

From the maelstrom of a sundered world, the Eight Realms were born. The formless and the divine exploded into life. Strange, new worlds appeared in the firmament, each one gilded with spirits, gods and men. Noblest of the gods was Sigmar. For years beyond reckoning he illuminated the realms, wreathed in light and majesty as he carved out his reign. His strength was the power of thunder. His wisdom was infinite. Mortal and immortal alike kneeled before his lofty throne. Great empires rose and, for a while, treachery was banished. Sigmar claimed the land and sky as his own and ruled over a glorious age of myth.

But cruelty is tenacious. As had been foreseen, the great alliance of gods and men tore itself apart. Myth and legend crumbled into Chaos. Darkness flooded the realms. Torture, slavery and fear replaced the glory that came before. Sigmar turned his back on the mortal kingdoms, disgusted by their fate. He fixed his gaze instead on the remains of the world he had lost long ago, brooding over its charred core, searching endlessly for a sign of hope. And then, in the dark heat of his rage, he caught a glimpse of something magnificent. He pictured a weapon born of the heavens. A beacon powerful enough to pierce the endless night. An army hewn from everything he had lost. Sigmar set his artisans to work and for long ages they toiled, striving to harness the power of the stars. As Sigmar's great work neared completion, he turned back to the realms and saw that the dominion of Chaos was almost complete. The hour for vengeance had come. Finally, with lightning blazing across his brow, he stepped forth to unleash his creation.

The Age of Sigmar had begun.



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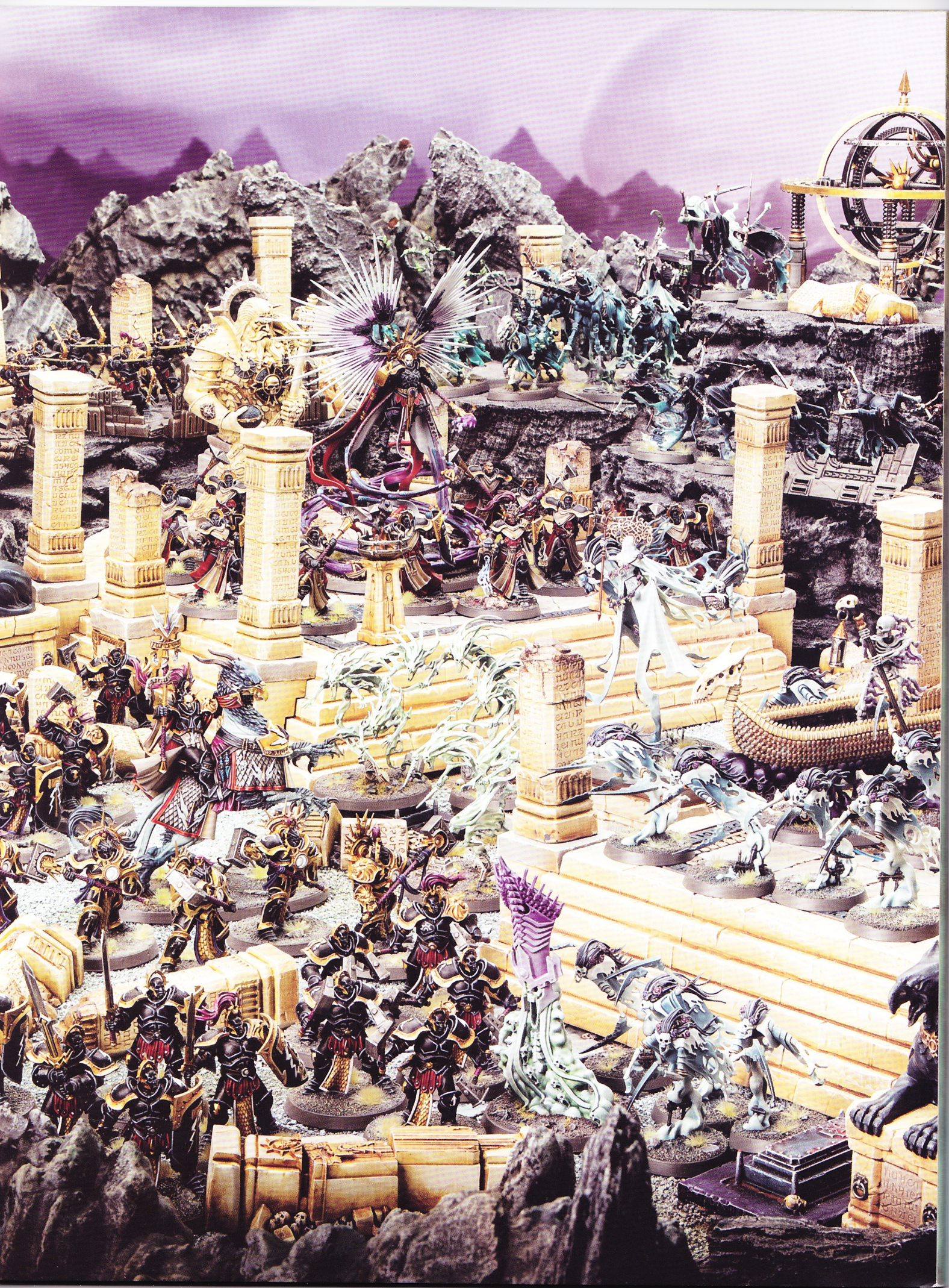
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TREASURES UNTOLD

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The Siege of Lethis was one of the bloodiest engagements of the Soul Wars, as the forces of Nagash, Supreme Lord of Undeath, sought to breach the depths of the Midnight Tomb. In the maelstrom of battle, legends were forged on both sides, and reputations forever blackened.

DEITIES

- **Sigmar, the God-King:** Ruler of the Realm of Heavens and creator of the Stormcast Eternals.
- **Teclis, Lord of Illumination:** Aelf god and twin brother of Tyrion. Ruler of Hysish.
- **Grungni the Great Maker:** Smith-god of the duardin.
- **Nagash, the Great Necromancer:** Supreme Lord of Undeath and Tyrant of Shyish.



NIGHTHAUNT

- **Lady Olynder, Mortarch of Grief:** The Veiled Lady, commander of the Legion of Grief.
- **Kurdoss Valentian, the Craven King:** Consort and advisor to Lady Olynder, leader of her Nighthaunt armies.

KHARADRON OVERLORDS - BARAK-NAR

- **Admiral Bryge Colstarn:** Ambitious Kharadron fortune-seeker out of Barak-Nar. Captain of *Dealbreaker*.

IDONETH DEEPKIN - IONRACH ENCLAVE

- **King Ecraviir Blacktide:** Ruler of the Idoneth that dwell in the depths of the Dwindlesea, and guardian of the whirlway known as Haedrann Kar.
- **Savrentis (Deepmare):** Noble steed of King Ecraviir.
- **Soulscryer Nammos:** Advisor to King Ecraviir Blacktide and envoy to the free city of Lethis.

FYRESLAYERS - GREYFYRD LODGE

- **Runeson Graegar:** Hot-tempered son of Greyfyrd, commander of the mercenary Fyreslayers hired to defend Lethis.
- **Kavaknos (Magmadroth):** Ferocious mount of Runeson Graegar.

FLESH-EATER COURTS - THE TENEBROUS COURT

- **Abhorrant Ghoul King Maldoros:** Delusional ruler of the Tenebrous Court, which maintains an uneasy peace with Lethis.

FREEGUILD - LETHIS MILITIA

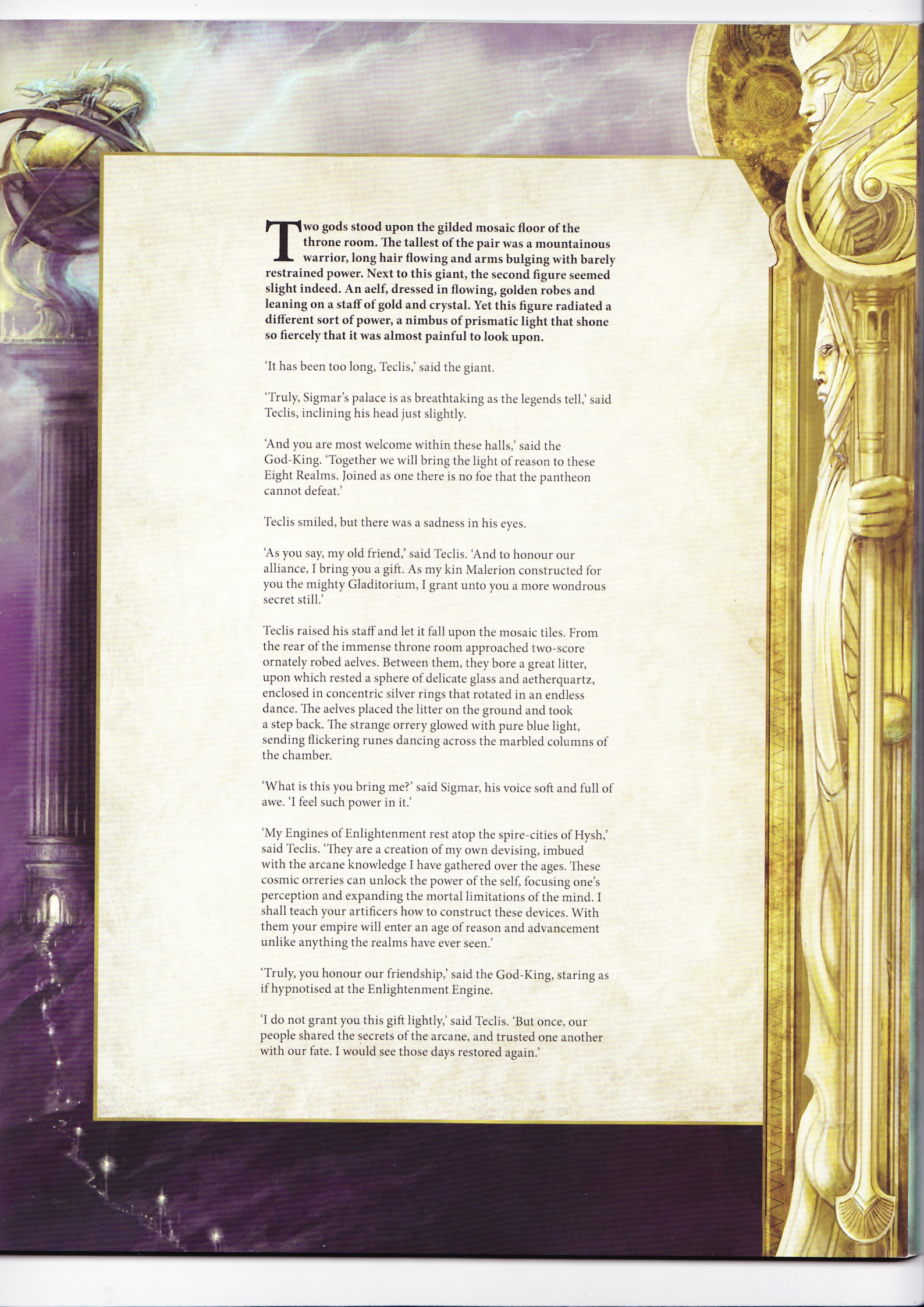
- **Blackshore Guard:** Mortal defenders of the Raven City, specialists in warfare against ethereal and daemonic foes.

DEVOTED OF SIGMAR

- **Excelsior Warpriest Pravus Morningstar, the High Acclamator of Azyrheim:** Zealous battle-priest of Sigmar, leader of countless Devoted crusades.

STORMCAST ETERNALS - ANVILS OF THE HELDENHAMMER

- **The Celestant-Prime:** Avenging Angel of Azyr, Bearer of Ghal Maraz and the First Scion of Sigmar.
- **Lord-Celestant Ossiach Vanderghule:** Lord of the Soulguard Chamber, and commander of the armies of Lethis.
- **Lord-Arcanum Lynus Ghalmorian:** Commander of the Sempiternals Sacrosanct Chamber, defender of the Midnight Tomb.
- **Lord-Ordinator Arthreus:** Arcane engineer and siege-master, overseer of the fortification of Lethis.
- **Soulguard Warrior Chamber:** Largest of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer Warrior Chambers stationed in Lethis.
- **Sempiternals Sacrosanct Chamber:** Dedicated guardians of the Midnight Tomb.
- **Grave Brethren Sacrosanct Chamber:** Foremost Sacrosanct Chamber of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer.



Two gods stood upon the gilded mosaic floor of the throne room. The tallest of the pair was a mountainous warrior, long hair flowing and arms bulging with barely restrained power. Next to this giant, the second figure seemed slight indeed. An aelf, dressed in flowing, golden robes and leaning on a staff of gold and crystal. Yet this figure radiated a different sort of power, a nimbus of prismatic light that shone so fiercely that it was almost painful to look upon.

'It has been too long, Teclis,' said the giant.

'Truly, Sigmar's palace is as breathtaking as the legends tell,' said Teclis, inclining his head just slightly.

'And you are most welcome within these halls,' said the God-King. 'Together we will bring the light of reason to these Eight Realms. Joined as one there is no foe that the pantheon cannot defeat.'

Teclis smiled, but there was a sadness in his eyes.

'As you say, my old friend,' said Teclis. 'And to honour our alliance, I bring you a gift. As my kin Malerion constructed for you the mighty Gladitorium, I grant unto you a more wondrous secret still.'

Teclis raised his staff and let it fall upon the mosaic tiles. From the rear of the immense throne room approached two-score ornately robed aelves. Between them, they bore a great litter, upon which rested a sphere of delicate glass and aetherquartz, enclosed in concentric silver rings that rotated in an endless dance. The aelves placed the litter on the ground and took a step back. The strange orrery glowed with pure blue light, sending flickering runes dancing across the marbled columns of the chamber.

'What is this you bring me?' said Sigmar, his voice soft and full of awe. 'I feel such power in it.'

'My Engines of Enlightenment rest atop the spire-cities of Hysh,' said Teclis. 'They are a creation of my own devising, imbued with the arcane knowledge I have gathered over the ages. These cosmic orreries can unlock the power of the self, focusing one's perception and expanding the mortal limitations of the mind. I shall teach your artificers how to construct these devices. With them your empire will enter an age of reason and advancement unlike anything the realms have ever seen.'

'Truly, you honour our friendship,' said the God-King, staring as if hypnotised at the Enlightenment Engine.

'I do not grant you this gift lightly,' said Teclis. 'But once, our people shared the secrets of the arcane, and trusted one another with our fate. I would see those days restored again.'

THE NECROQUAKE

It began at the heart of Shyish, at the epicentre of the Great Necromancer's power. Armies from distant lands gathered to prevent the apocalyptic outpouring of death magic, but they were too late – the necroquake erupted into being. Its coming would change the Mortal Realms forever.

Nagash, the Great Necromancer, is the undisputed master of death magic, an immortal being that has blighted the Mortal Realms since time immemorial. A being of surpassing arcane power and endless patience, Nagash desires nothing less than to rule over a realm-spanning empire of undeath – a sterile existence in which not a single speck of dust shall move unless it is at his demand.

Nagash names every soul that passes through the veil of death as his property alone. Anyone foolish enough to rob him of his due earns the Great Necromancer's eternal anger, and even if he must bide his time for centuries, Nagash will have his revenge upon all who have crossed him. Many of his fellow deities have found themselves the subject of his cold fury. The aelf gods Teclis and Malerion drew his ire when they stole away a great many souls to remake the dwindling civilisations of their children, while the Chaos Gods earned Nagash's wrath for greedily devouring the essences of dead mortals. Other secretive and parasitic beings have equally angered the Death God.

Greatest of all of these betrayers was the God-King Sigmar – the Soul-Thief and Taker of Heroes. Both hailing from the world-that-was, Nagash and Sigmar had a long and fractious history. At times they had been allies, at others, the deadliest of enemies. For a while, Nagash had accepted a place within the God-King's great pantheon, but never did he consider Sigmar more than an ally of convenience. At the decisive Battle of Burning Skies, the Great Necromancer

left his fellow deities to face the surging tides of Chaos, choosing instead to retreat to his holdings in Shyish. Sigmar's resulting fury laid waste to great swathes of the Realm of Death, and forever sundered the old alliance between the gods. Worse was to come. In order to forge his grand celestial army and make war upon the Chaos Gods, Sigmar began capturing the souls of great mortal heroes before they could be claimed by death – vibrant, powerful spirits highly prized by the Great Necromancer. These valued souls were then forged by magical means into the mighty champions known as Stormcast Eternals.



Perhaps most egregious of all, the God-King created an entire Stormhost from souls taken from the Realm of Death. These were the Anvils of the Heldenhammer, a sombre and mysterious company of warriors forged under a dark moon. To Nagash, this pillaging of Shyish's finest souls was a crime beyond comprehension, an insult that could not go unanswered.

Throughout the long and bloody conflict of the Realmgate Wars, Nagash largely bided his time, neither committing the full force of his armies against the God-King nor accepting Sigmar's request for a renewed alliance. Instead, he let his enemies grind each other down. All the while, he wove his own plans for dominance, and prepared to drown the Eight Realms in a tide of necromantic energies.

The Great Necromancer seethed in silence over Sigmar's insolence, but he did not intend to do so forever. Behind a shroud of secrecy, he had his followers labour ceaselessly, day and night, on a great work of incomparable potency. Nagash had long ago devised a method to harness the darker forms of magic, and the building of great black pyramids was a hallmark of his art. In the very centre of the Realm of Death his minions constructed a vast inverted pyramid out of monolithic blocks. No mundane material was used in the construction of these giant segments, but the magical substance that some call grave-sand, or the sands of time, vitrified by necromantic witch-fire to appear much like volcanic obsidian. The purest deposits were used to make the capstone of that inverted pyramid – that which would one day form an awl to burrow through the substance of reality.

As his numberless minions retrieved the stuff of Shyishan magic, Nagash laboured night and day upon his defining monument. The structure hovered above the spires of Nagashizzar's citadel keep; that immense reflection of Nagash's immortal ego that



had been toppled by the forces of the Dark Gods during the Age of Chaos. However, this endeavour was no ode to pride or vaunting ambition, but the beginning of a carefully planned arcane coup. It would be imbued with a grand spell that would unleash an unprecedented tidal wave of death energies over all the realms.

During the Time of Tribulations, this Great Black Pyramid – more massive and ambitious than any construction that Nagash had previously attempted – resonated with fierce power, causing fluctuations that rippled across reality. Hideous portents of death and destruction manifested throughout the Eight Realms, and eyes were drawn to

Shyish and to the cataclysm brewing there. Armies of Azyr, belligerent greenskin hordes and the vile legions of Chaos marched upon Nagashizzar in force, determined to foil the Great Necromancer's plans.

When the day of the pyramid's completion grew close, the dust of battle was already clogging the horizon. So delicate was Nagash's work, the painstaking finale of his great ritual, that he could not afford the disruption of open war on his doorstep. Perhaps it was the avalanche of conflict grinding ever closer that caused him to lose focus at the last minute, perhaps even one as intelligent and single-minded as Nagash can make mistakes. But on the hour in which the final rune-carved monolith was laid in place and the last stanzas of the complex

ritual spoken, the Great Black Pyramid played host to a critical impurity.

Agents of the skaven Clans Eshin had breached the walls of Nagashizzar and entered the Great Black Pyramid. Their presence, a single thread of corruption running through Nagash's intricately laid designs, was to prove decisive. As the ritual was completed and a bow wave of amethyst magic erupted across the realms, twisted gheists rose from the earth, and billions of dead souls were awakened and turned upon the living. Yet the strain of Chaos buried deep within the workings of the spell was to have another, lasting effect; it would unbalance the very fabric of reality, and throw the primordial laws of magic into disarray.



CASCADE OF MAGIC

As the lands were assailed by baleful phantasms and howling spectres of the past, mages of all kinds found they suddenly commanded boundless power over the arcane. Many a gheist was banished by their destructive emanations, but always more were there to take their place. Desperate, sorcerers reached for ever more ambitious spells and incantations. These mages drew to themselves the anarchic power rolling across the cosmos, shaped it into forms that resonated with their nature, and hurled it back out, more deadly than ever before. These spells manifested physically, not for a single lethal moment – nor even an hour or day – but indefinitely.

The magic of a spell usually dissipates over time. With the right incantations, artefacts and gestures, a wizard can draw motes of a certain type of eldritch energy into a coalesced form, but those sorceries will soon be pulled apart once more by the irresistible draw of the Realm's Edge. However, the spells borne on the bow wave of the Shyish necroquake were unaffected by this process. Shorn of their due demise by the backlash of Shyishan energies, these spells had no end. They continued to assail the Mortal Realms long after they were cast, with many feeding on the energies of the living in the manner of an arcane predator or vampire.

A cackling skull of flame shaped from the energies of Aqshy would burn on and on, seeking out ever more victims as it scorched a path across the lands. Eventually such a hazard would become known to a region's native people, named for its peculiar dangers, and avoided at all costs. Though the caster might have initially felt a thrill of raw power as he unleashed such a spell against his foes, it would soon escape

his control, consuming his allies and perhaps even himself.

Many of the spells granted terrible permanence by the necroquake were intrinsically linked to Shyish, for after Nagash's great spell, those energies were ascendant. Hurricanes of raw magic whirled across the lands, shaped into sentient tornadoes by those with the skill to bind them. The Purple Sun, a form to which baleful Shyishan energies are sometimes drawn, was conjured on a hundred battlefields; those touched by the giant spined sphere were instantly transformed into statues of soulless amethyst.

Wherever Nagash's foremost servants walked, empty sepulchres were given horrible life, hungering for creatures to bury alive. Entire graveyards ruptured and began roaming the lands to crush the living under seismic waves of earth, tomb-slabs and corpseflesh. Discoloured shackles burst from the land at the whim of spiteful Necromancers, their pincer-like manacles grabbing hold of souls, rather than bodies, so they might pull them down to the Great Oubliette.

But Nagash's masterwork had stirred up every form of magic, not just the macabre energies of the Realm of Death. Gnashing maws large enough to swallow a Dracoth emerged from Ghur to ravage the lands. Chronomantic cogs from Azyr appeared in mid-air to wreak havoc on time itself. Prismatic walls of purest Hyshian crystal burst from the ground to dazzle and blind those nearby.

The sages and seers of the free cities swiftly learned the dangers of these rogue spells. After the disastrous Living Inferno of Hallowheart, the battle wizards of the Collegiate Arcane combined forces with the Swifthawk Agents of their cities, sending covens of

Bright wizards to channel and dissipate rogue Aqshian spells, and cabals of Shyishan adepts to ward against the roiling energies of the Realm of Death. The Eldritch Council convened whenever a spell proved too powerful for human minds to banish, riding enchanted steeds and sinuous drakes to hunt down those spells that crackled beyond the reach of men.

Though hundreds of talented magic users met spectacular ends for their trouble, the finest minds found their efforts rewarded. Some of those spells that could not be banished were instead channelled and siphoned into enchanted relics, bound to ensorcelled artefacts that had long held a magical charge and were now given all the more power. Yet for every spell dismantled and dispersed to the edges of the realms through sheer willpower, for every sorcerous manifestation captured and contained in the form of a powerful amulet or blade, a dozen more arcane phenomena raged on across the realms, killing or eternally cursing those foolish enough to approach them.

SECRETS UNCOVERED

The emergence of these living spells was not the only devastating effect caused by the disruption of magical energies. Ancient wards and illusory enchantments that had lain unnoticed for generations were rent asunder by the force of the necroquake. Across the realms, sites of ancient power and repositories of forgotten lore and treasures beyond imagination were unmasked.

Scattered civilisations that had endured in shadowed seclusion throughout the horror of the Age of Chaos were dragged into the harsh light. Secrets that the gods had thought to bury forever were unmasked, to the delight of avaricious beings across the Eight Realms.



Perhaps no discovery during this troubled era was more momentous than the emergence of the Stormvaults. These magical chambers were spread through the realms, hidden within uncharted lands or buried deep beneath destroyed empires. Some, known as Stormvault Sacristies, were barely larger than an Azyrite manor house. The Grand Stormvaults, conversely, were city-sized, guarded by legions of celestial beasts and arcane automata. Each contained objects of awesome power, artefacts gathered by the God-King during his exploration of the realmspheres in the early days of the Age of Myth, and locked away so that the forces of evil could not turn them to dark purpose.

For centuries, arcane wards and sorcerous engines had kept these places of power

safe from prying eyes. As the necroquake broke across reality, it smashed through these protective enchantments like a hammer striking glass. The Stormvaults were once more exposed for all to see, and it was not long before intrepid explorers and glory-seeking looters found them. Those who managed to breach the devilish traps and defeat the deadly guardians that defended each chamber found all manner of long-forgotten wonders, from relic weapons that could cleave a boulder in half with a single blow to repositories of forbidden spell lore and even hideous abominations kept alive in chrono-fields for some unknown reason.

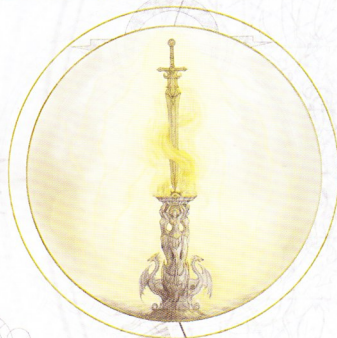
A furious race began between those who wished to plunder the Stormvaults for their priceless contents, and the forces of Sigmar, determined

to secure the God-King's holdings at any cost. Mercenary treasure-seekers formed their own companies, and Scourge Privateers led voyages deep into the deadly wilds of the realms, hunting rumours of ancient ruins and long-lost cities. These quests inevitably stirred up native populations who resented the intrusion into their sacred lands – Chaos-worshipping tribes of the plains, isolated pockets of aelven Wanderers, and even reclusive hosts of Seraphon, still guarding strange ziggurats in the depths of the wilderness. The forces of the Dark Gods rose in great numbers, granted visions of power and glory by their malevolent deities. Magical artefacts and spells of terrible power found their way into the hands of conquerors and tyrants, threatening the safety of the empires that the God-King had founded.

