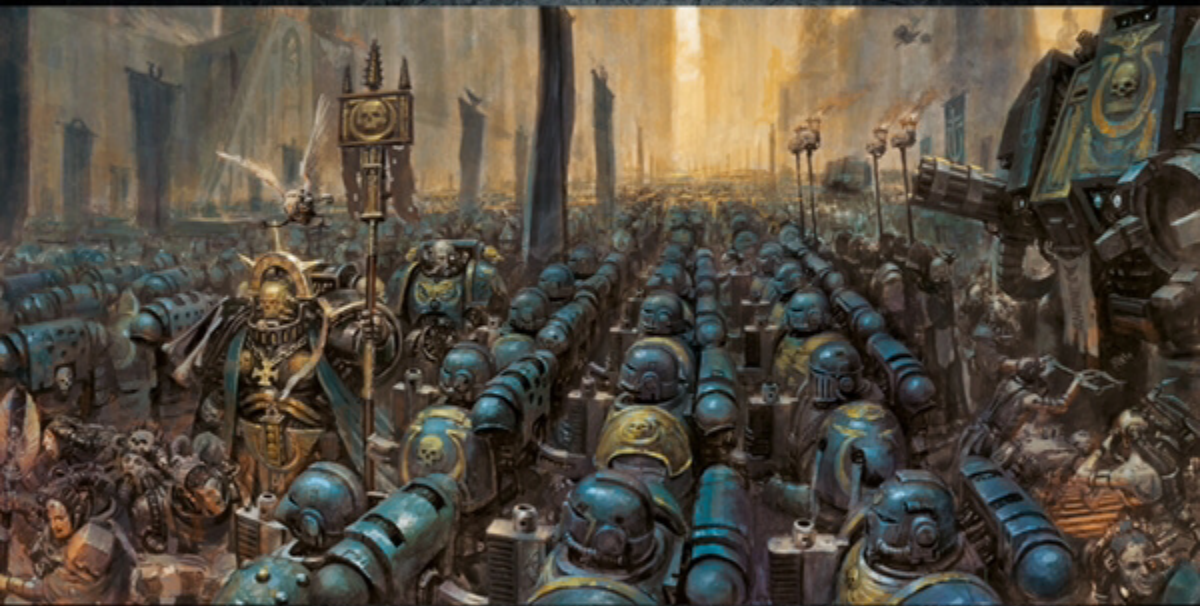


WARHAMMER
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INDEX ASTARTES™



VOLUME I

INDEX ASTARTES

VOLUME 1



Index Astartes explores the units, heroes and vehicles of the Space Marine Chapters. Index Astartes: Volume 1 compiles a select of some of these great articles all in one place, including Dreadnoughts, Predators, Chaplains, the Codex Astartes, Tactical Dreadnought armour, the Death Company, Battle Barges, Centurions, Apothecaries and more.

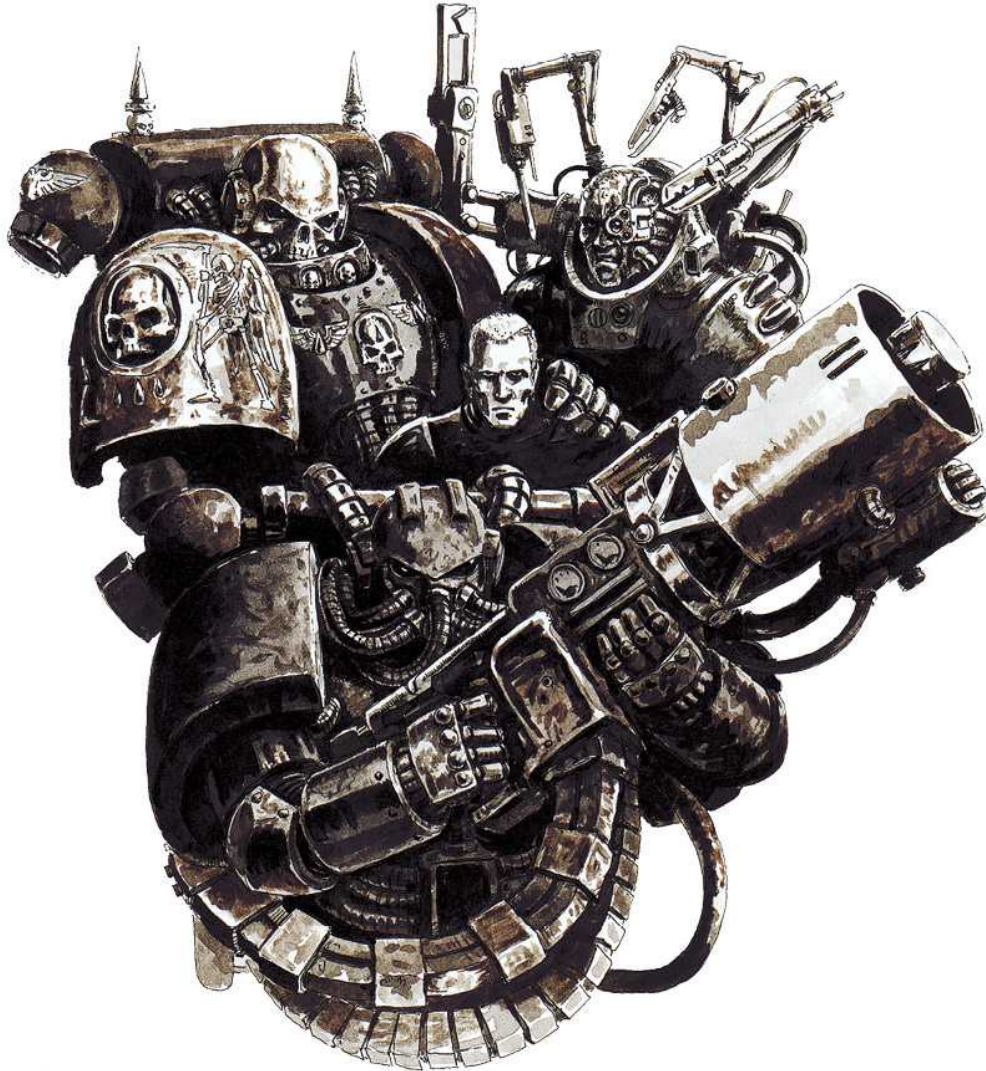


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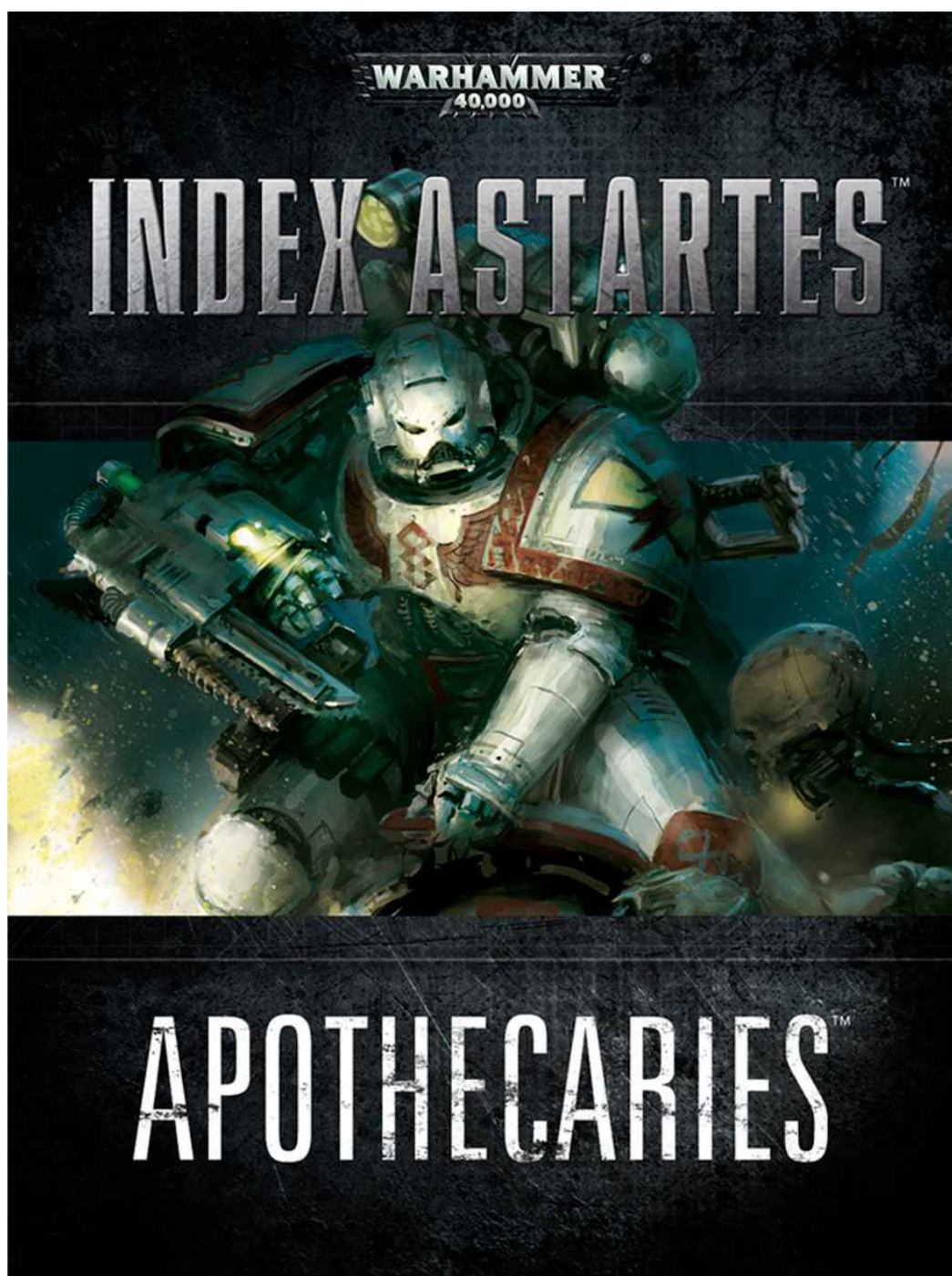
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INDEX ASTARTES:

APOTHECARIES



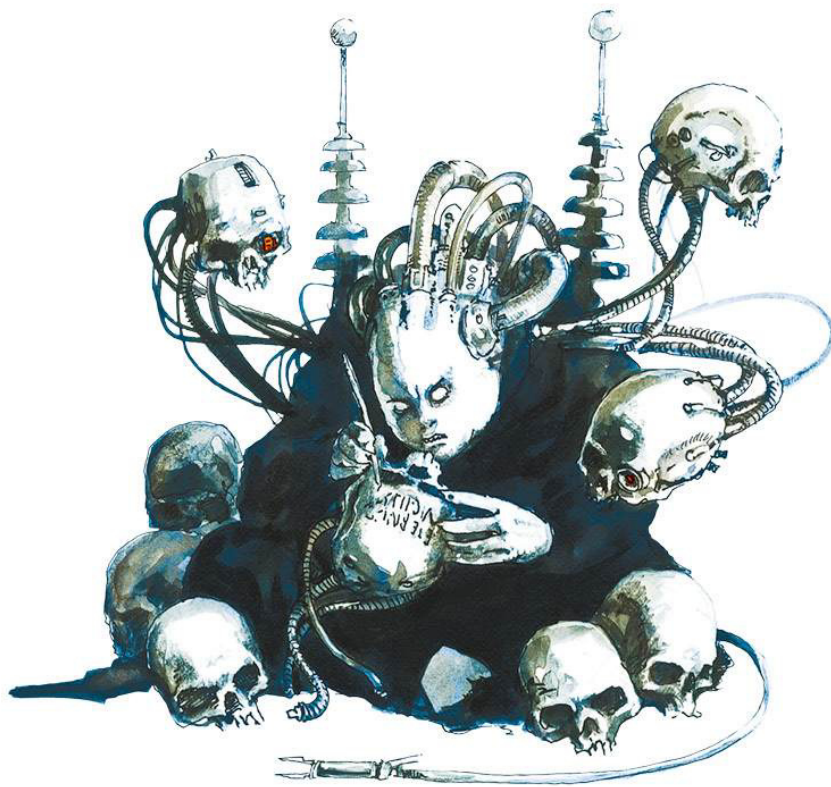
SPACE MARINE APOTHECARIES



Apothecaries are the elite battle-medics of the Space Marine Chapters, skilled in combat surgery and keepers of the medicae lore of the Adeptus Astartes. Wherever a Chapter deploys in strength its Apothecaries are there to heal the grievously injured and recover any fallen battle-brothers, as well as ensuring the continuation of the Chapter's genetic legacy. It takes an exceptional Space Marine to become an Apothecary – not only must a battle-brother be able to master bio-medicae technologies and the secrets of Adeptus Astartes biology, but he must also be where the fighting is thickest. Often armed only with his narthecium and bolt pistol, the Apothecary must complete his important work under withering enemy fire, his brothers fighting all around while he tends to the fallen.



DEATH'S ANGELS



DEATH'S ANGELS



Every Chapter maintains a core of Apothecaries drawn from its veteran battle-brothers and trained in the genetic mysteries of the Adeptus Astartes. The exact number of these specialists varies from Chapter to Chapter, though most will have enough to oversee the creation of new Space Marines as well as to join the command sections of each of its companies. Just as favoured battle-brothers can rise in rank and work their way into the First Company of the Chapter, an Apothecary will be assigned based on his skill and standing, the greatest of their number tending to the Chapter Master himself.

In accordance with the Codex Astartes, Apothecaries traditionally paint at least part of their armour white to denote their battlefield role – usually their helmet, shoulder pad or narthecium. Often, a shoulder pad or knee guard bears the Prime Helix, the twisting blood-red symbol of the Apothecarion. In battle this makes them distinctive among their fellow Space Marines, allowing their battle-brothers to protect the medic from harm, as well as call for his aid when needed. In combat, this is the heart of the Apothecary's duty: while his brothers seek glory and vengeance against the foe, the battle-medic moves among the horribly wounded, knitting their flesh with biotic glue and reinvigorating their muscles with shots of adrenium fluids.

When the battle-medic is needed on the field of war, a battle-brother will call across the vox-net for an Apothecary as they stand over the fallen, fighting to keep enemies at bay. An Apothecary must then assess the wounded at a glance, as there is often little time to save their life if the tides of war are quickly rising. In most combat situations, if the shot or blow has not killed the Space Marine, an injection of combat stimulants or a jolt from the narthecium's cardio-revitalius will get them back in the fight. If the situation allows, he may then be extracted from battle and fully healed on one of the Chapter's ships, or at local planetary facilities.



In cases where the Space Marine has lost a limb or suffered massive organ failure, but yet clings to life, the Apothecary will use his narthecium to inject the Space Marine with chemicals keyed to his Larraman's organ. This sends the cells' healing processes into overdrive, and seals even the deepest wounds under a layer of coagulated blood and scar tissue. The Space Marine can then be evacuated away from the fighting, or if extraction is impossible, filled with combat stimulants and dragged into position against some cover to fight on for as long as he can.

In some cases, if a battle-brother is too close to death or impossible to move, then it falls to the Apothecary to end his suffering. However, this is a rare occurrence, as there are few weapons capable of mortally wounding a Space Marine that are not likely to kill him outright. Sometimes, though, a battle-brother will be torn apart by a foe, partially devoured or impaled on jagged wreckage, his broken body grasping at life for a few agonizing hours as its superhuman endurance keeps death at bay. For a Space Marine in this position, the appearance of the white-armoured Apothecary is a vision of salvation. The Apothecary will lay a reassuring hand on his wounded battle-brother, giving him time to say a gurgling, gore-flecked prayer to the Emperor before the narthecium ends his torment. The battle-medic can use the narthecium's

reductor to deliver the Emperor's Peace by piercing the battle-brother's brain, but this is messy and often inefficient. The narthecium also contains a highly secret concoction of poisons that react swiftly with a Space Marine's biology, causing massive heart failure. Even the existence of these poisons is a secret known only to the Adeptus Astartes and high-ranking members of the Adeptus Terra.

GENETIC GUARDIANS



GENETIC GUARDIANS



Ministering to the wounded is the secondary battlefield responsibility of an Apothecary. This comes behind the completion of the mission, as well as ensuring the recovery of the Chapter's gene-seed from the fallen. Without the gene-seed the Chapter would be unable to create new Space Marines – the genetic information it carries is the crucial component in the transformation of a human into a Space Marine. Bereft of this vital bio-component, the Chapter would wither and die within a generation, its losses irreplaceable. Thus the loss of even one progenoid gland is a terrible blow for any Space Marine Chapter, and an Apothecary will go to great lengths to ensure that none are left to rot upon the field of battle, or worse – fall into enemy hands.

Should the Space Marines hold the field after an engagement, the Apothecary is able to walk among the dead, using his narthecium's reductor to extract the progenoid glands of the fallen, punching the hollow blade into the corpse and sucking out these vital organs. The battle-medic's task becomes significantly more difficult when the Space Marines must rapidly withdraw from combat, giving ground before a vastly more numerous foe, or if the combat zone is unstable, such as a burning void ship or collapsing hive city. The Apothecary must work quickly under fire to recover the gene-seed, wrestling bodies away from the enemy or making daring charges into no man's land to reach a fallen battle-brother.

When the Space Marine Chapters first encountered the Tyranids, the Adeptus Astartes made a horrific discovery. The vile aliens would consume a battle-brother completely, feasting on his bio-matter and combining it with their own. For the Apothecarion, this was anathema to everything a Space Marine was, and the true and utter death of his genetic legacy. When Space Marines fight against the xenos swarms of the Hive Mind, it is considered a great shame by the Apothecarion to allow the fallen to be taken by the foe, and Apothecaries will fight their way through hordes of chitinous horrors to recover the dead. If the gene-seed cannot be recovered then it must be destroyed, and though it is the lesser of two horrors, it remains preferable to allowing the remains of a Space Marine to fall into xenos hands. In extreme cases an Apothecary will even destroy himself, especially if his narthecium is filled with extracted genetic materials, rather than risk them being absorbed by the Tyranids.



A Genetic Heritage

All Space Marine Chapters are descended from the first superhuman warriors created by the Emperor. Their genetic makeup and origins are a continuation of this esteemed history; the vital biological information stored in a battle-brother's progenoid glands, known as his gene-seed. This is the cellular code that is implanted into a Space Marine when he first joins the Chapter, and allows his body to undergo its transformation from human into Adeptus Astartes. When the battle-brother dies, it falls to an Apothecary to extract these glands so that the gene-seed might be passed onto a new warrior, just as it has been for thousands of years.



SECRETS OF THE APOTHECARION

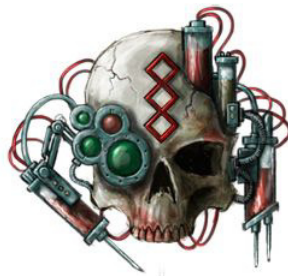


SECRETS OF THE APOTHECARION



Apothecaries are far more than battlefield medics and angels of mercy. When not at war, they work in the Apothecarion – a sprawling complex of subterranean vaults or fortified towers given over to the Chapter's Apothecaries. Here, behind heavy ferrocrete blast doors and watchful gun-servitors, the medics keep and catalogue the Chapter's genetic history and maintain the purity of its gene-seed. Deep-frozen catacombs, connected to the Apothecarion, house thousands of sealed flasks, each one holding an extracted progenoid gland, biscopea, neuroglottis or other Space Marine organ. From this store, the Apothecaries will create new generations of Adeptus Astartes.

This is far from a simple process, and takes all the skill and ability of the Apothecary. Just as the recruits will be tested and trained, the Chapter taking only the bravest and hardest of candidates, so too must the Apothecaries test the gene-seed. The organs are put through a lengthy series of trials, the battle-medic subjecting each sample to varying stress levels of radiation or chemical agents to see how it reacts. This is vital to ensure its purity, as even the smallest flaw can grow into terrible and heretical mutation if left undetected. Equally, the process of melding a gene-seed organ into one of the Chapter's recruits is made far more dangerous if there is something awry with the biological secrets held within. This can cause the Space Marine organs to grow out of control, fuse together or burst forth from the flesh of the subject, resulting in death, if fate is merciful, or a horrific semblance of life if not.



An Apothecary therefore oversees every step of the creation of a Space Marine; even after a battle-brother has been accepted into the Chapter, every one is monitored to ensure he does not develop mutation and his organs and glands remain in good function. Space Marines are regularly examined by the Apothecaries, but the results of these tests remain a closely guarded secret of the Chapter. Any flaws in the Chapter's gene-seed will be seen as a weakness; fractures in its biological construction that could lead to heresy or madness. Even a single mutation, if it escapes notice, might cause the gene-seed to degrade over subsequent generations, polluting whole batches and spreading its taint through the ranks of the Chapter.

Apothecaries must also prepare the gene-seed tithe all Space Marine Chapters send to the Adeptus Terra. This sample will be examined for its purity before being stored away for the founding of new Space Marine Chapters. If there is even a small flaw in the gene-seed, or any sign of mutation, it can cast a shadow over the Chapter and even bring excommunication from the Imperium in extreme cases.

GENETIC ENHANCEMENT AND BIONIC AUGMENTATION



GENETIC ENHANCEMENT AND BIONIC AUGMENTATION



Apothecaries are trained in the performance of advanced surgery and grafting of bionics, delving into the field of bioengineering. When a Space Marine is grievously wounded in battle and survives, he will usually end up on an Apothecary's table. Whether this is to restore function to damaged organs or to mend shattered limbs, the Apothecarion has a store of the battle-brother's genetic material kept within gene-banks just for this very purpose. From the bio-seed of the Space Marine, replacement lungs, livers and hearts can be grown, even great sheets of new skin for when a battle-brother's own has been burnt or flayed away.

Apothecaries have no way, however, of restoring missing limbs. When a battle-brother is maimed in this way, Apothecaries will work with the Chapter's Techmarines to craft a cybernetic replacement. Often created for a specific battle-brother, these bespoke augmentations are then sutured into muscles and screwed into bone. Through a painstaking process, the Apothecary will then weave nerve endings with monofilament receptor wires so that the limb might respond to the Space Marine's neural impulses. Eyes, organs, arms and legs can all be restored via bionics, granting a battle-brother little loss of function – sometimes even improving on the original – and the hardened steel casing mimics the natural resilience of the Space Marine's own flesh. After years of war and thousands of battles, when the battle-brother dies, the Apothecaries reclaim their mechanical bounty, slicing free tendons holding adamantium-plated hands, crystal lenses from eye sockets and blood-drenched organs hidden deep in chest cavities. These devices may then find a future in other wounded Space Marines, passed down from one generation to the next.

Sometimes, on an extended campaign, an Apothecary is forced to repair a battle-brother far from the advanced technologies and sanctified tools of the Apothecarion. This kind of battlefield surgery is cruder and quicker, intended to get the Space Marine back into the fight as quickly as possible. Bionics will be scavenged from the dead, while chemical stimulants are substituted for true healing. Stitched meat and fused muscle is then hidden under the ceramite plates of power armour, and the Space Marine is sent back into the fray.





Blood of Heroes

Brother-Apothecary Gaius looked out of the canopy of the Stormraven Gunship, the grey, windswept oceans of Avalan rolling underneath him at breakneck speed. Ahead of him the pilot was making last minute adjustments to his course as amber and green runes flickered across his control throne, indicating altitude, airspeed and atmospheric conditions. Behind Gaius, in the belly of the aircraft, ten of his battle-brothers sat braced for rapid insertion, the deep blue of their power armour and the stark white symbol of Ultramar turned black and bloody red by the combat lighting.

‘How long?’ Gaius asked the pilot, watching the scrolling numbers and vectors chasing each other across the heads-up display.

‘Three minutes.’ The pilot replied. ‘We are cresting the horizon now, and beginning our attack run. Resistance is expected to be light. The first wave are securing the beach now and we’ll be following them in.’

The orbital descent had been rough, though none of the Space Marines had made mention of it. Gaius himself remained braced behind the cockpit, waiting for it to end, his enhanced muscles straining to keep him steady as the craft bucked and jolted its way down to the surface. These Stormravens might be more manoeuvrable, but Gaius preferred the heavier construction of a Thunderhawk, especially when falling through the atmosphere of a world.

However, the Apothecary couldn’t dwell for long on such matters; the sacred duty entrusted to him by Captain Galenus weighed upon his mind. Up ahead, Gaius could already see the shadow cast by the downed Traitor cruiser, its broken spine jutting up from the sea while its still functioning void shield turned the sky above it dark. This was the Apothecary’s goal.

The Claw of Damnation had attempted to run the Imperium’s blockade around Avalan, trying to reach the heretic forces fighting for the hive cities of its northern continents. Instead, it had been gutted by the righteous fire and blessed torpedoes of the fleet, spiralling down through the atmosphere to crash into the frozen polar oceans. While the Imperial Navy considered its task complete, the Ultramarines were not so lax, and deep augur sweeps had revealed that life still lingered in the wrecked Chaos cruiser. Worse, unravelling the complex vox ciphers spilling out from the vessel into space revealed the Claw of Damnation held a unique cargo, intriguing enough for Captain Galenus to dispatch a strike force immediately.

Gaius was drawn back to the present as the Stormraven jolted violently in the air, and he realised the pilot was talking to him again.

‘Say again?’ Gaius said.

‘The ship’s defensive turrets prevent us coming in from above, but if we keep a few feet above the waves we can come in under their heavy guns.’ The pilot was shouting now, over the howl of the freezing wind outside and what Gaius recognised as the crack-boom of anti-aircraft fire.

The Apothecary could now see the cruiser, dominating the horizon, its length broken in half, the aft mostly sunken beneath the waves, the prow resting on a desolate-looking island, nose pointing into the sky. The ship’s flickering void shield made the air shimmer and crackle above the wreck, but it faded where it touched the sea, the

rising and falling water creating arcs of energy where the two met. Beyond, Gaius could make out the beach, and the trench-works dug by the traitors. Heavy weapons and tanks salvaged from the Claw hammered at the sky as squads of Ultramarines made their landings.

With a keening jet-scream, a pair of Stormtalon Gunships raced past the Apothecary's Stormraven, burning tracer fire from their assault cannons raking the beach as they swooped overhead. Suddenly, Gaius' craft was under the void shield and thundering down onto the beach. Small arms fire spanged off its hull while its engines made a deafening whine as they struggled to arrest the aircraft's descent, kicking up clouds of sand and plumes of sea-spray.

Light flooded into the Stormraven as its ramp crashed down into the surf, the Space Marines charging out in precise formation, spreading out and laying down fire with their boltguns. Gaius was close on their heels, his own bolt pistol answering the withering hail of fire coming from the trenches. Steadily, Gaius and his Tactical Squad advanced; the Traitors were well dug-in, but hopelessly inferior to the Ultramarines. As the Apothecary jumped down into the first trench line, other Space Marine squads were already clearing out the foe. Debased heretics, the defenders were mostly drawn from the ship's crew, their scarred flesh and warped bodies a mark of their ruinous masters.

Pushing through the battle, Gaius led his men into the broken ship, his briefing telling him unerringly which twists and turns to take within its ruined, nightmare interior. Several times, the Ultramarines encountered resistance, squads of traitors charging from the dark or lying in wait. In each instance, short bursts of bolter fire and gouts of fire from the squad's flamer sent the heretics screaming to the deck, their ruined corpses lighting up the shadows as they burned.

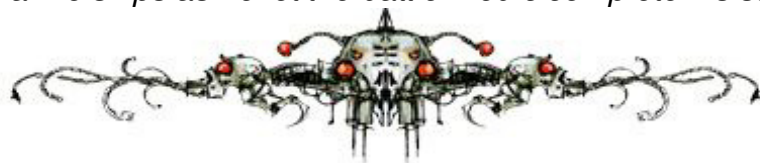
Finally, Gaius and his brothers smashed their way into a rusted, stinking cell, its walls and floor daubed with profane glyphs. In the corner, a bloodied Space Marine was chained to the wall, an Ultramarine tattoo visible on his naked, filth-covered chest.

'Brother...' the prisoner croaked from cracked lips, his bloodshot eyes fixed on Gaius.

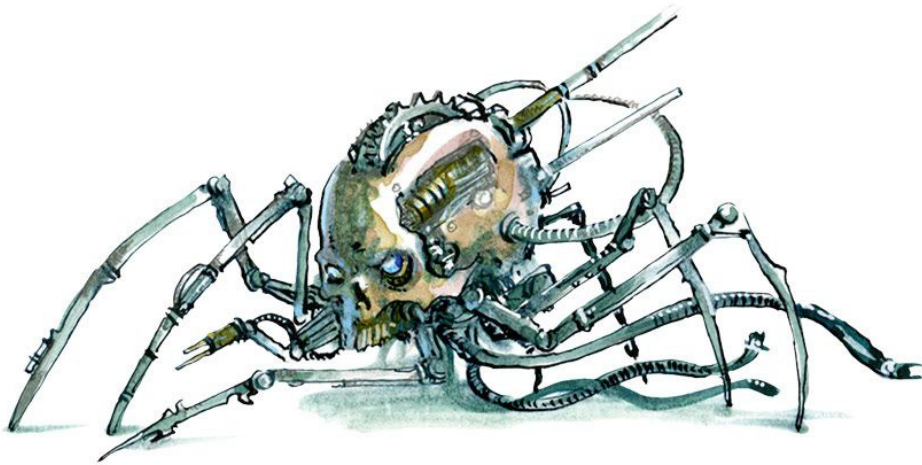
Gaius looked over the battered giant, noting what he already knew; the first signs of warped flesh and forced mutation were clearly visible to him.

'Be at peace,' the Apothecary replied. 'The Emperor's Peace is upon you.'

As Gaius pressed his narthecium to the prisoner's temple, a smile touched the captive Space Marine's lips as he let the battle-medic complete his sacred duty.



MINIATURE SHOWCASE





Ultramarines - Apothecary with chainsword



Black Templars - Apothecary



Crimson Fists - Apothecary



Howling Griffons - Apothecary



Dark Angels - Apothecary



Dark Angels Deathwing - Apothecary



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BATTLE BARGES™



INDEX ASTARTES:

BATTLE BARGE



BATTLE BARGE



The battle barge is the largest and most powerful Space Marine vessel. It is a brutal craft, extremely heavily armoured and shielded, and outfitted with enough firepower to crack open a world.

BACKGROUND

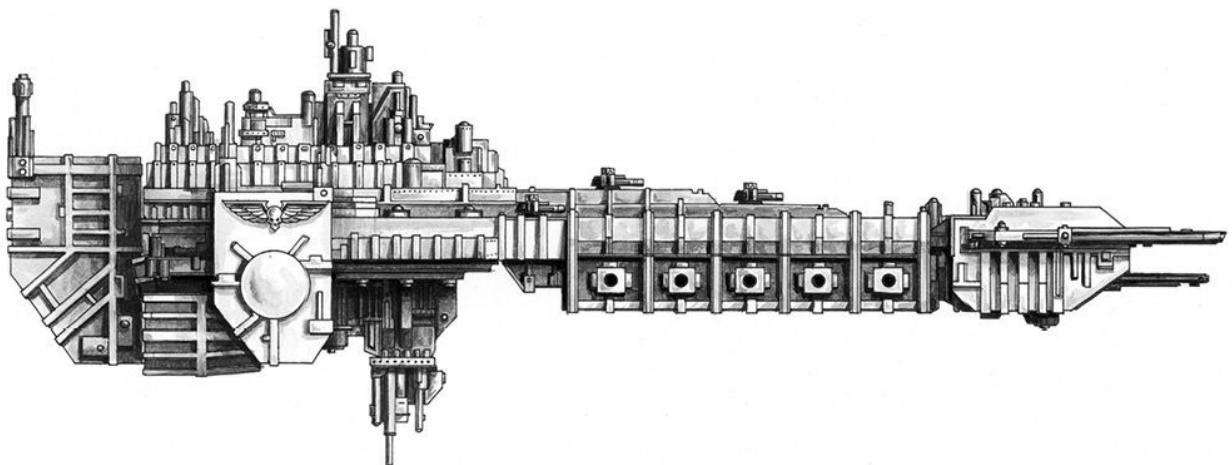


PLANETARY ASSAULT

After the Horus Heresy, measures were taken to contain the power of the Space Marine Legions, solemn decrees that would ensure no single individual could ever again command such might in isolation. As is well documented, the Legions, each numbering thousands of Space Marines, were divided down into smaller warhosts called Chapters; each of only a thousand warriors. What is perhaps of greater importance is that the Space Marines were divorced from the old Imperial military: the new Adeptus Astartes Chapters would no longer hold dominion over vast fleets of battleships or grand regiments of vassal soldiery. If they were to triumph among the stars and stand resolute against the darkness of the void, they would need to work within the Imperium, and as part of it. Since that time, Space Marines have been granted only such warships as are needed to patrol their system borders, and deliver them to battle. To this day, the primary function of their fleets has been to transport battle-ready forces of Space Marines into war.

Though formidably armed and armoured, the battle barges of the Space Marines are no exception to this rule, and were designed first and foremost to facilitate full-scale planetary assaults. Each has enough hold space to accommodate three full companies of Space Marines, along with their vehicles and support elements. Indeed, the majority of a battle barge's interior hull-space is given over to launch bays, muster decks and transport holds. Housed there are squadrons of Thunderhawk gunships, an array of intra-system craft, and dozens of drop pods. With such resources at its command, a battle barge can deploy almost all of its forces simultaneously, putting its entire complement of Space Marines on the front lines within minutes of reaching orbit. The speed and ease with which this is accomplished has caught many a foe off guard, allowing them little time to prepare before the angels of death bring fire and vengeance to their door.

Considering its size, a battle barge has little in the way of Space Marine crew. The warriors of the Adeptus Astartes are too rare and too valuable to be tasked with performing the myriad mechanical functions required to keep a warship at operational readiness. Instead, they act as officers, overseeing the ranks of servitors and Chapter serfs who carry out other, less critical duties; performing all of the menial and manual tasks unworthy of their Space Marine lords. Yet even these subordinates are too precious to be wasted in the gunnery decks. Loading and calibrating a starship's weapons for firing is a perilous undertaking. Plasma wash, unscheduled detonations and residual radiation keep the attrition rates in these areas high. Those with enough luck and the fortitude to survive such daily toil are soon claimed by combat, beaten past their physical tolerance by a gang-master's whip or obliterated by enemy fire targeted to rob a battle barge of its capacity to attack. With such high mortality rates, the crewing of the gun decks falls to an indentured underclass of slaves and vat-grown dregs. In this way, their worthless lives are given purpose, for even the lowliest may redeem themselves by giving their lives in service to the Emperor and the Imperium.



Like the smaller strike cruisers, although they are each cast from the same STC templates, battle barges are not finished to a singular design. Their outer hulls and internal layout vary from Chapter to Chapter and even from one to another within a given Chapter. The *Raven's Claw*, the oldest of the Raven Guard's surviving battle barges, has none of the sensor towers or ostentatious sanctums that protrude from the spines of most battle barges, and its profile is kept as small as possible. By contrast, the Ultramarines battle barge *Macragge's Honour* is studded with towering edifices to the Emperor's glory, and the prow of the Executioners' battle barge *Death's Shroud* is fashioned into a grim-set skull.



The *Victus*, an ancient battle barge and the flagship of the Flesh Tearers, has sailed the void since the days of the Great Crusade. Long-forgotten records, held in stasis and sealed to all but the most senior among the Imperium's agents, note that the *Victus* was long ago refitted by the Tech-Priests of Mars at Chapter Master Amit's personal request. The extent of the refit – and what debt the Flesh Tearers might still owe Mars for its undertaking – is unknown. However the ship has remained the subject of legend and speculation, and coupled with the dubious rumours surrounding the Chapter itself, the secrets contained within the *Victus'* corridors have become a matter of interest to several members of the Inquisitorial ordos. Few have dared to question it in open forum, lest Master Seth seek 'compensation' for such a slight. Inquisitor Corvin Herrold was reported to have boarded the vessel looking for answers. His report as yet remains un-filed.



ARMOUR AND SHIELDS

The magos-architects and master artificers who built the first battle barges knew full well the terrible storm of violence such a vessel would have to suffer. In order to deliver its payload of Space Marines and attack craft, a battle barge needs to enter a planet's orbit, leaving itself open to attack from nearby ships and ground-based orbital defences. Depending on atmospheric and gravitational conditions, successful deployment may require the battle barge to enter a synchronous or low orbital hold, making it even more vulnerable to attack. To compound the problem, the sheer size of the vessel makes it easy to target, and its low engine power-to-mass ratio makes it unable to execute dynamic evades. With deployment complete, a battle barge is then expected to remain defiant in orbit, an immovable object acting as guardian over the Space Marine units below. In short, a battle barge will absorb more fire and weather more damage in a single mission than most warships are capable of withstanding over the course of their service. Fortunately, a battle barge is almost indestructible.

Constructed with its unique role in mind, the battle barges' skeletons were forged from an ultra-dense alloy. The rare base mineral can only be mined from the sites of recent volcanic eruptions, and is further hardened by ballast compression tanks situated on high-gravity moons. The pressurised environment hardens the alloy, ensuring the superstructure is as solid as the

doors protecting the Emperor's throne room itself. These inner frameworks were then girded in kilometres of hardened plasteel and adamantium, and edged with thick ferrocrete buttresses that surround the main hull like a reinforced rib-cage. Finally, a second and ablative layer of armour was added to each vessel's prow, forging an impenetrable figurehead for the indomitable fury of a battle barge.



Like all Warp-capable vessels, battle barges are protected by Geller fields, arcane devices that create a bubble of realspace around a ship as it passes through the tides of the Immaterium. Unlike Imperial Navy warships that are required to spend large portions of their deployment guarding a single system, and who are called upon to travel in the warp infrequently, battle barges are in constant motion, traveling from one war zone to the next without respite. Such frequent Warp travel puts these prized vessels at great risk, and as such they are frequently outfitted with two inter-connecting Geller fields. Should one fail, the other will continue to protect the battle barge from the Warp's hostile environment and the foul entities that dwell there. Yet this extra precaution has not always proven enough. The denizens of that twisted realm are relentless and on at least one occasion have conspired to breach both fields simultaneously.

The Novamarines battle barge *Liberator*, for example, was found drifting near its last recorded entry point. A stricken hulk, the initial salvage crew found no signs of life aboard. A Grey Knights kill-team was dispatched to cleanse the ship, plunging into the madness that had enveloped it. Reports of the incident are sealed, but even though their helm-logs reported a mission time of seven hours, it was more than a hundred days before they emerged from the craft.

In realspace, battle barges are protected by a group of layered void shields, wavering bands of energy that spark around the vessel to create a teardrop of invisible force. These energy barriers are capable of absorbing or deflecting the worst excesses of stellar radiation and meteor showers, and can sustain a succession of weapon hits and explosive impacts before overloading. Once overloaded, the shield generators must be power-cycled in order to let them vent off the excess energy. This is not a simple process – many slaves and Chapter serfs lose their lives in the resulting plasma fires and sparking energy discharge.

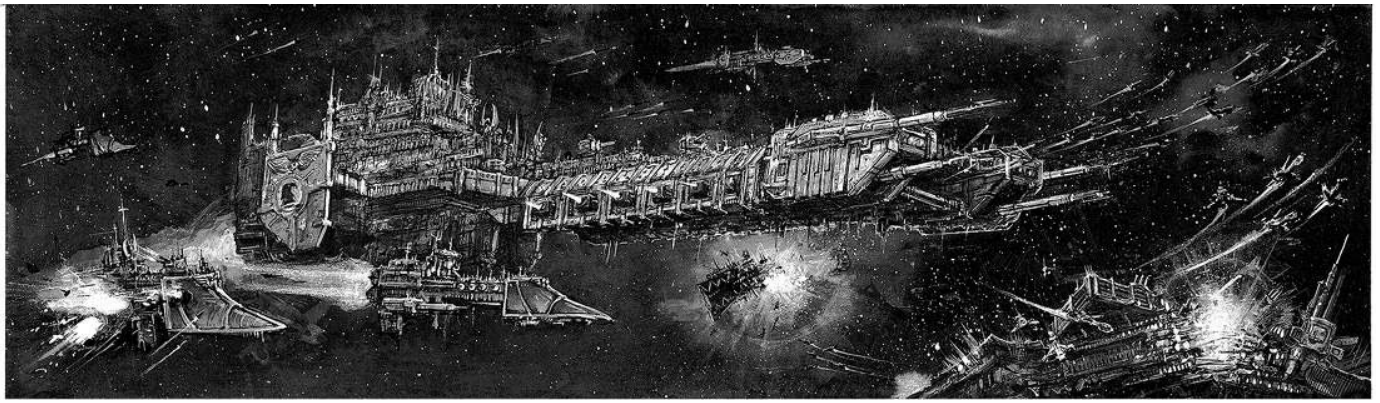
The shields protecting a battle barge are, however, among the most sophisticated that the Emperor's armies have at their disposal. Segmented into a series of zones, it is possible for an area of shield to fail without leaving the ship entirely exposed. Further to this, energy can be siphoned from one zone to another, and redirected to where there is the most need of protection. In dire circumstances the shields' energy can be driven up past their normal maximum. This temporarily provides the battle barge with greater protection but soon burns out the generators, and renders the shields inert. Long is the list of bold Space Marine captains who, when faced with overwhelming odds, have used this tactic to close to attack distance, and claim victory from certain defeat.

Though often severely damaged, some beyond repair, there are scant recorded reports of battle barges being destroyed outright. Perhaps this is just as well, for each Space Marine Chapter typically has only two or three of them under its command. They are as much prized relics as warships, icons of strength and endurance that echo the might of the Space Marines, and the resources required to build them anew are difficult to come by. The loss of even a single one of these vessels would not only be a great blow to the military capabilities of a Chapter, but would also damage its morale, robbing it of part of its proud warrior history.

BRINGERS OF DESTRUCTION

The primary weapons of any battle barge are their dorsal-mounted bombardment cannons. Each cannon comprises a series of heavyweight batteries, huge turret-mounted linear accelerators that launch salvos of heavy magma bomb warheads. As the name suggests, bombardment cannons were primarily developed to bombard planets from high orbit, a task at which they excel. A battle barge will begin firing as soon as it reaches orbit and will continue to rain destruction down on a planet even as its complement of Space Marines is hurled downwards in their assault craft, clearing a path for their deployment on the ground. Capable of obliterating almost any manner of planetary defences, bombardment cannons will first be directed against missile silos and laser towers, ensuring that the Space Marine attack force can proceed unmolested, before being used to take out command bunkers and shield generators, aiding their swift domination of the planet. On more than one occasion, a single salvo fired into a dense population centre has ended the conflict before it has gathered any real momentum, shocking a world's leaders into seeing the error of their ways and quickly swearing fealty to the Emperor once more.

Thanks to their gene-modified constitution and advanced armour, Space Marines can wade through a blast zone untroubled by the radiation and toxic residue left behind by a bombardment cannon strike. When operating as a self-contained force, this allows them to receive close fire support from an orbiting battle barge. Using tight-focus marker beacons they are able to direct surgical bombardments to clear their advance or protect their flanks and rear from counterattack. When working as part of a combined Imperial Guard action, such measures are usually avoided – however, Captain Barras Varlock of the Iron Hands Chapter infamously ordered a close proximity strike at the battle of Yoyung Prime. He sought to expedite victory, allowing his forces to continue on to Secundus, and gave no thought to the disastrous consequences for the Gadan Ninth Regiment that fought in support of his warriors. In the aftermath of the conflict, the surviving Imperial Guardsmen quickly succumbed to radiation sickness and died within a matter of weeks.



In extreme circumstances, or when the enemy force is so well entrenched on a world that even a sustained assault will not break their hold on it, bombardment cannons can be used to sunder entire continents, smashing them from the face of a planet in a cacophony of violent explosions. Indeed, a concentrated, prolonged bombardment can crack tectonic plates, sending massive earthquakes and tsunamis of destruction rippling out across a globe.

Battle barges are one of only a few Imperial warships capable of carrying Exterminatus-class weapons. So terrible are these devices, so irrevocable are their consequences, that their use must be sanctioned at the highest levels. Even a Chapter Master must be prepared to answer for his actions should he authorise the use of such extreme force.

When a world is deemed beyond saving, when its populace has fallen too far from the Imperial fold, a battle barge will descend into low orbit and begin the task of Exterminatus. Spreads of virus bombs turn the planet's landmass and organic matter into corrupted slurry which can be burned away by firestorm or lance beams. Yet sometimes, such a solution is not enough. Should a planet's skies echo to the resounding laughter of Daemons, should it fall so far as to become a terrible temple for the Dark Gods, the Space Marines will bring about its complete destruction, ending the world once and for all. Retreating to the maximum range of its weapons, a battle barge will launch cyclonic warheads which burn to the planet's core, blasting it apart from within and removing its imperfection from the Emperor's blessed sight.



'It was as though the Emperor himself reached out with a single golden finger and pressed down onto the earth, cracking it asunder.'

- Survivor, Vercessus Cleansing, 864.M40.



SHIP-TO-SHIP

The Adeptus Astartes only engage enemy warships on favourable terms, if indeed at all. As has already been noted, battle barges were not built for naval engagements – they lack the

long-ranged firepower of larger capital ships and the maneuverability of light cruisers. In void combat a battle barge will rely on its heavier armour to close with enemy ships and launch devastating boarding actions. As it closes, a battle barge can use the weapons batteries that stud much of its hull to rake the enemy with fire. Rank upon rank of plasma projectors, macro-laser cannons, missile racks and fusion beamers fire in diffuse salvos, a co-ordinated pattern of shots designed to strip a target's shields and overwhelm its close-range defences. With its shields down, an enemy vessel is left open to a teleport assault. Few ships can survive such an attack, the swift wrath of a squad of Space Marines stalking their corridors and attacking critical systems. It is because of this that an enemy captain will do everything in his power to try and prevent a battle barge from drawing too near to his vessel.

If this form of close-range attack is untenable or proves ineffective, a battle barge can always fall back on its bombardment cannons. While their primary purpose is as orbital support weapons, they can be used to great effect against enemy warships. Though they lack the range of lance batteries and the fast reload times of standard ship-to-ship weapons, they more than make up for it in raw killing power. When magma shells impact upon another ship, they do not crash down through their hulls as they might with a planet's surface. Instead, they break upon contact, erupting outwards, broiling over the surface of a vessel to strip away its plating and shred its battlements. The immense heat and shrapnel from the resultant explosion confuses automated defence turrets and sensors, allowing the Thunderhawk gunships and boarding torpedoes launched from the battle barge to close unharmed. A series of concurrent blasts is enough to knock an enemy ship off course, and a sustained assault from a bombardment cannon can cripple and blast apart even the largest of capital ships.



It was madness. I watched from the observation deck as the battle barge cracked and tore. Still it held orbit, firing intermittently, a defiant answer to the torrent of missiles and laser blasts erupting from the surface. The Valorous just waited, waited for the Eagle Warriors it had deployed to be extracted. Even when its shields failed and an explosion ripped a hole through its core, it waited. By the time it broke orbit and turned away, it was as a drifting horizon of fire. Emperor only knows how it was still held together.

We... we thought to re-engage but the risk was too great. Dictum required we wait at the system's edge for reinforcements.

- Transcribed from the confession of Shipmaster Gregeo Namn, executed for desertion 789.M40



SPACE-BORNE HOME

Although most Space Marine Chapters have a fortress monastery housed on a moon or world,

many do not. These Chapters have been forced into the void by war or cruel circumstance as space faring fleets. To these Chapters, battle barges play an even more important role, forming bastions that carry the Chapter's legacy and a haven when pressed. Several Chapters are rumoured to possess even larger vessels adapted from the battle barge, or built by some other means.

As of 999.M41, the following Chapters are known to be almost entirely fleet-based, though this record is doubtless incomplete: Imperial Fists, Black Templars, Executioners, Black Dragons, Invaders, Charnel Guard, Minotaurs, Fire Hawks, Lamenters, Mantis Warriors, Relictors, Scythes of the Emperor, Knights of Gryphonne.



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SPACE MARINE CENTURION



ORIGINS

Centurion warsuits are one of the most deadly and powerful assets available to the Adeptus Astartes, able to punch holes through fortress walls with obscene force, flush out enemies with flame or cut down any foe's advancing lines. They are walking tanks with formidable firepower. With the wall-grinding siege drill of the Assault Centurion, and the mass-collapsing grav-weapons of the Devastator Centurion, the vehicle pools of numerous Chapters are well-stocked with both variants of these warsuits.

It is much disputed by Imperial scholars as to when the Centurion warsuit first engaged in conflict. This is because its origins are to be found within that dark period of the Imperium's history known as the Age of Apostasy. This was a new age of religious strife, where millions of heretics were slaughtered across numerous star systems. The structures of the Imperium groaned under the weight of violent, internal conflict. During the Siege of Drax, a whole hive city was destroyed, and the entire Cadian 23rd fireballed in the process. Whole companies of Space Marines were consumed in these enduring, bloody actions. Battle-brothers were emptied into orbit as the ejecta of battlefleet assaults, or slaughtered in the shadows of their own fortresses.

The horrific spectre of the Horus Heresy and the threat of another all-consuming civil war began to loom over the Imperium. It became apparent to the High Lords of Terra that their troops would need new, more brutal wargear so that they might successfully smash their way across the galaxy to exterminate the unfaithful – weapons that could resolve the most abhorrent of battles, even if apostate factions had barricaded themselves within indomitable citadels.

So it was that the Tech-Priests of the Adeptus Mechanicus prepared for the worst and embarked upon the Voyages of Understanding, their arks criss-crossing the galaxy on unfamiliar routes and legions adepts scouring ancient texts in a quest for archaic knowledge. They brought back technologies to their forge worlds that had never before been observed, and set to work. Manufactorums clattered with fevered industry. They echoed with litanies as Tech-Priests refined weapons and armour that could be used by the Adeptus Astartes. Forge worlds were choked by banks of acrid smoke, while thousands of menials died each day, burnt to a cinder as they sought to feed the ancient furnaces with promethium.

Some of the newly discovered STCs, such as the VX Bellam Ravager and Thermae Missile Suits were beyond the best efforts of the Tech-Priests to replicate reliably, and many corrupted over time to produce disturbing results. These designs were locked away in stasis vaults lest their potency seduce the more weak-willed fabricators. But out of the manufactorums on Mars came the prototypes of a Space Marine warsuit, a vehicle that would encase existing power armour and even enable the battle-brother to mesh with the larger suit's machine spirit. Itself a statement of intent, the warsuit was named in a manner as to acknowledge the Space Marine heroes of the Horus Heresy.

It was called the Centurion.

The two sanctioned variants of the Centurion warsuits were not called upon to fight during the Age of Apostasy itself, and even years later these two remained the guarded secret of the Tech-Priests, who continued to refine their litanies, pray over them and pour on sacred oils. The

Centurions remained unused and untouched, unable to be unleashed across the corpse-choked battlefields of the Apostasy before the heretics could be finally crushed. Because of this strange delay, it was muttered by some that the Omnissiah Himself was displeased with what this new brute force might enact. This rumour was only strengthened by suggestions these terrible devices were craving war and their machine spirits were thirsty for blood.

THE CENTURIONS BRING REDEMPTION

After being sanctioned for official battlefield use, Centurion warsuits began to show in Imperial records during the bloody crusades of the Age of Redemption. Following pacts with the Adeptus Mechanicus, these slab-sided constructs were first utilized by squads of Imperial Fists and Iron Hands. Experts in tearing down fortifications and in rigorously maintaining defences, both Chapters were quick to see how the Centurion design would complement their own combat doctrines. Companies assigned pilots first from their Assault Squads, and later from their Devastator Squads. In these Centurion warsuits they found new ways to enforce and inflict the Imperial creed upon numerous star systems.

Companies of the Imperial Fists began to use the warsuits to provide an unstoppable impetus to their planetary assaults. They deployed them from their orbital Battle Barges in order to punch through fortresses and city blockades. They were not, however, only employed against heretics. Xenos ships flashed like meteors through the skies to assault the planets of Mankind. Great daemonic entities and various macabre forms of alien races carved their way out of the warp to annihilate frontier garrisons. On battlefields across the galaxy, these warsuits prevented a great many losses to Imperial forces. Wherever there was a threat to the Imperium of Man, the Centurion warsuits strode forth to crush the foe beneath their ceramite heel. Vast ships, docked or in orbit around heathen planets, were ripped open to punish those who worshipped false prophets. Many worlds to this day – which were liberated from the yoke of xenos oppressors by squads of Space Marine Centurions – have since enshrined these mighty heroes as angels of the Emperor. Their hulking figures adorn stained-glass frescoes and auto-rhetorical shrines across the Imperium, crowned with glowing haloes and wielding the cleansing flame of Imperial justice.

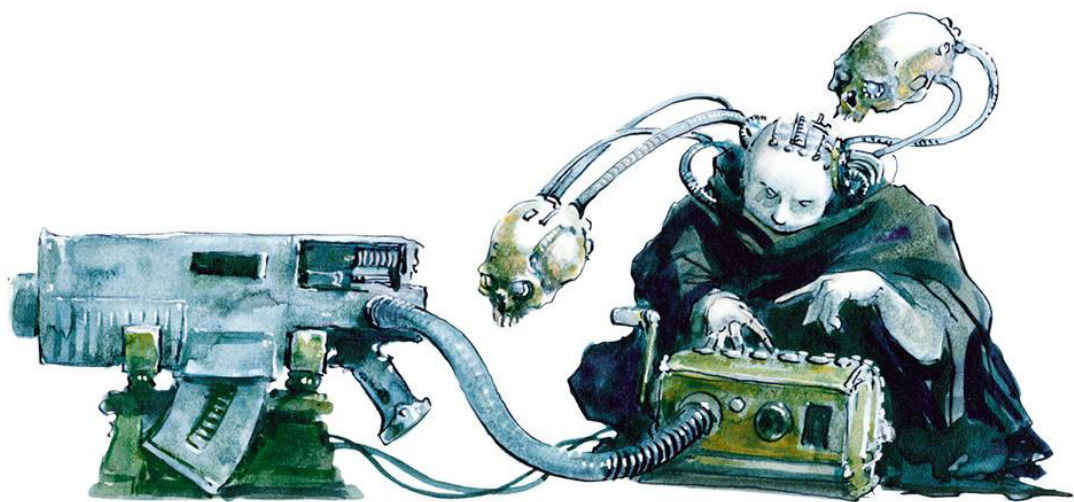
It was not long until more Chapters, first the Ultramarines and Salamanders, began to deploy full squads of these vehicles. They, too, could appreciate the lethal utility of these suits. But to them especially the Centurion proved more than a siege weapon. They found their new Centurion Devastator Squads brought a withering level of firepower to the battlefield. The Assault Centurions helped to bring brutal vengeance to heretics, crushing their twisted bodies and obscene idols with ease.

Centurions brought not just the Light of the Emperor, but salvation. On Orbide II an Ork Waaagh! promised to overwhelm the planet until squads of warsuits held the green tide back in time for reinforcements to arrive. Kabalite raiding parties in the Vysis Star System were crushed before they were able to conduct more than a handful of raids against the agri worlds vital to the system's survival. Insurgencies were cut down, the heretic heart of many traitor rebellions were burned out, and the Centurions became rightly feared. There was nowhere to hide for those who opposed the Imperium.

