged, snow-swept peaks reached so high that they disappeared into the lurid clouds that perennially rushed across the Eightpoints, bringing with them storms of crackling witch-fire and scouring downpours of blood. Before them stretched wide and barren plains, scrawled with patches of scrubland, acid-spewing geyser fields and bubbling flesh-swamps within which writhed malformed and shapeless things. To the warbands of the Eightpoints, this region was known as the Desolate March, and the name seemed to Lord-Celestant Nihilat well chosen indeed.

Upon sighting the distant peaks, the Stormcast Eternals and their Khainite allies had divided into three battle groups. The first – commanded by Lord-Celestant Narbus Lightbearer of the Hallowed Knights – was to maintain its position, securing the Genesis Gate against the inevitable Chaos counter-attack. The second, comprised mainly of Ranger veterans from the Vanguard Auxiliary Chambers and infiltration experts from the shadowy Khailebron temple of Khainite zealots, would push ahead of the main advance, clearing outposts and sentry towers, attacking from within the enemy's own territory. Lord-Veritant Keiser Ven Brecht of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer would command the Azyrite contingent, with the Hag Queen Scylleth leading their purple-clad Khainite allies. Ven Brecht replaced Lord-Aquilor Themistoclan, slain during the fighting around the Genesis Gate. It was a mark of the great respect that Lord-Celestant Nihilat had for the grim witchfinder that he trusted Ven Brecht to lead the vanguard, for he knew the Lord-Veritant had vast experience in penetrating enemy territory.

Lord-Celestant Nihilat would claim the most dangerous task and therefore the greatest honour for himself – namely, the overground assault upon Varanthax's Maw. His warriors would be joined by the Melusai Ironscale Vatheira Seris and her Hagg Nar and Zainthar Kai elite. The long journey across the Desolate March would be both bloody and costly in lives, Nihilat knew, but that was why he was the best choice to lead it; his uncompromising nature was legendary amongst his Stormhost, and he determined to maintain a fearsome pace all the way to the gates of the Maw. Speed would deny the enemy time to regroup and bring their overwhelming force to bear.

The distance from the Genesis Gate to the Skullpike Mountains was great, and there was little that could be done to conceal such a mighty host abroad in enemy territory. Morathi had prepared for this, of course. Even as she was attending the war councils of Sigmaron, her agents had visited the court of no less a being than Orpheon Katakros, Mortarch of the Necropolis. Katakros himself had established



### LORD-VERITANT KEISER VEN BRECHT

A grim and uncompromising man who speaks little but sees much, Lord-Veritant Keiser Ven Brecht is perfectly suited to his role as a hunter of daemon worshippers and those secretive death-cults that revere the Great Necromancer. Descended from an ancient Athanasian bloodline of great renown, upon his Reforging the Lord-Veritant discovered that his descendants had fallen into depravity and barbarism. They had willingly embraced the Soulblight curse in order to survive the ravages of the Age of Chaos, and now plagued the underworlds of Shyish as vampiric warlords. Ven Brecht swore an oath to seek out and destroy every last remnant of his dynasty – a task he carried out with the same implacable resolve that marks his every action. More recently, Ven Brecht was assigned to investigate rumours of corruption and heathen activity in the Anvils' ward city of Anvilgard – he has left a trail of bodies in his wake, but the necessities of war have thus far impeded his progress.

the fortress stronghold known as the Arx Terminus around the Endgate, Arcway of Shyish, the first territory anyone had seized in the Everchosen's realm. The High Oracle of Khaine was able – by delivering an enormous tithe of shadow-infused bones taken from the corpse-filled vales of Ulgu – to forge a delicate pact with the Mortarch and his master, Nagash. While the Khainite-Sigmarite host struck at the Maw, the Mortis Praetorians – foremost legion of the Ossiarchs – would launch their own offensive towards the Varanspire itself. Thus, the enemy's forces would be occupied on two fronts. For his part, Katakros was only too happy to help destroy Archaon's varanite mining operations. If the God-King's armies suffered grievously in the attempt, so much the better.

Judiciously, Sigmar was not informed of this arrangement, for he would have accepted no ceasefire with the armies of Nagashizzar. Instead, Morathi had brought word of the Mortarch's fresh assault as a fortunate happenstance, to be quickly taken advantage of.

## A HATEFUL LAND

Divided though the forces of the Dark Gods might have been, they were still multitudinous, even in a region as inimical to life as the Desolate March. Wading across mires of bubbling flesh and slogging through magic-blasted wastelands, Lord-Celestant Nihilat and his warriors were assailed at every step by screaming throngs of Chaos worshippers, frothing at the mouth to spill the lightning blood of their hated nemeses. Pus-dripping cannibal reavers crept from hidden caves to hurl themselves at passing Liberators, stabbing at eye sockets and gorgets with filth-smeared daggers. Yellow-eyed beastmen swept down from the lowland bluffs, rank bodies matted with blood and eyes wild with hatred. Chaos Furies swirled above the advancing ranks of the Stormcasts, hurling curses and missiles, before swooping off to spread word of Nihilat's advance.

Battle followed skirmish, and ambush followed desperate rearguard action. At Soulfire Fields, a charge of Dracoth-riding cavalry broke through the stubborn defence of a company of Blessed Sons, driving the bloated champions of Nurgle into the acidic mists spewed by a cluster of sulphurous geysers. The Firemanes Chamber of the Lions of Sigmar was all but decimated while defending Goreslake Pass against a howling tide of Bloodbound that threatened to drive into the flank of Nihilat's column. The Lions' sacrifice bought time for Morathi's elite, the Zainthar Kai, to encircle and destroy the rampaging brutes.

For each scarred and mutilated figure dropped by a crackling lightning-arrow or a javelin hurled with pinpoint accuracy from a circling Khinerai warrior, ten more seemed to churn out of the mountains. The Hammers of Sigmar and their allies left a trail of broken corpses in their wake as they pushed onwards without respite, shields high and warhammers slick with gore. These were souls who had seen every form of war imaginable, who had fought and killed and died on more battlefields than they could recall. And yet, none of them had ever experienced such a hostile environment as the Eightpoints. Many a warrior was claimed by the land itself; dragged down into pits of grinding, churning teeth that appeared without warning in the charred earth, skewered and sapped of their lifeblood by crystalline, predatory trees, or dissolved entirely by a sudden downpour of black vitriol.

Still, Nihilat's pace did not relent. As endless as the heathens' numbers appeared, the enemy failed to coordinate their attacks into a decisive killing blow. Instead, they struck as an ebbing and flowing tide that was seen off again and again, though each time at bloody cost. Try as they might, the worshippers of ruin could not shatter the Stormcast shieldline, nor withstand the ferocity of the Daughters of Khaine. Ven Brecht and the Vanguard Auxiliary Chambers, working in concert with the illusory masters of the Khailebron, sent scouts to warn of every enemy manoeuvre. Khinerai Heartrenders streaked across the skies on leathery wings, harrying the Chaos forces with a ceaseless rain of javelins, while providing invaluable communication between the two army groups.

After several gruelling days of constant advance, Nihilat and his host had crossed the Desolate March. Before them rose the foothills of the Skullpikes, a warren of canyons and steep climbs that led to the mouth of Varanthax's Maw. The Lord-Celestant's headlong pace had been brutal. Stormcast and aelf alike were battered, bloody and tired, but they were still fuelled by battle-zeal. And yet, even as they gave the order to advance into the twisting canyons of the cursed mountains, towards the bitter glow of the Maw, Nihilat and Ironscale Seris could not help but grow suspicious at the enemy's failure to bring them to a decisive battle. As swift and devastating as their advance had been, surely the heathens had the numbers and will to unite for a telling assault? They had not the luxury of excessive caution, however. Even now the High Oracle and her smaller force would be entering the labyrinthine caverns that stretched deep below Varanthax's Maw. The defenders of the forge must be drawn away from the true threat, no matter the cost.



# SHADOW AND TREACHERY

**While Lord-Celestant Nihilat pressed ever closer to the walls of Varanthax's Maw, Morathi's smaller force plunged into the depths of the immense forge-complex, following paths marked out with painstaking precision by her Shadowstalkers.**

Morathi's odyssey into the subterranean hellscape that lay beneath the surface of the Eightpoints was no less arduous than that of Lord-Celestant Nihilat and his forces. Through treacherous winding tunnels and caverns vast enough to house a city, the High Oracle's army and the arcane warriors of the Dolorites Sacrosanct Chamber marched, past the sizzling shores of acid lakes and across rivers of screaming souls. At every step, the dregs of the Eightpoints assailed them. These underlands were home to multitudes of troglodytic Chaos-worshippers, and malformed beasts that boiled up from fleshy spawning pits, drawn by the scent of fresh meat. No sooner had one slavering pack been driven back into the shadows than another spilled from an adjoining chamber. Many a Stormcast and Khainite was dragged away into the darkness, their agonised screams echoing along the winding tunnels as they were torn apart.

Still, the High Oracle's host pressed on relentlessly, carving a bloody furrow towards the heart of Varanthax's Maw as they followed a winding route marked with umbral glyphs by Khainite Shadowstalkers. Finally, when the air grew blisteringly hot and the scent of smoke and blood caught in their nostrils, they knew their target was close at hand. They had entered at last the lowest depths of the Maw. A fell glow spilled across the obsidian armour of the Lord-Arcanum Vennerdreizh and her Sequitors, reflecting in the cold eyes of their Melusai allies.

Ahead, the ground fell away into a vast, bowl-shaped pit half-filled with a bubbling crimson liquid. Where this substance splashed against the walls of the cavern, it warped and twisted the rock, leaving lurid patterns that were painful to look upon and screaming, half-formed faces in the black stone. This was varanite, raw and unrefined. The bloated, tubular bodies of three gigantic bore-wyrms descended into the simmering pool, each surrounded by a metal cradle of walkways, extractor-engines and fortified towers. The chamber was alive with activity – many hundreds of pale and broken slaves crawled about the mining platforms, whipped mercilessly by masked overseers. The enemy garrison was formidable, consisting of ironclad Chaos Warriors and a horde of thralls and Marauders.

The bore-wyrms pulsated grossly as they slurped up the molten realmstone. Each of the creatures was horribly swollen, for they had drunk deep; clearly, Archaon's forces had almost drained this deposit dry, but they had not yet extracted the precious varanite from the guts of the daemonic wyrms. Surely there would be enough within to suit Morathi's ends – all that remained was to secure it without raising her allies' suspicions.

## PRICELESS BOUNTY

Lord-Arcanum Vennerdreizh and her warriors struck at the fortified walkways extending over the lake of varanite, smiting all who stood against them. As soon as they sensed the presence of enemies within their domain, the cruel taskmasters of the Molten Wound hurled open the gates containing their malformed thralls. Enraged fomoroids came lumbering forward, swinging jagged chunks of masonry that made a mockery of the Sequitors' armour. Horn-helmed savages advanced in the wake of these cyclopic brutes, eager to spill blood in the name of the Everchosen. Crackling lightning filled the cavern as the Stormcasts' spirit-infused weapons struck home. Screaming warriors flailed as they were hurled over iron gantries, toppling into the bubbling varanite below.

With the Sacrosanct Chamber fully engaged, Morathi ordered her Zainthar Kai to her side. Weaving intricate patterns in the air, she called upon the magic of Ulgu, drawing shadows from the aether, and reshaping them to better suit her purpose.

The Dolorites were experts in the arcane arts, wielders of storm magic and warding spells with few peers in all the realms. Yet event they could not see through the illusions conjured by High Oracle, woven with delicate, almost artistic precision from wisps of utter darkness. They saw the roof of the cavern split apart as a fourth bore-wyrm smashed through the igneous rock, sending an avalanche of debris raining down upon them, demolishing one of the walkways and dividing them from their Khainite allies. They saw Morathi's regal face, jaw clenched in concentration as she strove to tear open a portal to the Aetheric Void, and the Zainthar Kai fighting desperately to hold back the foe.



Only Lord-Arcanum Vennerdreizh saw the lie for what it was. Her practised eyes saw the minute imperfections in the scene before her, inconsistencies that only one as perceptive as she could possibly have noticed. She saw the real Zainthar Kai slip away into the shadows, leaving the Anvils to be surrounded on all sides. Battling at the heart of the melee, the truth of this betrayal began to dawn on Vennerdreizh. Yet before she could call out to her fellow Stormcast Eternals and warn them of the deception, she felt a lancing surge of agony. She opened her mouth to cry out in pain, but found she could not make a sound. Her body seized up and she froze on the spot, her skin and armour alike turning to black crystal as the poisoned sliver of shadowstone embedded in her gut did its work. The Lord-Arcanum thought that she glimpsed the pallid skin and cold, dead eyes of an aelf amidst the churn of bodies, before the figure disappeared out of sight.

Vennerdreizh was not dead. She was paralysed, encased in the impervious prison of her transmuted form, unable to speak or scream. Death would have freed her spirit to return to Azyr, but the dagger's curse kept her trapped and helpless, destined to watch the deaths of every one of her outnumbered warriors.

While her erstwhile allies were surrounded and cut down, Morathi bade her sorceresses drive forward the Blood Cauldrons, so that they came to a halt at the centre of the armoured gantry, directly beneath the massive bulk of the bore-wyrms. With swift and precise cuts, Heartrender pierced the hides of the great beasts, and gushing streams of precious varanite spilled forth. The cavern shook as the bore-wyrms screeched and writhed in agony, but their bindings held them fast. Morathi and her Hag Queens bled the creatures like slaughtered livestock, letting the hissing, liquid realmstone contained within their guts stream into the Cauldrons. Though the flow of varanite went on and on, the iron vats did not fill – all were connected through the High Oracle's magic to the Mother Cauldon, the Máthcoir of Hagg Nar. Every drop of varanite that spilled into the Blood Cauldrons was transported to Morathi's stronghold. Soon, the punctured bowels of the daemon-beasts were all but empty.

Thus did the High Oracle of Khaine gain the precious varanite she desired. As more and more Chaos worshippers surged from hidden warrens, she commanded her Zainthar Kai to stage a fighting withdrawal, abandoning her erstwhile allies to the mercy of the enemy.



# CATASTROPHE

**Bloodied but determined, Lord-Celestant Nihilat's army finally arrived before the walls of Varanthax's Maw. There, waiting for the Stormcast Eternals and their Khainite allies, was a vast horde of Chaos worshippers, howling profane oaths to their gods and eager for the slaughter to come.**

Emerging from the narrow confines of the Skullpike valleys, Lord-Celestant Nihilat finally laid eyes upon the entrance to the Maw, bathed in the glow of infernal forge-fires and encircled by a vast Dreadhold. The wide vale – known as the Valley of Ashes – was littered with corpse-dust and scorched bones. At the far end awaited a Chaos army far larger than anything the allies had faced thus far, a mass of ironclad infantry flanked by wedges of brutal-looking chariots. Behind this throng towered blazing icons raised in honour of the Dark Gods – Chaos Warshrines, carried aloft by hulking mutants, their brazen symbols burning with terrible power. There were eight in all, each guarded by a Shrinemaster whose demented, bellowed prayers could be heard drifting across the valley.

Nihilat and the Melusai Ironscale Vatheira Seris shared a moment of silence as they gazed down upon the waiting host, all too aware of the horrors that awaited them. The Chaos defenders far outnumbered their own forces, depleted as they were by the bloody push through the Skullpikes. Yet their mission was clear: they must keep the enemy fixed here in this jagged stretch of mountainside for as long as they could. Every moment they endured bought the High Oracle precious time to complete her ritual. Ironscale Seris assured the Lord-Celestant that her Khinerai scouts had spotted Lord-Veritant Ven Brecht and the Khailebron contingent driving through the peaks to the east. They would arrive in a matter of hours, to reinforce their own armies and strike into the enemy's flank.

The Lord-Celestant signalled the advance, muttering a prayer to the God-King as he urged his Dracoth, Iximir, onwards. If death found him and his warriors, it would be in the pursuit of glorious duty.

The honour of guarding the gates of Varanthax's Maw had been granted to Rokar Gresh, an Idolator Lord whose worship of the Ruinous Powers had long crossed over into deranged obsession. Convinced that he was chosen by the Chaos Gods as the embodiment of their wrath, he and his thousands-strong horde of similarly fervent zealots – the Crimson Brethren – had made a pilgrimage to the gates of the Maw, believing the discovery of sacred varanite to be a sign of the forge's significance to the Dark Pantheon. Gresh had sworn to safeguard the forge of the gods at all costs, and any foes that dared to defile it with their presence were to be subjected to the most agonising deaths imaginable.

Word had reached the Idolator Lord of the Sigmarites' presence by way of a servant of the Dark Prince, a daemon-thing that called itself Sinheart and, like he, rode in a chariot. Gresh did not waste a moment ordering his Marauder tribesmen to strike out against the Stormcast Eternals and their aelf allies. Only Sinheart's honeyed words swayed the warlord from joining this first assault personally – he would soon wet his axe with the blood of Azyrites, the daemon promised, but to rush forth headlong and without caution would surely draw the wrath of the gods.

Responsible for overseeing the extraction of all varanite within Varanthax's Maw was the Gaunt Summoner known as the Eater of Tomes. Floating above the gathered Crimson Brethren on a bizarre Disc of Tzeentch, the daemonic sorcerer could not suppress a cruel smile. His experiments with refined bloodrock were now to be put to the ultimate test. He awaited the impending carnage with great anticipation.



## VALLEY OF ASH AND BLOOD

The Stormcast Eternals advanced down into the Valley of Ashes in ranks twelve deep, Liberators presenting a wall of gleaming shields. Rokar Gresh sent his own infantry to meet them. With an ear-splitting roar, hundreds of Chaos Warriors surged across the ashen ground, hurling themselves against the hated foe. The centre of the valley devolved into a grinding slaughter, the unfettered rage of the Dark Gods' faithful meeting the unyielding resolve of Sigmar's warriors. Skulls were cloven in two, throats

and bellies sliced open, and faces smashed to bloody ruin by the edges of heavy shields. Warriors from both sides were trampled into the sticky mire of ash and blood as the battleline ground back and forth.

Seeing the enemy's Dracoth cavalry thundering forwards on both flanks, Rokar Gresh rode ahead of his own forces, his chariot's driver lashing the warhorses that pulled it into a frothing frenzy as he hurtled straight towards the gleaming drake-riders. The daemon Sinheart rode alongside him, letting out shuddering cries of ecstasy as they ground helpless enemy warriors beneath bladed wheels. The two massed formations of cavalry came together. Ironshod war machine crashed against scaled, draconic hide in an explosion of splintered bone and twisted metal. Chariots were sent spinning through the air and Dracoths were scythed apart at the knees by bladed wheels. Gresh's mighty axe hacked left and right, cleaving through sigmarite armour and lopping Witch Aelves in two. Fully lost in the throes of religious fervour, the Lord of the Crimson Brethren crashed his chariot through the melee, seeking out the enemy's most fearsome warriors against whom to test his might.

Floating above the carnage on his daemonic mount, the Eater of Tomes saw that the enemy was fully engaged. The time had come. He raised his Changestaff high and brought it slashing down. Forward came the immense Warshrines, radiating a suffocating aura that infected nearby warriors with a killing madness. For the first time the allied advance faltered, as the enemy abandoned any semblance of reason and threw themselves bodily at the Hammers of Sigmar and their allies. They grabbed at the Stormcasts' blades, uncaring of the pain as their flesh was sliced open. Horn-helmed savages roared with savage laughter as they bore writhing Melusai to the ground, ignoring the horrendous wounds caused by the glaives that they had deliberately impaled themselves upon.

With every slain foe, the Warshrines seemed to blaze more fiercely, their blasphemous sigils shimmering and twisting, glowing red-hot and casting the scenes of slaughter around them in a crimson light. Each of the war-icons had been forged from varanite, tempered by the hideous rituals of the Eater of Tomes. Fuelled by pain and death, they became lodestones of ruinous power. The ground beneath them bubbled and cracked. Chanting zealots among the Crimson Brethren began to shudder, their flesh splitting apart, skin sloughing from their bones as a hideous transformation overcame them. Degenerated into mindless Chaos Spawn, they fell upon the enemy in a blur of fang-stuffed maws and lashing pseudopods. Above, the sky turned the colour of clotted blood, swallowing the flashing bursts that each marked the death of a Stormcast warrior. Observing from the back of his mount, Lord-Celestant Nihilat felt a rising sense of horror.

No longer did the souls of fallen Stormcasts burst upwards through the skies in arcs of celestial lightning. Now, the disembodied essences of slain warriors were drawn into the blazing symbols of the Crimson Brethren's Warshrines, disappearing in howls of agony. By what foul means they had achieved it, Nihilat did not know, but the enemy had cut the cord that bound the Stormcast Eternals to Holy Sigmaron. Death here would be permanent, their souls reduced to playthings for the Dark Gods. Even as the Lord-Celestant cast around for a route to break free and retreat, he saw thousands more savage, ironclad killers spilling from the canyons behind their battleline, encircling his beleaguered army. They were truly trapped.

## IDOLATOR LORD ROKAR GRESH

The Idolator Lord known as Rokar Gresh is a giant of a man, clad from head to toe in burnished iron-and-gold battle plate. He leads the throng of Chaos worshippers known as the Crimson Brethren, renowned amongst their own kind for the ferocity of their faith. These blood-mad zealots were drawn to Varanthax's Maw by the discovery of varanite beneath its halls, for they believe the stuff to be the very blood of their ruinous deities. Swearing themselves to the service of the Gaunt Summoner known as the Eater of Tomes – responsible for overseeing Archaon's varanite-mining operations – Rokar Gresh's chariot riders and seemingly endless hordes of Marauders proved ruthlessly effective at guarding the valleys of the Skullpike Mountains against any intruders seeking to claim the precious realmstone for themselves.

In return for this service, Rokar Gresh was granted the varanite axe Soulbutcher, a weapon he wields with fearsome strength from the back of his chariot as the heavy war machine grinds over the bodies of the slain. While he hews down his foes, Gresh roars blood-curdling oaths of fealty to Chaos in the Dark Tongue, his booming voice carrying far over the clangour of battle and inspiring his fanatical followers to ever greater acts of violence and depravity in the name of the Dark Pantheon.



***Lord-Veritant Keiser Ven Brecht's vanguard force had been greatly delayed by enemy action in the bloody valleys of the Skullpike Mountains. Yet with customary grit, the Lord-Veritant and his Khainite allies broke through the Chaos lines to relieve Lord-Celestant Nihilat's beleaguered host.***

***The barbarian turned at the last moment, just in time to catch Ven Brecht's descending blade in the temple. The scar-faced human's eyes rolled over white, and the Lord-Veritant ran on.***

*Through a mass of bodies he saw Lord-Celestant Nihilat, his golden armour and broadsword splattered with gore, surrounded by the corpses of dead heathens. Nihilat's Dracoth lay slain beside him, great gouges torn in its scaled hide. A half-dozen Retributors formed a circle about their lord.*

*'You are late, Keiser,' the Lord-Celestant said as Ven Brecht approached. 'And yet, I prayed to Sigmar that you would not arrive at all. There is no escape from this valley.'*

*'The enemy's blasphemous shrines,' said Ven Brecht. 'Somehow they have severed our connection to the storm.'*

*Both turned to look upon the nearest of the fell devices, casting its foul light across a churning mass of bodies. The eight-pointed icon atop the shrine blazed with unholy flames.*

*'As long as those cursed things stand, our souls are forfeit,' said the Lord-Veritant. 'They must be destroyed.'*

*Nihilat grimaced. 'Lot of degenerate savages in our path.'*

*'I did not come alone,' said Ven Brecht.*

*Even as he spoke, blood-curdling cries filled the air. The pale forms of Witch Aelves surged forth, leaping in graceful somersaults, opening throats with every slice of their shining daggers. Leather-winged Khinerai swept down over the heads of the Chaos worshippers, screeching in delight as they slashed away with cruel sickles.*

*'They find too much joy in this,' said Nihilat.*

*'Today, they have my forgiveness,' Ven Brecht replied.*

*Nihilat rallied the nearby warriors to his command, and they began to force a path to the Warshrine. The shrinemaster atop the graven altar noticed their advance, and began to point and shriek in the vile tongue of the enemy, urging his flock forward. A baying tide of barbarians rushed at the advancing Stormcasts, hurling themselves upon the Retributors without any care for their own lives. The Paladins stood their ground, clearing a path with sweeping blows of their mauls.*

*The closer Ven Brecht drew to the altar, the more terrible the aura of wrongness became. It swirled about them like a choking shroud, blistering their armour and scorching the flesh beneath. The ground transformed into a fleshy mire, and fanged tentacles protruded from the filth, winding about their ankles. It was all Ven Brecht could do to put one foot in front of the other, to hack away the repulsive tendrils seeking to drag him down.*

*Reaching the foot of the shrine, the Stormcasts found themselves face to face with the massive mutants who carried it aloft. Pallid, swollen things, they lashed out with tentacle limbs and club-like fists. Lord-Celestant Nihilat's blade sank into the chest of one, and with a gurgling howl it collapsed to its knees, sending the entire structure lurching to the side. Ven Brecht leapt atop the teetering platform, confronting the horn-helmed shrinemaster. The wretch began to chant the words of some unclean spell, but Ven Brecht raised his Lantern of Abjuration, and let loose a beam of cleansing light. The shrinemaster recoiled, screaming in pain and clutching melted eyes. Ven Brecht hurled him aside.*

*He now stood in the full glare of the shrine. He could feel his skin blistering and running like wax beneath his armour, but still he held the Lantern high – it was all that shielded him from the deadly emanations.*

*'Destroy it, Nihilat,' he managed to choke out. 'I cannot hold.'*

*The Lord-Veritant saw a flash of gold as his companion rushed past, and the thunderous ringing of metal striking metal. Retributors clambered up alongside the Lord-Celestant, smashing their hammers into the graven image. Cracks ran along the surface of the shrine, and with a deafening*

*blast it exploded in a hail of red-hot shards. Ven Brecht was thrown free of the carriage. He struck the earth hard, and felt the crunch of bone as his spine shattered. He lay there, unable to raise his head, blood bubbling in his throat. Through a bloody haze, he saw the towering form of Lord-Celestant Nihilat. His comrade knelt, clasping Ven Brecht's shoulder.*

*'It is done ,' said Nihilat. 'But we have destroyed only one of many. Our options are few, my friend.'*

*'One yet remains,' said Ven Brecht.*

*Nihilat's grey eyes bored into him, understanding.*

*'We cannot know what will happen,' the Lord-Celestant said.*

*'Trust to the God-King,' Ven Brecht said. 'And strike true.'*

*Nihilat's sword punched through the join between chestplate and plackart, and sank deep into Ven Brecht's chest. There was a brief moment of pure, white-hot agony, followed by a spreading numbness. Nihilat's blood-smeared face began to fade from Ven Brecht's sight.*

*'May your journey be swift,' came the Lord-Celestant's voice, growing more distant with every word. 'Warn Azyr of what has befallen us.'*

*The world dissolved in a flash of blinding white.*

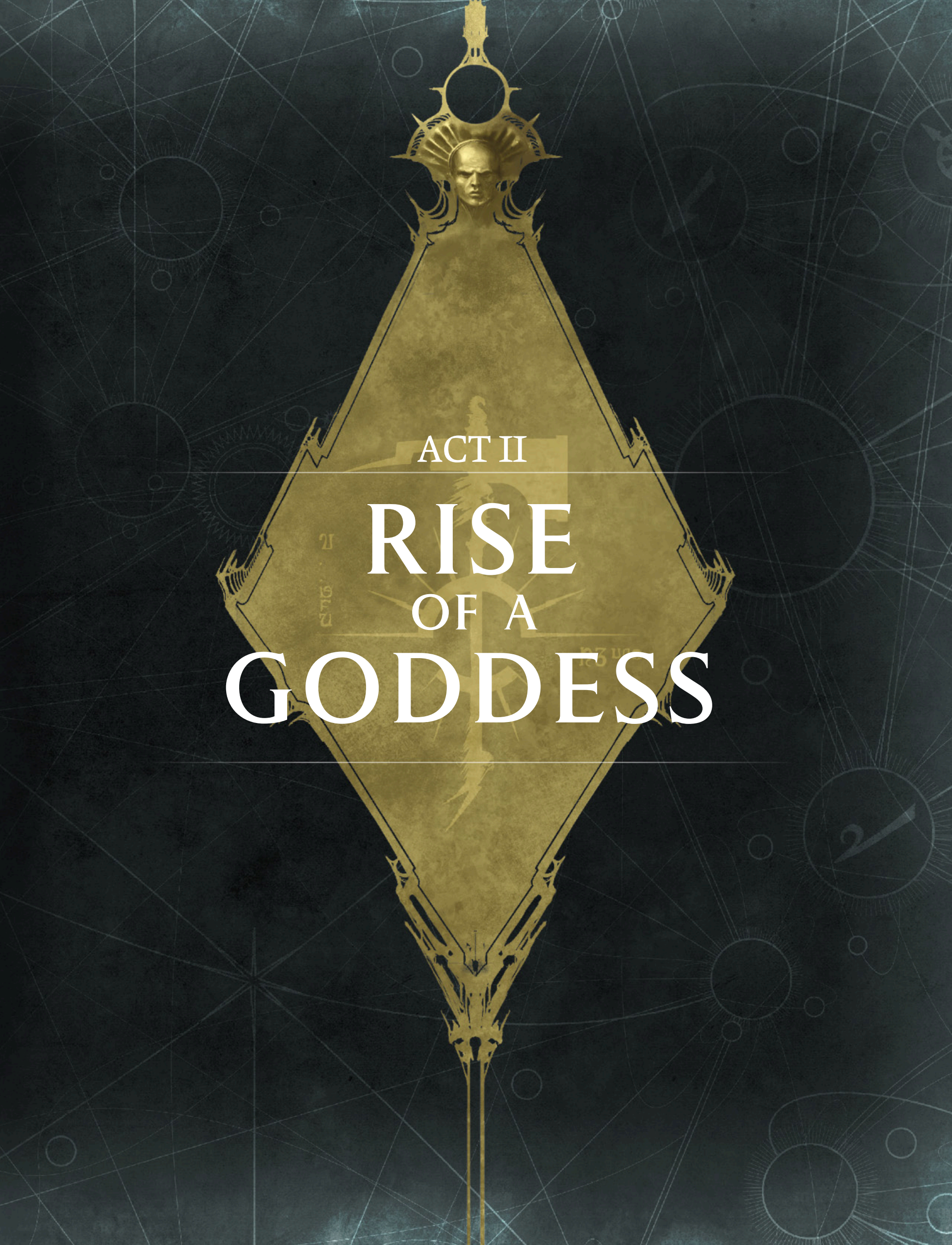
*That which had once been Keiser Ven Brecht was swept along on a trail of cerulean energy, racing towards the bruised sky. It was not alone. Across the churning battlefield, other bolts of blue-white lightning broke for freedom – the spirits of fallen Stormcasts, called home upon the storm. The Eightpoints would not relinquish its prey so easily. The enemy's wretched icons blazed with sorcerous power, and lashing tendrils of crimson energy reached forth to snatch the fleeing spirits from the sky. Caught like hooked fish, they were dragged into the burning embrace of the Chaos shrines.*

*Ven Brecht's disembodied spirit raced on, through layers of bloodstained clouds, hungering coils flailing and grasping at its passing. Ahead, through the vile maelstrom, it could feel a pinprick of radiance, penetrating the stratosphere like a beam of sunlight spearing into dark water. That-which-had-been-Ven Brecht raced towards the light, and freedom, even as the hungering coils closed in around it.*

***The souls of slain Stormcasts are drawn towards the Star Bridges, metaphysical spirit-links that guide them back to Azyr. These same cosmic links are also connected to each of the great Stormkeeps, ensuring that a Reforged warrior can swiftly return to service.***







ACT II

# RISE OF A GODDESS

# DOMINION OF SHADRAC

**In the wake of her successful seizure of varanite, Morathi returned swiftly to Hagg Nar, her fortress stronghold in the Shadrac Convergence. There she oversaw the beginning of a grand ritual, while her armies prepared to repel any opposing army that might dare to interrupt the High Oracle's holy work.**

## DOMAIN OF MORATHI

Hagg Nar is the pre-eminent power in the region known as the Shadrac Convergence, where eight of Ulgu's Thirteen Dominions meet amidst a tangle of jagged coastlines and narrow, treacherous seas. The temple-city sits atop a font of shadow magic known as the Helleflux that constantly spews thick mists. It is this arcane nexus that makes the Umbral Veil perhaps the darkest region of the Shadowlands, ever smothered by a pall of blackness.