RELICS OF THE ASHEN CLOISTER

Much knowledge was lost when Sigmar the God-King was forced to retreat from the Mortal Realms at the dawn of the Age of Chaos. Sigmar kept maps and tomes within the libraries of Sigmaron that depicted the locations of many of his hidden treasure chambers, such as the Cloister of Ashes – an immense Grand Stormvault buried beneath Aqshy, the Realm of Fire. These records, penned by scholars of Azyr, described relics of terrible destructive power, and creatures that, if unleashed, could spell the doom of civilisations.

So it was that Sigmar smote the King of Ashes, shattering his dread form into ten thousand smouldering fragments. Only the tyrant's sword, the Blade of Fulmination, remained, burning still with the desire to conquer and enslave. Thus did the God-King take this fell blade and bury it deep beneath the earth, where its evil could scar the realms no longer.



Speak not of the Scourge of Aspiria, the Charonhydra. If this beast should break free from its rune-marked cage, its fiery wrath would be terrible to behold.



In their arrogant pride, the spell-smiths of Tarascan summoned forth the Ember Serpent, but such magic cannot be tamed by mortal souls. Its flaming coils enveloped their great city, burning all to ashes.



Within this gleaming palace of burning gold are entombed the Four Princes of Aksharata, greatest of the God-King's fire-sages. In death they serve him still, and shall forever more.



Only the faithful may cross the molten rivers that run through the Canals of the Great Maker, for ancient and terrible beings dwell within those bottomless depths – magma-krakens and rachnovores, ash-devils and fire stalkers.

THE HIDDEN VAULTS

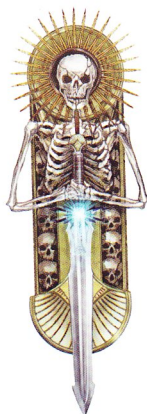
During the Age of Myth, the God-King Sigmar journeyed across the Mortal Realms in search of his scattered folk. His journeys led him to all manner of treasures and forbidden artefacts, objects far too powerful for mortal beings to wield.

The Age of Myth was a time of glory and wonder unrivalled. Sigmar and his fellow deities spread their worship across the Eight Realms, reuniting the scattered fragments of mortal-kind that had been dispersed throughout time and space in the tumultuous eruption of the world-that-was.

United in common purpose for the first time, Sigmar's Pantheon of Order began the process of taming the savage wildernesses of the realms. Rampaging godbeasts were subdued or brought low by the ferocity of the greenskin deity Gorkamorka – in those times still a grudging ally of the God-King. The aelf gods Teclis, Tyrion and Malerion dispelled storms of protean magic, weaving protective enchantments and reshaping the very fabric of the realms to better suit their mortal followers. Nagash pursued the darkest gods of death that preyed upon the populace of Shyish – with each devoured rival, his own power only grew more formidable. Alarielle sought to balance the ferocity of nature with the needs of her children. The duardin gods Grimnir and Grungni forged a future for their people through ingenuity and furious resolve.

Sigmar the God-King oversaw the rise of glittering kingdoms of Order and justice across the realms. The God-King travelled across sweeping vistas and through ancient Realmgates, and in these most magnificent of settings he found treasures of unimaginable power: swords formed from pure nothingness that could carve through reality; circlets of zekrossian mindstone that bestowed the power to read thoughts

upon their bearer; sentient magical storms that raged with the ferocity of a newborn star. There were monstrous creatures formed from pure, undiluted magic, beasts whose rage reshaped continents and boiled the seas. There were darker powers at large also, entities of cruel and malicious intent, who wielded god-killing weapons. One by one, Sigmar the warrior slew these would-be challengers, taking their treasures for himself.



Only when his dominion was uncontested did Sigmar turn his mind towards the many relics he had collected. These artefacts and captured beings were mighty beyond mortal comprehension. The God-King knew that he could not risk them falling into enemy hands, nor allow their extraordinary power to endanger the new world he was creating. Nor could many of them be easily disposed of, for they were creations of old and formidable magic. Some were so attuned to the realms in which they were located that to remove them would cause their energies to wane, or even lead to a devastating

outpouring of magic. Others were too powerful for even Sigmar to unmake, resisting the shattering blows of his legendary hammer Ghal Maraz. Thus, the God-King assigned his mortal worshippers to the construction of fortified temples secreted in carefully chosen positions across the Eight Realms – the Stormvaults.

Outwardly, these holy sites were erected to pay tribute to the God-King, but in truth they had another purpose – to safeguard the many relics and magical objects that Sigmar had gathered in his millennia of exploring the Mortal Realms. Some were as large as great cities, their cavernous vaults filled to the brim with items of power. Others stored only a single artefact. All were designed by the realms' foremost architects, filled with ingenious traps, labyrinths and mazes invented by Grungni, the duardin smith-god. Yet Sigmar knew that these formidable defences alone would not keep avaricious souls at bay forever. As long as the Stormvaults stood in plain view, they were at risk.

Seeking a way to hide his gains from prying eyes, Sigmar oversaw the remaking of the Enlightenment Engines. These sorcerous orreries had been gifted unto the God-King by the aelf god Teclis, a sign of mutual respect to seal their alliance. These spheres of swirling, concentric rings were forged from fragments of the world-that-was. Imbued with both the enlightening magic of Hysh and the aelf god's own all-surpassing knowledge, they opened the minds of those nearby to the secrets of the

multiverse, granting them great wisdom and arcane mastery. Many of the Enlightenment Engines had been taken to Azyr, fashioned into magical arcanoscopes by Sigmar's greatest loremasters, artisans and arcane engineers. Others had been gifted in turn to the greatest civilisations in the Eight Realms. In this way Teclis intended to share the gifts of arcane science with humanity, as he had done so long ago in the world-that-was.

After centuries of theorising and experimentation, Sigmar's greatest arcane experts discovered that the Enlightenment Engines could spread obfuscation instead of illumination, dampening the minds and powers of those nearby rather than swelling them. The God-King once more sought the aid of Grungni. He presented the smith-god with one of Teclis' orreries, and tasked him with remaking it into a device that could keep forbidden secrets hidden forever. The aelf god was not informed of this act of desecration, of course, for if he ever discovered what the God-King had made of his

precious gift, his ire would be great indeed. Yet Teclis sees all, it is said, and perhaps it was the perversion of his gift that caused the aelven god's path to diverge from that of his former ally. For his part, Grungni was all too happy to prove his mastery over the creations of his old rival, and glad to take on a worthy challenge.

After a century of ceaseless toil, the duardin god finally reversed the working of the Enlightenment Engines, hammering runes of chronomantic binding into their surface and subtly altering the complex mechanisms that gave them motion. Their powers reversed, the orreries now drained the mind and altered the perception of all who strayed close, blanketing everything within a large radius in a suffocating, disorientating pall. Grungni named these new creations Penumbral Engines, for the impenetrable shroud of gloom they emitted. In secrecy, the God-King's most trusted agents then installed them in each of his Stormvaults. Activating the arcane machines required one last terrible sacrifice. The

orreries could not function without a powerful animus from which to draw strength. Formerly the Enlightenment Engines had attained a form of symbiosis with their users, both taking and granting energy. The Penumbral Engines, however, required a potent source of power from which to draw, much like a fire needs fuel to burn, for they contained as much of the blazing, consuming magic of the forge as they did that of spontaneous illumination.

Thus it was that a powerful guardian spirit was leashed to each of the Stormvaults by the God-King's foremost arcane experts, trapped eternally within rune-circles of binding grafted by Grungni. Some of these aetheric beings were loyal followers of the God-King, worshippers and comrades who sacrificed their lives and eternal souls in his name. Others were old foes entombed against their will – raging elemental monsters, or ever-hungry beasts of the void. These creatures had sought to strike the God-King down, and would do so again should they ever break free.

THE CLOISTER OF ASHES

Located far beneath the congested streets of Hammerhal Aqsha lies one of the greatest of Sigmar's Stormvaults. The Cloister of Ashes is a grand, subterranean temple-city constructed over a series of magma channels and lakes of bubbling sulphur. Its vast chambers house artefacts beyond counting, many of which resonate with the heat of Aqshian magic. Since the necroquake, the long-forgotten ruins have been rediscovered by magic-seekers and would-be looters, despite the best efforts of the Hammers of Sigmar to contain and close off the site. Underground tremors and volcanic eruptions have opened many new paths into the depths, but few treasure hunters who venture down into the smouldering halls return alive. Those that do babble in terror, speaking of a guardian that stalks the halls – the towering Burned Man, his blistered body glowing with barely restrained power, who can turn flesh to crumbling ash with but a glance.



RISE OF CHAOS

For millennia, Sigmar's Stormvaults lay dormant and hidden, unheard of by all but the God-King's most trusted allies. As the Penumbral Engines drew upon the energies of their guardian spirits, their masking aura became ever more powerful. Eventually, the memories of those who had helped build and design the Stormvaults began to ebb away, and the worshippers of Sigmar who had once made great pilgrimages to visit his temple-cities no longer felt the stirring of faith calling them on.

Over time, the sites of the Stormvaults were forgotten and abandoned, just as the God-King had intended, and he let them fade from the memory of his most loyal servants. Those vaults that resided at the centre of great cities were lost beneath ever greater and more awe-inspiring architecture, buried deep beneath the expanding urban sprawl. Those hidden amidst the wildernesses of the realms lay buried. Travellers and nomadic tribes alike avoided these secret places, though beyond a vague sense of unease

they felt upon nearing them, they could not give a reason for doing so. Sigmar had always intended to one day return to the sites of his Stormvaults, to recover and unlock the secrets of the priceless treasures stored within. But the fates conspired against his grand vision. Gradually, the Pantheon of Order began to fracture and fall apart, as old grudges re-emerged and ancient hatreds were rekindled. So too did the tendrils of corruption begin to seep into the great mortal civilisations of the realms – slowly and almost imperceptibly at first, but with growing insistence.

By the time the Pantheon of Order understood the scale of the threat that had risen against them, it was already too late. Perhaps if they had united as one they might still have triumphed, but the common purpose that had bound them had long since frayed beyond recovery. The armies of Chaos, marching under the iron will of Archagon the Everchosen, were too strong and too many. The heart of the God-King was pierced with despair to abandon his scattered people,

but he knew that if he did not secure Azyr the rising tide of depredation would swallow everything that he had striven to build. Thus did Sigmar's forces retreat through the Realmgates to High Azyr and close the eldritch pathways behind them, leaving untold billions of mortal souls to a terrible fate. Many great cities and kingdoms were torn down by the ravaging hordes of Chaos, their populaces butchered or enslaved. So too were many of the great Stormvaults abandoned. The God-King could only hope that the magic of the Penumbral Engines would hold, and that the servants of the Dark Gods would not uncover the treasures he had buried. He swore to one day return and visit retribution upon the Great Enemy, and in doing so recover all that had been lost.

Throughout the long night of the Age of Chaos, the God-King prepared for his return to the Eight Realms. A new army of immortal champions was forged, the legendary Stormcast Eternals. In the grand Gladitorium of Azyrheim they drilled and

THE CRAWLING PITS OF GHARRENTIA

The Stormvault of Thunderstone Reach once stood atop the great mesa of Gharrentia in Ghur. During the devastation caused by the necroquake, the Stormvault broke apart and tumbled into the abyss below. It did not break upon the ground, however. Deep in the shadows of the great canyons nested a colony of Arachnarok Spiders, and the ruins of Thunderstone Reach were caught in the beasts' enormous webs. Sigmar despatched his Astral Templars to the site, but Gordrakk, greatest of the Ironjaw Megabosses, smashed his way through their shield wall. Within the grand vestibule of Thunderstone Reach was kept the skull of Hammergord, a bull-headed, furnace-hearted godbeast slain by Sigmar during the Age of Myth. Gordrakk claimed this prize, mounting it upon a titanic battering ram of beaten iron. Hammergord's Skull has the power to shatter mountains into rubble, and the Fist of Gork has great plans for his new weapon.



battled relentlessly, and the forges of the Heavens echoed to the never-ending clamour of industry as weapons and war machines were crafted for the coming crusade. The God-King had much to occupy his mind, and did not notice the slow erosion of his memories as the subtle magic of the Penumbral Engines did its work. Isolated as he was within distant Azyr, even Sigmar was not immune to their suffocating influence. The location of several of his largest Stormvaults the God-King recalled with an almost subconscious certainty, but the knowledge of many more gradually faded from his mind, focused as he was on his preparations for war. Such was the power of Teclis' orreries that even script and hand-drawn maps revealing paths to the Stormvaults faded into blank nothingness over the centuries.

TREASURES AND HORRORS UNTOLD

When Sigmar's Tempest finally broke across the realms, the forces of Chaos – so long ascendant and uncontested – were forced back on multiple fronts. After the long and bloody Realmgate Wars ground to a close, the God-King had secured notable gains in many of the realms. So began the process of rebuilding that which was lost during the Age of Chaos. From the ruins of the past grew grand bastions of Order that would become the bedrock of Sigmar's new empire. Many of these sprawling metropolises were constructed upon the sites of Sigmar's Stormvaults. Hammerhal, greatest of the God-King's cities, was one such example. Beneath Hammerhal Aqsha lay catacombs and ancient ruins, and amongst this labyrinthine mass was the Cloister of Ashes. One of the very largest of the Stormvaults, it was a multi-levelled, subterranean complex built

over wide, brass-lined canals of bubbling magma, and housing ten thousand wondrous treasures. The thick boughs and garden-spires of the twin city of Hammerhal Ghyra concealed the Jade Temple, another immense vault. It was said to be guarded by Ghillnarad Dhor, the Prince of White Flowers – an ancient creature of the forest whose limbs were a thousand lashing vines and whose song sent all who heard it into an eternal slumber. The desiccated corpses of ill-fated intruders lined the halls of the Jade Temple, pale flowers sprouting in great clusters from their eyes and mouths.



Far below the grand city of Lethis lay the Midnight Tomb, a single, enormous Stormvault Sigmar raised to imprison an unspeakable force of darkness from the days of yore, an elemental being of death whose very name was scoured from history by the God-King's agents. So grave was the threat lurking in this forgotten chamber that the Grand Necropolis, the foremost Stormkeep of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer, was constructed to stand guard over the Lethis Mausoleum and the entrance to the Midnight Tomb.

These few were only a fraction of the repositories scattered across the realms. Determined

to recover his lost secrets before they fell into enemy hands, Sigmar despatched agents far and wide. The obfuscating magic of the Penumbral Engines had hidden many of the Stormvaults from even his keen mind, but he retained glimpses of the past, images of distant lands and flickers of recognition. Knights-Questor embarked upon decades-long journeys to discover the Stormvaults, battling the deadly hazards of the wilds and forging a path into lands shrouded in a maddening, disorienting pall. Most of these errant warriors never came back. Some few completed their mission, returning to the God-King with knowledge that confirmed his fragmented memories. In Aqshy, Ghyran and Chamon several Stormvaults were reclaimed by Stormcast forces, fortified and garrisoned in secret. But these were few, and many more remained lost amongst the near-infinite expanse of the realms.

Then came the necroquake, and the culmination of Nagash's grand act of necromancy. Untrammelled magic swept across the cosmos, fracturing the very fabric of reality and sundering the ancient, eldritch forces that governed the magic of the realms. Enchantments that had lasted thousands of years were smashed asunder by the swelling tide. Illusions were swept away in an instant. Curses were shattered and runic wards dispelled. The magic of the Penumbral Engines – for so long impenetrable – buckled and failed. As it did so, memories flooded back to the God-King, images of far-flung lands and hidden temple-cities raised in his name and lost to the ages.

The spell had been broken, and Sigmar could once more see his long-lost holdings. But he was not the only one who witnessed their re-emergence.



THE ORB-CITY OF CALUMNEXIS

The orb-city of Calumnexis hangs above the molten tides of the Beryllium Sea. Built upon a series of concentric, rotating plates, it resembles the gears of an enormous timepiece, floating in the aether. For centuries none but the foolish or lost ventured close to Calumnexis, for it was surrounded on all sides by drifting clouds of vitriolic mist that could strip the iron hull from a sky-ship within minutes. Kharadron vessels travelling along ancient trade-routes went far out of their way to avoid the seemingly abandoned city, though if asked they would not be able to explain exactly why. It was only when the magic of the Penumbra Engines protecting the orb-city failed that it drew the attention of not only the duardin of the sky, but fleets of Grotbag Scuttlers and ramshackle blimps piloted by avaricious skaven from the Clans Skryre. All could sense the aura of intense magical power that had suddenly been unmasked, and so they risked a hideous death to navigate the acid squalls and enter Calumnexis. Amidst the spires of the orb-city lay an ancient Stormvault watched over by clockwork automatons possessing a strange and malevolent sentience. Every inch of the orb-city was riddled with astonishingly intricate traps, layered one on top of the other in a seemingly endless and utterly deadly maze. Thus far none have breached the outer levels of Calumnexis, though much blood has been spilled on all sides.

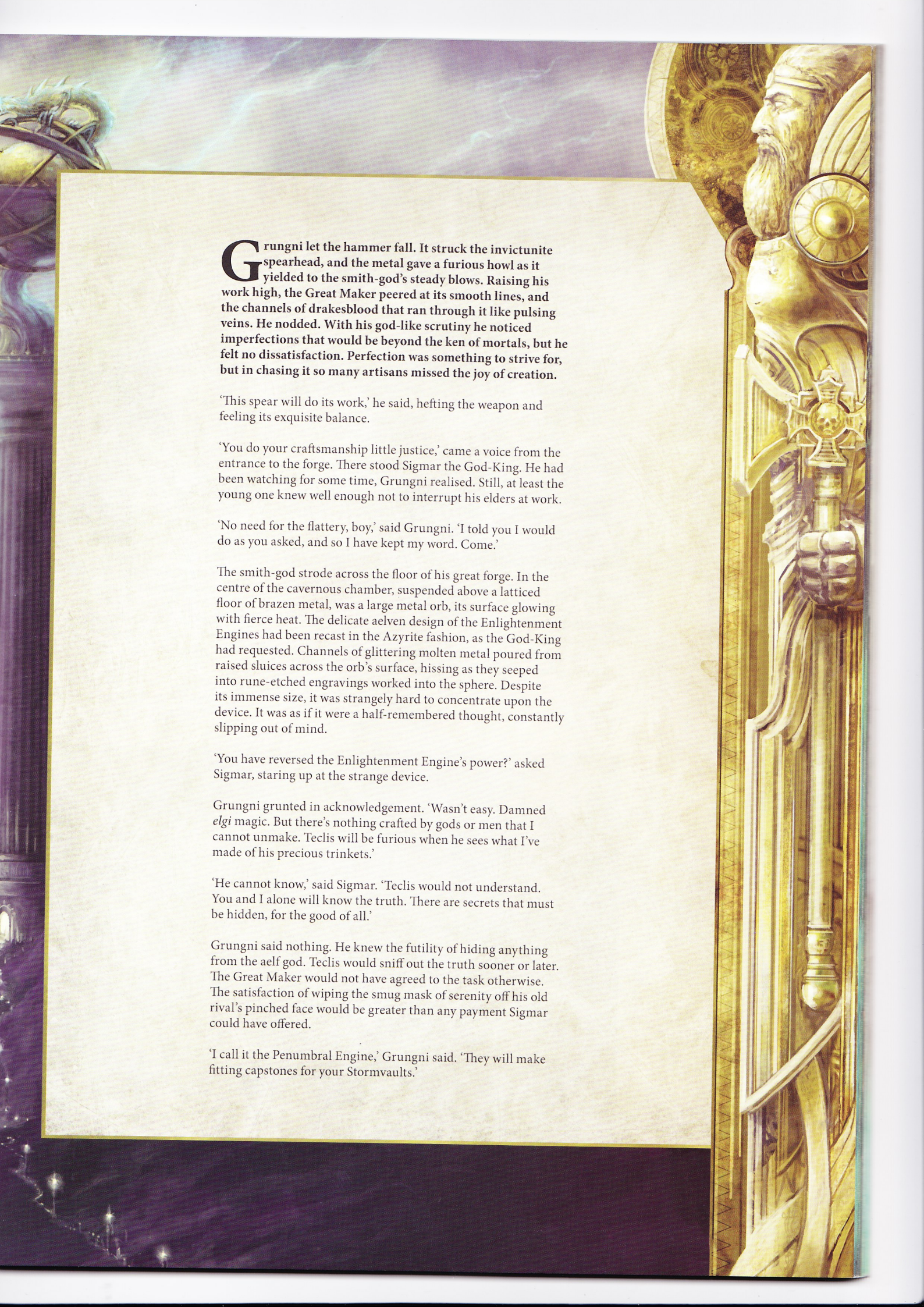
THE VAULTS BREACHED

The untold eldritch might concealed within each Stormvault means that these repositories are much coveted by the feuding powers of the Mortal Realms, and many of the God-King's hidden treasure chambers have been breached by the armies of his rivals. Unable to send forces to relieve every one of his Stormvaults, Sigmar has instead been forced to focus upon those nearest to his centres of power. Meanwhile, the minions of Chaos, the legions of Nagash and the greenskin hordes have all taken the opportunity to loot his far-flung Stormvaults. Even the God-King's supposed allies have joined the hunt.

The Idoneth are particularly fascinated by the potential of the Penumbra Engines, for their ability to shroud the memories of mortals would

be of great use to the secretive aelves. The Kharadron believe that, according to the laws of salvage, anything left abandoned for so long can surely be claimed by those who uncover it. Many airship expeditions have been launched from their skyports in Chamon to locate new excavations and strip them of valuables. These ventures have only increased since Admiral Zunggt of Barak-Zilfin returned triumphantly from the Silent Fortress of Aggharen, the holds of his Ironclads stuffed with precious aether-gold and all manner of esoteric treasures. The haul included a sparkling amulet of viridian that the Admiral never lets out of his sight. This bounty assured Zunggt a position on the Admirals Council, but he has rarely been seen of late, and his crew whisper of strange sounds and the echoing of cruel laughter emanating from the duardin's chambers.

The Sylvaneth are astonished to find hidden ruins in lands they thought to know in intimate detail, and Alarielle the Everqueen has been greatly discomfited to discover that the God-King hid treasures of such deadly power in her verdant domain. Chaos Warlords lead bloody crusades to crack open emergent Stormvaults and lay claim to their contents, and Skullgrinders have appeared in ever greater numbers, offering weapons of daemonic power that can shatter rune-wards and sigils of binding. The ever opportunistic skaven sense plentiful profit and anarchy, and are able to use their gnawholes to burrow up into the heart of long-abandoned temple-cities. When these factions come across one another on their hunt for buried secrets, bloodshed swiftly follows. To the victor go the spoils, relics and arcane secrets of incalculable power.



Grungni let the hammer fall. It struck the invictunite spearhead, and the metal gave a furious howl as it yielded to the smith-god's steady blows. Raising his work high, the Great Maker peered at its smooth lines, and the channels of drakesblood that ran through it like pulsing veins. He nodded. With his god-like scrutiny he noticed imperfections that would be beyond the ken of mortals, but he felt no dissatisfaction. Perfection was something to strive for, but in chasing it so many artisans missed the joy of creation.

'This spear will do its work,' he said, hefting the weapon and feeling its exquisite balance.

'You do your craftsmanship little justice,' came a voice from the entrance to the forge. There stood Sigmar the God-King. He had been watching for some time, Grungni realised. Still, at least the young one knew well enough not to interrupt his elders at work.

'No need for the flattery, boy,' said Grungni. 'I told you I would do as you asked, and so I have kept my word. Come.'

The smith-god strode across the floor of his great forge. In the centre of the cavernous chamber, suspended above a latticed floor of brazen metal, was a large metal orb, its surface glowing with fierce heat. The delicate aelven design of the Enlightenment Engines had been recast in the Azyrite fashion, as the God-King had requested. Channels of glittering molten metal poured from raised sluices across the orb's surface, hissing as they seeped into rune-etched engravings worked into the sphere. Despite its immense size, it was strangely hard to concentrate upon the device. It was as if it were a half-remembered thought, constantly slipping out of mind.

'You have reversed the Enlightenment Engine's power?' asked Sigmar, staring up at the strange device.

Grungni grunted in acknowledgement. 'Wasn't easy. Damned *elgi* magic. But there's nothing crafted by gods or men that I cannot unmake. Teclis will be furious when he sees what I've made of his precious trinkets.'

'He cannot know,' said Sigmar. 'Teclis would not understand. You and I alone will know the truth. There are secrets that must be hidden, for the good of all.'

Grungni said nothing. He knew the futility of hiding anything from the aelf god. Teclis would sniff out the truth sooner or later. The Great Maker would not have agreed to the task otherwise. The satisfaction of wiping the smug mask of serenity off his old rival's pinched face would be greater than any payment Sigmar could have offered.

'I call it the Penumbral Engine,' Grungni said. 'They will make fitting capstones for your Stormvaults.'

A REALM OF ENDINGS

Shyish is the realm of endings and of silent decline. It is not a contiguous domain, but is instead a myriad of underworlds, all coalesced upon the same plane. Each is crystallised into being from pure death magic, and given form and substance by the power of mortal belief.

Most understand Shyish to be a flat disc with a deep pit in the middle that draws everything else in towards it, much as a whirlpool drains the flotsam of a shattered fleet into its depths. It can be depicted as a vast torus on which everything at the edge is pulled in towards the centre. However, some civilisations instead depict the underworlds of Shyish as continental plates suspended, one atop another, in an inverted pyramid of magical energy. Many ogor tribes see it as an impossibly huge mouth that devours all things, whereas the duardin miners might picture it as a glittering fault lined with priceless minerals. Such is the nature of trying to define that which a mortal mind cannot hope to fully comprehend.

The scattered civilisations of the Mortal Realms have each

forged their own image of what awaits their souls after death, their own mythical concept of an underworld. All of these imagined afterlives coalesce in Shyish, the Realm of Death, shaped by common ideologies and given form by pure amethyst magic. These new lands are settled by the souls of those who gave credence to them in life, growing in power and prominence with each new believer. Yet Shyish is, above all, a realm of dispassionate finality. In time, the memories of these underworlds will fade, as the civilisations that gave birth to them are lost to history. Eventually, each will disperse into nothingness.

