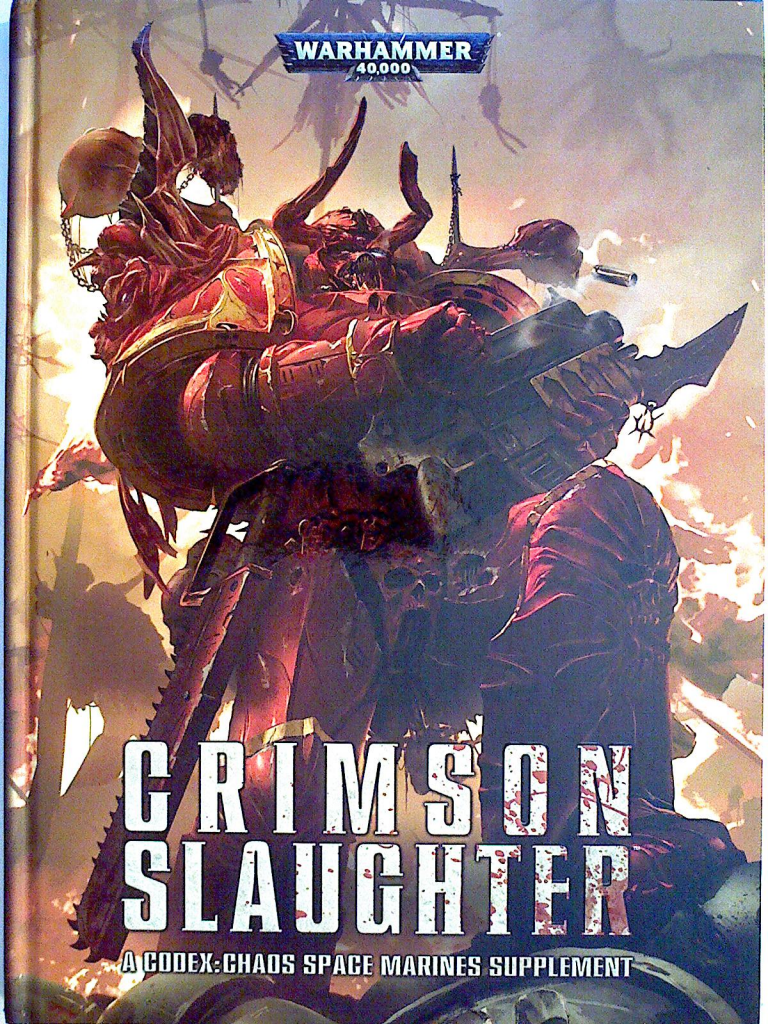




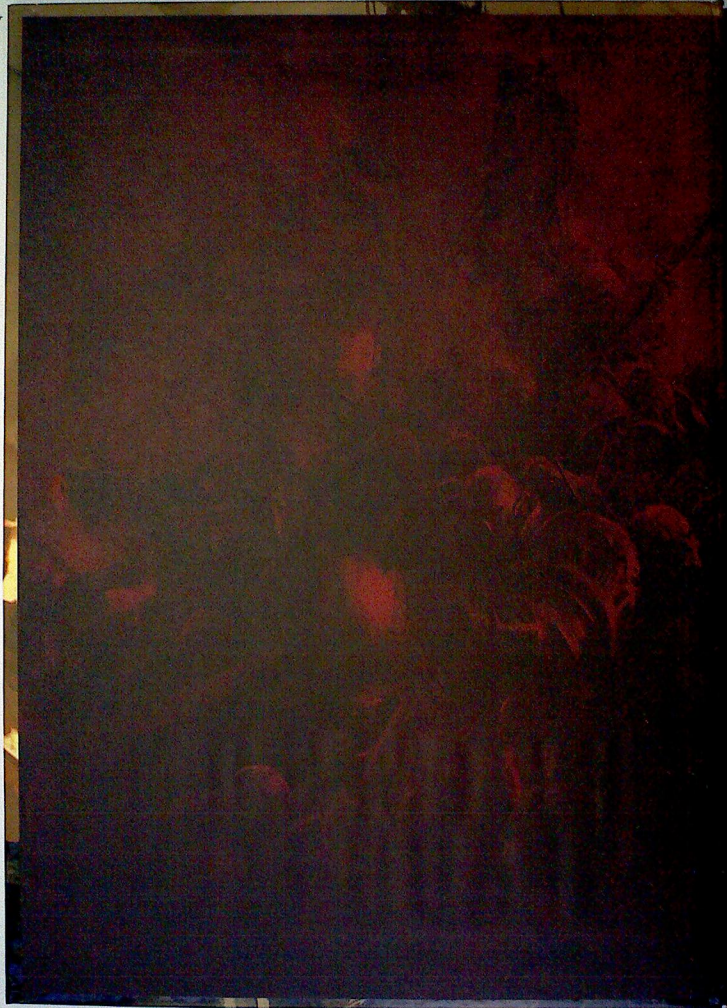


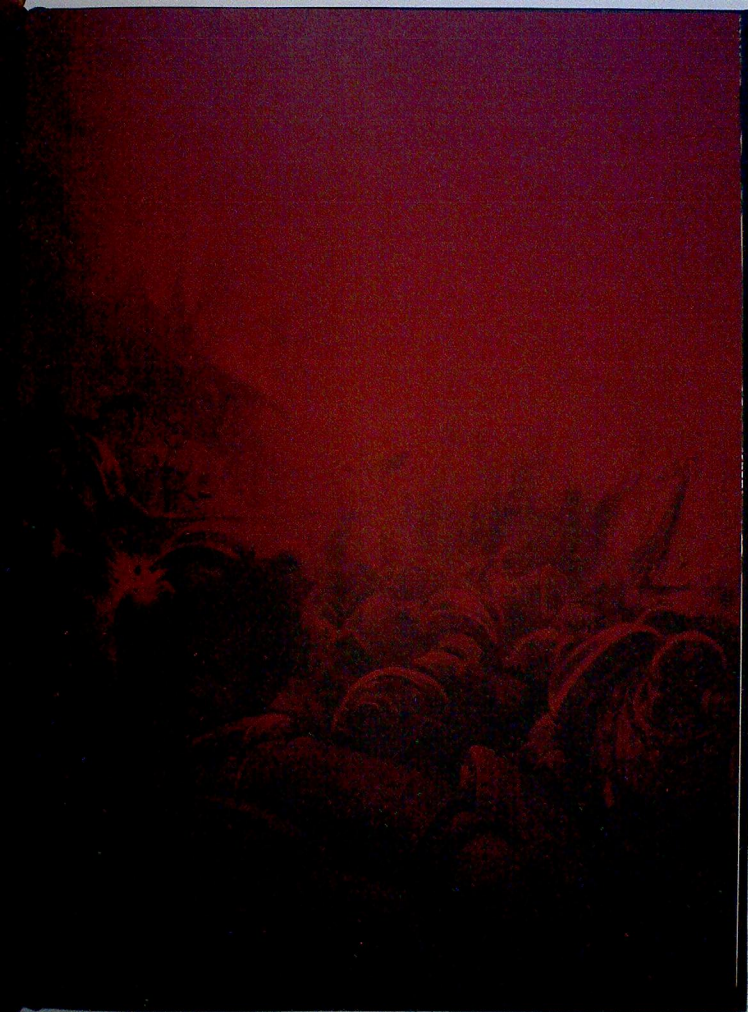
WARHAMMER

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GRIMSON SLAUGHTER

A CODEX:CHAOS SPACE MARINES SUPPLEMENT









CRIMSON SLAUGHTER

THE GORE-SPLATTERED TALE OF WARP-CURSED RENEGADES

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	3
SLAVES TO THE VOICES.....	5
Fall of the Crimson Sabres.....	6
Into the Eye of Terror.....	12
Fractured in Body and Soul.....	16
From Sabre to Slaughter.....	18
Salvation of Lost Hope.....	20
The Crimson Slaughter Unleashed.....	22
Confrontation with Angels.....	24
Dæmon Wars.....	28
The Black Crusade.....	32
The Long Spiral to Madness.....	34

THE RED ONSLAUGHT.....	38
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LET SLAUGHTER COMMENCE!.....	48
Lords of Slaughter.....	49
Warbands of the Crimson Slaughter.....	50
Relics of the Crimson Slaughter.....	51
Cities of Death Stratagems.....	52
Planetstrike Stratagems.....	53
Altar of War: Crimson Slaughter.....	54
- Storm of Spirits.....	56
- Silence the Voices.....	58
- Securing a Legacy.....	60
Echoes of War.....	62
- Confrontation with Angels.....	62
- A New Redemption.....	64
- The Hunt for Traz'lan-tar.....	66
- Regallus Under Siege.....	68
- A World Turned Crimson.....	70



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INTRODUCTION

In the entire galaxy there is nothing more cursed than a traitor. Excommunicated, hated and hunted, the Crimson Slaughter turned from the Emperor's light and have since carved a bloody trail through the Imperium. The massacres have only begun...

As the 41st Millennium comes to a close, the galaxy is burning. Where once they would have aided the staggering Imperium of Mankind, now the Crimson Slaughter are amongst its most hated enemies. Whether they were led by some predetermined fate, tricked into madness by whispering paranoia or willingly corrupted by their own weak willpower, it matters not – they are now traitors, rebels, renegades. Truly, they are the lost and the damned.

Only through butchery and genocide can the Crimson Marines of the Crimson Slaughter gain even momentary peace from the inner voices that goad them. Such is their cursed existence. So has an entire Chapter of the Emperor's Finest left behind the dogma of the Imperium, choosing instead to embrace the Dark Gods. The Crimson Slaughter seek to wash away their sins in a tide of blood, joining the Long War to bring down the regime they once willingly served.

Genetically designed for warfare and killing, the Space Marines of the Crimson Slaughter have at last thrown off the Imperial shackles, loosing themselves from restraint. Now, with allegiance only to themselves, the renegades blaze a trail of death across the galaxy, fully immersing themselves in wanton destruction. They combine the resources and training of an Adeptus Astartes Chapter with the dark boons granted by the Gods of Chaos. Since their betrayal, the Crimson Slaughter have destroyed armies, massacred entire populations and despoiled swathes of the Imperium.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

If you are reading this codex supplement, then you have already taken your first steps into the Warhammer 40,000 hobby. The *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook contains all the rules you need to fight battles with your Citadel miniatures, and *Codex: Chaos Space Marines* contains everything you need to field a force of Chaos Space Marines in these games.

This codex supplement allows you to turn your collection of Chaos Space Marines into an unstoppable renegade warband of the merciless Crimson Slaughter. It tells the tragic tale of how a Chapter loyal to the Emperor was transformed into Warp-cursed and bloodthirsty renegades. The gore-drenched background details the Crimson Slaughter's victories, their long fall into madness, and their first battles with foes that would grow to become their arch-enemies. You'll also find a showcase of expertly painted Crimson Slaughter miniatures showing the colour scheme and iconography used by the renegade warbands. Finally, this book also includes new missions, both to recreate some of the most famous battles ever fought by the Crimson Slaughter, and to reflect their favoured tactics. You will also find within rules and descriptions for unique relics, Warlord Traits and new stratagems to being to bear in your games of Planetstrike and Cities of Death.

Prepare yourself for a tale of blood-soaked massacres and the warping powers of the Eye of Terror.





SLAVES TO THE VOICES

Of all the renegade Space Marines that have abandoned the Emperor's cause, none are more feared than the Crimson Slaughter. The mere mention of their name brings a shudder to even the most stalwart of Imperial defenders, for it is a name linked to betrayal and bloodshed, a title synonymous with the blackest deeds of carnage and horrors unimaginable.

The 41st Millennium is an age of war – an era where the strong take what they will and the weak die choking in the dust. None know that less than the Chaos Space Marines known as the Crimson Slaughter.

The Crimson Slaughter entered this millennium as a Chapter of Space Marines – the ultimate defenders of Mankind. Through fate or the baleful influence of the supernatural, they have turned from the light of the Emperor. Their own paranoid insanity, or perhaps just their own weak will, has driven them down the path of damnation – a road from which there is no turning back.

The Imperium has attempted to suppress rumours that an entire Chapter of their Space Marines has been corrupted – for the Chaos Space Marines are fearsome foes. They possess all of a Space Marine's abilities and skills, and his matchless gear of war. In addition to this, such enemies also wield the corrupting powers of the Dark Gods and their insidious gifts. These traitors command arcane powers, infernal weaponry and daemonically possessed machines that are akin to nightmarish monsters. They will stop at nothing to achieve their self-serving aims.

Try as they might, however, the Imperium cannot conceal the truth about the Crimson Slaughter. Their deeds are too heinous, the scale of their bloodbaths too enormous. Since turning their backs upon the Imperium they swore to protect, the Crimson Slaughter have carved bloody paths of destruction back and forth across the galaxy. In their wake they leave behind massacre sites so repulsive in their excess, so extreme in their savagery that even hardened veterans must look away.

The Crimson Slaughter strike with the same precision and thunderbolt fury as the Space Marines. To the Imperial repertoire of lightning assaults and armoured spearheads are added lurching daemonic engines of war and waves of brainwashed Cultists. Alongside traditional bolter and heavy weapons fire come sorcerous blasts and drizzling balefire. For close quarters onslaughts the Crimson Slaughter use the time-honoured chainsword and power fist, but also lasher tentacles and claw pincers capable of snipping a Dreadnought in two. Against them, no defence line can hold, no bunker can remain intact. In the end, most of their foes break and run, hoping to hide in the ruins of their world. Yet whether the Crimson Slaughter hunt their prey by auger-tracker, Warp trace or bloodscint, their end is always the same. None can hide, none are permitted to escape – all must fall, broken and bullet-ridden.

The doctrine of well-coordinated shock attacks has ever been the trademark of the Space Marines, but none embody it with the mastery of the Crimson Slaughter. With their hellish arsenal they harness surprise and dismay, wielding

them in the same way a master swordsman wields his blade. Yet as horrific as their wanton violence is, as gut-wrenching as their genocidal purges are – there is something else about the Crimson Slaughter that makes them more terrifying than the other myriad threats that stalk this brutal era.

Strange things happen when the Crimson Slaughter arrive for battle. Unnatural, awful things that hardly bear description. Phantasmal spirits manifest out of shadows and premonitions of doom coalesce so thickly they hang like haze upon the air. The skies bleed, walls melt and the innocent contort and wrack their bodies into hateful angles while they howl to the heavens with the voices of the damned. Even mutes will plead for swift and merciful death, screaming out in languages they never knew.

The Crimson Slaughter are haunted

Lake claws squeak-screaming down a steel hull or the slow and steady scratching away of tooth enamel to reach the nerve cluster within, the spine-shivering voices murmur to them. A hateful sound, the whispering is quiet at first, so quiet that a lone warrior might pay it little heed. Those voices build in intensity, swelling not only in their volume, but also in their power. As a steady drip will, over time, carve through the hardest rock, so too work the voices. Only by acts of inhumane butchery and utter annihilation can members of the Crimson Slaughter find release from this agony. Only in gore-drenched wars can they dispel that which bedevils them, dogging their every footstep. Only by turning entire worlds into abattoirs can they make the voices halt, a reprieve that is all too short-lived.

In the beginning, the renegade Chapter of Space Marines resisted their doom – perhaps some still do. Most of their number, however, have cast off the fetters of service and deprivation. They have at last embraced the power and the madness, longing for the blissful, sated release that follows slaughter. It is impossible to surmise which are more damned – the warriors who are filled with self-loathing for their vile acts, or the ones who have developed a taste for it?

Regardless, the power of the Warp spreads and the shadow of the End Times grows longer. The bells of doom clang and toll. And somewhere in the galaxy, or hidden just behind the veil that overshadows it, the Crimson Slaughter are once more driven by their inner voices, once more on the hunt.

'I see fear in their eyes, right before they die. I see shock as they realise too late what it is to pit their puny strength against true power.'

Kraanon the Relentless

FALL OF THE CRIMSON SABRES

To better understand how an entire Chapter of the Adeptus Astartes could turn aside from its duty, many Inquisitors have attempted to trace the rot of corruption back to its source. Although much detail has been lost or remains shrouded since the Chapter's founding, investigators have pieced together as much as could be uncovered about the Crimson Slaughter's past.

The story of the Crimson Slaughter is a tragic tale. To the Imperium of Mankind, it is the story of ultimate betrayal – a Space Marine Chapter that turned from the light of the Emperor, rebels who forsook sacred duty to pursue their own twisted agenda. As for the Crimson Slaughter themselves, their beliefs on the matter are more varied. Some claim that the chain of disasters that befell them was nothing more than random fate, a series of events that led down a path upon which there could be no turning back. Others deny any aimlessness in their doom, seeing instead either the engineered machinations of more sinister forces at work, or perhaps their Chapter's own subconscious bursting forth after long and brutal suppression.

Some seek the truth of the Crimson Sabres' fall, hoping to identify signs of further corruption in other Chapters of the Adeptus Astartes. Others seek evidence simply to understand what could make Mankind's most elite protectors into its worst nightmare. All agree upon two things – the Crimson Slaughter were born of war, and their history has been writ in blood.



SHROUDED BEGINNINGS

The renegades who call themselves the Crimson Slaughter were once the Crimson Sabres Chapter of Space Marines. Since their betrayal and excommunication, many have sought out the Chapter's origins, delving back into their past to find perhaps some reasoning behind their rapid decline into savage butchery. Thus far, the Inquisition has failed to reveal any conclusive evidence that links them to corrupt gene-seed or known mutagenic factors.

What has been brought to light in the quest to understand what happened to an elite army is only another reminder that there are enormous gaps in the Imperium's data. Tracing historical records is a difficult task. Much of the history of the Imperium of Mankind, including that of some of the most decorated Space Marine Chapters, has holes riddled through its continuum. These dead patches are often ascribed to rampant warfare, but not always. Even without xenos threat or internecine fighting, the sheer size of the galaxy-spanning empire and the dangers of Warp travel conspire to make any kind of cohesive record-keeping impossible. The most bureaucratic systems – those with the most Adeptus Administratum workers – keep the best records, but ironically, they are the most



difficult to extract information from. The sheer number of data scrolls and information stockpiles, along with outdated or misunderstood technology, makes sifting the heaped recordings the life's work of entire armies of scribes.

It is unknown from which founding the Crimson Sabres were created, or which Chapter served as their progenitor. Naturally, much speculation on both accounts has been made, including postulations made by members of the Chapter itself. The earliest mentions of the Crimson Sabres that have been have been uncovered are battle records that list them as participating in campaigns at the dawning of the 36th Millennium. That the Chapter's founding is unknown seems tied to two events – the Amalgamation Schism and the destruction of the planet Rhogon.

EARLY IMPRESSIONS

After long searches, keen-eyed Inquisitorial teams have been able to track down several sources regarding the Chapter's activity during the Wars of Apostasy. One, a brief report in the chrono-logs of the Silver Skulls, lists the Crimson Sabres' service in several battles, noting their disciplined fire support as exemplary. To aid the investigations, Silver Skulls Prognosticators delved further into their records, confirming that, at the time, they judged their brethren to be in perfect accordance to the Codex Astartes. Another reference in the data-scrolls of the Black Templars credits the Crimson Sabres as the leaders in hunting down and destroying a xenos threat that encroached upon Segmentum Solar while the Imperium was distracted in their war with the rogue High Lord of Terra Goge Vandire.

During the Cleansing of Danor IV, a year-long campaign in which no less than six Chapters of Space Marines took part, it was the Crimson Sabres who gained the most commendations. The overall leader – the then master of the Blood Angels, Commander Virgilus – noted that the duty-bound Crimson Sabres were masters of quick-strike warfare, praising their Drop Pod assaults and claiming that they nearly rivalled those of his own legendary Chapter. The only cautionary note from this period comes from Brother Aerigulus, an Ultramarines Librarian who took part in the actions on Danor IV. It was his report that cited the Crimson Sabres as 'overeager for acceptance.' Later, in the same data-scroll, Aerigulus went on to clarify that this overwrought zeal might have been expected from a new Chapter fighting alongside such Imperial stalwarts as the Blood Angels and Ultramarines. This foreshadows what was to follow.

THE AMALGAMATION SCHISM

Although the Warp storms that once cut it off had lifted, the Brakatoa System remained plagued by strange eddies in the Immaterium. Warp-transit in its vicinity proved particularly hazardous – aside from being thrown off course, spacecraft faced increased risk of time alterations and daemonic incursion. Despite the warnings, many ships were caught in the wayward crosscurrents. So many derelict spacecraft and Warp anomalies materialised just outside of Brakatoa that the region became known colloquially as 'Hulk Alley.' From Rhogon, the Crimson Sabres routinely launched missions to explore these hulks, their fleet blasting paths through the debris and using the larger clusters for target practice.

Indeed, one of the few records of the Crimson Sabres that has been found in the archives on Terra compounds this fact, claiming that the location of the Chapter's home world was specifically chosen so they could regularly perform this precautionary duty.

Even before the space hulk designated *Amalgamation* fully emerged out of Warp, psychic choirs in the Brakatoa System began receiving desperate pleas for help. Other comms channels followed as the process of solidifying into realspace took place. What appeared was a hulk in every sense of the word – an enormous conglomerate made of a miserable mangle of many star-faring craft compacted together. At the heart of the sprawling *Amalgamation* was a pilgrimage transport, a barricaded vessel where many millions of colonists were under siege by Warp entities.

All available elements of the Crimson Sabres were called into action, but they were not alone in responding. Following some trail of their own, the Dark Angels arrived shortly after and requested to enter the space hulk alone. This appeal was dropped after the arrival of a Blood Angels Strike Cruiser, which had also answered the distress signal. Having the most senior officer present, the Blood Angels claimed overall command – but even as they did so, the Crimson Sabres followed their own protocols and launched boarding torpedoes towards the hulk. Soon, the other forces joined by Thunderhawk landings, while Deathwing Terminators teleported directly onto the craft.

The Space Marines hunted the vast hulk, carving through bulkheads to enter blood-strewn corridors. Just as the chugging of bolter fire announced contact with the foe, the Daemons began to fade, disappearing back into the Warp. With the military aspect of the mission over, the Space Marines made ready to return to their respective ships – leaving the surviving colonists to the agents of the Inquisition that would arrive soon.

In their zeal to follow procedures and their continued eagerness to prove themselves, the Crimson Sabres had not deferred to two of the most heralded Chapters of the Adeptus Astartes. Although the two organisations couldn't be more different from each other – the taciturn and simple-robed Dark Angels, the famed descendants of the 1st Legion, contrasting with the polished brilliance of the celebrated Blood Angels, warriors whose armour flashed with elaborate gold adornments – both Chapters were proud and well aware of their respective status. Unspoken tradition had been breached, and the Crimson Sabres were coldly treated as impudent newcomers rather than as comrades in arms. There was further trouble besides.

Against standard procedure, a Dark Angels Chaplain had captured one of the colonist-pilgrims. The Chaplain had been in the midst of harsh interrogations when several squads of Crimson Sabres interrupted his work. They challenged him, claiming that some Warp malady must have possessed the Dark Angel for him to act so, and a brief firefight ensued. This resulted in casualties amongst both Chapters, and the subsequent escape of the tormented hostage. Clearly infuriated, for moments it seemed the Dark Angels were on the verge of retaliation, but they soon disappeared with the arrival of the Inquisitors.

A GROWING ESTRANGEMENT

Even a small stone can cause many ripples. Although outwardly everything was the same after the minor rift that later came to be known to the Crimson Sabres as the Amalgamation Schism, it set off a chain of events that was to have wider repercussions. Within days, the Crimson Sabres stronghold of Decavium received words of censure from Terra, and most probably from their founding Chapter as well, although no records remain. This was little more than remonstrance, a lesser rebuke that let it be known that failure to properly acclaim the Dark Angels and Blood Angels had brought the Crimson Sabres dishonour, a tarnish that did not sit well with their gloried predecessors.

The leadership of the Crimson Sabres – the Chapter's High Council of Company Masters and senior officers – ordered a tribunal to investigate the matter. None wished the Crimson Sabres' deeds to be questioned and Chapter Master Nigellus was alarmed to learn that some of the group feared further censure. Concerned with what he felt was a growing element of unwarranted paranoia, Nigellus was outraged. To his mind, he felt the Crimson Sabres had followed procedure and acted swiftly and correctly in responding to the threat. If there was any misconduct it was not by his Chapter. Furthermore, any perceived slight to honour was unintentional and petty. They were all serving the same Emperor and fighting the same enemy were they not?

Nigellus was determined to shed his Chapter's growing self-doubt and make a statement. In a bold move, he declared the Crimson Sabres would sever all ties to their brother Space Marine Chapters, including their founders. They would be loyal to the tactical guidelines laid out by the Codex Astartes and follow uncompromisingly all orders as issued by the High Lords of Terra. To all others, they would be unanswerable. By Nigellus' straightforward logic this was as it should be – for their mission of service must not be corrupted by the influence of their comrades. Was it not dogged faithfulness to the Warmaster Horus that had allowed half of the original Space Marine Legions to be led astray? In this action, he sought to free the Crimson Sabres from faulty judgement and therefore all reproach.