Thus, by M38, it was unsurprising that almost all Chapters of the Adeptus Astartes began assigning these warsuits to their armouries. To this day, it is rare to find a Chapter whose armoury does not possess at a single Centurion warsuit of either variant. Though only the Assault Centurion and Devastator Centurion variants have trod the field of war, many more had initially been discovered or produced as a result of Tech-Priest modifications. These more unstable and heretical versions were discreetly lost by the Adeptus Mechanicus; they remain so to this day.



STEPPING INTO A WARSUIT



STEPPING INTO A WARSUIT



The Centurion is an enormous, battle-ready exoskeleton, a vehicle to enable the vengeful brutality of the Adeptus Astartes to gain access to hitherto unreachable places. A Space Marine pilots each one and the Centurion warsuit communes with the machine spirit of his power armour. The Centurion stands taller than a Terminator, and possesses all the resilience and firepower of a tank. Woe betide any citadel that bars its gates to a warrior so armed.

The warsuit's construction is based on thick plates of ceramite, each one blessed with the Litany of Ritual Bonding by a Tech-Priest before being fixed in place by crane-armed servitors possessed by sanctified datahosts. With such protection Centurions can endure ferocious attacks, while the Space Marine inside can concentrate on punching through the bulkheads of hive city walls, or incinerating rows of armoured xenos.

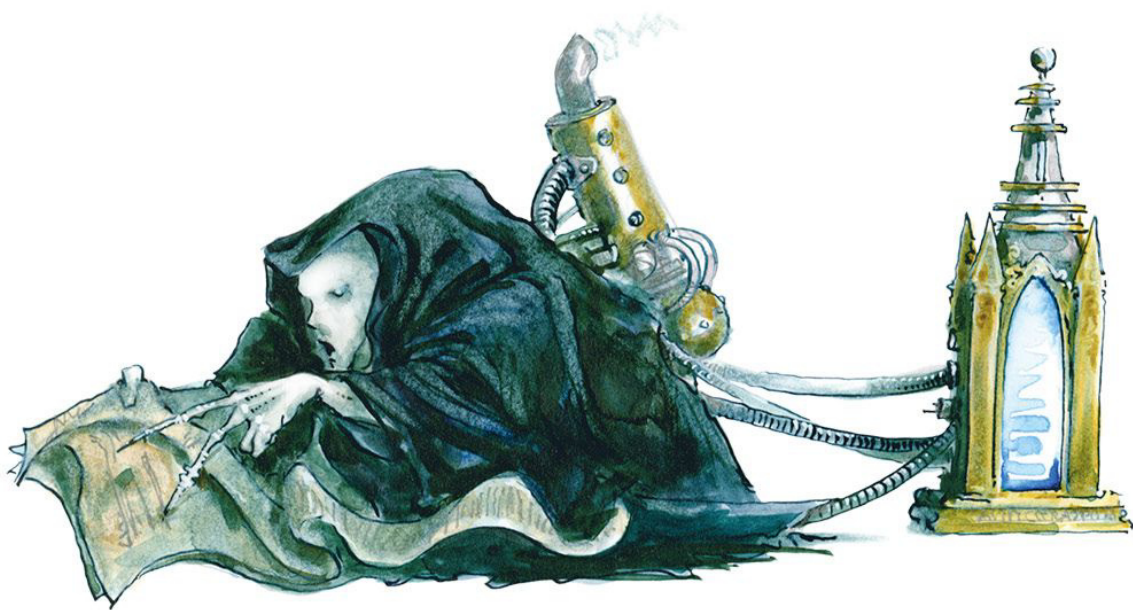
The Centurion designs permit a skilled Techmarine or servitor to access the various pistons and cables within and apply any sacred unguents. For a Space Marine to step inside the warsuit from the rear, the top section of the warsuit must be lifted upwards. At this stage he may exchange helmets for a more appropriate Centurion helmet, to better augment his targeting or monitor the feedback of the siege drills, or simply rely upon his own enhanced instincts. It is often the newer pilots who opt to go into battle with a helmet so that they may override the machine spirit and gain better control over it from within a sealed constituent. Once they have tamed the violent tendencies of the warsuit, then they may trust it more, extending their awareness more completely to the warzone around them.

Once inside, there are numerous harnesses to strap the battle-brother in place. These enable him to weather even the concussion caused by direct hits from firepower designed to rupture tank hulls. The pilot is connected by several power cables so that the Centurion suit directly interfaces with his own power armour; as this link is activated, his body pounds momentarily with newly established energies, enough to overwhelm an unenhanced human. At first, new pilots must enter a trance-like state purely to gain control over the machine spirit, and a mental duel is fought even before the suit is even activated.

Some machine spirits will not be tamed by the Space Marine, and a handful even cause burnout, frying the minds of their pilots. Such overly-powerful Centurion suits are quickly ushered away by Tech-priests for 'decommissioning'. Once connected into the warsuit, the accepted battle position is for a Space Marine's hands to be crossed against the front of his chest, behind the torso-plate and the suit's secondary weapons, for he controls the vehicle with his thoughts.

It is worth noting that certain Chapters, such as the Iron Hands, have developed particular expertise when interfacing with their own vehicles, and are therefore more naturally inclined to use them in battle. In fact, such is the strength of their belief that all flesh is weak – even that of a Space Marine – that pilots from the Iron Hands tend to dwell within the warsuit longer than is strictly necessary. A number of their pilots are now permanently bonded within their warsuit and can never be removed.

PILOT TRAINING



PILOT TRAINING



Centurion training requires an intense level of focus and determination, even for a Space Marine. A pilot undergoes numerous simulations, tactical recreations and bouts of endurance testing to ensure he is capable of controlling such a complex and powerful piece of wargear in violent situations.

As per the decrees of the Codex Astartes, each Chapter is responsible for training its own battle-ready Space Marine force, and an important part of this regime includes vehicle training. Only once tanks and aircraft have been mastered is a Space Marine ready to try his hand at controlling a Centurion battlesuit, though some Chapters – notably the Imperial Fists – will single out potential warsuit pilots earlier than others.

Part of the intense regime for a Devastator Centurion is hardening the Space Marine to the severe recoil of the weaponry. The warsuit permits a Space Marine to walk into battle armed with the firepower of a tank, and such powerful weaponry would crush a mere human. Recoil kicks hard on the chestpiece of his power armour, its blasts ricocheting around his nervous system and musculature and causing spasms in those unprepared. Battle-brothers who train as Devastator Centurions tend to develop massively proportioned upper-body muscles, even for Space Marines. The most successful Devastator pilots possess phenomenal mental powers in order to prioritise targets whilst enduring these violent kick-backs.

For Assault Centurion pilots, much of their readiness for full combat missions depends upon their handling of a siege drill, and developing the mental will and strength to operate it. Whilst some Chapters are satisfied to prepare at length on their home worlds, others prefer to see that the siege drills are put to more immediate and practical use in the crucible of war, hurling new inductees into the teeth of the foe with siege drills growling.

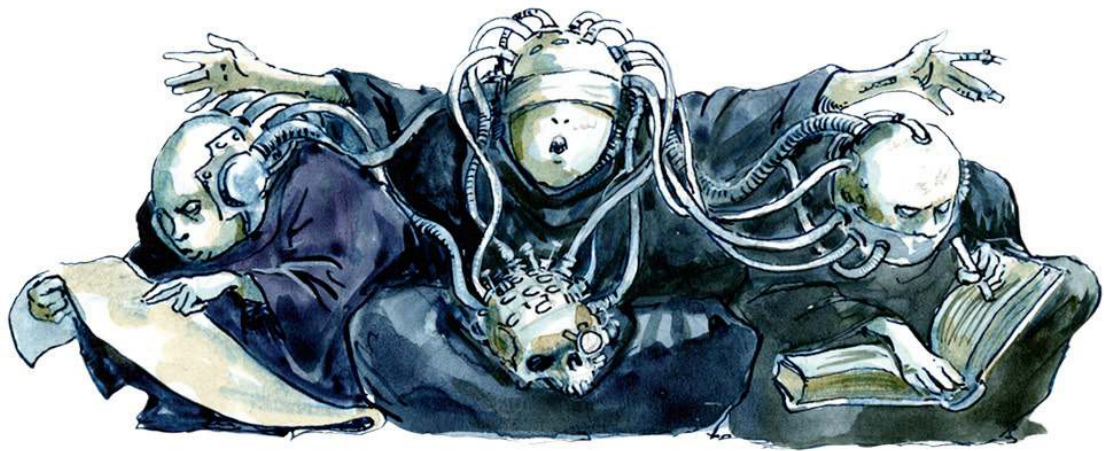
Because Centurion warsuits are a highly specialised asset within a Chapter's armoury, the majority of Centurion pilots are selected from a Chapter's Devastator and Assault Squads – though not from the ranks of the 1st Company. A Chapter's Veterans possess an exceptional level of battlefield experience, and their knowledge and combat flexibility means they are called upon to fight in a greater variety of circumstances, many of which would be unsuitable for deploying these bulky warsuits. Some Veterans would add bluntly that they find going to war in such slow-moving constructs undignifying.

Markings

Centurions share the same heraldry and organizational squad markings that can be seen on many other vehicles within a Chapter's pools. As well as this, they occasionally share similar sigils to the pilots who control their warsuits with respect to honours won in battle or their status within a company.

They also boast a Centurion Honour, a large stone sigil of two crossed fists set within a circle – echoing the position taken by a pilot inside. This is displayed upon the shoulder of the warsuit, in much the same way as a Crux Terminatus.

WEAPONS AND DEPLOYMENT



WEAPONS AND DEPLOYMENT



The specific deployment of a Centurion suit depends entirely upon the requirement, the weapons, and the squad to which they are assigned, as well as the tactical doctrines of a particular Space Marine Chapter. Broadly speaking, given that the typical Adeptus Astartes deployment is as swift and terrible as a thunderbolt, and that Centurions in contrast are slow-moving and bulky, they are sanctioned for use only in specific circumstances. They are stubborn and powerful tools for very difficult tasks.

THE OMNISCOPE

Though already possessed of superhuman senses, Centurion pilots are able to use Omniscope to perceive greater distances, see through otherwise-impenetrable levels of darkness, and achieve a heightened level of precision with their deadly weapons.

An Omniscope is comprised of various ultra-sensitive lenses, filters, radical electronics and thrice-blessed cogs, as well as sensor equipment. It was not to be found on the very first Centurion suits, but became a unique addition to squads after the results of combat situations were analysed.

The Omniscope is used by Centurion Sergeants, enabling them to guide their squads more effectively on the battlefield, to locate targets, and to gauge the weak points of allegedly impenetrable fortress walls. Utilising a molecular targeting matrix it allows the sergeant to focus a squad's fire more effectively on a single target. Such technology helps to bring an entire bastion crashing down to rubble, or to scythe a limb from an enemy war-construct.

ASSAULT CENTURIONS

The siege drill is a remarkable and unique device found on Assault Centurions. Constructed out of a ceramite alloy, the siege drill design was originally used for the most intensive mining operations in the galaxy, the core-deep tehldrite mines of the Regulum III Polar Stars. However, it was soon realised that, with modifications, it could be deployed effectively in a number of military operations, and was fitted accordingly to the Centurion warsuit.

The drill's reverberant growl strikes fear into defensive forces. Buildings are shredded into rubble, tanks are rapidly ground into scrap metal and stubborn xenos carapaces are reduced to bloodied, chitinous scraps. There is little that can withstand the onslaught of this hugely destructive tool, even a fortress wall fabricated out of adamantium.

Though capable of taking down almost any foe in the galaxy, Assault Centurion pilots are in their element when spearheading offensives against enemy fortifications. Once their siege drills gain traction on walls, they can tear yawning rents through the toughest plascrete or wraithbone within seconds. Once the Assault Centurions have opened a gap into an enemy fortification they continue leading the offensive to carry the breach, enemy fire pinging off their hulls as they smack into the heart of the foe's citadel. Assault Centurions possess a relatively narrow frame, when compared to a tank or an immense Ironclad Dreadnought. This means they can easily plough through constricted paths and bulldoze obscured lines of sight, obliterating debris and slaughtering any threats.

Assault Centurions can utilise Ironclad assault launchers, a weapon loaded with anti-personnel grenades which shreds screaming foes with a barrage of withering shrapnel. They are also armed with twin-linked flamers, which they put into effect in the narrow confines of cities, flushing enemies out of cover where the air is promptly filled with the noise of whooshing flame

and the smell of sizzling body fat.

Once inside a fortification, they can draw away the defenders' fire, confident in the resilience of their warsuits. This leaves the way clear for their battle-brothers to secure the area, so it is commonly the Assault Centurions who pave the way for other units to bring victory to the Chapter.

Assault Centurions, being committed to a specific task and of limited speed, usually require other units to support them in order to reach their full potential in a warzone. Their mobility is often enhanced by them being transported into battle by Land Raiders or Stormraven Gunships. Once deployed, many Chapters prefer to protect their Centurions against enemies with the strafing fire of air support, or the more mobile and flexible Terminators, to allow the warsuits to achieve their objectives. Others send in large numbers of Tactical Squads, who utilise the sheer size and toughness of the Centurions as walking cover, though this tactic is more effective with Devastator Centurions, which also possess a breathtaking level of firepower.

DEVASTATOR CENTURIONS

In contrast to the Assault Squads, Centurion Devastator Squads are able to make use of formidable guns more suited to long-ranged firefights. As a consequence of bearing such powerful weapons they take on a very different role on the battlefield.

Common to these warsuits, and not widely seen elsewhere in a Chapter's vehicle pool, are the grav-cannon and grav-amp. A grav-weapon distorts the gravity fields local to its target; therefore, the target's own mass is used against it. The greater the target, the more damage will be inflicted on it. This technology is lethally deployed at short range through grav-pistols and grav-guns, but many Devastator Centurions possess grav-cannons, so they may utilise this technology over greater distances. Even vehicles or war engines some distance away will be crumpled and distorted by these gravity-based implosions, until they are little but a wreck of metal and the flesh of whatever crew was once inside, while great beasts, their weird biologies constricting and contorting, erupt and fill the air with thick gouts of blood.

The grav-amp scries the gravimetric traces of the target and enables the wielder to localise the effects of their grav-cannon still further, creating structural contradictions that tear their target apart. The deadly combination of these technologies mean that the Centurion is often used as a formidable mobile weapons platform. It hunts larger threats from afar, sending Stompas buckling into the ground under the weight of their own scrap, or making Maulerfiends implode violently, their metal tendrils trailing into the newly carved void like the remnants of a dying star.

Both of these potent weapons incorporate ancient technology dating back to the Dark Age of Technology, which is only prescribed by the High Lords of Terra. If such might was not sufficient, Devastator Centurions may also march implacably to war bearing twin-linked heavy bolters, hurricane bolters, lascannons and missile launchers.

Devastator Centurion Squads can lend an overwhelming degree of firepower to both offensive and defensive strategies. As they are able to wreck whole squads of enemy infantry, a common tactic when deploying squads of Devastator Centurions is to defend a fortification already under the Chapter's control. In dire circumstances, they are used as armoured buttresses in their own right, allowing Space Marines to hunker behind them before bursting out to attack on the flanks. This way, Ultramarine Centurions of the 3rd Company held the Cadulaen Bridge on Vorscht II for three days and three nights, fighting off wave after wave of Tyranids who attempted to swarm across the structure while their battle-brethren fought repeated counteroffensives.

Where static defence is not required, they may be set loose alongside larger vehicles such as Stormravens or Dreadnoughts in order to hunt down Titans and other war engines. As mobile weapons platforms they are able to help advance battle lines. Their weapons reach far and

their sturdy yet practical armour can quite easily shrug off the worst an enemy can throw their way, be it baleful gunfire or alien spores.

FAMOUS BATTLES OF THE CENTURIONS



FAMOUS BATTLES OF THE CENTURIONS



025.M37 Purging the Lambis

First sanctioned use of an Assault Centurion outside of the Segmentum Solar. In orbit above Drandus V, the Iron Hands deploy Centurions against the Lambis, a 4km-long vessel suspected of evacuating thousands of heretics from the ongoing land battle below. Deployed from a Thunderhawk, the Centurion rips open the ship's hull to permit the Adeptus Astartes access. All crew and passengers are exterminated.

654.M37 The Fall of the Adamantium City

After the cessation of communications from the governor of the city of Zalos, the Adamantium City, suspicion is further raised by a refusal to pay the Imperial Tithe. Local forces based in the sub-sector are sent to investigate, only to be denied access and discover that the Adamantium City has been fortified.

Imperial Fists deploy from Battle Barges and lay siege to the city. Assault Centurion Squads are used to breach the citadel's walls, whereupon the populace is found to have fallen to Chaos. Renegade Space Marines are discovered operating within the city, inciting the Cultists that swarm around them. After a bloody battle, the Traitors are utterly destroyed, the horn-headed and pockmarked heretics all executed, but the Adamantium City is reduced to ruins.

734.M38 Ambushed by Traitors

In the Segmentum Solar, Space Marines from the Invaders 2nd Company investigate a reported Eldar sighting on Bissan. They are attacked by Word Bearers who arrive by Strike Cruiser. In the ensuing battle, a squad of Devastator Centurions staunchly defend their battle-brothers from atop the ruins of an old exodite settlement, eventually destroying many tainted tanks, Forgefiends and Helbrutes.

The Invaders Chapter launches an all-out assault on their attackers, eventually driving the traitors from the planet. The victory is attributed to the tactical awareness of Centurion Sergeant Thynor; he downs a Word Bearers Thunderhawk before the reinforcements aboard can deploy, turning the battle. Modest, he accredits the success to the precision afforded by his Omniscope.

223.M39 Devil's Claws

The Brazen Claws enter the Peligron Cluster to besiege a renegade stronghold on Falax. They lose three squads from their 3rd Company and a Daemonic surge destroys the mind of the librarian leading the assault. Their complex strategy is in disarray but, due to the heroics of their Devastator Centurions, the Daemons are kept at bay. An evacuation is made possible only by the firepower of the Centurions.

779.M41 The Siege of Hammerspire

Following a decade-long siege, the much-vaunted fortress of Hammerspire is finally breached by Iron Hands Assault Centurions and the defenders slain to a man – a full two years after the renegades declared their total and unconditional surrender.

885.M41 The Corrupted Tomb

The Black Templars board a Necron Tomb Ship that veers into the Segmentum Pacificus and hangs inert in space without apparent purpose. Two Assault Centurions from the 2nd Company carve a path through the sealed corridors of the mysterious ship, allowing Terminators to

investigate and eliminate any threats.

The Tomb Ship suddenly explodes, taking with it every Space Marine onboard. The reason remains unclear due to the garbled communications from within the ship in its final moments, but to this day the Black Templars suspect it to have been a trap laid by Imotekh the Stormlord.

954.M41 The Greenskin Hunt

White Scars from the 4th Company enjoy an impressive hunt against Ork war engines on Phrayton VI, a shrine world in the Scarus Sector. Using innovative tactics, they utilise the long reach of Devastator Centurions along with the rapidity of their bike squads to eventually outmanoeuvre the greenskins after a gruelling battle. After four Stompas are eliminated, the Ork menace is finally purged from the planet.

987.M41 Brothers only in Arms

The Iron Hands are attacked by a large Dark Eldar raid before they can thoroughly set up fortifications in defence of Montrekk. Aid comes from a detachment of their brethren from the Sons of Medusa, whose Devastator Centurion Squads effectively eliminate the piratical threat. Such powerful support receives only begrudging gratitude at best.

988.M41 The Campaign of Fire and Steel

Fighting alongside the Salamanders, the Imperial Fists 3rd Company bring an end to the ten-year Alpha Legion chokehold on Magnas Prime, deploying nearly thirty Centurion warsuits into the close, twisted streets of the sprawling hive to finally cut off the Alpha Legion's escape.

994.M41 The Defence of Hyth

Space Marines of the Eagle Warriors Chapter answer a distress call from the city of Hyth, shortly before all communications are smothered by a splinter hive fleet. Though unable to reach the city itself to prepare a robust defence, they deploy on the plain before it, in the path of the ravaging swarm, to unleash the full firepower of their Stormravens, Centurion Squads and Dreadnoughts. The Eagle Warriors' efforts hold back an incessant tide of Genestealers, and the Devastator Centurions eliminate the more severe threat of Haruspexes and Harpies before they are able to cause the devastation expected of them. After many weeks, victory is secured, preventing Hyth, and the planet, from succumbing to the Hive Fleet.

998.M41 The Third War for Armageddon

When Ghazghkull Thraka returns to Armageddon at the head of the largest Waaagh! in history, the Salamanders are one of the first Chapters to respond, Tu'shan personally leading six full companies to combat the Orks.

The Salamanders deploy and immediately launch several counter-attacks against the Ork Roks along the Hemlock River. The close-quarter fire-fighting within the Roks' crudely carved tunnels is ideally suited to the Salamanders' method of waging war. Terminator and Centurion Assault squads spearhead these efforts, the warsuits ploughing through all that the Orks throw at them in the labyrinthine tunnels. Assault Centurions carve new exits and lay underground traps that result in the greenskins being torched; their stubbornness, ingenuity and determination results in a momentary victory. The Salamanders destroy no fewer than nine Roks, along with the thousands of Greenskins within.

THE FALL OF THE ADAMANTIUM CITY



THE FALL OF THE ADAMANTIUM CITY



One of the most glorious early deployments of Centurions was at the Adamantium City, where Imperial Fists laid siege to the city's walls...

He sensed Chaos.

Centurion Sergeant Brantus could see no evidence of taint, but he could certainly sense its presence was to be found somewhere close by. Such a spiritual malaise was beyond his omniscope's sensory range, but he felt the influence of the Ruinous Powers festering within the towering walls of Zalos nonetheless. Even earlier, from the relative sanctuary of the Victory Fist as the Land Raider rumbled across the dust road leading to the city, he expected to discover the worst. Why else would a city cut itself off from the Imperium? Why else would the governor go silent after refusing to pay the tithe?

Now that he was standing within sight of the city's walls, however, Brantus felt the presence of Chaos more than ever: a bitter taste in the mouth, a foetid breath upon the back of his neck. They had deployed in the night – two Centurion Assault Squads, and one squad of Devastator Centurions – and made their way towards the city shortly before dawn.

Brantus turned to face Zalos, the Adamantium City, famed for its formidably armoured architecture. Originally a mining settlement connected to an unusual vein of adamantium ore, Zalos had grown over thousands of years to become a sprawl of industrial structures punctuated by spires that towered into the skies like the arms of a god. As he contemplated this vista, all that concerned Brantus was that the city stood within the hardest walls in the sub-sector, and was said to be impregnable – indeed, the city had never fallen, not even during the dark years of the Horus Heresy.

He'd heard those sentiments many times before, the boasts from planetary governors of their mighty citadels and unassailable walls. Brantus had always proven them to be wrong.

His omniscope clicked as it focussed, readouts scrolling across Brantus' vision as sensors scrutinised the fortress-walls of the city in minute detail. The walls of Zalos were a mere 96 feet tall and the city on this side was 5.6 miles wide. Enormous cannons sat atop the structure at regular intervals; such defences were powerful enough to trouble even a Battle Barge, should one of the ships present themselves above.

It would be simple enough to carve their way in, but what would they have to defend themselves against? There were no sentries, no guns pointed in their direction, no guards. No one.

'You have concerns about this mission, brother-sergeant?' It was a fellow Centurion who spoke.

Brantus' grim expression must have been unusually stern today. 'I have none, brother. Our task remains simple enough.'

The sun breached the distant hills, the sky purpling for a moment; storm clouds scudded along the horizon, gathering mass. Within minutes, rain and hail began to

rattle against the slab-like plates of the Imperial Fists' warsuits. The early morning sky groaned with thunder – and the Centurions would be bringing more.

Brantus gave the order and the three squads prepared for the walk to the Adamantium City. One heavy step after another, Brantus strode slowly and implacably forwards, each movement an audible groan of metal plates sliding across each other, of pistons releasing pressure. The ground rumbled and the warsuits closed the distance on Zalos.

He could perceive the presence of his other battle-brothers further behind: Ironclad Dreadnoughts beginning their approach and the faint grunting of tank exhausts, as Land Raiders waited with their cargoes of Tactical Squads. He had reassured his commander that the others in his company would be able to enter the city within an hour.

Brantus intended to remain true to his word.

As they approached the wall, which was covered in faded Imperial icons and a rusted Aquilla, Brantus willed his siege drills into action. The intense vibrations could be felt within his shoulders at first, and then eventually the whole warsuit began to shudder minutely. The Devastator Squad held back, their weapons levelled above the wall and to either side – expecting the worst, just like Brantus.

One by one, standing alongside one another, the eight Assault Centurions slammed their drills into the surface of the famous adamantium-enforced wall. Brantus intensified the speed of his drills, and now his whole warsuit thronged with power as the monumental force was deployed.

Debris shot back, ricocheting off their armour, and rubble began piling up like corpses around their feet. Suddenly a grav-cannon fired from one of his battle-brothers.

With his siege drills still utterly focused on grinding down the fortification, Brantus turned his head to witness the exchange of fire. His brethren aimed their weapons towards the south side of the city. There, some distance away on the ground, a betentacled war engine imploded violently, its twisted metal tentacles wrapping around itself as its own mass turned against it. More came, the behemoths' approach so violent he could feel the vibrations above those of his drills.

'Chaos,' he grunted, and relayed this information back to his commander.

'Sergeant,' Gysus shouted seconds later, 'I've successfully established a faultline.'

As the sound of gunfire raged around them, Brantus restructured his squads so that they focussed their efforts around the crack that Gysus had generated in the wall. Lurching into position, the Centurions deployed their might against that weakest part of the wall. Above him the siege cannons emptied enormous shells into the distant skies, where Stormravens began their approach.

Another explosion came, though it was not from any weapon. The fortifications buckled in a vertical plane. Large chunks of the adamantium-enforced walls rained down upon their heavily armoured warsuits, rolling back from the walls like a river that had burst its banks. Their adamantium bulk would surely have crippled any power-armoured battle-brothers who stood in their path.

The Centurions merely shrugged off this debris and focussed their efforts ahead. Siege drills still whirring amongst the dust cloud erupting from the wreck of the fortress-wall, Brantus' brothers proceeded forwards. They destroyed any remnants of the masonry that provided an obstacle, rendering the structure to gravel. Some of his

brethren fired bolter rounds into the gap, punching through whatever was beyond. Something or someone returned fire, the shells skimming off the Centurions' armour, but to no avail.

The impenetrable city had been breached.

Behind came an intense roar as two Stormravens appeared, risking the assault of the fortress' cannons, tilting their engines as they lowered themselves to the ground, and sending up a cloud of sand. As shells detonated around them, sending sand pluming into the air, two massive Ironclad Dreadnoughts stepped onto the desert world and began striding towards the newmade entrance into Zalos.

Brantus marched into the city, escorted by his Devastator brethren. Once the debris had settled and the immediate area was secure, he was not surprised by what he saw.

Chaos had long since claimed the city.

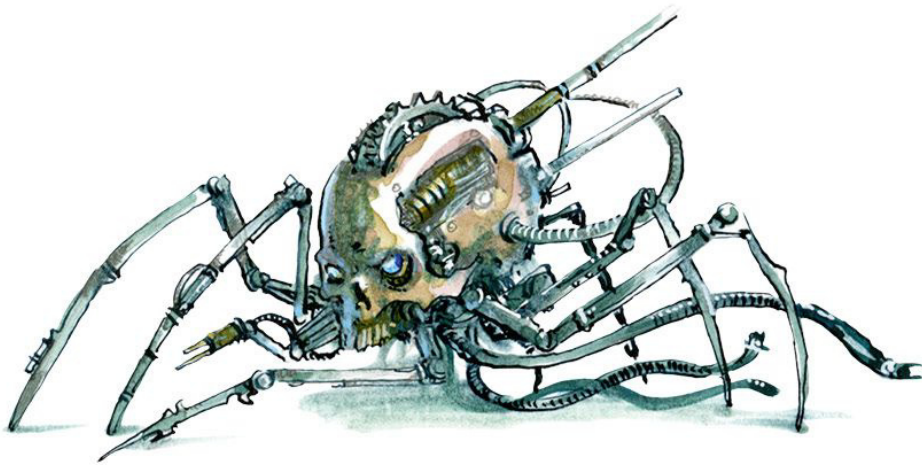
It could be discerned from the bloodied sigils graffitied on the walls, or the mob of wild-eyed citizens cowering against buildings in an effort to hide their hideous mutations. Others, also deformed, were armed with knives and clubs, and they began a slow stagger forwards. The taint could clearly be noted in the warped architecture of the governor's mansion, its four famous spires now twisted and distorted, horns and mouths erupting from its rooftop and walls. Even the very air within the city seemed to taste rancid, as though death breathed down from every lane. And within the dark corners of passageways came the flash of warp energy, as if some arcane being lay hiding, waiting to assault them with vile sorcery.

Zalos was diseased. No, diseased wasn't a fitting term for this: the city was beyond a cure, beyond redemption.

Upon his command, the warsuit pilots began to ready their flamers, but not before his omniscope informed him of a far greater threat than frothing cultists. Between the shadows of the tall buildings something stirred. It had the silhouette of a Space Marine, yet was different. It was tainted beyond anything he had seen so far, its armour distorted with grotesque horns and leering faces.

Only then did Brantus understand how much work there was to be done in Zalos.

MINIATURE SHOWCASE





Assault Centurion with two siege drills



Assault Centurion with two siege drills



Devastator Centurion



WARHAMMER
40,000

INDEX ASTARTES™

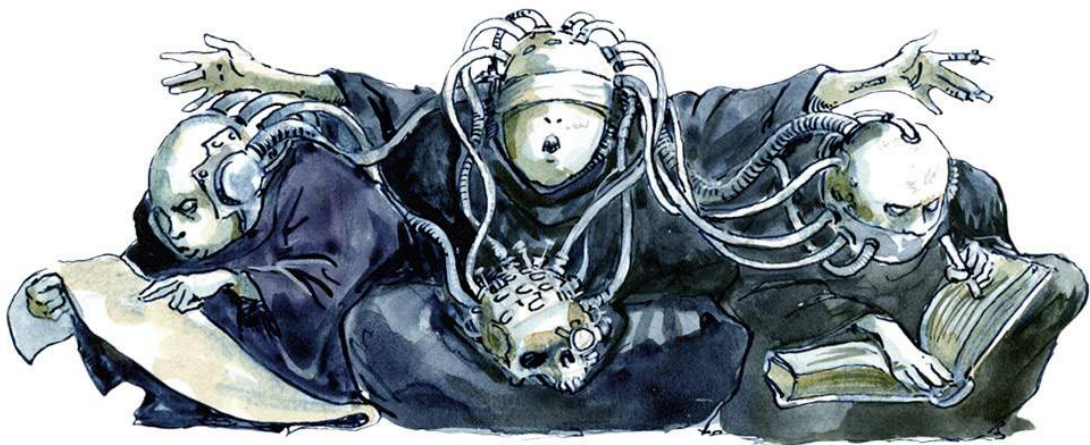


CHAPLAINS™



INDEX ASTARTES:

CHAPLAINS



SPACE MARINE CHAPLAINS



Space Marine Chaplains are the spiritual leaders of the Adeptus Astartes. They accompany their brother Space Marines into battle, chanting liturgies and exhorting them to great feats of bravery. They are terrifying and sinister figures, garbed in black ceramite power armour, and wearing their death's head masks. Ferocious and devoted, they are inspirational Space Marines who are found wherever the fighting is thickest. They lead their brethren from the fore, and perceive battle as the highest form of worship. The Chaplains rejoice in the slaughter of their enemies, rendering praise to the Emperor and to the founder of their Chapter as they fight.

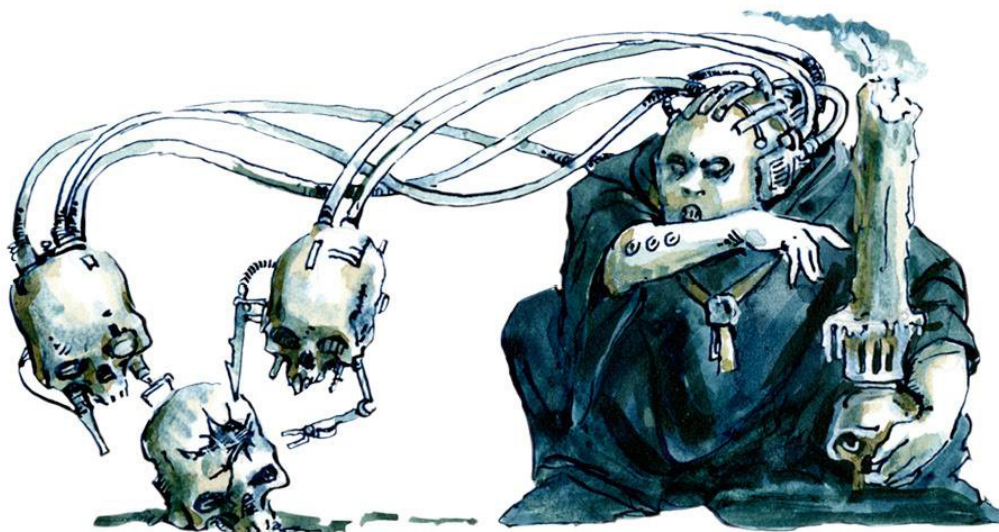


'Rejoice! Let the glory of battle envelop us! Let our enemies fear us, for we are the Emperor's wrath!'

- Chaplain Remataan, Imperial Fists Chapter



BACKGROUND



CHAPLAINS AND THE ECCLESIArchY

For over ten thousand years, the Ecclesiarchy has been a powerful organisation within the Imperium. The Imperial Cult preached by the Ecclesiarchy, also known as the Ministorum, has become the sole official religion within the Imperium, and it wields tremendous power. Its influence is enormous, and the followers of the Ministorum are zealous and unwavering in their belief and faith. The Ecclesiarchy is notoriously xenophobic and aggressive towards any perceived taint within Humanity. Any deviance from the teachings of the Imperial Cult is dealt with harshly. Persecutions are frequent throughout the Imperium as the Ecclesiarchy attempts to maintain its powerful position, stamping out any cults and religions that could threaten its authority.

The Cults of the Space Marines were formed long before the Ecclesiarchy became a powerful force within the Imperium, and they hold to their beliefs stubbornly, disdaining the fanatical ravings of the Ministorum. Their ideology features fundamental theological differences from the teachings of the Ecclesiarchy. The main point of contention between the Space Marines and the Ecclesiarchy occurs in how they perceive the Emperor. To the Ecclesiarchy, the Emperor is a god, the most divine being, the Saviour of Mankind and its eternal guardian. Most Space Marine Chapters, however, revere the Emperor as a brilliant, inspired man, but a man nonetheless. This forms a major schism between the two organisations.

Some amongst the Ecclesiarchy see the Space Marines as dangerous, heretical deviants, and certainly Wars of Faith have been fought for far less. However, the Space Marines are unfailingly loyal to the Emperor, even if they do not recognise his divinity. At the same time, the Space Marines are themselves to be revered, for they share aspects of their genetic structure with the Emperor himself. An uneasy truce has developed between the Adeptus Astartes and the Ministorum, though occasional disputes shatter this wary peace.

The Chaplains of the Space Marine Chapters are gifted with their sacred rosarius by the Ecclesiarchy in recognition of the link between the two organisations, though this is little more than a symbolic gesture of peace between them. Most commonly, this powerful protective amulet is worn around the neck in the form of an ornate cross, and it is sometimes referred to as their 'soul armour', capable of protecting them even from a direct hit by a lascannon.



'At battle's end, speak the Liturgy in a clear voice. Respect the bravery of the living. Give the Rite of Passage to the fallen. Honour the battle gear of the dead. To do all this with reverence, even when exhausted by battle and weary from the field, is the duty of the Chaplain. It is his burden and his satisfaction.'

- Interrogator-Chaplain Isiah, Dark Angels Chapter



CODEX ROLES WITHIN THE CHAPTER

Space Marine Chaplains are important figures within their Chapters, and they are well respected by their battle-brothers. They have a strong bond with the other members of the Chapter, featuring heavily within the daily lives of the Space Marines from an early stage. They are one of the first faces encountered when new recruits join the Chapter as neophytes, and the Chaplains preside over their indoctrination. The Chaplains teach them of the Chapter's cult beliefs and direct them in memorising the various hymns and liturgies that they are required to know. Though notoriously strict and fiery individuals, they are also renowned for their sense of duty and responsibility for their battle-brothers. They fight with inspired passion and belief, ever watchful for the well-being of their comrades.

The Chaplains are the spiritual leaders of their brethren, and guide the Space Marines in the oaths of loyalty sworn to the Chapter. Praise is rendered to the Emperor and the Primarch for the inception and existence of the Adeptus Astartes, although the way each is perceived varies from Chapter to Chapter. The Emperor is recognised as their founder and the saviour of Humanity, but is most often regarded as an awe-inspiring man by the Adeptus Astartes. Some few Chapters worship their Primarch as a god or demi-god, while most others praise them as superior, yet mortal beings, mighty heroes from an age long past.

A Chapter's central shrine, where prayer and worship is conducted, is called the Reclusium, and it lies within the Chapter's fortress monastery. It is a place of uncomparable cultural and spiritual reverence for the Chapter. This most holy place contains ancient artefacts of particular significance, often holding relics such as fragments of the Primarch's armour and the battle gear of heroic figures from the Chapter's history. Company and Chapter standards hang from its hallowed walls. The Chaplains lead their sermons within this vast Reclusium, rousing the Space Marines with their passionate exhortations. The Battle Barges and Strike Cruisers of the Chapter's fleet also hold towering cathedrals within their armoured halls, enabling Space Marines to confirm their devotions when far from the Chapter's fortress monastery. Indeed, the majority of a Chapter is often scattered across the galaxy, fighting in campaigns that may last hundreds of years. However, the Chaplains preach a very practical minded form of worship, and the presence of a formal chapel is not always necessary. The Chaplains accompany their battle-brothers in their crusades, guiding them spiritually wherever they may be. They lead them in prayer and ritual, whether it be within the Reclusium, aboard a strike craft or in the midst of battle itself.



DEVOTIONAL ARMOUR

The archaic and ornate armour that the Chaplains wear may be hundreds, if not thousands of years old. They are revered pieces of equipment, and are perceived as mobile shrines in themselves. The black armour is frequently decorated with an array of ancient tokens and embellishments, often in the form of purity seals, devotional pendants and etched litanies. These sigils come in a range of forms, often appearing as winged skulls, the Imperial Eagle or other Chapter-oriented symbols of dedication. The face plate of the Chaplain's helmet commonly resembles a death's head skull, inspiring fear in the enemy, as well as respect and devotion in their comrades.

Part of the formal regalia that the Chaplain carries is his staff of office, a potent crozius arcanum. This most holy of arcane items is used in official ceremonies and worship and is often topped with an Imperial Eagle or winged skull. The staff is carried to war by the Chaplain, reflecting the ritual importance of battle to the Space Marines. Each crozius incorporates a powerful energy field, enabling it to crush armour and flesh with ease, smiting the Chaplain's enemies in bright bursts of energy and faith.

Glorious battle is seen as the highest form of worship for the Chaplains. Their primary role is as inspiring, spiritual warriors, and they are chosen from amongst the most fiery and devoted of Space Marines. They lead their brothers from the fore, chanting the liturgies of battle while they slay their foes, urging their fellow Space Marines to greater feats of arms in the name of the Chapter and the Emperor. They encourage their battle-brothers to relive the glories of the Emperor, each warrior aspiring to the miraculous feats their founding father was capable of.



'Acknowledge death as it approaches, but do not succumb to its touch, for your purpose is great...'

- Chaplain Hanius, Blood Angels Chapter



Chapter Approved. Access Level: β seventy-three



Rosarius -
'Soul armour'
cross ref: 1Xz
Gifts of the
Ecclesiarchy

Chaplain Borrinoff of the Aurora Chapter



Wolf Priest Ulrik the Slayer
note: Wolf Helm of Russ



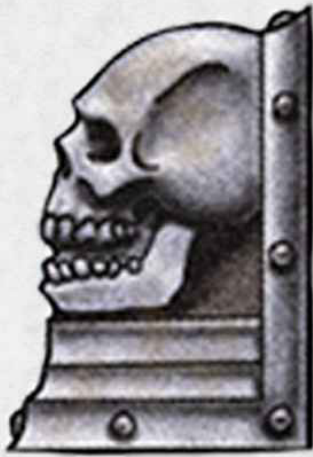
Ultramarines Chaplain Bracius



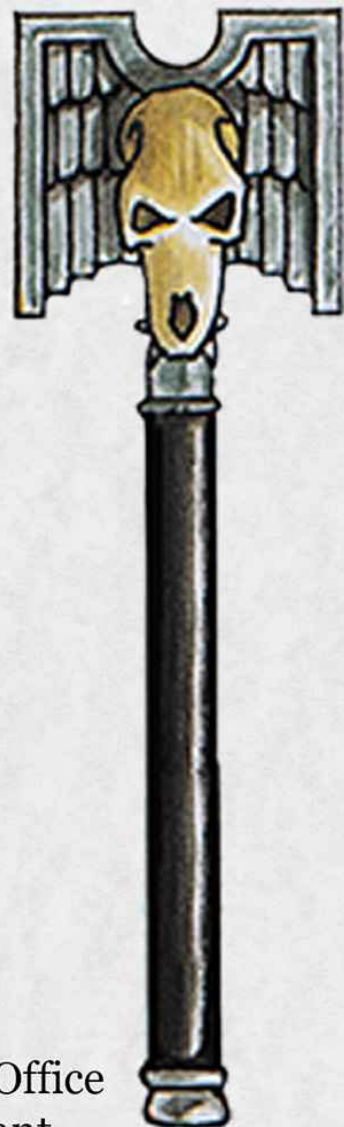
Blood Angels Chaplain Lemartes
Guardian of the Lost



Chaplain Xavier's Salamander mantle



Auto-reactive shoulder pads with
Chaplain Badge of Office - Death's Head



Crozius Arcanum - Staff of Office
Note: Space Wolves variant

CHAPTER VARIATIONS



CHAPTER VARIATIONS

Chaplains are the purveyors of the Chapter's cult, ensuring its continuation and survival within the Space Marine ranks. The Codex Astartes dictates the role that the Chaplains play within the Space Marine Chapter, as epitomised by the steadfast Ultramarines Chapter. However, the cult beliefs have been in existence for over ten thousand years, and over this time the various Chapters have branched apart, each respective cult following their own path with their own unique belief system. As a consequence, the roles that the Chaplains play will often vary between the different Chapters.

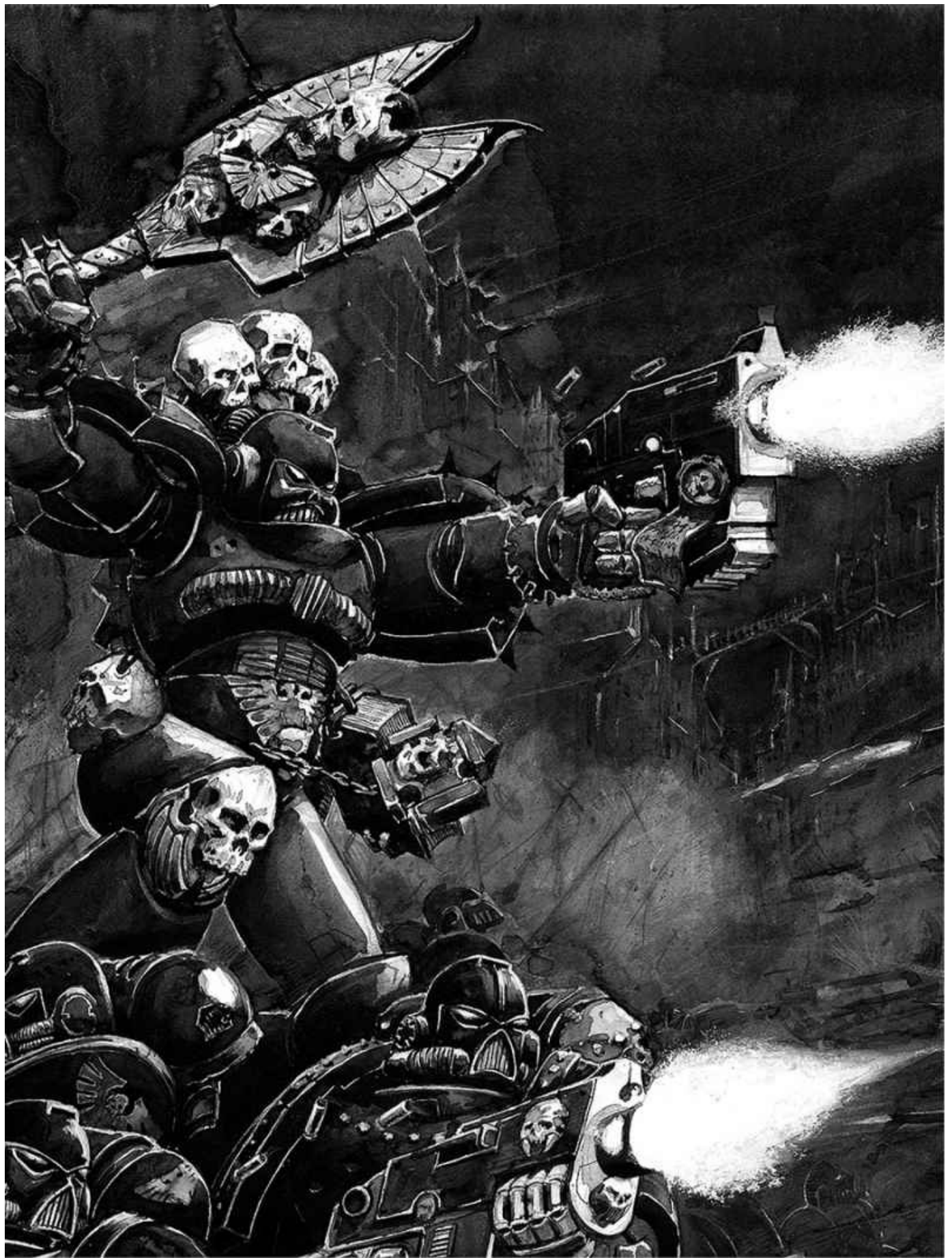
The Interrogator-Chaplains of the enigmatic and secretive Dark Angels Chapter are a sinister variation from the traditional Codex. They are driven solely by the pursuit and reclamation of their damned brethren, the Fallen. The Chapter is fanatically consumed with the finding of these heretics, and those who are captured are handed over to the Interrogator-Chaplains. Hidden within the depths of the Rock, in a structure known as the Tower of Angels, these menacing Space Marines undertake their grisly duty as they attempt to draw a confession from the lips of the Fallen. The Interrogator-Chaplains give a quick death to those rare few who repent, and lingering torment to those who do not. For each of the Fallen who confesses his sins, the Interrogator-Chaplain may add a single black pearl to his sacred Rosarius. The most successful of all the Dark Angels Interrogator-Chaplains was the great Master Molocia, who died after three hundred years of service to his Chapter. Throughout his illustrious career, he secured ten black pearls for his Rosarius, an achievement unmatched within the Dark Angels' ranks.

The Chaplains of the tragically flawed Blood Angels are the guardians of their Chapter, constantly vigilant for the first signs of the Black Rage amongst their battle-brothers. The Black Rage afflicts some members of the Blood Angels before a battle, their minds becoming unhinged as they relive the moment of their Primarch's death. On the eve of battle, the Chaplains move amongst the Space Marines as they are engaged in their prayers and devotions. They chant the moripatris – the mass of doom – and carefully check for the first signs of the terrible curse. Those who succumb to the affliction are removed from their brethren to become a part of the Death Company. They are typically led into battle by the Chaplain himself, and their madness and frenzy lends them superhuman strength and powers of resilience. They tear into the enemy without hesitation, shrugging off wounds that would make even their hardened battle-brothers fall. They would rather seek death in battle than risk succumbing to the even more debilitating catastrophe of the Red Thirst. Dark rumours can be heard that those who fall to such depths are kept atop the Tower of Amareo on the Blood Angels' home planet of Baal. Here they are said to exist for all time, howling for the living blood that they crave. The Chaplains are said to administer to these degenerates, although what actually becomes of the twisted creatures is a secret known only to the Blood Angels Chaplains themselves.

The Wolf Priests of the ferocious Space Wolves Chapter fulfil the dual role of both the Chaplain and Apothecary within a Codex Chapter. They adorn themselves in wolf totems, and often wear an intimidating wolf-skull helm over their heads. They minister to both the physical and spiritual well-being of their brethren, and they are fully responsible for the indoctrination and recruitment of young 'Blood Claws' from amongst the fierce, nomadic sea-faring people of their icy home world, Fenris. They can often be seen from afar, watching from a high vantage point as the native warriors battle each other. They pick suitable candidates from amongst those who display particular promise and bravery.

The beliefs of the Space Wolves Chapter more closely resemble those of the hardy, feral tribes than those of strictly Codex Chapters. They hold great respect for personal bravery and great deeds, but have little regard for inherited power. The Emperor is revered as the only warrior to ever have bested their Primarch, the headstrong Leman Russ, in hand-to-hand combat. They have little more than contempt for the Ecclesiarchy, although the Wolf Priests will often wear the

sacred Rosarius. However, their Rosarius is altered to represent a wolf totem rather than an Ecclesiastic icon. When they call on the Emperor and their Primarch in battle, it is not so much to seek their aid, but rather to call their attention so as to witness personal deeds and accomplishments.



WOLF PRIEST ULRIC THE SLAYER

Ulric is an ancient and revered figure, held in awe by his fellow Space Wolves. As a young Blood Claw, full of unrestrained fury, he fought in the First War for Armageddon where he earned a fearsome reputation. He engaged the enemy on the ash wastes of that tortured planet as part of the Great Company of Wolf Lord Kruger. Despite his relative lack of experience, he fought with astonishing skill and savagery. In one conflict he dispatched three traitorous World Eater Space Marines, earning the dubious honour of the respect of the corrupted Legion, who praise martial skill above all else. Ulric has recruited many Space Wolves who have gone on to become mighty warriors. Greatest amongst these are Logan Grimnar, the current Great Wolf, and the impetuous and tactically brilliant, if unorthodox, Ragnar Blackmane.



ULTRAMARINES CHAPLAIN CASSIUS

Cassius is the oldest living Space Marine within the faithful and valourous Ultramarines Chapter. Approaching four hundred years old, he fought by the side of the current Grand Master of the Ultramarines, Marneus Calgar, as they defeated the Tyranid Hive Fleet Behemoth. He is heavily scarred, his skin weathered and leathery, and his hair pure white. Despite his age, he fights with inspired passion and ferocity, and leads the warriors of the Ultramarines into battle against the enemies of the Imperium still. His age has tempered his battle skills with great wisdom, and his counsel is well respected amongst his brethren. He has a particular hatred for the Tyranids, to whom he has lost so many battle-brothers. He leads daring attacks against them whenever possible, totally fearless of the towering monstrosities, and inspiring his companions to remarkable feats of bravery.



SALAMANDERS CHAPLAIN XAVIER

Chaplain Xavier was said to epitomise the Salamander ideal more completely than any other Space Marine in the long history of the proud Chapter. A great upholder of the Promethean Cult, he encouraged dedicated acts of endurance and belief, and it is said that he slew with his bare hands one of the ancient, monstrous salamanders native to his home world of Nocturne. Xavier could spur his battle brothers to great acts of fortitude and resilience, and when he led them, the Salamanders never fell back before an enemy. He was killed whilst leading a heroic counter-attack against the twisted members of a Dark Eldar raiding force that had ravaged numerous settlements across the jungle-world of Drykeena. Mortally wounded and pierced by countless blades, he fought on, stubbornly refusing to fall. Only once all his foes were vanquished, their bodies piled around him, did he let his grievous wounds overcome him. His body was returned to Nocturne by his brethren, and his name is spoken with reverence.



ASMODAI, MASTER INTERROGATOR-CHAPLAIN OF THE DARK ANGELS CHAPTER

The Interrogator-Chaplains are specialists in their vicious field, but none is more adept than the sinister Asmodai. Such is his fearful reputation that the enemy would rather die than fall into his hands. Rumours of the horrific tortures he can inflict abound, and it is said that he can keep his victims alive for weeks on end as he subjects them to increasingly agonising torment. He is single-minded in his devotion to this dire responsibility, and he makes use of the horrific Blades of Reason to encourage the Fallen to repent their sins. The Blades are etched with labyrinthine

neural wires which cause unbelievable pain to the nerve fibres they sever. Though they cause intense anguish, their effects are not fatal, and so the torture may continue virtually indefinitely, until the subject is both physically and mentally broken, and willing to confess his foul crimes.

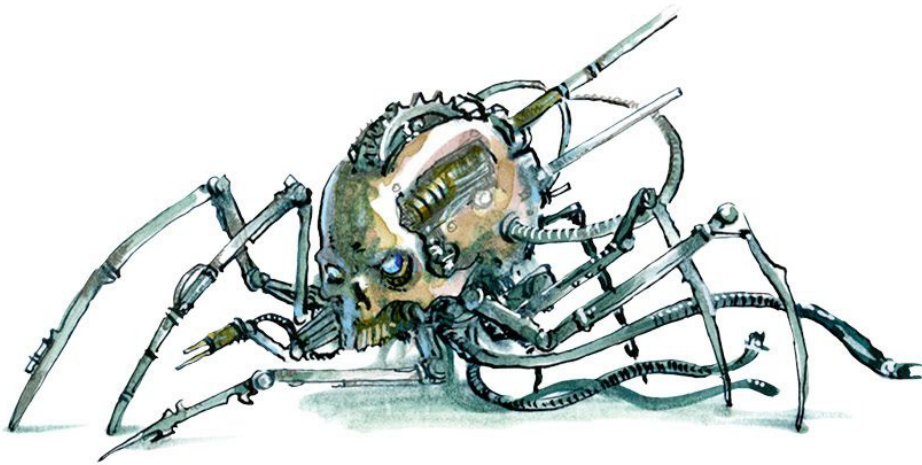


BLOOD ANGELS CHAPLAIN LEMARTES, GUARDIAN OF THE LOST

Chaplain Lemartes is a particularly strong-willed figure within the battle-hungry Blood Angels Chapter, leading into battle those of his damned brothers who have succumbed to the Black Rage. Lemartes is himself affected by the tragic curse, although through supreme strength of will he is able to have some control over its effects, and keeps his madness in check. Thus did he become the Guardian of the Lost, and the Death Company he leads have achieved many great victories due to his guiding presence. Bearing the deadly Blood Crozius in battle, he is a fearful figure of doom, a nightmare to behold as he charges into combat, unleashing the full fury of his rage.