As a new mythical underworld gains ground in the belief system of a mortal society, the magical stuff of Shyish coalesces at the edge of the realm to form a reflection of

that afterlife. Shapes crystallise in the amethyst clouds of the Shyish realmsphere, becoming ever more real until a new world is born, settled by the souls of those who believe in it upon their death. Alongside these many and varied underworlds stand cities populated by mortals, strongholds erected by the God-King and his army. Here, the living and the dead maintain a strange coexistence – in some cases, mortal souls might reside within sight of the very afterlife to which they will pass on after death, while in others the living are able to converse with the spirits of long-dead ancestors. In recent times, however, this solemn harmony has been thrown into jeopardy by Nagash's baleful influence.

Even before the necroquake, Shyish was a deadly place, haunted by wrathful unde-



and ravaged by enervating magical storms. Since Nagash's grand plan came to fruition, the tide of deathly magic has only increased. The Nighthaunt legions – the spectral servants of Nagash – sweep across the wilds, laying siege to underworlds and mortal settlements. The Wight Kings march to war at the head of enormous Deathrattle armies, seeking new lands to conquer.

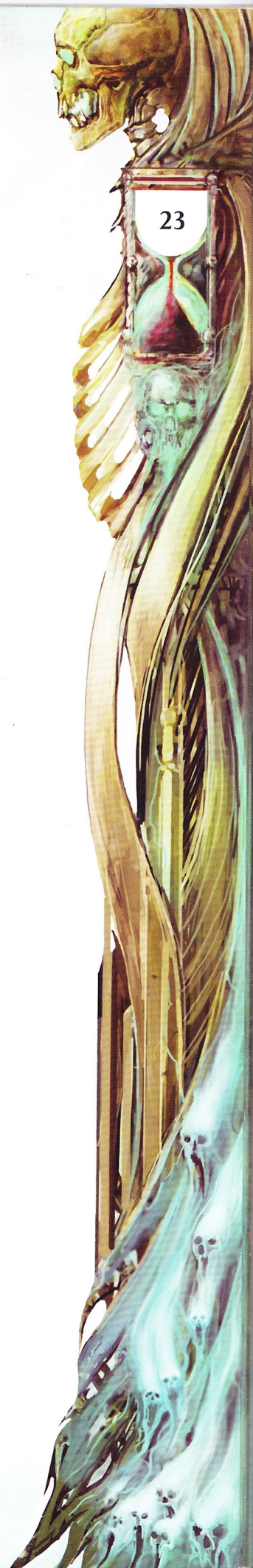
The proliferation of magic has given rise to all manner of arcane dangers. Sentient spells conjured by bold and foolish Necromancers haunt the bone-deserts and obsidian mountains of Shyish: Purple Suns that turn all they touch into statues of amethyst crystal; surging tides of grave soil that smother the unwary in a choking embrace; roiling orbs of necromantic magic engorged with trapped and tormented souls. These endless spells hunger for the animus of living beings, seeking out wayward travellers like voracious predators. Few are foolish enough to venture across the vast expanse of the

Realm of Death without at least one hired spellcaster at their side, a grizzled mercenary who specialises in the dispelling of unleashed magic. Many of Sigmar's border outposts and free cities in Shyish have anti-arcane defences constructed to guard their walls – aether-cannon arrays, webs of nullifying enchantments and other ingenious innovations. Tragically for the unfortunate souls that dwell within endangered cities, these methods are not always effective. The duardin settlement of Magryn's Peak, for example, was overwhelmed by a trio of Purple Suns that tore through its rough-hewn tunnels, turning the entire fort to lifeless crystal overnight.

The Prime Innerlands, amongst the richest and most populous regions of Shyish, are now perched on the edge of oblivion. To the south lies Nagashizzar and the Shyish Nadir, and with every passing season the Innerlands are dragged incrementally closer to the mouth of that great vortex, and to obliteration.

The uneasy detente between the God-King and his old rival has been decisively shattered, and open war has come to Shyish once more. This close to the seat of Nagash's power, the armies of the dead gather in huge numbers. A ceaseless river of undead legions flows forth from the mouth of Nagashizzar, the Citadel of Death, led by vampiric generals and spectral tyrants.

In response to this onslaught, the Sacrosanct Chambers have deployed in force. Sigmar's arcane champions have long trained in battle against the ethereal and daemonic, and have proven a vital weapon in the war against the dead. These powerful mystical champions lead the campaign against Nagash's gathering might, spearheading grand crusades of banishment and exorcism. The Anvils of the Heldenhammer, who maintain the largest presence of any Stormhost in Shyish, have launched many counter-offensives from their stronghold of Lethis in the province of Stygxx, taking the fight to the God of Death.



STYGXX

Stygxx is a region that has witnessed the fall of gods and empires. Scattered across its bleak mountains and windswept plains are the ruins of ages past: huge abandoned castles, enormous valleys filled with the bones of fallen titans, and the haunted palaces of long-dead deities.

The Land of Forgotten Gods is a harsh and unforgiving region, ravaged by gheist-storms and freezing cascades of jet-black rain. Its mountainous wilds are littered with crumbling ruins, ancient palaces and shrines to gods of the afterlife that have long since faded from mortal memory. It is said that as worship of these deities began to dwindle, they travelled

to Stygxx to die, fading into memory and becoming part of the tortured landscape forever more.

Life is hard here, and the lands are haunted by packs of ravenous mordants, skull-painted grot tribes and spectral predators. To venture beyond the walls of its few mortal strongholds is to risk a terrible

death. Lethis is the dominant city of Stygxx, but other cities and forts have been built in this expanse; the reaver-port of Karakathos, the heavily fortified Lodgelands of the Ulrung Fyreslayers, and the Khainite citadel of Haggrath Plight. Yet vast tracts of Stygxx remain untamed and inimical to life, and the secrets they hold are yet to be unveiled.

LAND OF FORGOTTEN GODS



LETHIS

The sombre spires of the Raven City loom over the black waters of Lake Lethis.

SEA OF DROWNED SORROWS



DEIFIC MONS

The castle of the gods stands silent and cold, its vast halls home to none but the dead.



CASTLE DRACHMIR

Once a bastion of light, this citadel has been claimed by flesh-eating ghouls.

25



HAEDRANN KAR

This Realmgate of petrified coral grants the Idoneth passage to other realms.



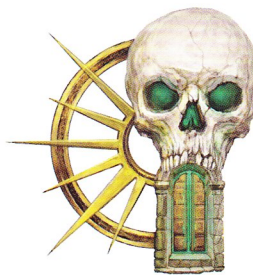
LETHIS, THE RAVEN CITY

The continent of Stygxx lies to the north of the Prime Innerlands, surrounded on all sides by the pitch-black waters of the Dwindlesea. It is a place that resonates with a dark and troubled history, a gloomy, mountainous region that has suffered under the heel of tyrants and cruel gods over the millennia. The immense Lake Lethis dominates the southern portion of the landmass. Bordering that enormous expanse of still water is the great city of Lethis itself, one of Sigmar's most formidable strongholds in the realm.

In the aftermath of the Realmgate Wars, the Anvils of the Heldenhammer launched an offensive into Stygxx, driving back the forces of the Great Pretender – a Chaos Lord of fearsome power who believes himself the reincarnation of Slaanesh. The Pretender's depraved legions had taken their insane bacchanals to the shores of Lake Lethis, and there the Stormcast Eternals met them in open conflict. The Battle of the Screaming Shore was a brutal affair, but the Anvils had chosen the moment of their assault expertly, catching the Chaos worshippers in the midst of their sickening rituals and driving them into the bleak waters of Lake Lethis. Thousands were slain in a single day, either broken by the hammers of the Stormcasts or swallowed by the stygian depths of the vast lake. The Great Pretender retreated to his stronghold in the southern lands of Bacchanalia to lick his wounds, and the free city of Lethis was founded upon the site of his greatest defeat. More than half a century since its founding, the free city still stands tall and proud.

Lethis is a solemn place. It is a mausoleum-city dominated by the immense, colonnaded tower of the Grand Necropolis,

the foremost Stormkeep of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer. The imposing fortress stands guard over a sweeping sepulchral garden filled with the graves of fallen champions and heroes, each marked with reverently carved statuary. None but the Anvils and the raven-masked Priesthood of Morrda may enter these grounds, under pain of death. They are sanctified against corruption and necromantic magic by fountains and streams of crystal clear Azyrite water thrice-blessed by saints of the God-King. Within the fortified grounds of the Grand Necropolis is the Veil, a misty gateway of polished bone cloaked in funereal shrouds and echoing with the sibilant whispers of long-dead guardians. This is the city's prime Realmgate, connecting to several locations across the realms depending upon the phases of the celestial tapestry. When the High Star Sigendil is at the apex of its heavenly ascent, the Veil opens a pathway between Lethis and Azyr, making it a key strategic location for the God-King's forces.



Beyond the towers of the Grand Necropolis lies a spider-web of crooked backstreets. They are lined by rows of austere, black-bricked houses, many of their steep-angled roofs dotted with hand-carved statues of the Bleak Raven. This one-eyed bird is the herald of the god Morrda, an ancient deity of the dead said to have escaped the clutches of Nagash, and

revered still by the Anvils of the Heldenhammer. The Stormcasts' sombre rituals have spread amongst the peoples of Lethis, and this divergence of faith is largely tolerated by the Devoted of Sigmar, so long as proper obeisance is also paid to the God-King. The raven is an image that is seen throughout Lethisian culture, from its ivory coinage to the heraldry of the local Freeguilds, and great flocks of the birds settle across the rooftops of the city, gazing in utter silence at the comings and goings of the common folk. It is said that the watchful presence of Morrda's Eyes keeps at bay vengeful spirits, and it is forbidden to bring them harm.

The great Lake Lethis laps against the harbour wall of the city, its waters as dark and impenetrable as obsidian. Ancient legends tell that Nagash fled beneath the surface of this great inland sea in the aftermath of his defeat at Nagashizzar during the Age of Chaos. Its lightless depths descend far beyond the ken of mortals, and there are many eerie tales of what lurks at the bottom of the abyss. Some say the Great Necromancer's grand sarcophagus lies down there, and it is the waves of death released by this fell artefact that have given rise to the skullcoiler eels and other undead monstrosities that haunt the lake.

Indeed, the very waters of Lake Lethis prey on the unwary. The enchanted depths steal the memories of anyone unfortunate enough to fall into their pitch-black embrace, rendering them mute amnesiacs. Despite this, the lake's water is the lifeblood of Lethis. Imbibed in careful quantities, the dark liquid's supernatural properties banish traumatic memories and nightmares, granting peace both spiritually and psychologically to the drinker.

SPELLS OF ENTROPY

The threat of untapped magic has ever loomed over those mortals brave, foolish or unfortunate enough to settle the lands of Shyish. In this deathly realm the very earth is reshaped and twisted by amethyst magic inimical to life, and the wilds are haunted by malevolent arcane entities given form and power by the protean nature of the realm. Horrorghosts, for example, are predatory entities summoned into being by necromantic rituals or acts of mass sacrifice. They have no form of their own, but instead appear as whatever primal nightmare will most terrify their prey, feeding off its maddened panic and growing steadily more powerful. These living spells often drift in the wake of spectral or undead armies like carrion birds, for the trail of fear left in the wake of such a procession is tempting indeed. Increasingly, Horrorghosts have begun to take on the shape of Nagash, for ever since the necroquake, many mortals see the Great Necromancer's grinning skull in their waking nightmares.

Such is the potency of Shyishan magic that during the Age of Myth, the God-King hunted down many of the most dangerous arcane manifestations, trapping those that could not be dispelled – or that might prove vital to his cause at a later time – in the depths of his Stormvaults. The Midnight Tomb of Lethis contains several of these powerful incantations. The invocation known as the Soulscream Bridge devours the soul-stuff

of displaced spirits in order to tear open a gateway across reality. This is followed by the agonised screams of the spectral beings whose essences are burned away to nothing by the spell's fearsome power.

The Shards of Valagharr were created by the legendary arch-mage Mython Valagharr. These warding prisms were conjured to roam the borders of Sigmar's great kingdoms, absorbing trails of amethyst magic before they could coalesce into deadly gheist-storms. Valagharr's quest to master Shyishan magic was to come to a tragic end – consumed by his work, the arch-mage turned to necromancy and other dark arts. His shards became not spells of protection, but spirit-leeching devices that drained the animus of living beings to fuel Valagharr's experiments. Ultimately the arch-mage was slain by the God-King, and his creations sealed away beneath Lethis.

Also imprisoned in the depths of the Midnight Tomb is a shard of Lauchon the Soulseeker. An ancient god of death worshipped by the first mortal civilisations of Shyish, Lauchon was destroyed by Nagash thousands of years ago. Yet fragments of his essence still linger, for the Soulseeker is intimately bound to the tides of amethyst magic from which the Realm of Death was formed. The Soulseeker knows the location of every spirit in the realms, and can swiftly guide a spellcaster to that which they seek. In return, it demands a heavy toll – a soul for a soul.

These soothing properties are in great demand across the realms, in sanatoriums and hostels housing those stricken by madness and corruption.

Abandoned palaces still line the far northern edge of Lake Lethis, relics of an ancient civilisation that once called the region home. The ruins are named Silentshore by the folk of the Lethis, and they reach out over the water, ziggurats of dully gleaming gold marked by indecipherable hieroglyphs. The nature of these strange ruins is lost to time, eroded by the smothering waters of Lake Lethis. Many claim to have seen the strange priests of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer walking beneath the golden temples of Silentshore,

communing with the spirits of the dead.

Lethis is a vital strategic link between the God-King's domain and the contested lands of Shyish, but that is not the sole reason why it is so heavily fortified and rigorously defended. The Raven City stands guard over a deadly secret. Far beneath the austere gardens of the Lethis Mausoleum lies a subterranean network of ossuaries and shrines. At the centre of these crypt-tunnels lies the Midnight Tomb, a towering mausoleum of obsidian over which the Anvils of the Heldenhammer maintain a constant watch. This Stormvault is a prison that houses rogue Shyishan magic and shards of long-forgotten

gods of death, creations of hideous necromantic power that were quelled and defeated during the God-King's first travels through the Realm of Death. Its Penumbral Engines draw their energy from the immense power of the entity trapped at the centre of the tomb, bound to an arcane void.

For many years the Midnight Tomb had lain forgotten and silent, but in the wake of the necroquake, its malevolent guardian stirred in its grave-prison, awoken for the first time in centuries. Its roar of bitter fury boomed out upon the cold winds of Shyish and reached the very walls of Nagashizzar – there, the master of the Citadel of Death heard the call.



AN ANCIENT HATRED

The people of Lethis have long held life and death in equal reverence. Few mortals know better than the folk of Shyish that a story is not complete without an ending, and that a life lived in fear of death is no life at all. Yet in the wake of the necroquake, even these solemn and resolute souls would know the cruel terror of eternal torment.

Nagash had felt the awakening of the Midnight Tomb, the grand Stormvault that ran beneath the streets of Lethis. He felt the call of magic that he had thought lost forever. More than that, he sensed a familiar presence, something ancient and mighty that had once called him master, and he was in no doubt that Sigmar was responsible for its imprisonment. Every fell thought and ancient grudge that the Great Necromancer harboured towards the God-King was once more reinforced. Nagash was not surprised, for Sigmar's list of outrages against him was long and grievous, but that did not quench his fury. The Great Necromancer swore that Sigmar would pay for this newly revealed treachery, and determined to see Lethis torn to the ground and his treasures returned.

Already waging war on a thousand fronts, the Great Necromancer appointed the breaching of the Midnight Tomb to one of his foremost generals – Lady Olynder, the dread Mortarch of Grief and the personification of crippling despair. Lady Olynder had led her Nighthaunt armies to victory after victory against the enemies of Shyish, waging a new and terrible form of war against the Free People of the realms and anyone else foolish enough to deny the authority of Death. In order to fulfil her master's command, the Mortarch summoned her legion. Shrieking gheists

and blade-limbed revenants flocked to her dolorous call, eager to take out their bitter self-hatred and tormented rage upon the living. Her betrothed, the Craven King Kurdoss Valentian, raised his own armies, calling to his banners several powerful Wight Kings and Necromancers, whose shambling minions would provide the men-at-arms for this grand procession of death. Thus assembled, Lady Olynder led her Legion of Grief north across the Dwindlesea towards the free city of Lethis.



Beyond the high walls of Lethis, mountainous valleys stretch as far as the eye can see. These roads are best avoided unless one marches alongside a retinue of well-armed warriors, for the wilds of Stygxx are home to innumerable dangers – ash-smeared grots riding corpse-pale spiders who strike from the depths of the forest, headless spectral riders on an endless hunt for living souls to reap, and bat-winged horrors that haunt the cliff-side valleys. If one can pass unharmed through the Land of Forgotten Gods, they will come to the cloud-scraping mountain known as Deific Mons. This great spire of basalt is one of the wonders of the Mortal Realms. Atop the mountain sits a vast abandoned fortress whose towering doorways are large enough for an army of thousands to march through abreast. It is said that once the

demigods and titans of Shyish gathered there to hold counsel.

For centuries untold there was nothing but silence in the cavernous halls of the great fortress, though local legends lingered, telling of ancient god-spirits slumbering in the depths of the mountain. Such tales held no fear for Lady Olynder. Indeed, the abandoned citadel made the perfect staging ground for her assault upon the city of Lethis. Her wailing procession swept through the ruins in an unending tide, seeping into every corner of the gargantuan fortress like spreading hoarfrost. Swirling clouds of Spirit Hosts crowned its highest towers. As far afield as the debauched realm of Bacchanalia, the revellers of the Slaaneshi warlord known as the Great Pretender felt a growing despair seep into their cruel hearts, robbing even the most deprived acts of their enticing joy.

From afar, the citizens of the Raven City watched the peaks of Deific Mons glow with sinister witchlight, bathing all around it in a foreboding light. Whispers spread of awakening gods of old; while some assured themselves that it was Morrda returning to join Sigmar's great crusade against the powers of darkness, others were more fearful. The Lord-Relictors of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer sensed the true danger – they were greatly troubled by the rising tides of death magic that suffused the lands. A single Swifthawk Agent returned from an advanced scouting mission, half-insane with fear and grief, telling of an ethereal host so vast that it engulfed the peaks of Deific Mons. In the wake of this grave news, summonses were sent to old allies, and desperate calls for aid despatched to Azyrheim. Yet time was short, and for now the Raven City and its allies would have to stand alone.

The Great Necromancer rested upon a throne of gravestone, surveying the grand court of Nagashizzar. Cold fury resonated from the monarch of the dead, so icily intense that it would have flayed the souls from any mortals in his presence.

There were none, of course. The Black Citadel was no place for the living.

'SIGMAR THE SOUL-THIEF,' said Nagash, in a voice that shook the earth.

'SIGMAR THE BETRAYER. THERE IS NO END TO HIS DUPLICITY. I FELT THE PRESENCE OF THAT WHICH IS RIGHTFULLY MINE, STOLEN FROM ME BY HE WHO CALLS HIMSELF AN HONOURABLE GOD.'

Arkhan the Black stepped forward.

'The Blood Queen's spies in Lethis speak of a hidden temple complex beneath the city,' said the Mortarch of Sacrament. 'It is from this place that the surge of amethyst magic issued. From beneath a mausoleum guarded by the Anvils of the Heldenhammer.'

At the mention of this name the room chilled yet further, black rimefrost crackling across the ancient armour of the Wight King generals that stood in silent audience. The black-armoured Stormhost were the very embodiment of the God-King's crimes. Once they had belonged to Shyish, until Sigmar the

Accursed had stolen their eternal souls away and shaped them into his willing lapdogs.

Nagash arose, eyes flickering with barely constrained outrage. Arkhan knew his master better than any soul, living or dead. He knew that the God of Undeath was already plotting a cruel and final revenge.

'MY MORTARCH OF GRIEF. ATTEND ME.'

A spectral figure drifted across the grand hall, her face shrouded in a white veil, her banshee handmaidens silently bearing the trailing tatters of her flowing dress.

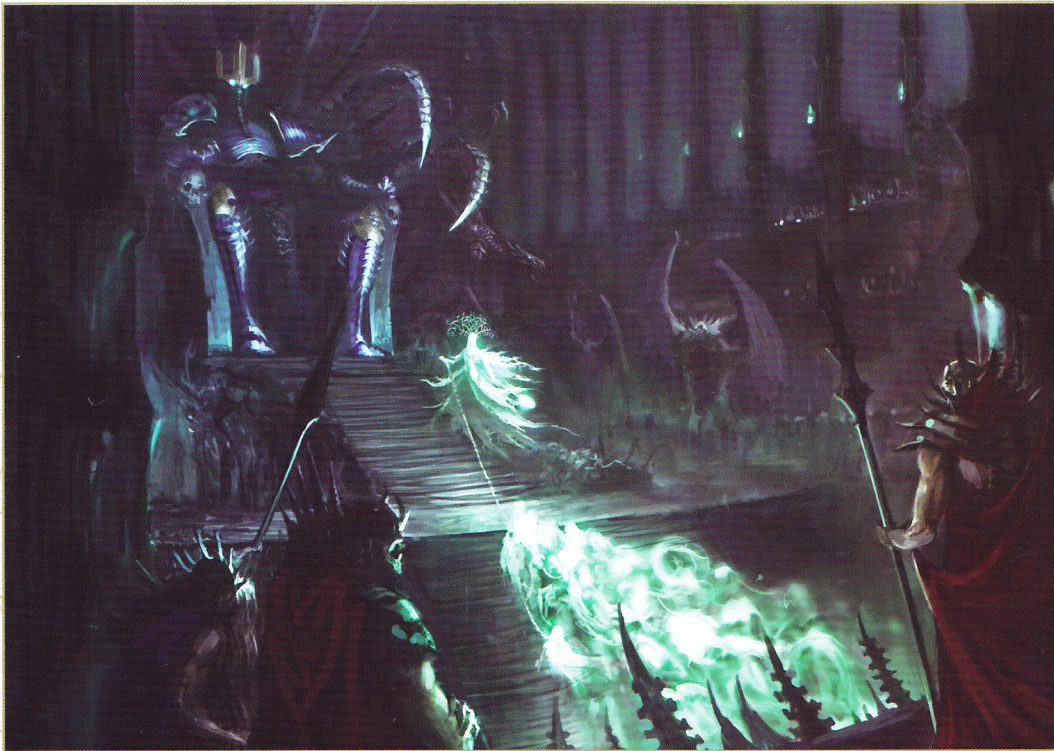
Lady Olynder ascended the stairs. Grave roses bloomed and died in her wake, and even Arkhan – long a stranger to mortal emotions – felt the sensation of aching sorrow and desolation that surrounded her like a smothering shadow.

'What dost thou command, my master?' asked the Mortarch of Grief. Her voice was the last, ragged breath of the dying, the hiss of leaves brushing across a gravestone.

'TEAR OPEN THE VAULTS OF LETHIS AND BRING ME WHAT IS MINE. LET EVERY MORTAL SOUL WITHIN THAT CITY FEEL THE DEEPEST DESPAIR BEFORE THEY PERISH.'

The Lady Olynder bowed her veiled head.

'It shall be done, my lord,' she said.



The alliance that defended the civilised lands of Stygxx was a fragile one. The city's skies were patrolled by a Kharadron fleet from Barak-Nar under the command of Admiral Bryge Colstarn, who had set up a lucrative aether-gold mining operation above the peaks of Deific Mons, until the coming of the Legion of Grief had forced him to retreat. Colstarn was determined to recover his lost pump-stations, but for now the offer of privateer work and the rumours of hidden treasures beneath the streets of Lethis offered an intriguing distraction.

Hidden beneath the black waves of the Dwindlesea lies the Haedrann Kar, a whirlway known solely to the strange Idoneth Deepkin of the Ionrach Enclave. The soul-raiders have long haunted the coasts of Stygxx, though their unsettling, deep-ocean magic ensured their presence remained a mystery. Only in recent years had Idoneth envoys from the Ionrach Enclave travelled to the walls of Lethis, seeking audience with the city's governors and representatives from the Anvils

of the Heldenhammer. The Idoneth, of course, had an ulterior motive for pursuing a tentative alliance. The magic of the Penumbra Engines greatly intrigued Soulscrier Nammos, envoy to Lethis, for such memory-eating power might be harnessed to protect vulnerable Idoneth enclaves.