BORN AGAIN

At first, the Crimson Sabres maintained great pride in their resolve, but slowly, self-doubt began to gnaw at many within the Chapter. Never one to brook dissent, Nigellus banned all further debate on the matter and any mention of the deeds of the Amalgamation Schism was forbidden.

Although the Crimson Sabres remained resolute in their convictions, the break with their primogenitors was far from easy. Much of their Chapter lore had to be reconfigured so that no mention of their founders appeared in their history. Over and over, the Librarians and Chaplains were ordered to scrub clean all evidence of their forebears, and Rhogon was scoured of statues, heirloom suits of power armour, and any relics of their ancient past that predated the founding of their Chapter. Amongst the star-faring fleet, Strike Cruisers were renamed and the training regimen of the 10th Company was reconstructed anew. In essence, the Crimson Sabres were reborn – new defenders of the Imperium, unencumbered by any ties to the distant past.

Only in the Sanctum of the Sword, the innermost chambers of the tallest tower of Decavium, their Chapter stronghold, was the full history locked away. There it was decreed that the truth of the Crimson Sabres' birthright and the full history of their deeds would be kept. The sanctum was accessible only to the Chapter's senior officers – the Captains of each company, along with the senior Chaplains and Librarians.

Beneath Nigellus' stern leadership, the Crimson Sabres were zealous in their duty. If any rumour or ill feeling towards the Chapter remained amongst any agents of the Adeptus Terra, this was soon forgotten. The red-armoured Space Marines firmly established a reputation for swift efficiency, being regarded as warriors of unimpeachable conduct. Indeed, their rigorous obedience to the Codex Astartes, for they followed its guidelines to the letter, earned them many commendations for their rapid actions. However, deeper within the Crimson Sabres, something was brooding.

A GROWING RIGHTEOUSNESS

For over a hundred years, Nigellus served as Chapter Master. He was uncompromising and quick to action, for he knew well the tenets of the Codex Astartes and followed them to perfection. In the pursuit of faultlessness, Nigellus instilled a new cult of extreme rigour within the Crimson Sabres. It was not enough for each mission to be successful; it had to be faultless, executed more swiftly, and properly detailed and recorded. It was a great loss to the Chapter when Nigellus was slain in action during the Fornstadt Rebellion.

Arnoch succeeded Nigellus as Chapter Master of the Crimson Sabres, but the new traditions he had established lived on. If anything, the Chapter became yet more fervent and exacting in its strict adherence to orders. Arnoch became known as the Intransigent – a title that would be used to describe all the Chapter Masters that followed. In one of his first acts, Arnoch the Intransigent sought to further banish their hidden past, wary of how others might judge the Chapter. He made the decision to seal all entrances to the Sanctum of the Sword. Not only did it lock away evidence of a perceived imperfection, but it was also his declaration that the past was over and a new era begun.

More eager to prove themselves than ever, the Crimson Sabres conducted operations with undeniable precision. Over many centuries, their battle records were exemplary. They gained particular distinction in the Zobrist Wars, hunting down the piratical Eldar, and also drew many commendations for leading the spearhead attacks during the Deadstar Battles. In both cases, their allies – who included many battalions and armoured divisions of Tallarn along with the Black Templars – are noted in official documentation as praising the Crimson Sabres. Off the record, however, the truth was rather different.

The Crimson Sabres were efficient and trustworthy, yet when the battle was over, they were self-righteous and fastidious. Allied commanders, whether subordinates or many ranks more senior, received post battle reports of great detail. These inevitably pointed out where allied forces had failed to meet proper standards. For Space Marines, any deviation from the Codex Astartes brought even longer datasheets –

long lists of observed compliances that failed to follow the tactical or organisational guidelines set forth by Roboute Guilliman. While their demands for meticulous detail, contingency plans and exact protocol ultimately helped win many battles for the Imperium, it also estranged the Crimson Sabres from those they fought alongside. All of their previous conflicts, however, were precursors to the Chapter's role in the Redemption Crusades.

ABSOLUTION THROUGH EXPANSION

The Imperium's Age of Redemption was marked by many crusades. Countless campaigns were launched in an effort to purge away the sins of the previous Age of Apostasy. Once again the Ecclesiarchy rebuilt its fanatical devotion and wave after wave of new offensives were announced. There was a galaxy-wide effort to push the borders of the Imperium out further than they had ever been before.

This was an ideal time for an eager Chapter to prove themselves. Seeking a lion's share of the glory, the Crimson Sabres campaigned with utmost diligence – striving to further perfect their rapid strikes. With ruthless efficiency they completed mission after mission, the crusades in which they took part expanding the Imperium's holdings within Segmentum Tempestus. On planet after planet, their assaults crippled key enemy infrastructure or seized heavily fortified positions, allowing ensuing waves of Imperial Guard to consolidate and hold all gains.

It was the Crimson Sabres that eradicated the Hrud from the frontier world of Nolla, and led the way to free the Reductus System from the Orks. Despite the heroics and their many instances of sacrifice, then Chapter Master Drabek became increasingly convinced that the reputation of his Chapter was in question. To those on far-off Terra, this was not the case – for the Crimson Sabres were amongst the most highly decorated forces that participated in Segmentum Tempestus. To those who fought alongside them, however, Drabek's assessment was accurate. Many allies were growing frustrated with the highly critical and overly suspicious nature of the red-armoured Space Marines.

Many long-lost worlds and new star systems were added to the Imperium's control during the Redemption Crusades. In their fervour for longer and more involved campaigns, however, the forces of the Imperium sustained many casualties and became stretched too thinly. The galaxy is a dangerous place and abhors a power vacuum. While the Imperium concentrated its efforts to expand into wilderness space, the inadequately defended home sectors of the crusaders became imperilled. Throughout the galaxy, rebellions, Chaos-led insurgencies, Ork invasions and new xenos threats encroached upon poorly defended worlds.

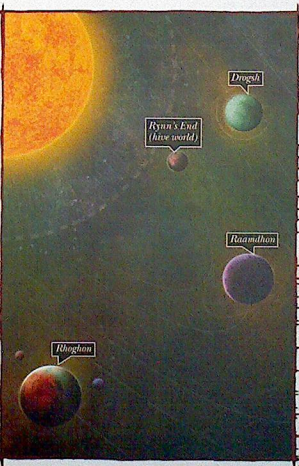
It was while the majority of the Crimson Sabres were on campaign near the Veiled Region that the near-total collapse of the Brakatoa System began. The distant fleets of the Crimson Sabres soon received word from their besieged

THE BRAKATOA SYSTEM

The Brakatoa system was first colonised in the early stages of Mankind's Dark Age of Technology. Though distant from Terra, a 'drift channel' in the Warp allowed for easy travel to the region. The star system was ideal, for it grouped a dozen inhabitable planets within a compact orbit. During the ever-growing Warp storms that ushered in the Age of Strife, all contact was lost with the Brakatoa System. It was not until thousands of years later, late in the Age of Forging, that the storms cleared sufficiently so that Explorer Fleets could once more push into that region, now defined as the galactic south of Segmentum Tempestus.

What the Imperium found was that a few of the planets still had human populations: the outermost planet Rhogon with its twin moons, as well as Raamdhon, Drogha and Rynn's End. Yet as close as these planets were to each other they had lost touch with all outside worlds. During the long millennia Terra, the birthplace of Humanity, had become but rumour and legend. All three planets had regressed and were ruled by feudal warlords – brutal, but fair men, who fought bravely to fight off Orks and other xenos raiders.

Anxious to reclaim the mineral-rich Brakatoa system, the Imperium sent out vast colonisation expeditions. The outermost planet, Rhogon, was a shield world – so called because its orbit protected the rest of the inhabitable worlds. It was on Rhogon that the newly founded Crimson Sabres built their stronghold – the fortress of erosion iron known as Decacitum, or 'ten victories' in the native language. Built into the side of a mountain, its ten towers soared even higher than the snow-capped peak. Upon Rhogon's moons the Crimson Sabres established a pair of naval bases, including the orbital docks required for their sizable fleet.



fortress monastery of Decavium, but they could not leave until their campaign had been properly concluded. By the time they had completed all missions assigned to them and re-gathered their scattered companies, the incursion of Brakatoa was all but over. The shieldworld of Rhoghon, their home world, had been the first to fall under the daemonic onslaught. Subsequent explosions of the planet's reactors, relics of the Dark Age of Technology, left the planet a blasted rad-zone, uninhabitable by human life for thousands of years. When the massed uprising and daemonic fury descended upon the Brakatoa System, the only help from the Imperium came in the form of cyclonic torpedoes. Three worlds were seething with corruption – there was little choice but to condemn them to fiery destruction. In the wake of this purge, a plague scourged Rynn's End; of the once thriving system, only Raamdhon and Drogsh remained.

The devastation of their star system and the loss of their home world struck the Crimson Sabres hard. The last transmissions from the psychic choirs revealed an ugly picture – their fortress partially overrun, its occupants cruelly tortured. While they would soon resetttle the Chapter on Drogsh, the third world of the Brakatoa System, the loss of Rhoghon was a blow to the Chapter's pride. All records of their past and the truth of their origins were lost, buried beneath their ruined stronghold. Although they had turned from their past, some had long held out a secret hope that their estranged founding fathers would one day recognise their worth and re-establish ties. No Chapter ever did.

DESTRUCTION OF RHOGHON

It is believed by the Ordo Malleus that the Brakatoa eruption began with the emergence of the supercluster space hulk codenamed The Misery. Its long-awaited appearance in realspace was the sign for cultists to rise up across the system. Dating back to when the Explorer Fleets first rediscovered the star system, the region was rife with cults. Although the Ecclesiarchy had done their best – erecting several great cathedrals dedicated to the Emperor – they had never fully succeeded in wiping out such organisations as the Cult of the Carmine Truth or the Mist-druids.

Upon Rhoghon, many of the feudal keeps from which the Crimson Sabres drew recruits housed secret factions. These rose up, seizing control of many of the great strongholds. Through their sudden wars and foul rituals, portals to the Warp were opened and Daemons poured forth across all of Brakatoa. With their fleet many sectors distant, there was little the Crimson Sabres could do to halt The Misery. Soon the massive space hulk was orbiting Rhoghon, the Warp-pilgrims ferrying to the planet to bolster the rising cult armies.

An army of half-trained Scouts, veterans recovering from wounds and Dreadnoughts too slow to awaken when the Crimson Sabres left en masse were all that was left to confront the Cultist hordes. Were it not for the Daemons, the makeshift Space Marine forces might have held out long enough. As it was, the end was cruel for those Crimson Sabres that were caught. With their requests for aid denied, the Master of the 10th Company succeeded in detonating the ancient reactors leading to a cataclysmic rad-explosion that scourged the world.

It took many years for the Chapter to re-establish itself upon Drogsh and to re-build its numbers. During this time, they did not fail in their duty, nor did they slacken their zeal – but a simmering resentment was also growing.

THE MASSACRE AT UMIDIA

For over a millennium after resettling their Chapter upon Drogsh, the Crimson Sabres continued to do their duty. All Space Marines are detached from those they serve, but the zealously obedient Crimson Sabres drifted into ever greater isolation. They did not realise the growing acrimony they themselves fostered amongst their comrades. In others they saw only flaws, and they were puzzled that their own quest for absolute adherence to the Codex Astartes gained them little commendation. By the time they made the planetfall that would forever change their Chapter, the Crimson Sabres had earned a reputation as self-righteous crusaders.

Several Space Marine Chapters heard the distress call sent out from the jungle world of Umidia. When it was discovered that the Crimson Sabres were en route, the other nearby Chapters withdrew their offers of aid. Had any of them sent along a landing detail to aid the operation then perhaps matters might have turned out differently.

Following standard procedure, reconnoitres by the Crimson Sabres reported a surprising development upon Umidia. Escalating calls for support eventually summoned all available warriors from the entire Chapter onto the fateful planet. With each new location their augers scanned, they found more corruption, so that it was not long before they went from localised assaults to genocidal cleansing. In their methodical manner, the Crimson Sabres purged Umidia, seeking nothing less than to eliminate every single one of the world's inhabitants. Much later, when questioned about the deed, members of the Crimson Sabres claimed that all of Umidia's citizenry were given over to Balethu Cults – a debased group that worshipped the Dark Gods.

In the wake of their purge, teams of Inquisitors from the Ordo Hereticus were sent to investigate. The Inquisitors found no evidence that the Balethu Cults were worshippers of the Dark Gods. What they did find amongst Umidia's thick foliage, however, was an atrocity. With the duty of rooting out nests of corrupted cults, the Ordo Hereticus was composed of hardened individuals. Each of their order had seen many a grim scene – yet each expressed horror at what they witnessed upon Umidia. The Crimson Sabres' action went well beyond the eradication of some hidden cult, it had been an act of wanton butchery on a planetary scale.

WHISPERS IN THE DARK

The Crimson Sabres had departed Umidia long before the Inquisitorial teams arrived to document the carnage that wholly eliminated its native population. However, the slaughter they had wrought was already beginning to have a strange effect upon the Crimson Sabres. At first, none of the Space Marines mentioned any of their untoward experiences to each other – each feeling as if, perhaps, he was simply having some sort of post-battle melancholia. Many felt unusual symptoms – their multiple hearts racing to peak levels for no purpose, or the onset of a growing

sense of foreboding, as if some unseen fug was closing in all around them. A rising pressure weighed heavily upon their minds. Even before the mission was fully complete and the Crimson Sabres returned to their orbiting fleet, some of their members were already feeling the first effects of what they would later call 'the haunting'.

Individual members of the Chapter found that they could not properly clear their minds. No amount of litanies or meditations seemed to work. Thanks to implants and genetic modifications, Space Marines do not sleep as most humans know it, but enter a comatose state that allows them to recharge their minds, even while their bodies remain alert. Yet the Crimson Sabres failed in attempt after attempt to reach that peaceful state. Rather than being able to relax, they visualised instead the faces of those they had killed, living over and over again their massacre.

In an ever growing state of unrest, the most agitated of the Crimson Sabres began to hear voices – the whispered words of the slain. The voices cajoled, taunted, or pleaded, while others screamed endlessly, or chanted indecipherable words that were painful to hear. No Space Marines yet broke – for through training and superhuman discipline, their willpower was as impervious as their ceramite power armour. However, as the fleet entered the Warp, travelling towards their next destination, many of the Crimson Sabres felt their sanity slipping away. Hidden from their comrades, they clutched their hands to their heads in a futile effort to stop the voices. Since he had watched the slaughter on Umidia unfold, Chapter Master Sevastus Kranon too felt a growing unease. The Crimson Sabres were, of course, only following procedure – the Imperium's response to heretics was necessarily harsh – but something felt very wrong.



REDEMPTION OR DAMNATION

For the briefest of periods Sevastus Kranon hung on a knife's edge. Part of him wished to order his fleet to halt, to return to Umidia. It was growing more difficult to think clearly, as voices in his head accused him of atrocities and visions of condemnation flashed through Kranon's every thought. He knew he had shown the proper methodology, that behind the savage acts of death-dealing were orthodox procedures. But another part of Kranon felt a growing dread – he and his troops had some spell or curse upon them. It could be hidden no longer, for it had become apparent during Warp travel that the Crimson Sabres were hearing the voices of the slain. On Drogh, as on a great many planets of the Imperium, witches, mutants and madmen were hunted down and slain for lesser signs of insanity than those he and his Chapter were now displaying.

Despite the voices that attempted to alter his perception, Kranon at last made a resolution. They would halt their Warp travel and steer back towards Umidia, setting their course instead for her sister planet – Demetra. There, they would seek clues of contamination. If, as he suspected, the Crimson Sabres uncovered further spread of the Chaos-worshipping Balethu Cults there, then he could offer them

THE HAUNTING

In his growing ire, Sevastus Kranon had brusquely ordered the command bridge cleared, chasing out even the servitors that minded the autologs of the ship. He needed to think clearly, to be alone – yet these days that was hardly possible.

'You cannot block us out Sevastus, do not even try. Soon you'll need us – for the Inquisitors are reaching Umidia even now. You know what they'll find, you saw it. You ordered it done. "Overzealous," they will say. They will declare the Crimson Sabres "Unstable." And worst of all, you did not finish the job. We have already spread, Demetra is ours already.'

'Stop!' Sevastus shouted inside his mind. 'I will not listen to you! What happened on Umidia was perhaps... excessive. But it was necessary. I have my orders to follow. The action was carried out according to protocol!'

'We were there – we saw what happened. We felt the way you embraced the slaughter. Was that how it is prescribed in the Codex Astartes? To revel in killing? Give up the pretence, Sevastus. The sooner you embrace us, the better it will be.'

For a moment Sevastus halted his frantic pacing. He must do something – anything – to stop the voices.

up as proof of the righteousness of their cause. It also gave the Chaplains, Librarians and Apothecaries some time to assess the mental malady that enshrouded the Chapter.

The voyage to leave Warp space and reach orbit over Demetra may have been brief, yet to the Crimson Sabres, it felt like a lifetime of torment. No peace could be found aboard any part of the fleet, and a pall of paranoid insanity raced through each and every member of the Chapter.

It was not the Crimson Sabres that made planetfall upon Demetra, but instead raving madmen. In an instinctive attempt to burn away the harrowing memories that haunted them, the red-armoured Space Marines arrived forgetful of all their plans, now intent upon only a single undertaking: slaughter! Using the rapid-strike, multiple assault blueprint that had made the Adeptus Astartes the most feared fighting force in the galaxy, the Crimson Sabres sliced into Demetra's population centres like a power blade through flesh. Systematically, they employed a combined arms approach that utilised armour, sudden strikes, and bold manoeuvre to eliminate all living targets. Herding all before them, they set up spectacular orbital bombardments, finishing the rest off with bolter fire, or pulverising their victims in close combat. They killed with an efficiency that only superhumans genetically modified expressly for war could achieve.

Gore-drenched, the Crimson Sabres returned to their fleet, haunted no longer. They had drowned the voices in their heads with tidal waves of blood. Upon closing their eyes they found only the peace of restful oblivion. In typically detailed fashion of the Crimson Sabres, Kranon filed his after action report. He declared the neighbouring world of Demetra was indeed tainted, undoubtedly due to its proximity to Umidia. The threat was destroyed and the Crimson Sabres were now proceeding towards their next mission.

INTO THE EYE OF TERROR

As the voices inside their heads were quelled, the Crimson Sabres looked upon their deeds of slaughter with a rising sense of dread and foreboding. What had they done? What would become of them? After a lifetime of service dedicated to protecting the Imperium of Mankind, they were now outcasts – hunted refugees. And then the whispers in their heads began anew...

Shortly after the massacre upon Demetra, Librarians brought Chapter Master Sevastus Kranon messages intercepted from the High Lords of Terra. It was his worst fears confirmed: the Crimson Sabres had been declared Excommunicate Traitoris. They were now named as renegades – a standing order for all forces of the Imperium to open fire upon the Crimson Sabres on sight.

Part of Kranon had known such a move was possible, but he had expected an inquiry, not excommunication. If he could only explain – the acts had been extreme, but necessary. Even as he thought this, Kranon envisioned the faces of those they had massacred. An inner voice, perhaps his own, whispered that the Crimson Sabres' only real hope had been the Imperial bureaucracy overlooking the incidents. Deep down, Kranon knew he could never satisfactorily explain the violence that had overcome his Chapter, or the voices that followed. Inevitably the Ecclesiarchy would brand them as traitors and Daemon-worshippers. Now every asset of the galaxy's greatest empire would be turned against them. He was not prepared for the crushing finality of it.



HUNTER OR HUNTED?

Given their location, Kranon knew they would never reach Drogh before the Imperial forces could. Kranon debated not sending a warning – Exterminatus of their home world would be faster and more merciful than the cruelty that would doubtless descend upon those that remained within their fortress monastery. Countless serfs, servitors, half-trained Scouts and more would be put to death. Kranon thought of the old veterans hard-wired into the moon's defence guns, and the Scout Sergeants with whom he had long served. Violent death was an expected hazard for any Space Marine, but all had hoped to fall in battle, serving the Imperium and the Emperor. There was no honour in dying to the fiery blast of a cyclonic torpedo.

Kranon had vowed to do all in his power to ensure the best for his Chapter. Now, like a weight lifted from his shoulders, he realised he no longer owed anyone anything. Yet he could not be wholly sure if this was his own thought or the whispering return of the hated voices. Already he felt like he could hear them scratching at his subconscious. Regardless of right or wrong, service was ingrained in him, a part of his fibre. Calling for Librarians, Kranon dictated an urgent message to be sent to Drogh. In essence it read: flee if you are able – to remain on the planet or the old moon bases of Rhoghon, or to be affiliated in any way with the Chapter, was a death sentence. Whether they escaped or some other fate befell them, Kranon never knew. Bereft of sanctuary, the Crimson Sabres would now be hunted without mercy.

After sending his message, Sevastus Kranon called together a Sword-meet – a gathering of the Chapter. In the great Sabre Hall of the vast flagship *Red Honour* they gathered – rank after rank of battle-brothers, bonded by vows and wars uncounted. All looked upward to Kranon, for they hoped to hear words of salvation even as unbidden voices began to once more echo inside each of their heads.

Kranon spoke – he spoke of the physical pain they had endured as new organs were implanted into their modified bodies. He spoke of their commitment, he spoke of the Chapter's honour, and he spoke of the Warp-borne curse that allowed voices to whisper into his mind. And finally, Kranon spoke of the choice that now lay before them.

Only through battle and death could the Crimson Sabres rid themselves of the voices that haunted them. It was Sevastus Kranon's plan to steer a course into the Eye of Terror. There, they could attack the hell-spawned traitors within that forsaken region and no further innocent lives would be lost. They might be branded as traitors, but Kranon knew they were not. It would be a noble end – a martyrdom fitting for heroes as in the tales of old. Any that wished to leave the Crimson Sabres could do so now. Beneath the great vaulted domes there was silence as each Space Marine pondered his ultimate fate.

DESPERATE COURSE OF ACTION

With a resounding cry that echoed off the vaulted ceiling, the Crimson Sabres shouted as one, raising their arms in the Chapter salute. They would follow Sevastus Kranon, they would remain in service to the Emperor. They would join him for one final campaign even if that were to be a last defiant charge into the very heart of their foe's realm!

Bowing his head beneath the pride he felt swelling inside of him, Kranon dispersed his charges back to their ships and bade them all set course for the Eye of Terror. Yet, even as he did so, there was some other part of the Chapter Master, something deeper – an almost unconscious lingering voice – that said he was not leading his men to martyrdom and doom, but luring them. Some other fate awaited them, something far greater than an unmourned death.



All journeys through the Warp are prone to anomalies, and the nearer a vessel approaches the greatest tear in the fabric of realspace, the more they feel the presence of the Immaterium pressing upon them. With their frequent travels through Warp space, all Space Marines have mantras or battle hymns that allow the warriors to maintain solid mental discipline upon such voyages. For the Crimson Sabres, these intonations were compromised. The swelling voices and whistles left the Space Marines vulnerable, their iron wills besieged by self doubt. By the time they dropped out of the Warp before the Cadian Gate, they felt as if their very beings were under a barrage, their thoughts intertwining with the voices and suggestions of the slain.

The Cadian Gate is the most stable route that is large enough to allow the passage of battlefleets into and out of the Eye of Terror. However, it is neither easy to enter nor to leave that region – for Imperial cordons surround that swirling mass of space, guarding against the raids, horrors and Black Crusades that sporadically issue forth from its whirling depths. With the correct Imperial clearance codes, the seven ship warfleet of the Crimson Sabres slipped past several of the layers of that restricted zone, eluding fortress-planets and orbital sentinel stations. But those that guard the Eye of Terror are on constant alert and could not wholly be avoided. In their final run to enter restricted space, the Crimson Sabres could not avoid a brief clash with an Imperial Fists Strike Cruiser and supporting destroyer craft that had scrambled to block their entrance.

The opposing fleets exchanging distant torpedo and lance battery fire, and the Crimson Sabres were forced to repel a brief but fierce boarding action from their fellow Adeptus Astartes. This was not a battle that Kranon wished for, but with their heads filled with nightmare visions of slaughter and the horrible accusations of those they had slain, the Crimson Sabres reacted by rote, their training taking over as they simply fought off another foe. With a single ship, the *Red Horizon*, trailing debris and listing slightly, the Crimson Sabres at last left behind their pursuers and entered the most feared region of space in the galaxy.

THE RENEGADE WARS

Onwards, into the Eye of Terror the Crimson Sabres steered their course, making all speed. Kranon knew that only by war could the spectral voices be drowned; only when their very armour dripped with gore would the voices cease. They had travelled long and the pent-up madness in their minds threatened to overload and burst forth at any moment.