MINIATURE SHOWCASE





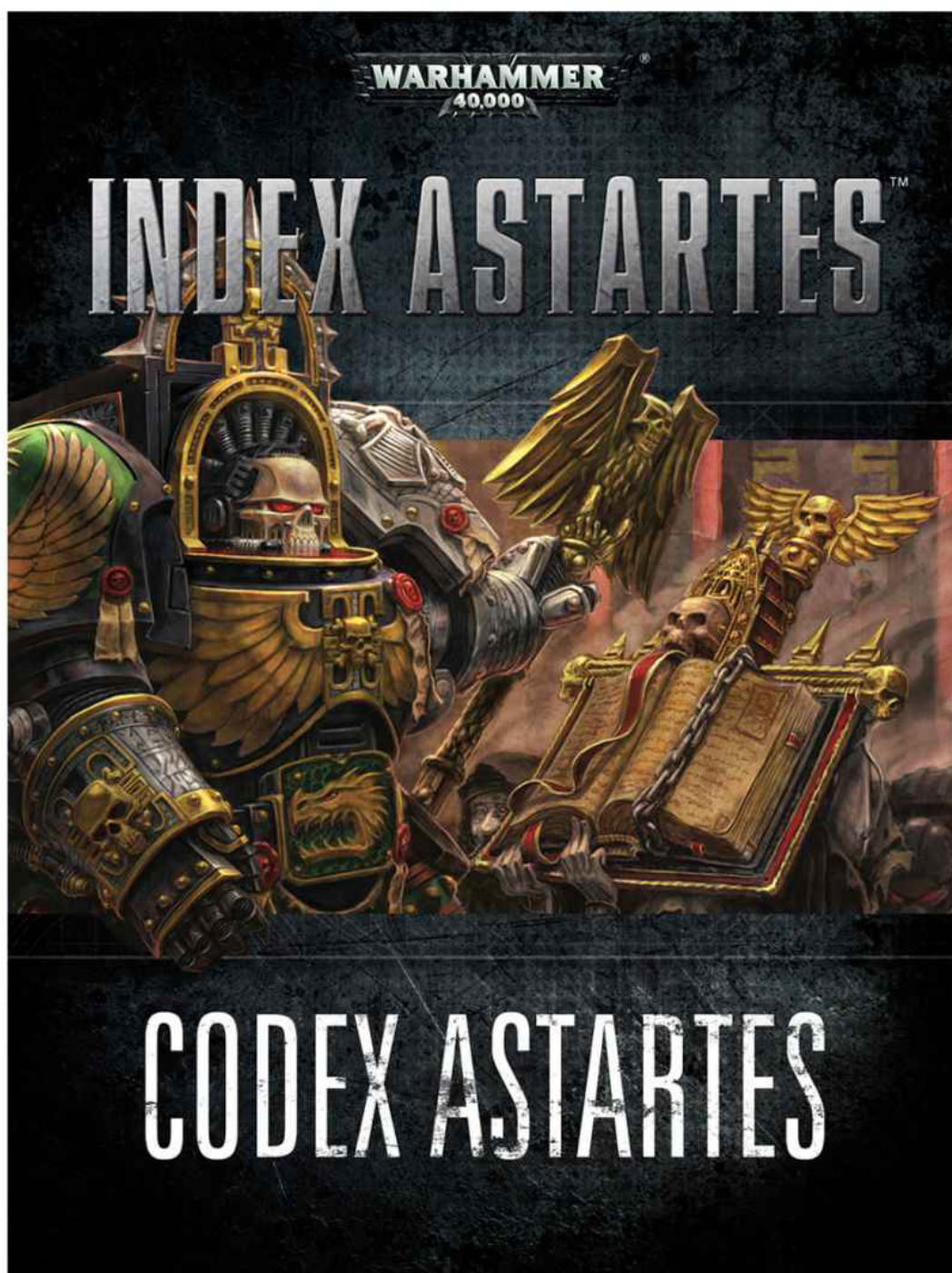
Ultramarines Chaplain with Jump Pack



Terminator Chaplain



Raven Guard Chaplain



INDEX ASTARTES:

CODEX ASTARTES



CODEx ASTARTES



The Codex Astartes describes the organisation, tactical operation and countless other aspects of Space Marine doctrine. Subjects as diverse as spiritual instruction and strategic supply are all covered in great detail within its thousands of pages. Over the following pages, we will look at the origins of this ancient tome and also how it states a Space Marine Chapter should be organised.



THE HORUS HERESY

Of the original twenty Primarchs, Horus was the greatest and most beloved of the Emperor and so was appointed his Warmaster. He was placed in charge of the entire northeastern battlefront of the Great Crusade, and only Lion El'Jonson and Leman Russ approached his tally of victories. Little did the Emperor know that Horus had come to serve dark masters. The gods of Chaos, malevolent beings from the warp, had corrupted Horus and his armies, turning them from the Emperor's light. Their plan was a foul and devious one. They would allow the Emperor to possess the galaxy for a fleeting moment only. He would be encouraged to stretch his empire further and further from Terra, until his forces were scattered thinly along the galactic fringe. Then the Dark Gods would strike and crush the Emperor with one swift blow. When rebellion erupted, Horus led more than half of the Space Marine Legions into the bloodiest civil war ever to engulf the galaxy and laid siege to the Emperor's Palace. It would take many pages to describe the battle for Earth; suffice to say the war ended when the Emperor teleported onto Horus' Battle Barge and slew the Warmaster in single combat. This titanic struggle saw the Emperor mortally wounded and from that moment on he ceased to live in the conventional sense. Rogal Dorn, Primarch of the Imperial Fists, discovered the Emperor's dying body and carried it back to Earth where he was interred in the life-preserving mechanism of the Golden Throne. For ten thousand years since that day, the Emperor has ruled immobile and immortal from the throne of Earth.

Though the Horus Heresy was at an end, the galaxy was in turmoil once more. The armies of the Imperium were destroyed or scattered and, worst of all, the Emperor could no longer walk amongst his warriors. The leadership and guidance he had given humanity for thousands of years was suddenly absent. To lead Mankind, a council was formed of the twelve most powerful individuals in the Imperium. They became known as the High Lords of Terra, and their role was to rule the Imperium on behalf of the Divine Emperor.



THE DARK FOUNDING

Not all the foundings of Space Marine Chapters are recorded in exact detail. However, the Adeptus Terra maintains a single bank of original gene-seed from every single Chapter ever created since the Horus Heresy. There is one notable exception: the Thirteenth Founding, also known as the Dark Founding. No-one knows how many Chapters were created by the Dark Founding or what became of them. Perhaps the secret lies in some deep vault in the record office of the Adeptus Terra. Maybe the Space Marines of the Dark Founding are still out there somewhere, waiting to return to the world that created them.



THE CODEX ASTARTES

The newly created High Lords established the organisation of the Imperium, which remains familiar to this day. The first High Lords laid down the structure by which the Adeptus Terra operates, and described the feudal responsibilities and duties of planetary lords. One of their

most important accomplishment was the reorganisation of the Imperium's armed forces. This task was undertaken almost single-handedly by the Primarch of the Ultramarines Legion, Roboute Guilliman, who quickly and efficiently codified the structure of the Imperial Guard, the Imperial Fleet and the Adeptus Astartes – the Space Marines. Of all his works, the most influential is the Codex Astartes, the great prescriptive tome that lays down the basic organisational and tactical edicts for the Space Marines.

The Horus Heresy had revealed weaknesses in the gene-seed of several Space Marine Legions which, in some cases, had been exaggerated by the accelerated zygote harvesting techniques needed to keep the huge Space Marine Legions up to strength. The powers of Chaos exploited this growing physical and mental corruption to turn Horus' troops against the Emperor. One of the prime objectives of the new Codex Astartes was to recognise and expunge these weaknesses.

The Codex decreed that Space Marines would be created and trained over a controlled period of time. The genetic banks used to produce implants would be carefully monitored, and cultivated organs would be subject to the most stringent tests of purity. Young initiates would undergo rigorous trials of physical and psychological suitability before they were accepted, and only those of the highest calibre would be chosen.

On Earth, the Adeptus Terra created genetic repositories to produce and store Space Marine gene-seed. These banks were used to provide all new gene-seed for Space Marines; to prevent cross-contamination, the genetic material of each of the old Legions was isolated. Henceforth, the new Space Marine Chapters would receive gene-seed only from their own genetic stock.

The gene-seed of the Traitor Legions was placed under a time-locked stasis seal, even though, at the time, many believed these dangerous gene stocks should be destroyed. By taking direct control of the genetic stocks, the Adepts on Earth could ultimately control the Space Marines. Now, they alone had the power to destroy or create Space Marine armies at will.

The Second Founding of the Space Marines was decreed seven years after the death of Horus. The existing Space Marine Legions were broken up and refounded as smaller, more flexible formations. Where the old Legions were unlimited in size, the new formations were fixed at approximately one thousand fighting warriors. This corresponded to the existing unit called the Chapter and, from then on, the Chapter was recognised as the standard autonomous Space Marine formation. No longer would one man have power over a force as powerful as a Space Marine Legion.

The existing Space Marine Legions were divided into new Chapters, one Chapter keeping the name and colours of the original Legion, while the remaining Chapters took new titles and colours. Most of the old Legions divided into fewer than five Chapters, (the Space Wolves divided into only two) but the Ultramarines were divided many times. The exact number of new Chapters created from the Ultramarines is uncertain; the number listed by the oldest known copy of the Codex Astartes (the so-called Apocrypha of Skaros) gives the total as twenty-three, but does not name them.

As a result of the Second Founding, the Ultramarines' gene-seed became the favoured gene-seed of most subsequent Foundings. New Chapters created from the Ultramarines are often referred to as the Primogenitors, or 'first born'. All the Primogenitor Chapters venerate Roboute Guilliman as their founding father and patron.

The Codex Astartes further defines the tactical roles, equipment specifications and uniform identification markings of the Space Marines. These guidelines have evolved over the centuries, and the Codex Astartes of the 41st Millennium is a highly developed treatise combining the wisdom of hundreds of military thinkers throughout history. Some of its contents

seem petty and restrictive, hardly worthy of the great mind of the Primarch. Others describe actual battles together with comments on the tactics employed and the decisions of the commanders of the day. As such, the Codex Astartes is revered as a holy text, and many Chapters regard its recommendations as sanctified by the Emperor himself.



THE CODEX CHAPTERS

The Chapters that rigidly follow the recommendations of the Codex Astartes are sometimes referred to as Codex Chapters. These Space Marines adhere to the Codex as the model for their organisation, identification markings and tactical doctrine. Of all the Codex Chapters, the most famous is the Ultramarines, the Chapter of Roboute Guilliman himself, and many of the other Codex Chapters descended from their genetic line adhere to the Codex's tenets just as loyally.

Many Chapters, however, do not stick so rigidly to the patterns laid down in the Codex, either for organisation, tactical roles or other processes. These Chapters are largely organised according to the Codex but are further shaped by their home world and the personality of their Primarch. The Blood Angels and Dark Angels are prime examples of this. There are also a small number of Chapters that are vastly divergent from the Codex, and owe almost nothing at all to it. The most famous of these 'wild' Chapters are the Space Wolves, whose strong-willed Primarch, Leman Russ, moulded his Chapter very much in his own image, irrespective of other influences.

The Adeptus Terra has never felt it necessary to enforce the Codex absolutely. Indeed, it is doubtful whether it could. However, with subsequent Foundings they have always favoured the Ultramarines' gene-seed and created new Codex Chapters from their line. With the passage of time, some of these Chapters have subsequently strayed from the strict letter of the Codex, introducing new variations but remaining broadly faithful to the principles laid down by Roboute Guilliman many thousands of years before.



'To die without purpose is not a service to the Emperor. It is a heresy to waste lives entrusted to you as an Imperial officer. There is nothing shameful or disloyal in righteous retreat. But in withdrawing from the enemy's presence, allow him no succour. That which cannot be saved must be destroyed. Leave no weapons, armour, transport, food or water in your passing. Scorch the earth at his feet, and leave him desert and desolation as his victory gifts.'

- Codex Astartes



SUBSEQUENT FOUNDINGS

The history of the Imperium since the Heresy is not a continuous story. There have been periods of rebellion and anarchy, times when the balance of power has suddenly changed and history has been quite literally rewritten. Many of the subsequent Foundings of Space Marines belong to these troubled times, making it almost impossible to be certain when some Chapters were created or even how many Chapters have been created in total. It is believed that there are approximately one thousand in existence today, scattered throughout the galaxy. Of these, more than half are descended from the Ultramarines, either directly or through one of the Primogenitor Chapters of the Second Founding.

THE SECOND FOUNDING

It is not certain how many new Chapters were created by the Second Founding. Many Imperial

records were lost during the Age of Apostasy, a troubled time that lies across the history of the Imperium like an impenetrable veil. In all likelihood, some of the Chapters created during the Second Founding have since been destroyed, leaving no record of their deeds. Others have been lost in more recent times and their names are now all that remain of them.



THE CURSED FOUNDING

The Twenty First Founding was the largest since the Second Founding. It took place sometime immediately before the Age of Apostasy, a time of civil war which divided and almost destroyed the Imperium. The new Chapters were dogged by bad luck right from the start. Several disappeared mysteriously whilst in action or in warp space.

Every surviving Chapter of the founding is affected by spontaneous genetic mutation of its gene-seed. As a result the Chapters have gradually dwindled in size as their inability to raise and induct recruits means that battle casualties cannot be replaced. Worse still, some Chapters have developed genetic idiosyncrasies, mutations which strain the tolerance of the Inquisition and threaten the Chapters' survival. Few Chapters have suffered as ignominious an end as the Flame Falcons whose spontaneous and extreme physical corruption turned them into a race no longer human or sane. The Chapter was declared Excommunicate and driven from its homeworld of Lethe by the Grey Knights.



CHAPTER ORGANISATION



Following the Horus Heresy, the Space Marine Legions were divided into Chapters consisting of roughly one thousand warriors. A large section of the Codex Astartes is dedicated to structuring the organisation of these Chapters. A Chapter consists of ten companies each numbering one hundred Space Marines. A company consists of ten squads of ten men including a sergeant, and is led by a Captain.

Every company, with the exception of the Scout Company, maintains Rhino transports for their squads and officers. The 1st Company is also equipped with Land Raiders to carry Terminator squads. It is customary for Dreadnoughts to remain with their company, as their fearsome presence bolsters the company's fighting strength.

CHAPTER ORGANISATION

HEADQUARTERS

HEADQUARTERS STAFF

Master of the Chapter
Senior Officers
Administrative Staff
Support Personnel

ARMOURY

Techmarines & Servitors

LIBRARIUS

Chief Librarian
Epistolaries
Codiciers
Lexicaniums

HEADQUARTERS

A Chapter also includes a number of officers and specialists who stand aside from the company organisation. These individuals are known as the Headquarters staff and they may be assigned to fight with a company in battle. Included amongst them are psychic Librarians from the Chapter's Librarius and Techmarines, together with their servitors.

Although the Codex describes a number of ranks and responsibilities within the Headquarters staff, only a very few of these officers actually accompany the Chapter to war. Many are non-combatants of advanced years whose roles are to recruit and train new members or administrate the Chapter. Some ranks described by the Codex include the Chapter's Ancient (or Standard Bearer), the Master's Secretarius, the Lord of the Household, the Chapter's Armourer, the Commander of the Fleet, Victuallers, the Commander of the Arsenal, Commander of Recruits and Commander of the Watch.



ULTRAMARINES CHAPTER BANNER

THIS BANNER, WITH LAVISH DESIGNS DEPICTING THE VICTORY AGAINST HIVE FLEET BEHEMOTH, CARRIES THE NAMES OF THE GREAT HEROES FROM THE WAR, AS WELL AS THE PIVOTAL ENGAGEMENTS.

VETERANS

1ST COMPANY

Captain
Chaplain
Apothecary
Standard Bearer

SQUADS

20 Terminators or 10 Veterans

SUPPORT

Dreadnoughts
Rhinos
Land Raiders

FIRST COMPANY - VETERANS

Of the ten companies comprising a Chapter, the 1st Company consists of veteran troops and is invariably the most powerful. The 1st Company is the only one trained to use the treasured suits of Terminator armour.



ULTRAMARINES 1ST COMPANY BANNER

1ST COMPANY KNOWN AS THE 'WARRIORS OF ULTRAMAR'

THIS BANNER BEARS A CRUX TERMINATUS AND HONORIFIC EMBLEM
FOR THE FALLEN OF THE BATTLE FOR MACRAGGE.

BATTLE COMPANIES

BATTLE COMPANIES

The 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th are Battle Companies, each consisting of six squads of Tactical Space Marines, two of Assault, and two of Devastators. These four Battle Companies form the main battle lines and generally bear the brunt of the fighting. The Assault Squads of the Battle Company may be deployed as Bike Squads or Land Speeder crews.

2ND COMPANY

Captain

Chaplain

Apothecary

Standard Bearer

SQUADS

6 Tactical

2 Assault

2 Devastator

SUPPORT

Dreadnoughts

Rhinos

Land Speeders

Bikes



ULTRAMARINES 2ND COMPANY BANNER

2ND COMPANY, THE 'GUARDIANS OF THE TEMPLE'

THE BANNER BEARS MOTIFS, SUCH AS LAURELS AND SKULLS,
ALONGSIDE THE SYMBOL OF THE ULTRAMARINES.

3RD COMPANY

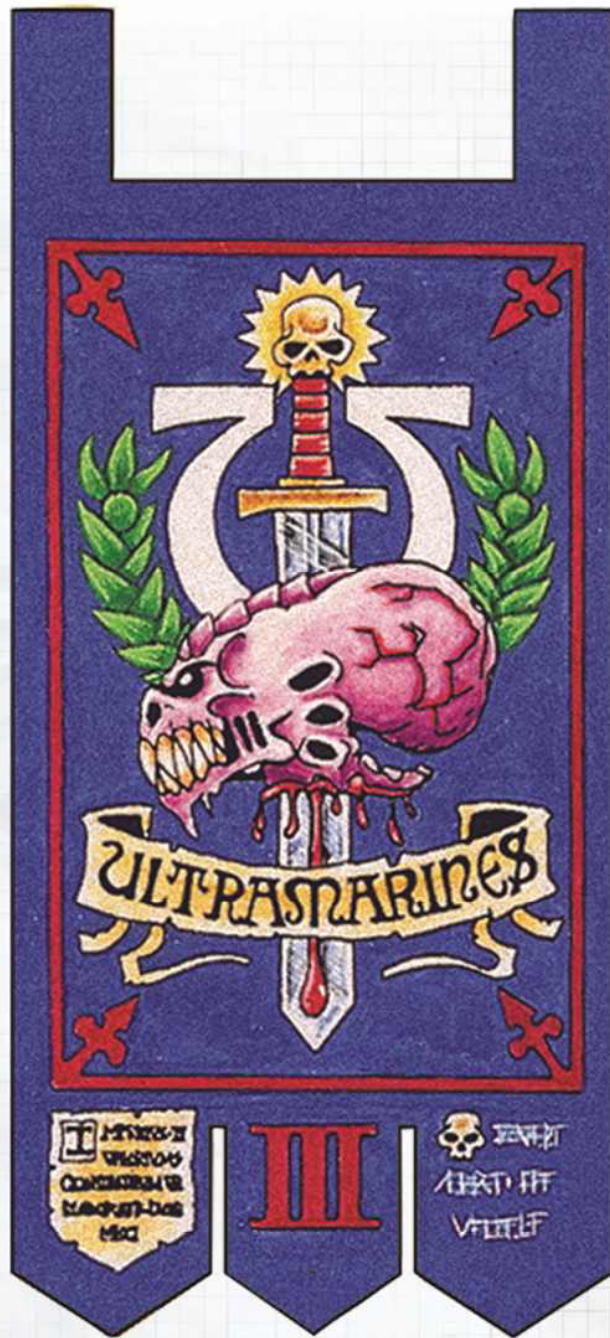
Captain
Chaplain
Apothecary
Standard Bearer

SQUADS

6 Tactical
2 Assault
2 Devastator

SUPPORT

Dreadnoughts
Rhinos
Land Speeders
Bikes



ULTRAMARINES 3RD COMPANY BANNER

3RD COMPANY, THE 'SCOURGE OF THE XENOS'

THE 3RD COMPANY'S BANNER DISPLAYS A BATTLE HONOUR WON IN THE FIRST TYRANNIC WAR.

4TH COMPANY

Captain
Chaplain
Apothecary
Standard Bearer

SUPPORT

Dreadnoughts
Rhinos
Land Speeders
Bikes

SUPPORT

Dreadnoughts
Rhinos
Land Speeders
Bikes



ULTRAMARINES 4TH COMPANY BANNER

4TH COMPANY, THE 'DEFENDERS OF ULTRAMAR'

THE BANNER SHOWS THE IRON GAUNTLET OF ITS FORMER LEADER, CAPTAIN IDAEUS, WHICH INDICATES HE WAS A MIGHTY HERO.

5TH COMPANY

Captain
Chaplain
Apothecary
Standard Bearer

SQUADS

6 Tactical
2 Assault
2 Devastator

SUPPORT

Dreadnoughts
Rhinos
Land Speeders
Bikes



ULTRAMARINES 5TH COMPANY BANNER

5TH COMPANY, THE 'WARDENS OF THE EASTERN FRINGE'

CAPTAIN GALENUS IS ALSO THE MASTER OF THE MARCHES.
 THE BANNER DISPLAYS THE EAGLE THAT IS HIS BADGE OF OFFICE,
 IT IS A SIGN OF HONOUR TO DISPLAY SUCH RANKS ON THEIR ARMOUR WITHIN THE COMPANY.

6TH COMPANY

Captain
Chaplain
Apothecary
Standard Bearer

SQUADS

10 Tactical

SUPPORT

Dreadnoughts
Rhinos
Bikes

6TH & 7TH COMPANIES

Companies 6 and 7 are Tactical Companies, each consisting of ten Tactical Squads. These are intended to act as a reserve and may be used to reinforce the main battle line, launch diversionary attacks or stem enemy flanking moves. The 6th Company is also trained to fight on bikes and the entire company may be deployed as Bike Squads. Similarly the 7th Company squads are trained to fight from Land Speeders, enabling the company to fight as a light vehicle reserve formation.



ULTRAMARINES 6TH COMPANY BANNER

THOUGH ONE OF THE ULTRAMARINES RESERVE COMPANIES, THE 6TH COMPANY HAS WON MUCH HONOUR, NOTABLY IN THE DEFENCE OF THE GENO SECTOR. CAPTAIN EPATHUS IS THE MASTER OF THE RITES, AND HIS SHOULDER GUARD BEARS THE SKULL INSIGNIA OF THE COMPANY.

7TH COMPANY

Captain
Chaplain
Apothecary
Standard Bearer

SQUADS

10 Tactical

SUPPORT

Dreadnoughts
Rhinos
Land Speeders

6TH & 7TH COMPANIES

Companies 6 and 7 are Tactical Companies, each consisting of ten Tactical Squads. These are intended to act as a reserve and may be used to reinforce the main battle line, launch diversionary attacks or stem enemy flanking moves. The 6th Company is also trained to fight on bikes and the entire company may be deployed as Bike Squads. Similarly the 7th Company squads are trained to fight from Land Speeders, enabling the company to fight as a light vehicle reserve formation.



ULTRAMARINES 7TH COMPANY BANNER

7TH COMPANY, THE 'DEFENDERS OF CAESEREAN'

THEIR NAME DERIVES FROM THE MEMORY OF THEIR
CRUSHING DEFEAT OF KORUS THE DEFILER.

8TH COMPANY

Captain
Chaplain
Apothecary
Standard Bearer

SQUADS

10 Assault

SUPPORT

Dreadnoughts
Rhinos
Land Speeders
Bikes

8TH COMPANY

The 8th Company is an Assault Company consisting of ten Assault Squads. This is the most mobile company and is often used wherever a strong hand-to-hand fighting force is needed.



ULTRAMARINES 8TH COMPANY BANNER

8TH COMPANY, 'THE HONOURBLADES'

THE CROSSED SWORDS INDICATE THE COMPANY'S DESIGNATION
AS A DEDICATED ASSAULT COMPANY.

9TH COMPANY

Captain
Chaplain
Apothecary
Standard Bearer

SQUADS

10 Devastator

SUPPORT

Dreadnoughts
Rhinos

9TH COMPANY

The 9th Company is a Devastator Company, consisting of ten Devastator Squads armed with heavy weapons. They anchor defence points and provide long range fire support.



ULTRAMARINES 9TH COMPANY BANNER

9TH COMPANY, THE 'STORMBRINGERS'

THE 9TH COMPANY'S BANNER CARRIES THE TRADITIONAL
ULTRAMAR LIGHTNING BOLT BLAZON.

SCOUTS

10TH COMPANY

Captain
Chaplain
Apothecary

SQUADS

Scouts

SUPPORT

Bikes

10TH COMPANY SCOUTS

The Chapter's 10th Company is its Scout Company consisting of a number of Scout Squads. Scouts are youths who have been recruited and partially transformed into Space Marines. Until their physical transformation and training is complete they fight as Scouts. There is no formal size for a Scout Company as the rate of recruitment is not fixed.

SQUAD ORGANISATION



According to the Codex Astartes, Space Marines are organised into three different types of squad: Tactical, Assault and Devastator. Each of these squads has a unique battlefield role and they are designed to operate together to provide mutual support and maximum flexibility. In addition to these three squads the 1st (Veteran) Company can be formed into Terminator or Veteran Squads while the Scouts are always fielded as Scout Squads.



Tactical Squads are the most commonly found squad in a Chapter. A Tactical Squad is led by a Sergeant and includes nine other Space Marines. Of these, seven Space Marines are armed with boltguns, whilst the remaining two can be armed with boltguns or, alternatively, one may carry a heavy weapon and the other may carry a special weapon. This combination is the most tactically flexible and offers a good mixture of capabilities within the squad.



Assault Squads are specialists at fighting in hand-to-hand combat. Each squad consists of a Sergeant and nine Space Marines equipped. They are equipped with jump packs and commonly armed with a close assault weapon in each hand; usually a bolt pistol and chainsword. Optionally, two of the Space Marines may carry plasma pistols or flamers. This combination is ideal for fast-attacking, close-quarter fighting assault troops.



Devastator Squads consist of a Sergeant and nine Space Marines. Up to four of the Space Marines may be armed with heavy weapons, whilst the remainder will carry boltguns. This is the most heavily armed type of Space Marine squad and they are deployed wherever extra fire support is needed, especially when the Chapter faces enemy tanks or fortified positions.



Terminator Squads wear the uniquely powerful Terminator armour. These are massive in construction, virtually turning a Space Marine into a one-man tank. Every Chapter has a limited number of Terminator armoured suits, and each is an ancient artefact crafted many thousands of years ago. Terminators are less mobile than other Space Marines and are primarily used in boarding actions or at extreme close quarters when heavy firepower cannot otherwise be brought to bear.



Sternguard Veteran Squads follow the same organisation as Tactical squads, though the Sergeant and the Space Marines under his command are all Veterans, and bear a variety of potent close-range weapons. These squads are rarely deployed en masse but are sometimes used to strengthen an attack.



Vanguard Veteran Squads usually consists of nine Veterans, led by a Veteran Sergeant. They sport jump packs and a plethora of deadly melee weapons, and lead assaults or provide the Chapter with flexible, hard-hitting reserves.



Scout Squads consist of a Space Marine Sergeant and four to nine Scouts. The role of the Sergeant is to train the Scouts and lead them in battle. Only Sergeants of considerable experience and status are designated for this role.

All Space Marine squads, with the exception of the Scouts, are nominally of ten troopers, but can be divided into two separate combat squads in battle, giving each unit a further degree of flexibility in action.



WARHAMMER
40,000

INDEX ASTARTES™



COMPANY CHAMPIONS™



INDEX ASTARTES:

COMPANY CHAMPIONS



SPACE MARINE COMPANY CHAMPIONS



Company Champions are charged with defending the honour of their company, their Chapter and the Emperor himself. They engage the warlords and champions of the foe in single combat, leaving their Captains free to conduct the wider battle, rather than engage in a series of personal combats. Company Champions have key roles in the rituals and ceremonies of the Chapter, representing their brothers in rites and mysteries as they do in war.

ORIGINS

It is believed that the first Company Champions were to be found in the ranks of the Space Marine Legions as they fought in the Emperor's Great Crusade. Although most records from this time were lost during the dark days of the Horus Heresy and the strife that followed, there are fragmentary reports of heroes armed with shining blades and clad in the mightiest suits of armour who protected their liege lords, the Primarchs and Praetors of the Legions, on the field of battle.

What is known is that when the Ultramarines Primarch, Roboute Guilliman, came to break up the Legions and wrote the Codex Astartes – the tenets of which still guide the organisation of the Adeptus Astartes ten millennia later – Company Champions were firmly established as part of every Chapter's structure. It is likely, given the great emphasis placed on personal honour within the realm of Ultramar, that the concept of champions who protect the Masters of the Chapter originated within the XIII Legion, though none now can say for sure.

SELECTION

The champion of each company is chosen very carefully, for his skill in battle may be the difference between life and death for his Captain, and therefore between victory or defeat in battle.

Company Champions are rarely warriors of rank; those with the skill to command their fellow Space Marines in battle are better utilised as squad Sergeants or Captains. Instead, champions are chosen for their skill at arms.

By the strictures laid down in the Codex Astartes, it takes an act of great personal valour for a Space Marine to be considered for the role of Company Champion, as well as a demonstrated record of humility where others strive for personal glory. Such warriors must always keep the safety of their commander uppermost in their mind, even as they match blades with the deadliest of foes.

Different Chapters, however, choose their champions in different ways. The Silver Skulls cleave strongly to the visions of their Prognosticators, who see those marked for greatness and sequester them away to be trained in the arts of duelling until their very body is a weapon, every instinct honed to a razor edge.

The Imperial Fists and many of their Successor Chapters hold great tournaments whenever a Company Champion dies, where any warrior of the company may compete to take up the mantle of the fallen hero and represent their Captain. Few sons of Rogal Dorn can resist such an opportunity, and many friendly grudges result from these tournaments, spurring unsuccessful battle-brothers on to ever greater feats of valour on the field of battle.

It is even whispered that among the Mortifactors, the warrior who hunts and slays the killer of a former Company Champion and takes the foe's skull will be named as the new champion. It is said that such hunts have taken battle-brothers of the Mortifactors as far afield as the hidden city of the piratical Dark Eldar and into the depths of the Eye of Terror itself. It is true that when the Mortificators march to war, their Captains often go unaccompanied by a champion, lending credence to such wild-seeming rumours.



'And within each company, the mightiest warrior shall be anointed as Champion. He shall bear arms and armour of great craftsmanship, and he shall protect his Captain from all harm, though it cost him his life. Great honour shall be bestowed upon him in life and in death, and he shall be lauded with great praise.'

*- From the teachings of Roboute Guilliman
as laid down in the Apocrypha of Skaros*





ROLE WITHIN THE CHAPTER



CHAMPIONS AT WAR



When Company Champions take to the battlefield, it is as part of a command squad, assigned to accompany a great hero of the Chapter. Most commonly, the Champion – along with several other veteran battle-brothers – will fight alongside his Company Captain, but he can also be seconded to the service of his Company Chaplain or a member of the Librarius.

The champion's role within the command squad is threefold. Firstly, and most obviously, he is an avatar of war, bringing death to the foe with blade and bolt. Often, his commander will need to focus on the wider battle, manoeuvring forces to achieve victory, and the Company Champion will be tasked with his protection, ensuring that any enemy who seeks to harm the Captain, Librarian or Chaplain meets their end, spitted on an energy-wreathed sword.

The Company Champion also acts as counsellor to his commander. While his focus is on martial skill and strength of arms, the Champion's insight is often invaluable, giving his commander a different perspective on the unfolding events on the battlefield. The Champion's knowledge of martial styles can often inspire interesting tactical options that a Captain or Chaplain may not have considered.

The third – and arguably most important – role of a Company Champion in war is to act as his commander's second. While they are technically outside the chain of command and outranked by sergeants, Company Champions are veterans of hundreds of battles and have often served at the side of their Captain for longer than any other. Should they fail in their duty to protect their commander, a Company Champion will often be looked to to provide leadership and ensure that the Captain's plan is carried out, his duty completed. This is a great burden, for should the battle be lost, the Champion will have failed twice, both to protect his liege and to fulfil his fallen commander's duty – dishonouring them both.

Few Company Champions have ever failed in this way, and those who have often choose to stand down from their position and take up the role of a penitent in whatever way their Chapter Master sees fit, be it returning to the ranks as a battle-brother, or embarking upon a dangerous and almost certainly suicidal mission in an attempt to redeem their honour.

CEREMONIAL DUTIES

All Space Marine Chapters have ceremonies and traditions that go back centuries or millennia to their founding. These are often accompanied by rites and rituals in which the Chapter's Chaplains lead the battle-brothers. There are as many different such traditions as there are Space Marine Chapters, and they will usually revolve around significant events – the recruitment of new warriors for the Chapter, movement between companies or promotions to higher ranks.

Among the duties of Company Champions is the representation of their own company during such rituals where multiple companies are involved. For example, the Crimson Fists have a ceremonial blooding for any warrior who moves from one company to another, where the Champions of both the battle-brother's old and new companies perform a mock combat, with ritual steps that represent an honour-duel that Rogal Dorn is said to have performed with each of the Imperial Fists Captains who left to command new Chapters in the Second Founding.

One of the better-known ceremonial duties for Champions from many Imperial Fists Successor Chapters is to represent their brothers at the Feast of Blades, a great ritual combat that takes place at least once a century. Each of the Chapters formed from Dorn's bloodline nominates a champion, usually chosen from amongst the Company Champions, competing for glory and the

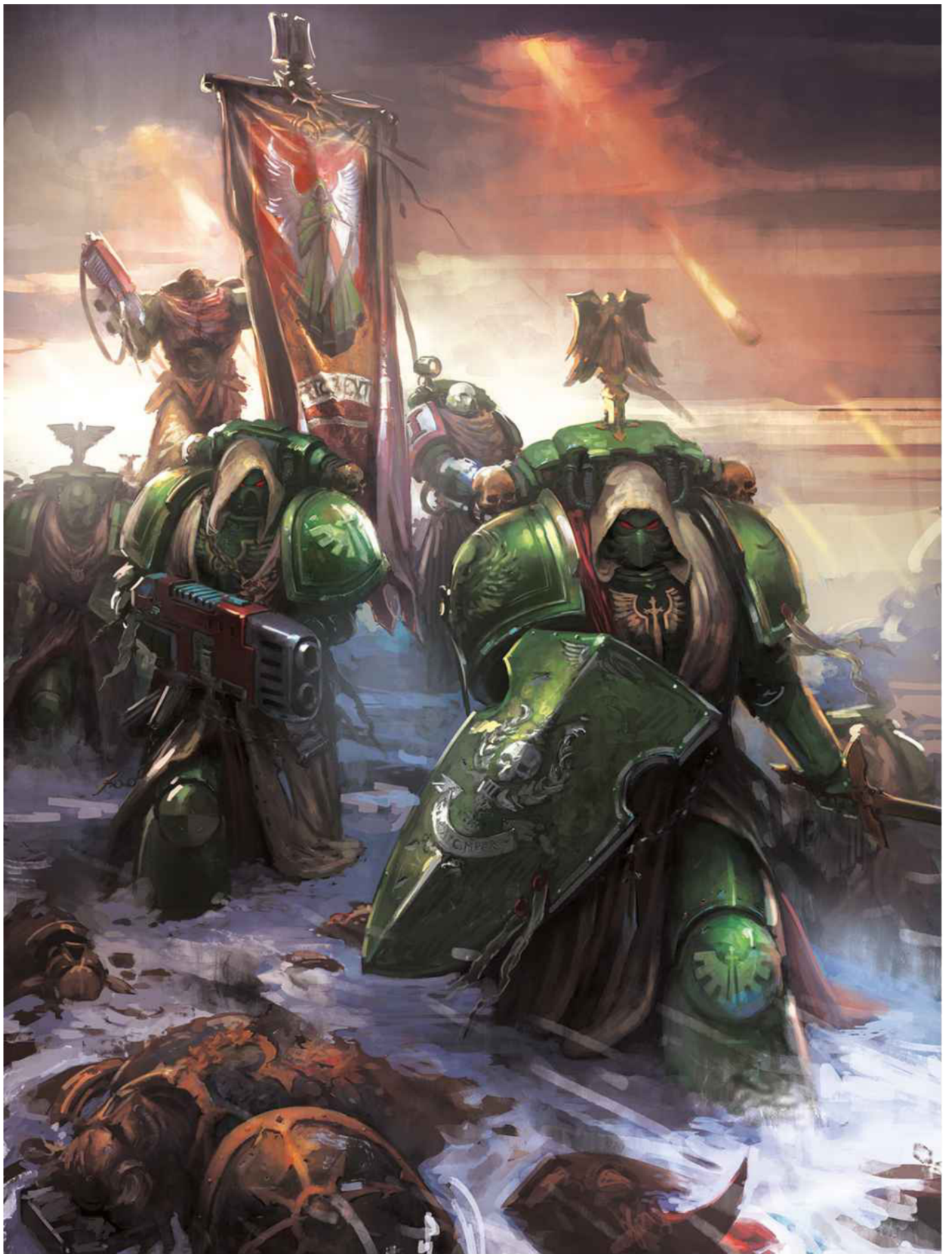
right to host the next Feast. It is a great honour to be chosen to represent the Chapter, and those who are frequently find that their Chapter Master has an eye on them for promotion in the near future.



'In the name of the Emperor, Blessed Guilliman and Captain Sicarius, I will take your head, traitor. For the honour of the 2nd, and in memory of Calth!'

*- Honoured Brother Gaius Prabian., Ultramarines Second Company,
engaging a Word Bearers Dark Apostle on Kaliman IV*





ARMS & ARMOUR



POWER WEAPONS

Company Champions must always be prepared to engage their foes in single combat, and so are typically equipped with some of the finest arms and armour to be found in the Chapter vaults. The primary close combat weapon for many Company Champions is the power sword, though this is by no means universal.

The Champions of the Stone Hearts Chapter, for example, are known to have a preference for heavy maces or mauls, reflecting the culture of their home world, where such weapons, crafted from stone and hardened wood, are used in ritual combats to decide the hierarchy of local clans. When these bludgeons are recreated in adamantite and equipped with energy fields, they are vicious weapons, capable of knocking an enemy's head from his shoulders or crashing through armour plate.

The Clan-Champions of the Storm Lords, on the other hand, have been seen to emulate their progenitors in the White Scars Chapter by making use of long, diamond-tipped lances wreathed in shimmering energy fields, preferring to destroy their target with a single decisive strike, though these warriors keep powered tulwars as secondary weapons for the rare occasions when an enemy survives their initial attack.

Even amongst those champions who make use of swords, there is near-infinite variety. From nimble duelling rapiers to heavy-bladed claymores, there is no type of blade that has not been used by a Company Champion somewhere in the Imperium. Each champion strives to completely master his chosen fighting style, training with his blade and shield to the exclusion of all else, the better to defend his Captain and uphold the honour of his Chapter.

When different Chapters come together in a theatre of war, it is common for Company Champions from the forces involved to come together to fight duels and learn from each others' fighting styles and preferences. Many weapons and combat styles that originate from one world have spread across the Imperium in this way, and it is not uncommon for Chapters that have never fought alongside one another before to find that their Company Champions have surprisingly similar methods of waging war.

COMBAT SHIELDS

Regardless of their preferred weaponry, Company Champions are trained duellists and make use of many techniques handed down by skilled combatants since time immemorial, and codified in Guilliman's great work. Their role as defender of their captain, as well as a hunter-killer, means that they often carry a combat shield to accompany their blade. Small bucklers that are typically affixed to the forearm, combat shields are equipped with a less powerful version of the energy field found in the storm shields of Terminators, and Company Champions train tirelessly to make best use of this extra defence. The Codex Astartes outlines three main uses for a combat shield in a duel:

Deflecting blows: The combat shield's small size and energy field make its primary purpose to intercept and parry an enemy's strike, allowing the Company Champion to deliver a riposte.

Hiding and protecting the sword hand: By angling his combat shield correctly, the Company Champion can both protect his sword hand from enemy blows and hide it from their view, allowing him the element of surprise as the foe struggles to anticipate his next strike. Whilst a few Chapters – typically those whose view of war is more brutal and straightforward – eschew this style of fighting, seeing it as dishonourable, most Company Champions are happy to have this technique in their arsenal.

Directing attacks: While not nearly as effective as a blade or a bolter, a strong strike with a combat shield at the right moment can knock an opponent off-balance, or even more if the

power field makes contact with bare flesh. Many an overeager enemy has found themselves at the mercy of a Company Champion after being felled by an unexpected jolt of energy from a combat shield.

Many other techniques have been developed over the ages by particularly inventive or daring champions. Whilst many of these remain in use within just one Chapter, handed down from weapons-master to warrior across generations, many have spread across Chapters that have fought in the same war zones, and some have even made it back to Macragge, there to be enshrined in the addenda to the Codex Astartes, held within the Library of Ptolemy.

ARMOUR

While many suits of Space Marine power armour are as old as the Imperium, handed down from battle-brother to battle-brother, repaired and refitted a hundred times or more, Company Champions are given a unique honour. Upon ascension to the role, a newly-appointed champion has a bespoke suit of armour crafted for them. When a champion eventually falls, should his body and armour be recovered, it is preserved and displayed with great honour in the Chapter reliquaries, every plate of the armour etched in remembrance of the hero's many victories. Thus are the deeds of each and every Company Champion commemorated for all time.

The standard pattern of champion armour – known informally as Curadh variant armour, after a title for heroes in ancient Terran – is laid down in the Codex Astartes. Based loosely upon Aquila-pattern battleplate, the Curadh variant comes with additional reinforcement upon the shoulder guards, designed both to display the many badges of honour a Company Champion is entitled to wear and to provide greater protection.

A similarly reinforced breastplate is often emblazoned with a winged shield. Uniquely amongst his battle-brothers, a Company Champion is entitled to bear personal heraldry. Many choose not to, but some commemorate particularly notable feats of valour by adding them to the shield upon their chests. Amongst the Ultramarines, it is also common for champions of noble birth to display all or part of their family heraldry on their chest plate.

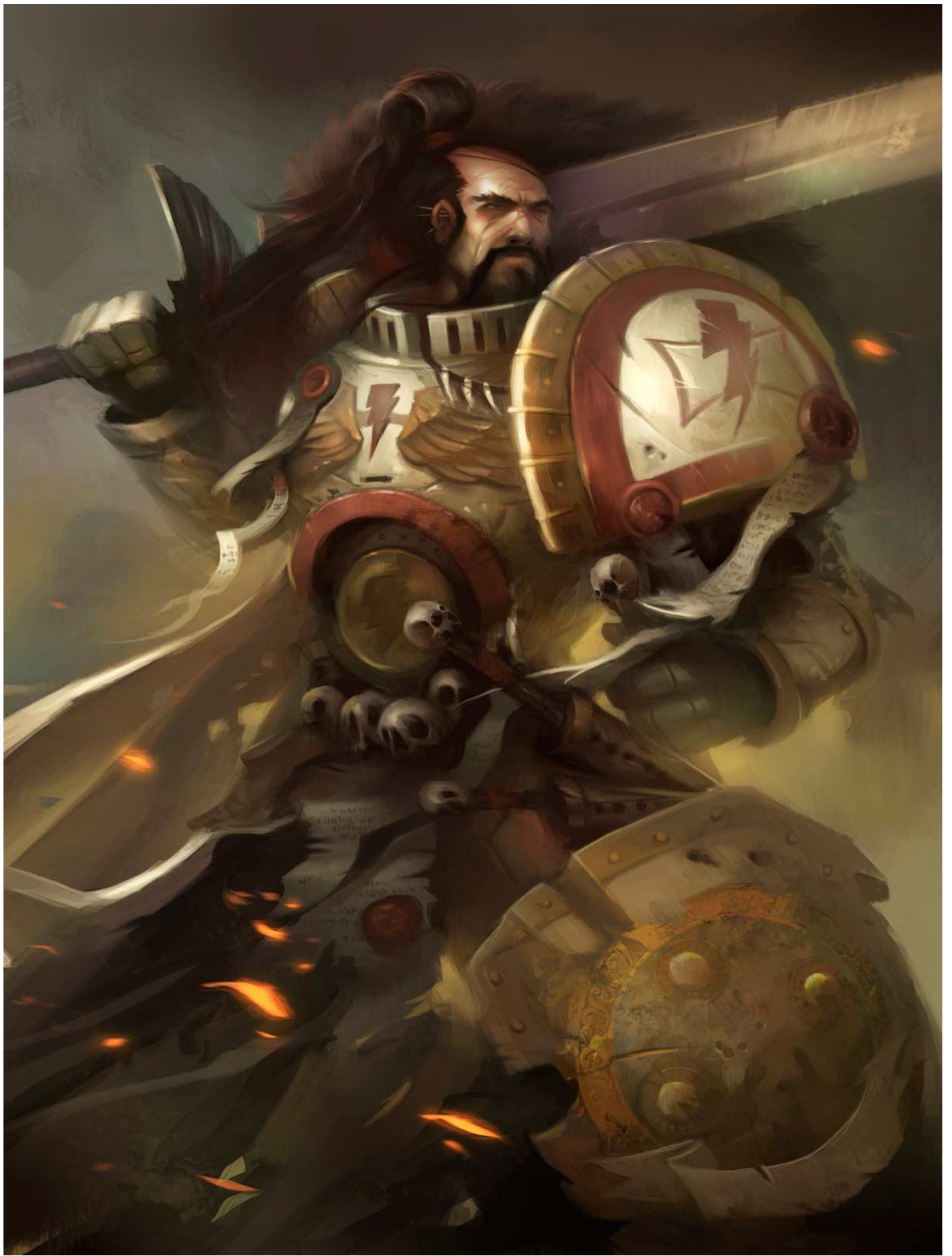
The helms worn by Company Champions are often designed to echo knightly helms of old, as seen in fragments of ancient tapestries and the tattered remnants of illuminated manuscripts. While little is remembered from these long-lost times, it is known that knights were chivalrous individuals dedicated to the defence of the innocent – ideals that Company Champions are seen to represent.



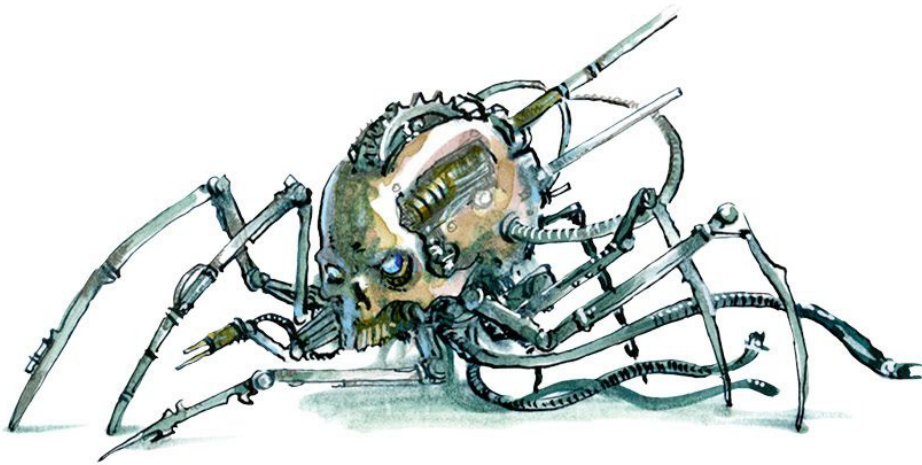
'With this blade, I dub thee Champion of the 3rd. With this shield, I name thee Protector of thy Lord. With this helm, I crown thee Defender of Right. Carry thy wargear with pride, honour it with thy life and thy foe's death, and bring glory to thy Lord, thy Primarch, thy Chapter and thine Emperor.'

*- Vox-capture from the anointing of Balus Karath
as 3rd Company Champion of the Novamarines,
844.M41, on the world of Asalam.*





MINIATURE SHOWCASE





Ultramarines Company Champion



Dark Angels Company Champion



Raven Guard Company Champion



Salamanders Company Champion



Black Templars Company Champion



Mentors Company Champion

BROTHERS OF RENOWN



CADULON, FOURTH COMPANY, IRON KNIGHTS

Cadulon is a name celebrated in the annals of the Iron Knights Space Marines and revered by every Chapter that sends warriors to the ritual Feast of Blades. Known to his brothers and rivals alike as the 'Saint of Blades' for his skill at arms, Cadulon rose to the position of Company Champion when his predecessor was killed by a Dark Eldar slaver-queen in battle on the world of Cystan. Over the centuries that followed, Cadulon became renowned for his swordsmanship, wielding an estoc with consummate ease.

Three times Cadulon represented his Chapter at the Feast of Blades, the great competition between the successors of the Imperial Fists Legion. On his first appearance, he won the contest, besting the chosen champions of eleven other Chapters. On his second, he was narrowly defeated by the Black Templars' representative, but he returned once again and claimed victory a second time, one of only a handful of Space Marines to do so.

Eventually, Cadulon was promoted to Captain and served with distinction for nearly a century in command of the 4th Company until 226.M41, when he crossed blades with a Dark Eldar Archon on the world of Omeros. With his command squad and his own Company Champion kept busy by the twisted alien's minions, Cadulon found himself fighting single-handedly against the Archon and a dozen Incubi. Even the Saint of Blades could not hold out against so many skilled foes, and he was incapacitated.

The last that any of the Iron Knights saw of Cadulon, he was being carried, still struggling against a dozen captors, into the writhing darkness of a webway portal.



OROS TELEMAR CLAN GARRSAK, IRON HANDS

The tragic tale of Oros Telemar is recounted whenever a new warrior of the Iron Hands takes up the mantle of Clan Champion, as a salutary reminder that, while justified pride in one's martial abilities is no sin, pride taken to extremes is a deadly flaw.

In 237.M38, Clan Garrsak of the Iron Hands was deployed to the Herevok Sector to help put down an insurgency that had gripped more than twenty worlds. Upon their arrival, they discovered that the rebels were, in fact, Chaos-tainted heretics, aided by Traitor Space Marines from the Emperor's Children Legion of old.

The Iron Hands fell upon their ancient foes with relish, cleansing them from world after world in the name of Ferrus Manus, slain in a bygone age by the Emperor's Children Primarch in an act of fratricide which changed history. Beside his clans leaders stood Oros Telemar, a Clan Champion of long standing and great renown. Ever prideful, Telemar swore a battle-oath to hunt and kill the commander of the enemy force, a swordsman of superlative skill known as Lucius, a name recognised with hatred by every warrior of the Chapter.

Taking a handful of Space Marines with him, Telemar crossed the sector in pursuit of his quarry, eventually chasing him down to an airless asteroid on the outskirts of a long-abandoned planetary system. There, Telemar and his men engaged Lucius. The Chaos-corrupted swordsman, scarred and twisted, but still possessed of preternatural skill with a blade, dispatched Telemar's warriors in short order, and so began a game of cat and mouse between champions that lasted for seven days and nights and ranged across the barren surface of the asteroid.

Eventually, Telemar prevailed, striking the traitor down and taking his sabre and whip to display as trophies of victory on the Iron Hands home world. When he returned to the clan, the war was over, and the Iron Hands departed for Medusa.

When their ship arrived in orbit around the Iron Hands home world, the vessel was silent, refusing to answer hails or follow recognised approach vectors. A boarding party of Space Marines entered the ship and found a scene of carnage. Every Iron Hands warrior and Chapter serf who had boarded the vessel in the Herevok sector was dead, killed by pinpoint sword strokes; all bar one – Oros Telemar himself, who was missing, along with the remains of the traitor Lucius.

The Techmarines used the ship's logs and internal surveyors to piece together what had happened. To their horror, they discovered that over the course of the journey, Telemar had begun to change, ritually scarring himself and repainting his armour in wild and sickening colours. Eventually, his will had snapped and he had rampaged through the ship, killing all the crew and passengers with the weapons claimed from the traitor, before entering a saviour pod and disappearing into the depths of the Immaterium.

To this day, none are sure exactly how this happened, though this is well, as to try and explain the methods of Chaos is to invite madness. The members of the Iron Council theorised that Telemar's pride over killing such a notorious traitor created a chink in his mental armour through which the Ruinous Powers corrupted his soul.

Later sightings of Lucius in war zones across the Imperium and beyond have only added to this mystery.



BRAYDEN

FIRST COMPANY, INVADERS

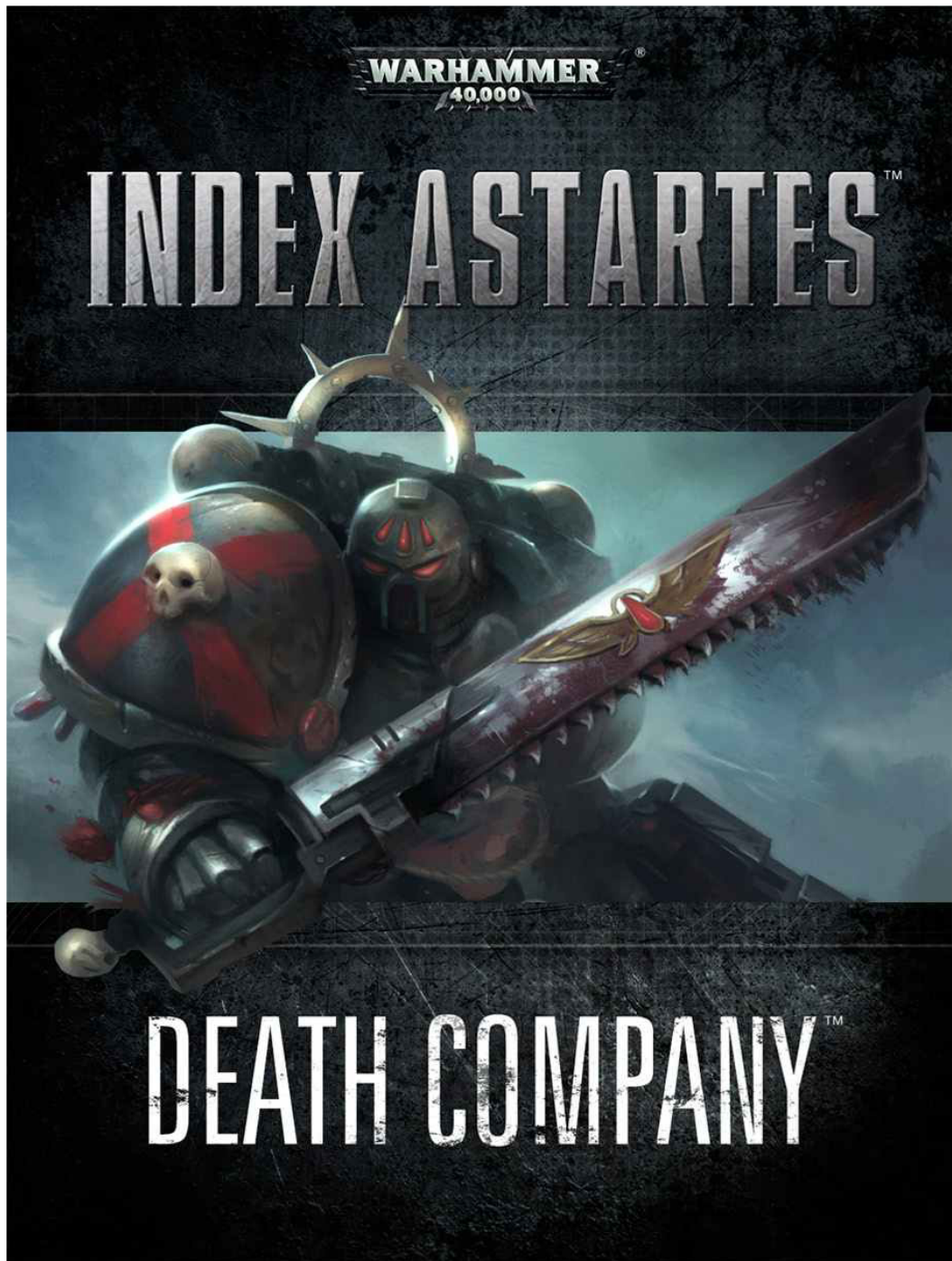
In the years before the fall of their home world of Ogryd, the Invaders underwent many trials. Their most notable feat was a daring assault upon the Eldar craftworld of Idharæ. The entire Chapter gathered to leave the craftworld a floating wreck, and many valorous deeds were performed in Idharæ's domes and tunnels.

