

WARHAMMER
AGE OF SIGMAR
ROLEPLAY

SOULBOUND ERA OF THE BEAST



ENTER THE REALM-SHATTERING ERA OF THE BEAST,
WITH NEW ARCHETYPES, ENEMIES, AND MORE.

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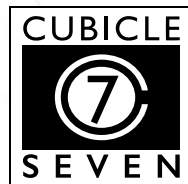
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BROKEN REALMS

The Mortal Realms are in a constant state of flux. As cities are built, razed, or conquered, as armies spill blood on the battlefields and gods wield their power, even as the realms themselves buckle under the assault of Chaos — all is at peril and prone to change. This has never been more true than with the advent of the Era of the Beast, a period in the history of the Mortal Realms where new gods have risen and old powers have been shaken to their roots.

Era of the Beast allows players and Gamemasters alike to participate in this new epoch, advancing the timeline of their campaigns from the Soul Wars after the Necroquake. This advancement in timeline is optional, but even existing campaigns will find a wealth of resources such as new Archetypes, enemies, and more. This book is perfect for starting a new party on their

adventures, advancing a campaign through the events of the Broken Realms, or simply adding new elements to your games of *Warhammer Age of Sigmar Roleplay: Soulbound*.

USING THIS BOOK

Era of the Beast is a setting sourcebook for the updated Age of Sigmar timeline following events in the lore of *Warhammer Age of Sigmar*. It contains information on those events and many elements relevant to them, including the region of Thondia and the devious Orruk Kruleboyz.

Additionally, new player options are included that highlight these changes, including Thunderstrike armour-clad Stormcast, Morathi's elite Scaithborn agents, and even the mighty Draconith newly returned to the Mortal Realms.

CULMINATION OF THE SOUL WARS

The times leading up to the Era of the Beast – the end of the Soul Wars – was a period of great upheaval and turmoil. The balance of power among the Gods has shifted: Nagash's empire of Death was weakened, while the forces of Destruction once championed by Gorkamorka gained strength under new warlords. In the face of changing threats, the forces of Order have rallied and begun a counterattack to reclaim territory across the realms with new Dawnbringer Crusades. All the while, the powers of Chaos remains a threat to everyone and everything in the Mortal Realms.

Morathi, the High Oracle of Khaine, consumed fragments of power from the ancient Aelven pantheon of the World-That-Was held in Slaanesh's belly in the culmination of an age-spanning plot. Now a goddess with power to match her ambitions, she has declared herself Morathi-Khaine, the reborn avatar of the God of Murder, and moved to secure a powerbase beyond Ulgu. Though she gained what she had long sought, the consequences of Morathi-Khaine's risks are yet to be fully tallied, and the temple of Khaine is beset by strife in the wake of her actions. Some in the Free Cities have called for the exile of all Khainites after her conquests, while elements of the Daughters of Khaine began to question in secret whether this new goddess is truly what she claims to be.

While Morathi rose high in the Broken Realms, Nagash suffered a series of losses. He entered into conflict with the mage god Teclis, pitting his assembled legions against the blazing light of the Lumineth. Though the cost to the Aelven nations was great, Nagash's assault was rebuffed, causing him to retreat. Even the Necroquake's tide of deathly energies across the realms was undone. Endless Spells and Nighthaunt remain a threat, but the floodgates that empowered them were closed. Though, as always, deathless Nagash endured, now planning his next move in Shyish.

All these events were watched from the shadows by malevolent forces, even as they moved to alter the outcomes in their favour. The Daemon Be'lakor saw the end of the Soul Wars as the time to make his move, making a play to destroy the realmgate network. In the process, much of Chamon was scarred and the Free City of Vindicarum was nearly destroyed, but his efforts were stymied at the last by the noble sacrifice of the Stormcast and the intervention of an ancient power.

However, the Stormcast that died to protect Vindicarum were unable to return to Azyr after the machinations of the First Prince poisoned the skies above Chamon. This twisting of the heavens spread to other realms, and the eternal nature of Stormcast souls was no longer a certainty.

Amidst the death and misery of conflict, the goddess Alarielle sought to wake the realms anew with a Rite of Life, healing the ills of the Necroquake and soothing the maladies of Chaotic influence. Her vast spell had unintended consequences when it broke the mountain-prison of the ancient god Kragos, freeing him to roam the realms. He fought his way across Ghur before seizing control of a vast Waaagh! assembled by the Orruk warlord Gordrakk, assaulting the city of Excelsis. The Free City only survived Kragos' rage thanks to the intervention of two unlikely allies – the Seraphon relic-priest Lord Kroak, and Morathi-Khaine herself.

At the end of all these events, a tenuous new status quo emerged over the realms. The absent god Grungni once more emerged from the mists of history and began to defend Vindicarum and Excelsis. By his efforts, many Stormcast were outfitted with thunderstrike armour that could pierce the miasma of the Cursed Skies. Given hope once more, the free cities rallied the Dawnbringer Crusades to reclaim lands lost to their enemies since the Age of Myth. Though hope has returned, threats both new and old look to cast down the forces of Order once more.

THE BLOOD OF KHAINE

The ancient queen Morathi has been acting as the god of murder's prophet to further her own agendas, chief among them the ambition to achieve divinity herself. Since the dawn of the Age of Myth, she has eyed the other members of the Pantheon of Order with jealousy – especially her son, Malerion. Her control of the Daughters of Khaine and the spread of Khainite worship have all been in service to gaining power, influence, and information that might one day lead her to this goal. When her elite Shadowstalker agents brought word of Archaon the Everchosen mining vast stores of corrupted Varanite realmstone, she saw an opportunity. The raw, twisting power of Varanite was without equal, capable of bringing low champions, melting citadels, and corrupting the incorruptible. With the right arcane preparations, it would serve as the catalyst for a ritual millenia in the making. All she had to do was claim it from under the watchful gaze of the Three-Eyed King.

Such a brazen move was ill-suited for Morathi's network of spies, and the armies of Khainites she commanded could not strike into the Eightpoints alone. They would need access to one of the eight realmgates leading there, and reliable allies who could bear the brunt of the ire from the forces of the malefic subrealm.

Fortunately, Morathi knew that Sigmar could not afford to stand idly by while Archaon gathered a vast supply of such a potent substance, one capable of breaching the wards of the Eightpoints gate to Azyr. She went to the God-King with a warning of Archaon's plan to gather and use the Varanite, proposing an alliance to halt the operation. Sigmar did not trust her motives, but as predicted he could not ignore the threat, forced to rely on the High Oracle's hatred of Chaos as a safeguard against treachery. Morathi also sought to manipulate the Life Goddess Alarielle, drawing on old sympathies for the Aelven people to persuade the Everqueen to open the Genesis Gate in Ghyran and help usher

the joint force of Khainites and Stormcast warriors through. Alarielle committed none of her own children to the risky plan, but assented to Morathi's request and used the waters that once sealed the gate to wash away the Chaos-sworn defenders on the other side. Taking advantage of this sudden change, the joint host pressed into the Eightpoints and made for the mines where colossal bore-wyrms were harnessed to gather the profane realmstone.

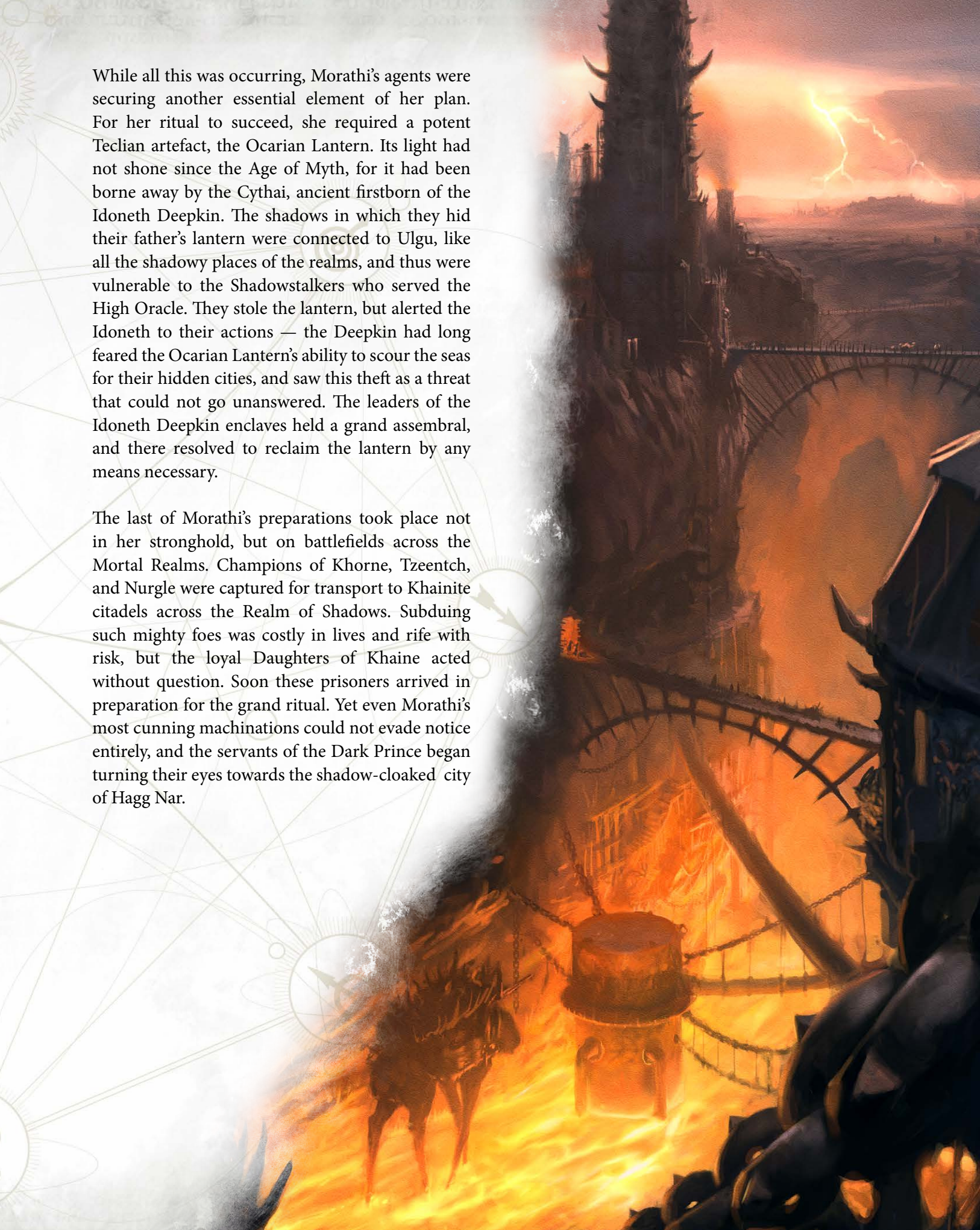
During the assault, Morathi used her Ulguan magics to create the appearance of destroying the Varanite supply as the Khainites slew the bore-wyrms and wrought havoc in the mines. In truth, the Varanite was poured into the vast cauldrons her host had brought for this purpose, each of which was magically linked to Morathi's Mother Cauldron, the Máthcoir in Hagg Nar. As the battle raged on, Morathi's cauldron began to fill, and preparations for her rite of ascension reached a frenzy.

Once the Khainite cauldrons had drunk dry the last of the Varanite, the Stormcast's purpose as a distraction had been fulfilled. The lone Stormcast who saw through the illusions Morathi wove was slain with a cursed knife that imprisoned her soul to prevent her warning Sigmar in Azyr. The Stormcast left guarding the mines were abandoned, left to fend for themselves as the Everchosen's forces approached to annihilate the intruders.

The hosts of Chaos hauled twisted altars of Varanite which warped the skies above the battlefield, blocking the return of Stormcast souls to the Realm of Heavens. The trap tightened around the Stormcast, but they did not surrender to despair. Instead, a vanguard of their forces made to punch through the fell host in the hopes of returning at least some of their number to Azyr. As the first altar fell, momentarily restoring the clear skies above the Eightpoints, the Lord-Veritant ven Brecht sacrificed his life to serve as a messenger, his soul surging heavensward on a bolt of lightning.

While all this was occurring, Morathi's agents were securing another essential element of her plan. For her ritual to succeed, she required a potent Teclian artefact, the Ocarian Lantern. Its light had not shone since the Age of Myth, for it had been borne away by the Cythai, ancient firstborn of the Idoneth Deepkin. The shadows in which they hid their father's lantern were connected to Ulgu, like all the shadowy places of the realms, and thus were vulnerable to the Shadowstalkers who served the High Oracle. They stole the lantern, but alerted the Idoneth to their actions — the Deepkin had long feared the Ocarian Lantern's ability to scour the seas for their hidden cities, and saw this theft as a threat that could not go unanswered. The leaders of the Idoneth Deepkin enclaves held a grand assemblage, and there resolved to reclaim the lantern by any means necessary.

The last of Morathi's preparations took place not in her stronghold, but on battlefields across the Mortal Realms. Champions of Khorne, Tzeentch, and Nurgle were captured for transport to Khainite citadels across the Realm of Shadows. Subduing such mighty foes was costly in lives and rife with risk, but the loyal Daughters of Khaine acted without question. Soon these prisoners arrived in preparation for the grand ritual. Yet even Morathi's most cunning machinations could not evade notice entirely, and the servants of the Dark Prince began turning their eyes towards the shadow-cloaked city of Hagg Nar.



RISE OF A GODDESS

As Morathi began the rite that could see her hopes realised, she did not neglect the defences of her stronghold. Knowing her enemies may retaliate for her betrayals, or be drawn by the power which she worked, she employed mercenaries from the devious Free City of Mithåvn, promising wealth from her vast coffers for their protection on the seas. The Khainites have had common cause with the forces of Mithåvn before, whether they be greedy Freeguilds or ruthless Black Ark Corsairs. Indeed, such were the rewards promised from Hagg Nar's treasury that one of the most famous dreaded seaborne fortresses came to her defence, the Black Ark *Agoniser*. Morathi spared no effort in securing her ritual site, recognising that for the duration of her ritual, she would be more vulnerable than she had been since the Age of Chaos.

Her preparations were fortuitous, for the Idoneth Deepkin assailed her cloaked citadel as they pursued the Ocarian Lantern, and a vast host assembled from every enclave came from the sea to assault it. Led by High King Volturnos, last of the Cythai, the host pressed across the Hagganal Bay to the shores beneath Hagg Nar itself. None present could oppose Volturnos' blade, for even the mightiest of Morathi's servants were not his equal. Her forces were cunning and dedicated, and the High King gained ground slowly. Alas, too slowly, as a fleet serving the Dark God Slaanesh arrived, drawn by Morathi's scheme. This new force punched through the defences commanded from the *Agoniser* and made for the beaches where the Idoneth Deepkin and Khainites were embattled.

This fresh assault drove the privateers of Mithåvn to reassess the situation and, deeming their contract sufficiently fulfilled, they made for the open seas and left their erstwhile allies in the melee on the shore. Even in their absence, Volturnos found his forces hard-pressed, pinned between the Slaaneshi attackers and Khainite defenders — saved perhaps only by the animosity his two foes bore each other. He committed himself to a bold strategy to secure the stolen prize his people sought, knowing that a

cautious advance would yield neither victory nor survival. The defenders of Nautilar and Mor'phann were committed to the rearguard, while the most adept Akhelian riders of Ionrach and Fuethán pressed forwards towards Morathi herself.

As this desperate battle raged, Morathi and her servants were at work. Strange reagents were consumed in potent spells to temper the stolen Varanite and render it safe for what was to come. Any Daughters not engaged in battle were led in prayers exulting Khaine and his High Oracle, drawing on their fervour to lend a mystical weight to the ongoing ritual.

Not just in Hagg Nar, but at ritual sites across Ulgu, Hag Queens made sacrifices of the imprisoned champions of Chaos. Their corrupt ichor flowed into Blood Cauldrons linked to the Máthcoir, and from there, across the folds of reality linking the Realm of Shadows to Uhl-Hysh, where Slaanesh lay imprisoned. Through this arcane link that the sacrifices established, the Mother Cauldron became a conduit linking the halls of Hagg Nar to the very belly of Slaanesh.

As the ritual reached a crescendo, Morathi made her most daring move. Taking the Iron Heart of Khaine and the stolen Ocarian Lantern, she descended into the Máthcoir and through it, into the gullet from which she had once escaped at the dawn of the Mortal Realms. With the light of Teclis' creation to guide her and the power of the Iron Heart to sustain her, she was in part protected from the imprisoned god's malice, but it was her hardened spirit, forged in torments unknown by any other living being, that truly enabled her to endure her journey.

Within the monstrous depths of the trapped Chaos God, Morathi sought out the flickering sparks of ancient Aelven kings from the World-that-Was, in whose spirits lingered a trace of divinity. Wielding the lantern of their most brilliant scions, she found each of these king-spirits and consumed them, one by one. As her power swelled with each new flame devoured, her plan suddenly teetered on a precipice.

The last and most potent of the spirits was the one being Morathi had ever truly loved, and ancient memories of their devotion cost her a moment of hesitation. In that moment, the wrath and despair of this king manifested as a blade of blazing ruin which struck and sundered Morathi's form. Such was the force of the blow that even Slaanesh felt it, and as the Dark God convulsed in agony, Morathi fled the depths of the prison. At her back was a dual entity of which she had no knowledge, but who she had created through her reckless actions.

Just before she emerged into the Realm of Shadow, High King Volturnos arrived in the heart of Hagg Nar with his vanguard. With the blazing sword he bore, he carved a path through the Khainites overseeing the ritual and struck at the Máthcoir itself. His blow sundered the shadowy steel of the ancient artefact and sent a torrent of Varanite gushing forth like blood from a terrible wound. Yet this was not the only thing to emerge from the sundered Mother Cauldron. Hagg Nar was rocked by a massive explosion as a coruscating pillar of sorcerous light surged forth from the wreckage. At the sight of its scintillating colours, the Slaaneshi forces storming the shores immediately withdrew to make sail, gripped by the need to pursue the strange light. Within the embattled halls a shadowy mist concealed a vast serpentine form, slithering forth from the wreckage of the ritual.

Morathi escaped Uhl-Gysh not as the mortal Aelf she once was, but as the divine spirit and form of a true goddess, albeit split into two forms by the blade of her one-time love. Her apparent visage is but one aspect of her now, the other the monstrous, writhing, coiled form of her true self. Though twain in form, she is undiminished in prowess, and flush with newly gained power, she could easily dispatch the Idoneth intruders.

Halting the assault and securing her domain, Morathi declared that her ritual had fused her with the molten remnants of the Bloody-Handed God, granting her his divine nature and authority. Yet in her surprising first act as Morathi-Khaine, she ordered not only clemency for the attack against her realm, but made a peace offering to Volturnos himself. The Ocarian Lantern was dimmed by her works, though not destroyed, and she offered it to the Idoneth once more. As she spoke honeyed words of kinship between the outcast Idoneth and the mistrusted Khainites, she tendered those souls she had taken from Slaanesh's clutches and consumed the spirits of the other Cythai, whose early trauma and close connection to Slaanesh had doomed them to return centuries ago. Promising an alliance that could yield fruits even beyond these gifts, she cooled the High King's wrath and convinced him that his people's best chances lay in diplomacy.



ANVILGARD IN DARKNESS

Although Morathi's efforts were centred in Ulgu, her actions had impacts far beyond the Realm of Shadows. Through her guise as the shadowy figure known only as the Sovereign, she commanded Anvilgard's underworld to begin bloody work to pave the way for gaining further power. Her demands were championed by the Blackscale Coil, a deadly criminal syndicate that had long remained a rumour in the mist-shrouded Free City. Though uncomfortable with such bold action, none in the Coil dared to oppose their leader's will. Throughout the city, figures who stood to impede Morathi's control were found dead or vanished entirely.

With such ominous work under way, even the Blackscale Coil could not fully elude the attentions of Sigmar's agents, and Lord-Veritant ven Brecht, newly reforged after his battle in the Eightpoints, was assigned to root out Anvilgard's corruption. Though he yearned to rejoin his former comrades, duty bound him to investigate this new concern of the God-King. His arrival in Anvilgard saw innumerable criminals and suspected agents of corruption seized and questioned. Some of these were minor offenders, quickly sentenced and sent on.

Others confessed under the light of the Lantern of Abjuration to all manner of crimes ranging from banal to hideous. Most concerning of all were those, including many highly placed figures within Anvilgard's halls, who showed signs of mental manipulation and domination. Attempts to cleanse their minds saw magical safeguards against revelation turn their blood to acid as they spoke. Yet in their last moments, a few endured long enough to speak of the Blackscale Coil.

Even as the Lord-Veritant struggled to unmask the Coil, he was interrupted by the arrival of none other than Morathi herself. Though she claimed she had come to aid Anvilgard in its troubles, ven Brecht met her with mistrust, for he well recalled her abandonment of his host in the Eightpoints, but he could not easily refuse her help without causing a diplomatic incident. While Morathi and her retinue settled within the city, the Stormcast investigator sought to return to his work, only to be once again confounded by events in the city. This time, a strange mist rose from the harbour that made even the perpetual dark clouds over the city seem clear and inviting.



Fearing that the mists were prelude to invasion, the Lord-Veritant worked with the Stormcast leaders within the Black Nexus, the realmgate-housing fortress of Anvilgard, to prepare for a possible attack. Yet when the blow struck, none anticipated its source. The first Anvilgardian blood spilled in the mists was not shed by foreign invaders or even Khainite betrayal, but by Anvilgard's own Aelven auxiliaries. Scourge privateers joined knights of the Order Serpentis and the mind-slaved hosts of the Darkling Covens to turn on the Freeguild and Ironweld troops they had once fought besides. As panic spread across the city in the face of this insurrection, the Stormcast withdrew to their headquarters at Dauntless Hall and the Black Nexus, until they could more clearly determine the threats and separate perpetrators from victims.

ANVILGARD ADVENTURES & SHADOWS IN THE MIST

The events of the Broken Realms are the prelude to the Era of the Beast, with Morathi's machinations setting in motion many important changes across the Mortal Realms. For players of *Soulbound*, the Broken Realms themselves have a precursor within the supplement *Shadows in the Mist*. The adventures within delve into the secret actions of the Blackscale Coil, a key element of Morathi's plans for Anvilgard. As such, those included adventures are assumed to occur before the Era of the Beast and the events detailed below.

If GMs wish to take their group through the stories there and into the Era of the Beast, they could use these details as guidelines for what occurs afterwards, perhaps having their players join the Anvilgard Resistance or even become part of Morathi's new order in Har Kuron. Further details on how to make the Broken Realms saga a part of your campaigns can be found in the final chapter of *Shadows in the Mist*.

They attempted to sally forth in a counter-attack to rally the city's defenders, but it was too late. Morathi's retinue had joined with the Aelven traitors, alongside a greater Khainite host. Morathi's forces used paralysing toxins to take the Stormcast alive, denying them even the hope of warning Azyr. Stormcast and Duardin engineers delved beneath the city, hoping to reach the cogfort *Old Firesnout*, in a desperate attempt to turn the tide. As it came to life and began turning its cannons on the invaders, it seemed for a moment that Anvilgard might be saved. It was all for naught: the serpentine form of the Shadow Queen flew from the misty skies, sundering the cogfort to pieces. Lord-Veritant ven Brecht endured throughout the battle, only to be taken at the last by the same poisons that had captured his fellows. Yet for ven Brecht alone, an unexpectedly appeared after he awoke in a Khainite prison within the conquered city. This shadowy figure slew his captors and set the Lord-Veritant free to return to Azyr with a warning. Had the remnants of the poison not still muddled his senses, he might have recognised his rescuer for what it was, yet he saw only a strange fortune at the time.

In the aftermath of these events, Morathi renamed the city Har Kuron, City of Beasts, and set about creating a new haven for her Aelven followers, and a hell for any who would not bow to them. The Humans and Duardin who managed to escape to the Charrwind Coast, along with some number of loyalist Aelves, began a ragtag resistance, seeking to spread word of their tragedy and to fight the new regime. As their battlecry of "Anvilgard endures!" sounded, and ven Brecht's warning of treachery reached the high halls of Azyr, the Dark Powers looked on and laughed. Morathi's actions had not only spread terrible strife within the forces of Order but also loosed a new horror upon the realms.

The Dark Prince smiled behind his claw, for the Morathi's ascension had paved the way for a newborn fragment of his power to emerge and take on blasphemous new form.

WAR OF EMPIRES

Among the Twelve Paradises of Hysh, outsiders to the society of the Lumineth only reside in Xintil, the central region of the realm. This permission is not extended to all however — while the Human adherents of Sigmar established their city of Settler's Gain in Xintil, the undead followers of Nagash have never been welcome. Despite this, during what passes for night in the golden lit realm of Hysh, a Nighthaunt host swarmed towards Settler's Gain, the legions of Nagash invading where they were once forbidden.

The spirits came in a vast multitude, thousands strong, and with them came a dolorous mist that could dim even the radiance of Hysh. Through enlightened arcane wards they tore, slaughtering Human guests and Aelven hosts alike in the city of Settler's Gain. Scholars of the Lumineth Scinari

worked with Human wizards of the Collegiate Arcane and priests devoted to Sigmar and the Hyshian twin-gods alike to repel the malefic invaders. Though potent practitioners, they were unprepared to deal with a ghostly host so vast. The assault seemed unstoppable, and as bodies piled in the streets and spirits rose from the unhallowed dead to join the assault, all hope seemed lost.

The defenders of the city toiled on even as their numbers dwindled, struggling against despair in futility... until at last their defiance was rewarded with a radiance that eclipsed even the dawn. Teclis, the Mage God resplendent with divine magic, worked the utter ruin of the invaders. The destruction of the Nighthaunt was thorough, and even more sudden than their arrival. In the wake of this miraculous intervention, hope blossomed, holding back the dark that attempted to snuff it out.



Teclis made use of this defiant spirit to muster a great host of his people. The Lumineth he gathered invaded Shyish via hidden realmgates with a singular purpose in mind. They were not there to shatter armies or slay Nagash, for in the Realm of Death, such efforts would be meaningless — instead, they sought to create a symbol of hope that would undo the power of Elder Bones in a way no crude slaughter could manage.

Advancing atop floating metaliths offered up by Shyishian mountains to the would-be liberators at Teclis' entreaty, the Lumineth made swift progress into the Innerlands of Nagash's empire. The strategic genius Katakros, Nagash's preeminent military commander, was occupied in the Eightpoints, and the power of Teclis' magic scoured away what resistance could be mustered without his insights. The target of the Hyshian advance was the Triptych — a trio of vast statues of sculpted bone and realmstone serving to bolster Nagash's necrotopia. Toppling the massive edifice at the heart of the Ossiarch Empire raised in service to this ghastly ideal would be a symbol of victory against the supposedly inevitable, something that could galvanise those struggling within Shyish to further defiance.

However, even accounting for the vast garrisons at the base of each of the three statues, this was no simple task. The Triptych was not merely a work of unwholesome art, but bone constructs like the Ossiarchs themselves, and fully capable of self-defence — something the Lumineth learned at a dear cost. Each construct bore a nullstone blade capable of severing enchantments of flight and protection, and the metaliths bearing the Aelven army came literally crashing to a halt.

Teclis was able to guard his followers against the worst consequences of this fall, but without their aerial advantage, his disciples were locked into a war of attrition against the forces of Death. Such a battle had historically favoured Nagash, as the Death God's forces could cannibalise the material of both sides' losses to replenish their ranks.

In the ensuing battle upon the soil of the Prime Innerlands of Shyish, fell and wondrous magicks scorched the ground and skies. Teclis duelled an entire contingent of Ossiarch mages to protect his troops, while the aelementors accompanying the Lumineth pitted their enduring might against the relentless advance of Ossiarch constructs. These forces of elemental reckoning were ultimately potent enough to tip the tide, and the Triptych was felled by war engines, magic, and mighty stone hammers. Lumineth messengers took the captured soul gems and wrought bone of Ossiarch constructs to serve as proof of victory to mortal nations struggling to survive in the Realm of Death, inflaming their hopes of resistance. As perhaps the greatest insult of all to Nagash, Teclis seared a geomantic rune into the ground where the battle occurred, stabilising it against the pull of the Shyish Nadir.

This victory came at great cost — the bodies and soul of the fallen Lumineth were taken to serve in Nagash's deathly forces, stifling the resistance they had hoped to encourage. As for the counterattack against Hysh and the Lumineth themselves, it was already in motion as Nagash and his Mortarchs schemed anew.



WAR OF THE MORTARCHS

Ever since Nagash's Necroquake failed in his ultimate goal to end all life in the Mortal Realms, the Great Necromancer has been adapting his plans to make use of the actual results. The rise of his Nighthaunt processions and the rampages wrought by Endless Spells were perhaps the most obvious effects, especially beyond Shyish. However, the inversion of an entire realm's Perimeter Inimical into the Shyish Nadir is by far the most frightening to those who truly understand the implications, yet Nagash was not satisfied with a single Nadir.

Though already gluttoned on the power of Shyish, he sought to devour further realms by funnelling away their energies through the realmgate network. To that end, he dispatched agents to oversee rituals that could collapse major realmgates into magical vortices and create new minor Nadirs within other realms. His chosen servants were among his most potent agents – the Mortarchs Mannfred, Neferata, and Arkhan. Mannfred was dispatched to the despised Realm of Life, Ghyran, while Neferata sought to bring a new transmutation to the ever-volatile Chamon. Arkhan, the only being Nagash came close to truly trusting, was given the prime target — Hysh, home of the impudent Lumineth and their presumptuous “Mage God.”

Mannfred, ever scheming and duplicitous, failed deliberately. Under the guise of launching a pre-emptive strike against the forces of Nurgle near his ritual site in Ghyran, he baited them into assaulting his armies. He knew Alarielle of old, and their history was not a friendly one. When the Everqueen sensed the presence of such a hated foe within her realm, he knew she would come to settle old scores. He was entirely correct, and he abandoned the battle against the Goddess of Life and the forces of plague alike upon her arrival — leaving his twin foes to fight each other to the final death.

Though not much more loyal than Mannfred, Neferata was far less brazen about moving against Nagash's will, and set about her own work with her characteristic grace and secrecy. Her network of agents spread across the realms, working to conceal their mistress' presence. They discharged their task almost too well, and so great was the veil of protective secrecy they wove that it redirected the sky traffic of the Kharadron for leagues around her ritual site. Such an effort was carefully done, and could not have been noticed by any one vessel's captain. However, Admiral Imoda Barrasdottr made a point of keeping complete charts of aether-currents and trade routes across the Realm of Metal, and found the curious blank spot worth investigating. Her search cost her several vessels and nearly her life when she was discovered by Neferata's forces, saved only by her retreat — and by the intervention of twin Lumineth prodigies who had been active in the skyport to which she fled.



The twins, Ellania and Ellathor, had been investigating Neferata's network, and found in Admiral Barrasdottr's story a reason to accelerate their work. Calling upon allies from Hysh, they joined the Alarith disciples of the Mountain Temples to ascend the Chamonite peaks and stop Neferata's workings at their heart. Their forces were heavily outnumbered by the dead Neferata had brought from Shyish, and despite their alacrity, the ritual was nearly complete by the time of their arrival. In a desperate bid to stop its completion, the Stonemage Xelathuria called to the spirits of Chamon's mountains and granted them a form with which to smash the ritual site and halt the defilement of the realmgate.

In Hysh, Arkhan first attempted a campaign against the quarantined Blackpit realmgate in Ymetrica, hoping to hide in the darkness that coiled within the sunken realm of Cathartia. However, the Lumineth's vigilance extended even to those depths, and they rallied to defend their homes. Rather than grind his forces to dust against such fierce resistance, the Mortarch of Sacrament withdrew, and the Lumineth dared hope that they had stopped him, but this was far from the case. The ever meticulous Arkhan had a backup plan ready, and made for the Gates of Paradox that linked the realms of Light and Death. On the Hyshian side, the gates emerged in the inhospitable region of Haixiah, where mortals could be rendered into crystal or song by a stray thought. The Null Myriad he commanded were used to fighting within a Perimeter Inimical however, and were far more resilient to wild magic than any mortals could be.

To halt Arkhan's return, the immortal hero known as the Light of Eltharion rallied a small but dedicated force to engage them. He had but few volunteers, for none expected to return from such a journey. Yet such was the threat of the Mortarch, and the love the Lumineth bore for their champion, that he was able to reach Arkhan's army with enough surviving warriors to force the Mortarch to engage him personally. The two had duelled before, in another time and another world, but the sorcery of Eltharion's new radiant body was proof against the spells that had slain him long ago. At the very edge of Hysh, the two battled until the Light of Eltharion's deft swordwork toppled the Mortarch and the dread abyssal he rode. Arkhan and his undead mount were thrown off the edge of the realm and hurtled into the unravelling infinities beyond.



CLASH OF GODS

With the defeat of his Mortarchs, Nagash was further incensed by the Lumineth meddling in his schemes, as his plans in Hysh and Chamon were foiled, in addition to the insult they had delivered at the Triptych. With a terrible fury, he took to the field personally, determined to see his plans through and take revenge upon the Aelves in one fell stroke. Raising a host from the dead of Shyish, he made for the sacred mountain of Avalenor in the Realm of Light, his new army at his heels.

The defenders of Ymetrica were already at their limits from the battles against Arkhan, and their seers noticed the dark power that had descended upon their lands almost too late. It was a desperate hour — spent in battle, and without the succour of their gods, for none knew the whereabouts of Tyrion and Teclis. Despite this, the exhausted warriors of the mountain donned their raiment once more, and made for Avalenor. As they set themselves against Nagash's rearguard, they turned to desperate measures informed by the battles in Shyish, performing hasty battlefield cremations without any funerary rites, all in order to deny the undead reinforcements. It was a grave dishonour to the spirits of the fallen, but better than the torment they would suffer enslaved to Nagash's will.

For several gruelling days the Ymetricans battled their way towards Avalenor against fortresses of bone garrisoned by Ossiarch warriors. The Lumineth's cremations were serving their intended purpose, and the bone constructs of the Ossiarchs could not be replaced as they normally would be. Desperate to prevent the Lumineth from reaching Nagash's grand ritual, the Ossiarchs turned on their ostensible allies, mordant Ghouls of the Flesh-Eater Courts. The proud yet deluded Ghouls of Ymetrica's peaks would not pay further tribute to their demanding Ossiarch guests, and the two forces clashed as the Bonereapers attempted to harvest those who had once fought alongside them. This desperate move cost the defenders of the ritual site dearly, allowing the Lumineth to push past them at last.

Reaching the ritual site, the Lumineth were exposed to horrors no mortal should endure. Even the sacred Ymetrican Longhorns, symbols of the Alarith temples, who were thought as impervious to sickness as the mountains themselves, rotted as they walked, and charnel pits of sacrifices littered the sacred peak. Despair and fatigue claimed most of the Lumineth forces, with only a handful of vengeful aelementiri warriors maintaining the focus necessary to press on. To assault the forces defending Nagash's side with so few would have been suicide, even discounting the god himself.

Yet as they made for their inevitable deaths, salvation arrived. The winds of the mountains brought with them new allies — Hurakan aelementor spirits, and with them, Teclis himself descending in radiance.

As the Alarith and Hurakan forces assaulted the defenders of the ritual site, Teclis and Nagash duelled atop the sacred mountain in a display of the mightiest magic in the realms. Endless Spells were conjured and unleashed, yet snuffed out so quickly as to make their name a lie. Teclis incinerated the Nine Books of Nagash, those artefacts that the Great Necromancer had penned so long ago. Yet the God of Death was not so easily defeated, and his dark spells nearly slew the Mage God and the Lunasphinx Celennar both. In his moment of near-triumph, Nagash was undone not by his rival in divine magicks or by the vengeful spirits of Hysh, but by Human auxiliaries from Settler's Gain, who had travelled through a shining portal to aid Teclis with prototype Luminarks, great magical engines of war. These new arrivals from Xintil brought the light of their weapons to bear on dread Nagash, empowered by Teclis' own magic.

This new power tilted the scales of the duel. In an awe-inspiring display of power, Teclis struck down Nagash's physical form, binding the remnants to the mountain so his power could be exorcised with a mighty rune placed in the heavens, ending the Necroquake and seemingly Nagash himself. However, a black mist escaped the site of the battle, bearing on it the accursed soul of the death god. The Great Necromancer's spirit fled to Shyish once more, returning to Nagashizzar to reform and strengthen again in the wake of defeat.

Though Nagash was not slain, Teclis' victory over the invader god protected the sacred aelementor Avalenor and saved his Lumineth devotees. His exorcism of the deathly power of Nagash likewise was a great victory, but the Mage God had been sorely taxed by his duel, wounded in body and spirit by the dark power he had combated. It would remain to be seen if his war against the forces of Death would ultimately prove an act of wisdom or of hubris.



THE TOWER FALLS

In these new times, the concern of the ancient Slann of the Seraphon was the stability of the realmgate network underpinning the cosmos. Already gravely corrupted during the Age of Chaos, further damage could threaten the very existence of the Mortal Realms. As the toad-like eyes of the enigmatic Slann gazed down from the Aetheric Void, they saw Archaon's experiments with Varanite threatening to expose the Realm of Heavens to Chaos.

The looming threat of instability compelled them to drastic action, as they planned an elaborate strategy to remove one of its chief architects from play — the Eater of Tomes, one of the Everchosen's Gaunt Summoners. This Tzeentchian sorcerer had been tasked by Archaon with overseeing the application of his Varanite, and was in charge of the effort to breach the sealed All-gate to Azyr within the Eightpoints. The Slann marshalled forces for a many-pronged assault on the Eater of Tomes and his trans-dimensional strongpoint, the Silver Tower gifted to him by Tzeentch. To destroy a foe with such a vessel would require all of the Seraphon's cunning and artifice. However, even as focused on the future as they were, they remained blind to the machinations of another party, orchestrating events from the shadows.

In order to assault the Silver Tower, the Seraphon would have to strike out into the deadly Eightpoints. However, they were able to make use of an opportunity granted to them seemingly by fortune, as the forces of Sigmar worked with the Daughters of Khaine to assault the Genesis Gate in the Realm of Life. On the Ghyranite side of the Gate, Stormcast of the Hallowed Knights battled the forces of Nurgle, led by Lord-Celestant Gardus Steel Soul, a renowned commander. However, even the Steel Soul proved hard pressed, barely hoping for success against the forces arrayed before him. His fears seemed allayed when the Seraphon arrived, punching through the Plaguefather's armies to reach the side of the Hallowed Knights. However, instead of joining them in defence, the Seraphon simply continued on, plunging into the Eightpoints without explanation. Lacking enduring reinforcements, the Hallowed Knights' lines began to fail, and Gardus himself fell in battle, but not before the arrival of the remnants of Azyr's expedition to the Eightpoints. The Genesis Gate would hold, as the Seraphon had foreseen.

The cold-blooded warriors were primarily concerned with their own goals. Pushing on, they moved swiftly to the Silver Tower, nestled in a nearby mountain range. Its master was away, harrying the fleeing Stormcast expeditionary host, though many



Daemons of the Great Conspirator flocked to the tower's defence in his absence. Without the Eater of Tomes to command them, however, they could not stop the Seraphon from damaging much of the tower's structure. Many Starborne lives were lost in the multicoloured fires of Tzeentch, but the necessary work was underway.

The Eater of Tomes surveyed the damage through his arcane connection to the tower and worked a spell of return, abandoning his battle with the Stormcast. Upon his arrival, he invoked the magics that would launch the tower from the Eightpoints and fled towards the aetheric void between realms. Yet this was a grave miscalculation on his part. The Seraphon were well aware of the Silver Tower's capabilities, having observed its assault on the skein of reality before planning this attack. When it reached the aetheric void, Seraphon temple-ships were waiting to assault it in a devastating battle that sent it crashing down once more, this time into the Realm of Metal.

There the deathblow came to the Silver Tower by the Seraphon of the Thunder Lizards. Having been warned of their spawn-kins' plan, they had mustered their war beasts and magical engines to make ready for the tower's fall. When it hurtled down from the void, the Thunder Lizards were waiting to finish what had begun. Precision bursts of arcane energy erupted from the ancient weapons borne on the backs of great beasts, targeting the weak points of the tower and directly striking at its magical core. The tower's power was undone at last, though it came at a heavy price. By the fell power of Chaos, the Silver Tower had become entangled with the realmgate network itself, and destroying it caused a surge of chaotic energies across Chamon. A cascade of portals across the Realm of Metal erupted in arcane fire or consumed themselves in geomantic vortices. The Seraphon had anticipated this phenomenon, and judged it dispassionately as a lesser price to pay than leaving the Eater of Tomes free to wreak still-greater damage. The threat, they judged, was largely ended and the network could stabilise in time if left unscathed.

Others in Chamon were not quite as stoic about the massive release of magical power that had just occurred. A prototype Kharadron skyship, the *Redoubtable*, had been on assignment in the area, under the command of a veteran Endrinmaster named Humboldtsson. Observing the aftermath of the Silver Tower's destruction, he was tempted to ignore the orders from the Admiralty Board not to risk the prototype in order to investigate this strange event. As he considered, he was joined by a veteran Arkanaut, Gromthi, who he could not recall yet who felt entirely familiar, and who urged him to investigate the strange occurrence. So was the *Redoubtable's* course set, onwards towards destiny.





DEATH PACT

The far-seeing Seraphon were renowned for their wisdom and insight, but even they had their limits, especially after a daemonic attack destroyed the Eye of Tepok, a potent artefact used to assist in divinations. Bereft of this aid, and pressed for time, they overlooked the manoeuvrings of the Daemon Be'lakor, First Prince of Chaos. It was his agents that freed the Lord-Veritant ven Brecht in Anvilgard, his forces that had destroyed the Eye of Tepok, capitalising on the Seraphon's oversight. Inspired by the very events that so alarmed the Seraphon, Be'lakor now hoped to work destruction on the realmgate network himself and spread his corruption across the Mortal Realms. In ending one threat, the Seraphon had inadvertently enabled one even more terrible.

Yet Be'lakor's plans were not without complications. The ancient Daemon Prince had enemies who sought his ruin, and some of them were mighty enough to threaten his work. In particular, the Mortarch of Grief Olynder, leader of the Nighthaunt processions, had turned her enmity towards the First Prince after they crossed paths at the Eightpoints.

Even as the Dark Master began to set his plans in motion, he noticed a malign curse winding through his essence that bore the hallmarks of the Mortarch's spectral magic. As an adept in curses himself, Be'lakor knew that this one would only grow in potency if left to fester, and had the potential to derail his plans. Such a potent curse could not be easily unmade by another, and so the First Prince planned an alternate approach.

At his command, Daemons owing fealty or favour to Be'lakor assaulted Olynder's underworld realm of Dolorum. There, Be'lakor hoped to change his fortune and draw out the Mortarch. Pressing deep into the hidden reaches of her stronghold in Sylontum, Dolorum's capital, Be'lakor sought a secret the Mortarch had thought hidden from all others save Nagash. Yet the shadowy insights and hidden informants of the First Prince granted

him knowledge that by all rights should have been unknowable, and he found in the crypts of Sylontum Olynder's mortal remains, the body to which her cursed essence was bound. With a single blow of the Blade of Shadows, he would be able to end her immortal existence. Yet as the Mortarch arrived, the prince chose not to end her, but to bargain. Promising a chance to harvest the all-but untouchable souls of Sigmar's so-called Eternals, he convinced the Veiled Lady to temporarily lift her curse, entering into an uneasy partnership.

Theirs was a strange alliance, and surely a temporary one, but it proved devastatingly effective. Olynder's Nighthaunt assaulted sites across Chamon with such terrors as to prompt fears of a resurgent Necroquake. In doing so, they provided cover for the Dark Master's own attacks on the realmgate network, confusing any reports as to the nature of the threat. Even other disciples of the Dark Gods were not spared, for the First Prince had need of the corrupt energies flowing through already twisted gates. At his command, Daemons broke their pacts and turned on each other or butchered their mortal summoners to claim what was needed. It was a monumental risk, for in destroying this realmgate already controlled by the Ruinous Powers, he closed off routes for their armies and ingress to the Mortal Realms for Daemons. Be'lakor considered the gamble well worth undertaking, and his early efforts seemed to prove him correct.

As realmgates collapsed and frayed the fabric of the realms, the skies above Chamon began to boil with corrupt power, growing turbulent and twisted. The investigating crew of the *Redoubtable* found their aether-readings going mad, prompting grave alarm and a swift return to the Admiralty Board. The ever-vigilant Seraphon were also quick to spot this new variable influencing the Great Plan. When Gardus Steel Soul, newly reforged in Azyr, came to their temples to seek an explanation for the actions of the Starborne host at the Genesis

Gate, he was met by none other than the venerable Lord Kroak, who had transcended his own death to continue the battle against Chaos. The ancient Slann projected a vision of a dark future to Gardus' mind, warning him of perils to come – perils against which the Seraphon were already making preparations. For his part, the Lord-Celestant would be needed in Chamon to prevent the terrible events that were unfolding there.

Kroak's predictions seemed, if anything, perhaps too mild as the Dark Master's plan unfolded. The Daemons and gheists working on behalf of Be'lakor had begun his work without mercy, and it now neared completion. However, one holdout stood strong — the Gate of White-Gold in the city of Vindicarum remained unbroken, preventing the full unfolding of the First Prince's dark masterpiece. Aware of the need for decisive action before the God-King turned his attention to Chamon and realised the true threat, Be'lakor employed Skaven gutter runners to assault another Silver Tower even as the Stormhost of the Sigmarite Brotherhood deployed to defend the Free City. Even at his boldest, Be'lakor would not risk the disfavour of Tzeentch by destroying another such tower, but the damage he wrought to its core resonated through the already destabilised realmgates in Chamon, and the skies darkened with chaotic power.

As the Sigmarite Brotherhood took casualties in their defence of Vindicarum, the souls of those that fell did not return to Azyr. Lightning erupted from their fallen forms as usual, but rather than piercing the dark clouds towards the Realm of Heavens, the Cursed Skies trapped them as tormented lightning-gheists, unable to break through. These souls bereft of bodies became vulnerable to the malicious torments of the daemoniac host and to the soul-prisons at Olynder's command. Her host of Nighthaunts reaped the fallen, claiming the souls of the entire Stormhost before withdrawing, her feud satisfactorily delayed.





CURSED SKIES

When Gardus Steel Soul arrived in Vindicarum with his Hallowed Knights, he found a scene more befitting the hells of the Realm of Chaos than a city of Sigmar. Be'lakor's plans were in full motion, the city's defenders in all but total rout, and the skies aflame with dark power. It was not a sight easy to bear, nor one fit for mortal eyes, but the Hallowed Knights had braved the worst Chaos had to offer in the past, and would not be found wanting at this new challenge.

Elsewhere in Chamon, a different conflict brewed. As the twisting skies sent aetheric navigation astray and foretold devastating changes in the harvest of aether-gold, the Kharadron skyports met at the site of the original pact that formed them, holding the Second Conference of Madralta to address the strange disaster. However, while cool heads and measured wisdom were the way of the original meeting, bickering and factionalism were all that was to be found in this new assembly, with each skyport blaming the others for the brewing troubles. As the mood turned ugly, the conference might have even turned to violence if not for the arrival of Humboldsson and Gromthi from the *Redoubtable's* scouting mission. They breached protocol and interrupted the conference, but such was Gromthi's

presence that he seized the chance to speak of the skyship's findings. Aether-readings indicated the skies of Chamon, and all that was within them, were forming into a tremendous spiralling vortex centred on Vindicarum. Swift action could save the city and the skies alike, but without it, all lay at risk.

While the debate dragged on in the halls of Madralta, a desperate battle engulfed Vindicarum. The First Prince's daemonic legions were numberless, and their malefic powers sorely taxed the defenders' resolve. Freeguild soldiers, Duardin warriors of the Dispossessed, and Stormcast Eternals alike died in great numbers. Many Stormcast of the Celestial Vindicators who hailed from the city and the Hallowed Knights who had come to defend it were slain and their spirits drawn into the vortex in the skies, but despair did not break Gardus Steel Soul, determined to hold the line to the last. Such was their resistance that Be'lakor himself descended from his host to break them, and the Lord-Celestant was drawn into a duel with the mighty Daemon Prince. It was a desperate battle, and not one the Steel Soul saw triumph in. However, his grit and endurance kept the Blade of Shadows at bay long enough for respite. The Kharadron had come to an accord, and a vast skyfleet had arrived.

As the new force descended upon the daemonic horde and began a bombardment equaling the most malefic magics of Chaos, the defenders dared to hope for victory. But it was not yet in hand, for Be'lakor quickly abandoned his battle with Gardus to once again take command of the field. His wings of shadow bore him to the lead ship coming to evacuate the remaining civilians of Vindicarum, none other than the swift *Redoubtable*. With a terrible fury, he laid into the crew and nearly slew Endrinmaster Humboldtsson. As the fallen commander lay on the brink of death, he saw the curious Arkonaut Gromthi seemingly grow in stature to match the imperious Daemon Prince, wielding a simple riveting hammer with the bearing of a champion warrior. In a manoeuvre that seemed to beggar belief, the First Prince turned and fled at the sight of the venerable Duardin. What the Daemon saw in that stout form was unclear to onlookers, except that at that moment, he realised his battle was lost, followed by the mocking derision of the Dark Gods.