So it was that the Crimson Sabres descended upon the Eye of Terror with the unequalled fury of both the righteous and the psychotically enraged. They brought doom and in their hands they carried death and carnage. The first to feel the unbridled wrath of the Crimson Sabres were the outermost planets, those only partially contained by the swirling maelstrom. These were not full-fledged Daemon worlds that bathed in the free-flowing powers of the Warp, but rather the refuge of the dispossessed – the twisted home of mutants and the most successful of the Cultist rabble that had escaped persecution in the Imperium. These forsaken planets made fine recruiting grounds and hidden lairs for the many renegade warbands of Space Marines. There, piratical raiders formed small armies that would launch plundering forays back into the Imperium.

Whether witch or abhuman, mutant or renegade Chaos Space Marine – all fell before the scythe that was the Crimson Sabres. With bolter and chainsword they unleashed retribution, fighting with a savage joy that, for a time, cleared their minds and souls.

BATTLE OF NEBULON

The planet known as Nebulon was one of the outermost of the planets ringing the Eye of Terror, a world only occasionally veiled within that region. Onto that bleak orb swept the Crimson Sabres like avenging angels. Drop Pods sliced through the thick clouds, their screaming descents halting only at the last second. Retro-jets kicked up dust clouds that were suddenly illuminated with flashes as the Crimson Sabres burst forth, guns blazing. In a twisted land of derelict hives and the crashed remains of spacecraft, the red-armoured Space Marines hunted, gunning down any quarry they could find. They slew mutants and blasted down the wretched masses of outcasts that gathered in those desolate ruins. None could match the Crimson Sabres – none, that is, until the Black Skull renegades emerged out of the sylvan depths of the underhive.

Pitting red against black, the power armoured foes hurled themselves upon each other. In battle prowess and gear of war they were equal – the finest of Mankind's warriors. The Crimson Sabres were nigh on Chapter strength, but so too were the Black Skulls. However, only the core of their force were Space Marines, turncoats from many disparate Chapters united by their self-serving nature and the black markings which they had painted over their old heraldry. The remainder of their numbers were Cultists – cut-throat mobs, well armed and dangerous, but nothing near the elite and superbly armed Space Marines. Yet the biggest difference was that the Crimson Sabres fought as one – a coordinated effort, with squads supporting each other to maximum effect. A wall of bolter and heavy weapons fire met every Black Skulls charge, and when the wave of red armour arrived it broke the renegades. Black Skulls champions – defiant in their rage – were blasted down as they roared out challenges, pleading to their Dark Gods for aid.

TWISTED BEYOND RECOGNITION

Planet by planet, the Crimson Sabres worked their way ever more deeply into the Eye of Terror. They slaughtered their way through Cultist scum with ease, but were slowed considerably when they ran up against renegade Space Marine warbands. Through their own numbers, the power of their fleet and the anger in their hearts, they pressed on. During one planetfall, the Crimson Sabres fought Khorne Berzerkers, toppling their blood-dripping idols and gunning down the red-robed Cultists that surrounded them. On a beslimed and marsh-ridden moon they discovered the lair of creatures that walked like men, but had the heads of enormous insects, with great bulbous compound eyes. Some of them, ominously, wore the power armour of some unrecognisable Space Marine Chapter. All were dispatched with the same ruthless efficiency that marked every one of the Crimson Sabres' actions.

After each battle, the voices were silenced and each of the Crimson Sabres felt renewed and full of worthy purpose. Slowly, however, the haunting voices returned, building into an ever more maddening cacophony. During the long Renegade Wars, there was no single moment that marked the Chapter's turning to Chaos, rather it was a gradual evolution. The flowing powers of the Warp and the heightened fears and desires of each Space Marine combined to morph the Crimson Sabres. In some, the changes were internal or too subtle to be noticed, in others the transmutation was far more drastic.

No one knew when Chaplain Okrak's tomes of liturgies altered, but his zealous speeches shifted from spouting the righteousness of sacrifice and the Imperial doctrine

to the pursuit of power, the rights of the individual, and the almighty strength they bore within their own band of warriors. One Space Marine's eyes glowed crimson as he grew angry, another noticed his teeth growing into more pronounced fangs. Others returned from battle to discover that their own bones had grown forth, penetrating their armour to form new ridged designs. Great horns sprouted out of helmets, growing in size and elaboration to match their owner's valour and deeds of battle. None were so large or as formidable as those of Chapter Master Kranon. On the ever-changing mist world of Drabloy, esteemed Sergeant Draznicht's strange new precognitive powers erupted forth, as did the third eye that grew out of his forehead.

Space Marines are trained to accept alterations to their bodies. In part, this has to do with the extra organs implanted within them during the genetic modification stages of their early development, but largely it has to do with their war-filled lives. Typically, a Space Marine warrior will sustain more wounds in a year than any two dozen frontline Imperial Guardsmen, and in his lifespan he will have recovered from many injuries that would have killed an unmodified man outright. Such rugged survivability is not without cost, and scars, burns or losses of limb are common. Witnessing gruesome wounds, or bionic replacements, is just another part of being a Space Marine. Perhaps this attitude made them so readily accept the new growths upon their bodies? When they entered the Eye of Terror, they had already chanted their death hymns, already rationalised that this was their last campaign. From that stance, what matter if a Space Marine grew an extra appendage or sprouted razored talons? If these new mutations aided the slaughter they wreaked upon their foes, then so much the better.

THE POWER OF THE WARP

Within the Eye of Terror, the tendrils of corruption that began to alter the Crimson Sabres also had wary effects upon their equipment. These changes followed no discernible pattern. New symbols coalesced on armour while bolguns developed death's heads. The Red Horizon, one of the Chapter's spacecraft, had sustained damage beyond the Space Marines' ability to repair, yet of its own accord the ship's metal plating regrew itself, healing hull breaches in the same manner as skin reknits over an open wound.

It was not until battle against Hakanor's Reivers that Sevastus Kranon noted the changes to his blade. Since the Amalgamation Schism, the Chapter Master of the Crimson Sabres had borne the Imperator Blade. Newly forged from the metal of the fallen Titan Imperator Rex, the mighty power sword had always served the leader of the Crimson Sabres well, but had never before shown any remarkable properties. Now, however, Kranon found the weapon to possess some eldritch ability. It glowed from within, seeming to contain the howling spirit faces of those that it had cut down. Many Cultists fled before the mere sight of the blade. The renegade Space Marines of Hakanor's Reivers were not so easily daunted, but with a speed and power he had never felt before, Kranon cut them down. As he did so, Kranon found himself growing even stronger, an energy surge travelling through the blade and up his arm. When all his foes had been cut down, arcs of blue-hued lightning wreathed the blade and Kranon felt he could challenge the gods themselves. The Imperator Blade had become a weapon to be feared.



DESCENT TO NEW DEPTHS

Since the battle on Umidia, not all the Crimson Sabres went along with or accepted the growing corruption of their Chapter. A few of the most aggressive of these individuals were struck down as they attempted to forestall or prevent the massacres perpetrated by their brethren. However, even when filled with the red oy of slaughter, the Crimson Sabres were loath to slay their brothers. In most cases, those who attempted to rein in the rampant bloodshed, or even those who protested too loudly afterwards, were seized and thrown into holding cells aboard the Chapter's ships. One of these was Chapter Master Sevastus Kranon's true brother. Several more Crimson Sabres were clamped into irons after they rebelled against their brethren's growing mutations. A former Chaplain buckled as he realised a horrible new truth – he was starting to enjoy the wanton slaying and he begged his compatriots to put him out of his misery.

Chained and isolated, without massed killing to even temporarily drive out the voices that haunted them, most of those unfortunates succumbed to raving insanity. The lower levels of the ships rang to the howling ravings of madmen, yet still the Crimson Sabres kept them incarcerated.



THE KILLING CONTINUES

So much raw Warp energy spills out into realspace in the region around the Eye of Terror that time passes strangely there. What may seem a matter of days or weeks within that nefarious region might be but seconds of time outside. On and on the Crimson Sabres went, searching each new planet, moon or floating space hulk. If any sign of life was found, they proceeded to assault, relentlessly pursuing their quarry until every one was slain. To them, it felt as if their death-bringing campaign had lasted long years already.

In the beginning, the Chapter's Librarians diligently recorded the full details of the Renegade Wars – or so they thought. All who approach the Eye of Terror increase the risk of madness or possession, and a psychically capable mind is put under even more strain. When the Librarians went to check their datascrolls and chrono-logs in an attempt to verify how long they had been on this final campaign, they found not the accounts of their several score of battles, but instead only gibberish, the ranting recordings of the maniacal voices from inside their heads.

Kranon took this news hard. He had hoped to redress the ledger against the Crimson Sabres by sending detailed records of their actions. In this way, the Imperium might learn something of the noble and heroic sacrifice of the Chapter they had wronged. His deepest wish had been to prove the Crimson Sabres' worth and gain forgiveness from the Imperium, but this had always been a fool's hope. Rightly or wrongly, they had been condemned by a harsh and unforgiving realm and Kranon knew that there could be no return. More realistically, the Chapter Master had simply wished to redeem honour for the Crimson Sabres, perhaps earning a worthy remembrance and memorial.

Now, ironically, the only messages the Crimson Sabres had transmitted were garbled nonsense or lunatic ravings – surely the exact thing that would convince the Imperium that they were indeed possessed and lost.

Although the passage of time had become a befuddlement, Kranon knew it had been three days since their last battle, a brief sortie where he himself had slain the warlord – the renegade leader of Grimlod's Raiders. Kranon knew it was only three days because already the voices were beginning, a faint whisper, like a distant scratching that he was growing more and more aware of with each passing hour. They had not been able to find enough foes on that barren planet to wash away the murmuring for long.



Kranon looked at himself and his army. By this point in the campaign, he had lost well over two hundred of his Space Marines. With no home world and no neophytes in training, there was no way to replace those losses. There were another fifty or so of his Chapter that he could not account for – that had not been seen for days. At least one of those had reportedly burst out of his power armour, becoming a foul and monstrous being that prowled the lower decks of the *Red Honour*. Whatever it was, it would have to be hunted out and contained. Kranon suspected several of his Librarians had passed beyond unstable and teetered upon the brink of some dreadful transformation. His own blood-brother was locked in a cell and refused to speak to him, calling him a murderous traitor. Even his fleet was becoming grotesque – gothic spires twisting upwards, spiked railings jutting outwards. Kranon was fairly certain that the corridor leading to the command bridge was now organic.

At that moment, at that low point of despair and utter failure, Kranon Sevastus decided that he no longer wanted an unmourned martyrdom. Instead, he wanted to live.



FRACTURED IN BODY AND SOUL

In the depths of contaminated space within the Eye of Terror, the Crimson Sabres were dissolved, born again as the Crimson Slaughter. This final act of betrayal forswore any allegiance to the Imperium of Mankind or its missions, and instead announced that the renegades would now serve none but themselves. Further fracturing and bloodshed ensued...

SABRES NO MORE

Kranon gathered about him a selection of his most trusted officers and those leaders of the Crimson Sabres who seemed to be coping the best with the onset of their curse. Into that tight circle came Company Masters Rangald and Sherdon and Veteran Sergeant Draznicht, along with the former Chaplain Okrark and Master Librarian Mannon. To them alone Kranon revealed his new frame of mind. He stated he meant to find some way to end the curse and to carve out a life rather than simply finding a way to end it with honour. In many ways, this was a final acceptance of their rebellion – intentional or not – from the Imperium. Where Kranon had half expected to find resentment, anger and confrontation, he found only a feeling of mutual relief.

Each of the gathered leaders of the Crimson Sabres had also felt the pang of regret as they prepared to sacrifice their lives in battle. They were following Kranon out of duty and vows, aspects that had controlled their lives fully for many years, but now seemed hollow. Each of the officers expressed his own version, justifying that they no longer sought to martyr themselves for the very cause that had so quickly – and erroneously – judged them. None of them, not even Kranon, mentioned that the inner voices that tormented each of them had been spewing long diatribes along similar lines for some time now. It was as if each was steeling his mind, willing themselves to believe that the whispered words of enticement had washed over harmlessly, that their decisions were entirely their own.

Thus began a new stage, as a growing circle of confidants began planning how best to bring the rest of the Chapter along with them. They also agreed the best ways to deal with those who insisted upon remaining loyal to their pledges to the Imperium and the Emperor. One way, or another, the Crimson Sabres would be no more.



CRIMSON FRACTURE

Not until every aspect of the plot was ripe did Kranon give the command. The Chapter had gone ten long days without battle before they were unleashed to maul a rabble enclave they discovered upon a drifting space hulk. So vast was the derelict craft that it took three days to clear. As the sated Space Marines returned from their latest butchery, they were immediately summoned once more into the great Sabre Hall upon the flagship, *Red Honour*. There, squad by squad and company by company, they formed up, waiting for their brethren to arrive, waiting to hear the words of their leader.

Despite their gore-slick armour, and the viscera that still dripped from their close combat weapons, each of the red-armoured superhumans was content. Aboard the derelict vessel – a hulk named *Lost Hope* – had been hundreds of dark pilgrims, worshippers of the Dark Gods lured into the Eye of Terror with false promises of power. Their deaths had drowned out the voices, at least for the time being.

Kranon addressed his battle-brothers – asking them how long had they fought in the Eye of Terror. Once, he had told the Chapter that they had been brave enough to follow him into the most dreadful place in the galaxy. Now he asked them to have the courage to follow him out. Kranon announced that he no longer served the Imperium. Instead, he would seek a cure to halt the madness that had grown in his mind. The Crimson Sabres were dead, he told them, claiming the very name the Imperial agents had pinned upon them for their acts on Umidia and Demetra. From now on, he would lead the Crimson Slaughter.

What followed was brief, but bloody. To some score of Space Marines this was a final blow. They heard the words of sedition and, looking around them, saw that which they had forewarned to destroy. Kranon's war council had already earmarked who the likely loyalists would be and stationed their own supporters nearby, with guns already aimed. Less fought than expected, and the action was swiftly over.

Once again, their lives had changed forever. Another line had been crossed, another decision had been taken from which there could be no turning back. So did the Crimson Slaughter step forward and of their own free will choose to stride down the path of damnation.

'When I first cast my eyes upon the galaxy from space I didn't see millions of points of light, I saw only duty – planets of the Imperium that it was my task to protect. Now, I serve no one but myself. I look upon distant stars and see only opportunity. Who will join me and take what is rightfully ours?'

– Kranon the Redeemed

NEW CHALLENGES

Quickly Kranon learned that the pressures of leading a renegade warband were far different to merely commanding a Chapter of Space Marines. Amongst other challenges, it was far more dangerous. While they were no longer confined to the slavish dictates of the Imperium, there was also no unifying factor – no binding oath or loyalty to cling fast upon. What laws would men follow when there were no laws? To hold the Crimson Slaughter together there was only Kranon, the latest plan and as much loot and ammunition

as they could plunder. There was trouble within hours of declaring themselves as what the Imperium had already labelled them: renegades.

Under Kranon's direction, the officers and leaders reorganised their old companies, forming smaller warbands. These would prove more flexible as the Crimson Slaughter began to adapt to their life outside the Imperium. Several duels broke out over the right to lead, and in the ensuing confusion, a sizable warband seized the ship *Pride of Rhoghon* and left the remaining fleet. It was composed mostly of the remnants of the old 4th Company, led by their Captain, Dzarton. It seemed they had been covertly planning such an operation for some time and the last message sent before their spaceship entered Warp travel was that they would remain Crimson Sabres and, should they meet again, it would not be as brothers – blood would be spilt.

During their next few battles – seizing a fortified base upon an otherwise barren night world and capturing a space freighter whose Warp engines were malfunctioning – several other squads took the opportunity to disappear into the void. From what Kranon could gather from the psychic readings supplied by Mannon, those smaller groups left to forge their own destinies.

The stream of deserters was a problem for Kranon, as they weakened his command, yet they were not so dangerous as those that directly threatened his life. There was no weight of tradition to quell ambitious subordinates – for renegades take what they want and follow the strongest of their kind. Captain Barkman was the former Commander of the 6th Company of Crimson Sabres. The voices in his head had convinced him of his own greatness, his right to seize control of the Crimson Slaughter for his own. They whispered to him that he was more fit to lead the killing, they said that Kranon was too weak. Barkman had always coveted the Chapter Master's role and had been passed over for promotion many times. Alone, he pledged his own dark pacts with the voices, promising mountains of skulls for the boon of power. Aboard the flagship *Red Honour* Barkman burst into the command room and hefted up his great chainaxe to challenge Kranon to personal combat. Kranon could do nothing but accept, and a ring of onlookers formed – eager to see who was strongest.

Kranon had served alongside Barkman for over a century, during which time they had regularly trained against each other. Since their days as Scouts in the 10th Company, they had faced each other in all manner of hand-to-hand combat. This was no drill, however, for now they duelled for their lives and for ultimate mastery of the Crimson Slaughter.

In an eerie parody of the Crimson Sabres combat training ritual, both Kranon and Barkman raised their weapons in ceremonial salute before stepping back and bowing. Then began the duel. Each warrior circled the other – Barkman adjusting the grip upon his great chainaxe, while Kranon waved the Emperor Blade back and forth so that the glowing daemonic faces traced bright patterns before him.

Each man was wary of the other. They were both amongst the most accomplished close combat fighters in the Chapter, and they had trained enough with each other to know each

others' tendencies, feints and favoured ruses. If either had expected the swordplay of days gone, however, they were greatly surprised. This was not a subtle scoring competition between comrades, but a death struggle. With unnatural speed for such a hulking figure, Barkman launched a savage series of wide-arc strikes – great two-handed hacks intended to sever Kranon in two. The Emperor Blade howled in protest, its bright blade parrying blows that would have cracked open a Land Raider. Such a flurry of vigour would have tired even the iron-strong limbs of a Space Marine, but now some power of the Warp coursed within them, and neither Barkman nor Kranon slowed in the least.

Having taken his challenger's measure, Kranon went on the offensive. With his blade glowing ever brighter, Kranon methodically drove Barkman backwards before cleaving through his old comrade's power armour, cleanly lopping off his right arm from the elbow down. With a clang, Barkman's axe dropped, its whirling teeth grinding deeply into the ship's deck before become wedged. If Barkman had expected mercy from his former commander, he did not get it. With a whirl to gain momentum, Kranon spun around to deliver a final blow – splitting his foe lengthwise from helm to groin. For a moment, Barkman remained still, but slowly, his two halves separated and fell wetly to either side.

Despite the urgings of the voices, for a long while thereafter no further challenges were issued to Kranon.



FROM SABRE TO SLAUGHTER

Since their excommunication and their voyage into the Eye of Terror, the millennia-old heraldry and dogmatic markings of the Crimson Sabres have been left behind and all but forgotten. Now the symbols and colours of the Crimson Slaughter alone are enough to cause ripples of panic, for rumour of their fell deeds has spread far and wide across the Imperium of Mankind.

LOST HERALDRY

It is known that the Crimson Sabres were followers of the Codex Astartes in their use of insignia and squad markings; however, exact details are now hard to ascertain. Since their fall from service to the Imperium, the millennia-old heraldry of the Crimson Sabres has largely been eradicated and is now for the most part wholly forgotten. Led by the Inquisition, all records of the now excommunicated Space Marine Chapter have been erased, covered up or scratched out. In many ways it is as if they never existed.

There have been scattered reports that cite witnesses seeing the uniform and heraldry of the Crimson Sabres still in service. Though it is widely unknown, the 4th Company of the Crimson Sabres split from the newly rebelled Crimson Slaughter and, operating in strict transmission silence, began attempting to re-establish their Chapter. Although they seemed to have been lost in the Warp for some period of time, they have since secretly returned to their original home world, the rad-poisoned planet of Rhogon in the Brakatoa System.



TWISTED AND BAROQUE

In the Eye of Terror the Crimson Sabres began their transformation into full-fledged Chaos Space Marine renegades. In some cases the changes were subtle, but in others the change was savage and dramatic. The smooth contours of ceramite became gnarled as intricate new patterns etched themselves across the Space Marines' power armour. When first glancing at a member of the Crimson Slaughter, it is difficult to distinguish any of the former Crimson Sabres iconography, save for the colour of their armour. Closer inspection, however, reveals that some of the former insignia can still be seen, albeit in a new and altered form. Squad markings and honour badges are twisted, having reshaped themselves into debased symbols in mockery of the Imperium. The Imperial Aquila congealed into a far-seeing eye is perhaps the most common of these emblems and can be seen in many of the different warbands of the Crimson Slaughter.

On the battlefield, only the bravest dare to meet the baleful glare of murderous intent that glows within the eyes of the Crimson Slaughter. Covered in fell symbols and dripping gore from their most recent butchery, they see most foes flee before their fearsome aura.



RABID AND POSSESSED

Those Crimson Sabres who most welcome the warping mutations of Chaos become Possessed, their bodies acting as harbour for one or more daemonic entities. These wholly corrupted individuals are marked by extreme mutations, such as wings, bestial claws, or razor-sharp pincers. Foul and grotesque, the very air seems to congeal about them, as if they were contaminating reality itself. Of all the Crimson Slaughter, they are the most warp-tainted, and the guttural and unnatural howling they issue as they lope across the battlefield spells doom for all those unfortunate enough to hear it.

While most Chaos Space Marine warbands number some of these daemonically inhabited warriors amongst their ranks, the Crimson Slaughter seem especially blessed by the Dark Gods. Indeed, so strong is the supernatural effect that surrounds the cursed renegades that, on the verge of combat, some squads become so utterly filled by daemonic powers that their very bodies writhe and change. During a number of their bloodiest invasions into realspace, it seemed to their foes that they faced an entire army of mutated murderers. While most Possessed give themselves up permanently to such a deranged state, this seems not to be the case for all of the Crimson Slaughter. Hours or days after sating their bloodlust, some of their kind will shed their possessing spirits and revert, at least partially, back to their old selves again.

CULTS OF THE CRIMSON SLAUGHTER

It did not take long for rumour of the bloody deeds of the Crimson Slaughter to spread across the vastness of the Imperium like wildfire. The desperate and the dispossessed clung to the tales – gravitating towards any beings that could stand up to the harshest regime Mankind had ever known. Others – the more debased and depraved of their lot – chose the Crimson Slaughter for they saw that the renegades were strong. In the 41st Millennium, where total war is a way of life, it pays to ally oneself to the most formidable faction available. So did cults rise up and dedicate themselves to the red-handed renegades. To them, the Crimson Slaughter are manifestations of the Dark Gods themselves.

Mutants, exiles, and hive gangers in their millions have set off in quest to prostrate themselves before the most fearsome of the Renegade Chapters – the Crimson Slaughter. Most never make it. The galaxy is a dangerous place, and as merciless as the Imperium is to such traitors, the Chaos Space Marines are far worse. Most cultists are slain on sight, destroyed for pleasure, ritual, or the whims of the renegades. Some few, however, have found and joined the Crimson Slaughter – at least until the mortals' overly ingratiating presence no longer serves any useful purpose. The Cult of the Red Disciples, the Blood-bathers and Dirt-dogs make up but a few of the thousands of different cultists that serve the Crimson Slaughter.



SALVATION OF LOST HOPE

In order to carve out an existence as renegades, the Crimson Slaughter needed to establish themselves in the most convoluted and hostile environment in the galaxy. To survive, they had to fight off their madness, establish a new home world and make strange new alliances within the Eye of Terror. No longer lapdogs of the Imperium, they learned to take what they needed.

Although the Crimson Slaughter no longer wished to end their lives on a sacrificial death-quest, there was a very real chance that it might happen regardless. With numbers dwindling from casualties and desertions, their strength was rapidly waning. Their fleet had suffered damage – several ships were listing from encounters with hostile spacecraft and the monstrous denizens that hunted the void around the Eye of Terror. Desperate to stop the voices inside their heads, the Crimson Slaughter could not tarry long between battles. This left them constantly on the move, forever seeking new quarry to slay so that they could avoid drifting so deeply into madness that there could be no return.

Before their excommunication, the Crimson Sabres had been self-sufficient. Like all Space Marines, they were able to service and maintain their arms and fleet. No matter where they were ordered to go in the galaxy, behind them were all the resources of their home world back in the Brakotoa System. From Drogh, and previously Rhoghon, had come a steady supply of genetically enhanced replacements. The non-stop competition to be accepted by the Crimson Sabres weeded out all but the most worthy of aspirants from the feudal kingdoms of their home star system.

What the Crimson Sabres could not source from their own system had been provided by the sprawling Imperium. It had been their Chapter's lot to collect a tithe of the most gifted of those pre-screened by the Scholastica Psykana. These were then trained as per the Codex Astartes to one day become Librarians, or perhaps join their psychic choir. To maintain their fleet, weapons and machines, the Crimson Sabres sent likely candidates to Mars to be trained in the way of the Machine God, and at need they could call further upon the forge worlds. All that was now gone.

Kranon and the Crimson Slaughter still had to learn the most basic of tenets for their new existence: to a renegade nothing is given – it must all be taken.