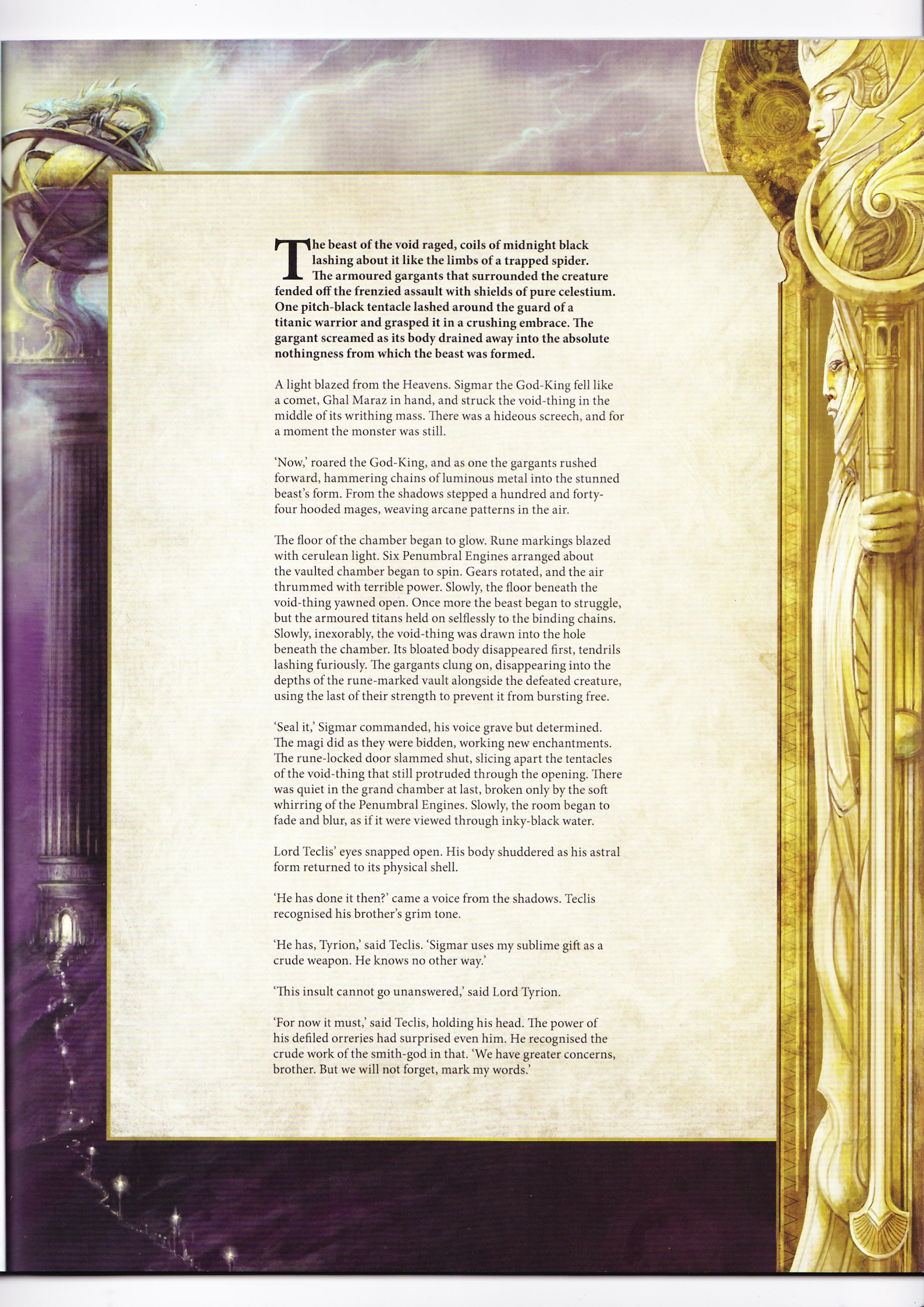
Grim mercenaries from the Greyfyrd Lodge of Fyreslayers had campaigned on behalf of Lethis for many months, battling against vast Deadwalker hordes that had emerged in the wake of the necroquake. All was not well between the duardin and their employers, however. The merchant lords of Lethis balked at the increasingly exorbitant fees that the Greyfyrd demanded for their service. To make matters worse, several caravans filled with ur-gold intended for the Fyreslayers had mysteriously disappeared. The city's governors managed to placate the Greyfyrd's notoriously ill-tempered leader, Runeson Graegar, with the promise of additional payment, but if the shipments did not arrive soon, the situation would surely deteriorate.

To the east of Stygxx lies the isthmus known as Dead Man's Folly. Centuries ago, the region fell to madness and ruin, its inhabitants overcome by a morbid curse that caused them to degenerate into cannibalistic monsters. Still the Flesh-eater Courts of this rotten kingdom believe themselves to be majestic lords fighting for the cause of good. Intimately connected to realms beyond the physical, the grim warriors of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer recognise the tragedy of these troubled souls; it is insanity that drives them to acts of butchery, and not an evil nature. The Lord-Relictors of the Anvils have ventured into Charnelcourt on missions of peace, trying to find some common ground with their unpredictable neighbours. The Abhorrant Ghoul King Maldoros finally granted audience to one of these envoys, in his delusion seeing them as diplomats from a tottering kingdom who sought the protection of his legions. Thus did the mad liege of the Tenebrous Court swear to lead his household knights to the aid of Lethis, should it ever be threatened by evil.

BITTERBLOOD CAVERNS



Bitterblood was a being once worshipped by the cannibal tribes of northern Stygxx. It was a bloated, blood-soaked corpse-worm the size of a moon whose ravenous hunger required the sacrifice of thousands. Sigmar came upon this monstrous godbeast during his search for Nagash, and smote its swollen body with Ghal Maraz. Bitterblood burst apart, and from its ruptured belly wriggled ten thousand of its formless children. Every strike of Sigmar's hammer simply caused the spawn of Bitterblood to divide again, and so the God-King instead locked them away in a Stormvault. The Bitterblood Caverns lie amidst the mountains of Dead Man's Folly, and are infested by the mordants of the Tenebrous Court. The spawn of Bitterblood have escaped their bondage and grown fat on carrion brought by the Flesh-eaters. Their bloated bodies envelop the ruins of the Stormvault, a rancid garden of swollen flesh and rotting slurry.



The beast of the void raged, coils of midnight black lashing about it like the limbs of a trapped spider. The armoured gargants that surrounded the creature fended off the frenzied assault with shields of pure celestium. One pitch-black tentacle lashed around the guard of a titanic warrior and grasped it in a crushing embrace. The gargant screamed as its body drained away into the absolute nothingness from which the beast was formed.

A light blazed from the Heavens. Sigmar the God-King fell like a comet, Ghal Maraz in hand, and struck the void-thing in the middle of its writhing mass. There was a hideous screech, and for a moment the monster was still.

‘Now,’ roared the God-King, and as one the gargants rushed forward, hammering chains of luminous metal into the stunned beast’s form. From the shadows stepped a hundred and forty-four hooded mages, weaving arcane patterns in the air.

The floor of the chamber began to glow. Rune markings blazed with cerulean light. Six Penumbral Engines arranged about the vaulted chamber began to spin. Gears rotated, and the air thrummed with terrible power. Slowly, the floor beneath the void-thing yawned open. Once more the beast began to struggle, but the armoured titans held on selflessly to the binding chains. Slowly, inexorably, the void-thing was drawn into the hole beneath the chamber. Its bloated body disappeared first, tendrils lashing furiously. The gargants clung on, disappearing into the depths of the rune-marked vault alongside the defeated creature, using the last of their strength to prevent it from bursting free.

‘Seal it,’ Sigmar commanded, his voice grave but determined. The magi did as they were bidden, working new enchantments. The rune-locked door slammed shut, slicing apart the tentacles of the void-thing that still protruded through the opening. There was quiet in the grand chamber at last, broken only by the soft whirring of the Penumbral Engines. Slowly, the room began to fade and blur, as if it were viewed through inky-black water.

Lord Teclis’ eyes snapped open. His body shuddered as his astral form returned to its physical shell.

‘He has done it then?’ came a voice from the shadows. Teclis recognised his brother’s grim tone.

‘He has, Tyrion,’ said Teclis. ‘Sigmar uses my sublime gift as a crude weapon. He knows no other way.’

‘This insult cannot go unanswered,’ said Lord Tyrion.

‘For now it must,’ said Teclis, holding his head. The power of his defiled orreries had surprised even him. He recognised the crude work of the smith-god in that. ‘We have greater concerns, brother. But we will not forget, mark my words.’

A GROWING DREAD

The Legion of Grief converged upon Lethis, surrounding the city with a supernatural pall of misery and preying upon those mortals foolish enough to stray beyond its walls. Caught off-guard by the pace of the Nighthaunt assault, the armies of the city rushed to intercept the foe.

DEATH ON THE WATER

It began with a great wave of spectral undead, sweeping in across the fathomless depths of Lake Lethis with shrieks of inchoate hatred. Fishermen from Lethis who were out on the lake trawling for moon-eels and bledrigs felt the air turn deathly cold and heard the distant screech of spirits – a sound they knew only too well. Desperately, they turned their ships about and headed for shore, but it was already too late. The spectral host swept through the fishing fleet, turning the placid waters of the lake to ice and piercing the hearts of the sailors with mortal terror. Many were hurled overboard and swallowed by the enchanted waters of Lake Lethis, their memories draining away into the aether as the magical tides did their work.

Such was the speed of the assault that the city's Lakeguard regiments would likely have been taken entirely by surprise. As it was, aid came from an unexpected source. Sleek and graceful sea-creatures swam up from the still waters of Lake Lethis, armoured riders mounted upon their backs. The Soulscryers of the Ionrach had sensed the tormented soul-stuff of the Nighthaunt vanguard before any others, and had despatched a phalanx of elite Akhelian Guard to the surface of the great lake to support the beleaguered land-dwellers. Their stolen souls shielded by their obfuscating magic, the memory-stealing powers of the Lethisian waters had no effect upon the strange aelves. Led by King Ecraviir Blacktide upon his proud Deepmare Savrentis,

the elite Akhelian cavalry of the Ionrach crashed into the ranks of the spirit hosts, enchanted lances blasting asunder gheists and wraiths in a storm of spectral energy. Such was the force of the Idoneth assault that the ghostly vanguard was pushed into retreat, falling back across the wide expanse of Lake Lethis with the aelves in close pursuit. Following behind the Akhelian charge came Namarti thralls, who made sure to gather up the confused and terrified sailors left splashing and screaming in the dark waters of the lake. These were valuable souls and, as far as the Idoneth were concerned, were of far greater worth to the Ionrach than the bereaved families they left behind, former loved ones they would never recognise again.



As the Idoneth drove the Nighthaunts back as far as the northern shore of the great lake, they realised the scale of the horror that had come to Lethis. From the darksome palaces that lined the lake's edge poured a vast host of ethereal undead, which quickly encircled the Ionrach. Now the pursuer was the prey, and the Idoneth took their first significant losses as Fangmora

Eel-riding Akhelians were dragged from their mounts by grasping, grave-cold talons. Yet King Ecraviir did not call for a retreat, knowing that the armies of Lethis were at that very moment mustering to defend their borders. Sure enough, the skies flared with corposant lightning and amethyst sigils lit the earth as the Anvils of the Heldenhammer came to their allies' aid. Lord-Celestant Vanderghule of the Soulguard Chamber led the charge, swirls of violet energy flickering around his sigmarite armour as his Dracoth mount crashed into the Nighthaunt ranks. Vanderghule fought to King Ecraviir's side, and the two warriors shared a moment of mutual respect as they surveyed the flow of battle.

RETREAT TO THE RAVEN CITY

The Stormcast reinforcements had shattered the right flank of the spectral line and were pushing along the shore to form up with the Idoneth cavalry, but in the north the sky was illuminated by an immense emerald cloud, so large that it masked the distant peaks of Deific Mons. This was no strange quirk of the Stygxxian climate, Vanderghule saw, but a rolling tide of spirits descending from on high, scythe-wielding spectral riders at the fore. Beneath that vast host, the ground crawled. A carpet of rotting flesh and yellowed bone swept through the mountain valleys towards Lethis, thousands upon thousands of Deadwalkers and Deathrattle warriors drawing closer by the moment. The Soulguard had deployed in force to repel the Nighthaunt

vanguard, but even with the Idoneth at their side, Lord-Celestant Vanderghule knew that the oncoming army was too vast for them to break. Never one to allow passion to override reason, Vanderghule gave the signal to fall back to the walls of Lethis. While a rearguard of Liberators slammed their broad shields into the earth and formed a wall of onyx sigmarite, the rest of the Anvils retreated in good order, stepping back rank by rank. Liberator-Primes roared battle orders in an ancient tongue, and the Stormcasts began to sing a haunting dirge, a mournful song that rose above the laughter of the charging Hexwraiths. With scythes swinging, the ghostly riders struck home, each slice of their cursed weapons

severing the mortal threads of their victims. The Anvils of the Heldenhammer rearguard fought back with grim determination, buying time for their comrades to reach the walls of Lethis. Lord-Celestant Vanderghule intoned a litany of remembrance for his fallen warriors, yet his heart did not fill with sorrow as the skies lit up with the lightning-spirits of slain Stormcasts; these warriors knew death as an old friend, and it held no power over them.

Even with the heroic defence of the Stormcast Eternals' rearguard, Vanderghule saw that his harried force would still be overrun. More gheists flowed around the island of Liberators like running water, and soared towards the retreating Stormcast Eternals.

Shrieking Horrorthasts went with them, summoned into being by spectral mages. These shapeshifting spells fed on fear, and had transformed into the image of the Great Necromancer to better terrify their prey.

Just as the ethereal tide swept down to envelop the Stormcasts, however, the sound of bellowed battle-hymns split the air. From the tree-line charged a tide of soot-bearded warriors, each clutching blazing fyresteel axes in their fists. Runeson Graegar was at their fore, mounted upon his Magmadroth, Kavaknos. With the might of the lodge's favoured scion leading them, the warrior-sons of Grimnir hurled themselves at the Nighthaunt host.



A TIMELY ARRIVAL

The Greyfyrd Fyreslayers had witnessed the coming of the spectral host and abandoned their war-camp at the base of Deific Mons, seeking the protection of Lethis' high walls. Runeson Graegar was loath to aid the folk of the city, for his lodge was still owed payment for services rendered in the destruction of a shambling horde of Deadwalkers that had recently been plaguing towns in the nearby area. For now, however, practicality demanded he swallow his discontentment – so vast was the undead army bearing down upon the region that there was nowhere to which his people could retreat. And so they fought.

Vulkite Berzerkers sang as they whirled and span in a lethal dance, their fyresteel axes burning through ectoplasmic matter and scattering gheists to the aether. Magmadroths lumbered behind, spewing molten lava across Hexwraith riders, who screamed in outrage as their spectral forms were dissolved by the supernatural heat. The vanguard of the Legion of Grief was broken, transforming into a whirling cloud of displaced spirit-stuff that ebbed away into nothing. Yet it had performed its task well; the Soulguard Chamber had taken significant losses, as had the Ionrach under the command of King Ecraviir. These were losses that might prove decisive in the coming siege. Lord-Celestant Vanderghule's withered, corpse-like face was grim as he led the battered defenders of Lethis and their allies through the city's northern threshold, the Onyx Gate.

Vanderghule approached Runeson Graegar, offering his gratitude for the Fyreslayers' bold intervention. He was met only by the furious gaze and smouldering broadaxes of Graegar's elite Hearthguard

Berzerkers. The Runeson told his supposed ally in no uncertain terms that in failing to pay their due the Stormcasts had broken any bonds of fellowship with the Greyfyrd. The sons of Grimmir would fight this day, but they would not soon forget. With that, the Runeson turned his back on the Lord-Celestant.

THE DREAD BEFORE THE STORM

The Raven City was no stranger to the vengeful attacks of undead hosts, which were little more than a fact of life in the deadly wilds of Shyish. Many would-be Necromancer lords had attempted to lay siege to the city, but the consecrated walls and cannon towers had always kept them at bay. However, the size of the Nighthaunt procession approaching Lethis was beyond anything that the city had ever faced before. It blocked out the light of the Heavens, enshrouding the Raven City in a sickly green haze. The armies of Order standing in defence were formidable, but against that oncoming doom they appeared meagre indeed.

The seemingly insurmountable task of defending the city fell to Lord-Ordinator Arthreus. The outer walls of Lethis had been constructed in a hexagrammatic pattern that channelled the cleansing light of Azyr. Additionally, in the aftermath of the necroquake, Arthreus himself had directed Dispossessed work crews in the creation of intricate sluiceworks within the masonry, which were subsequently filled with raw celestium – the stuff of heavenly magic.

As long as the walls were intact, Arthreus believed that this radiant material would prevent spectral assailants from simply sweeping through them – those that attempted to do so would be seared by

holy emanations. Arthreus put his Devoted warpriests to work ensuring that the artillery teams were well supplied with Azyrite starwater and javelins of blessed Chamonic silver that would wreak carnage upon the otherworldly besiegers. More deadly still were the Celestar Ballistas that guarded the northern walls. These holy war machines, wonders of the Ordinatos Conclaves, would hurl lightning-wreathed sigmarite bolts into the ranks of the foe at a terrifying rate.

The Blackshore Guard – the dedicated militia of Lethis – was roused in full. Regiments of black-coated Freeguild Handgunners lined the walls, staring off into the eerie twilight with expressions of grim-faced determination. Retinues of Liberators and Paladins in the onyx armour of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer held the walls alongside their mortal allies, their grim presence both unsettling and inspiring as they oversaw their archaic pre-battle rites.

This was but the first line of fortifications. Beyond the walls, the Sacrosanct Chambers of the Grave Brethren and the Sempiternals prepared their own defences, sprinkling blessed starwater along ancient ley lines, forming hexagrammatic patterns of warding that would agonise any ethereal being that attempted to breach the sanctified gardens. Soulscryer Nammos of the Ionrach devoted much of the Idoneth force to the defence of the mausoleum. Ostensibly this was because the fleet, agile mounts of the Akhelian Knights would be far more effective in the open grounds of the mausoleum than on the narrow confines of the city walls. In truth, Nammos sought to place his forces as close as possible to the Midnight Tomb, and the secrets buried within.





Onward came the Legion of Grief. It was as if the firmament itself was descending upon the city by the lake, so thoroughly did the Lady Olynder's host blanket the horizon. The people of Lethis were resolute folk, but fear spread rife through the city's twisting alleys. The shrill cries of ravens split the air, and locked within their homes the free folk nailed sprigs of witherwort and knucklebone charms to their doors while quietly beseeching the God-King and Morrda for salvation. The prayers of the people did

not go unheeded. Sigmar had foreseen the immensity of the horror that threatened Lethis. He could not allow the city to fall or the Midnight Tomb to be breached. So it was that the God-King summoned his most powerful champion – the Celestant-Prime. The first Stormcast Eternal to be forged and the wielder of the mythic hammer Ghal Maraz, the Avenging Angel would lead the defence of Lethis. However, the God-King could spare none of his Stormcast Eternals to accompany him, for so deadly

had the ramifications of the Shyish necroquake been that the Stormhosts of Azyr were already embroiled in other campaigns across the Eight Realms. Still, reinforcements for the beleaguered city were desperately needed. Thousands of Devoted faithful, the numberless zealots of the God-King's creed, answered the call. They knew that they likely marched to their deaths, but not one amongst them hesitated, for their faith had long ago cleansed them of fear or doubt.



The honour of leading this crusade went to the Excelsior Warpriest Pravus Morningstar, the High Acclamator of Azyrheim and one of the God-King's most trusted mortal servants. His forces had little time to muster. Sigendil the High Star had passed the apex of its ascent, and now strayed behind the shadow of Mallus. It would be mere hours until the Veil of Lethis shifted, and the Realmgate was cut off from Azyr for many long weeks. For Sigmar's mortal armies, this was the only route to Lethis.

A spear of heavenly light lanced through the Veil, piercing the umbral pall that cloaked Lethis. It washed out across the city, briefly banishing the darkness and sweeping away the crushing waves of despair. When the light faded there stood the Celestant-Prime, resplendent in the onyx sigmarite of the Anvils of the

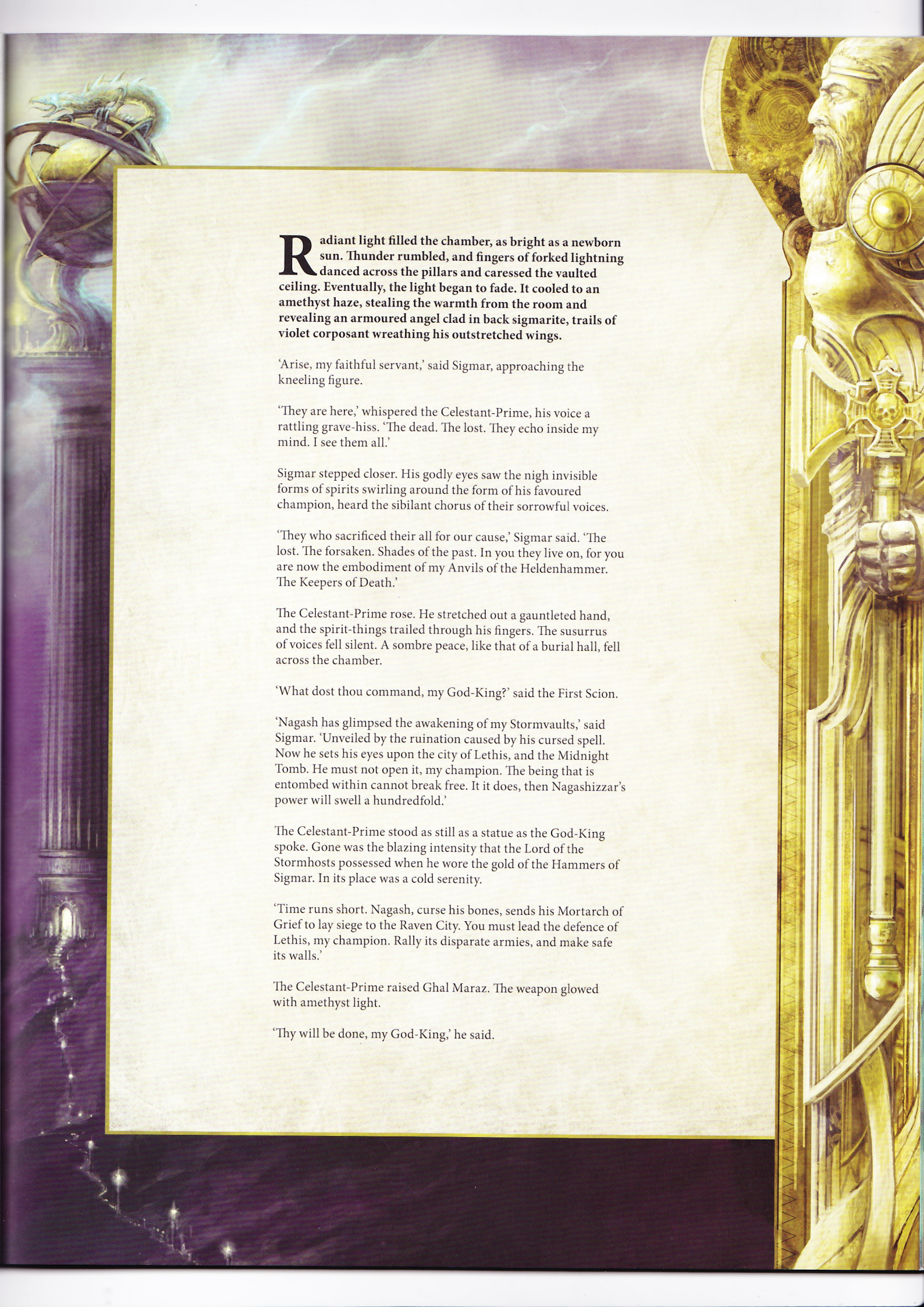
Heldenhammer, with a nimbus of amethyst magic coiling about his unfurled wings. Ranks of robed flagellants followed, a procession of the faithful raising banners of devotion and holding aloft the blessed bones of fallen saints. Raising the Great Shatterer high, the Celestant-Prime spoke, his voice not an authoritarian bellow, but a susurrus of whispers, both comforting and achingly sad, that echoed in the minds of every being in the city.

'You are not forgotten, children of Sigmar,' he rasped. 'And Death will not have its due this day.'

No sooner had the Celestant-Prime arrived in Lethis than he called for a council of war, summoning the lords of the great armies that would fight in defence of the city. The Grand Necropolis would

face the brunt of the coming onslaught, the Avenging Angel declared, and more specifically the catacombs beneath. This drew particular interest from the Kharadron Admiral Colsstarn. He had heard intriguing rumours of the treasures locked beneath the Lethis Mausoleum, and hoped that the coming battle might provide an opportunity to enter its forbidden depths. Colsstarn's airships would reinforce any areas of the city wall that appeared in danger, but the Admiral would watch the Stormvault entrance carefully. Defence of the Onyx Gate would fall to the Anvils of the Heldenhammer commanded by Lord-Celestant Vanderghule and Runeson Graegar's Greyfyrd warriors. The obstinate duardin was pacified with the promise of a far greater payment from the vaults of Azyrheim than that owed, to be paid at battle's end.





Radiant light filled the chamber, as bright as a newborn sun. Thunder rumbled, and fingers of forked lightning danced across the pillars and caressed the vaulted ceiling. Eventually, the light began to fade. It cooled to an amethyst haze, stealing the warmth from the room and revealing an armoured angel clad in black sigmarite, trails of violet corpusant wreathing his outstretched wings.

'Arise, my faithful servant,' said Sigmar, approaching the kneeling figure.

'They are here,' whispered the Celestant-Prime, his voice a rattling grave-hiss. 'The dead. The lost. They echo inside my mind. I see them all.'

Sigmar stepped closer. His godly eyes saw the nigh invisible forms of spirits swirling around the form of his favoured champion, heard the sibilant chorus of their sorrowful voices.

'They who sacrificed their all for our cause,' Sigmar said. 'The lost. The forsaken. Shades of the past. In you they live on, for you are now the embodiment of my Anvils of the Heldenhammer. The Keepers of Death.'

The Celestant-Prime rose. He stretched out a gauntleted hand, and the spirit-things trailed through his fingers. The susurrus of voices fell silent. A sombre peace, like that of a burial hall, fell across the chamber.

'What dost thou command, my God-King?' said the First Scion.

'Nagash has glimpsed the awakening of my Stormvaults,' said Sigmar. 'Unveiled by the ruination caused by his cursed spell. Now he sets his eyes upon the city of Lethis, and the Midnight Tomb. He must not open it, my champion. The being that is entombed within cannot break free. If it does, then Nagashizzar's power will swell a hundredfold.'

The Celestant-Prime stood as still as a statue as the God-King spoke. Gone was the blazing intensity that the Lord of the Stormhosts possessed when he wore the gold of the Hammers of Sigmar. In its place was a cold serenity.

'Time runs short. Nagash, curse his bones, sends his Mortarch of Grief to lay siege to the Raven City. You must lead the defence of Lethis, my champion. Rally its disparate armies, and make safe its walls.'

The Celestant-Prime raised Ghal Maraz. The weapon glowed with amethyst light.

'Thy will be done, my God-King,' he said.

THE SIEGE OF SORROW

The initial battles on the borders of Lethis were revealed to be little more than minor skirmishes as Lady Olynder launched her opening assault upon the city's walls. Thousands upon thousands of rotting Deadwalkers swept towards the defences, and from on high came a wave of spectral killers.