The 1st Company, under the command of Captain Ravinger, deployed en masse, teleporting into the centre of the craftworld and laying waste to all around them. As the Eldar reacted and more forces were drawn from the periphery of Idharæ to deal with this immense threat, the Terminator-armoured veterans of the 1st found themselves fighting back to back, storm bolters and assault cannons running hot; power fists and lightning claws reaping a fearsome tally of Eldar warriors.

In the midst of the battle, Captain Ravinger fell, his hearts pierced by the blade of a mighty Wraithlord ghost-construct. With victory in the balance, his champion, Brayden, rallied the company around the ancient and proud banner of the 1st and stood over the body of his lord. No count exists of how many foes Brayden slew in the hours that followed, but all who saw his deeds attested that he fought with the valour of Rogal Dorn himself.

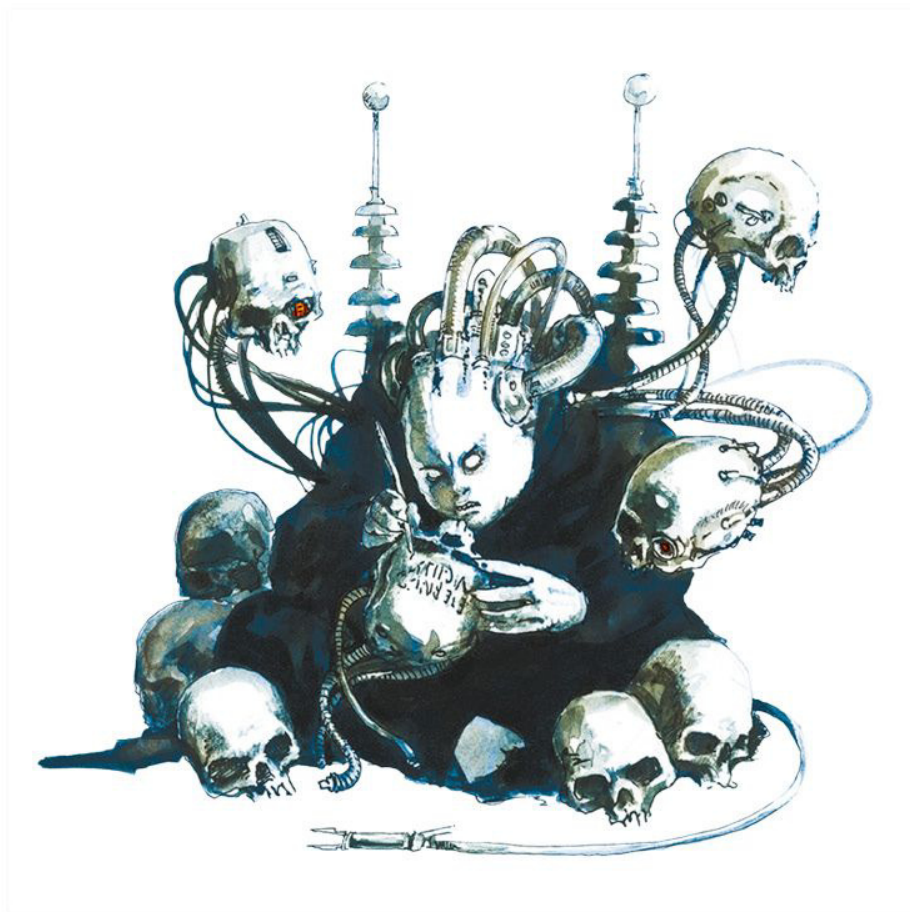
When the battle was won and the Masters of the Chapter convened to decide who would succeed Ravinger as First Captain, Brayden was unanimously nominated. Stepping forward under the gazes of the great and good of the Invaders, he humbly declined the honour, declaring that he was a warrior and a servant, not a leader, and that another would be better placed to command the company, another whom he would pledge to protect unto death. He nominated a sergeant of the company and stepped back into the shadows, content that his duty

would continue.



INDEX ASTARTES:

DEATH COMPANY



THE DEATH COMPANY



Armoured in black and marked by the symbolic wounds suffered by their fallen Primarch, the Death Company are a grim foreshadowing of the Blood Angels Chapter's final fate. Every warrior in their ranks is a boon on the battlefield, possessed of righteous strength and holy fury. Yet once the storm of war passes, madness and execution are all that await these tormented souls, driven past redemption by the curse in their tainted blood.

ANGEL'S FALL

Every Chapter has its secrets. Whether those secrets are inked on ancient parchment and sealed in stasis-vaults or hidden behind the snarling mouth grilles of Mark VII helms, no Space Marine Chapter – not even the vaunted Ultramarines – have entirely clean consciences.

The Blood Angels and their Successor brethren have striven since the Second Founding to keep their genetic flaws from harming the very people they are sworn to defend. Even in the years of the Heresy, the IX Legion was pained by the Red Thirst, driven by their Chaplains and the brothers of the Sanguinary Priesthood to exalt themselves above the maddening urges to drink their foes' blood. Such a curse would surely be enough for any Legion to bear, but it was only after the death of great Sanguinius that his surviving sons found themselves afflicted by a new bane in their bloodline.

Many Legions claimed absolute loyalty and reverence for their Primarch fathers, but few were as fervent in their adoration as the Blood Angels, and none had their master stolen from them in such a way – even the Iron Hands, who had lost their lord to the Daemon-claimed Fulgrim, knew nothing of the pain felt by the IX Legion when Sanguinius faced the Archtraitor Horus alone, and fell to the Warmaster's unholy Talon.

With the slaughter of their gene-sire by the very vessel of the Ruinous Powers, the Blood Angels Legionaries suffered a psychic backlash that wracked their very souls, burning an irreversible mark throughout their genetic coding.

When the dust settled in the decades after the Siege of Terra, the mighty Space Marine Legions were broken into Chapters and granted autonomy from Imperial authority. Among the Blood Angels and their new Successors, it became increasingly apparent that their Primarch's death had left a last imprint that no Chaplain could have predicted, and no Sanguinary Priest could cure. Opposing the Red Thirst – that bloodlust that beats in the heart of every Son of Sanguinius – their new curse was a more solemn and spiritual malady.

The condition goes by several names, including the Fate, the Primarch's Curse, and the Chaplain's Vigil. But most Blood Angels know it by a bleaker title, spoken in whispers on the eve before a battle.

They call it the Black Rage.



BACKGROUND



THE BLACK RAGE

Alone among the Space Marines Chapters, the Blood Angels and their Successors possess an intrinsic racial awareness of their Primarch's last moments in the skies above Holy Terra. Such was the ferocity and psychic virulence of Sanguinius' murder that the emotional echoes of that dark deed still swim through the blood of his descendents, even ten thousand years later. And time has not been merciful to the Angel's sons – the Black Rage bites deeper with every generation, stealing more warriors' minds with each passing century.

Many of the warrior-philosophers born of Sanguinius' bloodline consider the Red Thirst and the Black Rage as two sides of the same coin: one afflicting the mind, the other blighting the soul. However, resisting the pull of the Red Thirst confers a strength in its own right; for in rising above their baser urges and eternal bloodlust, the Blood Angels are forever focused on girding their souls against the temptations of Chaos.

The Black Rage offers no such hope. A Blood Angel in the grip of the Primarch's Curse is damned in the most literal sense – all that awaits him is death in battle, wearing the colours of sacred mourning as he fights in a maddened frenzy beneath the watchful gaze of a skull-faced Chaplain.

There is no cure. There is no recovery.

The Lamenters Chapter were once thought to have conquered the curse through the diligence and tech-genius of its Apothecaries – only for stories circulate at the close of the Dark Millennium that the Black Rage has returned tenfold after their flawed attempts to cleanse it from their gene-seed.

In ten thousand long, long years, only a single soul has 'returned' from the Black Rage: the Blood Angels Librarian Calistarius; now called Mephiston – named the Lord of Death for conquering the limits of mortality. After falling to the Flaw and allowing himself to be clad in Death Company black, Calistarius fought in the defence of Hades Hive during the Second War for Armageddon. Some archives state that he was buried alive for seven days and seven nights beneath a collapsed Ecclesiarchy building, others conflict with that account, citing that the severity of his wounds show beyond doubt that he died beneath the rubble, and was restored by some miracle of transmogrified gene-seed.

Whatever the truth, Calistarius rose stronger – both physically and psychically – somehow having banished the Black Rage from his blood. If the former tale is true, then it might be possible for warriors of supreme will and psychic strength to fight through the Flaw. If the latter is true, then a darker precedent has been set: to overcome the Black Rage, a Blood Angel must die within its grip, and pray for a resurrection that may have been nothing more than mythic misunderstanding.

The Black Rage begins with visions, with dreams of bloodshed and battle that stir the warrior's senses and linger within his mind beyond the hours of slumber. Soon, they press on the Space Marine's mind during his hours of meditation, training, and battle, painting the palette of his mind with memories of wars he never fought, and the faces of brothers that died thousands of years before he was born.

Rigorous focus and mental training can suppress the onset of these waking nightmares, but the process can never be entirely halted. Once the Black Rage begins to take hold, degeneration is inevitable. It can take minutes, hours, days... in some rare cases, even decades, but the path always leads to the same fate. The Black Rage boils through the sufferer's mind, infusing his senses with the mythic moments of Sanguinius' shattered past. His eyes and heart lie to him, but it is a glorious lie. Every enemy, be they alien or mutant or heretic, all blend into a vision of the Traitors that set fire to Holy Terra. The brothers at his side are the heroes and fallen

champions of that ancient age.

Soon enough, the afflicted Blood Angel is lost to all reason, needing to be restrained in his frothing blood-madness, and living only to kill the enemies of the Emperor. No longer will he train and serve with his former squad. He is surrendered into the care of the Reclusiam, bound to take to the battlefield in ritually blackened armour. From that day forward, he fights as one of the Death Company.

Death in battle inevitably follows; with no ability to follow tactics or heed the intricacies of a commander's battle plan, the warriors of the Death Company charge in a howling tide, bound – even if only temporarily – by the inspiring wrath-chants of their Chaplains. As in so many matters of Adeptus Astartes spirituality, it is the Chaplains that play a key role.

For many Blood Angels, the descent into the Black Rage is a sudden plummet, as brutally, tragically quick as opening one's eyes and seeing all truth warped into a long-dead legend returned to life. It is only through the never ending vigil of the Chapter's warrior-priests that a degree of control can be maintained. Even a berserk, delusional fury can be guided by the fervent oratory and leadership of a skilled Chaplain. In this way, the Death Company's insane rage is harnessed into a potent weapon; if they are destined to lay down their cursed lives, it will at least be in the defence of Mankind.

Just when and where these fevered hallucinations will strike can never be predicted, but the Chapter's Sanguinary Priests and Chaplains spend their solemn lives seeking any signs of taint among their rank and file brethren. It is common for the creeping sickness to be noticed on the eve before a battle, when the Blood Angels gather in prayer with their battle-brothers, and speak the Litanies of Hate before their watching Chaplains. Every warrior kneels before their spiritual guardians, answering for the state of their soul and speaking their oaths of devotion to their brothers in the coming battle. Any slurred words or disorientation are marked by the overseers.

If a Blood Angel is judged to be on the edge of succumbing to the Black Rage, he is withdrawn from the ranks as though he carried a contagion. From that night on, his fate is sealed. In times of peace, he will be imprisoned in the Tower of the Lost within the Chapter's fortress-monastery, crying out his torment under the eternal watch of Chaplain guardians.

And in times of war, he is clad in the black of loss and sorrow, seeking to cleanse the stain on his soul by achieving death in righteous battle.

ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE

No Blood Angels commander treats his Death Company brothers with careless abandon. This is perhaps unsurprising, given the soulful nature and humanity inherent in the hearts of Sanguinius' sons.

In accordance with the Chapter's merciful temperament, the Death Company are rarely deployed to be lost in useless sacrifice. They are a tactical asset like any other, but more than that, they are a vision of an inevitable fate: every Blood Angel will one day wear the same black ceramite and charge alongside a chanting Chaplain while lost to the delusions of a mythic age. Battle-brothers that have already fallen to such a doom are treated with respect and honour.

'It is our duty,' an ancient Blood Angels litany goes, 'to know the difference between the doomed and the damned.'

This is far from a universal truth among the Successor Chapters. More than one of the Blood Angels' kindred bloodlines are known to take a much harsher, punitive attitude to their battle-lost brothers, hurling their Death Companies into the fray with no concern for their lives and using them as a blunt instrument to break enemy front lines no matter the cost. Flesh Tearer

officers have displayed such merciless disregard many times across the span of millennia, as have the Chaplains of the Angels Numinous, the Flesh Eaters, and now-extinct Chapters such as the Golden Sons and the Crimson Legion.

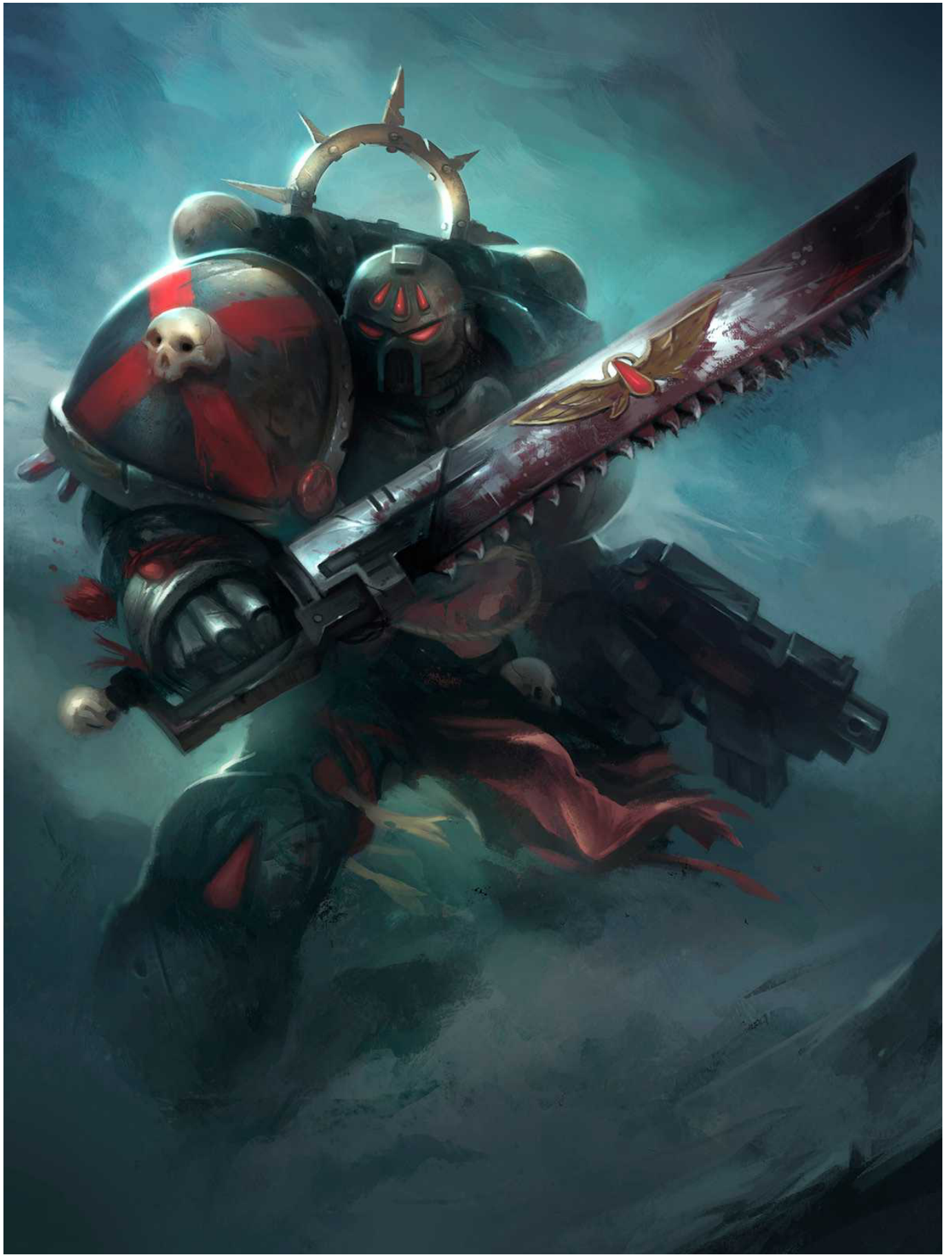
Every Death Company is marked by unpredictability, not least because of its warriors' melancholic madness. When these doomed Space Marines take to the battlefield, they are usually armed with a motley assortment of wargear – each Blood Angel bears the weapons he wielded among his former squad, so bolters are almost as common as chainswords. Ranking officers will bring more sacred, relic weapons such as thunder hammers or power swords, but no matter how a Death Company is equipped, they can be relied upon to tear their way through the enemy in a loose phalanx of enraged warriors.

Chapters with a less reverent attitude to their afflicted brethren frequently field Death Companies equipped with jump packs, hurling their black-clad brothers into the heart of the enemy army to inflict terrible punishment while the rest of the Space Marines strike force moves to capitalise on the foe's disorder.

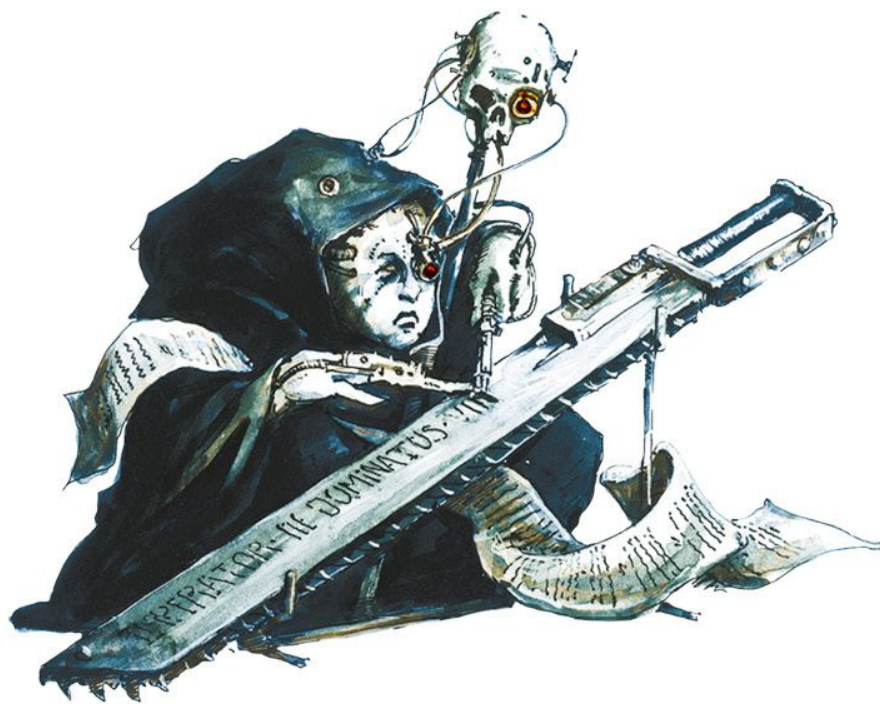
And while many Chapters consider a benevolent perspective regarding the lost souls of a Death Company, every Blood Angels Successor can point to countless listings in their fortress's archives, citing darkly glorious last stands where these warriors in black died fighting insurmountable odds, so that the rest of the force could achieve its objective. As bleak as such a sacrifice can be, such is the burden of service in the Dark Millennium. Only in death does duty end.

For all the darkness of this curse flowing through the bloodstreams of the Angel's descendants, the Black Rage offers a certain mournful glory to those in its thrall. All sensation, all pain, is stolen from their flesh; Death Company warriors will wade through volleys of gunfire that would force even veteran Space Marines to their knees, and fight on despite the loss of limbs and the rupture of vital organs. Every virtue of vitality and strength within the genhanced soldiers of the Adeptus Astartes is magnified in these doomed Blood Angels. More than one loremaster has speculated that Primarch's infinite nobility shines through in his sons' bleakest hours, allowing them to meet death with at least the shadow of dignity.

True enough, once the fighting is over and their fevered imaginings finally clear, many of the Death Company will finally collapse from their wounds, as their fading madness no longer sustains their broken bodies. Those who survive, for better or worse, are bound by their brothers – either in chains or in stasis pods – and returned to the Tower of the Lost, destined to scream the agonised death-echoes of Sanguinius' doom, until they are released to do battle in black once more.



HALL OF VALOUR



261.M33 - The War of Broken Wings

A unified armada of vessels drawn from the Night Lords Legion and its myriad allies assaults the Angels Sanguine's battlefleet in high orbit above the world of Anzyra. The Angels Sanguine, fighting for their homeworld and the very survival of their Chapter, are pressed into a defensive battle to prevent mass bombardment of their fortress-monastery.

To end the engagement, which records list as several days of protracted void war and boarding actions, the Angels Sanguine force a final resolution by offering the perfect bait: they allow their flagship, the Cruor Domina, to be crippled and boarded by hundreds of enemy Traitor Marines.

While the Space Marines defend the Battle Barge to keep it from being taken as a prize by the raiding Night Lords, a full three hundred Death Company warriors are sent by boarding torpedoes to slaughter their way through the vulnerable crews of eight enemy capital ships, including the renowned Lies of Dawn, the Foresworn, and the Brotherhood of Darkness warship Sightless Godling.

The Angels Sanguine have always suffered fiercely from the Flaw, and such an assault represented a century's worth of prisoners within their monastery's Tower of the Lost being unleashed into battle one last time. Without Chaplains to lead them, the Death Companies were sacrificed in desperation, with no hope of recovery.

It turned the tide. Suddenly, at risk of losing many of their own flagships, the Traitor warbands fought their way back to their own vessels, only to be cut down by the enraged defenders as they turned their backs and fled. Those Traitors that managed to return to their own ships were met with entire decks left as abattoirs by the rampaging Death Companies, and were forced to contend with the blood-maddened boarding parties even as they ordered their ships back from the primary assault.

c.811.M37 - The Ghost War

During the long years of the Seventh Black Crusade, the full might of the Blood Angels Chapter falls upon a vast Black Legion warband on the world of Mackan. Although the conflict ultimately ends in the near-extinction of the Blood Angels at the hands of Abaddon the Despoiler and his primary lieutenants – the sorcerer-lord Iskandar Khayon and the swordmaster Telemachon Lyras – the Blood Angels Reclusiarch Thalastian Jorus becomes one of the few Imperial heroes to ever land a blow against the Warmaster of Chaos.

With his Chapter devastated, the Chaplain endures weeks of hardship in the wilderness and the constant trials of keeping his crazed warriors undetected on Mackan. When the time is right, Jorus leads his Death Company in a lightning raid behind enemy lines, butchering the unprepared sworn warriors of the Despoiler's honour guard, and allowing the Reclusiarch to lock blades with Abaddon himself. It is said the Warmaster still bears the scars of that battle, even three millennia later.

Whatever the truth of the matter, it is known that the Despoiler honoured Jorus once the war was over – perhaps in mockery, or perhaps with nothing but sincerity. After Mackan, thousands of Blood Angels corpses were desecrated, their gene-seed ruined beyond recovery. Of all the Chapter, only a handful of bodies were left undefiled: Reclusiarch Jorus and his Death Company, clad in their battered and broken black ceramite, seated in makeshift thrones made from the armour of those Black Legion warriors they had killed on that fateful night.

998.M41 - At Gaius Point

Not every incident involving the Death Company rings with morbid honour. Many are not even victories at all.

During the Third War for Armageddon, the Order of the Argent Shroud bear full witness to the

Flesh Tearers committing atrocities against Imperial citizens at Gaius Point, when the Chapter's warriors breach the human militia's barricades and turn their blades on the very souls they were sent to protect.

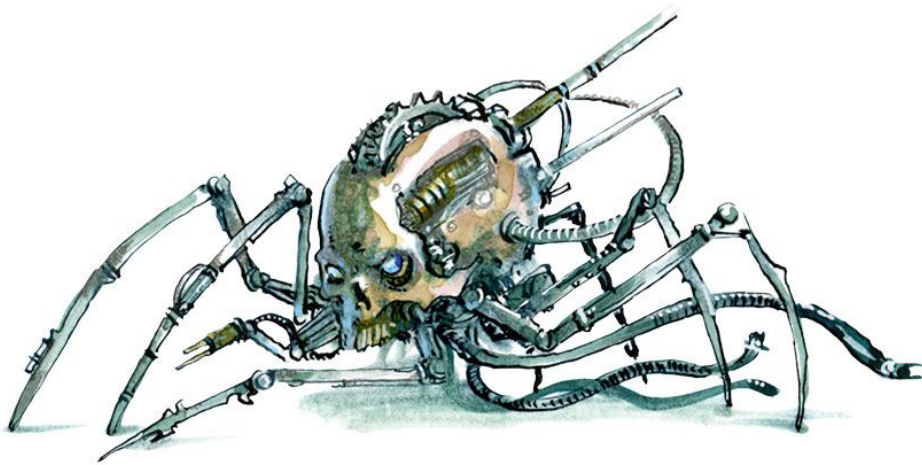
Soon enough, reports reach the Inquisition and the Adeptus Terra that the Flesh Tearers are a dangerous, unstable threat, and that their Chapter must be purged at once, and any survivors declared Excommunicate Traitoris.

No Imperial agent sees what comes next: the reckoning demanded by the Blood Angels and their Successor cousins. Warriors from several nearby Chapters approach the Flesh Tearers' commander, Gabriel Seth, demanding an answer for the apparent transgression.

Gaius Point marks one of the rare, sad instances of brother lying to brother in the name of survival, as Seth lays the burden of blame on his Death Companies. In speaking this lie to save his chapter, he damns the Flesh Tearers' Death Companies to lives of even deeper revulsion, as even other Blood Angels Successors consider them tragic mongrels in sore need of execution, in order to keep their bloodline's darkest secret.



MINIATURE SHOWCASE





Lemartes, Guardian of the Lost



**Captain Tycho after his induction
into the Death Company**



Death Company Space Marine with boltgun



Death Company Space Marine with boltgun



Death Company Space Marine with boltgun



Death Company Space Marine with boltgun



Death Company Space Marine with boltgun



**Death Company Assault Marine with
power sword and bolt pistol**



**Death Company Assault Marine with
chainsword and bolt pistol**



**Death Company Assault Marine with
infernus pistol**



**Death Company Assault Marine with
thunder hammer**



**Death Company Dreadnought with
two blood talons**



WARHAMMER
40,000

INDEX ASTARTES™

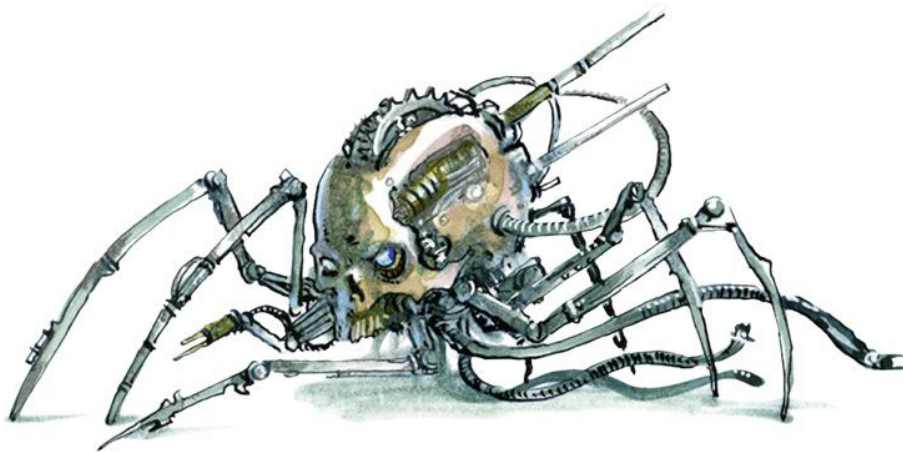


DREADNOUGHTS™



INDEX ASTARTES:

DREADNOUGHTS



DREADNOUGHTS



Spearheading the assaults of the Space Marines, Dreadnoughts are feared by all foes of the Imperium. On the battlefield they are death incarnate, with powerful weapons blasting their foes and lethal close combat weaponry crackling with deadly energies. There are few opponents in the galaxy who can stand against such armoured savagery.

Standing three times the height of a man, Space Marine Dreadnoughts are amongst the oldest war machines fighting on the battlefields of the 41st Millennium. Some Dreadnoughts are even said to date back tens of thousands of years to the Great Crusade, when the Emperor himself walked amongst his people. The art of their construction has long since been lost, the arcane knowledge required passing into ritualised mythology, and each Chapter's Dreadnoughts are treasured relics. They are a living embodiment of the Machine God, representing the ultimate fusion of the biological and the mechanical, as each one contains a living, sentient being. The pilots encased in the shell of a Dreadnought often have memories stretching back for millennia, and these ancient warriors are a tangible link to their Chapter's past and heritage.



CENTURIES OF WAR

The biological component of a Dreadnought is no ordinary man, a mighty Space Marine hero who has suffered grievous wounds in battle and is deemed worthy to be placed within the armoured sarcophagus of a Dreadnought. The interment of the warrior's shattered remains is a ritual of great significance, involving his fellow battle brothers, the Chapter's Techmarines and

its Apothecaries. It is considered a great honour for a Space Marine to be placed within a Dreadnought, and these ancient heroes are much respected by their fellow battle brothers. The warrior's organic remains are suspended in amniotic fluids and surgically implanted within the armoured sarcophagus, where mechanical senses allow him to perceive the world around him. In this way he can continue fighting for the Emperor for many centuries to come, never leaving his metal body until its destruction.

In battle, Dreadnoughts are a terrifying foe to face, advancing with thunderous strides as incoming fire spatters from their thick adamantium armour. Their heavy, powered limbs allow them to fire devastating weapons on the move, and they still fight with all the skill and ferocity they possessed as a Space Marine. As well as fearsome warriors, the accumulated wisdom of their centuries of battle is a valuable resource, and their vast experience means that they have fought in almost every form of engagement imaginable. Almost nothing can defeat a Space Marine Dreadnought in an assault, and its close combat weapons can tear apart even the most heavily armoured vehicles. Dreadnoughts are exceptionally difficult to slay in battle and, in most cases, only the complete destruction of the sarcophagus will kill the pilot. Destroyed Dreadnoughts are only ever abandoned in the direst of circumstances, and Space Marines will fight with righteous fury to retrieve a fallen Dreadnought so that they can lay its occupant to rest in the Chapter's sepulchres. The recovered shell will then be lovingly restored to full operation to await its next occupant.



VENERABLE BROTHERS

When not in action, Dreadnoughts slumber within sealed stasis vaults in the depths of their Chapter's fortress monastery to extend their lives. The resting place of a Chapter's Dreadnoughts is a holy shrine, and the Techmarines tend to their ancient charges with great care, fastidiously applying the sacred oils and unguents while chanting the Litanies of Preservation. To honour these courageous warriors, the Techmarines allow them to sleep, and only awake the Dreadnoughts in times of great need. When called to fight, the Dreadnoughts are removed from their vaults and the Rune of Awakening is struck upon their hide.

As the Dreadnought continues to fight through the centuries, the pilot's grip on the material world inevitably begins to slip and he spends more and more time dormant, his mind becoming ever more distant. When the machine is awoken in the cause of war, the pilot's warrior spirit burns bright as ever, and he fights as a patent icon of the Chapter's legacy. One of the oldest recorded Dreadnoughts is Bjorn the Fell-Handed of the Space Wolves. Bjorn was a young warrior in the days of the Primarchs and was said to have fought alongside the Primarch Leman Russ himself. Since his interment in the armoured shell of a Dreadnought, he has fought in some of the most famous battles of the Imperium's blood-soaked history and even led his Chapter in defence of their home on Fenris.



DESTRUCTION INCARNATE

Dreadnoughts are called upon when the fighting is sure to be close and bloody. They are best employed in situations where there is plenty of cover for them to take advantage of so that enemy weapons cannot draw a line of sight to them. They excel at fighting in built-up areas,

underground tunnels and boarding actions where they can quickly close with the enemy and bring their devastating assault weapons to bear. The weapon points on a Dreadnought allow it to be armed with a variety of armament configurations depending on the tactical situation, and the preference of the warrior within. The ranged weapons they bear are broadly similar to those carried by Space Marine Terminators, as Dreadnoughts were once used as test beds for new weapon patterns intended for suits of Terminator armour. However, Dreadnought weapons benefit from increased stability, better targeting systems and a greater ammunition capacity than those carried by Terminators. The sheer size of a Dreadnought also allows it to incorporate cooling systems for its rapid firing weapons, resulting in less overheating and fewer jams.

As well as powerful heavy weapons, Dreadnoughts can also be fitted with lethal motorised fists that incorporate magna-coil servos to increase the strength of the arms. These allow them to grip and rotate, tearing gaping holes in even the strongest materials, or punch through the thickest armour. The Ironclad Dreadnought is a prime example of this, its strength easily capable of tearing through a bunker or defense wall.



DEATH UNLEASHED

Throughout history Dreadnoughts have been involved in the bloodiest battles inscribed in the annals of the Imperium. Their acts of heroism are the stuff of legend across all the realms of man and few sights are more inspiring, or more terrifying, than to see one of these great mechanical juggernauts rampaging across the battlefield. Many Dreadnoughts become famous in their own right, with tales being told of their courage and sacrifice in the name of the Emperor all across the Imperium. The smallest chapter of their history would fill a lengthy manuscript, their service to the Emperor stretching back over many thousands of years.



GHATTANA BAY: THE BATTLE FOR GATE IX

During the Third War for Armageddon, the largest recorded Dreadnought versus Dreadnought confrontation occurred during the attack on the Ghattana Bay Water Processing Plant. Water would be a key resource on Armageddon when the Season of Fire arrived, and Ghattana Bay was the source of every drop reaching Armageddon Prime. The Ork attack on the plant had stalled badly. Options were now running out for the Ork Warlord Judrog Irontoof and he committed every Deff Dread and Kila Kan in his force to a single attack. Aiming for a point in the Space Marine line weakened by an earlier Kommando attack, over a hundred Ork machines stomped forward in a densely packed phalanx. The defenders were battered by the Ork weaponry, their positions swept clear by the sheer weight of fire. Land Speeder squadrons were blasted from the skies by massed big shootas while bunker after bunker was silenced by salvos of Ork rokkit. Judrog's charge breached the defences and burst onto one of the plant's access roads, which led between towering purification tanks. The Ork machines rumbled on, their power claws

ripping each successive gate apart as they pressed deeper into the plant. As they approached Gate 9, however, they were surprised to see the barrier rise to reveal a line of eight Space Marine Dreadnoughts drawn up across the roadway. At their front was Brother Damos of the Angels Porphy. Critically wounded during the Scouring of Hume and entombed for the last three thousand years, he had faced a hundred such situations before and prevailed.

The Dreadnoughts standing with Damos were armed for long-range combat with a mixture of lascannons, autocannons and missile launchers. Their first salvo was devastating: the front line of Ork Deff Dreads melted under their barrage but were battered aside as the rest clanked forward. The Space Marine Dreadnoughts' guns punched through the Ork Walkers' armour to deadly effect, and each step the Orks made towards the Space Marines cost them dearly, but eventually they were in range and could reply in kind. The Deff Dreads could not match the accuracy of the eight Space Marine Dreadnoughts facing them, though. Each was a veteran of centuries of war, each a paragon of their Chapter's qualities, each a hero whether clad in flesh or metal.

An advance of four hundred metres had cost the Orks seventeen Deff Dreads. They still came on though, and howled in fury when they saw the Dreadnoughts step back to allow a heavy security gate to be lowered, blocking the road. Speeding up, they hurled themselves against it, rending the thick steel with their hydraulically powered claws and buzzsaws, determined not to let their quarry escape. Flight was not their quarry's plan, however. On the other side of the ruptured gate, the Space Marine Dreadnoughts were ready. There waited another nine Dreadnoughts led by Brother Weylands of the Omega Marines, all armed with power fists, seismic hammers and a mixture of shorter ranged assault cannons, multi-meltas and hurricane bolters. Behind them stood Brother Damos' Dreadnoughts on a rampart of earth and sundered concrete so they could see over the front line. Both ranks opened fire together and for seven long minutes they stood thirty metres from the Orks, firing non-stop into the tightly packed mass of machines. Then the front rank ceased fire, its weaponry white hot, and thundered into close combat. The Orks were tightly packed in the roadway; the sustained fire had given them no chance to press forward and the Killa Kans at the back blocked their retreat. The Ork force was irretrievably entangled, some machines were lifted off the ground by the press, unable to move, and the front five ranks were a smoking ruin. The Space Marine Dreadnoughts cut into them – Brother Weylands led the way, climbing up over the destroyed Dreadnoughts until he was striding over the packed hulls of still operable machines, alternately crushing them with stamps and punches. Where a revving weapon reared up at him, a swift multi-melta shot silenced it.

It had been a bold attack by Judrog's Deff Dreads, but, unsupported and caught at a complete disadvantage, they were helpless. It is testament to their ferocity and fighting spirit that not one Ork machine fled. The final reserve destroyed, Judrog had no choice but to withdraw. Rearmed Thunderhawks were beginning their attack runs and ammunition was becoming scarce. The defeat would cost Judrog dearly but there was no celebration in the Space Marines' lines. Of the seventeen ancient Dreadnoughts committed to battle, seven had been utterly destroyed with the loss of over 9,000 years of battle experience and loyal service. The Battle at Gate IX remains their testament.



BROTHERS OF RENOWN

BROTHER SEVERUS OF TARENTUS



THE BATTLE OF MACRAGGE

Brother Severus arrived on Macragge as one of sixteen aspirants who had triumphed in competitive games between Quintarn, Tarentus and Masali. These games are held between the triple worlds each seven years to determine which youths should have the honour of attempting to join the Ultramarines Chapter on Macragge. The games which Severus participated in were noted as particularly spirited and hard-fought on this occasion, with over a third of the participants killed or seriously injured.

The young Severus was accepted by the Ultramarines and successfully completed his training. According to records, Brother Severus' early career in the Scout Company was unremarkable, but once he came to full status as a battle-brother he was frequently commended for his wisdom and far-sightedness. He received his Marksman's Honour while a member of the 6th Company in combat against Eldar pirates, and an Imperial Laurel in the following year after being wounded in the cleansing of Copul IV. He was promoted to Sergeant in the 3rd Company and commanded his squad through the Siege of Belios and the first Balur Crusade, earning great praise from his company's Captain.

When Sergeant Severus led his squad in breaking through a dangerous Ork encirclement on Goramon he was inducted into the prestigious 1st Company. His promising career was cut tragically short, however, when he was critically injured during the Battle of Corinth. Ultramarines Apothecaries used his mortal remains to replace those of Venerable Brother Commodius, whose Dreadnought frame was also damaged on Corinth. Severus adapted well to the transition into the amniotic tomb of a Dreadnought body, retaining all of his former wisdom and battlecraft.

Severus' list of battle honours over the succeeding three centuries grew too long to be listed, culminating in his eventual return to Corinth during the seven year Corinthian Crusade. Brother Severus also participated in the Damocles Crusade against the Tau Empire, but urgent new orders sent his company back to Macragge to defend it from the advance of Hive Fleet Behemoth.

Of the great battle in space over the beleaguered world little can be said here, but the masterful defence by Marneus Calgar, Lord of the Ultramarines, is recounted in other places. In the aftermath it fell to Captain Fabian's 3rd Company to recapture the northern polar defence fortress on Macragge itself. Tyranid swarms had penetrated the orbital defences and overrun the sprawling complex of laser silos and bastions. The first landings by the company barely held their ground against the swarms of creatures which emerged from the shattered bunkers and tunnels to oppose them, only being driven back by the combined fire of Devastator squads and Thunderhawk gunships. Captain Fabian summoned three Dreadnoughts – brothers Severus, Agrippa and Diocletian – to assist his troops in clearing the forbidding underground tunnels. The twisting, intersecting passages were already subtly altered by the aliens' presence, dripping mucus and resounding with horrifying shrieks and screams. The dead lay everywhere, contorted and mangled by the violence of their passing. More than once, Tyranids hid among the dead before ripping into the advancing Ultramarines from ambush.

Casualties mounted, and the Space Marines were forced to use flamers to burn their way forward. The Dreadnoughts were moved ever closer to the front of the advance as squads

peeled off to guard intersections. Agrippa was leading when a flank attack broke across the company like a wave of razor-fanged destruction. In seconds, two squads were overrun and hacked down by a dozen Tyranids. Agrippa's assault cannon painted the walls with Tyranid ichor as they rushed forward, and the Venerable Dreadnought was reduced to trampling them underfoot when its power fist was torn away. But Agrippa still held the perimeter against the bio-engineered monstrosities until Severus arrived to crush the remaining xenos.

With his searchlight piercing the darkness, Severus now led the advance of the 3rd Company into Silo 8, the cavernous housing of a giant, ship-killing laser battery. As the last squads cleared the entrance, a nightmarish horde of Tyranid creatures spilled out of the shadows on all sides. A hail of obscene projectiles cut through the Space Marine lines, corroding armour and flesh wherever they struck. Lithe killing beasts tore into the Ultramarines lines with horrifying ferocity, their scythe-like talons clashing against chainswords and armour as bolters chattered frenziedly. Once again it was Severus that held the line, throwing the creatures back with his steel-strength and crushing power fist. The surviving Ultramarines rallied around the giant fighting machine as it blasted through the aliens' ranks, and the next wave of monstrosities swept down upon them.

A fearsome Hive Tyrant, as massive as a Dreadnought itself, thundered into the Ultramarines with a primal shriek. Three Space Marines fell to a single sweep of its claws before Severus charged into the beast. A terrible struggle ensued as the blessed servos and ancient fibre-bundles of the Dreadnought were pitted against the preternatural strength of the alien monster's steely sinews. The Tyrant sent Severus reeling with one mighty blow of its claw, but the ancient warrior recovered and sparks flew as its fist crashed into the creature's carapace. Foul ichor sprayed from the gouting wounds, temporarily blinding Severus' sensors. The beast caught Severus a terrible blow, tearing through his leg to leave the Dreadnought sprawling helplessly. At this moment Captain Fabian leapt into the fray, knocking aside the creature's claw and evading its scything return swing before blasting it in the head with his plasma pistol until it reared and screamed a final howl of death-agony. With the loss of the Hive Tyrant and the guidance of the hive mind, the Tyranids fell into confusion. The Ultramarines' bolter fire cut the beasts down mercilessly as they turned to flee.

The 3rd Company was saved and went on to cleanse the polar fortress in its entirety. After the battle, Severus was restored and continues to serve with the 3rd Company to this day. Among the long list of honorifics he has accumulated, the Battle of Macragge remains the proudest, including as it does a share in the first ever accredited kill of a Tyranid Hive Tyrant in close combat.





MORIAR THE CHOSEN

On the corpse-strewn fields of Clamorga, Captain Moriar of the Blood Angels fell in battle, grievously wounded unto death beyond even the lore of the Chapter's Sanguinary Priests. At a loss to save his mortal remains, his flesh was interred within the armoured shell of a Dreadnought constructed by the master artificer, Brother Morleo. Moriar is not the first to inhabit this magnificent machine and will not, without doubt, be the last. Upon regaining his senses, it became clear that Moriar's battle fury had not abated and his psyche was wracked with visions of Sanguinius' death. The Black Rage had consumed him, but Mortar survived its ravages and continues to fight alongside his battle-brothers in the forefront of every assault.







BROTHER DAMOS OF THE ANGELS PORPHYR

Brother Damos commanded the 9th Company of the Angels Porphyry, a stalwart veteran of three centuries of battle. His Devastator squads were the very model of efficient fire support, and wherever his men fought, the armoured might of the enemy would be wary indeed. It was during the Scouring of Hume as he led his men in the defence of Hill 236 that a surprise attack on the Space Marines' position by rebel Marauder Bombers caught him in the open as he moved between the hill's linked bunkers. By all rights, the bombardment should have killed Damos, but when the attack was over his brothers found that the bloody shreds of his body still drew breath. He demanded the chance to fight on, and thus his remains were placed in stasis and transported back to the Chapter's fortress monastery, where he was implanted within the sarcophagus of a Dreadnought. For three thousand years he has remained entombed within his armoured body and, as he did in life, Damos provides a solid anchor of fire support for his brothers, guiding the deployment and firing of the Chapter's devastators.



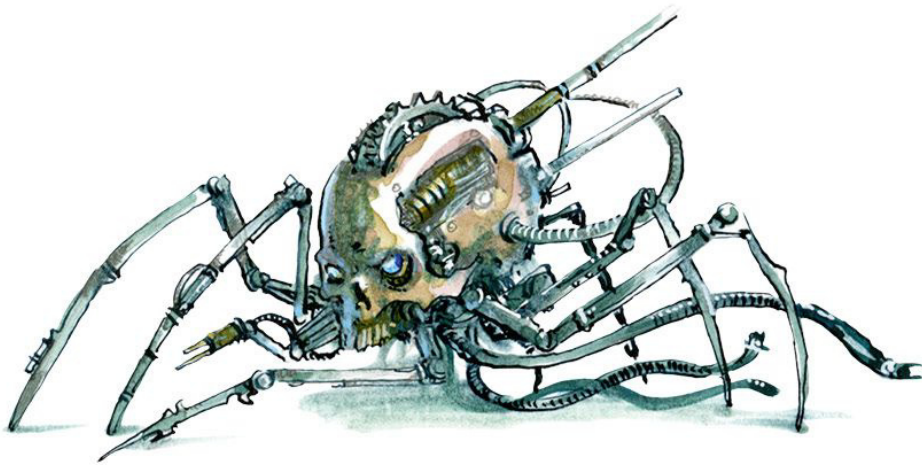


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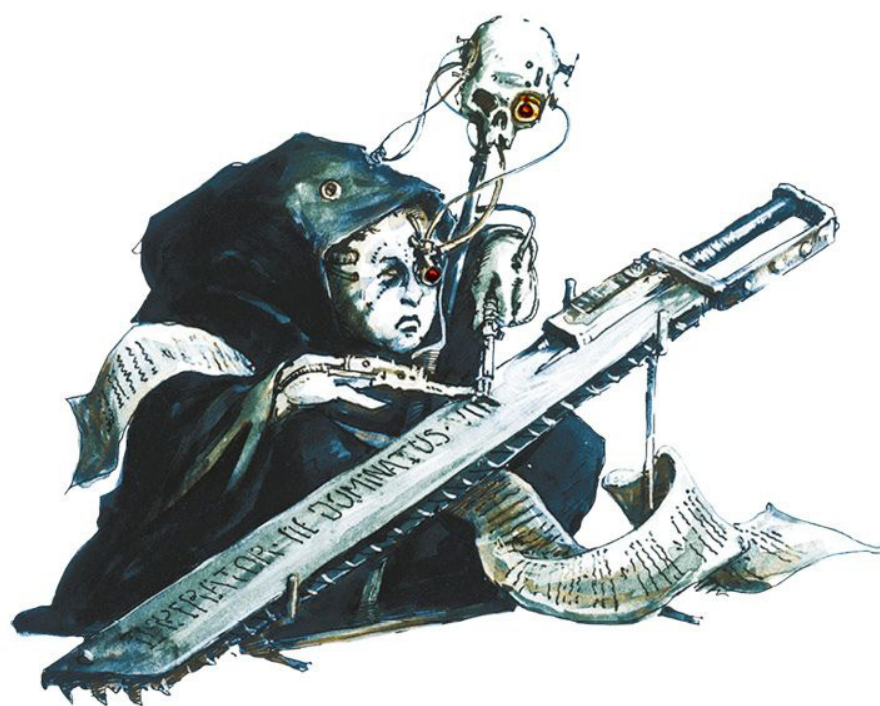


EMPEROR'S CHAMPION™



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EMPEROR'S CHAMPION



EMPEROR'S CHAMPION



The Black Templars Space Marines revere the Emperor as a god, His divine will guiding the actions of their Chapter as they scour the galaxy of His foes in a never-ending crusade. This faith is embodied in the Emperor's Champion, a chosen vessel of the God-Emperor's might that manifests only within the ranks of the Black Templars. On occasion, the spirit of the Emperor will make itself known to a Black Templars battle-brother as he prays on the eve of battle, and by holy mandate, the Emperor chooses the battle-brother to be His instrument of war. It is a duty that is never taken lightly by the Space Marine gifted with this honour, and as he dons the sacred Armour of Faith and takes up the Black Sword, he leaves behind the warrior he once was. In his place, the Emperor's Champion is born, implacable behind his visored helm and unflagging in his righteous rage.



The First Emperor's Champion

The Emperor's Champion was a title originally given by Rogal Dorn to Sigismund, founder of the Black Templars. During the Second Founding, when the Black Templars were born out of the Imperial Fists, the title became an honour for those who embodied the greatest ideals of the Chapter and were peerless in their faith to the Emperor. It is written in the holy texts of the Black Templars that when a battle-brother is gifted with divine visions guiding him to take up the mantle of the Emperor's Champion, it is the memories of Sigismund he sees. It is a shifting vista of warring angels and vengeful gods, just as the ancient Space Marine witnessed during the war for Terra and the blasphemy of the Horus Heresy. Only those who have become the Emperor's Champion and survived can hope to understand the time in which Sigismund lived, and the weight of his duty to smite the enemies of the Emperor.





BACKGROUND



A RIGHTEOUS VESSEL

How and why the Emperor's Champion manifests within the soul of a Black Templars remains a mystery, even to the Chapter itself, though the Black Templars accept it as the divine work of the God-Emperor, and a measure of their faith. Indeed, as far as they are concerned, that the Emperor's Champion is unique to the Black Templars only goes to prove their profound connection to the Master of Mankind and the strength of their devotion.

In a ritual that has been repeated for centuries, the Black Templars gather on the eve of an important battle, their heads bowed in solemn prayer by the light of candles rendered from the tallow-fat of faithful Chapter serfs. Walking among the supplicant warriors, Space Marine Chaplains carry censers of sacred incense, their voices raised in droning hymns. Through the haze of blue-tinted smoke, the battle-brothers' lips move in silent prayer to the Emperor, each one inviting His divine spirit into their souls.

Almost every ritual ends with the candles burned to nothing and the air heavy with a mist of stale incense. Invigorated by their prayers, the Black Templars battle-brothers will then rise to their feet and march to war. A handful of times each century, the ritual will end in a different way.

During the long night of prayer, a single battle-brother will be visited by a vision sent by the Emperor, a ghostly dream of a pale, blazing knight struggling against a sea of foes. While accounts of the vision vary from one battle-brother to the next, many of the symbols and themes remain the same. A mighty hero fighting an impossible foe, a fading light that must to be rekindled, and a tide of endless enemies crashing upon crumbling fortress walls, are all images given by the Emperor. Awakening from his vision-trance, the battle-brother will proclaim the Emperor's visitation and the Chaplain will take him away so that the true ceremony may begin.

The most senior Black Templar's Chaplain in the crusade is called to listen to the vision, and verify its authenticity. Ever fearful of daemonic trickery and false interpretation, the Chaplain will have the battle-brother recount what he saw, referencing the Liber Divinitus of the Chapter to see if symbols and images recorded there match those described. Never in the history of the Chapter has a battle-brother received a false vision, each and every one a true vessel of the God-Emperor.

The vision confirmed, the battle-brother is taken to the Chapter's lay-shrine: sacred ground blessed by the Chaplains wherever the company makes its camp. Whether it is the scorched earth of an alien world, the shadowy, creaking hold of an Imperial vessel or the rusted, dripping ruins of a hive city, this is a place holy to the Chapter and made divine by the grace of the God-Emperor. From a sealed stasis casket, the Chaplain draws out the Black Sword and Armour of Faith – the trappings of the Emperor's Champion. With great care, the attendant Chapter serfs will then dress the battle-brother as blessings are recited over each plate and seal. Tiny, spidery script is inscribed upon the armour, further protecting its wearer from harm; each one a benediction to the Emperor's might, and a promise of His divine protection.

Finally, once the visored helmet is placed upon his head, the newly anointed Emperor's Champion will heft the Black Sword, placing both hands on its long, heavy hilt and lifting it high into the air; the ritual is done and the Emperor's Champion is ready to begin his holy work.



Blade and Faith

The Black Sword is a heavy great sword, blessed by the Emperor and wreathed in a potent power field. Only ten of these ancient weapons exist, given to the Chapter during its founding as a token of their bond to the Emperor and of their oaths of loyalty. Every significant crusade the Chapter embarks upon must take with them one of the ten blades.

The armour is a relic of equal sanctity, crafted by the Chapter's Techmarines and blessed by its Chaplains. It embodies the height of the artificer's craft, usually reserved for Company Captains and Chapter Masters. The Armour of Faith is also as much a symbol as it is protection for the Emperor's Champion. The purposefully archaic design and its distinctive laurelled helm are a rare and inspiring sight to the Black Templars, and proof that the vessel of the Emperor's wrath walks among them.





DIVINE COURAGE

In battle, the Emperor's Champion fights alone. Even though he might stride through the ranks of his battle-brothers, he does not heed the orders of Captains nor share their objectives. He exists only to vanquish the most powerful foes of the Emperor, singling them out in personal combat and hewing them apart with felling blows from the Black Sword. No warrior that has seen the Emperor's Champion in battle can deny that the God-Emperor is working through his faithful servant. Haloed by a faint glow of faith manifest, enemy bolts and bullets that would tear ordinary men apart seem to have no impact upon the champion. The blessed battle-brother walks across the field as if the hand of the Emperor shields him, shells ripping the earth and air to pieces in his wake, while he remains untouched. Even when a powerful blow or blast knocks the Emperor's Champion to the ground, he will haul himself to his feet, shaking debris from his armour to continue his charge into the foe.

The effect of the Emperor's Champion on a battle is undeniable, and many Black Templars battle-brothers believe that it is a blessing merely to fight beside one. While the champion does not follow orders from his former commanders, he answers to a greater power, and the Chapter is content to allow him to seek out specific enemies or war zones as guided by his visions. This is born out of the belief that the Emperor's Champion manifests for a reason, one that is beyond the ken of the Chapter Commanders but that is nonetheless important to victory. It is reasoned that the Emperor's Champion has been summoned to kill a potent foe or turn the tide of a vital conflict, and he alone knows what is required of him.

It is rare for the Emperor's Champion to live long beyond donning the Armour of Faith. Filled with divine courage, he will hurl himself into the thickest fighting or against the greatest enemy warlords, selling his life for the glory of his Chapter while taking scores of the foe with him. It is a doom that both battle-brother and Chapter accept as part of their covenant with the God-Emperor, the knowledge that great glory is won only with the blood of heroes.

When an Emperor's Champion falls, the Chapter's Chaplains will bear his body from the field of battle. In a ritual that honours his divine deeds, the Armour of Faith is removed, its seals broken and its prayers washed away with holy oils. The Black Sword is borne back to the Black Templars' battle barge Eternal Crusader and interned in its reliquary. Then, in an honouring ceremony, High Marshal Helbrecht listens to Chaplain Grimaldus tell him of the deeds of the Emperor's Champion while a venerable Chapter serf inscribes the battle-brother's name onto the blade. The ritual complete and the name having taken its place next to its predecessors, the blade is placed back into its stasis casket until another is chosen by the Emperor to claim it.