RED RAIDERS FROM BEYOND

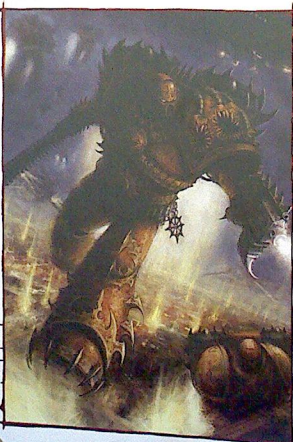
Years previous, Kranon had been promoted to Chapter Master not because of his considerable martial prowess or tactical acumen, but rather due to his drive. Now, shaking off the malaise of doom that had hung over him since Umidia, he became a force of action once more. He was now Kranon the Relentless, and he was everywhere.

Retracing their path to the floating space hulk *Lost Hope*, the Crimson Slaughter began to turn the drifting colossus into a new base of operations. Those not working on the hulk were sent out to launch horrific raids, to relieve their madness by butchering any victims they could find. Many times the renegade Space Marines prowled along the shipping lanes that led out of the Eye of Terror towards the Cadian Gate. There they sought prey – whether dark pilgrims or lost travellers, it mattered not. Upon their return, they would switch places with their comrades – helping to overhaul the *Lost Hope*, while their brethren set out to reap their own bloody harvest. It was during this period that the Crimson Slaughter began to leave the Eye of Terror, returning once more to the Imperium, bringing with them red ruin.

"Take from them everything. Leave behind only corpses."

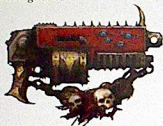
- Mantra of the Crimson Slaughter

How long this new routine lasted none could say, but slowly, the *Lost Hope* inched closer to becoming a protectable base. The Techmarines and their servitors worked non-stop, never removing their servo-harnesses. Already the nature of their mechanical skills was altering in this strange new landscape. They found that they could bind the living energies of the Warp into metal. Kranon looked upon his support crew, their betentacled gear writhing like living snakes upon their backs. He would have pitied them if there had been such a thing as pity left in him. Instead he urged them to work faster, adopting whatever means necessary.



It had been Kronan's intent to fill many of the large empty holds on board the space hulk with prisoners. These could be turned into slaves and servitors to aid the Crimson Slaughter. There was room to work with upon the hulk, for it was a mighty size, composed of nearly a dozen different freighter-class spacecraft melded together through Warp-fusion. The problem arose with obtaining prisoners. The Crimson Slaughter were red-handed killers, eager destroyers of men who could readily unleash genocide upon even the most populous of planets. But as slaves, they were less disciplined than Orks, preferring to murder their prey. At best, the Crimson Slaughter could grab plunder after they had slain every living creature they encountered.

Although they now had a base of operations, Kronan knew that the Crimson Slaughter lacked the ability to sustain themselves. Even as he debated over the next course of action with the voices in his head, augers buzzed and klaxons wailed in warning. As large as the *Lost Hope* was, it was as nothing in comparison to the enormous craft that materialised alongside it.



BARGAIN WITH THE PRIMOGENITOR

From out of portholes and viewports, the Crimson Slaughter gazed out upon a monstrosity of a ship. It looked more like a hive city hung in the void than any craft built for travel. The *Lost Hope* was dwarfed by the new craft. Escape was impossible, for the space hulk had no Warp engines and could do little more than drift in the wayward currents of that region. Kronan was preparing an assault when comm-hailers picked up an incoming request. Fabius Bile wished to announce his arrival and he wished to meet with Kronan.

An ancient and evil figure, Fabius Bile was one of the most legendary villains that had beset the Imperium. He was a living piece of history from the mythic age when the first Space Marine Legions betrayed the Emperor during the Horus Heresy. Bile was a renegade even amongst his own kind, and tales of his experiments and his altered creations were known to every Space Marine. The Imperium had even issued warnings to the Space Marine Chapters about the threat of Bile, for he was known to seek access to gene-seed, using ruse or deadly raids to snatch what he desired.

Surrounded by his towering bodyguard, Fabius Bile strode the shabby decks of the *Lost Hope*. He was impossibly old, yet he moved with a sinuous grace, and an aura of menace surrounded him. Bile was incredibly powerful – having sold his genetic experiments to rebel commanders for millennia, he had amassed his own armies. Bile's home – reputedly an ancient Eldar crone world deep within the Eye of Terror – was rife with ancient technologies, genetic samples and the most successful of his abominable New Men. Bile's sunken eyes blazed as he mentioned his latest works and his lofty aspirations, saying today's growth-wat was tomorrow's victory.

Fabius Bile – the 'Primogenitor' – was the foremost expert on cloning and genetics. Yet despite burying himself in millennia of study into the esoterica of fleshcrafting, Bile was no less cunning a schemer. Through his network of alliances and promises, Bile had not just survived the power struggles that took place within the Eye of Terror, he had thrived. Bile had betrayed so many patrons that he should have been dead a thousand times over, but always he had secured the protection of some other, yet mightier, benefactor. With his army of enhanced warriors, Fabius Bile could simply seize what he was after, but the old scientist found he gained more through bargaining. What he wanted was gene-seed.

Kronan was surprised by what Fabius Bile already knew about the former Crimson Sabres. With honeyed words, Bile congratulated them, praising their decisions. But Fabius Bile offered more than mere council, he proffered help. Without being told, Bile already knew Kronan's chief concern: the ability to create further Space Marines. Kronan's warband contained far less than half of the Crimson Sabres Chapter at full strength. With the loss of their home world, they had lost the ability and technology to create new troops. This, Fabius Bile could redress, but only at a price. Promises and pacts were easy for Kronan to agree, but the rest was more difficult. When he handed over to Bile those Crimson Sabres that had refused to join him, he condemned them to a horrible and grisly fate. Kronan emptied his holds of those former comrades, sparing only his true brother. Even that tiny trace of compassion would not last for long.

HAUNTED LIKE NEVER BEFORE

When warbands of the Crimson Slaughter returned to realspace from the Eye of Terror, they did so to launch a series of minor, yet deadly raids. Some plundering took place during these incursions, but the unstated main goal was for the raiders merely to exorcise the voices that haunted each of them.

It was Mannion and Draznicht who selected the sites the Crimson Slaughter would attack, for they were both gifted with prescient visions. Kronan insisted that all targets had easy access and weak defences rather than high value objectives. Although they may have been backwater destinations, there were no easy pickings. Even small moon bases were equipped for self-defence and any planetary defence force that was given time to gather and deploy their substantial numbers could prove deadly.

These raids were small compared to the genocidal strikes of their entire Chapter of old, but their effect was far more terrifying. This was due, in part, to the strange new phenomena that the Crimson Slaughter observed amidst their massacres. When they materialised out of the Warp, the renegades were not alone. Their haunting was no longer confined within their heads. Strange and disturbing manifestations followed them as they methodically gunned down every soul they encountered. At first, the renegades thought the howling laughter or screams of pain were just inside their minds, but they noticed their madness spread outwards from them like a bewitching wave. Previously, foes had fled before their onslaught – now some were too frightened to do even that. Lights flickered in their presence, inanimate objects oozed blood or leviatined in their wake. With eyes blazing with balefire, they were doom incarnate. In time, these unnatural occurrences would only grow stronger.

THE CRIMSON SLAUGHTER UNLEASHED

With an established base of operations and a system for replenishing their lost casualties, Kronan was at last ready to unleash the full force of the Crimson Slaughter upon the Imperium. Yet it was not vengeance alone that drove the renegades onwards – they sought also to reclaim their sanity, and to halt the voices in their heads forever.

How long it took the Crimson Slaughter to outfit their space hulk base is unknown. They no longer kept records and the passage of time was unpredictable, for they were inside the swirling arms of the Eye of Terror and well within its aura of disorder. Certainly many decades were lost in the endless labour. During this period, the renegades continued to launch raids, both in the Eye and into the Imperium.

Due to the immensity of the Emperor's realm – over a million inhabited worlds scattered across the vastness of the galaxy – these hit and run assaults were hardly noticed by the Imperium at large. It was an era of war, and such battles and loss of life were rampant across the five segmentums. Despite the inconsequential numbers involved, however, there was a rising concern. Although the raids were carried out by between fifty and a hundred Chaos Space Marines, the amount of damage inflicted was wildly disproportionate.

Many of the inhuman foes of the Imperium inflicted gut-wrenching damage or perpetrated sadistic acts. However, the Crimson Slaughter's raids were always bound to attract additional attention. Firstly, they were obviously Chaos Space Marines – a bitter foe for the Imperium, and one that Imperial agents did their best to cover up. They loathed admitting the fact that their best and most reliable warriors were susceptible to heresy. Secondly, there was something far more sinister about these raids. Reports gleaned from vid-cams, for survivors were uncommonly rare, showed that these bloodthirsty killers were steeped in the mystical powers of the Warp, accompanied into battle by phantasmal forces.

The red-armoured renegades left behind not just a trail of bloody massacres, but another kind of corruption. Bone-chilling hauntings drifted in their wake, maleficent poltergeists that lingered long after the Crimson Slaughter had left. These Warp-cursed signs, which were becoming all too familiar in the 41st Millennium, were normally the hallmarks of a different kind of incursion. On the agri world of Grunald, the Crimson Slaughter destroyed entire communities before departing, but their presence was blamed for the wilted and bleeding crops that starved a continent. The raid that broke the sentinel bunker on the moon of Tarkus had left a series of jagged craters which, when viewed from orbit, formed the image of an enormous eight-pointed star. Witch hunters of the Ordo Hereticus studied the bloody trail of the Crimson Slaughter, theorising that this was the return of the corrupted Crimson Sabres.

NEW RECRUITS

Space Marine Chapters recruit by seeking out the best of Mankind's natural warriors. This is why so many Chapters recruit from feral or death worlds, where survival is not a birthright, but an accomplishment achieved by only the strongest and fittest. The Crimson Sabres had recruited from feudal planets, worlds where warfare between rivals

heightened the competition and ensured those who survived were excellent Space Marine candidates. Now, at the Crimson Slaughter, Kronan sought to emulate their old recruitment and training cycle.

With help from Fabius Bile, great laboratories had been set up aboard the *Last Hope*. Row after row of chem-vats grew the organs that would be transplanted into aspirants to transform them into initiates. Kronan's first few sorties into realspace to collect potential recruits from savage worlds went poorly – the renegades either slaughtering everyone, or the prisoners proving too resistant to pass even the first few stages of the process. Luckily, there was another, better answer already en route to the *Last Hope*.

The Crimson Slaughter were gaining a reputation inside the Eye of Terror as well as outside. Many bands of Cultists and the lesser enclaves of rebellious Chaos Space Marines remembered them with angst, recalling their brutal attacks during the Renegade Wars, but many more Cultists were already flocking to the Crimson Slaughter's banner. In all human societies, power has an alluring draw, but nowhere is that more true than in the Eye of Terror. Many of these so-called dark pilgrims banded together and left the repressive Imperium, searching for a new life, seeking to make something of themselves. Most die horrible deaths, being bit fodder or sport for renegades or Daemons. To survive in that environment requires skill, toughness and a certain psychotic edge – the very same qualities produced by the most ferocious of death worlds.



Some of the novices that reached the *Last Hope* were young enough to receive the implants, although they still had to prove themselves to begin the process. Those who had spent too long near the Warp overflow already were too contaminated for their bodies to accept the organs but they too served a purpose. Some were fashioned into servitors, or joined the growing factions of Cultists that were drawn to joining the Crimson Slaughter's cause.

TOMORROW'S SLAUGHTERERS

Draznitch looked over the Cultists as they filed past. This was the Bloody Brotherhood – hard, worn looking men who had waterlogged aboard a freighter whilst in the Warp. They had drifted into the Eye of Terror before being hauled to dock on the Last Hope. They were to bivouac at the far end of the hulk – a dark and desolate corner where all the newcomers were first placed. No one told them about what was lurking there – they would find out soon enough. Those few who managed to escape being eaten would pass to the next test.

SLAUGHTER AND SALVATION

When the Crimson Slaughter's numbers began to wax strong once more, Kranon knew it was time for a large scale foray into the Imperium. There were many reasons to launch such a venture: it was a show of strength, it struck a vengeful blow against those that had betrayed them, and it would bring temporary relief from the voices. There was another reason that Kranon did not share widely; he was seeking a way to permanently quell the whispering that plagued them and at long last he had found a promising lead.

Following the Warp-dreams of his chief sorcerer Mannon, Kranon had sought to learn all he could about the mysterious artefact known as the Hellfire Stone. The voices in his head feared this, redoubling their efforts to fill his mind with such garble that it was difficult to think straight at times. This alone led Kranon to believe he was on the right path. He had learned that the Hellfire Stone's location was last guessed to be somewhere on the galactic southern rim. Kranon gave the command to gather all the warbands, to recruit cultists to swell the Crimson Slaughter's numbers further and to prepare the entire warfleet.

Thus began a rampage across a dozen worlds near the Veiled Region. These were not raids, but full-scale invasions that swept over a planet like wildfire. The first to meet the onslaught was Verdfall. On the old charts and auger-readings that Kranon had obtained, the planet was under the Imperium's rule, so the Crimson Slaughter were surprised to find Orks. The world had recently fallen into greenskin hands and the xenos race was still busy scrapping all they could find to suit their own ramshackle purposes.

Within minutes of their fleet materialising into realspace and attaining orbit over Verdfall, the Crimson Slaughter were attacking on eight different fronts simultaneously. They had aimed all their landing zones around the most concentrated population readings – a far more difficult proposition with Orks than with Imperial citizens.

This was the first time the Crimson Slaughter went to battle out of the Eye of Terror not in raid numbers, but with a host nearly the size of their old Chapter. The effect was startling. Perhaps it was the quantity of them, perhaps it was the savagery of their attack – but for whatever reasons, the paranormal activity around the Crimson Slaughter was magnified. Balefire flickered about their eyes and coronas of lightning wreathed their horned helmets. Their bolter fire left weirdly incandescent tracer trails and the shells screamed as they struck home. Spectres loomed out of shadows and discordant screeches wailed at the approach of the red-armoured renegades. Paralysed with fear, grots threw down their weapons and buried themselves under battlefield debris. As the chainsaw-like offensive of the Crimson Slaughter began to hit home, even the bravest of the Ork mobs wavered and began to break. They were mercilessly pursued and cut down in their thousands.

After days and nights of non-stop killing, the multiple attacks at last were over and the Crimson Slaughter returned to their ships in orbit. Mangled Ork bodies and smouldering vehicle wrecks were everywhere. There had been no sign or auger readings to indicate the Hellfire Stone was on Verdfall. At least for now, thought, the voices were silenced as Kranon plotted out the next attack.



CONFRONTATION WITH ANGELS

The search for the Hellfire Stone is on, leading to a further string of massacres inflicted upon the Imperium. Unable to dredge up the ancient artefact that might lift their curse, the Crimson Slaughter instead uncover the ten thousand year-old secret of the Dark Angels. A great enmity and bitter rivalry is born, and many battles follow.

The Crimson Slaughter's attacks were well documented, if subsequently suppressed by the Imperium. The remote nature of the planets along the southern rim of the galaxy and the speed with which they completed their massacres meant that by the time a distress call was received, the Crimson Slaughter had long since departed. Only the fast-response ability of the Space Marines was suited to combat such rapid hit and run tactics. Thus far, no Imperial Guard or planetary defence force had been able to withstand the fury of their attacks. The Adeptus Astartes were alerted and elements from several Chapters were already in the region.

A DARK SECRET

Again and again the Crimson Slaughter materialised out of the Warp and wreaked havoc, yet Kronan was no closer to finding his true goal, the Hellfire Stone. There were still hundreds of possible planets to search in the distant region, but at last he had a clue, albeit a gruesome one. Hundreds of the last massacre victims had all had the same angry pattern of welts upon their backs. At first, Kronan

had assumed this was just another cult – they certainly had come across worse. Indeed, far more disturbing symbols and mutilations could be found upon the very Cultists that followed them into battle. But Mannon, once the Crimson Sabres Master Librarian, noted the symbols had manifested upon the victims only upon the arrival of the Crimson Slaughter – some sign from the Warp, as if something attempting to aid them. Sure enough, once properly flayed and laid out altogether, the welts proved to be a skin-map. The symbols and vector signs were coordinates.

The map led them to a desolate moon – a crater-struck wasteland. Scans revealed no arcane energies. Kronan doubted he would find the Hellfire Stone here, but the auger-readings did reveal two beings – the only living creatures on the entire orb. Anxious to discover the meaning of the skin-map, Kronan, leading a bodyguard of his Terminators, teleported down to investigate.

The ruins of alien structures revealed that the moon had once served as an outpost, but for what manner of xenos it could not be determined. Stalking between ruins, the landing party turned a corner to find two figures in argument. Both were clad in power armour, over which one wore long, enfolding robes. Although shocked to see interlopers in so forlorn a locale, both strangers drew weapons and fired with uncanny speed and accuracy.

The fight was brief. For the loss of five Terminators, Kronan captured the black-armoured foe alive. The robed warrior, whose twin pistols had caused most of the casualties, eluded seizure and mysteriously disappeared off the moon. Angry at the wasted venture, the renegades and their captive returned to the fleet and gave their prisoner over to Mannon for questioning. In searching for a hidden object, they had instead discovered secrets hidden for ten thousand years.

When their prisoner broke under mental probing and other, more persuasive methods, Mannon was able to reveal much about the one that they had caught. His name was Turiel, and in his secret past he had once been a Dark Angel. Of his escaped accomplice, Turiel would say little. They learned of the robed one only that he had arrived shortly before the Crimson Slaughter, for he had some premonition of peril and had begged Turiel to flee. It would have been better for him if he had.

Seemingly ageless, Turiel had crisscrossed the galaxy over his long lifespan, fighting as a mercenary, and even working alongside other renegades out of the Eye of Terror. However, he had repented of his deeds and sought redemption in a solitary life far out on the distant edge of the galaxy. In his travels, he had also heard of the Hellfire Stone, and narrowed down its location. In a desperate bid to gain freedom from the *Last Hope*, Turiel even revealed where he suspected more of the Fallen could be found.

THE FALLEN ANGELS

Beneath their taciturn manner, their long heritage of service and their austere robes, the Dark Angels have a nefarious secret that they tell to no one. So damning is the secret that the Dark Angels don't even tell it to their own – speaking not a word of it to newcomers or veterans alike. Only after years of proven loyalty will a select few be told the truth. What this group, called the Inner Circle, know is this: at the tail end of the Horus Heresy, the Dark Angels' home world of Caliban was corrupted. The Legion's second-in-command, Luther, betrayed the Dark Angels and turned many of their brethren from the Emperor. These traitors attacked the Primarch Lion El'Jonson and his forces upon their return to Caliban. Although the loyalist Dark Angels were victorious, the cost was high. Their very home world was shattered and their Primarch was gone, presumed slain. In the death throes of Caliban, the swirling eddies of a Warp storm opened up – a perilous gateway to the Realm of Chaos. It was this rent in the fabric of space that consumed the remaining treasonous Dark Angels.

But those Fallen Angels were not slain – instead, they were cast through space and time, scattered to the five segments. Some few of these Fallen became true Chaos Space Marines, joining the nefarious Traitor Legions in the Eye of Terror. Most, however, went rogue – using their superhuman abilities so they might excel as mercenaries or piratical cutthroats, plaguing the Imperium to fulfil their own needs. Others attempted to repent, to hide within the vast spread of colonised planets and to use their lives to achieve some good in the galaxy. That the traitors escaped their loyal brethren's vengeance was a torment for the surviving Dark Angels. As long as any of the Fallen lived, the Legion's great shame would live on as well. To this day, the Inner Circle leads the hunt for the Fallen.

DARK VENGEANCE

Kranon fumed at the information. His own Chapter had been excommunicated due to a misunderstanding, whilst the Imperium heaped accolades upon the guilty First Legion of old. That the Dark Angels were also one of the Chapters involved in the Amalgamation Schism that had put the first mar upon the Crimson Sabres was too much. The Hellfire Stone could wait.

Now that he knew their secret, luring the Dark Angels into battle would be easy, but Kranon wanted his first impression to be one the Dark Angels would never forget. While small warbands were sent out tasked with capturing the Fallen Turiel had spoken of, Kranon prepared the trap. He found what he was looking for in the newly founded Ecclesiarchy world by the name of Stern's Remembrance.

With no warning, the Crimson Slaughter attacked Stern's Remembrance with savage brutality. There was nowhere for the masses to flee to, and Daemon Engines and Helbrutes waded through overcrowded streets, crushing victims with every footfall. The bells of ten thousand cathedrals tolled, but their ringing was no aid to the doomed. The limited resistance provided by the planetary defence force and the few honour guard squads of Adepta Sororitas did not slow the Crimson Slaughter in their grisly work. Only when the last inhabitant of the planet fell twitching did the renegades begin the next stage – piling the corpses into the cathedrals. The dead were stacked all the way up to the great vaulted ceilings, a grim trophy mound.

When all was ready, Kranon ordered his Sorcerers to send the Dark Angels a message – a telepathic vector that would burn the coordinates into the body of whoever received the message. But he not only sent a map, for the message also named one of the Fallen that could be found there and mocked the Dark Angels for their filthy secrets. Amidst the piled dead of Stern's Remembrance, Kranon left one of the recently captured Fallen. He wanted to ensure his foes that he knew of their hidden past.

Their trap set, the Crimson Slaughter left the empty planet, returning to the Warp to await the oncoming of their foe. They knew it would not take long.

Soon enough the Dark Angels strike cruiser *The Pride of Caliban* materialised in the sector and cautiously approached orbit. Twin Thunderhawks swooped down in order to land elements from the 5th Company. Kranon gave them time to discover and appreciate the true horror of what the Crimson Slaughter had left them before he sprung his trap.

A host of landing craft entered the atmosphere, rapidly deploying the Crimson Slaughter. Before the Dark Angels could extricate themselves, they were surrounded. There, amidst the enormous stone edifices and winding streets, battle ensued. No match for the numbers or ferocity of the renegades, the Dark Angels retreated, fighting their way out of the narrow streets. Although they recaptured the Fallen known as Attias the Untamed, they lost many battle-brothers, including Zadakiel, the Master of the 5th Company.



BATTLE OF BANE'S LANDING

Kranon soon had the Crimson Slaughter back in search of the Hellfire Stone. Their rampage blazed a trail of bloodshed and devastation, but they could not yet find the artefact. Meanwhile, another force was stalking them.

The Dark Angels had sworn retribution against the renegades. Ostensibly this was for the loss of the 5th Company Commander, but underlying that was a compulsive urge to destroy any who knew of their ancient secret. Relentless was the hunt, and on a dozen of the worlds ravaged by the Crimson Slaughter, the Dark Angels arrived to do battle. Most were small skirmishes – the Dark Angels advance forces nipping at the heels of the renegades as they escaped back to the Warp. It was on the planet of Bane's Landing that the Dark Angels tracked down the Crimson Slaughter in force. For it was on Bane's Landing that Kranon finally found what he was seeking: the Hellfire Stone.

To complete the ritual, Kranon needed to find the ancient altar and to sacrifice a loyalist Space Marine upon it. Many skirmishes broke out as the Dark Angels learned what their foe was attempting and raced to thwart them. The two forces battered at each other, neither side willing to give ground. Ravenwing Bikers clashed with Draznitch's Ravagers – the Chosen warriors that had fought by his side since he led the 1st Company of the Crimson Sabres. Although Kranon was nearly successful, at the last moment victory was snatched from his grasp when his hard-won Dark Angels captive heroically sacrificed himself rather than allow the Crimson Slaughter to complete their ritual. Bitterly, the outnumbered Crimson Slaughter returned into the Warp.

GRIM REALISATION

After their battles with the Dark Angels, the Crimson Slaughter fleet returned to the Eye of Terror. Lord Kranon was furious. He struggled with rage and above all, the manifold voices. In the midst of battle, after bloodletting granted him a rare moment of clear thought, Kranon experienced an epiphany. He was being used, and badly.

It had been a near thing on Bane's Landing. As they had attempted to wash the Hellfire Stone with the blood of a captured Space Marine he had felt the skies grow black, he had felt the witching agitation from the inner voices that were now a part of him. It was not fear they were feeling about the ritual, but a fierce joy. The words that had risen unbidden from Kranon during the height of the ritual had not been his own, nor even in a language that he knew – but it came to him that he had heard similar words before. On Umidia the Bailethu Cult had screamed those words. They sought to summon Daemons from their patron, Khorne, but were denied the completion of their ritual by Kranon and the Crimson Sabres that slaughtered them.

The ancient magicks of the Hellfire Stone were not meant to eradicate the inner Daemons, but rather to make them stronger. They were intended to usher in a dark new age. His mind reeling with implications, Kranon returned to the *Lost Hope* to find it a larger and more vibrant place than the forlorn and derelict hulk they had left. Word of the Crimson Slaughter had spread wide. Cultists, renegades and traitor warbands had flocked to fight beneath their banner.