With their leader gone, the Daemons assaulting Vindicarum were at last pushed back and the city reclaimed. The losses were devastating, yet the spirit of the pious citizens endured.

The city began to rebuild with Kharadron aid and investment — all suitably compensated. It seemed that the day was won, but the cost was terrible indeed. An entire Stormhost lost, the skies boiling with Chaotic energy, and nothing gained but continued survival.

Amidst the remnants of one of the city's fallen districts, the Duardin Gromthi viewed the work being done with satisfaction. It was good, stalwart, neighbourly work – or so he first viewed it. Humboldtsson saw it as something more mercenary: the Kharadron had not been moved by Vindicarum's plight, not by simple sentiment. Theirs was a way of profit and survival, as it had always been. Some great sorrow seemed to come over the elderly Arkonaut, but he offered nothing to refute the claims the Endrinmaster made of necessity. Then, between one puff on his pipe and another, he was gone. Vindicarum still stood, and in ensuring that the joint fleet of the Kharadron sky-ports had secured access to the swirling cloud of aether-gold gathered above it. Now the two peoples were joined together by a common necessity, and whether pragmatism or faith drove them, they would not stand aside and allow the Ruinous Powers to take it from them.



IN EXCELSIS

On the Coast of Tusks along the border of Thondia in Ghur lay Excelsis, the City of Secrets. Built around the Spear of Mallus, a vast shard of the ancient World-That-Was, the city's moniker was well-earned by the shards of prophecy mined there. These glimmerings enabled Excelsis' fisherfolk to fill their nets without hazard or harm, and directed hosts of Stormcast and Freeguild alike to where victory was most certain. Yet treachery blinded the city's seers to the rise of a Tzeentchian cult within their walls, which nearly brought ruin to the City of Secrets and its people.

Though the plots of the Great Conspirator did not come to full fruition in Excelsis, whole districts of the city were lost to wild magic and ever-blazing witchfires, worsened by the Necroquake. As the long weeks of rebuilding turned to years of enduring the unhallowed ground scarred by dark sorcery, unrest grew among the citizens. Many were descended from the Ghurish tribes who had endured the Age of Chaos, and they saw the continued presence of this malign magic as an unwelcome reminder of their ancestor's tribulations — about which the Azyr-born overlords of the city did nothing. In truth, efforts by elite Sacrosanct Stormcast, the mages of the collegiate Arcane, and the witch hunters of the Order of Azyr were in full swing, but they were slow to reclaim the land from such fell powers.

As frustrations mounted, a new fervour swept the citizenry, led by one Odo Maulgen. This burly preacher led a movement to stamp out unlawful magic, playing into fears that the Tzeentchian conspiracy might one day come to finish what it had started. His followers styled themselves the Nullstone brotherhood, naming themselves after the realmstone of the aetheric void, which snuffs out spellwork and wild magic.

With their hands full charting a course through a turbulent future, Excelsis' government tolerated the Nullstone Brotherhood's excesses, especially as rumour spread that Maulgen worked under orders from Cerrus Sentanus, the White Reaper

of the Knights Excelsior. The preacher's presumed master was held by some to be a fanatic even more unhinged than Maulgen himself. Even those with more charitable views of Sentanus' frequently extreme actions did not find it implausible that he would see the Nullstone Brotherhood as useful weapons against corruption, nor that he would find the collateral damage they inflicted acceptable.

Yet the Nullstone Brotherhood soon overstepped any bounds that they might have presumed to be operating under. By dubious leaps of logic, they expanded their targets from unsanctioned practitioners to not only mages of any kind, but any with the power and wealth to study magic or pay for spellcraft. Chief among their targets were Aelves, for they were seen as aloof elites capable of inherent magic by the Brotherhood's ignorant creed. From Lumineth ambassadors to the corsair navy that guarded the city's harbours, none were spared the ire of Maulgen's followers. Any reprisal the Aelves met out only further inflamed the fanatics, as their fallen became martyrs to the cause. Soon any Aelves capable of leaving the city did so, as did many mages and other key elements of the city's defences. Yet the Brotherhood's wrath was not appeased. They served not Sigmar in this fury, for he was no foe to magic wielded in faith and good purpose. Instead, their obsessive extremism led them to temptation by the very foe they claimed to oppose — the fell power of Chaos. In particular, their mad yearnings and the shed blood of Aelves pleased Slaanesh, the Dark Prince empowered by all obsession.

Though this dark patron remained unknown to those within the city, there were still many disturbed by the Brotherhood's actions. Two agents of the Order of Azyr, a father and daughter team of the ven Denst family, Galen and Doralia, had until recently been focused on quelling wild magic within the city. This pair turned their attention to the vigilante movement when the fanatic Brotherhood drove out the seers upon which their work had previously relied. Needing reliable sources of information to navigate Excelsis' troubled streets, they turned to the Seraphon, who maintained a small embassy

within the city. Doralia alone was admitted, and there given a vision that warned of terrible threats to the city, both within and without. The latter remained of particular concern to the Seraphon, whose vision was obscured by a strange void — a presence whose actions they could not foretell, and the ripples of which interfered with prophecy across Thondia. However, without knowledge of the threat, their more distant kin would not act, leaving Excelsis to stand alone.

Driven by this foretold peril, the ven Densts made for the fortress of the Knights Excelsior, there to confront Sentanus about the actions of his errant henchman. Many braver than even these steely agents would have been cowed by the White Reaper's wrath, yet he received them with a polite detachment. Sentanus revealed that he knew nothing of Maulgen and his claims, having been focused on a threat of Soulblight infiltration among the city's nobility. Though known for his relentless pursuit of corruption, the Stormcast lacked the particular brand of obsession that had subverted the Nullstone Brotherhood, and he resolved to bring Maulgen to judgement.

Unfortunately, it was also at that time that some of the city's long-simmering worries of Skaven infiltration came to fruition, as invading teams of Warlock-Engineers set much of the city suddenly ablaze. Sentanus rallied his forces to repel the assault, but was wounded by a foul poison in the process. With the last of his strength and lucidity, he

was spurred by the words of Doralia ven Denst to send for the Steel Soul. Sentanus had heard of how the Lord-Celestant of the Hallowed Knights had contacted the oldest and wisest of the Seraphon, and hoped that this creature could once again save a city whose fate was hanging in the balance. It was a desperate effort, but one even more needed than he knew, for the Skaven's true purpose was as pawns for the terrible newborn Daemons spawned from the apotheosis of Morathi-Khaine, Synessa and Dexcessa. Amidst the havoc of the fires and Skaven skirmishes, these mighty Daemons came into the realms to take command of the obsession-twisted Nullstone Brotherhood and bring about their opportunity to seize Excelsis.



THE RAMPAGE OF KRAGNOS

In the earliest days of the Mortal Realms, before the arrival of Sigmar, other powers ruled where the Pantheon of Order would eventually hold sway. In the feral lands of Ghur, the Drogrukh of Donse were one such power — a culture of mighty centauroid creatures who hollowed out caves in which to shelter from the primordial Realm of Beasts. The Drogrukh were mighty, but they were not alone in such power, and their way was of harmony and taking only what was needed, rather than conquest.

At least, that was the way of most Drogrukh. Ancient legends and inscriptions tell how Kragnos, the son of a tribal elder named Gorgos, was censured for his brutal temper and violent actions. Kragnos was a physical prodigy, and along with a small group of companions who joined him in self-imposed exile, set about on a rampage across the lands surrounding Donse, from Thondia and Bjarl to distant Lendu. In the course of their exploits of war and might, they struck fear into the early Human tribes they passed, but impressed and awed the Orruks of their time. Though the Orruk culture of those lost days is not recorded, it is conjectured they were close in temperament to modern Bonesplitterz. Thus they hoarded the bones of their prey as their treasures, still rife with Ghur's volatile power, and precious amberbone realmstone. All this they offered up to Kragnos as tribute, for they saw his might as perhaps divine, and certainly worthy of worship.

On this diet of primal heartsblood and realmstone Kragnos grew in might until he became a god. Legends of the pounding of his hooves spread until Ghur itself was convinced of his potency, granting him the power of a living earthquake. Yet still Kragnos was not satisfied with his conquests. He turned his attention to the Draconith empire, a mighty skyborne civilisation of drakes, despite the peace that had been struck between them and the Drogrukh. In Kragnos' eyes, this accord was of

little value compared to the new challenge against which to test his strength. Kragnos and his followers assaulted the mountain sanctuaries of the Draconith, slaughtering those caught there, whether roosting Draconith or tamed beast, and trampling their eggs. The Draconith were potent, but against the divinity burning within Kragnos and the might of those Drogrukh who rallied behind him, they could not win. As the two elder nations warred in the wake of Kragnos' incitement, the wisest and most farseeing of the Draconith princes appealed to their father, Dracothion, for aid.

Their plea was heard not only by the godbeast they entreated, but by other allies — the inscrutable Seraphon of Azyr. In the cold-blooded planning of the Seraphon, Kragnos' power was a dangerous variable that could not be left unchecked. They came to an accord with the last Draconith, and the mightiest Slann arrived in Ghur, led by the relic-priest, Lord Kroak, who was old before the dawn of the Mortal Realms. Through their combined power, and the might of Dracothion himself, they defeated Kragnos for the first time in his long ravages and bound him in a timeless prison under a mountain. There, they hoped, he would remain forever bound.

For ages untold Kragnos lay trapped, even as the last Drogrukh died out and the Draconith retreated to distant corners of existence. The corruption of the Age of Chaos could not warp the celestial power at the root of his bindings, nor could the power of the Necroquake bring a close to that which lay outside time itself. Yet when the goddess Alarielle began a Rite of Life to invigorate the Mortal Realms with a cleansing power, she inadvertently released what those fell powers could not. Trees grew across the mountain in which Kragnos was trapped until their questing roots encountered the fringes of his prison, worming a tiny crack in the enchantment. Yet this opening was enough for Kragnos to leverage his godly strength, slowly shattering the stones around him until he was free.

The din of Kragnos' efforts to escape was heard by all the forces of Destruction who resonated with his ferocious spirit. Many Orruks heard the pounding and relayed it in their drums and warchants, while Gargants recognised his hoofbeats as the footfalls of an immense power. Even the pea-brained Troggoths could recognise that something was coming. When Kragnos emerged, the beat intensified as he stampeded across the plains of ruined Donse. His wrath at what he witnessed was unimaginable. He had not obeyed the laws of his people, nor respected their other leaders – but he was still Drogrukh. Yet there was no sign of his kin, nor the civilisation they had made.

Of all those who felt Kragnos' presence, only one had any inkling of what it meant. Skagrott the Loonking, the mad Grot prophet of the Bad Moon, learned much from the menagerie of imprisoned seers he kept in his domain of Skrappa Spill. But Skagrott had other matters on his mind, at work enacting an ancient prophecy, seeking to crown the mightiest boss ever using three artefacts of power. His chosen ally — or pawn, as he envisioned it — for this endeavour was Gordrakk, the Orruk known as the Fist of Gork. Gordrakk had the brutality and cunning necessary for the plan, but a stubbornness that made him intractable to Skagrott's careful planning. Despite the Loonking's manipulations, Gordrakk abandoned the search for the latter two artefacts in favour of leading his Waaagh! across Ghur to test the only one he had claimed — the skull of the great godbeast Hammergord.

As the vast horde crossed Thondia where it encroached hungrily on the lands of Carcass Donse, Gordrakk encountered a defiant and angry Kragnos, eager to vent his fury on the fools who did not recognise his power. Gordrakk and his

maw-krusha, Bigteef, set themselves against the Earthquake God, fighting with a mortal fury that could barely be believed. Yet Kragnos was not mortal, and could not be bested by their strength. With the fate of the Waaagh! in the balance, Skagrott called to the Bad Moon, and the leering satellite sent down a shower of stone from the sky to batter Kragnos. The ancient god was unharmed, but the potency he recognised in Skagrott and Gordrakk was enough to draw his interest. A wordless accord was struck, and he spared the bosses and instead galloped alongside the Waaagh! towards their target. He too, sought to test his might in this strange new age.



THE SIEGE OF EXCELSIS

In the wake of the Skaven attack that razed so many of the city's districts, the citizens of Excelsis began efforts not only to rebuild, but to fortify. Word had come of a vast Orruk horde on the horizon, a threat that would soon make its way to their walls. However, the unrest inflamed by the Nullstone Brotherhood still raged, and mistrust made such efforts difficult to coordinate. Authorities within the city did what they could to smooth the way, but they too were gripped by uncertainty. The ven Denst's warning to the Order of Azyr had made it clear that Maulgen's followers were operating under false pretences, while rumours proliferated of strange happenings in some of the districts where the unhallowed ground of the previous Chaos invasion lingered. Ultimately, the certainty of reports from the city's scouts was pitted against unsubstantiated rumours of the sort that the city had long dealt with, and the Orruks were deemed the greater threat. The city continued to focus its attention on protecting its outer walls, even as a terrible darkness festered at its heart.

When the Orruks did arrive, they did not do so alone. The oncoming Waaagh! was accompanied by every manner of creature from Grots and Troggoths, to Ogors and Gargants, all in numbers beyond reckoning. The defensive batteries of Excelsis had

been drilling for weeks, but no massed artillery or gyrobombardier payload could halt the advance of such a mighty force. Even the arrival of Astral Templars from Azyr, beast hunters of great renown, could do little to slow the tide. The hope of Excelsis lay in its walls, and in the possibility of the invaders fracturing in a protracted siege. Though the flight of Aelves had left the city bereft of its corsair navy, the ramshackle rafts the enemy could construct would likely be destroyed by artillery fire before reaching the docks. The ram upon which Gordrakk had mounted Hammergord's skull made such hopes cold comfort, yet Excelsis' gates were protected by more than they knew.

In the wake of Sentanus' message to the Steel Soul, Lord Kroak had become aware of Kragynos' looming threat, and had secretly arrived in Excelsis to halt the threat he had previously bound. Shrouded in spells that kept his presence hidden to the commoners of the city, he had laid subtle but potent wards on the city's gates that even a god would be hard-pressed to break. When tested against the ram of godbeast bone, it was Hammergord's skull that broke. In the detonation of power that followed, it seemed that a stroke of luck had come to the city's defenders, as Gordrakk and Bigfteef lay unconscious on the ramparts of the city, having hurled themselves forward in anticipation of the gate breaking.



Yet that good fortune would soon turn ill. Before any brave soldiers of the city could finish off Gordrakk, Kragnos came thundering to the fore of the horde. Where his hooves struck the ground by the walls, they ruptured it, tearing apart the foundations. His swift gallop brought him to a section of wall that had been secretly undermined by the Skaven, and this weakened stretch was soon torn open, collapsing a mile of the curtain wall around Excelsis. Roused by Kragnos' thundering actions, Gordrakk and Bigteef began a slaughter across what ramparts remained, and the Waaagh! poured into the city.

The carnage that followed was terrible: as the forces of Destruction poured through the gap in their multitudes, further threats reared their heads. The rafts approaching the city by sea had been largely shattered, and what Orruks and Ogors were aboard slain by the barrage of fire laid upon them. Yet as the wreckage continued to drift closer, it became apparent that they approached not by the tides, but atop the heads of Mega-Gargants who waded beyond the shallows, cunningly hidden by the waters around their curious headgear. More deadly still, Synessa and Dexcessa made their move at last, streaming through the heart of the city with their court of Daemonettes towards Excelsis' conclave to enrapture the souls of the city's leadership.

To the city's great fortune, the ven Denst's and Cerrus Sentanus had been alert for news of corruption, and diverted from the defence of the walls to defend the conclave. By the holy arts and weaponry available to the Order of Azyr, they were able to save some small number of the city's councillors and banish the Daemon twins, although the White Reaper was slain and sent unto Azyr in their desperate assault. This costly exchange seemed typical across the city, as deeds desperate and valiant pushed back against the invaders, yet ultimately the odds seemed unwinnable. The salvation of Excelsis was ultimately not in the walls or even the vigilance of Azyr, but in the arrival of the most unexpected of

all possible reinforcements. From the harbour the Mega-Gargants assaulted, new ships came into view — the corsair fleet that had previously departed, now led by a Black Ark. Morathi-Khaine had rallied her forces from Har Kuron to deny Destruction their prize. The expertise of the corsairs in fighting primal foes was unequalled even by many of the Ghurish natives of the city, and where the Astral Templars' armour served them little against powerful blows from Troggos and Ggargants, the Aelven grace of the new arrivals allowed them to step aside from the cumbersome attackers. Witch Aelves experienced in misdirection spread through the streets to blunt the rampages of Orruks split from the main bulk of their comrades, and the goddess herself made quick work of all who opposed her.

It was only when she pitted herself against the rival divinity of Kragnos that she was halted. His shield, Tuskbearer, repelled any arcane assaults she could bring to bear, while even the Shadow Queen's serpentine might was no match for the primordial strength born of Ghur's own bones. Kragnos' successes alone might have been enough to maintain the invasion force, if not for the intervention of Lord Kroak. Morathi-Khaine knew of him and his arts from the World-That-Was, and devised a strategy that combined their magicks in a way Tuskbearer could not impede – a tear in reality through which they banished Kragnos to a distant corner of Ghur.

Bereft of Kragnos and repelled by the unexpected arrivals, the remnants of the Waaagh! dispersed. In the ruined halls of the city's conclave, Morathi-Khaine offered no excuses to Sigmar's representative, the Celestant-Prime, for her sack of Anvilgard, only claiming her salvation of Excelsis proved it a greater good. Things might have turned bloody at the goddess' unrepentant response, if not the intervention of the god Grungni, who at last revealed himself from his long seclusion to offer her clemency in order to maintain unity. It would be needed in the face of things to come.

KRAGNOS

THE END OF EMPIRES

Though seemingly a newcomer to the Mortal Realms, Kragnos was, in truth, among the first of the gods to wander the realms. Having ascended to divinity in the Age of Myth, before Sigmar's arrival, Kragnos was a singular power during those primordial days. By his hooves were the Draconith and their empire trampled to all but dust, and it was only through great sacrifice on the part of his foes, united with an even more ancient power, that the End of Empires was bound in his timeless prison. Since he broke free in the wake of Alarielle's Rite of Life, he has become an icon to the forces of Destruction. He shattered the gates of Excelsis, which endured even a ram tipped with a godbeast's skull, and led the charge of the greatest Waaagh! since the Age of Myth. Though he was once again banished, this time he is not bound or gone. In the wilderness of Ghur he remains, galloping to find new followers worthy of him and prey to crush beneath his hooves.

Titles: The Earthquake God, the End of Empires, Last of the Drogrukh, Destroyer of the Draconith Empire

Seat of Power: The Drogrukh lands of antiquity (former); the Ghurish Heartlands (current)

Sacred Artefacts: The Dread Mace; Tuskbreaker, the Shield Inviolat

WITHIN THE PANTHEON

Kragnos has never had a position within the Pantheon of Order and it seems he never will. He predates its formation, though some ancient legends and cavern wall paintings suggest Gorkamorka may have once known him. If this is true, they did not speak of it. What's more, Kragnos views the creations and works of the Pantheon with scorn. Cities, walls, fortresses, and empires — all are meaningless, only fit as conquests to be made into rubble. The so-called Pantheon is naught but newcomers and weaklings to him. He does not even deign to test himself against these new gods of civilisation, preferring to pursue his vendetta against the renewed Draconith, as evidenced when he abandoned the siege of Excelsis to chase after a mirage of his ancient foes.

In their turn, the other gods who have encountered him do not hold a high opinion of the Earthquake God. Sigmar has aligned himself with the ancient princes of the Draconith and seeks as ever to defend his cities against marauding powers, making him twice a foe of Kragnos. Morathi-Khaine acknowledges Kragnos' physical might, but neither fears nor respects him after her simple deceit removed him from the field. Grungni, the consummate builder, is ever-opposed to those who live for the tearing down of his works, and the twin gods of Hysh disdain such unenlightened behaviour as the ancient Drogrukh stallion represents. Malerion's opinion is as unknowable as ever, and Nagash fumes at another divine rival. Gorkamorka alone might approve of Kragnos, but he is a god who measures actions, rather than words. It remains to be seen if Kragnos' raw power, ancient yet new to this tumultuous age, is enough to shake the scorn of his new peers, but it is sure his is a power to watch — preferably from a safe distance.

CURRENT STATUS

After awakening amidst the ruins of his ancestral lands, forsaken in an unfamiliar time, Kragnos has remained resilient as only a being burning with the fire of divinity can manage. He has slain foes, conquered armies, and even gathered a powerbase of sorts, all by the fury of his own prowess. Yet for all that his legend spreads once more, and he gathers followers daily, he remains utterly alone. The last of his kind, speaking a tongue known to almost no one — save his canny interpreter, Gobsprakk — and the only remnant of an age so far removed that not even the histories of modern civilisations recognise it, Kragnos is isolated from all others.

Yet for all his rage and his sorrow, Kragnos remains an icon to many across Ghur, with word of his power even spreading to other realms. The survivors of Godrakk's Waaagh! witnessed his power, and spoke of his exploits in reverent tones. Word of his might spreads through every realmgate they cross as they speak of the new god who shatters city walls and whose hooves split the earth beneath them.

In addition to the devotion of these odd evangelists, Kragnos gathers power from the Kruleboyz who surround him. To these cunning Orruks, he is a sign that their time of skulking around is over, and they now have a new weapon with which to strike out across the realms. The shaman Gobsprakk, styled the Mouth of Mork, is chief among Kragnos' devotees. However, as the only being in all of Thondia who can understand the god's ancient language, it is questionable as to how much of Kragnos' plan is actually his own and how much is Gobsprakk's rather liberal interpretation.

FOLLOWERS

In the wake of his exploits at Excelsis, devotion to Kragnos spreads across the forces of Destruction. His prowess, might, and ferocity have quickly proliferated his legend. Yet such is the fractious nature of his new flock that no two of them can agree what defines him above all else.

To Bonesplitterz, he is the ultimate beast and beast-slayer at once, while to Ironjawz, what matters is that he is the hardest fighter around. Ogors respect his appetite and his apparent inedibility both, with the legends of his shield Tuskbreaker, which it is said not even Gorkamorka could chew, taking on a particular life in their camps. Gargants respect Kragnos as one of the few beings large enough to stare their tallest in the eyes, as well as envying the hooves that can step on even the sharpest "pipsqueaks" without being cut. Grots see Kragnos as yet another huge shouty boss who will wallop them for disrespect, making the new god part of a long and venerable tradition.

However, it is the Kruleboyz who are Kragnos' most fervent followers. While their culture values cunning over brutality, the followers of devious Mork are not above a good kicking, and none do it better than their new god. What's more, Kragnos' arrival amidst the swamps in which they dwell has been taken as a sign that their long wait is over, and the time to give civilization a nasty stabbing has come. Few outsiders know how word of Kragnos' arrival has spread so far beyond the swamps of Thondia, but Kruleboyz in bogs across the realms are making ready for war, confident that they will finally get a real chance to go for the soft bits the cities of Sigmar have hidden behind their walls.

STRICTURES

- ✱ Hiding behind walls is for weaklings and cowards.
- ✱ Destroy the Draconith and their kin wherever they are found.
- ✱ Crush your enemies, but let word of your victories spread.

ERA OF THE BEAST

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The Mortal Realms are changing. The Era of the Beast has altered every place, pantheon, and people in the cosmos, and the rule of this new age is clear — like animals in the wild, all must either adapt or die. But unlike the Arcanum Optimar, which followed directly after the intense magical upheaval of the Necroquake, the Era of the Beast does not revolve around a singular cause or event. Of course Kragno's awakening is key to the shift in the status quo, and the thundering of his hooves can be heard everywhere as the empowered forces of Destruction rally under his command. But the actions of Morathi, Teclis, Be'lakor, and Alarielle had far-reaching consequences as well, and their schemes dragged many unlikely allies into the fray. As a result, every major power stirs, and the resulting mess of alliances, enmities, goals, and lies has created a uniquely tumultuous environment. There are no bystanders in this game; there are only players, each with agency and burning ambition. Perhaps, then, Gorkamorka's followers have the right of it. With so much in flux, there's no point in attempting to predict what happens next. The only way to prevail in the Era of the Beast is to become as strong as possible, and to take on every challenger that stands before you.

This chapter covers how every known faction participated in the events of *Broken Realms*, as well as the ways a character from each faction might have reacted to these dramatic twists and turns. It also discusses the role Soulbound might play in the Era of the Beast, and it provides two sample campaign plots to illustrate how a party can shape these realm-shaking storylines.

THE REALMS QUAKE

Nagash and his undead servants rose triumphant after the Necroquake, and therefore had the farthest to fall. The shattering of the Great Necromancer's physical form inspired many to take up arms against the dead, and their faith empowered their blades to cleave through spectral foes. Victories beget hope, which enable more victories, and thus even in morbid Shyish the living have taken a stand against those who tithe their blood and bones. Without Nagash's might to reign in their ambitions, the Mortarchs squabble more than ever before, and factions across the realms have found ways to counteract the Necroquake's enervating influence. But Death's virtue is patience, and as Nagash recovers within his citadel in the abyssal Shyish Nadir, his cold fury is tempered by the certainty that one day he will claim his due.

Both Order and Destruction have gained a new God. In Order's case, the ascension of Morathi-Khaine has exacerbated the divisions in their already tenuous alliance. Distrust runs rampant, and while the gods have made an uneasy peace, their scattered forces might not find their former enemies so easy to forgive. As for Destruction, they have by far benefited the most from the changes to their pantheon. Kragnos's stampedes have drawn out the Kruleboyz, with all their vicious cunning, and Orruks of all stripes have united into Big Waaagh!s of unmatched, boisterous fervour under the Drogrukh's banner. Over the course of the Soul Wars, many cities learned to employ protective hexes to defend themselves against the relentless patience of the dead, but these same defences are flimsy as paper against Destruction's crushing might. Finally, omnipresent Chaos eats at the realms.

Be'lakor's cursed skies spread inexorably from Chamon's Spiral Crux, the Free Peoples trembling beneath them — for if the Stormcast Eternals can have their eternal cycle of life and death so disrupted, how are Sigmar's cities supposed to stand against the endless daemonic legions? At the same time, Aelves of every kind feel a foreboding weight in their souls, their ancestral trauma stirring as Slaanesh gradually weakens and methodically snaps the bonds that hold him imprisoned. Decessa and Synessa, the twin Daemons born of the Dark Prince's essence, act as avatars for the imprisoned god, and Slaanesh's disparate hosts preach that they surely herald Slaanesh's imminent return.

All these changes have ushered in the next age, the Era of the Beast. Each inciting calamity has triggered its own cascade of consequences, rippling across the realms, and when they meet, the results are violent and spectacular. Continents crashing together create mountains; likewise, the clashing of gods create an age of uncertainty and change, a new era defined by the rise of Destruction, the Great Stomp, and the fury of Ghur spreading out across the realms. No one knows what dormant, forgotten power will awaken tomorrow, or what new monster, spell, or weapon might appear on the frontlines next. But even as these dramatic developments unfold, time alters the realms in subtler ways — new cities have already become ruins, legends have grown grander (if less accurate) in their retellings, and eternal beings like the Soulbound have watched another generation fight and fall in the endless war for reality itself. As the cycle of conflict begins anew, such beings must ask themselves how much they accomplished during the Arcanum Optimar. What still remains, now that the dust of the Necroquake has settled? What doesn't? And for better or worse, will this time be different?



ACROSS THE COSMOS ARCANÉ

War, at a scale beyond comprehension, ravages the realms. Not seen since the days of prehistory, the campaigns that led up to the Era of the Beast were some of the largest in centuries. By using subversive tactics or recruiting unlikely allies, many armies drove straight into the heart of territories which defenders thought impregnable. For example, Teclis and his Lumineth disciples burned a path through Shyish's innermost regions, while Nagash's retaliation struck at the centre of Ymetrica and nearly destroyed sacred Mount Avalenor itself. Even in the Eightpoints, where war is ceaseless, the combined assault of the Stormcast Eternals and the Daughters of Khaine brought fresh violence to the Bloodwind Spoil, and now survivors from both sides are scattered throughout the wastes, doomed to fight until their minds break or their mutating bodies betray them.

Like all wars, the violence continues even after the victors have taken what they wanted. In Ulgu, the Idoneth may have retreated back into the sea, but the Cathtrar Dhule repeats itself as Hedonites drawn to pay homage to the Newborn come into conflict with the Daughters of Khaine once again. The stubborn Anvilgardian resistance fights a guerrilla war along Aqshy's Charrwind Coast, despite Sigmar and Morathi's begrudging peace over the coup of Har Kuron, while the reopening of the Genesis Arcway means the Sylvaneth must dedicate ever-increasing forces to defend Ghyran from the Eightpoints. The War of Light and Death has splintered into dozens of smaller conflicts, while darkened Chamon has become a free-for-all warzone. Everywhere, looters, brigands, and ambitious warlords take advantage of the chaos, prolonging the conflict in these already devastated lands.

As for the objectives of these wars, many of them are fought over realmgates. The forces of the Mortal Realms have struggled over these mystical portals since antiquity, but in recent battles the great powers have sought not just to control the realmgates, but to alter their very nature. Archaon the Everchosen attempted it first, using Varanite in

industrial quantities to corrupt the Meteoric Gate. Had his mining operations not been interrupted by Morathi, he might well have reopened a passageway from his blighted realm to distant Azyr, and all Sigmar's people would have suffered as a result. Without the realmstone seams at Varanthax's Maw, he is not likely to complete his work anytime soon, but the halfway-complete mutations at the Meteoric Gate's base still remain.

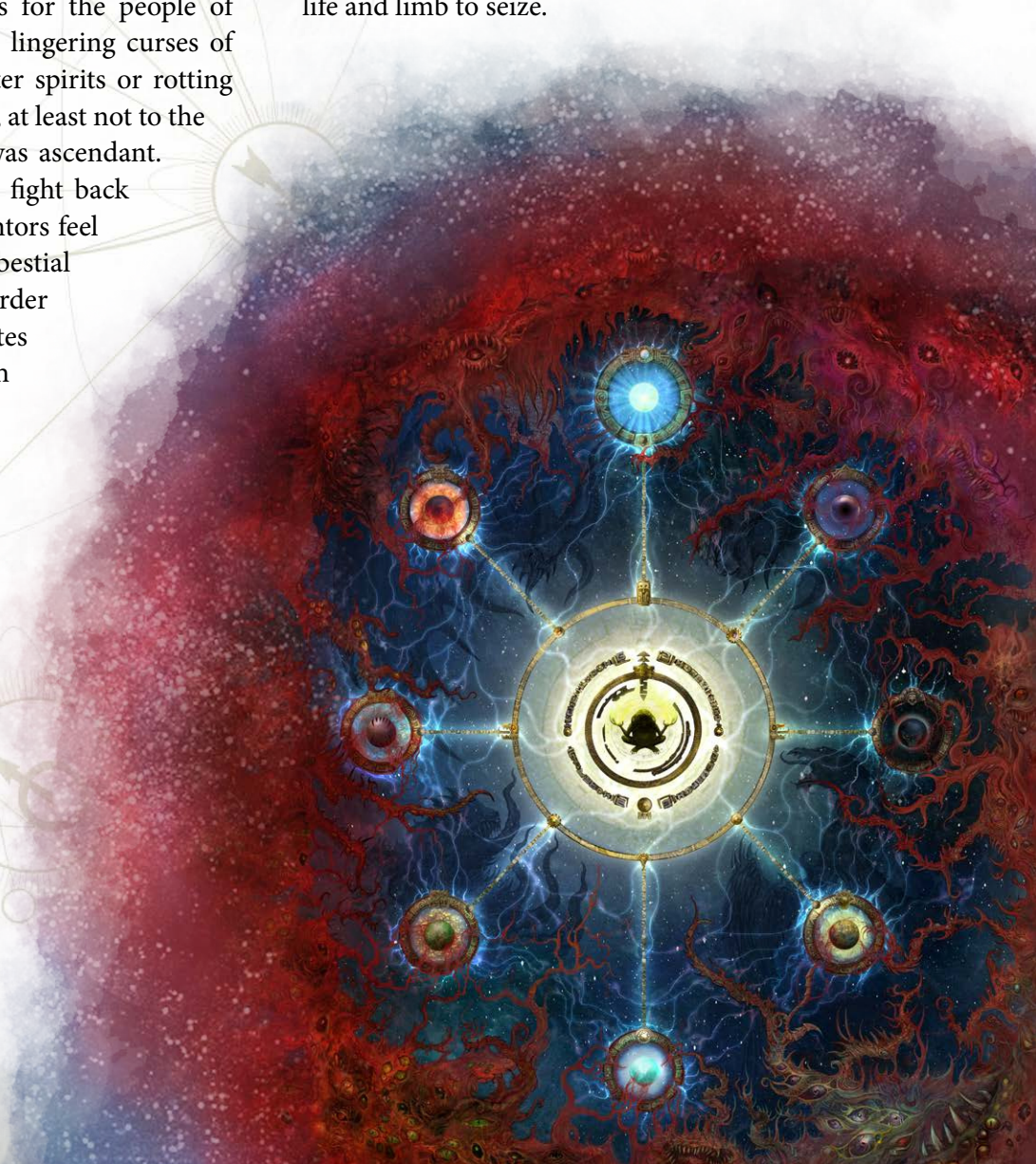
The next, equally ambitious attempt to corrupt the realmgates came from the Undying King, Nagash. He sent his Mortarchs to realmgates in Ghyran, Chamon, and Hysh, with instructions to collapse the ancient gateways and connect them to the all-consuming Shyish Nadir. These lesser nadirs would have bolstered Nagash's reach to an extent not seen since the Necroquake, and though he too failed, the dark rituals still cast a deathly pall over the surrounding regions — Invidia in Ghyran, the Great Bewilderness in Chamon, and the Ymetrican Geosegment in Hysh. Even now, the forlorn residents of these lands must contend with the violence of the undead and the withering effects of their presence.

It was Be'lakor, the First Prince, who succeeded where Archaon and Nagash had failed. By capitalising on the destruction of one Silver Tower by the Seraphon, before severely damaging another through Skaven infiltration, he destroyed an entire network of realmgates in Chamon's Spiral Crux. The realmgates he targeted collapsed in on themselves, spewing raw Chaos into Chamon's skies, and the forces of Order soon discovered these loathsome clouds could block out a Stormcast Eternal's connection to Azyr. Though the cursed skies are spreading slowly from Chamon to other realms, the effect they've had on travel and logistics is already profound. Transportation between realms, already rare enough before Be'lakor's ploy, has become even more difficult, especially since the Kharadron and their airships were the ones most heavily impacted by the collapse of the Spiral Crux's realmgates. At the same time, the Stormcast Eternals cannot deploy with the surety they once did.

The invention of thunderstrike armour has allowed Sigmar's chosen to pierce the pall of Be'lakor's corruption, but only those going through the Reforging process are bestowed the honour of bearing Thunderstrike armour, and gone are the days when entire golden hosts could materialise out of nothing. Beneath the cursed skies, Sigmar's armies must march as they did in ages past, every inch of ground hard-won.

Yet, not all the changes to the realms were for the worse. The sundering of Nagash's physical form allowed Alarielle to breathe new life into the cosmos. In a ritual which resurrected the Oak of Ages Past — a fossil from another time and a testament to life's tenacity — the Everqueen sent pulses of jade magic rippling across all the realms. Inadvertently, her rite gave Kragnos the chance to escape his prison, with devastating consequences for the people of Ghur, but it also banished the lingering curses of the Necroquake. No more bitter spirits or rotting corpses burst from their graves, at least not to the extent they did when Death was ascendant. Instead, the land itself stirs to fight back corruption and decay. Aelementors feel new vigour in their war-forms, bestial companions fight all the harder alongside their partners, and sites of natural power bristle with new defences. Darkness may block out the light of Sigendil in those places blighted by Be'lakor's malice, but its song still carries just as far, and the melody of life surges to a crescendo in every realm.

Finally, while the gods have finished their rituals, the fortifications and artefacts they used to conduct them are not gone. The shadowpath towers Morathi built to aid her ascension still stand, marking sites of power with naked honesty in Ulgu's otherwise duplicitous mists. Likewise, the crater formed by the Silver Tower's destruction still remains, radiating change-magic, while the air above it swirls with aether-gold. Rubble around the Twinhorn Peak still bears traces of the Draconith and Seraphon enchantments that kept Kragnos contained, and in Excelsis, still reeling from the mighty Waaagh! of Grodrakk, those weak to temptation have already started to gather up the mirror fragments from Dexcessa and Synessa's lair amongst the city's rubble. For the people left to pick up the pieces, these places represent the chance to wield god-touched strength, and even a fraction of divine might is worth risking life and limb to seize.



THE NEW PANTHEON

The breaking of the realms began with Morathi's dramatic entrance to the pantheon. By submerging herself in stolen Varanite and consuming the souls of ancient Aelven kings, Morathi at last achieved the divinity she had always wanted; but even now, she cannot escape her dual nature. The ambitious sorceress from a lost world became Morathi-Khaine, a regal goddess with bladed wings, but so too did the monster she tortured inside Slaanesh's gut become the Shadow Queen, a towering serpent whose murderous hatred gave her the strength to duel Kragnos himself. For now, Morathi-Khaine pretends the latter is a separate entity from her, but Morathi-Khaine finds the Shadow Queen's bloodlust hard to contain. Her closest attendants dare not say so openly, but they can hear her arguing with herself in her chambers, and the way both aspects sometimes move as one is hard to ignore.

Morathi-Khaine's other lies have not gone unquestioned either. The former High Oracle claims to have fused with the Bloody-Handed God, and she wields his Iron Heart with impunity, but the deception that keeps the Khainite Aelves under her control is becoming harder to stomach with each new icon bearing her visage. Her spycraft and ruthlessness have so far kept the dissidents silent, but Morathi-Khaine

plays a delicate game. One wrong move might cost everything, even as she stands on the cusp of winning it all, and with so much at stake, Morathi-Khaine can afford no half-measures. Thus, the Shadow Queen has not just divided her own followers with her apotheosis — she has split the forces of Order as well. Sigmar might have welcomed a new god to his side, pressed as he is for allies, had she shown deference or humility. Instead Morathi took Anvilgard in a bid to build her own inter-realm empire, stoking the God-King's wrath in the process, and war between them was only barely averted. In a twist of irony, none of the Aelven gods vouched for her before the Heldenhammer. In fact, Tyrion, Teclis, Alarielle, and Malerion all seem reluctant to even acknowledge Morathi-Khaine's ascent. Instead, it was a Duardin who defended Morathi-Khaine, in his first open act since the Age of Chaos.

Grungni the Maker left his people behind centuries ago, thinking that they would better temper themselves in the fires of war rather than live eternally under his aegis. In recent years, whispers of his return have circulated everywhere from Fyreslayer lodges to Kharadron sky-ports, the reasons growing increasingly wild as Duardin swap rumours over their hearths. They say he means to reunify the Duardin nations, or build a great machine in his hidden Chamonian stronghold, or even revive



lost Valaya, the goddess of the hearth; he still has yet to explain himself. His interference was subtle at first. As a simple, long-bearded Arkanaut named Gromthi, he served on the crew of the prototype Arkanaut Frigate *Redoubtable*, under the command of Drongon Humboldsson. He pushed Humboldsson to investigate the disturbances around the Spiral Crux, and when the Second Madraltan Conference reached a stalemate, he inspired the admiralty to save Vindicarum, where Be'lakor himself fled upon seeing through Grungni's disguise. Later, Grungni convinced the Celestant-Prime to show Morathi clemency, and he returned to Azyr long enough to show his old ally Sigmar and his demigod apprentices, the Six Smiths, how to craft thunderstrike armour. What he plans next, only he can say, but Grungni clearly doesn't intend to stay idle.

Morathi-Khaine's actions also had consequences beyond the Pantheon of Order. Part of her ritual involved opening a conduit to Slaanesh's prison in Uhl-Gysh, a risk Morathi might not have taken had she known Slaanesh's bonds were not as unbreakable as their makers assumed. Through that conduit, the Prince of Excess sent a portion of his divine essence hurtling into the Mortal Realms, an embryonic entity which eventually split and metamorphosed into the twin Daemons Dexcessa and Synessa. Though their debut in Excelsis was cut short by the heroics of the city's defenders, the discord they sowed between Aelves and humanity has already taken a life of its own, and from Slaanesh's empty palace, the twins plan to deepen those divides.

All told, in becoming a goddess, Morathi-Khaine angered Sigmar, forced Grungni out of hiding, and let Slaanesh manifest new agents abroad in the realms. But not every change to the divine landscape can be laid at her feet. The obliteration of Nagash's body was Teclis's doing, while the disappearance of the demigod Arkhan the Black, last seen plummeting over the edge of Hysh, is the work of Teclis's friend

and ally Eltharion. Living residents of both Hysh and Shyish rejoice at the news of Nagash's defeat, and with the remaining Mortarchs fighting amongst each other and Nagash's spirit confined to Shyish for the time being, it seems the dawn has triumphed over death. But Alarielle cautioned Teclis to be wary of the Great Necromancer's inevitable retaliation, and though he must recover inside his sanctum, Nagash's commands still reach across the realms.

Finally, no examination of the Era of the Beast is complete without mention of Kragnos and the great Waaagh! of Orruks, Grots, Ogors, Troggoths, and Gargants that now stomp across the cities of civilised folk, left flat in his wake. The End of Empires predates Sigmar and his petty pantheon, and though some may have forgotten his legend over the ages, the preaching of Gobsprakk and other Kruleboyz worshippers are both reviving old tales and spreading gory new ones. Kragnos' priorities are simple: first, he wants vengeance against his captors, and his hooves shall trample the realms until he has hunted the remaining Draconith to extinction.

Second, he shall topple the flimsy edifices of mortalkind, for neither Humans, Duardin, nor Aelves deserve to declare their supremacy while a Drogrukh still lives. These goals put him in direct conflict with the Stormcast Eternals and the Draconith, with brave hunters like Yndrasta welcoming the challenge Kragnos represents, but the other forces of Order are not so eager to join the fight. Their stance is similar to that of Morathi-Khaine and Lord Kroak. As the Shadow Queen put it: *'That which we cannot kill, we must redirect.'* Permanently defeating this primordial power seems out of the question, so the next best option is to divert Kragnos elsewhere. Thus unopposed, with a score of tempting targets wherever he turns, Kragnos rampages across the realms with his ever-growing horde of brutish and cunning worshippers. Where he walks, the earth shatters, and there is no denying the Era of the Beast has come.

PEOPLE OF THE REALMS

The fighting that led to the Era of the Beast centred around four major cities: Anvilgard (now Har Kuron), Settler's Gain, Vindicarum, and Excelsis. Of these cities, Settler's Gain suffered the least damage, saved as it was by Teclis's intervention, and Har Kuron's new occupiers preserved as much of the city as possible for their own use. Warpfire reduced entire districts to ashes in both Vindicarum and Excelsis however, and the shattered walls testify how close they came to annihilation. Rubble and mouldering bodies still line the streets in all four cities, and they shall take decades, if not centuries, to rebuild. These cities didn't stand alone, either. Though every settlement in this age endeavours to be self-sufficient, the four sites of battle were major powers in their regions, and they worked with many other Order-aligned peoples within their sphere of influence. Before, they were the places refugees, where the Reclaimed fled when war displaced them from their homes. Now, they can barely sustain their own citizenry, even though the tide of those seeking shelter has not slowed.

At the same time, travel between cities has trickled to a halt. The Kharadron air lanes, which were once the most reliable method of transportation across the realms, are struggling with the collapse of so many realmgates in Chamon. Not only must the sky-Duardin seek new routes out of the Spiral Crux, but they must also use their fuel sparingly, for the detonation of a Silver Tower and the corruption of the cursed skies have scattered Chamon's local aether-gold currents once again. Many maps were already outdated after the Great Gale of Death — now, with all their progress since the Garaktormun doubly undone, the Kharadron must focus on resupplying the lifeblood of their society before they can even think about conducting business with the wider realms. Maritime travel is also faltering. While the Scourge Privateers nominally serve Sigmar, their loyalty wavers as angry Azyrites blame them for Morathi-Khaine's treachery and the xenophobia of the Nullstone Brotherhood spreads. Many wolf-ships and Black Arks have simply abandoned familiar waters around the Ghurish

coastline, leaving Sigmar's cities to flounder while the Privateers take their business to more grateful customers. Without the expertise and strength of the Scourge, sailing vessels these days are easy prey for the Idoneth, who have grown increasingly brazen since their attack on Anvilgard.

So, with both sky and sea awash with strife, that leaves only the land, but overland travel remains as dangerous a prospect as ever. Kruleboyz and other followers of Gorkamorka watch the roads for new victims, while the cursed skies bring Daemons and Chaos worshippers with them wherever they spread. Apart from the Soulbound, the only travellers who have a decent chance of making it to their destination are the Dawnbringer Crusades, massive caravans that combine Stormcast Eternal escorts with throngs of mortal Devoted, lumbering cog-forts, and floating metaliths loaded with the infrastructure the Dawners need to establish themselves once they arrive.

A more cautious god might send these Crusades out piecemeal, or even wait until the status quo settled before launching these costly expeditions. Sigmar is a warrior-king however, and instead he has commanded his faithful to match the aggression of their enemies and take the offensive. Dozens of Dawnbringer Crusades, in every realm, have set out to reclaim lands lost to Chaos, Death, or Destruction. This grand campaign has raised many new bastions in the blighted lands, all while giving existing settlements space to repair the damage from the previous wars. But for every one that reaches its destination, another disappears. Even for the Dawnbringers who successfully plant their roots, the violence of reclamation has only just begun.

All these changes have made life in the Mortal Realms more isolated and more difficult than ever. News travels slower, shelter is harder to find, and god-like powers clash without warning, heedless of the collateral damage. Those who huddle in the overcrowded cities must ration their supplies, performing back-breaking labour day after day to rebuild crumbling defences. Meanwhile, those



who march with the Dawnbringers face a hostile landscape that will do everything in its power to eject them, all while Daemons, undead, and beasts pick off any who take so much as a single misplaced step. No matter where they turn, the people under Sigmar's rule face a trial of endurance and faith unlike any they've encountered before.

But where Sigmar's people struggle, the brutal and the cunning rejoice. Gorkamorka's followers have risen ascendant with the Era of the Beast, their bellies fuller, their fists bloodier, and their heads full of more schemes than ever before. Their changing fortunes can be attributed to a single source — Kragnos, the End of Empires, who is the perfect antidote to the bane of 'civilisation' that has infected the realms. Since the Age of Myth, the forces of Destruction have fought without a god on their side, and it is a testament to their natural might that they held their own even without a divine advantage. Now, with Kragnos free and loosening his stiff muscles with every battle, the scales have tipped firmly in Destruction's favour. The last Drogrukh is more than just a campfire tale or a vision received after eating a warty mushroom: he is as solid as a

mountain, and the rubble-strewn wildernesses created by his stampedes are the perfect habitats for Gorkamorka's followers. Here, the hunting is good, the mushrooms grow thick on the scattered corpses, the beats of the Waaagh! pulse loud, and the yoofs can test their mettle in an environment that's sure to toughen them up. While the soft people suffer during the Era of the Beast, the hard ones grow strong and powerful.

The benefits of Kragnos's emergence aren't just limited to Orruks and Grots either. All those who flourish in wild places, from the Sylvaneth to the Maggotkin, to the rambunctious Stormcast hunters called the Astral Templars, have found the Era of the Beast to their liking. They are uniquely suited to navigating the realms on foot, where those who rely on magic or crafted vessels now struggle, and with so many factions scattered or in disarray, personal strength matters now more than ever. Their allies, huddling inside city walls, might look askance at their wild ways, but they are exactly the kind of people who don't care about such judgements. In this new age, the people who embrace their inner beast are the ones who reign supreme.

THE FORCES OF ORDER

Order is guilty of many sins: among them pride, callousness, and zealotry, but its foremost failing in the Era of the Beast is distrust. In stark contrast to the Orruk warclans and the other followers of Gorkamorka, who have united as never before beneath mighty Kragnos, the already tenuous alliance of Order is coming apart at the seams. From the outside, one might understand the conflict inside the forces of Order as one between Aelves and the other species they fight alongside. But the Aelves are far from a monolith, and it takes only a cursory examination to see how the schism breaks down into smaller divides. Broadly speaking, there are enmities between Khainite Aelves and Stormcast Eternals, free city Aelves and their Human or Duardin co-citizens, Lumineth Aelves and the Sylvaneth who disapprove of their reckless actions, and even Idoneth Aelves and the Fyreslayers.

These grudges all manifest in varying ways, with varying degrees of severity between varying groups of people. For example, one Stormcast host might heed the God-King's reluctant call for peace with the Khainite temples, while another, unable to forgive the sting of betrayal, might draw their weapons immediately upon seeing a Blade-coven before them. Muddying the waters further, the latter host might then intermingle with the former, and it becomes magnitudes more difficult to separate the bloodthirsty and the vengeful from those whose hands are clean. Trust in such an environment is a fragile thing. Once broken, the blame is laid on entire peoples instead of just the perpetrators.