HEROES INSCRIBED

In the millennia since the first Emperor's Champion took up blade and armour with divine anger and righteous purpose, hundreds of Black Templars have borne the title. Most of these great battle-brothers did not live to see a second night after receiving their vision, though their names remain etched onto the Black Swords they carried, and their glorious memory endures.

Rynart the Unbowed

Blessed be the name Rynart, Champion of the Emperor in the year of Our Saviour 563.M38. On the storm-wracked world of Ismas, Rynart led the charge against the cursed Ork hordes of Warboss Slagrut. Astride his clanking, smoking war machine, the Ork leader assaulted the Imperial lines across the great Ismas Steam Bridge linking the vast central canal-cities together. Rynart walked across a river of xenos corpses to smite the alien warlord, his Black Sword smashing apart the pistons and gears of its war engine. In the end, only a blow against the bridge itself was enough and, rupturing the compression spire, Rynart sent the Ork warlord and his horde screaming into the black waters below.

Torund the Thrice-Blessed

Blessed be the name Torund, Champion of the Emperor in the year of Our Saviour 772.M39. When the cursed Sorcerer-Librarian Xenthuros claimed the Crystal Hives of Vard for his profane god, it was Torund that stood against him and prevailed. In the final Black Templars assault against Xenthuros' floating spire fortress, dozens of battle-brothers were driven mad by the mirrored buttresses and their hidden whisper-spells. Only Torund was untouched, three times Xenthuros tried to ensorcell the Emperor's Champion, and three times Torund spat back the enchantments with contempt. In the crystal throne room of the Sorcerer, Torund swept Xenthuros' bird-like head from his shoulders, the Black Sword cleaving through wards and Warp magick alike.

Renald the Retribution

Blessed be the name Renald, Champion of the Emperor in the year of Our Saviour 301.M40. Renald was gifted with visions from the Emperor while gravely wounded and returning from the war zones of Helath. Renald was one of only a handful of Black Templars aboard the Space Marine strike cruiser Catechism of Fury. When the Fury's Gellar field failed and the vessel was overrun by Daemons, Renald alone saved it from destruction. Bereft of Black Sword or Armour of Faith, and suffering festering injuries, the Emperor's Champion exacted a terrible tally upon the Daemons wielding only a chainsword, until the Gellar field could be restored, and only then succumbing to his wounds. Though he never carried it in battle, a Black Sword was inscribed with his name to remember this great deed.

Alehart the Slayer

Blessed be the name Alehart, Champion of the Emperor in the year of Our Saviour 997.M41. When the Shimmering City of Mirlas fell under the shadow of Hive Fleet Leviathan, it was Alehart who stemmed the alien tide. In the second battle of the Heatwash, he slew the Tyrant overlord, choking it with his blade as it tried to devour his flesh. Not content to turn the tide of war, the champion led a small band of his battle-brothers aboard the Tyranid hive ship, hacking his way through tunnels webbed with grasping tendons and clawed sphincters. Alehart alone made it through the birthing stomachs and up the ropy spinal strands at the hive ship's core. Finally, the champion drove his Black Sword into the pulsing cortex of the beast, its death scream echoing across the system.



The Broken Blade

His hearts thundered in his chest as he lay gasping in the dirt. The blow had cracked the ceramite of his chest plate and fractured one of his knee-plates, the joint pushing against his augmented muscles as he tried to rise. The whine of hard rounds and the crump of bolter shells finding flesh were somehow louder, sharper and closer than before. A tendril of fetid air made him realise his helmet had come loose, the seals torn and useless. Pushing himself up onto one knee, he braced himself with his heavy blade, its point sinking into the earth as it took his weight. Through the single intact lens of his helm he could see the beast readying for the kill.

Clearing his mind, he let the divine touch of the Emperor take him, the memory of the previous night's visions still vivid and fresh. An icy shiver ran through his blood, as if his faith were a cool stream. Shaken awake by the feeling, he pushed himself fully to his feet and raised his blade to defend himself. The beast lashed out at him as it

closed, diamond hard talons carving screeching furrows in his shoulder pad, raking across the symbol of his Chapter. Pivoting on his heel, he let the blow spin him around and away from the beast, harnessing the momentum to bring his blade around in a wide, flat arc. The blow caught the creature across its elongated jaw, spraying black blood across his face and armour. Where the blood found cracks and rents in the armour, he felt it burn his flesh, the foul chemical smell of it filling his nostrils.

Wounded, but far from defeated, the beast staggered past him, its lumbering charge taking it back into the press of battle to find another foe. Such was the swirling melee that warriors and beasts would meet for but a moment, presented with a fleeting chance to score a kill before they spun apart again to face fresh opponents. Without a second thought, he turned back to the fray, the creature forgotten. Ripping free his helm and clasp it to the magnets at his waist, he spat out a mouthful of blood and blinked to clear his vision.

All around him was carnage, dozens of his brothers were locked in combat with the aliens, their bolters and blades reaping a terrible toll, horribly outnumbered as they were. What seemed only a moment ago, the trench-works had been filled with stony-faced Guardsmen, heavy weapons platforms and battle tanks, the proud, black-armoured warriors striding through their midst giving them hope and filling them with the wrath of the God-Emperor. Now, only corpses manned the defences, the smoking remains of tanks and blasted craters where guns had been. The Space Marines alone fought on, defending the last piece of the Imperium on this world.

He watched as his brothers hacked apart the foe or blasted them at point-blank range. For every vile xenos that fell, three more seemed to take its place, and he knew then that the battle was lost. Even so, he raised his blade once more, willing to die fighting alongside those of his brotherhood with prayers to the Emperor on his lips.

It was then that a flash caught his eye, a break in the seething black clouds through which a beam of pure light descended from the sky to fall upon his upturned face. In the midst of the tumultuous battle, a sea of calm enveloped him, and friend and foe alike parted around him like water. In his mind, he heard a trumpet's call, the stirring song of angels and the ring of holy steel being unsheathed. This was his purpose, this was his time, and he welcomed the spirit of the God-Emperor into his body.

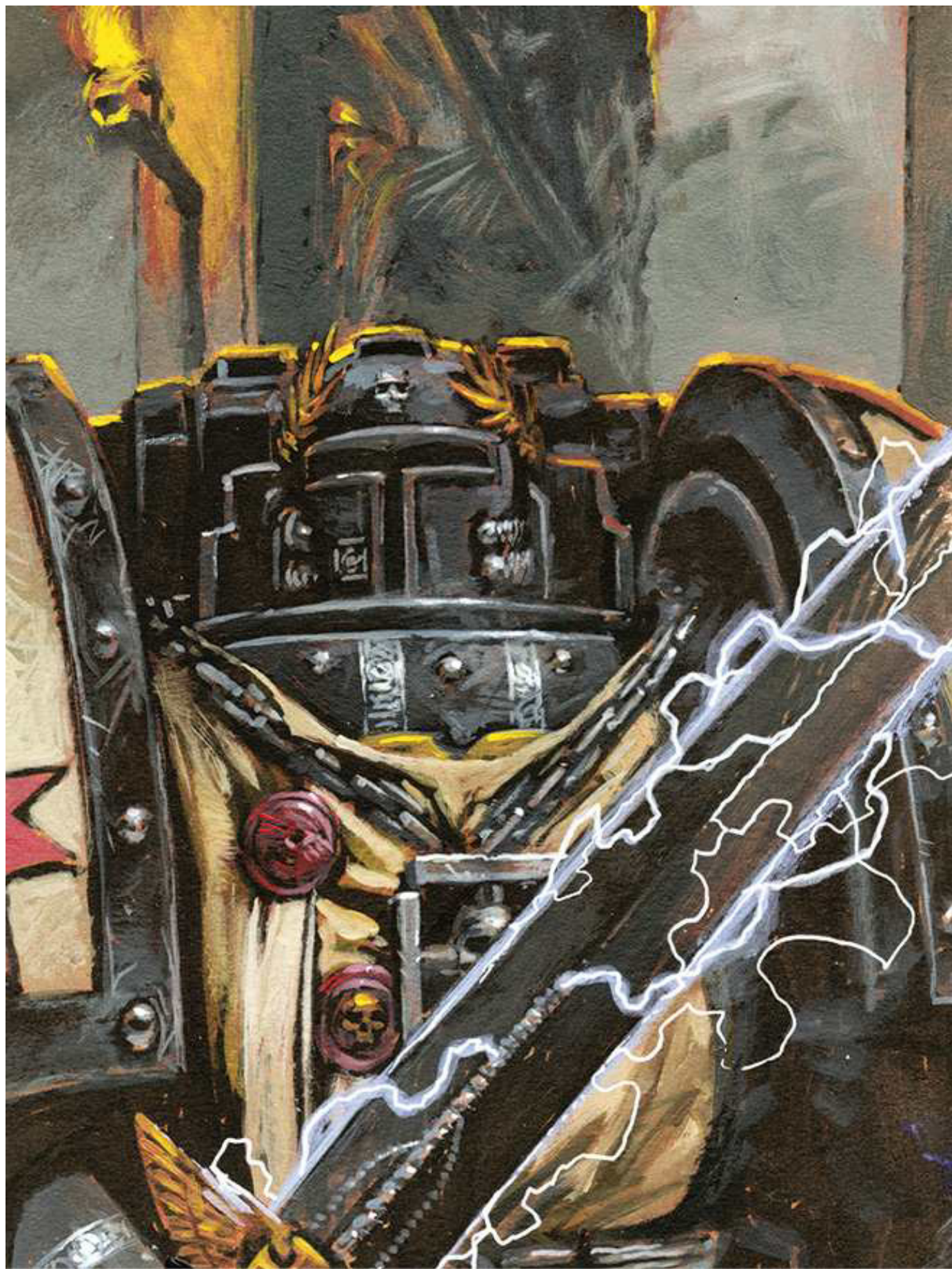
Turning his gaze upon the enemy, he took a step toward their ranks; then another, and another, until he was running across the broken earth-works, his charge kicking up dust and dirt. Where a beast lunged at him, the Black Sword flicked out, severing talons, limbs and insect-like heads with equal ease. Though he saw them not, his remaining brothers fell in behind him, spurred on to a final glorious act of defiance by his actions.

Sprinting now, he reached the great city gates where the beasts had broken through, the ground still choked with alien and Imperial dead. Climbing up over the mounds of corpses, he forced his way into the breach, cutting down dozens of the foe, his broken armour slick with alien blood. Finally, hewing down a towering warrior-beast, he made his way to the opening and stepped out.

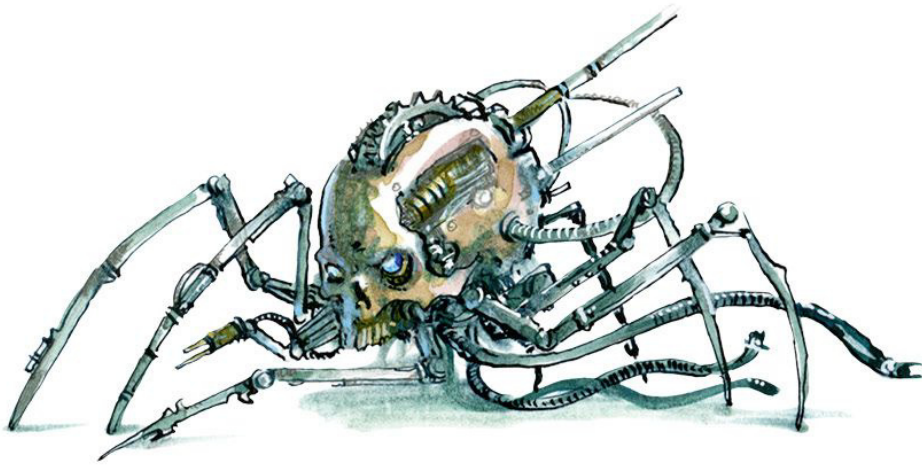
Before him stretched the once verdant plains that surrounded the city, a patchwork of hab-farms and gruel-mills, now carpeted in millions of crawling, clawing and screeching xenos. As he watched, the sea of creatures rippled and surged forward, thousands of beasts pushing towards the city and the lone warrior standing at its gates.

'FOR THE EMPEROR!', he screamed at the sky, holding the Black Sword aloft and charging down into the seething swarm.





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FORTRESS MONASTERIES™



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Every Chapter of the Adeptus Astartes maintains a mighty fortress monastery, a sanctuary where it trains every new generation of Space Marines and keeps its secrets safe. Great Imperial bastions in their own right, monasteries can take many forms, from towering keeps and sky-scraping spires, to subterranean vaults and seabed domes. Some monasteries are even incorporated into void-borne craft, like the Black Templars Battle Barge Eternal Crusader or the asteroid fortress of the Dark Angels known as The Rock.

However, most Chapters' monasteries are terrestrial, either based on their Chapter Planet, one of their seed worlds, or on an Imperial world by ancient accord with its planetary governor. These imposing edifices are often located in the wilderness regions of their worlds, far from the cities and towns of its other inhabitants. On primitive worlds, ignorant tribesmen will talk of the giant sky-gods and their sacred mountain, warning their children against straying into its shadow. Even on more advanced worlds, the citizens leave the Chapter well alone, often imposing a forbidden zone around the monastery that stretches for hundreds of miles in all directions. In either case, this suits the Chapter well enough, for its battle-brothers are content to stand apart from the world around them and focus on matters closer to home.





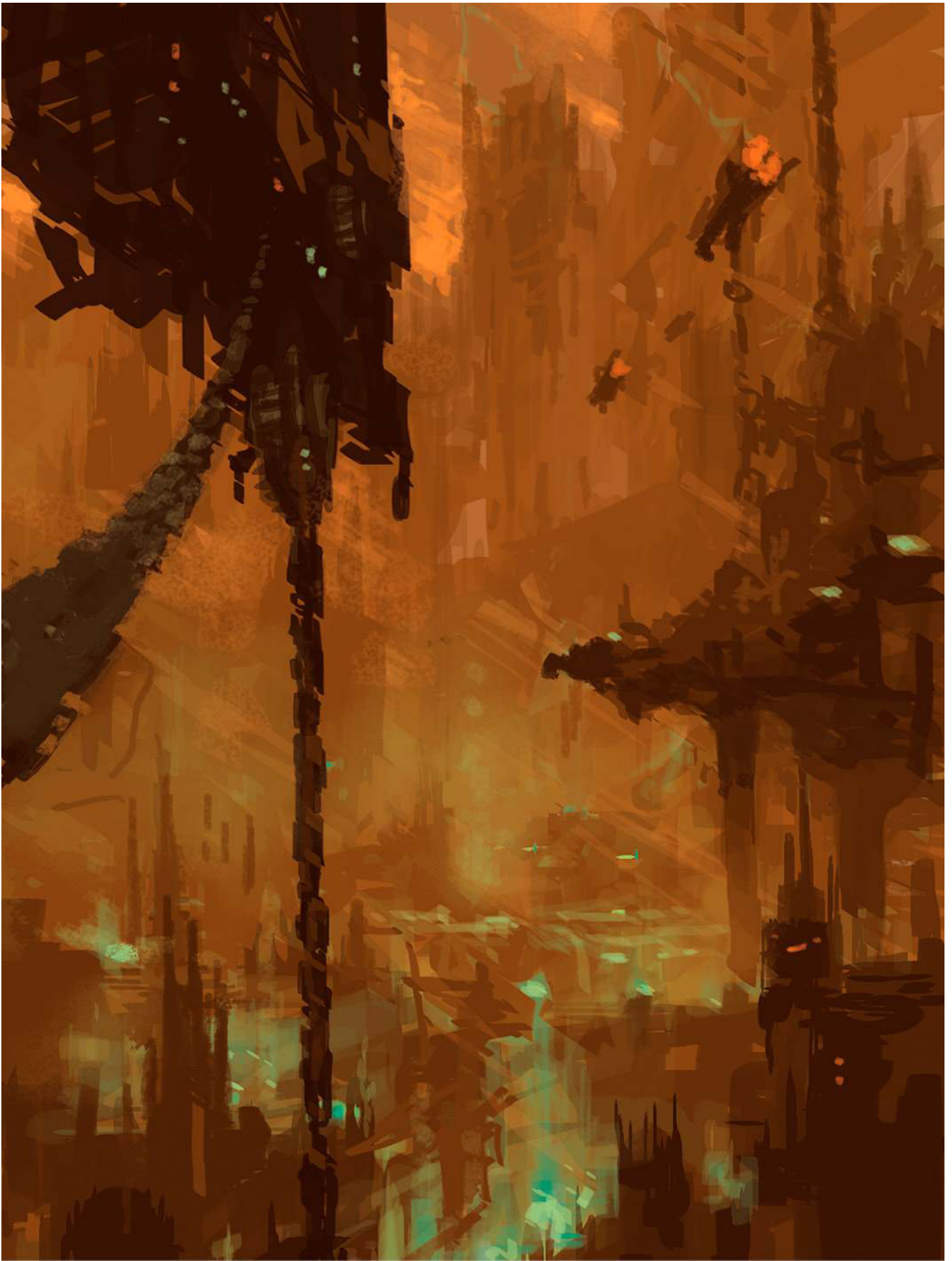
HEART OF THE CHAPTER



HEART OF THE CHAPTER



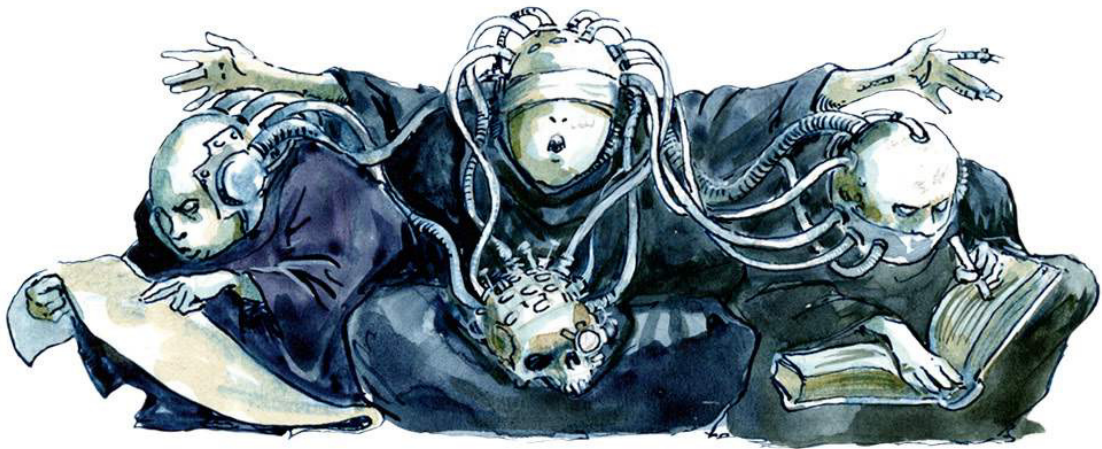
A fortress monastery is where a Chapter will safeguard its heritage and keep its trophies of war. It is rare for more than a fraction of a Chapter to be in residence at any one time, since most of the Chapter's companies spend years away campaigning across the Imperium. Consequently, life in a fortress monastery tends to follow ancient traditions and faithful routines of prayer and devotion that have gone long unchanged. The Codex Astartes teaches that, to be a great warrior, a Space Marine must be more than his weapons and armour, more than the genetic gifts of his Primarch and more than the war machines provided by his Chapter. He must be strengthened with faith in the Emperor and shielded by indomitable courage. What time a Space Marine does not give over to training will mostly be spent in prayer; even rest is a secondary concern to the rituals of devotion. As a result, a fortress monastery is designed for these needs, its halls studded with alcoves and shrines and its vaults filled with combat arenas and firing ranges.



So that the battle-brothers might concern themselves only with honing their body and spirit, the menial tasks of the fortress monastery are dealt with by Chapter serfs. These lay-servants are drawn either from local populations or sometimes from failed recruits, allowing them to serve despite not becoming Space Marines. They clean the vast vaulted chambers and prepare the battle-brothers' spartan meals. When work is too intricate or complicated for servitors, it is the Chapter serfs who tend to the task for their super-human masters, moving like shadows through the halls and catacombs of the monastery. Though they have a trusted place beside the battle-brothers they serve, they remain largely invisible to them, just another function of the monastery which allows them to focus on the needs of their warrior life.



FORTRESS CHAMBERS



FORTRESS CHAMBERS



Each fortress monastery is unique to its Chapter and the world upon which it stands. However, most share common chambers and rooms, built as they are in part upon the teachings of the Codex Astartes. Below are listed some typical examples of these chambers, their uses and the part they play in the everyday existence of a Space Marine when he is between campaigns.

GATES, RAMPARTS AND BARBICANS

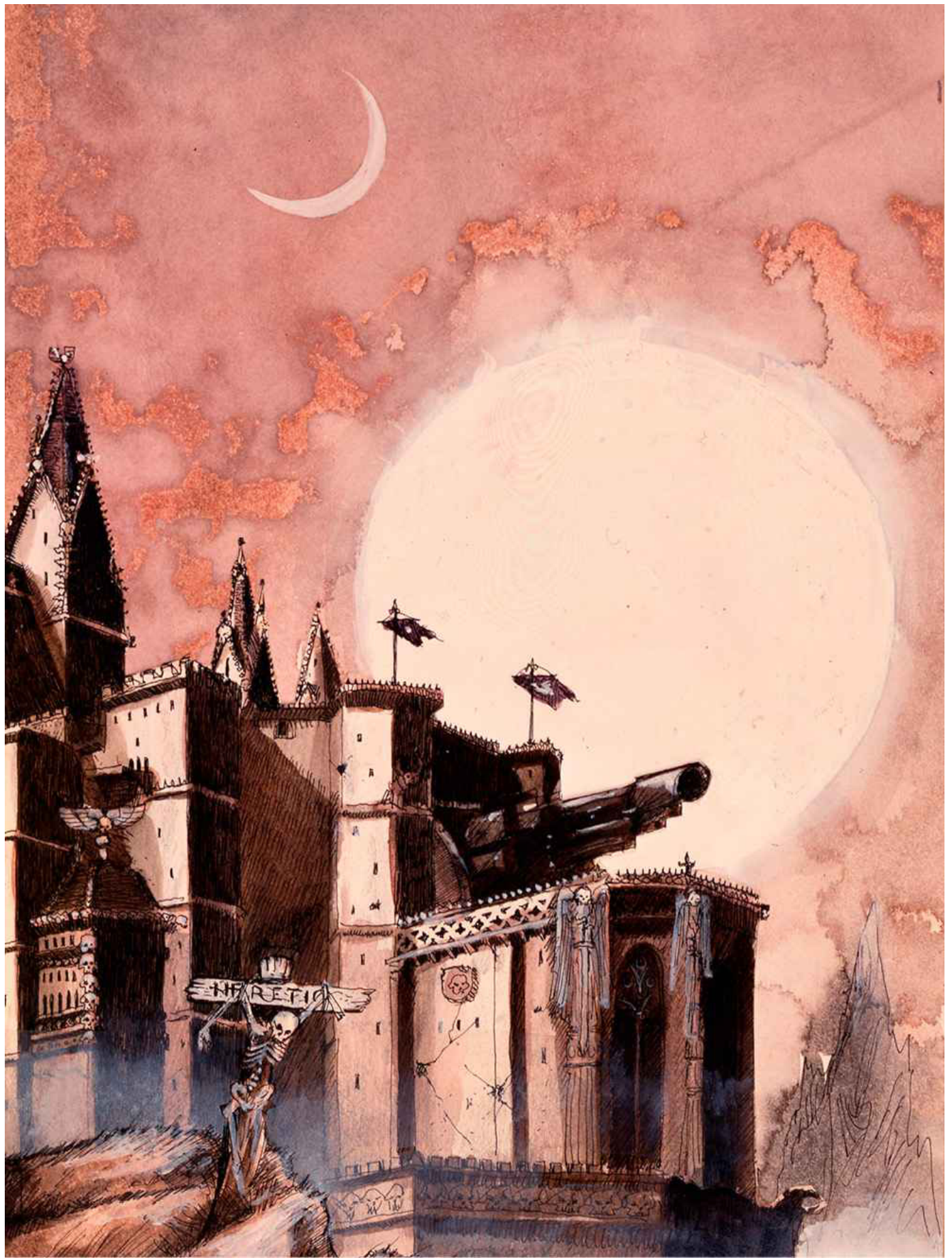
As the name implies, a Space Marine fortress monastery is constructed to withstand an assault from any determined foe. Ringed with high walls or built into the heart of a mountain or other natural defence, the monastery comprises dozens of ramparts, watchtowers and bastions. Every entrance is sealed with heavy adamantium, ceramite or stone gates, barred by ancient and complex locks, often keyed to the unique genetic code of the Chapter's battle-brothers. The monastery will also often incorporate shimmering void shields, domes of power enveloping the entire structure to ward off orbital bombardments or assaults from Titans.

Covering every entrance and approach, macro-cannon turrets, heavy bolter bunkers and missile batteries scan the horizon for foes, ready to unleash their deadly ordnance at a second's notice. Whether on the remotest of worlds, or firmly within the grasp of the Imperium, a fortress monastery is always ready for war. The lands beyond its walls and gates are always considered hostile, and only the most trusted allies are admitted entrance.

In addition to thick walls and gates, the Chapter will create other kinds of defences to further discourage assault. These can consist of almost anything that would bring woe to an attacker, be they grav-mine nets, vortex-pits or eletro-pylons, each one capable of killing entire regiments. Natural defences are frequently incorporated into a fortress monastery, and were doubtless a motivating factor for their ancient builders. On mundane Imperial worlds, this might mean placing the fortress high atop a remote peak, deep within the heart of a forbidding jungle or embedded beneath a frozen polar ice cap. Death worlds provide alternative means of repelling the foe, such as forests of carnivorous plants, airless plains bombarded with solar radiation or even shifting tectonic seas of magma.

The Chapter's fleet is also maintained at the fortress monastery when not transporting battle-brothers or engaging enemies across the galaxy. Any ships present add to the might of the fortress' defences, either from within shielded docking arrays or from geosynchronous orbit above, their heavy guns scanning the surrounding void.





GREAT HALL

A fortress monastery will often have a large entrance chamber, designed to convey the might of the Chapter and awe all who walk through its great gates. Known as the great hall, this cyclopean room is lined with ceiling-scraping statues of heroes, its walls carved with reliefs depicting the glorious history of the Chapter. An emissary led into the hall must pass under the watchful gaze of these stone and bronze giants, his eyes drawn up into the shadows of the vaulted ceiling where frescos show bloody battles and scenes of ancient heroism. In the centre of the chamber, the Chapter's symbol will often dominate the floor, easily a hundred metres across, so that none may doubt whose fortress it is they stand in.

The Great Hall is used not only to display the glory and power of the Chapter, but is also large enough for a full company to assemble. Space Marines of the Chapter will sometimes gather here in the presence of their ancestors before embarking on a mission or campaign. It is written in the Codex Astartes that a Chapter must be mindful of its heritage, the genetic past that connects it to its Primarch and ultimately to the Emperor. Each Chapter has its own means and methods of honouring their heroes and forbears, but many use the Great Hall for their rituals.

The Great Hall is the glorious face of the Chapter, hiding its secrets, sins or shame, behind a facade of grand monuments. The statues and mosaics of the hall are the outward image of the Chapter, hence its location just beyond the fortress monastery's main entrance, and they show visitors what the Chapter wants them to see. Any flaws the Chapter possesses are hidden deep within the fortress, their taint far from the glory reflected by the Great Hall.



CELLS AND DORMITORIES

While the fortress monastery is primarily a venue of worship, training and defence, it is also a place where Space Marines and their servants take rest. Each battle-brother has his own cell within the monastery, which – depending on the creed of his Chapter – might be a bare stone room bereft of ornamentation or a warrior's refuge, its walls hung with weapons and trophies. In either case, a Space Marine's cell is unique to him, and for as long as he lives it will remain his own, a place where he can pray alone and contemplate the glory of the Emperor.

By contrast, the Chapter serfs that maintain the fortress live in sprawling dormitories which, though still basic, are more spacious and comfortable than the cells. This is partly because the Chapter serfs live their whole lives within the walls of the monastery, and as a place where the battle-brothers rarely tread, the dormitories become their homes. Indeed, many Imperial citizens would be impressed by the life a Chapter serf leads, the Chapter ensuring the wellbeing of those that tend to the needs of its battle-brothers.

Even Chapter Masters will seldom have cells more impressive than those of an ordinary battle-brother. Though they might have war rooms and audience chambers in which they conduct the business of the Chapter, their own personal quarters are usually simple – as befits a warrior-monk, regardless of his station.

When a Space Marine dies the Chapter serfs clear out his cell and make sure that his possessions are either buried with him or, if this is not possible, stored within the depths of the fortress. Many monasteries have extensive catacombs beneath their walls holding hundreds of centuries worth of trinkets, trophies and honour tokens from countless generations of battle-brothers, each one bearing the name and deeds of the Space Marine. Often a group of serfs will spend their lives extending these catacombs and enshrining these belongings, the locations and contents of old tunnels lost when they die, until the fortress rests on an uncharted maze of the dead.





FORGES AND ARMOURY

Entire levels or wings of a fortress monastery will be given over to the forging of weapons and the maintenance of the Chapter's war machines. This is the domain of the Techmarines. As secretive as their Adeptus Mechanicus brothers, they work their rituals and prayers behind sealed doors, coaxing machine spirits to life or constructing new ordnance for their battle-brothers.

While a Chapter receives the bulk of its ammunition, small arms and armoured fighting vehicles from the Munitorium, the forge worlds of the Imperium producing the finest weapons for its greatest warriors, a degree of its weapons come from within the Chapter itself. This is especially true of weapons unique to the Chapter, such as relic blades, specialised bolter rounds or ancient suits of armour. These weapons are created and maintained in the forges of the fortress monastery, the Techmarines and servitor workers casting gun casings, chain blades and ceramite plates. Even without the aid of the Munitorium, once a Space Marine Chapter has created a fully working forge it is capable of sustaining its own combat needs.

Even in the absence of the Techmarines the forges are never cold, shifts of specially created servitors endlessly churning out bolter shells, frag grenades and other light ordnance. Chambers close to the forges are therefore never quiet, and constantly reverberate to the clang of hammers and the roar of autobellows keeping the fires hot. To a battle-brother these are comforting sounds, telling him his guns will not fail him in combat, nor will his clip ever run dry.

To house the war materiel of the Chapter huge shielded silos are built into its central recesses. Protected from attack by metres of adamantium, ferrocrete, null shields to dampen energy weapons and reactive blast doors, they are always piled high with crates of shells, rounds and missiles. Racks of boltguns, meltaguns, and heavier weapons line the walls, each one wrapped in the purity seals of the Master of the Forge, attesting to its blessed craftsmanship.

Connecting these silos to the rest of the fortress, a network of shell-hoists and ammo-conveyors ring the central chambers. Legless, sightless servitors hang suspended over the moving platforms and belts, their wizened fingers sorting rounds and shells by size and shape. Thus, from ammo-shrines throughout the monastery, a battle-brother can reload his boltgun or summon a weapon with which to fight any would-be invader.



APOTHECARION

Next to the forges and armouries, the Apothecarion is amongst the most well defended parts of a fortress monastery. This is where the Apothecaries safeguard the Chapter's genetic heritage and tend to its injured Space Marines. It is rare for a Space Marine to suffer lingering damage from combat; most wounds are not strong enough to kill a battle-brother, either healing quickly or being overcome by auxiliary organs, internal vascular control or metabolic cycling. By the time a Space Marine has returned to the Chapter's fortress monastery, any such damage will have healed or been patched up in the field by Apothecaries. The Apothecarion therefore usually deals only with those Space Marines who require new organs or limbs, or psycho-surgery for excessive mental trauma. Even these more complex operations are quick to carry out given a Space Marine's high metabolic healing rate and tolerance for pain.

Far more important than the tending of wounded battle-brothers, the Apothecarion serves as the repository for the Chapter's gene-seed. It is this part of a Space Marine that holds his genetic code and the ancestry of his Primarch. With this gene-seed an Apothecary can create a new Space Marine, implanting it into a man and letting it grow new organs, altering his physiology until he develops into a full battle-brother. The gene-seed of a Chapter represent both its past and its future, holding the DNA of their greatest heroes as well as the potential of future

generations of Space Marines.

To protect the gene-seed from interference or loss they are usually kept in spiralling stasis-wells: long cylindrical vaults lined with hundreds of sealed stasis-caskets, each one holding a single shielded vial containing a progenoid gland in glistening embryonic fluid. Only the Chapter Master and Chief Apothecary are allowed access to the stasis-well; heavy adamantium blast doors keyed to their unique bio-signatures surround it, and ranks of bolter turrets are constantly vigilant for trespassers.

It is the responsibility of the Apothecaries not just to keep and maintain the gene-seed but also to ensure its purity. Many Chapters have fallen from the light of the God-Emperor by allowing corruption and mutation to creep into their gene-seed, resulting in insanity and aberration among their battle-brothers. The pristine white chambers of the Apothecarion are where this work is done, and the biological discoveries of the Apothecaries recorded. These are secrets that must be well defended against friend and foe alike.





LIBRARIUS

The Librarius is the central store of all the Chapter's history and lore. Filled with ancient tomes and sacred scrolls, every piece of text ever laid down by the Chapter or relevant to its existence is housed within. Overseen by the Librarians, it is a silent and holy place of whispered secrets and hidden truths. Few battle-brothers are permitted access to the Librarius, its reserve of knowledge restricted to the Chapter Master and his advisors. In this capacity, the Chief Librarian is usually either recording lore for safekeeping or seeking it from among the dusty shelves and scroll-vaults.

A Librarius will often be created around a central pillar, its racks and shelves of books and scrolls spiralling out in ever widening circles. Branching from a central large round chamber, antechambers will hold tomes on specific lore or proscribed texts, many sealed permanently to guard against the heretical writings they contain. On a web of gantries, Lexicanium Librarians catalogue and order the books, assisted by Chapter serfs, the latter often blinded lest their gaze fall upon a forbidden word or dark illumination.

The disposition of lore within the Librarius varies from Chapter to Chapter, each placing varying degrees of importance on different texts or having more or fewer relics in their possession. However, in many cases the central pillar of the Librarius will house the Chapter's oldest copy of the Codex Astartes, held upon a stasis plinth or projected by holo-reflection. It is the honour of the Chapter Master and Chief Librarian alone to be able gaze upon this sacred tome, many lords of the Adeptus Astartes drawing their inspiration and resolve from the ancient book in times of darkness.

Beyond the central pillar, rows of written works, data-slates, chronicle stones and memory crystals line the walls, reaching up dozens of metres from dusty floor to shadowy ceiling. Each one is a piece of lore important to the Chapter, the account of a great battle, the final words of one of its heroes or the secrets of a vanquished foe. Imperial scholars speculate that there are details of lost xenos empires, terrible forgotten weapons and entire sectors of space that exist only in the Librarius' of the Adeptus Astartes. Such knowledge remains forever the dominion of the Chapter, and it is doubtful any outside of its masters will even know of its existence.



CRYPTS

The Space Marines honour their dead – each fallen battle-brother is borne back to the fortress monastery to be interred with his ancestors. Though not all battle-brothers make this final journey, the Chapter endeavours to see it done, and even on remote worlds or far-flung war zones there will be Chapter serfs or battle-brothers whose responsibility it is to gather up the dead and convey them back to the monastery.

Once the Apothecaries have removed his gene-seed, a Space Marine has served his final duty to the Imperium, and is ready for rest. His brothers, especially those from the squad or company in which he served, will say prayers over him before he is taken away, honouring his deeds and remembering his bravery in battle. The body then finds its way back across the stars and eventually into the crypts of the fortress monastery.

The nature of these crypts depends on the world upon which the fortress stands, and in many cases the customs of the Chapter itself. Some will take the form of subterranean vaults, their walls carved with recesses and filled with the bones of long-dead battle-brothers, while others might be shadowy chambers lined with rows of sealed stone caskets, the lid of each carved into the likeness of the Space Marine it inters. In some cases the world's environment will be used, the bodies of the fallen frozen into the depths of a polar mountain, preserved in the airless heart of an asteroid or cremated in the caldera of a seething volcano.

A fortress monastery is where a Space Marine is made, where he is trained and where he lives his life between campaigns. In the end, when his duty is finally done, it is also fittingly where his body is laid to rest.







WARHAMMER
40,000

INDEX ASTARTES™



LIBRARIANS™



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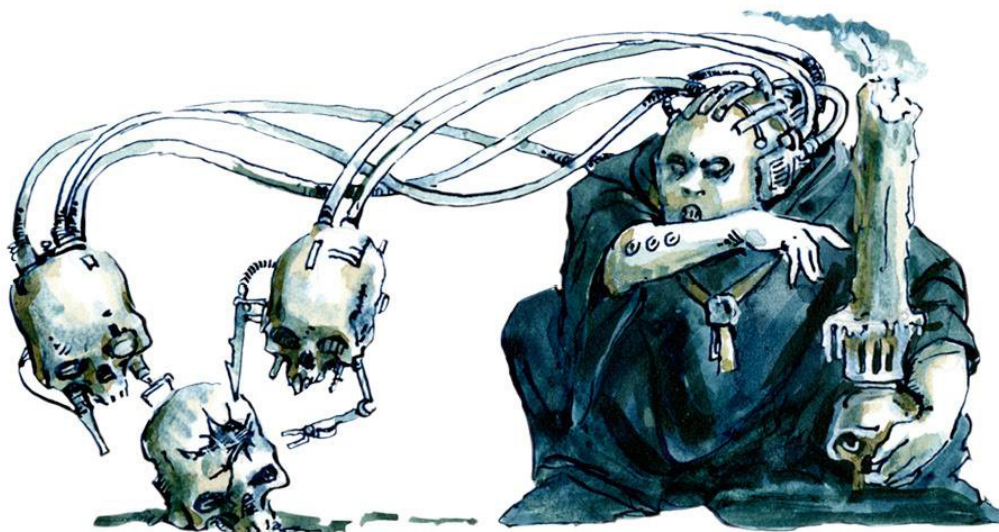
LIBRARIANS



The Librarians of the Space Marine Chapters are mighty warrior-mystics, inspiring figures who wield incredible and devastating powers. They are an integral part of the Adeptus Astartes, outstanding warriors who utilise their psychically enhanced wisdom and knowledge to fulfil the function of oracles and psychic communication within the Space Marines Chapters. Such powers come at a price, however, and only those with the strongest willpower are capable of withstanding the constant pressures that come with psychic awareness. For every successful psyker, there are countless others whose lack of control threatens to doom them to an eternity of torment. The risk of corruption and daemonic incursion is great, and there was once a time when the Emperor determined that the danger was too great, banning his Space Marines Legions from making any use of their psychic powers. However, without psykers, the entire system of interstellar communication and travel would cease to exist, consequently resulting in the collapse of the Imperium, and in the 41st Millennium, nearly all Space Marine Chapters make use of Librarians.



BACKGROUND



THE INSIDIOUS CURSE OF THE PSYKER

The growing number of psykers within the Imperium is seen by some as the next evolutionary step for Mankind. However, these are the very early, tentative stages, for such an advancement will take countless generations to fully evolve, and the powers of the psyker are not yet refined. Psychic ability is both the greatest boon to Mankind and its most dangerous threat. Of those psykers whose strength of will enables them to control their powers, the most highly trained and potent are the Librarians of the Adeptus Astartes.

Lacking these powers, the Imperium would become nothing more than a series of scattered and isolated systems. Warp travel is only made possible for Humanity with the guiding light of the Astronomican, a psychic beam stretching many tens of thousands of light years across space from its source on Terra. The pure psychic energy needed for this great undertaking is created by the combined 'voice' of ten thousand specially trained psykers, a soul draining labour that exhausts their life-force, often within months, leaving them little more than shrivelled husks. This 'voice' is focused and directed by the immortal Emperor, who projects the pure psychic energy into the galaxy. This beacon is vital to the specially trained and psychically attuned Navigators, who require it to have any possibility of steering a safe path through the turbulent and inconsistent non-reality of the Immaterium.

Those of particular strength of mind, if discovered when young, may be nurtured so that their abilities can benefit Mankind in such ways. The psykers schooled by the Scholastica Psykana generally operate within a particular specialised area, most commonly as Astropaths, trained for interstellar communication within the Adeptus Astra Telepathica. The Librarians of the Adeptus Astartes, however, fulfil a much more varied and combat oriented role, and as such, they are chosen only from amongst those of exceptional ability and skill.

Those with psychic ability draw their power from the turbulent realm of the Warp, also known as the Ether, the Immaterium or the Emypyrean, as recorded in the Scriptorum Arcanum. This alternate dimension is a twisted reflection of the known physical world, a horrific and constantly shifting domain of raw emotions that defies the accepted laws of the material universe, inhabited by malevolent and predatory astral creatures. When a psyker uses his power, he opens a gateway between the two realms, drawing energy from the Warp into himself and reshaping it to his needs. If a psyker is unprepared or inexperienced, he may inadvertently attract the attentions of Daemons, drawn to the temporary gateway of the psyker's mind like moths to a flame. According to the codices of the enigmatic, Daemon-hunting Ordo Malleus, these Warp entities are capable of traversing the link the psyker has formed between the two dimensions, assaulting his mind, ripping the very soul from his body and dragging him screaming to an existence of eternal torture within the Warp. As such, that twisted realm is sometimes referred to as the Sea of Souls. A particularly powerful Daemon may also attempt to force its way into the physical realm by overwhelming the body of the hapless psyker, and from there, endeavour to inflict as much psychic and physical suffering as possible on the material world.

Those with a limited degree of psychic ability, but who lack the strength of will to fully control it, are one of the most dangerous forces threatening the Imperium, and they are hunted down without remorse by the Inquisition. As a matter of course, the number of minds considered dangerous far outweighs those embraced by the Imperium. Some of those condemned are transported to Terra aboard one of the Black Ships, where their sacrifice can benefit all of Mankind. It is said that their life-force is fed to the insatiable needs of the undying Emperor in order to sustain him, enabling his glorious light to remain indefinitely within the physical realm. Indeed, to be born with psychic ability is a terrible curse, and many attempt to hide their powers from detection. Without the correct training, a psyker teeters on the brink of eternal damnation. Entire planetary systems have been brought under daemonic dominion, creating hellish worlds

of tortured slaves, due to a single psyker lacking the mental discipline to not use his gifts.



SPACE MARINE LIBRARIANS

Space Marine Librarians are amongst the most potent of all of Mankind's psykers, with exceptional talent and trained to the highest levels. A skilled Librarian can manipulate the energy of the Warp in extraordinary ways, and with spectacular effect.

Librarians constantly train their minds and bodies to reinforce their willpower, for the danger involved is great. While the Chapter Apothecaries test the physical gene-structure of potential Space Marines, the Librarians are responsible for testing their psychic ability and willpower. They do this to seek out and nurture those who show talent, and more importantly, to weed out those who possess some ability whose untrained minds would endanger the entire Chapter.

Those initiates displaying the required psychic talent and willpower are inducted into the Librarium, where they commence their intensive years of study and development in conjunction with the strict training of their brother Space Marines. These initiates are recruited from a variety of sources, depending on the means and position of the Space Marine home world or fortress monastery. Some Chapters recruit their Librarians solely from amongst those chosen as potential Space Marines, while other Chapters select their number from amongst the most talented and disciplined of young Primaris Psykers of the Scholastica Psykana.

The need for vigilance is never treated lightly, and the Librarians of every Chapter routinely engage the minds of its Space Marines in order to ensure their purity. They are meticulous in their record keeping, chronicling any discovered deviancy for future reference. Space Marines exposed to particular psychic strain and trauma, such as through contact with alien horrors or the warping influence of Chaos, must undergo a series of strict screening and cleansing rituals conducted by the Librarians in order to confirm the integrity of the precious gene-seed. For the Space Marines, gene-seed is the Chapter's life-blood, the most invaluable of possessions, and must be kept pure at all costs. Any trace of perversion or corruption within the gene-seed must be eradicated utterly if the Chapter is to survive.



THE LIBRARIUS

The librarius of the Chapter is typically an ancient and immense structure, housing the collective knowledge that the Chapter has acquired over the millennia. Scribes work ceaselessly within its walls, labouring to duplicate the older texts as they are gradually destroyed by time. The Librarians of the Chapter are charged with the upkeep of the librarius, and as a group, are named after the halls where they spend so much of their time. It is their responsibility to maintain the many records of the Chapter and their integrity. Only they know the full wonders and horrors that are contained within the ancient vellum pages, deeds both heroic and heinous.

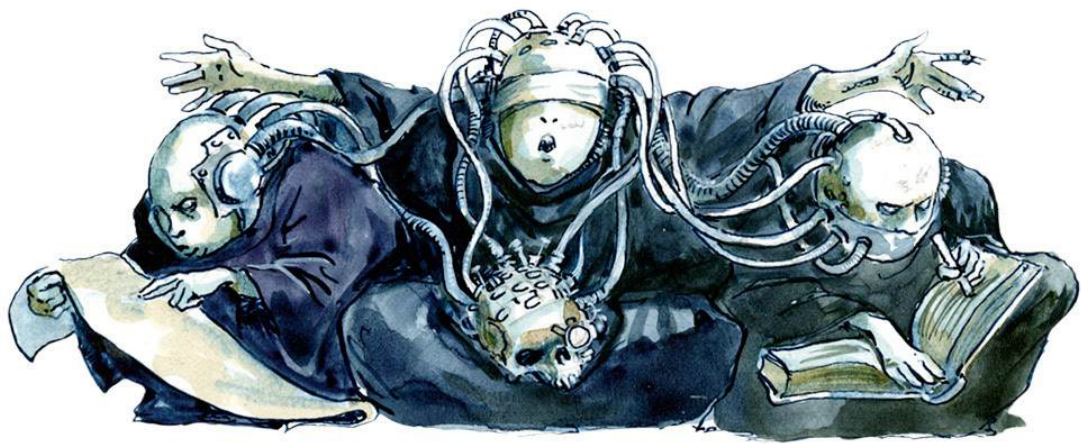
Thousand-year-old tomes, bound in cracked and faded leather, sit side by side with newer works in an immense and ever expanding collection. Indeed, the librarius is often enlarged as time passes in order to house the perpetually increasing number of volumes held within. Imperial envoys tell fantastical stories of the rare and ancient arcane technologies that reside within a librarius' hallowed walls, great humming data repositories that store unfathomable amounts of information. The librarius will often include an archaic catalogue containing countless data crystals, each crystal holding a lifetime of accumulated wisdom. Many librarius

contain a smaller inner sanctum, where the most dangerous and heretical texts are kept. This area is accessible to only a select few of the Chapter's Chief Librarians, as befits the dangerous and blasphemous nature of the texts. Merely glancing at the twisted pages of these dangerous volumes would send most men spiralling deep into insanity, and they can only be viewed under the most controlled conditions and with careful preparations of the mind.





ORGANISATION



The various official ranks within the Librarians' order serve to describe the particular functions that they perform within the Chapter and within the Librarius itself. The lowest of the battlefield ranks is the Lexicanium, whose job it is to act as a record keeper, creating the initial reports that are to be added to the librarius. These summary accounts chronicle the history of the Chapter, varying in nature from campaign and battle details to the beliefs and philosophies of the Chapter. The next rank of Librarian is that of Codicier, awarded to the older, more experienced Space Marines who critically evaluate the reports of the Lexicaniums, finalising their form for inclusion in the librarius. The Epistolary stands a level higher still, and is one of those typically turned to when the need arises for psychic communication. This power can be used to project the mind of the Librarian across the Warp itself if necessary. This is a similar ability to that used by the Astropaths of the Adeptus Astra Telepathica, who are relatively common throughout the Imperium. However, such is the strength of will of the Librarians that they have no need to undertake the tortuous ritual of Soul Binding that the Astropaths must endure. More commonly, the Epistolary is used to communicate over shorter distances, coordinating attacks and relaying battle orders.

The Chief Librarians are the highest ranking members of their order, and their mastery and control of the mystic arts is awesome to behold. The Chapter and its commanders rely heavily on the council of these most powerful of psykers and, acting within their role as advisors, the Chief Librarians have countless centuries of experience at their disposal. Through a combination of wisdom and considerable psychic powers of premonition, the advice of the Chief Librarians is greatly respected within the Chapter. On the battlefield, however, is where their abilities truly come to the fore, as their overwhelming powers devastate the armies and defences of their enemies, rending them apart with pure force of will.

The tactical worth of the Librarians is tremendous. The psychic shock wave and turbulence that is created as a ship moves in and out of Warp space can be felt by them, and so the actions of an enemy can be more effectively anticipated and countered. They are the equal in battlefield prowess of any other Space Marine, and the devastating psychic powers that they wield will often tip the balance in the Chapter's favour in a close fought conflict. The psychic abilities of the Librarians are utilised in various forms, most directly by channelling the power of the Warp through his body, striking at the enemy with devastating blasts of concentrated energy. With their powers of prescience, they can sense and predict the movements of the enemy, providing a distinct tactical advantage. Messages and communications can be relayed using the Librarian's psychic powers, and these types of communications have the advantage over more physical forms, such as comm-links, of being completely undetectable to all but the most powerful of psykers.



ARCANE EQUIPMENT

There is a myriad array of equipment that the Librarians of the Adeptus Astartes use to amplify and focus their psychic might. The variety of these arcane items is so great that it makes a general classification of them impossible, and their use varies amongst the different Chapters, as well as being dependent on the personal preferences of individual Librarians. Some favour the use of the Emperor's Tarot in predicting the twisting paths of the future, a tool used for divination throughout the Imperium. The psychic hood is an intricately designed helmet, fitted with an array of psychically conductive wires and crystals, which serves to amplify the psyker's abilities, enabling him to disrupt the flow and manipulation of the Warp by others. As such, it is an effective counter to the psychic abilities of rogue and alien psykers. Ritually purified force weapons are utilised by the majority of Librarians. They come in a variety of forms, most generally appearing as swords and axes. Psychically attuned to the mind of its wielder, the force weapon is a potent armament that the psyker uses as a conduit through which his power is channelled. Coiling psychic energy flows around the crystalline matrices etched into the weapon, released on impact in an explosive display of power. The weapons have a colossal force when utilised against creatures of the Warp, which are particularly vulnerable to attacks made with the same form of energy that makes up their own Warp-spawned forms. Despite the wide variety in the way they equip themselves, nearly all Librarians have their armour painted a distinctive blue, the symbolic colour of the librarius, to denote their status. This sets them apart from their battle-brothers, though they usually maintain their Chapter's colours and heraldry on their shoulder pad and have other emblems and designations to signify their rank within the Librarius.



The Rune Priests of the Space Wolves

The Rune Priests of the Space Wolves are a notable exception to the doctrines of the Codex Astartes, a comment that can be applied to the entire Chapter (other particularly noteworthy exceptions include the Librarians of the Crimson Shades, the White Scars and the Novamarines). While the role that Rune Priests play within the Chapter is not so different from the traditional Codex role, it is in the methods they employ where they differ significantly. They act as record keepers, much like Codex Librarians, though they memorise their histories in great sagas rather than in written form. They act as advisors to the Great Wolf as well, counselling him in times of war. The particular psychic powers and practices they employ, however, are based on those of the traditional shamans of their home world, Fenris, and as such, are very different to the Codex form. Young skalds are taught the complex and arcane lore of their people by the older Rune Priests, their methods having remained unchanged for countless centuries. The Rune Priests are independent and ferocious warriors, wise and deliberate in their methods and rituals. They cast runes to predict the ebb and flow of events to come, the runes often carved from the bones or teeth of one of the various totem animals of the Fenrisians. The teeth of the great wolves that prowl the icy world are particularly noted for their power.

The Rune Priest holds a different attitude towards psychic powers than that of the other Codex Space Marine Chapters. Where typical Codex Librarians hold to the belief that their power is a manipulation of the pure essence of the Warp, the Rune Priest believes that his power comes from the living energy of Fenris, as well as from within. The innate power of Fenris can be channelled into his totems by the Rune Priest, so that he may always carry this power with him wherever he may be within the galaxy.



**Rune Priest with plasma pistol
and runic axe**

Chief Librarian Mephiston, Lord of Death

Mephiston is an awe-inspiring figure, viewed by the Blood Angels with fear and reverence in equal measure. His entrancing eyes penetrate into the very depths of the soul, engaging friend and foe alike with their terrible brilliance. The Blood Angels see him as the spiritual son of their Primarch Sanguinius, and as a great hope for the entire Chapter, for it was he who first overcame the agonising experience of the Red Thirst. The Blood Angels strive to emulate his courageous strength of will, in the hope that they too will be able to conquer their terrible curse. In the depths of the madness brought on by the Red Thirst, Mephiston re-lived the final agony of his dying Primarch. He arose transcendent from his insanity, suppressing his overwhelming lust for blood through sheer force of will. The mental strength that was needed to survive this ordeal was phenomenal, and serves him well as Chief Librarian, though he fights a continuing battle to keep it in check.



Mephiston, Lord of Death

Chief Librarian Tigurius

Chief Librarian Tigurius is the highest ranking of his order within the proud and highly respected Ultramarines Chapter. A fierce and wise warrior-mystic, he attained his exalted position after proving his worth time and again over many years of arduous campaigning, primarily against the savage and brutal Orks. He was one of the few survivors of the Ork attack on Boros, where he witnessed the mysterious appearance of the black armoured Space Marines known as the Legion of the Damned. His psychic mastery is augmented by the Hood of Hellfire, a uniquely modified psychic hood of ancient design. It is a powerful version of the standard psychic hood, an arcane creation that crackles with barely suppressed energy as it enhances the strength of his devastating mental assaults.



**Chief Librarian Tigurius
of the Ultramarines**



WARHAMMER
40,000

INDEX ASTARTES™



LONE WOLVES™



INDEX ASTARTES:

LONE WOLVES



SPACE WOLVES - LONE WOLVES



A Lone Wolf is vengeance incarnate. The last survivor of his pack, he will stop at nothing to avenge his fallen kinsmen, hurling himself into the thick of the fighting without hesitation so that he may win great glory or earn a magnificent death in battle. The Space Wolves hold true to the belief that only through deeds of incredible heroism or sacrifice can such a warrior atone for his survival and restore the honour of his dead packmates. So does every Lone Wolf swear a mighty oath to seek out the mightiest foes and slay them in glorious combat, or die in the attempt.

Lone Wolves are a natural byproduct of the unique structural organisation and warrior brotherhood that forms the heart of the Space Wolves Chapter. Unlike standard Space Marine squads, as defined by the Codex Astartes, where individual squad members are frequently reassigned to replace casualties or grouped together according to their experience, Space Wolves fight together as a single pack until death claims them all. New recruits begin their lives amongst the Sky Warriors as large packs of youthful and brash Blood Claws, becoming Grey Hunters only when they are tempered by battle and highly skilled in every aspect of war. It is common for newly promoted Grey Hunter packs to be half of their original size, sometimes even less. Should they survive long enough to become wise and venerable Long Fangs, their pack will inevitably have dwindled further still. Only elevation to the ranks of the Wolf Guard, or rarer still, the triumvirate of Priesthoods, will see a Space Wolf ever leave his pack. Despite the great honour granted to these warriors by such a promotion, they will be sorely missed, and will not leave before being subjected to a suitably raucous send-off by their packmates.