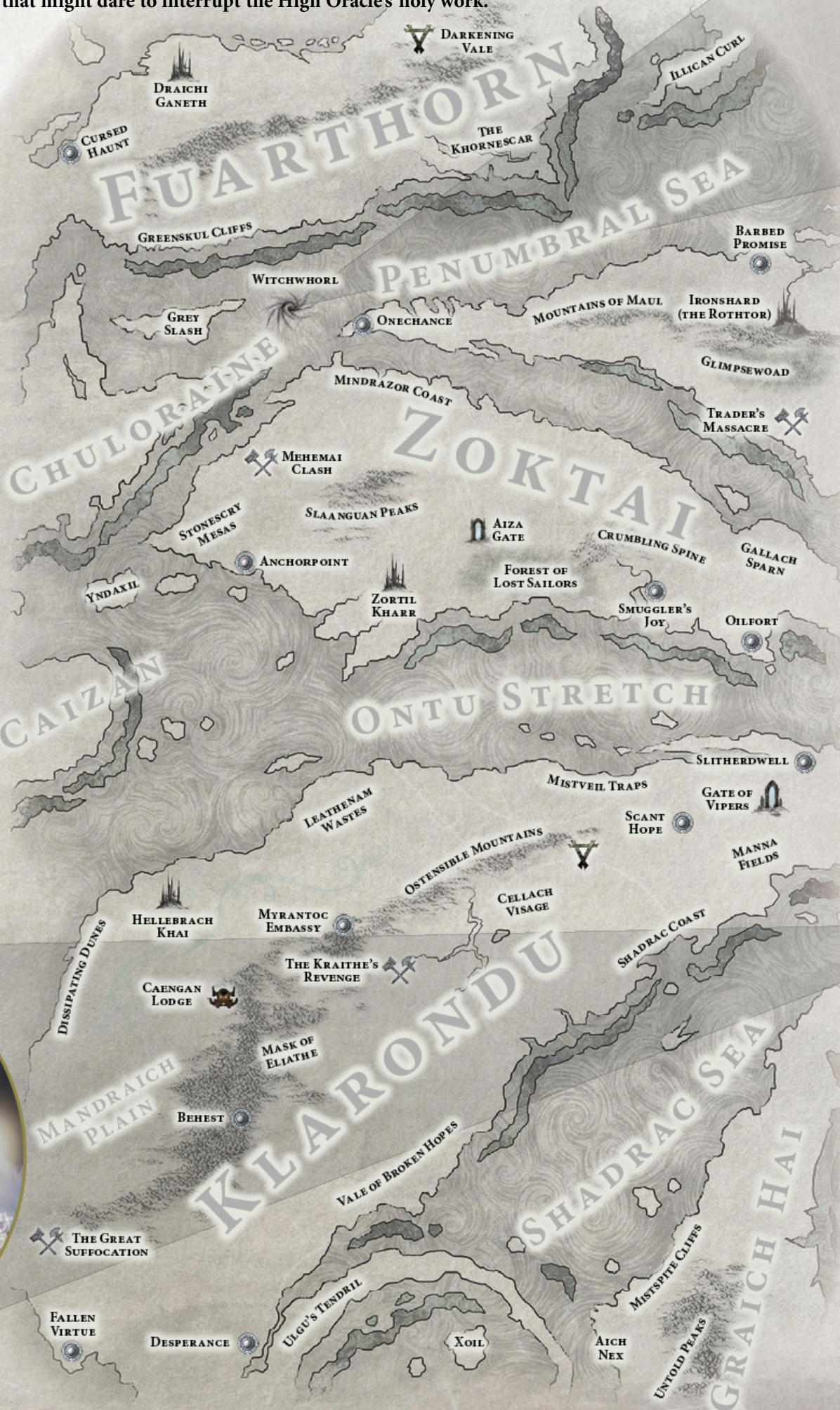
## LOOMING THREATS

Though Morathi's influence stretches far across Shadrac, her control is by no means absolute. The free city of Misthåvn is a growing power, its impressive navy already far larger than the smaller, elite fleets of Hagg Nar. The Idoneth Deepkin are also a constant threat, for the depths of the Shadowsea provide the perfect cover for their raiding parties.

### *MISTHÅVN*

*A city formed of lashed-together hulks, the great port of Misthåvn is a den of criminality and deception.*







### THE WITCHWHORL
*An undersea realmgate formed from churning, illusory whirpools.*

### HAGG NAR
*Situated atop the shadow-spewing Helleflux, the Khainite capital Hagg Nar is a city of blades and shadows.*



Hellezar
Greater Ulguroth
Va-Leth
Umbral Veil
Inner Shadrac
Ulguroth Spiral
Hypnoi Stretch
Liminus
Emyjine Sea
Curlicue Sea
Vochtai

Noble's Height
Alibi
Shadewhale Coast
Burntspike
The Cruel Splinters
Lake Depthless
Contrarian River
Silver Tongue
Faker's Isles
Fort Mirage
Sufferance
Koschaic Demise
Quintaron Spear
Zoli
Tal-Kos
Scaleblight Coast
The Misted Isles
Malevolus
The Helleflux
Ashspires
Hagg nar
The Tithe
Smittencove
Erekhui Mountains
Greycrawl Inlets
Battle of Druchxar
Fort Intrinsic
Nemesa
Suspected Eshin Lair
Slivern
Arcanite Veldt
Aile-Ti
Isle of Veiled Threats
Ulthern Citadel
The Ulgish Cairns
Proboscis Tip
Dhucha Zhur
Coast of Duplicity
Yntoch Promontory
The Serpent
The Notches
Coast of Antipathy
Malerion's Veins
Glib Spike
Arch of Dark Miracles
Inzitil
Cape Tenebrax
Ravage of Luxcious
Erstwhile Coast
Alaithru
Bladewealds
Ruins of Neff-Taal
Windshaden Plains
Spindlespike
Dream's End
Misthåvn
Khar-Quenta Reaches
Godloss
Cape Heartpierce
N. Barrier Liminus
Bleak Forest
Clawing Forest
Harsh Welcome
Coldhearth Peaks
Aichiu Prowl
Deathbite Point
Choking Neck
Lone Cliffs
Tzendar's Mark
Trapper's Bolt
The Great Gleam
The Devouring Fogs
Maddening Skirl
Galhain Spurn (Corrupt)
S. Barrier Liminus
Itril Gharr
Knifecut Inlet
Site of the Grand Khielt-Gadh
Phantasmis Greyweald
Grydd Var
Obfuscatia
Grimaice
The Lost Spine
Slaangoria
Corsair's Keep
The Shackled Spines
Holloweye Caves
Ruins of Azyrsen
Mindlost
Ithid Zar

# THE BRINK OF TRIUMPH

**The first stages of Morathi's grand plan had proceeded as smoothly as the High Oracle had dared hope. However, as she paced through the shadowed halls of Hagg Nar, overseeing the preparations for her ritual, Morathi knew that the greatest challenge was yet to come.**

Morathi's flock could sense their ruler's tension. The High Oracle paced and fretted, observing her Hag Queens carefully mixing ingredients into the foul concoction that bubbled within the Máthcoir. Into it they scattered priceless fragments of cursestone and aqthracite, the gelid eyes of a shadow-kraken spawnmother, and the black heart of a void drake, amongst a host of other exotic items.

Morathi's sorcery required exacting precision, for not only was Khaine's Blood perhaps the deadliest substance in all the realms, but if this batch was tainted, there would be no telling if the High Oracle would ever again lay her hands on more. Moreover, Morathi had paid a steep price to attain the ingredients critical to refining the realmstone, nullifying its corrupting energies while maintaining its potent powers of transformation. Morathi planned to remake herself, to use this sorcerous concoction to strip away the curse that afflicted her, birthing herself anew as a flawless goddess. Such complex magic was fraught with risk. The smallest mistake in preparation could condemn Morathi to a hideous demise. One luckless acolyte met a slow and torturous fate at the High Oracle's hands when she made the fatal error of misplacing a single sliver of crystallised sap, harvested at great cost from the Oak of Ages Past. The aelf's screams could be heard for many hours while her kin continued to follow Morathi's exacting instructions as if their lives depended on it. Which, of course, they did.

The cursed brew that simmered within the Máthcoir was only one component in a most complex and delicate endeavour. The Daughters of Khaine had already secured many vital locations across the Realm of Shadows. Each of these fonts of primordial power connected to the shadowpaths, the network of shifting, arcane corridors that trailed like ventricles throughout Ulgu and Uhl-Gysh, the Twilight Realm.



At each point, Morathi's Scáthborn had constructed dagger-shaped watchtowers, which were garrisoned by some of her most fearsome warriors. These redoubts had been attacked almost ceaselessly ever since their construction. Only recently, the Tower of Kiri'tar had been besieged by a mighty Slaaneshi host under the command of the Lord of Pain Gestharyx. The Slaaneshi warlord had breached the tower and slain scores of Melusai before finally being repulsed – though not without glimpsing the secrets that the Daughters of Khaine had been concealing behind the bladed walls of their fastness.

## A SACRIFICE OF CHAMPIONS

The shadowpath towers housed more than just Melusai warriors. Within each languished captives of a very specific sort: servants of Tzeentch, Nurgle and Khorne, champions of ruin captured over the centuries of slaughter and bloodshed that had marked the Age of Chaos, and denied the dignity of death. Instead they had been subjected to an ingenious variety of torments, but preserved until their deaths could better serve the High Oracle's purpose.

That moment was fast approaching. Even as the Máthcoir bubbled and hissed, its iron shell groaning under the strain of containing such horrific energies, the blades of the Zainthar Kai were being sharpened, their own Blood Cauldrons primed with sacred rituals. Hagg Nar was well prepared for the war that was surely coming.

A Caillich Coven had been decreed, a mighty gathering of warriors from each of the Khainite temples, summoned to defend their foremost stronghold. The High Oracle claimed that she was conducting a ritual that would summon the God of Murder in a storm of blood and fire, returning Khaine to his flock. Only the Scáthborn knew this was a monstrous lie, a cover for Morathi's true purpose. This night she aimed to fulfil the destiny that had so long eluded her.

Everything was approaching the moment of truth, and that more than anything preyed upon Morathi's nerves. Everything that she had ever experienced, every triumph, loss and disappointment across all the long ages of her life, had led her to this place. This hour. This last gambit. There would be no turning back now, no devious escape and certainly no shameful retreat.

She would seize godhood, the prize she had always desired above all else, or she would accept her own destruction.

**Glavia Sinheart had left the carnage in the Eightpoints, following the trail of Morathi as they raced along forbidden pathways to Ulgu. God-granted visions brought the Herald to the war camp of Gestharyx, a Lord of Pain who had brought war and suffering to vast swathes of the Umbral Veil in his search for missing Slaanesh.**

**Gestharyx had recently laid siege to the Tower of Kiri'tar, a Khainite stronghold raised upon a wellspring of shadow magic that guarded a gateway to the Hidden Gloaming that lay between the Realms of Light and Shadow.**

**The Lord of Pain had been driven back by the tower's Melusai defenders, but not before he had laid eyes upon the sacrificial chambers of Kiri'tar, the sprawling dungeons where captured worshippers of Chaos awaited their torment and execution.**

**Sinheart listened to this tale with mounting excitement. Now, the true scale of Morathi's plans was becoming clear. The Slaaneshi Herald gathered the remnants of Gestharyx's beaten army, and made at once for Hagg Nar.**





***The legendary High King Volturnos is the last surviving Cythai, the progenitors of the Idoneth Deepkin. A coldly pragmatic soul and an unidisputed military genius, he has ensured the stability and security of the Idoneth's undersea kingdoms.***

***The grand assembral was a riot of colour. Briomdar, Fuethán, Mor'phann – even secretive Dhom-hain, who had not deigned to attend such a summit for many centuries – all had answered the call of High King Volturnos. All knew the gravity of this crisis, and the ramifications for all Deepkin.***

*The Last of the Cythai observed the contingents of the Idoneth enclaves as they took their places in the Dome of Ten Thousand Lights, beneath a canopy of crystalline coral and swirling strands of glitter-kelp. Twelve thrones were situated across the intricately engraved scaphodon-shell floor – one for each of the greatest enclaves. The largest of all was Volturnos' own, carved from the maw of a shadow-kraken.*

*Only when the delegates had taken their seats did the High King rise, hand clasping the hilt of the Astra Solus, the Sword of Light.*

*'I bid you glad welcome, kin from distant lands,' he said. Ether-magic carried his words across the hall, and allowed him to move with easy grace despite the water that filled the Dome.*

*'A grave injustice has been carried out against our people,' he went on. 'The Temple of Sarr Danoi has been breached, and the Ocarian Lantern stolen from within.'*

*The Idoneth were not given to displays of emotion, but the water fairly rippled with consternation at those words. The shoals of glimmerfish that circled the roof of the Dome darted back and forth, their scales flashing scarlet as they sensed the tension in the chamber.*

*'How was such a thing allowed to happen?' said King Molpir of the Fuethán, standing tall. 'Are the Ionrach's defences so weak that even our most treasured secrets are vulnerable?'*

*Only one from the impetuous Aqshian enclave would have dared address the High King so bluntly. Molpir was a giant by aelven standards, his skin tattooed with spirals of red ink, his bare arms muscled and scarred. Volturnos met his gaze with his one good eye, rapped his fingers meaningfully on the hilt of his sword.*

*'Ware your words, son of the Sound,' he said, his voice deathly calm. 'Remember to whom you speak.'*

*Molpir glared, but after a moment retook his seat. King Revarnos of the Nautilar rose next. He chose his words more carefully, as befitting the steadfast nature of his kin.*

*'Blame and anger serve us not,' Revarnos said. 'We must act swiftly. I need not speak of the grave consequences that will befall us should the Lantern fall into our enemies' hands. Do we know who is responsible for this outrage?'*

*'We do,' came a voice from the rear of the dome. King Nemmetar marched into the centre of the hall, flanked by a pair of Akhelian throne guards. The huntmaster of Príom held in one hand a wicked, curved blade, as ornately crafted as any Idoneth weapon but blackened and ill of aspect.*

*'A sciansá,' said Nemmetar, raising the blade high for all to see. 'A weapon of the Khainite cults. Though this one is crafted from a material unknown to me. Its bearer still lives. She is in the care of the Isharann.'*

*'This is the work of Hagg Nar,' said Volturnos. 'Morathi moves*

*against us. Perhaps she acts in alliance with her kin-gods. Perhaps this is her war alone. Regardless, we must answer in kind.'*

*There was a collective silence, as all present took a moment to absorb that revelation. Save, perhaps, for the hot-blooded sons and daughters of Fuethán, the Idoneth were not a people given to rash action. Volturnos let them play the ramifications out in their minds, before addressing the assembral once more.*

*'You all know the fate that awaits us if the Illuminator recovers his lost treasure,' said the High King. 'There is no abyss nor lightless trench deep enough that he will not find us there. He will seek us out, and he will finish what he started.'*

*'It is war then,' said King Molpir, his smile revealing sharp white teeth. Never had those words been said with more relish. 'I welcome it. Past time we put the Khainites in their proper place.'*

*'Our prisoner is resolute,' said Nemmetar, 'but the Tidecasters have stripped what they could from her mind. They believe that the Lantern is on its way to the Umbral Veil, to the Khainite capital. My Allopexes have their scent. Wherever they hide, we shall find them.'*

*'Hagg Nar is no meagre fortress,' said Telwyra Mistheart, her skeletal fingers steepled. The water around the Mor'phann leader was dark and cold, as if the Isharann priestess had brought the freezing depths of the Great Quagmire with her to the court of Príom. Mistheart's eyes blazed like those of abyssal catchers, cold and calculating.*

*'These khannvir are no fools,' she continued, using the Idoneth term for land-walkers. 'They will know we are coming.'*

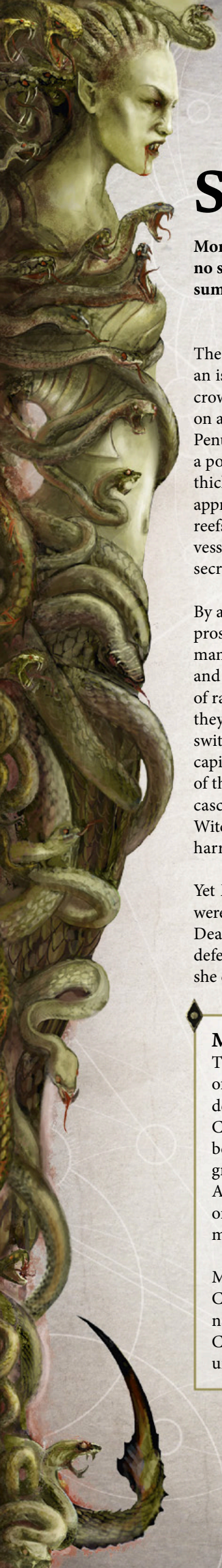
*'Then I will awaken the ocean,' said Volturnos. 'I will summon the tides, and the storm, and the beasts of the deepest trenches. I will tear down the Khainites' greatest city stone by stone, until that which was taken from us is recovered. For a thousand years, aelves and mortals and the gods themselves will whisper in dread of the ruin that the Kin of the Deep brought to Hagg Nar.'*

*As his voice reached a crescendo, Volturnos' Deepmare, Uasall, unleashed a piercing cry, and the Ten Thousand Lights turned angry crimson – bathing those present in a wrathful glow.*

*As one, the Grand Assembral rose and drew their blades, saluting the Last of the Cythai. Volturnos turned to King Nemmetar, whose face was filled with fierce pride.*

*'Summon the phalanxes,' he said. 'Send forth the Namarti Battalions, and order the Embailors to rouse the ancient ones. The Idoneth will ride to war and ruin, and they shall follow the banner of the High King.'*





# SCOURGE OF THE SEAS

**Morathi was all too aware that while she performed her grand ritual she would be vulnerable, and there was no shortage of enemies who would seek to see her plans dashed. To safeguard Hagg Nar, she had not only summoned the Khainite temples, but also hired cut-throat privateers from the free city of Misthåvn.**

The great temple-city of Hagg Nar was located on an island in the heart of the Umbral Veil, set atop a crown of jagged mountain peaks and surrounded on all sides by the treacherous currents of the Penumbral Sea. Beneath Hagg Nar lay the Helleflux, a powerful font of shadow magic that spewed forth thick mists. This permanent shroud of fog masked all approaches to the island, concealing the blade-like reefs of black crystal that would cut any approaching vessels to splinters should they not be privy to the secret routes that led to Hagg Nar's hidden docks.

By all measures, the First Temple was an imposing prospect for any besieging army. If they somehow managed to navigate the hazards of the Helleflux and make landfall upon one of the gloomy stretches of razor-sharp rocks that lay beneath Hagg Nar, they would then have to ascend a series of winding, switchback valleys to the summit of the Khainite capital itself. Their forces would be assailed every step of the way by watchtowers spitting reaper-bolts and cascades of shadowflame, not to mention frenzied Witch Aelves spilling from illusory hideaways to harry their flanks.

Yet Morathi knew that the enemies she had made were mighty, their armies vast and battle-hardened. Deadly as they were, her acolytes alone might be defeated, the walls of her stronghold breached. That, she could not risk. The Hagg Nar fleet was powerful, but small in number. It could not keep an invading armada at bay should the God-King uncover her duplicity and send forth his Stormhosts, or should her hated Slaaneshi foes come streaming across the ocean. Thus, Morathi had called upon allies old and new, offering them the wealth of Hagg Nar to keep the cliffs of the First Temple safe.

All too eager to accept the High Oracle's treasures once more, Fleetmaster Nightscour of the free city of Misthåvn had assembled a huge armada to defend the coast of Hagg Nar. The Scourge Privateers had brought with them one of their dreaded Black Arks, a seaborne fortress of slick obsidian walls and bolt-thrower towers, built into the shell of a tentacled leviathan of the deep.

This titan of the seas was surrounded by a flotilla of lesser ships, not only the sleek, black-sailed raiding vessels of the Scourge Privateers, but also rugged steam-barques of human design, manned by sailors out of Misthåvn. Such was the power wielded by the Scourge in that strange, floating city that Nightscour had managed to gather several regiments of Freeguild marines under his banner. These soldiers knew nothing of the cause for which they fought, but were all to happy to kill in exchange for the rewards promised by the High Oracle of Khaine. In any case, it was not the first time Hagg Nar and Misthåvn had found common cause against an enemy.

### MISTHÅVN, THE CITY OF SCOUNDRELS

The notorious port of Misthåvn is one of the strangest of the God-King's free cities. Its landmass consists of countless boats and great junker-ships lashed together, forming artificial islands whose foundations descend far below the surface of the ocean. Though it is semi-permanently moored on the shores of Cape Tenebrax, the city is not bound to a single location. Due to its unique construction, Misthåvn can be unmoored, slipping into the shadows of the Penumbral Sea. In extremis, the boats that form the great city can detach and disperse, much like a shoal of glimmerfish scattering in the face of a hungry Allopex. Rather than districts, the city is divided into several armadas, each commanded by an admiral or Fleetmaster of the Scourge Privateers and defended by Freeguild regiments renowned for their marksmanship and skill as marines.

Misthåvn is regarded as a hive of criminality, vice and deception by those of other free cities. Natives of the City of Scoundrels naturally take great pride in their dubious reputation, dealing in illusory magics and narcotics, and forging business arrangements with all manner of unsavoury customers. The city's Grand Conclave is nominally responsible for ensuring the city follows the decrees of Azyr, but this is often a vain undertaking; politics in Misthåvn is as deadly and ever-shifting as the gloomy seas of Ulgu.

## THE ARMY OF THE HIGH KING

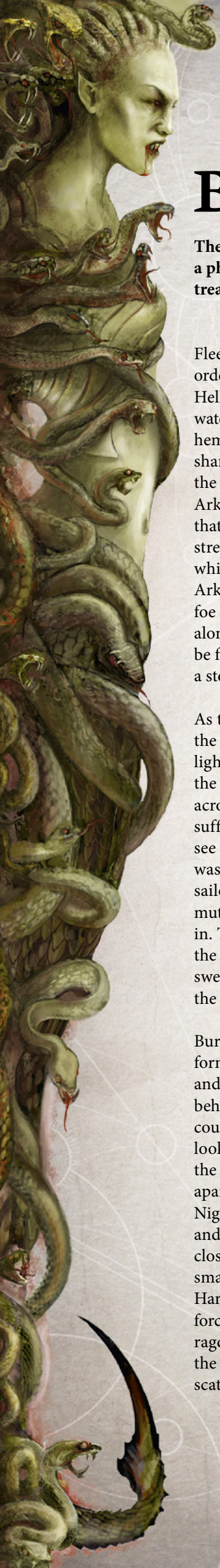
Far below the barnacled hulls of galleons and the streamlined keels of aelven wolfships, the ocean was stirring. The boiling vents of the Léirgaeta whirlway opened, spilling wan light into the inky blackness of the shadowsea. In the bubbling froth that gushed forth from the undersea realmgate, shapes could be seen to emerge.

First came the Namarti warrior-thralls. Gaunt and eyeless, their expressions were as placid and emotionless as those of sharks as they rode nautili shell-beasts up from the depths. Then, the behemothic silhouettes of Leviadons came looming out of the darkness, the living ship-breakers manned by aelves in shining plate. Following behind came gleaming formations of Fangmora Eels, their scales rippling in a riot of iridescence, their Akhelian riders resplendent in gilded armour. The vanguard of King Nemmetar of the Ionrach – the High King's huntmaster – ranged ahead of the main deephost. His keen-scented Allopexes were to plunge into enemy territory, identifying the foe's numbers and attacking any weaknesses in their battleline, then falling back to the main body of the army before resistance could be mustered against them.

It was rare indeed for the scattered enclaves of the Idoneth Deepkin to be united in common cause. High King Volturnos felt a cold and quiet pride as he looked upon the host he had assembled. Hot-blooded eel-riders from the Fuethán enclave surged forth, their evil-tempered mounts snapping at one another, sensing that they would soon feast upon flesh. Seaweed-draped titans from the Briomdar kelp-jungles drifted beside them, along with clansmen from Dhom-hain and bronze-shelled Nautilar warbeasts. Even the sinister Mor'phann had answered the call of the High King; the pale, black-eyed priests of that deathly enclave were all too aware of the fate that would befall even their hidden city of Mor'drechi should the Ocarian Lantern fall into enemy hands.

Volturnos reared on the back of Uasall, Prince of Deepmares, and raised high the Astra Solus for all to see. The Blade of Light issued a beam of radiance that cut through the black depths of the Penumbral Sea, directing the Idoneth host onwards, towards the distant shadow of Hagg Nar. If she imagined herself safe inside her mountaintop fortress, thought the High King, then the treacherous Oracle of Khaine was a fool. He would lay waste to Hagg Nar until he found what had been stolen from him.





# BLOOD IN THE WATER

**The Idoneth's host encircled Hagg Nar like an enormous sithilopod, each coiling tendril consisting of a phalanx of Akhelian lords and their Namarti warrior-thralls. Before them lay a killing ground of treacherous currents and razor-sharp reefs – and beyond that, the sails of Scourge reaver-ships.**

Fleetmaster Nightscour had arranged his flotilla in order to guard the main approach to Hagg Nar – the Hellemark Strait. This narrow channel of navigable water was overlooked by a huge statue of Khaine, and hemmed in on both sides by reefs of black crystal sharp enough to tear a ship's hull to shreds. Beneath the shadow of the great colossus, Nightscour's Black Ark, *Agoniser*, had rooted itself. The gargantuan beast that formed the foundations of the floating fortress stretched out plated tentacles to grip the sea floor, while iron gateways yawned open in the flanks of the Ark, from which emerged yet more reaver ships. Any foe hoping to pass beneath the shadow of Khaine along the most direct route to the temple-city would be forced into a kill zone bracketed by cannonfire and a storm of reaper-bolts.

As the opening tremors of Morathi's ritual caused the skies above Hagg Nar to crackle with arcs of red lightning and the sounds of chanting drifted from the high towers of the temple-city, a mist crept in across the Hellemark. It settled across the strait, so suffocating and impenetrable that one could barely see more that a dozen yards in any direction. There was an eerie silence as aelven corsairs and Misthåvn sailors alike clutched their weapons, and nervously muttered prayers to whatever gods they held faith in. Then a cry went up from the lookouts. Through the shroud of white could be seen the outline of a swelling wave, rushing along the narrow channel of the Hellemark towards them.

Bursting from the water came the monstrous forms of twelve Leviadons, their shells glistening and their fang-lined maws opening wide. As these behemoths broke the surface, pale-skinned figures could be seen upon their backs, manning vicious-looking harpoon launchers. Missiles whipped in over the water, impaling sailors to the deck, smashing apart machinery and tearing great gouges in sails. Nightscour's fleet answered with a hail of cannonshot and bolts of their own, but the enemy was too close. Like living battering rams, the Leviadons smashed straight into the outer ring of warships. Hardwood and metal alike crumpled under the force of the impact. Bodies flew through the air like ragdolls, splashing into the pitch-black waters of the Hellemark. Screams filled the air, punctuated by scattershot blasts from panicking gun crews.

Behind the charging Leviadons came other creatures of the deep places, winding between the hulls of Scourge warships. Amongst them were the voracious predators known as Allopexes, whose Akhelian riders loosed volley after volley of harpoons even as their bloodthirsty bond-beasts swept across the decks of reeling vessels, eviscerating the crews with their bladed fins and serrated teeth. Many of these creatures were blasted out of the air by chain-shot and disciplined musketry, but with every moment more sleek shapes burst from the depths. It seemed the entire ocean had come to life.