But if Order fights with itself for much longer, then its cities, roads, and books won't survive. Daughters of Khaine might chuckle on seeing the Kruleboyz pick apart a wayward Dawnbringer Crusade, and likewise Stormcast Eternals might give a wry smile if they found a Khainite idol defaced by Orruk vandals, but to rejoice at such things is folly, for when *one* force of Order falls, the odds for *every* other force of Order grow slimmer.

Only with their strengths and knowledge pooled together can the people protecting the realms hold against the coming threat. Grungni and Sigmar proved that when they created the first set of Thunderstrike Armour together, forging a spark of hope that could penetrate even the roiling darkness of the cursed skies. A Binding of champions, fighting together in these suspicious, desperate times, might do the same.

CITIES OF SIGMAR

The free cities have always been a conglomeration of factions masquerading as one, but in the Era of the Beast, their motley nature has become more apparent than ever. Some groups within the Cities of Sigmar, like the Scourge Privateers who abandoned Excelsis, barely even acknowledge their allegiance to Azyr anymore. These Aelven pirates, along with their kin in the Darkling Covens and the Order Serpentis, came under heavy scrutiny after forces among them joined Morathi in betraying Anvilgard. Of course, the vast majority of free city Aelves had no involvement in Anvilgard's fall, and indeed many stood against the Shadow Queen during the battle for the city. Such truths matter little to the Scourge's critics. The hateful attacks of organisations like the Nullstone Brotherhood prompted the Privateers to simply lift anchor and sail away, and in many cities where the Conclave fails to keep violence against Aelves in check, the docks are now suddenly vacant.

Other Aelves in the free cities, like the Wanderers and devotees of the Phoenix Temple, have a harder time just walking away. Often their only way to escape persecution is to join the Dawnbringer Crusades, which not only offer a way out but also a chance to return to their ancestral homelands or heal nature's suffering. Aelves are not the only ones to answer Sigmar's summons — other typical Dawnbringers include Devoted zealots compelled by their faith, Freeguilders eager to strike back against the enemies surrounding them, and Collegiate Arcane scholars whose mystical knowledge can cleanse the land of its corruption.

Life beneath the metaliths is no easier than one in the streets, but dying to reclaim the realms at least has more meaning than dying in a back alley to an anonymous mob. Often, the trials of the wastes bring the Dawners together, reminding them of their common enemy and shared dream. In other cases, suffering only drives the wedges deeper. The sad reality is the Free Peoples bring their prejudices and grievances with them, and the divisions that threaten the cities they came from are the same ones splitting apart the cities they're building.

While suspicion and distrust are spreading among so many of the Free Peoples, there is one group that is rallying together. The Dispossessed and the Duardin of the Ironweld Arsenal, inspired by the news of Grungni's return, have taken to their forges with vim and vigour, chanting ancestral hymns while their freshly polished family icons gleam around their necks. Many mason-elders, their eyes brighter and their beards bushier than they've been in decades, have banqueted the Kharadron and the Fyreslayers in the past few months, and over deep mugs of ale, they fondly recall the old Khazalid tales.

Centuries of divergence cannot be undone with a few drinks, but the mending bonds between Grungni's people demonstrate that the dream of a better world still lives.

The Free Peoples stand at a crossroads now, where one path leads to shattering apart and the other means forging themselves anew. It's up to them which they will choose.

YOUR CHARACTER

Many Soulbound from the free cities join the Dawnbringer Crusades, spearheading these perilous efforts into the forsaken lands. If you're from a city where a major battle was fought, you're marching into the territory of an enemy who threatened your home — the Legion of the First Prince if you come from Vindicarum, for example, or Kragnos himself if you're from Excelsis — and the stakes are personal. But even as you venture into the most hostile environments imaginable, you must be wary of those by your side, for unfortunately, the worst people in your faction now represent you in the eyes of your allies.



DAUGHTERS OF KHAINE

The Daughters of Khaine entered the spotlight after Morathi-Khaine's ascension. Hidden sects like the Zainthar Kai now reveal themselves, and the monstrous Scáthborn act more openly than ever before, led by Melusai Ironscales who act as Morathi-Khaine's field generals. Their naked ambition now plain to see, Morathi-Khaine's nascent empire extends its reach with slow surety, like a shadow stretching as the sun sets. By using Har Kuron as a beachhead, the Daughters of Khaine and their Idoneth allies have already seized other major Aqshian strongholds like Fort Foothold and Gladium, and Sigmar's truce with Morathi-Khaine has given the Khainite cults breathing room to plan their conquests.

Meanwhile, the Khainite religion itself is changing. To consolidate her power, Morathi-Khaine is replacing traditional icons of Khaine with her own visage, and those who protest against this sacrilege are silenced without hesitation.

While brazenness now defines Morathi-Khaine's actions, her opponents within the Daughters still excel at hiding in the shadows, and dissent spreads through the temples so subtly even the Scáthborn can't detect it. Whether Morathi-Khaine has overreached, either in conquest or heresy, is a question the Era of the Beast will decide.

YOUR CHARACTER

How loyal are you to Morathi-Khaine? If you trust the Shadow Queen, then the Era of the Beast is a joyous new age, for it has begun with the resurrection of your lost god. If your dedication has ever wavered, you have more reason than ever to suspect her true motives. Morathi-Khaine has tasked her Soulbound with expanding the Khainite empire, and though this might give you new allies, like the Idoneth or Scourge Privateers, it'll also make enemies of old ones. Both obedience and disobedience have consequences, and only you can decide which better serves Khaine.



IDONETH DEEPKIN

The loss of the Ocarian Lantern shook the Idoneth, for if their enemies could breach the abyss of Sarr Danoi, then nowhere in the oceans is safe. But when Morathi-Khaine, against all expectations, returned the Lantern to them, the Idoneth found their fears transforming into hope. The dimming of the Ocarian Lantern, though tragic, also meant that cruel Teclis could never use the artefact's light to find them, and the return of ancient Cythai souls into their care meant the Idoneth had a chance to reincarnate their most honoured ancestors. Though many enclaves hesitated to work with the Khainites further, the glut of stolen souls from Anvilgard rejuvenated their dying species like no other raid in history. Such a gift convinced the last Idoneth Deepkin holdouts of the merits of joining the Khainite campaigns.

The stirring of the Deepkin has cost the Forces of Order, though. As more outposts disappear beneath the ethersea and more souls vanish into the depths, the free cities beg their few Idoneth contacts to remember their common enemy, while less forgiving factions like the Fyreslayers sharpen their axes and prepare for retribution. So long as the Idoneth's future relies on extinguishing the hope of the surface, peace between them seems unlikely.

YOUR CHARACTER

As an Idoneth Soulbound, your lifespan elongated by the Ritual of Binding, you might have known the Cythai when they still lived. Now that the Ocarian Lantern has brought their souls within your grasp, you might be eager to meet your old friends again, but restoring the dead to life will require many trials. Such quests are not easy in the Era of the Beast. Luckily, you also have new allies in the Daughters of Khaine. Do you enjoy working with them? Do you trust them? One way or another, recent events have pushed you out of the seclusion you've known for a lifetime and driven you towards the surface.



FYRESLAYERS

As part of his ritual to corrupt Chamon's skies, Be'lakor destroyed the magmahold of Gulgrymstok. His Daemons slaughtered the defenders until only a dozen remained, then engulfed the realmgate at the magmahold's centre, Kostarg's Way, with Chaos magic until the portal detonated. Only the timely intervention of Endrinmaster Humboldsson and his ship the *Redoubtable* saved Gulgrymstok's Duardin from complete annihilation, but in truth the survivors already thought themselves dead. Having sworn the oath of barazakdum, their axes lit with the fire that burned their home to ashes, they sought only vengeance against the Legion of the First Prince. When the *Redoubtable* eventually delivered them to the siege of Vindicarum, they fought with a fiery fury, making the Daemons pay tenfold for every Duardin they had killed.

Gulgrymstok was more than just a minor lodge. As a vassal of the Vostarg and a trade partner with the sky-port of Barak-Nar, Gulgrymstok represented the friendship between two great Duardin powers, and its destruction incensed them both. It was not the only magmahold to fall during Be'lakor's attacks, either. As a result, Fyreslayers across the realms have hammered fresh runes into their skin, their burning eyes fixed toward the clouded skies as they swear to honour their fallen kin.

YOUR CHARACTER

Though your culture owes more to Grimgni than Grungni, the news of the Maker's return is still a boon to all Duardin. As Soulbound, you are in a particularly fitting position to join hands with Kharadron and Dispossessed in a show of Duardin unity, but you can also disregard the oldest remaining Duardin god in the traditional Fyreslayer manner, with a blade in your hand and a song on your lips. Having heard the news from the Spiral Crux, you are keen to hunt Daemons who serve Be'lakor, and where others flee from the cursed skies, you run toward them with fiery purpose.



KHARADRON OVERLORDS

The situation could be worse, the Kharadron tell themselves. The actions of one brave admiral kept the Spiral Crux from hosting a lesser Shyish Nadir, while the intervention of another saved Vindicarum from becoming a new throne to Chaos, and for a brief, miraculous moment, the Second Madraltan Conference resembled the first. The Kharadron came together, combining the innovations of a new age with respect for the ancestors, and as one they decided to act in each other's best interest, not just their own. Sadly the corruption raging through Chamon can't be healed in a moment, and the Kharadron have a long, stormy trip ahead of them.

Trapped in the Spiral Crux, with the aether-gold currents blown askew by Be'lakor's machinations, the Kharadron Overlords face more challenges than anyone else during the Era of the Beast. The scattered sky-ports must establish new trade routes, supply

lines, and defences even as the clouds split apart and spew unreality around them. The Arkanauts, full of bluster and Bugman's, say there is opportunity in adversity, and they'll all be rich once the Era of the Beast is over. First though, they must survive, and the chances seem slim.

YOUR CHARACTER

Most Kharadron just want to know what happened — with the Spiral Crux cut off from the wider realms, information regarding the Kharadron homeland is hard to acquire, and separating rumour from fact is nigh impossible. Whether you were in Chamon when the cursed skies appeared or voyaging outside the realm, you seek a new route to replace all the connections the sky-ports lost. This undiscovered route serves more than just sentiment: whoever charts it first shall make fortunes selling the maps to the admiralty, and the prospect of profit has given you extra motivation.

GRUNGNI'S RETURN

In the guise of an ageing Arkanaut, Grungni the Maker saved Vindicarum. He revealed himself to spare Morathi-Khaine from the God-King's wrath, and then in Azyr, with Sigmar and the Six Smiths, he forged the Thunderstrike Armour which allows the Stormcast Eternals to keep fighting beneath the cursed skies. Yet to his followers, these acts don't seem significant enough to justify Grungni's return from exile. They believe Grungni still has a higher, unrevealed purpose, though what it is they cannot say. People turn to everything from ancient Khazalid rune-texts to starry-eyed Azyrite soothsayers to divine Grungni's true motives, but the most compelling theory uses evidence not from any of these vaunted sources, but from the Hobgrots. Best known as lackeys of the Kruleboyz, the Hobgrots say they're conducting brisk business

with Duardin who worship an ancient deity named Hashut. The forges of these Chaos Duardin churn out all manner of twisted new weaponry, the scraps of which the Hobgrots happily peddle to their customers, and the activities of this old enemy might have compelled Grungni to meddle in the affairs of mortals once again.

Whatever his reasons, Grungni's presence has already deeply affected the Duardin. Having gone without a god for so long, many are loath to welcome him back with open arms. Others see Grungni's return as a sign that their labours matter – in a time when the forces of Destruction tear down everything that mortalkind raises, Grungni reminds his followers that some things are still worth building.

LUMINETH REALM-LORDS

The strength of mountains laid the foundation for the Lumineth's emergence into the realms, but during the War of Light and Death, they needed the speed of the wind instead. Thus the Hurakan aelementiri debuted in force outside Hysh for the first time since the Spirefall, as did the Tyrionic nations of Alumnia and Helon, both of whom valued dexterity, agility, and curiosity. Their timing was fortuitous, for now that foes like the Living Earthquake have entered the fray, the Lumineth benefit greatly from having aelementors who can outmanoeuvre Kragos in addition to ones who can match his strength.

Scars from the war disrupt the symmetry of Hysh — from Xintil, where the Nighthaunt invaded Settler's Gain, to Haixiah, where the Null Myriad made their stand. Like all wounds caused by Death, they are slow to heal. The Cathallars work tirelessly

to manage the Lumineth's mourning, and as their censers grow heavy with grief, they turn their veiled faces outward to the other realms. Shyish was just the beginning. To save the realms from disorder, the Lumineth intend to sanctify them all, and woe betide any who stand in the way of such charity.

YOUR CHARACTER

Teclis may be satisfied with his symbolic victories in Shyish, but the dead don't give up so easily, and thus you must still fight the Illuminator's war. If you find undead during your travels, they likely feel particular ire toward you. At the same time, life surges through the realms due to Alarielle's ritual, and the connection you have with the aelementors means you can feel the land itself stirring. Guided by the teachings of the Hysha-Mhensa, you must find a way to balance the energies of life and death that surround you.

SERAPHON

The Seraphon made heavy sacrifices before the Era of the Beast. During the Age of Myth, many irreplaceable Slann Starmasters gave up their lives to imprison Kragnos, knowing one day he would break free from the mountain. As Maggotkin converged on the Genesis Gate, the Seraphon let the Steel Souls die just so they could reach the Silver Tower a few hours faster. When that same Silver Tower detonated, Lord Kroak deemed the collapse of an entire chain of realmgates worth the cost. In the merciless calculations of the Great Plan, such losses no doubt justify themselves, but only beings like the Slann can truly understand how.

Mortals, struggling to understand the Seraphon, can at least observe a few direct consequences of their actions. Lord Kroak himself intervened to divert Kragnos from Excelsis, although the city's salvation seemed an unintended side-effect rather than his actual aim. Shortly thereafter, the Seraphon released the last remaining Draconith from stasis, and the union of these ancient creatures with Sigmar's celestial warriors has proven a potent combination. The Seraphon's intentions going forward remain mysterious as ever, but their intention to destroy Chaos remains a universal constant.

YOUR CHARACTER

For you, the dramas of the Era of the Beast are as unremarkable as a line of dominoes falling over — they were events happening in an inevitable sequence, nothing more. As a Skink or Saurus, you barely understand the Great Plan better than the warm-blooded, but you trust your Slann's orders without question. Currently, those orders might be to deliver a clutch of Draconith eggs to a besieged Stormkeep, or to guide a party toward a surviving realmgate in the Spiral Crux. Your task could change at a moment's notice, and your thoughts on the matter are as incomprehensible as everything else about you. For more on playing Seraphon, see the supplement *Stars and Scales*.

SYLVANETH

The winter of the Necroquake fades away, and in spring the pipers play. Alarielle's ritual at the Oak of Ages Past created a new strain of Sylvaneth, the Warsong Revenant, and these fey musicians not only amplify the spirit-song, but also conduct it into complex new melodies. With this resurgent strength, Sylvaneth in every realm gird their wyldwoods with fresh greenery, hard bark, and sharp thorns, and as a result they are the only Order faction whose homes have become less vulnerable in the Era of the Beast.

But just as the Sylvaneth grow stronger, so too do their enemies. The Beasts of Chaos howl outside their groves, and Nurgle's chortling has an angry undertone as he sees his foetid swamps cleansed and replanted. Both sides are committing fresh forces to battle across the Everspring Swathe, such as in Invidia and around the River Vitalis, and in particular the Genesis Gate has attracted much attention. Closed at great cost during the Realmgate Wars, Alarielle reopened the Arcway to the Eightpoints for the combined Stormcast-Khainite invasion. The Sylvaneth still hold it, but once Archagon finishes with Katakros, the easy access it provides to Ghyran makes it a tempting target.

YOUR CHARACTER

Listening to old voices born anew, you feel the raw energy of life coursing through you. Even uncontrollable Drycha Hamadreth assisted the Everqueen in the ritual at the Oak of Ages Past, and this show of unity by your people is a welcome balm in these troubled times. Unfortunately, a direct consequence of the rite was Kragnos's escape. As a steward of the wild, you stand on the frontlines of this new assault on the natural order. Your duty is clear — to show that the dumb aggression of Destruction is just as disruptive to the cycle of life as the cities they tear down, and to demonstrate the might of a forest that grows in harmony.



STORMCAST ETERNALS

The name Stormcast “Eternal” becomes less fitting by the day. Already, during the Arcanum Optimar, there were tales of Nighthaunt who could ensnare a dying Stormcast Eternal inside spectral prisons, or even Ogors who wanted nothing more than to feast on lightning souls. Now Chaos has found a way to slay the warriors of Azyr permanently as well. During the battle at Varanthax’s Maw, many Stormcast Eternals fought with the belief that they’d return to the heavens when they fell, but instead they found themselves caught inside Chaos Warshrines, imprisoned for the Ruinous Powers to torment.

These Warshrines may have inspired Be’lakor’s cursed skies, for they work much the same way, ensnaring wayward Stormcast souls and reducing them to shrieking lightning gheists as raw Chaos erodes their sanity. Nearly all the major Stormcast hosts suffered heavy losses in the defence of the free cities — notably, Be’lakor annihilated the Sigmarite Brotherhood completely, the Hammers of Sigmar escaped from the Eightpoints with only a fraction of their number, and the Celestial Vindicators barely have a city to call their own anymore, let alone the numbers to protect it. As the Six Smiths reforge those who returned upon the Anvil of Apotheosis, their surviving brethren are painfully aware that the Flaw of Reforging still goes uncorrected. Sigmar did not

choose warriors who succumbed easily to despair, and so the Stormcast Eternals keep fighting. New formations like the Thunderstrike Host go forth armed and armoured with the products of Grungni’s long, lonely research, while the Stormdrake Guard are composed of not just Stormcast Eternals but also their newly hatched Draconith allies, released at last from their temporally-suspended incubation. Stormcast Eternals, both old and new, escort the mortal members of the Dawnbringer Crusades, and they can but hope that striking out into the wastes is courage, not folly.

YOUR CHARACTER

You must remember that the roiling, Chaos-infused storm clouds do not bring the release of oblivion. They hold only torture and torment, and if your service is to ever end, it is not beneath those cursed skies. As you fight in the Era of the Beast, you have many fallen siblings to avenge, as well as many fragile, hopeful mortals to protect. You can go cautiously, like the Stormcast engineers who secure every inch they gain in enemy territory, or boldly, like the hunters who clash with the Kruleboyz out in the wild, but one way or another you must go forward to your duty. A brand new set of Thunderstrike armour can be yours, when you next return to your Stormhost – be that during downtime, or after Reforging.



THE FORCES OF CHAOS

Chaos bides its time in the Era of the Beast. The major players who serve the Dark Gods largely don't feature in the wars that broke the realms, instead using this time to gather their strength or conclude old campaigns. Archaon, for instance, was notably absent when the Stormcast-Khainite alliance invaded his Varanite mining operation, for he had his hands full contending with the Mortarch Katakros and the Ossiarch fortification built around the Endgate. Korghos Khul, like many other champions of Khorne, had his own wars to fight while Morathi's schemes played out elsewhere, and while the Gaunt Summoners and their Silver Towers featured in some of Be'lakor's battles, for the most part Tzeentch's servants stayed in the shadows, working as ever on their twisted schemes.

Even if the most powerful Chaos champions were not directly involved, the pressure they put on sane reality is constant. The presence of Chaos wounded

many gods and demigods as they conducted their rituals or executed their plans, and now the servants of the Dark Powers wait to capitalise on these lingering weaknesses.

Of course, a few made significant plays for power too, during this time. Notably, Be'lakor used Daemons of every variety in his schemes, while Slaanesh's increasing activity has gained them many new mortal followers in the form of the ostentatious Sybarites. Wittingly or not, mortals are always succumbing to the temptations of Chaos, and the hardships suffered by so many Dawnbringer Crusades make them particularly vulnerable to corruption. Finally, though Kragnos does not spare Dreadholds or Chaos legions in his rampages, by occupying so much of Sigmar's attention, he has benefited the Dark Gods far more than he has hurt them. After all, when the people of the realms become distracted fighting each other, that is when the Ruinous Powers become the most dangerous.



BLADES OF KHORNE

The Blood God's direct contribution to the Era of the Beast was minimal, almost nonexistent. At best, one could argue that he participated in the Siege of Vindicarum via the Bloodletters in the Legion of the First Prince, led by a reluctantly loyal Bloodthirster named Kazarkos who fell in an earlier battle to a Stardrake's celestial breath. Beyond that, neither Khorne's mortal followers, nor his Daemons fought much in the pivotal battles — their slaughterous attentions fell elsewhere, with Aqshy the worst assailed. But war, no matter who wages it, honours Khorne. All that bloodshed infused him and his servants with fresh power, and as the new age dawns, they seek any possible arena to release that pent-up fury.

Like the Orruk warclans, the Blades of Khorne roam constantly in search of worthy challenges, and they exult just as much as Gorkamorka's followers in the heady rush of combat. As a result, they are prospering during the Era of the Beast almost as much as their wild rivals, and the two factions often clash as they spill out of their traditional territories. The Bloodbound and Blood Legions also fight with renewed vigour against the Dawnbringer Crusades, for gore spills all the easier once the God-King's toadies leave their precious cities.

THREAT

Kazarkos hasn't forgotten his ignominious defeat. To draw Lord-Celestant Diocis and his Stardrake Raxastemes onto the field to settle the business of vengeance, the Greater Daemon has decided to target the hatcheries of the Dracothian Guard, where precious Draconith eggs incubate and emerge from stasis. However, Diocis and Raxastemes fell permanently with the rest of the Sigmarite Brotherhood, a fact which Kazarkos is convinced is a ruse for their cowardice. Another group of heroes must stop the Bloodthirster and his followers, or else he will drive the already endangered Draconith that much closer to extinction, and the ancient reptilian warriors will lose faith that their new Stormcast allies can protect them.

MAGGOTKIN OF NURGLE

The Bleeding Gate, in Invidia, is the largest realmgate connecting Shyish to Ghyran's Everspring Swathe. Around this portal, the Maggotkin fought three of Mannfred von Carstein's armies to prevent him from turning the Bleeding Gate into a lesser nadir. Infamous figures among Nurgle's children, like Horticultural Slimux, Rotigus, Gortle Pulp skull, and Noddrack the Snitch, arrived to oppose the Mortarch, whose presence baited not only them but also Alarielle herself into fighting over the Minuet Rivers. In truth, the Maggotkin need not have rallied such strength — the Mortarch of Night had always planned to flee, using the Maggotkin as an excuse to retreat and consolidate his holdings in Shyish.

Elsewhere in Ghyran, the Maggotkin spread their plagues with opportunistic glee. They slaughtered many Steel Souls in their attempts to take the Genesis Gate, and hid plague-mites in the fur of the Gor-kin who attacked the Oak of Ages Past. While Alarielle's rite empowered the Sylvaneth to uproot the undead from their homes, it also gave the Maggotkin of Nurgle fresh hosts and lands to parasitise. Such is the nature of their eternal rivalry that, when wholesome life grows strong, its rotting mirror does as well.

THREAT

The crotchety Maggotkin cannot abide this newfangled Sylvaneth music. To drown out the playing of the Warsong Revenants, dozens of Sloppity Bilepipers have emerged from the Realm of Chaos, and the caterwauling of their pestilent gutpipes echoes throughout the forests. This is a sonic war that shapes the landscape, as one melody heals the woods and the other sickens them, and the Sylvaneth need help. A party that gets involved might have to assassinate a Bilepiper in the middle of a gross concert, or perhaps they must escort Sylvaneth from other glades to lend their voices to the spirit song.





HEDONITES OF SLAANESH

Slaanesh's freedom approaches by a matter of degrees. Until then, they entrust the indulgence and excess of the Mortal Realms to his children. The Newborn, created when Morathi opened a connection to Slaanesh in Uhl-Gysh, attracted crowds of worshippers with its perfumed scent and rippling form. In this throng came Sybarites, mortal followers of Slaanesh, never seen in such force before: Blissbarb Archers whose eyes drink in as much visual stimulation as possible, Symbaresh Twinsouls fused with Slaaneshi Daemons, and even Slaangors with crab-like claws and horns shimmering with gold. Even before they emerged from their shared chrysalis, Dexcessa and Synessa made the Nullstone Brotherhood of Excelsis their thralls through whispers alone, and nearly seized the city as their neonatal conquest.

Though banished to the Palace of Slaanesh for a time, the twin Daemons make frequent forays into the realms, bewitching scores of new followers with

their mere presence and delighting in all the cruel pleasures the mortal world offers. The Dark Prince's whispers work their way into dreams and idle thoughts once more, and the ranks of the Sybarites swell by the day. With their master's return surely so close at hand, they see the Era of the Beast as the beginning of a revel that will never end.

THREAT

Life in the Dawnbringer Crusades is hard, but the mortal leaders of this particular expedition take a perverse pleasure in austerity, forbidding the pilgrims, reclaimers, and other hopeful travellers under their command from having even the simplest pleasures or comforts. Anything taken to excessive extremes, even deprivation, feeds Slaanesh, and many among the leadership might already be in the Dark Prince's thrall. The party, tasked with making sure the Dawnbringers reach their new home safely, must separate the misguided from the truly lost, all while keeping the caravan safe from the dangers circling around them.

DISCIPLES OF TZEENTCH

The Gaunt Summoners of Tzeentch, commanders of the Silver Towers, have struggled of late. The Eater of Tomes, a Gaunt Summoner obedient to Archaon, won the battle at Varanthax's Maw, but still lost the Everchosen's precious Varanite to Morathi. Then, distracted by his hunt for Stormcast stragglers, the Eater of Tomes permitted a Seraphon army to reach his very doorstep, and though he did his best to flee, both he and his Silver Tower ultimately detonated under the force of the Seraphon's cosmic engines. Finally, the Gaunt Summoner of another Silver Tower couldn't repel the Clans Eshin infiltrators who planted a warpstone bomb at the heart of their twisted sanctum, which wrecked the crystalline fortress's interior. Though schemes are Tzeentch's forte, the Gaunt Summoners' foresight and planning proved lacking.

Hopeful Tzeentchian disciples might look at Kragnos and his simpleton followers and assume they have a golden opportunity with such easy fools to manipulate, but Tzeentch's followers excel in complex and twisted environments, not the plain, brutal ruins made when Orruks tear down a city. When they try their games here, they find the forces of Destruction are cunning as well as brutal, playing by wild rules that Tzeentch never taught them.

THREAT

Damaged but not destroyed, the Silver Tower sabotaged by Be'lakor's Skaven cronies lands near the party. Even in its impaired state, the Silver Tower emanates change-magic, warping the region around it. Already, those who live nearby are trying to evacuate, and the land heaves as dirt turns to flesh and the waters swirl with iridescent runoff. But the Silver Tower is also in dire need of repairs, and as its residents scramble to cast sorceries to bolster it, champions of Order have a chance to disable it for good. After all, the realmgate it was connected to have already been destroyed. What more could go wrong?

THE SKAVEN

As always, the Skaven scurry about and gnaw at reality, reminding everyone that entropy ruins all plans. For example, they helped usher in the Era of the Beast by creating the cursed skies — though Be'lakor set up the realmgates to fall, it was an Eshin Deathmaster who pressed the trigger to destroy them all. Later, a Warlock Bombardier named Rattachak weakened Excelsis in preparation for its takeover, setting fire to half the city while Skaven spilled out of the sewers and gunned down Excelsis' defenders. The Children of the Horned Rat caused immense devastation, all while the blame fell on their clients, rather than them.

This tactic, where the Skaven kill and take as they please while hiding behind their employers, seems to work well in the Era of the Beast. With titans like Kragnos throwing their weight around, many Skaven opt to get behind these powerful forces rather than stand in the ring alone. When protected by a bigger and more immediate threat, the Skaven can watch their enemies exhaust themselves fighting each other, all while waiting for the moment when they inevitably betray them all.

THREAT

Rattachak hasn't blown himself up yet, but he's trying. Loyal to Synessa and Dexcessa the same way a bomb is loyal to the person who threw it, the Warlock Bombardier has now set his sights on the Order of Azyr, who earned the twins' ire after the ven Densts and their ally, the White Reaper, banished Synessa in Excelsis. Unfortunately for the local chapter of the Order, the Skaven have watched them and know their methods. Only a group of unfamiliar faces has a chance at getting close to Rattachak, and if they don't stop him soon, then it's the witch hunters who'll burn.



THE FORCES OF DEATH

Life and light have swept away the pall cast by the Necroquake, and the power of Death wanes. But every braying beast eventually succumbs to age, and the undead wait, knowing they shall rise again.

In Nagashizzar, the Great Necromancer recovers his strength, regenerating his body through a combination of macabre sorceries and sheer willpower. His Mortarchs, left to their own devices, have scattered, each pursuing their own goals. The only exception, Arkhan the Black, is gone, dealt a blow by Eltharion that sent him tumbling over Hysh's edge.

All who saw him fall assume the raw magical energies beyond the edge of reality annihilated him, though if anyone could survive a plummet past the Perimeter Inimical, it'd be the Mortarch of Sacrament. Meanwhile, Orpheon Katakros continues his war against Archaon, refusing to back down, and Lady Olynder hunts for Be'lakor, making good on her promise for reckoning now that their short-lived alliance is over. As for Neferata and Mannfred, the two are at each other's throats as always, grasping at the other's territory even as Death loses ground across the realms. None of the Mortarchs seem eager to collaborate, nor do any have the ability to overpower and rule the others.

As for the undead masses, obedience is still their curse. The Supreme Lord of Undeath may be indisposed, his few commands now delivered by proxy, but his judgments remain, and the various Wights, Vampires, Bonereapers, and gheists in his thrall must carry out their last orders as best as possible. Even when the rapid changes sweeping across the realms make such orders senseless, the dead must execute them, hoping against hope for an escape from this futile existence.

CHAMPIONS OF DEATH

While Nagash's absence has caused only more suffering for most of the dead, those whose strength is on par with the Soulbound have a rare chance. Independent and intelligent enough to make their own choices, these champions of Death can use the Era of the Beast to seize their freedom.

The Mortarchs, though powerful, do not have the Great Necromancer's limitless reach, and the subtle can use the upheaval of Destruction's resurgence to their advantage. The more open their defiance, the greater the eventual repercussions, but death-aligned parties might happily pay such a price if it saves loved ones who still live, ensures revenge against their killers, or gains them more power in the long run. Of course, not all who can betray Nagash necessarily want to, and they might instead spend the Era of the Beast quickening his recovery or carrying out the rare direct orders he has the strength to give.



FLESH-EATER COURTS

Ghouls aren't truly dead, even if they are saturated with deathly energy, and their common delusion makes their actions difficult to predict. The Ossiararch Bonereapers discovered this to their cold displeasure during the War of Light and Death, when the Ossifector Xaramos enlisted the local Flesh-eater Court to fight against the Lumineth. While Gorstane Mortevevell, Abhorrant Archregent and Bright Emperor of the Vertiginous Peaks, remained loyal to Nagash, his vassal Varshorn chafed at the demand that he sacrifice his own loyal followers to the bone-tithe. In a courageous act befitting a king loved by his people, Varshorn tore Xaramos's head off, thus depriving Nagash of Xaramos's boneshaping expertise and inadvertently abetting the Lumineth in their war effort, ultimately enabling their victory.

With the forces of Death now fractured, the Ossiararch response is long away, and the Flesh-eater Courts are free to entertain all their flights of fancy. In their delusional optimism, the Ghouls see the Era of the Beast as everything except what it really is. Some Ghouls look dewy-eyed at the stampeding Orruks, convinced that these beautiful, noble beasts have come to spread their life-giving blessings to grey and forlorn lands, while others descend on the Waaagh!s, shrieking blessings to the fates for this cornucopia of good hunting.

THREAT

Bright Emperor Gorstane Mortevevell, horrified that one of his own betrayed the kind and beneficent Nagash, has decided to personally execute Varshorn, the treacherous king of Starfang Mont. The Lumineth hearing of this development are largely glad to know the undead have turned on each other, and they're too occupied rebuilding Ymetrica to interfere even if they had the inclination. What they don't realise is that Varshorn's delicate position of power is vital to maintaining the internecine conflicts between the local Flesh-eater Courts. The party must ensure this unwitting ally's delusion triumphs over his rival's; as where one example is set, others may soon follow.

NIGHTHAUNT

Sylontum, a gloomy citadel shrouded by elemental grief, is the capital of the Nighthaunt empire of Dolorum, and the Sanctum of Anguish, where Lady Olynder's own sarcophagus lies, is the centre. Be'lakor reached this innermost sanctum with a surprise attack against the Nighthaunt fortress, but instead of destroying Lady Olynder's corpse, he used it as a bargaining chip with the Mortarch of Grief. They agreed on a temporary alliance, and thus the Nighthaunt processions joined the Legion of the First Prince in destabilising realmgates throughout the Spiral Crux. For their labours, they reaped a fair portion of the souls of the fallen Sigmarite Brotherhood, many of whom went into the hands of spectral torturers called the Krulghast Cruciators.

The truce between Nighthaunt and Daemon is now over, but the Gheists still capitalise on the effects of the cursed skies. Eager to extract more secrets from the Stormcast Eternals or simply inflict more suffering upon them, the Nighthaunt shadow the cursed skies. The festering clouds snare most of the storm-infused souls before the Nighthaunt can catch them, but every so often they succeed in catching one of Sigmar's chosen, who face a grim fate as they're dragged toward Shyish.

THREAT

Having died upon the rack or the flensing table themselves, the Krulghasts know how to draw out every moment of their victim's suffering. Before the Era of the Beast, they spent their tortured (and torturing) existences in hidden oubliettes throughout the underworlds, working slow agonies on the souls delivered to them. But during the battle for the Gate of White Gold, the Krulghast Cruciators emerged, and canny trackers might follow their ethereal trail back to their now-exposed lairs. If such heroes move fast enough, they might even save souls from the Sigmarite Brotherhood before pain obliterates their identities completely.

OSSIARCH BONEREAPERS

Teclis burned his way through the heartland of the Ossiarch Empire, toppling the Triptych statues while his Hurakan riders slew several towering Ossiarch behemoths in Equuis Main. The geomantic runes of the Lumineth anchored multiple underworlds in place, slowing their slide toward the Shyish Nadir, and these symbolic victories gave the living hope. As a result, mortals throughout Shyish have found the courage to refuse the bone-tithe and fight against the Ossiarch Empire once more. Subsequent defeats in Hysh weakened the Ossiarch Bonereapers further, and the protracted engagement between Katakros and Archaon has proven a costly drain on the empire's resources.

The Ossiarch Bonereapers, however patient, do not falter at their losses. Already they are collecting the Aelven corpses strewn throughout the Prime Innerlands, carving up both their skeletons and souls to create war-constructs of surpassing intelligence and agility. Dawnbringer Crusades and Big Waaagh!s also leave bones aplenty, and given time, the cautious Bonereapers will have all the resources to rebuild their necrotopia at almost no cost to themselves. When they next strike out in force, they shall do so with the alacrity of the Lumineth, the tenacity of the Dawnbringers, and the ferocity of wild beasts.

THREAT

Created to resist the raw magic at the realm's edge, the Null Myriad have an unmatched resilience to the arcane. They are not, however, totally immune. A Null Myriad survivor from the battle in Haixiah has crawled through the nearest realmgate, its mind expanded by enlightening magic, its form repaired using the bodies of its fallen brethren. The gargantuan, ossified abomination is now a hulking tangle of limbs and faces, as intelligent as it is strong, and its hunger for more material to build itself is insatiable. Whatever inspired, maddening final form it envisions for itself is impossible to describe until the Bonereaper's work is complete.

SOULBLIGHT GRAVELORDS

Vampires, always the most ambitious of Nagash's servants, see the Era of the Beast as a time of opportunity. Often bestial in behaviour, Soulblight Vampires at every tier of the Midnight Aristocracy seek to grow in power and influence. For example, Mannfred von Carstein planned to lose his invasion into Invidia, all so he could 'retreat' into Neferata's holdings and secure them as his own. Neferata, not to be outdone, already had agents inside Mannfred's own territory, deposing his lieutenants or swaying them to her side. Elsewhere in Shyish, lesser Soulblight Vampires assert their mastery over other undead, while monstrous Vargskyr and Vargheists hunt with animal fervour in the wilds created by Kragnos' followers.

Overall, with Nagash ensconced in Nagashizzar, the Era of the Beast exacerbates the relative independence that characterises the Gravelords. They can parlay with the Great Necromancer's most hated enemies, like the Stormcast Eternals, without fear of his immediate retribution, and some even hope to break from Nagash's control completely. The proud Wight sovereigns find themselves beholden to nothing but their own purpose once more, and eager necromancers wipe the dust off forbidden tomes, studying Nagash's most guarded secrets while he recovers.

THREAT

As insightful as Neferata is, she didn't expect so much of the Spiral Crux to collapse after she left. Many Nulahmian informers and assassins are now stranded in Chamon, flitting between shadows as they spy on Kharadron Overlord scouts who are also looking to escape. Getting these Vampires back to Shyish is in everyone's best interests, for while they remain in Chamon, they slake their thirst in sky-ports and cities which can ill afford to lose more souls. Only a party as crafty as Neferata's servants can hope to work with them while not getting manipulated in turn.

THE FORCES OF DESTRUCTION

It began with a persistent, soul-deep thump. Echoing from Kragno's prison beyond space and time, this relentless rhythm pounded in the heads of all Gorkamorka's children. Few among the forces of Destruction understood what they were hearing, but nevertheless they followed the sound to Ghur, their own heartbeats quickening as the drumming grew louder. Such a concentration of hooligans and schemers created no end of entertainment for themselves in the Ghurish Hinterlands, waiting as they were for the beat to reach its peak, and as a result, Gorkamorka's followers were largely absent from the battles preceding the Era of the Beast. No Orruk, Grot, Ogor, or Gargant played a major role in the wars of Morathi-Khaine, Teclis, or Be'lakor. While scouts and astromancers reported on the worrying convergence of the Waaagh!s in Ghur, the gods were too busy squabbling with each other to notice the warning signs.

Then the End of Empires bashed his way out of the mountain, and all the emperors and empresses suddenly started paying attention. Kragno's following merged with that of Gordrakk, the Fist of Gork, as they both approached Excelsis, and together they brought the biggest Waaagh! since the Age of Myth crashing into the City of Secrets. Through Morathi-Khaine and Lord Kroak's intervention, the city escaped annihilation by the slimmest margin, but the sheer force displayed that day had a galvanising effect on all the forces of Destruction. The legend of 'Da Boss Trampa' are told around gutbashes and campfires, drawing even the reclusive Kruleboyz out of their misty swamps. In every realm, the wilds reclaim lands that foolish civilisations thought they could tame, and howling hordes proclaim both their rising supremacy and the start of a new age: the Era of the Beast.

CHAMPIONS OF DESTRUCTION

There is no better time to be a champion of Destruction. Alarielle's rite, Kragno's emergence, and Gordrakk's ambitions have turned the realms into a gargantuan free-for-all, and the scraps you've had in recent days are the most fun you've had in ages. The rules of this new era are exactly the ones you know the best, and you're eager to rise to the top with some honest (or not-so-honest) bouts with whoever stands in your way. New Bindings, smashed together by Kragno, rampage in search of upstart cities to level, while champions of Destruction in Order-aligned parties find their soft allies suddenly appreciating their wild ways. After all, if your mates in the forces of Destruction happen to be the strongest gits around, you'll duff them up as happily as anyone else. In a time like this, even 'civilised' folks are eager to recruit a brutish ally to their side.



GLOOMSPITE GITZ

Skragrott the Loonking did his best to steer Gordrakk on the right path. Using the gibbering prophecies of his fungal seers, Skragrott identified three artefacts which would ensure Gordrakk's victory in Excelsis and ultimately open a path to Azyr itself. Unfortunately, patience was never one of Gordrakk's virtues, and he commenced the invasion instead of following all of Skragrott's instructions. Fuming at this disrespect to his prodigious and clearly superior intellect, Skragrott has retreated to Skrappa Spill to figure out what course might next draw the Bad Moon's attention.

Gloomspite Gitz everywhere are doing much the same thing. Now that the fun on the Coast of Tusks is over, the Grots and Troggoths go back to their dank lairs and — at least in the Grots' case — plan their next steps. Kragnos is as much their god as anyone else's, bathed in the Bad Moon's light when he broke free from Twinhorn Peak, and the Gitz love to festoon the ruins he leaves behind with mushrooms and spiderwebs. Sadly, their ability to manipulate him is stymied by the Kruleboyz, who seem poised to depose the Grots as the brains of the forces of Destruction.

THREAT

The siege of Excelsis is over, so the remnants of Glogg's Trogherd — after their unwitting leader's demise — supposes that it's time to go home. The fact that Glogg's former home, the Spiral Crux, is now cut off from the wider realms doesn't seem to bother them. Amazingly, after gathering all along the way from Glogg's old troghole to the Realm of Ghur, at least one member of this idiotic Trogherd might know of a route to the Spiral Crux that Be'lakor didn't destroy. To follow them along it, though, the party must ensure that the mile-long mob of lesser Troggoths and Squigs don't get distracted by anything along the way.



OGOR MAWTRIBES

As Excelsis scrambled to prepare for Kragnos' approach, an Ogor mercenary company appeared to provide their services. During a pivotal moment of the siege, the mercenaries betrayed the Knights Excelsior, tearing apart the Stormcast shieldwall from within and giving the invaders the northern wall. The turncoats thought only of the rewards they'd receive from Skragrott, having planned this betrayal with the Loonking long in advance, but the repercussions of their actions rippled far beyond this one company. Most already considered Ogor mercenaries unfaithful, but at least they could expect the Ogors to wait until after the battle to turn on their employers. Now, the free cities close their gates to Ogors of all kinds, forcing the mercenaries to find work elsewhere.

Unfortunately for the free peoples, that work is usually with Sigmar's enemies. Gutbusters happily accept swamp meat from the Kruleboyz to soften up the Dawnbringer Crusades, and while the Beastclaw Raiders deal less with outsiders, they're happy to follow their Ogor kin to good hunting. If the free cities want to survive Destruction's ascendancy, they can ill afford to push away the only contacts they have within the grand alliance.

THREAT

The Brokenjarl Mawtribe were hunting near the primordial jungles of Mekitopsar when Skragrott discovered them, for they've always had a taste for reptilian flesh. Having feasted so well the first time they followed Kragnos, they followed his trail after he disappeared from Excelsis, and along the way they stumbled upon a battered Draconith corpse which they found much to their liking. Now obsessed with their new favourite meal, Brokenjarl Ogors chase down any Draconith they can, both to stew them into their mawpots and to earn Kragnos's favour. Preventing the Brokenjarl from reuniting with Kragnos is a high priority for the champions of Order.

ORRUK WARCLANS

Orruks in the hundreds of thousands converged on Ghur. Many, like Gulgaz Stoneclaw, came like pilgrims, sensing the Waaagh! in the beat that echoed through their dreams. Others arrived having been swept up by Gordrakk's bellowing charisma. Whatever their reasons, they far outnumbered the other species in the army that invaded Excelsis, and when the city's defenders looked out past their walls, it was the tusked, scarred faces of Orruks that they saw. With all their love of war and natural resilience, Orruks thrive in the Era of the Beast, and to many they've come to represent this new age.

Of all the changes the Orruk warclans have experienced, the most significant is their growing sense of unity. Putting aside their cultural and philosophical differences, not only with each other but sometimes with Grots, Ogors, and Gargants as well, the Orruks band together into big Waaagh!s that thrum with sparking green energy. They direct this bellicose power toward whatever's closest, including each other, and their fury only grows as the Dawnbringer Crusades trespass into their native lands. As tenacious as the green grass, and as mighty as the mountains, the warclans charge toward the era's next battles with their mouths frothing in anticipation at the destruction to come.

THREAT

Rangers in the Lost Mesas of Carcass Donse have been watching a Waaagh! of Ironjawz Orruks gathering for some time; they chant the names of Kragnos and Gordrakk, between bouts of impatient infighting. One ranger got too close for comfort, but returned to the Mesas only partially maimed, and with strange news: the many Orruk warbands aren't aware that the Kragnos-led Siege of Excelsis is now in the past, they still aim to charge north and add their might to the great Waaagh! they believe is on its way to assault the city. Excelsis is still hurting post-siege, and any attack upon its walls would cost lives and cause further setback to relief efforts.

SONS OF BEHEMAT

Gargants think slow, but they get there eventually. When the Mega-Gargants of the Gallet Stomp defied Kragnos, he killed all but one, Derko Walrusbiter, who survived by pledging his loyalty to the Living Earthquake. Seeing the sense in this, Gargants everywhere have decided they'd rather stand with Kragnos than against him. A few have even taken to wearing horns or painting hooves on the soles of their feet to show their admiration, and the Gargant matriarchs agree that Kragnos having four feet surely indicates he has been blessed twice over by the Gorkfoot and the Morkfoot.

THREAT

Dokka Wallthumper misses the sound of Kragnos's mace. To emulate the relentless pounding, she has taken to smashing a colossal, uprooted tree repeatedly against the side of the nearest mountain, and the resulting ruckus has drawn other Gargants toward her. If they're not diverted, they'll flatten the surrounding land and all who live there.



KRULEBOYZ

An Orruk subspecies that branched off the Bonesplitterz and the Ironjawz during the Age of Myth, the Kruleboyz make their homes in foetid wetlands where hard finkin' matters more to their survival than brawn. Ever since, they have been waiting for the right time to rally, content in the mean time to skulk and hunt around their swamplands. They were finally galvanised when Kragnos emerged. With the Living Earthquake serving as the one-god vanguard for their mass invasion, they spilled out of their swamps to seize the spoils which had grown so rich during their time in hiding.

Central to the Kruleboyz relationship with Kragnos is Gobsprakk, the Mouth of Mork. A cunning but brutal mirror to Gordrakk, Gobsprakk tracked Kragnos down after the siege of Excelsis and flattered the god into letting the Kruleboyz serve him directly. Now Gobsprakk spreads the Living Earthquake's legend as far as possible, for the god's strength swells as his fame grows, while in turn his fame grows with each new act of strength. As a result of Gobsprakk's evangelism, the Kruleboyz worship Kragnos almost as much as Mork, leaving horned effigies to honour him wherever their muddy territories spread. And spread they have, especially in relation to the Dawnbringer Crusades. A favoured new tactic of

the Kruleboyz is to bait a Dawnbringer Crusade into marching towards counterfeit arcane relics or into seemingly inviting wilderness, then to pounce on the Dawnbringers once they're footsore and isolated. Using this momentum, the Kruleboyz can then conquer the very city the Dawnbringers came from, and thus they drown huge chunks of Sigmar's empire in a muddy deluge. Conflicts like the War at Amberstone Watch have convinced the Sigmarites that the Kruleboyz are the foremost threat of this new era.

For more on the Kruleboyz, see **Chapter 5: From the Mists** on page 124.

THREAT

After the party members have exhausted themselves with a hard battle or long journey, swamp mists roll in around them. The Kruleboyz have been tracking them the whole time, and they're using this moment of weakness to begin their torments. If the heroes don't keep their wits about them, the Kruleboyz take them captive one by one. They have a higher aim than just torturing the party, though they'll certainly enjoy that part of it. The Killaboss leading this raid, eager to impress the End of Empires, wants to present him a sacrifice of Soulbound warriors, and maybe even tempt the god to make Bindings of his own.



PLAYING IN THE ERA OF THE BEAST

Kragnos' hooves are shaking everything up, including your game. No matter a character's goals or where they are in the Mortal Realms, the Era of the Beast means change for their adventures. The focus shifts from the creeping, existential dread of the Necroquake to a fiercer, wilder threat, and the tone of your game will likely shift to match. No doubt you'll still find yourself embroiled in twisted conspiracies or complicated politics, but you'll also spend more time venturing into hostile environments and clashing against enemies with simple but undeniable strength. Parties used to hopping between locations will find their travels slowed by the cursed skies and collapsed realmgates, while parties protecting a single city might find themselves surrounded by fresh threats rising out of the mists.

To transition your campaign into the Era of the Beast, start by talking with your group. How much do the other players know about *Broken Realms*? Do they want to go in 'spoiler-free,' experiencing the changes to the realms purely through their character's eyes, or have they already read up on everything that's happened with the gods, the realms, and the major factions? If they have, what are they most excited about? Some players might be eager to clash against new foes, like the Kruleboyz, the Sybarites of Slaanesh, or Kragnos himself, while others might want to focus on helping Order's newest forces, like the Dawnbringer Crusades and the resurgent Draconith. *Soulbound* are powerful and exceptional, close enough to the gods that they might even have participated in the battles like the one at Varanthax's Maw or the Siege of Vindicarum.