The pack mentality of the Space Wolves grows ever stronger as the years pass, each band of warriors becoming many times the sum of its individual parts. So strong is this bond of brotherhood that every Space Wolf keenly understands the sense of loss left by the absence of his packmates. To so suddenly lose this kinship is a psychologically traumatic experience that few can fully comprehend. Though Space Wolves traditionally face death with jovial fatalism, to fight and die alone without their comrades is something that few of them relish. Only the Chapter's Ancients can truly empathise with the emotional plight of a Lone Wolf, having lost their kinsmen over the many centuries since their incarceration in a Dreadnought's sarcophagus – they too walk a lonely path, fuelled by the need for vengeance on those that robbed them of a mighty death. But of all the Dreadnoughts, it is Bjorn the Fell-handed who is most keenly familiar with their situation...



BACKGROUND



FIRST OF THE LONE WOLVES

Few accurate records remain concerning the earliest years of the Space Wolves, and only one such tale exists regarding the first known case of a Lone Wolf's quest for vengeance. The subject of this tale is none other than the legendary hero of the Chapter, Bjorn the Fell-handed. Some scholars believe this notion merely to be yet another improbable chapter in the saga of the ancient warrior, one fuelled by sentiment and lacking in credibility. Their cynicism may even be justified, for the tale does not take place until after the bitter wars of the Scouring. However, whether he was indeed the original Lone Wolf or not, it appears that Bjorn may well have been the first of his kind to earn redemption through his courageous actions.

During the Horus Heresy, Bjorn was a young warrior of great potential. He had excelled during the burning of Prospero, and his pack was often singled out to lead assaults where enemy resistance was expected to be at its heaviest. It was whilst undertaking one such attack on the acrid, volcanic world of Gryth that events were to take a tragic turn. Bjorn's pack had humbled tyrants, butchered aliens beyond counting, and even hewn down their brother Space Marines that had fallen from the Emperor's grace; yet against the Daemon king, Arvax the Arch-slaughterer, they knew only death. That Bjorn actually survived the massacre of his kinsmen was a testament to his exceptional skills as a warrior, for all others who faced the mighty Daemon of Khorne that fateful day joined Bjorn's packmates in death. Though the arrival of Leman Russ saw the Space Wolves ultimately emerge victorious against the daemonic host, it was Bjorn who finally drove the seemingly unstoppable Daemon general from the field.

Despite his victory of sorts, Bjorn never forgave himself for the loss of his kinsmen, nor the fact that he alone yet lived having been denied a magnificent death. In the hours that followed the battle, Bjorn became increasingly melancholy, refusing to accept the hearty approval of those that had witnessed his heroic battle against the Daemon king. As he witnessed his packmates burn atop the victory pyres, he gave voice to a long, mournful howl. Kneeling before the bodies of his burning kinsmen, he swore a grave oath of vengeance against their slayer.



*Lo there, do I see my fallen kinsmen,
Threads cut by the foe I now seek.
In bloody battle I will engage him,
And carve my vengeance from his flesh.
No ale shall pass my lips,
At no feast will I indulge.
No foe shall stay my wrath,
Until my brothers are avenged.
Ever shall I hunt my quarry,
Across the Sea of Stars.
Whilst I yet breathe, I will not falter,
Until Morkai claims his due.*

- Bjorn's Oath of the Lone Wolf



To Bjorn's continued frustration, it was to be five long years before word of Arvax's location surfaced once more. Russ immediately led his Wolves to destroy the foul creature, determined to personally slay the Daemon king himself and avenge those who had died during their last encounter. Yet in this goal, the Primarch was to be denied, for Bjorn too sought out his nemesis and, as fate would have it, was the first to face Arvax in battle. As the Wolf-King tore through the Khornate horde towards his quarry, he witnessed Bjorn's duel first-hand. Russ could only look on in pride as Bjorn deftly rolled beneath a blow attempting to cut him in half, then clambered up the Daemon's towering frame to tear out the Arch-slaughterer's throat with his trusty wolf claw. In the aftermath of the battle, Russ came to Bjorn in person and exonerated him in front of the entire Chapter, holding his oath fulfilled. Setting a precedent that still exists to this day, the Wolf-King promoted Bjorn to his personal Wolf Guard, naming him the 'Fell-handed' in honour of his mighty deed.

The Skjalds of the Chapter hold that it was the sense of loss and tragedy that Bjorn had already experienced and learned to master that influenced Russ' decision to leave him behind when he set forth on his last, fateful journey to the Eye of Terror. Of all of the Primarch's Wolf Guard, he alone had shown such strength of purpose and determination in his darkest hour; he alone would understand the lonely burden of command.

THE PATH OF THE LONE WOLF

A Lone Wolf invariably becomes somewhat estranged from the rest of the Chapter by the gravity of his oath. Vowing not to feast nor embrace the company of his fellows, a Lone Wolf leads a solitary existence until the moment of his destiny arrives. Despite this, the Space Wolves reserve a solemn respect, even reverence, for those that walk the path of the Lone Wolf. Every warrior readily accepts that a Lone Wolf's *wyrd* has led him to this point and that a mighty doom awaits him – ultimate vengeance, or redemption in death.

When a member of his Great Company takes the oath of the Lone Wolf, a Wolf Lord will traditionally accompany the doomed warrior to the armoury. There, he will be allowed to pick the wargear of his choosing to serve him in his quest. A Lone Wolf can even claim a suit of revered Terminator armour in this manner, a privilege normally reserved exclusively for the Great Company's mightiest champions, the Wolf Guard. This custom also serves as something of an accord between the Wolf Lord and his warrior – a sanction of sorts to walk the path of the Lone Wolf and fight his own way, in what is ultimately a violation of the Great Company's military organisation. From that point, the Lone Wolf is effectively freed from the chain of command and is able to dedicate himself utterly to the pursuit of his goal. The Wolf Lord may lose a subordinate, but in his place, he gains an implacable warrior who seeks to take on the very toughest missions in the battles to come.



LONE WOLVES IN BATTLE

Despite being relinquished from their Great Company's formal command structure, Lone Wolves still accompany their battle-brothers to war in order to seek their doom. They prowl at the forefront of the Space Wolf advance and will charge headlong into the thick of the enemy battle line, howling their vengeance. So terrible is their fury that Lone Wolves will often continue to fight long after suffering injuries that would fell any other Space Marine. As they tear into their foes, they pour all of their wrath and hatred into the single-minded destruction of their enemies, always focusing on attack and disregarding self-preservation. To face a Lone Wolf when the battle-rage is upon him is truly a terrifying prospect, a confrontation that only the foolhardy would relish.

A Great Company rarely includes more than a handful of Lone Wolves at a time. For the most part, this is an inevitable consequence of the way they choose to fight, for most die amidst a whirlwind of extreme violence during their first engagement after becoming Lone Wolves. However, those that survive long enough will have fought against such odds, and in so many battles, that a place among the Wolf Guard is all but assured.

HONOUR AND REDEMPTION

Despite the honour granted to them by such an offer, it is not unusual for a Lone Wolf to refuse a place amongst the Wolf Lord's bodyguard. More often than not, this will be because the warrior has yet to avenge himself against the foe responsible for the death of his packmates. Only when his quarry lies dead by his hands will these Lone Wolves hold their oaths fulfilled. Yet there are others still whose bitterness and hatred runs even deeper. These Lone Wolves, though rare even amongst others of their kind, hold a smoldering resentment of the galaxy that robbed them of their closest kin. Only death will release them from their grief, though spilling the blood of their foes dulls the pain, for a while at least. By their own conviction, these tormented Space Wolves are beyond redemption, and will walk the path of the Lone Wolf until Morkai claims them.



Weapons of the Warrior

With such a wide variety of weaponry at their disposal, Lone Wolves are akin to the Wolf Guard in terms of armament, each warrior's choice of wargear as unique as the man himself and guided by his preferred method of fighting. However, unlike the Wolf Guard, who sometimes utilise powerful heavy weapons, most Lone Wolves will eschew any form of ranged weaponry, preferring to fight their enemies in the manner of a true warrior – up close and personal in bloody melee. With this in mind, a popular choice amongst Lone Wolves is to bear the traditional axe and shield of the tribesmen of Fenris, though this will often take the form of a power or frost axe and storm shield. Other weapon choices favoured by Lone Wolves are a pair of raking wolf claws or the brutal thunder hammer.



FAMOUS LONE WOLVES

Torvald Fellhammer

From a very early age, Torvald of the Grimskull tribe was a skilled and ferocious warrior. By the age of six, he had mastered the fundamental principles of axemanship. By ten, he had killed his first man in a territorial skirmish against warriors of the Icehelm tribe. At a mere twelve years old, he was accounted amongst the deadliest warriors of his clan, a match even for the chief of the Jarl's guard. It was only a matter of time before the Sky Warriors came for him.

As a Blood Claw, Torvald's weapon of choice soon became apparent after his pack leader was slain in combat with a horde of greenskins in the heavy fighting on Alaric Prime. Having followed their Wolf Lord Ragnar Blackmane's reckless charge into the heart of the Ork horde, Torvald's pack found itself isolated and grievously outnumbered. By the time relief finally arrived, in the guise of Logan Grimnar and his battle-hardened veterans, Torvald was the last survivor of his pack. He was found amidst a roiling mass of greenskins, laying about him with mighty sweeps of the thunder hammer he had wrenched from his fallen mentor's grasp. Torvald's every swing saw a handful of Orks laid to ruin by the weapon's murderous impact.

Now fighting as a Lone Wolf, Torvald strides fearlessly into battle, clad in a suit of formidable Terminator armour, but still bearing the very same thunder hammer he first claimed on Alaric Prime. Torvald puts the martial skills he honed as a youth to devastating use as he smites the foes of the Allfather with relentless purpose. Countless are the foes he has slain with his honoured hammer and, though his tally grows with every battle, his wrath has yet to be sated.

Olaf Silvermane

The saga of Olaf Silvermane began in the early years of the 41st Millennium. White of hair and long of tooth, this gnarled veteran is one of the oldest warriors in the Chapter, and remembers the days when even Ulrik the Slayer was but a young whelp, hungry for glory. Over the centuries, Olaf has witnessed the death of each and every member of his pack, feeling the loss of each kinsman more keenly than the last. Olaf now stands alone, the last Long Fang of his pack.

Yet it was two long years after the death of his last kinsman before Olaf became a fully-fledged Lone Wolf. The brutal campaign against the Death Guard was expected to drag on for many more months, and Olaf never truly expected, nor even wanted, to survive the war that had claimed the last of his packmates. As the eldest, and amongst the most respected, member of his Great Company, none sought to question his resolve, for despite fighting alone, he continued to do so with cold efficiency and undeniable determination. Yet as the war continued to grind on, Olaf became increasingly frustrated and reckless, often discarding his missile launcher and advancing to take on the loathsome Chaos Space Marines in close combat. However, no foe was up to the task of granting Olaf the glorious death he sought, and when the war was finally won, he was forced to take measures into his own hands in order to join his packmates in death.

Olaf Silvermane, now an indomitable Lone Wolf, has since devoted his life to seeking a truly magnificent death – one that will echo through the ages so that all will remember him and the brothers he once fought beside.

Bulveye the Berserker

The first chapter in Bulveye's saga began during his Trial of Morkai. Alone and unarmed, the young Space Wolf was attacked by a fearsome ice bear. Faced with certain death, Bulveye unconsciously tapped in to a power that had been lying dormant within him since he first ingested the Canis Helix. Roaring in agony as huge talons erupted from his fingertips, Bulveye hurled himself at the giant predator in a bid to drown out the pain.

Bulveye later awoke, covered in congealed gore, amid a grisly scene that can only be

described as a bloodbath. The ice bear's ribcage had been ripped open, its torn limbs and internal organs scattered across the surrounding area. He had little memory of what events had transpired, though he was relieved to see that his hands – if they had indeed changed – appeared to have returned to normal.

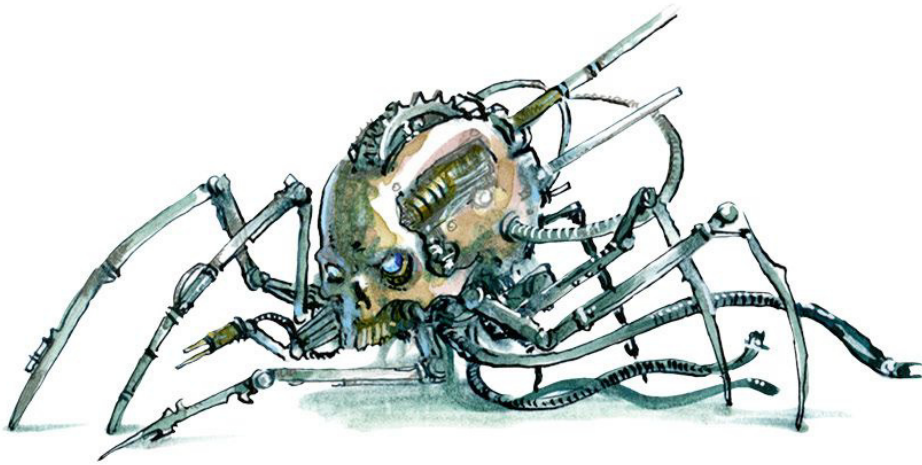
After becoming a fully-fledged Space Wolf, Bulveye soon became renowned for his berserk rages in the heat of battle. Each time, the young Blood Claw's fingers would elongate into deadly, bestial claws, with which he would tear his enemies to shreds. It was clear to the Wolf Priests that he bore the Mark of the Wulfen and, over the years, they carefully monitored his progress for any sign of the curse fully manifesting itself. It was during the Assault on Hellmaw Spire, however, that Bulveye's career was to take a wildly different turn that no one could have predicted. Victory seemed to be at hand as Bulveye's pack tore through the daemonic host that held the corrupted fortress, but in their fury, the young warriors continued to press on, eventually becoming separated from the rest of their Great Company. In the battle's aftermath, Bulveye was discovered alone, drenched in blood and ichor, and knee-deep in the dismembered bodies of the Daemonettes his pack had slain. But of his pack, only Bulveye yet lived. The Blood Claws had all been messily torn apart, but whether by the vicious talons of the Daemons or the Wulfen claws of Bulveye, none could say.

Some within his Great Company claimed that Bulveye slew his packmates, unable to distinguish friend from foe in his blood-mad frenzy. If this was the case, Bulveye would not speak of it, if indeed he even knew the truth of the matter. He took the oath of the Lone Wolf that same night, alone, whilst his battle-brothers celebrated at the victory feast. He swore to bathe his hands in the blood of his enemies in a hope of one day vindicating the loss of his kinsmen, whether he was responsible for their deaths or not.

Bulveye has won great renown over the course of his quest for redemption. Never once has he borne a weapon as a Lone Wolf. In battle, Bulveye throws himself at the enemy lines, bestial claws manifesting in response to his frenzied rage, to rip and tear his foes apart. Monsters, beasts and traitors beyond counting have fallen before his fury, their bodies rent asunder by the blood-maddened warrior. In the Battle of Magnir's Crag, Bulveye saved the life of his Battle Leader by slaying the Carnifex that had laid him low, virtually boring a hole through its midriff as he gouged great chunks from its flesh with every swing.

To this day, Bulveye's detractors call him 'kin-slayer' behind his back. However, not even the most hot-headed Blood Claw would dare to call him by that name to his face, though more than a hundred barrels of mead have been gambled on Lukas the Trickster being the first. The Wolf Priests continue to keep a close eye on Bulveye lest his inner beast thrive and consume him entirely. Few will be surprised if such an outcome is indeed his *wyrd*, yet Bulveye's dedication to his oath remains strong enough to control the beast – for now at least...

MINIATURE SHOWCASE





Lone Wolf

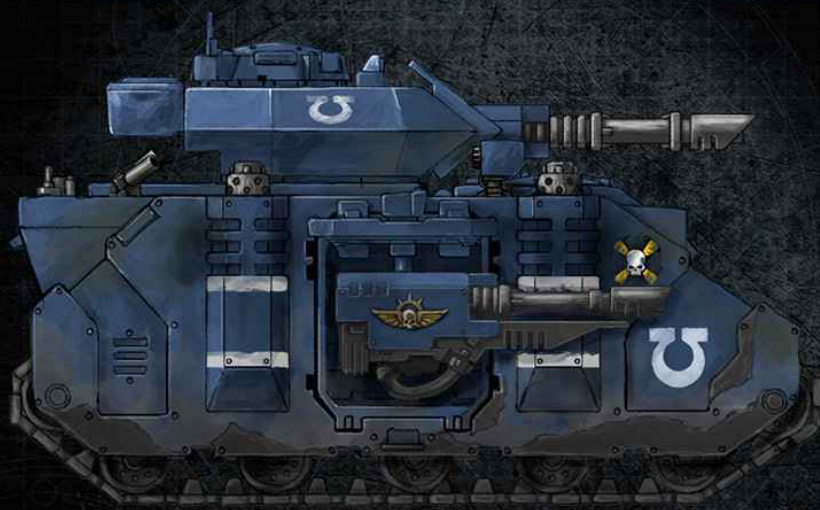


Lone Wolf



WARHAMMER[®]
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INDEX ASTARTES:

PREDATORS

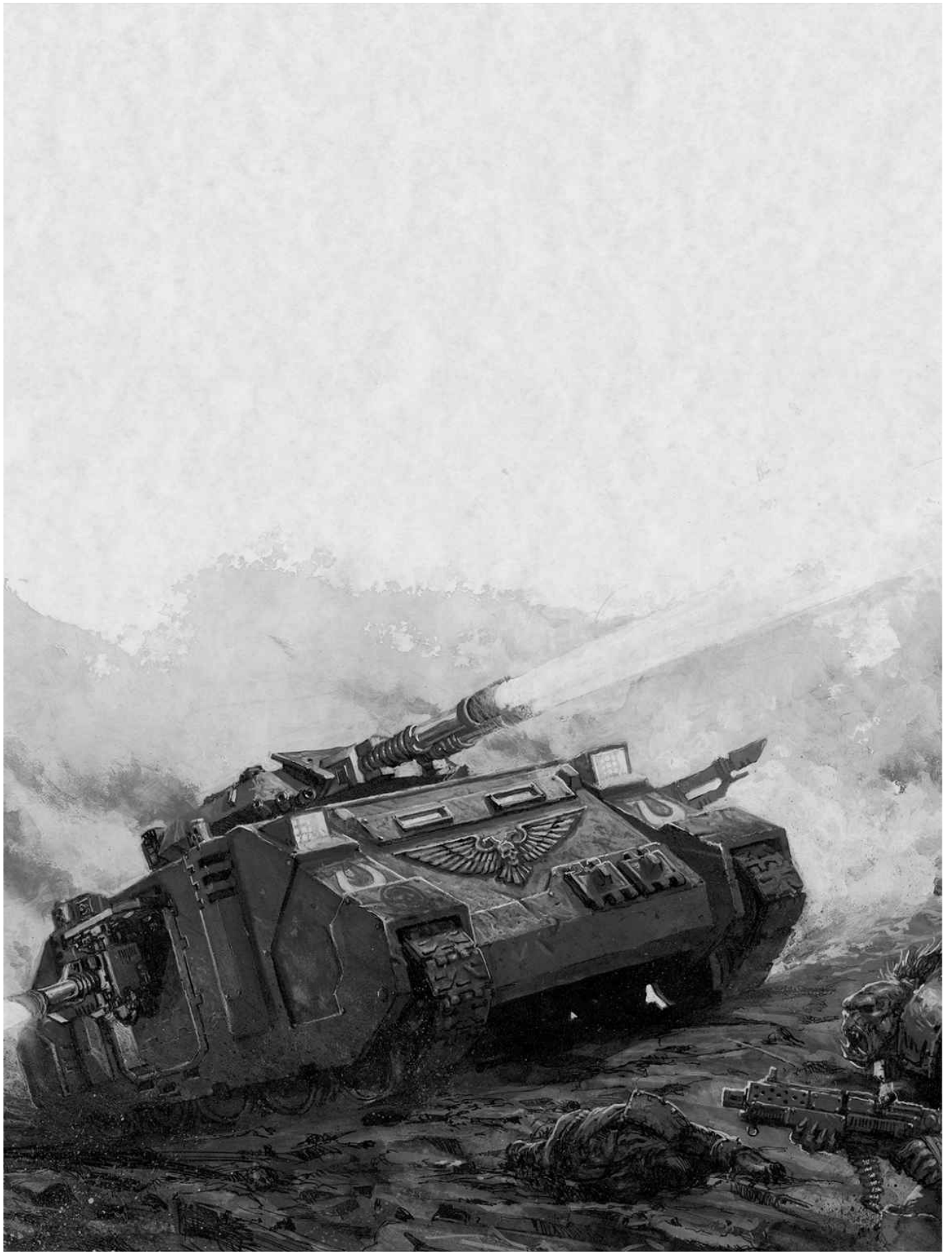


SPACE MARINE PREDATOR

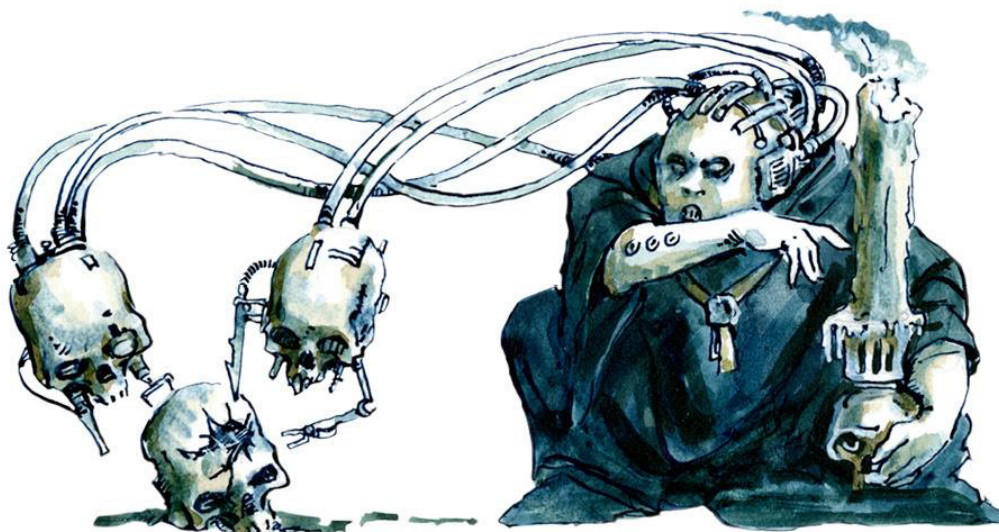
The Predator is a variant of the Rhino armoured personnel carrier that sacrifices passenger capacity for superior armour and firepower. These vehicles have served the Adeptus Astartes since the dark days of the Horus Heresy, but were created long before the Emperor united Humanity and led the Great Crusade to reclaim the galaxy.

Every Chapter of the Adeptus Astartes has at its disposal a large pool of armoured vehicles, ranging from the ubiquitous Rhino to the mighty Land Raider. These vehicles each fulfil a specific battlefield role set down by the Ultramarines Primarch Roboute Guilliman in his epic tome – the Codex Astartes. The Predator is a light tank, and its primary battlefield role is that of squad support. Wherever a squad of Space Marines is in need of mobile fire support, be it against enemy infantry or armour, the Predator is there to provide it.





BACKGROUND



STANDARD TEMPLATE CONSTRUCTS

The technology of the 41st Millennium is steeped in superstition and ritual. Most of the technological achievements utilised by Mankind are creations based not in the era of the Imperium, but in the dimly remembered Dark Age of Technology. During this period Man travelled to every corner of the galaxy, surviving on the remotest of worlds thanks to the Standard Template Construct: a system that evaluated local resources and produced the designs for any tool the colonists might require, from a ploughshare to a Warp drive. One design that served the settlers well upon a myriad of worlds was the Rhino armoured personnel carrier, and the Predator is an STC variant of this highly versatile blueprint.

The Rhino is an extremely adaptable and open-ended design that features in-built compatibility with many standard weapon and drive systems. This means that it forms the basis for a number of other vehicles besides the Predator, including the Razorback, Immolator, Whirlwind and many specialised variants such as field medic units, command vehicles and armoured recovery vehicles. The ease with which the basic Rhino pattern can be upgraded to the Predator, and the interchangeability of components, makes the Predator almost as ubiquitous a tank as the Rhino is an armoured carrier.



THE EARLIEST PREDATORS

The Predator was first fielded during the Dark Age of Technology: the period of expansion that saw human settlers colonising vast swathes of the galaxy. During this age the Predator was instrumental in establishing Mankind's dominance upon an untold number of worlds. What little evidence that survives from this period is jealously guarded by the Tech-Priests of the Adeptus Mechanicus, but it is theorised by those with access to the sealed archives that the Predator template was developed in response to Mankind's earliest contacts with the Ork race. Where the Rhino had served Mankind well in previous conflicts with lesser races, the brutal, close quarters method of warfare favoured by the newly discovered Orks required different tactics altogether. The Predator was an ideal weapon against the Orks, who had few weapons that could penetrate its upgraded armour, and whose own armour offered no protection whatsoever against the tank's autocannon and heavy bolter armament.

The Predators originally employed by the Emperor's forces were only slightly different to those employed today, and it is a testimony to functionality of the original design that it has changed so little over the course of ten thousand years. The first Predators were equipped with a small passenger-carrying capacity, but during the prolonged campaigns of the Great Crusade it became obvious that this meagre facility was of less importance than the ability to carry greater amounts of ammunition, especially if the vehicle in question was to be fitted with side sponsons. By the time of the Great Crusade, a great number of Standard Template Constructs had been lost, and it was another five millennia before the template for the Razorback, a vehicle dedicated to the role of infantry fighting vehicle, was discovered. In the meantime, Imperial tactics sacrificed transport capacity for firepower, fielding Predators as light support vehicles alongside Rhino armoured personnel carriers.



THE ANNIHILATOR VARIENT

Today, those senior Tech-Adepts with access to such ancient texts as Wilhelm of Mantrioch's Liber Armourum believe that all of the Predators in service during the Dark Age of Technology were outfitted according to the pattern known today as the 'Destructor'. Armed with a turret-mounted autocannon, this was the pattern in use by the armies of the Emperor at the very dawn of the Imperium.

The 'Annihilator' variant, featuring a twin-linked, turret-mounted lascannon did not come into service until many millennia later, during the Skarath Crusade. That an established STC vehicle should be adapted is highly unusual in the superstitious Imperium, where the Adeptus Mechanicus view anyone 'tinkering' with their technology as guilty of techno-heresy of the very worst kind.

At the height of the crusade into the Chaos-infested worlds bordering the Eye of Terror, a Great Company of the Space Wolves Chapter found itself besieged by the combined armoured might of several Traitor Legions.

The Space Wolves' commander had requested the aid of a contingent of his Chapter's Land Raiders, whose high-powered 'Godhammer' pattern lascannons would break the Traitors' ring of fortifications and armoured vehicles once and for all. However, a great tragedy befell the Chapter, as the mass conveyance vessel transporting the Land Raiders was inexplicably lost in the warp, leaving the force on the ground with little more than their man-portable lascannons with which to face the enemy armour.

The Space Wolves are renowned for their ingenuity and refusal to stand down from a seemingly impossible situation. The Iron Priests struck upon the idea of modifying their Predators to carry the lascannons employed by the Long Fang heavy weapon squads. The Iron Priests and Rune Priests consulted every portent and cast every augury they could conceive, until they were convinced that all the signs were favourable and the modifications should be made.

The Space Wolves' breakout at the height of the Skarath Rebellion was the first battle in which the newly dubbed 'Annihilator' pattern Predator saw action, and it was an overwhelming success. The armoured column cut a swathe through the Traitors' Land Raiders and Dreadnoughts, who had been prepared for no more heavy weaponry than heavy bolters and autocannons to be employed against them.

In the wake of the battle, the Adeptus Mechanicus were outraged at the Iron Priests' methods, and branded them desecrators and blasphemers against the Machine God. However, when confronted with its undeniable success, the Tech-Adepts decided to instigate an inquiry to ascertain whether the new pattern should be accepted and enter production as a standard variant. The inquiry lasted for two centuries, during which time the Annihilator was subjected to an exhaustive series of trials and examinations. The Tech-Priests prayed to the Machine God and made their supplications to the spirits of all those Predators they modified. At the end of this long and meticulous process they declared that the Omnissiah was in favour of the variant, and indeed that the facility to retrofit the vehicles with lascannons was an intentional feature of the original template. By this time, the Space Wolves and a number of other Chapters had already been using the new variant for one hundred and ninety years.



CONSTRUCTION

Most Space Marine Chapters have the facilities to construct their own armoured vehicles. These Chapters maintain a large forge in which its serfs, overseen by its Techmarines, produce all the ammunition, equipment and supplies required by the Chapter to fulfil its obligations and objectives.

The forge will produce large numbers of Rhino chassis, a small number of which will be earmarked to provide the basis for Predators, Whirlwinds and other variant patterns. Only the finest chassis are used in the production of a Predator, and one is only selected once the Tech-Adepts of the Chapter have made the relevant supplications and are sure the omens for the vehicle's future are favourable. The entire process is carried out with the utmost reverence for the vehicle's machine spirit, and every precaution is taken to protect against ill fortune. Every 13th vehicle to be outfitted as a Predator is blessed and purified to an even greater degree, and every 666th is melted down, its constituent materials returning to the forge in a solemn ceremony resembling a state funeral as much as a sacrificial offering to the Machine God.

The Adepts name the Rhinos as they emerge from the forge, and those designated to become Predators receive a name that reflects its role as a protector of the battle-brothers it fights alongside, and a mighty opponent to the Chapter's enemies. The name is only chosen after the Emperor's Tarot has been consulted, and it is widely held that the machine's personality will adhere to its title. In battle, some vehicles are held to be utterly fearless in the attack, others stubborn in the defence. Vehicle crews hold that each vehicle is as individual as its name.

One advantage of the Rhino chassis is that, if absolutely necessary, it can be retrofitted to another variant with relative ease. During the Vern IV offensive in 140.M40 for example, the Death Spectres Chapter lost almost its entire pool of Predator Destructors when the Eldar of the Kabal of the Envenomed Thorn ambushed them. They were later forced to retrofit twelve Rhinos to Predators in response to the unexpected intervention in the conflict by the Eldar of the Void Dragons pirate fleet.

Predator

Models....Patterns 3D to 7b. Primary patterns: Annihilator; Destructor; Baal.
Forge world of origin....Produced alongside Rhinos by Chapters with independent production capacity.

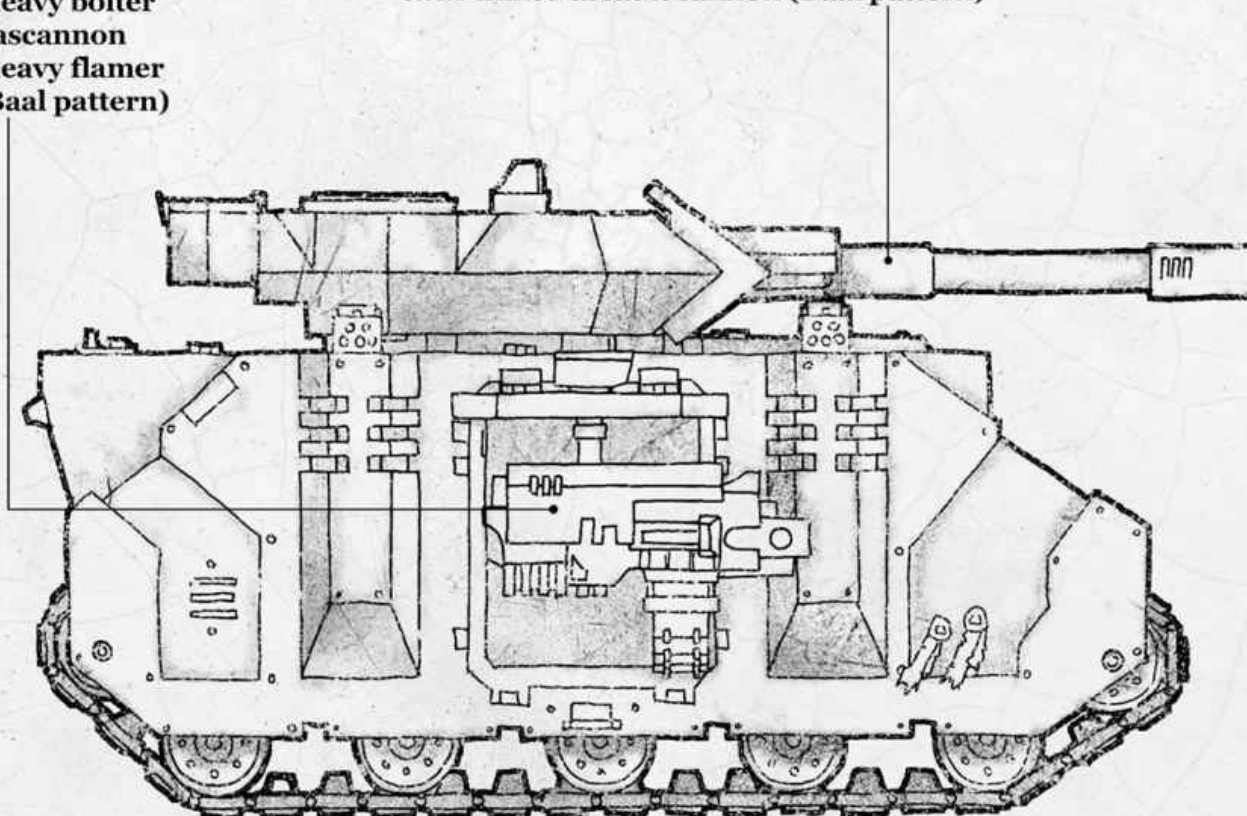
ARMAMENT

Variable configuration
sponson-mounted
secondary weapon system:

- heavy bolter
- lascannon
- heavy flamer
(Baal pattern)

ARMAMENT

Variable configuration turret-mounted main weapon system:
autocannon (Destructor pattern)
twin-linked lascannon (barrel requires replacement after
1000 firings) (Annihilator pattern)
twin-linked assault cannon (Baal pattern)



Armour.....0-65mm

(Frontal glacis plate reinforced with
10mm secondary thermoplas layer)

Maximum speed.....60 kph on road,
50 kph off-road

Crew.....2: Commander & Driver

Passenger.....None (patterns 2D+)

Fording depth.....1.20m

Weight.....39-44 tonnes dependent
upon pattern

Length.....6.6m

Height.....4.4m including turret

Hull width.....5.9m

Ground clearance...0.44m

CHAPTER ORGANISATION



CHAPTER ORGANISATION

All of the Predators owned by a Chapter are the responsibility of the Chapter's Master of the Forge. This officer, who is the most senior Techmarine within the Chapter, commands the armoury, which includes all of the armoured vehicles that are not permanently attached to a Company.

A Chapter will own on average between 20 and 30 Predators. Most prefer an equal proportion of Annihilator and Destructor variants but some exclusively maintain one model; the idiosyncratic Subjugators Chapter, for example, favour the Destructor.

The Master of the Forge is responsible for maintaining the vehicles in sufficient number and condition to meet the Chapter's commitments. When a task force is dispatched on a mission its commander will request a detachment of armoured vehicles from the armoury, and the Master of the Forge will issue him with those vehicles he considers suitable for the task in question. The Master and his staff consider the Predators their own charges, and view any mistreatment at the hands of a force commander an unforgivable insult. Woe betide the commander who returns a Predator to the forge in any lesser state of repair than it was issued to him at the outset of a campaign.

The crews of Predators are Space Marines who specialise in the operation of armoured vehicles and, while not actually Techmarines, they are fully trained in the operation and maintenance of their vehicles. It is considered a great honour to crew a Predator, the only greater honour being promotion to custodian of a Land Raider.



BATTLEFIELD ROLES

Upon the field of battle, the primary role of the Predator is as a mobile firebase acting in support of the Space Marines themselves as they undertake their mission. The Predator variant utilised for the mission will depend upon the foe they will be facing and the objective the force is attempting to achieve. The Destructor is considered the ideal tank to tackle light vehicles and large numbers of lightly armoured infantry, for instance, Orks or ill-equipped human rebels. Against enemy tanks and heavy infantry, the Annihilator's lascannons will make a mockery of the thickest armour.

Many forces will field Predators specifically outfitted for a given mission as the side sponsons may be fitted with either heavy bolters or lascannons, irrespective of what pattern the turret mount adheres to. If the force commander was expecting to face a mix of lightly armoured infantry and heavily armoured vehicles, such as a rebellious company of Imperial Guard, an Annihilator fitted with heavy bolter side sponsons would provide an efficient mix of anti-infantry and anti-armour firepower.



THE BATTLE FOR TALLARN

Ten thousand years ago the Imperium was gripped by the most destructive conflict in its long history. Warmaster Horus revealed his true allegiance to Chaos and the Traitor Legions were let loose in an orgy of destruction that engulfed the greater part of the Imperium and cost the lives of billions.

The Iron Warriors Traitor Legion was responsible for just such an act of destruction upon the world of Tallarn, a planet of unparalleled beauty. Lush tropical forests and warm blue seas covered the planet's surface and its people considered their world a paradise. The Iron

Warriors, for reasons known only to themselves, subjected the world to an utterly inhuman virus bombardment. The warheads of their missiles unleashed a strain of biological agent that killed every single living cell upon the surface of the world in a matter of weeks. So efficient was the virus that it even destroyed the bacteria that would ordinarily break down dead organic matter. The result was a world of lifeless slime; the remains of all plant and animal life reduced to an acrid, shapeless residue.

But some inhabitants had survived. Deep beneath the surface of Tallarn were sealed shelters, and as the survivors emerged to bear witness to the destruction wrought upon their world, the Iron Warriors struck. So inimical to life was the surface that the Tallarns were forced to fight within heavy protective suits, and at times even these offered no protection against the deadly viral strains running wild across the world. Infantry could play little part in the conflict and the war soon escalated into the largest tank battle of the Horus Heresy.

Imperial forces rushed to the world in response to the Iron Warriors' attack, and the Predators of the Imperial Fists and Iron Hands Legions were instrumental against those of the Traitors. Across plains of slime and stinking mist the tanks clashed, fighting in formations hundreds or, at times, thousands strong. The armoured might of the Imperial Guard joined that of the loyalist Space Marines; an act of indescribable heroism as they lacked the sealed power armour that allowed Space Marine crew to survive should their vehicles be crippled. Many thousands of Imperial tanks were lost in the conflict as more forces joined the war for what was essentially a lifeless, worthless and dead world.

At length the Iron Warriors were repelled. No one can say why they attacked Tallarn, or why they put up such a fight in response to the Imperial counter-attack. What is known is that without the deadly weapons, heavy armour and advanced life support systems of the Predator, the world would have remained in the hands of the Traitors, who would have been able to pursue whatever foul mission they had come to Tallarn to achieve.

The Blood Angels Chapter specialises in close quarter fighting, and although they are equipped to deal with as many tactical situations as any other Chapter, they maintain a Predator variant unique to themselves and their successor Chapters. The Baal pattern Predator has been in service since the earliest days of the Great Crusade, where the template was discovered amidst the ruins of the fortress of the techno-heretic Lord de Ladt on the world of Atium III. It features a turret-mounted, twin-linked assault cannon, of the terrifying flamestorm cannon, and has the option of fitting sponson-mounted heavy flamers or heavy bolters. This vehicle provides fire support at extremely close ranges, and is ideal for fighting large numbers of lightly armoured enemy in cover or in the built-up environs of a city. Furthermore, due to its unique engine design, the Baal Predator complements the Blood Angels' combat doctrine perfectly, as it keeps pace with the assault of the bloodthirsty Sons of Sanguinius.



THE TILVIUS-LAND ENIGMA

At the end of the 36th Millennium, Chief Artisan Tilvius of the Adeptus Mechanicus set out upon his great expedition across the southern rim in search for a functioning Standard Template Construct system. Although he was unsuccessful in locating the source of the rumours surrounding this priceless artefact, he did return to Mars with the hard-copy data that led to the development of the Space Marine Razorback.

But Tilvius is said to have been searching for something more; and it is even said by some that he found it. For many millennia, the disciples of the Technoarchaeologist, Archon Land, of which Tilvius was a senior member, have researched the many potential STC variants of their master's greatest discovery: the Land Raider. Their research has led to such innovations as the Prometheus and Helios pattern Land Raider variants. The inner circle of Land's descendants

are said to have found evidence of a previously unknown armoured vehicle, one that bridges the gap between the comparatively light Predator, and the heavy assault vehicle that is the Land Raider. This evidence is said to lie within the very blueprint of the vehicles themselves; Tilvius and his brethren had discovered compatibilities and in-built system redundancies on a microscopic scale that could only be explained by the existence of a 'missing link'. The disciples of Land had essentially decoded the electronic 'genome' of the STC template: now all that remained was to prove such a vehicle exists. Their search has become the life's work of many, but these obsessive Tech-Priests are viewed by their fellows as little more than madmen.



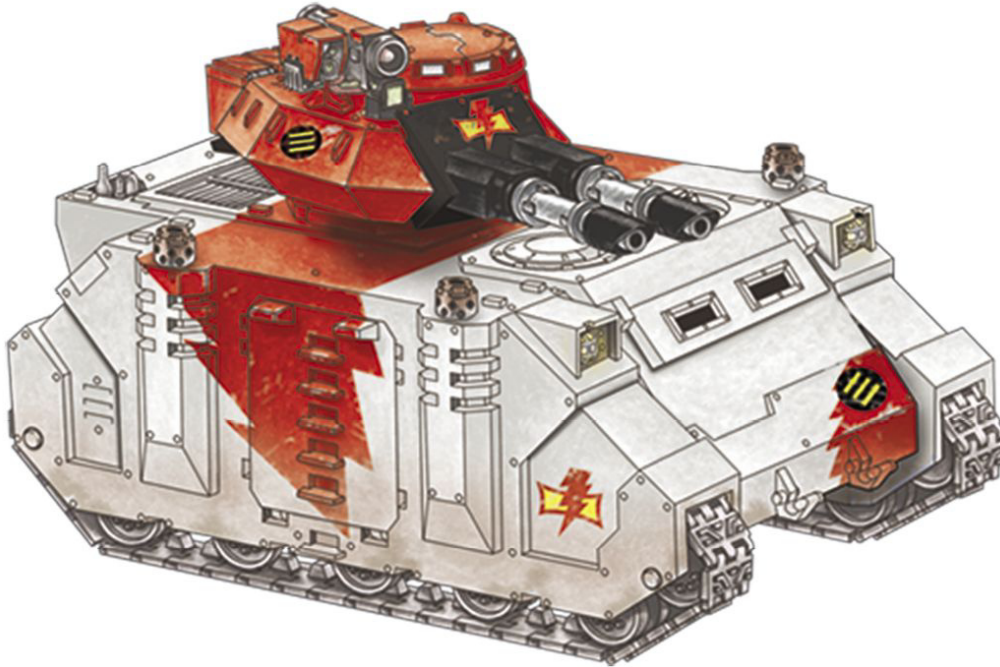
ULTRAMARINES

This vehicle, designated *Gladius*, was commissioned following the loss of the Ultramarines' entire 1st Company at the Battle of Macragge. Its custodians are stalwart veterans promoted from the elite of the Chapters' vehicle crews, and *Gladius* has earned the honour of being permanently attached to the rebuilt 1st Company.



WHITE SCARS

The Predator tanks of the White Scars Chapter are rarely fitted with sponson mounted weapons; they are equipped to provide heavy firepower in support of the Chapter's fast moving bike and Rhino-mounted formations. Julak, whose long-range patrols are notorious for their bold ambushes, has commanded this vehicle for as long as any Space Marine of the Tulwar Brotherhood can remember.



SALAMANDERS

The use of flames as vehicle livery is common amongst the vehicle crews of the Salamanders Chapter, and there are many potential meanings to be derived from the form and placing of the adornment. This vehicle, designated *Noctus*, displays a flame pattern around the turret-weapon mount, indicating that its commander is both a senior member of the Promethean Cult and a highly accomplished artificer.



BLOOD ANGELS

This Blood Angels Predator fought in both the Second and Third Wars for Armageddon. It was left empty when its crew succumbed to the Black Rage at the Siege of Hive Tempestora, and was hurriedly re-crewed by Space Marines of the Storm Giants Chapter whose own Predator had been crippled. The vehicle was later returned having served with honour and courage during the battle.



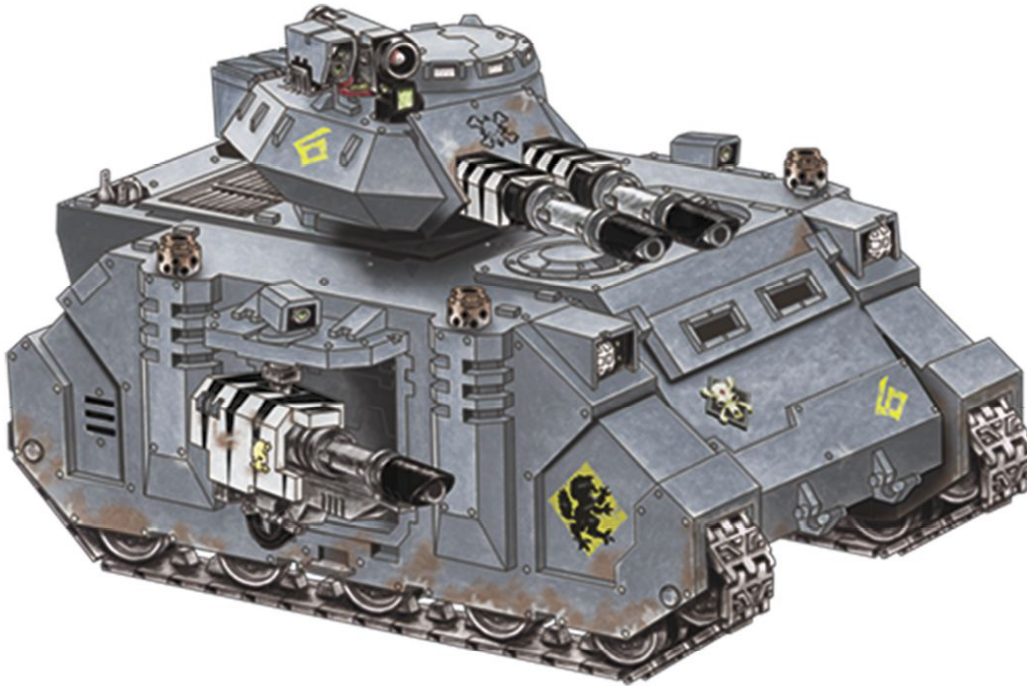
BLACK TEMPLARS

The script adorning the frontal armour of this Black Templars Predator proudly proclaims its participation in the Teutanus Crusade that cleansed the Pleiades Cluster. The white weapon cowling indicates ten confirmed kills, and the crew of this particular vehicle were later promoted to custodians of a mighty Land Raider Crusader.

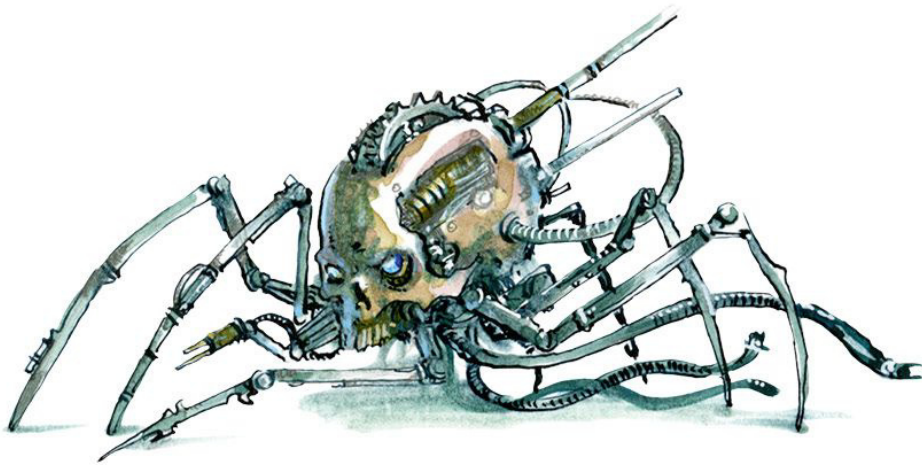


SPACE WOLVES

The Space Wolves are credited with creating the first Annihilator pattern Predators, when, lacking mobile anti-tank weaponry, they were encircled by enemy armour during the Skarath Crusade. The weapon cowling on this vehicle displays the markings of the Long Fangs pack that sacrificed its heavy weaponry that the company might gain mobile anti-armour support for the breakout.



MINIATURE SHOWCASE





Ultramarines Predator with turret mounted twin-linked lascannon and sponson mounted lascannons



**Ultramarines Predator with turret mounted autocannon
and sponson mounted heavy bolters**



WARHAMMER
40,000

INDEX ASTARTES™



RHINOS™



INDEX ASTARTES:

RHINOS



RHINOS



Perhaps one of the most ubiquitous vehicles in Imperial service, the humble Rhino has been the mainstay of Space Marines armies since the time of the Great Crusade. Throughout the galaxy, servants of the Emperor take fire and steel to the enemies of Humanity, borne across the hell of uncounted battlefields in armoured fighting vehicles known as Rhinos. These blessed vehicles carry the warriors of the Emperor safely through the inferno of shot and shell to bring the Emperor's fiery retribution upon his enemies. The Rhino has been in Imperial service for over ten thousand years, and the origins of this faithful vehicle lie in the depths of Humanity's past, at the beginning of its expansion into space.



BACKGROUND



AN AGE OF EXPLORATION

Mankind's first steps into space were painfully slow, and even upon reaching other planets, colonisation was hampered by the lack of an all-purpose vehicle with which to explore these new worlds and the multitude of different terrain types encountered upon them. However, all this was to change soon after the colonisation and exploration of Mars, with the development of Warp drives and the evolution of the Standard Template Construct (STC) system. The sheer versatility of the STC system enabled the earliest colonists to simply input their needs and the STC system would design the most practical and robust solution to meet those requirements, be it a vehicle, shelter or any other item the colonists desired.

The STC allowed the early colonists to create all manner of useful equipment from locally available materials and fuel them with whatever resources were to hand. As time passed, refinements were introduced into the system and it is said that many of the earliest STCs could in fact learn and self-evolve. STCs became more and more efficient and with these advances, Mankind's expansion into space leapt forwards as starships became capable of reaching further and further into the galaxy. Mankind entered a golden age of exploration and colonisation and it seemed as though nothing could halt the expansion of Humanity's realm.



THE EARLIEST RHINOS

In conjunction with this, early colonisation of newly discovered worlds was facilitated by the creation of the

RH1 N0 Tracked Exploration and Multi Defence vehicle – commonly referred to as the Rhino. At its most basic level, the Rhino is an armoured transport on tracks, designed to cope with all manner of hostile environments and cross almost any dangerous terrain while protecting those within. The efficiency of the design has resulted in the basic configuration of the Rhino remaining largely unchanged in the last ten thousand years. Capable of being constructed from almost any materials and powered by any partially combustible fuel, the Rhino has proven, time and time again, to be one of the most reliable and durable vehicles ever devised. The design quickly spread, and within the space of a decade, almost every world within Mankind's burgeoning coalition of planets had its own locally-produced variants of the Rhino. The military applications of this vehicle were quickly realised and the features that made the Rhino so appealing to the early colonists were perfectly suited for military operations. The armed forces of the day quickly adopted the Rhino as an armoured fighting vehicle and troop transport, fitting it with weapons and an augmented engine capacity.

The earliest known use of the Rhino in battle, recorded in the faded script of the Liber Armorum, was by the armed forces of Torben's World against the indigenous xeno creatures that inhabited the fertile western plains. These regions had long been in dispute, with the aliens claiming that these lands were sacred to them and places of great holy significance. When several human townships built on the edges of the plains were attacked and their inhabitants murdered, retribution was swift and deadly.

Three hundred Rhinos were despatched across the plains to the largest alien settlement. Such was the speed of the Rhinos that the aliens had no foreknowledge of the attack and were caught completely by surprise. The aliens' technology was equivalent to that of a black powder society, and their firearms would have wreaked havoc on the ranks of the human troopers, but for the protection of their armoured vehicles. The Rhinos surrounded the settlement and poured their firepower into the flimsily-constructed dwellings, before smashing through them and disgorging nearly three thousand troopers. With the destruction of this settlement, the remainder of the aliens were soon eliminated and the human colonisation of Torben's World progressed

with no further interference. News of this victory was soon delivered to other colonies, and the tactics of using the Rhino in battle became further refined.

The Rhino became the standard transport vehicle of human armies across the galaxy, with differing variants falling in and out of favour as the nature of Man's enemies and battlefields changed. The armies of Mankind spread throughout the galaxy, and many hundreds of worlds were brought within this growing galactic empire. As more enemies were encountered, the STC systems provided these early armies with many different variants on the Rhino such as the Predator, Immolator and Whirlwind and many others.

All this was to come to an end, however, in a period now known as the Age of Strife. What caused such a massive upheaval in the realm of Man can now only be guessed at, but its cataclysmic effects cannot be underestimated. The many wars that erupted around this time engulfed the entire galaxy and not a single planet was spared the horror of battle. Alliances and coalitions collapsed into internecine conflict, planets and systems waging war on one another for reasons that have since been lost to posterity.





THE DEATH OF KNOWLEDGE

Whole planets were razed in the conflicts, their precious STC libraries destroyed or smashed by their enemies. Countless designs were lost and many of the STC systems were damaged beyond repair. By the time the wars subsided and Mankind had been united under the banner of the newly-revealed Emperor, the vast majority of STC systems had been destroyed and their priceless knowledge forgotten. Denied this most valuable resource, those few fragments of knowledge that remained became treasured relics, passed down from generation to generation, their very existence kept secret from the outside world. In time, these fragments became legendary canticles of faith, their knowledge assuming the status of divinely inspired wisdom, and the revered Rhino was among these rare survivors.

Hard copies of schematics and designs created by STC systems have lasted longer than the STCs themselves and are zealously sought after by the Adeptus Mechanicus. Over the millennia, scattered pieces of STC lore have been recovered and ancient designs have slowly been reincorporated into the Imperial inventory. The Immolator tank used by the battle sisters of the Adeptus Sororitas is one such example, the databank containing its construction details discovered within an ancient factory complex on the world of Fornoth, during the Icaria Crusade.

As knowledge of their construction faded from memory, attrition took its toll on the number of Rhinos throughout the galaxy. Routine maintenance became ritual as the centuries passed, and knowledge of the exact workings of the Rhinos passed into myth. What little remained was jealously guarded by the Techmarines of the newly created Legiones Astartes and Tech-Priests of the Adeptus Mechanicus, who established strict guidelines regarding the construction, consecration and maintenance of these valuable vehicles. Whether built in the Martian weapon-forges or the fortress monasteries of the Space Marines, the builders of these holy vehicles know that the purity and spiritual welfare of the Rhino is as important as the skill of the artificers who construct it.



THE RITES OF CONSTRUCTION

At every stage in a Rhino's assembly, sacred oils are applied and scented incense burnt to sanctify the process. Armoured panels are ritually inscribed with protective sigils as they are fixed into place and prayers are chanted as the bolts are turned in the cardinal directions. Every component is ritually checked and blessed before being installed, and as the Rhino rolls to the end of its assembly nave, the ceremony of commission is prepared, whereupon the builders call upon the Spirit of the Machine to invest the Rhino with a measure of its power. The runes of activation are hammered thrice upon its armoured hide and the engines fired as the third blow is struck. If the engine catches the first time, it is seen as a good omen for the vehicle and the warriors it will carry into battle. As the Rhino rumbles out of the assembly hangars, it is given a battle name worthy of such a sacred artefact and is then ready to depart for a life of war amongst the stars.