The time Kranon had to think clearly was short and there was much to do. Decisions needed to be made before the madness grew inside him and the core of his army. Also, the *Lost Hope* was a powder keg, with many Cultists and rival factions vying to win favour. A warband of Khorne Berzerkers had joined – they tired of the petty raids of other renegade warbands and were eager to take part in the epic bloodbaths that had already made the Crimson Slaughter infamous. To maintain control, Kranon needed a new war



TARGET: NEW REDEMPTION

After discussing the progress of the newly recruited, Kranon knew what the next target for the Crimson Slaughter must be. It was clear that the recruits produced from the gene-seed of their own brethren were faring well. Those implanted with the organs developed from Fabius Bile's creations, however, were turning into monstrosities, wild and uncontrollable. But he needed more warriors – many more – and there was only so much gene-seed that could be farmed from his own followers. To gain the more stable matter he would need to seize it. After recent clashes and the vendetta the Crimson Slaughter had developed, Kranon knew exactly which Chapter he would steal it from.

THE LOST HOPE

*When the Crimson Slaughter returned to their base what they found amazed them. The space hulk that hovered within the spiralling arms of the Eye of Terror had further transformed. It was the size of a large moon and more nightmarish than ever, an amalgamation of contorted shipwrecks and twisted spires. Some attackers would quail before the *Lost Hope*, for it was decked with gun towers and protruding spikes, thorny clusters on which boarding torpedoes would shatter themselves. Protruding from the structure were tendrils, although whether the grasping tentacles were mechanical or belonged to beasts attached to the hull was unknown. None of the Crimson Slaughter wished to drift close enough to find out.*

*The bulk of the Crimson Slaughter had been gone for less than a Terran year, but decades had passed within the Eye of Terror. The Techmarines had left behind the limiting technology of the Omnissiah and embraced the blending of machine with the energies of the Immaterium. They were Warpsmiths now, and they had laboured long on the *Lost Hope*. Some, like Brother Gravitus, were more metal than flesh; their bodies covered with fused mechanical elements that had minds of their own. A few, like Brother Sarlok, gave themselves wholly to the *Lost Hope*, becoming living flesh engines bound into the conglomerate hulk. Worse things still haunted the lower decks, for they had become the hunting grounds for strange mutated beasts and Warp-born monsters. These creatures served their purpose, however; only those recruits that survived against such terrors would be allowed to continue their initiation.*

Since the destruction of their home world, Caliban, the Dark Angels no longer had a single recruitment world, but instead used a variety of different planets. Their headquarters, the Rock, was an asteroid base replete with Warp engines, and could travel between worlds or war zones as required. Upon each world they claimed, the Dark Angels established strongholds – fortress monasteries to hold the necessities required to implant and train new Space Marines.

The Warp-visions of Sorcerers aided Kronan's search for the Dark Angels recruiting world best suited for attack. On the ice-covered planet of Numarc, the Dark Angels had built the fortress of New Redemption. Although the star system was heavily populated, Numarc was furthest from the sun – a frozen world where the small human population fought the elements and ferocious beasts to survive. Those harsh conditions made for excellent recruits, where the Dark Angels could select the best warriors from the savage wastelands and turn them into new Space Marines. It was also a location that the Crimson Slaughter could raid and get away from before the full might of the Imperium could be roused against them.

Kronan knew there was trouble with the plan the moment the Crimson Slaughter attack fleet materialised out of Warp. Klaxons blared to warn of nearby enemy vessels. In orbit above Numarc were four Dark Angels spacecraft. Further warnings announced spreads of torpedoes were already rocketing towards them. It would have been prudent for Kronan to re-engage the Warp engines, for with his fleet already spotted the element of surprise was gone. Even if they won the space battle, the defence lasers on Numarc would be fully primed, making planetfall a deadly proposition. Dark Angels reinforcements might already be on the way. Yet not for nothing was Kronan called the Relentless. He commanded the fleet forward, already the gun decks were blazing away at the distant targets.

There were six ships in the Crimson Slaughter fleet, but two of them were primarily transports. The largest of the vessels was the flagship *Red Honour*, but perhaps the most dangerous was the heavily shielded *Samitar*, which mounted a brutal prowblade for ramming. Although several of their torpedoes struck home, the Dark Angels ships were not prepared to stand before the oncoming foe. With all haste, they were already manoeuvring to put the planet Numarc between themselves and the fast approaching Chaos fleet.

This played into Kronan's hands, for it was not a space battle he had intended. He wished to drive off the enemy fleet, denying them orbital support while he landed his own ground forces. They must hit hard, ideally completing their mission before the opposing fleet could re-engage. It would not take them long to discern what the Crimson Slaughter were aiming for – an assault on the stronghold of New Redemption. The Chaos fleet was not powerful enough nor did it have a large enough numerical advantage to fight a battle while deploying or extracting troops.

As planned, the speedy escort-class *Ironwasp* was the first to enter Numarc's orbit. As the smallest and fastest of Kronan's attack craft, it stood the best chance of avoiding fire from the planet. The three warbands it carried were soon planetbound. It was their task to silence the three gunbases

that covered this section of the hemisphere. As there was scant time, Kronan ordered the next wave in straight away. The transports *Helbound* and *Deathbringer* entered orbit and immediately jettisoned their transport and assault craft before the steady beams of defence laser fire began to pierce the thick atmosphere and lance upwards from the planet.

Nephilim Jetfighters scrambled to intercept the incoming assault craft. They were not expecting metallic, winged monstrosities to drop out of the cloud banks. The Helbrakes struck, their six-barrelled hades autocannons spitting death, sending half of the Dark Angels air support spinning downwards on fiery contrails. In the fierce dogfight that followed, the remaining ships were likewise dispatched, sent to crash below by rending claws or scythe-sharp wings.

A few landing craft were caught by crisscrossing beams of ground fire – blasted apart by macro cannons or pierced by defence lasers. Already, however, the ground-fire was slackening as each of the orbital gun platforms came under attack by Crimson Slaughter forces. Enough of the assault boats had landed that the angel-winged tower of New Redemption was soon surrounded. From out of screaming snow squalls emerged squads of red-armoured renegades, scuttling Defilers and roaring Helbrutes. There was no subtlety to the attack – for there was no time. The Crimson Slaughter had come to take what was stored within the well defended stronghold, and they needed to do so before the Dark Angels fleet returned.

For their part, the stalwart Dark Angels knew that if they could hold out long enough, their distress calls would be answered with reinforcements. With robes whipping in the freezing winds, they deployed to the outer trenches and prepared to hold off the invaders. Explosions blossomed on the snow plains, sending up geysers of ice shards. Great centauroid Daemon machines – Forgefinders – reared out of the storm. They never halted their firing, but as they advanced they stitched the loyalist battalions with shot, flames lingering like tracers in the wake of their furious salvos. Above the din could be heard the battlecry of the Khorne Berserkers – the same chant that had heralded untold massacres for ten millennia.

The Dark Angels' only hope was to deplete their attackers' numbers before they could close. The snow squalls and incoming fire made it difficult to aim, but the Space Marines had equipment and training to counter such adversity. What they were not prepared for, however, was the spectral wave of phantasmal forces that washed over them, throwing off the shots of even the most disciplined. Too soon and too fast the red wave of death reached them – it swept over defence lines and moved ever towards the inner citadel. A last counter-attack of half-trained Scouts and armoured vehicles was crushed in turn by pain-maddened Helbrutes. With its great pincer arms, a Defiler ripped open the triple-sealed doorway into the stronghold's inner cloisters. While squads rushed in to plunder the halls, Sorcerers and Dark Apostles stalked amongst the dead, callously extracting gene-seed from their fallen foes. As the other warbands had destroyed all three of the defence lasers, the Crimson Slaughter fleet easily entered orbit to extract the Crimson Slaughter when their looting was complete. On Numarc, not a single Dark Angel remained alive.

DAEMON WARS

The Crimson Slaughter are only growing stronger, but Lord Kranon is not satisfied. It is still his goal to rid himself and his men of the curse, but he seems no closer to finding a way than before. This realisation leads the warlord and his warband down a strange, forbidding path, yet Kranon the Relentless will not bow before curse or Daemon.

It was a difficult trip through Warp space back to the Eye of Terror. The Cadian Gate was well guarded and the Immaterium was restless. Great storms were surging through the centre of that maelstrom and raw Chaos energy poured forth to sweep across the galaxy. The Eye itself was astir – for rumour of the 13th Black Crusade was building everywhere. Kranon, however, had other things weighing heavily upon his mind. He brooded.

Kranon too had taken part in the battles on Numarc. The joyous act of cutting down Dark Angels with his blade had cleared his mind of the cobwebbed voices that wove in and out of his thoughts. How had he been so convinced that the Hellfire Stone would lift the curse? Had that idea been planted in his mind by the voices? Others too had been involved – were his own followers seeking to undermine him? Was Draznicht, who could see into the future, part of the plot? Did Mannon, chiefest of his Sorcerers, twist his visions so as to better manipulate him? Kranon had made up his mind and called for a council. Acting on an inkling, he knew just where to hold the assemblage of leaders.

'Almost, Sevastus. You almost made us more powerful than your mortal mind could imagine.'

'Don't call me that,' Kranon raged internally. 'I am Sevastus no longer – he is long gone. I loathe you. One day I will find the means to be rid of you and your damnable curse!'

'We are no curse Sevastus. We are salvation. You needed us to push you on your path. It is a course you had already chosen – we just hastened you further along. You should be thanking us. We showed you true purpose. We freed you from blindly following your corpse god. We showed you your only chance of greatness, your only opportunity for attaining true power.'

'Your words are tricky and lies!' screamed Kranon, this time aloud. 'Greatness? I've slain so many innocents I can no longer remember. I've lost count of how many times I have washed myself in blood for only the chance of a few days' respite from you!'

'We haven't lost count Sevastus. We've seen it all.' Kranon rocked on his feet as his mind was filled with visceral images of the wanton slaughter he and his men had carried out, the fierce joy of battle in their faces. 'See only your true calling.'

'Your lies are not working,' thought Kranon as he fought hard to clear his mind of the tormenting visions, struggling to regain control over his rising temper. 'I will think no more upon this.'

'We understand Sevastus, but know this: all these decisions are yours and yours alone. If you cannot confront the truth, then by all means continue to imagine there are voices in your head.'

REVELATIONS BROUGHT TO LIFE

Flush with their great victory, the most fell-handed of his lieutenants filed into the very heart of the *Lost Hope*. Down into the great engine room Kranon led them, down into what was now known as the Room of the Orb. It was to there that all the power cables and conduits ran, snaking through miles of passageways and spreading outwards like veins and arteries. Through them pulsed the lifeblood of the *Lost Hope*.

Two dozen leaders of the Crimson Slaughter strode in, each wondering what this meeting and locale might mean. To begin, Kranon addressed not them, but the orb itself. A great spherical fleshy mass hung suspended by myriad coils. At Kranon's word it opened – a great lid drew back, revealing a pulsing wet globe beneath. It was once Brother Sartok, a Crimson Sabres Techmarine whose fervour to work closely with the machines took on strange roots in the Eye of Terror. Now it was something more – a fusion of man, machine and the daemonic. When it spoke, it did so with no mouth – the sound instead emanating out of a comm-station grown into the raw flesh. In Kranon's restless wanderings they had engaged in many conversations before.

Now Kranon asked the orb whom it saw in the room. It listed them in its slow, steady and inhuman voice. It also saw and named the Spirits of Umidia – a fact that Kranon had discovered long ago. He was hoping the orb would call out any other unseen manifestations it saw, for it was Kranon's suspicion that one of his trusted captains had become wholly possessed. The last appellation uttered by the orb was Tzax'lan-tar. Saying a Daemon's true name is to speak a word of power. At its articulation the room grew chill, a cold prickle running down the spines of all there. All save one.

Forward stepped Mannon, an iridescent shimmering rippled through his body as the Daemon stepped out of the former psyker. It shed the power armoured carcass as though shrugging its way out of ceremonial robes, and the skin-shell crumpled behind it. The creature grew, standing twice, now three times the height of a man and still it expanded. Spreading out its feathery wings and stretching forth its long serpentine neck, the Greater Daemon of Tzeentch opened its beak wide and gave a long mind-tearing screech of mocking defiance. It gazed upon the Crimson Slaughter with eyes that sparkled with ancient evil.

Even as it opened its beak to speak, Kranon fired his plasma pistol to open the conversation. Though halted by some invisible force field, the super-heated blast still caused the Daemon to pull back, hissing. So began a brief battle, pitting the flickering Warp-flames of Tzax'lan-tar against the blades and pistols of the Crimson Slaughter. Even surrounded and outnumbered, the Greater Daemon was a powerful foe – able to behead a Warpsmith and melt several others. However, when Kranon's Emperor Blade screamed through its defences, the Greater Daemon disappeared in a blink.

DEEPER INTO THE EYE OF TERROR

How long Mannon had played host to the Daemon was not known, nor was it possible to fathom when Tzax'lan-tar's manipulations had begun. Had he led the Crimson Slaughter to the Dark Angels' secret? Was the Greater Daemon involved in the long string of events that isolated the Crimson Sabres, perhaps guiding the space hulk that corrupted the Brakataa System? Had the Tzeentchian agent been involved in the distress call sent from Umidia, or was it working against the daemonic voices that possessed the Crimson Slaughter? Lord Kranon's head swam at the possibilities, but he knew one thing – he vowed to behead the Greater Daemon, declaring war upon Tzax'lan-tar.

Kranon's Sorcerers could not trace the fiend's whereabouts, as if the arcane arts refused to aid them, so Kranon called for Draznicht, champion of the Ravagers. Gifted with a third eye that saw strange visions, Draznicht went into a trance. He shuddered and spoke in a faraway voice, prophesying of a planet named Myrmdrax. Little was known of the world, except that it was located further into the Eye of Terror than any of them had ever been. The directions chanted by Draznicht were more akin to ritual than to coordinates for a space journey – but what use were maps when the stars moved according to the whims of Chaos? Within the hour, Lord Kranon's warfleet was already en route.

It was a strange journey, but at last they reached their destination. It was not a planet, as they had surmised, but a rocky plane suspended in the void of space. Neither scans nor augers worked, so they had no idea what awaited them. Kranon led the warbands down to Myrmdrax, for they were too close to the centre of the Eye of Terror to linger long.

The plane of Myrmdrax was flat, with rocky spires jutting upwards. The ground had a purple hue to it and was dotted with clusters of crystalline growths that protruded outwards and gave off a bluish luminescence. The Crimson Slaughter formed up in a line and advanced across the barren land. It was not long, however, before their presence was detected.

With flashes of multi-coloured fire and incomprehensible gibbering sounds, Daemons began to pour forth from out of the many tunnels that lined the rocky ridges. Striding in the midst of the cavoring Pink Horrors and blue-hued flame-creatures was Tzax'lan-tar. The Lord of Change sent a bolt of eldritch fire crashing into the Khorne Berzerkers to open hostilities. The Crimson Slaughter's Land Raiders and Defilers returned fire, sending their shots into the prancing ranks of Daemons. Thus began the Battle of Myrmdrax.

A high-pitched shrieking announced the arrival of Screamers, finned Daemons that streaked overhead. Where they saw an opening, they dove down, their lamprey-like mouths gnawing through power armour to tear the flesh

beneath. Flamers bounded forward, blasting gouts of fire from their stump-like arms. This washed over the red-armoured renegades harmlessly, but the cultists were lit up like torches, their death cries adding to the cacophony.

Conditions deteriorated as a Warp storm howled above. The skies flashed and from the unnatural gas clouds came spinning cyclones. These whirled haphazardly across the battlefield, tearing gaps through the warring forces. Through the madness waded Kranon, with Draznicht and his Ravagers by his side. Together they shredded Pink Horrors, fighting their way towards Tzax'lan-tar. Inexplicably, the Daemons' attacks were proving ineffective. Kalcidoscopic flames spread over the renegades, yet they stepped forth unscathed. Never had the spectral hosts materialised in such numbers around the Crimson Slaughter, never had the incorporeal spirits shielded them so effectively.

To slow their relentless advance, Tzax'lan-tar rained arcane doom upon his foes, yet the onslaught of the Crimson Slaughter was proving too much and defeat seemed only a matter of time. Seeking a last chance for victory, the winged Daemon targeted Kranon, drenching him with blue flame. Protected by the green-tinged spectres that hovered near him, the Crimson Slaughter's warlord emerged from the fire, his blade at the ready. Screeching curses in a thousand languages, the Daemon vanished once again. Cheated of vengeance, Kranon did not leave until every Daemon was slain, sent howling back into the Warp. He vowed the Daemon Wars would continue until Tzax'lan-tar was slain.



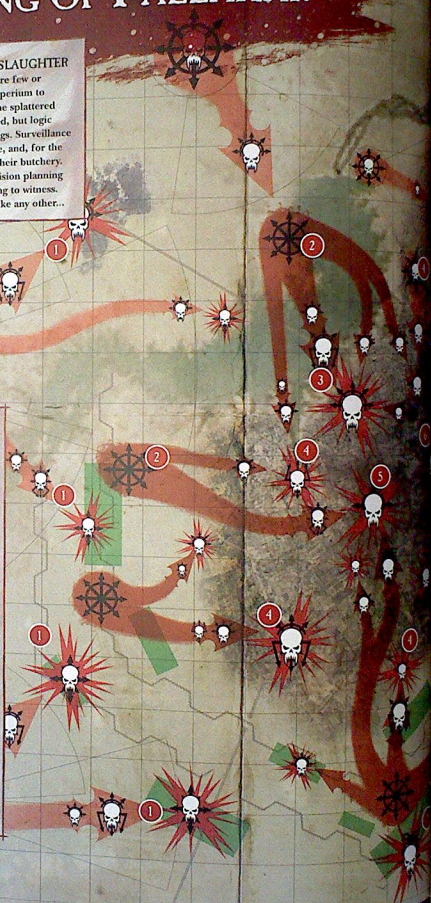
'You should not have come, Kranon. But let us battle if we must. Try as you might, you cannot defy your true nature. I would tell you that none can fight against the inevitability of fate, but I already know that you will.'

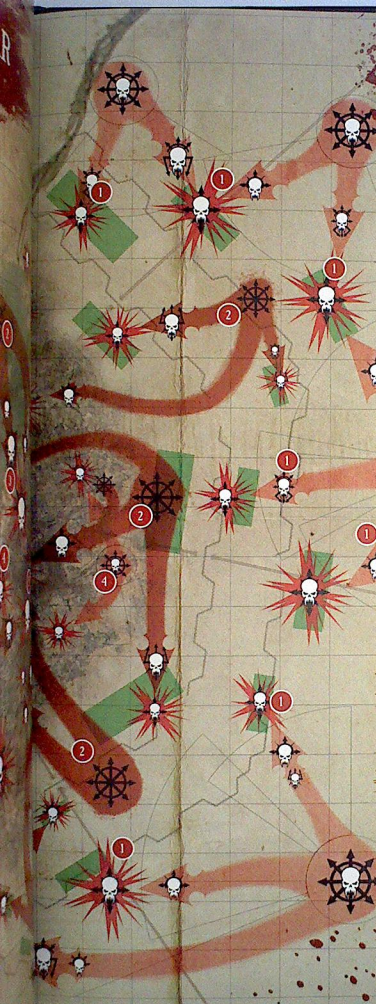
- Tzax'lan-tar, Lord of Change

THE REAPING OF PALLAXAR

GRIM REVELATIONS BEHIND THE SLAUGHTER

As survivors of Crimson Slaughter attacks are few or nonexistent, it has been difficult for the Imperium to piece together how such assaults unfold. The splattered aftermaths of their battles have been studied, but logic alone could not account for the grim findings. Surveillance craft captured the massacre of Pallaxar hive, and, for the first time, the renegades were observed at their butchery. The combination of chainsaw ferocity, precision planning and waves of Warp-phenomena was terrifying to witness. Here was a new threat to the Imperium unlike any other...





The Crimson Slaughter assault began with a well-coordinated planetfall. Their choice of uncontested landing sites surrounding their target is telling. It speaks of a meticulously prepared strategy akin to the rapid assault planning of the Adeptus Astartes. Somehow, this makes the methodical carnage that follows more horrible.

1) THE FIRST WAVE – THE TERROR BEGINS

Although some element of surprise is lost by not landing directly atop their initial targets, the Crimson Slaughter have a weapon in their arsenal to compensate. Their first assaults are preceded by a bow wave of spectral forces – ghostly spirits, skullstorms and psychic phenomena.

2) STAGING THE MAIN ASSAULT

Each of the initial spearheads lance through the Imperial defences and reform at predesignated rally points. By gathering together, the Crimson Slaughter focussed the power of their psyches to fray the fabric of reality. Once more the defenders are washed over by a series of horrific visions and terrifying unnatural occurrences.

3) HORRORS UNTOLD

Untold atrocities are piled upon the pillared palaces of the Planetary Governor. The red armoured renegades do the killing, and it is the daemonic aura that follows in their wake that defiles the corpses in such a gruesome manner.

4) STREET FIGHTING

At this stage in the battle the last defenders now fully understand the level of carnage that is being wrought. In this war of total annihilation, they fight as martyrs, as they know now that they will be slain one way or another. The fighting devolves into a series of bitter last stands amongst the shattered ruins of the hive.

5) THE BATTLE OF THE WEeping STATUES

Not surprisingly, the Imperial defence becomes stouter around the Ecclesiastical cathedral district. The defenders' faith might be buoyed, but each of their makeshift barriers is battered down nonetheless.

6) HIGH TIDE OF BLOOD

As the Crimson Slaughter methodically advance, the defenders of Pallaxar are compressed into an ever-tightening ring within the hive's centre. There, the last and most desperate battles occur. By this point, more and more of the Crimson Slaughter have become Possessed and they reap a terrible toll. Fuelled by the butchery, the air is filled with spectres of death and the streets run with blood. Twisted faces appear within the ruined buildings and scream out the presence of any survivors so that they can be stalked and mercilessly slain by the Crimson Slaughter. Relentlessly every last survivor is hunted down and slain. In the end, Pallaxar is no more, for it has become a corpse-ridden and haunted city of death.

THE BLACK CRUSADE

The greatest of all Chaos invasions are the Black Crusades. It takes the most powerful of champions to unite the disparate forces and hold them on course long enough to sweep out of the Eye of Terror. During such events, the entire galaxy holds its breath – for war on such a scale, and of such a magnitude of hatred, threatens to sweep away all that is, or ever was.

Led by Kronan the Relentless, the Crimson Slaughter had carved out their own realm within the Eye of Terror. Their numbers were swollen as other outcasts from the Imperium sought them out, arriving in droves to the *Lost Hope*. Most were Cultists, worthless lives that the Crimson Slaughter could spend as they saw fit. However, some few showed promise and were allowed to progress further. A few were impressive enough to be augmented and given the gene-seed that would transform them into initiates. Not until they were fully proven could a member of the Crimson Slaughter don the red power armour and join his brethren. But when he did, he joined a warband with numbers beyond the strength of a Space Marine Chapter.

ABADDON THE DESPOILER

So it was that Abaddon, the Warmaster of Chaos, had taken notice of the Crimson Slaughter. In the brutal dog-eat-dog existence that is the Eye of Terror, it does not pay to lose sight of rising powers, even for those on top. None could match the size and power of the Chaos Space Marine Legions, and of those the most powerful and well organised

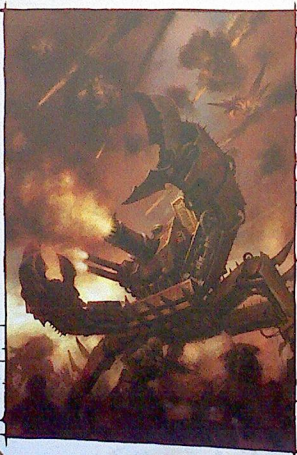
was the Black Legion. It is said that only the will of Abaddon can fuse all of the manifold forces within the Eye. Now Abaddon cast his gaze upon the newcomers. Over his ten thousand year reign he had seen many rises and as many falls. Who were these upstarts? Why had they not sent tribute or bent their knee? Was this Kronan yet another rival he must crush before he could finally finish the Long War?

Upon his return from Myrmidrax, word of Kronan's battle with the Lord of Change had spread like wildfire through the decks of the space hulk. Most of the Crimson Slaughter cared not who or what army they faced, but many of the Cultists quavered. They feared the Daemons, wishing them for allies and not as foes. It was while deciding what his next course of action would be that emissaries of the Black Legion arrived at *Lost Hope*. They brought a demand that Kronan should meet Abaddon and join his Black Crusade against the Imperium. He knew full well what would happen should he refuse either command.