Every good game starts with good communication. After you've found your focus, the GM can work out how to link it to the events of your current campaign. Players can help by suggesting connections or altering their character's Goals to better suit the campaign's new direction. There's no rush to leap into the Era of the Beast, so take your time in wrapping up your current adventure. As you do, the coming changes to the realms can bubble up as Rumours and Fears, hinting at the cataclysmic conflicts that are happening off-screen. Once you're ready, you can tackle the foe or quest that's most interesting to you. Introducing every new element in the Era of the Beast all at once can be overwhelming, but by focusing on one and using the rest as a backdrop, you can ease your transition into this new age.

Alternatively, transitioning into the Era of the Beast might mean ending your current campaign. *Soulbound* has grown since it first released, and if you're itching to try a new Archetype or go adventuring in a different realm, now's your chance. Bring your current campaign to a dramatic finale, then let those characters retire or ride into the sunset, bringing their chapter to a close. It's better to give a campaign a satisfying conclusion rather than to let it fizzle out due to lack of interest, and you can always pick these characters back up if you really miss them. After your group gets a chance to reminisce, recharge, and get excited about the next batch of heroes, you can advance the timeline to this new age and re-enter a familiar, but altered, world. No doubt the adventures of the last party left their mark on the realms, so your new campaign can combine the widespread consequences of the Era of the Beast with the more personal contributions of champions you know better than anyone else.



THE BINDING

As the gods turn on each other and grand alliances crumble, the people look toward the Soulbound for hope. Like Kragnos, Grungni, and the Draconith, the Soulbound are an ancient force, thrust into the present age, who have become more important than ever. Their melded souls are the one unbreakable thing during a time when it feels like the very realms are shattering apart, and they prove to the forces of Order that despite all their differences, they can still work together. But the symbolic weight of these Soulbound heroes means the stakes are high if they falter. A Binding's every success represents a chance to mend the bonds among mortalkind, but failure further convinces the scattered factions that there can be no peace between them after all.

When figuring out how the Era of the Beast has affected your party, the most important factor to consider is who made their Binding. Bindings strung together by Morathi-Khaine's bloody rituals, for example, are under intense scrutiny throughout the free cities, while those same citizens might treat Bindings forged by Grungni's hammer with renewed awe. How closely do you work with your patron? How much do you know of their plans? Bindings are flexible compared to the cumbersome armies that most gods employ, making them perfect agents for divinities with hidden agendas. However, the gods rarely trust their Bindings without reservation, especially if any among them are loyal to other powers that may have conflicting interests.



There is always a careful balance between wielding these powerful champions effectively and revealing too much to them, and only you can decide how much you trust your patron if they are reticent about their ultimate goals. Other variables to consider include the party's current quest, their location, and their involvement in the wars of **Broken Realms**. A party in Ghur, a realm where the most pressing threats are the ascendant Orruk warclans, have very different priorities compared to a party in Chamon, which Be'lakor has literally plunged into Chaos. Has the Era of the Beast revealed new paths for a party to achieve their goals? Alternatively, has it made their goals obsolete? For example, a party tasked with protecting Anvilgard – or rather, Har Kuron – must now decide what that means following the city's occupation, especially considering Sigmar's begrudging peace with the Shadow Queen.

In addition, the Era of the Beast altered the relationships between many factions, changes which can be reflected in miniature among individuals within your party. A few cultures, like the Idoneth and the Daughters of Khaine, have come closer together in this new age. The vast majority though have split further apart, and overcoming these new divides might be the single greatest challenge your party faces.

Finally, it's not just your party that's been affected. Opposing Bindings appear everywhere in the Era of the Beast, as Kragnos pounds champions of Destruction together with his mace, Grungni returns from exile to craft Bindings openly once more, and Morathi-Khaine exercises her recently acquired divinity. As a result of their growing unity, many new Destruction-aligned Bindings arise, their souls melded together during the transcendent joy of the Waaagh!. Oddly, this has in turn created more hybrid Bindings between Order and Death, struggling as they are to face a common enemy. After all, Nagash's decreased control means many champions of Death are now free to interact with the living in ways that the Great Necromancer usually forbids, and the distrust among the forces of Order has made them turn toward unlikely allies.

RISE AND FALL OF HEROES

The Era of the Beast has created both new heroes and pushed reclusive ones out into the open. The Stormcast of the Thunderstrike hosts, as well as their Draconith allies, compose much of the former, while the secretive Khainites called the Scáthborn and the Lumineth of the wind-aligned Hurakan temples number among the latter. Just as a Stormcast Eternal clad in thunderstrike armour might march alongside a more traditional Stormcast host, these new heroes can join existing parties. They can also form parties of their own, like the purely Thunderstrike retinues who all wear Grungni's new armour. For more on the new Archetypes of the Era of the Beast, see **Chapter 4: New Heroes**.

In addition to creating new Archetypes, the Era of the Beast also changed old ones. As discussed earlier, every major faction in the Mortal Realms has felt the impact of the Era of the Beast, and these changes trickle down to affect the individuals within these factions. In some cases, the differences are so extreme that an existing champion might transition into an entirely new Archetype, like an experienced Stormcast Eternal becoming a Thunderstrike warrior by donning new armour. If you think this change is appropriate for your character, work with your GM to figure out how this affects you mechanically. The simplest option is to swap your previous Archetype's Core Skill, Core Talent, and equipment for your new Archetype's Core Skill, Core Talent, and equipment. This allows your character's history and training to stay with them even as they step into a new role.

Whether or not the Era of the Beast causes a mechanical change to your Archetype, it has affected all of them thematically. This section covers the most dramatic of these changes, regarding Archetypes from the forces of Order.

The **Cities of Sigmar** once represented the unity the Free Peoples had despite all their differences, but no more. Archetypes like the Black Ark Corsairs and the Darkling Sorceresses struggle to find a place in the free cities these days, and many have struck out

to find a new way of life beyond the walls. Ironically, the remainder — people like the Battlemages, the Excelsior Warpriests, and the Trade Pioneers — have done the same. These Archetypes lead the Dawnbringer Crusades, using their knowledge, faith, and connections to reclaim the realms from the forces of Chaos.

The **Daughters of Khaine** are undergoing a religious evolution that threatens to split their faith in half. Those closest to Khaine, like the Hag Priestesses, struggle to reconcile their image of the God of Murder with Morathi's iconography, which steadily overtakes all the Khainite temples. The Witch Aelves, meanwhile, fight to expand the Khainite empire, a gruelling task whose sole motive seems to be Morathi-Khaine's ego. All this coincides with the Scáthborn exerting more control over every Khainite sect, and so the old Archetypes must stomach lower positions in the Khainite hierarchy even as Morathi-Khaine usurps their god in all but name. Despite all this, such is Morathi-Khaine's manipulative power that many Khainite Soulbound are still fanatically loyal to her, while the rest stick close to their Bindings to distance themselves from their egomaniacal mistress.



The **Fyreslayers** murmur at news of Grungni's return, unsure how to react. Many turn to the Auric Runesmiters and the Battlesmiths for leadership, and these characters have the power to sway the opinions of entire lodges. Other Fyreslayer Soulbound, like the Doomseekers and the Grimwrath Berzerkers, don't pay much attention to politics, and fight with the same hot fury they always have.

The **Idoneth Deepkin** raid with impunity, emboldened by their alliance with Morathi-Khaine. Diplomats like the Akhelian Emissaries either struggle to maintain good relations with the free cities or have abandoned the task entirely, while the various Isharann sorcerers use the influx of new soul-stuff in research to save their species. A few, given access to the Ocarian Lantern, search for ways to revive the noble souls acquired by Morathi.

The **Kharadron Overlords** scramble to connect Chamon back to the realms. The beating heart of Kharadron society has stopped pumping aether-gold to its extremities, like a body undergoing cardiac arrest, and Soulbound Kharadron know they must get their precious resources flowing soon or else their entire culture will collapse. Archetypes of every discipline pool their knowledge to save their society, with Aether-Khemists tracking emergency aether-gold currents, Endrinmasters modding their aether-endrins to minimise fuel usage, and Skyriggers fighting to keep them safe as the Aetheric Navigators search for new courses back to the Spiral Crux. Survival has replaced profit as the primary motive of Soulbound Kharadron, coaxing forth new heights of ingenuity and craftsmanship. Grungni, watching from the forges of Azyr, is proud, though whether his abandoned children reciprocate his fondness is another matter entirely.

The **Lumineth Realm-lords** continue to mobilise from Hysh. Six of the eight Great Nations have now broken their historic isolation to aid the Mortal Realms, as have two of the four orders of

aelementiri. Soulbound Lumineth, leading this effort, comport themselves with varying degrees of smugness now that their peers have agreed to follow their example. Lumineth Archetypes like the Vanari Warrior might follow the path of the Hurakan or dedicate themselves to the Loreseeker's way if they want to transition into a new Archetype, but for the most part, Lumineth Archetypes are ingrained philosophies that don't change within the rapidity of the Era of the Beast.

The **Stormcast Eternals** do what they do best in the face of adversity: fight harder. Reclad in thunderstrike armour, riding atop their bonded Draconith partners, the Stormcast Eternals engage Chaos, Death, and Destruction on every front possible, despite the losses they have suffered. Many have integrated into the Dawnbringer Crusades, and those who fell during the wars of **Broken Realms** have been Reforged to wear thunderstrike armour — among those whose souls returned to the Anvil of Apotheosis, that is. Stormcast Eternals are the most likely heroes to change into a new Archetype, for the Stormcast champions who fight alongside Soulbound have demonstrated the conviction necessary to wear thunderstrike armour many times over. GMs should warn their Stormcast Eternal players at the outset that reforging is no longer a certainty in this age, at the very least they should highlight whenever their characters enter a situation where permanent death is a possibility.

The **Sylvaneth** surge with vitality due to Alarielle's Ritual of Life. The forces of Destruction may rally en masse behind Kragnos, but Wargroves across the realms stand ready to defend the natural order of Life. Sylvaneth of all Archetypes would react to this call and energy physically; their leaves more vibrant, their bark sturdier, some may find new colourful flowers blooming on their bodies. Many hear the music of the emergent Warsong Revenants and are uplifted, except perhaps the Spite-Revenants, who can only partially hear the notes played by the bringers of the wild song.

RUNNING THE GAME

The *Soulbound* rulebook provides the Gamemaster (GM) with advice on running games of epic adventure in the Mortal Realms (*Soulbound*, page 287). This includes advice on vital tools such as Session 0, and how to manage the tones, themes, and content of your average *Soulbound* game. We recommend you read that chapter before running your own game.

While running a game in the Era of the Beast, there are some additional things to keep in mind that can make your games play differently from a typical *Soulbound* game. This section provides tips on how to run adventures in the Era of the Beast, including how Doom can represent the changing realms and two sample campaigns set during this time.

This section is primarily intended for the player who is taking up the role of the GM. However, it may be beneficial for each player to read through this section individually, in addition to discussing its contents as a group. This can be important for managing player expectations, especially in terms of tone and theme, and understanding where the story may be heading — nobody wants to join a game expecting to march bravely into the wastes at the head of a Dawnbringer Crusade, only to find out they are instead trapped in a Stormkeep babysitting Draconith eggs (or vice versa!). As always, discussion between the players and the GM is key, especially during Session 0 (*Soulbound*, page 288).

COMMON THEMES

Much has been written about the scope of the changes the cosmos has experienced, but at the end of the day, the Mortal Realms are still the Mortal Realms. The same factions still war in its near-infinite landscapes, and the same flickering flame of hope still guides the Soulbound and their allies through their perilous adventures. When running games in the Era of the Beast, all the core themes and structures of *Soulbound* still apply. The world remains mythic, hopeful, tragic, and dark, with the mundane juxtaposed against the extraordinary. No matter the era, the characters struggle to protect what they hold dear.

If you want to accentuate the feeling of entering a new era, you won't change the themes so much as choose different ones to emphasise. During the Necroquake, the tragic tales and morbid darkness of the dead hung over the realms like a smothering pall. Now, hope drives the Dawnbringer Crusades into the wild, as mythical, larger-than-life figures from both the past and the present clash around them. The common people step for the first time outside the walls that have surrounded them for long decades, and their awestruck reactions might kindle new wonder for the Soulbound and their allies, even if the heroes have ventured into these places more times than they can count.

If you explore the conflicts exclusive to this age, you'll naturally start dealing with more specific themes. Many of the key questions of the Era of the Beast revolve around power. Who has it? Where does it come from? How do you get it? Over the course of *Broken Realms*, one answer in particular emerges — power ends up in the hands of those with the boldness and ambition to seize it, from Morathi-Khaine, Kragnos, and the Orruks who don't think twice about grabbing what they want. This is an age where half of acquiring power is acting like you already have it, and the sin most punished by the Era of the Beast is not arrogance or faithlessness, but timidity. Sigmar's decree to launch the Dawnbringer Crusades feels like he's learned this lesson too late, and it remains to be seen if his aggression can save his empire. Perhaps, over the course of your campaign, you'll find out.

Another idea at play is reclamation. The Dawnbringer Crusades march out not to conquer new lands but to save old homes, while the Orruk warclans claim the same lands as theirs because they're the ones currently sitting on them. Kragnos' first act after emerging from Twinhorn Peak was to seek out his old home, and his rage on seeing Donse consumed by the grinding tectonic teeth of its neighbours has fueled his every rampage since. An unavoidable part of entering a new era is becoming aware of all the ones before.

As the heroes fight to take back what was once theirs, they'll have to reckon with the fact that parts of the past are simply beyond saving. What will they build in its place? How do they plan on preserving something they already lost once before? As always, make the stakes personal. A quest to reclaim some hazy, abstract loss is weightless compared to a quest to reclaim a place with personal value, like an ancestral homeland that a character's parents once talked about with tears in their eyes, a city where a character lived in their past life, or a beautiful patch of nature that a character promised a departed friend they'd one day save.

On a related note, the Era of the Beast is also about cycles. Winter gives way to spring, ancient gods return to the present, and Sigmar wages war on a thousand different fronts once more. Even the rise of the Orruk warclans feels familiar in a way, reminiscent of the rhythm all living things undergo, as they transition from youth to their prime to old age. Not all these cycles are to the party's benefit, especially the ones that involve formerly or currently imprisoned gods like Kragnos and Slaanesh. Even the ones that enrich the forces of Order come with a sense of foreboding, for just as incorporeal Nagash promises to return, there is a looming threat that with every rise comes a fall. Will the heroes try to defy the cycle of ruin and desolation? Even the

name of this period, the 'Era of the Beast', implies that the nature of the realms and its people cannot change. But if anyone can build something that lasts through the turning of the ages, it'd be Soulbound.

There's a lot happening in the Era of the Beast, and a lot to think about. But the beauty of RPGs is that they're a conversation, and whatever ideas you present are just a springboard for the players to reflect on their character's own mindset and values. That includes the GM! Granted, your 'character' is the setting itself, but just as your take on the Mortal Realm has its own people, quirks, and locations, so too does it have its own unique guiding ideology.

Finally, though the age is named after beasts, plenty of conflicts besides the one between Destruction and Order can be the focus of your campaign. As mentioned earlier, the best way to choose this focus is to talk with your players. Including what everyone's excited about is a surefire way to get them invested in the game, and the mix of topics and ideas will give you a unique set of themes to consider. No matter how scattered or different the player's request might seem, there's always a common throughline that brings it all together, so stay open to unexpected connections. If you do, your Era of the Beast campaign is bound to be a memorable one.





DOOM IN THE ERA OF THE BEAST

Thanks to Be'lakor, Doom has a way to manifest visibly. Though the cursed skies are densest in Chamon, they can appear over any place where Chaos' influence is strong, and though the roiling clouds can manifest in different ways, they are always gut-twisting, corrupting, and foul.

When Doom is 5 or more, the cursed skies appear.

You can easily adjust this threshold depending on the preferences of your group — lower it to 3, for example, if your group likes playing on 'hard mode,' or bump it up to 7 if they're struggling enough as it is. The major mechanical effect of the cursed skies is the cancellation of the Stormcast Eternal Species Bonus, Reforged. Unless they're wearing thunderstrike armour, a Stormcast Eternal character who dies beneath the cursed skies is trapped and extremely unlikely to return. Make sure to communicate this rule with your players beforehand, and if there's resistance, you can simply not use it. The cursed

skies can also have other effects appropriate for the narrative, like fuelling a Chaos ritual as it turns from Fear to Threat, or making the NPCs paranoid and irascible as they huddle in fear beneath the reality-eating storm.

In addition, Doom can reflect the other threats to the realms, like the growing distrust against Aelves in the free cities or the encroaching fog of the Kruleboyz as they convert the land into seeping swamps. During the Arcanum Optimar, when the chilling dread of Death crept into every aspect of life, Doom worked well as an abstract malaise that touched everything in subtle ways. But during the Era of the Beast, it's more appropriate for Doom to be attached to concrete, visible threats. In terms of gameplay, it still functions the same way, but changing how you communicate Doom to the players is an extra tool for you to make the Era of the Beast feel all the more visceral.

SAMPLE CAMPAIGN: A SYMPHONY FOR STARSONG

Every member of the party has fought at least once alongside Juneia Starsong, a Knight-Azyros whose bright laughter guided the hopeless as much as her shining celestial beacon. She marched into Varanthax's Maw with a smile on her face, knowing full well the dangers but trusting that good would prevail, and when she fell, she died with her face turned toward the heavens — but Juneia Starsong never returned to the Anvil of Apotheosis. A Chaos Warshrine caught her soul, along with dozens of other Stormcast Eternals, and now she is slowly losing herself as Archaon's sorcerers torment what's left of her. With the Hammers of Sigmar in retreat, only the party has a chance at saving their old friend.

This sample campaign takes place during the events of *Broken Realms*. It explains what the party was doing while the gods clashed, and by the time they emerge from their trials in the Eightpoints, the Era of the Beast will have begun. The following outline goes through the campaign's major beats, but be flexible if the players go off-script. Everything here is meant to be supportive rather than prescriptive, and you can use these ideas to develop your own campaign in further detail.

- ✧ The adventure begins after the battle at Varanthax's Maw. The party accompanied the joint Stormcast-Khainite invasion into the Eightpoints, and while the Hammers of Sigmar retreat, the party has decided — or has been commanded — to stay. Small, flexible, and far subtler than a marching Stormhost, the heroes are the most capable of recovering the trapped Stormcast souls while still making it out alive.

- ✧ Across the twisted wastes of the Bloodwind Spoil, the party tracks the Chaos Warshrine which caught Juneia's soul. As they travel, they encounter both Chaos monstrosities and glory-seeking warbands. They must either be careful or ruthless, or else word spreads that a Binding of meddlesome heroes wanders the Eightpoints.

- ✧ The Warshrine's trail leads to the camp of Rokar Gresh, leader of the fanatical Crimson Brethren. Incensed by the loss of Archaon's Varanite, the Eater of Tomes has laid the blame at Gresh's feet, and Gresh in turn takes his rage out on his subordinates. The party can take advantage of these tense politics to navigate the camp and reach the Warshrine, which still crackles with the agonised souls of the Stormcast Eternals.

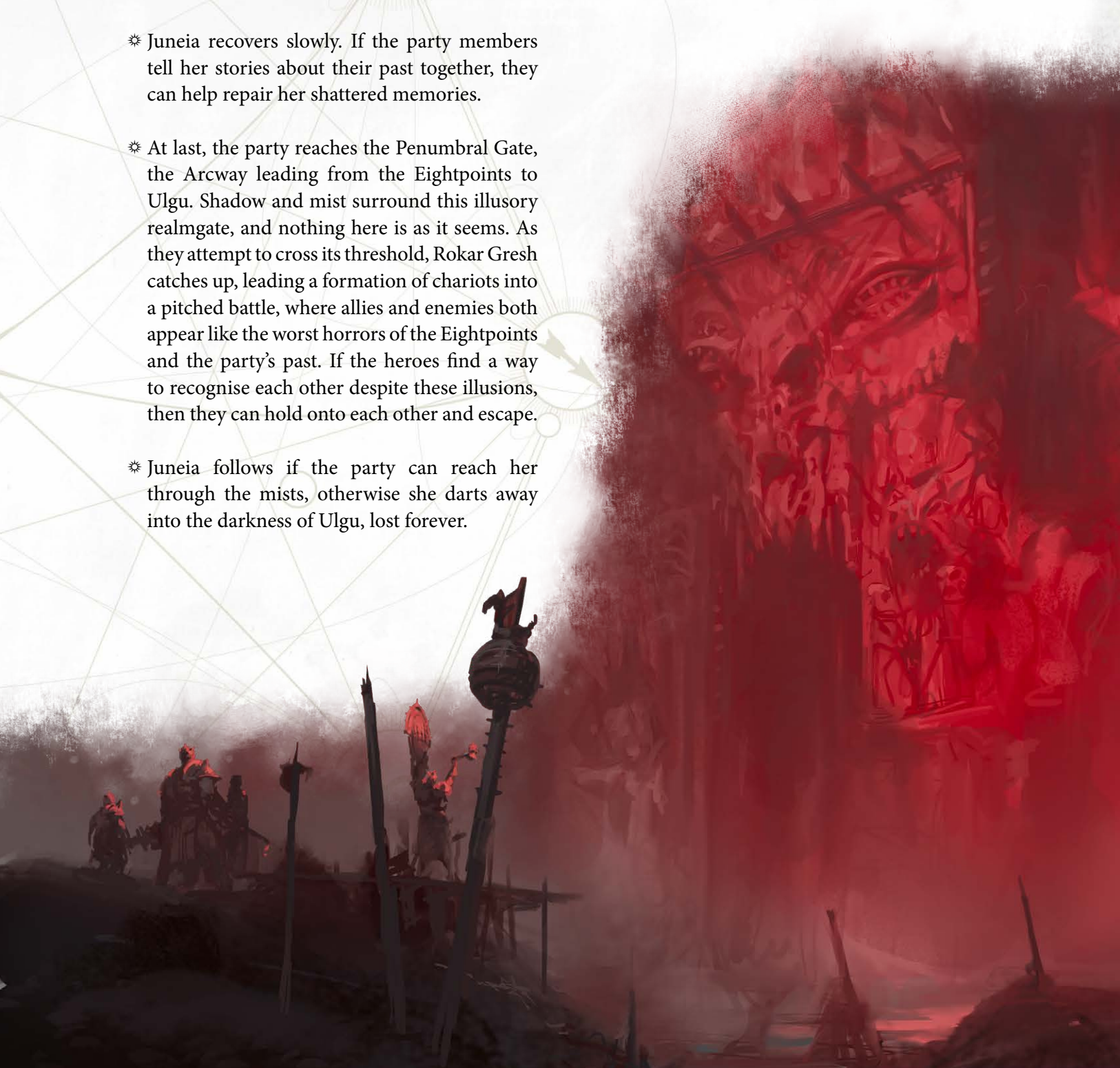
- ✧ Defeating the Shrinemaster and sundering the Warshrine's blazing runes are no easy feats. If the party manages it, then the Warshrine splits open with a howling wind. Most of the Stormcast souls are gone forever, lost to the Realm of Chaos. A few dart upward toward the Star-Bridges, where the Six Smiths might heal them. One remains — the sparking, misshapen form of Juneia Starsong, who is barely more than a lightning gheist. Like this, she cannot find her way back to Azyr. The party has recovered her soul, but whether they can save Juneia is still in question.

- ✧ With Juneia's half-cogent soul in tow, the party now seeks a way out of the Eightpoints. Countless warbands surround them, each more colourful and zealous than the last, any of whom might know a path to the realms beyond. One in particular stands out, though: a growing band of Sybarites, preparing a pilgrimage to Ulgu.

- ✧ Among the party's options, they can spy on the Sybarites, abduct one and question them, pretend to join them, or kill their leader and take over the revel. However they acquire the information or support they need, they embark toward Ulgu, following the Sybarite's intended path towards a sacred battleground in the Shadrac Convergence, from the time of the Cathtrar Dhule.

- ✧ Traversing the Bloodwind Spoil is a nightmarish task at the best of times, but to compound their difficulties, the Crimson Brethren are in hot pursuit. Enraged by the destruction of his Warshrine, Rokar Gresh leads the hunt, and nothing shall assuage his rage except beheading the heroes himself. Depending on the party's previous actions, the Sybarites might join Gresh or they might clash against him, slowing him down.
- ✧ Juneia recovers slowly. If the party members tell her stories about their past together, they can help repair her shattered memories.
- ✧ At last, the party reaches the Penumbra Gate, the Arcway leading from the Eightpoints to Ulgu. Shadow and mist surround this illusory realmgate, and nothing here is as it seems. As they attempt to cross its threshold, Rokar Gresh catches up, leading a formation of chariots into a pitched battle, where allies and enemies both appear like the worst horrors of the Eightpoints and the party's past. If the heroes find a way to recognise each other despite these illusions, then they can hold onto each other and escape.
- ✧ Juneia follows if the party can reach her through the mists, otherwise she darts away into the darkness of Ulgu, lost forever.

Once the party leaves the Eightpoints, give them a long period of downtime. The realms changed while the party traversed Archaon's domain, and like Juneia, some of those cracks are beyond repair. But the hope that a broken thing can mend pushes the party onward, even if it doesn't look quite the same after it's put back together. If the party helps escort Juneia all the way back to Azyr, her brethren guide her gently back to the Anvil, and in time she might become herself again.



SAMPLE CAMPAIGN: MASON'S PROMISE

Tempest rains, the likes of which the Dawners of the Mason's Promise have never seen before, pound down around their nascent city. There is a dark, poisonous quality to this storm, though. The crops drown in the floodwaters, the buildings sink into foundations that are turning into mud, and sometimes, when the rain is heaviest, the Dawners can see faces in the murk, with red eyes and jagged, grinning teeth.

The Kruleboyz are responsible for this storm, and unless the party intervenes and soothes the spirits that the Swampcallas are agitating, the Orruks shall submerge the Mason's Promise and capture any survivors for their sadistic games.

This sample campaign takes place after the events of *Broken Realms*. It pits the party against the newest faction, the Kruleboyz, making it the perfect opportunity to use the new enemies in **Chapter 5: From the Mists**. It also touches on other new elements of the age like the Rite of Life, Kragnos' emergence, and the Dawnbringer Crusades, which you can spend more time exploring if they're interesting to your group. The following outline goes through the campaign's major beats, but be flexible if the players go off-script. Everything here is meant to be supportive rather than restrictive, and you can use these ideas to develop your own campaign in further detail.

- ✧ The Mason's Promise, a Dawnbringer Crusade, set out through the realmgates into the Ghurish Heartlands, hoping to establish a new free city which can support Excelsis as it rebuilds. The party joined the Promise to keep it safe, and the adventure begins a few weeks after the Dawners arrived at their destination and raised their prefabricated defences. The city doesn't have an official name yet, though the locals jokingly nickname it 'Promise-kept' after the Promisekeep, the fortress at its centre, which isn't quite a Stormkeep, but one day might rise to be one.

- ✧ The unnatural weather began soon after the Dawners arrived. Attributing it to the wild nature of Ghur, the Sigmarite reclaimers squared their shoulders and tried to endure it, but now it's more than just rain and floods. Violent tremors collapse buildings through the outpost, while constant wind shrieks throughout the streets, bringing fresh torrents with it.
- ✧ Aelindel Diamondeye, an Aelf Wanderer who trained with the Lumineth in Settler's Gain, can sense the unease in the land coming from three distinct sources, and she approaches the party to ask them to investigate. Alternatively, any party member with a close connection to nature can detect this on their own. The party can approach the agitated lands in any order, with the resistance provided by the Kruleboyz growing each time.
- ✧ Ghur's living lands are hungry and predatory, barely sapient compared to their Aelementor cousins in Hysh. Appeasing them takes more than a simple self-sacrifice. They want the ability to fight back, and they can only free themselves from the Kruleboyz once the party builds them a war-form which they find suitable.
- ✧ Mount Borgorent looms over the Sigmarite outpost, its ancient slopes craggy and scarred from old battles where it ate the neighbouring hills and peaks. The Swampcallas have managed to scare this weathered giant into submission. Like a beaten hound, it huddles from its tormentors and whimpers in fear as the Kruleboyz festoon it with icons of Kragnos, who broke the mighty Twinhorn. Restoring Mount Borgorent's courage means giving it a form with which it can smash apart these horned shrines.

- ✧ The wide, sluggish river called the Sweep winds its way around the Promisekeep. Its banks overgrown with morka-moss and other invasive swamp plants, it grows more indolent by the day, its water spilling outward rather than flowing toward the sea. If the party reminds it of how it feels to flow free, making it a form as equally versatile, the Sweep purges the Kruleboyz from its shores.
- ✧ The Hunter's Wind never stays in one place long, but it loves to follow beasts like the two-headed Ghurish Griffon, buoying them up on its currents. As the Swampcallas hurl insults at it, it vacillates between disconsolate weeping and livid fury. A nimble war-form, with arrows that can strike down the slippery Kruleboyz before they hide out of reach, is perfect for it.
- ✧ Wherever the party goes last, it's quite a distance from the Promisekeep. The Kruleboyz take advantage of their absence to strike, seizing as many of the Dawners as possible in a devastating raid. Luckily, the heroes don't return alone. They have the aid of the mountain, the river, and the wind to track down the Kruleboyz and rescue the captives. In the ensuing battle, the very land itself brings its might to bear.

Once the party frees the living lands and defeats the Kruleboyz, give them a long period of downtime. They've given the Mason's Promise a chance to lay down a foundation and build something that lasts, but it's only that — a chance. The Kruleboyz are still out there, as well as other Ghurish threats who prowl in search of weak prey to pounce upon. Future adventures can follow the story of this new city and the heroes who protect it, as they find ways to live in harmony with the land they've reclaimed.





THONDIA AND BEYOND

3

Hunt, or be hunted — the first truth of the Amber Realm. The Heartlands of Ghur embody this truth across wide savannahs, looming mountains, icy tundras, storm-wracked seas, noxious marshes, and burning deserts — all of which are predators as deadly as the creatures that inhabit them. Within the Mortal Realms, the most powerful mystic energies are said to collate along their outermost rims, though dread Nagash has altered this truth within Shyish. Some scholars believe that the painfully feral energies of Ghur encouraged the most clever and ruthless predatory lands to fight the hardest to get away from its rim. Whether this is true or not, Ghur's inner Heartlands are all ur-predators and famously deadly even for a realm known for its many perils.

The Realm of Beasts has always been a dangerous place, where one must embrace a hunter's instincts to survive. Legends tell that even in the Age of Myth, one did not lightly travel Ghur. Recently though, the Amber Realm has changed, becoming increasingly volatile. Alarielle's Song of Life has awakened something perilous within the heart of Ghur, giving it the strength to vent its long-seething rage. The predators of Ghur, always bloodthirsty, have become ravenous,

attacking without care for their own lives. Transformative energies now roil across the land, changing those unfortunates who get caught up in them into feral reflections of their most savage selves.

This chapter contains details on locations across Thondia, Gallet, and Andtor, three of Ghur's innermost Heartlands, where Sigmar's grasp is tenuous at best, along with discussing key details about several of Ghur's outer Heartlands — all of which are being wracked by the events of the Era of the Beast. Excelsis, Sigmar's foremost city on Ghur, has but barely survived a massive siege only a few short months ago and large portions of the city remain in ruins, with reconstruction happening all too slowly. The insidious poisons of the Kruleboyz continue to slowly spread through southern Thondia, spoiling the land and turning it into stinking quagmires that readily swallow the unwary. One ray of hope shines within this dark time: the Draconith have returned. Theirs' is a bittersweet homecoming though, for the realm which birthed their people barely remembers them and in what surely seems no accident, their ancient enemy Kragnos, the architect of the Draconith empire's fall, also roams the lands of Ghur once more.

THONDIA

A mighty land even by the pitiless standards of the Realm of Beasts, Thondia is a massive primordial wilderness, resentful of civilisation's touch. The long dead kingdoms that once dwelt here in the Age of Myth are all shattered and lost. There are almost no standing ancient ruins to be found, only broken stone and the destroyed hopes left by ill-fated Sigmarite settlers remain, but they too will soon be subsumed by the ever-changing landscape.

Everything in Thondia is immense, its proportions staggering to folk from other Realms. Endless amber-coloured plains stretch to the horizon, occasionally broken by deadly-sharp mountain ranges, wide mesas, and vast mist-filled swamps that can swallow even the canniest traveller.

The beasts here reflect the land. Deadly Mawkrushas prowl the mountains and plains, flattening anything that dares to stand before them, their bellows shattering stone, flesh, and living bone. A Thondian Rok thinks nothing of scooping up an entire Steam Tank to drop it from a great height and get at the sweetmeats inside. Rockgrinder wyrms surge out through the soft rock mesas to swallow Troggoths whole.

Roving tribes dedicated to the Ruinous Powers are omnipresent in the wilds of Thondia and shrines to the Blood God are disturbingly common. Orruks thrive here, and their warclans cover the savannah, as do tribes of voracious Ogors. Some of the territories claimed by Ogor Mawpaths in Thondia are so gigantic, they can take a cautious hunter a month to traverse. The Gargants of Thondia are strong indeed, for this is the land their legendary forefather Ymnog supposedly once trampled, and his people flourish here. All sup well in Thondia, for the bounty is near limitless, if you've the skills to bring down its massive beasts.

More than ever before, Thondia is restless and earthquakes have become common. The Everqueen's Song and thunderous hoofbeats of Kragnos have stirred the land, and even the most sluggish of beasts, into a wakeful hunger. Thondia's rage has begun to physically manifest itself in the form of powerful spirits known as Krondspine Incarnates to Azyrite Scholars, named for the first one which was encountered along the Krondspine Range. The Kruleboyz Swampcallas have managed the seemingly impossible task of injuring the ley lines of this living land, causing a vast suppurating gash of spreading mires called the Drowned Lands to slowly spread across southern Thondia. The land bleeds and as every hunter knows, a wounded beast is the deadliest.



EXCELSIS, THE CITY OF SECRETS

Bloodied and near ruined, the greatest Free City of Thondia still stands, for the legendary port of Excelsis is no stranger to storms, whether they come in the form of seemingly limitless greenskins or lightning-filled squalls rolling in from the Clawing Sea. Neither the belligerent hordes of Waaagh! Gordrakk, nor the terrible might of Kragnos, the End of Empires, was enough to destroy the City of Secrets, though they came far too close. A city that can glimpse the future though, is one not easily toppled. Even so, despite possessing soldiers of undaunted courage and a citizenry all but inured to hardship, Excelsis is constantly assailed and needs heroes more than ever before.

RUN BY PROPHECY

The reason for the city's existence, cause of many of its woes, and yet the source of its survival stands where it was thrust into the Clawing Sea during the formation of the Mortal Realms: The Spear of Mallus. A massive fragment of the World-That-Was, the substance of the Spear is prophecy frozen into crystalline form. The city's Prophetesiers' Guild mines the Spear of Mallus for glimpses of the future, which they then sell depending on the potency of any given foretelling.

The simplest and smallest prophecies generally appear as small shiny crystals known as Glimmerings, which are the basis of Excelsis' economy and the main currency by which the city pays its debts. Glimmerings are usually employed as money, but they can also be utilised to snatch glimpses of the immediate future, which may be to a user's gain, but destroys the crystals. Overuse of Glimmerings in such a manner is dangerous, for it can be addictive, leaving overindulgers locked in a haze of shifting visions where they can no longer discern reality from prophecy. More potent prophecies come in the form of larger crystals and are known as Auguries. The visions granted by Auguries are far more powerful and correspondingly lucrative, making them highly valuable. Auguries are bid for at the Prophetesier's Guild Hall, where they can fetch a steep price.

The skilled Prophetesiers frequently have an idea of the general information many 'simpler' Auguries might hold, though they cannot know the specifics, which helps them set opening bidding prices. Many merchants, traders, and hunters frequently have to balance the high cost of an Augury against the profits it may potentially lead to, always a difficult prospect. The more dangerous and extraordinarily powerful Auguries are studied by members of the Collegiate Arcane and generally kept locked up by the city, only to be used when the need is dire.

A TURBULENT HISTORY

Excelsis was founded at the conclusion of the Realmgate Wars by the Knights Excelsior, a Stormhost infamously lacking in mercy. Azyrite families, noble and common, soon followed, with Reclaimed families eventually following as the city expanded. Excelsis started as a port, wrapped about the bay which the Spear of Mallus stands in, and the eastern harbour district is the oldest in the city. As the city prospered, the nobles claimed the higher ground to the west, giving them better sweeping views of the lands around them. Over a few decades, the city greatly expanded, leaving its original inner walls surrounding some of the better portions of the city, including the Noble Quarter.

Eventually, the city reached the outer walls as they stand now, but monied interests decided to continue building, for the marshy ground beyond the city made further outward expansion difficult. This led to the vast overbuilt multi-tiered neighbourhoods known as the Veins, which stretch from along the western wall all the way to the edge of the eastern harbour. Within these warrens, despair became rife, along with rumours of sedition, and corruption began to spread.

The Knights Excelsior responded with a massive purge that laid waste to nearly a quarter of the city's populace. Though they crushed the taint of Chaos within Excelsis for a time, many innocents died and the fierce Lord-Veritant Cerrus Sentanus was forever known thereafter as the White Reaper.



As Excelsis became the most important Sigmarite city within Ghur, it was constantly assailed by Orruks. The Scourge Privateers accepted Azyrite coin and Aqua Ghyranis to scour the Coast of Tusks for Sigmar's enemies and monsters alike, the latter of which they hauled back to sell at the docks of Excelsis for even greater profits.

In the midst of prosperity, corruption rose once more, for the Changer of the Ways coveted the Spear of Mallus. The city's High Arbiter, Ortam Vermyre, spent long years arranging a masterful coup for his Dark God Tzeentch, which was barely stopped by agents of the Order of Azyr. This led to a second, though thankfully lesser, purge by the Knights Excelsior.

Then came Nagash's Necroquake, sweeping over the Mortal Realms. Excelsis was assailed by the undead, but they weathered the storm by consulting a few key auguries, protecting the city in its most dire moments. For years after the city was the target of Skaven attacks, followed by Orruks, followed by another purge. Then, worst of all, the End of Empires and his armies led by Gork, the Fist of Gork. Despite the years of hardship and constant assaults, Excelsis endures.

THE GREAT PORT ON THE TALON COAST

Excelsis is very much a traders' city, stretching from the Eastern Harbour to its Great Western Trade Gate, having clearly grown in an organic mess, as commerce demanded. The city is continually lashed by rain, with storms of various magnitudes being the rule, rather than the exception. Many of its better buildings are carved from stormstone, a blue-black marble that resists weathering. Wood and bone are abundant building materials, driftwood and beasts being taken from the Clawing Sea, and shacks are common, draped with shark skin to hold off the rain. At the outer edge of the bay rises the Spear of Mallus, a titanic shard of the World-That-Was. Arcane towers float about it in lazy arcs, manned by the wizards of the Collegiate Arcane or the Prophesiers' Guild. Some are dedicated to its study, others to mining its secrets.

Looking south along the coast, one can see a long promontory that reaches far out into the bay, upon which rises a dread fortress of black iron from which sinners never emerge. This is the Stormkeep of the Knights Excelsior, the Consecralium. It is forever sheathed in turbulent lightning storms, and few dare approach its barred gates, no matter how great their need.

The harbour hosts a mass of vessels from a hundred nations, ranging from Duardin Steam-Cogs to Scyllan Shellships, all come to trade their wares, though the meat of beasts predominates trade here. The Kharadron Overlords have an aether-berth floating above the harbour and there are always a few airships anchored there. The ships of the Scourge Privateers, led by Fleetmaster Arika Zenthe, are the dominant power in this port. Captain Zenthe is a famously mercurial Aelf who has terrorized the Coast of Tusks for centuries, nominally at Sigmar's behest and certainly while paid with Excelsis' coin, and while it is exceedingly perilous to bore her, she always keeps her word.

On the opposite end of the city, the whole western front is enclosed by a miles-long twisting curtain wall, and evenly spaced gatehouse towers. Westgate Tower, among them, was once the city's grand entrance. It is now a stump of masonry surrounded by a shattered waste of broken road and corpses. It has become a battlefield that bears the brunt of ongoing assaults that is currently easier to reinforce than worth the focus of being repaired outright. Other sections of the wall fare better, though most were undermined by skaven and demolished by Gargants, Mega-Gargants, and Kragnos himself. The city's siege engineers are engaged in a continual struggle to rebuild these towers and walls, as fresh stonework is torn down nearly as fast as they can put it back up.

Deeper into the city lies the cramped alleyways and hovels of the Veins, which stretch off towards the north of the city. The finer townhouses of Squallside line the southern end of the harbour — follow them far enough and you'll eventually reach the mansions of Wellman's Row which curves towards the city's centre, parallel to the great Tradeway. One of the most important arterial routes of the city, the Tradeway stretches directly from the harbour markets into the heart of the city, passing through the Grand Square, past the Prophet's Guild Hall and onto the Western Trade Gate and the Great Excelsis Road beyond.

From the centre of the city rises the Palace Excelsium, the edifice from which the City of Secrets is governed. Within the palace lies a massive oval table where the ruling Grand Conclave of Excelsium meets. The number of members reflects that of Azyrheim: 244 seats representing folk from every station and species within the city sit around the table, with an additional Council of Twelve empowered to enact direct governance on issues that need swift resolution. Over the last brutal year and the Great Siege, well over two hundred councillors died or went missing — Grand Matriarch Yarga-Sjuhan leads a Grand Conclave that can barely boast thirty members at present. The former Freeguild General is well suited to her task, but she is exhausted, having barely survived a confrontation with Daemons during the Great Siege.

One of the great secrets of Excelsis' continued survival lies hidden within the Palace Excelsium — a hidden hall with a floor composed of crystal mined from the Spear of Mallus, laid out in the shape of the City of Secrets and the Coast of Tusks. The floor is an augurium — a colossal map of continuous prophecy showing potential future troubles and where they may strike Excelsis. It is this map that has allowed Excelsis to weather seemingly impossible odds. Near the Palace Excelsium sits the Prophet's Guild Hall, where Auguries are bid on. The Hall of Justice stands nearby, its adepts coordinating with the different Free Guilds to patrol the city streets and enforce the law. The second of the city's major thoroughfares, the Glimmerstretch, passes through here, running north-south through the city.

To the south lies the Temple District, where the colossal Abbey of Remembered Souls rings its great bells to commemorate the fallen. Further south is the Taverna District, famed for its many fine drinking establishments, and infamous for its houses of ill-repute. Bordering the Taverna District is the Duardin Forgequarter Sprawl. Here, the greater bulk of the city's Duardin reside, some below the surface. The denizens of the Sprawl look to Vaidal Marchiana to speak for them in council — as the undisputed master bladesmith of Excelsis, his

steel is said to be without peer. The city's Ironweld have their holdings here and the sound of clanking machines and falling hammers is ever present, along with the hiss of venting steam. The Ironweld keep a hanger of their flying war-machines here and Gyrocopters are a frequent sight.

Immediately north of the city's centre lies the overcrowded merchant district of the Teemings, where a great deal of the city's commerce occurs. Farther north is the city's humid arboreal district, dominated by two unusual buildings: one is a pyramid called the Serpentinis — the embassy of the mystifying Seraphon within Excelsis. The Skinks here have been bemused by the sudden outpouring of generosity from the citizens who have lost so much, yet have still brought many small offerings to their temple in gratitude for Lord Kroak's recent assistance in saving Excelsis. The other unusual building is the Citadel Tenebris, the stronghold of the Darkling Covens ruled by a secretive cabal of Sorceresses. Few know exactly what occurs within the forbidding spire, and those foolish enough to ask often swiftly disappear.

West of the city's centre is the Noble Quarter, encompassed by the city's inner wall. It is filled with the elaborate palaces of Azyrite noble families and more modest townhouses of wealthy merchants. The sky above the Noble Quarter is frequently filled with illusions generated by vast aetheric machines, meaning the nobles enjoy sunny days while the rest of the city is drenched with torrential storms. A sizable section of the Noble Quarter is blocked off by a massive containment wall erected by Duardin masons. This is the edge of the Crystalfall, a stain on the noble quarter's reputation created by the crashing of an arcane Tzeentchian vessel during the events of Ortam Vermyre's uprising. The strictly forbidden derelict sub-quarter holds shattered ballrooms and abandoned storefronts, which became home to some of the Nullstone Brotherhood's more unsavoury activities for a time and acted as the staging area for a Slaaneshi host during the Siege of Excelsis. Trespass here leads to execution if caught.



THREATS & PROBLEMS

Excelsis has trials and difficulties in abundance, but here are some of the more pressing problems that have beset the City of Secrets, which a party may seek to resolve.

THE PIERSRAIN CONSORTIUM

Named after the beautiful but exceedingly deadly Ghurish Rose, whose thorns are swift to draw blood, the Piersrain Consortium is a group of glittering nobles and wealthy merchants, the patrons of talented artists. Their members gather regularly to discuss politics, trade fine pieces of art, and decide which target will be the subject of their next ritualised hunt — the consortium is in truth a well-disguised coven of Neferatian Soulblight Vampires.

The consortium was formed in Excelsis not long after its foundation. The Consortium's leader, the ancient Nulahmian Asynais, carefully chose key members of Azyrite descent to avoid suspicion. Those she chose soon thereafter frequently became the sole survivor of their families as they secretly dined upon their kin at their Dark Mistress' order. They are monied and cultured, with many unwitting agents who bring them news and rumours, with no knowledge of what they truly are.

As Vampires of Ghur the hunt is just as important, if not even more so to them, than the kill. They choose their targets with great care and invariably select dangerous, invigorating game. As they frequently shroud their identities by magical means while stalking their prey, most are completely unaware of their pursuers. They carefully hide all traces of their kills, save the trophies which they insist were 'fairly won', and keep hidden in their halls. The broken state of the city has been particularly useful in covering their activities, making them even bolder of late.

The Knights Excelsior have long known that there are Soulbright covens within their city. Their purges have slain several incautious covens and whispers say the White Reaper himself has been stalking the remainder for years. The Piersrain Consortium has managed to stay hidden for so long, in part due to their cunning, but also because they are Excelsians to the bone. Their members regularly buy auguries which they publicly claim help secure their fortunes, while their true purpose is to keep their names out of public prophecy, staying well ahead of potential enemies. A group of Soulbound would be ideal prey for this coven of illicit thrillseekers.

ENTHUSIASTIC ORRUKS & VICIOUS GITMOBS

The Orruk warclans of Thondia take it as a personal insult that one brick still stands upon another within Excelsis. Small packs of raiders to entire warclans assault the semi-repaired walls on a daily basis. Many of the Freeguilds that protect the city are exhausted, their troops depleted, and their morale faltering. The city's engineers and masons are equally fatigued, as they've had to constantly repair walls only for them to be immediately knocked down again. They've had to recycle broken masonry and shattered ships for parts, as desperately needed supply trains are constantly raided by large gitmobs of Snarlfang riders. Inflicting a massive or, better yet, humiliating defeat on the warclans or dealing with some of the gitmobs, without letting word of a 'decent scrap' getting out, would certainly give the city's troops and builders some much needed breathing room.

THE CULTISTS AMONG US

When Excelsis' former High Arbiter Ortam Vermyre's treasonous coup failed to overthrow the city, many of his surviving cultist followers took off their masks and slipped back into their normal identities. While the Knights Excelsior's third purge found many of these, others were so well hidden they went unscathed. In the years since, the constant stream of pilgrims and traders has allowed other cultists dedicated to the Ruinous Powers to slip into the city. There are now several cults dedicated to the Dark Gods within Excelsis, and while most endeavour to stay concealed, others look at this time of tumult as an opportunity and are using the damaged state of the city to their advantage. The Searing Brand is an offshoot of Aqshy's Scions of the Flame, which believes the Ever-Raging Flame of Chaos lives in the heart of every lightning bolt. They used the Siege of Excelsis to abscond with one of the city's fulminating engines. They've since employed the engine on stormy days to continually call down lightning directly into their Inferno Priest Hexbraltos the Radiant. Soon, they'll unleash a storm of their own on Excelsis, one that the city is ill prepared to face.

MONSTER HUNTERS WANTED

During the months leading up to the Siege of Excelsis, prejudiced elements among the Nullstone Brotherhood began to regularly persecute magic users and Aelves. Eventually, the abuse grew so bad that both the Scourge Privateers and the Order Serpentis abandoned the City of Secrets to its fate. While the Scourge triumphantly returned with Morathi-Khaine in time to save Excelsis from being utterly destroyed, the Order Serpentis did not.

During the siege, cages holding terrifying monstrosities once tended by the Order Serpentis were broken, unleashing many terrible creatures into the city, where they now hide in sewers and abandoned districts, creeping forth to prey on the populace at will. The city needs ambassadors to seek out the leaders of the Order Serpentis and persuade them to return. Finding the Order Serpentis' Ghurish

masters will be exceedingly difficult and dangerous, as they tend to frequent lethal regions. While the city's ambassadors will have a list of generous boons which Excelsis is willing to offer for the Order's return, they'll doubtless need a selection of choice bribes as the cruel scions of the Order Serpentis are notoriously difficult to impress. Something alive, hopefully venomous, and definitely dangerous, would do nicely.