Shimmering phantoms surged upwards upon great plumes of seawater before crashing down across the bows of stricken warships in eruptions of splintered wood. Each of these ethereal beings was a manifestation that embodied a different aspect of a vengeful oceanic god; some raged and struck like the lashing waves of a great tempest, while others preyed upon the minds of their foes, unleashing waves of overwhelming, isolating dread that caused many sailors to hurl themselves over the gunwales in terrified despair into the churning embrace of the shadowsea.



Despite the sudden shock of the Idoneth assault, neither the salt-blooded corsairs of the Scourge nor the grim marines of Misthåvn gave in to panic. Both had faced the strange deep-aelves of the Penumbral Sea before, and enmity girded their hearts for battle. Along the twisting shoreline of Hagg Nar, formations of Freeguild Handgunners cracked off volleys of lead shot, repulsing every wave of Namarti Thralls that tried to force their way up the narrow inclines to the cover of the mountain paths. Destroyer-barques and Scourge wolfships yawed about to face the monsters rising from the ocean, loosing a punishing cannonade that ripped through scales and coral armour, filling the water with ruptured corpses.



## HAGGANAL BAY

Fighting soon raged across the outskirts of Hagg Nar, but nowhere was the battle fiercer than at Hagganal Bay. This was the widest and most open landing point for any invading force, though it was still a forbidding deathtrap of blade-edged rocks and treacherous currents. Namarti warriors emerged from the crashing waves, skipping nimbly across slick stone. Watchtowers spat streaming arcs of shadowflame into their midst, wreathing scores in flesh-melting black fire. Reaper-bolts scythed through the mass of pale bodies, and Khinerai descended from the inky clouds in killing flocks, their barbed sickles lopping off heads and slicing open throats. Three times the Namarti drove their Khainite foes back to the cliff face, only for a tide of screaming Witch Aelves to emerge from some unseen tunnel and fall upon their flank in a blur of slashing daggers.

Still the waters brought forth more Idoneth hosts, as shoals of Leviadons and Allopexes surged up the beach to support the Namarti formations. Yet it was not only the Deepkin that had tamed the denizens of the deeps. Driven by the lashes of cold-eyed handlers, the abyssal beasts known as Kharibdysses lumbered out of the sea caves, multiple heads hissing and snapping as they scented blood. The creatures' horrific mouthparts and massive claws made short work of any sea-aelves that came within reach, and even tore at the shells of Leviadons to get at the soft flesh beneath. Many Kharibdysses were crushed or ripped apart by the armoured behemoths, but dull-minded and ravenous as they were, the Scourge's tamed monsters came on regardless.

Just as it seemed that the Idoneth might be driven back into the sea, a light flared in the distance. Holding aloft the Astra Solus, High King Volturnos rode at the head of his royal guard, a wedge of gleaming scales and glinting blades that swept down from on high like a breaking wave. Crackling volt-spears struck home with devastating force, filling the sky with blinding flashes of bioelectric lightning. Fangmora Eels snapped their jaws closed around heads and throats, violently savaging their prey. Carving his way through the battle atop his Deepmare, Uasall, Volturnos fought as the epitome of Idoneth martial might. None could score even a glancing blow upon him, and every time the Astra Solus lashed out in a flash of blinding luminescence, he cut down yet another foe.

The sight of the Crest of the High Kings emboldened the faltering Idoneth, filling Namarti and Akhelian alike with newfound zeal. Step by bloody step, the Daughters of Khaine and their Scourge Privateer allies were driven back to the base of the cliffs. Hundreds were cut down by the storms of arrows loosed by Namarti Reavers, or driven over cliffs onto outcroppings of jagged rocks to be dashed to pieces. It seemed as though the Idoneth's assault was as unstoppable as the tide.

# SCREAM OF EXULTATION

**With the fate of Hagg Nar balanced on a knife edge, the defenders of the temple-city heard a sound that chilled them to the bone: the discordant blaring of war-horns on the horizon, caroming across the water. In a riotous cacophony, the host of Glavia Sinheart had arrived at the Khainite capital.**

Guided by visions of agony and ecstasy, the Slaaneshi Herald Glavia Sinheart had come to the shores of Hagg Nar, bringing with them a vast host of revellers under the sway of Lord Gestharyx. Pennants of flayed skin fluttered from the sails of silver quadriremes as they cut gracefully through the waves towards the temple-city, while dangling censers vomited clouds of incense. Oiled and tattoo-covered ogors were melded into banks of oars carved from sinew and bone, hauling with all their fearsome strength as Daemonettes lashed them into a delirious frenzy.

The electric rush of anticipation rippled across Sinheart's skin. The daemon embraced the overwhelming urge to bare their teeth and howl their delight to the roiling skies. The time was at hand. The chains were frayed, and the Dark Prince writhed against his bonds in the throes of blissful torment. Sinheart could feel the eyes of their deity upon them. They would not fail him.

Gestharyx, too, could scent the divine spoor of Slaanesh swirling about the towers of Hagg Nar. The Lord of Pain had slain and tortured his way across the Realm of Shadow in search of any hint of the Dark Prince's presence, and it seemed to him only fitting that his odyssey would culminate in a glorious bloodbath before the bladed citadels of Morathi's capital. Gestharyx planned to wreak death and defilement on such a scale that the Dark Prince would surely honour him with the gift of an immortal and monstrously beautiful new form. As his ships surged towards the distant, mist-covered beaches of Hagganal Bay, the Lord of Pain inflamed his building excitement by ritually lacerating the flesh of a rapturous supplicant.

## BLOOD AND PAIN

From the high towers of the *Agoniser*, Fleetmaster Nightscour let out a stream of inventive curses as he watched the Chaos fleet sweeping towards Hagganal Bay. Freeguild barques that had been left floundering in the wake of the Idoneth assault were smashed into flotsam as the ram-equipped quadriremes struck them amidships. The Slaaneshi navy's momentum barely slowed. Yet to Nightscour's shock, this new enemy did not encircle his beleaguered fleet. Instead, they sliced their way up onto the rocks at the rear of the Idoneth formations, before their hulls split apart to disgorge mobs of painted, shrieking warriors and bladed chariots onto Hagg Nar's bloodstained beaches.

Glavia Sinheart's Exalted Chariot burst from the hold of her ship, churning up a bloody spray as it sped onto the corpse-strewn sands, followed by a formation of similar death-machines. This whirring, scything mass of metal crashed into the rear of the Idoneth ranks. Scores of Namarti were sliced to ribbons by the chariots' axle-blades, or lacerated by the barbed whips of the baying charioteers. Following swiftly behind came Lord Gestharyx and a throng of Daemonettes that leapt into battle, ripping open throats with their snapping pincers and jumping onto the shells of struggling Leviadons.

Nightscour's savaged Corsairs could barely believe their fortune as the Slaaneshi fell upon their enemies, their sudden appearance throwing everything into complete disarray. The covens sworn to Hagg Nar did not care for a moment that the Dark Prince's faithful were targeting the Idoneth – all they saw were the same despised deviants that they had battled throughout the Cathtrar Dhule, Chaos-worshipping wretches that despoiled the First Temple with their mere presence. Uncaring of the tactical ramifications, the Hag Queens launched themselves into the flanks of Sinheart's revelrie with renewed vigour, delighting in every spray of perfumed ichor as they sliced the Godseekers apart.

By contrast, the Scourge Privateers were all too happy to let this battle decide itself without them – as far as they were concerned, their task of mauling the invasion force had been carried out. Under cover of the escalating slaughter they made for their reaver-ships, retreating to the relative safety of the Black Ark *Agoniser*. As he observed the carnage from a distance, Fleetmaster Nightscour recognised that the time had come to cut his losses. He ordered a retreat – taking the opportunity to capture a number of Idoneth prisoners and even a pair of wounded Leviadons, for he had been greatly impressed with the creatures' destructive power.

## THE HIGH KING'S FURY

Volturnos saw that his grand army, trapped as it was between the defenders of Hagg Nar and this new host of Chaos worshippers, was at risk of obliteration. Yet the High King of the Idoneth and the Last of the Cythai had fought a thousand and more battles, and was not given to panic nor rash action. His orders came swiftly and purposefully. King Revarnos of the Nautilar would form a defensive line at Hagganal Bay – the wraithshell-clad warriors of the nomad enclave were consummate defenders, able to bleed their foes for even the most modest gains. Their Leviadons would form living barriers, while their Isharann summoned shields of arcane force to protect their warrior-thralls. The Nautilar would be joined by Tidecasters of the Mor'phann, who would drape the battlefield in freezing mists, slowing the furious momentum of the Slaaneshi assault.



While this force drew the Khainite and Slaaneshi forces into a battle of attrition, Volturnos would lead the best of the Ionrach's cavalry corps and Akhelian King Molpir's Fuethán Bloodriders in a charge to the heart of Hagg Nar. They would force a path through the gates of the Drathi Coran and into the First Temple itself, there to reclaim the Ocarian Lantern from the High Oracle's hands.

It was a gamble, for the divided Idoneth army would be left at the mercy of fate. Yet Volturnos knew that only bold action would prevent complete disaster. The time had come to risk all, for if the Ocarian Lantern was not recovered, everything his people had built would be at stake.

With the Astra Solus leading the way, the High King and his Akhelian Guard rode the shimmering ethersea into the skies, smashing a path through the shrieking Khinerai that flocked about them hurling javelins and spitting curses. Ahead rose the bladed spires of the Palace of the High Oracle. The largest structure in Hagg Nar, it was a soaring dome fashioned from the crystallised bodies of Morathi's defeated foes, kept alive and in a state of constant agony by the scáth-touch of her Melusai warriors. Somewhere beneath the Palace lay Khruthú, the underhall in which was housed the fabled Mother Cauldron, the Máthcoir.



# THE RITUAL

**The sounds of battle grew ever closer to the undercrofts of Hagg Nar, and now word came to the High Oracle of a Slaaneshi warhost that had joined the slaughter. Still, it was far too late to turn back now. Morathi stepped to the edge of the Máthcoir, gazing into the roiling depths of the Mother Cauldron.**

Across the Realm of Shadow, in each of the great towers erected by Morathi's followers upon the nexus points of the Shadowpaths, the sacrifices began. Champions of the Dark Gods – save those of hated Slaanesh – were dragged onto altars of black stone. As Hag Queens led their faithful in prayers to the Bloody-Handed God, the prisoners' throats were opened with ritual daggers. Their gushing life-essence spilled into grooved channels carved in the ancient stone, pouring into waiting Blood Cauldrons. The hot, sulphurous gore of Khorne worshippers blended with the congealed pus that ran in the veins of the Plague God's faithful, along with the silvery ichor of Tzeentchian sorcerers.

The Blood Cauldrons' mystical connection to Hagg Nar transformed the Mother Cauldron into a nexus of sorcerous power, a beating heart that drew in the damned souls of each slaughtered Chaos worshipper and sent them gushing along the arcane capillaries that connected Ulgu to the Twilight Realm of Uhl-Gysh. There, Slaanesh was bound in paradoxical chains of light and shadow. A ceaseless torrent of souls gushed into Slaanesh's belly.

At first the captive god was euphoric, for it had been a long time since he had feasted so well. Then he began to taste the notes of this unexpected bounty. He shuddered with revulsion as he recognised the sickening taint of his brother gods: the ugly foulness of Nurgle, the tedious wrath of Khorne and the artless scheming of Tzeentch. These were rotten victuals, sworn to his despised kin and marinated in their insipid fixations. They spilled down his gullet by the thousand, bloating his shackled form. Slaanesh shuddered and retched, and struggled against his chains, but he could no more break free than he could prevent the stream of sickening spirit-essence flooding into him. Through a haze of revulsion, the Dark Prince sensed an opening in the folds of reality – something had breached the wards of his prison.

Sensing that her moment had arrived, the High Oracle of Khaine raised the Iron Heart in one hand, took up the Ocarian Lantern in the other, and strode purposefully towards the Máthcoir. Choking clouds of crimson vapour billowed from the Mother Cauldron, filling the air with a heady reek of blood and sorcery. Morathi made her way up the stairway to the lip of the enormous bowl, and her attendants lost sight of her in the swirling mist. Boiling varanite surged, crashing and hissing as it tried to break free of its iron prison. Half-formed shapes could be seen within, their ghostly faces locked in expressions of utmost horror. In the centre of the cauldron was a sucking whirlpool, from which spilled colours and sounds unknown to mortal senses, and one by one the insubstantial forms were swept screaming into its embrace.

Morathi's ritual had forged a connection between the Máthcoir and the belly of the Dark Prince. The High Oracle could feel the tremors of Slaanesh's anguish emanating from the portal, and felt a surge of bitter satisfaction. She had inflicted upon her most hated enemy only a mere fragment of the suffering she had experienced at his hands. But it was a start nonetheless.



Raising the Ocarian Lantern, which filled the entire chamber with purest light, Morathi steeled her soul and stepped over the lip of the Mother Cauldron, and descended into the raging depths. The pain came first, blinding and all-encompassing. Morathi's alabaster skin peeled away, sloughing from her body like the hide of a serpent. When she opened her mouth to scream, raw varanite spilled down her throat, coursing through her veins and filling her lungs with liquid fire. The High Oracle could feel her very bones cracking apart and shifting into new configurations. A lesser being might have succumbed to these agonies, but not Morathi. An eternity of torment in the clutches of the Dark Prince had hardened her against the most hideous tortures imaginable, and now it allowed her to focus her mind and her will. Gritting her teeth, she raised the Ocarian Lantern high. The Teclian artefact blazed with scintillating radiance, its beam cutting through the bloody maelstrom.

***The physical world fell away, and Morathi found herself adrift amidst an ocean of colour and sensation that boiled and thrashed with motion. Above there was a blood-red sky, and hanging in that crimson canopy was a vast glittering portal through which could be glimpsed a grotesque immensity, its chained and distended form fashioned from screaming faces, their expressions alternating between agony and ecstasy.***

*If the Dark Prince noticed her presence, he could not show it – the captive god was thrashing and groaning in delirious fever as toxic souls, those sworn to his hated brothers, poured into him.*

*Morathi raised the Ocarian Lantern. The Teclian artefact spilled its piercing light through the rift, and the High Oracle began to draw wisps of soul-matter from within Slaanesh's godly frame.*

*Like a lighthouse amidst a raging ocean, the Lantern called forth spirits that had lingered in torment within the Dark Prince for countless centuries. They surged to freedom in their multitudes. Most were dull, ragged things, flickering with the merest traces of potential. These Morathi brushed aside dismissively. She sought those souls which blazed like stars, undiminished by the aeons they had spent in torturous bondage: the souls of ancient kings of the aelven race, who had, in another world, ruled over an empire unrivalled in its beauty and grace.*

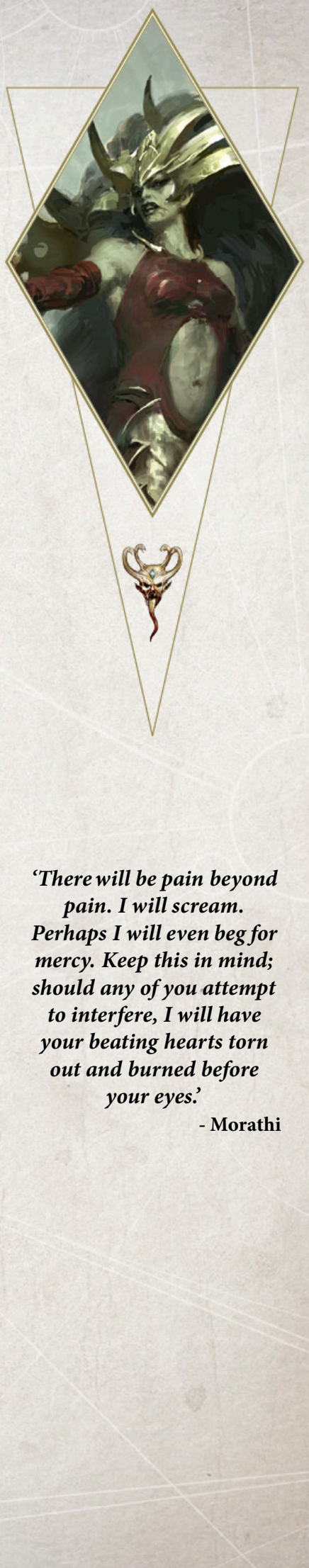
*Even now they bore a flicker of divinity. Within each burned the ember of a sacred flame, undimmed by the weight of ages. As these radiant souls reached out to her, Morathi felt a flood of stirring emotion. Some of these beings she had known, in a life long lost to her. Some she had hated. Some she had feared. One amongst them, she had even loved.*

*Memories both bitter and sweet swirled in her mind. The pang of her lonely existence briefly ached at her, but only for an instant; Morathi smothered that weakness, turned her heart to iron. She had come here for a single purpose, and no mortal emotion would intervene. Her body became that of a writhing serpent, formed from the deepest shadows. She seized the nearest of the king-souls in her coils and latched onto it with night-black fangs. Morathi drank deep, draining every drop of its potent power, leaving nothing but a husk of ash behind. Then, she snatched another and another, and each met the same doom as the first. Morathi screamed in triumph as she felt herself swelling with divine might.*

*Horrified, the king-souls tried to escape the Shadow Queen's grasp, but her grasping coils would not relent. Still, they possessed formidable power, and took mystical forms of their own to deny their betrayer. Some transformed into flame-winged eagles, swooping down to rake Morathi's eyes. Others summoned spears and blades of sunlight, or became waves of azure magic that struck at the Shadow Queen's serpentine form.*

*Yet with every one of their number consumed, Morathi grew mightier. One by one the king-souls were devoured, until only a single radiant spirit remained – perhaps the most powerful of all. On the threshold of her ascension, Morathi hesitated. This being she had once shared a closeness with that her cruel heart had never experienced before or since.*

*It was a moment of weakness that would cost her dearly. The king-soul – filled with rage at the slaughter of its kin – became a sword of fire and blood, a blazing brand that hewed straight through Morathi's soul, sundering the very core of her being. The Shadow Queen reeled and screeched in agony, black ichor pouring from the terrible wound. As Morathi fell into darkness, cleaved in twain, the bloated body of Slaanesh began to convulse. A chorus of demented groans issued from the captive god's thousand mouths, followed by a flood of glittering drool. This viscous torrent coalesced into a shimmering, protean shape that raced after the retreating Shadow Queen…*



***'There will be pain beyond pain. I will scream. Perhaps I will even beg for mercy. Keep this in mind; should any of you attempt to interfere, I will have your beating hearts torn out and burned before your eyes.'***

**- Morathi**



# MORATHI-KHAINE

**Spider-webbing cracks crept across the surface of the Mother Cauldron, and the undercroft of Khruthú echoed to the agonised shrieks of Morathi. Still, her attendants made no move to aid their mistress, for she had warned them on pain of death not to interrupt her moment of triumph.**

The Bloodsurf Hunt of King Nemmetar led the charge through the shadowed halls of the First Temple, his Allopexes tearing a swathe through the Khainite temple guards while their riders loosed volleys of harpoons and flesh-shredding nets. With every rending bite the blade-finned predators became more frenzied, but their blood-scent remained impeccable, leading Nemmetar and the High King unerringly to the great doors of Khruthú. Issuing from the chamber beyond came piercing screams of agony, mindless and bestial in nature. A blow from the Astra Solus sundered shadow-forged metal, and the High King's retinue burst into the inner chamber.

Ahead rose the Mother Cauldron, glowing red-hot as fracture lines rippled across its surface. Coils of crimson smoke poured out of the huge iron bowl, from which the pained screams emanated. Khruthú was not empty. Morathi's guardians charged to protect their mistress. Melusai champions lashed out at Nemmetar and his Allopexes with cruel glaives, while Blood Stalker archers loosed heart-seeking arrows. Volturnos rode Uasall into the heart of the Melusai, reaping a bloody harvest with the Astra Solus. None could stand before the High King's fury, and soon he and Nemmetar's Akhelians had carved a path to the base of the Máthcoir. What dire ritual the Khainites were conducting, he did not know, but it would end now. The blazing edge of the High King's sword struck the Mother Cauldron, which came apart with a shriek of twisted metal and an explosion of boiling blood. The force of the blast sent Volturnos and his steed hurtling across the underhall. Idoneth and Khainites alike were swallowed by a roaring tide of varanite that gushed forth from the Máthcoir.

## BIRTHED IN BLOOD

Glavia Sinheart's eyes were drawn to the spires of Hagg Nar as a sorcerous explosion tore through the roof of the Khainite fortress, sending up a column of crimson flames. From the heart of this inferno burst an indistinct shape, trailing lurid colours as it arced across the sky. It roared away from the Khainite citadel, screaming out across the ocean and leaving a massive plume of superheated steam in its wake. Sinheart gave a shriek of ecstatic joy, echoed by the rest of the Hedonites that stormed the shores of Hagganal Bay. To the astonishment of their hard-pressed foes, the Slaaneshi forces abandoned the slaughter without a second thought. They raced back to their quadriremes, leaping aboard the sleek vessels and turning in pursuit of the strange, glowing comet now disappearing over the horizon.

## MERCY OF A GODDESS

As the High Oracle's handmaidens and their Idoneth foes picked themselves up from the floor, all present stared in apprehension at the shattered remnant of the Mother Cauldron. Something was moving in the blood-red mists – a glistening, serpentine form with rippling membranous wings and a crown of hissing serpents. As the battered High King looked upon this nightmare, even his world-weary heart quickened with dread. The monster spread its wings wide, liquid realmstone cascading down its scales, and loosed a primal scream that shook the chamber. Then, from amongst the serpent thing's coils, another figure emerged, its teeth gleaming white within a mask of gore. Volturnos recognised the regal beauty of Khaine's Oracle at once. Her eyes fell upon him. He saw pain and exhaustion in that gaze, but both were outshone by the gleam of absolute triumph.

Volturnos named Morathi a thief, declaring death the only fitting punishment for her crimes. The High Oracle only smiled. It was not for mortals to pass judgement upon a goddess, she said. As Morathi strode across the ruined undercroft, the serpent thing matched her motion with eerie precision, each turn of the head and subtle motion mirroring that of the High Oracle. King Nemmetar and his riders descended upon the pair, Allopex bond-beasts snapping and tearing at the snake creature's scaled flank. The monster's eyes blazed a hellish crimson, and one of the Allopexes burst apart in a spray of viscera. Its lashing tail slammed into King Nemmetar's Deepmare, sending rider and mount crashing against the far wall. Nemmetar slumped to the floor, senseless. His steed was less fortunate – the blow had shattered its spine like it was dry coral.

High King Volturnos drove Uasall forwards, the Deepmare's jaws snapping at Morathi's throat. With a casual gesture, the High Oracle summoned snaking tendrils of black smoke that seized Uasall about the flank, dragging the noble beast to the ground. At the

same time, the winged monstrosity struck Volturnos a fearsome blow, smashing him from his saddle. The serpent creature loomed over him, the edge of its great spear resting on his neck. But before it could deliver the killing thrust, Morathi stepped in between her monstrous counterpart and Volturnos. Though she was covered in blood, the self-proclaimed goddess radiated a sense of regal assurance. In the searing crucible of the Mother Cauldron, she had bonded with the last vestiges of the Bloody-Handed God. She was the High Oracle no longer, but Morathi-Khaine.

The risen goddess ordered those few Akhelian warriors that had survived her wrath – King Nemmetar amongst them – to be released. To the shock of all, Morathi-Khaine then called for her Melusai attendants, and gave word that the armies of Hagg Nar should fall back, granting the savaged Idoneth clemency. Khainite and Idoneth need not be enemies, she said. Both had far more in common than not. They were exiles; outcasts despised by those who imagined themselves better, more *noble*. She spat the last word with undisguised hate. Teclis and his brother would destroy them both, said Morathi, if the power lay within their grasp. Yet together, they could form an alliance that would cause even the arrogant empires of Hysh to tremble.

Volturnos was reluctant to trust anyone that would steal from him and trespass into the Idoneth's most sacred places. How could he ever trust such a being with the fate of his people? Morathi-Khaine, to the High King's surprise, openly admitted her crimes. She offered no excuse, only a gesture of her good will. With a wave of her hand, she folded the shadows around her, summoning the Ocarian Lantern. It was broken, its light forever dimmed, but it had not been shattered. Volturnos raised a hand to fend off the fierce glare, but as he did so he saw sparkling energy dancing at the corners of his vision – shimmering lights like those of deep-sea glowfish, releasing a mournful dirge as they swirled about the chamber.

Morathi-Khaine stretched out her hand, letting the ethereal motes drift through her fingers. She had found the souls languishing in Slaanesh's gullet, she explained, and had called them towards the Lantern's light. Now she offered them freely, along with the stolen relic itself. These were the spirits of Cythai – the High King's kinmates, slain centuries ago, their essences thought beyond any hope of recovery. This offering was merely the beginning, promised Morathi-Khaine. The High King stared at her, his calculating mind playing through the ramifications of this unexpected offer. A being more driven by emotion would perhaps have shunned Morathi's proposal outright, for the Idoneth had lost many lives in the battle for Hagg Nar. Yet the aelves of the deep places – and especially the High King – were not given to such whims. Their harsh existence did not permit feelings to overcome cold practicality. The High King bade Morathi-Khaine to speak her piece.

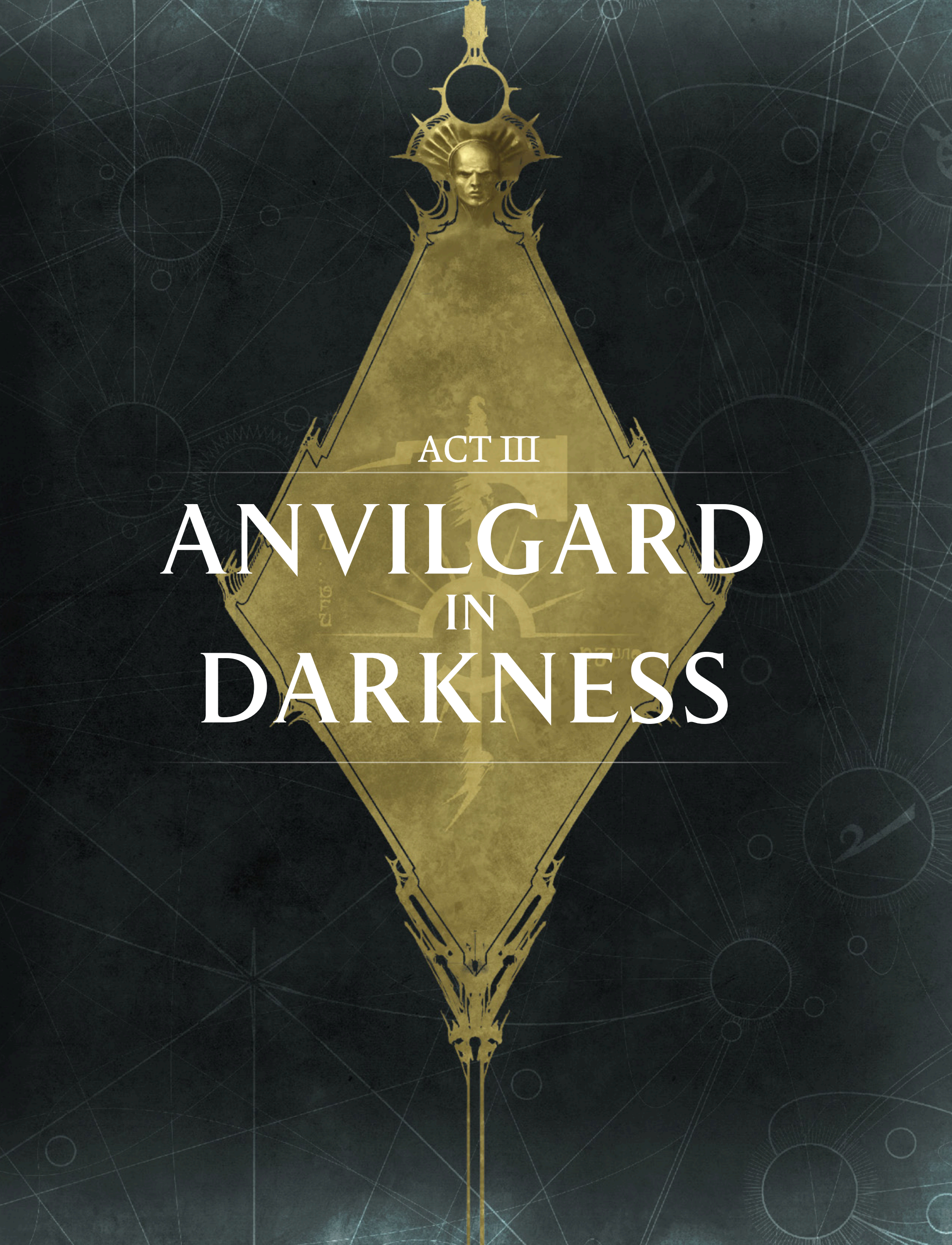




**In the pursuit of godhood, Morathi's essence had been cleaved in two. Now, she possessed two distinct forms united by a single soul: one, a regal sorceress, the other a wrathful monster known as the Shadow Queen. As High King Volturnos assaulted the underhall of Khruthú, the divided goddess indulged in her newfound power.**

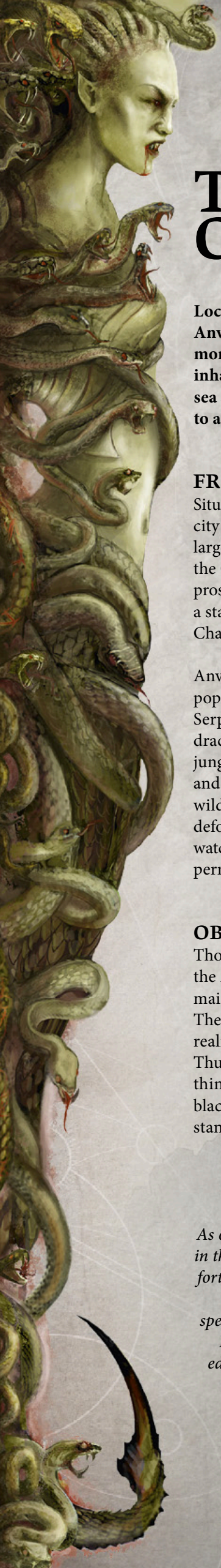






ACT III

# ANVILGARD IN DARKNESS



# THE CITY OF SCALES

**Located on the deadly frontier of the Great Parch, Anvilgard had fended off more invasions, ravenous monsters and Chaos raiding parties than its inhabitants could count. Heavily defended both at sea and on land, it presented a formidable challenge to any would-be conqueror.**

## FRONTIER STRONGHOLD

Situated on the steamy shores of the Searing Sea, the city of Anvilgard stands proud and free. Though not large or particularly populous by the standards of the God-King's cities, it has become one of the most prosperous trading ports in the Great Parch, and a staging ground for military expeditions into the Chaos-infested wilds of Aqshy.