The Deadwalker horde that closed in around the Raven City was the largest that the defenders had ever seen. It blotted out the ground for miles around, smothering everything in a surge of rotten, yellow-brown flesh. There was no shortage of corpses in Stygxx for Lady Olynder's Necromancers to make use of, and their covens had been hard at work completing the fell rituals that would bind the fallen to their will. The Deathmage cabals had fashioned great siege towers of twisted bone and sinew, and battering rams crafted from the skeletons of fallen gargants and capped by black stone hammer-heads. These war engines rumbled closer to the walls of Lethis as the city's siege defences unleashed their first salvos. Helstorm cascades stitched lines of fire across the ocean of shambling dead, hurling gouts of rotten offal into the air. Starsilver mortars lobbed immense charges that exploded in an eviscerating burst of blessed shrapnel.

Great-cannons took aim at the bone-towers, and many were blasted to pieces by the relentless barrage. Kharadron airships strafed across the heart of the Deadwalker horde, blasting away with aethermatic volley cannons and spilling clusters of grudgesettler bombs that detonated in blossoming fireballs. From the decks of their ships, hard-bitten Grundstok marines fired away at the gheists seeking to engulf the flying vessels. Admiral Bryge Colsstarn's flagship, the proud Ironclad *Dealbreaker*, flew at the centre of the Kharadron formation, unleashing the full fury of its arsenal.

But for every bone-tower that fell to cannon-shot or bomb, two more drew closer to the parapets. Blackshore Guard halberdiers braced for the coming surge, muttering prayers of benediction as the skull-shaped siege-ramps slammed down upon the parapets of the northern wall and disgorged mobs of Zombies and mouldering Dire Wolves.



Even as the undead tide broke onto the silver-tipped halberds of the Blackshore ranks, the skies spilled spectral horrors down on the city. Hordes of leering Chainrasps fell upon the defenders, swiping with rusted wraith-daggers and wrapping their chains about the throats of their victims. The ghostly dervishes known as Bladegheist Revenants whirled along the length of the wall, a cyclone of spinning blades that tore open throats and slashed through cuirasses, washing the stone in gore. Hardy and unyielding souls all, the Free People of Lethis fought back bravely, but the enemy onslaught was relentless. Those that ran were sliced and torn apart, their souls consumed by the

Spirit Torments that prowled amidst the mass of shrieking gheists. Only the inspiring presence of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer prevented the battle from devolving into an disorganised rout.

Lord-Celestant Vanderghule led by example, amethyst trails coiling around the ridges of his battle-plate as he hewed through corporeal and ethereal figures alike, bellowing ancient oaths of defiance at his enemies. No matter their numbers, the gheists of the Legion of Grief could not force an opening in the Stormcast line. Worse still for the servants of Nagash, the Fyreslayers of Greyfyrd had shattered the initial wave of Deadwalker attackers, and were advancing to the Square of Martyrs to reinforce the Soulguard Chamber's dwindling numbers. For a brief and shining moment it seemed as though the siege of Lethis might be thrown back at the first time of asking, the people of the Raven City spared a terrible, drawn-out fate.

Then the warriors of Greyfyrd, led by Runeson Graegar, turned as one, and charged into the unguarded flank of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer. Magmadroths spat molten lava, and fyresteel axes hewed open sigmarite plate. The air was filled with trails of celestial lightning as the Stormcasts were cut down in scores. Some rallied, cursing their betrayers with dire oaths of vengeance even as they were surrounded and butchered. Graegar led the rout to the doors of the Onyx Gate, where grim-faced Greyfyrd warriors began to haul on the great gate-chains, opening a breach for the army of the dead to rush inside.

You fight and die for those who deny you your rightful due,' rasped the figure, its tattered cloak fluttering in the cold wind. 'Tell me, son of Greyfyrd, how long has your payment been delayed?'

Runeson Graegar grimaced, and spat a trail of bloody phlegm. The opening stages of the siege had been bloody indeed, and the sun had not yet descended upon the first day of battle. He stared at the scores of dead warriors at his feet – loyal Vulkite Berzerkers, their chests raked open by clawing, spectral talons. Anger filled Graegar like a surging flame. These brave warriors had fought and died for Lethis, for arrogant humans who judged their sacrifice worth nothing at all. Below, the battle still raged. Many more would lose their lives this day.

'The ur-gold shipments were delayed, they said,' he spoke at last. 'By your own kind, dead thing.'

The wraith-knight gave a rattling hiss that might have been laughter.

'Lies. Lies to hide their predictable, mortal greed. They want you to die here upon these walls, Runeson. They would gladly see all of your warriors fall rather than pay what they owe. Tell me, duardin, how many loyal comrades must you lose before you admit the truth to yourself?'

'Am I to trust in you then, spirit?' Graegar said, with no little sarcasm.

'Not I. Only my master, Undying Nagash. Unlike the God-King, he always pays his debts.'

The shrouded knight gestured with a bony finger.

From the mouth of the siege tower marched a phalanx of black-armoured skeletons, clutching wicked halberds. As one, they came to a halt in front of Runeson Graegar, and their ranks parted to admit two more warriors bearing an obsidian coffer. The undead creatures hauled open the heavy lid, and a fierce orange glow spilled free.

Graegar's mouth fell open. Ur-gold. By the look of it, more than twice the sum still owed by the city of Lethis.

'As I said, Nagash always pays his debts,' said the shrouded knight.

'What do you ask of me?' said Graegar.

'To open the way, and nothing more,' came the reply. The spectral knight's gaze was impassive, its patience that of a being for whom time had long ago lost its meaning.

There was only one answer for a loyal son of Greyfyrd. Graegar nodded to his personal guard, who moved forward to secure the offering.

'It will be done,' he said.



THE CITY OVERRUN

Through the open Onyx Gate swept the Nighthaunts. The air became deathly cold and the aura of despair smothering the city intensified. Black roses burst through the cobbled stones of the streets, blooming and dying, their withered petals raining down upon the bodies of the fallen.

Lady Olynder, the Mortarch of Grief, had come. She entered Lethis at the head of her court of Banshees and Hexwraith knights, her consort Kurdoss Valentian at her side. The Craven King sat hunched upon his throne, awaiting the command of his queen. The crushing weight of loss and tragedy that emanated from the Mortarch of Grief caused many mortal warriors to drop their weapons and fall to their knees, weeping and tearing at their skin in a grief-stricken frenzy. Lady Olynder's veiled face turned towards the Grand Necropolis, and the mausoleum over which it stood guard. She

raised her Staff of Midnight and pointed its polished grave-sand gem at the distant fortress and the entrance to the Midnight Tomb.

The shock of the Fyreslayers' betrayal reverberated across the battlefield of Lethis like a thunderstorm. The Blackshore Guard faltered and broke, fleeing into the labyrinthine streets in disorganised mobs, firing over their shoulders at the pursuing horde. Deadwalkers spilled through the breach in their thousands, followed by Necromancers resting upon palanquins of sculpted bone, cackling with triumphant delight as they hurled black bolts of deathly fire at the retreating Freeguild. Graegar and his Fyreslayers let their new allies pass, despatching any pockets of defenders who still stubbornly resisted. In the midst of the madness they found Lord-Celestant Vanderghule, fighting alone. The souls of his fellow Stormcasts had either

been drawn back to Azyr for reforging, or captured within the rusted iron locks of Spirit Torments. Vanderghule's own armour was torn in a thousand places and his Dracoth was sorely wounded, but he faced down his betrayer with no fear, only determination and a hint of sorrow.

'Thou hast damned thyself, betrayer,' he spoke, his voice rendered harsh and grating by an axe-wound that had all but opened his throat.

'You should have kept your oaths,' responded the Runeson, urging Kavaknos forward and hefting his javelin. 'And paid me and mine what was due.'

With that, Vanderghule charged his enemy. Blade and javelin clashed, too fast for the eye to track. There was a spurting arc of blood, and the Lord-Celestant fell from his mount, his body erupting into violet lightning before it could reach the ground.



ONSLAUGHT OF GRIEF

The Nighthaunt contingent converged upon the Lethis Mausoleum, Lady Olynder's haunting presence binding the torrent of spirits into a murderously focused assault. Ranks of the Sacrosanct Chambers awaited them, arrayed in perfect order in front of the high gates of the domed sepulchre that marked the entrance to the Midnight Tomb. The hammers of the Grave Brethren and the Sempiternals blazed with searing light, and Celestar Ballistas mounted upon the roof of the sepulchre unleashed a ferocious hail of rapid-fire bolts, each of which slammed into the onrushing gheists before exploding in a coruscating blast of lightning. The watchtowers of the Grand Necropolis likewise opened fire, sending amethyst missiles screaming into the spectral horde. Hundreds of Chainrasps were blasted into motes of sickly green energy by the barrage, but these were mere drops in the ocean.

While Lady Olynder's force struck at the entrance to the Midnight Tomb, Kurdoss Valentian led a second wave of undead west through the wide avenues of Lethis towards the walls of the Grand Necropolis. His cunning strategic mind saw the weakness in the tactics of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer – their forces were divided between those defending their mighty Stormkeep and those guarding the grounds of the Lethis Mausoleum, and they could afford to abandon neither. Gathering the roaming swarms of Deadwalkers to his side, as well as the Legion of Grief's new Fyreslayer allies, Valentian sought to drive a wedge between these two key objectives. In the process, he would buy his betrothed time to breach the Stormvault's defences.

The Grand Necropolis was no meagre target. It towered above the city of Lethis, its highest spires scraping the clouds, its sheer-walled surface lined with ballista towers and murder-holes. Moreover, the Anvils of the Heldenhammer had warded every inch of the tower with enchantments that repulsed wrathful spirits and formless daemon-things. The Lord-Relictors of the Black Sepulchres knew their craft well, and the Lord-Ordinator Arthreus had made his own adjustments to the fortifications, intended to trap any would-be besiegers in an overlapping web of artillery fire and vicious hails of arrows from Judicator archers.

Yet so vast was the Deadwalker host that descended upon the Stormkeep that even such formidable defences were sorely tested. Its numbers swollen by the newly risen corpses of slaughtered city folk, the horde of Zombies swept across the open ground in front of the Grand Necropolis. The drawbridge of the Stormkeep was raised, and beneath ran a moat of holy starwater. Yet the Necromancers of the Legion of Grief simply drove their numberless minions on, thousands of corpses spilling into the cavernous drop. Slowly, the pile of ruined dead rose, forming a bridge of rotting flesh. Across this makeshift pass went the Fyreslayers of the Greyfyrd Lodge, Runeson Graegar and Kavaknos at the fore. The Runeson led a charge of lava-spitting Magmadroths, smashing a path through the battered Anvils of the Heldenhammer who barred the great gate of the Stormkeep. Sigmarite melted and warped as the Magmadroths spat streams of searing flame, and Graegar and his elite guard struck from their saddles with vicious blows that sent Stormcast spirits surging back to Azyr. Many of the beasts feli, their limbs shattered by

silver warhammers, their riders pierced by scores of crackling arrows.

On came Kurdoss Valentian and his Nighthaunts, racing up the sheer face of the Stormkeep in such numbers that even the potent wards of the citadel could not hold them at bay. Where they found clusters of archers or artillery nests, they fell upon the Stormcast defenders, Hexwraiths descending from above to trample formations of Judicators beneath spectral hooves, blade-limbed Dreadscythe Harridans screaming and wailing as they hacked and slashed their prey apart.

More than a score of Magmadroths gathered at the gates of the Grand Necropolis, and as one they spat a torrent of raging fire across the black-iron portcullis, which began to groan and scar under the ferocious heat. Runemasters ran forward with crews of elite Hearthguard and made to hammer runes of breaching into the consecrated walls.

It was at that moment that the gathering darkness parted, and blazing comets rained from the sky to explode amongst the ranks of the Greyfyrd. Winged shapes dropped from above – Prosecutors, hurling stormcall javelins that struck as bolts of celestial lightning. The aerial host rained death down upon the Fyreslayers as they followed their lord to war. Those Anvils of the Heldenhammer still fighting began to sing a mournful battle-dirge as they saw their comrades strike home, and fought with renewed hope and vigour. At the same time, the rapturous chanting of Devoted of Sigmar was heard echoing from the streets of Lethis. The Warpriest Pravus Morningstar charged, and his faithful flock of wild-eyed flagellants crashed into the rear of the undead force.



The Celestant-Prime dived from the sky with Ghal Maraz held in hand, and crashed into Runeson Graegar's Magmadroth, the legendary weapon splintering the war-beast's skull into pieces. Graegar fell free, and his Hearthguard ran to his aid. But against the cold fury of the First-Forged Angel, they could not stand. One by one, the Celestant-Prime hammered the Sons of Greyfyrd apart, Ghal Maraz blasting through rune-marked flesh and hardened fyresteel. Finally, the winged champion stood before Graegar himself, and to the Runeson it seemed not a creature of light and justice, but a grim spectre of oblivion, the very shadow of death made manifest.

'Thou ist damned, Son of Grimmir,' he spoke. 'In this life, and all others.'

With that, the hammer of the God-King descended, crushing Runeson Graegar's skull to bloody fragments. As the Fyreslayer fell, onlookers saw a halo of purplish flame envelop his body, which was then drawn into the head of the Great Shatterer. Slowly, the Celestant-Prime turned, and his gaze fell upon the remaining Greyfyrd. Doughty warrior-sons they were, but there was not one amongst the duardin mercenaries who did not feel the cold hand of death take a grip upon their souls as they looked upon the Avenging Angel.

From the skies above soared fresh reinforcements – Admiral Colstarn's privateer Kharadron, their aether-cannons blasting down at the ranks of the Fyreslayers even as Grundstok marines and Arkonaut Companies leapt over the gunwales of their vessels and into the fray, their guns spitting fiery death. Never ones to back down, even from a losing fight, the Greyfyrd engaged their fellow

mercenaries, fyresteel axes hewing open metal-plated bodysuits. But the tide of battle had turned. The killing that followed was merciless. From the thousands of Fyreslayers who took part in the Siege of Lethis, a scant few hundred would escape the city alive. Forever cursed and shamed by their defeat, they would all of them take the Long Walk, and embrace the path of the Doomseeker.

Shorn of his reinforcements, Kurdoss Valentian's army was now outnumbered and surrounded, pinned between the Stormkeep's defenders at the fore and Pravus Morningstar's Devoted army behind. Dust spilled from the Craven King's mouth as he tried to unleash a roar of frustration. With a final, silent glower of bitterness, he led his host in a retreat from the Grand Necropolis. The stronghold of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer would not fall today, but Valentian's attack had divided the forces of Order and granted his betrothed precious time to complete her sacking of the Midnight Tomb.

THE TOMB BREACHED

Under the command of Lord-Arcanum Ghalmorian, the Sacrosanct Chambers of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer battled the endless surge of spectral forms. Their weapons enchanted with heavenly power, they banished hundreds of tormented spirits, shattering the cursed forms of Chainrasps into scattered motes of spirit matter. Lord-Exorcists drained away the tormented souls of Banshees and wraiths into their redemption staves, judging the worth of each and banishing those beyond salvation into the lightless aether.

Ghalmorian himself rode down the Stormcast line astride his Celestial Dracoline, and

wherever the Nighthaunts threatened to force a breach he unleashed a thunderous storm of Azyrite magic that blasted dozens of gheists into oblivion. King Ecraviir of the Idoneth led his forces in sally after sally, sweeping across the open grounds of the mausoleum gardens with his loyal Akhelian Guard, spear-tips gleaming in the fell light as they scythed into the enemy like hungry sharks.

It was a glorious defence worthy of the greatest feats in the Stormhost's grand history, but it could not last. Shorn of desperately needed reinforcements, battered by the relentless waves of attackers, the ranks of Sequitors were slowly pulled apart. Gheists spilled through the line, forcing their way past the searing magical wards by dint of their sheer numbers. Lord-Arcanum Ghalmorian ordered his troops to fall back, and his Evocators wove a scintillating web of burning lightning as the Stormcasts retreated to the secondary defences within the guardian chamber of the Midnight Tomb. Many were the treasures and lethal horrors contained within the ancient Stormvault, but it was the beast entombed at the heart of the structure that Nagash sought above all else.

It was then that Ghalmorian enacted his secret orders from the Lord-Celestant, a desperate last gambit only to be employed if the Midnight Tomb was breached. He ordered his Evocators to break open several subsidiary chambers of the Stormvault, those filled with powerful relic weapons and artefacts of amethyst magic. Rune-sealed caskets and the smothering magic of the Penumbra Engines had kept the terrible power of these items in check for many centuries. Now that they were removed from their vaults, that power gradually began to



reawaken. Ghalmlorian knew it might be vital in the battle to come. King Ecraviir of the Idoneth was granted a mighty gift – the sword Gheistbane, a shard of pure amethyst magic that with a single touch could devour the spirit essence of any being it touched, be they living or dead. Ghalmlorian himself carried the Shield of the Pale Knight, a targe of invictunite embedded with the bones of a long-dead saint. Even as they held these ancient artefacts in hand, the lords of Lethis could feel the swelling power of each object as its arcane sentience began to stir.

The restless dead hissed and shrieked as they felt the power of the weapons now unleashed against them. King Ecraviir swept through the halls of the Midnight Tomb, each graceful arc of Gheistbane devouring clouds of spectral matter and drawing shrieking, skull-faced gheists onto the perfect

crystalline blade. Meanwhile, the Shield of the Pale Knight bathed Ghalmlorian and his Evocators in a radiant glow that repelled the strikes of spectral claws and blades. The Lord-Arcanum led his depleted force to the heart of the Midnight Tomb, praying that the Celestant-Prime would arrive with reinforcements soon.

Lady Olynder's host followed the retreating Stormcasts, spilling into the depths of the Stormvault and racing through its ossuary halls and warding chambers. The Mortarch of Grief despatched her favoured agents, Tomb Banshees and Guardians of Souls, to seek out the areas of the labyrinthine catacombs that blazed with necromantic energies. The Stormvault's Penumbral Engines were shattered or suffused with such potent death magic that their gears crumbled to dust or slowed to a crawl. Cairns and vaults were

breached, their wards broken and their invaluable contents dragged out by spectral claws. Living spells of entropy and death broke free from the rune-bindings that had subdued them for centuries. With every warding orrery that was rent asunder, the secrets of the Stormvault were further exposed.

Lady Olynder herself released the lambent-eyed, skeletal boatsman known as Lauchon the Soulsecker from its rune-locked cell. A splinter of a long-dead god, this being of pure Shyishan magic had a malevolent sentience, and could seek out any soul trapped in the underworlds of the Realm of Death. Using her mastery of dark sorcery, the Mortarch of Grief leashed the arcane entity to her will, and commanded Lauchon to seek out the immensely powerful being that dwelt within the Midnight Tomb.

The Grave Brethren and the Sempiternals fought to preserve what they could, but in breaking one tendril of the Nighthaunt assault they were forced to allow two more to flow past them. Ghalmerian divided his forces as much as he dared, but the defence of the prison at the heart of the Midnight Tomb was vital beyond every other concern. The central chamber was a cavernous hall of vaulted arches and floors of polished bone. In its centre hovered an immense orb of utter blackness, pulsing with barely suppressed energies. Concentric rings of sigmarite enclosed the sphere, their surfaces glowing with runes of warding and Azyrite sigils. Here the Anvils would make their last stand, assaulted on all sides by waves of ethereal monsters. Lady Olynder urged her flock on, despair radiating from her spectral form so intensely that even several Sequitors – their souls hardened against all types of magic – were driven to the ground, left helpless in the throes of grief-stricken agony. Others that drew too close were turned to dust with a single blow from the Staff of Midnight. Desperately seeking to cut the head from the Legion of Grief, Ghalmerian led a combined charge of Evocators mounted upon Dracolines and King Ecraviir's elite eel-riding Morrissarr Knights, but even this formidable force could not break through to Lady Olynder.

Ghalmerian exorcised several ghostly cavalrymen as he blasted a line to the Mortarch, protected from their scythes by the searing light of the Shield of the Pale Knight, which now blazed like a sun in the darkness of the chamber. Yet before he could channel a storm of celestial lightning through his staff to lay her low, he was dragged from his mount by the choking noose of a Lord-Executioner. Even as he tried to rise, the Lord-Arcanum was set

upon by scores of Bladegheist Revenants, who hacked and tore him apart. King Ecraviir fought on, trying in vain to get to his fallen ally, but it was hopeless. The triumphant howls of the dead filled the halls of the Midnight Tomb as Lady Olynder approached the rune-sealed prison. She raised the Staff of Midnight, and coils of night-black rose vines reached forth to ensnare the rune-wards that surrounded the hanging orb of blackness. Slowly, inexorably, they began to pry the locks apart.



RIDE OF THE TENEBROUS COURT

It was at that moment that a terrible sound was heard across the city of Lethis, and the festering stench of carrion filled the air. At first the people of the city were stricken with horror, wondering what fresh nightmare the Great Necromancer had unleashed against them. Those few Freeguild defenders still fighting on the walls of the city turned, and saw a tide of hunch-backed creatures swarming towards Lethis from the east. At their head flew a rot-skinned dragon, tattered wings spread wide. A figure rode upon the drake's back, hulking and monstrous, its fangs slathered in blood. This was the Ghoul King Maldoros, master of the Tenebrous Court, with whom the Raven City had long held an uneasy

peace. Stranger still were the vampire's companions – Vanguard-Palladors, racing alongside the bounding host of ghouls upon their sleek mounts. Confusion reigned, until the Anvils of the Heldenhammer sent up the call; the noble kingdom of the Tenebrous Court had come to the aid of the Raven City, as their oaths had demanded. In their insanity, the mordants of the Flesh-eater court saw the minions of Nagash as bat-winged horrors assailing a gleaming city, and themselves as the noble cavaliers riding to the rescue of the innocent. In a hollering, slashing tide they swept into the rear of the unprepared Deadwalkers and Deathrattle formations that held the Onyx Gate. Crypt Horrors bounded into the fray, swiping and smashing madly with their bone clubs, stuffing rotten meat into their gaping mouths.

The Necromancers that bound the Legion of Grief's corporeal undead as one had thought the mordants to be reinforcements sent by Nagash, and were caught completely unaware as the deranged cannibals attacked them. Screaming, the Deathmages were dragged down under the churning tide, slashed apart and devoured. Shorn of the binding necromancy that gave animus to their rotting bodies, hundreds of Zombies and Skeletons crumbled into nothing, or were simply ground to dust under the advance of the Tenebrous Court and their Vanguard allies. The Lord-Relictors of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer desperately tried to corral as many mordants as they could, drawing Maldoros and his hunched court towards the Midnight Tomb. Many simply gave in to their insatiable hunger, roaming and killing at will. To further add to the chaos, yet more Horrorthaunts appeared, conjured by

Nighthaunt mages. They boomed pronouncements of death and eternal torment as they rampaged through Lethis, feeding upon the populace's fear and growing ever more powerful. So too did the Shards of Valagharr appear, unshackled from the vaults of the Midnight Tomb. They orbited the battle in maddening patterns, ensnaring the souls of helpless victims.

Just as the cannibals of the Tenebrous Court threatened to run amok, becoming as deadly a threat to the city as the Nighthaunt host, the Celestant-Prime landed before Ghoul King Maldoros. The vampire was struck with wonder at the First-Forged Angel, seeing him not as an avenging warrior, but the wise spirit of a beloved ancestor come to guide him to glory. For a single brief moment, the susurrus of deathly voices emanating from the Celestant-Prime soothed Maldoros' insanity,

and focused the minds of his minions. Gathering his strange new allies and those Stormcast forces that remained intact, the Avenging Angel led the charge.

CATAclysm

The Celestant-Prime knew that even with the main force of the Legion of Grief crushed by the unexpected arrival of the Flesh-eater court, all would be for naught if the Midnight Tomb was lost. The First-Forged Angel swept through the catacombs upon gilded wings, Prosecutors trailing in his fiery wake. Lady Olynder looked up from her spell-casting to see an amethyst glow fill the central chamber. The sonorous chanting of the few Sacrosanct warriors still standing reached a great pitch, and the robed warriors bellowed triumphant shouts in an ancient tongue. The Celestant-Prime crashed into Lady Olynder, and the Mortarch of Grief met Ghal Maraz with the Staff

of Midnight. Even that foul artefact of darkest magic buckled under a single strike from the Great Shatterer, and Lady Olynder wailed as she was driven backwards by the God-King's foremost champion.

Yet the ethereal Mortarch was grief and hopelessness given form, and she would not be defeated this day. With a flick of her hand, she gestured to one of her banshee handmaidens, who produced an ornate hourglass and smashed it upon the tiles. Pure grave-sand spilled forth from the shattered glass, and instantly the Celestant-Prime's armour began to buckle and rust. As the First-Forged Angel's form broke apart into forking bolts of lightning, it spared one, last horrified look at the onyx orb above. In a blinding explosion of green light, the prison burst open, scattering clouds of swirling gheists and sending Sacrosanct warriors sprawling across the cold stones.





THE SHATTERED TOMB

The arrival of the Tenebrous Court prevented the utter destruction of Lethis, but even the heroic stand of the Anvils of the Heldenhammer could not prevent the breaching of the Midnight Tomb and the prison that lay at its heart. The being within left a trail of devastation in its wake as it smashed its way free of the Raven City.

The shifting visions of the orrery showed Sigmar the true scale of the destruction that had been visited upon Lethis. The streets and squares of the Raven City were piled high with the rotting corpses of duardin and aelf, as well as the brave defenders of the city and the dead things that had sought to tear it down.

Stretching for miles through the centre of the city was a path of utter ruination heading towards the eastern wall. The streets had been torn and churned apart, and town houses, watchtowers and armouries alike shattered to kindling.

The Barrengate, the eastern entrance to the city, had been torn entirely from its moorings, hurled aside contemptuously to crush a number of heavy Ironweld gun-carriages.

Figures picked through the rubble of the desolated city, survivors of the Siege of Sorrow, so covered in dust and ashes that they looked like ghosts drifting through the streets. Some searched hopelessly for lost loved ones, others for trapped survivors, buried in the wreckage. Battered and bloodied Freeguild warriors patrolled Lethis, hunting any undead creatures that had not fallen in the tumultuous final battle. The harsh cry of ravens broke the solemn quiet. Beneath their chorus could be heard the faint, mournful sound of voices joined in song – the Priests of Morrda, leading a litany in honour of the fallen.

The God-King felt a surge of pride. He had forged a hardy people. The very worst of Nagashizzar had been unleashed against the Raven City, but still it endured.