THE YARGANA PROPHECY

There is an account known to some of the tribes of the Heartlands of the prophecies of famed Ghurish sorceress, Yargana Syng, whose divinations were never wrong. Supposedly, Yargana spoke of a time when the Amber Realm would 'awaken in anger' and would need to be appeased, along with how such a feat could be accomplished. An ancient star-chart bearing map to Yargana's Prophecy is said to be hidden somewhere among the libraries of the city. Unfortunately, it is also known that the map uses references to the phases of all three moons of Ghur: Koptus, Gnarl Half-Eaten, and Dronsor... but Dronsor no longer exists, as it was supposedly eaten by the very realm it orbited. As the Amber Realm grows increasingly volatile, a daring Binding may be tasked with retrieving Yargana's Prophecy, but first they'll have to discover how to track the phases of a moon that no longer exists, perhaps by consulting with the enigmatic Seraphon.

RAIDERS BELOW

The Clans Pestilens managed to dig a number of tunnels beneath Excelsis in advance of the Great Siege. While many were found by Duardin, or collapsed due to the softening ground, others linger unseen. Both Skaven and Grot raiders now make use of the tunnels to occasionally raid into the city, behind the outer fortifications. The Grots delight in unleashing packs of squigs to run riot through the Veins, causing mayhem in their wake. Hunting down the various tunnel exits and eliminating them, or collapsing the tunnels entirely, would be most appreciated by many folk within the city.

SEVERE GUARDIANS

One of the most powerful and ominous forces the citizens of Excelsis have to contend with is their supposed guardians — the Knights Excelsior. Harsh and unforgiving at the best of times, their continual deaths and reforgings have rendered the Knights Excelsior utterly intolerant of flaws or corruption of any kind. Three times, they've executed their judgement upon the city, unleashing purges on the populace. Lord-Veritant Cerrus Sentanus is widely considered the most frightening being within the City of Secrets.

Many Bindings are likely to have severed disagreements with the Knights Excelsior and are unlikely to see eye to eye with the pitiless White Reaper. Indeed, for some Bindings, only their privileged status as Soulbound may prevent bloodshed. The Knights Excelsior offer little to no support to a Binding whose members they do not approve of. Yet there is also opportunity, as Sentanus has realised that his methods are not entirely effective and he is weary. A Binding that truly helps the city, even if their methods are unorthodox, may well succeed in the near impossible task of impressing the White Reaper and gaining his aid.

AMBERSTONE WATCH

A few days' journey to the north-east of the Morruk Hills lies the Sigmarite strongpoint Amberstone Watch. The Watch was the site of a terrible battle between Kruleboyz of the Grinnin' Blades, who sought to poison the arcane pathways of Thondia, and the determined Stormcast Eternals of the Hammers of Sigmar. The Stormcast endured searing poisonous mists and the fell creatures goaded on by the Kruleboyz, but only succeeded in driving them off due to the intervention of Yndrasta the Celestial Spear, the God-King's slayer of beasts.

Originally a mighty settlement built on a rocky promontory, Amberstone Watch has since slowly settled as the land beneath it has transformed into marshland due to the poisoning of Thondia's magical ley-lines.

The Hammers of Sigmar have made a point of rebuilding and fortifying the strongpoint so it can serve as a base for large groups of Freeguild and Stormcast scouts. The turnover in scouts is great, as they constantly risk their lives to track the continuous movements of the massive Orruk Warclans and particularly dangerous predators of Ghur that continually assault Excelsis and the Sigmarite strongpoints across eastern Thondia.

The original settlers of Amberstone Watch were completely annihilated by the Kruleboyz and the brave souls that have since relocated here all lost their homes, and many their families, during the Siege of Excelsis. Its ongoing existence is a defiant challenge to the Kruleboyz of the Morruk Hills; one they will doubtless answer in time.

BILGEPORT

A port of reavers built within the colossal corpse of a God Beast's spawn, the ships of Bilgeport hunt in the trade-lanes along the Coast of Tusks. They claim to only take ships belonging to barbarians and followers of the Dark Gods, but it's common knowledge they'll happily attack a Sigmarite ship if they think they can get away with it. Traders from the port sell what their corsair accomplices have seized at ruinous prices, frequently claiming the goods are simply salvage from wrecked ships. Bilgeport has been heavily punished for this practice in the past — indeed once their leaders were annihilated at the behest of the Order of Azyr. In the Era of the Beast, the Sigmarites need all the mercenaries they can get and thus try not to look too closely into the affairs of Bilgeport — not that they have many hired blades to spare, as they also endure regular Orruk raids.

Bilgeport rests beneath a massive shell, its harbour enclosed by five titanic ribs, each festooned with cannons and ballistae. The beast's skull serves as a dock, the bones of its remains providing much of the material for the various buildings within it. The rest of the town is a patch-work nightmare of sailcloth tents, driftwood shanties, and leather wrapped bone hovels. The market of Bilgeport is a treasure trove of illicit wares and dangerous merchandise.

Goods that would lead to arrest, or even worse, in the cities of the God-King are readily available here, if you can afford it.

The port is run by an ever-shifting group of ship masters referred to as the High Captains, whose number generally runs from three to five members. Most dangerous by far is the Ogor Butcher, Rumber the Salter, who claims his Gulping God demanded he sample all the flesh the seas have to offer. Rumour has it he is preparing to perform a ritual which will call up an unstoppable monstrosity from the depths of the sea, just so he can take a bite out of it.

CLAWING SEA

East of Thondia roils the Clawing Sea, a deadly passage for any ship due to the countless hungry creatures that live within it — sea serpents that can crush a Wolfship in their coils and ghyresharks so big they can swallow five sailors in a single gulp. Leviadons merely hunt for seaweed along the Coast of Tusks, but they are so ill-tempered they will ram a ship to splinters simply for disturbing their repast. In the colder waters closer to the Icefangs, there are vast Kraken in the depths which frequently rise with fierce storms to trawl the surface with their many tentacles.

The fleets of the Scourge Privateers have dominated the surface of the Clawing Sea for generations. They take Sigmar's coin and drops, destroying enemy ships while hunting some of the monsters of the deep for sport and profit, but many now assert that it's time to return to reaving again with the rise of Morathi-Khaine. Of all the monstrous dangers of the Clawing Sea, one of the worst along the Coast of Tusks is the Kraken-eater Mega-Gargant Gurnog Shark-caster. Clever enough to see the value in not over-fishing his territory, Gurnog is raking in a fortune by randomly extorting passing ships, but then frequently actually letting them go if they pay his exorbitant fees. Those that fail to pay, and those he decides to eat on a whim, don't live to tell the tale. Gurnog moves along the coast randomly, always settling his lair in hidden inlets, making him exceedingly difficult to track.

COAST OF TUSKS

The Coast of Tusks lies along the eastern edge of Ghur's Heartland, Thondia. During the present time, its southern portions are mostly swamplands which are encroaching upon the wide grassy plains to the north, which are, in turn, being crushed by mountain ranges and slowly creeping tundra. The constant churn of Ghur's geography means that all of this will change with time and it may well appear completely different within a season or two. Enormous herds of beasts wander here, grazing along the plains and granting the coast its name. Rhinox and Thundertusks are common, as are multi-segmented Tokkashottle, and Flathorns. They are preyed upon by diverse predators, including cunning Sabretusks, and the vicious reptilian ambush hunters called Sheklis, which drag screaming prey into burrows lined with digestive acids. Any carrion here swiftly attracts flocks of Slasherwings who are quick to take fresh meat from the unwary.

Dawnbringer Crusades and expeditions from Excelsis and Izalend have set up many Stakeforts and settlements along the Coast of Tusks, most of which now lie in ruins. Some of have been overwhelmed by bestial predators, others smashed by Ogors or Gargants, but the majority have been leveled by marauding Orruk warclans. Many near the marshland portions of the coast simply lie empty, their settlers, and the Freeguilds that guarded them, entirely vanished save for one or two found nailed to a palisade wall — a mocking message from the Orruk Kruleboyz.

Settlements here survive on faith, courage, and more than a little luck. Determined predators prey on young settlements, marking them out as the weak herd members they are. Sadly, their overall importance is such that if they cannot survive alone, the Sigmarites can spare few to save them. The Amber Realm is ruthless and many Ghurites quietly think it is better that the weak should perish quickly so those stronger can take their place.

THE DRENCH

Along the northern edge of Thondia lies a vast series of cold marshlands where Hysh's light seldom falls, but cloying mists moving in strange patterns are ever-present. The wetlands are punctuated by oddly shaped stony knolls that rise from the muck at random and the echoing cries of swamp creatures bounce about the hills in bizarre ways. All sound is distorted in the Drench, save the droning, maddening nonsense songs of the Jabberslythes who thrive there. Lethal amphibian predators abound, as do several breeds of Troggoths and voracious Sludgeraker Beasts. The dark-hearted Kruleboyz love the Drench, as much as they can love anything. *'Oh, downright nasty, that 'un. Keeps ya sharp, it surely does,'* being the general approving consensus amidst their tribes.

Other folk risk the many dangers involved in travelling to the inhospitable Drench because it holds a number of uniquely potent medicines that can only be found amidst the creatures and flora that thrive there. There are mushrooms that can cure many afflictions, flowers that can instantly ease hideous pain, and it is said the secretions of the squamous brass-toad can promote the slow regeneration of lost limbs. Persistent rumour holds that consuming one of the eggs of the semi-legendary lobken, indigenous to the Drench, can even cure Nurgle's Rot.



GLOSSOM CREVASSE

Several hard weeks of travel west of Excelsis leads to the eastern edge of the colossal Glossom Crevasse, a deep fissure in the crust of Thondia that is believed to stretch for many thousands of miles. Its exact size has never been recorded, for it is vast beyond reckoning, and hunters believe that Thondia regularly changes its dimensions in unpredictable ways. The crevasse's interior is so massive that wildly disparate ecosystems thrive within it. Multiple nomadic bands of Gor-kin are thought to roam its length in year long migrations that sees them fighting feuding kingdoms of Gloomspite Gitz, colonies of ambulatory slime moulds, and countless tribes dedicated to the Ruinous Powers, all while avoiding the many deadly predators that hunt its treacherous interior.

One of the crevasse's more unusual properties is that it seems to regularly attract streams of aether-gold. Unsurprisingly, the Kharadron Overlords routinely mine the skies above the crevasse, but other recent discoveries have also drawn their attention. For reasons yet unknown, the aether-gold above the crevasse routinely coalesces, causing solid droplets of aether-gold to plummet into the depths below. There are strange creatures within the Glossom Crevasse that can apparently live on the stuff. The Aether-Khemists Guild has offered sizable bounties to anyone that can bring them living specimens of the aether-gold consuming beasts from the crevasse, but so far, no expeditions have returned.

THE GNARLWOOD

There are many hunters who believe the twisted forest which lies just across the border from Gallet is the very heart of Ghur, and therefore correspondingly the most dangerous. It is a vast and perilous carnivorous woodland, inhabited by countless bands of vile Gor-kin and warped Sylvaneth who delight in slaughter. Perverse rites echo through the boughs on ill-omened nights and dark things shamble through the shadows. Several Sylvaneth wargroves have tried to reclaim portions of the Gnarlwood for the Everqueen, but they have all failed.

The Gnarlwood is named for its most infamous native species — the Gnarloak. Voracious ambush hunters, Gnarloaks have perfected the art of mimicking the appearance of dead or fallen trees. Once unsuspecting prey draws close, their wooden maws open wide and grasping limbs pull victims to a grisly death. The Gnarloak is but one of the many ambulatory floral predators within the forest. There are shrubs that hunt like wolf packs, vines which will drain the blood from unwary victims, and corpse flowers that exude deadly poisons.

The Astral Templars maintain a heavily fortified Stormkeep on the edge of the forest called the Valourhall. They use it to monitor the forest and as a rallying point from which they will occasionally set forth to cull Gnarloaks and whatever other evils they may encounter; however, they never enter the Gnarlwood proper with anything less than a full chamber of warriors.

Since the Everqueen's new song has spilled over the forest, the Gnarlwood has gone berserk, its borders visibly growing as they scuttle outwards. The Astral Templars say the forest's hunger has increased tenfold and strange ravenous new creatures are beginning to appear. There are rumours of vicious fights breaking out between wildly varied groups of explorers here. They seek a Seraphon vessel called Talaxis which crashed within the eastern woods. The ship is rumoured to hold many powerful magical artefacts and other priceless treasures; tales of the



vast wealth to be claimed by the bold have drawn fortune hunters from across the Mortal Realms. While they are too proud to ask for aid, the Astral Templars desperately need assistance in figuring out what it will take to calm the Gnarlwood.

GREAT EXCELSIS ROAD

A lengthy trade road that stretches from the great city of Excelsis to the gates of the icy Free City of Izalend, the Great Excelsis Road is the only route of its kind within the Realm of Beasts. The road loosely follows the Coast of Tusks, save where it swings inland away from the disreputable pirate haven of Bilgeport. The two ends of the road were once lined with statues depicting valiant Sigmarite heroes and many still stand nearer to Izalend; however, the majority of those close to Excelsis have fallen, either by being torn down by the forces of Destruction, or due to collapsing because of the ever-encroaching marshlands emanating out from the Drowned Lands which border much of the road.

The road was originally built to facilitate trade and the movements of troops between the two Free Cities — it was once regularly patrolled, but Excelsis' forces have taken such a beating that only heavily armed trade caravans are accompanied by troops now and there is always a need for competent escorts. The trade road is now under constant attack by Orruk raiders, Ogors, Gitmobs, Gargants, and other predators who know meals frequent it. Stakeforts were once placed at random intervals along the way. The majority now lie in ruins, though a few still hold small garrisons of Freeguilders which allow travellers a brief respite from the many dangers of Ghur. Axebeaks and Screecher Lizards are common along the road, valued by hunters for their tough hides. Neither are particularly dangerous, but their shrieks frequently call larger predators and they're considered a menace for that alone.

Due to the great importance of construction materials safely arriving in Excelsis, the city has recently hired Magmadroth riding Fyreslayer mercenaries of the Lofnir lodge to accompany large shipments of them.

This has definitely helped discourage more bestial predators. Unfortunately, it has also attracted the attention of a large Beast-breakaz tribe of Orruk Kruleboyz, the Three-Hookz, who are determined to get their squalmy hands on a few Magmadroths.

THE GREAT GUTFORT

Built from a mountain's worth of boulders hauled into place within central Thondia, the Great Gutfort is an immense Ogor feast-hall fortress. It is continually shrouded in pungent smelling smoke which rises from the countless fires where Butchers are forever searing meat at all times of the day. The Great Gutfort is the stronghold of the Meatfist, most dominant of all the Ogor Mawtribes. The blood-stained fist symbol of the Meatfist is recognised and feared across Ghur for good reason — the Meatfist are utterly voracious. All that have tried to stop them, from Stormcast Warrior Chambers to vast armies of Chaos marauders, and even the bone legions of the Ossiarchs, fall before them, vanishing down their gullets in turn. Their appetites are quite literally endless.

Globb Glittermaw, the Overtyrant of the Meatfist, is a devious towering monster, whose gob is rumoured to be lined with pure realmstone. It was Glittermaw who first discovered the trick of storing loot rather than immediately eating it and he has encouraged many of his warriors to hire themselves out as mercenaries. This has served to increase the infamy of the Meatfist, but has also provided the cunning Overtyrant with all sorts of desperately needed information on delectable new targets for his tribe. This is exceedingly important to Glittermaw to maintain control of the Meatfist, as he has gobbled up so many lesser Tyrants that his Mawtribe's numbers have almost swollen beyond his control and their vast hunger must be assuaged with a steady flow of warfare and feasts.



THE ICEFANGS

The infamous bay which leads to the port city of Izalend has sent many a ship into the depths of the Clawing Sea. Forever half-frozen, the waters of the bay are an icy slush filled with spars and icebergs that can easily tear through a ship's hull, and require a skilled navigator and a steady pilot to slip past. All sorts of scavenger beasts lurk in the Icefangs, hoping to pick up easy meals when a ship flounders. Worse, there are monsters that actively hunt there, the most infamous of which is the Terror of Izalend. A many-tentacled beast, the Terror plucks crewmen off passing ships before swiftly vanishing beneath the icy waves. Some tribes of barbarians that hide within the walls of the bay are said to worship the Terror and attack passing ships to draw its attention.

IZALEND

The second of the two greatest Free Cities within the Heartlands of Ghur, the White City is a frozen port set in the north of Thondia within the bay of the Icefangs. It is protected by an ancient wonder — the Everflame — an encircling wall of magical white fire twice the height of a full-rigged galleon, which stretches over land and sea. Another city once stood where Izalend now rises, but it was destroyed during the Age of Chaos, sacked when the Everflame failed. After the Age of Sigmar had begun, the God-King's servants rekindled the Everflame with a spark taken directly from the forges of the Six Smiths and Izalend was founded on the old city's ruins.

The Everflame is broken at intervals by great rings of vast separated armoured towers which are unaffected by its magical heat. The most commonly used entrance to the city is the Gate of Martyrs, a gigantic golden archway formed between a pair of the Everflame's towers within the harbour. Each bristles with cannons, rocket batteries, and organ guns — all manned by Izalend's Freeguild, the Hearthguard. While the arch is wide, a long wall beneath the waves only allows the passage of two vessels at a time. The harbour can be closed by means of great chains said to have been forged by Grungni himself.

While the docks of Izalend cannot compare to those of Excelsis, it is still a busy and ever-growing port. The flow of ships from the Martyr's Gate is constant, with whaling ships, hulking galleons, and a wide array of smaller vessels continually importing their wares. The smell of cetacean oil and razor-seal meat is ever-present. The heat of the Everflame does not reach the city, meaning the docks are forever cold, with icicles lining the wharfs. Izalend compensates with warm braziers, heavily spiced and smoked hogfish, and stiff shots of bracing liquor. The bulk of Izalend's trade is in meat and furs, along with practical magical tools for fire building and wilderness survival.

The city proper is divided by concentric walls. Once, ramshackle dwellings were common, but Izalend's success has been such that the majority of the buildings have been made sturdy. The Kharadron have recently built a harbour-side docking tower for their air-ships, as they routinely stop here while transporting mineral wealth and entire chests of realmstone southwards from the small mining Free City of Skythane in the northern hinterlands.

The other entrance into the city is the Northern Gate, which is at one end of the Great Excelsis Road, a smaller passage through the Everflame than the Gate of Martyrs. Beyond it to the south lies a tundra dominated by Black Clatterhorns, ice lions, and reaver tribes with a taste for Human flesh. Immediately beyond the Everflame to the north west rises the imposing Druichan Forest. A series of constant raids has slain many logging crews, whereas others have vanished into the depths of the wood. Izalend's leaders now have to send increasingly larger combat patrols out with the loggers to ensure any return at all.

KODZODON

The name of a menacing great beast and the tribal city that was built within its vast protective shell long after the titanic creature had fallen, Kodzodon is protected from wandering predators by the feral animus of its namesake. Tribal stories hold that Kodzodon was originally founded due to the

existence of a legendary relic, the Hunting Horn of Kresh'ta. The horn is said to be able to open a cavernous mystic maw gate anywhere on Ghur that will transport those who dare enter it to the edge of Kodzodon. The tribal city is well hidden and has managed to never fall to the worshipers of the Ruinous Powers. That may soon change though, as several brayherds of Gor-kin have been scouting the region surrounding it, sniffing for the tribal city they suspect is there.

THE KRONDSPIKE RANGE

The largest of Thondia's mountain ranges, the Krondspine Range is named for the semi-mythic godbeast Krond, whose backbones supposedly act as its foundations. In legends Krond is depicted as a combination of wolf and serpent, though most lore on the creature has been lost to Sigmarite scholars. The Frays of beastmen that inhabit part of the range likely know more of which they will not speak, but what is known by outsiders is that they venerate lupine and reptilian mutations before all others.

During the Age of Chaos, folk fleeing the forces of the Dark Gods climbed high into the Krondspine Range. Those not swift enough in their flight were butchered by marauders and Daemons, their bones left to bleach in vast piles on the lower slopes of the mountains. Due to their violent deaths, even before the Necroquake, restless spirits haunted these low valleys. Now, their raging shrieks pierce the night and few dare venture out once Ulgu has shrouded Ghur. Massive tribes of Orruks dominate the Krondspine Range. They are constantly at war with the beastman throughout the mountain passes, as well as Ogors and any other foes that happen to catch their eyes. A few Human tribal strongholds do still exist here, the majority of which have long since fallen to Chaos.

The steady awakening of Ghur has been keenly felt along the Krondspine. There are rumours of great gatherings of beastmen, including whispers that the Warherd of the infamously cunning wolf-headed Doombull Varhowl has returned from the Ghurish hinterlands for the imminent slaughter to come.





KRONDSKOL

At the southernmost point of the Krondspine Range lies a massive fanged skull which may or may not be that of the godbeast Krond. Regardless of its actual provenance, the deep vales and large caverns that surround the colossal skull have long been home to a wide variety of brawling Gargant tribes. Most of the tribes of the Krondspine Range, regardless of what species they belong to, generally avoid the gargants, unless they wish to recruit them for a specific battle, thinking they can buy their brief loyalty with promises of food and a proper scrap.

When Kragnos passed their lairs, word of the End of Empires had already reached them and many went to join his cause. None returned from the siege of Excelsis, their Stomp broken on the walls of the great city. In the power vacuum caused by the deaths of so many Gargants, a Warstomper Mega-Gargant named Bannog Hollowguts has since risen to power. Bigheel of a Stomper tribe called the Stoneboots, the story goes that Hollowguts once consumed a Wildfire Taurus, a living spell, some portion of which still rages in his guts giving him an insatiable thirst for water. Bannog has recently learned that humie runtlings, when they set off on their long walks from their little towns to set up even tinier towns, sometimes carry about floating metal islands which spew endless streams of healing water. The Warstomper would very much like to own such a thing and has cut a bargain with some Orruks to tell him where a likely Dawnbringer Crusade might be found so he can acquire an Aqualith.

LAKE EVERGLUT

The largest inland body of water in Thondia, if it was not frozen solid, Lake Everglut more resembles an entirely iced over sea. Surrounded by the imposing wall of the Krondspine Range, the lake is fed by bitterly cold runoffs from the mountains. The lake is a forlorn place, where strange winds blow that are said to whisper secrets from afar. All Ogor Mawtribes of Ghur's Heartlands believe Lake Everglut is sacred, its frozen waters blessed by their greedy Gulping God.

Ogor Butchers will travel for many months to acquire large chunks of Lake Everglut's ice to serve as the base for the stews they make in their Great Mawpots. Of late, Butchers have begun to arrive from many different warglutts, driven by visions of an island upon a frozen lake filled with rare spices. This is the beginning of a grand gathering of Butchers known as a Gollop, wherein recipes will be shared, meats savoured, and worship of the Gulping God in the form of consuming butchered captives will begin in earnest.

Gollops release intense gastromantic power which causes the lands surrounding them to shudder with cannibalistic frenzy. Considering the mighty anger burning within Ghur and Thondia in particular, it would be very wise for a party to intervene, as the ripples emanating from it would be devastating. The Butchers however, will not be denied... unless someone can stop them, be it through guile or force.

MANGREL ISLE

North of Thondia, surrounded by the Clawing Sea, lies Mangrel Isle. At the beginning of the Age of Chaos, it was the centre of an honourable kingdom which long resisted the forces of the Dark Gods, blessed as it was with good hunting. However, even the most bounteous island has limits.

As years became decades, game grew increasingly scarce. The folk were eventually forced to eat poisonous beasts to survive, warping their minds, and as their hunger deepened they supped on increasingly foul fare, until finally they turned, devouring each other. Now, Mangrel Isle has become a Carrion Kingdom, home to the Bileblood Court, led by the Abhorrant Ghoul King Marrowblade. King Marrowblade regularly leads great hunts against *'the many beasts that assail his people'*, and the recent disturbances across Ghur have caused him to take up a great crusade in Thondia. His ravenous followers flooded into what they perceived to be magnificent galleons — in reality

barely seaworthy ramshackle rafts made of bone and bloody sinew, sailing south into Vensoth Bay, to engage in their noble quest to 'free the lands of tyranny'. Since they tend to perceive anyone that doesn't belong to the Bileblood Court as 'monstrous' they are presently embroiled in multiple chaotic campaigns against tribes dedicated to the Ruinous Powers, warclans of Orruks, and any beast they happen to encounter. A daring envoy willing to take the risky chance of travelling to Mangrel Isle to convince King Marrowblade to assist their cause might be able to enlist the aid of a powerful army, if they can manage to avoid being eaten, but the King's delusions are dangerously infectious to all but the strongest minds.

THE MAR

It is understood by the folk of Ghur that the lands of the Amber Realm have a distinct life and feral predatory awareness of their own. Their souls are thin, stretched across their vast lengths, though perhaps with the rise of the Krondspine Incarnates this is starting to change. Regardless, in eastern Thondia, there is a region known as the Mar which is known to be very sentient. Many hunters swear that the Mar can directly communicate with travellers if it chooses to.

There are stories of ferocious beasts placidly leading hunters to glens where the wind blows just so through sculpted rocks, forming an eerie voice that questions their presence and intentions, demanding sacrifices from time to time. Hunters that would remain in the Mar's good graces regularly toss part of their kills into the Marblood, the russet-coloured river that runs down from Ursricht's Kill through the heart of the Mar, and on to the ocean. In truth, the Mar is the prison of a daemonic entity of the same name, trapped long ago and bound to the land with ancient geomantic magics. It poses as a spirit of Thondia, demanding sacrifices from local tribes and passing hunters alike so that it can amass enough power to break free of its prison.

MORRUK HILLS

Several hard weeks of travel to the southwest of Excelsis rise the Morruk Hills, a series of high marshy peaks filled with sudden drops into stagnant pools purposefully lined with sharp rocks to skewer the unwary. The ground here is uncertain, dotted with pleasant seeming wildflowers that are fatally poisonous.

Unsurprisingly, considering their name, these hills are dominated by tribes of Orruk Kruleboyz. The Grinnin' Blades, largest of the Kruleboyz warclans and considered by many to be the most gruesome, regard this swamp as an ancient place of power. One of their cherished myths suggests Gorkamorka had an earth-shaking brawl here with a poisonous Godbeast. His blood mixed with the beast's poison and the swamp's mud to produce the first Grinnin' Blades Kruleboyz. It is also the domain of Gobsprakk, the Mouth of Mork, prophet of Kragos and mightiest of all the Swampcalla Shamans. It was supposedly Gobsprakk that suggested the sinister plan of poisoning the ley-lines of Thondia, hoping to goad the living land into finally devouring the remains of the once-great land of Donse. This would, in turn enrage the Earthquake God, causing him to return, and wreak further havoc in vengeance for his fallen homeland.

While the sinister plan ultimately failed, the poisoned ley-lines have continued to corrupt once fertile plains into seeping mires of the Drowned Lands. While this is terrible, it has taught Sigmarite scholars something potentially wondrous: the living lands of Ghur can be purposefully altered, encouraged to transform with the right application of magic. Champions are needed now, ones willing to brave the Morruk Hills in search of a cure for the poisoned ley-lines, and maybe the mystic key to encouraging flourishing life in Ghur's wildlands.

NAUTIL PEAKS

In Thondia, along the western edge of Carcass Donse, rises the mountain range known as the Nautil Peaks, named after the remarkable creatures that dwell there. The Nautilor are huge shelled cephalopods that left the seas behind when the Mortal Realms were young. Producing the wondrous magical substance valreus within their shells, it is this that allows the Nautilor to float above the ground at great speeds, puffing through a specialised air sac to propel themselves. The Nautilor are fiercely intelligent predators, willing to hunt fresh prey or feed on carrion, both of which they will consume bones and all. They have dozens of ridged tentacles which they use to snare their prey. Nautilor will retreat from more dangerous predators by swiftly floating away or by withdrawing into their thick ornate shells. While most Thondian beasts leave Nautilor alone, it is the tribal folk of Ghur and the Free Cities that hunt them. Their flesh is considered to be a delicacy, while the pearlescent interior of their shells is favoured by Duardin for inlays in weapons and armour, and many wielders of magic will pay prices comparable to that of realmstone for valreus. Recently, the Collegiate Arcane has placed a staggering bounty out for a Nautilor, but there is one very large catch – they demand that it be brought in alive and unharmed.



QUESTING SERPENT RIVER

Starting high in the grinding mountains that edge the crumbling land of Carcass Donse, the Questing Serpent River stretches north for thousands of miles, passing through the Morruk Hills until it eventually spills into the Bay of Mallus. The river cuts its winding course across the shifting landscape, occasionally even running uphill. It is one of the major sources of fresh water in the region and proudly so, for when several tribes of Kruleboyz attempted to poison it at one point, it rose up and drowned them. The river is capable of partially rising from its course in the form of a titanic liquid alligator, large enough to crush a Mega-Gargant. It may well be capable of assuming other forms, but none living claim to know them. There are scholars in Excelsis that hope to use the Questing Serpent River to their advantage, but determining what might entice a bestial ever-flowing river is a daunting task at best.

THE RAVENIDS

An enormous chain of coral islands surrounding a central volcano, the Ravenids are home to innumerable scaly predators. The surrounding seas are filled with fierce ocean life, dominated by voracious cetaceans that challenge even the toughest Scourge Privateers.

Hidden beneath the Ravenids lies an ornately carved cavern, a sanctuary for bestial Vampires of the Avengorii Dynasty. The grotto is home to a coven of Vengorians desperately struggling to control their raging minds, lest they descend into a blood-soaked lunatic savagery from which there will be no recovery. They have begun a series of excessively brutal hunts in the hopes of slaking their ever-increasing thirst — hunts that frequently carry them far across Thondia, slaughtering every single being they encounter. The lengthy trails of corpses in their wake may well soon lead to a reckoning for them, but how many would dare to hunt down a coven of ever-monstrous Vampires?

SALZAGOR'S HOPE

Named after a brave Reclaimed captain who gave his life defending pilgrims to Excelsis, Salzagor's Hope was once a thriving township set astride a powerful river, lying several weeks north along the Great Excelsis Road. No longer — the trading hub drew the attention of the Kruleboyz, who tested a foul poisonous brew that caused madness and eventually gruesome death. The Kruleboyz slithered into town on stolen ships, slipping past the town's guardians before unleashing their deadly concoction on the populace. Their Swampcalla Shaman transformed the town into a loathsome mire before leaving to work their evil elsewhere. Salzagor's Hope is one of the centres of the spreading Drowned Lands, its ground turned into squelching marsh and its buildings sliding into muck.

A few stern and faithful folk have since returned to Salzagor's Hope, but there are far more warriors here than settlers, and trade has been slow to return to the stricken township, becoming more of a well-fortified stakefort than a thriving riverport town. While this could change, the presence of a large infestation of Fellwater Troggoths is not helping matters. The vulgar creatures have dug their stinking lairs into the spreading marshes surrounding the township. While Salzagor's Hope's guardian statues are keeping them at bay, their presence greatly discourages travellers, and the warriors desperately need assistance in repelling them.



STONE NAUTILOR

In a vale at the centre of the foothills directly northwest of the Nautil Peaks lies a massive Nautilor's shell made entirely of stone. There are many tales concerning how the Stone Nautilor came to be — one legend claims that it was caught in a magical storm and transformed. Another, that it was felled at the end of a tremendous fight against the mythic Cockatrice Mother. The few Azyrite scholars that have studied it believe that it is, in fact, natural — an ancient fossil petrified due to great age. Regardless of its origin, its importance now is that it is one of the rarest of things in all of Ghur: a fixed point. Thondia and all the lands of the Amber Realm constantly change shape, shifting so swiftly that landmarks can become useless within days. Not so the Stone Nautilor. For reasons unknown, it has remained as it is, permanently placed within a week's journey of the southern border of Thondia. Correspondingly, the Stone Nautilor has been used as a meeting place and rallying point for travellers, tribes, and armies for times beyond recorded history. Discovering why the Stone Nautilor is a fixed point would be priceless information, especially if it was something that could be replicated elsewhere in Ghur, but of late, it constantly plays host to hordes of Orruks, Chaos tribesmen, and occasionally a full Stomp of Gargants, making investigation near impossible.

THUNDERSORN PEAKS

In far northern Thondia are the dread crags of the Thundersorn Peaks, named for the monstrous ancient beings that once dominated the range. The Thundersorn Dragon Ogors are a species so ancient that their progenitor is said to have survived the destruction of the World-That-Was. They are ageless, bound to the Dark Powers by an ancient pact, their flesh charged with lightning.

During the Age of Myth, they first rose in Azyr, but Sigmar drove them from the heavens. In bitter revenge they took various high mountain ranges in the other Mortal Realms as their own, claiming dominance over all of Thondia, which did not sit well with the Draconith, nor the Drogrukh, Kragnos' people. The two species joined forces

during the War of Thirteen Peaks, slaying many Shaggoths, the gigantic elders of the Thundersorn, and utterly broke their empire. During the Era of the Beast, this mountain range has become the centre of a raging war once more. Multiple Stormhosts fight here against many Orruk Warclans, for it is the will of Sigmar that the mountains be claimed. The battles here are grinding ones, fought through deep mountain valleys and across the summits. The range is filled with predators, with hungry Maw-krushas common.

The mountains are continually wreathed in lightning storms, for the Thundersorn are here still, if greatly reduced in number. They have no great love for Orruks, but their hatred of Sigmar has never ebbed, so they occasionally assist the Orruks in their battles for spite alone. Dark rumours swirl that the Thundersorn have learned how to catch and consume the lightning spirits of fallen Stormcast before they can return to Azyr — a grim prospect that needs investigation, yet there are none to spare for it.

TWINHORN PEAK

The largest of the Ursricht's Kill mountains, Twinhorn Peak served as the prison of Kragnos, the End of Empires, for aeons. Named for its high curving horn-shaped double peaks, the Seraphon used the mountain's symbolic resemblance to the Earthquake god as part of the sympathetic magic that let them trap him within it. The mountain now bears a huge scar in its flank, where Kragnos finally emerged from his long captivity. Considering the length of time Kragnos was held, and the powerful magics involved, the few sages that know of it are now engaged in furious speculation about what insights might be gained from studying the former prison, as well as what power may linger within the stones themselves. Unfortunately, Twinhorn Peak has become a holy place to the followers of Kragnos, who now take pilgrimages here to fight for the Earthquake God's favour. Between battling Orruks and the creatures that hunt across the Ursricht's Kill range — with Maw-krushas, Ghorgons, and herds of depraved beastmen not least among them, any knowledge to be gleaned here will be hard won.

URSRICHT'S KILL

A high granite mountain range in western Thondia named for the totemic Godbeast, Ursricht, the White Bear, which legends claim still stalks here once every three hundred and thirty-three years. The colossal pale ursine Ursricht is said to be able to walk in the form of a massive Human with a long white shaggy-beard. The Astral Templars venerate Ursricht, paying him ritual homage. Members of that Stormhost sometimes make pilgrimages to Ursricht's Kill, hunting the great beasts of the range to lay a proper offering before one of the White Bear's shrines. Those that seek Ursricht's blessing, and his might in battle, can do likewise.

VEXOTHSKOL

Once a beautiful mountain city and the capital of the ancient Draconith empire, Vexothskol now lies smashed and fallen. Its many statues depicting the Celestial Drake Dracothon were destroyed by the raging Kragnos and his Drogrukh braves long ago, though at terrible cost. The pride of the Draconith empire, Vexothskol was built in the ruins of the vast skull of a mighty reptilian beast which Draconith legends claim was their first ancestor. The Draconith delighted in art and Vexothskol originally shone

from a great distance with intricately carved gems that flickered with the amber fires of their breath. The price the End of Empires paid to topple Vexothskol was everything, all his long-time companions slain in the battle. When the few surviving Draconith warriors retreated, they set out to wreak vengeance upon the Drogrukh for Kragnos' depredations. Due to his long imprisonment, Kragnos would not learn all that happened till several ages later, that the Draconith utterly destroyed the rest of his people.

The ruins of Vexothskol now play host to a disturbing cult known as the Jade Obelisk who have been ritually destroying the remaining sculptures of the Draconith that time, and the Drogrukh, have missed. They constantly skirmish with an infestation of giant spiders and Gloomspite Gitz Spider-fang tribes who regularly creep down from the heights to hunt the lowlands below. While the young newly returned Draconith only know of Vexothskol from the stories their Seraphon minders have taught them, many of them are disgusted that such creatures despoil the memory of their folk. A small, but growing faction among them have begun seeking allies to help in cleansing the ruins of the filth that festers there.

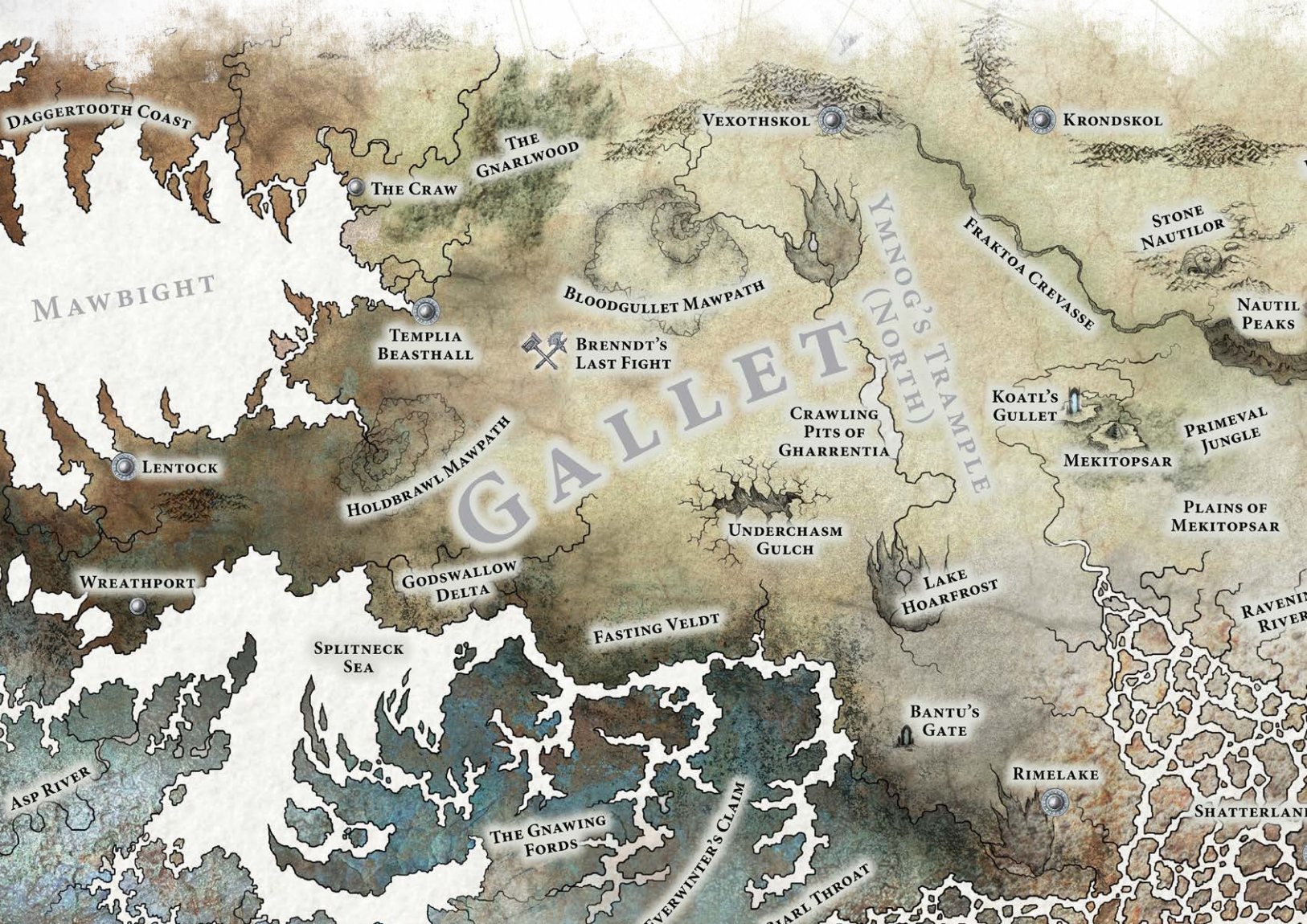


GALLET

The black-earthed land of Gallet is a deadly one, and it must be, surrounded as it is by hungry places, mighty Thondia to the north, adroit Andtor to the east, and ever encroaching bitter-cold Bjarl to the south. In Gallet, beasts of fur and cloven hoof are prey far more often than predator, for here colossal insects rule supreme. Multi-segmented horrors with mandibles that can snip a Gargant in half roam in unsettling silence. There are bizarre moths whose poisons cause their victims to have incandescent visions until they combust. Abyssal leeches that can suction all the blood from a warrior's body in seconds if one of their pseudopod mouths gets a hold. There are enormous arachnids with acidic ichor for blood

that can melt stone, and revolting larvae the size of cogfords which consume everything they can reach until they metamorphosize into something even more hideous. All of these horrors lurk beneath the surface of broken Gallet, crossing the land via huge tunnels, winding caverns, and colossal ravines, for the sharp gale winds which constantly blow across its surface can strip a warrior to the bone.

Many state that Gallet will never be tamed, its life cycles too alien to ever be understood. Ironically, it is these extreme dangers that cause brave souls to set out to claim Gallet for Sigmar, for they imagine the glory to be won by achieving the impossible in the God-King's name, and not the terrible deaths which likely await them.



THE CRAW

Dug deep into the cliffs of the Mawbight coast for protection against the fierce winds of Gallet is the Sigmarite strongpoint known as the Craw. A thriving hunter's settlement, the Craw is protected by the Astral Templars. The Craw acts as both a trading port on the Mawbight Sea and a staging ground for Azyrite expeditions into Gallet. The Craw tends to be a raucous affair, where passing hunters and traders briefly unwind before setting out to confront the many dangers of Gallet. Of late, the Craw is filled with daring souls preparing to head out into the Gnarlwood for there are many new rumours circulating of treasure and glory; however, so many groups have been ambushed before they even reached the Gnarlwood, that the Astral Templars believe there must be a spy in league with the Ruinous Powers operating within the Craw. Finding clever sorcerous spies is not the Astral Templar's favoured activity, that being slaying massive monsters, and they could use some assistance in the matter.



CRAWLING PITS OF GHARRENTIA

Within the land of Gallet lies Gharrentia – a toxic region of acidic grubs, ravenous arachnids, and poisonous insects along with a ramshackle 'guild' of Grot Brewgits who continually attempt to distil all of them into potent magical inebriating potions. More infamous by far are the Crawling Pits of Gharrentia, a series of massive caverns within the earth stretching for countless miles, filled to the brim with spiders of every size. Tribes of Spiderfang Grots infest the region, worshipping the vast Arachnarok Spiders and regularly swarm out in vast hunting parties to plague the surrounding regions.

In the northern portion of the pits, the Orruk warlord Gordrakk managed to cunningly trap the Godbeast Fangathrak within the spider's colossal webs. The beast's jaws have since been pried open, exposing the Mawgate arcway that resides within its gullet, so that the Fist of Gork can lead his forces into the Eightpoints to reclaim the glory he lost when he failed to level Excelsis. Gordrakk's Ironjawz have greatly fortified the Crawling Pits, but their presence doesn't sit well with the Grots, nor their Spider King, the bloated Gargant Greedy Hekk. Exactly how Hekk became the Spider King is a tale full of exaggeration and semi-truths, but most agree he consumed a particularly nasty Arachnarok named Kraka-Bita whole. The Spider King's voracity (along with his girth) has only grown since he assumed his throne and the Spiderfang tribes at his command continue to increase in number. The Grots' raids now take them far from the Crawling Pits and few are safe from their king's ravenous appetite.

INTO THE MAW

If you want to explore the Crawling pits of Gharrentia in more detail, they feature as an adventure location in the upcoming release *Warhammer Age of Sigmar Soulbound: Ruins of the Past*.

LENTOCK

The hidden City of Hides hangs suspended far above the cliffs of the southern Mawbight, formed from a massive intricate cage of latticed bones. Specially treated iron-scale pelts from slain monstrosities form the outer walls and hold the fierce winds of Gallet at bay. Lentock's unusual construction was designed to keep out both the insects of Gallet and to hide it from the hordes of Orruks which would otherwise assail it. A city of fierce hunters and canny traders, Lentock was built by survivors of the Age of Chaos who managed to not fall to the Ruinous Powers by fleeing deep into the wilds of Ghur. It is protected by its camouflaged seclusion, by a cadre of some of the deadliest hunters in all the Realm of Beasts, and by a circle of ferocious shamans led by the legendarily brutal beastcaller Korsa Stone-Eye. Lentock specialises in succulent meats, unusual pelts, and chitin useful for crafting armour and tools, taken from the myriads of Gallet's insectile predators. As the dangers of Ghur continue to grow during the Era of the Beast, Lentock may not be able to hide much longer. Some Azyrites believe the time is ripe to reach out to the leaders of Lentock for an alliance once more, but it will take strong envoys to win their trust and respect.

MEKITOPSAR

During the Age of Chaos, Skaven agents of Clan Pestilens used one of their gnawholes to open a portal into the primary temple-ship of the Koatl's Claw constellation of the Seraphon. Supposedly, the Skaven sought the keys to some ancient plague, but they failed in their quest; however, mystical rust-phages that they unleashed during their search crippled the temple-ship, causing it to crash land upon the heartlands of Ghur. The temple-ship's ruin became the heart of Mekitopsar, the primaeval stronghold of Koatl's Claw, likely forced by these dire circumstances to become the first Coalesced constellation within the Mortal Realms.

Koatl's Claw's nominal leader, Starmaster Lord Quex, was poisoned by the Skaven during their raid and has never been able to fully recover. He dwells in seclusion within his broken chambers, only sending forth his astral-form when the need is truly dire. Many of his Skink attendants and confidants died in the crash, thus the Saurus Oldbloods of the constellation rose to take control. The Oldbloods swiftly ordered the workings of the few spawning pools that had survived the crash to be accelerated.



The saurus spawned from them were born in pain, their souls scarred with a primal rage. Correspondingly, the Saurus of Koatl's Claw are some of the most savage in all the Mortal Realms, true predators of Ghur, feral and vicious. The Saurus Lords that now lead the temple-host must constantly direct their savagery outwards, lest it turn on their own kind, and the armies of Koatl's Claw are forever in motion. A realmgate they've dubbed Koatl's Gullet lies a relatively short journey west of Mektopsar. The Seraphon use it to wage constant war against the forces of Chaos across Ghur.

The lands directly about Mektopsar have been drastically reformed by the Realmshaper Engines that the Seraphon assembled about their crashed temple-ship. They are filled with phenomenally dangerous saurians, exceedingly venomous reptiles, and mobile carnivorous plants, to say nothing of the roaming packs of Koatl's Claw Saurus hunting those who seek to disturb their sacred grounds. Some fools still come here in search of rumoured treasures, but most vanish into the dark primordial jungle. Those who would seek to deal with the Seraphon have better luck if they inquire at their embassy, the Serpentinis Temple of Excelsis. Unfortunately, the Skink attendants there say those seeking to truly influence the lords of Koatl's Claw's army will have to personally call upon the Scar-veterans and Oldbloods at Mektopsar to be heard.

PLAINS OF MEKITOPSAR

Once home to many tribes, the desolate plains stretching far out to the south-east beyond the jungles surrounding Mektopsar may bear the temple-city's name, but they have little else in common. The tribes fell into corruption during the Age of Chaos, worshipping the Ruinous Powers to survive those dark days. Once the Seraphon of Koatl's Claw discovered their presence, they annihilated them to the last. What remains here is a bleak expanse of arid scrub plains, where silence tends to linger till pierced by the dying cries of a prey beast or the rumbling of the immense herds of razorhorns that charge over the steppes, shredding everything in their path. Scattered stone outcroppings offer

some protection, but most such places are claimed by predatory beasts. There are scouts among the Free Peoples that believe these plains are ripe for colonisation, but before any such endeavour could begin, someone would have to face the daunting prospect of travelling to Mektopsar to plead with the strange Seraphon for their permission.

PRIMEVAL JUNGLE

Sprawling eastward from the temple-city Mektopsar is a shadowy rainforest which Ghurish hunters refer to as the Primeval Jungle; a notable appellation within the Realm of Beasts as it holds many places that could bear such a description, but those that know the Heartlands declare this place truly deserves it. It feels like a jungle from the Age of Myth, though in truth, it is less than a millennia old. The plants and trees here are unlike any others on Ghur — including wildly varied reptiles and saurians, many of them unnervingly clever, almost eldritch. Furtive lizards dwell here which violently combust into fiery explosions when they're injured, alongside one of the Amber Realm's most vicious apex-predators, the Carnosaur.

The Primeval Jungle was formed by the powerful Realmshaper Engines of Mektopsar, but not entirely on purpose. Many of the Skink savants who would've normally attended to the devices died when their temple-ship crash landed. The few attendants that survived didn't have the skill to predict how perfectly the engines would attune with the leylines of Ghur. While they did intend to form a defensive jungle about their temple-city, the rampant growth that overtook the lands to their east is now beyond their control, and save by turning their Realmshaper Engines off entirely, cannot be stopped. The Order Serpentinis is very interested in the beasts of the Primeval Jungle. Indeed, anyone seeking to influence them could certainly gain their favour by bringing them a worthy specimen.