Anvilgard is notable for the size of its aelven population, particularly beasthunters of the Order Serpentis, who ply their trade hunting the monstrous draconids and fire-spewing reptiles that prowl the jungles of the Charrwind Coast. Indeed, so deadly and fast-growing is the flora and fauna of the wilds beyond the city that it is only kept at bay by defoliating gases pumped into the air by Ironweld watchtowers, which drape the city in a semi-permanent grey murk.

## OBSIDIAN GUARDIANS

Though it is not the site of their foremost Stormkeep, the Anvils of the Heldenhammer have always maintained a sizeable presence in the City of Scales. Their stronghold – the Black Nexus – safeguards four realmgates, leading to prominent strategic locations. Thus, even when their numbers are stretched thin by the wars raging in distant lands, there are black-armoured sentinels of the deathly Stormhost standing guard over their ward city.





### *OLD FIRESNOUT AND THE BLACK NEXUS*

*As one of the foremost strongholds of Sigmar in the Realm of Fire, Anvilgard is formidably fortified. Its walls are protected by a number of mobile cogforts, including the flame-spewing behemoth known as* Old Firesnout. *Near the city's centre stands the imposing edifice of the Black Nexus – a Stormkeep of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer.*



Ziggurat of Ling

Canyons of Kaeris

The Shank

Trail of the Torchbearers

Ashgrot Marshes

Settlepier

Port Prosper

Ashcrawler Hives

Mist Valley

Fort Foothold

Black Kraken hunting grounds



*AGONISER*

*Personal flagship of the notorious Fleetmaster Taras Nightscour, the Black Ark* Agoniser *is a recent sighting on the tides of the Searing Sea, accompanied by a large flotilla of Scourge vessels.*

SEARING SEA

Black Ark Agoniser

Spitecrag

CHARRWIND COAST

The Blazing Claws

FREE CITY OF ANVILGARD

Stabba Skrit

The Wailing Grove

The Steam Falls

Aqthracite Delves

Callidium

Heinstorm's Pass

Vostargi Waycamp

BRUTOS HILLS

The Smoulderveins

Barter's Plain

Koltan Lavaflow

Sootstrider Encampment

King's Claim

The Redplains

Daimon's Crossing

Battlefield of Stricken Souls

Ven Arber Estates

The Solemn King

ARIDIAN

Charidor Hunting Grounds

Ruins of Ahramentia

Mouldboil's Dwelling

# THE GRIP OF FEAR

**Long has the sweltering port-city of Anvilgard been a place of changeable loyalties. Though ruled over by a conclave of Sigmarite loyalists, much of its populace answered to another master – the shadowy cabal of aelven renegades known as the Blackscale Coil.**

The folk of Anvilgard had always been regarded as a hardy people, tempered by the brutal environs in which they lived, and known far and wide for their great courage. Yet when High Arbiter Concelius Gour became the latest city dignitary to suffer a gruesome death – murdered by poison in the chambers of his fortress-like estate under the nose of his personal guard, even the city's most grizzled trappers and frontier scouts began to mutter darkly of the terror that had come to the City of Scales. If even the city's master of laws was not safe, then was anyone?

The abductions and killings had begun no more than a half-season earlier. The victims were prominent civic and military leaders: captains of the watch, admirals of the Charrwind fleet, merchant princes, priests and politicians. Pillars of the hierarchy all, whose sudden disappearance sent a wave of paranoia rippling from the docks of Bleakscale Harbour on the shores of the Searing Sea to the gilded manor houses of Firstwall-on-the-Line. Some blamed the grots that dwelled within the surrounding jungles and periodically swarmed forth to raid and pillage. Others swore blind they had seen scampering rat-things the size of men abroad at night. Some even muttered that agents of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer – those foreboding warriors whose Stormkeep rose at the centre of the city – had been abroad, purging the faithless and corrupt.

A few, more world-wise souls whispered another name – that of the dreaded Blackscale Coil. For as long as anyone could remember, this syndicate of aelven corsairs and renegades had controlled all vice and illicit trade along the Charrwind Coast. It was said that they had agents embedded throughout Anvilgard. They even held sway over the high conclave itself, if the rumours were to be believed. Perhaps these powerful criminal lords were at last making a play for outright dominance?



## THE SOVEREIGN'S DEMAND

In truth, the ringleaders of the Coil had their own reservations about this spate of murder and mayhem, for indeed it was they who had carried them out at the orders of their mysterious faceless master, known only as the Sovereign.

The cabal had always preferred anonymity. Its modus operandi had ever been to remain in the shadows – to operate through fear, subterfuge and subtle manipulation rather than outright brutality. It counted amongst its number several sorceresses of the Darkling Covens, whose mind-leashing magics had proved most effective in establishing a network of spies and informants throughout Anvilgard. This had been a most profitable strategy over the years. Even the Order of Azyr – the God-King's feared witchfinders – had been unable to uncover any adamant proof of the cabal, only a raft of unsubstantiated rumours.

Indeed, there were many in the upper echelons of Anvilgard society who denied the mere possibility that such an organisation could exist. After all, how could any criminal network have operated freely for so long in the very heart of one of the God-King's cities? No, surely the abductions must be the work of some nefarious cult or malign actor from far afield. This was exactly the version of events that the Coil sought to propagate, of course, and one spread at every opportunity by their agents in the city's conclave. Even while the Coil's puppet lords scoffed and sneered and misdirected, the cabal carried out the Sovereign's ruthless will.

So it had been for many long years, and the Scourge Fleetmasters, warlocks and lords of the Order Serpentis who made up the shadow council of the Blackscale Coil had grown incredibly powerful and wealthy in that time. Many of them were loath to risk such power without good cause, yet none were prepared to deny the will of the Sovereign. Anyone who did so had a tendency to come to a swift and unpleasant end. The Sovereign's major-domo and herald – the sorceress Drusa Kraeth – had spies everywhere. Her Coven of the Serpent's Blood was greater in number than even the Anvilgard Freeguilds, so it was whispered, a host of mind-leashed fanatics that obeyed her every desire without compunction. Many of Kraeth's hidden agents had not the least idea of their true allegiance, so potent were the sorceress's enchantments.

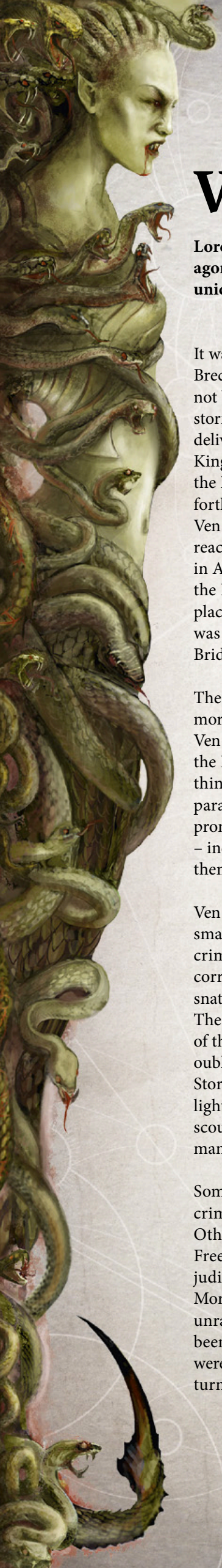


The greater aim of their campaign of terror may have escaped the leaders of the Blackscale Coil, but its effect upon the populace did not. Fear spread through Anvilgard like the chemical vapours that billowed through its gloomy streets each morning. All within the City of Scales could sense something foreboding on the wind.

### THE BLACKSCALE COIL

Weaving their plots from the shadowed corners of the City of Scales, the mysterious cabal known as the Blackscale Coil has come to dominate trade within Anvilgard, and rules over its thriving criminal underclass with an iron fist. Its leadership is comprised of an ever-shifting circle of aelven notables – corsairs, sorcerers and cut-throats – united by a desire to further the interests of aelf-kind above the lesser races, and a determination to keep firm their stranglehold on the city's markets. The Coil rarely meets in person, for secrecy is paramount to the organisation's effectiveness. Instead, they communicate via a network of mistmirrors – sorcerous devices through which one can project a shadowy, insubstantial version of oneself. Every member of the cabal pays homage to a mysterious entity known simply as the Visharhein – or the Sovereign, in the common tongue – from whom they receive their orders.

Though its influence is far-reaching, the cabal is not all-powerful in Anvilgard. Many Scourge Fleetmasters and Sorceresses of the Covens still see loyalty to the God-King as the surest way to grow their power, and would baulk at any notion of open sedition. Thus, agents of the Coil must rely upon manipulation and secrecy to achieve their ends. Such figures can be found in every stratum of society, from government officials and apparently straight-laced agents of the Office of Tithes and Duties, to the lowest of censer bearers and city watchmen. Many have no idea they serve the cabal, for they have been indoctrinated with the subtle enchantments of Darkling Coven sorceresses, to be activated as sleeper agents when the need arises. Others are recruited via more mundane means, most commonly threats or blackmail.



# VEN BRECHT'S RETURN

**Lord-Veritant Keiser Ven Brecht had fallen at the battle of Varanthax's Maw, to be remade in lightning and agony in the Sigmarabulum. From there, he was dispatched across the Sky Bridges to Anvilgard, where his unique talents were in urgent demand.**

It was not the first time that Lord-Veritant Keiser Ven Brecht had fallen in battle, and it would certainly not be the last. He had been remade upon the stormy altar of the Anvil of Apotheosis, and had delivered his urgent missive directly to the God-King. Sigmar received the news of the disaster in the Eightpoints gravely, and immediately ordered forth fresh reinforcements to relieve the survivors. Ven Brecht would not be joining them. Word had reached the court of Sigmaron concerning the unrest in Anvilgard, and – as a warrior of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer – the Lord-Veritant was well placed to root out the cause of this disharmony. He was immediately dispatched along the celestial Sky Bridges to the Stormkeep of the Black Nexus.

The inability to aid Nihilat and his warriors in a more practicable manner was a crueller torment for Ven Brecht than even the agony of Reforging. Still, the Lord-Veritant had no time to brood upon such things. The city of Anvilgard was caught in the grip of paranoia. Citizens were disappearing, amongst them prominent figures. Worse still, Anvilgard's garrison – including the Anvils of the Heldenhammer themselves – was spread ominously thin.

Ven Brecht acted swiftly. His Stormcast agents smashed down the doors of the city's most notorious criminals and those public figures suspected of corruption, dragging them from their beds or snatching them from the street in full view of all. These prisoners were taken in chains to the dungeons of the Black Nexus for questioning, thrown into oubliettes as their protests fell upon the deaf ears of Stormcast Eternal guards. One by one, the blazing light of the Lord-Veritant's Lantern of Abjuration scoured their minds for signs of corruption, causing many to go mad with pain.

Some of those taken were little more than petty criminals, and possessed no secrets of interest. Others, however – including merchant-lords, Freeguild officers and even members of the Anvilgard judiciary – showed signs of mental domination. More troubling still, as soon as Ven Brecht began to unravel the full extent of the enchantments that had been laid so skilfully upon them, these unfortunates were overcome by sudden, fatal seizures, their blood turning to black acid in their veins. The Lord-Veritant emerged from the dungeons with but a single name, repeated many times over by stricken prisoners in their last, agonised moments – that of the Blackscale Coil. This criminal fraternity was not unknown to the sentinels of Anvilgard, but the reach of its influence disturbed even Ven Brecht. Yet before he could plot his next move, word reached the Lord-Veritant of a most unexpected development. No less august a being than Morathi, High Oracle of Khaine, had come to the city of Anvilgard, at the head of a retinue of Khainite warriors.

## THE COUNCIL ASSEMBLES

The Lord-Veritant made at once for Dauntless Hall, the imposing structure in which the high conclave assembled for council. A fortified slab of volcanic rock capped by parapets and watchtowers, it was as harsh and formidable as the city in which it lay.

Morathi entered Anvilgard by the Bleakscale docks, accompanied by silver-armoured Melusai attendants. It was the first time that Ven Brecht had seen the serpentine warriors on the streets of a free city. The High Oracle's procession slowly wound its way towards the city's capitol, taking a noticeably circuitous route that afforded the citizenry ample time to gaze upon Morathi's glorious presence. Anvilgardians stared at the fierce-looking Khainite soldiers with a combination of fear and awe as they slithered past in perfect formation. Observing from the stairs of Dauntless Hall, even Ven Brecht was forced to admit that the High Oracle cut an impressive figure; she seemed entirely unbowed by her travails within Archaon's domain as she was drawn regally through the streets upon her iron altar of Khaine. Indeed, it seemed to Ven Brecht that the Khainite leader came to Anvilgard not as a priestess or diplomat, but as a conqueror.

As Morathi strode into the audience chamber of Dauntless Hall, the assembled dignitaries received the High Oracle with awed adoration. High Matriarch Tarvilla Etain herself bade Morathi welcome to the City of Scales with barely concealed relief – surely this ally of the God-King would help the city root out the devils that were preying upon its citizens? It was a sentiment shared by Ironweld forge-lord and Freeguild General alike. Only Ven



Brecht met the High Oracle with suspicion instead of deference. How, he inquired, had the High Oracle escaped the disastrous expedition to the Eightpoints, and what had brought her as far afield as Anvilgard at this desperate hour?

Morathi did not betray a flicker of anger as she turned to address the Lord-Veritant, and her answer came without hesitation. Her mission beneath Varanthax's Maw had been successful, she said, but the enemy had been fast on her heels. She had fled the Eightpoints alongside her Stormcast allies, before they had realised the danger that Lord-Celestant Nihilat found himself in. Word had been dispatched to Azyr, the High Oracle promised, and surely reinforcements were already on their way to relieve the survivors. With a cold smile, Morathi offered her deepest sympathies to Ven Brecht for any trauma he may have suffered during his Reforging, and her profound hope that he would suffer none of the terrible side-effects that plagued so many of his resurrected kin. There was an audible gasp at this, for it was forbidden by the law of Azyr to give voice to the rumours that swirled regarding the changes wrought upon the Stormcast Eternals by their constant resurrections. Perhaps Ven Brecht was not himself, Morathi continued. She had already heard rumours of his heavy-handed justice. Had those who languished within the dungeons of the Black Nexus – some of whom were high-ranking members of the Anvilgard hierarchy – been treated with due fairness?

Ven Brecht maintained a stoic silence, revealing no hint of his ire. Still, he heard the whispers of the attending delegates as a nervous tension settled over the hall. Speaking in his familiar death-rattle tone, the Lord-Veritant reminded all present that his mandate had no limits when it came to acts of sedition or heresy.

Morathi, apparently ignoring the steel in Ven Brecht's words, explained that she had been made aware of the growing strife in Anvilgard from priestesses of the Khainite temple of Khelt Nar, who maintained a gladiatorial pit within its walls. She was here to root out the evil at large within the city. Her words were met with rapturous applause, and no small amount of relief, for many present feared that they would be the next soul to be dragged away into the mists, never to be seen again. Lord-Veritant Ven Brecht was not so quick to celebrate. The inquisitor had spent years uncovering lies, and though he had no proof, he could taste the deception in the High Oracle's words. It was not happenstance that had led her to Anvilgard, just as it seemed the city was at its most vulnerable.

Yet without evidence, any accusation Ven Brecht made of duplicity on Morathi's part would be easily refuted. Instead, the Lord-Veritant coldly welcomed her to the City of Scales, and departed from the hall. All the way to the door, he could feel the High Oracle's gaze boring into him.



# TERROR IN THE MIST

**The spate of murders and disappearances that had struck Anvilgard had left its citizenry fearful, and as they saw a great swell of soupy fog drifting in from the ocean, their trepidation only increased. This was no natural phenomenon – where it settled over the city, it brought with it a disorienting paranoia.**

At first, the billowing mist that rolled in across the Searing Sea seemed unremarkable enough, for the streets of Anvilgard were perennially draped in fog, a by-product of the plant-withering gases pumped into the air by Ironweld watchtowers in an attempt to keep the jungles of the Charrwind Coast at bay. Yet as an impenetrable shroud settled over Bleakscale Harbour, the city's inhabitants began to realise that something was awry. To those who stumbled into the chilling clouds it seemed that the world slowed around them; the air shimmered as if glimpsed through a clouded mirror, and every breath felt like icy seawater flooding into the lungs.

From the harbour, the mists spread swiftly. They swept into the Gullies, the tumbledown districts where the poor lived cramped together in their ghila-hide huts. They crept over Hammercroft, the duardin quarters, and the Freeguild cogfort known as *Old Firesnout*. The crack of cannonshot and musketry could be heard echoing across Anvilgard. Recognising the folly of pushing blind into the mist, companies of Freeguild Guard – the majority of them consisting of battle-hardened Charrwind Rangers, the city's elite troops – attempted to form up into defensible positions. Each was soon isolated amidst an impenetrable shroud. As the Rangers peered into the mists, hails of missiles rained in amongst them, punching through drake-hide armour and steel chain. Scores toppled screaming to the floor, riddled with barbed bolts. Reeling from the onslaught, the Freeguild forces fell back in 'shell-kraken' formation, holding their shields high above their heads as Helblaster Volley Guns fired blindly into the murk in a vain attempt to provide cover fire.

Across the city, bloodied squads of guilders muttered prayers to the God-King as they saw the angular helms of aelven warriors marching out of the mists in perfect formation. These newcomers wore the deep burgundy of the city's aelven auxiliaries. Reinforcements, they believed, from the coven-temples. That relief soon turned to horror. With blank indifference upon their faces, the aelven cohorts drove their spears into the bellies of their unsuspecting allies, or hacked them down with contemptuous blows of their hooked swords. Sorceress Drusa Kraeth observed the slaughter approvingly from the back of her Black Dragon, Klarronaxes. Her mind-leashed warriors drove the broken formations of Charrwind Rangers back street by street. Despite the confusion, the Freeguilders gave good account of themselves. Many of Kraeth's thralls fell to disciplined musketfire, or were impaled on resolute spear-walls. Yet inch by bloody inch, the Charrwind Rangers were forced to give ground. Soon, they had been pressed all the way to the docks of Bleakscale Harbour. There they waited for the enemy to come, determined to sell their lives dearly.

Clutching muskets and spears in quivering hands, the guilders felt cold water trickling across their skin. The air grew heavy, their breathing ragged and laboured. Blastpowder was sodden, and torches sputtered out. Sleek shapes circled the stricken soldiers, drawing closer and closer.

When the end came, it came from the sea.



At the Black Nexus, the Anvils of the Heldenhammer were assembling for battle. Messengers were dispatched through the Stormkeep's four realmgates to the nearest free cities, requesting immediate aid. The nature of the enemy was still unclear. Kraeth's spies had circulated as much disinformation as possible, and so there were conflicting reports; some claimed the city was besieged by an army of the dead, whole others spoke of an uprising of the Change God's worshippers. Commanding the city's Stormcast Eternal garrisons was Lord-Castellant Ephrem Vanhelm, an experienced siegebreaker. He at once directed Lord-Veritant Ven Brecht to take his retinue and make safe Dauntless Hall, for the conclave had sheltered there, and would surely be amongst the foe's first targets.

Rumours had already reached Ven Brecht of aelven warriors taking up arms against the city, and he

took them as confirmation of his darkest suspicions. Morathi's presence in Anvilgard and this sudden uprising must surely be connected, he told the Lord-Castellant. The longer they waited to act, the more desperate their position would become. By cutting off the head of the serpent they could end this insurrection at a stroke.

Vanhelm trusted Ven Brecht's instincts, but without proof he dared not declare war against an ally of the God-King. In any case, he could not march upon the Khainites without leaving large sections of the city undefended. Much of the Anvils' military force was on campaign, and they had but a few hundred warriors to defend a city of thousands; a formidable force, to be sure, but one that he could not afford to divide. Secure Dauntless Hall, he bade Ven Brecht, and find proof of the High Oracle's duplicity. If his suspicions were proven correct, Morathi would indeed face judgement. Ven Brecht feared that by then, it would already be too late too save the city. But it was not his place to question the Lord-Castellant's command – defence of the city did not fall within his purview. And so he recited an oath of fortune to his comrade, and went to gather his retinue.

## STREETS OF DEATH

As Ven Brecht made for Dauntless Hall, Lord-Castellant Vanhelm dispatched several units from the Angelos Conclaves with orders to scout the city as best they could, allowing him to form a more cohesive picture of the situation. As Prosecutors launched themselves from the highest spires of the Black Nexus, squadrons of shield-bearing Liberators marched from its gatehouse to secure the thoroughfares leading to First Circle – the beating heart of the city, where Anvilgard's noble districts and halls of governance were located. Drusa Kraeth and the Coven of the Serpent's Blood were waiting, concealed by the swirling mists. The right hand of the Sovereign had at her command the full might of the Blackscale Coil, including reinforcements from the Black Ark *Agoniser*, captained by an arrogant Ulguan Fleetmaster that called himself Taras Nightscour. The Sovereign had been clear in their commands – not a single Stormcast was to be slain, for none must not be allowed to die and make the journey to Azyr to bring word of Anvilgard's peril.

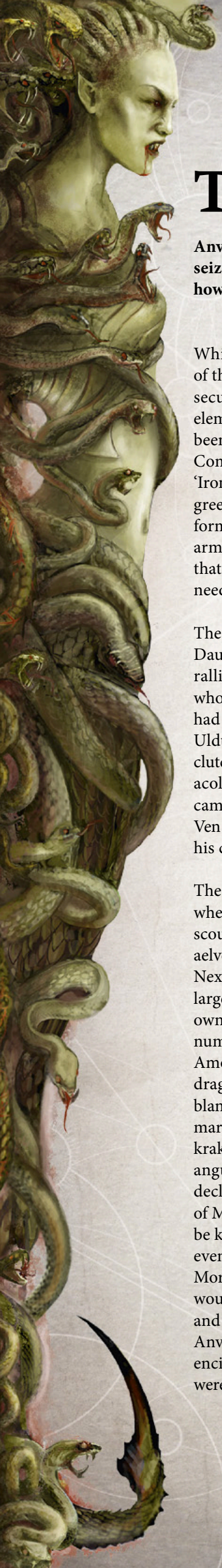
To defeat a Stormcast garrison – reduced in number though it was – without deadly force was a daunting proposition. Yet Kraeth could call upon some of the finest beast-hunters in the Mortal Realms, not only those of the Scourge, but also the cold-hearted knights of the Order Serpentis and their monstrous drakespawn steeds. Prosecutors were snatched from the sky by steel nets, or brought down with hails of crossbow bolts laced with the paralytic venom of shadowstealers and spitter-mantids. Patrols of Liberators were charged by packs of Drakespawn Knights whose lances were similarly dripping with debilitating poisons. Each black-clad Stormcast Eternal reaped a grievous toll before they eventually succumbed to the numbing poisons seeping into their veins. Even the lightning-blooded champions of Azyr could not withstand toxins that aelven poison-brewers had developed to bring down the immense draconids of the Charrwind jungles.

Lord-Castellant Vanhelm soon realised that the traitors' numbers vastly outnumbered his own, and they clearly possessed an intimate knowledge of the city. Though it galled him to do so, he ordered his remaining warriors to fall back to the safety of the Black Nexus.

### DRUSA KRAETH, VOICE OF THE SOVEREIGN



The sorceress Drusa Kraeth is the matron of the Coven of the Serpent's Blood, an order of aelven spellcasters that has served Anvilgard for many years. She is also the right hand of the Sovereign, speaking with the full authority of that enigmatic entity as she directs the operations of the Blackscale Coil. Indeed, it is said that she is one of the few beings to know her master's true identity. In effect, Kraeth has ruled Anvilgard for decades from behind a veil of secrecy, so effectively that only a handful of the city's denizens have ever seen her face – usually a few moments before their minds are scoured, pulled apart and remade in order to better suit her needs. A master of mind-leashing enchantments, Kraeth has assembled an army of enthralled agents throughout the free city, 'whisperers' that inform her of every notable event that occurs within its walls. Similar methods are used to keep a close eye on her fellow members of the Coil, of course, for they are an ambitious company, never to be trusted.



# THE PRECIPICE OF RUIN

**Anvilgard was poised to fall. Drusa Kraeth and her forces had laid waste to its Freeguild regiments, and seized several key strongholds across the city. Lord-Veritant Keiser Ven Brecht determined to fight on, however, no matter the odds.**

While his comrades fought and fell in the streets of their warden city, Lord-Veritant Ven Brecht secured Dauntless Hall, linking up with the scattered elements of the Charrwind Rangers that had not been lost during the initial assault on the city. Commanded by the aging Freeguild General Dignan 'Ironwhiskers' Crant, these troops consisted of mostly greenhorn recruits and grey-haired veterans, reserve formations responsible for militia duties, but still well armed and capable. The Lord-Veritant recognised that at this desperate hour, every willing hand was needed for the defence of Anvilgard.

These were not the only loyalists that had rallied to Dauntless Hall. Warden King Matlo Loriksson had rallied a company of grim-faced duardin Longbeards, who were aching to test their axes against those who had dared invade their home city. The Cogsmith Uldur Flamebeard had also managed to escape the clutches of the enemy with a number of steamhand acolytes, while from the Chapel of the Sacred Flail came thousands of wailing flagellants. Slowly, Ven Brecht began to gather a cohesive force under his command.

The growing sense of optimism was soon shattered when word finally came from the Lord-Veritant's scouts that the enemy had at last revealed itself. An aelven army had surrounded the walls of the Black Nexus, trapping Lord-Castellant Vanhelm and the larger part of the Anvils' battle strength in their own Stormkeep. No longer caring to conceal their numbers, the traitors had emerged by the thousand. Amongst their ranks were corsairs of the Black Arks, dragon-riding lords of the Order Draconis and silent, blank-eyed warriors of the Darkling Covens. They marched beneath banners depicting the traditional kraken's head of Anvilgard but defaced with an angular aelven rune. The bearers of these banners declaimed the annexed city a subject of the empire of Morathi-Khaine, and that it would thenceforth be known as Har Kuron. Ven Brecht absorbed these events, playing the consequences out in his mind. Morathi had made her play, as he had suspected she would. Clearly she had allies throughout the city, and spies everywhere. There was no other way that Anvilgard's regiments could have been so efficiently encircled and destroyed. The Lord-Veritant's options were few; the army of the Darkling Covens that had encircled the Black Nexus outnumbered his small force at least thrice over. Who could know what other forces lay hidden in the mists, waiting to ambush any who strayed above ground?

Yet for all the enemy's subtlety, they had not yet entirely secured Anvilgard. According to Cogsmith Flamebeard, the Freeguild cogfort *Old Firesnout* had been captured and its occupants slain, but the piston-powered stronghold had not been destroyed. A lumbering iron behemoth as large as a castle and bristling with cannon-towers and flame-spitting turrets, *Old Firesnout* was a fearsome construction. If it could be secured, not only would the loyalists have gunned-up monster of a fortress at their disposal, but one that could be moved into position to cause the enemy grievous losses. Flamebeard assured the Lord-Veritant that he and his small crew of acolytes could operate the cogfort, if somehow they could get inside. It was fortunate then, that the loyalist forces counted the Dispossessed amongst their number. Warden King Matlo Loriksson assured Ven Brecht that the duardin-built catacombs that wound beneath Anvilgard would get them to the belly of the cogfort.

## TUNNELS OF DEATH

Leaving behind a contingent of Freeguild to safeguard Dauntless Hall, Ven Brecht led General Crant's troops and the rest of his warriors into the undertunnels of Anvilgard. They followed Warden King Loriksson through the maze-like network that comprised the city's sewer system.

For long miles they marched in silence, sweltering inside their armour, for deep below Anvilgard the temperatures rose to almost unbearable levels. Ven Brecht had hoped to avoid confrontation with the enemy, but that proved a vain wish. The insurrectionists lacked the duardin's keen sense for subterranean distances, and had therefore sealed off the tunnels rather than risk clearing them out. Yet they had not left them unguarded; beastmasters of the Order Serpentis in thrall to Kraeth had driven their most fearsome monsters underground to hound and savage any duardin who might use them as sanctuary. As his forces neared their destination, Ven Brecht saw the glow of hellish fires spill from the corridors ahead, and the ground began to shake.



Thundering out of the darkness came many-headed War Hydras and Kharibdysses, hissing and shrieking as they caught the scent of prey on the foetid wind. Driven by its aelven handlers, one of the Hydras crashed into Loriksson and his Ironbreakers, crushing duardin beneath its massive bulk and roasting others alive in their armour. The Dispossessed did not flee, instead standing stubbornly in formation as they hewed at the monster's legs. Loriksson himself brought the beast crashing to the ground as he shattered one of its hindlimbs with a blow from his rune hammer, his warriors crowding around its thrashing form to hack it apart. Ven Brecht fought nearby, his Judicators blasting craters in the monsters' scaly hides with volleys of crackling arrows, while packs of Gryph-hounds ripped and clawed at the beasts' softer underbellies.

Only after scores of duardin lay dead was the last of the beasts slain, its handlers put to the sword and the creature's corpse incinerated by a unit of Irondrakes with their flame-spewing drakeguns. Wiping black ichor from the face of his hammer, Warden King Loriksson observed the bodies of his fallen brethren, scowling in fury. He would gather the rest of his kin, he promised Ven Brecht, and along with Cogsmith Flamebeard and his steamhands, they would secure the cogfort. When the final reckoning came, the traitorous aelves would pay a hundredfold for every slain duardin. The Warden King departed, but not before directing Ven Brecht towards a tunnel that would lead him to the edge of the Square of the First Rite, where the Anvils' Stormkeep was located. Ven Brecht aimed to draw the enemy to battle, relieving Lord-Castellant Vanhelm's forces and buying time for Loriksson to even the odds.