The Grand Necropolis had not fallen, and though hundreds of slain heroes were now going through the agony of reforging, the Anvils of the Heldenhammer would recover.

Yet the Midnight Tomb had been breached. The Celestant-Prime had failed, and Nagash – that wretched traitor – had won another great victory. Deathly magic of terrible power had broken free of the Stormvault. Unbound, these living spells would wreak more horror and ruin across the realms.

That was not the worst of it. The thing that had been imprisoned beneath Lethis now roamed free. Its revenge would begin in Shyish, but it would not stop there. Millions upon millions would perish across the realms, slaughtered to satiate the monster's boundless hatred of all living things. A reckoning was coming, a war for which the God-King did not know if even his mightiest hosts were truly prepared.

Sigmar closed his eyes and rose from his seat. The lights of the orrery mounted upon the ceiling high above dimmed. The God-King felt a wave of rage and frustration – no small amount





of it directed at himself – threatening to explode in an act of destructive violence. He descended the steps of his throne, mighty fists clenched and trembling.

'You thought that you could simply consign your secrets to the grave?' came a voice from the shadows. 'In Shyish of all places? One cannot so easily escape the tides of destiny, God-King. Your arrogance has unleashed a great evil upon the realms, and now we shall all suffer its wrath.'

Sigmar spun, teeth bared. The Lord of Illumination stood before the throne of Azyrheim, his thin form glittering with motes of silver.

'You speak to me of arrogance?' Sigmar roared. 'You play your conceited games, Luminous One, tending only to the fate of your own kind. I wage this war for the good of all.'

'Still so contemptibly human,' said Teclis, his lip curling. 'You care for knowledge only when it can be sharpened into a weapon. You wield your power like a hammer, and care not what ruin you leave in your wake.'

'Sometimes there are only bad choices. I do not retreat from making them.'

'Clearly,' said Teclis. 'I granted you the Enlightenment Engines for the good of your people. To help them escape their limitations. To allow them a glimpse of true greatness. How long was it before you took my gift and perverted it for your own ends?'

'There was no other way. Always do the Dark Gods seek to dominate mortal-kind. To defeat them we must use every weapon available to us. Would you have discarded the artefacts that we gathered? Would you so quickly have squandered such power?'

Teclis did not reply, but simply gazed back at the God-King through his lambent eyes. Sigmar tried to rein in his anger, to regain his focus. Now was not the time for rash action or poorly chosen words.

'So the Midnight Tomb is emptied and its prisoner loose once more,' said the aelf god at last. 'You understand what that one is capable of. Nagashizzar's power will swell ever further now.'

'I know full well its nature,' said Sigmar. 'Even the Great Shatterer could not destroy that monstrosity, and so I imprisoned it in the deepest, darkest hole I could find. That act spared our people untold suffering and death, but it will not work a second time. Now we must unite, Teclis, or face the destruction of all that we have built.'

The aelf god laughed mirthlessly.

'No doubt you wish the armies of Hysh to march out in force, to erase the stain of your hubris?' he said, his voice thick with bitterness. 'Nay. There may come a day when my brother and I might have need of Azyr's might, but that time is not yet. The coming darkness is yours to face alone.'

With that, the aelf god's thin body burst into a cascade of sparkling light-beams, leaving Sigmar standing alone in the vast expanse of the throne room.

'So be it,' he said at last.

Let the aelf gods play at their shadow trickery, and think him blind to their deceptions. Ever had they underestimated the will of Azyr. Sigmar brought his gauntleted hands together, unleashing a booming crash of thunder that echoed throughout the palace of Sigmaron, summoning his greatest generals to a council of war. It was time for his enemies to remember why they feared the wrath of the Heavens.

WAR FOR THE STORMVAULTS

This book contains exciting new rules that you can use to recreate the battles that raged across the Mortal Realms for control of Sigmar's Stormvaults, from Realm of Battle rules to a thrilling, multi-battle campaign.

REALM OF BATTLE

Region of War rules to fight battles set in Stygxx in the Realm of Death are included in this section. Realmsphere magic, realm commands, a realmsphere prayer and a realmscape feature each provide rules that represent the deathly conditions of this region of Shyish (pg 67).

ALLEGIANCE ABILITIES

This section features two new sets of allegiance abilities to allow players to field themed armies based on the story of the Siege of Sorrow in Lethis. The first (pg 68-69) represents the combined forces of Order, led by the sinister Anvils of the Heldenhammer Stormhost, in defence of the city of Lethis. The second (pg 70-71) represents the forces of Death fighting in the Legion of Grief, led by Lady Olynder.

Each of these sets of allegiance abilities features new battle traits, command traits, artefacts of power, spell lores and prayers.

MERCENARIES

This section contains rules that allow armies of any allegiance to employ Fyreslayer mercenaries of the Greyfyrd Lodge (pg 72) and Flesh-eater Courts envoys of the Tenebrous Court (pg 72).

STORMVAULT CAMPAIGN

This section describes how you and a group of friends can run an exciting campaign to capture Stormvaults all across the Mortal Realms (pg 74-75).

AWAKENED ARTEFACTS

These unique artefacts of power grow in strength as you conquer more Stormvaults, granting the bearer ever more destructive abilities (pg 76-77).

PITCHED BATTLE BATTLEPLANS

These four new Pitched Battle battleplans allow you and an opponent to test your strategic cunning and tactical acumen against one another. These battleplans can be used as part of a Stormvault campaign, or as one-off battles, and are specifically designed to provide a balanced experience for each player (pg 78-81).

NARRATIVE BATTLEPLANS

This section includes five new narrative battleplans that can either be played as part of a Stormvault campaign, or as exciting stand-alone battles. Battleplan: Grand Stormvault provides a dramatic finale to a Stormvault campaign (pg 82-87).

PITCHED BATTLE PROFILES

This section contains Pitched Battle profiles for the endless spells included in this set (pg 89).

WARSCROLL CARDS

In this set you will find warscroll cards for the endless spell models included in this set, as well as scenery warscroll cards for brand new Stormvault terrain pieces. These warscroll cards contain all the rules you need to use these models in your games of Warhammer Age of Sigmar.

ENDLESS SPELL WARSCROLL CARDS

There are four endless spell warscroll cards that detail the rules for unique and powerful endless spells that can be cast by **WIZARDS** of any allegiance. The rules for playing games with endless spells can also be found in this book (pg 88).

SCENERY WARSCROLL CARDS

Here you will find six scenery warscrolls for Stormvault terrain features, including the Penumbral Engine included in this set.

REALM OF BATTLE

REGION OF WAR: STYGXX

The following rules can be used for battles fought in Stygxx, in the Prime Innerlands of Shyish. These rules work especially well for battles fought as part of a Stormvault campaign (pg 74-75) set in Stygxx.

REALMSPHERE MAGIC

WIZARDS know the following spell in battles fought in this region, in addition to any other spells that they know.

PALL OF DOOM

A cloud of terrifying darkness pours forth and engulfs the wizard's foes.

Pall of Doom has a casting value of 6. If successfully cast, pick an enemy unit within 18" of the caster that is visible to them. Subtract 2 from the Bravery characteristic of the unit you picked until your next hero phase.

REALM COMMANDS

You can use the following command abilities in battles fought in this region, in addition to the command abilities that you are normally allowed to use.

HONOUR THE DEAD

The dead are honoured by the living ending the lives of their remaining foes.

You can use this command ability at the start of the combat phase. If

you do so, pick a friendly unit that is within 3" of a friendly **HERO** or 12" of your general, and roll a dice. If the dice roll is less than the number of models that have been slain from the unit you picked, you can add 1 to the Attacks characteristic of weapons used by that unit in that combat phase.

SOUL-FORCE SACRIFICE

Your general can siphon soulforce from their minions to extend their life.

You can use this command ability at the start of your hero phase. If you do so, pick a friendly unit that is within 3" of your general. Allocate any number of wounds to that unit that you wish – you can heal 1 wound that has been allocated to your general for each wound that you allocate.

REALMSPHERE PRAYER

PRIESTS know the following prayer in battles fought in this region. It can only be chanted once per turn, regardless of how many **PRIESTS** know it.

COMMUNION WITH THE ANCIENT DEAD

The capricious spirits of long-forgotten civilisations linger in these lands.

In your hero phase, 1 friendly model that knows this prayer can chant it. If it does so, make a prayer roll by rolling a dice. On a 1, the model chanting this prayer suffers 1 mortal wound and the prayer is not answered. On a 2-5, the prayer is not answered. On a 6, the prayer is answered. If this prayer is answered, you receive 1 command point.

REALMSCAPE FEATURE

If a battle takes place in this region, the following realmscape feature rule applies for the battle.

ENERGIES OF THE MIDNIGHT TOMB

In the wake of the necroquake, baleful energies spill from this ancient Stormvault.

If the casting roll for a spell is a double, that spell is successfully cast and cannot be unbound.

ALLEGIANCE ABILITIES: LETHISIAN ARMY

This section describes the allegiance abilities available to a Lethisian army, allowing you to field a thematic army of miniatures based on the story described in this book on the battlefields of the Mortal Realms.

LETHISIAN ARMY

When you are choosing your army, you can decide it is a Lethisian army and has the Lethisian army allegiance instead of another allegiance. If you do so, all units in your army gain the **LETHISIAN DEFENDER** keyword. A Lethisian army can only include units that have one or more of the following keywords: **STORMCAST ETERNAL**, **IDONETH DEEPKIN**, **KHARADRON OVERLORDS**, **FYRESLAYERS** or **EXCELSIOR WARPRIEST**. In addition, it cannot include any units with the following keywords: **HAMMERS OF SIGMAR**, **VOSTARG**, **VOLTURNOS**.

BATTLE TRAITS

GUARDIANS OF THE RAVEN CITY

WARRIORS OF THE GRAND NECROPOLIS

Under the command of Lord-Celestant Vanderghule, the defenders of Lethis fight with grim determination.

In the battleshock phase, you can re-roll battleshock tests for friendly **LETHISIAN DEFENDER** units. In addition, add 1 to hit rolls for attacks made with melee weapons by **HUMAN LETHISIAN DEFENDER** and **DUARDIN LETHISIAN DEFENDER** units that target enemy units that made a charge move that turn.

AKHELIAN PHALANX

King Ecraviir Blacktide's elite Akhelian cavalry are veteran warriors, honed at swiftly hunting their quarry.

Add 1 to the Move characteristic of **AKHELIAN LETHISIAN DEFENDER** units. In addition, add 1 to charge rolls for **AKHELIAN LETHISIAN DEFENDER** units.

COMMAND ABILITY

Onyx Shield Wall: *Slamming their black shields into the earth, the Stormcast of the Soulguard are resolute and unshakable.*

You can use this command ability at the start of the enemy combat phase. If you do so, pick a friendly **LETHISIAN DEFENDER LIBERATORS** unit wholly within 12" of a friendly **LETHISIAN DEFENDER STORMCAST ETERNAL HERO**. Until the end of that phase, add 1 to save rolls for attacks that target that **LIBERATORS** unit. However, that **LIBERATORS** unit cannot make pile-in moves that phase.

COMMAND TRAITS

WARDENS OF ONYX GATE

D3 Command Trait

- 1 **Raven Priest:** *A worshipper of Morrda, this general communes with the ancient god for aid in battle.*

This general gains the **PRIEST** keyword. If this general already has the **PRIEST** keyword, it knows two Prayers of Morrda (pg 69) instead of one.

- 2 **Solemn Soul:** *This warrior does not fear death, for as the Lethisians say, no story is complete without an ending.*

Do not take battleshock tests for friendly **LETHISIAN DEFENDER** units while they are wholly within 12" of this general.

- 3 **Sinister Aura:** *Rumours abound that this leader's relationship with death is closer than most.*

Add 1 to this general's Wounds characteristic. In addition, subtract 1 from the Bravery characteristic of enemy units while they are within 6" of this general.

ARTEFACTS OF POWER

RELICS OF THE GRAND NECROPOLIS

D3 Artefact of Power

- 1 **Crown of Raven Feathers:** *This sacred wreath protects the bearer's spirit from Nagash.*

Roll a dice each time you allocate a wound or mortal wound to the bearer. On a 5+ that wound or mortal wound is negated.

- 2 **Silvered Blade:** *This thrice-blessed blade can strike even ghostly apparitions.*

Pick one of the bearer's melee weapons. Add 1 to the Damage characteristic of that weapon. Add 2 instead if all of that weapon's attacks target a **DEATH** unit.

- 3 **Flask of Lethisian Darkwater:** *Consumed in careful quantities, this black liquid soothes the body and soul.*

Once per battle, at the start of the combat phase, the bearer can use this artefact. If they do so, you can heal D6 wounds that have been allocated to the bearer.

PRAYERS

Each **PRIEST** in a Lethisian army knows one prayer from the three Prayers of Morrda. You can either choose or roll for the prayer each **PRIEST** knows. Each Prayer of Morrda can only be chanted once per turn, regardless of how many **PRIESTS** know that prayer.

PRAYERS OF MORRDA

D3 Prayer

- 1 **Morrda's Resurrection:** *This priest breathes life into those recently fallen through power granted by Morrda.*

In your hero phase, 1 friendly model that knows this prayer can chant it. If it does so, make a prayer roll by rolling a dice. On a 1-2, the prayer is not answered. On a 3+, the prayer is answered. If the prayer is answered, pick a friendly **LETHISIAN DEFENDER** unit wholly within 18" of the model chanting this prayer. You may return a number of slain models to that unit that have a combined Wounds characteristic equal to or less than the roll of a D3.

- 2 **Morrda's Eye:** *Above the priest manifests a sinister raven eye that glares at its quarry.*

In your hero phase, 1 friendly model that knows this prayer can chant it. If it does so, make a prayer roll by rolling a dice. On a 1-2, the prayer is not answered. On a 3+, the prayer is answered. If the prayer is answered, pick an enemy unit within 18" of the model chanting this prayer. Subtract 1 from hit rolls for attacks made by that unit until the start of your next hero phase.

- 3 **Morrda's Embrace:** *Words of power are spoken in a long-dead tongue, warding those who can hear them from harm.*

In your hero phase, 1 friendly model that knows this prayer can chant it. If it does so, make a prayer roll by rolling a dice. On a 1-2, the prayer is not answered. On a 3+, the prayer is answered. If the prayer is answered, you can re-roll save rolls of 1 for attacks that target friendly units wholly within 12" of the model chanting this prayer until the start of your next hero phase.

ALLEGIANCE ABILITIES: LEGION OF GRIEF

This section describes the allegiance abilities available to a Legion of Grief army, allowing you to field a thematic army of miniatures based on the story described in this book on the battlefields of the Mortal Realms.

LEGION OF GRIEF ARMY

When you are choosing your army, you can decide it is a Legion of Grief army and has the Legion of Grief allegiance instead of another allegiance. If you do so, all units in your army gain the **LEGION OF GRIEF** keyword. A Legion of Grief army can only include units that have one or more of the following keywords: **DEADWALKERS**, **DEATHLORDS**, **DEATHMAGES**, **DEATHRATTLE** or **NIGHTHAUNT**. If it includes any **MORTARCHS**, then it must also include **LADY OLYNDER** and she must be your general.

BATTLE TRAITS

THE INFERNAL HOST

THE UNQUIET DEAD

The dead stir in every corner of the realms, rising up from unhallowed grave-pits and corpse-strewn battlefields to prey upon the living.

After territories have been determined, but before any units have been set up, you can pick up to 2 points in your territory and up to 2 points anywhere on the battlefield to be gravesites. You may wish to place suitable markers on these points. Then, instead of setting up a **SUMMONABLE** unit from your army on the battlefield, you can place it to one side and say that it is set up in the grave. You can do this with as many of your **SUMMONABLE** units as you wish. At the end of your movement phase, for each friendly **DEATH HERO** within 9" of a gravesite, you can pick a single friendly unit in the grave and set it up wholly within 9" of the gravesite and more than 9" from any enemy models. Any model that is unable to be set up in this way is slain. If a unit is still in the grave at the end of the battle, it is considered to be slain.

INVIGORATING AURA

The power of death magic swells, empowering the restless dead and drawing more forth from their graves.

At the start of your hero phase, pick a friendly **SUMMONABLE** unit within 9" of a gravesite (see 'The Unquiet Dead'). You can either heal D3 wounds that have been allocated to models in that unit or, if no wounds are currently allocated to any models in the unit, you can return a number of slain models to the unit that have a combined Wounds characteristic equal to or less than the roll of a D3.

DEATHLESS MINIONS

The powerful death magic that binds the undead grows stronger when these minions are in close proximity to their masters.

Roll a dice each time you allocate a wound or mortal wound to a friendly **LEGION OF GRIEF** unit within 6" of your general or another friendly **LEGION OF GRIEF HERO**. On a 6+ the wound or mortal wound is negated.

AURA OF GRIEF

To face the Legion of Grief in battle is to be overcome by waves of crushing sorrow.

Subtract 1 from the Bravery characteristic of enemy units while they are within 6" of any friendly **LEGION OF GRIEF** units.

COMMAND ABILITY

Endless Legions: *The souls of the deceased are innumerable, a bottomless well of sorrow and bitter hatred from which the lords of death magic can fashion their conquering armies.*

You can use this command ability at the end of your movement phase. If you do so, pick a gravesite (see 'The Unquiet Dead') that is within 9" of your general, and then pick a friendly **SUMMONABLE** unit that has been destroyed. Set up that unit wholly within 9" of that gravesite and more than 9" from any enemy units.

COMMAND TRAITS

ASPECTS OF GRIEF

D3 Command Trait

- 1 **Amethyst Glow:** *Shyishan magic suffuses this general.*

This general is a **WIZARD**. They can attempt to cast one spell in your hero phase, and attempt to unbind one spell in the enemy hero phase. They know the Arcane Bolt and Mystic Shield spells. If this general is already a

WIZARD, they know one extra spell from the Lore of Sorrows.

- 2 **Vassal of the Craven King:** *The general is one of Kurdoss Valentian's trusted lords.*

If this general is on the battlefield, each time you spend a command point, roll

a dice. On a 5+, you receive 1 extra command point.

- 3 **Tragic Emanations:** *This leader radiates an aura of crippling sorrow.*

Subtract 2 from the Bravery characteristic of enemy units while they are within 12" of this general.

ARTEFACTS OF POWER

RELICS OF ANGUISH

D3 Artefact of Power

- 1 **Grave-sand Gem:** *This gem has the power to unmake flesh or stitch it together.*

In your hero phase, you can either inflict 1 mortal wound on 1 enemy **HERO** within 6" of the bearer, or you can heal 1 wound that has been allocated to the bearer.

- 2 **Gothizzari Mortuary Candle:** *This cursed candle of Gothizzar radiates sickening corpse-light.*

Subtract 1 from hit rolls for attacks made with missile weapons that target the bearer.

- 3 **Souldrain Pendant:** *This pendant hungers for the animus of living beings.*

At the end of the combat phase, roll a dice for each enemy unit within 3" of the bearer. On a 4+ that unit suffers 1 mortal wound.

SPELL LORES

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

LORE OF SORROWS

D3 Spell

- 1 **Dread Withering:** *Black roses bloom before instantly withering away.*

Dread Withering has a casting value of 5. If successfully cast, pick 1 enemy unit within 18" of the caster that is visible to them. Subtract 1 from save rolls for attacks that target that unit until the start of your next hero phase.

- 2 **Wail of Doom:** *A piercing shriek borne on Shyishan winds races across the battlefield.*

Wail of Doom has a casting value of 8. If successfully cast, roll a dice for each enemy unit within 6" of the caster. On a 4+ that unit suffers D3 mortal wounds.

- 3 **Shroud of Terror:** *A wave of palpable fear floods those nearby.*

Shroud of Terror has a casting value of 8. If successfully cast, pick 1 enemy unit within 12" of the caster that is visible to them. Subtract D3 from the Bravery characteristic of that unit until your next hero phase.

MERCENARIES

This section describes rules for including mercenaries in any army, and includes two mercenary companies that can be employed by your army – the Greyfyrd Lodge and the Tenebrous Court.

MERCENARY COMPANIES

To include mercenary units in your army, you must first pick a mercenary company to be hired by your army. A maximum of one mercenary company can be hired by an army.

If a mercenary company is hired by your army, one out of every four units you include in your army can either be an ally or a mercenary unit from that company. All mercenary units gain the **MERCENARY** keyword. **MERCENARY** units are treated as part of your army, except that they are not included when working out your army's allegiance, and can therefore be part of a different Grand Alliance or faction from the rest of your army. In addition, a **MERCENARY** unit cannot be the army's general, cannot use or benefit from your army's allegiance abilities, and cannot be a named character.

REINFORCEMENTS

If a **MERCENARY** unit uses an ability or spell that adds a unit to your army, the unit that is added to your army gains the **MERCENARY** keyword. They do not count against the limit on the number of **MERCENARY** units you can include in your army.

WARSCROLL BATTALIONS

A warscroll battalion cannot include any **MERCENARY** units unless all of the units in the battalion are from the same mercenary company.

PITCHED BATTLES

In a Pitched Battle, the points you have available to spend on allied units (see the *Warhammer Age of Sigmar Core Book*) can be spent on **MERCENARY** units, although any points spent on **MERCENARY** units are deducted from the total you have available to spend on allied units, and vice versa.

MERCENARY units are not included when working out the number of Battleline units in your army, but they do count towards the maximum number of Leader, Behemoth and Artillery units that can be included in your army.

MERCENARY SPECIAL RULES

If you include any **MERCENARY** units in your army, the following rule applies during the battle:

DISRUPTIVE PRESENCE

If your army includes any **MERCENARY** units, at the start of your hero phase in the first battle round, you do not receive 1 command point.

GREYFYRD LODGE MERCENARIES

The grizzled, pragmatic Greyfyrd duardin will fight for any cause in exchange for a bounty of ur-gold.

MERCENARY COMPANY

If you pick this mercenary company to be hired by your army, you can include **FYRESLAYERS** units in your army as **MERCENARY** units, with the following exception:

- **AURIC RUNEFATHERS** cannot be included as **MERCENARY** units.

FULFIL ONE'S OATHS

Greyfyrd mercenaries fight fiercely for whoever pays them the most. However, these distrustful warriors are known to keep a keen eye on their employer to ensure their promise of ur-gold is kept.

Add 1 to hit rolls for attacks made with melee weapons by **FYRESLAYERS MERCENARY** units that target enemy units that made a charge move in the same turn. However, from the start of the third battle round, subtract 1 from the Bravery characteristic of friendly **FYRESLAYERS MERCENARY** units while they are not wholly within 18" of your general.

TENEBOUS COURT MERCENARIES

Delusional and utterly unpredictable, the Tenebrous Court fight with untamed savagery.

MERCENARY COMPANY

If you pick this mercenary company to be hired by your army, you can include **FLESH-EATER COURTS** units in your army as **MERCENARY** units, with the following exceptions:

- Royal Terrorgheists cannot be included as **MERCENARY** units.
- Royal Zombie Dragons cannot be included as **MERCENARY** units.

FRIGHTFUL ALLIES

The mordants of the Tenebrous Court have allied with mortal-kind before, but their madness and hunger for flesh can never truly be tamed.

Add 1 to hit rolls for attacks made by **FLESH-EATER COURTS MERCENARY** units that made a charge move in the same turn. However, **FLESH-EATER COURTS MERCENARY** units cannot make retreat moves.

PENUMBRAL ENGINE

An army of any allegiance can include 1 **PENUMBRAL ENGINE** terrain feature.

After territories have been chosen but before armies are set up, you can set up the **PENUMBRAL ENGINE** wholly within your territory, more than 12" from enemy territory and more than 1" from any other terrain features. If both players can set up a terrain feature before armies are set up, they must roll off, and the winner can choose the order in which the terrain features are set up.

PITCHED BATTLES

In a Pitched Battle, the points you have available to spend on allied units (see the *Warhammer Age of Sigmar Core Book*) can be spent on a **PENUMBRAL ENGINE**, although any points spent on a **PENUMBRAL ENGINE** are deducted from the total you have available to spend on allied units, and vice versa.



STORMVAULT CAMPAIGN

Across the realms, Stormvaults hidden since the Age of Myth have been laid bare once more in the wake of the necroquake. Many of these are Stormvault Sacristies that house a few artefacts or malign spirits, but amongst these stand the Grand Stormvaults, which contain entities of terrible power and ancient relics of untold value.

INTRODUCTION

From the Cloister of Ashes in Aqshy to the Midnight Tomb of Stygxx, mighty armies close upon Sigmar's Stormvaults in a bid to seize control of them and the wealth of treasures hidden within. This section contains rules for organising and playing a thrilling Stormvault campaign. Taking you beyond fighting one-off battles, this campaign links your games together into an ongoing narrative where to triumph you must play many battles against your rivals as you vie for control of the Stormvaults hidden across the realms.

ORGANISING A CAMPAIGN

To begin, you must gather all the players interested in taking part in the campaign. A Stormvault campaign can be played with any number of players.

Once you have mustered the players for your campaign, agree on a regular schedule for your games. On average, a Stormvault campaign will last around ten battles for each player before one is declared the overall winner. We have found that committing to one battle per week allows for the campaign to conclude in a timely manner, but is also flexible enough for the busiest of players to take part.

THE STORMVAULTS

During the campaign, players will first battle for control of lesser Stormvaults, known as Stormvault Sacristies, until they have gathered enough power to march upon the Grand Stormvault and claim their ultimate prize.

Before the campaign begins, you can decide among your group where in the Mortal Realms these Stormvaults are located. They can all be hidden in a single realm, or spread across

multiple realms, your armies travelling through Realmgates to reach them. If you wish, you can use Realm of Battle rules from this and other Warhammer Age of Sigmar books to represent the environments in which the Stormvaults are located to add a further dimension to your games. You can base your Stormvaults on those described in this book, or you can create your own. The maps presented in this and other Warhammer Age of Sigmar books are ideal places to start when deciding on the setting for your campaign.

MUSTERING YOUR ARMY

At the start of a Stormvault campaign, each player chooses an army allegiance and a **HERO** that will be their general for the duration of the campaign. Players note down their army allegiance and which **HERO** will be their general on the campaign roster (pg 89). Players must use this army allegiance and general in each battle played during the campaign but are otherwise free to change the composition of their army between battles.