TEMPLIA BEASTHALL

Reckoned by many sages to be the most barbarous of Sigmar's Stormhosts, the Astral Templars are recruited from savage tribes and born to war. They are hunters all, slayers of beasts and tyrants alike, but fiercely honourable. They preserve the heads of the foes they've slain, keeping them in special strongholds known as lodge-keeps — Templia Beasthall is one of the greatest lodge-keeps in all of Ghur, holding some of the Astral Templars' most cherished trophies. Mighty beasts of the wilds are set alongside those of Chaos warlords to inspire their newer brethren to undertake ever bolder hunts. Some even whisper that the arcanelly preserved heads of several Daemon Princes and Greater Daemons line the innermost sanctum of the Beasthall — a rumour the Astral Templars will neither confirm nor deny. What they will cheerfully state is that they have prepared a huge plaque which awaits to display the head of Kragnos.

The Astral Templars regularly run vast culling crusades dedicated to reducing the Orruk hordes of the Ghurish Heartlands out of the Templia Beasthall. Those that wish for the aid of the Astral Templars, or would learn deep hunting lore, along with the nature of many obscure beasts, can seek them out at the Templia Beasthall if they dare. It is well hidden and guarded by the fierce insects of Gallet, yet finding it proves a seeker may well be worthy of the Stormhost's assistance.

WREATHPORT

In south-western Gallet, on the shore of the Splitneck Sea, lies the coastal trading town of Wreathport. A Sigmarite strongpoint where the frigid winds of Bjarl are ever-present, Wreathport was built within the sheltering walls of a vast sea cavern where it could take advantage of the bounteous sea life afforded by the cold waters. Agents of the Order of Azyr frequently use Wreathport as a forward base from which to keep an eye on the schisms and movements of the various factions of Chaos-worshipping tribes that dominate Bjarl. Recently, they've taken note of a particularly dangerous warlord, Karse the Benevolent, who preaches a message of unity amidst the followers of the Ruinous Powers, not that he is any less likely to slaughter those that disagree with his 'enlightened' viewpoint. Nevertheless, the Order finds his sermons particularly dangerous — a Binding would be just the thing to stop him.



CARCASS DONSE

The last remains of a former alpha-continent slowly being torn apart by its neighbours, Thondia from the north, and Andtor from the south, Donse was once the domain of the Drogrukh, but it fell along with Kragnos' people. The magnificent dwellings and great bas-relief sculptures the Drogrukh carved into the walls of the ravines with their great hooves have long since crumbled. The stone spires they raised to celebrate their victories were toppled ages ago and most have long since turned to dust. What remains now is a land of crumbling mesas and fallen glory, though the Earthquake god's return has altered this.

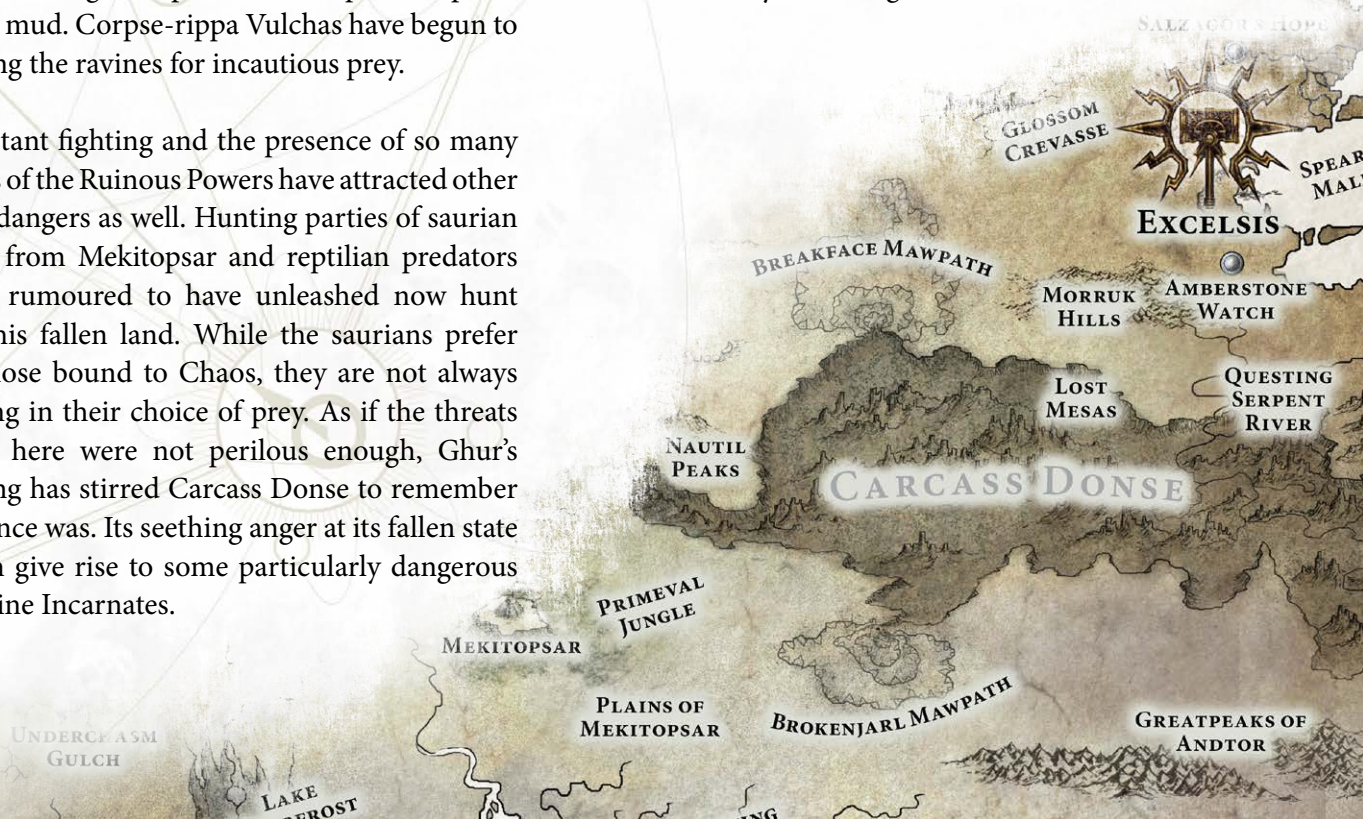
The daring and the foolish still seek the treasures of the Drogrukh chieftains, but increasingly, they must slip past vast hordes of Orruks, Gits, and Bloodbound which continuously battle here amidst the chasms. The Greenskins have come here to fight as an act of worship of Kragnos, many in the mistaken belief he is more likely to notice them if they make a name for themselves in his ancient land. The followers of Khorne seek only to spill more blood in his name and Carcass Donse is as good a place as any for carnage. The seeping changings caused by the poisoning of Thondia's ley lines have reached the northern edge of this land, causing the few still standing rock pillars to collapse into pools of rancid mud. Corpse-rippa Vulchas have begun to hunt along the ravines for incautious prey.

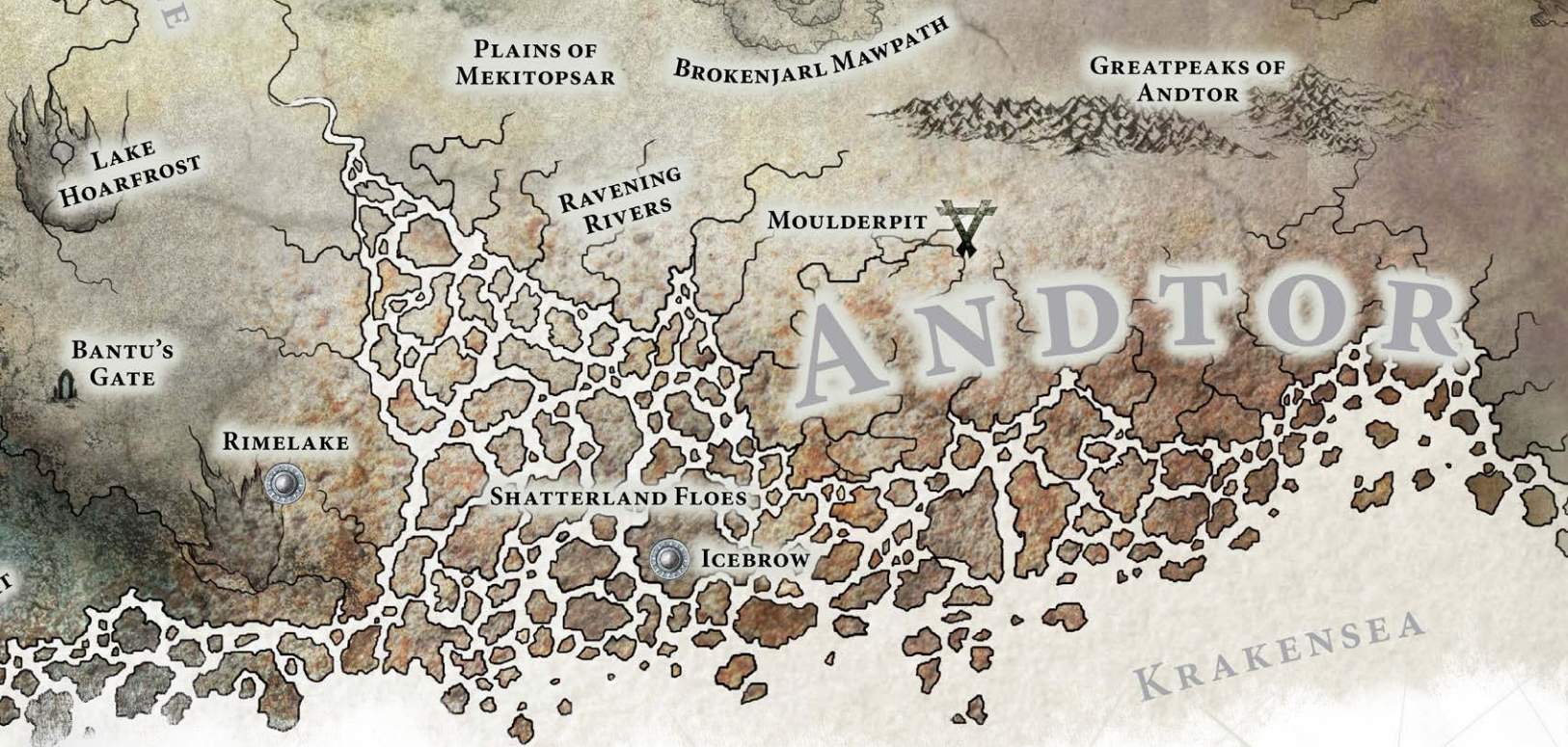
The constant fighting and the presence of so many followers of the Ruinous Powers have attracted other unusual dangers as well. Hunting parties of saurian warriors from Mekitopsar and reptilian predators they are rumoured to have unleashed now hunt within this fallen land. While the saurians prefer to kill those bound to Chaos, they are not always discerning in their choice of prey. As if the threats gathered here were not perilous enough, Ghur's awakening has stirred Carcass Donse to remember what it once was. Its seething anger at its fallen state will soon give rise to some particularly dangerous Kronspine Incarnates.

LOST MESAS

When the Drogrukh knew their species had been spent against the Draconith, and accepted they might soon pass from history, they carved a final cairn — a marker dedicated to their glory and folly. They wound it with subtle enchantments, carved deep into the stone of their land, and hid their remaining treasures within its shadows. Their final act as a people within Ghur was to inter the bones of their last chieftains in rocky tombs about the cairn, before riding out to meet their fate. An age passed, and hunters loyal to Sigmar found the legendary site by chance, hidden in plain sight with crafty magic and cunning stonework.

One of the larger cave complexes of the Lost Mesas now acts as a hunter's refuge for those loyal to the God-King. Skilled hunters, Human, Duardin, and Stormcast Eternal alike use the hidden sanctuary to keep an eye on the battles that rage throughout the canyons of Donse. With the return of Kragnos, discussions have arisen about whether the time has come to claim the Drogrukh's treasures. Many feel this would be utter folly and would somehow draw the attention of the Earthquake God, or at least erode whatever magic keeps the Lost Mesas hidden. Others argue that, sooner or later, the End of Empires will come looking regardless. Better to seize what they can and go.





ANDTOR

South of Thondia, past the ruins of Carcass Donse, lies the sparse tundra of Andtor, where both rock and ice can flow like water. The northern portions of Andtor are smooth expanses of cold shrub plains and tall sheer mountains, whereas permafrost and broken earth dominate its southern reaches. Andtor appears to be bleak and empty, but learned hunters know that, like so many things about Andtor, this is a deception...

Andtor is a cunning predator that frequently hides its fangs beneath a placid exterior. Most of central and southern Andtor is unstable, with earth shifting without warning in ways that catch and dismember the unwary. Violent ice storms erupt from clear skies, cold enough to freeze a traveller solid if they don't find shelter. Many tribal folk believe that Andtor mocks those that dare cross it, besetting them with difficulties unless appropriate sacrifices are made to appease it. Landmarks are rare in Andtor and those few that appear will one day either vanish without warning, or suddenly move vast distances very swiftly, throwing off travellers.

Andtor is host to a great many strange chimeric creatures that appear to be weird amalgamations of terrain and flesh, allowing them to readily hide on the tundra. Of course there are many ways to die on the tundra; Thundertusks and packs of icy squigs roam over the plains, but there are also creatures like the frost kraken, a beast with tendrils formed of frozen stone that can tear apart an unwary hunter in seconds.

Of the Orruk tribes, only the Bonesplitterz can be found here in any numbers, seeking to commune with the spirits of ice and rock, but even they seldom linger long. There are hardly any shrines across Andtor, save for a few monuments to the Ruinous Powers. Shaggy furred Gor-kin roam the tundra and while vicious, their numbers are few.

Hunters that have travelled far across the Heartlands suggest that Andtor is already beginning to adjust its regions to deal with the slow attack of Bjarl from the south. Azyrite Scholars scoff that a land could be sentient enough to react in advance to future attacks, but those that know deadly clever Andtor think otherwise.

GREATPEAKS OF ANDTOR

Harshest of all the mountain ranges of the Heartlands of Ghur, the Greatpeaks of Andtor are a series of sheer granite heights where death is omnipresent. The range is filled with terrible creatures that fortunately seldom come down to hunt the tundra below. The unusual beasts to be found here include voracious Ghorgons, terrifying Chimera, sinister Mindstealer Sphinranxes, and most terrible of all, Mutalith Vortex Beasts which mutate anything incapable of fleeing their twisted forms. Roughly formed stone idols dedicated to the Dark Gods line the heights, some of which are occasionally tended to by wandering Bray-shamans. There are valuable Amberbone deposits here, but few dare the dangers to claim them. Tribes of Humans and Gor-kin regularly journey here in order to recruit the beasts that dwell in the heights. Many merely add their bones to the mountains' foundations, but enough succeed that there are rumours in Excelsis that a crusade may soon be undertaken to cull the monsters of the Greatpeaks.

ICEBROW

In the southern portion of Andtor, within the region called the Shatterland Floes, lies the fortified harbour known as Icebrow. During the Age of Chaos, a Human tribe which refused to worship the Ruinous Powers fled deep into the wastes of Andtor, reasoning that no one would follow them. They lost many to wild beasts before coming upon an astounding sight — a massive battle between a raging furred monstrosity and a lone injured Icebrow Hunter, his loyal pack of Frost Sabres slaughtered about him. While the tribe watched in awe the Ogor managed to kill the great beast with his bare hands, but he was gravely injured in turn, collapsing even as he triumphed.

The Ogor's name was Jaged Hrothvir and he awoke days later, to his surprise, with his wounds bound and an exceedingly large bowl of tasty stew at hand. This was the beginning of a pact between the folk of Icebrow and a group of Icebrow Hunters that entails the Humans offering up regular hauls of the Krakensea's bounty in exchange for the Ogors'

protection. The Icebrow Hunters enjoy the novelty of cooked food and have kept their end of the bargain for many seasons, though it will probably only take only a single bad fishing season for them to turn on the town that bears their name.

Recently, an entire pack of hunters was found along the edge of the Krakensea in a stupor from which they never recovered. The greatly aged but very much alive Jaged Hrothvir has seen similar ends before over the centuries. He has even heard the word 'Dhom-hain' as he hunted for answers. The old Ogor has begun searching for useful allies, for he knows a raid *'of beasts and pointy-eared blighters wot should stay in the sea'* will follow soon and he is not yet willing to give up his satisfying arrangement with the harbour.

LAKE HOARFROST

Lake Hoarfrost is an icy lake left in one of the great clefts in the land supposedly left by the titanic tread of semi-mythic Ymnog as he trampled over Ghur's northern reaches. Rumour holds that once an ancient folk that worshipped Gargants were crushed flat beneath Ymnog's tread without notice, as they rushed forth to worship them — now, what's left of their artefacts are supposedly locked beneath the frozen lake, guarded by deadly predators and the extreme cold. A fool's errand to search for perhaps, but some Azyrite scholars believe that the key to understanding why the Mega-Gargants have steadily increased in number may hide in Lake Hoarfrost.

MOULDERPIT

In central Andtor there is a deep valley where the most devious and horrific abominations thrive. The Moulderpit is the greatest stronghold of the Skaven Clan Moulder in the Amber Realm, shared by several influential factions, though the scions of Clan Dregg are the undisputed rulers here. The twisted fleshcrafters find themselves nearly overwhelmed by regular arrivals of ferocious new prospects, dragged from across Ghur's Heartlands by their ruthless 'thing-catcher' clawpacks, raw material to be twisted into fresh monstrosities.

The Moulders' already outsized ambitions have increased as they've discovered a way to tap into the very life-blood of Andtor itself, using that oily substance to further power their mighty beasts, and war seems imminent. If a beloved creature vanishes anywhere in Thondia or Gallet with minimal bloodshed, it's most likely headed here. Those that would hope to rescue such a beast would have to be swift and cunning; the Moulder are ruthless and do not readily give up their prizes.

RAVENING RIVERS

Crossing Andtor's tundra is always perilous, but never more so than if one dares to travel through the region known as the Ravening Rivers. Titanic landslides of grinding stone bore their way through the landscape, moving like water, but tearing apart any who cross their path. The courses of the numerous rock rivers regularly change, making every new crossing as risky as the first. In addition, the area is frequented by Rockgrinder wyrms, which have learned to attack travellers in the midst of attempting to cross one of the deadly flows. Despite the many dangers, a consortium of Kharadron Overlords and a Collegiate Arcane circle have begun planning a large joint expedition to the Ravening Rivers. While they've been guarded about their plans, it is common knowledge that the endless flow of the rivers regularly carries exceedingly rare minerals to the surface, along with valuable gemstones, and precious chunks of Amberbone.

RIMELAKE

In southern Andtor there is an ice storm that never ceases to rage, for it is touched with the chill of the Everwinter. The eye of the storm is a forever frozen lake, nestled in a range of jagged hills — this is Rimelake, sacred ground to the Beastclaw Alfrostuns. By ancient decree, strict neutrality

is observed here and no fighting is permitted, excepting formal leadership challenges and certain rituals. On the shores of the lake, warriors who seek to lead their fellows by claiming the title of Huskard, and perhaps even one day the mantle of Frost King, learn the time-worn rituals of their people. At certain times, the mystic Huskard Torrs of various Mawtribes will gather together at the heart of the frozen lake to work their great rites, deepening their connection with the Everwinter. Few that aren't Ogors would ever dare approach Rimelake, but many scholars believe the secret of how to endure the Everwinter, and release its grip upon the land, resides here.

SHATTERLAND FLOES

The greater part of southern Andtor is a broken series of islands surrounded by frozen slush, which resembles nothing so much as a titanic archipelago, stretching nearly the entire length of the land. The region, now referred to by hunters as the Shatterland Floes, began changing well over a century ago. Chimeric beasts are common here, as are various predators from the Krakensea. Anything that lives here has long since learned to adapt to the shifting terrain, which isn't as perilous as the rapidly flowing Ravening Rivers, but still highly unstable. Mystics of the Amber Realm strongly suspect that the existence of the Shatterland Floes is no accident. The land appears shattered here because Andtor is doing it on purpose, adjusting its shape to better respond to Bjarl's encroaching ice, which it can more readily grind amidst countless stony teeth. Artefacts, sometimes ones of great power, have been washing up inexplicably on islands within the Floes over the last few years — a few scholars suggest that a Stormvault, or some other lost treasure hold, was ground open by the shifting ice and stone, causing its contents to slowly churn to the surface.



THE OUTER HEARTLANDS

Across the Bitingsea lies belligerent Rondhol, a land of fierce rivers, oxbow lakes, and furious mountains where Orruks of the Bonesplitterz tribes are by far the most common denizens, though no few of its many swamps are claimed by the Kruleboyz. Rondhol is the site of the legendary duel, or at least the start of it if credence is given to certain myths, between Sigmar and Gorkamorka. After the Great Green God was freed from the godbeast Drakatoa by Sigmar's lightning, the raging Gorkamorka immediately gave Dracothion a mighty bash, and started a twelve-day brawl with the God-King. An immense statue of the two deities clasping arms in friendship following their duel once stood on the site where the fight supposedly ended, but Sigmar's side has long since been thrown down, leaving only a grinning Gorkamorka clenching a severed arm.

Rondhol is filled with wildly varied effigies of Gorkamorka, with some emphasising Gork (or possibly Mork) over Mork (or possibly Gork) with the majority of them being carved high within the mountains due to its belligerent rivers. The rivers of Rondhol are exceedingly swift and predatory, capable of digging great channels through the earth and changing course without warning. Sometimes, an entire river will abruptly subside, leaving behind potential unearthed treasure from previous ages, but this is near invariably a trap by the clever predatory waterways to lure in looters which they can then take great pleasure in drowning with a sudden surge. The mountains, in turn, loathe the rivers for constantly tearing at them and will shake debris from their sides to dam the rivers or divert their courses, occasionally causing great floods and forcing swift migrations to higher ground.

Rondhol's constantly changing terrain has greatly influenced its beasts and its people, making all of them disposed to abrupt changes of mood and swift violence, though such traits certainly are not uncommon in Orruks. Constant feuding amidst the Orruk wartribes and the hordes of Bloodbound here is not helped by the cleverly savage Ogors of the Hartgulper Mawtribe delighting in encouraging different clans in their feuds, so they can do mercenary work for both sides. Sigmar's folk here are a hearty lot that mostly stick to the sea or relatively stable waterways as conventional farming is almost impossible in Rondhol. Skilled sailors and fisherfolk, much of their sustenance and even their clothing is drawn from the water. They frequently dress in garments made from turtles and various seagoing reptiles. Unfortunately, their increasing reliance on the woods of Rhondol for their ships and rare settlements has greatly angered their local Sylvaneth allies, which may lead to further troubles.



South of Rondhol lurks ancient Lendu, a patient land of grasping rivers carving through deep valleys and long forgotten mist-wreathed ruins, guarded only by vast flocks of carrion birds, both living and undead. It is a land of long silences, broken only by the sudden screams of dying prey. Much of Lendu is dominated by large bodies of water, though they are far calmer than those of its rival land to the north. Its western portions hold wide veldts, where a hunter must be swift to claim any trophies from the great herds of razorhorn that graze there.

Lendu's history stretches back far beyond mortal reckoning, with its oldest ruins showing traces of fallen empires that possibly predate even the coming of Sigmar. Indeed, what little remains of their ancient stonework suggests they were not carved by Human, Duardin, or Aelven hands, but by some other people entirely. Most infamous of Lendu's ancient sites was the Beastgrave, a region dominated by a hungering mountain, whose labyrinthine guts were said to hold priceless treasures trapped in amber. The Beastgrave was destroyed by a massive Seraphon engineered explosion and now lies shattered. Its ruins are said to still be filled with treasures though, for those willing to brave the many dangers inherent in finding them. What most will find is an early grave.

Everquake City is a Sigmarite stronghold on the edge of Lendu, from which Dawnbringer Crusades regularly march as far north as deep into Rondhol. Indeed, the once-prosperous port town of Civilia rested on the shore of Rondhol's Bitingsea until it was destroyed by violent floods. The Kraken Blades Stormhost guards the city and routinely sends as many warriors as they can spare out with each new crusade. The Kraken Blades are said to have been reforged from the souls of tribal sea raiders and coastal fisherfolk, making them an ideal Stormhost to watch over Lendu and Rondhol.

Directly south of Gallet and Andtor dwells cruel Bjarl, an aggressive ice wrapped nightmare of furred predators, cold serpents, and crimson-tinged ice. The frozen land has already sent encroaching tendrils northwards. A glacial flow known as Bjarl's Throat has begun to slowly press against Andtor, though the freezing Krakensea has so far prevented the two landmasses from further crashing into one another. Any scholar of Ghur can see that further clashing between the two lands is inevitable.

Bjarl is dominated by hordes of fur-clad barbarian tribes dedicated to the Ruinous Powers and large nomadic tribes of Ogor Beastclaw Alfrostuns. Both groups regularly hunt across the frozen plains, slaughtering and consuming all they can catch, with conflicts between the two groups invariably resulting in massive, deadly affairs that all other beings with any bit of sense avoid. The folk of Azyr look at Bjarl as a problem to be handled in the future, once other lands more suitable for habitation are better settled.

Bjarl's inhospitable conditions, which have made so many folk shun it, have gained it favour in the eyes of the Ossiarch Bonereapers. Deep in Bjarl, they have begun working on their Ghurish Necrosia, centred on the ominous pale grey towers of their fortress, the Ivory Citadel. They have been slow to expand though, as the Ossiarch must be cautious when they travel outside their walls, for so desperate are the predators of Bjarl even the scant marrow offered by an Ossiarch's bones means some sustenance.





NEW HEROES

4

New threats rise during the Era of the Beast, but so do new heroes — though hero might be too strong a word for some of these beasts and rogues. Vengeful drakes, half-serpent shadow assassins, and relentless inquisitors aren't quite what the Free Peoples imagine when they seek defenders for their cities, but these monstrous champions are what they have.

Like many in the forces of Order, these heroes don't fight out of pure altruism, nor are they prepared to work with just anyone in their fractious grand alliance. Each has their own goals, histories, and resentments, and even those who are atypical for their Archetype must contend with how others perceive them.

This chapter presents 10 new Archetypes, including one for a new Species, the Draconith.

- ✧ The Errant Draconith is a **Draconith** Archetype. These newly emerged descendants of Dracothion are powerful draconic beings who seek to oppose the enemies of Order, learn from great heroes, and rediscover their lost civilisation.
- ✧ The Hurakan Windcharger and Scinari Loreseeker are **Lumineth** Archetypes, representing the agile and curious approach the Great Nations took during their offensive against Death.
- ✧ The Knight-Judicator, Knight-Relictor, and Knight-Vexillor are **Stormcast Eternal** Archetypes. Clad in thunderstrike armour, Sigmar's newest champions pierce through the cursed skies with conviction and zeal.
- ✧ The Khinerai and Melusai are **Daughters of Khaine** Archetypes. Both are Scáthborn, monsters born from a mix of Morathi's essence and Slaanesh's torment. While their very existence was once secret, Morathi's apotheosis has led to their increasing boldness.
- ✧ The Warsong Revenant is a **Sylvaneth** Archetype, created during Alarielle's rite of life. These ethereal pipers amplify the spirit-song, using its melody to empower wholesome life while making their enemies shriek in pain.
- ✧ The Witch Hunter is a **Free Peoples** Archetype. Sworn agents of the Order of Azyr, they scour the God-King's cities for corruption.

If you are using the optional rules for Subfactions presented in *Champions of Order* or other *Soulbound* supplements in your game, you can find suggested Draconith Subfactions in the Appendix on page 143



NEW SPECIES: DRACONITH

The ancient reptilian race of the Draconith have returned. Strong enough to carry a Stormcast Eternal rider in full sigmarite plate, and with wings, fangs, and scales that imply their descent from the god-beast Dracothion, the Draconith hail from a time before Sigmar walked the realms. Having diverged long ago from their cousins, the Dracoth and the Stardrakes, the Draconith gave up the pure celestial energies of Azyr for the earthier essences of the lower realms. According to some accounts, they were born directly from Ghur's rocky peaks, their eggs laid by a saurian predecessor whose fossilised spine became the mountain range Vexothia. From those mountains, the Draconith used their magic to maintain a mighty empire, ousting the Chaos-tainted Shaggoths from northern Thondia and striking a tentative peace with their neighbours, the centauroid Drogrukh.

It was Kagnos, son of the very Drogrukh who negotiated the pact, who broke it. For no reason other than to prove he could, the End of Empires assaulted the Draconith capital of Vexothskol, initiating a war of mutual destruction that would see both his species and the Draconith all but annihilated. Only the intervention of the Seraphon kept the Draconith from going extinct, as the Slann placed the last Draconith eggs in stasis and transported them to the safety of the void.

The newest generation of Draconith, transposed from the primordial past, are doing their best to adapt to a new age. Many have the temperaments of brooding adolescents, and even those who are fully grown have spent their hatchling years inside isolated Seraphon temple-ships. Most are aghast at learning the Mortal Realms fell to Chaos in their people's absence. Yet they have true friends in the Stormcast Eternals, who aid their reintroduction into the realms, and they are eager to reestablish themselves as a people. Whether it leads to their recovery or final doom, the Draconith hunger to face Kragnos again.

SPECIES BONUS: DRACONIC FORM

None can deny that you are clearly a direct descendant of Dracothion. You gain the following benefits from your draconic form.

- ✧ Your base Armour is 2. If your natural Armour is damaged, it regrows and is repaired after a rest.
- ✧ Your enormous wings give you a Fly (Fast) speed.
- ✧ Your Teeth, Claws, and Tail are Natural Weapons. They deal 1 + S Damage and have the *Piercing*, *Slashing*, and *Crushing* Traits respectively. When you make an Attack, you can select two of your Natural Weapons to Attack with and count as Dual Wielding (**Soulbound**, page 148). You cannot be Disarmed.

✧ As an Action, you can unleash your devastating Draconic Breath. Target one Zone within Medium range. Each creature in the target Zone must make a **DN 4:1 Body (Reflexes)** Test opposed by your **Body (Fortitude)**. Each Target suffers Damage equal to the difference in successes. If the target achieves more successes than you, they suffer no Damage. Your Draconic Breath either takes the form of bolts of lightning, or terrible flames, chosen at character creation.

✧ Your size is Large.

✧ You can't become Soulbound and can't use Soulfire.

DRACONITH NAMES

The only Draconith who know Vexothskol as anything other than a distant story are the brothers Krondys and Karazai. The rest do what they can to honour their vanished nation, but with every generation, the Draconith's collective memory of their old culture becomes murkier. As a result, Draconith names are an eclectic mix, emulating the names of their lost ancestors while relying on half-remembered tales or the records of Dracothion's other children to do so.

Example Draconith Names: Calaroth, Karazai, Kathaskol, Krakathar, Krondys, Laxiazar, Raxathia, Vathakron, Vexonroth, Zorithys



HURAKAN WINDCHARGER

The wind itself carries your arrows, as you, your steed, and your aelementor race above the earth and all its concerns.

To join the Hurakan temples, a Lumineth must enter the trance-like state called hurathré. In doing so, they become weightless, levitating upward to the floating islands where they can charm the wind with gentle chimes and soothing songs.

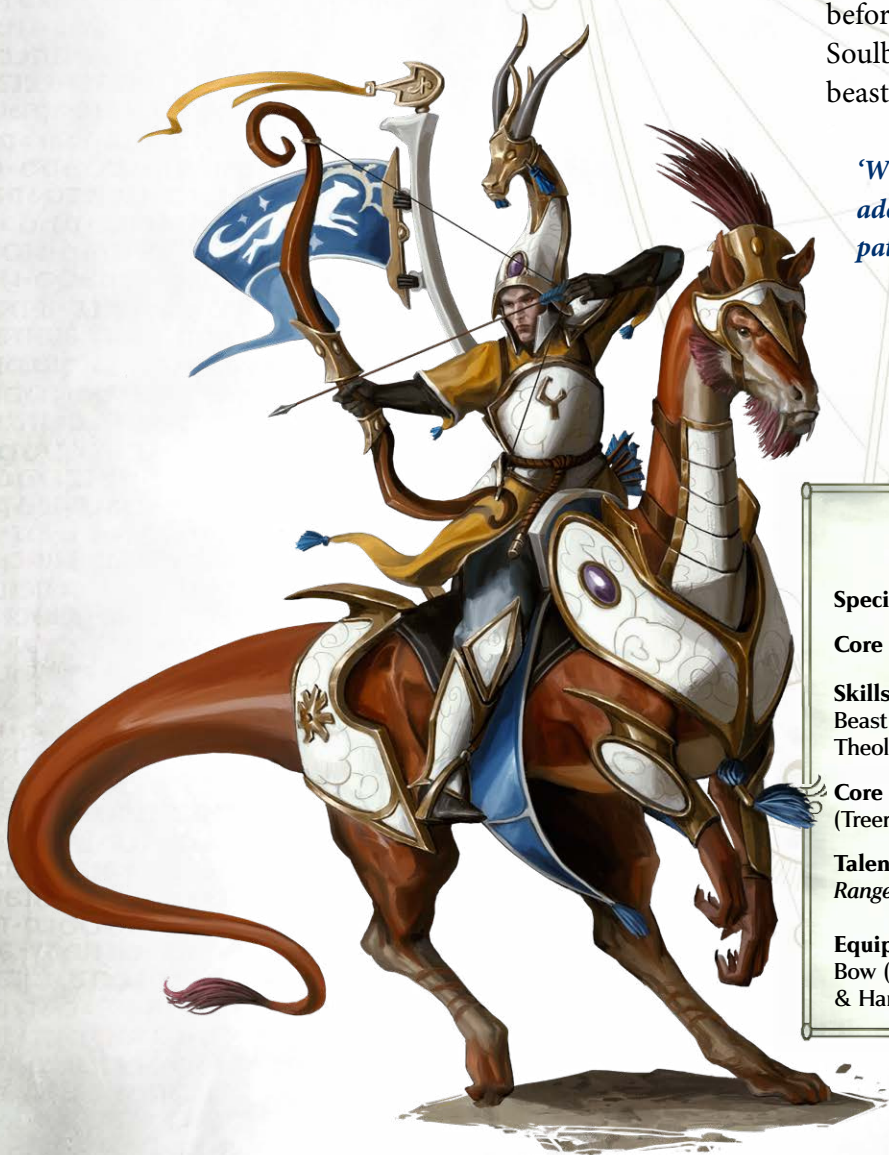
An untrained aspirant may spend weeks meditating, trying to achieve this spiritual buoyancy, but experienced Hurakan Windchargers can enter hurathré even while mounted and aiming a bow.

Light as the air, riding nimble treerunners who seem to ignore gravity's pull, both Windchargers and the arrows they fire are carried by the wind itself. The arrow's shaft twirls around cover and darts through gaps until it pierces through its target.

As an aelementiri, a Lumineth bonded to an aelementor spirit, a Hurakan Windcharger doesn't become Soulbound alone. A spirit of the wind rarely has objections to joining a Binding, though. Eager to experience new adventures, both aelementor and aelementiri adapt well to a life spent scouting unfamiliar lands or making contact with spirits outside Hysh. If anything, it is the Windcharger's mount who has the most trouble adjusting. Skittish by nature, treerunners require much soothing before they grow accustomed to strangers, and thus Soulbound Windchargers are often adept at calming beasts, spirits, and Bindings alike.

'Winds, swirling along paths, find sweet my adoring songs. Thus songs, adoring my sweet, find paths along swirling winds.'

— A mirror poem, from *Hurakan to Her Love*



3

BODY

3

MIND

3

SOUL

Species: Aelf (Lumineth Realm-Lords)

Core Skill: Ballistic Skill

Skills (6 XP): Arcana, Athletics, Awareness, Ballistic Skill, Beast Handling, Fortitude, Intuition, Lore, Nature, Reflexes, Theology, Weapon Skill

Core Talent: Aelementiri Archer*, Loyal Companion (Treerunner)

Talents (Choose 1): Acute Sense*, Animal Friend, Point Blank Range, Pierce Armour*, Scholar

Equipment: Windscale armour (Light Armour), Windcharger Bow (Bow), Hurakan Short-Sword (Sword), Treerunner Saddle & Harnesses, and 50 drops of Aqua Ghyranis.

SCINARI LORESEEKER

You unite the two halves of Hysh into a single discipline, as you seek — and often find — the lost secrets of the realms.

The Hysha-Mhensa, a runic mandala that symbolises Lumineth philosophy, has two halves. The left-hand Tyrionic side represents the sun and proactivity, while the right-hand Teclian side, represents the moon and contemplation. Most Lumineth pick one side or another to embody, but the wandering scholars called the Scinari Loreseekers take inspiration from both. Combining Teclian spellcasting with the dexterity and poise of Tyrionic training, the Loreseekers use their unique set of skills to unearth lost knowledge throughout the realms. For every secret they return to the forces of Order, there is another they bury forever, for the Loreseekers discover many things they deem too dangerous to become common knowledge.

Wanderers who have left home to pursue esoteric ends, Scinari Loreseekers are halfway to becoming Soulbound already, but after a lifetime of lonely independence, many lack the inclination. A Scinari Loreseeker requires a compelling reason to give up that lifestyle and join a Binding, usually something along the lines of a lost text or hidden relic that would be impossible to acquire alone. A Loreseeker ambassador might come to enjoy the company of the Free Peoples, who they can teach all that they have learned, while a Loreseeker censor might have more in common with the secretive Idoneth or Daughters of Khaine.

‘We gave Sigmar the Enlightenment Engines, and he used them to hide knowledge, not spread it. To admonish him, and all those who seek to stifle knowledge, we shall make the punishment fit the crime.’

— Aurilnur Tor-Elid

3

BODY

3

MIND

2

SOUL

Species: Aelf (Lumineth Realm-lords)

Core Skill: Channelling

Skills (7 XP): Arcana, Awareness, Channelling, Determination, Dexterity, Intuition, Lore, Reflexes, Survival, Theology, Weapon Skill

Core Talents: Scinari Balance, Spellcasting (Light), Unbind

Talents (Choose 2): Ambidextrous, Bulwark, Forbidden Knowledge, Scinari Contemplation, Scholar, Unbreakable Spells*

Equipment: Scinari plate (Medium Armour), Eclipsian Staff (Quarterstaff), Loreseeker Blade (Greatsword), three tomes containing knowledge and notes shared from other Loreseekers, and 200 drops of Aqua Ghyranis.



ERRANT DRACONITH

You are a scion of a resurrected species, carving out a place for yourself with your claws and mighty breath.

Draconith eggs, preserved since the Age of Myth, now hatch in the Seraphon's temple-ships and hidden nests. Some hatchlings even emerge inside Stormkeeps, surrounded by the newly dubbed Knights-Draconis. The burden of an entire culture rests on the shoulders of these young Draconith, the eyes of all past and future generations upon them during this pivotal moment. No wonder, then, that Draconith seek partners to shoulder this burden with them. As soon as they are old enough to fly, Errant Draconith take off to explore the realms and find champions in which they can place their trust.

Due to the Pact Draconis, an oath of alliance between the drake-lord Krondys and the God-King Sigmar, many Draconith grow up knowing they'll one day partner with a Stormcast rider. They deliberate for months or years on this decision, observing how potential candidates act during war, and if such a Stormcast becomes an ally to a Binding, the Errant Draconith is sure to follow. Errant Draconith might also ally with Bindings because they seek a different kind of partner. Impressed by the feats of non-Stormcast warriors, be they mighty or subtle, these young Draconiths join Bindings to learn more about both the Soulbound and themselves through their adventures.

'From the temple-ship, I could see the realmspheres glimmer. The Skinks told me that one day I'd find what I sought down there — something, or someone, worth fighting for.'

— Vathazai, Draconith hatchling



5

BODY

2

MIND

2

SOUL

Species: Draconith

Core Skill: Fortitude

Skills (3XP): Athletics, Awareness, Channelling, Fortitude, Intimidation, Might, Reflexes, Survival

Core Talent: Arcane Heritage

Talents (Choose 2): Drag Into The Tempest*, Furious Descent, Guts, Iron Scales, Night Vision, Spellcasting (Celestial)

Equipment: Draconith Barding, a scale from your favourite clutchmate.

KNIGHT-JUDICATOR

You puncture through corrupted foes and corrupted skies alike, a living artillery piece clad in holy thunder.

Courage wins a Knight-Judicator their thunderstrike armour, while wisdom guides the aim of their colossal terminus greatbow. These officers of the Justicar Conclaves take command from the high ground, rallying their fellow Stormcast even as they pick off targets from afar. A preternatural ability to sense corruption means they can identify those who deserve their bolts with ease, and they tip their ammunition with nullstone or blessed steel to better purify these unclean souls. When pressed, Knights-Judicator can fire directly into the sky, opening a path to the heavens. Through this shaft of light, the God-King can cast his judgement in the form of crackling lightning.

Since they can detect the malignant auras of those who defy Sigmar, many Knights-Judicator join forces with Bindings to track down pressing threats to Azyr. Like all their Thunderstrike brethren, Knights-Judicator specialise in navigating long distances by foot and fighting beneath the cursed skies, making them well-suited for the typical adventures of a Binding. Often, a Knight-Judicator and their allied Binding serve as scouts for a free city or Dawnbringer Crusade, clearing a path for the fragile mortals in their charge. Once the way is clear, a bolt fired straight toward Azyr, answered in short order by Sigmar's lightning, declares that Order has reclaimed another land.

'Why am I so certain? Sigmar trusts me to call down his wrath. That is all the reason I need.'

— Knight-Judicator Justica Silvercast

4	3	2
BODY	MIND	SOUL
Species: Stormcast Eternal		
Core Skill: Ballistic Skill		
Skills (9 XP): Awareness, Athletics, Ballistic Skill, Beast Handling, Determination, Devotion, Intuition, Lore, Reflexes, Survival, Theology, Weapon Skill		
Core Talent: Faithful Gryph-hounds		
Talents (Choose 2): Gaze of Sigmar, <i>Hail of Doom*</i> , Hunter, Patient Strike, Pierce Armour*, Sigmar's Judgement*, Tactician.		
Equipment: Thunderstrike Mail (Medium Thunderstrike Armour, page 123), Terminus Greatbow (page 123), Warblade (Sword), a Holy Symbol of Sigmar, 75 drops of Aqua Ghyranis.		



KNIGHT-RELICTOR

You burn the bones of martyrs to delay the creation of new ones.

At the head of the Dawnbringer Crusades, the Knights-Relictor carry their heavy burdens. The remains of holy martyrs burn inside their skull-faced censers, and with this sweet incense they shroud the crusades in warding smoke to protect them from the Ruinous Powers. They do not do this lightly: only the God-King's express order makes this practice anything less than sacrilege, and even then the Relictors offer reverence to every saint they must inter in fire. As guardians of the Temple of Ages, where the Stormcast store all their knowledge regarding spirits and death, the Knights-Relictor understand the full terrible price they are paying to keep their companions safe.

A Soulbound's soul dissipates on death, but their body remains. A Knight-Relictor might accompany a Binding explicitly to keep their order's censers supplied, promising to collect the Binding's bones if any die a martyr's death. In the meantime, they often find common cause, working together to keep a Dawnbringer Crusade safe or to disperse the cursed skies. Though dedicated to Sigmar, Knights-Relictor are always open to learning the spiritual lore of other cultures, so they can add their findings to the library in the Temple of Ages.

'The smoke is sweet when it should be bitter. I have disturbed this saint's final rest so you may fight a few minutes longer. Breathe deep, and promise me it is worth it.'

— Knight-Relictor Andrid the Enduring



3

BODY

2

MIND

4

SOUL

Species: Stormcast Eternal

Core Skill: Devotion

Skills (7 XP): Athletics, Awareness, Determination, Devotion, Dexterity, Fortitude, Medicine, Might, Reflexes, Theology, Weapon Skill

Core Talents: Sacred Remains, Blessed (Sigmar)*

Talents (Choose 2): Fearless, Iron Will*, Rending Blow*, Scholar, Strong Soul*, any Miracles of Sigmar

Equipment: Thunderstrike Plate (Medium Thunderstrike Armour, page 123), Relic Maul (Warhammer), Relic Censer, a locked cache for storing bones, 100 drops of Aqua Ghyranis.

KNIGHT-VEXILLOR

You carry the standard of the heavens high, so all can witness your unbreakable will.

Only the most stalwart Stormcast Eternals can become a Knight-Vexillor. Though the pace of war has led many to loosen the strictures of Sigmar's Eighth Law, which mandates that every Reforged Stormcast must triumph in the Gladitorium before returning to active duty, the Knights-Vexillor still remember. They can only claim their title after enduring combat with monsters, fellow Stormcast, and the harshest of environments, but through these trials, they earn the right to bear the sacred standards of Azyr into battle. Such unshakeable resolve also makes them a natural fit for thunderstrike armour, and so with the most powerful artefacts of the storm in-hand, the Knights-Vexillor bolster the faith of their allies to stand against the darkness

With their banners, some of which draw power from the Anvil of Apotheosis itself, Knights-Vexillor can carry their allies on heavenly winds, call down comets from the heavens, and bring back the wounded from the brink of death. When they use these abilities for a Binding, a Knight-Vexillor does more than just secure a material victory — they also bolster morale for all the forces of Order who see them, as by planting their banner among such disparate companions, they declare that Sigmar still stands with anyone ready to fight for a better world.

‘The banner looked like a patch of the night sky, glittering and full of stars. I looked at it, and I knew — as long as those lights shine, there’s hope for us down here.’

— Galgrim Hrunsson, Ironweld Engineer

4	2	3
BODY	MIND	SOUL
Species: Stormcast Eternal		
Core Skill: Determination		
Skills (7 XP): Arcana, Determination, Fortitude, Lore, Might, Reflexes, Theology, Weapon Skill		
Core Talents: Holy Standard Bearer, <i>Spellcasting (Celestial)*</i>		
Talents (Choose 2): <i>Diplomat, Eidetic Memory, Fearless, Hard to Kill, Scholar, Iron Will*</i>		
Equipment: Thunderstrike Plate (Medium Thunderstrike Armour, page 123), Sigmarite Warblade (Sword), Choose one Sigmarite Standard (Banner of Apotheosis, Meteoric Standard, or Pennant of the Stormbringer), 100 drops of Aqua Ghyranis.		



KHINERAI

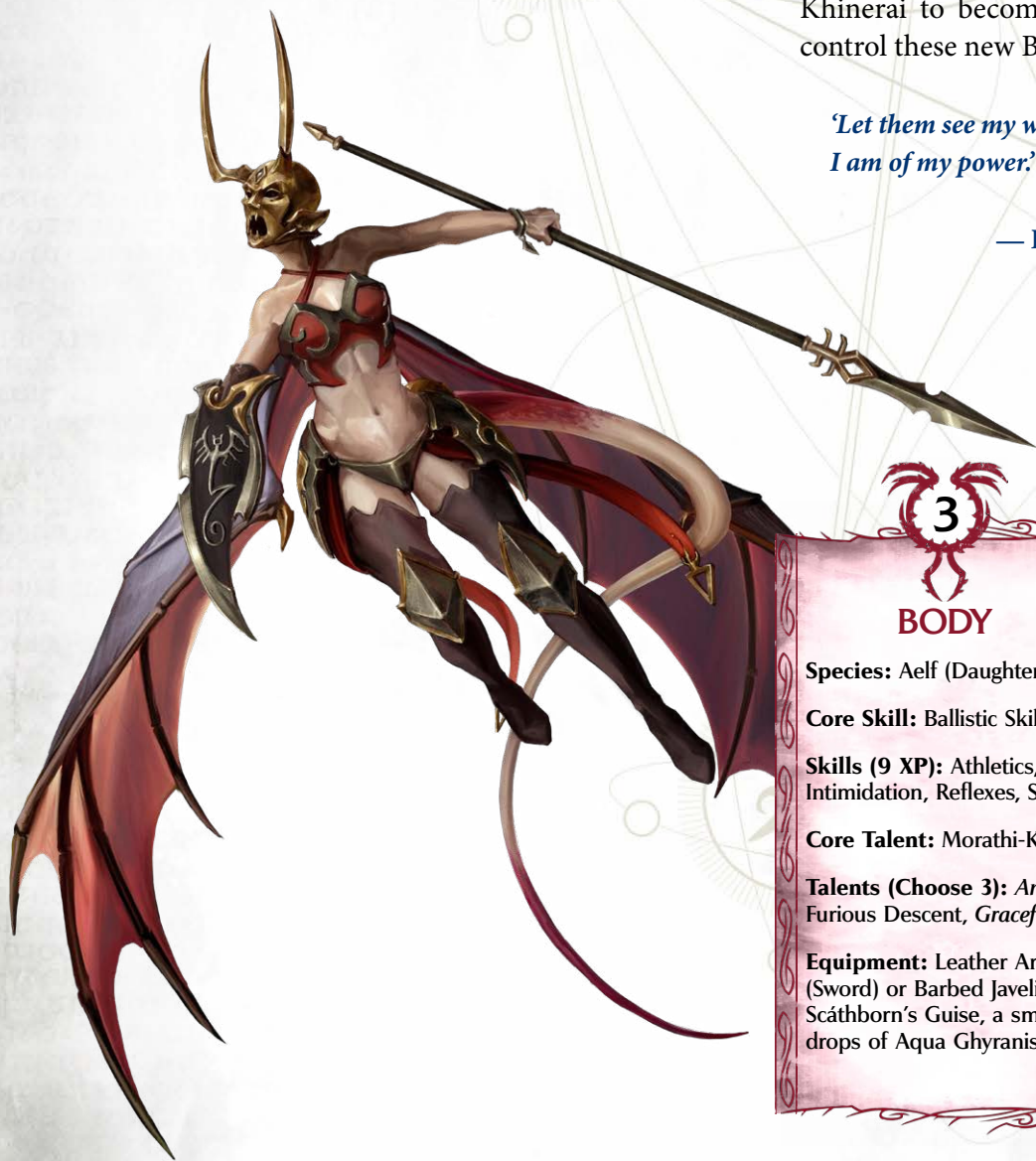
You are vengeance given flight, a winged monster wrenched from Shaanesh's corruption and remade with Morathi's bitterness.