Night had fallen thick and silent across Anvilgard by the time Ven Brecht's small force neared the walls of the Black Nexus. The Stormkeep was surrounded by the flickering torches of thousands of aelven warriors assembled beneath the banners of the Coven of the Serpent's Blood and Har Kuron, as well as the cruel heraldries of several Scourge Fleetmasters and Order Serpentis Dreadlords. Though the walls of the Black Nexus concealed a cluster of four realmgates, it appeared that no reinforcements had arrived to liberate the city. Whether aid was on its way or Morathi had managed to isolate Anvilgard from the other free cities of Aqshy, Ven Brecht did not know. Whatever the case, time was running short. Already the walls of the Stormkeep were being hammered by a rain of projectiles hurled by scores of bolt throwers.

*Before the walls of the Black Nexus the Anvils of the Heldenhammer made their last stand, facing an endless tide of insurrectionists and the full might of the goddess Morathi-Khaine.*



# SHADOWS RISING

**Though outnumbered and cut off from his allies, Lord-Veritant Ven Brecht led the counter-attack against the sorceress Kraeth and her fellow insurrectionists. He had sworn to defend the God-King's city until his last breath, but he would soon face the true power seeking to conquer the City of Scales.**

The Black Nexus was more than a simple fort; it was a towering citadel, built to house hundreds of Stormcast Eternals and impervious to all but the most ferocious assault. Its walls were enchanted invictunite and its towers bristled with arcane ballistas. Booming defiantly from the ornately sculpted walls of the great fortress came a sonorous chanting as Anvils recited oaths of battle that predated the formation of Sigmar's first empire, readying their souls for the battle soon to come.

As they emerged into the Square of the First Rite, the voices of Ven Brecht's contingent joined those of their brethren, and the eerie battle-dirge sent a chill into the heart of even the knights of the Order Serpentis as it drifted across the city. Trailing wisps of violet light circled above the marching Stormcast Eternals – ancestral spirits, perhaps, solemn witnesses to their doomed march. The Lord-Veritant did not go unseen. Kraeth's spies had brought word of the loyalist army long before they reached the Stormkeep. The brazenness of their approach made the sorceress uneasy. Surely the Sigmarites understood that they could not hope to triumph with such meagre numbers – no more than a hundred or so Stormcast Eternals and a scattering of human irregulars. Yet her scouts could locate no hidden force lying in ambush, and the Sovereign had assured her that no reinforcements would be coming through the realmgates of the Black Nexus. Kraeth ordered the army of Har Kuron to wheel about, temporarily abandoning their siege in order to repel this new host. The Sovereign's orders were the same – the Stormcast Eternals must be taken alive. Any others that remained loyal to the God-King were subject to no such mercy.



Dreadspears followed the mental commands of their sorceress masters, forming into bristling phalanxes. Chariots funnelled through gaps in the battleline, their aelven crews lining up harpoon launchers and hefting javelins. Black Ark Corsairs watched the loyalists advance across the square, jeering and spinning their duelling swords disdainfully.

Their arrogance was blunted somewhat when Ven Brecht's Judicators loosed a volley of lightning arrows. The missiles lit up the night sky before whipping down into the traitors' ranks. Darkling warriors were blasted from their feet, limbs twitching as the celestial missiles did their lethal work. Directed by the Lord-Veritant, the Stormcast archers focused their shots at the enemy's leaders. Sorceresses were brought down in a hail of crackling arrows, for Ven Brecht knew that it was the presence of spellcasters that bound the armies of the Darkling Covens as one. For once, the enemy could not pick the loyalists off at a distance, for their crossbows lacked the range of the Stormcasts' skybolt bows. Ven Brecht ordered his Liberators to form into a circle of shields, protecting the archers as they kept up their deadly barrage.

Seeking to end the battle swiftly, Kraeth sent her troops rushing forward. Drakespawn Chariots circled Ven Brecht's position, trying to draw the Stormcast Eternals out with volleys of javelins that clattered off the Anvils' shields. Scourge Corsairs began to hurl glass orbs filled with choking gases that fogged the mind and dulled the senses, and Scourgerunner Chariots shot barbed nets laced with tentaclid venom. Each fallen warrior left a gaping hole in Ven Brecht's lines, and soon the enemy had them surrounded. It was then that a fiery glow washed across the battlefield, and all present heard a cacophony in the distance, growing louder by the moment.

## ANVILGARD'S LAST STAND

Kraeth's eyes were drawn to the east, where a vast, smoke-belching shape was thundering across the city on piston-driven limbs, pulverising all in its path as it barrelled towards the Black Nexus. The walking fortress known as *Old Firesnout* bristled with gun towers, mortar batteries and incinerator turrets. Flames erupted from the muzzle of the metal monster, and the sorceress saw a rippling blast of orange smoke as its culverin arrays fired. Screaming volleys of cannonshot scythed through formations of Darkshards and Dreadspears, blasting scores of aelven warriors to bloody mist. Helstorm rocket batteries built into the iron behemoth's crown opened fire, the wailing missiles arcing across the sky on smoking contrails before detonating amongst Kraeth's troops in blossoming fireballs.

The cogfort crushed the enemy beneath its huge, piston-driven limbs and spat great gouts of flame into their ranks. As it came to a halt before the gates of the Black Nexus, its metal belly lowered to the ground. Hundreds of duardin and Freeguild warriors spilled forth, bellowing battle cries and chanting the name of their home city. Warden King Loriksson and his Longbeards crashed into the rear of the traitors, hacking and hewing with long-hafted axes. Handgunners loosed punishing salvoes of lead shot, while packs of Scourge corsairs still loyal to the city appeared on nearby rooftops to shower the foe with poisoned bolts – not all the aelves of Anvilgard had abandoned their oaths to Sigmar.



The sight of these precious reinforcements stirred the hearts of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer, and once more their sonorous voices echoed above the thunder of muskets and the clash of blades as they roared their ancient battle-dirges. Caught between the guns of the cogfort and the hammers of the vengeful Stormcasts, even the mind-leashed warriors of the Darkling Covens began to waver. The Dreadspear formations were losing their vital cohesion, even as Drusa Kraeth and her fellow sorceresses tried in vain to steady them.

Ven Brecht saw the sorceress upon her black dragon struggling to maintain order in her ranks, and he ordered his warriors to drive a path towards her. Slay their leader, and surely the will of the Darkling forces would be shattered. He cut a bloody swathe through milling Bleakswords, his blade lashing out to split skulls and open throats as his Judicators redirected their fire at the dragon. The beast beat its great wings, trying to rise above the battlefield, but Ven Brecht's Lantern of Abjuration blazed with purifying light that washed across the sorceress. Kraeth screamed in agony as her eyes were seared by the punishing radiance, tumbling from the saddle even as her mount expired, its heart pierced by a dozen arrows. Ven Brecht strode through the melee towards the fallen sorceress, raising his sword for the killing blow.

A shadow fell across him. He looked up to see something vast racing through the misty clouds. He caught a glimpse of night-black scales, and heard the beating of leathery wings.

Descending from the sky on a trail of darkness, the Shadow Queen crashed down upon the parapets of *Old Firesnout*. Heartrender whipped out, puncturing a rotary turret and its duardin gunner. With monstrous strength, she wrenched the barrel of the turret free, sending the ten-foot length of iron spinning to the floor. With a flap of her great wings she leapt atop the fortress's fore cabin and peeled away its leaden roof as if it were loose skin. Heartrender stabbed out once, twice, three times, butchering Cogsmith Flamebeard and his crew.

Shorn of guidance, the smoking cogfort veered to the left like a wounded beast. From the ground, Ven Brecht could see the tiny forms of Freeguild soldiers spilling from the walls of the staggering construct as it careened into a row of statues, piston-legs collapsing beneath it. In a cloud of dust and shattered marble, *Old Firesnout* fell. As the loyalist forces watched in stunned horror, they heard a blood-curdling sound: the high-pitched cries of Khainites as they came bounding out of the shadows. Flocks of bat-winged shapes spilled out of the darkening skies, loosing hails of javelins or sweeping down to lay about their victims with cruel sickles. Melusai archers slithered into position upon the rooftops, drawing a bead upon the Stormcast Eternals below before sending arrows whistling down. Liberators raised their shields to block the deluge, but the enemy emerged from all around, aiming at their unprotected flanks and finding weak spots in armour with incredible accuracy. Sigmar's chosen did not fall easily, and many an aelf and Melusai warrior was dashed to pieces by crackling hammers or decapitated by warblades that burned with amethyst fire.

But the momentum of battle could not be reversed a second time. The Khainites were too many. One by one the Anvils of the Heldenhammer began to stumble and fall, for each perfectly aimed arrow was laced with poisons concocted by the Hag Queens: paralytic blends that caused muscles and joints to freeze solid, or debilitating toxins that fogged the mind and slowed the heart. With each obsidian-armoured warrior that toppled to the ground, the Stormcast battleline faltered.

An arrow sank into Ven Brecht's shoulder, and the Lord-Veritant dropped to one knee, his face gritted in pain as the arrow delivered its toxic payload into his veins. His vision blurred and his head swam as



if he had been punched by a gargant. He saw the last of his forces in panicked flight, pursued and cut down by masked aelven warriors. He saw winged creatures circling the highest spires of the Black Nexus, screeching in triumph. He saw Warden King Loriksson surrounded by the last of his loyal Longbeard bodyguards, spitting oaths of vengeance as a circle of wicked glaives closed in around them. In the distance, the serpent monster howled, silhouetted against the burning cogfort.

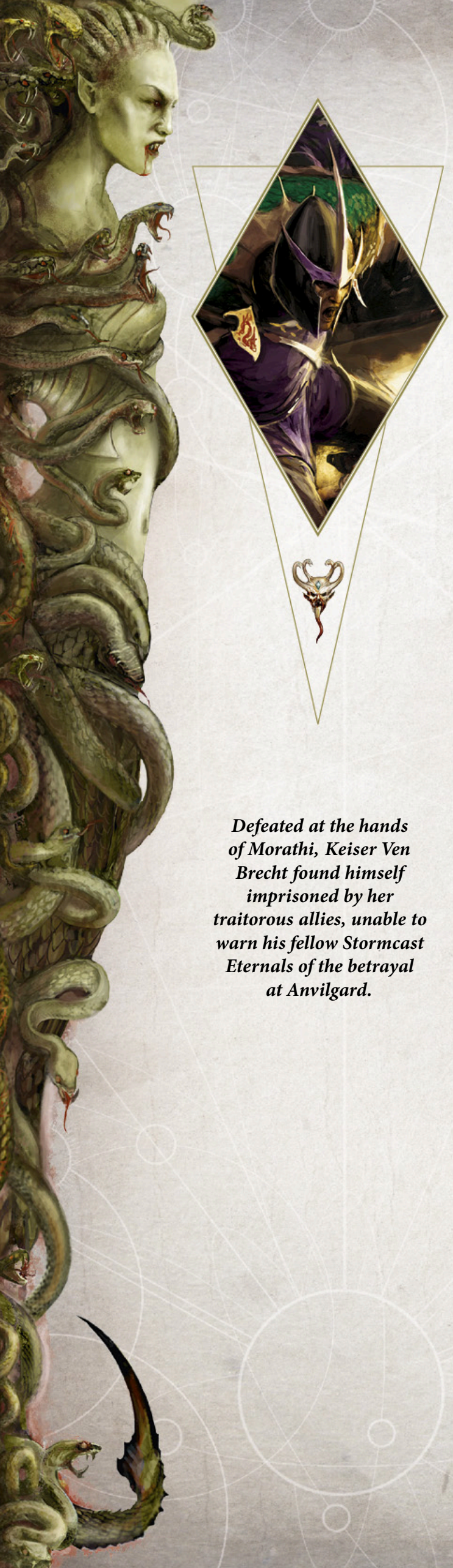
A figure stepped over the bodies of the fallen, her motion as effortlessly graceful as if she was striding across the floor of a grand ballroom. Her darkly regal form was framed by wings of golden metal. Shadows stretched behind her, and for an instant Ven Brecht though that they took on the shape of a great coiling serpent. Stormcast Eternals charged at her with hammers raised, only to be snatched up by tendrils of darkness as the figure waved a dismissive hand, the strength robbed from their limbs by enervating magic. The High Oracle of Khaine smiled as she caught the eye of Lord-Veritant Ven Brecht. This city now belonged to the goddess Morathi-Khaine, and to the empire of Hagg Nar, she proclaimed. Continued resistance was pointless.

Ven Brecht gritted his teeth and shook away the disorienting torpor that threatened to overwhelm him. Death was a gift, he told the sorceress, and held no fear for him. Did she feel the same, he wondered? For the outrage of Anvilgard would see her slain by the God-King's own hand. Morathi nodded knowingly, for she had of course expected such defiance. The rain poured down upon them, mixing with blood and ash. Ven Brecht's hand clenched about the hilt of his blade.

His strike, when it came, took even the High Oracle by surprise. She barely had time to raise her spear before the Lord-Veritant's sword came crashing down upon it, inches from her pale face. Ven Brecht's eyes bored into hers, blazing with purple flame. The Shadow Queen descended from the clouds with an outraged scream, smashing into Ven Brecht and snatching him up in her black-and-red coils, constricting so tightly that the Lord-Veritant's breastplate began to buckle and groan. Ven Brecht choked, unable to breathe, as he looked into the creature's yellow eyes, filled with bitter hatred.

It was the last sight he witnessed before darkness enveloped him.







***Defeated at the hands of Morathi, Keiser Ven Brecht found himself imprisoned by her traitorous allies, unable to warn his fellow Stormcast Eternals of the betrayal at Anvilgard.***

***He was alive. That should have been a comfort to Keiser Ven Brecht, but it was not. Death would have turned his flesh to lightning, and sent his essence screaming back to Azyr. The agony of Reforging would have awaited him, but at the least he could have warned the God-King of Morathi's betrayal. Even now the traitorous sorceress might be marching on another free city. Her insurrection would surely not cease after Anvilgard. Her vision was of empire.***

*The Lord-Veritant had been stripped of his armour and weapons, and wore nothing but sodden rags. He was suspended in mid-air, his hands and feet bound tightly not by cold metal, but by slimy, sinuous strands of organic matter that disappeared into the shadowy ceiling of the cramped cell, far out of sight above his head. Brackish water dripped down onto his scalp with maddening regularity.*

*How long he had languished here, Ven Brecht could not say. Days, surely. Weeks, perhaps. The constant dripping made it hard to focus the mind.*

*Again, Ven Brecht struggled against his bonds. With every motion, they tightened around his wrists. Minute barbs protruded from the tendrils, sinking into his flesh. He felt a rush of light-headedness, and gritted his teeth as a numbing cold spread along his limbs.*

*'I confess myself impressed,' came a self-satisfied voice from the far corner of the chamber. Ven Brecht squinted, trying to make out the speaker.*

*'Krascopod venom can paralyse a rhinox with a few drops,' the voice continued. 'The fact you are struggling at all, pointless though it might be, is nonetheless impressive. I advise you to cease, though. The creature can sense the slightest motion, and contracts itself accordingly. I have seen it tear off a prisoner's arms.'*

*The speaker stepped out of the shadows. A lithe, cruel-eyed aelf clad in shark-hide leathers. His hair was a shock of midnight black bound into an elaborate topknot. Ven Brecht noted the twin scimitars on his hips, and a cleverly concealed dart-thrower protruding from the cuff of his shirt.*

*'You have sown the seeds of your doom, corsair,' the Lord-Veritant said.*

*The aelf laughed. 'A bold claim, for someone hanging helpless in a dungeon.'*

*'What end do you envision for this little insurrection you and your mistress have begotten?' said Ven Brecht. 'Do you believe for a moment that Sigmar will allow such a thing to happen? He will burn Anvilgard to the ground before he lets that treacherous sorcerer and her ilk lay claim to it. And then he will come for you.'*

*'Har Kuron is the city's name,' the corsair corrected. Then he smirked, and shrugged. 'Perhaps you are right to be sceptical. But life is so meaningless without risk, don't you agree? Your God-King offers only dull servitude. Only rules, and laws and endless bowing to half-witted mortals. Morathi offers the freedom of the ocean, and as much plunder as our holds can contain. We were never meant to serve your kind.'*

*Ven Brecht nodded. 'So be it. You should kill me now, aelf. Elsewise I will break free of these bonds, one way or another. And then I will repay your treachery with just reward.'*

*The Scourge lord opened his mouth to reply, but a high-pitched scream in the distance cut off his words. It was followed by a rushing, roaring sound, like a fierce wind howling through a tunnel. There was the harsh ring of steel on steel, and another piercing cry.*

*The corsair's hands went to his blades, and for the first time a hint of consternation crossed his angular face. His eyes flicked to the Lord-Veritant, who stared back impassively.*

*There was a frantic hammering on the door of the cell. Drawing one of his scimitars, the corsair eased the hatch open. Another aelf stumbled into the cell, torn open from throat to belly. He coughed blood, and collapsed, his guts spilling between pale fingers.*

*The corsair cursed, and moved to slam the door shut again, but something seized him by the throat. Ven Brecht had the briefest impression of a gleaming, blood-slick claw, and then the aelf was hauled bodily out of the room. There was a series of horrified screams, and a wet tearing sound, then silence.*

*Ven Brecht peered out into the dark hall. He could sense something out there, some malign presence panting in the darkness. Surely it would come rushing down upon him at any moment.*

*The bonds securing his arms tightened suddenly and painfully, and the sinewy tendrils quivered and lashed. There was a distant, pained shriek, and the downpour splashing across Ven Brecht's head became hot and sticky. It dribbled into his mouth, and he tasted the salty, metallic tang of blood. The tendrils slackened, dropping him several feet to the floor. He wrenched himself free, rolled, and snatched up a hooked dagger from the dead aelf's belt.*

*Aside from the drip-dripping of blood from above, the cell was eerily silent. With his dagger in a backhand grip, the Lord-Veritant moved into the corridor. It was smeared with gore, and littered with corpses that had been torn apart with a savagery that defied reason. The aelf corsair was slumped against the wall, his lower jaw torn away, one arm missing. He was still alive. His cold grey eyes found Ven Brecht's. They mocked him no longer.*

*The Lord-Veritant waited a moment. Long enough for the ruined creature to remember his promise. Then he broke the aelf's neck. A mercy ill deserved, but he had given his word after all.*

*Ahead, a curving stair of polished coral led out of the darkness, to a glimmer of light above. Ven Brecht cautiously ascended. Somewhere distant, he heard more faint shrieks of horror. They were soon cut off, leaving only the sound of trickling and dripping brine. The Lord-Veritant made his way through a warren of cramped tunnels, bilgewater and blood swirling around his feet. There were corpses scattered all about. Most of them were aelven corsairs, ripped limb from limb or eviscerated. Some appeared to be emaciated prisoners, none of whom had been spared their captors' grim fate.*

*Whatever the identity of his mysterious saviour, they had no intention of leaving any witnesses behind. It was strange indeed, for Ven Brecht had no doubt that the killers had intended to ensure his escape. Every bulkhead and shuttered gate in his path had been torn open. He walked the path of corpses until finally he felt a cool breeze caress his face.*

*Emerging from a narrow stairway, he found himself on the ramparts of a great iron wall. Above, the sky was pitch-black, so thick and impenetrable that even the High Star Sigendil was not visible. There were sickle-shaped murderholes running along the wall. Ven Brecht peered through. Several hundred paces below, glassy black water lapped against the base of the rampart. Too far to jump. He would have to make his way down to sea level, and hopefully find a vessel that required only a single pilot.*

*A faint sound caused him to turn and bring up his stolen dagger in a defensive grip. Far above, clinging to the spar of a bladed tower, was a figure wreathed in shadow. He could see the creature's eyes, pinpricks of crimson light, boring into him.*

*He caught the impression of a pair of bat-like wings unfurling, and there was a sudden rush of air. In an instant the thing was gone, leaving Ven Brecht alone on a dead ship.*

***With Anvilgard's fall, Morathi seized a vital strategic position in Aqshy. Yet she knew that word of her betrayal would soon reach the God-King…***





The Newborn
screamed across the sky,
leaving a trail of brilliant iridescence
in its wake. It was an amorphous, protean
thing, yet to choose a configuration befitting the
magnitude of its creation. Where it passed it turned
stone to quivering flesh, birthed lakes of honeyed saliva
and ploughed valleys of pristine glass. The Dark Prince's
faithful followed close, weeping tears of joy to see such
divine corruption. The Prophecy of Parturition had
been fulfilled; soon they would looks upon the face
of their beloved god and know true ecstasy.
Finally, the Newborn came to rest in a shadowed
hollow in the earth – a fitting cradle,
echoing to the agonised wails of
long-dead souls.



Hedonites came in their thousands to witness the birthing. Soon the hollow crawled with writhing, swaying worshippers, lost in rapturous delirium as they looked upon the pulsing sphere of potential that was the Newborn. As the skies above howled in protest, a shape began to emerge within the embryonic glow, a winged form so beautiful and terrible to look upon that many present died there and then, lost to the throes of purest rapture. As the gathered faithful prostrated themselves, the Newborn began to speak its first, profane words…

# THE RULES

# BROKEN REALMS

**This section of *Broken Realms: Morathi* contains exciting new rules for open and narrative play games. You can use the rules in this section to recreate the battles that were fought when Morathi unleashed her plan to raise herself to godhood and take control of the free city of Anvilgard.**

### CAMPAIGN RULES

This section includes a set of rules that allow you to link together the battleplans in this book, so that the result of each battle has an impact on the subsequent battles.

### REALMS OF BATTLE

This section includes Realmsphere Magic, Realmscape Features, Realm Commands and Realm Artefacts rules that allow you to fight battles set in the locations described in the narrative section of the book. These rules have been designed for open and narrative play.

### BATTLEPLANS

This section includes new battleplans that allow you to recreate the pivotal battles described in the narrative section of the book.



# CAMPAIGN RULES

**This book includes six battleplans, each based on a critical battle that was part of Morathi's quest to become a god and extend the power of the Khainite Cult within the Mortal Realms. The rules on this page allow you to play a series of linked games that recreates the High Oracle's monstrously ambitious plan.**

## THE ARMIES

This campaign is fought between two players. One player is the Morathi player and the other player is the Enemy player. The Morathi player must be able to field the following armies from the battleplans on pages 80-90:

- **Priceless Bounty:** Morathi's Army
- **Valley of Ash and Blood:** Stormcast Eternals Army
- **Hagganal Bay:** Daughters of Khaine Army
- **The Inner Chamber:** Daughters of Khaine Army
- **The Undertunnels:** Ven Brecht's Army
- **The Fall of Anvilgard:** Insurrectionist Army

The Enemy player must be able to field the following armies:

- **Priceless Bounty:** Slaves to Darkness Army
- **Valley of Ash and Blood:** Slaves to Darkness Army
- **Hagganal Bay:** Idoneth Deepkin Army
- **The Inner Chamber:** Idoneth Deepkin Army
- **The Undertunnels:** Beastmasters Army
- **The Fall of Anvilgard:** Anvilgard Army

## THE BATTLES

The players must fight each battle in the order in which they appear in this book.

## CONSEQUENCES OF BATTLE

Any named characters that are slain in a battle are assumed to have been hurt but not killed, and will be fully recovered in time for the next battle. This aside, the result of an earlier battle may have an impact on subsequent battles that are fought, as explained below. If you are allowed to add units to your army, they must conform to any Unit Selection restrictions for the battleplan being used.

**Priceless Bounty/Valley of Ash and Blood:** No changes.

**Hagganal Bay:** The Morathi player can add 1 **DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE** unit to their army for each **major victory** they have won so far in the campaign. The Enemy player can add 1 **IDONETH DEEPKIN** unit to their army for each **major victory** they have won so far in the campaign.

**The Inner Chamber:** If Volturnos was slain in Hagganal Bay, he does not take part in this battle. If Nemmetar was slain in Hagganal Bay, he is replaced with an Akhelian King and the Bloodsurf Hunt warscroll battalion is not used. If the Enemy player won a **major victory** in Hagganal Bay, they can add 1 Akhelian Allopexes unit to their army.

**The Undertunnels:** If Ven Brecht was not slain in Valley of Ash and Blood, the Enemy player receives D3 command points at the start of the first battle round of this battle. If the Morathi player won a **major victory** in The Inner Chamber, they receive D3 command points at the start of the first battle round of this battle.

**The Fall of Anvilgard:** The Morathi player can add 1 **CITIES OF SIGMAR** or **DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE** unit to their army for each **major victory** they have won so far in the campaign. The Enemy player can add 1 **STORMCAST ETERNALS** or **CITIES OF SIGMAR** unit to their army for each **major victory** they have won so far in the campaign.

## CAMPAIGN VICTORY

If one player is victorious in Priceless Bounty, The Inner Chamber and The Fall of Anvilgard, they win a **total campaign victory**. If one player is victorious in The Fall of Anvilgard and either Priceless Bounty or The Inner Chamber, they win a **strategic campaign victory**. In any other circumstances, the victor in The Fall of Anvilgard wins a **tactical campaign victory**.

### ALTERNATIVE ARMIES

If you don't have all of the units or armies needed to fight a campaign, just substitute suitable units that you do have for the ones that you don't. For example, if the player using the Morathi army in Priceless Bounty didn't have any **SACROSANCT** units, they could substitute them for **STORMCAST ETERNALS** or **DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE** units they do have.

# REALMS OF BATTLE

**On the following pages you will find three new sets of Realms of Battle rules that allow you to fight battles set in the regions of the Mortal Realms described in the narrative section of this book. These rules are suitable for narrative and open play games but are not intended for matched play.**

## REALM OF BATTLE: THE HELLEFLUX, ULGU

### REALMSPHERE MAGIC

**Umbral Leap:** *The caster becomes one with the darkness, traversing the battlefield in a flicker of shadows.*

Umbral Leap has a casting value of 8. If successfully cast, remove the caster from the battlefield and then set them up again anywhere on the battlefield more than 9" from any enemy units. If this spell is successfully cast and not unbound, the caster cannot move in the next movement phase.

### REALMSCAPE FEATURE

**Wellspring of Shadow:** *The Helleflux is a great font of Ulguan magic, rendering the surrounding islands places of illusion and deception where nothing is as it seems.*

For each terrain feature that has a scenery rule that would be picked or determined before the battle, do not do so before the battle. Instead, the first time a unit is set up or finishes a move within 1" of that terrain feature, randomly determine the scenery rule by rolling on the Scenery table.

### REALM COMMAND

**Unseen Killers:** *Those who make war in the lands around the Helleflux quickly learn to strike from the shadows with deadly effect.*

You can use this command ability when you pick a friendly unit to shoot or fight and that unit is wholly within 12" of a friendly **HERO** and wholly within 3" of a terrain feature. If you do so, add 1 to hit rolls for attacks made by that unit until the end of the phase.

### REALM ARTEFACT

**The Fetch's Ring:** *This ensorcelled band of dark metal projects a shadowy mirror image of the bearer, drawing the enemy's attention.*

Roll a dice each time you allocate a wound or mortal wound to the bearer. On a 4+, that wound or mortal wound is negated. If this artefact of power negates a wound or mortal wound, you cannot use it to attempt to negate any more wounds or mortal wounds for the rest of the phase.



# REALM OF BATTLE: THE CHARRWIND COAST, AQSHY

## REALMSPHERE MAGIC

**Scalehide:** *The caster transforms the subject's flesh into the tough, scaly hide of a drake.*

Scalehide has a casting value of 7. If successfully cast, pick 1 friendly **HERO** that does not have a mount, is within 12" of the caster and is visible to them. Add 1 to save rolls for attacks that target that **HERO** until your next hero phase.

## REALMSCAPE FEATURE

**Sweltering Mists:** *Thick, billowing mists roll across the Charrwind Coast, providing the perfect cover for advancing killers.*

At the start of the enemy shooting phase, you can pick up to D3 friendly units to be covered by mist. Subtract 1 from hit rolls for attacks that target those units until the end of the phase.

## REALM COMMAND

**Misthunters:** *Those who fight amidst the haze of the Charrwind Coast learn to rely on their instincts as much as their senses.*

You can use this command ability before you pick a unit to shoot in your shooting phase. If you do so, pick 1 friendly unit wholly within 12" of a friendly **HERO**. Do not subtract 1 from hit rolls for attacks made by that unit that target an enemy unit covered by mist (see Sweltering Mists).

## REALM ARTEFACT

**Black Kraken Helm:** *Just like the tentacled, deep-sea monstrosity in whose image it has been fashioned, this helm can project swirling clouds of a powerful toxin.*

Once per battle, at the end of a combat phase, you can roll a dice for each enemy unit within 3" of the bearer. On a 4+, that enemy unit suffers D3 mortal wounds.

# REALM OF BATTLE: VARANTHAX'S MAW, THE EIGHTPOINTS

## REALMSPHERE MAGIC

**Fleshwarp:** *With a gesture, the caster causes the flesh of their target to melt and reform into a new and hideous configuration.*

Fleshwarp has a casting value of 8. If successfully cast, pick 1 enemy **HERO** within 12" of the caster that is visible to them. Subtract 1 from hit rolls for attacks made by that **HERO** for the rest of the battle. This spell cannot affect the same **HERO** more than once per battle, and has no effect on hit rolls for attacks made by a mount.

## REALMSCAPE FEATURE

**Forbidden Forgecraft:** *Within the halls and forge-floors of Varanthax's Maw can be found all manner of arcane esoterica, weapons, armour and priceless artefacts.*

Once per battle, in your hero phase, you can pick 1 friendly **HERO** that does not have an artefact of power, that is not a named character and that is within 1" of an objective marker or terrain feature wholly within enemy territory. If you do so, roll a dice. On a 2+, you can give that **HERO** an artefact of power. The artefact must be one that could have been given to the **HERO** when the army was chosen.