If your general is slain during a battle, it is assumed that they survive their injuries and live to fight in the next battle.

AWAKENED ARTEFACTS

During your first battle of a Stormvault campaign – whether or not you are victorious – your army discovers a powerful relic in the Stormvault. Known as an 'awakened artefact', it can then be wielded by a **HERO** from your army in the campaign's subsequent battles.

Each of these artefacts is an artefact of power, and its strength will grow the more that **HERO** wields it in battle. See pages 76-77 for more details on how these artefacts work in this campaign.

FIGHTING BATTLES

Players are free to challenge each other to battles as they wish. There are nine battleplans available for this campaign, eight representing the Stormvault Sacristies and the final one representing the Grand Stormvault.

Of the Stormvault Sacristy battleplans, four are Pitched Battle battleplans (pg 78-81) and four are narrative battleplans (pg 82-85). Before each battle, players roll off and the winner chooses to roll on either of the tables opposite to determine which of these battleplans is used. Alternatively, if all players agree on the battleplan they wish to play, they can use that battleplan in their battle instead. Note that Battleplan: Grand Stormvault cannot be played until one player has conquered at least six Stormvault Sacristies.

If the battleplan has different player roles – such as an attacker and defender – the player who has conquered the least Stormvault Sacristies can pick which role they will take. If the amount of Stormvault Sacristies conquered by players is tied, the players roll off, and the winner decides which role they will take.

CONQUERING STORMVAULT SACRISTIES

A player who won a **major victory** or **minor victory** in a battleplan is said to have conquered that Stormvault Sacristy. They then roll on the Stormvault Sacristies table (opposite) to see what reward they receive. When a player receives a reward they mark it off on their campaign roster. The same reward cannot be received twice by the same player in a campaign. If a player rolls a reward they have already received during the campaign, they re-roll until they receive a reward they have not already received.

CONQUERING THE GRAND STORMVAULT

Once a player has conquered six Stormvault Sacristies, they must declare that they will march upon the Grand Stormvault. Once they have done so, no more battles can be fought by any player in the campaign except for Battleplan: Grand Stormvault (pg 86-87). If the campaign has four or fewer players, all players in the campaign participate in this final battle. If the campaign has more than four players, the four players that conquered the most Stormvault Sacristies participate in the battle. If the

players are tied on the number of Stormvault Sacristies they have conquered, the level of their awakened artefact is used for the first tie-breaker and a roll-off for the second tie-breaker.

The winner of Battleplan: Grand Stormvault is declared the overall winner of the campaign as their forces conquer the Grand Stormvault and seize control of the powerful entity within.

PITCHED BATTLE BATTLEPLANS

D6 Battleplan

- 1 The player who has conquered the least Stormvault Sacristies chooses the battleplan.
- 2 Battleplan: Penumbral Domain
- 3 Battleplan: Guardian Spirits
- 4 Battleplan: Sorcerous Streams
- 5 Battleplan: Ebb and Flow
- 6 The player who has conquered the most Stormvault Sacristies chooses the battleplan.

NARRATIVE BATTLEPLANS

D6 Battleplan

- 1 The player who has conquered the least Stormvault Sacristies chooses the battleplan.
- 2 Battleplan: Lying in Wait
- 3 Battleplan: Hold the Chamber
- 4 Battleplan: Unlock the Vault
- 5 Battleplan: The Sunken Temple
- 6 The player who has conquered the most Stormvault Sacristies chooses the battleplan.

STORMVAULT SACRISTIES

D6 Reward

- 1 **Sacristy of Lauchon:** In the next battle, the first time you attempt to cast Summon Lauchon the Soulseeker, that spell is automatically cast (do not roll 2D6) and cannot be unbound. In addition, if you are using Pitched Battle rules in your next battle, 1 Lauchon the Soulseeker endless spell can be included in your army for 0 points for that battle.
- 2 **Sacristy of Bones:** In the next battle, the first time you attempt to cast Summon Soulscream Bridge, that spell is automatically cast (do not roll 2D6) and cannot be unbound. In addition, if you are using Pitched Battle rules in your next battle, 1 Soulscream Bridge endless spell can be included in your army for 0 points for that battle.
- 3 **Sacristy of Ghosts:** In the next battle, the first time you attempt to cast Summon Horrorthast, that spell is automatically cast (do not roll 2D6) and cannot be unbound. In addition, if you are using Pitched Battle rules in your next battle, 1 Horrorthast endless spell can be included in your army for 0 points for that battle.
- 4 **Sacristy of Valagharr:** In the next battle, the first time you attempt to cast Summon Shards of Valagharr, that spell is automatically cast (do not roll 2D6) and cannot be unbound. In addition, if you are using Pitched Battle rules in your next battle, 1 Shards of Valagharr endless spell can be included in your army for 0 points for that battle.
- 5 **Sacristy of Awakening:** Your army's awakened artefact immediately gains a level. Re-roll this result if your army does not yet have an awakened artefact.
- 6 **Sacristy of Dark Blessing:** Add 1 to your general's Wounds characteristic for the rest of the campaign.

AWAKENED ARTEFACTS

These artefacts of power are for use in Stormvault campaigns only. At the start of your second game in a Stormvault campaign, pick one of the awakened artefacts below to be carried by a **HERO** from your army and note it down on your campaign roster (including the **HERO** who will bear it). You receive this awakened artefact in addition to any other artefacts of power your army can have, but otherwise this artefact follows all the normal rules for artefacts of power.

Your awakened artefact must be taken by the same **HERO** in each subsequent battle of the campaign. This means that if it is given to a **HERO** who is not your general, this **HERO** must be included in your army in each subsequent battle of the campaign. Awakened artefacts start at the 1st level of power, and gain levels of power as described below. Levels of power are cumulative and last for the rest of the campaign. They grant abilities as described below.

GHEISTBANE

It is said that this weapon hungers for souls, and that same craving is imparted to its bearer.

Pick one of the bearer's melee weapons to be the Gheistbane. After each battle, Gheistbane gains a level of power if 3 or more enemy models were slain by attacks made by the bearer.

1 1st Level: Improve the Rend characteristic of Gheistbane by 1.

2 2nd Level: Add 1 to Gheistbane's Attacks characteristic.

3 3rd Level: If the unmodified hit roll for an attack made with Gheistbane is a 6, that attack inflicts 1 mortal wound on the target in addition to any normal damage.

4 4th Level: Improve the Rend characteristic of Gheistbane by 3 instead of 1.

5 5th Level: Add 3 to Gheistbane's Attacks characteristic instead of 1.



SHIELD OF THE PALE KNIGHT

Bearing the sanctified remains of a long-dead guardian, this shield renders its wielder all but invincible.

After each battle, the Shield of the Pale Knight gains a level of power if 5 or more successful save rolls were made for attacks that targeted the bearer.

1 1st Level: You can re-roll save rolls of 1 for attacks that target the bearer.

2 2nd Level: Add 1 to the bearer's Wounds characteristic.

3 3rd Level: If an attack that targets the bearer is made with a weapon that has a Damage characteristic of 2 or more, subtract 1 from the Damage

characteristic of that weapon for that attack.

4 4th Level: You can re-roll save rolls of 1 for attacks that target friendly units while they are wholly within 12" of the bearer.

5 5th Level: Each time the save roll for an attack that targets the bearer is an unmodified 6, you can heal 1 wound allocated to the bearer.

AETHERBEAST PINION

Taken from a legendary avian godbeast, this feather imbues the bearer with formidable speed.

After each battle, the Aetherbeast Pinion gains a level of power if 3 or more charge moves and/or run moves were made by the bearer.

1 1st Level: The bearer can run and still charge later in the same turn.

2 2nd Level: Add 3" to the bearer's Move characteristic.

3 3rd Level: Add 1 to charge rolls for friendly units wholly within 12" of the bearer at the start of your charge phase.

4 4th Level: The bearer can retreat and still charge later in the same turn.

5 5th Level: Add 6" to the bearer's Move characteristic instead of 3". In addition, the bearer can fly.

HEXFLAME PENDANT

This baleful artefact is suffused with vile curses that can be inflicted upon the wielder's foes.

After each battle, the Hexflame Pendant gains a level of power if 3 or more hexes were placed on enemy units by the bearer.

1 1st Level: In your hero phase, the bearer can attempt to place a hex on 1 enemy unit within 18". To do so, roll a dice. On a 4+ the hex is successfully placed. Subtract 1 from hit and wound rolls for attacks made by a unit that has any hexes placed upon it.

A unit with a hex placed upon it can attempt to lift the hex in their hero phase. To do so, roll a dice. Add 1 to the roll for each friendly **PRIEST** within 12" of that unit. On a 6+ the hex is lifted and its effects no longer apply.

2 2nd Level: The range at which the bearer can attempt to place a hex is 24" instead of 18".

3 3rd Level: Halve the Move characteristic of enemy units with any hexes placed upon them.

4 4th Level: The dice roll to determine if a hex is successfully placed upon an enemy unit is 3+ instead of 4+.

5 5th Level: At the start of your hero phase, enemy units with any hexes placed upon them suffer D3 mortal wounds.



REALMSTONE WAND

This ornate wand is crafted from purest realmstone.

After each battle, the Realmstone Wand gains a level of power if 5 or more spells were successfully cast by the bearer and not unbound.

1 1st Level: The bearer can attempt to cast 1 spell in your hero phase as if they were a **WIZARD**. If the bearer is already a **WIZARD**, they can attempt to cast 1 extra spell in your hero phase.

2 2nd Level: Add 2 to casting rolls for the bearer.

3 3rd Level: Each time this model is affected by a spell or endless spell, you can roll a dice. If you do so, on a 2+ ignore the effects of that spell on this model. In addition, if this model is affected by a spell (but not an endless spell), and the roll to ignore the effect of the spell was 4+, the caster suffers D3 mortal wounds after the effects of the spell have been resolved.

4 4th Level: You can re-roll casting rolls for friendly **WIZARD** units wholly within 12" of the bearer.

5 5th Level: This bearer knows all the spells known by **WIZARDS** on the battlefield.



THE LIFESTEALER

Fashioned from the fang of some ancient vampiric horror, this weapon transfers the life essence of its victims to the wielder.

Pick one of the bearer's melee weapons to be the Lifestealer. After each battle, the Lifestealer gains a level of power if you healed 5 or more wounds that had been allocated to the bearer.

1 1st Level: If the wound roll for an attack made with the Lifestealer is an unmodified 6, you can heal 1 wound that has been allocated to the bearer.

2 2nd Level: Each time an enemy **HERO** is slain by an attack made by with the Lifestealer, add 1 to the Lifestealer's Attacks characteristic until the end of the battle.

3 3rd Level: The bearer fights at the start of the combat phase, before the players pick any other units to fight in that combat phase.

4 4th Level: In your hero phase, you can pick 1 friendly unit wholly within 6" of the bearer to be sacrificed. If you

do so, that unit suffers D3 mortal wounds, but you can add 1 to the Damage characteristic of the Lifestealer until the end of the battle.

5 5th Level: Subtract 1 from wound rolls for attacks made by enemy units while they are within 12" of the bearer.



BATTLEPLAN PENUMBRAL DOMAIN

Two forces close in on an ancient Penumbral Engine. As its power wildly oscillates, each force finds that different points of the battlefield become strategically vital if they are to secure victory and harness the device for their own ends.

PITCHED BATTLE

Use the Pitched Battle rules in the *Warhammer Age of Sigmar Core Book*.

THE BATTLEFIELD

In the centre of the battlefield, place a Penumbral Engine terrain feature. This Penumbral Engine is referred to as the Stormvault Penumbral Engine.

SET-UP

The players roll off, and the winner decides which territory each side will use. The territories are shown on the map below. The players then alternate setting up units one at a time, starting with the player that won the roll-off. Units must be set up wholly within their own territory, more than 12" from enemy territory. Continue to set up units until both players have set up their armies. If one player finishes first, the opposing

player sets up the rest of the units in their army, one after another.

OBJECTIVES

This battle is fought to control four objectives. Two objectives are located on the horizontal centre line and two objectives are located on the vertical centre line, each 12" away from the centre of the battlefield, as shown on the map.

GLORIOUS VICTORY

The player with the most victory points at the end of the fifth battle round (or when the amount of time allocated for the battle runs out) wins a **major victory**. If the players are tied on victory points at the end of the game, then each player adds up the points value of any enemy units that have been destroyed during the battle (excluding any new units that were added to the armies after the battle started). If one player has a higher total, they win a **minor victory**.

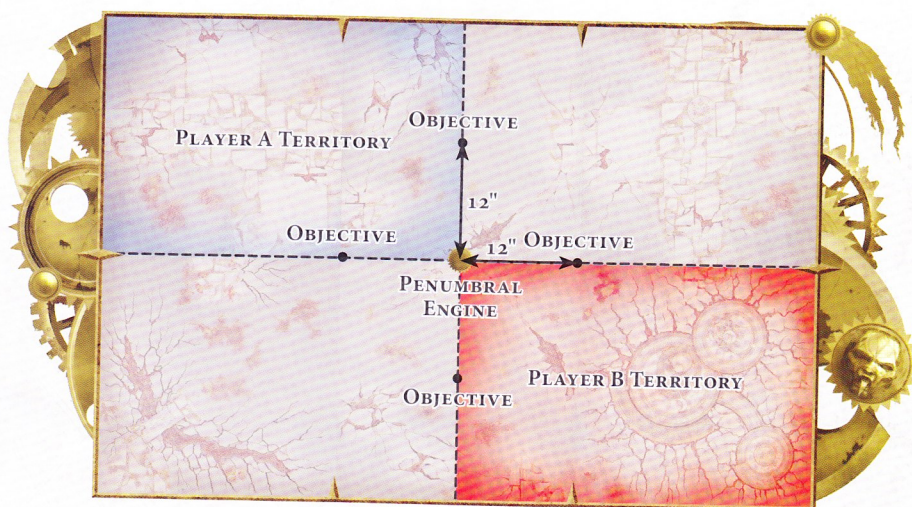
VICTORY POINTS

During the battle, the Stormvault Penumbral Engine is not affected by the 'Repercussions of the Necroquake' and 'Deteriorating

State' scenery rules on its warscroll. Instead at the start of each battle round, roll a dice. On a 1-3 the Stormvault Penumbral Engine gains the Orrery of Obfuscation function for that battle round; on a 4-6 it instead gains the Orrery of Illumination function for that battle round.

While the Stormvault Penumbral Engine has the Orrery of Obfuscation function, each player scores 2 victory points at the end of each of their turns for each objective on the horizontal centre line they control and 1 victory point for each objective on the vertical centre line they control.

While the Stormvault Penumbral Engine has the Orrery of Illumination function, each player scores 2 victory points at the end of each of their turns for each objective on the vertical centre line they control and 1 victory point for each objective on the horizontal centre line they control.



BATTLEPLAN GUARDIAN SPIRITS

Two rival forces seek to exert control over the spirits that haunt the ruins of this Stormvault Sacristy, for it is said that only they know the whereabouts of a fabled Grand Stormvault.

PITCHED BATTLE

Use the Pitched Battle rules in the *Warhammer Age of Sigmar Core Book*.

THE BATTLEFIELD

After terrain has been set up, but before territories have been decided, the players roll off and, starting with the winner, take it in turns to place a single Timeworn Ruin model anywhere on the battlefield wholly within 9" of the horizontal centre line and more than 6" from another Timeworn Ruin model. Continue until 10 Timeworn Ruin models have been placed. No other Timeworn Ruin terrain features can be placed on the battlefield. Each of these Timeworn Ruin models is treated as a separate terrain feature but otherwise all the rules on the Timeworn Ruin warscroll apply.

Designer's Note: *If neither player has access to a set of Timeworn Ruins, players should feel free to*

substitute them for any set of small terrain pieces they have in their collection. Ruined walls and toppled pillars work especially well!

SET-UP

The players roll off, and the winner decides which territory each side will use. The territories are shown on the map below. The players then alternate setting up units one at a time, starting with the player that won the roll-off. Units must be set up wholly within their own territory, more than 12" from enemy territory. Continue to set up units until both players have set up their armies. If one player finishes first, the opposing player sets up the rest of the units in their army, one after another.

GUARDIAN SPIRITS

Each general seeks to find and control the guardian spirits that haunt these ruins.

At the end of each of your movement phases, you can roll a dice for each Timeworn Ruin model that is within 3" of any friendly **HEROES**. Add 1 to the roll for each friendly **PRIEST** within 3" of that Timeworn Ruin model and each friendly **HERO** with an artefact of power within 3" of

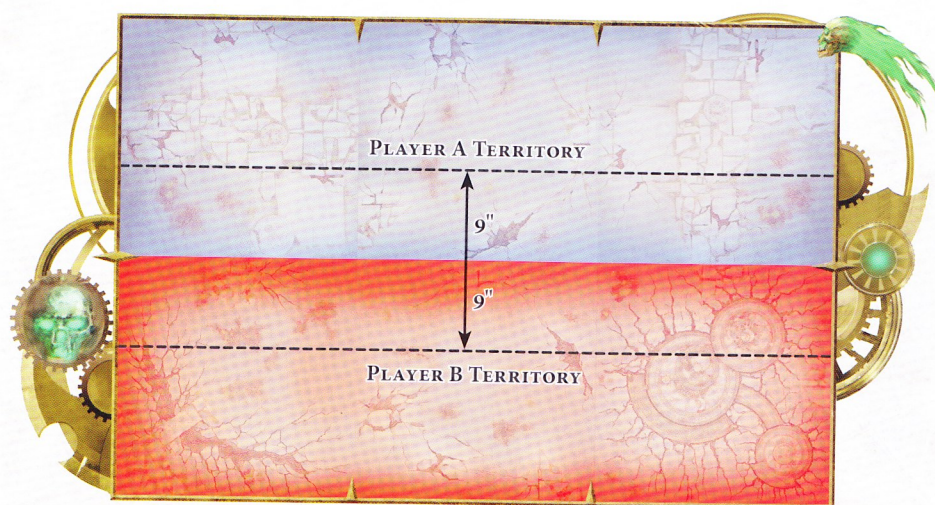
that Timeworn Ruin model. On a 6, a guardian spirit has been found inhabiting that Timeworn Ruin. Once a guardian spirit has been found, that Timeworn Ruin is treated as an objective for the rest of the battle.

GLORIOUS VICTORY

The player with the most victory points at the end of the fifth battle round (or when the amount of time allocated for the battle runs out) wins a **major victory**. If the players are tied on victory points at the end of the game, then each player adds up the points value of any enemy units that have been destroyed during the battle (excluding any new units that were added to the armies after the battle started). If one player has a higher total, they win a **minor victory**.

VICTORY POINTS

At the end of each of your turns you score a number of victory points equal to the number of the current battle round for each objective you control. For example, if you control 1 objective at the end of your turn in the third battle round, you score 3 victory points.



BATTLEPLAN

SORCEROUS STREAMS

The magical wards surrounding a Stormvault hidden deep below the battlefield have collapsed, and now the powerful magic trapped within seeks to escape back into the realms. Two rival forces battle on the surface above, desperate to capture the source of each sorcerous stream before it dissipates.

PITCHED BATTLE

Use the Pitched Battle rules in the *Warhammer Age of Sigmar Core Book*.

SET-UP

The players roll off, and the winner decides which territory each side will use. The territories are shown on the map below. The players then alternate setting up units one at a time, starting with the player that won the roll-off. Units must be set up wholly within their own territory, more than 12" from enemy territory. Continue to set up units until both players have set up their armies. If one player finishes first, the opposing player sets up the rest of the units in their army, one after another.

OBJECTIVES

This battle is fought to control six objectives. Three objectives are located in each player's territory, as shown on the map.

At the start of each battle round after the first, the player taking the second turn in that battle round can pick 1 objective on the battlefield and remove it from play.

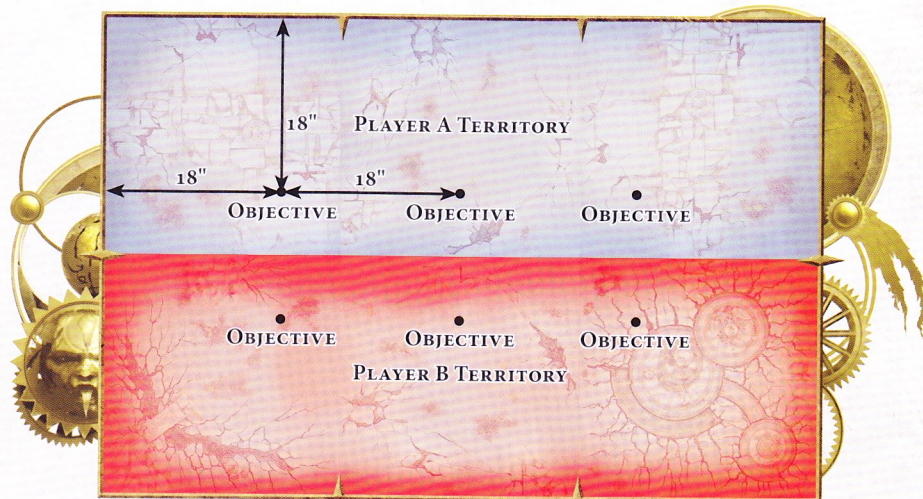


GLORIOUS VICTORY

The player with the most victory points at the end of the fifth battle round (or when the amount of time allocated for the battle runs out) wins a **major victory**. If the players are tied on victory points at the end of the game, then each player adds up the points value of any enemy units that have been destroyed during the battle (excluding any new units that were added to the armies after the battle started). If one player has a higher total, they win a **minor victory**.

VICTORY POINTS

Each player scores 1 victory point at the end of each of their turns for each objective they control.



BATTLEPLAN

EBB AND FLOW

Two armies clash in battle at the entrance to a coveted Stormvault. As the fighting rages on, each force identifies weaknesses in their enemy's line that they must exploit in order to gain the decisive advantage and seize control of the prizes hidden within.

PITCHED BATTLE

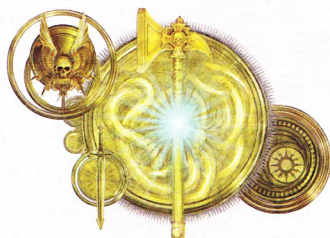
Use the Pitched Battle rules in the *Warhammer Age of Sigmar Core Book*.

SET-UP

The players roll off, and the winner decides which territory each side will use. The territories are shown on the map below. The players then alternate setting up units one at a time, starting with the player that won the roll-off. Units must be set up wholly within their own territory, more than 9" from enemy territory. Continue to set up units until both players have set up their armies. If one player finishes first, the opposing player sets up the rest of the units in their army, one after another.

OBJECTIVES

This battle is fought to control six objectives. Three objectives are located in each player's territory, as shown on the map.



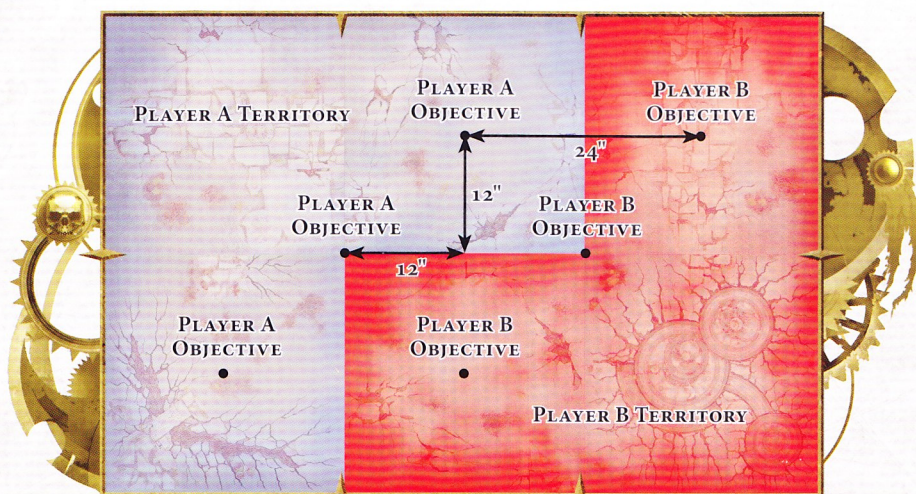
GLORIOUS VICTORY

The player with the most victory points at the end of the fifth battle round (or when the amount of time allocated for the battle runs out) wins a **major victory**. If the players are tied on victory points at the end of the game, then each player adds up the points value of any enemy units that have been destroyed during the battle (excluding any new units that were added to the armies after the battle started). If one player has a higher total, they win a **minor victory**.

VICTORY POINTS

The map below shows which objectives belong to which player. At the start of each player's turn, the opposing player picks one of their own objectives to be the primary objective for that turn. For example, if it is Player A's turn, Player B picks one of the Player B objectives labelled on the map to be the primary objective that turn.

Each player scores 1 victory point at the end of each of their turns for each objective they control. If a player controls the primary objective, they score 5 victory points instead of 1 for that objective.



BATTLEPLAN LYING IN WAIT

One army is marching upon the location of a rumoured Stormvault Sacristy through contested territory. Unbeknownst to them, their enemies are lying in wait for an opportune moment to strike. As the trumpets blare and warning cries ring out, it is already too late – the trap is sprung and a deadly battle for survival ensues.

THE ARMIES

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

THE BATTLEFIELD

The attacker sets up the scenery for the battlefield, not placing any terrain pieces within the defender's territory or the area marked 'Marching Route' on the map.

SET-UP

The armies can now be set up. The defender must set up their units first, wholly within their territory. Instead of setting up a unit on the battlefield, the defender can place it to one side and say that it is set up in the rearguard as a reserve unit.

The defender can set up one reserve unit in the rearguard for each unit they set up on the battlefield. The attacker's units can be set up anywhere on the battlefield, more than 18" away from any enemy units.



defender's movement phase. The unit must be set up wholly within 6" of the defender's table edge, and more than 9" from any enemy units. Any reserve units in the rearguard that are not set up on the battlefield before the start of the fourth battle round are slain.

ESCAPE

The defenders are able to escape to the safety of the Stormvault.