In the dungeons of Hagg Nar, Morathi mixed the Aelven souls she took from Slaanesh with shadow magic and her own blood. Thus she created the Khinerai Harpies, winged Aelves whose resentment toward all the Shadow Queen's enemies was matched only by their loyalty to her. For centuries, the Khinerai operated in secret, swooping down from clouded skies to perform their assassinations, and casting illusions over their wings whenever they walked among other mortals.

But with the Era of the Beast all the Scáthborn, including the Khinerai, are revealing their existences to the realms, and entire flocks now fight openly for Morathi's growing empire. During the ritual of Gristead, when Morathi dispatches her flocks of Khinerai to the various Khainite temples, she might instead assign a notable Harpy to a binding. As with all Khainite Soulbound, this dubious honour doubles as a way for Morathi to dispatch inconvenient servants, and with Khinerai in particular, she must ensure that a single Harpy's doubts don't infect the rest of her fanatically loyal Scáthborn. That being said, both Sigmar and Grungni have pressured Morathi into contributing more to their tenuous alliance, and so she might send her most trusted Khinerai to become Soulbound in an attempt to control these new Bindings.

'Let them see my wings. Let them know how proud I am of my power.'

— Falleskys, Khinerai Heartrender



3 3 2
BODY MIND SOUL

Species: Aelf (Daughters of Khaine)

Core Skill: Ballistic Skill or Weapon Skill

Skills (9 XP): Athletics, Awareness, Ballistic Skill, Dexterity, Intimidation, Reflexes, Survival, Theology, Weapon Skill

Core Talent: Morathi-Khaine's Glory

Talents (Choose 3): *Ambidextrous*, *Death From Above*, *Furious Descent*, *Graceful Landing*, *Hit and Run*, *Orientation*

Equipment: Leather Armour (Light Armour), a Barbed Sickle (Sword) or Barbed Javelin (Javelin), a Heartpiercer Shield, a Scáthborn's Guise, a small icon of Morathi-Khaine, and 20 drops of Aqua Ghyranis.

MELUSAI

You were made in Morathi's true image, your serpentine lower half imbuing you with unnatural strength and grace.

Vanity, conscious or not, is why Morathi's closest servants, the Melusai, look the most like her. The Shadow Queen's most trusted Melusai, the Ironscales, serve as both her field generals and her elite bodyguard. Lower-ranked Melusai, like the Blood Sisters and Stalkers, still have authority over the greater mass of Khainites when they choose to reveal themselves — and when they don't, they act as Morathi's spies, listening for dissent while they use illusions to mask their true form. Their subtlety and sorceries have made them Morathi's greatest assets, but now their monstrous strength makes them fitting champions to lead the Daughters of Khaine into the Era of the Beast.

Few Melusai underwent the Ritual of Binding before Morathi-Khaine's ascension, for fear they'd give away the Scáthborn's secret. Now though, they are ready to take full advantage of the benefits of becoming Soulbound. Mirroring their mistress' hunger for divinity, many Melusai see becoming Soulbound as a way to achieve demi-godhood, and they'll admit even the oddest members into their little pantheon if that's what it takes. Most Melusai still join Bindings under the Shadow-Queen's orders, but the increasing independence of the Scáthborn means a few are taking matters into their own hands, ostensibly to better serve the goddess Morathi-Khaine.

'I look in the mirror, and I see the Shadow Queen staring back at me. I have always aimed to match her power, her beauty, her cunning. Lately, though, I wonder — could I have more? And that thought, I realise, is the truest expression of my mistress.'

— Sinethra, Melusai Blood Sister

3	3	2
BODY	MIND	SOUL
Species: Aelf (Daughters of Khaine)		
Core Skill: Ballistic Skill or Weapon Skill		
Skills (9 XP): Athletics, Awareness, Ballistic Skill, Beast Handling, Determination, Devotion, Fortitude, Guile, Intimidation, Intuition, Might, Reflexes, Stealth, Theology, Weapon Skill		
Core Talent: Shadow Queen's Grace		
Talents (Choose 3): <i>Blessed (Khaine)*</i> , <i>Constriction*</i> , <i>Contortionist</i> , <i>Hail of Doom*</i> , <i>Intimidating Manner</i> , <i>Loyal Companion (Blood Wyrn)</i> , <i>Pierce Armour*</i> , <i>Scáth Touch</i> , any Miracles of Khaine		
Equipment: Armoured Plating (Medium Armour), a Heartshard Glaive (Halberd) or a Heartseeker Bow (Bow) and Scianlar (Sword), a Scáthborn's Guise, a shed scale from the Shadow Queen herself, and 50 drops of Aqua Ghyranis.		



WARSONG REVENANT

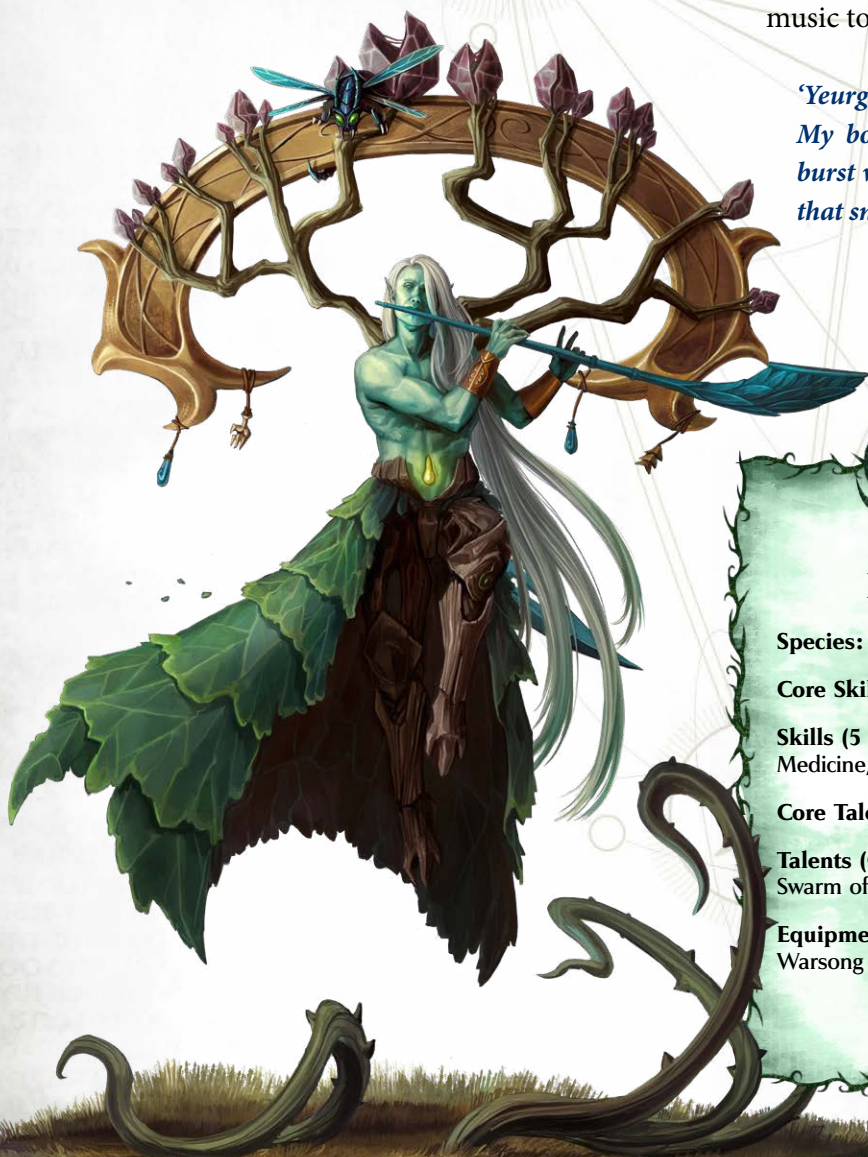
You play a fey song, uplifting nature's allies and rousing its frenzy to shred its enemies to pieces.

Inside the petrified Oak of Ages Past, a set of ancient soulpods waited centuries for their time to sprout. When Alarielle completed her Rite of Life, these soulpods dropped into the clean waters of the River Vitalis, and from those golden acorns the Warsong Revenants blossomed. As their neonatal act, they played a skirling melody on their ethereal flutes, cleansing Nurgle's corruption from the surrounding wetlands all while making the attacking Gor-kin collapse from internal haemorrhaging.

The Warsong Revenants have since scattered among the groves, each bringing with them a different take on the spirit-song's odd music, but all are intent on filling the realms with the sound of life once more. Some Warsong Revenants play best as soloists, but others want their music to become a part of a greater harmony. In some ways, it is easier for a Warsong Revenant to become Soulbound than other Sylvaneth, for their newborn lamentiri aren't as rich with memories and experiences. But for others, it is much harder, as the Warsong Revenants are few enough as it is, and only Alarielle knows when more might be planted. If the Everqueen asks such a warrior to become Soulbound, it is because together the Binding can enhance the Warsong Revenant's music to a beautiful, life-generating fever pitch.

'Yeurgh! It plays its flute, and see what happens? My boils shrivel, my poxes fade, and my gnats burst with blood! I hate it, I despise it, and I'll see that snottin' piper silenced!'

— Rancidus Putrefax, Great Unclean One



2

BODY

2

MIND

4

SOUL

Species: Sylvaneth

Core Skill: Entertain

Skills (5 XP): Beast Handling, Entertain, Fortitude, Lore, Medicine, Nature, Survival

Core Talents: Alarielle's Song, *Unbind**, *Spellcasting (Jade)**

Talents (Choose 2): *Animal Friend*, *Diplomat*, *Fearless*, *Swarm of Spites*, *Witch-Sight*

Equipment: Arboreal Cloak, Spirit Falchion (Greatsword), Warsong Flute, 280 drops of Aqua Ghyranis

WITCH HUNTER


You keep the free cities safe, your rune-engraved weapons poised to banish malign influences.

During the Age of Chaos, when Daemons battered at the gates of Azyr, Sigmar knew he had to keep the heavens safe. Fearing the last bastion of mortalkind was vulnerable to an attack from within, the God-King founded the Order of Azyr, a collection of investigators and assassins dedicated to combating the subtler aspects of Chaos and Death. The agents of the order, most of whom are known as Witch Hunters, spread with Sigmar's empire and now every citizen of the free cities knows how to recognise them, with their long coats and grim eyes, loaded down with the weapons of their trade. Granted, this mental image isn't always correct, but their fearsome reputation is.

Skilled as Witch Hunters are, they are only Human. Joining a Binding gives them the chance to become something more, while still retaining the humanity that separates them from their prey. A Soulbound Witch Hunter can confront even the most entrenched servants of Chaos or Death, a task which has become more important than ever as the free cities empty their garrisons to bolster the Dawnbringer Crusades. Other truth-seekers, like Knights-Azyros or Isharann Soulscryers, make good partners, but Witch Hunters often fall easily into the role of the always suspicious cynic in a party of hopeful souls.


'I'm a hunter, aye, but not of beasts. There are worse things than Gruntas and Vulchas inside these walls.'

— Witch Hunter Alela Gaunt



2

BODY



3

MIND



3

SOUL

Species: Human, Duardin, or Aelf

Core Skill: Guile

Skills (11 XP): Arcana, Awareness, Ballistic Skill, Determination, Devotion, Fortitude, Guile, Intimidation, Intuition, Lore, Reflexes, Stealth, Survival, Theology, Weapon Skill

Core Talent: Bane of the Witch

Talents (Choose 2): *Ambidextrous, Backstab*, Blessed (Sigmar)*, Gunslinger*, Guts*, Intimidating Manner, Iron Will*, Point Blank Range*, Sigmar's Judgement*, Underdog, Vanish*,* any Miracles of Sigmar.

Equipment: Leather Armour & Coat (Light Armour), 2 Weapons of Banishment (page 123), an Iron Torch, a set of Nullstone Manacles, a bandolier fitted with an assortment of witch hunting esoterica, 100 drops of Aqua Ghyranis.



TALENTS

Talents are special abilities and tricks that your character has learned throughout their life. Your Archetype lists a number of Talents that you can take during character creation, but after that you are free to choose any Talent as long as you meet the requirements.

Each Talent costs 2 XP, and can only be taken once, unless it states it can be taken multiple times.

REQUIREMENTS

A number of Talents have requirements, such as Species or culture, a particular level of Training or Focus, or even an Archetype. You must meet these requirements to learn the Talent. At the GM's discretion they can allow you to take a Talent even if you do not meet the requirements. This is best used when a Talent requires a particular Species, culture, or Archetype, rather than a Skill or Attribute.

AELEMENTIRI ARCHER

Requirements: Hurakan Windcharger

Your arrows are carried through the air by their Aelementiri, who guide your projectiles towards distant targets with devastating precision. Whenever you make a Ranged Attack with a weapon that uses arrows, your Accuracy is never decreased as a result of the Environmental Traits such as *Cover* or *Obscured*.

ALARIELLE'S SONG

Requirement: Warsong Revenant

You have been made by the Everqueen herself with the single purpose of spreading her song wherever it is needed most. When you cast a Jade spell or use the Unbind Talent, you can use Soul (Entertain) instead of Mind (Channelling) for the Test. You can also use your Training and Focus in Soul (Entertain) rather than Mind (Channelling) for the purpose of Talent Requirements. In addition you can use an Action to play one of two unique songs.

✧ **Ballad for the Brave:** Make a DN 5:1 Soul (Entertain) Test. For each success, you can choose one ally within Medium Range. They immediately recover from the *Frightened* or *Stunned* condition.

✧ **The Everqueen's Warsong:** All enemy creatures within Medium Range who can hear you must make an Opposed Test using Soul (Determination) versus your Soul (Entertain) or become *Frightened* of you until the end of your next turn.

ARCANE HERITAGE

Requirements: Draconith

Whether raised within the temple-vessels of the Seraphon or born in the magic-wracked outer wilderness of the Mortal Realms, every Dragonith develops a resistance to the arcane. If you are the target of a spell, you may attempt to Unbind it (*Soulbound*, page 91) using Body (Fortitude).

BANE OF THE WITCH

Requirements: Witch Hunter

Witch Hunters are tenacious trackers and experts in investigation and interrogation when it comes to seeking out their damnable targets. When investigating or tracking traces of Chaos taint or witches, you double your Training in all Mind Tests.

CONSTRICTION

Requirement: Melusai, Training (1) and Focus (1) in Might

You have learned to use your serpentine lower half as a mass of coiling muscle to crush the life from your enemies. You gain Advantage on Opposed Tests to Grapple (*Soulbound* page 143). If you successfully Grapple an enemy, you may deal Damage to the target equal to your combined Training and Focus in Might. This Damage ignores Armour. If the target is still *Restrained* at the beginning of your subsequent turns, you can deal this Damage again.

DEATH FROM ABOVE

Requirement: Khinerai

You have learned how to put the full force of a dive behind your javelin throws. If you use your Move to Fly at least one full Zone directly towards your target, you can use an Action to Throw a Barbed Javelin with terrifying force. If you do this, the Barbed Javelin deals Double Damage and gains the *Penetrating* Trait for this Attack.

DRAG INTO THE TEMPEST

Requirements: Draconith, Training (1) and Focus (1) in Might

With your incredible draconic strength, you have learned how to snatch mortals from the battlefield and carry them aloft. This can be used to rescue allies from harm, or send enemies plummeting to a grizzly end. When you successfully Grapple a creature of size Medium or smaller (*Soulbound*, page 143), you may carry them with you when you Move. An ally may choose to let you Grapple them, rather than make an opposed Test.

You can release or drop a carried creature as a Free Action, which can cause them to take Falling Damage depending on the distance dropped (*Soulbound*, page 140).

FAITHFUL GRYPH-HOUNDS

Requirements: Knight-Judicator

You have a pair of Gryph-hounds (*Soulbound*, page 306) that both serve as your loyal companions. Your Gryph-hounds gain a bonus to their Toughness equal to your Soul. On your turn, you can use an Action to direct both of your companions to Move and take an Action, such as attacking or taking the Defend Action, and you can choose a different Action for each of your companions. Your Gryph-hounds do not have their own Initiative and only act if instructed. If one of your Gryph-hounds dies, you can take the *Train Companion* Endeavour to spend time between adventures bonding with a new Gryph-hound.

FURIOUS DESCENT

Requirements: Draconith or Khinerai

You descend from the sky in a primal frenzy, using your weapons, tail, and even wings to decimate your foes in wide swathes. Whenever you take the Charge Action using your Fly Speed, your Melee Attacks gain the *Cleave* Trait.

GAZE OF SIGMAR

Requirements: Knight-Judicator, Training (1) and Focus (1) in Theology

Your strengthened connection to the God-king Sigmar allows you to briefly call upon his direct intervention to smite your foes in a blast of celestial light. The more desperate the struggle, the greater the power of Sigmar's stern lightning gaze. Once per day, you can spend an Action and target a single Zone within Long Range. Every creature within that Zone takes Damage equal to the current Doom. This Damage ignores Armour.

HOLY STANDARD BEARER

Requirements: Knight-Vexillor

You wield your sacred standard with a confidence and unshakable certainty that rallies your allies, even in the darkest hour. You can wield a Sigmarite Standard in one hand and use it to make Attack Actions as if it were a Warhammer. In addition, any allied creature within Medium Range who can see your Standard can add your Training and Focus in Determination to Tests to resist or recover from the *Charmed* or *Frightened* Conditions.

Finally, you can spend an Action to plant your standard in the ground and declare that 'none shall falter on this day'. While you remain in the same Zone as your standard, you and all allies within the Zone can add your Training and Focus in Determination to Death Tests.



LOYAL COMPANION (CHOOSE)

This Talent functions as per the Loyal Companion Talent on page 86 of *Soulbound*, but adds the following companion options. The stat-blocks for the companions below can be found on page 141 and 142.

- ✧ A Blood Wyrn (Khineraï or Melusai Aelf only).
- ✧ A Treerunner (Hurakan Windcharger only)

MORATHI-KHAINE'S GLORY

Requirement: Khineraï

Your resplendent leathery wings are a glorious echo of those of Shadow Queen herself. Your wings grant you a Fly (Fast) Speed. This benefit is lost if you wear Medium or Heavy Armour.

IRON SCALES

Requirements: Draconith

Your scaly hide has hardened to such an extent that even mighty blows can be turned aside. Your Natural Armour increases to 3.

SACRED REMAINS

Requirements: Knight-Relictor

It is your sworn duty to retrieve the bones of fallen martyrs and burn their sacred remains in your Relic Censer to grant them one final act of hope and defiance. Make a **DN 4:1 Mind (Theology)** Test and note the number of Successes. These are your Sacred Remains, which represents the blessed bones of the fallen.

As an Action, you can burn one of your Sacred Remains to cast any Miracle of Sigmar or Universal Miracle, even if you do not normally know it. Alternatively you can burn one of your Sacred Remains as a Free Action to sustain or empower one of your Miracles. You can replenish your Sacred Remains when you Rest in a city or between

adventures. You can do this in addition to any other Endeavours you take. The maximum number of successes in your Sacred Remains is equal to your Soul plus any levels of Training in Theology. Alternatively, if a Soulbound member dies, and they give prior consent, you can harvest their remains. This fully replenishes your Sacred Remains, and reduces Doom by 1.

SCÁTH TOUCH

Requirement: Melusai

You have mastered the accursed Scáth Touch, a method of carving out your foe's heart before transmuting their dying body into a still-conscious crystal statue — eternally trapped in the agonising moment of death.

When you kill an enemy with a melee attack, you can immediately spend a Mettle to deliver the Scáth Touch and hold aloft the crystallised heart of your foe. All enemies within Medium Range who witness this grizzly display must make a **DN 4:X Soul (Determination)** Test where X is equal to 1 if the target was a Minion, 2 if they were a Warrior, and 3 if they were a Champion or Chosen. On failure, the targets are *Frightened* of you until the end of your next turn. Note that at the GM's discretion, certain creatures in the Mortal Realms such as Automata and Daemons may not have a heart and thus cannot be the target of this Talent.



SCINARI BALANCE

Requirements: Scinari Loreseeker

Your years of training and research in the Tyrionic and Teclian disciplines have granted you great balance and harmony in combat. You can wield your Eclipsian Staff and Loreseeker Blade at the same time, one in each hand.

Additionally, you double your Focus on Dexterity and Reflexes Tests to maintain your balance, keep your footing, and resist any effects which would cause you to fall *Prone*.

SCINARI CONTEMPLATION

Requirements: Scinari Loreseeker

The Loremasters are renowned for applying their knowledge and thoughtful deliberations during combat, taking time to prepare spells before unleashing them at a calculated moment. During combat, when you cast a spell, you can double your Focus in Channelling if you didn't cast a spell on your previous turn. Alternatively, when you make a melee attack, you can double your Focus in Weapon Skill if you didn't make a melee attack on your previous turn.



SHADOW QUEEN'S GRACE

Requirement: Melusai

Your lower body is a lithe, serpentine mirror of the Shadow Queen's herself — a length of coiled muscle and hardened scales. Your Speed is Fast, and you cannot be knocked *Prone*.

SWARM OF SPITES

Requirement: Warsong Revenant, Branchwych

Using the abundant life energy flowing through the realms, you can call out to nature and summon a swarm of buzzing, diminutive, and malicious Spites which gleefully follow your commands. As an Action, you can make a **DN 4:1 Soul (Entertain)** or **Mind (Channelling)** Test and summon a number of **Spites** (page 141) equal to the number of successes. The Spites appear in your Zone and immediately form a single Swarm. On your turn, you can use a Free Action to issue a simple verbal command to your Swarm of Spites, such as '*protect me*' or '*kill that beast*'. The Spites follow your commands to the best of their ability.

You can only summon and command one Swarm at a time, with a maximum number of Spites up to your combined Soul and Training in Entertain, or Mind and Training in Channelling. While your Swarm of Spites is within Medium Range, you can take an Action to make the same Test used to summon them to bolster their numbers. Alternatively you can use a Free Action to dismiss your Swarm of Spites.



NON-SIGMARITE REMAINS

At the GM's discretion, if a Knight-Relictor burns the Sacred Remains of a martyr who was a devout worshipper of a different god, such as Morathi-Khaine or Grinnir, the Knight-Relictor may cast a Miracle associated with that god instead.

ENDEAVOURS

It's easy to look at the grand battles before the Era of the Beast and conclude that they decided the fate of the realms, but the centuries-long schemes cooked up by feuding Gods that led up to these wars played just as significant a role. You can emulate the patience and persistence of the gods during periods of downtime.

Below is a list of Endeavours, themed around the Era of the Beast, that your character can undertake. Some Endeavours have requirements that you must meet before taking them. If an Endeavour requires you to make a Test, you cannot spend Soulfire or Mettle to alter your dice pool or the result.

CONSULT THE WIND

Requirement: Hurakan Windcharger

No matter how far you roam, your aelementor is right behind you. Capricious and mercurial, your spiritual patron might only answer your questions with cackling laughter, but even the wind's most mean-spirited jokes contain lessons upon which you can reflect. This communion also imbues you with geomantic energy, giving your body the same nimble agility as your soul.

Consulting the wind is a **DN 4:8 Soul (Athletics)** Extended Test. Over the course of one week you can make 3 Tests for your spirit to race and fly with your aelementor. If you succeed, your Speed increases one step until your next downtime period. In addition, once before your next downtime period, your aelementor can slow your fall, maximising your successes on a Test to reduce Damage from Falling (*Soulbound*, page 140).

DETECT CORRUPTION

Requirement: Training (1) or Focus (1) in Insight

Both the Knights-Judicator and the Witch Hunters specialise in sensing dark influences. Detecting corruption is a **DN 4:8 Mind (Insight)** or Soul

(**Insight**) Extended Test. Over the course of one week you can make 3 Tests to detect corruption. If you succeed, before your next downtime period, you automatically pass the first Mind (Insight) or Soul (Insight) Test you make to sense if a character has hidden or suspicious motives.

IMPRISON

The Draconith and the Slann buried Kragnos under not just a mountain, but also the corpses of their kin. They judged his imprisonment worth the price, for lacking the strength to defeat such a force, they could only hope to contain it.

When you take this Endeavour, work with your GM to decide what it will take to imprison an evil you cannot ever defeat. The greater the evil, the higher the price. For example, you may need to use a loyal ally as bait to draw your target into the trap, or you might have to flatten your homeland during a geomantic ritual to keep your enemy contained. Over the course of your downtime, you discover the method by which you can contain this evil, but the opportunity to execute it will only occur during your adventures. When the time comes, can you bring yourself to make such a sacrifice?

PREACH UNORTHODOXY

Requirement: *Blessed* (any) Talent

The faiths of the Mortal Realms are in flux. The most visible conflict is in the Khainite temples, as the former High Oracle's claims to have fused with the God of Murder agitate much of her leadership. At the same time, Duardin priests rage over whether Grungni is a traitor or a saviour, while even the Orruks, Grots, and Gargants look upon Kragnos and wonder how to fit him in their conception of the Great Green God.

Preaching heresy doesn't mean you've forsaken your god, but that your beliefs have departed from the orthodoxy. Using the spell creation rules (*Soulbound*, page 283), create a new 'Miracle' which you cast using Soul (Devotion) instead of

Mind (Channelling). When you undertake this Endeavour, you must make a **Soul (Devotion)** Extended Test to create and memorise the new Miracle. The Difficulty of the Test is 5, while the Complexity is equal to the total cost of the Miracle's Aspects. Over the course of one week you can make 3 Tests to create the Miracle. If you succeed, you have successfully created and memorised the Miracle, which represents your divergent beliefs or unconventional interpretation of your god. If the authorities of your religion see you using this Miracle, you are sure to earn their ire.

RITE OF LIFE

Requirement: Sylvaneth

The song that Alarielle started at the Oak of Ages Past still echoes among her children. As the Sylvaneth lend their voices to the chorus, they empower the wild beasts that now ravage the realms, but they consider such a price worth it to cleanse the energies of Chaos and Death from their lands.

Echoing the rite of life is a **DN 4:10 Soul (Devotion or Entertain)** Extended Test. Over the course of one week you can make 3 Tests to harmonise with the spirit-song. If you succeed, until your next period of downtime, all non-Minion living creatures in the region, like Humans and Orruks, gain a bonus to their maximum Toughness equal to your Training in Devotion or Entertain. Additionally, all creatures who profane the cycle of life, like Daemons and the Undead, decrease their maximum Toughness by an amount equal to your Training in Devotion or Entertain, to a minimum of 1.

SANCTIFY

When the Lumineth marched through the Prime Innerlands, they did more than just topple a few statues. They also engraved the geomantic rune Yngra, which means both rescue and imprisonment, in key locations around Shyish. Once activated, Yngra both protected great swathes of that region's mortals from necromancy and also helped anchor

several of the underworlds in place, giving the living the breathing room they needed to strike back against the undead.

Sanctification is an aggressive but temporary measure, which hopefully paves the way for more permanent change. Every faction of Order has their own way of sanctifying a location, from the aforementioned Lumineth runes, to the flagellation of Sigmar's Devoted, or the harmony of Sylvaneth spirit-song. By combining all the knowledge and techniques of your party, you push back the darkness just long enough so you can strike back at those who caused it.

This Endeavour must be taken by the whole Binding, as well as any of the Binding's allies like Stormcast Eternals. When you take this Endeavour, halve Doom for your next adventure. Doom returns to its previous value at the start of your next downtime period. This Endeavour can only be taken once in a given region.

SEEK YOUR HERITAGE

Requirement: Draconith

The young Draconith who wander the Mortal Realms are always on the lookout for traces of their lost civilisation, or in some cases, a new place that their people could someday call home. You spend your downtime flying across the land at a pace few could match.

Seeking your heritage is a **DN 4:8 Mind (Survival)** Extended Test. Over the course of one week you can make 3 Tests to find ruins of the past or suitable places to call home. If you succeed, you are emboldened by your discoveries: your maximum Mettle increases by 1 until your next downtime period. If you fail, your efforts are met with frustration, but at least you gained an understanding of your surroundings. You gain +1d6 to Mind (Survival) Tests when navigating the area until your next downtime period.

EQUIPMENT

This section offers a selection of new equipment to players, in addition to what is available in the *Soulbound* core rulebook (page 99). The Weapons and Adventuring Gear table lists the typical price of these items, but these can change depending on the rarity of the item and where in the realms you are.

WEAPONS AND ADVENTURING GEAR		
Name	Cost	Availability
Arboreal Cloak	N/A	Special
Banner of Apotheosis	N/A	Special
Draconith Barding	2,000D	Rare
Excelsis Glimmerings (1 use)	100D	Rare
Heartpiercer Shield	210D	Rare
Keldrisaith	400D	Rare
Meteoric Standard	N/A	Special
Nullstone Manacles	200D	Rare
Pennant of the Stormbringer	N/A	Special
Relic Censer	N/A	Special
Scáthborn's Guise	550D	Exotic
Terminus Greatbow	N/A	Special
Thunderstrike Armour	N/A	Special
Weapon of Banishment	600D	Rare

ARBOREAL CLOAK

These priceless arcane cloaks are made from an ever-growing curtain of leaves from the Oak of Ages Past. While they seem fragile on the surface, the cloak is suffused with the life-giving magic of Ghylan that holds a Warsong Revenant aloft, and gifts them unnatural endurance.

While wearing an Arboreal Cloak you gain a Fly (Fast) Speed. In addition, while you wear the cloak, your maximum Wounds increases by 2, giving you two additional spaces on your Wound Track (*Soulbound* page 39).

BANNER OF APOTHEOSIS

This incredibly rare Sigmar Standard is made of Starsilk and woven with shavings taken directly from the Anvil of Apotheosis. When called upon by the proper invocation, the Banner casts a holy light that hardens the armour and flesh of Stormcast and Soulbound alike. While wielding the Banner of Apotheosis, you can cast the *Hallowed Ground*, *Healing Light*, or *Purifying Blast* Spells (*Soulbound*, page 273, 273, and 274 respectively) using Soul (Determination) and gain 1 additional success whenever you successfully cast them. Spells cast in this way do not suffer the Price of Failure.

DRACONITH BARDING

Knowledge of the Draconith's emergence is far from widespread among the mortal populace. This became all too apparent when the first Draconith, driven by boundless curiosity, approached Order settlements in Ghur, only to be met with calls to arms and misguided attacks. In their eyes, the Draconith were just another primal Ghurish beast sent to terrorise them. Since then, some Draconith have gone to great lengths to assuage these concerns as best they can. The most common method is to adopt Draconith Barding. These shaped steel plates do little to reinforce a Draconith's already iron-hard hide. Instead, they feature emblazoned sigils of a Free City, iconography of the God King Sigmar, or other Order Deities. This serves to grant a Draconith a sense of civility and nobility in the eyes of most mortals — after all, few wild beasts wear finely crafted armour.

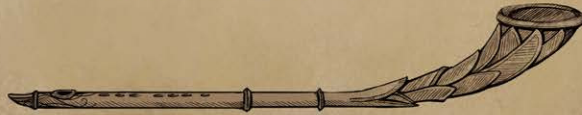
While wearing Draconith Barding, you gain +1d6 to social tests while interacting with members of Order aligned factions, and individuals are less likely to assume you are a mindless beast or mount.



Weapons of Banishment



Stormcast Annihilator
Thunderstrike Armour



Warsong Flute



Meteoric Standard



Relic Censer



Glimmerings

EXCELSIS GLIMMERINGS

Glimmerings, as they're known locally to Excelsis, are shards mined from the Spear of Mallus. They act primarily as a highly sought after currency within the city, or can be consumed, channelling their celestial energies to grant prophetic but incomplete visions of the future. Glimmerings can take the form of rough-cut jewels, minted into coins, or discovered in the form of smooth pebbles scavenged from the surrounding frozen beaches. Using a Glimmering has the same effect as casting the *Prophecy* spell (*Soulbound*, page 273) and allows the user to ask one question. Whilst in Excelsis, during a downtime period, you can convert 100D to 1 Glimmering, in addition to any other Endeavours you take. Outside of Excelsis their availability increases from Rare to Exotic. Merchants will often haggle their prices up if they believe a Glimmering is particularly potent or contains evidence of more specific events, as officially appraised and documented by Excelsis' Prophetisers' Guild.

HEARTPIERCER SHIELD

A wicked amalgamation of lightweight buckler and a razor-sharp claw, Heartpiercer Shields are often found in the hands of Morathi's Khinerai warriors, who utilise both their offensive and defensive traits with deadly grace.

A Heartpiercer Shield counts as a Shield (*Soulbound*, page 104) but only increases your Defence against attacks made from within Close Range. In addition, you can Attack with the Heartpiercer Shield as if it were a Sword (*Soulbound*, page 103) without losing its defensive properties. Note that a Heartpiercer Shield still counts as a Shield for the purpose of Talent interactions.

KELDRISAITH

These serpent-headed staves are gifted to Melusai Ironscales upon their appointment as leaders of Morathi's armies. On the surface, they appear like baroque icons of office, but in battle their true nature is revealed. At range, a Melusai can use them to launch devastating bolts of shadowy energy towards their foes. Those who survive to close the distance, find that the ornamental snakes adorning the staff leap into life at the Melusai's command, lashing out to attempt to carve out their foes' hearts with their fangs. Whenever you use a Keldrisaith to make an Attack, you can choose to use its ranged or melee profile:

✱ **Ranged:** 1 + S, Range (Medium), Piercing, Two-handed

✱ **Melee:** 2 + S, Piercing, Penetrating, Two-handed

METEORIC STANDARD

This Sigmar Standard amplifies your ability to call down comets and wrath from the stars. While wielding the Meteoric Standard, you can cast the *Comet of Casandora*, *Foretell Doom*, or *Orrery Spells* (*Soulbound*, page 273) using Soul (Determination) and gain 1 additional success whenever you successfully cast them. Spells cast in this way do not suffer the Price of Failure.

NULLSTONE MANACLES

A rare anti-mage tool once in use by Excelsis' Nullstone Brotherhood, these are constructed mostly of lesser metals, but imbued with a few shards of nullstone to produce the manacle's desired effect, preventing captive spellcasters from unleashing their spells. The manacles can be placed on a creature's wrists and ankles, then locked, causing them to be *Restrained* until they are freed. Breaking the manacles requires a **DN 6:2 Body (Might)** Test or dealing 4 points of Damage to it (the Manacles have Poor Defence), while unlocking them without the key requires a **DN 6:1 Body (Dexterity)** Test with lockpicks. Whilst lashed to a creature, the Difficulty and Complexity of all Channelling Tests the affected creature attempts increase by 2.

PENNANT OF THE STORMBRINGER

This Sigmar Standard summons storms and hurricanes that aid you and your allies in combat. While wielding the Pennant of the Stormbringer, you can cast the *Chain Lightning*, *Favourable Winds*, or *Sigmar's Storm Spells* (*Soulbound*, page 273) using Soul (Determination) and gain 1 additional success whenever you successfully cast them. Spells cast in this way do not suffer the Price of Failure.

RELIC CENSER

These grim skull-faced Censers carry within them the bones of martyrs; when burnt a fragrant smoke is produced that nullifies opposing powers and protects the allies of its Knight-Relictor. While wielding a Relic Censer, if you or the Zone you occupy is the target of a spell, you can spend 1 Mettle or one of your Sacred Remains (page 117) to unbind the spell per the *Unbind* Talent (*Soulbound*, page 91), using your Soul (Devotion) instead of Mind (Channelling).

SCÁTHBORN'S GUISE

For years Morathi hid the existence of the Scáthborn from mortal eyes. Those who could not hide, or had to walk the Realms to enact Morathi's will, did so with the aid of a Scáthborn's Guise. These artefacts are woven with subtle but powerful illusion spells which conceal a Scáthborn's monstrous features from prying eyes and even errant touch. The most common form of Scáthborn's Guise are the vicious snake-adorned masks worn by Melusai Blood Sisters, but more discrete options exist. Glimmering amulets, barbed rings, or wicked crowns are all popular, especially among the winged Khinerai who resent every ounce of weight which slows their ascent.

While wearing a Scáthborn's Guise, you can use an Action to conceal or reveal your monstrous body parts with illusionary magic. If you choose, the Scáthborn's Guise is also concealed or revealed with this Action. Note that a Scáthborn's Guise does not grant you the ability to alter your appearance. You retain the same identifying features, such as your face and voice.



TERMINUS GREATBOW

Knight-Judicators are forged to become living artillery engines, training their strength to such a level that they can wield massive Terminus Greatbows. They can deliver damage to their enemies akin to that of a fixed ballista, but with the flexibility and speed of an archer's longbow. The Terminus Greatbow has the following statistics, and requires Body (4) to wield.

☼ 2 + S Damage, *Penetrating, Piercing, Range (Long), Two-handed.*

THUNDERSTRIKE ARMOUR

Be'lakor's cursed skies continue to spread across the realms, blocking the Stormcast Eternal's connection to Azyr. Sigmar has desperately sought a solution to this problem, and Grungni the Maker, upon his return, provided one. Thunderstrike Armour is infused with explosive energy, giving the Stormcast Eternals a means to pierce these cursed clouds upon their death. Upon their death, the Thunderstrike Armour disincorporates amidst a crackling blaze of lightning, propelling the Stormcast Eternal's essence back to Azyr with great force. This immediately deals 5 damage, ignoring armour, to everything in the same zone. Thunderstrike Armour can be forged as Medium or Heavy Armour. A Stormcast Eternal character can claim a set of Thunderstrike Armour when they return to their Stormhost during downtime (*Soulbound*, page 155).

WARSONG FLUTE

These sacred instruments are carved from branches of the Oak of Ages past and gifted to Warsong Revenants, so they can spread Alarielle's song throughout the Realms. With them, Warsong Revenants can rouse nature to battle and grant hope to the hopeless.

A Warsong Flute takes two hands to use. While playing it, you gain +1d6 to Soul (Entertain) Tests, including those you make to cast Jade spells.

WEAPONS OF BANISHMENT

Witch Hunters are always prepared, equipped with their infamous modified weaponry, each enhanced to banish daemonic forms and spells that regular arms could not touch. These might take the form of baroque pistols tagged with a holy writ, consecrated blades inlaid with nullstone or silver, or even a crossbow crudely etched with anti-thaumic symbols. They could be the masterworks of smiths, or the desperate creations of crafty hunters.

A Weapon of Banishment can be any Common or Rare Melee or Ranged weapon (*Soulbound*, page 103). In addition to the weapon's normal functionality, it deals +2 Damage against Daemons or characters with the Spellcaster Talent or Trait. In addition you can tear apart a spell mid-air: if a spell targets you, your Zone, or a target within Close Range of you, you can spend 1 Mettle to unbind the spell per the *Unbind* Talent (*Soulbound*, page 91). You use Body (Weapon Skill) if you are wielding a melee weapon or Body (Ballistic Skill) if you are wielding a ranged weapon instead of Mind (Channelling). The weapon's Damage is added to the successes for the purpose of unbinding.

NULLSTONE WEAPONS

If you are using the optional rules for Nullstone Weapons and hunting Endless Spells found in *Artefacts of Power*, Weapons of Banishment count as Nullstone Weapons, dealing double Damage to Wild Endless Spells.



FROM THE MIST

Thousands of years ago, the Kruleboyz's ancestors vanished into the swamps.

This is a common occurrence in Ghur, where the voracious wetlands swallow any who misstep amid the grasping vines and yawning sinkholes, but the Orruks didn't die in the mire. Instead, they adapted. Physically, the Kruleboyz became lankier, their profiles slimming so they could better slip through the foliage, their warty skin gaining an oily coating from their diet of bog toads and slobber squigs. The greater changes happened behaviourally. No longer capable of bashing flat everything around them, the Kruleboyz began to emphasise the Morkish side of their culture, using scare tactics, envenomed weapons, and whatever other dirty tricks they could come up with to get one up on their enemies.

After ages of isolation, the Kruleboyz are now an entirely different society compared to the Ironjawz and the Bonesplitterz. Patient, clever, and ensconced inside swamps which protect better than any fortress, the Kruleboyz have gathered their strength across the realms, claiming the places that fit their soggy tastes. Any who stumble into their lairs soon find a greater threat than the bog drakes or throttler eels, but they rarely escape to share their discoveries. Kruleboyz are especially fond of taking captives, whether to eat them, use them as bait, or simply watch them stumble about in the

mud — few captured in the swamps survive the first week, let alone escape to spread the Kruleboyz's secrets to the outside world. In any case, their warnings come too late. As Kragnos rampages once more and the Great Stomp approaches, the Kruleboyz emerge from their boggy homes. Filled with devious plans and offended by the foolish cities that jut out from the landscape, they prepare to drown the Mortal Realms under a deluge of Orruk cunning.

USING THEM IN YOUR GAME

Amongst the Era of the Beast's greatest threats are the Kruleboyz. At once old and new, these so-called 'Morruks' bring a cunning twist to classic Orruk warfare, and those who underestimate them are in for a harsh surprise. Having watched the other factions develop over the centuries, keeping their own tricks and techniques secret all the while, the Kruleboyz know how to take advantage of their victims' weaknesses. They couldn't have chosen a better time either. As cracks appear in the grand alliances, the Kruleboyz slink in to make the most of these divisions, turning friends into enemies and certain victories into crushing losses. For the most part, they're not interested in loot or glory. Their foremost desire is the delicious pleasure of seeing someone else in pain. To that end, they drag captives screaming into their swamps or cover the precious relics of other cultures in muck.

The Kruleboyz emphasise that the Mortal Realms have entered a new era. In many ways, they act like the cruelty of the wild personified, hunger and dominance and senseless pain made flesh. But it's important to remember that the Kruleboyz, unlike Daemons, aren't actually manifestations of a primordial evil. Even though they're predictably malicious and hungry for a fight — they're socially complex, with a range of motives, customs, and personalities. In particular, the Kruleboyz show a willingness to work with other cultures, from expected allies like the Bonesplitterz and Ironjawz Orruks, to stranger bedfellows like the Hashut-worshipping Duardin, but only so long as they get to have their fun. The Morruks add a terrifying new dimension to any of the party's other enemies if they join forces, and you can use the Kruleboyz to escalate an existing campaign as you transition into the Era of the Beast. If the party can stomach the Kruleboyz's sadism though, there's a chance that the newest power in the Mortal Realms might fight on their side too.

RUMOURS

'That Storm-git says she fears nofink, does she? Drown the city in front of her, see if that changes her tune. And make sure she don't croak 'erself. I don't want her goin' home for a long time...'

'I've heard some corks in my time, but this one takes the cake. A crew of simpleton Orruks took an entire cogfort? Preposterous.'

'I have never seen the Spirit of the Mountain speak with anything except unyielding calm. But the Swampcalla's vile spells made it sob like a newborn babe, and all the land wept with it.'

'We have unearthed the richest deposit of realmstone I've ever seen, just south of the Nautil Marsh. The locals say this is a morruk trick, but I know they just want the realmstone for themselves. When next I write to you, a great city shall stand here in Sigmar's name.'

— last missive of The Shining Sanctity,
a Dawnbringer Crusade

USING THEM IN COMBAT

Kruleboyz fight dirty. If they're taking the offensive, make sure they have a cheap trick to get one over on the heroes. Maybe the Orruks far outnumber the characters, or have Boltboyz lurking in the trees to skewer the party with bolts, or perhaps they've mired the party in sucking mud or hallucinogenic mist. A particularly sadistic trick is for the Kruleboyz to take the party's favourite NPC captive beforehand, then threaten to kill that beloved ally unless the heroes surrender. Usually, GMs balance combat encounters so fights are fair, but when you pull out the Kruleboyz, take that instinct and toss it in the mud. If the party wants to win, they need to discard their sense of honour and deploy a few schemes of their own. The Kruleboyz rarely fight alone either, often alongside Thondian Ironjawz and Bonesplitterz, yet unlike their brethren, the Waaagh! emboldens their nefarious and kunnin' aspects. But in that strength lies their weakness. The distrustful Kruleboyz can't help but turn on each other eventually, with the ambitious trying to clamber the ranks and the cautious trying to preempt betrayal. Just as the Kruleboyz use the discord of the Era of the Beast to their advantage, the party can win by dividing the Kruleboyz and their allies.

KRULEBOYZ TRIBES

Each Kruleboy belongs to a tribe, a cross-clan subculture with a unique speciality. Kruleboyz tribes are more like gangs than family units, with the Badstabbaz acting as the massed muscle of the clan, the Deffspikerz as its ranged support, the Gitsnatchaz as inventive corpse-harvesters, and the Beast-breakaz as the clan's resident monster tamers. The tribes wear the clan's colours and follow its Killaboss, but sometimes a Kruleboy has more in common with a peer from the same tribe than one from the same clan, and all the tribes have a proud history of backstabbing and double-crossing each other.

ZAGGAK EYEPOPPA

Ever since he was a yoof, Zaggak Eyepoppa had a sense of showmanship. The humies wet themselves with terror when he spoke to them from the mists, and his comedic timing when he skewered the slobber squigs made his fellow Kruleboyz howl with laughter. Now that the Kruleboyz's existence is no longer secret, his stage has grown larger than ever, and he won't stop until all the realms know his name. As the first step to reaching cosmos-wide infamy, he's decided to torment and humiliate a set of worthy rivals: the Binding and its allies.

Zaggak is a **Killaboss**, mounted on Sniffa, his **Great Gnashtoof**. The first time he encounters the party, he wants to test them to ensure they're strong enough to serve as the foils to his legend. He uses Sniffa's bark-throwing ability to lure the tough, well-armoured heroes of the party into a sucking mire, then pounces on the fragile characters from the back. To help him, he has 1 **Murknob** and 2 **Gutrippaz** per party member to bog the heroes down, as well as a **Marshcrawla Sloggoth** to snatch a party member away for questioning. Zaggak's goal isn't to defeat the party, but to abduct one of their number so he can question them at his leisure. In particular, he's curious about both the Binding's deeds and their methods.

The next time Zaggak and the party meet, he either has one of their number in custody or he's found another way to get his information — probably by torturing someone else, such as one of the party's allies or even one of their surviving enemies. He invites the party into a roiling fog, perhaps by taunting them with all the unspeakable things he'll do to their friends and loved ones, then whittles away at their stamina by sending **Gnashtoofs** to snap at their heels. Only after the heroes find and neutralise the **Swampcalla Shaman** summoning the mist do they realise the full extent of the trap: a functionally infinite number of cackling **Gutrippaz** and **Man-skewer Boltboyz** are watching from the sidelines, squished together on the crooked branches of the marsh trees or poking their heads out of the water.

Once his audience has a clear view, Zaggak engages the party, while the Gutrippaz and Boltboyz pile in to join the fun a dozen at a time. They scatter if Zaggak flees or admits defeat, but the party might find other ways to disperse them or break through the crowd, or even turn them against each other.

CRUELLEST OF THE CRUEL

The Kruleboyz have hundreds of different ways to make their enemies suffer, and specialists among them have refined each of these sadistic methods to an art. It's not just Orruks who fight in the Kruleboyz mobs either. Grots, Hobgrots, Troggoths, and all manner of swamp-dwelling beasts join them on their raids, pressed into service.

BREAKA-BOSS

The Beast-breakaz are a smaller Kruleboyz tribe, but they make up for it with their non-Orruk members. These monster tamers keep an impressive menagerie of slimy, sneaky, and snarling beasts, from laughing Gnashtoofs to the arguably sapient Mirebrute Troggoths. When the Kruleboyz play da waitin' game, the Beast-breakaz feed their companions the occasional live captive to keep them happy, but when it's time to battle, the monsters starve, and their hunger drives them into a malicious frenzy.

Breaka-bosses are the leaders of this tribe, and few others can so deftly handle the beasts under their command. It takes both raw physical strength and a keen intuition to wrangle the many monsters tamed by the Kruleboyz, but while the Breaka-bosses possess an abundance of animal handling skill, they utterly lack empathy. Nothing demonstrates this better than how they treat their favoured steeds, the Mirebrute Troggoths. Standing atop the blinkered Troggoth's shoulders, the Breaka-boss manipulates their mount with whips, pierced chains and spurred with a scrap-metal bident-goad. Mirebrute Troggoths lash out blindly whenever they feel pain, so all it takes is a sharp prod to make it squash whatever's in front of it flat. Breaka-bosses have found this a particularly effective way of putting down both disobedient beasts and potential rivals.