## REALM COMMAND

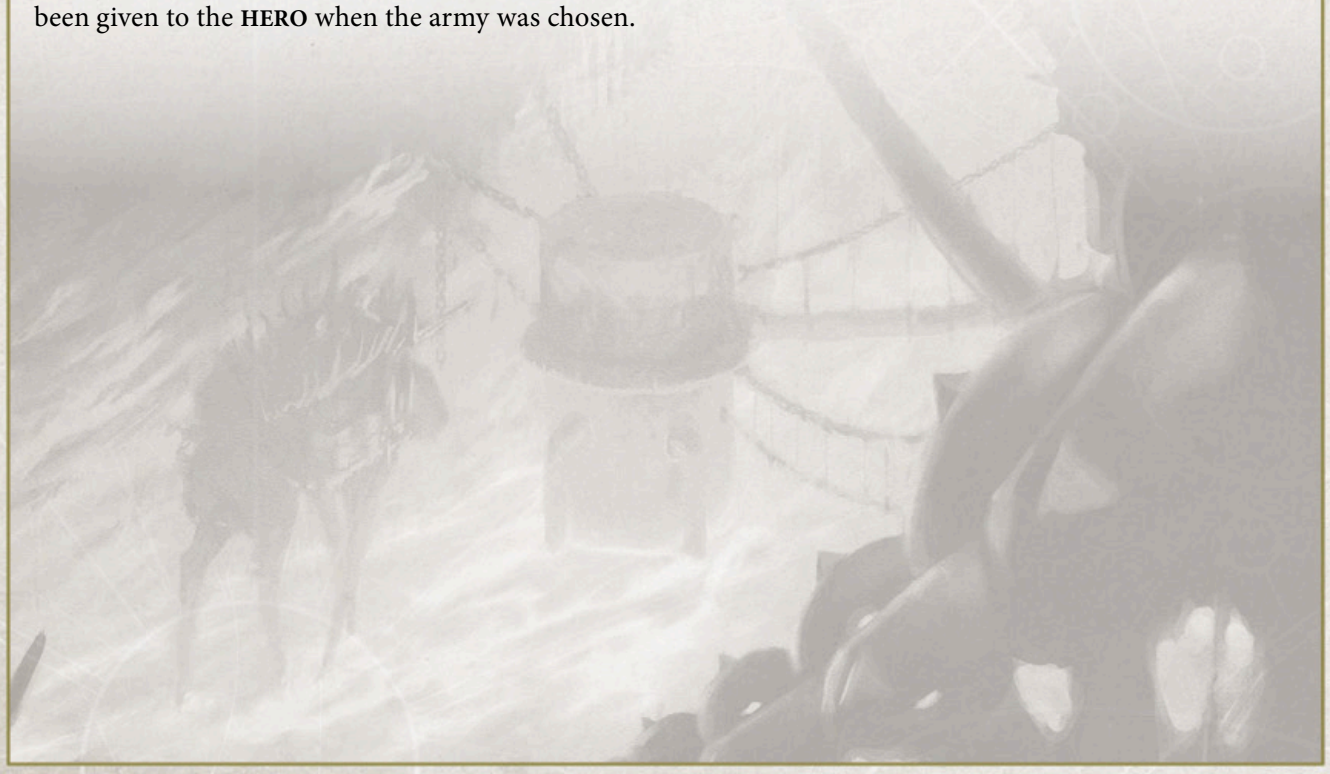
**Self-sacrifice:** *Warriors who fight in Varanthax's Maw soon learn that they may have to make the ultimate sacrifice in order to ensure victory for their army.*

You can use this command ability at the start of the combat phase. If you do so, pick 1 friendly unit wholly within 12" of a friendly **HERO**. Until the end of the phase, add 1 to hit rolls for attacks made by that unit, and subtract 1 from save rolls for attacks that target that unit.

## REALM ARTEFACT

**The Devourer:** *Fashioned from pure varanite, this immense two-headed axe inflicts wounds that turn into gnashing mouths in the victim's flesh and devour them from within.*

Pick 1 of the bearer's melee weapons. If the unmodified hit roll for an attack made with that weapon that targets a **HERO** is 6, that attack inflicts 1 mortal wound on the target in addition to any normal damage.





## BATTLEPLAN

# PRICELESS BOUNTY

*Morathi's army and the arcane warriors of the Dolorites pressed on until they at last entered the lowest depths of Varanthax's Maw, where three bloated bore-wyrms slurped up huge volumes of varanite. Morathi drove forward, destroying the Chaos Warriors that guarded the bore-wyrms and collecting the molten realmstone in her Cauldrons of Blood. All that then remained was to escape, while ensuring that none of her Stormcast Eternal allies survived to reveal what she had done…*

## THE ARMIES

One player is the Morathi player. Their opponent is the Slaves to Darkness player.

### Morathi's Army

The Morathi player must use a Zainthar Kai Daughters of Khaine army (pg 96). It must consist of the following units:

- Morathi, High Oracle of Khaine (from *Battletome: Daughters of Khaine*)
- 1-2 Cauldrons of Blood
- 6 other **DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE** units
- 2 allied **SACROSANCT** units

### Slaves to Darkness Army

The Slaves to Darkness player must use a Slaves to Darkness army. It must consist of 16 **SLAVES TO DARKNESS** units.

### Unit Selection

With the exception of Morathi and Cauldrons of Blood, the units in each army must conform to one of the types in the following list. You can double the size of a unit if you wish, but it then counts as 2 choices instead of 1.

**Regular Unit:** A unit of up to 10 models, each with a Wounds characteristic of 1.

**Elite Unit:** A unit of up to 5 models, each with a Wounds characteristic of 2 or 3.

**Guard Unit:** A unit of up to 3 models, each with a Wounds characteristic of 4 or 5.

**Champion:** A **HERO** with a Wounds characteristic of 8 or less.

## REALMS OF BATTLE

This battle uses the rules for Varanthax's Maw, the Eightpoints (pg 78).

## SET-UP

The players alternate setting up units one at a time, starting with the Morathi player. Players must set up their units wholly within their territory. The Cauldrons of Blood must be set up more than 36" from the escape edge of the battlefield. The Slaves to Darkness player can set up their units in either or both of their territories, and must set them up more than 12" from enemy territory.

Continue to set up units until both players have set up their armies. If one player finishes first, their opponent must set up the rest of the units in their army, one after another.





## ENDLESS HORDE

Every time a unit in the Slaves to Darkness army is destroyed, it is replaced with an identical reserve unit. At the end of the Slave to Darkness player's movement phase, they can set up any of these units wholly within one of their territories, wholly within 6" of the battlefield edge and more than 12" from the escape edge.

## ESCAPE

If Morathi or a Cauldron of Blood is within 6" of the escape edge at the end of a battle round, the model escapes: remove it from play.

## BATTLE LENGTH

The battle continues until Morathi and all Cauldrons of Blood have either been destroyed or have escaped.

## GLORIOUS VICTORY

The Morathi player wins a **major victory** if Morathi and at least 1 Cauldron of Blood escaped and all **STORMCAST ETERNALS** units have been destroyed.

The Morathi player wins a **minor victory** if Morathi and at least 1 Cauldron of Blood escaped and any **STORMCAST ETERNALS** units are on the battlefield.

The Slaves to Darkness player wins a **major victory** if Morathi has been slain and all Cauldrons of Blood have been destroyed.

The Slaves to Darkness player wins a **minor victory** if Morathi escaped and all Cauldrons of Blood have been destroyed.



BATTLEPLAN

# VALLEY OF ASH AND BLOOD

*While Morathi fought in the depths of Varanthax's Maw, on the surface a Stormcast Eternals army fought a desperate battle against a much larger Chaos force. Every moment the Stormcasts could endure would buy Morathi precious time to escape from the Eightpoints. However, as the battle began to unfold, it quickly became clear that the Stormcasts had fallen into a deadly trap.*

## THE ARMIES

One player is the Stormcast Eternals player. Their opponent is the Slaves to Darkness player.

### Stormcast Eternals Army

The Stormcast Eternals player must use an Anvils of the Heldenhammer Stormcast Eternals army. It must consist of the following units:

- 12 **STORMCAST ETERNALS** units
- 3 allied **MELUSAI** or **KHINERAI HARPIES** units in any combination

### Slaves to Darkness Army

The Slaves to Darkness player must choose the **IDOLATORS** Damned Legion keyword for their army (pg 116). It must consist of the following units and warscroll battalion:

- 1 Gaunt Summoner on Disc of Tzeentch (the Eater of Tomes)
- 1-2 Chaos Warshrines
- 14 other **SLAVES TO DARKNESS** units
- Gresh's Iron Reapers (pg 119)

### Unit Selection

With the exception of the Eater of Tomes, Rokar Gresh and Chaos Warshrines, the units in each army must conform to one of the types on the following list. You can double the size of a unit if you wish, but it then counts as 2 choices instead of 1.

**Regular Unit:** A unit of up to 10 models, each with a Wounds characteristic of 1.

**Elite Unit:** A unit of up to 5 models, each with a Wounds characteristic of 2 or 3.

**Guard Unit:** A unit of up to 3 models, each with a Wounds characteristic of 4 or 5.

**Champion:** A **HERO** with a Wounds characteristic of 8 or less.

## REALMS OF BATTLE

This battle uses the rules for Varanthax's Maw, the Eightpoints (pg 78).

## SET-UP

The players alternate setting up units one at a time, starting with the Slaves to Darkness player. Players must set up units wholly within their territory and more than 12" from enemy territory.

Continue to set up units until both players have set up their armies. If one player finishes first, their opponent must set up the rest of the units in their army, one after another.





## ENDLESS HORDE

Every time a unit in the Slaves to Darkness army is destroyed, it is replaced with an identical reserve unit. At the end of the Slave to Darkness player's movement phase, they can set up any of these replacement reserve units wholly within their territory and wholly within 6" of the battlefield edge.

## TERRIBLE FATE

Subtract 1 from save rolls for attacks that target **STORMCAST ETERNALS** units while they are wholly within 18" of any Chaos Warshrines.

## BATTLE LENGTH

Starting from the third battle round, at the end of each battle round, roll a dice and add the number of the current battle round to the roll. On a 9+, the battle ends. On any other roll, the battle continues.

## GLORIOUS VICTORY

The Stormcast Eternals player wins a **major victory** if any **STORMCAST ETERNALS** units are on the battlefield and at least 1 Chaos Warshrine has been destroyed.

The Stormcast Eternals player wins a **minor victory** if no **STORMCAST ETERNALS** units are on the battlefield and at least 1 Chaos Warshrine has been destroyed.

The Slaves to Darkness player wins a **major victory** if no **STORMCAST ETERNALS** units are on the battlefield and no Chaos Warshrines have been destroyed.

The Slaves to Darkness player wins a **minor victory** if any **STORMCAST ETERNALS** units are on the battlefield and no Chaos Warshrines have been destroyed.

## BATTLEPLAN

# HAGGANAL BAY

*Nowhere was the battle fiercer than at Hagganal Bay. Namarti emerged from the crashing waves, skipping nimbly across slick stone. Watchtowers spat streaming arcs of shadowflame into their midst, wreathing scores in flesh-melting black fire. Reaper-bolts scythed through the mass of pale bodies, and Khinerai descended from the inky clouds in killing flocks…*

## THE ARMIES

One player is the Idoneth Deepkin player. Their opponent is the Daughters of Khaine player.

### Idoneth Deepkin Army

The Idoneth Deepkin player must use an Idoneth Deepkin army. It must consist of the following units and warscroll battalion:

- Volturnos, High King of the Deep
- 1-3 Akhelian Leviadons
- 12 other **IDONETH DEEPKIN** units
- The Bloodsurf Hunt (pg 115)

### Daughters of Khaine Army

The Daughters of Khaine player must use a Hagg Nar Daughters of Khaine army. It must consist of the following units:

- 16 **DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE** units
- 1 allied Kharibdyss
- 2 other allied **SCOURGE PRIVATEERS** units

### Unit Selection

With the exception of Volturnos, Nemmetar, Akhelian Leviadons and the Kharibdyss, the units in each army must conform to one of the types on the following list. You can double the size of a unit if you wish, but it then counts as 2 choices instead of 1.

**Regular Unit:** A unit of up to 10 models, each with a Wounds characteristic of 1.

**Elite Unit:** A unit of up to 5 models, each with a Wounds characteristic of 2 or 3.

**Guard Unit:** A unit of up to 3 models, each with a Wounds characteristic of 4 or 5.

**Linebreaker Unit:** A unit of 1 model with a Wounds characteristic of more than 5 that is not a **HERO** or a **MONSTER**.

**Champion:** A **HERO** with a Wounds characteristic of 8 or less.

## REALMS OF BATTLE

This battle uses the rules for the Helleflux, Ulgu (pg 76).

## SET-UP

The Daughters of Khaine player sets up their army first. They must set up their **DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE** units wholly within Daughters of Khaine territory and their **SCOURGE PRIVATEERS** units wholly within Scourge Privateers territory. The Idoneth Deepkin player sets up their army second, wholly within their territory and more than 12" from enemy territory.





## FIRST TURN

The Idoneth Deepkin player takes the first turn in the first battle round.

## LORDS OF THE SEA

Models in the Daughters of Khaine army cannot finish a move in Idoneth Deepkin territory unless they can fly. In addition, instead of making a normal move with a unit that is wholly within Idoneth Deepkin territory, the Idoneth Deepkin player can remove that unit and set it up again wholly within their territory and more than 9" from any enemy units. They can relocate any number of units in this way in each of their movement phases.

## WATCHTOWERS

The Daughters of Khaine player can use this command ability in their hero phase. If they do so, they can pick 1 enemy unit that is within 18" of an objective and roll a dice. On a 2-5, that unit suffers D3 mortal wounds. On a 6, that unit suffers D6 mortal wounds.

## BATTLE LENGTH

The battle lasts for 5 battle rounds.

## GLORIOUS VICTORY

The Idoneth Deepkin player wins a **major victory** if they control at least 2 objectives at the end of the battle.

The Idoneth Deepkin player wins a **minor victory** if they control only 1 objective at the end of the battle.

The Daughters of Khaine player wins a **major victory** if they control all 3 objectives at the end of the battle and Volturnos has been slain.

The Daughters of Khaine player wins a **minor victory** if they control all 3 objectives at the end of the battle and Volturnos is on the battlefield.

## BATTLEPLAN

# THE INNER CHAMBER

*The Bloodsurf Hunt of King Nemmetar led the charge through the shadowed halls of the First Temple, his Allopexes tearing a swathe through the Khainite temple guards. With every bite the blade-finned predators became more frenzied, but their blood-scent remained impeccable – they led Nemmetar and the High King straight to the great doors of Khruthú. A blow from the Astra Solus splintered shadow-forged metal, and the High King's retinue burst into the inner chamber – the very seat of Morathi's power...*

### THE ARMIES

One player is the Idoneth Deepkin player. Their opponent is the Daughters of Khaine player.

### Idoneth Deepkin Army

The Idoneth Deepkin player must use an Idoneth Deepkin army. It must consist of the following units and warscroll battalion:

- Volturnos, High King of the Deep
- The Bloodsurf Hunt (pg 115)

### Daughters of Khaine Army

The Daughters of Khaine player must use a Zainthar Kai Daughters of Khaine army (pg 96). It must consist of the following units and warscroll battalion:

- Morathi-Khaine (pg 98)
- The Shadow Queen (pg 99)
- Vyperic Guard (pg 97)

### REALMS OF BATTLE

This battle uses the rules for the Helleflux, Ulgu (pg 76).

### LOW-CEILINGED CHAMBER

Models cannot fly in this battle.

### SET-UP

The Daughters of Khaine player sets up their army first. Morathi-Khaine and the Shadow Queen must be set up in reserve. All other units in the Daughters of Khaine army must be set up wholly within Daughters of Khaine territory. The Idoneth Deepkin player sets up their army second, wholly within 6" of the entrance.

### FIRST TURN

The Idoneth Deepkin player takes the first turn in the first battle round.

### THE RITUAL

The Daughters of Khaine player must roll a dice at the end of each of their turns. On a 1, if Volturnos is more than 3" from the Mother Cauldron, nothing happens. On a 1, if Volturnos is within 3" of the Mother Cauldron, it is destroyed.

On a 2+, all models within 6" of the Mother Cauldron are slain, with the exception of Volturnos. If Volturnos is within 6" of the Mother Cauldron, the Idoneth Deepkin player must remove him from the battlefield and set him up again anywhere on the battlefield that is more than 12" from the Mother Cauldron and more than 3" from any enemy models.





After any models have been slain and Volturnos has been moved if necessary, Morathi-Khaine and the Shadow Queen must be set up within 3" of the Mother Cauldron and more than 1" from an enemy models. Do not roll again for the Ritual after the Morathi models have been set up.

## BATTLE LENGTH

The battle lasts for 5 battle rounds, or until Volturnos and Nemmetar have been slain, or until the Shadow Queen has been slain, or until the Mother Cauldron is destroyed, whichever occurs first.

## GLORIOUS VICTORY

The Idoneth Deepkin player wins a **major victory** if the Mother Cauldron has been destroyed or the Shadow Queen has been slain.

The Idoneth Deepkin player wins a **minor victory** if the battle lasted for 5 battle rounds and Volturnos is on the battlefield.

The Daughters of Khaine player wins a **major victory** if Volturnos and Nemmetar have been slain and the battle lasted for less than 4 battle rounds.

The Daughters of Khaine player wins a **minor victory** if Volturnos and Nemmetar have been slain and the battle lasted for at least 4 battle rounds.



## BATTLEPLAN

# THE UNDERTUNNELS

*As the battle raged on through the streets of Anvilgard, Ven Brecht led a small, potent battleforce into the undertunnels with the aim of recapturing the Freeguild cogfort* Old Firesnout. *Ven Brecht had hoped to avoid confrontation with the enemy, but that proved a vain wish. Beastmasters of the Order Serpentis in thrall to Kraeth had driven their most fearsome monsters underground. As Ven Brecht's force neared the location of* Old Firesnout, *the ground shook and thundering out of the darkness came many-headed War Hydras, snorting flames as they caught the scent of prey on the foetid wind.*

## THE ARMIES

One player is the Ven Brecht player. Their opponent is the Beastmasters player.

### Ven Brecht's Army

The Ven Brecht player must use an Anvils of the Heldenhammer Stormkeep army (pg 106). It must consist of the following units and warscroll battalion:

- 1 Warden King (Loriksson)
- 1 Ironbreakers unit
- Ven Brecht's Black Watch (pg 109)

### The Beastmasters Army

The Beastmasters player must use a Har Kuron Cities of Sigmar army (pg 104). It must consist of the following units:

- 4 War Hydras or Kharibdysses in any combination

## REALMS OF BATTLE

This battle uses the rules for the Charrwind Coast, Aqshy (pg 77).

## SET-UP

The Ven Brecht player sets up their army first, wholly within their territory.

The Beastmasters player sets up their army second. 1 unit must be set up wholly within each of their territories more than 12" from any enemy units. The remaining unit can be set up anywhere on the battlefield that is more than 12" from any enemy units (it can be set up in Ven Brecht's territory).

## VEN BRECHT AND LORIKSSON

Both Ven Brecht and Loriksson are considered to be generals. Loriksson has the Slayer of Monsters command trait from the Rulers of Anvilgard table in *Battletome: Cities of Sigmar*. You cannot take any other command traits or any artefacts of power for Ven Brecht's army.

## FIRST TURN

The Ven Brecht player takes the first turn in the first battle round.

## SURPRISE ATTACK

In the first battle round, units from Ven Brecht's army cannot run or attempt to charge.

## NO QUARTER

Do not take battleshock tests in this battle.





## BATTLE LENGTH

The battle lasts until one army has been destroyed.

## GLORIOUS VICTORY

A player wins a **major victory** if their opponent's army is destroyed before the end of the fourth battle round.

A player wins a **minor victory** if their opponent's army is destroyed after the end of the fourth battle round.

*Liberator Ghuldian could feel the sigmarite of his shield melting under the War Hydra's fiery breath, globules of the enchanted metal searing his flesh and dripping onto the floor.*

*There was nothing to be done but swallow the pain. The line must be held, for if the creatures got amongst them, it would be a slaughter. The many-headed horrors emerged on all sides, belching fire or unleashing abyssal howls that chilled the blood. The War Hydra filling the tunnel ahead of Ghuldian reared back, and one of its five heads shot towards the Liberator, too fast for him to raise his shield. Before its reeking jaws could snap shut on him, however, it splattered apart in a spray of viscera.*

*Warden King Loriksson's hammer glowed as the doughty duardin pulverised another monstrous snout. His bodyguards barrelled in behind him, swinging their great axes.*

*'Hurry it up lads,' Loriksson growled. 'We've got a schedule to stick to. Don't let the durned thing grow its ugly mugs back.'*

BATTLEPLAN

# THE FALL OF ANVILGARD

*Though outnumbered and cut off from his allies, Lord-Veritant Ven Brecht led the fight back against the insurrectionists – but he would soon face the true power seeking to conquer the City of Scales.*

## THE ARMIES

One player is the Anvilgard player. Their opponent is the Insurrectionists player.

### Anvilgard Army

The Anvilgard player must use either an Anvils of the Heldenhammer Stormkeep army (pg 106) or an Anvilgard army. It must consist of the following units:

- 1 Lord-Veritant (Ven Brecht)
- 16 other units

### Insurrectionist Army

The Insurrectionist player must use an Anvilgard army. It must consist of the following units and warscroll battalion:

- 12 **DARKLING COVENS**, **ORDER SERPENTIS**, **SCOURGE PRIVATEERS** or **SHADOWBLADES** units in any combination
- 1 allied Morathi-Khaine (pg 98)
- 1 allied The Shadow Queen (pg 99)
- 2 allied **MELUSAI** units
- Kraeth's Shadowhost (pg 101)

### Unit Selection

With the exception of Ven Brecht, Drusa Kraeth, Morathi-Khaine and the Shadow Queen, the units in each army must conform to one of the types on the following list. You can double the size of a unit if you wish, but it then counts as 2 choices instead of 1.

**Regular Unit:** A unit of up to 10 models, each with a Wounds characteristic of 1.

**Elite Unit:** A unit of up to 5 models, each with a Wounds characteristic of 2 or 3.

**Guard Unit:** A unit of up to 3 models, each with a Wounds characteristic of 4 or 5.

**Champion:** A **HERO** with a Wounds characteristic of 8 or less.

## REALMS OF BATTLE

This battle uses the rules for the Charrwind Coast, Aqshy (pg 77).

## SET-UP

The Anvilgard player sets up their army first, wholly within their territory. The Insurrectionist player sets up their army second. Their **DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE** units must be set up in reserve, and all other units in the army must be set up wholly within Insurrectionist territory and more than 12" from any enemy units.

## OLD FIRESNOUT

Do not roll to see who takes the first turn in the fifth battle round. Instead, the Anvilgard player takes the first turn.

### Cogfort Barrage

Starting from the third battle round, the Anvilgard player can pick up to D6 enemy units and roll a dice for each of them. If the roll is less than or equal to the number of models in that unit, it suffers D3 mortal wounds.





## RESERVES

The Insurrectionist player's reserve units arrive at the end of their third movement phase. When they do, the Insurrectionist player must set up all of them apart from the Shadow Queen wholly within Insurrectionist territory and wholly within 6" of the battlefield edge.

The Shadow Queen is kept to one side and must instead attack the Cogfort, as described next. While she is attacking the Cogfort, she is treated as being on the battlefield.

### The Shadow Queen

After the Shadow Queen arrives, at the end of each combat phase the Insurrectionist player can use her to attack *Old Firesnout*. If they do so, they must roll a dice. The roll is the amount of damage inflicted on *Old Firesnout*.

Once the damage inflicted on *Old Firesnout* is 4 or more, it has been destroyed, the Anvilgard player can no longer use the Cogfort Barrage rule and the Insurrectionist player must set up the Shadow Queen anywhere on the battlefield more than 3" from any enemy units.



## BATTLE LENGTH

The battle lasts for 5 battle rounds.

## GLORIOUS VICTORY

At the end of the battle, if more Insurrectionist army units have been destroyed than Anvilgard army units and the Shadow Queen has suffered more than 3 wounds, the Anvilgard player wins a **major victory**.

At the end of the battle, if more Insurrectionist army units have been destroyed than Anvilgard army units and the Shadow Queen has suffered less than 4 wounds, the Anvilgard player wins a **minor victory**.

At the end of the battle, if at least twice as many Anvilgard army units have been destroyed as Insurrectionist army units, the Insurrectionist player wins a **major victory**.

Any other result is a **minor victory** for the Insurrectionist player.



# BATTLETOME

# UPDATES



# BATTLETOME UPDATES

**This section of *Broken Realms: Morathi* includes updates to five battletomes which allow you to use the armies described in the narrative section of the book in your games of *Warhammer Age of Sigmar*. The updates are designed to be used with the battleplans in this book, and can also be used in matched play.**

DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE (pg 96-99)
This update to *Battletome: Daughters of Khaine* contains rules for the Zainthar Kai temple, new warscroll battalions for Morathi's elite Scáthborn, and updated warscrolls for Morathi after her ascension to godhood.

CITIES OF SIGMAR (pg 100-105)
This update to *Battletome: Cities of Sigmar* contains rules for using Cities of Sigmar armies from Misthåvn and Har Kuron, and a warscroll battalion that allows you to field Drusa Kraeth in your games.

STORMCAST ETERNALS (pg 106-109)
This update to *Battletome: Stormcast Eternals* contains rules and warscroll battalions for the Stormcast Eternals that man the Stormkeeps in the free cities, and a warscroll battalion that allows you to field Keiser Ven Brecht and his personal retinue in your games.

IDONETH DEEPKIN (pg 110-115)
This update to *Battletome: Idoneth Deepkin* contains a set of mount traits for Deepmares and Leviadons, a warscroll battalion that allows you to field King Nemmetar and his bodyguard in your games, and updated warscrolls for four key Idoneth Deepkin units.

SLAVES TO DARKNESS (pg 116-119)
This update to *Battletome: Slaves to Darkness* contains rules that allow you to field an army from the Idolators Damned Legion, and a warscroll battalion for Gresh's Iron Reapers.

PITCHED BATTLE PROFILES (pg 120)
Here you will find Pitched Battle Profiles for all of the warcrolls and warscroll battalions introduced in this book.



# ZAINTHAR KAI

**When you pick the Daughters of Khaine allegiance for your army, you can say it will be a Zainthar Kai army. If you do so, it has access to the Temple of Khaine rules at the bottom of this page and can include the warscroll battalions to the right.**

The origins of the Zainthar Kai harken back to the earliest, most horrific days of the Cathtrar Dhule. Desperate for a winning weapon in the war against Chaos, Morathi created a new breed of Scáthborn, each of whom carried nothing less than three drops of Khaine's cursed blood in their veins. Most of these subjects burst apart in a welter of gore, unable to bear such terrible potency. Those that survived learned to wield the curse running through their veins as a weapon, calling upon its simmering power to strengthen their strikes and wrack their foes with unbearable agony. When lost in the throes of battle-frenzy, a Zainthar Kai broodcrone can even cause the lifeblood of nearby enemies to erupt from their eyes, nose and mouth in a boiling torrent.

For years this highly isolationist and secretive sect has functioned as Morathi's most deadly weapon, destroying any foe that she wished to be rid of. The sect is almost entirely comprised of Scáthborn, though its nest-matrons and Ironscales also maintain a disposable force of leathanam and Witch Aelves to perform lesser roles upon the battlefield.



## ABILITIES

**Khaine's Essence:** *The drops of divinity that Zainthar Kai warriors carry in their cursed blood elevate them above other Scáthborn.*

Add 1 to the Bravery characteristic of **ZAINTHAR KAI MELUSAI** units and **ZAINTHAR KAI KHINERAI HARPIES** units.

**Vault of the First Brood:** *The heroes of Zainthar Kai temple maintain a hallowed vault of treasures gifted to them by Morathi.*

You can choose 1 additional **HERO** in your army to have an artefact of power. That artefact of power must come from the Gifts of Morathi table in *Battletome: Daughters of Khaine.*

## COMMAND ABILITY

**Power in the Blood:** *Zainthar Kai leaders can awaken the godly might running through the veins of their followers, granting them even greater power.*

You can use this command ability once per phase when you pick a friendly **ZAINTHAR KAI MELUSAI** unit or friendly **ZAINTHAR KAI KHINERAI HARPIES** unit to fight and that unit is wholly within 12" of a friendly **ZAINTHAR KAI HERO**. If you do so, add 1 to the Attacks characteristic of melee weapons used by that unit until the end of the phase.

## COMMAND TRAIT

A **ZAINTHAR KAI** general must have this command trait instead of one from *Battletome: Daughters of Khaine*:

**Curse of the Bloody-Handed:** *So fiercely do the champions of the Zainthar Kai blaze with the dead god's fury that it can cause their enemies' very blood to boil.*

At the end of the combat phase, roll a dice for each enemy unit within 3" of this general. On a 5+, that unit suffers D3 mortal wounds.

## WARSCROLL BATTALION
# VYPERIC GUARD

### ORGANISATION

- Morathi-Khaine
- The Shadow Queen
- 1-2 Bloodwrack Medusae or Melusai Ironscales in any combination
- 2-3 Blood Sisters units or Blood Stalkers units in any combination

### ABILITIES

**Vaunted Slayers:** *The Melusai that make up Morathi's famed Vyperic Guard are unwaveringly loyal and the finest warriors of their kind.*

Once per battle, a **HERO** from this battalion can use a command ability without a command point being spent.

## WARSCROLL BATTALION
# SCÁTHCOVEN

### ORGANISATION

- 1 **BLOODWRACK MEDUSA** or Melusai Ironscale
- 1-4 Blood Sisters units
- 1-2 Blood Stalkers units
- 0-2 **KHINERAI HARPIES** units

### ABILITIES

**Devoted to Morathi:** *The warriors of a Scáthcoven are utterly dedicated to Morathi's cause, and will fight without fear of pain or death in order to carry out her will.*

Do not take battleshock tests for units from this battalion.