Kronan had served as a Chapter Master of the Space Marines, had been in the presence of such luminaries as Chapter Master Marneus Calgar, Lord Commander Dante and Supreme Grand Master Azael. Yet none had the dominating presence that he saw and felt when he stood aboard the *Planet Killer*, the Warmaster's massive starship, staring up at the hulking figure of Abaddon the Despoiler. With the voices in his head spewing advice, it was difficult to concentrate. When, at last, it was his turn to declare fealty, Kronan vowed to join the Black Crusade, but he would do so only on the condition that the Daemon Tzax'lan-tar was his to kill, whether they be on the same side or not. At Kronan's proud words, the assembled Chaos Lords and Daemon Princes, Champions and Sorcerers froze. There were no conditions with the Warmaster. He had slain for less.

Abaddon had many fractionalised forces to command, from rival Legions to the Daemon Primarchs that awaited in the Warp. He had little patience for the foolish egos of lesser commanders. They would bow or they would die. Yet there was something about Kronan's proud bearing that Abaddon admired. Despite the rampages of the Crimson Slaughter, they were efficient – something that still pulled to that part of him that was always an old Legionnaire. Besides, none knew better than he the fickleness of Daemons. He laughed and welcomed the Crimson Slaughter to the Black Crusade, assigning them a place of honour amongst the attackers.

One of the marks of a good commander in charge of a coalition force is that he can use each separate formation to its best ability. The Crimson Slaughter's reputation of lightning fast terror raids had reached Abaddon – and he chose them to perform just such actions in the 13th Black Crusade. While the bulk of Abaddon's forces prepared to take the Cadian Gate, the Crimson Slaughter would sow terror deep within the Imperium.



CAMPAIGN OF SHOCK AND HORROR

Losing no time, Kronan led the massed Crimson Slaughter fleet to skirt the Cadian Gate, and to instead penetrate deeply into the Imperium. Their campaign of shock and horror would draw off some of the support that would be rushed towards the battle at the Cadian Gate, but more importantly it would put fear into the hearts of any who clung to the false hope of the Imperium of Mankind.

Their first target was the heavily defended hive world of Regallus. Kronan was forced to make his plan of attack en route. From the best visions his Sorcerers could conjure, it appeared as if the defence batteries were concentrated around the mighty continent-sized hive cities. With that in mind, Kronan decided the dropsites must be in the ash plains. This meant a two stage campaign – the first would be to break through the formidable defensive barrier. Once the Crimson Slaughter got past the trench lines, the next phase would be to wreak havoc amongst the tangled inner hive – to massacre all they could, for this would send a message to the other Imperial planets – a sign of what awaited them all.

BREACH THE LINE

The artillery of the Imperial Guard was already booming when the first landing craft deposited Crimson Slaughter warriors into that grey wasteland. In the distance, they could see the first of the trench lines, the raised bunkers already flashing with long-ranged gunfire. Casualties would be high

Kronan stood amidst the ruins of the largest hive city he had ever seen. Even in its utter destruction it was a marvel of state. Now it was an abattoir, a slaughterhouse. Already, his vast army of renegades, Cultists and madmen were preparing to depart. A few of the most insatiable still prowled the crumbling buildings, searching for hidden victims to pull out from their burrows. A few screams in the distance gave proof that not all had been found. It was actually better that way. For when the agents of the Imperium came, they could not only witness the horror, but hear first-hand. Kronan had no doubt that a few would still be capable of coherent speech. With hair gone unnaturally white and a hollow twitching look in their eyes, they would recount the horror and the slaughter that followed in its wake. They would tell of the red-armoured renegades whose eyes glowed, who walked with death itself. The belfair and the horrible wails and the last spoken words cried out by those who were already long dead. All would fear the Crimson Slaughter.

Turning his back on the ruin of Regallus, Kronan the Relentless crouched back through the rubble of the broken civilisation. To his surprise, something stirred under the debris. He halted, watching dispassionately. A Guardsman, helmet gone, his uniform the colour of ash-dust, pulled himself out of a shell hole and staggered to his feet. He stared dazedly at the devastation, at the piled bodies and pools of blood. At last his panorama pivoted enough to take in Kronan in his sweeping view. He grasped for his sidearm, but the holster was empty. He clenched his fists and took a single step forward and then faltered, his battered body failing him so that he dropped to a knee. Kronan decided to let him live – after all, the poor wretch would be haunted all his life. It was this thought that made Kronan change his mind. He kept firing his plasma pistol until there was nothing left. For that soldier, the haunting was over.

It had been Draznicht's suggestion to mass the Cultists, thus providing the most tempting targets for the Imperial artillery. This was wise council, for much of the incoming fire rained down on those wretched souls. The advancing lines shot in return – the Lord of Skulls first, followed by the battle cannons of the six-limbed Defilers and later by the Havoc squads as they progressed within range and hunkered down. The rest moved forward, closing ranks to fill the gaps blasted by the artillery shells exploding all around them.

On the far right flank, the red-armoured tanks of the Crimson Slaughter opened up – sending beams of bright las-fire into the enemy bunkers, attempting to silence their big guns before the assault. Rumbling out to meet them came Imperial Guard tank companies, their own guns blazing in answer. While the armour duelled, the infantry closed into range for the trench lines to erupt in lasgun fire. Bright beams stabbed across the dust-ridden plain – but much of the firing was wild, as a wave of wailing spectral horrors raced before the advancing lines of the Crimson Slaughter. In the trenches, many Guardsmen heard the calls of long lost loved ones, or else saw demonic faces leering in the shadows. Some threw down their weapons and fled. Those that stayed in hopes of defending the walls were easily broken as the renegades stormed the barricades.

So was the first defensive line breached – the claws of the Defilers or the pile-driving fists of the Hellbrutes destroying chunks of ferrocrete to allow the tracked tanks to follow. Strike teams of Raptors and Warp Talons arrived to attack the second line, allowing time for the infantry to advance. Line after line fell, bunker after bunker was cleared.

The most heavily defended battlement was the last one. By that point, however, the wave of horror was so great, the psychic tension so thick, that few defenders were left. The towering statues of mighty heroes of the Imperium that lined the streets were already weeping blood by the time the first renegade crashed through the gates and entered the hive city proper. It was at this stage of the campaign that the true killing really began. None now could stay the butchery.

'Scour the planet! Cleanse it with the blood of men!'

- Kronan the Relentless

The last phase of the operation was the bloodiest. Disparate squads of Imperial Guard and the remnants of their supporting armour desperately attempted to defend the hab-blocks, concentrating their efforts near the densest of population centres. One by one, those strongholds fell and the massacres began. Street by street, the battle raged and the blood flowed. Howling screams and maniacal laughter echoed down the long avenues, almost drowning out the sound of chainsaws, bolter fire and the unheeded screams for mercy. Utter madness and cold-blooded slaughter had come to Regallus and it went on and on and on.

Regallus was only the beginning – the start of the Crimson Slaughter's terror campaign. Tales of the genocidal horrors committed there would soon send shockwaves through the Imperium. Planet by planet, their doom was at hand.

THE LONG SPIRAL TO MADNESS

Following are the dates of key events or battles in the fall of the Crimson Sabres and the rise of the Crimson Slaughter. For those events that happened in the Eye of Terror, the standard dating system of the Administratum is approximated.

c.M35-M36 The 13th Founding

There is more mystery surrounding the 13th Founding than any other, though it is known to have occurred sometime between the 35th and 36th Millennia. The Adeptus Terra usually keeps exact records on the foundings of Space Marine Chapters, but has none for the 13th Founding, also known as the Dark Founding. The Adeptus Terra maintains a bank of gene-seed utilised by every single Chapter ever created, with the notable exception of only the 13th Founding. It is surmised by many, from Inquisitors to curator-scribes, that the Crimson Sabres may have belonged to the 13th Founding, but nothing has ever been proven.

378.M36 Wars of Apostasy

481.M37 Cleansing of Danor IV

The Crimson Sabres fight alongside five other Chapters, who are riled by their zealous adherence to protocol.

556.M38 Amalgamation Schism

The arrival of the space hulk *Amalgamation* triggers a series of events that further estranges the Crimson Sabres. Chapter Master Nigellus locks away the Chapter's history and declares the Crimson Sabres born again.

599.M38 Fornstadt Rebellion

Called in to suppress a rebellion that is spreading like wildfire over the hive world of Fornstadt, the Crimson Sabres become embroiled in a brutal clash with Cultists. Master Nigellus is slain in his 112th year as Chapter Master – his last action was to expose the source of the rebellion, the Alpha Legion. Arnoch is declared the new leader of the Crimson Sabres.

613-621.M38 Zobrist Wars

The Imperium takes action against increasing piratical attacks by Eldar that are paralysing shipping lanes in the sector. Along with Imperial Guard elements from Tallarn, the Crimson Sabres succeed in finding and eliminating four Eldar outposts. Due to their ever-increasing righteousness, the Tallarn are glad to see the red-armoured Space Marines leave for other sectors.

983.M38 Deadstar Battles

An armoured spearhead of Crimson Sabres joins the Black Templars in defeating the Thu'l, a loathsome xenos race that thrives under the light of dead stars. After the battle is won, the two Chapter Masters nearly fight a duel, but this is avoided when the Crimson Sabres Chapter Master Gryloch refers to the Codex Astartes and finds that such a course of action is forbidden.

88-186.M39 The Redemption Crusades

The Crimson Sabres earn many accolades during campaigning in the Segmentum Tempestus.

186.M39 Collapse of Brakatoa

The entire system erupts with a Cultist uprising heralded by the arrival of the space hulk *Misery*. Of the eleven planets in the star system, all life is wiped off of eight planets, with three of them mercilessly destroyed by cyclonic torpedoes in a desperate attempt to halt a growing Warp rift. The Crimson Sabres home world of Rhoghon is contaminated by the detonation of an ancient reactor from the Dark Age of Technology.

187.M39 A New Home World

The Crimson Sabres claim Drogsh, one of the few hospitable planets left in the Brakatoa system. A growing bitterness towards the Imperium for the destruction of their system and for the lack of help from other nearby Chapters begins to ferment. The Adeptus Terra does nothing with the long file of datascrolls detailing the available forces within one hundred light years that did not respond to the distress cries of Brakatoa.

995.M40 Macharian Conquests

The Crimson Sabres take part in the seven-year campaign, their effectiveness and estrangement noted in the records of the Silver Skulls.

928.M41 Genocide on Umidia

The Crimson Sabres arrive on the jungle planet of Umidia to discover the Baletu Cults. They claim the cults are attempting to open a Warp rift, and respond by slaughtering all of them. The Chapter believe they are cursed (or rewarded) by the Dark Gods in response, as they are forever after haunted by fell voices.

929.M41 Terror on Demetra

Hoping to halt the voices in their heads, the Crimson Sabres declare the planet of Demetra to be contaminated due to its proximity to Umidia. The killing begins anew. The plan works, but the Chapter is declared Excommunicate Traitoris. Their home world of Drogsh is seized and everyone connected to the Chapter slain. Only a handful of Scouts, under the Master of the 10th Company, Murdock, escape.

929.M41 Into the Eye of Terror

Fighting their way through the Imperial forces standing guard at the Cadian Gate, the Crimson Sabres steer their fleet into the Eye of Terror, seeking a glorious martyrdom through slaying the hordes of traitors within.

929-938.M41 The Renegade Wars

The Crimson Sabres fight and destroy countless cults, but also face many warbands of Chaos Space Marine renegades within the Eye. They engage and defeat warbands of the Black Skulls, Bragza's Fell-handed, the Cleaved, Grimhunters, Tainted Souls, Tatterskulls and more that have been forgotten by history.

932.M41 The Change

The first signs of mutation begin appearing amongst the Crimson Sabres. They do not speak of it aloud.

938.M41 Crimson Slaughter

Chapter Master Sevastus Kronan changes his mind – he does not wish to die for an empty cause. The remains of the Chapter are gathered and Kronan's abandonment of martyrdom is announced. Strife amongst the ranks ensues. Captain Dzarton, leader of the 4th Company, departs, taking with him many of the men of his former company and the ship *Pride of Rhogon*. He swears that if they ever meet again they will be foes.

939.M41 Lost Hope

The Crimson Slaughter establish a new base of operations within the edge of the Eye of Terror – the space hulk *Lost Hope*. They send their first warbands to raid into realspace.

941.M41 Coming of the Clonelord

Kronan strikes a deal with Fabius Bile. He gains aid in extracting gene-seed and using it to create new Crimson Slaughter Space Marines. In return, Kronan gifts Fabius prisoners – forty-eight Space Marines that refuse to join the carnage to silence the voices in their heads. Only his own brother, Sevastian Kronan, is spared. Kronan agrees to come to Fabius' aid should he ever call.

940-964.M41 The Haunting

While their base is established and their gene-seed experiments begun, the Crimson Slaughter launch many small raids into the Imperium. They begin to earn a reputation, noticing the effect their mere presence has when they leave the Eye of Terror. Warp energies and poltergeist activity surround them in uncanny and unnerving fashion.

941.M41 Rhogon Refounded

Captain Dzarton and his fifty-nine followers of the 4th Company re-establish a secret base upon their old home world of Rhogon. It is still rad-contaminated, but it is Dzarton's hope to restore the old Crimson Sabres. He vows to hunt down and slay Kronan.

941.M41 Daemon Fusion

Warpsmith Trentukus successfully bonds a Daemon spirit with a machine. Many new works for Kronan's armies are begun.

947.M41 The Orb

Warpsmith Sartok comes too close to the generator. Hardwires entrap him and henceforth he becomes as one with the space hulk and the daemonic entities it has absorbed. His entire body fuses with the cables and alters so that it is now but a giant fleshy orb.

965.M41 The Fate of Sevastian

In a fit of madness, Kronan orders his brother Sevastian Kronan to be wired into a Helbrute. The long, painful process takes many months. Mortis Metalikus is born.

971.M41 Incursion

Daemons sweep forth during a Warp storm and the *Lost Hope* batters down to defend itself. It is later speculated that Mannon is possessed during this battle.

978.M41 A Cult of Slaughter

Although Cultists began to join the Crimson Slaughter's cause soon after they established a base within *Lost Hope*, by this point vast armies of the depraved and despondent are rallying towards the space hulk.

981.M41 The Hellfire Stone

Kronan first hears of the legendary item and begins to suspect it can aid him in his plan to rid the Crimson Slaughter of the voices that haunt them.

988.M41 The Below Beast

All hands aboard the *Lost Hope* are called out to hunt down and slay the Below Beast – a hideous creature that has taken up residence aboard the lower levels.

578999.M41 Battle of Stern's Remembrance

The Crimson Slaughter trap and engage the Dark Angels 5th Company in battle upon the world of Stern's Remembrance, slaying many battle-brothers including Company Master Zadakiel. This earns the Crimson Slaughter the undying vengeance of the Dark Angels.

884999.M41 Dark Vengeance

The Dark Angels 5th Company battles elements of the Crimson Slaughter for control of the Hellfire Stone. The renegades believe that by anointing the ancient altar to the Dark Gods with the sacrificial blood of a loyalist Space Marine they can halt the voices that haunt them. The Dark Angels are victorious, but this battle marks only the first in a long series of clashes they will fight against the renegade Space Marines. Mortis Metalikus is slain in the fight. Kronan does not grieve – it is too late for that now.

921999.M41 Blood in the Snow

The Crimson Slaughter destroy the Dark Angels bastion upon the frozen recruiting world of Numarc. They steal their rivals' gene-seed, planning to use it to aid the creation of corrupted Space Marines.

968999.M41 Beginning of the Daemon Wars

When Kronan the Relentless discovers that Mannon has been possessed, he tracks the Daemon further into the Eye. Although failing to kill the Lord of Change named Tzax'lan-tar, he serves the Greater Daemon notice of his intentions and severs its arm.

995999.M41 13th Black Crusade of Abaddon

The Crimson Slaughter join the largest of Abaddon's Black Crusades. Impressed with the Crimson Slaughter, the Warmaster gives them a place of honour spearheading one of the Crusade's many assaults into Imperial space.





THE RED ONSLAUGHT



Aspiring Champion with power axe



Chosen can bear a wide range of deadly weaponry.



The Chaos Terminators of the Crimson Slaughter launch shock attacks to destroy key enemy formations.





The heavily armed and armoured Chaos Land Raider is a spear of terror in the arsenal of the Crimson Slaughter.

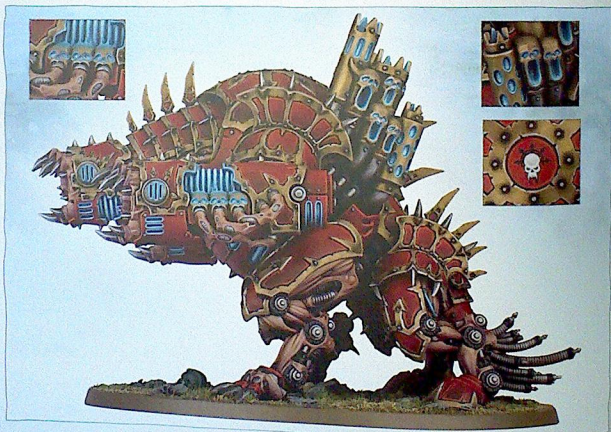




Chaos Terminators disgorge from a Chaos Land Raider – an assault that can break any enemy's battle line.



Twisted mockeries of the Space Marine Dreadnought, Helbrutes are rage-maddened battle engines. This Helbrute is outfitted with a reaper autocannon and a power scourge.



The retoplasma cannons of the Forgefiend add to the carnage meted out by the Crimson Slaughter.



Rapid-striking Raptors strike terror into the hearts of the Crimson Slaughter's foes.





Only through blood-drenched battle can the Chaos Space Marine renegades of the Crimson Slaughter halt the voices inside their heads.





Almost impervious to all but the heaviest of weapons, Chaos Terminators cut bloody swathes into the foe and deal death to any who stand before them.







LET SLAUGHTER COMMENCE!

On the following pages you will find all the rules that you need in order to field a Crimson Slaughter Chaos Space Marine army. You will also find new missions specifically written to capture the warband's unique – and supernaturally violent – methods of warfare, including missions that recreate some of the Crimson Slaughter's most famous battles. New stratagems for Cities of Death and Planetstrike are included so you can wreak havoc upon hive worlds and unleash sudden assaults.

On the preceding pages you've read about the tragic fall of the Crimson Sabres and their journey to becoming the Crimson Slaughter. Now it's your turn to unleash the murderous destruction of the Crimson Slaughter upon the galaxy at large. When used alongside *Codex: Chaos Space Marines*, this section of the book allows you to transform your collection of Chaos Space Marines into a fearsome and bloodthirsty warband of the Crimson Slaughter.

HOW THIS SECTION WORKS

In this section, you will find:

THE LORDS OF SLAUGHTER

The Crimson Slaughter are led by a core of powerful leaders who were once the revered and respected commanders of the Crimson Sabres. They led the fallen Chapter on its sacrificial journey into the Eye of Terror and either masterminded its rebirth as the Crimson Slaughter or were dragged against their will into the clutches of Chaos. You will find a selection of these characters presented here, along with their appropriate wargear, if you wish to represent them on the battlefield.

THE WARBANDS OF THE CRIMSON SLAUGHTER

These pages present all the rules alterations and additions to those given in *Codex: Chaos Space Marines* that you will need to transform your collection of Citadel miniatures into an army of embittered warriors of the Crimson Slaughter. With these new rules you'll be able to:

- Unleash the Harbingers of the Tormented upon the foe. This special rule allows you to take full advantage of both the dread reputation of the Crimson Slaughter and the supernatural phenomena that surround them.
- Recruit more Warp-cursed warriors to your cause. The Possessed run rampant in the Crimson Slaughter, and now you can bolster your warband with more of these powerful fighters and their unique mutations.
- Upgrade your warband with the prescient Draznicht and his fell-handed band, the Ravagers. These Chosen have proven themselves as ruthless killers time and again.
- Equip your own characters with the Relics of the Crimson Slaughter – or use these items to recreate the legendary champions of the Crimson Slaughter themselves.
- Have your Warlord embrace the wayward energies of the Warp. The Warlord Traits table for the Crimson Slaughter can grant dark gifts such as of spectral aid, blood-maddened vengeance or merciless rage.

CITIES OF DEATH & PLANETSTRIKE STRATAGEMS

In their blood-spattered history, the Crimson Slaughter have unleashed their fierce onslaught many times to cleanse population-filled hive cities, stalking the crowded urban confines to annihilate every last victim. Amongst their favoured ploys are quick-hitting invasions to rip deep into their foe before they even know what has hit them. To best recreate this, you will find additional stratagems for your Crimson Slaughter warband to bring the action onto the tabletop in games of Cities of Death and Planetstrike.

ALTAR OF WAR MISSIONS

Hone your tactics and foe-crushing skills as you lead your own Crimson Slaughter warband in a series of missions created to match their fighting style and favoured modes of attack. Do you have the strategic prowess to master the Crimson Slaughter way of warfare?

- **Storm of Spirits:** A bow wave of spectral spirits rides before the Crimson Slaughter, adding to the carnage.
- **Silence the Voices:** Can the Crimson Slaughter wash away the voices in a tide of bloodletting? The challenge is to kill every foe you can find!
- **Securing a Legacy:** The Crimson Slaughter must seize the gene-seed from the enemy, no matter the cost.

ECHOES OF WAR MISSIONS

Use these missions to try your own hand at recreating pivotal battles from the history of the Crimson Slaughter.

- **Confrontation with Angels:** The trap is set. On the planet of Stern's Remembrance, can you lead the Crimson Slaughter to destroy the Dark Angels before they escape?
- **A New Redemption:** On the ice world of Numarc the Crimson Slaughter must assault a Dark Angels' stronghold.
- **Hunt for Tzax'lan-tar:** Amidst whirling Warpstorm tornadoes, the Crimson Slaughter stalk their hated foe.
- **Regallus Under Siege:** Lord Kranon leads a fierce assault to destroy the defenders of the hive city of Regallus.
- **A World Turned Crimson:** Can the Crimson Slaughter smash aside the last defenders of Regallus and run amok, slaying to their fell hearts' content?

LORDS OF SLAUGHTER

DRAZNIGHT, CHAMPION OF THE RAVAGERS
Chosen Champion, power maul.



DARK APOSTLE OKRARK
Dark Apostle, Crozius of the Dark Covenant.



KRANON THE RELENTLESS, MASTER OF THE CRIMSON SLAUGHTER

Chaos Lord, Blade of the Relentless, the Slaughterer's Horns, Daemonheart, plasma pistol, sigil of corruption



MORTIS METALIKUS
Helbrute, multi-melta, power fist.



WARBANDS OF THE CRIMSON SLAUGHTER

A Crimson Slaughter army is chosen using the army list presented in *Codex: Chaos Space Marines*. It also has a series of supplemental rules (presented below) that can be used in addition to those found in *Codex: Chaos Space Marines*.

HARBINGERS OF THE TORMENTED

All models in a Crimson Slaughter detachment have the Fear special rule.

SLAVES TO THE VOICES

When choosing a Crimson Slaughter detachment, units of Possessed are troops choices instead of elites choices. Furthermore, Possessed units in a Crimson Slaughter detachment do not have the Vessels of Chaos special rule in *Codex: Chaos Space Marines*. Instead, roll a D3 on the table below at the beginning of each controlling player's turn. The mutation affects every Possessed model in the unit and lasts until the start of the controlling player's next turn:

D3 MUTATION

- 1 **Spirit Beacons:** The unit, and any vehicle they are embarked upon, gains the Shrouded special rule.
- 2 **Beast Form:** The unit's type changes from Infantry to Beasts.
- 3 **Incorporeal Bodies:** The unit's invulnerable save is changed to 3+, and they gain the Rending special rule.

DRAZNICHT'S RAVAGERS

When choosing a Crimson Slaughter detachment, one unit of Chosen can be upgraded to Draznicht's Ravagers for +10 points.

As a result of his prescience, Draznicht, the unit's Chosen Champion, has the Preferred Enemy special rule. If Draznicht is slain, this special rule is immediately lost.

RENEGADES OF THE DARK MILLENNIUM

When choosing a Crimson Slaughter detachment, the only units that can take the Veterans of the Long War special rule are Khorne Berzerkers, Plague Marines and Noise Marines.

RELICS OF THE CRIMSON SLAUGHTER

Any character in your Crimson Slaughter detachment that can select Chaos Artefacts cannot select from those listed in *Codex: Chaos Space Marines*, but can instead select from the Relics of the Crimson Slaughter, presented opposite, at the points cost shown.

ALLIES

A Crimson Slaughter detachment can ally with a *Codex: Chaos Space Marines* detachment as Battle Brothers (and vice versa).

WARLORD TRAITS

When generating his Warlord Traits, a Crimson Slaughter Warlord may either roll on one of the Warlord Traits tables in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook, or roll on the table on the right.

WARLORD TRAITS TABLE

D6 WARLORD TRAIT

- 1 **Murderous Hate:** *This Warlord thirsts for vengeance against a cruel galaxy that spurned the Crimson Sabres, but blames the Dark Angels above all others.*

Your Warlord, and any unit he joins, has the Hatred special rule. However, when striking enemy units chosen from *Codex: Dark Angels*, your Warlord, and any unit he joins, can re-roll misses in every round of close combat.