CORPSE-RIPPA VULCHA

Native to the deep swamps, Corpse-rippa Vulchas roost on thrones of bones and death. Each finds a gnarled, twisted tree to make its larder, then impales the corpses of its prey on the branches. Not only does the Vulcha prefer meat that's soft and maggoty, but the smell also attracts other scavengers. Silently circling overhead, the Vulcha waits for these opportunists to arrive, then dives down with a shriek and adds the thief to its hanging feast. The only way for a Kruleboy to ride such a beast is to cheat, poisoning the Vulcha's stores before leaping onto its back and throttling it into submission.

GNASHTOOF

Gnashtoofs are lupine beasts bred by the Kruleboyz as hunting hounds and guard animals. Like their owners, they slink through the bogs with ease, rippling corded muscle taut beneath their hairless hides, waiting for just the right moment to pounce upon their prey, drag them to the ground, and tear them to shreds with their fangs. Prized Gnashtoofs are treated well, fed some of the best cuts of flesh and gifted armour plates to protect them from the blades of their enemies.

GREAT GNASHTOOF

Some wild Gnashtoof specimens can grow to truly staggering sizes, large enough that they can even be ridden by a suitably daring master. These terrifying beasts are prized mounts for Kruleboyz champions, who risk life and limb to claim them from the wilds and secure their loyalty through cruel practices. The greatest of the Gnashtoofs can even throw their barks in order to terrify and confuse their prey.

GUTRIPPA

Most Kruleboyz start out in the Badstabbaz tribe, bragging about being 'proper Orruks', when in truth, most would rather have the fancy kit of their mates higher up in the warclan's hierarchy. As it is, the bulk of the Badstabbaz infantry, the Gutrippaz, make do with two iconic pieces of equipment — the stikka, a jagged and long-reaching weapon which is easy to cobble together from a fallen branch, scrap metal, and twine, and the skaeshield, which the

Kruleboyz paint to look like vibrant, bulge-eyed swamp predators — some utilising bioluminescent algae to make these visages glow. So armed, the Gutrippaz array themselves in battlelines whose very shields seem to snarl and laugh as they march out of the mists.

HELPER GROT

Any Orruk can tell you that Grots have all sorts of uses. Aside from the obvious stress-relief of giving one a good kick, they can carry stuff, fix things, and are especially good at boring tasks like stirring pots or cleaning bones. They can even work as a decent distraction in a scrap, stabbing heels or pointing out weak-spots ripe for krumpin'. From the Grots' point of view, making themselves useful is just a good way of making sure they're kicked less than the rest of their mates. This can lead to fierce competition and unspoken hierarchies between Helper-Grots, as they vie for the attention of the biggest Orruks and rise in stature along with their masters. Of course this squabbling goes largely unnoticed by most Orruks, who don't care what the Grots get up to, provided they keep it down.

HOBGROT SLITTA

Hobgrots like to lord their size and strength over their Grot cousins, but to an Orruk, the difference is immaterial, and Hobgrots get clobbered into line just the same when it's time for a proper scrap. To their credit, they display more organisation and military discipline than most of their allies. Using explosive bangstikks, which they barter and swindle from Chaos Duardin, Hobgrot Slittas fill the battlefield with poison gas before setting it on fire. Then, once the smoke clears, they get right back to insulting each other and vying for position in their own isolated communities.



KILLABOSS

From the stikka-wielding masses of the Badstabbaz, the most intelligent and vicious Orruks rise to become Killabosses. These heroes of Kruleboyz society enjoy no small degree of celebrity among their followers, for they have both Morkish smarts and a wiry version of Gorkish strength. To maintain their status and reputation, they must constantly flex their 'finkin' muscles,' providing their mobs with cruel entertainment while making their enemies sob with despair. The more they raid, steal, and torment their way across the realms, the more extreme the folklore surrounding them becomes, but even the wildest stories still contain a nugget of truth. A great Killaboss, after all, has triumphed over many enemies to reach their position.

The Killabosses are the leaders of Kruleboyz society, and their personalities and favourite tricks often define the warclans they rule. But even the most egotistical Killabosses are opportunistic too, and they're quite open to clever contributions from their subordinates. Thus, the humblest Gutrippa can still contribute to the plan if they have a good idea, and in this way the Killabosses foster an atmosphere of snickering camaraderie among the Orruks under their command.

MAN-SKEWER BOLTBOY

Killing from a distance is a fringe idea among Orruks, treated with suspicion by many. But the Man-skewer Boltboyz of the Deffspikerz tribe care less about honour than even other Kruleboyz, which is saying a lot. With black-fletched crossbow bolts that can punch through armour and hide alike, the Boltboyz adjust their aim for every situation. On the hunt, they fire at the extremities, cackling as their prey limps away, moaning in pain. During pitched battle, they go for the head, stunning or poisoning their target even if they don't kill them outright. As the saying among the Deffspikerz goes, 'Kill half of 'em quick, so you can kill the other half slow.'

MARSHCRAWLA SLOGGOTH

Distant relatives of the Troggoths, the nocturnal Marshcrawla Sloggoths hunt with inhuman patience. Their preferred prey is anything that can't fight back — infant beasts, mostly, but also clutches of eggs, petrified Stonehorns, and even corpses in shallow graves. They use their oversized hands and gangly arms, leveraging their supreme dexterity and ability to dislocate their limbs for greater reach to invade places where huddling creatures think themselves safe. With long fingers wrapped tight around their screaming prey, they drag their meals out to eat with the same slow, undeniable constancy they do everything. Beast-breaka mobs capture Sloggoths by 'spiking' their meals with poison, before fettering the beasts and hanging heavy stones around their necks.

GROT SNATCHA-KREW

Orruks, even Kruleboyz, find Sloggoths cowardly and unfitting mounts. Grots, however, consider it a mark of status to ride in a Sloggoth's howdah. Grot Snatcha-krews use weighted nets and man-snatcher polearms to snag captives from the Sloggoth's back, then urge the Sloggoth to lead them to fresh gore once the current conquest is done.

MIREBRUTE TROGGOTH

All Troggoths move slow, think slower, and heal fast. Mirebrute Troggoths are no exception, spending their days languishing in flatulence-infused muck while the waterlogged corpses of their prey rot to their preferred texture around them. When their bellies rumble and there's no more food within reach, the Mirebrute Troggoth shambles off at a lethargic pace in search for more food. Their reaction times are so slow that it takes several seconds for them to register pain, and when they do, they bash whatever's in front of them to paste rather than waste time pinning down the source of their irritation.



MURKNOB

Murknobs are veterans and bruisers who prove themselves in war, thus earning special favour from their Killabosses. A Murknob has to strike just the right balance of smarts, enough that they stand out and survive the swamps, while not being so intelligent that they look like a threat to their boss. Universally though, Murknobs are strong, being among the brawniest Kruleboyz and lending their strength to the mob when a trick needs raw force. Through their deeds, they earn the right to carry the clan's most powerful relics, such as the enchanted Belcha-bannas that scream spells out of existence.

SLUDGERAKER BEAST

Covered in the effluvia of their past kills, Sludgeraker Beasts wait upwind of their prey so as not to alert them with their stench. Once their quarry steps within striking range, the ambush predator leaps into action. Lanky arms reach out to hold the target in place, a whip-like tail beats the captive into submission, and then drooling jaws full of protruding teeth rip into the meal. Only Kruleboyz of the Gitsnatchaz tribe are nimble enough to withstand the Sludgeraker Beast's uneasy shambling movements, and lash their riding platforms to the beast's back. They understand the potency of the beast's noxious, infectious secretions, and like to wipe their blades on the beast's belly to give their attacks an extra bite.

SNATCHABOSS

The Gitsnatchaz tribe, as the name suggests, excels at taking captives. Endlessly amused by the struggles of their prisoners, they are infamous for their cruel imaginations, and none among them are crueller or more imaginative than their leaders, the Snatchabosses. While a Killaboss might secure the support of their mates through successful raids and hard finkin', a Snatchaboss' respect is emboldened by intimidating reputation and whispers of their cruel exploits. Anyone who crosses a Snatchaboss must thereafter spend every waking moment looking over their shoulders, and no matter how long it takes, as soon as their guard drops, the Snatchaboss will strike.

For light infractions, the Snatchaboss inflicts suitably lenient punishments — a morning spent drowning in a barrel of scorpions, for example, or a desperate chase through the marsh with hungry Gnashtoofs nipping at the offender's heels. But anything more egregious, especially challenges to the Snatchaboss's power, merit only a long and slow death. Paralysis is their tool of choice in these cases, leaving their victim fully aware but immobilised, while the Snatchaboss flays them alive or feeds them bit-by-bit to their pet Sludgeraker Beast. The Snatchaboss' cowed subordinates laugh all the harder when they take new captives, secretly celebrating that it's not them in the cage.

SWAMPCALLA SHAMAN

The spiritual leaders of the Kruleboyz bring home with them wherever they go. Using the strange arts of dowsing to sniff out water from miles away, the Swampcallas embark from their sludgy lairs with the goal of creating new wetlands wherever they end up. Once they arrive, they use choking mists and vile potions that corrupt the land into churning muck, in a process which conveniently also makes it hellish for the region's current residents to fight back against them. Swampcallas rarely undertake these Mork-guided missions alone, either. Protected by a retinue of other Kruleboyz, Swampcallas can secure new territories for their Killaboss patrons all while providing them with kunnin' counsel and advice. Then, once they've flooded the land with muck, the Swampcalla slinks back into the shallows, where they feed on toadspawn and rokodile hatchlings as the semi-sentient mist weaves new prophecies around them.



MIREBRUTE TROGGOTH

Large Mortal (Troggoth), Champion

↑ Superb

⊗ Poor

⬇ Great

Armour

Toughness

Wounds

Mettle

2

22

-

2

Speed: Normal

Initiative: 1

Natural Awareness: 1

Skills: Fortitude (+2d6, +2), Intimidation (+2d6), Might (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6, +2)

TRAITS

Got Me 'Ands Full: The Mirebrute Troggoth is equipped with two Iron-Bound Clubs. It can attack with both of them at once, splitting its dice pool as if it were dual wielding (*Soulbound*, page 148).

Magic Resistance: The Mirebrute Troggoth's thick hide is naturally resistant. The Mirebrute Troggoth doubles their dice pool for any Tests to resist the effects of a spell. Additionally, the Mirebrute Troggoth's Armour is doubled for the purposes of calculating Damage from spells.

Nigh Unkillable: The Mirebrute Troggoth is impossibly resilient. Its Toughness is equal to (Body + Mind + Soul) x 2. This is included above.

Regeneration: Troggoths can regrow flesh almost as quickly as it is harmed. At the start of its turn, the Mirebrute Troggoth heals 4 Toughness, up to its maximum.

ATTACK

Dual Iron-Bound Clubs: Melee Attack (Great) 8d6 +2F, 2 + S Damage. *Crushing*.

BODY

MIND

SOUL

7

1

3

BREAKA-BOSS

Medium Mortal (Krulboyz Orruk), Chosen

↑ Great

⊗ Average

⬇ Good

Armour

Toughness

Wounds

Mettle

2

12

3

2

Speed: Normal

Initiative: 5

Natural Awareness: 3

Skills: Awareness (+2d6), Beast Handling (+2d6), Fortitude (+1d6), Might (+1d6), Stealth (+2d6), Survival (+1d6), Weapon Skill (+3d6)

TRAITS

Breaka-harness: The Breaka-boss rides atop wild beasts and knows all too well that granting them small freedoms to rend and crush to their heart's content is the only thing keeping them in the saddle. If the Breaka-boss is mounted, their mount retains their ability to take Actions, without the Breaka-boss commanding them too. The Breaka-boss' mount has the same Initiative value as the Breaka-boss, but takes their turn immediately after them.

Goad into Frenzy: The Breaka-boss can use their Bident-goad to drive their mount into a fury! Whilst mounted, the Breaka-boss can use an Action to deal 2 damage (ignoring Armour) to their mount, increasing the Damage of all their mount's Attacks by a value equal to Doom until the end of their mount's next turn.

ATTACK

Bident-goad: Melee Attack (Great), 8d6, 1 + S Damage. *Piercing, Reach*.

BODY

MIND

SOUL

5

3

4



KILLABOSS

Medium Mortal (Kruleboyz Orruk), Chosen

⚔ Great

⚖ Average

🛡 Good (Great with Skareshield)

Armour

Toughness

Wounds

Mettle

3

15

6

2

Speed: Normal**Initiative:** 5 + current Doom**Natural Awareness:** 3**Skills:** Awareness (+2d6), Fortitude (+3d6), Guile (+2d6), Intimidation (+2d6), Might (+2d6, +1), Stealth (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6, +2)

TRAITS

All Part of Da Plan: The boyz are always impressed by the Killaboss' kunnin' plans. At the beginning of the encounter, the Killaboss creates a pool of d6 equal to Doom. During an allied Kruleboyz turn, that ally can take up to 1d6 from that pool to add to any Test they make.

Finkin Muscles: The Killaboss can't be *Charmed* or *Frightened*, and they have Advantage on Opposed Guile Tests.

Skareshield Charge: Gutrippas use their gruesome Skareshields as a vanguard whenever they charge. When a Gutrippa Charges a *Frightened* enemy, their Defence does not decrease by one step.

Boss Skare Taktikz: The Killaboss' battle cry strikes fear into their prey. As an Action, the Killaboss can choose up to three targets within Medium Range and make a **DN 4:1 Mind (Intimidation)** Test opposed by the target's **Soul (Determination)**. If they succeed, the target is *Frightened* until the end of their next Turn.

ATTACK

Jagged Boss-stikka: Melee Attack (Great), 8d6 +2F, 1 + S Damage. *Piercing, Reach.*

Boss-hacka: Melee Attack (Great), 8d6 +2F, 2 + S Damage. *Rend.*

BODY

MIND

SOUL

6

3

3

KILLABOSS MOUNTS & COMPANIONS

On the battlefield, an Ironjaw or Bonesplitter boss might demand an enemy face them alone, so they can pit their honest strength against each other – Kruleboyz Killabosses think that's just plain stupid. They rarely fight alone, often riding a beast that can do the dirty work of ripping their foes apart. Sometimes they bully their Helper-Grots into slinking behind enemy lines to hamstring the Killaboss' targets when they're not looking: victory is victory, no matter how it's won. Killabosses take whatever companions they can get to achieve it.

Kruleboyz Killabosses can choose any of the following Kruleboyz Beasts as Mounts: Corpserippa Vulcha, Gnashtoof, or Great Gnashtoof.



GOBSPRAKK, THE MOUTH OF MORK

Self-proclaimed as the greatest Orruk prophet in history, Gobsprakk leads the warclans from atop a Corpse-rippa Vulcha named Killabeak. Astride this malodorous steed, Gobsprakk flew toward Dreadspine Fortress, led by a vision that told him he'd find Kragnos there. Finding himself able to speak the ancient Drogrukh tongue through Mork's blessing, Gobsprakk pledged the Kruleboyz to the Living Earthquake's side and promised that together they'd conquer the entire cosmos. As a result, the Mouth of Mork now serves as Kragnos' translator and closest advisor. Banners depicting Kragnos' legend flap from Killabeak's high-backed saddle, while Gobsprakk himself proclaims the demigod's strengths and wild exploits. Both Vulcha and Orruk eat well when the End of Empires rampages, so it's in their best interest to keep his following strong and his wrath stoked.

CORPSE-RIPPA VULCHA

Enormous Beast, Champion

Great

Poor

Great

Armour

Toughness

Wounds

Mettle

0

16

-

1

Speed: Normal, Fly (Normal)

Initiative: 5

Natural Awareness: 2

Skills: Athletics (+1d6), Awareness (+1d6), Intimidation (+2d6, +1), Might (+1d6), Reflexes (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6)

TRAITS

Commanding View: From their stalking positions above the battlefield, the Corpse-rippa Vulcha and their rider watch carefully as the battle below unfolds. The Corpse-rippa Vulcha and any creature mounted on it reduce the Difficulty of Awareness and Survival Tests by 1.

High Unkillable: The Corpse-rippa Vulcha is impossibly resilient. Its Toughness is equal to (Body + Mind + Soul) × 2. This is included above.

Venom-encrusted: The natural weapons of the Corpse-rippa Vulcha are coated in all manner of vile and necrotic toxins. Wounds caused by the Corpse-rippa Vulcha increase their severity by one step.

ATTACK

Beak and Flesh-tearing Talons: Melee Attack (Great), 7d6, 1 + S Damage. *Rend, Slashing.*

Poison Stinger: Melee Attack (Great), 7d6, 1 + S Damage. *Piercing.* A creature damaged by this attack must make a **DN 4:2 Body (Fortitude)** Test or be *Poisoned* until the end of their next turn.

BODY

MIND

SOUL

5

2

1

GREAT GNASHTOOF

Large Beast, Warrior

↑ Good

⊕ Poor

⬇ Average

Armour

Toughness

Wounds

Mettle

2

7

-

-

Speed: Fast**Initiative:** 3**Natural Awareness:** 2**Skills:** Awareness (+1d6), Might (+1d6), Stealth (+1d6), Weapon Skill (+1d6)

TRAITS

Pouncing Predator: When they pounce, a Great Gnashtooft drags their prey to the ground and savages them terribly. If the Great Gnashtooft takes the Charge Action, it adds an additional 1d6 to its dice pool for the attack, for a total of +2d6. In addition, if they deal Damage with a Charge, their Target is knocked *Prone*, provided it is size Medium or smaller.

ATTACK

Teeth and Claws: Melee Attack (Average), 5d6, 1 + S Damage. *Slashing and Piercing.*

Throwing Barks: The Great Gnashtooft can throw its voice and barks to confuse its enemies. As an Action during a Surprise round, a Great Gnashtooft can choose a target within Medium Range and make a **DN 4:1 Body (Stealth)** Test opposed by the target's **Mind (Awareness)** to confuse them. If they succeed, the Great Gnashtooft increases its Melee by one step on its next attack against the target.

BODY

MIND

SOUL

4

2

1

GNASHTOOF

Medium Beast, Warrior

↑ Average

⊕ Poor

⬇ Poor

Armour

Toughness

Wounds

Mettle

1

5

-

-

Speed: Fast**Initiative:** 3**Natural Awareness:** 2**Skills:** Awareness (+1d6), Might (+1d6), Stealth (+1d6), Weapon Skill (+1d6)

TRAITS

Pouncing Predator: When they pounce, a Gnashtooft drags their prey to the ground and savages them terribly. If the Gnashtooft takes the Charge Action, it adds an additional 1d6 to its dice pool for the attack, for a total of +2d6. In addition, if they deal Damage with a Charge, their Target is knocked *Prone*, provided it is size Medium or smaller.

ATTACK

Teeth and Claws: Melee Attack (Average), 3d6, 1 + S Damage. *Slashing and Piercing.*

BODY

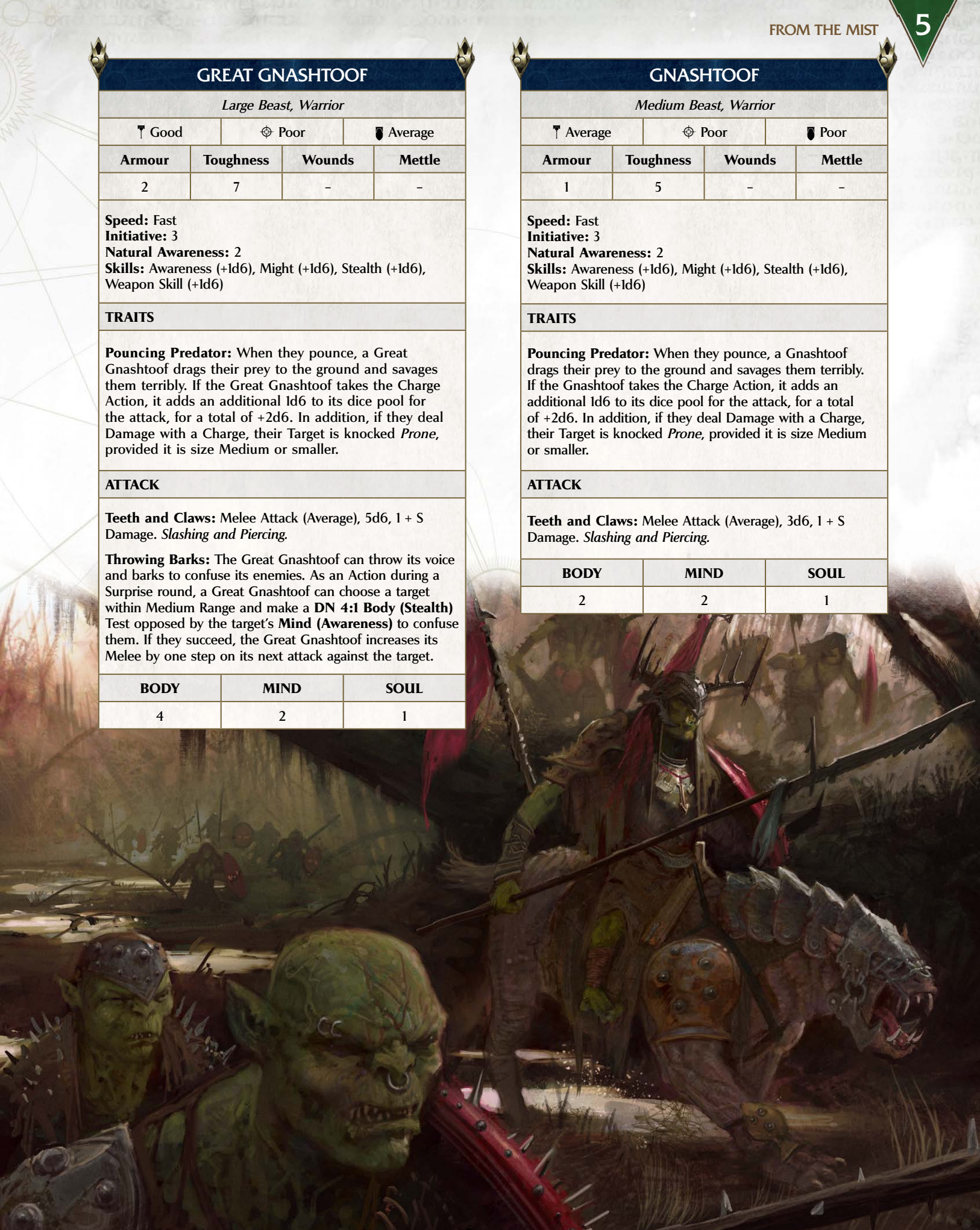
MIND

SOUL

2

2

1



GUTRIPPA			
Medium Mortal (Krulboyz Orruk), Warrior			
<div> <div></div> <div>Good</div> </div>		<div> <div></div> <div>Poor</div> </div>	
		<div> <div></div> <div>Good (Great with Skareshield)</div> </div>	
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
1	8	-	-
Speed: Normal Initiative: 3 Natural Awareness: 2 Skills: Intimidation (+1d6), Might (+2d6), Reflexes (+1d6), Stealth (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6)			
TRAITS			
Skareshield Charge: Gutrippas use their gruesome Skareshields as a vanguard whenever they charge. When a Gutrippa Charges a <i>Frightened</i> enemy, their Defence does not decrease by one step.			
Skare Taktikz: A Gutrippa's strange ululating battle cries strike fear into their prey. As an Action, a Gutrippa can choose a target within Medium Range and make a DN 4:1 Mind (Intimidation) Test opposed by the target's Soul (Determination) . If they succeed, the target is <i>Frightened</i> until the end of their next Turn.			
ATTACK			
Wicked Stikka: Melee Attack (Good), 6d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Slashing</i> .			
BODY	MIND	SOUL	
4	2	2	

HELPER GROT			
Small Mortal (Grot), Minion			
<div> <div></div> <div>Poor</div> </div>		<div> <div></div> <div>Average</div> </div>	
		<div> <div></div> <div>Poor</div> </div>	
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
0	1	-	-
Speed: Normal Initiative: 2 Natural Awareness: 1 Skills: Awareness (+1d6), Ballistic Skill (+1d6), Stealth (+1d6), Weapon Skill (+1d6)			
TRAITS			
'Andy Helpa: Any unmounted Krulboyz Orruk Champion or Chosen can have a Helper Grot companion. Each Helper-Grot has a specialisation which grants them a unique ability. They must choose between Grabba-Grot, Guard-Grot, Pot-Grot, or Stab-Grot, as described below.			
Grabba-Grot: Grabba-Grots have been tasked with one goal, to harass their master's enemies during combat as best they can. Grabba-Grots have Weapon Skill (+1d6) and always aim to make Called Shots during combat, targeting their enemy's Head, Arms or Legs to disrupt them (<i>Soulbound</i> , page 142).			
Guard-Grot: A Killaboss is not above using a Guard-Grot lackey as a living shield when things get dicey. The Guard-Grot has Reflexes (+1d6). In addition, as a free action on their turn, the Guard-Grot's master can force them to take the Defend Action during the Guard Grot's next turn, targeting their master.			
Pot-Grot: Favoured by the Swampcalla Shamans, Pot-Grots lug around great cauldrons and help in the creation of all manner of brews and poisons. The Pot-Grot has Might (+1d6). In addition, when using the Swampcalla Shaman's <i>Vile Cauldron Brew</i> Trait, they can hand out two additional doses of their chosen brew.			
Stab-Grot: Stab-Grots are obsessed with spotting weak points in enemy armour, shrieking orders and grotling tactics at the top of their lungs. The Stab-Grot has Awareness (+2d6) and Natural Awareness 2. In addition, if the Stab-Grot is within Close Range of an enemy, all allied attacks against that creature gain the <i>Penetrating</i> Trait.			
ATTACK			
Stabba: Melee Attack (Poor), 2d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Piercing</i> .			
BODY	MIND	SOUL	
1	1	1	



HOBGROT SLITTA

Small Mortal (Hobgrot), Minion

⚔ Poor

⚖ Average

🛡 Poor

Armour

Toughness

Wounds

Mettle

0

1

-

-

Speed: Normal

Initiative: 3

Natural Awareness: 2

Skills: Awareness (+1d6), Ballistic Skill (+1d6), Guile (+1d6), Stealth (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+1d6)

TRAITS

Swarm: If three or more Hobgrots occupy the same Zone they become a Swarm. The Hobgrot Swarm acts as one. Add +1d6 to attacks and +1 Toughness per Grot in the Swarm. The Swarm suffers double Damage from effects that target a Zone.

Stab 'Em Good: Hobgrot Slittas fall upon their foes in a frenzy of incomprehensible curses and savage stabbing blades. When a Hobgrot Slitta Charges, they make two Attacks with their **Slittas**.

ATTACK

Slittas: Melee Attack (Poor), 2d6, 1 + S Damage. *Slashing*.

Bangstikks: Ranged Attack (Average), Blast (2), Medium Range, *Loud*. A creature damaged by the Bangstikk must make a **DN 6:1 Body (Fortitude)** Test or become Poisoned until the end of their next turn, as toxic gas fills the Zone. The next Blast weapon that targets the Zone deals +2 Damage and ignites the gas, and the Zone becomes a Minor Hazard for 1 minute.

BODY

MIND

SOUL

1

2

1

YOU OWE ME...

Hobgrots make better merchants, con artists, and swindlers than soldiers. When not bullied into formation by Orruks, Hobgrots spend their time peddling junk, and it's a testament to their skill that most parties walk away feeling like they've got the better end of the deal. Since the Wars of the Broken Promise, the Hobgrots have served as go-betweens for the Kruleboyz and the Hashut-worshipping Duardin, taking sick and wounded hostages from the former and trading them for scrap metal, slitta-knives, and bangstikks from the latter. Their other clients include Gitmob bosses, bemused Gargants, and sometimes even unscrupulous Humans.



BEAST-SKEWER KILLBOW TEAMS

These massive spear-shooting ballistas can be wielded by a Man-Skewer Boltboy and an accompanying pair of Helper Grotz. The Boltboy aims and shoots, whilst the Grotz aid in carrying and loading the Killbow. Operating the Killbow alone, without aid, the wielder reduces their Accuracy and Speed by one step. The attack has the following profile:

- * **Beast-skewer Killbow:** Ranged Attack (Average), 3d6 +1F, 3 + S Damage, Extreme Range. *Penetrating, Piercing, Reload, Two-Handed.*

MAN-SKEWER BOLTBOY

Medium Mortal (Krulboyz Orruk), Warrior

⚔ Average

🎯 Average

🛡 Average

Armour

Toughness

Wounds

Mettle

1

6

-

-

Speed: Normal

Initiative: 4

Natural Awareness: 2

Skills: Awareness (+1d6), Ballistic Skill (+1d6, +1), Reflexes (+1d6), Stealth (+2d6)

TRAITS

Pick 'Em Off: The Man-Skewer Boltboy can forgo their Move to increase their Accuracy one step, and deal +1 Damage to their Ranged Attacks until the start of their next turn.

ATTACK

Man-Skewer Crossbow: Ranged Attack (Average), 3d6 +1F, 1 + S Damage, Long Range. *Penetrating, Piercing, Reload, Two-Handed.*

Jaggedy Blade: Melee Attack (Average), 3d6, 1 + S Damage. *Slashing.*

BODY

MIND

SOUL

3

2

1



GROT SNATCHA-KREW

Small Mortal (Grot), Warrior

⚔ Average	⚙ Average	⚔ Poor
-----------	-----------	--------

Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
0	9 (3x3)	-	-

Speed: Normal**Initiative:** 3**Natural Awareness:** 2**Skills:** Awareness (+1d6), Ballistic Skill (+1d6), Stealth (+1d6), Weapon Skill (+1d6)

TRAITS

Snatcha-Krew: A Grot Snatcha-Krew is composed of three Grots that function together as a team. Each Grot has 3 Toughness, and counts as an individual creature for the purposes of being targeted by spells or attacks. If one of the Grot Snatcha-Krew members is killed or Incapacitated, the team's Melee and Accuracy are both reduced by one step, as the remaining Grots pick up the slack.

Krew Drummer: One of the krew beats out a powerful rhythm to inspire nearby allies to fight their hardest. As an action, the Grot Snatcha-Krew can beat their war drums, increasing the Melee or Accuracy of Orruks within Medium Range by one step until the end of their next turn.

ATTACK

Catchin' Nets and Snatcha-stikks: Ranged Attack (Average), 3d6, +S Damage, Short Range. A creature damaged by the Catchin' Nets and Snatcha-stikks is *Restrained* until they or another creature uses an Action to free them.

BODY	MIND	SOUL
2	2	2

MARSHCRAWLA SLOGGOTH

Large Mortal (Sloggoth), Champion

⚔ Superb	⚙ Poor	⚔ Great
----------	--------	---------

Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
1	20	-	1

Speed: Normal**Initiative:** 1**Natural Awareness:** 1**Skills:** Fortitude (+2d6, +2), Intimidation (+2d6), Might (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6, +1)

TRAITS

Nigh Unkillable: The Marshcrawla Sloggoth is impossibly resilient. Its Toughness is equal to (Body + Mind + Soul) x 2. This is included above.

Krew Howdah: The Sloggoth carries a **Grot Snatcha-Krew**. The Howdah grants them **Partial Cover** as long as they are aboard, and they act independently of the Marshcrawla Sloggoth.

Sloggoth Regeneration: As a type of Troggoth, the Sloggoth is able to regrow flesh during battle. At the start of its turn, the Sloggoth heals 4 Toughness, up to its maximum.

ATTACK

Raking Claws: Melee Attack (Superb), 9d6 +1F, 1 + S Damage. *Slashing, Rend*.

BODY	MIND	SOUL
7	1	2





MURKNOB

Medium Mortal (Krulboyz Orruk), Warrior

↑ Good

⊕ Poor

♣ Good

Armour

Toughness

Wounds

Mettle

1

9

-

-

Speed: Normal

Initiative: 5

Natural Awareness: 2

Skills: Awareness (+1d6), Devotion (+2d6), Intimidation (+2d6), Reflexes (+2d6), Stealth (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6, +1)

TRAITS

Belcha-Banna: Belcha-bannas are built around the severed tongues of mire-drakes, their soul shrivelling gas remains ingrained within the Banna. While wielding a Belcha-Banna, so long as the Murknob is not *Prone*, their enemies in the same Zone increase the Complexity of Tests to resist being *Frightened* by 1. In addition, they can unbind spells per the *Unbind* Talent (*Soulbound*, page 91), using Soul (Intimidation) instead of Mind (Channelling).

Belching Fear: As an Action, the Murknob bellows a guttural warcry and raises their Belcha-Banna. It chooses a creature in its zone to make a **DN 4:1 Soul (Determination)** Test opposed by the Murknob's **Soul (Intimidation)**. On a failure, the creature becomes *Frightened* until the end of its next turn.

ATTACK

Kleaver: Melee Attack (Good), 5d6, +1 F, 1 + S Damage. *Slashing*.

BODY

MIND

SOUL

3

2

4

SNATCHABOSS

Medium Mortal (Krulboyz Orruk), Chosen

↑ Good

⊕ Average

↓ Good

Armour

Toughness

Wounds

Mettle

2

8

4

1

Speed: Normal**Initiative:** 6**Natural Awareness:** 3**Skills:** Awareness (+1d6), Might (+2d6), Reflexes (+2d6), Stealth (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6)

TRAITS

Reel em' in: The Snatchaboss uses their Chain-linked Grappling Hook to snare their enemies and drag them towards their demise. When the Snatchaboss deals Damage with their Chain-linked Grappling Hook, the Snatchaboss can make a **DN 4:1 Body (Might)** Test opposed by the target's **Body (Reflexes)**. If they succeed, the target is pulled within Close Range of the Snatchaboss and falls *Prone*.

Opportunist: The Snatchaboss is loath to let his quarry escape his grasp. If an enemy attempts to leave the Snatchaboss' Zone, they can use their Reaction to make a free Attack action against the enemy with their **Chain-linked Grappling Hook**.

Sludgeraker Steed: Some Snatchabosses ride atop a Sludgeraker Beast, which functions as a mount. On its turn, the Snatchaboss can forgo an Action to direct the Sludgeraker Beast to make an Attack.

ATTACK

Chain-linked Grappling Hook: Melee Attack (Good) 6d6, 1 + S Damage. *Reach, Restraining*.

BODY

MIND

SOUL

4

3

1

SLUDGERAKER BEAST

Large Mortal (Sludgeraker), Champion

↑ Good

⊕ Poor

↓ Great

Armour

Toughness

Wounds

Mettle

1

16

-

1

Speed: Normal**Initiative:** 3**Natural Awareness:** 1**Skills:** Fortitude (+1d6, +2), Might (+2d6), Reflexes (+2d6), Stealth (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+1d6, +2)

TRAITS

Nigh Unkillable: The Sludgeraker Beast is impossibly resilient. Its Toughness is equal to (Body + Mind + Soul) x 2. This is included above.

Sludgeraker Venom: The Sludgeraker's underbelly is encrusted with rot, slime, and its own excretions, coalescing into a highly potent poison.

Any Krulboyz Orruk or Grot in the same Zone as the Sludgeraker beast can take an action to apply this venom onto their weapons, which lasts until the end of combat. A creature damaged by an attack or weapon applied with Sludgeraker Venom must make a **DN 4:1 Body (Fortitude)** Test or be *Poisoned* until the end of their next turn.

ATTACK

Grasping Talons: Melee Attack (Good), 6d6 +2F, S Damage. *Restraining*.

Noisome Bite: Melee Attack (Good), 6d6, 3 + S Damage. *Piercing*. Damage caused by this attack applies Sludgeraker Venom, as described in the Traits above.

BODY

MIND

SOUL

5

1

2



SWAMPCALLA SHAMAN

Medium Mortal (Krulboyz Orruk), Champion

⚔ Poor	⊕ Average	⚔ Average	
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
1	8	-	1
Speed: Normal Initiative: 8 Natural Awareness: 3 Skills: Arcana (+1d6), Awareness (+2d6), Channelling (+2d6, +1), Crafting (+1d6), Guile (+2d6), Stealth (+2d6), Reflexes (+2d6)			
TRAITS			
Vile Cauldron Brew: A Swampcalla Shaman can create up to three brews and distribute them among their allies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✱ Disgusting Elixir: A creature can spend an action to drink this foul-smelling potion, regaining 2d6 Toughness. ✱ Deadly Venom: The creature's <i>Piercing</i> or <i>Slashing</i> weapons deal +1 Damage, for the duration of combat. Targets that are Damaged by these weapons are <i>Poisoned</i> until the end of their next Turn. ✱ Corrosive Sludge: The creature can throw this jar of thick black sludge at a Zone within Medium Range. Creatures in the Zone suffer 3 Damage. 			

Spellcasting: The Swampcalla Shaman is a spellcaster. It knows the *Arcane Bolt*, *Mystic Shield*, *Skarefog Horrors*, and *Summon Boggy Mist* spells. Additionally, the Swampcalla Shaman can unbind spells per the *Unbind* Talent.

Skarefog Horrors: DN 5:3. The Swampcalla Shaman manipulates the surrounding fog of swamp gas, causing a mirage of their enemy's worst fears. Choose a creature within Long Range of the Shaman. The target becomes *Frightened* until the start of the Shaman's next turn. Each additional success extends the duration by 1 round, or allows the Swampcalla Shaman to target an additional Creature.

Summon Boggy Mist: DN 5:3. The Swampcalla Shaman raises their hands and lets out a guttural belch, transmuting the ground into thick marshland and conjuring a thick boggy mist. Choose a Zone within Long Range of the Shaman. The Zone becomes *Difficult Terrain* and *Heavily Obscured* for the Shaman's enemies until the start of its next turn. Each additional success extends the duration by 1 round.

ATTACK

Bogbark Staff: Melee Attack (Poor), 2d6, 1 + S Damage. *Two-handed*.

BODY	MIND	SOUL
2	4	2



VILE CAULDRON

Swampcalla Shamans use their magic to cultivate Vile Cauldrons full of stagnant swamp water and filled with foul ingredients. The shaman continuously maintains this toxic brew, often with the help of a scowling Pot-Grot who never ceases stirring. The substances scooped from the cauldron range from disgusting elixirs which fortify the drinker's stamina with their bracing taste, venoms made to emulate the swamp's most spiteful creatures, and corrosive sludge which reduces flesh and stone to sticky black goo. Note that only Krulboyz have the fortitude of gutz to survive imbibing one of these vile potions – any creature whose diet isn't attuned to the Morruk swamps would likely sicken terribly. And though cumbersome to transport, a Swampcalla usually has a retinue of Grots to carry this noxious artefact behind them.

APPENDIX A

PETS AND MOUNTS

BLOOD WYRM

Hatched and raised in Khainite Temples throughout the realms, Melusai train predatory Blood Wyrms to aid the Blood Stalker packs in tracking their quarries. These small winged wyrms are as keen as hunting hawks, and have a sharp sense of smell, able to sniff out targets by a single drop of blood from miles away. Their sharpened fangs bear an anticoagulant venom that rapidly thins its victim's blood, slowly bleeding them out, so that the rest of the Brood Nest can catch up for the kill.

BLOOD WYRM			
<i>Tiny Beast, Minion</i>			
⚔ Poor	⚔ Poor	⚔ Average	
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
1	4	-	-
Speed: Fast (Fly) Initiative: 6 Natural Awareness: 2 Skills: Awareness (+2d6), Reflexes (+2d6), Stealth (+1d6), Weapon Skill (+1d6)			
TRAITS			
Blood Scent: The Blood Wyrms and Melusai train together to detect and focus on wounded foes in the heat of battle. While within Close Range of a Melusai ally, the Blood Wurm increases the Melusai's Accuracy by one step when they target an enemy who has lost Toughness.			
ATTACK			
Hooked Fangs: Melee Attack (Poor), 2d6, 1 + S Damage. <i>Piercing.</i> A creature damaged by this attack must make a DN 4:1 Body (Fortitude) Test or reduce their Speed by one step until the end of their next turn.			
BODY	MIND	SOUL	
1	2	1	

SPITE

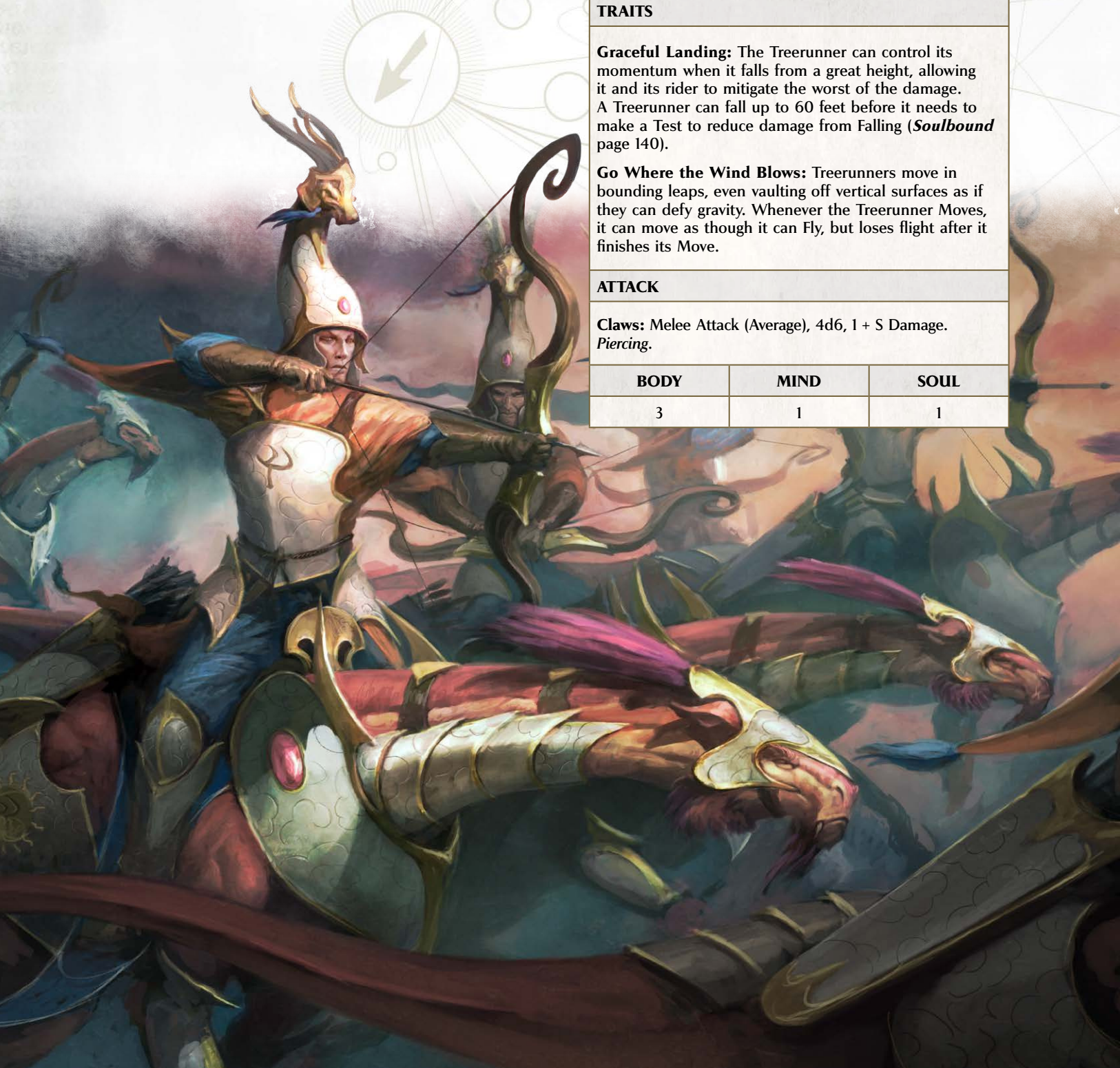
Sylvaneth Spites come in a menagerie of forms, called forth from the surrounding wilderness. Ranging from the size of cats to that of goats, these fae-like magical creatures are imbued with Alarielle's abundant energy, and have fickle temperaments: one moment they might act docile, caring for their grove or master, yet in another pounce viciously on intruders, aiming to tear them apart limb from limb. Their nature works in favour of Sylvaneth who weave or amplify the Spirit Songs of life and war; the Spites are easily caught up in the song's trance and flit towards wherever the melody leads.

SPITE			
<i>Tiny Spirit (Spite), Minion</i>			
⚔ Good	⚔ Poor	⚔ Good	
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
1	1	-	-
Speed: Fast Initiative: 7 Natural Awareness: 2 Skills: Awareness (+2d6), Reflexes (+3d6), Weapon Skill (+2d6)			
TRAITS			
Hit and Run: Once per turn, if a Spite deals Damage with a melee attack, it can move to an adjacent Zone as a Free Action.			
Nimble: Spites are unnaturally lithe and quick, their Melee and Defence are one step higher than normal (included above).			
Swarm: If more than one Spites occupy the same Zone they become a Swarm. The Spite Swarm acts as one. Add +1d6 to attacks and +1 Toughness per Spite in the Swarm. The Swarm suffers double Damage from effects that target a Zone.			
ATTACK			
Thorn Claws: Melee Attack (Good), 3d6, + S Damage. <i>Piercing.</i>			
BODY	MIND	SOUL	
1	2	1	

TREERUNNER

These highly agitable beasts, native to Hysh, take the discipline of a Hurakan adherent to properly calm and train for war. The Windcharger must discover the correct melody or whistle that soothes their mount's soul as before they are tamed, Treerunners bound happily and free through the Hyshian forests, typically high up in the canopies or scaling the sheer cliffs of the land with ease. Appearing as if one with the wind, their feet rarely touch the ground for long.

TREERUNNER			
Large Beast, Warrior			
Average		Poor	Good
Armour	Toughness	Wounds	Mettle
1	5	-	-
Speed: Fast Initiative: 3 Natural Awareness: 1 Skills: Athletics (+2d6), Reflexes (+2d6), Weapon Skill (+1d6)			
TRAITS			
Graceful Landing: The Treerunner can control its momentum when it falls from a great height, allowing it and its rider to mitigate the worst of the damage. A Treerunner can fall up to 60 feet before it needs to make a Test to reduce damage from Falling (<i>Soulbound</i> page 140).			
Go Where the Wind Blows: Treerunners move in bounding leaps, even vaulting off vertical surfaces as if they can defy gravity. Whenever the Treerunner Moves, it can move as though it can Fly, but loses flight after it finishes its Move.			
ATTACK			
Claws: Melee Attack (Average), 4d6, 1 + S Damage. Piercing.			
BODY	MIND	SOUL	
3	1	1	



APPENDIX B

DRACONITH SUBFACTIONS

STARBORN CLUTCH

In ancient times, when Kragos rampaged across the land seeking to exterminate the Draconith species, the enigmatic Seraphon enacted a desperate plan. They took precious clutches of Draconith eggs, and hid them on their void-traversing temple-vessels, far from the trampling hooves and smashing blows of the vengeful Earthquake god. As the two races battled each other to extinction, the eggs were held in stasis, protected until such a time as the Draconith species could return to the realms.

Those who grew up among the Seraphon gained a very clear understanding of their species' history, and the grave responsibility which now lies on their shoulders. Skink Starpriests and Slann masters weave elaborate prophecies around the young Draconiths, filling their heads with equal parts hope and frustration. To many Draconith raised in this way, the Mortal Realms and its people are a complete mystery. The Seraphon themselves are alien and aloof, and couldn't explain what life among the realms is like to a curious young Draconith even if they tried. As a result, at the onset of their adventures, many star-born Draconith come across as painfully naive, fascinated by mundane affairs, troubles, or traditions. They are fast learners, however, and they continue their sworn duty to learn from their history and the heroes of Order.

- ✧ You were born among the stars. This has affected you in a number of ways, most notably you are more prone to contemplating and comprehending the arcane. You gain +2 XP at character creation which can be used on the Arcana or Channelling skills.

REALMBORN CLUTCH

Only the great scions Krondys and Karazai managed to survive the mutually assured destruction of the Draconith and Kragos' people. While Krondys worked hard to retain the trappings of civilisation, Karazai embraced the primal nature of the Draconith, living in the Ghurish wilderness and hunting his sworn enemy for centuries. Since the Draconith's return to the Mortal Realms, some Draconith that have seen Karazai's strength and voluntarily followed in his footsteps — living and fighting in the wilderness to strengthen themselves and their offspring.

Those who grew up in the wilds experienced harsh conditions, surviving only due to their power and savagery. They are often short tempered and no-nonsense, having learned over the years that the only thing you can truly rely on in the wild is yourself. Yet still, their desire for vengeance and martial might draws them towards heroes of the realms, especially those who combat Kragos and the forces of Destruction.

- ✧ You were born in the savage wilderness of the Realms, reducing your connection to the Celestial realm and giving you a far more predatory and savage manner which makes you far more likely to give in to rage than contemplation. You gain +2 XP at character creation which can be used on the Weapons Skill or Might skills.