At the start of the defender's hero phase, any of their units that are wholly within 5" of the table edge labelled 'Escape Route', and more than 3" from any enemy units, can leave the battle. Remove the models in those units from play but do not count them as being slain.

GLORIOUS VICTORY

The game ends at the end of the fifth battle round. Count the number of the defender's models that have moved off the board edge labelled 'Escape Route'. If a third or more of the defender's models did so, the defender wins a **minor victory**. If half or more of the defender's models did so, the defender instead wins a **major victory**. Any other result is a **major victory** to the attacker.

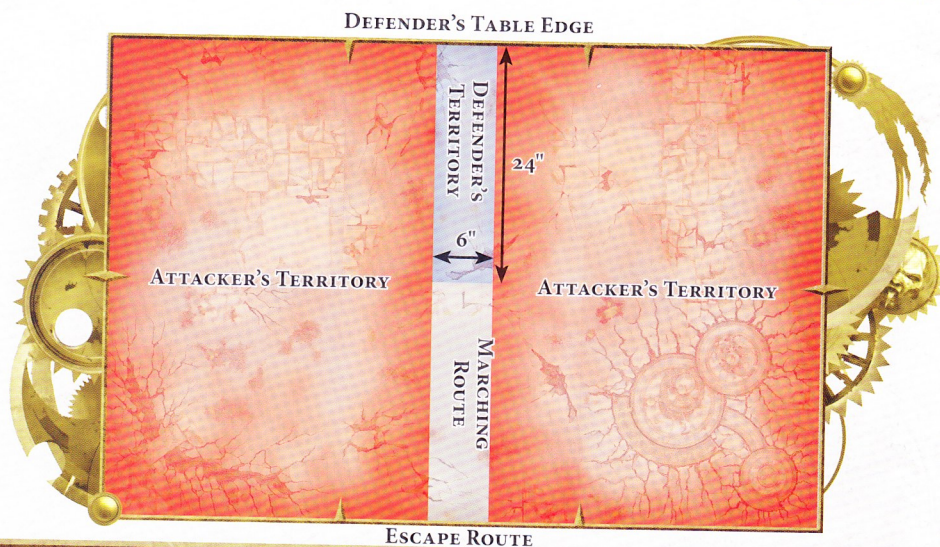
FIRST TURN

The attacker has the first turn in the first battle round.

REARGUARD

A contingent of warriors holds the enemy at bay, buying precious time.

Units set up in the rearguard can enter the battlefield at the end of the



BATTLEPLAN

HOLD THE CHAMBER

A Stormvault Sacristy held by a small contingent of warriors has come under attack. The threatening force greatly outnumbers the meagre defenders who must hold out until reinforcements arrive.

SIEGE WARFARE

Use the Siege Warfare rules in the *Warhammer Age of Sigmar Core Book*.

THE ARMIES

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

THE BATTLEFIELD

The players set up scenery as described in the Siege Warfare rules in the *Warhammer Age of Sigmar Core Book*.

SET-UP

The defender must set up their army first, wholly within their territory. Instead of setting up a unit on the battlefield, the defender can place it to one side and say that it is set up in the relief force as a reserve unit.

The defender must set up one reserve unit in the relief force for each unit they set up on the battlefield. The attacking army sets up second. Attacking units must be set up wholly within their territory, more than 9" from the defender's territory.

FIRST TURN

The attacker has the first turn in the first battle round.



THE RELIEF FORCE

The sounds of horns and eager battle-cries herald the arrival of vital reinforcements.

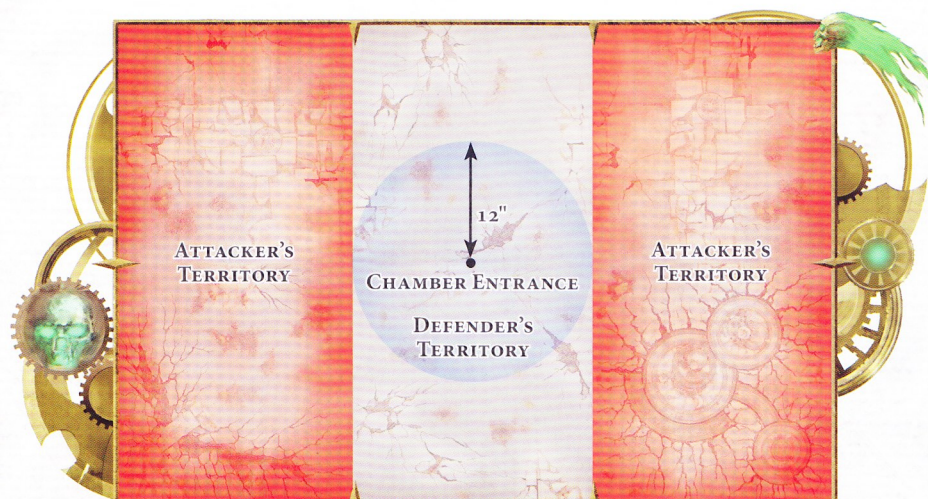
Roll 2D6 at the start of each of the defender's turns to see if the relief force arrives. Add the battle round number to the roll. On a result of 11 or more the entire relief force arrives. Units from the relief force can enter the battlefield at the end of the movement phase of that turn. The unit must be set up wholly within 6" of a table edge and more than 9" from any enemy units. In addition, each unit set up after the first must be within 3" of another unit from the relief force.

OBJECTIVES

There is a single objective in the centre of the battlefield that represents the entrance to a chamber within the Stormvault. When determining control of the objective, each **PRIEST** within 3" of the objective and each **HERO** with an artefact of power within 3" of the objective counts as 10 models instead of 1.

GLORIOUS VICTORY

The game ends at the end of the fifth battle round. The player that controls the objective wins a **major victory**. If neither player controls the objective, the attacker wins a **minor victory**.



BATTLEPLAN

UNLOCK THE VAULT

Access to this Stormvault Sacristy is restricted by the wards on its Penumbral Engine. To open its chambers, one must first still the spinning cogs and wheels of the arcane device. However, this process is not swift, and an opposing army has already arrived to lay claim to the vault. The defenders must hold off this new threat long enough for the ritual to be completed and the chamber opened.

THE ARMIES

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

THE BATTLEFIELD

In the defender's territory, place a Penumbral Engine terrain feature. This Penumbral Engine is referred to as the Stormvault Penumbral Engine.

SET-UP

The defending army sets up first, and the attacking army sets up second. Defending units can be set up anywhere wholly within their territory. Attacking units are then

set up anywhere wholly within their territory.

THE PENUMBRAL ENGINE

This arcane device has remained intact, its power unbroken.

During the battle, the Stormvault Penumbral Engine is not affected by the 'Repercussions of the Necroquake' and 'Deteriorating State' scenery rules on its warscroll. Instead it gains the Orrery of Obfuscation function for the duration of the battle.



THE FIRST TURN

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

NODES OF POWER

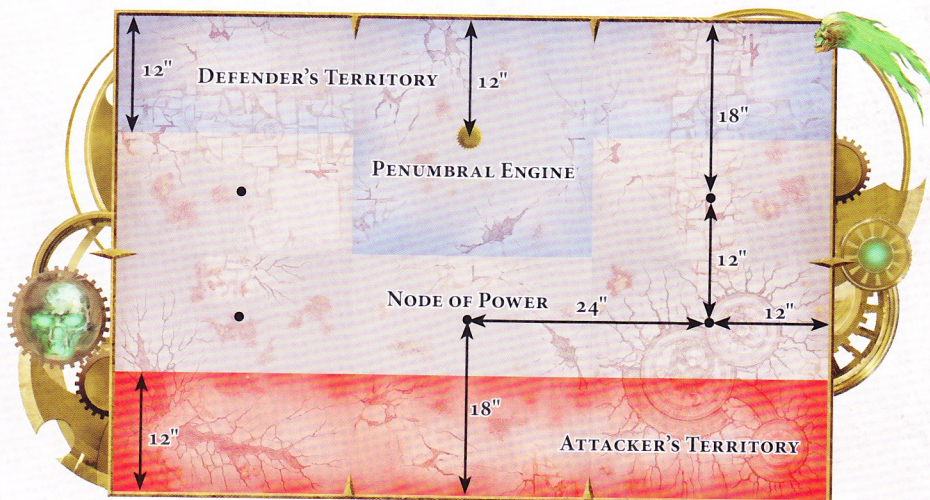
Rune-markings and strange symbols thrum with arcane energy.

There are 5 nodes of power on the battlefield. Each of these nodes of power is treated as an objective. When determining control of a node of power, units that are **HERO WIZARDS** count as 10 models instead of 1.

GLORIOUS VICTORY

At the end of each battle round, the defender rolls a dice and keeps a running record of the total score. Add 1 to the roll for each node of power the defender controls and add 1 to the roll for each defending **WIZARD** that is within 6" of the Stormvault Penumbral Engine. In addition, subtract 1 from the roll for each node of power the attacker controls and subtract 1 for each attacking **WIZARD** that is within 3" of a node of power that the attacker controls.

If the total score equals or exceeds 20, before or by the end of the fifth battle round, the game ends and the defender wins a **major victory**. Otherwise, if at the end of the fifth battle round the score is less than 20, the attacker wins a **major victory**.



BATTLEPLAN

THE SUNKEN TEMPLE

Hidden within flooded marshlands, this ancient Stormvault Sacristy is contested by two rival forces. The defenders have arrived first and claimed the higher ground, but the encircling attackers threaten to overwhelm them if they cannot hold their position.

THE ARMIES

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

THE BATTLEFIELD

The battlefield represents a Stormvault surrounded by swamplands. This battleplan works especially well if the battlefield contains a lot of **STORMVAULT** terrain features.

SET-UP

The defending army sets up first, and the attacking army sets up second. Defending units can be set up anywhere wholly within their territory. Attacking units are then set up anywhere wholly within their territory. Instead of setting up a unit on the battlefield, the attacker can

place it to one side and say that it is set up in the outflanking force as a reserve unit. The attacker can set up one reserve unit in the outflanking force for each unit they set up on the battlefield.



THE FIRST TURN

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

SWAMPLAND

The marshland here is treacherous, grasping and trapping those who attempt to wade across it.

At the start of each player's movement phase, halve the Move characteristic of units in that player's army that cannot fly and are not wholly within or on a terrain feature until the end of that turn.

THE OUTFLANKING FORCE

Charging warriors appear from the mists, surrounding their foes.

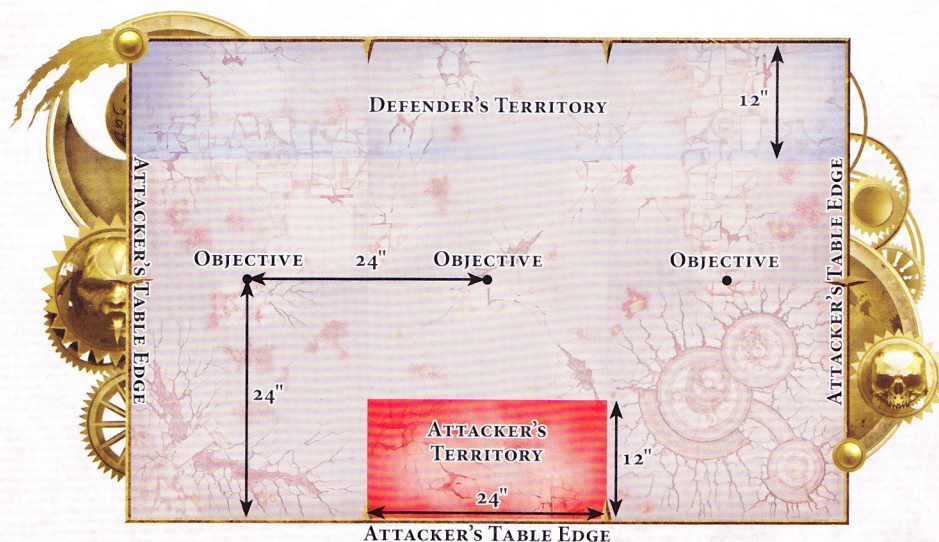
Units from the outflanking force can enter the battlefield at the end of the attacker's movement phase. The unit must be set up wholly within 6" of an attacker's table edge and more than 9" from any enemy units. Any reserve units in the outflanking force that are not set up on the battlefield before the start of the fourth battle round are slain.

OBJECTIVES

There are three objectives in the centre of the battlefield that represent important areas of the Stormvault. When determining control of the objective, units that cannot fly count as 2 models instead of 1.

GLORIOUS VICTORY

The game ends at the end of the fifth battle round. The player that controls the most objectives wins a **major victory**. If neither player controls more objectives than the other, the attacker wins a **minor victory**.



BATTLEPLAN GRAND STORMVAULT

Before your general stands the Grand Stormvault. Within it lies the terrible entity they have been tasked to capture. Bitterly fought victory after bitterly fought victory have led them to this place, but there is no respite – even now, rival forces march upon the Stormvault, and the sky above swirls with a vortex of arcane energy.

TRIUMPH AND TREACHERY!

This is a Triumph & Treachery battle for up to four players. Use the Triumph & Treachery rules from the *Warhammer Age of Sigmar Core Book*. Secret Objectives are not used in this battle.

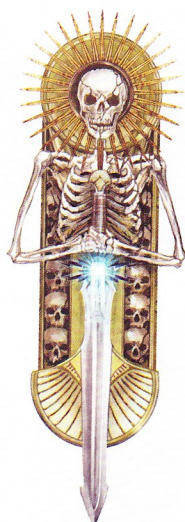
Each player can use the following command ability.

COMMAND ABILITY

Vanquish All Rivals: *A roar resounds across the battlefield as an enemy general is torn down and butchered. Your leader barks a challenge, declaring that any who deny their claim upon the Grand Stormvault will meet the same grisly fate.*

You can use this command ability in the combat phase if any attacks made

by your general resulted in an enemy general being slain that phase. If you do so, add 1 to hit rolls for attacks made by friendly units for the rest of the battle.



Engines are referred to as the Stormvault Penumbral Engines.

SET-UP

Players take it in turns to pick their territories, starting with the player who has conquered the most Stormvault Sacristies in this campaign (rolling off in the case of a tie). Then, in reverse order, players set up their armies in turn, wholly within their own territory.

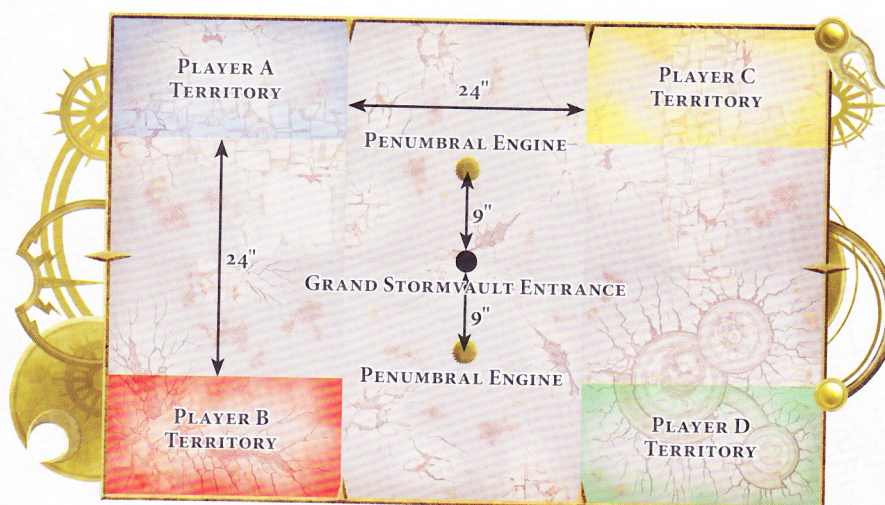
MALIGN SORCERIES

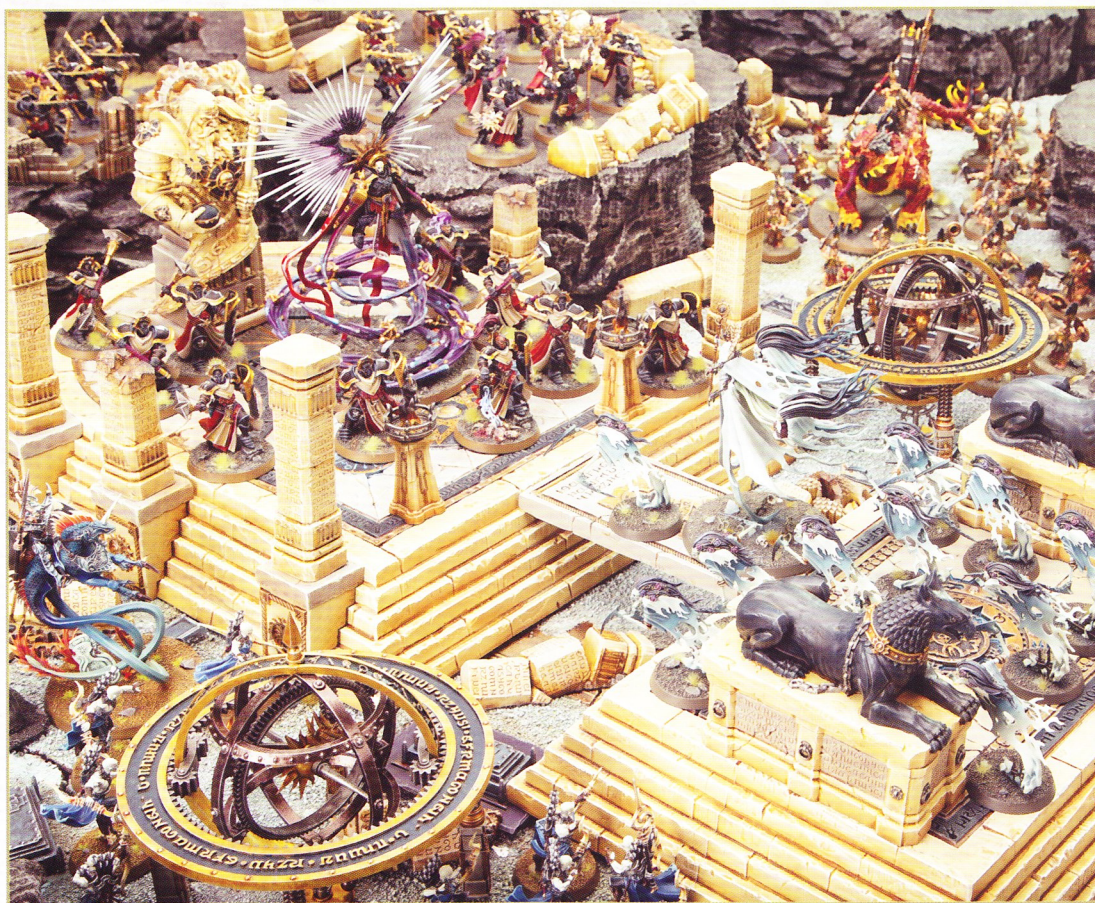
Free from the bindings that have held them for centuries, powerful eldritch entities prey on the unwary.

Once all armies have been set up, each player can set up 1 Predatory **ENDLESS SPELL** within 3" of the Grand Stormvault entrance, starting with the player who has conquered the least Stormvault Sacristies in this campaign (rolling off in the case of a tie). These endless spells do not move until the start of the first battle round. These endless spells are not taken as part of your army (and if you are using Pitched Battle rules, they do not cost any points). During the battle, **WIZARDS** cannot attempt to dispel these endless spells.

THE BATTLEFIELD

Place a terrain feature in the centre of the battlefield to mark the Grand Stormvault entrance. Place 1 or 2 Penumbral Engines on the vertical centre line, 9" away from the centre of the battlefield. These Penumbral





SHATTERING THE PENUMBRAL ENGINES

The powerful magic of the Penumbral Engines must be shattered before your forces can venture into the Grand Stormvault.

At the start of their hero phase, each player can make 1 attempt to shatter a Stormvault Penumbral Engine if they have any friendly **HEROES** within 3" of it. To do so, pick a friendly **HERO** within 3" of that Stormvault Penumbral Engine and roll a dice. Add 1 to the result if the **HERO** bears an awakened artefact. On a 4+ the Stormvault Penumbral Engine is shattered – the scenery rules on its warscroll do not apply for the rest of the battle. In addition, when a player shatters a Stormvault Penumbral Engine, they can immediately remove any 2 **ENDLESS SPELLS** on the battlefield from play.

OBJECTIVES

The terrain feature that marks the Grand Stormvault entrance is treated as an objective. Measure from any part of the terrain feature, rather than the centre, when determining which player controls the objective.

GLORIOUS VICTORY

The game ends at the end of the fifth battle round if all Penumbral Engines on the battlefield have been shattered (see above), and one player controls the Grand Stormvault entrance. The player that controls the Grand Stormvault entrance wins a **major victory** and is crowned the winner of the campaign. If one or both of the above conditions have not been met at the end of the fifth battle round, the battle continues until the end of a battle round where both conditions are met.

LARGER CAMPAIGNS

If your campaign has more than four players, a player not participating in the final battle can move one predatory endless spell at the start of each battle round. If there are multiple players not participating in the final battle, they first roll off and then, starting with the player that rolled highest, pick a predatory endless spell to move.

If there are any predatory endless spells that have not yet moved after all non-participating players have picked one to move, those remaining predatory endless spells are moved by the participating players as normal.

ENDLESS SPELLS

Endless spells are a special type of spell that wizards can use. Casting an endless spell creates a magical construct, represented by an endless spell model, that remains in play until it leaves the battlefield or is unbound. The rules in this section explain how to use endless spells in your games.

ENDLESS SPELLS

If you have an endless spell model and its warscroll, all **WIZARDS** in your army know that spell in addition to any other spells they know. There are four endless spell warscrolls included in this book. Other endless spell models and the warscrolls for them are available in the *Malign Sorcery* supplement for Warhammer Age of Sigmar, and further endless spell warscrolls are available in some battletomes.

ENDLESS SPELL MODELS

Endless spell models are not set up on the battlefield at the start of a game. Instead, when an endless spell is successfully cast and not unbound, the model for the spell is set up on the battlefield. Where and how the endless spell model is set up will be described on its warscroll. If any restrictions make it impossible to set up the endless spell model, the attempt to cast it is unsuccessful. Endless spells have no effect on an army's allegiance.

Unless noted otherwise, an endless spell model cannot be attacked or affected by spells or abilities; it is treated as a friendly model by all armies for any other rules purposes. An endless spell model cannot be moved unless it is a predatory endless spell (see below).

In order to attempt to cast an endless spell, you must have a model for the spell available that is not already on the battlefield. For example, if you have two Balewind Vortex models in your collection, and both are on the battlefield, you cannot attempt to cast Summon Balewind Vortex again until at least one of them has been removed from the battlefield. A **WIZARD** cannot attempt to cast more than one endless spell in the same turn (even if they are different endless spells).

PREDATORY ENDLESS SPELLS

Many endless spells are immobile, and once cast remain in the same location. However, some can move across the battlefield in search of living prey: these are noted as being predatory endless spells. The following rules apply to predatory endless spells.



Predatory endless spells are moved at the start of each battle round, after the players determine who will have the first turn, but before the first turn begins. The players alternate picking a predatory endless spell to move, starting with the player who has the second turn. A player must pick a predatory endless spell to move if any are available, but only predatory endless spells that have not yet been moved can be chosen. Once all predatory endless spells have been moved, start the first turn of the battle round.

The distance a predatory endless spell can move will be noted on its warscroll. Some predatory endless spells can fly – this too will be noted on the warscroll.

Unlike other models, a predatory endless spell can cross the edge of the battlefield when it is moved. However, if it does so the spell is immediately dispelled (see Removing Endless Spells, below).

The effects and abilities of predatory endless spells are resolved by the player who moved that model for that battle round.

REMOVING ENDLESS SPELLS

An endless spell remains in play until it is removed from the battlefield. An endless spell can only be removed from play if:

- A **WIZARD** dispels the endless spell as described below.
- The endless spell crosses the edge of the battlefield when it is moved (see Predatory Endless Spells, above).
- A method described on the model's warscroll is used to remove the spell from play.

UNBINDING AND DISPELLING

A **WIZARD** can attempt to unbind an endless spell when it is initially cast as normal. In addition, a **WIZARD** can attempt to dispel one endless spell at the start of each of their hero phases. If a wizard attempts to dispel an endless spell, they can attempt to cast one less spell than normal that phase.

In order to dispel an endless spell, first pick an endless spell model within 30" of the wizard and visible to them, and then roll 2D6. If the roll is greater than the casting value of the spell, the endless spell is dispelled. An endless spell model cannot be subjected to more than one dispel attempt per hero phase.

When an endless spell is dispelled its model is removed from play; the model can then be used again if the same endless spell is successfully cast later in the battle.

PITCHED BATTLE PROFILES

The table below provides points, minimum and maximum unit sizes and battlefield roles for all the endless spell warscrolls included in this set, plus the Penumbra Engine terrain feature, for use in Pitched Battles as described in the *Warhammer Age of Sigmar Core Book*. Spending the points listed on this table allows you to take that endless spell. Updated April 2019; the profiles printed here take precedence over any profiles with an earlier publication date or no publication date.

UNIT	UNIT SIZE		POINTS	BATTLEFIELD ROLE	NOTES
	MIN	MAX			
Horrorghast	1	1	60	Endless Spell	
Lauchon the Souleseeker	1	1	60	Endless Spell	
Shards of Valagharr	1	1	40	Endless Spell	
Soulscreech Bridge	1	1	80	Endless Spell	
Penumbra Engine	1	1	100	Scenery	

CAMPAIGN ROSTER



GENERAL'S NAME:.....
 ARMY ALLEGIANCE:.....
 GENERAL'S WARSCROLL:.....
 AWAKENED ARTEFACT:.....
 AWAKENED ARTEFACT BEARER:.....

AWAKENED ARTEFACT

ARTEFACT LEVEL



CONQUERED STORMVAULT SACRISTIES



SACRISTY OF BONES



SACRISTY OF LAUCHON



SACRISTY OF GHOSTS



SACRISTY OF VALAGHARR



SACRISTY OF AWAKENING



SACRISTY OF DARK BLESSINGS