## WARSCROLL BATTALION
# SHRINE BROOD

### ORGANISATION

- 2 Bloodwrack Shrines
- 2 Blood Sisters units or Blood Stalkers units in any combination
- 2 **KHINERAI HARPIES** units

### ABILITIES

**Blood Sacrifice:** *The warriors of a shrine brood will sacrifice their own lives in order revitalise the Bloodwrack Shrine they are sworn to protect.*

In your hero phase, you can pick any number of units from this battalion that are within 6" of the **BLOODWRACK SHRINE** from the same battalion. 1 model from each unit you picked is slain. You can heal 1 wound allocated to the **BLOODWRACK SHRINE** for each **KHINERAI HARPIES** model that was slain, and you can heal up to 2 wounds allocated to the **BLOODWRACK SHRINE** for each **MELUSAI** model that was slain.




WARSCROLL

# MORATHI-KHAINE



**Proclaiming herself Khaine reborn, the goddess Morathi bestrides the realms, summoning snaking tendrils of shadow magic to tear apart her enemies. She is a master of manipulation and deception, endlessly cunning and depthlessly cruel.**

| MELEE WEAPONS | Range | Attacks | To Hit | To Wound | Rend | Damage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Heartrender | 2" | 3 | 3+ | 3+ | -1 | D3 |
| Bladed Wings | 2" | 6 | 3+ | 3+ | -1 | 1 |

## DESCRIPTION

Morathi-Khaine is a named character that is a single model. She is armed with Heartrender and Bladed Wings.

If this model is included in a Daughters of Khaine army, this model is treated as a general in addition to the model that is chosen to be the army general.

**THE SHADOW QUEEN:** If this model is included in an army, then the army must include the Shadow Queen. References to the Shadow Queen on this warscroll refer to the Shadow Queen model in the same army as this model.

## ABILITIES

**Commanding Presence:** *Very few foes are able to resist quailing before Morathi's regal presence.*

Subtract 1 from hit rolls for attacks that target this model.

**One Soul, Two Bodies:** *Morathi-Khaine and the Shadow Queen are two entities but share the same life force.*

If the Shadow Queen is on the battlefield, wounds and mortal wounds that would be allocated to this model are instead allocated to the Shadow Queen and have no effect on this model. Wounds and mortal wounds allocated to the Shadow Queen in this way cannot be negated.

In addition, if the Shadow Queen is on the battlefield and an ability or spell would cause this model to be slain without any wounds being allocated, then this model is not slain and 3 wounds are allocated to the Shadow Queen.

If the Shadow Queen is slain, after her model is removed from play, this model is also slain.

## MAGIC

This model is a **WIZARD**. It can attempt to cast 3 spells in your hero phase and attempt to unbind 2 spells in the enemy hero phase. Add 1 to casting, dispelling and unbinding rolls for this model.

This model knows the Arcane Bolt, Mystic Shield and Black Horror of Ulgu spells.

**Black Horror of Ulgu:** *A roiling black cloud of energy swirls into existence, smoking tendrils lashing out from it to drag those nearby to their doom.*

Black Horror of Ulgu has a casting value of 7 and a range of 36". If successfully cast, pick 1 enemy unit within range of the caster that is visible to them and roll a dice. On a 1, that unit suffers 1 mortal wound. On a 2-3, it suffers D3 mortal wounds. On a 4+, it suffers D6 mortal wounds.

## COMMAND ABILITY

**Worship Through Bloodshed:** *At Morathi's command, her warriors launch into a killing frenzy that sees their foes slain in droves.*

If this model is on the battlefield, you can use this command ability in your hero phase. If you do, pick 1 other friendly **DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE** unit wholly within 24" of this model. That unit can shoot or, if it is within 3" of any enemy units, it can fight. You cannot use this command ability more than once in the same phase.



| KEYWORDS | ORDER, AELF, DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE, HERO, WIZARD, MORATHI-KHAINE |
|---|---|




WARSCROLL

# THE SHADOW QUEEN



**The Shadow Queen is Morathi-Khaine's dark reflection, the accumulation of all her hatred and bitterness given monstrous, serpentine form. Those who would challenge this nightmare in battle are soon slain in a blur of shadowsteel and lashing coils.**

| MISSILE WEAPONS | Range | Attacks | To Hit | To Wound | Rend | Damage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gaze of the Shadow Queen | 18" | 1 | 2+ | 2+ | -3 | D6 |
| **MELEE WEAPONS** | **Range** | **Attacks** | **To Hit** | **To Wound** | **Rend** | **Damage** |
| Heartrender | 2" | ✹ | 3+ | 3+ | -2 | 3 |
| Crown of Serpents | 1" | 2D6 | 3+ | 3+ | - | 1 |
| Envenomed Tail | 3" | 1 | 3+ | 3+ | -2 | ✹ |

| DAMAGE TABLE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Wounds Suffered | Move | Heartrender | Envenomed Tail |
| 0-3 | 14" | 8 | 6 |
| 4-6 | 12" | 7 | 5 |
| 7-8 | 10" | 6 | 4 |
| 9-10 | 8" | 5 | 3 |
| 11+ | 6" | 4 | 2 |

## DESCRIPTION

The Shadow Queen is a named character that is a single model. She is armed with Gaze of the Shadow Queen, Heartrender, Crown of Serpents and Envenomed Tail.

This model cannot be a general.

**MORATHI-KHAINE:** If this model is included in an army, then the army must include Morathi-Khaine. References to Morathi-Khaine on this warscroll refer to the Morathi-Khaine model in the same army as this model.

**FLY:** This model can fly.

## ABILITIES

**Fury of the Shadow Queen:** *Bloodshed raises the Shadow Queen's fury to new heights, which in turn fuels the murder lust of nearby Scáthborn.*

While this model is within 3" of any enemy models, add 1 to the Attacks characteristic of melee weapons used by friendly **KHINERAI HARPIES** and **MELUSAI** units wholly within 18" of this model.

**Two Bodies, One Soul:** *The Shadow Queen and Morathi-Khaine are two entities but share the same life force.*

If this model is on the battlefield, wounds and mortal wounds that would be allocated to Morathi-Khaine are instead allocated to this model and have no effect on Morathi-Khaine. Wounds and mortal wounds allocated to this model in this way cannot be negated.

In addition, if this model is on the battlefield and an ability or spell would cause Morathi-Khaine to be slain without any wounds being allocated, then Morathi-Khaine is not slain and 3 wounds are allocated to this model.

If this model is slain, after this model is removed from play, Morathi-Khaine is also slain.

**Iron Heart of Khaine:** *The Iron Heart of Khaine is the last remnant of the fallen god, and it pulses still with life-sustaining divine energies.*

No more than 3 wounds and/or mortal wounds can be suffered by this model in the same turn. Once 3 wounds and/or mortal wounds have been allocated to this model in the same turn, not counting any wounds that were negated, any further wounds and mortal wounds that would be allocated to this model are ignored and have no effect.

Wounds and mortal wounds allocated to this model at the start of the battle round count towards the number of wounds allocated to this model in the first turn of that battle round. Wounds and mortal wounds allocated to this model at the end of the battle round count towards the number of wounds allocated to this model in the second turn of that battle round.

If the rule for an ability or spell would cause this model to be slain without any wounds being allocated, 3 wounds are allocated to this model instead. These wounds cannot be negated but will still be ignored once 3 wounds and/or mortal wounds have been allocated to this model.

Wounds allocated to this model cannot be healed.

**KEYWORDS** ORDER, AELF, DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE, MONSTER, HERO, THE SHADOW QUEEN

# CITIES OF SIGMAR
## FREE CITIES BATTLE TRAITS

### BROKEN REALMS

A TIME OF CHANGE
*The Cities of Sigmar would never be the same again after Morathi had carried out her plan of ascension.*

When you pick the Cities of Sigmar allegiance for your army, you can say it will be a Broken Realms army. If you do so, you must give it a city keyword from the list below instead of one from the list in *Battletome: Cities of Sigmar*. If a model already has a city keyword on its warscroll, it cannot gain another one from the list below (you can still include the model in your army but you cannot use the allegiance abilities for its city).

- **MISTHÅVN** (pg 102)
- **HAR KURON** (pg 104)

The army is still considered to be a Cities of Sigmar army and can use the Ways of the Free Peoples battle traits unless stated otherwise.

**Designer's Note:** *You can still choose the Anvilgard allegiance for a Cities of Sigmar army. If you do, your army represents either a force from the time before Morathi began her annexation of the city, or a loyalist detachment still fighting in the God-King's name.*



WARSCROLL BATTALION

# KRAETH'S SHADOWHOST



**The sorceress Drusa Kraeth is the power behind the scenes in Anvilgard, utilising an army of ensorcelled agents to carry out the will of the Blackscale Coil. She commands a Shadowhost of her most favoured thralls, each of whom would charge through fire and raining arrows to protect their mistress. Such is Kraeth's expertise at subterfuge and manipulation that she never enters battle without an enormous advantage over her unsuspecting foes.**

## ORGANISATION

- 1 Sorceress on Black Dragon (Drusa Kraeth)
- 1 Dreadspears unit
- 1 Darkshards unit

The Sorceress on Black Dragon from this battalion is a unique named character. All units from this battalion must have either the **ANVILGARD** keyword or the **HAR KURON** keyword.

## ABILITIES

**Subjugated:** *The warriors of the Shadowhost are completely controlled by Kraeth, and will do whatever she commands.*

In your hero phase, if the **SORCERESS** from this battalion is on the battlefield, you can declare she will compel her minions to attack savagely. If you do so, until your next hero phase, add 1 to the Attacks characteristic of weapons used by **DREADSPEARS** and **DARKSHARDS** units from this battalion, but subtract 1 from save rolls for attacks that target those units.

## COMMAND TRAIT

If Drusa Kraeth is your army's general, she must have this command trait instead of one from *Battletome: Cities of Sigmar* or page 104:

**The Whisperers:** *Drusa Kraeth is a master in the art of mind-controlling enchantments, and has a network of mentally dominated secret agents that provide her with information.*

At the start of the first hero phase of the first battle round, you receive 1 extra command point.

# MISTHÅVN BATTLE TRAITS

## CITY OF SCOUNDRELS

**MISTHÅVN** armies only.

### THE SHADOW PORT

*Misthåvn is semi-permanently moored on the shores of Cape Tenebrax.*

A Misthåvn army must be from Ulgu.

### UNDERHANDED TACTICS

*While the core of Misthåvn's armies engage the foe face to face, the elite elements strike at the enemy's flanks with ruthless aggression.*

Instead of setting up a friendly **MISTHÅVN ORDER SERPENTIS**, **SHADOWBLADES** or **SCOURGE PRIVATEERS** unit with up to 10 models on the battlefield, you can place it to one side and say that it is set up in a flanking force as a reserve unit. You can set up 1 unit in a flanking force for each **DARKLING COVENS**, **FREEGUILD** or **DUARDIN** unit you have already set up on the battlefield. At the end of each of your movement phases, you can set up 1 or more flanking force units on the battlefield more than 9" from any enemy units. At the start of the fourth battle round, flanking force units that are still in reserve are destroyed.

### MISTHÅVN NARCOTICS

*The City of Scoundrels deals in powerful narcotics, and its leaders are not above using their own wares.*

1 **HERO** in a Misthåvn army can have a Misthåvn narcotic. Choose which **HERO** will have the Misthåvn narcotic, then pick from or roll on the Dark Temptations table opposite. You can choose 1 additional friendly **HERO** to have a Misthåvn narcotic for each warscroll battalion in your army. A **HERO** cannot have more than 1 Misthåvn narcotic. In your hero phase, you can declare that a **HERO** with a Misthåvn narcotic will use it. Each Misthaven narcotic can be used only once per battle and has no effect on the bearer's mount.

### COMMAND ABILITY

**Shadowstrike:** *Misthåvn commanders are adept at using the darkness to hide their approach.*

You can use this command ability once per turn after you set up a flanking force unit wholly within 12" of a friendly **MISTHÅVN HERO**. If you do so, you can move that unit up to D6" (it cannot run).

# MISTHÅVN COMMAND TRAITS

## UNSCRUPULOUS DESPOTS

**MISTHÅVN** generals only.

| D3 | Command Trait |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Shadowlord:** *No foe can anticipate when or where this general will attack.*<br><br>Once per battle round, this general can use the Shadowstrike command ability without a command point being spent. |
| 2 | **Wily Foe:** *This general uses subterfuge to befuddle their enemies.*<br><br>Roll a dice each time you allocate a wound or mortal wound to this general. On a 6, that wound or mortal wound is negated. |
| 3 | **Shade Warlock:** *This general is a secret adept of the arcane arts.*<br><br>This general knows the Arcane Bolt and Mystic Shield spells and can attempt to cast 1 spell in your hero phase in the same manner as **WIZARD**. If this general is already a **WIZARD**, they can attempt to cast 1 extra spell in your hero phase. |

# MISTHÅVN NARCOTICS

## DARK TEMPTATIONS

**MISTHÅVN HEROES** only.

| D6 | Misthåvn Narcotic |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Synesthalcum:** *This sought-after stimulant heightens the senses to preturnatural levels.*<br><br>When this narcotic is used, until your next hero phase, add 1 to hit rolls for attacks made by the user. |
| 2 | **Witch-mist:** *This arcane narcotic renders the user temporarily incorporeal.*<br><br>When this narcotic is used, until your next hero phase, ignore modifiers when making save rolls for attacks that target the user. |
| 3 | **Skiffer's Salve:** *This balm has potent healing effects but engenders a state of languid euphoria in the user.*<br><br>When this narcotic is used, you can heal up to D6 wounds allocated to the user, but until your next hero phase the user cannot run or charge. |
| 4 | **Float:** *When this powder is inhaled, the user floats free from the shackles of gravity.*<br><br>When this narcotic is used, until your next hero phase, the user can fly. This narcotic has no effect if the user has a mount. |
| 5 | **Sawfang Dust:** *These dull crystals fill the user with a ravening bloodlust.*<br><br>When this narcotic is used, until your next hero phase, each time the user fights, after all of their attacks have been resolved, you can pick 1 enemy unit within 1" of them and roll a dice. On a 4+, that unit suffers D3 mortal wounds. |
| 6 | **Glatch Ink:** *This narcotic makes the user's eyes and veins turn black with arcane might.*<br><br>When this narcotic is used, until your next hero phase, you can add 1 to casting, dispelling and unbinding rolls for the user. |

# MISTHÅVN ARTEFACTS OF POWER

## RELICS OF MISTHÅVN

**MISTHÅVN HEROES** only.

| D3 | Artefact of Power |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Gloom Bell:** *This tocsin rings out with an ominous chime, summoning a concealing black mist.*<br><br>Once per battle, at the start of the enemy shooting phase, you can say that the bearer will ring the Gloom Bell. If you do, until the end of the phase, subtract 1 from hit rolls for attacks that target units wholly within 12" of the bearer. |
| 2 | **Strangler-kelp Noose:** *Strangler-kelp winds itself tightly around unsuspecting prey.*<br><br>Once per battle, at the start of the combat phase, you can pick 1 enemy model within 3" of the bearer and roll a dice. If the roll is 6, or is less than the target's Wounds characteristic, the target cannot attack in that combat phase. |
| 3 | **Shadowsilk Armour:** *Woven from wisps of Ulguan magic, this armour is as light as gossamer but stronger than tempered steel.*<br><br>Add 1 to save rolls for attacks that target the bearer. |

# HAR KURON BATTLE TRAITS

### CITY OF KHAINE

**HAR KURON** armies only.

HAR KURON

*The armies of Har Kuron are made up only of warriors that Morathi trusts to fight for her cause.*

A Har Kuron army cannot use the Ways of the Free Peoples battle traits from *Battletome: Cities of Sigmar*. In addition, a Har Kuron army can only include units with the following keywords: **DARKLING COVENS**, **ORDER SERPENTIS**, **SCOURGE PRIVATEERS** , **SHADOWBLADES**.

ON THE SHORES OF THE SEARING SEA

*This dark port-city dominates the wild lands of the Charrwind Coast in the Realm of Fire.*

A Har Kuron army must be from Aqshy.

TEMPLES OF KHAINE

*Each of the main Daughters of Khaine sects has established a temple within Har Kuron.*

1 in every 4 units in a Har Kuron army can be a **DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE** unit. Those units gain the **CITIES OF SIGMAR** and **HAR KURON** keywords. In addition, in each of your hero phases, you can pick 1 friendly **DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE PRIEST** to attempt the Incitement to Murder prayer (below) in addition to the 1 other prayer that **PRIEST** can attempt in that phase.

*Incitement to Murder:* If this prayer is successful, pick 1 friendly **HAR KURON** unit wholly within 12" of the priest. Until the start of your next hero phase, if the unmodified hit roll for an attack made by that unit is 6, that attack scores 2 hits on the target instead of 1. Make a wound and save roll for each hit. You cannot pick the same unit to benefit from this prayer more than once per phase.

COMMAND ABILITY

**Make an Example of the Weak:** *This champion mercilessly cuts down a faltering underling.*

You can use this command ability at the start of the battleshock phase. If you do so, pick 1 friendly **HAR KURON** unit wholly within 12" of a friendly **HAR KURON HERO**. 1 model in that unit is slain. However, in that phase, you do not need to take battleshock tests for friendly **HAR KURON** units wholly within 18" of that unit.

# HAR KURON COMMAND TRAITS

### RULERS OF HAR KURON

**HAR KURON** generals only.

| D3 | Command Trait |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Bathed in Blood:** *This general immerses themselves in the warm blood of sacrificial victims before battle, granting them Morathi's blessing.*<br><br>Add 1 to this general's Wounds characteristic. In addition, in your hero phase, you can heal 1 wound allocated to this general. |
| 2 | **Murderous Zeal:** *This general has dedicated themselves body and soul to Morathi-Khaine.*<br><br>This general can attempt to use the Incitement to Murder prayer in the same manner as a **PRIEST**. If this general can already attempt this prayer, they can attempt it twice instead of only once. |
| 3 | **Dark Adept:** *This general shows a talent for sorcery.*<br><br>This general knows the Arcane Bolt and Mystic Shield spells and can attempt to cast 1 spell in your hero phase in the same manner as **WIZARD**. If this general is already a **WIZARD**, they can attempt to cast 1 extra spell in your hero phase. |

# HAR KURON ARTEFACTS OF POWER

### RELICS OF MORATHI-KHAINE

**HAR KURON HEROES** only.

| D3 | Artefact of Power |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Lifetaker:** *This crossbow fires bolts of shadowstuff.*<br><br>In your shooting phase, you can pick 1 enemy unit within 36" of the bearer that is visible to them and roll a dice. On a 3-5, that unit suffers 1 mortal wound. On a 6, that unit suffers D3 mortal wounds. |
| 2 | **Traitor's Banner:** *This illusory standard makes those beneath it appear as allies to the foe.*<br><br>Subtract 1 from hit rolls for attacks made with missile weapons that target friendly units wholly within 12" of the bearer. |
| 3 | **Nullstone Vizard:** *This featureless mask shields the thoughts of the wearer.*<br><br>If bearer is on the battlefield at the start of your hero phase, roll a dice. On a 5+, you receive 1 command point. |

# HAR KURON SPELL LORES

You can choose or roll for one of the following spells for each **WIZARD** in a Har Kuron army.

### LORE OF UMBRAL SPITE

| D6 | Spell |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Sap Strength:** *Umbral wisps of magic worm their way into the foe, draining their vitality.*<br><br>Sap Strength has a casting value of 6. If successfully cast, pick 1 enemy unit within 18" of the caster that is visible to them. Subtract 1 from hit rolls for attacks made by that unit until the start of your next hero phase. |
| 2 | **The Withering:** *The wizard plants vivid images of frailty and doubt in the foe's minds.*<br><br>The Withering has a casting value of 7. If successfully cast, pick 1 enemy unit within 18" of the caster that is visible to them. Until the start of your next hero phase, add 1 to wound rolls for attacks that target that unit. |
| 3 | **Vitriolic Spray:** *The caster's foes are doused in acid that eats away at armour and hide.*<br><br>Vitriolic Spray has a casting value of 8. If successfully cast, pick 1 enemy unit within 6" of the caster that is visible to them. Until the start of your next hero phase, that unit has a Save characteristic of '-'. |
| 4 | **Steed of Shadows:** *A winged, coal-black creature carries the caster above the fray.*<br><br>Steed of Shadows has a casting value of 6. If successfully cast, until your next hero phase, the caster can fly and has a Move characteristic of 16". |
| 5 | **Pit of Shades:** *The wizard tears open a yawning rift to a deadly nether-realm.*<br><br>Pit of Shades has a casting value of 7. If successfully cast, pick 1 enemy unit within 18" of the caster that is visible to them and roll 2D6. If the roll is higher than that unit's Move characteristic, it suffers a number of mortal wounds equal to the difference between its Move characteristic and the roll. |
| 6 | **Shadow Daggers:** *A flurry of eldritch daggers shoots forth from the caster's hand.*<br><br>Shadow Daggers has a casting value of 7. If successfully cast, pick 1 enemy unit within 9" of the caster that is visible to them. That unit suffers D6 mortal wounds. |

# STORMCAST ETERNALS
## STORMKEEP BATTLE TRAITS

**The Stormcast Eternals are famed for the ferocity of their assaults, slamming to earth upon coruscating trails of lightning into the midst of their foes. Yet as the God-King's empire grows and new conquests must be protected, the Stormcasts have adapted to a different kind of conflict, one in which an impenetrable sigmarite shieldwall is more valuable than the shock and awe of a lightning strike. Each of the great Stormkeeps stands guard over one of Sigmar's strongholds, and boasts a small but formidable garrison of Stormcasts – the majority consisting of Liberators – that stand ready at all times to defend their ward city.**

When you pick the Stormcast Eternals allegiance for your army, you can say it will be a Stormkeep army. If you do so, you must use the Celestial Sentinels battle traits on this page instead of the Legends of the Living Tempest battle traits from *Battletome: Stormcast Eternals* (it is still considered to be a Stormcast Eternals army for the purposes of the other allegiance abilities).

### CELESTIAL SENTINELS

STORMHOSTS

*The Stormhosts of Azyr are numerous, and each one has its own methods of waging war.*

If your army is a Stormkeep army, you can give it a Stormhost keyword. All **STORMCAST ETERNALS** units in your army gain that keyword. If a model already has a Stormhost keyword, it cannot gain another one, but this does not prevent other units in your army from having a different Stormhost keyword. You can either choose one of the Stormhosts listed below or choose a Stormhost you've read about or created yourself. If you choose one from the list below, all units with that keyword benefit from the extra abilities listed for that Stormhost in *Battletome: Stormcast Eternals*. If you choose a different Stormhost, simply pick the Stormhost that most closely matches the nature of your own Stormhost.

- **HAMMERS OF SIGMAR**
- **HALLOWED KNIGHTS**
- **CELESTIAL VINDICATORS**
- **ANVILS OF THE HELDENHAMMER**
- **KNIGHTS EXCELSIOR**
- **CELESTIAL WARBRINGERS**
- **TEMPEST LORDS**
- **ASTRAL TEMPLARS**

SHIELD OF CIVILISATION

*When the Stormcast Eternals of a Stormkeep take to the field of battle, Liberators are the main strength of the army and the foundation upon which victory is built.*

Add 1 to the Bravery characteristic of friendly **STORMCAST ETERNALS** units while they are wholly within 12" of any friendly **LIBERATORS** units.

In addition, at the end of your movement phase, you can pick any friendly **LIBERATORS** units that did not move and were not set up in that phase and say they will stand fast. If you do so, until your next movement phase, you can add 1 to hit rolls for attacks made by those units, and you can add 1 to save rolls for attacks that target those units.

MORTAL AUXILIARIES

*When a Stormkeep's garrison goes to war, it can draw upon the aid of the population of the city it helps to protect.*

1 in every 4 units in a Stormkeep army can be a **CITIES OF SIGMAR** unit. Add 1 to the Bravery characteristic of those units while they are wholly within 12" of a friendly **LIBERATORS** unit. In addition, when you pick a unit to benefit from a command ability from *Battletome: Stormcast Eternals*, you can treat those units as if they were **STORMCAST ETERNALS** units.

**Designer's Note:** *This rule allows you to use a **STORMCAST ETERNALS HERO** to issue a command to a **CITIES OF SIGMAR** unit instead of or as well as a **STORMCAST ETERNALS** unit. Note that you cannot use a **CITIES OF SIGMAR HERO** to issue commands to **STORMCAST ETERNALS** units.*

WARSCROLL BATTALION

# WARDENS OF THE STORMKEEP

## ORGANISATION

- 1 **LORD-CELESTANT**
- 2-5 other **STORMCAST ETERNALS HEROES**

This battalion can only be included in a Stormkeep army. It cannot include any **MONSTERS**.

## ABILITIES

**Watchful Commanders:** *The commander and officers of a Stormkeep ensure that their forces are always prepared for battle, for they are ever conscious of the dire fate that awaits their city should they fail in their duties.*

At the start of your first hero phase, roll 1 dice for each **HERO** from this battalion. Add 3 to the roll if the **HERO** being rolled for is your general. On a 5+, you receive 1 command point.

WARSCROLL BATTALION

# STORMTOWER GARRISON

## ORGANISATION

- 1 Knight-Vexillor
- 2-4 Liberators units
- 1-2 **PALADIN** units
- 1-2 **JUSTICAR** units

This battalion can only be included in a Stormkeep army.

## ABILITIES

**Brothers in Arms:** *The Stormcasts that garrison the different wings and towers of a Stormkeep form tight-knit bonds over their eternal watch.*

**PALADIN** and **JUSTICAR** units from this battalion that are wholly within 12" of any **LIBERATORS** units from the same battalion can use the Shield of Civilisation battle trait (pg 106) to stand fast in the same manner as a **LIBERATORS** unit.

WARSCROLL BATTALION

# STORMKEEP PATROL

## ORGANISATION

- 1 Lord-Veritant
- 1 Gryph-hounds unit
- 2 **REDEEMER** or **JUSTICAR** units in any combination

This battalion can only be included in a Stormkeep army.

## ABILITIES

**Ever Vigilant:** *The warriors of a Stormkeep patrol their ward city and the surrounding territory, watchful for any sign of corruption or unrest.*

After armies are set up, but before the first battle round begins, you can remove the units from this battalion from the battlefield. If you do so, you must then set up the **LORD-VERITANT** from the battalion anywhere on the battlefield more than 9" from any enemy units, and then set up the other units from the battalion wholly within 12" of the **LORD-VERITANT** and more than 9" from any enemy units.

WARSCROLL BATTALION

# STORMKEEP BROTHERHOOD



**The great Stormkeeps stand sentinel over the free cities of Sigmar. Ranks of battle-hardened Stormcast Eternals garrison these mighty fortresses, each having sworn an oath to defend their ward city until their last breath. Eschewing the Stormcasts' familiar lightning assaults for impervious sigmarite shieldwalls and units of mortal auxiliaries, they repel invaders and destroy insurrectionists with implacable resolve.**

## ORGANISATION

- 1 Wardens of the Stormkeep warscroll battalion
- 3+ Stormtower Garrison warscroll battalions
- 1+ Stormkeep Patrol warscroll battalions
- 0-3 of the following warscroll battalions in any combination: Hailstorm Battery, Thunderhead Brotherhood, Hammerstrike Force, Vanguard Wing

This battalion can only be included in a Stormkeep army.

## ABILITIES

**Defenders of the Faithful:** *The Stormcast Eternals that make up the garrison of a Stormkeep will do all in their power to safeguard their ward city from those who would seek to cast it down.*

You can add 1 to wound rolls for attacks made by models from this warscroll battalion that target enemy units that are wholly or partially within your territory.

WARSCROLL BATTALION

# VEN BRECHT'S BLACK WATCH



**The grim Lord-Veritant Keiser Ven Brecht has assembled an elite band of Stormcast sharpshooters in order to track down servants of darkness operating in the shadows of Sigmar's free cities. Known as the Black Watch, this retinue employs keen-scented Gryph-hounds to run heretics and traitors into the open before riddling them with a storm of lightning arrows. Guided by Ven Brecht's centuries of bitter experience, there is no foe that can evade their relentless pursuit.**

## ORGANISATION

- 1 Lord-Veritant (Keiser Ven Brecht)
- 1 Gryph-hounds unit
- 1-2 Judicators units
- 1 Castigators unit

The Lord-Veritant from this battalion is a unique named character. Units from this battalion must have **ANVILS OF THE HELDENHAMMER** keyword.

## ABILITIES

**Ever Vigilant:** *Stormkeep patrols roam the Cities of Sigmar and the surrounding territory, vigilant for any sign of corruption or unrest.*

After armies are set up but before the first battle round begins, you can remove the units from this battalion from the battlefield. If you do so, you must then set up the **LORD-VERITANT** from this battalion anywhere on the battlefield more than 9" from any enemy units, and then set up the other units from the battalion wholly within 12" of the **LORD-VERITANT** and more than 9" from any enemy units.

## COMMAND TRAIT

If Keiser Ven Brecht is your army's general, he must have this command trait instead of one from *Battletome: Stormcast Eternals*:

**Fiendslayer:** *Lord-Veritant Keiser Ven Brecht is perfectly suited to his role as a hunter of daemon worshippers and secretive death-cults.*

When you use this general's Sanction ability, you can pick an enemy **CHAOS** or **DEATH HERO** instead of an enemy **WIZARD**. In addition, add 1 to hit rolls for attacks made by this general that target a **VAMPIRE**.

# IDONETH DEEPKIN MOUNT TRAITS

If an Idoneth Deepkin army includes any **HEROES** mounted on a Deepmare, 1 of them can have a Deepmare mount trait. Choose or roll for the mount trait from the table below.

If an Idoneth Deepkin army includes any **LEVIADONS**, 1 of them can have a Leviadon mount trait. Choose or roll for the mount trait from the table below.

You can choose 1 extra **HERO** or **LEVIADON** to have a mount trait for each warscroll battalion in your army. A **HERO** or **LEVIADON** cannot have more than 1 mount trait, and the same mount trait cannot be taken more than once in the same army.