- 2 **Maelstrom of Torment:** *Wherever this Warlord walks, the spirits of the damned howl and phantasmal apparitions gather in ever-greater swarms.*

All enemy units within 12" of your Warlord suffer a -1 Leadership penalty. Furthermore, all enemy units within 12" of your Warlord suffer a -2 Leadership penalty to any Fear tests they are required to make.

- 3 **Maddened Rage:** *Having succumbed to the howling voices in his head, this Warlord has gone completely berserk.*

The Warlord has the Rage and Furious Charge special rules. However, if the Warlord, or any model in a Crimson Slaughter unit he joins, is within 12" of an enemy model at the beginning of the Shooting phase, he cannot shoot and must attempt to charge in the ensuing Assault phase if at all possible.

- 4 **Merciless Slaughterer:** *None of the Crimson Slaughter rejoice in the wanton butchery of their enemies more than this Warlord.*

Your Warlord, and any unit he joins, has the Crusader special rule.

- 5 **Spectral Assailants:** *This Warlord is surrounded by a spirit horde of poltergeists that bite, rake and claw at the flesh of his foes.*

Enemy models in base contact with the Warlord each take D6 Strength 3 AP- hits at Initiative step 10 of each Assault phase.

- 6 **Pall of Mist:** *An unnatural, ghostly mist enshrouds the Warlord wherever he goes, confounding the aim of his foes.*

The Warlord has the Shrouded special rule.

RELICS OF THE CRIMSON SLAUGHTER

The Relics of the Crimson Slaughter are relics of incredible power that the renegades have acquired over the course of their bitter campaigns. Only one of each of the following artefacts can be chosen per army – there is only one of each these items in the entire galaxy!

CROZIUS OF THE DARK COVENANT.....30 POINTS

Chaplain Okrark once wielded this deadly crozius in the name of the Emperor, bellowing forth titanes of hate and zealous oratory as he struck down his foes. Now the ancient mace is so suffused with the corrupting power of the Warp that Okrark need say nothing, for the weapon itself acts as a conduit for the voices that fill the heads of each of the Crimson Slaughter. Warriors in its presence are driven into a mindless frenzy, and will butcher their foes with ever increasing ferocity.

The Crozius of the Dark Covenant can only be taken by a Dark Apostle, and replaces the model's power maul.

Range	S	AP	Type
-	+2	4	Melee, Concussive, Warp-medium

Warp-medium: All friendly Crimson Slaughter units within 6" of the bearer have the Zealot special rule.

BLADE OF THE RELENTLESS.....30 POINTS

Formerly known as the Emperor Blade, this fabled weapon has long since been renamed after the one who wields it. Indeed, Kronan the Relentless has borne this fell weapon for many centuries, and witnessed its corruption from noble power sword to fearsome Warp-enhanced blade. As it feeds on the lifeblood of its victims, so too does the Blade of the Relentless devour their souls. This raw essence is channelled into the blade, where its touch becomes increasingly lethal with every life it claims.

Chaos Lord only.

Range	S	AP	Type
-	User	3	Melee, Soul Siphon

Soul Siphon: Make a note of how many enemy models are removed as casualties as a direct result of the wielder's close combat attacks over the course of the battle. At the end of every Assault phase, compare the current total to the following chart to see if any further effects are applied to the Blade of the Relentless. These effects are cumulative and last for the rest of the game:

No. of Kills	Effect
1+	+1 Strength
3+	AP2
5+	+1 Strength
10+	Instant Death

THE SLAUGHTERER'S HORNS.....15 POINTS

Since the Chapter's rebirth as the Crimson Slaughter, the horns atop this Warp-infused helmet have grown truly enormous in size. So suffused with fell energies has this helm become that the one who wears it is driven into an uncontrollable rage, the voices in his head amplified to a deafening crescendo. As he throws himself at his enemies, the frenzied warrior will gore and skewer his victims with the daemonic horns even as he hears them down.

The bearer of the Slaughterer's Horns has the Furious Charge, Hammer of Wrath and Rage special rules.

THE BALESTAR OF MANNON.....25 POINTS

Mannon was once the Chief Librarian of the Crimson Sabres before becoming a powerful Sorcerer blessed with the Warp-sight. After the Lord of Change, T'rax'lan-tar, subsumed his body, the only component of the sorcerer's armour to survive was the relic that became known as the Balestar of Mannon. This potent artefact takes the shape of an eight-pointed star, within which is set a malevolent, glowing eye. If he can control the maddening visions, the bearer of the Balestar of Mannon can see a number of potential futures with which to guide the actions of his fellow renegades.

Chaos Sorcerer only. The bearer of the Balestar of Mannon can choose to generate powers from the **Divination** discipline, and re-rolls failed Psychic tests. However, neither he nor any unit he has joined can benefit from any modifiers to Deny the Witch rolls for the bearer being a Psyker.

DAEMONHEART.....30 POINTS

This suit of baroque armour is the crowning achievement of Trentukus, the Chief Warpsmith of the Crimson Slaughter. Trentukus has bound the essence of a powerful Daemon within the armour, siphoning its unearthly energies to fortify the wearer. Beneath its glassy surface, the armour's prisoner writhes impatiently, ever seeking the opportunity to escape. Its efforts are futile, for the enchantments wrought within the armour's baleful runes sap the Daemon's strength to feed unholy, life-giving energies to its wearer.

May not be taken by a Daemon Prince. Daemonheart confers a 2+ Armour Save and the It Will Not Die special rule.

PROPHET OF THE VOICES.....30 POINTS

When the Crimson Slaughter prepare for battle, one of their number will sometimes be chosen by the unknown powers that command the voices in their heads. There is never any doubt as to who the voices have selected for this dubious honour, for a howling maw erupts from his armour. A constant stream of inexplicable words speaks forth from the daemonic jaws, twisting his appearance on a whim. In battle, he will lead a host of similarly afflicted warriors into the heart of the enemy army in mindless service to the will of the voices.

The bearer has the Daemon, Fearless and Fleet special rules. Furthermore, the bearer has the Slaves to the Voices special rule (see opposite), and can only join units of Possessed chosen from a Crimson Slaughter detachment.

CITIES OF DEATH STRATAGEMS

These are additional stratagems for Cities of Death games. They can be used if you are using the supplemental rules given in the Warbands of the Crimson Slaughter section (pg 50). To do so, simply add them to the list of available stratagems you can choose from.

KEY BUILDING STRATAGEMS

Haunted Ruin

Since the arrival of the Crimson Slaughter, reports of spectral phenomena and poltergeist activity have become rife all across the planet. Yet, whether by unhappy coincidence or some malevolent will, this derelict building has become a beacon to the unquiet spirits of the slain. To enter its boundaries is to be assaulted by objects hurled by invisible assailants and be exposed to horrific visions of death and madness. Only the bold or the truly insane will emerge from its depths with their minds unscathed.

Any units within the nominated city ruin have the Fear special rule. If a unit within the nominated city ruin already has the Fear special rule, enemy units attempting to attack that unit suffers a -2 Leadership penalty to any Fear tests they are required to make. Furthermore, at the end of every enemy Movement phase, any enemy units with at least one model within the Haunted Ruin suffer D6 Strength 3 AP- hits.

Weapon Curse

The malicious spirits that accompany the Crimson Slaughter often play tricks on their unfortunate victims. In their presence, weapons jam, cooling systems malfunction, and munitions spontaneously explode in gun barrels.

Any weapons fired by units within the nominated city ruin have the Gets Hot special rule.



DIRTY TRICKS STRATAGEMS

Silent Voices

Having recently been sated by a bloody massacre on the planet's population, the voices inside the heads of the Crimson Slaughter have been quieted, for the moment at least. As a result, those of their number that are most sensitive to the voices – and prone to their manipulation – can maintain a greater element of control over whatever power influences them.

All friendly Crimson Slaughter units that have the Slaves to the Voices special rule (see page 50) can choose to re-roll the result on the Mutation table. You must accept the second roll, even if it is worse than the first.

Souls of the Fallen

One of the side effects of the murderous rampages undertaken by the Crimson Slaughter is that the souls of the recently slain can become trapped in the mortal plane, only to be inadvertently devoured by their killers. On many occasions, warriors of the Crimson Slaughter that have suffered fatal wounds or injuries have dragged themselves back to their feet, their bodies revived and nourished by the life essence they unwittingly absorbed.

Whenever one or more friendly non-vehicle units in a Crimson Slaughter detachment completely destroys an enemy unit in close combat, or as a result of a Sweeping Advance, each unit recovers one lost Wound as follows: if the unit includes one or more friendly characters from a Crimson Slaughter detachment that have lost a Wound earlier in the battle, that model regains one Wound (randomise if there is more than one eligible character); if the unit includes no eligible characters, but the unit has suffered one or more casualties earlier in the battle, randomly select one casualty that the unit has suffered and return it to play, anywhere within normal unit coherency; if the model cannot be legally placed in this manner, or the unit has suffered no casualties, nothing happens – no Wounds or casualties are recovered.

ARMOURY STRATAGEMS

Ectoplasma Weapons

The supernatural energies that manifest in the presence of the Crimson Slaughter can, with the careful attention of a Warpsmith versed in the art, be channelled into a warband's deadly plasma weaponry, enabling the renegades to fire coruscating beams of terrible power at their foes.

All plasma weapons carried by friendly models from a Crimson Slaughter detachment are Strength 8.

OBSTACLES STRATAGEMS

Spirit Shroud

The Sorcerers of the Crimson Slaughter can coax the ghostly spirits that follow in their wake to form an ethereal barrier of sorts. Though they will offer no sanctuary to those not of the Crimson Slaughter, the swarm of spectres that comprise each barricade will flock together in swirling shrouds to confound the aim of any who would seek to harm those they serve.

Spirit Shrouds follow all of the rules for the barricades (see Cities of Death), yet they do not block line of sight or offer a cover save. However, all friendly Crimson Slaughter units within 2" of a Spirit Shroud have the Shrouded special rule.

DEPLOYMENT STRATAGEMS

Warp Blip

The unearthly powers that watch over the warriors of the Crimson Slaughter have been known to conceal groups of warriors beneath a ghostly shroud. When the cloud disperses, they are gone, but they reappear in a similarly mysterious manner moments later, far from their original location. Whether or not the Crimson Slaughter have any control over, or know how to instigate these 'Warp blips', none can say.

One use only. Nominate one friendly non-vehicle unit, from a Crimson Slaughter detachment, that is not locked in combat. Instead of moving normally, the unit is removed from play and immediately Deep Strikes back onto the battlefield.

PLANETSTRIKE STRATAGEMS

These are additional stratagems for Planetstrike games. They can be used if you are using the supplemental rules given in the Warbands of the Crimson Slaughter section (pg 50). To do so, simply add them to the list of available stratagems you can choose from.

ATTACK STRATAGEMS

Spirit Bombs

Stratagem Points: 1

When declared: Immediately before the firestorm.

When the Crimson Slaughter bombard their foes in preparation to assault, waves of spectral horrors burst forth from the impact sites, to the abject horror of the survivors. Whether the Crimson Slaughter's Warpsmiths have somehow harnessed the spirits that follow in their warband's wake and bound them into the warheads of their bombardment cannons, or are unaware of what happens on the ground when they unleash their payloads, remains a mystery.

Any units that suffer one or more casualties from the Attacker's Firestorm must pass a Morale check or Fall Back.

The Urge to Kill

Stratagem Points: 2

When declared: Immediately before the firestorm.

The master of the Crimson Slaughter is acutely aware of the need to blood his warriors as often as he can, keeping them sated with a regular supply of butchery and carnage to calm the voices in their heads. However, this need can also play to Krannon's advantage, for his bloodthirsty renegades will be all the more determined to get to grips with their foes when battle is finally joined.

All friendly Crimson Slaughter units have the Crusader and Furious Charge special rules.

Guidance from the Warp

Stratagem Points: 3

When declared: Immediately after the firestorm

The Crimson Slaughter have become true masters of swift planetary assaults. If asked, a commander of the renegades would claim that this is due to their meticulous planning before committing to battle, yet there is also another reason – their uncanny ability to plunge into the heart of the fighting exactly where they are needed. Even if they are truly aware of who – or what – guides them during these ventures, none will admit it.

All friendly Crimson Slaughter units can choose to re-roll the scatter dice when arriving via Deep Strike.



DEFENCE STRATAGEMS

Interference from the Warp

Stratagem Points: 3

When declared: Immediately after the firestorm.

The unknown powers that unnervingly guide the Crimson Slaughter towards their prey during planetary assaults can also confound and disrupt their foes as they launch their own orbital descents.

The Attacker must re-roll any results of a Hit! on the scatter dice when arriving via Deep Strike.

Wave of Horrors

Stratagem Points: 2

When declared: Immediately after the firestorm.

Even as the enemy makes planetfall to attack the Crimson Slaughter, their emerging forces must face a shrieking wave of phantasmal assailants that scratch and claw at their armour and confound their attempts at coordination, stalling their assault and leaving them vulnerable to counter-attack.

Each of the Attacker's units that arrived during turn one must take an immediate Pinning test at the end his Movement phase.

Perfect Counterstrike

Stratagem Points: 1

When declared: After a unit has entered play from Reserves.

The voices that constantly gibber and mutter in the heads of the Crimson Slaughter tell of many things, speaking both of reality and of twisted, paranoid interpretations. If one has the strength of will to discern fact from fiction and guidance from deceit, it is possible to learn of events and actions that may yet come to pass. One with the wit to act upon these signs can use this foreknowledge to take the enemy by complete surprise.

Nominate a unit that has just entered play from Reserves. That unit can declare a charge in the ensuing Assault phase.



Bombardment Fodder

Stratagem Points: 2

When declared: Before deployment.

On countless occasions, the Crimson Slaughter have mercilessly herded their bands of attendant Cultists into battles and firefights in order to distract the attention of their enemies. The 'noble sacrifice' of the expendable Cultists frees up the renegade Space Marines so they can focus on winning the battle and bringing about the ruination of their foes.

During deployment, you can place a free unit of Chaos Cultists anywhere on the battlefield that is in open ground (i.e. none of the models in the unit can be deployed inside any buildings, atop battlements or in area terrain). This unit can be of any size (as long as you have the appropriate miniatures available) and does not cost any points. The unit can be given any optional equipment, though they cannot be given a Mark of Chaos.

ALTAR OF WAR: CRIMSON SLAUGHTER

INTRODUCTION

The *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook already includes a set of Eternal War missions; when you multiply that by the different armies you might face, and the myriad different ways you can set up the terrain for your battle, there are hundreds, probably thousands, of different ways to play. However, we feel that you can never have too much variety, so this book has three new missions you can use if you or an opponent has a Crimson Slaughter army.

The new missions illustrate the different sorts of strategies used by the Crimson Slaughter, and they will provide new tests of your tactical ability as a commander. Additional Altar of War mission books have scenarios for use by other armies from the *Warhammer 40,000* galaxy.

STRATEGY

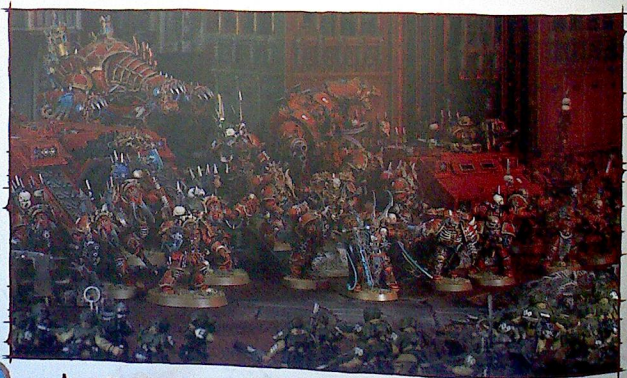
Different armies use different strategies when they go to war, which affects the types of battle that they fight. The Black Templars, for example, hurl themselves at their foes to engage them in savage melees where their ferocity and zealous determination often earns them a swift and bloody victory. Meanwhile, the disciplined warriors of the Tau Empire utilise their highly advanced technology and tactical flexibility to cut their enemies down at a distance, believing ranged combat and carefully prepared ambushes to be the pinnacle of honourable warfare.

The missions found here are themed around the reviled Crimson Slaughter and the way they fight. This gives you a chance to discover more about the strategies used by these feared renegades, and then to try these strategies out on the tabletop. It also means that the army you command can affect the types of battle you are likely to fight. This is highly appropriate – after all, you would expect to fight a very different sort of battle as an Ultramarines Captain than you would as an Ork Warlord.

TACTICS

The three Altar of War missions included in this book are designed to provide players with games that will really challenge their tactical ability. We've gone to some pains to make sure that each mission is as balanced as possible, and that they provide both sides with a new set of tactical challenges to overcome.

This means that, in order to win, you will need to be prepared to think on your feet and quickly adapt to the new circumstances the missions will throw at you. You may be called upon to spearhead an attack or fight to hold a defensive position deep behind enemy lines. Tried and trusted tactics will need to be re-thought in the face of these new challenges, and you will need to be ready to think outside the box in order to win.



A GALAXY'S WORTH OF CHALLENGES

That, then, is what this section is all about, and on the following pages you will find out how to put these ideas into practice on your gaming table. We'll start off with an overview of how to incorporate the new missions into the games you play, and then we'll provide the missions themselves. You'll also find plenty of background information about how the armies fight and how the missions we've provided fit into their strategic battle plans.

HOW TO USE ALTAR OF WAR MISSIONS

The Altar of War Missions part of this book is split into two sections: the section that you are reading now, which explains how to incorporate the *Altar of War: Crimson Slaughter* missions into your games of *Warhammer 40,000*, and the missions themselves.

It is very straightforward to use an Altar of War mission – it only requires a handful of minor modifications to the rules for fighting a battle in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook. These changes are explained in detail next, but they boil down to: roll-off if you want to use an Altar of War mission; if you win, you can roll on an Altar of War mission table instead of the Eternal War mission table. And that's it!



THE MISSION

If either you or your opponent wish to use an Altar of War mission, then you must make a roll-off at the start of The Mission step of Fighting a Battle (as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook). The winner of the roll-off can choose to either roll on the Eternal War mission table, or instead roll on the Altar of War mission table for their army. Other supplements also have new types of mission tables, and the winner of the dice roll-off could choose to roll on one of those, if they prefer and are allowed to do so. These rolls will determine which mission is used for the battle. Note that each set of Altar of War missions is linked to an army chosen from a specific codex; in order to use Altar of War missions, an army chosen from the appropriate codex must be the primary detachment. In the case of *Altar of War: Crimson Slaughter*, the missions are linked to armies chosen from *Codex: Chaos Space Marines* using the additional rules found elsewhere in this book.

ALTAR OF WAR: CRIMSON SLAUGHTER MISSION TABLE

D6	Mission
1-2	Storm of Spirits
3-4	Silence the Voices
5-6	Securing a Legacy

For example, Jeremy and Mark have arranged to play a game of *Warhammer 40,000*. Jeremy has brought along his *Crimson Slaughter* army and this book, while Mark is using his *Dark Eldar* and has *Eternal War* missions from the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

They roll-off and Jeremy wins. He decides to roll on the *Crimson Slaughter* Mission table in this book. If Mark had won, he would have rolled on the *Eternal War* Mission table instead.

THE BATTLEFIELD

The deployment map, deployment zones and deployment instructions for each *Altar of War: Crimson Slaughter* mission are included in the mission itself, unless otherwise stated, do not use the deployment maps in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

THE ENEMY

The player that won the roll-off and rolled on the Altar of War Mission table is known as 'the *Crimson Slaughter* player' in the rules and missions that follow, and their opponent is known as 'the enemy player'.

Note that the player that loses the roll-off counts as 'the enemy' for the purposes of an Altar of War mission, even if they have a *Crimson Slaughter* army too.

RESERVES

Altar of War missions follow all of the rules for Reserves in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook; however, some specify different limits on how many units may (or must) be placed in reserve rather than deployed at the start of the game.

CARRY ON AS NORMAL

These three changes aside, all of the rules for Fighting a Battle in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook are used as normal.

SELECTED MISSIONS

As an alternative to rolling on a mission table, the players can agree to choose the mission they wish to fight. Picking missions is a great way to try out a particular mission you haven't fought before, or to hone your skills at missions you have previously fought.

ECHOES OF WAR

After the Altar of War missions, you will find a selection of Echoes of War missions inspired by the battles fought by the *Crimson Slaughter*. The *Armies* section of each of these missions provides guidance on the forces present so that you can replay the pivotal events using the armies, characters and war machines described in this book. Many of the Echoes of War missions include a map that depicts the battlefield on which the conflicts were fought. For those with a mind to historical accuracy, you'll notice certain restrictions and rules that we use to replicate the conditions of the battle in question. Whilst the Echoes of War missions have been inspired by specific events, with a little imagination they can easily be repurposed to recreate battles of your own invention. If you choose to go this route, you can modify these missions so that they can be fought using any combination of forces and terrain in your collection.

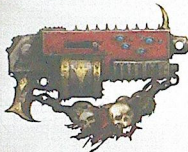
ALTAR OF WAR: STORM OF SPIRITS

This world is ripe for the slaughter. Unleash the damned upon these wretches!

When the Crimson Slaughter take to battle, they do so in the company of wailing spirits of the damned. Yet on occasion, some ephemeral and enigmatic purpose sees these restless souls roused to surge forth with unholy vigour. Not even the Crimson Slaughter themselves know why these events occur. Nor do they care – if the spirits that accompany them see fit to aid in the destruction of their foes, then so much the better. So long as the voices in their heads are silenced, it does not matter.

THE ARMIES

Choose armies as described in the Fighting a Battle section of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook. The Crimson Slaughter player must choose a primary detachment from *Codex: Chaos Space Marines* using the extra rules presented in this book.



THE BATTLEFIELD

Use the deployment map included with this mission. Set up terrain as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

PLACE PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

After setting up the terrain, the both players take it in turns to place 3 objectives anywhere in their half of the table, starting with the Crimson Slaughter player. No objective can be placed within 6" of any battlefield edge or 12" of another objective.

DEPLOYMENT

Before any models are deployed, both players must roll to determine their Warlord Traits.

The Crimson Slaughter player deploys first, placing all of his units in the deployment zone depicted on the map. The enemy player then deploys his units anywhere in his deployment zone.

FIRST TURN

The Crimson Slaughter player has the first turn unless the enemy player can Seize the Initiative as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

GAME LENGTH

The mission uses Variable Game Length (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

VICTORY CONDITIONS

At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory Points wins the game. If players have the same number of Victory Points, the game is a draw.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

At the end of the game, each Primary Objective is worth 3 Victory Points to the player that controls it.

SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

Slay the Warlord, First Blood, Linebreaker.

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

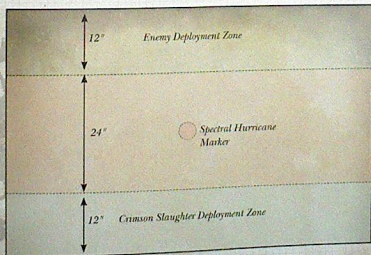
Night Fighting, Mysterious Objectives, Reserves.

Spectral Hurricane: After deployment, but before either player has taken the first turn, place a Spectral Hurricane marker (a coin will do) in the centre of the battlefield. At the beginning of each of the Crimson Slaughter player's turns, roll 2D6. The Crimson Slaughter player can move the Spectral Hurricane marker in any direction up to the distance rolled in inches. After this move has been made, any non-Crimson Slaughter units with at least one model within 12" of the Spectral Hurricane marker immediately suffer 2D6 Strength 3 AP-hits. Count the direction of the attack as originating from the Spectral Hurricane marker.





Enemy Table Edge



Crimson Slaughter Table Edge

ALTAR OF WAR: SILENCE THE VOICES

'Set loose your wrath upon these fools, and with their deaths, find solace in silence.'

Unlike the majority of the renegade warbands that emerge from the Eye of Terror to launch raids against the worlds of the Imperium, many of those undertaken by the Crimson Slaughter have a very specific reason beyond the outward appearance of mindless butchery and vengeance. The only way to find relief from the voices that plague their thoughts is to wash away the noise in a tide of slaughter. So do worlds die, their populations put to the sword so that the Crimson Slaughter can find momentary peace. But it is never long before they must begin the slaughter anew, for the voices will soon return...

THE ARMIES

Choose armies as described in the Fighting a Battle section of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook. The Crimson Slaughter player must choose a primary detachment from *Codex: Chaos Space Marines* using the extra rules presented in this book.



THE BATTLEFIELD

Use the deployment map included with this mission. Set up terrain as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

DEPLOYMENT

Before any models are deployed, both players must roll to determine their Warlord Traits.

The Crimson Slaughter player deploys first, placing all of his units in the deployment zones depicted on the map (see Mission Special Rules below). The enemy player then deploys his units anywhere in his deployment zone.

FIRST TURN

The Crimson Slaughter player has the first turn unless the enemy player can Seize the Initiative as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.