Besides the Space Marines of the Adeptus Astartes, only a select few Imperial organisations now have access to Rhinos. The priceless technology involved in their construction and maintenance is too valuable to be entrusted to any but the most loyal and steadfast bodies of warriors. The Adeptus Sororitas and Adeptus Arbites have a number of Rhinos and they maintain a body of those sanctified and pure of heart to care for them. Years of training go towards achieving this respected position. Aspirants must learn how to divine the runes of engineering, memorise the liturgy of maintenance and constantly study the routine of service. It is a position of great honour to care for these vehicles and those that are carried into battle

within one of these armoured transports are mindful of the spirits that inhabit the mechanical functions and blessed bolts that make up each one.

Should a Rhino ever be lost in battle, it is an occasion of great mourning for those entrusted with its care, and furious battles have been fought to reclaim the burned-out carcass of a Rhino simply to lay its spirit to rest. After the Battle of Naeuysk Gorge, fourteen Rhinos of the Imperial Fists had to be abandoned when traitor Space Marines from the Night Lords Legion ambushed the advancing column as it crossed the only bridge across the gorge. The attackers destroyed the lead and rear vehicles, trapping the rest in place. Previously placed demolition charges blew out the bridge supports and every Rhino on the bridge plummeted nearly a thousand metres into the gorge. The survivors were harried back to their base and great oaths of vengeance were sworn against that band of Night Lords. The following morning, a daring mission involving an airborne assault across the gorge pushed the Night Lords back from the hills on the opposite side and allowed the Imperial Fists to bring up salvage units to start the recovery of their shattered vehicles and the bodies of their comrades. The battle in the hills raged for over thirty hours, with Imperial Fists' casualties mounting to almost 85% as they fought to give their Techmarines enough time to retrieve the fallen Rhinos. Many of the recovered vehicles were subsequently repaired and sent back into action, their battle spirits eager to avenge the ignominy of their earlier defeat.

Rhinos that can be salvaged are brought back to the forge and each wound reverently repaired by skilled artificers, the battle scars worn with pride and their war-spirits honoured with the Litanies of Battle. As a result, many Rhinos have remained in service for thousands of years, becoming holy icons amongst the Chapters of Space Marines and other Imperial servants who rely on them. The oldest Rhino still in existence belongs to the Salamanders, and is known as *Nocturne's Hammer*. The Salamanders tell that it carried their legendary Primarch, Vulkan, into battle at the Siege of Devlin's Fastness, sallying out through the gates of the Imperial fortress to attack the foe. *Nocturne's Hammer* has seen nearly ten thousand years of action and now has a place of honour in the Chapter's reliquary on Prometheus, its armoured hide scarred by millennia of war. It is a great honour for a Techmarine to be chosen to minister to this holy vehicle and it is a duty that is solemnly observed. At the dawn of each new century, the Chapter's Techmarines gather in the reliquary and the Master of the Forge strikes the rune of activation upon the engine. It is always seen as an omen of great doom when the engine fails to catch first time.

The Rhino continues to serve as the mainstay of many Imperial organisations and it is unlikely to be superseded without the discovery of a functioning STC database that will enable Imperial servants to further refine and improve on its design. Until that day, the faithful Rhino will continue to carry the warriors of the Emperor into battle, proof against the weapons of their foes and ready to bring the wrath of the Master of Mankind upon his blasphemous enemies.





THE BONES OF SAINT EMILINE

In 452.M41, an Ork Waaagh! under the command of the Arch-Maniac of Calverna crashed into the Yerena System, destroying all that stood against it and sweeping towards the main populated planets at the system's core. One planet on the Orks' main axis of attack was the Adeptus Sororitas shrine world of Emiline's Hope, so named for the blessed saint who had given her life to recapture it from the forces of Chaos nearly a millennium previous. Realising that there was no way the paltry number of Sisters based on Emiline's Hope could withstand the full force of the Orks, the Canoness Superior reluctantly ordered the planet's evacuation. The Order of the Bleeding Heart had long been entrusted with the care of the Saint's bones and reverently they placed her remains in sacred urns and began the journey to Caprium, the nearest spaceport to their abbey.

But the Orks moved far swifter than anyone had believed possible and, en route to Caprium, the processional convoy bearing the saint's bones was ambushed by Ork Kommandos as the Sisters stopped for morning prayers. Caught completely off-guard, the Sisters were mercilessly cut down and their Rhinos were looted by the Orks. As the Kommandos returned victorious to their encampment, they did not realise that they were being followed. A sole survivor of the attack, a young Celestian named Sister Martika had recovered consciousness beneath the corpses of her Sisters and had vowed to avenge her Order, trailing them back to their camp. As night fell, she stealthily infiltrated the camp, identified 'Valiance', the Rhino that contained the Saint's remains, and made her way towards it, planting a number of grenade booby traps along the way. Sister Martika hauled open the crew door and hurled her last few grenades towards a nearby group of Warbuggies. The resulting explosion was more devastating than she could have hoped for, all seven of the buggies detonating in a string of roaring booms. The encampment erupted into chaos as the night was lit up by more explosions as the grenade traps exploded, set off by the confused Orks.

Martika gunned the engines of the Rhino and drove it at top speed through the howling Orks, smashing aside their flimsy vehicles and crushing those not swift enough to avoid her. She broke through the outer edges of the camp and pushed the Rhino's engine to the maximum, offering prayers to the Saint's remains for forgiveness at their rough treatment as she made her escape to Caprium.

Before long, the Orks were in pursuit, scores of red buggies and Trukks racing after her. Knowing that the Rhino could not outpace the faster Ork vehicles, Martika slewed from the road and began weaving her way through the forest, the beams of her Rhino's headlights spearing through the darkness. She skilfully drove between the densely packed trees while many of the more reckless Ork drivers slammed into them, destroying their crude vehicles in giant fireballs. Eventually, the forest thinned and the Orks closed the gap, spraying the Rhino with gunfire even as Sister Martika voxed Caprium for aid. The vehicle stood firm against the shots, though the chase, having lasted the best part of the night, had exhausted almost all of the Rhino's fuel. At close range, the Orks' shooting took a far greater toll, punching smoking holes in the Rhino and thick, black smoke poured from the engine housing.

But the Rhino would not fail in its duty and, even as the gears clashed and the engine spirit howled in anger, it continued to carry its charge towards Caprium. The Rhino finally cleared the edge of the trees, the walls of Caprium visible in the distance as two Ork Trukks pulled level with the Rhino. Martika sideswiped both, and sent them spinning out of control. More Ork vehicles began moving up to attack, when explosions suddenly ripped through them as the gunners on the walls of the spaceport began to fire. The ground thundered with the impact of the shelling, a storm of lethal shrapnel ripping apart the Ork Trukks with ease. Shell after shell blasted huge holes in the Ork pursuit and within seconds, it had been blasted to fragments and Martika's Rhino lurched through the gates of the spaceport. Exhausted, but elated, the young Celestian staggered from the Rhino and gave thanks to its indomitable spirit before presenting

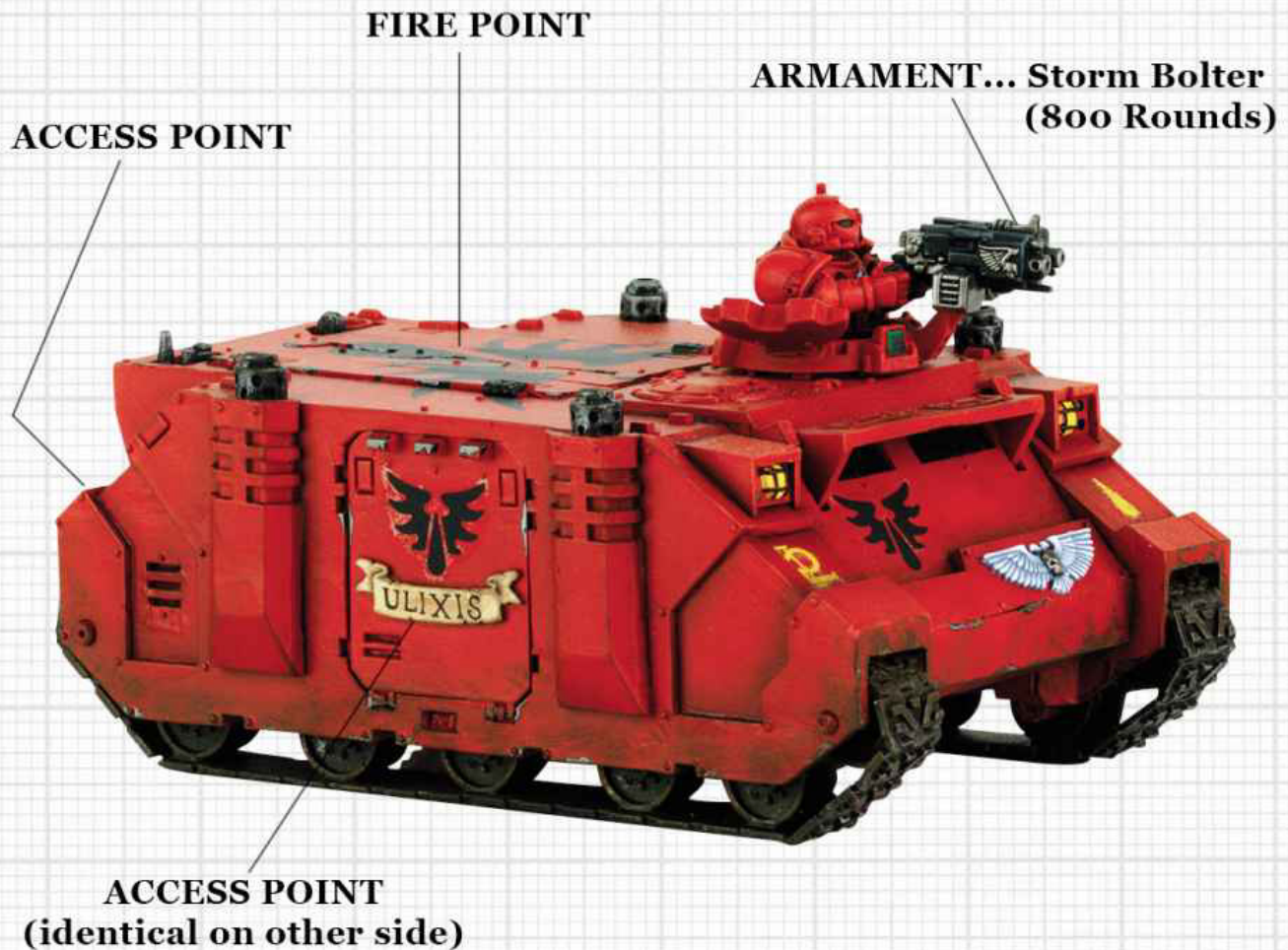
the urns containing Saint Emiline to her Canoness. The Rhino itself was repaired and became Martika's personal transport, carrying her into battle until the day of her death.



RHINO APC

Models.....Patterns I to VI. Within each pattern type are literally hundreds of regional variations using local materials and engineering techniques.

Forge world of origin.....Virtually every industrialised world of the Imperium can produce Rhinos.



Armour - 30-60mm

**Maximum Speed - 70kph on road.
55kph off-road**

Crew - 1 (Driver)

**Passengers - 10 Space Marines or
Battle Sisters**

Fording depth - 1.20m

Weight - 30 Tonnes unladen

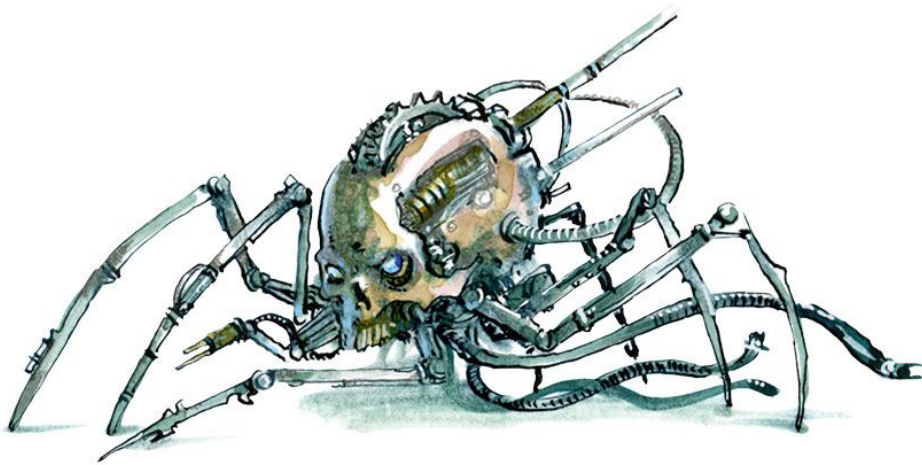
Lenght - 6.6m

Height - 3.6

Hull width - 4.5m

Ground Clearence - 0.44m

MINIATURE SHOWCASE





Blood Angels Rhino



Black Templars Rhino



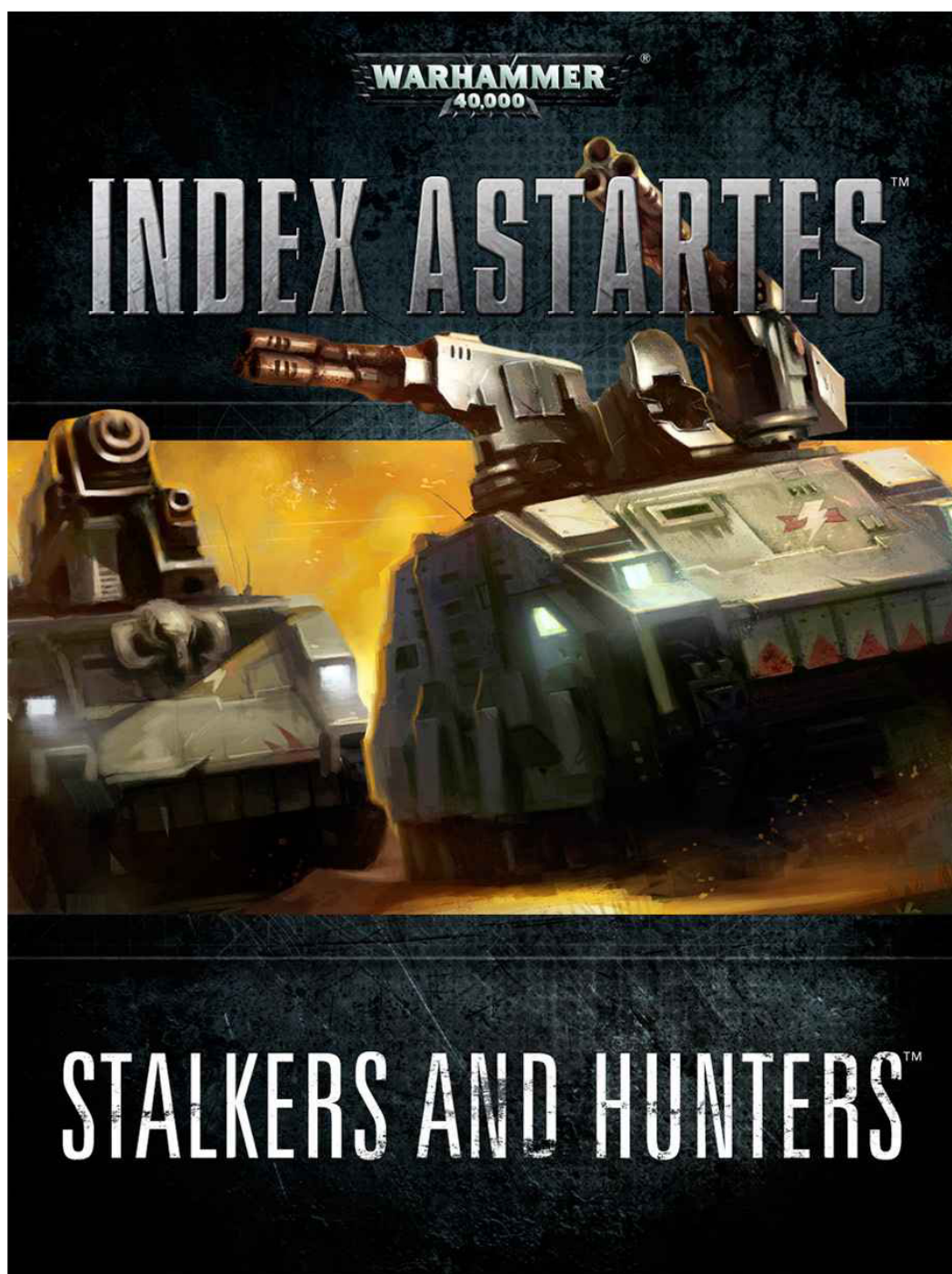
Grey Knights Rhino



Dark Angels Rhino

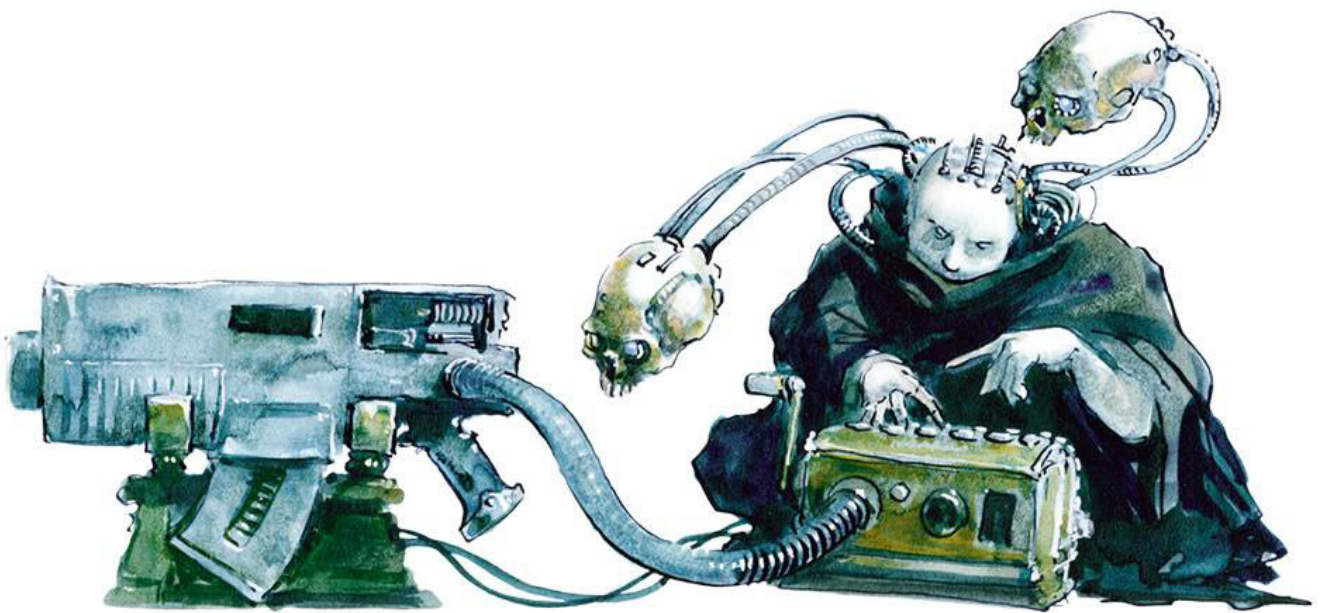


Ultramarines Rhino



INDEX ASTARTES:

STALKERS AND HUNTERS



STALKERS AND HUNTERS



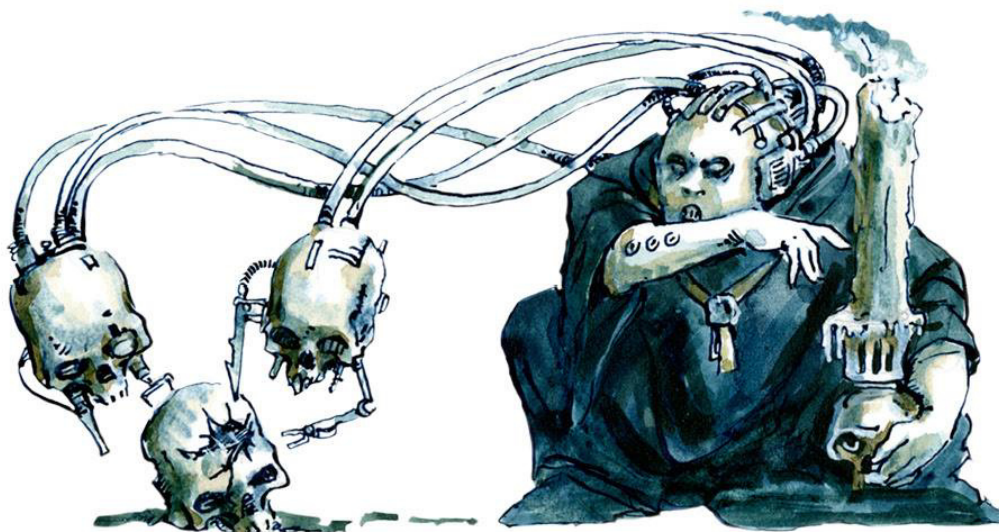
An elite strike-force, the Adeptus Astartes must be prepared for a myriad of foes and battlefield conditions. This includes providing dedicated anti-aircraft support for their planetary landings, battle groups and firebases. The Space Marine Chapters employ their own anti-aircraft tanks in the form of the Stalker and the Hunter, unwilling as they are to rely on the air cover provided by the fallible warriors of the Imperial Guard and Imperial Navy. Crewed by Space Marines and armed with some of the most powerful and effective surface-to-air weapons produced by the Imperium, each is capable of tearing Dakka Jets and Helldrakes from the air in hails of hammering fire or clouds of burning light.

Both the Stalker and the Hunter are relatively recent additions to the Space Marine Chapters, having only been in service for the last few millennia. Before then the STC used to create them had been lost for an age, though tales of their glory in battle lingered still among the armies of the Imperium. Indeed, even though surviving examples of both tanks were vanishingly rare when the Chapters were formed, Roboute Guilliman wrote of their use in the Codex Astartes. The Ultramarines Primarch spoke of casting a sword across the sky, that the enemies of man might be forced to walk upon the earth.

Extensive tactica on air defence became a vital part of Space Marine doctrine, and when a Chapter makes a planetary bridgehead Hunter and Stalkers will be the first on the ground to scour the sky of the enemy in all directions. This allows heavy aircraft like Thunderhawk Transporters to be brought down from orbit swiftly under cover of heavy fire. Any aircraft brave enough to try and make a sortie against a Space Marine landing zone will be met with a storm of ground fire, the air alive with explosive shells and twisting, jinking missiles. Few but the most skilled pilots can hope to survive long against this concentration of anti-aircraft fire, and even those that manage to hit their targets seldom live to break off and head for home.



BACKGROUND



SERVITOR CONCLAVE

The secret of both the Stalker and the Hunter's effectiveness lies not in the construction of their guns and missiles; these tools of destruction having long been within the grasp of the Techmarines and the Adeptus Mechanicus. Rather, it is their ability to track and engage fast moving aerial targets that comes from the surgically altered brains and neural interfaces of their servitor operators. Since the time of the Space Marine Legions, the armies of the Imperium have employed weapons capable of knocking out ground attack aircraft, from the multi-barrelled Hydra to the Whirlwind Hyperios. Even individual soldiers have access to flakk missiles, giving them the chance of taking down a flyer. What all of these weapons lack are the blessed targeting systems of the Hunter and Stalker. The hard-wired brains of the servitors, combined with the reflexes and combat experience of the Space Marine crews, make these tanks far more deadly than weapons that merely hurl shells and shot into the sky alone.

The servitors must be specially chosen, their brains possessed of a mental agility in life that is then repurposed in near-death. These withered gunners are often chosen from failed Chapter initiates should they be too damaged to become Serfs, either those crippled during their training or that have rejected the sacred implanting processes. Chapter serfs can also find a place as a target-servitor, if they show promise and serve well, earning the right to accompany the Chapter into war. In both cases, the brain, and as much of the head and torso of the initiate as possible, will be salvaged so that he might serve the Chapter in another way. Techmarines will then spend long hours suturing the servitor into the tank, or encasing it into a skyspear missile. Where possible, the servitor's limbs are used to operate controls and weapons, but most importantly their brain is linked into the augur arrays of either missile or cannon. The process is not always successful and many servitors may die before one merges with the tank's machine spirit, creating a deadly symbiotic relationship.

Augmented by the servitors' brains, the Hunter and Stalker are both able to carve their way through enemy defences, whether they are the crude chemical counter-measures of an Ork Dakkajet or the sophisticated electronic bafflers of a Tau Sun Shark Bomber. It is perhaps the spark of faith and duty that endures within the withered brain of the servitor which drives the weapon on, causing a skyspear missile to unflaggingly track an enemy aircraft no matter how the pilot twists and turns, or the storm cannon to track its target unerringly, striking at its weak points.



ANCIENT WAR MACHINES

The value of a Stalker servitor conclave cannot be measured as one might measure the worth of a bolter or lascannon. To a Space Marine Chapter, a worthy Stalker tank and its crew are a revered and precious relic, honoured for their glorious history and every foe they have sent flaming to the earth. Over long centuries of war and countless battles, Stalker and Hunter tanks will develop their own personalities as the memories and faint psyches of the servitors bleed into their machine spirits. The tanks will begin to display almost human emotion; flying into a rage of firepower and death against hated foes or suffering from a plague of mysterious technical problems if neglected by their company. The Space Marine crew of a Hunter or Stalker learn to placate the spirit of their tank with solemn praise and deep respect, lest it fail them in battle. The cold, dead eyes of the servitor conclave might seem empty and vacant, though the battle-brothers know living souls lurk behind those lifeless orbs.

Groups of Stalker and Hunter tanks will also form a bond, their machine spirits and servitors displaying a shadowy reflection of a Space Marine's own sense of duty to his brothers. A Stalker might specifically single out enemies that target tanks from its armoured company, even against the directions of its Space Marine crew, its guns taking bloody vengeance upon the

aggressor.



STALKERS

Based upon the ubiquitous Rhino STC, the Stalker incorporates additional armour and a twin Icarus storm cannon array. With a high sustained rate of fire and the guidance of the servitor conclave, a Stalker can track multiple targets through the sky, each of its cannons filling the air with deadly shells. Unlike the Rhino APC upon which it based, the Stalker's main compartment is given over to augur-cradles for its two servitor gunners and racks of ammo bins connected to the cannon array by snaking mag-feeds. Where most tanks carry dozens of shells for their main guns the Stalker carries thousands, so that it might keep up constant unrelenting fire into the sky.



BATTLEFIELD DEPLOYMENT

Major Space Marine deployments usually include the use of Stalkers, the anti-aircraft tanks protecting orbital beachheads and covering armoured advances. Even a single Stalker can bring down a squadron of enemy fliers, while several in close support are able to send up an almost impenetrable curtain of fire.

The Stalker incorporates heavier armour than a Rhino, space that would be required for transport given over to thickened ceramite plates and reactive shielding. Much of this additional armour is placed above the crew compartment and around the servitor conclave, giving it additional protection from aerial assault. The shell around the servitors is sealed from the outside, and thrice-blessed by the Chapter's Techmarines before battle. A Stalker can suffer a direct hit to its ammo store from a superheated round or plasma bolt and detonate in a fireball of twisted metal and shrapnel, but the servitor conclave will survive. The Space Marine Chapter can then extract the servitors and implant them into a new tank, their duty not yet done.

Stalkers incorporate stabiliser jacks, which extend from the edges of its hull, steadying it for sustained fire. Once a good firing position is found the crew will 'plant' the tank using the jacks, allowing it to maintain a steady aim amid the kick of the storm cannons and cascade of shells. They are also useful when fighting on broken battlefields, or in low-gravity environments, where finding a level platform for the tank is impossible. The crew will use the jacks to lock the tank onto any surface that is available, be it the twisted hull of a ship, the rubble choked slope of a ruined hive or even the gnarled and twisted vegetation of a cursed xenos swamp. When the tank needs to move rapidly the jacks carry explosive drill-tips, a keyed rune from the crew blasting the vehicle free and throwing the jacks back into the hull with a dull crack.

Stalkers are not only used against flying targets, but at times are also pressed into service against earth-bound foes. Their fearsome rate of fire combined with heavy explosive shells goes some way to make up for the limitations of targeting enemies on the ground. Even without the accuracy of a Predator tank or Devastator Squad, a Stalker can suppress enemies of the Chapter, its indiscriminate stream of fire blowing ragged chunks from their cover and forcing them to cower from the hammering boom of its guns.



RENOWNED STALKERS

Every Stalker tank is a prized part of its Space Marine Chapter, a venerated weapon with a long

and glorious history. Every campaign and conflict see the shell of the tank battered and repaired; and the crew of battle-brothers will inevitably change, but the machine spirit and servitor conclave endure. In time, the withered minds of the servitors will develop their own quirks, as will the machine spirit; favouring certain foes, displaying ghost-like memories of past combat and raging against the enemies of the Imperium.

Sky-Scythe

The Ultramarines Stalker *Sky-Scythe* is a rare relic from the earliest days of Mankind's ascendancy, one of the precious few tanks of its kind to survive since before the rise of the Imperium. It is rumoured that some of the tactica in the Codex Astartes is based directly on the *Sky-Scythe*, the detailed illuminations in the earliest copies of the codex bearing a striking likeness to the tank. *Sky-Scythe* proved its name during the Battle for Macragge when it accounted for scores of Harpies and Gargoyles, even ripping apart the wings of a vast Harridan and sending it spiralling to the ground.

Xenosbane

The Black Templars Stalker *Xenosbane* is unique in that its servitors were Chapter serfs that died in battle during the Ajaxian Crusade against the Broken-worlds Waaagh! Their bodies preserved and their brains kept alive by bio-fluidic immersion, they were blessed with the honour of fusion into a servitor conclave. It was not until *Xenosbane* first met Orks in battle that a spark of hatred awoke in the servitors. Fighting against the stabiliser jacks, *Xenosbane* raged against the Orks, its precise fire ripping their smoking, coughing engines of war from the sky. Such was their frenzy that the storm cannons would track crippled Dakka Jets as they fell from the air, pumping shells into their ragged fuselages even as they burst into flaming scrap.

Deathless Saint of Days

During the siege of Kaenis V, the Imperial Fist Stalker *Deathless Saint of Days* held the Chapter's forward trenches alone for twelve hours. A counter-attack by Alpha Legion Traitor Space Marines from the ruined conveyer tunnels had broken into the loyalists' communication trenches. Its crew dead and its tracks ripped apart, the enemy ignored the Stalker until it stirred to terrible, vengeful life. At point-black range, *Deathless Saint of Days* practically annihilated a Traitor Marine squad, turning its storm cannons on the tunnel openings and forcing the survivors into retreat. When the Imperial Fists reclaimed their trenches they discovered the Stalker still covering the corpse-choked tunnel entrance, its smoking guns pointed into the dark.

Spite of Prometheus

The Salamanders are well known for their scorn of armies that favour airborne vehicles. The Stalker *Spite of Prometheus* embodies this disdain, and its servitor conclave targets fliers with a methodical hatred. The Salamander battle-brothers who crew the Stalker speak of how this was not always so, the servitors seeming as vacant and deathless as any of their kind when fused into the heart of the tank. Over time, exposed to the Salamanders' open contempt for sky-borne foes, a change came upon the servitors. They would fire unbidden, pre-empting the commands of their crew, and always give an enemy another burst even when they were already downed. This hatred has grown and evolved until now the tank shudders with eagerness upon hearing the whine of enemy jets, its cannons raking the horizon, hungry for fresh kills.



HUNTERS

The Hunter is a variant of the Stalker, using the same chassis and fulfilling a similar battlefield role. Whereas the Stalker is armed with twin Icarus storm cannons, the Hunter carries a single skyspear missile launcher. Far more deadly against a single target than the storm cannons of a Stalker, the skyspear missile is capable of bringing down almost any flyer known to the Imperium. The true danger of the missile, however, comes not from its armour piercing warhead

but its unerring guidance system. Each missile houses the brain and spinal column of a savant-servitor, a blessed servant of the Chapter that has given his life so that he might guide the missile's righteous anger.



BATTLEFIELD DEPLOYMENT

Hunters are usually only deployed if the Space Marine Chapter expects to face heavy flyers or concentrated air assault. The hail of shells from a Stalker is usually enough to keep most enemy aircraft at bay, though when getting a kill is an absolute priority the Hunters are brought forward. However, each skyspear missile is a sacred relic in its own right, and the Techmarines of the Chapter do not sacrifice them lightly, trading each one for an enemy heavy aircraft. Indeed, the brainstem and cranium of a dedicated savant-servitor is the most vital part of the missile, the neural crown feeding his faithful thoughts directly into its augurs. Thus the more pious the savant-servitor, and the more dedicated his mind to the task of seeking out the enemies of the Emperor, the better the chance the missile will strike home.

A single Hunter can prove the bane of large enemy aircraft. From Tau Barracudas to Eldar Vampire Raiders, a single missile is usually all it takes to knock one from the sky. Beasts and Daemons are equally vulnerable to the skyspear, a missile able to blow a flaming hole through the heart of a Bloodthirster or winged Hive Tyrant. These are the high value, high threat targets its crew seek out, honouring the savant-servitor and giving it an end worthy of zealous furore.

The Hunter also employs more mundane high explosive missiles so that it might preserve its skyspear savant-servitors for worthy targets. Against ground targets the tanks can lay down a salvo of missile fire turning a wide area into a firestorm in seconds. Though it lacks the sophisticated and sacred technology of the skyspear savant, each missile is more than capable of smashing its way through enemy armour and roasting the crew within.

The ammo store of the Hunter is divided into the skyspear savant missiles, each one encased in its own munitorum shrine-case, awaiting the moment it will be released into the foe, and clips of explosive ordnance. Each clip holds three missiles, and an auto loader is able to draw them from the racks and feed them into the launcher in a single smooth motion. Each of these three missiles bears a psalm of vengeance inscribed in red wax by one of the Chapter's Techmarines, its hate-filled words a curse upon the enemy it strives to destroy. When the burst of missiles is fired, the wax melts into streaming crimson and the curse is given life.



RENOWNED HUNTERS

The Hunter has a glorious history even in the relatively short time it has served within the armies of the Adeptus Astartes. In the millennia since the rediscovery of its STC, the Hunter has made millions of confirmed kills, bringing down a myriad of enemy flyers against every major enemy of the Imperium. These renowned feats are not attributed to the tank alone, but to the individual skyspear savant-servitors. A savant that relentlessly seeks out its target and scatters it flaming across the sky has earned his place as a hero of the Imperium.

Javelin of Faith

The Black Templar Hunter *Javelin of Faith* earned its name as a Daemon killer. On the verdant agri world of Sharlor, the Black Templars vanquished the Penumbra Cult, executing its arch-heretic in a public display and burning his profane works. No sooner had the heretic's head been hewn from his body than a Lord of Change tore its way out of his bleeding neck stump, shaking gore from its incandescent feathers. Taking to the sky, the Daemon unleashed a

maelstrom of psychic fire upon the Space Marines. Then, from out of the coiling smoke of the witchfire, a skyspear missile launched by the *Javelin of Faith* impaled the Greater Daemon, tearing it apart in an explosion that left only a shimmer of blue flame upon the wind.

Righteous Fist

The White Scars value mobile warfare, their companies always in motion, encircling and enveloping their foes. The Hunter *Righteous Fist* has been used extensively in this kind of combat, its crew firing bursts of missiles on the move, overwhelming their enemy with a wall of fire and shrapnel. Skyspear savant missiles are ideal for this kind of rapid deployment, the crew sending the weapon skyward then gunning their tank back to high speed, confident that it will find its target. In its most famous kill the *Righteous Fist* fired a skyspear savant missile from the open vault door of a heavy lander in mid-flight, knocking a Helldrake from the sky before it could descend upon the transport aircraft.

Dorn's Hammer

Like the Stalker, the Hunter can play a role within the drawn out engagements of siege warfare. The Imperial Fists in particular have found ways to use the Hunter beyond its envisioned design, using the heavy ordnance of the skyspear launcher and the skyspear savant missiles to break down fortifications. *Dorn's Hammer* was used during the destruction of the Magenta Citadel and its cursed xenos cult, the Sons of the Void. The Hunter was pressed into service as artillery, lobbing ordnance over the citadel's high walls, while the skyspear savant missiles targeted the cultist observers and their ghost-ships, invisible to almost all weapons but easy targets for the savants.

Lance of Fire

Skyspear savant missiles have an extremely long range, their promethium reserves mixed with holy oils to make them burn hotter but slower. The Iron Hands Hunter *Lance of Fire* is renowned for its distance kills with the skyspear, taking full advantage of the extraordinary range of its missiles. In the war on Medusa against Abaddon's Thirteenth Black Crusade, the *Lance of Fire* has proven itself worthy of the name Hunter, blunting numerous Chaos Space Marine attacks. The first the enemy knows of its attentions is when one of their squadron is blow to pieces by a direct hit, peppering its companions with flaming wreckage and the smoking remains of its crew. The Iron Hands have made their own special modifications on the *Lance of Fire*, awakening in it ancient protocols and stirring its machine spirit to greater awareness. The result is an uncanny accuracy and an impressive tally of enemy aircraft kills.



Fire in the Sky

Menoch peered at the parchment with watery eyes, each of the spidery High Gothic words blending into the next. It was the completion of the Chapter serf's life's work written out in prayers and benedictions, each chapter filled with one after another of the one thousand oaths of devotion required of a penitent savant. Now, at last, his work was almost done, his life force ebbing away as he completed the final blessing.

As he put down his worn quill and let out a weak, ragged sigh, he felt a withered hand fall upon his shoulder. Looking up, Menoch could see the servitor ready to lead him to the anointing chamber, its cold, lifeless eyes ignorant of the importance of its task. In the shadows beyond, Menoch could make out the towering form of Brother Ursan, the Techmarine's burnished armour dull in the torchlight. Easing his old joints up, Menoch let the servitor lead him from the chamber, acutely aware of the fate that awaited him.

The cutting had not hurt, nor had the removal of his organs. Only when the Techmarine sliced free Menoch's brainstem did the savant feel a strange disconnection, the droning hymns of the attendant Tech-priests changing in pitch as he heard them with new electronic ears. As his consciousness shrank, Menoch recited the prayers of bonding in his mind, even as he forgot his own name and his years of service to the Chapter; the words that Ursan had taught him burning themselves into his brain. Then, one by one, new senses made themselves known. As the priests sutured neural tentacles into his exposed brain and tethered his optical nerves into augurs, he 'saw' the anointing chamber with new eyes.

The part of Menoch's brain that remained felt nothing when it looked upon the butchered remains of his wrinkled old body, with its skull carved open and brain removed. It was just another unimportant feature of the chamber, like the stone table carved in the shape of an Aquila, the smouldering bone torches and racks of bladed tools. Only the priests and Ursan registered any interest to the savant, their faint azure auras telling him they were not enemies.

As the ritual came to an end, the priests sealed the savant into its shrine-case, the world turning dark, leaving it to dream with the prayers of seeking rolling around its mind.

Light, like holy fire, flooded the savant's senses as its shrine-case was cracked open. Its ghostly vision took in waves of sound like ripples through the air and blazing rivers of light where power surged through its world. Cogitator cogs and synapse-webs filtered the data into the savant's mind and it could make out the interior of the Hunter, alive with motion, even more vivid than the illuminations Ursan had shown it. A huge armoured warrior descended on the savant, hauling it out of its shrine-case and heaving it into a clanking autoloader, before banging a heavy fist on the side of the cabin. All at once the savant felt the prayer come unbidden to its mind, and new senses springing to life while old ones became sharper. The loader lifted the savant into the launcher firing-chamber, darkness enveloping its senses as it waited for its purpose to be fulfilled. The prayer was louder now, a near scream in the savant's brain causing him to flick his spinal-fragments back and forth against the neural tentacles holding them in place. Then an image flicked into the savant's mind, a shape, a smell and a sound imprinted upon its brain before the launcher kicked and the savant was thrown into the sky.

Information rushed into the savant's mind, drowning out for a second the scream of the prayer, as a world of fire and death unfolded around it. Below and behind the savant, yellow-armoured forms fought under an azure haze, the savant's sonic senses feeling the air tremble as shells and bolts tore it to pieces. Ahead, black-armoured shapes wreathed in hateful crimson returned fire and crept through great furrows in the earth. However, these were as motes of dust to the savant, the image impressed upon its mind and the howling prayer urging it skyward. From out of the clouds the steel bird appeared, its smell drawing the savant closer, driving it on. Sensing the savant's approach, the bird swerved desperately out of the way, but the savant adjusted its attack and drove into the heart of the creature. In that final moment before the savant struck home, the name Menoch came unbidden to its mind, and it knew its duty was complete.

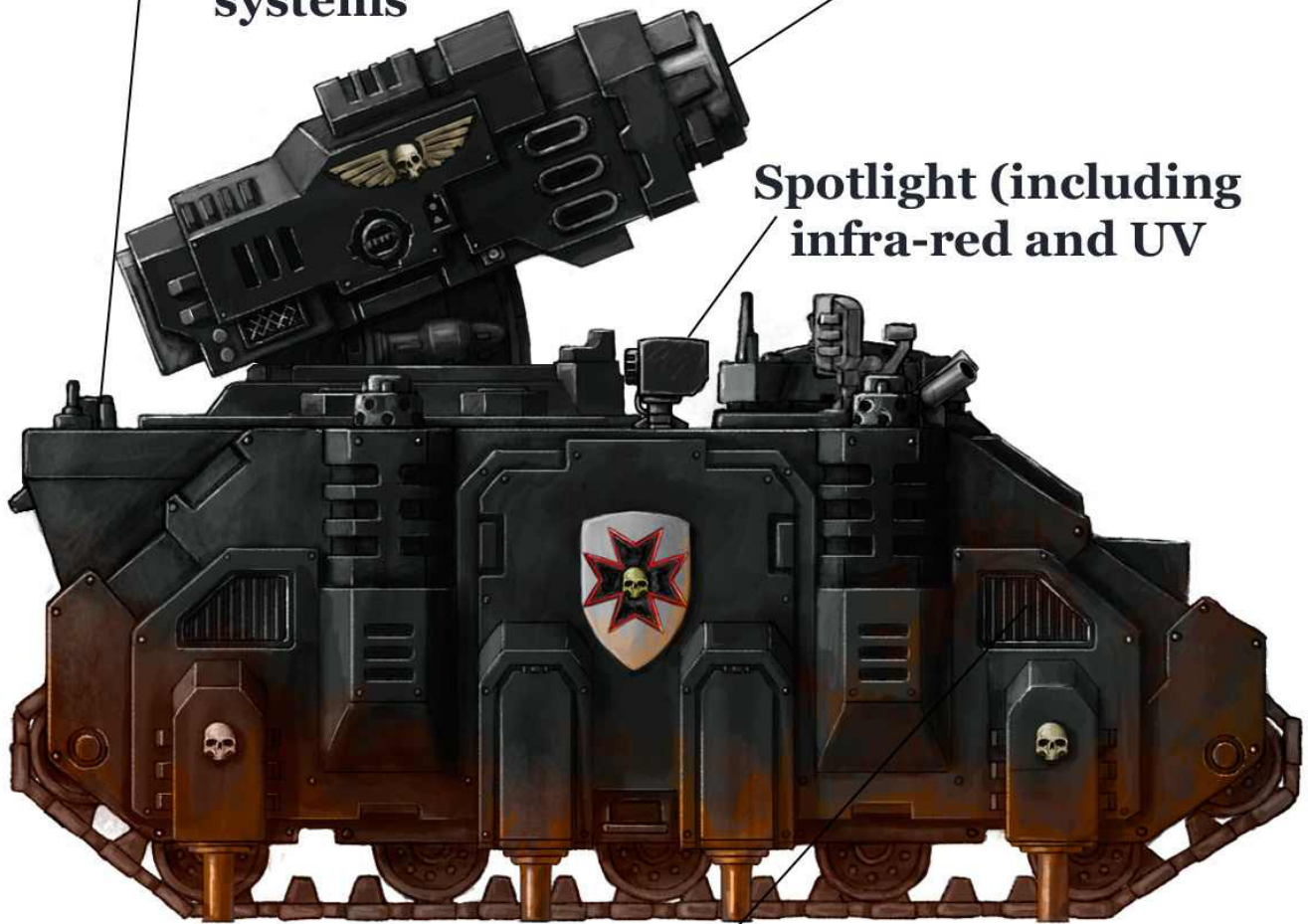


HUNTER

**Troop transport space
given over to additional
ammunition and AA
automated guidance
systems**

**Skyspear Missile
Launcher**

**Spotlight (including
infra-red and UV)**



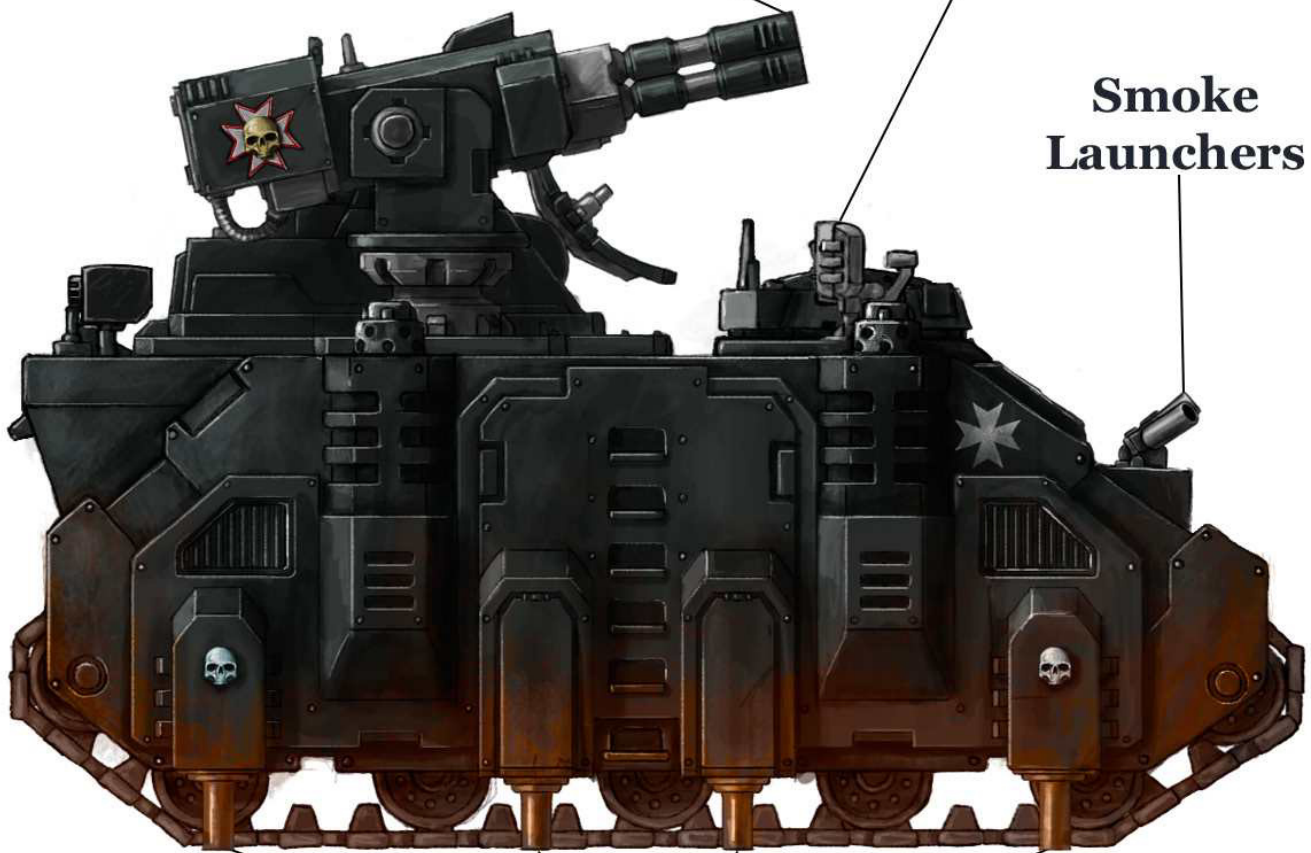
**Re-enforced armour
plating over Rhino
APC hull**

STALKER

**Icarus Stormcannon
array**

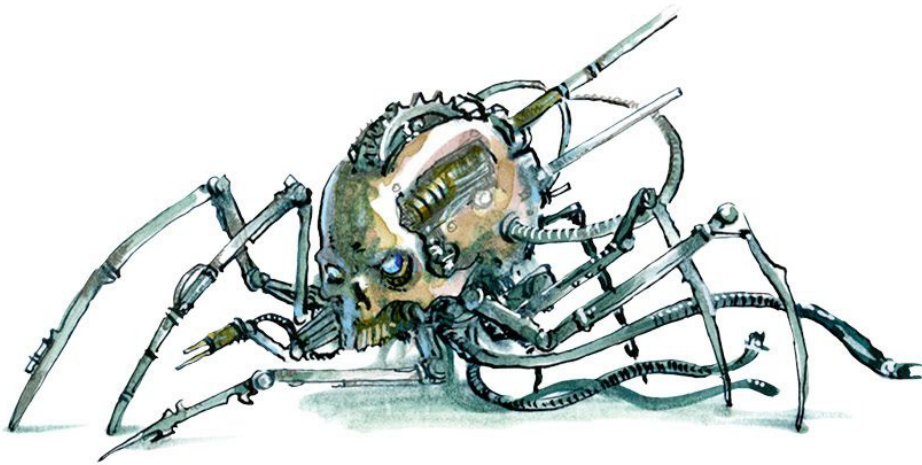
**Sub-orbital RADAR
detection dish**

**Smoke
Launchers**



**Re-enforced
stabilisation struts**

MINIATURE SHOWCASE





Hunter with skyspear missile launcher



Stalkers are armed with icarus stormcannon arrays, great for taking out enemy air support.



WARHAMMER
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TACTICAL DREADNOUGHT ARMOUR™



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TACTICAL DREADNOUGHT ARMOUR



TACTICAL DREADNOUGHT ARMOUR



There are few instances where Space Marine power armour is not enough protection for a warrior, but when battle calls for durability and protection over agility, it is to the revered suits of Terminator armour that the Space Marines turn. Massively thick armour plates and powerful servo-muscles drive them, and only the best and bravest of a Space Marine Chapter may don these suits of ancient, holy armour.

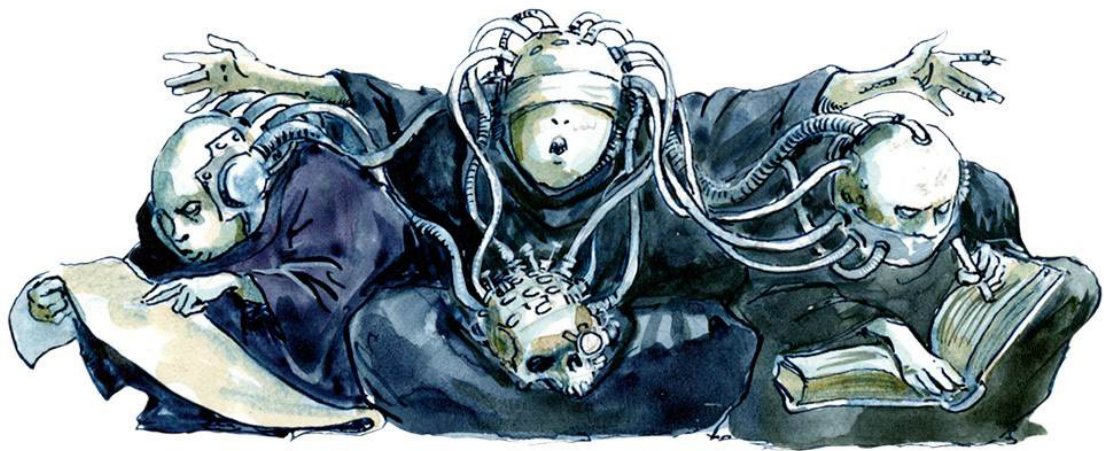
Space Marine power armour has a long and glorious history, having its origins in the long-forgotten time before the Emperor's unification of Mankind on Terra. Nothing is now known of this time, but it is speculated that the first suits of powered armour were worn by the techno-barbarians that fought alongside the Emperor as he battled to bring Terra under his rule. Over time, these suits were refined and improved, becoming the earliest incarnations of Space Marine power armour.

The first suits of Space Marine power armour were developed from this armour and were said to have been worn by the first Space Marines as they fought to unite the planets of the Solar System under the Emperor's control. Legend tells that, once the Solar System was secure and the process of rebuilding was firmly in hand, the greater galactic conquest began. Faded techno-arcana of the Adeptus Mechanicus tells that, even before the Age of Strife ended, the Emperor had started to make provisions for his Great Crusade.

Part of these plans included the re-equipping of the Space Marine armies with a far more sophisticated fighting suit that historians have dubbed Crusade or Crusader armour. Alongside these developments, the Emperor initiated a program to develop a system of armour that would provide even greater protection than that offered by power armour.



BACKGROUND



TACTICAL DREADNOUGHT ARMOUR

Combining the technology of power armour with that of the exo-armour developed for sealed environment suits used by starship crews forced to work in extremely hazardous situations, the development of Tactical Dreadnought armour was begun in order to provide the best protection possible for the Space Marines.

Exo-armour is constructed from heavy gauge plasteel plating, forming an armoured shell that can withstand even the colossal impact of high-speed orbital micro-debris. It is the only armour suitable for working inside the high-pressure casings of plasma reactor shields or the extremely corrosive environments inside the holds of bulk chemical carriers. These same qualities, suitably enhanced, make Tactical Dreadnought armour virtually invulnerable to most weapons.

The development of Terminator armour, as Tactical Dreadnought armour soon became known, was well underway by the time the Horus Heresy erupted, and these heavily armoured suits were available throughout the Legions by the time the traitor Warmaster struck.

According to fragmented records of the Adeptus Mechanicus, Terminator armour was originally designed to be the ultimate Space Marine power armour, and was envisioned to replace the older suits. However, as the Horus Heresy sucked the resources from the Imperium, Terminator suits became increasingly rare, for they were exceptionally difficult to create and maintain. In addition, in most battles, their bulk became a disadvantage against the lighter power-armoured warriors who easily outmanoeuvred them.



However, the suits were still highly sought after, and they were used to great effect in the countless bloody and short-ranged battles waged in cramped conditions, such as boarding actions in ship-to-ship engagements, hive cities and tunnel fighting. It was in these areas that Terminator armour excelled, and under these conditions that their bulk and sturdy frame are best deployed. Armoured with heavy sheets of plasteel and ceramite, Terminator armour contains a full exoskeleton and a complex arrangement of fibre-bundle muscles that allow a warrior to fight with deadly skill in close quarters, where agility is secondary to protection. In the same manner as power armour, Terminator armour contains its own independent power supply and fully enclosed life-support functions, though those incorporated in Terminator armour are more powerful and longer-lasting. Suits of Terminator armour also carry teleport homers enabling them to teleport into battle with some degree of accuracy. The armour contains various augers and auspexes, enabling the Space Marine to be fully aware of his environment, both externally and internally, monitoring such things as radiation levels, proximity of biological entities and the life signals of the body, amongst others. Just like power armour, though, the armour also has other devices installed that are designed solely for

Tactical Dreadnought armour, including threat detectors and motion sensors.