## DEEPMARE MOUNT TRAITS

**HERO** mounted on Deepmare only.

| D3 | Mount Trait |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Swift-finned Impaler:** *This Deepmare tears through the ethersea, eager to bring death to the enemy.*<br><br>If the roll for this model's Deepmare Horn ability is 6, the nearest enemy unit suffers D6 mortal wounds instead of D3 mortal wounds. |
| 2 | **Savage Ferocity:** *Few foes can withstand the terrible ferocity of this Deepmare's jaws, talons and lashing tails.*<br><br>Add 1 to the Attacks characteristic of this model's Deepmare's Fanged Jaws and Talons and its Deepmare's Lashing Tails. |
| 3 | **Voidchill Darkness:** *This Deepmare comes from some of the darkest and coldest oceans depths in the realms, turning the ethersea around it ice-cold and dark.*<br><br>Subtract 1 from hit rolls for attacks made by enemy models that are within 3" of this model. |

## LEVIADON MOUNT TRAITS

**LEVIADON** only.

| D3 | Mount Trait |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Ancient:** *The shell of this Leviadon is heavily encrusted with jagged shardshells that have grown during the countless generations it has served the Idoneth.*<br><br>If the weapon used for an attack that targets this model has a Rend characteristic of -1, change the Rend characteristic for that attack to '-'. |
| 2 | **Denizen of the Darkest Depths:** *This Leviadon was born in seas so deep that the creatures that live there have evolved skeletons and shells that are unbelievably heavy and strong.*<br><br>Add 1 to the number of mortal wounds inflicted on each enemy unit by this model's Crushing Charge ability. This means it will inflict 1 mortal wound on an enemy unit on a roll of 1. |
| 3 | **Reverberating Carapace:** *The shell that encases this Leviadon is filled with channels and chambers that amplify the effect of the void drum it carries on its back.*<br><br>Increase the range of this model's Void Drum ability from 12" to 15". |




WARSCROLL

# AKHELIAN ALLOPEXES



**Allopexes are vicious predators of the deep known for their voracious appetites and savage blood-frenzies. As Akhelian bond-beasts they are more dangerous still, boasting scythed fins and deadly back-mounted harpoon launchers.**

| MISSILE WEAPONS | Range | Attacks | To Hit | To Wound | Rend | Damage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Razorshell Harpoon Launcher | 24" | 4 | 3+ | 3+ | -1 | 1 |
| Retarius Net Launcher | 18" | 1 | 3+ | 3+ | - | 3 |
| **MELEE WEAPONS** | **Range** | **Attacks** | **To Hit** | **To Wound** | **Rend** | **Damage** |
| Barbed Hooks and Blades | 1" | 6 | 3+ | 3+ | - | 1 |
| Ferocious Bite | 1" | 3 | 3+ | 3+ | -2 | 2 |

## DESCRIPTION

A unit of Akhelian Allopexes has any number of models. Each model in the unit is armed with 1 of the following weapon options: Razorshell Harpoon Launcher, Barbed Hooks and Blades, and Ferocious Bite; or Retarius Net Launcher, Barbed Hooks and Blades, and Ferocious Bite.

**FLY:** This unit can fly.

## ABILITIES

**Bloodthirsty Predators:** *Allopexes are drawn towards the scent of freshly spilt blood.*

Add 1 to the Attacks characteristic of this unit's Ferocious Bites if it is within 3" of any enemy models that have any wounds allocated to them or it is within 3" of any enemy units that have had any models slain in that turn.

**Entangled:** *A Retarius net entangles its victims even if it does not tear them to shreds right away.*

A unit that has been hit by any attacks made with a Retarius Net Launcher cannot make pile-in moves in the same turn.

**KEYWORDS** ORDER, AELF, IDONETH DEEPKIN, AKHELIAN, ALLOPEX






WARSCROLL

# EIDOLON OF MATHLANN

ASPECT OF THE STORM



**In its aspect of the storm, an Eidolon of Mathlann is the vengeful wrath of slain Idoneth made manifest, an uncontrollable tempest given aelven form that surges above the battlefield before crashing down upon the foe with tidal-wave force.**

| MELEE WEAPONS | Range | Attacks | To Hit | To Wound | Rend | Damage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spear of Repressed Fury | 2" | 4 | 3+ | 2+ | -2 | 2 |
| Crulhook | 1" | 4 | 3+ | 2+ | -1 | 1 |
| Sharp Fangs | 3" | 2D6 | 4+ | 4+ | - | 1 |

## DESCRIPTION

An Eidolon of Mathlann, Aspect of the Storm is a single model armed with a Spear of Repressed Fury and a Crulhook.

**STORMSHOAL:** This model is accompanied by a Stormshoal that attacks with its Sharp Fangs. For rules purposes, it is treated in the same manner as a mount.

**FLY:** This model can fly.

## ABILITIES

**Crashing Upon the Foe:** *The Eidolon surges up into the sky before crashing down like a tidal wave, reforming to dive again and again until nothing is left of the enemy but soulless corpses.*

You can heal up to D3 wounds allocated to this model after it makes a charge move.

Add 1 to the Attacks and Damage characteristics of this model's Spear of Repressed Fury if it made a charge move in the same turn.

This model can retreat and still charge later in the same turn.

**Drench with Hate:** *The mere presence of an Eidolon in its warrior aspect is enough to imbue nearby Idoneth with a fierce and bitter hate.*

Add 1 to wound rolls for attacks made by friendly **IDONETH DEEPKIN** units that are wholly within 18" of any friendly models with this ability.

**Pulled Into the Depths:** *The viciously barbed Crulhook can ensnare unfortunate foes.*

At the start of the combat phase, you can pick 1 enemy **HERO** with a Wounds characteristic of 8 or less that is within 3" of this model. Add 1 to hit rolls for attacks made by this model that target that **HERO** in that phase.

**Stormshoal:** *The ethereal sea-creatures that swirl and dart around an Eidolon harry attackers, intercepting their blows and spoiling their aim.*

Roll a dice each time you allocate a wound or mortal wound to this model. On a 5+, that wound or mortal wound is negated.

| KEYWORDS | ORDER, AELF, IDONETH DEEPKIN, EIDOLON, HERO, ASPECT OF THE STORM |
|---|---|




WARSCROLL

# EIDOLON OF MATHLANN

ASPECT OF THE SEA



**In its aspect of the sea, an Eidolon of Mathlann is a majestic phantom that harnesses the mystic bounty of the oceans, its magic able to lull the foe asleep, heal wounded Idoneth, or send the enemy fleeing beneath a wave of purest terror.**

| MISSILE WEAPONS | Range | Attacks | To Hit | To Wound | Rend | Damage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Blasts of Abyssal Energy | 15" | D3 | 3+ | 3+ | -2 | 2 |
| **MELEE WEAPONS** | **Range** | **Attacks** | **To Hit** | **To Wound** | **Rend** | **Damage** |
| Psi-trident | 2" | 3 | 3+ | 3+ | -2 | 2 |
| Deep-sea Sceptre | 1" | 3 | 3+ | 3+ | -1 | 1 |
| Sharp Fangs | 3" | 2D6 | 4+ | 4+ | - | 1 |

## DESCRIPTION

An Eidolon of Mathlann, Aspect of the Sea is a single model armed with Blasts of Abyssal Energy, a Psi-trident and a Deep-sea Sceptre.

**STORMSHOAL:** This model is accompanied by a Stormshoal that attacks with its Sharp Fangs. For rules purposes, it is treated in the same manner as a mount.

**FLY:** This model can fly.

## ABILITIES

**Dormant Energies:** *The Isharann aspect of an Eidolon of Mathlann seethes with suppressed energies that it can draw upon at need.*

You can re-roll casting, dispelling and unbinding rolls for this model. If you do not re-roll any casting or dispelling rolls for this model in your hero phase, you can heal up to D3 wounds allocated to this model at the end of that phase.

**Stormshoal:** *The ethereal sea-creatures that swirl and dart around an Eidolon harry attackers, intercepting their blows and spoiling their aim.*

Roll a dice each time you allocate a wound or mortal wound to this model. On a 5+, that wound or mortal wound is negated.

**Tranquillity of the Abyss:** *An Eidolon in its aspect of the sea radiates an aura of unnatural tranquillity, calming any fears nearby Idoneth may harbour.*

Add 3 to the Bravery characteristic of friendly **IDONETH DEEPKIN** units while they are wholly within 18" of any friendly models with this ability.

## MAGIC

This model is a **WIZARD**. It can attempt to cast 2 spells in your hero phase and attempt to unbind 2 spells in the enemy hero phase. It knows the Arcane Bolt, Mystic Shield, Cloying Sea Mists and Tsunami of Terror spells.

**Cloying Sea Mists:** *The Eidolon brings forth cloying sea mists that heal Idoneth Deepkin and send foes into a mystic slumber from which they will never awake.*

Cloying Sea Mists has a casting value of 6. If successfully cast, pick 1 friendly **IDONETH DEEPKIN** unit, or 1 enemy unit, within 12" of the caster and visible to them. If you picked a friendly **IDONETH DEEPKIN** unit, heal up to D3 wounds allocated to that unit. If you picked an enemy unit, that unit suffers D3 mortal wounds.

**Tsunami of Terror:** *With a wave of its sceptre, the Eidolon sends forth invisible waves of fear that cause even the bravest of opponents to cower.*

Tsunami of Terror has a casting value of 7. If successfully cast, pick up to D6 enemy units within 12" of the caster and visible to them. Until your next hero phase, subtract 1 from hit rolls for attacks made by those units, and subtract 1 from the Bravery characteristic of those units.

| KEYWORDS | ORDER, AELF, IDONETH DEEPKIN, EIDOLON, HERO, WIZARD, ASPECT OF THE SEA |
|---|---|




WARSCROLL

# AKHELIAN LEVIADON



**A monstrous undersea titan, the Leviadon is covered in thick scales and protected by an impenetrable shell. In addition to its powerful jaws and bladed fins, it carries a hard-bitten crew and twin harpoon launchers, making it a veritable living fortress.**

| MISSILE WEAPONS | Range | Attacks | To Hit | To Wound | Rend | Damage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Razorshell Harpoon Launchers | 24" | 8 | 3+ | 3+ | -1 | 1 |
| **MELEE WEAPONS** | **Range** | **Attacks** | **To Hit** | **To Wound** | **Rend** | **Damage** |
| Twin-pronged Spear and Razorshell Harpoons | 1" | 6 | 3+ | 3+ | - | 1 |
| Massive Scythed Fins | 2" | 4 | 2+ | 3+ | -1 | ✹ |
| Crushing Jaws | 1" | 2 | ✹ | 2+ | -2 | 3 |

| DAMAGE TABLE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Wounds Suffered | Save | Massive Scythed Fins | Crushing Jaws |
| 0-8 | 2+ | 4 | 2+ |
| 9-11 | 3+ | 3 | 3+ |
| 12-14 | 4+ | 2 | 4+ |
| 15+ | 5+ | 1 | 5+ |

## DESCRIPTION

An Akhelian Leviadon is a single model armed with Razorshell Harpoon Launchers, a Twin-pronged Spear and Razorshell Harpoons, Massive Scythed Fins and Crushing Jaws.

**FLY:** This model can fly.

## ABILITIES

**Crushing Charge:** *When a Leviadon charges into battle, it crushes the foe with its sheer mass.*

Roll a dice for each enemy unit within 1" of this model after this model finishes a charge move. On a 2+, that enemy unit suffers D3 mortal wounds. If that enemy unit has a Wounds characteristic of 1, it suffers D6 mortal wounds instead of D3 mortal wounds.

**Jaws of Death:** *When a Leviadon is able to clamp its jaws down firmly upon its prey, they are almost impossible to prise open.*

If the unmodified hit roll for an attack made with this model's Crushing Jaws is 6, that attack inflicts 3 mortal wounds on the target and the attack sequence ends (do not make a wound or save roll). If the unmodified hit roll for an attack made with this model's Crushing Jaws is 6 and the target is a **MONSTER**, that attack inflicts 6 mortal wounds on the target instead of 3 and the attack sequence ends (do not make a wound or save roll).

**Void Drum:** *A void drummer rides on the back of every Akhelian Leviadon. The mesmerising rhythm that they beat out sends rippling currents through the air, distorting the outlines of the drummer's comrades and making them hard to see, while at the same time making the foe easier for Namarti warriors to detect.*

Add 1 to save rolls for attacks that target friendly **IDONETH DEEPKIN** units that have a Wounds characteristic of 8 or less that are wholly within 12" of any friendly **LEVIADONS**. In addition, add 1 to hit rolls for attacks made by friendly **NAMARTI** units that target an enemy unit wholly within 12" of any friendly **LEVIADONS**.

**KEYWORDS** ORDER, AELF, IDONETH DEEPKIN, MONSTER, AKHELIAN, LEVIADON

WARSCROLL BATTALION

# THE BLOODSURF HUNT



**King Sythus Nemmetar of Príom is the trusted right hand and royal huntmaster of High King Volturnos. He is renowned as one of the finest beastriders in any enclave, and chooses only the most battle-hardened and skilled Akhelians to join his Bloodsurf Hunt. Any who draw the ire of the High King are pursued relentlessly by these cavaliers and their ferocious steeds, who can scent a single drop of their quarry's blood from leagues away.**

## ORGANISATION

- 1 Akhelian King (Nemmetar)
- 1-2 Akhelian Allopexes units

The Akhelian King from this battalion is a unique named character. Units from this battalion must be from the Ionrach enclave.

## ABILITIES

**Deadly Guardians:** *The Allopex riders that fight at King Nemmetar's side are amongst the most skilful and disciplined of their kind, slaying their quarry with deft strikes from the backs of their mounts and willingly putting themselves in harm's way to protect their lord.*

Add 1 to hit rolls for attacks made with Barbed Hooks and Blades by **ALLOPEX** units from this battalion that are wholly within 12" of the **AKHELIAN KING** from the same battalion. In addition, roll a dice before you allocate a wound or mortal wound to the **AKHELIAN KING** from this battalion if it is within 3" of any **ALLOPEX** units from the same battalion. On a 2+, you must instead allocate that wound or mortal wound to one of those units.

## COMMAND TRAIT

If Nemmetar is your army's general, he has the Lord of Storm and Sea command trait from *Battletome: Idoneth Deepkin*.

# IDOLATORS

**Wherever the profane symbols of Chaos power stand, there can be found throngs of Idolators. These frenzied worshippers of the Ruinous Powers seek to spread their deranged worship far and wide, tearing down the false idols of rival gods and dragging away defeated foes to be brutally sacrificed in dark rituals.**

When you choose a Damned Legion keyword for a Slaves to Darkness army using the Damned Legions battle trait in *Battletome: Slaves to Darkness*, you can choose the **IDOLATORS** keyword instead of one of those listed. The allegiance abilities for the Idolators Damned Legion can be found on these pages.

## BATTLE TRAITS – DARK PANTHEONITES

### BLESSED OF CHAOS

*The Chaos Gods look favourably upon the Idolators and the warrior priests that lead them.*

Add 1 to prayer rolls for **IDOLATORS PRIESTS**. In addition, units in your army with the **PRIEST** keyword have the Leader battlefield role.

### PANOPLY OF RUIN

*Idolators armies include vast throngs of twisted Chaos-worshippers from various esoteric cults, often differing greatly in appearance and culture, but equally obsessed with proving themselves in the eyes of the gods.*

**IDOLATORS CULTISTS** units have the Battleline battlefield role. In addition, when you make a charge roll for an **IDOLATORS CULTISTS** unit, change the lowest dice to a 6. If the roll is a double, change one of the dice to a 6.

### IDOLATOR LORDS

*As well as being fearsome war machines, Chaos Chariots act as imposing mobile platforms from which the leaders of the Idolators can incite their followers to action with incendiary rhetoric.*

You can upgrade 1 **CHAOS CHARIOTS** or **GOREBEAST CHARIOTS** unit with only 1 model in your army to an Idolator Lord. If you do so, that unit gains the **IDOLATOR LORD**, **HERO** and **PRIEST** keywords, is an Exalted Charioteer (even though the unit has only 1 model), and you must give it one of the following Mark of Chaos keywords when you select it to be part of your army: **KHORNE**, **TZEENTCH**, **NURGLE**, **SLAANESH** or **UNDIVIDED**.

An **IDOLATOR LORD** knows the prayer from the Idolators Prayers table opposite that corresponds to its Mark of Chaos keyword.

### DESTROY THE FALSE IDOLS

*Idolators hold a special hatred for priests and holy men of those who do not worship Chaos, or who preach a creed at odds with their own.*

Add 1 to wound rolls for attacks made by **IDOLATORS** models that target a **PRIEST**. In addition, you can use the following command ability:

**Desecrate:** *The Idolators are commanded by one of their champions to tear down a monument dedicated to a rival god.*

You can use this command ability in your hero phase. If you do so, pick 1 friendly **IDOLATORS** unit that is wholly within 12" of a friendly **IDOLATOR LORD** and within 3" of a terrain feature that is part of the enemy army. Then, roll a dice. If the roll is greater than the number of enemy models within 3" of that terrain feature, that terrain feature is Desecrated. Scenery rules for a Desecrated terrain feature do not apply for the rest of the battle.

## COMMAND TRAITS – ZEALOTS OF THE RUINOUS FAITH

**IDOLATORS PRIEST** general only.

| D6 | Command Trait |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Bolstered by Hate:** *So potent is this general's loathing for unbelievers that it manifests as a vile nimbus of Chaos energy.*<br><br>Add 2 to this general's Wounds characteristic. |
| 2 | **Lord of Terror:** *Where this champion walks, daemonic howls echo around them, striking horror into the hearts of all in their path.*<br><br>Subtract 1 from the Bravery characteristic of enemy units while they are within 6" of this general. |
| 3 | **Favoured of the Pantheon:** *The gods watch this warlord's deeds particularly closely.*<br><br>You can add or subtract 2 from the result of any rolls made for this general on the Eye of the Gods table (see *Battletome: Slaves to Darkness*). |
| 4 | **Fiery Orator:** *This general's darkly inspired words carry far, inciting great multitudes of their followers.*<br><br>This general can chant 2 prayers in their hero phase instead of only 1 (they can chant the same prayer more than once). |
| 5 | **Bane of False Idols:** *Monuments to the enemy's gods are anathema to this general.*<br><br>Once per hero phase, this general can use the Desecrate command ability without a command point being spent. |
| 6 | **Smite the Unbeliever:** *This general lays about themselves in combat with frenzied conviction.*<br><br>Add 2 to the Attacks characteristic of this general's melee weapons. |

## IDOLATORS PRAYERS

**IDOLATOR LORD** only.

***Blessings of Khorne:*** At the start of your hero phase, you can say that this model will chant this prayer. If you do so, pick 1 friendly **KHORNE IDOLATORS** unit wholly within 12" of this model and make a prayer roll by rolling a dice. On a 1-2, the prayer is not answered. On a 3+, you can re-roll hit rolls for attacks made with melee weapons by that unit until your next hero phase.

***Blessings of Tzeentch:*** At the start of your hero phase, you can say that this model will chant this prayer. If you do so, pick 1 friendly **TZEENTCH IDOLATORS** unit wholly within 12" of this model and make a prayer roll by rolling a dice. On a 1-2, the prayer is not answered. On a 3+, you can re-roll save rolls for attacks that target that unit until your next hero phase.

***Blessings of Nurgle:*** At the start of your hero phase, you can say that this model will chant this prayer. If you do so, pick 1 friendly **NURGLE IDOLATORS** unit wholly within 12" of this model and make a prayer roll by rolling a dice. On a 1-2, the prayer is not answered. On a 3+, you can re-roll wound rolls for attacks made with melee weapons by that unit until your next hero phase.

***Blessings of Slaanesh:*** At the start of your hero phase, you can say that this model will chant this prayer. If you do so, pick 1 friendly **SLAANESH IDOLATORS** unit wholly within 12" of this model and make a prayer roll by rolling a dice. On a 1-2, the prayer is not answered. On a 3+, you can re-roll charge rolls for that unit until your next hero phase.

***Blessings of Chaos Undivided:*** At the start of your hero phase, you can say that this model will chant this prayer. If you do so, pick 1 friendly **IDOLATORS** model within 12" of this model and make a prayer roll by rolling a dice. On a 1-2, the prayer is not answered. On a 3+, you can heal D3 wounds allocated to that model.



WARSCROLL BATTALION

# GRESH'S IRON REAPERS



**A colossus of a man clad in scarred iron plate and wielding a cursed greataxe that blazes with unholy power, Lord Rokar Gresh is the ruler of the Crimson Brethren, a horde of Idolators that seeks out sites steeped in the corruption of Chaos. Riding atop his thundering Chaos Chariot and accompanied by a pair of champion charioteers, Gresh bellows profane attestations to the majesty of the Dark Gods, all while swinging his blade and crushing dozens of foes beneath his war machine's heavy spiked wheels.**

## ORGANISATION

- 1 **IDOLATOR LORD** armed with a Chaos Greatblade and Lashing Whip (Rokar Gresh)
- 2 Gorebeast Chariots units

All units from this battalion must have the **IDOLATORS** and **UNDIVIDED** keyword. The **IDOLATOR LORD** from this battalion is a unique named character.

## ABILITIES

**Soulbutcher:** *Gresh has been honoured for his service to the Everchosen with the dreaded varanite greatblade known as Soulbutcher.*

The Chaos Greatblade used by the **IDOLATOR LORD** from this battalion has an Attacks characteristic of 4 instead of 2 and a Damage characteristic of D3 instead of 2. In addition, if the unmodified hit roll for an attack made with that weapon is 6, that attack inflicts D3 mortal wounds on the target and the attack sequence ends (do not make a wound or save roll).

## COMMAND TRAIT

If Rokar Gresh is your army's general, he must have this command trait instead of one from *Battletome: Slaves to Darkness* or page 117:

**Profane Oratory:** *Rokar Gresh's voice booms out over the noise of the battlefield, filling the hearts of his warriors with murderous joy.*

At the start of the combat phase, you can pick 1 friendly **SLAVES TO DARKNESS** unit wholly within 18" of this general. Add 1 to hit rolls for attacks made by the unit you picked until the end of the phase.

# PITCHED BATTLE PROFILES

**The table below provides points, minimum and maximum unit sizes, and battlefield roles for the warscrolls and warscroll battalions in this book, for use in Pitched Battles. Spending the points listed on this table allows you to take a minimum-sized unit with any of its upgrades. Understrength units cost the full amount of points. Larger units are taken in multiples of their minimum unit size; multiply their cost by the same amount as you multiplied their size. If a unit has two points values separated by a slash (e.g. '60/200'), the second value is for a maximum sized unit. Units that are listed as 'Unique' are named characters and can only be taken once in an army. Updated August 2020; the profiles printed here take precedence over any profiles with an earlier publication date or no publication date.**

| CITIES OF SIGMAR | UNIT SIZE | | POINTS | BATTLEFIELD ROLE | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WARSCROLL | MIN | MAX | | | |
| *Kraeth's Shadowhost* | - | - | *160* | *Warscroll Battalion* | |

| DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE | UNIT SIZE | | POINTS | BATTLEFIELD ROLE | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WARSCROLL | MIN | MAX | | | |
| Morathi-Khaine | 1 | 1 | 210 | Leader | Unique. These units must be taken as a set for a total of 600 points. Although taken as a set, each is a separate unit. |
| The Shadow Queen | 1 | 1 | 390 | Leader, Behemoth | |
| *Scáthcoven* | - | - | *140* | *Warscroll Battalion* | |
| *Shrine Brood* | - | - | *120* | *Warscroll Battalion* | |
| *Vyperic Guard* | - | - | *140* | *Warscroll Battalion* | |

| IDONETH DEEPKIN | UNIT SIZE | | POINTS | BATTLEFIELD ROLE | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WARSCROLL | MIN | MAX | | | |
| Akhelian Leviadon | 1 | 1 | 340 | Behemoth | |
| Eidolon of Mathlann, Aspect of the Sea | 1 | 1 | 330 | Leader | |
| Eidolon of Mathlann, Aspect of the Storm | 1 | 1 | 330 | Leader | |
| Akhelian Allopexes | 1 | 3 | 110 | | |
| *The Bloodsurf Hunt* | - | - | *120* | *Warscroll Battalion* | |

| SLAVES TO DARKNESS | UNIT SIZE | | POINTS | BATTLEFIELD ROLE | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WARSCROLL | MIN | MAX | | | |
| *Gresh's Iron Reapers* | - | - | *140* | *Warscroll Battalion* | |

| STORMCAST ETERNALS | UNIT SIZE | | POINTS | BATTLEFIELD ROLE | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WARSCROLL | MIN | MAX | | | |
| *Stormkeep Brotherhood* | - | - | *60* | *Warscroll Battalion* | |
| *Stormkeep Patrol* | - | - | *130* | *Warscroll Battalion* | |
| *Stormtower Garrison* | - | - | *160* | *Warscroll Battalion* | |
| *Ven Brecht's Black Watch* | - | - | *160* | *Warscroll Battalion* | |
| *Wardens of the Stormkeep* | - | - | *140* | *Warscroll Battalion* | |

# EXPLORE THE DIGITAL RANGE

## RULES AND BATTLETOMES

**The Age of Sigmar is an epic setting populated by myriad armies, powerful heroes and magnificent monsters. It plays host to vast, realm-spanning wars between the forces of Order and Chaos, Destruction and Death. Read on to explore these battle-torn landscapes and learn of the many peoples and creatures of the realms.**




### WARHAMMER AGE OF SIGMAR CORE BOOK

**The Mortal Realms have been ground beneath the iron heel of the Dark Gods. These monstrous deities once believed their final victory to be near, yet they have underestimated the forces of Order that stand against them. Across the realms, bolts of energy deliver Sigmar's heroic Stormcast Eternals into battle as the Pantheon of Order gathers its strength. With new cities and fortresses raised in the wake of each conquest, civilisation takes root once more. Yet from the shadow of progress, new and deathly evils come into the light…**

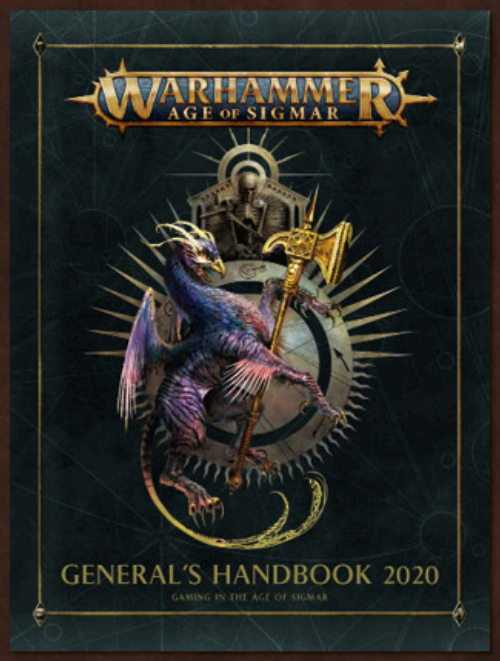
This book tells the epic story of the Age of Sigmar, from mythic beginnings to an arcane apocalypse, and provides you with exciting ways to forge your own legends. Inside you will find showcases of Citadel Miniatures, epic stories, and detailed maps of the Mortal Realms – as well as rules that bring your Warhammer Age of Sigmar battles to life on the tabletop.




### ORDER BATTLETOME: STORMCAST ETERNALS

**By Sigmar's will they are reforged, heroes locked in a hellish war without respite.**

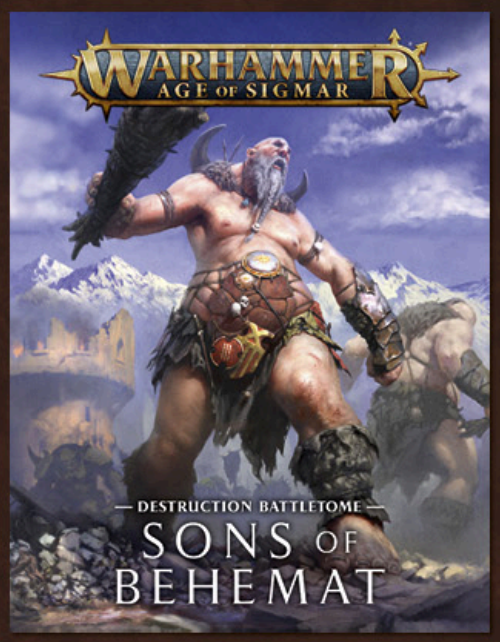
Each Stormcast Eternal was once a mortal who sought to defy the dominion of Chaos. Taken to Azyr by Sigmar and reforged in the fires of the God-King, these warriors have become living weapons that wield the power of the storm. Thundering down to the Mortal Realms in blasts of lightning, the Stormhosts take their bloody revenge on the hordes of Chaos over and over again. But of late, there are those brave enough to ask – at what cost?




## GENERAL'S HANDBOOK 2020

This book expands on the Warhammer Age of Sigmar core rules to support an array of gaming styles that suit all hobbyists, from casual collectors who play occasional games with their friends to veteran warriors who spend years honing their forces for competitive tournaments.

Everyone enjoys the Games Workshop hobby in different ways. Some are avid painters who collect stunning centrepiece models, while others immerse themselves in gripping tales of the realms. For some, though, using their collections to play games against like-minded opponents across the tabletop is at the very heart of their hobby. If you fall into the latter category, then this book is for you, as it focuses on that aspect of the hobby where the miniatures meet the battlefield.




## DESTRUCTION BATTLETOME: SONS OF BEHEMAT

**The gargants stride the Mortal Realms without fear, smashing aside everything in their path.**

The titanic Sons of Behemat have might enough to throttle dragons, barge down castle walls and tear elder oaks from the ground. When they attack as a tribe they become unstoppable, stamping the enemy's infantry flat and pummelling rival monsters to death. Any who oppose their rule are battered with hurled boulders before the gargants charge in, each towering hulk roaring in savage triumph as he seizes victory through brute force and ignorance.




## DEATH BATTLETOME: OSSIARCH BONEREAPERS

**The undead of the Ossiarch Empire are fearsome indeed, each soldier made from the bone and souls of their foes.**

The Ossiarch Bonereapers do not slay all those they encounter, but conquer them, only to bind their vassals into a hideous bargain. In return for a tithe of skeletal remains they will leave their mortal prey alone. But should any defy the will of the military genius Katakros or his master Nagash, they will soon face giant constructs, heavy cavalry, living artillery and endless ranks of undead revenants intent upon their death.