GAME LENGTH

The mission uses Variable Game Length (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

VICTORY CONDITIONS

If, at the end of any game turn, the enemy player has no models on the battlefield, the Crimson Slaughter player wins. If the game ends before this condition has been met, the enemy player wins.



MISSION SPECIAL RULES

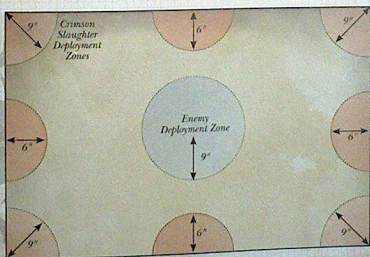
Night Fighting, Reserves.

Eight-pointed Attack: The Crimson Slaughter player must divide their units as equally as possible between the eight deployment zones depicted on the map; distribute any odd units as evenly as possible amongst the available deployment zones. With the exception of Flyers, no Crimson Slaughter units can be held back in Reserves.

Fight to the Last Man! Every non-vehicle unit in the enemy army has the Stubborn special rule.

Lines of Retreat: Any Crimson Slaughter unit that Falls Back does so towards the nearest table edge. Any enemy units that Fall Back must do so towards the centre of the board, where they will remain until they Regroup.

Voices Becalmed: All Crimson Slaughter units have the Hatred and Furious Charge special rules until the first enemy non-vehicle unit has been destroyed.



ALTAR OF WAR: SECURING A LEGACY

'Our very future may well depend on the success of this mission. Failure is not an option.'

To be a renegade is to take what is needed to survive. In the case of traitor Space Marines, an essential aspect of this is to ensure that they have adequate stocks of gene-seed to implant into new recruits in order to replenish their losses. Without the means to do so, the Chaos Space Marines would never have been able to sustain the Long War, for attrition alone would have doomed their cause.

Having struck an unholy pact with the infamous 'Primogenitor', Fabius Bile, the Crimson Slaughter have developed the means to create new Space Marines. All they need to maintain their warbands' numbers is a regular supply of genetic material. The Imperium holds vast stockpiles of gene-seed in secret, well-defended vaults across the galaxy. Whenever the Warp-screying of their Sorcerers discovers such a location, the Crimson Slaughter will stop at nothing to secure the priceless material it hides within. What matter the loss of hundreds, if thousands can rise from the ashes?

THE ARMIES

Choose armies as described in the Fighting a Battle section of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook. The Crimson Slaughter player must choose a primary detachment from *Codex: Chaos Space Marines* using the extra rules presented in this book.

THE BATTLEFIELD

Use the deployment map included with this mission. The enemy player can place any number of fortifications anywhere within his deployment zone. He does not pay any points for these fortifications, and none start the game dilapidated. All fortifications deployed in this manner start the game claimed by the enemy player. Set up any remaining terrain as described in the Fighting a Battle section of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

PLACE PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

After setting up the terrain, the enemy player places 3 objective markers anywhere within his deployment zone. No objective can be placed within 6" of any battlefield edge or 12" of another objective.

DEPLOYMENT

Before any models are deployed, both players must roll to determine their Warlord Traits.

The enemy player deploys first, placing all of his units in the deployment zone depicted on the map. The Crimson Slaughter player then deploys his units anywhere in his deployment zone.

FIRST TURN

The Crimson Slaughter player has the first turn unless the enemy player can Seize the Initiative as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

GAME LENGTH

This mission lasts for 10 game turns.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory Points wins the game. If players have the same number of Victory Points, the game is a draw.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

At the end of the game, each Primary Objective is worth 3 Victory Points to the player that controls it.

SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

Slay the Warlord, First Blood, Linebreaker.

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

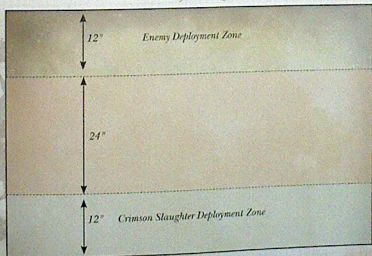
Mysterious Objectives, Night Fighting, Reserves.

A Fight for Survival: Each time a non-vehicle unit in a friendly Crimson Slaughter detachment is completely destroyed (with the exception of Unique characters), remove it from play and place it into Ongoing Reserves, where it will be available to return to the battle at the start of the Crimson Slaughter player's next turn. These units enter play from any point along the Crimson Slaughter table edge, as depicted on the map.





Enemy Table Edge



Crimson Slaughter Table Edge

ECHOES OF WAR: CONFRONTATION WITH ANGELS

Warlord Kronan has conceived a diabolical plan to exact revenge upon the Dark Angels for a host of imagined slights and insults. Falling upon the Imperial world of Stern's Remembrance, the Crimson Slaughter butchered the planet's entire population. Kronan's Sorcerers then sent a psychic message to lure the Dark Angels to the planet, naming one of the Fallen who could be found there amidst the piled dead in the planet's largest cathedral. When Dark Angels investigation teams left the cathedral with the body of the Fallen, they found themselves surrounded by Crimson Slaughter warbands. The Dark Angels were forced to fight their way out of the trap, battling their way through the city's narrow streets to safety.

Designer's Note: *If you have a copy of the Dark Vengeance boxed set, you will likely already know about the chain of events that happened on Bane's Landing, and may even have played your way through the narrative missions that reenact the series of clashes between the Crimson Slaughter and the Dark Angels. This mission relives the moment when these two forces first encountered each other in battle – a conflict that would eventually lead on to the Crimson Slaughter's bitter campaign against the Dark Angels on Bane's Landing, and many more battles besides.*

THE ARMIES

The Crimson Slaughter player chooses an army from *Codex: Chaos Space Marines* using the additional rules in this volume. The enemy player commands an army chosen from *Codex: Dark Angels*. Both players select forces to an agreed points limit.

The enemy player cannot take fortifications as part of his army.

THE BATTLEFIELD

Set up terrain as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook, using the deployment map opposite.

The battle took place amongst the narrow streets and ruins of the planet's capital city. To represent this you must use as many city ruins models as you have available and can fit into the gaming area you are using. If you have space, you must use any spare fortifications in your collection as dilapidated fortifications, to represent the city defences that were overrun by the Crimson Slaughter's initial attack.

DEPLOYMENT

Before any models are deployed, both players must roll to determine their Warlord Traits.

The enemy player deploys first, placing all of the non-Flyer units from his primary detachment in the Dark Angels deployment zone depicted on the map. All other units in his army start as Reserves. The Crimson Slaughter player then deploys his units anywhere on the table that is more than 9" from an enemy model.

When the enemy player deploys, they must nominate one of their models to be carrying the body of the Fallen (see the Mission Special Rules below).

FIRST TURN

The Crimson Slaughter player goes first unless the enemy player can Seize the Initiative as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

GAME LENGTH

The mission uses Variable Game Length (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

VICTORY CONDITIONS

At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory Points wins the game. If players have the same number of Victory Points, the game is a draw.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

At the end of the game, each player receives 1 Victory Point for each enemy unit that has been completely destroyed. Units that are falling back at the end of the game, and units that are not on the board at the end of the game, count as destroyed for these purposes.

SECONDARY OBJECTIVE

Slay the Warlord.

If the enemy player extracts the model carrying the body of the Fallen (see the Mission Special Rules below), then they receive D3 Victory Points. If the model carrying the body of the Fallen is removed as a casualty, then the Crimson Slaughter player receives D3 Victory Points. If the model carrying the body of the Fallen is not slain, but is not extracted, then neither player receives any additional Victory Points.

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

Reserves.

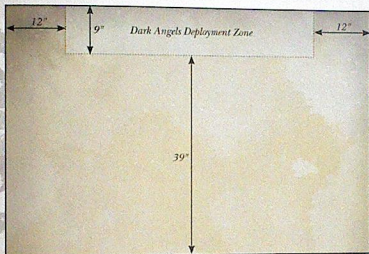
Extraction: Any enemy model that starts its Movement phase within 6" of the extraction table edge can be 'extracted'. Remove the model from play. It may not return.

Body of the Fallen: After the enemy player has deployed their army, and before the Crimson Slaughter player deploys theirs, the enemy player must pick one Infantry model, or Ravenwing Biker model, or Ravenwing Attack Bike model in their army, and declare out loud that it is carrying the body of the Fallen Dark Angel. The body does not impede the model carrying it in any way, but the fate of the bearer will affect how many Victory Points are scored for achieving Secondary Objectives (see left).

Surrounded on Three Sides: The Crimson Slaughter player can bring on units held in reserve or Ongoing Reserves from any point on any of the table edges, apart from the extraction table edge. The enemy player can bring on units held in reserve or Ongoing Reserves from any point on the extraction table edge. Crimson Slaughter units must always Fall Back towards the closest table edge that is not the extraction table edge. Enemy units must Fall Back towards the extraction table edge.

CITIES OF DEATH

Players that have the *Cities of Death* expansion can fight this battle as a Cities of Death mission. If you decide to do so, set up and fight the mission as described above. However, each player is allowed to take two Cityfighting Stratagems. These must be chosen and declared after the battlefield has been set-up, but before either army is deployed.



Extraction Table Edge



ECHOES OF WAR: A NEW REDEMPTION

The Dark Angels have built the fortress monastery of New Redemption on the ice-covered planet of Numarc. The harsh sub-zero conditions on the planet made for excellent recruits, but it was also a location that the Crimson Slaughter could attack with relative impunity. The Crimson Slaughter fleet quickly drove off the defending Dark Angels spacecraft, allowing Kranon to start landing his assault formations and attack New Redemption. The attack was a brutal hammer-blow, but the defending Dark Angels resisted stoically. They knew that if they could resist the initial assault, there would be a good chance they could hold out until assistance from the rest of their Chapter arrived.

THE ARMIES

The Crimson Slaughter player chooses an army from *Codex: Chaos Space Marines* using the additional rules in this volume. The enemy player commands an army chosen from *Codex: Dark Angels*. Both players select forces to an agreed points limit.

The Crimson Slaughter player is the Attacker in this Planetstrike mission. Their army cannot include fortifications. The enemy player is the Defender.

THE BATTLEFIELD

Set up terrain as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook. Numarc is a frozen ice world, and you cannot therefore use any Forest, Jungle, Woods or Wild Undergrowth terrain.

PLACE PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

After setting up the terrain, the enemy player places six objectives anywhere in his deployment zone.

DEPLOYMENT

Before any models are deployed, both players must roll to determine their Warlord Traits.

The enemy player deploys first, placing all of his units in the deployment zone depicted on the map. All of the Crimson Slaughter player's units begin the game in Reserve. Both players have 3 Stratagem Points.

FIRST TURN

As the Attacker, the Crimson Slaughter player goes first. The Crimson Slaughter player makes 3 Firestorm Attacks and makes Reserve Rolls from the start of his first turn.

GAME LENGTH

The mission uses Variable Game Length (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

VICTORY CONDITIONS

At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory Points wins the game. If players have the same number of Victory Points, the game is a draw.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

At the end of the game, each Primary Objective is worth 3 Victory Points to the player that controls it.

SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

Slay the Warlord, First Blood.

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

Night Fighting, Reserves.

This mission uses the following special rules from the Planetstrike rules: **Firestorm, Shock Tactics, Scramble!**

Ice World: Roll a D6 at the start of each player turn. On a roll of 1, an ice-shard blizzard sweeps the snow-covered battlefield. The following special rules apply that turn.

- First, the players must roll a D6 for each Zooming Flyer or Swooping Flying Monstrous Creature on the table. On a 1 the model crashes; a Zooming Flyer will Crash and Burn, while a Swooping Flying Monstrous Creature is Grounded. On a roll of 2 or more they are forced to flee before the storm, and are immediately placed in Ongoing Reserves.
- Next, the players must roll-off. The winner must unleash an Ice-shard Hurricane, as described below.
- Carry on with the rest of the turn as normal. However, the maximum distance for any line of sight is 12" for the duration of the turn.

Ice-shard Hurricane: As noted above, if a blizzard sweeps the table, the winner of the roll-off must unleash an Ice-shard Hurricane upon the battlefield. To do so, he will need five Ice-shard Hurricane markers. These are represented by squares of thin paper about 1" across.

The winner of the roll-off takes four of the markers (two in each hand). The opposing player takes the remaining (fifth) marker. The players must then position their hands with the markers, so that they are anywhere above the battlefield, and about 36" from the surface. Then, on a count of three, they simultaneously drop the markers so they flutter down to the table below. Any unit within 6" of a marker's final landing point suffers D6 Strength 5 AP5 hits with the Pinning special rule. The markers are then removed. Note that markers that completely miss the table do not cause any damage (well, apart from to one's pride!).



Designer's note: A New Redemption is a Planetstrike mission.

To play this mission you will require a copy of the Planetstrike rules. We've included a set of Ice-shard Hurricane markers above. Permission is granted to copy them to use in the battles you fight.

ECHOES OF WAR: THE HUNT FOR TZAX'LAN-TAR

Tzax'lan-tar, a Greater Daemon of Tzeentch, has revealed itself at last. The Lord of Change had worn the form of the Crimson Slaughter's Chief Sorcerer for longer than any would dare to admit, and was doubtless behind many of the woes that had beset the Crimson Slaughter. Vowing vengeance on the manipulative Daemon lord, Kronon leads a hunting party deeper into the Eye of Terror than any had yet travelled in a bid to corner Tzax'lan-tar and engage him in battle.

Guided by the vision of Draznitch's third eye, the Crimson Slaughter eventually arrive at their destination – the Daemon world of Myrmdrax. There waited Tzax'lan-tar, an army of daemonic servants at his side, ready to punish the renegades for their arrogance in thinking that they could challenge their unholy master.

THE ARMIES

The Crimson Slaughter player chooses an army from *Codex: Chaos Space Marines* using the additional rules in this volume. The enemy player commands an army chosen from *Codex: Chaos Daemons*. Both players select forces to an agreed points limit.

The Crimson Slaughter player must include Kronon the Relentless (see page 49) as his Warlord. The enemy player must include a Lord of Change as his Warlord.

THE BATTLEFIELD

Set up terrain as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook, using the deployment map opposite.

DEPLOYMENT

Before any models are deployed, the Crimson Slaughter player should roll to determine his Warlord Trait. The enemy player does not roll for his Warlord Trait – Tzax'lan-tar automatically has the Lord of Unreality Warlord Trait (see *Codex: Chaos Daemons*).

The Crimson Slaughter player deploys first, placing all of his units in the deployment zone depicted on the map. The enemy player then deploys his units anywhere in his deployment zone.

FIRST TURN

The Crimson Slaughter player goes first unless the enemy player can Seize the Initiative as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

GAME LENGTH

The mission uses Variable Game Length (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

VICTORY CONDITIONS

At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory Points wins the game. If players have the same number of Victory Points, the game is a draw.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

At the end of the game, each player receives 1 Victory Point for each enemy unit that has been completely destroyed. Units that are falling back at the end of the game, and units that are not on the board at the end of the game, count as destroyed for these purposes.

SECONDARY OBJECTIVE

Slay the Warlord*, First Blood, Linebreaker.

* In this mission, the Slay the Warlord Secondary Objective is worth 3 Victory Points to the Crimson Slaughter player.

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

Night Fighting, Reserves.

A Score to Settle: Kronon the Relentless has the Hatred (Tzax'lan-tar) special rule.

Warpstorm Tornadoes: At the beginning of each game turn, the enemy player must roll a D3. The number rolled is the total number of Warpstorm Tornadoes that touch down this turn. Starting with the enemy player, both players take it in turns to place a Large Blast marker anywhere on the battlefield. Roll for scatter (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook) before determining the final position of the Warpstorm Tornado marker. Each unit (friend or foe) suffers one hit for each model fully or partially beneath the Warpstorm Tornado marker, with the following profile (vehicles are hit on their side armour):

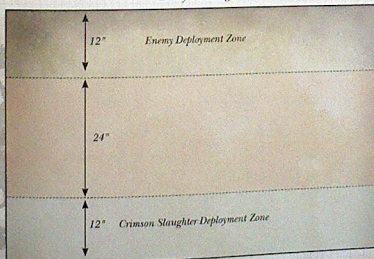
	Range	S	AP	Type
Warpstorm Tornado	N/A	2D6*	D6*	Large Blast, Barrage

* Roll to determine the Strength and AP value of each Warpstorm Tornado after its final position has been established.





Enemy Table Edge



Crimson Slaughter Table Edge

ECHOES OF WAR: REGALLUS UNDER SIEGE

At the Warmaster's orders, Kronan has led the full force of his renegade Space Marines on a mission to sow fear and death amongst the Imperial worlds beyond the Cadian Gate. Acting as bloodthirsty heralds of Abaddon's 13th Black Crusade, the Crimson Slaughter have bypassed the Imperial fortress worlds that encircle the Eye of Terror. They are now poised to bring destruction to Regallus, a hive world situated far behind the Cadian frontier. Kronan's remorseless warriors have been tasked with causing such carnage and devastation that the Imperium will be forced to divert valuable resources away from the main war zone at the Cadian Gate.

However, before the Crimson Slaughter can get to the main population centres and butcher the inhabitants, there is the small matter of the planet's Imperial Guard defenders, who would rather die than leave so many innocent people at the mercy of such cold-blooded killers.

THE ARMIES

The Crimson Slaughter player chooses an army from *Codex: Chaos Space Marines* using the additional rules in this volume. The enemy player commands an army chosen from *Codex: Imperial Guard*. Both players select forces to an agreed points limit.

The enemy player can place a Wall of Martyrs Imperial Defence Network (see *Warhammer 40,000: Stronghold Assault*) anywhere within his deployment zone. He does not pay any points for this fortification network.

THE BATTLEFIELD

Set up terrain as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook, using the deployment map opposite.

PLACE PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

After setting up the terrain, the enemy player places 3 Primary Objectives anywhere in his deployment zone.



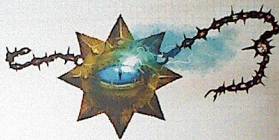
DEPLOYMENT

Before any models are deployed, both players must roll to determine their Warlord Traits.

The enemy player deploys first, placing all of his units in the deployment zone depicted on the map. The Crimson Slaughter player then deploys his units anywhere in his deployment zone.

FIRST TURN

The Crimson Slaughter player goes first unless the enemy player can Seize the Initiative as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.



GAME LENGTH

The mission uses Variable Game Length (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

VICTORY CONDITIONS

At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory Points wins the game. If players have the same number of Victory Points, the game is a draw.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

At the end of the game, each Primary Objective is worth 3 Victory Points to the player that controls it.

SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

Slay the Warlord, First Blood, Linebreaker.

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

Mysterious Objectives, Night Fighting, Reserves.

Wave of Terror: Once during the game, at the beginning of one of his turns, the Crimson Slaughter player can send forth a wave of howling spirits. All enemy units within 18" of a Crimson Slaughter model must pass a Morale check or Fall Back.

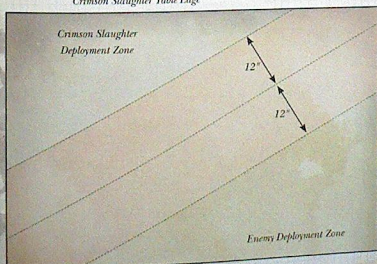
Cannon Fodder: Each time a unit of Chaos Cultists is completely destroyed, remove it from play and place it into Ongoing Reserves, where it will be available to return to the battle at the start of the Crimson Slaughter player's next turn. These units enter play from any point along either Crimson Slaughter table edge, as depicted on the map.



Crimson Slaughter Table Edge

Crimson Slaughter Table Edge

*Crimson Slaughter
Deployment Zone*



Enemy Table Edge

ECHOES OF WAR: A WORLD TURNED CRIMSON

The Crimson Slaughter have broken through the Imperial forces on Regallus, pressing past ad hoc defences to run amok in the streets of the hive city. The merciless renegades advance from building to building, rooting out anyone seeking sanctuary within and ruthlessly cutting them down. The Imperial forces on Regallus have been well and truly broken, and only a few scattered formations remain. These desperate souls fight on with no hope of victory, but are willing to sell their lives to put a stop to the brutal massacre of those they have sworn to protect.

THE ARMIES

The Crimson Slaughter player chooses an army from *Codex: Chaos Space Marines* using the additional rules in this volume. The enemy player commands an army chosen from *Codex: Imperial Guard*. Both players select forces to an agreed points limit.

THE BATTLEFIELD

Set up terrain as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook, using the deployment map opposite.

DEPLOYMENT

Before any models are deployed, both players must roll to determine their Warlord Traits.

The Crimson Slaughter player deploys first, placing all of his units in the deployment zone depicted on the map. The enemy player does not deploy – all of his units begin the game in reserve.



FIRST TURN

The enemy player goes first unless the Crimson Slaughter player can Seize the Initiative as described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

GAME LENGTH

The mission uses Variable Game Length (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

VICTORY CONDITIONS

At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory Points wins the game. If players have the same number of Victory Points, the game is a draw.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

At the end of the game, each player receives 1 Victory Point for each enemy unit that has been completely destroyed. Units that are falling back at the end of the game, and units that are not on the board at the end of the game, count as destroyed for these purposes.

The Crimson Slaughter player can also earn additional Victory Points for clearing out buildings (see *Leave None Alive!* below). At the end of the game, the Crimson Slaughter player receives 1 Victory Point for each building that has been Cleared.

SECONDARY OBJECTIVE

Slay the Warlord, First Blood.

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

Night Fighting, Reserves.

Leave None Alive! If a Crimson Slaughter unit with the Walker or Infantry unit type moves into a city ruin and does not Run or shoot in the Shooting phase, that ruin will become Cleared. Each building can only be Cleared once, so place a suitable marker next to each building that has been Cleared (a coin will do) as a reminder.

Lines of Retreat: Any Crimson Slaughter units that fall back do so towards the nearest table edge.

Scattered Forces: At the start of his first turn, the enemy player makes Reserves rolls to see if his units held in reserve arrive, exactly as if it were the start of his second turn. If, by the time the enemy player rolls to see if the last of his units in reserve arrive, none of his units have done so, do not make a Reserves roll – that unit arrives automatically. The enemy player's units enter play from any point along any table edge.

Stop the Massacre! All enemy units have the Zealot special rule.

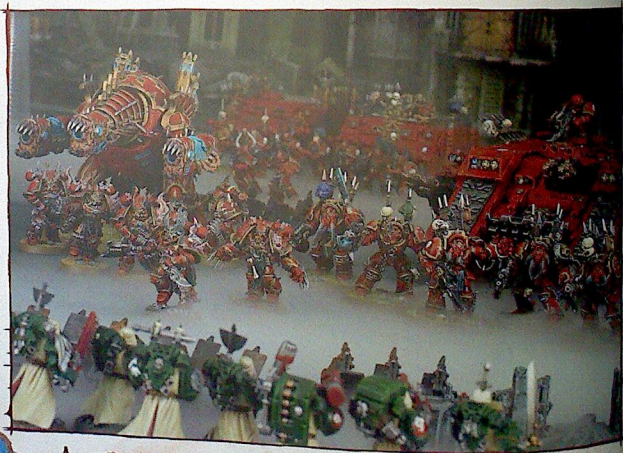
CITIES OF DEATH

Players that have the *Cities of Death* expansion can fight this battle as a *Cities of Death* mission. If you decide to do so, set up and fight the mission as described above. However, each player is allowed to take two Cityfighting Stratagems. These must be chosen and declared after the battlefield has been set-up, but before either army is deployed.



*Crimson Slaughter
Deployment Zone*

12"









WARHAMMER 40,000



MASSACRES AND MADNESS

Before they were excommunicated, the Crimson Slaughter were once loyal servants of the Imperium of Mankind. Whether tricked into madness or corrupted by their own weak willpower, they turned from the Emperor's light. Now they carve a red path through the Imperium they once vowed to protect, for only through butchery and genocide can the Crimson Slaughter silence the voices that haunt their own twisted minds. So has an entire Chapter of the Emperor's Finest gone renegade, choosing instead to embrace the Dark Gods. Before them sweeps a bow wave of Warp-cursed possession and terror, as the Crimson Slaughter seek to wash away their insanity in a tide of blood.

Inside you will find:

SLAVES TO THE VOICES: The story of how the Crimson Sabres fell from grace and arose again as the Warp-cursed Crimson Slaughter, dreaded foes of the Imperium they once served.

THE RED ONSLAUGHT: A showcase of Chaos Space Marine Citadel miniatures, presenting the warband colours and icons of the Crimson Slaughter.

LET SLAUGHTER COMMENCE! A set of supplemental rules that, along with Codex: Chaos Space Marines, allows you to assemble your Crimson Slaughter models into a force for Warhammer 40,000 battles. Also included are a series of narrative missions that enable you to recreate some of the Crimson Slaughter's bloody history, alongside a set of Altar of War missions that showcase the Crimson Slaughter's deadly tactics.

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WARHAMMER
40,000

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