In addition, the suit is fully equipped with a range of auto-senses and targeters, allowing the Space Marine to track his target with increased accuracy. Members of a Terminator squad are linked to each other with pict-display units, allowing the Space Marines to see what their brother warriors see. All suits of Terminator armour are capable of this, but to avoid confusion, it is usual only the Sergeant's armour that broadcasts pict-signals during combat.





VETERAN SPACE MARINES

A Chapter's 1st Company is also known as the Veteran Company and contains its bravest and most heroic battle-brothers. Many will have risen to the rank of Veteran Sergeant before being inducted to the 1st Company, though less experienced Space Marines are often accepted into its ranks for performing acts of exceptional courage. These Space Marines are mighty heroes whose legends have become part of the Chapter's history, and it is every warrior's ambition to become one of their Chapter's elite. The 1st Company is invariably the most powerful Company in the Chapter, as only its warriors are trained to take the field of battle wearing Terminator armour. All Space Marine Chapters maintain a number of suits of the revered and rightly feared Terminator armour, and these are amongst a Chapter's most prized relics.

Squads of Terminators are most often employed in boarding actions or where the fighting is certain to be close and bloody. They can also be equipped with a varied selection of weaponry that allows them to fight at longer ranges, but it is brutal assaults that they are primarily designed for. These rare suits are highly sought after, and as such, each Chapter carefully maintains those in its care. Incredibly ancient, many of the secrets of construction are long lost and each one is revered by the Space Marines and lovingly maintained by the Chapter's Techmarines. Some of the oldest suits were produced before the Horus Heresy. Although new suits are produced by the Adeptus Mechanicus, the production rate is so slow, and the demand for them is so great, that no Chapter can be sure when it will be re-equipped; there could be several centuries between two shipments of the treasured armour arriving at a fortress monestary. Each suit of armour is given a special place of honour within the 1st Company's Chapel, and only warriors of the 1st Company and selected senior commanders may enter to don these holy artefacts. It requires rigorous training to be able to fight in Terminator armour and, once trained in its use, a Space Marine will be expected to perform above and beyond his brethren, acting as an example to the rest of the Chapter.





ARMAMENT

Terminator armour is designed to carry a variety of weapon fits, but the most common armament carried is a storm bolter and power fist. This configuration allows a Terminator to engage the enemy at long range while advancing and then to deliver a devastating assault with the deadly energies of a power fist – a weapon capable of tearing through the hull of a battle tank. Many Space Marines opt to carry a chainfist, similar in effect to a power fist, though equipped with a massively powerful chainblade attachment that can carve through the armoured bulkhead of a starship. Within each squad, one Space Marine is often designated a fire support role, and massive, fibre-bundle muscles and suspensor fields allow a Terminator to carry a much heavier array of weaponry than his power-armoured brethren. Such warriors may carry the dreaded assault cannon – to lay down a hail of heavy shells, a heavy flamer – for when the fighting is certain to be close and bloody and the enemy closely packed, or the cyclone missile launcher – to engage heavily armoured targets at long range.

Certain squads of Terminators are also configured specifically for close combat, with no ranged weaponry whatsoever. These squads are most often teleported into battle, where the enemy cannot engage them with long-range firepower before the Terminators attack. The most favoured configuration for these squads is either a pair of lightning claws – multiple, fist-mounted blades sheathed in lethal energy that can cut through armour and flesh with equal ease – or thunder hammer and storm shield. This latter configuration is usually employed when the enemy is likely to employ weaponry that may defeat even the formidable armour of a Terminator. A storm shield contains a small power field generator that can protect a warrior in close combat and is proof against even the most lethal close combat weapons. The thunder hammer is a deadly weapon that releases a terrific blast of energy upon impact, and those it does not kill, vehicles and the living alike, are rendered virtually incapacitated.





DEPLOYMENT

Unlike Space Marines in power armour, Terminators are bulky and slow moving, their speed and agility sacrificed for better protection. As a result, methods had to be developed in order to allow them to reach the enemy in enough strength to prevail. Terminator armour is designed to allow its wearer to utilise the technology of teleportation, and through this sometimes treacherous method of transport, Terminators may strike right into the heart of the enemy battle lines. Although this method of transport can be far from accurate, it is often the best way to get Terminators into the thick of the fighting quickly. Teleportation is, however, a barely understood technology, and many Chapters of Space Marines – such as the Space Wolves – have a healthy distrust of such things and refuse to utilise it. For Chapters like this, Terminators more commonly make use of Drop Pods – which allow them to strike like a thunderbolt into the thick of the fighting – or deploy inside the fearsome Land Raider battle tank.

The Land Raider is one of the most, if not the most, powerful tank in the Space Marine's arsenal, able to withstand the impact of a battle cannon with little or no effect. These tanks were designed primarily to enable Terminator squads to travel in safety through the very worst war zones, and are equipped with frontal assault ramps that deliver its warriors straight into the thick of the fighting. In addition, the Land Raider is armed with powerful lascannons and can act as mobile fire support for the Terminators once they have disembarked. There are several Land Raider variants, but one of the most common is the Land Raider Crusader, a pattern developed by Marine-Artificer Simagus during the Jerulas Crusade of the Black Templars Chapter. This crusade involved the besiegement of many heavily fortified bastions of a hive world and extensive use of the Crusader pattern enabled the Sword Brethren Terminators of the Black Templars to penetrate the defences of their enemies with relative ease. With an increased transport capacity, and weaponry designed to inflict maximum casualties amongst nearby infantry, many other Chapters involved in similar engagements quickly adopted this Land Raider pattern.



THE BATTLE FOR MACRAGGE

A great and terrible day for the Ultramarines came during the battle for their homeworld, when the hammer blow of the Tyranid Hive Fleet Behemoth smashed through Ultima Segmentum.

The final battle against Behemoth was fought on the surface of Macragge itself, while the Ultramarines fleet battled the massive bio-ships of the Tyranids in orbit. The key to the defence of Macragge was the polar defence fortress, held by the veterans of the 1st Company, Titans of the Legio Praetor and the Ultramar Defence Auxilia. Though the invaders paid in blood for every yard gained, the defenders were ultimately pushed back inside the darkened, bloody corridors of the fortress.

In defence of their homeworld, the warriors of the 1st Company displayed heroism the likes of which has rarely been seen since, dying to a man in the depths of the fortress. Upon the defeat of the Tyranid fleet, the Ultramarines descended to the surface of Macragge and discovered the carnage at the northern polar defence fortress. The dead of the 1st Company lay where they had fallen, mounds of Tyranid corpses piled hundreds deep around each warrior. Though the entire company had been killed, they had broken the back of the Tyranid invasion and given the Ultramarines ultimate victory.

Such a grievous loss was almost too much to bear, and Marneus Calgar, Chapter Master of the Ultramarines, decreed that the Chapter Banner of the Ultramarines would no longer be unfurled until the 1st Company was returned to full strength. Only now, some two hundred and fifty years after the defeat of Hive Fleet Behemoth, has the banner been lifted from its reliquary and once again borne to battle.





THE DEFEAT OF ANGRON

The war-torn world of Armageddon has known the tread of invaders many times, most recently in the form of the Ork Warlord, Ghazghkull Mag Uruk Thraka's second invasion. But Ghazghkull was not the first, or even the greatest, threat to Armageddon. Five hundred years before that Ork even killed his first squig, the taint of Chaos came to Armageddon. Trouble had been brewing for some time, with riots and civil unrest spreading throughout the planet's main continental mass. On Armageddon Secundus, these revolts were quickly suppressed, but those on Armageddon Prime proved to be more difficult to eradicate. Imperial reinforcements could not easily reach Armageddon due to the presence of the Mid-Calvius CVII Warp Storm, and as the fighting continued, a vast space hulk appeared in orbit...

With the arrival of this space hulk, the rebels on Armageddon were revealed as cultists of the Ruinous Powers, and to make matters worse, the great space hulk contained the Daemon Primarch Angron. The fallen Primarch of the World Eaters was accompanied by hordes of Daemons and frothing Berzerkers who hurled the warriors of the Imperium back in a tide of bloodletting. As the defenders rallied beyond the Chaeron River, reinforcements arrived in the shape of the Space Wolves Chapter of Space Marines, led by the Great Wolf himself, Logan Grimnar. But more than that, the Chamber Militant of the Ordo Malleus, the Grey Knights, answered the defenders' cry for aid.

The Grey Knights are a Space Marine Chapter whose entire existence is dedicated to the destruction of the daemonic, and while Angron's horde built great monoliths to their diabolical master, the Grey Knights attacked. Led by Brother-Captain Aurellian, a hundred Grey Knights in Terminator armour teleported into the field of battle, fighting their way through the enemy host until they came face-to-face with the fallen Primarch.

Guarded by a dozen of his most favoured Bloodthirsters, Angron was nigh unstoppable, but the Grey Knight Terminators attacked without thought for their own safety or survival. Many brave warriors fell in battle, but one-by-one, the Daemons accompanying Angron were slain, banished back to the Warp by the faith and power of the Grey Knights. The battle waxed furious on the bloody field of Armageddon, but at last, the Grey Knights defeated Angron and cast his essence back to the Warp. With the defeat of Angron, the daemonic horde soon vanished and, without the presence of the daemonic Primarch, the hordes of cultists were soon crushed beneath the might of the Imperial counter-attack. The aftermath of the First War for Armageddon was, however, to bear witness to some of the most terrible cruelty imaginable, as the entire population of the planet was systematically rounded up and placed into forced labour camps and the planet repopulated so as to avoid the threat of any lingering taint of Chaos – a heinous act for which Logan Grimnar has never forgiven the Administratum.



Within dark and forgotten places hide the enemies of the Emperor.

You have been chosen to enter such places and, protected by the best armour the Adeptus Mechanicus can provide, cleanse it.

Take with you your weapons, a valiant heart and the Emperor's blessing, and engage the enemy where it makes its lair.

Acknowledge death as it approaches, but do not succumb to its touch, for your purpose is great.

*You have proven yourselves to be worthy of the status you now hold.
Every one of you standing here, all of whom have declared allegiance to the Emperor and take
his will as your guide, have shown your courage and have been rewarded for it.
Those that stand before me, I charge you now, go forth and vanquish the foe.*

- Sermon made by Chaplain Hanius to Blood Angels Terminator squads before the attack on
Thain II.





THE CRUX TERMINATUS

Each Terminator bears a badge upon his left shoulder guard that is made from stone and is said to incorporate fragments of the Emperor's armour. At the climax of the Horus Heresy, the Emperor personally led an attack upon the Warmaster's Battle Barge alongside some of his most trusted warriors. During the fierce fighting, the Emperor came face to face with Horus, who, in the battle that resulted, grievously wounded him. Following Horus' defeat, it is said that the Emperor decreed that his armour be taken off and melted down, and that the pieces be made into badges that all Terminators could wear in recognition of the service performed in the defeat of Horus. However, if this is true, then each suit of Terminator armour must only contain the most miniscule of fragments.



THE CRUZ ARGENTUM

Elements of the Crux Terminatus, on the shoulder pad of a Terminator, can be adorned with additional ornamentation in recognition of acts of supreme valour. One such adornment is the Cruz Argentum, a shoulder badge of silver and encrusted with gems, that is awarded to Space Marines who perform acts of valour above and beyond the call of duty.



Brother Sergeant Egil of the Space Wolves ducked behind the smoking, burnt-out shell of a Land Raider and slammed a fresh magazine into his bolter. The remains of his Sky Claw pack were spread throughout the blasted building, gore-streaked and exhausted. Even with the filtering effect of his armour's auto-senses, the noise of the battle was still deafening. He risked a glance around the side of the Land Raider. Thick clouds of choking black ash fell from a lacerated sky and the entire city was aflame. Massive explosions and the thunder of artillery obscured the battle and rendered even his acute senses useless. Egil spun around, raising his bolter to a firing position as he heard the crunch of heavy footsteps approaching behind him. The massive Terminator-armoured form of Brother Kaarlson, of the Wolf Guard, entered the building and Egil lowered his gun.

'Ready your men, Sergeant. We take the fight to the traitors,' snarled the Wolf Guard. Even over the vox-unit's distortion and din of battle, the edge of feral anticipation in Kaarlson's voice was unmistakable. Egil nodded, passing the word to his men. The green runes on his visor display blinked as the Space Wolves acknowledged his orders. Egil racked the slide on his bolter as the ground suddenly shook under a thunderous impact. The deep, rumbling crash sounded again, like an angry god's footsteps, and Egil looked up as a massive shadow swallowed them. Emerging from the smoke, like a vast beast from the sagas, a corrupted Titan towered above them, its dark carapace silhouetted against the bloody sky.

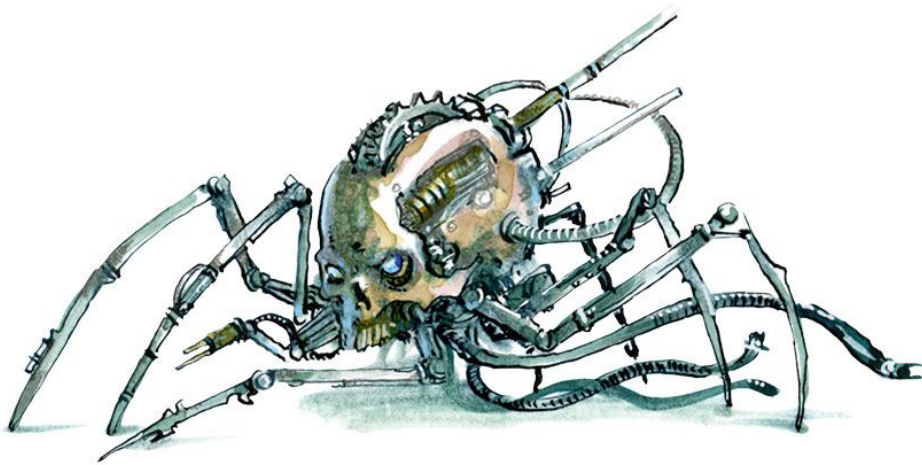
Lights flared around the Titan's head as Imperial fire impacted on its void shields, but the enormous machine ignored them, lifting one huge leg ponderously from the ground. Egil could clearly hear the whine of its powerful actuators over the explosions. The gigantic war-machine's foot smashed aside buildings in its path and Egil realised with sick horror exactly where it would stamp down.

'Everybody up! Move!' he yelled and fired his jump pack as the shadow of the Titan's foot descended upon them. Egil powered through the air, heedless of the crack of small arms fire that burst around him, angling for the cover of a shattered bunker. He landed badly and cursed as he fell to the rubble, looking back to see Kaarlson slowly lumbering through the ruins. He screamed his name as the mass of the Titan's foot smashed through the building and crashed down upon the Wolf Guard Terminator. Egil covered his head as the Titan's other foot swept above him, showering dust and debris. Howling with rage, he fired his bolter ineffectually at the Titan as it strode onwards, unheeding of the great warrior it had just killed.

Egil again reloaded his weapon, his thoughts filled with avenging the fallen Kaarlson. He looked over towards the flattened building and watched with astonishment as the rubble began to shift and heave. Massive chunks of plascrete and steel were pushed aside as Kaarlson pulled himself free of the debris. His Terminator armour had been gashed open in a dozen different places and his blood was splashed crimson against its grey, but he was alive. The Wolf Guard Terminator joined Egil in the ruins of the bunker and shouted, 'Like I said, Sergeant, ready your men. We've wasted enough time already. We have a battle to win!'



MINIATURE SHOWCASE





Ultramarines Terminator with cyclone missile launcher and chainfist



**Ultramarines Terminator with
storm bolter and chainfist**



**Ultramarines Terminator with
assault cannon and power fist**



**Ultramarines Terminator Sergeant
with power sword**



**Crimson Fists Terminator with
heavy flamer and power fist**



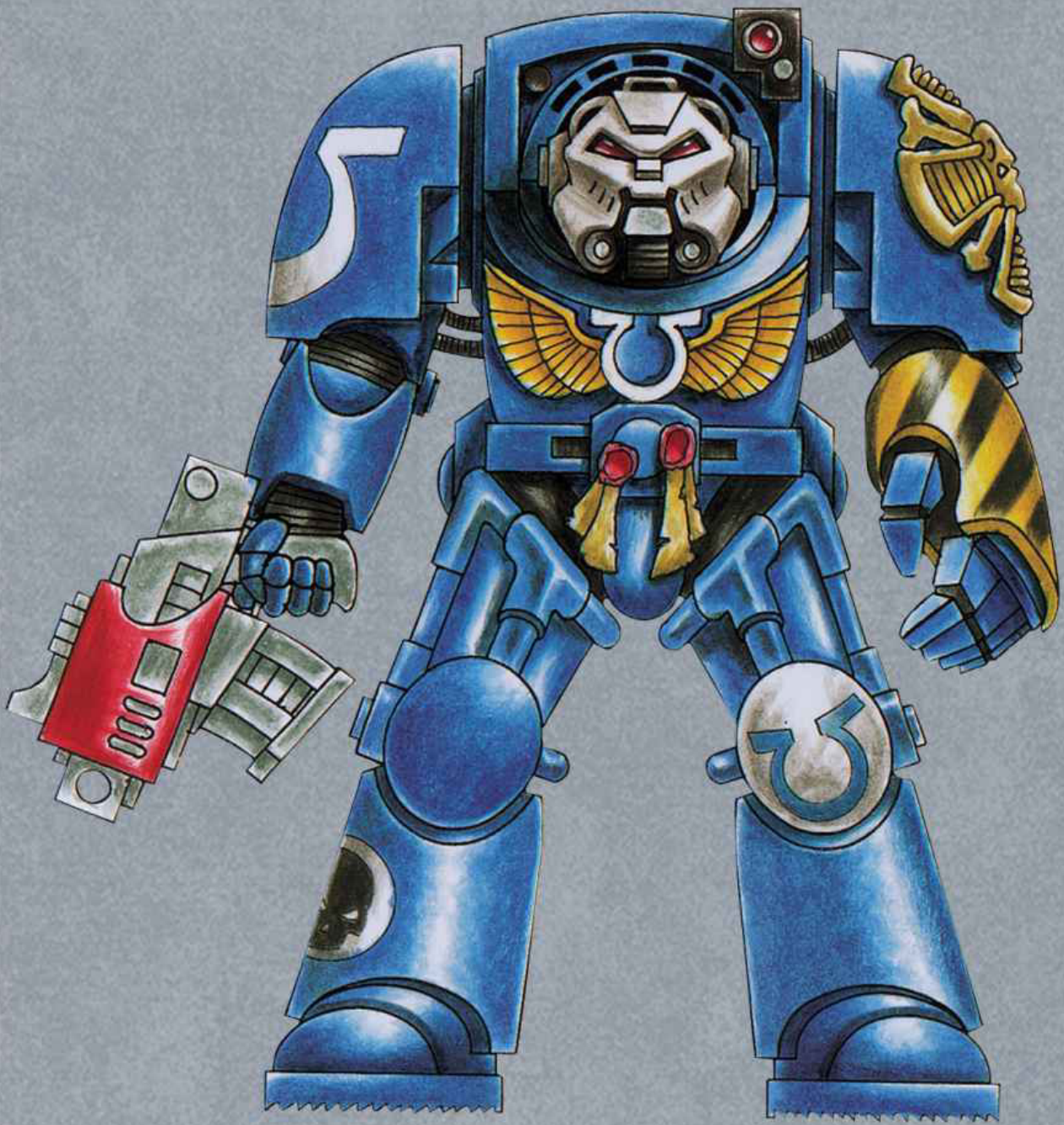
**Iron Lords Terminator with
thunder hammer and storm shield**



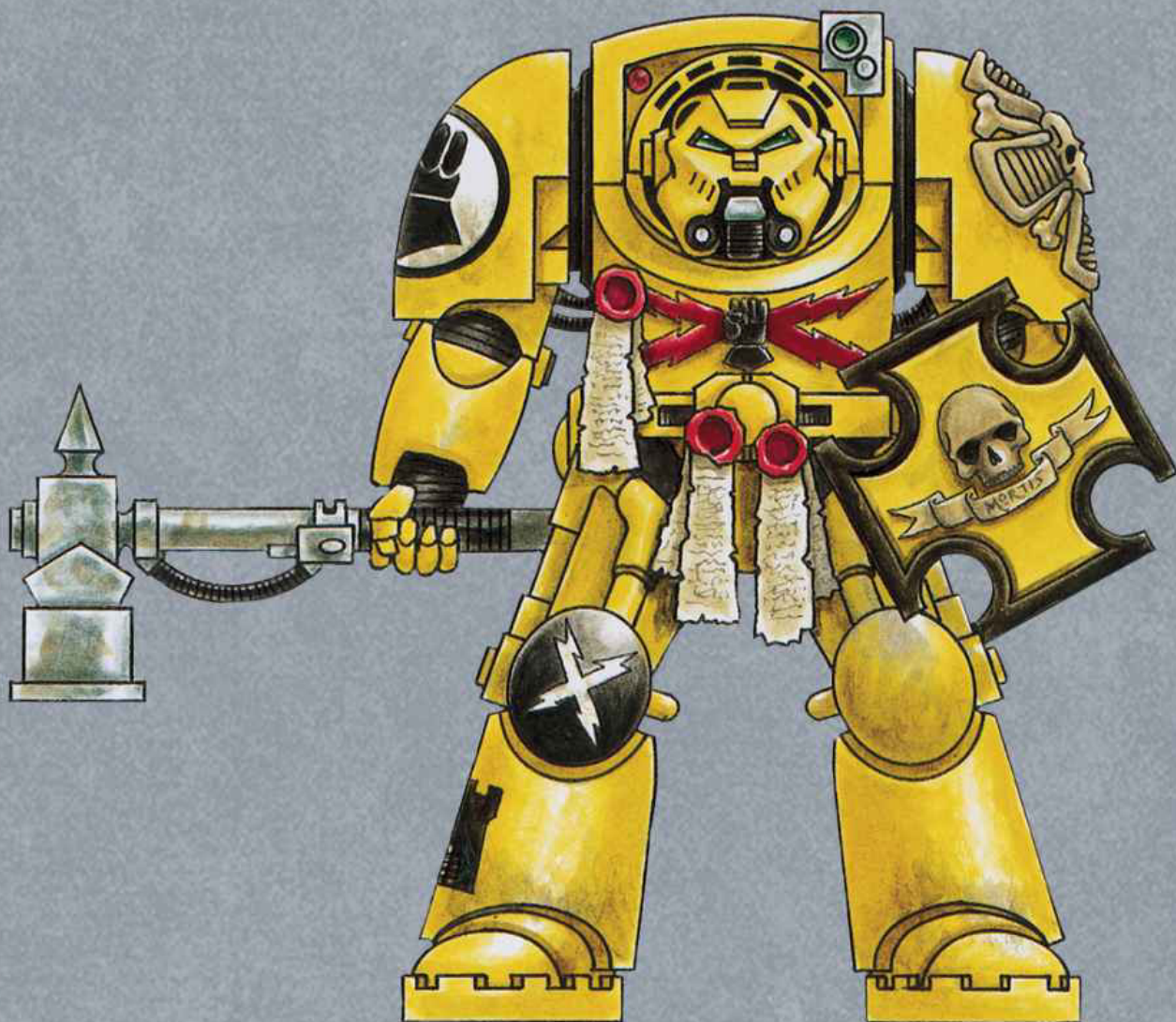
**Salamanders Terminator
with lightning claws**

GALLERY

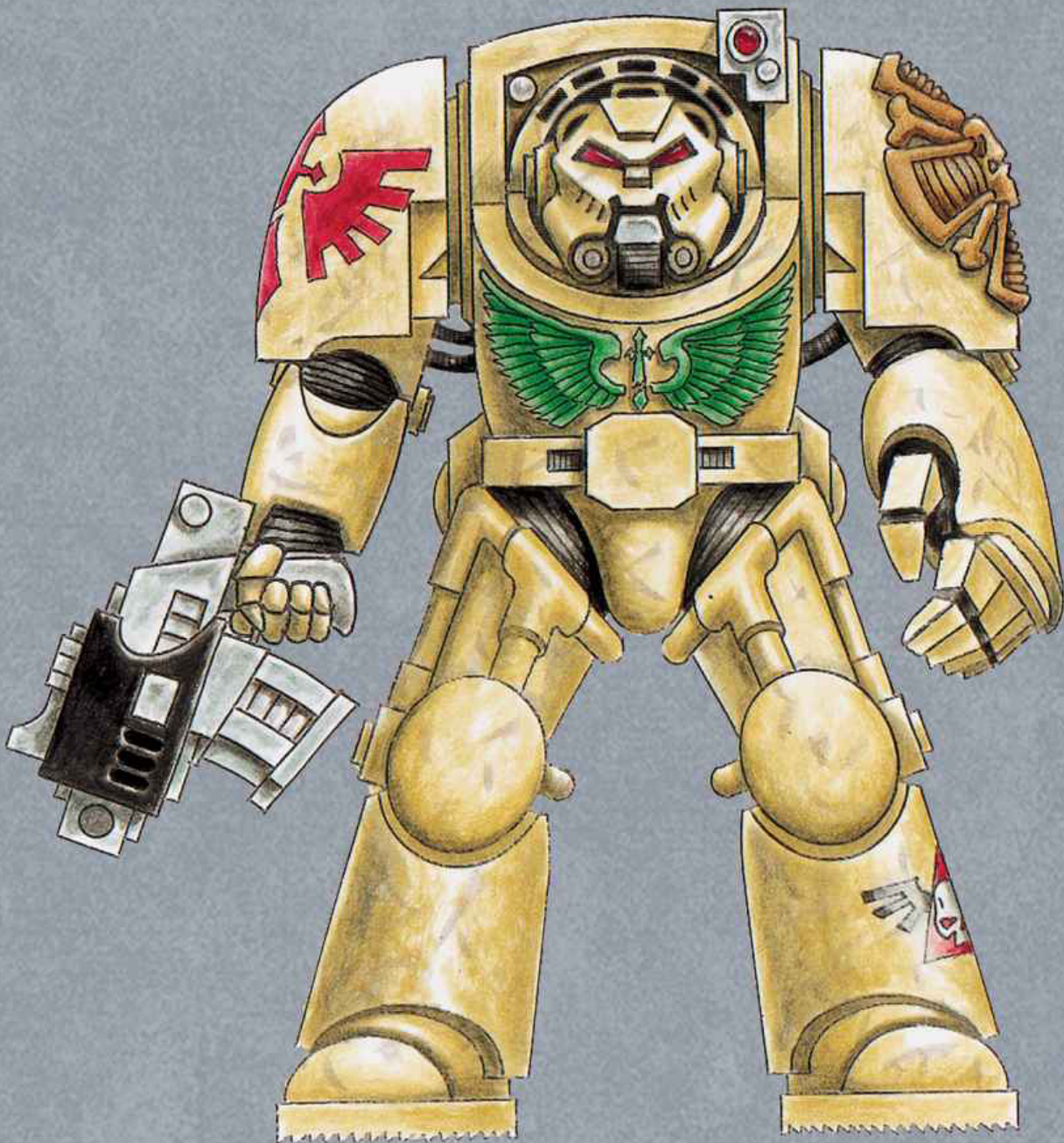




Ultramarines Terminator



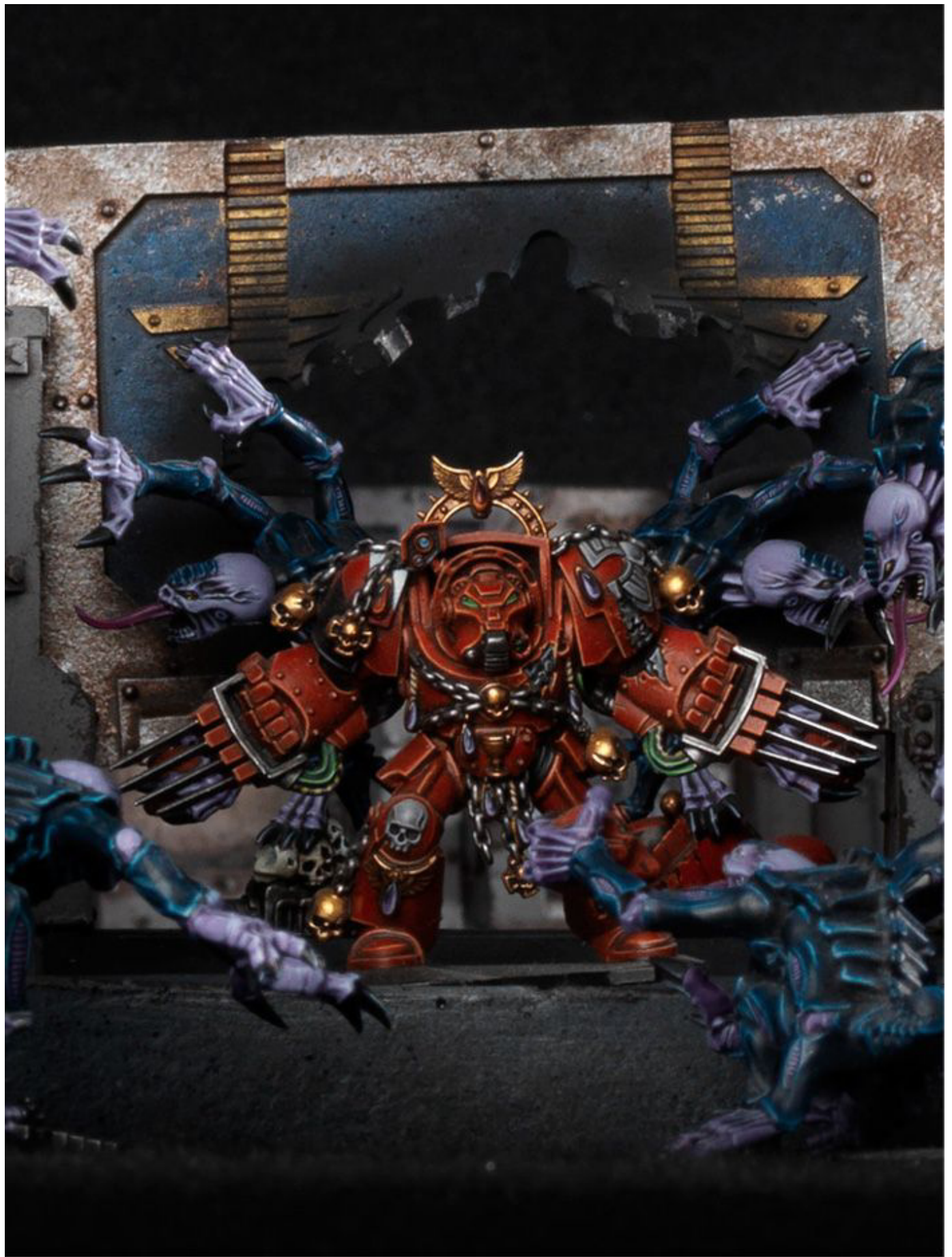
Imperial Fist Assault Terminator



Dark Angels Deathwing Terminator



**Black Templar
Sword Brethren Terminator**





WARHAMMER
40,000

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TECHMARINES™



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TECHMARINES



TECHMARINES



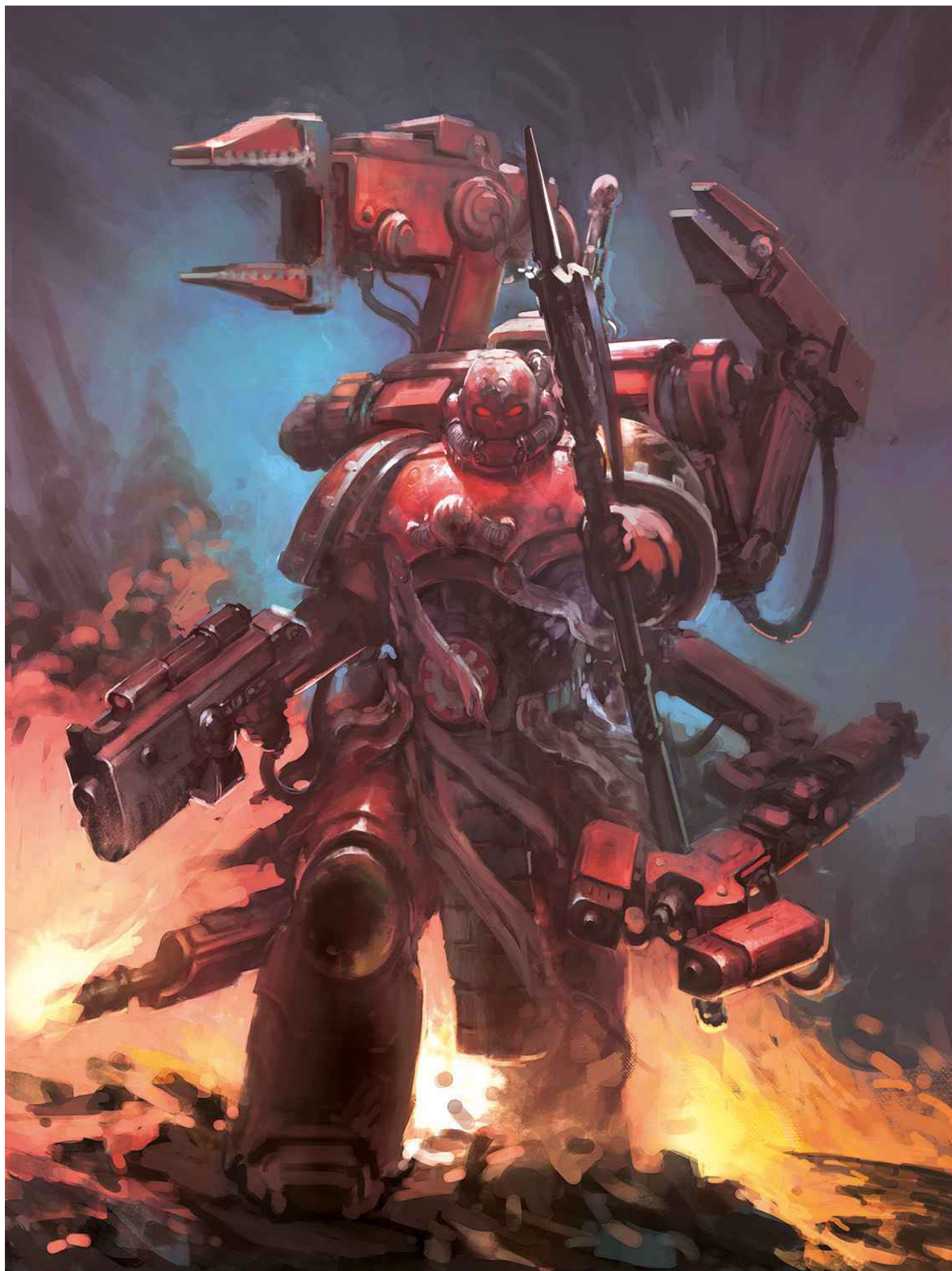
Schooled by the Adeptus Mechanicus in the mysterious rites of the machine, Techmarines are essential for the survival of any Chapter of Space Marines. It is they who tend to the spirits of the weapons and wargear of the Chapter, ministering to the technological secrets that bind man and machine into an instrument of the Emperor's wrath. Deep within their machine temples they forge weapons and armour for their battle-brothers with great reverence and skill.



The beast of metal endures longer than the flesh of men. Those that tend the beast of metal must labour long to learn its ways, for a single beast must suffer the mastership of many men until ready to shed its vorpal coils. Those that seek apprenticeship must attend closely to the runes of mobilisation, the rites of maintenance, and the words of power that describe the parts of a beast. Nor must they neglect the tutelage of the Adeptus Prefects, nor the casting of the proper roboscopes.

- Runic Mechanicus: An Introduction: Infantry Support Manual RT477d





TECHMARINES AND THE ADEPTUS MECHANICUS

The workings of technology and the mysteries surrounding the inner secrets of machines is knowledge that has long since passed from the Imperium of Man. A great catastrophe wiped away much that was once common knowledge and reduced a great deal of Humanity to barbarism. What little remains is debased, mythical or has become such unthinking repetition

that its true purpose has long since been forgotten. These scraps, gathered obsessively over the millennia, are jealously gathered together on Mars by the Adeptus Mechanicus, the devotees of the Machine God, the Omnissiah. Only those privy to such knowledge, however rudimentary it may be, can hope to utilise any form of technology, and such individuals are rare indeed.

Ancient pacts sworn between the Adeptus Mechanicus and the Adeptus Astartes allow the Space Marines to send a proportion of their warriors to Mars to train with the Adeptus Mechanicus and begin the long, arduous journey of becoming a priest of the Machine God. Without the passing on of such revered knowledge, the fate of the Space Marines would be sealed, for only by such means may the weapons and wargear of the Adeptus Astartes be maintained. The role of the Techmarine is to minister to the spirits of the machines in the care of their Chapter, the weapons, the armour and all the equipment in daily use by the Space Marines.

The young Space Marines train for many years on Mars, swearing powerful oaths and spending their every waking hour in deepening their understanding of the Omnissiah. They learn the correct rites of activation, maintenance and how to call forth or placate the wrath of the war-spirits of the machines they will be entrusted with. When they return to their Chapter, they are changed individuals, aloof and mysterious, with an unusual dichotomy of loyalties; they are Tech-Priests of the Machine God and battle-brothers of their Chapter. This division of loyalties causes the majority of Techmarines to stand apart from their Chapter, becoming strange figures of awe and power. The knowledge they possess is held in great esteem by their battle-brothers and they recognise and acknowledge their skills in the arcane sciences pertinent to the dark secrets of technology. Though they possess great skill and knowledge regarding the mystical science of machines, they are warriors first and foremost and are often in the forefront of many of the fiercest battles. Should a vehicle or artefact of technology be lost, it is the Techmarines who will fight hardest to retrieve it, and as hard, if not harder, than their brethren fight to recover a fallen comrade.



*Look to your battlegear and it will protect you
We guard it with our lives
Your armour is your Soul, and your Soul's dedication
The soul of the warrior is the shield of Humanity
Honour the craft of death
Only the Emperor is higher in our devotion
Honour the battlegear of the Dead
We ask only to serve*

- Part of the Warrior Catechism of Worship as taught by the Chapter's Techmarines.



CODEX ROLES OF THE TECHMARINES

Within their Chapter, Techmarines are arcane engineers, maintaining and ministering to the needs of the Chapter's arms, armour and vehicles. Each Chapter has its own weapon shops, foundries and artisans. Some Chapters honour long-standing agreements with forge worlds that supply them with starships and weapons which the Techmarines subsequently modify to meet their own requirements. This practice varies from Chapter to Chapter, but few Space Marine Chapters have the facilities to build their own spacecraft, most being constructed in the shipyards of Jupiter and Mars. A notable exception to this are the Ultramarines, who maintain extensive construction yards in orbit around Calth, one of the planets within their realm of Ultramar. Marine armourers are highly skilled, practical craftsmen and their chief weapon-smith is the Master of the Forge; an honoured title and a position of great respect. All of the Space Marines' armourers work within an ancient tradition of design and decoration unique to their own Chapter, and the work of a fine artificer is incredibly prized.

Before battle, the Techmarines ritually prepare their charges for war, raising the anger of the war-spirits of the weapons and vehicles that are being employed in whatever coming conflict they are to take part in. They have a strong bond with the vehicles and weapons they issue to the Space Marines, treating the equipment as though it belongs to them and the Space Marines are merely borrowing it temporarily. Once deployed for battle, the Techmarines and their servitor thralls ritually bless the weapons and tanks of the force, uncaging the war-spirits and allowing them to see the targets of their wrath. Together with a retinue of cybernetically altered servitors, the Techmarines can also effect battlefield repairs on vehicles, healing the damage done to armour and rekindling the war-spirit that it might fight once more. At battle's end, each wound done to the vehicles and wargear issued by the Techmarines is reverently repaired and recorded in the Litanies of Battle, and it is not uncommon for some vehicles to remain in service for many hundreds, if not thousands, of years. The oldest known serving vehicle is a Rhino belonging to the Salamanders, known and honoured as Nocturne's Hammer, said to have carried the great Primarch, Vulkan. It is a position of great honour to minister to such holy artefacts and those Techmarines who honour such revered pieces of technology are accorded great respect by their peers.



EQUIPMENT AND ARMOUR

Techmarines employ a wide variety of esoteric tools and equipment not normally issued to their brethren. Many Techmarines are equipped with a servo-arm, a specialised auxiliary arm grafted to the Techmarine's armour and linked to his neural network. These arms can be fitted with a multitude of lastorches, vibrosaws and power drills or any number of arcane tools that aid the Techmarine in his battlefield role of vehicle maintenance and repair. Their gauntlets are also often heavily modified to include more delicate tools or even a limited form of mechadendrites. Many Techmarines have the organic components of their hands removed and replaced with augmetic prosthetics that allow them a greater connection to whatever machine they are ministering to, some even going as far as to incorporate mechanical interfaces that allow the Techmarine to commune directly with the machine spirit.

In deference to their training on Mars and the close bond that exists between Techmarines and the Adeptus Mechanicus, Techmarines traditionally repaint their armour red, though one shoulder guard will always remain in their Chapter's colours. Techmarines understand better than anyone the risks inherent in angering the war spirit of battle gear and are careful to ensure that their Chapter symbol remains clear and unobscured. Though the Iron Priests of the Space Wolves, despite their training on Mars, exhibit a fiercely independent streak by retaining their original armour colour throughout.



'The Machine is strong. We must purge the weak, hated flesh and replace it with the blessed purity of metal. Only through permanence can we truly triumph, and only through the Machine can we find victory. Punish the flesh. Iron in mind, iron in body.'

- Paullian Blantar



IRON PRIESTS OF THE SPACE WOLVES

The Iron Priests are masters of the forge and armoury, their expertise with matters technical marking them apart from their brothers of the Chapter. They fulfil the same function for the Space Wolves as Techmarines do for Codex Chapters. Like Techmarines, they spend many years on Mars training with the Adeptus Mechanicus where they learn the innermost secrets of arcane mechanics. Like all those steeped in the mysteries of technology, the Iron Priests stand apart from their brethren, though this is especially true of the Space Wolves who view such knowledge as a dark and frighteningly arcane science. The Iron Priests are the keepers and guardians of the venerable Dreadnoughts who dwell in the deepest cavern of the Fang, the Space Wolves' fortress monastery on Fenris. They ensure that their ancient brethren are woken only in times of great need and honour their undisturbed slumbers. Without their expertise, the Fang would crumble and the Chapter itself die.



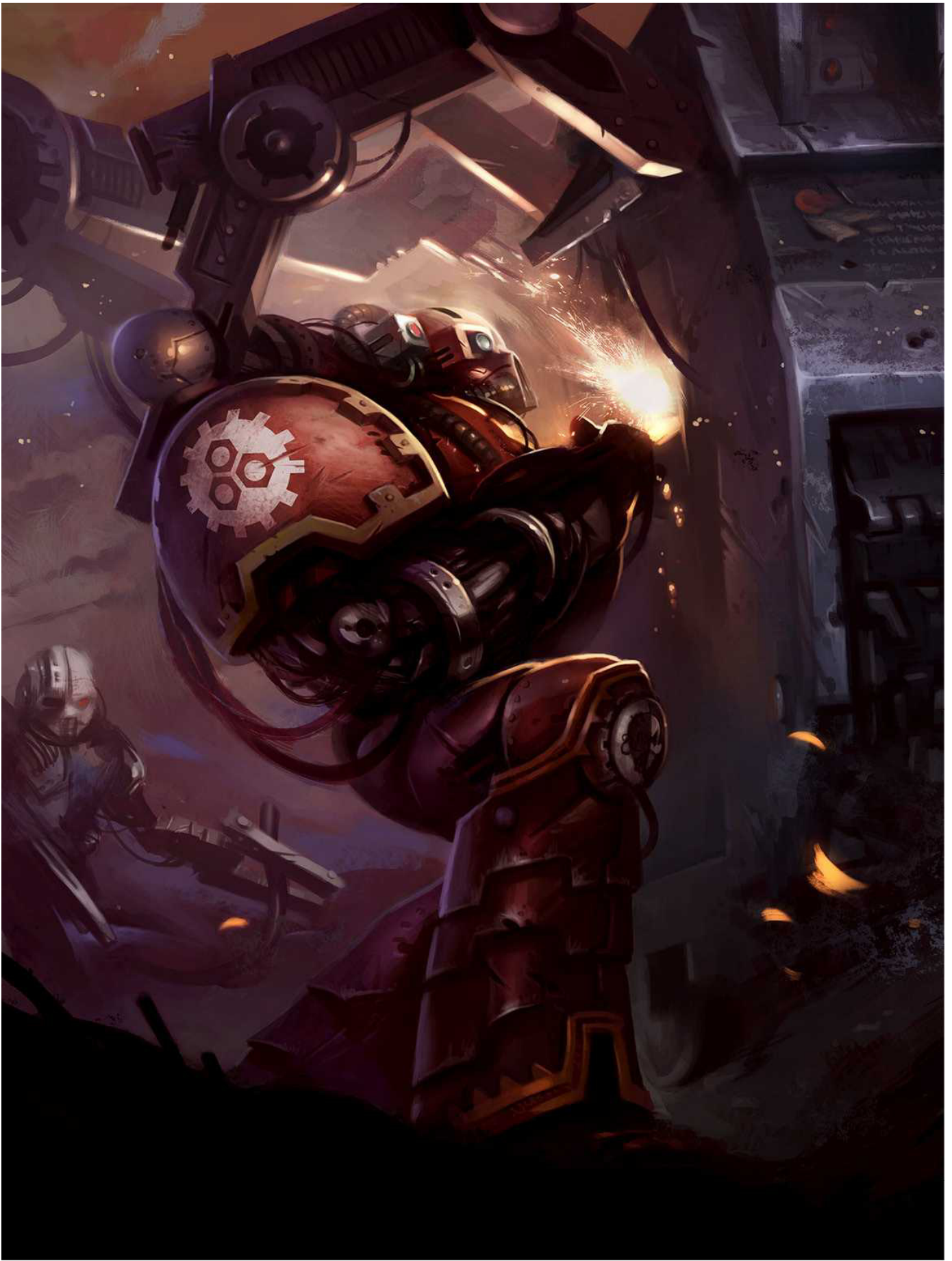
TECHMARINE SEVANO TOMASIN OF THE

ULTRAMARINES

As is typical of the Ultramarines, their Techmarines exactly follow the letter of the Codex Astartes when it comes to their training and methodology. The rigid adherence to the holy tome of their Primarch instils a dogmatic belief in following the words written thousands of years ago without deviation in the Chapter, and even more so in the Ultramarines Techmarines. Sevano Tomasin was no exception to this, and was a faithful servant of the Cult Mechanicus and an expert in the field of demolitions. His service to the Emperor was very nearly cut short on Ichar IV when a rampaging Tyranid Carnifex ripped apart the Land Raider he was driving.

Alien bio-plasma flooded the interior of the vehicle and detonated its ammunition in a huge explosion that wrecked the tank and killed the monstrous alien. Determined not to lose his centuries of wisdom, the Chapter's Apothecaries were able to save his life, Tomasin himself directing the replacement of his legs and right arm with augmetic components he had forged many years ago. His expertise in demolitions came to the fore during the Ultramarines' mission to the planet of Thracia when the Fourth Company was given the task of destroying a number of strategically vital bridges. Though the mission was ultimately a success, it was to be Tomasin's last, as he was killed in action by a direct hit from an artillery shell that cooked off the melta charges he was in the process of arming.







PAULLIAN BLANTAR, Techmarine of the Iron Hands

The Iron Hands have a deep-rooted hatred – and some might whisper, fear – of the weaknesses of the flesh, seeing its frailty and ultimate decay as the greatest danger to Humanity. To them, the flesh is weak and must be replaced wherever possible. The Iron Fathers fuel this hatred with rousing speeches and fiery oratory, proclaiming that the example their Primarch set them is the only true path. The Iron Hands have a reverence for the machine that far outstrips that of most other Chapters, and they have a much closer relationship with the Adeptus Mechanicus than is usual.

Paullian Blantar served in the Clan Company Kaargul , a warrior with a natural affinity for the mysteries of technology. The leaders of his Chapter noticed his kinship with the spirits of machines early on and he was sent to Mars to begin his initiation into the Cult of the Machine. Within decades he rose to become the pre-eminent techmarine of his clan company, a mentor and tutor to a great many aspirants of the Chapter. His expertise in the field of bionic augmentations was unparalleled and his skills in this area profoundly affected the direction of the Chapter. Blantar himself performed the necessary surgery on many recruits and was later to perform the augmentations that saved the life of his clan leader, Brannus, after Dark Eldar Haemonculi horrifically mutilated him following the Battle of Kaladrone.

His own hatred for the weaknesses of flesh was just as great and for the entirety of his life, he ritually scarred what little flesh remained of his body until, towards the last years of his life, there was almost nothing organic remaining of his body, save his brilliant, mechanically-attuned brain. As with most Iron Hands, nothing would please him more than to one day be interred within the sacred sarcophagus of one of the ancient and revered Dreadnoughts.







Strike the first rune upon the engine's casing employing the chosen vessels. Its tip should be anointed with the oil of engineering using the proper incantation when the auspices are correct.

Strike the second rune upon the engine's casing employing the arc-tip of the power driver.

If the second rune is not good, a third rune may be struck in a like manner to the first. This is done according to the true ritual laid down by the Great Engineer.

A libation should be offered.

If this sequence is properly observed the engines may be brought to full activation by depressing the large panel marked 'ON'.

- Runic Spaceflight - An Introduction: Naval Flight Manual W110E



Something had struck Rynn's Honour. The rest of his battle-brothers, a select few from the Crimson Fists' 5th Company, had long since scrambled out of their three Rhinos. Now that dawn had finally broken, his brethren were advancing through the blast-scarred city to secure the immediate area. Since then, two vehicles had been incapacitated. This... complicated the mission, and their ability to progress through the prefecture or fall back.

No one thought about retreating, of course. Except Corbid, as one of the Techmarine's thousands of calculations.

He had felt the impact of the blasts almost personally, as a violation of something sacred. The vile greenskins who did this needed to be destroyed for this insult to the machine spirit, he thought, as well as for older sins. By the Omnissiah they would suffer his vengeance.

As he stood tending to Kantor's Blade, masonry buckled under greenskin fire above his shoulder, the rubble hailing across his artificer armour. His last surviving servitor, a chapter thrall augmented with a powerful claw, fared less well, and was buried by the rubble. Shrugging off the debris, Corbid strode across to the other vacant vehicle to assess the new damage. All the while staccato bursts of gunfire erupted intermittently from the surrounding streets.

After a lull came a perverse, guttural roar from a thousand xenos scum several streets away.

They will not get to the vehicles.

'Brother Corbid,' came the call across his vox. 'We're being overwhelmed in the northern sector and need to withdraw to the second defensive line immediately.'

A quick scan of the Rhino's system revealed that a withdrawal would have to be on foot at the moment. These were reliable vehicles, but the damage to Rynn's Honour had been significant. The mauled tracks would still operate, and the hole rendered in its hull would not prevent it from

moving, but the steering mechanisms and geo-augur were badly affected.

He could fix Kantor's Blade while it was on the move, but Rynn's Honour required more dedication. Lowering his lastorch towards the hull, he began chanting the Litany of Bonding. He plumbed the depths of his knowledge and faith, searching for the correct method, the nuance of the STC stored deep within his mind, and the sacred words that would bring the old Rhino back to life. Sparks fizzed up from the ceramite as he sought the blessings of the Omnissiah, and he set his servo-arm to work.

Though he kept his bolt pistol in his right hand, he buried his left within the Rhino's exposed circuits and wired innards, muttering the ancient words committed to memory on Mars. Within moments, there came a crackled interruption across his vox.

'Is the vehicle repaired, Brother Corbid?'

It seemed as if his brethren would never understand his need to remain focussed on his rituals. Corbid replied in the negative and confirmed the severe damage to the second transport, but there came no reply, just a crackle of vox.

A crunch nearby diverted his attention again. Two greenskins lurched from a side street. He raised his weapon to deal with them, barely missing a beat in his intonations. Four shots later they collapsed, their thick blood spurting onto the road from the wounds in their skulls. Where they had fallen, more came, moving through the gaps like a green river bursting its banks. Some brandished mechanical equipment and whirring saws, others ramshackle guns and crude blades.

He emptied his clip into their leathery hides. Bodies continued to mount up in the street. Still the Orks clambered up over the corpses to get to him. Would nothing stop them? He knew what horrific sacrilege would occur to the vehicles if the Orks got past him: there would be debasement and dishonour.

He hurled a frag grenade into the mass of their next wave, exploding chunks of xenos flesh into the air, but a single creature managed to scramble to within a few feet of him. He pulled his servo-arm from the Rhino and clenched its mechanical grip around the Ork's throat. Its eyes bulged, neck tendons snapped. Its life was crushed out of it. Hauling its still-spasming form to one side, he hastily continued his litanies and his work.

Soon, more Orks were advancing in their hundreds down the central thoroughfare from a much wider street, their raucous gibbering an offense to his senses. Their presence fouled the air, their hides reeking, their crude vehicles grunting through the city. A rocket streaked from a nearby rooftop, crippling a huge building, and mass of ferrocrete collapsed onto the swarm. He looked to where the weapon had been fired from, to the north. Five of his battle-brothers were standing defiantly, their red on blue markings bold in the morning sun. Others filed in behind them on the rooftop, firing their bolters into the survivors.

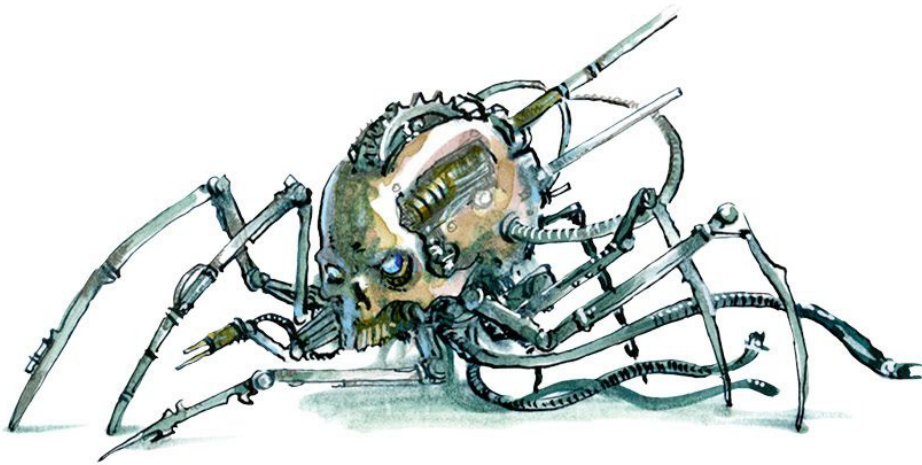
'Are the vehicles fixed yet, Brother Corbid?' the sergeant demanded across the vox.

Overriding the ignition from within the circuitry, Corbid started the first engine. The exhausts roared like a primeval beast.

'Once I have blessed the other,' Corbid replied, 'we may leave.'



MINIATURE SHOWCASE





Ultramarines - Techmarine



Ultramarines - Master of the Forge with servo-harness



Iron Hands - Techmarine with servo-harness



Dark Angels - Techmarine with servo-harness

Warhammer 40,000: Space Marines Codex

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